

**ACCESSORY SUITES UPDATE PROJECT
ATTACHMENT #3: WHAT WE HEARD REPORT (ACCESSORY SUITES)**

2024 Accessory Suites Bylaw Updates Survey

Project overview:

Supporting the Affordable Housing Principled Action Plan passed by Council in June 2023, and in light of the increasing number of accessory suite applications received by the City, City Staff have been tasked with reviewing the regulations for accessory suites. As part of that review Planning and Development implemented an online survey to gather feedback on potential changes to accessory suites regulations in Airdrie. The survey ran from March 22 to April 15, 2024. The survey was published using Involve Airdrie, the City's online public engagement portal. 735 participants responded to the survey. This report provides a synopsis of the results of the survey.

Date: May 29, 2024

Prepared by City of Airdrie

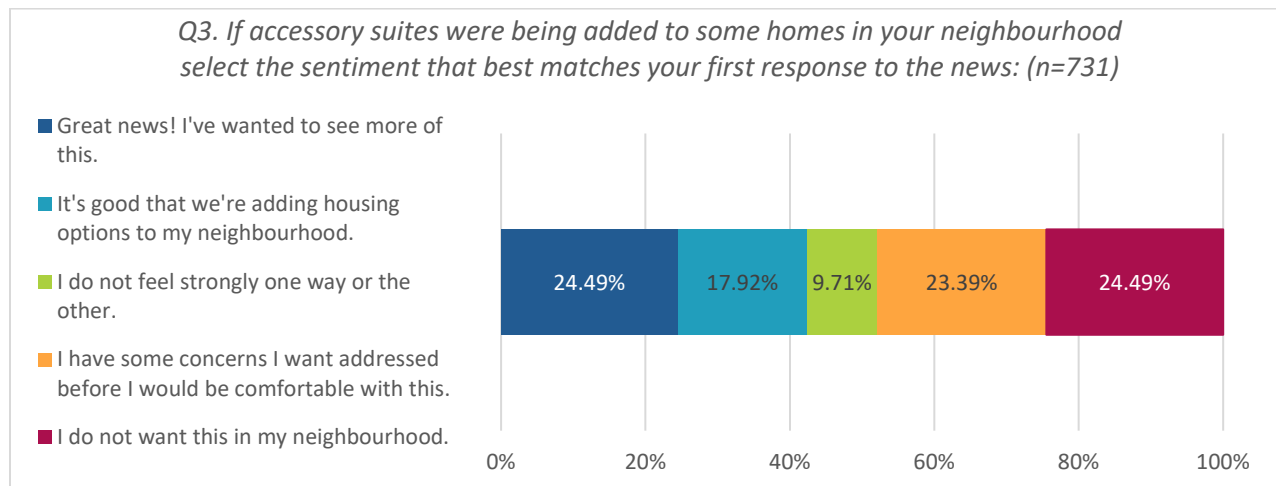
Executive Summary

Supporting the Affordable Housing Principled Action Plan passed by Council in June 2023, and in light of the increasing number of accessory suite applications received by the City, City Staff have been tasked with reviewing the regulations for accessory suites.

The review aims to identify barriers associated with creating accessory suites and recommend updates to the regulations in the City's Land Use Bylaw to reduce those barriers in appropriate locations city-wide.

As part of the review, City Staff conducted comparative research with other municipalities, internal and external stakeholder meetings and online public engagement.

Based on the results of the public survey, the topic of accessory suites is quite polarized in Airdrie. Many respondents identified they would see a (hypothetical) announcement of more accessory suites in their neighbourhood as great news, and good to see more housing options, while as many felt they had concerns they'd want to see addressed first or would rather not see accessory suites in their neighbourhood at all.



Key challenges related to accessory suites identified by respondents included:

- **Parking:** Parking is a major concern for many respondents. Residents worry that additional accessory suites will exacerbate already problematic on-street parking situations leading to more parking congestion and potentially safety issues.
- **Impact on community:** Many residents expressed concerns about the impact of accessory suites on the community. They expressed, variously, fears that there may be more noise, unkempt properties, decreased property values, increased conflicts with neighbours, and that introducing more accessory suites into neighbourhoods with largely single-detached dwellings may change the character of the neighbourhood away from being family oriented.

Key opportunities related to accessory suites identified by respondents included:

- **Supplemental Income:** Accessory suites are seen as a way to provide rental income for homeowners, including seniors, allowing them to stay in their homes longer and offset high living costs. For other owners, the income could help offset mortgage costs. Some residents see economic benefits in allowing accessory suites, such as increased tax revenue and providing income for homeowners. For these respondents there is a sense that well-managed accessory suites could help boost the local economy.
- **Affordable housing options:** Many respondents expressed concerns about the high cost of housing and the need for affordable options. These respondents identify that accessory suites can help young people afford homeownership, provide additional income for families, and meet the high demand for rental properties. Some also point out that accessory suites can help buyers with easier mortgage approvals.

Participants offered several suggestions for regulations, or requirements that they felt would help integrate accessory suites into Airdrie neighbourhoods, these included:

- **Parking regulations:** Investigate permitted on-street parking or stricter parking regulations for residential areas, and ensure accessory suites include off-street parking solutions.
- **Suite regulations:** Make it easier to create legal suites with clear standards to ensure safety and quality. Consider occupancy limits.
- **Designated areas:** Consider allowing accessory suites only in areas where they can be better accommodated (parking), or in new areas, consider limiting the number of suites allowed in a neighbourhood.
- **Infrastructure and amenities:** Ensure adequate infrastructure and amenities such as greenspaces and pathways before allowing accessory suites.
- **Community Involvement:** Include consultation with neighbours in the process for suite approvals.

Project information

A priority of City Council is to “offer a full range of integrated below-market housing options that will allow residents to access housing that is achievable on their income.”

Many factors influence housing affordability - and the Affordable Housing Principled Action Plan identifies availability of accessory suites as a contributing factor to increase diverse housing types which in turn improves affordability of housing in the city.

Supporting the Affordable Housing Principled Action Plan passed by Council in June 2023, and in light of the increasing number of accessory suite applications received by the City, City Staff have been tasked with reviewing the regulations for accessory suites.

The review aims to identify barriers associated with creating accessory suites and recommend updates to the regulations in the City's Land Use Bylaw to reduce those barriers in appropriate locations city-wide.

As part of the review, City Staff conducted comparative research with other municipalities, internal and external stakeholder meetings and online public engagement.

Using these inputs, City Staff will prepare recommended updates to the Land Use Bylaw regulations pertaining to accessory suites. The recommendations will be presented to Council at a Public Hearing for deliberation and decision.

Public Participation Approach

From March. 22 to April 15, 2024 Planning and Development implemented an online survey to gather feedback on potential changes to the regulations on accessory suites in Airdrie.

The City used its digital communications channels including MyAirdrie, Facebook and Instagram to create awareness of the survey opportunity.

City Staff also reached out to service agencies to encourage them and their patrons to complete the survey. The survey was published using Involve Airdrie, the City's online public engagement portal.

