Information Bulletin - Secondary Suites

What is a Secondary Suite?

A Secondary Suite is a self-contained, accessory dwelling unit that is located within a single detached house and has its own separate kitchen, sleeping and bathing facilities. A secondary suite does not include townhouses, duplex housing, or apartment housing.

Currently, property owners in the West and East Electoral Areas are required to apply to rezone or amend the land use designation of the parcel to permit a secondary suite. A subsequent Building Permit for the building construction/alteration is also required.

What is happening with Secondary Suites?

On June 27, 2016, the Regional Board passed a resolution that Regional District staff be directed to bring a report to a future Governance & Services Committee meeting for the consideration of secondary suite applications by policy approval rather than bylaw amendment. The report found that:

- Five of six member municipalities and neighbouring regional districts permit secondary suites by policy (meaning there is no need to rezone properties).
- Some of the local governments previously had secondary suite processes similar to RDCO’s current process. These local governments completed significant public consultation prior to amending their secondary suite processes.

What to expect from the Regional District of Central Okanagan

Regional District staff believe that consistency among secondary suite bylaws, policies, procedures and regulations may be beneficial to Central Okanagan residents. Prior to the amendment being considered by the Regional Board, Regional District staff will hold public consultation sessions in 2017 to gain insight on the public’s opinion on secondary suites and the proposed change to the approval process.

For more information on the future public consultation sessions, please visit www.regionaldistrict.com in 2017 to learn where and when the sessions will be held.

This bulletin is for information purposes only. Please be sure to consult the relevant Regional District bylaw.