

## **Zoning By-law Amendment to Permit Laneway Suites in Yorkville – Final Report**

**Date:** February 6, 2023

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

**Ward:** Ward 11 – University - Rosedale

### **SUMMARY**

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In 2019, following an extensive study of a city-wide laneway suite strategy, City Council amended both the Official Plan and Zoning By-law 569-2013 to permit laneway suites in low-rise residential zones. While City Planning staff had recommended the amendments apply to the entire city, Council directed that the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods be excluded from the Zoning By-law. Council further directed staff to consider permitting laneway suites within the area as part of its ongoing review of Site and Area Specific Policy 211, being the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area Site and Area Specific Policy ("SASP 211").

Since that decision, the Province of Ontario has made legislative changes to the Planning Act, through Bill 23, with respect to residential unit permissions on lots containing a detached house, semi-detached house, or rowhouse. These legislative changes advanced City Planning's consideration of laneway suites in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhood areas now instead of following the completion of the review of SASP 211 in 2024.

City Planning staff surveyed the laneways in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods and found that laneway suites and the existing performance standards in Zoning By-law 569-2013 are appropriate and fit within the existing and planned area context. City Planning staff recommend that City Council amend Zoning By-law 569-2013 to remove the location restriction for laneway suites in this area.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council amend Zoning By-law 569-2013, as amended, substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment appended as Attachment 1 to this report.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the Draft Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

## **EQUITY IMPACT**

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Access to safe, good quality and affordable housing is an important determinant of physical and mental health, and a fundamental goal of the City's Housing TO 2020-2030 Action Plan. Adequate and affordable housing is also the cornerstone of inclusive neighbourhoods, supports the environment, and improves the socio-economic status of individuals, families, and communities as a whole. With a rapidly growing population of older adults in Toronto, the Toronto Seniors Strategy identifies the need to create affordable housing to facilitate aging in place across the City.

As Toronto looks to rebuild and recover after COVID-19, the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods initiative can directly advance recommendations laid out in the Towards Recovery and Building a Renewed Toronto report. Specifically, Recommendation 68 of the report calls on the City to apply the principle of “build back better” to land use planning and improve the City's overall built form by prioritizing gentle density that places greater emphasis on a mix of building types and uses – including low-rise residential, retail and services – and that supports transit use.

Expanding housing options in neighbourhoods, such as laneway suites, is an important step towards increasing and accelerating the creation of a diverse range and mix of housing options, including additional units and affordable housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes.

## **CLIMATE IMPACT**

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The City has ambitious goals to cut greenhouse gas emissions to avoid disastrous climate change, as well as become resilient and adapt to the impacts that climate change have on the city and its residents. On October 2, 2019, City Council voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency and accelerate efforts to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate by adopting stronger emissions reduction target of net zero by 2050 or sooner. In December 2021, City Council adopted a new goal of net zero emissions by 2040. Climate and resilience considerations and recommendations are also included in the September 2020 report from the Toronto Office of Recovery & Rebuild.

Permitting laneway suites helps reduce GHG emissions through the efficient use of land and resources. Density enables low carbon transportation choices, such as walking, cycling, and public transit. Housing built in Toronto also reduces sprawl and reduces transportation-driven GHG emissions regionally. Density enables the use of existing infrastructure, which avoids carbon-intensive infrastructure built elsewhere. Smaller buildings such as laneway suites and low-rise apartments can more easily achieve net zero operational emissions, and low carbon materials are readily available at this scale. These buildings are also more easily deconstructed and much of the existing material can be salvaged and reused. The City Planning Division will continue to consider missing middle housing approaches, informed by laneway suite construction, through a climate impact lens, and specifically work to mitigate impacts on the City's soft landscaping areas and tree canopy.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its meeting of May 22, 2018, City Council adopted the Downtown Plan and directed staff to review Site and Area Specific Policy 211 and to continue using the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy to inform the evaluation of development applications until it has been updated.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.PG29.4>

On June 26, 2018, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 403 (OPA 403), which added Site and Area Specific Policy 546 (SASP 546) to the Toronto and East York geography in the Official Plan, and Zoning By-law 810-2018, which applies to the Toronto and East York geography excepting the residential zones in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. The amendments permit secondary suites in ancillary buildings adjacent to public lanes.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.TE33.3>

