

**From:** Suite Additions

**Sent:** Friday, May 27, 2022 9:00 AM

**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)

**Subject:** May 31 Planning Committee meeting item Modifications and Updates to existing Secondary Dwelling Unit and Secondary Dwelling Unit – Detached Regulations (PED20093(c)) (City Wide)

Dear Madam/Sir,

As a house designer specifically in the space of densification through second suites and detached SDUs, I wholeheartedly support Hamilton's new proposed SDU amendments to existing Secondary Dwelling Unit and Secondary Dwelling Unit - Detached Regulation (PED20093(c)).

I have studied and visited similar housing types across North America, and in all cases, these housing types do not negatively affect the neighbourhood. Rather they improve it, and provide relatively more affordable housing to the community, while reducing the damaging effects of urban sprawl.

SDUs are the most gentle form of densification available within the low rise residential areas within the urban boundary of Hamilton, and is a type of development that is accessible by many homeowners themselves.

**Here are just a few examples of some of the benefits of SDUs:**

1. Better use of existing city services and infrastructure
2. Repopulates areas in decline and creates greater demand for local businesses
3. Additional security for low-density neighbourhoods
4. Affordable housing option for young people, small families, seniors and individuals
5. Great option for seniors to age-in-place in the community they are accustomed to
6. Creates jobs for the local economy
7. A great option for multigenerational families to live in proximity and still maintain privacy
8. Additional financial security for homeowners

I support the changes proposed to reduce parking requirements. Hamilton has invested heavily in public transportation and bike lanes. We should encourage residents to use these services. Not requiring additional parking for SDUs makes a lot of sense in this regard, and it also reduces water runoff by retaining permeable landscaping.

In areas where street parking is allowed, there are many studies to show that street parking actually improves safety, by slowing down moving vehicles and creating a safety barrier for pedestrians on the sidewalk. See article link cited below\*.

**Additionally there were 2 concerns brought up by Councillor Danko that I wish to address:**

1. An increase of the existing 7.5m separation between the primary house and the SDU detached. This distance is already very high compared with many other municipalities in Ontario, and will eliminate many properties to be eligible for an SDU detached. Most other cities' are significantly less. For example 1.5m in Brantford, 4m in Toronto, 0m in Kitchener and many other cities and towns where they can be attached as an addition to the unit. As long as amenity space and lot coverage is maintained, the 7.5m should actually be reduced in my opinion to allow more properties to qualify.

2. A maximum percentage of SDU detached relative to the primary house because of concerns that it will be an equal size house . This is redundant since we already have a maximum percentage based on lot size, maximum unit size, and that it cannot be larger than the primary house. Implementing a rule such as 75% maximum (as Councillor Danko suggests) would effectively make many SDUs not large enough to justify the high cost to build a 2 bedroom unit that makes them a viable housing option for a large demographic of the population.

I personally have had many clients who are older adults looking to build these units to downsize into themselves to age in place and eliminate stairs, stay in their neighbourhood, and allow their grown kids to move into the main house or to rent out, and retain financial security. But many of the parking restrictions have made them effectively ineligible.

Please don't allow a small group of vocal minorities who are against this inclusive housing option to slow down the incredible work that has been done to put this policy in place, and more importantly to make the decision for the entire population of Hamilton, the majority of whom support this type of housing.

Thank you for your consideration.

\* <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2020/01/07/nine-keys-safe-downtown-streets>

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