

GARDEN SUITES

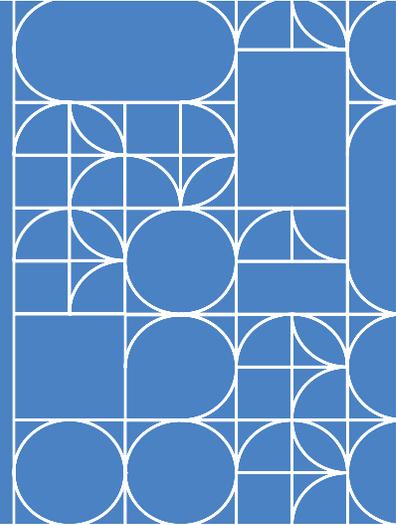
OVERVIEW OF REGULATIONS

Edmonton

INTRODUCTION

Rules for building garage and garden suites have changed. There are now more opportunities to build them and higher standards in place to ensure they are attractive and well designed. The new rules came into effect on February 25, 2019.

This booklet includes a general outline of the new regulations and is intended for information purposes only. The information contained within this booklet may not be used to determine development rights and does not supersede or interpret the provisions found within the Edmonton Zoning Bylaw, Bylaw 12800.



DEFINITION

Garden suites are stand-alone living spaces that have their own kitchen, bathroom, bedroom(s) and living room. They're located in the backyard of a single detached house, semi-detached house and row houses, and can include garage space or have no garage at all

When designing a garden suite, you can put your living space on the main floor, above a garage or split it between two floors.

Garage *and* garden suites are now both referred to as **garden suites**.



ZONING

Garden suites are now a Permitted Use in the zones listed below. Being a Permitted Use means that if you meet all the rules of the Zoning Bylaw, your permit cannot be denied or appealed. For zones where garden suites are still a Discretionary Use, Development Officers will review all applications and make a formal decision about whether a garden suite is the right fit for that property. A permit granted for a Discretionary Use or a garden suite that does not meet all regulations requires notification to surrounding property owners and may be appealed to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

PERMITTED USE	DISCRETIONARY USE
RF1 - <i>Single Detached Residential Zone</i> RF2 - <i>Low Density Infill Zone</i> RF3 - <i>Low Density Redevelopment Zone</i> RF4 - <i>Semi-Detached Zone</i> RF5 - <i>Row Housing Zone</i> RF6 - <i>Medium Density Multiple Family Zone</i> RSL - <i>Residential Small Lot Zone</i> RPL - <i>Planned Lot Residential Zone</i> RR - <i>Rural Residential Zone</i> RMD - <i>Residential Mixed Dwelling Zone</i> TSDR - <i>Terwillegar Single Detached Residential</i> TSLR - <i>Terwillegar Small Lot Residential Zone</i> GLD - <i>Griesbach Small Lot Residential Zone</i> GLG - <i>Griesbach Low Density Residential with Garage Suites Zone</i> HVLD - <i>Heritage Valley Low Density Zone</i> GHLD - <i>Graydon Hill Low Density Residential</i> SLD - <i>Stillwater Low Density Residential</i>	RA7 - <i>Low Rise Apartment Zone</i> RA8 - <i>Medium Rise Apartment Zone</i> RA9 - <i>High Rise Apartment Zone</i> HDR - <i>High Density Residential Zone</i> EETR - <i>Edmonton Energy & Technology Park</i> SRH - <i>Stillwater Row Housing</i> If your property is zoned DC1 or DC2, you will need to check specific requirements in the Zoning Bylaw.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES

In the past, garden suites were only eligible in certain locations, like corner lots or next to commercial zones, and lots over a certain size. These criteria have been removed.



PARKING

Effective July 2, 2020 minimum on-site parking requirements have been removed from the Zoning Bylaw. This means that homeowners can now decide how much parking to provide with their garden suite based on their own particular needs. For more information, please visit edmonton.ca/makingspace.



HEIGHT

The maximum height for garden suites no longer depends on the height of the existing house but does vary based on zoning or based on whether the property has a back lane.

LOCATION	SLOPED ROOF (4/12 (18.4°) or greater))	FLAT ROOF (less than 4/12 (18.4°))
<p>Garden suite with back lane.</p>	6.5 m	6.2 m
<p>Garden suite without lane.</p>	4.3 m	4.3 m
In the TSDR, TSLR & the GLG zones.	7.5 m	7.5 m

If designing a garden suite with a **sloped roof**, the height will be measured to the **midpoint** of the roof. If your suite has a **flat roof**, the height will be measured to the **highest part** of the roof. Section 52 of the Zoning Bylaw provides information about measuring height and how to calculate the grade for garden suites.



