

SUBJECT: Statutory Public Meeting and information report for the draft new Residential Zoning Bylaw

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Development and Growth Management
Community Planning

Report Number: DGM-69-25

Wards Affected: All

Date to Committee: October 7, 2025

Date to Council: October 14, 2025

Recommendation:

Receive for information community planning department report DGM-69-25 regarding Statutory Public Meeting and Information Report for the Draft Residential Zoning By-law; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare a final Residential Zoning By-law for Council adoption along with a staff recommendation report identifying changes in December 2025.

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the Draft Residential Zoning By-law and next steps in the New Zoning By-law Project.

The purpose of the new Residential Zoning By-law is to implement the objectives and policies for the Residential Neighbourhood Areas designations of the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 as amended (BOP, 2020). The changes that are proposed in the Draft Residential Zoning By-law are intended to result in a by-law that:

- enables development and increased housing options in Burlington's neighbourhoods,
- is user-friendly and easy to interpret,
- is modern and innovative, and
- is flexible.

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law was posted on July 2, 2025 on the City's New Zoning By-law Project Page (www.getinvolvedburlington.ca/newzoningbylaw) for public review and comment. Along with the draft by-law, an interactive mapping tool was also made available for

the public to view the proposed residential zones of the draft by-law in comparison to the current zones under the Burlington Zoning By-law 2020. Discussion papers summarizing the background research and analysis that informed the draft by-law were also posted on the project page. On Aug. 27, 2025, supplementary information was posted to the project page regarding where triplex and fourplex dwellings and where low-rise apartments may be permitted within certain proposed low-rise zones.

Following the release of the draft by-law, by-law numerous engagement tactics were employed by-law to inform residents and key stakeholders about the proposed changes and seek feedback on the draft by-law. A statutory open house was held on Sept. 16, 2025. At the time of writing this report, 28 comments have been received from the public in addition to comments from agencies.

Feedback received on the draft by-law since Jul. 2, 2025 will be used to inform the final by-law that will be recommended to Council for approval in December 2025. If approved, once it is in effect, the final Residential Zoning By-law will replace the current Burlington Zoning By-law 2020 as the zoning by-law for all lands within the City's residential neighbourhoods.

Purpose of report:

- The purpose of this report is to provide background information and an overview of the Draft Residential Zoning By-law to support the statutory public meeting on the draft by-law and receive feedback from the public and Council on this matter.

Information Report

Background

On July 2, 2025, the City of Burlington posted the first draft of the new Residential Zoning By-law to the [New Zoning By-law Project webpage](#) for public review and comment (Appendix A to this report). The following supporting materials were also posted at the same time:

- a new interactive mapping tool, showing the proposed residential zones of the draft by-law compared against the zones of the current zoning by-law,
- the July 2024 Step 1, Residential Zones – Discussion Paper, prepared by SGL Consulting & Dillon Consulting,
- the June 2025 Residential Zones – Discussion Paper Addendum, prepared by SGL Consulting & Dillon Consulting (Appendix D), and
- the Community Engagement Backgrounder, which tells the story of the New Zoning By-law Project to date, including what zoning is and how the draft by-law was prepared (Appendix E).

On Aug. 27, 2025, supplementary information to the draft zoning by-law was posted on the New Zoning By-law Project (NZBP) webpage, providing the proposed criteria for where triplex, fourplex, and low-rise apartments may be allowed in some residential zones (Appendix B).

New Zoning By-law Project Background

The New Zoning By-law Project began in September 2022. It is focused on delivering a new zoning by-law that implements the objectives and policies of the Burlington Official Plan (BOP, 2020). The *Planning Act* requires Council to update its zoning by-law to ensure conformity and implement the policies of a new or updated Official Plan within three years of the policies taking effect. The project is being advanced in phases, starting with Phase 1: Residential Zones.

