

April 28, 2021

Hamilton City Council  
71 Main Street West  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8P 4Y5



RE: Proposed Second Dwelling Units (SDUs) By-law

Dear Hamilton City Council,

The REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington (RAHB) fully supports any changes that create more affordable and inclusive housing options in Hamilton.

Gentle densification utilizes existing housing and infrastructure to best use the land we have within our urban boundaries to create more housing options for Hamiltonians. When single-family properties are allowed to legally house two or three households, the community sees numerous benefits including an increase in usage of local transit, consistent and sustainable enrolment in neighbourhood schools and more support for local businesses.

**RAHB has always been a champion of housing that is safe, sustainable and compliant.**

Second Dwelling Units (SDUs) are a prudent way to support gentle densification, while also providing safety for both owners and tenants. There is a misconception that SDUs will make Hamilton more unaffordable. Whether a homeowner decides to increase their home's value by creating a Second Dwelling Unit or updating the home's electrical, HVAC or by putting in a new kitchen or bath - it is the homeowner's choice. The homeowner's choice to create an SDUs may be the only way a young couple can afford to buy a home or for a multi-generational family to keep a mother or grandfather some independence while still being close so as to help with medical appointments or grocery shopping. For renters and tenants, SDUs provide increased choice in their preferred neighbourhood.

In summary, there are **two** critical elements to this proposed By-law that will greatly benefit the City:

1. Units that the City does not currently recognize as legal now, have a path to becoming legal.
2. It allows for densification in the most affordable way possible without significant changes to neighbourhoods and infrastructure.

While RAHB has opposed the City's attempts to impose a Rental Licensing By-law in the past, our opposition was because the City's current Zoning By-laws are so restrictive that hundreds of existing Second Dwelling Units in the City would not have a path to legalization. With more than 6,000 names on the City's Affordable Housing Waitlist, it is RAHB's position that any By-law proposal resulting in the loss of housing units is unacceptable.

Bill 108, *the More Homes, More Choice Act*, has made municipalities revisit their By-laws with respect to gentle densification, and RAHB fully supports the City's proposed By-law for SDUs.

Sincerely,

*Donna Bacher*

Donna Bacher  
2021 President of the REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington