



Secondary Suite Registration Program

Planning and Development Services
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The New Program

City Council has recently approved a process to legalize *accessory registered secondary suites* in one-unit single family residential zones. These zones include:

- RS-1 One-Unit Residential Zone
- RS-2 One-Unit (Small Lot) Residential Zone
- RS-3 One-Unit (Small Lot, Hillside) Residential Zone
- RS-4 One-Unit (12.1m Lot Width) Residential Zone
- RE-1, RE-2, RE-3 (Estate Residential Zones)
- RI-1, RI-2 One-Unit (infill 1 and infill 2) Residential Zones

Please check the zoning of your property to ensure you are eligible.

What is an accessory registered secondary suite?

The Zoning Bylaw states that an *accessory registered secondary suite* shall:

- be accessory to a one-unit residential use only;
- be limited to one accessory registered secondary suite per *lot*;
- shall conform with the current BC Building Code requirements and limited to a maximum of 90 square metres *residential gross floor area* and not more than two (2) bedrooms;
- provide one additional on-site parking space for occupants of the *accessory registered secondary suite*; and
- be inspected and registered through the City's Secondary Suite Registration process.

General Requirements

- The *accessory registered secondary suite* floor space cannot be more than 40% of the habitable floor space of the entire building or to a maximum of 960 sq ft
- The *accessory registered secondary suite* can be located within the principal dwelling unit or within an "*accessory coach house*".

- ❑ One (1) additional off street parking space must be provided for the *accessory registered secondary suite* in addition to the parking already required for the main house. The *accessory registered secondary suite* minimum parking space dimensions are 2.5m (8'- 0'') in width by 5.2m (17'-0'') in length. The *accessory registered secondary suite* parking space cannot block access to the main residential parking area. The City encourages the use of pervious parking surfaces for the additional parking space (i.e. grasscrete paving stones).
- ❑ RI-1 driveway width requirements restrict the additional space to tandem.
- ❑ For new homes, permits and inspections of the suite can be included as part of the overall permit and inspection process.

Construction Requirements

Please note that the following are guidelines and may or may not apply in each circumstance. For more comprehensive details refer to the current British Columbia Building Code Section 9.36.

Fire Sprinklered Residences

- ❑ Hardwired photoelectric type smoke alarm to be installed in the main residence, in each bedroom and in the suite living area. Photoelectric type alarms are less prone to nuisance false alarms.
- ❑ Exterior suite door to be hinged – using a sliding door as your only exit door not permitted.
- ❑ If you have an interconnecting door between suite and main residence the door, frame and self-closing devise must have a ULC 20 minute rating.
- ❑ Heating and ventilation ducts are not permitted to be interconnected.
- ❑ Independent heating system required. This could include: electrical baseboards, hot water or gas appliance rated to heat entire space. (i.e.; gas fireplace)
- ❑ Central Vacuum systems are not permitted to be interconnected.
- ❑ A ventilation system is required for the suite and could be as simple as a continuously running bathroom fan and 6'' passive make-up air duct from the exterior.
- ❑ A fire separation is required between the main residence and suite. This can be achieved with ½'' gypsum board on the walls and 5/8'' gypsum board on the ceilings. This is often typical construction in modern single dwelling houses making upgrading minimal.

- ❑ Minimum headroom height in suite shall be not less than 2.0m (6'-7").
- ❑ Pot lights are not permitted

Non-Sprinklered Residences

If you have a non-sprinklered existing suite or wish to construct a suite in a non-sprinklered residence you must meet the full BC Building Code Section 9.36 standards for secondary suites.

Specific considerations under Section 9.36 of the BC Building Code include:

- ❑ Hardwired photoelectric smoke alarms are required in the main residence, in each bedroom and the suite. These alarms must be interconnected and conform to CAN/ULC S531 standard.
- ❑ Exterior suite door to be hinged – using a sliding door as your only exit door not permitted.
- ❑ If you have an interconnecting door between suite and main residence the door, frame and selfclosing devise must have a ULC 20 minute rating.
- ❑ Heating and ventilation ducts cannot be interconnected.
- ❑ Central Vacuum systems are not permitted to be interconnected.
- ❑ Independent heating system required. This could include: electrical baseboards, hot water or gas appliance rated to heat entire space. (i.e. gas fireplace)
- ❑ A ventilation system is required for the suite and could be as simple as a continuously running bathroom fan and 6" passive make-up air duct from the exterior.
- ❑ A separation between the main residence and suite is required with a minimum fire resistant rating of 30 minutes. This can be achieved with ½ " gypsum board on the walls and 5/8" gypsum board on the ceilings. This is often typical construction in modern single dwelling houses making upgrading minimal.
- ❑ Minimum headroom height in suite shall be not less than 2.0m (6'-7").
- ❑ Pot lights are not permitted

Plan Requirements

Floor Plans

To apply for the Building Permit you will need two (2) copies of the Floor Plan of the suite with the following information:

- ❑ Scale ¼"=1'0" or metric equivalent.
- ❑ The entire floor area of the level on which the suite is located.
- ❑ Floor plans of the rest of the house may be required to accurately determine the 40% total area of the suite.
- ❑ The walls of fire separation between the suite and the rest of the house.
- ❑ The uses and sizes of all the rooms.
- ❑ The uses and sizes of all the doors and windows.
- ❑ Location of smoke alarms.
- ❑ Location of exhaust fan.
- ❑ The exit door(s) and required bedroom exit window.
- ❑ Wall construction specifics.

Site Plans

You will also need two (2) copies of a Site Plan showing the following information:

- ❑ The entire lot.
- ❑ Property lines with dimensions.
- ❑ Location of the house on the lot.
- ❑ Identification and dimensions of setbacks from the property line.
- ❑ Location of all parking spaces indicating suite parking space.

Limits on uses and activities

Accessory registered secondary suites are allowed in all one-unit residential zones. Only one (1) *accessory registered secondary suite* is permitted per lot.

Enforcement

The City will continue to current enforcement program acting on a complaint basis. Secondary suites which are not yet registered but which have been given notice by the City that they must conform to the Zoning Bylaw or be decommissioned shall be given six months from the date of notice to meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. For information on how to properly decommission your suite please contact the Planning and Development Services Department at 604-541-2136.

A sanitary sewer levy charge (contact the City's Property Tax Clerk) will continue to be applied on a yearly basis to all registered and non-registered suites.