Phase 1: Residential Zones of the New Zoning By-law Project

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law that was released in July has been prepared as part of Phase 1: Residential Zones. The lands subject to this phase of the project consist of all lands within the Residential Neighbourhood Areas and designated as Low-Rise Neighbourhood I, Low-Rise Neighbourhood II or High-Rise Neighbourhood on Schedule C Land Use – Urban Area of the BOP, 2020 (see Appendix C).

The goal of Phase 1: Residential Zones is to deliver a new zoning by-law for the City's residential zones that:

- enables development and increase low-rise housing options in Burlington's neighbourhoods,

- makes it easier for readers to find and interpret zoning regulations,
- reflects modern and innovative land use planning and urban design practices, and
- provide flexibility for development, reducing zoning by-law amendment and minor variance applications.

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law is intended to implement the policies of Section 8.3 Residential Neighbourhood Areas of the BOP, 2020 as well as policies for additional residential units, garden suites, and residential supportive land uses (i.e., home occupations, cottage industries, offices, retail uses, service commercial uses, and day care centres), including policies to increase housing options and support gentle, ground-oriented intensification in Burlington's neighbourhoods.

Staff note that the structure and organization of the draft Residential Zoning By-law is also intended to form the basis of future phases of the New Zoning By-law Project. Future phases of the project will involve amending the new zoning by-law to add new sections such as Uptown Zones, Mixed Use Zones and Natural Heritage Zones, relying on or making amendments as appropriate to the administration, interpretation, definitions, general provisions, and parking sections that will be established through this phase of the project.

How was the Draft Residential Zoning By-law prepared?

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law was prepared based on detailed research and analysis undertaken by the project consultants, SGL Consulting and Dillon Consulting, with support from city staff and based on preliminary consultation with the public and targeted stakeholder groups. The supporting research and analysis that led to the preparation of the draft by-law is further outlined below.

Initial Background Research & Analysis: Discussion Paper (July, 2024)

As part of the first step of this phase of the project, the project and consulting team undertook the following background research and analysis:

- analysis of relevant planning policy and legislation,
- a best practice research of comparable municipalities to understand trends in how residential and residential-supporting land uses are regulated and to identify potential options for the overall structure, layout and format of the new zoning by-law, and
- a review of minor variance applications in Burlington's existing Residential Zones from 2017 to 2023, to understand common regulations that have been varied and should be updated in the new Zoning By-law.

The zoning by-laws of several comparable municipalities to Burlington that were reviewed as part of the best practice research were: Town of Oakville; City of London; City of Guelph; City of St. Catharines; City of Vaughan; and City of Edmonton.

A summary of the research findings and preliminary recommendations from the consultant team which formed the basis of the draft by-law is provided in “Phase 1: Residential Zones – Discussion Paper”, prepared by SGL Consulting and Dillon Consulting. This paper was presented to Council through staff report [PL-34-24](#) in July 2024.

Official Plan Amendment 3 to Increase Housing Options & Discussion Paper Addendum

After the abovementioned research and analysis work was completed, in February 2025, the project workplan was adjusted to include additional research and analysis to address changes to the City’s policy framework resulting from Council’s approval of Official Plan Amendment No. 3 (OPA 3) in January 2025.

OPA 3 amended the BOP, 2020 to support gentle, ground-oriented intensification with consideration for the context and character of Burlington’s Established Neighbourhoods while providing opportunities for more diverse housing options to meet the needs of residents at all stages of life and at all income levels. OPA 3 added permissions which allow for more low-rise, ground-oriented housing options including duplex, triplex and fourplexes within the Residential Neighbourhood Areas, and the possibility of allowing to up to two detached additional residential units (ARUs) per urban lot in the new Residential Zoning By-law. As a result, the NZBP team undertook best practices research and analysis to determine appropriate zoning standards for the new housing options enabled through OPA 3.

The NZBP team also conducted additional best practice research on zoning regulations related to administration, general provisions, definitions and parking to inform the preparation of those sections of the new Zoning By-law.

