

HLDAC Recommendations Related to Zoning Bylaw - Additional Recommendations

The Housing and Land Development Advisory Committee had provided recommended amendments to the Zoning Bylaw in 2024. City Council approved a portion of the recommendations around the Zoning Bylaw to be done immediately and further ones were deferred to be included in the larger Zoning Bylaw review being undertaken by the City. HLDAC, after further review and discussion, has determined that the following three recommendations need to be done to ensure that the immediate impacts of the provision of up to 4 units on a parcel can be realized. Without implementing these three recommendations, it will be challenging or virtually impossible for a builder or owner to get to the maximum allowable units on their property.

In addition to the short-term amendments presented by the committee on August 7, 2023 and passed by Council on April 22, 2024, the committee resolved and recommends that Council considers the following Zoning Bylaw amendment:

Recommendation 1:

- Increase maximum building height in the following zones to 12.5m or to allow for no more than 3 stories above ground: RC2, RCS, RCS2, RCS3, RCT, RCT2, RD, RR, RS, RS2, RCM3.

Rationale:

- This recommendation should have been included in the first round of recommendations. This was an oversight by the committee.
- The committee believes that building 4 units on one lot with the 10m height constraints is unachievable.
- 12.5m max height would allow builders to build suites at grade to provide accessible housing options to people with limited mobility and encourage people to age in place. This can result in the added benefit of adding more units that meet these particular needs.
- Effectively going to this height can allow for 3 stories above grade (for example stacked triplexes or duplexes)
- Allowing building up instead of out works to relieve potential urban sprawl by focusing development within existing developments.

Recommendation 2:

- Increase maximum building height in the following zones to 20m: RCM, RCM2, RM, CNC, CN, and CNC2.

Rationale:

- Creates a more distributed density throughout our city rather than in on concentrated area such as downtown in order to increase housing stock and improve livability of neighbourhoods and can have the result of building mixes commercial/residential communities within neighbourhoods.
- Can work to incentivize a commercial development to build more stories (residential units) instead of just one floor (strip mall kind of development).

Recommendation 3:

Remove minimum parking requirements other than for accessible parking in residential uses. Approval of this recommendation may require implementation of other parking management tools or ensuring that street widths can accommodate more street parking in new developments.

Rationale:

August 7, 2024 the committee recommended that Council considers removing parking requirements in residential zones. The recommendation was deferred to the Zoning Bylaw Re-Write project. Merely eliminating single-detached housing will not increase housing stock. To unleash the conversion of single-detached neighbourhoods requires peeling back layers of regulations. This means relaxing overly stringent site requirements such site setbacks, site coverage and parking requirements and increasing maximum building heights. All of these constraints must be addressed together in order to enable conversion and densification.