



City of Maple Ridge

TO: Her Worship Mayor Nicole Read
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Detached Garden Suites (DGS) Pilot Project – Look-Book Concepts

MEETING DATE: June 19, 2018
FILE NO: 2018-200-RZ
MEETING: Workshop

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the May 1, 2018 workshop, Council endorsed a process and timeline for the DGS Pilot Project. The project is intended to create tangible examples of DGS units to showcase the following:

- Allow a Secondary Suite and a DGS on the same lot;
- Allow a DGS to be a minimum of 20.3m² (219 ft²) in size; and
- Allow a DGS to be up to 140m² (1500 ft²) in size or 15% of the lot area, whichever is less.

Initial steps in the endorsed DGS Pilot Project process involved identifying property owners who were able to commit to the design and construction of a DGS within a short timeframe, followed by preparation of a Look-Book conceptual design document.

Notifications through newspaper advertisement and social media were used to solicit interest in participating in the Pilot Project. About 60 inquiries were received, culminating in a shortlist of six potential test cases that met the criteria. Of those, four test cases are proposed to be advanced through the next phases of the project. These four test cases are identified in the attached Look-Book (Appendix A).

This report discusses the outcomes of the steps taken so far in the DGS Pilot Project and also presents the Look-Book document for Council to review and consider for endorsement. Upon receiving Council endorsement of the Look-Book, the next steps will involve bringing Zoning Bylaw text amendments to Council for First and Second Reading on June 26th, with an aim to proceed to Public Hearing and Third Reading by the end of July. As indicated in the May 1st Pilot Project process Council workshop report, proceeding with bylaw readings as next steps is intended to provide property owners with a reasonable assurance of Council support before proceeding with preparation of building permit plans.

Additionally, this report presents a proposed Phase II for the DGS Pilot Project to seek potential participants interested in constructing smaller DGS units between 20.3m² (219 ft²) and 36m² (387 ft²) as well as two or three urban examples of larger DGS units sized at 15% of the lot area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT pursuant with the previously endorsed DGS Pilot Project process, that staff be directed to prepare zone amending bylaws for the test cases identified in the DGS Pilot Project Look-Book dated June 2018;

2. AND THAT staff be directed to proceed with Phase II of the DGS Pilot Project, as outlined in the report titled Detached Garden Suite Pilot Project – Look-Book Concepts, dated June 19, 2018.

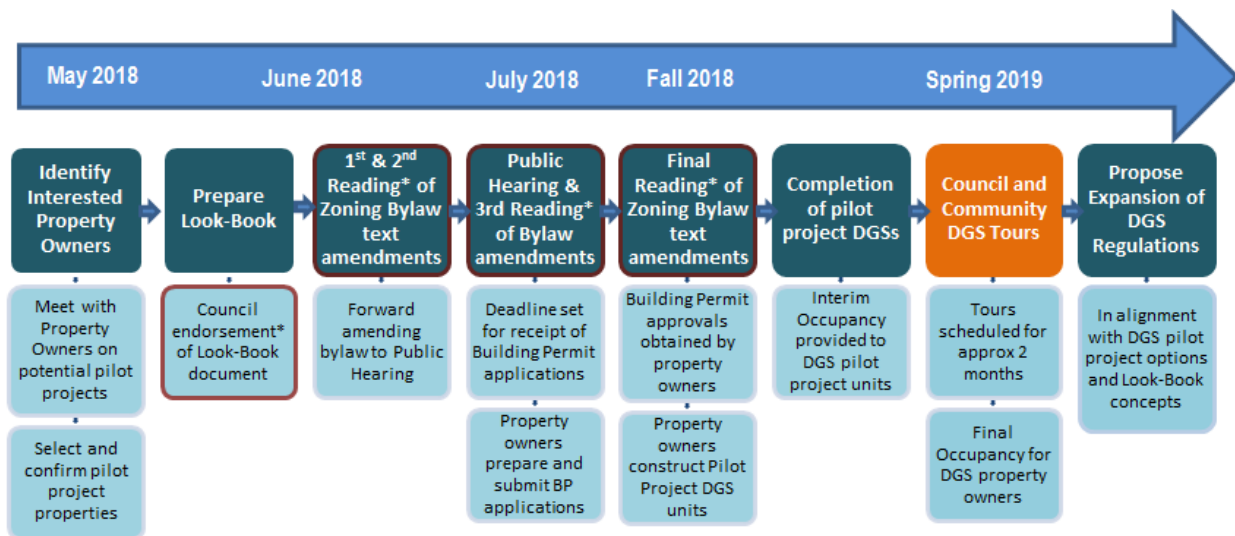
1.0 BACKGROUND:

A review of the Zoning Bylaw regulations for DGS and Secondary Suites (SS) was initiated through Council direction from the August 29, 2016 workshop. Public consultation on potential expanded options for SS and DGS was undertaken in November 2017 with a DGS workshop and a SS and DGS public open house. The outcomes of the public consultation were presented to Council at the February 6, 2018 workshop, wherein exploration of a pilot project was initiated through a Council resolution.

