



CITY OF COURTENAY
Building Division
830 Cliffe Avenue
Courtenay, BC V9N 2J7
Tel: 250-703-4862 Email: building@courtenay.ca

Requirements For Secondary Suites

“Secondary Suite” means a *dwelling unit* which is accessory to the principle use being made of the lot upon which the secondary suite is located:

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

SECONDARY SUITE CRITERIA

The following criteria must be met in order for the City of Courtenay to issue a permit for secondary suite:

- Does the property meet the requirements of *Zoning Bylaw No. 2500, 2007* to allow a secondary suite? If not, you may make an application to have the property rezoned to allow a secondary suite, see “Guide to Rezoning” below.
- Does the subject property meet schedule 7 A – Required Number of off-Street Parking Spaces of *Zoning Bylaw No. 2500, 2007*?
- Does the subject property meet the Secondary Suite Building Code Requirements? You must make an application for and be issued a building permit and have passed an occupancy inspection before the suite can be considered legal and habitable.

GUIDE TO REZONING – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSIONS

Prior to submitting an application for rezoning, you are advised to discuss the proposal, including specific application requirements and required fees with both the Planning and Building Divisions. The Zoning Bylaw amendment must be adopted by Council prior to the building permit application being submitted to the City.

An application to amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow for a secondary suite will require the following items:

- Zoning Amendment (Development) Application Form
- Zoning Amendment Application fee
- Written summary, including a description of the proposed amendment and the reasons/rational for the amendment
- Legal description from and copy of Certificate of Title
- Site Plan showing available parking spaces (3 required spaces a minimum of 2.75m x 5.5m each)
- Floor plan demonstrating the calculation of floor area (suite must not exceed 90m² or 40% of the habitable floor space of the building)
- Pictures of the existing single family dwelling (include front, side and rear of building)

SECONDARY SUITE APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS FOR BUILDING PERMIT

- Building Permit Application
- Legal Description and copy of Certificate of Title (Title certificates are only valid thirty (30) days from when they are downloaded from Land Titles; City Staff are able to “pull” title for your application, a charge of \$12.00 will be applied when your application is submitted to the Building Division).
- Two sets of plans showing all the required information:
 - Site plan showing available parking spaces (3 required spaces a minimum of 2.75m x 5.5m each)
 - Floor plan demonstrating the calculation of floor area (suite must not exceed 90m² or 40% of the habitable floor space of the building)
 - Floor plan indicating fire separation, location and construction details, door fire ratings, window sizes, door sizes, ceiling heights (if under 2.0m), use of rooms, building elevations (if adding to the building) and any other aspects of construction to determine compliance with BC Building Code

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All applications for a secondary suite are reviewed by Planning and Development Engineering as well as the Building Division. Development Engineering reviews applications to assess whether there are existing services (sanitary sewer, water and storm) as well as that each building has appropriate inspection chambers and water meter setters (as required). If upgrades to services are required, those costs will be determined by the Development Engineering Technologist and will be included in the cost of the building permit.

When your permit is complete, you will need to request addressing for your secondary suite. Please forward any requests for addressing by email to building@courtenay.ca.

Electrical permits are managed by the BC Safety Authority, 1-866-566-7233. Please contact them directly for application information and to book any applicable inspections.

DECOMMISSIONING SECONDARY SUITES

The first step is to make an application to the Building Department for a permit. There is a fee for the application - \$50.00 – as well as a fee for the title document - \$12.00 – and a performance bond of \$200.00 that will be refunded to you once the suite has been decommissioned and a final inspection has been passed.

- Permanently remove cooking facilities; the stove must be removed from the dwelling unit. Gas lines must be capped or removed and/or the 220v electric outlet and cable into panel removed. No microwave, hotplate, toaster oven or similar cooking appliances are permitted.
- Complete a *Statutory Declaration* confirming that the suite has been removed from the property and will not be occupied or rented as a secondary suite.

Key BC Building Code Requirements to be Considered when Designing a Secondary Suite

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. If additional interconnected hardwired photoelectric type smoke alarms are installed in both dwelling units, the fire separation may be reduced to 30 minutes.

Fire Separation – (example of an acceptable separation would be)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 45/60 minute | 5/8" type X drywall on ceiling – 45 min. = 1 layer, 60 min.= 2 layers |
| | 5/8" type X drywall on both sides of common walls – one layer |
| 30 minute | One layer 5/8" Type X |
| | ½" drywall on both sides of common walls – one layer with insulation |

Doors located within a fire separation are to be rated for 20 min or 45 minutes, have self-closers and provide a smoke seal.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms – interconnected hardwired smoke alarms are required for both dwellings, on every level. If there is only a 30 minute rated separation, then additional photoelectric smoke alarms are required to be interconnected between both dwellings. In addition, if there are fuel-fired appliances or an attached garage, carbon monoxide detectors are required within 5m of bedroom areas.