The findings and recommendations resulting from this work is summarized in the “Discussion Paper Addendum” prepared by SGL Consulting and Dillon Consulting and attached as Appendix D to this report.

Preliminary Engagement Activities

Preliminary engagement activities with the public and key stakeholders were also held as part of the team’s research and analysis work to seek feedback on what is working well with the current Zoning By-law, what can be improved, and suggestions on which municipalities the project team should consider when preparing the draft by-law. A summary of these preliminary engagement activities and feedback heard is provided in Appendix F to this report.

Overview of Draft Residential Zoning By-law

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law is organized into eight parts:

Part 1: Administration

Part 2: Establishment of Zones and Uses

Part 3: Interpretation

Part 4: Definitions

Part 5: General Provisions

Part 6: Parking and Loading

Part 7: Residential Zones

Part 8: Holding Zone Requirements

- **Part 1: Administration** contains regulations related to where and when the by-law applies. It includes regulations related to legal non-conforming buildings and structures and transition regulations for projects for which a complete Planning Act application has been received by the City.
- **Part 2: Establishment of Zones and Uses** outlines the zones that are established in the by-law and sets out how zone boundaries, zone exceptions, and holding provisions are to be interpreted.
- **Part 3: Interpretation** provides regulations related to how the words, tables, numbers, permitted uses, and purpose statements of the by-law are to be interpreted. This part also includes guidance on how zone standards are to be applied in the case of phased condominiums, 0.3 m reserves, and multiple building connections, and guidance on how to interpret Conservation Halton's Regulatory Limit.
- **Part 4: Definitions** contains the definitions of defined terms in the by-law. Defined terms are bolded throughout the by-law for ease of interpretation.
- **Part 5: General Provisions** contains regulations that apply to all residential zones, similar to the current zoning by-law. The regulations in this part of the by-law relate to matters such as accessory uses, buildings and structures; patios, platform structures and porches; uses permitted in all zones (e.g. schools, day care centres); setback from infrastructure and creeks; outdoor patios; and rooftop features (e.g. mechanical equipment and solar panels).

- **Part 6: Parking and Loading** contains parking-related regulations, including minimum requirements for off-street parking, loading, bicycle parking, accessible parking, and electric vehicle parking spaces; dimensions of parking spaces, garages and driveways; illumination and surface treatment of parking facilities and lots; and setback requirements for parking structures.
- **Part 7: Residential Zones** provides regulations specific to each residential zone, organized by building type and zone. The draft by-law divides Burlington's neighbourhoods into nine residential zones (eight Low-Rise Neighbourhood Zones and one High-Rise Neighbourhood Zone).
- **Part 8: Holding Zone Requirements** will contain a list of properties subject to a holding symbol and the requirements to lift the hold. In the final by-law, this section will be updated to include any existing holds within the residential zones.

What's Proposed to Change?

The Draft Residential Zoning By-law introduces a number of changes to how land, buildings and structures within Burlington's residential neighbourhood areas are regulated, with the goal of making it easier to build a broader range of low-rise housing forms at appropriate locations and subject to appropriate built form standards in Burlington's neighbourhoods, in accordance with BOP, 2020. These changes include:

- new permissions allowing semi-detached and duplex buildings broadly in the Low-Rise Neighbourhood Zones, and triplex, fourplex, multiplex and low-rise apartment buildings at the edges of some Low-Rise Neighbourhood Zones on lots facing a major street, where they are currently not permitted in the Zoning By-law 2020 but are now allowed by BOP, 2020.
- new permissions allowing up to two detached additional residential units (ARUs) on a parcel of urban residential land and allowing detached ARUs to be up to two storeys in height, subject to additional standards to reduce overlook and protect privacy on neighbouring lots.
- a streamlined number of residential zones along with simplified minimum lot area and frontage standards and new built form and functional standards, to add flexibility to the zoning by-law while recognizing and enhancing the residential character of areas (9 primary zones are proposed whereas the current zoning by-law contains 31 primary residential zones and subzones).
- new flexible front yard regulations that consider the existing conditions of a street and could minimize the need for some minor variances.

