

Residential Accessory Bldg



What is an Accessory Building?

An accessory building (or structure) is a detached garage, a barn, a shed, a workshop or something similar. There has to be a 'primary' building on the property, meaning an existing house. An accessory building is a second structure on the property. If someone will be living in the structure, it would be considered an 'accessory dwelling unit,' which requires additional regulations.

How Big Can It Be?

An accessory building can be no larger than **1,200 square feet** if your total lot size is 11,000 square feet or less. On a lot over 11,000 square foot, the structure may be increased an additional 100 square feet for each 1,000 square feet of lot size. That includes the enclosed area **and** roof covered open space areas but does not include roof overhangs less than 30 inches. The height limit is 25 feet measured from the midpoint of the roof. Farm accessory buildings in the Rural Zone on lots over 2.5 acres are exempt from the maximum size limit.

Are There Any Design Requirements?

Yes. On a lot less than 2.5 acres the exterior siding needs to be the same general material and color as the main house if the accessory building is over 200 square feet. Shipping containers cannot be used as accessory structures. Metal pole barns are **not** permitted because the siding cannot match the house.

What Kind of Permit Do I Need?

Anything under 200 square feet does not require a building permit or any approvals from the City. It does still need to respect setbacks. For anything over 200 square feet, you only need a building permit, which is processed by the City and Linn County. You will need a site plan and elevations. The site plan and other requirements are outlined the in the Permit Application and can be found on the City website.

Can I get a Variance?

Possibly, but usually not. A variance can be used when there is something limiting on the property, like a stream, or a hill that prevents you from being able to use the site. It's not a tool that lets someone ask for a larger structure. If you think there is something limiting on your property, contact City staff to discuss.

What Are the Setbacks?

The setbacks* specific to an accessory structure are:

Front	25' for a garage, 15' to a structure	
Rear/Side	One story structure	5 feet'
	Two story structure	8 feet'
From the House	6'	

* These apply to buildings under 200 square feet too.

What about lot coverage?

Your house is probably in the RL zone. That zone has a lot coverage maximum of 50%. What does that mean? It means that no more than 50% of your property can be covered with any improvements that prevent water from seeping into the ground. Driveways, homes, patio covers, RV pads, usually even gravel areas are impervious. You need to add all that up and include that on your site plan for the building permit, so we know you are under 50%. If you are over, we cannot approve the project.

Sample Lot Coverage Breakdown

<p>House 2,000 sf + Drive 1,500 sf + Rv Pad 1,000 sf + Proposed Shed 700 sf</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>=Total of 5,200 sf</p> <p>Subtract from the 10,000 sf lot size</p> <p>In this example the shed is OVER the 50% lot coverage</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Property Lines</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposed Shop</p>
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What Code Sections Does This Come From?

Chapter 3.15 is the Residential Accessory Section. This section explains what you can and cannot do in an accessory building. This section also explains that you are not limited to only one accessory structure on your property, but total cumulative square footage of all structures cannot exceed the maximum allowed (usually, 1,200 sq. ft.).

What Can I Do in an Accessory Building?

You cannot use it for dwelling purposes; that would be an accessory dwelling unit. You also cannot do sales from the building unless it has been approved for a home occupation.



**UNDER 200
Square Feet?**

No permit
required!

**OVER 200
Square Feet?**

Building permit
required!

