



## Secondary Suite Incentive Program Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. How do I apply for a grant?**

If you are planning to construct a secondary suite, your first step should be to ensure that your property complies with zoning and other requirements for the construction of a secondary suite. The District's Community Planning & Development Department, located at 270 City Centre can assist you with these inquiries. Office hours are 8:30 am-noon and 1:00-4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding holidays.

Phone 250-632-8910 and inquiries by email [dok@kitimat.ca](mailto:dok@kitimat.ca)

Once you have confirmed that your property complies, you must apply for a Building Permit. A Building Permit requires that a homeowner comply with the secondary suite standards in the *BC Building Code*.

### **Q: Am I eligible to apply for the grant?**

A: You are eligible for the grant if you are the owner of an existing home within the District of Kitimat in a zone which allows secondary suites, but does not currently have a suite. Zones which allow suites are: R2-B, R2-A, G3, G3-A, G3-B, and G3-C. These zones contain approximately two-thirds of houses in Kitimat. A zoning map is available at [www.kitimat.ca](http://www.kitimat.ca)

### **Q: What does the grant cover?**

A: A basic will equal 33% of eligible construction costs, to a maximum of \$2,500. Eligible expenses are defined as the value of building materials, contracted services, related permit fees, and service upgrades to facilitate the development of the secondary suite. Ineligible costs include volunteer and owner's labour, tools, appliances, and any service or material without appropriate documentation or not directly attributable to the development of the secondary suite. Additional grants are available for affordable and accessible suite.

### **Q: What are the steps I need to take in order to receive this grant?**

A: You will need to follow the steps below in order to receive the grant:

- Confirm your property meets the zoning and regulatory requirements.
- Apply for a Building Permit.
- Submit your completed grant application form. Grant application form are available at District Office, and on District website, [www.kitimat.ca](http://www.kitimat.ca).
- Do not assume approval of grant monies until receiving notice of eligibility.
- Pick up your approved Building Permit and complete all necessary construction and applicable inspections.
- Apply for your Occupancy Permit.
- After your Occupancy Permit has been issued, provide a signed Partnering Agreement, and submit your eligible receipts to the District of Kitimat. A cheque will be issued within about three weeks.

**Q: Is there a time limit on construction of my suite to be eligible for the grant?**

A: Yes, an Occupancy Permit must be obtained within 12 months of the application for a Building Permit.

**Q: I currently have a suite, but would like to legalize it and bring it up to code. Will this grant cover that?**

A: No. The grant only applies to construction of a new secondary suite and does not apply to renovation or upgrading of any existing suite.

**Q: Once my suite is constructed, what do I need to do in order to receive the grant funding?**

A: In order to receive the grant, you must be issued an Occupancy Permit by the District, submit all eligible receipts related to the suite's construction for audit, and enter into a Partnering Agreement with the District.

**Q: What is a Partnering Agreement?**

A: A Partnering Agreement is a written agreement between the District of Kitimat and the homeowner detailing the terms and conditions of the grant. The agreement will specify that the secondary suite constructed under the grant program be made available for rental for a period of five years. The agreement will also require the grant recipient to indemnify the District of Kitimat from any claim arising from construction of the suite or its subsequent occupancy.

**Q: If I sell my house within the five year period, does the Partnering Agreement pass to next owner?**

A: The Partnering Agreement is registered against the property. If the new owner wishes to cancel the Partnering Agreement, but will they must repay the remainder of the initial loan.

**Q: Can I strata-title and sell my suite?**

A: No. Secondary suites are not eligible for strata-titling.

**Q: Is there anything else I need to do in order to be eligible?**

A: Your property must be in compliance with the District of Kitimat Building Bylaw and Zoning Regulation Bylaw at the time of application, and construction must comply with all permits and bylaws related to secondary suites. You must be current in your payment of taxes and utilities for the property. You must consent to public notification including name, address and grant amount, and posting your suite information for potential tenants.

**Q: Are there any restrictions on who I can rent my suite to once it is completed?**

A: No.

**Q. What are the additional grants that are available?**

A: Grants are available for people who commit to rent their suites at rates deemed affordable by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), known as Level 1 and Level 2. Levels as of July 2014 are shown below.

Owners committing to rent their suite at Level 1 are eligible for an additional \$5,000 (or up to 50% of construction costs), and owners committing to rent their suite at Level 2 are eligible for an additional \$,7500 (or up to 66% of construction costs).

	Bachelor/Studio		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3+ Bedroom	
	Level 1	Level 2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2
Maximum Levels	\$645	\$575	\$750	\$685	\$900	\$815	\$950	\$873

Additionally, a grant of up to \$2,500 is available for those wishing to create suites that are accessible. Accessible suites would meet BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards for wheelchair accessible units.