



Eugene has a shortage of Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. One way to quickly create more is to convert conventional housing into SRO facilities. A SRO is a cross between a group home and a conventional rooming house that can be tailored to meet the needs of a managing organization and selected tenants. Houses might serve specific populations, such as veterans, refugees, or people living with mental illness, people who are medically fragile or people recovering from addiction. Supervision can range from a daily or monthly staff visit to installing a full-time resident manager. SROs are ideal for individuals who use Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) or Section 8 vouchers, which do not cover conventional “roommate” situations. In a SRO tenants rent individual rooms and have access to shared bathrooms, kitchens, and other living spaces. SROs are generally more affordable, and they have the added benefit of allowing clients to build up good rental histories, so that they can more easily rent apartments in the future.

What’s required for a SRO conversion?

To meet Section 8 / Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements¹, most conversions require:

1. At least 110 square feet of floor space, and at least 4 square feet of closet space with an unobstructed height of at least five feet, for each SRO unit. If the closet space is less than four square feet, the unit must contain at least one hundred ten square feet of remaining floor space after subtracting the amount of the deficiency in closet space.
2. At least one flush toilet that can be used in privacy, a lavatory basin, and a bathtub or shower for each six persons. Sanitary facilities must be accessible from a common hall or passageway, not more than one floor above or below the SRO unit. (It is not required to have toilets, basins or showers within each SRO unit – shared facilities are acceptable.)
3. Access to a kitchen/food preparation area - it can be shared. It’s acceptable to have kitchenettes or hot plates in individual rooms as well.
4. Fire Sprinklers in all “major spaces” defined as “hallways, common areas, and any other areas specified in local fire, building or safety codes.” (This includes bedrooms, living rooms and hallways) (This is often the most expensive item on the conversion list. As a rough guide a 2015, 4-bedroom conversion cost \$10,000.)
5. Exterior doors and windows accessible from outside the SRO unit must have working locks.
6. Access doors to the unit must have operating locks for privacy.
7. There must be no need to walk through one unit to get to another.
8. Hard wired smoke detectors.
9. Each unit must have access to two or more approved means of exit leading to safe open space at ground level.

Are there zoning restrictions?

Residential zones (R-1–R-4) have different restrictions on the number of bedrooms and other factors. So to determine the zoning of a particular property you can visit our website at www.eugene-or.gov/zoningmap. Please contact Land Use staff at 541-682-8336 or landuseinfo@ci.eugene.or.us for more information.

Where to go to get started?

You may start with a drop-in visit at the Permit & Information Center (PIC), located at 99 W. 10th Ave. For a complex project, you can schedule a free pre-development meeting, with the necessary City staff. For an appointment, call 541-682-5593.

How much will it cost?

Your project may incur building permit fees and System Development Charges (SDCs). City staff cannot provide fee estimates prior to project submittal due to the many variables that influence the calculations. A fee estimating guide is available on our website at www.eugene-or.gov/bldgpermitfees.

Your project may be eligible for federal, state, and/or local funding assistance. Please refer to the City’s Community Development web page at www.eugene-or.gov/development and/or call the Community Development Division at 541-682-5086.

Where can I get more information about SRO conversions?

For the Section 8 Program regulations and the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) requirements call the Housing and Community Services Agency (HACSA) of Lane County at 541-682-3755. For any building code related questions, please contact a residential plan reviewer at residentialpremitinfo@ci.eugene.or.us or call 541-682-5611.

¹ SRO housing quality standards, from chapter 17, (17-2) Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook