



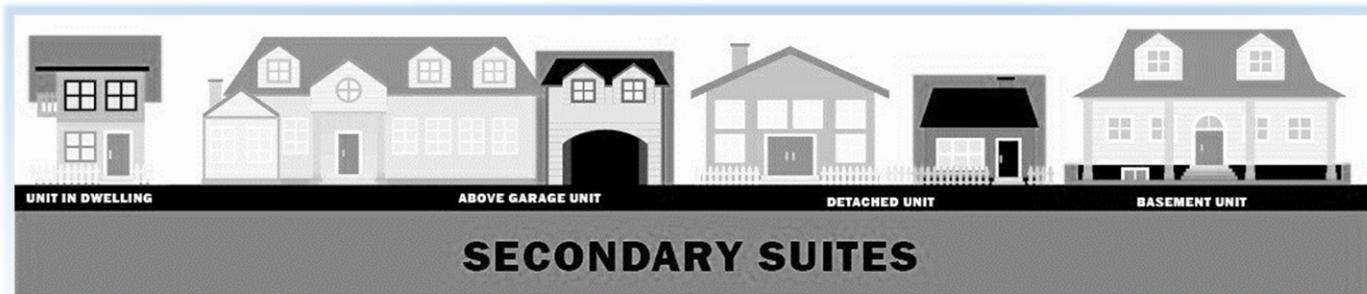
Secondary Suites in Foothills County

Open House Survey



WHAT WE HEARD

Summary Report
June 2023



WHAT WE HEARD – GENERAL SURVEY INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

April 17, 2019, Council adopted Bylaw 8/2019 approving amendments to the Land Use Bylaw allowing for Secondary Suites on residential parcels 2 acres in size and larger under the zoning Agricultural District, Agricultural Business District, and Country Residential District.

The current Secondary Suite provisions have been under implementation for 4 years. It is time for the County to review the provisions, engage with residents, and see what is working, what is not working, and how we can do better.

Public engagement was initiated in February 2023 with a *Preliminary Hamlet Survey* to residents within Hamlets in Foothills County to see if there was a desire for Secondary Suites on residential properties in Hamlets. This engagement process showed that there was an overall support to proceed with allowing Secondary Suites in most Hamlets with the exception of the Hamlet of Heritage Pointe and the Hamlet of Priddis Greens. Public engagement, pertaining to Secondary Suites, will exclude these two communities but continue for the remainder of the County at this time.

Our next step was to proceed with public engagement from the County residents on policy review topics such as acceptable forms of Secondary Suites, appropriate sizes of Secondary Suites, and where suites should be allowed in the County. Feedback was obtained through a series of open houses held throughout the County and a second survey pertaining more specifically to our policy review topics as described in detail below.

THE OPEN HOUSES

A series of three open houses were held throughout the County for review on the Secondary Suite policy. The following open houses were held:

- Tuesday, May 2, 2023 – Dewinton Community Hall - 4 pm to 7 pm
- Thursday, May 4, 2023 – Priddis Community Hall - 4 pm to 7 pm
- Tuesday, May 9, 2023 – Foothills Administration Building Council Chambers - 4 pm to 7 pm

The Open houses were designed to provide County residents with information on:

- Implementation of Secondary Suites in Foothills County since 2019.
- Important requirements and how to apply for a Secondary Suite.
- Current rules and regulations for Secondary Suites.
- Changes being considered and policy review topics.
- Benefits, challenges, and suggested solutions.
- Preliminary Hamlet Survey results and considerations for Secondary Suites in Hamlets.
- The process and next steps.
- How to provide feedback on our Secondary Suite policy review in Foothills County.

The number of residents in attendance at the open houses was very low (approximately 15 residents in total).

WHAT WE HEARD – GENERAL SURVEY INFORMATION

SURVEY OVERVIEW

A survey was developed to obtain feedback from the Foothills County residents to determine if we need to make any updates or amendments to our current policy on Secondary Suites.

Surveys were available for completion at the open houses and residents that were unable to attend were encouraged to complete the online survey on the County website. The online survey was available from May 2, 2023, and remained open for responses until the end of day May 23, 2023.

We received **106 completed surveys** providing feedback on Secondary Suites.

The survey questions were separated into four sections based on our policy review as follows:

- Forms of Secondary Suites
- Sizes of Secondary Suites
- Where Secondary Suites are allowed in the County
- Challenges and solutions

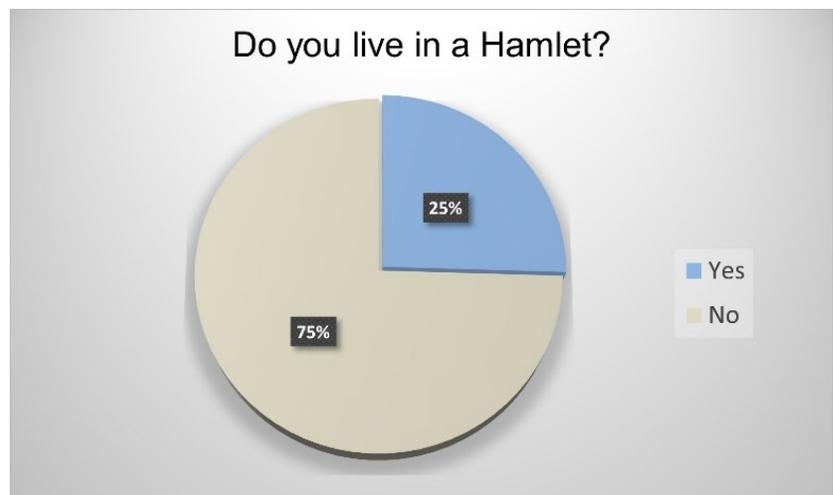
The questions in the survey follow these four policy review sections, however questions varied somewhat for residents in the County, where Secondary Suites have been allowed over the past 4 years, from those questions posed to Hamlet residents where there have been no allowances for suites to date.

OUR AUDIENCE

The survey was designed to obtain feedback from those residents living within Hamlet boundaries separate from those that live outside of the Hamlet boundaries in Foothills County.

We recognize that the challenges can be considerably different within Hamlet boundaries from those in the rural community, thus having separate survey questions allow the County to explore appropriate policy for each area separately.

79 surveys (75%) were completed by residents outside of Hamlet boundaries, while the other 25% were from properties within Hamlet boundaries.



The summary of results of the residents survey can be reviewed separately, in the information to follow the general survey information.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

POLICY REVIEW - FORMS OF SECONDARY SUITES - OUTSIDE HAMLET BOUNDARIES

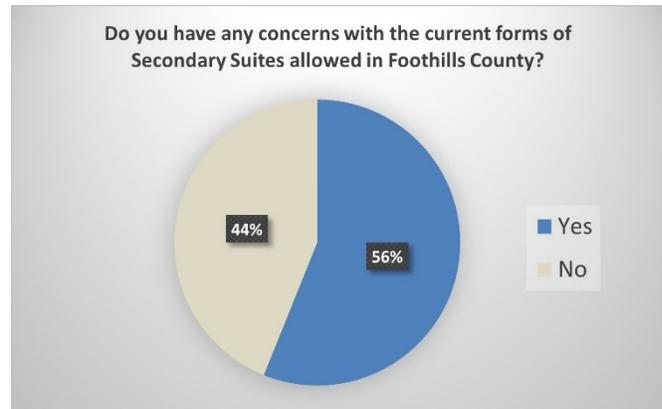
The County currently allows for only one Secondary Suites per parcel, either within the principal dwelling (Secondary Suite, Principal) or within an accessory building on the parcel (Secondary Suite, Accessory) on parcels over 2-acres in size outside of Hamlet boundaries.

