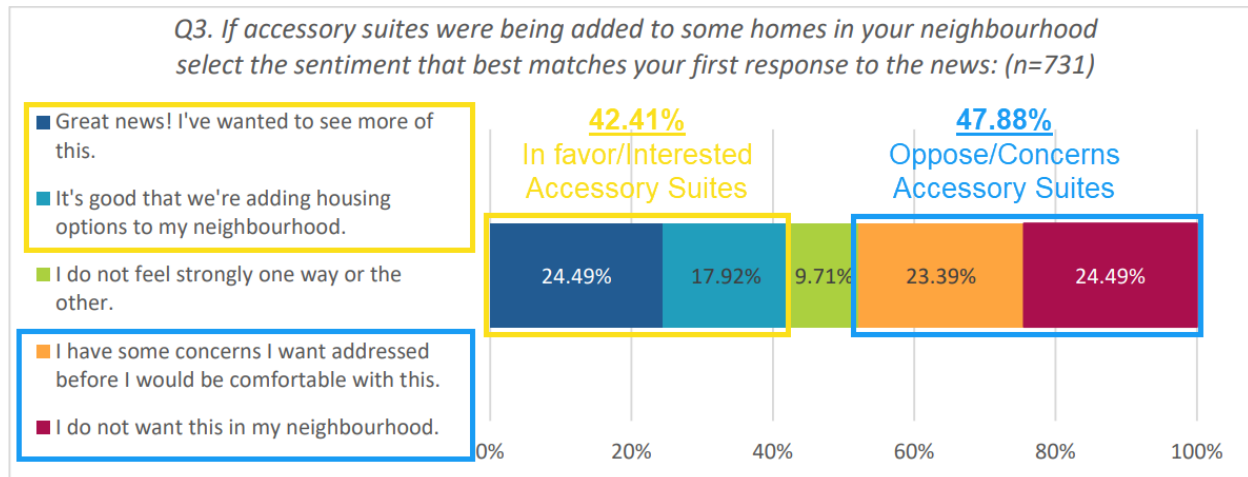


## Accessory Suites / Affordable Housing

The topic of accessory suites in the City of Airdrie is certainly a hot button topic. A 2024 public survey conducted by the City of Airdrie Planning and Development department confirmed that divide. 47.88% of people who participated in the survey either have concerns or are outright not in favor of accessory suites in their communities.

### **Results of 2024 Public Survey**



### **Accessory suites ARE NOT the answer to address affordable housing:**

- **Myth #1** – *Accessory suites are able to provide the rental market with affordable housing for the public*

Let's not fool ourselves here: the costs to develop a legal secondary suite are high so do we really think these homeowners are going to provide a reduced rental property to the public? Absolutely not, they will charge whatever the rental market is asking

- **Myth #2** – *Accessory suites are a way to provide homeowners with a way to afford a new house.*

In the case of my generation, we entered the real estate market in the same manner. We purchased smaller condos or townhouses and slowly accumulated equity over time. After many years of being in the market, we could finally move up and purchase a single house dwelling that was within our budget. Is it a good idea to offer a way for people who purchase houses that they can't afford and provide them a way to subsidise costs to service mortgages? This is a bad idea

and paves the way to have communities built around renters or out of town investors.

## Is there room for compromises for R1 zoned home owners?

- Planning Department Presentation – Accessory Suites – on August 27, 2024 the City of Airdrie Planning and Development department presented to City Council (bylaw B/30 2024 – accessory suites regulation update) along with their recommendations on accessory suites. I listened to the presentation and what I heard was a long list of changes and recommendations on how to reduce the requirements for accessory suites and ways to speed up the approval process. In my opinion, their recommendations are solely focused on increasing the number of accessory suites available while disregarding public safety and adding extra strain on the infrastructure, schools, recreation centers that were not designed to accommodate these loads. For example, every fall we hear on the news about overcrowding in schools. Will overpopulating communities compound these issues?

It appears home owners that built in R1 zoned areas for specific reasons, mainly to have more space, are being completely disregarded. They are being forced to accommodate extra traffic in their communities all under the façade that these changes are addressing “affordable housing”.

*Is it possible to have some type of compromise so both sides of the accessory suite debate feel like they are being heard?*

- **Compromise #1 - Develop a “Cap System”** - For existing neighborhoods, limit the number of accessory suites allowed in communities that were not designed to accommodate the extra load
- **Compromise #2 - New Community Development** – Develop new communities with the thought of having more accessory suites available. This way, the roads, parking, infrastructure, and schools can be properly designed to accommodate more accessory suites.

We are all aware of cumulative affects...just think of the recent City of Calgary water main repair work. Excessive use of water affected the overall water consumption. This can also be applied to accessory suites and the extra people.