

Planning your **Additional Residential Unit (ARU)**



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The County of Brant Development Services Department

Disclaimer

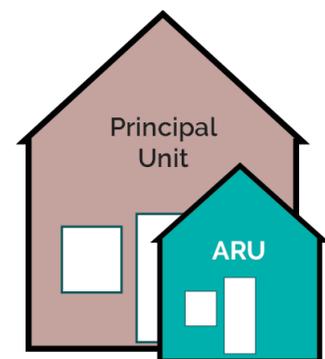
The information contained in this guide was compiled based on information available at the time this guide was produced. While this guide can be used as you plan your ARU project, the information herein, including regulations and costs, is subject to change and it is in the best interests of property owners and applicants who wish to pursue an ARU project to confirm all information in this planning guide prior to proceeding. For more information or assistance with your project, please contact the County of Brant Development Services Department.

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What is an Additional Residential Unit?

An Additional Residential Unit, or ARU, is a type of dwelling unit that is provided as a secondary dwelling unit on a property where there is a primary dwelling unit. ARUs can be inside an existing house, added on, or located in a detached accessory structure. These come in many shapes and sizes, and are commonly referred to as basement apartments, granny flats, coach homes, in-law suites, tiny homes, garage lofts, and more. If the new additional unit is smaller than the primary unit on the property, it may qualify as an ARU.



Do I qualify for an Additional Residential Unit?

To see if your property qualifies for an ARU, the main factor that will need to be addressed is the type of sanitary and water servicing that is available to the property. If you are on well and/or septic (private servicing), we need to make sure your property's size and services can handle any additional usage with the new ARU. With properties that have full municipal water and sanitary services, we will need to verify that servicing capacity of the area will be able to handle the ARU.

To apply for an Additional Residential Unit Building Permit, there are several requirements. To determine if the property may qualify for an Additional Residential Unit, please review the lists below. All Additional Residential Unit proposals will need to be reviewed by County of Brant staff. Please complete the Additional Residential Unit Planning Worksheet at the end of this guide to help provide all relevant property information for review.

I'm on private or partial services

Your property may qualify for an ARU if:

1. A residential use is permitted as a principal use of the lot
2. The lot is a minimum size of 0.4 hectares in area
3. A well and septic report is required with your building permit application to verify that any additional capacity and usage will be supported on the property
4. 1 additional parking space can be provided on the property in accordance with the standard required by the County
5. The ARU has unobstructed pedestrian access from the street and/or driveway
6. There are no other ARUs or Garden Suites on the property
7. If the ARU is located within the primary dwelling, or attached to it, it is subject to the requirements for a dwelling in the applicable zone category (*We've also included these later in this guide to help you out*)
8. If the ARU is in a detached accessory structure, and not connected to the primary dwelling, it is subject to the requirements for accessory structures on the property as provided in Section 4 of By-Law 61-16. (*We've also included these later in this guide to help you out*)
9. The ARU must meet all applicable requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Ontario Fire Code and requires an approved building permit for the additional unit
10. The ARU is located within 40.0 metres of the closest portion of the principal dwelling unit

I'm on full municipal services

Your property may qualify for an ARU if:

1. A residential use is permitted as a principal use of the property
2. Municipal water/sanitary services and capacity are available to the property, as verified by the County of Brant
3. The ARU has unobstructed pedestrian access from the street and/or driveway
4. There are no other ARUs or Garden Suites on the property
5. 1 additional parking space can be provided on the property in accordance with the standard required by the County
6. If the ARU is located within the primary dwelling, or attached thereto, the ARU must meet the requirements for a dwelling in the applicable zone category (*We've also included these later in this guide to help you out*)

7. If the ARU is in a detached accessory structure, and not connected to the primary dwelling, the ARU must meet the requirements for accessory structures on the property in accordance with Section 4 of By-Law 61-16. *(We've also included these later in this guide to help you out)*
8. The ARU must meet all applicable requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Ontario Fire Code and requires an approved building permit to establish the additional residential unit.

What are my setback and size requirements?

The requirements for how large, how tall, and where on your property you can build your ARU will depend on a few different factors. First, it will depend on the zone category that applies to your property and if you are building an ARU that is attached to the primary house or detached from it.

Use the information below to help determine what requirements may apply to your property. Please note that the information below is provided as a summary of the overall requirements and certain properties may have specific requirements that are not listed below. If you need help finding out what your property is zoned, you can visit www.brant.ca/zoning, email zoning@brant.ca or contact Planning Staff for assistance.

Keep in mind that that each property is a little bit different and there may be other factors that impact the size you can build, such as the setbacks from your property lines or from your well and septic. The information below is provided to give you a good starting point and when staff reviews the proposal, we'll be able to help figure out exactly what permissions will apply to your property to help move your project forward.

What does my zoning mean?

