



WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
RECREATIONAL VEHICLE ACCESS & STORAGE

City of Murrieta – Development Services Department
 1 Town Square, Murrieta CA 92562

This Information Bulletin is intended to provide important information BEFORE you invest and install an access drive or enclosure/shade structure for your RV. These are general responses to common questions. Following each response is the applicable code section(s) that can be accessed via the link provided.

Your individual circumstances may result in slightly different requirements. As such, please contact the appropriate department referenced below for more information.

I. OVERVIEW

A recreational vehicle (RV) is a term often used for a motorized vehicle or trailer that is equipped with living space and amenities found in a home. Other terms used to describe an RV include motorhome, travel trailer, truck camper or camping trailer, watercraft or vessel.

RVs can represent a significant investment and many owners want to store their vehicle within an enclosure or shade structure on their property to help protect it from the elements.

II. CAN I PARK MY RV ON MY PROPERTY?

Yes. RVs can generally be parked anywhere on your property (including the side and rear yard) so long as they are screened by an approved fence or wall. RV's cannot be stored within the front yard setback such as your driveway or on your front lawn.

Additionally, RV's cannot be parked on a public street for more than two consecutive days.

[MMC §10.44.020.A](#)

III. CAN I BUILD AN ENCLOSURE OR SHADE STRUCTURE FOR MY RV?

Yes; however, there are limitations on the size, height, and location of the enclosure or shade structure.

- **Structure Setback**

State & City laws require that structures be set back a certain distance from the property line. There are two code provisions that are applicable to structure setbacks: 1) State (and Murrieta) Building Code; and, 2) Murrieta Development Code.

**Documents Referenced in this
 Information Bulletin**

- [Development Plan Permit Application](#)
- [Building Permit Application](#)
- [Encroachment Permit Application](#)

- ✓ **California/Murrieta Residential Code**

This code establishes the minimum standards to address health/safety threats such as fire. Under the code, all structures must maintain a minimum setback of five feet¹.

The building codes allow structures to encroach into the setback if the structure is built with ignition-resistive construction and fire sprinkler protection¹. Contact the Building Division at 461-6062 for requirements.

¹[CRC Tables R302.1\(1\)&\(2\)](#):

- ✓ **Murrieta Development Code**

This code is intended to address community character and quality of life concerns such as potential visual impacts to neighbors.

RV structures are considered an 'Accessory Structure - Garage' under the Development Code and setback regulations tend to be more restrictive (i.e. greater than) than the Building Code and vary depending upon the neighborhood and whether the structure is attached or detached¹.

As such, determining setback requirements can be challenging if not familiar with the code. Contact the City at (951) 461-6061 to determine exact requirements for your situation.

¹[MMC §16.44.150, Table 3-14](#)

In cases where the Building and Development Code differ, the more restrictive code is applied.

- **Structure Size**

RV structures are considered an 'Accessory Structure - Garage' under the Development Code and, are allowed to be a maximum of

1,000 square feet in size or 50 percent of the primary residence, whichever is greater¹. Please note that depending upon the zoning on your property, the maximum lot coverage allowed ranges from 25% to 50%², which may impact the ultimate size of the structure.

Contact the City at (951) 461-6061 to determine the zoning and exact requirements for your situation.

(The maximum size and lot coverage noted above do not apply to other unpermitted structures (i.e., shed, barn, garage, patio cover) built in the setback. Please refer to Section V.)

¹[MMC§16.44.150.C](#); ²[MMC§16.08.020, Table 16.08-3](#)

- **Structure Location**

Pursuant to the CA Residential Code and CA Fire Code, emergency escape and rescue openings (e.g., windows, doors) must be maintained without any obstructions, such as from an RV structure that is too close to allow access to the openings.

[CRC §310.1.1; CFC §504.1](#)

- **Structure Height**

Similar to setback requirements, height limits vary depending upon your neighborhood. Generally speaking, however, the height of the RV structure cannot exceed the height of the primary structure (home). Again, contact the City at (951) 461-6061 to determine exact requirements for your situation.

IV. DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT FOR AN ENCLOSURE OR SHADE STRUCTURE?

Yes. At a minimum, a *Building Permit* is required for all permanent or temporary (≥180 days/calendar year) enclosures or shade structures, with one exception: one-story, detached enclosures or shade structures that do not exceed 120 square feet are exempt from a building permit². Please note, however, that exempt enclosures are still required to comply with setback and location requirements described in Section III.

