

EASTERN INTERLAKE PLANNING DISTRICT

*Serving the RM of Gimli, Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton,
Town of Arborg and the Town of Winnipeg Beach*

Secondary Suites and Accessory Dwelling Units

Construction requirements for
secondary suites and dwellings units
within accessory structures.



November 2017

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What is a Secondary Suite?

A secondary suite is a self contained dwelling unit that has independent access, cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities which are separate from and not shared with the principal dwelling. They may be located in any story of the principal dwelling and may occupy more than one story.

Secondary suites can be:

- an addition to the principal residence;
- a ground-level suite detached from the principal residence; or
- a suite above a detached garage.

Secondary suites can go by other names such as garden suites, or granny suites and can be rented out and may require Conditional Use approval from Council.

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

An accessory dwelling unit is a detached accessory building located on the same site as a single family dwelling and are often referred to as a “guest house”.

Typical zoning restrictions:

- do not permit for cooking facilities;
- may allow for sanitary facilities;
- have maximum square footage allowances;
- may require Conditional Use permission from Council;
- not to be rented separately from the single family dwelling; and
- shall only provide incidental accommodation for family members and guests of the occupants of the single family dwelling.

Contact the Eastern Interlake Planning District for specific rules and regulations in your municipality on accessory dwelling units.

Is a building permit required for the development of a secondary suite or an accessory dwelling unit?

Yes, a building permit is required.

The Manitoba Building Code (MBC) sets the standards for secondary suites. These standards include size limitations, fire and smoke separations, exiting requirements, use of common spaces, smoke and CO alarms, heating and ventilation requirements etc.

The MBC requirements for secondary suites are outlined in this booklet.

Accessory dwelling units also require permits but they are not considered a self contained unit therefore the requirements are somewhat less restrictive.

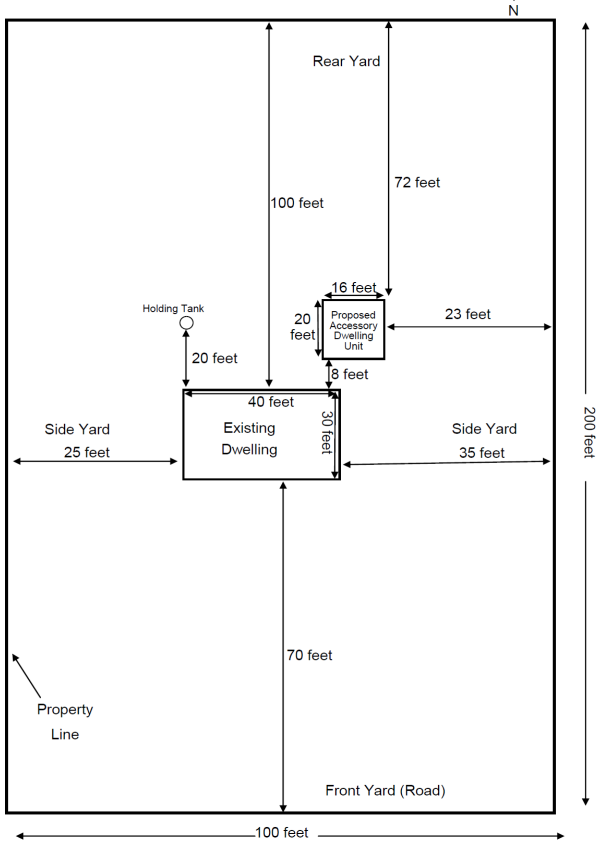
Documentation required when applying for a Building Permit:

1. Completed Building Permit application on Cloudpermit; link can be found at www.interlakeplanning.com
2. Complete PDF of *drawings (blueprints) which include, but is not limited to:
 - i) square footage of each floor
 - ii) floor plan, min. 1/48 scale
 - iii) full cross section(s) and partial sections, min. 1/48 scale
 - iv) four (4) elevations, min. 1/48 scale
 - v) details, min. 1/24 scale.
 - vi) Engineered foundation drawing

***Free hand and graph paper drawings will not be accepted for final drawings.** Engineered drawings may be required.

3. Surveyor's Building Location Certificate (BLC) showing the location of the new secondary suite and any/all other existing structures on the site, with all distances to property lines and between structures clearly marked. Well drawn site plan may be accepted subject to EIPD's permission. See sample on page 4.
4. Lot Grade Permit (if applicable)

Sample Site Plan Drawing– must include distances to all property lines and to all existing buildings on the property