735 participants responded to the survey.

Summary of Public Participation Input

Based on the results of the public survey, the topic of accessory suites is quite polarized in Airdrie. Many respondents identified they would see a (hypothetical) announcement of more accessory suites in their neighbourhood as great news, and good to see more housing options, while as many felt they had concerns they would want to see addressed first or would rather not see accessory suites in their neighbourhood at all.

Parking was the most significant concern raised by respondents – indicating that additional accessory suites are seen to exacerbate an already difficult on street parking situation in many neighbourhoods. Additional concerns related to privacy concerns with garage or garden suites potentially looking into neighbouring yards, or blocking sun or views, concerns about increased pressure on schools from more people living in the community, and the potential for increased noise, neighbour conflicts, and unkempt properties.

On the other hand, many respondents supported accessory suites as an affordable housing option. They see them as a way to help increase rental options, provide additional income to families or seniors to ease mortgage or cost-of-living pressures, as a way to keep seniors in their homes longer, and as a way to support extended family members.

Several suggestions were received by participants in ways to accommodate accessory suites into Airdrie including keeping the use allowable to new developments/areas only, using a parking permit system, ensuring that accessory suite parking is off-street. Making it easier to apply for accessory suites and include clear standards to ensure safety and quality.

What we heard?

The following sections provide summaries of responses to each survey question organized by category of question.

What we heard? 5

 ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS..... 6

 TYPES OF DWELLINGS 8

 TYPES OF OTHER USES..... 11

 PARKING 14

 SIZE OF PROPERTY 16

 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS..... 19

Notes:

Numbers of responders to individual questions in the survey are reported as n=x included in brackets at the end of the question wording, for example, “Q2 What community do you live in? (n=730)”

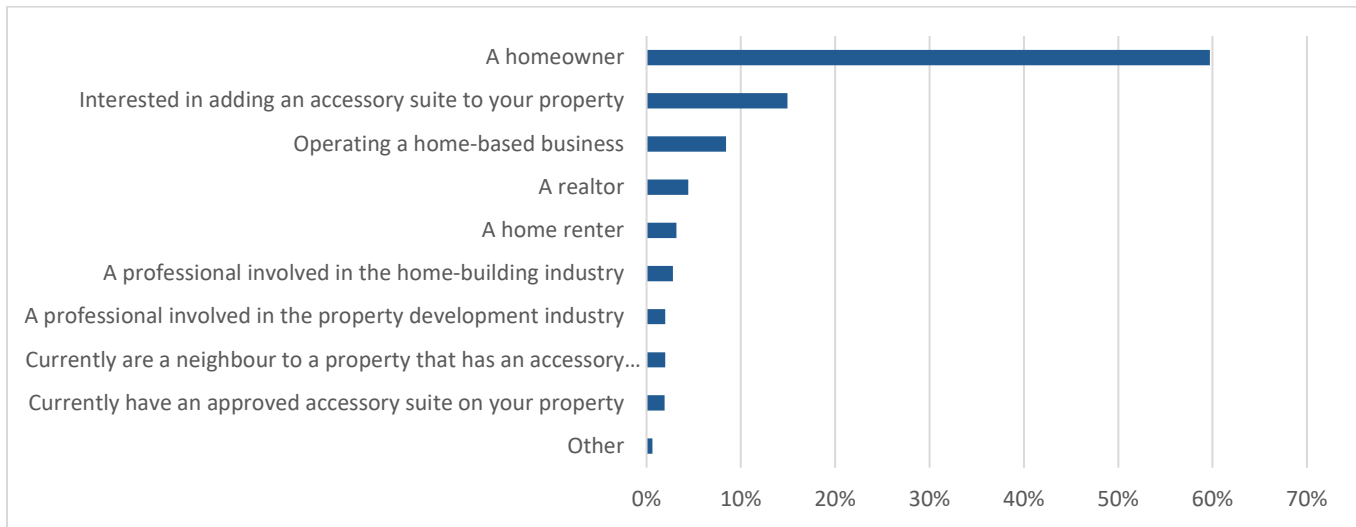
Where a question asks participants to ‘select all that apply,’ any participant may select multiple responses, for these questions total number of responses will be larger than the number of responders.

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Most respondents identified as homeowners ~60%, and 15% identified they are interested in adding an accessory suite to their property. About 53% of respondents live in SW Airdrie, 28% in SE Airdrie, 15% in NW Airdrie, 2% in NE Airdrie and 0.4% downtown.

Sentiment about accessory suites is quite mixed amongst respondents – with they same number seeing a (hypothetical) announcement of more suites in their neighbourhood as “Great news” as those who would react to that same announcement with “Do not want this in my neighbourhood.”

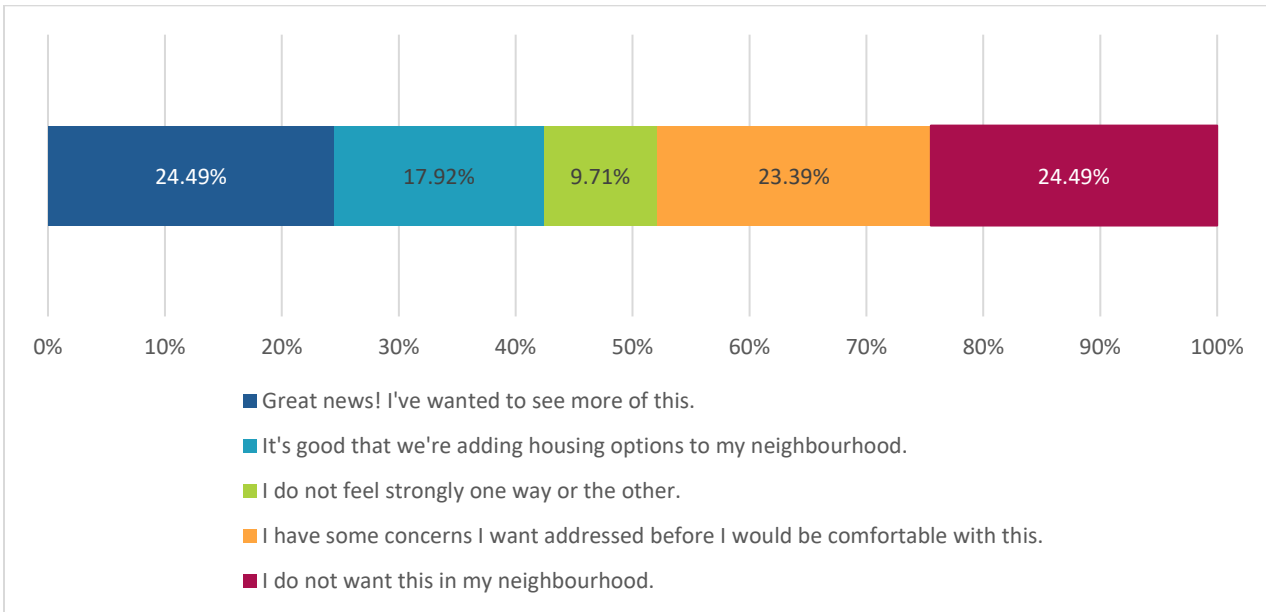
Q1. Are you... (select all that apply)? (n=734)



