

Zoning By-law Review Project



Secondary apartments

In Ontario, actions are being taken to improve affordable housing and municipalities are making changes to further support the development of affordable housing in their communities. Clarington's response began with the recent review of our Official Plan. Policies are being implemented in the draft Zoning By-law to expand and enhance existing urban area permissions to allow secondary apartments in new and existing homes within Clarington's rural areas.

SECONDARY APARTMENT

A self-contained residential unit with a kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area(s) within a dwelling or accessory structure to a dwelling (ex. detached garage). They are also commonly referred to as secondary suites, basement apartments, granny flats, or in-law apartments.

Policy framework

The Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act, 2011 introduced changes to Provincial policy and legislation to support secondary apartments in communities. The changes require municipalities to allow secondary apartments in their Official Plans. During the recent review of the Clarington Official Plan, policies were strengthened to enhance permissions and development criteria for secondary apartments throughout the municipality.

Where we are today

Zoning By-law 84-63, which zones land south of the Oak Ridges Moraine, allows secondary apartments within three of Clarington's urban areas: Courtice, Bowmanville and Newcastle. Secondary apartments are not permitted in rural areas and require an amendment to the Zoning By-law to permit them.

Zoning By-law 2005-109, which zones lands on the Oak Ridges Moraine, does not permit secondary apartments within the area. An amendment to the Zoning By-law is required to permit them.

Currently in Clarington, approximately 90 per cent of houses are single detached, semi-detached or townhouses. Apartment units account for approximately six per cent of all housing (2016 Census). In recent years, there has been increased interest from the public to allow secondary apartments on rural properties. Allowing secondary apartments in the rural area will provide additional housing options for family members or live-in caregivers, or an affordable option for individuals or families looking to rent.

Where we are headed

ZONE Clarington has examined provincial policy and other municipal regulations on secondary apartments. When developing the Official Plan, the public was consulted and presented with possible options on this issue. Input was received and informed the policies of the Official Plan.

To ensure compatibility with the surrounding area, the Zoning By-law review has considered regulatory measures to ensure secondary apartments are, in fact, secondary to the main house. Important factors to consider are the size of the secondary apartment and location of its entrance.



What is proposed?

To implement the updated policies in Clarington's Official Plan, it is proposed to change existing rules to allow secondary apartments within the Rural Residential (RR) and Agricultural (A) zones. They are also allowed within existing dwellings in the Environmental Protection (EP) zone. Each property in these zones is eligible for one secondary apartment as-of-right (i.e. without having to seek amendment to the Zoning By-law) if the apartment is located within a permitted dwelling, or above or within a detached secondary building.

The draft Zoning By-law contains the following regulations for secondary apartments:

- They are not permitted on a lot that has more than one dwelling, unless the other dwellings are for farm workers.
- A secondary apartment must have a minimum floor area of 40 metres squared and not exceed 40 per cent of the floor area of the main house.
- If in a detached garage, the secondary apartment cannot be more than 50 per cent of the floor area of the garage and must be within 30 metres of the main house.
- In Urban and Settlement Areas, the entrance to the apartment must be either shared with the main house entrance, or be in the side or rear yard.
- Secondary apartments are not permitted below the floodplain elevation.

What do you think?

The Zoning By-law review is an ongoing exchange between the Municipality and the community. We

want to hear your thoughts on the proposed zoning regulations for **secondary apartments** in Clarington.

- What do you like about expanding permissions for secondary apartments to Clarington's rural areas?
- Do you see any challenges arising from secondary apartments in the rural areas?
- The proposed regulations limit the size of secondary apartments and the location of the entrance. Are there other ways to help ensure secondary apartments remain secondary to the main house?
- Have you had experience with this issue? Would the proposed changes improve that experience?

Ensure your ideas are considered during the review and submit your feedback online at www.clarington.net/ZoneClarington, email ZoneClarington@clarington.net or call 905-623-3379 ext. 2415.

Stay up-to-date

Visit www.clarington.net/ZoneClarington and subscribe to ZONE Clarington updates, register as an interested party and find out about upcoming information centres, public meetings and revised drafts of the Zoning By-law.

Resources

Secondary Units Resources – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing:

www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page9575.aspx

Municipality of Clarington Basement or In-House Apartment Information:

www.clarington.net/InHouseApartment

Clarington

Learn More. Ask Questions. Provide Your Input.

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