

# GARDEN SUITES

A New Housing Typology for Toronto

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LANE  SCAPE

150 King St. W, Suite 206, Toronto, ON M5H 3T9  
416 414 9944 | [info@lanescape.ca](mailto:info@lanescape.ca) | [www.lanescape.ca](http://www.lanescape.ca)

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**Landscape inc.**

150 King St. W, Suite 206

Toronto, ON M5H 3T9

416-414-9944

[info@landscape.ca](mailto:info@landscape.ca)

[www.landscape.ca](http://www.landscape.ca)

Craig Race, Andrew Sorbara, Alex Sharpe, Tony Cunha, and Sarah Tyl

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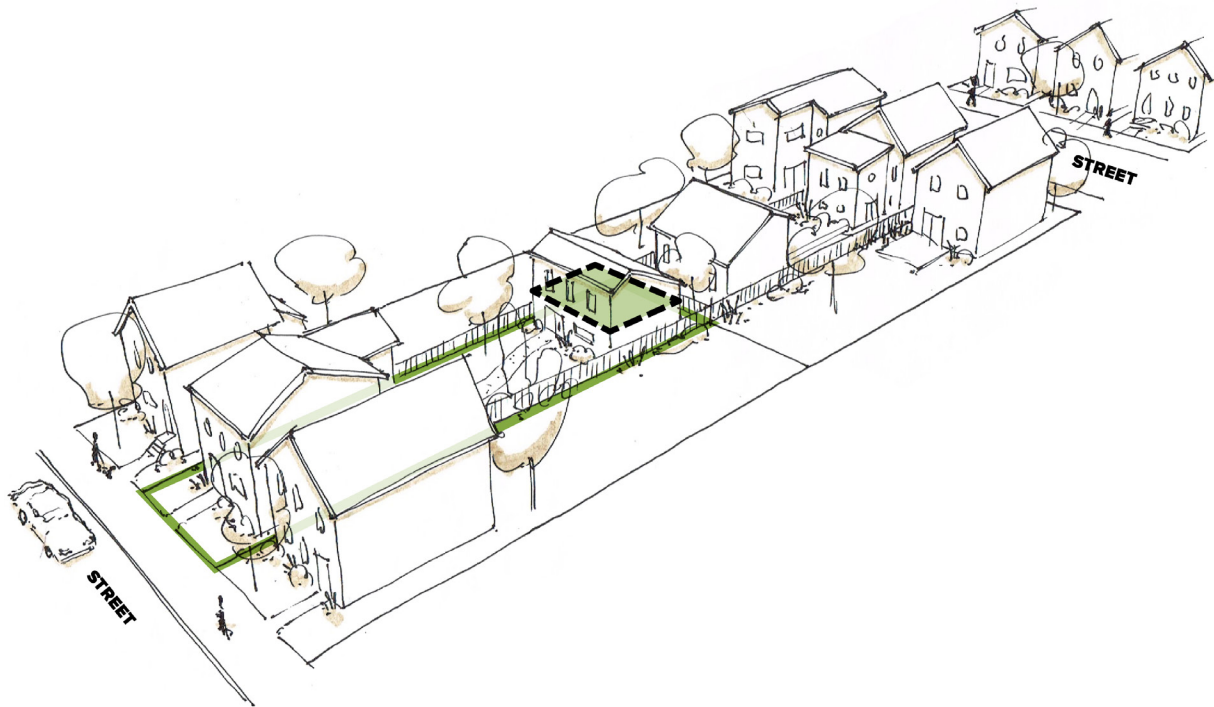
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**GARDEN SUITES, AS PROPOSED IN THIS REPORT, ARE  
DEFINED AS DETACHED SECONDARY SUITES THAT ARE:**

- Non-severable units that remain under the same ownership as the main house
- Intended for use as rental housing, for family members, and for aging-in-place
- Serviced (water, sewage, gas, electrical) via the principal residence or main street
- Recognized under Provincial legislation as a means of supporting intensification and increasing low-rise neighbourhood-oriented rental stock

Garden Suites are sometimes referred to by other names, such as “coach houses,” “tiny homes,” “backyard suites,” “accessory dwelling unit,” and even “granny flats.”

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide rationale for the introduction of garden suites in Toronto
- Address previous and current concerns around garden suites
- Summarize the feedback gathered from the Lanescape's public online survey
- Provide a set of guiding principles and recommended performance standards for garden suites

As the population of the Greater Toronto Area grows at a rate of almost 100,000 residents per year, we must think creatively about how to provide the range of housing options that will be required to accommodate this growing need and demand. There is no singular solution and accomplishing a lasting impact will require the consideration of a number of different investment strategies, policy tools and development approaches.

The goal of this report is to extend the current detached secondary suites permissions to properties across the city, including garden suites, as non-severable and ancillary to the principal dwelling. This definition has been adopted in over a dozen municipalities across Canada because it resolves many of the complications related to severing and servicing, similar to Toronto's policy on Laneway suites. Garden suites can be used to house family, aging relatives or dependents, as home office space, or rented out to provide a secondary source of income. They are regulated to be smaller than the principal dwelling, with all services including water, sewer, gas, and electricity are to be provided by the main house, not unlike a secondary basement or attic suite.

In light of recent provincial policy mandating permissive regulation for detached secondary suites, the lack of new rental supply, and concrete examples from cities across the country, it is time for Toronto to seriously consider extending the current policy to include this new building typology.

As a result, the goal of the survey was to develop a set of performance standards to guide the development of for garden suites within the City of Toronto.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

In order to implement a successful Garden Suite policy, the City of Toronto must create **a streamlined, straightforward, and affordable planning approvals process**, similar to laneway suites. The following actions are recommended as next steps:

### Develop an as-of-right planning framework

- As long as they meet the requirements and performance standards, a planning approvals framework should allow for garden suites to be developed **"as-of-right."** This framework should include a definition for a 'garden suite' and specific, associated zoning bylaw and municipal code provisions based on the performance standards.

### Exempt garden suites from development charges

- **Exempt detached secondary suites**, including garden suites, **from development charges** just as secondary suites are if they are the second unit on a property, or if they are part of a new build. If the garden suite represents a third unit or more, development fees could apply. Toronto's Development Charges Bylaw should be updated to reflect The Planning Act's definition of detached secondary suites, to exempt garden suites and other secondary dwellings from development charges.

### Implement garden suite policy citywide

- Apply Official Plan and zoning bylaw policies for garden suites to all 'residential properties' in the City of Toronto to ensure that **all neighbourhoods benefit from equal access to these policies** and that the policy is effective in creating rental housing supply city-wide.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When introducing a new building typology, we have the opportunity to address key issues of provincial policy and stakeholder concern. Although all current building code standards would apply to garden suites, due to their size and nature, garden suites offer a particular opportunity to reinforce standards or incentives for accessibility, affordability, safety, heritage, materiality, functionality, constructibility, and sustainability. **The following are the principles that have guided our approach to the consideration of garden suites.**

### Accessibility

With over 25% of Ontario's population expected to reach their senior years by 2041<sup>2</sup> and aging in place recognized as the preferred and most affordable means of care<sup>3</sup>, garden suites are an ideal opportunity for multigenerational living and accessible care for dependents.

### Affordability

As garden suites correspond with local and provincial mandates to address gentle forms of intensification and rental housing, it is critical for the approvals process to be efficient, predictable, and affordable. To achieve this, an as-of-right permitting process like what is presently in place for houses must be implemented to provide simplicity for most homeowners who have little experience developing houses. In addition, there should be no development charges or parks levies imposed on garden suites similar to the approaches employed when creating other ancillary units in Toronto.

