Residential Suites Update

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

March 2019
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Kamloops is considering changes to the Zoning Bylaw to allow suites in more urban residential areas. This summary report describes the Residential Suites Update process, explains the draft policy options and key questions under consideration, and provides a summary of engagement activities as well as key themes and results from community feedback. The report also highlights key regulations and lessons learned from comparable communities, and offers some key considerations for implementation.

Why is the City doing this work?

**Housing**
Kamloops has had a low rental vacancy rate under 2% for several years. The city is also experiencing increasing costs of home ownership. Suites expand the supply of lower-cost rental housing and can provide both a form of affordable rental housing for tenants and a mortgage helper for homeowners.

**Health and Safety**
Suites built to BC Building Code standards under a valid Building Permit help protect tenants’ health and safety. As well, zoning regulations are intended to help suites sensitively integrate into single-family and low-density residential neighbourhoods. For example, off-street parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw can help alleviate on-street parking challenges in neighbourhoods.

**Sustainability**
Suites help the City increase density in an efficient way by making use of existing services and infrastructure. As well, encouraging suites in urban areas with access to transit, community services, and amenities makes it easier and more convenient for tenants living in those areas to walk, cycle, or use transit to commute or get to key destinations, which in turn helps reduce emissions from single-occupancy vehicle trips.
2.0 THE PROCESS

The Residential Suites Update is a three-phase process. Brief descriptions of each phase are outlined below. The release of this report coincides with the conclusion of Phase 2.

Phase 1
Background Research
November 2018–January 2019

Phase 1 involved gathering baseline data related to suites and technical analysis with an internal working group consisting of City staff from various departments. Phase 1 also included background research of best practices and a review of policies and regulations from comparable communities (see 5.0 Comparable Communities for a brief summary of this work).

Phase 2
Draft Policy Options and Engagement
January–March 2019

In Phase 2, City staff developed draft residential suite policy options as well as key questions for community members to provide feedback on. Community engagement activities included an online survey and informational material on the City’s Let’s Talk platform; interviews with local news media; and an open house with interactive displays, a presentation, and a City staff panel discussion featuring audience Q&A opportunities. Residents also provided feedback by email and phone.

Key themes and results from the engagement phase can be found in this summary report. All comments have been reviewed and transcribed in verbatim and can be found in a supporting document to this report available at LetTalk.Kamloops.ca/Suites.

Phase 3
Zoning Bylaw Amendments and Awareness Campaign
April–May 2019

In Phase 3, City staff will present key research findings and results from the engagement process to Council for feedback and direction. This input will be used to draft Zoning Bylaw amendment recommendations, which will be brought back to Council for consideration.

Following the adoption of amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, City staff will conduct an awareness campaign to inform residents of the zoning changes, and to enhance understanding of the process to construct a new suite or to legalize an existing suite. Some key considerations for implementation are included in this report.
3.0 DRAFT POLICY OPTIONS

Engagement for the Residential Suites Update focused on gathering community feedback on proposed policy options and key issues regarding residential suites. However, it was also important to ensure that residents were informed about how the City defines suites, where they are currently permitted, and what the key zoning regulations are. This section provides the City’s definitions for secondary, garden, and carriage suites; outlines where residential suites are currently permitted; and describes the policy options under consideration.

Definitions

Secondary Suite
A second dwelling unit that has a total floor area of not more than 90 m² and floor space less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the principal building. The suite must be located within the principal building either above or below ground.

Garden Suite
A self-contained, one-storey dwelling unit that is separate from, subordinate in size to, and accessory to the principal dwelling. The total floor area of a garden suite can be no more than 80 m².

Carriage Suite
A self-contained, two-storey dwelling unit that is separate from, subordinate in size to, and accessory to the principal dwelling. The footprint of a carriage suite can be no greater than 80 m² and the unit cannot have more than 95 m² of residential living space.
Residential Suites

Current Permitted Use
Secondary suites are currently permitted in certain zones (RS-1S, RT-1, RT-2, RT-3, RC-2, and RM-2A – please refer to the Zoning Bylaw for more information) in urban areas of the city. Garden or carriage suites are currently permitted on lots with single-family dwellings in the RS-1S zone.

