

# Oak Bay Secondary Suites Review Committee Final Report

May 17, 2010

## **Introduction**

Oak Bay does not currently permit secondary suites in single family dwellings. Despite this prohibition many exist throughout the community. Municipalities throughout British Columbia are moving to legalize suites in newly constructed dwellings and to regulate existing suites. Nine municipalities in the Capital Region have already done so.

Whether Oak Bay should allow secondary suites is a matter of no small controversy.

Mayor Causton established the Secondary Suites Review Committee for the purpose of reviewing this controversial issue. The committee was mandated to solicit the views of Oak Bay residents, to survey other communities and to report to Council.

The Committee was composed of three members of Council, Councillors Nils Jensen (Chair), Pam Copley, John Herbert and three residents, Dr. David Blades, Colin Crisp, and Tony Sharp. Mayor Causton was an ex-officio non-voting member. The Committee was very ably assisted by Roy Thomassen Oak Bay's Director of Building and Planning and Lise-Lotte Loomer Secretary and Communication assistant to the Committee.

The Committee made an interim report in 2009.

This final report contains the committee's findings and recommendations for steps Council may wish to consider. It is divided into two parts. Part A gives an overview and sets out the Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations. Part B details the information gathered by the Committee.

## **PART A**

### **Overview, Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Overview**

##### **a) Background**

At the Committee's Inaugural meeting Mayor Causton provided an overview of his expectations for the work of the Committee.

Mayor Causton, acknowledging the need for rental accommodations, wanted the Committee to gather information and identify the issues for Oak Bay should secondary suites be permitted. He wanted the Committee to hear from residents and gather information from other communities who have legalized or had rejected suites.

Mayor Causton was of the view that Oak Bay residents were divided on the issue of secondary suites. He recognized concerns that legalizing suites may impact the single family nature of our community. He also remarked on the "dormitory" function of Oak Bay where a significant percentage of the students from Camosun College and University of Victoria reside in suites and similar accommodations.

The Mayor accepted that suites and boarders were 'mortgage helpers' for homeowners. He pointed to the fact that suites and conversions already existed in the community without complaints being raised.

Allowing suites could impact the use of community resources he noted. On the other hand because the current bylaw permits two boarders per household an average house could legally accommodate six or more persons, assuming at typical family of two parents and two children.

##### **b) The Committee's Work**

The Committee undertook a broad based public consultation process of Oak Bay residents and a survey of other local governments.

The consultation process had three main components:

1. Open Committee meetings.  
Time for public input was specifically allotted at Committee meetings to hear from residents.
2. Two Community Consultations.  
One was held in South Oak Bay at the Windsor Pavilion, the other in North Oak Bay at the Emmanuel Baptist Church. A total of about 150 residents attended.
3. A resident survey.  
Surveys were mailed with the annual tax notices to approximately 6000 resident homeowners. Surveys were also available at the municipal hall. The Committee received 1907 responses. All but one were in response to the mail out.

The Committee also surveyed other municipalities in the region and other parts of British Columbia. In addition the Committee heard presentations from representatives from the City of Victoria, the Town of View Royal and the Gonzales Neighbourhood.

## **Findings**

### **a) Community Consultations**

Mayor Causton's view, noted above, that the Oak Bay community was split on the issue of secondary suites was clearly borne out by the survey of residents. Of the approximately 1817 who responded to the mailed out survey 52% were generally in favour of secondary suites, 41% were generally against and the remainder offered no opinion.

Oak Bay residents appear not only divided on the issue of allowing suites but also on the potential impacts of such a move. A division was also seen on Oak Bay's responsibility for addressing regional housing needs.

The diversity created by allowing secondary suites was seen by some Oak Bay residents as adversely affecting quality of life while others embraced the idea of encouraging families and a broader range economic groups to come to Oak Bay.

There was general consensus on a number of issues. Most respondent felt that parking would increase, that young families would be attracted to Oak Bay and seniors could stay in their homes longer if suites were allowed.

The strongest consensus emerging from the survey was the need to require an owner to occupy a residence if suites were allowed. Strong consensus was also evident on the need to require off-street parking, to impose license fees and to require inspections.

The Committee noted that the survey reflected the views of home owners rather than renters. According to Statistics Canada 26% of dwellings in Oak Bay are rental accommodations. The survey had been mailed out with the tax notices to owners not renters. Of the approximately 1900 responses returned only one came from a person who had not received a mailed survey.

Speakers at the Committee meetings and at the Community Consultation reflected views similar to those expressed in the survey. In general, most speakers at the meetings expressed opposition to secondary suites.

The reasons for and against secondary suites expressed in the resident survey and

public meeting can be roughly grouped as follows:

Reasons given for supporting secondary suites:

- It would bring young working families and others into Oak Bay.
- Oak Bay would be doing its share to help the housing crisis.
- Urban sprawl would be negated.
- Suites can be “mortgage helpers”.
- Senior could live in their homes longer.

Reasons for opposing secondary suites:

- Increased density would decrease the quality of life in Oak Bay.
- There would be Increased noise, traffic and parking.
- The extra costs on municipal services would not be shared equitably.
- There would be additional burdens on the municipal infrastructure.

The survey and the results for each question are set out in the Appendix. In addition there is a breakdown of the main question by geographical area.

A detailed analysis of the survey comments and summaries of the other public input is contained in Part B.

#### b) Other Municipalities

An online survey of local governments in BC was conducted and a review was done of regional municipalities. Both showed a clear trend to legalizing secondary suites. This was evident in both the Capital Region and elsewhere in BC.

Of the 51 responses to the online municipal survey 44, or 86%, reported they allowed secondary suites. Of the remaining seven municipalities who did not allow suites, six had a process underway to consider the issue. The full results and analysis is set out in Part B and Appendix Three.

In the Capital Region nine of the thirteen municipalities permit suites. IN addition to Oak Bay suites are not currently allowed in Saanich, North Saanich and Highlands. Saanich is presently considering a draft bylaw which would permit in an area of south of McKenzie Ave.

A brief review of the regional municipalities is set out in Part B.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Committee is of the view that Council should continue to review the issue of legalizing secondary suites. While only a slight majority of surveyed resident favour such a move it appears that others may support suites if proper protections and restrictions are in place to deal with expected negative impacts.

The Committee feels that a more comprehensive and informed public discussion led by Council could allow a consensus to emerge. There should not be an all-or-nothing approach. Oak Bay currently has many hundreds of secondary suites scattered throughout the community. Ways must be found to deal with these existing suites and the potential for new suites in renovated or newly constructed homes.

If handled appropriately it can be a win-win situation for the community, especially for those who have or live in suites.

The trend in British Columbia is clearly to permit secondary suites as a method of providing additional affordable housing. The Committee sees the potential for suites to provide seniors with the opportunity to remain in the houses longer will reduce the need for expensive public infrastructure to accommodate our aging population. This reason alone is enough to continue an examination by Oak Bay Council. Such an examination should of necessary look at other options for aging in place including permitting 'granny suites' or duplexes as has been done elsewhere. Consideration should also be given to 'nanny' suites that would permit an affordable 'assisted' living arrangement in a senior's home.

The Committee was of the view that a proactive consultative approach is needed.

Respectfully submitted.

Oak Bay Secondary Suites Review Committee

Councillor Nils Jensen (Chair)

Councillor Pam Copley

Councillor John Herbert

Dr. David Blades

Colin Crisp

Tony Sharp

The Committee thanks all Oak Bay residents who took the time and made the effort to provide valued input at our meetings and by completing the surveys. The remarks residents provided were very helpful and greatly appreciated.

Thanks also to Roy Thomassen and Lise-Lotte Loomer for their work and support during the protracted process. A special note of thanks to Ann and John Herbert and their team of volunteers who worked countless hours tabulating the huge response to the resident survey.

## PART B

### Detailed Information

#### Section 1: The Provincial Context

The Committee reviewed the 2005 Provincial Government document “Secondary Suites – A Guide for Local Governments” produced by the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (Housing Policy Branch) . The guide was designed to assist local governments considering secondary suit. It provided the Committee a valuable starting point for consideration of secondary suites on Oak Bay.

The Guide contains helpful background information and describes how other communities have handled secondary suites. Specifically it sets out four effective “best practices” drawn from the experience of other communities who have dealt with this issue .

- a) ***Consult with residents and stakeholder organizations.*** *Secondary Suites can be a highly contentious community issue. However, the experience of many jurisdictions suggests that listening to concerns, and finding ways to address them, helps to defuse strong feelings. In addition, community and stakeholder input can create a better program. The builders and developers interviewed for this guide indicated a keen interest in working with local governments to create secondary suite strategies. It is recommended that local governments consult with home builders associations and developers in their jurisdiction.*
- b) ***Use a consistent approach throughout the jurisdiction.*** *Staff from several jurisdictions commented that one of the key strengths of their secondary suite program is consistency throughout the municipality. For example, if suites are allowed in all detached homes, it creates a sense of fairness and simplicity. A consistent approach is easier to understand.*
- c) ***Provide clear information materials.*** *Information materials on secondary suites, such as fact sheets and guidelines, should clearly state the information needed by homeowners and other interested parties.*
- d) ***Focus efforts on creating legal suites for the future.*** *Legalizing existing suites has proven extremely difficult. Most jurisdictions have had limited uptake on voluntary registration and upgrading. Proactive enforcement is costly and may result in significant loss of secondary suite stock.*

The Guide goes on to make the point that:

*“...there has been excellent uptake on the inclusion of new suites (or at least “suite-readiness”) in new, detached housing. Much of the resulting rental housing*

*stock may be higher-end than suites in older homes. Over the long term however, expanded supply of rental housing will contribute to affordability while maintaining health and safety standards.”*

Oak Bay has taken the first step in the Guide’s list of best practices by providing many different opportunities for the community to ask questions and share opinions and information before Council proceeds to consider future action.

The link to this report and to information from other communities is contained in Appendix One.

## **Section 2: The Current Oak Bay Framework**

Secondary suites are currently prohibited in Oak Bay. The Zoning Bylaw allows a single family residence to accommodate a maximum of two boarders but the boarders may not have a separate suite with cooking facilities.

Any consideration of secondary suites in Oak Bay would of necessity require a change in the Zoning Bylaw. Additionally the Oak Bay Official Community Plan would need to be amended.

Any change in the Official Community Plan requires a comprehensive legislated public participation process including a public hearing as a pre-condition to Council considering any amendments.

The current Oak Bay Official Community Plan addresses the single family residential zones of the Oak Bay in the following way.

### *Single Family Dwelling*

*9. OBJECTIVE 1: Oak Bay's fundamental housing objective is the preservation of the single-family character in most neighbourhoods.*

*(1) Quiet, low-density residential neighbourhoods are characteristic of Oak Bay. Although there will continue to be a significant demand for housing, the ability to meet demand is not likely and, even if it were, would require drastic changes to Oak Bay as it is known today. The traditional single family home will continue to provide the greatest number of housing units occupying the largest land area.*



Oak Bay Zoning Bylaws create five residential zones which permit a single family dwelling as a principle use. These zones vary in minimum lot sizes from RS-5 (6000 ft<sup>2</sup>) to RS-1 (43,000 ft<sup>2</sup>). To allow suites in any particular residential zone would require a change to the permitted uses in the Bylaw.

As already noted Oak Bay Zoning Bylaw currently permits up to two boarders within the single family dwelling. Boarding Use is defined as

*“means the sharing of the principle building, as a single family dwelling unit, by the family of the owner or lessee, with not more than two other unrelated persons; **but excludes transient accommodation, separate suites and independent accommodation.**”* [emphasis added]

Secondary suites are also governed by the British Columbia Building Code. The Code creates minimum health and safety requirements for dwellings which contain a secondary suite. The minimum standards can not be changed by a municipality.

Key areas addressed by the Code relating to secondary suites, include:

- Fire separations between principle dwelling and the suite.
- Hard wired smoke alarms
- Safe exits from bedrooms and the building
- Separation of air handling systems between the suite and the main dwelling.
- Limiting suite area to 40% of the dwelling to a maximum of 90 m<sup>2</sup>
- Limiting suites to one per principal dwelling
- Minimum ceiling height of 2 meters (6'-7") throughout suite.

### Section 3: Provincial Survey of Local Governments

#### a) Introduction

The Committee conducted a survey of British Columbia municipalities. With the assistance of Civic Info BC, a co-operative local government information service, the survey was made available to all of British Columbia's 189 local governments. A copy of the survey is contained in Appendix Two.

Fifty-one communities or 27% responded. The 51 responses represented a wide range of communities from Canal Flats, a village of 700, to Vancouver, a city of over half a million.

Below is a breakdown of respondents by population.

Under 5,000	16
5,000 – 20,000:	14
20,000 – 50,000:	7
Over 50,000:	12
Anonymous:	2

The survey was divided into two parts.

Part A contained questions for communities that permitted secondary suites. Part B had questions for communities that did not allow secondary suites.

Forty-four or 86% communities identified themselves as permitting secondary suites. Seven or 14% did not allow suites. Of the forty-four who responded to Part A one was in the process of allowing suites while another permitted two-family residences rather than suites *per se*.

Of the seven communities who did not allow suites, six were either in the process of considering the issue or were mandated to do so by their Official Community Plan.

A comprehensive summary of the responses is contained in Appendix Three.

## b) Summary by Question

### Part A. Communities That DO Permit Secondary Suites

Question 1. What, if any, limits are on secondary suites in a single family dwelling, such as owner occupancy, lot size minimums or off-street parking requirements?

There were many similarities in the way communities imposed limits on suites. The main ones are discussed below.

#### **One suite within the main dwelling**

Limiting suites to one per dwelling was a condition imposed by virtually all communities in keeping with the BC Building Code. Some communities also specified that secondary suites were not allowed in conjunction with other uses such as a bed and breakfast, a boarding house and a day care.

As a corollary to one suite per single family dwelling most communities required the suite be contained wholly within the main dwelling. Only three communities permitted suites in accessory buildings.

Some communities specifically prohibited changes to the exterior of the dwelling

in order to accommodate the suite. Two required direct access from the suite to the exterior.

One community required the suite be 80% below the main dwelling.  
Vancouver prohibits the suite from being more than 2 m below grade.

### **Suites only in selected zones or area**

The majority of communities allowed suites only in select zones or areas.

