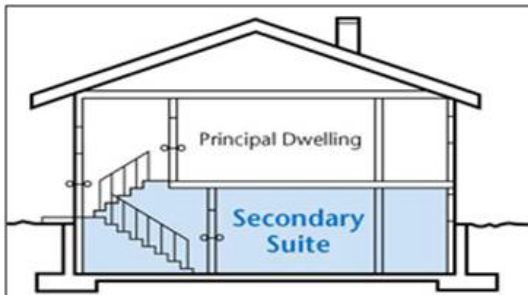


Secondary Suites

WHAT IS A SECONDARY SUITE?

The British Columbia Building Code (2006) defines a Secondary Suite as an additional dwelling unit

- having a total floor space of not more than 90 m² (968 ft²) in area,
- having a floor space less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the building,
- located within a building of residential occupancy containing only one other dwelling unit, and
- located in and part of a building complex which is a single real estate entity.



REQUIREMENTS?

Zoning

The City of Nelson *Zoning Bylaw #3199* permits secondary suite use within a single detached residential dwelling in specific zones subject to a number of conditions. The zones in which a secondary suite is allowed are R1, R3, and R6 zones.

The R1 zone requires a minimum lot size of 276 m² (2,992 ft²). for a secondary suite . Secondary suite use is not allowed in conjunction with a duplex.

The R3 zone permits the addition of a suite in a duplex. These suites are subject to Development Permit requirements, and additional building code requirements, as well as additional water/sanitary sewer connection fees. Contact planning staff for additional information.

The zoning map is available for viewing on the City of Nelson website (www.nelson.ca).

Parking

The property must accommodate off-street parking in accordance with *Off-Street Parking and Landscape Bylaw #3274*. One (1) additional parking space of 16.5 m² (177.6 ft²) is required per secondary suite.

BUILDING CODE SUMMARY

This is a brief overview of the some of the minimum health and safety requirements for secondary suites outlined in Section 9.36 of the B.C. Building Code (2006). This information must be shown on the submitted plans.

Floor Area & Ceiling Heights

The secondary suite must be less than 90 m² (968 ft²) in area, and less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the building. Ceiling heights and the undersides of beams (in passageways) must be at least 2 m (6.6 ft) above the floor.

Fire Safety and Exiting

In order to restrict the spread of fire and smoke, and to ensure that the occupants have safe egress from the building, a Fire Separation is needed to create a barrier between the suite and the rest of the house, and between dwelling units and any common space. The Building Code requires that the structure be built with a minimum fire resistance rating of 45 minutes between the dwelling units. The fire resistance rating may be reduced to 30 minutes where there is an existing 12.7 mm (½ in.) gypsum wall board ceiling provided interconnected, hardwired smoke alarms are installed.

Continued on reverse side...

Fire Separation

An example of an acceptable separation would be:

- 45 min. rating: 15.9 mm (5/8 in.) Type X drywall one layer on ceiling
15.9 mm (5/8 in.) Type X drywall on both sides of wall
- 30 min. rating: 12.7mm (1/2 in.) drywall two layers on ceiling
2.7mm (1/2 in.) drywall on both sides of wall

Doors located in a fire separation must be labelled and rated for the fire separation, complete with a self-closing device.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Independent hardwired smoke alarms are required for both dwellings, near bedrooms, on every level. If there is only a 30 min. separation, interconnected smoke alarms are required. In addition, if there are fuel-fired appliances or an attached garage, carbon monoxide alarms are required within 5 m (16.4 ft) of bedroom areas.

Safe Exiting

The secondary suite must have an exit door, ideally directly from the suite to the exterior. This door must be an exterior door, with a deadbolt and door viewer (or glazing), that swings on a vertical axis (not a sliding patio door). In situations where the suite egress door opens into a common entrance, each unit must be served by a second and separate means of egress. A suite above the main floor may require a fire escape.

Bedroom Windows

All bedrooms are required to have an opening window with a minimum clear opening area of 0.35 m² (3.8 ft²) with no dimension less than 380 mm (15 in.). This area would allow for exiting in the case of an emergency.

