

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

ELECTORAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2013

6:30 PM

(RDN Board Chambers)

A G E N D A

PAGES

CALL TO ORDER

DELEGATIONS

MINUTES

- 3 - 6 Minutes of the regular Electoral Area Planning Committee meeting held Tuesday, November 13, 2012.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT WITH VARIANCE APPLICATIONS

- 7 - 13 Development Permit with Variance Application No. PL2012-143 – Guy Robertson – 902 Barclay Crescent South, Electoral Area 'G'.

DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT APPLICATIONS

- 14 - 18 Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-157 – Fern Road Consulting Ltd. – 3511 Shetland Place, Electoral Area 'E'.

- 19 - 25 Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-037 – Glencar Consultants Inc. – Wally's Way & Undeveloped Stanhope Road, Electoral Area 'G'.

OTHER

- 26 - 31 Development Permit Application and Request of the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement/Subdivision PL2012-161 & PL2012-111 – 1965 Widgeon Road, Electoral Area 'H'.

- 32 - 37 Regional District Agricultural Advisory Committee (Revised Terms of Reference).

- 38 - 163 Secondary Suites Study and Consultation Plan

ADDENDUM

BUSINESS ARISING FROM DELEGATIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

**MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO HELD ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2012 AT 6:30 PM IN THE
RDN BOARD CHAMBERS**

In Attendance:

Director G. Holme	Chairperson
Director A. McPherson	Electoral Area A
Director M. Young	Electoral Area C
Director J. Fell	Electoral Area F
Director W. Veenhof	Electoral Area H
Director J. Stanhope	Electoral Area G

Regrets:

Director H. Houle	Electoral Area B
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Also in Attendance:

P. Thorkelsson	A/ Chief Administrative Officer
J. Harrison	Director of Corporate Services
T. Osborne	Gen. Mgr., Recreation & Parks
P. Tompson	Mgr., Long Range Planning
J. Holm	Mgr., Current Planning
J. Hill	Mgr., Administrative Services
T. Nohr	Recording Secretary

DELEGATIONS

Ken Tanguay, re Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-149 – Ken Tanguay – Redden Road, Electoral Area 'E'.

Mr. Tanguay gave a verbal presentation regarding his Development Variance Permit Application PL2012-149.

ELECTORAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director McPherson, that the minutes of the Electoral Area Planning Committee meeting held October 9, 2012, be adopted.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

Robyn and Malcolm Arnold, re Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-149 – Ken Tanguay – Redden Road, Electoral Area ‘E’.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Fell, that the correspondence from Ms. Arnold and Mr. Arnold regarding Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-149 be received.

CARRIED

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Development Permit Application No. PL2012-088 – Fern Road Consulting Ltd. – 783 Mariner Way, Electoral Area ‘G’.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Young, that Development Permit Application No. PL2012-088 to permit the construction of a dwelling unit and recognize an existing retaining wall and landscaping works within the subject property be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedules 1 to 3.

CARRIED

Development Permit Application No. PL2012-122 – Tomm’s Food Marketing Group, Inc. – 6990 Island Highway West, Electoral Area ‘H’.

MOVED Director Veenhof, SECONDED Director McPherson, that Development Permit No. PL2012-122 to permit the construction of an addition to a commercial building be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedules 1 to 3.

CARRIED

Development Permit Application No. PL2012-143 – Guy Robertson – 902 Barclay Crescent South, Electoral Area ‘G’.

Withdrawn by applicant.

DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-147 – Gray – 1815 Settler Road, Electoral Area ‘F’.

MOVED Director Fell, SECONDED Director McPherson, that Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-147 be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.

CARRIED

Development Variance Permit & Frontage Relaxation Application No. PL2012-126 – Avis – 2940 & 2950 Dufferin Road, Electoral Area 'E'.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Veenhof, that Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-126 to reduce the setback from 8.0 metres to 3.3 metres for an existing garage to a proposed panhandle lot line be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.

CARRIED

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Veenhof, that the request to relax the minimum 10% perimeter frontage requirement for application No. PL2012-126 proposed Lot A, be approved.

CARRIED

Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-149 – Ken Tanguay – Redden Road, Electoral Area 'E'.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Young, that Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-149 to increase the maximum permitted dwelling unit height be approved subject to the conditions outline in Schedules 1 to 3.

CARRIED

Development Variance Permit and Frontage Relaxation Application No. PL2012-146 – Shepherd – 853 Miller Road, Electoral Area 'G'.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Fell, that the Board approve Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-146 to relax the minimum panhandle width from 6.0 metres to 4.0 metres subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1 and 2.

CARRIED

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Fell, that the request to relax the minimum 10% perimeter frontage requirement for Application No. PL2012-146 proposed Lots A and B be approved.

CARRIED

OTHER

Relaxation of the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement – Ferguson – 6368 Island Highway West, Electoral Area 'H'.

MOVED Director Veenhof, SECONDED Director Stanhope, that the request for the minimum 10% frontage requirement for proposed Lot A, 6368 Island Highway West, be approved.

CARRIED

Alternative Forms of Rural Development Study.

MOVED Director Fell, SECONDED Director McPherson, that the report titled 'Alternative Forms of Rural Development' be received.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was called adjourned at 6:50 PM.

CHAIRPERSON

CORPORATE OFFICER



	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	JH	Dec 21/12
Approved (GM)	JH	Dec 21/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	Dec 21/12
Authority (CAO)	JH	Dec 21/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeremy Holm
Manager of Current Planning

DATE: December 21, 2012

FROM: Kim Farris
Planner

FILE: PL2012-143

SUBJECT: Development Permit with Variance Application No. PL2012-143 – Guy Robertson
Lot 82, District Lot 28, Nanoose District, Plan 26472 – 902 Barclay Crescent South
Electoral Area 'G'

PURPOSE

To consider an application for a Development Permit with Variance to allow the construction of a detached accessory building on the subject property.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo has received an application from Guy Robertson to construct a detached garage on the subject property. The property is approximately 1,063 m² in area and is zoned Residential 1 (RS1) pursuant to "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987" (see Attachment 1 for subject property map).

The subject property is bordered by Barclay Crescent (South) to the west and residential parcels to the north, east and south. The natural boundary of French Creek is located approximately 48.0 metres from the subject property's northern lot line. There is an existing dwelling unit located on the property.

The proposed development is subject to the Hazard Lands Development Permit Area (DPA) in accordance with the "Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area 'G' Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1540, 2008" as the property is located within the Little Qualicum River floodplain. Therefore, a development permit is required for the proposed garage.

Proposed Development and Variances

The applicant proposes to construct a detached garage on the subject property (see Schedule 2 and 3 for site plan and elevation drawings). The proposed garage is located within the French Creek floodplain. The "Regional District of Nanaimo Floodplain Management Bylaw No. 1469, 2006" requires that where land is within 200 metres of French Creek the minimum Flood Construction Level shall be 3.0 metres above the natural boundary of the watercourse. The present natural elevation of French Creek is 47.1 metres and the top of the foundation footings will be 50.3 metres (0.2 metres above the minimum required elevation).

The applicant initially proposed to build the detached garage below the flood construction level as it would meet the exemptions of the Floodplain Management Bylaw (Section 16(c)) as it states that a building or that portion of a building to be used as a garage, carport or storage building may be built below the flood construction level only if the building is not used for the storage of goods damageable by flood waters, toxic materials, or materials that may contaminate the environment. The applicant opposed registering a covenant on the property title restricting the use of the garage as he would likely use the garage for storage of goods.

The maximum permitted accessory building height in the RS1 zone is 6.0 metres above natural grade. In order to raise the garage up to meet the minimum flood construction level while allowing a 6.0 metre building height when measured from the proposed raised grade level, the applicant is requesting a variance to increase the accessory building height from 6.0 metres to 6.7 metres. The applicant provided the following rationale:

- The variance will accommodate the owner's preferred architectural design for the detached garage which will complement the design of a proposed dwelling unit;
- The applicant prefers to avoid registering a covenant on property title stating the garage is not to be used for storage of goods damageable by flood waters, toxic materials, or materials that may contaminate the environment if the it is built below the flood construction level;
- Applicant would prefer full functionality of his garage to store his personal vehicle; and
- The 6.0 metre height of accessory building is essential to allow for an office/loft space.

The proposed detached garage will meet the minimum setback requirements of the RS1 zone as set out in the submitted site plan prepared by Sims Associates, attached as Schedule 2.

ALTERNATIVES

1. To approve the Development Permit with Variance Application No. PL2012-143 subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.
2. To deny the Development Permit with Variance Application No. PL2012-143.

LAND USE IMPLICATIONS

Development Implications

The applicant submitted a Geotechnical Floodplain Hazard Assessment prepared by Lewkowich Engineering Associates Ltd. dated December 6, 2012, to satisfy the Hazard Lands Development Permit Area Guidelines. The report states that the property is safe and suitable for the proposed development and provided the recommendations of the report are followed the development would not result in a detrimental impact on the environment or adjacent properties.

As the proposed garage will meet the minimum flood construction level, the applicant is not required to register a covenant restricting the use of the building. The applicant will be required to register a Section 219 Restrictive Covenant on the property title that includes the Geotechnical Floodplain Hazard Assessment and a save harmless clause that releases the Regional District of Nanaimo from all losses and damages to life and property as a result of potential geotechnical and flood hazards. The requirement is included in Schedule 1 – Conditions of Approval.

Sustainability Implications

Staff have reviewed the proposed development with respect to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Sustainable Development Checklist" and note that the proposed garage will not have a detrimental impact on the natural environment.

Public Consultation Process

Pending the Committee's recommendation and pursuant to the Local Government Act, property owners and tenants located within a 50.0 metre radius, will receive a direct notice of the proposal and have an opportunity to comment on the proposed variance prior to the Board's consideration of the application.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

This is an application for a Development Permit with Variance to permit the construction of a detached garage within the Hazard Lands Development Permit Area. The applicant proposes to increase the maximum permitted accessory building height from 6.0 metres to 6.7 metres in order to raise the detached garage to meet the minimum flood construction level above French Creek, which will facilitate better flood protection for the proposed building and goods stored within. In staff's assessment, this proposal is consistent with the applicable Development Permit Area Guidelines, and staff recommends that the Board approve the Development Permit with Variance.

RECOMMENDATION

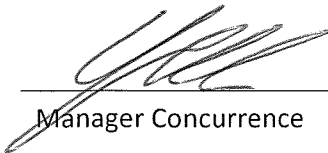
That Development Permit with Variance Application No. PL2012-143 to permit the construction of a detached garage be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.



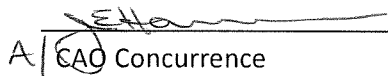
Report Writer



General Manager Concurrence



Manager Concurrence



CAO Concurrence

Schedule 1
Conditions of Development Permit

The following sets out the terms and conditions of Development Permit with Variance No. PL2012-143:

Bylaw No. 500, 1987 – Variance

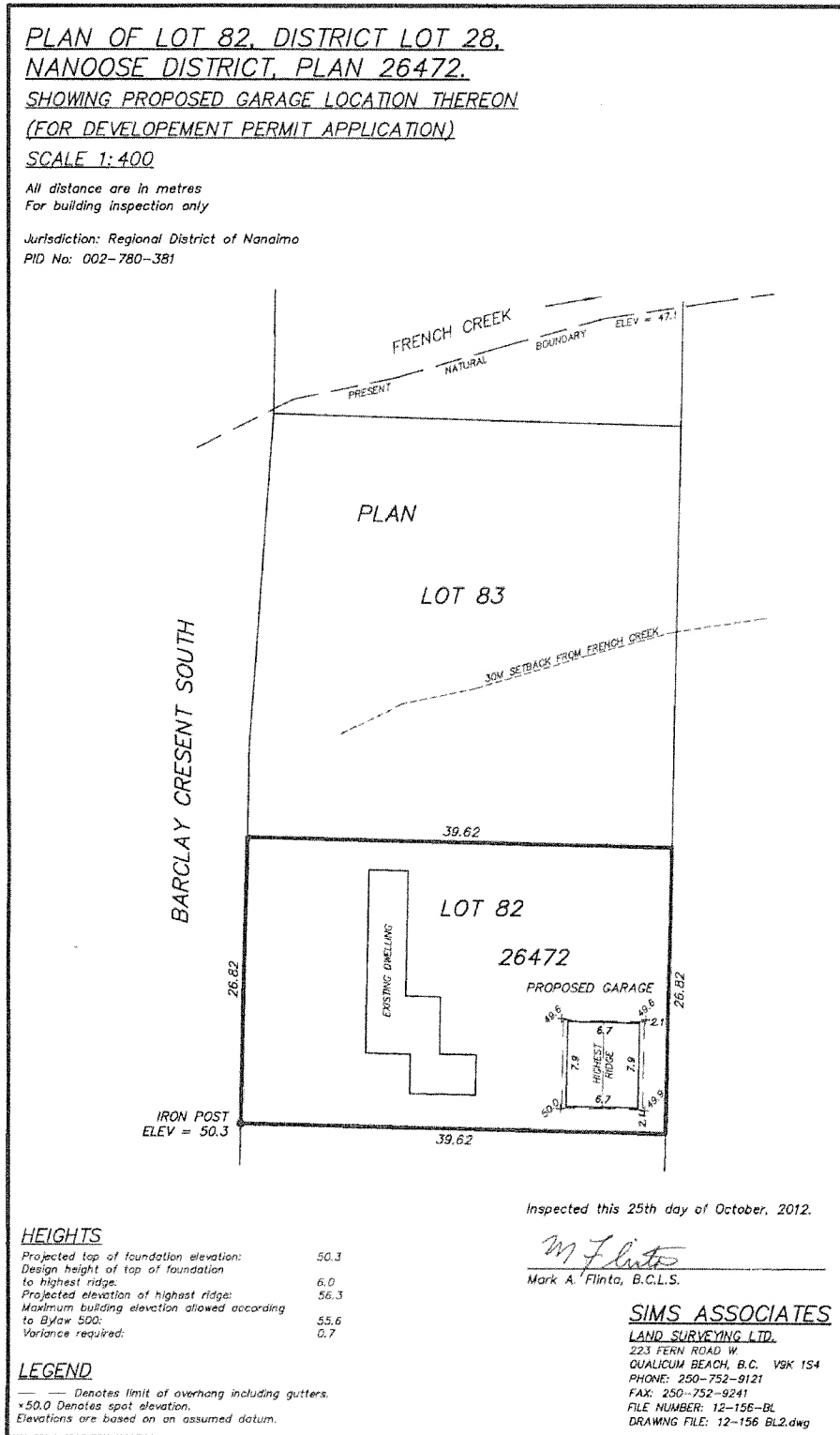
With respect to the lands, “Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987,” is varied as follows:

- **Section 3.4.61 Accessory Building Height** to increase the maximum permitted height from 6.0 metres to 6.7 metres for a proposed detached garage as shown on Schedule 3.

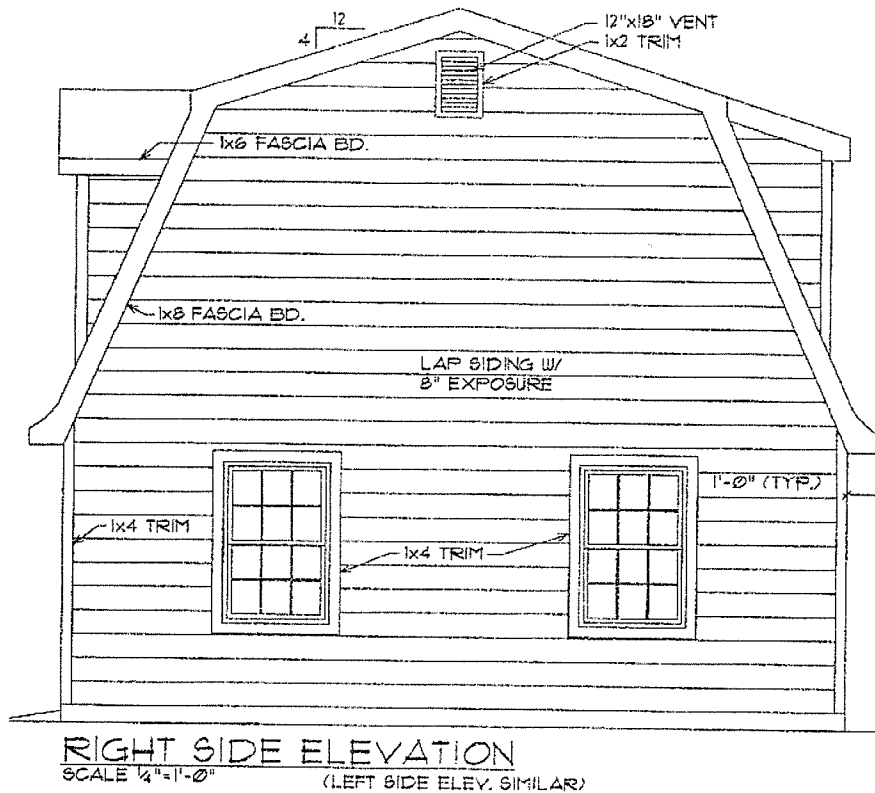
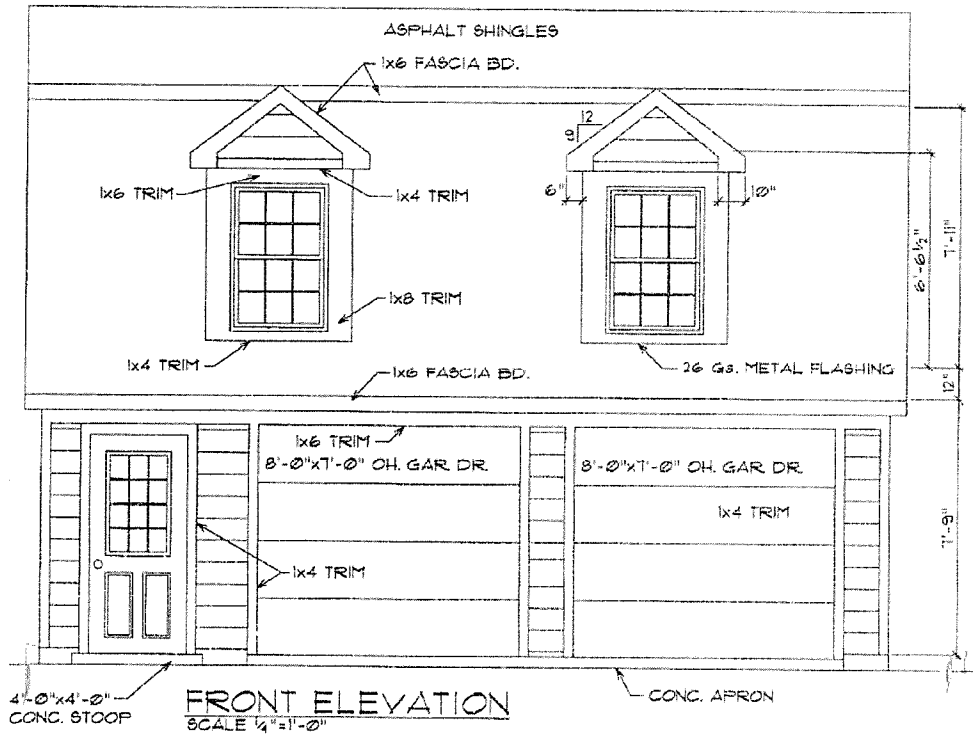
Conditions of Approval

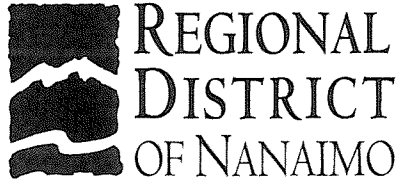
1. The garage shall be sited in accordance with the site plan prepared by Sims Associates dated October 25, 2012 attached as Schedule 2.
2. The garage shall be constructed generally in compliance with the elevation drawings attached as Schedule 3.
3. The Lands shall be developed in accordance with the Geotechnical Floodplain Hazard Assessment prepared by Lewkowich Engineering Associates Ltd. dated December 6, 2012.
4. Staff shall withhold the issuance of this Permit until the applicant, at the applicant's expense, registers a Section 219 covenant that registers the Geotechnical Floodplain Hazard Assessment prepared by Lewkowich Engineering Associates Ltd. dated December 6, 2012, and includes a save harmless clause that releases the Regional District of Nanaimo from all losses and damages as a result of the potential hazard.

**Schedule 2
Site Plan**



Schedule 3
Building Elevations





	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	JH	Dec 27/12
Approved (GM)	JH	Dec 27/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	Dec 27/12
Authority (CAO)	JH	Dec 27/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeremy Holm
Manager of Current Planning

DATE: December 20, 2012

FROM: Kristy Marks
Planner

FILE: PL2012-157

SUBJECT: Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-157 – Fern Road Consulting Ltd. Strata Lot 50, District Lot 78, Nanoose District, Strata Plan VIS3393 Together with an Interest in the Common Property in Proportion to the Unit Entitlement of the Strata Lot as Shown on Form 1 – 3511 Shetland Place Electoral Area ‘E’

PURPOSE

To consider an application for a Development Variance Permit to legalize the siting of an existing retaining wall and fence on the subject property.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has received an application from Fern Road Consulting Ltd. on behalf of Nicholas and Kandyce Keen to reduce the setback from the interior side (west) and rear lot line to legalize the siting of an existing retaining wall and fence on the subject property. The subject property is approximately 0.12 hectares in area and is zoned Residential 1 (RS1) pursuant to “Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987” (see Attachment 1 for location of subject property). The property is bordered by residential properties to the north, east and west and by Shetland Place to the south.

The property contains a recently completed dwelling unit, retaining wall and fence. Development Variance Permit No. PL2010-192 was approved by the RDN Board on November 23, 2010 in order to increase the maximum permitted dwelling unit height from 8.0 metres to 9.1 metres and a building permit was subsequently issued in December 2012. The property contains topographic constraints including a steep slope to the rear and rocky outcrops. The retaining wall was constructed prior to the completion of the dwelling unit and was constructed without a building permit or development variance permit. If this application is approved the applicants will be required to obtain the necessary building permit for the retaining wall.

Proposed Variance

The applicants propose to reduce the setback from the interior side (west) lot line and rear lot line from 2.0 metres to 0.0 metres in order to legalize the siting of the existing retaining wall and fence (see Schedule 2 for site plan).

ALTERNATIVES

1. To approve the Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-157 to reduce the minimum setback from the interior side and rear lot lines for an existing retaining wall and fence, subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.
2. To deny the Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-157.

LAND USE IMPLICATIONS

Development Implications

Given that the existing retaining wall and fence are greater than 1.0 metre in height and they are located within the setback a variance is required in order to legalize their siting. The applicants have provided a Geotechnical Field Review prepared by Ground Control Geotechnical Engineering Ltd. dated October 25, 2012 which states that the footings of the house are unlikely to be directly affected by the walls performance and that the wall is considered safe from a geotechnical perspective.

Sustainability Implications

Staff have reviewed the proposed development with respect to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Sustainable Development Checklist" and note that the proposed variance would allow the owners to maintain the existing retaining wall and associated fencing in their current location.

Public Consultation Process

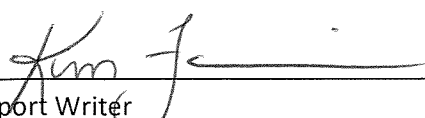
Pending the Committee's recommendation and pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, property owners and tenants located within a 50.0 metre radius, will receive a direct notice of the proposal and have an opportunity to comment on the proposed variance, prior to the Board's consideration of the application.


SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

This is an application for a Development Variance Permit to reduce the minimum front lot line setback from 2.0 metres to 0.0 metres in order to legalize the siting of an existing retaining wall and fence within the setback area. The applicants have submitted a site plan and a geotechnical field review in support of the application. Given that the requested variances would allow for the continued use of an existing structure and there are no geotechnical impacts anticipated for adjacent properties, staff recommends the Board approve the requested variances pending the outcome of public notification.

RECOMMENDATION

That Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-157 to reduce the minimum required setback from the interior side (west) lot line and rear lot line from 2.0 metres to 0.0 metres, be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1.

For  _____
 Report Writer

 _____
 General Manager Concurrence

 _____
 Manager Concurrence

 _____
 CAO Concurrence

Schedule 1
Terms and Conditions of Development Variance Permit

The following sets out the terms and conditions of Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-157:

Bylaw No. 500, 1987 - Variances

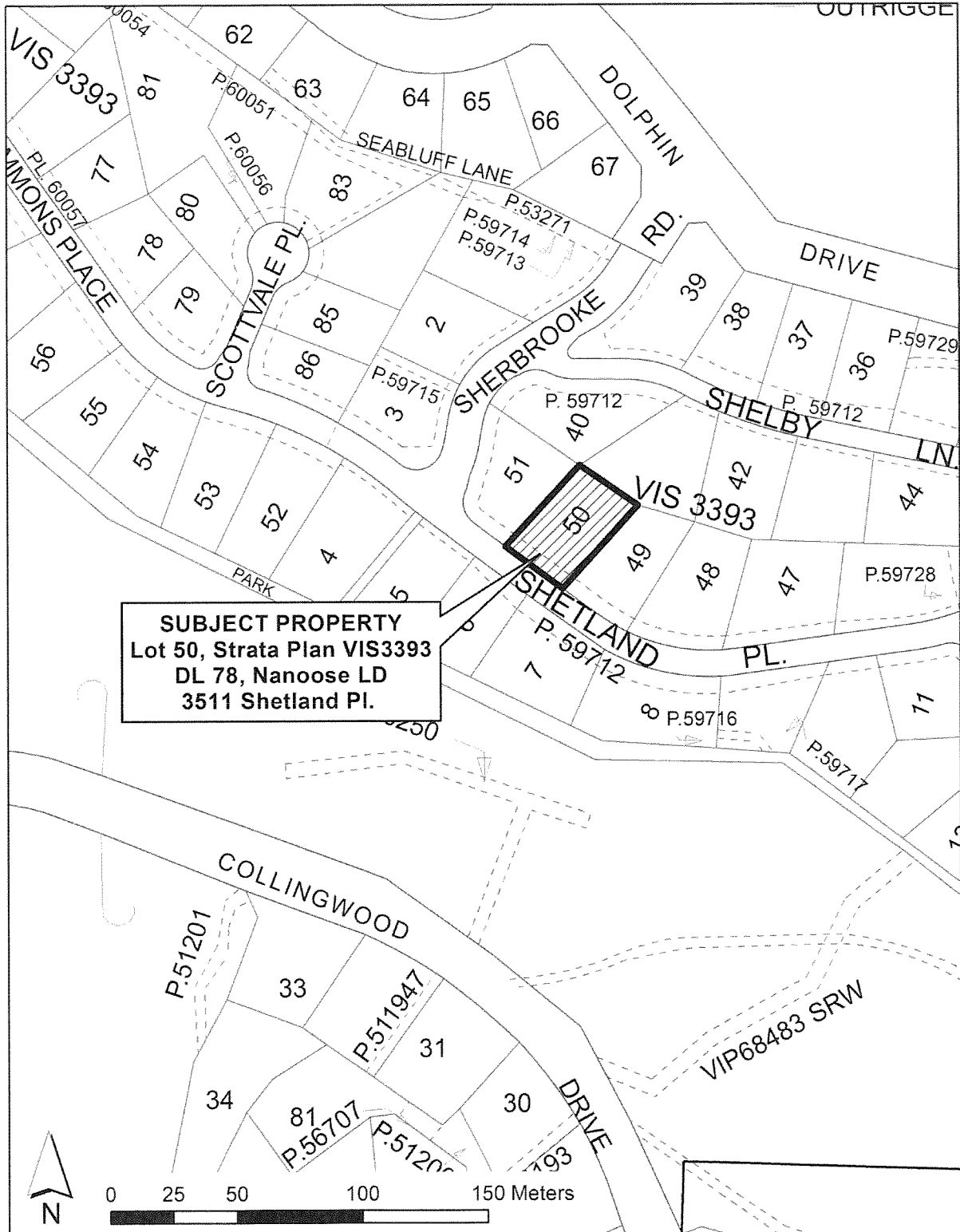
With respect to the lands, "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987" is varied as follows:

- **Section 3.4.61 Minimum Setback Requirements** to reduce the minimum setback from the interior side (west) lot line and rear lot line from 2.0 metres to 0.0 metres for an existing retaining wall and fence as shown on Schedule 2.

Conditions of Approval

1. The retaining wall shall be sited in accordance with the site plan prepared by Sims Associates Land Surveying Ltd. dated October 26, 2012, attached as Schedule 2.
2. The applicant shall obtain the necessary building permit for the existing retaining wall.

Attachment 1
Location of Subject Property





	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	JH	Dec 27/12
Approved (GM)	JH	Dec 27/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	Dec 27/12
Authority (CAO)	JH	Dec 27/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeremy Holm
Manager of Current Planning

DATE: December 21, 2012

FROM: Tyler Brown
Planning Technician

FILE: PL2012-037

SUBJECT: Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-037 - Glencar Consultants Inc. Lot 11 and Lot 12, District Lot 81, Nanoose District, Plan EPP21783 - Wally's Way & Undeveloped Stanhope Road Electoral Area 'G'

PURPOSE

To consider an application for a Development Variance Permit to reduce setbacks to a walkway in relation to the construction of residential dwellings within the subject properties.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has received an application from Glencar Consultants Inc. (on behalf of 0885538 BC Ltd.) to reduce the minimum setbacks from an existing walkway, in order to accommodate the construction of new dwellings within the subject properties (Lot 11 and Lot 12, Plan EPP21783).

The subject properties, Lot 11 and Lot 12, are 1260 m² and 855.1 m² in site area and are zoned Residential 1 Subdivision District Q (RS1Q) pursuant to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987" (see Attachment 1 for location of subject property). The lots are currently vacant and surrounded by similarly sized residential parcels to the north (separated by undeveloped Stanhope Road), to the east and south. A larger residential lot to the east separates the subdivision from Ackerman Road.

The parcels were created through a recent Subdivision Application (PL2011-079), which was registered in July 2012. Through the subdivision review process it was determined that a pedestrian connection was needed between Wally's Way and the undeveloped Stanhope Road, which will in future be developed as a multi-use trail. The applicant dedicated a 4.5 metre wide lane between Lot 11 and Lot 12 to be used as a public walkway (see Schedule 2 Existing Subdivision). Subsequently, the applicant consulted with RDN staff about the building envelopes for Lot 11 and Lot 12. It was determined that the Side Lot Lines bordering the pedestrian walkway (lane) are not common to another parcel and therefore cannot be considered as Interior Side Lot Lines, which require a 2.0 metre setback, but instead must be considered as Other Lot Lines which require a 5.0 metre setback for buildings and structures.

Proposed Development & Variance

The applicant is requesting a variance to reduce the side yard (Other Lot Lines) setback from 5.0 metres to 2.0 metres to better accommodate the construction of new dwellings within Lots 11 and 12 (see Schedule 3 Existing Subdivision – Detail). The applicant has indicated that the required 5.0 metre setback would limit the building envelopes and make it difficult to construct a dwelling unit consistent in character to other homes within the subdivision. The following regulation from the “Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987” is requested to be varied:

- **Section 3.4.61 Residential 1 - Other Lot Lines Minimum Setback Requirements** –to reduce the Other Lot Lines minimum setback requirement from 5.0 metres to 2.0 metres for the existing walkway (lane) between Lot 11 and Lot 12, Plan EPP21783.

ALTERNATIVES

1. To approve the Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-037 subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1 to 3.
2. To deny the Development Variance Permit No. PL2012-037.

LANDUSE IMPLICATIONS

Development Implications

The RS1 Zone requires a setback of 5.0 metres from Other Lot Lines. The variance to reduce the setback to 2.0 metres from the walkway is consistent with the side yard setbacks on the opposite sides of the lots, and would ensure the building envelopes are consistent with other lots in the subdivision. In staff’s assessment, the proposed variance would not negatively impact the function of the adjacent lane or either of the adjoining properties. All other setback requirements will be met within the subject properties.

Public Consultation Process

Pending the Committee’s recommendation and pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, property owners and tenants located within a 50.0 metre radius will receive a direct notice of the proposal and have an opportunity to comment on the proposed variance prior to the Board’s consideration of the application.

Sustainability Implications

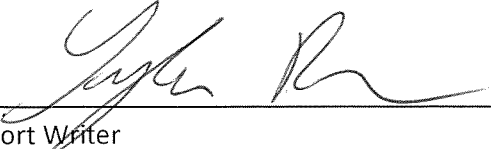
Staff have reviewed the proposed variance and no sustainability implications have been identified.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

This is an application for a Development Variance Permit to reduce the Other Lot Lines setback requirement in order to accommodate the construction of new dwellings. The applicant has submitted a rationale and site plan in support of the application, indicating that the variance would improve the building envelopes within these lots and ensure consistency with other lots in the subdivision. As the proposed variance would not negatively impact the function of the adjoining walkway and residential lots, staff recommends the variance be supported.

RECOMMENDATIONS

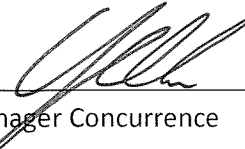
That the Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-037 to reduce the setback from "Other Lot Lines" adjacent to the existing walkway (lane) within the subject properties be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1 to 3.



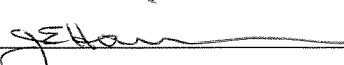
Report Writer



A/ General Manager Concurrence



Manager Concurrence



A/ CAO Concurrence

Schedule No. 1
Conditions of Development Variance Permit

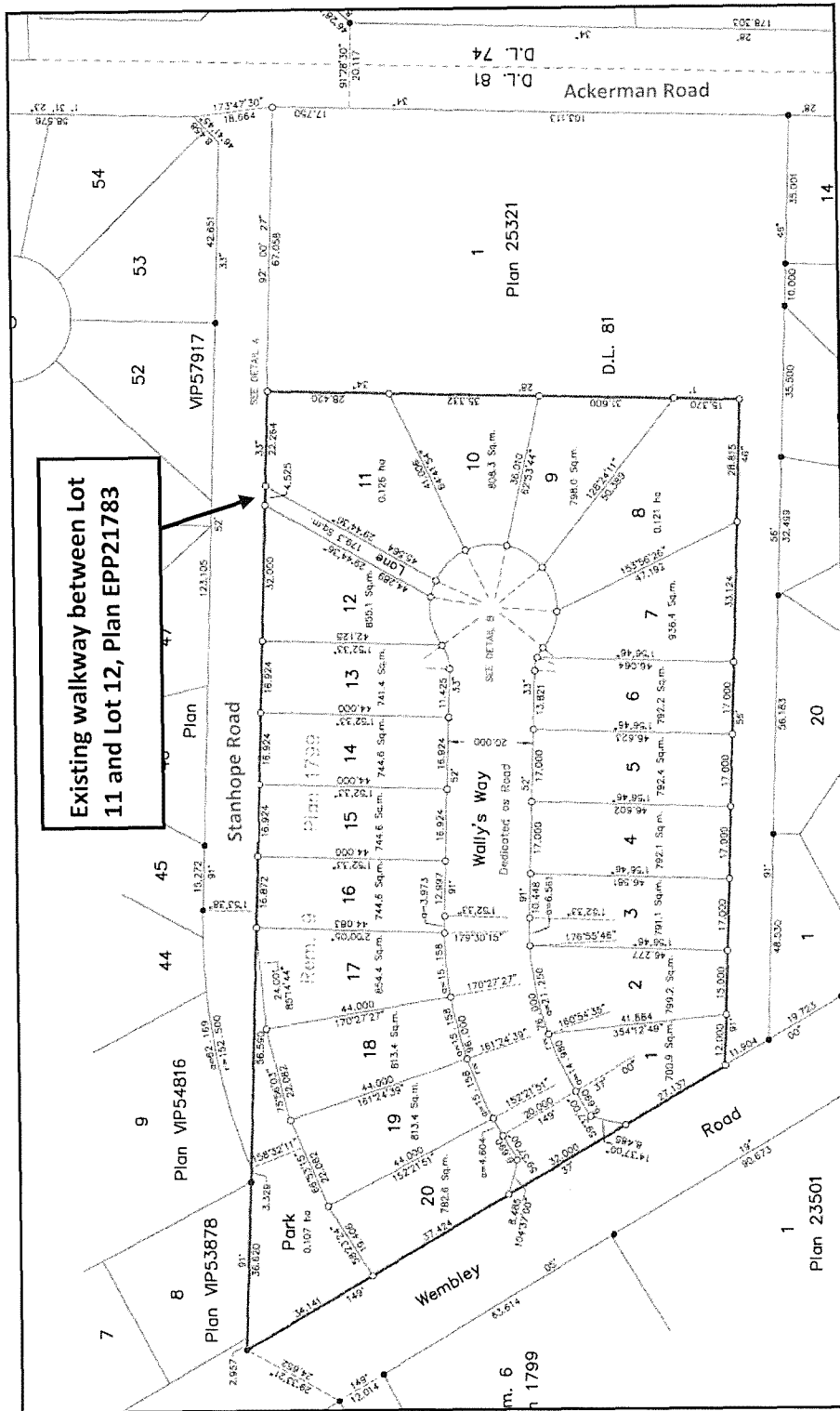
The following sets out the terms and conditions of Development Variance Permit Application No. PL2012-037:

Proposed Variance

With respect to the lands, "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987," is varied as follows:

- **Section 3.4.61 Residential 1 – Other Lot Lines Minimum Setback Requirements** –to reduce the Other Lot Lines minimum setback requirement from 5.0 metres to 2.0 metres for the existing walkway (lane) between Lot 11 and Lot 12, Plan EPP21783 as shown on Schedule 2.

