

# URGENT CHANGES TO PLANNING DOCUMENTS FOR HOUSING

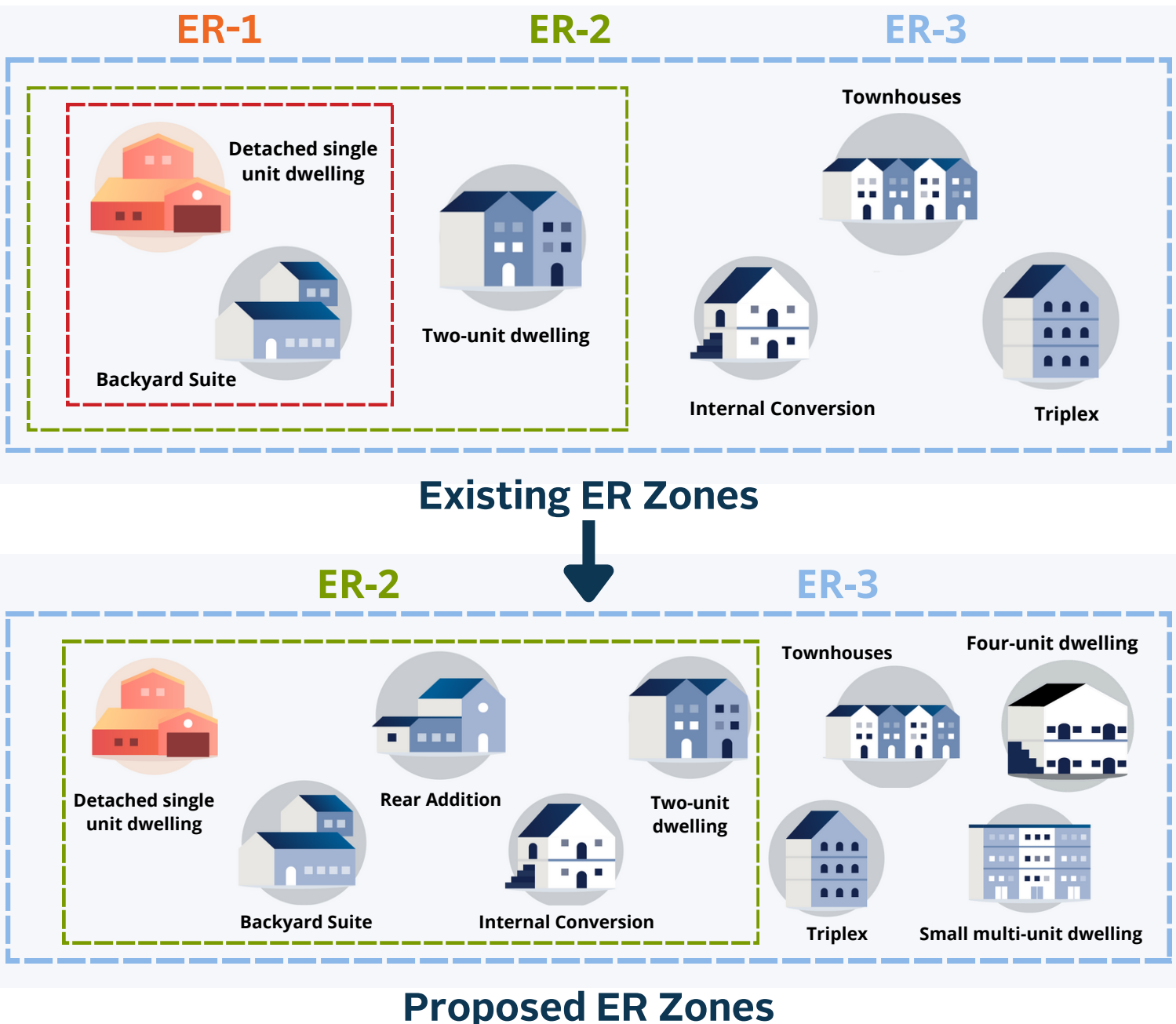
## Regional Centre: Established Residential Zones

### Proposed HAF Amendments: Permitted Uses

It is proposed that the municipality allow **four or more dwelling units** in all residential zones in the Regional Centre by amending the existing “Established Residential” (ER) Zones (ER-1, ER-2 and ER-3) to permit more housing options.

