



## Converting an Existing Single-Family Home to a Two-Family Duplex

Adding an additional dwelling unit to your existing single-family home has requirements from Construction Services, Planning, and Life Safety:

### **Compliance for Minnesota Residential & Fire Codes – See codes for all requirements**

1. 1-hr fire separation is needed between the dwelling units. These may be a horizontal (Floor/Ceiling) separation for up/down duplexes or a vertical (wall) separation for side-by-side duplexes.
2. Fire doors are required if the doors are in the fire separation walls.
3. Mechanical ventilation (heating, cooling, air exchanger) cannot be shared between units. This often means a second furnace must be installed with its own duct work. Alternatively, another form of heating & ventilation may be installed.
4. Firestopping details need to be provided for penetrations (piping or wiring) of the fire separation.
5. Both units need access to their electrical panels.
6. Code compliant smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
7. Egress windows are needed in newly created habitable spaces and in all newly created bedrooms.
8. Ceiling heights must meet code minimums. This can be an issue in attics and basements. See the [Habitable Attic Space Requirements](#) handout.

### **Common UDC Zoning Requirements for a Two-Family Home – See UDC for all requirements**

1. Each unit in a two-family dwelling must have a separate exterior entrance on the side facing the front lot line or corner side lot line.
2. A one-family or two-family dwelling may locate its principal entrance(s) in a location other than the front or corner side if it is determined by the Land Use Supervisor that other design elements such as porches, windows, façade or roof articulation, or building materials meet the intent of orienting and visually connecting the dwelling to the public street.
3. Minimum lot size in R-1 or R-2 Zone is 2,000 sq ft, and MU-N 2,500sq ft for each dwelling unit on the lot.

**If you have questions about land use or your zone district, contact the Planning division:**

[planning@duluthmn.gov](mailto:planning@duluthmn.gov) or 218-730-5580

### **Other Items:**

- **Resource Renew (formerly WLSSD) CAF Fee** – A new dwelling unit will trigger a capacity availability fee (CAF). This is paid with the permit fees.
- **Life Safety/Rental License** – A rental license is needed for dwelling units that are going to be occupied by someone other than the owner of the building. See <https://duluthmn.gov/fire/licenses-and-permits/>
- Consider your estimated off-street parking needs. If the proposed location does not have dedicated/private off-street parking, inventory the availability and volume of existing on-street parking in the surrounding neighborhood. This may be a requirement for your rental license.

### **If you have any questions about your project:**

Call us at (218) 730-5240, email [permittingservices@duluthmn.gov](mailto:permittingservices@duluthmn.gov), or stop into the office in Room 100 of City Hall.