To:	COUNCIL
Meeting Date:	**10/28/2025**
Subject:	**25-023-PG Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review – Form Based Zoning Update**
Submitted By:	Sarah Austin, Acting Director of Planning
Prepared By:	Bryan Cooper, Senior Policy Planner and Breanna Syne, Policy Planner
Report No.:	25-023-PG
File No.:	D24
Wards Affected:	All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 25-011-PG, Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review – Form Based Zoning Update be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

- To inform Council on the public engagement process completed on Form Based Zoning as per Council's direction from the Statutory Public Meeting held on May 6, 2025.
- To provide a summary of the public feedback received.
- To update Council on next steps in the Zoning By-law Review.

Key Findings

- Staff and the consulting team held in person workshops, conducted an online survey and hosted several drop-in sessions to engage with the public on form based residential zoning.
- Staff continue to review feedback received and the feedback will inform refinements to the form based residential regulations.
- The Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review is being phased. Phase 1 will be presented to Council for approval in December 2025 and will include the form based residential zones. Phase 2 will include the remaining land uses and will be presented to Council for approval in 2026.

Financial Implications

- This project has an approved $250,000 budget for professional services which is funded by the Canda Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Program.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

☐ Strategic Action

Objective(s): VIBRANT NEIGHBOURHOOD - Promote, facilitate and participate in the development of safe and healthy neighbourhoods with a range of housing options

Strategic Action: Increase housing options

OR

☐ Core Service

Program: Not Applicable

Core Service: Not Applicable

BACKGROUND:

Staff and consultant Meridian Planning are preparing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law that will apply to all properties in the City.

Related to the Zoning By-law review project is the City's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Program Project #4 – Form Based Zoning. The purpose of HAF is to increase the supply of housing in the City. A Form Based Zoning By-law supports this objective by reducing regulations and allowing more housing types as-of-right. This is a change from the City's current Zoning By-law which is considered a traditional, more restrictive Zoning By-law. Differences between traditional zoning and form based zoning are described below.

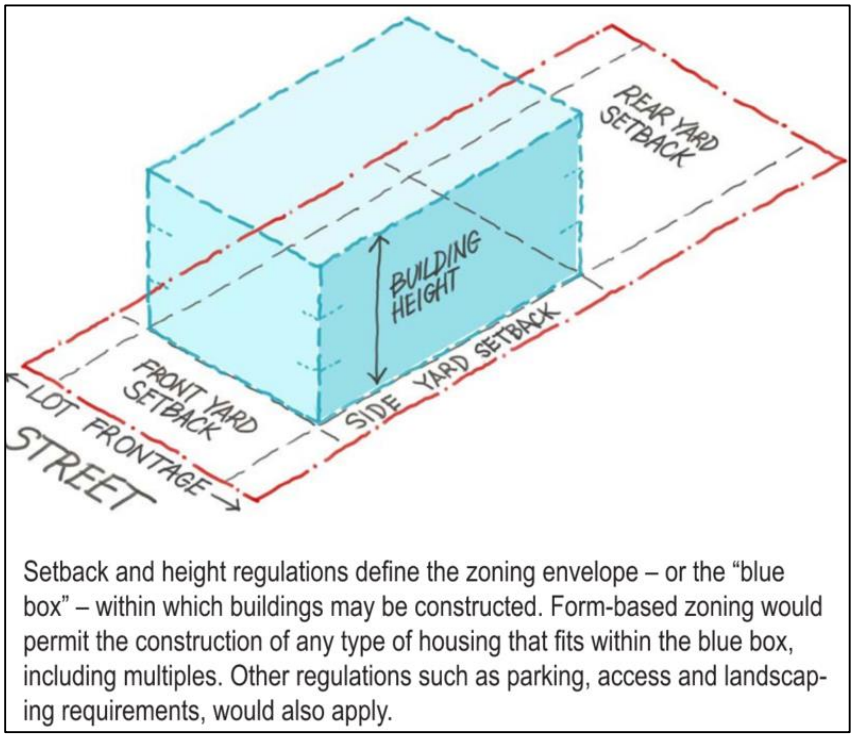
Traditional Zoning vs. Form Based Zoning:

Traditional residential zoning is based on the separation of uses and dwelling types. For example, the City's current Zoning By-law 150-85 contains several different residential zones that only permit one housing type (e.g. single detached dwellings). Any other housing type (e.g. semi-detached, townhouses or low-rise apartments) is not permitted without an amendment. Density is also used to limit the number of housing units that can be built on a property.

Form based zoning provides a different approach. It focuses on regulating the physical form of development, such as height and building placement, rather than the separation of housing types and density restrictions.

A form based zoning by-law will mean a variety of housing types are allowed throughout the City's residential neighbourhoods, which means more housing can be built over time. The size, scale and location of a development is still controlled by regulations like maximum building height, setbacks, landscaping and parking.

The figure below illustrates this concept at a high level:



Setback and height regulations define the zoning envelope – or the "blue box" – within which buildings may be constructed. Form-based zoning would permit the construction of any type of housing that fits within the blue box, including multiples. Other regulations such as parking, access and landscaping requirements, would also apply.

Figure 1 Visualizing Form Based Zoning

Draft Form Based Zoning By-law:

The draft zoning by-law proposes four residential zones that will apply to the City's residential neighbourhoods. This will replace 16 different residential zones in the current Zoning By-law 150-85.

- Rural residential zone **(RR Zone)** for rural areas which is limited to single detached dwellings due to private servicing constraints.
- Low-rise residential zone **(R1)** permitting all housing types, up to a maximum of three storeys.

- Low-rise residential zone **(R2)** permitting all housing types, up to a maximum of four storeys.
- Mid-high rise zone **(R3)** permitting multiple dwellings between 5 – 15 storeys. This zone is reserved only for limited properties designated High Density in the City's Official Plan.

The majority of the City's residential neighbourhoods are within the draft R1 and R2 zone.

Project Engagement Strategy:

The Planning Partnership was retained by the City to explore the design implications of form based zoning and to seek public input on potential regulations.

The following approaches were completed as part of the engagement strategy:

1. **Engage Cambridge project site:**

   An Engage Cambridge project site was launched in April 2025. The site provides the public with access to background information on the project and the City's HAF program, project timeline and information on how to get involved and provide feedback.

2. **Public Workshops:**

   Three public workshops were held in April 2025. Graphics illustrating conceptual housing developments were presented to demonstrate the concept of form based residential zoning and to gather feedback. The City completed a social media campaign to share information about the project and advertise workshop dates.

3. **Online Survey:**

   An online survey was released at the end of April and remained open until end of July 2025. The survey presented conceptual developments from the public workshops and asked respondents to provide feedback on the idea of allowing more housing to be developed in residential neighbourhoods and targeted questions about development standards relating to building height, setbacks, landscaping and parking.

4. **Statutory Public Meeting**

   A statutory public meeting was held on May 6, 2025 to formally introduce the project to Council and the public. At the public meeting, Council indicated that

more engagement was needed to better inform members of the public about the project and to receive a wider range of feedback.

5. **City-wide mailout**

   Following Council direction for more engagement, staff completed a City-wide mailout advising the public of the project and how to provide feedback and become involved. The mail-out was successful in generating significantly more awareness of the project and completion of the online survey.

6. **Drop-in engagement:**

   Staff hosted the following drop-in style information sessions:

   - May 27, 2025: City Hall
   - May 29, 2025: Cambridge Centre Community Kiosk (255 Hespeler Rd)
   - June 2, 2025: City Hall
   - June 5, 2025: David Durward Centre
   - June 6, 2025: Hespeler Farmer's Market
   - June 9, 2025: City Hall
   - June 11, 2025: Langs Community Health Centre
   - June 14, 2025: Cambridge Farmer's Market
   - June 17, 2025: City Hall
   - June 18, 2025: Preston Towne Market
   - June 19, 2025: Hespeler Scout House
   - June 23, 2025: City Hall
   - July 4, 2025: Islamic Centre of Cambridge

7. **Advisory Committee engagement.**

   Staff presented the project to the following advisory committees:

   - Cycling and Trails Advisory Committee
   - Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee
   - Environmental Advisory Committee
   - Accessibility Advisory Committee

8. **Waterloo Region Home Builders Association– Cambridge Liaison Committee**

   Staff introduced the form based residential zoning project to the WRHBA Cambridge Liaison Committee. Discussion on the draft by-law with the homebuilder's group is ongoing.

ANALYSIS:

While the drop-in engagement sessions were intended to help inform people about the bylaw and answer their questions, the online survey was intended to capture feedback about proposed zoning regulations.

Over 400 surveys were completed.

The survey included general questions asking respondents to indicate sentiment towards the concept of form based residential zoning and allowing more housing in neighbourhoods as well as specific questions regarding development requirements such as maximum building height, building placement, landscaping and parking.

Survey responses and comments were categorized into one of five levels of support:

- “Clear Support”
- “Conditional Support/Leaning Yes”
- “Clear Opposition”
- “Conditional Opposition/Leaning No” and
- “Netural/Unclear/Not Applicable”.

A detailed analysis of responses to all survey questions is included in The Planning Partnership’s report “Test Sites to Illustrate Form-Based Residential Zoning” in Appendix A.

The following is a summary of common themes from the survey responses:

Housing Types and Intensification:

- Some respondents support gentle density (duplexes, triplexes, additional residential units/ARUs), while others strongly oppose apartments or high-rises in existing low-rise, detached neighbourhoods.
- Conditional support tied to providing affordable or larger unit housing.
- Belief that developers will prioritize profit over community needs.

Building Scale and Height:

- Preference for low-rise: Many said 2–3 storeys maximum.
- Conditional support for 4 storeys: Accepted by some, but only if design fits context or near transit/downtown.
- Opposition to high-rise: Tall buildings seen as disruptive to privacy, sunlight, and neighbourhood character.
- Mitigation tools suggested: Stepbacks.

Parking and Traffic:

- Many believe 1 space per unit is not enough.
- Many support 2+ spaces per household.
- Preferred parking locations: Rear yard most supported, side yard also acceptable; front yard parking strongly opposed.
- Underground parking ideal but costly, favoured to preserve green space.

Setbacks, Landscaping & Green Space:

- Setbacks too narrow: Strong opposition to 1.2m (4 ft) setbacks—seen as inadequate for privacy, maintenance, and snow storage.
- Desire for larger buffers: Many prefer 6–12 ft or more, especially for apartments.
- Landscaping & greenery protection: Strong emphasis on trees, lawns, and permeable surfaces; fear of losing green yards to “concrete jungles.”
- Skepticism of enforcement: Doubts that landscaping or buffer requirements will be maintained.

Infrastructure and Services

- Repeated worries about water, sewers, schools, hospitals, and roads keeping up with added density.
- Traffic congestion noted as already a problem, expected to worsen with more residents and cars.
- Snow removal and emergency access: Many flagged practical concerns about narrow lots and setbacks.

Community Identity

- Neighbourhood preservation: Strong attachment to quiet, heritage, and suburban character.
- Fear of declining property values near new development or rental housing.
- Safety concerns: Some tie higher density or rental units to crime, noise, and social problems.

Overall Engagement Feedback:

50-60% of all responses to survey questions were categorized as either “Clear Opposition” or “Conditional Opposition/Leaning No” suggesting that overall, participating residents are reluctant to support the concept of form based residential zoning. This is not unexpected as public feedback on development projects within neighbourhoods is generally not overly supportive.

While not forming the majority of survey responses, many respondents expressed positive or conditionally positive responses to the concept of form based residential zoning and draft regulations. Further, during one-on-one conversations with staff at community drop-in sessions most residents indicated being supportive of the project.

Although not all feedback was positive, participant responses have generated valuable feedback to assist staff in refining the By-law regulations for a recommendation to Council.

It is staff's opinion that there is an opportunity to find a balanced approach in a form based zoning by-law that takes into consideration public feedback received while implementing the intended objective of supporting housing in the City, which is the purpose of the HAF program.

Next Steps in Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review:

Staff are evaluating all feedback received on the form based residential zoning project and will bring forward an updated By-law for Council consideration in December 2025. This amendment will form the first phase of the Zoning By-law review and include all residentially zoned properties in the City.

The second phase of the Zoning By-law review will consider all other land uses in the City and will be brought forward in 2026.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

By-law 150-85:

Residential properties subject to By-law 150-85 will ultimately be removed from the current By-law and rezoned as part of the form-based residential zoning by-law (Phase 1 of the Zoning By-law Review).

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This project is one of nine CMHC projects that has a committed $13,347,095 value through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) if certain targets are met. These projects are to help the City of Cambridge create more housing within the community to support our growth. This specific project has an approved $250,000 budget for professional services.

PUBLIC VALUE:

This project supports the public value of Engagement. Public involvement was invited at key milestones through the project as noted in the Background section of this report on engagement activities.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

As noted in the background section of this report staff consulted with various Advisory Committees on the project.

PUBLIC INPUT:

This report is posted publicly as part of the report process.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The following agencies and city divisions have been circulated through this project:

External Agencies:

School Boards:

- Conseil Scolaire Viamond
- Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir
- Waterloo Region District School Board
- Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Adjacent Municipalities:

- Township of North Dumfries
- Township of Woolwich
- Township of Puslinch
- Wellington County
- City of Kitchener
- City of Hamilton
- Region of Waterloo

Other Agencies:

- Grand River Conservation Authority
- Canadian National Railway
- Canadian Pacific Railway
- Union Gas Limited
- Ontario Power Generation
- GrandBridge Energy
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ministry of Transportation
- Infrastructure Ontario
- Six Nations of the Grand River

Internal Staff:

- Development Planning
- Development Engineering
- Transportation Engineering
- Recreation and Culture
- Economic Development
- Municipal By-law
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility
- Fire Department
- Finance Department
- Operations

CONCLUSION:

This report summarizes the engagement work completed as part of the form based zoning project. Public engagement included a project webpage, in-person workshops, online survey and a number of informal drop-in sessions.

It is staff's opinion that there is an opportunity to find a balanced approach in a form based zoning by-law that takes into consideration public feedback received while implementing the intended objective of supporting housing in the City, which is the purpose of the HAF program.

A recommendation report will be presented to Council in December 2025.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **No**

APPROVALS:

This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:

Director

General Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 25-023-PG Appendix A – Test Sites to Illustrate Form Based Residential Zoning

CAMBRIDGE
CANADA
PEOPLE • PLACE • PROSPERITY



September 2025

Test Sites to Illustrate Form-Based Residential Zoning for the Comprehensive Zoning By-law

The Planning Partnership
Meridian Planning Consultants

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction 1
- 1.1 Background and Scope 1
- 1.2 Provincial Legislative Changes 4

2.0 Examples of Infill Development and ARUs in Cambridge 5

3.0 Engagement 9
- 3.1 Project Web Page 9
- 3.2 Public Open Houses 9
- 3.3 Mail-out 11
- 3.4 Pop-Up Community Engagement 11
- 3.5 Online Survey Summary 12

4.0 Test Sites 18
- 4.1 Common Elements in the Illustrations for the Test Sites 20
- 4.2 Additional Residential unit on Deep Lots 21
- 4.3 Laneway Additional Residential Unit 24
- 4.4 Dwelling on a Flag Lot 32
- 4.5 Lot Consolidation with Apartment 37
- 4.6 Multi-Unit Infill 45
- 4.7 High Rise 52

5.0 Recommendations 59

Appendix A: Background Research 63

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and Scope

Meridian Planning Consultants was retained by the City of Cambridge to assist with the review of the City's New Comprehensive Zoning By-law. As part of this work, The Planning Partnership was retained to explore design implications of form-based zoning, and to seek public input on potential zoning standards for new infill development.

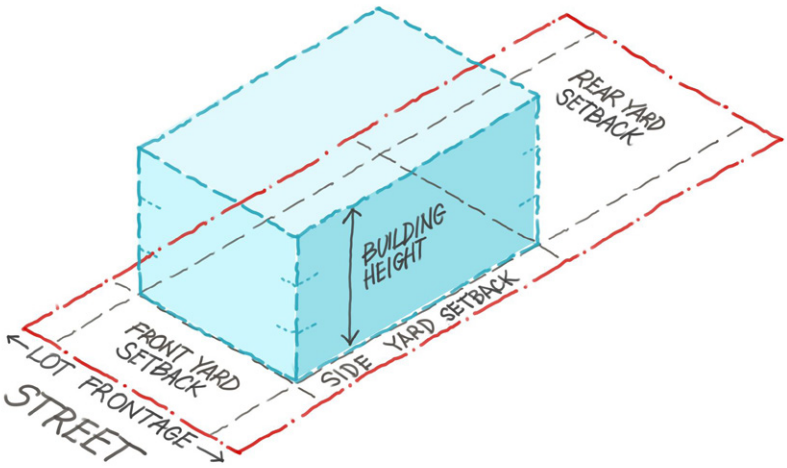
The scope of The Planning Partnership's involvement included:

- Review what other municipalities are considering for zoning, including what the standards are for Additional Residential Units (ARUs) in the principal dwelling and ARUs in a detached/accessory building. Provide commentary that compares these standards to the Cambridge context;
- Examine potential built form for low, mid and high-rise development through visualization of site plan and massing;
- Illustrate potential development scenarios in a variety of neighbourhoods of different ages and lot sizes to represent a full range of typical conditions found across Cambridge;
- Seek public input on scenarios and report back; and,
- Provide take-aways for further consideration in the preparation of form-based zoning

The City's current comprehensive Zoning By-law 150-85 has a complicated and restrictive residential zoning framework typical of many older by-laws, and is a constraint to housing supply, with 16 different residential zones and over 500 site-specific zoning amendments. Delays and costs can result if a development application does not precisely comply with these regulations. The reason for introducing Form-Based Zoning for residential areas is to help streamline the development application process to get new housing approved and built faster while accommodating for growth sustainably; as well as encouraging greater diversity in housing forms throughout.

The most recent draft of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law includes updates to residential zones to promote "missing middle" housing. Missing middle housing refers to ground-oriented housing types that are higher density than typical single detached lots. This includes garden suites, additional residential units, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, row houses, courtyard housing, and low-rise apartments (4 storeys or less).

Form Based Zoning focuses on the physical form of development (i.e., height, building placement) rather than the segregation of use and dwelling types. It shifts away from traditional zoning which can be restrictive and complex in practice. Form Based Zoning supports the development of "missing middle" housing as it allows a wide variety of low-rise building forms as of right. It will simplify zoning regulations. Buildings would no longer be restricted to a particular type (single detached, semi-detached, row house, etc.). Rather, any residential building type that fits within the zoning envelope, and complies with other applicable development regulations, would be permitted.



Setback and height regulations define the zoning envelope – or the "blue box" – within which buildings may be constructed. Form-based zoning would permit the construction of any type of housing that fits within the blue box, including multiples. Other regulations such as parking, access and landscaping requirements, would also apply.

Lot Width/Frontage: The measurement of a property's width along the street it faces.

Front Yard Setback: Minimum required distance between the front of a building and the property line along the street.

Interior Side Yard Setback: The required space between the building and the side property line.

Exterior Side Yard Setback: The required distance from the lot line facing a public street or lane.

Rear Yard Setback: The minimum distance a building must be from the back property line.

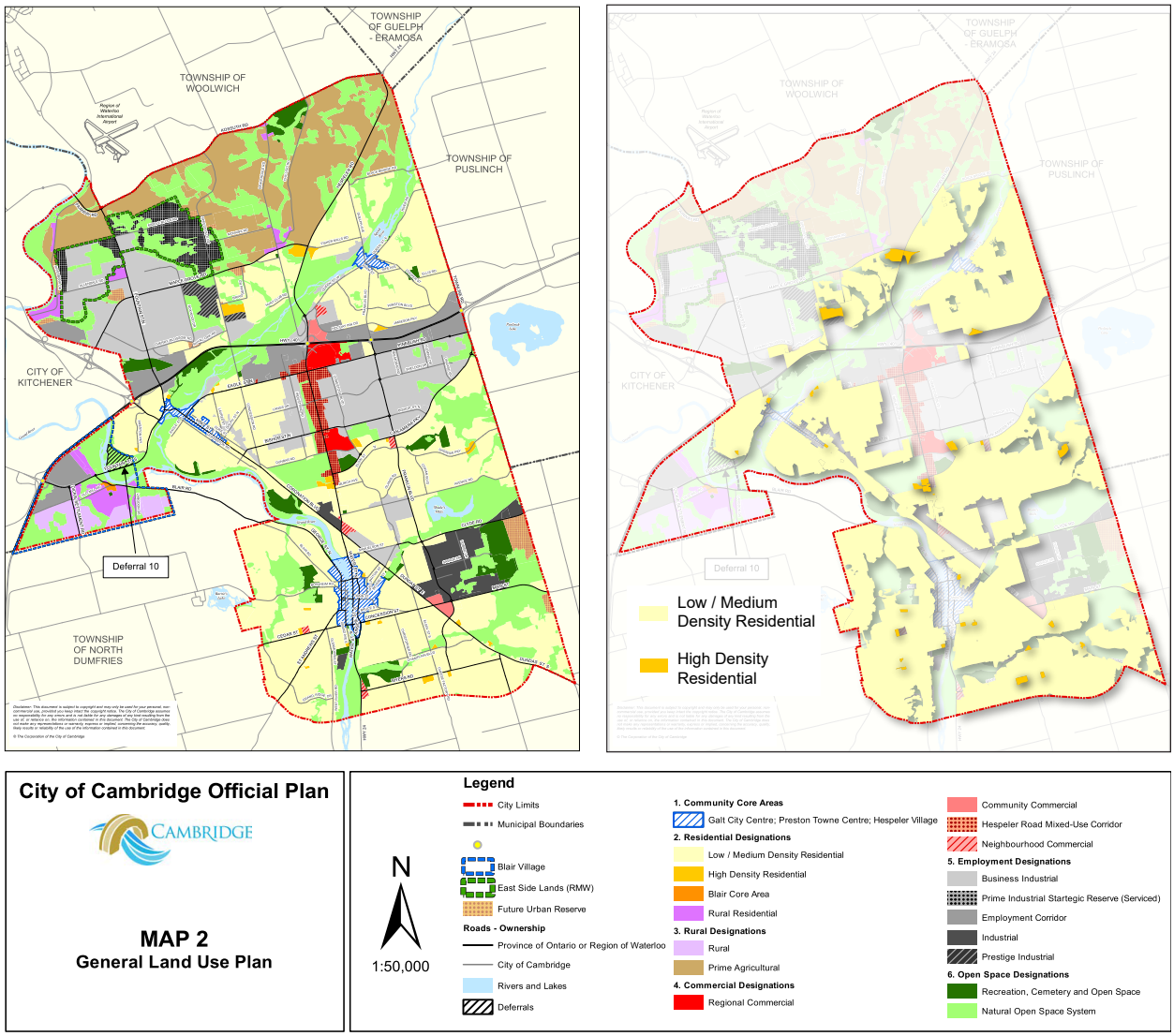
Building Height: The vertical distance from the ground to the highest point of the building.

