



Basement Suite Feasibility

1234 Example Road, Saanich

Example homeowner · October 20, 2026 · District of Saanich

Feasible with changes

Your basement can become a legal suite. The main work is fire separation, an enlarged bedroom window and separate heating.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

- Headroom under beams and ducts: Main beam and supply duct run low through the future living room. Duct can be rerouted.
- Bedroom egress windows: Bedroom window too small. Enlarge opening and lower the sill.
- Fire separation between units: Open joists. Needs a fire-rated ceiling and rated door at the stair.
- Smoke and CO alarms: Add interconnected smoke and CO alarms.
- Heating: Single forced-air system. Baseboard heaters for the suite.
- Fresh air supply: No fresh air supply to the basement. HRV or dedicated ventilation needed.
- Water service size: Fixture load is 20.6 FU, over the 16 FU a 3/4 in service can carry. A 1 in service (31 FU) would carry this load.
- EV charging (240V): EV-ready 240V outlet required.

DISTRICT OF SAANICH: RULES FOR SUITES

- Inside the urban containment boundary, a house can have a secondary suite and a garden suite together.
- Owner-occupancy is no longer required.
- An EV-ready 240V outlet is required.
- Outside the boundary, one secondary suite is allowed. Check agricultural land, floodplain or streamside areas and protected trees.

Lot notes: RS zone, inside the urban containment boundary.

Information checked October 2026. <https://saanich.ca/SSMUH>

WALK-THROUGH

Suite permitted on this lot

Secondary suite permitted.

OK

Ceiling height in living areas

Good height in main rooms.

OK

Headroom under beams and ducts

Main beam and supply duct run low through the future living room. Duct can be rerouted.

Needs work

Bedroom egress windows

Bedroom window too small. Enlarge opening and lower the sill.

Needs work

Suite entrance	OK
Existing side door to basement can serve as the suite entrance.	
Exit path to the street	OK
Fire separation between units	Needs work
Open joists. Needs a fire-rated ceiling and rated door at the stair.	
Smoke and CO alarms	Needs work
Add interconnected smoke and CO alarms.	
Sound separation	Not checked
Heating	Needs work
Single forced-air system. Baseboard heaters for the suite.	
Fresh air supply	Needs work
No fresh air supply to the basement. HRV or dedicated ventilation needed.	
Air conditioning	N/A
Electrical panel	OK
Room in the panel for a suite subpanel.	
Plumbing	OK
Main stack near the proposed kitchen location.	
Water service size	Needs work
Fixture load is 20.6 FU, over the 16 FU a 3/4 in service can carry. A 1 in service (31 FU) would carry this load.	
Moisture and drainage	OK
No signs of water.	
EV charging (240V)	Needs work
EV-ready 240V outlet required.	
Parking and site access	N/A

PLUMBING FIXTURE COUNT

Bathroom group	2 x 3.6 = 7.2 FU
Kitchen sink	2 x 1.4 = 2.8 FU
Dishwasher	2 x 1.4 = 2.8 FU
Pot filler	1 x 1.4 = 1.4 FU
Clothes washer	1 x 1.4 = 1.4 FU
Hose bibb (1/2 in)	2 x 2.5 = 5 FU

Total 20.6 FU · 3/4 in service carries 16 FU · Over capacity

Smallest water service that carries this load: 1 in (31 FU).

Guide capacities: 1/2 in = 7 FU, 3/4 in = 16 FU, 1 in = 31 FU, 1-1/4 in = 57 FU

Fixture units are private-use values from the National Plumbing Code hydraulic load table, which the BC Plumbing Code is based on. Service capacities are a planning guide for houses with more than one dwelling unit, assuming at least 200 kPa water pressure and no more than 90 m of piping. Final service sizing should be confirmed by a plumber.

NEXT STEPS

If you'd like to go ahead, the next step is concept design: an accurate as-built of your basement and suite layout options in 3D, followed by permit drawings. The \$250 feasibility fee is credited toward design if you go ahead.

This is a preliminary assessment based on a visual review of the space and current municipal information. It is not a building permit approval, an engineering review or a guarantee of approval. Municipal rules change often, and requirements will be confirmed with the municipality during design.

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SAMPLE