

# A Strategy for Second Suites

**Presentation to Development Services Committee  
May 15, 2007**

# **Request for update on Current Strategy**

## **March 8, 2005 Council action:**

**That staff from the Development Services Commission, Corporate Services Commission and Community Services Commission, provide a status report on the delivery of enhanced procedural changes for “grandfathered” two unit houses to DSC in six months time or as otherwise determined by the CAO and Commissioners**

# Council adopts Affordable Housing Strategy

In Feb 2003 Council endorsed Town role in support of the provision of rental and affordable housing:

- **Advocacy/Partner:** with senior governments, the community and the development industry in the application of supporting policy and financial initiatives
- **Policy:** initiatives (ie. intensification, housing mix, govt. lands inventory, a strategy for second suites)
- **Financial:** initiatives (ie. complementary financial incentives, surplus lands).
- **Community Rental Housing Program:** fast-track process

# Council Adopts Strategy for Second Suites

In March 2004 Request for DSC direction on preferred option for Town's Strategy for Second Suites:

- **Option 1:** No new zoning provisions; enhance current procedures as a base condition.

Building on Option 1 Procedural Enhancements:

- **Option 2:** New zoning provisions for certain Wards.
- **Option 3:** New zoning provisions for certain Wards & Town-wide for certain new development.
- **Option 4:** New zoning provisions Town-wide.

Council adopts Option 1 Base Condition as Strategy for Second Suites – Mar 2005

# Delivery of Enhanced Procedures

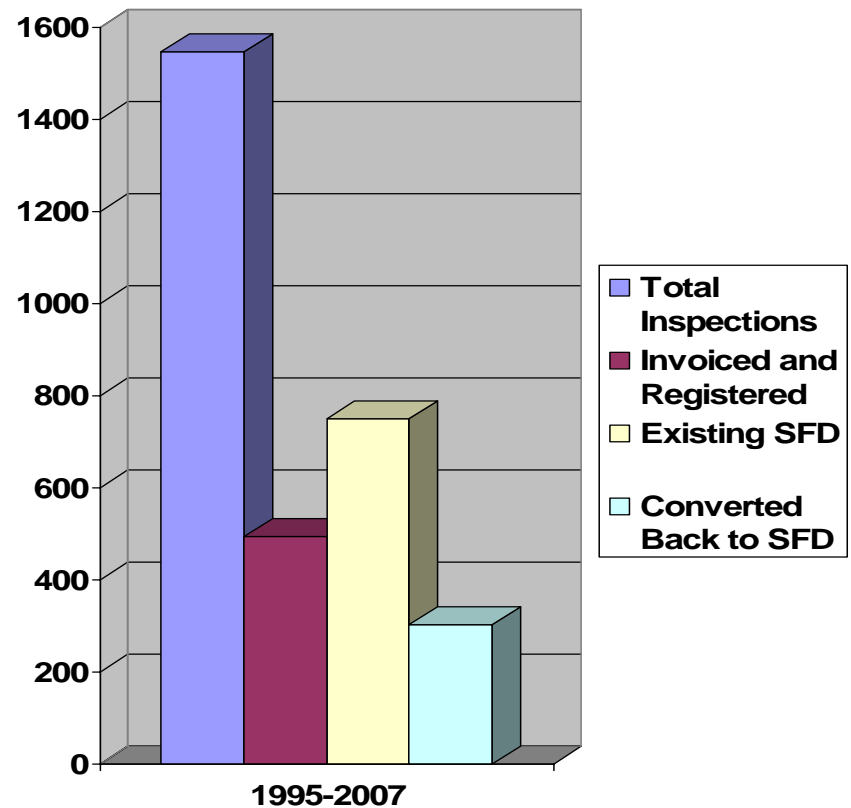
Since March 2005:

- Fire Services designated as “Lead” Department
- **Registration By-law** and **Declaration Form** updated
- Amanda database
- **New procedures** for inspecting and registering “grandfathered” two unit houses only and enforcement of illegally established units
- **Public information sheet**
- Fire Services and By-law Enforcement **resources in place**

