

Guideline to Create a Living Suite

City of Whitehorse Zoning Bylaw 2012-20 Living Suite Requirements

"*LIVING SUITE*" means a self-contained, accessory dwelling unit located within a single detached house intended to be used for living and sleeping purposes.

1. A development permit is required.
2. A development cost charge fee is to be paid for all living suites.
3. The suite cannot be more than 100 m² in floor area of a single detached house.
4. A *living suite* is only permitted in single detached houses and only one suite shall be permitted in a single detached house. A *living suite* shall not be permitted where a garden suite is established.
5. One additional off street parking space must be provided.
6. A *living suite* shall have unobstructed pedestrian access to a street frontage.

Common Living Suite Requirements:

A building permit is required for a *Living Suite*. The following is a general list of requirements for occupancy. Please contact the office to discuss specifics of your project. An inspection of the premises will be carried out to ensure that the minimum Health, Fire and Life Safety items are met prior to occupancy approval:

1. Entrance - A separate entrance is preferred to form a separate exit way.
2. Fire ratings - A fire separation with a minimum 45-minute Fire Resistance Rating is required between dwelling units & common areas. In a house with a *living suite* under 80m² (862ft²) of *gross floor area*, fire separation requirements can be satisfied by a continuous smoke-tight barrier of 12.7mm (1/2") gypsum board installed on ceilings and both sides of walls.
3. Sound Proofing – Separations shall have a minimum of 150mm (6") of sound absorbing material (insulation) in joists space and 89mm (3.5") of sound absorbing material in stud spaces with resilient channel on one side of walls and on ceilings or a Sound Transmission Class (STC) rating of 43.
4. Egress windows – Bedroom egress windows require an unobstructed opening area of 0.35m² (3.8ft²). (i.e. 15"x36", 24"x24"). If window opens into a well, a minimum 30" clearance beyond the window is required.
5. Ventilation – Balance mechanical ventilation is required. A Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV) is required to serve as the principal ventilation fan and can serve as the kitchen/bathroom exhaust as well.
6. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms - Hardwired interconnected smoke alarms to be located within each bedroom and in a location between the bedroom(s) and the remainder of the storey. CO alarms shall be installed in or within 5m of bedroom(s) when a fuel burning appliance is located in the building. All suite alarms to be interconnected with alarms in common areas and each storey of house.
7. Heating systems - The *living suite* shall have independent controls for its heating system. Forced air furnaces may not serve more than one unit.
8. Stairs, landings, handrails, & guards - Stairs, landings, handrails and guards to conform to the current National Building Code requirements. (Max riser 7⁷/₈", min tread depth 11", min stair width 34")
9. Adequate supply of hot water - One hot water tank shall be provided for each dwelling unit unless it can be shown there is a sufficient supply.
10. Doors separating the living suite, house and common areas shall be a minimum of 45mm solid core wood construction, installed to resistance to forced entry requirements (including a deadbolt). Doors are to be equipped with a self-closing mechanism and weather stripping to maintain fire separations.
11. Ceiling height - A *living suite* shall have a minimum clear height of 1.95m (77").

Please do not hesitate to contact a Building Official for further information at 668-8340.