Also, a *Development Plan Permit* will be required if the size of the enclosure or shade structure is >25% of the floor area of the primary structure or 500 square feet, whichever is less³. The Development Plan Permit must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to issuance of the building permit.

¹[CRC §R107.1](#); ²[CRC §R105.2](#); ³[MMC §16.44.150](#);

V. IS THERE A 'GRANDFATHERING' POLICY FOR UNPERMITTED STRUCTURES?

Yes. In an effort to help ensure public safety while recognizing that some of the existing RV structures have been erected for some time, the City is authorizing structures that existed as of November 2018 that encroach into the setback to remain until the property is sold; at which time, the non-compliant structure must be removed. Structures that meet the criteria below are eligible.

- RV structure is ≤560 square feet in size;
- RV structure is not enclosed (open on all four sides from the ground to a height of at least eight feet);
- There is no immediate health/safety issues (i.e., exposed wiring, obvious structure failures);
- The owner(s) shall provide an indemnification & defense agreement holding the City harmless for allowing the RV structure to remain;
- The owner(s) shall record a certificate of non-conforming use on the title to the property informing all potential buyers that the non-conforming structure is to be removed upon the sale of the property.
- The code enforcement complaint did not originate from the neighboring (adjacent) property owner(s).

Further, structures that maintain compliance with this policy shall be allowed to remain until the property is sold, even if the City later receives a complaint from a neighboring property owner.

Existing structures not meeting the requirements above will need to be removed or modified to meet the requirements of this policy.

VI. ARE THERE LIMITATIONS ON HOW I CAN ACCESS AN RV ONTO MY PROPERTY?

Yes. Under the Murrieta Municipal Code, vehicular access to/from any 'public place'¹, which includes public streets and sidewalks that provide access to private property, requires authorized 'encroachment'¹ over that public place. RV access is only permissible via a City permitted driveway opening². The following are examples of unlawful ways to access your property with an RV under City code.

- Driving over the curb and sidewalk⁴
- Constructing an unpermitted ramp³

- Unpermitted modifications to an existing permitted driveway, curb, or sidewalk³
- Accessing the property from a pedestrian ramp located at an intersection⁴

¹[CA Gov Code §830](#); ²[Callahan v. City and County of San Francisco \(1967\) 249 CA 2d 696, 702](#)

¹[MMC §15.54.020](#); ²[MMC §15.54.040](#); ³[MMC §15.54.040.B](#); ⁴[MMC §15.54.040.G](#)

VII. ARE THERE LIMITATIONS ON THE DESIGN OF PERMISSIBLE DRIVEWAY OPENINGS?

Yes. The City Council has adopted Public Street Design Standards that include minimum standards for driveway location¹ and driveway apron design². Some important requirements specified in those standards include the following:

- Driveway opening must be a minimum of five (5) feet away from the point of curvature at an intersection to ensure safe sightdistance¹
- A minimum of 20 feet between driveways is required to allow on-street parking between access points²
- Driveway width must be a minimum of 12 feet, and a maximum of 30 feet²

Driveways shall be consistent with the standards adopted with original neighborhood construction, *unless otherwise approved by the City Engineer*. Please contact the City Engineer if you are unable to comply with the standards.

¹[Drawing #307](#); ²[Drawing #308a and #308b](#)

VIII. DO I NEED A PERMIT FOR A DRIVEWAY OPENING?

Yes. A property owner must obtain an Encroachment Permit from the City prior to construction or modification of any driveway opening¹. Please contact the Engineering Division at (951) 461-6077 to determine exact requirements for your situation.

¹[MMC §15.54.040](#)

IX. IS THERE A 'GRANDFATHERING' POLICY FOR UNPERMITTED ACCESS?

No. Unlike private structures, driving over a public pedestrian curb ramp or portion of the public sidewalk without an approved driveway apron constitutes a dangerous condition¹ because such improvements are meant for pedestrians, not vehicles. Should the City knowingly authorize the continued use of unpermitted access which then results in an injury, the City can be held liable; even if the property owner signs an indemnification and defense agreement holding the City harmless².