A Homeowner’s Guide to Accessory Dwelling Units
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INTRODUCTION

ADU = ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT

Sometimes called "in-law units," "secondary dwelling units," or "backyard cottages," an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a complete, independent living facility for one or more persons. These structures can be detached from or attached to a primary residence, converted from existing square footage of a primary residence, or converted from an existing accessory structure such as a garage or workshop.

To provide additional housing opportunities in the Kerman in response to housing supply shortages and lack of affordable options, the City of Kerman is working on adopting an ADU Ordinance and established a Pre-Approved ADU Program. The purpose of the Program is to reduce or eliminate obstacles for Kerman residents to construct an ADU in their backyard by offering pre-approved construction plans including floor plans and elevations. The pre-approved plans will help reduce costs and timeframes for design, permitting, and approval of ADUs.

This How-to-Guide outlines step-by-step instructions for building an ADU on your property, providing considerations from regulations and processing timelines to design and costs. This Guide answers the following questions:

- Can I build an ADU on my property?
- What are the restrictions of designing my ADU?
- What are the necessary steps to building my ADU?
**ADU BASICS**

**WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT?**

An Accessory Dwelling Unit, or ADU, is a secondary housing unit on a single- or multi-family residential lot that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel as the primary residence. ADUs are also known as: second units, guest cottages, in-law suites, casitas, etc.

A **JUNIOR ADU** is an ADU of no more than 500 sf. and is contained entirely within an existing primary dwelling unit, including an attached garage.

**ADU TYPES**

There are different types of ADUs, including:

- **DETACHED ADU**
  Structurally independent and detached from a primary residence.

- **ATTACHED ADU**
  Attached to a primary residence. The attached ADU shall have an exterior entrance separate from the main house.

- **CONVERTED ADU**
  An area of an existing structure (ex. primary residence, detached garage, pool house, storage room, attic, basement, etc.) converted to habitable space.
BUILDING AN ADU – THE BIG PICTURE

THE PROCESS

Determine if ADU is Allowed

Plan/ Design Your ADU
- Engage a design professional
- Evaluate your need and budget
- Review code and regulations – see page 5 Requirements Checklist

Submit Complete Application Package
- Prepare application package and pay fees
  – see page 9 for Application Checklist
- Modifications or Additional Information
  Requested as required by the City

Application Processing (City)
- Completeness review and acceptance
- Routing and commenting
- Approval and Building Permit Issuance

ADU Construction
- Secure funding and hire contractor
- Construction
- Complete final inspection

ADU Ready to Occupy!

COST CONSIDERATIONS

Architectural and Design Services 1
Structural Engineering Services 1
Title 24 Energy Compliance Report
Planning and Permitting Costs
Plan Review Cost 1
Misc. Permits Fees (Solar, Fire Sprinklers, Demolition)
Development Impact Fees 3
School Development Fees 4
Utility Connection/Improvement Fees
Construction and Labor Costs
(Demolition, Site preparation, Materials, Labor, Landscaping) 2
Inspection Fees

Cost Saving Tips:
1. Save this cost by participating in the city’s ADU Program!
2. JADU/ attached or conversion ADU: use existing structure, easier and more cost efficient to connect to utilities.
3. Exempt for sizes under 750 square feet
4. Exempt for sizes under 500 square feet
BUILDING AN ADU IN THE CITY OF KERMAN

Are you interested in building an ADU on your property in Kerman? This section will provide a step-by-step detailed guide to help you navigate the process in Kerman.

STEP 1. REVIEW THE BASIC ADU REQUIREMENTS

Your property must meet the basic ADU requirements to qualify for an ADU. Review the Requirements Checklist on Pages 5-7 of this guide before proceeding to the next step in the ADU process. The Requirements Checklist will help you determine if your property is eligible to build an ADU and whether your ADU design will be compliant with regulations.

STEP 2. DESIGN YOUR ADU

There are 3 typical ways to design your ADU: 1) hire an experienced designer, architect, or engineer to design your ADU, 2) purchase a pre-fabricated or modular ADU, or 3) participate in the voluntary and optional City of Kerman ADU Program which offers free, pre-reviewed ADU plans including floor plans, elevations, and construction drawings.

