where are secondary suites allowed on Gabriola?
One secondary suite is permitted on lots 2 hectares (4.94 acres) or larger and only in the Small Rural Residential (SRR), Large Rural Residential (LRR), Forestry (F), Resource (R), Resource Residential (RR1), or Agriculture (AG) zones.

what is an ‘accessory cottage’ versus a ‘secondary suite’?
Recent changes to the Gabriola Island Land Use Bylaw No. 177 (LUB) eliminated “accessory cottage” and replaced it with “secondary suite”. This allows greater flexibility in configuring suites and potentially increases the floor area from a previous maximum of 700 ft² to 968 ft².

what are the options for configuring a secondary suite?
There are six options for accommodating up to a 2 bedroom suite, either within a dwelling or an accessory building (below). Options A, B and D allow a maximum of 40% of the dwelling floor area or 968 ft² (whichever is less). Options C, E and F allow a maximum 968 ft² suite.

A SUITE ABOVE MAIN FLOOR OF A SINGLE, DETACHED DWELLING

B SUITE ATTACHED TO A SINGLE, DETACHED DWELLING

C SUITE ABOVE A DETACHED ACCESSORY BUILDING

D SUITE BELOW MAIN FLOOR OF A SINGLE, DETACHED DWELLING

E DETACHED SUITE AT GRADE

F SUITE AT GRADE WITHIN A DETACHED ACCESSORY BUILDING DWELLING
Secondary Suites

What

about the Building Code?

Regulations for secondary suites are found in section B.6.6 of the LUB. Please contact the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Building Inspection Services for British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) requirements and to apply for a Building Permit (if you have over 2 ha and are in one of the zones listed above). The Building Inspector will review the plans to ensure they meet LUB regulations and the BCBC, as well as for adequate septic and water connections. Prior to a building permit being issued, registration of a restrictive covenant on title (see below) will be required.

Why

is a Restrictive Covenant required?

The Gabriola Local Trust Committee (LTC) requires a restrictive covenant (a section 219 covenant under the Land Title Act) for any new suite being constructed. This is a legal agreement between the owner and the LTC that prohibits future building strata subdivision on the property which will ensure that the secondary suite cannot become a separate real estate entity. A model covenant is available for property owners to use and register on the title of their property. Proof of registration will be required prior to a building permit being issued. In the future, the LTC, with the agreement of the owner, can agree to discharge (remove) the covenant from title, under specific circumstances (i.e. if replaced by an affordable housing agreement).

What

if I’m in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)?

The LUB permits a maximum of three dwellings in the ALR:

1. one principle dwelling;
2. one secondary suite within the principle dwelling (maximum floor area as above); and
3. a manufactured home for immediate family or farmworker housing (with specific restrictions/conditions).

Although farm status is not required for the secondary suite and there are no restrictions on who can occupy the suite, the location of the suite must be within the principal dwelling. This is consistent with the provincial Agricultural Land Commission regulations that apply to all land in BC within the ALR.

Where

can I get more information?

Visit: Islands Trust Northern Office
700 North Road, Gabriola Island
Phone: 250-247-2063
Email: northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca
Visit: www.islandstrust.bc.ca to view Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee bylaws

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