



CITY OF BURLINGAME

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT– PLANNING DIVISION

501 PRIMROSE ROAD, BURLINGAME, CA 94010

TELEPHONE: (650) 558-7250 E-MAIL: planningdept@burlingame.org

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

[Code Section 25.48.030](#) of the Zoning Code provides regulations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and junior accessory dwelling units (JADUs) in compliance with California Government Code Sections 65852.2 and 65852.22 and the Housing Element of the Burlingame General Plan.

This guide provides a basic overview of Burlingame’s Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance and provides homeowners information on how to add an accessory dwelling unit to a single-unit dwelling. Please visit www.burlingame.org/adu for submittal requirements and additional information.

★ Please note each ADU application will be unique and this handout serves as a general guide to provide a basic understanding of what is permitted when designing an ADU.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. TYPES OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADU)
3. ROOF TYPES
4. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR ADU’S
5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (PARKING, OTHER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS)
6. OTHER HELPFUL GRAPHICS
7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
8. APPLICATION PROCESS



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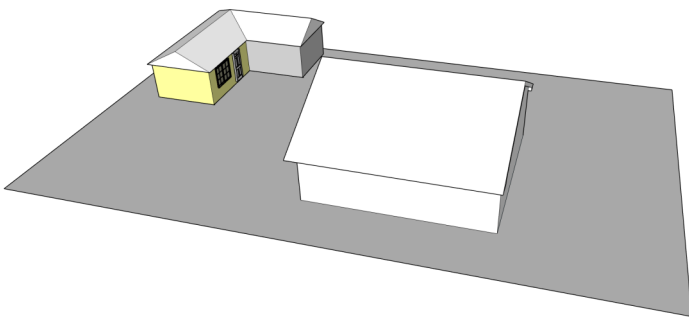
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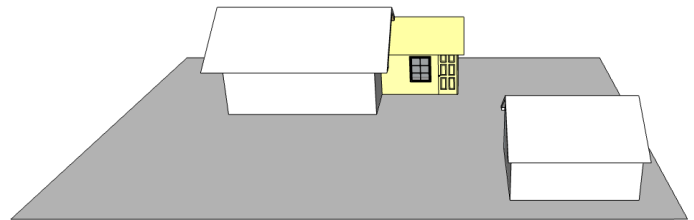
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INTRODUCTION

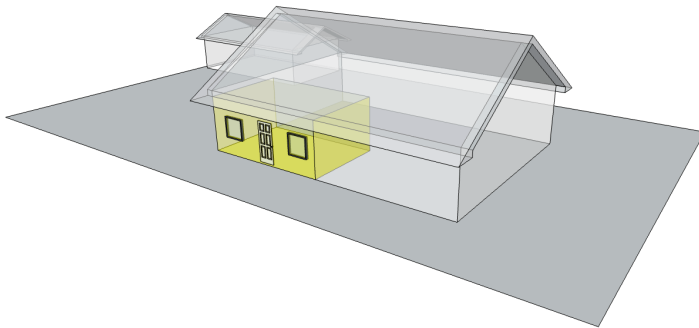
An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) defined by the Burlingame Municipal Code, is an attached or detached residential dwelling unit ancillary to a primary dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons and is located on a lot with a proposed or existing primary residence. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel as a the single-unit or multi-unit dwelling is or will be situated ([Code Section 25.48.030](#)).



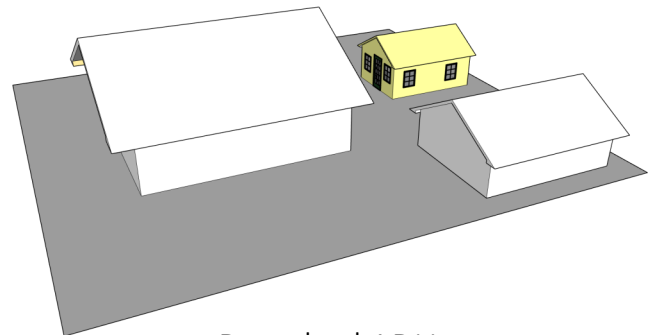
Attached to Existing Garage



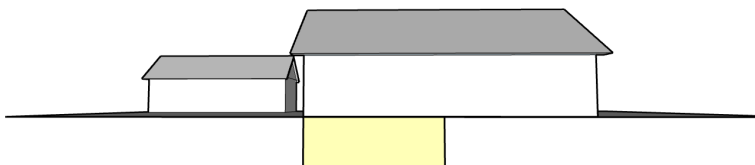
Attached Addition to Existing Single-Unit Dwelling



