



RESIDENTIAL ZONING STANDARDS

INFORMATIONAL PACKET

QUESTIONS?

Additional information regarding the planning process can be obtained at the Planning Counter at 630 Garden Street (805) 564-5578, PlanningCounter@SantaBarbaraCA.gov



INSTRUCTIONS

This informational guide provides a summary of zoning regulations for residential projects. It is not designed to preclude the use of the Zoning Ordinance. If there are any discrepancies between the information provided in this handout and the Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning Ordinance prevails.

WHAT IS ZONING?

Zoning is the separation of a community into districts, or “zones,” that regulate land uses and the intensity of development. A zoning designation is assigned to every parcel in the city. The city has two zoning codes: **Title 28** covers the Coastal Zone and **Title 30** is used in areas outside the Coastal Zone.

Zoning regulations can be found online in the City’s interactive [Municipal Code](#). Each zoning district has its own Chapter that describes uses allowed and building regulations. For residential zoning, review Chapters [30.20](#) in areas outside the Coastal Zone, and [28.15](#), [28.18](#), and [28.21](#) in the Coastal Zone.

HOW DO I BEGIN?

Your first step is to find out some basic information about your property including if it is in the Coastal Overlay Zone (S-D-3), the lot size, slope, and zoning designation. You may find this information in several ways. Parcel specific information is available 24-hrs a day online through the City’s [Accela Citizen Access \(ACA\) Portal](#). Another way to look up information is through [MAPS](#) (Mapping Analysis & Printing System) a publicly-accessible online mapping application. You may also ask a planner at the Planning Counter during business hours: (805) 564-5578, PlanningCounter@SantaBarbaraCA.gov.

HOW DO I USE THIS TABLE?

Use these tables if you are looking for a quick guide to common development standards for your project (such as setbacks or open yard) or to calculate the maximum number of dwellings permitted on a lot. Note that fractions are to be rounded down to the nearest whole number, except for affordable housing projects under either State Density Bonus or the City's Inclusionary Housing requirements.

TABLE A: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES									
Title 30 Zoning Designations	RS-1A	RS-25	RS-15	RS-10	RS-7.5	RS-6	R-2	R-M	R-MH
Title 28 Zoning Designations	A-1	A-2	E-1	E-2	E-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4
BUILDING HEIGHT									
Main Building	30 ft							45 ft	
Accessory Building	30 ft and 2 stories. See code for additional standards §30.140.020 / §28.87.160								
Solar Access Height	Height also limited by Solar Access Ordinance §30.140.170 / §28.11								
SETBACKS									
Front Setback	35 ft	30 ft	30 ft	25 ft	20 ft	Portions of bldgs. 15 ft in height or less: 15 ft; more than 15 ft: 20 ft Street-facing parking: 20 ft		1 st – 2 nd story: 10 ft 3 rd + story: 20 ft Title 28 only: see code for 3-stories Street-facing parking: 20 ft	
Sloped Lots	See code for setback reduction on slopes more than 20%							N/A	
Interior Setback	15 ft	10 ft	10 ft	8 ft	6 ft	5 ft	6 ft	6 ft Title 28 only: see code for 3-stories	
Rear Setback	15 ft	10 ft	10 ft	8 ft	6 ft	5 ft	6 ft	6 ft Title 28 only: 2 nd – 3 rd story: 10 ft	
Covered Parking – Interior & Rear Setback	Same as above						3 ft	Interior: 6 ft Rear: 3 ft See code on lots < 55 ft wide	
Uncovered Parking – Interior & Rear Setback	Same as covered parking. Uncovered parking must be screened in front yard. See code for setback reductions with a 3 ft landscape buffer								
Accessory Dwelling Units	4 ft interior setback. See code for additional standards §30.185.040 / §28.86								
Encroachments	See §30.140.090 / §28.87.062, for encroachments in setbacks and open yards								
Nonresidential Use	Double the interior setback for nonresidential uses Title 28 only: Double front and interior setbacks for nonresidential uses								