Council endorsed a process and timeline for the DGS Pilot Project at the May 1, 2018 workshop. The project is intended to create tangible examples to showcase the following:

- Secondary Suite and a DGS on the same lot;
- DGS size to be a minimum of 20.3m² (219 ft²); and
- DGS size to be up to 140m² (1500 ft²) or 15% of the lot area, whichever is less.

The process and timeline for the DGS Pilot Project is shown in the diagram below.



* Council consideration required

2.0 DISCUSSION

Notification of the DGS Pilot Project was sent out, with information on project details and a response deadline of May 3, 2018, through a variety of methods including:

- Updating the DGS regulatory review webpage with a homepage banner to connect directly to the DGS webpage;
- The City's FaceBook page and Twitter;
- Email to attendees of the November 2017 open house event who requested they be kept updated on this process;
- A newspaper advertisement in the Maple Ridge news on May 4, 2018.

The notifications asked interested property owners to respond with their address, intended Pilot Project option, and contact information. Approximately 60 inquiries of interest have been received to date on potential participation in the project, the majority of which expressed interest in the 140m² (1500 ft²) DGS option.

The following set of criteria was used to select participant properties:

- Property owners who were first to confirm interest were given priority consideration;
- Feasibility of property for one of the three Pilot Project options;
- Project will contribute to a wide range of examples, both urban and rural, depicting a variety of sizes, DGS forms and designs;
- Owners able to meet Pilot Project deadlines and commit to:
 - Payment up to \$1,000 to contribute to costs for preparation of Look-Book document,;
 - Signing a Housing Agreement Bylaw that will be registered on the property title;
 - Allowing Council and the community to tour DGS units for a period of two months prior to receiving final occupancy;
 - Gifting approved building permit plans to the City to be used as pre-approved plans as an option for future DGS property owners.

Properties within the Agricultural Land Reserve were excluded due to the restrictions and complexities for accessory dwelling units in the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* that include:

- The accessory unit to be located above an existing building;
- A maximum size limit of less than 90m² (968 ft²);
- A requirement that the property must have farm status.

It was also determined that the extra time it would take for property owners to obtain ALC approval for a DGS on farm property would make participation within the tight project timelines unfeasible.

2.1 Participating Property Owners

The vast majority of inquiries were from property owners with large acreage lots with an interest in constructing a 140m² (1500 ft²) DGS as a residence for family members. Three of the project participant examples are representative of the family situations that have been common amongst most of the pilot project inquiries, wherein the parents are intending to live in the principal dwelling unit and the adult children and grandchildren will reside in the newly constructed DGS. Very few inquiries were received with regard to constructing an urban example of a DGS up to 15% of the lot area, a SS and DGS on the same property, or on the option to construct a small 20.3m² (219 ft²) DGS.

An interdepartmental working group met and discussed a shortlist of potential participants. After working through the selection criteria with the inquiries received, a total of six properties were chosen for the pilot project and the particulars for each are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Properties Selected for Participation in DGS Pilot Project

	Neighbourhood	Lot Size	Zoning	Site Conditions	DGS Proposal
1.	Rural - Whispering Falls	1.05 acres	RS-2	water, septic, no-build area for septic	140 m ² (1500 ft ²) unit
2.	Rural - Yennadon	1 acre	RS-2	water, septic, floodplain, Wildfire DP Area	140 m ² (1500 ft ²) unit
3.	Rural - Academy Park	1 acre	RS-2	water, septic, outside Urban Containment Boundary	140 m ² (1500 ft ²) unit
4.	Urban - Albion Area	588.30m ²	RS-1b	fully serviced, new subdivision, vacant lot	DGS size 47.6m ² (512 ft ²) and SS on same lot
5.	Urban - Hammond Area	629.5m ²	RS-1	fully serviced lot	DGS size 94m ² (1016 ft ²) over garage and SS on same lot
6.	Rural - Ruskin Area	1.72 ha	RS-3	well water, septic	20.3 m ² (219 ft ²) unit

Note: Six properties were initially selected for participation in the DGS Pilot Project process and early on two properties (#5 and #6) either declined or withdrew from participation.