Allowance for the principal and accessory secondary suites on parcels 2 acres in size and larger outside of Hamlet boundaries has been permitted since 2019.

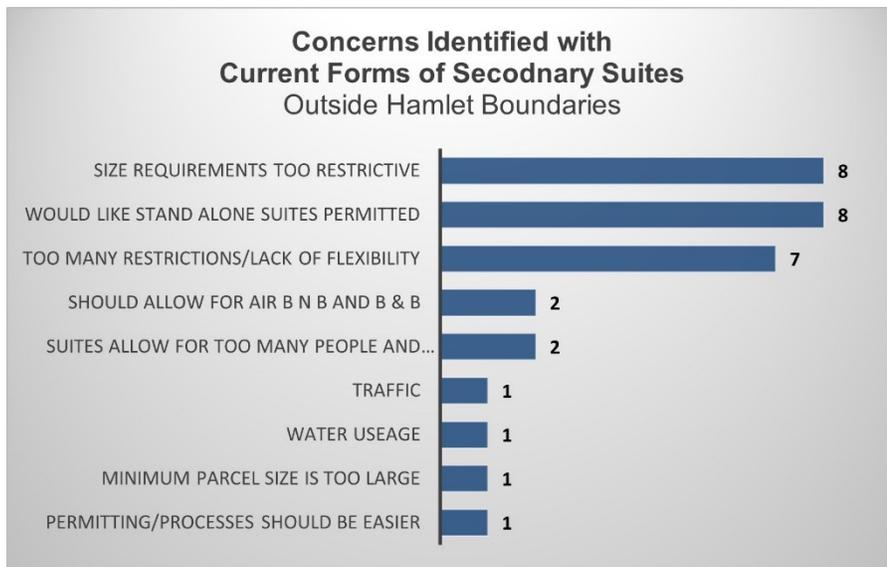
CURRENT FORMS OF SECONDARY SUITES

We asked residents outside of Hamlet boundaries if they have any concerns with the current forms of Secondary suites allowed in Foothills County.

56% of the residence said they had no concerns.



The following is a summary of concerns with current forms of Secondary Suites in Foothills County. noted by residents outside of Hamlet boundaries:



A complete list of the comments can be found under the respective questions in Schedule A.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

NEW FORMS - SECONDARY SUITE, DETACHED

One of the policies being explored is the allowance of stand-alone suites in Foothills County. Staff drafted a new definition to allow for discussion and feedback with residents at the open houses and as part of the survey.

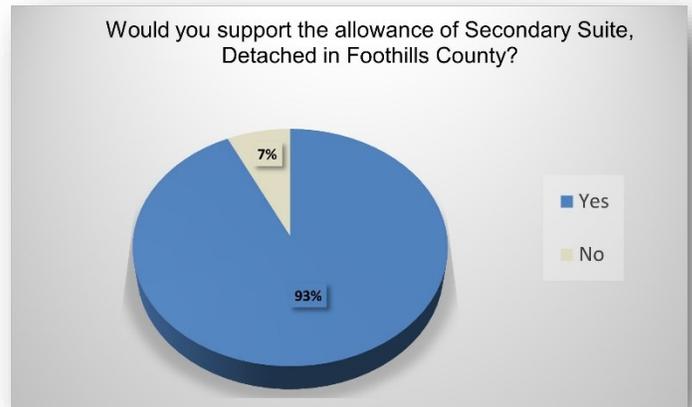
Detached or stand-alone suites are currently not permitted in Foothills County but could potentially be considered in the future if supported, with appropriate restrictions put in place.

DRAFT - SECONDARY SUITE, DETACHED means a *Dwelling, Secondary Suite*, which is detached from and subordinate to, the principal dwelling located on the same parcel.

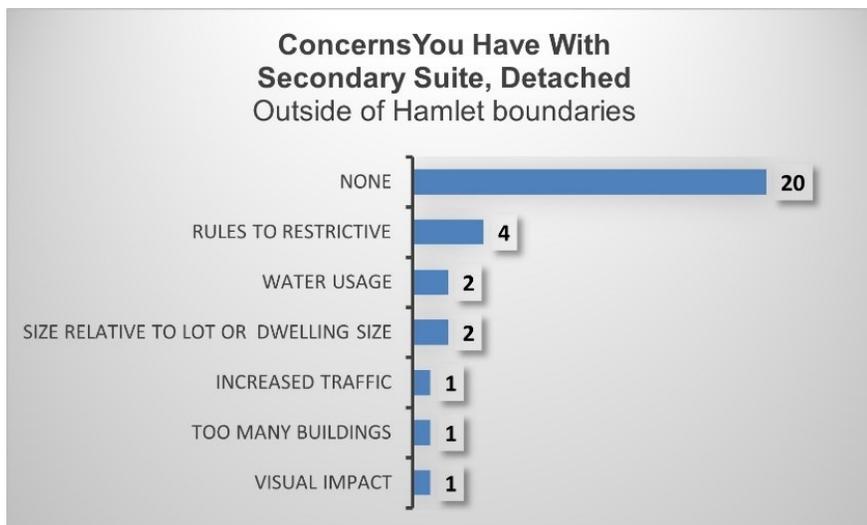
A Secondary Suite, Detached may be a stand-alone suite or a suite within or attached to an accessory building or detached garage on the same parcel as the principal dwelling.

We asked County residents situated outside of Hamlet boundaries, if they would support allowing detached Secondary Suites?

93% of the responses were in support.



We also asked those residents outside of Hamlet boundaries for any concerns with allowing Secondary Suite, Detached in Foothills County.



The concerns noted with allowing detached Secondary Suites in Foothills County were summarized here.

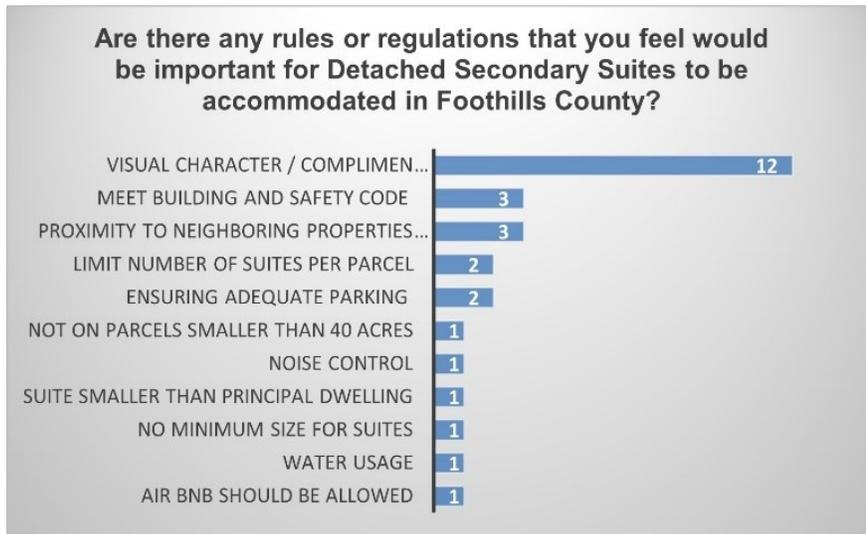
Of the 29 responses received, 20 residents indicated they had no concerns.

A complete list of responses received is attached under the respective question attached as Schedule A.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

As part of exploring the allowance of detached secondary suites, we understand that it is important to have appropriate rules and regulations in place to help implementation go smoothly. We asked residents what rules or regulations they felt would be important for detached secondary suites to be accommodated in Foothills County.

