

The background features several overlapping circles in various shades of green and blue. A large, dark green circle is positioned in the upper right. Below it, a medium-sized light blue circle overlaps. In the lower right, a large, light green circle overlaps with the blue one. A thin white line curves across the bottom left corner.

Garden Suite Study Engagement Strategy

Updated Feb 2, 2018

Context

The District of Saanich is undertaking a garden suite study and is seeking to involve the public and stakeholders in the planning process. An engagement process supports the study by bringing public and stakeholder voices to the development of regulations and guidelines for Council's consideration. This document outlines the engagement approach, and the role for the public and stakeholders. The engagement strategy is based on project Terms of Reference adopted by Council on September 11, 2017.

Three primary periods of public engagement are planned:

1. **March – April 2018** – understanding the issues and opportunities surrounding garden suites.
2. **May – June 2018** - Developing options and gauging public support for potential regulatory changes and an approval process.
3. **Fall 2018** – presenting a complete draft regulatory framework and design guidelines for consideration by the public and stakeholders.

Scope of the Project

Having a garden suite to help offset a mortgage, house a family member, or provide an accessible living situation is becoming increasingly appealing to homeowners. Additionally, garden suites can provide housing supply at a time when shortages exist. They are a potential housing option used by many communities as a way to infill established residential neighbourhoods while retaining form and character.

Currently, garden suites are not permitted within the District of Saanich. However, in September 2017 Council approved the Terms of Reference for a study to examine opportunities to legalize garden suites, and to develop a regulatory regime and approvals process.

The purpose of the Garden Suite Study is to examine opportunities to:

- Increase the supply of permanent rental housing;
- Expand the diversity of housing choice;
- Provide a legal and safe option for landowners wishing to develop this form of housing; and
- Support forms of infill that are sensitive to established neighbourhoods within urban Saanich.

The objectives of the study are to:

- Investigate garden suites as a form of permanent rental housing;
- Establish a foundation of information to assess potential regulatory changes and associated impacts;
- Develop an understanding of key issues, including challenges and opportunities;
- Assess stakeholder and community support for garden suites;

- Identify locations within the Sewer Service Area where it would be most appropriate to permit garden suites; and
- Create an appropriate regulatory framework for garden suites.

Scope of the Engagement

The Garden Suite Study will be completed in five phases that will take place over approximately twelve months. A description and graphic representation of the phases is provided below.

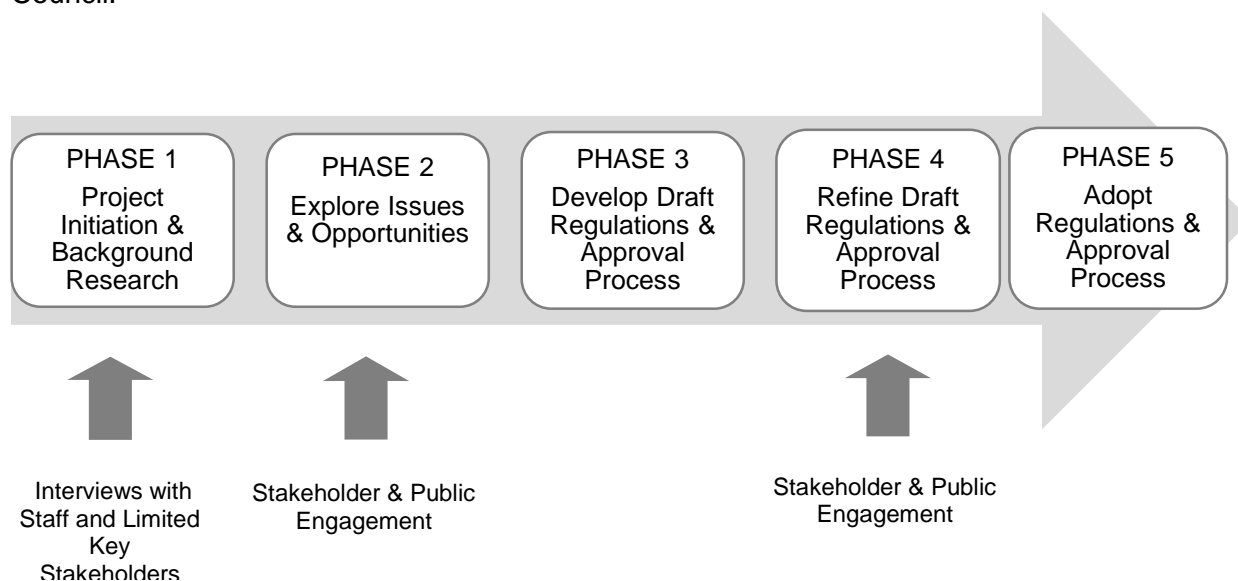
Phase 1 – preparation of the engagement strategy and a technical report. The background report contains information to support the next four phases of the study. This first phase will involve a preliminary exploration of issues through interviews with staff and a limited number of key stakeholders.

