



BUILDING A DADU ON YOUR PROPERTY

A Homeowner's Guide to Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

Waltier Homes

- Custom Homes
- DADUs
- Remodels

Edmonds DADU Walkthrough

- Edmonds,
Washington

Zach Waltier

- Owner / Builder

What Is a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU)?

A Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) is a secondary residential home built on the same lot as a primary house. Unlike an attached ADU that shares walls with the main home, a DADU is a completely separate structure typically located in the backyard of a residential property.

DADUs function as fully independent homes with their own living space, kitchen, and bathroom. Many cities throughout the Puget Sound region allow DADUs on residential lots to help increase housing options while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.



Typical Size of a DADU

Most cities place a maximum size limit on detached accessory dwelling units. In many Puget Sound jurisdictions, the maximum size is typically around 1,000 square feet, though specific regulations can vary depending on zoning and property characteristics.

Most DADUs are designed between approximately 450 and 1,200 square feet, which allows space for a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and living area within a compact footprint.

What Typically Does NOT Count Toward DADU Square Footage

- **Garages attached to the DADU**
- **Exterior decks or patios**
- **Covered porches or entry areas**
- **Outdoor stairs or exterior circulation areas**

Because these areas are often excluded from interior floor area calculations, homeowners can incorporate garages, covered outdoor spaces, or decks without impacting the allowable interior size of the DADU.

Placement on the Property

DADUs are typically built in the rear portion of a residential lot behind the primary home. The exact location depends on zoning requirements such as setbacks from property lines, lot coverage limits, tree protection rules, and access to utilities.



Why Homeowners Build DADUs

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units have become increasingly popular across the Puget Sound region because they provide additional housing, flexibility, and long-term financial value for homeowners.

Rental Income Potential

Many homeowners build DADUs to generate long-term rental income. Depending on the size, location, and finishes, DADUs in the Edmonds and Seattle area can often rent for approximately \$2,000 to \$4,000 or more per month.

- **Offset mortgage payments**
- **Create additional monthly income**
- **Build long-term financial security**

Opportunity to Sell the DADU

DADUs may be legally separated and sold as independent homes through condominiumization or evolving housing policies. This can allow homeowners to unlock additional value from their property.

- **Sell the DADU as its own property**
- **Create equity from underutilized backyard space**
- **Maximize the financial potential of the lot**

Housing for Family

Many homeowners build DADUs to create housing for family members while maintaining privacy between the main house and the additional dwelling.

- **Aging parents**
- **Adult children**
- **Extended family**
- **Long-term guests**

Increased Property Value

Adding a DADU can increase the overall value and appeal of a property by providing rental potential and flexible housing options for future buyers.

Can My Property Fit a DADU?

Many residential properties in the Edmonds and Seattle area may be able to support a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit. However, each property is unique and feasibility depends on several zoning and site factors.

Lot Size & Zoning

Local zoning regulations determine whether a property is eligible for a DADU. Many residential zones now allow DADUs, but requirements can vary depending on zoning designation, lot size, and existing structures.

Setbacks

DADUs must typically meet setback requirements, which are minimum distances from property lines and other structures on the lot.

- **Rear yard setback**
- **Side yard setbacks**
- **Separation from the primary residence**

Utilities

DADUs must be connected to essential utilities including water, sewer, and electrical service. In some situations, additional utility work may be required depending on the existing infrastructure.

Tree Protection

Many cities in the Puget Sound region have tree protection regulations that may affect where a DADU can be located on a property.

Site Conditions

Site characteristics can also influence feasibility. Important factors often include slope, drainage, construction access, and the placement of existing structures on the property.

The Best Way to Know

Because every property is different, the most effective way to determine whether a DADU is feasible is through a property feasibility review. Waltier Homes can help evaluate zoning, site conditions, and potential layout options for your property.



Typical Timeline to Build a DADU

Many residential properties in the Edmonds and Seattle area may be able to support a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit. However, each property is unique and feasibility depends on several zoning and site factors.

1. Feasibility Review (1–3 Weeks)

The first step is determining whether a property can support a DADU. This includes reviewing zoning rules, site conditions, utilities, and potential building placement.

- **Zoning and development regulations**
- **Site layout and lot conditions**
- **Utilities and access**
- **Initial project feasibility**

2. Design & Planning (1–3 Months)

Once feasibility is confirmed, the design process begins. Architectural drawings and engineering are developed to prepare for permit submission.