Your property's zoning helps lay out what uses are permitted on your property and where structures can be placed. The zoning will help you figure out what requirements will apply to your ARU project for things like maximum floor area, height, and required setbacks from your property lines.

Listed below are the common zone categories that will allow for an ARU project:

- ***Agriculture (A)***
- ***Rural Residential (RR)***
- ***Non-urban Residential (SR & RH)***
- ***Urban Residential (R1, R2, RM1, RM2 & RM3)***

How far from my property lines do I have to be?

The requirements for the property line setbacks of your ARU will be dependent on whether you are planning an ARU that is inside/attached to your primary house (such as a basement apartment), or if it will be detached from the primary house (such as a tiny home). The requirements will also vary based on the property's zoning and are illustrated in the tables below for your convenience.

My ARU will be inside or attached to my main house

	Agriculture	Rural Residential	Non-urban Residential	Urban Residential
<i>From any property line along a street</i>	10.0 metres	20.0 metres	7.5 metres	4.5 metres
<i>From side property lines</i>	4.0 metres	5.0 metres	1.5 metres	1.2 metres
<i>From a rear property line</i>	10.0 metres	15.0 metres	7.5 metres	6.0 metres

*Please note that any openings such as windows and doors may impact the location of an ARU. These details are governed by the Ontario Building Code.

My ARU will be detached from my primary house

	Agriculture	Rural Residential	Non-urban Residential	Urban Residential
<i>Setback from street-fronting property line</i>	10.0 metres	20.0 metres	7.5 metres	4.5 metres
<i>Setbacks from side property lines abutting a neighbour</i>	3.0 metres	1.5 metres	1.5 metres	1.2 metres
<i>Setback from rear property line abutting a neighbour</i>	3.0 metres	1.5 metres	1.5 metres	1.2 metres

*Please note that any openings such as windows and doors may impact the location of an ARU. These details are governed by the Ontario Building Code.

How large and how tall can I build?

The requirements for the maximum size and height of your ARU will also be dependent on whether you are planning an ARU that is inside/attached to your primary house (such as a basement apartment), or if it will be detached from the primary house (such as a tiny home). The requirements will also vary based on the property's zoning and are illustrated in the tables below.

My ARU will be inside or attached to my primary house

To determine the maximum size you can build, you'll have to add the footprint area of your existing house and any accessory structures with the size of your proposed ARU to make sure it doesn't exceed the maximum coverage percentage of your lot area.

	Agriculture	Rural Residential	Non-urban Residential	Urban Residential
<i>Maximum lot coverage (all structures)</i>	30% of lot area	30% of lot area	30% of lot area	40% of lot area
<i>Maximum Height</i>	10.0 metres	10.5 metres	10.5 metres	10.5 metres

My ARU will be detached from my primary house

To determine the maximum size for your detached ARU, you'll first need to add together the area of all your existing accessory structures. This would include an uncovered deck if it's over 2 feet above grade, detached garages, sheds, gazebos, or other accessory structures. Now subtract your existing accessory coverage number from the maximum noted in the table below and you'll get the maximum size of the ARU you can build. For example, if your property is zoned *Agriculture* and you have a detached garage and uncovered deck that total 140 square metres, you'll subtract this from the maximum 200 square metres to determine that you may be able to build an ARU that is 60 square metres.

When calculating the maximum lot coverage percentage for your ARU, keep in mind that the property also has a maximum lot coverage that applies to all structures on the property, including the primary dwelling. In most cases, you'll hit the maximum floor area number before you'll hit your total lot coverage, but in some cases 15% of your lot area may be smaller than the maximum permitted floor area. If this is the case, the smaller number will prevail as the maximum. For example, on an Urban Residential property that is 400 square metres, 15% of the property area is 60 square metres. Because this is less than the 95 square metres, the 60 square metres would become your maximum.

If you have questions about what your maximum permissions will be, Planning and Building staff will review your calculations when you submit your permit application and are also available to assist with any questions about determining your specific requirements before your submission. The table below is provided as a guide to determining the maximum size permissions as you consider your project.

	Agriculture	Rural Residential	Non-urban Residential	Urban Residential
<i>Maximum floor area for all accessory structures (area, in metres squared)</i>	200 square metres	140 square metres	140 square metres	95 square metres
<i>Maximum lot coverage for all accessory structures (% of lot area)</i>	15%	15%	15%	15%
<i>Maximum Height (in metres)</i>	5.0 metres	5.0 metres	5.0 metres	4.5 metres

**Please note that any openings such as windows and doors may impact the location of an ARU. These details are governed by the Ontario Building Code.*

I don't quite qualify, so what can I do?

