

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: October 4, 2023 To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building	Originator's file: BL.09-RES (All Wards)
	Meeting date: October 23, 2023

Subject

INFORMATION REPORT (ALL WARDS)

Updated Low Density Residential Zones: Gentle Density in Mississauga Neighbourhoods
File: BL.09-RES (All Wards)

Recommendations

1. That the report dated October 4, 2023 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building regarding the proposed amendments to Zoning By-law 0225-2007 and Mississauga Official Plan to update low density residential zones, under File BL.09-RES (All Wards), be received for information.
2. That staff be directed to seek community input through an online awareness campaign and report back to the Planning and Development Committee in February 2024 with recommended Zoning By-law amendments.

Executive Summary

- This report introduces the Updated Low Density Residential Zones project as part of the City's ongoing efforts to expand low-rise housing options in Mississauga
- Staff are considering consolidating detached dwelling zones, revising zone regulations including the reduction of minimum lot sizes and frontages, and introducing semi-detached dwellings as a permitted use in detached dwelling zones across the City
- Staff have developed preliminary Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments for consideration

Background

The current provincial priority to increase the supply of all forms of housing is well established. Recently enacted, or proposed, changes to the *Planning Act*, Growth Plan and Provincial Policy

Statement are largely focused on this objective. Looking at low density housing specifically, there has been a refresh of thinking in Ontario and across North America around the ability of low density neighbourhoods to accommodate new development. Historically, many zoning by-laws, including most low density zones in Mississauga, were structured to only allow the replacement of the built form of what currently exists on the property, albeit the new dwelling could be much larger. These policies have had their stated effect – most redevelopment in low rise neighbourhoods has been in the form of large single detached houses which are sometimes referred to by some residents as "monster homes". While they create more livable gross floor area, larger homes often have similar occupancy levels to the smaller homes they replaced. In these cases increasing housing supply objectives are not achieved.¹

All levels of government have been exploring tools to increase the supply of housing. In particular, low density neighbourhoods present a unique opportunity to modestly intensify, revitalize areas facing population decline, and improve efficiency of existing municipal and school infrastructure. Some of the recent actions taken by the City of Mississauga to increase the supply of housing in neighbourhoods include:

- February 5, 2020: Councillor Parrish directed staff to review existing standards for detached dwellings in the City's Zoning By-law and to identify opportunities to allow smaller lots and dwellings as-of-right.
- April 19, 2021: Council endorsed the report titled "Official Plan Review – Scope of Work for Increasing Housing Choices in Mississauga's Neighbourhoods Study". The goals of the study are to:
 - bring the City's Official Plan policies into conformity with recent changes to *Planning Act* (Bill 108 – *More Homes, More Choices Act*, 2019), Growth Plan and 2020 Provincial Policy Statement
 - increase the supply of ground-related housing units, including appropriate infill as-of-right zoning permissions
 - expand opportunities to develop similar types of dwellings in low density areas (e.g. detached dwellings on smaller lots)
- March 1, 2023: Council approved *Growing Mississauga: An Action Plan* which contains an action to reduce exclusionary zoning throughout Mississauga by allowing appropriate as-of-right gentle infill in low density neighbourhoods.
- June 26, 2023: At the Planning and Development Committee meeting, staff presented the "Mississauga Official Plan Review—Bundle 3 Draft Policies" which contained a new housing chapter. In order to support the City's effort to provide a greater range of housing options, new residential land use designations were proposed that move away from a density and built form premise to height-based designations. These new land use designations broaden city-wide neighbourhood housing options by consolidating **Residential Low Density I and II** into one land use designation, **Residential Low Rise I** (see below Figure 1). This new

¹ There are some areas of the city such as Lakeview West where two semi-detached homes frequently replace a single detached home on the same lot as is permitted by the zoning.

designation would permit all forms of dwellings with frontages on public streets up to three storeys including detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, plexes and street townhouses.

