



Detached Additional Residential Units

Introduction

In order to increase housing affordability *Ontario's More Homes Built Faster Act 2022 (Bill 23)* allows home owners to add Additional Residential Units (ARU) to their home. This handout will focus on units being added in a detached accessory structure. If See the [Additional Residential Unit Handout](#) for ARUs in the main building.

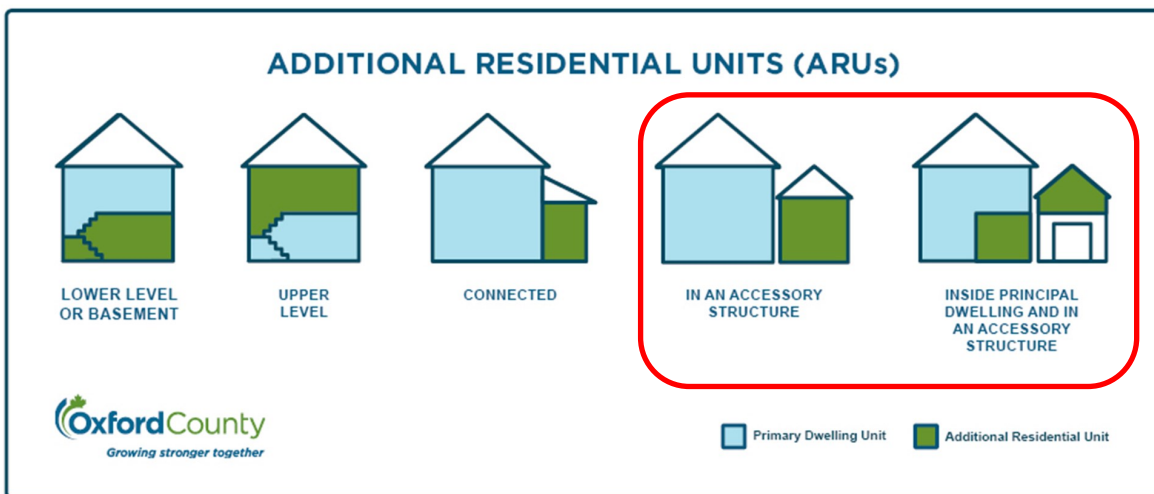
ARUs are also referred to as secondary suites, basement apartments, two-unit dwellings, granny flats, in-law suites, accessory apartments, laneway houses, coach houses, garage suites, and garden suites. ARUs can range in size from studio units to multiple bedroom units.

It is important to meet the Zoning and Building Code requirements, some of which may vary depending on the property and design.

Zoning By-Law

Properties zoned R1, R2, R3 and EC may have one primary dwelling unit and two ARUs. Each ARU will require one parking space, a separate municipal address, and a primary entrance. Zoning requirements will vary, based on the designation of your property and whether the ARU is attached to or detached from the primary dwelling. Setbacks from property lines, heights, lot coverage percentage, and other applicable zoning requirements will still apply to each permit and will need to be considered prior to submitting.

It is recommended to reach out to the building department to assist you and/or your designer further in retrieving relevant information. You can also research your property in **GLIMR** at the County of Oxford website at <https://www.oxfordcounty.ca/en/services-for-you/maps.aspx>



ARU Entrance

A detached ARU needs to be provided with a distinct entrance that provides access to and from the dwelling. A hard surface pathway that is a minimum of 34" wide is required from the front lot line, or public thoroughfare to the entrance of the ARU.

Parking Space

- Two parking spaces are required for the principal dwelling and one additional parking space is required for each ARU.
- A required parking space may be located within a garage provided the space is a minimum of 2.7m (8'-10 1/2") wide by 6m (19'-8 1/4") long.
- The minimum parking space size in a driveway is 2.7m (8'-10 1/2") wide by 5.5m (18'-3/4") long.
- Street parking cannot be counted towards the minimum required parking spaces as overnight street parking during the winter months is prohibited between 2am-6am.

Grading and Easements

If your design involves any changes to your grading, the construction of exterior stairs, or accessory structures:

- Confirm if your property has an approved lot grading plan as a revised grading plan may be required. Grading must allow free drainage of water away from structures and must not adversely effect neighbouring properties.
- Drainage must be maintained or improved with the ARU addition.
- Construction of an attached or detached ARUs are not permitted on an easement. Check with The Town to see if you have an easement on your property.