### Safety

As experienced with laneway suites and other secondary suites, regulating rental suites ensures that they are built to safety standards as it is important to acknowledge the Ontario Building Code as it pertains to unique accessory dwelling units.

### Heritage

When located in a heritage district, heritage requirements should still apply to the garden suite in terms of required materials and building shape.

### Materiality

Materials that are in character with the neighborhood context are encouraged. High quality and durable materials that seamlessly integrate with the surrounding context and main residence.

### Constructability

Creating a zoning envelope that can accommodate relatively thick, energy-efficient building assemblies will improve the usability of these performance standards. With increasing thicknesses of insulation being required by the Ontario Building Code, walls, floors, and roofs will only get thicker as time goes on. This must be accounted for in determining permitted heights and footprints.

### Sustainability

Our recommended performance standards have considerations for green roofs, photovoltaic panels, and efficient building envelopes. As sustainability standards change throughout time, provisions should be included to ensure garden suites remain able to perform to superior energy efficient performance standards.

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ministry of Finance (2016). Ontario Population Projections Update, 2015-2041.

<sup>3</sup> CARP (2008). Impacts of the Aging of the Canadian Population on Housing and Communities. Canadian Association of Retired Persons. <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/65913.pdf>

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***What are Garden Suites?***

A ‘garden suite’ is a detached, accessory dwelling unit located in the rear yard of a detached house, semi-detached house, townhouse or rowhouse. They are intended to be a modest-scale separate housing unit that integrates sensitively within existing neighbourhoods. Garden suites would effectively extend the current permissions for laneway suites to residential properties that do not benefit from frontage on a public laneway and fulfill provincial housing policy that requires improved housing flexibility for homeowners and families.

### ***Evolution of Toronto’s Policy Direction***

The importance of detached secondary suites and low-rise infill to support intensification has been recognized by the Government of Ontario. In 2011, the Province’s *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act* amended the Planning Act to enhance land use planning tools to support the development of secondary suites in municipalities across the province. Municipalities were mandated to create and implement Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw policies to support the development of secondary suites and detached secondary suites, including garden suites.

The City of Toronto is currently looking into a policy for ‘garden suites’ on residential properties in neighbourhoods across the city. This would contribute to the *Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON)* work program with the initiative to expand housing supply and support secondary dwellings and garden suites for alternative housing. The City of Toronto has had great success with laneway suites beginning in June 2018. Since then, the policy has evolved to allow rental potential for homeowners and expanding the Zoning bylaws to permit more laneway suites across the city. Laneway suites have proven their potential within the city and it is now time to re-focus our efforts and introduce Garden suites within Toronto’s urban fabric, like other jurisdictions across Canada and the United States.

Landscape took the initiative to help the city develop its laneway suite policy and now we are turning our attention to garden suites. We created a survey to gather public feedback and help illustrate how to best introduce garden suites to Toronto.

## PRECEDENTS FROM OTHER JURISDICTIONS

As a part of the development of our Guiding Principles outlined in this report, we reviewed the guidelines and regulations of other municipalities in Canada and the United States that have approved planning frameworks for secondary dwellings. This review indicated key issues and important considerations in other jurisdictions to best indicate how Garden Suites should be integrated within Toronto's existing housing infrastructure.



Chicago Coach House

Photo credit: <https://www.chicagomag.com/real-estate/december-2018/five-coach-houses-you-can-live-in/>



Vancouver Coach House

Photo credit: <https://lornegoldman.com/coach-houses-vancouver>



Edmonton Garden Suite

Photo credit: <https://www.deviatedesign.ca/blog/secondary-suite-investment>

### Maximum Size / Setbacks

- Common regulations for detached secondary suites, like laneway suites, specify that the ancillary unit be smaller than the principal residence (specifications across Canadian Municipalities range from 40-80% of the area of the main house).<sup>1</sup>
- Other Municipalities have had success with mandating setbacks and limits to overall square footage, to ensure garden suites maintain an appropriate scale.
- Restricting Garden Suites to a maximum of one unit per lot.

### Emergency Access

- Our recommended performance standards require an access with a min. width of 0.9m of unobstructed access be maintained through the principal yard to the main street so that emergency services can reach the unit from the street front.
- For unique properties such as corner lots where secondary street access is available, the policy should mimic laneway suite requirements to ensure there is adequate emergency access
- Garden suites can use the main home's address with a prefix 'R' for 'rear' so mail, waste disposal, and emergency access can all be accommodated and easily located via the principal residence.

### Loss of Green Space

- Minimizing the footprint of garden suites can manage this concern to great extent.
- Many municipalities have addressed this through guidelines encouraging green roofs, requiring that storm water be managed on site, and through tree protection policies.
- Vancouver and Ottawa both have such tree protection policies in place and can relax other guidelines at the discretion of the planner if required to salvage a mature tree.

### Parking Requirements

- The City of Toronto does not require an additional parking space for secondary basement, attic suites and laneway suites, this should extend to garden suites.
- Ottawa conducted a minimum parking standard study and determined that it was unnecessary to require parking provision for coach houses. Victoria and Portland have also have this approach to parking for secondary dwellings.
- Calgary requires a minimum of one additional parking space with specific size requirements.
- Vancouver also requires a parking space but it is to be to remain uncovered.

### Height, Shadowing, Privacy and Overlook

- Screening, placement and transparency of windows, orientation of dormers, height and pitches of roofs can all be regulated to maintain maximum privacy and minimum overlook and shadowing.
- Vancouver expressly states that their policy is intended to address both solar access and perceived scale from adjacent neighbours.
- Calgary also requires the backyard suite to have a sloped roof next to a neighbouring property to maintain privacy and minimize shadows.

1

See Appendix B for Municipal Detached Secondary Suite Guideline Comparison of 10 cities.



<b>GARDEN SUITE POLICIES IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Ottawa</b> <i>Garden Suites / Coach Houses</i>	<b>Calgary</b> <i>Backyard Suites</i>	<b>Portland</b> <i>Accessory Dwelling Units</i>
<b>Permitted building types</b>	Detached Dwelling, linked-detached dwelling or semi-detached dwelling	Detached Dwelling	Detached Dwelling
<b>Regulated by neighbourhood or city-wide?</b>	A garden suite is only permitted where a site-specific, temporary zoning bylaw allows one	Permitted in 4 central wards, Discretionary	As-of-Right where single detached homes are permitted
<b>Servicing</b>	Main residence	--	--
<b>Severances</b>	No	No	No
<b>Units per lot</b>	1	1	1
<b>Minimum Lot Width</b>	No Minimum	30 ft	Min. 36ft standard development
<b>Maximum Total Built Coverage</b>	35% of the area of the year yard	45% including garage and accessory buildings	Accessory building may cover no more than 15% of the lot area
<b>Maximum Allowable Square Footage</b>	829 sq.ft	810 sq.ft	1,100 sq.ft
<b>Maximum Size Compared to Main Residence</b>	65% of the gross floor area of the principal building on the lot	No Maximum	Maximum 75% of the principal residence
<b>Minimum Side Setback</b>	Same as for principal building	3.9 ft	--
<b>Minimum Rear Setback</b>	7.5 ft	4.9 ft	--
<b>Maximum Height</b>	15 ft	24 ft - sloping down to a lower height next to a neighbouring property	20 ft or 15 ft if within setback
<b>Maximum Number of Storeys</b>	1 storey	1 storey	2 storey
<b>Required Parking</b>	None	1 (or 2 in some neighbourhoods)	No additional parking required
<b>Basements</b>	Yes	--	--