Suites are subject to zoning regulations pertaining to lot area, lot width, street frontage, setbacks, front yard landscaping, and off-street parking. Suites are regulated under the BC Building Code and must be constructed under a valid Building Permit.

Secondary Suites

Proposed Zoning Changes
Under consideration is a proposed zoning change to allow secondary suites as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in all urban residential areas.

This would include adding secondary suites as a permitted use in three additional zones – RS-4, RS-5, and the predominant single-family residential zone in the city, RS-1. Key zoning regulations for secondary suites include a minimum 464 m² lot area, 15 m street frontage, three off-street parking stalls, 40% front yard landscaping, and other regulations pertaining to lot width and setbacks.

Did You Know?
Urban residential areas encompass 93% of Kamloops residents, and include the following neighbourhoods: Aberdeen, Batchelor Heights, Brocklehurst, Campbell Creek, Dallas, Downtown, Dufferin, Juniper Ridge, Lower Sahali, North Kamloops, Pineview, Sagebrush, Upper Sahali, Valleyview, West End, and Westsyde.
Garden and Carriage Suites

Proposed Zoning Changes

Two options are under consideration for garden and carriage suites: allowing garden suites as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in the urban core (Downtown, Sagebrush, West End, and North Kamloops), or in all urban residential areas.

Garden and carriage suites are subject to similar zoning regulations as secondary suites, with an additional requirement that the lot have secondary access (corner lot, two street frontages, or access via a lane), unless it is a large urban lot with a minimum 650 m² lot area and 18 m street frontage. The form and character of garden and carriage suites are further regulated through the Intensive Residential Development Permit Area guidelines within the Official Community Plan (KAMPLAN). Two-storey carriage suites have the potential to have a more significant impact on neighbourhood character than one-storey garden suites and will continue to require a rezoning and public hearing process.

Garden and Carriage Suites
Proposed Zoning Option A
Garden Suites in the Urban Core

Garden and Carriage Suites
Proposed Zoning Option B
Garden Suites in All Urban Residential Neighbourhoods
4.0 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The engagement process for the Residential Suites Update featured activities and informative materials to help residents learn about the project and provide feedback, including the following:

- **Residential Suites Survey** – available online from January 24 to February 24
- **Residential Suites Open House** – February 5, 7:00 to 9:00pm, Valley First Lounge, Sandman Centre
- **Residential Suites Update – Let’s Talk webpage**, which included an informational brochure, maps and tables showing current and proposed residential suites zoning, and a Frequently Asked Questions page
- **emails** to communityplanning@kamloops.ca

**Phase 1 and 2 - By the Numbers**

**Community Engagement**
- 90+ open house attendees
- 39 questions or comments from residents during the panel discussion
- 872 surveys completed, with over 1,400 individual comments provided
- 2,684 Let’s Talk web page visits and 176 document downloads
- 1 presentation to the Development and Sustainability Committee
- 1 presentation to Council at a Committee of the Whole meeting
- 2 e-newsletters sent to 1817 individuals receiving 1153 opens and 180 link clicks

**Technical Review**
- 16 technical meetings with 30+ City staff in various departments
- 17 comparable communities’ regulations reviewed with several follow-up conversations conducted
- 1 legal review of policy options under consideration

**News Media**
- 6 media interviews
- 10 media articles
- 12 radio ads
- 1 newspaper ad
- 1 press release

**Social Media**
- 6 Facebook posts, 1 Facebook event page, 1 Facebook event boost reached 16,265 people and received 99 reactions, 10 comments, 49 shares, and 63 expressions of interest
- 5 Twitter posts received 4,041 impressions, 5 likes, 5 retweets, and 60 link clicks
- 2 Instagram posts reached 921 people and received 1,264 impressions, 25 likes, and 1 comment
5.0 COMPAREABLE COMMUNITIES

As part of this study, the residential suite policies of 17 municipalities were reviewed, with special focus given to the following 8 comparable communities:

- City of Abbotsford
- City of Coquitlam
- Township of Langley
- City of New Westminster
- City of Chilliwack
- City of Kelowna
- City of Nanaimo
- City of Prince George

A table featuring key residential suite policies from each of these municipalities can be found on the following two pages.

