

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What types of coach houses are permitted?** A coach house can be in a single storey building or in a suite above a detached garage.

**How big can a coach house be?** A coach house suite can be a maximum of 60 m<sup>2</sup>.

**What is needed to install a coach house dwelling unit in an existing accessory building?** A Development Permit is required to install a coach house dwelling unit in an existing accessory building. If the existing building does not meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw, a Development Permit Variance Permit application may also be required. The Development Variance Permit application process requires notification to the neighbours.

A building permit is also required to convert an accessory building to residential occupancy. When a 'change of occupancy' is proposed to an accessory building, the BC Building Code requires that the building be upgraded to meet current code standards. You will need to assess the extent of the required building upgrades. In some cases existing accessory buildings cannot be made suitable for residential use. Also be advised that home warranty insurance, from the Homeowner Protection Office of BC (HPO), may be required. For more information visit [www.hpo.bc.ca](http://www.hpo.bc.ca).

**Do I need a Building Permit for a coach house and what is the cost?** Yes. If you are constructing a new coach house or converting an existing building to a coach house. A Building Permit fee will be charged based on construction values contained in

the Building and Plumbing Bylaw. You will also need a Development Permit.

**How many parking spaces do I need to provide?** One parking space is needed on the property for the coach house resident, and another space is needed for the residents of the primary dwelling. Parking may be arranged in tandem, such that one space is located behind the other, with a shared point of access to the adjacent road or lane. A driveway access permit may be required. Contact Infrastructure Services for more information.

**Are there other costs?** Yes. The Town will charge an additional wastewater user rate for each coach house, as well as an additional charge for garbage, recycling, and organic waste collection. Also, water is metered, so usage will increase with the addition of the coach house. There will be only one quarterly bill sent to the owner of the property.

**Can I sell my coach house suite?** No. A coach house suite cannot be stratified, subdivided, or otherwise legally separated from the property.

**What if I don't use the coach house as an accessory dwelling anymore?** Utility fees will be charged for a coach house until the residential use is removed. Contact the Building Inspector for more information on removing a coach house suite.

**How can I learn more about being a landlord?** The Provincial Residential Tenancy Branch website ([www.rto.gov.bc.ca](http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca)) provides resources for landlords and tenants.



Review this guide to learn more about the zoning regulations and design considerations that apply to coach houses.

### WHAT IS A COACH HOUSE?

A coach house is a self-contained accessory dwelling unit located within a detached accessory building that is either accommodated at-grade within a one-storey accessory building, or within the second storey of a two-storey accessory building.

### WHERE CAN I PUT A COACH HOUSE & HOW BIG CAN IT BE?

Coach houses are only permitted on residential parcels in specified zones (i.e. R-2, R-2-A, R-2-LW, and RU-1). Also, the parcel needs to meet the following conditions:

- If located on a lane, a parcel needs to be 668 m<sup>2</sup> or larger.
- If located on a corner, a parcel needs to be 668 m<sup>2</sup> or larger, and the front entry of the coach house must face the lane or exterior side of the parcel.
- For all other parcels, the parcel must be 780 m<sup>2</sup> or larger.

A coach house dwelling:

- May not exist on a parcel containing a secondary suite.
- Can have a gross floor area of 60 m<sup>2</sup> or less.
- Can be a height of 6.6 m when located in the second storey of an accessory building (except where the roof pitch is less than 4:12, then the maximum height is 5.7 m). Can be a height of 5 m when located in a single storey accessory building.
- Must be located in the rear yard and must be located at least 6 m from the principal dwelling.
- Must be located within a single parcel that includes the principal dwelling (i.e. it cannot be stratified).
- Must accommodate one parking stall on the parcel for the coach house, as well as one parking stall for the principal dwelling. Parking stalls may be located in tandem.
- May not have upper level balconies and decks larger than 2.9 m<sup>2</sup>, and flat roofs may not be used for deck areas.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Development Services Department**, 132C Roberts Street, Ladysmith BC  
250-245-6415 | [DS@ladysmith.ca](mailto:DS@ladysmith.ca)

**Building Inspection**, 132C Roberts Street, Ladysmith BC  
250-245-6443 | [DS@ladysmith.ca](mailto:DS@ladysmith.ca)

**Infrastructure Services Department**, 330 Sixth Avenue, Ladysmith BC  
250-245-6445 | [RBouma@ladysmith.ca](mailto:RBouma@ladysmith.ca)

Visit [www.ladysmith.ca/business-development](http://www.ladysmith.ca/business-development) to download a copy of the Zoning Bylaw and the Development Permit Area Guidelines.



## I WANT TO BUILD A COACH HOUSE. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

1. Ensure you can have a coach house on your property by reviewing the zone that applies to your parcel, or contact Development Services.
2. Review the regulations for coach houses in Part 6, Section 6.5 of the Zoning Bylaw.
3. Review the Development Permit Area Guidelines (DPA 10) for Coach House Intensive Residential, ensuring your proposed coach house plans follow the guidelines.
4. Whether you are remodelling an existing accessory building or constructing a new building, a Coach House Intensive Residential Development Permit is required. Apply for the Development Permit by submitting a completed Development Application form, and provide the following information with the application:

### DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The coach house design needs to be functional, livable and safe for tenants, and meet the Development Permit Area Guidelines for Coach House Intensive Residential, as well as the BC Building Code. Whether you are remodeling an existing accessory building or constructing a new building, remember to include the following features in the site and building design:

