

Accessory Building, Structure, & Uses

Gwinnett County has adopted an ordinance (regulations) to help protect neighborhood character, health and safety, and property values. Accessory buildings include detached garages, utility buildings, sheds, trampolines, gazebos, pools, tennis courts, or barns. They can impact neighborhoods and communities in several ways:

- Negatively affect the visual attractiveness of the neighborhood, impacting property values
- Create a safety hazard to children when a play structure is not in a safe location
- Create a safety hazard if used to store hazardous materials

Plan of Action

- Ensure building, structure, or use is not within the public right-of-way.
- Locate trampolines, play equipment, swings, grills, and patio furniture in the back yard.
- Put basketball goals next to a driveway, not in the street or facing the street.
- Prior to beginning any construction, contact Gwinnett Planning and Development at PND@GwinnettCounty.com to review your plans, understand the regulations for setbacks and maximum floor area, and obtain a Building Permit, if it is required.

What does the ordinance say about accessory buildings, structures, and uses (UDO 230-120)?

All accessory buildings, structures, and uses of land such as a detached garage, utility building, shed, gazebo, barn, pool, or tennis court:

- Shall be clearly subordinate to and supportive of the principal use (home)
- Located in the rear yard ONLY
- Is not allowed in the side yard of a corner lot that faces a public street (corner lots have 2 front yards)
- Cannot be located in the public right-of-way:
 - Basketball goals adjacent to driveways are allowed in most residential zoning districts. They are prohibited from being placed in the right-of-way (at the street).
 - Landscaping shall not be located within the public right-of-way unless approved by Gwinnett County Department of Transportation.
- Cannot be built before its principal building (home) is constructed.
- Cannot be utilized unless the principal structure (home) is also occupied.
- Set-back requirements from all property lines and right of ways are based on the structure size / area:
 - 0 – 100 square feet: 5 feet set-back
 - 101 – 300 square feet: 10 foot set-back
 - 301 – 500 square feet: 15 foot setback
 - 500+ square feet: 20 foot set-back
- The maximum cumulative total of all accessory buildings is based on lot size (see UDO 230-120.13)
- In residential district, accessory buildings cannot:
 - Exceed 50 percent of the primary dwelling (home)
 - Be used for any commercial operation or human habitation (exception: accessory dwelling)
 - Be used to store hazardous materials, waste products or putrescent (rotting / decaying) materials

Learn more at
GwinnettCodeEnforcement.com
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