Ottawa Coach House  
Photo credit: <https://www.upfrontottawa.com/coach-houses-in-ottawa/>



Calgary Backyard Suite  
Photo credit: <https://www.sprawlcalgary.com/backyard-suites-get-fresh-boost-calgary>



Portland Accessory Dwelling Unit  
Photo credit: <https://www.propelstudio.com/the-wedge-adu-portland-or>

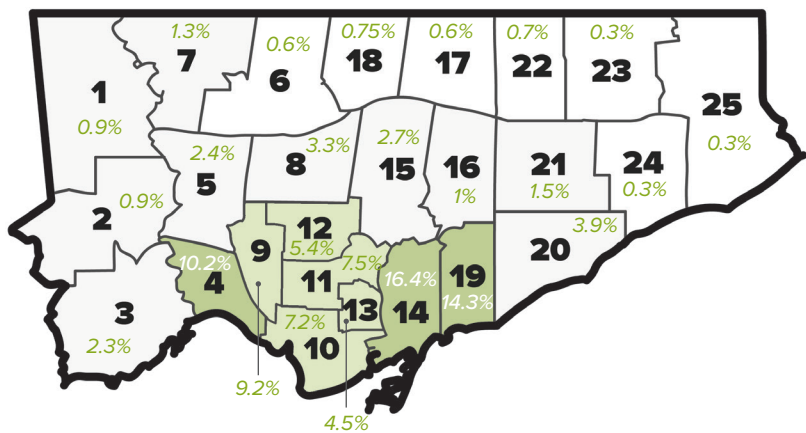
## **LANESCAPE'S ONLINE GARDEN SUITES SURVEY**

Landscape helped gather initial public input on laneway suites through an online survey. The thousands of responses that were received helped to inform the policies that are currently in place. We are now turning our attention to garden suites and engaging input from citizens around the city once again. The goal of this survey was to develop a vision in which garden suites would suit the social and physical fabric of Toronto and make a positive and lasting impact on our city. We collected public feedback on critical issues related to garden suites, and the results established the foundation of our guiding principles.

The survey opened January 28, 2021 and closed on April 22, 2021 with over 900 responses received. With 93% of respondents expressing a desire for garden suites to be permitted in their neighbourhood, responses were, in general, positive and suggested that any concerns could be addressed through thoughtful and sensitive policy.

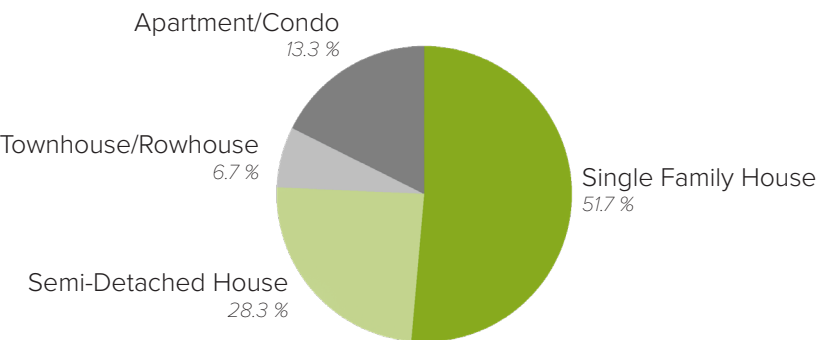
ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

1. WHICH WARD DO YOU LIVE IN?



Not surprisingly, we saw very high engagement from Torontonians in wards just outside of downtown. These are predominantly residential neighbourhoods, well suited to for the addition of garden suites.

2. WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DWELLING TYPE?



The majority of respondents seem to live in either a Single Family House or a Semi-Detached House.

3. WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE GARDEN SUITES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?	
Yes	93.4%
No	6.6%

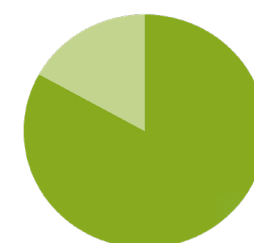
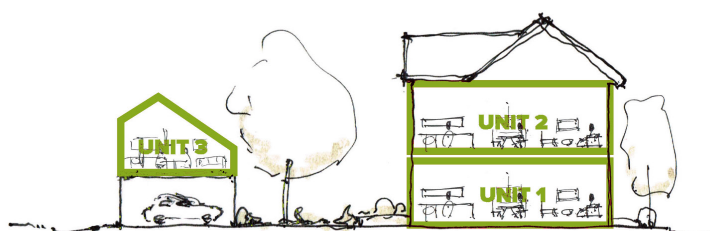
The response to this survey was very positive. The clear majority of respondents were eager to replicate the success other cities have had with Garden Suite housing.

4. IN WHAT REGIONS OF THE CITY DO YOU THINK GARDEN SUITES ARE MOST APPROPRIATE?	
North York	1.6%
Etobicoke-York	1.2%
Scarborough	1.5%
Toronto & East York	12.3%
All of the above.	83.4%



This is appropriate, similar to Laneway Suites, the Garden Suite policy should apply to all regions of the city.

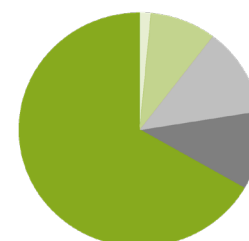
5. IF THE MAIN HOUSE CONTAINS MULTIPLE UNITS, SHOULD A GARDEN SUITE STILL BE PERMITTED?	
Yes	76.8%
No	23.2%



Yes  
No

Toronto and other municipalities have had great success where laneway suites are permitted to exist on the same lot as a multi-unit house. Extending this to Garden Suites ensures properties that already have a basement apartment can continue to contribute to a community's rental stock.

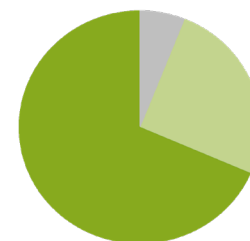
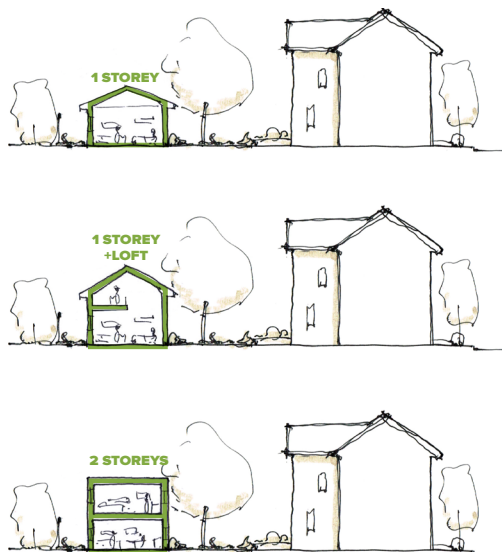
6. WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAX SIZE OF A GARDEN SUITE?	
Bachelor	2.5%
1 Bedroom	10.9%
2 Bedroom	10.4%
3 Bedroom	8.2%
Depends on the property & neighbourhood	67.9%



Depending on Property  
1 Bedroom  
2 Bedroom  
3 Bedroom  
Bachelor

It is important that solutions for a variety of housing typologies and lot configurations are created so there is equal access to this new housing solution.

