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City of Maple Ridge

TO: His Worship Mayor Dan Ruimy  
and Members of Council  
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer

MEETING DATE: May 02, 2023  
FILE NO: 2023-123-RZ  
MEETING: CoW

SUBJECT: Secondary Suites and Detached Garden Suites on the Same Lot in the ALR

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Since January 2022, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) has permitted secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot without an application to the ALC. The Province of BC removed the need for an application to the ALC to increase residential flexibility. However, Maple Ridge's Zoning Bylaw does not currently permit a secondary suite and detached garden suite on the same lot anywhere in the City.

At the April 26, 2022, Council Workshop meeting, Council was presented with accessory dwelling unit regulatory options that would positively impact current and future residents by creating additional secondary suite and detached garden suite units in the community. At this meeting, Council directed staff to proceed with ten of the eleven recommendations, including bringing forward a zone amending bylaw to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed housekeeping changes to the City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw in order to align with the ALC's regulations. Should Council move forward with the recommendation to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the ALR, *Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023* (Appendix B) will proceed through the bylaw adoption process.

Secondary suites and detached garden suites are not only an important component of the community's rental market, but these forms also assist in homeownership affordability as mortgage helpers. Additionally, housing flexibility within the ALR benefits farming practices. Farmers in the region are aging and allowing more flexible housing encourages succession planning of farms and transfer of knowledge. To maintain a vibrant and thriving City, Maple Ridge needs to attract and retain working households and enable them to grow and age in place.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That *Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023* be given first and second reading and forwarded to public hearing to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND:

##### a) Recent Work

At the April 26, 2022, Council Workshop, Council received a market update on housing in Maple Ridge and an update on Provincial regulatory changes aimed at encouraging more accessory dwelling units throughout the province. At this meeting, eleven regulatory options that were explored during the

public consultation and review of accessory dwelling unit regulations was presented to Council. At the April 26, 2022, Council Workshop, Council directed staff to bring forward a report with detailed information and a description of the amendments for ten of the eleven recommendations. This included bringing forward a zone amending bylaw to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

#### **b) Official Community Plan Policy Alignment**

Maple Ridge's Official Community Plan (OCP) reflects the community's long-term vision to become more vibrant and prosperous, offering residents a strong local economy, stable and special neighbourhoods, thoughtful development, a diversity of agriculture, and respect for the built and natural environment. Through the OCP housing policies, the need to provide a mix of housing types densities, and affordable options is recognized. In order to meet the diverse residential needs of local residents, the OCP housing policies are intended to help:

- Accommodate growth through infill by promoting housing types and tenures to support diverse needs, lifestyles, and preferences (Policy 3-1), by considering disparities in age, income, and mobility;
- Support the provision of rental accommodation and encourage the construction of rental units that vary in size and number of bedrooms (Policy 3-31); and
- Encourage housing that incorporates "age-in-place" concepts and seniors housing designed to accommodate special needs (Policy 3-33).

The OCP also contains agricultural policies that support maintaining the City's agricultural base and farming activity. The OCP also contains policies that support the ALC's policies and regulations, such as:

*Policy 6 - 9 Maple Ridge supports the policies and regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission Act and the Farm Practices Protection Act in its land uses and will review its bylaws affecting farmland and farm operations for consistency with these provincial acts, regulations, and guidelines.*

#### **c) Housing Action Plan Alignment**

Council endorsed the Housing Action Plan on September 30, 2014, and the Housing Action Plan Implementation Framework on September 14, 2015. The development and endorsement of the Housing Action Plan provides the opportunity to implement the strategies and actions to enhance the Official Community Plan policy direction for affordable, rental, and special needs housing. The Implementation Framework contains actions that are based on the Housing Action Plan's strategies.

The endorsed strategies of the Housing Action Plan are summarized below:

- Create new rental housing opportunities;
- Continue to monitor secondary suites policies & bylaws; and
- Expand the garden suites program.

#### **d) Housing Needs Report**

On February 9, 2021, Council received a Housing Needs Report. This report provided an understanding of current and anticipated housing needs within Maple Ridge. The Housing Needs Report found that there is a growing disconnect between what is available and what is affordable to Maple Ridge residents and showed that the price of a single-detached home in Maple Ridge is becoming increasingly out-of-reach for dual-income households. Additionally, with limited rental units available

locally, and throughout the Metro Vancouver region, rental unit rates are increasing and also becoming a less affordable housing option.

The findings of the Housing Needs Report reaffirmed the objectives and policy direction of the Official Community Plan, such as Policy 3-31 that encourages the construction of rental units or varying size and bedrooms, as well as the strategies and goals within the City's Housing Action Plan to create new rental housing opportunities and expand the secondary suite and detached garden suite programs.

