

FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS

Expanding Housing Options in Unincorporated Clackamas County: Using an RV as a Second Dwelling

Effective **September 3, 2024**, the use of a **recreational vehicle (RV)** as a second dwelling is allowed on some residential properties.

Why did the county change the rules to allow RVs to be used as second dwellings?

The Oregon Legislature passed a law in 2023, Senate Bill (SB) 1013, that gave counties the option of allowing RVs as second dwellings on certain properties. In light of the pressing need for additional housing, the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners chose to take advantage of this opportunity.

Did the county change my zoning?

No. The new regulations did not change anyone's zoning designation; they simply added another housing option in certain existing zones.

What is the definition of an RV?

An RV is a titled vehicle, with or without motive power, that is designed for human occupancy, has a total floor area of 400 square feet or less when it is set up, and has not been rendered structurally immobile. RVs include, but are not limited to, park trailers, travel trailers, pick-up campers, motor homes, fifth wheel trailers, and camping and tent trailers.



Where can RVs be permitted as a second dwelling?

Only in certain residential zones in unincorporated Clackamas County (outside city limits):

Urban low density residential zones:

R-5 through R-30, VR-4/5, and VR-5/7

Other single-family residential zones **unless** the property is in an urban reserve or within the urban growth boundaries of Barlow, Canby, Estacada, Molalla or Sandy:

RA-1, RA-2, RRF-5, FF-10, RR, FU-10, HR, and MRR



Can the RV be parked on the street?

No. The RV must be on private property, with permitted water, wastewater, and electrical connections. Living in an RV parked in the right-of-way is still **not allowed** in the county.



How do I check my zoning to see if my property would qualify?

Go to cmap.clackamas.us, search by your address, then click on the Zoning & Development tab. For help, call Planning and Zoning at (503) 742-4500 or email zoninginfo@clackamas.us.

What are the requirements for using RVs as second dwellings in these areas?

The property:

- Must contain a single-family dwelling that is occupied as the property owner's primary residence. No portion of the single-family dwelling can be rented for residential tenancy.
- Cannot have any other dwelling units or a guest house.

The RV:

- Cannot be used as a short-term rental.
- Cannot be located in 100-year floodplain and floodway areas.
- Must comply with the same setbacks that apply to the primary dwelling.
- Must be at least 10 feet and no more than 100 feet from the primary dwelling.
- Must have a working toilet and sink.
- Must be connected to an onsite wastewater system or public sewer; public water service or well; and electricity. **Permits must be obtained for these connections.**

The property owner:

- Must provide a rental agreement between the property owner(s) and the resident(s) of the RV.
- Must receive land use approval before moving an RV onto the property for use as a dwelling.

You can find the specific requirements in **Section 847** the county's [Zoning & Development Ordinance \(ZDO\)](#).

How do I get approval to use an RV as a second dwelling?

1. **Understand the rules:** Does your zoning district allow for RVs to be used as second dwellings? Can you meet the requirements in ZDO Section 847? Contact Planning and Zoning at 503-742-4500 or zoninginfo@clackamas.us to find out whether any overlays, protected areas, or other special circumstances will affect your ability to use an RV as a second dwelling.
2. **Apply for land use approval:** Complete the [Recreational Vehicle as a Second Dwelling application form](#). Submit the application and payment to Planning and Zoning in person at the Development Services Building or by email at zoninginfo@clackamas.us. It may take up to 6 weeks for staff to issue a decision once an application is deemed complete.
3. **Get permits:** After you receive land use approval, you must obtain permits for connecting the RV to electricity, potable water, and either public sewer or an on-site wastewater system. You may also need a permitted stormwater drainage connection.

How much will the permit(s) cost?

The land use application fee is **\$480**. Permit costs for utility connections are determined by whichever department or agency issues the permits. Please contact your provider for actual costs specific to your property:

Sewage disposal: Contact your sewer service provider, or the County's Septic and Onsite Wastewater Program (503-742-4740; septicinfo@clackamas.us).

Water: Contact your water service provider, or the State Water Resources Dept, if on a well (503-986-0900).

System Development Charges (SDCs) for impacts to the transportation system and/or parks: Transportation Engineering (503-742-4691; engineering@clackamas.us).

For more information, visit the Planning and Zoning project web page:

[ADUs and RVs as options for secondary dwellings | Clackamas County](#)