SLOPED ROOF



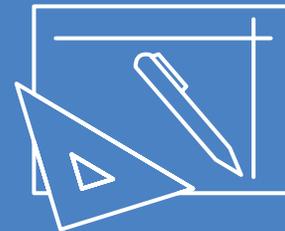
FLAT ROOF



BUILDING SIZE

The total size of your building is determined by two main regulations: floor area and site coverage.

FLOOR AREA is the total square footage of your building.
SITE COVERAGE is the size of your building's footprint, or, in other words, the amount of your property the building covers.



FLOOR AREA (SQUARE FOOTAGE)

The square footage of a garden suite includes the living space (bedrooms, kitchen, etc.) and garage parking spaces. ***The maximum total square footage for any garden suite is 130 m².***

There are some restrictions on second storey floor area. The maximum second storey floor area in the RF1, RF2, RF3, RF4, RF5, RF6, RA7, RA8 and RA9 zones is 50 m². If you're building an accessible suite, the second storey can be up to 60 m² from the floor area calculation for the stairs and 6 m² per storey for the elevator and its landing areas.

If you're installing a staircase or elevator inside the building, you can exclude up to 6 m² from the floor area calculation for the stairs and 6 m² per storey for the elevator and its landing areas.

Specific details about square footage requirements can be found in Section 87 of the Zoning Bylaw.

SITE COVERAGE (BUILDING FOOTPRINT)

The total footprint of your building is calculated as a percentage of your property's overall size. The percentage of your property your garden suite can cover depends on:

- » What zone your property is located in
- » The size of your main house

In the **RF1, RF2, RF3, RF4, RF5, RF6, RA7, RA8, and RA9 zones**, your garden suite can cover up to 18% of your lot. However, the total amount that all the buildings on your property can cover is 42%. This means that if you have a larger house that covers more than 24% of your lot, your suite's footprint will be limited to less than 18%.

In all cases, the garage parking areas and other accessory buildings (such as sheds) on your property cannot cover more than 12% of your property. The extra site coverage can only be used to accommodate living spaces on the ground floor, including storage and staircases.

ZONE	MAXIMUM SITE COVERAGE FOR THE GARDEN SUITE	MAXIMUM TOTAL SITE COVERAGE FOR ALL STRUCTURES	MAXIMUM SITE COVERAGE FOR OTHER ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND PARKING AREAS IN THE GARDEN SUITE
RF1, RF2, RF3, RF4, RF5, RF6, RA7, RA8, RA9	18%	42%	12%

In **all other zones**, your garden suite can cover 2% more of your lot than you'd be allowed for a normal accessory building, like a detached garage. You're also allowed 2% more total site coverage (for all the buildings on your property).

To determine the site coverage you're allowed, look to your property's zone and find the site coverage regulations. Add +2% to the number specified for "accessory building" coverage to find the maximum footprint for your garden suite. Add +2% to the number specified for "total site coverage" to find the maximum footprint for all structures on your property.

In all cases, the garage parking areas and other accessory buildings (such as sheds) on your property cannot cover more than the number specified for "accessory building" coverage. The extra site coverage can only be used to accommodate living spaces on the ground floor, including storage and staircases.

ZONE	MAXIMUM SITE COVERAGE FOR THE GARDEN SUITE	MAXIMUM TOTAL SITE COVERAGE FOR ALL STRUCTURES	MAXIMUM SITE COVERAGE FOR OTHER ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND PARKING AREAS IN THE GARDEN SUITE
All other Zones	Add +2% to the maximum accessory building coverage in your zone.	Add +2% to the maximum total site coverage in your zone.	Equal to the maximum accessory building coverage in your zone.

The space underneath balconies and other structures higher than 1 m above the ground are counted in the building footprint.

LOCATION ON YOUR PROPERTY (SETBACKS)

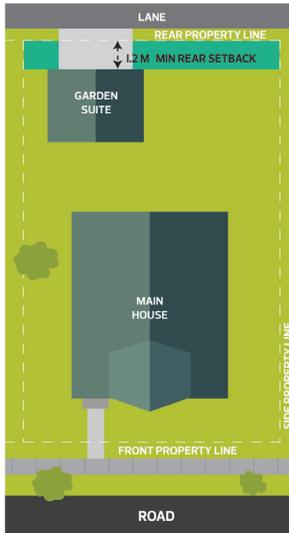


Figure 1

If the garage door on the garden suite faces the lane, the building must be at least 1.2 m from the back of your property (see figure 1). If the garage door on the garden suite does not face the lane, the building can be 0.6 m from the back of your property.