STEP 3. PREPARE & SUBMIT YOUR ADU APPLICATION PACKAGE

The Permitting Process and Submittal Requirements for your ADU project are outlined on Page 9 of this guide. Refer to the Application Checklist on page 9 for requirements.
STEP 1. REVIEW BASIC ADU REQUIREMENTS

The following is a checklist of basic ADU project requirements. This checklist is not an official determination, but rather a quick guide to help you understand the requirements for your proposed ADU concept and help you prepare your application for a building permit. Once you've reviewed the requirements, we recommend the "Finding Your ADU Fit" exercise on Page 11 to help determine which square footage is appropriate for your property.

NEED HELP?
For assistance and official determination of whether your concept meets these requirements, please contact the City of Kerman Planning Division at (559) 842-2301. For additional information referenced below, please visit the following links:
- City of Kerman Zoning Map
- City of Kerman Municipal Code Chapter 17.66 Accessory Dwelling Units
- City of Kerman Residential Design Guidelines

REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Permitted Locations: Can you build an ADU on your property?

Check Zoning: Is your property in a single-family residential zone district abbreviated as RR, R-1-7, R-1-12 or is the property in a multi-family residential zone district abbreviated as R-2, R-3 or is the property in PD, SD, PA, MU, CG zone district with existing or planned residential dwellings? Find your property’s zoning: Zoning Map

Result: If “no”, an ADU is not allowed. If “yes”, see table below and standards in the following sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>ADUs Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family</td>
<td>1 ADU and 1 JADU; subject to standards below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family</td>
<td>Converted ADUs: not to exceed 25% of the number of dwelling units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Detached ADUs: 2 ADUs subject to standards below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Design Standards: What can my ADU look like?

1. Statewide Exempt ADU. The following ADUs are allowed "by-right," meaning that if you meet the minimum standards below, and the ADU meets all applicable building code standards and all applicable sewer and water requirements, the ADU(s) will be approved and cannot be denied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single-Family Residential Lots</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The ADU shall not exceed 800 sf. in floor area;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The ADU does not exceed 16 ft. in height.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Detached ADU**

- The side and rear setbacks must be a minimum of four (4) ft. as measured to the closest portion of the building.

**Converted ADU**

- One ADU and one JADU is permitted per lot within the existing walls of the primary residence.

2. ADU Processing. The following ADUs are processed ministerially, indicating that if the proposed ADU meets all applicable design standards below, the ADU will be approved without going through any additional zoning review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Standards</th>
<th>Detached</th>
<th>Attached</th>
<th>Converted</th>
<th>Junior ADU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Size and Width</td>
<td>No minimum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot Coverage</td>
<td>See base zone district for maximum lot coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Independent exterior access required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Sprinklers</td>
<td>Required if existing or is required for the primary dwelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Foundation</td>
<td>ADU must by permanently attached to a permanent foundation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Size</td>
<td>850 square feet if no more than 1 bedroom</td>
<td>1,000 square feet if more than 1 bedroom</td>
<td>Size of existing structure (No limit) *</td>
<td>Not exceed 500 square feet and shall not expand the existing primary dwelling by more than 150 square feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Height</td>
<td>Single-story and maximum 16 feet</td>
<td></td>
<td>Height of existing structure. Any expansion beyond 150 square feet is subject to height limitations for attached or detached ADUs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*An additional 150 square feet if expansion is for the sole purpose of accommodating ingress/egress. Any expansion beyond 150 square feet is subject to size limitations for attached or detached ADUs.
### Design Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Standards</th>
<th>Detached</th>
<th>Attached</th>
<th>Converted</th>
<th>Junior ADU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
<td>1 off-street parking space per ADU. Driveway parking is permitted.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 off-street parking space per ADU, and no replacement required for a garage of carport conversion.</td>
<td>None required, except when an attached garage is converted to a JADU, replacement parking is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Front Setback</strong></td>
<td>Not allowed in front of primary residence if existing front yard setback is less than 20 feet</td>
<td>Same as primary residence</td>
<td>None required</td>
<td>None required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rear Setback</strong></td>
<td>4 feet</td>
<td>4 feet</td>
<td>Existing setback</td>
<td>Existing setback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Side Setback</strong></td>
<td>4 feet</td>
<td>4 feet</td>
<td>Existing setback</td>
<td>Existing setback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Space between Structures</strong></td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10 feet if ADU is detached</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solar Panel</strong></td>
<td>Required for all newly constructed structures, including ADU and JADU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 2. DESIGN YOUR ADU

