



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 15.1.7
Regional Council
August 22, 2023

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 24, 2023

SUBJECT: **Case 24527: Secondary and Backyard Suites - Accessibility & Monitoring**

ORIGIN

On September 1, 2020, the following motion of Regional Council was put and passed:

THAT Halifax Regional Council adopt the proposed amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and all land use by-laws, with the exception of the Regional Centre Land Use By-law (Package A), as set out in Attachments A and B of the supplementary staff report dated June 2, 2020, to allow secondary suites and backyard suites accessory to single-unit, two-unit or townhouse dwellings.

On September 30th, 2020, the following motion of Regional Council was put and passed:

THAT Halifax Regional Council request a staff report that:

- 1. Recommends approaches to ensure accessibility to secondary and backyard suites from streets or driveways; and*
- 2. Discusses how the Municipality will monitor secondary and backyard suites to determine if further amendments to community land use by-laws should be considered.*

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter), Part VIII, Planning & Development.

...RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 2

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to explore the development of an incentive program for secondary and backyard suites with key features as outlined in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report and its recommendations include an update to HRM's approach to secondary and backyard suite developments. As requested by Regional Council on September 30, 2020, this report addresses accessibility for this form of housing, supported by an analysis of building code requirements and a scan of accessibility approaches in other jurisdictions. Based on this, staff recommend the adoption of guidelines to encourage further accessibility, which are based on [CSA](#) and [Rick Hansen](#) accessibility guidelines.

Given current levels of housing demand in HRM, it is important to monitor the successes and limitations of programs and policies that are used to increase housing affordability and supply, and to update those tools as necessary. This report addresses how HRM is monitoring the roll-out of these housing options. Current permit volumes, future data sharing methods, as well as observed barriers are aspects of monitoring efforts to date and are outlined.

BACKGROUND

Secondary and backyard suites are smaller dwelling units that are accessory to a main dwelling. Secondary suites are separate dwelling units that are completely contained within a main dwelling. They are often referred to as in-law suites or basement apartments. Backyard suites are self-contained subordinate dwelling units that are located within an accessory building or structure on the same lot as a main dwelling. Backyard suites are either built over an accessory structure like a garage, or on their own. They are sometimes referred to as granny suites or carriage flats. Secondary and backyard suites were allowed across HRM to increase diversity and affordability of long-term housing.

On [September 1, 2020](#), Halifax Regional Council approved region wide amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS) and land use by-laws (LUB), to allow secondary and backyard suites accessory to single-unit, two-unit and townhouse dwellings. During the [late winter/early spring of 2021](#), housekeeping amendments were approved by the Halifax West, Harbour East Marine Drive and North West Community Councils.

On [September 30, 2020](#) Regional Council passed a motion requesting a supplementary staff report that explores approaches to ensure the secondary units are accessible from streets or driveways and discusses how the Municipality will monitor the overall success of the region wide amendments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement was completed and presented as part of the original secondary and backyard suite amendments, including an online questionnaire, as well as stakeholder and group consultation. No further community engagement was completed as part of this supplementary report; however, engagement with HRM's Accessibility Advisory Committee took place last fall.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

On October 24, 2022, staff presented information on the proposed approach to accessibility for secondary and backyard suites to HRM's Accessibility Advisory Committee. Minutes from the meeting are included as Attachment C. Members of the Committee asked questions of the approach and were supportive of the introduction of HRM's accessibility guidelines. Members encouraged staff to expand the guidelines to

include design features for individuals with vision impairments as well as cognitive and functional accessibility needs. Design interventions for these accessibility needs were subsequently added to the guidelines.

DISCUSSION

Given unprecedented housing demand in HRM, it is important to monitor the successes and limitations of programs and policies that are used to increase housing affordability and supply, and to update those tools as necessary. Since the adoption of secondary and backyard suite amendments and in consideration of the motion that directed this report, staff have noted three key areas to be addressed: accessibility, monitoring and potential incentives.

Accessibility

The September 30, 2020 motion passed by Regional Council requested that staff explore land use provisions and approaches to ensure accessibility between secondary and backyard suites and driveways or public streets. This is an important consideration to ensure that all residents, including those with accessibility needs, can benefit from new housing permissions.

The region wide amendments adopted in September 2020 include the following provision for backyard suites:

“where the main dwelling unit does not have a side yard on both sides, a backyard suite must have unobstructed access upon the same lot in which the backyard suite is located to a public street.”