### **Extra Parking Requirement**

Twenty six communities required off street parking. In many instances one extra space was required in addition to the one or two required for the main dwelling.

One parking note of interest was from Port Coquitlam which described itself as “secondary suite” friendly. After two year consultation period and the support of 70% of homeowners the zoning bylaw was amended in 1998 to permit suites in single family zones. However they specifically rejected an additional parking requirement preferring crowded streets to possible front yard parking.

On the other hand Vancouver specifically requires an extra parking space in addition to the one required for the main dwelling but only for residences built after April 2004, when the bylaw was amended.

### **Owner Occupied Requirement**

Nine communities required that the owner occupy the dwelling.

Interestingly two responses recognized that a requirement of ‘owner occupancy’ was not a requirement that could be legally imposed by a zoning bylaw or covenant. Some communities found ways around this impediment by imposing an owner occupancy requirement using a ‘housing agreement’, making it a condition of licensing or requiring a statutory declaration.

### **Suite size**

Twenty-five communities limited the maximum size of the suite in accordance with the BC Building Code. The most common size limit, used by sixteen communities, was 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of the dwelling gross or habitable floor area.

Other maximums ranged for 120 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% down to a low of 46.5 m<sup>2</sup> or 25%.

Two communities limited the suite to two bedrooms.

Two communities required the suite to be at least 37 m<sup>2</sup>, one required at least two rooms.

Vancouver requires the suite be “smaller” than the main dwelling in addition to setting the *minimum* size at 37 m<sup>2</sup>.

**Lot size and frontage**

Six communities had a minimum lot size requirement ranging from 344.4 m<sup>2</sup> to 2000 m<sup>2</sup>. Two communities required a minimum of 18 m frontage

**Occupant limits**

Two communities limited the number of occupants of a suite to two. Another set the maximum occupants at three.

In one case the suite was limited to one family.

**Extra Utility Charges**

Three communities imposed extra utility charges on suites. Utilities included were water, sewer and garbage. It appears the extra water and sewer charges were used where there was no water metering.

**Registration Requirement**

Two communities required suites to be registered. One required an annual fee.

Question 2. Have you identified any changes to your community as a result of allowing secondary suites? For instance increased traffic or parking, noise complaints or similar changes?

The majority of the 41 communities allowing suites reported no adverse affects resulting from the suites. Thirty communities saw little or no change, although a number noted that suites in their jurisdiction had been allowed for many years.

Of the communities that reported changes, ten said the main change related to increases in parking and parking complaints.

Question 3 Have you identified any additional or new costs associated with permitting secondary suites?

Some respondent interpreted question 3 as relating to increased costs to the owner of suites, others focussed on additional costs to the municipality.

Some noted there were increased costs for the home owner, citing the utility charges.

Very few communities noted any extra costs to the municipalities. The few that did noted costs of enforcement and approvals as adding an extra burden to the municipality that was not recovered from the properties with suites.

Question 4. Did you create any incentives (or disincentives) for registering secondary suites?

Twenty of the forty-four communities that permitted suites did not have any incentives or disincentives. Five communities charged extra utility fees for suites. These included extra charges for water, sewer and garbage. The extra water charges appear to be predominately in communities that do not meter their water.

Other incentives/disincentives reported:

- Fees waived or reduced (4)
- Free inspections (1)
- Fast-tracking applications (1)
- Costly rezoning application (1)
- Business licence (1)
- Notice on title if work done without inspection (1)

Two communities mentioned they were revisiting the issue of incentives to remove barriers to secondary suites.

The City of Vancouver seems to have done the most work in the area of incentives which include:

- Architectural plans not required – sketches accepted
- Token fee for inspections
- No extra parking if dwelling built before April 2004
- Suite headroom relaxed to 6.5 feet
- Sprinkler retrofit not required

Question 5. What is your policy for dealing with non-compliant secondary suites? Did this policy change when secondary suites were permitted? Have there been any increases in the costs of enforcement after secondary suites were permitted?

Many communities (16) reported that their enforcement was complaint driven. Some required the complaint to be in writing. One community required the complainant to be a resident living in close proximity to the suite being complained about. Twelve reported no changes in their approach to non-compliant suites.

Langley reported a change of policy once suites were legalized. Before legalization enforcement was complaint driven, afterwards enforcement became proactive.

Two noted increased costs of enforcement. One mentioned the extra costs associated with reviewing and authorizing suites.

Enforcement techniques included:

- decommissioning the suite

- removal of the stove outlet
- pursuing extra utility charges
- ticketing non-compliant suites
- notice placed on title

## Part B. Communities That DO NOT Permit Secondary Suites

### Question 6. What were the main reasons your community considered in rejecting secondary suites?

Five of the seven communities where secondary suites were not allowed reported they had not rejected suites specifically. One had merely inherited the bylaws. Others were planning to review the issue of suites.

Only two of the seven communities which did not allow suites had concerns about suites, one related to water availability the other referred to Building Code and fire safety concerns.

### Question 7. What is your enforcement policy for illegal secondary suites?

Five communities enforced on complaint only. One had no complaints and one small village had no resources to enforce the bylaw.

### Question 8. Are there any plans for reviewing the issue of secondary suites in your community?

Six of the seven communities reported that they will be reviewing the issue. Two indicated that their Official Community Plans mandated consideration of suites.

## **Section 4: Capital Regional Survey**

Of the 13 Capital Region municipalities nine permit secondary suites:

- |                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • Central Saanich | • Sidney     |
| • Colwood         | • Sooke      |
| • Esquimalt       | • Victoria   |
| • Langford        | • View Royal |
| • Metchosin       |              |

These municipalities impose a variety of different conditions and limitations on suites.

Examples of the limits imposed by Capital Region municipalities include:

- Suites are limited to designated zones.
- Lots size minimums
- Owner occupancy requirement
- Extra parking required
- License fees are

In addition to Oak Bay three other municipalities currently prohibit secondary suites:

- Saanich
- North Saanich
- Highlands

Saanich is actively considering allowing secondary suites in single family dwelling in an area south of McKenzie Ave. A draft bylaw has been drafted and discussed in Committee. A public hearing on the bylaw is expected in the near future.

Highlands' prohibition on suites is linked to their limited water supply. Highland residents all draw water from wells. Despite this concern the Highlands Official Community Plan envisions a future consideration of suites. North Saanich also has plans to review the issue.

## **Section 5: Information from Invited Guests**

The Committee heard from three invited guests.

**Sarah Jones**, Director of Corporate Administration, Town of View Royal presented to the Committee on February, 18 2009

Ms. Jones and the View Royal Council began work on the secondary suites policy in 2004.

Ms. Jones provided the following insights:

- A unified voice from Council to clarify their goals/objectives early on in the process is useful.
- Communication with the public is important:
  - a) Backgrounders were sent with survey and newspaper ads were used to inform the public
  - b) Ipsos Reid poll – newspaper ads were used to advise residents beforehand – the public appeared well informed in advance of the poll
- The program has been useful for the Fire Department to be aware of what

residences have suites.

- Secondary suites have not changed the neighbourhoods because those suites were generally already there and being used.

In the brief discussion that followed, Ms. Jones remarked: “Older people may want to stay in their homes, but they don't necessarily want to be alone in their homes”. A secondary suite can provide the desired security for those living alone.

A link to more information on secondary suites in View Royal is set out in the Appendix.

**Brian Sikstrom**, Senior Planner at the City of Victoria presented to the Committee on February, 18, 2009

Mr. Sikstrom told the Committee that Victoria has had a long history of suites. Currently, there are 4,000 legal suites. Victoria is one of the densest cities in Canada.

Mr. Sikstrom spoke of the many steps that staff took in order to prepare policy for possible changes. Council's main concern was that they didn't want to make changes without the support of the neighbourhood associations, 65% of whom had concerns.

Action taken to deal with the neighbourhood concerns included focus group meetings and public meetings. Meetings were also held with realtors and neighbourhood associations to discuss concerns about demolitions of existing houses in order to build new houses with suites.

It was suggested that a pilot project might work for Oak Bay in the same way that it had worked in the Gonzales neighbourhood of Victoria. The Gonzales neighbourhood had specifically requested that the secondary suites be allowed in their area.

More information on Victoria's secondary suite program can be found by following the link set out in the Appendix.

**John Farquarson**, Chair of the Steering Committee of the Gonzales Neighbourhood Community Plan presented to the Committee on June 2, 2009.

Gonzales was the first Victoria area to complete a neighbourhood community plan. It has been in place for seven years. Over the course of 2 ½ years, the Gonzales Steering Committee worked through a process with the community that started with a vision statement to facilitate a community dialogue. The aim was to articulate the shared values of the neighbourhood and the values which they wanted to see shape decisions over the next 20-30 years. It took a lot of time and hundreds of people were involved. With time, came buy-in and it made the implementation phase easier.

The community identified four principles or values to guide development of the



community plan:

- Enhance the built and natural overall environment  
After calculating that within the neighbourhood, there is 6-8 acres of asphalt, and in keeping with the above statement, they decided to relax their on-site parking requirement. In Mr. Farquarson's opinion, this also helps with traffic calming.
- Reinforce and maintain social stability  
They liked the diversity in the neighbourhood where there is a wide enough range of housing that one can be born and die in Gonzales and have the kind of housing that meets one's needs at various stages of life.  
  
Secondary suites form part of the housing stock. This means that there are options for elderly people and students. It has allowed younger families to realize their goal of owning their first home because a suite acts as a mortgage helper.
- Maintain the single family character of neighbourhood  
It was important to maintain the current look of the neighbourhood. With appropriate safeguards it has been possible to incorporate secondary suites without changing the overall look of the neighbourhood.
- Encourage alternative transportation and traffic calming  
In the context of other values, secondary suites are a means to an end with the trade-offs being a few more cars on the street.

Secondary suites must comply with the BC Building Code.

Suites are permitted without a requirement for off street parking and suites can be in any building no matter when it was built. Homes with secondary suites are owner occupied. The noise issue is self-regulating between both parties sharing the same house.

Secondary suites have allowed the neighbourhood to realize their vision of a single family look.

Anecdotally, Mr. Farquarson has noticed no difference in litter, level of noise or blocked streets.

Committee members asked Mr. Farquarson questions. A summary of the discussion follows:

- Victoria's enforcement policy is the same as Oak Bay's, it is complaint based.
- An incentive for people to declare their suite was to remove roadblocks such as the requirement to have off street parking.

- In starting with the values, which took the first few months of the process, it meant that they were looking 10 years in the future as opposed to planning blind which would have resulted in a reactive plan.

## **Section 6: Committee Meetings and Consultations**

### **a) Public Input at Committee Meetings**

The first meeting of the Committee was held on January 21, 2009. The Committee held 11 meetings, six of which were open to the public. Over the course of the public meetings from January 2009 to February 2010, twenty- two community members presented their questions, concerns and opinions to the Committee. This number does not include repeat visitors.

Public presentations were usually the first agenda item to encourage people to speak and to show respect for the time they took to participate. Meeting minutes and the Interim Report can be found on the Oak Bay website at [www.oakbaybc.org/](http://www.oakbaybc.org/)

The following list is a summary of the main points made by speakers:

- concerns about issues of homelessness and poverty and how this could be addressed by Oak Bay
- suites permit older residents to remain in their homes longer
- encouraging the committee to develop long term vision
- concerns about more cars, parking, noise and litter
- the need for owner occupancy if secondary suites are permitted
- the difficulty of enforcing bylaws governing secondary suites
- encouraging the committee to look for all the advantages and disadvantages
- question about costs of additional municipal services required for suites
- concerns that suites will affect the ambiance of Oak Bay

### **b.) Community Consultations**

The Committee held two Community Consultations. One was held in South Oak Bay at Windsor Park Pavilion on April 1, 2009, the second was held in North Oak Bay at Emmanuel Baptist Church on April 16, 2009. Approximately 150 people participated.

Secretary to the Committee Lise-Lotte Loomer facilitated both sessions using the same format. Upon arrival at the meeting, participants were welcomed, given name tags, offered coffee and tea and asked to take a seat at any table. Each table had a leader who was a member of the Committee or another volunteer. During the discussions the

table leader's task was to ensure that everyone at the table was given an opportunity to speak. Some tables also had recorders, at others the leader took notes during the small group discussion. The notes were used to form part of the resident survey sent to homeowners with their tax notice in May.

At the outset of the meeting a brief introductory overview of the issues was provided. Each table then was asked to discuss the issues based on the statement: "Oak Bay is considering a by-law permitting secondary suites." People were asked to provide their views under four headings.

1. I think that this would be a positive change for Oak Bay because...
2. I think that this would be a negative change for Oak Bay because...
3. I have another comment to make regarding a change on secondary suite policy...
4. I have a bylaw/policy question

Table leaders recorded the responses on separate sheets of paper under these headings. These responses were then shared with the group as a whole.

At the end of the session Roy Thomassen, Director of Building and Planning provided answers to questions about bylaw or policy issues.

Themes which arose in the Community Consultations were:

- the possibility of having suites allowed only in some areas within Oak Bay
- quality of life issues: noise, parking, knowing neighbours
- additional costs of having secondary suites: garbage, services being paid for by neighbours who don't have suites
- who would be the beneficiaries of allowing secondary suites: seniors who can have someone living in their home allowing them to stay in their home and also providing company; young families who would have a mortgage helper enabling them to buy their first house.
- home occupied by owner
- licensing issues related to health, safety and fairness of everyone being licensed, incentives for individuals to license their existing suite; bringing existing suites to Code

The table notes, posters, notes to table leaders and backgrounder which were made available to participants and posted on the Oak Bay website.

## Section 7: Results and Analysis of the Comment Feedback of the Resident Survey

### Introduction

The over 6000 Secondary Suites Survey distributed with tax assessments in Oak Bay provided space for written comments on the survey form. A total of 807 comments were received; based on total return 40% of survey submissions also provided comments.

Comment response rate varied somewhat with the orientation of the respondent: 49% of the total comments were from those supporting secondary suites provided comments, 47% of the comments were from those opposed to secondary suites; only 4% with no opinion provided a comment. There was little variation by region but a consistent trend in age group responses, with the most frequent response rate among the 51-65 age group; followed by 31-50, over 65 and under 31.