Lessons Learned

Follow-up conversations were conducted by telephone with municipal planners at the comparable communities. City staff asked questions about best practices, key takeaways, lessons learned, current issues or challenges, and any potential upcoming policy changes under consideration. Some of the highlights and recommendations included the following:

- Tandem parking (one car parked behind another) tends to result in the tenant parking on the street – consider keeping the requirement to have unstacked parking spaces.
- Two-storey carriage suites often have a greater neighbourhood impact than one-storey garden suites – consider allowing garden suites as a permitted use but continue to require a rezoning and public hearing process for carriage suites in most areas.
- Developing regulations for short-term rentals (e.g., AirBnb, VRBO) needs to be approached as a separate project given the complexity involved and amount of staff time that will be required.
- Waiving Building Permit fees to encourage residents to legalize existing suites isn’t an effective incentive – the cost of fees is marginal when compared to the cost of upgrading to BC Building Code standards.
- Allowing suites in more areas of the city won’t result in a significant increase in the number of complaints – affordability has become a major issue for residents in most communities.
## Key Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>General Approach</th>
<th>User Fees</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Compliance Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Abbotsford** | • secondary suites allowed in single-family dwellings in most rural, country, suburban, urban residential, and agricultural zones  
• coach houses allowed on single-family lots in most rural, country, and suburban residential zones and one urban residential zone  
• some infill areas include multi-unit flex zones that permit 1-2 secondary suites and/or 1 coach house per lot | • $260 new suite registration fee  
• $572 existing suite registration fee  
• $260 annual infrastructure fee (on property tax bill) | • 2 for the principal dwelling, 1 for the suite, except in multi-unit flex zone where 0.5 spaces are required per suite/coach house  
• tandem parking acceptable, but City strongly encourages non-tandem parking space for tenant | • complaint-driven, City obligated to investigate complaints received with sufficient evidence by notifying owner, requesting inspection  
• Bylaws cannot obtain entry warrant without strong evidence  
• homeowners with illegal suites have option to decommission or register the suite and obtain Building Permit, or risk fines  
• suites required to be registered with City |
| **Chilliwack** | • secondary suites allowed with any single-family home in the city, regardless of zone  
• coach houses and garden suites allowed in most common urban single-family zones, and most suburban, rural, and agricultural zones  
• no secondary suites or garden suites below flood construction levels | • additional curbside collection fee for the suite  
• no additional charge for water and sewer (water is metered, may consider additional charge for sewer) | • 2 for principal dwelling, 1 for the suite (some areas that permit suites do not currently require an additional parking space for the suite)  
• 2 of 3 must be unenclosed (not in a garage)  
• tandem parking is permitted | • City will no longer respond to complaints regarding existence of a suite or seek out suites constructed before recent policy change (May 2018)  
• City will respond to emergencies (smoke, fire, flooding, hazards) for new suites constructed without a permit, City will receive complaint, take enforcement, require homeowner to decommission suite or obtain a Building Permit  
• Section 57 notice on title for suites constructed without Building Permits |
| **Coquitlam** | • secondary suites allowed with single-family in nearly all single-family and two-family residential zones  
• coach houses allowed in some single-family areas of SW Coquitlam  
• some large urban lots permit 1 secondary suite + 1 carriage house or garden cottage | • 40% additional utility fee surcharge on properties with authorized suites  
• 200% additional utility fee surcharge on properties with known unauthorized suites | • 2 for the principal dwelling, 1 for the suite  
• tandem parking is not permitted  
• parking space for suite must be independently accessible | • complaint-driven, City responds to complaints on priority basis (safety issues, multiple suites in a home receiving highest priority)  
• owners of illegal suites will be notified if their suite can be authorized or not, and provided options for proceeding  
• alternative construction requirements available for suites in homes built before 2000 |
| **Kelowna** | • secondary suites allowed in single-family homes in most zones (urban, rural, agricultural), except where servicing capacity is limited  
