

**Overview**

This information outlines design elements you will need to include in your secondary suite, for houses built after July 1998. The guidelines are divided into four categories:

1. Landscaping and Private Outdoor Space
2. Parking
3. Suite Entries
4. Suite Livability

**Related Publications**

- Secondary Suite Readiness Guide
- Secondary Suite General Guide
- Secondary Suites Zoning Requirements

**Key Information**

Please complete the contact information below and then choose the flexible design standards in each category that you intend to provide with the completed suite (you may want to complete this with the person who prepared your Building Permit drawings). Please note the “Requirements” described in each category *must* be provided.

Please sign this form at the bottom of the last page and ensure the property address is written at the top right of each page.

When you have completed this form please return it to the Planning Division. A Building Permit will not be issued until this form has been completed and returned to the Planning Division.

If you have questions please call the Development Services Department, Planning Division, at 604-527-4532.

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant’s Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

House Designer/Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

Building Inspector	Inspector	Inspection Date	Result

## 1. Landscaping and Private Outdoor Space

The suite must have an outdoor space for the suite’s tenants which are clearly separate from the rest of the outdoor space at the property. The suite’s private outdoor space (POS) must be delineated in some way, with fencing, shrubs, planter boxes, or by the location of the space on the property. The POS is usually best located at grade level just outside the entrance to the suite. If necessary it can be located a short distance away, in which case a paved walkway will be required to connect the entry with the POS. Occasionally, a secondary suite is located above ground, in which case it might be more convenient to have the space elevated, on a deck or porch.

**You only need to complete one of the following two sections.** Complete Section A if your POS is to be located at grade (on the ground) or below grade. Complete Section B only if your POS is to be located above grade (on a deck, porch, or balcony).

### SECTION A: At grade or below grade

#### Requirement

Provide a private outdoor space of at least 80 square feet for the use of the suite tenants.

#### Flexible Standards

Choose enough standards that will give you a total of at least 11 points.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	2			Include landscaping in the form of planted areas, raised beds, shrubs, or trees.
2.	2			At least 80 square feet of hard surface (e.g. concrete, paving stones).
3.	1			Adjacent to the living/dining room, kitchen, or entry of the suite, with direct access through a door.
4.	3			No more than 24 inches above the level of the suite main floor.
5.	2			Partially screened (e.g. with vegetation, fencing, lattice), or will be located on the site in such a way as to ensure privacy from next-door neighbours.
6.	2			Separated from the outdoor space of the principal unit, either through a change in grade, a hedge or fence, or the layout of the site generally (e.g. the suite uses the front or the side yard and the main house uses the back and other side yard).
7.	1			Lighting for evening use.
8.	1			No functions of the principal unit (e.g. basement doors, storage areas, hose taps, garbage cans, connecting walkways) will be located in such a way that access to them by the principal unit occupants will require walking through the suite POS.
9.	3			All fencing on the site will be either decorative wood fencing, stone walls, or brick walls.
10.	1			No fencing constructed of chain-link, concrete, or concrete blocks will be used anywhere on the property

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
11.	1			A closable gate will be used to allow access between the front and side or rear yards.
12.	2			Fencing will be semi-transparent (e.g. lattice) along the top section.
13.	1			The entries to the front and/or rear yards will be delineated with “specimen”, unusual or special trees or shrubs.
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		11		

**SECTION B: Raised deck, porch, or balcony**

**Requirement**

Provide a private outdoor space of at least 60 square feet (no dimension can be less than 6 feet) for the use of the suite tenants.

**Flexible Standards**

Choose enough standards that will give you a total of at least 7 points.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	1			Directly accessible from, and adjacent to, the main living space of the suite.
2.	1			Partially screened from habitable rooms in the main house and neighbouring houses.
3.	1			Lighting for security and evening use of the space.
4.	1			Incorporates planters containing either plants, shrubs, or trees.
5.	3			All fencing on the site will be either decorative wood fencing, stone walls, or brick walls and the fencing will be used to delineate private yard space from public space at the front of the property.
6.	1			No fencing constructed of chain-link, concrete, or concrete blocks will be used anywhere on the site.
7.	1			A closable gate will be used to allow access between the front and side or rear yards.
8.	2			Fencing will be semi-transparent (e.g. lattice) along the top section.
9.	1			The entries to the front and/or rear yards will be delineated with “specimen”, unusual or special trees or shrubs.
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		7		

## 2. Off-Street Parking

One parking space must be provided for the suite somewhere on the property. The space can either be enclosed (e.g. in a garage or carport) or unenclosed (a parking pad).

**You only need to complete one of the following two sections.** Complete Section A if your suite parking space is to be unenclosed. Complete Section B if your suite parking space is to be enclosed.

### SECTION A: Unenclosed parking for the suite

#### Requirement

The parking space must be paved and it must be connected to the suite by a direct hard-surface route (e.g. concrete, paving stones, concrete slabs). It also must be partially visible from one or all of the following: the suite, the principal unit, the street, or neighbouring houses.

#### Flexible Standards

If your parking space is located right at the lane (i.e. with no separate driveway) then the flexible standards do not apply (put "N/A" in each of the boxes below).