Schedule 2 Existing Subdivision

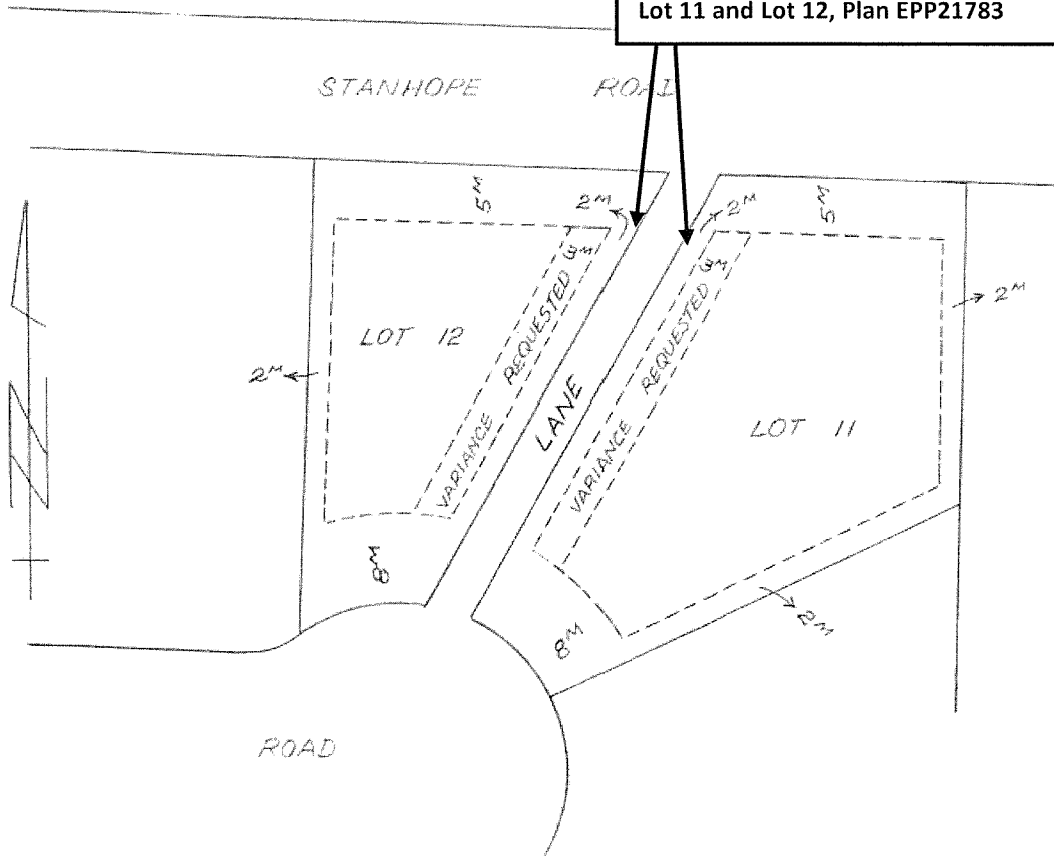


Schedule 3
Existing Subdivision – Detail

PLAN OF LOTS 11 AND 12, + LANE
DISTRICT LOT 81, NANOOSE DISTRICT
SHOWING BUILDING SETBACK VARIANCES REQUESTED

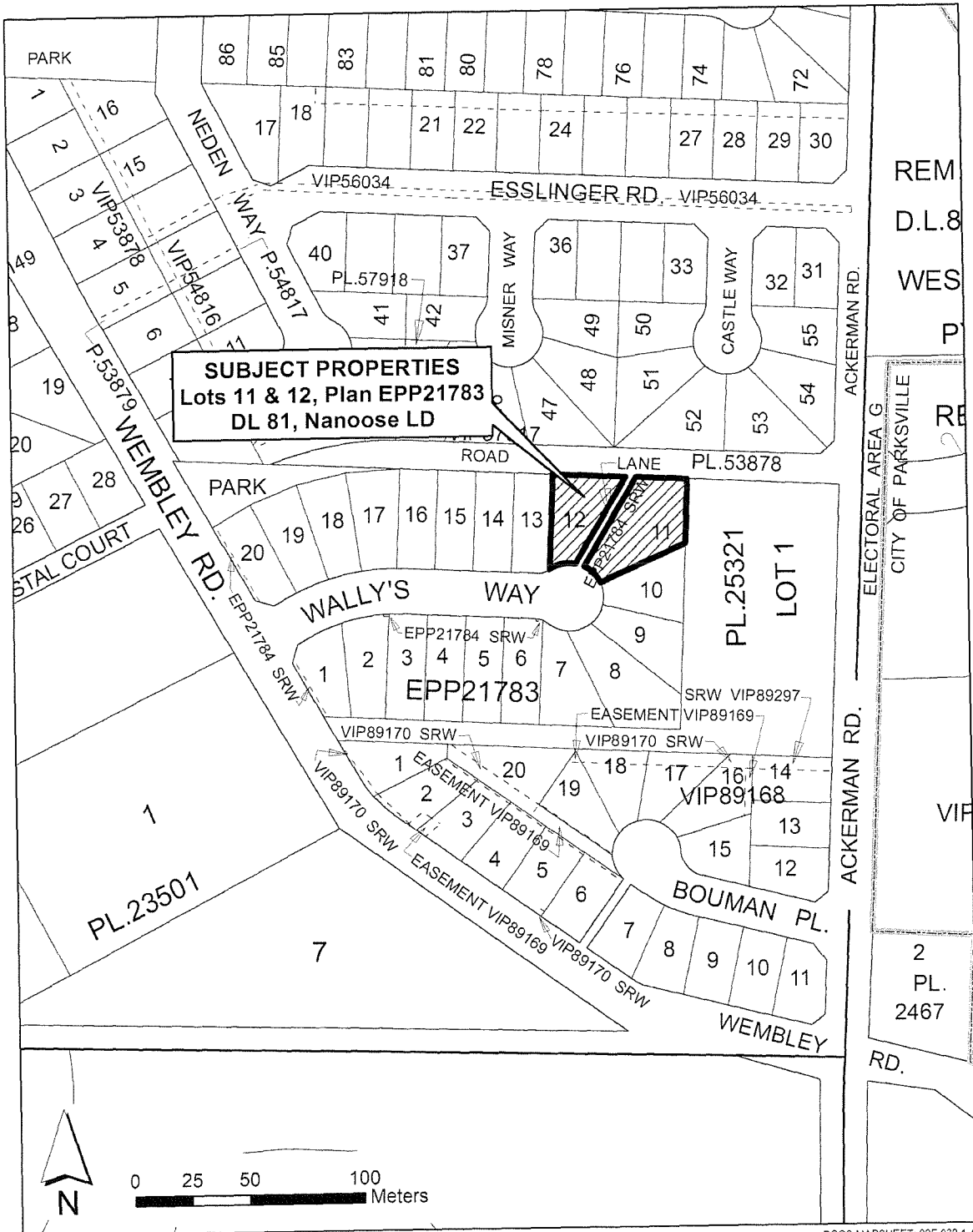
SCALE: 1:500

Proposed variance to reduce the
Other Lot Line setback from the
walkway from 5.0 m to 2.0 m within
Lot 11 and Lot 12, Plan EPP21783



FEB. 27/12

Attachment 1
Location of Subject Property





	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	JH	Dec 27/12
Approved (GM)	JH	Dec 27/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	Dec 27/12
Authority (CAO)	AEH	Dec 27/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeremy Holm
Manager, Current Planning

DATE: December 20, 2012

FROM: Angela Buick
Planner

FILE: PL2012-161/PL2012-111

SUBJECT: Development Permit Application and Request of the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement/Subdivision
Lot A, District Lot 89, Newcastle District, Plan 22079 – 1965 Widgeon Road
Electoral Area 'H'

PURPOSE

To consider an application for a Development Permit and a Request for Relaxation of the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement in order to facilitate a proposed two lot subdivision.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has received an application from Fern Road Consulting Ltd. (on behalf of Franz and Gertraud Assenbrunner and Georg and Birgit Seitz) in order to permit a two lot subdivision under Section 946 of the *Local Government Act*. The subject property is approximately 2.95 ha in area and is zoned Rural 1, Subdivision District 'D' (RU1D) (2.0 ha minimum parcel size with or without community services) pursuant to "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987".

The parent parcel currently contains two single dwelling units and associated accessory buildings. Surrounding land uses include the Strait of Georgia to the north; rural zoned parcels, to the east and west; and Widgeon Road, E&N Rail Corridor, and rural zoned parcels to the south.

The property is designated within the following applicable Development Permit Areas (DPA) pursuant to "Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1335, 2003":

- Environmentally Sensitive Features for Aquifer Protection DPA; and
- Hazard Lands DPA.

Proposed Development

The proposed subdivision will result in the creation of a 0.95 ha lot (Lot 1) and a 2.0 ha remainder (see Schedule 2 for proposed plan of subdivision). The parcels are proposed to be serviced by individual potable water wells and individual private septic disposal systems. The proposed Development Permit and Frontage Relaxation are required to facilitate the proposed two lot subdivision.

ALTERNATIVES

1. To approve the Development Permit Application No. PL2012-161 and Request for Relaxation of the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement subject to the conditions outlined in Schedules 1 and 2.
2. To deny the Development Permit Application No. PL2012-161 and Request for Frontage Relaxation.
3. To provide staff with an alternate direction.

LAND USE IMPLICATIONS

Development Implications

To address the Aquifer Protection Guidelines, the applicant submitted a Hydrogeological Impact Review prepared by Waterline Resources Inc., dated September 13, 2012. The impact review noted that the underlying aquifer (Aquifer 662) is described as having low vulnerability. Each of the proposed lots are limited to one dwelling unit per parcel; therefore the report concludes that the proposed two lot subdivision represents a low risk of adverse impacts to the adjacent properties or to nearby surface water resources.

With respect to the Hazard Lands Guidelines, the applicant submitted a Geotechnical Hazard Assessment Report prepared by Ground Control, dated August 31, 2012. The report concluded that the proposed subdivision will have no new construction or land alteration associated with it, and will have no negative impact on the steep slopes along the north property line; therefore, the site is safe and suitable for the proposed development. The report recommended that any future development (e.g., new construction) on the proposed lots must take the steep slopes into consideration when establishing suitable building setbacks in order to ensure adequate protection against soil movement during seismic events. Staff recommends that the applicant be required to register a Section 219 Restrictive Covenant on the property title including the Geotechnical Hazards Assessment Report and a save harmless clause that releases the Regional District of Nanaimo from all losses and damages as a result of erosion and/or landslide. Compliance with the recommendations of the Geotechnical Hazards Assessment Report and registration of a covenant are included as Conditions of Approval.

Proposed Lot 1 and Remainder Lot A, as shown on the submitted plan of subdivision, will not meet the minimum 10% perimeter frontage requirement pursuant to Section 944 of the *Local Government Act*. Therefore, approval of a frontage relaxation is required from the Regional Board. The requested frontages are as follows:

<i>Proposed Lot No.</i>	<i>Required Frontage</i>	<i>Proposed Frontage</i>	<i>% of Perimeter</i>
Lot 1	58.0 metres	46.5 metres	8%
Remainder Lot A	95.0 metres	49.3 metres	5 %

Inter-governmental Implications

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure staff have indicated they have no objection to the request for relaxation of the minimum 10% perimeter frontage requirement for the proposed parcels as there will be sufficient frontage to support access to each of the lots.

Sustainability Implications

The applicant has provided professional reports to address the Development Permit Area Guidelines which conclude there will be no negative impacts as a result of the proposed subdivision. Furthermore, the proposed subdivision is located outside of the 60.0 metre radius no disturbance area around an eagle nesting tree in the northwest corner of the property.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The applicant has submitted a Development Permit Application and a Request for a Frontage Relaxation in order to facilitate a two lot subdivision. The subject property is located within the Sensitive Environmentally Features (Aquifer Protection) and Hazard Lands DPA pursuant to the Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan. The applicant has provided a Geotechnical Hazards Assessment and a Hydrogeological Impact Review; both reports conclude that the proposed subdivision will not negatively impact the subject property or adjacent properties. As the application is consistent with the applicable development permit guidelines and the frontage relaxation can be supported, staff recommends approval of the development permit and request for frontage relaxation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

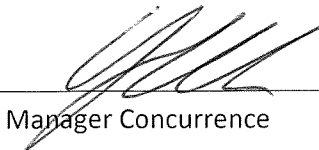
1. That Development Permit Application No. PL2012-161 to permit a proposed two lot subdivision be approved subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in Schedules 1 and 2.
2. That the Request to Relax the Minimum 10% Perimeter Frontage Requirement for a proposed two lot Subdivision Application (No. PL2012-111), be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Schedules 1 and 2.



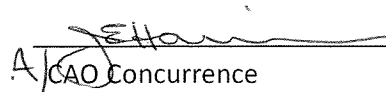
For Report Writer



General Manager Concurrence



Manager Concurrence



CAO Concurrence

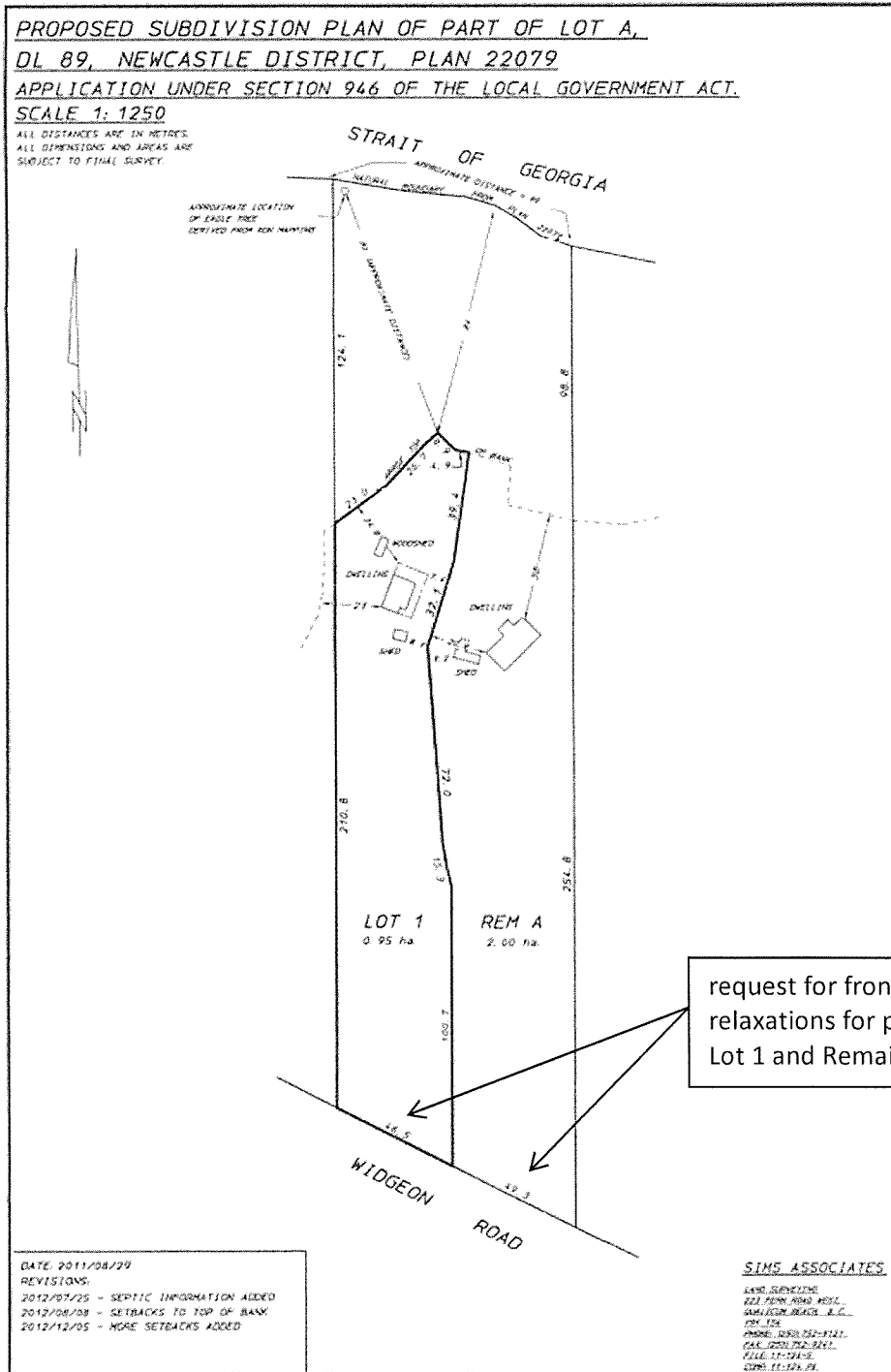
Schedule 1
Terms and Conditions of Development Permit

The following sets out the terms and conditions of Development Permit Application No. PL2012-161:

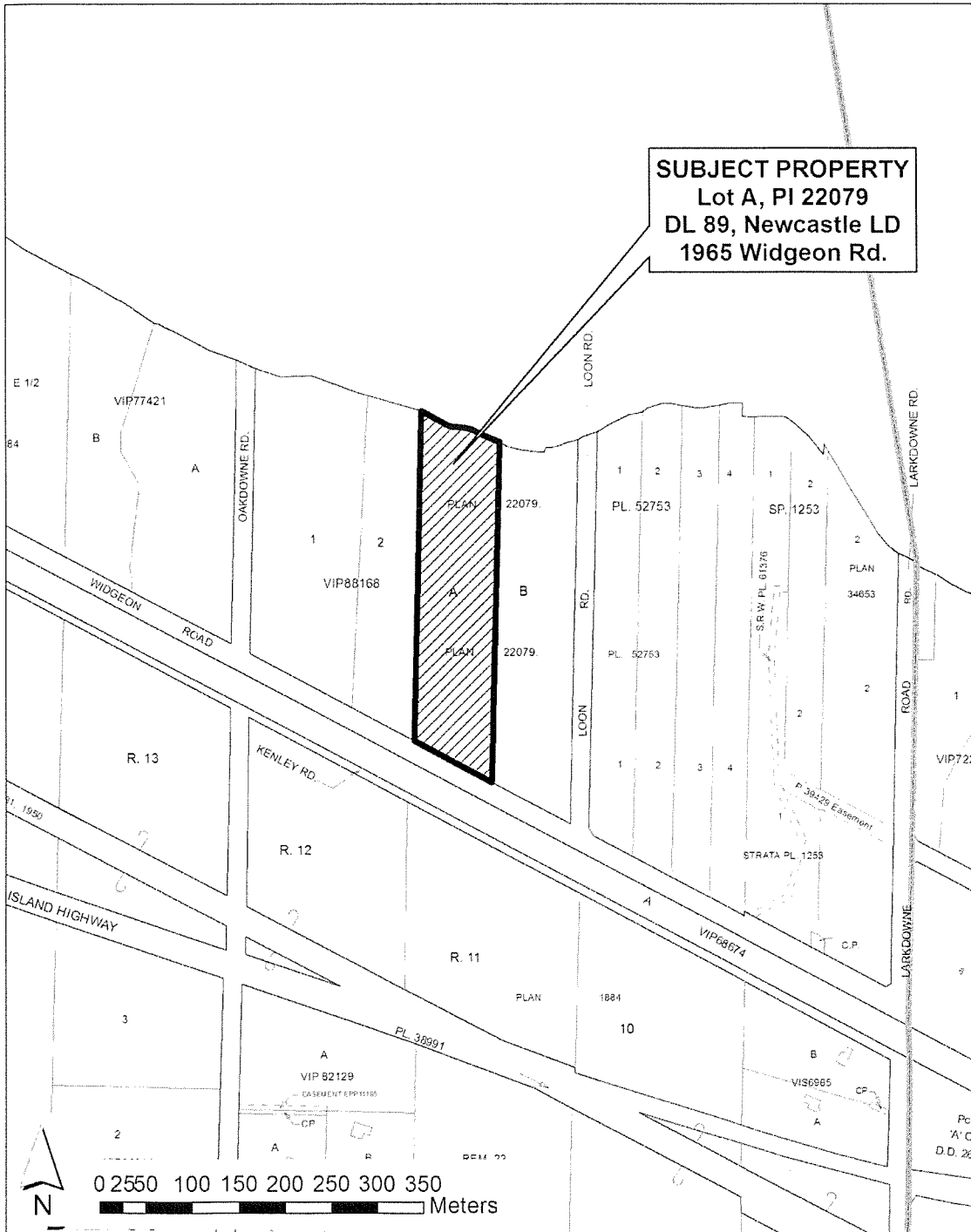
Conditions of Approval

1. The subdivision of the lands shall be developed in accordance with the recommendations established in the Geotechnical Hazards Assessment Report, prepared by Richard McKinley of Ground Control and dated August 31, 2012.
2. The applicant shall register the Geotechnical Hazards Assessment Report on title of the parent parcel as a Section 219 Restrictive Covenant and includes a save harmless clause that releases the Regional District of Nanaimo from all losses and damages as a result of erosion and/or landslide.
3. The subdivision of the lands shall be developed in accordance with the recommendations established in the Hydrogeological Impact Review, prepared by Shelly Bayne of Waterline Resources Inc. and dated September 13, 2012.
4. The subdivision of the lands shall be in substantial compliance with the plan of subdivision prepared by Sims Associates dated August 29, 2011 as shown in Schedule 2.

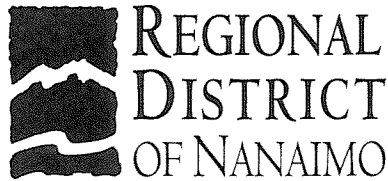
Schedule 2
Proposed Site Plan and Frontage Relaxation/Subdivision



Attachment 1
Subject Property Map



BCGS MAPSHEET: 92F.038.3.2



	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	JH	Dec 27/12
Approved (GM)	JH	Dec 27/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	Dec 27/12
Authority (CAO)	JH	Dec 27/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeremy Holm
Manager of Current Planning

DATE: December 21, 2012

FROM: Greg Keller
Senior Planner

FILE: 0360 20 AAC

SUBJECT: Revised Regional District of Nanaimo Agricultural Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval to revise the Regional District of Nanaimo Agricultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference in response to direction provided by the Board with regard to an Agricultural Area Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Board approved a Terms of Reference for the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) in July 2008. Since its formation, the AAC has been involved in a number of agricultural issues. Most notably, the AAC played a key role in the recent Agricultural Area Plan process that resulted in the adoption of an AAP for the region.

Recently, staff presented a report to the Board outlining an action plan for the AAP. The Board directed staff to proceed with the following five actions:

1. Include for the Board’s consideration an item in the 2013 budget for establishment of an AAP Implementation Steering Committee, including a limited allowance for implementation actions in 2013.
2. Prepare a Terms of Reference for the AAP Implementation Steering Committee for the Board’s consideration.
3. Establish the AAP Implementation Steering Committee as per Board approved Terms of Reference.
4. Work with the AAP Implementation Steering Committee to develop a three-year Implementation Work Plan for the Board’s consideration.
5. Take action on items on the Implementation Steering Committee Work Plan within the limited initial AAP Implementation budget established for 2013.

Actions 2 and 3 above require the preparation of a Terms of Reference and the establishment of an Implementation Steering Committee.

DISCUSSION

Staff is proposing to amend the AAC Terms of Reference rather than to propose the creation of a new Committee to build on existing momentum and reduce administration. Please refer to Attachment 1 for a proposed amended Terms of Reference. This amendment would refocus the AAC towards AAP implementation as well as additional agricultural issues as determined by the Board.

Staff is proposing that the amended Terms of Reference maintain the existing membership provisions, number of members, and elected representation. This is in keeping with the direction previously provided by the Sustainability Select Committee when the AAC was first established.

The proposed amended Terms of Reference is organized differently than the existing Terms of Reference and takes a more simplified form, which is consistent with other RDN Committee Terms of Reference. Rather than including specific procedural rules of conduct within the Terms of Reference, AAC members will be expected to follow the procedures contain within "Regional District of Nanaimo Board Procedure Bylaw No. 1512, 2006".

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Board approve the amended Agricultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference as attached.
2. That the Board not approve the amended Agricultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

With the exception of staff time commitments and minor expenses related to administration of the Committee, the proposed amendments to the AAC will have minimal budgetary impact for 2013. The draft 2013 Budget includes \$5,000 for implementation of the AAP. An amendment of the existing AAC Terms of Reference, rather than appointing an additional Committee, would result in administrative efficiencies and reduced administrative costs.

Based on Board direction in relation to action 4 of the AAP action plan, one of the first tasks the AAC will undertake is to prepare a draft AAP implementation work plan for the Board's consideration. Any substantial budgetary commitments can be considered by the Board through approval of the AAC's work plan and would require further Board approval through the annual budget review process.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Given the support for agriculture and local food production in the Board's 2013 – 2015 Strategic Plan's Specific Goals and Actions, as well as in the Regional Growth Strategy, and the various Official Community Plans throughout the region, it is well established that agriculture and food security is a high priority. In addition, the AAP provides greater focus and clarity on agriculture planning at both the local and regional level. The proposed amended AAC Terms of Reference supports the implementation of the AAP, which would assist the region in making a positive contribution towards increasing agricultural capacity and food self-reliance.


The revised Terms of Reference and new role of the AAC would support the Board's mission to implement its plans with action on the ground as outlined in the Board's 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. The implementation of the AAP, starting with a revision to the AAC Terms of Reference, would support the Board's strategic priorities of regional self-sufficiency and economic viability through continued support for local agriculture and shellfish aquaculture.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

An amendment to the AAC Terms of Reference is being proposed in response to the Board's direction regarding the AAP action plan. The proposed amended Terms of Reference is intended to reflect a need to refocus the AAC's role towards AAP implementation. The proposed membership remains the same while the content of the proposed amended Terms of Reference has been reorganized and simplified to create consistency with other RDN Committee Terms of Reference documents. Approval of the proposed amendment would redirect the AAC's efforts towards implementation of the AAP which is supported by the Board's Strategic Plan. Therefore, staff recommend that the Board approve the amended AAC Terms of Reference attached as Attachment 1.

RECOMMENDATION

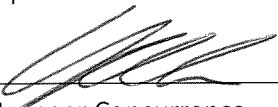
That the Board approve the amended Agricultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference attached as Attachment 1.



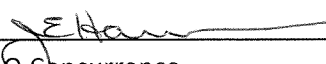
Report Writer



A/General Manager Concurrence

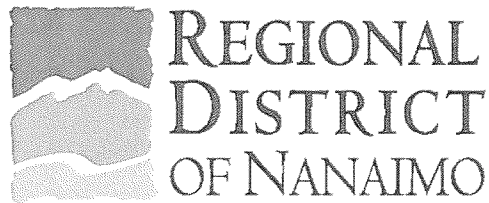


Manager Concurrence



A/CAO Concurrence

Attachment 1
Proposed Amended Terms of Reference



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE
date of adoption

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) established an Agricultural Advisory Committee in 2008 to assist in a range of RDN initiatives, such as the preparation of an Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) and provide comments and recommendations to the Board on a range of agricultural issues. The RDN adopted the AAP on October 23, 2012. The AAP includes recommendations for action in support of local agriculture and aquaculture in the RDN.

One of the recommended actions included in the AAP is to establish a Committee to guide the implementation of the AAP and provide the Regional Board with ongoing advice and recommendations on agricultural related items. These Terms of Reference expand the role of the AAC to include reference to the preparation and implementation of the AAP.

PURPOSE

The role of the AAC is to increase awareness of agricultural issues in the RDN, assist in the implementation of the RDN AAP and other agricultural related initiatives, and provide local perspective and expertise to advise the Regional Board on a range of agricultural issues on an ongoing and as needed basis as directed by the Board.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The AAC will, upon the Regional Board's direction, be responsible for advising the Regional Board on a number of initiatives including:

- monitoring and evaluating the AAP and its implementation;
- preparing regular reports to the Board with RDN staff assistance;
- providing comments and recommendations to the RDN Board as it relates to agriculture on items including, but not limited to, the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), Official Community Plans (OCP), Local Area Plans, reviews of RDN Zoning Bylaws, Parks and Trails Master Plans, Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Plans, Liquid Waste Management Plans, Rainwater Management Plans, noxious weed/insect control, and other items referred to the AAC by the Board upon request or as directed by Board policy;

- promoting public awareness of agriculture and its role and economic value in the community; and,
- advocating on behalf of the agricultural community.

MEMBERSHIP

The AAC will consist of a maximum of ten members appointed by the Regional Board representing a diverse range of interests including elected officials, commodity groups/producers, and established regional farming and aquaculture organizations. AAC members should reside, own property, or conduct business within the RDN.

Membership representation will be as follows:

Community Members

- Two members who actively participate in agriculture in District 68;
- Two members who actively participate in agriculture in District 69;
- Two members representing regional agricultural organizations;
- One member representing shellfish aquaculture organizations;

Elected Members

- One Electoral Area Director from District 68;
- One Electoral Area Director from District 69; and
- One Municipal Director.

Community members will be appointed by the Regional Board through an open application process. Members will be recruited through advertisements in local media, word of mouth, and use of the RDN website. In addition, direct invitations may be used to solicit participation by the specific interests listed above. Applications must demonstrate the applicant's interest in agriculture and ability to commit the necessary time to the AAC.

The Regional Board will appoint two Electoral Area Directors and one Municipal Director as outlined above. The Board will designate one of the three Board representatives as the Chairperson for the AAC.

Non-Voting Advisors

The AAC may seek representatives from other organizations to advise the AAC from time to time on an as needed basis to provide expertise in response to the needs of the AAC.

TERM

The term of appointment for AAC members is two years. In order to allow staggering of Committee membership and allow for greater continuity for the AAC and its works, approximately half of the Community member terms will expire each year.

No substitute members will be permitted. If a member must resign from the Committee, their position will be filled through the application process.

No remuneration for participation on the Committee is provided unless otherwise approved by the Board. However, if Committee activities coincide with meal times, meals may be provided.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

AAC members having a priority or pecuniary interest in a matter discussed by or are personally affected by a matter discussed by the AAC must declare a conflict and step aside from the discussion and subsequent vote/motion on that particular matter.

1. Terms of Reference originally adopted by the Board on August 26, 2008
2. Terms of Reference amended by the Board on January 25, 2011
3. Terms of Reference amended by the Board on January 22, 2012



	Initial	Date
Content (Mgr)	PT	12/28/12
Approved (GM)	PT	12/28/12
Legal Form (CO)	JH	12/28/12
Authority (CAO)	SEH	12/28/12

MEMORANDUM

TO: Paul Thompson
Manager of Long Range Planning

DATE: December 27, 2012

FROM: Lisa Bhopalsingh
Senior Planner

FILE: 6970 20 SESU

SUBJECT: Secondary Suites Study and Consultation Plan

PURPOSE

To present a Secondary Suites Study and Consultation Plan to provide background information and a process for gathering community input on secondary suites that will be used to guide Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board decisions related to allowing secondary suites.

BACKGROUND

This report and the attached *Secondary Suites Study* in Appendix 'B' and *Secondary Suites Consultation Plan* in Appendix 'A' have been drafted in response to RDN Board direction to staff (given on January 25, 2011) to proceed with Adopting a Secondary Suites Bylaw as an action identified in the RDN's Housing Action Plan (December 30, 2010):

2010 Housing Action Plan - Action 8 - Adopting a Secondary Suites Bylaw

The RDN will consider undertaking a Study to identify where secondary suites and carriage homes should be permitted in the electoral areas of the RDN. The Study would also consider appropriate land use regulations (e.g. parking spaces, floor area). Based upon the outcome of the Study above, the RDN will consider updating OCPs and zoning bylaws to allow secondary suites.

This report and the attached documents apply to all electoral areas where the RDN provides land use planning services (Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G and H).

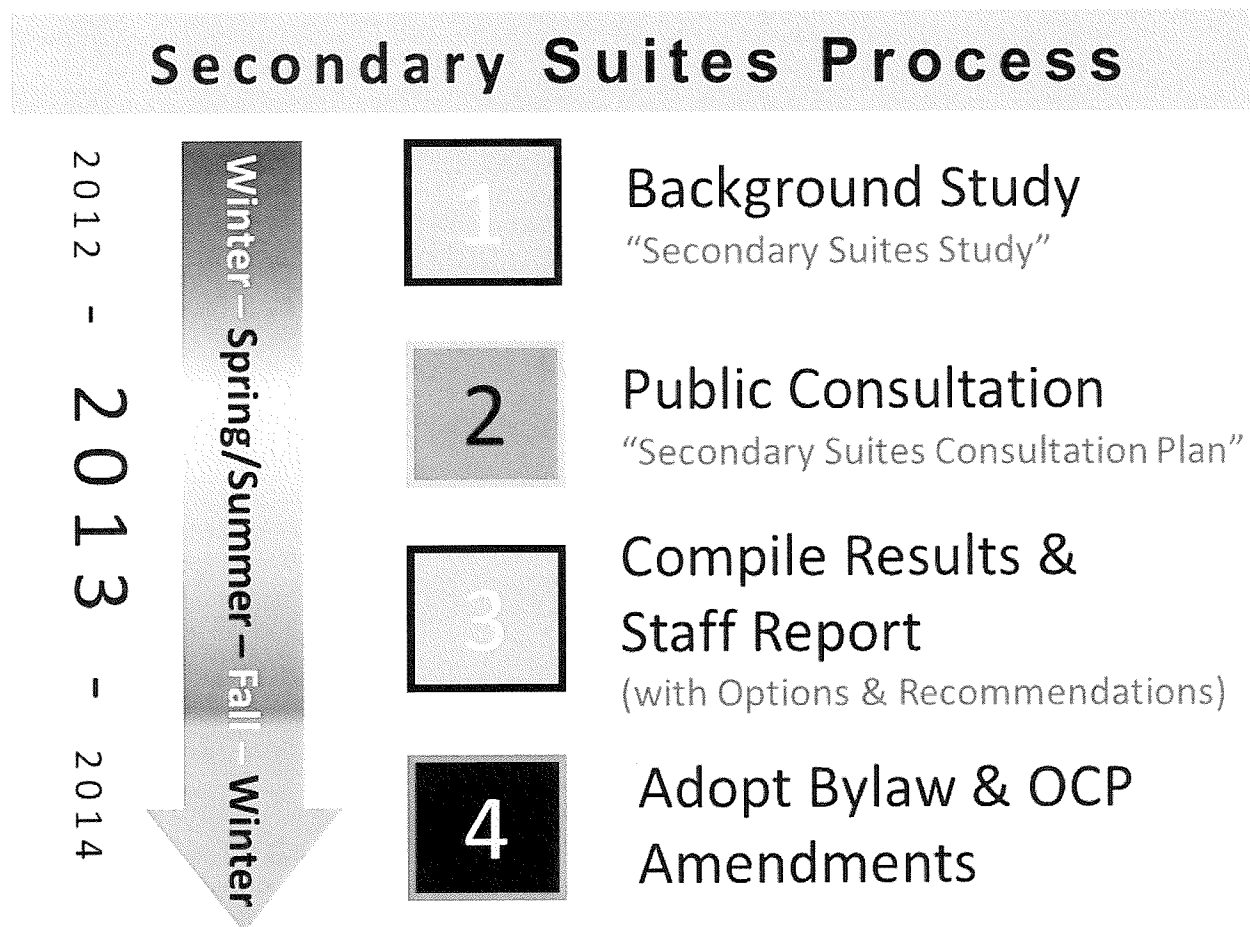
Secondary Suites Process

The Secondary Suites Study is the first stage in a process to consider amending bylaws to allow secondary suites (see Figure 1 below). The Study provides background information on secondary suites including a summary of the benefits and challenges of allowing secondary suites in a range of locations; a review of different issues that need to be considered prior to allowing suites and; a discussion of different policy options for where secondary suites could be allowed in the region. The Study was based on a staff review of existing RDN policies together with the experience and practices of other jurisdictions that allow secondary suites.

The information presented in the Secondary Suites Study will be used as background information for implementing Stage 2 of the process outlined in the Secondary Suites Consultation Plan and as discussed in the 'Public Consultation Implications' section of this report.

During Stage 3 of the process RDN staff will compile and analyze the consultation results, using it to develop options and recommendations to the RDN Board. Based on direction from the RDN Board, amendments may be drafted for land use bylaws including Official Community Plans (OCPs) and zoning bylaws. Community members will have an opportunity to provide further feedback on any potential changes to land use bylaws during Stage 4.

Figure 1: Secondary Suites Process Winter 2012-2013 - Winter 2013-2014



Summary of Secondary Suites Study

The RDN has long recognized that secondary suites play an important role in providing affordable rental housing in the RDN’s Electoral Areas. Allowing secondary suites is a practical way for the RDN to use its land use authority and resources to increase housing options for those who struggle to find adequate, affordable housing. Secondary suites capitalize on the potential to use new and existing single family housing to provide rental housing. There is evidence from other jurisdictions that this can help meet the demand for affordable housing and also allow community members to age in place. While there are

many clear benefits to allowing secondary suites in the RDN, there are also a number of challenges that need to be considered and addressed. The Secondary Suites Study provides an overview of the benefits and challenges of secondary suites from the perspective of homeowners, renters, rural communities and the region as a whole.

The Study identifies issues that need to be considered when drafting and implementing secondary suites regulations including: size, number of rooms, number of suites allowed and location on a lot, parking requirements, owner-occupancy, user fees, flexible design of suites to allow for different types of users and energy efficiency. These issues are based upon the experience of other jurisdictions, anticipated community concerns and direction from RDN sustainability policies.

The RDN has a number of interrelated sustainability priorities that need to be considered when making decisions about where and how secondary suites should be allowed. Taking this into consideration the Study reviews the suitability of different locations within the RDN for allowing secondary suites. This involves evaluating how well different places fit RDN policies that address: prior community support for secondary suites as identified by OCPs; access to transit and a diverse range of amenities; groundwater resources; and levels of community servicing (water and sewer). This is discussed in more detail in the 'Sustainability Implications' section of this report.

ALTERNATIVES

1. To receive this report with the attached *Secondary Suites Study* in Appendix 'B' as Stage 1 of the secondary suites process and proceed with Stage 2 - Public Consultation as outlined in the attached Secondary Suites Consultation Plan in Appendix 'A' of this report.
2. To receive this report with the attached Secondary Suites Study in Appendix 'B' as Stage 1 of the secondary suites process and not proceed with Stage 2 - Public Consultation as outlined in the attached Secondary Suites Consultation Plan in Appendix 'A' of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications with respect to receiving the information in this report that relates to Stage 1 of the secondary suites process. However, there are costs associated with directing staff to proceed with Stage 2 - Public Consultation.

The costs associated with the public consultation process as outlined in the attached Secondary Suites Consultation Plan are included in the 2013 Long Range Planning Budget. The majority of the anticipated financial implications for Stage 2 will be for staff time and resources involved with preparing and presenting educational materials and surveys, conducting meetings and other processes to gather and analyze feedback, responding to inquiries/ concerns and drafting regulations.

It should be noted that, if the topic of secondary suites generates a high degree of concern for RDN residents/stakeholders, then it may be necessary to make modifications to the proposed public consultation process. This could have potential impacts on the anticipated costs that have been budgeted for.