Foundations

Please note that as of January 2024, all Foundation drawings that accommodate a living space shall be designed and sealed by a Structural Engineer

Accessory Dwelling Units

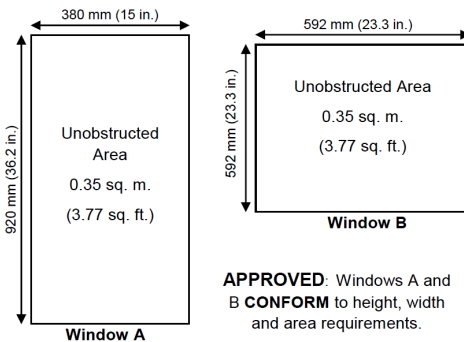
Accessory dwelling units are merely intended for overflow situations on a residential property. They allow for sleeping and sanitary accommodations. They are typically seasonal structures (non-heated) and therefore do not require the same code requirements as a habitable dwelling.

Accessory dwelling units are required to have the following Life Safety Items:

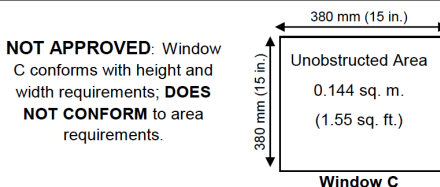
- egress requirements for bedroom windows
- smoke alarm(s)
- carbon monoxide alarm(s)
- compliant stairs, landings, guards and railings

If the accessory dwelling unit will be used for year round use, they will require the Life Safety Items as mentioned above, as well as:

- ventilation and exhaust systems
- must meet the minimum R value, as per the current MBC
- the foundation will require an engineers stamp.



**Window
Egress
Requirements**



Secondary Suites

ATTACHED OR WITHIN THE PRINCIPAL DWELLING:

- Not more than one Secondary Suite shall be permitted within a principle dwelling.
- Not more than one Secondary Suite shall be permitted on a single zoning site.
- The property containing a Secondary Suite shall contain a permanent habitable single family dwelling.
- A minimum of one off-street parking space must be provided for the secondary suite.

If a suite will be in the basement of a principle dwelling, additional code information can be found in our "Basement Development" booklet.

Maximum Floor Area:

- Shall not exceed 80% of the total habitable floor space of the **principal dwelling* to a maximum of 80 m sq. (861 sq. ft.), whichever is the lesser.

*In the case where the existing dwelling is being split to provide for a secondary suite the *Principle Dwelling* is not the total square footage of the entire dwelling prior to the separation. It is the amount required after separation. An example of how to calculate the principal dwelling area is shown below:

Total Sq.Ft. of Home x .555 = Required Principle Dwelling Area Sq.Ft.

Once you have your Principle Dwelling Area you can now determine the amount allowed for your Secondary Suite, as follows:

Principle Dwelling Sq. Ft. x 80% = Allowable Secondary Suite Sq. Ft.

Example of a 1,500 Sq. Ft. Home
 $1,500 \times .555 = 833 \text{ sq. ft.}$
 $833 \text{ sq. ft.} \times 80\% = 666 \text{ sq. ft.}$

Principle Dwelling = 833 sq. ft.	Secondary Suite = 666 sq. ft.
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Amenity space:

- An exterior private amenity space such as a deck or patio shall be provided for the Secondary suite.
- Minimum area: 7.5 m sq. (80 sq. ft.).
- Minimum Dimension: (length or width) no less than 1.5m (4.9ft.).

A secondary suite may be located in the basement, main floor or second floor of a residence, or in areas from several stories. When a basement or second storey area of a 1 ½ storey residence is used for a secondary suite there are minimums to maintain.

Please refer to the table below.

Ceiling heights	1.95m (6 ft. 4¾ in.)
Clear height under beams and ducts	1.85m (6 ft.)
Height over stairs and landings	1.95m (6 ft. 4¾ in.)
Stairs: Min. Width	860mm (32 ½ in.)
Doors: Min. Height	1.98m (6 ft. 6 in.)
Doors: Min. Width	810mm (32 in.)
Door to bathroom facility	760mm (30 in.)
Hallway minimum width	860mm (34 in.)

Fire Protection required between the Residence and the Secondary Suite

A smoke-tight barrier in lieu of a fire separation

Structural Components: Light framed walls, columns, arches, and beams as well as load bearing steel elements (beams, columns etc.) that support floors between the residence and its secondary suite, including their common spaces and service room shall be protected by not less than ½ in. thick gypsum board.