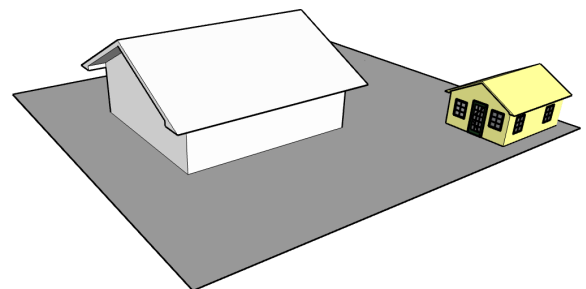
Interior Conversion



Detached ADU



Basement ADU



Garage Conversion



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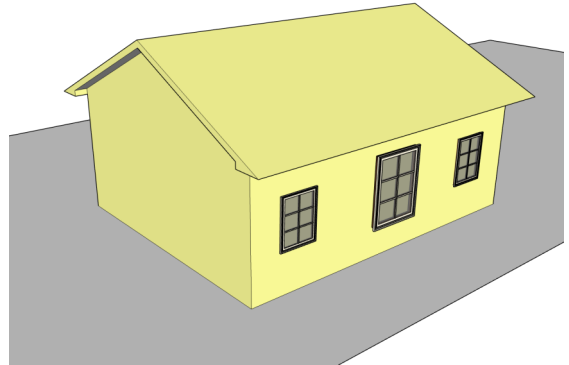
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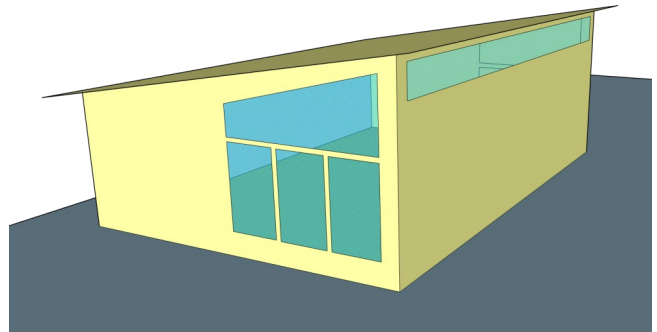
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ROOF TYPES