Analysis of comments was through the development of a matrix-based coding sheet that summarized responses by emergent themes developed through a random sampling of responses. Themes were indicated on a sheet and counted for frequency, providing a summary of the major points raised by citizens through their comments. This method is reliable and valid for such qualitative research. In the case of the secondary suite survey, *every comment submitted was read*. A single researcher experienced in such qualitative research coded these comments, providing consistency. However, it should be noted that coding was not triangulated and thus reflect the researcher's view of the emergent themes.

Comments that simply restated positions from the questionnaire, such as “we are opposed to secondary suites,” were counted but not coded since this sentiment appears in their responses to the questions. In a similar way, comments tangential to the purpose of the questionnaire were not coded, such as comments on the questionnaire structure and nature of the questions asked or those using the space to argue for dedicated bike routes in Oak Bay. A few complained that such surveys are a “waste of taxes” and a rare few complimented Council for asking about secondary suites, wishing members of Council well in “resolving this difficult issue.” Almost all of the comments, however, provided *reasons* for supporting or opposing secondary suites and these reasons were all coded into themes. The following is a summary of the major themes that emerged for the entire Municipality based on the comments received, with particular comments provided that were deemed to be representative of the sentiment of the particular theme.

### Comments by Those Supporting the Legalization of Secondary Suites in Oak Bay: “Yes, but...”

Respondents supporting the legalization of secondary suites provided two types of comments: reasons for legalization and concerns that need to be addressed if

legalization becomes reality. Thus this group can be summarized as conditionally supportive.

Reasons provided for the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay in order of frequency:

1. Bringing young working families and others into Oak Bay.

Comments in this category reflect an opinion that Oak Bay could more diversified in its population, especially with the addition of more working families. The most common word used in this category of comments was, “diversity.” In most cases, this meant diversity of ages, but some also noted the need for diversity of “all economic levels, not just the rich and privileged.” There is a strong sense among respondents that secondary suites would increase diversity that in turn would “rejuvenate” Oak Bay to become “more vibrant.”

2. Doing our share to help with the housing crisis.

Almost as common as the first category was the strong belief that Oak Bay residents should “do our share” by helping to ease the housing crisis in Greater Victoria. This group believes that secondary suites provide affordable housing and that it is our collective civic responsibility to help out. One respondent captured the sentiment of this category well: “There is a housing crisis in Greater Victoria and we all need to share better.” This category is ideological; residents note that it is “unimaginable” that Oak Bay would not allow measures to ease the housing crisis and that providing such housing is our “ethical responsibility.”

3. Negating urban sprawl.

This category links to #2 above as another ideological commitment by respondents supporting the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay. In this case, respondents point out that increased urban sprawl contributes to increases in traffic and land use, which respondents consider detrimental to the environment. If Oak Bay is to become a “greener, more environmentally responsible” municipality, then those commenting in this category believe that supporting secondary suite legalization is an “ecological must.”

Although infrequent, a number of respondents also noted that many large houses in Oak Bay have considerably less residents than the house could accommodate. One comment in particular summarized this viewpoint:

We are a couple living in a 4-bedroom house designed for 5 or more people. The house to our right and the house behind us are 3 storey houses with a single resident. The house to our left is a 4-bedroom, 3 story house with only a couple. If secondary suites were allowed there wouldn't be an overload of parking, traffic noise, or Oak Bay services because these houses would simply be housing the number of residents for which they were designed.

#### 4. Helping people live in Oak Bay through suites as mortgage assistance.

Categories 4 and 5 were approximately half as frequent as the previous three, but the responses tended to be longer, often taking up the entire space provided. Citizens argue that Oak Bay is too expensive in house prices and taxes for many and that a secondary suite would enable some to live in Oak Bay that otherwise could not afford to purchase a house. A significant group in this category argued that secondary suites enables them to continue to live in Oak Bay: Some citizens explained that they are very involved in the Municipality, but couldn't live in Oak Bay without a secondary suite; two had recently divorced and would have to move without a secondary suite to assist with mortgage payments and a few respondents had retired only to find that their retirement incomes were lower than expected.

#### 5. Helping seniors live in homes longer.

Respondents in this category tended to cite examples of how a secondary suite worked well for seniors, either by personal example or someone they knew. The presence of "boarders" seemed to make life easier for seniors while also ensuring a level of personal safety. Some respondents argued that a secondary suite would be suitable accommodation for a health care provider.

#### 6. Additional themes.

Additional, less frequent comments argue that secondary suites improve property values, lead to better care of yards, helps to preserve older homes, and provide "lifeblood" housing for Camosun College and University of Victoria students, especially international students.

#### Concerns that need to be addressed if secondary suites are to be legalized

Comments supporting the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay almost without exception include conditions for this legalization. The strong sense is that *if* suites become legal, that changes in the community plan should be conditional on the following:

##### 1. Parking *must* be enforced.

*This was one of the most frequent themes* among all responses of those who favour the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay. In general, respondents find parking an *existing* problem in Oak Bay and are loathed to see it worsen with secondary suites. Respondents believe that secondary suites would not necessarily lead to increased parking if present parking regulations were enforced with more vigour. Parking in Oak Bay is described as, "horrible" with sometimes 5 or 6 cars per residence and sometimes even boats and trailers on the street. In some cases respondents believe that this congestion is dangerous since fire trucks, they claim, could not travel down the road in the event of an emergency. Respondents believe that the *owners* of existing housing

create existing parking problems and that these can be solved through stricter and more frequent enforcement of existing parking regulations.

There were many suggestions on how to improve the parking situation should secondary suites become legal in Oak Bay. Most frequent was a call to have off-street parking (one per suite) as a condition of any legal secondary suite. Many respondents called for a “sticker” or decal system allowing residents to park on the street, but decals would be available for only one vehicle. Presumably those renting a suite would be provided with a decal as well, although some respondents did not want *any* parking on the street by those renting secondary suites. Some suggested painting yellow lines and allowing parking on one side of the street only. It is important to emphasize that this was a very frequent category of responses and a primary condition for the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay.

## 2. Standards for existing suites *must* be enforced.

As frequent as the concerns for parking were comments that legalizing secondary suites would be one way to ensure that *existing* suites would conform to health and safety standards. Respondents almost universally believe that standards *must* be enforced. As one commented, “these suites are here already” and thus minimum standards should be enforced. Related to this concern is the less frequent belief in the need for a system of inspections of existing suites, set of minimum standards for suites, and substantial fines for those who continue to operate suites illegally. Respondents realize that the Municipality of Oak Bay would need to hire more staff for enforcement, but this expansion of staff is well supported if the cost is borne by the homeowner with a secondary suite.

The single most frequent comment about suite regulation is the desire by respondents for a requirement that the owners of the home live in the home if there is a secondary suite. This is followed by a desire to restrict secondary suites to “high density areas” or the converse desire that such suites should not be limited to particular areas of Oak Bay. Less frequent were a few comments that the status quo works well, so existing suites should be “grandfathered” into any change in bylaws and standards only applied to new secondary suites. One comment summarized this sentiment well:

We are concerned that regulation will lead to impossible requirements to have a suite, and that upgrades and fees to comply will lead homeowners to continue with illegal suites anyway. We hope that regulations will be realistic and reasonable, created in consultation with those relevant stakeholders (i.e., those who have the right style and size of house).

The diverse voices in this category are united in their belief that firmly enforced and consistently applied regulation of suites is essential to ensure that the suites are safe and built correctly.

## 3. Secondary suites *must not* burden taxpayers.

Most respondents recognize that increased population density in Oak Bay through the



legalization of secondary suites will increase infrastructure demands. In general, respondents want to see licensing fees for each secondary suite as long as the licenses are not a “tax grab.” As one respondent noted, “don’t overtax, because we need affordable housing.” The sentiment in this category is that fees for secondary suites should be charged to offset the increase in infrastructure demands, but no more.

#### 4. Additional concerns.

Some respondents point out that issues with entire houses being rented, what a few called the problem of the “absentee landlord.” These comments all support the owner living in the home that has a secondary suite. Some respondents suggest a pilot study of an area of Oak Bay by allowing secondary suites in that area only. A few want a Municipal landlord-tenant system and advice for landlords and a public database of all suites in the Municipality.

### **Comments by Those Opposed to the Legalization of Secondary Suites in Oak Bay:**

#### **“There Goes the Neighbourhood...”**

Comments by those opposed to the legalization of secondary suites tended to present a view of Oak Bay as “serene” and “special” and were concerned that legalizing secondary suites would disrupt this atmosphere. Many of the comments were anecdotal, pointing to suites operating in their block or experience with suites in other cities or municipalities of Greater Victoria; Fairfield was often cited. The overall sentiment is that legalizing secondary suites would diminish considerably those attributes that make Oak Bay a desirable area of Greater Victoria. This sentiment seemed to be due to the prevalent belief that if made legal there would be a radical increase in the number of secondary suites in Oak Bay.

There were two dominate themes: Concerns about the decrease in the quality of Oak Bay neighbourhoods and concerns about traffic flow and parking issues due to legalization. About half as frequent are concerns about increased noise, followed by comments that focused on by-law enforcement, taxation and issues around increases to infrastructure arising from increased population density.

#### Reasons provided against the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay in order of frequency:

##### 1. Preserving the quality of life in Oak Bay.

Opposition to the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay focus on a number of events respondents believe would occur should such suites be allowed. In general, people believe that as density increases, the quality of neighbourhoods decrease. The primary reason seems to be concerns that the renters of secondary suites are “transients” or “unsavoury types” more likely to commit crimes (e.g., vandalism, drug use, etc.) than those who purchase homes in Oak Bay. Some clearly feel Oak Bay will be “less safe” with secondary suites and that legalizing these suites will lead to



“strangers” living in the neighbourhood. Respondents claim that these strangers are “just not good citizens” because they “have no stake in the community.”

Respondents believe renters of secondary suites would not care for the properties they occupy. The result, according to the comments submitted, will be “unsightly” properties in the Municipality that in turn drive down property values. A consistent comment was that people “paid a lot” to live in Oak Bay and that secondary suites compromise this investment. As one respondent noted, “We paid higher house prices and higher taxes in order to enjoy the standards that Oak Bay brings.” Many commented that they moved to Oak Bay precisely because secondary suites are not legal in this Municipality.

Comments were unequivocal: “If people can’t afford to live here they should move, rather than force poor conditions on others.”

Throughout the comments received was the overall theme that secondary suites would disrupt the “quiet elegance” of Oak Bay, the “last nice area of Victoria.” There is a sense that real estate sorts out who can and cannot live in Oak Bay and that residents opposed to legalizing secondary suites prefer the existing demographic and population density. One comment summarized the majority and is reproduced here in full:

Changes to allow multiple occupancies in Oak Bay would provide no noticeable change to the accommodation problem of the city as a whole, and would inevitably reduce the value and desirability of the property throughout the district, sold to the current owners on the basis of single family dwelling only. We object to the compromise of values with no counterbalancing fundamental benefits that can be established.

If secondary suites are allowed, the following themes predict by category how increased population would ruin Oak Bay:

## 2. Increased traffic and parking.

Respondents opposed to the legalization of secondary suites in Oak Bay share concerns about parking with those supporting legalization, but those opposed also point out that increased density would lead inevitably to increased traffic in the Municipality. *Issues related to parking were the most frequent comment by those opposed to secondary suites.* The chief concern about traffic is the safety to pedestrians and this concern increases with the age of the respondent. Respondents agree with those for secondary suites that parking is *already* a serious issue in Oak Bay, commenting that parking is “out of control” and that “some streets in Oak Bay look like an auto body yard.” In this category people note that street cleaners have difficulty working due to the congestion of parked cars and, in one case, this led to a plugged drain that caused water difficulties. There is universal agreement that parking is an issue that would only be made worse by legalizing secondary suites.

## 3. Increased noise.

Half as frequent as the previous two themes were concerns that legalizing secondary suites would result in a much noisier Oak Bay. Almost all of the comments in this theme

were anecdotal, pointing to parties held by those presumably renting secondary suites, although who this was not clear in the comments; mostly the offending group were thought to be students.

#### 4. Difficulty enforcing by-laws.

Respondents agree with those supporting legalization of secondary suites that *existing* by-laws should be enforced, but add an additional concern that such enforcement is rare or nearly absent in Oak Bay. Respondents were thus held strong doubts that minimum standards for secondary suites would be enforced; there is clearly little or no confidence in the present system among these respondents since, according to the comments received, Oak Bay is “soft” on enforcement. A few cited examples of complaints made about illegal suites and that, according to the respondent, “nothing was done.” As one respondent noted:

We are already seeing this (additional vehicle traffic, parking concerns, potential for traffic noise and safety) with no enforcement, where illegal suites have already snuck into the area. We are already noticing the slipping in pride of property.

Some suggested a wider issue dealing with existing suites, especially when there is no incentive (in fact, possibly the opposite) to ensuring that a suite become legalized:

Just because suites are legalized does not mean that they will be brought to the attention of the Municipality. A suite that doesn’t meet licencing and standards will never be submitted for licencing, and neighbours are less likely to report it if suites are legalized because they will assume it is in compliance.

#### 5. Unfair tax burden.

Comments in this theme completely agree with those for legalization of secondary suites that owners of such suites must pay increased taxes to share the burden of increased to infrastructure caused by secondary suites. Respondents point out that it is “unfair” for single-family homeowners to essentially subsidize an increased to costs municipal costs due to secondary suites. Most believe that these costs should be transferred to the owners of the suites.

There was, however, considerable debate in this category of comments. Some felt that taxes should go *down* for houses offering secondary suites, while others wanted the status quo; i.e., no legalization at all so that the present system of illegal suites would continue to be self-regulatory. Others thought that Oak Bay should not be legalizing suites because offering accommodation for students is the business of the local higher education institutions. A few comments suggested legalizing secondary suites would “embolden” those with illegal suites, although it was unclear what was meant by this comment. A curious phenomenon in this category is that some geographical areas would allow legal secondary suites in *other* geographical “high density” areas of Oak Bay, but not their own.

## 6. Overburdened infrastructure.

Related to #5 above are concerns about the demands on existing infrastructure should secondary suites become legal in Oak Bay, especially increased garbage and demands on policing. In this category, respondents believe that such increases are inevitable, but that the costs will not be passed to those who have secondary suites but to homeowners generally, thus comments in this category acknowledge that increased density brings more demands for existing services and that this would be detrimental to life in Oak Bay (more people on beaches, more using the recreation centres, etc.) but also more expensive for existing homeowners. The sentiment that those offering secondary suites should pay more increased with the age of the respondent, with those over 65 most insistent.