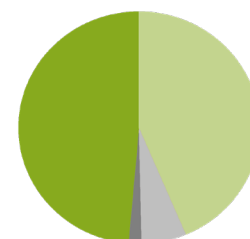
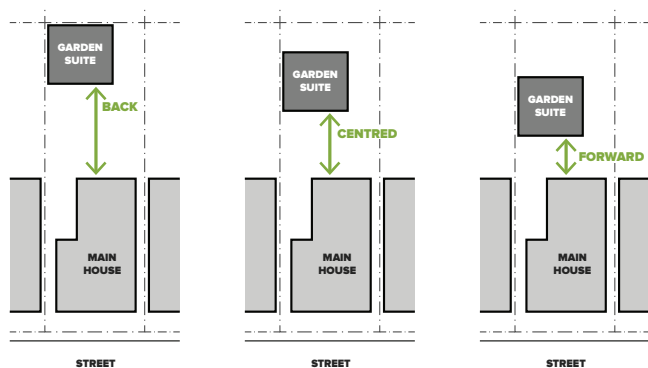
7. WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF A GARDEN SUITE?	
1 storey	7.9%
1 storey + partial loft	26.1%
2 storey	66%



- 2 storey
- 1 storey + partial loft
- 1 storey

Our results show there was a preference for 2 storeys. Most municipalities limit height to 1 or 1.5 storeys. This ensures the Garden suite is appropriately scaled, relative to the main house, and remains sensitive to neighbours.

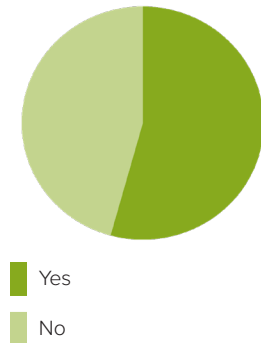
8. WHERE ON A LOT SHOULD A GARDEN SUITE BE SITUATED?	
As far back as possible	44.8%
Centred	4.9%
As far forward as possible	1.8%
It should be the homeowner's choice	48.5%



- Homeowner's choice
- As far back as possible
- Centred
- As far forward as possible

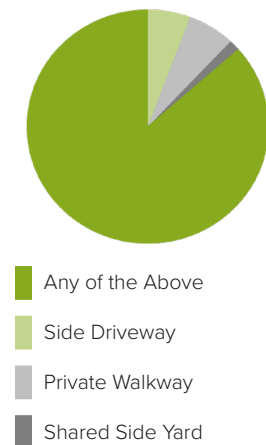
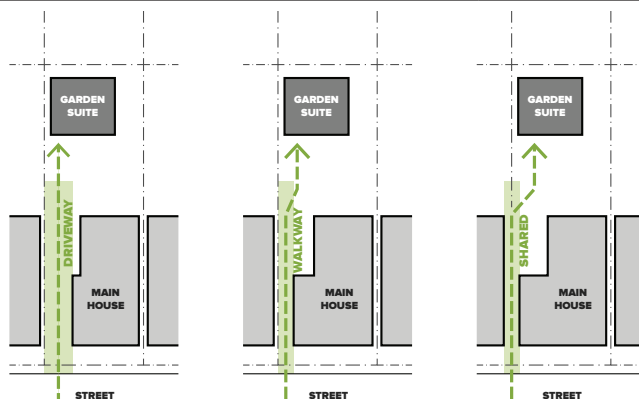
The response to this question demonstrates that there should be some choice for the homeowner in determining the location on the lot, however there is a clear preference for garden suites to be located to the rear of the property.

10. SHOULD A GARDEN SUITE HAVE ANGULAR PLANES FROM ADJACENT PROPERTY BOUNDARIES?	
Yes	57%
No	43%



Survey responses are nearly split on the requirement of an angular plane. This indicates that shadow and massing impacts on neighbours are important, but an angular plane is not the only solution to consider.

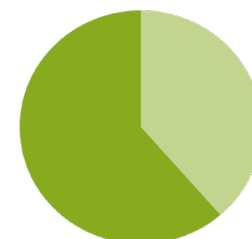
9. HOW SHOULD A GARDEN SUITE BE ACCESSED?	
Side driveway	6.2%
Private walkway	5.6%
Shared side yard	1.6%
Any of the above	86.6%



This is appropriate. As long as the garden suite has sufficient emergency access and satisfies life safety requirements, any of the above access routes should qualify.

12. SHOULD GARDEN SUITES HAVE THEIR OWN DEDICATED, PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACE?	
Yes	37.4%
No	62.6%

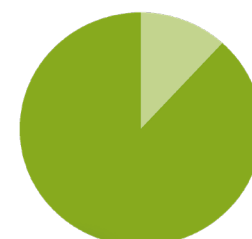
There is a clear preference for green space to remain shared by the principal residence and the garden suite.



No  
Yes

13. SHOULD GARDEN SUITES REQUIRE ADDITIONAL PARKING?	
Yes	11.6%
No	88.4%

Respondents did not feel that additional parking should be required for garden suites.



No  
Yes

14. LIST OF KEY CONSIDERATIONS SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BELIEVED SHOULD BE CONSIDERED MOST PROMINENTLY IN GARDEN SUITE DESIGN:	
Sensitive Scale and Density	12.3%
Parking	4.1%
Sensitive to Neighbour Privacy, Overlook, and Shadowing	30.5%
Affordability	11.4%
Neighbourhood Character	14.3%
Emergency Services Access	4.5%
Sustainability, Green space, and Tree Protection	22.7%

34% of respondents did not respond to this question.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This survey provided us with valuable insight on how the public envisions garden suites within the City of Toronto. These responses helped us develop a series of recommended performance standards to best guide the design garden suites in Toronto. There were two issues that were most prominent.

**Privacy** is a major concern. This concern for privacy emerged not only for the residents of the garden suites but also between the neighbouring properties. The survey responses suggest that garden suite proposals should consider their effects on surrounding properties. Particular attention should be paid towards shadowing and sight lines.

**Sustainability and tree preservation** was also a prominent topic. It is clearly important to incorporate sustainable features into the design of garden suites such as green roofs and other environmentally conscious design techniques to minimize their ecological footprint. Most respondents were also opposed to the removal of any existing mature tree and concerned with maintaining as much green space as possible.

The survey results also demonstrated the desire for garden suites to be compatible with existing neighbourhoods in terms of scale and aesthetics. Neighbourhoods Policy 5 of the City of Toronto's Official Plan speaks to a set of development criteria which ensures that new development in neighbourhoods respects and reinforces the existing physical character of the community. Therefore, where secondary suites in ancillary structures already exist and that dwelling type is part of the existing physical character of the neighbourhood, the Official Plan provides for the opportunity to consider additional housing in that form. As new development in neighbourhoods is based on prevailing character, and garden suites are a new building typology, the City should consider amending the Official Plan to facilitate the broad implementation of a garden suites typology, as well as amendments to the Zoning Bylaw which would provide a set of performance standards for garden suites.

Overall, we have seen considerable success with laneway suites in Toronto and the survey reveals an overwhelmingly positive response to introducing a Garden suites in the city.



## **RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The guiding principles and performance standards proposed in this section were developed based on feedback received from our public survey, our experience with the design of laneway suites, as well as a thorough review of existing detached secondary suite policies in municipalities across Canada and the United States. They define the design and functional requirements for garden suites in Toronto that optimize flexibility and opportunity for the homeowner while remaining thoughtful and sensitive, and of a scale that is well-suited to the established neighbourhoods. Garden suites built within these defined parameters are proposed to receive planning approval as-of-right, like the approvals process currently in place for other secondary dwellings.

## RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

### General

- Permitted Building Types
  - Garden suites are permitted on all residentially zoned lots (R, RD, RS, RT, RM)
  - They are not permitted in mixed MCR or CR zones
- Units per lot
  - A garden suite is permitted to be a third unit on a lot in all R-zones
  - Where fourplexes are allowed, the garden suite may be the fourth unit
  - Where fiveplexes are allowed, the garden suite may be the fifth unit
- Only one ancillary structure permitted in the rear yard of a property
  - A detached garage and garden suite can be combined in a single structure where a garage is permitted

Our survey results demonstrate the desire to make garden suites accessible to a wide range of properties across Toronto.