Once you determine that what you have in mind will comply with the City of Kerman’s ADU Ordinance, you can start to strategize your ADU design. Be sure to refer to the Requirements Checklist on Page 5-7 and Kerman Municipal Code Chapter 17.66 Accessory Dwelling Units for all requirements during the design process. There are three typical ways to design your ADU:

1. Participate in the voluntary and optional City of Kerman Pre-Approved ADU Program and select from pre-approved floor plans and elevations for detached ADUs. The pre-approved floor plans and elevations have been plan checked and approved by the City and are available to be downloaded and submitted with your Building Permit Application. Advantages to participating in the ADU Program include:
   - **Skip the design costs** - no need to hire an architect or design professional. Save costs on architectural/design services, structural engineering services, plan review fees.
   - **Enjoy a streamlined permitting process** - plans are already approved.
   - **Don't sweat the details** - plans already meet the required height, living provisions, maximum size, foundation, and architecture standards.

2. Hire an experienced designer, architect, or engineer to design and prepare your ADU plans.
   
   **Consider:**
   - The professional is licensed, bonded, and insured
   - Ask for references with similar ADU/JADU projects
   - Compare quotes from different contractors

3. Purchase a prefabricated or modular ADU. A prefabricated ADU is manufactured in a factory prior to its final assembly at the construction site. A modular ADU is an ADU that is built or organized in self-contained units, like building blocks, and then assembled at the construction site. There are increasingly more companies who provide these types of ADUs today.

Interested in the Pre-Approved ADU Program? Read more on Pages 11-18
STEP 3. PREPARE AND SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

The final step in the ADU permitting process is to prepare and submit your application. Download the ADU Building Permit Application for submittal requirements or prepare your application packet by reviewing the following checklist with required materials.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

☐ Completed Application Form
  ▪ Name(s) and addresses(s) of applicant(s) and property owner(s)
  ▪ Confirm how the ADU will be established (i.e., detached, conversion, attached)
  ▪ Owner’s signature

☐ Copy of Grant Deed or Preliminary Title Report

☐ Scaled Plot Plan (see Submittal Requirements on page 4 for Sample Plot Plan, also see page 12 for more instructions). Some items to include are (not extensive):
  ▪ Driveways and parking spaces for exiting and proposed
  ▪ Location of existing and proposed water and sewer utility services for the primary dwelling unit and the proposed ADU
  ▪ Location of transformer boxes and other utility equipment

☐ Vicinity Map (show main streets bounding the property)

☐ ADU Plan Set
  ▪ California Green Building Sheet
  ▪ Floor Plan, Cross Sections, Elevations, Roof Plan, Structural Plan
  ▪ Foundation Details, Framing Details

☐ Site Specific Title 24 Energy Calculation Report

☐ Roof Truss Calculations Report (if applicable)

☐ Grading Plan (if applicable)

Submit application here: buildingonline@cityofkerman.org

Contact planning staff to access pre-approved plans

Contact Energy Consultant

Contact Truss Company
APPLICATION AND PERMITTING PROCESS

Application Preparation and Submittal

• Prepare all items listed in the Application Checklist
• Submit a hard copy or electronically

City Review

• Application Acceptance: city reviews application package to make sure all required items are included.

• Routing and Corrections: city departments will review the package and require conditions of approval, including potential development impact fees, school fees, utilities connection, deed restrictions etc.

