

# Houseplexes

## Draft Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan

Houseplexes are small, multi-unit buildings designed to look like a large house and be architecturally compatible with the residential neighbourhood.



Illustrative examples of houseplexes featuring three or four units. Photo: Vancouver fourplex Christopher Cheung

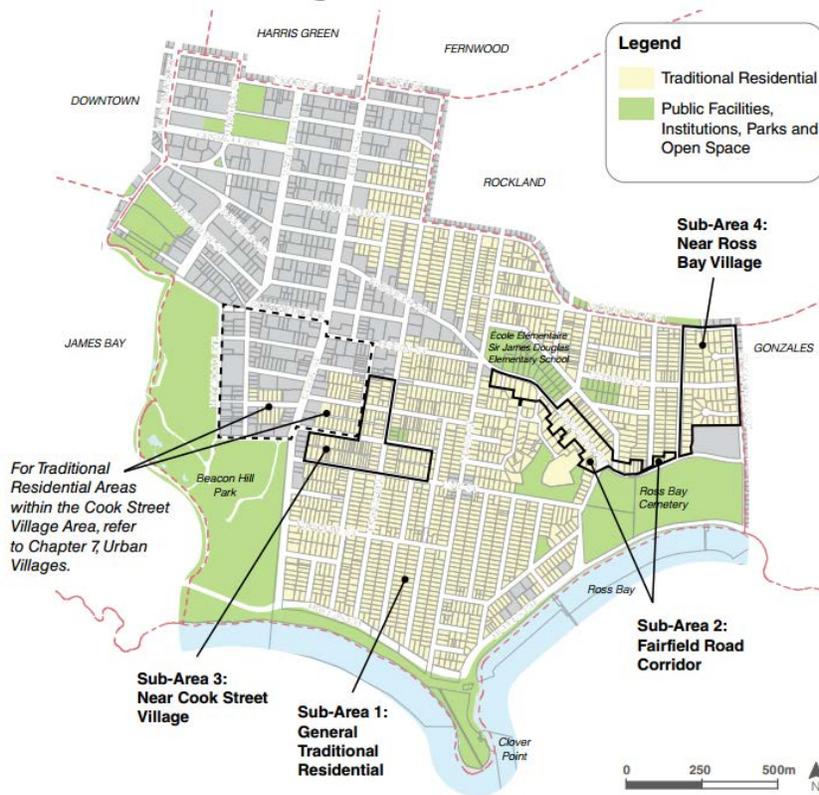
## What's proposed?

- Support houseplexes in certain location on appropriately-sized lots
- Houseplexes of 3 units are proposed in:
  - Sub-Area 1: on larger lots (at least 18m/60 ft wide and 650m<sup>2</sup>/7,000 sq. ft. in area) [see map below]
- Houseplexes of 3 or 4 units are proposed in:
  - Sub-Areas 1,2,3 and 4: on lots at least 18m/60 ft wide and 650m<sup>2</sup>/7,000 sq. ft. in area that front two streets (e.g. corner or laneway access lots) [see map]
  - Sub-Areas 2 and 3: mid-block lots at least 18m/60 ft wide and 650m<sup>2</sup>/7,000 sq. ft.
- More units (e.g. 3 → 4, or 4 → 5+) might be supported if all the guidelines for design and landscaped open space can be met. This would generally require an approved parking variance to reduce the number of on-site parking spaces.
- Heritage designated or registered houses should be retained. New units may be considered where consistent with the City's existing House Conversion Regulations.
- A house conversion (retaining and adapting the existing house) is preferred to construction of a new houseplex for other houses assessed to have heritage merit.
- A houseplex may be up to 2 storeys tall, or 2 ½ storeys tall without a habitable basement. Half storeys should be under a peaked roof.

[See Sub-Area Map on Next Page]

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### Map of Traditional Residential Sub-Areas:

See a bigger version of this map on p.76 (Map 11) of the draft neighbourhood plan.

### What's different from existing policy?

- Currently, the [Official Community Plan](#) supports attached housing in Traditional Residential areas throughout Fairfield. The draft plan introduces houseplexes as a new housing type, and identifies the locations and lot sizes where this type of housing would be suitable.
- The OCP supports housing in traditional residential areas up to a density of 1.0 floor space ratio; the draft plan proposes reducing this to 0.75 floor space ratio for houseplexes, to provide more on-site open space.
- Currently, development may be up to 2 storeys tall, regardless of whether there is a basement (habitable basements may be partially above-ground, making the actual height of buildings with them approximately 2 ½ storeys). To fit in with the height of existing properties while supporting livable units, the draft plan supports houseplexes of up to 2 ½ storeys if there is no habitable basement.

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### Benefits and tradeoffs

- Houseplexes can fit the character of existing neighbourhoods – they may be similar in scale or appearance to character homes converted to include multiple suites, which already exist in many neighbourhoods
- Houseplexes provide additional housing choices (rental or strata) in the neighbourhood
- Houseplexes provide on-site parking, but may require a reduction of on-site parking requirement to retain green space. Some residents may park on-street
- Houseplexes may encourage new construction where there are smaller existing homes on larger lots