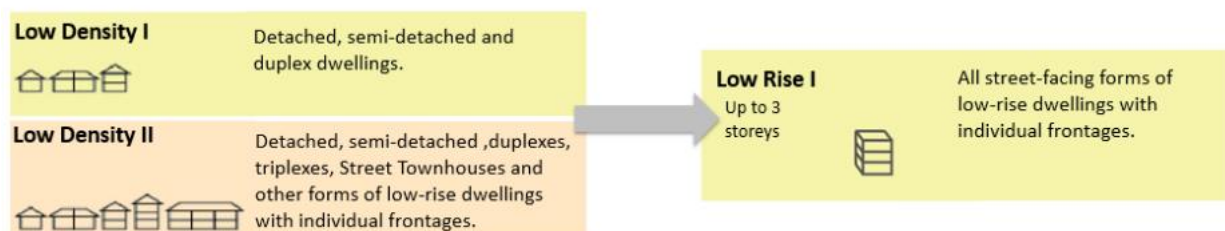


Figure 1 - Proposed Land Use Designation Changes

Taking direction from the above, the purpose of this report is to discuss potential amendments to Mississauga Official Plan and Zoning By-law 0225-2007 which would update low density residential zones by consolidating 12 of the 16 "R" zones into two new zones (Large Lot Zone and Small Lot Zone) and introduce semi-detached dwellings as a permitted use in both of these zones. These potential changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law are part of the City's effort to expand city-wide housing options.

ZONING BY-LAW 0225-2007

The City's Zoning By-law currently has 16 zones (**R1 – R16**) which exclusively permit detached dwellings. Zones **R1 to R5** (Detached Dwellings – Typical Lots) are the most common zone categories (refer to Figure 2). **R1 to R5** zones are differentiated by lot frontage and lot area standards, with **R1** being the zone with the largest lot frontage and area requirements and **R5** having the smallest standard requirements. Other "R" zones are specialized zones which are tailored for specific neighbourhoods or lot types. Please refer to Appendix 2 for a comparison of all "R" zones in Zoning By-law 0225-2007.

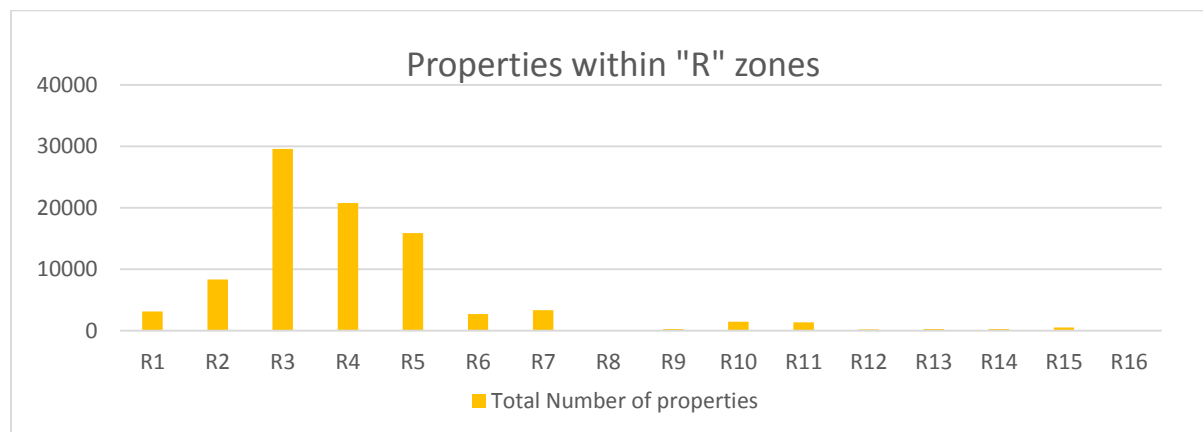


Figure 2 - Number of Properties within Each "R" Zone

A jurisdictional scan of comparable municipalities revealed that Mississauga has the greatest number of zones for detached dwellings of all municipalities surveyed (refer to Appendix 3).

Comments

Staff are considering consolidating 12 of the 16 "R" zones into two new zones (Large Lot Zone and Small Lot Zone) and allowing semi-detached dwellings as-of-right in these zones. Changes under consideration are summarized as below. For further details, see Appendix 1, Section 2.

