



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between basement development and a secondary suite?

Basement development is the improvement of space within the primary residence. A secondary suite is a self-contained living unit contained within a primary residence or accessory building.

Do I need a permit to develop a secondary suite or basement?

Only a Building Permit is required for basement development. Both a Development and Building Permit are needed for a secondary suite. Other Safety Codes permits are required e.g. Electrical and Plumbing.

Is it possible to have two secondary suites on a lot?

No, only one secondary suite is permitted on a parcel of land.

Is the building inspection an additional expense?

No, inspections are included in the permit fees.

What is the benefit of getting permits and inspections?

- ensures work complies with all regulations
- avoids costly corrections after construction
- provides personal safety and peace of mind
- aids in the protection of your investment

CONTACT US

If you have any questions or for more information contact:

Planning & Economic Development

St. Germain Place
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Hours

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday
Closed on statutory holidays

This brochure is for information purposes only and may be periodically updated. The contents do not necessarily reflect the legal documents and cannot be used as an official interpretation of the official bylaws, regulations and statutory plans in effect.

Revised December 2015



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

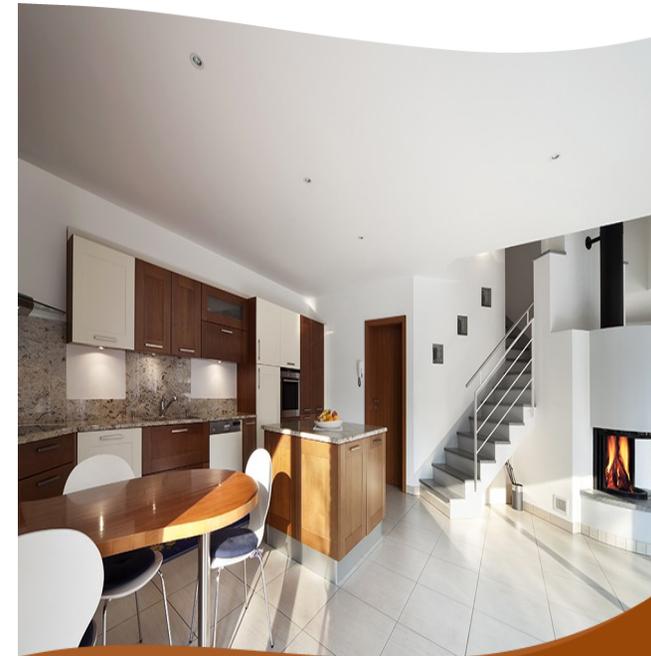
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DEVELOPING A BASEMENT OR SECONDARY SUITE?

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Development in Morinville, including secondary suites, is regulated by the Land Use Bylaw.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- Secondary suites are permitted in most single detached dwellings, and may be allowed in some duplexes.
- A secondary suite must have a minimum floor area of 30.0 m² (322.9 sq. ft.) and maximum floor area of 92.9 m² (1,000 sq. ft.). The secondary suite floor area can not exceed the floor area of the rest of the house. This does not include shared mechanical areas and stairways.
- The outside appearance of the house must be that of a single detached dwelling.

Secondary Suites in an Accessory Building (i.e. Detached Garage)

- Secondary suites in an accessory building are only allowed on corner lots or lots next to a lane and the lot must be a minimum of 445.9 m² (4,800 sq. ft.) in area.
- The accessory building containing the suite can not be closer than 1.2 m (3.9 ft.) to any side or rear property line.
- The house and accessory building must be separated by a minimum distance of 2.4 m (7.9 ft.).
- A detached garage containing the suite cannot exceed two storeys with a maximum height of 7.0 m (23 ft.) or exceed the height of the house. The roof pitch can not be less than 4:12. The suite may only face a lane or road next to the site.
- Windows in secondary suites shall be strategically placed so that visibility into neighbouring windows and yards is minimized.

BUILDING PERMIT

Construction in Morinville is regulated by the Alberta Building Code. The intent of the Alberta Building Code is to ensure the health and safety of the owners and the general public who occupy or use the structures. The Alberta Building Code provides the minimum requirements to be met in the Province of Alberta.

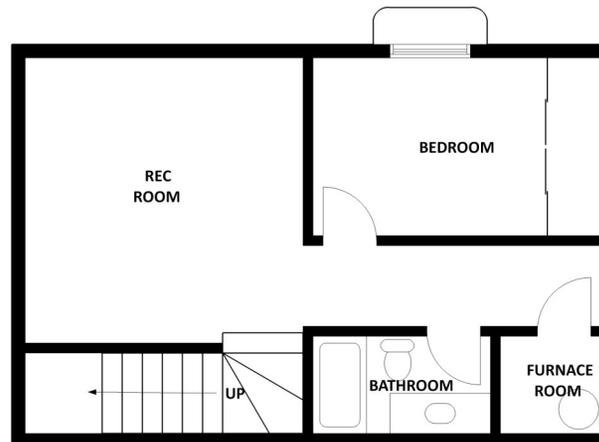
Make sure you have the following before applying for permits:

- A complete Development Permit application (only required if applying for a secondary suite)
- A complete Building Permit application (available at our office or at www.morinville.ca)
- Application fees

Finishing your basement

3 sets of floor plans are required to be submitted with your building permit application and they should contain the following information:

- Proposed and existing rooms
- Indicate the use and dimension of the proposed rooms under development
- Indicate details of any structural changes
- Locations of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Indicate locations, sizes and swing direction of all doors
- Indicate window sizes and locations



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Secondary Suites

Planning is key when considering a secondary suite. Before homeowners decide to proceed with renovating or building a secondary suite within their home, they should consider the costs. Those costs can increase quickly as only qualified tradespersons are permitted to do electrical, plumbing, and gas installations in secondary suites.

Specific construction standards for secondary suites provide landlords with clear guidelines for safe construction of such units, and tenants and their families will have greater confidence in the safety of their homes. The Alberta Building Code specifies required ceiling heights, windows, fire protection, interconnected smoke detectors, dedicated heating and ventilation systems, and separate exits.

A good place to begin your planning is reviewing a pamphlet printed by the *Alberta Safety Codes Council*, called **Safety Tips, Secondary Suite Standards** (http://municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/am_safety_tips.cfm).

How to apply for a permit

For your convenience, development and building permit applications can be applied for at the same time. Applications are available at our office or online at www.morinville.ca. Submit the completed application with the necessary plans and supporting documents (as required). Application fees are due at the time of your submission.

Our dedicated staff is always available to help you with this process. If you have questions, please feel free to call or visit our office.