Sustainability Implications

Proximity to transit and a range of shops, services, employment opportunities and amenities (schools, recreation) are important factors in housing affordability. Access to these features is also fundamental to the principles of Smart Growth that the RDN's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is consistent with. In the RDN's Electoral Areas this involves focusing growth within Growth Containment Boundaries (GCB's) known as Rural Village Centres (RVC's). These areas are intended to become compact, complete, mixed-use communities in order to achieve more vibrant, efficient and sustainable development while at the same time protecting environmentally sensitive and rural lands outside of RVC's.

Policies in the RDN Board Strategic Plan, Regional Growth Strategy and Official Community Plans clearly support secondary suites either directly or indirectly as a means of increasing housing diversity and affordability within Rural Village Centres. However, the reality is that few RVC's currently have features associated with compact, complete, and mixed-use development and it has become increasingly clear that their capacity to support such development in the future may also be limited. Furthermore there are areas outside of RVC's that receive the benefits of some services including transit and community water.

The Secondary Suites Study presents five different options for considering where secondary suites could be allowed: The options range from allowing suites in more to fewer places and from meeting fewer RDN policies to all RDN policies:

- Option 1: Secondary suites allowed in all zones that permit single family residential use.
- Option 2: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres and the Rural Residential Land use designation in the RGS.
- Option 3: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres.
- Option 4: Secondary suites allowed in Rural Village Centres with characteristics that are most consistent with RDN policies.
- Option 5: Secondary suites pilot project within an area where secondary suites are supported in an OCP.

The Study evaluates the benefits and challenges of each option based on RDN policies relating to: affordable housing, growth management, environmental protection, climate change, and efficient servicing. Both Options 1 and 2 would allow secondary suites in all zones that allow single family residential use. While these first two options allow secondary suites in the most areas, they were also found to be the least consistent with RDN policies. Options 3 and 4 would allow secondary suites in some or all Rural Village Centres. These latter two options allow secondary suites in smaller, more concentrated areas and were also found to be the most consistent with RDN policies.

The Study also presents Option 5, which involves allowing secondary suites in a pilot area such as part of a new subdivision in an area where OCP policies already support secondary suites. This would enable the impacts of allowing secondary suites in a small area to be evaluated before deciding on which other areas should be considered for suites and under what conditions they should be allowed.

The attached Study provides a more detailed discussion of the benefits and challenges of the different options. This discussion is intended to be used as information for the RDN Board and community members as they respectively provide direction and feedback during the subsequent stages of the secondary suites process on where and how secondary suites could be allowed.

Public Consultation Implications

The recently adopted 2011 Regional Growth Strategy included an extensive public consultation process that showed clear support for the RDN and its member municipalities doing more to support the creation of affordable housing in the region. A few of the RDN's Electoral Area Official Community Plans, developed with broad community consultation, show specific support for secondary suites within Rural Village Centres (e.g. Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan, Bowser Village Centre Plan). However, there are several areas of the RDN where the question of allowing secondary suites has never been addressed by the community nor has there been any discussion around how secondary suites should be implemented.

The 2011 Regional Growth Strategy and more recently adopted RDN Board Strategic Plan 2013-2015 support transparent and open decision making and involving community members in decisions that impact them. As outlined on Page 19 of the RDN Board Strategic Plan 2013-2015:

- To encourage regional dialog on topics affecting all residents, including housing, transportation, employment, water supply, waste management, among others;...
- To engage residents in problem-solving to generate ideas and to understand needs; and
- To recognize the importance of social inclusion and social equality in working toward regional resilience.

Given that allowing secondary suites represents a significant change in land use policy, it is very important that the RDN consult and listen to the concerns of residents to find out how best to proceed with allowing secondary suites. One of the key lessons learned from other local governments who have undertaken processes to legalize secondary suites is that, "successful secondary suites regulations draw on broad community participation in the process".

Finding out more about what types of concerns community members may have about where and how secondary suites should be allowed is an important part of developing regulations that address these concerns. The RDN's Electoral Areas are made up of unique communities that may have differing perspectives on where and how secondary suites should be considered. Public consultation would allow better understanding of how each Electoral Area community would like to see secondary suites addressed.

Facilitating region-wide community consultation, particularly for the RDN's dispersed rural residents is an ongoing challenge. The public consultation process outlined in Appendix 'A' of this report is consistent with RDN Board public consultation policies. It emphasizes community education and awareness on the need for secondary suites and, involves gathering feedback about where and how community members (both homeowners and renters) would support allowing secondary suites.

The proposed approach to public consultation focuses on using a variety of methods to encourage participation amongst homeowners and renters as well as other stakeholders including affordable and

seniors housing advocates and the development and construction industry. A range of opportunities to participate in the process will be used including presentations, workshops, informal meetings, web based information and an online survey. Existing community networks including groups involved with affordable and seniors housing will be directly approached to help encourage community members to participate in the process.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

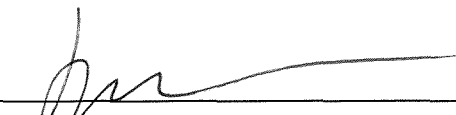
This report presents materials for the community consultation process for considering Secondary Suites. The first is the Secondary Suites Study which is Stage 1 of the process to consider potential bylaw amendments to allow secondary suites in the RDN. The Study provides background information and discussion on secondary suites in the RDN including: the role of secondary suites in meeting the demand for affordable housing; the benefits and challenges involved with allowing secondary suites; issues to consider for amending bylaws to allow secondary suites; and an evaluation of the suitability of different places for locating secondary suites based on RDN sustainability goals.

The Study is aimed at building understanding of the impacts of different choices about where to locate secondary suites and provides an evaluation of five different options that range from allowing secondary suites in more to fewer places and from meeting fewer to more RDN policies. The Secondary Suites Study is intended to provide background information to be used for subsequent stages of the secondary suite process.


Also presented is the Secondary Suites Consultation Plan. This plan will guide activities in Stage 2 of the process. The community consultation will emphasize community education and awareness on the need for secondary suites and gather feedback about where and how community members (both homeowners and renters) would support allowing secondary suites. The results of the community consultation will be used in Stages 3 and 4, to analyze and report on support for different approaches for addressing secondary suites, and as needed make recommendations on draft regulations to allow secondary suites in the zoning bylaw (these latter stages also include further opportunity for community members to provide input).

RECOMMENDATIONS


1. That the Secondary Suites Study as attached in Appendix 'B' of this report be received.
2. That staff be directed to proceed with the Secondary Suites Consultation Plan as attached in Appendix 'A' of this report.



Report Writer



General Manager Concurrence



Manager Concurrence



A/CAO Concurrence

Appendix A
Secondary Suites Consultation Plan

Secondary Suites Consultation Plan

DRAFT

December 18 2012

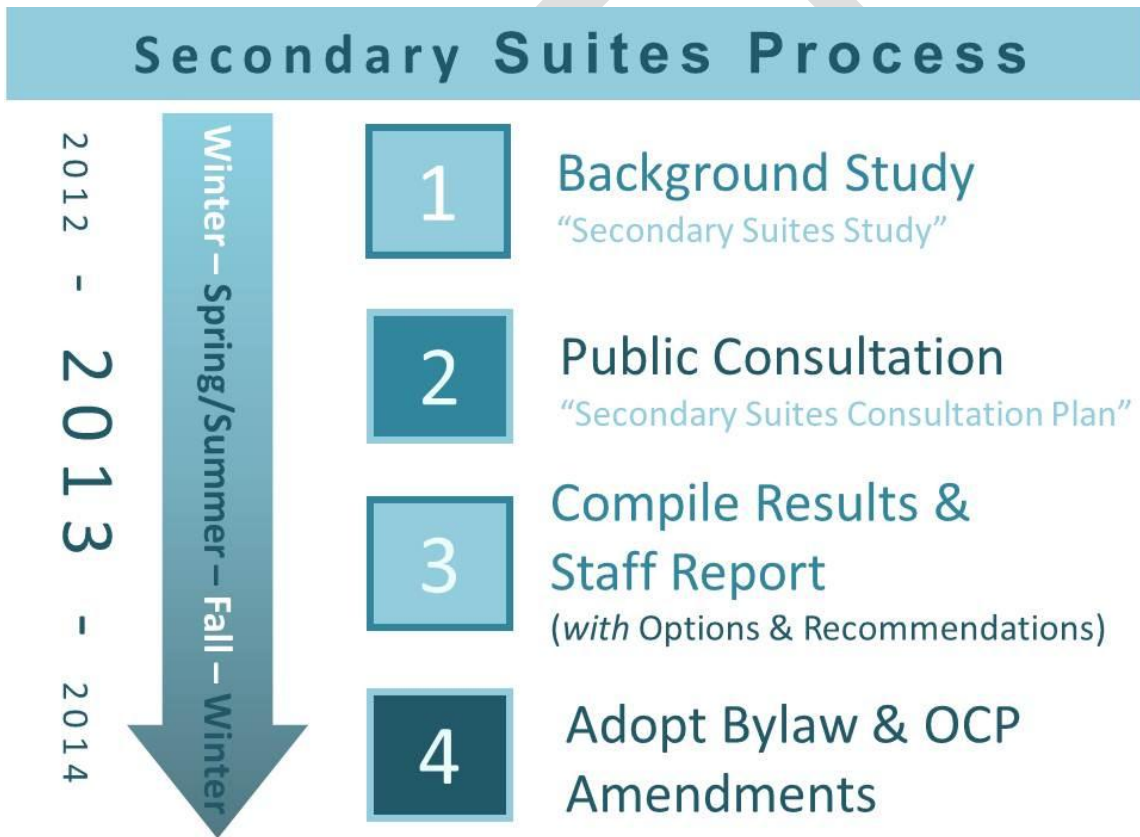


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1 OVERVIEW

A background study on secondary suites has been completed as Phase 1 of a process to consider allowing secondary suites as a form of housing in the RDN’s Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G and H. This Consultation and Communication Strategy lays out the framework for conducting Phase 2 of the secondary suites process which involves community consultation (see process diagram below). Consultation results will be reported back to the community and used in staff reports that present options and recommendations to the RDN Board for allowing secondary suites in the RDN’s different Electoral Area communities. The consultation results together with other background research and RDN policies will be used by the RDN Board when deciding how to proceed with allowing secondary suites.



2 BACKGROUND

Secondary suites are supported in a few of the RDN's Electoral Area Official Community Plans created with broad community consultation (e.g. Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan, Bowser Village Centre Plan). However there are several areas of the RDN where the question of allowing secondary suites has not been addressed by the community nor has there been any discussion around how and where secondary suites should be implemented.

One of the key lessons learned from other local governments who have undertaken processes to authorize secondary suites is that, *"successful secondary suites regulations draw on broad community participation in the process"*¹. Finding out more about what types of concerns community members may have about where and how secondary suites should be allowed is an important part of developing regulations that address these concerns.

Facilitating region-wide community consultation, particularly for the RDN's dispersed rural residents is an ongoing challenge. This plan sets out an approach that is consistent with RDN Board public consultation policies². It builds on staff experience of consultation in Electoral Areas and provides a range of engagement methods aimed at providing opportunities for a diversity of community members to provide input. This includes opportunities for face to face contact through meetings and events, virtual and online contact through e-mail, online survey and social media. Key to all of the methods of engagement will be raising awareness of the process and encouraging participation by using the networks/connections of existing community groups, RDN Electoral Area Directors and RDN staff.

¹ Islands Trust Staff Report, July 21, 2011, Update on Consultation Strategy for Secondary Suites

² Regional District of Nanaimo, June 2, 2008 Public Consultation/Communication Framework POLICY No. A1.23

3 CONSULTATION GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Primary Goal:

To conduct a public consultation process that raises awareness, and provides opportunities for education and gathering community feedback on where and how to allow secondary suites in the RDN's Electoral Areas.

Objectives:

The primary objectives of this communications and consultation plan are to:

1. Raise awareness of the need for affordable housing and greater choice of housing types in the RDN's Electoral Areas.
2. Build understanding and support:
 - For secondary suites as a form of affordable housing;
 - For secondary suites as a way of increasing the choice of housing types to meet a variety of housing needs; and
 - For the need to consider suitable locations for secondary suites to ensure maximum benefits to renters while also ensuring consistency with the RDN's growth management, climate change and environmental goals.
3. Encourage and maximize input from a broad range of community members (including renters and homeowners) and other stakeholder groups on where and how secondary suites should be considered.
4. Consider feedback collected from the consultation process in drafting regulations to allow secondary suites.
5. Provide opportunities for community members and other stakeholders to comment on draft regulations.

Secondary Goals:

The secondary suites consultation process provides an opportunity to "Provide Information on Housing Resources" in keeping with direction from the RDN Board to proceed with specific actions in the RDN 2011 Housing Action Plan Report. The RDN website lists housing resources provided by others as well as its own information (such as incentives for home energy conservation measures that can help reduce housing costs). The secondary suites process provides a valuable opportunity to connect renters and homeowners with a variety of resources that may help them improve their housing situation.

The secondary suites process also provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the benefits and ways of designing homes to adapt to the changing needs of the occupant/s as they move through different stages in life.

4 CONSIDERATIONS

There are several key issues and pre-existing decisions that influence the approach to public consultation on secondary suites:

- 1 Public consultation for the RGS adopted in 2011 revealed a high level of support for the RDN and its member municipalities playing a larger role in the provision of affordable housing.
- 2 The RDN's Regional Growth Strategy includes a goal and several policies that support actions that increase the range of affordable housing options. RGS Policy 6.2 *"Adopt official community plans and zoning bylaws that increase the range of housing options available, especially in mixed-use centres that are well served with transit"*.
- 3 In Jan 2011, the RDN Board provided direction to undertake a study of secondary suites which was identified as a step the RDN could take to increase housing choice and affordability in the 2010 RDN Housing Action Plan.
- 4 Each Electoral Area has distinct community characteristics. There is a need to understand how each of these communities wants to see secondary suites addressed.
- 5 Experience has shown that RDN public consultation events are typically dominated by older residents who tend to be retired and/ have more time and resources to participate in planning processes. It has often been the case that youth, younger adults and those with young families are harder to engage. Those who are working may find it difficult to take time off work or away from family to participate in any public consultation activities.
- 6 Need to provide education on existing RDN policies on growth management, servicing and environmental policies in relation to secondary suites.
- 7 Need to gather feedback from existing and prospective renters of secondary suites as well as existing and potential owners.
- 8 Need to use consultation methods that are timely and cost-effective while at the same time encouraging broad participation.
- 9 Renters have typically been harder to engage in planning processes as they often mistakenly perceive that they are not able to participate in planning processes because they are not homeowners. Renters will need to be convinced that they have a voice in this process. Furthermore it can be a challenge informing renters as any mail from the RDN (property taxes and utility bills) typically go the property owner not the renter.
- 10 Effective use of online surveys requires promotion through other forms of media (e-mail, staff presentations, information booths and, advertising).
- 11 Large ads and mail-outs are typically expensive and generally provide a low return on investment. However, there are opportunities to reduce costs by including information with RDN utility bills and other departmental mail outs.

- 12 Use of prizes and incentives has been an effective way to encourage community members to take the time to complete online surveys and participate in events.
- 13 Experience has shown that public meetings hosted by the RDN have typically low turn outs and are one of the least effective forms of engagement particularly given the staff time and resources invested in organizing and running them.
- 14 Meetings and events hosted by external groups and organizations typically have higher participation rates than those hosted by the RDN.
- 15 While RDN Electoral Area residents may not be as culturally diverse as those from larger urban centres there are those who may have language and cultural barriers that affect their ability to participate in land use consultation processes.

Working with community groups, representatives and Electoral Area Directors to identify ways of increasing both the number and the diversity of participants will be key to the success of this consultation process.

5 METHODOLOGY

A. Level of Public Involvement

The level of public engagement for developing regulations for suites will involve a combination of Public Communication, Consultation and Participation as defined in the RDN Board Policy A1.23 Public Consultation/Communication Framework. The rationale for using all three levels of consultation is provided below.

Allowing secondary suites would represent a significant change to land use in Electoral Areas. As such it is essential and in keeping with the Guiding Principles of the RDN Public Consultation Framework that “Anyone likely to be affected by a decision ...have opportunities for input into that decision”. This strategy provides opportunities for those affected by decisions related to secondary suites to share their ideas and views with RDN representatives.

B. Engagement Methods

For community members to be able to provide “informed input” on whether or not they want secondary suites in their neighbourhoods/rural areas, they first need to receive information on issues and opportunities related to secondary suites. Various methods of *Public Communication* can be used to provide educational information (brochures, fliers, newspaper inserts, advertisement, press releases, websites, social media, mall/recreation

centre/library displays, and posters). While these forms of public engagement are more one-way, they are also part of enabling two-way dialogue that is part of the *Public Consultation* and *Participation* processes discussed below.

Using *Consultation* and *Participation* methods will enable higher levels of public involvement by creating opportunities for input and dialogue between the RDN and community members. The following methods of public involvement will be included as part of this process:

1. Informal “kitchen table” or “coffee shop” discussions with Electoral Area Directors – these could take place at a local coffee shop, a community member’s home or other suitable venues that would support this type of engagement. These types of meetings are often helpful for strengthening relationships between RDN staff, Area Directors and community members.
2. Events that combine the following methods of providing and gathering information - Open houses/Workshops/Presentations/Displays. While these can be individual standalone RDN events the preference would be to attend events hosted by other community groups where participation rates are likely to be much higher. The aim will be to have at least one such event in each Electoral Area.
3. Use of an online survey/s (with hard copies made available for those without online access). The online survey could also be made accessible by providing computers at RDN events where internet access is available. The survey will include ways of analyzing results for each Electoral Area separately. Please see Appendix A for a draft survey example.

Consideration will also be given to the use of online engagement forums or tools that allow for virtual community discussion.

Given the diversity of electoral area communities it is essential that each electoral area community is able to provide their input and specify where and how they would consider secondary suites within their community rather than for all the RDN’s Electoral Areas as a whole. This would enable the RDN to understand and learn more about community preferences and concerns and then take this into account when considering decisions about secondary suites.

C. Target Audiences

There are several target audiences who need to be involved with the secondary suites process. These can be broken down into internal and external stakeholders:

Internal Stakeholders (RDN Departments):

Internal stakeholders for this process include the RDN Board and RDN Staff particularly those in departments providing services which will be impacted by decisions about secondary suites. This includes:

RDN Department	Secondary Suite Interest
Long Range Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working towards RGS Affordable Housing Goals. Direction and impacts on OCPs.
Current Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoning Bylaw changes to allow secondary suites.
Energy and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing energy efficiency of suites to reduce housing costs for tenants. Sustainability Checklist and incentives for secondary suites.
Building, Bylaw and Emergency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building code and minimum safety requirements for suites. Addressing to provide enhanced 911 for secondary suite occupants.
Finance and Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility billing for secondary suites.
Regional and Community Utilities (Wastewater and Water Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on suites on RDN utilities and need for cost recovery mechanisms. Impact of suites on groundwater particularly in areas known to have vulnerable aquifers.
Transportation Services and Solid Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of increased density through suites on future demand for transit services. Impact of suites on solid waste services and need for cost recovery.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directing media inquiries, producing news releases, corporate communications materials and other information updates.

External Stakeholders:

The following external stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in the secondary suites process. Stakeholder groups may also be asked to assist with encouraging their clients and own stakeholders to participate.

- **Electoral Area Residents**

All RDN Electoral Area residents (excluding Gabriola - Electoral Area B) are the primary external stakeholder group impacted by allowing secondary suites. Residents have a diversity of demographic, cultural and socio-economic characteristics that need to be considered when determining the most appropriate engagement methods. It should be

noted that some of the other stakeholder groups listed below are important bridges in helping engage Electoral Area residents.

- **Groups and Organizations**

There are also many secondary external stakeholders whose clients and/ or operations would be impacted by allowing secondary suites.

- Social advocacy groups and social service providers whose clients need affordable housing (including food banks, faith based and non-profit groups, child care providers)
- Aboriginal communities and organizations
- Housing providers (including BC Housing and associated organizations)
- Students
- Seniors groups
- Business associations
- School boards and Vancouver Island University Student Union
- Elementary, Middle and High Schools located in or with a high proportion of students from Electoral Areas
- Economic development/chambers of commerce associations
- Employers' associations
- Environmental groups
- Neighbourhood, ratepayer and community groups
- Infrastructure service providers (Water, Wastewater services not provided by the RDN)
- Emergency responders (Police, Fire, Ambulance) and response systems (enhanced 911)
- Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) – (from the perspective of Health and Safety of Water and Wastewater Treatment as well as regarding housing and health services to rural communities)
- Realtors and Property Managers who manage rental properties in Electoral Areas (they can help encourage their rental property owners and tenants to participate in the process)
- Designer/architectural and development/construction associations (involved with designing and building single family residential homes)

D. Information Needed

The following information needs to be communicated to the public in order to allow community members to provide “informed input”.

- What are secondary suites and what are the different forms they can take?
- Where might different forms of secondary suites be suitable (detached versus attached)?
- What is the impact of secondary suites on affordable housing and how can they increase the range of available housing options?
- How can secondary suites be created in new and existing homes?
- Who would rent / use secondary suites?
- What are the challenges and benefits of allowing secondary suites?
- What are the potential impacts on rural communities, the environment, groundwater, infrastructure, services, and housing affordability based on where secondary suites are allowed?
- What are some considerations for allowing secondary suites (number of bedrooms, size, on/off street parking requirements etc.)?

E. Methods for Providing Information & Receiving Feedback

The following approach for providing information and receiving feedback will be used.

- Build on use of existing e-mail networks and group contacts from community engagement for the recently adopted 2011 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and more recent consultation conducted by other RDN departments. Use consultation on secondary suites as way of increasing knowledge and education of RGS goals.
- Ensure that respective RDN departments have an opportunity to provide input in the process, particularly those whose activities/services will be impacted by allowing secondary suites.
- Focus the range of engagement activities to ensure the best results given available resources, this includes:
 - RDN staff actively seeking opportunities to make direct contact with individuals and groups concerned with affordable housing. This includes affordable housing advocates, economic development/business, construction, and seniors. Direct contact with stakeholder groups will be pursued as an effective means of distributing information and encouraging wider participation in the process.
 - Presentations and focused workshops will be considered as a means of providing information and seeking feedback on secondary suites from both the perspective of affordable housing provision and potential neighbourhood

- impacts. This will include direct contact with neighbourhood associations as well as both formal and informal groups interested in affordable housing.
- The networks of key stakeholder groups will be used to share information and encourage wide spread community involvement in the process. This will include promoting an online survey/s linked to the RDN website.
 - The process and opportunities to provide feedback will be promoted through newspaper ads (Parksville Qualicum Beach News, Oceanside Star, Take 5 the Beacon, RDN Perspectives, RDN Electoral Area updates), radio ads (Island Radio, CBC, CHLY, The Coast - CKAY), e-mail lists (RDN staff and Area Director contacts), RDN website updates and e-mail alerts, social media (Facebook, Twitter), and earned media including Newspapers, Magazines, Radio and TV (CTV, CHEK, Shaw Cable). Capitalizing on opportunities to use banners, handouts and display boards at community events and community venues (libraries, recreation centres, community information boards, malls or specific stores) to provide information and promote website & survey.
 - Provide the results of engagement online and in hard copy by request. Notices of the results and updates will be sent via the e-mail alert, e-mail lists and through RDN website notices and RDN Perspectives (depending on the timing).
 - Provide documents showing how community input has been considered in drafting of bylaw regulations.
 - Provide opportunities for community members to comment on any draft regulations or bylaw updates.
 - Ensure that community members are aware of opportunities for further consultation as part of the standard process for amending and updating bylaws.

6 COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

The following types of communication materials will be used throughout this process:

1 Power Point

Powerpoint presentations will be created to assist with presentations and also made available online.

2 Online Survey

A visual and easy to follow online survey will be used to gather feedback. A survey draft is included in Appendix B.

3 Information Sheets/ brochures/rack cards

Information sheets/brochures and/ rack cards on secondary suites will be created and made available online. These will include information explaining what secondary suites are and encouraging community members to participate in discussions and surveys to provide feedback on them. These documents can also be used as handouts and also distributed via RDN utility mail-outs. Please see examples of printed materials in Appendix B.

4 Online Information Packages

The websites will contain powerpoint presentations, the secondary suites study, information sheets and any other suitable materials for groups to download and use for their own discussions. These materials will also be available in hard copy in a binder in libraries and other key locations such as improvement District offices.

5 Website

A separate website domain (www.RDNSuites.ca) linked to the RDN website will be used to keep residents and other stakeholders informed about the project.

6 Social Media

Facebook and Twitter will be used as another way to distribute key information about secondary suites including promoting events, workshops and surveys.

7 Video/s

If feasible, work will be done with Shaw Cable to create videos to help educate and raise awareness. Alternately if a suitable existing video can be found it may be used instead. Suitable videos will be used for presentations and linked to the RDN website via YouTube or a similar host website.

8 Media Releases

Media releases will be prepared to:

- Raise awareness on the role of secondary suites in helping meet housing needs in Electoral Areas.
- Build understanding of the implications of different options for where and how secondary suites could be allowed.
- Encourage participation and feedback using online forums, surveys, workshops, presentations and other events.

9 Community Database

A database of community organizations and other stakeholders will be used to distribute information, offer presentation materials and invitations to events, online surveys and discussion forums.

10 Affordable Housing – Regional Housing Resources List

The RDN is maintaining a *Regional Housing Resources List*, that provides information on the different organizations who provide a range of affordable housing types and that also advocate for the provision of affordable housing. As appropriate, the contacts and organizations on this list will be informed of the secondary suites process and encouraged to participate.

11 RDN Community Events Calendar

The RDN Community Events Calendar will be kept updated with information on events related to the Secondary Suites Process.

7 ACTIVITIES AND TIMING

Regional District of Nanaimo Secondary Suites – Proposed Timeline		
Winter 2012-2013	Spring – Summer 2013	Fall – Winter 2013-2014
Background Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review of RDN Policies & existing data relating to secondary suites previously identified issues/challenges Consultation Plan	Gather Feedback → Summarize Feedback	Draft Bylaws <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use feedback to draft/ amend bylaws Adopt Bylaws To Allow Suites → →
Consultation Activities		
	Public Education & Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> online survey & presentations consult other stakeholder groups Publish Consultation Results	Present Draft Bylaw to Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gather community feedback present feedback to RDN Board amend draft as directed by RDN Board Bylaw Public Hearings To Allow Suites → →

The scheduling of public consultation events will avoid key holidays (spring break and school summer holidays) when people are less likely to have the time to participate in activities that are not web-based. RDN staff will also check RDN Board department event calendars and other community event calendars to minimise scheduling conflicts. However it should be emphasized that community events will also be considered opportunities to provide consultation opportunities.

Given the need to reach a diversity of people, the dates and times of any public events should try to accommodate dates, times and places that are likely to work for the greatest diversity of community members. It should be noted that in some Electoral Areas the timing of events may be constrained by the availability of appropriate venues. This is why going to the meetings of other groups works well as they typically have a venue booked and people in attendance up.

The advantage of web-based input opportunities like surveys is that they can be completed at any time convenient to those with internet access. This can help remove the barrier of participation for those who find it challenging to attend meetings or other events due to physical, transportation or time constraints. For those without internet access, hard copy surveys will be made available and online information provided at local libraries with internet access. The possibility of using internet kiosks will also be explored for community events.

The proposed timeline in the diagram above shows a potential decision on how to proceed with secondary suites being made by the RDN Board in winter 2012-2013 by approving the consultation plan. This is an ambitious schedule and leaves little room for delays that may occur in the process. Furthermore, it should be recognized that if the issue of secondary suites raises any unanticipated issues that warrant a more extended level of consultation then the proposed timeline will need to be adjusted.

A. Consultation Activities & Timing

The proposed Public Consultation period is March 1, 2013 – June 30, 2013 (16 week consultation period). The table below outlines the timing for different consultation and communication activities.

	Consultation & Communications Activities	Lead	2013 Timing
1	Present Consultation Plan to Electoral Area Planning Committee (EAPC)	RDN Staff	Early Jan
2	EA Directors provide direction to RDN staff about proceeding with Secondary Suites consultation	EA Directors	Early Jan
3	Update RDN Website with information on process	RDN Staff	Early Feb
4	Develop posters/ display boards for community meetings/displays	RDN Staff	Early Feb
5	Create online survey (using Survey Monkey or similar program)	RDN Staff	Early Feb
6	Help revise press releases and ad layouts	RDN Staff	Early Feb
7	Develop Power Point Presentations for meetings/events	RDN Staff	Feb
8	Develop handouts and mail out materials	RDN Staff	Feb
9	Develop FB & Twitter messages to be timed with Survey launch and to promote meetings/events	RDN Staff	Feb
10	Develop list of potential groups and contacts to engage	RDN Staff	Feb
11	Develop earned media and paid media (ads) strategy to encourage participation in the process	RDN Staff	Feb
12	Establish and advertise survey incentive	RDN Staff	Late Feb
13	Develop insert for Spring 2012 Electoral Area Updates (Deadline early March for Spring publication)	RDN Staff	Late Feb
14	Develop rack cards for inserting with RDN Utility Bills	RDN Staff	Late Feb

	Consultation & Communications Activities	Lead	2013 Timing
	(mailed out for end May)		
15	Develop meeting initial schedule for kitchen table meetings in each EA with EA Directors (Feb-May)	RDN Staff	Late Feb
16	Launch online Survey (March-June)	RDN Staff	Early March
17	Press release to launch process	RDN Staff	Early March
18	Start Facebook page updates		
19	Start Twitter Releases	RDN Staff	Early March
20	Send out regular updates using email alert system	RDN Staff	March -June
21	Promote survey at events	RDN Staff	March -June
22	Identify and attend community events	RDN Staff	March -June
23	EA Directors to promote Secondary Suites Process	RDN Staff	April -June
24	Conduct at least one meeting in each EA	EA Directors	March -June
25	Develop insert for Spring 2013 RDN Perspectives (Deadline early May for June publication)	RDN Staff & EA Directors	April -June
26	Coordinate printing and insertion of rack cards advertising survey with Utility Bills	RDN Staff	End April
27	Utility Bills send to RDN customers	RDN Staff	Early May
28	Summarize comments from all input received	RDN Staff	End May
29	Survey closes and community meetings phase ends	RDN Staff	July-August
30	Update website with public input results	RDN Staff	End June
31	Prepare report with proposed changes to RDN bylaws based on input from the community and other stakeholders.	RDN Staff	July-August
32	Present report to EA Directors	RDN Staff	July-August
33	Develop insert for Fall Electoral Area Update (Deadline early September for October publication)	RDN Staff	Sept
34	Take draft bylaw amendments to community for feedback	RDN Staff	Early Sept
35	Document and report to EA Directors outcome of feedback on draft bylaw amendments	RDN Staff	Sept-October
36	Depending on direction, proceed with bylaw amendment process (public hearings and readings)	RDN Staff	Sept-October
37	Develop insert for Winter 2013 RDN Perspectives (Deadline early Nov for December publication)	RDN Staff	October
38	As per RDN Board direction, adopt bylaw amendments	RDN Staff	Early Nov
39	Update bylaws	EA Directors	Dec-Jan
40	Update website, e-mail alert list	RDN Staff	Dec-Jan
41		RDN Staff	Dec-Jan

8 RESOURCES

A. Team Leader

The lead RDN staff person on this project is the Senior Planner reporting to the Manager of Long Range Planning.

B. Staff Time

The staff time and resources allocated for this public consultation process are included in the 2013 Long Range Planning budget.

C. RDN Departments to Consult

RDN departments that have been identified as both being sources of information and being stakeholders that need to be consulted as part of the secondary suites process are listed in section 5c above.

D. Corporate Communications

The RDN's Corporate Communications Coordinator has reviewed and provided comment on this consultation plan to ensure it is consistent with the RDN's Communication Policies and that it is in sync with other communications and consultation initiatives scheduled by the RDN for 2013.

9 BUDGET

The staff time, materials and other resources (printing, advertising, hall rentals etc.) needed for the secondary suites process is accounted for in the 2013 Long Range Planning Department Budget. Below are various costs that have been anticipated and accounted for in the budget.

A. Printed Materials

The following printed materials have been identified as part of the secondary suites process:

- Inserts for Utility Bill Mail Outs - Budget includes cost of 16,000 double sided colour rack card Inserts, postage and insert charges with RDN May utilities bill.
- Newsletters – RDN Perspectives Articles and Electoral Area Update publications (both sent out as unaddressed ad-mail) are part of the Corporate Communications Budget and so have no cost to the Long Range Planning budget.
- Rack Cards/Brochures/Book Mark/fliers – these will be designed and produced in-house in order to lower costs and printing will be part of other budgets.
- Posters, Maps and other Display Materials – these will be done in-house through the GIS department and have been included in the 2013 Long Range Planning budget. (Note - display boards and easels are part of the planning departments stock of reusable resources).

B. Meeting Room Rentals

Meeting room rentals vary in cost, size and availability among electoral areas. Every effort will be made to take advantage of opportunities to use venues that are well located, free of charge and central to the community being targeted for consultation.

C. Online Media

- Website updates are covered under both the Long Range Planning budget and the RDN Corporate budget.
- It is anticipated that the online survey can be hosted by a free or low cost web application such as SurveyMonkey.

10 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The communication process will be monitored throughout implementation. Surveys and printed material will be “tested” and adjusted by RDN staff and volunteers prior to being used.

Some of the methods that may be used for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of this consultation strategy include:

- Participation rates in surveys and at events;
- Feedback questions in the survey;
- Feedback forms provided at events;
- Tracking media coverage;
- Tracking events that RDN staff are invited to attend to give presentations;
- Tracking feedback via individual e-mail, phone calls and visits;
- Asking participants to share their thoughts on the value of different engagement methods; and
- Staff observations.

Based on the results of monitoring the effectiveness of the consultation strategy, adjustments will be made.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – DRAFT PRINTED MATERIALS

The following draft survey is based upon materials created by the Islands Trust, City of Nanaimo, Town of Qualicum Beach and City of Edmonton.

SECONDARY SUITES Let’s Create Safe, Legal, and Affordable Rental Housing!

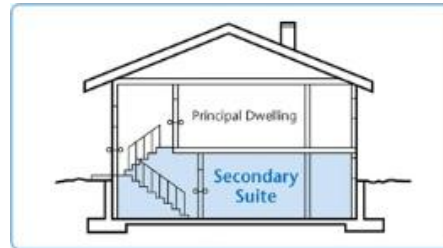
What are Secondary Suites?

A secondary suite is an additional, self-contained dwelling unit that is clearly secondary in use to the principal dwelling unit on a lot. The BC Building Code allows relaxed regulations for secondary suites up to 40% of the floor area of the principal dwelling unit - to a maximum floor area of 90 m² (969 sq. ft.).

A Secondary Suite may include:

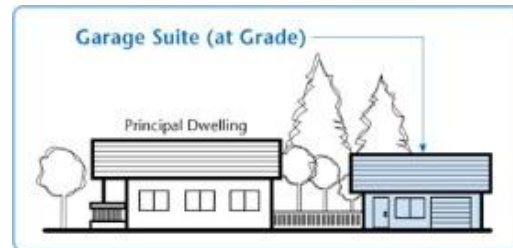
- An attached suite above the main floor of a single-detached dwelling;
- An attached suite below the main floor of a single-detached dwelling (basement suite);
- An attached suite to a single-detached dwelling at grade;
- A suite above or part of a detached garage (coach house, garage suite); or
- A suite detached from the principal dwelling but on the same lot (garden suite, carriage house).

Example of an Attached Secondary Suite



Source: City of Edmonton

Example of a Detached Secondary Suite



Source: City of Edmonton

Did you know...

There are already parts of the RDN’s electoral areas where secondary suites are allowed. This is in areas where zoning bylaws allow two or more dwelling units on a lot (depending on the size of the lot). However, throughout the region’s electoral areas there are many secondary suites that currently exist in areas where zoning does not allow them. These suites represent a significant portion of rental housing stock in the rural areas. The RDN Board wants to get community feedback on where secondary suites should be considered and how they could be allowed.

There are a variety of options for where and how secondary suites could be allowed, each with different implications. In order to generate discussion and understand community priorities four distinct options have

been created and can be viewed on the RDN website [\[click here\]](#). Each option is described in terms of how well it encourages increasing the number of secondary suites while also meeting RDN policies.

Why Secondary Suites?

A Way to Increase Affordable Housing...

Over the past ten years there has been an increasing gap between what many of the RDN's rural residents can afford and the cost of housing that is available. Secondary suites have been identified as a form of housing that can help improve housing affordability for some groups of lower income renters and homeowners.

Rising transportation costs further add to the cost of housing in rural areas where the use of private cars is necessary to meet daily travel needs. The location of secondary suites in relation to transit, shops, employment and schools will affect how affordable secondary suites are for renters and is also a key factor in meeting the region's long term sustainability goals.

Supporting secondary suites in suitable locations is an important first step towards increasing the amount of affordable housing in the RDN.

Renters

Secondary suites provide renters with better options for housing that is safe, authorized, and affordable. This means security and stability for many renters, as well as an opportunity to move out of what may be inadequate living situations. Suites also offer opportunities for mutual support for both tenants and renters (allowing older renters and homeowners to age in place more securely).

Homeowners

Secondary suites offer mortgage helpers to make home ownership easier for first time home buyers and those on limited/fixed incomes. They also offer options for people to age in place, security for those with a disability, and offer family support to adult children or elderly relatives.

Community

Secondary suites maintain community character while enabling families and individuals from diverse economic backgrounds to live in the same area. They provide a stock of low-cost housing without government subsidies and without a major change in the character of a community. Secondary suites are also important for business owners by providing accommodation for employees; for agriculture by offering a place to house farm workers; and for non-resident property owners by offering security and caretaking of a property.

The Environment

Secondary suites require water and waste water to be addressed in the building permit process. This means that each sewage disposal system is evaluated on a case by case basis and upgrades are required where needed. Properly constructed sewage disposal systems reduce pollution and protect the water quality of drinking watersheds. Proof of available water supply is also confirmed at the time of application for building permits. Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption per household are reduced with secondary suites that increase the intensity of use of single family homes. GHG emissions and energy consumption are further reduced when secondary suites are located near transit service or walking distance to a range of shops, schools, services and amenities.

On the Other Hand. . .

Secondary suites can create challenges for communities. It is normal for there to be concern about community change. Common concerns include:

- Increased noise, traffic and parking;
- Difficulty monitoring activities of renters and enforcing bylaws;
- Unfair distribution of costs for extra services (sewer, water, garbage) for homes with secondary suites;
- The long-term affordability of secondary suites may be difficult to ensure;
- Potential negative environmental impacts and/or water supply; and
- Suites being used improperly for short-term vacation rentals.

Lessons Learned

Many communities throughout BC have made – or are in the process of making – provision for secondary suites.

The experience of other communities offers numerous lessons:

- Simple, basic bylaws tend to be the most successful;
- Encouragement is more effective than approaches that rely on penalties;
- It is important to address the need for parking on-site; and
- Successful secondary suite regulations draw on broad community participation in the process.

Within the RDN, the member municipalities of Nanaimo, Qualicum Beach and Parksville already allow both attached and detached secondary suites in different zones.

APPENDIX B – DRAFT SURVEY

Secondary Suites – What do you think?

The RDN welcomes and encourages community input on secondary suites. The following survey is for homeowners and renters living in Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G and H of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) who wish to share their thoughts on allowing secondary suites in their communities. If you are not sure whether or not you live in one of the RDN’s Electoral Areas please click here [Link to RDN Map].

Your answers to this survey will be used to guide the RDN in developing policies to allow secondary suites.

Are you a homeowner? If yes, please answer section A.

Are you a renter? If yes, please answer section B.

A - Survey for Homeowners

Homeowners, please tell us...			
	Yes	No	Please Explain
1. Do you think secondary suites will provide needed affordable housing in the RDN’s Electoral Areas?	Y	N	
2. Do you think the RDN’s Electoral Areas would benefit from secondary suites?	Y	N	
3. Would you like to have a secondary suite in your home?	Y	N	
4. Would you like to have secondary suites in your neighbourhood?	Y	N	
5. If you don’t have a suite in your home, would you build one if suites allowed?	Y	N	If no why not?
6. If you had a suite in your home, would you make it available as a long-term rental unit for someone to live in?	Y	N	If no, what would you use it for?
7. If you already have a suite in your home, would you go through the process to get a building permit to make it an authorized suite if it were possible?	Y	N	Why or why not?
8. Do you have on-site sewage disposal (i.e. septic field)?	Y	N	
9. Would you upgrade your on-site sewage disposal system, if needed, in order to have a	Y	N	

secondary suite?			
10. Are you concerned about the impact of secondary suites on your community's water supply?	Y	N	
11. Are you on well water?	Y	N	
12. Are you on community water?	Y	N	If yes, which water district are you in?
13. Are you concerned that allowing secondary suites will lead to a water shortage?	Y	N	
14. Are you concerned about potential parking and traffic issues related to secondary suites?	Y	N	
15. If suites were allowed, do you think they should be:			
A) Allowed in all zones in the RDN's Electoral Areas. [See Map Link]	Y	N	
B) Allowed in all zones where the primary use is residential. [See Map Link]			
C) Allowed in all Rural Village Centres. [See Map Link]	Y	N	
D) Phased in, and limited to Rural Village Centres with features listed below that are most consistent with RDN policies. [See Map Link]	Y	N	
Please indicated which features are important to you:			
D1 Close to a range of schools, shops, services and other amenities	Y	N	
D2 Close to public transportation	Y	N	
D3 Not known to have water problems (water supply and quality) or where adequate measures are in place to address/prevent problems.	Y	N	
D4 In areas where community sewer is provided. [See Map Link]	Y	N	
Which Electoral Area Do you Live in?	A	C	E F G H Other
Additional Comments?			
Would you like to receive more information and opportunities to comment on the process to allow secondary suites?	Y – Link to RDN E-mail Alert System N		

Thank You

B - Survey for Renters

Renters, please tell us....			
	Yes	No	Please Explain
1. A) Do you currently live in a secondary suite?	Y	N	
B) If No, would you consider living in a secondary suite?	Y	N	
2. A) Do you feel you have the security of a long-term rental situation in your current home?	Y	N	
B) Is this important to you?	Y	N	
3. Does your rent cost you more than 30% of your income?	Y	N	
4. Is your home adequately serviced with a kitchen, bathroom, and direct access to the outdoors?	Y	N	
5. A) Does your home feel healthy and safe?	Y	N	
B) Why or why not?			
6. Are you aware of water shortages or water quality issues where you live?	Y	N	
7. Are you aware of any problems with the sewage disposal system where you live?	Y	N	
8. A) Do you own a car?	Y	N	
B) If not, how do you get around?			Please select one or more of the following options a) Motorbike b) Electric Scooter c) Get car rides with Friends/Family d) Walk e) Bicycle f) Hitchhike g) Bus h) Other

Secondary Suites Consultation Plan

9. How important are the following considerations for you when choosing a place to rent:			
Affordability	High	Med	Low
Close to schools	High	Med	Low
Close to shops and other services	High	Med	Low
Close to transit	High	Med	Low
Close to jobs/ employment opportunities	High	Med	Low
Number of bedrooms	High	Med	Low

Which Electoral Area Do you Live in?	A	C	E	F	G	H	Other
Additional Comments?							
Would you like to receive more information and opportunities to comment on the process to allow secondary suites?	Y – Link to RDN E-mail Alert System N						

Thank You

Secondary Suites Study

D R A F T

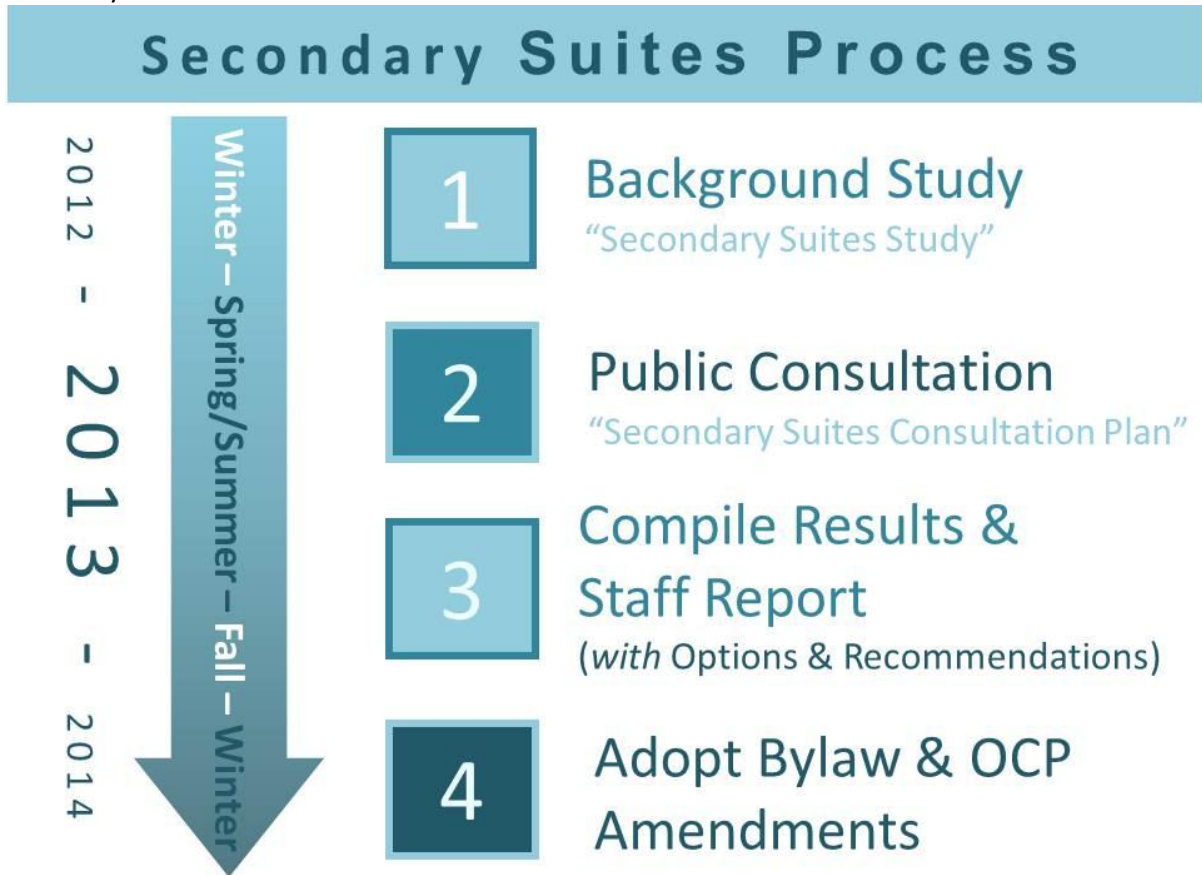
December 18 2012



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 25, 2011, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board directed staff to proceed with *Adopting a Secondary Suites Bylaw* as an action identified in the RDN’s Housing Action Plan staff report (December 30, 2010).

This secondary suites study is the first step in a proposed process to adopt a secondary suites bylaw (see the diagram below). This study provides background information based on a staff review of existing RDN policies together with the experience and practices of other jurisdictions that allow secondary suites.



The RDN has long recognized that secondary suites play an important role in providing affordable rental housing in the RDN’s electoral areas. Allowing secondary suites is a practical way for the RDN to use its land use authority and resources to increase housing options for those who struggle to find adequate, affordable housing. Secondary suites capitalize on the potential to use new and existing single family housing to provide rental housing. There is evidence from other jurisdictions that this can help meet the demand for affordable housing and also increase housing options that allow community members to age in place.

The RDN has a number of interrelated priorities that need to be considered when making decisions about where and how secondary suites should be allowed. These include policies intended to foster more resilient and sustainable communities by addressing climate change, growth management, affordable housing and aging in place, groundwater protection, and efficient servicing.

Proximity to transit and a range of shops, services, employment opportunities and amenities (schools, recreation) are important factors in housing affordability. Access to these features is also fundamental to the principles of Smart Growth that promote the development of compact, complete and mixed-use communities. These concepts are the foundation of growth management policies in the RDN's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

Growth Management policies in the RGS aim to achieve more vibrant, efficient and resilient forms of urban development while at the same time protecting environmentally sensitive and rural lands. The RGS directs the majority of the region's future growth within Growth Containment Boundaries (GCB).

The GCB's within municipalities are referred to as Urban Centres and are intended to accommodate the majority of future growth in the region. Meanwhile, in the RDN's electoral areas, Rural Village Centres (RVC's) are intended to support smaller amounts of growth in keeping with their rural nature. Policies in documents endorsed by the RDN Board (the RDN 2013-2015 Board Strategic Plan, RGS and Official Community Plans) support strategies that increase housing diversity and affordability within Rural Village Centres. Some policy documents specifically support secondary suites as a means of increasing housing diversity and affordability within Rural Village Centres.

As the first phase of the secondary suites process, this study provides an overview of the benefits and challenges of secondary suites from the perspective of homeowners, renters, rural communities and the region as a whole. This study also reviews the suitability of different areas within the RDN for allowing secondary suites. This involves evaluating how well different areas fit RDN policies that address: prior community support for secondary suites as identified by Official Community Plans (OCPs); access to transit and a diverse range of amenities; groundwater resources; and levels of community servicing (water and sewer).

This study presents options that range from allowing suites in more to fewer places and from meeting fewer RDN policies to all RDN policies. The five different options for allowing secondary suites include:

- Option 1: Secondary suites allowed in all zones that permit single family residential use.
- Option 2: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres and the Rural Residential Land use designation in the RGS.
- Option 3: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres.
- Option 4: Secondary suites allowed in Rural Village Centres with characteristics that are most consistent with RDN policies.
- Option 5: Secondary suites pilot project within an area where secondary suites are supported in an OCP.

An evaluation of the benefits and challenges of each option was conducted based on RDN policies relating to: affordable housing, growth management, environmental protection, climate change, and efficient servicing. Both options 1 and 2 would allow secondary suites in all zones that allow single family residential use. While these first two options allow secondary suites in the most areas, they were also found to be the least consistent with RDN policies. Options 3 and 4 would allow secondary suites in some or all Rural Village Centres. These latter two options allow secondary suites in smaller, more concentrated areas and were also found to be the most consistent with RDN policies. In terms of consistency with RDN policies, the results identify Cedar, Red Gap, French Creek and Bowser Rural Village Centres as the locations that are most consistent with RDN policies including those found in the OCPs.

Another possible approach for the RDN Board to consider is Option 5, which involves allowing secondary suites in a pilot area such as part of a new subdivision in an area where OCP policies support secondary suites. This would allow the impacts of allowing secondary suites in a small area to be evaluated before deciding on which other areas should be considered for suites and under what conditions they should be allowed.

In addition to presenting different options for where secondary suites could be located, this study identifies several issues that need to be considered when drafting and implementing secondary suites regulations including: type of suite (attached, fully within or detached from a single family dwelling), size, number of rooms, number of suites allowed and location on a lot, parking requirements, owner-occupancy, user fees, flexible design of suites to allow for different types of users and energy efficiency. These issues are based upon the experience of other jurisdictions, anticipated community concerns and direction from RDN policies.

Following this study, the second stage of the Secondary Suites Process involves a proposed consultation process (please refer to the *Secondary Suites Consultation Plan*) that is consistent with RDN Board consultation policies. Community consultation will help to ensure the successful development and implementation of a strategy to encourage secondary suites by: building understanding for the need for secondary suites in suitable locations; identifying and addressing concerns about where and how secondary suites should be allowed; and, providing opportunities for input on drafting regulations for amendments to bylaws.

The third stage of the Secondary Suites Process will involve compiling and analyzing the results of community consultation and using this to provide options and recommendations to the RDN Board. Based on the recommendations from the RDN Board, zoning bylaw amendments will be drafted and community members will have an opportunity to provide further feedback on them during the fourth and final stage of the Secondary Suites Process which will involve updating and amending zoning bylaws.

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ACRONYMS

BCNPHA – BC Non-Profit Housing Association
CMHC – Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation
GCB – Growth Containment Boundary
RDN – Regional District of Nanaimo
RGS – Regional Growth Strategy
RVC – Rural Village Centre
OCP – Official Community Plan

INTRODUCTION

This study responds to specific direction from the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board on January 25, 2011 to proceed with undertaking a study to identify where secondary suites should be permitted in Electoral Areas of the RDN. This is one of the actions identified in the RDN's Housing Action Plan Report (December 30, 2010).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to provide background information and a discussion of different options for undertaking a process to consider allowing secondary suites in the RDN's electoral areas. This includes a discussion of:

1. **Issues to consider for drafting and implementing regulations to allow secondary suites**, this includes size, number of rooms, number of suites allowed and location on a lot, parking requirements, owner-occupancy and user fees. Encouraging suites that are designed to adapt to changing community demographics and to be more energy efficient is also discussed;
2. **Benefits and challenges of allowing secondary suites**, from the perspective of homeowners, renters, rural communities and the RDN as a whole;
3. **Public consultation methods** to gather feedback from community members and other stakeholders that will be used to guide the development of policies and bylaws to allow secondary suites; and
4. **Where secondary suites should be permitted** taking into account RDN priorities to create more resilient and sustainable communities (affordable housing, growth management and the development of compact communities, environmental protection, climate change, infrastructure and servicing) while balancing benefits to those in need of affordable housing.

This study does not recommend any one of the options presented. It is intended to assist the RDN Board in making informed decisions about how to proceed with the process to consider allowing secondary suites. It is anticipated that feedback from Electoral Area residents will help guide the RDN in deciding which of the options could be implemented or if an alternate option needs to be created.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 What is a Secondary Suite?

Broadly speaking the term 'secondary suite' is used to describe an additional dwelling unit¹ that is clearly subordinate to the principal residential dwelling on a lot. The term can be used solely to describe suites that are attached to a principal dwelling unit like basement suites (City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach) or, it can also refer to suites that are detached from a principal dwelling unit (City of Nanaimo) such as carriage houses or garden suites.

For the purposes of this report the following definitions are used;

Dwelling means a building or portion of one used exclusively for residential occupancy, including single-family, two-family and multifamily dwellings, but not including hotels, lodging houses, care homes or tourist accommodation.

Dwelling unit means one self-contained unit intended for year-round residential occupancy with complete living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking and sanitation contained within common walls with a separate entrance.

Secondary suite means an additional, self-contained dwelling unit that is clearly subordinate to the principal dwelling on a lot, that is intended for year round residential occupancy, and that has its own external entrance, toilet, bathroom, sleeping and living areas and cooking facilities.

A Secondary Suite may include:

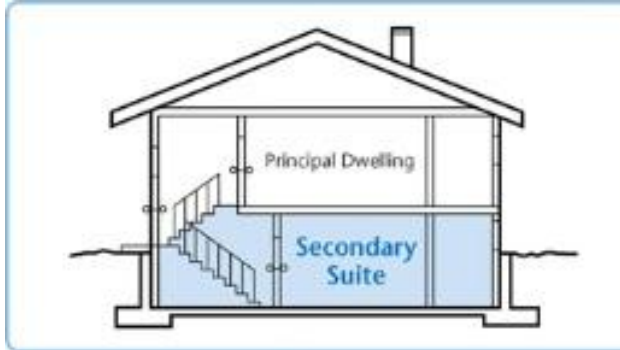
- A suite above the main floor of a single-detached dwelling;
- A suite below the main floor of a single-detached dwelling (basement suite);
- A suite attached to a single-detached dwelling at grade;
- A suite above or part of a detached garage (coach house, garage suite); or
- A suite detached from the principal dwelling but on the same lot (garden suite, carriage house).

¹RDN Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 2008 defines a dwelling unit as one self-contained unit contained within common walls with a separate entrance intended for year-round occupancy and the principal use of such dwelling unit is residential with complete living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking and sanitation. RDN Electoral Area 'F' Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw No. 1285, 2002 defines a dwelling unit as follows: means one or more rooms which comprise a self-contained unit used or intended to be used for habitation by one or more residents, including living, sleeping and sanitary facilities, and a single kitchen.

Bylaw No. 500 clearly notes that a dwelling unit is intended for year round residential occupancy with permanent facilities, however, Bylaw No. 1285 by not specifying this could be interpreted as allowing dwelling units to include temporary facilities and temporary uses such as short term rentals. Unlike, Bylaw 1285, Bylaw 500 also specifies that a dwelling unit must have a separate entrance. These details are important depending upon whether or not the intended use of primary or secondary dwelling units is for long term residential accommodation or shorter term (e.g. vacation rentals). These differences in defining a dwelling unit should be addressed as part of developing regulations to allow secondary suites.

Figure 1: Forms of Secondary Suites

Example of an attached Secondary Suite



Source: City of Edmonton

Example of a detached Secondary Suite



1.2 What is the Current Status of Secondary Suites?

Currently, secondary suites are not defined in either of the RDN's two land use/zoning bylaws. They are also not permitted on the majority of smaller lots in the RDN's electoral areas where zoning regulations allow only one dwelling unit per lot. Secondary suites are permitted as a form of housing in a few zones (see Appendix A) that allow more than one dwelling unit on a lot (typically up to 2 depending on the lot size).

It should be noted that while secondary suites may be considered as one of the dwelling units permitted in zones that allow duplexes, they are not the same as a duplex. RDN Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500 defines a duplex as *"two self-contained dwelling units oriented side-by-side with separate ground level entrances and adjoined by a common wall"*.

The Agricultural Land Commission Act allows one secondary suite within a single family dwelling on lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)², subject to local government zoning requirements. The Act also supports allowing additional dwellings on a parcel as necessary for farm use³.

It is widely acknowledged that secondary suites (*whether permitted or not*) exist as a form of rental housing in the RDN's electoral areas. The RDN does not currently collect data on secondary suites, nor does it have access to reliable data from other sources. Without this information it is not possible to accurately determine or provide a reliable estimate of the number and location of existing secondary suites in electoral areas.

...Secondary Suites whether legal or not, continue to constitute a significant portion of the rental housing stock throughout British Columbia.

Secondary Suites – Guide for Local Governments, September 2005, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services Housing Policy Branch

² Agricultural Land Commission Act, Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (BC Reg. 171/2002), Sect 3 (1)(b)

³ Agricultural Land Commission Act, Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (BC Reg. 171/2002), Section 18

Trying to track the number and location of existing secondary suites would be a time consuming exercise with limited impact on increasing the number of secondary suites in locations that best fit with RDN policies and the needs of those requiring affordable housing.

1.3 Process for dealing with un-authorized Secondary Suites

At present, suspected un-authorized secondary suites are dealt with on a case by case basis. This is typically triggered by a complaint from a resident or, when the RDN's Bylaw Enforcement department is made aware of a potentially un-authorized secondary suite by another RDN department (for example receiving a request for an additional address on a property, or for additional solid waste collection). The process for dealing with un-authorized secondary suites may involve taking measures that require the homeowner to remove the suite in order to comply with existing land use bylaws.

The recent expansion of building inspection service (April 1, 2011) throughout the region now provides the RDN with the ability to regulate secondary suites in any areas where they may be allowed in the future. This will enable the RDN to ensure that secondary suites in new and upgraded buildings meet minimum standards for health and safety that are set out in the BC Building Code.

For the purposes of solid waste collection, the RDN recognizes additional dwelling units (including secondary suites) by charging a separate full solid waste collection fee regardless of whether the additional unit is allowed or not. The introduction of the RDN's Green Bin program during 2010-2011 resulted in numerous calls from tenants of secondary suites requesting extra green bins. While no formal records were kept, staff noted that many of these requests were not met due to a policy of providing only one green bin per legal address. These requests did not typically result in investigations of whether or not these secondary suites were authorized or not.

This study is not proposing that the RDN change its current approach to addressing complaints about unauthorized secondary suites. Rather, the focus is on encouraging new secondary suites and voluntary upgrading of existing suites as this is more likely to produce better results towards meeting RDN affordable housing and sustainability goals as well as being a more effective use of staff time and resources.

1.4 What is the Demand for Affordable Housing in the RDN?

The RDN's 2006 State of Sustainability Report⁴ and the more recent 2009 Housing Needs Overview⁵ indicate that the RDN has been experiencing a decrease of affordable rental and owned housing for those with low to moderate incomes over the last ten years.

This situation has been attributed to widening gaps between the cost of housing relative to incomes and a shortage of adequate rental stock. It is projected that from 2011 to 2036 the numbers of those needing affordable rental housing as well as rental housing in general will continue to rise each year.

⁴ Regional District of Nanaimo State of Sustainability Report (Prospering Today, Protecting Tomorrow: The State Of Sustainability of the Regional District of Nanaimo) September 2006

⁵ Housing Needs Overview (Prepared for Regional District of Nanaimo, Nanaimo, Parksville and Qualicum Beach) by January 2009, CitySpaces

The BC Non-Profit Housing Association estimates that “rental housing demand is projected to increase by 34% to 40% over the next 25 years through two different scenarios, compared with population growth of 41% over the same period”⁶. Table 1 below shows the projected increase in households needing rental housing including those in core housing need (unable to find housing that is affordable, adequate and suitable - see Figure 2).

Table 1: Rental Housing Demand and Core Housing Need – Regional District of Nanaimo 2011-2036

Year	Scenario A: Constant Tenure ⁷		Scenario B: Shifting Tenure ⁸	
	Rental Demand	Core Need	Rental Demand	Core Need
2011	16,041	4,603	16,041	4,603
2036	22,378	6,490	18,677	6,254
Increase 2011-2036	6,337	1,887	5,410	1,651

Source: BCNPHA September 2012

Those considered to be in core housing need are projected to increase by 36% to 41% over the next 25 years - an increase of between 1,651 and 1,887 households. It should be noted that the incidence of core housing need was found to be higher for the RDN than for the province as a whole for all age categories, except amongst seniors.

As the market fails to provide suitable affordable rental and ownership options, the number of people requiring access to ‘Affordable Non-Market Housing’ and ‘Government Subsidized Housing’ has been increasing. The supply of non-market rental housing has not kept pace with existing demand resulting in increasing numbers of people who are considered to be in core housing need.

⁶ BC Non-Profit Housing Association, Our Home, Our Future: Projections of Rental Housing Demand and Core Housing Need, Regional District of Nanaimo to 2036 - September 2012 – Note that these projections are based on 2006 Census data.

⁷ Scenario A: Constant Tenure considers how rental housing demand will change if tenure patterns stay constant and age-specific household maintainer rates are held at 2006 levels.

⁸ Scenario B: Shifting Tenure assumes tenure patterns will follow the trend seen over the preceding decade, to 2036. In many cases this is a shift away from rental and towards ownership.

Data from BC Housing's registry⁹ of non-profit housing providers show that the number of non-profit housing units in the RDN increased slightly from a total of 1,506 beds in 2011 to 1,529 units in 2012. In addition to non-profit housing units, between 2011 and 2012, BC Housing data shows a decrease from 1,088 to 1,054 in the number of households receiving a housing subsidy through the Residential Assistance Programs for both seniors and families (RAP) to offset the costs of private market rentals.

As of March 2012, the City of Nanaimo accounted for approximately 80% of the BC Housing registered units followed by the City of Parksville with 15%. Those receiving housing subsidies through the RAP are also more concentrated in urban areas (approximately 70% Nanaimo, 17% Parksville and 5% Town of Qualicum Beach).

The majority of BC Housing units in the RDN are designated for independent and frail seniors followed by low income families (Figure 3). Together with RAP housing subsidies, seniors account for the largest proportion of housing supported by BC Housing in the RDN.

Figure 2: Acceptable Housing & Core Housing Need

The term acceptable housing refers to housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size, and affordable.

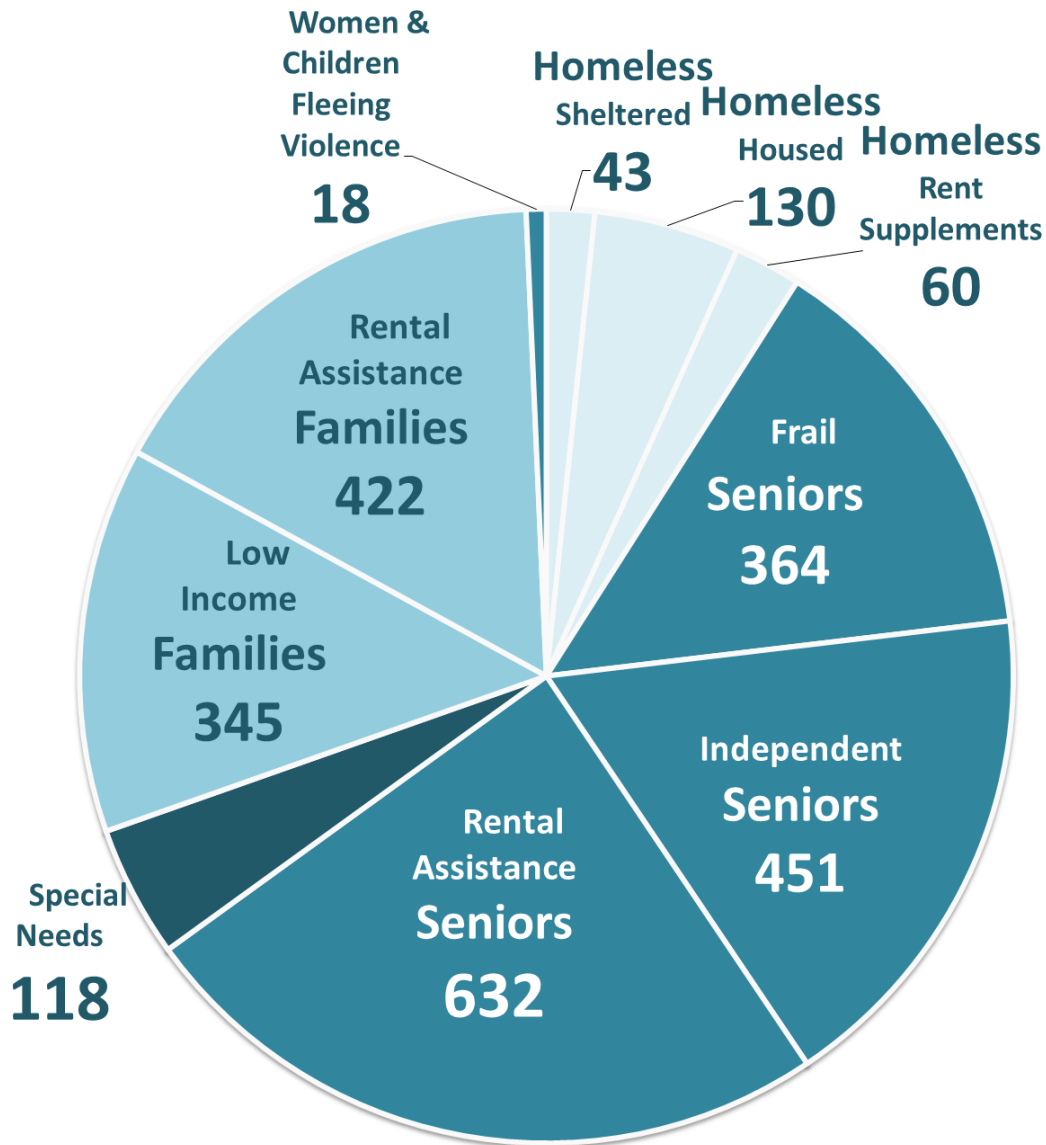
- **Adequate housing** does not require any major repairs, according to residents.
- **Suitable housing** has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements. Enough bedrooms based on NOS requirements means one bedroom for each cohabiting adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex children under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e., a unit with no bedroom).
- **Affordable housing** costs less than 30 per cent of before-tax household income. For renters, shelter costs include rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. For owners, shelter costs include mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services.

A household is in **core housing need** if its housing does not meet one or more of the adequacy, suitability or affordability standards and it would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local market housing that meets all three standards.

Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation

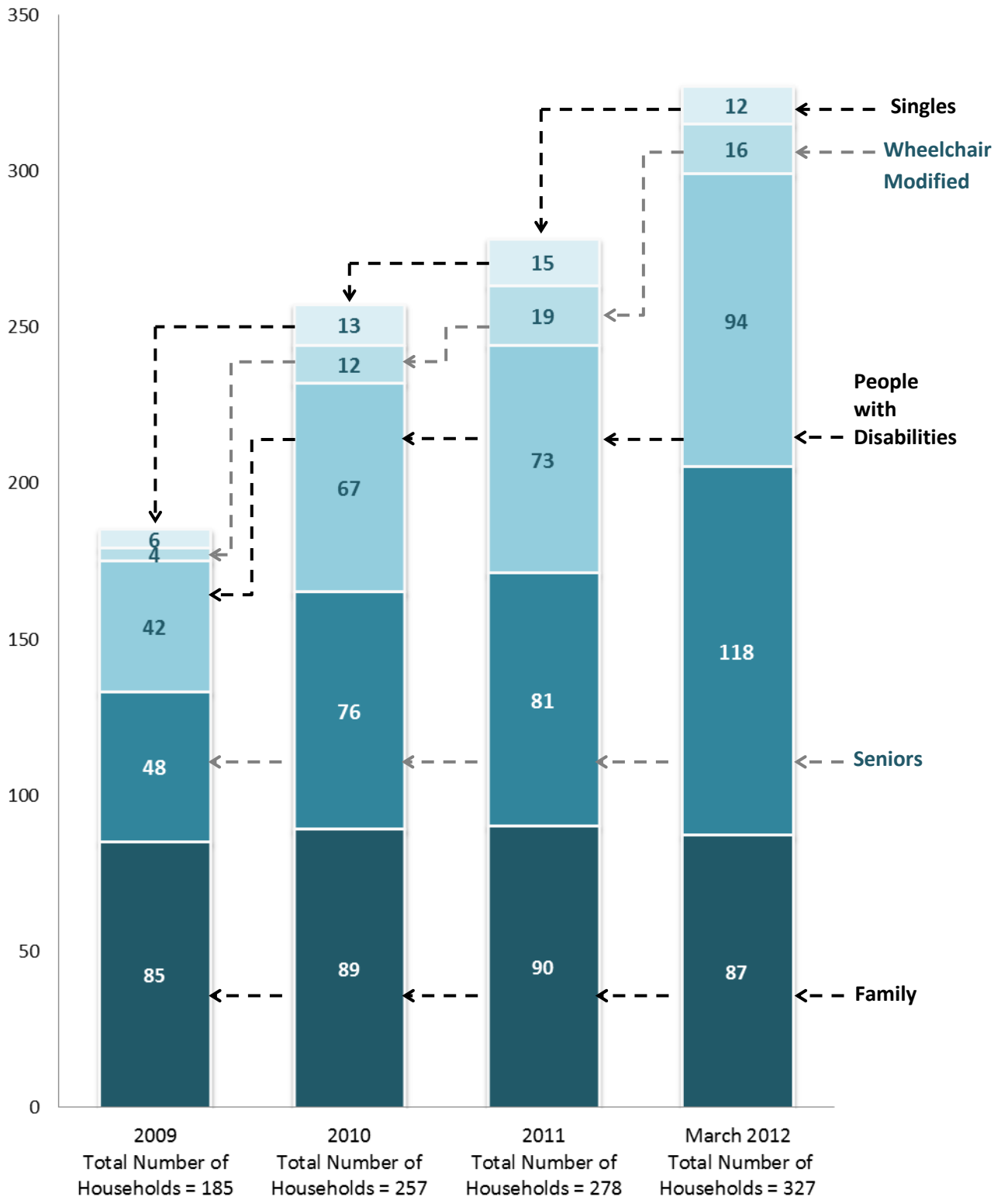
⁹ Source: BC Housing: WebFocus Report HCSTAT002: Housing Registry Statistics, From a Report Prepared by BC Housing's Research and Corporate Planning Department - September 2012

Figure 3: Number of Units Administered by BC Housing in the Regional District of Nanaimo by Target Client Type – March 2012



Since 2009 and 2012 there has been an increase in the number of applicants on waitlists for BC Housing units. This indicates that the increase in non-market housing units has not kept pace with demand. In particular there has been a significant rise in applicants for seniors housing and housing for people with disabilities (Figure 4). The rise in demand for housing for seniors and those with disabilities is likely to continue as the regions' population continues to age.

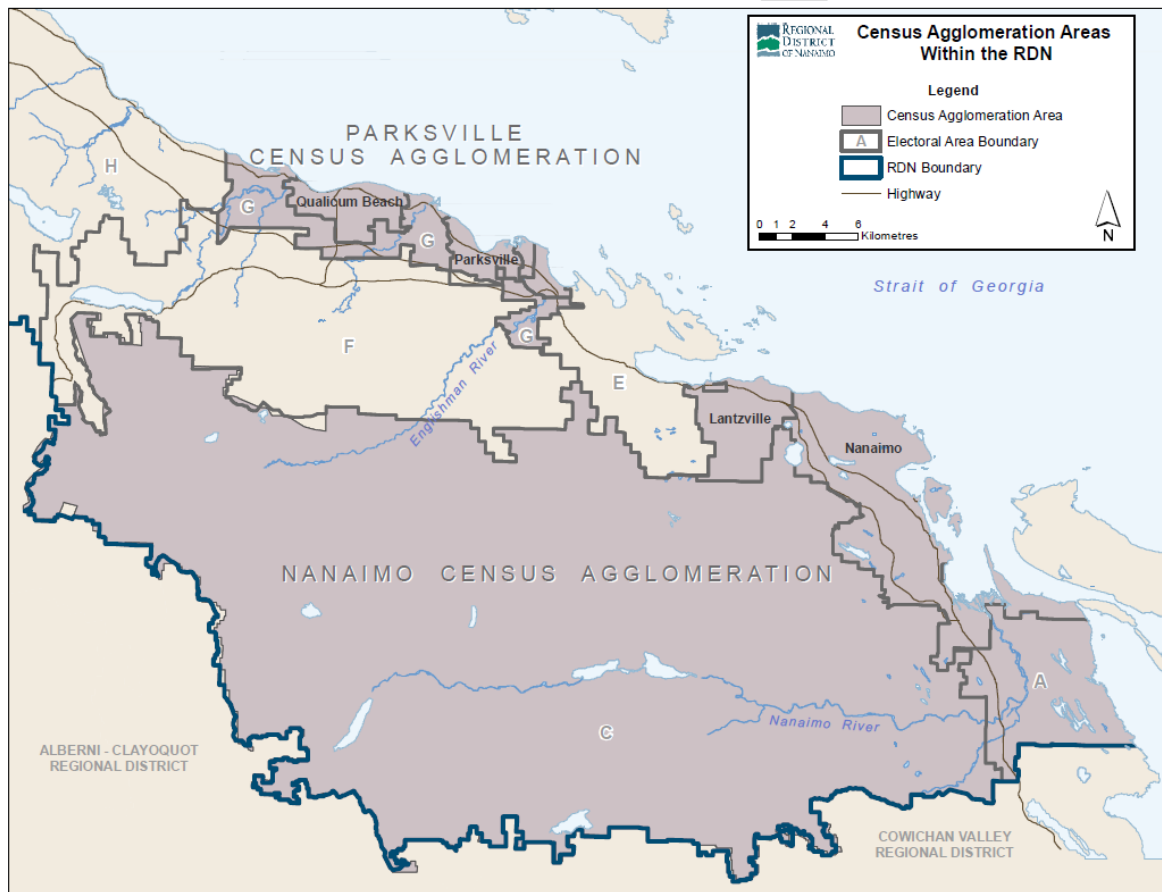
Figure 4: March 2012 BC Housing Waitlist by Household Type for the Regional District of Nanaimo



1.5 How does the Demand and Availability of Affordable Rental Housing vary across the RDN?

The demand for affordable rental housing varies across the region both amongst rural areas and between rural and urban areas. The RDN’s 2009 Housing Affordability Study provides detailed analysis of the varying socio-economic characteristics of residents in each of the RDN’s Electoral Areas and Municipalities that influence the need for different forms of affordable housing.

Map 1: Census Agglomeration Areas in the RDN



Vacancy rates¹⁰ for private (market) rental housing can be used as an indicator for rental housing demand. Higher vacancy rates may not necessarily mean that rental housing is more affordable. However, it does increase the likelihood of lower market rents due to increased supply of rental units relative to demand. Although there is no data for the RDN’s electoral areas specifically, data collected for two Census Agglomeration Areas (CAs) in the region (see Map 1 below) show marked differences in vacancy rates for private market rental housing¹¹ (see Table 2 below).