Rules or Regulations Important to accommodate Detached Secondary Suites



POLICY REVIEW - SIZE OF SECONDARY SUITES - OUTSIDE HAMLET BOUNDARIES

Currently, where Secondary Suite are allowed on parcels 2 acres in size or larger outside of Hamlet boundaries, size allowances are as follows:

Minimum size - 400 sq. ft.

- All types of Secondary Suites

Maximum size:

- **Secondary Suite, Principal** - no larger than 40% of the habitable area of the dwelling up to a maximum 900 sq. ft.
- **Secondary Suite, Accessory** - no larger than 50% of the gross floor area of the accessory building up to a maximum of 900 sq. ft.

Note: *The minimum habitable area for a single-family dwelling is:*

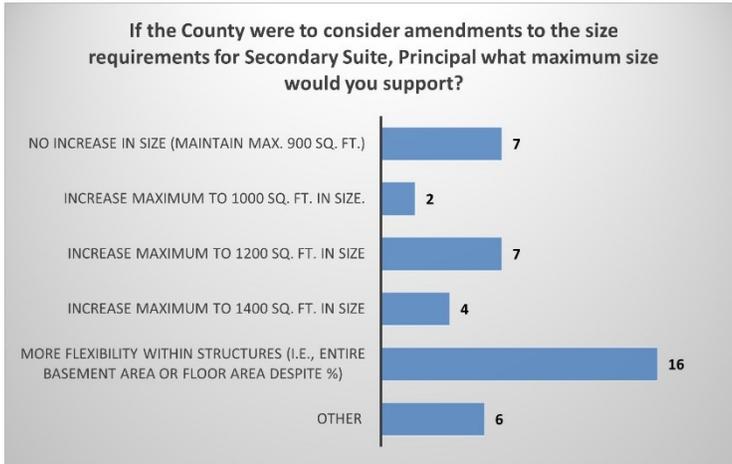
- 100 m² (1,077 sq. ft.) in most residential districts.
- 84 sq. m. (904.20 sq. ft.) in Residential Community District

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

SIZE OF SECONDARY SUITES - OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

We have provided several options for size allowances for Secondary Suites as part of the policy review. We asked residents outside of Hamlet Boundaries, what amendments to size requirements they would support.

Secondary Suite in Principal Dwellings:

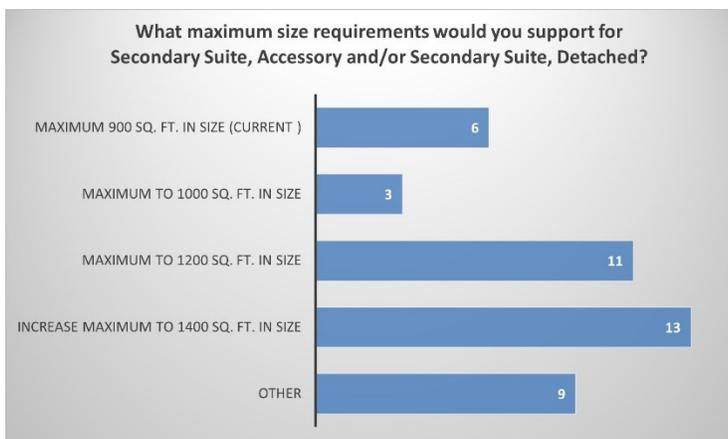


The majority of residents noted more flexibility within structures

Other suggestions for size included:

- Increased maximum to at least the size of the primary dwelling.
- Allow for entire basement or entire second floor/over garage area
- No minimum or maximum size limit.

Secondary Suite in Accessory Building or Detached:



The majority of the residents responded supporting an increase in the maximum size to 1,400 sq. ft. in size.

Other suggestions for size included:

- No minimum or maximum size limit.
- Increased maximum to at least the size of the primary dwelling.
- Allow for entire basement or entire second floor/over garage area
- No size restrictions.

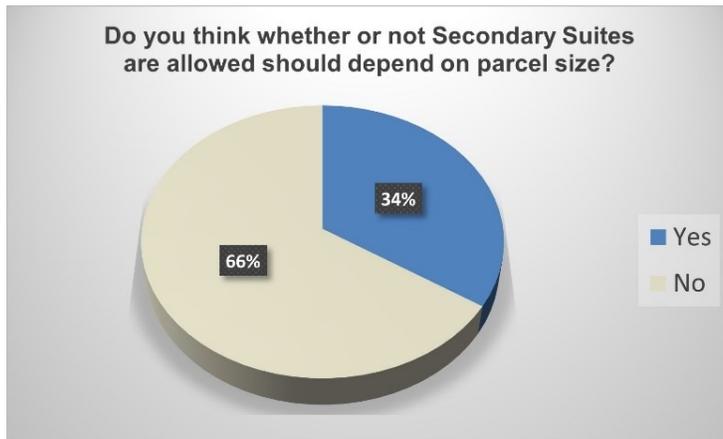
WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

WHERE WE CAN HAVE A SECONDARY SUITE - OUTSIDE HAMLET BOUNDARIES

Currently, some forms of Secondary Suites are allowed in Foothills County on residential parcels 2 acres in size and larger, where situated outside of hamlet boundaries. Foothills County residential parcels consist of a very diverse range of parcel sizes and land use districts.

We asked the residents outside of Hamlet boundaries if they felt that allowance of Secondary Suites should depend on parcel size.

Should the allowance of Secondary Suites be dependent on parcel size

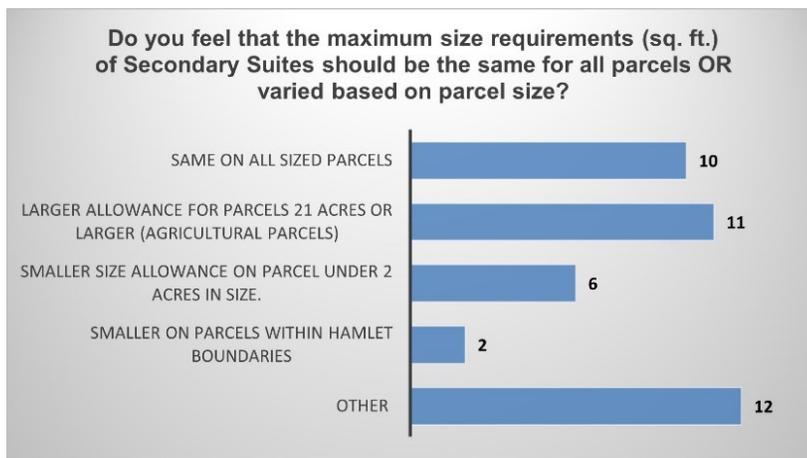


66% of the residents felt that allowance of Secondary Suites should NOT be dependent on parcel size.

A large number of other responses were submitted:

- All comments have been included in Schedule A under the corresponding question.

How should they vary based on parcel size??



Other responses included:

- Have more flexibility on parcels over 5 acres
- Detached suites should be limited to parcels 40 acres in size and larger
- Same suite size on all parcels so long as they can meet setback requirements
- Larger allowances for parcels over 2-acres and smaller sizes within Hamlets (except parcels over 5 acres)
- Suite size should be varied by % relative to parcel size
- There should be no limit on size

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

We also asked residents outside of Hamlet boundaries, what size of parcel they felt that a Secondary Suites should be allowed on.