Safe Exiting – the secondary suite must have an exit door, directly to the exterior with a protected path of travel, or a fire rated common egress area. The exit door must be of exterior quality (rated), with a deadbolt and door viewer (or tempered glazing), that swings on a vertical axis (sliding patio doors are not permitted for a primary exit).

Bedroom Windows – all bedrooms are required to have an opening window with a minimum clear, unobstructed opening area of 0.35 m² (3.77 ft²) with no dimension less than 380 mm (15").

Mechanical Systems

Heating Systems – the secondary suite must be equipped with an independent heating system, no shared ducting between dwellings is permitted to prevent the migration of smoke between dwellings during a fire; unless designed to prevent the circulation of smoke between dwellings.

Ventilation – an exhaust fan vented to the exterior shall be installed in each kitchen and bathroom. Each secondary suite is required to provide a principal exhaust fan that operates continuously with ducted make-up air vents in each bedroom and at least one common area.

This information is to be used as a guide only and the City of Courtenay holds no responsibility for its accuracy. Please ensure that you consult the current edition of the British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) for the most accurate and current information.

EXAMPLE OF FLOOR PLAN DEMONSTRATING SECONDARY SUITE

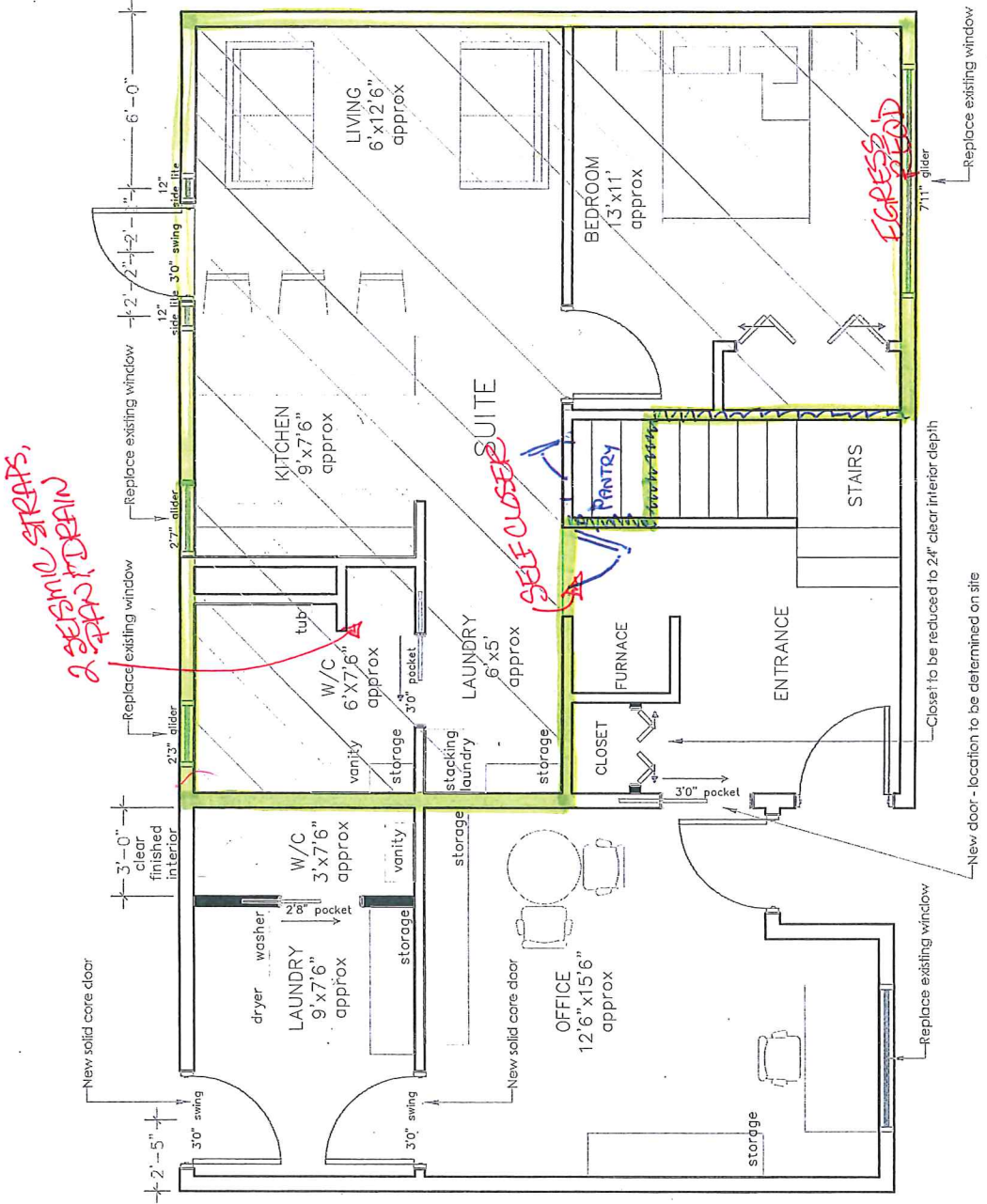
Office Col

- * PLUMBING REQUIRES SEPARATE PERMIT
- * FIRE SEPARATION TO BE MINIMUM 30 MINS.
- * SMOKE ALARMS REQ'D 1 REGULAR & PHOTOELECTRIC (BOTH LEVELS)