# Impact of Enhanced Procedures

## Two Unit Houses under “grandfathering” legislation 1995 to 2007:

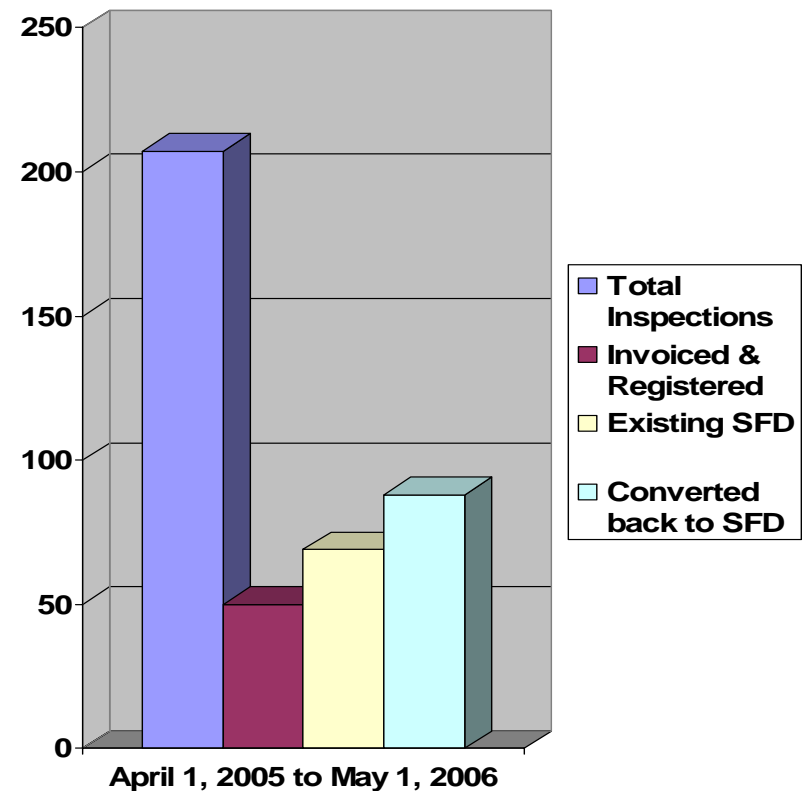
- Registration of legal Two Unit Houses has increased
- 1/3 of complaints registered
- 2/3 not valid or converted



# Impact of Enhanced Procedures

**Two Unit Houses under  
new Procedures  
May 2005 – May 2006:**

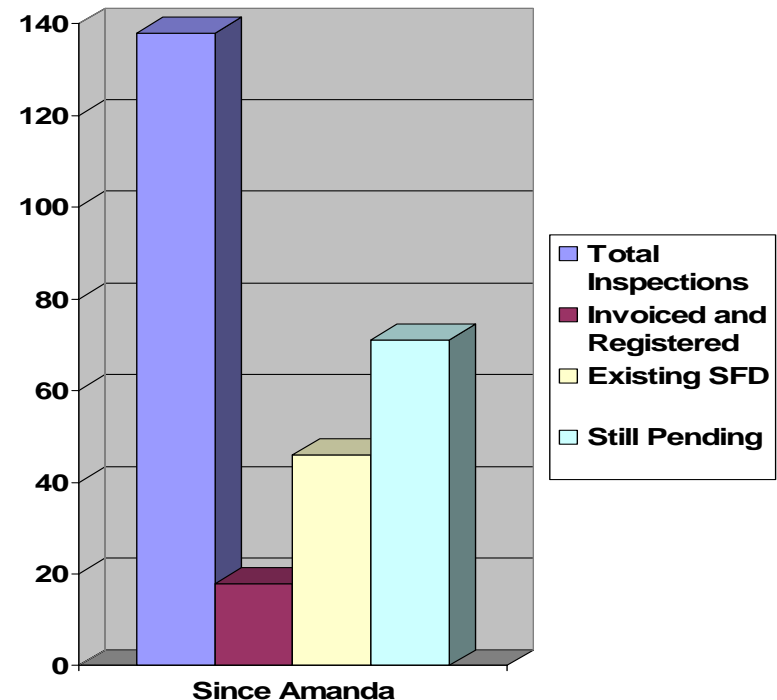
- **More rigorous requirements have increased compliance**



# Impact of Enhanced Procedures

Two Unit Houses since  
Amanda introduced  
May 2006- May 2007:

- Simplified management of inspections
- Decrease in number of valid complaints





# Legislation and Policy Changes

**Since March 2005:**

## **Legislation:**

- **Bill 51 Planning Reforms – No appeal on zoning to permit second suites under Town's current OP policies**

## **Policy:**

- **Provincial Growth Plan and emerging Regional Growth Management Strategy encourage second suites in the built-up area to facilitate intensification**
- **Front and Exterior Yard Parking in Residential Areas**
- **Markham Centre and Cornell already have zoning in place to permit second suites**
- **Pickering, Burlington latest to permit second suites**

# Revisiting the Strategy Options?

Comparing the Strategy Options:

Impact of Strategy Options on Markham Communities

PROCESS ONLY OPTION vs. TOWN-WIDE ZONING OPTION

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| - Limited Approval Process            | - Standard Approval Process                    |
| - Inequitable Zoning                  | - Equitable Zoning                             |
| - Limited Public Information          | - Public Better Informed                       |
| - Unreported/illegal suites           | - Opportunity for legal suites                 |
| - Potential life safety issues        | - Life Safety aspects improve                  |
| - Development Standards not addressed | - Development Standards updated and maintained |

# **Building on Strategy for Second Suites**

**If Council were to consider zoning to permit second suites there are previously identified issues that need to be addressed:**

- **Life Safety**
- **Customer Service**
- **Standards and Use of Housing Stock** including absentee landlords, adequate parking, property standards, contribution to intensification, etc.
- **Provision of Rental and Affordable Housing**
- **Impact on Resources**

# Moving Forward Strategy for Second Suites

Council direction required on either:

- **Maintaining current Strategy** of enhanced procedures for “grandfathered” two unit houses and request staff to provide status report updates to DSC as required
- OR
- **Building on the current Strategy** by considering options for a Strategy that would apply zoning provisions for second suites Town-wide and request a Subcommittee of DSC and staff to report back on Strategy including involvement of the community in public open houses and/or workshops