#### **e) Agricultural Plan**

On December 15, 2009, Council endorsed the Agricultural Plan. The Agricultural Plan outlines recommendations to protect and enhance agriculture in Maple Ridge. The Agricultural Plan identifies that farm operators are aging rapidly. According to Statistics Canada, the average age of Canada's farm operators are 56 years old, as of the 2021 census. The Agricultural Plan encourages succession planning of family farms and for the transfer of knowledge.

## **2.0 DISCUSSION:**

There are approximately 1,440 properties within the ALR that would be eligible for having a secondary suite and detached garden suite on the same lot. Approximately 1,200 of the eligible properties are currently zoned RS-3 (Single Detached Rural Residential), which has a minimum lot size of 0.8 hectares (1.97 Acres). Permitting secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the ALR would align with the ALC regulations.

### **2.1 ALR and Detached Garden Suite Regulations**

Since January 2022, the ALC has been permitting the following, without requiring an application to the ALC:

- a secondary suite and detached garden suite on the same lot;
  - a detached garden suite, up to 90m<sup>2</sup> (968ft<sup>2</sup>) if the total floor area of the principal residence is 500m<sup>2</sup> (5,382ft<sup>2</sup>) or less and on a parcel less than 40 ha (99 acres) (which currently aligns with Maple Ridge's maximum size for a DGS); and
  - a detached garden suite, up to 186m<sup>2</sup> (2,002ft<sup>2</sup>), if the total floor area of the principal residence is 500m<sup>2</sup> (5,382ft<sup>2</sup>) or less and the parcel is 40 ha (99 acres) or more (only six properties in Maple Ridge are greater than 40ha).

The City does not currently permit a principal dwelling size to exceed 500m<sup>2</sup> (5,382ft<sup>2</sup>) within the ALR, regardless of parcel size. Additionally, the City does not permit detached garden suites larger than 90m<sup>2</sup> regardless of the property size.

For properties within the ALR there are additional siting requirements. Detached garden suites must be located within the Farm Home Plate, which is an area on the property that allocates where residential buildings and structures are permitted in order to restrict the impact of residential development on agricultural land. The aim of the Farm Home Plate regulations is to maintain the land base for agricultural purposes.

Appendix A of this report further outlines the regulations for secondary suites and detached garden suites in Maple Ridge.

## 2.2 “Homes for People” Action Plan

On April 3, 2023, the Province of BC announced the “Homes for People” action plan. This plan outlines how the Province is going to increase the delivery of new homes over the next several years. Part of this Plan is to introduce legislation this Fall to allow up to four units on single-family detached lots (or three depending on the size/type of lot) with additional density permitted in areas well-served by transit. The Plan is also intending to make it easier to create secondary suites and detached garden suites throughout British Columbia.

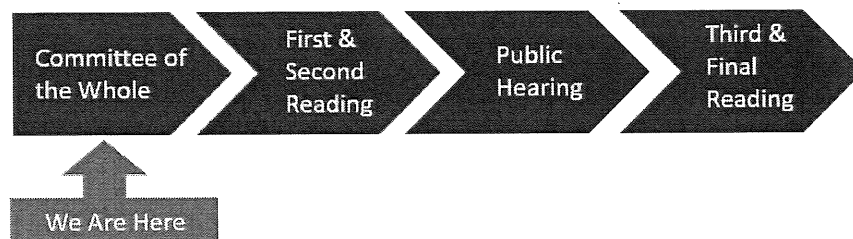
A report will be coming forward to Council in the future regarding the “Homes for People” plan. This report will also discuss how the City’s current housing workplan, including secondary suites and detached garden suites, aligns with this plan and next steps.

## 3.0 NEXT STEPS

The proposed housekeeping changes to the City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw, in order to align with the ALC’s regulations, are proposed through *Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023* (Appendix B). This zone amending bylaw proposes changes to Section 402.11 of the Zoning Bylaw, which outlines the general regulations for detached garden suites, and Section 402.24 of the Zoning Bylaw, which outlines the general regulations for secondary suites. The proposed bylaw states that secondary suites and detached garden suites shall not be permitted on the same lot, unless the lot is located within the ALR.

Should Council move forward with the recommendation to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot in the ALR, *Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023* will proceed through the bylaw adoption process. Public hearing is included within the bylaw adoption process. Should Council move forward with the recommendation, the proposed bylaw will be advertised in the newspaper and public hearing will provide an opportunity for the public to provide comment on the proposed changes. Additional public consultation is not recommended because the proposed amendment aligns with Provincial regulations.

Figure 1: Zone Amending Bylaw Process



## 4.0 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Facilitating an expansion of housing diversity and supply is identified as a draft Council priority, as established under the Liveable Community pillar, of the draft 2023-2026 City of Maple Ridge Strategic Plan. Aligning with the ALC’s regulations to permit secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot would expand housing supply within the ALR.