Form based zoning is intended to be incorporated into the new comprehensive zoning by-law in residential areas. Staff are considering the following new zones that would simplify existing low-rise residential zones, and would apply City-wide:

- Rural Residential Zone (RR) - Detached, private services
- Low Density Residential (R1) - Detached, attached and multiple (3 storey maximum)
- Low Density Residential (R2) - Detached, attached and multiple (4 storey maximum)
- Low Density Residential (R3) - Attached and multiples (5-15 storey maximum, subject to tall building standards)

Collectively, the low-rise zones comprise one of the largest land use areas within the City. Applying a simplified form-based zoning approach will permit a greater range of housing types to be built across the City.

This study also examines sites that are designated for higher density residential development. While a large number of these are already built, some sites are yet to develop with higher density forms, while other sites could accommodate additional development.



City of Cambridge Official Plan

CAMBRIDGE

MAP 2
General Land Use Plan

N

1:50,000

Legend

- City Limits
- Municipal Boundaries
- Blair Village
- East Side Lands (RMW)
- Future Urban Reserve

Roads - Ownership

- Province of Ontario or Region of Waterloo
- City of Cambridge
- Rivers and Lakes
- Deferrals

1. Community Core Areas

- Galt City Centre; Preston Towne Centre; Hespeler Village

2. Residential Designations

- Low / Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Blair Core Area
- Rural Residential

3. Rural Designations

- Rural
- Prime Agricultural

4. Commercial Designations

- Regional Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Hespeler Road Mixed-Use Corridor
- Neighbourhood Commercial

5. Employment Designations

- Business Industrial
- Prime Industrial Startegic Reserve (Serviced)
- Employment Corridor
- Industrial
- Prestige Industrial

6. Open Space Designations

- Recreation, Cemetery and Open Space
- Natural Open Space System

Map 2 of the Official Plan defines land uses across the City. Low-rise areas, designated as Low/Medium Density Residential, comprise a large proportion of the City's land base, as shown by the map on the right. The focus of this study has been to examine form-based zoning within low-rise areas to encourage missing middle housing. This study also examines High Density Residential areas, which are scattered through the City and tend to be smaller, discrete sites.

1.2 Provincial Legislative Changes

Changes in recent Provincial legislation also play a role in the introduction of form-based zoning for Cambridge. Over the past few years, the Province has recognized the need to overall reduce red tape for people, businesses, the government and organizations. Ontario's Spring 2024 Red Tape Reduction Package is a result of this recognition. Among other efforts to reduce barriers to productivity and growth, the Province introduced Bill 185: Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024 to help reduce barriers to build more housing in the face of a housing crisis.

Bill 185

On April 10, 2024, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in Ontario introduced Bill 185, the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024, which received royal assent on June 6, 2024. Bill 185 is an effort by the Province to accelerate the development of new housing by removing barriers and undoing previous amendments made by the Province that may have slowed down development applications.

One of the key changes brought about by the new legislation included changing the Planning Act to eliminate barriers to building additional residential units (ARUs), including garden suites, laneway suites, or basement suites. Previous regulations within the Planning Act authorized the Minister to make regulations establishing requirements and standards for a second or a third residential unit within a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse and for a detached ARU. The new legislation authorizes regulations establishing requirements and standards for ARUs and the land where such residential units are located, dictating things like the maximum lot coverage and the number of bedrooms permitted in ARUs.

Bill 23

Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 was passed on November 28, 2022, which exempts residential development projects with 10 or fewer units from Site Plan Control, unless the project falls within areas prescribed in the regulation. This is also a result of the Province's efforts to reduce barriers to building homes and speed up the approval process.

Additionally, Bill 23 allows up to three ARUs as-of-right on many residential properties in Ontario to help increase housing supply.

2.0 Examples of Infill Development and ARUs in Cambridge

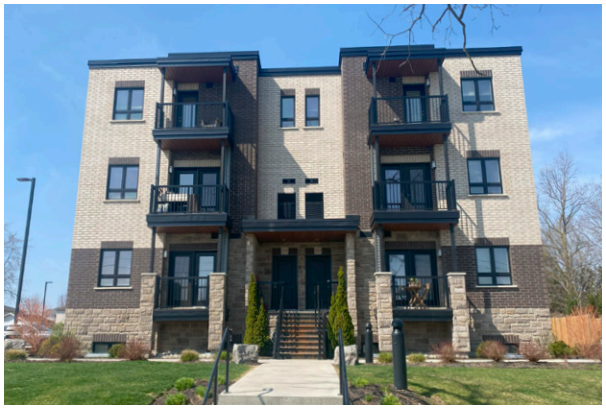
Cambridge has witnessed numerous ARUs and infill developments over recent years, including multi-unit infill, townhouse and stacked townhouse complexes, and ARUs. A lot of these new developments are largely located within the Hespeler Village, East Galt, West Galt, and Blair Road neighbourhoods. Below are some photos of recent ARUs and infill development within Cambridge:

Silver Heights





Example of an ARU on a corner lot with a single detached home, with access for the ARU from the adjacent street.





Example of a stacked townhouse infill development with surface parking

Avenue & Franklin



Example of a stacked townhouse infill development with surface parking.

East Galt



Example of an ARU on a lot with a single detached home, with access for the ARU from the street.





Example of a townhouse infill development with garage spaces and visitor parking spots.

Blair Road





Example of a detached ARU on a lot with a single detached house, with parking on the principal driveway.





Example of a recent townhouse development with garage spaces and visitor parking spots.

West Galt




Example of a semi-detached compact laneway house, with parking off the laneway on the side.




Example of a detached compact 2-storey laneway house, with parking off the laneway on the side.





Example of a townhouse infill development, with garage spaces and visitor parking spots.



Example of a duplex with parking off the laneway on the side.

West Galt (con't)





Example of an existing home retained with townhouses in the back, with garage spaces.




Example of two multi-unit developments that blend with the street and the neighbourhood. Parking is off the laneway in the back.

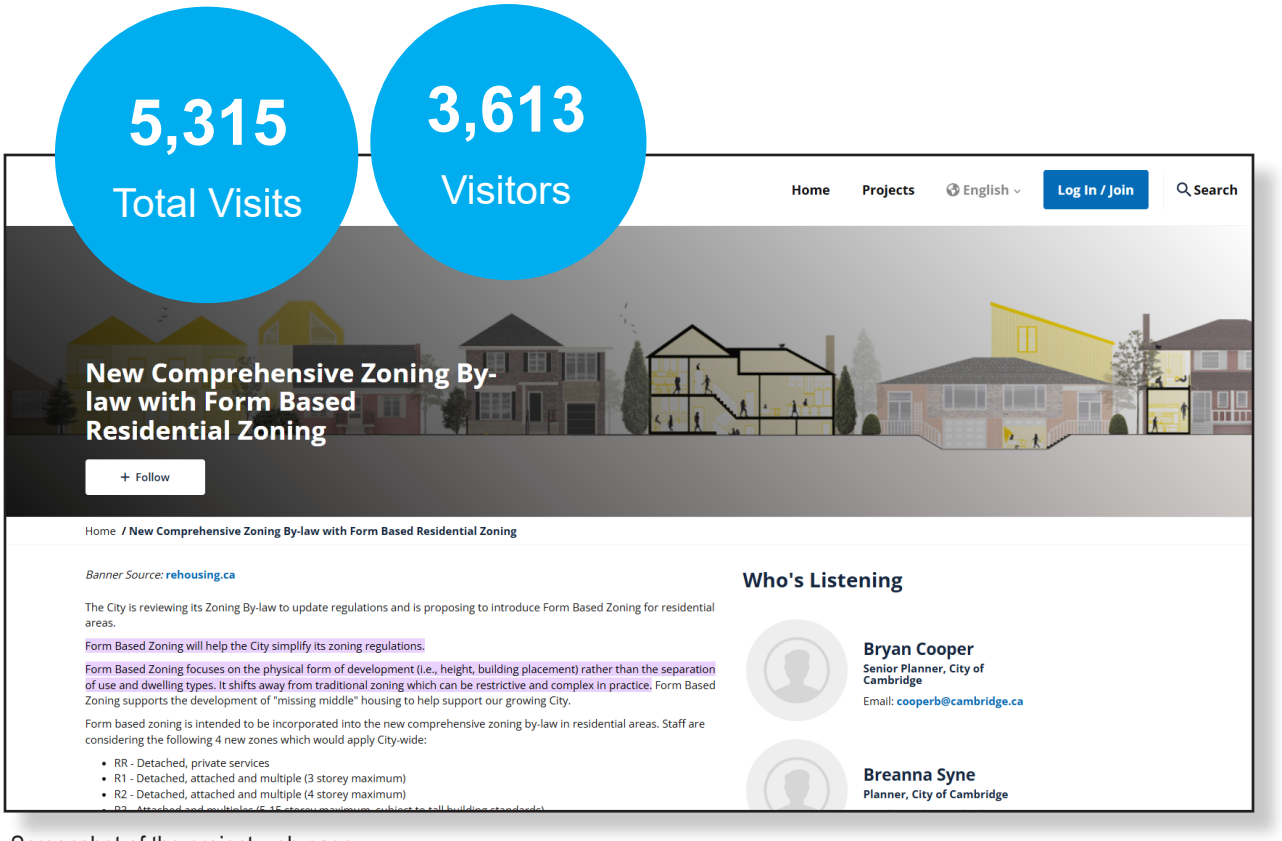



Example of an ARU on a deep lot, with parking in the rear off the laneway.

3.0 Engagement

3.1 Project Web Page

The project web page was launched in early April, 2025, where information, links, reports, and project updates are posted regularly, to function as a point of engagement with the public. It also provided a link to the online survey.



Screenshot of the project web page

3.2 Public Open Houses

Three public in-person open houses were held on April 14, 16, and 17, 2025, where The Planning Partnership delivered a presentation to the public followed by a workshop where the public were provided with worksheets on the test sites to provide thoughts and feedback.

Dates for Public Open Houses

April 14, 2025 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
637 King Street East, Cambridge, ON
Participants: 5

April 16, 2025 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Cambridge City Hall, 50 Dickson Street, Cambridge, ON
Participants: 11

April 17, 2025 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Hespeler Scout House, 16 Kribs Street
Participants: 10

What We Heard

General Comments to Consider

- Parking standards: how many are required, where they should be located
- Common amenity space regulations (unit threshold or minimum requirement)
- Setbacks correlated to height regulations

Parking

- Generally, residents desire more parking and builders support less parking
- People are currently parking on the street or parking within boulevards in newer developed areas
- Overall safety concerns regarding location of parking
- Concern with the higher numbers of units and whether it will cause more traffic (i.e., Princess Street & Blair Road intersection is very busy)
- Current 1.25 per unit parking rate is too high, suggestions for lower parking rates from builders and developers (i.e., 0.54 per unit or 0.66 per unit)
- Parking controls unit counts

Infill Development

- Consider compatibility with surrounding context, neighbourhood character, streetscape, etc.
- Resident concern about whether proposed setbacks regulations are relaxed over current standards
- Parking or landscaping has to give in order to accommodate infill

Flag Lots

- Example of flag lots in Cambridge currently exist
- Elgin Street South
- Chalmers Street (two storey in the rear, bungalow in the front)
- A resident said that realtors will like this
- There is a deficit in rental properties in Cambridge
- Suggestion to consider height and size regulations of dwellings

Other

- Stormwater and fire concerns:
  - With more infill, there is less permeability, how do we account for that?
  - Consider stormwater retention
- Site Alteration By-law alteration by-law should be updated to include smaller developments - can impose drainage concerns/issues if more dwellings are added to a lot
- Where would amenity spaces be accommodated?
- Consider minimum unit size
- Consider higher building code requirements for more dense lots
- Alternative mobility, like biking and walking, should be considered
- Overall interest in diverse/ missing middle housing for seniors/ different generations
- The cost to build missing middle housing in Cambridge is not feasible
- Support for pre-zoned areas
- Suggestion to review past OLT decisions to better inform the work being done

Development Industry Input

As demonstrated during consultation for this study, the perspective of the development industry tends to differ from that of the public and other stakeholders. Given that builders and developers are primarily responsible for delivering housing, it is prudent to conduct additional consultation with them on the zoning standards to more fully understand their issues and needs.

Based on the conversations with the builders and developers who attended the workshops, parking is an important issue. They believed that some of the test cases were not financially viable given the high requirement for parking. One developer cited a very low car parking rate (in the order of 0.5 cars per unit) in one of their small rental buildings in Preston.

Notwithstanding their parking concerns, overall, they supported the principles of the zoning reforms to simplify categories and allow more flexibility in housing type within the categories. In our experience, every developer will have a different perspective on what they consider to be financially viable given their different skill sets and approaches to marketing, tenure, construction and the like, so it is important to solicit a range of input. Questions for the development industry could include:

- What is an appropriate parking rate? How should it vary by context? E.g. close to downtown or to transit vs. suburban
- What size of site are they looking for? Where?
- What size of development? How many units, what type?
- What are appropriate built form standards for height, setback and separation?
- What should landscape requirements be?

3.3 Mail-out

In May 2025, the City did a city-wide mailout to over 60,000 residents/businesses advertising the project and time/dates of community drop ins.

3.4 Pop-Up Community Engagement

Several pop-up engagement events took place from May 27 to July 4 to connect with residents across the city and share links to the on-line survey. Most people were looking for more information on how the new zoning by-law could impact their property and neighbours. Pop-up engagement occurred on the following dates and locations:

- May 27 – City Hall (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- May 29 – Cambridge Centre Community Kiosk (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 2 – City Hall (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 5 – David Durward Centre (10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.)
- June 6 – Hespeler Farmer's Market (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.)
- June 9 – City Hall (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 11 – Langs (12 p.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 14 – Cambridge Farmer's Market (7 a.m. to 1 p.m.)
- June 17 – City Hall (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 18 – Preston Towne Market (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- June 19 – Hespeler Scout House (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- June 23 – City Hall (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- July 4 - Islamic Centre of Cambridge (ICC - Mosque) (12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)

Over 350 Cambridge residents attended the engagement sessions and City staff heard an array of feedback, which can be categorized into three items:

1. Residential changes to existing neighbourhoods
2. Allowing more housing types, and
3. Parking

Similar feedback was expanded throughout the online surveys.

3.5 Online Survey Summary

An on-line survey was launched on April 24, 2025 to gather input on the new Form-Based Zoning By-law in Cambridge. The survey was posted for 11 weeks on the Engage page. There was a total of **402** responses to the survey. The survey included 30 questions with accompanying graphics, to primarily gather input on some of the test site illustrations. The survey results in hundreds of data points that are summarized in this chapter with respect to the general questions and in Chapter 4.2 regarding some of the test site illustrations.

The following provides a summary of common themes that we heard.

Housing Types and Intensification

- Some support gentle density (duplexes, triplexes, ARUs), others strongly oppose apartments or high-rises in existing neighbourhoods.
- Conditional support tied to providing affordable or family-oriented housing.
- Belief that development will prioritize profit over community needs.

Building Scale and Height

- Preference for low-rise: Many said 2–3 storeys is the maximum appropriate in neighbourhoods.
- Conditional support for 4 storeys: Accepted by some, but only if design fits context or near transit/downtown.
- Opposition to high-rise: Tall buildings seen as disruptive to privacy, sunlight, and neighbourhood character.
- Mitigation tools suggested: Stepbacks, buffers, shadow studies, and height transitions.

Parking and Traffic

- Many believe 1 space per unit is not enough; many push for 2+ spaces per household.
- On-Street Parking Opposition: Seen as unsafe, overcrowding narrow streets, and limiting snow/emergency access.
- Preferred parking locations: Rear yard most supported, side yard also acceptable; front yard and street parking strongly opposed by many.
- Underground parking ideal but costly, favoured as a way to preserve green space.

Setbacks, Landscaping & Green Space

- Setbacks too narrow: Strong opposition to 1.2m (4 ft) setbacks—seen as inadequate for privacy, maintenance, and snow storage.
- Desire for larger buffers: Many prefer 6–12 ft or more, especially for apartments.
- Landscaping & greenery protection: Strong emphasis on trees, lawns, and permeable surfaces; fear of losing green yards to “concrete jungles.”
- Skepticism of enforcement: Doubts that landscaping or buffer requirements will be maintained.

Infrastructure and Services

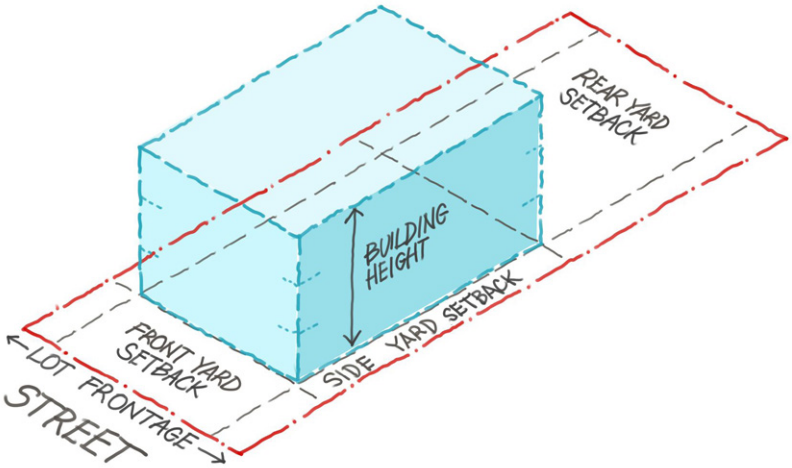
- Repeated worries about water, sewers, schools, hospitals, and roads keeping up with added density.
- Traffic congestion already a problem, expected to worsen with more residents and cars.
- Snow removal and emergency access: Many flagged practical concerns about narrow lots and setbacks.

Community Identity

- Neighbourhood preservation: Strong attachment to quiet, heritage, and suburban character.
- Fear of declining property values near new development or rental housing.
- Safety concerns: Some tie higher density or rental units to crime, noise, and social problems.

The first part of the survey focused on general input. It began with an explanation of the various elements regulated through zoning, then asked the following four questions highlighted in blue text. The yellow boxes on the following pages include survey results to these preliminary questions. The remainder of the survey questions and results can be found in Section 4 of this Report, within the yellow boxes.

Input on New Housing Types



Zoning envelope

Lot Width/Frontage: The measurement of a property's width along the street it faces.

Front Yard Setback: Minimum required distance between the front of a building and the property line along the street.

Interior Side Yard Setback: The required space between the building and the side property line.

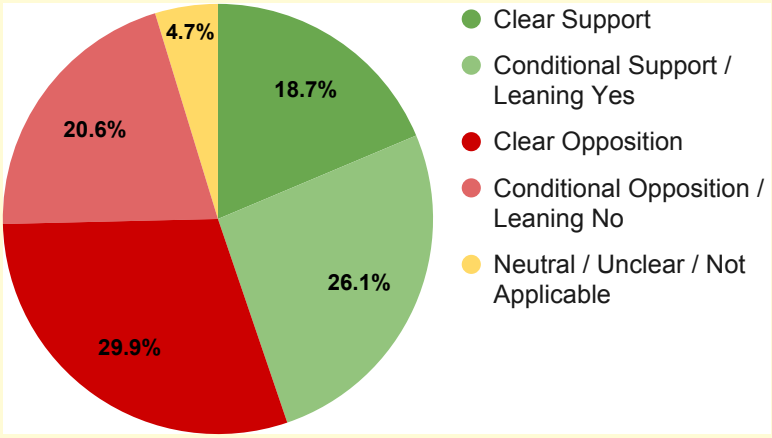
Rear Yard Setback: The minimum distance a building must be from the back property line.

Building Height: The vertical distance from the ground to the highest point of the building.

The survey asked:

1. The City will be permitting more types of housing in residential neighbourhoods. What are your thoughts on this?

Stance



> **Keep it to 2-3 storeys, Mid-rise only in appropriate areas.**

> **Cambridge needs more housing options ... as providing more affordable options. This seems like a great way to work towards that.**

> **More homes for families, not just investors.**

> **Great! Please consider impact to traffic and ensure new residences have ample parking.**

Supportive Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear support or lean positive:

- New buildings must match the character, scale, and look of existing homes.
- Support for gentle density (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, ARUs).
- Support if development is limited to new growth areas, arterial corridors, or downtown, not core residential streets.

Neutral or Conditional Responses

- Concerns about sewer, water, garbage, schools, and hospitals being able to keep up.
- Worries that additional homes will worsen congestion or lead to more illegal parking.
- Clear resistance to high-rises in low-density zones.
- Some support is contingent on units being affordable or filling the “missing middle” housing gap.

Opposing Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear opposition or lean negative:

- Strong emotional attachment to quiet, heritage, or low-density character.
- Widespread belief that multiplexes, rentals, or high-rise development will devalue nearby homes.
- Fear that more people will worsen roads, schools, and services.
- Distrust that the city will enforce standards (parking, noise, garbage, upkeep).
- Fear that development will be driven by profit, not community need.
- Some tie higher density or rentals to rising crime or loss of safety.

> "We're already over capacity," "Cambridge can't handle more people.

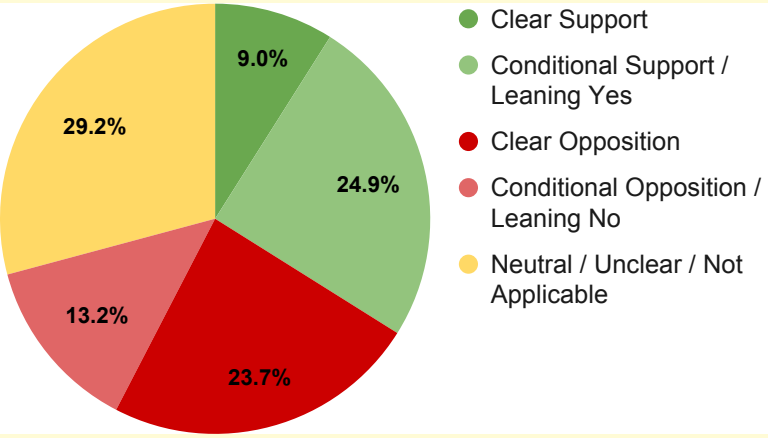
> "Bad idea. No to over densification of communities.

> "Developers will overbuild, the city doesn't listen.

> "Rooming houses have ruined our street, Bylaw doesn't respond.

2. The City is considering allowing parking in side and rear yards to support more housing types and reduce front-yard parking. What are your thoughts on this? What do you think about providing fencing and/or landscape buffers around parking in the side or rear yards?

Stance



> "The only way to have more housing units is to ease parking bylaws. So yes.

> "This sounds significantly better than the status quo in my area.

> "Could create dangerous backing / sightline issues onto the alley.

Supportive Responses

- Support for side/rear yard parking as a way to reduce front-yard parking and improve streetscape.
- Belief this will help add more housing units and flexibility for homeowners.
- Seen as a better alternative to current options in some neighbourhoods.

Neutral or Conditional Responses

- Screening / aesthetic design controls (hedges, shrubs, wood fences) emphasized.
- Conditions on surface treatment: permeable paving, avoid excessive asphalt, maintain green space.
- Support only if it does not impact drainage, tree canopy, or neighbour privacy.

Opposing Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear opposition or lean negative:

- Concerns it will reduce green space and increase hard surfaces.
- Seen as detrimental to neighbourhood character.
- Worry about traffic or parking spillover from higher housing density.
- Worry about safety issues: vehicles backing out into alleys or tight spaces.
- Doubts that fencing/landscaping would be sufficient to mitigate negative impacts.

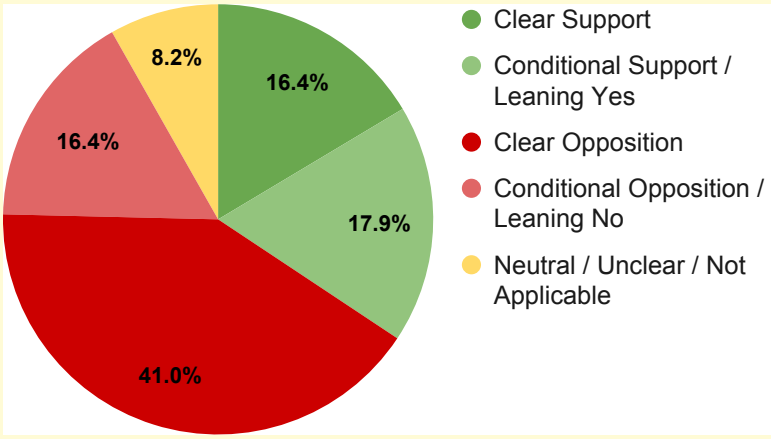
> Do not allow parking in backyards.

> Terrible idea — more pavement, less green

> Do not allow parking in backyards.

3. Should the City consider on-street parking to accommodate more parking required for these new housing types?

Stance



> On-street parking should be considered as needed and residents can apply for a permit if they need to park on the street.

> Enforce current rules better instead of adding more.

> Yes! But how would these spaces be impacted in the winter months?

Supportive Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear support or lean positive:

- Prioritizing sightlines, emergency access, and pedestrian safety.
- Some support restrictions in problem areas, or during specific times, or one-sided street parking.
- Consider on-street parking challenges during the winter months.
- Many homes have multiple vehicles and no room in driveways.
- On-street parking seen as essential due to poor transit or inaccessible lots.

Opposing Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear opposition or lean negative:

- Some feel seasonal rules are already sufficient.
- Streets are too narrow for both parking and movement.
- Some think that the City should focus on enforcement of current rules.

4. How can the City strike the right balance between permitting more units in residential neighbourhoods, while maintaining sufficient landscaping on the lot?

Supportive Response

Most common themes for responses that show clear support or lean positive:

Support more housing if landscaping is protected or enhanced. Some suggestions include:

- Minimum green space requirements (% of the lot)
- Use of green roofs, vertical gardens, or permeable surfaces
- Creative parking solutions to reduce paved areas (e.g., underground, laneways)
- Preference for low-rise, small-scale additions (e.g., duplexes, garden suites)
- Encourage quality design standards to make denser housing look and feel better

> **Set a size standard of lot to people who will inhabit.**

> **Have a combination mixed together in a neighbourhood**

> **Ample use of trees and bushes between properties help a lot with beautification and demarcation.**

> **Promoting other methods of transportation such as public transit, biking, and walking so that the greenspace surrounding building can be green rather than a parking space.**

> **Worry less about landscaping and create more public green space**

Neutral Responses

- Some suggest it depends on the area (e.g., urban core vs. suburban)
- Others ask for more public engagement, education, or to learn from other cities
- A few say: “this is too complex” or “need more details to decide”

Opposing Responses

Most common themes for responses that show clear opposition or lean negative:

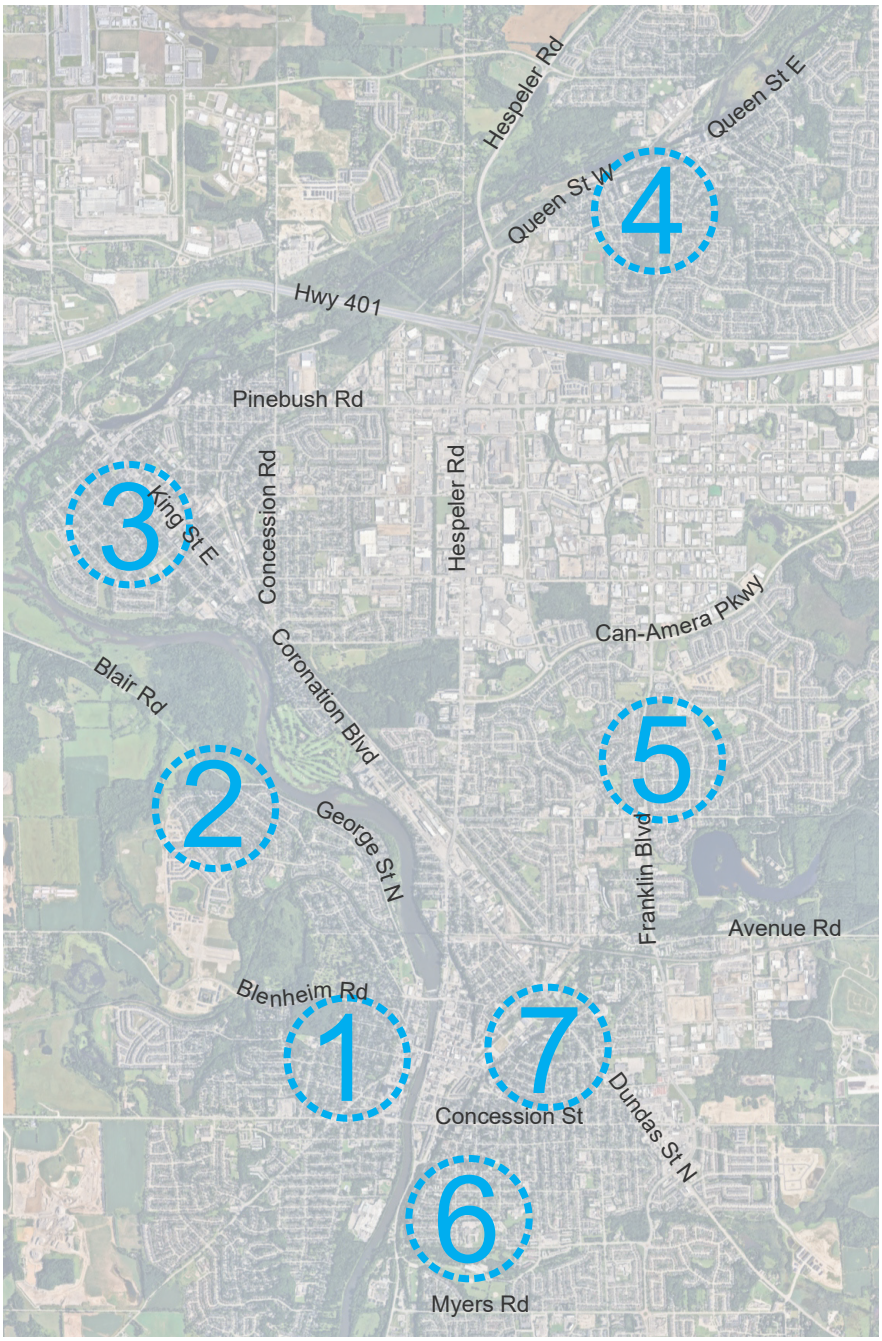
- Worry that more housing will mean losing trees, grass, privacy, and sunlight
- Feel neighborhoods are already too crowded, and infill will make things worse
- Believe the City won’t enforce landscaping rules or preserve neighborhood character
- Many don’t want apartment buildings or fear a “concrete jungle” effect

> **Many neighbourhood don’t want more density. Creating more issues increasing density**

> **This is a terrible idea. Developers will maximize space for building over landscape**

4.0 Test Sites

Seven test sites from different neighbourhoods were selected to visualize what development might look under Form-Based Zoning By-law standards. Each site was selected to represent a different typology of development in Cambridge, for example older laneway lots, newer suburban lots, and larger blocks of land.



1 West Galt

2 Blair Road

3 Preston Centre

4 Hespeler

5 Regional Road Corridors/ Fiddlesticks

6 Christopher-Champlain

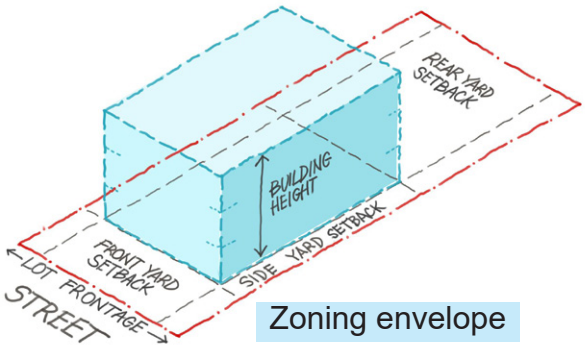
7 East Galt Major Transit Station Area

Map of the general locations of the test sites.

Each Test Site shows one potential type of infill development, such as an Additional Residential Unit, a small multi-plex, small apartments, or large apartments. Other types of infill are possible. The Test Sites are meant as one possible demonstration of zoning standards; many other design concepts are possible.

Assumptions

The design concept, including the zoning envelope shown for each Test Site, is based on the assumptions below. While conceptual buildings are shown to illustrate potential placement, design and other architectural details, they are for visualization purposes only. The zoning envelope is shown in blue dashed line, superimposed over the demonstration development scenarios.



Zoning envelope

Design dimensions
Dimensions are based on draft zones R1, R2, or R3. Generally, setbacks and dimensions are as follows:

Setbacks

- Side (interior): **1.2 m** (dwelling, ARU, driveway, parking
- Rear (ARU, driveway, parking): **1.2 m**
- Rear (principal dwelling): **7.5 m**
- Front (principal dwelling): **3.0 – 6.0 m**

Separation

- Principal dwelling ↔ ARU: **4.5 m minimum**

Building Heights

- Low-rise residential: **3 – 4 storeys**
- Mid / high-rise: **15+ storeys** (TBD)

Driveways

- Small-scale (< 20 stalls): **3.0 m width**
- Large-scale (20+ stalls): **6.0 m width**

Parking
Development scenarios illustrate current parking ratios:

- 1.0 parking stalls per detached ARU
- 1.25 parking stalls per attached ARU in multiple form (where ARUs are contained within the principal building)

Parking is on-lot; no on-street parking is assumed.

Unit Size
Buildings are sized to provide marketable and rentable unit sizes. Most ARU-type units are shown in the 55-75 square metre (600-800 square feet) range. Stacked townhouses are in the 110 square metre (1,200 square feet) range. The largest units are “house” type units at 140 square metres (1,500 square feet). Units in mid- and high-rise buildings are assumed to average 72 square metres net (775 square feet). For most test sites, there is sufficient design flexibility to provide variation in these sizes.

4.1 Common Elements in the Illustrations for the Test Sites

Lot Size

- Cambridge lot widths and depths tend to be larger in all neighbourhoods than lots in other municipalities. Lots in Cambridge usually have sufficient space to create multi-unit buildings or ARUs.
- Larger lots offer greater opportunities, not only for the number of units that can be achieved, but also for providing enhanced design features, such as amenity spaces.

Zoning Envelope

- Applying the proposed setbacks and building heights to the typically large lot sizes results in very large zoning envelopes that, if built out fully, would create bulky and sometimes inappropriate massing. See comment on parking, below.

Driveway Access

- Most of the test sites provide driveway access from the street, though there are some with laneway access
- Shared driveways or long side-yard driveways are used in many cases to ensure that parking is not located in the front yard. A benefit is that it provides additional building separation (buffering) from the adjacent lot, assuming nothing is built above the driveway.
- Use of existing driveways or shared access minimizes curb cuts and preserves landscaping/street character.

Parking

- Parking is consistently located in the rear or in side driveways, helping maintain a pedestrian-friendly street frontage.
- Parking is often the limiting factor in determining the scale of development and the number of units achievable. Meeting the minimum parking requirements on the lot means that the zoning envelope is not fully utilized, since the parking itself takes up a portion of the envelope.

Low to Mid-Rise Built Form

- ARUs are generally shown 1–2 storeys. In some cases, a second storey is beneficial where the ground floor is primarily garage space for parking.
- Multi-unit development is typically three storeys or less. Given the parking requirements, it is difficult to provide enough parking on the lot in order to generate additional gross floor area for a fourth storey.

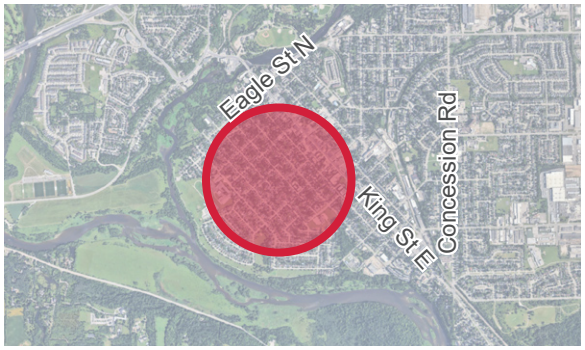
4.2 Additional Residential unit on Deep Lots

Example: Preston Centre

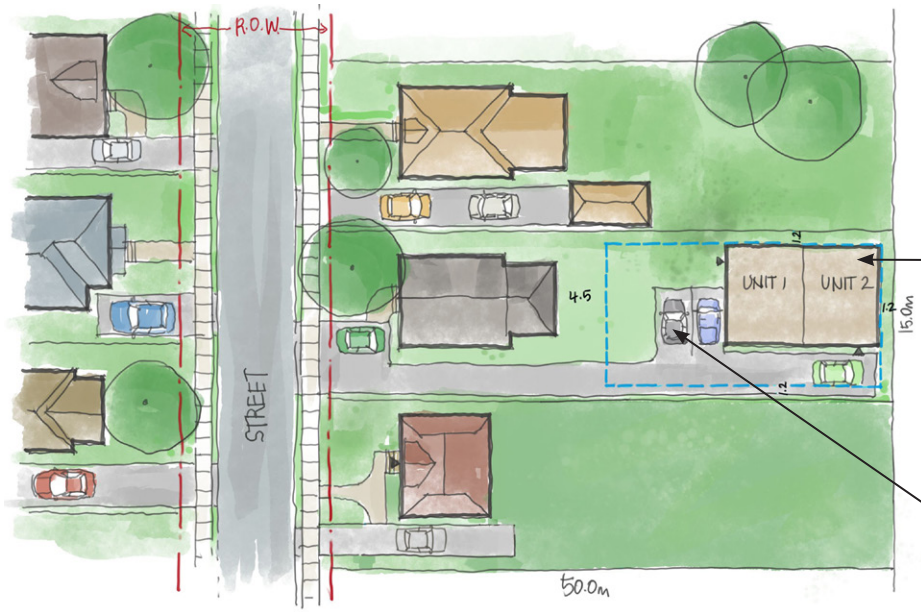
Preston Centre is characterized by very deep lots, often 50m, with a diverse mix of housing eras and styles. Shown in the illustration below, the lot depth could easily accommodate two detached ARUs and their parking.



Existing Condition



Preston Centre Aerial View



2 ARUs where space permits

1.0 parking spots per unit

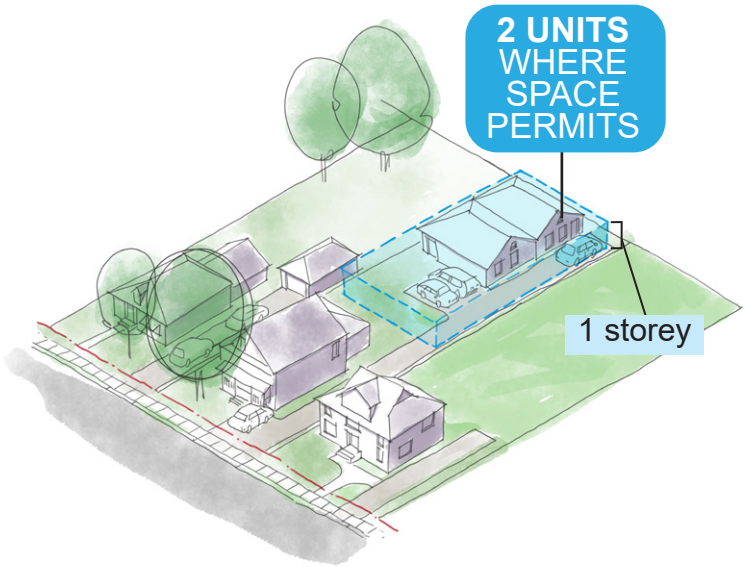
1 parking spot

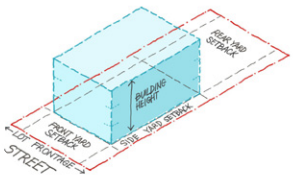
Potential New Condition - ARU

Example:



Garden Suite on a deep lot, Toronto.





Zoning envelope

Takeaways for Cambridge

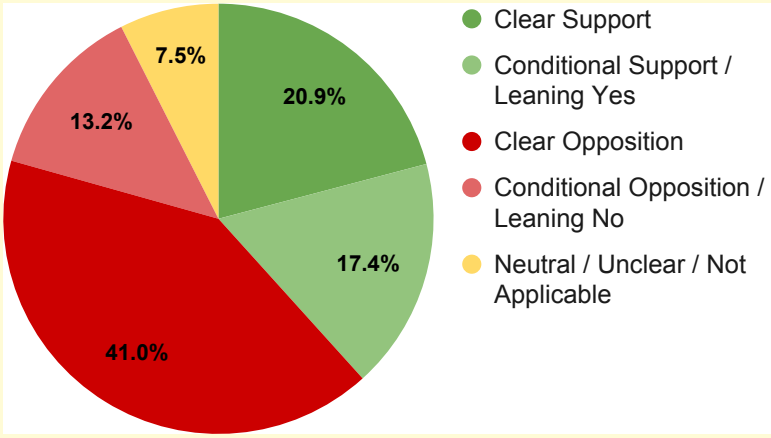
- 2 detached ARU units on large lots could be considered

The survey asked:

5. The demonstration illustration shows up to two detached Additional Residential Units (ARUs) in the rear yard on a lot. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support ARUs if:

- Design is compatible with the main dwelling and neighbourhood
- There's enough lot space to preserve privacy and greenspace
- On-site parking and service capacity (e.g., water/sewer) is ensured
- Helps with affordability, aging in place, or multi-generational families

Opposing Responses

Respondents oppose due to:

- Overcrowding, loss of privacy, noise, and property devaluation
- Inadequate parking or traffic capacity
- Concerns about renters or absentee landlords
- Fear of turning quiet streets into "backyard villages" or "rental zones"
- Incompatibility with neighbourhood character

> **Yes, this would be very important for the future generation! Due to the high cost of living it will offer multi generation living and much needed affordable housing!**

> **Looks like a good way to add housing!**

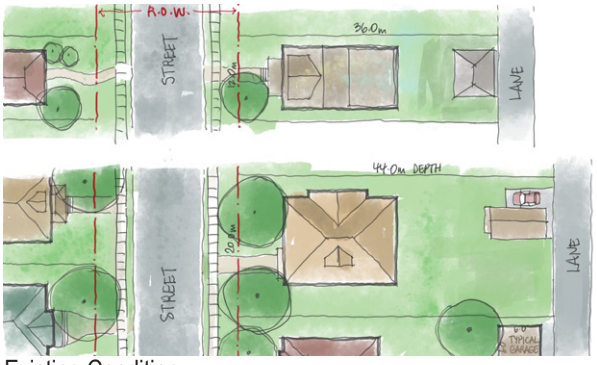
> **It brings more traffic into area due to multiple residents living in the building , creating a very different feeling to area.**

> **Only if the yard can accommodate them properly**

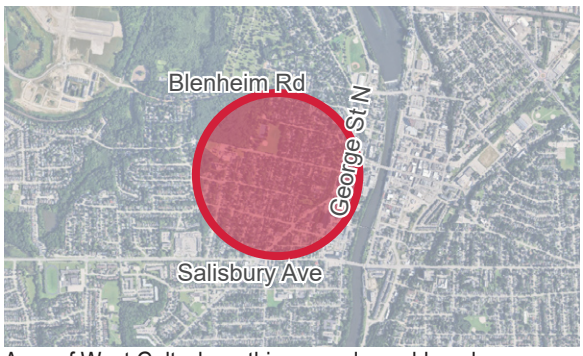
4.3 Laneway Additional Residential Unit

Example: West Galt

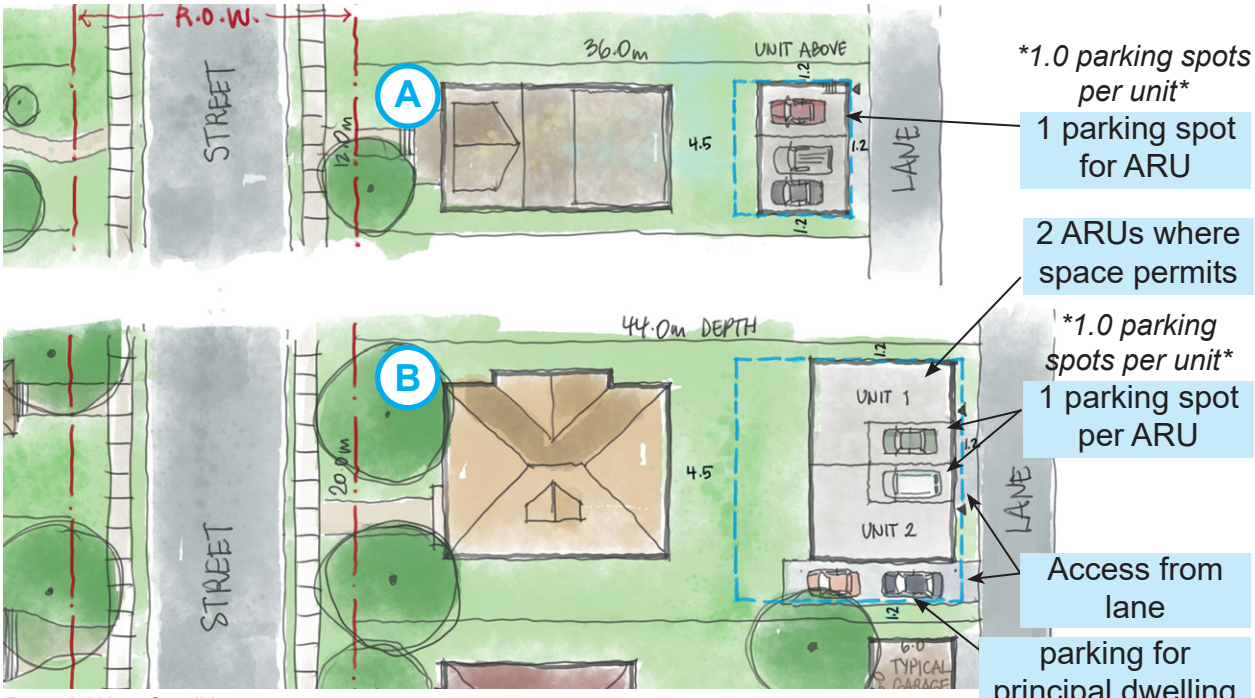
This test site explores detached ARUs on lots that have a rear laneway. There are a variety of laneway lot widths and depths in Cambridge; a smaller lot (A) and a larger lot (B) are illustrated below. Laneways are ideal for accommodating intensification. Laneway rights-of-way are underutilized, and new residential uses will help to animate these public spaces, providing eyes and activity on them.



