GARAGE/CARPORT CONVERSIONS TO LIVING SPACE

This Bulletin provides information for the building code and permitting requirements typically encountered when converting garages, carports or other existing non-habitable building areas to living or habitable uses.

CONSTRUCTION CONSIDERATIONS

Include:

- When exterior walls are constructed to create an interior space, they are to be supported by a concrete curb or foundation, whether the new walls will be load bearing or non-load bearing.
- The concrete foundation/curb is to be a minimum 200mm (8”) above grade and extend a minimum of 450mm (18") below ground for frost protection (*See skirt insulation frost protection supplement below*).
- Framing materials must be protected from contact with concrete by either an approved membrane or be made of pressure treated material.
- Unheated floors that are above the frost line and have no embedded heating pipes, cables or ducts shall be insulated to a minimum effective thermal resistance of R12 (1.96 RSI). - This insulation is to be applied either beneath the newly leveled slab or within the pressure treated sleepers, for a distance of not less than 1.2m (3’ 11 ¼”) horizontally along the perimeter of the floor. – Framed Floors with joists constructed above the slab shall be insulated to minimum effective R26.5 (4.67 RSI).
- Ceiling below attics are required to be insulated to an effective R-50 (8.67 RSI) (*approximately 18” of blown in fiberglass)* with cathedral ceilings and flat roofs to be insulated to an effective R-26.5 (RSI 4.67) *(R-28 fiberglass batt with framing 16”o/c).*
- Unless installed below the concrete slab a damp-proofing membrane is required over the existing slab prior to the placement of floors described above or finished flooring.
- minimum of 2.0m (6’ 7”) clear height is required throughout the new floor space measured to the underside any suspended fixture, bulkhead etc.
- If a bedroom is planned for the new interior space, it will require a window for emergency egress. The minimum openable portion of this window is to have 0.35m2 (3.75sqft) in area, with no dimension less than 380mm (15”).
- Any existing bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans, dryer ducts or air intakes that vent into or draw from the existing carport or non-habitable area, are to be re-routed or located to exhaust to the exterior.

BUILDING PERMIT SUBMISSIONS

To apply for a building permit for a garage-to-living-space conversion, you will need the following:

- **Completed application documents** (*see links below*)
- **A hazardous materials survey & clearance letter** completed by a qualified contractor if the house was built before the 1990s *(Note: individual samples are no longer accepted)*
- **Floor plans** (before & after) showing:
    - Dimensions and uses of all areas

  - Location, size, and swing of doors
  - Location, size, and opening direction of windows
  - Plumbing fixtures
  - Interior and exterior finishes
  - Insulation details for the walls, floor, and ceiling *(must meet the 2024 BC Building Code)*
- **Heating and ventilation details**
- **Confirmation of a perimeter drain** around the area or proposed design if drains are not currently installed
- **Details of frost protection** including the infill wall where the garage door or other non-typical foundation areas will be filled in (see *details below)*
- **Additional details** may be required depending on the scope of work

REQUIRED INSPECTIONS

The number and specific inspections will depend on the exact scope of work taking place and will be noted on the building permit. Inspections are to be requested by the owner/agent when the appropriate stage of construction is completed and prior to covering or concealing. Typical inspections include:

- **Footing/foundation/curb inspection** on completion of concrete form work but prior to placing concrete.
- **Perimeter drain/foundation insulation** once drainpipe and insulation is in place below grade but prior to backfill.
- **Rough plumbing** when all drains, waste pipes, vents and water lines have been completed and have the appropriate test applied.
- **Framing** when all framing, sheathing, electrical, plumbing, mechanical rough ins are completed, and doors and windows have been installed.
- **Air barrier & rainscreen** when the building wrap is complete, sealed and all flashings, rain and bug screens are installed.
- **Insulation/vapour barrier** once insulation installed and covered with poly or appropriate vapour barrier but prior to placement of drywall.
- **Occupancy/final** once all health and safety aspects have been completed, final paperwork submitted, and the renovation is substantially complete but prior the area being occupied.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Where onsite parking is reduced due to conversion of a carport or garage to living space, additional parking may need to be confirmed to ensure the property remains in compliance with Section 4.21 of the City's Zoning Bylaw No. 3250, 2006 https://www.campbellriver.ca/media/file/zoning-bylaw-3250-2006-schedule-text

RESOURCES

Digital Application Procedure:

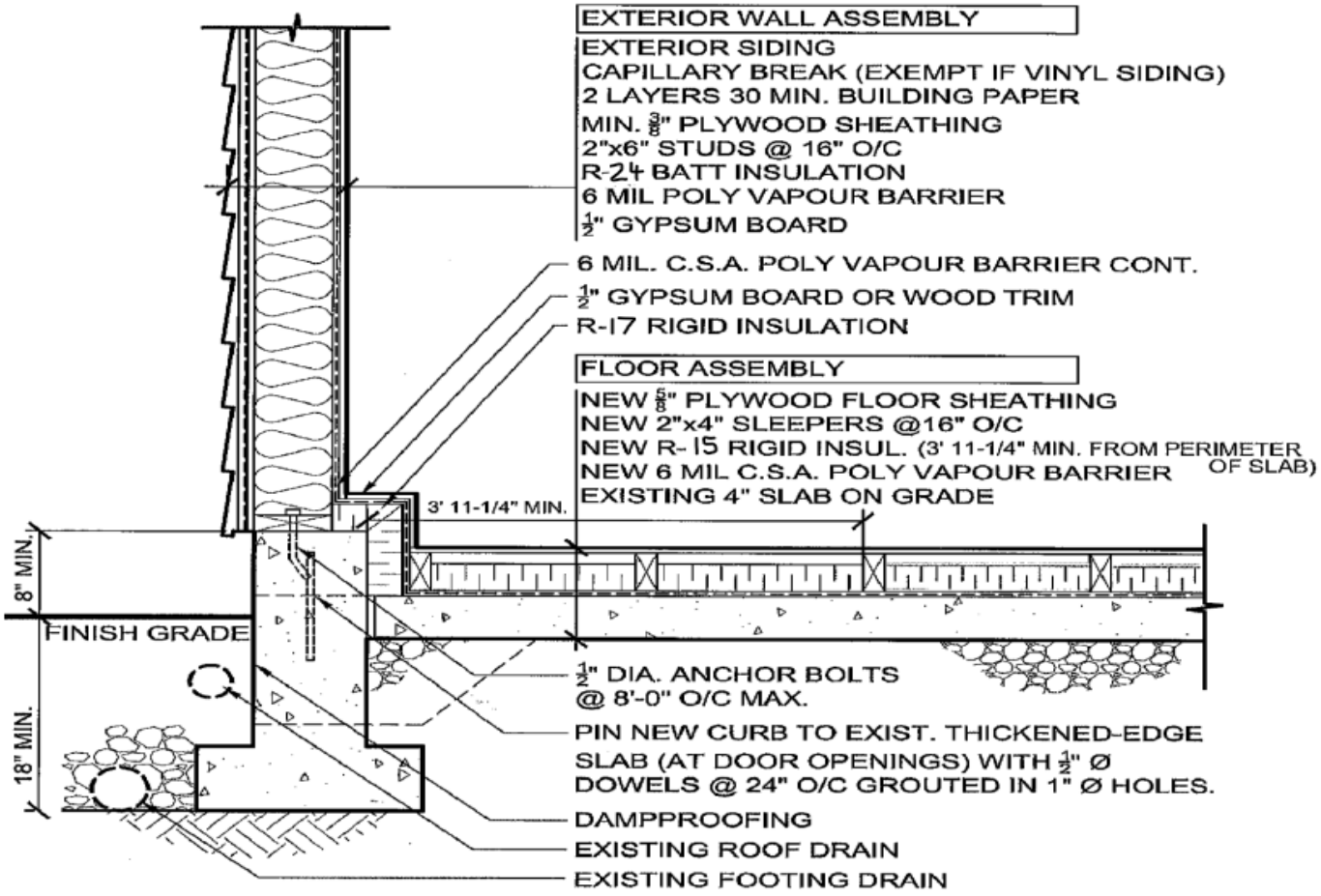
- digital-building-permit-application-procedure

Application Documents:

- building-permit-application-form.pdf
- damage-to-infastructure-agreement.pdf
- owners-undertakings.pdf

SUGGESTED SLAB & CURB DETAIL FOR GARAGE CONVERSIONS TO LIVING AREA FOR SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING UNITS

This detail is an example only. Approval of this application may not be possible in certain circumstances.



Alternative Foundation/Slab Insulation Method

A-9.36.2.8.(9) Skirt Insulation. "Skirt insulation" refers to insulation installed on the exterior perimeter of the foundation and extended outward horizontally or at a slope away from the foundation. In cold climates, skirt insulation is typically extended 600 to 1 000 mm out from the vertical foundation wall over the footings to reduce heat loss from the house into the ground and to reduce the chance of frost forming under the footings.