On July 16, 2019, City Council adopted the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments permitting Laneway Suites in R, RD, RS, RT and RM zones under Zoning By-law 569-2013 across the City.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2019.PH7.1>

On September 30, 2020, City Council adopted a report to provide clarification and additional options for laneway suites designs to achieve compliance with the City's fire department access requirements.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2020.PH16.10>

On December 15, 2021, City Council adopted a report outlining the outcomes of the City's Laneway Suites Monitoring Program. This report also included strategic amendments to the zoning standards for laneway suites to facilitate their construction and respond to community comments.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.PH29.2>

On February 2, 2022, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 554 (OPA 554), which added Site and Area Specific Policy 670 (SASP 670) to permit garden suites on all lands designated Neighbourhoods within the City. Zoning By-law 101-2022 permits garden suites in all residential zones City-wide.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.PH30.2>

On December 14, 2022, City Council adopted a motion directing the City Manager to develop a "2023 Housing Action Plan" for the 2022-2026 term of Council to enable both market, non-market and hybrid housing production in order to achieve or exceed the provincial housing target of 285,000 new homes over the next 10 years. Among other

actions, the motion includes direction to amend the City-wide zoning by-law to be more permissive from a housing opportunities perspective.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC2.1>

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENT**

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The City Planning Division is recommending the following amendment to Zoning By-law 569-2013 regarding laneway suites in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods:

- Delete Regulation 150.8.20.1(3) restricting the location of laneway suites in the area bounded by Avenue Road, the Canadian Pacific (CP) Limited rail corridor, Yonge Street, Rosedale Valley Road, Sherbourne Street, Bloor Street East and Bloor Street West.

The effect of this amendment would be to permit laneway suites in in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, subject to the same performance standards that apply to laneway suites in all other areas of Toronto.

Attachment 1 shows the proposed draft Zoning By-law amendment.

## **BACKGROUND**

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In 2018, City Planning staff completed a laneway suite strategy for Toronto and East York and recommended a planning framework to permit laneway suites on lands within the Toronto and East York District. The framework included a proposed amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law 569-2013 as well as the development of Laneway Suite Guidelines.

The ABC Residents Association submitted a letter, dated April 30, 2018, which outlined a number of concerns with laneway suites specific to their area. These concerns are detailed in the comments section of this report.

While Council adopted the strategy and the proposed Official Plan Amendment to permit laneway suites in the Toronto and East York District, it amended the staff recommendations to exclude the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhood areas as delineated in the SASP 211 boundary from the Zoning By-law Amendment. Council further directed that City Planning staff consider any necessary policies and/or by-law standards to permit and regulate Laneway Suites as part of the ongoing review of SASP 211.

In 2019, City Planning staff brought forward a recommendation to extend permissions for laneway suites across the City. In the context of expanding laneway suite permissions, further consultation with the ABC Residents Association and review of SASP 211 was undertaken as is outlined in the staff report attached to the 2019 Council decision. Staff concluded that laneway suites and their associated performance standards conformed with SASP 211 and recommended that the proposed Official Plan

and Zoning By-law Amendments include the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. The ABC Residents Association submitted a subsequent letter, dated June 28, 2019, outlining continued concerns with laneway suites in the SASP 211 area and requested once again that laneway suites be examined in the context of the SASP 211 review.

City Council amended the Official Plan as per City Planning staff's recommendation; however, directed that the lands within the SASP 211 boundary continue to be excluded from the area which the Zoning By-law would apply and directed staff to consider permitting laneway suites in this area as part of the ongoing review of SASP 211.

## **Community Concerns**

The primary concerns raised by area stakeholders in 2018, including the ABC Residents Association, regarding permitting laneway suites within the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods included:

- The provision of secondary units in laneway suites as opposed to in other forms of secondary housing and the need for the modest homes/affordability/accessibility;
- Conformity with SASP 211, particularly with respect to neighbourhood character and the policy that new development be contextually similar and appropriate to the individual settings, patterns of development, unique features, architectural and landscape character, and heritage significance within the area;
- Requested the prohibition of laneway suites behind rowhouses and requested an increase to the required minimum frontage on a lane;
- Requested the inclusion of laneway suite gross floor area in the calculation of the maximum density permitted on a lot;
- Identified a concern with the definition of lane in the Zoning By-law potentially not being restricted to public lanes and the implications on where laneway suites may be permitted, and expressed concerns with lane size requirements in order to accommodate laneway suites and required setbacks for laneway suites from rear property lines;
- Expressed concerns with fire and emergency access considerations;
- Expressed concerns with as of right permissions surrounding the construction of laneway suites;
- Identified concerns with built form standards, including: impacts to privacy, access to sky view, and shadow impacts resulting from maximum height provisions; window placement, exceptions to angular plane provisions, and permitted encroachments into setback areas; and with the setback requirements from the rear of the principal building on a lot;
- Identified concerns with the soft landscaping requirements and tree protection policies;
- Raised concerns regarding traffic and parking impacts (particularly on street or through increased pressure to provide front yard parking pads);
- Identified concerns over the severance of lots; and
- Expressed concerns over implementation and the proposed monitoring process.

## **POLICY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

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### **The Planning Act**

Section 2 of the Planning Act establishes matters of provincial interest to which City Council shall have regard, in carrying out its responsibilities, including: the orderly development of safe and healthy communities; the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing; the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians; and the appropriate location of growth and development.

In November 2022, the [Planning Act](#) was amended by [Bill 23](#), the More Homes Built Faster Act. These amendments build on previous 'second unit' and 'additional residential unit' requirements to require that municipalities allow, through Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law permissions, the use of three residential units on any lot. This includes units located in a detached, semi-detached and rowhouses, and in a building or structure ancillary to those residential buildings. The Act also states that any policy or by-law that has the effect of prohibiting a residential unit in an ancillary structure is of no effect. The permissions for residential units to give effect to these requirements are not appealable, except by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

### **Provincial Policy Statement (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) (“PPS”) provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong healthy communities, wise use and management of resources, and the protection of public health and safety. The PPS includes policy to encourage an appropriate range and mix of housing types as part of the city's long term economic prosperity, growth management planning, land use patterns, transit supportive development, and broader housing needs.

The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act and all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS.

### **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)**

The Growth Plan (2020) provides a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which the City of Toronto forms an integral part. The Growth Plan (2020) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2020) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform to the Growth Plan (2020). Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform to the Growth Plan (2020).

## **Toronto Official Plan**

The Official Plan is the City's primary land use planning document that stresses the need to integrate environmental, social, and economic perspectives in the City's decision making. The City has to meet the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The Official Plan contains policies which guide where and how the City grows its housing, commercial and employment areas, ensures the stewardship of the City's green spaces, and directs expansion and improvement of the City's transportation network, among other directions.

### **Making Choices (Chapter 1)**

Chapter 1 of the Official Plan contains a series of vision statements about the future of the City and the decisions which will help achieve this vision. Section 1.1 of the Official Plan outlines the Principles for a Successful Toronto as a City of Diversity and Opportunity, a City of Beauty, a City of Connections, and a City of Leaders and Stewards. Section 1.2 discusses the implementation of the Plan, stating that Toronto's future is about re-urbanization and its continuing evolution that will involve a range of situations and decisions.

### **Healthy Neighbourhoods (2.3.1)**

The diversity of Toronto's neighbourhoods, in terms of scale, amenities, local culture, retail services and demographic make-up, offers a choice of communities to match every stage of life. Our neighbourhoods are where we connect with people to develop a common sense of community. Section 2.3.1 of the Official Plan contains policies to ensure the City's Neighbourhoods remain healthy.

### **Neighbourhoods (4.1)**

Toronto's Neighbourhoods contain a full range of residential uses within lower scale buildings, as well as parks, schools, local institutions and small-scale stores and shops serving the needs of area residents. Section 4.1 of the Official Plan contains policies to guide investment and development in Neighbourhoods, which includes residential uses in lower scale buildings such as detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses, as well as interspersed walk-up apartments that are no higher than four storeys and respect and reinforce the existing physical character of the neighbourhood.

### **Housing (3.2.1)**

Section 3.2.1 contains policies that help guide the provision of a range of housing across Toronto, directing that a full range of housing, in terms of form, tenure and affordability, will be provided across the City and within neighbourhoods, to meet the current and future needs of residents.

### **Built Form (3.1.2)**

Section 3.1.2 of the Official Plan includes policies for the City's Built Form and requires that new development be located and organized to fit within an area's existing and/or planned context.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

### **Site and Area Specific Policy 546 – Laneway Suites in *Neighbourhoods***

Site and Area Specific Policy 546 permits laneway suites on properties abutting a public lane within areas designated as *Neighbourhoods* across the City, including the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, subject to criteria established in the policy.