Existing Condition



Area of West Galt where this example could apply

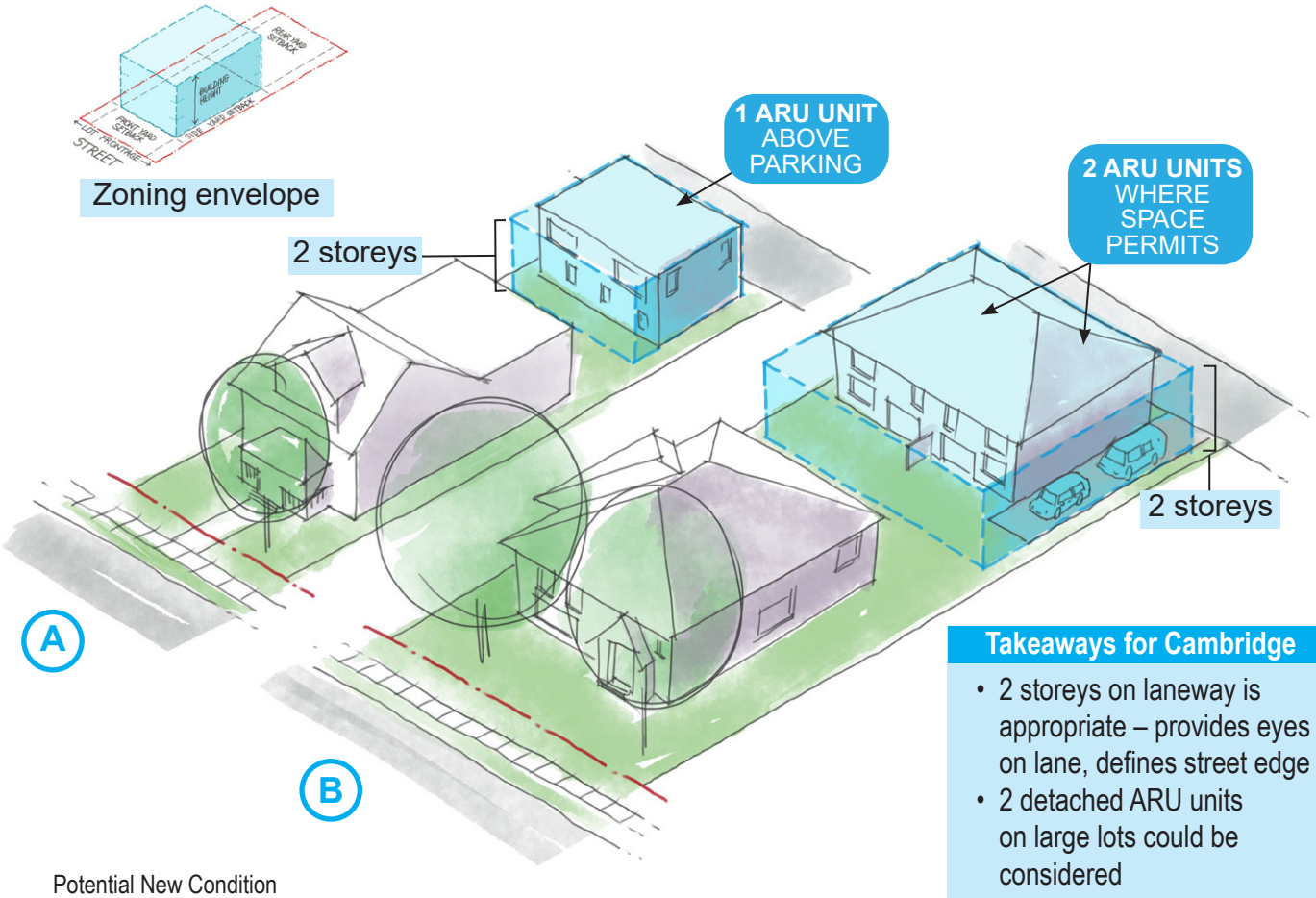


Potential New Condition

Example:



Reduced setback to public laneway, Toronto



Potential New Condition

Takeaways for Cambridge

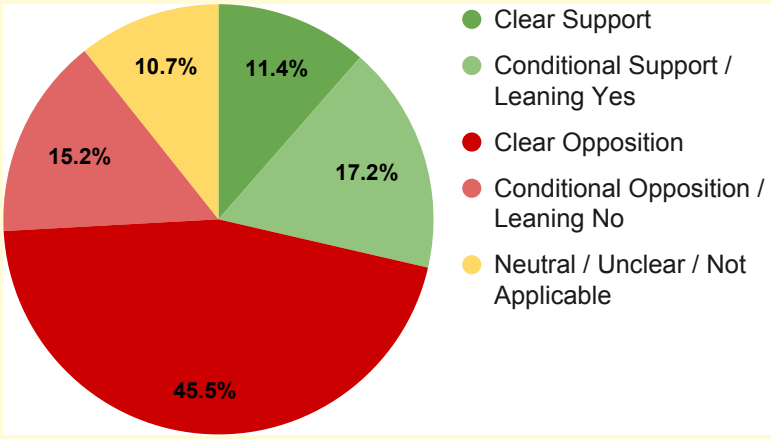
- 2 storeys on laneway is appropriate – provides eyes on lane, defines street edge
- 2 detached ARU units on large lots could be considered

The survey asked:

6. The City is considering a height of up to 2 storeys for ARUs. Do you have any concerns about this and if so, what are your concerns? (please specify).

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Generally, support for 2-storey ARUs often depends on:

- Matching height with surrounding buildings
- Maintaining privacy through design (e.g., setbacks, landscaping, window placement)
- Only allowing where the main house is also 2 storeys
- Including parking within the ARU structure
- Preserving neighborhood character

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- Loss of privacy (people looking into backyards)
- Blocking sunlight or views
- Overcrowding and increased density
- Strain on parking and traffic
- Devaluation of existing properties
- Changing the character or feel of established neighborhoods

> "No concerns other than privacy issues in people's yards"

> "Yes please keep this flexible, and allow for 3 storeys."

> "Height and appearance must be consistent with current homes in the area"

> "Only if adequate set back. Are you going to cut down trees"

> "Privacy and sight lines. I don't want people looking into my backyard or house"

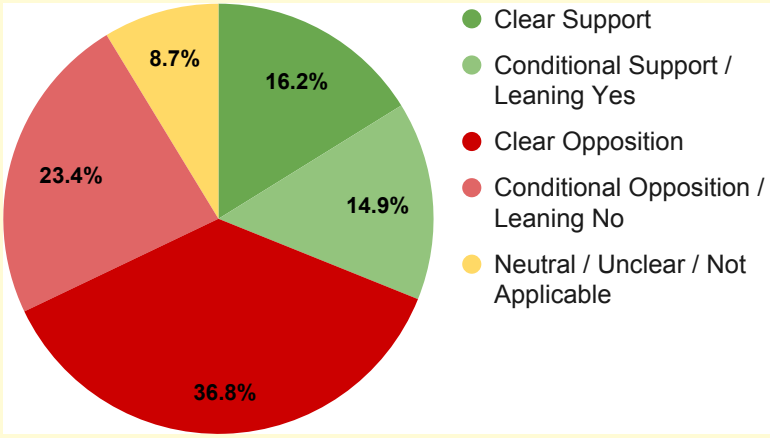
> "We should consider under unit parking and housing above it to conserve space"

The survey asked:

7. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from the ARUs to the side and rear property lines. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks if:

- Setbacks include space for drainage, snow, garbage, AC units, or access
- There is privacy screening or green barriers
- The design respects fire safety and utility needs
- Setback applies to areas with laneways (less concern than with neighbouring yards)

> **Yes, this would be very important for the future generation! Due to the high cost of living it will offer multi generation living and much needed affordable housing!**

> **I think there should be a bit more space.**

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- Too narrow for privacy, maintenance, fire protection, or landscaping
- Makes neighborhoods feel cramped, “like sardine cans”
- Insufficient space for outdoor activity, snow storage, or garden use
- Belief that setbacks should match existing main dwellings (6–10 ft)

> **Where there is a laneway at the rear, yes. If there is no laneway and this directly touches a neighbouring property, then more space is needed**

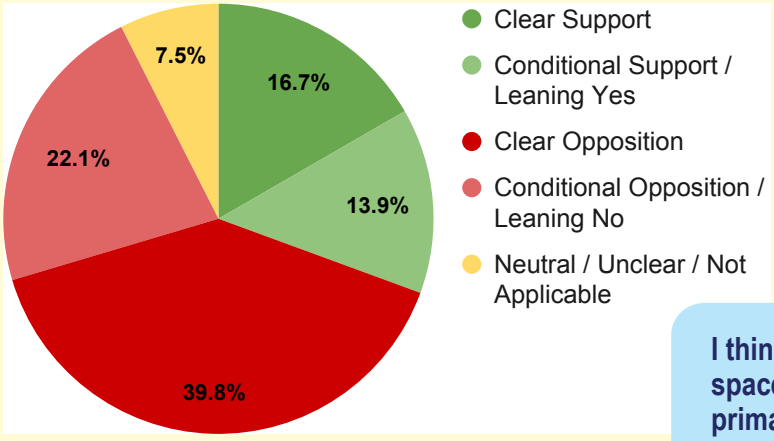
> **I think 3 feet is fine. It gives people more room to build. This is what matters most.**

The survey asked:

8. The demonstration illustration shows 4.5 metre (15 feet) setbacks from the ARUs to the principal dwelling. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 4.5 metre (15 feet) setbacks if:

- There is enough space for light, movement, and basic privacy
- The property owner is okay with it or the design is flexible
- It's implemented with landscaping, fencing, and proper grading
- Smaller lots may still need more flexibility

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- Too little yard left—concerns about loss of green space, gardens, play areas
- Fire risk, BBQ safety, and noise transfer
- "Cramming" or "packing in" housing—perceived density too high
- Impact on privacy, resale value, enjoyment of home
- Belief that setbacks should be 20–30 feet minimum

> I think this distance is great. Provides space between the units for the primary unit to still have some kind of yard (particularly helpful if renting out the ADU)

> Yes. This seems more appropriate for noise pollution, to alleviate neighbour disputes, and fire issues.

> Perhaps in designated developments. Not in existing neighborhoods.

> Hard to say, this doesn't give either property much space for landscaping or yard use. This may depend on landscaping choices and proximity to parks or open space

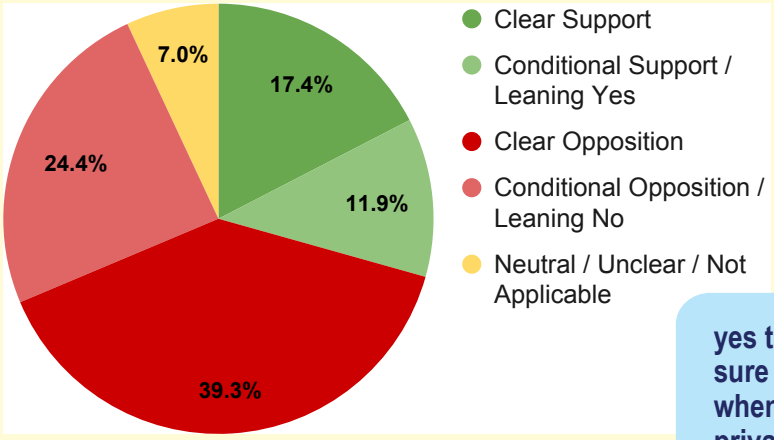
> Too much. Front lawns are often wasted space 99% of the time since all people do is grow grass.

The survey asked:

9. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from the parking spots to the side and rear property lines to provide a landscape buffer. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 feet) parking setbacks if:

- Landscaping is maintained and regulated (not left to die or become weeds)
- The buffer includes fencing or appropriate plantings for privacy
- There's flexibility depending on lot size or specific use cases
- Design doesn't compromise snow removal, grading, or drainage

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- 4 feet is too narrow for meaningful landscaping or maintenance
- Not enough privacy, noise dampening, or snow storage
- Potential to make neighborhoods "look junky" or "like parking lots"
- Skepticism that enforcement will be effective or consistent
- Belief that setbacks should be 6–10 feet or more to be effective

> **yes these guidelines will help to make sure proper buffer spaces implemented when building ARUs. This helps with privacy and nice looking homes which should also be considered.**

> **It depends on the nature and height of the plantings; goal should be to camouflage cars without obstructing views of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.**

> **We should consider under unit parking and housing above**

> **I wouldn't want someone parking that close to the side of my house.**

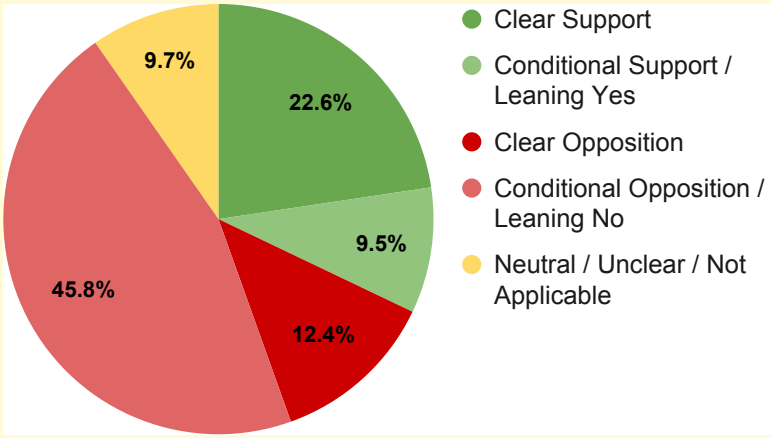
> **No - far too small an area for personal enjoyment for anyone living there, including neighbours**

The survey asked:

10. How many parking spaces should each dwelling have? The current standard is 1 parking space per unit for ARUs. (please specify).

The response follows:

Stance



> 1, but if possible 2.

Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1 parking space if:

- The unit is small (e.g., studio or 1 bedroom)
- The area is walkable or has reliable public transit
- Additional space is available for bikes/scooters
- Flexible rules can allow some units to have fewer spots

> 1.2 Max. This has always been enough in the past and would be in the future. There cannot be more spaces for cars than there is for units or liveable space.

> 1 is adequate, however this should be accompanied by continued investment in public transit.

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- Most households now have 2+ cars (including teens or multigenerational families)
- Without enough parking, streets will get crowded or unsafe
- Winter snow removal, emergency access, and guest parking are already strained
- Realistic parking demand should be at least 2 spaces per unit

> We have a 2 bedroom home turned into a 5 bedroom unit rental, now 5 cars. How do you restrict what each unit is occupying? Houses are being bought to rent rooms now, not units which adds 1 car per bedroom.

The survey asked:

11. Where can parking spaces be located? For example, front driveways, rear yard, side yard, etc. (please specify).

The response follows:

Location	Themes
Front yard / driveway	Most frequently mentioned. Many support current front driveway use, though some dislike the look or environmental impact.
Side yard	Frequently preferred for its balance of accessibility and visual impact.
Rear yard	Popular if laneways exist or for aesthetic reasons (keeps streetscapes cleaner).
Underground / garage	Often mentioned as ideal, especially for denser builds or to preserve green space.
Nowhere / No additional parking	A significant number of respondents say no parking should be added, especially for ARUs.
Designated or communal lots	Some suggest off-site or shared public parking to reduce impact on residential lots.
"Anywhere that makes sense"	A recurring sentiment: flexibility is key depending on lot layout, access, and neighbourhood character.
Street parking	Mixed views—some support it as a solution, others say it clutters roads and should be avoided.

- Many support case-by-case flexibility rather than strict placement rules.
- Some fear that allowing backyard or side yard parking will lead to visual clutter, loss of green space, or even safety issues (e.g., fires under trees).
- A few innovative suggestions include parking beneath units, or limiting paved area via permeable surfaces.
- Strong pushback from some who believe more parking = more problems: less greenspace, more cars, and worsened neighbourhood character.

"This depends on lot size, current location of buildings, and necessary space needed for snow and setbacks. ARU parking should be under dwellings and limited to one only."

"No where should it be allowed and definitely not more cars on the streets."

"I would say whichever has the least impact on current neighbours"

"Keep it to the street and ENFORCE it"

"Vehicles should be out of sight --> In a garage or the back yard."

4.4 Dwelling on a Flag Lot

Example: Hespeler Village

This test site explores lots from the 1960s-70s that are relatively typical in Cambridge. Lot widths and depths are still generous and can accommodate additional units easily. Scenario A, below, explores an addition to an existing dwelling to accommodate additional ARU units within the principal building. Scenario B explores a flag lot scenario. A flag lot is a new lot that would be created by severing an existing lot in two. The “flag” portion of the lot is located behind the principal dwelling with a driveway connection to the street. The new lot could be conveyed to a different owner, unlike all other scenarios where the ARUs remain part of the same lot. The advantage of a flag lot is that the owner of the original lot is not responsible for the new lot in any way (i.e. does not have to be a landlord). While not currently contemplated in Cambridge, flag lots are mandated as of right in California and have been successful there in providing additional housing in a freehold, ground-contact form.



