

Secondary Suites

REVISED 2021 JAN

The following is a summary of the Zoning Regulations and B.C. Building Code requirements for the construction of one residential suite in a single family home.

The zoning information below is provided for your convenience only and it should be clearly understood that you must satisfy yourself as to the applicable zoning and whether the premises conform to all Bylaws and Regulations of the City of Salmon Arm.

DEFINITION – SECONDARY SUITE - ZONING BYLAW NO. 2303

“**SECONDARY SUITE** means a *dwelling unit* conforming to the Building Regulations of British Columbia which is accessory to the principal *dwelling unit* and must meet the following criteria:

- a) cannot exceed a maximum floor space of 90 square metres (968.8 square feet);
- b) cannot exceed a maximum of 40% of habitable floor space of the building;
- c) must have a separate entrance;
- d) must be an integral part of the building and have at least one heated wall or floor in common with the principal dwelling unit;
- e) must be located within a building of residential occupancy containing only one other principal dwelling unit;
- f) must be located in and part of a building which is a single real estate entity.”

APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SUITE BUILDING PERMIT

- Property shall be zoned R-8, Agricultural (A-1, A-2 or A-3), CD-3, CD-7 or M-6;
- Zoning Amendment Application Fees are as follows: R-1 to R-8 for properties less than 0.4 ha (0.99 acres) are \$800.00 (no posting of Rezoning Sign required). All others \$1200.00 (posting of Rezoning Sign is required).
- Completed Building Permit Application is required;
- **Two (2) sets of plans** must be provided, accurately dimensioned and drawn to scale; these plans must be of sufficient detail and clarity to enable the builder to construct the building and should include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 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 are required to accurately determine the 40 percent (40%) total area of the suite,
 - A site plan showing the location of all required off street parking spaces,
 - The location and construction of all fire separations between the suite and the rest of the house,
 - The use and size of all rooms and spaces,
 - The sizes of all doors and windows,
 - The location and type of interconnected smoke alarms, i.e. regular, photo-electric, carbon monoxide, combo smoke & carbon monoxide, etc.
 - The location of principal exhaust fan, kitchen exhaust fan, dryer vent duct to be discharged to outside.
 - The type of heating and ventilation system proposed for secondary suite and house.
 - The exit door(s) and required bedroom egress windows.
- Interior Health Authority Approval for septic sewage system (if applicable).
- City water supply (size and if metered). If the site cannot be connected to the municipal water supply system, proof of water for domestic purposes will be required in accordance with Section 3.0 of Schedule B, Part 1 of City of Salmon Arm Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 3596. Registration of a *Land Title Act*, Section 219 covenant will also be required.
- Permits are required for plumbing, electrical and gas works, and are required for any work which may have been done previously without a permit.
- Other documentation as may be required.

SECONDARY SUITE BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

- Secondary Suites are only permitted within Single Family Dwellings; not in Duplexes, or Multi-family Residential buildings;
- Only one (1) suite may be developed per Single Family Dwelling;
- One (1) extra parking space is required for the suite in addition to the two (2) spaces already required for the main house. The extra parking space for the suite must be contained on the property and not encroach on public property.
- Properties connected to City water system will require a metered connection. Water service size to be confirmed for adequate sizing.
- The suite must be integral to the building and have at least one heated wall or floor in common with the principal dwelling unit.

BUILDING CODE SPECIFICATIONS

The building code information below is also for your convenience only. The building code is amended from time to time and it is the designer's responsibility to ensure compliance to the code in all design detail. The fire rated assemblies listed are suggestions of what seems to be the most practical application of the code however many options are available to meet specific requirements.

Part 9 of the current BC Building Code governs residential construction and the following paraphrases the Secondary Suite provisions:

- **CEILING HEIGHT** – minimum ceiling height of secondary suites shall not be less than 6' 10 ½" (2.1m) with no obstructions below this height along the path of exit travel from any portion of the suite;
- **BEDROOMS** – must have at least one exterior door or egress window with a minimum clear openable area of 3.8 ft² (0.35m²), and a minimum opening dimension of 15" (38 cm).
 - Note that 15" X 15" does not provide the minimum required area. The window must be openable from the inside without special tools or knowledge;
- **EXIT STAIRS** – must be a minimum of 34" (860mm) wide;
- **LANDINGS** – for exterior stairs serving two (2) dwelling units, landings need not exceed 35.5" (900mm) in length;
- **EXIT DOORS** – must be a minimum 80" (1,980mm) high and 32" (810mm) wide and are permitted to swing inwards. A sliding glass door is **NOT** permitted as the only exit door from a suite;
- **FIRE SEPARATIONS** – in dwelling units, exits and common rooms (such as laundry, storage or furnace rooms) shall be separated from adjacent floor areas by fire separations (drywall) (see notes):
 - Having a fire resistance rating of 60 minutes (two storey application); or
 - Having a fire resistance rating of 45 minutes (one storey side by side); or
 - Having a fire resistance rating of 30 minutes (one or two storey application) if used in conjunction with photoelectric smoke alarms; or
 - Having a fire resistance rating of 15 minutes, (one or two storey application) if all smoke alarms within the house are of photoelectric type and interconnected.
 - No fire resistance rating is required if the building has sprinkler system installed.
- **DOORS THAT PENETRATE FIRE SEPARATIONS** - are to be fire rated as below and equipped with self-closing devices:
 - For 45 and 30 minute fire separations, a 20 minute rated door is required, but a 1 ¾" (45mm) solid core wood door with a maximum clearance of ¼" (6mm) at the bottom, and 1/8" (3mm) at the top and sides may be used.
 - For a 1 hour fire separation, a 45 minute rated door is required.
- **CONTINUITY OF FIRE SEPARATIONS** – is required around items such as pot lamps, bath fans, plastic laundry boxes, electrical panels, etc. A good design will place these items within walls which do not form part of the fire separation or below the ceiling fire separation.
- **SMOKE ALARMS** – conforming to CAN/ULC-S531 standard are required within each dwelling unit and:
 - Are required to be interconnected between floors; and
 - In each bedroom and between the bedroom(s) and the remainder of the suite;
- **ADDITIONAL 120v PHOTOELECTRIC SMOKE ALARMS** – must conform to CAN/ULC S531 standard and are required if:
 - The required fire separation is reduced to 30 minutes between dwelling units. Must be interconnected between each dwelling unit.
 - The required fire separation is reduced to 15 minutes between dwelling units. All smoke alarms shall be of photoelectric type and interconnected so that the actuation of any one smoke alarm causes all smoke alarms within the suites to sound.
- **CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS** – are required within 16' of each bedroom door and all CO alarms in the house and suite must be interconnected. No CO alarms are required if the building has no attached garage or fuel fired appliances.

- **SOUND TRANSMISSION** – A dwelling unit shall be separated from every other space in a house containing a secondary suite:
 - By insulating joist and stud spaces, installing resilient channels on the walls and ceiling and installing 12.7mm gypsum board on the ceiling and both sides of the separation wall, or
 - By using construction methods providing an STC rating of 43, or
 - By using a separating assembly and adjoining construction providing an ASTC rating of not less than 40.

NOTE!! The City of Salmon Arm is not aware of any listed 15 minute fire rated assemblies which meet the STC 43 rating.
- **VENTILATION** – Ventilation system shall be provided for the secondary suite by way of:
 - A combined ducted force-air heating & ventilation system with/without a heat-recovery ventilator, or
 - A heat-recovery ventilator system, or
 - A ducted central-recirculation ventilation system, or
 - A ventilation system and passive return air grilles in exterior walls.

NOTE!! Individual temperature controls shall be provided in each dwelling where a ducted heating system serves both suite and house.
- **FURNACE ROOMS** – unless the furnace room is completely contained within the main dwelling, the common walls are to be separated from the suite by the required fire separation. A rated door with self-closing device may also be required. Because of the number of ducts and pipes typically contained within a furnace room, it may be very difficult to provide such separation. Ducts penetrating fire separations and serving both suites, shall be equipped with fire dampers and duct-type smoke detector shut down device to prevent circulation of smoke.
- **COMBUSTIBLE DRAIN, WASTE and VENT PIPING** - Is permitted to be located within or penetrate a fire separation provided:
 - The pipe is located within a wall or floor and protected with gypsum board.
 - Pipes penetrating the gypsum board membrane must be tight fitted or caulked with an approved fire stop caulking material (gypsum mud is not acceptable).
 - The trap, trap arm and clean outs may be exposed.
 - Exposed combustible pipe shall not penetrate the gypsum membrane on the underside of the floor system unless protected with an approved fire stop sleeve
 - Built-in vacuum system pipe cannot penetrate a fire separation between suites.