ZONES	Large Lot Zone (Consolidated R1, R2, R3 and R8 zones)	Small Lot Zone (Consolidated R4, R5, R6, R7, R9, R10, R11 and R15 zones)	ZONES	Large Lot Zone (Consolidated R1, R2, R3 and R8 zones)	Small Lot Zone (Consolidated R4, R5, R6, R7, R9, R10, R11 and R15 zones)
ZONE REGULATIONS – DETACHED DWELLINGS			ZONE REGULATIONS – SEMI-DETACHED DWELLINGS		
MINIMUM LOT AREA			MINIMUM LOT AREA		
Interior lot	550 m ² (5,920 sq. ft.)	285 m ² (3,070 sq. ft.)	Interior lot	340 m ² (3,660 sq. ft.)	200 m ² (2,150 sq. ft.)
Corner lot	720 m ² (7,750 sq. ft.)	370 m ² (3,985 sq. ft.)	Corner lot	400 m ² (4,305 sq. ft.)	280 m ² (3,015 sq. ft.)
MINIMUM LOT FRONTAGE			MINIMUM LOT FRONTAGE		
Interior lot	15.0 m (49 ft.)	9.75 m (32 ft.)	Interior lot	9.0 m (30 ft.)	6.8 m (22 ft.)
Corner lot	19.5 m (64 ft.)	13.5 m (44 ft.)	Corner lot	12.0 m (39 ft.)	9.8 m (32 ft.)

Figure 3 - Potential New Zone Regulations

The remaining four zones have unique regulations (**R12** to **R14**) and/or have frontage on a Common Element Condominium road (**R16**) and therefore, are not under consideration for inclusion in the new Large Lot and Small Lot zones.

The potential amendments would result in reduced minimum lot frontage and lot area requirements across the City's neighbourhoods. By reducing these standards, more properties across the City will have the opportunity to be severed to create two new detached dwellings, add one new detached dwelling or allow for a pair of semi-detached dwellings without requiring relief from the Zoning By-law. Allowing smaller detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings in the City's neighbourhoods will achieve the benefits of gentle infill including:

- Achieve a greater mix of housing to give people more housing choices in Mississauga's neighbourhoods
- Reinvigorate neighbourhoods that are seeing a population decline
- Build more homes in areas where there are existing parks, community centres and libraries
- Help reduce urban sprawl by creating more compact communities with access to transit and already established road networks

Further discussion on the potential amendments are considered below.

UPDATED LOT AREA AND LOT FRONTAGE STANDARDS

In order to understand how these potential zoning changes could impact the City's neighbourhoods, staff completed an "example neighbourhood" exercise to demonstrate how many new lots could be created in different areas across the City should the reduced minimum lot frontage and minimum lot area regulations be implemented (see Appendix 4).

The exercise shows that should the potential new zoning standards be implemented, some neighbourhoods would have more redevelopment opportunities than other areas. The draft Large Lot Zone (currently **R1**, **R2**, **R3** and **R8** zones) is made up of larger lots with older homes. As a result, these areas have more lots which are large enough to accommodate a pair of semi-detached dwellings or two detached dwellings where there was only one previously. Many of these areas are already subject to redevelopment due to the size of the lots and the age of the homes in the neighbourhoods. A review of minor variances for minimum lot frontage or minimum lot area from 2020 to 2023 reveals that 65% of the variances approved were in **R1**, **R2** and **R3** zones (i.e. Large Lot Zone). A map showing the locations of these minor variances is available in Appendix 6.

In order to provide a more equitable distribution of opportunity for infill development in neighbourhoods across the City, staff are considering the lowest detached zone (**R5**) and semi-detached dwelling zone (**RM2**) as the recommended standards for the Small Lot Zone.