### Additional comments

Respondents would like an anonymous system for informing the Municipality of homes that may have illegal secondary suites; there is some concern among comments that making suites legal might compromise “neighbour relations.” Some comments suggested that legalizing suites would drive up the prices of houses in Oak Bay since the suites would assist in mortgage payments, thus ironically making Oak Bay even less affordable.

While not frequent, some residents believe that status quo does afford a measure of supervision of illegal suite activity by neighbours. There is a minor sentiment that Council should consider leaving the present situation in place because, as some observe, “it works.” Those residents who claim that existing secondary suites *already* cause problems contradict this status-quo option.

## **Appendices**

Appendix One	Useful Links
Appendix Two	Graphs of Resident Survey Results
Appendix Three	Survey of Other Municipalities conducted by Civic Info BC
Appendix Four	Summary of Responses by Other Municipalities

## **Appendix One**

### **Useful Links**

#### CAPITAL REGION MUNICIPALITY LINKS

City of Colwood – Secondary Suites Information and Bylaws

<http://colwood.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=248&SearchText=secondary+suites>

Township of Esquimalt – A Guide to Secondary Suites

[http://www.esquimalt.ca/files/PDF/Municipal\\_Services/Suites\\_Brochure\\_Final.pdf](http://www.esquimalt.ca/files/PDF/Municipal_Services/Suites_Brochure_Final.pdf)

City of Langford – Secondary Suite Guide and Application Information

[http://www.cityoflangford.ca/documents/brochures/secondary\\_suit.pdf](http://www.cityoflangford.ca/documents/brochures/secondary_suit.pdf)

District of Metchosin – Land Use Bylaw No. 259 section 23

<http://metchosin.civicweb.net/contentengine/launch.asp?ID=201>

The District of Saanich – Secondary Suite Study

<http://www.saanich.ca/business/development/plan/secondariesuitestudy.html>

District of Central Saanich – Secondary Suite Brochure

<http://www.centralsaanich.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=850>

Town of Sidney – Secondary Suite Information Sheet

[http://www.sidney.ca/\\_shared/assets/Secondary\\_Suite\\_information1940.pdf](http://www.sidney.ca/_shared/assets/Secondary_Suite_information1940.pdf)

City of Victoria – Secondary Suites Information Page

<http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/departments-sustainability-secondary-suites.shtml#guidelines>

Town of View Royal – A Guide to Secondary Suites & Secondary Suite Ipsos Reid Survey

[http://town.viewroyal.bc.ca/upload/dcd934\\_Secondary\\_Suites\\_Guide.pdf](http://town.viewroyal.bc.ca/upload/dcd934_Secondary_Suites_Guide.pdf)

[http://town.viewroyal.bc.ca/upload/dcd741\\_Ipsos\\_Reid\\_Secondary\\_Suites\\_Report\\_January\\_2006.pdf](http://town.viewroyal.bc.ca/upload/dcd741_Ipsos_Reid_Secondary_Suites_Report_January_2006.pdf)

#### OTHER LINKS

Government of British Columbia - Secondary Suites – A Guide for Local Government

[http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/housing/docs/web\\_secondary\\_suites.pdf](http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/housing/docs/web_secondary_suites.pdf)

City of Cranbrook - Secondary Suites Background and Questionnaire

[http://www.cranbrook.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=130:secondary-suites-background-and-questionnaire&catid=40:2009-news-index&Itemid=480](http://www.cranbrook.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=130:secondary-suites-background-and-questionnaire&catid=40:2009-news-index&Itemid=480)

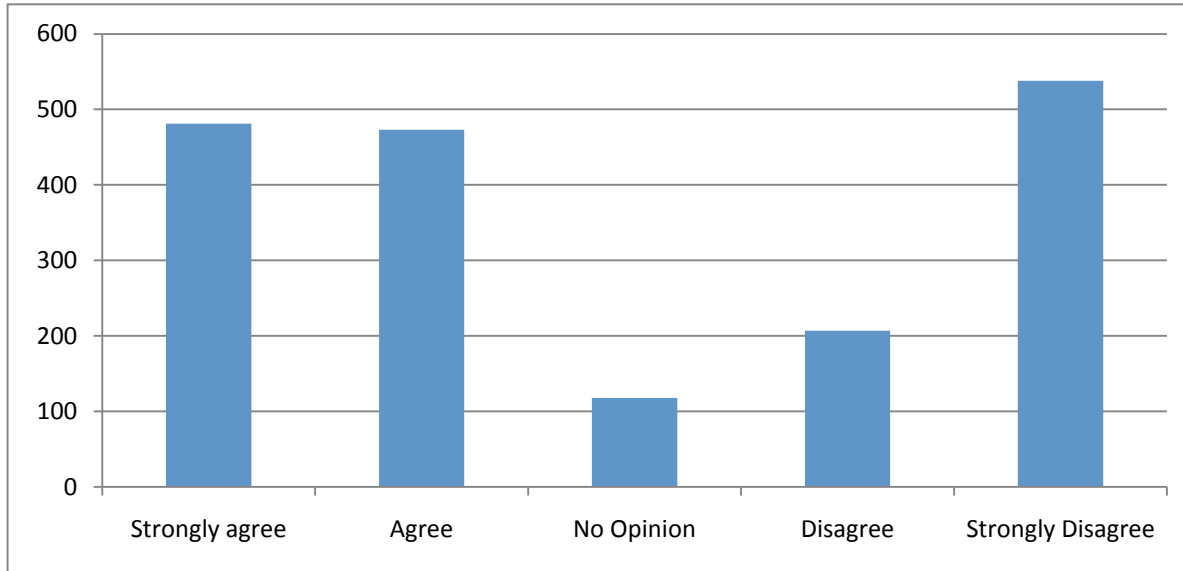
Town of Gibsons - Secondary Suite Brochure

<http://www.gibsons.ca/images/stories/brochures/secondariesuites.pdf>

**Appendix Two**  
**Resident Survey and Graphs**

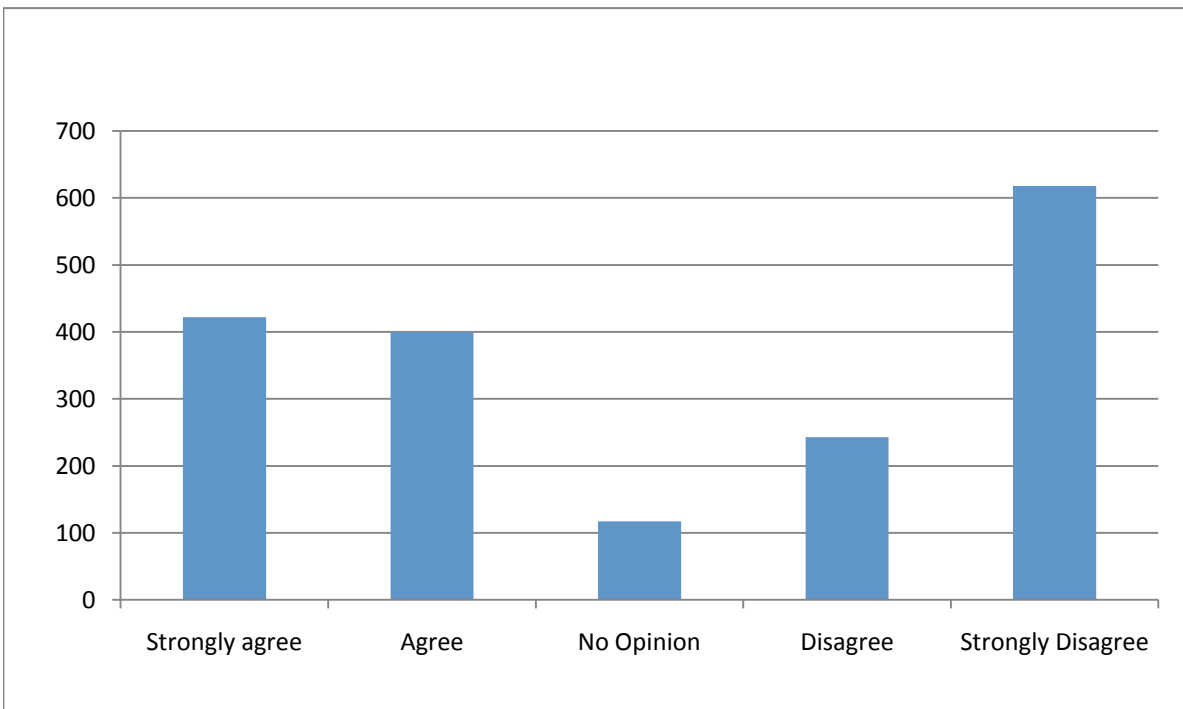
### I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
481	473	118	207	538	1817
26%	26%	6%	11%	30%	



### Secondary suites should be allowed in all residential areas of Oak Bay.

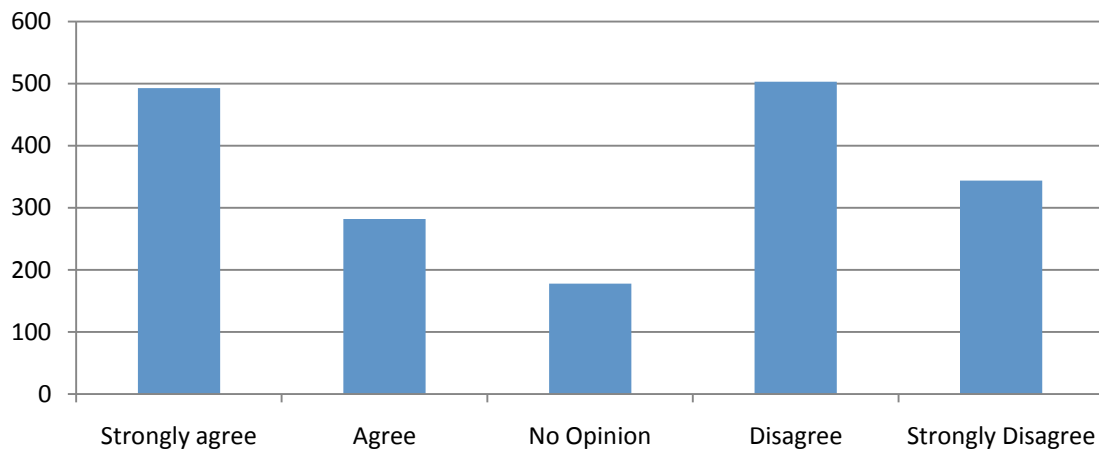
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
422	400	117	243	618	1800
23%	22%	7%	14%	34%	





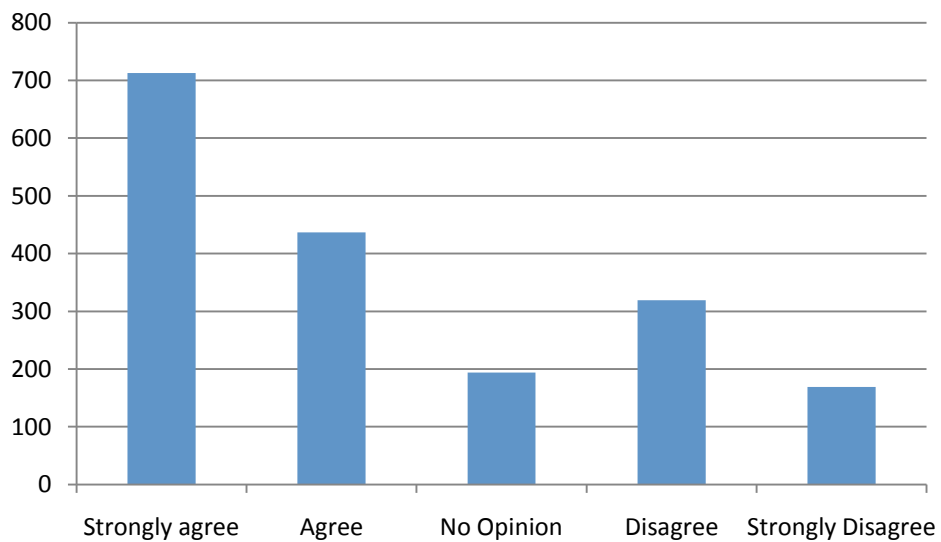
### Secondary Suites Would Negatively Impact the Quality of Life In Oak Bay

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
493	282	178	503	344	1800
27%	16%	10%	28%	19%	



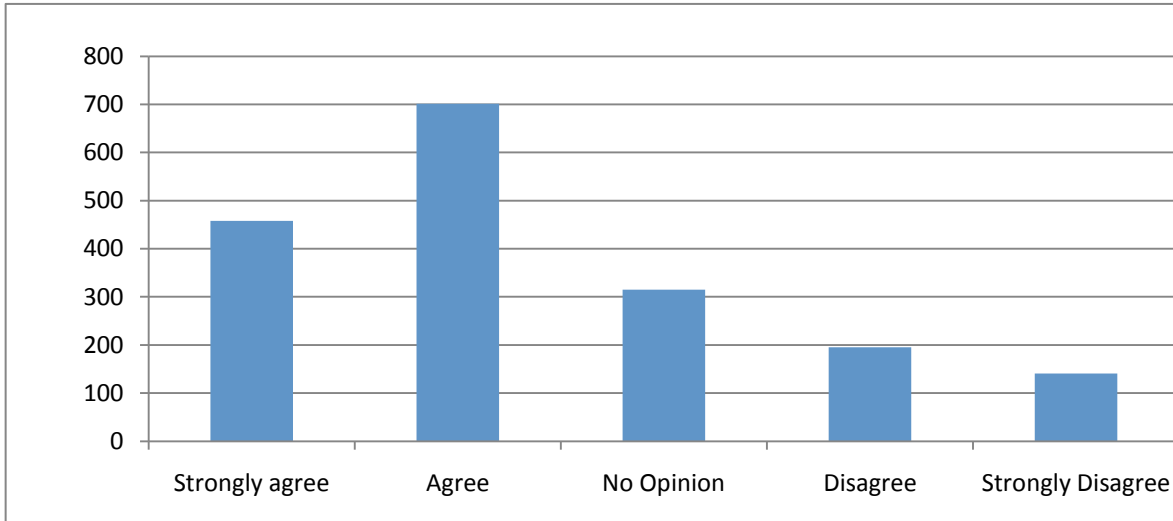
### Legalizing secondary suites would increase parking problems in Oak Bay

