



City of Delta  
COUNCIL REPORT  
Regular Meeting

To: **Council**

File No.: **P25-07**

From: **Development Department**

Bylaw No(s): **8507**

Date: **May 7, 2025**

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**Minor Height Increases to Allow for Standard Coach Houses and Garden Suites**

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The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager's Office.

▪ **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT first, second and third readings be given to Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8507.

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▪ **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to present for Council's consideration Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8507 (Attachment A), which would amend existing maximum height allowances for detached accessory dwelling units (detached ADUs) in "Delta Zoning Bylaw No. 7600, 2017" (the Zoning Bylaw). Detached ADUs in Delta's Zoning Bylaw are defined as garden suites and coach houses. The intent of the amendment is to make a modest increase to allowable heights to accommodate the standardized designs provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Province, making the addition of garden suites and coach houses in Delta more feasible.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

In January 2025, the CMHC announced Delta would be receiving \$14.2 million through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). To meet the terms of this funding, the City must undertake seven initiatives, including the creation of a comprehensive Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) program. Staff will be at select locations throughout the summer showcasing the detached ADU concierge program that will help Delta homeowners to build new units.

As part of this initiative, staff are creating a catalogue of standardized and pre-reviewed detached ADUs provided by CMHC and the Province. However, existing maximum building height provisions for detached ADUs in the Zoning Bylaw, which were established in June 2024 as part of Delta's implementation of small-scale multi-unit housing requirements, do not accommodate the federal or provincial standardized designs. The proposed bylaw amendments would modestly amend the maximum height allowance for detached ADUs to accommodate pre-reviewed designs and streamline the approval and development of these forms of accessory housing.

More information on Delta's HAF initiatives can be found in Attachment B.

▪ **DISCUSSION:**

A pre-reviewed design catalogue incentivizes the construction of detached ADUs by making it easier for property owners to select designs that are suitable for the local context and compliant with zoning requirements. Amendments to the maximum building heights for detached ADUs are required to make the design catalogue feasible for property owners to select pre-reviewed designs and apply for a building permit without the need for a height variance.

**Public Notification:**

A Public Hearing must not be held for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8507, as the detached ADU height amendment bylaw is consistent with the Official Community Plan. Notice of the application has been provided in accordance with Section 467 of the *Local Government Act*. Any correspondence received in response to the notice will be provided to Council in the agenda package and presented alongside this report.

**Review of Existing Standardized Detached ADU Designs:**

Staff reviewed the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs' Standardized Housing Designs Catalogue (BC Designs Catalogue) and CMHC Housing Designs Catalogue to create a catalogue of designs for garden suites and coach houses suitable for Delta's local context. This review found that all the standardized designs for garden suites and coach houses are not compatible with the Zoning Bylaw due to height restrictions.

The BC Designs Catalogue includes flexible, basic designs for ADUs and other small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) structures which are intended to be modified in order to meet site-specific needs. This catalogue has two detached ADU designs, including a one-storey structure with a height of 5.4 m (18 ft) to the roof ridge and a two-storey structure with a height of 8 m (26 ft) (Attachment C). These heights exceed the maximum allowable heights for garden suites and coach houses in the Zoning Bylaw.

The CMHC Housing Designs Catalogue includes examples of structures designed to meet different site conditions in different regions of Canada. The CMHC designs for one-storey ADUs have heights ranging from 4.25 m (14 ft) to 6.5 (21 ft), averaging at approximately 5.5 m (18 ft), to the roof ridge. One sample design for BC has a height of 4.6 m (15 ft). Designs for two-storey ADUs range from 6 m (20 ft) to 8.1 m (27 ft) to the roof ridge, and a sample design for BC has a height of 7.9 m (26 ft). Accommodating standard designs for one-storey garden suites and two-storey coach houses requires updating existing maximum building heights. A sample garden suite design from the CMHC Catalogue intended for use in BC has been included in Attachment D.

**Proposed Maximum Heights for Coach Houses and Garden Suites:**

To ensure the Zoning Bylaw permits the construction of detached ADUs using standard designs staff intend to include in Delta's design catalogue, staff propose raising the maximum height to mid-roof or the top of a flat roof for garden suites from 3.75 m (12 ft) to 4 m (13 ft), and the maximum height to the roof ridge for a pitched roof from 4.5 m (15 ft) to 5.5 m (18 ft). The table below outlines the proposed changes.

Table 1: Proposed Heights for Garden Suites

	Current	Proposed
Maximum Storeys	1.5	1.5
Maximum height to mid-roof or the top of a flat roof	3.75 m	4 m
Maximum height to roof ridge for a pitched roof	4.5 m	5.5 m

Staff also propose raising the maximum height to mid-roof or the top of a flat roof for coach houses from 6.25 m (21 ft) to 6.75 m (22 ft), and the maximum height to the roof ridge for a pitched roof from 7 m (23 ft) to 8 m (26 ft). The table below outlines the proposed changes.

Table 2: Proposed Heights for Coach Houses

	Current	Proposed
Maximum Storeys	2	2
Maximum height to mid-roof or the top of a flat roof	6.25 m	6.75 m
Maximum height to roof ridge for a pitched roof	7 m	8 m

### Impact on Scale and Form:

The proposed amendments are not expected to have significant impact; at maximum, the changes would permit garden suites and coach houses to be one meter higher than is currently permitted, if the structures have a pitched roof. Existing detached ADUs in Delta have been approved and built with heights in line with the proposed amendments, while remaining compatible with the scale and form of established residential neighbourhoods. Other than the amendment to the maximum heights for detached ADUs, all other zoning regulations for these housing types would remain unchanged.

### Implications:

Financial implications – Delta anticipates receiving \$14.2 million through the HAF to fund the seven initiatives identified in Attachment B, including the creation of a comprehensive ADU program supported by a pre-reviewed and standardized design catalogue. This funding is conditional and requires the City to demonstrate progress on the development and implementation of these initiatives. The creation of the design catalogue is necessary to fulfil the funding agreement. Amending the maximum heights for garden suites and coach houses would allow the City to move forward with the creation of the catalogue.

Intergovernmental Implications – Delta is under a Provincial Housing Target Order. The proposed changes would help incentivize the development of detached ADUs, contributing to Delta's Housing Target.

As the proposed building height regulation changes affect properties within 800 m (2,625 ft) of an intersection of a controlled access highway, Bylaw No. 8507 would require approval from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT). Should Council give Bylaw No. 8507 first, second, and third readings, staff will forward the bylaw to MOTT for approval.

▪ **CONCLUSION:**

Increasing maximum allowable building heights for garden suites and coach houses would enable the creation of a standardized detached ADU design catalogue. This would help property owners construct ADUs more easily while still ensuring garden suites and coach houses are compatible with the scale and form of established residential neighbourhoods. The proposed amendments contribute to a major initiative within Delta's overall housing strategy and help incentivize construction of new housing.

It is recommended that Bylaw No. 8507 be given first, second and third readings.



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▪ **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Bylaw No. 8507
- B. City of Delta Housing Accelerator Fund Initiatives Summary
- C. BC Design Catalogue Samples
- D. CMHC Design Catalogue Sample