Q2. What community do you live in? (n=730)

Community	Percentage	Community	Percentage	Community	Percentage
Central	0.4 %	SW	53 %	SE	28 %
Downtown	0.41%	Cooper’s Crossing	6.68%	King’s Heights	5.18%
NW	15 %	Bayside	5.46%	Ravenswood	4.91%
Reunion	3.68%	Canals	4.64%	Meadowbrook	3.55%
Stonegate	2.46%	Windsong	4.64%	Thorburn	2.59%
Woodside	2.46%	Bayview	4.50%	Lanark	2.46%
Silver Creek	1.91%	Hillcrest	3.96%	Summerhill	2.46%
Williamstown	1.36%	Chinook Gate	3.27%	Edgewater	2.32%
Fairways	1.09%	Sagewood	3.14%	Big Springs	2.18%
Old Town	0.82%	South Point	2.59%	Airdrie Meadows	1.50%
Willowbrook	0.68%	South Windsong	2.59%	Waterstone	0.95%
Wildflower	0.55%	Cobblestone Creek	2.32%	Yankee Valley Estates	0.27%
Sunridge	0.27%	Southwinds	2.05%	Other	0.7 %
NE	2 %	Luxstone	1.77%	Acreage	0.14%
Jensen	1.5%	Midtown	1.77%	East Lake	0.14%
The Village	0.27%	Morningside	1.23%	East side rural	0.14%
East Lake Industrial	0.14%	Baysprings	1.09%	Valley Estates	0.14%
Edmonton Trail Commerc.	0.14%	Prairie Springs	0.82%	8 Street	0.14%
Gateway	0.14%	Ridgegate	0.55%		

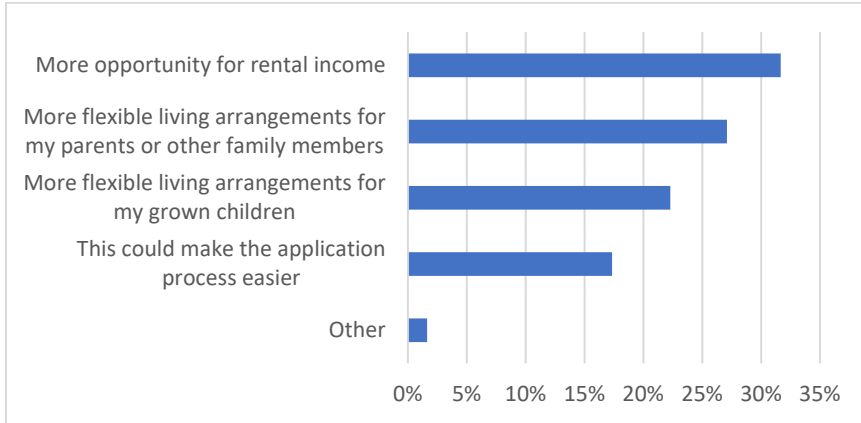
Q3. If accessory suites were being added to some homes in your neighbourhood select the sentiment that best matches your first response to the news: (n=731)



TYPES OF DWELLINGS OPPORTUNITIES

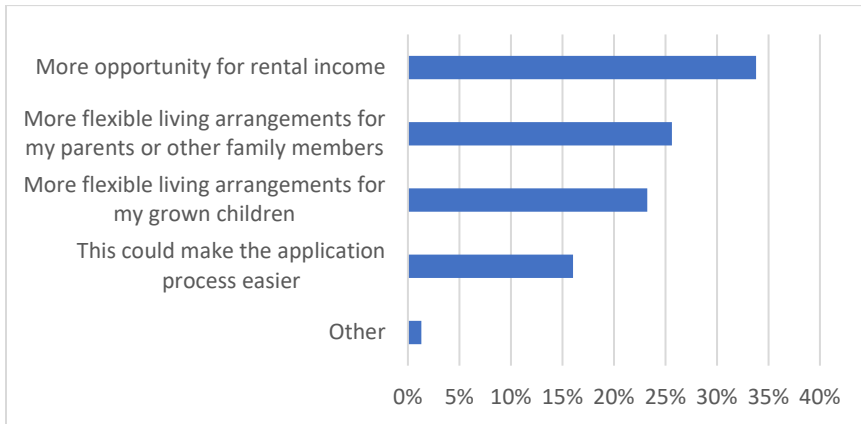
Introduction: Currently, secondary suites must be located within single, detached dwellings. Garage and garden suites must be located on the same property as single, detached dwellings.

Q4. If the City were to expand the rules to allow secondary suites within dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what opportunities do you anticipate the update could bring: (n=659) Note: An error in the survey meant this question showed here as well as in the following section about other types of uses co-located with secondary suites. It should have read similarly to Q5.



Q4 Other	Mentions
More rental options	3
More housing options	3
More supply reducing rental costs	3
Supports students	2
Benefits others even if not me	1
Help manage growing costs	1
Income: in retirement	1
Less red tape	1
Less sprawl	1
More access to housing	1

Q6. If the City were to expand the rules to allow garage or garden suites to be located on the same property as duplex or semi-detached dwellings, what opportunities to you anticipate this update could bring: (n=613)



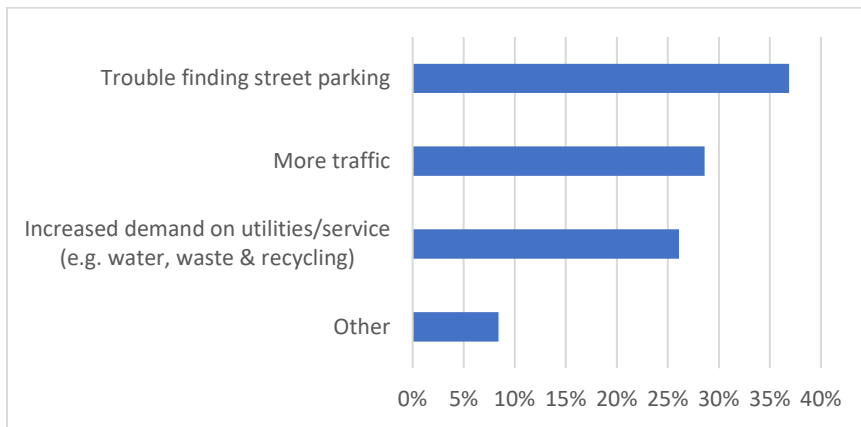
Q6 Other	Mentions
More affordable housing	4
Retirement income	2
More rental options	2
More rental options	2
Supports safe suites	1
More housing options	1
Help manage growing costs	1
Fewer restrictions on house improvements	1
Makes sense on detached dwellings	1
More tax revenue to City	1

“As someone with no real pension, this could allow me to build a garage or garden suite that I could live in as a retiree and provide me with a rental income and offer rental housing for a family.”