Phase 2 – an intensive phase of stakeholder and public engagement with the goal of exploring issues and opportunities for garden suites, and testing ideas for regulations and an approval process.

Phase 3 – using the results of Phase 1 and 2, Staff will develop draft regulations and an approval process.

Phase 4 – Stakeholders and the public will have the opportunity to review the draft regulations and the proposed approval process, and to make any last suggestions for changes.

Phase 5 – present the proposed regulatory framework and permit approval process to Council.



Guiding Principles for Engagement

This engagement strategy aligns with IAP2 protocols and core values, and it is based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation shown below. Guidance for the engagement process is also provided by the Terms of Reference for the project and the District's Public Participation Policy. As identified in the policy, the following five principles will guide all public engagement activities:

- **Inclusiveness:** The District will endeavor to involve and enable the participation of all interested parties across the full range of our diverse population.
- **Transparency:** The District will endeavor to ensure decision processes, procedures and constraints are understood and followed. The purpose and limitations on public participation will be made clear. Respective roles and responsibilities will be clearly communicated. Feedback will be provided on what stakeholders said and how their opinion was considered by decision makers.
- **Access:** The District will ensure that accurate information is available to participants in a timely manner.
- **Respect:** Public participation requires the mutual respect of all participants. The District will listen with an open mind and show consideration and value for another person's point of view.
- **Honesty:** In conducting public participation the District will demonstrate our core value of honesty; we will tell the truth, follow through on commitments and act in a trustworthy manner.

Table 1: The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum

	INTENSITY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT				
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or a decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and goals are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulation solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Decision Making

Saanich Council is the ultimate decision-maker for the garden suite regulations and approval process, which will be presented for consideration and adoption in early 2019. Through the provisions of the Terms of Reference endorsed by Council in September 2017, Saanich staff will be responsible for the engagement planning process and will provide updates to Council throughout the project to ensure they are well informed and maintain an ongoing awareness of process and key outcomes.

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been identified, however, this list is fluid and may evolve over the course of the project.

- Residential builders and designers
- Saanich Community Association Network
- Community Associations
- Residents – renters and owners
- Saanich Committees – Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee; Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee
- Victoria Real Estate Board
- City of Victoria
- Capital Regional District
- Town of View Royal
- District of Central Saanich
- District of Oak Bay
- Others identified through the process

Engagement Objectives and Techniques

Engagement for the Study will provide stakeholders and the public with balanced and objective information. Through consistent application of a variety techniques, Staff will endeavour to inform, consult and involve stakeholders and the public throughout the planning process. Staff is committed to ongoing communication with the public and stakeholders through various means including email, and conversations over the phone and in person.

Significant engagement will take place during Phases 2 and 4 of the Study. The following section outlines the objectives and purpose/intensity of engagement activities, as well as anticipated outcomes and techniques to be used in each phase.