The draft by-law also introduces changes to the organization and formatting of zoning regulations and to defined terms, to make it easier for readers to find and understand the applicable zoning regulations for a property, such as:

- new illustrations to explain zoning concepts,
- simplified and intuitive organization of General Provisions and Parking sections, and
- defined terms are bolded, updated and streamlined.

Finally, some changes are proposed to modernize parking provisions and accommodate existing and future parking technologies.

A more detailed overview of the key changes can be found in the Community Engagement Backgrounder to Draft 1 that was released in July, 2025 alongside the draft by-law (Appendix E to this report).

Engagement Matters

After the draft by-law was released, numerous engagement tactics were used to inform the public and other stakeholders of the draft by-law, encourage participation in the public consultation process and seek feedback on the draft by-law. These tactics included:

- emails to key stakeholder groups including Citizen Advisory Committees;
- social media posts;
- a month-long Google Ads campaign;
- drop-in public information centres around the city;
- an online comment form; and,
- meetings and workshops with development industry representatives, resident groups and other interested parties.

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, an in-person statutory open house was held on Tuesday Sept. 16, 2025, at Mountainside Community Centre from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The giving of statutory notice of the open house and public meeting was completed on Sept. 5, 2025. A Notice of Statutory Open House and Public Meeting was posted on the [City's Public Notices webpage](#) on Aug. 27, 2025, and was emailed to prescribed persons and public bodies in the last week of August, 2025 and first week of September, 2025.

At the time of writing this report, 28 comments from the public have been received. Comments have also been received from several agencies, including Metrolinx, Enbridge Pipelines, TransCanada Pipelines, Halton District School Board, and CN Rail. City staff have also been actively engaged in discussions with Conservation Halton about the draft by-law.

A detailed overview of the engagement activities on the draft by-law, as well as a summary of the comments received on the draft by-law to date, is found in Appendix F of this report.

A copy of the written public and agency comments received to date on the draft by-law are found in Appendices G and H, respectively. Staff's response to the comments will be provided in the future recommendation report.

Status

The October 7, 2025 statutory public meeting is a significant milestone in Phase 1: Residential Zones of the NZBP and marks the end of Step 2: Build & Engage of this step of the project. The comments received on the draft by-law will be used to inform the development of the Final Residential Zoning By-law that is planned to be presented to Council for approval in December, 2025.

Proposed Revisions to Draft Residential Zoning By-law

Staff note that the Residential Zoning By-law is still in draft form. As the October 7, 2025 Statutory Public Meeting will provide an opportunity for additional public input and feedback on the draft by-law, revisions are expected before the final draft by-law will be presented to Council for approval, based on feedback received so far and staff's ongoing review. In addition, the December, 2025 by-law will incorporate existing site-specific exceptions from Burlington Zoning By-law 2020 into the new by-law as appropriate, adding existing holding provisions, and updating the zoning map accordingly. An outline of other aspects of the by-law that are proposed to be revised and topics that are being explored further by the project team, based on comments received so far, are summarized in Appendix I to this report.

A detailed overview of the revisions made to the by-law will be included in staff's recommendation report to Council in December. Under section 34(17) of the *Planning Act*, where a change is made to a proposed by-law after the statutory public meeting is held, Council is required to determine whether any further notice is to be given regarding the zoning by-law. If significant changes are made, further consultation will be recommended by staff in the future staff report. The final by-law will be attached to future staff report and posted on the project webpage.

Key Dates & Milestones

The following are the key dates and milestones of Phase 1: Residential Zones of the NZBP, organized into the three steps of the project workplan.

Step 1: Research & Analyze – September 2022 to July 2024

- This step of the project involves Council's endorsement of the original and revised project Terms of Reference and Workplan, and detailed research and analysis of relevant policies, legislation, and best practices in zoning and trends in minor variance applications, as well as preliminary engagement activities.