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Title 28 Zoning Designations	A-1	A-2	E-1	E-2	E-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4
BUILDING SEPARATION									
Main Building	0 ft Title 28 only: 20 ft						0 ft Title 28 only: 1-story: 10 ft; 2+story: 15 ft		
Accessory Building	0 ft; except Accessory Dwelling Units: 5 ft Title 28 only: 5 ft								
MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA									
All Floor Area on a Lot – Floor to Lot Area Ratio (FAR)	Applicable only to lots with a building with two or more stories or 17 feet or more in height. FAR is a guideline on lots of 15,000 sq. ft. or more						N/A		
	LOT AREA			MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA					
	Less than 4,000 sq.ft.			2,200 sq.ft.					
	4,000 sq.ft. - 9,999 sq.ft.			1,200 sq.ft. + (0.25 x lot)					
	10,000 sq.ft. - 14,999 sq.ft.			2,500 sq.ft. + (.125 x lot)					
	15,000 sq.ft. - 19,999 sq.ft.			4,180 sq.ft. + (.013 x lot)					
	> 20,000 sq.ft.			4,430 sq.ft. + (.013 x lot)					
	Precluded Development: 1. If sq.ft. exceeds 100% of Max Floor Area; or 2. If sq.ft. exceeds 85% of Max Floor Area, and: a. Slope is 30% or more, or b. Height is more than 25 ft., or c. Grading >500 c.y. in Hillside Design District								
Accessory Buildings	Title 28 – Covered Parking: 500 sq.ft., except A-1, A-2, and lots > 20,000 sq.ft.: 750 sq.ft. Accessory Building: 500 sq.ft. Title 30 – Maximum cumulative total covered parking and accessory buildings on a lot is limited per the table below. Includes Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)								
	LOT AREA					MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA			
	Less than 5,000 sq.ft.					1,000 sq.ft.			
	5,000 sq.ft. - 9,999 sq.ft.					1,300 sq.ft.			
	10,000 sq.ft. - 14,999 sq.ft.					1,500 sq.ft.			
	15,000 sq.ft. - 19,999 sq.ft.					1,750 sq.ft.			
	> 20,000 sq.ft.					1,950 sq.ft.			
MINIMUM UNIT SIZE									
Minimum Unit Size	Efficiency Unit 150 sq.ft. Studio 220 sq.ft. (Title 30 only) All other units 400 sq.ft.								

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Title 28 Zoning Designations	A-1	A-2	E-1	E-2	E-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4
OPEN YARD									
See code for standards on the location of open yard: SBMC § 30.140.140 / 28.15 , 28.18 , and 28.21									
Single-Unit and Two-Unit	Lots less than 5,000 sq.ft. 800 sq.ft. (Title 30 only) All other lots 1,250 sq.ft. Dimensions 20 ft x 20 ft Title 28 only: On slopes +20%, include one additional 160 sq.ft. “flat area”								
Multi-Unit	Area 15% of lot area; include interior setback Dimensions 10 ft x 10 ft Title 28 only.....10% of lot area; exclude interior setback; no dimensions Optional common open yard with one 20 ft x 20 ft area, see code for details								
Private Open Yard	GROUND LEVEL					UPPER STORY			
	Studio unit: 100 sq.ft. 1-Bedroom unit: 120 sq.ft. 2-Bedroom unit: 140 sq.ft. 3 or more Bedroom unit: 160 sq.ft. Minimum Dimensions: 10 ft x 10 ft.					Studio unit: 60 sq.ft. 1 Bedroom unit: 72 sq.ft. 2 Bedroom unit: 84 sq.ft. 3 or more Bedroom unit: 96 sq.ft. Minimum Dimensions: 6 ft x 6 ft			
PARKING									
Single-Unit	2 covered spaces per unit; see code for parking exceptions: § 30.175 / § 28.90								
Two-Unit	2 spaces (1 covered / 1 uncovered) per unit								
Multi-Unit	Studio 1.25 spaces per unit* One-bedroom 1.5 spaces per unit* Two or more bedrooms 2 spaces per unit Guest Parking 1 space per 4 units Bicycle Parking1 per unit (Title 30 only) * 600 sq.ft. or Less 1 space per unit (Title 30 only)								
Average-Unit Size Density	Central Business District 0 spaces required, maximum 1 space allowed Two or fewer Bedrooms 1 space per unit Three or more Bedrooms 2 spaces per unit Guest Parking 0 spaces required Bicycle Parking1 per unit Market-Rate Condominium in USS Overlay Zone: Same as multi-unit above								
Accessory Dwelling Unit	0 spaces, except 1 uncovered space per unit in High Fire Areas and Coastal Zone, see code for additional parking exceptions § 30.185.040 / §28.86								
Affordable Housing	1 uncovered space per unit, or less, for Density Bonus Gov. Code § 65915								



HOW MANY DWELLINGS ARE PERMITTED ON A LOT?

How to Calculate Dwelling Units Per Acre

To calculate the dwelling units per acre, the lot area in square feet is divided by 43,560 (square feet in an acre). The resulting acreage is multiplied by the General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan density range.