Total Square Footage of Home: 1814

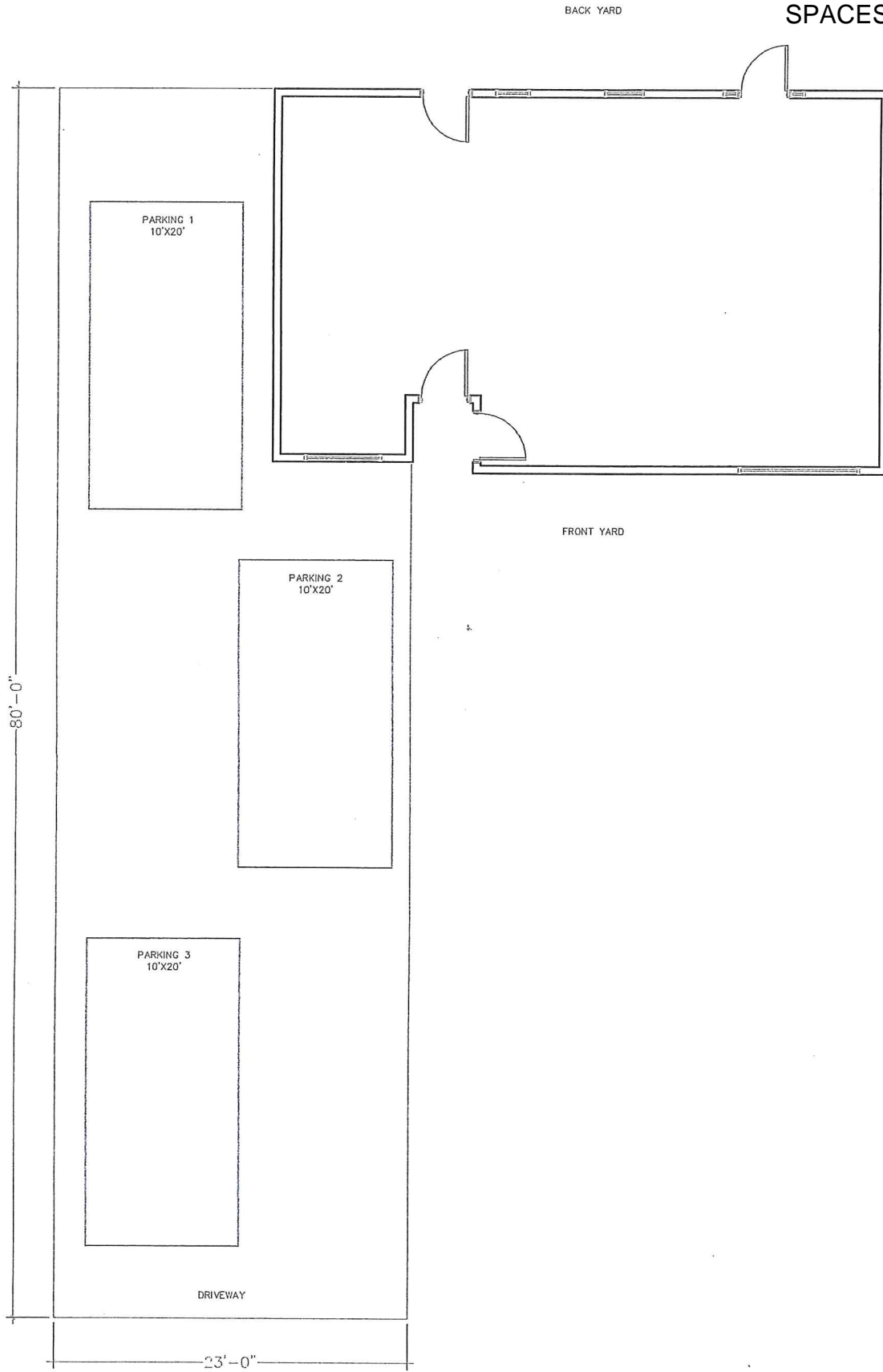
Total Square Footage of Secondary Suite: 474.5

- * FAN REQ'D IN KITCHEN & BATHROOM
- * PANTRY CEILING TO BE FIRE RATED.
- * CONFIRM SEPARATE HEATING SYSTEMS



FLOOR PLAN
1/4" = 1'-0"

EXAMPLE OF SITE PLAN
DEMONSTRATING PARKING
SPACES



PARKING PLAN
NTS