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
713	437	194	319	169	1832
39%	24%	11%	17%	9%	



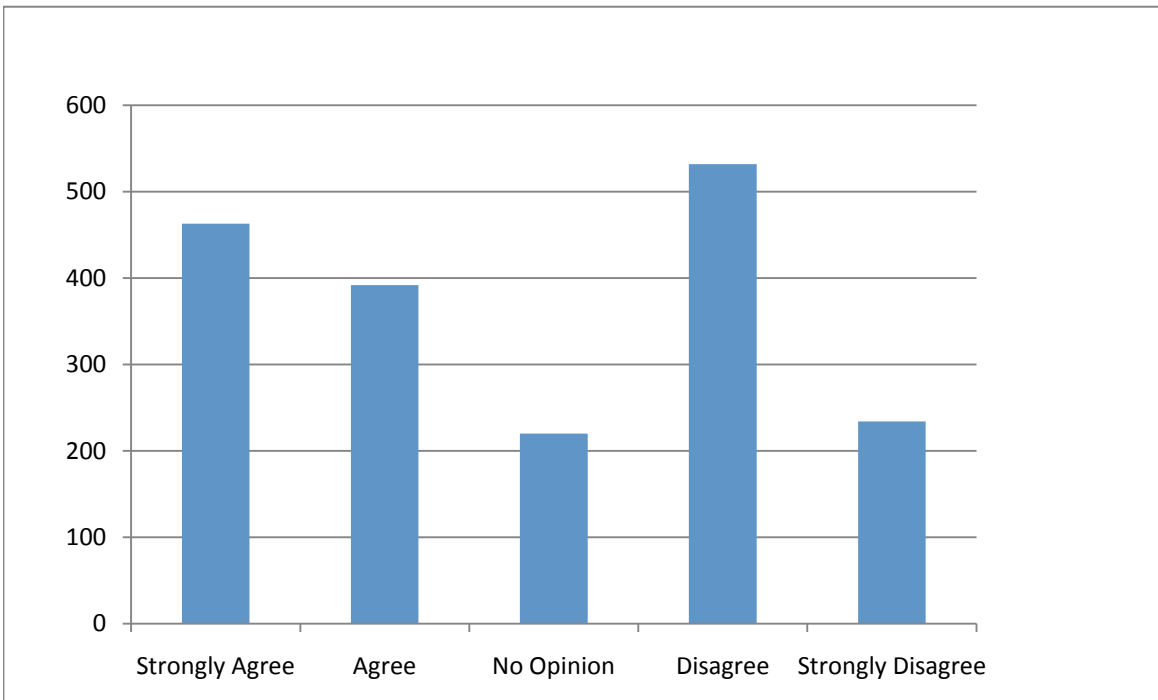
### Secondary suites would permit younger citizens and younger families to live in Oak Bay

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
458	701	315	195	141	1810
25%	39%	17%	11%	8%	



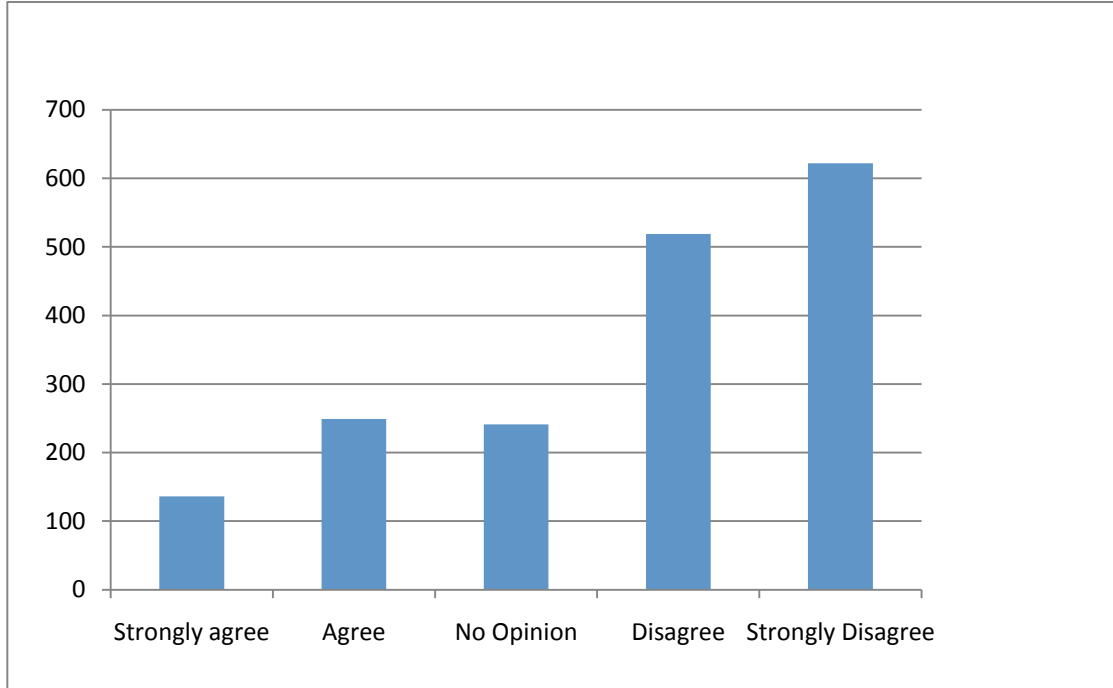
### Increasing housing density would lead to problems with increased noise in Oak Bay

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
463	392	220	532	234	1841
25%	21%	12%	29%	13%	



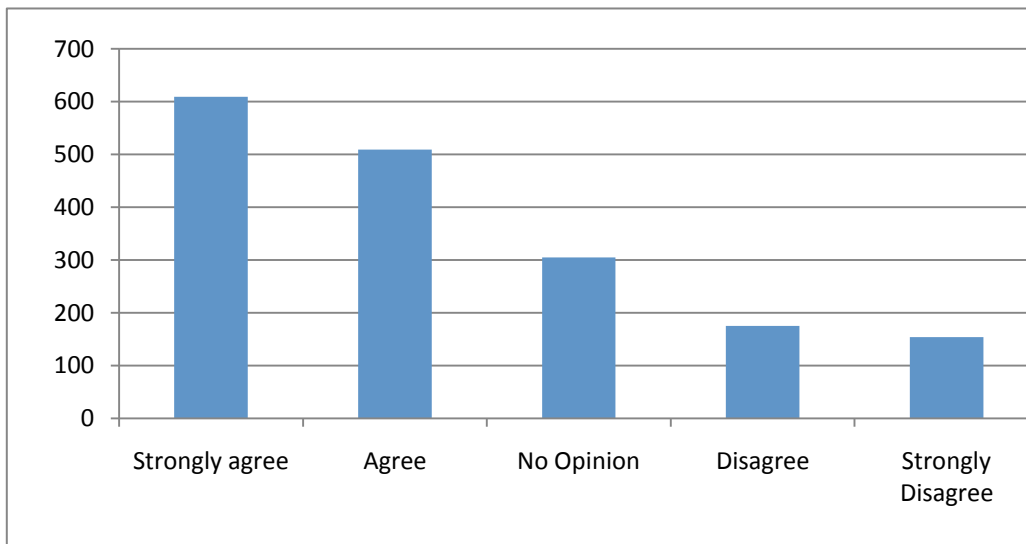
**Secondary suites should only be allowed in selected areas of Oak Bay**

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
136	249	241	519	622	1767
8%	14%	14%	29%	35%	



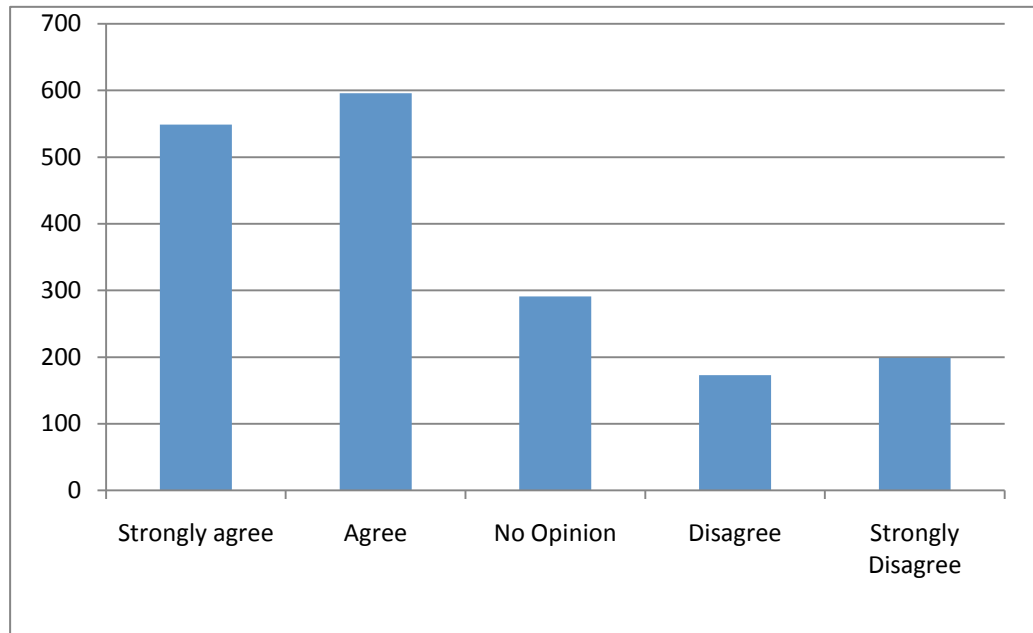
**Additional costs to the municipality specifically related to secondary suites should be recovered through suite license fees.**

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
609	509	305	175	154	1752
35%	29%	17%	10%	9%	



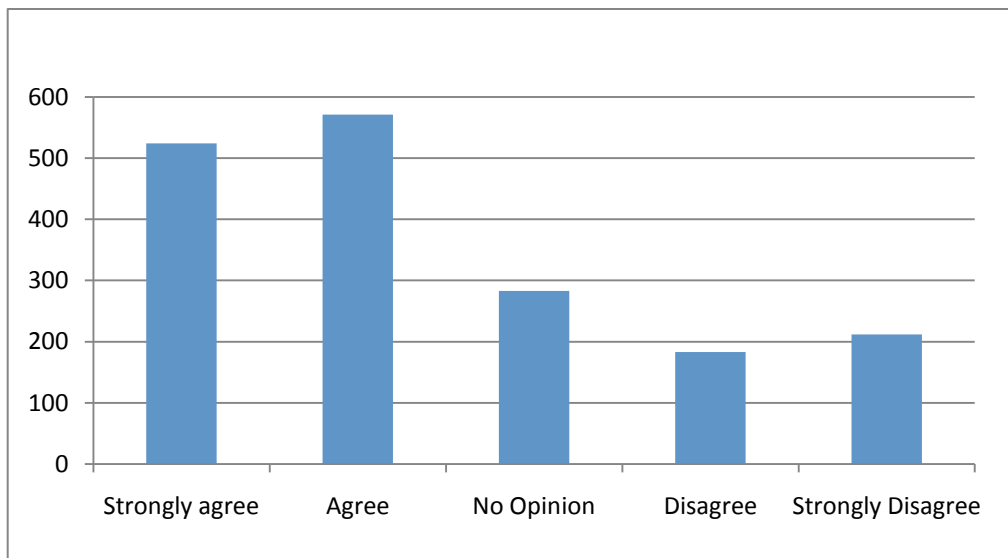
**Some senior citizens would be able to stay in their home longer if their home contained a secondary suite.**

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
549	596	291	173	199	1808
30%	33%	16%	10%	11%	



**Legalizing secondary suites is the best way to ensure that health and safety standards are met**

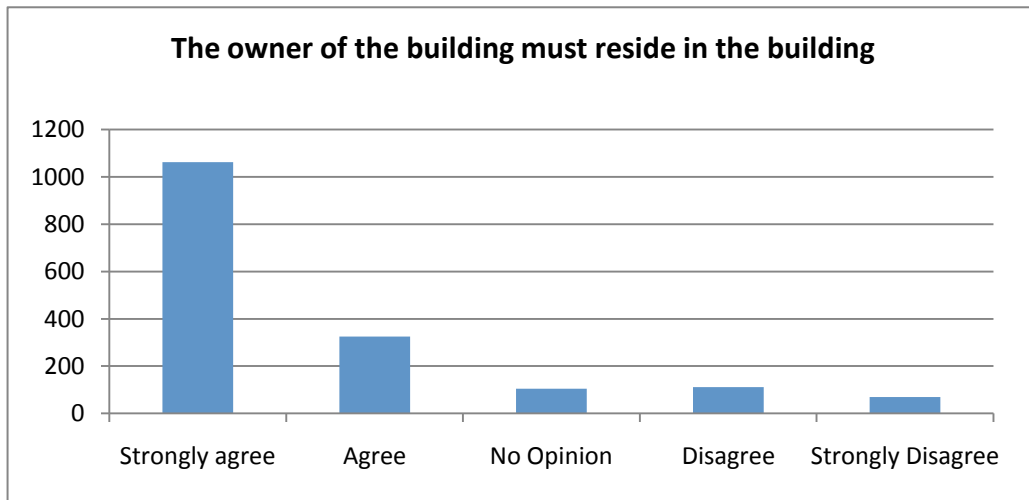
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
524	571	283	183	212	1773
30%	32%	16%	10%	12%	



If secondary suites were permitted in Oak Bay, please indicate the importance of each of the following conditions;