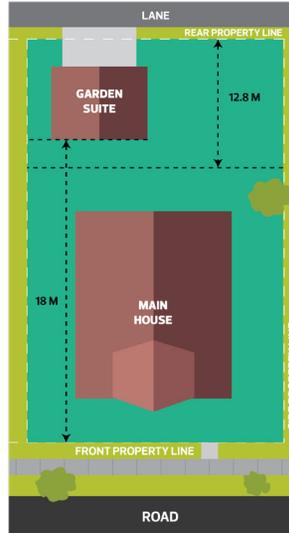


Figure 2

A garden suite must be at least 18 m from the front of your property. If you are in a neighbourhood where the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay applies, your suite cannot extend further than 12.8 m from the back of your property (see figure 2).

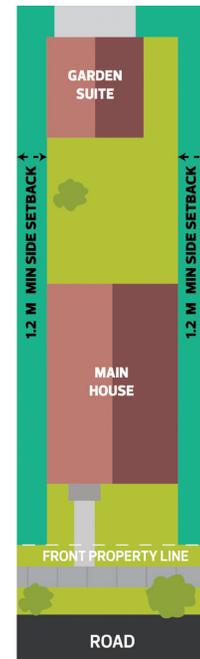


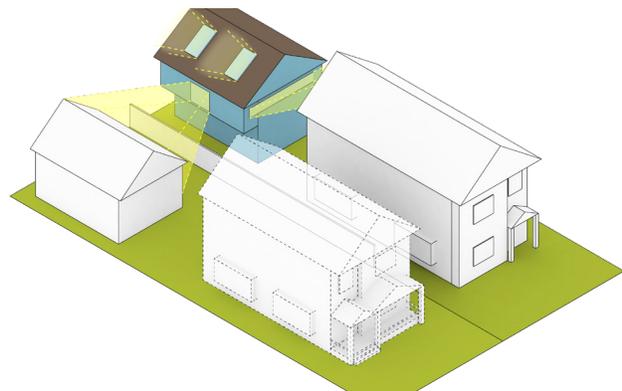
Figure 3

The minimum distance from the garden suite to the side lot lines is the same as what is required for the principal dwelling in your property's zone or overlay (See figure 3 for 1.2 m example).

PRIVACY / OVERLOOK

If your garden suite is two storeys, you must submit information about the proposed location of second storey windows in relation to the neighbouring yard spaces and windows. Second storey windows must be designed to reduce views into neighbouring yards and windows. This can be done by:

- Off-setting windows
- Locating windows above eye level
- Adding frosting to windows
- Placing windows to face trees or neighbouring garages
- Placing larger windows to face a lane or street



BALCONIES

Balconies are allowed on garden suites if they follow the regulations below.

LOCATION

Balconies higher than 1 m must be located no further than 6 m from the back of your property (see figure 4). Exception: if your suite is next to a side street or side laneway, the balcony can wrap around that full street or side laneway facing side.

If your garden suite has two storeys, a balcony can be located on top of the first floor roof. Rooftop balconies on top of the second storey are not allowed.

PRIVACY SCREENING

Balconies higher than 1 m require privacy screening to reduce overlook onto properties that share a property line with yours. More information about privacy screening requirements can be found in Section 49 of the Zoning Bylaw.

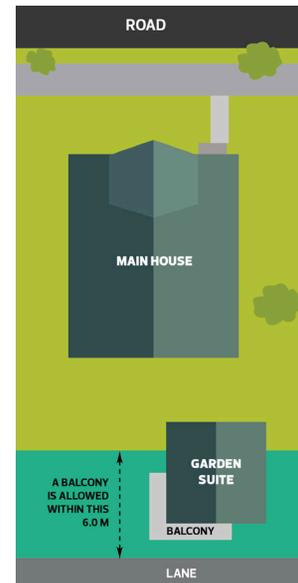


Figure 4



DESIGN

Each exterior wall of the garden suite must be designed to have at least two of the following features:

- a. Projection or recession of portions of the façade
- b. Projecting architectural features
- c. Balconies
- d. Two or more exterior finishing materials
- e. Variation in rooflines
- f. Entrance features facing a road or lane
- g. Dormers
- h. Window trim with a minimum width of 7.5 cm
- i. Windows on the ground floor covering 50% of the side facing the lane

On corner sites, the sides facing the lane and street must have consistent building materials and architectural features.

LIGHTING

The sides of the garden suite facing a lane must have exterior lighting, such as a porch light.

ENTRANCE

Entrances must include a covered feature over the main door to the suite. Where a garden suite contains a garage, the garden suite must have an entrance separate from the vehicle entrance to the garage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please see edmonton.ca/gardensuites.

For more information about garden suite pre-application meetings, visit the [Pre-application Meetings](#) page at edmonton.ca.

