

5 April 2018

Mayor Lisa Helps and Council
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps,

Re: Amending Zoning Regulation By-law Schedule M to include moveable tiny houses

I am writing on behalf of Tiny House Advocates of Vancouver Island (THAVI) to congratulate you and Council for implementing policy and bylaw changes to ease the process of permitting construction of garden suites in Victoria under *Zoning Regulation By-law Schedule M - Garden Suites*. In light of those changes, THAVI would like to work with Council and staff to explore further amendments to Schedule M to include moveable tiny houses.

A tiny house is defined in the *International Residential Code Appendix Q* as “a dwelling that is 400 ft² (37 m²) or less in floor area excluding lofts.” A typical tiny house is no greater than 13.5 ft tall and 8.5 ft wide, to comply with Transport Canada regulations. It may sit on either a foundation or wheeled trailer. If the latter, the tiny house is towed to its destination and then established on blocks, often with the wheels removed.

As you know, at present, Schedule M allows for dwellings up to 602 ft² (56 m²) in floor area and 18 ft (5.5 m) tall if placed on a “plus site”. A typical moveable tiny house fits well within that footprint.

THAVI seeks an amendment to *Zoning Bylaw Schedule M – Garden Suites* and the *Garden Suite Policy and Guidelines* to either include moveable tiny houses under the definition of “garden suite” or to add “moveable tiny houses” as an additional allowable structure that is intended for living in full-time.

Such amendments would bring a number of advantages to property owners, tiny house owners, and renters, as well as to the City, for example:

- Property owners could earn revenue with a minimal investment of an estimated \$2,000 - \$8,000 to prepare a pad and extend services to the tiny house parking site – far less than the cost of constructing a garden suite or secondary suite.
- Families could provide flexible and affordable housing for relatives and have them live close by.
- Tiny house owners could live legally within the community and contribute to the tax base and local economy.
- The rental inventory could increase as some renters choose to move into tiny houses, potentially leading to reduced rental rates.

- The City could earn additional tax revenue through an annual permit fee charged to tiny house owners. The permit could be designed to ensure compliance with stipulations set out in the bylaw and policy.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding our proposal and to working with you and staff to help Victoria become one of the first municipalities in BC to allow tiny houses as a viable and legal affordable housing alternative.

Sincerely,



Marian McCoy

THAVI

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