

## Accessory Buildings - Residential

### Requirements for Building Permit

**Overview:** This guide outlines Building Inspection and Current Planning Sections' requirements for detached accessory buildings on single and two family residential zoned lots. A sample set of plans is included as an example of the expected level of detail and information required for a building permit application. For the requirements for an accessory building with a secondary suite see our guide [Home Suite Home - Secondary Suites in Nanaimo](#).

#### Building considerations:

Detached buildings that do not create a hazard and are under 10 m<sup>2</sup> (107.64 ft<sup>2</sup>) do not require a building permit, but must comply with the setback and height requirements set out in the "[Zoning Bylaw 4500](#)" for accessory buildings. All other construction and additions to existing buildings require a building permit prior to commencing construction. (See additional considerations below).

Buildings less than 55 m<sup>2</sup> (592 ft<sup>2</sup>) in building area do not require a conventional foundation. Larger buildings require a conventional footing and foundation wall design as per the [BC Building Code](#) (BCBC) Division B, Section 9.15. An example foundation is included with the example plans on the cross section drawing.

Plans and building permit application requirements for an accessory building containing a secondary suite will be more complex than plans for a typical accessory building used for a garage or work shop. The Building Code and application requirements will be similar to a single family dwelling application. These requirements are not covered in this guide.

The attached sample plan shows an unheated garage. If your plan is to include plumbing, or create a conditioned space with heating and insulation the requirements will be similar to building a single family dwelling. See our guide [Insulation Requirements for Residential Additions](#). Both the BC Building Code and the BC Plumbing Code requirements will apply to your structure and must be reflected in your plan submission.

#### Zoning considerations:

In a typical single dwelling residential zone, the yard setback and height requirements for an accessory building are:

Yard Setbacks	Height Maximum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>front - 6 metres (19' 8 1/4")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roof pitch &lt; 6:12 – 4.5m (14.76')</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rear - 1.5 metres (4' 11 1/16")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roof pitch ≥ 6:12 – 5m (16.4')</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rear lane – 1 metre (3' 3/8")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roof pitch ≥ 8:12 – 5.5m (18.04')</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>side - 1.5 metres (4' 11 1/16")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains a secondary suite – roof pitch 6:12 – 7m (22.97')</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flanking street – 4 metres (13' 1 1/2")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>located within allowable principal building setback – 7m (22.97') – (see section 7.5.1 of Zoning Bylaw 4500)</li> </ul>

NOTE: some residential zones may have different setback and height requirements for accessory buildings, (for example R1b zone and through lots). Confirm the specific requirements for your lot in the "[Zoning Bylaw 4500](#)" section 6.6, or consult with the Current Planning Section of City of Nanaimo's Development Services Department prior to moving forward with your project.

Accessory buildings shall not be closer than 1.2 metres (3.94 feet) to a residential use building or 3m (9' 10 1/8") if the accessory building contains a suite.

The sum total of the gross floor area of all accessory buildings on a residential lot shall not exceed 13% of the lot size or a maximum of 90m<sup>2</sup> (968 ft<sup>2</sup>), whichever is lesser.

An accessory building is not permitted without a principal use on a property. A principal use is typically a dwelling unit.

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### Additional considerations:

Restrictive covenants (registered on title), water course, riparian setbacks, steep slopes, utility right-of-ways, and zoning setbacks to the property lines may affect the location of your accessory building whether a Building Permit is required or not. Determining if any of these factors will affect the location of your accessory building is the responsibility of the home owner.

A survey by a British Columbia Land Surveyor (BCLS) will be required if the proposed building location is within 0.15 meters (6 inches) of the setback requirements or if the proposed height is within .305m (1') of the maximum height permitted. A BCLS survey may be required at the discretion of the Building Official where the lot has an irregular shape or the survey iron pins cannot be located and where natural grade cannot be determined.

