

# R4 Zoning Strategy: Summary

## OVERVIEW

The Residential Fourth Density (R4) family of zones is the city's most intensive low-rise residential zone. R4 zoning covers much of Ottawa's old established low-rise neighbourhoods in the inner urban area, including communities such as Sandy Hill, Vanier, and Westboro.

In many cases, R4 zoning has been in place for decades and has provisions allowing development that may not be in line with current Official Plan policy directions for infill, intensification and compatibility within established communities. Residents have raised concerns that densities and community impacts associated with excessive-bedroom development are out of scale and character with established communities, do not provide adequate waste management for the density, and are creating building typologies that are not adaptable for future households.

In 2016, the City of Ottawa began a review of the R4 family of zones to ensure that new low-rise multiple-unit buildings in established communities respect and fit with their urban context, while still providing the opportunity for a gradual and appropriate increase in density and affordable housing choices in established inner-urban neighbourhoods. In July 2017, Council broadened the scope to include all residential zones where these typologies occur.

## ZONING STRATEGY

Based on consultations with community groups and industry, the City of Ottawa is proposing a comprehensive suite of changes to zoning and other bylaws to encourage a gradual and appropriate increase in density while ensuring low-rise multi unit buildings are compatible within the neighbourhood fabric. These changes will be implemented in a phased approach.

**Phase 1** are immediate measures that will close the door on excessive-bedroom buildings and address some of the more pressing performance issues associated with intensive low-rise in established neighbourhoods.

Phase 1 Measures	
Restrict further development of oversized dwelling units with unreasonably high bedroom counts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict the number of bedrooms in a Dwelling Unit in a multi-unit building to a max. of 4 bedrooms per unit;</li> <li>• Permit Over-Sized Dwelling Units to a maximum of 8 bedrooms as-of-right in detached dwellings only, in any residential zone;</li> <li>• Require a major rezoning to permit an Over-Sized Dwelling Unit in a multi-unit building;</li> <li>• Clarify bylaw definitions (e.g. rooming house vs dwelling unit, over-sized dwelling units, single - housekeeping unit);</li> </ul>

Amend performance requirements for multi-unit housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require an enclosed garbage storage of a min. 7m<sup>2</sup> in floor area for multi-unit buildings with 3+ dwelling units (including both main and secondary dwelling units), with a min. 1.5m clear unobstructed access provided to street curb for all buildings over 400 m<sup>2</sup> in total floor area;</li> <li>• Amend the amenity area requirements to allow for a functional garbage enclosure to occur in a rear yard; and</li> <li>• Remove the 30% landscaping requirement from application to low-rise apartments of up to 12 units as the original intent of the 30% requirement is now served with more precision by the amenity space and other Infill requirements.</li> </ul>
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**Phase 2** are critical longer term actions intended to address the broader challenge of long-term growth, affordability and housing supply - in particular the need for well-built, well-designed, family-oriented and future-adaptable multi-unit buildings in the Residential zones.

<b>Phase 2 Measures</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider design controls and oversight on new development through varying levels of Site Plan Control to support integration of new development into established neighbourhoods;</li> <li>• Undertake a “Missing middle” housing typology review to consider opportunities and constraints involved in developing good-quality, family-oriented multi-unit housing and developing the appropriate performance standards and policy supports to encourage it;</li> <li>• Review the Development Charges By-Law to consider how rates may be changed to favour family-style apartment units and capture costs associated with density;</li> <li>• Identify possible changes to Development Review, Building Code Services and Committee of Adjustment internal processes to close procedural loopholes and improve coordination and communication;</li> <li>• Examine harmonization between the Zoning By-Law and Rooming House licensing requirements and ensure effective enforcement;</li> <li>• Review the City Cash-In-Lieu of Parkland policies to look for opportunities to capture full value for parkland contributions;</li> <li>• Review Secondary Dwelling Units zoning provisions to ensure it is meeting its intent; and</li> <li>• Update the “Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing” to provide clear, graphical guidance for development of compatible low-rise infill housing.</li> </ul>

Questions or comments may be directed to [R4zoning@ottawa.ca](mailto:R4zoning@ottawa.ca).