

## **Attachment 5: Community and Stakeholder Engagement Details**

### **Internal Stakeholder Interviews**

As part of the Monitoring Program, GPA and the monitoring team held several meetings with internal stakeholders in Development Review, Environment, Climate and Forestry, and Toronto Building staff between September and October 2024, to better understand the review and submission process of applications that propose a garden suite. Staff identified key challenges resulting from the various site conditions across the city.

The monitoring team and GPA met with staff from the Development Review division, specifically with Assistant Planners in Community Planning, on September 23, 2024. Through discussions with staff, it was determined that more homeowners are relying on support from private consultants and industry professionals (i.e., planners, architects, and designers) to advance their applications through the Committee of Adjustment process. Generally, staff found that private consultants and industry professionals have a relatively clear understanding of the Minor Variance application process. Staff noted some challenges with the application process including the timing between the issuance of comments and updated documents that addresses staff concerns, while also being cognizant of timelines. In some cases, the application is deferred to offer additional time to obtain revised materials, however, this results in delays to decision making. Staff noted that some improvements could be made to streamline this process, particularly in instances where staff recommend revisions be made to an application.

In meetings with the Environment, Climate and Forestry division, staff found that the number of Tree Permit applications associated with both as-of-right applications and Committee of Adjustment applications that propose a garden suite was low. Generally, staff communicate directly with architects and landscape architects and found that industry professionals had a general understanding of the tree permit process and what is required. A challenge that staff identified was that Tree Permit applications are oftentimes submitted quite late in the review process, making it challenging for staff to request changes or conduct thorough reviews. In some cases, staff request the applicant to provide additional studies or conduct on-site testing, however, these requests require additional time, depending on the time of year. Staff acknowledged that it would be beneficial to be involved earlier on in the process to get ahead of these potential challenges.

Toronto Building staff provided details on the submission process and key process improvements that were being considered to improve application review and processing times. Staff noted that the Building Permit application requirements for garden suites are similar to that of detached dwellings. However, staff found that some delays in the overall application process are due to missing application materials, such as grading plans, certain items not being properly indicated on the plans, such as emergency access requirements, and compliance issues. These issues related both to the Zoning By-law and the Ontario Building Code. Some of these process delays could be addressed by applicants reviewing the current application requirements to ensure the required details are provided, screening earlier on in the process to catch errors or omissions in submission materials, and ensuring accurate information is regularly

updated on the City's websites, and More detailed summaries of these meetings are contained in the consultant's report.

## **Industry Stakeholder Consultation**

On October 18 and 25, 2024, GPA and the monitoring team hosted meetings with industry experts to gather insights from their experience in garden suite development. From an industry expert perspective, the goal was to understand the planning process, regulatory challenges, costs and design considerations, and opportunities for improving the garden suite by-law. Following these meetings, GPA and the monitoring team met with those industry experts again on April 7, 2025, to present preliminary adjustments to the garden suites by-law and to receive feedback. Detailed notes from these meetings are provided below, as well as in GPA's report.

### **October 18 and 25 2024**

A group of industry experts met with City staff and were asked a series of discussion questions and topics. Below is a list of the questions and topics along with their responses:

#### **1. Do you work on both laneway and garden suites? If so, how do you perceive the similarities and differences in a process/regulatory context?**

- Laneway and garden suites are viewed as fundamentally different: laneway suites are typically beside garages with access from a lane, while garden suites often lack any frontage and are surrounded by rear yard open space.
- There is confusion and inefficiency due to differing by-laws for each housing type. Some experts questioned the need for two separate regulatory frameworks, especially since this dual approach is uncommon outside of Toronto.
  - Garden suites face more restrictive regulations than laneway suites, including greater setback requirements and comprehensive angular plane provisions, which apply on all sides and significantly limit buildable space. Simplifying by-laws and making regulations more permissive would encourage more builders and homeowners to pursue garden suites.
- Garden suites are primarily used for multi-generational living rather than rental, whereas laneway suites are often used more as rental properties because they face a laneway instead of the rear main wall of the principal dwelling on the property.
- Interest in garden suites exists in both denser urban areas and suburban neighbourhoods, whereas laneway suites can only exist on public laneways.
- Fire access for garden suites remains with no clear or consistent direction in the current regulations, unlike laneway suites.
- Garden suites may have a greater impact on neighbouring properties compared to laneway suites, due to their position in previously undeveloped yard spaces and lack of pre-existing structures like garages.
- Existing systems used for laneway suites cannot be easily adapted for garden suites due to these By-law complexities.