### Building Permit requirements:

- [Building Permit Application – online application.](#)
- [Appointment of Agent](#) is required if the permit is to be applied for, picked up, or revised by other than the registered owner. This form is to be completed and then submitted online as part of the building permit (BP) application process.
- [Application Fee](#) required where the estimated value of construction exceeds \$20,000. The application fee will be requested after your online building permit application has been accepted.
- [Access Application](#) – online form to be completed as part of the BP application process for a new driveway or access change to an existing driveway.
- [Plans – to scale 1/4"=1' or 1:50](#) showing the specifications of the structure. To be submitted / uploaded as part of the online BP application process. For a sample of the expected level of detail and information required for a building permit application, see the attached sample accessory building drawings. Electronic plan submissions – hand drawn or computer generated – are to be in PDF format and must be a clean copy with no watermarks or other interfering mark-ups. Drawings are to be on minimum 11" x 17" plain white paper (no graph paper), drawn in dark blue or black ink. Photographs of plans or documents are not accepted. Clearly identify if the accessory building is heated or unheated.
- [Site Plan – to scale 1/16" = 1' or 1:250](#) showing the dimensions of the parcel, the existing dwelling, all existing accessory buildings and the proposed new accessory building. Include the natural and final elevations of the corners of the proposed building, and if a new driveway is proposed, the elevation of the slab and access point at the street. Include setback locations and dimensions of all existing buildings. Include the location and the dimension of any right-of-ways, easements, environmental or riparian setbacks.
- [Truss Layout, Manufactured Floor Joist and Engineered Beam Layouts](#) (if used) from the truss, beam manufacturer with point loads identified.
- [Business Licence](#) valid in the City of Nanaimo is required for builders, contractors, and developers.

If you are unable to prepare the drawings yourself, a list of local designer / draft persons is available on our website at [www.nanaimo.ca](http://www.nanaimo.ca) or at the City of Nanaimo Development Service Counter.

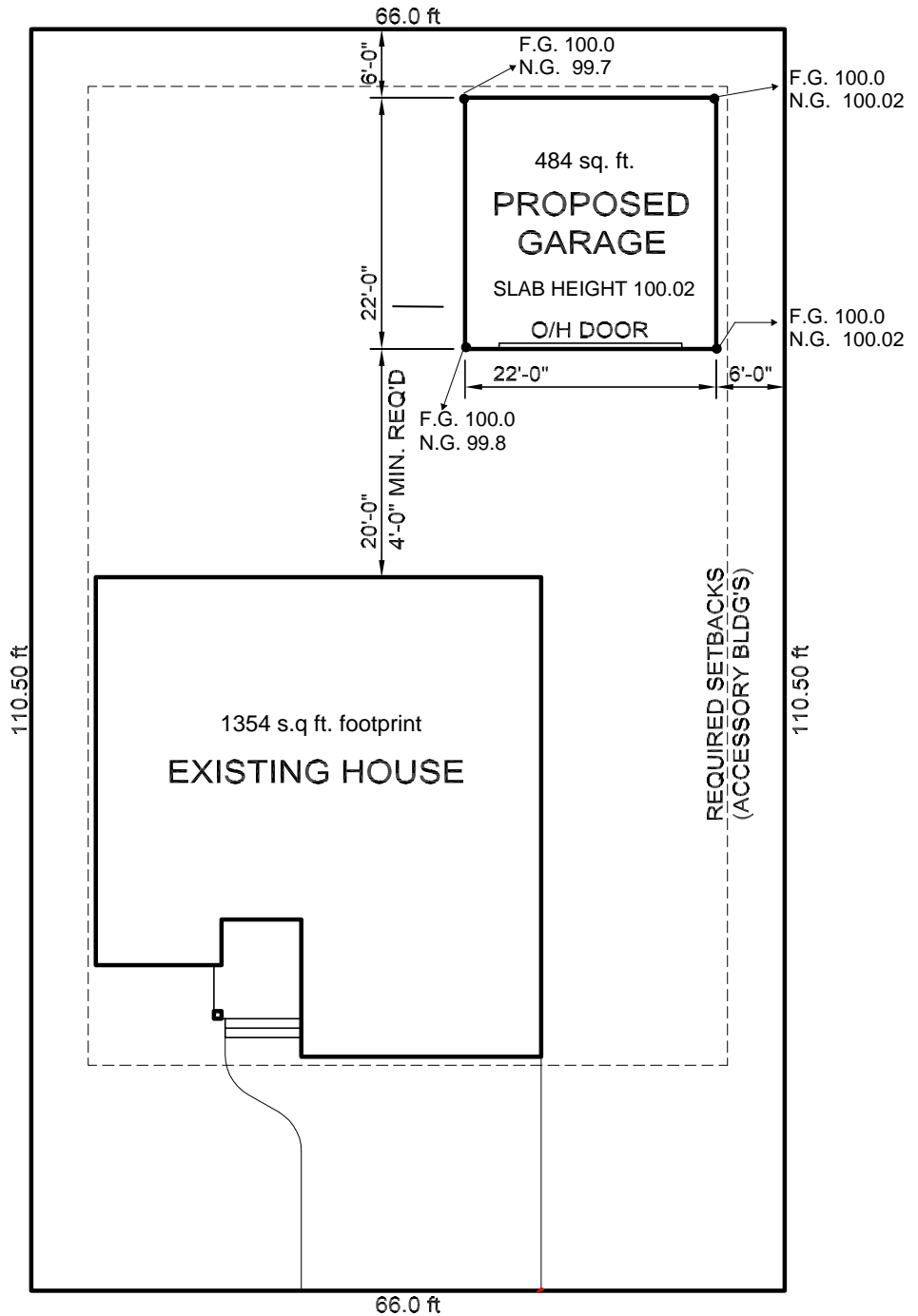
If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact a building official at our office at 250-755-4429. This guideline should not be used as a substitute for existing building codes and other regulations. The building owner is responsible for compliance with all codes, bylaws, and other regulations whether or not described in this guideline.

