



Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division

800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • 805 654-2488 • <http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning>

Second Dwelling Units

WHAT ARE SECOND DWELLING UNITS?

The County Zoning Ordinance defines a second dwelling unit as an accessory structure that is intended for human habitation, which may be attached to, or detached from, the principal dwelling with no means of internal access to the principal residence. A second dwelling unit is typically a fully independent residence and may include bathing facilities and/or a kitchen.

WHAT ARE THE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

To be eligible for a second dwelling unit, a parcel must be at least 10,000 square feet in size. The maximum number of bedrooms and the size of the second dwelling unit are determined by zoning, parcel size and location. Staff at the Planning Division information counter can provide information pertaining to a parcel's zone, minimum lot size requirements, and location.

In general, parcels over 10,000 square feet in size that meet all other requirements may have a second dwelling unit that is a maximum of 900 square feet in size and no more than two bedrooms. Parcels that are 5 acres in size or more may have a second dwelling unit of up to 1,200 square feet in size and no more than three bedrooms. On parcels that are 40 acres or more, a second unit up 1,800 square feet in size and four bedrooms is allowed.

Second dwelling units located in the **Ojai Traffic Impact Area** are limited to 700 square feet in size, while parcels in the **Arroyo Santa Rosa/Tierra Rejada Groundwater Quality Impact Area** are required to meet a specified parcel size requirement if the septic system for the unit is located within the impact area. Refer to Section 8107-1.7 of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance for the specific standards that apply in these areas.

The second dwelling unit must meet all setback, height, lot coverage and parking requirements. Only one detached, habitable structure with a full/half bath or a wet bar will be allowed on a parcel in addition to the principal dwelling unit. Therefore, a second dwelling will not be allowed if an existing structure meets these criteria.

WHAT ZONING DISTRICTS ALLOW SECOND DWELLING UNITS?

Second dwelling units are allowed, subject to specific development standards, in all residential, rural, open space, timberland preserve, and agricultural zones.

WHAT PLANNING PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

Second dwelling units not located in the coastal area of the unincorporated County require the issuance of a Zoning Clearance that is issued at the Planning Division information counter at the County Government Center. Second dwelling units located in the coastal area require the issuance of a Coastal Planned Development Permit by the Planning Director, following environmental review and notification to neighbors. To obtain the necessary application materials and information about the approval process and fees for coastal second dwelling units, please contact the Planning Division at 805/654-2488.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

The applicant for a second dwelling unit must be the owner and occupant of the principal residence on the site. The owner of the property must provide a signed affidavit, provided by the Planning Division, stating that the owner is a resident of the principal residence. If an agent other than the owner submits the affidavit, the signature is required to be notarized.

WHAT ARE THE PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

One on-site parking space 9 feet by 20 feet in size, covered or uncovered, must be provided for any second dwelling unit up to 700 square feet in size.

If the second dwelling unit is more than 700 square feet, two on-site parking spaces must be provided (in addition to the parking provided for the main residence). See Section 8107-1.7(e) of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance for additional parking standards.

MAY A MANUFACTURED OR MOBILE HOME BE USED AS A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

Any mobile or manufactured home meeting the requirements of Section 8107-1.3 of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance may be used as a second dwelling unit. This section contains requirements including the date of construction of the manufactured or mobile home (generally, it must be built after June 14, 1976), the foundation system, and exterior siding.

WHAT ARE THE WATER AND SEWER REQUIREMENTS FOR SECOND DWELLING UNITS?

If a public water or sewer purveyor serves the existing principal dwelling, the second dwelling unit must utilize the same system. In such cases, the water and sewer purveyors must sign a water/sewer certificate stating that they have entered into a binding agreement with the property owner to serve the second dwelling unit and, for water purveyors, that the water system complies with State and County standards.

County Planning and Building and Safety permits cannot be issued if it is known that the water supply or sewer system capacity is inadequate. If an individual water well or septic system is used, the Building and Safety and Environmental Health Divisions must be contacted for their requirements.

WHAT IF MY EXISTING RESIDENCE IS A SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

You may be allowed to build a new main residence on your property and retain the second dwelling unit, provided the main residence meets the second unit standards and that you obtain a Zoning Clearance first.

WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR REPLACING AN EXISTING SECOND DWELLING UNIT?

An existing second dwelling unit may be replaced with a new second dwelling unit upon issuance of a Zoning Clearance and a Demolition Permit, provided all of the setback, height, and lot coverage restrictions which are in effect at the time of replacement can be met.

WHERE CAN I GET A COPY OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE?

The entire Zoning Ordinance, including the portions applicable to second dwelling units, is available for review on the Planning Division website or at the Planning Division information counter.

This pamphlet is a general discussion of commonly asked questions regarding the ordinance. It is intended for public convenience only. Anyone having specific questions of interpretation should refer to the text of the ordinance or contact the Planning Division information counter.

**For more information, contact:
The Public Information Counter
Ventura County Planning Division
805/654-2488**

Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance Second Dwelling Units

ADOPTED 9/27/83

ORDINANCE 3658

LAST AMENDED 6/28/11

ORDINANCE 4436

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