### Access Requirements

- The lot must have adequate emergency service access
  - A minimum of 0.9m wide clear path of travel must be accommodated from the principal entrance of the garden suite to a street (either through a side yard, which can be shared between properties)

Our survey suggests that respondents were concerned with emergency service access. Based on the current laneway suite policy, a 0.9m unobstructed pathway will provide adequate access to the Garden suite. However, it is important to note that a 0.9m walkway will present challenges in the construction of a project (delivering materials to site, equipment access, etc.)

### Landscaping / Green Space

- On a property with a lot width of 6.0 metres or less, a minimum of 60 percent of the area between the rear main wall of the principal residential building and the front main wall of the ancillary building containing a garden suite must be soft landscaping
- On a property with a lot width of more than 6.0 metres, a minimum of 85 percent of the area between the rear main wall of the residential building and the front main wall of the ancillary building containing a laneway suite must be soft landscaping

The survey results also confirm that respondents are concerned with the preservation of green space. The garden suite policy should mimic the laneway suite policy in regards to landscaping, while also considering the use of green roofs to offset this requirement.

### Parking

- No additional parking required
- 2 Bicycle Parking Spaces required

83% of our survey respondents believed that additional parking was not necessary. Currently, parking requirements are associated with the main residence. Parking requirements imposed on the lot should remain unaltered and unaffected by garden suites.

### **Setbacks and Dimensions**

- Minimum Rear Yard Separation
  - No less than 5.0 metres from a residential building on the same lot
- Rear Lot Line Setback
  - No less than 0.9 meters from the rear property line to the rear wall of the garden suite
  - This area must be accessible via walkway or through the garden suite
- Side Lot Line Setback
  - No less than 0.9 meters from one shared property line
  - No less than 0.15 meters from the other shared property line
- In the event of a corner lot where secondary street frontage is available, the policy should mimic the laneway suite setback requirements
- Maximum Footprint of a Garden Suite
  - 10.0 metres by 10.0 metres

The current laneway suites policy mandates a minimum rear yard separation for a single storey suite of 4.0 metres in height or less to be 5.0 metres. The same should apply to garden suites. Mandating a maximum 10 metre x 10 metre footprint will keep the garden suite at an appropriate scale, while still accommodating for a variety of housing typologies and lot configurations that allows equal access to this new housing solution.

### **Maximum Height**

- Flat Roof
  - The building must not exceed 4.0 metres in height
- Pitched Roof
  - The midpoint of the slope must be no more than 4.0 metres in height

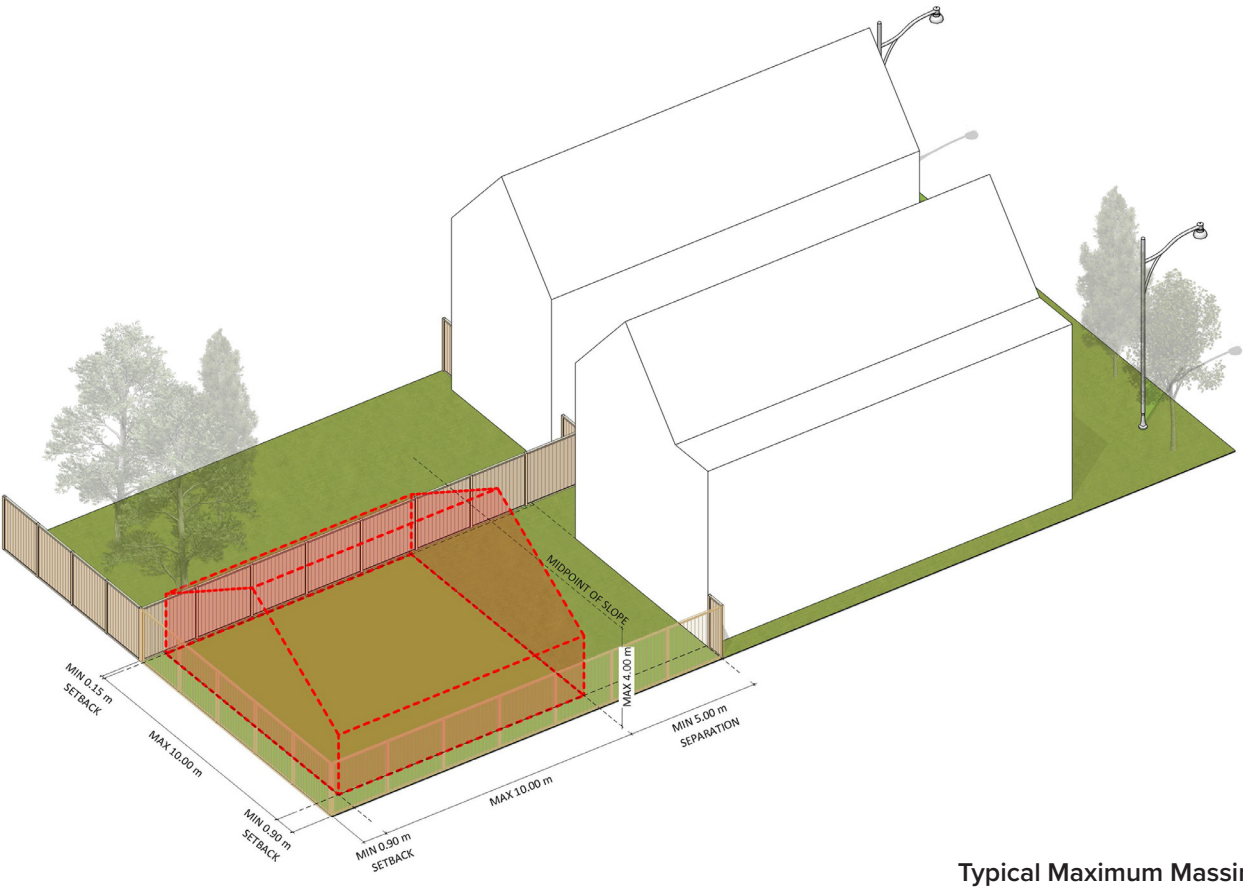
Our survey results show that 68% of respondents are supportive of a two-storey laneway suite. However, the survey also demonstrates that respondents are concerned with privacy and the suite's imposition on neighbouring lots. As a result, mandating the main wall height to a maximum of 4.0 metres will allow for a 1-storey suite or a 1.5-storey suite if the ground floor is partially sunken.

The introduction of a pitched roof with the midpoint of the slope to be a maximum of 4.0 metres will allow homeowners to achieve an increased height within the garden suite while minimizing shadow and overlook on neighbouring properties.