Dwelling Units Per Acre Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 20,000 sq.ft. \div 43,560 = 0.46 acres

General Plan Density Range: 15 to 27 du/ac

15 to 27 du/ac X .46 acres = 6.9 to 12.4 (rounded) 6 to 12 units

How to Calculate New Lots for a Subdivision

To calculate the number of new lots allowed for a subdivision or lot split, divide the lot area in square feet by the minimum net lot area required per the zoning designation and slope. Newly created lots must also conform to the General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan density range (dwelling units per acre).

New Lots Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 72,000 sq.ft. Zone: RS-10 or E-2 Slope: 15%

Minimum Net Lot Area: 15,000 sq.ft. per newly created lot

72,000 sq.ft. \div 15,000 sq.ft. = 4.8 (rounded) 4 new lots

How to Calculate Base Density

If the property is zoned for two-unit or multi-unit, on lots over 7,000 sq.ft., divide the lot area by the minimum square feet of lot area required per unit. On lots less than 7,000 sq.ft., check the table for allowable number of units; only one or two units may be allowed even if the zoning is for multi-unit.

Base Density Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 12,000 sq. ft. Zone: R-M or R-3

Minimum Net Lot Area: 3,500 sq.ft. per unit

12,000 sq. ft. \div 3,500 sq. ft. = 3.4 (rounded) 3 units

How to Calculate Variable Density

Variable density is suspended outside the Coastal Zone. Applicable on lots 5,000 sq. ft. or more, the minimum lot area per unit varies based on the number of bedrooms. To calculate the maximum number of units, divide the lot area by the minimum square feet of lot area required, *per bedroom type*, per unit.

Variable Density Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 12,000 sq. ft. Zone: R-M or R-3

4 – One-Bedroom Units [1,840 sq.ft. lot area per unit X 4 Units = 7,360 sq.ft.]

2 – Two-Bedroom Units [2,320 sq.ft. lot area per unit X 2 Units = 4,640 sq.ft.]

6 Total Units – Minimum Net Lot Area = 12,000 sq.ft. (7,360 sq.ft. + 4,640 sq.ft.)

How to Calculate Average Unit-Size Density (AUD)

AUD is only available outside the Coastal Zone. To calculate the maximum number of units, find the average unit size on the AUD Program Table under the property's General Plan Land Use designation (Medium High, High, Priority). Multiply the maximum dwelling units per acre by the lot area. The resulting area is divided by 43,560 (square feet in an acre).

AUD Density Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 12,000 sq. ft. Zone: R-M or R-3

General Plan Land Use: Medium-High Density

Average Unit Size: 1,000 sq.ft. per unit

$[22 \text{ du/ac} \times 12,000 \text{ sq.ft.} = 264,000] \div 43,560 = 6.06 \text{ (rounded) to 6 units}$

How to Calculate State Density Bonus

The table in the [Density Bonus Program](#) application summarizes the amount of density bonus allowed based on the level of affordability. To calculate the maximum number of units, apply the maximum bonus percentage (%) per the table in state law to the baseline density (which is the maximum residential density allowed under the Zoning Ordinance or General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan). Any resulting remainder is **rounded up** to the next whole number. If using General Plan density, the resulting units are still limited by the average unit size or bedrooms per unit per the zoning ordinance.

State Density Bonus Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 12,000 sq. ft. $\div 43,560 = 0.27 \text{ acres}$

General Plan Density Range: 15 to 27 du/ac

$15 \text{ to } 27 \text{ du/ac} \times .27 \text{ acres} = 4.05 \text{ to } 7.2 \text{ (rounded) } 5 \text{ to } 8 \text{ units}$

$+20\% \text{ Density Bonus} = .20 \times 8 = 1.6 \text{ (rounded) to 2 extra units}$

How to Calculate AUD Inclusionary Housing

AUD rental housing projects with 10 or more units must provide at least 10% of the units at affordable rental rates; projects of 5 to 9 units may either build one affordable unit or pay a \$25/sq.ft. in-lieu fee. To calculate the number of Inclusionary Units, multiply the total number of units on the project site (excluding any density bonus units) by 10%. If the resulting remainder is 0.5 or more, round up to the next whole number. For any remainder less than 0.5, a Fractional In-Lieu fee is required. To calculate the Fractional In-Lieu Fee, divide the amount of the remainder by the total number of Inclusionary Units required. Multiple that amount by \$25. The resulting amount is multiplied by the total square feet.

Inclusionary Housing Calculation Example:

Lot Size: 20,000 sq. ft. Zone: R-M or R-3

General Plan Land Use: High Density

Average Unit Size: 1,100 sq.ft. per unit; Total Square Feet = 15,400 sq. ft.

