

Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Text Amendments – Permitting Secondary Suites in Semi-Detached Dwellings

APPLICATION SUMMARY

In 2024, City Council approved amendments to Bylaw No. 9770 - Official Community Plan, 2020 (OCP), and to Bylaw No. 9990 - Zoning Bylaw 2024 (Zoning Bylaw) to permit multiple-unit dwellings containing up to four units, allow for two units within a semi-detached dwelling and allow for up to two accessory dwelling units per site for a one-unit dwelling. The proposed amendments will allow for a secondary suite to be developed in a semi-detached dwelling.

RECOMMENDATION

That at the time of the public hearing, City Council consider Administration's recommendation that the proposed amendments to Bylaw No. 9700 - Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020 and Bylaw No. 9990 - Zoning Bylaw, 2024, as outlined in this report, from the Community Services Department, dated February 25, 2025, be approved.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Public Hearing [meeting](#) on June 27, 2024, approved amendments to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw to implement the Housing Action Plan. The amendments to the Zoning Bylaw included permitting two dwelling units in a semi-detached dwelling (SDD), multiple-unit dwellings (MUD) containing up to four units on sites with a minimum width of 15 metres and allowing for up to two accessory dwelling units per site for a one-unit dwelling. The amendments did not allow for secondary suites in SDDs.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Administration is pursuing an amendment as a follow up item to align the Zoning Bylaw and National Building Code (NBC) and provide for additional options for the development of new housing units. Planning and Development has also received requests from the development industry and property owners to allow for this form of development.

An SDD is defined in the Zoning Bylaw as:

“a building containing no more than two dwelling units on its own site, attached to another building containing no more than two dwelling units on its own site, with a common wall dividing the liveable area of the two attached buildings being at least 40% of the length of the longest building containing the dwelling units, measured from the front to the rear building lines of the dwelling unit”.

The Zoning Bylaw permits a secondary suite, provided it is accessory to and located within a detached one-unit dwelling.

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To enable secondary suites in SDDs, amendments to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw are required.

Proposed OCP Amendments

Section G1.3 Infill Growth (8) (f) states that:

“A secondary suite will be a permitted accessory use to a one-unit dwelling in all areas of the city where one-unit dwellings are permitted.”

In addition to being permitted accessory to a one-unit dwelling, Administration is proposing this policy be amended to allow secondary suites accessory to SDDs, allowing development of secondary suites on more sites throughout the city. This proposed amendment is aligned with the OCP policy for low-density residential land use.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments

The regulations for secondary suites are contained in Section 5.3.23 (1), which currently only allows for secondary suites to be located within a detached building where the principal use is a one-unit dwelling. Amendments to Section 5.3.23 (1) are proposed to also permit a secondary suite as an accessory use to the principal dwelling in one side of an SDD. There will be no change in permitted dwelling unit density as a result of the proposed amendment. With this amendment, one side of an SDD may consist of one dwelling unit, one dwelling unit with a secondary suite (new) or two dwelling units.

It is also proposed to repeal Section 5.3.23 (3), which requires that the principal dwelling have access to the mechanical room. This regulation is in place to ensure the principal dwelling has unobstructed access to the mechanical room. This regulation can be removed as *The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* provides for landlord access to a suite in an emergency or with proper notice, which would provide access to a mechanical room located in a secondary suite if needed.

Comments from other Divisions

In cases where two dwelling units are constructed on one side of an SDD, the development must be developed as a multi-unit dwelling. Building Standards has provided a comparison of NBC requirements for secondary suites in SDDs and multiple-unit dwellings. In general terms, that comparison shows the development of a secondary suite is less onerous than requiring dwelling units to be developed to the standard of a multiple unit dwelling.

Municipal Scan

A municipal scan was conducted of other municipalities in Saskatchewan. Municipalities identified that allow for a secondary suite in an SDD (either permitted or discretionary) include Regina, Warman, Prince Albert, Weyburn, Pilot Butte and Lloydminster.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Information was shared with the public on the [Engage Page](#). Feedback can be provided on the Engage Page or by contacting Administration. Information about the Engage Page was shared by email to the subscribers of the HAF e-newsletter, through social media and information-sharing with the Community Associations.

At the time of preparing this report, ten emails had been received. Two emails were not supportive of more multiple-unit development. Six emails were supportive of the proposed change and/or were requesting further information about potential secondary suite development.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 11(a) of Council Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy.

Once this application has been considered by the Municipal Planning Commission, it will be advertised in accordance with Council Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice, and a date for a public hearing will be set. A notice will be placed in The StarPhoenix two weeks prior to the public hearing.

REPORT APPROVAL

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