• Approval and Conditions: ADU is permitted to start construction!

NEED HELP? Contact the Planning Division at (559) 842-2301
CITY OF KERMAN PRE-APPROVED ADU PROGRAM

The City of Kerman Pre-Approved ADU Program is an optional and voluntary program that provides pre-approved plan sets for detached ADUs, including floor plans, structural plans, calculations, and elevations. By offering pre-approved plans, the Program helps interested property owners avoid design costs and to reduce the overall time it takes from submitting an application to receiving building permit approval.

The City of Kerman has prepared three (3) permit-ready, pre-approved detached ADU plan sets including studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom ADUs that range in size from 386 to 696 square feet. These plans are available in three (3) different architectural styles: Ranch/Early Century, Mediterranean/Mission, and Cottage. Some plans are designed with flexibility for customization, such as adding a wall to turn a flex space into a bedroom. The following sections provides an overview of the design options. Pre-Approved Plan Sets are available for download to include as part of your Building Permit Application. Once you're ready, email the City of Kerman at buildingonline@cityofkerman.org for the full set of plans.

After deciding on your design plan set, all you have to do is make sure that the plan fits your property, meets setback and lot coverage requirements, and has space for parking. It is your responsibility to prepare a site plan as part of the application package. Page 12, Finding your ADU Fit, guides you through the preparation of the site plan.

In addition to the ADU building permit, deferred submittals are required for:

- Solar energy systems (must be installed and operational prior to final inspection)
- Fire sprinklers (required if primary residence has fire sprinklers)
- Demolition (required if any existing structures are to be demolished)

ADU PROGRAM PROCESS

To get started, review the process:

1. Review pre-approved floor plan layouts on Pages 13-15 and select a layout that fits your property (i.e., the ADU meets setback and lot coverage requirements). For help finding your ADU fit, see Page 12 ("Finding Your ADU Fit").

2. Review examples of the pre-approved design options on Pages 16-18 and select your preferred design (Canoga, Lena, or Reseda)

3. Proceed with preparing and submitting your Application Package (See Page 9).
FINDING YOUR ADU FIT

To determine an ADU layout that fits your property (i.e., which square footage meets setback and lot coverage requirements), we recommend using the Plot Plan Template to sketch out your property.

Refer to Requirements Checklist on page 5 and Kerman Municipal Code Chapter 17.66 Accessory Dwelling Units for setback requirements.

Refer to a recent Title Report for your property to locate any easements or special requirements.

Utilize the grids to draw to scale.

Show trees and indicate if they are to be removed.

Label each structure as existing or proposed, include dimensions to property lines.
The 386 square foot floor plan provides essential components of a home: a bedroom-living room space, kitchen, washer/dryer, a bathroom, and storage space. This is a great choice for homeowners with smaller lots searching for a separate living space for one (1) person with least construction costs due to the smaller footprint. All spaces are designed to fit standard-sized appliances that can be bought locally.

**DETAILS**
- Kitchen
- Hide-a-bed
- Washer and dryer closet
- Storage closet
- Bathroom with shower/tub combination
- Wall between kitchen and living room
- Three (3) windows
The 498 square foot floor plan provides basic components of a home: a bedroom, living room space, kitchen, washer/dryer closet, a bathroom, and storage space. This is a great choice for homeowners with smaller lots searching for a separate living space for one (1) to two (2) people. All spaces are designed to fit standard-sized appliances that can be bought locally.

- **Kitchen** with pantry closet
- **Washer and dryer** closet
- **Storage** closet
- **Bathroom** with shower/tub combination
- **Living room**
- **Dining counter**
- **Three (3) windows**

**DETAILS**
OPTION 3: 749 SQUARE FEET / 1 BEDROOM + 1 FLEX SPACE / 1.5 BATHROOM

The 749 square foot floor plan provides all components of a home: dining space, living room, kitchen, washer/dryer closet, 1.5 bathroom, and multiple storage spaces. A flex space provides an option to include an additional bedroom. This is a great choice for homeowners searching for a separate living space for two (2) to three (3) people. All spaces are designed to fit standard-sized appliances that can be bought locally.