TYPES OF DWELLINGS CHALLENGES

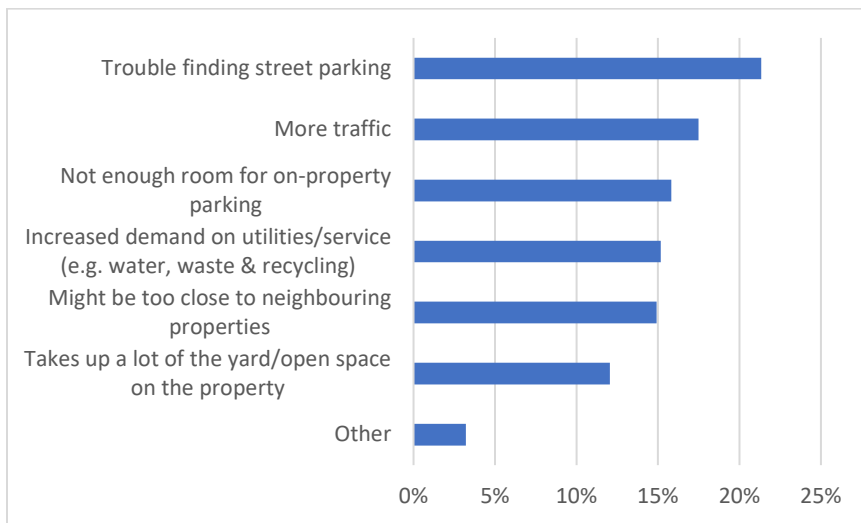
Introduction: Currently, secondary suites must be located within single, detached dwellings. Garage and garden suites must be located on the same property as single, detached dwellings.

Q5. If the City were to expand the rules to allow secondary suites within dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what challenges do you see that could arise: (n=695) Note: An error in the survey meant this question showed here as well as in the following section about other types of uses co-located with secondary suites. It should have read similarly to Q7.



Q5 Other	Mentions
More crime	19
More noise	19
Pressure on schools	19
Overcrowded community	16
Lack of property upkeep	12
Character of community changes	8
Decreased property value	6
Overcrowding homes	6
Illegal suites	7
Overwhelm existing infrastructure	6

Q7. If the City were to expand the rules to allow garage or garden suites to be located on the same property as duplex or semi-detached dwellings, what challenges do you see that could arise: (n=691)



Q7 Other	Mentions
Character of community changes	13
Overcrowded community	13
More crime	9
More noise	8
Pressure on schools	6
Privacy concerns	6
Lack of property upkeep	5
More litter	5
Decreased property value	4
Reduced sun to yard	4

“Houses in [my neighbourhood] are close together with street parking already a challenge. Adding accessory suites will increase the need for parking and there truly isn’t room for more vehicles than what are already here.”

TYPES OF DWELLINGS

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q8. Is there anything else you want the City to know when considering what types of dwellings should allow accessory suites? (n=290)

Key themes related to types of dwellings:

- **Parking:** There is a concern that duplex or semi-detached dwellings, because they are smaller, cannot accommodate on-site parking and would then contribute to congested street parking.
- **Type of suite preference:** There was some preference for secondary (within premise) suites for these types of dwellings as garage and garden suites were seen as obtrusive to neighbours, and/or not feasible on the lot size.

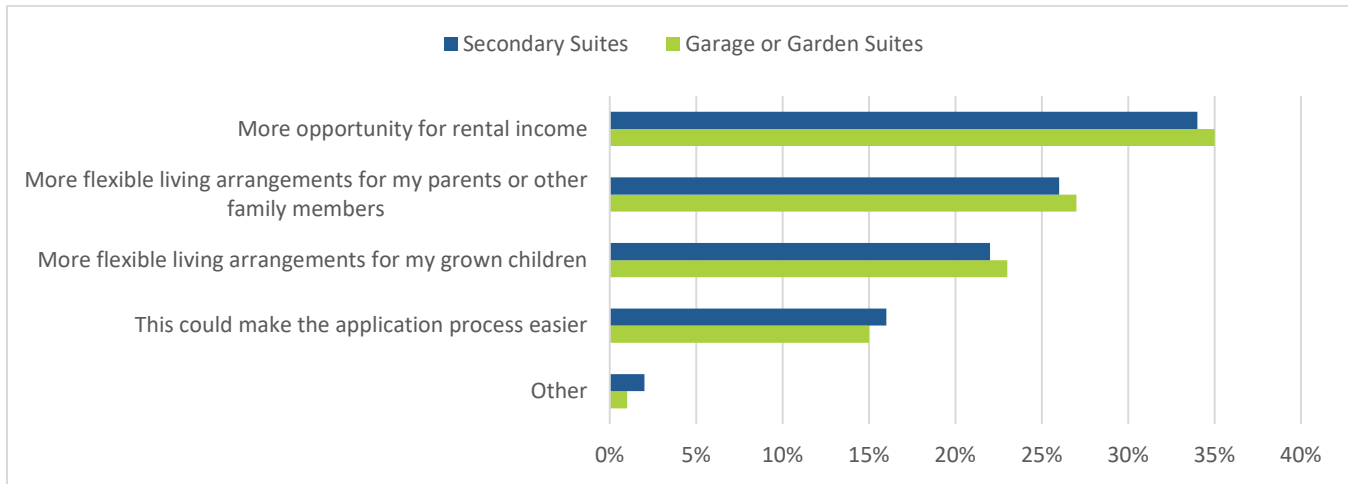
Key themes from other comments provided:

- **Parking and Traffic Issues:** Parking is a major concern for many respondents. Residents worry that additional accessory suites will exacerbate already problematic on-street parking situations leading to more parking congestion and potentially safety issues.
- **Impact on Community:** Many residents expressed concerns about the impact of secondary suites on the community. They expressed, variously, fears that there may be more noise, unkempt properties, decreased property values, increased conflicts with neighbours, and that introducing more accessory suites into neighbourhoods with largely single-detached dwellings may change the character of the neighbourhood away from being family oriented.
- **Housing Affordability:** Many respondents expressed concerns about the high cost of housing and the need for affordable options. These respondents identify that accessory suites can help young people afford homeownership, provide additional income for families, and meet the high demand for rental properties. Some also point out that accessory suites can help buyers with easier mortgage approvals.
- **Economic Benefits:** Some residents see economic benefits in allowing accessory suites, such as increased tax revenue and providing income for homeowners. For these respondents there is a sense that well-managed accessory suites could help boost the local economy.
- **Supplemental Income:** Accessory suites are seen as a way to provide rental income for homeowners, including seniors, allowing them to stay in their homes longer and offset high living costs. For other owners the income could help offset mortgage costs.
- **Regulations and Standards:** Some respondents suggest that simplifying the application process for accessory suites can encourage legal conversions and better regulation. Others want to ensure that there are clear, enforceable, rules and penalties to ensure compliance and mitigate negative impacts on neighbourhoods.
- **Community Involvement:** There is a desire for consultation with neighbours to be part of the approval process.
- **Infrastructure and amenities:** There is concern that community population increases due to accessory suites will strain existing infrastructure, and put pressure on community amenities such as parks, pathways and community centres.

