



## FRASER VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**SUBJECT: Secondary Dwellings in the Electoral Areas**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** June 25, 2019

**REVISION DATE:** June 25, 2019

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

The FVRD undertook a study to gauge the level of community support for secondary dwellings in the Electoral Areas and to explore possible options and necessary changes to existing bylaws to allow the use.

This policy was developed, based on the outcome of the study, to create a framework for the introduction of secondary dwellings into the Electoral Areas, with the intent of balancing the community and developer interest and acknowledging the cumulative effects to both the environment and the character of the communities in which they exist.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- guide the FVRD Board in subsequent Official Community Plan and zoning bylaw amendments in support of secondary dwellings;
- provide consistent language and policy objectives for future Official Community Plan updates and amendments;
- assist the FVRD Board in reviewing individual applications for secondary dwellings;
- identify some of the potential considerations of the FVRD Board when amending bylaws and reviewing applications;
- assist applicants in preparing applications that address the interests and concerns of the FVRD Board;
- minimize the impact of secondary dwellings on the environment, particularly groundwater resources;
- minimize the impact of secondary dwellings on neighbours and the surrounding community;
- support the successful integration of secondary dwellings into suburban and rural communities where appropriate; and
- encourage review of policy implementation and outcomes within 3 years of the adoption of the policy.

## **3.0 POLICIES**

### **3.1 General Considerations**

- 3.1.1 The FVRD Board recognizes the benefits secondary dwellings can provide to communities within the Electoral Areas, including but not limited to:
- provide additional affordable housing options;
  - increase alternative housing forms across the Electoral Areas;
  - promote aging in place, consistent with Provincial objectives; and
  - allow gentle densification of existing settlement areas.
- 3.1.2 The FVRD Board encourages including policies supportive of secondary dwellings in future Official Community Plan updates.
- 3.1.3 The FVRD Board supports that use of secondary dwellings be restricted to residential use only. Secondary dwellings should not be used for short term vacation rentals or for other seasonal residential purposes unless otherwise expressly permitted by the Zoning Bylaw.
- 3.1.4 The FVRD Board is supportive of secondary dwellings on larger parcels exceeding 1.0 hectare in size where impacts to surrounding properties are minimized, notwithstanding other regulations or enactments that may affect the permissibility of secondary dwellings.
- 3.1.5 The FVRD Board is generally supportive of secondary dwellings on parcels between 0.5-0.99 hectare where connection to community water supply is possible, notwithstanding other regulations or enactments that may affect the permissibility of secondary dwellings.
- 3.1.6 The FVRD Board may wish to consider the number and scale of proposed secondary dwellings within the community and the cumulative affect they may have.
- 3.1.7 Notwithstanding the policies contained herein, the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation and the FVRD Floodplain Management Bylaw may contain provisions which supersede those of this Policy.

### **3.2 Implementation**

- 3.2.1 The FVRD Board supports establishing a secondary dwelling as a permitted accessory use, in residential zones where a primary dwelling is already established, on parcels 1.0 hectare or larger.
- 3.2.2 The FVRD Board supports secondary dwellings as a permitted accessory use, in residential zones where a primary dwelling is already established, on parcels between 0.5-0.99 hectare subject to a rezoning application by the property owner and where the parcel meets the minimum level of service per Section 3.3 of this Policy.

- 3.2.3 The FVRD Board supports the creation of a streamlined rezoning application process for the sole purpose of processing secondary dwelling applications. This streamlined process may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following: a) reduced application fees; and, b) option to waive public hearing requirements at the discretion of the Director of Planning and Development.
- 3.2.4 The FVRD Board may require that applicants hold a public information meeting to present details of the proposed secondary dwelling and receive feedback from the community.
- 3.2.5 The FVRD Board will support and encourage consideration of secondary dwellings in new developments at the time of subdivision in order to adequately accommodate the necessary servicing, parking, road width and screening requirements.

### 3.3 Minimum Levels of Service

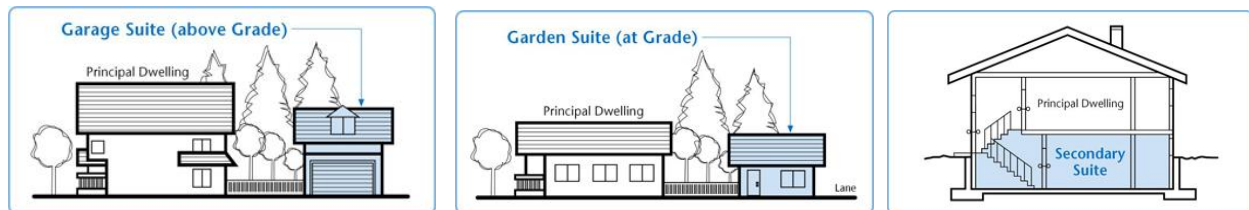
- 3.3.1 Where appropriate levels of service exist to a property, the FVRD Board generally supports establishing a secondary dwelling.
- 3.3.2 The FVRD Board generally supports the following minimum levels of service for properties where secondary dwellings are proposed:

	Water	Sewage Disposal
<b>Parcels 1.0 ha and greater</b>	On-site supply (shared or independent)	On-site sewage disposal system (shared or independent)
<b>Parcels 0.5-0.99 ha</b>	Community Water System	Community Sewer System <i>or</i> On-site sewage disposal system (shared or independent)

- 3.3.3 The FVRD Board may wish to consider applications for secondary dwellings on parcels 0.5 – 1.0 hectare serviced by existing community water and sewer systems subject to the following considerations: a) each application is considered on a site specific basis deliberated on its own merit; and b) capacity of the community systems to support secondary dwellings.
- 3.3.4 The FVRD Board, for the purposes of determining a minimum level of service requirement, does not distinguish between the various permissible typologies of secondary dwellings.

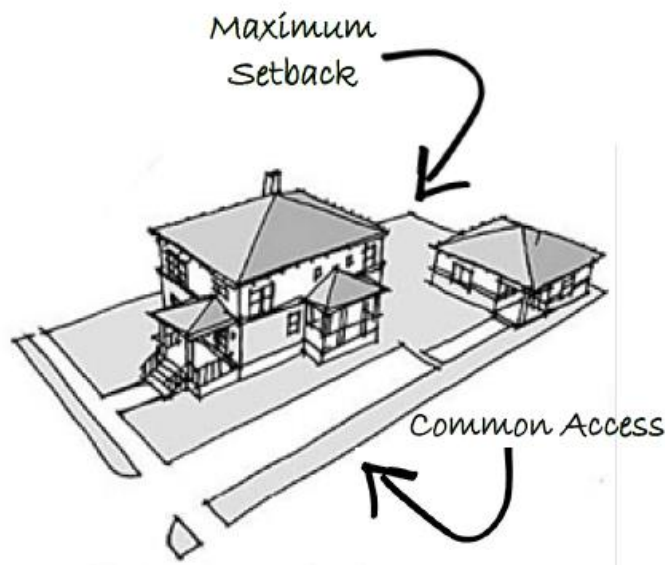
### 3.4 Form and Design

3.4.1 The FVRD supports offering choice and flexibility for Electoral Area residents in secondary dwelling form and design. As such, the following dwelling typologies are considered acceptable by the FVRD Board: Garage Suite (above grade), Garden Suite (at grade), and Secondary Suite (contained within existing dwelling).



3.4.2 The FVRD Board encourages maintaining a relationship between the secondary dwelling and the principle dwelling on the parcel, through maximum setback requirements, for the purposes of:

- discouraging future subdivision rationale;
- maintaining the ancillary nature of the secondary dwelling;
- encouraging natural surveillance; and
- reducing impacts to neighbouring properties.



3.4.3 The FVRD Board does not support the issuance of Ministry of Transportation Access Permits for an additional or alternative access for a secondary dwelling. Secondary dwellings should be accessed from the same access as the principle dwelling on the parcel.

3.4.4 Secondary dwellings should be restricted in size to: a) a total floor space of not more than 90m<sup>2</sup>; or b) 40% of the habitable floor space of the principle dwelling, whichever is lesser.

3.4.5 Secondary dwellings should be subject to minimum setback and maximum height requirements consistent with the principle dwelling on the parcel.

### **3.5 Further Consideration of Secondary Dwellings**

- 3.5.1 This policy should be reviewed by staff and the FVRD Board within three (3) years of adoption to assess and identify the following:
- progress of subsequent amendments to Official Community Plans, Zoning Bylaws, and other relevant FVRD Bylaws;
  - interest and uptake in secondary dwellings as a permitted use in the Electoral Areas;
  - possible issues associated with the implementation and efficacy of the streamlined rezoning process;
  - cumulative effects of secondary dwellings to neighbourhoods where they have been introduced as a permitted use; and
  - opportunities to expand the scope of secondary dwelling permissibility in the Electoral Areas.
- 3.5.2 Notwithstanding the policies outlined above, the FVRD should continue to explore options and opportunities to allow secondary dwellings on parcels less than 0.5 hectare. This may include, but may not be limited to, technical studies examining: a) servicing feasibility and potential groundwater impacts of secondary dwellings on parcels less than 0.5 hectare without connections to community water or sewer systems; b) assessment of the capacity of community water or sewer systems to support secondary dwellings on parcels less than 0.5 hectare; and, c) potential for distinct servicing requirements for attached and detached secondary dwellings.
- 3.5.3 The FVRD should continue discussions with the Fraser Health Authority with respect to *Policy 3.5.2* and consider developing a framework, based on the technical studies referred to above, to further guide Registered On-Site Wastewater Practitioners when considering on-site servicing options for secondary dwellings on parcels less than 0.5 hectare.