



Common Code Questions:

Accessory Structures

“What is an Accessory Structure?”

An accessory building is a smaller, separate building on the same property as the main building. It is used for extra space but not for living or sleeping. It can have a bathroom but no kitchen or bedroom. Examples of accessory buildings are carports, garages, greenhouses, patio covers, and sheds. An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is different and not considered an accessory building.

[HMC Sec. 10-1.2750](#)

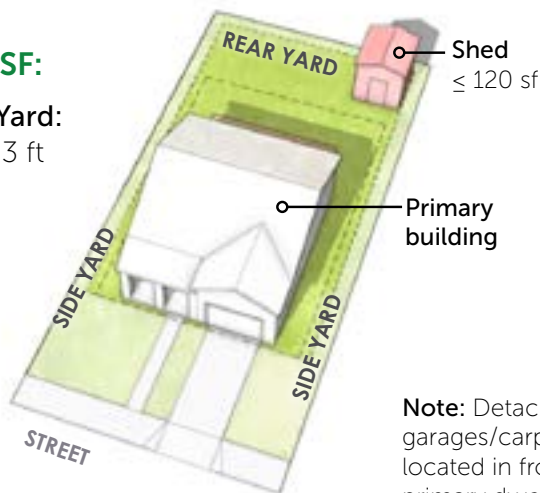


“Where can I locate an Accessory Structure?”

Accessory Structures cannot be located in a required front yard or side street yard, and only detached carports or garages can be located in front of a primary building. **Accessory Structures over 120 square feet must be setback at least 5ft from the rear and side yard of the property and structures up to 120 square must be setback at least 3 feet** from the rear and side yard.

UP TO 120 SF:

Rear & Side Yard:
Minimum of 3 ft
setback



OVER 120 SF:

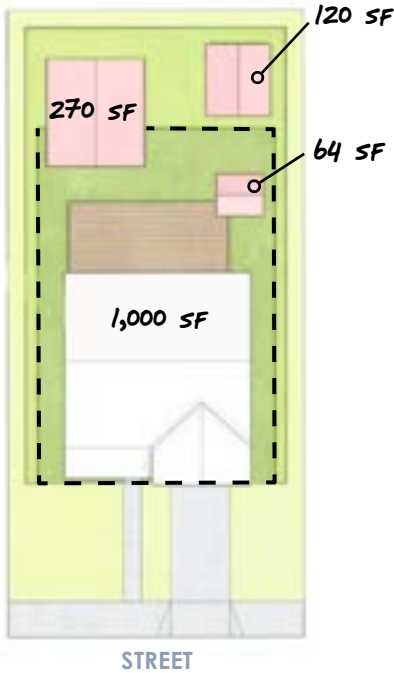
Rear & Side Yard:
Minimum of 5 ft
setback



Note: Detached garages/carports can be located in front of the primary dwelling unit

How large can I build an Accessory Structure(s) on my property?

The total area of all accessory buildings cannot exceed **50% of the ground floor area** of the primary building(s). To measure **Ground Floor Area (GFA)**, it is important to understand the following terms:



Ground Floor

Ground floor means the floor of a building located nearest to the level of the grade around a building.

Floor Area

Floor area is the total combined square footage of all floors of all buildings on a parcel. The "Floor Area Ratio" is the total floor area divided by the parcel area.

Building Coverage

Building coverage means the land area covered by all buildings and accessory structures on a parcel.

Based on the information provided in the graphic above, you can determine the GFA of the primary building and calculate the coverage of accessory structures:

GFA of Primary Building:	Floor Area of Accessory Structures:	Coverage:
1,120 SF	440 SF detached garage	560 SF
	+ 120 SF shed	1,120 ground floor area =
	= 560 SF	50% coverage ✓

When do you need a permit to build an Accessory Structure?

Accessory buildings over 120 SF require a building permit. To apply for a building permit, visit the [Hayward e-Permit Portal](#)

For more information, please refer to the [Accessory Structures Tip Sheet](#)

Variable Site Conditions

Other conditions may apply. For more information, talk to the City of Hayward Planning Division or reference the Hayward Municipal Code [Section 10-1.204](#).

WHAT IS MY ZONING?

To find your zoning, visit <https://webmap.hayward-ca.gov/>. Or, scan the QR code (right).

