

CITY OF HAMILTON MOTION

Planning Committee Date: May 16, 2023

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. WILSON

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR

WHEREAS, in May 2021, amendments were made to the City of Hamilton’s Zoning By-laws to expand permissions for Secondary Dwelling Units;

WHEREAS, a detached SDU (SDU-D) is separate from the main dwelling on a lot, must be constructed in the rear and/or side yard of a lot or may be created from the conversion of an existing accessory building such as a detached garage;

WHEREAS, SDU-Ds can be relatively more affordable to rent than most single-family houses and provide new housing options in areas of our city where housing is generally unaffordable to many people;

WHEREAS,, a wide range of households, particularly older adults looking to downsize, seniors with fixed incomes, homeowners with disabilities or other needs, and multigenerational families could benefit from the flexibility, stability, or supplemental income that a SDU-D provides to meet their evolving household needs;

WHEREAS, many residents remain unsure of the design, construction and permitting process involved in pursuing a SDU-D;

WHEREAS, other jurisdictions in North America have explored various strategies aimed at encouraging the construction of SDU-Ds; and,

WHEREAS, developing and implementing a promotion strategy to accelerate construction and expansion of Accessory Dwelling Units is one of the priority actions contained within the City’s new Housing and Sustainability Investment Roadmap;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That to encourage more homeowners to pursue Detached Secondary Dwelling Units (SDU-D’s), that staff report back in on a program to assist homeowners in the SDU-D design and permitting processes, including consideration of measures such as:

(i) Expediting the permitting and approvals process for SDU-Ds through a “one window” dedicated approvals team;

- (ii) Providing access to a library of permit-ready design templates for SDU-Ds;
- (iii) Developing a one-stop SDU-D website that provides a comprehensive inventory of SDU-D information, guidance, resources and summarizes SDU-D regulations and permitting steps;
- (iv) Facilitating connections among prospective SDU-D owners and residents and relevant experts in the design and construction community;
- (v) Partnering with nonprofits, public agencies, and private organizations to develop models for affordable SDU-D construction, using best practices gleaned from other jurisdictions.