

R4-R6

General Residential Districts

(Zoning Ordinance Sections 6-8-5, 6-8-6, 6-8-7, 6-8-8)
Updated April 2026



***See Title 6, Chapter 8 of the Evanston Code of Ordinances for more information, definitions, additional requirements and exceptions to these regulations. A Zoning Analysis is strongly recommended for major projects prior to submitting an application for building permits.**

PURPOSE STATEMENTS

R4 General Residential District

To provide for a mix of residential types at a moderate density including multi-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and single-family attached and detached dwellings.

R4a General Residential District

To protect the residential character of this district by providing a mix of residential types at a medium density in terms of number of dwellings and mass of structures compatible with the prevailing single- and two-family detached structures.

R5 General Residential District

To provide for the infill development of a mix of multi-family residential structures at a medium density, including townhouses, two-family dwellings, three-story walk-ups, and courtyard apartment buildings that characterize the traditional multiple-family housing development found in this district.

R6 General Residential District

To provide for high density residential development of primarily multiple-family dwellings particularly in and around the downtown area.

MINIMUM LOT SIZE			
	R4 & R4a	R5	R6
Single-family detached	5,000		4,000
Single-family attached	2,500/dwelling unit	2,000/first three dwelling units, 1,200/each additional	4,000
Two-family	2,500/dwelling unit		2,000/first two dwelling units, 1,000/each additional
Multi-family	2,500/dwelling unit	1,500/first four dwelling units, 800/each additional	5,000/first four dwelling units, 400/each additional
Nonresidential	10,000		
(square feet per dwelling unit)			

MINIMUM LOT WIDTH	
	R4, R4a, R5, & R6
Single-family detached	35 ft.
Two-family dwellings	35 ft.
Single-family attached (3 or more dwelling units)	60 ft., street frontage required
Other uses	50 ft.

MAXIMUM PEAK BUILDING HEIGHT			
	R4 & R4a	R5	R6
Feet	35	50	85
Stories	2.5	5	8
If multiple standards apply, all standards must be met			
Half-story: That portion of a building between a sloped roof and the building's top story or exterior knee-wall, if applicable. The minimum slope ratio of any roof above a half story must be 2:12.			

MAXIMUM BUILDING LOT COVERAGE			
	R4 & R4a	R5	R6
	40%	45%	50%
Building lot coverage includes all ground floor roofed areas, includes roofed/covered stoops/landings, patios, decks, and other similar surfaces.			
50% of the surface area of an open front porch is excluded when it meets the following conditions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to the air, • Not all weather, • Roofed or not roofed, screened or not screened, • Facing a street, • Not a rear or back porch or any portion of a porch between the rear wall of the house and rear lot line, • Not separated by the street right-of-way by a fence exceeding 60% opacity and 4 feet in height. 			

MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS SURFACE COVERAGE			
	R4 & R4a	R5	R6
	55%	60%	65%
Impervious surface coverage is calculated by dividing the total defined net impervious surfaces on the zoning lot by the area of the zoning lot.			
The total defined net impervious surfaces on the zoning lot are all areas included in the building lot coverage plus any hard surfaced area that does not readily absorb water, including, but not limited to: paved asphalt and concrete areas, parking/driveway areas, swimming pools, and sidewalks.			
Pervious paving systems receive a 25% discount towards the measured area. Other permeable paving systems receive a 20% discount towards the measured area. Solid concrete and asphalt do not receive a discount.			
Decks that are not roofed/covered with a permeable surface underneath, covering up to 3% of the zoning lot area are excluded			

from impervious surface coverage calculation. Any portion of the deck exceeding 3% of the zoning lot area counts towards coverage at 100%.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)

One ADU is permitted per zoning lot and may be created through new construction, alteration of an existing structure, addition to an existing structure, or conversion of any existing structure to an ADU while simultaneously constructing a new residential building on the site.

The property owner is not required to reside on the property. However, an ADU is required to remain under common ownership with the principal structure.

Occupancy of an ADU is limited to one family.

ADU is required to be smaller than the floor area of the largest primary dwelling unit. A detached ADU, internal or attached ADU created through new construction, internal or attached ADU created through an addition to an existing structure, or detached ADU created through the conversion of an existing structure to an ADU shall not exceed 1,000 square feet. However, an internal or attached ADU created through the altering of an existing structure may exceed 1,000 square feet of floor area but is limited to one level of the existing structure.

One pedestrian entrance to the structure is permitted to be on the front facing façade of the principal building. Exterior stairs serving the ADU are required to be located on the interior side or rear of the principal building.

An ADU does not require an off-street parking space.

Educational institution – public	P	P	P	P
Efficiency home	P	P	P	P
Efficiency home (when zoning relief is requested)	S	S	S	S
Home occupation	P	P	P	P
Independent living facility	S	S	S	S
Long term care facility	S	S	S	S
Membership organization	S	S	S	S
Neighborhood garden	P	P	P	P
Office	S	S	S	S
Park	P	P	P	P
Planned development	S	S	S	S
Playground	P	P	P	P
Public utility	S	S	S	S
Recreation center – public	S	S	S	S
Religious institution	S	S	S	S
Residential care home – Category I or II	P	P	P	P
Retirement community, home, hotel	S	S	S	S
Rooming house	S	S	S	S
Shelter for abused persons	P	P	P	P
Shelter care home	S	S	S	S
Transitional shelter	S	S	S	S
Transitional treatment facility – Category I or II	S	S	S	S

P = Permitted Use Not permitted, not eligible Special Use
 S = Special Use

PERMITTED AND SPECIAL USES				
	R4	R4a	R5	R6
Apartment hotel				S
Assisted living facility	S	S	S	S
Bed and breakfast establishment	S	S	S	S
Cemetery	S	S		
Child residential care home	S	S	S	S
Community center – public	S	S	S	S
Congregate housing	S	S	S	S
Cultural facility	S	S	S	S
Daycare center – adult or child	S	S	S	S
Daycare home – adult or child	P	P	P	P
Dwellings – Increase to legally established number		S		
Dwelling – Multiple-family	P	P*	P	P
Dwelling – Single-family attached	P	P*	P	P
Dwelling – Single-family detached	P	P	P	P
Dwelling-Two-family	P	P*	P	P
Educational institution – private	S	S	S	S

Community Development Dept. – Planning & Zoning Division
 909 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201
 E: zoning@cityofevanston.org
 P: 847-448-4311
 P: 847-448-8155
www.cityofevanston.org/zoning
