

Two Units, One Lot: Planning Checklist

What to settle before adding a basement apartment and garden suite

Confirm With the Town First

- 1 Ask how many units your zoning permits today**
Bring your survey; the answer depends on the lot, not just the street.
- 2 Ask what registration the basement unit needs**
Attached units are registered with the town after the permit work passes inspection.
- 3 Ask about current development charge policy**
Policies for additional units change; confirm what applies before you budget.
- 4 Ask whether tree protection applies to the yard build**
Root zones can constrain where a detached unit and its services can go.

Check the Lot's Real Capacity

- 1 Water and sewer service size**
Three kitchens draw on one connection; have the service assessed early.
- 2 Electrical service and panel space**
Ask for a load calculation covering both new units before finalizing designs.
- 3 Parking and emergency access**
Walk the side yard; access routes constrain detached units more than floor plans do.
- 4 Grading and drainage**
New roofs and paths change where storm water goes; a grading plan is part of the permit.

Sequencing Questions

- 1 Decide which unit generates rent first**
Basement-first lets rent flow while the yard build is still in permitting.
- 2 Plan the trench once**
Power, water, and communication lines to the garden suite can share one dig.
- 3 Reserve panel and plumbing capacity in phase one**
Cheap to rough in now, disruptive to add later.

Bring this checklist to your first site visit and design meeting.

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