Exits: The exit in a house with a secondary suite shall be protected by a continuous smoke-tight barrier of not less than ½ in. thick gypsum board installed on both sides of walls separating the exit from the remaining building and the underside of the floor –ceiling framing separating the exit from the remainder of the building.

Smoke–Tight Barriers between rooms and common spaces in houses with a secondary suit: The wall and floor assemblies separating the residence from the secondary suite, including common spaces, are to be constructed as a continuous barrier against the spread of fire and retard the passage of smoke. The continuity of the smoke-tight barrier is to be maintained where it abuts another smoke-tight barrier, a floor, a ceiling, a roof or an exterior wall assembly.

Walls and floor-ceiling framing that separate the dwelling units from each other (or dwelling units from ancillary or common spaces) are to be protected by a continuous smoke-tight barrier of not less than 12.7mm (½ in.) thick gypsum board installed on both sides of walls and the underside of floor-ceiling framing. All gypsum board joints are to be taped and penetrations (in the assemblies) are to be sealed using flexible sealants to maintain the integrity of the smoke-tight barrier over the entire surface

Protection of Openings in Smoke Tight Barriers

Openings in the required smoke tight barriers are to be protected by closures conforming to MBC clause 9.10.13.. Doors in smoke tight barriers must be solid core wood doors a minimum of 45mm (1 ¾") thick with a self closing device.

Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke alarms in a secondary suite shall be wired so that the activation of any smoke alarm causes all smoke alarms within the house to sound. Smoke alarms shall be installed in each sleeping room, in each storey including the basement, and in common spaces and ancillary spaces. Where carbon monoxide alarms are required because of a attached garage or fuel fired appliances in the house, then combination Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms shall be installed and wired so that they are interconnected between suites and activation of any one Smoke or CO alarm will cause all the Smoke or CO alarms in the house and secondary suite to sound.

Heating and Ventilation

Individual temperature controls are required for each suite and common areas. To prevent smoke spread by ducted HVAC systems, there can be no interconnection of ducts between suites or their common areas. Therefore heating, ventilation and air conditioning can provide a challenge to the development of a secondary suite in an existing house.

Sound Transmission Rating (STC) between Suites

A sound transmission rating of not less than 43 is required for walls and floors between residence and its secondary suite.

This can be achieved with insulation filled cavities, and resilient channels and gypsum board on both sides. Normally a sound transmission rating of 50 is required between residential suites.

Secondary Suites

DETACHED:

- Not more than 1 Secondary suite on an established zoning site.
- The exterior of the secondary suite should be similar to the principal residence.
- The zoning site containing the secondary suite shall contain a permanent habitable single family dwelling .
- A minimum of one off-street parking space must be provided for the secondary suite.

Maximum Floor Area:

- Shall not exceed 80% of the total habitable floor space of the principal dwelling or 80 sq.m (861 sq.ft.), whichever is the lesser.

Building Height (maximum):

- As permitted by zoning by-laws.

Separation from the Principal Dwelling (minimum)

- The more restrictive of the zoning by-laws or MBC.

Amenity Space:

- An exterior, private amenity space such as a deck or patio shall be provided for the Secondary Suite.
- Minimum area: 7.5 m sq. (80.7 sq. ft.)
- Minimum Dimension: (length or width) no less than 1.5 m (4.9 ft.)

Who enforces all of these requirements?

The Eastern Interlake Planning District is responsible for monitoring construction for compliance with the Building Code and By-Laws. This monitoring is carried out by means of a permit approval process and site inspections.

The ultimate responsibility for compliance rests with the owner and contractor.

Is there any way that compliance with a certain aspect of the Building Code can be waived?

The Eastern Interlake Planning District does not have the authority to waive the requirements but it does have the authority to accept equivalents which meet the intent of the Building Code. If you feel you can satisfy a Building Code requirement by using an equivalent building material or construction method, please contact the Building Inspector.

When do I contact someone for inspection of the work?

The owner and contractor are equally responsible for notifying our office for the necessary inspections .

The following inspections are required, if applicable based on the project:

- 1) Footing forming/Piles/Piers/Thickened edge slab steel and forming - house and attached garage
- 2) Basement wall & grade beam steel and forming/PWF framing
- 3) Drain tile and damp proofing prior to backfill
- 4) Basement floor drain tile, plumbing, sump, granular fill and soil gas barrier
- 5) Framing - Engineered truss/floor etc. info. on site
- 6) Plumbing drain waste and vent installation
- 7) Insulation and vapor barrier
- 8) Final Inspection

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