

HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND (HAF)

Attachment A4 - Comparison of Proposed Changes (Before and After Public Consultation)



Proposed Change	Initial Proposal	Recommended Approach (Revised Proposal)
<p>Gentle Density: Allow a minimum of four units on low-rise residential lots in the Urban Service Area (Regional Centre and Suburban Area)</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Permit gentle density and more missing middle housing options, including internal conversions, small multi-unit housing options in the existing low-rise neighbourhoods which generally limit units from 1-3 per lot.</p>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow up to 4 units or more per lot in the Suburban Area, regardless of the type of units (main, auxiliary, backyard or accessory units) in all low-rise residential zones in the Urban Service Area (except Beechville CDD zone where a local planning process with the African NS community is underway). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow up to 4 units or more per lot in the Suburban Area, regardless of the type of units (main, auxiliary, backyard or accessory units) in all low-rise residential zones in the Urban Service Area (except Beechville CDD zone and the latest Beechville Community Boundary, where a local planning process with the African NS community is underway).
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Repeal existing policies in the Suburban Area that prioritize and mandate single unit developments. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. In the Regional Centre, more than 4 units will be permitted per lot, including through internal conversions (see below). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. In the Regional Centre, the ER-2 Zone will permit two units plus a backyard suite for new construction, with no unit limit for units added to existing buildings through internal conversions and rear additions. <p>The ER-3 Zone will allow up to 8 units a lot for new construction based on a lot size and subject to urban design requirements. More than 8 units will be permitted by retaining existing dwellings through internal conversions and rear additions.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Secondary suites will no longer be regulated by the municipality through land use, but they will be able to be constructed under the Building Code because permitting at least 4 as-of-right, makes a “secondary suite” designation unnecessary. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Property owners are still eligible to apply for the provincial Secondary and Backyard Suite Incentive Program. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change. 	

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<p>Gentle Density: More Flexibility for Backyard Suites (Region wide)</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Support conversion of existing accessory structures into backyard suites and the construction of viable living space by increasing the maximum height and floor area for backyard suites and allowing for more than one backyard suite per lot.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. Increase the maximum height and floor area of accessory structures that contain a backyard suite use in all low-rise residential zones to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.7 metres (25 feet); • 93 square metres (1000 square feet). 	<p>2. No change.</p>
	<p>2. Non-conforming accessory structures may be converted to a backyard suite if it does not exceed the max. floor area.</p>	<p>3. Only one backyard suite is permitted on a lot.</p>
	<p>3. Allow for more than one backyard suite per lot subject to zone requirements.</p>	
<p>Gentle Density: Increase maximum lot coverage in low-rise residential areas (Regional Centre)</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Support the realization of additional units or additions in low-rise residential areas by increasing lot coverage from generally 40% to 50%, and 60% on small lots.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. New lot coverage maximums will vary depending on the type of dwelling, zone and designation.</p>	<p>2. No change.</p>
	<p>2. Single unit dwelling uses in ER-2 and ER-3 Zone: 40 percent lot coverage.</p>	<p>3. No change.</p>
	<p>3. Other residential uses: 50 percent lot coverage.</p>	<p>4. No change.</p>
	<p>4. Residential uses on undersized lots (less than 325 square metres) that are NOT single unit dwellings: 60 percent).</p>	

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<p>Missing Middle: Enable More Housing in Regional Centre Established Residential Zones and in Suburban Area</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>There is a tremendous opportunity to increase housing in low-rise residential areas but current rules do not adequately address the potential impacts of increased number of units per lot such as management of solid waste, parking, landscaping and stormwater.</p> <p>To balance the broader application and increased permissions in the ER-3 zone, the ER-2 zone will be applied to proposed Heritage Conservation Areas.</p>	
	<p>1. Amend policies to increase options for missing middle housing in the Established Residential Designation, including multi-unit housing.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>2. Replace the Established Residential (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.</p>	<p>2. No change.</p>
	<p>3. Amend zoning on proposed Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) and registered heritage properties from ER-1 to ER-2 Zone, with a continued focus on preservation but more permissive internal conversions and limited additions to existing structures.</p>	<p>3. No change.</p>
	<p>4. Apply the ER-3 zone as the base zone in the Established Residential Designation where small multi-unit buildings will be permitted up to a max. height of 12 metres plus a 3-metre height exemption for a pitched roof.</p>	<p>4. The maximum height of ER-3 Zone will stay as 11 metres as opposed to 12 metres. There will still be a 3 metre height exemption for a pitched roof.</p>
	<p>5. Remove bedroom counts and unit counts in the ER-2 and ER-3 zone to allow for more housing subject to meeting built form requirements and Building Code requirements.</p>	<p>5. No change.</p> <p>Note: By-law M-200 also applies to rental housing.</p>
	<p>6. Expand the area of some proposed Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) in existing low-rise neighbourhoods and apply ER-2 Zone (see Interactive Map).</p>	<p>6. No change.</p> <p>Note: 8 new or expanded HCD study areas have been proposed.</p>
	<p>7. In the Suburban Area remove policies that only permit multi-unit housing by development agreement.</p>	<p>7. No change.</p>

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	<p>8. Require dwellings with more than 4 units to fully enclose its outdoor solid waste area, limiting parking areas to 40% of the width of front yard, and limit parking on townhouse areas, and introduce a maximum lot coverage of 30% for hard landscaping in ER zones.</p>	<p>8. No change.</p> <p>More design requirements have been added to a multi-unit dwelling use between 5 and 8 units, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) at least one door has to front a street, instead of a side or rear yard; (b) a maximum building dimension is 20 metres wide and 30 metres deep; (c) a townhouse block must not be more than 64 metres wide; (d) at least 25% of the wall facing a front yard must have windows, and at least 15% of the wall facing any other street must have windows; and (e) if a building is wider than 10 metres, more design requirements such as mandatory balconies, recesses, or window bays may apply.
	<p>9. In Suburban Areas, minimum parking requirements in low density residential areas are proposed to be removed.</p>	<p>9. In the suburban area, a minimum parking requirement will be reduced down from 1.5 spaces to 0.33 spaces to be consistent with the existing requirement of the Regional Centre Planning Area.</p>
		<p>10. R-3 Zone for Dartmouth outside of the Circumferential Highway: lot coverage will increase from 25% to 50%.</p>

<p>Student Housing: Enable More Mid-Rise and High-Rise Housing near Post-Secondary Institutions</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Areas around existing post-secondary institutions are walkable, generally well-served by transit, and are located close to proposed rapid transit routes, but zoning is often dominated by low-rise residential zoning that includes unit and bedroom limits.</p>	
	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="436 1279 1213 1526"> <p>1. Amend policies to allow more mid-rise and housing near post-secondary institutions to support more walkable and student-friendly housing. This included designating some lands previously zoned as ER-1, ER-2, and ER-3 as Higher Order Residential (HR) or Corridor (COR) Zones with a maximum heights of 20 – 26 metres based on policy and context.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1220 1279 2022 1526"> <p>1. Certain areas will remain as ER-3 zone based on local context.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<p>1. Amend policies to allow more mid-rise and housing near post-secondary institutions to support more walkable and student-friendly housing. This included designating some lands previously zoned as ER-1, ER-2, and ER-3 as Higher Order Residential (HR) or Corridor (COR) Zones with a maximum heights of 20 – 26 metres based on policy and context.</p>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Add new policy to enable the Fenwick Street and Lucknow Centre, and Woodside Future Growth Node which are located within a walking distance from post-secondary institutions to allow more housing, including student housing (see Interactive Map). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change.
<p>Transit-Oriented Housing: Enable More Housing on Transit</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Successful transit service relies on minimum densities to support ridership. Additional housing close to transit can help lower household transportation costs.</p>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the Regional Centre, expand Corridor Zoning and increase Maximum Heights on proposed Rapid Transit Routes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No change.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Increase permitted heights and Floor Area Ratios (FAR) in most Centre Zones (CEN). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increase general policy for Centres to enable a Maximum FAR of 10, and maximum permitted height of 120 metres. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Maximum permitted height in the Centre Zones will be 40 storeys (approximately 120 metres). <p>Note: Special conditions apply for Quinpool and Spring Garden Road.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Consider a number of site-specific changes that align with the objectives of the Housing Accelerator Fund (e.g. minor changes to height or density). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. No change.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Allow minor height increases (up to 6 metres) to existing development agreements approved under policies in effect prior to Centre Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Instead of 6 metres, additional 2 storeys may be granted for the existing development on 6324 and 6330 Quinpool Road.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Immediate provide as-of right zoning for approximately 40 Suburban Opportunity sites (see below). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. No change.

Proposed Change	Initial Proposal	Recommended Approach (Revised Proposal)
<p>Maintain Heritage Properties and Areas</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To balance the significant upzoning in established residential areas in the Regional Centre, additional incentives are provided to maintain or register new heritage properties and to provide a minor expansion to some of the proposed Heritage Conservation Districts. This also supports climate goals and adaptive reuse.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. Expand the heritage development agreement policy to the Downtown Halifax (DH) Zone to support additional housing and heritage preservation.</p>	<p>2. No change.</p> <p>Note: 8 new or expanded HCD study areas have been proposed.</p>
	<p>2. Include a minor expansion to some proposed Heritage Conservation Districts and zone them ER-2 with revised provisions that allow for unlimited number of units through internal conversions, and additions to existing structures.</p>	
<p>Support Office Conversions for Housing</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Support adaptive reuse of older, under-utilized office spaces in downtown areas into housing (which can be complex and costly) by providing exemptions from land use requirements.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. Exempt commercial to residential conversions in Downtown Halifax (DH Zone) and Downtown Dartmouth (DD Zone) from: amenity space; unit mix; and development permit where the built form is not changing.</p>	
<p>Incentivize Wood and Timber Construction</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Wood and mass a building material renewable, and generally less energy-intensive and less costly compared to other construction materials, including concrete and steel. Wood stores carbon and can support transition to carbon-neutral economy but as an emerging practice compared to concrete construction wood construction requires more per floor space to accommodate materials.</p>	<p>1. Instead of allowing 10% more height, the measurement of height in the DD, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2, and HR-1 will change from metres to storeys to remove barriers for mass timber construction requiring more height per storey.</p>
	<p>1. In the Regional Centre, allow for a 10% height increase for proposed wood and mass timber construction.</p>	

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<p>Maintain Heritage Properties and Areas</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To balance the significant upzoning in established residential areas in the Regional Centre, additional incentives are provided to maintain or register new heritage properties and to provide a minor expansion to some of the proposed Heritage Conservation Districts. This also supports climate goals and adaptive reuse.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. Expand the heritage development agreement policy to the Downtown Halifax (DH) Zone to support additional housing and heritage preservation.</p>	
<p>Remove/ reduce parking requirements (Regional Centre and Suburban Area)</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Reduced parking requirements can increase project viability, density and reduce carbon footprint.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. In the Regional Centre: All residential buildings, including multi-unit dwellings and shelters, will not require a minimum number of parking spaces.</p>	
	<p>2. In the Suburban Area: All low-density residential (typically one to three units) will not require a minimum number of parking spaces .</p>	<p>2. No change.</p>
	<p>3. In the Suburban Area: Minimum parking requirements for multi-unit dwellings will be reduced from 1.5 to 0.0 spaces per unit.</p>	<p>3. Minimum parking requirements for multi-unit dwellings will be reduced from 1.5 to 0.33 spaces per unit.</p>
<p>Support Non-Market Housing (Regional Centre)</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Support the viability and long-term viability of non-market housing projects by providing exemptions or additional options with respect to bonus zoning public benefits.</p>	<p>1. No change.</p>
	<p>1. Exempt affordable housing providers from paying the incentive or bonus density.</p>	
	<p>2. In Future Growth Nodes provide an option for bonus zoning public benefits to be provided as land or units on-site.</p>	<p>2. No change.</p>

Proposed Change	Initial Proposal	Recommended Approach (Revised Proposal)
Built Form Flexibility (Regional Centre)	<p>Purpose</p> <p>Support the viability of housing projects by providing additional flexibilities to built form requirements.</p>	
	<p>1. Increase the height of Tall Mid-Rise Building from 26 metres to 30 metres.</p>	<p>1. Increase the height of Tall Mid-Rise Building from 26 metres to 10 storeys.</p>
	<p>2. Allow for more flexible tower dimensions (35 by 35 metres and up to 750 square metres).</p>	<p>2. Allow for more flexible tower dimensions (40 metres wide and 35 metres deep, up to an average of 900 square metres per storey).</p>
	<p>3. Increase flexibility for balconies</p>	<p>3. No change.</p>
	<p>4. Relaxing streetwall height calculation on sloping conditions up to 14 metres.</p>	<p>4. No change.</p>
	<p>5. Expanding variation for building dimensions in HR-1 zone.</p>	<p>5. No change.</p>
	<p>6. Exempting small multi-unit buildings (under 40 units) from amenity space requirements</p>	<p>6. No change.</p>
	<p>7. Remove Cogswell Park from Schedule 51.</p>	<p>7. No change.</p>
	<p>8. Expanding variation for building dimensions in HR-1 zone.</p>	<p>8. No change.</p>

Proposed Change	Initial Proposal	Recommended Approach (Revised Proposal)
<p>Enable Quick Adjustments in the Suburban Area: Apply Zoning on Suburban Opportunity Sites</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>In July 2023 Council initiated the Suburban Planning process, and directed that site specific plan amendment requests be only considered through that process. Staff received a large number of Site Specific Development Requests through recent Regional Plan and Suburban Plan consultation process (see staff report).</p> <p>In a small number of cases, a minor change to existing policies can enable the development. In most cases, housing can only be enabled quickly by removing the sites from the current suburban plan and land use by-law, and including them in the Centre Plan and under modern planning policies This is consistent with expanding the framework of the Centre Plan to the Suburban Area.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Site-specific requests have been reviewed based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot size: must be smaller than 2 hectares; • Location: must be located within 800 metres of a proposed Rapid Transit route OR within 1200 metres of a proposed Rapid Transit terminal OR within 800 metres of a post-secondary institution campus • Affordable Housing: sites identified by the Provincial Land for Housing Program or projects by housing not-for-profit • No Net Loss: projects must not result in the demolition of an existing multi-unit dwelling (3 units or more). • Environmental protection: sites are located less than 3.2 metres above CGVD2013 standard OR within 30 metres from a high-water mark. <p>Information on the sites and recommended changes is available in Attachment F2 and on the Interactive Map. Other site specific requests for the Suburban Area will be considered separately through the Suburban Planning process.</p>	