Existing Condition



Hespeler Aerial View

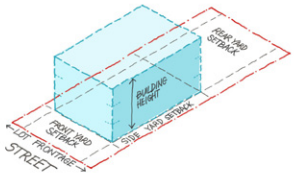


Potential New Condition

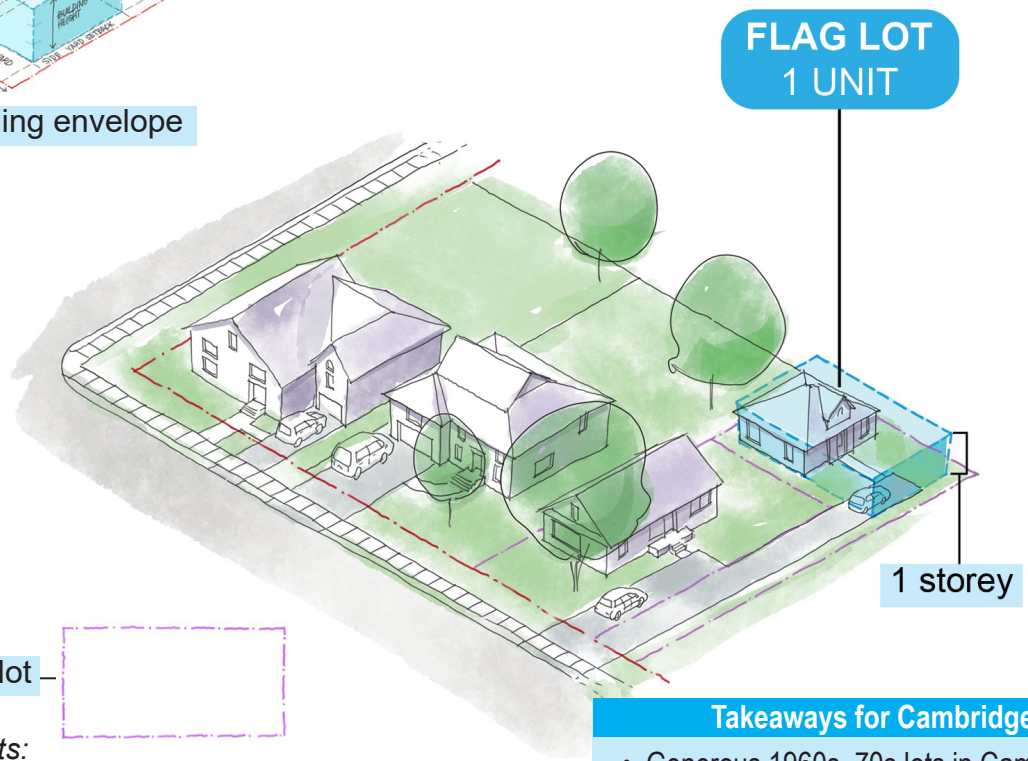
Example:



Dwelling on a flag lot, California



Zoning envelope



Original lot

2 new lots:

Lot with principal dwelling

New Flag Lot with unit

Takeaways for Cambridge

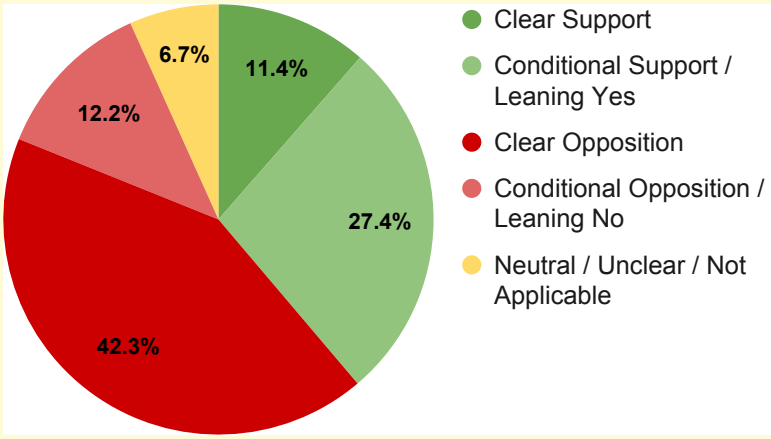
- Generous 1960s–70s lots in Cambridge can accommodate additional housing. While flag lots aren't currently permitted in Cambridge, they represent a proven approach elsewhere (e.g., California) to deliver ground-oriented housing without requiring the original owner to act as a landlord.

The survey asked:

12. The demonstration illustration shows a "flag lot" where one lot is subdivided to become two lots. The second lot is flag shaped, with a narrower access to the street, and a new dwelling is built at the rear. Is this an appropriate type of development?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support flag lots if:

- The lot is large enough to support it
- The driveway has adequate access and snow storage
- Privacy and emergency access are preserved
- It's treated as a gentle infill strategy for deep lots
- The rear unit is one storey only or limited in size

> I like this as another available option.

> It could be, depending on the dimensions of the original lot and the character of the neighbourhood.

> It will change up the privacy of the neighbours backyard

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concern include:

- Overcrowding and loss of green space
- Driveway conflicts and disputes with neighbors
- Difficulty with snow removal, emergency access, and waste collection
- Loss of neighborhood character, especially in Hespeler and older areas
- Becoming "slums," "sardine cans," or "concrete jungles"

> I think so. It preserves the same amount of sidewalk crossings and vehicle entry points, so is not adding any new risk to pedestrians or any new vehicle intersections.

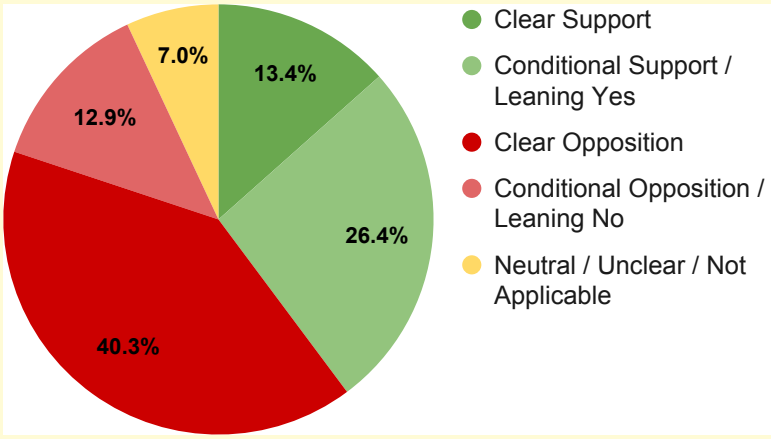
> I don't believe it is. Squeezing us in like sardines is not the answer.

The survey asked:

13. The demonstration illustration shows the flag lot is 4.2 metres (14 feet) wide at the street so that there is a 3.0 metre (10 feet) driveway plus a 1.2 metre (4 feet) landscaped buffer. Is this an appropriate front yard access to the property?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 4.2 metre (14 ft) front yard access if:

- It is well-maintained and landscaped
- The driveway is designed for clear access and visibility
- Snow storage and drainage can be handled properly
- It helps enable creative housing solutions on deep lots

> **Only if lawn garden area can be maintained**

> **Landscape buffer is nice to keep them separate but snow removal and directing may be a big problem**

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposition or concerns are due to:

- Insufficient width for snow removal, emergency access, or visibility
- Loss of green space and increased hardscaping and runoff
- Landscaping likely being neglected, becoming “weeds” or clutter
- Driveways being too long, narrow, and not neighbor-friendly
- General belief that this is “cramming” or not suited to Cambridge neighborhoods

> **No...too much pavement, run-off issues.**

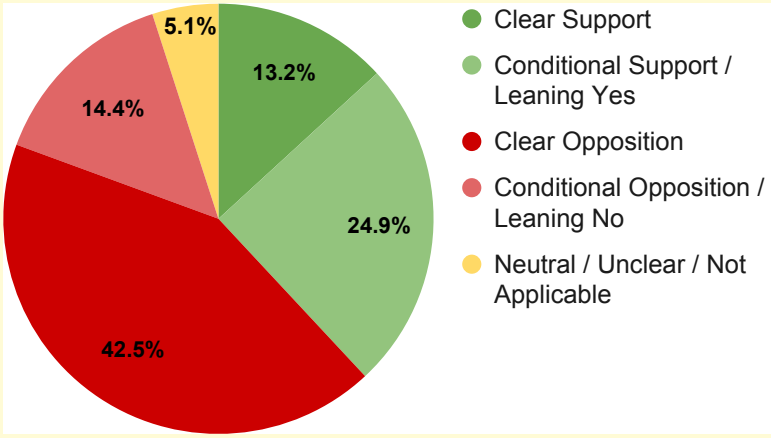
> **I don’t know if that is enough space but the landscape buffer is definitely needed.**

The survey asked:

14. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from the dwelling to the side and rear property lines. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 ft) side and rear setbacks if:

- Sufficient for landscaping or walking space
- Matched with thoughtful site design and privacy screening
- Emergency access or snow removal isn't impacted
- Design flexibility is maintained for different lot shapes

> **Yes. If required to make it work. City should allow and make exception.**

> **I think that allows for some landscaping, so yes.**

Opposing Responses

Opposing responses say 1.2 metres is too narrow because:

- It invades privacy, creates "cramped" conditions
- Doesn't allow enough room for landscaping, maintenance, or snow storage
- Could result in fence-line conflicts or noise issues between neighbors
- Believe 6–12 ft should be the minimum for side or rear buffers

> **Not enough, this should be the same as the front lot rules**

> **No. Encroaching on space and privacy of everyone. I don't want to see this secondary home from my backyard**

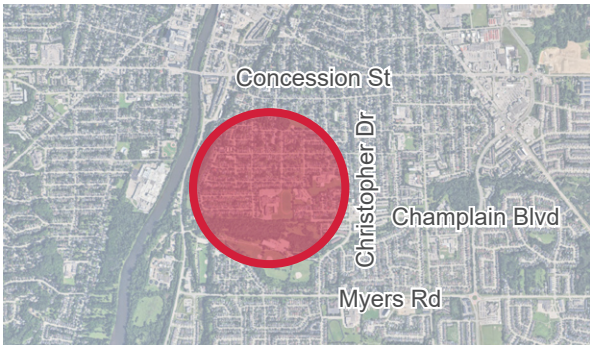
4.5 Lot Consolidation with Apartment

Example: Christopher-Champlain

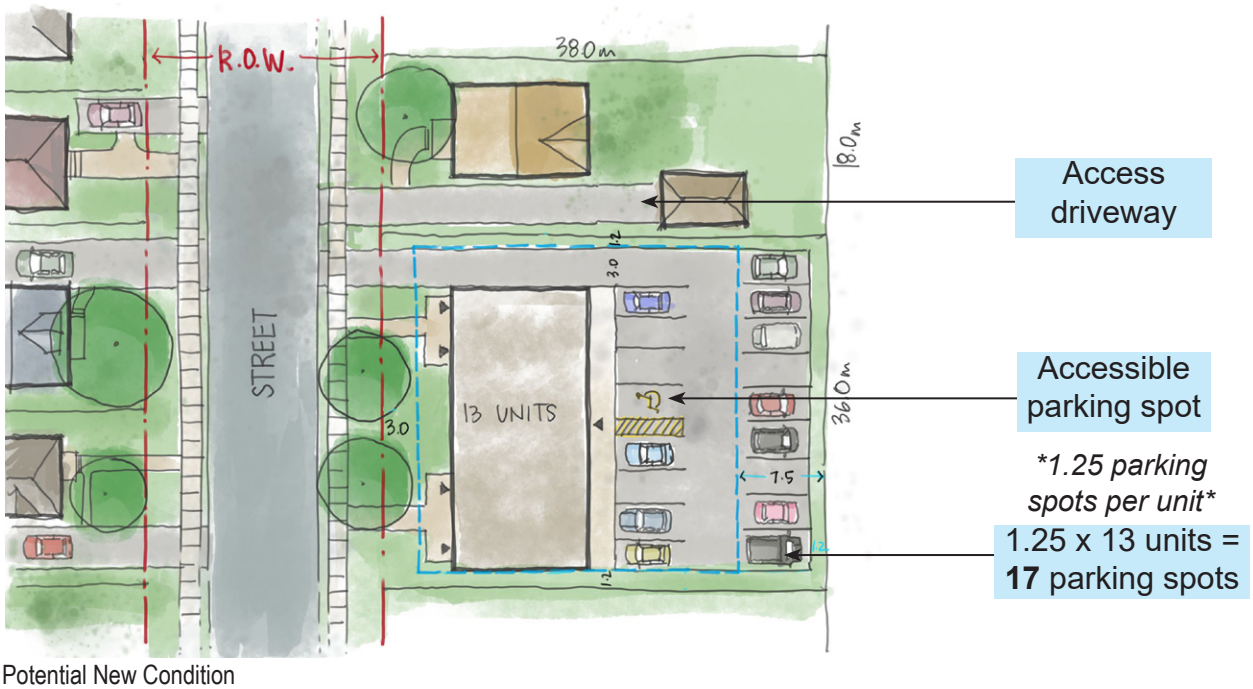
This neighbourhood is characterized by small post-war bungalow dwellings on large lots. This test site examines the potential for lot consolidation, where a developer acquires two or more adjacent lots in order to completely redevelop the resulting site with a larger form of development. The resulting zoning envelope is very large; however it is unlikely that new development could utilize it because of the requirement to provide off-street parking. There have been a number of recent developments in Cambridge with stacked townhouses or low apartments that share similarities with this test site.



Existing Condition



Christopher-Champlain Neighbourhood Aerial View

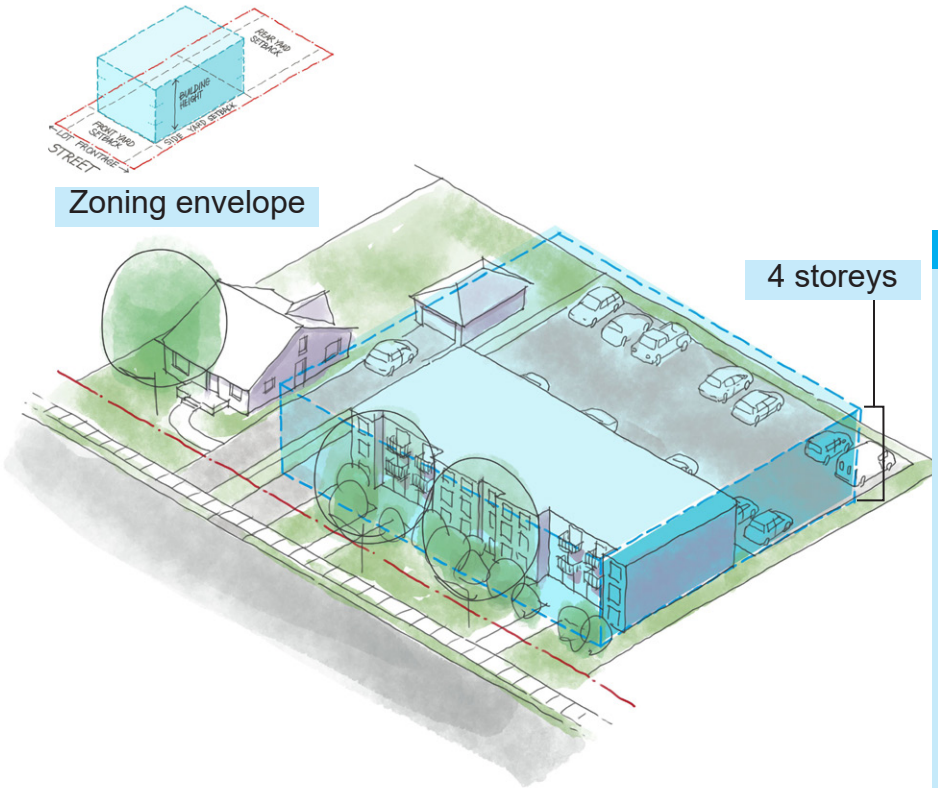


Potential New Condition

Example:



Low rise apartment building, Halifax



Takeaways for Cambridge

- Monitor the type of development that occurs on these types of sites over time. Given their large zoning envelopes, it is possible that new construction could be overly bulky and incompatible with the character of the neighbourhood, in which case additional development regulations could be considered.

The survey asked:

15. The demonstration illustration shows up to a 4-storey apartment building. How tall could it be? Could the buildings be taller than 4 storeys? (please specify).

The response follows:

Supportive Responses

- Depends on location/ context: Some support taller buildings only in areas already zoned for apartments or on major streets, not within single-family areas.
- Support for taller buildings: A minority believe taller buildings are acceptable, especially to increase housing supply, if issues like parking, design, and privacy are managed.

Opposing Responses

- Majority oppose taller buildings: Most said 4 storeys should be the maximum, and many prefer only 2–3 storeys instead.
- Key concerns include privacy loss, shadows blocking light, loss of neighbourhood character, strain on infrastructure (traffic, parking, sewers), lower property values

Preferred Maximum Height	Approx. Mentions	Notes
2 storeys	~70	Often cited as most compatible with existing homes
3 storeys	~100	Frequently described as a good compromise or appropriate limit
4 storeys	~120	Supported if design is sensitive; some said "4 is the max"
5–6 storeys	~40	Only acceptable in specific locations: major roads, transit corridors
More than 6	~10	Very rare; typically only supported for affordable or mixed-use zones
Unclear / Not Specified	~60	Some said “depends” or discussed issues without naming a number

- Most respondents support 3–4 storeys as the maximum, often emphasizing the need to match existing character, avoid shadows or crowding, and preserve livability.
- 2 storeys is a popular fallback for those who oppose apartment-style buildings altogether.
- 5+ storeys is only tolerated if placed on main corridors or paired with strict design controls.

> **4 storeys is the limit. Any more will ruin the neighborhood.**

> **6 storeys could be okay—if it’s well designed and in the right place.**

> **Only allow taller buildings where it fits: near transit, main roads, or other tall buildings.**

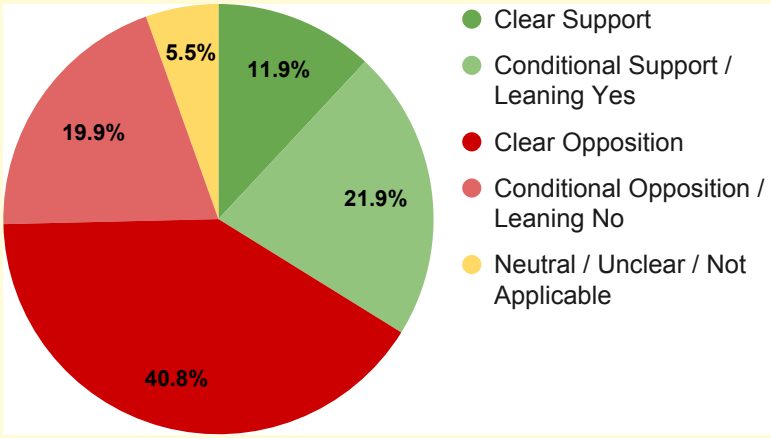
> **2 storeys max! Let homes match the existing scale.**

The survey asked:

16. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from the apartment building to the side property line. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 ft) setbacks if:

- Building is 2–3 storeys max
- Emergency access and privacy are respected
- Landscaping is added or maintained
- Neighbors are buffered with fences or non-windowed sides

> 6 feet is better

> This seems a bit tight on greater than a 4 story. Maybe look at a proportional setback based on height tiers?

Opposing Responses

Opposing responses say 1.2 metres is too narrow because:

- Building height requiring larger setbacks (8–15 ft suggested)
- Privacy, sunlight, and sightline concerns for adjacent homes
- Inadequate space for landscaping, snow removal, or emergency access
- Fear of apartments feeling imposing, overbearing, or claustrophobic

> All these suggestions just add a lump of houses with no real design.

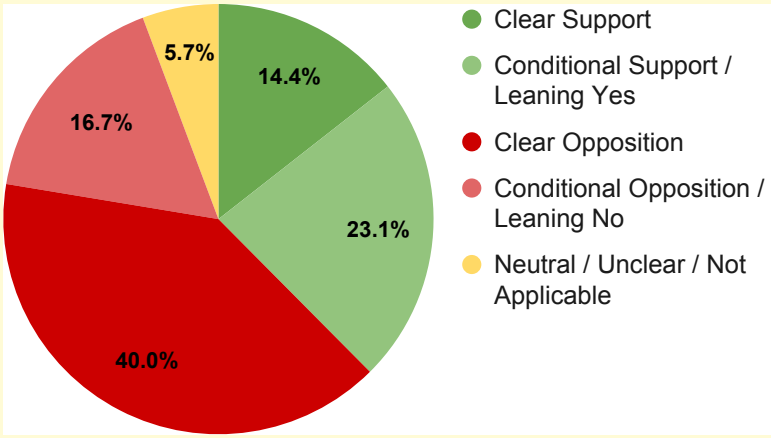
> You need at least 10 feet for tall buildings for breathing spaces and green space

The survey asked:

17. The demonstration illustration shows minimum 7.5 metre (25 feet) setbacks are required from the apartment building to the rear property line. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support a 7.5 metre (25 ft) rear setback if:

- It's used for parking or landscaping, not just empty space
- Privacy is maintained with fencing, trees, or no rear windows
- There is adequate space for snow, garbage, or truck access
- The height of the building is relatively modest (e.g., 2–4 storeys)

Opposing Responses

The most common reasons for opposing the setback are due to concerns like:

- Too close for a large or tall apartment building
- Doesn't provide enough buffer for privacy or shadow impacts
- Fear it will be used entirely for parking, leaving no green space
- Call for setbacks of 30–40+ ft to allow trees or sunlight access

> **It depends if you are putting parking at the rear.If you are not I think it would be acceptable.**

> **This is a bit excessive. A 4 metre minimum would be fine for an area like this with apartments of this size**

> **Depends on the property. No set back might be required at back but might be required on the sides.**

> **No. There is virtually no green space for how many families?**

The survey asked:

18. How many parking spaces should each unit have? The current standard is 1.25 spaces per unit. (please specify).

The response follows:

Commonly mentioned parking ratios:

Spaces Per Unit	Approx. Count	Notes
0 spaces	~25	Some support zero to promote transit and reduce car dependency
0.5–1 space	~60	Many say 1 space is enough, especially in transit-rich areas
1.25 spaces	~50	About 50 people said the current standard is fine or acceptable
1.5 spaces	~40	Suggested to account for visitors or multi-driver households
2 spaces	~130	Most frequently mentioned; many believe 2 is needed per household
More than 2 (2.5–3+)	~20	Rare, but cited for large families or multi-bedroom units
Flexible / Depends	~60	Many say it should depend on unit size, number of bedrooms, or let the market decide

Supportive Responses

In Favor of Fewer Spaces (0–1):

- Encourage public transit, biking, walkability
- Reduce pavement, heat, and cost
- Belief that not every household owns a car
- Suggest leaving it to developers or market demand

Neutral Reponses

Conditional or nuanced views:

- Tie parking to number of bedrooms
- Allow flexibility based on site context
- Combine reduced parking with better transit
- Ask for visitor parking to be separated from per-unit minimums

> One or no mandatory minimum. Why not plan bus stops to be near new larger units?

Opposing Responses

In Favor of More Spaces (1.5–2+):

- Most households have 2 working adults = 2 cars
- Worry about street parking overflow
- Want parking for visitors or large families
- Believe 1.25 is confusing and unrealistic

> 1 max! Focus on public transit.

> Formula should take the number of bedrooms per unit into account. Will there be on-site visitor parking?

> Most people have a car each so should be 2 spots per unit.

The survey asked:

19. Where can parking spaces be located? For example, rear yard, side yard, etc. (please specify).

The response follows:

Commonly suggested locations:

Location	Approx. Frequency	Notes
Rear yard	~230+	Overwhelmingly the most popular response. Favored for aesthetics, privacy, and street appeal.
Side yard	~80–90	Common second choice, especially where rear is not feasible.
Front yard	~50–60	Mixed views: some support it for convenience, others dislike how it impacts appearance.
Underground / under building	~45–50	Many call this the ideal solution—protects green space and improves design.
Driveway	~20–30	Some support driveway-only setups for simplicity.
Street parking	~10–15	Occasionally mentioned. A few support it, others raise concerns about clutter.
Designated lots / communal areas	~15–20	Suggested by some to remove parking from private yards entirely.
Nowhere	~25–30	A noticeable number oppose any new parking on-site at all, often tied to opposition to the development.
Flexible / Case-by-case	~60–70	Many say it “depends” on the lot, building type, or neighborhood. Flexibility preferred.