### **Site and Area Specific Policy 670 – Garden Suites in *Neighbourhoods***

Site and Area Specific Policy 670 permits garden suites on properties not abutting a public lane within areas designated as *Neighbourhoods* across the City, including the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, subject to criteria established in the policy.

### **Site and Area Specific Policy 211 – Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area**

Site and Area Specific Policy 211 encompasses the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area that is bounded by Avenue Road to the west, Bloor Street to the south, the Rosedale Ravine and Yonge Street to the east, and the CP rail corridor to the north. SASP 211 of the Official Plan recognizes that the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area comprises a broad mix of districts with differing intensities, scales and heights in a diversity of building forms. The area includes *Neighbourhoods*, Apartment *Neighbourhoods*, Areas of Special Identity, Mixed Use Areas, and open space provided by parks and ravines.

The City is undertaking a review of SASP 211 through the Bloor-Yorkville Secondary Plan study and will report further in 2024.

### **City-wide Zoning By-law**

The City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013, applies to most of the City of Toronto. As some lands are not covered by Zoning By-law 569-2013, zoning by-laws from former municipalities are still applicable in some areas of the City.

### **Reasons for the Proposed Amendments**

An amendment to Zoning By-law 569-2013 (Attachment 1) is proposed to remove the restriction on laneway suites within the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. No changes are proposed to the currently permitted form, scale, height, location, and size of laneway suites permitted by Zoning By-law 569-2013.



## **CONSULTATION AND AGENCY CIRCULATION**

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### **Community Consultation**

The City Planning Division has consulted extensively on the topic of Laneway Suites through the Changing Lanes study. In-person consultation meetings were held in 2017 and 2018 for the first phase of Laneway Suite permissions in the Toronto and East York district, and further city-wide and district-specific meetings were held in 2019 as part of the expansion of Laneway Suites City-wide. Virtual meetings were also held in 2021 as part of the Laneway Suites Monitoring Program. Extensive City-wide consultation also occurred in 2021 for Garden Suites.

A virtual information session on the proposed removal of the location restriction for laneway suites in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods will be held on February 16, 2023, to provide community members an opportunity to learn about this zoning by-law amendment and related changes to Provincial direction for residential units.

### **Agency Circulation**

Previous reports were circulated to all appropriate agencies and City Divisions, including: Parks Forestry and Recreation, Transportation Services, Engineering and Construction Services, The Housing Secretariat, Community and Social Services, Toronto Building, City Legal, and others. The responses received were used to assist in the drafting of previous Zoning By-law amendments. As the proposed Zoning By-law amendment does not modify any performance standards for laneway suites, further circulation was not undertaken.

## **COMMENTS**

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### **Planning Act**

The Planning Act, as amended by Bill 23, requires official plans and zoning by-laws to permit the use of three residential units on any lot. It goes on to specify that a residential unit must be permitted in an ancillary building on a lot containing a detached house, semi-detached house, or rowhouse containing no more than two residential units. Further, the Act states that any by-law that has the effect of prohibiting a residential unit in an ancillary structure is of no effect.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment extends zoning permissions for laneway suites to low-rise residential lots, with requisite laneway access, within the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. This aligns with the Official Plan and zoning by-law permissions for laneway suites and garden suites city-wide.

### **Provincial Policy Statement (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

Policy 1.1.1.b) states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential types, including additional units, affordable housing and housing for older persons.

Policy 1.4.3 directs planning authorities to provide a range of housing types and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents. This policy directs planning authorities to permit and facilitate all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents, and all forms of residential intensification, including additional units, and redevelopment where existing or planned infrastructure can accommodate projected needs. This policy further directs planning authorities to promote densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed. Planning authorities are also directed to establish development standards for residential intensification which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form.

Policy 4.6 recognizes the Official Plan as the most important vehicle for implementation of the PPS.

In permitting laneway suites in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, the City is supporting an additional form of contextually appropriate infill housing that makes efficient use of land and existing services. Laneway suites provide new rental accommodation and additional living space, in a compact form, for families, accommodating the City's population as it ages and as household structures and needs change over time. The proposed Zoning By-law amendment is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and ensures alignment with existing Official Plan policies for laneway suites.

