

Getting Your Secondary Suite to Compliance

Bringing an existing secondary suite into compliance requires a building permit. The majority of the requirements are based on the fire resistance rating (FRR) between the suites. The fire resistance rating (FRR) is the amount of time for which a building element (like walls, floors, or doors) can withstand fire exposure while still performing its structural function. Below are the code requirements that must be met as prescribed in the 2024 British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) Division B.

- Fire separation between the suites. The FRR is determined by the type of smoke detectors. Both options require the detectors to be installed and interconnected throughout the whole house, not just the secondary suite [9.10.19]. The two types of detectors are:
 - photo-electric type (which are smoke sensitive) require a FRR of 15 minutes.
 - standard smoke alarms (which are flame sensitive) require a FRR of 45 minutes.
- If access to the secondary suite is not directly from the outside, the common spaces must have fire separation with the FRR as determined by the type of smoke detector.
- If the access to the secondary suite is a stairwell, then it must have a FRR and door determined by the type of smoke detector installed. [9.9.4.2]
 - A landing is required if the door swings towards the stairs. [9.8.6]
- The furnace room must have a FRR of 45 minutes. [Table 9.10.13.1]
- If the furnace will serve both suites:
 - If the ducting penetrates the fire separation (ceiling or walls) fire dampers must be installed. [9.10.9.6]
 - If the ducting does not penetrate the fire separation, then a duct-type smoke detector must be installed. [9.10.18.5]
- The door on the furnace room must have a Fire Protection Rating of 20 minutes [Table 9.10.13.1] (A 45mm thick solid core door will meet this requirement). Clearance around the door must be 6 mm beneath the door and 3 mm around the top and sides. [9.10.13.2]
- Carbon Monoxide Alarms are required whenever the building has fuel-burning (natural gas or wood) appliances (furnace, hot water tank, stove, etc.). Alarms must be installed either inside every bedroom or within 5 meters of each bedroom door and be interconnected throughout the whole house, not just the secondary suite. [9.32.4.2]
- If unsprinklered, the bedroom must have a secondary means of egress, either through an exterior door or an exterior window. The unobstructed opening must not be less than 0.35m² in area with no dimension less than 380mm (15"). [9.9.10.1(2a)]
 - If the window opens into a window well, there must be 760mm (30") of clearance from the front of the window. [9.9.10.1(3)]
- Handrails are to be installed on interior stairs with more than 2 risers and exterior stairs with more than 3 risers. Handrail height must be 1070mm (42"). [9.8.7]
- Kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans must be vented to the outside. [9.32.3.8(2)]

Alternatively the other option is to utilize sprinklers in the bedroom(s) and furnace room, provided that they follow NFPA 13 requirements below:

- must be supplied from the domestic water system [3.2.5.12(4)]
- must be a fast response sprinkler head for residential occupancy [3.2.5.12(10)]
- must be constructed of combustible piping [3.2.5.13]
- not more than 9 sprinkler heads [3.2.5.12(4)]

A business licence is required for all rental property or units.

If you have any questions please contact buildinginspection@dawsoncreek.ca

Secondary Suite Checklist

Address: _____ Date: _____

This application is for bringing existing secondary suites into compliance.

Please note that only complete applications will be accepted.

Please attach this checklist when submitting the application.

- ☐ Building Permit Application
Complete form attached
- ☐ Owner Authorization Form (If Applicable)
Required when an agent is submitting the application on behalf of the property owner.
Must be completed and signed by the property owner.
- ☐ Floor Plan showing the Suite Layout
Drawn to scale, showing:
 - Each floor - Showing the dimensions and use of all existing rooms and other areas and proposed rooms or area. Location, size, type, and swing of doors, and location, size, and opening of windows
 - Location of interconnected smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms
 - Type of detector (circle one)
 - photo-electric type
 - standard smoke alarm
- ☐ Typical Wall Section
 - Do not leave any blanks. Some items may be existing or unknown and should be label as such.
 - Fire separation and fire-resistance rating of all assemblies separating primary dwelling unit from secondary suite
 - Wall details for the 1-hour fire separation for the furnace room