NOTES (Table 9.10.3.1 – A & B)

1. A **30 MINUTE WALL FIRE-RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 2" x 4" studs @ 24" o.c. staggered on common 2" x 6" plate, fully insulated, with 1 layer of 1/2" regular drywall each side of wall frame with all edges supported. (W7c)
2. A **45 MINUTE WALL FIRE RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 2" x 4" studs @24" o.c., fully insulated, with resilient metal channels @ 24" o.c. on one side of wall frame, 1/2" Type X drywall on each side. (W3c)
3. A **60 MINUTE WALL FIRE-RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 2" x 4" studs @ 24" o.c. staggered on common 2" x 6" plate, fully insulated, with 1 layer of 5/8" Type X drywall each side of wall frame. (W7a)
4. A **30 MINUTE CEILING FIRE RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 5/8" subfloor on wood or I-Joist @ 24" o.c., minimum 3 1/2" fiberglass insulation in joist cavity, resilient metal channels @ 24" o.c. and 1 layer of 1/2" Type X drywall (F8h)
5. A **30 MINUTE CEILING FIRE RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 5/8" subfloor on wood or I-joist @ 24" o.c., resilient metal channels @ 24" o.c. and 1 layer of 5/8" Type X drywall. (F8b)
6. A **45 MINUTE CEILING FIRE RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 5/8" subfloor on wood or I-joist @ 24" o.c., minimum 3 1/2" fiberglass insulation in joist cavity, resilient metal channels @ 24" o.c. and 2 layers of 1/2" Type X drywall. (F6h)
7. A **60 MINUTE CEILING FIRE RESISTANCE RATING** is achieved with a minimum 5/8" subfloor on wood or I-joist @ 24" o.c., minimum 3 1/2" roxul insulation in joist cavity, resilient metal channels @ 24" o.c. and 2 layers of 1/2" Type X drywall. (F6h)

ALTERNATE COMPLIANCE METHODS for EXISTING BUILDING [Article 1.1.1.1(6) + Table 1.1.1.1(6)]

For the design and construction of *alterations* to existing *buildings* to add a *secondary suite*, not including the design and construction of new additions or new *buildings*, the Alternate Compliance Methods for Alterations to Existing Buildings to Add a Secondary Suite in Table 1.1.1.1.(6) may be substituted for requirements contained elsewhere in BC Building Code. (See Note A-1.1.1.1.(6).) *see Table 1.1.1.1.(6) attached – pages 4 & 5*

Secondary Suite in Table 1.1.1.1.(6)

