



Additional Residential Unit (ARU) Policy – Zoning By-law 12-1979 *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*

1. WHAT IS AN ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT (ARU)?

An Additional Residential Unit (ARU) is a self-contained dwelling unit that is provided as a second or third residential unit on a single residential lot, alongside a principal residential unit. These ARUs are equipped with living space, a kitchen, and sanitary facilities.

2. TYPES OF ARU CONFIGURATIONS?

Detached ARU

A standalone residential unit that is physically separated from the principal dwelling (or its attached garage) with no shared walls. This includes:

1. A new standalone structure that is completely separate from the principal dwelling.
2. Converting the entirety of an existing detached accessory structure, such as a garage or a workshop, into a separate residential unit.
3. Adding an extension to an existing detached structure, such as adding a residential unit above or adjacent to an existing detached garage.

Attached ARU

A residential unit that is within or connected/attached to the principal dwelling (or its attached garage), having a shared wall. This includes:

1. Converting an existing space (e.g., attic, attached garage, storage area) into a residential unit.
2. Renovating an existing space/floor within the primary dwelling unit to create a separate residential unit, such as a residential unit within a basement.
3. Adding square footage to the primary dwelling unit, such as by adding a second storey or extending the footprint of the main floor.

3. WHERE CAN I HAVE AN ARU, AND HOW MANY ARUs ARE PERMITTED?

The Planning Act (the Act) now “as-of-right” permits up to three residential units on an urban residential lot and this permission overrides any conflicting municipal Zoning Bylaw regulations.

In the lands designated ‘Agricultural’ and ‘Rural,’ up to two ARUs may be permitted with a maximum of one ARU within a detached accessory structure to ensure that all units would be within the existing ‘farm cluster.’ This reduces the likelihood of Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) implications for surrounding farm operations.

“parcel of urban residential land” means a parcel of land that is within an area of settlement on which residential use, other than ancillary residential use, is permitted by by-law and that is served by,

(a) sewage works within the meaning of the Ontario Water Resources Act that are owned by,



- (i) a municipality,
 - (ii) a municipal service board established under the Municipal Act, 2001,
 - (iii) a city board established under the City of Toronto Act, 2006,
 - (iv) a corporation established under sections 9, 10 and 11 of the Municipal Act, 2001 in accordance with section 203 of that Act, or
 - (v) a corporation established under sections 7 and 8 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006 in accordance with sections 148 and 154 of that Act, and
- (b) a municipal drinking water system within the meaning of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002;
- “specified person” means,
- (a) a corporation operating an electric utility in the local municipality or planning area to which the relevant planning matter would apply,
 - (b) Ontario Power Generation Inc.,
 - (c) Hydro One Inc.,
 - (d) a company operating a natural gas utility in the local municipality or planning area to which the relevant planning matter would apply,
 - (e) a company operating an oil or natural gas pipeline in the local municipality or planning area to which the relevant planning matter would apply,
 - (f) a person required to prepare a risk and safety management plan in respect of an operation under Ontario Regulation 211/01 (Propane Storage and Handling) made under the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000, if any part of the distance established as the hazard distance applicable to the operation and referenced in the risk and safety management plan is within the area to which the relevant planning matter would apply,
 - (g) a company operating a railway line any part of which is located within 300 metres of any part of the area to which the relevant planning matter would apply, or
 - (h) a company operating as a telecommunication infrastructure provider in the area to which the relevant planning matter would apply;

4. AM I PERMITTED TO CONVERT MY SHED OR DETACHED GARAGE INTO AN ARU?

If the ARU is located within a detached accessory structure, it must comply with all the zoning and occupancy requirements for human habitation.

5. CAN I USE A SHIPPING CONTAINER OR A TRAILER FOR AN ARU?

No, a shipping container or a trailer can not be used as an ARU.

6. WILL AN ARU AFFECT MY PROPERTY TAXES?

Yes, the creation of an ARU will result in an increase in your property taxes. You can find general information about assessment and property taxes from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).



7. WHAT APPLICATIONS, FEES AND COSTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH ARUS?

Building Permit Application and Fees

If the proposed ARU complies with all the regulations outlined in the zoning by-law, then it becomes eligible for a building permit application. The cost of a building permit is determined by the project's size, the amount of work done, and the type of building being constructed or renovated.

Professional Fees

Depending on your project's nature, you may be required to hire a professional designer, architect, or engineer for a variety of processes including preparing your building permit drawings.

Registration Application and Fee

An application for Registration of Additional Residential Units must be filed with accompanying paperwork and applicable fee.

8. CAN AN ARU BE SEVERED AND SOLD SEPARATELY?

No. The intent of the Additional Residential Unit is to provide an additional unit on a property where a primary dwelling unit already exists.