Information Guide
Accessory Dwelling Units

District of Metchosin
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This guide is designed to help you understand the regulations for **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** in the District of Metchosin. This guide is provided for general information only and does not replace the requirements of the *BC Building Code*, the District of Metchosin *Land Use Bylaw No. 259, 1995*, the District of Metchosin *Building Bylaw No. 694, 2024* or any other applicable District bylaws or regulations.

For specific legal definitions and the most up to date bylaws and regulations, please visit the District website at **www.metchosin.ca**.

Property owners and applicants are encouraged to contact the District of Metchosin Development Services Department by email at building@metchosin.ca or by phone at 250-474-3167 to confirm zoning, property eligibility, and what is permitted before beginning design or construction.

WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a self-contained smaller dwelling unit located on the same lot as the principal dwelling. There are three types of ADUs permitted in the District of Metchosin: **secondary suites, detached secondary suites and carriage houses**.

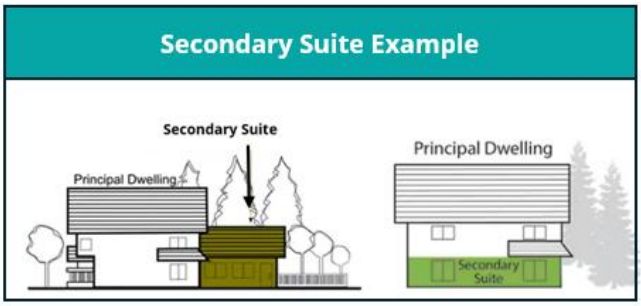
TYPES OF ADUs

Each type of ADU has different characteristics, locations and requirements. The following provides a plain-language description of each type, along with key rules and illustrations.

Secondary Suite

A self-contained dwelling unit located inside the principal dwelling, with its own kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area.

Illustration shows a typical example. Actual designs must meet zoning and building regulations.



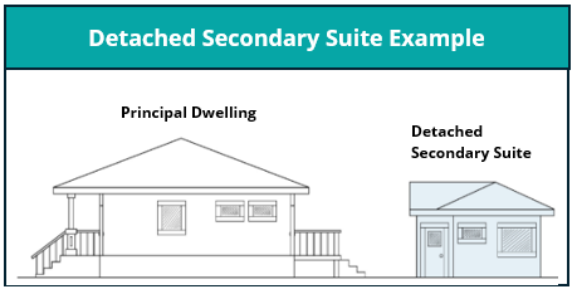
Key Requirements:

- Maximum floor area: 120 m^2 (1,291 ft^2) or 40% of the principal dwelling's gross floor area, whichever is less (garages and carports are excluded).
- The secondary suite and the principal dwelling must be connected by a common wall or floor/ceiling assembly.

Detached Secondary Suite

A self-contained smaller dwelling unit located in a separate building from the principal dwelling on the same property. It includes its own kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area.

Illustration shows a typical example. Actual designs must meet zoning and building regulations.



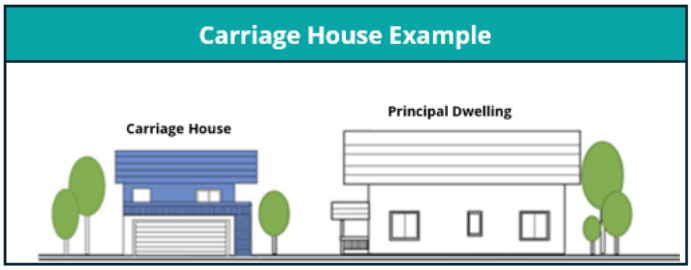
Key Requirements:

- Must be in a separate building from the principal dwelling.
- Minimum lot size: 0.8 ha (1.98 ac).
- Maximum floor area: 90 m^2 (968 ft^2).
    - Includes enclosed garages, stairwells, hallways, mezzanines.
    - Excludes unenclosed decks, open porches, carports, crawl spaces, attic areas < 1.8 m ceiling.
- Maximum height: 8 m (26.2 ft).
- Must be located between 1 m (3.3 ft) and 15 m (49.2 ft) from the principal dwelling.
- Must be at least 15 m (49.2 ft) from any lot line.

Carriage House

A self-contained smaller dwelling unit located above an accessory building, such as a garage, storage building or workshop, on the same property as the principal dwelling. It has its own kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area, and has a separate entrance.

Illustration shows a typical example. Actual designs must meet zoning and building regulations.



Key Requirements:

- A dwelling unit above an accessory building.
- Minimum lot size: 0.8 ha (1.98 ac).
- Maximum living area: 90 m^2 (968 ft^2).
- Maximum height: 10.5 m (34.4 ft).
- Accessory building (excluding the carriage house): cannot exceed 110 m^2.
- Total building (carriage house plus all non-residential uses): cannot exceed 200 m^2.
- All living space for carriage house must be on the upper floor; the ground floor can only have stairs, hallways, an entry foyer/mudroom, or mechanical/utility rooms.
- Must be located between 1 m (3.3 ft) and 15 m (49.2 ft) from the principal dwelling.
- Must be at least 15 m (49.2 ft) from any lot line.

HOW MANY ADUs ARE ALLOWED?

The number and type of ADUs allowed on a property depends on lot size, zoning, and whether the property is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Property Type/Lot Size	Number of ADUs Allowed	Types of ADUs Allowed
Less than 0.8 ha (1.98 acres)	1	Secondary suite only
0.8 ha or larger, **not in ALR**	1	Secondary suite, detached secondary suite or carriage house
0.8 ha or larger, **in ALR**	**2**	One secondary suite **plus** one detached secondary suite or carriage house

If your property is in the ALR:

- The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) has its own method for calculating floor area.
- The maximum floor area for the principal dwelling in the ALR is 500 m^2, with or without a secondary suite.
- Always check *the ALC Act and ALR Regulations* and contact the District of Metchosin before starting your project.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- A Building Permit is required for all ADUs.
- ADUs cannot be separated from the principal dwelling by strata title or subdivision.
- Always confirm zoning, location, lot size, and ALR status with Development Services before applying.
- Before deciding to construct an ADU, consider any site restrictions (i.e. easements, covenants, zoning regulations, geotechnical constraints, watercourses, an oceanfront location, Development Permit (DP) Areas).
    - For example, setbacks are required from watercourses, which may limit where an ADU can be located on your property.
    - Tree Cutting Permits: The District Tree Management Bylaw regulates the removal of trees.
    - These site restrictions/conditions may trigger additional permits, studies or approvals before a building permit can be issued.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Need more information?

Refer to Building Permits | District of Metchosin. For zoning information, to view copies of the Land Use Bylaw and Official Community Plan, contact the Development Services Department or visit the District website **www.metchosin.ca**.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their plans early on with staff. For land use and building inquiries, email building@metchosin.ca

Looking for property records?

If you are requesting Property Information (includes Building Permit history, date of occupancy, zoning information, legal description), contact the District directly at 250-474-3167. There may be Property Service Fees associated with this type of request in accordance with the District's Fees Bylaw 2024, No. 696

- BC Building Code
- BC Housing - Licensing & Consumer Services
- BC Housing - Licensed Builder Registry
- BC Housing - Become an Owner Builder
- BC Association of Building Designers
- Association of BC Land Surveyors
- Housing and tenancy - Province of BC
- 2025 Metchosin Housing Amendments
- Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
- Land Title and Survey Authority of BC
- Island Health - Septic Info