INTRODUCTION OF SEMI-DETACHED DWELLINGS

Presently the "R" zones only permit detached dwellings as a permitted use. Staff are considering a recommendation to introduce semi-detached dwellings as a permitted use in the Large Lot Zone and Small Lot Zone. As discussed previously, the Official Plan review is considering a new Low Rise I land use designation which would permit all forms of street-facing dwellings up to three storeys including detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, plexes and street townhouses. Permitting semi-detached dwellings in the City's low density residential zones will align more closely with the direction of the City's draft new Official Plan and support the goal of providing more housing options in the City's neighbourhoods.

Not all existing detached lots would have sufficient frontage to build a pair of semi-detached dwellings. Approximately 43% of properties within the draft Large Lot Zone and 24% of properties within the draft Small Lot Zone have sufficient frontage to build a pair of semi-detached dwellings. See Appendix 5 for a summary of each Ward in the City. It should be noted that a Consent application will still be required to be approved by the Committee of Adjustment in order to sever a lot, as per the *Planning Act*.

The City already has a neighbourhood where semi-detached dwellings were introduced as a permitted use in an established neighbourhood made up of mostly detached dwellings. In 2021, the Lakeview West Housing Infill Study was completed and resulted in rezoning the

neighbourhood from a zone that exclusively permitted detached dwellings to a zone that permits both detached and semi-detached dwellings. Shaw Drive is an example of a street that has a mix of both detached and semi-detached dwellings (see Figure 4).

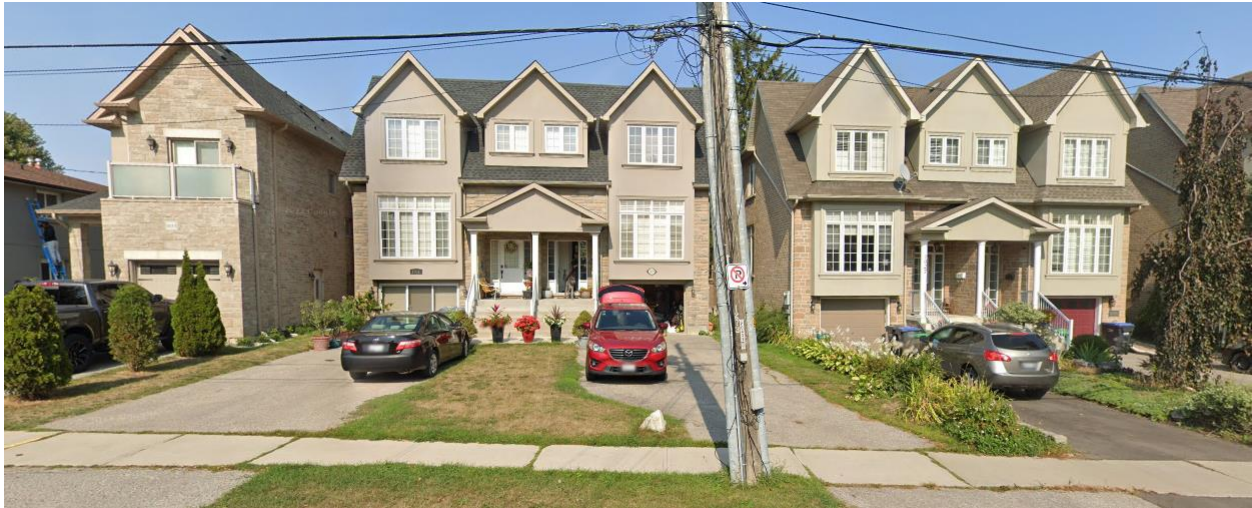


Figure 4 - Shaw Drive, Mississauga

NEW MAXIMUM DWELLING HEIGHT

The maximum height of a detached dwelling in the majority of the City's "R" zones is 10.7 m (35 ft.) measured to the highest point of the roof surface of a flat roof and the midpoint of a sloped roof. A number of neighbourhoods are subject to infill exception regulations, which are more restrictive regulations that apply to certain neighbourhoods in the City to preserve the character of the area. In these neighbourhoods, the maximum height to the highest ridge of a sloped roof is 9.0 m (30 ft.) or 9.5 m (32 ft.), depending on the size of the lot. The maximum height of eaves is 6.4 m (21 ft.) and the maximum height of a flat roof is 7.5 m (25 ft.).

