



# Building Information

BURNABY BUILDING DEPARTMENT

## Access to Building Department Records

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act) some of the documents and drawings created, processed and stored by the Building Department are public information and may be available for viewing and photocopying. This brochure explains which of our records we may be able to provide to the public.

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*"This information is provided for convenience only and is not in substitution of applicable City Bylaws or Provincial or Federal Codes or laws. You must satisfy yourself that any existing or proposed construction or other works complies with such Bylaws, Codes or other laws."*

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### How to Access Building Department Records

#### General questions

General questions can often be answered by looking at the information available on the City of Burnaby website. Information brochures, forms, reports, the age of buildings and FAQ's for the Building Department are located at <http://www.burnaby.ca/City-Services/Building.html>.

Staff are also available by phone at (604) 294-7130 or at the front counter on the second floor of City Hall at 4949 Canada Way.

#### Viewing and copying of plans and documents

*Please complete our "Permission to Access Permit Records" form. File research and copying fees may apply to the following services.*

If you require copies of plans or documents relating to a property you can request a file search be done. Staff at the Building Department will search the files and records to determine what information can be released and provided it to you for viewing at our counter. If after viewing the information you require copies of any of the documents or drawings staff can provide electronic copies either by e-mail or on a dvd. Paper copies can also be provided.

If possible we will provide a same day reply but this may not always be possible.

Staff do not calculate square footage or interpret drawings.

If you wish to view plans or document without the written permission of the property owner or information that we cannot release you can complete a [Request for Access to Records Form](#). We will forward the request to the City's Records and Information Administrator in the Clerks Department for approval. Once your request is approved we will provide you with the information.

## **File Research and Letter**

Lawyers and notaries acting on behalf of prospective buyers of a property often require a written response to questions about a property. If you require this type of service you can send a request for information about residential single and two family properties to the Building Department.

If you require a written response to questions about properties other than single or two family dwellings your letter requesting this information should be directed to our Planning Department.

**Please refer to Fee Schedule for applicable fees.**

## **About The Information**

### **Information Which Can Be Released To the Public**

Under Section 22(4)(i) of the Act a disclosure of personal information is not an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy if the disclosure reveals details of a licence, permit or other similar discretionary benefit granted to the third party by a public body. As such staff can routinely release copies of permits, including the following related information:

- the applicant's name
- the name of the person or company to whom the permit was issued
- the name and address of businesses connected with the permit (i.e.: contractor or subcontractor)
- value of construction
- the type of construction being authorized
- site and elevation plans
- if an alternative solution has been approved with respect to construction on the property
- the permit number
- expiry date of the permit
- any fees related to the permit
- inspection results
- date of occupancy
- the nature of outstanding or pending permits
- use of property (e.g. single or multi-family dwelling etc.)
- heritage status
- if there is a flag on the property relating to environmental or legal concerns
- backflow device requirements
- the location of storm and sanitary sewer connections
- records of permits for oil tanks or oil burning appliances
- ages of buildings (available on our department webpage)

- complaint records including:
  - date of complaint
  - location of complaint
  - nature of complaint (a summary of the nature of the complaint can be provided so long as it doesn't identify the complainant directly or indirectly).
  - action taken/outcome
  - inspector's name

## **Information Which Can Be Released Only To the Property Owner**

*Please use our "Permission to Access Permit Records" form. File research and copying fees may apply to these services.*

Real Estate Agents, acting on behalf of the vendor of a property, who can produce a copy of their agreement with the property owner including a statement allowing them to view the information, will also be given access to:

- building floor plans
- truss drawings
- letters of assurance
- BC land survey
- inspectors comments and notes

Individuals, not being the owner requesting access to this information will need written permission from the owner and/or strata council.

## **Information Which Cannot Be Released**

We cannot provide personal information supplied in support of the application for the permit such as:

- the names of property owners
- where a person lives
- individual applicant's phone number
- the permit applicant's home address, if it is different from the property to which the permit applies
- how long the owner has owned the property
- correspondence files and microfilm containing correspondence and written records are not generally available to the public or the property owner for viewing

Under Subsection 15(1)(l) of the Act, a public body may refuse to disclose information if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the security of any property or system, including a building, a vehicle, a computer system or a communication system. It is our position, that the release of any building floor plans to persons other than the property owner or their representative could jeopardize the security of a property.

Under Section 15(1)(d) and 22(3)(b) the head of a public body may refuse to disclose information if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to reveal the identity of a confidential source of law enforcement information.

In the case of a complaint we will not disclose:

- the complainant's name, address or phone number (or other identifying information).
- Information relating to files that involve matters before the courts or files that involve an active bylaw investigation

## Information Which We Do Not Have

The Building Department typically only collects and retains information relating to construction or development on a property. Examples of information that we do not have and cannot provide include:

- criminal uses such as grow ops or drug labs that might have existed on a property (*RCMP*)
- possible environmental contamination of a site (*Engineering Department*)
- construction material that might contain asbestos or toxins (*private environmental consultant*)
- hazardous conditions such as moulds (*private environmental consultant*)
- when or if underground tanks have been removed (*Fire Department*)
- property tax information (*Burnaby Tax office*)
- covenants (*Land Title Office*)
- easements (*Land Title Office*)
- details relating to a heritage designation (*Planning Department*)
- etc.

## Fees

The City of Burnaby charges fees for the following services:

- file search
- file search and letter – single or two family
- file search and letter – all other buildings
- electronic copies, per image
- paper copies 8.5 x 11 inch per page
- paper copies 11 x 17 inch or larger per page

All fees will be charged according to our current fee schedules.

## Further Information

If you have any further questions please contact the Building Department at 604-294-7130.