Parcel size for Secondary Suite Principal

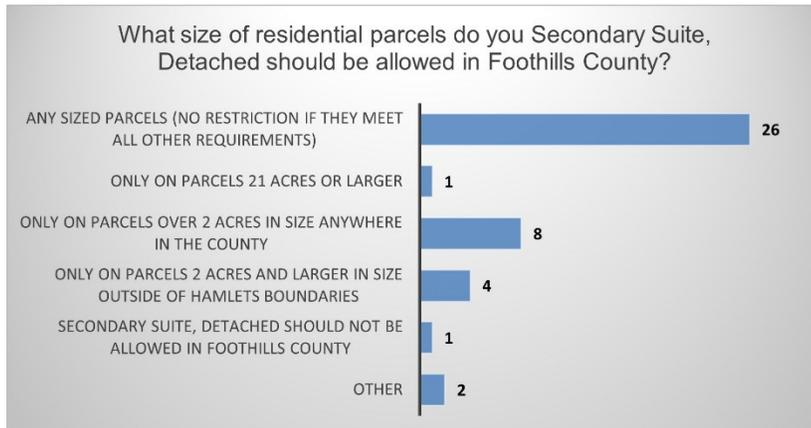


62% of the residents responded that Secondary Suite, Principal should be allowed on any size parcel.

Other responses included:

- So long as the total developed area of the parcel is not exceeding 40%.

Parcel size for Secondary Suite Detached



Again 62% of the residents responded that Secondary Suite, Detached should be allowed on any size parcel.

Other responses included:

- This is over governed.
- So long as the total developed area of the parcel is not exceeding 40%.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

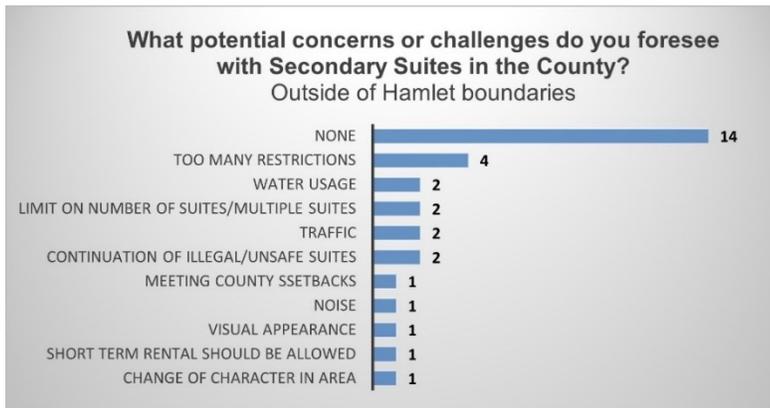
CHALLENGES WITH SECONDARY SUITES

In order to effectively update policy and improve implementation for Secondary Suites in Foothills County, it is important to recognize and understand all the concerns and challenges with Secondary Suites.

Residents were asked to identify potential concerns and challenges they foresee in the future with Secondary Suites.

In this exercise, we did not give a list of challenges for them to check all that apply, we asked them to provide us with their thoughts.

Potential Challenges with Secondary Suites Outside of Hamlet Boundaries



Potential Solutions To Alleviate Concerns

Staff created a list of rules or restrictions that could potentially alleviate some of the concerns noted with Secondary Suites. Residents were asked what rules or restriction they would like to see in place to help minimize or alleviate potential concerns. The residents were asked to choose all that were applicable.

Rules / Regulations to Alleviate Concerns Outside Hamlet Boundaries

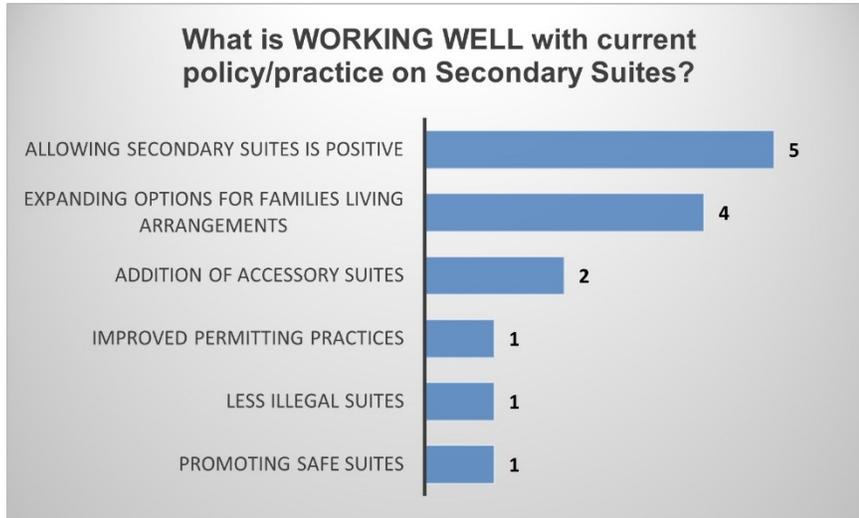


WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

What is working well – What is not Working Well - With Current Policies/Practices.

Secondary suites have been permitted in Foothills County on parcels over 2 acres in size outside of Hamlet boundaries for approximately four years. We felt it would be important to have the residents help to identify what has and has not been working well with current policies and practices on Secondary Suites.

Below is a summary of the comments received from the residents outside of Hamlet boundaries, on the question of “In your experience, what have you found **IS WORKING WELL** with our current policies/practice on Secondary Suites?”



Similarly, a summary of the comments received from the residents outside of Hamlet boundaries, on the question of “In your experience, what have you found **IS NOT WORKING WELL** with our current policies/practice on Secondary Suites?”



A full copy of all comments received are included in Schedule A to this document under the respective question.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

SCHEDULE A

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM RESIDENTS - OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES.

Do you have any concerns with the current forms of Secondary Suites allowed in Foothills County?

- I think they will benefit the County and those that live here.
- Too many families on one property. Too many vehicles, traffic, and noise.
- I would like to see stand alone suites permitted.
- Would like it to be easier to gain permission for a second detached dwelling/home for larger acreages that are not quite large enough to automatically be approved for a second dwelling. Would like to be able to put a smaller home on our property for my aging parents.
- I feel that the relatively small limit on the size of the Secondary Suites and the 50% floorspace restriction limits the uses of these secondary suites. I feel that the permitted size should be increased in accordance with the size of the parcel up to a permissible maximum,
- I think small separate residences should allowed, under a certain size, for family etc.
- my only concerns are the current restrictions, and the over-governing of what folks can do on their own property.
- Stand alone would be great
- Development permitting should be easier for building and adding additional living units. There should also be flexible options for micro living units such as tiny houses.
- Stand alone secondary suites from 150 to 1200 SQ FT should be allowed. With the housing challenges faced in our economy, this will help alleviate pressure in many ways
- I would like to see secondary suites allowed as a stand alone building on the property. I want my guest space to feel private not like they are staying above my garage or just below myself as I snore all night.
- They have a minimum size. Not allowed to air BNB or have a bed and breakfast.
- I am concerned the rules are too strict
- I believe a stand-alone suite should be allowed
- Secondary suites are currently too small and do not allow for revenue opportunities for the homeowner.
- I think there should be stand alone suites
- Current square foot requirements are very restrictive whether it be minimum or maximum allowable.
- More affordable housing, first home opportunities, senior living for family members, rental opportunities to help pay mortgage and expenses that seem to be skyrocketing with increased interest rates and cost of living. Simple air BNB opportunities that also help to cover higher cost of living.
- They are too restrictive to detached secondary suites, and the minimum parcel size is too large. If some cities and other municipalities can allow for fully detached secondary suites on a property, no bigger than a city residence- we should reduce the restrictions to match equal rules. There is a housing shortage in Canada- let's not let red tape further restrict people from affordable accommodation.
- My only concerns are the current restrictions, and the over-governing of what folks can do on their own property.
- To restricted
- Too restricting
- The size allowed seems too small
- There should not be a minimum size.
- Water usage