## **2. What is the general perception of garden suites?**

- Garden suites are seen as a highly useful housing typology.
- Interest among homeowners exists, but actual demand remains lower than expected.
- The garden suite By-law is complex, with redundant and overly specific provisions, making it difficult to automate or streamline design analysis.
- Garden suites are most commonly pursued for multi-generational living, with 50–75 percent intended for family use rather than rental income.
  - Their design and rear-yard access support close relationships with main house residents.
  - Many homeowners are hesitant to occupy more of their property or share space with another household.
- Barriers with overall cost:
  - Financial viability is a major barrier due to high construction costs, lack of financing options, Development Charges, parkland fees, and education taxes.
  - Some experts suggest government incentives could help offset costs and encourage uptake.
  - Small-scale investors seek low-cost builds for rental income but are deterred by limited returns versus high upfront costs.
  - Financing and interest rates are major barriers to building garden suites.
  - Garden suites typically cost \$200–\$300 per square foot, with total costs ranging from \$400K–\$500K.
  - Demand for garden and laneway suites dropped significantly after recent interest rate increases.
  - Many homeowners refinance their main property to fund a garden suite.
  - There are challenges with financing and appraisals from banks.
  - Challenging access to a site increases overall project expenses.
  - Small-scale investors aim to build as inexpensively as possible.
- Community resistance varies by application and neighbourhood.
- Initial opposition is common, however; concerns typically diminish over time, and post-construction feedback is often positive.
- There is generally more support than opposition for garden suites across Toronto.
- First time applications on the street tend to face more resistance due to fear of change.
- Subsequent applications in the same area face significantly less or no opposition.
- Familiarity with garden suites tends to increase acceptance.

## **3. What are some challenges you have found with the City's application processes?**

- The permit process is slow and should be streamlined. Some suggested a dedicated review team for garden and laneway suites.
- Arborist Reports should not be required for properties without existing trees on the subject site or on adjacent properties.

- Delays and unclear timelines from TRCA create additional process barriers.
- Most projects require variances and must go to the Committee of Adjustment due to restrictive by-laws.
- Committee of Adjustment wait times are too long.
- There should be a process to expedite Committee of Adjustment hearings when there is no opposition.
- City policies and regulations must align with Ontario Building Code requirements, which can override or complicate local by-laws.
- Staff's interpretation of By-law provisions is inconsistent.
- The Downtown Committee of Adjustment is more permissive than outer Committees in North York, Etobicoke and Scarborough.
  - Discrepancies between Committee of Adjustment decisions and Development Review recommendations cause uncertainty, applicants may have City support but be refused at hearings.
  - More training on City priorities would help ensure consistency across Committee panels.
- Managing expectations among applicants, planning staff, and committees is an ongoing challenge despite generally positive staff engagement.