• carriage houses allowed in large and medium lot urban residential, rural, and agricultural zones  
• carriage houses currently require rezoning in most zones | • $2,500 Development Cost Charge (DCC) fee if construction value is over $50,000  
• $300 sewer development fee if construction value under $50,000 | • 2 for the principal dwelling, 1 for the suite  
• 1 parking stall must be unstacked | • complaint-driven, Building Division follows up rather than Bylaws, focus is on trying to bring homeowners into compliance  
• homeowner given 15 working days to either legalize existing suite or decommission  
• if homeowner takes no action, City may put notice on owner’s tax certificate or take further legal action |
## Key Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>General Approach</th>
<th>User Fees</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Compliance Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langley (Township)</td>
<td>• secondary suites allowed in single-family homes in all residential zones</td>
<td>• 30% water and sewer fee on annual utility</td>
<td>• no additional parking space required for secondary</td>
<td>• strong regulatory approach with annual licence, statutory declaration, ability for residents to</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• principal dwelling must be owner-occupied</td>
<td>bill on property tax statement (no charge for</td>
<td>suites</td>
<td>anonymously report unauthorized suites online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• coach houses allowed in some residential zones</td>
<td>family-occupied suites)</td>
<td>• coach houses require an additional parking space</td>
<td>• illegal suites must be decommissioned or homeowner can be fined up to $500/day</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• $350 annual suite licence fee ($175 if family-occupied)</td>
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<td>• suites required to be registered with City</td>
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<td>Nanaimo</td>
<td>• secondary suites allowed on single-family lots in nearly all zones</td>
<td>• double rates for garbage and sewer (water is</td>
<td>• 2 for the principal dwelling, 1 for the suite</td>
<td>• complaint-driven, enforcement focused on life safety issues, hazards, and emergencies</td>
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<td>• carriage houses allowed in same zones as secondary suites, but only on corner</td>
<td>metered)</td>
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<td>• illegal suites constructed prior to 2005 can be authorized with Section 57 notice on title if</td>
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<td></td>
<td>lots or lots with lane access, unless lot is 700 m² area or greater</td>
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<td>upgraded with a Building Permit to meet certain life safety standards (egress, fire separation, and fire</td>
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<td>detection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Westminster</td>
<td>• secondary suites allowed in all single-detached residential zones</td>
<td>• additional utility charge for secondary suite,</td>
<td>• no additional parking space required for suites,</td>
<td>• complaint-driven</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• laneway and carriage houses allowed in many residential zones</td>
<td>unless vacant or occupied by family or homeowner</td>
<td>laneway or carriage houses</td>
<td>• for suites constructed after 1998 without a Building Permit, owners must remove the suite or obtain a</td>
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<td>• several zones allow both a secondary suite and a laneway/carriage house</td>
<td>• 50% additional utility fee surcharge</td>
<td>in areas with on-street parking restrictions, laneway or carriage house can receive their own parking</td>
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<td>permit</td>
<td>• for suites constructed before 1998, City will only investigate if suite becomes a source of serious</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• tandem parking not permitted</td>
<td>health, safety, or neighbourhood impact concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince George</td>
<td>• secondary suites, cottages and carriage houses allowed on lots with single-</td>
<td>• $155 business licence fee for rental</td>
<td>• 2 for the principal dwelling, 1 for the suite</td>
<td>• complaint-driven, homeowners can book inspection to legalize existing suites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family dwellings in most residential zones</td>
<td>properties</td>
<td>• tandem parking permitted</td>
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6.0 RESULTS