¹⁰ CMHC bases vacancy rates on privately initiated structures of 3 units or more. These rates do not include secondary dwelling units, holiday rentals or resort condominiums

¹¹ CMHC, Rental Market Report – British Columbia Highlights – Spring 2009 – Spring 2012, Table 1.1.1 Private Apartment Vacancy Rates (%) by Bedroom Type

Vacancy rates for the Nanaimo CA (which includes the City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville and Electoral Areas A and C) have been increasing since April 2009, with a marked jump from 3.3% to 7% in April 2012. Vacancy rates for the Nanaimo CA have been consistently higher than the averages for the Province as a whole during this time period. Meanwhile, for the Parksville CA (which includes the City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach and RDN Electoral Area 'G'), vacancy rates have been significantly lower than Nanaimo, ranging from a low of 0.8% during April 2009 to a more recent high of 3.6% in April 2012. While the Parksville CA vacancy rates have been lower than Nanaimo's since 2009, the most recent rates for April 2012 show Parksville's vacancy rate increasing 4.5 times and exceeding the Provincial average for the first time since April 2009.

Table 2: CMHC Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates

	CMHC Private Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates - %			Total Number of Private Rental Apartment Units	
	Nanaimo CA	Parksville CA	BC	Nanaimo CA	Parksville CA
April 2009	3.3	0.8	2.3	*	*
October 2009	3.4	1.1	2.8	*	*
April 2010	4.3	1.5	2.7	3,346	523
October 2010	3.3	1.5	3.1	3,317	538
April 2011	5	0.9	3.7	3,307	538
October 2011	6.3	2.0	2.4	3,324	548
April 2012	7	3.6	3.4	3,319	582

Source: CMHC, Rental Market Report – British Columbia Highlights – Spring 2009 – Spring 2012, Table 1.1.1 Private Apartment Vacancy Rates (%) by Bedroom Type

*Data to be added

There is a downside to higher vacancy rates. Higher vacancy rates may allow owners of private rental units in the RDN's member municipalities to apply for strata conversion, resulting in the permanent conversion of rental units into owned apartments. The City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach will only consider applications for strata conversions if vacancy rates are above 3%. Strata conversions of private rental buildings could have a significant impact on the supply and demand for affordable rental housing.

For the Nanaimo and Parksville CA's more detailed data shows variations in vacancy rates for different types of market rental units (Tables 3 and 4). Between April 2009 and April 2012 there was a notable increase in vacancy rates for units with three or more bedrooms for the Nanaimo CA. In contrast, the Parksville CA shows a very different pattern with an increase in the vacancy rate for bachelor apartments despite no overall change in the actual number of units since 2009¹².

¹² CMHC, Rental Market Report – British Columbia Highlights – Spring 2009-Spring 2012, Table 1.1.3 Number of Private Apartment Units in the Universe

The availability of other rental housing in the form of single private apartments, condos, duplexes as well as secondary suites are likely to impact the vacancy rates for bachelor, one bedroom and two bedroom units, whereas rentals of entire single family dwellings with three or more bedrooms is likely a factor affecting the vacancy rates of three plus bedroom apartments.

The recent rise in vacancy rates for the Parksville CA from 0.9% in April 2011 to 3.6% in April 2012 is significant. This is likely due to a combination of possible factors that reduce demand for private rental units including a moderate increase in market rental housing units (row houses and apartments) from 581 to 625 between April 2011 and 2012¹³; a small increase in the number of secondary suits available to rent since 2010; renters moving out of the area for work purposes; increasing numbers of renters moving into home ownership; transition of older renters into private or government assisted care units and generally increased availability of private SFD's or condos to rent that provide alternatives to rental apartments in buildings with 3 or more units.

Table 3: Nanaimo CA CMHC Market Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates by Unit Type

Nanaimo CA - CMHC Market Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates by Unit Type				
	Bach	1 Bed	2 Bed	3+ Bed
April 2009	2.8	2.8	4.2	1.2
October 2009	1.5	2.8	4.4	3.2
April 2010	3.1	3.8	4.8	7.6
October 2010	1.6	2.4	4.8	1.7
April 2011	2.7	5.1	5.0	7.9
October 2011	7.3	5.3	7.6	3.9
April 2012	3.7	6.1	8.6	8.8

Table 4: Parksville CA CMHC Market Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates by Unit Type

Parksville CA - CMHC Market Rental Apartment Vacancy Rates by Unit Type				
	Bach	1 Bed	2 Bed	3+ Bed
April 2009	0.0	0.0	0.8	6.3
October 2009	0.0	1.1	1.3	0.0
April 2010	0.0	1.1	1.8	0.0
October 2010	0.0	1.1	1.7	0.0
April 2011	0.0	1.0	1.0	**
October 2011	5.9	0.0	2.4	0.0
April 2012	5.9	2.1	4.0	0.0

** Data suppressed to protect confidentiality or data not statistically reliable

Table 3 & 4 Source: CMHC, Rental Market Report – British Columbia Highlights – Spring 2009 – Spring 2012, Table 1.1.1 Private Apartment Vacancy Rates (%) by Bedroom Type

¹³ CMHC, Rental Market Report – British Columbia Highlights – Spring 2012, Table 3.1.3 Number of Private Row (Townhouse) and Apartment Units in the Universe by Bedroom Type

Tables 5 and 6 below show an overall trend towards increasing rental costs over the past three years for all types of market rental apartment units in the Nanaimo and Parksville CA's. For those with low to moderate incomes, the impacts of even small increases in rental costs relative to income are compounded by rising costs of food, transportation and other goods. These factors serve to make housing less affordable for those with low to moderate incomes.

Table 5: Nanaimo CA CMHC Market Rental Apartment - Average Rents by Unit Type

Nanaimo CA - CMHC Market Rental Apartment Average Rents (\$) by Unit Type				
	Bach	1 Bed	2 Bed	3+ Bed
April 2009	509	617	748	902
October 2009	509	629	768	922
April 2010	509	636	773	960
October 2010	519	648	789	957
April 2011	539	657	793	953
October 2011	538	661	802	955
April 2012	548	661	797	961

Table 6: Parksville CA CMHC Market Rental Apartment - Average Rents by Unit Type

Parksville CA - CMHC Market Rental Apartment Average Rents (\$) by Unit Type				
	Bach	1 Bed	2 Bed	3+ Bed
April 2009	485	603	675	779
October 2009	493	621	688	818
April 2010	472	605	672	750
October 2010	488	625	718	800
April 2011	514	637	723	835
October 2011	520	649	726	893
April 2012	528	656	728	791

1.6 Secondary Suites & Availability of Rental Housing

Secondary suites clearly play a significant role in providing rental housing in British Columbia with secondary suites (both permitted and not permitted) making up an estimated 20%¹⁴ to 34 %¹⁵ of BC’s rental housing. The availability of secondary suites can have a huge impact upon rental vacancy rates particularly in areas where renters prefer or need ground oriented housing.

One possible factor contributing to the greater rise in vacancy rates for Nanaimo compared to the Parksville Census Agglomeration may be the substantial increase in the supply of ‘secondary rental units such as investor owned or secondary suites’¹⁶ in the City of Nanaimo compared to City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach (part of the Parksville CA). This assertion is supported by building permit data from the City of Nanaimo¹⁷ showing increasing proportions of new single family dwellings being built with attached suites (see the Table 7 below). As well, the number of permits for carriage homes and new suites within existing single family dwellings is growing.

Secondary suites are an excellent first stage solution for communities facing an affordable housing shortage. They increase the supply of affordable rental housing, increase the affordability of home ownership (financial institutions take that income into consideration in the mortgage calculation) and provide more housing while retaining neighbourhood character.

Review of Best Practices in Affordable Housing,

Building permit statistics for August 2012 show that 54% of all permits for a new single family dwelling included a suite. As of August 1, 2012, the City of Nanaimo recorded approximately 1,437 authorized suites (including carriage homes) and approximately 1,433 SFDs with unauthorized suites (based on finance user rates for additional water, sewer and solid waste). This brings the total estimate of known secondary suites in the City of Nanaimo (both authorized and unauthorized) to 2,870. The actual number of secondary suites is likely much higher than this number.

Table 7: City of Nanaimo Single Family Residential Permits including Secondary Suites, 2005-2012

City of Nanaimo Permit Type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	Total
New SFDs with Suites	65	112	141	120	104	158	112	64	876
New Suite within existing SFD	11	12	34	36	49	48	36	35	261
Upgraded Existing unauthorized Suites	28	48	46	50	17	41	16	19	265
New Accessory Dwelling Suites (Carriage Homes)				0	4	14	7	10	35
New SFD without Suites	403	252	261	153	133	139	69	54	1464
Suites identified through complaints	17	31	36	94	106	74	39	22	419

* City of Nanaimo Permit Statistics as of 2012-AUG-01

¹⁴ <http://www.wcel.org/secondary-suites>, Secondary Suites: A call for Safe and Legal Housing, Tenant’s Rights Action Coalition

¹⁵ <http://www.toolkit.bc.ca/diverse-zoning-strategies-diverse-communities#housing%20strategies>

¹⁶ Other factors include: the creation of new market rental units and subsidized housing units in the City of Nanaimo; more renters moving into home ownership due to lower mortgage rates and availability of homes for sale; and, a downturn in the economy resulting in more mobile workers who tend to be renters moving to other areas of Canada for work (CMHC Rental Market Report - British Columbia Highlights - Spring 2011)

¹⁷ City of Nanaimo, Building Permit Data, Response to Information August 2012

Table 8 below shows the number of suites as a percentage of new single family dwelling permits for the City of Nanaimo. Note that this excludes permits for carriage homes.

Table 8: City of Nanaimo Secondary Suites in New Single Family Dwellings, 2005-2012

City of Nanaimo Permit Type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	Total
New SFDs with Suites	65	112	141	120	104	158	112	64	876
New SFDs without Suites	403	252	261	153	133	139	69	54	1464
Total New SFDs	468	364	402	273	237	297	181	118	2340
% of Suites in New SFDs	14%	31%	35%	44%	44%	53%	62%	54%	37%

*City of Nanaimo Permit Statistics as of 2012-AUG-01

For the Parksville CA, two of the factors that may have an influence on lower vacancy rates compared to the Nanaimo CA are: generally lower numbers of purpose built market and non-market rental units in the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach compared to the City of Nanaimo; and, a much lower proportion of single family dwellings with rental suites. Due in part to an older population demographic, a large proportion of the single family housing stock in City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach and French Creek is in the form of single story ranchers. This style of housing is typically harder to renovate to include a secondary suite and homeowners in such cases may decide that the costs and challenges of creating a suite outweigh the potential financial benefits. Furthermore, the economic drive for mortgage helpers for homeowners may be lower given that many seniors who own homes in these areas may not need the additional income.

Since the City of Parksville permitted secondary suites fifteen years ago, and more recently carriage homes since 2008, there has been a relatively low uptake of permits for both forms of secondary dwelling units. Since 2008, Parksville has had 14 completed permits for secondary suites¹⁸. This includes 4 permits for new secondary suites within existing single family dwellings, 1 permit to include a secondary suite within a new single family dwelling, 1 permit to authorize an existing suite, and 8 carriage houses on properties with an existing single family dwelling. Although Parksville does not have a formal system for tracking secondary suites, as of August 2012 staff estimate that there are about 100-200 unauthorized suites and approximately 50 authorized suites (including carriage homes). Of the 50 authorized secondary suites, it is estimated that two thirds are existing suites that were brought into compliance and the remaining third are new purpose built suites.

Like Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach does not track numbers of secondary suites. However, since secondary suites were allowed two years ago, 21 permit applications for new secondary suites were received as of August 1st 2012. Out of the 21 applications, 14 were approved with 11 of these finalized and a remaining 3 awaiting finalization. During this time two permit applications for “garden suites” were also approved and finalized. As noted before, this small increase in secondary suites is one of the likely influences on the rise in vacancy rates for the Parksville CA.

¹⁸ Data provided by the City of Parksville, August 2012

1.7 How can Secondary Suites Help Meet Demand for 'Ground Oriented Housing' in the RDN?

The RDN's most recent Land Inventory and Residential Capacity Analysis¹⁹ concluded that overall, the RDN has adequate capacity to meet the anticipated demand for 110,900 housing units by 2036²⁰.

When broken down into demand for different housing types, the Land Inventory estimated that the region has sufficient capacity to meet demand for *single-detached and apartment dwelling units until 2036*. The category *other ground-oriented dwelling units* was the only one for which a shortfall was predicted within the 2036 timeframe. Ground oriented forms of housing (like row housing, secondary suites and duplexes) are more suitable for seniors, people with physical challenges, people with children and/pets.

If 5% to 10% of single-detached units have a secondary suite that could increase the number of other ground-oriented units to between 3,600 and 7,200 units, which would meet the shortfall in other ground oriented units.

Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis, October 2007, Sheltair, pages iv-v, page 36

The Land Inventory study notes that the shortfall of *other ground-oriented units* could be met by secondary suites, and suggests that options to meet the estimated shortfall between supply and demand include:

- *Upzoning properties to allow higher density in areas serviced by water and sewer inside the UCB; and*
- *Increasing the locations where single-detached areas allow secondary suites.*

1.8 How Can Secondary Suites Help Address Affordable Housing?

*The Community Housing Continuum*²¹ is commonly used as a model to understand housing affordability. The model categorizes a range of housing types and tenures, inferring that there are options for people to move along the continuum allowing for transition from Government-Subsidized to Market Housing.

Within the *Community Housing Continuum*, secondary suites are considered a form of Market Housing. Increasing the availability of secondary suites may result in greater choice and affordability of rental housing, which in turn could reduce pressure on the need for Non-Market and Government

¹⁹ Land Inventory and Residential Capacity Analysis, October 2007, The Sheltair Group

²⁰ This conclusion was further reinforced by the subsequent approval of higher density development in South Nanaimo in late 2007, along with additions of land within the Region's growth containment boundary in 2009 and 2011 (increasing the amount of land where future higher density residential development could be supported, as reflected in the revised 2011 Regional Growth Strategy).

²¹ Developed by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

Subsidized forms of housing. These forms of housing also permit more affordable market based homeownership.

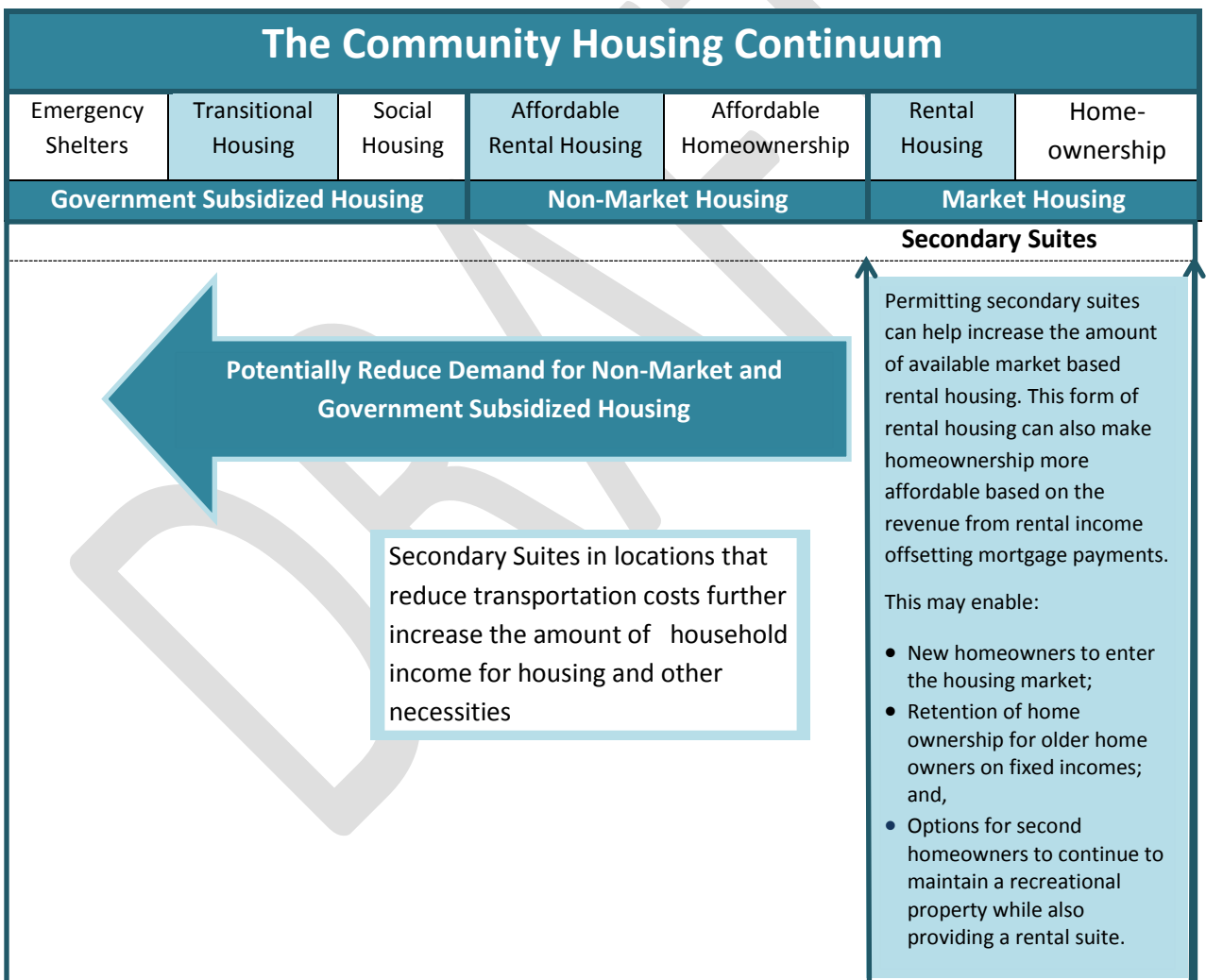
Building on the research and recommendations of the 2009 RDN Housing Affordability Study, the 2010 RDN Housing Action Plan staff report identified allowing secondary suites as one of the ways that the RDN can increase affordable housing options using existing resources (see Appendix B). Figure 5 below shows how secondary suites can influence the affordability of Market Housing in the RDN.

Given an understanding of the RDN's organizational mandate, jurisdiction, expertise and resources, the RDN can most effectively focus efforts to address regional housing needs by:

1. *Influencing the provision of market rental housing.*
2. *Influencing the provision of non-market housing (both rental and owned) through the RDN's regulatory authority.*

RDN Housing Action Plan, December 2010, Page 3

Figure 5: Secondary Suites and the Community Housing Continuum



1.9 Who Would Occupy Secondary Suites in the RDN?

Phase 1 of the RDN’s Affordable Housing study²² identified four broad groups of people²³ that “are particularly challenged to find suitable affordable housing” in the region:

- Income Assistance Recipients
- Retirees on Fixed Incomes
- Low-Income Workers
- Moderate Income Families

Phase 2 of the RDN’s Housing Affordability Study (“Connecting Housing Needs and Opportunities”) identified housing forms best suited to meet the needs of people in these four broad groups. Table 9 below (taken from the report) identifies secondary suites as a suitable form of housing in key locations with access to transit for the first three groups. The location of housing relative to transit, services and schools is an essential consideration given that people in these groups are most likely to be renters with limited income for transportation.

Although, not identified in the table as the best suited housing form for moderate income families, owning a single family dwelling with a secondary suite can facilitate more affordable home ownership for this group.

Table 9: Affordable Housing Forms and Tenures – Best Suited to Four Broad Groups

Group Profile	Housing Form Best Suited Most Likely Tenure	Key Locational Needs
Income Assistance Recipients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - depends on household type, disability - individuals may share, or may require studio, small apartment/suite - Families require ground access – row housing or secondary suite - Some with special needs require accessible housing <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market rental, non-market rental 	Proximity to public transit, commercial and medical services.
Low-Income Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studio, one bedroom units - some 2+ bedroom units for shared accommodation - units in multi-unit housing (apartments) - secondary suites in single-detached, semi-detached row houses - secondary suites (e.g. laneway housing) <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market rental 	Proximity to employment, commercial and medical services, public transit
Retirees on Fixed Incomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studio, one bedroom units - Some 2+ bedroom units for couples - Units in multi-unit housing (apartments) - Secondary suites in single detached, semi-detached, row houses - Manufactured home parks <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home ownership, life lease, market rental, non-market rental 	Proximity to commercial and medical services, public transit
Moderate Income Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two or more bedroom units - Single-detached, semi-detached, row houses - Ground orientation preference <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market rental, home ownership 	Proximity to schools, playgrounds, recreational facilities, commercial services.

²² Regional Housing Affordability Study Phase 1– Housing Needs Overview, January 2009, City Spaces

²³ Within these groups, the report identified a further 10 sub-groups who face “exceptional challenges due to unique circumstances”.

1.10 What is the Level of Interest in Allowing Secondary Suites in the RDN?

The RDN does not have a formal system of tracking inquiries received about secondary suites. However, anecdotal information from RDN planning staff indicate that since 2011, the RDN has been receiving a steady number of inquiries (on average 10-12 per week as of August 2012) about whether or not secondary suites are allowed within the RDN's electoral areas. Providing accommodation for an ageing parent is frequently cited as a reason for wanting a secondary suite.

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2 FACTORS TO CONSIDER FOR ALLOWING SECONDARY SUITES

In addition to deciding where secondary suites should be permitted, there are a number of different factors that need to be considered when developing bylaws that regulate how secondary suites will be allowed. Local government bylaws regulating secondary suites may cover one or more of the following: location (detached versus attached to principal dwelling), other types of home based business uses allowed in conjunction with a suite, off street parking spaces, owner-occupation on a lot with a suite, number and relationship of tenants, number of rooms, number of suites allowed on a lot, maximum/minimum size, licensing and additional user fees. Since 1995, the BC Building Code has included regulations that make it easier for the conversion of existing single family dwellings to incorporate a secondary suite. A summary of these regulations are included in Appendix E. The RDN's OCP's that support secondary suites also identify some of the conditions under which they are supported (Appendix F).

2.1 Attached versus Detached Secondary Suites

Secondary suites that are contained within the footprint of an existing principal residence tend to have the least impact on a single family neighbourhood from the perspective of neighbourhood character, efficient servicing and environmental impacts associated with new buildings on a lot. Nevertheless there are several areas within the RDN that may be well suited to supporting secondary suites that are detached from the principal residence on a lot.

Local governments that allow detached forms of secondary suites typically require larger minimum lot sizes than would be required for attached secondary suites. At the same time there are size limits to ensure that the detached suite remains a secondary use to the principal residential dwelling and subdivision or strata-titling is not allowed. More careful consideration needs to be given to the design of detached secondary suites due to their capacity to alter the appearance of a neighbourhood compared to suites that are contained fully within a single family dwelling.

The RDN's 2009 Housing Affordability Study noted that factors "*such as availability and distance to transit, and unit size*" should be considered in deciding where to permit detached secondary suites. This is "*to preclude the development of large secondary dwellings that do not address an affordable housing need*".²⁴

2.2 Bed and Breakfast, Home Based Business and Secondary Suites

There are several examples of local governments not allowing secondary suites in conjunction with Bed and Breakfasts or other Home Based Business uses that may be allowed on a lot. This is usually to address concerns about significant impacts (e.g. increased traffic or noise) on single family neighbourhoods as well as impacts on servicing and environmental protection. The electoral area 'G'

²⁴ Connecting Housing Needs and Opportunities, March 2009, CitySpaces, Page 19

OCP Bylaw No. 1540, 2008 supports secondary suites in certain areas of French Creek Rural Village Centre but not where a home based business, day care, or group home has already been established.

2.3 Vacation Rentals of Single Family Dwellings and Use of Resort Condominiums as Permanent Residences

Throughout the region, there is anecdotal evidence that market demands and opportunities have resulted in single family dwelling units and apartment units being used for short term vacation rentals or vacation rentals being used as permanent housing. The City of Parksville has found instances of single family dwellings being owned in quarter shares and rented out on a daily or monthly basis. Conversely, the Town of Qualicum Beach has found examples of resort condominium units being used year round as permanent residences due in part to their affordability compared to either owning or renting residential condominiums. There is also evidence of both these trends in the RDN's rural electoral areas in communities like Horne Lake, Nanoose, Fairwinds, Qualicum Bay, Bowser and Deep Bay.

Unauthorized vacation rental of dwelling units compete with legitimate forms of tourist accommodation. To address this issue with secondary suites, some local governments specify that suites are not to be used for vacation rentals (Whistler). Discouraging short term vacation rentals of single family dwellings and secondary suites (through enforcement of building bylaws) may help to increase the availability of affordable rental housing while at the same time also protecting the Region's tourist accommodation industry.

2.4 Parking

Parking is often a common concern raised about introducing secondary suites into neighbourhoods. To address this concern, local governments that permit secondary suites typically require at least one off street parking space for secondary suites (City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, Cowichan Valley Regional District, and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District). This is usually in addition to two off street parking spaces required for the main single family dwelling on a lot. It should be noted that the Area 'G' OCP supports two off street parking spaces for secondary suites in French Creek and reducing this number of off street parking spaces has been identified as a way of encouraging the development of secondary suites in this area²⁵.

Studies conducted for secondary suites in more urban settings have found that on average they do not generate demand for an extra full parking space. Allowing secondary suites in areas close to transit and a range of amenities will make it easier for the occupants of suites to live without owning a personal vehicle. There are already many low income renters in rural areas who cannot afford to own a vehicle, this together with the impacts of growing numbers of seniors whose ability to drive is limited by age related disabilities will also affect the need for additional off street parking related to secondary suites.

²⁵ Connecting Housing Needs and Opportunities, March 2009, CitySpaces Page 19

Requirements for additional parking tied to secondary suites may result in loss of green or permeable surfaces if homeowners have to pave land to provide extra parking. Concerns about rainwater management and groundwater recharge led the City of Portland (Oregon, USA) to encourage the use of on-street parking rather than require additional parking for secondary suites.

The RDN has several goals in the RGS and other policy documents designed to improve rainwater management in order to protect ground and surface water. This includes encouraging measures to reduce paved surfaces in order to adapt to extreme climate change events that require more effective management of rainwater to help mitigate flooding. The decision about whether or not to require additional parking for secondary suites should take these factors into consideration.

2.5 Owner Occupancy

Secondary suites often raise concerns about poor property maintenance or perceived behaviour of renters attributed to 'absent landlords'. To address this concern, many local governments include requirements for homes with secondary suites to be "owner-occupied" (Town of Qualicum Beach, City of Parksville). The City of Nanaimo does not require either a suite or principal dwelling to be owner occupied. This decision resulted from legal advice indicating that while local governments have the authority to adopt bylaws that regulate land use, it is not clear that they have the authority to regulate who uses land. The Province of BC's Housing Policy Branch supports this perspective indicating that the owner occupancy requirement is "legally challengeable" and also difficult to enforce.

If the issue of "owner occupation" proves to be a significant concern for community members when discussing allowing suites, then the RDN could seek legal advice regarding the ability to make this a requirement. There are also other tools available to the RDN to address community concerns about potential nuisance caused by residents of secondary suites. These include bylaws that allow the RDN to require standards of property maintenance, and bylaws regulating noise and other forms of disturbance.

2.6 Number of Occupants and Relationship

Several local governments that permit secondary suites define the number and relationship of secondary suite occupants.

"A suite is intended as residential accommodation of one or more individuals who are related through marriage or common law, blood relationship, legal adoption, legal guardianship or a group of not more than two unrelated persons." (City of Nanaimo)

Similar to owner occupancy requirements, questions have been raised about the ability of a local government to regulate the number of occupants of any dwelling unit and their relationship to each other. However, rental agreements between landlords and tenants may specify the number of occupants and local governments may enter into housing agreements with property owners that specify similar conditions. However, it should be noted that the latter option can be very difficult to enforce.

2.7 Size and Number of Rooms

The impact of secondary suites on a community will be affected by their size, with larger units attracting and accommodating more rooms and people. Placing a limit on the maximum size of a secondary suite and number of bedrooms allows local governments to control the impacts on the character of a community. Local governments that allow secondary suites typically use the maximum size requirements in the BC Building Code definition of secondary suites.

Under the BC Building Code, a suite is defined as a smaller dwelling unit within a single family house that is less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the house to a maximum of 90 m² (968 ft²). The Code requirements under this definition are more flexible, making it easier for existing single family dwellings to install suites compared to Code requirements that apply to suites that are larger than 90 m².

Local governments have the ability to establish maximum sizes for secondary suites and can also limit the number of bedrooms. For example, the City of Nanaimo allows an attached secondary suite to be 40% of the dwelling unit size, up to a 90 m² maximum with no more than two bedrooms. Some local governments like the City of Parksville may also specify a minimum size for suites (40 m²).

2.8 Number of Secondary Suites

Local governments that permit secondary suites typically allow only one secondary suite on a single family lot or within a single family dwelling. These limitations help to ensure that secondary suites have minimal impact on existing single family neighbourhoods.

Within the RDN there are some zones particularly in rural or rural residential areas that allow more than one dwelling on a lot. In instances where more than one single family dwelling could exist on a lot careful consideration needs to be given about whether or not suites are limited to one per lot or one per dwelling.

In the future, the RDN may also wish to consider how to make better use of extremely large homes with few occupants by allowing more than one secondary suite within the existing building footprint (similar to the City of Surrey's concept for 'Manor House' zoning).

2.9 Registration/ Licensing

Several jurisdictions require secondary suites to be registered. Some, like the City of Parksville, require a business license in order to register a secondary suite. The payment of fees for a business license or to register a suite may be considered a barrier to creating secondary suites. However, local governments may consider this a reasonable way of recovering costs involved with managing the process to permit secondary suites.

The Regional District of Nanaimo does not currently have a business license function. The RDN has a home based business registry for all home based businesses located in Electoral Areas A, C, E, G and H. However, there are no fees associated with registering a home based business, nor is there any enforcement of the bylaw requiring registration.

2.10 User Fees

The experience of other local governments shows that allowing secondary suites will raise concerns about ensuring that homeowners who have secondary suites pay their fair share for any extra services they use. A study conducted by Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation²⁶ found that, on average, homes with attached secondary suites consumed less than an additional 50% of municipal services for a single home. The results of this study suggest that simply charging homes with attached secondary suites double service fees may be inequitable compared to charging fees based on use. The RDN's Wastewater Services have also noted that *"some experience has shown that homes with secondary suites produce a negligible amount of additional wastewater"*²⁷.

While 'user pay' systems may be the fairest way to recover any additional costs resulting from secondary suites, not all services may be established to charge fees in this manner. For example, Improvement Districts in the RDN all charge fees for water based on metered usage²⁸. However, solid waste collection is a set service fee per household which is automatically doubled if a secondary suite is known to exist (whether permitted or not).

Local governments can also establish extra Development Cost Charges (DCC's) for secondary suites that are part of new land development. These charges can be based on the extent to which secondary suites impact the infrastructure needed to service new development. However, it should be noted that the RDN's DCC Bylaw No. 1442 that deals with wastewater for French Creek excludes the BC building code definition for a secondary suite in the definition of a dwelling unit. This means that secondary suites that are attached to a house and less than 90 m² in size are exempt from DCC charges. On the other hand, the RDN charges DCC's for sewer services related to detached secondary suites like Carriage Homes in the Town of Qualicum Beach. The RDN also has DCC bylaws that allow the RDN to consider waiving DCC charges where they would be considered a barrier to affordable housing²⁹.

The RDN has an established track record of balancing cost recovery goals with affordable housing goals when deciding how to establish DCC's for secondary suites. Nevertheless, allowing secondary suites will have an impact on services and require a review of DCC's and user fees. This will involve considering how the RDN currently addresses DCC's relating to secondary suites and how different methods for charging user fees may reduce the affordability of suites as a form of housing by either increasing rents for tenants and/or discouraging homeowners from creating suites.

²⁶ Impact of Municipal User Fees on Secondary Suites, Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation, October 2001

²⁷ RDN Staff Report: Northern Community Sewer Service Area Development Cost Charges Bylaw No. 1442.02, 2008, June 28, 2008

²⁸ It should be noted that some of the private water providers in the RDN may be charging a set rate

²⁹ RDN Bylaw No. 1088, A Bylaw to Impose Development Cost Charges in the Nanoose Bay Bulk Water Local Service Area, October 13, 1998

2.11 Addressing and Emergency Response

A major challenge with existing un-authorized secondary suites is that emergency responders may not be aware of a suite (due to the suite sharing the same address as the principal dwelling unit), resulting in possible delays in response for both occupants of secondary suites and a principal dwelling. The RDN does not provide addresses to secondary suites that are un-authorized. This can cause potential delays in response time when emergency services are required to homes with un-authorized suites.

Where secondary suites are allowed as a second dwelling, the RDN's Geographical Information Systems (GIS) services has a method for assigning an address for a secondary suite which is then provided to emergency responders (enhanced 911 systems). This helps avoid confusion for responders and improve emergency response times for all occupants on a lot where a secondary suite is allowed.

DRAFT

3 BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ALLOWING SECONDARY SUITES IN RDN ELECTORAL AREAS

Secondary Suites are commonly cited as a relatively easy way for local governments to increase affordable market based housing for both renters and homeowners. However, implementing a successful secondary suites strategy can be challenging. The tables below (adapted from several sources³⁰) identify the benefits and challenges of allowing secondary suites in the RDN’s electoral areas for renters, homeowners, rural communities and the Region.

Table 10: Benefits and Challenges of Secondary Suites for Renters

Renters	
Benefits	Challenges
<p><i>Affordable housing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary suites expand the supply and choice of rental housing in rural areas. Increased choice of rental accommodation may help to lower rents so that they are more affordable. Provides the opportunity for renters to live in rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unless there are conditions in place to require rent controls, there is no guarantee that rents for secondary suites will be affordable. Landlords may increase rents of existing suites to reflect costs of upgrades required to authorize suites. Depending on the age and quality of construction of the rental suite, renters may face unnecessarily high energy costs.
<p><i>Improved housing quality</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing secondary suites helps to ensure that better standards for health and safety are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most local governments that have allowed suites, face ongoing challenges with the existence of unauthorized suites, particularly those that existed prior to bylaws allowing suites. Owners of suites may be unwilling and/or unable to afford the costs of improving suites to meet minimum health and safety standards. Bylaw enforcement becomes a key tool in ensuring basic health and safety standards are met. However, enforcement has to be balanced with making sure that renters are not left more vulnerable due to closures of unsafe accommodation. It is easier for local governments to focus on ensuring newly created suites meet legislated requirements.
<p><i>Ground-oriented housing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basement units, the most common type of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing houses without basements (such as

³⁰ Qualicum Beach Secondary Suites Study, August 2008, Urban Aspects Consulting Group
 Secondary Suites: A Tool to Address Calgary’s Affordable Housing Needs, Revised 2007, Poverty Reduction Coalition
 Secondary Suites, A Guide for Local Governments, Revised September 2005, BC Housing Policy Branch

Renters	
Benefits	Challenges
<p>secondary suite, provide the greatest ease of entry and often include access to a yard. Ground orientation is important for renters with physical challenges as well as those with children and/or pets.</p>	<p>ranchers) may be limited in their ability to incorporate attached secondary suites without significant alteration.</p>
<p>Proximity to services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary Suites located in some areas of the RDN may have easy access to transit, schools, shopping, recreation centres and other services. Encouraging secondary suites in Rural Village Centres increases the likelihood that residents in suites benefit from lower transportation related costs due to closer access to services (including transit), shops, schools, jobs and amenities. Increases in density from secondary suites would also support the viability of local shops, schools and businesses located in Rural Village Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlike the RDN's municipalities, the majority of detached single family housing in the RDN's Electoral Areas is located in areas with limited access to transit, shopping, recreation centres and other services.

Table 11: Benefits and Challenges of Secondary Suites for Homeowners

Homeowners	
Benefits	Challenges
<p>Mortgage Helper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With rising housing costs, a secondary suite may serve as a mortgage helper, particularly for new homebuyers or those on fixed incomes. Banks will frequently consider the potential income from a secondary suite in granting mortgages. Where suites are allowed, homeowners may be eligible for grants to upgrade homes to provide low cost rental housing, housing for seniors or housing adapted to those with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renting a secondary suite requires management of a rental unit under the <i>Residential Tenancy Act</i>. May have noise and privacy impacts. May involve increased costs to upgrade suites to BC Building Code standards. May involve increased costs due to higher water use, garbage, sewage disposal. Especially where wells and septic systems need to be upgraded. May face structural difficulties meeting building code. May involve increased assessment values and property taxes. May result in increased income taxes, as reporting additional income from rent is required by law.

<p><i>Aging in Place</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secondary suite may help older homeowners on a fixed income afford to remain in their homes longer by providing an extra source of income as well as a measure of security that another adult/s is close by to assist if necessary. • A suite can also provide accommodation for a live-in caretaker or be part of a reciprocal arrangement where a tenant provides help with personal care of the homeowner and/ the upkeep of a property in return for accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites and/the primary dwelling unit may need to be upgraded or designed to include features that are “Accessible” and enable “Aging in Place”.
<p><i>Security for second home owners or frequent travelers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A suite might allow year round security for a homeowner who uses a home as a vacation property for short periods each year or who travels frequently. 	
<p><i>Allow families to stay together</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secondary suite may allow a family member such as an adult child or a parent to have an affordable home while also benefiting from mutual support. This may involve accommodation for grandparents or other family members to assist with childcare for working parents. • Alternately, a suite may allow accommodation for relatives in need of care, saving the travel time and expense associated with this responsibility. 	

Table 12: Benefits and Challenges of Secondary Suites for Rural Communities and the Region

Rural Communities & the Region	
Benefits	Challenges
<p><i>Increases affordable housing stock without the need for government subsidies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites would allow the RDN to increase the stock of affordable housing in rural areas without requiring government subsidies. • As the stock of rental housing increases, this may result in greater choice of rental housing and possibly lower market rents. This in turn would take pressure off the demand for subsidized housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless there are conditions in place to require rent controls, there is no guarantee that rents for secondary suites will be affordable. • In some tourist areas, secondary suites may be used for temporary tourist accommodation, thereby not being available for long-term renters.
<p><i>Low-impact densification.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites increase the rental housing stock without significantly changing the built form of single family rural neighbourhoods. • Secondary suites make more efficient use of existing housing stock, land, and services (water, sewer, roads, parks, schools etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be increased environmental impacts if water and wastewater systems are not equipped to handle additional demand. Groundwater vulnerability is of particular concern in some areas of the region. • May increase demand for on-street parking. • Secondary suites in accessory buildings could have a higher impact on the character of an area and would require more careful design considerations. • May increase traffic in residential areas. • Increases in density may be viewed negatively by community members. • May increase noise due to more people living on a site with potential increases in vehicle traffic.
<p><i>Supports Community Diversity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites increase the diversity of housing choice. This supports the ability of residents from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within rural areas. This may also enable greater stability for aging communities by allowing for “aging in place”, with a variety of housing types to accommodate different life stages of residents. • Increased density in the right locations can help develop more compact, complete, communities which support alternative transportation e.g. walking, cycling, and transit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some neighbourhoods and residents may not welcome or support diversity.