The property owner for the #6 property above determined very early on that the estimated cost for constructing a second well on the lot to service the DGS would make the construction cost for such a small unit too high and declined the offer to participate. Additionally, the property owner for #5 withdrew from participation early in the process. A total of four properties (#1 through #4) continue to remain in the project.

Of the four properties that are remaining in the Pilot Project, the first three in the table above are on one acre rural properties and each property owner intends to construct the maximum permitted size unit of 140m² (1500 ft²). Two of the units will be above a garage, whereas one will be a single storey at grade. Also, the location of the DGS units will differ on each property, with one in the front yard, one in the exterior side yard, and one at the rear, due to the location of existing buildings and configurations of each site.

The #4 property in Table 1 above is an RS1-b urban lot located in a recently completed subdivision in the Albion Area. The lot is currently vacant and the SS and DGS will be constructed along with the principal dwelling unit.

2.2 Look-Book Information Gathering Process

Gathering and compiling information for the Look-Book (Appendix A) involved the following steps:

- Meeting with each property owner to go through the project commitments outlined in the Letter of Agreement (Appendix B) and provide additional information that will be helpful through the process such as:
 - DGS building permit guide;
 - SS building permit guide (if applicable);
 - Erecting sign on property for Zoning Bylaw text amendment;
 - A list of key dates and deadlines;
 - Handouts (if applicable) for Tree Bylaw and Wildfire DP construction materials.
- Confirming with property owners the size, location, and general configuration of the DGS and required parking on the property for preparation of site plan and conceptual images;
- Preparing referrals for each property and sending to the Engineering and Building Departments to identify and comment on specific requirements early in the process.
- Each participant was contacted by a representative from Small Housing BC for a phone survey to ask questions about their intended DGS, who will be living there, and their projected construction costs.

Each property owner has signed a Letter of Agreement and paid the \$1,000 required fee.

The referral information from Engineering and Building was provided to the participating property owners, along with direct contacts in the Planning, Engineering and Building Departments to answer any questions.

2.3 Look-Book Features

The Look-Book document provides an overview of the project, including background, Look-Book goals, assumptions and exclusions, with the primary focus being on the four participating properties. Each participating property is identified as a “test case” and the information provided includes:

- A map showing the area where the site is located in Maple Ridge;
- A site map showing surrounding road and properties and conceptual site plan of the principal dwelling, the proposed DGS, driveway and surface parking areas;
- Homeowner profile of information obtained through phone survey;
- Site details, such as the address, lot size and dimensions, and lot features and challenges;
- Current property assessment values;
- A description of the intended DGS from property owners, including design details and estimated costs;
- The requirements identified to date from the Engineering, Planning, and Building Departments, along with additional requirements, recommendations, and notifications to property owners regarding next steps;
- Conceptual elevation images to show the relative size and orientation of the DGS in relation to the other buildings, trees, etc. on the site.

2.4 Project Outcomes To-Date

Allowing for more housing choice and affordability has been the primary goal of the SS and DGS regulatory review. While the initial intent included facilitating more rental units, only one rental DGS unit will be created through this Pilot Project. However, all four of the Pilot Project scenarios represent families in separate households coming together to make an affordable housing choice that provides not only financial benefits, but also social benefits to their families and ultimately to the larger community.

2.4.1 Benefits to Families

As discussed in Section 3 above, the majority of inquiries received to date have been from property owners with large properties interested in having a large DGS where family members may reside. It is evident that all of the Pilot Project participants were considering options for their family members prior to commencement of the DGS regulatory review and had either attended the open house event or were following the process. As affordable homeownership options are dwindling due to increasing housing costs, families are considering how to best utilize their collective resources to live within the same community. Through the regulatory review process, many property owners have expressed that the maximum permitted size of 90m² (968 ft²) under the current regulations is not large enough for their adult children and grandchildren, or their downsizing parents, and therefore did not choose to pursue a DGS until the Pilot Project was proposed. As such, several inquiries for the larger form of DGS were received prior to the May 1, 2018 Council report outlining the DGS Pilot Project process.

While only one of the participants (in scenario #4) will provide an urban lot example, it will contain a SS and DGS. The property owners have stated they intend to rent out the DGS and permitting the option to also construct a SS within the principal dwelling is enabling two related families to live on the property while generating rental income.

2.4.2 Seeking Small DGS and Urban DGS Examples

Very few inquiries were received on the options for a smaller 20.3m² (219 ft²) unit, DGS in urban areas at 15% of lot area, and the SS and DGS on the same lot (although we do have one example of the SS and DGS in this in the Pilot Project). This may be due to a couple of factors:

- The notification period for property owners to confirm interest in the project was a very short time period of just over one week;
- Smaller DGS units are more likely to be for rental purposes and property owners may need more time to consider and develop this idea, along with financing options, into their household budget.