**FLOOR PLAN**

**DETAILS**

- Kitchen with pantry closet
- Washer and dryer closet
- Storage closet
- Bathroom with shower/tub combination
- Flex space with optional door
- Dining room
- Five (5) windows
- Patio
ELEVATION

OPTION 1: CANOGA

The Canoga architectural style’s primary characteristic is vertical rustic grain pattern boards. There is a knee brace, lattice décor near the top of the building. For the windows, there is a spruce head trim, jamb trim, sill, and apron.
ELEVATION

OPTION 2: LENA

The Lena architectural style includes composition shingle roofing, painted wood fascia, stucco band around doors and windows, hard panel ban sculpt arch banding, ornamental clay pipe vents non-functional block with insect screen, painted lumber shelf, and stucco gable end.
ELEVATION

OPTION 3: RESEDA

The Reseda architectural style has a horizontal lapped siding and an optional stone or brick veneer. Windows include smooth casing and shutters.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Can I sell or rent my ADU?
You cannot sell your primary dwelling and ADU separately. ADUs may be rented. For a JADU, either the primary unit or JADU must be occupied by the homeowner.

2. What is the largest size I can make my ADU?
No matter how big your lot is, at a minimum, you can build an 800 square foot ADU as long it is no higher that 16-feet, has 4-foot minimum side and rear setbacks, and meets all fire, building code and safety standards. Otherwise, the size of your ADU is based on existing property restrictions and code regulations. You will need to review lot coverage and setbacks requirements of the zone district you are building in to ensure that the construction of an ADU would still comply.

3. How do I know if my ADU needs solar panels?
Newly constructed ADUs may be subject to the California Energy Code requirement to provide solar panels if the unit(s) is a newly constructed, non-manufactured, detached ADU. Confirm applicability with your Title 24 Consultant and refer to the California Energy Commission’s Newsletter, “Blueprint,” Issue 129 (click to access) for more information. If panels are required, they can be installed on the ADU or on the primary dwelling unit.

4. How do I know if my ADU needs fire sprinklers?
If fire sprinklers are required or existing in the primary residence, they will be required to be constructed in the proposed ADU.

5. If I go with a pre-approved plan, do I need anything else to get a permit?
Yes. A plot plan is required, along with truss calculations (obtain from lumber company) and a Title 24 Calculation and Compliance Report. The Calculation and Compliance Reports are to be completed by a certified third-party consultant. A consultant can easily be found through a web search (i.e. Google “Title 24 report consultant”). Separate permits for solar and fire sprinklers may also be required as noted above.

6. How do I calculate my lot coverage?
Calculate lot coverage by dividing total square footage of existing and proposed structures by lot size and multiplying by 100.

7. What is a Setback?
The distance that a building or structure is required to be located from the property line. The setback requirements differs in each zone district and can be found in the Zoning Ordinance.
RESOURCES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
The Planning Division provides advanced planning, technical and development assistance with zoning and land use entitlements. Phone: (559) 842-2301

BUILDING PERMIT
The Building Division processes building permit applications, calculates fees, issues permits, and reviews minor construction plans for code compliance. Phone: (559) 846-6121
Email: buildingonline@cityofkerman.org

CREDITS
The ADU pre-approved standard plans and this Homeowner’s Guide were prepared with Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) grant funding. LEAP provides funding to jurisdictions for the preparation and adoption of planning documents and process improvements that accelerate housing production.

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Thank you to the following individuals, whose consistent feedback and expertise made this how-to-guide possible. Their support and contribution provides homeowners the resources to develop and build ADU’s.

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Senior Associate Planner – Jenna Chilingerian
Associate Planner – Shin Tu

ADU ORDINANCE
The City of Kerman adopted an update to the ADU Ordinance on July 19, 2017. See Municipal Code Section: 17.66 Accessory Dwelling Units

FURTHER READING
HCD ADU Handbook

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