
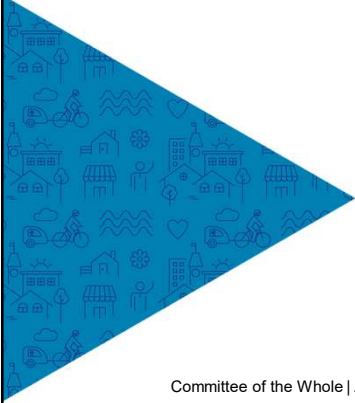


2022 | CITY OF VICTORIA | Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Garden Suite Program Review

Committee of the Whole | April 21, 2022

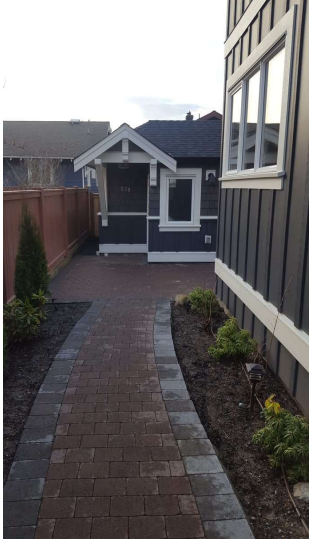



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Garden Suite Review 2022

This item:

- responds to a Council's motion requesting a review of the garden suite program
- outlines the program history
- identifies garden suite application numbers
- recommends revisions to the Garden Suite Policy and Design Guidelines
- recommends increasing application fees.



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Program History

2010

- Garden Suite Policy and Design Guidelines adopted
- a Rezoning Application and Development Permit was required

2017

- Zoning Bylaw amendments allow garden suites on sites with single family dwellings
- delegated authority

2019

- Zoning Bylaw amendments to limit the conversion of new accessory buildings to garden suites and reduce the height of garden suites for “plus sites”

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Development Statistics

2004 to 2017

- total of 27 applications
- 2 applications per year

April 2017 to February 2022

- total of 108 applications
- 22 applications per year
- majority (>70%) approved by staff under delegated authority



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Garden Suite Policy & Design Guidelines

Proposed revisions:

- remove redundant language
- address design challenges
- align with other City policies, bylaws and initiatives



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Garden Suite Policy & Design Guidelines: Remove Redundant Language

“Requirements” Section

- addressed in Zoning Regulation Bylaw or the BC Building Code

“Exceptions” Section

- relates to old rezoning process
- inconsistent with Zoning Bylaw

THE GARDEN SUITE POLICY AND GUIDELINES
To be used in consideration of existing and development permit applications.

1. What is a Garden Suite?
A Garden Suite is a small, ground-oriented, unit located in the rear yard of a single family detached dwelling.

2. Where can a Garden Suite be located?
Eligible locations for a Garden Suite in Victoria include all properties that contain only a single family detached dwelling and are appropriately zoned. The proposal must meet all requirements of the Garden Suite Policy and should incorporate the design guidelines contained in the Policy. Properties that already have secondary suites are not eligible.

3. Requirements
The requirements for a Garden Suite to be considered are:

EXCLUDED LOCATIONS	Single Family Dwelling
EXCLUDED ZONING	R1-4 (includes Single Family Dwelling, R1-B, Single Family Dwelling, R1-G, Single Family Dwelling, Cottages, R1-2, Two Family Dwelling, R1-J Low Density Attached Dwelling, R1-K Medium Density Attached Dwelling)
LOCATION	Rear yard only
HEIGHT (MAXIMUM)	2.5 m
SEPARATION (MINIMUM)	1.5 m from all lot lines
COMMON LOT SETBACK ON FINISHING (SIDE STREET) (MINIMUM)	2.4 m from existing dwelling
REAR YARD SITE COVERAGE (MAXIMUM)	Equal to the existing setback of the primary structure to the parking street on the adjacent property
TOTAL SITE COVERAGE (MAXIMUM)	25% maximum
MAXIMUM TOTAL FLOOR AREA	30-40% maximum, based on existing zoning requirement
BUILDING CODE	37 m ² (approximately 400 ft ²)
STRAITS TITLES	All BC Building, Plumbing, and Electrical Code requirements apply for residential uses. Grouping of properties with Garden Suites is prohibited.
ACCESS	An unobstructed pathway must be constructed and maintained between the public street and the Garden Suite entrance, with a minimum width of 1 m for private and emergency access. Interior or exterior structured access to the Garden Suite is prohibited for all purposes including patios.
ROOFTOP PATIOS	There are no additional parking requirements for the creation of a Garden Suite but the primary dwelling should have a minimum of 1 parking stall which may not be located in the front yard.
PARKING	Secondary Suites are not permitted on a lot with a Garden Suite.
SECONDARY SUITES	Secondary Suites are not permitted on a lot with a Garden Suite.
SEWERAGE	Servicing to the rear yard must be located underground.

POTENTIAL GARDEN SUITE SITES: The properties shaded in yellow are eligible for a Garden Suite. The properties shaded in blue are ineligible for a Garden Suite. The graphic is illustrative only.

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Garden Suite Policy & Design Guidelines: Design Challenges

Recommended revisions to address:

- window placement and privacy impacts
- the design of building entries
- roof design
- garden suites attached to existing garages



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Window Placement and Privacy Impacts

- Absorb privacy impacts on the subject lot
- Locate windows a minimum of 5m from a property boundary
- Locate small bedroom windows a minimum of 2m from the property boundary when required for exiting
- Consider landscaping and glazing design to address privacy issues
- Sensitive interface with Parks and public open space
- Consider solutions and opportunities for unique site conditions



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Garden Suite Policy & Design Guidelines: Align with City Policy, Bylaws and Initiatives

Recommended revisions relate to:

- tree protection and planting
- accessibility
- the location of mechanical equipment
- sustainability features
- bicycle parking and storage



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Public Consultation

It is recommended that:

- notice of the OCP amendment be posted on the City website
- consultation take place in the form of a 30-day referral to the UDI, Home Builders Associations, and CALUCs

In addition:

- a Public Hearing is required
- notice of the Hearing will be advertised in the local newspaper and on the City website.

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Application Fees for Garden Suites

	CURRENT TOTAL FEE	PROPOSED TOTAL FEE
Base Fee for Delegated Development Permit	\$1,000	\$3,000
Fee if Application is inconsistent with Design Guidelines and referred to Council	\$1,000	\$3,500
Fee for Variances	Base Fee Increases to \$2,000 plus \$250 per variance	\$250 per variance

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Future Review & Monitoring

- Continue to monitor and report to Council and recommend adjustments as needed.
- Strategic Plan housing actions identified for 2023 include policy initiatives around tiny homes and garden suites.



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Next Steps

- Prepare draft revisions to the Garden Suite Policy and Design Guidelines
- Public consultation, engagement and internal review
- Finalize document revisions
- Prepare OCP amendment and LUPB amendment for introductory Bylaw readings
- Public Hearing

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Summary

- The current garden suite program is generally working well
- The program has resulted in the approval of 77 garden suites, with an additional 16 in-stream applications
- The Garden Suite Policy and Design Guidelines would benefit from amendments to:
 - delete redundant language
 - address design challenges
 - align the guidelines with City Policy
- Recommend that fees be increased to better represent the staff time associated with processing applications

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