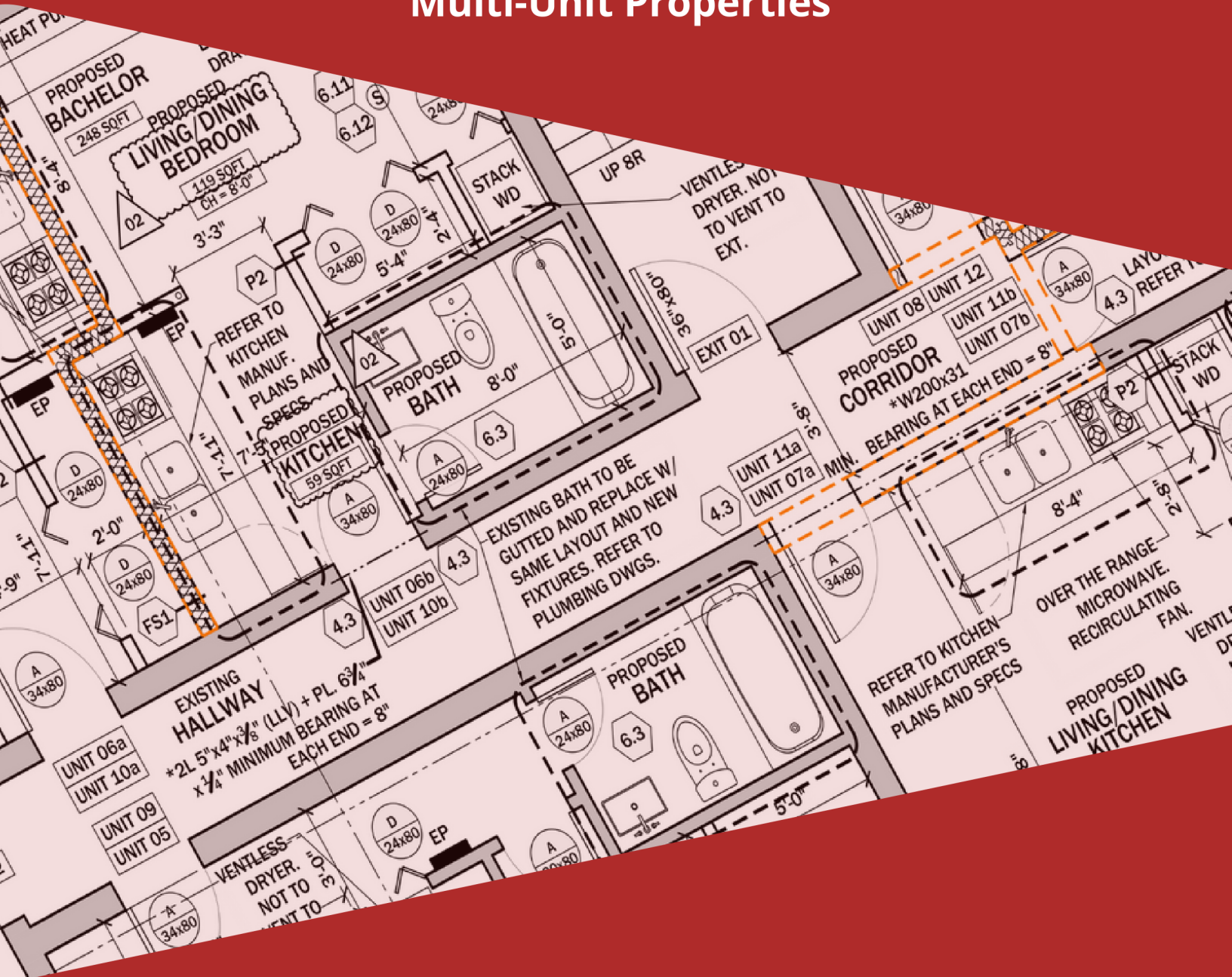


THE

ULTIMATE CHECKLIST

Converting Single-Family Homes/Duplexes into
Multi-Unit Properties



HENRY ROJAS

Introductions

Converting a single-family home or an existing duplex into a multi-unit property in Ontario can be a lucrative investment opportunity. However, it's essential to navigate the complex regulatory landscape and construction requirements to ensure a successful conversion. This checklist outlines the **TOP 3 CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS** you must evaluate before buying and converting such properties.