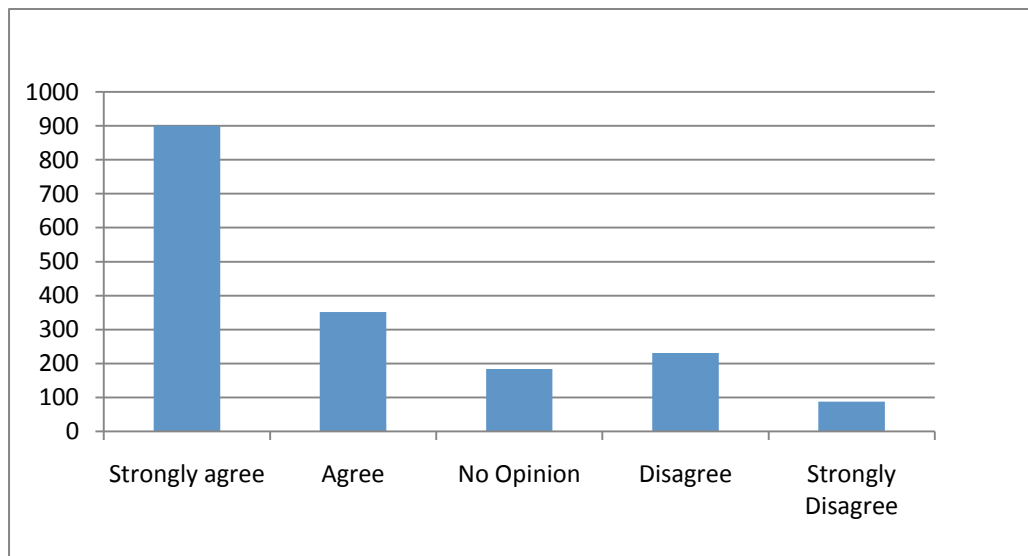
**A. The owner of the building must reside in the building.**

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1062	325	104	111	69	1671
64%	19%	6%	7%	4%	



**B. Off street parking must be provided for suites.**

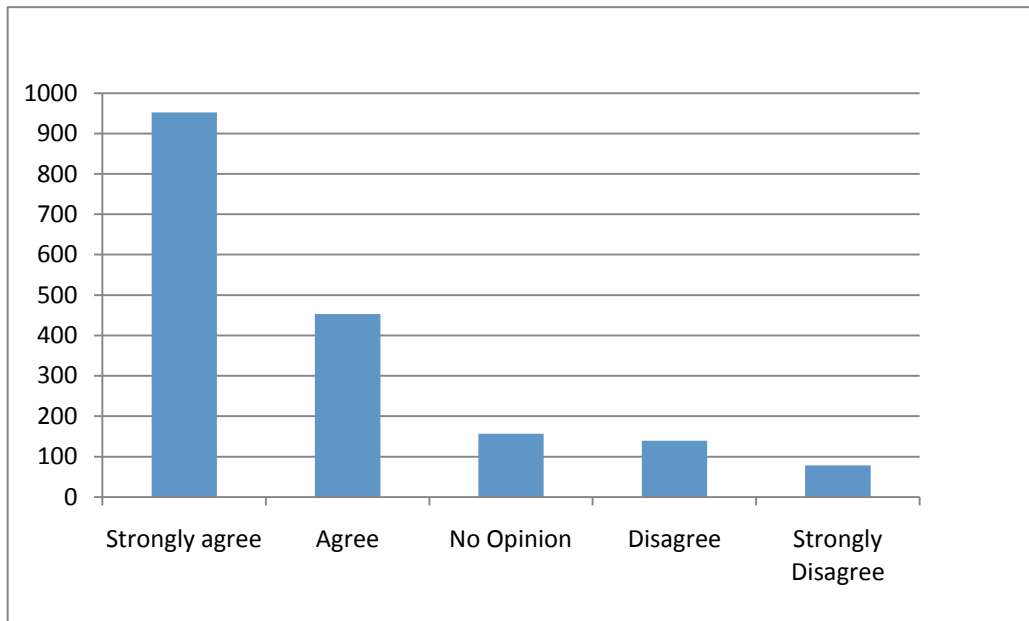
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
900	352	184	231	88	1755
51%	20%	10%	13%	5%	



If secondary suites were permitted in Oak Bay, please indicate the importance of each of the following conditions;

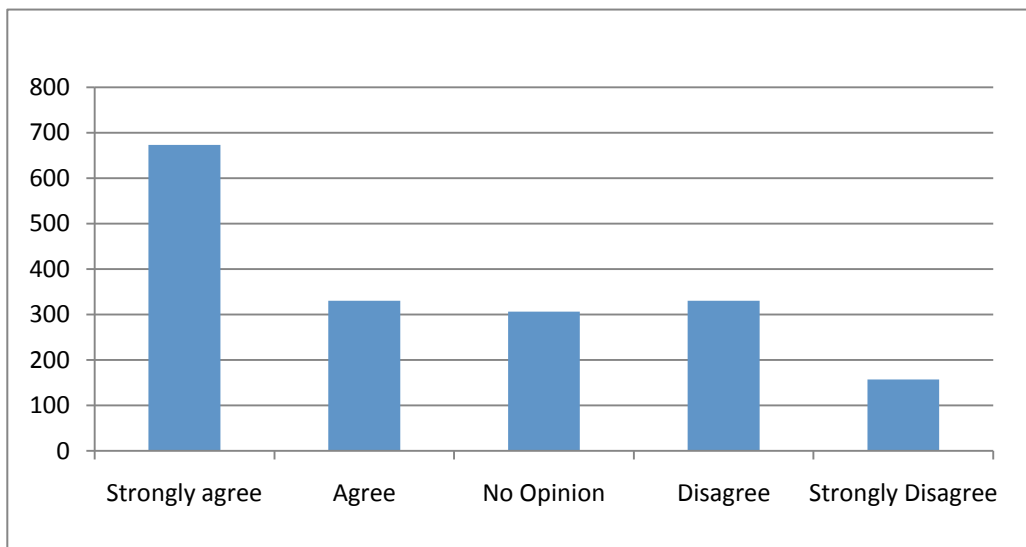
**C. The District of Oak Bay must inspect and license all suites.**

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
952	453	157	139	78	1779
54%	25%	9%	8%	4%	



**D. A minimum lot size would be required.**

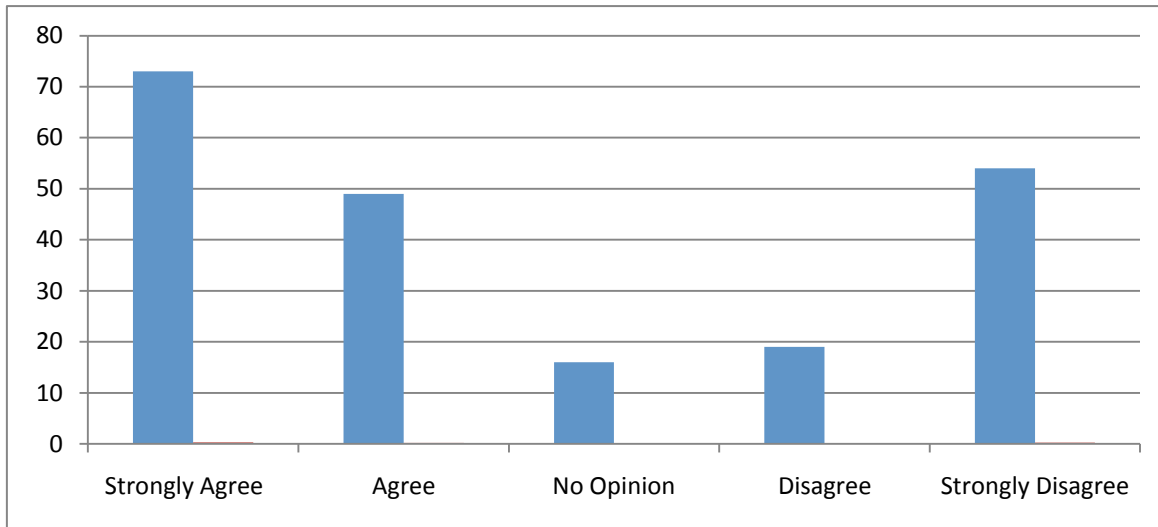
Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
673	330	306	330	157	1796
37%	18%	17%	18%	9%	



**AREA: SOUTH OF CENTRAL**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

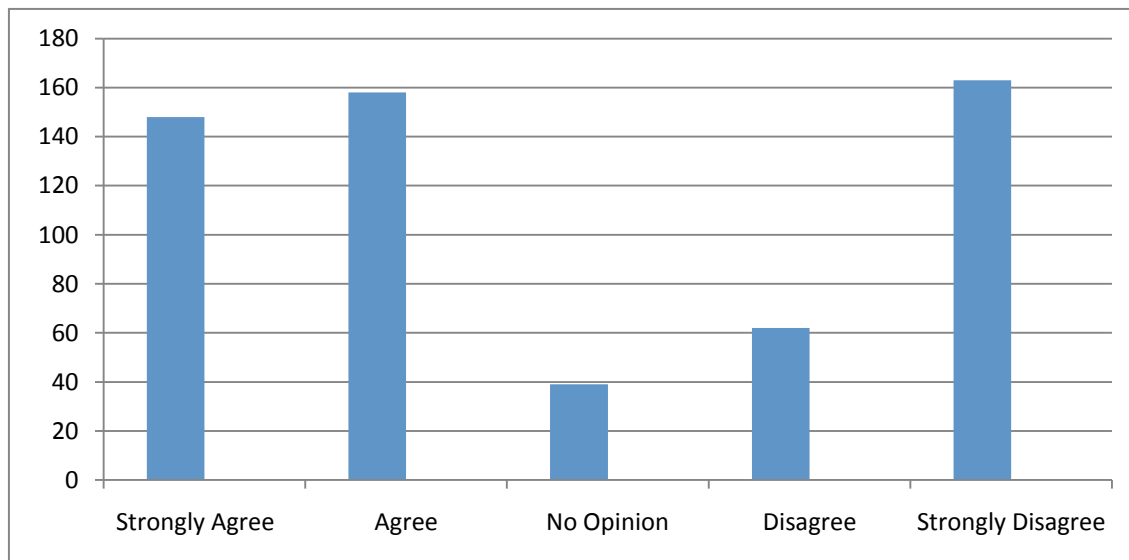
Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
73	49	16	19	54	211
35%	23%	8%	9%	26%	



**AREA: SOUTH OF OAK BAY/ NORTH OF CENTRAL**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

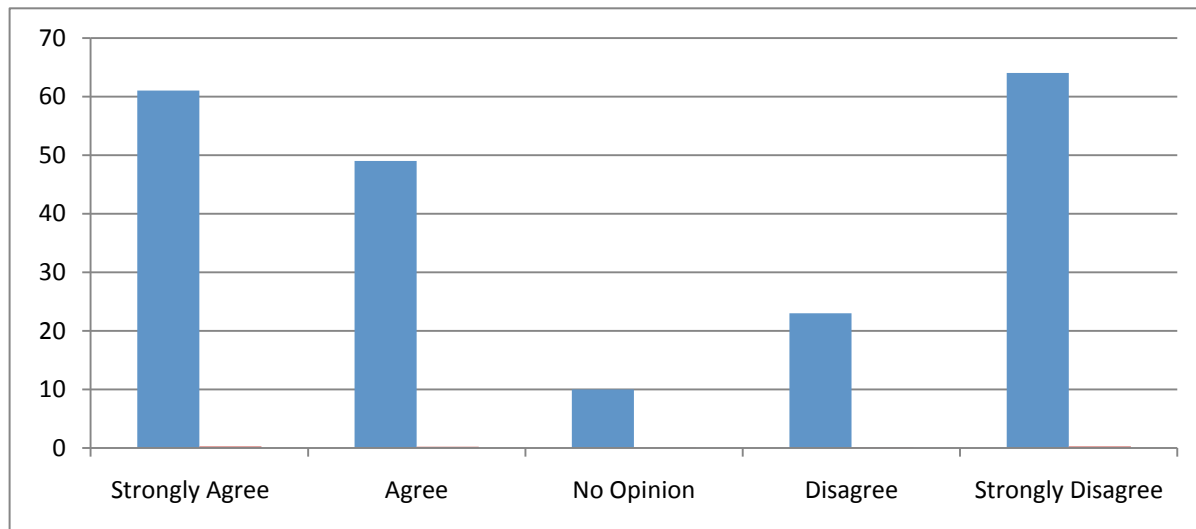
Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
148	158	39	62	163	570
26%	28%	7%	11%	29%	



**AREA: WEST OF CADBORO/HAMPSHIRE**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

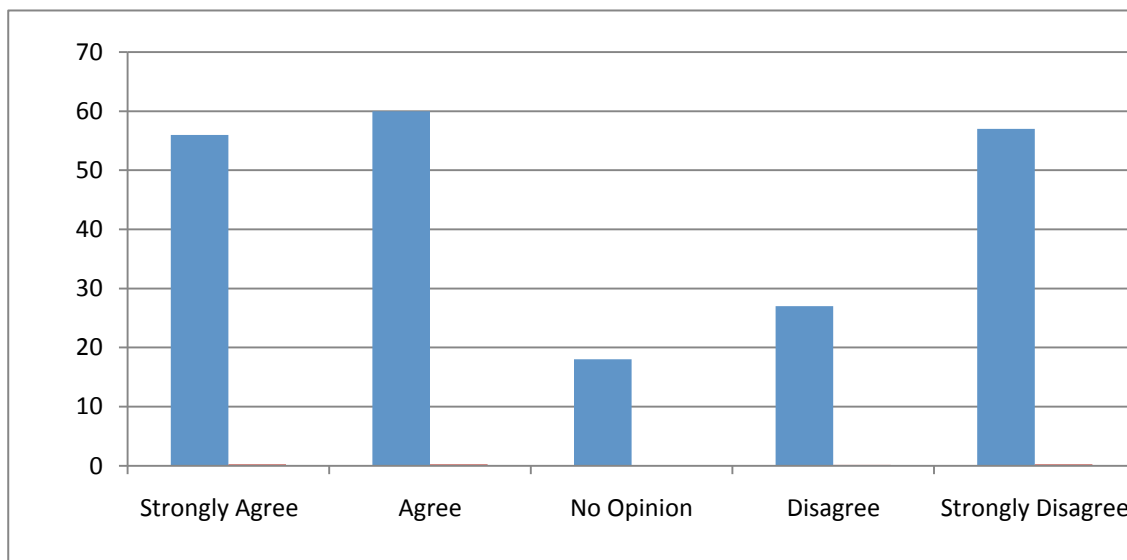
Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
61	49	10	23	64	207
29%	24%	5%	11%	31%	



