

# INFORMATION SHEET - *Houseplexes*

## Draft Vic West Neighbourhood Plan

*Houseplexes are small, multi-unit buildings designed to look like a large house, or to be architecturally compatible with the residential neighbourhood. In some cases, one of the units may be designed to appear as a garden suite (a small cottage in the backyard area).*



*Illustrative examples of houseplexes featuring three or four units.*

## What's proposed?

- Support the creation of houseplexes on appropriately sized lots in Vic West.
- Houseplexes of 3-4 units are supported on lots of at least 550 – 650 square metres (6,000 – 7,000 square feet). (Most lots suitable for 4 units are found east of Russell Street). Houseplexes with more units would be supported only where urban design guidance can be met, including requirements for landscaped on-site open space (generally with reductions in required parking).

## What's new?

- Currently, the [Official Community Plan](#) supports attached housing in Traditional Residential areas throughout Vic West. This neighbourhood plan focuses on sensitively integrating supported housing types into the neighbourhood by proposing more detailed lot width and area, height, density, design, and other requirements.
- 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 duplexes of up to 2 ½ storeys if there is no habitable basement.

## Benefits and tradeoffs

- Houseplexes can fit the character of existing neighbourhoods – they may be similar in scale or appearance to heritage homes converted to include multiple suites, which already exist in many neighbourhoods.
- Houseplexes provide additional housing choices (rental or strata) in the neighbourhood, near shops, services and transit
- Houseplexes with 4 or more units may require a reduction of on-site parking requirements. If all parking were accommodated on-site, it could be difficult to retain green space. Some residents who own cars may park on-street.