Mechanical Systems

Ventilation

An exhaust fan vented to the exterior shall be installed in each kitchen and bathroom. A ventilation checklist must be completed to ensure adequate fan size, duct size and make up air requirements are being met.

Mechanical Systems Con't...

Heating Systems

The secondary suite should be equipped with a method of heating, independent of the main dwelling. In order to prevent the migration of smoke between dwelling units during a fire, duct work is not permitted to interconnect the dwelling units. A separate system, such as electric baseboard heating, may need to be installed in the suite. If heating or ventilation duct systems serve both the suite and the main dwelling unit, the system must contain a duct-type smoke detector that shuts the furnace fan motor off. Fire dampers are also required.

Plumbing

A secondary suite is required to have a kitchen sink, lavatory, bathtub or shower and a water closet. Within existing homes, the water supply line may not be large enough to meet the minimum code requirements for supplying all the plumbing fixtures, including the suite. For example, if the house is serviced by a 12.7 mm (1/2 in.) supply pipe, it would be necessary to upgrade to a 19 mm (3/4 in.) or larger water pipe, from the street to the house. All the fixtures in the building should be shown on the plans to complete a fixture calculation. A separate plumbing permit would be required to approve any new (or previously completed) plumbing work.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sanitary & Water

The following Rates will apply :
(Note: these rates are subject to change)

| Utility Type | Dwelling Unit Type | Annual Charge (2015) |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Sanitary | Single detached dwelling unit | \$ 495.00 |
| | Conforming secondary suite | \$ 248.00 |
| Water | Single detached dwelling unit | \$ 569.00 |
| | Conforming secondary suite | \$ 285.00 |
| Total for Single Detached Dwelling Unit with an authorized & conforming Secondary Suite | | \$ 1677.00 |

Existing Suites that are non-conforming to the BC Building Code 2012, and have not been through a Permit process are not subject to the reduced rate, and the full rate for a "Single Detached Dwelling" for the suite will apply.

Important Information continued...

For new construction of single detached residential dwellings, site-specific water and sewer connection fees are required but the addition of a secondary suite does not affect this fee requirement. If a water, sanitary or storm service upgrade is required, there is a site-specific construction charge.

Garbage Collection

Any number of garbage cans or bags can be put out for disposal providing they are individually tagged with a garbage tag (\$1.50 per tag). There are additional garbage collection fees.

| Dwelling Unit Type | Annual Collection Fee |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Single detached dwelling unit | \$40.00 |
| secondary suite | \$40.00 |
| Total | \$80.00 |

ELECTRICAL CONNECTION

A licensed electrician or the B.C. Safety Authority should be consulted to analyze the existing service size and configuration to determine if additional loads created by the suite can be accommodated. A separate electrical panel is required if unrestricted access cannot be provided to the existing main panel. A separate electrical meter is not required, but is an option if you want the tenants to be solely responsible for their electrical consumption. If you choose to install a second meter for the suite, you must have a building permit for the suite installation prior to obtaining the service and meter from Nelson Hydro.

If the electrician determines that the existing service is inadequate for the addition of a suite, and a service upgrade is required, or if you want to have a separate meter installed for the suite, contact Nelson Hydro to determine costs and meter location. Nelson Hydro costs vary on service characteristics. For example, for the minimum overhead 100 amp suite service, the connection charge is \$200 + applicable taxes. This connection charge does not include the work to be completed by your electrician. The electrician is responsible for all building attachments and internal electrical work. Contact Nelson Hydro (250-352-8214) to discuss specific circumstances and related fee structure when you are ready to proceed.

BUILDING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

In order to authorize an existing suite or allow construction of a new secondary suite, a building permit is required to ensure adequate safety for all occupants.