Don't forget to check out our **LAST PAGE for a Budget Sheet Breakdown** for all the Services & City Fees to expect for these types of Project! Always run your NUMBERS!

#1

ZONING BYLAW

#2

BUILDING CODE

#3

CONSTRUCTION



Zoning Bylaw



ZONING: Before purchasing a property for conversion, check the zoning **DESIGNATION** designation. Ensure that the property is zoned for the number of units you intend to create. Zoning laws can vary widely across municipalities in Ontario, so it's vital to familiarize yourself with the local zoning bylaws and ensure that your intended use is permitted. **Look for words like "Multiplex", "Additional Dwelling Units" OR "Multiple Dwellings."**



PARKING: Evaluate the parking regulations in your specific area. Many **REQUIREMENTS** municipalities in Ontario have strict parking requirements for multi-unit properties. Ensure that you have enough space for tenant parking and that you are in compliance with local regulations. If additional parking space is required, consider how you will create it on the property. **Typically 1 parking per unit. Check if tandem parking is allowed.**
Parking ratio varies (0.3/Unit, 0.8/Unit, 1.25/Unit, etc...)



HAMILTON



TORONTO



WELLAND

TYPE IN YOUR SEARCH ENGINE
"CITY NAME" ZONING INTERACTIVE MAP

Zoning Bylaw



HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS If the property you're interested in has a heritage designation, you may encounter additional restrictions on alterations and renovations. Contact the local heritage department to understand the specific guidelines and limitations you must follow to preserve the property's historical and architectural significance. Some Municipalities have an online form which you can fill in and submit for them to check for you. **You may need a "Heritage Permit" depending on the scope of work.**



LOCAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES If the property is located in or near a designated conservation area, there may be specific regulations that pertain to development and environmental preservation. **Consult with the relevant conservation authority to ensure your conversion plans align with the conservation restrictions and ecological concerns.**

Visit <https://conservationontario.ca/conservation-authorities/find-a-conservation-authority>



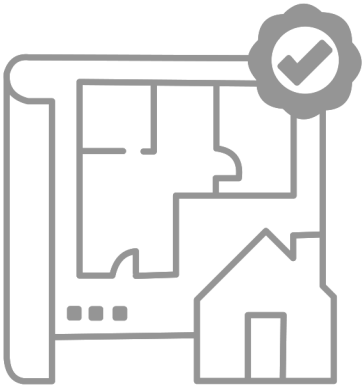
Typical heritage features to remain: trimwork, exterior wall finishes, columns, doors, roof

Note: Heritage and Conservations are separate from the municipalities' zoning and planning department.

Zoning Bylaw



SITE PLAN APPROVAL Certain municipalities in Ontario require site plan approval for **(SPA)**: multi-unit conversions. This process can be time-consuming and costly, involving detailed site plans, environmental assessments, and public consultations.



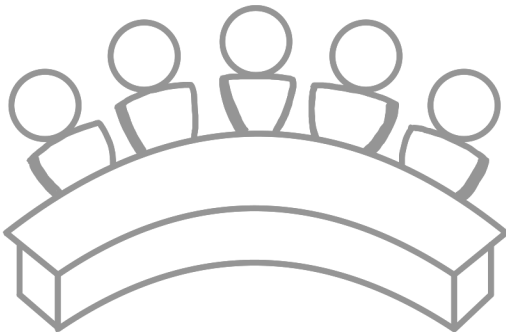
There are some municipalities who **waive this process** for your 10+ unit conversions **if all the work (that they interpret) is within the building.**

However, some have interpret the additional parking and new windows as part of exterior work and thus triggering the SPA.



COMMITTEE OF: If you encounter zoning challenges, you may need to seek minor **ADJUSTMENT/MINOR VARIANCE** variances through the Committee of Adjustment (CoA). This process involves submitting applications, public notifications, and hearings.