- **Architectural design**
- **Site planning**
- **Engineering coordination**
- **Construction budgeting**

3. Permitting (3–6 Months)

Completed plans are submitted to the city for review. The city evaluates building plans, structural engineering, and zoning compliance before issuing permits.

- **Plan review by city departments**
- **Corrections and revisions if required**
- **Permit approval**
- **Initial project feasibility**

4. Construction (5–7 Months)

After permits are approved, construction begins. The building process includes site preparation, foundation work, framing, mechanical systems, interior finishes, and final inspections.

- **Site preparation and foundation**
- **Framing and exterior work**
- **Electrical, plumbing,**
- **Interior finishes and inspections**



Typical Cost to Build a DADU

Costs for building a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit vary depending on size, site conditions, design complexity, and finish level. While every project is unique, most DADUs in the Seattle and Edmonds area generally fall within the following ranges.

DADU Type	Typical Size	Estimated Cost Range
Smaller DADU	450 - 800 sq ft	\$275,000 - \$350,000
Larger / Complex	800-1,200+ sq ft	\$350,000 - \$450,000



What Is Typically Included

- Site preparation and foundation
- Framing, roofing, siding, and windows
- Plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems
- Insulation and drywall
- Cabinets, flooring, fixtures, and interior finishes
- Final inspections and project completion

What Can Increase Cost

- Steep or sloped lots
- Difficult construction access
- Utility upgrades or long utility runs
- Higher-end interior finishes

Note: Every property and project is unique. Final costs depend on design decisions, site conditions, and permitting requirements



The Waltier Homes Process

Waltier Homes guides homeowners through every stage of the DADU building process—from early feasibility to final construction. Our goal is to make the process clear, organized, and efficient while helping homeowners make informed decisions along the way.

1 Property Feasibility Review

- Review zoning regulations and development standards
- Evaluate site conditions and lot layout
- Discuss possible DADU placement and size
- Provide initial cost guidance

3 Permitting

- Submit plans to the city for review
- Coordinate revisions if required
- Work through permit approvals
- Prepare project for construction

5 Project Completion

- Final inspections and approvals
- Project walkthrough with homeowner
- Delivery of closeout documents and warranty information
- Ready for occupancy or rental

2 Design & Planning

- Coordinate engineering and architectural design
- Develop site plan and building layout
- Work through engineering requirements
- Refine project scope and budget

4 Construction

- Site preparation and foundation
- Framing and exterior construction
- Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing
- Interior finishes and final inspections

Interested in Building a DADU?

Waltier Homes helps homeowners evaluate their properties, understand zoning opportunities, and navigate the entire design and construction process for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units.

Schedule a Property Feasibility Review & Proforma

A property feasibility review is the best way to determine what may be possible on your lot. This review typically includes zoning research, site considerations, potential placement options, and early project guidance. Our in-house realtor will run a CMA on the property and explore investment opportunities with you.

Waltier Homes

Zach Waltier – Owner

Phone: 206-437-2273

Seattle / Edmonds / Puget Sound Region

For questions about your property or to discuss a potential DADU project, feel free to reach out. Waltier Homes would be happy to review your property and discuss the possibilities.



Example DADU Project

This example illustrates what a typical Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit project may look like in the Seattle and Edmonds area. While every project is unique, many DADUs follow a similar size and layout.



Cedar Cottage

Location	West Seattle
Type	Detached Backyard Cottage (no garage)
Size	~460 Sq Ft
Bedrooms	1
Bathrooms	1
Estimated Construction Cost	\$330k
Very HIGH Efficiency Unit	

Potential Rental Value

Many DADUs of this size in the Seattle region may rent for approximately \$2,800 to \$4,000+ per month depending on location, finishes, and amenities.

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Sunset Hill

Location	Sunset Hill
Type	Detached Side Yard (Corner Lot - Garage)
Size	~1,000 Sq Ft
Bedrooms	3
Bathrooms	2
Estimated Construction Cost	\$420k

GREAT Layout - Pre Approved DADU Plan My Opinion the Most Value Layout for Return

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Phinney Ridge

Location	Phinney Ridge
Type	Alley Access DADU
Size	~1,000 Sq Ft
Bedrooms	3
Bathrooms	2-1/4
Estimated Construction Cost	\$410k
GREAT Layout - Pre Approved DADU Plan	

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