- This step was completed in July 2024 when “Phase 1: Residential Zones – Discussion Paper” was presented to Council.

Step 2: Build & Engage – July 2024 to Present

This step focused on writing the Draft Residential Zoning By-law, additional research in response to changes to the policy framework, and public consultation on the Draft Residential Zoning By-law:

- July 2024 to May 2025: Additional preliminary engagement activities held (Appendix F).
- January 2025: OPA 3 to Increase Housing Options approved by Council.
- March 2025: Adjustments made to workplan to reflect new policy framework introduced through OPA 3.
- July 2, 2025: Release of Draft Residential Zoning By-law and supporting materials.
- July to Present: Public and targeted stakeholder engagement (Appendix F).
- Sept. 16, 2025: Statutory Public Open House held at Mountainside Community Centre.
- Oct. 7, 2025: Statutory Public Meeting at City Hall.

Step 3: Close & Appeals – (Planned) October to December 2025

- Oct. 8 to November 2025: Preparation of final by-law for recommendation to Council.
- Dec. 1, 2025: Anticipated recommendation report to Committee of the Whole.
- Dec. 9, 2025: Anticipated Council meeting and decision.
- Rest of December: Appeal period (20 days) and preparation of strategies for the implementation of the new by-law, such as training and workshops.

Implications

Strategic Connections: The statutory public meeting on the Draft Residential Zoning By-law is an important step in the completion of Action H (Complete the new Zoning By-law) in the City’s Strategic Plan and in the implementation of the objectives and policies of the BOP 2020, the findings from the City’s Official Plan Amendment to Increase Housing Options Study, and the objectives of the City’s Housing Strategy.

Climate Implications: The Draft Residential Zoning By-law responds to climate change by:

- providing the opportunity for additional housing to be built within the City’s existing urban area;
- providing increased housing opportunities at the periphery of neighbourhoods in transit supportive locations;
- providing updated bicycle parking requirements;
- providing new electric vehicle parking requirements to future-proof development; and,

- maintaining lot coverage requirements to ensure that landscaped open space is provided as part of redevelopment and providing requirements that speak to not only the quantity of space but also the quality of space.

Financial Implications: There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations of the report.

References

- Original Project Terms of Reference and Work Plan – Sept. 20, 2022 ([Report PL-60-22](#))
- Project Update 1 – May 30, 2023 ([Report PL-41-23](#))
- Project Update 2 – Sept. 28, 2023 ([Council Information Package](#))
- Project Update 3 – Dec. 5, 2023 ([Report PL-62-23](#) – Revised Work Plan)
- Project Update 4 – March 22, 2024 ([Council Information Package](#))
- Project Update 5 – July 8, 2024 ([Report PL-34-24](#) – Discussion Paper)
- City-initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to increase housing options (OPA 3) – Jan. 28, 2025 ([Report DGM-01-25](#))
- Project Update 6 – May 9, 2025 ([Council Information Package](#))
- Project Update 7 – Aug. 29, 2025 ([Council Information Package](#))

Strategic Alignment

- Designing and delivering complete communities
- Providing the best services and experiences
- Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
- Driving organizational performance

Author:

Rebecca Lau, MCIP RPP
Senior Planner, Special Projects
rebecca.lau@burlington.ca

Appendices:

- A. Draft Residential Zoning By-law
- B. Supplemental Information to Draft Residential Zoning By-law: Potential Streets Where Triplex, Fourplex and Low-rise Apartments Are Being Considered
- C. Map of Lands Subject to Draft Residential Zoning By-law
- D. Discussion Paper Addendum
- E. Public Engagement Backgrounder
- F. Summary of Engagement Activities to Date

- G. Public Comments Received to Date
- H. Agency Comments Received to Date
- I. Proposed Revisions to Draft By-law & Topics Being Explored Further

Notifications:

N/A

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and approved by the Commissioner, Head of Corporate Affairs, Chief Financial Officer, and Commissioner of Legal and Legislative Services/City Solicitor.