Council expressed their concern that simply requiring unobstructed access may not meet the needs of all people with different abilities. The intent of the existing provision is to ensure that every backyard suite has direct access to a public street. This also ensures that crossing adjacent properties is not required for practical considerations such as emergency service access and deliveries.

To respond to Council's motion, staff reviewed requirements relating to accessibility in the provincial building code and explored how other jurisdictions incorporate accessibility requirements into requirements for secondary and backyard suites.

Building Code Requirements

As discussed in past reports ([January 2020](#) & [September 2020](#)) the *National Building Code* and *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* require accessibility in the interior of buildings. In 2019, adaptability requirements were introduced to the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* which included a provision that exterior doors must “be capable of being made barrier-free from a sidewalk or parking area.”

The *National Building Code* and *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* also require Fire Department Access to Buildings, which would be evaluated when issuing permits and has potential to offer a level of accessibility. This section of the code requires that the fire department shall be provided access to each building by means of a street, private roadway, or yard. As well, this regulation is further clarified to ensure that the design and site layout considers connection with public thoroughfares, weight of firefighting equipment, width of roadway, radius of curves, overhead clearance, location of fire hydrants, and the location of fire department connections and parking. Though these regulations do not specifically ensure barrier-free access, they do ensure emergency services can access all residential units.

Jurisdictional Review

Staff completed a jurisdictional scan of ten Canadian municipalities (Attachment A) who have adopted or are in the process of adopting secondary and backyard suite provisions. In most jurisdictions, accessibility is limited to the provision of an unobstructed access of a specified width from the street to the backyard suite (Victoria, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Toronto, Brampton, Ottawa). In two jurisdictions, Saskatoon and Ottawa, requirements for this path to be hard surfaced are included in regulation. Calgary and Edmonton do not have a requirement for unobstructed access built into their zoning by-laws but have

published guidelines to achieve accessibility. Most jurisdictions include a comprehensive how-to guide for developing backyard suites, with limited mention of further considerations to encourage accessibility.

Proposed Guidelines

As a result of the above review, staff do not recommend amending the land use by-law requirements to further require an unobstructed path to be hard-surfaced. If the Municipality were to require a hard-surfaced pathway of a certain width from a street or driveway to secondary or backyard suites, there will be properties where this infrastructure adds project costs which may make these units financially unfeasible. Staff recommend that the Building Code, existing HRM land use by-law language, and inclusion of accessibility guidelines will achieve accessibility while not negatively impacting affordability and project feasibility. Staff are consulting with Development Engineering and Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency to explore the implications of specifying a minimum width for unobstructed access in our land use by-laws.

Additionally, staff have developed a set of accessibility guidelines for secondary and backyard suites, similar to other jurisdictions. These guidelines were adapted from the Rick Hansen Universal Design Recommendations¹, which are based on the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18 *Accessible design for the built environment* standards². In offering this resource as a guideline document, there is an opportunity to provide a more exhaustive list of universal design elements than would be possible if included as a provision in HRM's land use by-laws. Compared to other jurisdictions reviewed for this report, Halifax would offer one of the more comprehensive sets of guidelines to encourage accessibility.

HRM's Secondary and Backyard Suite Accessibility Guidelines (Attachment B) will be included with permit application information and made available publicly with other backyard and secondary suite resources. In developing these guidelines, staff consulted with the Accessibility Advisors with HRM's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and HRM's Accessibility Advisory Committee. The document includes design considerations in the following categories:

- Entrances & Doors
- Ramps
- Parking
- Passenger Drop-off and Pick-up Zones
- Functional and Cognitive Accessibility

Additionally, future LUB amendments, to be addressed at the appropriate community councils, will explore exempting enclosed or internal staircases and elevators from gross floor area calculations for backyard suites to increase tenant safety, thereby improving accessibility.

Monitoring

The second part of the September 30, 2020 motion directs staff to explore how the Municipality will monitor secondary and backyard suites to determine if further amendments to community land use by-laws should be considered.

Monitoring the successes and limitations of secondary and backyard suite amendments is key to ensuring the policy goals are fulfilled. The adoption of region wide provisions for secondary and backyard suites coincided with the adoption of Planning and Development's new online permitting system. The new permitting system modernizes and streamlines service delivery for residents, the development industry, and staff.