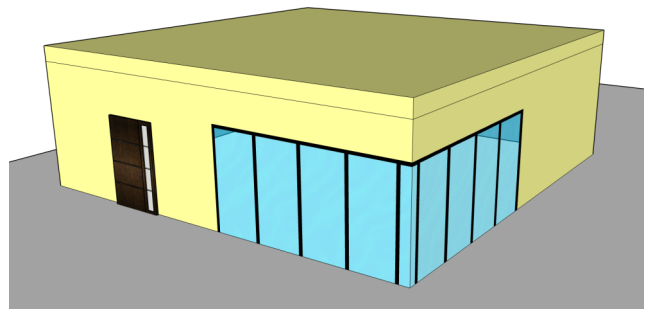
Pitched Roof



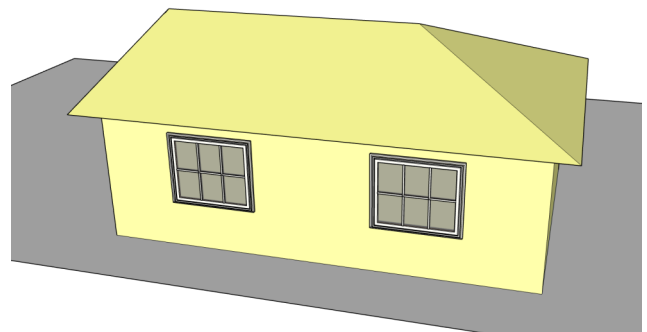
Single Slope Roof



Flat Roof



Hip Roof



TYPES OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

- A. Detached ADU:** The unit is constructed as a separate structure from the primary dwelling unit; or contained within the existing space of an accessory structure.
- B. Attached ADU:** The unit is constructed as a conversion of existing living space in a main dwelling or attached garage or as a physical expansion (i.e., addition) of an existing primary dwelling unit, including construction of a new basement underneath a primary dwelling unit to accommodate an ADU.
- C. Junior ADU:** The unit is limited to 500 SF in size, is located within the walls of an existing or proposed single family structure, and includes separate sanitation facilities or may share sanitation facilities with the single family structure. A JADU must contain an efficiency kitchen. Unlike an ADU, a JADU is legally required to have an owner living on the property at all times.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR ADU'S

	Detached	Attached	Converting Existing Space
Minimum Lot Size	No minimum size required	No minimum size required	No minimum size required
# of ADUs allowed	1 - may be detached, attached, or converted space		
# of JADUs allowed	1 - must be located within walls of an existing or proposed single-unit dwelling; may be allowed in conjunction with ADU as long as ADU does not exceed 850 SF		
Height	1 story or 16 feet	1 or 2 story (height limited by applicable zoning district) (16 feet maximum allowed if located in Hillside Overlay Area)	1 or 2 story
Plate Height	9 feet from finished floor (up to 10 feet max allowed if ADU is setback 4 feet from property lines)	---	---
Unit Size	850 SF Up to 1000 SF for 2+ bedrooms	850 SF Up to 1000 SF for 2+ bedrooms	Not subject to unit size maximum
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) + Lot Coverage	Up to 850 SF (not counted in FAR or lot coverage) 851-1000 SF (entire ADU counted in FAR and lot coverage)	Up to 850 SF (not counted in FAR or lot coverage) 851-1000 SF (entire ADU counted in FAR and lot coverage)	Up to 850 SF of converted existing space in a main dwelling or detached structure will be subtracted from existing floor area and lot coverage.
Setbacks	If located in rear 40%, no setbacks required (4 foot setback required if plate height exceeds 9 feet)	4 foot setback from any side or rear property line	None - if existing, permitted space then ADU is allowed with existing conditions
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 off-street uncovered space (in addition to the required parking for primary unit) ADU parking may be provided in tandem with required parking space in driveway <i>See Other Considerations on page 3 for parking waivers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 off-street uncovered space (in addition to the required parking for primary unit) ADU parking may be provided in tandem with required parking space in driveway <i>See Other Considerations on page 3 for parking waivers</i>	None required

NOTE: These are general requirements for ADUs. Additional requirements may apply. Please refer to [Code Section 25.48.030 of the City's Zoning Code](#) or contact the Planning Division if you have any questions.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

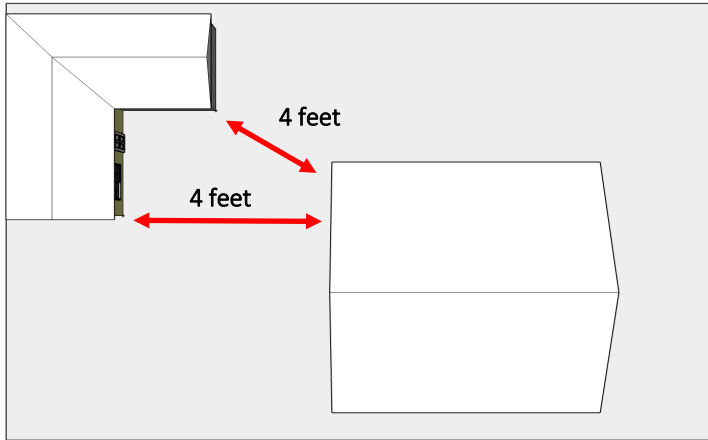
General Requirements:

