

Residential Tiny Homes



King County recognizes tiny homes as an affordable and efficient method of providing housing. The current building and zoning codes do not specifically define or regulate Tiny Homes. Regardless of size, all residences are required to meet the same health, life/fire safety, structural, and energy building Code requirements, as well as local zoning code requirements.

Site-Built Structures

A building permit is required for all site-built structures and shall include a complete set of construction plans. All construction documents must be submitted to the County to demonstrate compliance with building codes. The dwelling unit shall:

- Be supported and anchored to a permanent foundation.
- Include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, kitchen, and sanitation (water closet, lavatory, and a bathtub or shower).
- Habitable rooms shall meet minimum dimensional requirements including: a floor area of not less than 70 square feet, 7-foot clear horizontal dimension in any direction, and a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet (the height can be reduced in rooms and in areas with sloped ceilings).
- Fire code requirements may require fire sprinklers on a case-by-case basis.

Structures Built Off-Site

All structures built off-site must have approval from Washington State Labor and Industries (L&I), Factory Built Structures program. If a tiny home is fabricated in a factory or at some other off-site location, L&I inspects the unit as a modular structure. While the unit is pre-approved by the State, a building permit from King County is still required to locate the unit on a specific property.

Recreational Vehicles/Trailers

Tiny homes on wheels are treated like recreational vehicles. By King County zoning code definition, a recreational vehicle or park model RV is not a dwelling unit and may not be used as a full-time residence. If your tiny home has wheels, you need to follow parking rules for large vehicles. Per King County Regulatory Review Committee decision, RVs may be used on a temporary, “camping” basis for a maximum of 60 days in a rolling 365-day period. Storage of vehicles on vacant land is not permitted.

Tiny Homes, continued

Zoning Code

All structures shall meet all applicable dimensional standards in King County Code (KCC) 21A.12, as well as all other applicable provisions of KCC 21A for detached single family residences and/or accessory dwelling units. The zoning code limits typical lots to one residence and one accessory dwelling unit (ADU), provided that specific lot size requirements. NOT ALL LOTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT. There are several other requirements that limit the size of ADU's. Please review with Permitting staff before proceeding.

Health Department

Dwelling units, including tiny homes, are required to be provided with an approved potable water source and waste water disposal system. In most rural areas, this will require an approved well and a dedicated septic system. Contact King County Health Department for additional requirements.

References

King County

[Department of Local Services, Permitting](#)

[GIS Center Mapping Services](#)

[Forms, Bulletins and Reports](#)

[King County Code](#)

[Seattle-King County Public Health](#)

Washington State

[Department of Labor and Industries \(L&I\), Manufactured Homes & Other Mobile Structures](#)