#### **4. What are some challenges and limitations in the existing regulations?**

- Zoning has too many restrictions, including unnecessary requirements for distance, fire access, and forestry reports. The By-law should be more permissible.
- Suggestions include removing or modifying angular plane rules, increasing allowable floor area for garden suites to 160 square metres (to match laneway suites), eliminating lot coverage limits, and aligning setback rules with Ontario Building Code.
- Landscaping regulations need clearer definitions; permeable pavers and green roofs should count toward compliance; site permeability should be emphasized over specific materials.
  - Soft landscaping variances are very common.
- Adding a fifth unit to a fourplex triggers development charges on all five units, discouraging development.
- Post-approval enforcement of landscaping needs improvement; permeable pavers are often installed later replacing approved soft landscaping. Including such alternatives in landscaping definitions could prevent non-compliance.
- For conversions of existing structures, zoning allowances for setbacks and separation distances do not carry over when adding a second storey, which automatically triggers variances.
- There is a suggestion that if setbacks are already legal non-conforming, they should apply to additions such as a second storey.
- Angular planes make many garden suite designs less feasible, especially for modular or pre-fab homes. Some suggested modifying the regulation to apply only on the side facing the main house, rather than on all sides.
  - While there is general support for using angular planes to mitigate neighbour impact, several experts suggested increasing allowable height or relaxing related restrictions to improve flexibility and design feasibility.

- Some believe angular planes should be removed entirely, as they are no longer required on major streets.
- Others see angular planes as important adjacent to side yards for managing perceived massing but believe they should not apply to front and rear.
- Angular planes are especially limiting on tighter lots, making it difficult to add a second storey.
- If a project does not impact neighbours, angular planes should not be required.
- Setbacks should not be tied to property frontage and should be standardized.
- Developers should be allowed to build within property limits without restrictions from angular planes and setbacks.
- Most garden suite projects are being sent to the Committee of Adjustment due to restrictive zoning.
- Some firms reported only two percent of their garden suite projects needing to go to the Committee of Adjustment.
- There is support for allowing garden suites with two units.
- Semi-detached garden suites should be considered in zoning.
- Increased height limits are needed, with 8-foot ceilings being a common market expectation.
- Height limits should not apply to rooftop mechanical equipment.
- Garden suites are required to be smaller than the primary house, which creates issues due to the exclusion of basements from floor area calculations.
- There is a call to remove the size comparison requirement and instead focus on built-form provisions.
- Ground-mounted heat pumps should be allowed within setbacks without triggering variances.

## **5. General thoughts and suggestions**

- Tree protection is a shared priority. Construction methods like helical piles and slab-on-grade foundations help protect mature tree roots.
- Excavating to lower garden suites below grade can help meet angular plane limits but raises concerns about carbon footprint and tree root impacts; feasibility depends on site conditions.
- Rear yard access creates construction challenges for transporting materials and equipment.
- Eliminating parking spaces for new garden suites may increase street parking demand, raising concerns in some neighbourhoods. Flexibility based on site context is suggested.
- A feasibility study found only 14 percent of lots could accommodate laneway suites, while over 60 percent could support garden suites, showing broader opportunity with fewer infrastructure constraints.
- Stormwater management alternatives like Italian wells, soak-away pits, and dry wells are useful compared to traditional landscaping.
- Opinions on parking requirements vary. Some support parking in low-transit/high-demand areas, others note provincial policy limits municipal parking mandates for accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
- Electricity capacity upgrades are sometimes needed; basic utility connections generally pose no issues.

- If a mature tree must be removed to build, some believe the property may not be suitable for a garden suite. Creative solutions exist to build garden suites while preserving mature trees.
- Council direction to prevent injury or removal of healthy trees significantly restricts garden and laneway suite development.
- Some believe housing should be prioritized over tree protection, while others emphasize the importance of maintaining Toronto's strong tree protection policies.
- Semi-detached garden suites were proposed as a concept worth exploring to improve housing diversity without over intensifying lower density neighbourhoods.
- Design solutions like sinking the structure can help meet angular plane rules and minimize neighbourhood impact.
- Integration into backyards is possible with thoughtful planning.
- United States jurisdictions like California require cities to permit at least 800 square feet for garden suites, providing a model for more flexible minimum standards. This should be explored in Toronto.
  - Junior ADUs (JADUs) in California, which lack kitchens and are smaller, were proposed as a cost-saving model for local exploration.
- Some homeowners perceive that garden suites could reduce their property value.
- Positive experiences were shared about City planning staff being open and collaborative during the design process.
- Compared to renting or owning a condo, renting out a garden suite is seen as more economically favorable.
- Delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board have discouraged some from renting out garden or laneway suites.
- Decarbonizing the built environment is a priority for some industry experts.
- Emissions performance standards should be applied to reduce greenhouse gas impacts.
- Garden suites should avoid gas connections and instead use electric systems and heat pumps.
- An e-plans submission system should be implemented, as it is a standard in other municipalities.
- Many lots are not realistic or feasible for as-of-right development.
- Clear direction and guidance from staff are especially helpful in such cases.
- Committees typically rely on Staff comments, if Staff have no issues, they usually do not comment.
- Staff should provide letters of support and positive opinions where appropriate.
- Thoughts on Pre-fab:
  - Prefabricated construction is generally not financially practical for garden suites due to premiums for expedited construction, which is often unnecessary.
  - Conventional stick-built methods are more economical and practical, especially for rear yard access.
  - Crane challenges over homes make pre-fab less feasible; on-site building is often easier and less costly.
  - Development charges and parks levies need alignment, hitting development charges at five units discourages adding more units.

