

## **PLANNING UNIT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

**Our Planning Unit receives many inquiries on what’s allowed on a property, parcel splits, animal allowance, tiny homes and much more. Here’s a list of FAQs to help guide you!**

### **Can I split/divide my land? And how do I do that?**

#### **What Exactly Applies to Your Situation?**

\* **If Outside a Platted Subdivision** –A parcel split/lot line adjustment permit is required to split or reconfigure a parcel outside of a platted subdivision, or within unsubdivided lands where special circumstances apply.

\* **If Within a Platted Subdivision** – Please ensure that the scenarios below do not apply to you: If Splitting/Combining to the original platted parcels within a platted subdivision, please contact the Yavapai County Assessor’s Office – Parcel Maintenance Division at 928-771-3220. To create additional parcels (increase density) beyond what was originally approved and platted within a platted subdivision, a Revised Final Plat must be done and not a Land Split/Minor Land Division. You can contact your local surveyor for additional questions on this type of Revised Final Plat. If Splitting parcels into five (5) or fewer lots any of which is ten (10) acres or smaller in size– a permit is required. For more information on Minor Land Divisions visit our Planning Application website.

**What is a Variance?** A Variance is a request for a modification or adjustment to certain requirements of the zoning regulation such as setbacks, height, lot size, etc. Variances may be granted when there are special conditions or circumstances applicable to a property, an adjacent property, or to a neighborhood, where the requirements of the zoning ordinance would cause an unnecessary hardship and that the granting of the variance is necessary for the preservation and the enjoyment of substantial property rights. Some examples of “special conditions or circumstances” could be slopes, washes, floodways, etc. Depending on the request, variances can be processed either administratively or through the public hearing process by the Board of Adjustment. More information on variances can be found on the Planning Application website.

**Can I camp on my vacant property?** Camping is allowed in RCU-2A zoning 2-acre minimum lots 10 days at a time, 3 times a year, 30 days in between each stay.

**Can I have a business in my home?** Yavapai County does allow home occupations with a Home Occupation Permit provided that the use is within a primary dwelling or in an attached or detached structure, is merely incidental to the residential use and does not change the character of the neighborhood. Home occupations shall comply with the Section 543 of the Yavapai County Planning and Zoning Ordinance. Contact our Planning Unit at [planning@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:planning@yavapaiaz.gov) for more information on these types of permits.

**Can I use my home for a vacation rental?** As of January 1, 2017, Yavapai County allows the short-term rental of permitted habitable structures. This means that ONLY structures PERMITTED as habitable space for overnight occupancy can be used as short-term rentals. This includes single-family residences, guest houses, apartments, and condominiums. This does NOT include travel trailers, recreational vehicles, tents, yurts, gazebos, teepees, sheds, garages, barns, caves, offices, or any other structure not permitted for overnight occupancy. Short-term rentals do NOT allow events such as weddings, parties, specialized retreats, or any commercial activities. Bed and Breakfasts do allow individual rooms to be rented as short-term rentals provided the home is owner occupied. Must register with the Yavapai County Assessor’s office for any type of rental.

**Are tiny houses legal in the County?** Small site-built homes are allowed provided the structure meets all required code and building permits are obtained. Tiny houses on wheels do not meet the required codes and are considered recreational vehicles. No travel trailers, motor homes or recreational vehicles shall be made suitable for long-term occupancy without one of the following: Temporary Dwelling Permit, Use Permit or Secondary Medical Dwelling Variance.

**What is a Use Permit and how do I get one?** Use Permits (UP) are provided for instances where a use or uses normally prohibited by the Use District should be allowed due to the unique characteristics of the property and of the surrounding area, but a rezoning to less restrictive Use District is not appropriate. A Preliminary Planning Meeting (PPM) is the first step in the formal permit process and is required prior to any formal application. For more information on these types of permits visit the Planning Application website.

**How many large animals can I have on my property?** Farm animals are allowed with a minimum parcel size of seventy thousand (70,000) square feet in the R1L and RMM zoning districts and a minimum parcel size of thirty-five thousand (35,000) square feet in the R1 and RCU zoning districts. Farm animals are for the convenience and pleasure of the lot occupants, not to exceed the number allowed as per the Allowed Animal Chart located in Section 501 E., page 85, Yavapai County Planning & Zoning Ordinance located on our [Yavapai County Codes & Ordinances](#) webpage. Stables, barns, or structures for sheltering or feeding animals must observe the same setbacks or yards as the dwelling unit. If a property owner or occupant is considering acquiring an exotic or unusual animal not found in the Yavapai County Planning and Zoning Animal Chart, please contact the Planning Unit.

**Can I have a cargo container on my property?** Yavapai County does allow steel storage containers to be used solely for the storage of personal items owned by the property owner, **occupant**, or business in the RMM or less restrictive zoning districts. Located in Section 564 A. 13., page 109, Yavapai County Planning & Zoning Ordinance. A permit is required.

**What are my setback requirements?** Setbacks are based on the size and density district of the parcel. A setback is the required distance a structure or part of a structure must be set back from the property line or the inside edge of an ingress/egress easement. To find the required setbacks (of a typical parcel) look up the parcel using the GIS Interactive Map Tool. Go to Map Layers Tab → Zoning for the zoning and density district. The Results tab will provide parcel information including the zoning district and density district. This will be shown as (zoning district) - (density district). Density Districts are located in Section 516 B., page 89, Yavapai County Planning and Zoning Ordinance. Density districts are listed in the left column. If the parcel is in a PAD or does not meet the size requirements (square footage and/or width/depth) of the density district.

**What does the Dark Sky Ordinance regulate?** Any outdoor light fixtures installed on property within the unincorporated areas of Yavapai County. The most recent version of this Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors and became effective July 18, 2025. Fixtures must be shielded and there is a limit on the total outdoor lighting allowed for each property (measured in lumens). Changes of Use or Exterior Building Modifications/Additions/Replacements that require a permit will require that ALL outdoor lighting on the property be brought into compliance with the new standards. Details are located in Section 603 Outdoor Lighting Standards in the Yavapai County Planning & Zoning Ordinance.