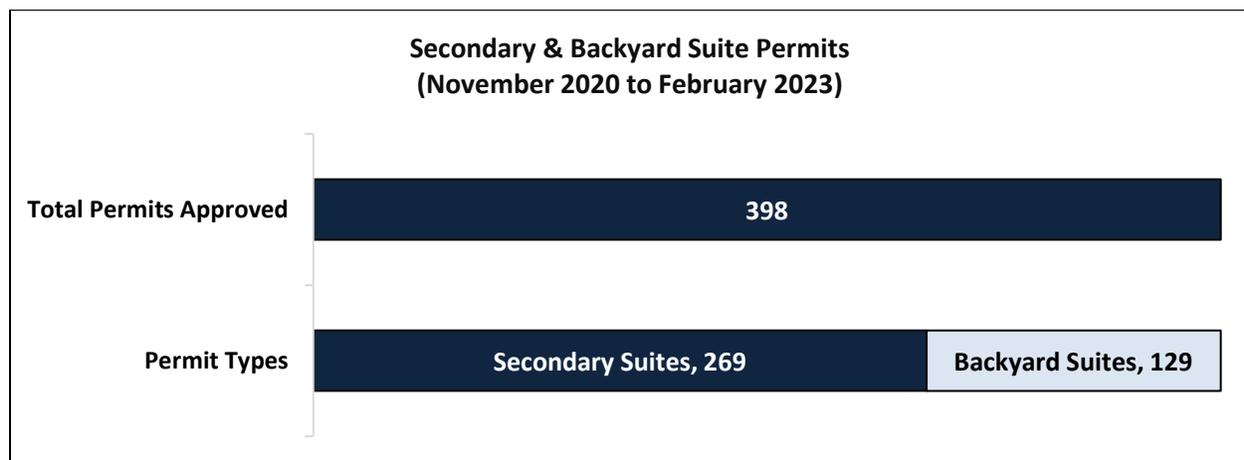
To monitor the secondary and backyard suite provisions, the following key indicators apply: tracking permit applications, tracking inquiries, and tracking compliance cases.

¹ Rick Hansen Foundation *Accessibility Resources*
<https://www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/accessibility-resources>

² CSA B651-18 *Accessible design for the built environment* Guidelines
<https://www.csagroup.org/wp-content/uploads/B651-18EN.pdf>

Tracking permit applications: Tracking permit applications is key to understanding the number of new secondary and backyard suites that are developed over time. The online system has allowed staff to track progress of new secondary and backyard suite permits from submission to issuance. Staff have also monitored permit applications to understand any additional or unintended barriers to the development of secondary and backyard suites that can be addressed through housekeeping amendments. With the roll-out of the new tracking system, data on issued permits is released publicly to HRMs Open Data portal on a weekly basis. A brief summary of secondary and backyard suite permit volumes is outlined below and staff are in the process of posting data to the Affordable Housing – Secondary and Backyard Suite website.

As shown in the table below, as of early 2023, 398 secondary and backyard permits have been issued: 269 for secondary suites and 129 for backyard suites. The Regional Centre Plan Area had the largest share of permits (26%) and the Halifax Plan area had the second most (17%). A complete geographical breakdown of permits issued by plan area is provided in Attachment D. The uptake of secondary and backyard suites has been encouraging, however, staff have identified additional land use provisions that unintentionally serve as barriers to their development.



Tracking inquiries: While tracking permit applications is important in understanding the number of new secondary and backyard suites, tracking inquiries also helps staff identify any barriers moving forward. Staff meet regularly with teams who field inquiries to understand issues related to amendments such as these. The online permitting system will also be helpful in identifying such inquiries and will supplement inquiries received directly from members of the public, other staff, and Councillors. Since the roll out of the complaint module in the online system in March of 2022, staff have received 347 public inquiries about secondary and backyard suites.

Tracking compliance cases – As noted in the [January 2020 recommendation report](#) on secondary and backyards suites, illegal secondary dwellings made up a significant portion of HRM compliance cases. Tracking the resolution of these compliance cases will be important in further identifying any barriers to the development of secondary and backyard suites. Compliance cases are now tracked through the online system and staff work closely with the Development Services and Compliance teams to understand issues related to secondary and backyard suites as plans and by-laws are amended.

Based on the applications, inquiries, and complaints to date, staff will be bringing housekeeping amendments to the regulations that will remove barriers to the development of secondary and backyard suites. Staff will continue to monitor secondary and backyard suites and the related regulations, and will bring forward other necessary amendments as part of future reports specific to secondary and backyard suites, or as part of larger plan and by-law simplification efforts.

