

Media Release

Owen Sound First in County To Approve Additional Residential Units (ARUs) to Aid in Affordable Housing Efforts

Owen Sound, Ontario
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Monday evening, City Council approved a Zoning Bylaw Amendment that permits additional residential units (ARUs) in urban areas, allowing for an increase in more efficient and affordable housing in Owen Sound.

The Zoning Amendment will permit up to two additional residential units (for a total of three units) in any single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling, subject to meeting certain criteria, including providing parking and obtaining a Building Permit. This means residents can add rental income apartments within their houses or create 'in-law suites' to house multi-generational families within one home.

During the preparation of the City's new Official Plan in 2022, housing choice and affordability were recurring themes of the public consultation. Recent amendments to the Planning Act direct municipalities to include regulations in Zoning Bylaws to permit ARUs.

As part of Grey County, the City also works with Grey County on a variety of initiatives, including policy development that will support the creation of affordable and attainable housing as well as initiatives that support people who are homeless. The City is the first of Grey County's lower tier to enact a Bylaw permitting ARUs.

In an earlier Zoning Amendment, the City eliminated the minimum gross floor area requirement for residential units in favour of the minimums required under the Ontario Building Code. This allows for homes to be constructed (singles, semi-detached, townhouses and apartments) that are smaller, again making way for more housing options.

For more information, please contact Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services at 519-376-4440 ext. 1252 or email pcoulter@owensound.ca

Quotes:

“With housing shortages and high rental costs in mind, I am happy to see this change that permits additional residential units to be built on existing serviced properties. This will provide a potential source of additional housing that is attainable. I am pleased that Owen Sound is the first community in Grey County to move forward with this initiative.”

- Mayor Ian Boddy

Quick Facts:

- Owen Sound City Council has approved a Zoning Bylaw Amendment to allow for additional residential units (ARUs) in the City
- ARUs can be additional apartments, in-law suites, or separate residential spaces available for rent
- The additional units may be located in the main dwelling; one unit may also be created in a detached structure.
- Owen Sound is the first municipality within Grey County to enact a Bylaw permitting ARUs
- ARUs allow for housing to become more affordable for first-time homebuyers, age-friendly for multi-generations to live within one property, and provide some financial assistance to the homeowner or landlord.