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- Size Requirements too Restrictive
- Would like Stand alone suites permitted
- Minimum parcel size is too large
- Too many restrictions/lack of flexibility
- Permitting/processes should be easier
- Should allow for Air B n B and B & B
- Suites in General allow for too many people, traffic, noise, and water usage

Concerns with Detached Secondary Suites

- I would be very happy if detached secondary suites were allowed as I would like to put a small, detached dwelling on my property for my aging parents.
- I am concerned with well water usage and traffic. There is already a detached secondary suite in our area, not sure how they got away with that.
- Visual.
- They should be less restrictions so that more people can have an extra income with the secondary suit or air BNB.
- I think it opens the door for great opportunities for everyone
- None, its no different then having a suite within an accessory building it just allows the building to be smaller and I don't see any issue with that,
- That the county will overreach with rules and regulations resulting in the detached suite being cost prohibitive and difficult to complete
- WE need more Secondary suites in order to decrease rent
- I think some RELATIONAL sizing rules should apply for secondary suites. If the primary residence is 2000sqft, the secondary has to be 2000sqft or under. There should also be some % figure on what the total area of the property that a secondary suite can cover. If you have 40 acres and a 6000sqft home, sure build a 4500sqft secondary suite. But if you got 0.25 acres and a 2000sqft main dwelling, that secondary suite will need to be on the smaller side so the entire property isn't under rooftop.
- Size limitations are too restrictive
- Don't make it too small
- Build to national building code.
- Water usage
- Too many buildings

Are there any rules or regulations that you feel would be important for Detached Secondary Suites to be accommodated in Foothills County?

- Visual character is important. As long as they are built to code and safe, I see no issues. I believe they should not have wheels - No trailers. There should be No minimum size for a secondary suite or a primary suite.
- Not allowed on parcels smaller then 40 acres.
- Possible some visual controls to ensure that they look good with the rest of the property.
- A Detached Secondary Suite should visually compliment the primary dwelling.
- Perhaps considering placement of suite if there are nearby neighbours whose privacy/views etc. could be impacted.
- Visual character, water usage, traffic
- Visual character should be in keeping with the area.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- Visual character is important, and size restrictions. And as long as noise and parking are controlled
- The secondary suite/building should be complimentary in appearance to the primary
- Probably proximity and suite should be smaller
- Set back requirements on acreages are still 15 meters from neighbouring properties. This can be hard for acreages of unusual shape and smaller sizes.
- The less regulation the better. Secondary suites on larger parcels should be limited to 2 story.
- Still remain safe, up to building code. Allotted parking space
- Would like it to be visually appealing
- They should follow a similar style to the property, they should not have wheels aka trailers. Aesthetically pleasing to keep the neighbourhoods nice. I think the colour could be important, so they do not stick out
- I think it should look similar to the main home

- Visual character of suite is important. Having shacks built on the property is not the objective.
- They should meet all building codes
- I think it should look similar to the main dwelling
- Air BNB additions
- I think there should be a maximum number of suites on a single property. i.e., It shouldn't be a full campground
- Think it should be limited to one suite.

If the County were to consider amendments to the size requirements for Secondary Suite, Principal what maximum size would you support?

- More flexibility and an increased maximum to at least the size of the primary dwelling. Thought should also be given to allowing larger "Secondary Suite, Detached" buildings on larger parcels. A maximum of 900 sq. feet is just too small.
- I'm unable to select multiple options here. I'd like more flexibility with structures (use entire basement size/ entire second floor over a garage) I'd also like to see at least an increase of up to 1000sqft for a stand-alone accessory dwelling
- Have no minimum or maximum
- Limit max to the size of the primary residence

- Any size should be okay, as long as it fits with community values. Tiny houses - great! mother-in-law suites - great! Does size really matter? Who cares if you still get your tax dollar. A little flexibility to landowners would be great - current laws do not represent freedom or allow families to be closer. It is expensive to live these days, multiple dwellings on a piece of land are okay in my books as long as we are not talking about hippy communes or encampments of any sort.
- I don't think there should be a size limit

If the County were to consider amendments, what maximum size requirements would you support for Secondary Suite, Accessory and/or Secondary Suite, Detached?

- Should not have a maximum and should be flexible within different structures.
- Not allowed would be my preference.
- Increase maximum to the same size as the Primary Dwelling.
- Have no minimum or maximum. This shouldn't matter, if you want to have a unit that is under 400 sq. ft., you'd think that the county would support that.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- Do we really need to govern size? Please let families do what they want... be closure together for less living expense.
- There should be no maximum restriction
- No size restrictions

Do you feel that the maximum size requirements (sq. ft.) of Secondary Suites should be the same for all parcels OR varied based on parcel size?

- If over 5 acres, flexible on size.
- 40 acres min for detached.
- Same size for all parcels so long as it can meet set back requirements.
- Larger allowances for any parcel over two acres. Smaller sizes within the Hamlet and larger sizes for 5 acres and over.
- Should vary by parcel but not be bigger than the principal dwelling
- We know we are facing a housing crisis and an affordability crisis, so if there is space, it could be larger to house more people.
- Should be varied, based on parcel size. I.e., 10-acre parcel could allow a 1,000 sq. ft. dwelling then increase/decrease according to land size.
- I feel that no matter the land size you should be able to build as small as you'd like on your own property. If you only want a small guest accommodation even though you're on 80 acres you should be able to. But if you have a parcel under 2 acres obviously a smaller suite makes more sense. I think the minimum size requirement should be dropped to 200sqft.
- Varied based on parcel size
- As stated previously- this should be % relational to parcel size.
- This should not be a law at all
- There should be no size limit other than the usual distance from property lines etc.

Do you think whether or not Secondary Suites are allowed should depend on parcel size?

- Suites make more sense in small hamlets and denser living arrangements or when parcels are 40 acres and larger
- I think lot coverage and setbacks should control the sizes to certain degree
- Under 2 acres perhaps a tiny home might be best. Max of 900sq ft.
- The whole lot doesn't need to be full of buildings.
- If a parcel size is under a half an acre, this might be too small and crowded.
- As long as the property can provide equal amenities and utilities and the secondary suite is not larger than the original home, I have no concerns.
- Size of parcel would affect the neighbours
- Yes, for detached suite should be based on parcel size
- But it also depends on the kind of suite to be built. Building a basement suite doesn't remove grass and plants, neither does a garage suite. Building an entirely separate structure does, so if its a small parcel, consideration should be taken for total covered area.
- I think the City of Calgary has some good rules when it comes to a secondary suite. In order to have a secondary suite you need to provide adequate parking for the suite, private outdoor space no smaller than I believe 1m x 5m (unsure on actual amount). If you are able to construct a suite while still providing parking and private outdoor space, I do not think you should be restricted to parcel size. Affording property is getting harder and harder, kids are living at home longer, parents are moving in with kids to help with the grand kids, young adults are looking for non traditional places to rent that won't break the bank.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- With the cost of living rising and the shortage of housing we should be flexible
- I think everyone should have the opportunity to have a secondary suite on their property. Not everyone can afford 100's of acres, that should not limit them on earning additional income or housing their in-laws or having a live-in nanny or caretaker
- Secondary suites should be allowed on all parcel sizes
- People are struggling, restrictive allowances diminish the ability to house extended family members, create revenue generating opportunities, and are unfair given that we own the premises.
- No property in the county is so small that a modest secondary suite can't be built.
- See all of my comments above
- If the parcel has the room, it should be allowed
- Suites should be allowed regardless of parcel size
- There is a serious housing crisis in Canada. If the MD can be a leader, they will benefit greatly and can promote it to their advantage
- Should be a minimum size acreage before allowing secondary suites, over 21 acres or something
- If a homeowner/landowner would like to build a secondary suite over a detached garage or building, I wouldn't have an issue if it was on a smaller acreage provided it was built to certain standards/sizes.