Building Permit Application

Property Information

Civic Address		PID
Legal Description		
Property Area (m ²)	Zoning Designation	

Project Information

☐	Single Family Dwelling/Duplex	☐	New construction (Commercial/Industrial)	☐	Weeping Tile
☐	Tri-plex or Greater/Apartment	☐	Tenant Improvements (Commercial/Industrial)	☐	Demolition
☐	SFD Renovation/Addition	☐	Detached Garage	☐	Wood Stove
☐	Secondary Suite	☐	Shed	☐	
☐	Manufactured Home	☐	Deck	☐	
Estimated Value			Area of Project (m ²)		
Occupancy Classification			Does this Building Fall Under Part 3 or Part 9 of BC Building Code?		
Occupancy Classifications: Group A: Assembly Group B: Care, Treatment, and Detention Group C: Residential Group D: Office & Personal Services Group E: Mercantile Group F: F-1 High Hazard Industrial F-2 Medium Hazard Industrial F-3 Low Hazard Industrial			Part 3 Buildings Consist of: • Group A • Group B • Group F-1 • Buildings exceeding 600m² in building area		Part 9 Building Consist of: • Group C • Group D • Group E • Group F-2 • Group F-3 • Buildings under 600m² in building area

Property Owner Information

Name	Company
Address	City & Province
Email	Postal Code
Phone	Fax

Contractor Information

Name		Company	
Address		City & Province	
Email		Postal Code	
Phone	Fax	Business Licence Number	

Agent / Tenant Information	
Is an agent submitting the application on behalf of the property owner? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
If Yes, the Owner Authorization form needs to be completed and submitted.	
Will there be commercial tenants? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Tenant Company Name
Contact Person	Business Licence Number
Address	City & Province
Email	Postal Code
Phone	Fax

1. I acknowledge that if I am granted a building permit pursuant to this application that I am responsible for compliance with the current edition of the British Columbia Building Code, this bylaw and any other applicable enactment, code, regulation or standard relating to the work in respect of which the permit is issued, whether or not the said work is undertaken by me or by those whom I may retain or employ to provide design and/or construction services.
2. I acknowledge that neither the issuance of a permit under this bylaw, the acceptance nor review of plans, specifications, drawings or supporting documents, nor inspections made by or on behalf of the City constitute a representation, warranty, assurance or statement that the current edition of the British Columbia Building Code, the City of Dawson Creek's Building Bylaw, Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw, and Sign Bylaw or any other applicable enactment, code, regulation or standard has been complied with.
3. Where the City requires that Letters of Assurance be provided by a Registered Professional pursuant to Section 11 of the City of Dawson Creek Building Bylaw and Section 55 of the Community Charter I confirm that I have been advised in writing by the City that it relied exclusively on the Letter of Assurance of "Professional Design and Commitment for Field Review" prepared by in reviewing the plans, drawings, specifications and supporting documents submitted with this application for a building permit.
4. I confirm that I have relied only on the said Registered Professional for the adequacy of plans, drawings, specifications and supporting documents submitted with this application.
5. I understand that I should seek independent legal advice in respect of the responsibilities I am assuming upon the granting of a building permit by the City pursuant to this application and in respect of the execution of this acknowledgement.

I hereby agree to indemnify and keep harmless the City of Dawson Creek against all claims, liabilities, judgements, costs and expenses which may, in any way, occur against the said City in consequence of and incidental to, the granting of this permit, if issued. I further agree to conform to all requirements of the Building Bylaw and all other statutes and bylaws in force in the City of Dawson Creek.

Name (Please Print)

Signature

Date

Arrange for inspections by phone or email

Phone: 250-784-3618

Email: buildinginspection@dawsoncreek.ca



Owner Authorization Form

FILE NUMBER: _____ - _____

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Municipal Address(es): _____

Legal Description(s): _____

Project Description: _____

Registered Owner Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Please be advised that I/we, the registered owner(s) of the above mentioned property(ies),
(select one)

- ☐ will apply for all applications related to the above mentioned project.
- ☐ authorize the following agent to apply for all applications related to the above mentioned project on my/our behalf

Agent Name		Agent Company	
Mailing Address			
City:	Province:	Postal Code:	
Telephone:	Cell:		
Email address:			

I/We agree to immediately notify the City of Dawson Creek, in writing, of any changes regarding this information.