Themes in Support of Rear/Side Parking

- Keeps cars out of sight and preserves streetscape
- Offers privacy for neighbors
- Allows for landscaping in front yards
- Works best with laneways or well-designed access

Concerns About Front Yard Parking

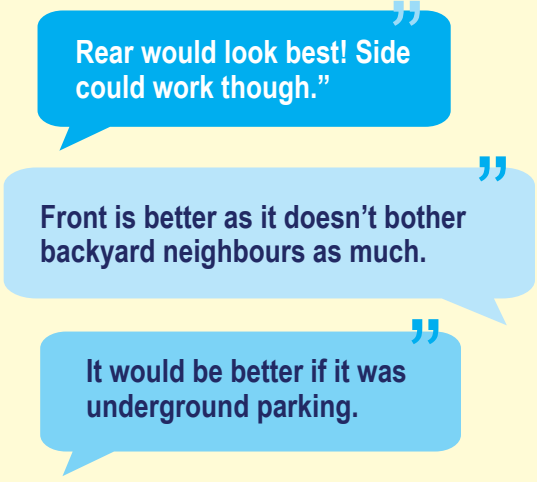
- Makes neighborhoods look more paved and less green
- Headlights and noise impact neighbor enjoyment
- Encourages car dependency

Support for Underground / Garage Solutions

- Seen as ideal but expensive
- Encourages green roofs or compact design
- Preserves yard space and permeable ground

No Parking Advocates Say:

- Don’t allow more cars: encourage transit or reduce density
- Removing green space for parking is bad for climate, water, and aesthetics

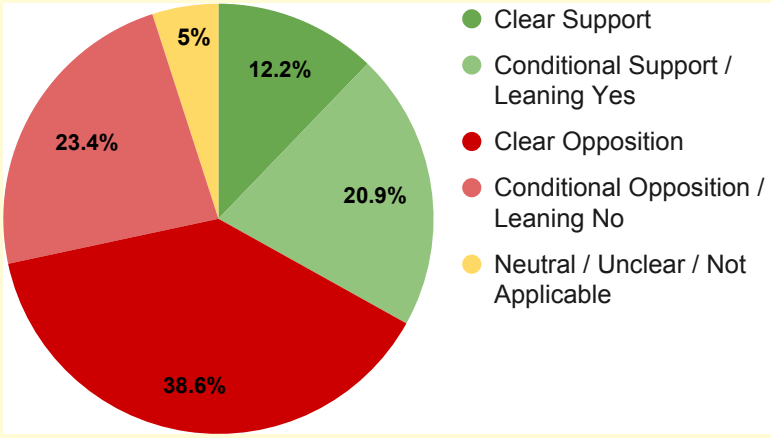


The survey asked:

20. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from the parking spots to the side and rear property lines to provide a landscape buffer. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 ft) parking setbacks if:

- Landscaping is well-designed, regularly maintained, and includes fencing or tall shrubs
- It's not the only greenspace in the project
- Noise, snow removal, and runoff are also addressed
- It's used only for low-rise or small-scale infill

Opposing Responses

Oppose this buffer due to concerns that:

- 4 feet is too narrow for privacy, snow storage, or visual appeal
- Insufficient for planting trees or creating meaningful green separation
- May look "cluttered," "tuna can-like," or degrade neighborhood character
- Developers may not properly maintain or enforce landscaping requirements

> **I would say more space where can anyone have child play and snow**

> **1.2 metres is more than enough. I would be fine with 0.8 metres, especially if the landscaping is taller than grass.**

> **The landscape buffer is very important in this case. For a larger parking lot, it would be nice to line it with plants so it looks nicer.**

> **No, not sufficient to maintain current privacy. Neighbours will no longer be able to enjoy quiet in their homes.**

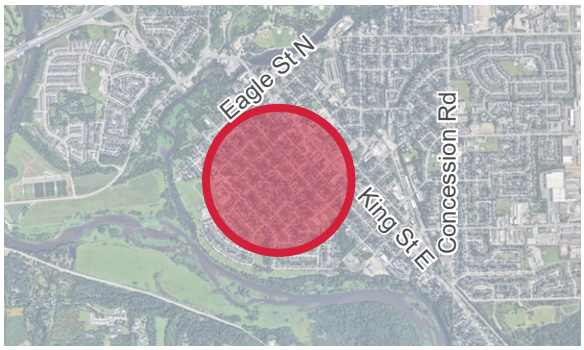
4.6 Multi-Unit Infill

Example: Preston Centre

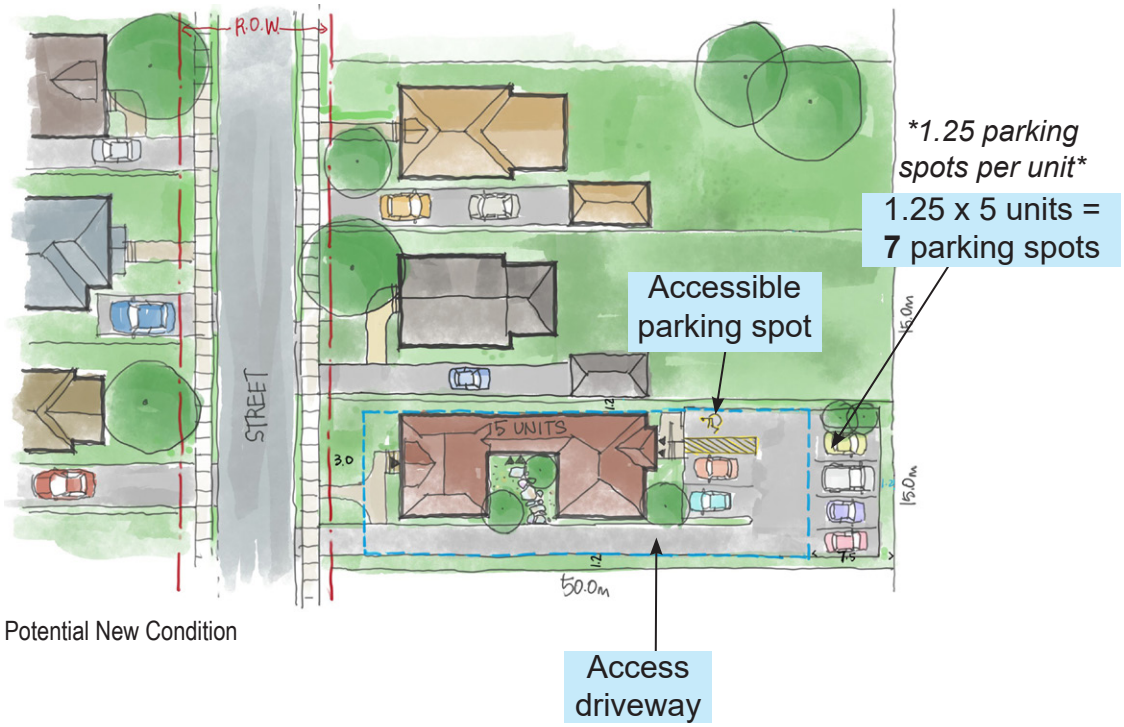
Preston Centre is characterized by very deep lots, often 50m, with a diverse mix of housing eras and styles. Similar to test site #2, this has the potential for bulky, multi-unit buildings that extend deep into the lot. But as demonstrated here below, some of the lot depth can be used for landscaping purposes, which would help to create usable amenity space attractive to tenants.



Existing Condition



Preston Centre Aerial View

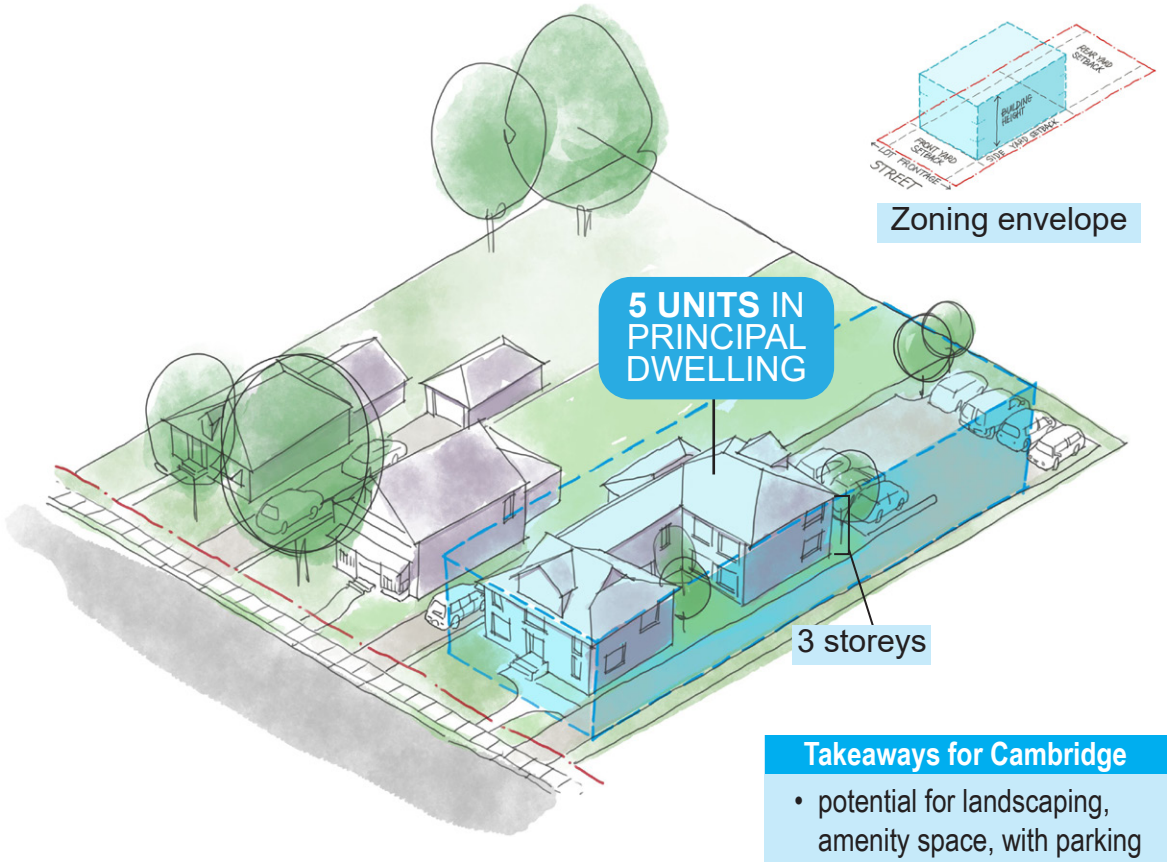


Potential New Condition

Example:



Three-storey walk-up with six units and a shared courtyard (centre), Vancouver.



Takeaways for Cambridge

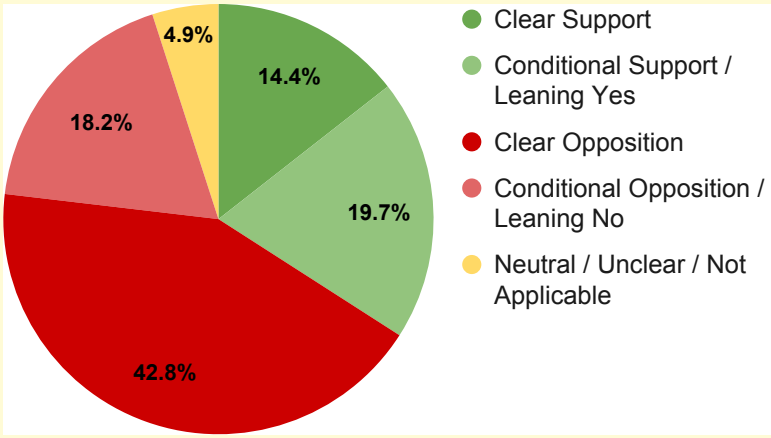
- potential for landscaping, amenity space, with parking in the rear

The survey asked:

21. The demonstration illustration shows up to a 3-storey principal dwelling, in this case with 5 units. Do you think up to 4 storeys is appropriate? (please specify).

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 4-storey dwellings if:

- Design is context-sensitive and fits height of nearby homes
- Area is already urbanized or near transit/ campus/employment
- Additional housing is urgently needed, even if it's taller
- Building avoids being "boxy" and includes landscaping

> **A 3-storey building integrates well but I could definitely see 4 working depending on how tall it is compared to other buildings/trees nearby.**

> **Yes. I think it has been done historically and nobody has noticed or complained in the decades since.**

Opposing Responses

Oppose 4-storey buildings for reasons such as:

- Too tall for existing 1–2 storey residential streets
- Privacy and shadow impacts on neighbors
- Increased congestion, noise, parking strain
- Erodes neighborhood character or "village feel"
- Perceived link with crime, renters, or declining property values

> **No, 3 stories are an easy walk up. 4 is too many.**

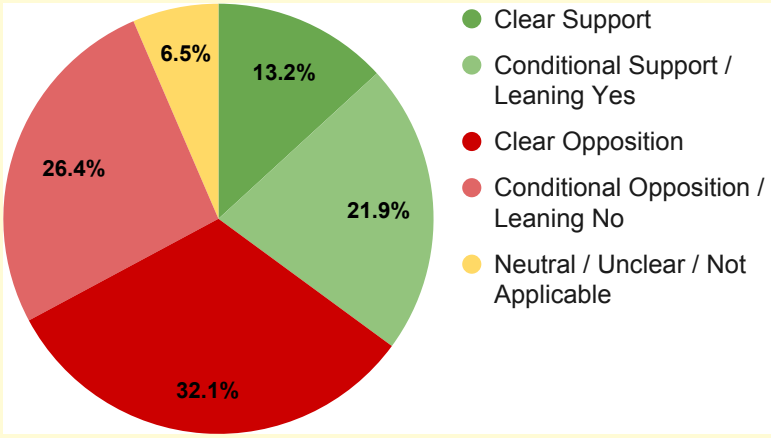
> **New units should not overwhelm existing ones**

The survey asked:

22. The demonstration illustration shows 1.2 metre (4 feet) setbacks from all the dwellings to the side and rear property lines to provide a landscape buffer. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.2 metre (4 ft) parking setbacks if:

- Landscaping is professionally maintained and includes fencing or privacy screens
- Used only on low- to mid-rise developments (e.g., 2–3 storeys)
- The buffer shields from car lights, noise, or water runoff
- The goal is to reduce visual impact and soften the streetscape

Opposing Responses

Oppose this buffer due to concerns that:

- Too narrow for snow storage, trees, or privacy from neighbors
- Doesn't match setbacks of existing homes (e.g., 6–10 ft is common)
- Provides no meaningful green space and allows for overcrowding
- "Smothering," "claustrophobic," or "invasive" were commonly used terms
- Buffer is seen as a weak substitute for preserving actual yards or greenspace

> I like this design. The new property is wrapped in green space.

> Yes (as long as setback includes any run off overhang for snow/ice/water)

> This should be doubled to at least 8 feet. Climate change, drainage, snow pack, maturing landscape buffer

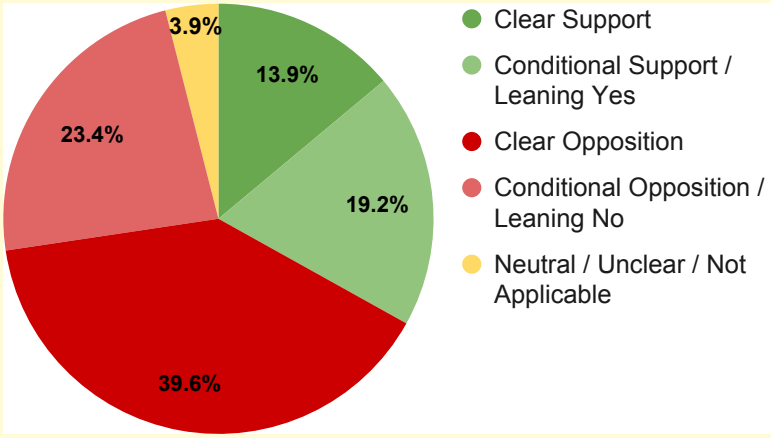
> no! existing properties lose their value , less privacy , roads busier and less green space , more noise

The survey asked:

23. The demonstration illustration shows 3.0 metre (10 feet) setbacks from the dwellings to the front property line along the street. Is this appropriate?

The response follows:

Stance



"Yes provided line of sight getting out of driveway isn't a problem"

Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support a 3.0 metre (10 ft) front setback if:

- It matches existing streetscape or adjacent homes
- It allows for landscaping, seating, or snow storage
- It creates space between the building and the sidewalk for privacy
- Street context is already urban or higher-density

"Everything looks good to me"

"Yes, a sufficient setback in the front property should be maintained to be able to maintain greenery and trees."

Opposing Responses

Oppose 10 ft front setbacks because:

- Too shallow for snow, greenery, or sightlines
- Prefer 15–20 ft minimum to match existing homes
- Creates a "wall of buildings" effect or feels "crowded"
- Believe it would cause loss of character, "danger to pedestrians," or visual disruption

"This is so close to the road, I personally wouldn't like it"

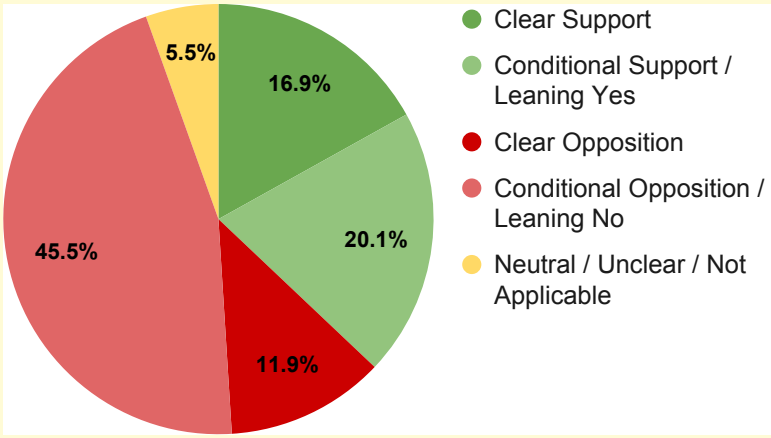
"No, they should be give more front yard, people need room to grow a garden, sit outside,'they don't need to be on the road directly. 10 ft is nothing."

The survey asked:

24. How many parking spaces should each dwelling have? 1.25 parking spaces per unit is the current standard. (please specify).

The response follows:

Stance



Supportive Responses

Respondents generally support 1.25 parking spots if:

- Units are small (1–2 bedrooms)
- Public transit is available nearby
- Visitor parking is accommodated separately
- It helps improve affordability and reduces sprawl

> 1.25 is good! Maybe even less depending on where?

> Current standards are adequate.

Opposing Responses

Oppose 1.25 spots because:

- Households often have 2 or more vehicles
- Overflow parking clutters streets or lawns
- Believe the standard is “unrealistic,” “a joke,” or “based on math that doesn’t match lived experience”
- Push for 2–3 spaces per unit, especially for families or multi-generational homes

> Most dwellings require a minimum of 2 vehicles, many more with adult children living at home with high cost of living.

> If a unit has two bedrooms, then two parking spots. If a unit is one bedroom, then one parking spot.

The survey asked:

25. Where can parking spaces be located? For example, front driveways, rear yard, side yard, etc. (please specify).

The response follows:

Commonly mentioned locations:

Spaces Per Unit	Approx. Count	Notes
Rear yard	~170	Most commonly supported. Seen as best for aesthetics and keeping streetscapes clean.
Side yard	~90	Often mentioned as an acceptable compromise or alternative to rear yard.
Front yard / driveway	~110	Divided opinions: many oppose for visual reasons, but others cite convenience.
Underground / beneath unit	~60	Ideal for aesthetics and greenspace; often mentioned with security and weather in mind.
Driveway (general)	~40	Some prefer driveways for simplicity, often not specifying front/side/rear.
Designated parking lots / communal	~30	Suggested for reducing yard disruption and promoting shared solutions.
Street parking	~20	Occasionally mentioned; mostly for overflow or visitor parking.
Nowhere / Against parking	~35	Some respondents reject the idea of added parking entirely, often rejecting the development as well.
Flexible / Depends	~50	Many believe parking should depend on site layout, access, and surrounding context.

Supportive Responses

- Preserves curb appeal and greenspace
- Keeps cars out of sight and reduces visual clutter
- Seen as safer and more neighbour-friendly

Opposing Responses

- Concern for visual impacts of front yard parking
- Concern for safety of people and bikers
- Destroys the character of neighbourhoods

Neutral Reponses

Conditional or nuanced views:

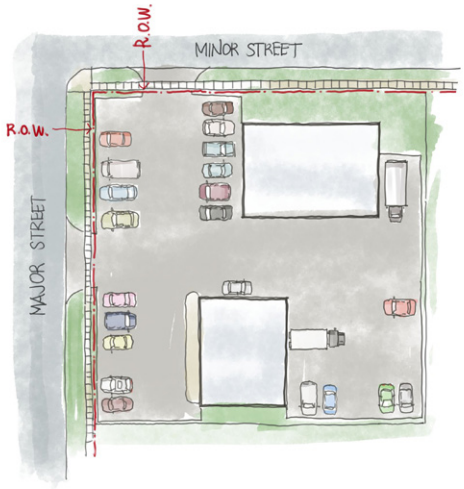
- Anywhere that makes sense for the lot
- Depends on access and emergency vehicle routing
- Can be on driveways, side yards, even designated lots if designed well

> "Should be at the back to preserve the streetscape."