# EXAMPLE PLANS ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A RESIDENTIAL LOT

PROPOSED GARAGE HEIGHT CALCULATION	
Average natural grade	99.89
Average finish grade	100.00
Maximum accessory building height (R1 Zone)	14.76
Maximum building elevation	114.65
Proposed roof peak elevation	113.70

PROPOSED GARAGE SLAB ELEVATION	
Elevation at back of sidewalk	101.90
Proposed garage slab	100.02
Driveway length	92.0



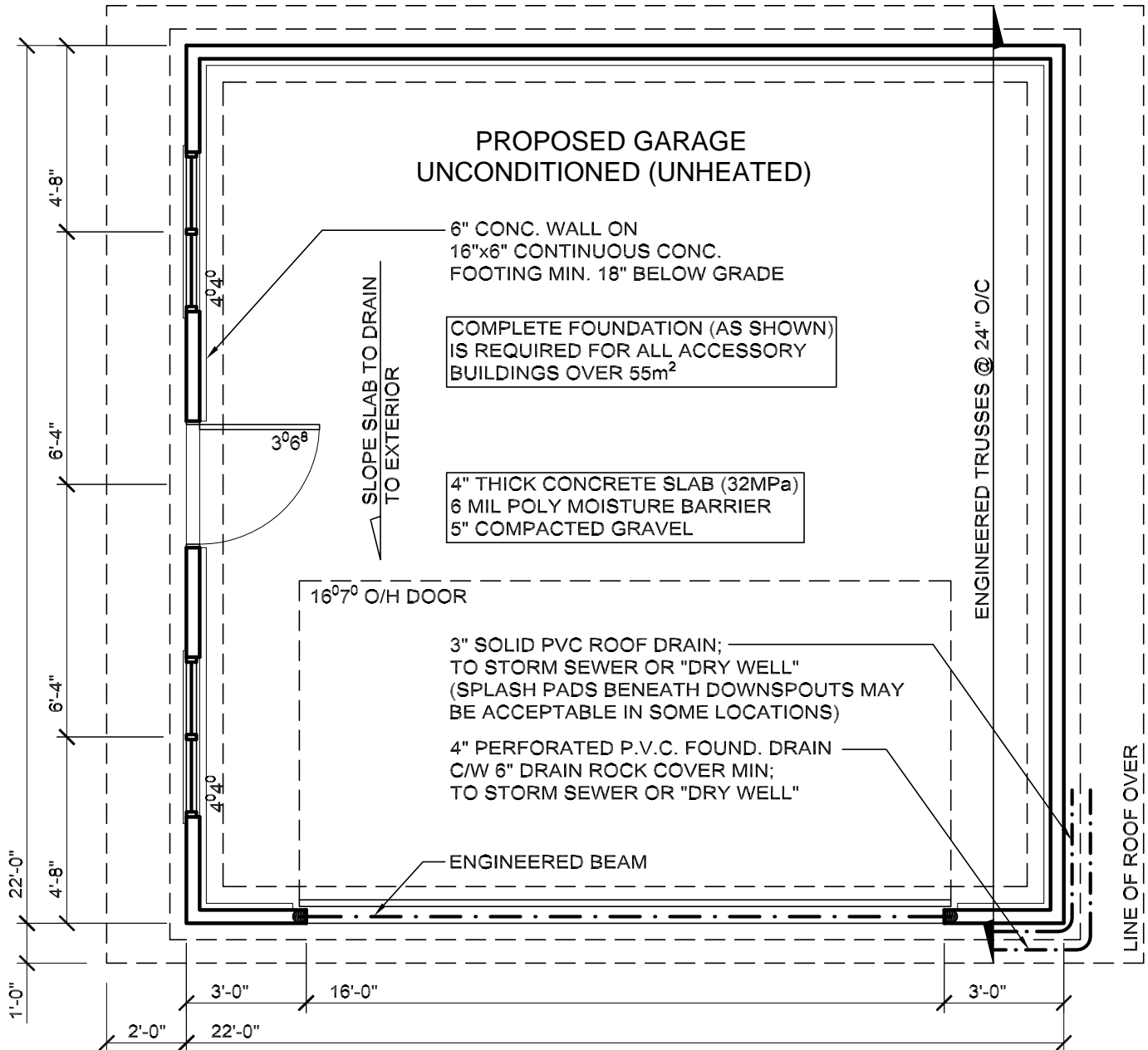
## SITE PLAN

SCALE:  $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$

EXAMPLE STREET

▪ 101.9 Edge of pavement

# EXAMPLE PLANS ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A RESIDENTIAL LOT

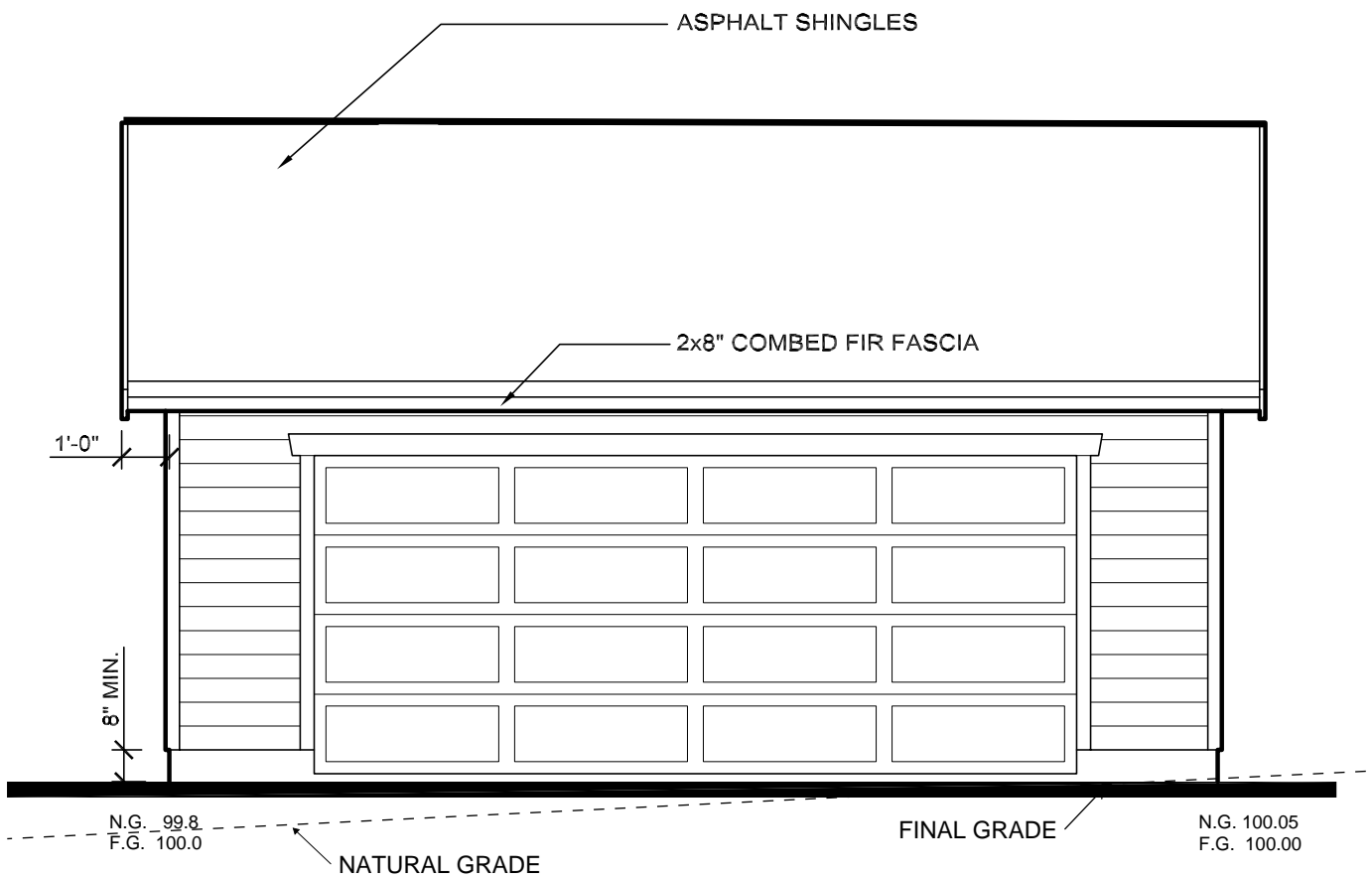


