



DETACHED ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS



The Town of Bedford permits Accessory Dwelling Units, commonly abbreviated to ADUs, to provide additional opportunities for housing in the community. Bedford allows one accessory dwelling unit per single-family parcel, subject to requirements outlined in this fact sheet.

What is a Detached ADU? Detached Accessory Dwelling Units are separate apartments that are detached from single family homes and located on the same parcel. ADUs offer several benefits for homeowners, including allowing a separate attached living space for relatives, or providing an additional stream of income to rent the units to tenants. The Town does not regulate who resides in an ADU.

Is an ADU right for you? This fact sheet is intended to be a guide and describes Planning & Zoning requirements regarding detached ADUs in Bedford. For a complete list of requirements refer to the Bedford Zoning Ordinance, Section 275-21(J). For specific questions on this subject, please contact the Planning & Zoning Department at (603) 472-5243 or planning@bedfordnh.org.

PLANNING/ZONING REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

- 1. Accessory to primary residential use and smaller than 1,000 square feet**
The ADU must be “clearly incidental” to the primary use of the property as a single dwelling and shall not have a gross floor area greater than 50% of the single dwelling or greater than 1,000 SF, whichever is less.
- 2. Detached ADUs permitted within the RA District with a Conditional Use Permit**
Detached ADUs are permitted in the Residential & Agricultural (RA) District and require approval of a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Board. See Attached ADU Fact Sheet for separate requirements related to an ADU proposed to be within or attached to the single dwelling structure.
- 3. Adequate septic capacity required**
A septic system design/capacity plan shall be approved by the NH Department of Environmental Services for homes reliant on septic systems.
- 4. Minimum lot sizing**
The combination of the principle single dwelling and the detached ADU shall comply with the minimum lot sizing for the RA District, in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.



- 5. One parking space required, no new driveway curb cut**
One parking space must be provided for the accessory apartment, including space within the existing driveway, and no new driveway curb cuts shall be constructed.
- 6. Ownership**
The ADU or lot shall not be converted to a condominium or any other form of legal ownership distinct from the ownership of the single dwelling.
- 7. Located in the side or rear yard and up to two bedrooms**
The ADU shall have no more than two bedrooms and shall be located in the side or rear yard.
- 8. Compatible exterior design required**
Exterior design of the detached ADU shall be compatible with the existing single dwelling through use of similar construction materials, architectural design and scale.
- 9. Do not market the apartment for short-term rentals**
Although the Town does not generally regulate the duration of rentals, Bedford does not permit short-term rentals, defined as the rental of residential units, or portions thereof, for less than 30 consecutive days. This includes the rental of the apartment for stays via popular internet sites like AirBnb, VRBO, and others. The ADU or primary dwelling may be owner-occupied or rented and rentals should be a minimum of a month-to-month basis.
- 10. Secure a building permit**
Although this fact sheet covers Planning & Zoning requirements related to ADUs, there are several building, health and safety measures that must be addressed relating to the apartment. Prior to applying for a building permit, contact the Building Department for more information at (603) 472-3838. ADUs constructed without the benefit of a building permit are not recognized by the Town and may impact future sales of the property.
- 11. Pay Impact Fees to the Town**
Before the Building Department can issue a Certificate of Occupancy and the ADU can be occupied, impact fees must be paid to the Town. The current fees are \$640 for the School Impact Fee and \$519 for the Recreation Impact Fee for a total of \$1,159.

Contact us!

The Planning Department is available to answer any questions regarding Accessory Dwelling Units you may have. The Department can be reached at **(603) 472-5243** and is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Building Department will issue building permits for ADUs and is available to answer questions related to permitting and interior requirements at **(603) 472-3833** or at safety@bedfordnh.org.