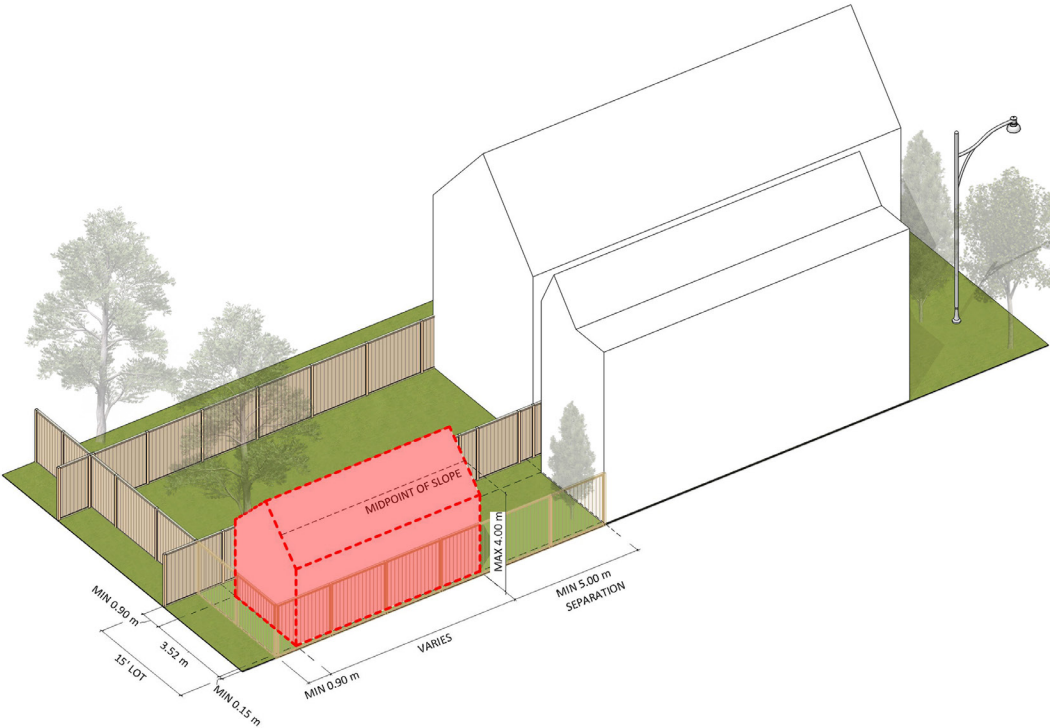
### **Other Requirements**

- All other requirements are to follow the laneway suite bylaws such as;
  - Floor Area relative to the principal residence
  - Decks, Platforms, Amenities, and Permitted Encroachments
  - Maximum Lot Coverage

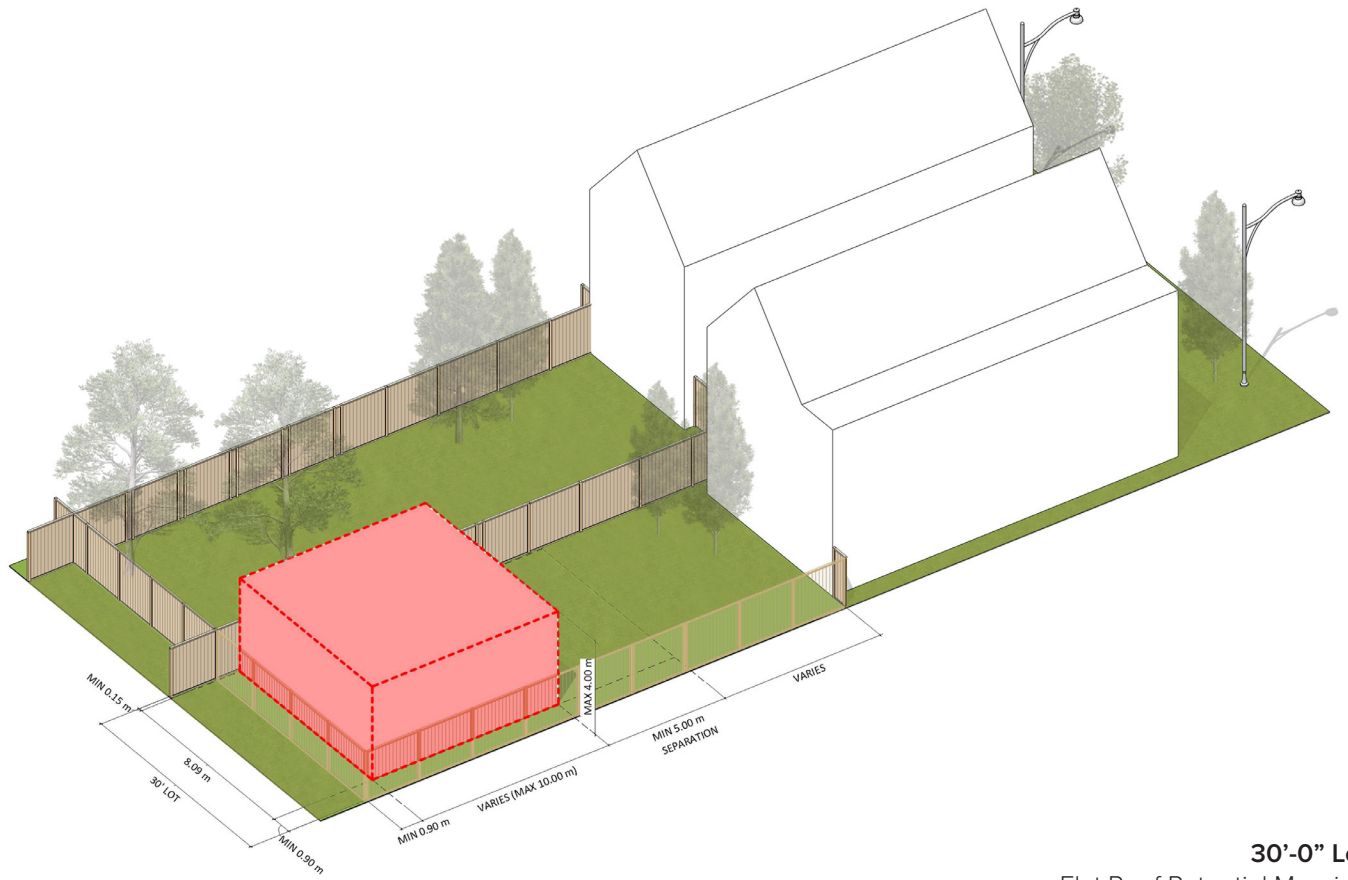
RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ILLUSTRATED