## FOUNDATION / FLOOR PLAN

SCALE:  $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$

# EXAMPLE PLANS

## ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A RESIDENTIAL LOT

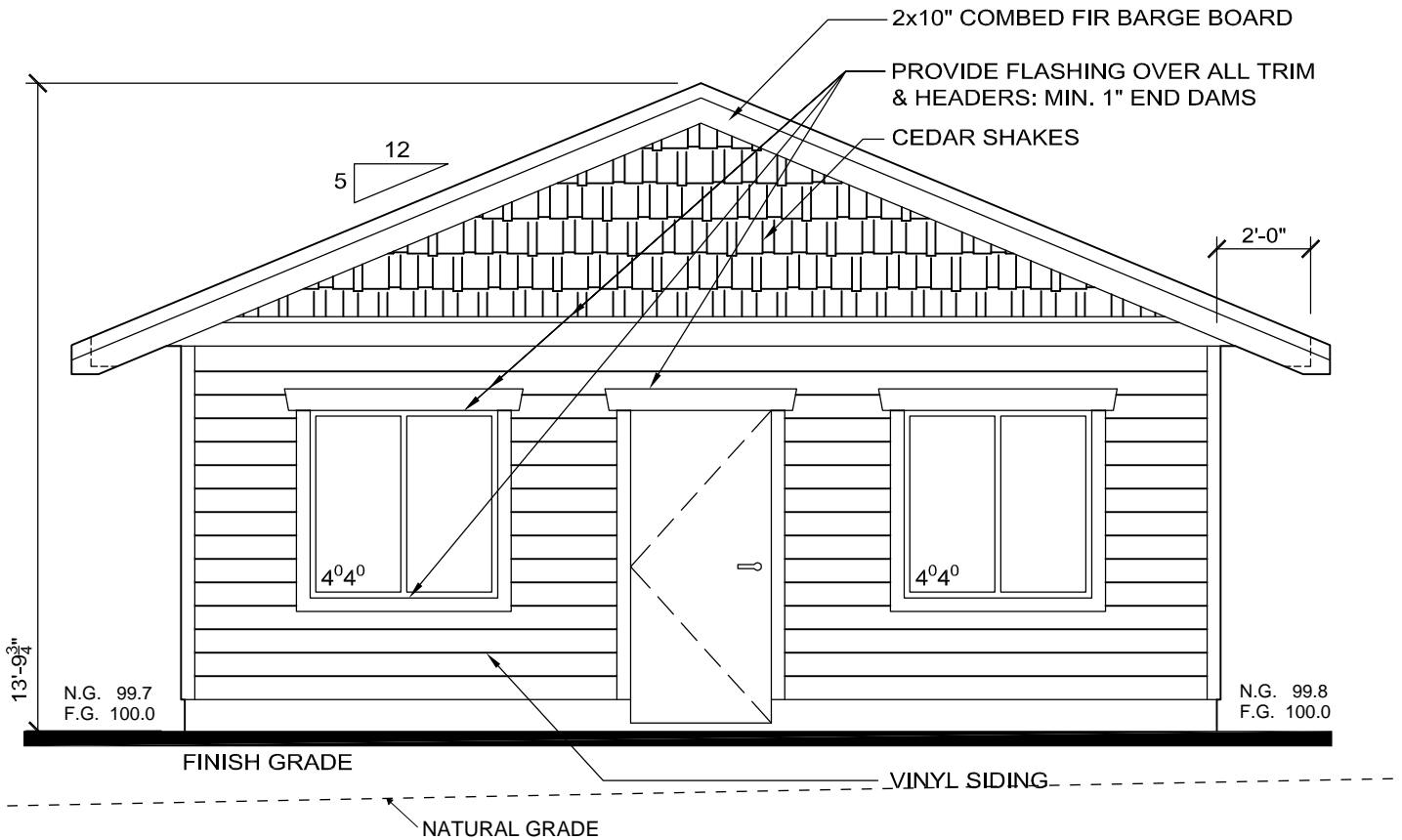


### FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE:  $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$