What size of residential parcels do you feel Secondary Suite, Principal, Accessory, and/or Detached should be allowed on in Foothills County?

- Any, as long as the total developed area of the parcel is not exceeding 40% covered.
- This is over governed.

In your experience, what have you found IS WORKING WELL with our current policies/practice on Secondary Suites?

- It's good that in this housing crisis there are more options for people to live
- Addition of secondary suites in accessory buildings.
- I appreciate that the county is working towards making secondary suites safe.
- The allowance of secondary suites
- Nothing.
- It has allowed for better permitting practices and less illegal suites. I believe that the maximum sq footage is too low and the minimum is too high.
- I haven't seen any issues where I know of secondary suites.
- Enforcement is lacking.
- The fact that they have been allowed is a positive thing.
- I think it's good to allow aging family members an option, plus employees on farms need places to stay
- We haven't tried the secondary suite but would be nice to have detached unit for elderly parents separate from our house or occasionally guest house, or rental
- From what I can tell it seems reasonable.
- The fact that they are allowed. Unfortunately, with strict ruling.
- The addition of secondary suites in accessory buildings

- Expansion of restrictive by-laws that allow landowners more freedom is beginning to work well.
- No

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- Allowing them is a step in the right direction. We just need to continue reducing the red tape.
- What we can and can't do is too restricted.
- Allowing them
- I think secondary suites should be encouraged to help provide families with other options for living arrangement for children/parents.

In your experience, what have you found is NOT WORKING WELL with our current policies/practice on Secondary Suites?

- The minimum size requirement - they should be any size. Ability to have a bed & breakfast or short-term vacation rentals within the secondary suite.
- The size of allowable secondary suites. Especially for an existing building (i.e., barn or garage), there should be no maximum sq. ft. The secondary suite should be able to have whatever size sq. ft it already is.
- Too much traffic, vehicles parked. People in neighboring properties and pets (dogs and noise)
- Too restrictive on what you are allowed to do with your suite. I believe that the restrictions on short term vacation or Airbnb's is too restrictive.
- Perhaps larger suites would help accommodate families with children better?
- There should be more flexibility for secondary suites on parcels of land larger than 10+ acres. Detached would be helpful and less restrictions on size and ratio to accessory buildings etc.
- Enforcement
- Permit applications take too long to process, and the allowed maximum size is too small.
- Need to have detached options
- Too many restrictions for the secondary suite, particularly the size
- Making the development permit and the over all processing process more streamlined would be nice. And a longer window for construction from start to finish. 3 years would be nice to have to start the permits to getting it all done, in case you are doing it yourself.
- Would like more leeway to add a detached cabin on a 10-acre property.
- The size requirements, the rental allowance are the 2 biggest issues I feel.
- There should not be a minimum size
- How strict the rules are, not allowing detached secondary suites, the minimum size of the units - 400 sq. ft. is too big! Some people would like to have a tiny home on their land and those range from 150-250 sq. ft. I think a min of 400 sq. ft. is not accommodating. I believe you should be able to use your secondary suite as a short-term vacation rental or bed and breakfast. There needs to be more flexibility within the county for families to have the ability to earn extra income, the housing market is through the roof, and it is getting more and more difficult to keep up.
- As an example, I don't understand why suites are allowed if they are attached to a garage but not stand alone. Stand alone doesn't take up as much space and in some instances depending on the parcel looks cleaner. I feel in order to have an approved suite you have to go bigger which doesn't really make sense to me
- To restricting to what you can build. It doesn't make sense that you can build a 900 sq ft garage and put a 900 sq ft suite above it but you can't build a nice little 900 sq ft bungalow. A little bungalow is much more appealing in my opinion
- Overreaching bureaucracy and review processes to meet current restrictions is not working well.
- We need to increase allowance on secondary suites

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

- Restrictiveness on sizing, property size, and where a secondary suite can be located are too restrictive currently. With relaxation- many more residences could be added to the county.
- You are over governing these policies. When are the rights of citizens/landowners?
- To restricted
- Having to get approval from neighbors
- I don't believe there should be a minimum size. I also believe you should be able to use it as a short-term rental
- No real issue with existing policies, although may want to increase the size permitted.

What potential concerns or challenges do you foresee with Secondary Suites in the County?

- The rules around secondary suites are too strict.
- I believe that Short term rentals should be allowed especially in a secondary suite where the owner lives on the property
- Neighbours might complain. Some people don't like change and wouldn't want their neighbours building rental properties etc.
- Cluttered, ugly dwellings on smaller lots, water usage issues
- None from my perspective. We have land and the need to support family members and/or generate income to supplement property taxes.
- As long as noise & traffic is addressed
- Illegal suites being built because the system is the burdensome and restrictive.
- Over crowding private land. Parcels under 2 acres should have a 2-person occupancy limit
- The continuation of illegal (possibly unsafe) Construction of suites because people can't/won't meet the current requirements, so they don't bother with permits on their own land.
- Too much traffic
- I foresee residents and owners being confused and burdened by unnecessary restrictions.
- Only when people take things to the extreme. There should be a limit to the quantity of secondary suites on the property.
- The benefits to families will outweigh any challenges
- County setbacks.
- Well water usage
- Perhaps people wanting multiple suites on their property?

Are there additional rules or restrictions that you would like to see in place for Secondary Suites that would help to minimize or alleviate any of your potential concerns with Secondary Suites?

- Detached units should be same colour, be of similar style to primary residence. Blend in with the property.
- Less fees during the application, development, and building
- The detached suites should blend in with the main property. Minimum sizes should be lowered to 250ft. The secondary suites are a great opportunity for residents to utilize for home-based businesses and there are already restrictions in place for vehicle traffic that could be implemented. The same setbacks for primary residence should apply to secondary unless appealed for good reason. Ultimately you just don't want buildings up against another persons property or right of ways. I believe that architectural controls would dictate the distance from principal dwellings.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF HAMLET BOUNDARIES

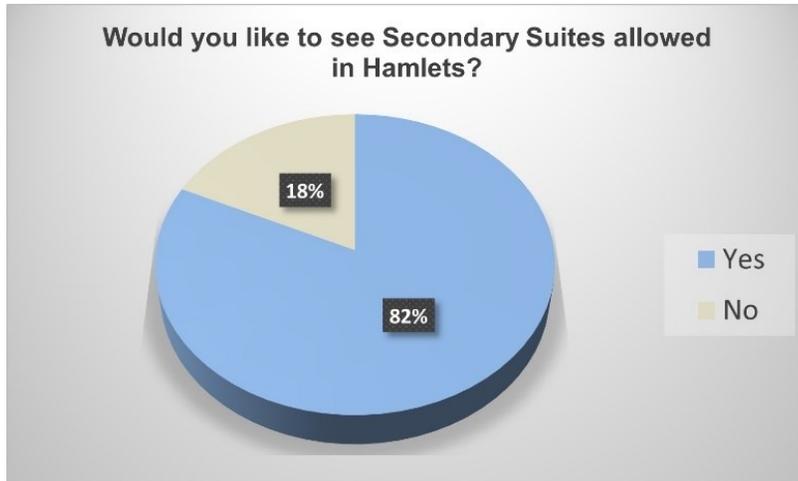
- It should compliment the primary residence.
- Aesthetics are important, make sure they suit the neighbourhood.
- The less restrictions for the homeowner the better