**AREA: EAST OF CADBORO BAY/HAMPSHIRE**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
56	60	18	27	57	218
26%	28%	8%	12%	26%	

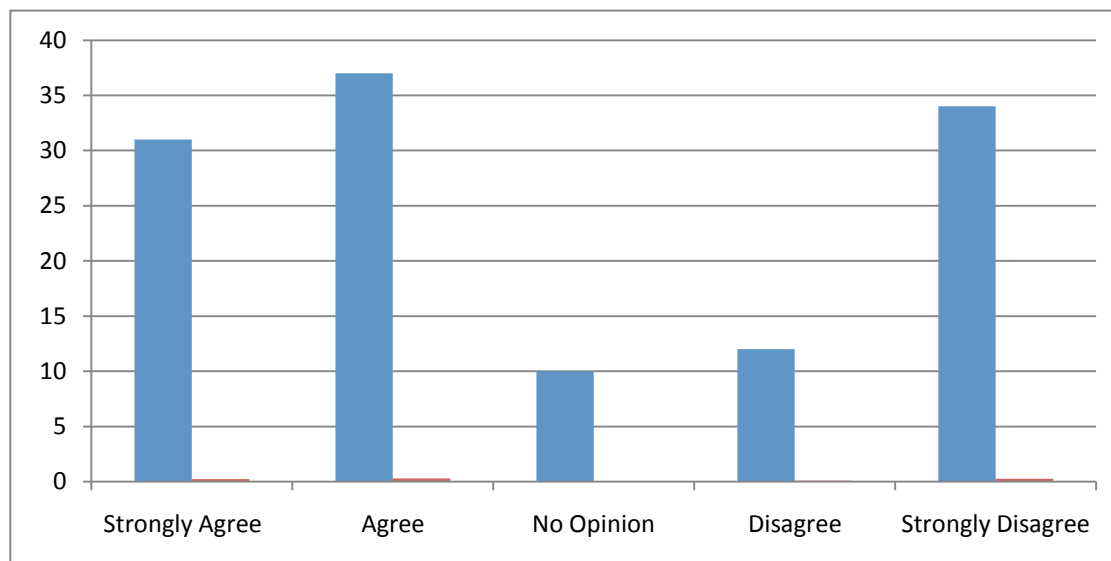




**AREA: UPLANDS**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

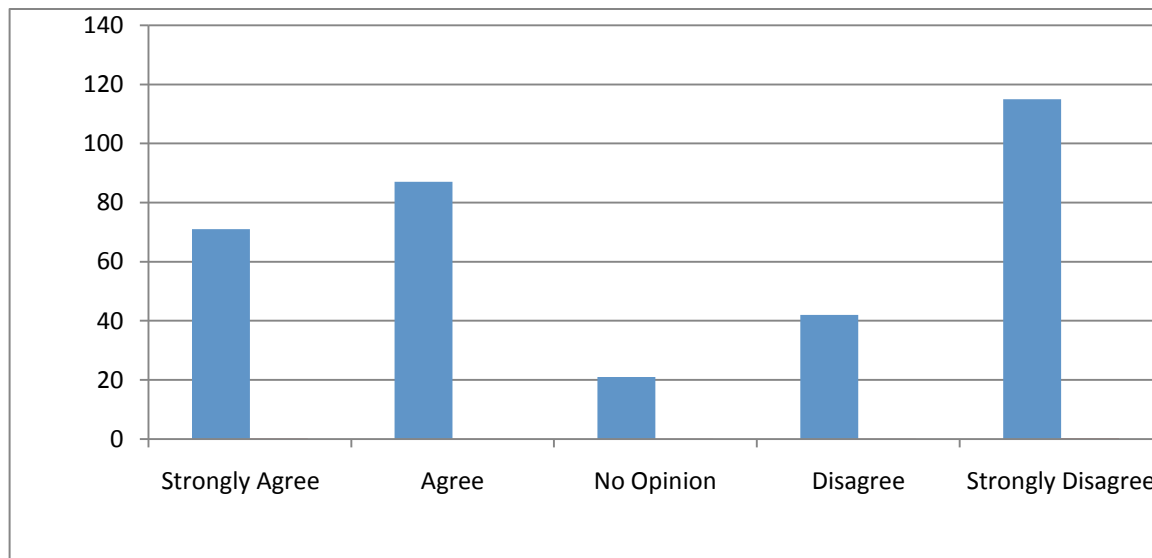
Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
31	37	10	12	34	124
25%	30%	8%	10%	27%	



**AREA: NORTH OF NEIL/ THOMPSON/ ESTEVAN**

**I am in favour of secondary suites in Oak Bay**

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
71	87	21	42	115	336
21%	6%	6%	13%	34%	



## **Appendix Three**

### **Survey of Other Municipalities**

Oak Bay has created a committee to study the issue of secondary suites in single family dwellings. We would be grateful if you could provide us feedback on how the issue of secondary suites has been approached in your municipality.

If your community permits secondary suites please respond to the questions in PART A.

If your community does not permit secondary suites please respond to questions in PART B.

Thank you for your assistance.

Nils Jensen  
Councillor  
Oak Bay

#### **PART A. If secondary suites are permitted in your municipality**

1. What, if any, limits are there on secondary suites in a single family dwelling, such as owner occupancy, lot size minimums or off-street parking requirements?
2. Have you identified any changes to your community as a result of allowing secondary suites? For instance increased traffic or parking, noise complaints or similar changes.
3. Have you identified any additional or new costs associated with permitting secondary suites?
4. Did you create any incentives (or disincentives) for registering secondary suites?
5. What is your policy for dealing with non-compliant secondary suites? Did this policy change when secondary suites were permitted? Have there been any increases in the costs of enforcement after secondary suites were permitted?

#### **PART B. If secondary suites are NOT permitted in your municipality**

1. What were the main reasons your community considered in rejecting secondary suites?
2. What is your enforcement policy for illegal secondary suites?
3. Are there any plans for reviewing the issue of secondary suites in your community?

## Appendix Four - Summary of Responses by Other Municipalities

### PART A – Municipalities That Permit Secondary Suites

	Qn 1 Limits on suites	Qn 2 Changes due to suites	Qn 3 Additional costs	Qn. 4 Registration Incentives/ disincentives	Qn. 5 Enforcement policy changes/increased costs of enforcement
1. Village of Radium Hot Springs 735	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owner must be resident in principal building or suite</li> <li>1.5 parking spaces for suite (1.5 for principal dwelling)</li> </ul>	<p>None</p> <p>Owner occupied requirement has kept noise complaints to a minimum</p>	Suite are charged an extra dwelling rate for water and sewer	None	If non-compliant under Code notice may be placed on title
2. Village of Kaslo 1,072	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed since 1985</li> <li>Only one permitted in a residence</li> </ul>	No impact	None	None	No
3. District of Ucluelet 1,487	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single family zones where permitted</li> <li>One unit per dwelling with exception of one zone where two allowed</li> <li>Max. 2 bedrooms</li> <li>Max. 90 m2 or 35% of gross floor area of detached dwelling</li> <li>Code compliant</li> <li>Business licence required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civic addressing</li> <li>Controlling monthly rentals vs. nightly tourist units</li> <li>Increase in rental stock</li> <li>Mortgage helpers</li> </ul>	<p>Servicing demands and cost</p> <p>Suites are charged full utility rate</p>	None	Everything remained fairly constant

4.	Village of Lumby 1,634	<p>Response in Comments section: Developing new land use bylaw to permit secondary suites in single dwelling units.</p> <p>Reasons for change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase rental units</li><li>• Mortgage helper</li></ul>				
5.	Village of Pemberton 2,192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One suite per parcel</li><li>• Only in principal bldg, not in a duplex</li><li>• Max 75 m<sup>2</sup></li><li>• Restrictive covenants apply (i.e. flood plains)</li></ul>	Increase parking primarily	Homes with suites charged 1.5 time utilities	Registration not required Penalties may be charged	Complaint driven  Suites required to be brought up to Code
6.	Village of Chase 2,409	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area in principal bldg</li><li>• One off-street parking space</li><li>• Only in one zone (2-3 properties have zoning)</li></ul>	None	None	None	Complaint driven  Investigate to ensure Code compliance, not zoning compliance
7.	Town of Port McNeill 2,623	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select zones only</li><li>• Three off-street parking spaces required</li><li>• Only one per single family lot</li><li>• Within principal residence</li><li>• Max 35% or 40% habitable floor area depending on zone</li><li>• Max 2 occupants</li></ul>	None	None	Extra charge for utilities creates disincentive to declare the suite.  Neighbours and other suite owners are quick to inform town.	Required to remove stove outlet and permit inspection.
8.	District of Sicamous 2,676	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Max 46.5 m<sup>2</sup></li><li>• Max 3 people in suite</li><li>• Only 1 per dwelling</li></ul>	None	None (areas where suites permitted is limited)	None (will be considered)	No increased costs of enforcement

9.	Village of Cumberland 2,762	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Within principal residence</li><li>• Only one per residence</li><li>• Max 65 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of habitable floor space – Min 37 m<sup>2</sup></li><li>• One off-street parking space</li><li>• Code compliant</li></ul>	Parking complaints	None	None	Written complaint driven – none received
10.	District of Invermere 3,002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Code compliant</li><li>• Other condition in Bylaw 1145 (not available online)</li></ul>	None Numerous illegal suites not sufficient staff to deal with them. When located charged suite utility rates.	Building Permit fee  Suites pay double utility fees	Free inspections offered for unregistered suites – very little response.	Very few issues with suites.  Insufficient staff to deal with non-compliant suites.
11.	Town of Gibsons 4,182	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No requirement for extra parking - want to avoid more paving</li><li>• Can't require owner occupancy instead planning for registry</li></ul>	None	None	None (working on registry) <u>Note:</u> Trying to create standard lesser than Code	No enforcement to date
12.	Town of Oliver 4,370	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing agreement requires registered owner to agree to being permanent resident in dwelling (either in main dwelling or suite)</li><li>• Only permitted in select zones</li></ul>	Only concern is design and privacy for suites in separate 'granny flats'	None	Housing agreement requirement could be seen as disincentive	No formal policy  Complaint driven

13.	Juan de Fuca Electoral Area 4,484	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only in single family dwelling – not in accessory bldg (note: consideration being given to permitting suites in detached accessory buildings)</li> <li>Only where zoned for secondary suites</li> <li>Require Bldg and sewage permit</li> <li>Require 1 off-street parking space</li> </ul>	No direct response	No response	No response	No response
14.	Town of Creston 4,826	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min 743 m<sup>2</sup> lot and 18 m frontage</li> <li>One off-street parking space</li> <li>Code compliance</li> </ul>	Always permitted	Always permitted	None	Request “minimum life safety” upgrades
15.	City of Kimberley 6,139	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only in one single and two family residential zone (R2)</li> <li>Must be within or attached to principal residence</li> <li>Only on suite per lot</li> <li>Extra parking</li> </ul> <p><u>In comments:</u> Will be considering allowing detached suites and reduced parking requirements.</p>	None (Two units, principal + secondary have always been permitted in R2)	None	None <u>In comments:</u> Considering amendments to remove some barriers to creation of suites in R2 zone.  Also considering reduced utility rates for suites.	No
16.	District of Whistler 9,248	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permitted in most dwelling units</li> <li>Min 695 m<sup>2</sup> lot size</li> <li>One parking space</li> </ul> <p><u>Note in comments:</u> Suites are very important to Whistler’s housing mix.</p>	Adds vehicle parking – street parking very limited esp. during snow season	None	Density bonus for suites that are employee restricted (little uptake – not seen as a real incentive)	Dealt with similar to other Code infractions  No increases on enforcement

17.	City of Quesnel 9,326	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezoning required to special classification (3 parcels currently zoned)</li> <li>One additional parking space</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of main dwelling</li> <li>Code compliant</li> </ul>	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costly rezoning process (community divided on this issue)</li> <li>Additional utility charges</li> </ul>	Complaint driven  Policy being developed
18.	District of Coldstream 9,471	ALR only – subject to bldg permit and Code compliant	None (only permitted in rural areas)	None	None	By complaint  <u>In comments section:</u> Owner occupied suites result in fewer complaints.
19.	Town of Comox 12,136	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only in some areas</li> <li>Only in single family dwelling</li> <li>Only one per dwelling – all within principal building</li> <li>Max. 120 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of main dwelling</li> <li>Own entrance</li> <li>Single family dwelling must be owner occupied</li> <li>One parking space for suite (one of main dwelling)</li> </ul> <p><u>In comments section</u> 10% uptake in area where suites allowed</p>	None	None	Applications for re-zoning to allow a suite are fast tracked and fee reduced.	Complaint driven.  No change in enforcement policy or costs
20.	City of Prince Rupert 12,815	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min lot size: 344.4 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>R2 zoning</li> <li>One additional off-street parking space</li> </ul>	Suites have been allowed for years.	None	None	Ordered to be compliant or be removed.

21.	City of Powell River 12,957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One per single family dwelling in select zones</li> <li>Must be wholly within main primary dwelling and have separate entrance</li> <li>Code compliant</li> <li>Pay double water and garbage fees</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area</li> <li>Must be registered and inspected prior to occupation</li> <li>One extra parking space</li> </ul>	No complaints  Given large lots parking/noise/etc. Rarely a problem	None (not been a hot-button issue)	None	No active policy  Complaint driven
22.	District of Central Saanich 15,745	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owner occupied – statutory declaration required</li> <li>One per single family dwelling</li> <li>Exterior of building remain consistent</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% floor area</li> <li>Min lot size 780 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>At least two rooms in suite</li> <li>Off-street parking</li> <li>Pay permit fee</li> <li>Code compliant</li> </ul>	Increase in parking issues due to many tenants owning several vehicles.	Additional staff time at counter and on-site with applicant.	<p>Incentive: Free building permit to legalize existing suite.</p> <p>Disincentive: additional \$46 flat water fee for a suite.</p>	<p>No increase in enforcement costs</p> <p>Enforcement policy – not changed for suites</p> <p>Enforcement from observations of staff or written complaint</p> <p>Suite must be removed or come into compliance.</p> <p>A notice may be placed on title or staff authorized to do required work or a court injunction.</p>



23.	City of Fort St. John 17,402	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% gross floor area</li> <li>• Owner occupied</li> <li>• 1 on-site parking stall</li> <li>• Code compliant</li> <li>• Not in conjunction with B&amp;B or with Boarders</li> </ul>	None	None	None	No
24.	City of Cranbrook 18,267	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowed in only 3 areas</li> <li>• Approval considers privacy of adjacent property, parking and traffic</li> <li>• Owner occupied (statutory declaration required)</li> <li>• Max 46 m<sup>2</sup> or 25% total floor area of principal residence</li> <li>• Max two occupants</li> <li>• One per dwelling</li> <li>• Code compliant</li> <li>• Min. 1 on-site parking space</li> </ul>	None (note: one area rural – other two areas yet to be developed).  Complaints being received due to publicity	Being reviewed.  With only one bylaw enforcement staff and one building inspector legalization could be a problem.	Being considered.  Concerns about displacement of tenants.	(Response unclear) Public survey show approx 80% support active enforcement
25.	Powell River Regional District 19,599	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No limits – no zoning in most areas</li> </ul>	None	None No building bylaws adopted –no permits required	None	N/A
26.	Courtenay 21,940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area</li> <li>• One per dwelling</li> <li>• Within dwelling</li> <li>• Only in some zones</li> </ul>	Nothing stands out (not tracked)	Nothing stands out (not tracked)	Affordable Housing Policy considers re-zoning on case-by-case basis.	Bldg Dept follows up on Code issues. Applicant may request re-zoning.