$[31 \text{ du/ac} \times 20,000 \text{ sq.ft.} = 620,000] \div 43,560 = 14.23 \text{ (rounded) } 14 \text{ units}$

$+10\% \text{ Inclusionary} = .10 \times 14 = 1.4 \text{ (rounded) to 1 extra unit}$

Fractional In-Lieu Fee Example:

$[.4 \div 1.4 = .28] \times \$25 \times 15,400 \text{ sq.ft.} = \$110,000$

TABLE B: RESIDENTIAL DENSITY REQUIREMENTS

Title 30 Zoning Designations	RS-1A	RS-25	RS-15	RS-10	RS-7.5	RS-6	R-2	R-M	R-MH
Title 28 Zoning Designations	A-1	A-2	E-1	E-2	E-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4
MINIMUM NET LOT AREA (for newly created lots – sq.ft.)									
Slope less than 10%, or lots fronting on the Pacific Ocean	1 acre	25,000	15,000	10,000	7,500	6,000	7,000	14,000	14,000
Slope 10% – 20%	1.5 acre	37,500	22,500	15,000	11,250	9,000	10,500		
Slope over 20% – 30%	2 acres	50,000	30,000	20,000	15,000	12,000	14,000		
Slope over 30%	3 acres	75,000	45,000	30,000	22,500	18,000	21,000		
Minimum Street Frontage (ft.)	100	100	90	75	60	60	60	60	60
MAXIMUM BASE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY (for existing lots – per lot)									
Less than 5,000 sq.ft. lot area	1 unit						1 unit	1 unit	
5,000 – 5,999 sq.ft. lot area							1 unit	2 units	
6,000 – 6,999 sq.ft. lot area and slope is 10% or more							1 unit		
6,000 – 6,999 sq.ft. lot area and slope less than 10%							2 units		
LOT SIZE 7,000 SQ.FT. OR MORE – Divide net lot area by square feet required per unit:									
Slope less than 10%	1 unit						1 unit/ 3,500	3 units or 1 unit/ 3,500, whichever is greater	
Slope 10% – 20%							1 unit/ 5,250		
Slope over 20% – 30%							1 unit/ 7,000		
Slope over 30%							1 unit/ 10,500		
VARIABLE DENSITY – Divide net lot area by square feet required per unit and bedroom type:									
Title 28 only: Greater density is allowed if bedrooms per unit are limited in accord with following on lots 5,000 sq.ft. or more:	N/A						Studio Unit/1,600 1-Bedroom/1,840 2-Bedroom/2,320 3+Bedroom/2,800		
AVERAGE UNIT-SIZE DENSITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM – (See AUD Program Table)									
Title 30 only: Greater density is allowed if Average Unit Size is limited per Density Tiers	N/A						[du/ac x lot area] ÷ 43,560 sq.ft. = maximum # units		
AFFORDABLE HOUSING – Greater density is allowed if a percentage of units are restricted as affordable units.									

AUD PROGRAM TABLE					
MEDIUM-HIGH DENSITY		HIGH DENSITY		PRIORITY HOUSING OVERLAY	
<i>Average Unit Size (sq.ft.)</i>	<i>Density (du/ac)</i>	<i>Average Unit Size (sq.ft.)</i>	<i>Density (du/ac)</i>	<i>Average Unit Size (sq.ft.)</i>	<i>Density (du/ac)</i>
1,450	15	1,245	28	970	37 - 48
1,360	16	1,200	29	969	49
1,280	17	1,160	30	960	50
1,210	18	1,125	31	941	51
1,145	19	1,090	32	935	52
1,090	20	1,055	33	917	53
1,040	21	1,025	34	901	54
1,005	22	995	35	896	55
985	23	970	36	880	56
965	24	–	–	874	57
945	25	–	–	859	58
925	26	–	–	845	59
905	27	–	–	840	60
–	–	–	–	827	61
–	–	–	–	825	62
–	–	–	–	811	63



HOW DO I FIND MY LAND USE DESIGNATION?

Finding the General Plan or Local Coastal Program land use designations and density tiers (dwelling units per acre) can be found in a few ways. The easiest method, is to find your parcel on the [General Plan Map](#) or [Coastal Land Use Plan Map](#). Use the map legend to find the maximum dwelling units per acre (du/ac). These maps are not parcel-specific, so if you can't tell exactly where your property is, you can also look up the designation using the property search function in the City's [Accela Citizen Access \(ACA\) Portal](#) or by searching the address through [MAPS](#) (Mapping Analysis & Printing System). In MAPS, select the "Planning" layer to find the Land Use Designations and Priority Housing Overlay.

CITY'S GENERAL PLAN MAP