Choose at least one flexible design standard.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	1			At least 50 percent of the length of the driveway between the property line and the parking space will not be wider than 18 feet.
2.	1			The driveway and parking area will be paved in a decorative material such as bricks, concrete pavers, exposed aggregate or patterned concrete (note: asphalt is not considered a decorative material)
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		1		

### SECTION B: Enclosed parking for the suite

#### Requirement:

The parking space must be paved and it must be connected to the suite by a direct hard-surface route (e.g. concrete, paving stones, concrete slabs).

#### Flexible Standards

If your parking space is located in a garage or carport that is right at the lane (i.e. with no separate driveway) then flexible standards 4 and 5 do not apply. Choose at least two standards.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	1			The garage doors will face the street or the lane and will not be wider than 10 feet.
2.	1			The garage will face the lane and have no more than three parking spaces located side by side.
2a.	1			The garage will face the street and have no more than two parking spaces located side by side.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
3.	1			The garage will be detached and separated from the house by at least 5 feet.
3a.	1			The garage will be attached to the house. The garage doors will be 10 feet or less wide and the garage will be set back from the house by 2 feet.
3b.	1			The garage will be attached to the house. The garage doors will be more than 10 feet wide and the garage will be set back from the house by 5 feet.
4.	1			At least 50 percent of the length of the driveway between the property line and the garage or carport will not be wider than 18 feet.
5.	1			The driveway and parking area will be paved in a decorative material such as bricks, concrete pavers, exposed aggregate or patterned concrete ( <i>note: asphalt is not considered a decorative material</i> )
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		2		

### 3. Suite Entries

#### Requirements

- A separate mailbox at the front of the house (near the principal unit mail box).
- Lighting beside or above the suite entry door.
- A hard surface sidewalk (minimum 3 ft. wide) connecting the suite entry door to the public sidewalk.
- A roof or overhang over the suite entry door (minimum 4 ft. wide and 3 ft. deep).
- A solid-core entry door with either a window or a door viewer (e.g. peephole).
- If both the principal unit entry and the suite entry face the street the suite entry will be set back at least 5 ft. from the front facade of the house.

#### Flexible Standards

Choose enough standards that will give you a total of at least 3 points.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	1			The main suite entry is not shared with an entry or foyer for the principal unit
2.	1			The suite entry is no more than 4 feet below grade level.
3.	1			The suite entry sidewalk is not combined with an adjacent paved driveway (e.g. the entry sidewalk and the driveway are separated by a planting bed at least 2 feet wide or by a low fence.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
4.	1			Decorative landscaping (e.g. flowering shrubs, planter boxes) will be incorporated into the entry or area around the entry.
5.	1			The suite entry will be visible from the street.
6.	1			The suite entry will be visible from the principal unit.
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		3		

#### 4. Suite Livability

##### Requirement

Strong, tamper-proof locks on all windows and entry and exterior doors. Additionally, all exterior doors must have reinforced framing and either a viewer (i.e. peephole) or glazed panels.

At least 3 feet of the floor to ceiling height of all habitable rooms (excluding a bathroom, utility room, workroom, furnace room and storage room) of the secondary suite must be located above grade. For this purpose, grade is to be measured immediately adjacent to the exterior walls of the habitable room in question.

##### Flexible Standards

Choose enough standards that will give you a total of at least 7 points.

	Points Available	Points Chosen	Insp. OK	Flexible Design Standard
1.	3			The floor level of the suite will be no more than 3 feet below grade level, or will be above grade level.
2.	2			The floor level of the suite will be between 3 and 4 feet below grade level.
3.	1			None of the functions of the principal unit (e.g. laundry, storage, furnace, hot water tank, electrical panel) will be accessible exclusively through the suite.
4.	1			None of the functions of the suite (e.g. laundry, storage, electrical panel) will be accessible exclusively through the principal unit.
5.	1			A storage space (not including bedroom closets) at least 6 feet high and 3 feet wide or deep will be provided for the suite.
6.	3			Each room (excluding the bathroom and kitchen) will have at least one window that will receive direct natural daylight.
7.	1			The suite will contain no more than two bedrooms.
8.	1	1		The suite will contain its own heating controls.

9.	7			<p>The suite will be designed in accordance with the 2006 B.C. Building Code standards for wheelchair accessibility to enable the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• entering the suite (Sentence 3.8.3.2.(1), Article 3.8.3.3, and Sentence 3.3.1.12.(3));</li> <li>• travel through all doorways in the suite (Sentence 3.3.1.13(10));</li> <li>• turning a complete circle in each room of the suite (Figure 3.8.19 in the <u>Building Access Handbook</u>, 1992);</li> <li>• opening all doors to habitable rooms without the door hitting the wheelchair (Sentence 3.3.1.13.(10)); and</li> <li>• transferring from the wheelchair onto at least one toilet in the suite either sideways or from the front (Sentence 3.7.4.8.(4)).</li> </ul>
<b>Total Points</b>				
Required		7		

I understand that at the time of a Final Inspection the secondary suite will be inspected to confirm that all the required items described above and sufficient flexible standards to meet the point requirements above have been provided.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print applicant's name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date