Further tools to Support Secondary and Backyard Suites

Secondary and backyard suites are considered an important form of infill housing and gentle density. While the number of permit applications show the adoption of secondary and backyard suite provisions have been successful in allowing this important housing type, staff advise that permit volumes could increase through implementing programs and tools to encourage these forms of infill housing. Initiatives that could be further explored in HRM include:

- 1) Continuing to work with other levels of government and external organizations in exploring the development of a secondary/backyard suite incentive/grant program.

Other jurisdictions are also experiencing housing supply constraints and realizing the potential to increase stock through gentle density measures such as secondary and backyard suite infill development. An approach undertaken by some jurisdictions is to offer incentives or grants to property owners who develop secondary or backyard suites. In some places, these grants and incentives are tied to the inclusion of level of accessible or energy efficient design. Staff will continue to work with the provincial government and external organizations to explore opportunities to develop a program to support the development of secondary and backyard suites.

- 2) Developing a pre-approved permit process to simplify backyard suite permit applications.

Another incentive program to develop backyard suites specifically is to offer pre-approved building plans that streamline the development process for homeowners. This type of program exists to varying degrees in Kelowna and Edmonton, as well as in Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, and Sacramento, California, and Portland, Oregon³. This study notes that a pre-approved design program alone does not increase uptake but serves best as an information campaign to provide awareness of secondary and backyard suites which, in combination with a comprehensive incentive/grant program, could help to increase secondary and backyard suite development.

- 3) Reviewing accessory building provisions and their impact to the development of backyard suites.

Current provisions require a backyard suite to conform to accessory building requirements, up to 90 square metres in floor area. However, most accessory building requirements limit the building size to much smaller than 90 square metres and many include height limitations that would not allow for a backyard suite over a garage. Additionally, accessory building requirements will vary from plan area to plan area and sometimes between different types of residential zones. Given these differences, a more comprehensive review at the regional scale for accessory structures will be explored as part of the Regional Plan Phase 4 review.

Conclusion

Secondary and backyard suites will continue to be an important part of HRM's efforts to address unprecedented housing need. Given the level of population growth and housing need, it is crucial to consider residents who are likely to feel the impacts of that housing need most. As outlined in this report, staff have developed comprehensive accessibility guidelines which will provide a more exhaustive list of accessible features without disincentivizing secondary and backyard suite development.

To monitor the overall development of secondary and backyard suites, staff have released permit information via HRMs Open Data portal and will publish a summary of permit applications to the HRM website. Staff also recommend further exploring tools to incentivize or encourage the development of secondary and backyard suites across the municipality.

³ Pre-Approved Designs – HousingBC, Anastasia Koutalianos and Natradee Quek. http://www.smallhousingbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Pre-approved-plans_SHBC_Final.pdf

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with the proposed amendments can be accommodated within the approved 2022-2023 operating budget. Costs associated with the development of an incentive program will be further assessed in a future report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no risks associated with the recommendations contained within this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional environmental implications in regard to these housekeeping amendments.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may choose to:

1. Modify the proposed recommendation to explore alternative tools to support the development of secondary and backyard suites.
2. Refuse the proposed recommendation to explore alternative tools to support the development of secondary and backyard suites.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Jurisdictional Scan of Accessibility Requirements/Guidelines
Attachment B: Secondary and Backyard Accessibility Guidelines
Attachment C: Advisory Committee for Accessibility in HRM Minutes - October 24, 2022
Attachment D: Secondary and Backyard Suite Permits by Plan Area

A copy of this report can be obtained online at or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Brandon Umpherville, Planner III, 902.240.5128

Attachment A

Jurisdictional Scan - Backyard Suite Accessibility

	Victoria	Vancouver	Calgary	Edmonton	Saskatoon	Winnipeg	Hamilton	Toronto	Brampton	Ottawa
Requirement for Hard Surfaced Path in Regulations	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Requirement for Unobstructed Access in Regulations	Yes	Yes	-	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-

Victoria

Requirement: 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. No detail given on pathway treatment.

Guideline document:

<https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Community~Planning/Housing~Strategy/Garden%20Suite%20Policy%20and%20Guidelines%202017%20Final.pdf>

Vancouver

Requirement: lane access – in order to build a Laneway House or Secondary Suite your site must have access to an open lane or be located on a corner served by an open or dedicated lane, or be located on a double fronting site served by a street at both the front and rear. Fire fighter access: a fire fighter access path must be provided from the street to the entrance of the Laneway House. This path must be at least 900mm (3ft) in width and clear of any projections.