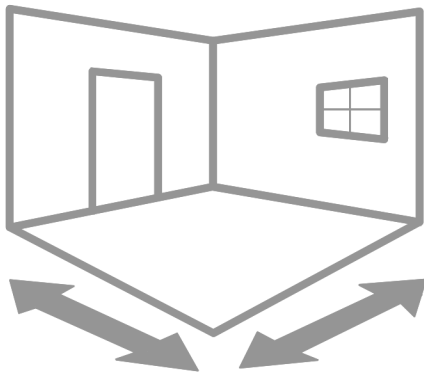
Consulting and pairing your local planner with your designer/ architect can help you navigate the process and increase your chances of success.



Building Code



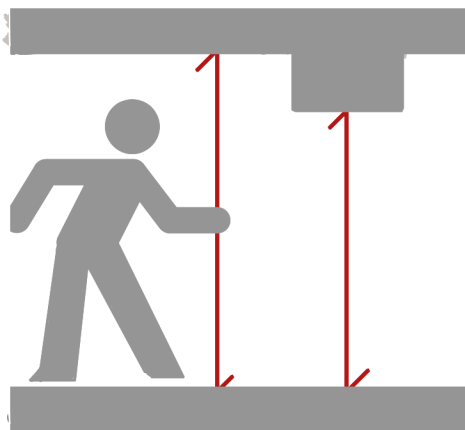
ROOM SIZE: The Ontario Building Code sets strict requirements for minimum room sizes in residential units. Ensure that all rooms in your conversion meet these standards to avoid compliance issues.



SINGLE AREAS				
ROOM	MINIMUM AREAS			
	1 BED		2 or MORE BEDS	
	M2	SQFT	M2	SQFT
LIVING RM	13.5	145.31	13.5	145.31
DINING RM	7	75.35	7	75.35
KITCHEN	3.70	39.83	4.20	45.21
MASTER BEDROOM W/O CLOSET	9.8	105.49	9.8	105.49
MASTER BED W/ CLOSET	8.8	94.72	8.8	94.72
BEDROOM W/O CLOSET	7	75.35	7	75.35
BEDROOM W/ CLOSET	6	64.58	6	64.58
COMBINED AREAS				
ROOM	MINIMUM AREAS			
	1 BED		2 or MORE BEDS	
	M2	SQFT	M2	SQFT
DINING + KITCHEN	10.7	115.17	11.2	120.56
LIVING + KITCHEN	17.2	185.14	17.7	190.52
DINING + LIVING	16.75	180.30	16.75	180.30
DINING + LIVING + KITCHEN	17.95	193.21	20.95	225.50
DINING + LIV. + KITCHEN + BED	13.5	145.31	22.65	243.80



CEILING HEIGHTS: Essential for creating safe and comfortable living spaces. The minimum ceiling height varies for different parts of a dwelling. **The min ceiling height for 3+ units is 6'-11"** since this would be considered a "building" not a "house" under building code. **Under bulkheads and beam would be 6'-5".**

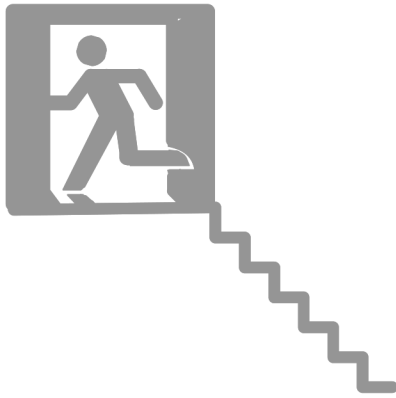


Remember ceiling height is calculated from finished floor to finished ceiling

Building Code



EXITS AND EGRESS: Safety is paramount in multi-unit buildings. Comply with the building code's requirements for emergency exits, stairways, and egress paths.



Each unit should have their own dedicated exit OR if shared with another unit, then you must provide another shared exit. One of the biggest complications, are the attic units since it'll be over 2 storeys to get out (which is not allowed in the building code), they will need to provide a new balcony on the attic level which usually involves a new dormer (\$\$\$).



NATURAL LIGHTING: Ensure that your conversion plans incorporate provisions for windows/natural lighting. The minimum natural light requirement (determined by the amount of glazing on the window) is **5%** of the Living and Dining Room areas. While its **2.5%** of the bedrooms and other finished areas (dens).