> "Tuck parking underneath the units"

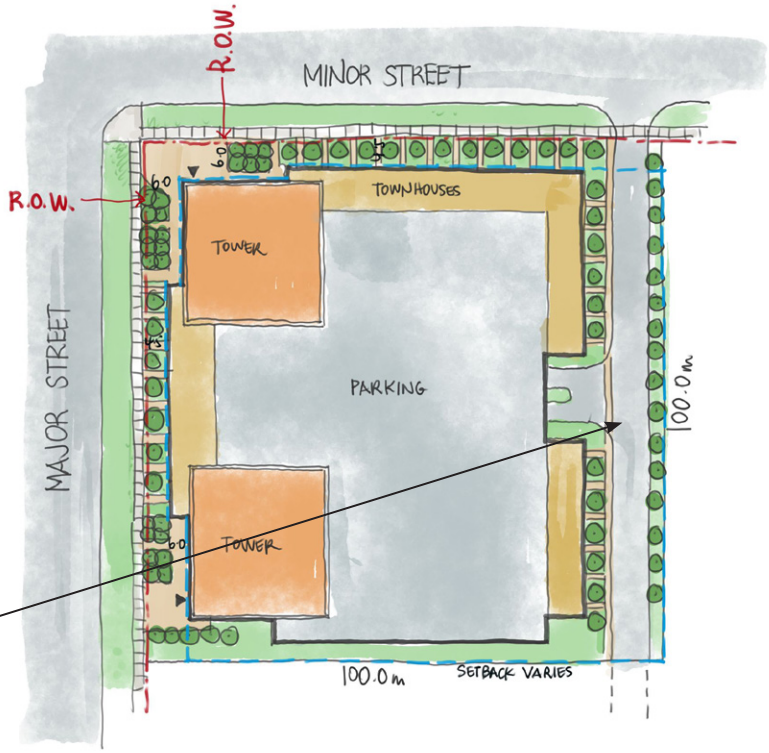
4.7 High Rise

The high-rise scale of development warrants a bigger-picture look at city-building requirements to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the urban fabric. This includes animated street edges, interconnected circulation (pedestrian and vehicular), screened parking, a coordinated parkland strategy, and access to daylight. Given the high cost of concrete construction, it is likely developers will require tall buildings to make development viable. While the negative impacts of height should be minimized (e.g. shadowing), it is better to focus on the positive impacts that high-density can bring, such as animated streetscapes, support for retail, and high-quality urban parks.



Existing Condition

Shared lane connects to future development where appropriate



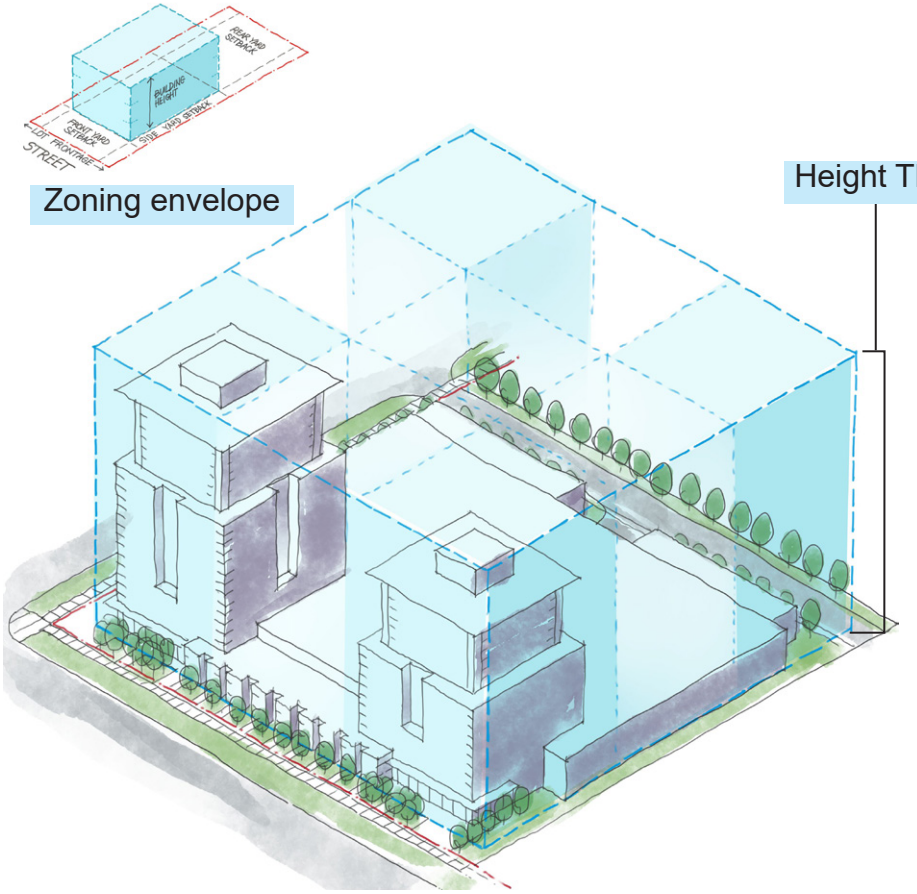
Potential New Condition

Example:





Above grade structured parking garage is screened from view of both public streets by habitable space including retail and apartment units, Waterloo.



Takeaways for Cambridge

- Mid- and high-rise development should be subject to design guidelines and/or site plan control regulations to ensure they make positive contributions to the urban fabric, in the form of great streetscapes and high quality architectural design.

The survey asked:

26. What building heights are appropriate, and how would the context inform those building heights?

The response follows:

Stance:

Location	Approx. Mentions	Notes
Height Depends on Context	~170	Majority emphasized that height should reflect the surrounding area.
Low-Rise Preference (2–4 storeys)	~140	Many preferred a maximum of 2–4 storeys in existing residential areas.
Mid-Rise Support (5–8 storeys)	~60	Accepted in transitional areas, near arterials, or with enough setback.
High-Rise Support (10+ storeys)	~40	Generally supported for downtowns, arterial roads, and new developments.
Opposition to High-Rises Anywhere	~35	Strong rejection of tall buildings; concern for privacy, light, and views.
Unclear / No Opinion / Unsure	~30	Did not give a firm answer or lacked context to decide.

Context-Sensitive Height Advocates

- Height should match neighbouring buildings, or be double existing height max.
- Use gradual stepping between low- and high-rise areas.
- Limit height next to single-family homes; allow more in downtown or industrial zones.
- Avoid shadowing, wind tunnel effects, and sightline disruption.

Low-Rise Supporters

- Prefer buildings 2–4 storeys max in neighbourhoods.
- Frequent concern about privacy, shade loss, and visual impact.
- Emphasis on maintaining neighbourhood character and greenspace.
- “Nothing higher than existing homes” was a recurring phrase.

Mid-Rise Supporters

- Accept 5–8 storeys in transitional areas, near highways, or with setbacks.
- Often linked to amenities, parking, or landscaping buffers

High-Rise Supporters

- Support up to 15–30+ storeys in areas like Hespeler Road, downtown Galt, or new zones.
- Framed high-rise density as a way to preserve greenspace elsewhere.
- Advocated using infrastructure and public transit proximity as height justifiers.

Oppose High-Rise

- Described tall buildings as “eyesores”, “privacy intrusions”, or “destroying the city.”
- Preferred bungalows, townhomes, or low-density housing.
- Strong concerns about traffic, overcrowding, and loss of neighbourhood feel.

> **Allow up to 25 stories tall. The city needs to maximize housing in as little footprint as possible**

> **The width of the street should influence the height**

The survey asked:

27. How can the zoning by-law mitigate impacts on nearby low scale residential, such as shadowing or views?

The response follows:

General themes and stance:

Location	Approx. Mentions	Notes
Do Not Build Near Low-Scale Homes	~140	“Don't build high-rises near houses,” “Just don’t allow it,” “Prevent it.”
Height Limits / Restrictions	~100	“2–4 storeys max,” “No taller than neighbors,” “Low-rise only.”
Setbacks / Stepbacks / Buffers	~85	“Increase setbacks,” “Tiered or stepped design,” “Add green space buffers.”
Landscaping & Green Space Separation	~40	“Use trees and gardens,” “Visual barriers,” “Plant more greenery.”
Shadow/Light/View Studies	~35	“Require sun/shadow impact studies,” “Model and assess views.”
Community Consultation & Fairness	~20	“Communicate with neighbours,” “Respect existing residents.”
Compensation / Offsetting Impacts	~10	“Offer compensation for lost views,” “Tax reductions,” “Purchase homes.”
Unclear / Unsure / Not Answered	~30	“Not sure,” “Ask experts,” “Can’t be mitigated.”

Opposition

- Many believe high-rises simply do not belong in or near existing low-scale residential neighborhoods.
- Repeated concerns about loss of privacy, sunlight, and skyline views.
- Fears of property devaluation, “destroying neighbourhood character,” and mental health impacts

Suggestions for Mitigation

- Use graduated height—e.g., start low near homes and increase toward streets or commercial zones.
- Mandate shadow and sightline studies for any proposed developments.
- Require green buffers, fencing, or even new parks to offset impacts.

Minority Views

- A few said shadowing/views are not valid concerns if density and housing needs are critical.
- Some noted: “Other cities do this,” or emphasized the greater good of adding housing.

> **Only Low Rise 3-4 or less should be permitted**

> **Shadows are a fact of resident city living, to much concern is based on shadows as a NIMBY attitude**

> **Should not be any nearby low scale residential**

The survey asked:

28. How can taller development contribute positively to streets and neighbourhoods? For example, ground level design, retail uses, etc.

The response follows:

General themes and stance:

Location	Approx. Mentions	Notes
Ground-Level Retail & Mixed Use	~150	Add retail, cafés, or services to encourage walkability and "15-minute cities."
No Positive Contribution / Opposed	~120	Believe taller buildings offer no benefits; associate them with traffic, noise.
Design Matters (Setbacks, Aesthetics)	~90	Support context-sensitive design, heritage integration, setbacks, and greening.
Walkability, Amenities & Community Uses	~65	Suggest community hubs, public seating, green space, wide sidewalks, etc.
Underground Parking & Traffic Concerns	~55	Recommend below-ground parking; many fear parking overflow and congestion.
Only in Downtowns / Not Near Houses	~45	Support for tall buildings in city cores or new zones—not in suburban settings.
Greenspace, Landscaping, & Street Life	~40	Call for green corridors, roof gardens, trees, benches, and community spaces.
Retail Vacancies / Cost Concerns	~25	Skeptical about retail success in new buildings; concern about affordability.
Unclear / Unsure / Non-Answers	~30	"Don't know," "No comment," "Not applicable."

Supportive Responses

- Ground-level retail and services can activate the street, reduce car reliance, and support local business.
- Taller buildings can help create density that makes transit viable and supports city sustainability goals.
- Good design—including stepbacks, street-facing windows, and ground-level animation—is essential.

Opposing Responses

- Many respondents feel taller developments lead to:
  - Overcrowding, traffic, and noise
  - Visual blight or architectural mismatch
  - Loss of green space, privacy, or views
- Common phrases include:
  - "They do not contribute positively."
  - "Keep them out of residential areas."
  - "We are already overcrowded."

> **"Retail uses and street-level design are excellent examples"**

> **"If done right, taller buildings bring energy and life to a street."**

> **"Nothing good comes from these—just traffic and shadows"**

The survey asked:

29. How many parking spaces should each unit have? (please specify).

The response follows:

General sentiment summary:

Location	Support	Notes
1 parking space per unit	Very common	The most frequently suggested number; often seen as a balanced minimum.
1.25 spaces per unit	Common	Many support this as a current or appropriate standard.
1.5 spaces per unit	Common	Especially supported by those concerned about families or two-car homes.
2 or more spaces per unit	Frequent	Common among respondents emphasizing family use, multiple drivers.
1–2 spaces depending on context	Frequent	Many said it should vary by bedrooms, transit, or household size.
Less than 1 / Zero / Remove minimums	Notable minority	Often justified by transit, affordability, or support for car-lite living.
Contextual or flexible approach	Repeated theme	Many said to adjust for unit size, location, or developer choice.
Unclear / No specific answer	Small minority	Some were unsure, off-topic, or rejected the premise altogether.

Support for 1–1.5 Spaces per Unit

- Most cited range.
- Seen as enough for households with one or two drivers.
- Some want extra for visitors.

Support for 2 or More Spaces

- Driven by concerns about households with multiple vehicles.
- Many noted street parking is already overcrowded.
- Some called for visitor or commercial vehicle space too.

Support for Less than 1 or No Minimums

- Motivated by affordability, walkability, and climate goals.
- More common among urbanist or transit-supporting respondents.

Context-Specific or Flexible Approaches

- Recommendations to scale by unit size, bedroom count, or location (e.g., downtown vs. suburban).
- Some suggest developers propose their own ratio.

> "1.5 would be ideal, especially in buildings with family units."

> "Less near transit, more where there's no service."

> "Each unit should have 2 spots—one for each adult."

The survey asked:

30. Is there anything else you would like to share about this project?

The response follows:

Common themes in final comments:

Intensification

- "Stop ruining our neighborhoods," "We don't want high-density housing."

Neighbourhood Character

- Concerns about losing charm, privacy, and tree-lined streets.

Against Apartment Buildings / High-Rises

- "No more apartments," "This is not Toronto," "Ban 6+ storey buildings."

Support for More Housing, But Carefully

- Call for mid-rise, gentle density, and context-sensitive design.
- Higher buildings on corridors, near transit—not in neighborhoods.

Preserve Green Space / Trees

- "Don't pave over yards," "Preserve mature trees," "Greenery matters."

Parking, Traffic, and Infrastructure Concerns

- "Streets are already crowded," "Where will people park?"

Public Consultation

- Some requests for transparency, input, and respect for existing residents.

Skepticism of Developers / City Plans

- Some believe that developers are driving decisions, not communities.

Concern for Seniors & Families

- Worry about displacement, affordability, and housing type mix.

Other

- Include more co-ops, regulate landlords, provide incentives, etc.

"We bought in a quiet area, not to live beside an apartment complex."

"Respect the architecture and spacing that make our city unique."

"Build more homes—but make sure they're liveable, green, and accessible."

"Trees make the neighborhood. Don't trade them for parking lots."

"Public transit is not good enough to justify reducing parking"

"Transparency and real input, or you'll lose public trust."

"Urban density is part of the solution—if done with care."

"Think about older adults who can't live in stacked units."

5.0 Recommendations

Based on a review of best practices, public input, and The Planning Partnership's experience, the following are recommendations for consideration in the preparation of the zoning by-law standards.

Parking and vehicular access

It is understood that it is a Council priority to maintain current on-lot parking rate minimums: 1.0 parking spaces per detached ARU, and 1.25 parking spaces per unit for multi-unit development. However, other municipalities are reducing parking rate minimums to encourage development (by lowering the cost of development), to encourage use of active and public transportation, and to reflect societal trends that favor a greater diversity of household types and transportation choices. In the coming years, the experience of other municipalities with lower parking standards may be helpful to the City of Cambridge to understand lessons learned and best practices.

In general, investments in transit and the trend towards intensification in a number of municipalities in southern Ontario is reducing the amount of parking that is needed. But like many other design factors, this is dependent on the context. Areas with high amenity – such as downtowns, and transit-supportive communities – have less need for parking than areas with lower amenity.

- Consider allowing overnight street parking. Many cities in Ontario are winter cities with snow clearing operations that successfully navigate parked cars. On-street parking has other benefits as well such as traffic calming and pedestrian buffering.
- Consider a graduated parking standards based on proximity to areas of amenity such as main streets and downtowns. Parking standards within MTSAs have already been addressed by Provincial legislation.
- Consider reducing parking requirements for small multi-unit development (1-5 additional units) to 1.0 per unit, similar to detached ARUs.

In addition to potential strategies for reducing the amount of parking overall, strong zoning standards should be implemented to control the impact of the parking that is required. One of the most important principles is to design cities for people, at a human scale, and not for the car. In practice, this means screening parking and vehicular access from view as much as possible, as well as reducing the size and scale of parking and driveways. It is also important to protect the existing streetscape appearance by ensuring parking does not overwhelm front yards, and that there is landscaping.

- In low-rise neighbourhoods, parking for new development should be in the side or rear yard, behind the line of the principal front façade. Front yard parking should be discouraged unless it is designed in a standard driveway format, such as a 6x6m driveway that allows for 2 cars maximum; or 1 car maximum if the lot frontage is less than 12 metres.
- For small multi-unit development, consider reduced driveway width standards. Access driveways could be in the 3.0 to 4.0m range, provided sight lines and turn movements are accommodated, and depending on the number of parking spots they access.
- For mid- and high-rise development, parking should be screened from view of the street. This could mean locating parking in the rear yard, or ensuring that habitable space (e.g. retail, or residential units) is located at the street edge, with structured parking behind it or underground.



Narrow driveway widths accessing rear yard parking for multi-unit infill (Preston)



Narrow driveway widths accessing rear yard parking for multi-unit infill (Fredericton, NB)

Height

A one-storey height limit for detached Additional Residential Units is a constraint for development in some situations. Additional building height can be considered where that height does not have negative impacts on the neighbours or streetscape. In some cases additional height is beneficial.

For detached Additional Residential Units that are adjacent to a public right of way – a street or a laneway – consider allowing two storeys in height. Dwellings along street and laneway edges are de facto part of the streetscape, and a two storey streetscape is appropriate as it provides eyes on the lane and defines the street edge.

On large lots of 22.5m or more, a 6.0 metre building height, with a flat roof, could be considered for detached Additional Residential Units in conjunction with greater setback requirements. This would allow for two storey flat-roof buildings. The additional setbacks would help to mitigate privacy concerns such as overlook or shadowing. The setbacks could be increased to 3.0 metres as measured to an adjacent residential property line (side or rear), and 6.0 metres as measured to any nearby habitable dwelling, including the principal dwelling on the lot.



Two storey coach housees in the rear yard (Toronto)



Two storey townhouse infill on a laneway (Toronto)

As for heights in the R1 and R2 zones, it is currently proposed to permit up to 10.5 m and three storeys on larger lots (15 m plus) and up to 14.0 m and 4 storeys on smaller lots. It seems counter-intuitive that height permissions would increase on smaller lots, since larger lots should theoretically be able to accommodate taller buildings with fewer impacts.



Two storey coach house facing a public street and a laneway (Markham)

Setbacks and Lot Coverage

Generally, a 1.2 metre setback to interior side yard or rear yard property lines is appropriate as it ensures new development does not crowd neighbours, and overlook can be mitigated through landscaping. For detached Accessory Residential Units with no windows in a facade, the setback could be reduced to 0.9 metres or 0.6 metres.

Also consider increasing the minimum setback from the primary dwelling to a detached Accessory Residential Unit from 3.0 metres to 4.5 metres, to provide more amenity space, greater access to sunlight, and privacy for both buildings.

For Accessory Residential Units adjacent to a public laneway, consider a reduced setback of 0 or 0.3 metres to the laneway.

In addition, relax or eliminate lot coverage requirements to provide greater development flexibility, allowing ARUs to better respond to site-specific conditions and homeowner needs.

Lot Consolidation with Low-Rise Apartment

It is recommended to monitor the type of development that occurs on lot consolidation sites within low-rise neighbourhoods over time. Given their large zoning envelopes, it is possible that new construction could be overly bulky and incompatible with the character of the neighbourhood, in which case additional development regulations could be considered.

Mid- and High-Rise Development

Mid- and high-rise development should be subject to design guidelines and/or site plan control regulations to ensure they make positive contributions to the urban fabric, in the form of great streetscapes and urban parks, and high quality architectural design.

Flag Lots

In California, flag lots have been permitted as of right by the state government, and have been a popular choice among property owners for adding housing supply. In California, there is a large supply of large, suburban-style lots that are located in areas where there is intensification pressure. There, an advantage of flag lots in comparison to ARUs is that the original homeowner merely has to sever a flag lot from their original lot, which allows them to sell the flag lot to a different owner. The new owner of the flag lot is responsible for entitlements and construction. This can be an attractive scenario for the original owner, as they are not responsible for entitlements, construction, or being a landlord.

Below are some standards for discussion in the Cambridge context:

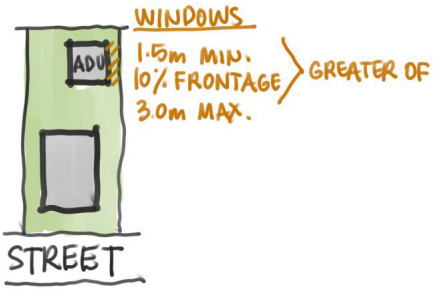
- A flag lot must have a minimum frontage of 7.5 m and a maximum frontage of 10 metres with the remnant lot having a frontage of no less than 15 m – meaning that for the original lot to qualify as a flag lot, it would have to have a minimum frontage of 22.5 m (15 m + 7.5 m)
- The minimum depth of the original lot has to be 40 m and the minimum depth of the remnant lot, once the flag lot has been severed, should be 20 m
- The maximum driveway width on the flag lot is no more than 4.5 m
- The minimum rear yard setback on the remnant lot is 4 m
- The minimum rear yard setback on the flag lot is 4 m
- The minimum interior side yard setbacks on the flag lot is 4 m

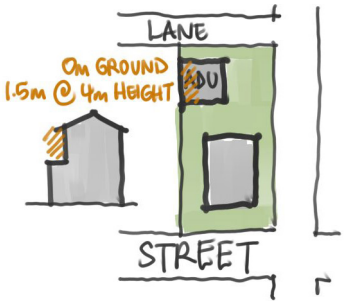
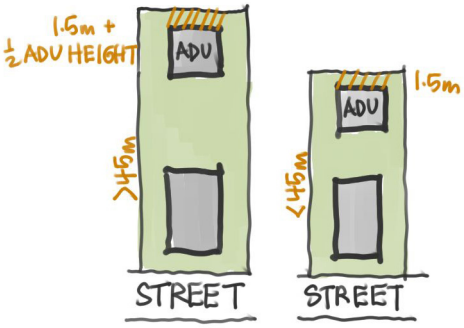
Appendix A: Background Research

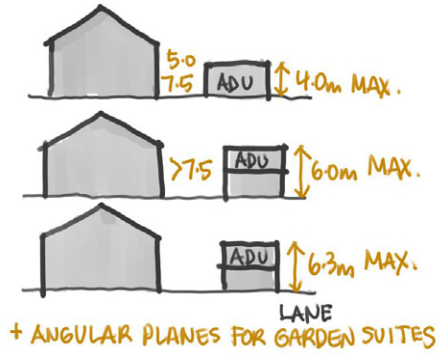
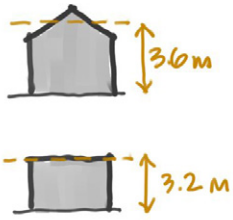
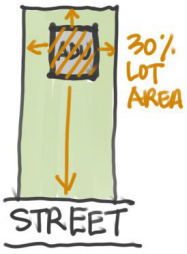
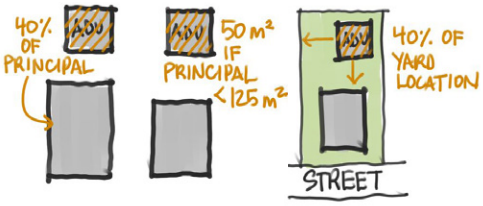
Toronto and Ottawa

Some of the larger municipalities in Canada have developed zoning standards for Additional Residential Units, contained within the principal dwelling or in detached buildings. These standards provide a benchmark for considering what standards might be applicable to the Cambridge context. Toronto's Zoning By-law classifies ARU's into three separate definitions: Secondary Suite, which essentially is an ARU located within the principal dwelling; Garden Suite, which is a detached ARU not abutting a lane; and Laneway Suite, which is a detached ARU that abuts a laneway. Ottawa's Zoning By-law on the other hand classifies ARU's into two definitions: Additional Dwelling Unit (apartment), which is a separate dwelling unit located in the same building as the principal dwelling, and; Coach House, which is a separate dwelling unit that is located on the same lot as an associated principal dwelling unit but is contained in its own building.