Guideline document (does not explicitly list accessibility considerations):

<http://bylaws.vancouver.ca/bulletin/bulletin-laneway-housing-guide.pdf>

Calgary

Guideline: where the backyard suite is located on a corner parcel it should have an entry that provides direct access to the street. Where this is not feasible, access to the street should be provided via a hard surfaced pathway extending from the entrance of the suite to the street. Where the backyard suite is located on a parcel with a lane it should have access to the lane through a direct entrance on the lane of provide direct access to the lane or street via a hard surfaced pathway. On a laneless parcel access to the backyard suite should be as direct as possible from the public street via a hard surfaced pathway.

Guideline document:

<https://publicaccess.calgary.ca/ldm01/livelink.exe?func=ccpa.general&msgID=GTTseTrKeKO&msgAction=Download>

Edmonton

Guideline: encourage location of staircases and elevators for second storey backyard suites to the interior of a building and provides a floor area exemption of 6 square metres. No guideline or requirement that speaks to exterior paths.

Guideline document:

<https://www.edmonton.ca/sites/default/files/public-files/assets/GardenSuiteHowtoGuide.pdf?cb=1654708164>

Saskatoon

Requirement: an internal walking path is required for the garden or garage suite to access both the front and rear of the property.

Guideline: Garden and Garage suites should be connected to adjacent streets and laneways, through the site, via an internal pathway. All publicly accessible areas, including sidewalks and internal pathways, should be barrier-free and constructed of materials chosen for their functionality as well as their maintenance efficiency. The preferred surface treatment is brushed concrete. Internal pathways should have a minimum width of 1.2 metres to facilitate barrier-free access and should integrate seamlessly with the adjacent sidewalk, on-site surface parking areas, main and secondary dwelling entrances, garage entrances, porches, decks, and other access points between primary and accessory dwellings. Access structures such as ramps should be considered as integrated components of infill development. Trees, landscaping and site furnishings should not obstruct the path of travel.

Guideline document (accessibility is required by regulations):

https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/garden_and_garage_suites_april_2022.pdf

Winnipeg

Requirement: Detached Secondary Unit must be no greater than 45.7 m (150'-0") from the nearest curb on the front street and an unobstructed pathway. A minimum of 762 mm (2'-6") in width must be provided between the front property line and the secondary suite. As well, Detached Secondary Units are only permitted on through lots, corner lots, or abut an improved public lane.

Guideline document:

<https://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Brochures/Secondary-Suites-Detached.pdf>

Hamilton

Proposed Requirements: Maximum Distance between property line and entry to a detached Second Dwelling Unit of 40.0 metres. Unobstructed access with a 1.0 metre width and 2.6 metres in height between the property line and entry to a detached Second Dwelling Unit. The path can be sodded or paved, but must not be a tripping hazard. The path must be clear of any obstruction such as parked vehicles, air conditioning units, stoops, stairs, fences that cannot be opened, and encroachments such as bay windows, ledges, or awnings to allow fire and EMS personnel safe unobstructed access to the back yard.

Toronto

Requirement: to ensure access to a garden suite in the case of an emergency, Toronto Fire Services, Emergency Services and the Building Code require a firefighting access with a maximum 45-metre travel distance measured from a public street to the entrance of the garden suite, a minimum width of 1.0 metre and a 2.1 metre vertical clearance from the fronting public street. The 1.0 metre minimum width would be unobstructed with the exception of hydro and gas meters.

To encourage accessible design, the proposed Official Plan amendment contains policies that compel City Planning staff to have additional regard for applications made under Section 45 of the Planning Act where the minor variances sought in support of the construction of a garden suite are necessitated by the construction of a suite that meets accessible Final Report - Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods - Garden Suites Page 26 of 50 building standards. In this case, applicants will be required to submit a rationale detailing why the proposed variances are necessary to support the construction of the proposed accessible unit.

Brampton

Proposed Requirement: a 1.2 metre pedestrian path to the main access of the garden suite. No detail on path material or surface.

Ottawa

Requirement: a walkway must be provided from a driveway, public street or travelled land to the coach house, and such walkway; must be at least 1.2 metres in width; must not exceed 1.5 metres in width; no

person may park a vehicle on any part of a walkway under this subsection, other than that part of the walkway that encroaches on a permitted driveway.

Guideline document:

https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/how_to_coach_en.pdf

Attachment B

Accessibility Guidelines for Secondary & Backyard Suites

Prepared by:

HRM

Planning & Development

2023



HALIFAX

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Introduction

HRM encourages property owners developing secondary and backyard suites to include accessibility features in their plans. HRM has many unique geographies and varied climate that will require context specific accessibility considerations.