# EXAMPLE PLANS

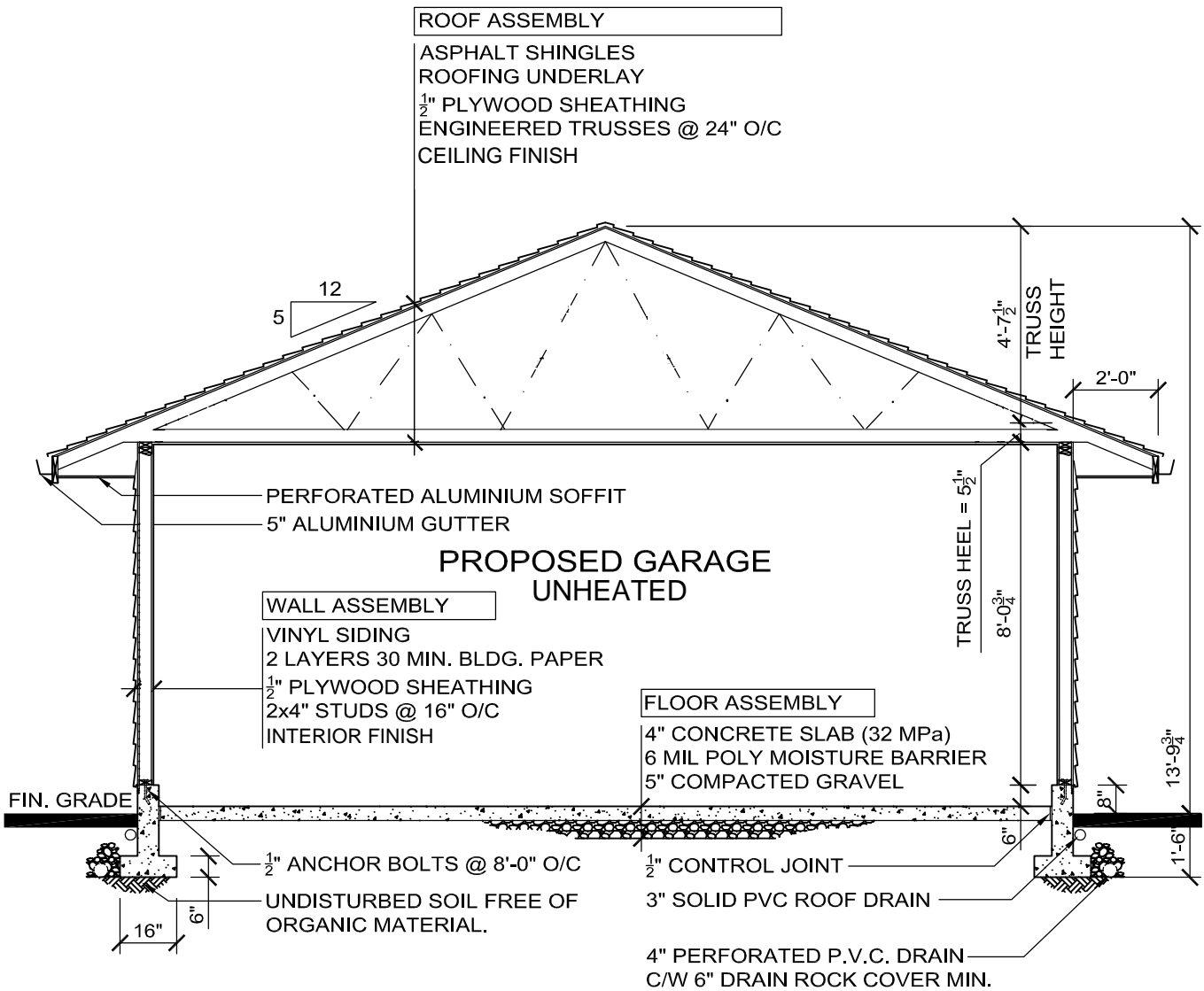
## ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A RESIDENTIAL LOT



### LEFT ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

# EXAMPLE PLANS ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A RESIDENTIAL LOT



## CROSS SECTION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"