Table 1.1.1.1.(6) Alternate Compliance Methods for Alterations to Existing Buildings to Add a Secondary Suite Forming part of Sentence 1.1.1.1.(6)		
No.	<u>Code Requirement in Division B</u>	<u>Alternate Compliance Method (References to Division B)</u>
1	<p>Ceiling Heights of Rooms or Spaces</p> <p>Sentences 9.5.3.1.(1) and Table 9.5.3.1.</p> <p>Ceiling height shall be not less than 2.1m over the minimum area required in Table 9.5.3.1.</p>	<p>Except as required by Sentence 9.9.3.4.(3) the minimum ceiling heights in a <i>secondary suite</i> over the required area as indicated in Table 9.5.3.1. shall be not less than 1.95m. It shall be possible to travel from the required area of one room to the required areas of all other rooms within the <i>secondary suite</i> without reduction of the ceiling height to less than 1.95m.</p> <p>Except as required by Sentence 9.9.3.4.(3), the minimum clear height under beams and ducting, including where located over stairs in a <i>secondary suite</i> shall be not less than 1.85m.</p>
2	<p>Doorway Opening Sizes</p> <p>Sentence 9.5.5.1.(1) and Table 9.5.5.1.</p> <p>Doorway openings shall be designed to accommodate swing-type and folding doors not less than 1,980 mm high</p>	<p>Except for <i>exit</i> doors and for doors serving <i>public corridors</i> and <i>exit corridors</i> that serve a house with a <i>secondary suite</i> doorway openings within a <i>secondary suite</i> shall be designed to accommodate swing-type and folding doors not less than 1,890 mm high.</p>
3	<p>Height over Stairs</p> <p>Sentence 9.8.2.2.(3)</p> <p>The clear height over stairs shall be not less than 1,950 mm</p>	<p>Except for stairs in a <i>public corridor</i> or <i>exit corridor</i> that serve a house with a <i>secondary suite</i>, the clear height over stairs that are located under existing beams and existing ducting in a house with a <i>secondary suite</i> shall be not less than 1,850 mm high.</p>
4	<p>Openings Near Unenclosed Exterior Exit Stairs and Ramps</p> <p>Sentences 9.9.4.4.(1)</p> <p><i>Unprotected openings</i> in exterior walls that are within 3m horizontally and less than 10m below or less than 5m above an unenclosed exterior <i>exit</i> stair or ramp of a house with a <i>secondary suite</i> shall be protected where the unenclosed exterior <i>exit</i> stair or ramp provides the only <i>means of egress</i> from a <i>suite</i> and is exposed to fire from <i>unprotected openings</i> in the exterior walls of another <i>dwelling</i> unit ancillary space or common space.</p>	<p>Protection of the <i>unprotected openings</i> as described in Sentence 9.9.4.4.(1) is not required when all <i>smoke alarms</i> within a house with a <i>secondary suite</i> are of photo-electric type and interconnected as described in Clause 9.10.19.5.(2)(a).</p>
5	<p>Openings Near Exit Doors</p> <p>Sentence 9.9.4.6.(1)</p> <p>Where an exterior <i>exit</i> door in one <i>fire compartment</i> is within 3m horizontally of an <i>unprotected opening</i> in another <i>fire compartment</i> and the exterior walls of these <i>fire compartments</i> intersect at an exterior angle of less than 135°, the opening shall be protected.</p>	<p>Protection of the <i>unprotected openings</i> as described in Sentence 9.9.4.6.(1) is not required when all <i>smoke alarms</i> within a house with a <i>secondary suite</i> are of photo-electric type and interconnected as described in Clause 9.10.19.5.(2)(a).</p>

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Table 1.1.1.1.(6)
 Alternate Compliance Methods for Alterations to Existing Buildings to Add a Secondary Suite
 Forming part of Sentenced 1.1.1.1.(6)

No.	<u>Code Requirement in Division B</u>	<u>Alternate Compliance Method (References to Division B)</u>
6	<p>Fire-Resistance and Fire-Protection Ratings Sentence 9.10.3.1.(3) In a house with a <i>secondary suite</i>, where a minimum <i>fire-resistance rating</i> of 30 min is permitted, it is permitted to use wood-frame construction where stud and joist spaces are filled with absorptive material resilient metal channel spaced 400 or 600 mm o.c. is on one side and not less than 12,7 mm thick gypsum board is installed on ceilings and on bgoth sides of walls</p>	<p>Adding resilient metal channel spaced 400 or 600 mm o.c. and an additional layer of not less than 12.7 mm gypsum board to one side of an existing finished wall assembly that has not less than 12.7 mm gypsum board on each side or an existing finished floor-ceiling assembly that has not less than 12.7 mm gypsum on the ceiling side is permitted to be used where a 30 min fire-resistance rating is required.</p>
7	<p>Fire Resistance Ratings for Walls, Columns and Arches Sentence 9.10.8.3.(1) <i>Loadbearing</i> walls, Columns and Arches in the <i>storey</i> immediately below a floor or roof assembly shall have a <i>fire-resistance rating</i> of not less than that required for the supported floor or roof assembly.</p>	<p>Except from heavy timber elements and those of masonry or concrete construction, light frame walls, columns, archers and beams as well as badbearing steel elements that support floors between dwellings units in a house with a secondary suite including their common spaces shall be protected by not less than 12.7 mm thick gypsum board.</p>
8	<p>Sound Transmission Sentence 9.11.1.1.(2) Each dwelling unit shall be separated from every other space in a house with a secondary suite in which noise may be transmitted by construction having joist and stud space filled with sound-absorbing material, resilient channel on one side of the separation and 12.7 mm thick gypsum bboard on ceilings and on both sides of walls, or by either construction providing an STC rating of not less than 43, or by using a separating assembly and adjoining construction providing a ASTC rating of not less than 40.</p>	<p>The assemblies and adjoining constructions that separate the dwelling units in a house with a secondary suite including their common spaces need not comply with Cause 9.11.1.1.(2)(a) where resilient metal channel spaced 400 or 600 mm o.c. and an additional layer of not less than 12.7 mm gypsum board is added to one side of an existing finished assembly.</p>