27.	City of Langley 23,606	<p>Allowed since 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner occupied</li> <li>• Bldg Code compliant</li> <li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40 % gross floor area</li> <li>• Within principal residence</li> <li>• One off-street parking spot</li> </ul>	None	Significant extra work for bldg inspection dept and providing guidance for permit process and Bldg Code	Permit and application fees waived	Proactive enforcement  Previously reacted to written complaints
28.	District of North Cowichan 27,557	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Originally allowed in standard residential zone</li> <li>• Now to have a suite a lot must be min 650 m<sup>2</sup> &amp; 18m frontage (existing lots grandfathered)</li> </ul>	No major problems – except illegal suites in duplexes where parking highlights the location	None Legal suites pay added sewer and garbage fees	None	Complaint driven
29.	Sunshine Coast Reg. District 27,759	<p>Allowed since 1976</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 55 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• On properties over 2000 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• One additional parking space</li> </ul>	None	Cost of issuing building permits	None	Complaint driven.  No sudden increase in enforcement costs
30.	District of West Kelowna 28,793**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One off-street parking space</li> <li>• One per single dwelling</li> <li>• Within the building</li> <li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Not in conjunction with B&amp;B</li> <li>• Direct access outside access</li> </ul>	Complaints mainly attributed to NIMBYism	None –other than utility billing	None	Complaint driven  Life safety issues must be dealt with or suite removed.  If can be remedied must apply for rezoning and receive permits.

31.	City of Campbell River 29,572	<p>Allowed since 1992</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of main dwelling</li> <li>Max 2 bedrooms</li> <li>One parking stall</li> </ul> <p><u>In comments section:</u> Secondary suites are most effective and cost effective way to facilitate affordable housing.</p>	None	None	None	Complaint driven.  No data for increased costs of enforcement.
32.	City of Vernon 35,944	Owner occupied in single detached dwelling	None	Some staff time (not much) in permitting process.	<p>Originally DCCs charged for suites unless permit under \$50,000</p> <p>New BCC bylaw being considered eliminates DCC for suites</p>	Complaint driven  Registration encouraged – if don't stove connections must be removed.
33.	City of Port Coquitlam 52,687	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only one per SFD</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area</li> <li>No child care operation in suite</li> <li>Code compliant</li> </ul> <p><u>Note:</u> No extra parking required No registration requirement No inspections program except for new construction</p> <p>Enforcement resources aimed at duplexes converted into 4-plexes</p>	<p>Few noticeable changes due to legalization.</p> <p>Some complaints about new and existing suites – noise, parking.</p>	Yes – utilities, bylaw enforcement, schools ?? (sic).	<p><u>Note:</u> Suites charged extra utility fee of \$582 (water not metered)</p> <p>2,100 of 9,400 SFD are charged extra utility fee.</p>	<p>Investigation where two or more suites.</p> <p>Policy changed when suites legalized.</p> <p>Staff pursue extra utility charges by inspecting for suites.</p> <p>Only safety complaints forwarded to Building inspection staff.</p>

34.	City of New Westminster 58,549	One additional off-street parking space	None	Additional staff costs to run suites program, do additional utility billing and pickup extra garbage and recycling	Create fear of enforcement to dissuade illegal suites  Policy on webpage <a href="http://www.newwestcity.ca/database/rte/Secondary_Suites_General_Guide.pdf">http://www.newwestcity.ca/database/rte/Secondary_Suites_General_Guide.pdf</a>  Suite will be removed or legalized
35.	Comox Valley Regional District 58,824***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be within SFD, a carriage house or a detached unit</li> <li>• Min lot size: 600 m<sup>2</sup> when connect to community water and sewer</li> <li>• One per dwelling</li> <li>• Within dwelling</li> <li>• Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area if within a SFD</li> <li>• One off-street parking space</li> <li>• Approval of Health Authority</li> <li>• Carriage house suites must meet specific criteria</li> </ul>	No complaints in last 2 years	None	<p>No</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> Suite function as either affordable housing or extra income for owner.</p> <p><u>Note from CVRD Engineering:</u> Lower DCC to encourage affordable housing and recognition of reduced water and sewer demands (Low flow appliances and fixture required in suites)</p> <p>Complaint driven</p> <p>No change to policy or cost increase as far as staff know.</p>
36.	Cariboo Regional District 62,190	<p>"Two family dwellings" allowed in select zones.</p> <p>'Secondary suites' <i>per se</i> not permitted.</p> <p><u>In comments section</u> Permit temporary residence (mobile home) for compassionate care.</p>	None	None	<p>Building inspections identify two family dwelling for new construction only</p> <p>Re-zoning required in one case only</p>

37.	City of Nanaimo 78,692	<p>Feb. 05 Bylaw allowed suites in all residential zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off-street parking required</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> - 40% floor area</li> <li>Code compliant if after Bylaw change</li> </ul> <p>Distinction made between 'authorization' of illegal suites built before the Bylaw and legalization.</p> <p>Suites existing before Bylaw can be 'authorized'.</p> <p>Suite built after Bylaw must be legal.</p>	<p>Parking requirement imposed by Council due to resident's concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permit fees (no DCCs) – don't cover staff time, but neither do alteration permit fees for SFDs</li> <li>Authorizing 'illegal' suites is burden on budget. Work covers size, parking and life safety issues.</li> </ul>	<p>Disincentive: Legal action</p> <p>Incentive: revenue for owner</p> <p>Notice placed on title showing work done without inspections (i.e. plumbing rough-ins)</p>	<p>Enforcement costs increased after Feb 05 Bylaw. Requires majority of time of 3 staff – minimal recovery through fees.</p>
38.	City of Kamloops 80,376	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permitted in two family zone and in single family zones with secondary suite designation</li> <li>Min of 3 parking stalls</li> <li>Boarders and lodgers not permitted</li> <li>Min 40% of front yard must be landscaped</li> </ul> <p><u>Note:</u> Advice received that owner occupancy requirement can not be imposed in zoning bylaw or covenant. However can be done via housing agreement.</p>	<p>Number of properties zoned for suites is limited – concentrated in new development.</p> <p>Few complaints/calls for service have been noted.</p>	Not been studied.	None	<p>Two complaints from within 150 m of subject property required.</p> <p>Complained about property must comply with zoning bylaw and Code.</p>

39.	City of Kelowna 106,707	<p>Bylaw 8000 referenced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permitted in main and accessory buildings</li> <li>Max one – not with B&amp;B</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of main dwelling</li> <li>Code compliant</li> <li>Garage or carport required if suite is in an accessory bldg.</li> </ul>	<p>Parking non-compliance and bylaw enforcement remain resourcing issues.</p> <p>DCC required at building permit stage.</p>	<p>True costs of suites not captured by DCC.</p> <p>Bylaw enforcement costs not clearly understood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced DCCs for suites</li> <li>Building permit and Code compliance required</li> <li>Business licence required</li> </ul>	<p>Illegal suites must be rezoned and obtain a building permit or be decommissioned within 30 days.</p>
40.	City of Coquitlam 114,565	<p>Allowed since 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Max. 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% of main dwelling</li> <li>One suite per dwelling</li> <li>Not permitted in duplex</li> <li>One additional parking space</li> <li>80% of suite must be below primary dwelling</li> </ul>	<p>Program designed in 2000 to address nuisances.</p> <p>Parking is biggest issue – still generate complaints.</p> <p>City now has tool to enforce compliance.</p> <p>Noise complaints rare.</p> <p>Neighbours concerned about suite without permits.</p>	<p>Suite assessments: \$140</p> <p>Permit fees cover plan examination and inspection.</p> <p>Unauthorized suites penalized by doubling utility bill (garbage/water)</p>	<p>Utility bill doubled for illegal suites</p> <p>Owners advised that selling a home without disclosing an illegal suite contravenes Real Estate Act.</p> <p>Educate public regarding health and safety.</p> <p>City has four options for decommissioning illegal suites (see <a href="http://www.coquitlam.ca">www.coquitlam.ca</a>)</p>	<p>Tickets issued for non-compliance – fines range from \$150 to \$500.</p>
41.	City of Richmond 174,461	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One per single family dwelling</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% habitable floor area</li> <li>Code compliant</li> </ul>	None	None	None	<p>No change in enforcement</p> <p>Complaint driven</p>

42.	City of Vancouver 578,041	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suite must be smaller than principal residence</li> <li>Min 400 ft<sup>2</sup></li> <li>No more than 6 ft below grade</li> <li>Houses built after April 04 require one extra off-street parking space (total 2 req'd)</li> </ul> <p>Note: Suite need not be owner occupied.</p> <p>No minimum lot size</p>	<p>Since program started in 1989 complaints centre around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise</li> <li>Parking</li> <li>Garbage</li> </ul> <p>Result from inadequate management of tenants or maintenance of rental property (whether suite involved or not).</p>	<p><u>Initial permit fees:</u></p> <p>Building: \$607+ Electrical: \$53+ Plumbing: \$113+ (if new) Gas: \$139+</p> <p><u>Annual fees:</u></p> <p>Business Licence: \$56</p> <p><b>Extra fees for SFD with a suite:</b></p> <p>Water: \$134 Sewer: \$69 Recycling: \$19</p>	<p><u>Incentives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Architectural plans not required – sketched allowed</li> <li>Token fee for inspections</li> <li>Houses built before April 04 do not require extra parking</li> <li>Relaxed head room required: 6.5 ft</li> <li>Sprinkler system retrofit no longer required ('04)</li> </ul>	Complaint driven	No changes due to suites
43.	Anonymous	<p>Suite defined by cooking facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owner occupied</li> <li>Max 90 m<sup>2</sup> or 40% floor area</li> <li>Additional off-street parking space</li> <li>Only one family in suite</li> <li>Must be registered</li> <li>Extra utility fees</li> <li>All new construction must be Code compliant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in parking complaints</li> <li>Sometimes noise complaints</li> </ul>	<p>“New” initial costs when program started which accounted for municipal start-up costs.</p> <p>Now cost reflect staff time and stationary</p>	<p>No visible incentives</p> <p>Under program may rent out suite – not allowed before.</p>	<p>Process introduced with Secondary Suite Program :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First a letter is sent requiring compliance.</li> <li>Next \$200 Bylaw Notice can be issued</li> </ul> <p>Additional staff time required to deal with non-compliant suites</p>	
44.	Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Max 75 m<sup>2</sup> floor area</li> <li>One additional parking space</li> </ul>	Principal form of affordable housing as well as a mortgage helper for younger home owners	None	N/A	No changes	

## PART B – Municipalities That Do NOT Permit Secondary Suites

	Municipality Population*	Qn 6 Main reasons for rejecting secondary suites	Qn 7 Enforcement policy for illegal suites	Qn 8 Plans to review
1.	Village of Canal Flats 700	Inherited bylaws which did not permit secondary suites.	None. Insufficient resources to enforce – few suites.	Yes  Awaiting outcome of review of secondary suites by City of Cranbrook.
2.	District of Highlands 1,903	Concern for water availability (community on wells)	Complaint driven	Yes Direction in Official Community Plan to do this.
3.	District of Hope 6,185	Concern for liability relative to the BC Building Code and fire separation.	If complaint is filed a request is made to decommission the suite.	Yes.  Will be considering new zoning bylaw controlling Code issues for new structures – conversions are problematic  Recognize revenue being lost for water, sewer and garbage user fees.  BC Assessment Authority may not recognize the suite resulting in lower assessments thus lower property taxes.
4.	Town of Ladysmith 7,538	Have not rejected suites.  Official Community Plan states “Secondary suites will be permitted specific circumstances and requirements. Secondary suite guidelines and regulations will be adopted by Council”	Do not receive many complaints.  Building permits for suites in new home are not approved.	Yes  2003 Official Community Plan provision for secondary suites has not been implemented given other priorities.



5.	District of North Saanich 10,823	Unsure – been this way since 1990's.	Respond only to written complaints from residents of District  Staff request removal of stove wiring and removal of stove and fridge  Staff do follow-up visit	Yes  Looking at trial period for one area of community
6.	Thompson-Nicola Regional District 122,286	Have not rejected suites.  No overwhelming demand for suites given rural nature of District. Demand for alternative accommodation fulfilled by affordable alternative such as manufactured home and duplex construction.  <u>Note</u> Do permit two family dwellings in all residential zones subject to conditions re servicing and off-street parking. Off-street parking is becoming more problematic in urban small lot areas.	Complaint driven	No
7.	Regional District of Nanaimo 138,631	Have not rejected suites.  Process underway to examine the issues of secondary suites and accessory dwelling accommodation.	Complaint driven	Yes

\*Source (unless otherwise noted): BC Stats, British Columbia Municipal and Regional District 2006 Census Total Population Results ([http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/DATA/cen06/mun\\_rd.asp](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/DATA/cen06/mun_rd.asp))

\*\* Source: <http://www.districtofwestkelowna.ca/>

\*\*\*Source: <http://www.rdc.bc.ca/>

SFD = Single family dwelling

DCC = Development Cost Charges