If your property or project doesn't quite meet the requirements needed to make it eligible for a building permit, you may be able to pursue a variance to ask permission from our Committee of Adjustment to have your ARU project move forward. Dependent on what requirement(s) your project doesn't quite meet, you'll need to let us know that your project will not have negative impacts on things like parking, water quality and quantity, septic attenuation, the character of the neighbourhood and the privacy of neighboring properties. This justification will be dependent on what requirement(s) you don't meet and you may need the assistance of a hired professional planner and/or engineer to help you prepare your application.

Going through the variance process will take a bit of time and extra money, but it will help us ensure that your project is done safely and can meet the intent of the policies in place. This is a public process that allows a neighbourhood to get involved and have their input on whether they think an application is suitable or not. The Committee of Adjustment will make the decision on the application and consider granting a variance if the criteria of the 'four tests of a minor variance' (as outlined within *The Planning Act*) can be met. These criteria are as follows:

1. The application is minor in nature,
2. The variance will be promoting the appropriate development or use of the property,
3. The general intent and purpose of the municipal Zoning By-Law is maintained, and
4. The general intent and purpose of the municipal Official Plan is maintained.

If you are considering a minor variance application for your project, it is best to talk to your neighbours to hear their feedback and address any concerns they may raise before spending the money needed to have your application go before the Committee of Adjustment. It is also best to contact and meet with Planning staff about your variance application to learn more about the submission requirements, application process, timeliness, fees, and policy requirements before applying for a variance. For more information, please contact the Development Planning Division at planning@brant.ca or 519.44BRANT.

How do I get a building permit?

A Building Permit is required to establish your Additional Residential Unit. There may be different Ontario Building Code requirements for your project depending on if you are renovating a house to create the new unit, if you are putting an addition on your house, converting an accessory structure, converting an established garden suite, or building a completely new detached accessory structure. Different properties and building types may have different submission requirements and fees. If you need assistance with your building permit application, please contact our Building Division at building@brant.ca or **519.44BRANT** (519.442.7268) | 1.855.44BRANT.

What kind of fees will apply to my project?

Development Charges

Development Charges are a one-time fee levied by municipalities on new residential and non-residential properties that help pay for a portion of the growth-related infrastructure projects. As the County of Brant continues to grow, we need to make sure each new dwelling unit is accounted for with our updated infrastructure and services. In most cases, Development Charges will apply to detached Additional Residential Units. Development Charges may not apply to internal renovations or an addition to create an Additional Residential Unit. For more information on Development Charges, please check the County of Brant Website or contact our Building Division for assistance.

Building Permit Fees

Building permit fees for a detached Additional Residential Unit is based on the finished floor area of the building, at a rate of \$1.60 per square foot and \$1.00 per square foot for attached garages. Building permit fees for renovations and additions to create an Additional Residential Unit are based on the construction value of the project at a rate of \$14.00 per \$1000.00, with a minimum fee of \$100.00.

These fees can be found on the County of Brant Website at Brant.ca/Fees or by contacting our Building Division directly at building@brant.ca or 519.44BRANT (519.442.7268) | 1.855.44BRANT.

*As building permit fees are subject to change, please verify any fees and charged with County of Brant Staff before preparing payment for your application.

Lot Grading Plan

Depending on the location of the Additional Residential Unit, a Lot Grading Plan may be required to ensure the County of Brant Development and Engineering Standards are being met. The purpose of a Lot Grading plan is to confirm drainage is directed away from the building and to ensure the project does not cause drainage issues or damage to neighboring properties. This may include the addition of items such as swales, slopes, infiltration galleries, etc. Determination of the requirement for a Lot Grading Plan will take place at the time of application for building permit.

What documents will I need for my building permit application?

To submit for a building permit, you'll need to provide the following paperwork to help staff review your project:

- A **complete and signed permit application form**
 - Including [Designer information 'Schedule 1'](#) corresponding with the designer's name and BCIN on all drawings submitted with the application
- A copy of the **Property Deed**
- A copy of the **approved zoning/grading site plan** and **ARU Planning Checklist**
 - A site plan illustrating the size and setbacks of the ARU, the location of wells, septic, and all other site services can be submitted to zoning@brant.ca along with the ARU Planning Checklist found at the end of this guide to obtain this approval.
- A complete set of construction drawings, drawn to scale, including applicable:
 - **Foundation Plans** (size of walls, footings, and piers)
 - **Floor Plans** (overall dimensions, room names, structure information etc.)
 - **Building Elevations** (from all sides showing wall and roof height, window, and door locations, etc.)
 - **Cross Sections** (through the wall from footings to roof noting all materials in the foundation, wall, and roof assembly)
- A **Heat Loss/Gain Calculation** and **Mechanical Ventilation Design Summary/Layout**
 - Provided along with calculations – Schedule 1: Designer Information
- An **Energy Efficiency Design Summary** form and applicable supporting documents
- A Copy of the **Truss Layout** for roof and/or floor layout
- A copy of the **Well and Septic Report and/or Permit**
- Other applicable approvals / supporting documentation may apply:
 - **Conservation Authority permit** or written permission (Grand River Conservation Authority / Long Point Regulatory Conservation Authority)
 - **Proof of address** for the ARU (which may require the purchase of an additional blue 9-1-1 address plate, and can be obtained by emailing planning@brant.ca)
 - **Proof of Municipal Servicing Capacity** for the ARU (obtained by emailing the County of Brant Development Engineering Division)
 - A **Minimum Distance Separation 1 Calculation** for properties in rural areas, as required by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that the new dwelling will not impact surrounding livestock facilities and vice versa. (More information on this can be found in the FAQs section of this guide)

