



**City of Walnut Creek**  
**Development Review Services**  
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*Revised March 12, 2019*

*Information Bulletin No. IB-003*

***Building permit submittal requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units***

**General Design Requirements**

Obtain specific zoning and planning requirements by calling (925) 256-3558 or email [dutyplanner@walnut-creek.org](mailto:dutyplanner@walnut-creek.org) for the planner on duty.

Fire sprinkler will not be required for an Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) unless the main residence has a fire sprinkler system.

**What building division plan reviewers will look for on submitted plans**

**Separation between units**

When an ADU is attached to the main residence Residential code Section R302.3 Two-family dwellings requires the dwelling units in a two-family dwelling to be separated from each other by wall and floor assemblies having not less than a 1-hour fire-resistance rating. The code Section states that "fire-resistance rated ... wall assemblies shall extend from the foundation to the underside of the roof sheathing."

- A continuous foundation may be provided under the 1-hour fire-resistance rated wall to meet this extent requirement.
- Alternately a California licensed architect or engineer could use CBC for the code compliance: building code Section 420 requires a fire partition between adjacent dwelling units. Exception 1 to section 708.4 of 2016 CBC, permits omission of a continuous foundation under the fire partition as long as the continuous foundation is not required by structural design and the entire floor assembly above crawl space has minimum 1-hour fire rating.

**Air-Borne Sound**

Wall and floor-ceiling assemblies separating dwelling units shall provide air-borne sound insulation for walls, and both air-borne and impact sound insulation for floor-ceiling assemblies. The air-borne sound insulation for wall and floor-ceiling assemblies shall meet a sound transmission class (STC) rating of 45 when tested in accordance with ASTM E90.

Floor/Ceiling assemblies between dwelling units shall have an impact insulation class (IIC) rating of not less than 45 when tested in accordance with ASTM E492.

**Electrical System**

ADU occupants must have ready access to the electrical panel with over-current devices that serve the ADU. The ADU occupants must also have ready access to service the overcurrent devices.

**Heating System**

If the house has a ducted system, the ADU shall have a separate heating system (and air conditioning system, if provided). Occupants shall have direct access to their heating system for service and repair.

**Smoke Alarms and CO detectors**

The primary dwelling unit and the ADU shall be equipped with smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors per Chapter 3 of the California Residential Code.

Minimum widths, heights and dimensions less than the current California Residential Code allows may be continued in use provided the plans show how the stairway met the building code enforced at the time the house was built. Otherwise follow the requirements in the current California Residential Code:

- Habitable spaces and hallways shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet. Bathrooms, toilet rooms and laundry rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than 6 feet 8 inches. See the residential code for exceptions for rooms with sloped ceilings, height above bathroom and toilet fixtures and at beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions.
- Hallways shall be at least 3 feet wide. Habitable rooms except kitchens shall have a floor area of not less than 7 feet in any horizontal dimension and not less than 70 square feet in area.

- New stairs added to an existing building must meet current provisions for rise, run and headroom in the current California Residential Code.
- Basements or sleeping rooms must have a door or a window opening for emergency escape and rescue to comply with Chapter 3 of the California Residential Code. The window sill height must be 44 inches or less above the floor.
- Each dwelling unit must have not less than one egress door. The egress door shall be side-hinged, and shall provide a clear width of not less than 32-inches. The clear height of the door opening shall not be less than 78 inches.

#### Natural Light and Ventilation

Every habitable room shall have at least one window facing directly to the outside except where an approved ventilation device is provided. The openable window area in every habitable room shall meet the requirements of Chapter 3 of the California Residential Code.

#### Energy

Specify insulation at ceiling, floor or exterior walls to the current California Energy Code standards.  
New windows or doors must meet current California Energy Code requirements for energy conservation.

#### Utility Connections

##### Water

Applicant contact the Water Purveyor to review to see if a single service can be used. They will also determine if an existing service will need to be up-sized.

##### Sanitary Sewer

Applicant contact the sanitary utility to determine whether applicants have the option of connecting the ADU to the existing sanitary sewer system connection or of requiring a separate connection for the ADU. If a separate connection is made, the sanitary district will require a permit and connection fees.

##### Gas and Electricity

Applicant contact the serving utility to determine whether applicants have the option of connecting the ADU to the existing system connection or of requiring a separate connection for the ADU.

#### Other

##### Addresses

The City's Planning Division will issue an address for the newly created ADU, (following approval of a final site visit for the building permit) using the main dwelling unit and street address with the letter "A" to designate the separate unit.

