



KLAMATH COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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DEVELOPMENT ON RURAL RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND – WHAT CAN I DO?

Here are some answers to what can be developed on Rural Residential Zoned land.

1. In the Rural Residential Zone a dwelling is considered the primary use and other structures are considered accessory structures. Accessory structures cannot be built without the permit being taken out for the dwelling.

One exception to the above is that a single 100 sq. ft. structure can be built without any permits at all, prior to any other permit being issued. This can be used as a pump house for a well with a little extra space for some land clearing tools or other storage. This structure cannot be used as a cabin for staying on the property. (Camping in an RV is allowed for 21 days in a 6 month period.)

2. In order to get site plan approval for a dwelling, the following things must be provided:
 - a. Proof of legal access to the property. If you're crossing other people's properties to get to yours, you will have to show evidence of a recorded easement granting you the right to cross their property.
If your property is within a rural subdivision, it should have legal access to each lot via designated road rights-of-way.
 - b. An approved septic evaluation or alternative system approved by the Klamath County On-Site Dept. to deal with waste and grey water.
 - c. A source of potable water. Provide a well-log for an existing well, or a contract with a well driller to drill a well, or indicate that a cistern will be used.
3. The septic installation can be done either separately or at the time of the home construction. The septic system has to be operational before living in the dwelling.
4. Once a building permit for the dwelling has been issued, you can do the following things:
 - a. You can construct any structures included on the approved site plan, in whatever order you wish, as long as the building permit for the dwelling remains active and does not expire. (Building permits are good for 6 months and the clock restarts each time there is an inspection.) There is no minimum or maximum time required for constructing buildings.
 - b. Once the building permit for the dwelling has been issued, you can apply for a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) to live in an RV while you're constructing the dwelling. The application fee is \$450 with a \$146 annual renewal fee. It takes approximately 35

days to receive approval of the TUP. The TUP can be extended as long as the building permit for the dwelling remains active and does not expire.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I want to stay on my property in an RV while I build a shop and eventually a dwelling.

Staying on the property in an RV is considered camping and subject to the camping limitation of not more than 21 days in a 6 month period.

2. Can I build a shop before I build the house?

The short answer is no, however there are two alternative strategies that property owners sometimes use when they want to build the shop first.

- a. You can include a small apartment like dwelling in the shop, which would allow you to build accessory structures. Once the main dwelling is constructed, you can then remove the cooking facilities so the apartment is no longer considered a dwelling. (There is typically only one dwelling allowed on each parcel.)
 - b. Once you take out a building permit for the dwelling, you can construct any accessory structures you wish, that were also shown on the site plan, prior to the dwelling. Once the building permit is issued for the dwelling, you can also obtain a Temporary Use Permit through the Planning Dept. to live in an RV during the time of construction.
3. I want to live off the grid by constructing a small cabin, with a composting toilet, solar power, and a holding tank for water.

You can build a small dwelling, but it has to meet the standards of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code which Klamath County uses. The smallest size that meets this code is approximately 300 sq. ft.

Alternative materials and styles for dwellings are allowed as long as a registered engineer certifies that they are "equivalent" to the building code. You will need to check with the Klamath County On-Site Dept. regarding alternative waste and grey water disposal. Solar power is acceptable to use in lieu of other power sources.

4. Can I build in a flood plain? You can build in a flood plain, you just have to meet the flood plain construction requirements which include having the finished floor elevation of the living space 1 foot above the base flood elevation which can be determined by a surveyor and confirmed by the Planning Dept. Vents have to be placed in the walls or foundation where it is below base flood elevation. Accessory structures, not used as habitable space, such as detached garages and shops and sheds have to have openings in the portions of the structures that are below base flood elevation.
5. Can I build where there are wetlands indicated on my property? Use of wetland areas is regulated by the Oregon Dept. of State Lands (DSL). Building on, or filling, wetlands can result in a fine, so it is best to contact DSL before disturbing or building on any wetland area.