Rural Communities & the Region	
Benefits	Challenges
<p>Promotes Smart Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing increased density within established RVC's promotes Smart Growth through intensification of land use, which will help to take the pressure off development of green space outside of the Rural Village Centres. • Encouraging suites within RVC's is consistent with the RDN's growth management goals that seek to concentrate future growth and development inside Growth Containment Boundaries in order to protect lands that are valued for environmental, recreation and resource uses (e.g. agriculture, forestry). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing secondary suites outside of RVC's and through-out the RDN's rural electoral areas would be inconsistent with the RDN's growth management policies and related Smart Growth principles. This would serve to further undermine the growth of RVC's as compact, complete communities.
<p>Design and character issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites contained within a single family home allow increases in density and meet housing needs without altering the character of a community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites that are detached or attached to the side of a single family home present more issues in terms of the potential impact on community character and design. This requires consideration of regulations to guide the form and character to minimize potential negative impacts.
<p>Efficient use of existing infrastructure & services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Suites help make good use of existing servicing and infrastructure e.g. water, sewer, solid waste, schools, parks, and community centres. • RDN Solid Waste services note that servicing existing secondary suites would allow for better cost recovery and efficiency for solid waste services. • In addition to better cost recovery, allowing suites would also help the RDN reduce GHG emissions by diverting waste from the landfill (from existing unauthorized suites) and collecting waste from more dwelling units along already established collection routes. • Permitting secondary suites could help extend residential capacity in a community if single family buildings continue to dominate development on lands permitted for higher density residential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, extra compostable waste generated by existing unauthorized suites may not fit in the one green bin collected from each house address. This may result in extra garbage being collected for a nominal fee (using purchased tags) or residents directly taking waste to the landfill/transfer stations.

<p>Planning for infrastructure and amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing secondary suites provides more certainty about the number of potential dwelling units in an area allowing the RDN and other levels of government to more accurately plan future infrastructure development as well as amenities like parks, recreation and schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to predict the uptake of secondary suites so actual and potential numbers of suites may be quite different.
<p>Addresses current situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes that secondary suites are already an established form of housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May incur additional administration costs to ensure that new suites meet regulations. • May increase local government liability with regard to ensuring that new and existing suites meet health and safety standards as well as other regulations.
<p>Addresses issues with second homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another factor influencing long term residential capacity in a community is the use of dwellings as second homes that are not occupied full time. • Allowing secondary suites may enable owners of second homes to provide a full time dwelling unit while still maintaining another dwelling unit for part-time personal use. This not only benefits homeowners, it also helps increase the availability of second homes as long term rental properties. 	
<p>Increase in federal transfer payments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renters living in authorized suites may be more willing to be identified by census takers. More accurate counts can result in higher population numbers and hence increases in population-based funding. 	
<p>Avoiding a culture of non-compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the problems associated with the proliferation of unauthorized suites is the development of a culture of noncompliance to RDN regulations. Conversely, a permissive policy encourages compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all existing suites may be able to meet current health and safety requirements.
<p>Climate Change and Energy Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the stock of housing in RVC's allows for the use of alternative transportation, thereby reducing transportation associated energy use and emissions. • The RDN can ensure that new homes built with suites meet minimum code requirements for energy efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit of existing homes poses more of a challenge and secondary suites in older homes may be less energy efficient as a result. This impacts GHG emissions and may result in the extra financial costs for low income renters living in inefficient buildings. • Allowing suites outside of RVC's or areas without nearby services and transit would lead to increased numbers of people reliant on cars

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites also allow for more efficient use of existing buildings and infrastructure by reducing the materials required for new construction and through greater efficiencies with shared walls. • Allowing secondary suites may make it possible for incentives /funding to be directed towards improving the energy efficiency of new or upgraded suites. 	<p>and increased transportation related GHG emissions.</p>
<p>Emergency Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing secondary suites will enable the RDN to provide proper addressing for suites and information to emergency responders about the presence of additional dwelling units. This will improve emergency response for occupants of secondary suites. 	

4 POLICIES SUPPORTING SECONDARY SUITES

The RDN has long recognized that secondary suites play an important role in addressing the need for affordable housing in electoral areas of the Region. The timeline in Appendix C provides a list of RDN Board endorsed plans and other documents that show support for the creation of affordable housing including secondary suites. Highlighted below are some of the RDN’s key policy documents that either directly or indirectly support allowing secondary suites as part of increasing the range of affordable housing options in the Region.

2013 – 2015 Board Strategic Plan

One of the goals of the RDN’s 2013-2015 Board Strategic Plan is to “Increase affordable, adaptable housing to support all members of a community”. This includes direction to “Build on the Regional Affordable Housing Study [2009] to promote the development of affordable housing and housing that supports aging in place for seniors”.

2010 Housing Action Plan

The Goal of the 2010 Housing Action Plan is “to increase the number and choice of affordable rental and market housing units designed to meet the needs of lower income residents with different household sizes, ages and special needs”. The Action Plan identifies that the “RDN can have greatest influence on the provision of Affordable Housing by using its jurisdiction over land uses” to influence the provision of non-market housing and market rental housing (see Appendix B).

The Action Plan outlines specific actions that the RDN can take to improve access to affordable housing using existing budgets and staffing resources. On January 25, 2011, the RDN Board endorsed proceeding with three actions including ‘Action 8’ to undertake a study to specifically identify where secondary suites should be permitted.

2010 Housing Action Plan - Action 8

Adopting a Secondary Suites Bylaw

The RDN will consider undertaking a study to identify where secondary suites and carriage homes should be permitted in the electoral areas of the RDN. The study would also consider appropriate land use regulations (e.g. parking spaces, floor area).

Based upon the outcome of the study above, the RDN will consider updating OCPs and zoning bylaws to allow secondary suites.

2011 Regional Growth Strategy

Unlike the previous 2003 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the 2011 RGS Bylaw No. 1615 contains goals and policies that specifically address affordable housing.

Goal 6 of the RGS is to: **Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing** – Support and facilitate the provision of appropriate, adequate, attainable, affordable and adaptable housing.

The inclusion of this goal in the 2011 RGS was in response to:

- Direction set in the 2010-2012 RDN Board Strategic Plan
- The results of the 2006 State of Sustainability Report that showed a trend towards worsening social indicators that affect increasing numbers of RDN residents in Core Housing Need.

- The subsequent 2007 State of Sustainability Recommendations Report included strategies to reduce the numbers of residents in Core Housing Need.
- Strong public support to include policies to address affordable housing in the RGS. The results of a 2011 survey on the revised draft RGS Bylaw No. 1615, showed that 78% of the 629 respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the RDN and its member municipalities should play a larger role in the provision of affordable housing (see figure 6 below).

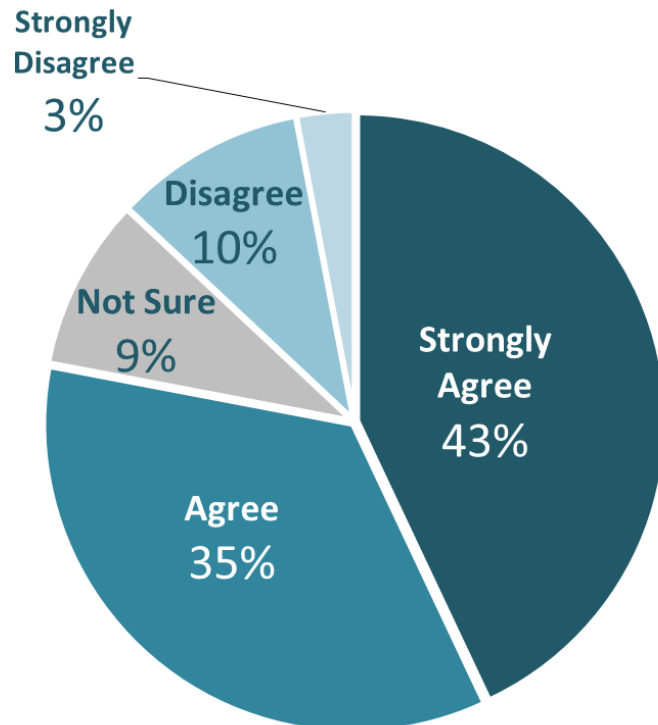
RDN Official Community Plans

Several of the RDN's Official Community Plans (OCPs) support secondary suites either directly by having policies that support secondary suites within specific areas or indirectly through policies that encourage greater diversity of housing within the Growth Containment Boundary (see Appendix F).

Figure 6: Response to RGS Survey on RDN's role in the Provision of Affordable Housing

**RGS 2011 Survey
Question:**

"Should the RDN and its member municipalities should play a larger role in the provision of affordable housing?"



5 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FOR DEVELOPING REGULATIONS TO ALLOW SECONDARY SUITES

The 2011 Regional Growth Strategy included an extensive public consultation process that showed clear support for the RDN and its member municipalities doing more to support the creation of affordable housing in the region (Figure 6). A few of the RDN's electoral area Official Community Plans, developed with broad community consultation, show specific support for secondary suites within Rural Village Centres (e.g. Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan, Bowser Village Centre Plan). However, there are several areas of the RDN where the question of allowing secondary suites has not been addressed by the community nor has there been discussion around how secondary suites should be implemented.

One of the key lessons learned from other local governments who have undertaken processes to authorize secondary suites is that, "successful secondary suites regulations draw on broad community participation in the process"³¹. Finding out more about what types of concerns community members may have about where and how secondary suites should be allowed is an important part of developing regulations that address these concerns.

Facilitating region-wide community consultation, particularly for the RDN's dispersed rural residents is an ongoing challenge. The document *Secondary Suites Consultation Plan* outlines a consultation process that is consistent with RDN Board public consultation policies and direction in the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. The proposed consultation process includes opportunities for direct contact between RDN staff, Directors and Electoral Area communities; and use of online media to provide educational information and to gather input through an online survey promoted by using existing community networks and e-mail lists. This approach draws from recent public consultation experience in electoral areas and the need for an effective approach that allows opportunities for both renters and homeowners to participate.

³¹ Islands Trust Staff Report, July 21, 2011, Update on Consultation Strategy for Secondary Suites

6 WHERE SHOULD SECONDARY SUITES BE CONSIDERED?

This section looks at where secondary suites should be considered within the RDN's electoral areas given RDN Board direction on affordable housing together with land use, growth management, environmental protection, climate change, drinking water protection and other policies designed to achieve a more sustainable region. The following factors are discussed:

- 6.1 Where are other local governments allowing Secondary Suites?
- 6.2 RDN Policies that Support Secondary Suites
- 6.3 Climate Change and Secondary Suites Locations
- 6.4 Transportation Costs and Secondary Suites Locations
- 6.5 Transportation & Aging in Place
- 6.6 Secondary Suites and Transit
- 6.7 Compact Communities – Secondary Suites & Proximity to Shops, Services and other Amenities
- 6.8 Secondary Suites and Employment Opportunities
- 6.9 Watershed Health and Community Servicing

6.1 Where are other local governments allowing secondary suites?

The majority of local governments that allow secondary suites are municipalities. Regional districts that allow secondary suites include Cowichan Valley, Alberni-Clayoquot, Bulkley-Nechako, Peace River and Sunshine Coast. Some regional districts also regulate secondary suites as duplexes, permitting them in areas that allow two dwellings on a parcel (e.g. Okanagan-Similkameen and Central Kootenay).

For municipalities, making the decision about where secondary suites should be allowed is often more straightforward compared to regional districts. Municipalities tend to have higher proportions of serviced land in closer proximity to transit, schools, sources of employment and other services. In contrast, many regional districts like the RDN govern areas that are typically more rural, with lower density development and lower levels of servicing. Regional districts often include areas with significant ecological values, including watersheds that are sensitive to the impacts of development. Lack of adequate waste water treatment and water can be a major factor in whether or not secondary suites are allowed in an area. Proximity to transit is another factor for where suites should be permitted. Transit, where it exists in rural areas, may service areas along highway corridors in between specific centres.

Unlike more remote regional districts in BC, the RDN has much of its land base within relatively close driving distance to larger urban centres. This fact, together with a legacy of zoning bylaws that allow large lot suburban style development in rural areas, have contributed to sprawling patterns of development with easy access to major highways.

Local governments in British Columbia generally take one of two approaches to allowing secondary suites. Some permit secondary suites in all single family dwellings regardless of zoning (City of Vancouver, City of Richmond), while others limit secondary suites to single family residences within specific zones (City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, Cowichan Valley Regional District). Some local governments in more rural contexts are also considering allowing suites within areas serviced by transit or where groundwater vulnerability is not an issue rather than focusing on particular land use zones (Islands Trust, Salt Spring).

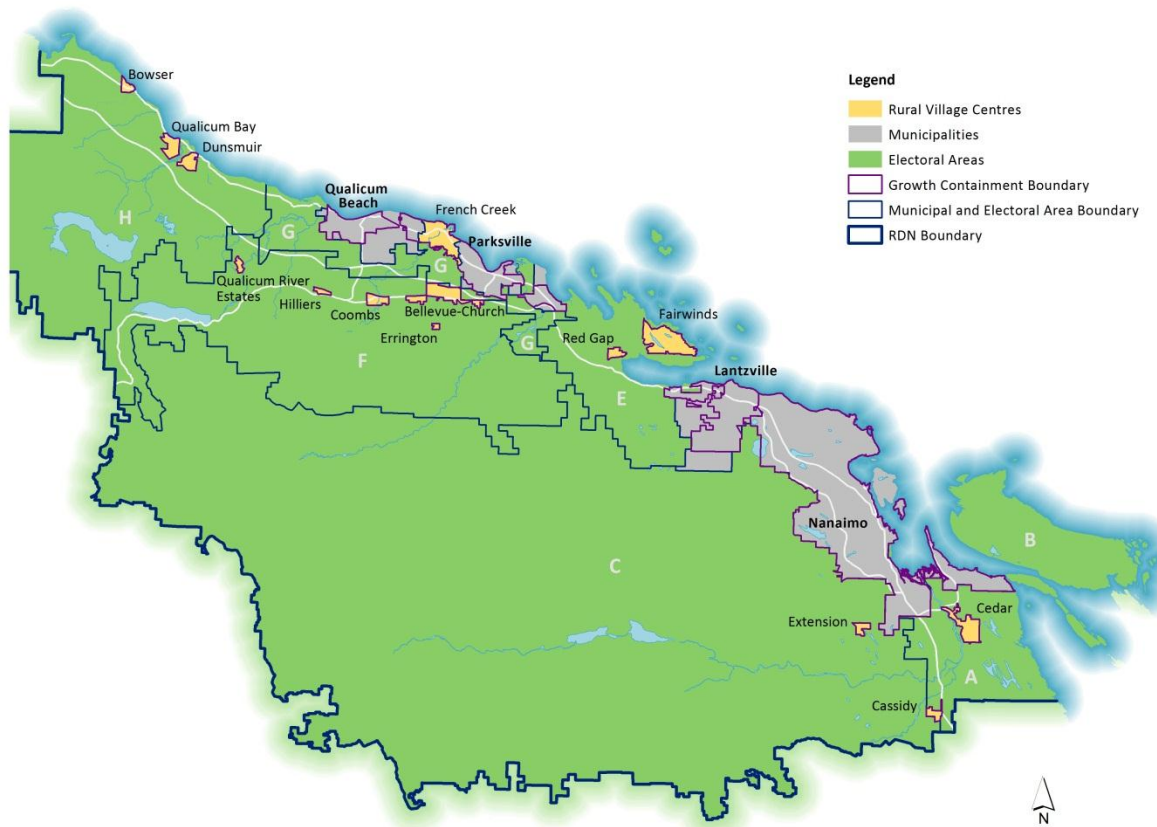
As a region, the goal is to reduce the percent of owners and renters in core housing need, at minimum to the provincial average. This may be done by improving the housing's adequacy, suitability and affordability.

Regional District of Nanaimo State of Sustainability Report (Prospering Today, Protecting Tomorrow: The State Of Sustainability of the Regional District of Nanaimo) September 2006

6.2 RDN Policies that Support Secondary Suites

Since the RDN’s first Regional Growth Management Plan in 1997 and subsequent updates reflected in the recently adopted 2011 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the RDN has committed to directing the majority of the region’s future growth within clearly defined areas. In electoral areas, these are areas identified in the RGS and OCP’s as Rural Village Centres and their locations are identified by a line called a Growth Containment Boundary (GCB).

Map 2: Regional District of Nanaimo - Growth Containment Boundary Map



Directing growth to these designated areas within GCBs is intended to limit urban sprawl and encourage the development of complete, compact communities. This allows for greater protection of lands outside GCBs for environmental, recreational and rural purposes (forestry and agriculture).

The RGS uses the terms “Urban Centre” and “Rural Village Centre” to distinguish between GCB’s within municipalities and Electoral Areas. The RGS supports the majority of future growth within Urban Centres in municipalities that have the capacity to efficiently accommodate higher levels of growth in mixed use centres. In contrast, Rural Village Centres in Electoral Areas are intended to support a smaller proportion of growth in keeping with their rural settings.

Although the RGS does not specifically address whether or not secondary suites should be located within the GCB, there are several policies (see Figure 7) that support increasing ‘housing diversity’ within GCBs. The RGS definition of ‘housing diversity’ includes secondary suites as a form of housing³². Three of the RDN’s municipalities that make up the larger Urban Centres in the RGS currently allow secondary suites (City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach).

Rural Village Centres

Electoral Area	Rural Village Centre
A	Cassidy
A	Cedar
C	Extension
E	Fairwinds
E	Red Gap
F	Bellevue-Church Road
F	Coombs
F	Errington
F	Hilliers
F	Qualicum River Estates
G	French Creek
H	Bowser
H	Dunsmuir
H	Qualicum Bay

Urban Centres

Municipality & Urban Centre
City of Nanaimo
District of Lantzville
City of Parksville
Town of Qualicum Beach

³²The RGS defines **Housing Diversity** as follows: To accommodate the diverse housing needs of residents, communities should strive to include a broad range of housing types including single detached, semi-detached, duplex, multi-unit attached housing, apartments, secondary suites, etc.

Figure 7: 2011 RGS Goals and Policies that Support Locating Secondary Suites within GCB's

Goal 1 – Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption – Reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption and promote adaptive measures

Policy 1.3 - Encourage, wherever possible, land use patterns and transportation systems that will improve lifestyle and behaviour choices based on sustainability principles. Key strategies include:

- Locating most housing, jobs, goods and services, and amenities in compact, complete rural villages and urban areas that are accessible without the need to drive;
- Encouraging greater housing diversity within Growth Containment Boundaries;
- Conserving lands located outside of Growth Containment Boundaries primarily for:
 - agricultural, forestry and other primary economic activities
 - recreation and environmental protection purposes
- Encouraging water-efficient, energy-efficient, and more sustainable subdivision and development...

Goal 4 - Concentrate housing and jobs in growth centres – Establish distinctive activity centres that provide ready access to places to live, work, play and learn.

Housing Diversity

Policy 4.4 - A broad range of housing types and unit sizes should be encouraged within GCBs. Special consideration should be given to the housing needs of an aging population, those who are differently-abled, and those with moderate or low incomes.

Goal 6 – Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing – Support and facilitate the provision of appropriate, adequate, affordable, attainable and adaptable housing.

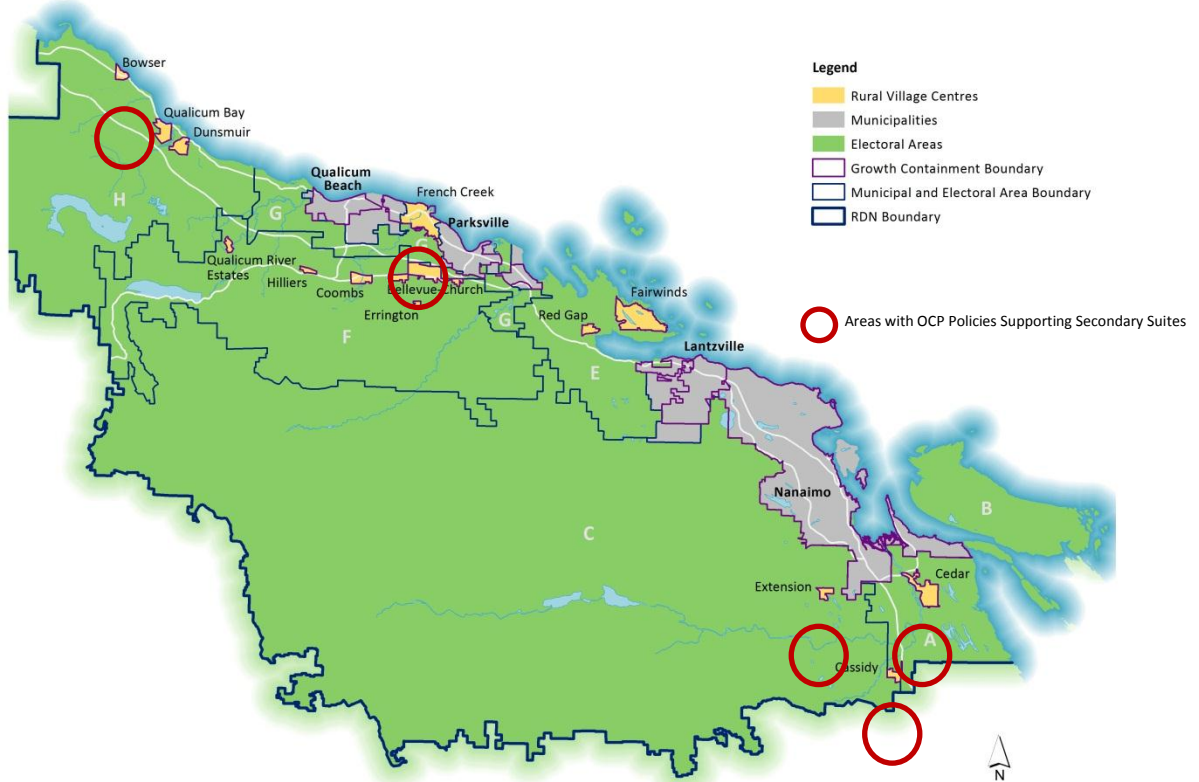
Policy 6.2 - Adopt official community plans and zoning bylaws that increase the range of housing options, especially in mixed-use centres that are well served with transit.

The following Official Community Plans include policies that provide specific direction on where secondary suites are supported (see Table 13).

Table 13: Electoral Area OCP Support for Secondary Suites

Electoral Area OCP	General Support for Increasing the Amount and Diversity of Housing Choices	Specific Support for Secondary Suites
A	Rural Village Centres Only	Cedar & Cassidy RVCs Only
C	Rural Village Centres Only	Extension RVC Only
E	Rural Village Centres Only	No
F	Rural Village Centres Only	No
G	Rural Village Centres Only	French Creek RVC Only
H	Rural Village Centres Only	Bowser RVC Only

Map 3: Areas with Specific Support for Secondary Suites in OCPs



Permitting secondary suites within all Rural Village Centres in electoral areas clearly meets the RDN Board Strategic plan actions and RGS policies that aim to “encourage higher residential density on land inside the growth containment boundary”³³ and “to develop region-wide strategies, incentives and options for increasing residential density in current and planned neighbourhoods to increase cost-effectiveness of infrastructure, services and transit”. Consistent with this, another important RGS policy involves locating “most housing, jobs, goods and services and amenities in compact, complete rural villages and urban areas that are accessible without the need to drive ... within Growth Containment Boundaries”³⁴.

Questions have been raised about the potential for all of the RDN’s Rural Village Centres to evolve into mixed-use centres that have the characteristics of compact, complete communities. Simply allowing secondary suites in all Rural Village Centres will not ensure other RGS goals and policies are met with regard to increasing housing diversity and density in mixed-use centres.

The RGS policies on GCBs specify that mixed-use centres within GCBs “should be planned and designed as pedestrian-oriented and transit-supportive, compact, complete neighbourhoods...”³⁵ RGS Policy 4.11 also states that these areas should be able to:

³³ RDN Board Strategic Plan 2013-2015, Sustainable Communities, Action 2, b page 25

³⁴ Regional Growth Strategy, 2011, Policy 4.1.3, page 18

³⁵ 2011 RGS Policies 4.5 and 4.6, page 29

- *Attract and support local commercial development;*
- *Attract and support local community services and amenities (e.g. schools, community centres, libraries et); and,*
- *Demonstrate how their development will contribute to the goals of the RGS.*

The 2009 *Housing Affordability* study identified several areas as the most suitable locations for affordable housing in the Region's electoral areas. Different forms of affordable housing were recommended for specific areas based upon the identified needs of residents in each electoral area to have access to employment and amenities (such as transportation, health services, and schools) together with availability of infrastructure to support higher housing densities (water and wastewater treatment). The areas identified as suitable locations for affordable housing were all within Rural Village Centres.

The RDN is in the process of undertaking a study to evaluate which Rural Village Centres have the most potential to evolve into mixed-use centres³⁶. While the outcome of that study may inform the Secondary Suite Process, it should be made clear that this Secondary Suite study identifies which Rural Village Centres are currently best suited to support secondary suites based on existing characteristics that support RGS goals.

RGS Goals

- Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption
- Protect the Environment
- Coordinate Land Use and Mobility
- Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centres
- Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing
- Provide Services Efficiently

Rural Village Centre Characteristic

- Access to transit
- Walkable
- A mix of local commercial development, services and amenities (e.g. schools, grocery store, bank, library, medical services)
- Watershed health and community services (water & sewer)

6.3 Climate Change and secondary suites Locations

In recent years, reducing impacts on climate change has become an important focus for the RDN Board. Both the Board Strategic Plan and the 2011 RGS include goals and actions to address climate change through better coordination between land use and transportation with an emphasis on creating communities that *"encourage transit, walking, cycling and other alternatives for the majority of trips"*³⁷. This is a key element of developing complete, compact communities.

The overall pattern of land use in the RDN's electoral areas, reflect low density, car dependent residential development that is difficult to service efficiently with transit. Private vehicles are responsible for the majority of the region's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that contribute to climate change.

³⁶ 2011 RGS, Policy 4.11, page 29

³⁷ RDN Board Strategic Plan, 2013-2015, page 30

Where secondary suites are located will determine whether or not there are alternatives to using a private vehicle to meet daily needs. This will in turn affect transportation related GHG emissions as well as transportation costs for those living in secondary suites. Currently, only a few areas of the RDN have transit. Furthermore, the Rural Village Centres study may show that some Rural Village Centres do not have the potential to develop in a way that supports efficient transit or other alternatives such as car co-ops, car sharing or car-pooling.

6.4 Transportation Costs and Secondary Suites Locations

Transportation costs have been steadily increasing on Vancouver Island, British Columbia and across Canada as a whole. The British Columbia Average Annual Consumer Price Index³⁸ shows significant increases in consumer costs for Transportation and Gasoline over the past few years (see Table 14).

High transportation costs have a direct impact on housing affordability in rural areas. This creates a double burden on low to moderate income residents living in rural areas and emphasizes the need to carefully consider the impact of housing location and transportation options on housing affordability.

Table 14: British Columbia Average Annual Consumer Price Index Showing Transportation and Gasoline Increases between 2007 and 2011³⁹.

British Columbia Average Annual Consumer Price Index (2002 = 100)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Transportation ⁴⁰	110	112.3	112.3	113.8	116.5
Gasoline	150.7	169.6	143.9	156.9	180.3

6.5 Transportation & Aging in Place

The RDN Board, through the Board Strategic Plan and the RGS, support *strategies that promote the development of affordable Housing that supports ‘aging in place’⁴¹*. This is another factor to consider

³⁸ The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is an indicator of changes in consumer prices experienced by Canadians. It is obtained by comparing, over time, the cost of a fixed basket of goods and services purchased by consumers. Since the basket contains goods and services of unchanging or equivalent quantity and quality, the index reflects only pure price change. The CPI is widely used as an indicator of the change in the general level of consumer prices or the rate of inflation. Statistics Canada - The Consumer Price Index – July 2012, Catalogue no. 62-001-X, vol. 90, no. 9 ISSN 1496-2225

³⁹ Statistics Canada - The Consumer Price Index CANSIM table 326-0021

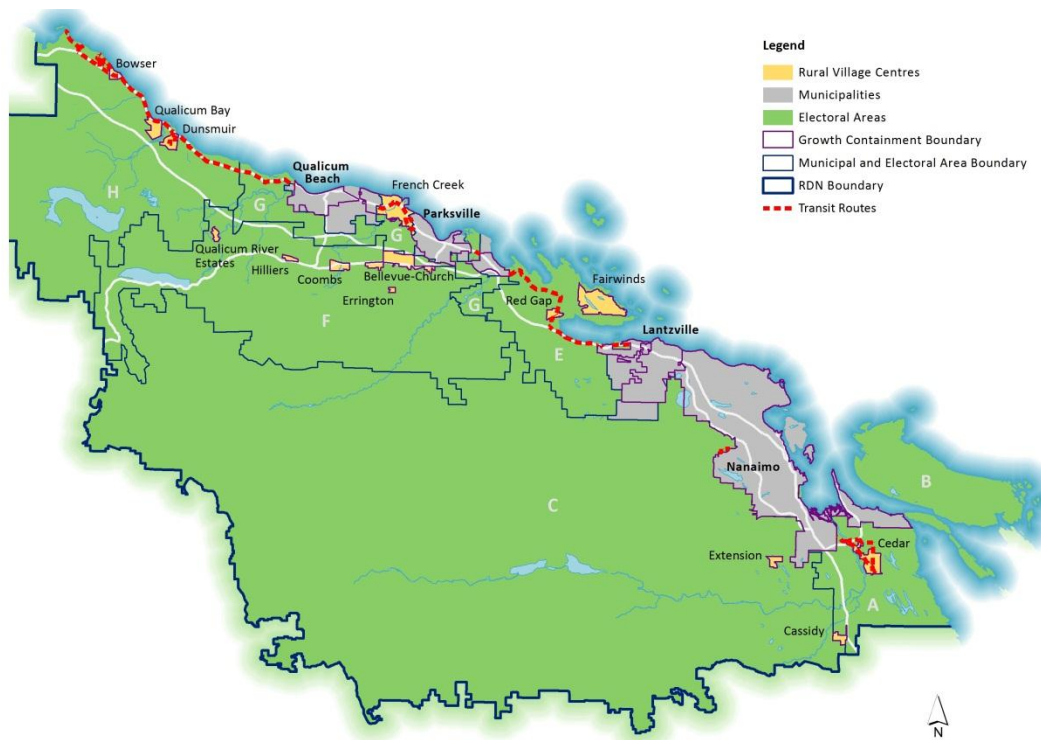
⁴⁰ The Consumer Price Index Transportation category includes Purchase, leasing and rental of passenger vehicles, Operation of passenger vehicles, Public transportation (Local and commuter transportation and Inter-city transportation)

when assessing suitable locations for secondary suites. The RDN’s electoral areas have an aging population with a higher proportion of its population in the 45+ age groups compared to the rest of BC. The majority of the RDN’s future population growth is projected to be in the seniors age groups. As the region’s population continues to age, there will be a growing need for communities that allow seniors to ‘age in place’. This will involve providing suitable, affordable housing in locations that allow seniors to ‘maintain their mobility and independence (without relying on private vehicles).

6.6 Secondary Suites and Transit

Transit service can be an important factor when considering suitable locations for secondary suites given benefits to residents of secondary suites and RDN goals to address climate change. Map 4 shows areas served by transit in the RDN’s Electoral Areas as of 2012. Changes to routes and service are being considered for 2013.

Map 4: Transit Service in RDN Electoral Areas



RDN transit services parts of Electoral Areas A, E, G and H with routes following transportation corridors that link areas with more concentrated residential development to commercial destinations

⁴¹ RDN Board Strategic Plan, 2013-2015, Strategic and Community Development Action 3a, page 25

including Rural Village Centres and larger urban centres (Nanaimo, Parksville, Lantzville and Qualicum Beach). As such routes are focused along Island Highway 19 A and other main roads serving rural neighbourhoods with relatively higher concentrations of population in Electoral Areas.

Table 15 below shows areas served by transit in the RDN’s Electoral Areas. Electoral Areas A, E and G have well established transit service connecting relatively higher density residential areas to commercial centres. Electoral Area A including Cedar RVC has the most frequent service with half hourly daily service. Both Electoral Area E (including Red Gap RVC and Northwest Bay Road) and Area G (focused on French Creek RVC) have hourly transit service.

As of March 2012, Electoral Area H has a paratransit service consisting of one trip per week along the Island Highway 19A between Qualicum Beach and Deep Bay. This includes stops in Qualicum Bay, Dunsmuir, and Bowser Rural Village Centres. This service could be continued and expanded in the future depending on demand.

Table 15: RDN Electoral Areas Served by Transit

Areas with Transit	Transit
Electoral Area A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cedar, Woodbank and Harmac Roads including Cedar RVC 	Y 30 min
Electoral Area E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northwest Bay Road including Red Gap RVC • Express service along Island Highway 19A between intersection at Northwest Bay Road and Parksville 	Y 60 min
Electoral Area G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Island Highway 19A between Parksville and Qualicum Beach. This includes French Creek RVC 	Y 60 min
Electoral Area H	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Island Highway 19A between Qualicum Beach and Deep Bay. This includes Qualicum Bay, Dunsmuir and Bowser, RVC’s 	Y 1 trip/ wk.

6.7 Compact Communities – Secondary Suites & Proximity to Shops, Services and other Amenities

Secondary suites in close proximity to a range of services and amenities help meet the intent of the RGS to develop complete, compact communities within growth containment boundaries. The RGS supports the development of places with a ‘complete’ mixture of opportunities to live, work, learn, play, shop and access services within a ‘compact’ area that allows for walking, cycling, use of transit and other transportation alternatives. Proximity to a range of these features increases the ability of those on low to moderate incomes to meet their daily needs without having to own a vehicle.

It is clear that some areas have a more ‘complete’ level of commercial services and amenities than others to serve residents. The table below lists a range of amenities in different areas of the RDN that most people may need/want to access on a regular basis. At this time the majority of services and amenities are located within the GCB in the RVC’s.

Table 16: Location of Services and Amenities in RDN Electoral Areas

Location with concentration of Services & Amenities	Public School	Grocery Store Corner Store	Restaurant/ Cafe	Bank	Medical/ Dental	Community Hall	Pharmacy	Post Office	Library	Gas Station
Cassidy RVC	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Cedar RVC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Extension RVC	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Fairwinds RVC	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Red Gap RVC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Bellevue-Church Road RSA	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Coombs RVC	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
Errington RVC	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Hilliers RVC	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Qualicum River Estates RVC	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
French Creek RVC	Y	Y*	Y	Y	Y*	Y*	Y*	N	N	Y
Bowser RVC	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y**	Y	Y	Y
Dunsmuir RVC	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Qualicum Bay RVC	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N

*French Creek is adjacent to Wembley Mall in Parksville that provides these amenities.

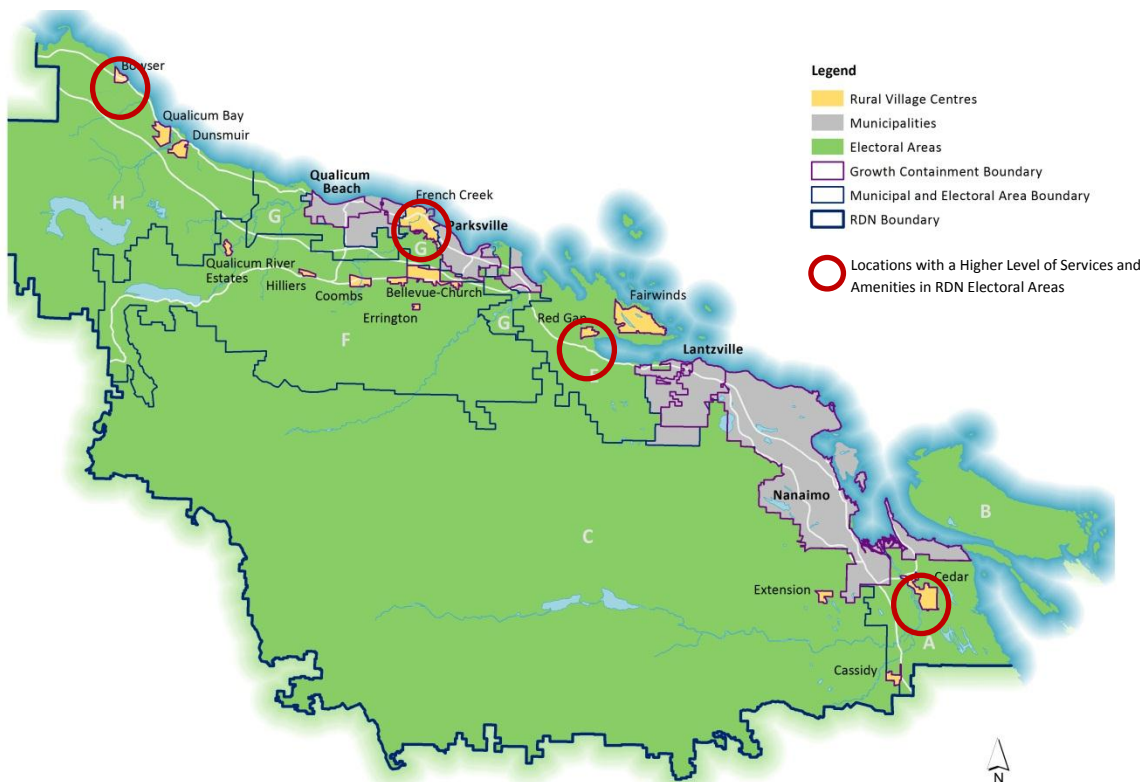
**Bowser has a store that provides a pharmacy pick up service.

Relative to all the areas with concentrations of services and amenities, the following four locations currently have a higher level of services and amenities aimed at meeting the needs of local residents (6 or more of those listed):

- Cedar RVC
- Red Gap RVC
- French Creek RVC
- Bowser RVC

It should be noted that these locations all have larger grocery stores as opposed to corner stores and, three of them are also the only Rural Village Centres with public schools within their boundaries (French Creek, Cedar and Red Gap).