- Property owners considering **pre-fabricated units** should contact the Planning Division prior to purchasing a unit. Due to the inability to modify these units, pre-fabricated ADUs may not be able to meet all required ADU regulations.
- A **deed restriction prohibiting the separate sale of the units on the property** will be required to be notarized and recorded with the San Mateo County Assessor's Office (prior to issuance of a building permit) once an ADU application is approved by the Planning Division.
- Properties located in a **flood zone** will have additional requirements by other City Divisions. Finished floor will need to be elevated to meet appropriate base flood elevation requirements. Please contact the Public Works Department at dpw@ Burlingame.org to inquire about specific requirements for ADUs proposed in a flood zone.
- Property owners considering a **Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)** should contact the Planning Division for specific regulations (see [Code Section 25.48.030 \(I\)](#)).

Parking Requirements and Waivers:

- Please refer to [Code Section 25.48.030 \(L\)](#) for a complete list of parking requirements.
- Parking for ADUs may be provided in setback areas or as tandem parking.
- Parking for ADUs must be provided on a hard, all-weather surface.
- ADU parking requirement can be waived for the following:
 - ⇒ When a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demolished in conjunction with construction of an ADU.
 - ⇒ When a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is converted into an ADU.
 - ⇒ ADU is located within ½ mile walking distance of public transit (bus stop or train station, where the public may access buses, trains, subways, and other forms of transportation that charge set fares, run on fixed routes, and are available to the public).
 - ⇒ ADU is located within an architecturally and historically significant historic district.
 - ⇒ When on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupant of the ADU.
 - ⇒ When there is an established car share vehicle stop located within one block of the ADU.

OTHER HELPFUL GRAPHICS

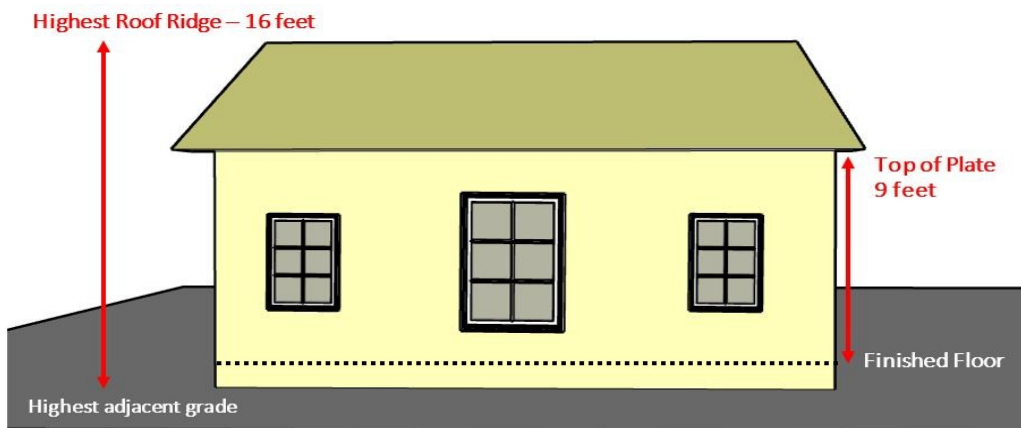
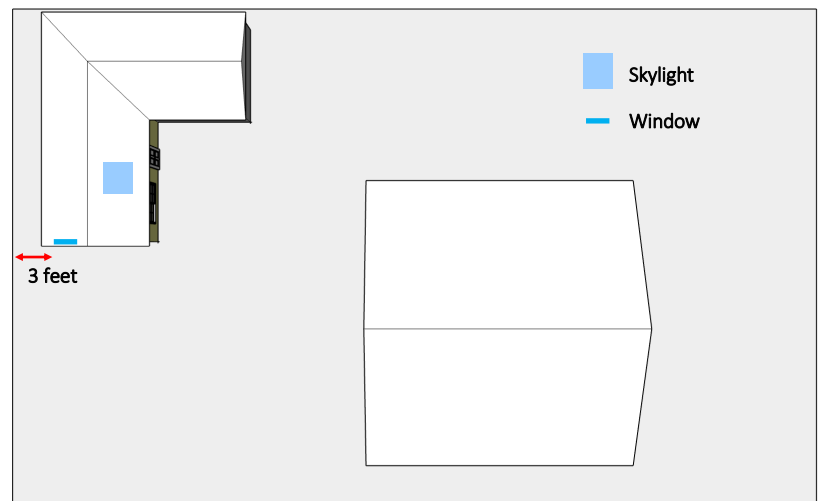