To convert an existing Garden Suite, a Building Permit may not be required if one was previously issued. Please verify any requirements for your Building Permit submission with staff in advance. Contact our Building Division directly at building@brant.ca or 519.44BRANT (519.442.7268) | 1.855.44BRANT.

*This excludes a recreational vehicle as defined within the County of Brant Zoning By-Law 61-16.



Frequently Asked Questions about ARUs

Does my ARU need a separate address?

Yes, please contact planning@brant.ca to have an address assigned to your ARU. This address will be assigned as a secondary address to the property to ensure the safety of the people residing in both dwelling units.

Can an ARU be severed and sold separately?

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

Can I have more than one (1) ARU on my property?

No. The Official Plan policies and Zoning By-Law requirements will only permit one Additional Residential Unit per property at this time. This policy will also apply to properties with a garden suite or an additional unit that may be considered legal non-conforming.

Do I need insurance on my ARU?

Yes. You will need to contact your individual insurance provider for quotes and information on coverage for your Additional Residential Unit.

Will Minimum Distance Setbacks (MDS) apply to an ARU within the rural areas of the County?

Minimum Distance Setbacks may need to be reviewed by Staff for an Additional Residential Unit proposal.

I need an MDS 1 Calculation for my ARU, where do I start?

A Minimum Distance Setback Calculation is required when your property is in a rural or agricultural area, outside of one of our settlement areas within the Official Plan. Applicants are required to provide the information necessary for County of Brant Planning staff to review a Minimum Distance Setback calculation. In some instances, it may be helpful to an applicant to hire [a land-use planning consultant or a nutrient management consultant](#) to undertake the calculation on their behalf.

How do I connect my ARU to proper services?

In most cases, you'll need to connect your ARU to water and wastewater services through the existing dwelling. While you can have your services metered separately between the primary house and the ARU, your services will likely be provided through the existing services to your property. You will need to contact the appropriate service providers, and in some cases, a qualified professional that can advise if your current service connections can accommodate the increase in service use, or if you will need to pay to have your services upgraded. Listed below are the common service providers in the County of Brant and who should be contacted for more information:

Municipal Water & Sanitary Services

- County of Brant Public Works Division (519-44BRANT or www.brant.ca)

Hydro Services

- Energy Plus (519.442.2215 or www.energyplus.ca)
- Hydro One (1.888.664.9376 or www.hydroone.com)

Well and Septic Services

- A qualified plumbing and/or septic professional

Natural Gas Services

- Enbridge / Union Gas (1.888.774.3111 or www.uniongas.com)

Will an ARU affect my property taxes?

Yes. Your property taxes will increase because you are adding a use and/or structure to your property. Please contact the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation for more information on a property assessment and incremental increase to your property taxes. More information can be found at www.mpac.ca or by contacting the County of Brant Tax Division at tax@brant.ca

What can I do if my property is not eligible?

If your property does not meet the requirements, you may not be able to have an ARU. In cases where your property cannot meet Zoning standards by only a very small amount, you may be able to apply to the Committee of Adjustment for a minor variance. Please note, however, that certain standards cannot be 'varied'. When you apply to vary certain standards, County of Brant Planning Staff will assess each application on a case-by-case basis. The application will be assessed based on the information submitted and the policy framework in place. If you have questions about a possible application, please review the section of this guide called "I don't quite qualify" and feel free to reach out to Planning staff for assistance.

Can I convert a temporary Garden Suite to a permanent Additional Residential Unit?

To convert a Garden Suite to a permanent Additional Residential Unit, please complete the Additional Residential Unit Worksheet below with a site plan for the existing structure. Please note that a recreational vehicle, as defined within the County of Brant Zoning By-Law 61-16, is not permitted as an Additional Residential Unit within the County of Brant. Additional Residential Unit Planning Worksheet

ARU Worksheet

This helpful worksheet can assist you with calculating the size, height, and setbacks of your ARU. It will also help staff review your proposal to provide you with any requirements you might need to get your building permit.

www.brant.ca/en/invest-in-brant/resources/ARU/ARU-Worksheet.pdf



ARU-Planning
Worksheet.pdf