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

POLICY REVIEW - FORMS OF SECONDARY SUITES IN HAMLETS

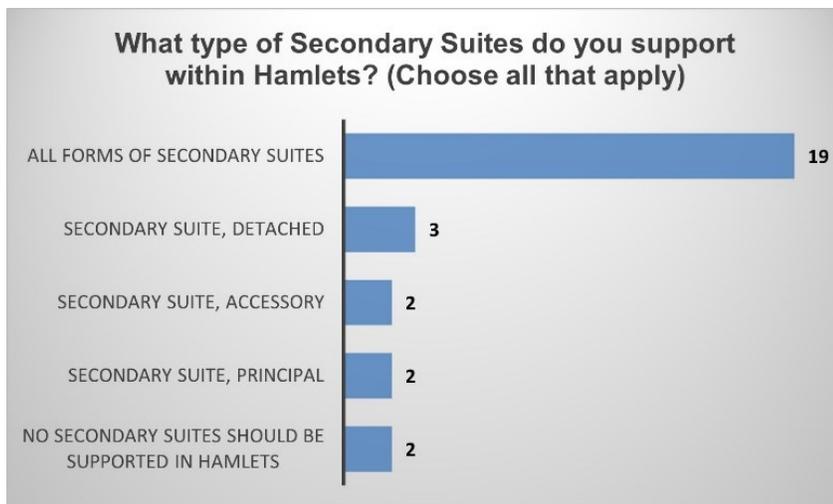
Secondary Suites have not been permitted within Hamlet boundaries to date. We initiated the Hamlet survey with a broader question of overall support of Secondary Suites in Hamlets with those participating in this round of public engagement.

Do Hamlet residents support Secondary Suites?



82% of the Hamlet residents responded in favor of allowing for Secondary Suites in Hamlets.

As part of the policy review, we wanted to explore what forms of Secondary Suites would be supported in Hamlets. We asked Hamlet residents what forms of Secondary Suites they would support within Hamlet Boundaries.



The majority of the residents responded supporting all forms of Secondary Suites.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

POLICY REVIEW - SIZE OF SECONDARY SUITES IN HAMLETS

Currently, Secondary Suites are not permitted within Hamlet boundaries. Where Secondary Suite are allowed on parcels 2 acres in size or larger outside of Hamlet boundaries, size allowances are as follows:

Minimum size - 400 sq. ft.

- All types of Secondary Suites

Maximum size:

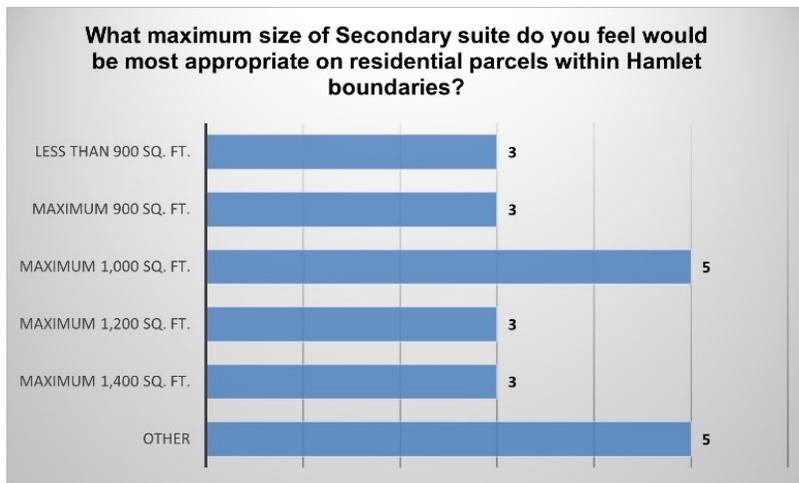
- **Secondary Suite, Principal** - no larger than 40% of the habitable area of the dwelling up to a maximum 900 sq. ft.
- **Secondary Suite, Accessory** - no larger than 50% of the gross floor area of the accessory building up to a maximum of 900 sq. ft.

Note: *The minimum habitable area for a single-family dwelling is:*

- 100 m² (1,077 sq. ft.) in most residential districts.
- 84 sq. m. (904.20 sq. ft.) in Residential Community District

We asked Hamlet residents what the maximum size of Secondary Suites would be most appropriate in Hamlet boundaries.

Maximum size of Secondary Suites Hamlet boundaries



The majority of the residents responded supporting 1000 sq. ft. as the most appropriate maximum size or other ideas.

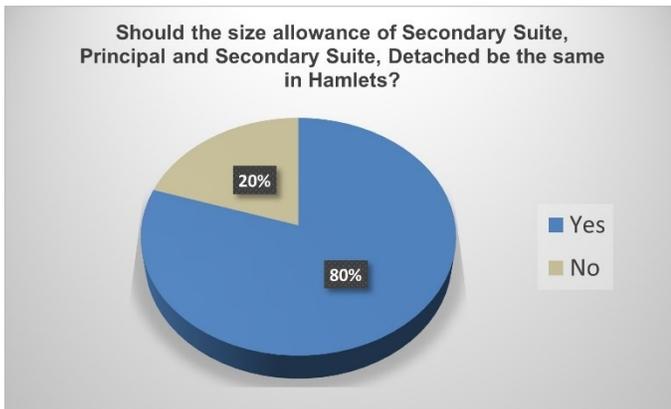
Other responses under this question included:

- I think the acceptable size of a secondary suite would be dependent on the space available on the parcel on which they plan to build.
- Depends on the size of the parcel.
- Size of secondary suite would be dependent on size of residential structure and reason for suite being included.
- This is challenging as the homes in Priddis range from very small (like ours which the main floor is only 700 sq ft) all the way up to some being 4000 sq ft. The larger homes could easily accommodate a larger secondary suite. Perhaps it the maximums should be removed and simply be maximum of 50% of residence.
- All floors, including any basement, not to exceed 1000 sq.ft.
- None

We also asked Hamlet residents if they felt the size allowance of secondary suites in the principal dwelling and detached secondary suites should be the same.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

Secondary Suites sizes in Hamlet based on form



80% of the residents responded that they felt the size of Secondary Suites should be the same for those within the principal dwelling as detached forms.

Other responses included:

- Should depend on parcel size.
- Smaller lots = smaller suites.
- Stay the same for ease and consistency.
- Every size is going to be unique to said property.

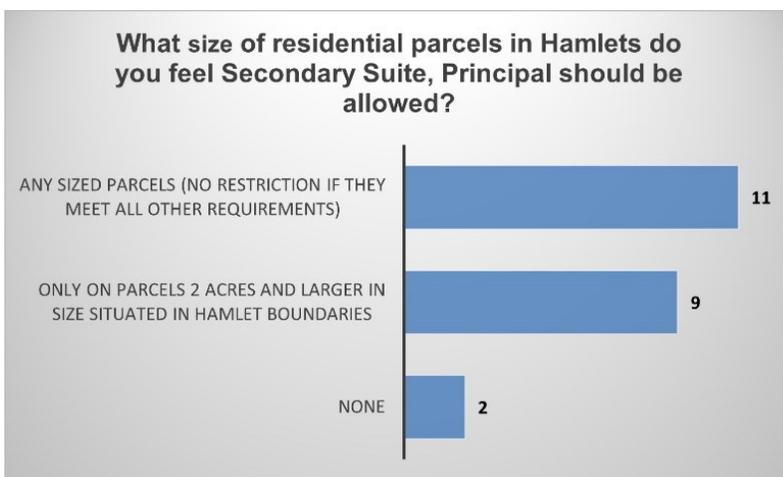
POLICY REVIEW - WHERE WE CAN HAVE A SECONDARY SUITE IN HAMLETS

Outside of Hamlet Boundaries

Currently, some forms of Secondary Suites are allowed in Foothills County on residential parcels 2 acres in size and larger, where situated outside of hamlet boundaries.