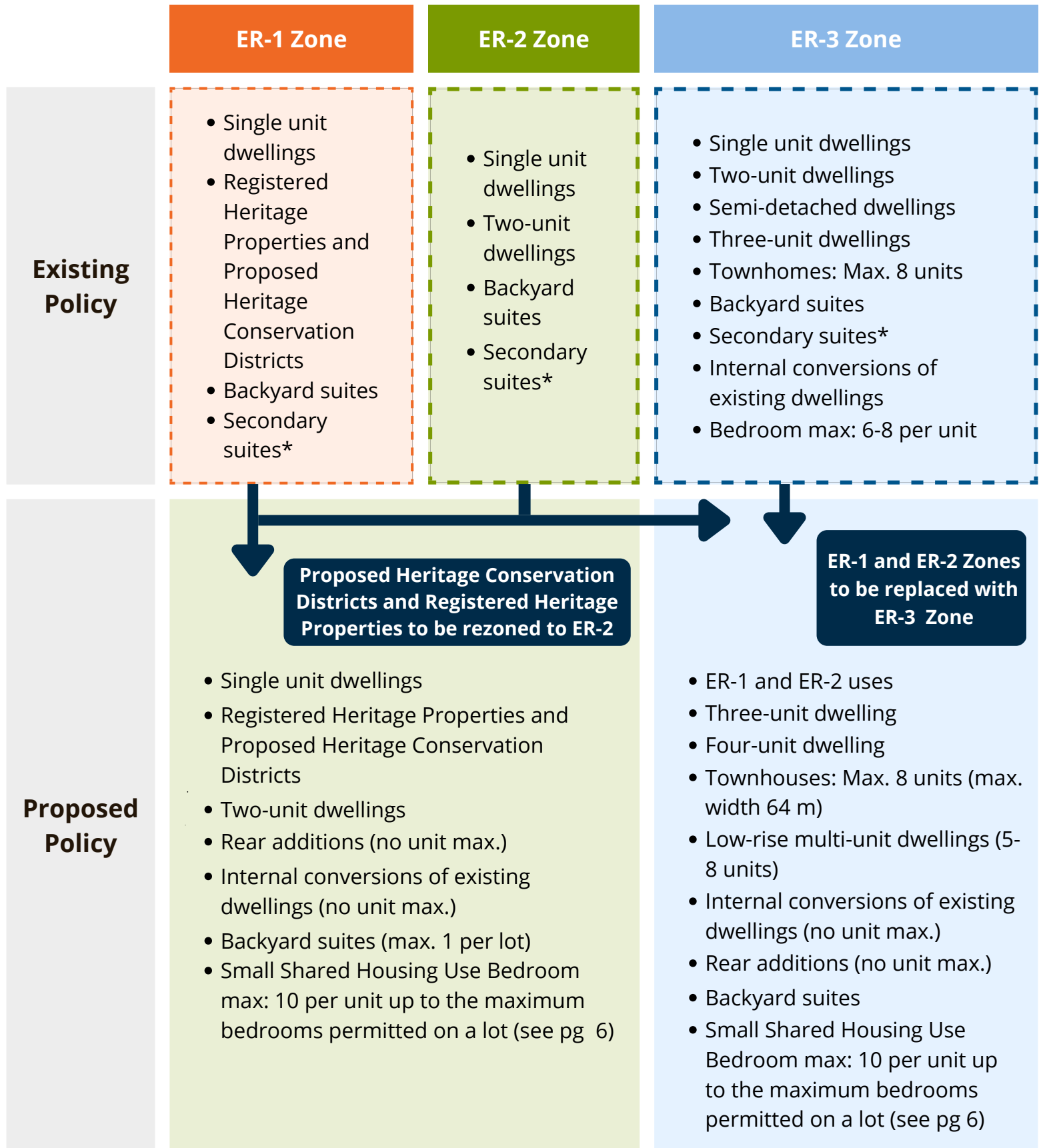
The proposed approach is to replace the ER-1 Zone, which currently limits a large portion of the Regional Centre to single-unit dwellings, with the ER-2 and ER-3 Zones, which allow for greater density and a range of housing types.

See the table on the next page for more details about the proposed zone amendments.

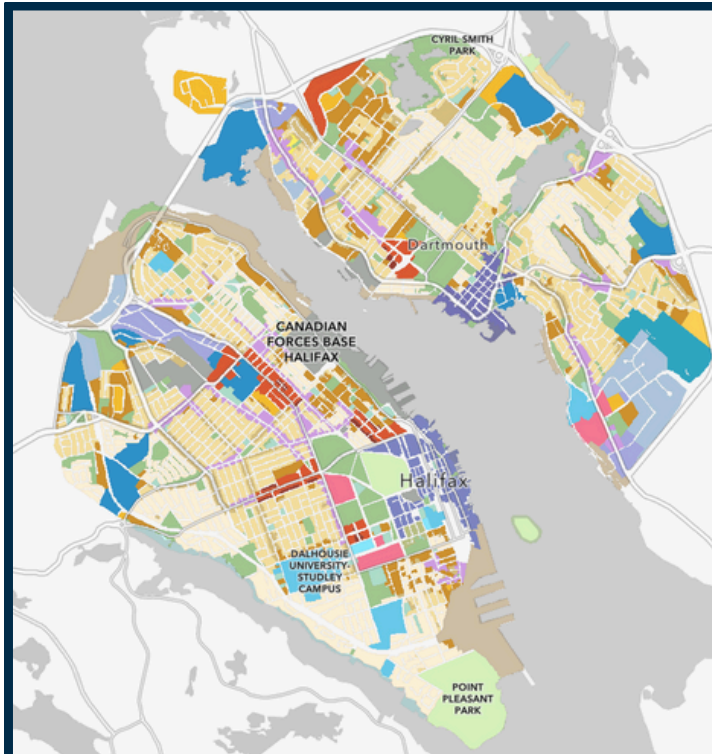


# URGENT CHANGES TO PLANNING DOCUMENTS FOR HOUSING

Regional Centre: ER Zones



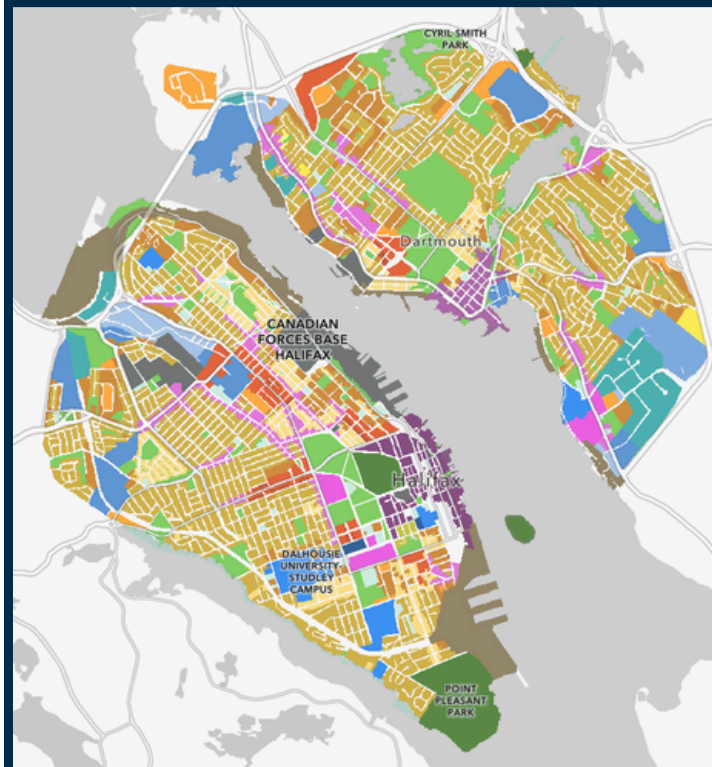
**\*Note:** Secondary suites will still be permitted in the Regional Centre and Suburban Area subject to the National Building Code.