TYPES OF OTHER USES OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction: Currently, accessory suites (secondary, garage or garden) cannot be included within or on the same property as a dwelling that contains a bed and breakfast, childcare facility, supportive housing facility, or a home-based business that interacts with clients at the property.

- *Q9. If the City were to expand the rules to allow secondary suites within dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what opportunities do you anticipate this update could bring: (n=580)*
- *Q11. If the City were to expand the rules to allow garage or garden suites on the same property as dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what opportunities to you anticipate this update could bring: (n=570)*



Q9 Other	Mentions
Could allow staff to live onsite	3
More affordable housing	2
Supports small local business	2
Allows more space for the business	1
Beneficial in new areas	1
Benefits others even if not me	1
Compatible with office uses	1
Fewer restrictions on house improvements	1
Lead to innovation/efficient by builders	1
More rental options	1

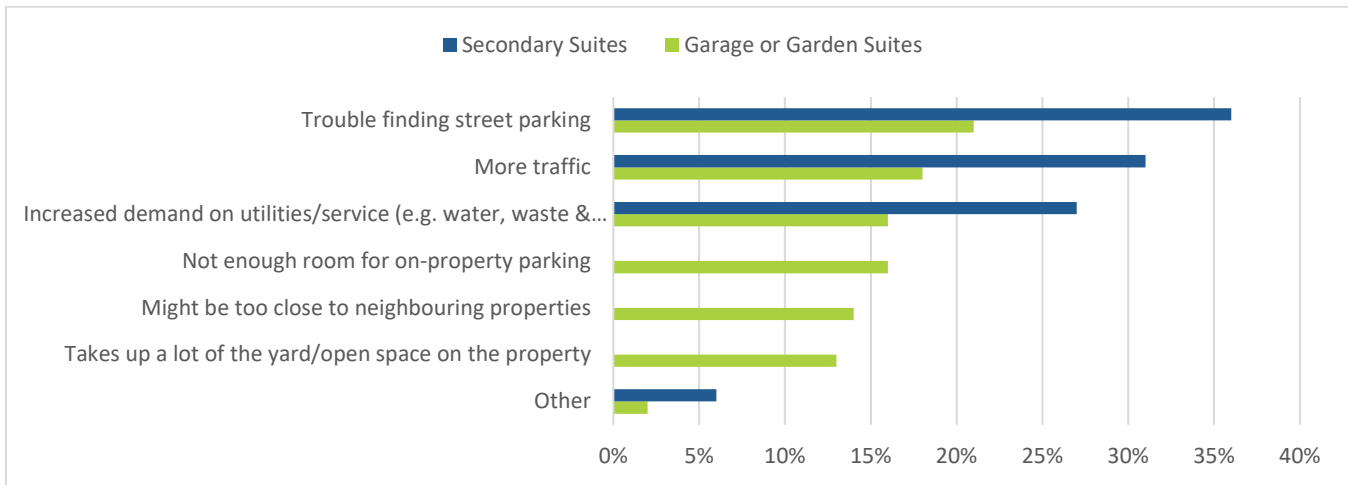
Q11 Other	Mentions
More affordable housing	2
Beneficial in new areas	1
Better security	1
Business options to support employees	1
Fewer restrictions on house improvements	1
More supply reducing rental costs	1
Reduced cost to business to find commercial rental	1
Should be different rules for acreages	1
Fences and trees should protect privacy	1

“More flexibility for low-income workers and businesses owners to support their employees.”

**TYPES OF OTHER USES
CHALLENGES**

Introduction: Currently, accessory suites (secondary, garage or garden) cannot be included within or on the same property as a dwelling that contains a bed and breakfast, childcare facility, supportive housing facility, or a home-based business that interacts with clients at the property.

- *Q10. If the City were to expand the rules to allow **secondary suites** within dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what challenges do you see that could arise: (n=655)*
- *Q12. If the City were to expand the rules to allow **garage or garden suites** on the same property as dwellings that had one of the above uses already in it, what challenges do you see that could arise: (n=657)*



Q10 Other	Mentions
More crime	13
Overcrowded community	13
Suites are not compatible with these uses	11
Safety at childcare facilities	9
More noise	8
Character of community changes	7
Pressure on schools	6
Decreased property value	5
Increased neighbour conflicts	3
Lack of Bylaw enforcement	3

Q12 Other	Mentions
More crime	8
More noise	8
Overcrowded community	8
Safety at childcare facilities	5
Suites not compatible with these uses	5
Pressure on schools	4
Privacy concerns	4
Safety for at risk persons	4
More problems	3
Character of community changes	2

“Where children and other vulnerable people are considered, I'd like there to be rules in place to protect those vulnerable people.”

TYPES OF OTHER USES

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q13. Is there anything else you want the City to know when considering what types of uses could be allowed at the same property that has an accessory suite? (400 characters) (n=157)

Key themes related to co-locating accessory suites with other types of uses:

- **Not all uses may be compatible with accessory suites:** Where there is a need for specialized training and background checks (e.g. childcare, supportive housing, etc.) this may not be a good fit for on-site rental accommodations where those same requirements are not met
- **Parking:** Higher intensity use of the home with both an on-site business and an accessory suite may exacerbate traffic and parking issues in the neighbourhood.
- **Benefits to small businesses:** This could be a good way for small, home-based businesses to support low-income employees.
- **Neighbourhood character:** Worries that accessory suites and mixed-use properties (business and residential) will alter the character of neighbourhoods making them feel overcrowded and less family oriented.

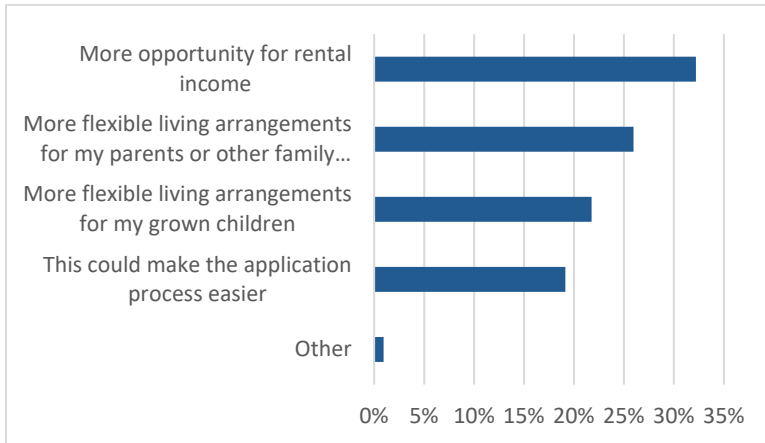
Key themes related to other comments received:

- **Devalued property:** There is a concern that accessory suites will lead to reduced property values in a neighbourhood.
- **Parking and traffic concerns:** Many respondents expressed concern about accessory suites exacerbating already congested on street parking situations as well as increasing traffic in neighbourhoods.
- **Impact on community:** Some respondents fear that the addition of accessory suites to their neighbourhood will result in increases in noise, crime, garbage, unkempt properties, and neighbour conflicts.
- **Zoning changes:** Some respondents indicate that zoning changes to accommodate accessory suites shouldn't be allowed in established communities whose homeowners bought properties under different expectations.
- **Affordable housing:** Some respondents expressed that accessory suites could help to ease the housing shortage, provide more affordable options, and help families stay in Airdrie.
- **Multigenerational living:** Some respondents indicated that accessory suites can support multigenerational living.