- Ending front yard parking prohibitions is important in suburbs with limited transit and street parking.
- Pre-fab designs face challenges from zoning and tree issues; pre-approved plans have limited usefulness due to site variability and specific conditions.
- Overall, there is limited optimism about widespread adoption of pre-fab for garden suites.

## **6. What are your thoughts on the new O. Reg 299/19 Provincial proposal (now passed O. Reg 462/24)?**

- There is concern that residential neighbourhoods could be overwhelmed if too much density is introduced without proper planning. Maintaining a low-density character remains important to many stakeholders.
- This proposal makes efficient use of the existing building envelope.
- A submission is being prepared for the Ontario proposal and will be forwarded to the EHON team.
- The City should not prioritize the provincial proposal at this time.
- The monitoring program should be completed before addressing the provincial proposal.
- Some industry experts disagree with the current angular plane requirements but do not support their full removal through the proposed O. Reg.

**April 7, 2025**

Industry experts met with City staff for a follow-up workshop to continue discussions and provide further input on key issues.

## **1. A 30-degree slope will open up more vertical clear space for ceiling heights**

- A 30-degree roof slope could provide more vertical clear space for ceiling heights, especially if combined with window and dormer openings.
- Limiting the sizes of openings and dormers is acceptable.
- Similar flexibility approaches have been considered in Saskatoon and Regina regarding mandatory roof and opening requirements.
- There is uncertainty about how to codify these rules in By-laws, whether to link them to maximum side wall heights and roof pitch limits.
- Angular plane regulations are particularly problematic on the sides of buildings.
- Side windows mainly serve for light, while front and rear windows provide light for bedrooms and living spaces.
- Imposing roof slopes where unnecessary may restrict the ability to build garden suites on some lots.
- A previous suggestion was to apply roof slope requirements only to the front and back of properties.
- OBC requires windows to be at least 4 feet from lot lines.
- Roof slopes are not seen as necessary to mitigate second storey massing issues.

- Removing roof slope requirements would allow more feasible building designs, especially on smaller lots.
- If roof slopes are required, applying them to front and back makes more sense than on the sides.
- Roof slopes should align with where bedrooms are located, typically front and rear, rather than sides.
- The OBC limits building on the sides due to fire code compliance.
- Melbourne zoning requires side windows to have obscured glass to address privacy without reducing window size.
- OBC limits the number and placement of windows, affecting design flexibility.

## **2. Are you generally supportive of angular planes and setbacks for corner lots?**

- Generally supportive of angular planes and setbacks on corner lots to align street setbacks.
- Concern that increasing setbacks might reduce the ability to build garden suites on corner lots.
- Suggestion to introduce a 'front' yard setback and/or use averaging between adjacent lots, as in the current By-law.
- Industry experts are generally pro-project but accept reducing size to increase setback, some designers don't pursue this option.

## **3. Are you finding that third-party appeal removals speeds things up?**

- No clear indication that third-party appeal removals speed up processes.