ER-1

ER-2

ER-3



## ◀ Existing zoning

The **ER-1 Zone** (shown in light beige) currently **limits** a significant amount of the Regional Centre to **single-unit dwellings**.

The **ER-2 Zone** (shown in medium beige), which allows up to two dwelling units, is also applied broadly.

There are only a few pockets of **ER-3 Zoned** neighbourhoods (shown in dark beige), which are mostly located in downtown areas and near universities.



Visit the [interactive map here](#).

## ◀ Proposed zoning

It is proposed that all **ER-1 Zones** (shown in light beige) and **ER-2 Zones** (shown in medium beige) are replaced with the **ER-3 Zone** (shown in dark beige).

The exception is proposed Heritage Conservation Districts and registered heritage properties, which would be zoned **ER-2**.

This would permit **greater density** across the ER designation within the Regional Centre.

### Proposed Amendments: Design Requirements

Included in the proposed amendments are new and modified design requirements for residential development in the ER Zones.

	ER-2 Zone	ER-3 Zone
Proposed Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8-11 metre max. height (no change)</li><li>• No minimum parking required for any residential development</li><li>• Garbage screening, 1.2 metres in height (applies to 3+ units)</li><li>• No ground floor balconies</li><li>• Maximum bedroom counts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 11 metre max. height, with a 3 metre exemption for a pitched roof or attic unit</li><li>• No minimum parking required for any residential development</li><li>• Garbage screening (applies to 3+ units)</li><li>• For multi-unit dwellings (5+ units):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Maximum building depth 30 metres</li><li>○ Maximum building width 20 metres</li><li>○ If provided, parking must not be located in the front yard</li><li>○ Parking screening is required from neighbouring properties</li><li>○ Fenestration (window) minimums and articulation standards for walls facing the street</li><li>○ Garbage area, with 1.8 metre high screening, must be located in the back or rear yard only</li><li>○ Street-oriented unit entrances</li></ul></li><li>• No ground floor balconies</li><li>• Maximum bedroom counts</li></ul>



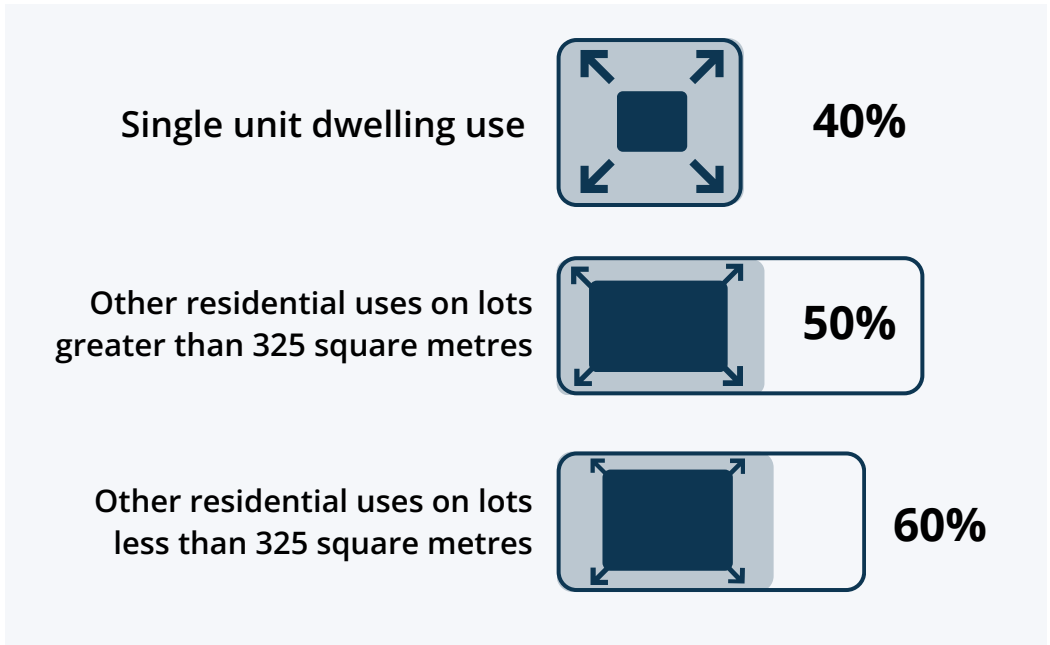
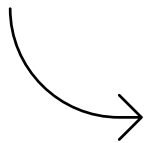
For detailed models of proposed design requirements in the ER zones, please see the last page of this fact sheet package.

### Proposed Amendments: Lot Coverage

#### Proposed lot coverage in ER Zones

The maximum lot coverage percentage is proposed to increase in the ER Zones.

New max. lot coverage will depend on lot size and type of residential use.



**?** **Lot coverage** generally means the percentage of a lot that is covered by roofed structures over 0.6 metres in height. See the [HAF website](#) for a complete list of proposed ER Zone amendments.

### Proposed Amendments: Maximum Bedroom Counts

Included in the proposed amendments are new and modified requirements for maximum bedroom counts in the ER-2 and ER-3 Zones.

It is important to note that all bedrooms are subject to the requirements of the **National Building Code** and **By-law M-200: Respecting Standards for Residential Occupancies**. Even though a building may qualify for a certain number of bedrooms per dwelling unit, there are health, safety and structural regulations that may limit the number of bedrooms that can actually be created.