In exploring the allowance of Secondary Suites on parcels under 2 acres in size within some hamlets and clustered communities (not including the Hamlet of Heritage Pointe and Priddis Greens), we asked Hamlet residents what size of parcel they felt were appropriate for allowance of Secondary Suites.

Parcel size for Secondary Suite, Principle

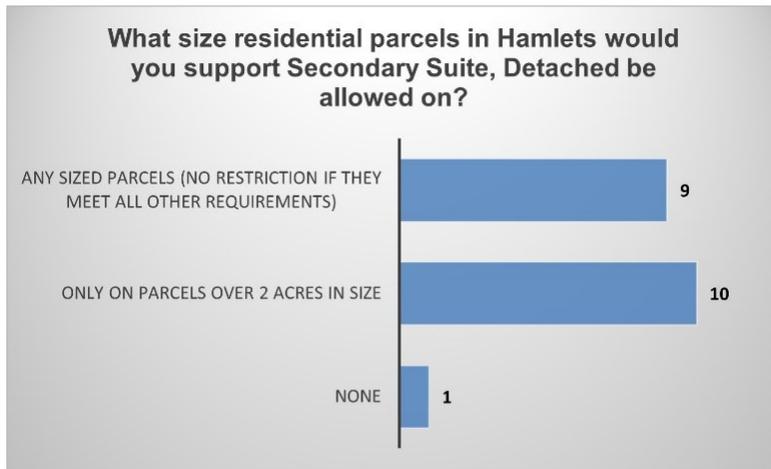


Other Responses:

- Larger parcels (over 10 acres) where the neighborhood or street, cul-de-sac is not impacted by doubling the number of residents within that area.
- None allowed

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

Parcel size for Secondary Suite, Detached



Other Responses:

- Anything over an acre
- Over 20 acres
- None allowed

CHALLENGES WITH SECONDARY SUITES IN HAMLET BOUNDARIES

In order to effectively update policy and improve implementation for Secondary Suites in Foothills County, it is important to recognize and understand all the concerns and challenges with Secondary Suites.

When originally asking Hamlet residents if they support Secondary Suites in their community, we provided a list of common challenges with Secondary Suites and asked residents what their main concerns or anticipate challenges with having Secondary Suites might be.

Concerns with Secondary Suites within Hamlet boundaries



Seven (7) Residents responded that they had no concerns.

Other Responses:

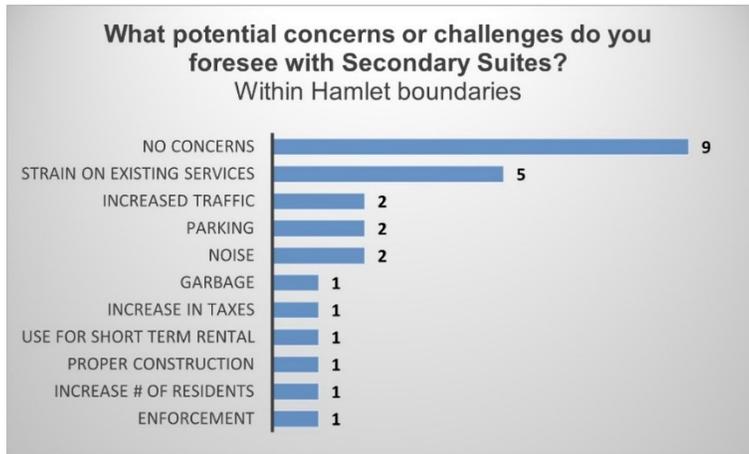
- Suites used as short-term rentals.
- That other properties will all consider secondary suites, and it will double the density
- I'm concerned the county will not be able to keep up with maintaining the roads within the hamlet with increased traffic.

Residents both outside of Hamlet boundaries and within Hamlets throughout the County were asked to identify potential concerns and challenges they foresee in the future with Secondary Suites.

In this exercise, we did not give a list of challenges for them to check all that apply, we asked them to provide us with their thoughts.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

Potential Challenges with Secondary Suites Within Hamlet Boundaries



Rules / Regulations to Alleviate Concerns Within Hamlet Boundaries



Some residents provided other responses to this question.

A full copy of all comments received are included in Schedule A to this document under the respective question.

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM RESIDENTS - WITHIN HAMLET BOUNDARIES

What are your main concerns, or anticipated challenges with having Secondary Suites in your community?

- I'm concerned the county will not be able to keep up with maintaining the roads within the hamlet with increased traffic.
- That other properties will all consider secondary suites, and it will double the density
- Secondary suite used as short-term rentals

What maximum size of Secondary suite do you feel would be most appropriate on residential parcels within Hamlet boundaries?

- I think the acceptable size of a secondary suite would be dependant on the space available on the parcel on which they plan to build.
- All floors, including any basement, not to exceed 1000 sq.ft.
- Depends on the size of the parcel.
- Size of secondary suite would be dependent on size of residential structure and reason for suite being included.
- This is challenging as the homes in Priddis range from very small (like ours which the main floor is only 700 sq ft) all the way up to some being 4000 sq ft. The larger homes could easily accommodate a larger secondary suite. Perhaps if the maximums should be removed and simply be maximum of 50% of residence.

Should the size allowance of Secondary Suite, Principal and Secondary Suites, Accessory or Secondary Suite, Detached be the same in Hamlets?

- Depending on parcel size.
- Every size is going to be unique to said property
- Would probably be easiest for consistency for them to be the same.
- Smaller lots = smaller suites

What size of residential parcels in Hamlets do you feel Secondary Suite, Principal should be allowed?

- Larger parcels (over 10 acres) where the neighbourhood or street, cul-de-sac is not impacted by doubling the number of residents within that area

What size residential parcels in Hamlets would you support Secondary Suite, Detached be allowed on?

- Over 20 acres
- Anything over an acre.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS WITHIN HAMLETS

What potential concerns or challenges do you foresee with Secondary Suites in your community?

- Increased strain on existing roadways and utilities.
- Water supply, traffic on our cul-de-sac. Double the residents for our neighborhood.
- Increase property taxes, water and sewer needs, and proper construction.
- Secondary suites used as short-term rentals thus creating more noise.
- Services - water and sewage. Enforcement of maintenance.
- Neighbours not enjoying new structures, or increased traffic, parking etc.
- Secondary suites are a way for seniors to continue to live at home, families to stay together i.e. university students to have reasonable accommodation while living in their own space, struggling families to add to their income with a rental space.
- Parking, noise, and garbage.

Are there rules, restrictions, or policies that you would like to see for Secondary Suites in Hamlets that would help to minimize or resolve any potential concerns with Secondary Suites in your community?

- No restrictions.
- Don't allow.
- All concerning.

WHAT WE HEARD – GENERAL SURVEY INFORMATION

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This summary report of “What We Heard” from the Secondary Suite survey will help inform staff on what the residents would like to see and what some of the challenges are. The feedback will be used to develop and update policy on Secondary Suites for future implementation.

A copy of this summary will be scheduled to go before Council in the fall along with proposed policy amendments for Secondary suites. Future Land Use Bylaw amendments to Secondary Suites will go before Council in a public hearing, giving the residents another opportunity for feedback.

Information will be updated on the Secondary Suite portion of the website at www.foothillscountyab.ca.

Below is the proposed process and timeline for our review on Secondary Suites.

