

Garden Suite Development



Garden suites provide many benefits to homeowners, from generating rental income for help with the mortgage, to providing a nearby place for a relative to live independently. Almost any single-detached homeowner, and some duplex owners, can build a garden suite.

For complete regulations, refer to the Zoning Bylaw, available at www.whitehorse.ca/zoning.

Definition: Garden suites are secondary dwelling units located on a lot where the principal use is either single detached housing or a fee simple duplex. Garden suites are detached from the principal residence.

Site Requirements: Garden suites are permitted in most residential zones where the lot size is 555 m² or more. Where the principal use is single detached housing and there is lane access, the lot may be smaller.

Garden suites are not normally permitted where a living suite has already been developed, except on large lots in RCS2 zone (min. lot size 980 m²), and RS/RS2 zones (min. lot size 1208 m²). Only the RD zone allows more than one garden suite per lot.

Location: Garden suites are only allowed in the rear yard, except in country residential zones (RC1 and RC2) where they may be located in the front and side yards.

Height: The maximum height in urban residential zones is 7.0 m (22 ft 11 in). The maximum height in country residential zones is 8.0 m (26 ft 3 in).

Gross Floor Area: The maximum gross floor area (GFA) for a garden suite is 100 m², except in the RC1 zone where it is 150 m². In urban residential zones, the maximum GFA on the second storey above an accessory building is 60 m². GFA is measured to the exterior faces of the exterior walls.

Setbacks: Garden suites must follow the same setbacks as for the principal building, except under certain circumstances. Refer to the table on next page to determine the setbacks based on your zone and the height of the structure.

Other Regulations: Garden suites:

- Must be at least 3.0 m (9 ft 10 in) from the principal building.
- Must have an exterior finish compatible with the principal building.
- Must be located on the same parcel as the principal structure (i.e. cannot be subdivided).
- Must have unobstructed pedestrian access to a street frontage.
- May not be used for short-term rentals.
- Setbacks are measured from the exterior wall of a structure.
- Roof overhangs may project 0.6 m (2 ft) into a required setback, but may not be closer than 0.15 m (0.5 ft) from the property line.

Permits: A Development Permit is required, to ensure compliance with the Zoning Bylaw. Application forms are available at www.whitehorse.ca/developmentforms.

A Building Permit is required, to ensure the garden suite is constructed to the standards of the Building & Plumbing Bylaw and the National Building Code. Garden Suites must be constructed to the same standards as any other residential construction. Visit www.whitehorse.ca/building for more information on Building Permits.

Additionally, if you live in a country residential area, you may also require approval from Yukon Environmental Health Services for connection to your system.



GARDEN SUITE SETBACK SUMMARY*:

Zone	RC1/RC2	RCS	RCS2, RCS3, RD	RS/RS2	CM1/CM2
Front Yard Setback	6.0 m	-	-	-	-
Side Yard Setback	6.0 m	1.5 m [†]	1.5 m [†]	3.0 m/ 1.5 m [†]	0 m
Rear Yard Setback	6.0 m	11.0 m [‡]	3.0 m [‡]	3.0 m [‡]	0 m

*Corner lot setbacks may vary - refer to the Zoning Bylaw for corner lot setbacks

[†]One side setback may be reduced to 0.6 m for garden suites under 4.5 m in height

[‡]Rear setback may be reduced to 0.6 m where there is lane access or the property backs onto a public right-of-way or publicly-owned land such as greenbelts, parks, schools etc.

Frequently asked questions about garden suites

Can I convert an accessory structure (e.g. shop, garage) to a garden suite?

An accessory structure may be converted to a garden suite, provided the siting and dimensions of the structure comply with all zoning regulations.

How can I service my garden suite?

In urban areas, garden suites must be connected to City water and sewer through the principal structure. In country residential areas, garden suites may be connected to the existing septic field and well, provided permission is granted from Yukon Environmental Health Services Branch. Otherwise, a new system may be required.

What will be suite's address be?

The City recommends using the street address plus the suffix 'B' for the suite address (e.g. 100B Main Street). If you wish to have mail delivered separately to the suite, you must submit a request to Canada Post. Canada Post will require confirmation from the City that the suite is permitted – contact land@whitehorse.ca once occupancy approval has been granted and they will provide confirmation to Canada Post.

What additional costs can I expect?

- \$75 Development Permit fee;
- Building Permit fee based on estimated value of construction;
- Development Cost Charge of \$2185 (urban areas) or \$1040 (country residential) for the creation of a new dwelling unit;
- Increased property taxes resulting from a higher improvements value on your property assessment;
- Higher utility bill – having an additional suite means that your sewer/water and waste collection fees are charged at a different rate;
- A new mailbox at Canada Post “superboxes” located in some neighbourhoods; and
- If you wish to have separate electrical billing for your suite, ATCO may alter the overall rate you pay for power.

Are there any incentives for creating a garden suite?

Yes! The City offers a development incentive for creation of new garden suites within the Urban Containment Boundary (see Map 5 of the Official Community Plan). The incentive is the waiver of the Development Cost Charge. If you qualify for the City's incentive, you may also qualify for the Yukon Housing Municipal Matching Grant of up to \$10,000.

Still have questions? www.whitehorse.ca/development
Email: development@whitehorse.ca
Phone: 668-8340
Office location: 6-151 Industrial Road

