

REPORT TO COUNCIL TEXT AMENDMENT



Date: February 10, 2025
To: Council
From: City Manager
Address: n/a
File No.: TA24-0017

1.0 Recommendation

THAT Zoning Bylaw Text Amendment Application No. TA24-0017 to amend the City of Kelowna Zoning Bylaw No. 12375 as outlined in Schedule "A" attached to the Report from the Housing Policy and Programs Department dated February 10, 2025, be considered by Council;

AND THAT final adoption of the Zoning Bylaw Text Amending Bylaw be considered subsequent to the approval of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

2.0 Purpose

To amend the Zoning Bylaw by allowing secondary suites as a permitted use in Townhouses.

3.0 Background

The BC Building Code was updated in December 2019 to allow the construction of secondary suites in townhouses. Secondary suites are still prohibited in building forms where units are "stacked" (located above and below each other), like stacked townhouses and apartment buildings.

4.0 Development Planning

In support of housing supply and diversity initiatives, staff are recommending that Council advance the proposed text amendments to the City's townhouse and urban centre zones in order to allow secondary suites as a permitted use in more forms of housing. These changes would give townhouse owners the opportunity to have a secondary suite as a mortgage-helper or for more flexible housing opportunities (ex: ageing in place, accommodating multi-generational families etc.).

The proposed amendments are also consistent with several key policy directions and funding commitments. More specifically, the Housing Action Plan identifies the expansion of opportunities for secondary suites in townhouses (Action #2.5) as a way to provide additional rental housing and as a mortgage helper for owners.

Housing Accelerator Fund Initiative #1: Infill aims to allow the development of missing middle housing across more of the city and accelerate its development through regulatory and process changes. Updating secondary suite regulations to align with BC Building Code changes was identified as a specific action to implement as a part of this initiative.

The proposed amendments align with the Official Community Plan (OCP) as allowing secondary suites in townhouses facilitates more housing diversity that supports a variety of households, incomes, and life stages. OCP Policy specifically identifies support for ground-oriented units within the design of multi-family developments like townhouses.

In addition, the proposed changes create more consistency in the City’s regulations. Several other zones (ex: MF4 and MF1) already allow secondary suites in townhomes. The proposed changes put the MF2 – Townhouse Housing zone and the Urban Centre zones on equal footing.

Stratification of secondary suites is prohibited by the Zoning Bylaw, meaning that secondary suites in townhouses could not be sold individually as a separate real estate entity. Secondary suites in townhouses would be required to provide a minimum of 1 parking stall per unit, which would be consistent with parking regulations in other zones that allow secondary suites.

5.0 Current Development Policies

5.1 Kelowna Official Community Plan (OCP)

The Big Picture: 10 Pillars to Realize our Vision	
Promote More Housing Diversity: One of Imagine Kelowna’s goals is to build healthier neighbourhoods that support a variety of households, incomes, and life stages. Having the housing that Kelowna citizens need is critical to achieving this goal. With this in mind, the Official Community Plan signals a wider variety of housing types and not just single family homes or small apartments. This housing is focused in areas where residents have easier access to jobs, amenities, transit and active transportation routes. In addition, this Official Community Plan supports more rental housing options.	

Objective 5.11 Increase the diversity of housing forms and tenure to create an inclusive, affordable and complete core area.	
Policy 5.11.1 Diverse Housing Forms	Ensure a diverse mix of low and medium density housing forms in the Core Area to support a variety of household types and sizes, income levels, and life stages. <i>Allowing suites in townhouses provides the opportunity for additional housing forms.</i>
Policy 5.11.3 Ground Oriented Housing	Incorporate ground-oriented units in the design of multi-family developments in the Core Area to support a variety of household types and sizes. <i>Suites in townhouses would allow additional ground-oriented units to be provided within multi-family developments.</i>

5.2 Housing Action Plan

Action 2.5 – Expand opportunities for secondary suites in townhomes in alignment with BC Building Code.

Secondary Suites are a useful tool to provide gentle density to established neighbourhoods. They provide rental housing and opportunities for owners to have a mortgage-helper. The City has taken several steps to support the development of secondary suites including a simplified online web portal and materials for homeowners. The City is looking to increase the development of secondary suites by allowing them in all zones that allow townhouses (e.g. MF2 – Townhouse Housing zone).

Report prepared by: Mark Tanner, Planner Specialist
Reviewed by: James Moore, Housing Policy and Programs Manager
Approved for Inclusion: Ryan Smith, Divisional Director, Planning, Climate Action & Development Services

Internal Circulation:
 Development Planning

Attachments:

Schedule 'A': Proposed Text Amendment to Zoning Bylaw No. 12375

For additional information, please visit our Current Developments online at www.kelowna.ca/currentdevelopments.