PARKING OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction. Currently, there must be two parking spaces provided for the main dwelling, plus one space per bedroom (up to a maximum of two) for the accessory suite. All parking must be located on the property.

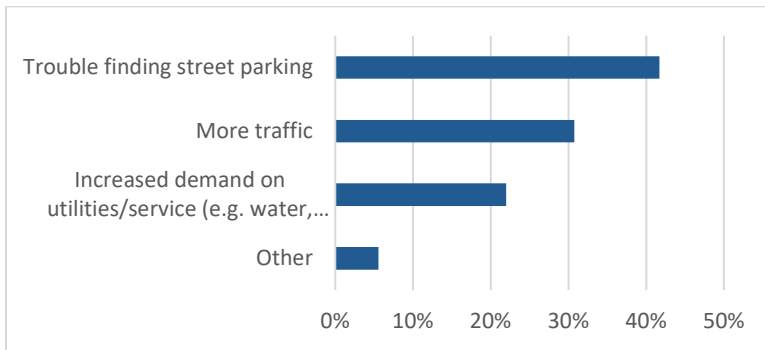
Q14. If the City were to relax these rules to, for example, allow for one parking space per every two bedrooms for the accessory suite, what opportunities do you anticipate this update could bring. (n=589)



Q14 Other	Mentions
More affordable housing	4
One space for two rooms is okay	2
Beneficial in new areas	1
Improved bike paths reduces parking	1
Improved transit reduces parking	1
More aligned to other cities	1
More housing options	1
More supply reducing rental costs	1
Should be different rules for acreages	1
Supports newcomers	1

CHALLENGES

Q15. If the City were to relax these rules to, for example, allow for one parking space per every two bedrooms for the accessory suite, what challenges do you see that could arise. (n=669)



Q15 Other	Mentions
Not enough parking already	18
Overcrowded community	9
Increased neighbour conflicts	7
More crime	6
No room for visitor parking	6
Lack of Bylaw enforcement	4
More noise	4
Lot sizes too small	3
Pressure on schools	3
Aesthetic concerns	2

“It makes sense to allow one space for two rooms as a single family could use two rooms but has only one car.”

“We are a bedroom community and if 2 people live in the [suite] there needs to be 2 parking stalls.”

PARKING

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q16. Is there anything else you want the City to know when considering parking requirements for properties that have an accessory suite? (400 characters) (n=524)

Key themes related to parking:

- **Street parking congestion:** Many respondents express frustration over current parking issues, fearing that allowing accessory suites will exacerbate the problem. Noting that many homeowners do not use their garages for parking.
- **Off-street parking requirements:** Due to current parking congestion conditions, many respondents want to ensure off-street parking is a must for accessory suites. Some respondents suggested limiting the number of vehicles per household.
- **Parking permit system:** Some respondents suggested introducing a parking permit system to better manage on-street parking in residential areas.
- **Parking enforcement:** Some respondents expressed a desire for more enforcement of current parking bylaws.
- **Accessibility & safety concerns:** Respondents highlight concerns about blocked driveways, intersections, and accessibility ramps, which pose safety hazards, especially for children and people with disabilities. Some residents worry about reduced visibility and increased accidents due to more cars on the streets.
- **Emergency vehicle access:** Some respondents expressed concern that narrowed streets due to on street parking volumes may hamper emergency vehicle access.

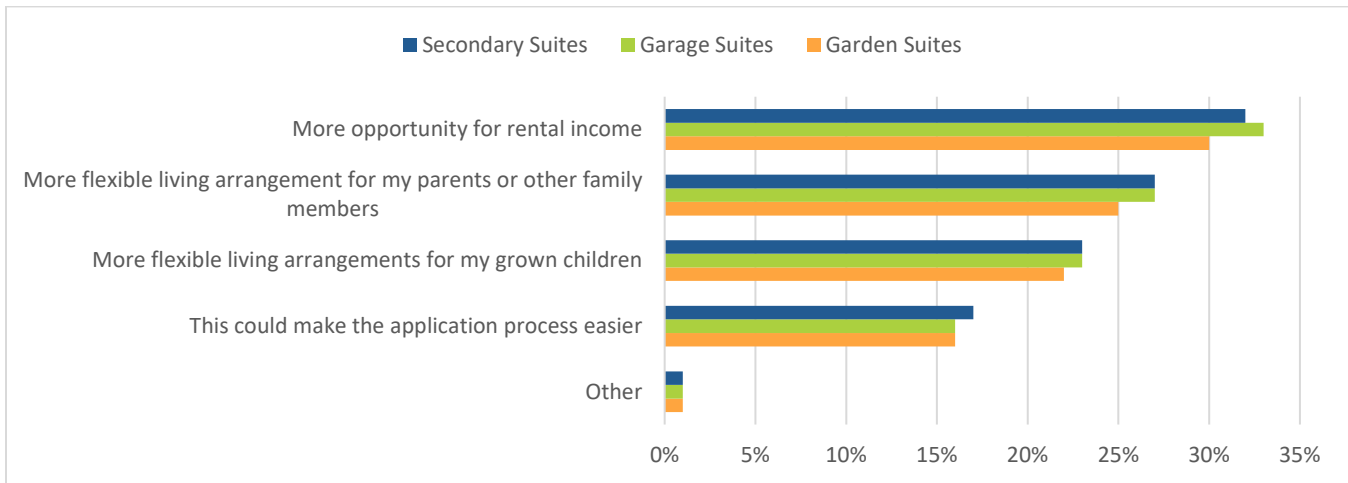
Key themes related to other comments received:

- **Community character:** Some respondents fear that increased accessory suites will introduce more noise, crime, unkempt properties, and neighbour conflicts.
- **Property values:** Some respondents worry that accessory suites will cause reduced property values.
- **Affordable housing opportunities:** Some respondents expressed their support for accessory suites as a solution for affordable housing and rental income opportunities, recognizing the potential benefits for multigenerational living arrangements.
- **Planning and zoning:** Some respondents feel accessory suites are best suited for new developments where parking and traffic issues can be addressed in the planning stage.
- **Fire hazard:** Some respondents fear that increased numbers of suites will increase the risk of fires in the community, as well as increase the risk of fire spreading between houses.

SIZE OF PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction. Currently, in the case of garage and secondary suites, the property must be at least 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area. And in the case of garden suites, the property must be at least 600m² (6,500ft²) in area.