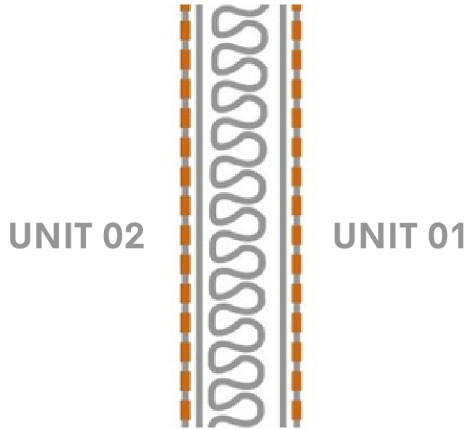


PART 11 (RENOVATIONS)		
ROOM	MIN. GLAZ W/O ELECTRIC	MIN. GLAZ W/ ELECTRIC
LR, BMNT REC, UNFIN. BMNT	2% OF AREA	WINDOWS NOT REQUIRED
WATER CLOSET RM	0.185m ²	WINDOWS NOT REQUIRED
KITCHEN	5% OF AREA	WINDOWS NOT REQUIRED
DINING + LIVING	5% OF AREA	5% OF AREA
BED & OTHER FINISH ROOMS	2.5% OF AREA	2.5% OF AREA

Building Code



FIRE & SOUND Compliance with fire separation requirements is critical for the safety of all occupants. Ensure that you have fire-rated walls, doors, and floors/ceilings between units. **Normally, we must provide 45 MIN fire rating**, however when you include the required sound insulation the Wall fire rating bumps up to a 1hr rating.

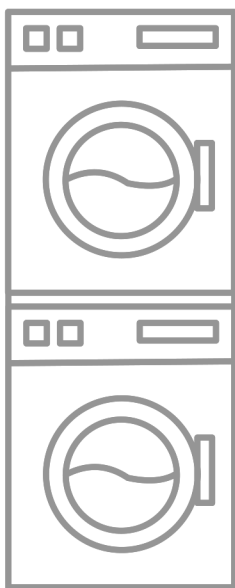


Service rooms require a 30MIN fire rating, while door in fire separation walls must be Min. 20MIN fire rating.

Exterior windows and walls along the path where the occupant/tenant takes to escape the building **MUST also be fire rated** to ensure the safety of the exit path to the public thoroughfare



LAUNDRY SERVICE: Any/all new unit conversion project requires you to **provide laundry service for all units in the building**. This laundry service must be within the building. Additionally, consider the convenience and accessibility of laundry services for your tenants as part of your conversion plans.

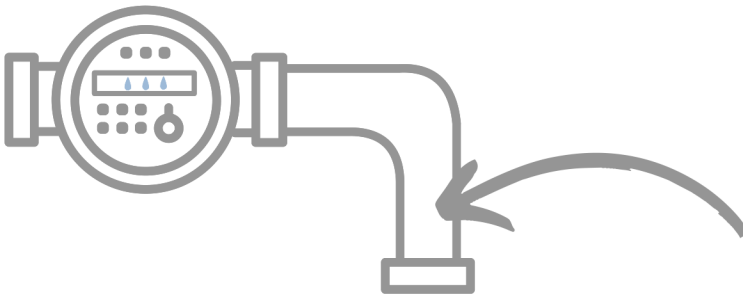


You can either provide each unit with their own in-suite laundry service OR provide a common laundry closet for all units to use. Be warned that new common laundry closets might trigger an exit code issue. Normally, laundry closet should not be part of the exit path, each municipalities have interpret this differently.