Please see the table on the following page for the proposed maximum number of bedrooms per unit and per lot in the ER Zones.

# URGENT CHANGES TO PLANNING DOCUMENTS FOR HOUSING

Regional Centre: ER Zones

Residential Use	Maximum Number of Bedrooms per Unit	Maximum Number of Bedrooms per Lot
Single-unit dwelling	-	6
Semi-detached dwelling	4	-
Townhouse dwelling	4	20 per townhouse block
Two-unit dwelling	-	8
Three-unit dwelling	-	10
Four-unit dwelling	-	12
Five-unit dwelling	4	14
Six-unit dwelling	4	16
Seven-unit dwelling	4	18
Eight-unit dwelling	4	20

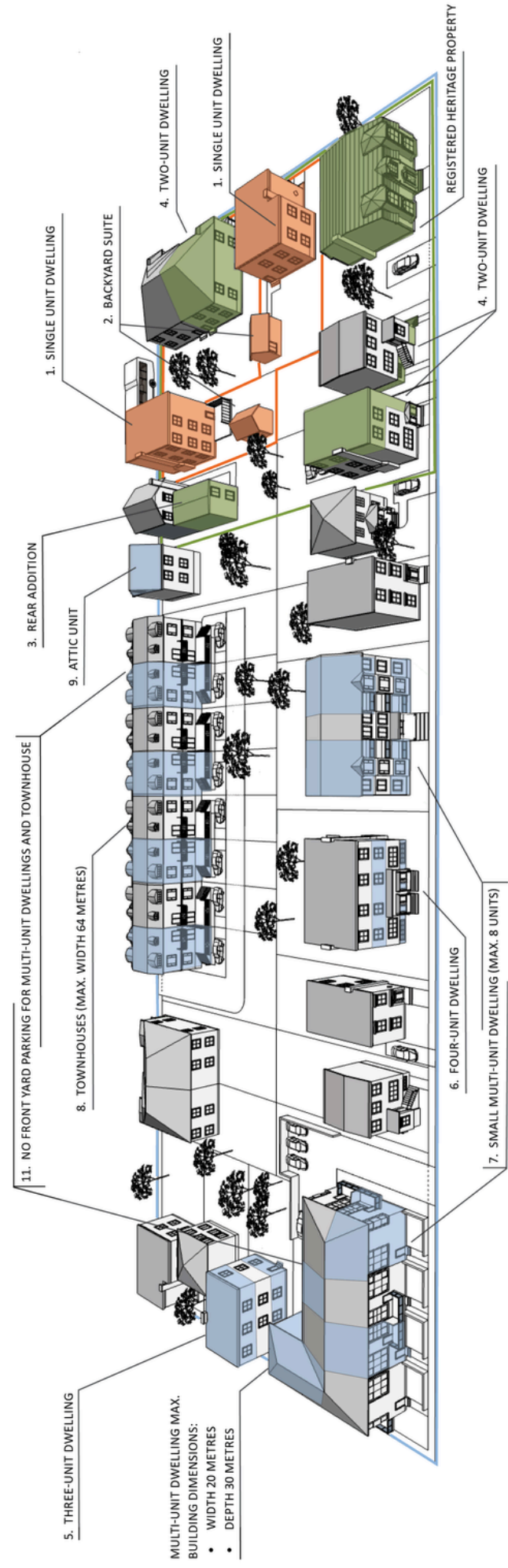


Bedrooms in a backyard suite use or added through an internal conversion are not counted towards the maximum number of bedrooms. See the [HAF website](#) for a complete list of proposed ER Zone amendments.

# HALIFAX

## Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Proposed Amendments Changes to Established Residential (ER) Zones

**?** ER-1, ER-2, and ER-3 Zones are “Established Residential” zones in the Regional Centre. The proposed zoning change would replace all ER-1 Zones with ER-2 and ER-3 Zones to allow for more housing options as-of-right.



### ER-1 Zone

The ER-1 Zone permits:

1. Single unit dwellings
2. Backyard suites

### ER-2 Zone

The proposed ER-2 Zone applies to registered heritage properties and proposed Heritage Conservation District and will permit:

- 1-2. All ER-1 Zone uses
3. Internal conversions and rear additions
4. Two-unit dwellings (e.g. duplex)

### ER-3 Zone

The proposed ER-3 Zone will permit:

- 1-4. All ER-1 and ER-2 Zone uses
5. Three-unit dwellings
6. Four-unit dwellings
7. Small multi-unit dwellings (max. 8 units)
8. Townhouses (max. width 64 metres)

### Other Requirements

Proposed requirements in the ER Zones include:

9. 3 metre exemption for a pitched roof/attic unit in the ER-3 Zone
10. No minimum parking will be required for any residential development
11. If parking is provided for a multi-unit dwelling (5+ units) or townhouse, it must not be located in the front yard
12. No unit count maximum for internal conversions or rear additions
13. Max. lot coverage for residential uses
  - 40% - single unit dwellings
  - 50% - lots > 325 sq. metres
  - 60% - lots < 325 sq. metres

# ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL 2 (ER-2) ZONE

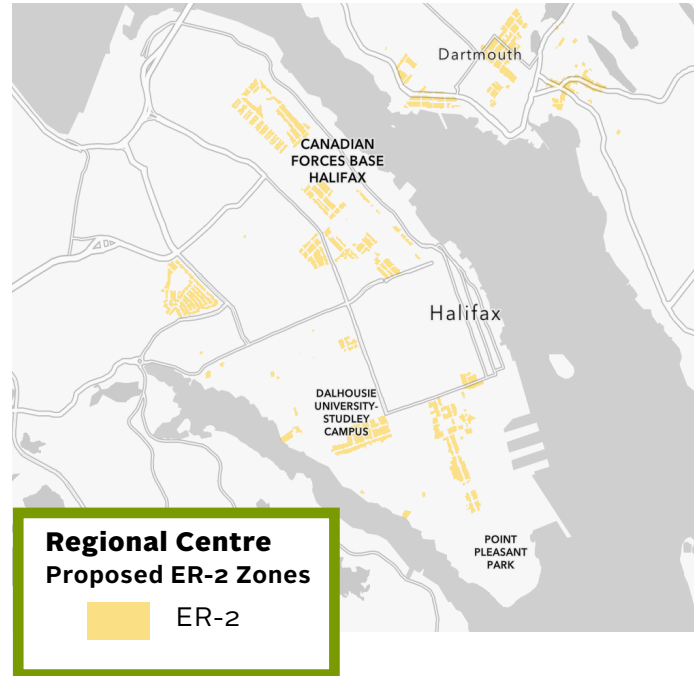
## What is the proposed ER-2 Zone?

The proposed ER-2 Zone will apply to some registered heritage properties and proposed [Heritage Conservation Districts](#).

The proposed ER-2 Zone aims to incentivize the retention of existing built form by allowing more units through internal conversions and rear additions than through new construction.

The proposed ER-2 Zone will not permit as much density through new construction as the proposed ER-3 Zone, but it will allow a greater range of housing types compared to the current ER-1 and ER-2 Zones.

Exact proposed ER-2 Zone locations are mapped in [Attachment C-2 of the Staff Report](#). To see all proposed changes to zoning within the Regional Centre, please visit the [interactive map](#).



## What uses will be permitted in the proposed ER-2 Zone?

**Residential uses:**  
The proposed ER-2 Zone will allow single-unit dwellings and two-unit dwellings plus one backyard suite and small shared housing uses. Rear additions and internal conversions will be permitted with no limit on units.

**Residential accessory uses:**  
Urban agriculture, home occupations, backyard and secondary suites, and other uses accessory to residential uses will still be permitted in the ER-2 Zone. Local commercial uses will still be able to be considered by development agreement.

## How will the amendments change what is currently allowed in the ER-2 Zone?

**More Gentle Density.** The current ER-2 Zone allows 2 dwelling units plus 1 accessory dwelling unit per lot as-of-right. The proposed ER-2 Zone will not have a unit maximum if the existing built form is retained (subject to meeting built form and building code requirements). Small shared housing uses will still be permitted, subject to similar unit number and bedroom count limits.

**More Diverse Housing Types.** The proposed ER-2 Zone will include all currently permitted building types as well as rear additions and internal conversions.

**Built Form Requirements.** Development will continue to be subject to requirements such as maximum height (8 – 11 metres), minimum setbacks, and lot coverage.



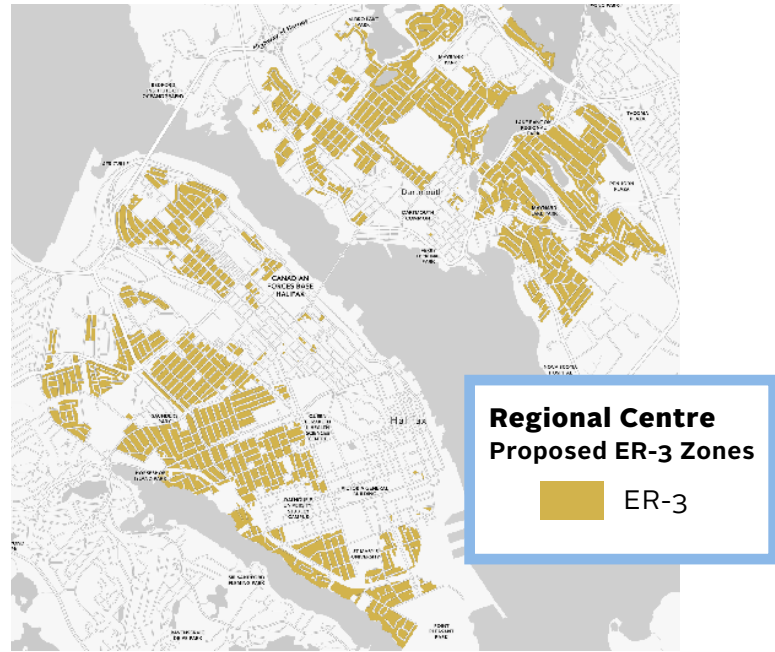
# ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL 3 (ER-3) ZONE

**Where will ER-3 zones be located?**

The proposed ER-3 zone is applied broadly across the Regional Centre to support more gentle density and missing middle housing close to transit and services.

Neighbourhoods that are currently designated ER-1 or ER-2 and are not within proposed [Heritage Conservation District](#) are proposed to be re-zoned ER-3.

Exact proposed ER-3 zone locations are mapped in [Attachment C-2 of the Staff Report](#). To see all proposed changes to zoning within the Regional Centre, please visit the [interactive map](#).



**What uses will be permitted in the ER-3 zone?**

**Residential uses:**

The proposed ER-3 zone will permit single, two, three and four-unit dwellings plus one backyard suite, small multi-unit dwellings (5-8 units), townhouses and small shared housing uses. Rear additions and internal conversions will be permitted with no limit on units.

**Residential accessory uses:**

Urban agriculture, home occupations, backyard and secondary suites, and other uses accessory to residential uses will continue to be permitted in the ER-3 zone. Local commercial uses will still be able to be considered by development agreement.

**How will the amendments change what is currently allowed in the ER-3 zone?**

**More Gentle Density.** The current ER-3 zone allows up to 3 dwelling units plus 1 accessory dwelling unit per lot as-of-right. The proposed ER-3 zone will permit up to 8 dwelling units per lot (depending on lot size) through new construction. Small shared housing uses will still be permitted, subject to similar unit number and bedroom count limits.

