

Secondary Dwellings in Campbell River

A GENERAL GUIDE TO SECONDARY DWELLING REQUIREMENTS

(Applies to the construction of a secondary dwelling and the alteration of an existing building to accommodate a secondary dwelling.)

Please consult section 9.36 – Secondary Suites of the BC Building Code for complete details of all requirements.

**THE FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE
PROPERLY ZONED FOR A SECONDARY DWELLING!**

Secondary dwellings are regulated by the City's Zoning Bylaw. To have a secondary dwelling, your property must first be zoned with a designation that allows secondary dwellings. Most single family dwelling lots in the City are zoned Residential One (R-1) which does not permit a secondary dwelling. Zones that do permit a secondary dwelling are:

- Residential One A (R-1A)
- Residential One B (R-1B)
- Residential Multiple One (RM-1)
- Residential Multiple Two (RM-2)

If your property is not in one of these zones, and you want to install a secondary suite, you will have to make an application, at your expense, to re-zone your property. You are strongly advised to discuss your proposal with Development Services staff prior to making an application for rezoning. Zoning applications are taken in front of Council and are decided by Council.

DWELLING DETAILS:

The dwelling itself must meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. In the definitions section, a secondary dwelling must fit the following criteria:

SECONDARY DWELLING means an additional dwelling unit attached to the principle dwelling unit and:

1. Having a total floor area of not more than 90 square metres in area;
2. Having a floor area less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the building;
3. Having not more than two bedrooms;
4. Located within a building of residential occupancy containing only one other dwelling unit; and
5. Located in and part of a building which is a single real estate entity.

Note that secondary dwellings cannot be located in detached ancillary buildings. A detached dwelling is considered a "secondary residence", which is only permitted in the R-1B zone, and which must meet similar criteria to the above. Please refer to the Zoning Bylaw for more details.

Installation or renovation of a secondary dwelling requires a Building Permit to ensure that it complies with current BC Building Code and relevant safety, fire and construction standards.

AN OUTLINE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE BC BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS:

- Hinged exit door (minimum 32") with door viewer or clear glass ...
- Required minimum bedroom window opening size (minimum 15" width/height, minimum 3.75 square feet in area) ...
- Two bedrooms maximum ...
- Where heating/ventilation duct system serves more than one suite a system designed to prevent the circulation of smoke upon a signal from a duct type smoke detector is required ...
- Kitchen and bathroom fans are to exhaust to the outdoors ...
- Principal exhaust fan is to run continuously and have a maximum sound rating not exceeding 1.0 sones.
- Passive exterior air inlets are required in all bedrooms and one in a common living area. If the suite is using a "Central Recirculation Ventilator System", an additional fan will be required to supply air to bedrooms as well as the common living space. ...
- Smoke alarms are to be interconnected to the alarms in the main dwelling so that activation of the one will cause alarms in the other suite to sound. ...
- Shut-offs shall be installed where the water supply enters each dwelling unit, so that when one suite is shut off, the water to the remainder of the building is not interrupted ...
- The maximum floor area for the suite measured from the inside of the exterior walls can be 40% of the dwelling up to 90 square metres (968 square feet) ...
- Hardwired smoke & carbon monoxide alarms required in all bedroom and common areas, as well as at least 1 per story.
- Doors and frames between suite and main dwelling are required to have a 20 minute fire rating (or install a 1 3/4" solid core wood door complete with 1 1/2" rabbited frame) and be self-closing
- Hardwired carbon monoxide alarm installed in rooms containing a solid-fuel-burning appliance
- One additional off-street parking stall

To obtain a 45-minute fire separation, two layers of 1/2" type X wallboard must be applied to the suite ceiling. One layer of 1/2" type X wallboard applied to both sides of demising walls with studs 16" on centre.

To obtain a 30-minute fire separation, one layer of 1/2" or 5/8" type X gypsum wallboard must be applied to the suite ceiling. One layer of 1/2" type X gypsum wallboard applied to both sides of the demising walls.