## **4. Are you finding there are issues with electricity and power?**

- Existing electrical service often lacks sufficient amperage.
- Increasing demand due to sustainability features like EV charging, induction stoves, and electric furnaces (upgrade to 200 amps was necessary).
- For 3 units plus a garden suite, a 400-amp electrical service is needed.
- Upgrading may require installing a transformer on the pole costing around \$50,000.

## **5. What methods do you find work best in addressing concerns from neighbours?**

- Owners are always recommended to contact abutting neighbours before submitting formal applications.
- Proactively addressing concerns from neighbours helps to alleviate some concerns.
- However, neighbors are often unwilling to engage or negotiate and tend to hold firm opinions.
- It's recommended to proceed with as-of-right builds and secure permits before discussing with neighbours.
- After permits are obtained, owners can negotiate minor design changes during construction.



- This approach prevents neighbors from completely blocking a project, as the owner has a legal right to build as-of-right.

## **6. What are the biggest barriers with garden suites currently?**

- Economic barriers prevent many clients from moving forward with garden suites.
- Installing new plumbing lines requiring deep trenches (~6ft) is unappealing; other municipalities have streamlined this.
- Restrictions on adding a second floor are problematic and often a dealbreaker due to high costs.
- Building a second storey is cheaper than adding a basement.
- Simple, ground-level, one-storey garden suites without basements would be more appealing.
- Connecting plumbing to the back of the main house could simplify construction.
- Basement shoring is a costly, complicated challenge for creating habitable basement space.
- Slab-on-grade garden suites are feasible.
- Fire safety requirements continue to be a major challenge in implementation.

## **7. For properties with garages on the first level and then having all the living spaces on the second level, would you put windows facing the back of the primary dwelling?**

- Window placement depends on the lot and what makes the most sense; not always facing the rear of the primary dwelling.
- Use of obscure glass (up to 5' high) can provide light while reducing impact on neighbours, this can be a condition set by Committee of Adjustment.

## **8. Costs of Garden suite**

- Plumbing access costs can be high, especially if connection to adjacent lines is difficult.
- Shoring for basements is challenging and costly in tight urban sites.
- Slab-on-grade construction is more common and involves trench digging for services.
- Landscaping modifications can improve construction feasibility and potentially reduce costs.
- Building two-storey garden suites increases overall costs compared to single-storey designs.

## **Resident Association and Grassroots Organization Consultation**

On March 19, 2025, staff and GPA held a virtual consultation meeting to consult resident associations on their experiences with garden suites, present findings from the monitoring program, provide updates on Provincial regulatory changes as a result of [O. Reg. 462/24](#) regarding “ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS” (ARUs), and to seek feedback based on the local expertise of resident associations. Approximately 11 people participated in the consultation.

**March 19, 2025**

Participants raised concerns regarding tree protection, privacy and overlook impacts, impact to existing infrastructure, abilities of certain areas to accommodate garden suites due to lot sizes, and adequate water infiltration and additional stormwater runoff as a result of garden suites. GPA and the monitoring team also received a number of questions related to the existing By-law provisions, the number of active applications and where the majority of garden suite applications are occurring, the Committee of Adjustment process, and other topics.

**1. Zoning Regulations**

- Questions about how far garden suites must be from property lines.
- Concerns about how the City plans to protect privacy and manage noise impacts for existing neighbours.

**2. Building permits**

- Questions about the number of building permit applications submitted for garden suites and which areas of the City receive the most applications.

**3. Committee of Adjustment**

- Concerns about frequent variance approvals and how garden suites are being controlled if they're commonly approved at the Committee of Adjustment.
- Etobicoke Committee of Adjustment noted as more receptive to neighbour input.
- Concerns about how tree preservation is handled through the Committee of Adjustment.