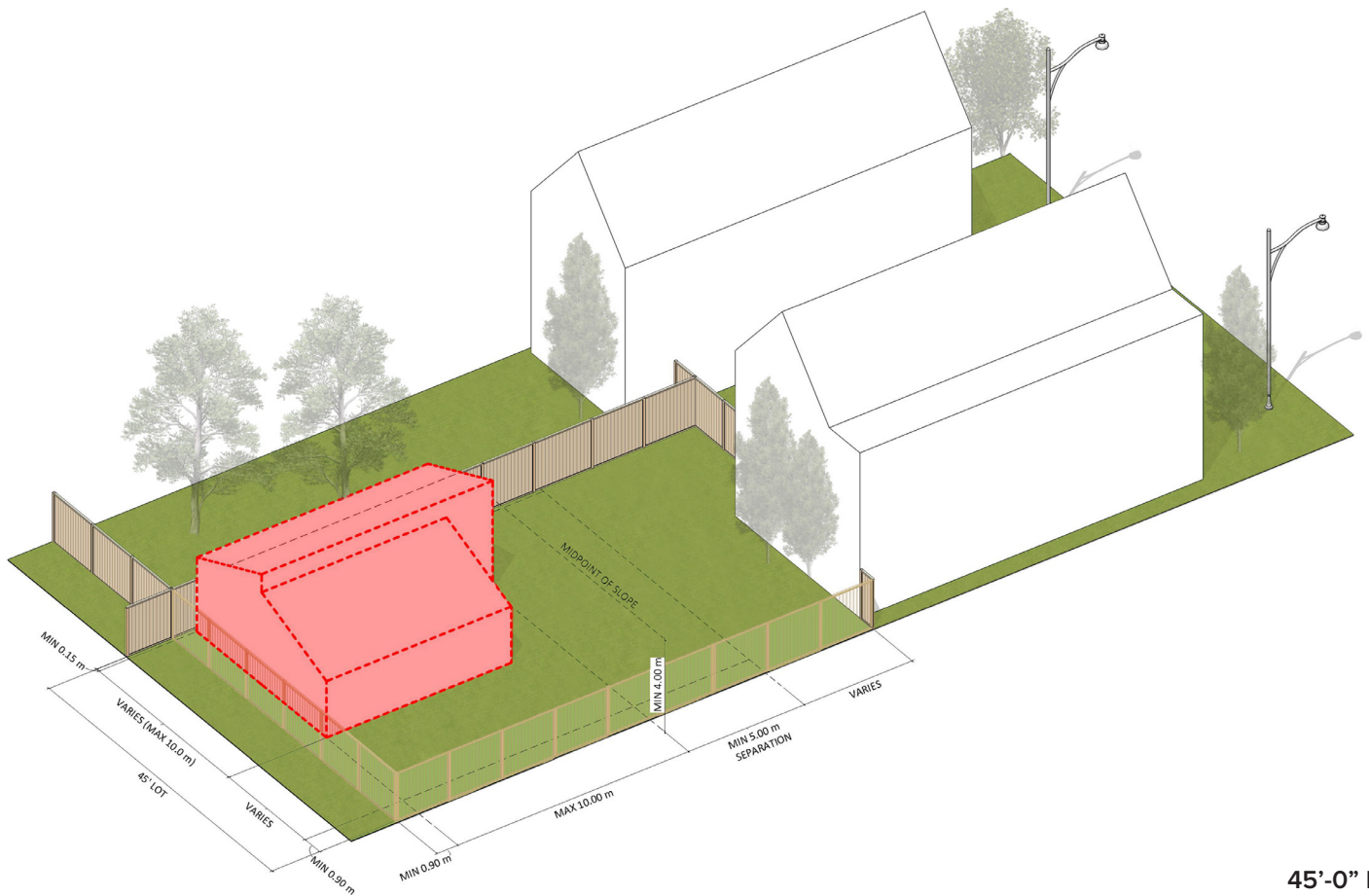
Typical Maximum Massing



15'-0" Lot  
Pitched Roof Potential Massing



**30'-0" Lot**  
Flat Roof Potential Massing



**45'-0" Lot**  
Potential Massing

## **CONCLUSION**

Recognizing the potential of garden suites is key to adding much needed housing stock within Toronto. This new building typology can be integrated within the existing housing infrastructure of the city. Similar to laneway suites, these secondary dwellings offer potential rental income, an opportunity for multi-generational living, and affordable housing. Most generally, they provide homeowners the ability to extend their living area by tapping into previously unused space in their properties.

A garden suite policy presents a city-wide strategy for secondary dwelling-based development that offers predictability for permit applicants and the potential to respond to rental housing supply needs at the neighbourhood scale.

The Performance Standards provide the basis of an implementation strategy that has been informed by public consultation and experience with the current laneway suite policies.

Landscape looks forward to continuing to work with our partners both inside and outside of City Hall to support this initiative and move it forward.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to acknowledge our Landscape community who continue to support our advocacy initiatives and the citizens of Toronto who are eager to contribute to these new and innovative housing typologies within our city.

## **APPENDIX A – ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

### **Lanescape**

Lanescape is a group of planning, design, and development entrepreneurs who have long considered laneway development to be a potential resource and opportunity for the City of Toronto to thoughtfully improve housing options in existing residential neighbourhoods.

Since 2014, Lanescape has been working with the City of Toronto to establish thoughtful, positive, and sustainable laneway suite guidelines. Our principals have successfully navigated the current planning and approvals process to obtain authorization for laneway suites across Toronto, including a laneway home that now serves as the primary residence of one of the principals and his family.

That experience of seeking approvals through the current, inefficient, expensive, and uncertain approvals process acts as the inspiration for us to create an equitable, simple process that will make laneway suites accessible to all Torontonians.

[www.lanescape.ca](http://www.lanescape.ca)



# Appendix B- Municipal Detached Secondary Suite Guidelines Comparison

--- = Data not found Adapted from 'Backyards: Way Forward. Assessing the potential for detached secondary suites in Toronto.' Kelsey Carriere, 2017.

## Policy Context

	Vancouver	Victoria	Edmonton	Calgary	Regina	Saskatoon	Ottawa	Moncton	Austin	Portland
Guiding Document	Laneway Housing How-to Guide	The Garden Suite Policy	Edmonton Zoning Bylaw 12800 Garage and Garden Suites	Secondary Suites and Backyards Suites	Laneway and Garden Suites Guidelines for Pilot Projects	Design Guidelines for Garden and Garage Suites - Neighbourhood Infill Development Strategy	How to Plan Your Coach House in Ottawa	Garden Suites By-law	Secondary apartment infill option	Accessory Structure Zoning Code Update
Year established	2009 (amended 2013)	2011	2007 (amended 2009)	2007	2016	2014	2016	1998	2001	1991 (amended 2016)
Policy Context	Addressing a crisis in affordable housing	---	Introduced along with Secondary Suites to increase affordable housing stock.	Introduced along with Secondary Suites to increase affordable housing stock.	Increase supply of rental and affordable housing and direct 30% of future growth through infill	Introduced as part of residential infill development strategy	Addressing affordable housing in suit with Provincial Policy	Originally permitted temporary, portable structures. Revised, 2014 for affordable housing	Introduced to combat rising housing costs, and ensure more sustainable patterns of growth	To ensure accessory structures do not become the predominant element on site
Permitting	As-of-right for simple one story. Taller DSS or outside of guidelines is discretionary	Discretionary – requires re-zoning	Discretionary	Permitted in four central Wards  Discretionary elsewhere	In Phase 2 of pilot project	Administratively discretionary	As-of-right for one simple story. Two stories involves committee of adjustment approval	Discretionary “change in use”	As-of-right where Secondary Apartment Infill Tool has been adopted	As-of-right city-wide
Public Consultation and evaluation	On- going consultation and evaluation between 2009 and 2013 informed program revisions	---	Initial stakeholder consultation, “What we heard report,” A Garage and Garden Suite Buildability Engagement Session to address issues raised in previous consultations	In conjunction with secondary suites consultation. 5 focus groups, telephone public opinion survey	Online Survey, Community advisory committee, online feedback. Consultation 1 - considering infill options, Consultation 2 - reviewing guiding principles and guidelines	2 public meetings, 125 attendance, council bus tour of exiting DSS, external working group	354 Comments received over 1 month comment period on Guiding Principles and Draft Recommendations. Comments informed final bylaw and guide.	Resident feedback was against city-wide regulations. DADUs allowed in one of the two single-unit zones, the two-unit dwelling zone, and the urban dwelling zone.	Informed through many non-profit housing advocacy partnerships	Focus group, draft public review, commission review, public hearing. Updated zoning based on public feedback.