**More Diverse Housing Types.** The proposed ER-3 zone will include all currently permitted building types as well as four-unit dwellings and multi-unit dwellings (5-8 dwelling units).

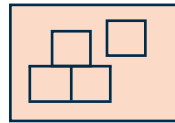
**Built Form Requirements.** Minimum setback requirements will still be enforced. The maximum height will be 11 metres (the typical height max. in current ER-2 and ER-3 zones) with a 3-metre exemption for pitched roofs. In the proposed ER-3 zone, multi-unit dwellings will have maximum building dimensions to promote development at a compatible scale with the neighbourhood.

**Design Requirements.** Multi-unit buildings and townhouses in the proposed ER-3 zone will have increased design requirements to encourage pedestrian friendly facades that harmonize with local architectural styles.

## DENSITY IN THE PROPOSED ER-3 ZONE

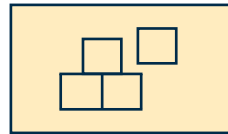
How many dwelling units are currently permitted in the ER-3 Zone?

Currently, the number of dwelling units permitted on a lot in the ER-3 Zone is limited to 3 dwelling units + 1 accessory unit (a backyard suite or secondary suite) as-of-right, no matter the lot size. Buildings must meet all other built form requirements, such as setbacks, lot coverage, height maximums, etc.



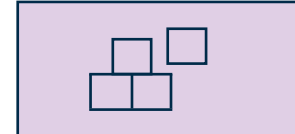
3+1 units

375 sq.m



3+1 units

525 sq.m



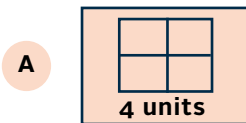
3+1 units

600+ sq.m

Regardless of the lot size, the ER-3 Zone currently permits a maximum of 3+1 units per lot.

How many dwelling units will be permitted in the proposed ER-3 Zone?

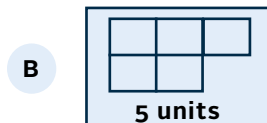
The proposed ER-3 Zone will permit at least 4 units on any lot and will allow up to 8 units as-of-right based on the size of the lot (see table below). Like the current ER-3 Zone, buildings will still need to meet setbacks, lot coverage, height maximums and other built form requirements.



A

4 units

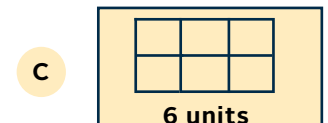
< 375 sq.m



B

5 units

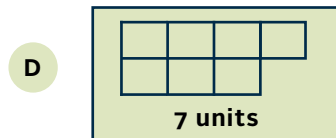
≥ 375 sq.m  
< 450 sq.m



C

6 units

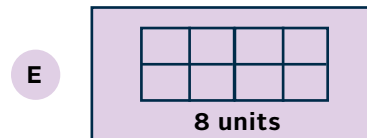
≥ 450 sq.m  
< 525 sq.m



D

7 units

≥ 525 sq.m  
< 600 sq.m



E

8 units

≥ 600 sq.m

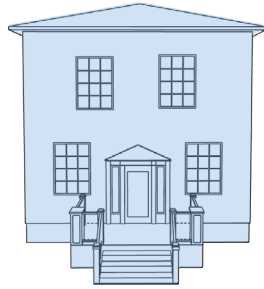
Based on lot size, the proposed ER-3 Zone will permit up to 8 units per lot.

How many dwelling units will I be permitted on my lot?

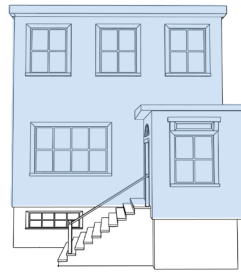
	A	B	C	D	E
<b>If your lot size is:</b>	less than 375 square metres	at least 375 square metres but less than 450 square metres	at least 450 square metres but less than 525 square metres	at least 525 square metres but less than 600 square metres	greater than 600 square metres
<b>You can have up to:</b>	4 dwelling units per lot + 1 backyard suite	5 dwelling units per lot	6 dwelling units per lot	7 dwelling units per lot	8 dwelling units per lot

# PERMITTED BUILDING TYPES IN THE PROPOSED ER-3 ZONE

What building types are currently permitted in the ER-3 Zone?



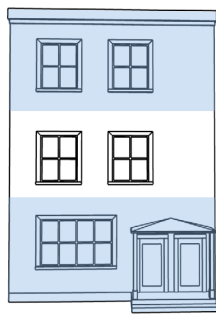
single-unit dwellings



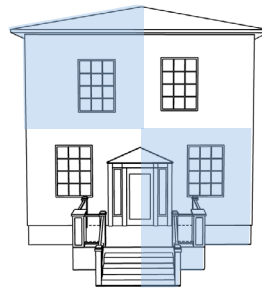
two-unit dwellings



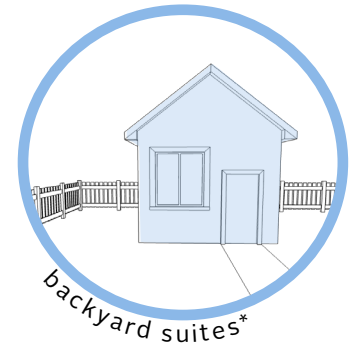
semi-detached dwellings



three-unit dwellings



internal conversion



backyard suites\*

\*accessory to a single, two, three or four-unit dwelling, semi-detached dwelling or townhouse dwelling

What additional housing types will be permitted in the proposed ER-3 Zone?



four-unit dwellings



small multi-unit dwellings (up to 8 units)