The Building Permit application must include:

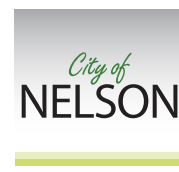
- Completed building permit application form
- Current land title
- Fee payment
- 1 set of plans showing all information from this handout (complying with the building code and Zoning Bylaw) for a suite, including:
 - o Site plan showing all buildings, structures, and dimensioned parking spaces,
 - o Plans of all floor levels, dimensions, room uses, ceiling heights and plumbing fixtures, and,
 - o Cross section or details of all fire separations between dwelling units.

You may also be required to obtain:

- A plumbing permit, prior to any plumbing installations,
- An electrical permit from the British Columbia Safety Authority, for new or unauthorized electrical work,
- Other documentation required by the building inspector due to a specific situation.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

For more information about Building Permit applications and Secondary Suites, please contact the City of Nelson Department of Development Services & Sustainability at **development@nelson.ca** or **250-352-8260**.



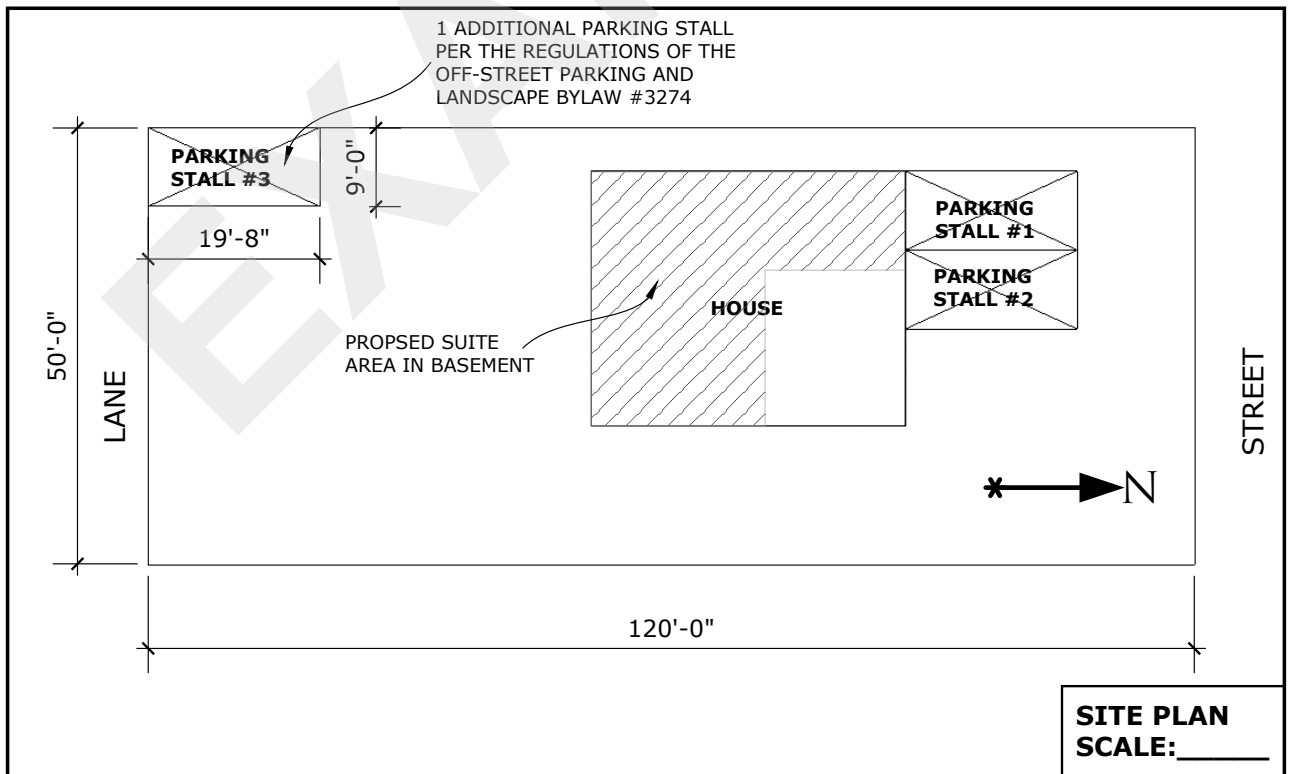
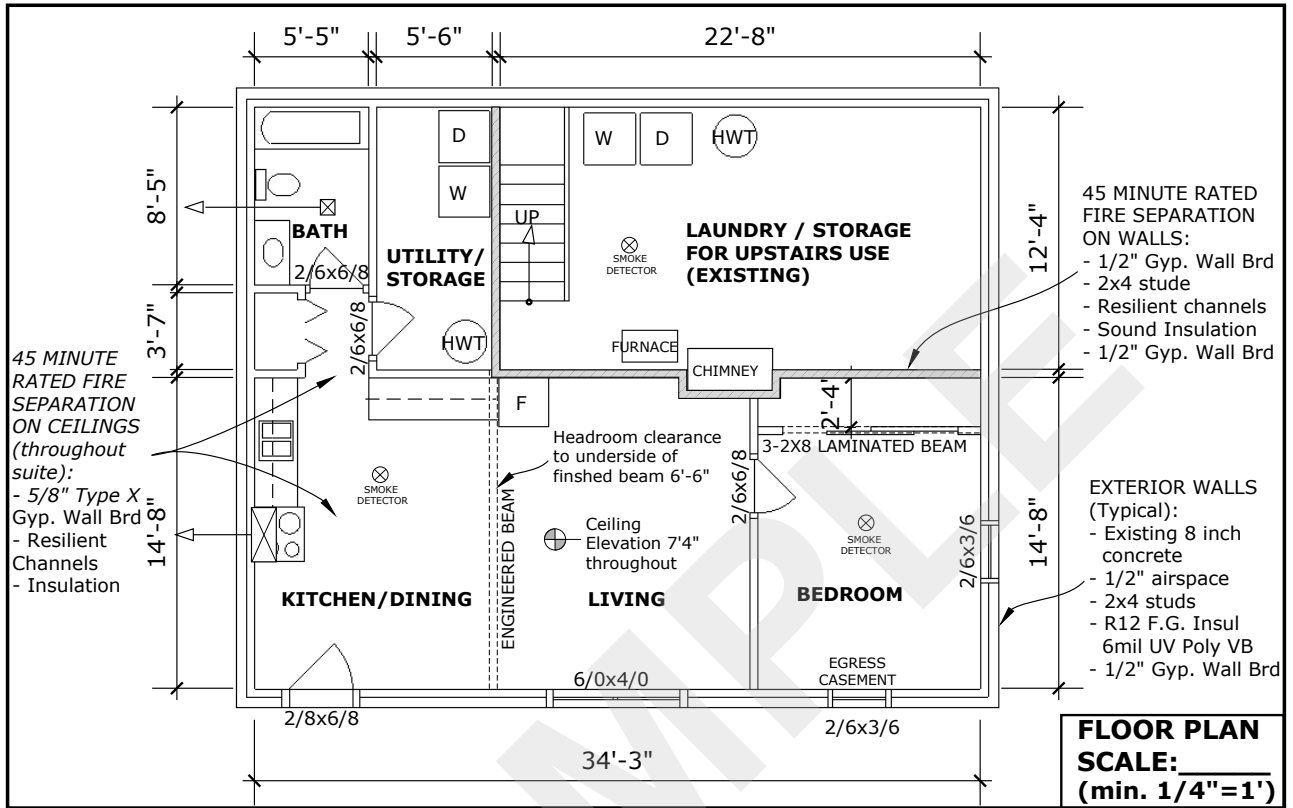
Secondary Suites CONTINUED

EXAMPLE OF PLANS REQUIRED WITH APPLICATION

THESE ARE SAMPLE PLANS ONLY.

It is the Property Owner's responsibility to ensure conformance to the current B.C. Building Code and all City of Nelson Bylaws and Regulations.

For a full list of required drawings and documents please refer to the Building Permit Application Forms and the Nelson Building Bylaw.



PROJECT DATA: House = _____ ft² Parking = 3 spaces
 Suite = _____ ft²