Owner's Name(s) (printed): _____

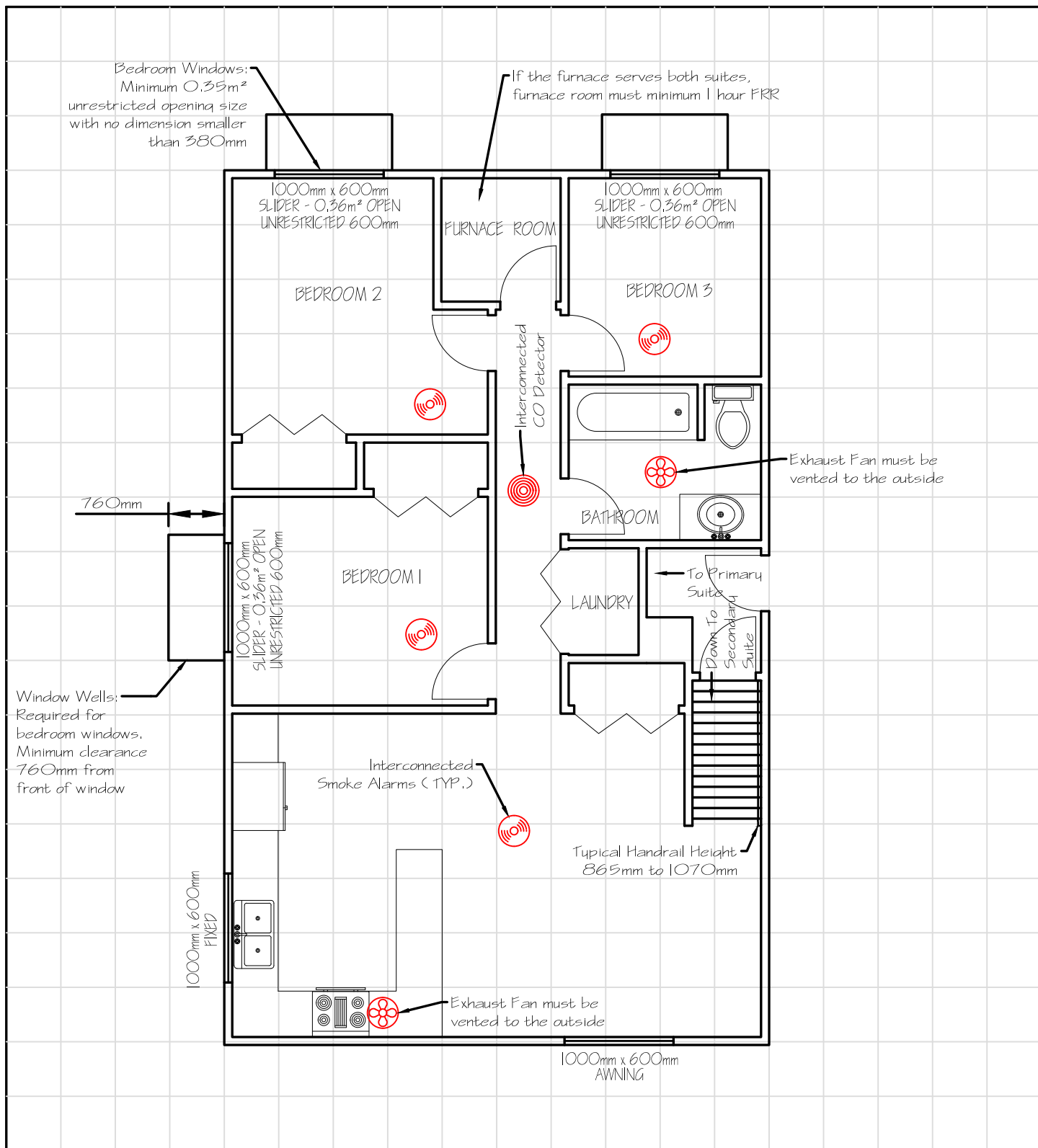
Owner's Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

FLOOR PLAN EXAMPLE

Address: 2997 Main Street Contact Name/Number: Mike Homes 250-555-1234

This template does not need to be used if submitted on graph paper or as an architectural drawing set.