### **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)**

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) (the "Growth Plan (2020)") provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan (2020).

The policies of the Growth Plan regarding how land is developed, resources are managed and protected, and public dollars are invested are based on the Guiding Principles found in Section 1.2.1. These Guiding Principles support a range and mix of housing options, including additional units and affordable housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households, and planning for more resilient, low-carbon communities. The Growth Plan (2020) also directs municipalities to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability. The plan highlights the need for stakeholders to work collaboratively to find opportunities for more age-friendly community design.

Section 2.2.1.4 c) echoes the guiding principles noted above by supporting complete communities that provide a diverse range and mix of housing options, including

additional units and affordable housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes.

Section 2.2.6.2 directs that municipalities support the achievement of complete communities by planning for the range and mix of housing options and densities of the existing housing stock and planning to diversify and increase density of the overall housing stock across the municipality.

Laneway suites represent an additional compact form of infill housing that diversifies the city's overall housing stock. They contribute to the creation and growth of complete communities, provide new rental accommodation and additional living space for households of different sizes, ages, and incomes, all of which can increase housing choice and supply in response to diminishing housing affordability. The proposed Zoning By-law amendment conforms to the Growth Plan.

### **Official Plan**

The Official Plan permits laneway suites within areas designated as Neighbourhoods across the city, including the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, subject to a range of criteria. These criteria reflect the tests of scale, form, and impacts contained within the policies currently governing Neighbourhoods, as well as the Official Plan's Built Form policies.

Detailed and extensive consideration of the Official Plan policies relevant to laneway suites is contained in the Final Report for laneway suites that is referenced in the reports linked in the Decision History Section of this report. It was established in these reports, and endorsed by City Council, that laneway suites are a form of residential development that is compatible with the character of established Neighbourhoods, even in cases where no laneway suites currently exist as part of the prevailing building stock. In the opinion of City Planning staff, the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods are not distinct from other areas of the City where laneway suites are permitted with respect to the characteristics that make laneway suites a compatible built form within the neighbourhood fabric. Staff also note that the same conclusion was reached when evaluating the introduction of permissions for garden suites, and the Official Plan (through SASP 670) and Zoning By-law permit garden suites within these neighbourhoods.

The proposed amendment to permit laneway suites in this area does not alter the currently permitted size, siting, scale and height of a laneway suite. The proposed Zoning By-law amendment is consistent with the policy objectives of the Official Plan.

### **Site and Area Specific Policy 211 – Bloor Yorkville / North Midtown**

SASP 211 states that new development in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville Triangle Neighbourhoods will respect and reinforce the stability and the established low-rise character of these areas containing tree-lined streets and houses of two and three storey height, consistently set back from the street line. All new development will be contextually similar and appropriate to the individual settings,

patterns of development, unique features, architectural and landscape character, and heritage significance within these areas.

Nothing in SASP 211 suggests that laneway suites in these neighbourhoods are not supportable. On the contrary, a staff report attached to 1976 adoption of the Part II Plan for North Midtown, which formed the basis of SASP 211, contemplated residential buildings in Low Density Residence Areas that were off street and behind existing residential buildings, provided Council was satisfied that overlook and shadow impacts to adjacent housing and traffic impacts were minimized.

Laneway suites are a low-rise form of development intended to be subordinate in scale to the principal structure on a lot and generally located behind existing houses in a manner that does not affect the streetscape. The associated performance standards and Laneway Suite Guidelines were developed to ensure new laneway suites would limit impacts on surrounding properties. City Planning staff are of the opinion that laneway suites and their associated performance standards conform to SASP 211.

### **Area Survey**

On January 16, 2023, City Planning staff conducted a site survey of all the lanes within the boundary area. There are a total of 11 distinct public laneways in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods, totalling approximately 2.1 kilometres in length. A total of 343 lots abut these public laneways and are zoned residential (R Zone) in City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013.

The R Zone permits a range of single detached, semi-detached, townhouse, duplex, triplex, fourplex and apartment building forms, as well as a range of community uses such as day nurseries, retail stores, rooming houses, and community centres, subject to a range of conditions. The maximum density varies across the area, ranging from 0.6 to 1.0 times the area of the lot, as does the maximum height, ranging from 10 to 12 metres.