Building Permits

Drawings required for a building permit must be prepared by a qualified professional. This professional can be a BCIN designer, an architect, engineer, or a competent homeowner. Permit applications must be fully completed and include the following at a minimum:

- Building Permit Application submitted through Cloudpermit
- Schedule 1 Designer Information Form
- Site Plan / Servicing Plan (a Grading Plan may be required)
- Architectural Drawing Set
- Electrical Planning Form (Tillsonburg Hydro)
- ARU Sewage and Water System Capacity Confirmation (County of Oxford)
- HVAC Drawings and residential mechanical ventilation form,
- EEDS Form (EEDS only required for ARUs in accessory structures or additions)



Design Considerations

Design considerations that will be required by Code may vary depending on the age of your house. Some common considerations are as follows:

- Exits
- Smoke/Carbon monoxide alarms
- Egress from bedrooms
- Minimum room sizes and window requirements
- Access to laundry facilities
- Enbridge does not require a secondary gas meter
- Ensure adequate hydro service by consulting with Tillsonburg Hydro, call into our general line at extension x.4600. Confirm with Electrical Safety Authority (ESA).
- Separate water and sanitary services are not permitted, and new units must be connected to the existing sanitary service before it reaches the property line. Premise meters may be added after the main building meter to monitor water usage from each additional unit.
- Access to laundry facilities
- Additional requirements may be applicable.



Exits

All detached ARU dwelling units require access to an exit. In all cases, the exit must lead to a public thoroughfare. This exit path must be a distinct hard surfaced pathway that is maintained.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Smoke alarms must conform to CAN/ULC S531 “Smoke Alarm” Standard, check the specifications prior to purchasing these. Installation must comply with CAN/ULC-S553, “Installation of Smoke Alarms”.
- Smoke alarms are required on every level of each unit, in each bedroom, outside of sleeping areas (in the hallway or room directly adjacent), and in common areas shared by units like laundry and entrances.
- Smoke alarms must have a flashing strobe when activated and tested.
- Smoke alarms are required to be interconnected within each unit, and may be required to be interconnected between the units.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are required adjacent to sleeping rooms, and in service rooms not located within a dwelling unit.
- Smoke alarms and CO detectors may be combined units.

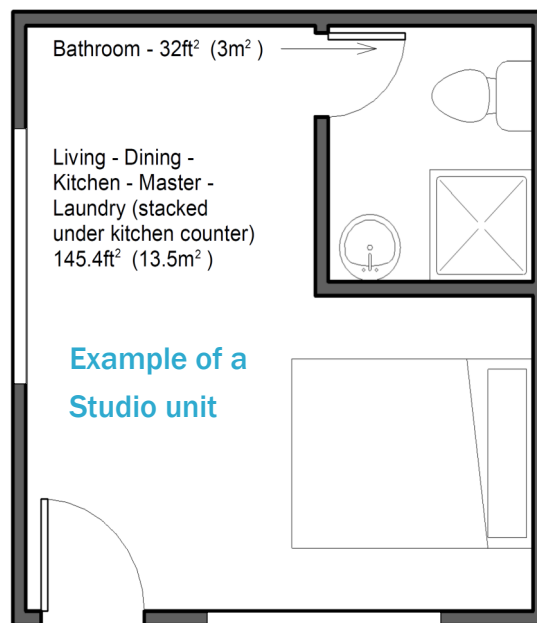
General Design Requirements

The following tables contain a general summary of common Ontario Building Code requirements.

Minimum Room Sizes		
Rooms or spaces	Separate spaces	Combined spaces
Living room (more than 1 bedroom)	145 ft ² (13.5 m ²)	145 ft ² (13.5 m ²)
Living room (1 bedroom only)	145 ft ² (13.5 m ²)	118 ft ² (11.0 m ²)
Dining room	75 ft ² (7.0 m ²)	35 ft ² (3.25 m ²)
Kitchen (more than 1 bedroom)	45 ft ² (4.2 m ²)	45 ft ² (4.2 m ²)
Kitchen (1 bedroom only)	40 ft ² (3.7 m ²)	40 ft ² (3.7 m ²)
Master bedroom with a closet	95 ft ² (8.8 m ²)	95 ft ² (8.8 m ²)
Master bedroom without a closet	105 ft ² (9.8 m ²)	105 ft ² (9.8 m ²)
Other bedroom with a closet	65 ft ² (6.0 m ²)	65 ft ² (6.0 m ²)
Other bedroom without a closet	75 ft ² (7.0 m ²)	75 ft ² (7.0 m ²)
Bedroom spaces in combination with another space	45 ft ² (4.2 m ²)	
Bathroom and laundry facilities	Sufficient space for fixtures (approx. 4 m ²)	
Studio apartment with combined kitchen, living and sleeping areas	13.5m ² (145.4 ft ²) plus sufficient space for a bathroom and laundry (approx. 4 m ²)	