- Q17. If the City were to expand the rules to allow **secondary suites** within dwellings on properties smaller than 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area, what opportunities do you anticipate this update could bring. (n=589)
- Q19. If the City were to expand the rules to allow **garage suites** on properties smaller than 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area, what opportunities do you anticipate this update could bring. (n=569)
- Q21. If the City were to expand the rules to allow **garden suites** on properties smaller than 600m² (6,500ft²) in area, what opportunities do you anticipate this update could bring. (n=575)



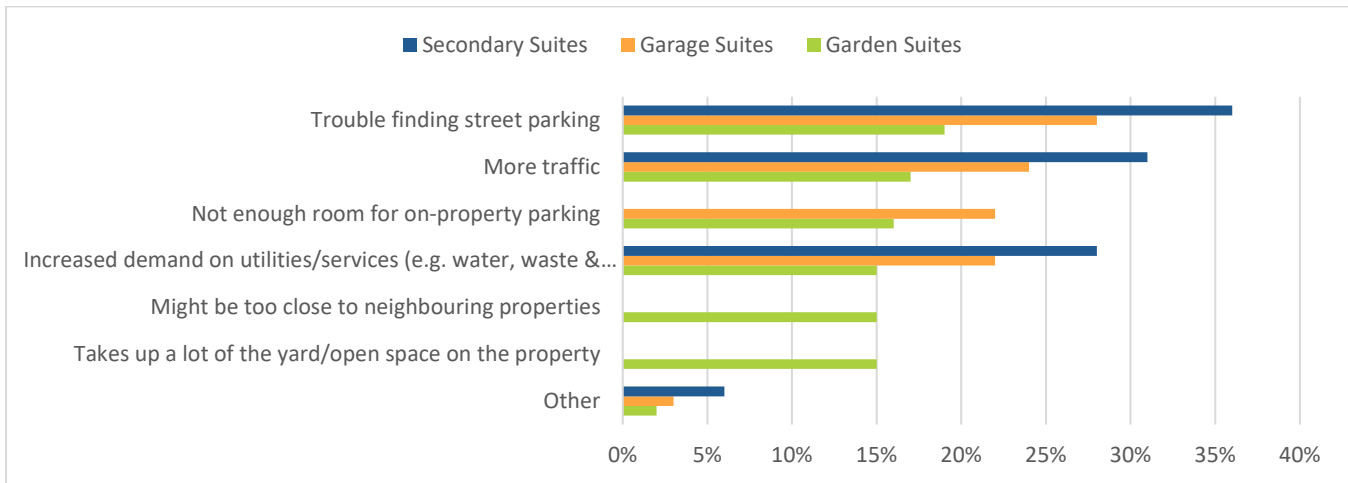
Q17 Other	Mentions	Q19 Other	Mentions	Q21 Other	Mentions
More affordable housing	2	More affordable housing	3	More affordable housing	3
Beneficial in new area	1	More housing options	1	Beneficial in new areas	1
More housing supply	1	Beneficial in new areas	1	More housing options	1
Fewer illegal suites	1	Not too small	1	Maintain building safety	1
Good to have owner onsite with tenant	1	Allow other code criteria to be considered	1	More supply reducing rental costs	1
More choice for landowners	1	More choice for landowners	1	More choice for landowners	1
Allow other code criteria to be considered	1	Needs onsite parking or on street permit system	1	Allow other code criteria to be considered	1
Could lead to innovation/efficiency by builders	1			Regulations to match community aesthetics	1
				Not too small	1

“Ability for more landowners to make their own choices on whether to have rental suite opportunities. Allows for other code criteria to be the real governing parameters for living spaces, not some arbitrary metric as noted [in the question].”

SIZE OF PROPERTY CHALLENGES

Introduction. Currently, in the case of garage and secondary suites, the property must be at least 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area. And in the case of garden suites, the property must be at least 600m² (6,500ft²) in area.

- Q18. If the City were to expand the rules to allow secondary suites within dwellings on properties smaller than 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area, what challenges do you see that could arise. (n=640)
- Q20. If the City were to expand the rules to allow garage suites on properties smaller than 13.0m (42ft) wide and 400m² (4,300ft²) in area, what challenges do you see that could arise. (n=646)
- Q22. If the City were to expand the rules to allow garden suites on properties smaller than 600m² (6,500ft²) in area, what challenges do you see that could arise. (n=653)



Q18 Other	Mentions	Q20 Other	Mentions	Q22 Other	Mentions
Overcrowded community	11	Should not be on smaller lots	7	More noise	12
Should not be on smaller lots	9	More noise	6	Overcrowded community	9
More noise	8	Overcrowded community	6	Should not be on smaller lots	6
Privacy concerns	7	Privacy concerns	6	More crime	5
More crime	6	Already not enough parking	5	Privacy concerns	5
Overcrowding homes	5	More crime	5	Not enough parking already	4
Decreased property value	4	Decreased property value	3	More fire hazard	3
Pressure on schools	4	Reduced sun to yards	3	Not good quality housing	3
Character of community changes	3	Increased neighbour conflicts	2	Increased neighbour conflicts	2

“Shadowing of adjacent parcels, impact to existing landscaping (trees and gardens), shading to solar panels, privacy to adjacent yards, homes and gardens (direct view from garage/garden suites into adjacent yards and houses)”

“If too small, landlords could rent subpar rooms/apartments to renters.”

SIZE OF PROPERTY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q23. Is there anything else you want the City to know when considering size requirements for properties that have an accessory suite? (400 characters) (n=128)

Key themes related to property size:

- **Changing character of neighbourhood:** Respondents express a concern that suites on small lot sizes may discourage family living, harming the community's family-friendly character.
- **Parking congestion:** Many respondents identified that narrow lots and front drive garages exacerbate parking problems.
- **Support for accessory suites:** Many respondents expressed support for accessory suites as a solution for affordable housing, but emphasized the need for them to be legal, safe and well-managed as some worried that allowing suites on smaller lot sizes might encourage some landlords to build unlivable small spaces.