This section provides a high-level summary of key themes and results from the open house, which was attended by more than 90 residents, and the online survey, which was completed by 872 residents.

Key Questions

Residents were provided key information and then asked several key questions during the engagement process, including the following:

• If you have a suite in your home that was built without a Building Permit, what are the barriers that prevented you from building your suite legally?
• If you do not have a suite in your home, what would encourage you to obtain a Building Permit to build a legal suite?
• If suites are permitted in more areas of the city, what are your top 3 concerns?
• Should secondary suites be allowed as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in all urban neighbourhoods?
• If garden suites are permitted on lots with single-family dwellings in more urban neighbourhoods, which additional areas should they be allowed in?

Key Themes and Results

Key themes and results from the engagement process are described below. Approximately 1,500 comments were provided by residents via the online survey, open house interactive display boards, or by email during the engagement phase. All comments can be found in verbatim in a supporting document to this report available at LetsTalk.Kamloops.ca/Suites.

Community-wide Representation

Residents living in every neighbourhood in the city completed the online survey, with the greatest share of respondents from Aberdeen (114), Brocklehurst (102), Upper Sahali (86), Westsyde (84), Downtown (82), and North Kamloops (72).

Living Situation

• 64% of survey respondents own a home but do not have a suite
• 22% of survey respondents own a home with a suite, and of those:
  - 72% rent out their suite
  - 75% did not have a Building Permit issued for the suite in their home
• 5% of survey respondents rent a secondary, garden, or carriage suite

Current housing for the 10% of survey respondents who selected “Other” includes renting or owning an apartment or townhouse unit, renting a whole single-family home or duplex, and living with parents. One respondent noted they are homeless.
Secondary Suites - Proposed Zoning Changes
A majority of respondents to the question “Should secondary suites be allowed as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in all urban neighbourhoods?” answered in support of the proposed zoning changes.

- 72% Yes, secondary suites should be allowed as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in all urban neighbourhoods (679 of 942)
- 18% No, secondary suites should not be allowed in any additional areas (166 of 942)
- 10% No, secondary suites should only be allowed in the following areas (97 of 942)
- 59% Yes, secondary suites should be allowed as a permitted use on lots with single-family dwellings in all urban neighbourhoods (546 of 925)

Some respondents suggested other areas where secondary suites should be allowed. Key themes included the following:
- areas with ample street parking available
- lots that can accommodate adequate off-street parking
- areas with access to transit
- areas with multi-family residential housing
- all urban neighbourhoods but with a maximum number of suites permitted per block
- areas where surrounding homeowners provide approval

Garden and Carriage Suites - Proposed Zoning Changes
A majority of respondents to the question “If garden suites are permitted on lots with single-family dwellings in more urban neighbourhoods, which additional areas should they be allowed in?” answered in support of allowing garden suites on single-family lots in all urban neighbourhoods.

- 17% Urban Core only – Downtown, West End, Sagebrush, and North Kamloops (158 of 925)
- 17% No additional areas (160 of 925)
- 7% Other (61 of 925)
- 59% All urban neighbourhoods (546 of 925)

Some respondents suggested other areas where garden suites should be allowed. Key themes included the following:
- lots large enough to accommodate adequate off-street parking and the accessory dwelling while allowing for landscaping and green space
- lots with lane access
Legal Suites – Barriers and Incentives

Homeowners with suites that were not built under a valid Building Permit were provided multiple-choice questions in the survey asking what barriers prevented them from building their suite legally, and conversely, what would encourage them to apply for a Building Permit to legalize their existing suite. Homeowners without suites were asked what would encourage them to obtain a Building Permit to build a legal suite. Residents were able to select as many options as were relevant to them.

Key findings included the following:

• 72% of homeowner respondents who have a suite in their home rent out their suite
• 71% of homeowner respondents who acknowledged having a suite built without a Building Permit noted that the suite was already in their house when they moved in.
• 55% of homeowner respondents who do not have a suite in their home expressed no interest in having a suite.
• 47% of all homeowner respondents (and 64% of homeowner respondents with a suite in their home) identified not having to go through a rezoning and public hearing process as an incentive that would encourage them to either legalize an existing suite or build a new suite legally.
• Some homeowner respondents also noted they would be encouraged to legalize an existing suite if they only had to address life safety issues, while others cited a faster Building Permit process or better communication about requirements as incentives that would encourage them to build a legal suite.