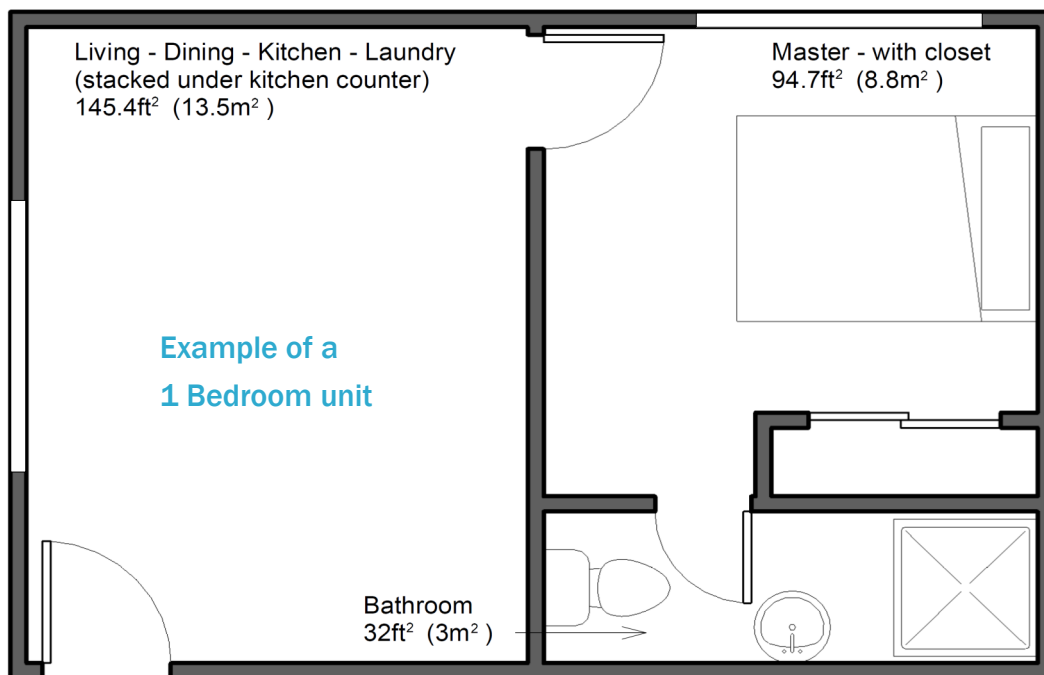
Minimum Unit Areas	
Studio unit	188 ft ² (17.5 m ²)
1 Bedroom unit	188 ft ² (17.5 m ²)
2 Bedroom unit	428 ft ² (39.75 m ²)

Door Sizes	
Doorway	Minimum Width
Dwelling Unit Entrance or utility room	32" (810mm)
Bedroom or rooms not mentioned elsewhere	30" (760mm)
Bathroom, washroom, and walk-in closet	24" (610mm)
Minimum height of doors = 78" (1980mm)	



Window Sizes		
Minimum unobstructed glass area of window based on Room (natural light)		
Living rooms and dining rooms	10 % of the area served	5% in buildings older than 5 years
Bedrooms	5% of the area served	2.5% in building older than 5 years

Ceiling Heights	
Room or Space	Minimum Heights over required floor area
Living room, dining room, kitchen, or space used for these purposes	7'-6 1/2" (2.3m) over at least 75% of the required floor area and a clear height of 6'-10 3/4" (2.1m) minimum over the remainder
Bedroom or bedroom spaces	7'- 6 1/2" (2.3m) over minimum 50% of space or 6'-10 3/4" (2.1m) over all the required area
Bathroom, water closet or laundry space above grade	6'-10 3/4" (2.1m) over any area where a person would normally be standing
Rooms/hallways not mentioned	6'-10 3/4" (2.1m)



List of Questions To Get You Started

Zoning Requirements and Applicable Law

- The property is zoned as R1, R2, R3, or EC
- The property has the room to accommodate additional parking spaces. If not, an encroachment permit may be required to widen the driveway
- Services can be provided to the new unit (water, hydro, sanitary.)
- Municipal addressing will need to be provided for the new unit(s)
- If your proposed ARU located in an existing/new accessory structure, see *Detached Additional Residential Units* handout

Design Considerations (Consult with a qualified designer a comprehensive list)

- The minimum are requirements for the proposed unit are met.
- The windows provide the minimum natural light and ventilation requirements
- An egress window is provided. If not, which window will be adjusted or added to meet code?
- A new exterior primary entrance be added or an interior location renovated.
- The smoke alarms / CO detectors are in the correct locations.
- Modifications are proposed for the plumbing and HVAC systems.
- A grading plan may be required based on the size of the addition.
- Overhead wires are not located in an area where an addition is proposed. If so, contact Tillsonburg Hydro to discuss.

Funding Considerations

- Research homeowner grants from the provincial and federal governments to improve your properties efficiency and reduce your carbon footprint.
- Consult financial professionals for trustworthy advice on the project.
- Research landlord legislation and what regulates the use of the ARU legally, Certain organizations offer assistance in finding approved renters who are in need.
- Compare designer/contractor pricing in hand with trustworthy reviews.

Additional information can be found at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/add-second-unit-your-house>

