

Redline Copy of Proposed Amendments to the Policy to Guide Discretion for  
Secondary Suites and Backyard Suites

**Policy to Guide Discretion for Secondary Suites and Backyard Suites**

Adopted by Council resolution March 12, 2018

A. Planning Objectives

1. To provide guidance to the Development Authority in the use of discretion when evaluating suites.
2. To ensure opportunities for suites are balanced with the potential impacts they may have on communities.
3. To manage privacy issues related to Backyard Suites.

B. Planning Principles for Secondary Suites and Backyard Suites

1. Parking

- a. The required motor vehicle parking stall for a suite shall be provided on the parcel.
- b. The required motor vehicle parking stall(s) for the primary Dwelling Unit shall not be considered as providing the required motor vehicle parking for a suite.
- c. Required motor vehicle parking stalls for a suite are intended for the exclusive use of the suite and:
  - i. Should be accessed from a lane where a rear or side lane provides access to the parcel;
  - ii. Should be accessed from an existing front driveway where no rear or side lane provides access to the parcel;
  - iii. Where both a lane and front driveway exist, parking for the suite should be located in a convenient, accessible location with preference being from the lane, where possible;
  - iv. When accessed from a street, parking should be located such that the loss of on-street parking is minimized;
  - v. Should have unobstructed access to and from the adjacent street for vehicles using that motor vehicle stall;
  - vi. Shall not obstruct access to and from the adjacent street for vehicles using any other parking stall on the parcel.
- d. The Development Authority may consider relaxing the parcel width requirements of the District when it is demonstrated the required motor vehicle parking stall is provided.
- e. The Development Authority may consider relaxing the allowable maximum driveway width to accommodate a motor vehicle parking stall.
- f. The Development Authority may consider relaxing the maximum parcel coverage in the District when the required motor vehicle parking stall is not provided in a private garage. Unless located on an

existing driveway the stall should not be paved and should be on a permeable surface.

2. Amenity Space

- a. The required amenity space for a suite should be provided on the parcel.
- b. The design and orientation of a suite should ensure direct access with the required private amenity space.

3. Compatibility with other uses

- a. The Development Authority may consider the compatibility of a proposed suite with other existing approved uses on the parcel. Should the parcel contain uses such as Home Occupations or Home Based Child Care Services, consideration should be given to the cumulative impacts when evaluating the appropriateness of a suite.

4. Cul-de-sacs

- a. Parcels located on end bulbs of cul-de-sacs where no lane exists may present specific challenges in terms of on-street and off-street parking. The Development Authority shall consider the compatibility of a proposed suite when located on the bulb of a cul-de-sac. Consideration should be given to the cumulative impacts when evaluating the appropriateness of a suite in these locations.

5. Flood Hazard Areas

- a. Secondary Suites are encouraged to be above grade when located in the Flood Fringe. Should the suite be located below grade, it must comply with the flood mitigation rules of the Land Use Bylaw.

6. Heritage

- a. When a parcel is listed on the City Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources, the Development Authority may consider relaxations to the required motor vehicle parking stalls (including the ability to accommodate the required parking off-site) in order to accommodate a Secondary Suite or Backyard Suite while retaining the existing building on the parcel.

C. Additional Policies for Backyard Suites

1. In addition to the previous policies, a Backyard Suite is subject to the following additional policies:
  - a. The maximum floor area for a Backyard Suite should not be considered as part of the maximum floor area for an Accessory Residential Building when located on the main floor of the building.

- b. A balcony for a Backyard Suite is not considered a balcony for an Accessory Residential Building.
- c. Balconies should orient towards the lane, or street if on a corner parcel.
- d. Where a balcony would result in overlooking on an adjacent parcel, the proposed amenity space should be relocated to the front or side of the Backyard Suite in the form of a deck or patio.
- e. Window placement should allow light penetration into the suite while respecting the privacy of adjacent parcels. Off-setting, frosting, and placing windows to face the lane or street should be considered.
- f. Screening should be considered to mitigate privacy concerns with adjacent parcels. Screening may be achieved using landscaping, tree plantings or constructed screens.
- g. The building mass of a Backyard Suite should be moderated with respect to neighbouring properties using architectural elements such as stepped or sloped rooflines and articulated façades.
- h. Relaxation of the maximum building height may be supported to accommodate the peak portions of a sloped roof where the sloped roof reduces the scale and mass of the Backyard Suite.

~~D. Policies for Secondary Suites in the Residential - Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District~~

- ~~1. An application for a Secondary Suite should be approved where one or more parking stalls is provided for the Secondary Suite in addition to the parking stall(s) that is required for the main Dwelling Unit.~~
- ~~2. Where a parking stall is not provided, a Secondary Suite may be supported in a Rowhouse Building or within a development with more than one **main residential building** where the following supporting characteristics are present:~~
  - ~~a. shops, services and institutions are accessible locally;~~
    - ~~**key indicator**~~
    - ~~i. the suite is located close (within about 600 metres) of a Main Street or Activity Centre identified in a planning policy.~~
  - ~~b. a variety of mobility options are available;~~
    - ~~**key indicators**~~
    - ~~i. the suite is located:~~
      - ~~• close to a frequent bus service (within about 150 metres);~~
      - ~~• close to a capital funded LRT platform (within about 600 metres);~~
      - ~~• close to a street containing a bicycle lane or cycle track (within about 400 metres);~~
  - ~~c. the intensity added with the secondary suite is in keeping with the immediate context;~~
    - ~~**key indicators**~~
    - ~~i. the suite is located:~~
      - ~~• adjacent to a parcel designated with a land use district that allows multi-residential or commercial uses;~~

- ~~• adjacent to school sites, parks or parcels designated Special Purpose District;~~
- ~~• adjacent to local collector and collector roads.~~

- ~~3. The following policies guide the implementation of policy D.2:~~
  - ~~a. Where two or more of the supporting characteristics are present, Secondary Suites may be approved in all of the Dwelling Units in a development.~~
  - ~~b. Where one of the supporting characteristics is present, Secondary Suites may be approved in up to half of the Dwelling Units in a development.~~
  - ~~c. Where none of the supporting characteristics are present, Secondary Suites are not supported in a development.~~
  - ~~d. The key indicators itemize features that contribute to achieving the support function of the supporting characteristic described. Not all key indicators are required to be present in order to achieve the supporting function of the supporting characteristic.~~
  - ~~e. The presence of other local features that serve a similar supporting function to the key indicators may be considered when evaluating whether a supporting characteristic is met.~~
  - ~~f. Distances are provided as general guide and are not intended as precise measurements.~~