

North Vancouver Secondary Suite: First-Visit Worksheet

Prepared for: _____ Property address: _____ Visit date: _____

This worksheet helps you prepare for a conversation with a contractor or designer about an existing basement. It does not decide whether the space meets building requirements. The property's municipality, zone, building condition and proposed work determine that.

1. Confirm the correct municipality

Is the address in the **City of North Vancouver** or the **District of North Vancouver**? Write the authority here: _____ . North Vancouver has two separate application routes. The City's [secondary-suite page](#) says its guidance does not apply to properties in the Ground Oriented Zone adopted in December 2025. The [District's suite page](#) begins with zoning, density, suite-size and parking eligibility. Do not use a neighbour's permit as proof that the same proposal will be allowed at your address.

What records do you already have? Tick any available items: existing floor plans []; survey/site plan []; past building permits []; electrical or plumbing records []; earlier suite drawings []; hazardous-material reports []. Note what is missing:

_____.

2. Record what can be measured on site

Height. What is the clear height today in the main basement rooms? _____. Are there beams, ducts or sloped areas with lower clearance? _____. Ask the designer to show the **finished** height after new floor and ceiling work. Jim Lazos of DELANA Interiors checks this first because the construction assemblies can reduce the usable height. His preference for seven feet is a practical screening point, not a universal code minimum.

Entry and windows. Sketch the current basement entrance and any other exit routes. List the rooms you imagine as bedrooms and the windows serving them. Do the windows open? Is there a window well outside? Are the exterior grades or retaining walls close to the opening? A qualified designer and the municipality will determine the applicable design requirements; a homeowner should not assume a small existing window is acceptable.

Water. Has the basement had seepage, damp smells, staining, drainage repairs or flooding? Note the location, season and any work already done. Photographs from a wet-weather event can help the site discussion. Do not cover a recurring water path with new finishes before its source is understood.

3. Show the existing systems

Make the electrical panel accessible for a qualified electrician to review. If you know the service size, write it here: _____. Leave the load calculation to the electrician. The District's current [suite checklist](#) specifies a minimum 200-amp service upgrade and separate in-unit panels for a secondary suite; the City's [application guide](#) asks for an electrical load calculation. Your address and proposal need their own review.

Describe how the main house and basement are heated: _____. Note any existing sprinklers, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and ventilation equipment. Jim also checks the floor structure and the proposed wall separating the homes. Those observations may affect drawings, trade work and inspections.

4. Ask what would change the project

Use the first visit to get clear answers to these questions:

1. Which existing conditions can remain, and which need further investigation?
2. Would a larger bedroom window, window well or new entrance require foundation work?
3. Will a structural engineer or other registered professional be needed for the proposed changes?
4. Which municipal drawings, trade permits and inspections are likely for this address?
5. Is the property already carrying a suite permit, or only a District utility registration? The District says utility registration does **not** authorize unpermitted construction.
6. What findings should be resolved before anyone fixes the layout or requests a construction quote?

Top three unknowns to resolve:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

DELANA Interiors can review the site, advise whether the work makes sense, prepare drawings, apply for permits as the owner's agent, coordinate construction and arrange inspections. Contact Jim Lazos at **(236) 858-8187** or delanainteriors.ca.