Map 5: Locations with a Higher Level of Services & Amenities in RDN Electoral Areas



6.8 Secondary Suites and Employment Opportunities

The locations that have a higher range of amenities that help meet the daily needs of residents tend to also have a greater number of potential employment opportunities associated with these businesses. Some RVC's like Bellevue-Church Road and Coombs have more specialized businesses that are not focused on meeting local needs but do provide potential sources of employment for residents. Having sources of local employment close to affordable housing like secondary suites provides important opportunities for jobs close to home, and helps to reduce transportation costs.

The table below provides an approximate number of businesses (not home-based) that influence the amount of potential employment opportunities in each RVC. The number of different Statistics Canada Industry Categories that these businesses fall under is provided as this gives a general indication of the variety of potential employment opportunities. Statistics Canada divides businesses into ten broad Industry Categories including; Agriculture/resource-based; Construction; Manufacturing; Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Finance and Real Estate; Health Care and Social Services; and Educational Services. More details on the actual businesses and Industry Categories found in each RVC can be found in the RDN's 2012 Draft Rural Village Centres Inventory. As most businesses are located in the RVC's, the majority of jobs are also located in the RVC's with a few exceptions.

Table 17: Concentration of Potential Business Employers in Different Locations

Concentration of Potential Business Employers	Approximate Number of Businesses (Excluding HBB)*			Approximate Number of Industry Canada Business Categories*		
	0-14	15-24	25+	0-3	4-6	7-10
Cassidy RVC		15		5		
Cedar RVC		26+		7		
Extension RVC	0			0		
Fairwinds RVC	8			2		
Red Gap RVC		15+		5		
Bellevue-Church Road RSA		53+		6		
Coombs RVC		25+		3		
Errington RVC	10			3		
Hilliers RVC	10			2		
Qualicum River Estates RVC	1			1		
French Creek RVC **		42+		9		
Bowser RVC		18+		4		
Dunsmuir RVC	4			2		
Qualicum Bay RVC		13+		4		

* Employment Information Source: RDN Draft Rural Village Centre Inventory, 2012

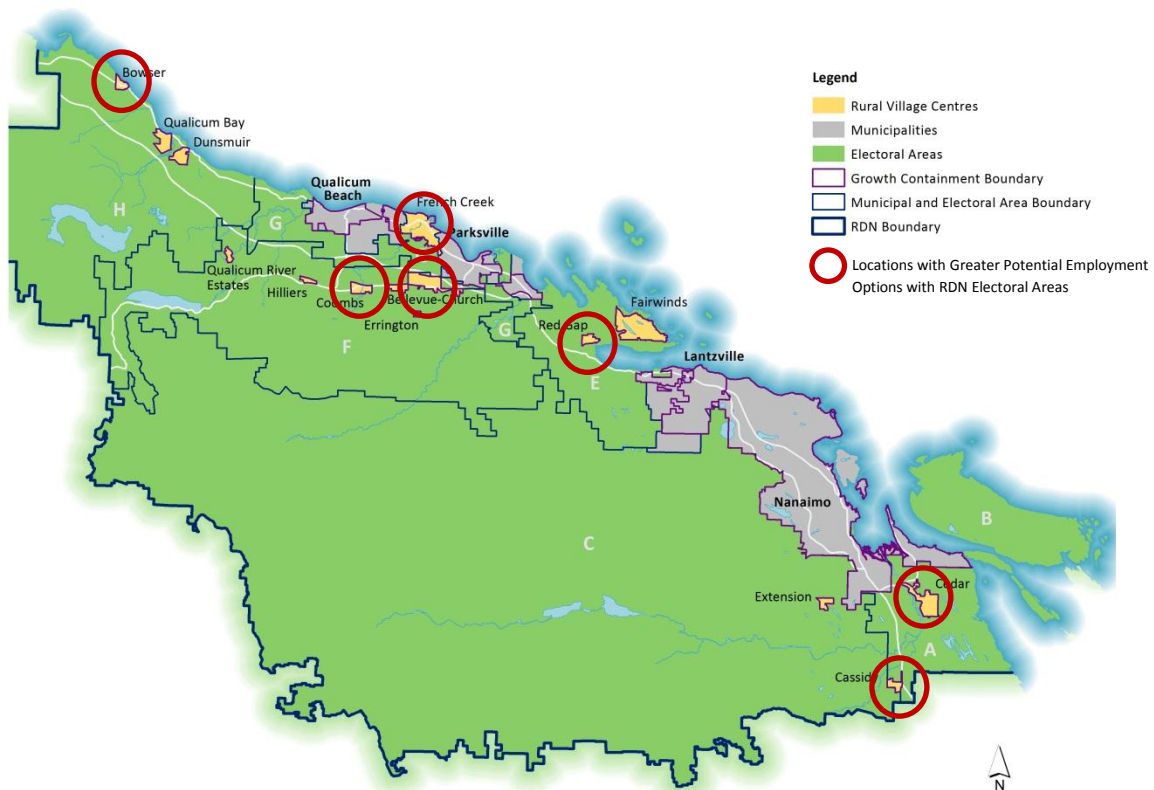
**Data for French Creek Rural Village Centre includes businesses immediately adjacent at Wembley Mall

The following locations currently have a higher number (15 or more) and/ a greater diversity of businesses (with 4 or more Industry Canada Business Categories present) that are sources of potential employment for local residents.

- Cassidy RVC
- Cedar RVC
- Red Gap RVC
- Bellevue-Church Road RSA
- Coombs RVC
- French Creek RVC
- Bowser RVC

Proximity and ease of access via transit to major employment centres also affects employment options for residents of RVC's as well as other areas of the RDN. For example, the RVC of French Creek has daily transit and areas within walking distance of potential employers in the City of Parksville. Red Gap RVC has daily transit to the Cities of Parksville and Nanaimo. Meanwhile, Cedar RVC has daily transit access to a wide diversity of jobs in the City of Nanaimo.

Map 6: Locations in RDN Electoral Areas with Greater Potential Employment Options



6.9 Watershed Health and Community Servicing

Healthy watersheds are another strategic priority for the RDN Board. The 2010-2012 Board Strategic plan notes that *public concern over protection of the region's water supply resources has increased in the past decade, particularly regarding the protection of the region's ground water resource.*

Based upon the experience of other jurisdictions, potential impacts on groundwater is likely to be raised as one of the concerns about allowing secondary suites in areas where individual well and septic systems are the only servicing options. This is particularly the case where groundwater vulnerability (to contamination) or capacity of water supply is either a known or perceived issue.

The provision of community water and sewer services is one of the key tools that the RDN uses to achieve growth management goals. The RGS directs the provision of community water and sewer service to lands within the GCB to facilitate growth in these areas while at the same time restricting servicing to lands outside. The only exceptions are in instances where community servicing is needed to address environmental or health issues outside the GCB.

Adequate servicing is necessary to support higher density development associated with compact communities. Sewer and water servicing are also important in areas where there are concerns about the impacts of development on groundwater resources. The dilemma for the RDN is that only a few areas currently have both community water and sewer service and, those that have neither water nor sewer may not have the densities necessary to support cost-effective service and/or land owners may not be willing or able to invest in community services to facilitate higher density development.

On the one hand there is evidence suggesting that homes with attached suites have a relatively low impact on increased water and waste water compared to separate detached suites or second dwellings. This may mean that the added loads on individual well and septic systems in un-serviced areas might be within the capacity of these systems to accommodate. Furthermore, there are measures that can be taken to ensure that homes with secondary suites have sufficient water and sewage disposal capacity to accommodate them (this includes issuing permits subject to proof of adequate capacity and requiring measures to reduce water use).

The challenge is that although well and septic systems may be designed to accommodate the additional demand generated by a suite, the RDN has no way of ensuring that systems are maintained and groundwater resources protected from negative impacts caused by poorly maintained septic systems or unsustainable use of well water.

Where groundwater quality and quantity is of concern, areas serviced with community sewer and/or water systems may be viewed as better suited to accommodate moderate increases in density (resulting from allowing secondary suites). Additionally, areas with Official Community Plans that include strong policies to mitigate impacts of development on groundwater may also be considered more favourable.

Table 18 identifies the intrinsic vulnerability of aquifers to contamination and groundwater capacity (quantity) issues, together with water and sewer servicing, and the existence of policies to protect

groundwater for different RVC's. Based on information from the RDN's Regional and Community Utilities, the table also identifies potential issues with the future capacity of existing water and sewer services.

Based on RDN servicing policies, areas that currently either have no or partial community water services as shown in Appendix G (including the following RVC's: Cassidy, Bellevue-Church Road, Coombs, Errington, Hilliers and Qualicum River Estates), would not be considered consistent with RDN policies supporting higher density development in a manner that allows both groundwater protection and the provision of efficient services. Several of these areas are also where groundwater capacity is either unknown or there are possible issues that need to be confirmed (Bellevue-Church Road, Coombs, Errington, Hilliers, and Qualicum River Estates).

Other areas that do have community water with stable capacity may also not meet RDN growth management and environmental policies because they have the following combination of characteristics: areas with high intrinsic aquifer vulnerability; no community sewer; and limited groundwater protection policies in OCP's to mitigate impacts of higher density development on groundwater. This includes the Qualicum Bay and Dunsmuir RVCs.

Cedar, Fairwinds and French Creek are the only locations with both community water and sewer services that also have stronger groundwater protection policies to help mitigate and address concerns in areas with high intrinsic groundwater vulnerability. However, it should be noted that North Cedar Improvement District (NCID) currently has a moratorium on additional water connections within its service area until infrastructure improvements are made.

Red Gap and Bowser RVC's are both serviced by community water systems which are considered to have a stable supply (based on known groundwater capacity). In addition Extension RVC is serviced by the City of Nanaimo's water supply that comes from surface water sources. While none of these three RVC's have community sewer, they all have stronger groundwater protection policies in place through their OCP's. These policies enable the RDN to require developments to achieve higher levels of groundwater protection. This is important for mitigating the impacts of development in areas with aquifers assessed as having high intrinsic vulnerability.

Based on meeting RDN goals to protect watershed health including groundwater, the following areas are better suited to accommodating increases in density:

- Cedar RVC – Pending future addition of infrastructure to support additional water connections.
- Extension RVC
- Fairwinds RVC
- Red Gap RVC
- French Creek RVC
- Bowser RVC

Table 18: Servicing Levels and Groundwater Protection Policies for the Rural Village Centres

Location	Aquifer - Intrinsic Vulnerability* Low-Moderate-High	Groundwater Capacity**	Groundwater Protection Policies Strong/Limited	Community Water Yes/No	Community Sewer Yes/No	Future Sewer Capacity***
Cassidy RVC	H	Stable – to be Confirmed	Stronger	N	N	-
Cedar RVC	L- <u>M</u> -H	Stable – to be Confirmed	Stronger	Y	Partial	Requires Co-operation with the City of Nanaimo
Extension RVC	M	City of Nanaimo Surface	Moderate	Y	N	-
Fairwinds RVC	<u>L</u> -M	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	Y	Good
Red Gap RVC	M	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	N	-
Bellevue-Church Road RSA	M-H	Possible Issues?	Limited	Partial	N	-
Coombs RVC	<u>L</u> -M	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
Errington RVC	M	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
Hilliers RVC	M- <u>H</u>	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
Qualicum River Estates RVC	<u>M</u> -H	Unknown	Limited	N	N	-
French Creek RVC	M-H	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	Y	Good
Bowser RVC	M- <u>H</u>	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	N	-
Dunsmuir RVC	M-H	Stable – No Concern	Limited	Y	N	-
Qualicum Bay RVC	H	Stable – No Concern	Limited	Y	N	-

*Groundwater vulnerability source: “Intrinsic Aquifer Vulnerability” – BC MoE-Water Protection & Sustainability Branch, 2010 – Note that intrinsic vulnerability means that it is based on hydrogeologic characteristics alone (e.g. depth to water, recharge, aquifer material, terrain, soil material) and does not consider the existing type of land use or nature of potential contaminants. Underlined letters indicate a stronger presence of the identified vulnerability level.

**Groundwater Capacity Source: RDN Water Services Staff, 2011 – Water suppliers will still have to confirm adequate supply before any development can be approved

***Future Sewer Capacity Source: RDN Wastewater Staff, 2012

7 OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

Five options for locations for secondary suites have been developed based on RDN policies that aim to create a more resilient and sustainable region. These policies address:

- Affordable housing and aging in place.
- Climate change and reducing GHG emissions.
- Growth management and supporting compact communities.
- Groundwater vulnerability.
- The provision of efficient services.

The options range from those that meet very few policies but allow for secondary suites in the greatest number of locations to those that meet all RDN policies but significantly limit the number of locations for secondary suites.

The five different options to consider for allowing secondary suites include:

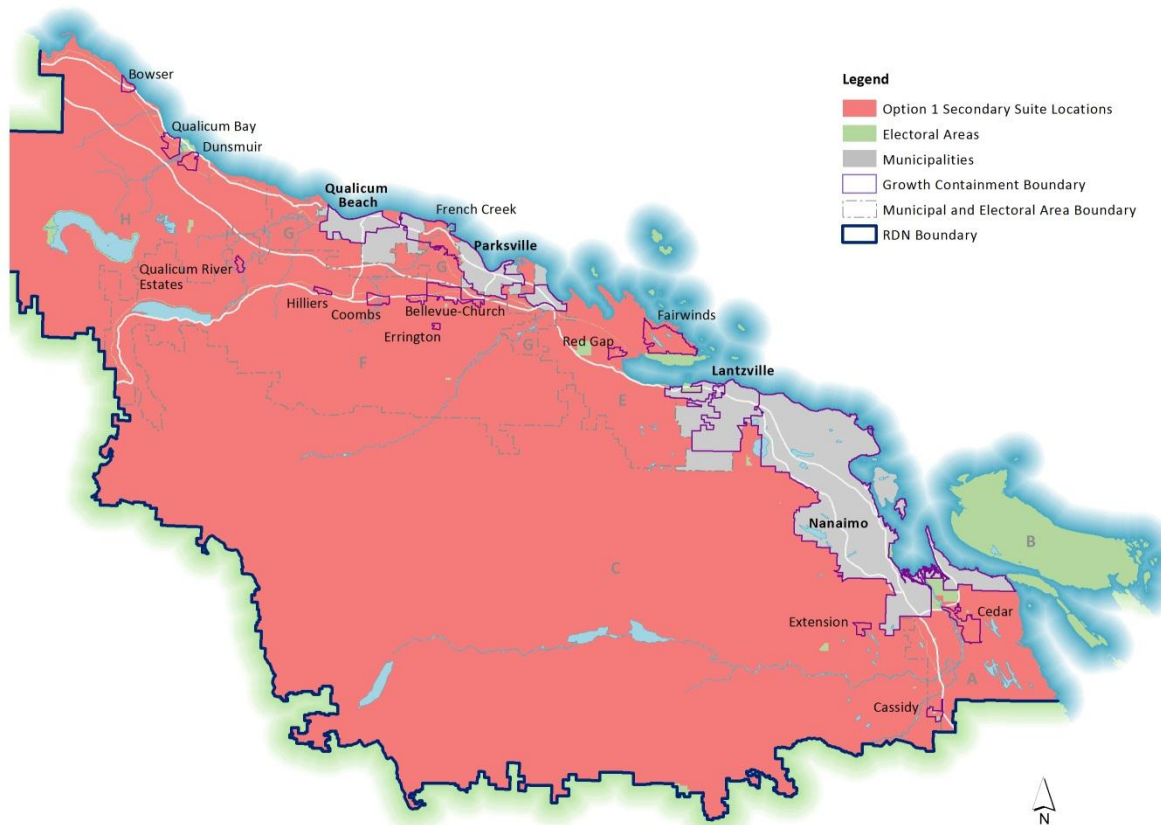
- Option 1: Secondary suites allowed in all zones that permit single family residential use.
- Option 2: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres and the Rural Residential Land use designation in the RGS.
- Option 3: Secondary suites allowed in all Rural Village Centres.
- Option 4: Secondary suites allowed in Rural Village Centres with characteristics that are most consistent with RDN policies.
- Option 5: Secondary suites pilot project within an area where secondary suites are supported in an OCP.

Some of these options would also require amendments to OCP's in order to implement them while others are in keeping with the existing direction provided by OCP's (see Appendix D for further details).

7.1 Evaluation of Options

Option 1: All Zones that Allow Residential Use

Secondary suites permitted in all zones that permit single family residential use.



Explanation:

Option 1 would essentially allow a secondary suite anywhere in the RDN that a single family dwelling is allowed. The majority of zones in the RDN’s two zoning bylaws allow for residential use even if zones may be primarily intended to accommodate other non-residential uses. Many of these zones are located in the Rural Residential and Resource Lands and Open Space land use designations in electoral areas.

Significant areas of land that are designated as Rural Residential and Resource Lands and Open Space include areas of high groundwater vulnerability which are also part of the region’s groundwater recharge areas. Option 1 also includes large areas that are neither walking distance from shops, schools, services and employment areas nor serviced by transit making residents of these areas dependent on private cars for transportation.

Permitting secondary suites in all zones that permit residential use is not consistent with RGS goals to increase residential density inside Rural Village Centres while limiting additional growth outside the RVC's. Allowing secondary suites in all zones that allow residential use outside of RVC's may serve to slow the development of RVC's into compact, complete, mixed-use communities that can be efficiently serviced.

A summary of the benefits and challenges for locating secondary suites based on this option are outlined below.

Option 1 Benefits:

- Consistent region wide approach – one set of regulations for all areas in the RDN's electoral areas.
- Increases areas where secondary suites can exist – expanding potential stock of affordable housing.
- Enables better regulation of secondary suites through the building permit process. This will help to improve the health and safety of secondary suites for tenants.

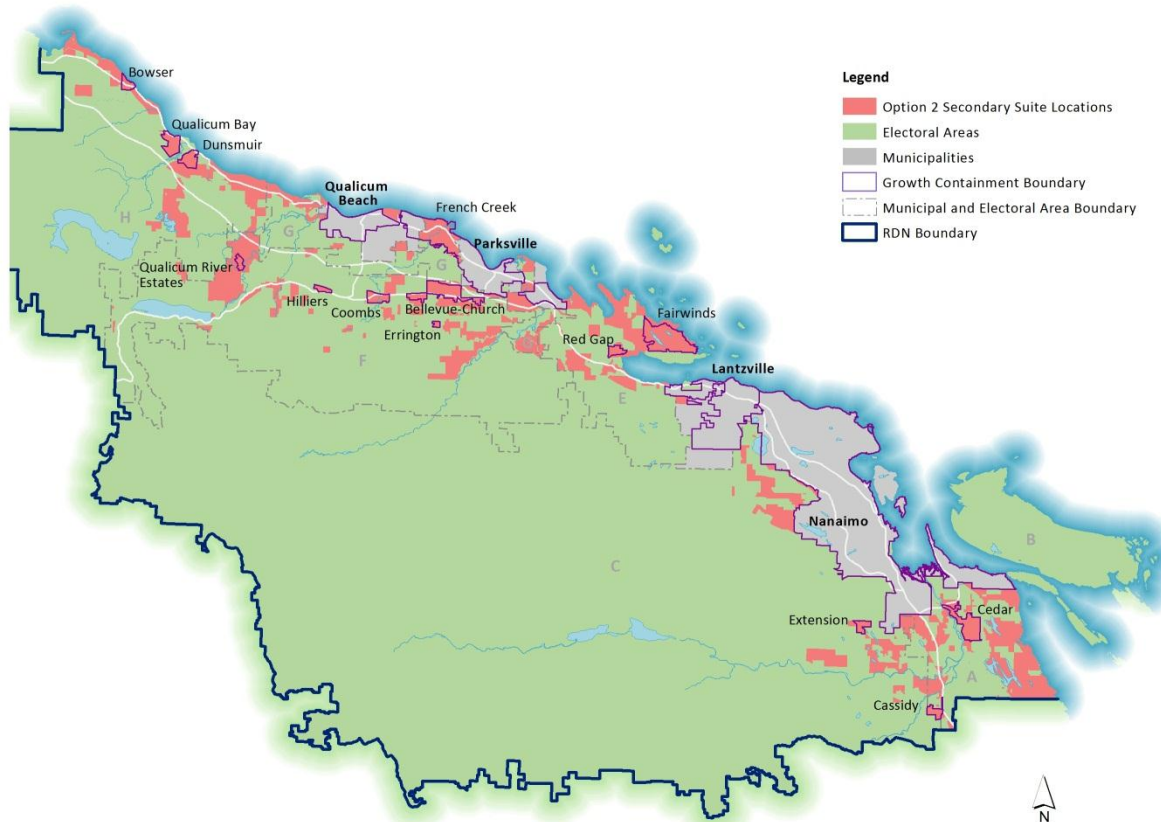
Challenges:

- Greatest potential for increasing density and development in areas outside the growth containment boundary. The cumulative impact of this together with the impact of future subdivision of lands outside RVC's allowed under current zoning could significantly alter rural landscapes.
- Inconsistent with RDN growth management and GHG reduction policies.
- Development outside RVC's may encourage further sprawl and discourage concentration of growth in Rural Village Centres.
- Slows the development of RVC's into compact, complete, mixed-use communities that can be efficiently serviced.
- Residential use intensified in areas with other priorities (agriculture, forestry, groundwater, environmental protection).
- Where groundwater protection measures are not in place, does not address concerns about increasing development in areas of high groundwater vulnerability and/or environmental sensitivity.
- Allows for suites in areas without easy access to transit, shops, and services. This will limit transportation choices for tenants to private vehicles, resulting in higher transportation costs for tenants and increased GHG emissions for the region.
- Does not allow for an incremental approach for the RDN to monitor impacts and make adjustment to regulations.
- Would require amendments to some OCP's.

Option 2: All Rural Village Centres and RGS Rural Residential Designation

Secondary Suites permitted in all Rural Village Centres and the Rural Residential Land use designation in the RGS

- All 14 RVC's
- All Rural Residential Land designated in the RGS



Explanation:

Option 2, allowing secondary suites in all Rural Village Centres and land designated Rural Residential Land in the RGS would cover areas where a large proportion of existing single family residential development is found in electoral areas. These are areas where existing secondary suites are likely to be found.

This option would allow secondary suites in all areas designated for residential use. This is a much greater area than just the RVC's but much less than the area in Option 1 that includes all lands in the Rural Resource Lands and Open Space designation.

The RDN has a significant amount of single family residential development in areas that are outside of designated Rural Village Centres. These areas are typically car dependent and very inefficient and expensive to service due to the spread out nature of development. The RGS recognizes the existence of these areas by designating them as Rural Residential lands. At the same time, the RGS also includes policies that make it clear that smaller lots are not supported beyond that already established by the OCP in place at the time the RGS was adopted.

On the one hand it could be argued that Option 2 allows for better use of existing single family housing stock and lands zoned for single family dwellings. However, allowing secondary suites on all land designated Rural Residential in the RGS would be inconsistent with the foundation of the RGS and other RDN policies that aims to concentrate growth within Growth Containment Boundaries while limiting growth outside these areas. This includes policies in some OCPS that clearly support secondary suites inside Rural Village Centres.

Allowing secondary suites in areas without transit or walking access to a range of daily amenities is also inconsistent with RDN policies aimed at reducing transportation related GHG emissions, increasing affordable housing options, and encouraging communities that enable aging in place.

A summary of the benefits and challenges for locating secondary suites based on this option are outlined below.

Option 2 Benefits:

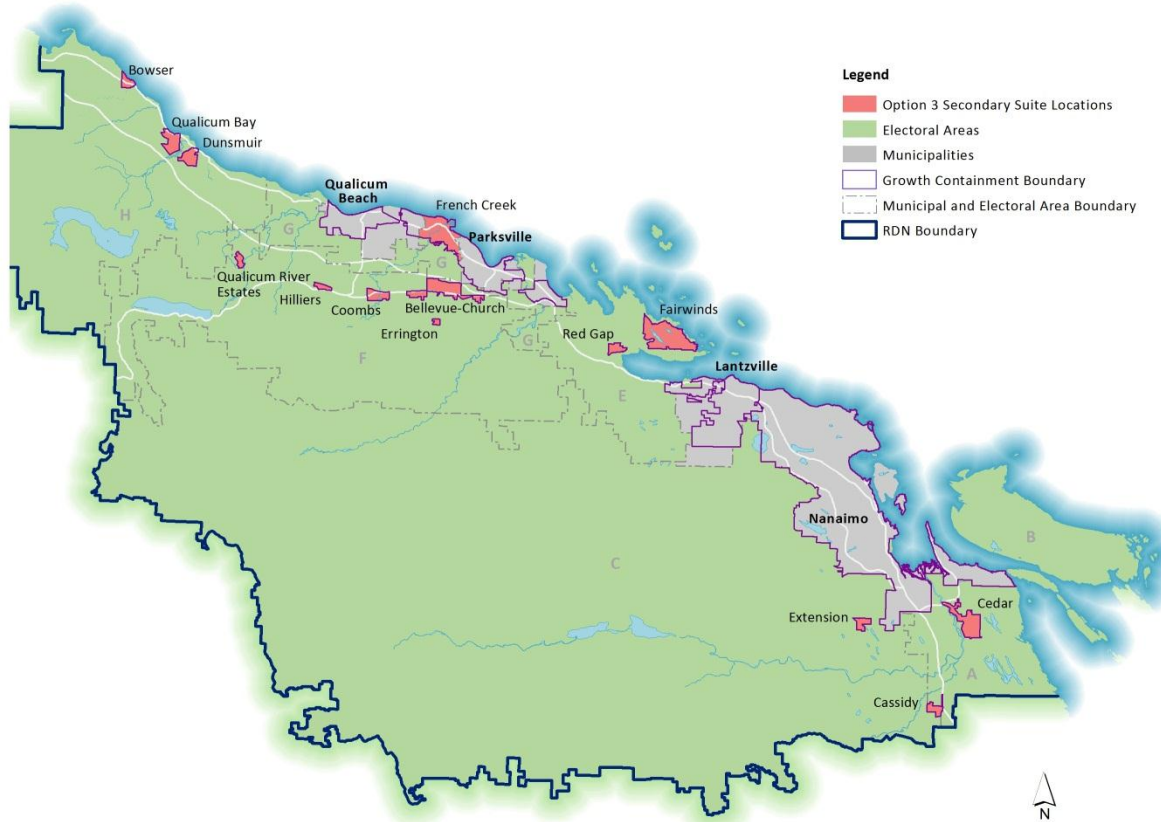
- Includes areas where the majority of existing secondary suites are likely to be found in the RDN.
- Increases areas where secondary suites can exist – expanding potential stock of affordable housing.
- Enables better regulation of secondary suites through the building permit process. This will help to improve the health and safety of secondary suites for tenants.
- Includes all areas where residential use has been identified as the primary land use.
- Does not include lands where other values take priority (i.e. agriculture, forestry or mining)

Challenges:

- Same as for Option 1 but for a smaller area compared with region-wide.

Option 3: All Rural Village Centres

Secondary Suites permitted in all Rural Village Centres (including future identified ones)



Explanation:

This option includes all of the designated RVC's. While the level of consistency with RDN policies is different for each of the RVC's, all the RVC's have been designated to accommodate future residential growth (see Appendix F for more details). This option includes a smaller area than options 1 and 2 but more than option 4.

Concentrating growth in designated areas within Growth Containment Boundaries is the foundation of the RGS and other RDN policies that aim to create more sustainable patterns of development. Option 3, permitting secondary suites in all Rural Village Centres is consistent with this direction in the RGS and also policies in OCPS that support secondary suites and increasing housing diversity inside Rural Village Centres. However, this option would involve allowing secondary suites in Rural Village Centres that do not currently have characteristics associated with compact, complete mixed use communities and/or existing services to support development in a manner that is consistent with RDN sustainability priorities.

A summary of the benefits and challenges for locating secondary suites based on this option are outlined below.

Option 3 Benefits:

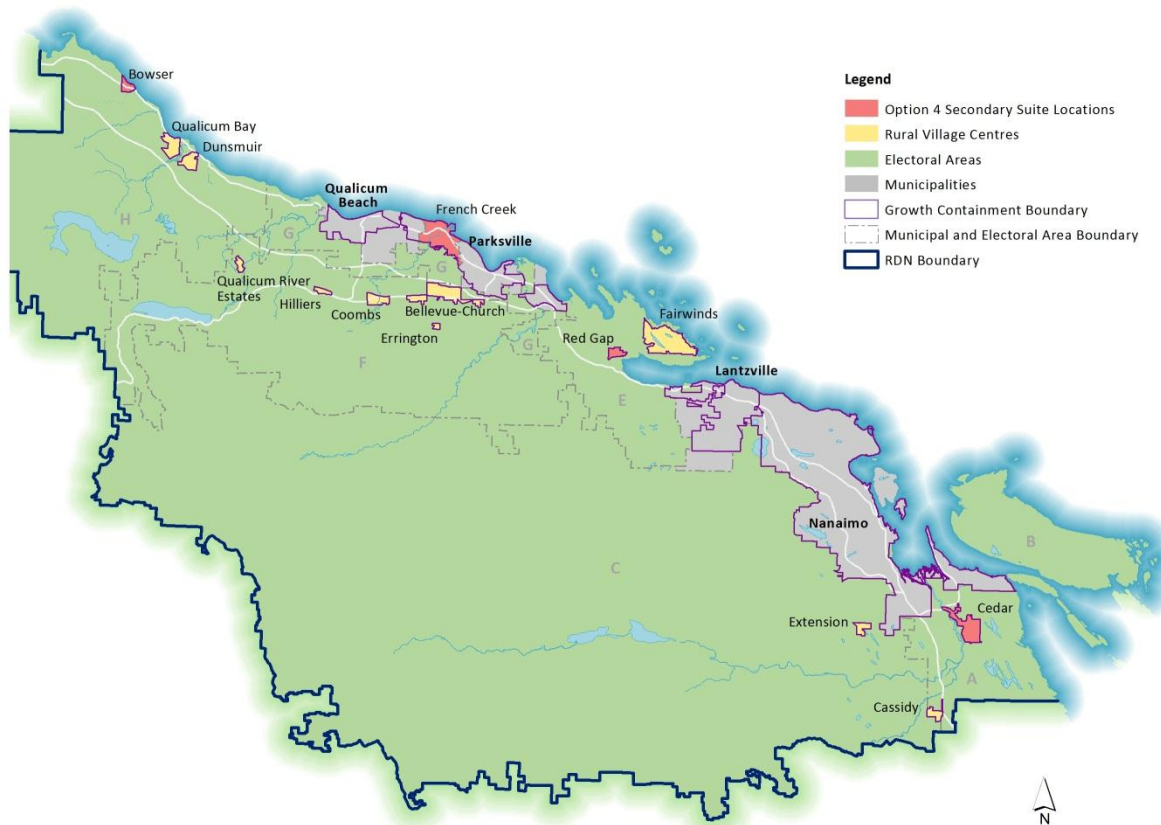
- Supports RGS and OCP policies for increasing housing diversity in RVC's.
- Promotes additional density in RVC's consistent with RGS goals.
- Consistent approach throughout the region makes it easier to understand.
- Helps to encourage future development inside RVCs.
- Enables better regulation of secondary suites through the building permit process. This will help to improve the health and safety of secondary suites for tenants.

Challenges:

- Where groundwater protection measures are not in place, does not address concerns about increasing density in RVCs in areas of high groundwater vulnerability and / or environmental sensitivity.
- Does not allow for an incremental approach for the RDN to monitor impacts and make adjustment to regulations.
- Does not address the fact that secondary suites exist outside RVCs.
- Allows for suites in areas without access to transit, shops, and services. This will limit transportation choices for tenants to private vehicles, resulting in higher transportation costs for tenants and increased Green House Gas emissions for the region.

Option 4: Locations Most Consistent with RDN Policies

Secondary suites allowed in Rural Village Centres with characteristics that are most consistent with RDN policies.



Explanation:

This option only includes those locations that meet all of the RDN policies related to affordable housing and aging in place, climate change and reducing GHG emissions, growth management and supporting compact communities, groundwater vulnerability and the provision of efficient services. As these locations only include the Cedar, French Creek, Red Gap and Bowser RVC's it is also the option that applies to the smallest area where secondary suites would be allowed.

The RGS directs future growth in electoral areas towards Rural Village Centres intended to become compact, complete, mixed use centres that can be efficiently serviced. These policies aim to create more sustainable patterns of development, reduce GHG emissions while protecting the natural environment and rural values. However, it has become clear that not all Rural Village Centres may have the capacity to develop into mixed use centres that can be serviced efficiently and as such some RVC's may be better locations than others for secondary suites based on meeting RDN sustainability priorities.

Characteristics or criteria considered consistent with RDN sustainability policies were used to evaluate each RVC as potential locations for secondary suites (see Appendix D) including:

- Avoid RVCs with high ground water vulnerability unless there is sewer service and/or OCP policies to mitigate the impacts of development.
- Limit to RVCs with community water service.
- Limit to RVCs with transit and close proximity to a range of shops, services, schools and recreation opportunities.

Section 2 of this report contains information used to review the different characteristics or criteria. Based on this evaluation, the RVC's of Cedar, French Creek, Red Gap and, Bowser stand out as locations for secondary suites that are most consistent with RDN sustainability priorities and policies on climate change, growth management, environmental protection, affordable housing and aging in place, and servicing.

Allowing secondary suites initially in RVC's that have characteristics most consistent with RDN priorities will help ensure that conditions exist for secondary suite tenants to benefit from safe drinking water, access to transit and a range of services, amenities, and employment options close to where they live. These benefits will help lower transportation related costs for tenants and also support more housing choices in RVCs that allow for better options to age in place.

A summary of the benefits and challenges for locating secondary suites based on this option are outlined below.

Option 4 Benefits:

- Focusing on areas with community water service helps ensure that high standards of drinking water quality are met. Water service providers that charge fees based on use encourage greater conservation compared to areas on well or with unmetered services. Community water service providers must also provide the RDN with proof of adequate capacity before permits can be issued to allow new development.
- Consistent with RGS and OCP policies for increasing housing diversity in RVC's.
- Focusing on RVCs with transit and access to range of shops and services – supports RDN goals for transit oriented, compact communities. This has immediate benefits for secondary suite tenants as these features are currently in place.
- Limiting to a small number of RVCs - allows for a phased approach, enabling RDN staff and community to test regulations, monitor change and make adjustments as necessary before considering expanding to other RVCs.
- Allows for consideration of future RVCs as locations for secondary suites over time based on getting higher levels of servicing and amenities.

Challenges:

- Creating a system that applies to some RVCs and not others may be seen as an inconsistent approach and could be difficult for community members to understand.
- Does not address the fact that secondary suites exist in other RVCs and throughout the region in areas that may have high ground water vulnerability and/ environmental sensitivity.
- Does not maximize the use of existing housing stock for secondary suites compared to other options.

- Meets groundwater protection policies by focusing on areas with lower levels of intrinsic ground water vulnerability or where vulnerability is higher, that measures are in place to address groundwater concerns (stronger OCP groundwater protection policies, community water service, and community sewer service).
- Enables better regulation of secondary suites through the building permit process. This will help to improve the health and safety of secondary suites for tenants.

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Option 5: Pilot Project

Secondary suites pilot project within an area where secondary suites are supported in an OCP

Explanation:

A fifth possible option for the RDN Board to consider is to undertake a pilot project to allow secondary suites as part of a new subdivision application where secondary suites are already supported in an Official Community Plan and where there is adequate servicing in place to support additional development. The OCP's that specifically discuss support for secondary suites only allow them in Rural Village Centres (see Appendix F).

A summary of the benefits and challenges for locating secondary suites based on this option are outlined below.

Option 5 Benefits:

- Allows RDN Board to implement secondary suites in a small pilot area within an RVC where the community has already indicated some level of support for secondary suites through their OCP.
- Using a new subdivision as a pilot area minimizes the likelihood of community concerns because the expectation of those buying into the subdivision will be that secondary suites are permitted.
- If rezoning is required for the development then permitting secondary suites could be undertaken as part of that process as opposed to a separate rezoning application.
- Focusing on new suites within a new development increases the likelihood that houses can be built 'suite-ready' and that suites can be built more cost effectively and meet minimum health and safety requirements more easily.
- Consistent with OCP policies for increasing housing diversity in RVC's. No need to amend OCP's to allow secondary suites.
- Provides opportunity to monitor and evaluate the outcomes before deciding on which other areas should be considered for suites and under what conditions they should be allowed.
- A pilot study could be used to help build greater understanding of how secondary suites could work in a single family residential context and allow for the RDN to make adjustments to regulations for suites before applying them to larger areas.

Challenges:

- Will have to wait for a suitable subdivision application and a willing developer to undertake the pilot.
- May take some time before impacts can be monitored and evaluated especially if the uptake of suites in the pilot area is slow.
- If secondary suites are not considered in wider areas following the pilot, property owners and developers could start to apply to have secondary suites through a series of rezonings which could be time consuming for RDN staff as well as property owners/developers.
- Least impact on the potential number of secondary suites needed to address demand for more rental accommodation in all electoral areas. However the pilot could lead to suites being allowed in more areas.
- Does not enable understanding the impact of suites in more established neighbourhoods where homes have to be retrofitted/ renovated.

7.2 Summary of Options

Options 1 and 2 provide the greatest area of land where secondary suites could be allowed. This would address areas where a high proportion of existing secondary suites are likely to be found, potentially supporting the greatest number of permitted secondary suites. While this helps to optimize goals to provide affordable housing, Options 1 and 2 both allow secondary suites in places outside of the areas designated for future residential growth. This is not consistent with the RDN's growth management policies that aim to concentrate the majority of population and development within Growth Containment Boundaries in order to protect the environment and rural values outside these areas. Furthermore these options are not consistent with policies to reduce transportation related GHG's. Also this option would result in more people living over vulnerable aquifers and aquifer recharge areas.

Options 3 and 4 both focus on allowing secondary suites within designated Rural Village Centres. This is consistent with the RDN's core sustainability goals relating to: affordable housing, growth management, environmental protection, climate change, and servicing. Of these two options, Option 4 meets more RDN sustainability goals by initially limiting secondary suites to areas that have:

- Clear support in OCPs for secondary suites
- Transit service.
- A range of services and amenities.
- A higher number and diversity of potential employment sources.
- Low to moderate groundwater vulnerability or where vulnerability is high that there is community sewer in place or strong OCP policies to mitigate impacts.
- Community water service with stable supply.

Option 5 allows secondary suites as a pilot project in a new subdivision where an OCP supports secondary suites. This option would be a first step enabling monitoring and evaluation of the impacts before deciding on a wider area to allow secondary suites. Like Option 4, no amendments to an OCP would be required however implementing Option 5 would depend on a willing property owner/developer within an area where suites are supported in an OCP.