Before your permit for a secondary or backyard suite is approved, a Development Officer and a Building Official will ensure that your plans meet the requirements of the relevant Land Use By-laws and Building Codes. The guidelines in this document are intended to encourage stronger universal design while also allowing for some flexibility as each property owner plans for their unique lot and potential tenants.

The guidelines listed below have been adapted from the Canadian Safety Association (CSA) [B651-18 guidelines](#) and the Rick Hansen Foundation's [Universal Design Guidelines](#).



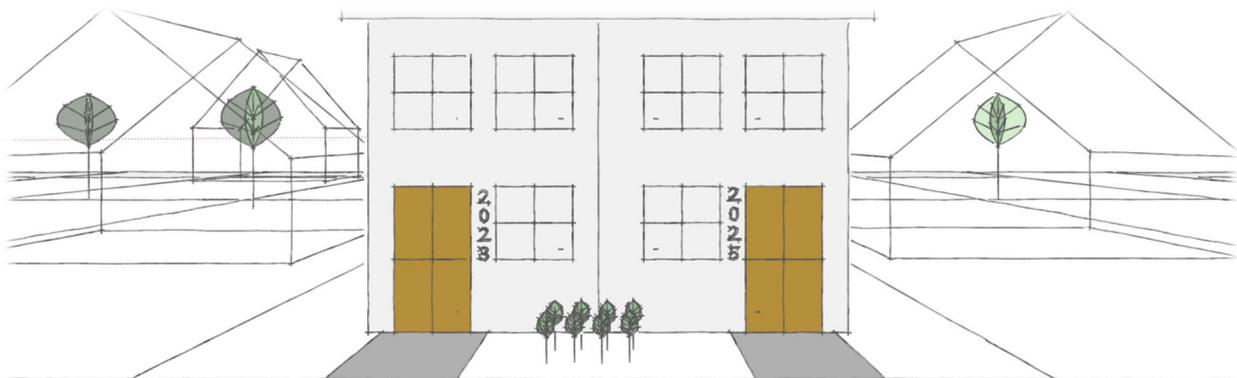
Entrances and Doors

Approach to Entrance

- Distinguish entrances to the suite from the rest of the building with a colour or architectural element.
- Ensure pedestrian pathways to the main entrance is accessible from parking, passenger drop-off or other arrival points.
- Pathway surface should be firm, stable, and slip resistant.
- Consider tactile direction indicators where approaches to building entrances include large open areas.
- Ensure the primary entrance of the suite includes accessible features outlined in these guidelines if multiple entrances are provided.
- Include clearly visible civic address or signage for approach to suite or site.
- Ensure there is a level landing at the entrance to the suite for people to wait, enter, and exit.
- Mount any included entrance operating mechanisms no higher than 1100 mm above the finished floor level with clear space in front of them.
- Ensure entrances are well-illuminated for safety after dark.

Entrance Door

- Clear opening door width should be no less than 850 mm for existing buildings and 1000 mm for new buildings.
- Wherever possible, the threshold should be flush with the external ground surface and internal floor finish.