Policy Context	Vancouver	Victoria	Edmonton	Calgary	Regina	Saskatoon	Ottawa	Moncton	Austin	Portland
DADUs allowed in backyards?	Laneways only	Only in backyards (laneways are not prominent)	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards	Laneways and backyards
Regulated by neighbourhood, or city-wide?	Permitted in two main residential zones with lanes	Permitted in all single and two-family dwelling zones	Permitted in all 4 main residential zones. Infill Design Guidelines apply to “Mature Neighbourhoods” in block-specific locations <sup>1</sup>	Permitted in 4 central Wards, Discretionary elsewhere	On pilot project sites, expansion city-wide pending evaluation. 3 distinct property types	All properties with detached single family homes	Permitted in all single and two-family zones. Row houses permitted if a corner lot or serviced by a lane	Permitted within some single-unit, and all two-unit, and urban dwelling zones	As-of-right where Secondary Apartment Infill Tool has been adopted	As-of-right where single detached homes are permitted
Servicing	---	---	---	---	From principle residence	---	From principle residence <sup>2</sup>	---	---	---
Severances	Severances not permitted	---	---	Severances not permitted	Severances not permitted	Severances not permitted	Severances not permitted	---	Severances not permitted	Severances not permitted
Addressing	---	Garden suite will have a unique address	---	---	Same as main house, L for ‘lane’ or R for ‘rear’	---	Garden suite will have a unique address	---	---	---
Permitted Uses	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Long or short term rental	Short term rental NOT permitted	Long or short term rental, home business, no parking.
Incentives or Fees	<b>\$1,150</b> simple one story, <b>\$1760</b> all other cases	\$1,200 base fee \$400 notice fee \$1,400 public hearing = <b>\$3,000</b>	Cornerstones Grant, up to \$20,000 or 50%	City has waived permit application fees	Fee exemption for secondary suites and laneway / garden suite pilot	<b>\$1,950 application fee</b> , 100% rebate on building and plumbing permit fees	Exempt from development fees except public transit charges	“change in use” as well as a building permit fees, no registration fees	Sliding scale of permit fee rebate based on percentage of affordable units	Waiver of System Development Charges = \$8,000 to \$13,000 USD savings per unit
Units to date	As of July 2016, 2,329 permits issued to construct laneway homes	From 2011-2014, 3 built, 12 applications pending	2 garden suites, 64 garage suites	458 secondary suites from 2012 - 2015 Backyard suites not distinguished.	31 purpose-built suites in new developments- Applications in for 8 in established neighbour-hoods.	since 2014, 15 approved, 8 under construction	First project currently breaking ground	---	5 as of September 2016	From 2000-2016 2,200 permits issued

1. Garage and Garden Suites in Edmonton are permitted in the following locations: on corner lots throughout the neighbourhood, on lots fronting onto a service road, on lots backing onto a lane adjacent to an arterial road that is separated from the lane by a landscaped boulevard, on lots abutting or separated by a laneway from sites zoned for Row Housing, Apartments, Community Services or Public Parks.

2. In Ottawa, coach houses are also permitted on rural or village lots over .8 hectares in size and must share either water or wastewater services with the main house, subject to Site Control Plan

Lot Guidelines	Vancouver	Victoria	Edmonton	Calgary	Regina	Saskatoon	Ottawa	Moncton	Austin	Portland
Typical city lot size (for comparison)	33 x 122 ft 4,026 ft <sup>2</sup>	50 x 100 ft 5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	4,300 ft <sup>2</sup>	25 ft wide ---	--- 4,795 ft <sup>2</sup>	25 x 125 ft 3,125 ft <sup>2</sup>	38 ft wide ---	---	50' x 140' 7,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	50 x 100 ft 5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Minimum lot area	N/A	N/A	4,300 ft <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	3,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Minimum lot width	33'	N/A	N/A	30'	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Min. 36' standard development
Maximum total built coverage	Laneway house width must not exceed 50% of lot width	25% of backyard or 40% of total lot	25% including garage and accessory buildings	45% including garage and accessory buildings	50% including garage and accessory buildings	50% of backyard	40% including garage and accessory buildings	---	40% including garage and accessory buildings	Accessory building may cover no more than 15% of lot area
Size Guidelines										
Minimum square footage	205 ft <sup>2</sup>	N/A	323 ft <sup>2</sup>	40-60% depending on zone	N/A	N/A	Standard, regulated by Building Code	N/A	500 ft <sup>2</sup>	N/A
Maximum allowable square footage	900 ft <sup>2</sup>	400 ft <sup>2</sup>	538 ft <sup>2</sup> (at grade)	646 ft <sup>2</sup> (above garage)	750 ft <sup>2</sup>	861 ft <sup>2</sup> (or 80% GFA of principal residence)	829 ft <sup>2</sup>	861 ft <sup>2</sup> (or 40% of GFA principal residence)	800 ft <sup>2</sup>	1,100 ft <sup>2</sup>
Number of stories permitted	1 ½ (2nd floor must be setback from lane and maximum 60% of main floor area)	1 (with exemptions for existing garage conversions and “plus sites”)	No taller than main house	1	1 ½ for core	2 in core (with 2nd floor setback), 1 in suburbs	1 (2 if above garage) <sup>1</sup>	---	2 (max 550 ft <sup>2</sup> on 2nd floor)	2
Max building height	20'	12'	21' (sloped roof) 18' (flat roof)	15'	19'	20' (in core) 12' (in suburbs)	12'	20'	30'	20', or 15' if within setback
Maximum size compared to principal residence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	must be smaller than principal residence	DSS (incl. garage) must be smaller than principal residence	must be smaller than principal residence	N/A	---	Maximum 75% of principal residence

1. Applications for minor variances with respect to coach houses shall have regard for all of the following considerations: the coach house is in no circumstance taller than the primary dwelling, the proponent can demonstrate that the privacy of the adjoining properties is maintained, the siting and scale of the coach house does not negatively impact the abutting properties, significant trees and plantings are preserved on the subject property; and any streetscape character impacts are addressed through the coach house design and siting.

Number of DSS permitted	Vancouver	Victoria	Edmonton	Calgary	Regina	Saskatoon	Ottawa	Moncton	Austin	Portland
Number of allowable DSS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Allowed if existing secondary unit is principal residence	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Location	Within the rear 26' of principal yard (32' if 1 story)	Rear of yard. <sup>1</sup>	Rear of yard	Rear of yard	Rear of yard	Rear of yard	Rear of yard	Rear of yard or on top of garage	Rear of yard	Set back 40' from lot frontage
Orientation and Setbacks	Facing Lane	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard	Facing lane or backyard
Minimum rear set back	5'	2'	---	2'	---	7'	---	8'	10'	---
Minimum side setback	Minimum 10% of the lot width	2'	4'	2'	---	3' in core, 10' in suburbs. One side must have at least 4'.	3' if no windows. 13' with windows. One side must have at least 4'.	4'	---	---
Distance between DSS and principal dwelling	16'	8'	13'	3'	---	13'	---	---	10'	N/A
Basements	Permitted. Counts towards total floor area.	---	---	---	Not permitted to prevent risk of flood damage	Not permitted	Permitted	---	---	---
Parking										
Parking spots required?	1 non-enclosed parking	No additional parking required	Sufficient as per the bylaw	1 (2 in some neighbourhoods)	1	1	No additional parking required	1	1 (or 2 if main house has none)	No additional parking required
Exemptions	---	---	---	----	Exempt within 400m of transit stop or near downtown	---	---	---	---	---

1. In Victoria it is encouraged that on corner lots the Garden Suite is sited as close to the side street as possible to create a consistent streetscape pattern.

Accessibility Affordability Sustainability		Vancouver	Victoria	Edmonton	Calgary	Regina	Saskatoon	Ottawa	Moncton	Austin	Portland
Accessibility guidelines	Must have one accessible washroom on the first/ground floor	---	---	---	---	All publicly accessible areas should be barrier-free	Entrance paths should accommodate barrier-free access	---	---	---	---
Affordability regulations	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	SMART program. Short-term rental not permitted to help ensure supply of affordable housing	---
Sustainability	Surface parking spaces should have permeable pavers or impermeable wheel paths with ground cover in centre and sides	---	---	---	---	---	Passive solar design, energy efficiency encouraged	---	---	---	---