7.3 Conclusion

Research shows that the RDN continues to face a shortfall of rental housing, especially affordable rental housing. This trend is projected to continue for the next twenty plus years. Allowing secondary suites is a viable way for the RDN to try to improve the stock of affordable rental housing with minimal use of resources and a minimal impact on the community.

This study outlines a number of considerations for implementing secondary suites including a discussion of different options that range from those that allow secondary suites in more to fewer areas of the RDN. The options presented attempt to balance a number of goals that are mostly complementary but in some instances competing. These goals include affordable housing, growth management, groundwater protection, climate change and reducing GHG's, and provision of efficient services.

The information in this study is intended to help decision makers and community members understand the potential implications associated with the different options including how some options are more consistent with RDN policies than others. As such, this study does not recommend one option over another.

In keeping with RDN Board direction to be accountable and have transparent decision-making, including community members in decisions which affect them is proposed as an important part of the process in deciding where and how to implement secondary suites. Feedback from community members will help the RDN understand what community members are willing to support. This feedback is essential to addressing concerns or potential challenges for implementing secondary suites.

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Appendix A - Existing Land Use Zones in RDN Bylaws Allowing an Additional Dwelling Unit

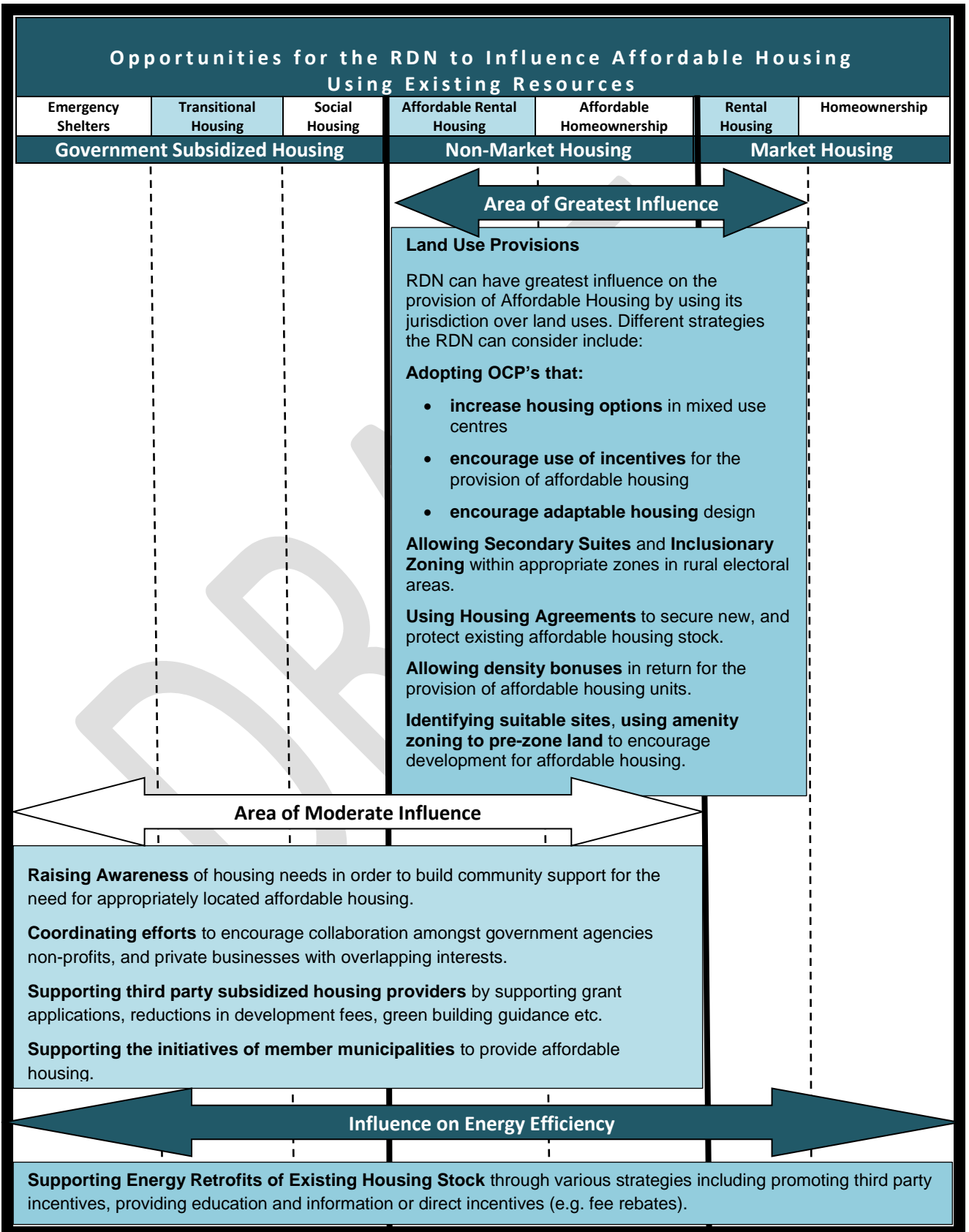
Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500 for RDN Electoral Areas A, C, E, G and H

- Recreation 2 (2 dwelling units per parcel)
- Residential 2 (2 dwelling units per parcel)
- Residential 2.1 (1 duplex)
- Resource Management 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 9 (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 8.0 ha - Electoral Areas A,C, E, H)
- Rural 1, 2, 3, 4 (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha - Electoral Areas A, C, E, H)
- Rural 1, 2, 3, 4 (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha- Electoral Area G prior to Feb 22, 2011 or equal or greater than twice min parcel size in Schedule '4B')
- Rural 5, 7, 9 (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha - Electoral Areas A, C, E, G, H)
- Rural 8 (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha - Electoral Areas A, C, E, G, H)
- Bowser CD – 5 du/ha
- South Wellington CD Zone (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha)
- CD Zone 21 - (max 2 du if parcel area is greater than 2.0 ha)
- Cedar Estates CD Zone 29 – Area B (max 2 du/ parcel)

Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw No. 1285, 2002 for Electoral Area F.

- Agriculture 1 (2 dwelling units per lot, provided that one is a Manufactured Home)
- Commercial 2 (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- Commercial 3 (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- Commercial 4 (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- Rural 1 (1 dwelling unit per ha to a maximum of 2 dwelling units per lot)
- Rural Residential 2 (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- Village Residential 3 (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- CD-5 1420 Romain Road (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- CD-10 1160 Smithers Road (1 dwelling unit per ha to a maximum of 2 dwelling units per lot)
- CD-11 1225 Fair Road (3 dwelling units) (Minimum Lot size 1 ha)
- CD-12 1440 Romain Road (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- CD-13 1470 Romain Road (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- CD-15 2701 Alberni Highway (1 dwelling unit per ha)
- CD-16 2116 Alberni Highway (2 dwelling units per lot, provided that one is a Manufactured Home)

Appendix B – RDN Opportunities to Influence Affordable Housing Using Existing Resources



Appendix C – RDN Support for Secondary Suites

Events Influencing RDN Support for Secondary Suites as a Form of Affordable Housing		
Date	Document Name	Direction relating to Secondary Suites
1995	BC Building Code	BC Building Code amended to add a section specifically to address secondary suites. This has resulted in more flexible standards to apply to suites contained within existing or new single family dwellings. Under the Code, a suite is defined as a smaller dwelling unit within a single family house that is less than 40% of the habitable floor space of the house to a maximum of 90 m ² (968 ft ²). Other parts of the Code apply to suites that are larger than 90 m ² .
1995	Staff Report "Secondary Suites" - September 12, 1995	Staff report outlines issues relating to secondary suites, presenting four alternatives for consideration. The report recommended that the RDN Board consider a region-wide secondary suites study (see below).
1995	RDN Board Minutes - October 10, 1995	RDN Board motion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the staff report outlining background information and alternatives concerning secondary suites be received. 2. That the Board consider a region-wide secondary suites study as part of the budget deliberations for the 1996 work program with the objectives of estimating the numbers and location of suites in the Regional District and determining the public's attitudes, perspectives and concerns after deliberations with the provincial government concerning possible new provincial regulations. <p>Note - this study was never undertaken.</p>
2004	RDN Board Minutes - August 10th 2004	RDN Board passed a motion: <p>That staff be directed to conduct a policy review with respect to secondary suite development in the Regional District of Nanaimo and that this item also be referred to the RGMAC / State of sustainability Project for their input.</p>
2004	Staff Report "Regional District Position regarding Secondary Dwellings" – November 1, 2004	The staff report proposed an internal policy for helping the RDN review and approve Building Permits in cases where a secondary suite is suspected in accessory buildings or within principle dwellings. Report received by the Electoral Area Planning Committee however no recommendation given. Report did not proceed to the RDN Board.
2006	State of Sustainability Report - September 2006	The RDN undertook an extensive study of the Regional Growth Strategy's implementation and progress with the 'State of Sustainability Project'. Overseen by the Regional Growth Monitoring Advisory Committee (RGMAC), the research findings resulted in the 2006 State of Sustainability Report. The report concluded that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of residents in 'Core Housing Need' (having housing that is inadequate, unsuitable or unaffordable) has increased in the region between 1991 and 2001. • Based on available 2005 data, the region was unable to meet the needs of family applicants for subsidized housing in a timely manner with almost double the rate of applicants per available subsidized housing unit compared to the provincial average. <p>The report states that "one of the primary issues is ensuring that there are a variety of types and sizes of houses to meet the needs of families, seniors and physically challenged people". Pages 193-202</p>
2006	2006-2009 RDN Board Strategic Plan	The first RDN Board strategic plan to clearly identify addressing affordable housing and aging in place as a strategic priority. This has been carried forward in the 2010-2012 RDN Board Strategic Plan.
2007	Population and Housing Change in the Nanaimo Region, 2006-2036 (October 2007), Urban	Study concludes that the RDN will see an increase in population by 60% from 144,371 residents to 231,184 residents by 2036. Population increase and demographic changes towards an older population will

Events Influencing RDN Support for Secondary Suites as a Form of Affordable Housing		
Date	Document Name	Direction relating to Secondary Suites
	Futures	<p>lead to an 80% increase in housing demand caused by the trend towards lower average household sizes as people age (more houses with fewer occupants).</p> <p>Study anticipates that housing patterns will shift towards smaller lot ground oriented and apartment formats due in part of affordability for younger adults who are forming households later in life and lack of availability of single detached homes as a large portion of the baby boomers remain in their homes for a longer period of time.</p>
2007	Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Growth Strategy Review Background Report: Land Inventory & Capacity Analysis (October 2007), The Sheltair Group	<p>Study identified that the region has sufficient capacity to meet demand for single-detached and apartment dwelling units until 2036. The category other ground-oriented dwelling units was the only one for which a shortfall was predicted within the 2036 timeframe. Due to the difficulty of capturing data, the study did not include secondary suites in calculations for existing or future residential capacity.</p> <p>One of the key recommendations was that the existing situation and trends associated with second home ownership and secondary suites be further researched.</p>
2007	RDN Staff Report, December 18, 2007 Regional Growth Strategy Review Background Reports: Population and Housing Change in the Nanaimo Region 2006-2036; and Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis	<p>Report summarizes findings of the Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis and provides new information indicating that the anticipated shortfall projected by the Land Inventory will be easily met by new developments approved in South Nanaimo.</p>
2007	State of Sustainability Final Report (December 2007)	<p>The Regional Growth Monitoring Advisory Committee, in the State of Sustainability Final Report (December 2007) identified that the RDN could take the following actions (pages 2-3) to improve Community Wellbeing by: Working with member municipalities, BC Housing Management Commission (BCHMC) and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and increase the Region's rental housing stock. • Implement strategies to increase the number of affordable and subsidized housing units for higher needs groups (e.g. lower income families including single parents, those challenged with disabilities and seniors)... • Amend OCP policies and zoning bylaw to allow secondary suites in residential zones inside the Urban Containment Boundary.
2009	Regional Housing Affordability Study Phase 1– Housing Needs Overview January 2009, City Spaces Phase 2 – Connecting Housing Needs and Opportunities March 2009, City Spaces	<p>The RDN's 2009 Housing Affordability Study was conducted in two phases with the first report (<i>Housing Needs Overview</i>) confirming that the supply of affordable housing throughout the region falls short of meeting the needs of those least able to afford adequate housing.</p> <p>The second report (<i>Connecting Housing Needs and Opportunities</i>) addresses solutions to the housing needs identified in the first report. These solutions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying housing types that will best accommodate those most in need in the region, specifically stating that: The initiatives "most likely to succeed" in rural areas are those that are "best fit" with the existing scale and character of development. These include secondary suites, secondary dwellings, manufactured home parks, cluster housing, and small-scale townhouses. • Recommending appropriate locations within designated Village Centres and Urban Areas within the RDN's electoral areas. The proposed locations were selected based upon the needs of different groups to have access to employment and amenities such as transportation, health services, and schools together with availability of infrastructure to support housing (water and wastewater treatment).
2009	RDN Board Receives	<p>On June 23, 2009, the RDN Board endorsed the following resolution:</p>

Events Influencing RDN Support for Secondary Suites as a Form of Affordable Housing		
Date	Document Name	Direction relating to Secondary Suites
	Correspondence from a citizen regarding secondary suites in Electoral Area 'G' – June 23, 2009	That the correspondence from Lisa Berube regarding the need for affordable housing in the RDN and a request to place a moratorium on enforcement of any bylaw which would result in the removal of existing secondary suites at this time be received. That staff contact the home owner to discuss potential options.
2010	2010-2012 RDN Board Strategic Plan	Vision carried forward from 2006-2009 Strategic plan that "Housing is affordable, and a variety of different types and sizes of housing are available to accommodate the current and future needs of residents" "To promote high quality housing that is affordable to residents" is listed as one of the objectives under the Strategic Priority of Economic Resilience (Page 12) The following Strategic Goals and Actions for 2010-2012 (page 19) include: 6. Increase affordable housing and housing choices that support "aging in place". a) Build on the Regional Housing Affordability Study to develop strategies that promote the development of affordable housing and housing that supports "aging in place". b) Develop region-wide strategies, incentives and options for increasing density in current and planned neighbourhoods to increase the cost-effectiveness of infrastructure, services and transit. c) Explore ways to encourage higher density development on land inside the Growth Containment Boundary. d) Ensure future costs of infrastructure are allocated fairly. e) Lobby senior governments to provide resources and support for affordable and seniors' housing.
2010	RDN Board Resolution - April 1, 2010	RDN Board approves the expansion of Building Inspection Services to all areas of the RDN. This has direct implications for the RDN's ability to regulate secondary suites in a consistent manner throughout the region.
2010	Housing Action Plan Report - December 30, 2010	RDN staff draft a Housing Action Plan report to carry forward the direction in the Board Strategic Plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase affordable housing and housing choices that support "aging in place". • Build on the Regional Housing Affordability Study to develop strategies that promote the development of affordable housing and housing that supports "aging in place".
2011	RDN Staff Report - January 11, 2011	On January 25th, 2011, the RDN Board directed staff to proceed with Adopting a Secondary Suites Bylaw as an action identified in the RDN's Housing Action Plan Report (December 30, 2010). "The RDN will consider undertaking a study to identify where secondary suites and carriage homes should be permitted in the electoral areas of the RDN. The study would also consider appropriate land use regulations (e.g. parking spaces, floor area). Based upon the outcome of the study above, the RDN will consider updating OCPs and zoning bylaws to allow secondary suites" (Page 7, RDN Housing Action Plan December 30, 2011).
2011	Implementation of Region Wide Building Inspection - April 1, 2011	On April 1, 2011, the RDN began implementing the provision of building inspection services to cover all rural electoral areas in the region. Educational information about building inspection noted the following: <i>"In the RDN today, we know that poverty exists in our rural areas. Typically, people with limited or no income cannot own their homes. Instead they must rent in buildings that are often in substandard condition. With limited options, renters often have no ability to demand upkeep or improvements for fear of eviction. Building inferior and unsafe housing is not a solution to housing affordability."</i> One of the most effective forms of affordable housing is secondary suites. The Building Code has specific and relaxed requirements to facilitate the construction of secondary suites.

Events Influencing RDN Support for Secondary Suites as a Form of Affordable Housing		
Date	Document Name	Direction relating to Secondary Suites
2011	Regional Growth Strategy	<p>The most recent revision of the RGS specifically addresses the issue of affordable housing. The RGS also contains direction to encourage greater housing diversity in areas within Growth Containment Boundaries where jobs, goods, services and amenities can be accessed without needing to drive.</p> <p>Goal 6 - Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing – Support and facilitate the provision of appropriate, adequate, attainable, affordable and adaptable housing.</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>The RDN and member municipalities agree to:</p> <p>6.1 Prepare a strategy to increase the range of affordable housing options in the region for seniors, youth, those with special needs, those with moderate or low incomes, and the homeless.</p> <p>6.2 Adopt official community plans and zoning bylaws that increase the range of housing options available, especially in mixed-use centres that are well served with transit.</p> <p>6.3 Adopt official community plan policies and zoning bylaws that make provision for incentives to build affordable housing units and encourage adaptable housing design.</p> <p>6.4 Explore opportunities to retrofit existing housing stock to reduce GHG emissions, improve energy efficiency, and enhance affordability.</p> <p>Goal 1 – Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption – Reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption and promote adaptive measures to prepare for climate change impacts.</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>1.3 Encourage, wherever possible, land use patterns and transportation systems that will improve lifestyle and behaviour choices based on sustainability principles.</p> <p>Key strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating most housing, jobs, goods and services, and amenities in compact, complete rural villages and urban areas that are accessible without the need to drive; • Encouraging greater housing diversity within Growth Containment Boundaries; • Conserving lands located outside of Growth Containment Boundaries primarily for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agricultural, forestry and other primary economic activities - recreation and environmental protection purposes • Encouraging water-efficient, energy-efficient, and more sustainable subdivision and development; <p>One of the RGS Implementation Action Items for the RDN and Member Municipalities of the RGS is to “Identify next steps to addressing affordable housing issues” (Table 3 - Summary of Studies and Implementation Actions Arising from Goals and Policies, RGS Page 46)</p> <p>Glossary</p> <p>Housing Diversity</p> <p>To accommodate the diverse housing needs of residents, communities should strive to include a broad range of housing types including single detached, semi-detached, duplex, multi-unit attached housing, apartments, secondary suites, etc.</p>

Events Influencing RDN Support for Secondary Suites as a Form of Affordable Housing		
Date	Document Name	Direction relating to Secondary Suites
2012	2013-2015 RDN Board Strategic Plan	<p>The 2013-2015 RDN Board Strategic Plan continues to support affordable housing with the following goal and actions listed under the Strategic and Community Development Section (page 25):</p> <p>3. Increase affordable, adaptable housing to support all members of a community.</p> <p>a) Build on the Regional Housing Affordability Study to promote the development of affordable housing and housing that supports aging in place for seniors.</p> <p>b) Lobby senior governments to provide resources and support for affordable housing, seniors' housing, and transitional housing.</p> <p>c) Develop region-wide strategies, incentives and options for increasing residential density in current and planned neighbourhoods to increase the cost-effectiveness of infrastructure, services and transit.</p> <p>d) Work with VIHA, member municipalities and other non-profit organizations to establish partnerships and build capacity to address homelessness in the region.</p>

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Appendix D - Summary of Attributes to Consider for Evaluation of Rural Village Centres in Options 3 & 4

		Policies Supporting Secondary Suites		Transit	Range of Shops, Services and Amenities for Local Residents											
Electoral Area	Rural Village Centre = Higher Suitability for Secondary Suites based on RDN Policies	General OCP Support for Growth and a Diversity of Housing Choices within Rural Village Centres	Specific OCP Support for Secondary Suites within Rural Village Centres	Transit	Public School	= Grocery	= Corner Store	Rest/Cafe	Bank	Medical/Dental	Community Hall	Pharmacy	Post Office	Library	Gas Station	
																A
A	Cedar	Y	Y	Y 30 min	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
C	Extension	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
E	Fairwinds	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
E	Red Gap	Y	N	Y 60 min	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
F	Bellevue-Church Road	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y
F	Coombs	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
F	Errington	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
F	Hilliers	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
F	Qualicum River Estates	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
G	French Creek*	Y	Y	Y 60 min	Y	Y*	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y*	Y*	N	N	N	Y
H	Bowser**	Y	Y	Y 1 day/ wk. start 2012	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
H	Dunsmuir	Y	N	Y 1 day/ wk. start 2012	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
H	Qualicum Bay	Y	N	Y 1 day/ wk. start 2012	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

Secondary Suites Study

Electoral Area	Rural Village Centre = Higher Suitability for Secondary Suites based on RDN Policies	Employment Opportunities ***		Groundwater & Servicing Darker Shades Indicate Better Features for Groundwater Protection					
		Approx. No. of Businesses (Excluding HBB) 0-14 15-24 25+	Approx. No. of Industry Canada Business Categories 0-3 4-6 7-10	Intrinsic Aquifer Vulnerability **** Low-Moderate-High <u>Bold</u> = Dominant Rating	Groundwater Capacity *****	RDN Groundwater Protection Policies Stronger/Limited	Community Water Yes/No	Community Sewer Yes/No	Future Sewer Capacity *****
A	Cassidy	15	5	H	Stable – to be Confirmed	Stronger	N	N	-
A	Cedar	26+	7	<u>L-M</u> -H	Stable – to be Confirmed	Stronger	Y	Partial	Requires Cooperation with City of Nanaimo
C	Extension	0	0	M	City of Nanaimo Surface	Moderate	Y	N	-
E	Fairwinds	8	2	<u>L</u> -M	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	Y	Good
E	Red Gap	15+	5	M	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	N	-
F	Bellevue-Church Road	53+	6	M-H	Possible Issues?	Limited	Partial	N	-
F	Coombs	25+	3	<u>L</u> -M	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
F	Errington	10	3	M	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
F	Hilliers	10	2	M- <u>H</u>	Possible Issues?	Limited	N	N	-
F	Qualicum River Estates	1	1	<u>M</u> -H	Unknown	Limited	N	N	-
G	French Creek*	42+*	9*	M-H	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	Y	Good
H	Bowser**	18+	4	M- <u>H</u>	Stable – No Concern	Stronger	Y	N	-
H	Dunsmuir	4	2	M-H	Stable – No Concern	Limited	Y	N	-
H	Qualicum Bay	13+	4	H	Stable – No Concern	Limited	Y	N	-

* French Creek Rural Village Centre includes businesses immediately adjacent at Wembley Mall

** Bowser has a pharmacy pick up service provided by the gift shop in Magnolia Court

*** Employment Information Source: RDN Draft Rural Village Centre Inventory, 2012

**** Groundwater Vulnerability Source: "Intrinsic Aquifer Vulnerability" – BC MoE-Water Protection & Sustainability Branch, 2010

***** Groundwater Capacity Source: RDN Water Services Staff, 2012 - Water suppliers will still have to confirm adequate supply before any development can be approved

***** Future Sewer Capacity Source: RDN Wastewater Staff, 2012

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Appendix E – Summary of BC Building Code Requirements for Secondary Suites

BASED DIRECTLY ON PUBLIC INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF NANAIMO'S BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION.



Secondary Suites – Building Code Requirements

The following information is a summary of Section 9.36 of the *BC Building Code* requirements regulating the construction of Secondary Suites. This summary is not an exhaustive list of the requirements, but rather an overview of the regulations in the *BC Building Code*. This summary is provided by the City of Nanaimo for information only. An official copy of the *BC Building Code* and Section 9.36 can be obtained by contacting the Queen's Printer in Victoria.

Scope

It is intended that Section 9.36 of the *BC Building Code* apply to the construction of a Secondary Suite, whether this construction be a renovation or an addition to an existing building or a new building that incorporates a Secondary Suite. This Section may also be used as a standard for assessing an existing Secondary Suite in a house.

For purposes of the *BC Building Code* regulations, in order for an additional dwelling unit to be considered a Secondary Suite, the following criteria must be met: (other criteria under the Municipal Bylaws of the City of Nanaimo will apply).

1. The Secondary Suite is in a house (single-family dwelling). i.e. not in buildings of mixed use (commercial, industrial, etc.) or buildings of multi-residential use (duplex, etc.)
2. The area of the Secondary Suite cannot exceed 90 m² (approx. 970 ft²) of finished living area. (this does not include the areas used for common storage, laundry facilities or egress.)
3. The area of the Secondary Suite cannot exceed 40 percent of the total living floor area of the building it is located. (the floor area of the building does not include attached storage garages).
4. Under the *Condominium Act* a Secondary Suite cannot be subdivided from the building it is part of.

Fire Separation Information

Fire Separations for Exits

9.36.2.7. Except when the building is sprinklered, every exit other than an exit doorway shall be separated from adjacent floor areas by a fire separation:

- a) having a fire-resistance rating of 45 minutes, or
- b) having a fire-resistance rating of 30 minutes where the dwelling units are equipped with smoke alarms as referenced in Article 9.36.2.20.

Openings Near Unenclosed Exit Stairs and Ramps

- 9.36.2.8.(1)** Where an unenclosed exterior exit stair or ramp provides the **only means of egress** from a dwelling unit in a building that contains a Secondary Suite and is exposed to fire from unprotected openings in the exterior wall of another fire compartment, the openings shall be protected with wired glass in fixed steel frames or with glass block.

Separation of Residential Suites

- 9.36.2.16.(1)** Dwelling units in a building, which contains a Secondary Suite, shall be separated from each other by the following:
- a fire separation having a 45 minute fire resistance rating for a one storey unit or a one-hour fire resistance rating for a two storey unit.
 - a fire separation having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 30 minutes where the dwelling units are equipped with smoke alarms in conformance with Article 9.36.2.20., or
 - a fire separation having no required fire resistance rating where the building is sprinklered.

Separation of Public Corridors

- 9.36.2.17.(1)** A common corridor serving a building, which contains a Secondary Suite, shall be separated from the suites by the following:
- a fire separation with a fire resistance rating of 45 minutes.
 - a fire separation having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 30 minutes where the dwelling units are equipped with smoke alarms as indicated in Article 9.36.2.20., or
 - a fire separation having no required fire resistance rating where the building is sprinklered.

Safety

Bedroom Windows

- 9.7.1.2.(1)** Except where the suite is sprinklered, each bedroom shall have at least one outside window or exterior door openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge and without the removal of sashes or hardware.
- (2)** Such windows shall provide an unobstructed opening of not less than 380 mm (15") in height or width and .35 m² (543") in area and maintain such an opening during an emergency without the need for additional support.

Travel Distance to Exit or Egress Doors

- 9.36.2.10.(1)** In a building which contains a Secondary Suite, the travel distance from a floor level in a dwelling unit to an exit or egress door may exceed one storey provided the floor level within the dwelling unit is served by an openable window with an unobstructed opening 1000 mm high x 55 mm wide located so the sill is not more than 1 m above the floor and not more than 7 m above the grade outside.

Shared egress facilities

- 9.36.2.11.(2)** Each dwelling unit shall be provided with a second and separate means of egress or an opening window conforming to Sentence 9.36.2.10. where the egress door from either dwelling unit opens onto an exit stairway which serves both suites, a public corridor servicing both suites and served by a single exit stairway, exterior passageway or balcony serving both suites and served by a single exit stairway.

Smoke Alarms

- 9.36.2.20.(1)** Except as permitted in Section (3), an additional smoke alarm of photo-electric type conforming to CAN/ULC-S531 "Standard for Smoke Alarms", shall be installed in each suite.
- (2)** Smoke alarms required in Sentence (1) shall be interconnected so that the activation of the additional alarm in one suite will cause the additional alarm in the other suite to sound.
- (3)** The additional interconnected smoke alarm is not required to be installed in each suite provided:
- (a)** the fire separations required in Articles 9.36.2.16. and Article 9.36.2.17 have a fire resistance rating of 45 minutes or greater, or
 - (b)** the building is sprinklered.

Plumbing and Heating

Combustible Water Pipes

- 9.36.2.14.** Combustible water distribution pipe that has an outside diameter of 30 mm or less is permitted to penetrate a fire separation provided:
- 3.1.9.1.(1)**
- (1)** in vertical fire separations:
 - a)** it is tightly fitted or
 - b)** is sealed by a fire stop system that has an F rating of 20 minutes (Note: no fire stop system is available for polybutylene pipe)
 - (2)** in horizontal fire separations:
 - a)** it has an FT rating of 20 minutes; or,
 - b)** it has an FH rating of 20 minutes and the fire compartment on the underside of the fire separation is sprinklered, or,
 - c)** the pipe is enclosed for 3 m in a service space having a 45 minute fire resistance rating and the pipe is firestopped where it enters the service space as per 1) a) or b).

Combustible Drain, Waste and Vent Piping

- 9.36.2.15.(1)** Combustible drain, waste and vent piping is permitted to be located within or penetrate a fire separation required to have a fire-resistance rating provided:
- a)** except for the permitted penetration in clause (b), the combustible piping is located within an assembly protected by a membrane of a minimum 12.7 mm gypsum board,
 - b)** the pipe must be tightly fitted in the opening in the gypsum board,
 - c)** the combustible piping does not penetrate the gypsum board protection membrane on the underside of a horizontal fire separation.
- (2)** Combustible drain, waste and vent piping enclosed in an assembly or protected as described in Sentence (1) is permitted on both sides of a fire separation.

Air Ducts and Fire Dampers

- 9.36.2.18.(1)** Heating and ventilation systems between suites must be separate or be designed and inspected by a Mechanical Engineer.
- (2)** Ducts penetrating fire separations need not be equipped with fire dampers provided they are noncombustible and all openings in the duct system serve only one fire compartment.

Room / Egress dimensions

Height of Rooms or Spaces

- 9.36.2.1.(1)** The minimum height of rooms or spaces in a Secondary Suite shall be not less than 2.0 m (79") in all finished living areas.

Exit Stairs

- 9.36.2.3.(1)** Exit stairs within or serving a building, which contains a Secondary Suite, shall:
- a) have a minimum width, measured between wall faces or guards of not less than 860 mm, and
 - b) conform with Type II stair requirements:
 - minimum rise: 125 mm
 - run: 210 mm
 - maximum rise: 200 mm
 - run: 355 mm

Means of Egress

- 9.36.2.6.** The width of every common corridor that serves a building that contains a Secondary Suite shall be not less than 860 mm.

Doors in a Means of Egress

- 9.36.2.9.(1)** Every exit door or door that opens into or is located within a public corridor or other facility that provides access to exit from a suite shall:
- a) be not less than 1980 mm (78") high, and
 - b) have a clear opening of not less than 800 mm (31.5"), and
 - c) be permitted to swing inward.

Spatial Separations

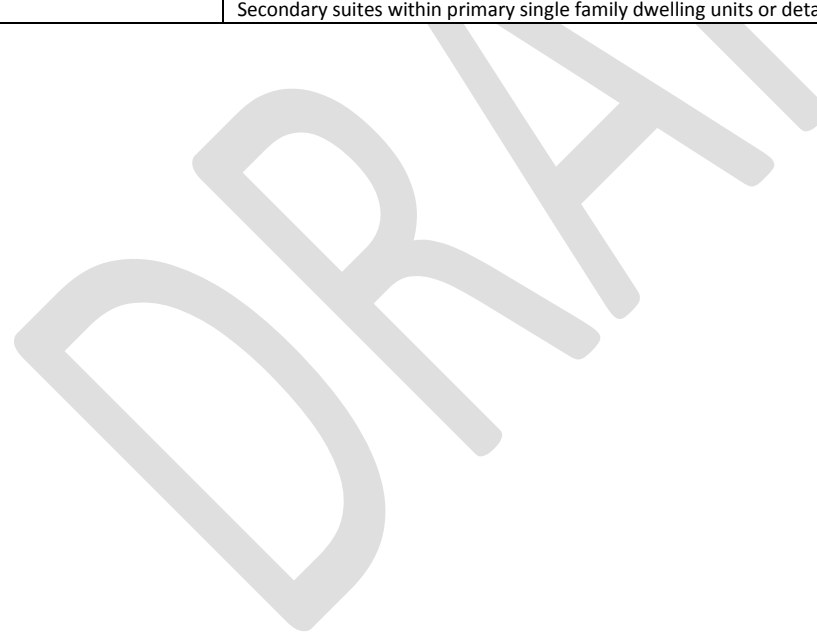
Exposing Building Face of Houses

- 9.36.2.19.(1)** The exposing building face requires a fire-resistance rating of not less than 45 minutes where the limiting distance is less than 1.2 m (4') and where the limiting distance is less than 0.6 m (2') the exposing building face must be clad with noncombustible material.
- (2)** Window openings in the exposing building face referred to in Sentence (1) shall not be permitted if the limiting distance is less than 1.2 m (4') and shall be limited in conformance with the requirements for unprotected openings in Article 9.10.14.1 where the limiting distance is 1.2 m (4') or greater. (ie: 8 percent openings permitted @ 1.5m).

Appendix F - Specific Support for Secondary Suites in RDN Electoral Area OCP's (Including Village and Neighbourhood Plans)

Electoral Area OCP	Policies Directly Referring to Secondary Suites
<p>A: Cedar, South Wellington, Cassidy ELECTORAL AREA 'A' OFFICIAL Community Plan Bylaw No. 1620, 2011</p> <p>Cedar RVC Cassidy RVC</p>	<p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the percentage of development that is located on lands outside of the GCB. • Increase the percentage of development that is located within well-defined areas on lands within the GCB. <p>Land Use Designations and Policies that support secondary suites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cedar Estates secondary suites supported (serviced with water and sewer). • Suburban Residential May consider rezoning after the completion of a village plan which includes a secondary suite and accessory dwelling unit review. • Cassidy Rural Village Centre Possibility of allowing more than 15 upha density in clustered development to allow secondary suites • Kirkstone Place – based on inclusion in the GCB and subsequent rezoning supports density 20 upha including secondary suites <p>Action Item: Conduct a review of secondary suites and accessory dwelling units during the upcoming Cedar village planning process.</p>
<p>A: Cedar Main Street Plan</p>	<p>Planning process underway 2011-2012 will include addressing ways to encourage greater housing diversity and density to accommodate a range of community needs including affordable housing.</p>
<p>C: Arrowsmith Benson - Cranberry Bright Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1148, 1999 Extension RVC</p>	<p>The Village Centre Land Use designation supports a secondary dwelling unit under the following criteria: e) A secondary unit in a residential building (i.e., a single family house which contains a primary and a secondary unit for a total of 2 dwelling units) will be in accordance with the following conditions... ii) a maximum of one secondary unit will be allowed within a single family house; iii) the single family house must be owner occupied; and iv) the presence of a secondary unit must not alter the single family appearance of the house.</p>
<p>G: French Creek, San Pareil, Dashwood Area G OCP, Bylaw No. 1540, 2008</p>	<p>3.2 Neighbourhood Residential</p> <p>In contrast to the rural areas of the Plan Area, most of the urban area in French Creek is comprised of existing residential neighbourhoods which are designated Neighbourhood Residential in this OCP.</p> <p>Policy 5 In order to support affordable/attainable housing in the Plan Area, secondary suites shall be supported on lots where serviced by community water and community sewer within the Neighbourhood Residential land use designation of this Plan provided they meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The secondary suite must be completely contained within the principal dwelling unit; No more than one secondary suite shall be permitted per parcel; Secondary suites are not permitted in a mobile home; A minimum of two (2) additional off-street parking stalls shall be provided; The Regional District of Nanaimo does not support the subdivision of secondary suites pursuant to the <i>Strata Property Act</i>; Secondary suites shall not be permitted where a home based business, day care, or group home has been established; and, The size of a secondary suite shall not exceed 40% of the habitable floor space of the principal dwelling to a maximum of 60 m². <p>6. Despite Policy No. 5 above, amendments to the criteria for suites may be made without an amendment to this Plan in order to address community concerns and issues during the implementation of Policy No. 5 above. 7. Policy No. 5 above shall not be considered for implementation until the Board has conducted an Electoral Area wide review of secondary suites. 8. Prior to considering a rezoning to permit secondary suites within the Neighbourhood Residential designation of this Plan, the Regional District of Nanaimo shall request confirmation from the community water service provider that there is sufficient water capacity which meets the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines to accommodate secondary suites. If sufficient capacity is not available or should proof of sufficient capacity not be proved by the water service provider, the Regional District of Nanaimo shall not implement Policy No. 5 above to permit secondary suites.</p>

<p>G: French Creek, San Pareil, Dashwood <u>Area G OCP, Bylaw No. 1540, 2008</u></p>	<p>Wembley Neighbourhood Designation <i>Page 36 of 119</i></p> <p>Up to an additional 30 units per hectare may be considered where a comprehensive mixed residential development concept is proposed and must include, but is not limited to two or more of the following housing types and options: detached single residential, town homes, cluster housing, flex housing, low cost housing, seniors care, apartments, and <u>secondary suites</u> and at least 35% of the site area must be maintained for green space and a public amenity acceptable to the Regional District of Nanaimo is provided....</p> <p>Implementation - SECTION 4.0: CREATING COMPLETE NODAL COMMUNITIES RDN - Immediate Rezone all lands within the 'Neighbourhood Residential' land use designation to permit secondary suites subject to the requirements of Section 3.2 of this Plan.</p>
<p>Bowser Village Centre Plan - Area H OCP, Amendment Bylaw No. 1335.03, 2010</p>	<p>Goal 3. Be More Inclusive and Accountable 3.4 Housing Diversity and Affordability Objectives 3.4.1 To increase the range of housing types, tenures and affordability in Bowser Village Centre. 3.4.2 To provide 40 units of seniors housing in Bowser Village Centre by 2020. 3.4.3 To have 15% of dwelling units meeting the CMHC definition of affordable housing by 2020. Policies 3.4.4 The RDN will encourage affordable housing (including seniors housing) to be integrated with the rest of the community and located close to shops, services, transit and public amenities. e. Review development applications to ensure that affordable housing (including seniors housing) is located close to shops, services, transit and public amenities. 3.4.5 The RDN supports secondary dwelling units in all residential areas within Bowser Village Centre. f. Include secondary suites as a permitted use within single family dwellings in Bowser Village Centre. g. Review and amend Zoning Bylaw 500.</p> <p>Building Arrangement Residential use at and above street level Secondary suites within primary single family dwelling units or detached at rear or side</p>



Appendix G – Groundwater Vulnerability Levels and Existing Community Water and Sewer Services