**4. Environmental and Tree Impacts**

- Issues raised about high-water tables, streams, and migratory bird routes being overlooked in development decisions.
- Belief that different neighbourhoods require different levels of consideration due to varying environmental conditions.
- Concerns about the number of tree removals in Scarborough Southwest and the approval of large garden suites.
- Questions about how many trees have been removed due to garden suites.
- Concern that the trend of tree removal in new developments may extend to garden suites.
- Doubts about the accuracy of current data on tree removals; suggestion for an audit.
- Concerns with the number of trees being removed without permits.
  - Reports of builders and/or homeowners removing trees and accepting fines rather than following proper procedures.
- Concern about the loss of greenspace, particularly due to issues like flooding and water runoff.

**5. Utilities / Infrastructure**

- Worries that infrastructure is being overlooked.
- Call for more neighbourhood-specific infrastructure assessments.

## **6. General**

- Skepticism that properties in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood are large enough for garden suites.
- Lack of confidence in the City's ability to monitor builder compliance.
- Concern that a concentration of garden suites could negatively affect neighbours who aren't building one.
- Clarification requested on whether garden suites must be used for family or multi-generational living.
- Interest in tracking cases where owners move into garden suites and rent or redevelop the primary house.
- Questions about tax implications of adding a garden suite.
- Concern over converting garden suites into rooming houses or multi-unit garden suites after the approval and inspection process are complete.
- Belief that garden suites can support housing needs, particularly for multi-generational living and aging in place.
- Concerns about financial implications, with developers buying and intensifying lots beyond the original intent.
- Concerns that the program is leading to redevelopment that prioritizes larger homes over gentle density.

## **City-wide Community Consultation**

On March 25, 2025, staff and GPA held a virtual city-wide consultation meeting. The purpose of the meeting was for the consultant and staff to consult city-wide and present findings from the monitoring program, provide updates on provincial regulatory changes as a result of O. Reg. 462/24 regarding "ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS" (ARUs), and to seek public feedback on garden suites across different neighbourhoods in the city. Approximately 75 participants attended the meeting. Meeting outreach was conducted via social media, with just under 2,200 impressions on the City's Instagram post advertising consultation, as well as via emails sent to interested parties and an eblast from City's EHON information newsletter, which has approximately 1,200 subscribers.

### **March 25, 2025**

Participants raised concerns regarding the appropriateness of the overall building massing and setbacks, privacy and overlook impacts, tree and soft landscaping preservation, and emergency access. GPA and the Monitoring team also received a number of questions related to application activity, By-law provisions, and other topics.

## **1. By-law Provisions**

- Question of why garden suites on through lots have different setback requirements interior lots.
- Interest in allowing green roofs on garden suites for environmental benefits.
- Need clarification on rear setbacks adjacent to railway tracks.
- Calls for distance restrictions between garden suites and houses on through lots to protect privacy.
- Inquiry about allowance for two-story garden suites.

- Questions on whether street width-to-building height ratio still applies under current rules.
2. **O. Reg. 462/24**
    - Provincial 45 percent of lot coverage may limit Toronto's control over garden suite size.
    - Consider applying Ontario regulations to homes with more than three units to increase density.
  3. **Ontario Building Code Regulations**
    - Concern about minimum building separations for fire safety when garden suites are as close as four meters.
  4. **Committee of Adjustment**
    - Request for data on garden suite permits with and without variances.
    - Concern about validity of data, especially in Scarborough (Ward 20), and lack of recent updates.
    - Call for analysis of Committee of Adjustment variance impacts. Questions about building larger family-size units on corner lots through the Committee of Adjustment.
  5. **Area / Lot Specific Provisions**
    - Request for special regulations for narrow streets like Craven Road.
    - Questions on severance rules related to garden suites.
    - Suggestion to treat garden suites on corner lots differently (similar to laneway suites).
    - Clarification needed on severance eligibility for lots with mutual driveways.
  6. **Emergency Access**
    - Concern about emergency access distance being extended beyond 45 meters, affecting garden suite placement.
    - Questions to clarify current emergency access rules (45m vs 90m).
  7. **Utilities and Servicing**
    - Infrastructure strain concerns (i.e., water and sewage) with new garden suites.
  8. **Trees and soft landscaping**
    - Need for audit of tree removal data linked to garden suites.
    - Preemptive tree removals on "garden suite potential" properties is not well monitored.
    - Calls for resident education on garden suites' impact on trees and landscaping.
    - Doubts about the reliability of tree condition assessments by secondary parties.
  9. **General**
    - Questions about tax implications of adding a garden suite.
    - Concern over converting garden suites into rooming houses or multi-unit garden suites after the approval and inspection process are complete.
    - Request for a monitoring survey similar to the laneway suites survey to assess impacts on neighbours.

