



Detached Residential Accessory Residential Structures: *Sheds, Detached Garages/Offices, Treehouses, Etc.*



Q. Do I need Planning approval for an accessory structure in my backyard or side yard?

A. Not necessarily, but there are limitations which apply regardless if approval is required. Permits are needed for structures 200 square feet and larger, but some limitations may apply to smaller buildings too. You may contact the Planning department at 503.783.3800 or planninginfo@happyvalleyor.gov we will inform you of any limitations or environmental protection processes needed.

Q. What are the zoning requirements for residential accessory structures?

A. Regulations for residential accessory structures may be found in [chapter 16.44.055.C and E](#) of the Land Development Code. All accessory structures must meet the following:

Setback limitations. New structures must be separated (setback) from property lines.

Structures up to 200 square feet in size

- The structure must meet the setbacks of the zoning designation unless it is 14 feet in height or less, then the side and rear setbacks may be reduced to three feet for the accessory structure and its projections (such as eaves). Note that some developments have site specific setbacks. The setback may be found by calling the Planning Department at 503.783.3800.
- Projections which do not touch the ground may extend up to 3 feet from the side and rear property lines. Examples include eaves and overhangs.

Structures 200+ square feet in size

- The structure must meet the setbacks of the zoning designation. Note that some developments have site specific setbacks. The setback may be found by calling the Planning Department at 503.783.3800.

Structure Height Limitations

Structures ≤200 square feet and ≤14 feet in height

- The structure cannot be taller than the zoning allows. Note that some developments have site specific height limitations. The height may be found by calling the Planning Department at 503.783.3800.

Structures >200 square feet and/or >14 feet in height

- Cannot be taller than 50% of the height of the primary structure or 26 feet, whichever is higher. Note that some developments have site specific height limitations.
- Treehouse height shall be measured from the floor level. Treehouses of this size shall require submittal of an arborist's report and structural engineering calculations demonstrating that the tree(s) and structure will support the load of the treehouse.

Lot Coverage Standards. The percentage of land that is covered by structures, decks, and stairways that are more than 30 inches above grade is limited in the zoning designation. Eaves are not included in lot coverage. Note that some developments have site specific lot coverage standards. The lot coverage may be found by calling the Planning Department at 503.783.3800.

Environmental Protections. Limitations for sites near streams, slopes, flood areas, historic, identified in LDC Environmental requirements for streams in [LDC 16.32-16.35](#). You can learn about any sensitive areas by calling the Planning Department at 503.783.3800.

Special limitations from the land division. Many developments include special limitations or site specific setbacks specific to that development. Please check in with the Planning Department at 503.783.3800 to verify the city limitations and review your Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) with your title.

Q. Do I need drawings?

A. Yes, you will need a site plan showing the existing house, new accessory structure location, with dimensions between the proposed structure and the property lines, calculations showing you are not covering too much of your property with a structure, and drawings demonstrating the height of the proposed structure.

Building Division – Accessory structures

Q. What permits will I need?

A. You will need an electrical, mechanical, and plumbing permit if there is any electrical, mechanical, and plumbing work. You will need a structural permit if it is more than 200sf.

Q. Do I need construction drawings and a site plan for a new accessory structure.

A. Yes if >200sf, No if ,200sf.

Q. Can I have a bathroom in my accessory structure?

A. Yes. You will need a Plumbing Permit and a way for the sewer to connect to the existing sewer.

Engineering Division – Accessory structures

Q. Do I need Engineering approval for an accessory structure in my backyard?

A. No. But you cannot place the accessory structure over an easement. Easements supersede setback standards; i.e. if your easement is five feet wide, but we allow a three foot setback from the property line, the structure must be set back at least five feet to avoid the easement. Easements can be found on many plat maps.