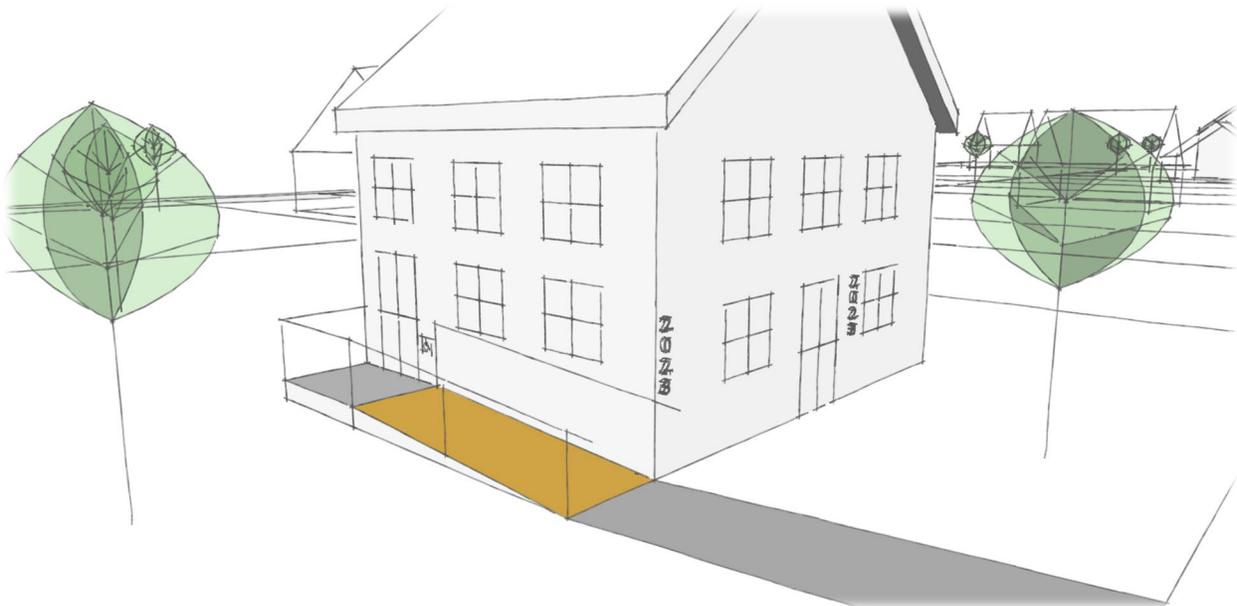
Ramps

When provided, ramps are required to meet the requirements of the Building Code. Complete details of the requirements are found in Section [3.8.3.5](#) (Ramps) of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations and include the following:

- A ramp located in a barrier-free path of travel at least 870 millimetres wide
- Slope does not exceed 1:12
- Include level landings at the top and bottom at least 1.5 by 1.5 metres
- Include intervals with level landings when the ramp is greater than 9 metres long
- Include handrails and guards that meet further requirements in the Building Code Regulations
- Provisions to ensure ramps and landings are hard, level and drain water easily

HRM also encourages provided ramps to include the following suggested design features:

- Ramp surface should be firm, stable, and slip resistant.
- Colour-contrasted and slip resistant strips at landings that extend the full width of the ramp to signal slope change.
- Ramps and landings should be well-illuminated.

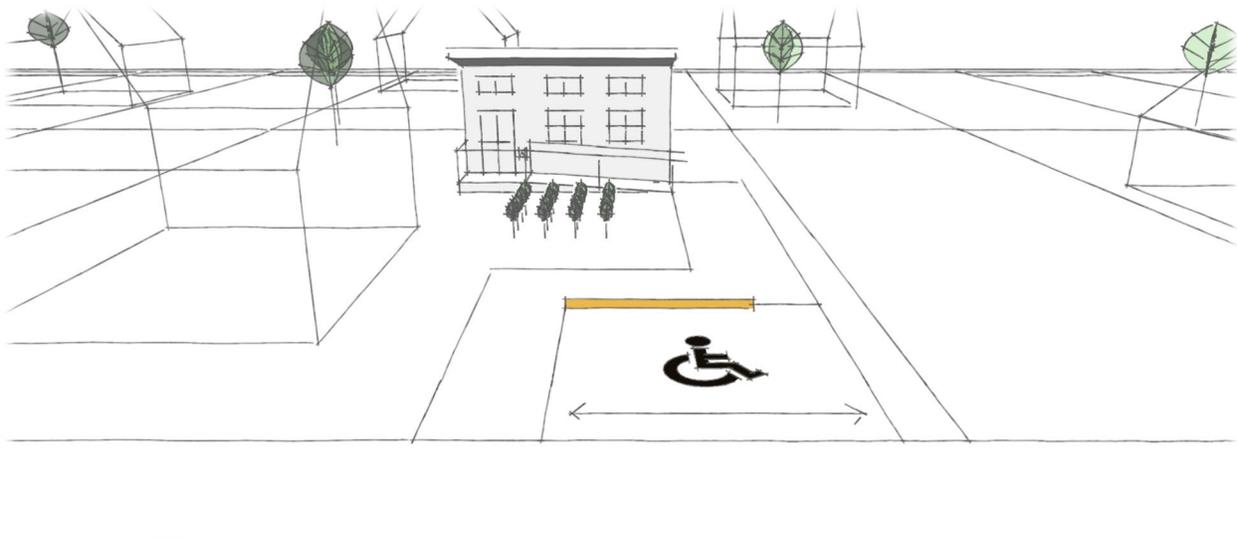


Parking

- Parking spaces provided should be at least 3.6 metres wide and include a curb, wheel stop or painted line to ensure a 0.90 metre pathway in front the vehicle.
- Ensure accessible parking spaces can be easily identified by providing directional signage to and vertical signage at the accessible parking space.
- Ensure the path of travel between the accessible parking spaces and the building entrance is safe and kept clear at all times.