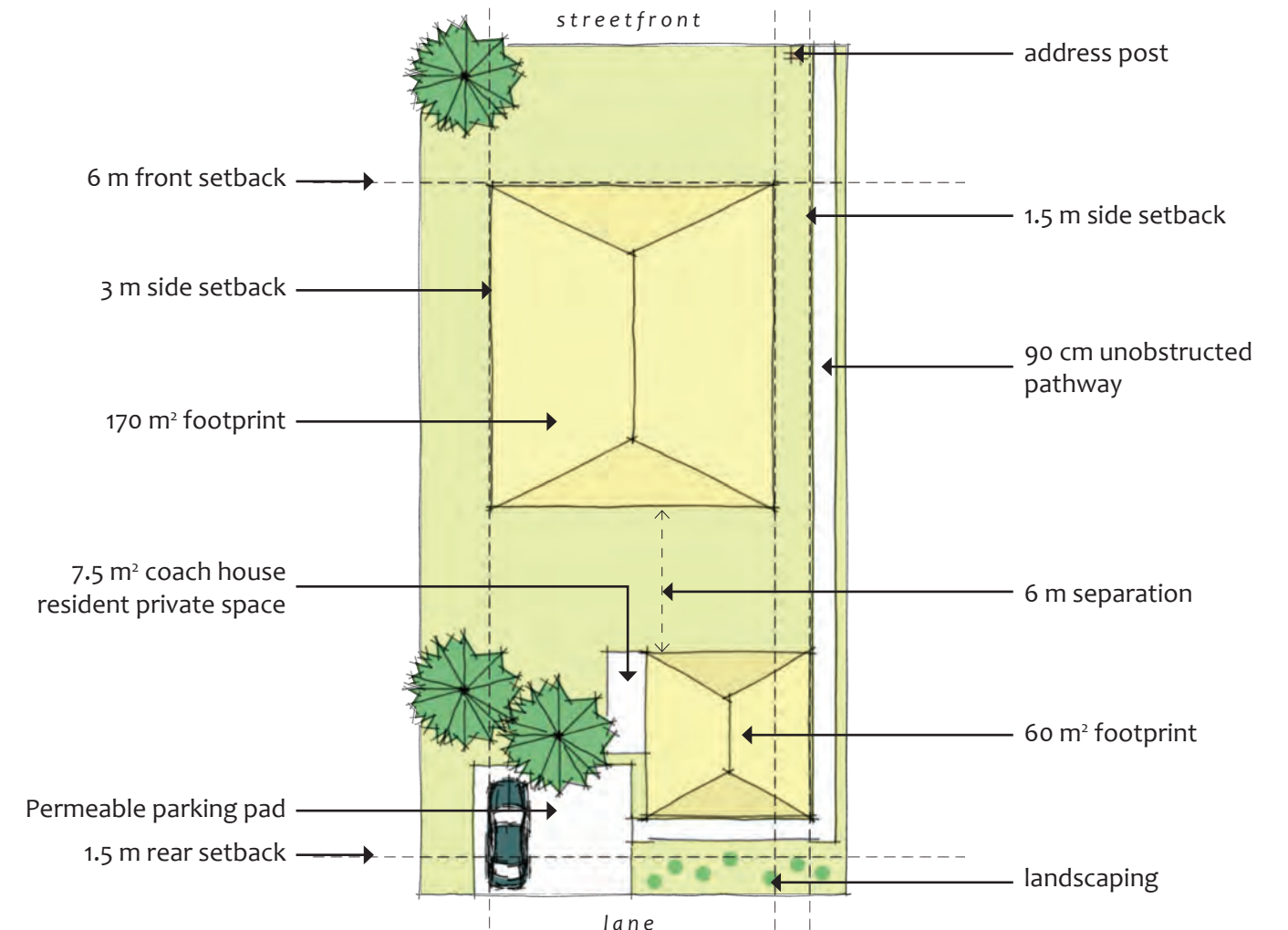
- Design to respect privacy, sunlight exposure, and views of neighbouring properties.
- Ensure the design is harmonious with the design of the principal dwelling.
- Provide a continuous unobstructed pathway from the street to the coach house entrance.
- The address of the coach house must be placed on a signpost, adjacent to the pathway, so it is visible from the street.
- Provide a screened outdoor amenity space near the entry of the coach house.
- Ensure there will be natural light in living areas.
- Provide windows that allow access/egress in case of fire, as well as a window in every bedroom (BC Building Code).
- Consider access to laundry facilities (can be shared).
- Provide a driveway access that meets Engineering Standards. A driveway access permit may be required. Contact Infrastructure Services for more information.



5. Upon receipt of a Coach House Intensive Residential Development Permit, submit a Building Permit Application (contact the Building Inspector for Building Permit information).
6. Contact Infrastructure Services for servicing information (i.e. water, sewer, stormdrain connections).

## WHAT IS A SITE PLAN?

Use this sample site plan to assist with your application.



### COACH HOUSE SUSTAINABILITY

Talk to your architect or contractor about incorporating green building technology and other sustainability features into your coach house. In addition to being more environmentally friendly and creating more healthy living spaces for tenants, a sustainable approach to the design of your coach house can save you money in the long term.

All coach houses can utilize energy efficient lighting and heating systems (or consider alternatives, such as solar or on-demand hot water) and appliances to conserve water, and reduce long term energy costs and Greenhouse Gas emissions. Using low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paint, carpets and cabinetry can improve indoor air quality inside coach houses.

Site landscaping can also incorporate sustainable elements. Choose plants suited to the local climate and that do not need excessive watering. Where possible, use permeable pavers or pervious materials for walkways, patios and parking stalls to enhance infiltration and keep rain from running into storm drains.