Lot depths in the area range from approximately 17 metres to 46 metres. The topography of the area shifts in the vicinity of Ramsden Park, where established grade lowers from the surrounding lands to the north and south. City Planning staff are satisfied that the performance standards associated with laneway suites, such as maximum heights and angular planes - and the required methods used to calculate compliance with these performance standards - ensure that in instances where the grade of the lane is elevated above the grade of the existing building on the lot, a laneway suite would remain subordinate to the existing building.

When compared with the rest of the city, City Planning staff are satisfied that laneways in the area boundary do not present unique requirements with respect to fire and emergency services, tree protection, accessibility, traffic, privacy, overlook, shadow, or sky view impacts. Any proposal that is unable to meet the performance standards in the Zoning By-law would necessitate a review through a planning process, such as a minor variance or rezoning application.

The laneway suite strategy that was brought forward in 2019 balances gentle intensification in *Neighbourhoods* with the policy direction to limit the impact of new development on adjacent properties. Historically, the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods include some of the most permissive residential zoning provisions in City. The introduction of laneway suites within area boundary complements this history and does not conflict with the existing neighbourhood fabric.

Further, as part of the Laneway Suites Monitoring Program in 2021, the City retained a consultant to assist in reviewing and analyzing the performance of the laneway suite regulations. This work also included further analysis of the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. The consultant found that the existing and planned character of these neighbourhoods does not preclude their potential or eligibility for moderate infill through laneway suites.

In the opinion of City Planning staff, the lanes in the area boundary are not distinct from other areas of the City where laneway suites are permitted. Laneway Suites are appropriate, compatible forms of housing in the context of these neighborhoods.

Attachment 2 shows the laneways within the boundary area that would be subject to the Zoning By-law Amendment.

### **Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment**

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment would amend Zoning By-law 569-2013 to delete Regulation 150.8.20.1(3) which restricts laneway suites in the area bounded by Avenue Road, the Canadian Pacific (CP) Limited rail corridor, Yonge Street, Rosedale Valley Road, Sherbourne Street, Bloor Street East and Bloor Street West. As detailed in this report, this amendment reflects the city-wide Official Plan policies for laneway suites and the requirements of the Planning Act.

No changes are proposed to the remainder of the performance standards for laneway suites contained in Section 150.8 of Zoning By-law 569-2013 as staff are of the opinion that they are appropriate for the existing and planned context in this area. Unique site characteristics may result in a laneway suite proposal requiring a Minor Variance application to seek relief from certain by-law standards, which would afford an additional level of review by City Planning staff and notice to adjacent property owners.

Attachment 1 shows the proposed draft Zoning By-law Amendment.

### **Update on Laneway and Garden Suites**

As of January 31, 2023, building permits have been issued for 412 laneway suites and 16 garden suites city-wide. An additional 168 building permit applications have been received, but not yet issued (118 for laneway suites and 50 for garden suites).

## **Conclusion**

Following recent changes to the Planning Act, City Planning staff are recommending to remove the provision in Zoning By-law 569-2013 that prohibits laneway suites in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods. This recommendation reaffirms the staff recommendations from the original report on laneway suites in the Toronto and East York District adopted in 2018, the report on expansion of laneway suite permissions city-wide adopted in 2019, and subsequent report on the Laneway Suites Monitoring Program that was adopted in 2021.

Having conducted an area survey, City Planning staff are satisfied that laneway suites are appropriate, compatible forms of housing in the Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville neighbourhoods.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment (By-law No. 569-2013)  
Attachment 2: Map of Laneways in Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville Area

## **Attachment 1: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment (By-law No. 569-2013)**

Authority: Planning and Housing Committee Item PHXX, adopted as amended, by City of Toronto Council on XXX 2023

### **CITY OF TORONTO**

### **BY-LAW XXX-2023**

**To amend Zoning By-law 569-2013, as amended, with respect to laneway suites.**

Whereas Council of the City of Toronto has the authority pursuant to Section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, to pass this By-law; and

Whereas Council of the City of Toronto has provided adequate information to the public and has held at least one public meeting in accordance with the Planning Act;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

1. Zoning By-law 569-2013, as amended, is further amended by deleting regulation 150.8.20.1(3).

Enacted and passed on XXX, 2023.

Frances Nunziata,  
Speaker

John Elvidge,  
City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

# Attachment 2: Map of Laneways in Asquith-Collier, Ramsden Park, and Yorkville Area