- Request for records of complaints related to approved garden suite applications.
- Suggestion to collect feedback based on neighbourhoods to ensure relevance.
- Inquiry about the possibility of coordinating with education boards to defer or eliminate education levies.
- Clarification sought on intended users of garden suites and how usage is monitored.
- Inquiry about differences between garden suites and laneway houses.
- Inquiry about allowing each townhouse in a multi-townhouse development to have its own garden suite.
- Questions regarding the feasibility of building a garden suite or multiplex on a short lot with limited separation from the main house.
- Suggestion for the City to consider offering free pre-approved plans to reduce costs and delays.
- Inquiry about the legality of using garden suites as rooming houses.
- Reference to Ottawa's garden suite guidelines and suggestion for staff to review them.
- Request for an assessment of how many lots across the City are eligible for garden suites.

## **Email and Telephone General Inquiries**

The Monitoring team received inquiries both from members of the public and industry experts through the general EHON email inbox. The inquiries received consisted of clarification on how to start the process of applying to build a garden suite and whether garage conversions are permitted, emergency access requirements and Ontario Building Code regulations, zoning by-law provisions, such as the number of units permitted in a garden suite, setbacks, and how to calculate the lot coverage and interior floor area, where utilities and servicing should be connected to, and more, as well as concerns from neighbours who have garden suites in their neighbourhood and on adjacent properties to theirs. Staff also received requests to review applications prior to submission of a formal application to receive early feedback. The Monitoring team provide responses as required and in response to these inquiries, have updated the garden suites website to provide more information and clarity on frequently asked questions. Staff continue to monitor the general email inbox for new inquiries.

## **Community Outreach following [O. Reg. 462/24](#)**

Following the Provincial government's announcement of O. Reg. 462/24, City staff updated the Garden Suites webpage and related EHON webpages linking to the Provincial changes for public to view, and created a question and answer document to respond to common questions about the applicability of the O. Reg.

## **Site Visits**

### **Site Visit with Industry Stakeholders**

City staff participated in a site visit for a garden suite with an industry stakeholder for a two-storey as-of-right project. Massing, setbacks, and separation distance were

assessed in addition to the resulting interior layouts. On the site visit, Staff noted a few observations:

- The sloped second storey massing abutting the side yards was noted to be acceptable for the site and when viewed from adjacent properties. Minor adjustments to ceiling heights would be beneficial.
- Separation distance to the principal building and the setback to the second storey structures were also considered appropriate to mitigate massing and privacy concerns.
- It was noted that the structures are not small on the site, however, the resulting separation distance for two-storey building was considered appropriate to mitigate massing and privacy concerns and provide open space for residents.
- The By-law permissions can support high quality interiors and built form.
- Multi-generational housing as a garden suite objective is a positive outcome.

### **Site Visit with Residents**

Three site visits subsequent to the virtual community consultation meetings were done by City staff as invited by residents living near newly or under construction garden suites. The site visits with residents were for two-storey as-of-right projects. One project was located in Ward 19 with a five-metre separation distance, and one was completed after the Province removed angular plane requirements. A corner lot property with a garden suite that was approved for a minor variance application through the Toronto Local Appeal Body was also visited.

Key built form standards emerged on these site visits for these projects, including second floor massing, setbacks, and separation distance. Staff note several key observations from the site visits which are noted in Attachment 6 of this report.