Top Concerns

Residents were asked to share their top concerns and what they hope to see addressed if suites are permitted in more areas of the city. Combining feedback in the online survey and on display boards at the open house, staff received approximately 790 responses to this question. Key themes involved the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>• increased on-street parking issues in residential areas</td>
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<td>• impact of additional on-street parking on snow removal</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• parking for tenants needs to be provided on-site</td>
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<td>Safety</td>
<td>• tenants living in unsafe conditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• need to ensure suites meet BC Building Code standards</td>
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<td>Absentee or negligent landlords</td>
<td>• homes can become nuisance properties</td>
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<td>• landlord should live in the home</td>
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<td>Problem renters</td>
<td>• tenants who do not care about the home or the neighbourhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>• increased congestion on local roads</td>
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<td>• unsafe conditions for walking and cycling in residential areas</td>
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<td>Process</td>
<td>• lack of clarity on process to build a legal suite</td>
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<td>• City should develop guide for residents looking to build a legal suite</td>
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<td>• streamline the approval process to legalize existing suites</td>
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<td>Neighbourhood character</td>
<td>• increased noise and nuisance issues with increased density in neighbourhoods</td>
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<td>• some residents bought into a neighbourhood expecting it to not have suites</td>
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<td>• too many suites in an area may decrease property values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>• City should enforce parking and nuisance properties</td>
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<td>• City should penalize or decommission illegal suites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>• need to provide additional bus service to areas with increasing populations</td>
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<td>• increase density in walkable areas with access to transit and services</td>
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<td>Short-term rentals</td>
<td>• reduce available rental housing for local residents</td>
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<td>• need to protect long-term rental housing stock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact on infrastructure</td>
<td>• cost to provide additional water, sewer, garbage and recycling services</td>
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<td>• increased demand on City utilities</td>
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<td>• homeowners with suites should pay more taxes/higher utility rates</td>
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<td>No concerns</td>
<td>• fully supportive of allowing suites in more areas of the city</td>
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<td>• need to prevent urban sprawl</td>
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<td>• need for more affordable rental housing</td>
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<td>• suites are a mortgage helper at a time of increasing home ownership costs</td>
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<td>• suites are good for community if managed appropriately</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Top Concerns - Word Cloud of Key Themes
Statements About Suites
Residents were provided with several statements (positive and negative) about residential suites, and were asked to share their level of agreement with each statement. Combined results from the open house and online survey are noted below.

- Suites provide an affordable housing option for renters.
- Suites add to the total stock of rental housing in the city.
- Suites provide a mortgage helper and source of income for homeowners.
- Suites allow families to stay together by providing accommodation for children attending university or for aging family members.
- Suites create parking issues in neighbourhoods.
- Suites negatively impact the character of neighbourhoods.
- Sensitive infill through the development of suites is good for residential neighbourhoods.
General Comments - Word Cloud of Key Themes

In the online survey, residents were asked to share any other comments they have about suites. At the open house, residents were able to ask questions or provide comments during a question and answer session with City staff. The word cloud captures some of the key terms from this feedback.
7.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

If suites are to be permitted in more areas of the city, some additional measures could be considered to help minimize neighbourhood impacts, encourage more suites to be constructed to BC Building Code standards and in accordance with zoning regulations, and support successful implementation of an expanded residential suites program. The following list of key considerations draws from best practices, lessons learned from comparable communities, community feedback received during the engagement process, and technical review.

Guide to Residential Suites

A theme from survey respondents was a lack of clarity around the City’s residential suite policies, permitting and approvals process, and construction requirements. Some other municipalities have addressed this by developing user-friendly guides that walk residents through their residential suites programs.

The City could develop and promote a “how-to” guide for residential suites, which could include a summary of the specific BC Building Code requirements for secondary suites, key zoning regulations, and development guidelines for garden and carriage suites. The guide would provide a flow chart that outlines the process, timeline for approvals, and associated municipal fees and costs involved with constructing a new suite or legalizing an existing suite. The guide would also highlight the benefits to the tenant, homeowner, and neighbourhood in constructing a legal suite to BC Building Code standards and in accordance with zoning regulations. Copies of the guide would be available at the Development, Engineering and Sustainability Building and the material would also be available on the City’s website.