ADU must meet minimum building separation of 4 feet from any other structure on the property.

WINDOWS/GLAZED OPENINGS

Windows and any glazed openings shall be at least 3 feet from any property line.

Skylights are allowed on sloping roofs facing interior yards. Skylights on sloping roofs facing side yards must be located at least 10 feet from any property line.



OVERALL BUILDING HEIGHT

Overall height for a detached ADU shall be taken from highest adjacent grade to highest roof ridge and shall not exceed 16 feet.

PLATE HEIGHT

Plate height shall be measured from finished floor to the top of plate and shall not exceed 9 feet (up to 10 feet allowed if ADU is setback 4 feet from property lines). If lot slopes more than two feet between front and rear of ADU, plate height shall be measured from average adjacent existing grade.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Does an ADU require a permit from the Planning Division?

Yes, prior to applying for a building permit, approval of an ADU Permit is required from the Planning Division. Please visit www.burlingame.org/adu for submittal requirements and additional information.

2. What are the required setbacks for an ADU?

A new detached ADU located in the rear 40% of the lot is exempt from setback requirements (see also #4 below). Any portion of a new detached ADU proposed forward of the 40% must have a 4-foot setback to property lines. A new attached ADU must be set back at least 4 feet from side and rear property lines. ADUs must be set back at least 4-feet to any other structure on the property.

★ **TIP:** Providing a setback of at least 1 feet or more from foundation to side and rear property lines allows room for maintenance of exterior walls, allows for proper drainage, and eliminates the requirement for a property survey.

3. What is the maximum height for an ADU?

All detached ADUs are limited to one story in height and shall not be constructed above detached garages or other detached accessory structures. The maximum allowable building height for a detached ADU is 16 feet, as measured from highest adjacent existing grade to the highest roof ridge. Attached ADU heights are subject to the height requirements of the applicable zoning district in which the ADU is located. If located within the Hillside Overlay Zone, the maximum allowable height for an attached ADU is 16 feet.

4. How do I measure plate height and what is the maximum allowed plate height for a detached ADU?

The maximum allowable plate height for a detached ADU is 9 feet, as measured from finished floor to top of plate (if lot slopes more than two feet between the front and rear of the ADU, the plate height shall be measured from average adjacent existing grade). The plate height may exceed 9 feet, up to a maximum of 10 feet, if the ADU is setback 4 feet from property lines. For detached ADUs that propose a single slope roof, one side of the structure may have a plate height greater than 9 feet so long as the plate height of the wall parallel with the side or rear property lines does not exceed 9 feet.

5. What is required for a cooking facility in an ADU?

An ADU is required to have a permanent stove and/or oven built into the counter and must have a refrigerator that has separate exterior doors for the refrigerator and freezer compartments.

6. What are the required setbacks for windows and skylights?

Windows and glazed openings must be at least 3 feet from any property line. Skylights are allowed on flat roofs and on sloping roofs facing interior yards, on sloping roofs facing side yards (skylights must be located 10 feet from property line).