It is possible that if a second phase of the Pilot Project were advertised to the community, focusing on the small units, but also allowing two or three examples of larger units (at 15% of lot area) on urban sized lots and allowing a longer timeframe for notification and confirmation of interest, more inquiries and potential project sites could be received. While the timeframe for Phase II would not be able to coincide with the construction timeframe for the current Pilot Project, as DGS tours are anticipated to commence in March 2019, it is proposed to follow the same process and include a second round of DGS tours.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

3.1. DGS Pilot Project Process

The next steps in the process is to bring the Zoning Bylaw text amendments and the Housing Agreement Bylaw to the next Council meeting on June 26, 2018 for consideration of First and Second Readings on June 26, 2018. The aim is for the bylaws to be presented at the July 17, 2018 Public Hearing so that Third Reading may be considered by Council on July 24, 2018.

Once the bylaws receive Third Reading, the participating property owners may begin preparation of their building permit plans in order to meet an application deadline set for August 20, 2018. Achieving this deadline will provide the Building Department with sufficient time to process each application by mid-September and then bring the bylaws to Council for final reading and adoption on October 9, 2018. Building permit plans will not be issued until bylaw adoption and then each property owner will be required to commence construction with a completion deadline of March 2, 2019. A schedule for the DGS tours is anticipated to be available and promoted in early 2019.

3.2 Proposed Phase II

If Council supports a Phase II for the DGS Pilot Project, as discussed in Section 2.4.2 above, the aim would be to confirm property owners interested in constructing a:

- Small DGS unit, between 20.3m (219 ft²) and 36m² (387ft²);
- Large DGS unit up to 15% of the lot area within the urban area on lot size between 557m² (5,995 ft²) and 900m² (8,611 ft²);
- SS and DGS within the urban area.

The time proposed for Phase II of the DGS Pilot Project is as follows:

- June through September 2018:
 - Notifications on Phase II sent out through City webpage, FaceBook, Twitter, emails to those on “update” list;
 - Advertisements put into Maple Ridge News – in June, July, and August
- If necessary, staff could also augment the process with a public information meeting as a further strategy to increase awareness of the ongoing pilot projects.
- Confirm up to 10 Phase II participants in the Fall of 2018;
- Prepare Phase II Look-Book and present to Council for endorsement in early 2019, with the intent to continue to follow in the same steps of the current Pilot Project process.

4.0 INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that Planning staff will continue working on the DGS Pilot Project with the Building, Engineering, and Fire Departments to respond to participant inquiries, review applications, and work through the regulatory process towards construction of each DGS Pilot Project unit.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION

Should Council have concerns with any of the test cases presented in the Look-Book document and wish to proceed in a different manner than the recommendations provided in this report, an alternative to recommendation number 1 has been provided below. Recommendation number 2 remains unchanged.

1. THAT pursuant with the previously endorsed DGS Pilot process, that staff be directed to prepare zone amending bylaws for test cases [insert test case(s)] identified in the DGS Look-Book dated June 2018.

6.0 CONCLUSION:

The DGS Pilot Project has been popular early on for property owners interested in larger DGS units for family members. Interest for these larger units was expressed through the public consultation process in November 2017 and has continued through the Pilot Project participant selection process. It is clear that allowing these larger units is providing both monetary and social benefits for the participating families.

With the completion of the Look-Book document, the next steps will be to bring text amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and Housing Agreement Bylaws to Council for consideration.

While increasing choice and stock for the rental market was a primary goal of the SS and DGS regulatory review, only one of the Pilot Project examples will result in a rental DGS unit. However, allowing more time for property owners to consider and investigate the option to construct a smaller DGS unit, as Phase II to the Pilot Project, may result in more property owners to come forward with feasible small unit and urban DGS projects.

“Original signed by Brent Elliott” for
**Prepared by: Lisa Zosiak, MRM, MCIP, RPP
Planner**

“Original signed by Christine Carter”
**Approved by: Christine Carter M.PL., MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning**

“Original signed by Frank Quinn”
**Approved by: Frank Quinn, MBA. P.Eng
GM: Public Works & Development Services**

“Original signed by Paul Gill”
**Concurrence: Paul Gill, CPA, CGA
Chief Administrative Officer**

The following appendices are attached hereto:

- Appendix A: The Detached Garden Suite Pilot Project Lookbook
- Appendix B: DGS Pilot Project Letter of Agreement