There is an opportunity to standardize the maximum dwelling height of all new dwellings through the updated low density residential zones, which are proposed City-wide. Rather than have a select few neighbourhoods subject to more restrictive height standards, it is more equitable to have all new detached and semi-detached dwellings subject to the same height regulations.

After reviewing infill detached and semi-detached dwellings across the City, staff are considering a new maximum dwelling height of 10.0 m (33 ft.) to the peak of a sloped roof and a maximum height of eaves of 6.9 m (23 ft.) for both detached and semi-detached dwellings. The maximum dwelling height of a flat roof is being considered at 7.5 m (25 ft.). The potential sloped roof standard is higher than the existing height standards in infill exception areas and lower than the existing height standard in "R" base zones. These new standards would provide greater flexibility and allow for three storey dwellings, as permitted in the Official Plan.

OFFICIAL PLAN

The **Residential Low Density I** and **Residential Low Density II** designations in the City's Official Plan permit both detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings as-of-right. However, several Neighbourhood Character areas restrict the permitted uses in **Residential Low Density I** to detached homes only. There are also site specific policies within Character Areas which stipulate minimum lot frontages for new lots and the number of new lots which can be created in certain areas. In order to permit semi-detached dwellings in the updated low density residential zones and reduced lot standards, an amendment to the Official Plan is necessary. See Appendix 1 for Character Areas with policies that would need to be amended.

LINK OTHER GENTLE DENSITY WORK

The table below shows the status of this project in the context of other gentle density zoning work underway.

Zoning By-law Review	Information Report Timing	Recommendation Report Timing
Three Units Per Lot Provincial Requirement	April 17, 2023 Council	October 23, 2023 Planning & Development Committee
"R" Zone consolidation (this report)	October 23, 2023 Planning & Development Committee	February 2024
Multiplex (four unit + buildings)	Q1 2024	Q3 2024
Expanded Street Townhouse Permissions	Not started. Pending experience with "R" Zone Consolidation.	

LAND USE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The *Provincial Policy Statement* (PPS) establishes the overall policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development within Ontario. It sets out province-wide direction on matters related to the efficient use and management of land and infrastructure; the provision of housing; the protection of the environment, resources and water; and, economic development.

The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Growth Plan) builds upon the policy framework established by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies which support the achievement of complete communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity. The Growth Plan establishes minimum intensification targets and requires municipalities to direct growth to existing built-up areas and strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land, infrastructure and transit.

The *Planning Act* requires that municipalities' decisions regarding planning matters be consistent with the PPS and conform with the applicable provincial plans and the Region of Peel Official Plan (ROP). Mississauga Official Plan is generally consistent with the PPS and conforms with the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Parkway Belt West Plan and the ROP.

Conformity of the amendments with the policies of Mississauga Official Plan is under review.

Additional information and details are found in Appendix 1, Section 1.

Engagement and Consultation

Staff are developing an online communications and outreach strategy to solicit public input on the potential changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. A media advisory was released introducing the Updated Low Density Residential Zones project to the public and information regarding the review is available on the City's Increasing Housing Choices in Neighbourhoods webpage.

Financial Impact

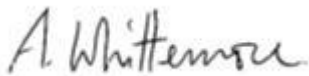
There is no financial impact.

Conclusion

The Updated Low Density Residential Zones project seeks to implement the recommendations of the City's Increasing Housing Choices Study and align the City's zoning with the direction of the new Official Plan. The specific regulations of the potential new low density residential zones will be refined and may change based on further analysis and feedback from the public and Council.

Attachments

- Appendix 1: Detailed Information and Preliminary Planning Analysis
- Appendix 2: "R" Zones in Zoning By-law 0225-2007
- Appendix 3: Jurisdictional Scan of Comparable Municipalities
- Appendix 4: Neighbourhood Examples
- Appendix 5: Lot Frontage Analysis
- Appendix 6: Minor Variances for Lot Frontage and Lot Area 2020-2023



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