## CONCLUSION:

Since January 2022, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) permits secondary suites and detached garden suites on the same lot without an application to the ALC. The Province of BC removed the application requirement in order to increase residential flexibility in the ALR. To align with the ALC's regulations, this report recommends *Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023* be given first and second reading and forwarded to public hearing. This recommendation also aligns with Council's direction given at the April 26, 2022, Council Workshop meeting.

By permitting housing flexibility within the ALR it would benefit farming practices in the City. Farmers in the region are aging and allowing more flexible housing encourages succession planning of farms and transfer of knowledge.

To maintain a vibrant and thriving City, Maple Ridge needs to be able to attract and retain working households and enable them to grow and age in place. Secondary suites and detached garden suites are not only an important component of the community's rental market, but these forms also assist in homeownership affordability as mortgage helpers.

"Original Signed by Krista Gowan"

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*Prepared by:* **Krista Gowan, MA**  
**Planner 2**

"Original Signed by Charles R. Goddard"

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*Reviewed by:* **Charles R. Goddard, BA, MA**  
**Director of Planning**

"Original Signed by Christine Carter"

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*Approved by:* **Christine Carter, M.PL, MCIP, RPP**  
**GM Planning & Development Services**

"Original Signed by Scott Hartman"

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*Concurrence:* **Scott Hartman**  
**Chief Administrative Officer**

The following appendices are attached hereto:

Appendix A – Current Secondary Suite and Detached Garden Suite Regulations

Appendix B – Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023

## APPENDIX A

**Table 1: Current Regulations for Secondary Suites and Detached Garden Suites**

Regulatory Requirement	Secondary Suites	Detached Garden Suites
Permitted Zones	All Single Detached zones, except R-3 & R-2	Single Detached zones that have a minimum lot size of 557m <sup>2</sup>
Minimum Floor Area	N/A	N/A
Maximum Floor Area	not to exceed 40% of the total floor area of the building	90m <sup>2</sup> or 10% of the lot area (whichever is less)
# Permitted Per Lot	One	One
Primary Dwelling Relationship	Must locate within primary dwelling	Must located in rear yard
Parking Requirement	One per unit	One per unit
Strata Title/Subdivision	Not permitted	Not permitted
Floodplain Requirement	Suite must be above Flood Construction Level	Suite must be above Flood Construction Level
Septic Site Requirement	Must notify Fraser Health Authority if Lot is not serviced by Community Sanitary Sewer System	Must notify Fraser Health Authority if Lot is not serviced by Community Sanitary Sewer System
Farm Home Plate Requirement for ALR	Must be located within the Farm Home Plate	Must be located within the Farm Home Plate

The current Zoning Bylaw regulations do not permit a detached garden suite and secondary suite on the same lot.

Additionally, neither a detached garden suite or secondary suite are permitted where there is already a: Bed and Breakfast, Boarding, Caretaker Residential, Temporary Residential or Two-Unit Residential Use (i.e. duplex) on the Lot.

CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE  
BYLAW NO. 7929-2023

A Bylaw to amend the text forming part of Zoning Bylaw No. 7600 - 2019 as amended

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WHEREAS, it is deemed desirable to amend Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw No. 7600-2019 as amended;

NOW THEREFORE, the Municipal Council of the City of Maple Ridge, enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited as "Maple Ridge Zone Amending Bylaw No. 7929-2023".
2. That PART 4 GENERAL REGULATIONS, Section 402.11 (8.e.) be amended by removing the text identified by strikethrough:
  - e. shall not be permitted where there is an Agricultural Employee Residential, Bed and Breakfast, Boarding, Caretaker Residential, ~~Secondary Suite Residential~~, Temporary Residential, Tourist Accommodation, or Two-Unit Residential Use on the same Lot;
3. That PART 4 GENERAL REGULATIONS, Section 402.11 (8.) be amended by adding the following text after item "e." and re-organizing in alphabetical order:
  - f. shall not be permitted where there is a Secondary Suite, unless the Lot is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve;
4. That PART 4 GENERAL REGULATIONS, Section 402.24 (1.c.) be amended by removing the text identified by strikethrough:
  - c. shall not be permitted where there is a Bed and Breakfast, Boarding, Caretaker Residential, ~~Detached Garden Suite Residential~~, Temporary Residential or Two-Unit Residential Use on the Lot;
5. That PART 4 GENERAL REGULATIONS, Section 402.24 (1.) be amended by adding the following text after item "c." and re-organizing in alphabetical order:
  - f. shall not be permitted where there is a Detached Garden Suite, unless the Lot is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve;
6. Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw No. 7600-2019 as amended is hereby amended accordingly.

ADOPTED, the            day of            , 20

CORPORATE OFFICER