Phase 1 Project Initiation and Background Research

#1: Stakeholders and the public are informed about the scope of the project and associated timeline.

Outcomes	Stakeholders and the public are aware of the project and upcoming process and have the option to sign up for project updates.
Techniques	Web content; updates on social media; Campaigner notification; direct mail/email.

Phase 2 Explore Issues and Opportunities

Objectives

#1: Prior to the start of engagement activities, the public and stakeholders are informed¹ about the planning process, the current facts and figures of the study area, and how they can participate.

Outcomes	The public and stakeholders understand the project and the process. They know how they can participate and they are motivated.
Techniques	Web content; digital ads on rental websites and social media; Campaigner notifications and updates; direct mail; print ads; presentation to SCAN.

#2: To consult with stakeholders and the public during the active engagement period (March to June 2018) on the issues and opportunities with garden suites, as well as the approval process.

Outcomes	The public and stakeholders are able to share issues and concerns. They find common ground through discussions about issues, and they explore opportunities to mitigate them through regulations, design guidelines and an approval process.
Techniques	Web content; digital ads on rental websites and social media; Campaigner notifications and updates; social media; direct mail/email; print ads; survey #1 and survey #2; open house #1 and #2; digital presentation boards; library booth with access to an online survey; engagement summary report.

¹ The underlined word in each objectives corresponds to the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement.

#3: During the active engagement period, to involve stakeholders in discussions about potential regulations and design guidelines, as well as an approval process.

Outcomes	Key stakeholders are able to provide input on possible regulations, design guidelines and approval process. They feel they have contributed to the final regulations, guidelines and approval process
Techniques	Web content; direct mail/email to key stakeholders; workshop #1; engagement summary report.

Phase 4 Refine Draft Regulations

Objectives

#1: Staff will consult with the public and stakeholders to hear their input on the draft regulations, design guidelines, and approval process. Input will inform revisions to the draft documents and creation of the final document.

Outcomes	Stakeholders and the public will see how their input has been used to develop the proposed regulations, guidelines and approval process. They will have the opportunity to provide additional input.
Techniques	Web content; digital ads on rental websites and social media; Campaigner notifications; social media; direct mail/email; print ads; open house #3; digital and paper comment forms; summary report of public engagement; bylaw amendments and staff report for Council consideration.

#2: Stakeholders and the public are informed about when Council will make a decision.

Outcomes	Stakeholders and the public have the option to attend the Council meeting to hear Council's deliberations on garden suites.
Techniques	Web content; updates on social media; Campaigner notification; direct mail/email.

#3: Stakeholders and the public are informed about Council's decision and next steps for garden suites in Saanich.

Outcomes	Stakeholders and the public are informed about Council's decision and they learn about next steps for garden suite development.
Techniques	Web content; updates on social media; Campaigner notification.

Key Engagement Opportunities

The following opportunities for stakeholder and public engagement are planned. Other engagement techniques may be used to supplement the following based on stakeholder feedback and collaboration opportunities.

OPEN HOUSES #1 and #2

WHO: Stakeholders and the public
WHAT: Invited to attend an open house to learn more about the Garden Suite Study and to share input on issues and concerns.
WHEN: March 2018

SURVEY #1

WHO: Stakeholders and the public
WHAT: Invited to complete a survey about the issues and opportunities related to garden suites and share any comments on items that should be incorporated into the development of regulations.
WHEN: March – April 2018

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

WHO: Stakeholders
WHAT: Work with community stakeholders to test different regulatory approaches.
WHEN: May 2018

SURVEY #2

WHO: Stakeholders and the public
WHAT: Invited to complete a survey about options for different regulatory approaches. A random, statistically valid survey will also be undertaken to assess support for various elements of potential regulation.
WHEN: June 2018

OPEN HOUSE #3

WHO: Stakeholders and the public
WHAT: Invited to review draft regulations and approval process, and provide comments
WHEN: Fall 2018