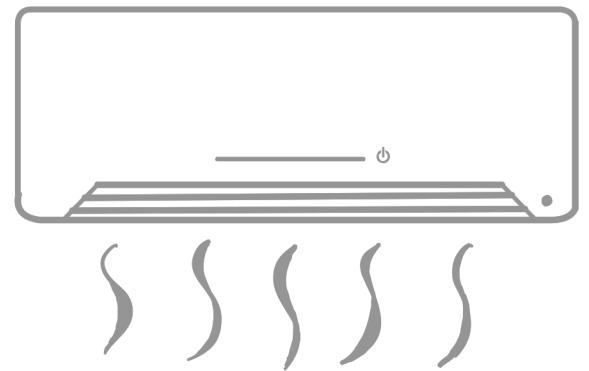
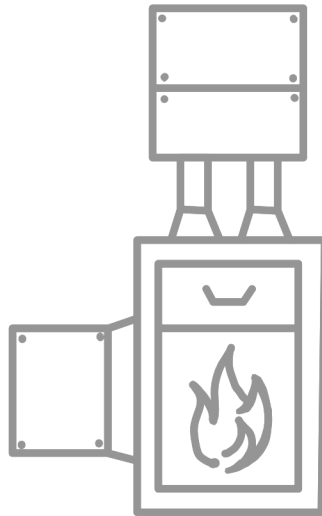
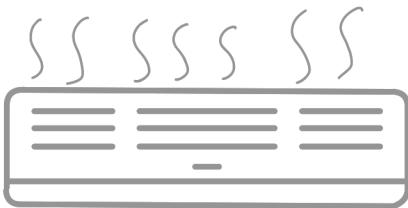
Construction



WATER METER SIZE: Evaluate the water meter size to ensure it can accommodate the increased water usage for multiple units. Upgrading the water service may be necessary to meet the demands of additional units. **Most of the time the existing water pipe size needs to be upgraded to 1" or 1 1/4"** for all the new plumbing fixtures (Typically due to the new Dishwashers and Washing Machines)



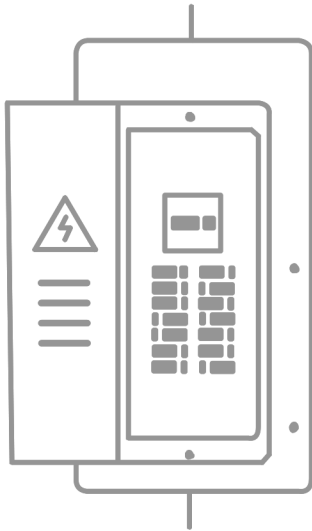
HEAT SOURCE: Select an efficient and cost-effective heat source for the multi-unit property. Depending on the number of units and heating needs, you may choose individual furnaces, a centralized heating system, Mini Split (Heat Pumps), Electric Baseboards or a combination. **Note that an existing furnace could be your primary heating source for up to 4 units.**



Construction



ELECTRICAL SERVICE: Assess the existing electrical service size to ensure it can **SIZE** support the increased electrical load. Upgrading the electrical panel and wiring may be necessary to meet the electrical needs of multiple units.



Majority of existing single family detached have 100amps, increasing to 200amps has been the norm for duplex conversion and could suffice for up to 3 unit conversions. Any more units would require more power.

You may also want to consider splitting the hydro panel, 1 per unit.



FIRE SAFETY PLAN: This is a document/plan that identifies the actions that should be taken by the occupants/tenants in case of a fire or emergency situation.

These types of plans are required when the “Building” is more than 3 storeys (including the basement).

For example, a 2 storey house with a basement wouldn't trigger this requirement **BUT** when the building has an attic space acting as the 3rd storey, NOW you are required to provide this plan.

Budget Sheet



SERVICES	COST
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN	
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING	
TRUSS ENGINEERING	
HVAC ENGINEERING	
PLUMBING ENGINEERING	
FIRE ALARM PLAN	
LEGAL SURVEY/TOPOGRAPHIC	
GRADING PLAN	
SITE SERVICING	
ELECTRICAL (POWER, LIGHTING)	
ELECTRICAL (HYDRO UPGRADE)	
PLANNER	
TOTAL SERVICING	
APPLICATIONS/CITY FEES	COST
ZONING CERTIFICATE/REVIEW FEES	
SITE PLAN APPROVAL FEES	
CoA FEES	
BUILDING PERMIT FEES	
DEVELOPMENT CHARGES	
PARKLAND FEES	
TOTAL APPLICATION/CITY FEES	
TOTAL GRAND FEES	