Scale: 1 Square = 1m

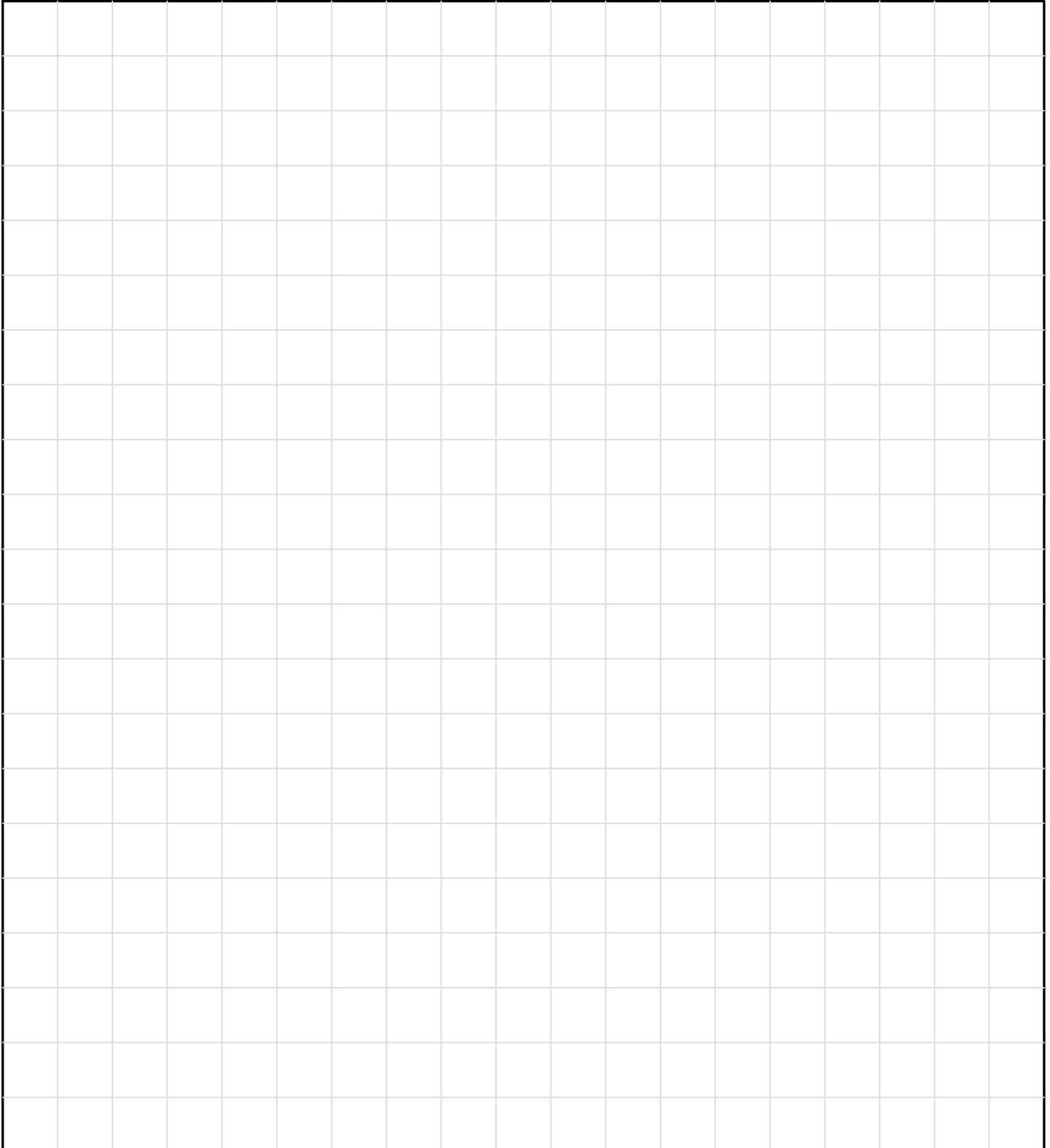


FLOOR PLAN

Address: _____ Contact Name/Number: _____

This template does not need to be used if submitted on graph paper or as an architectural drawing set.

Scale: 1 Square = _____



TYPICAL WALL SECTION