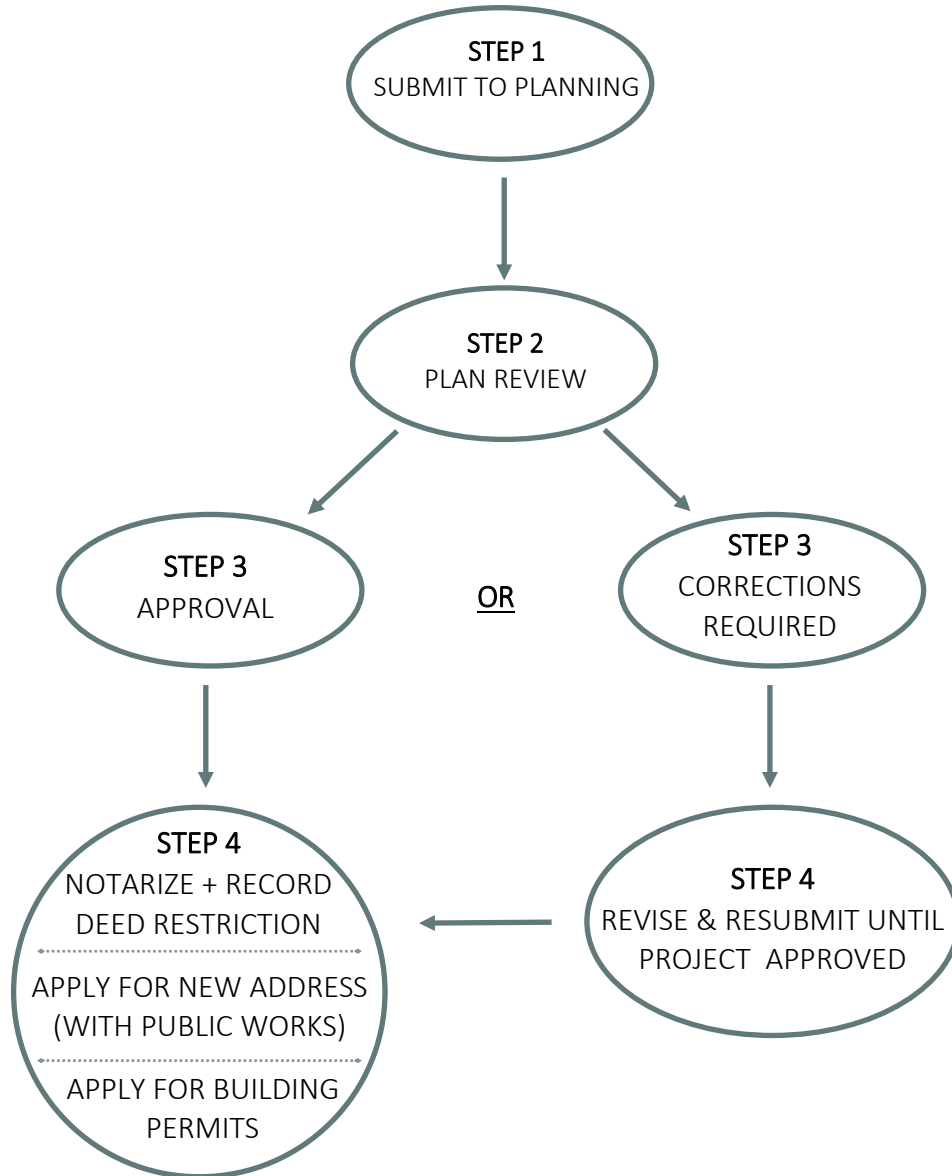
7. Are ADUs subject to Design Review?

No, an application for Design Review is not required for an attached or detached ADU.

8. Is a Hillside Area Construction Permit required for an ADU?

If your property is located within the Hillside Overlay Zone, an application for a Hillside Area Construction Permit (HACP) is required for a proposed attached ADU on the upper floor of a single-unit dwelling. The purpose of a HACP is to review whether or not the proposed construction will block long distant views. Please contact the Planning Division to determine if your property is located within the Hillside Overlay Area.

ADU PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS



OTHER CITY DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Building Division

Phone: 650-558-7260 or buildingpermits@burlingame.org

Public Works Department

Phone: 650-558-7230 or dpw@burlingame.org

Burlingame Fire Department

Phone: 650-558-7600 or creed@ccfd.org