

## RDN Bylaw 500 Review and Update Project – Affordable Housing, RVs and Tiny Homes

Bylaw 500, the Regional District of Nanaimo's (RDN) primary Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw, is currently being updated with the intent of addressing known problems where the bylaw is unclear, inconsistent, or challenging to administer or enforce. Following this update, a future review will examine options to provide more support for housing diversity, including the use of RVs and tiny homes as permanent residences.

The Bylaw 500 Review and Update Project includes three phases:

- Phase 1: Clarification and Housekeeping (*we are currently in this phase*)
  - General bylaw update and refresh to address problem areas and provide greater clarification
- Phase 2: Housing (Green Building and Affordability)
  - Includes obstacles to use of tiny homes, length of stay in recreational vehicles
- Phase 3: Other
  - Flexible phase to address outstanding issues that could be considered such as zoning on park land, campground regulations and standards, etc.

While recent resolutions to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) about recreational vehicles and tiny homes as alternative forms of affordable housing were not accepted, the RDN Board continues to work on the issue of affordable housing. This includes:

- Meeting with Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff at UBCM this past week, and when future opportunities arise, to advocate for changes to support long-term RV use and tiny homes as housing options.
- Working with RDN staff throughout the Bylaw 500 Review and Update Project to find ways within the authority of the RDN to support affordable housing options.

"The RDN Board recognizes we're in a housing crisis and is committed to taking action to support the creation of housing options in our region's rural areas," said Vanessa Craig, Chair, RDN Board. "This action includes ongoing advocacy to the Province requesting they review and update legislation needed to support long-term RV and tiny home living as affordable housing options in our region."

To help start addressing these critical housing issues, multiple motions related to affordable housing, diversity of housing, long-term stays in an RV and tiny homes were adopted on September 24, 2024, at the RDN board meeting.

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## **Motions Adopted on September 24, 2024:**

### **Motion:**

1. The Board suspend bylaw enforcement for length of stay of existing recreational vehicles located in Campgrounds, Resort Vehicle Parks and Recreational Vehicle Parks in Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G, and H until the completion of Phase Two of the Bylaw 500 Review except in circumstances where:
  - a. It is determined that there are risks to health and safety;
  - b. It is determined there is a risk to the environment;
  - c. It is determined that sewage is not being disposed of in an approved septic or sewage disposal system; or that septic or sewage disposal systems are beings used in excess of capacity;
  - d. It is determined that there is contamination of wells or other drinking water sources;
2. That no additional contravention or unlawful expansion of a Campground, Resort Vehicle Parks and Recreational Vehicle Parks takes place during the enforcement of length of stay suspension.

### **Motion:**

That the Board direct staff to amend draft Bylaw 2500 by reverting back to the language contained in Bylaw 500 with respect to resort vehicle park including the relevant definitions and adding resort vehicle park as a permitted use within the zones it was permitted in within Bylaw 500.

### **Motion:**

That the Board direct staff, following the adoption of Bylaw 2500 and in conjunction with Phase 2 of Bylaw 500 review and update project, to review the limitation on length of stay in a recreational vehicle and provide recommendations and community input on potential options to allow full time stays within a recreational vehicle.

### **Motion:**

That phase two of the Bylaw 500 update and review project begin as soon as possible, with a first draft presented by the end of 2025, and that the 2025- 2029 financial plan be prepared accordingly.

### **Motion:**

That section 3.21(d)(i) “secondary suites within a principal dwelling unit must not exceed 49% of the floor area of the dwelling unit that it is located within nor 90 m<sup>2</sup> of floor area, whichever is lesser” be removed and replaced with “secondary suites within a principal dwelling unit must not exceed 100 m<sup>2</sup> of floor area.”

### **Motion:**

That section 3.21(e)(iii)B. “The maximum floor area of a detached secondary suite shall not exceed 49% of the floor area of the principal dwelling unit which it is associated with nor 90 m<sup>2</sup> of total floor area, whichever is lesser” be removed and replaced with “The maximum floor area of a detached secondary suite shall not exceed 100 m<sup>2</sup> of total floor area.”

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**Motion:**

That section 3.21(c)(vi) “a secondary suite shall be limited to a maximum of two bedrooms and one cooking facility” be amended to “a secondary suite shall be limited to a maximum of three bedrooms and one cooking facility.”

**Background**


When it is adopted, Bylaw 2500 will replace Bylaw 500. Bylaw 2500 will address the issues identified through Phase 1 of the Bylaw 500 review. The updated bylaw will be easier for residents to understand and for the RDN to communicate and administer. The first working version of draft Bylaw 2500 has been available for public review and comment since August 2022. Since then, the bylaw has been updated based on community input, legal review and further staff refinement.

For information on the Bylaw 500 Review and Update Project, including FAQ, draft Bylaw 2500, staff reports and more, visit [getinvolved.rdn.ca/bylaw-500-review](https://getinvolved.rdn.ca/bylaw-500-review). For meeting agendas and to watch recordings of past meetings online, visit [rdn.bc.ca/agendas-minutes-videos](https://rdn.bc.ca/agendas-minutes-videos).

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