

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) REGULATIONS: TOWN OF SMITHERS

PIBC Peer Learning Network Regional Learning Event - Northern BC

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Presentation Outline

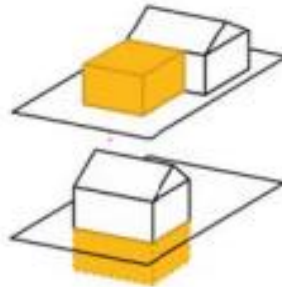
1. What are ADUs?
2. Pre-2022 ADU Regulations
3. Reasons for Updating ADU Regulation
4. Updated ADU Regulations
5. Update Process & Community Engagement
6. Updated Regulations: Positive Outcomes
7. Challenges & Next Steps
8. Alignment with SSMUH Legislation
9. Q & A

10. C

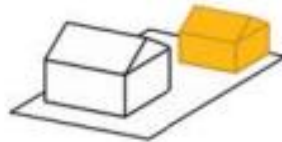
What are ADUs?

- All forms of self-contained dwelling units on a parcel in addition to the primary residence.
- May or may not be attached to the principal building.
- No separate property title.

Secondary suite in or linked to a detached home



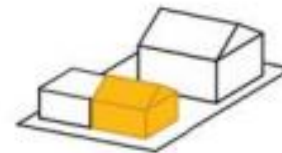
Garden suite a.k.a. coach or carriage house, in the yard of a detached home



Tiny home (possibly on wheels), as small as 10m² in the yard of a detached home



Garage/lane suite in, by or above a garage



Secondary suite in or linked to a duplex or town house



Image Credit: BC Housing

Pre-2022 ADU Regulations

Carriage Houses Reg.

- Only permitted only in R-2 zone
- Principal use must be SDD
- Maximum floor area: 90 sq m
- One parking stall required
- Auxiliary structure regulations
 - 1 aux structure / parcel
 - Maximum height: 4.9 m
 - Max 10% parcel coverage
- Not permitted when the parcel has:
 - an existing secondary suite
 - Home occupation
- Needed a F&C Development Permit
- Max 40% parcel coverage

Secondary Suites Reg.

- Permitted in multiple residential zones
- Principal use must be SDD
- 40% area of principal building
- Limited to one SS per parcel
- Not permitted when the parcel has:
 - an existing carriage house
 - Home occupation
- Max 40% parcel coverage
- One parking stall required

Reasons for Updating ADU Regulations

- Limited flexibility in site & building design
 - Need for OCP & Zoning amendments
 - Development Permit barrier
 - Provincial Building Code Updates (on secondary suites)
 - Increasing popularity of ADUs as a mortgage helper
 - Local Housing needs (ADUs form a key segment of the secondary rental market)
- Adding to:**
- Higher project cost
 - Delay in construction
 - Less predictability

Updated ADU Regulations

Carriage Houses Reg. (repealed)

- ~~Permitted only in R2 zone~~
- Principal use: Single-detached dwelling (SDD)
- Maximum floor area: 90 sq m
- One parking stall required
- Auxiliary structure regulations
 - ~~1 aux structure / parcel~~
 - ~~Maximum height: 4.9 m~~
 - ~~Max 10% parcel coverage~~
- ~~Not permitted when the parcel has:~~
 - ~~an existing secondary suite~~
 - ~~Home occupation~~
- ~~Needs a F&C Development Permit~~
- ~~Max 40% parcel coverage in R2 zone~~

Carriage Houses Reg. (current)

- Permitted in multiple zones
- Principal use: Single-detached dwelling (SDD)
- Maximum floor area: 90 sq m
- One parking stall required
- Auxiliary structure regulations
 - No limit on the number
 - Maximum height: 6.0 m
 - Excl from floor area limit for aux struct
- Permitted even if the parcel has:
 - an existing secondary suite
 - Home occupation
- No need of F&C Development Permit
- Max 50% parcel coverage in R2 zone

Updated ADU Regulations

Secondary Suites Reg. (repealed)

- Permitted in multiple residential zones
- ~~Principal use must be SDD~~
- ~~40% area of principal dwelling~~
- ~~Limited to one SS per parcel~~
- ~~Not permitted when the parcel has:~~
 - ~~an existing carriage house~~
 - ~~Home occupation~~
- ~~Max 40% parcel coverage~~
- One parking stall required

Secondary Suites Reg. (Current)

- Permitted in multiple residential zones
- Principal uses: SDDs, Duplexes & Town houses
- No limit on floor area
- A parcel may have more than 1 SS
- Permitted even if the parcel has:
 - an existing carriage house
 - Home occupation
- Max 50% parcel coverage in R2 zone
- Max 40% parcel coverage in R1 zone
- One parking stall required

Update Process & Community Engagement

- Review of ZBL/OCP regulations & analysis of past development approval-applications received.
- Good planning practices
- 18-month-long OCP-Zoning Update engagement process
- APC and the OCP-Advisory Committee served as the community voice throughout the process
- Public education was a key component of engagement
- Mostly positive community feedback
- Information overload was an issue
- Concerns identified about the proposed ADU changes:
 - Loss of community character
 - Infrastructure capacity constraints
 - Loss of privacy
 - Snow removal on lanes
 - Traffic safety issues (more lane traffic)
- No new infrastructure analysis before the amendments

Updated Regulations: Positive Outcomes

1. Predictability in the development of ADUs
2. Flexible site and building design process; attractive & innovative designs solutions
3. Time and cost savings for property owners
4. Owners repurposing existing aux. structures to ADUs.
5. Reduction in development approval applications; more staff time for long-range planning projects, policy development, and grant submissions.
6. Addition of 'minor variance' and delegated authority provisions in the Dev Procedures Bylaw further expedited the ADU approval process
7. Improved housing diversity & rental housing stock

Updated Regulations: Positive Outcomes



Challenges & Next Steps

Challenges

1. Need to respect community character vs residential densification impacts
2. Increasing pressure on municipal infrastructure
3. Enforcing BCBC requirements associated with building use conversions
4. Need for other policy / bylaw amendments (e.g., lane traffic; snow removal)
5. Unchanged parking and landscaping requirements
6. Public education on the new regulations

Next Steps

1. Infrastructure Capacity Modelling studies to evaluate the current capacity and projected need
2. Invest in municipal infrastructure improvements
 - Grant opportunities (E.g., LG Housing Initiatives Program, HAF, Growing Communities Fund)
 - Funding from North-west BC Resource Benefit Alliance

Alignment with SSMUH Legislation

1. More amendments required to permit the minimum 4-unit SSMUH requirement
2. Further amendments may be required to 'reasonably' accommodate SSMUH needs:
 - Parcel coverage
 - Housing forms permitted
 - Parking
 - Landscaping requirements
 - Simplifying DP regulations for multi-unit residential developments

Q & A