Passenger Drop-off and Pick-up Zones

- Provide clearly designated passenger drop-off and pick-up zones for site users, by marking space with paint and installing signage. A dedicated curb ramp should be provided, if there is a level change.
- Provide seating and shelter at passenger drop-off/pick-up zones. Seating and shelter are important for seniors, people with mobility or vision disabilities as they often need a comfortable and weather protected place to wait.



Functional and Cognitive Accessibility

The design of secondary and backyard suites should incorporate the following measures to reduce barriers for tenants with functional and/or cognitive accessibility needs:

- The unit/space is not confusing or illogical.
- The architectural features are not overly repetitive.
- The unit/space is buffered from, or mitigates, excessive noise.
- Adequate lighting is provided to ensure the safe use of the unit/space.
- Good air quality is ensured.
- Information provided to the occupant of the unit/space is easy to read and understand.

Further Resources

If you are looking to include or consider further universal design elements with a specific need or tenant in mind, please visit the following resources:

Rick Hansen Foundation – Accessibility Resources

<https://www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/accessibility-resources>

The Universal Design Project

<https://universaldesign.org/>

Home Modification Canada

<https://www.homemods.ca/home-modifications/>

Canadian Standards Association – B651-18 Accessible Design for the Built Environment

<https://www.homemods.ca/home-modifications/>



**ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 24, 2022**

PRESENT: Andrew Taylor, Chair
Jacki Purcell, Vice Chair
Councillor Deagle Gammon
Elizabeth Doull
Michelle Mahoney
Nicole MacDonald
Jordan Waterbury

REGRETS: Councillor Paul Russell
Rachele Manett
Kristen Hemming

STAFF: Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisory, Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO
Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant
Catie Campbell, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. and adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 15 and October 4, 2022

MOVED by Councillor Deagle Gammon, seconded by Jacki Purcell

THAT the minutes of August 15 and October 4, 2022 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Jacki Purcell, seconded by Jordan Waterbury

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

Correspondence was received and circulated for item 9.1.1.

For a detailed list of correspondence received refer to the specific agenda item.

7.2 Petitions – None

7.3 Presentations – None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Accessibility Guidelines for Backyard and Secondary Suites Presentation

The following was before the Committee:

- Staff memorandum dated October 14, 2022
- Correspondence from Gerry Post
- Staff presentation dated October 24, 2022

Brandon Umpherville, Planner II, and Jill MacLellan, Principal Planner, Social Policy gave a presentation on Accessibility Guidelines for Backyard and Secondary Suites and responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

9.1.2 2022 Annual Town Hall Planning

The following was before the Committee:

- Staff memorandum dated October 20, 2022

Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant, and Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor, Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO gave an overview on 2022 Annual Town Hall planning and responded to questions of clarification from the Committee. Staff confirmed that the event would be taking place on November 17, 2022 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Paul O'Regan Hall, Halifax Central Library. Sherry and Myers shared that Atlantic Livestream was chosen as the livestreaming vendor, updates on the communications plan, that information about the event would be hosted on Halifax.ca, and that Committee members would receive digital materials to distribute to their networks.

Committee members shared their approval of the agenda, indicated their interest in supporting roles for the event, and agreed to hold a special meeting prior to the 2022 Town Hall.

9.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS – NONE

9.3 STAFF UPDATES – NONE

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – November 17, 2022

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Catie Campbell
Legislative Assistant

ATTACHMENT D

Number of Permits Issued

Plan Area	Backyard Suites	Secondary Suites	Both	Percentage
Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville	21	16	37	9%
Bedford	4	13	17	4%
Cole Harbour/Westphal		12	12	3%
Dartmouth	5	18	23	6%
Eastern Passage/Cow Bay	4	5	9	2%
Eastern Shore (West)	10	5	15	4%
Halifax	9	57	66	17%
Lawrencetown		1	1	0%
Musquodoboit Valley/Dutch Settlement	2	2	4	1%
North Preston, Lake Major, Lake Loon, Cherry Brook and East Preston	1	1	2	1%
Planning District 4	2	9	11	3%
Planning District 5	8	6	14	4%
Planning Districts 1 & 3	15	11	26	7%
Planning Districts 14 & 17	11	12	23	6%
Planning Districts 8 & 9	6	6	12	3%
Regional Centre	28	75	103	26%
Sackville	2	12	14	4%
Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville	1	8	9	2%
Total	129	269	398	