Key themes related to other comments received:

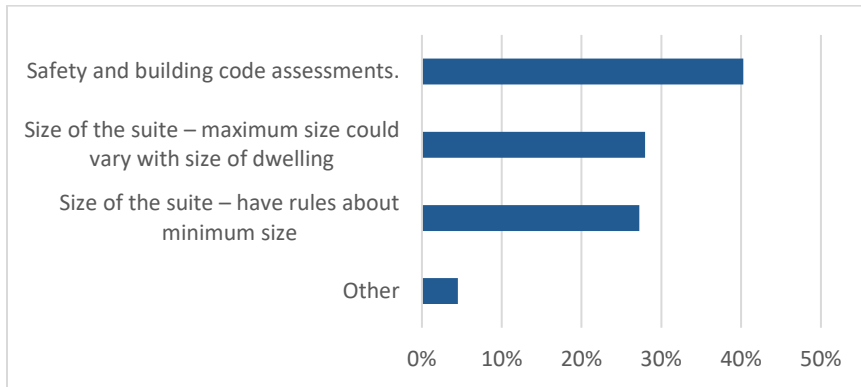
- **Property values:** Some respondents fear that the addition of secondary suites to neighbourhoods will reduce property values.
- **Environment concerns:** Some respondents expressed concerns that additional accessory building would reduce overall greenspace in the neighbourhood and affect drainage/stormwater management.
- **Fire hazard:** Some respondents expressed concerns that increased suites on smaller lots will increase the risk of fire, and of fire spreading between houses.
- **Planning and zoning:** Some respondents feel accessory suites are best suited for new developments where parking and traffic issues can be addressed in the planning stage.
- **Privacy concerns:** Some respondents expressed a concern that increase presence of accessory suites compromised the privacy of neighbours.
- **Noise concerns:** Some respondents indicated a concern that increased accessory suites would be accompanied by increased noise.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction. What rules or regulations could help ensure accessory suites can be successfully accommodated in Airdrie? (select all that apply)

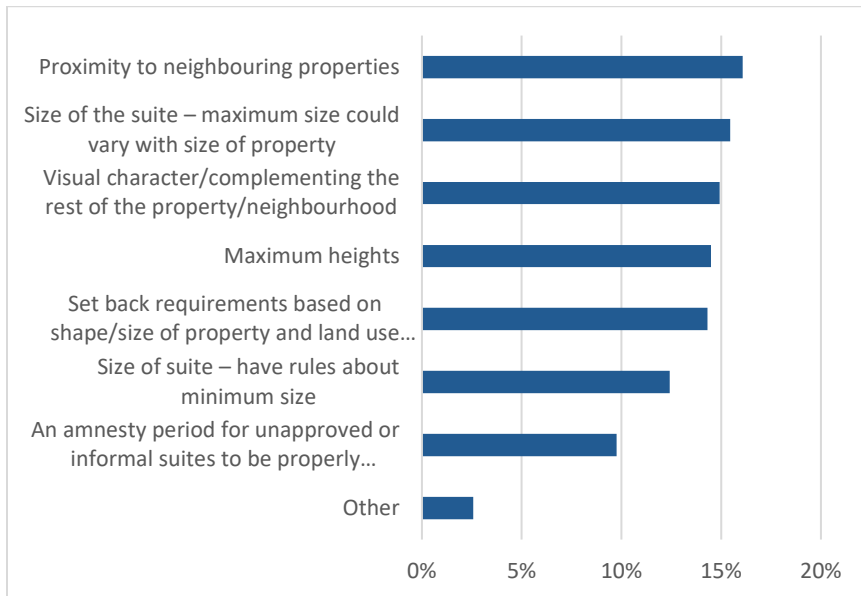
- *Q25. Secondary suites (within the principal dwelling).* (n=674)
- *Q24. Garage & Garden Suites (on the same property as the principal dwelling).* (n=694)

SECONDARY SUITES



Q25 Other	Mentions
Parking must be off-street	7
Limit number of occupants	4
Proper registration of existing suites	4
Proper registration of existing suites	4
Minimum frontage for parking	3
Parking regulations and enforcement	3
Consultation process with neighbours	2
Ensure adequate utility servicing	2
Incentives/grants/HAF funding to bring informal suites up to code	2
Limit number of vehicles	2

GARAGE & GARDEN SUITES



Q24 Other	Mentions
Parking must be off-street	11
Limit number of occupants	6
Consultation process with neighbours	4
Limit number of vehicles	3
Building code compliance and inspection	2
Ensure adequate utility servicing	2
Maintain aesthetic appeal of neighbourhoods	2
Parking regulations and enforcement	2
Will require more Bylaw enforcement	2
Allow for handicapped parking	1

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FINAL COMMENTS

Q26. Is there anything we haven't asked you about that the City should consider when updating regulations related to accessory suites in Airdrie? (600 characters) (n=168)

Parking Concerns:

- **Street parking permits:** Some respondents suggest implementing permits for street parking to manage vehicle overflow.
- **Parking Requirements:** Some respondents suggest reducing on-site parking requirements and adjust parking stall sizes to current standards.
- **Parking enforcement:** Some respondent would like to see more enforcement of existing parking bylaws before implementing new policies.
- **Parking congestion:** Many respondents fear parking overcrowding, blocked driveways, and lack of visitor parking due to increased vehicles from secondary suites.

Housing Regulations and Bylaws

- **Discretionary Zoning:** Some respondents suggested keeping regulations broad to address housing crisis; consider revising later for better control.
- **Grandfather Clause:** Some respondents wanted clarification on if older suites (built in the 70s/80s) will be grandfathered in under new regulations.
- **Occupancy limits:** Some respondents suggested setting a maximum number of residents per suite to prevent overcrowded living conditions.
- **Suite limits:** Some respondents suggested limiting or capping the number of suites that can be added to a street or neighbourhood.
- **Community involvement:** Some respondents would like to see the approval process require neighborhood consultation for new suites.
- **Discourage Short-term rentals:** Some respondents expressed concerns that well-intentioned changes for accessory suites would be misused to introduce short-term rentals that may increase negative community impacts and detract from affordable housing options.

Community Impact

- **Property upkeep:** Some respondents want the City to hold landlords accountable for property upkeep to prevent neighborhoods from becoming neglected.
- **Quality of Life:** Many respondents want the City to ensure new regulations do not degrade community living standards, addressing issues like noise, overcrowding, and pedestrian safety.
- **Property Value:** Many respondents want to protect property values by maintaining aesthetic standards and considering the impact of new suites on existing views and space.

Affordability and Housing Crisis

- **Flexibility for Affordability:** Be flexible with regulations to promote affordable housing solutions.
- **Support for Homeowners:** Assist homeowners struggling with costs through policies that support affordable mortgage and tax rates.
- **Rental Affordability:** Address the high cost of rent for secondary suites to ensure they provide genuinely affordable options.

Other Concerns

- **Noise and Safety:** Some respondents want to see regulations and enforcement measures implemented to reduce noise and ensure safety, particularly for families with children.
- **School and Infrastructure Impact:** Some respondents are concerned about increased pressure on schools and community infrastructure and amenities – and want reassurance this is being considered.
- **Public Transportation Access:** Some respondents would like to see the City prioritize neighborhoods with access to public transportation for new accessory suites.

What's Next & Timelines

The input received through the accessory suite survey is being used, along with internal stakeholder findings and external research from other municipalities to inform Administrations work drafting recommended changes to the Land Use Bylaw relating to accessory suites.

Results of the survey will be shared with Airdrie City Council at a regular meeting of Council, June 18, 2024.

Subsequently, City Administration will begin drafting recommendations for changes to the Land Use Bylaw. These will be presented to Airdrie City Council at a public hearing. Members of the public may speak to items going to Public Hearing. The recommendations are anticipated to go before Council in Fall 2024.

Contact Information

For more information regarding the 2024 Accessory Suites Bylaw Updates Survey, contact:

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