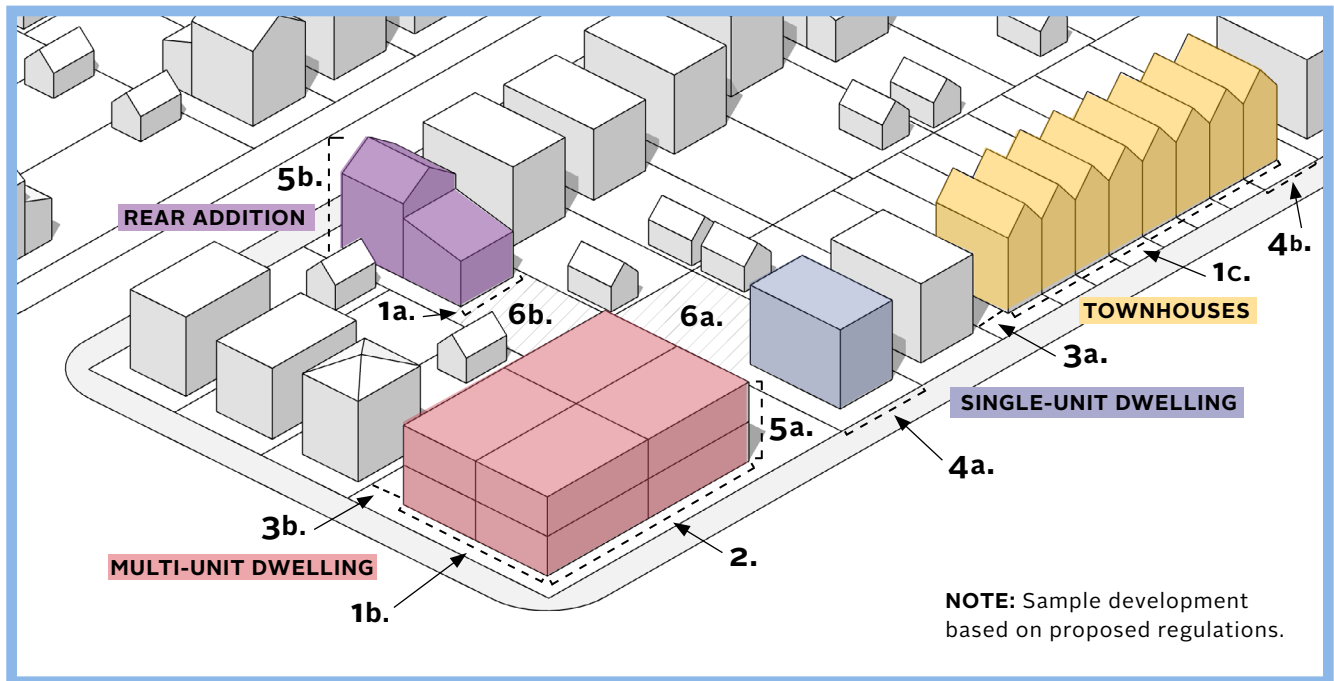


townhouse dwellings (up to 8 units)

# BUILT FORM REQUIREMENTS IN THE PROPOSED ER-3 ZONE

## What is a built form requirement?

- Built form requirements place controls on new development so that buildings are consistent in scale and align with neighbouring sites on the block. These regulations are important because they encourage pedestrian friendly and human-scale design, promote development at a compatible scale with the neighbourhood and manage shadow and wind impacts.
- The proposed ER-3 zone will introduce some **new built form requirements** in order to strengthen regulations around new development. It will also preserve many of the current built form controls in the ER-3 zone, such as setbacks and height maximums.



### 1: BUILDING WIDTH

- a. **REAR ADDITION:** May not exceed the width or footprint of the main dwelling
- b. **SINGLE, TWO, THREE & FOUR-UNIT AND MULTI-UNIT (5+) DWELLINGS:** 20 metres
- c. **TOWNHOUSES:** 64 metres

### 2: BUILDING DEPTH

30 metres

### 3: SETBACKS

- MAX. FRONT/FLANKING:** see [Schedule 19](#), with some small changes in [Attachment C-2](#)
- MIN. FRONT/FLANKING:** see [Schedule 18](#), with some small changes in [Attachment C-2](#)
- MIN. SIDE:**
  - a. 3 metres for townhouse dwellings (end units)
  - b. 1.25 metres elsewhere

### 4: LOT FRONTAGE

- a. **SINGLE, TWO, THREE & FOUR-UNIT AND MULTI-UNIT (5+) DWELLINGS:** 10.7 metres
- b. **TOWNHOUSES:** 4.5 metres for interior units; 7.5 metres for end units

### 5: MAXIMUM HEIGHT

- a. 11 metres
- b. **PITCHED ROOF EXEMPTION:** additional 3 metres

### 6: LOT COVERAGE

- a. **SINGLE-UNIT DWELLING:** 40%
- b. **OTHER USES:** 50% if a lot is larger than 325 square metres; 60% if a lot is 325 square metres or smaller

**NOTE:** there may be some variation in ER Special Areas

**!** **Note:** information updated to reflect amendments made at Regional Council first reading on [April 23, 2024](#).

## DESIGN REQUIREMENTS IN THE PROPOSED ER-3 ZONE

### What is a design requirement?

Like built form controls, **design requirements** encourage pedestrian friendly environments that are welcoming and street-oriented. Design requirements also ensure that new development complements the neighbourhood scale and local design style.

The proposed ER-3 regulations will introduce design requirements for multi-unit dwellings (buildings with 5 or more dwelling units). For more details, please see the **ER-3 Design Requirement Guidelines** chart below. You can find models illustrating the ER-3 multi-unit and townhouse dwellings design requirements on the following page.

### ER-3 Design Requirement Guidelines

#### 1: ENTRANCES

At least one exterior pedestrian entrance is required on a streetwall.

#### 2: REAR PARKING

No parking is permitted in the front yard of a townhouse or multi-unit dwelling.

