

# The ADU Process

We are here to help you through your ADU building process. Please contact the Community Development Department at (707) 665-3636 or visit our website ([cotaticity.org](http://cotaticity.org)) for more information.



## 1 Think about what you want

Visit [Napa Sonoma ADU](#) to look at floorplans, hear from neighbors on what they built and look at photos for inspiration. You can also learn about city rules, use the [Address Look-Up Tool](#) to find out what you are eligible to build and estimate costs or rents using the [ADU Calculator](#).



## 2 Talk to a Professional

Get a free [ADU Feasibility Consult](#) or contact the Community Development Department at (707) 665-3636 to find out in advance about any special issues with your property.



## 3 Make a Sketch

Make a sketch of your property, including existing home, any other structures and proposed ADU. Use the exercises on [Napa Sonoma ADU](#) to complete.



## 6 Prepare Application Package

Call or email to schedule a pre-application review. Submit your [Building Permit Application](#) and any other materials the City requires.

- [Permit Submittal Checklist](#)
- [Building Permit Process](#)
- [Other Useful Resources](#)



## 5 Hire Experienced Professionals

Although you can build an ADU as an owner builder, we recommend hiring a licensed architect or designer to design your ADU and a licensed builder to construct it, or a design/build team for the entire process. Whoever you hire will help with the application process. Look at the [free ADU Workbook](#) for more information on this step and the entire process.



## 4 Get a Planner's Advice

Now that you have a better idea of what you want to build, bring your sketch in. A planner will advise you on what rules might apply to your proposed ADU and what to consider.

- Call (707) 665-3636



## 7 Submit Application and Pay

Fees depend on the ADU size and valuation. Pay by phone or at the counter by cash, check, or credit card. Your application then goes to all departments and the Rancho Adobe Fire District as needed for review and comment. Reviews are usually complete within 10-15 business days.



## 8 Get Permit Issued

You'll receive a plan check letter if changes are needed. Resubmittals will be reviewed within 10 business days. Once your application is approved and fees are paid, you can collect your building permit.



## 9 Construct ADU

Check-in regularly with your builders or design/build team and make decisions about materials as needed. Timelines for construction vary, but 12-18 months is fairly common.



## MOVE-IN!



## 10 Schedule and Pass Inspections

Your builder will schedule inspections by calling (707) 665-3632. Once your ADU has passed the final inspection, your ADU is ready for move-in!





## Interested in building an ADU? Here are some important things to keep in mind.

### The Difference Between ADUs and JADUs

Junior ADUs (JADUs) are located within the existing footprint of a home, including an attached garage, and are no more than 500 square feet, while ADUs can be attached or detached and up to 1200 square feet depending on the size of the property. Both need to have their own entryways, bathrooms, and kitchen areas – JADUs can have efficiency kitchens though – and both can be rented for 30 days or more if a business license is obtained by the property owners.

### Legalize Your Existing ADU

If you constructed an ADU without getting a building permit, you may want to consider legalizing it. Doing so can reduce liability and risks to occupants, increase property value and provide peace of mind. Call (707) 665-3636 or to learn more. There is no fine or penalty for legalizing an existing ADU and no enforcement penalties will result from reaching out for more information.

### Utilities and Special Circumstances

In addition to applying for a building permit, you may also need to meet requirements with other agencies or departments, depending on your property and its location.



- **Water and Sewer Utilities:** New or separate utility connections for an ADU are not permitted. ADUs must use existing utility service laterals. Call [Public Works](#) at (707) 665-3638 for more information.
- **Fire Safety:** Fire sprinklers are not required for an ADU if sprinklers are not required for the primary residence, however installation is strongly encouraged.
- **School Fees:** Required for ADUs that are more than 750 square feet.
- **Soils Report:** May be required if the ADU will be constructed on a hillside or has known fills, slides, or soil creeps. Contact the Building Department at (707) 665-3636 for more information