Suite Registry

Some municipalities actively maintain registries of all residential suites built under a valid Building Permit. The City of Calgary’s website features an interactive online mapping tool that allows the user to zoom in and identify legal suites throughout the community. This approach helps renters identify safe, legal suites, and allows homeowners with legal suites to stand out in the rental market. As an added incentive, homeowners in Calgary are provided registry stickers to display at the entrance to their suites.

With approximately 200 suites built under a valid Building Permit at present, this could be a manageable project for the City to initiate. A first step may be to send a letter to all homeowners with legal suites informing them of the suite registry. The City could also consider sending a letter to owners of all homes identified by the BC Assessment Authority as a residential dwelling with a suite, but where there is no record of a Building Permit for a suite being issued. This letter could advise the homeowner of the zoning changes, provide a link to the City’s new guide for residential suites, mention the suite registry, and encourage them to legalize their suite under a valid Building Permit.

Parking Requirements

Parking was a common theme heard at the Residential Suites Open House in February and in the online survey. Many residents have concerns with on-street parking in their neighbourhoods. In discussions with planners from comparable municipalities, parking was always a key issue. General consensus was that tandem parking (one car parked behind the other) contributes to on-street parking issues, as coordination to move vehicles when needed proves difficult, and one of the vehicles often ends up parked on the street.

The City currently requires three unstacked off-street parking stalls in the RS-1S (single-family residential – suite) zone. To help address the on-street parking issue, this requirement could be applied as a general regulation to all single-family homes with a suite.
Parking Flexibility

The City currently allows two on-street parking permits per residence or lot in areas where limited parking restrictions (e.g., two-hour time limits) apply. These areas are primarily located in the West End and Downtown within walking distance of key services and amenities, which also happen to be parts of the city with some of the highest percentages of residents who commute to work by walking, cycling or transit. The City could consider one of the two parking permits to count towards the three off-street parking spaces required for homeowners with a suite.

Short-Term Rentals

Some municipalities (Kelowna, Vancouver, Victoria, Nelson, Tofino) have taken steps to regulate short-term rentals advertised through Online Accommodation Platforms (OAPs) like AirBnb and VRBO in order to help protect the long-term rental housing stock for local residents in their communities. The issue of short-term rentals was cited as a concern for several survey respondents. A scan of unique listings on these OAPs conducted at intervals over a two-week period identified approximately 150 unique listings within the City of Kamloops. By comparison, in the spring of 2018 the City of Kelowna identified nearly 2,000 unique listings, and a scan of the Mountain Resort Municipality of Sun Peaks identified approximately 190 unique listings on OAPs.

Based on discussion with these municipalities, the process to begin regulating short-term rentals is extensive and involves research and data analysis; engagement with the accommodations industry and the public; development of zoning, licencing, and enforcement policies and regulations; and potentially contracting out monitoring and compliance services. Given the scope of such a project and the current limited number of local listings, a recommended approach is for City staff to monitor the OAPs, observe how the process unfolds in other communities where it is an issue, and apply lessons learned to a future strategy.

Business Licence Requirement

A theme among survey respondents was a concern with properties owned by absentee landlords. The City is considering a business licence requirement and accompanying Good Neighbour Agreement requirement for single-family homes with residential suites that are not owner-occupied. In instances where Bylaws have to visit a residence due to noise/nuisance complaints or safety concerns, and a fully rented home is identified, the business licence requirement could be imposed. This would be separate from any fines imposed through the City’s Good Neighbour Bylaw. Alternately, a homeowner seeking a Building Permit to construct a suite could inform City staff that they plan to rent out the entire home, in which case the homeowner would need to apply for a business licence as well.

8.0 APPENDICES

All comments and feedback received during engagement activities have been reviewed and transcribed in verbatim, and can be found in a supporting document to this report available at [LetsTalk.Kamloops.ca/Suites](http://LetsTalk.Kamloops.ca/Suites). This supporting document includes the following appendices:

- Appendix A – Current and Proposed Zoning and Permitted Uses – Maps and Tables
- Appendix B – Residential Suites Open House Results
- Appendix C – Residential Suites Survey Results
- Appendix D – Frequently Asked Questions