



## 2023 Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance

Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 20.10.036

### Overview:

On August 7, 2023, the Bellingham City Council voted and approved an ordinance amending the Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) Titles 20 and 21 to improve Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) standards, permitting process, affordability, and consistency with state legislation.

ADUs are seen as a valuable component in achieving the City's infill housing goals. There are a range of benefits to enabling ADU development in Bellingham including increasing housing choice and affordability as well as providing an opportunity for homeowners to earn additional income and/or age in place.

*The updated ADU ordinance will go into effect on August 22, 2023.*

### ADU Updates at a Glance:

- ADU review is streamlined to a Type I permit process, a Type II process (public comment) is required if a modification is proposed;
- Allows up to two ADUs per lot in any configuration of attached or detached;
- Each ADU can be up to 1,000 sf;
- Detached ADUs can be up to 24ft in height;
- Allows condo ownership of the primary residence and ADU(s);
- Owner occupancy is only required in residential single zones; and
- On-site parking for ADUs is not required if:
  - Improved public street parking is available on at least one side of the block,
  - On-street parking is constructed, or
  - The ADU is within one-half mile walking distance to a major transit route.

### Need More Information?

To discuss feasibility of your project, please visit the Permit Center to consult with a Planner.

#### Permit Center

210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: (360) 778-8300 Fax: (360) 778-8301 TTY: 711 (WA Relay)

Email: [permits@cob.org](mailto:permits@cob.org) Web: [www.cob.org/permits](http://www.cob.org/permits)

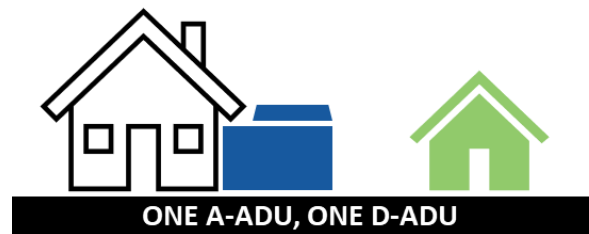


### Possible ADU Configurations with Primary Dwelling Unit:

- Two attached accessory dwelling units (A-ADUs);
- One A-ADU and one detached accessory dwelling unit (D-ADU); or
- Two D-ADUs, which may be comprised of either one or two detached structures.



*One A-ADU shown as a converted attic, and the second A-ADU shown as a converted basement. Three attached dwelling units may require design as R-2 dwelling units under the provision of the IBC.*



*One A-ADU shown as an addition to the primary residence and one D-ADU.*



*Two D-ADUs shown attached to each other as a two-story building.*



*Two D-ADUs shown as separate detached structures.*



*Two D-ADUs shown attached to each other side-by-side.*

**Disclaimer:** Diagrams shown above are visual examples of possible ADU configurations. Many configurations are possible. Different building codes may be applicable (IBC vs IRC) depending on the design and configuration. Please consult with the Permit Center to discuss the feasibility of your project.