#### 3: WINDOWS

**a. for a streetwall along a front lot line** - at least 25% of the length must consist of clear glass glazing;

**b. for a streetwall along a flanking lot line** - at least 15% of the length must consist of clear glass glazing

#### 4: ARTICULATION

**Multi-unit buildings wider than 10.0 metres must have at least two of these features:**

- a.** at least one balcony is provided facing the front lot line for each storey above the ground floor;
- b.** at least 20% of the building facing a front lot line is recessed by an additional 0.6 metres from the rest of the streetwall;
- c.** a window bay that projects no more than 1 metre towards the street;
- d.** a covered porch with an area of at least 2 square metres is provided on the ground floor facing a front lot line.

#### 5: SCREENING

**a. Outdoors solid waste management areas** for buildings with 3 or more dwelling units must be enclosed by an opaque fence or a masonry wall.

i. Minimum height: 1.2 metres for 3 and 4 unit dwellings;  
1.8 metres for 5+ unit dwellings

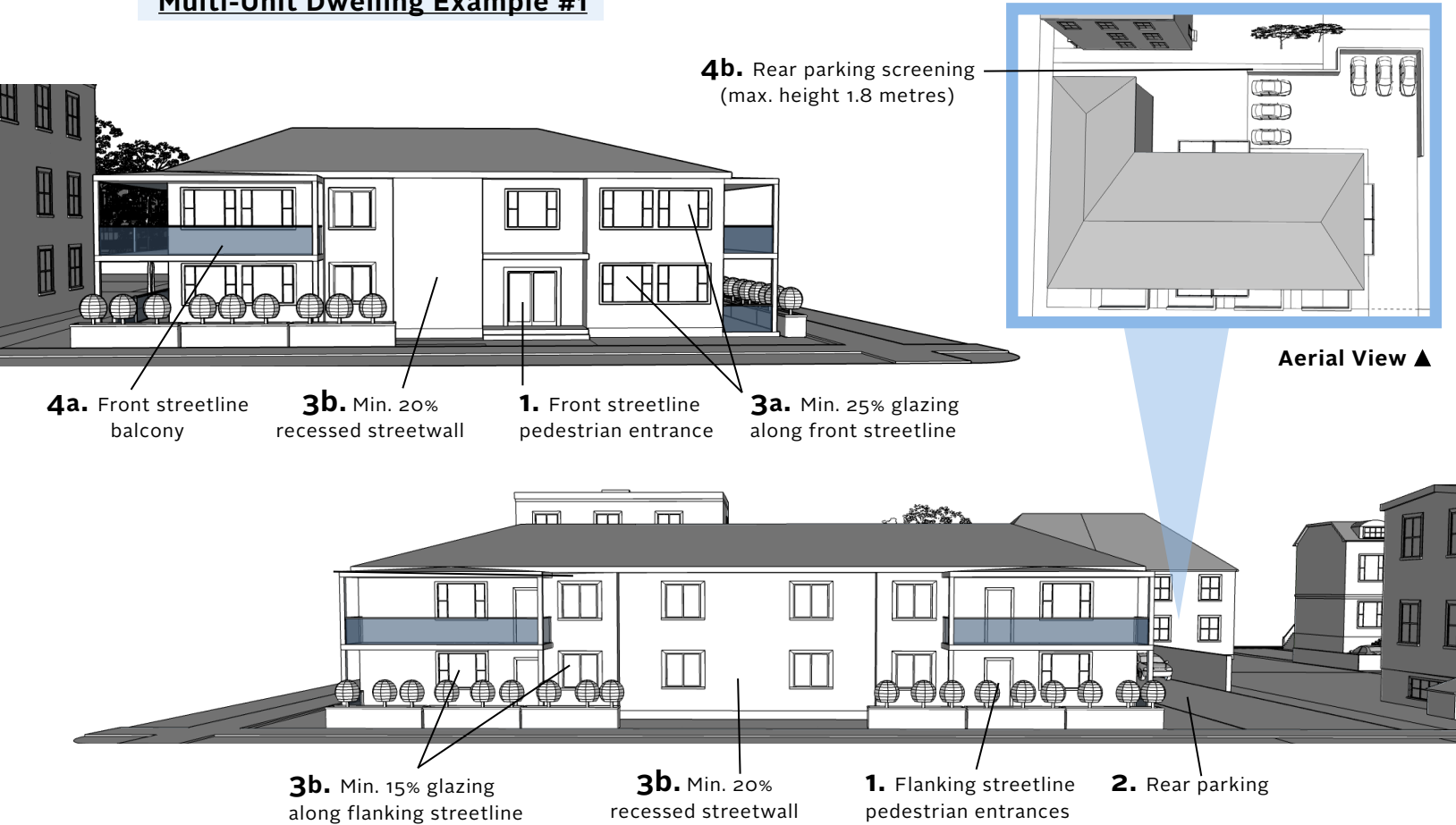
ii. Setback: 3.5 metres from another residential lot (for 5+ unit dwellings only)

iii. Location: side or rear yard (for 5+ unit dwellings only)

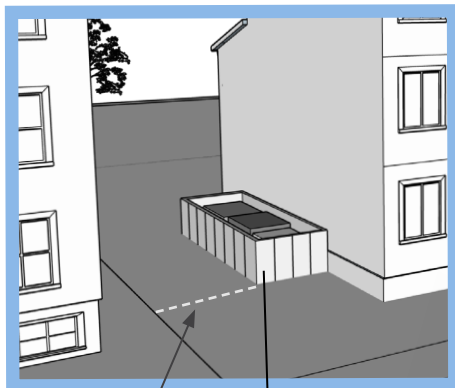
**b. Parking lots** that are accessory to residential uses must be enclosed by a hedge, an opaque fence or a masonry wall at least 1.8 metres in height.

# DESIGN REQUIREMENTS IN THE PROPOSED ER-3 ZONE

## Multi-Unit Dwelling Example #1



## Side Yard View ▼



## Multi-Unit Dwelling Example #2