##### "Illegal" Accessory Units

Property owners may use the procedures and standards of this guide to legalize existing ADUs that were constructed without a building permit.

##### County Assessment and Taxation

Property taxes are not assessed or collected by the City of Walnut Creek. Applicants consult the county assessor's office to determine how property taxes may be affected by the addition of an ADU to the property.

#### **Drawings (Submit 4 sets of drawings and two sets of all other documents)**

1. Plot Plan/Title Sheet
  - a. Identification of the address and owner of the property
  - b. Proposed second unit building footprint and projections
  - c. All existing buildings and accessory building footprints
  - d. All trees and their associated drip lines, including trees from adjacent property which have drip lines onto the subject property
  - e. Location and layout of any private sewer disposal system, including septic tank and leach field routing.
  - f. Location of any potable water wells.
  - g. Property lines defining the parcel
  - h. Set Backs
  - i. North arrow
  - j. All Easements
  - k. Project Data Block which provides the allowable area calculations per zoning.
2. Architectural Plans
  - a. Floor Plan showing existing residence and proposed second unit residence

- b. Roof Plan
  - c. Exterior Elevations
  - d. Interior cross sections through the building. Include a minimum of two orthogonal cross sections through addition.
  - e. Accurate slopes of grade shall be shown on all elevations and building cross sections in the plans.
3. Structural Plans
- a. Foundation Plan (include size and spacing of existing anchor bolts and provide details of existing cripple wall bracing)
  - b. Floor Framing Plan
  - c. Roof/Ceiling Framing Plan
  - d. Cross-Sections. A minimum of two cross sections must be provided. One must be through both the addition and the existing to clarify the way in which the addition will be supported by the existing portion of the building.
  - e. Foundation, floor, roof, and ceiling framing details
  - f. Lateral Force Resisting System – Provide complete detailing of shearwalls: Specify locations and lengths on plans. Provide sections or details of shearwall attachments at roof, floor, and foundation locations. Specify sheathing and nailing requirements. Shearwalls shall be designed by a licensed civil or structural engineer or architect in the State of California. Alternatively, conventional light-frame construction may utilize braced wall lines to resist lateral forces. Design shall conform to California Building Code or California Residential Code provisions. Indicate locations of interior and exterior braced wall panel locations and provide panel construction detailing.
4. H.V.A.C. (Schematic)
- a. Forced Air Unit Location
  - b. Supply and Return Air Registers
  - c. Cooling Equipment Location
  - d. Thermostat Locations
5. Electrical Plan (Schematic)
- a. Main electrical meter(s) location(s)
  - b. Service entrance panel(s)
  - c. Sub-panels
  - d. Electrical outlets
  - e. Switches
  - f. Light fixtures
  - g. Smoke detectors (within the new second unit and within the existing single family residence)
  - h. Carbon Monoxide detectors (within the new second unit and within the existing single family residence)
6. Plumbing plan (Schematic)
- a. Sewer main
  - b. Laterals and the point of connection to the sewer main
  - c. Lateral cleanouts
  - d. Fixtures
  - e. Cleanout locations
  - f. Pipe Sizes

### **Calculations**

1. Title 24 Energy Calculations
  - a. Submit complete point system or computer run input and output documents if these methods are used.
  - b. Furnace sizing calculations for new equipment.
  - c. Print Certificate of Compliance forms on drawings and ensure all required signatures are provided.
2. Structural Calculations
  - a. Framing
  - b. Foundation
  - c. Lateral (wind and seismic)
3. Manufactured Trusses
  - a. Calculations
  - b. Configurations
  - c. Location Plan

### **Foundation/Soils Report**

A foundation/soils report will be required when any of the following conditions apply:

- The site slopes exceed 1V:3H per CBC provisions.
- The engineer or architect incorporates allowable design values higher than that associated with the allowable design values corresponding to Class of Materials Item 5 of CBC Table 1806.2.
- The site has a history of soil related problems (e.g., creep, settlement, lateral spreading, etc.).

**Waste Management Program**

A Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling Plan may be required. Please see the City of Walnut Creek website for applicable projects and additional information: [http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/building/waste\\_management.asp](http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/building/waste_management.asp)

If applicable, a completed Waste Management Plan must be submitted and approved by the City before permit issuance. A final waste management report is required prior to final of a permit.

**Codes**

Refer to the City of Walnut Creek's Building Division website for the current codes: [http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/comm\\_dev/building\\_div/current\\_building\\_codes.asp](http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/comm_dev/building_div/current_building_codes.asp)