Table comparing ARU zoning standards between Toronto and Ottawa.

Standards	Toronto (Residential Detached Zone)	Ottawa
Number of ARUs	Up to three ARUs (referred to as garden suites or laneway suites)	Up to two ARUs
Location of ARU		Rear yard or in the yard adjacent to travelled public lane
Setbacks	**Garden Suites** Interior side yard: If side lot line does not abut street and there are doors or windows in the side main wall, the greater of 1.5 m or 10% of the lot frontage, up to 3 m max. In all other cases, the greater of 0.6 m or 10% of the lot frontage, up to 3 m max.  	Front yard: same as principal dwelling Interior side yard: 4 m, unless interior side lot line abuts a travelled lane or where no entrance or windows face interior side lot line, max. setback is 1 m. 

Standards	Toronto (Residential Detached Zone)	Ottawa
	Laneway Suites Interior side yard: 0 m if rear lot line does not abut street or lane; same min. setback as principal dwelling if it abuts a street; if side lot line abuts residential lot and rear lot abuts lane, 1.5 m from side lot line starting at 4 m. 1 m in all other cases.  Rear yard: **Garden Suites:** 1.5m **Laneway Suites:** 0m if rear lot line does not abut street or lane; 1.0m in all other cases 	Rear yard: where rear lot line abuts a travelled lane or where no entrance or windows face rear lot line, max. setback is 1m. All other cases, min. 4 m 
Building Separation	No less than 5 m from principal dwelling if ancillary building is max. 4 m tall; no less than 7.5 m if ancillary building is more than 4 m tall. 	Minimum 1.2 m from any other building located on the same lot. 
Access	1.5 m wide walkway	
Minimum Parking	No car parking required - min. 2 bicycle parking spaces	No car parking required - parking can be accommodated in existing driveway

Standards	Toronto (Residential Detached Zone)	Ottawa
Maximum Height	4 m if suite is located 5-7.5 m from principal dwelling; or 6m if suite is located 7.5m or more from principal dwelling. Max.2 storeys 	3.6 m or 3.2 m for flat roofs 
Maximum Coverage	**Secondary Suites:** Interior floor area of all secondary suites must be 45% of interior floor area of principal dwelling. **Garden and Laneway Suites:** Interior floor area must be less than GFA of principal dwelling - no more than 30% of lot area. 	Smallest of: 40% of principal dwelling footprint or 50 sqm if dwelling is 125 sqm or smaller; 40% of the yard area where the ARU is located; or 80 sqm in Areas A/B/C, or 95 sqm in Area D. 
Landscaping	**Garden Suites:** 25% with 6m or less lot frontage, 50% with lot frontage greater than 6 m **Laneway Suites:** 60% with 6m or less lot frontage, 85% with lot frontage greater than 6 m **Rear area (facing lane):** Must be landscaped, min. 75% soft landscaping	

Takeaways for Cambridge

- Protecting the existing streetscape appearance by ensuring parking does not overwhelm front yards, and that there is landscaping
- For detached ARUs:
  - Consideration for additional height, beyond 1 storey, at least in some contexts
  - Consideration for smaller setbacks where appropriate, e.g. if there are no windows on a wall

Hamilton, Guelph, and London

Smaller municipalities have also developed zoning standards for Additional Residential Units. Some municipalities provide user guides on their websites to help property owners navigate the different types of ARUs as well as the applicable regulations, like zoning and the Ontario Building Code. The City of Guelph also provides an “Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) Checklist” for details on what is to be included with a building permit submission for an ADU, with information that may be useful to someone considering an ADU for their property.

Basic ARU standards from Hamilton, Guelph and London were compared with the existing standards in Cambridge (see the table below). Standards for setbacks, location of ARUs, building separation, and access have minimal variances among municipalities. The number of ARUs, maximum height, landscaping, and parking provisions are more varied. Cambridge currently allows a height of up to 4.5 metres for detached ARU’s (single storey), while Hamilton, Guelph, and London allow up to 6 metres, or two storeys. Of all the municipalities compared in the chart below, London is the only one that doesn’t require additional parking space for ARUs, while others typically have a rate of 1 parking space per unit.

Standards	Cambridge (existing)	Hamilton	Guelph	London
Number of ARUs	Up to 2 ARUs	Up to 2 ARUs	Up to 3 ARUs per lot	3 per lot 2 detached
Location of ARU	Rear/side yard	Rear/side yard		Rear/side yard
Setbacks	1.2m to side and rear; 3m from a laneway	1.2m to side and rear	Interior side/rear (1 or 2 storey no windows): 1.2 m or 1.5 m; Interior side/rear (with 2nd storey windows): 3 m Exterior side: 4.5 m or 6 m, not less than main dwelling setback	3m rear 1.2m side 3.0m if window
Building Separation	3m	4m from primary house to ARU, 5m behind the front facade	3m from ARU to principal dwelling	
Maximum Height	4.5m	6m	6.1m	6m
Maximum Coverage	10%	maximum 75m^2 maximum 45% coverage	maximum 80 m^2 of residential floor area per unit maximum 30% yard coverage	Per zone
Landscaping		Landscape strip in side yard		
Access	min. 0.9m wide, 2.1m tall	1m wide	1.2m wide direct path	
Minimum Parking	1 per ARU	1 per ARU	1 per ARU	None required

Takeaways for Cambridge

- Consider additional height to permit 2 storeys as of right
- Relax or eliminate lot coverage to provide development flexibility

Cambridge Zoning By-law Research

Provisions for Principal Lot and Building (

** A note on Ottawa's zoning bylaw

In addition to the primary zones (i.e., R1), Ottawa also uses subzones to modify the uses or the regulations of the primary zone. Meaning, there are numerous possibilities for the provisions below and they depend on the subzones. The Bylaw has a chart with all the provisions in an R1 zone, with different values for each subzone. For comparison purposes, I chose one of the subzones to use as a demonstration of what their bylaws generally allow.

**A note on Toronto's ZBL

In the residential and residential detached zone category, the letters that follow the zone symbol in the zone label and a numeric value indicates required minimum/ maximum lot frontage, lot area, dwelling units, and FSI. These standards are site specific and can be identified in the interactive zoning bylaw map.

Provisions	Existing Zoning for lowest density residential zones				
	Cambridge ZBL	**Ottawa ZBL**	**Toronto ZBL**	**Edmonton ZBL**	**Vancouver ZBL**
Location					
Min. front yard setback (m)	6.0		**6 m** if reg. 10.5.40.70(1) doesn't apply	4.5	4.9
Min. interior side yards (m)	1.2		• 0.6m if req. min. lot frontage is <6m • 0.9m if req. min. lot frontage is 6-12m • 1.2m if req. min. lot frontage is 12-15m • 1.5m if req. min. lot frontage is 15-18m • 1.8m if req, min. lot frontage is 18-24m • 2.4m if req. min. lot frontage is 24-30m • 3m if req. min. lot frontage is 30m+	**1.2** (or 1.5 when row housing or multi-unit faces interior or flanking side lot line)	1.2
Min. exterior side yard (m)	6.0				
Min. rear yard (m)	7.5		The greater of: **7.5m** or **25% of the lot depth**	10	10.7
Max. lot coverage (% of lot area)	40		Depends on lot coverage overlay map	45	50
Form					
Height min/max	n/a		If not stated, **10m max.**	Min: Max:**10.5 m**	Max. 11.5m (3 storeys)
FSI	n/a		If "d" value not included in ZBL, **0.6**	n/a	Max. **0.70**, or **1.0** for multiple

					dwelling with no more than 8 units
Min. GFA (m2)	R3:120 R4: 90 R5: 75				
Sculpting	?				
Use/Type					
Dwelling Types	single detached/ duplex	Detached dwellings	Detached house, duplex, triplex and fourplex	Detached, attached, multi-unit residential	Single detached, duplex, multiplexes (up to 6 dwelling units or 8 rental) *See section on Vancouver ZBL below*
ADU	Up to 2 units permited	• ADU permitted • Rooming house also permitted (under conditions)	• Secondary suite (sec. 150.10) • Laneway suite (sec.150.8) • Garden suite (Sec.150.7)		ADU permitted for single detached and duplexes
Zone	Low-rise residential (R3, R4, and R5 zones)	Low-rise Residential (R1, subzone)	Residential Detached Zone (RD)	Small-Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Residential Inclusive Zone (R1-1)
Parking					
Minimum/maximum	1 space for the first 4 bedrooms in each dwelling unit + 1 space for each additional 2 bedrooms		0 spaces required for detached, semis, townhouse, duplex, triplex or fourplex. None for secondary suites.		Except where the principal use of the site is a parking area, the maximum site coverage for any portion of the site used as a parking area is **30%**
Driveways			Ranges from min. of 4-6m depending on interior angle of parking space (between 50 to 90 degrees)	From Street: • Each ground-oriented dwelling may have **1 driveway with street access** • Single parking space: max. 4.3m wide or the width of the garage/parking	Access must be from a lane abutting the site unless City Engineer issues crossing permit + development permit

				area, whichever is less. • 2 + spaces: max. width either the garage/ parking area width or 3.7m per parking space	
Landscaping					
Min. landscaped open space (% of lot area)	30		**Front yard:** • Lots under 6.0m frontage: entire front yard (except for a driveway or parking pad). • Lots 6.0m to less than 15.0m frontage: min. 50% of front yard. • Lots 15.0m or greater frontage: At least 60% of front yard. • Soft Landscaping: At least 75% of the required landscaped area must be soft landscaping. If no driveway, 75% of entire front yard must be soft landscaping.	30	Max. area of impermeable materials: **75%** of the site area Landscaping regulations are not apparent
			Side yard (corner lots only): • min. 60% of the side yard abutting a street must be landscaped. • min. 75% of the required landscaped area must be soft landscaping. **Rear yard soft:** • Lot frontage over 6.0m: At least 50% of rear yard. • Lot frontage 6.0m or less: At least 25% of rear yard.	**Single detached, semi, and duplex**: • Site width <8m: 1 tree + 4 shrubs • Site width 8-15m: 2 trees + 6 shrubs • Site width >15m: 4 trees + 8 shrubs **Row housing:** 1 tree + 4 shrubs per principal dwelling	

Provisions for a Converted Dwelling /ADU / Secondary Suite

**Note: Edmonton ZBL does not have regulations for ADUs. See section on Edmonton ZBL below.

See Vancouver section below for more guidance on the R1-1 zone.

Provisions	Existing Zoning			
	Cambridge ZBL	**Ottawa ZBL**	**Toronto ZBL**	**Vancouver ZBL**
Location				
Min. front yard (m)		Min. setback must be equal to or greater than the min. req. front yard setback for principal dwel.		4.9m
Min. interior side yards (m)	1.2 m	**4m**, unless interior side lot line abuts a travelled lane or where no entrance or window faces the interior side lot line, max permitted setback is **1m**.	**Garden suites:** • If the side lot line does not abut a street and there are openings (e.g., doors or windows) in the side main wall: The setback must be the greater of **1.5 metres or 10% of the lot frontage, up to a maximum of 3.0 metres.** • In all other cases: The setback must be the greater of **0.6 metres or 10% of the lot frontage,** up to **a maximum of 3.0 metres.** **Laneway Suites:** • If rear lot line does not abut street or lane and there are no openings, **0m**. • If abuts street, then min. setback for the residential building on the lot. • If side lot line abuts any residential lot and	1.2m for side yards

			rear lot line abouts a lane, an ancillary building must be set back **1.5 metres from the side lot line, starting at a height of 4.0 metres** 1m in all other cases.	
Min. exterior side yard (m)	Consistent with the zone where detached ARU is located			
Min. rear yard (m)	1.2 m or 3 m from laneway	where the rear lot line abuts a travelled lane or where no entrance or window faces the rear lot line, **the max. permitted setback is 1m**. All other cases, min. req. setback is 4m.	**Garden suite:** if lot depth greater than 45m – the greater of 1.5m and half the height of the ancillary building. **1.5m** in all other cases. **Laneway Suites:** • If rear lot line does not abut street or lane and there are no openings, **0m**. **1m in all other cases.**	10.7m
Setback to principal building	3m	A coach house must be a distance of at least **1.2 m away from any other building located on the same lot**.	**Garden suites** and **Laneway Suites: no less than 5m** from a residential building on the same lot if ancillary building is no more than 4m tall; **no less than 7.5m** if ancillary building is more than 4m tall.	
Location of ADU	Interior side, exterior side or rear yard	Coach house must be located in rear yard for lots less than 0.4 ha, or in the yard adjacent to the travelled public lane where the lot front on both a street and travelled public lane		
Form				

Height min/max	Max. 4.5 m	Max. 3.6m, or 3.2m if flat roof	**Garden suite** and **Laneway Suite (max): 4m** if the suite is located 5-7.5m from the residential building; **6m (6.3 for laneway)** if the suite is located 7.5m or more from the residential building. Max. 2 storeys.	Max. 11.5m or 3 storeys
FSI	Max. lot coverage of 10%	The max. footprint of a coach house building is limited by the smallest of the following: • **40% of the principal dwelling's footprint**, or **50m^2 if the dwelling is 125m^2 or smaller**. • **40% of the yard area** where the coach house is located. • **80m^2 in Areas A, B, and C**, or **95m^2 in Area D** (as per Schedule 1).	The **interior floor area** of a **secondary suite**, or all **secondary suites** where more than one is permitted, must be no more than 45 percent of the **interior floor area** of the **dwelling unit** within which it is located. **Garden suites** and **Laneway suites:** interior floor area must be less than the GFA of the residential building on the lot. • Lot coverage: No more than 30% of the lot area	• **Max. 0.7 floor space ratio** for duplex or duplex with secondary suite. • **0.65** for single detached or single detached with secondary suite to facilitate an addition to a character house. • **0.75** for multiple conversion dwelling to facilitate an addition to a character house. • **0.85** for infill in combination with the retention of a character house.
Sculpting				
Use/Type				
Dwelling Types	Max. 2 ARUs permitted on lots containing a detached, demi-detached, or rowhouse	Coach house and/or additional dwelling units are permitted on a lot containing detached dwelling, linked-detached dwelling, semi-detached dwelling, townhouse or duplex	• **Secondary suites** are permitted on a detached, semi, and townhouse lot(max. 1 secondary suite per dwelling unit) • Laneway suites	•
Use			• An ancillary building may be used for living accommodation in one garden suite	

			(Max. 1 permitted on a lot) • A lot may not contain both a garden suite and a laneway suite	
Parking				
Minimum	1 space for each ARU	• No parking required • On corner lots, a new driveway can be added in a yard facing a street if the main dwelling doesn't already have a driveway. • Otherwise, parking for ADUs or coach houses must be in the existing driveway of the main dwelling and may be in tandem with its parking space.	**Garden suites** and **Laneway Suites:** no parking required, must provide 2 bicycle parking spaces min.	No parking required Maximum parking rates apply to certain districts based on unit typology
Landscaping				
Min. landscaped open space (% of lot area)			**Garden suites:** Lot frontage greater than 6m, **min. 50%** of the area. Lot frontage 6m or less, **min. 25%** of the area. **Laneway suites**: Lots **≤ 6m frontage:** At least **60%** of the area between the main house and laneway suite must be soft landscaping. Lots **> 6m frontage:** At least **85%** of this area must be soft landscaping, excluding a **1.5m-wide pedestrian walkway**. **Rear area (facing lane):** Must be landscaped, at least	

			75% soft landscaping, excluding a **1.5m-wide walkway** and permitted driveway	

Cambridge Zoning Bylaw

Residential Use Class R3, R4 and R5

Accommodate detached one-family dwellings at varying urban densities in areas where full public services are generally available.

Low Density Residential (R3, R4, and R5):

Low density residential uses that are meant to accommodate detached one-family dwellings, and with uses at varying urban densities in areas where full public services are generally available include: the R2, R3, R4, R5, and R6 zones.

The zones of which the specified sites in Cambridge belong to are the R3, R4, and R5 zones.

Permitted Uses for the R3, R4, and R5 zones (they all have the same permitted uses):

- A detached one-family dwelling
- A residential special care facility
- A use permitted in any zone in accordance with section 2.1.1
- An accessory use, building or structure in accordance with section 2.1.11:
    - Accessory building or structure can't be attached to the principal building or within 1 metre of it
    - Accessory use, building or structure can't be located:
        - between the building line and street line,
        - in an exterior side yard closer to any street line than a minimum distance required by this bylaw for the exterior side yard,
        - in an interior side yard or front yard, closer than 1.2 metres to the interior lot line,
        - in a rear yard abutting a street, closer to the street line than the min. distance required,
        - or in a rear yard closer than 0.6m to an interior lot line or rear lot line
    - accessory uses, buildings and structures can't occupy more than 10% if the area of the lot that it is located on
    - the height of any accessory building or structure can't exceed 4.5 m and nor exceed 1 storey.

Section 4.2, Exceptions Not Shown on the General Zoning Maps

Policy 4.2.8, Detached and Semi-Detached One-Family Dwellings Converted to Provide One or More Additional Self-Contained Dwelling Units states **that a detached or a semi single family dwelling located on a site that is specified in Column A of section 4.2.8.2 may be converted to provide a number of units that is specified in Column B (ranging from 2-7 units)**, in accordance with the following regulations:

- each dwelling unit in the converted dwelling must be self-contained with a private entrance, kitchen, and bathroom;
- minimum GFA of one dwelling unit in the converted dwelling is
    - **90 m2** in RR1 RR2 or **R4**
    - **120 m2** in an R1, R2 or **R3**
    - **75 m2** in an **R5, R6**, RS1, or RM-class zone
- The minimum GFA of each additional dwelling unit in the converted dwelling shall be 40m2
- Minimum one parking space provided per dwelling unity
- No encroachments onto an existing yard

See the chart below:

2.

	Column A	Column B
(a)	563 Grimm's Drive	4
(b)	134 Concession Street	3
(c)	586 Coronation Boulevard	4
(d)	2 Marion Way	3
(e)	601 William Street	3
(f)	232 Main Street	3
(g)	248 Main Street	3
(h)	5-7 Lincoln Avenue	3
(i)	42 Glenmorris Street	3
(j)	42 Kribs Street	3

Column A		Column B
(k)	819 Duke Street	3
(l)	81 Avenue Road (see also section 4.2.64) (By-law 159-08)	5
(m)	5 Spiers Crescent (see also section 4.2.14)	2
(n)	138 Beverly Street	3
(o)	10 Paisley Heights	2
(p)	13 Elgin Street South	2
(q)	706 Queenston Road (By-law 217-89)	7
(r)	102 Cedar Street	3
(s)	51 Mill Creek Road (By-law 184-90)	2
(t)	1203 Hamilton Street (By-law 213-90)	3
(u)	84-84½ Francis Street (By-law 213-89)	3
(v)	77 McNaughton Street (By-law 3-90)	3
(w)	(Reserved)	
(x)	10-10½ Crombie Street (see also section 4.2.22) (By-law 315-90)	3
(y)	221 Water Street North (By-law 235-90)	2
(z)	163 Alison Avenue (see also section 4.2.31) (By-law 27-91)	2
(aa)	167 Alison Avenue (By-law 27-91)	2
(bb)	11 Oxford Street (see also section 4.2.32) (By-law 31-91)	2
(cc)	204 Myers Road (By-law 83-91)	3
(dd)	40 James Street (By-law 217-90)	2
(ee)	766 Queenston Road (By-law 86-92)	3
(ff)	578 Coronation Boulevard (By-law 219-93)	2
(gg)	734 Sherring Street (By-law 109-94)	3
(hh)	47-49 Cedar Street (By-law 97-94)	4
(ii)	10 Kay Street (By-law 98-94)	3
(jj)	71 Chalmers Street South (By-law 13-01)	2
(kk)		
(ll)	125 St. Andrew's Street (By-law 111-04)	2

Column A		Column B
(mm)	69 Birch Street (By-law 171-05)	2
(nn)	66 Queen Street West (see also section 4.2.62) (By-law 232-05)	4
(oo)	15 Pretoria Road	3
(pp)	64 Elgin Street South	2
(qq)	37 Mercer Road (By-law 160-08)	2
(rr)	135 Green Bank Drive (By-law 121-09)	2

Additionally, 4.2.8.3 **identifies numerous sites that may be used for two residential dwelling units for an attached, detached, or semidetached single family dwelling** (subject to the provisions of apartments in houses of the Residents Rights Act, or Bill 120). See chart below:

(a)	123 First Avenue	(b)	7 Manchester Street
(c)	55 Avenue Road	(d)	269 Fearnwood Street
(e)	20 Rich Avenue	(f)	325 Laurel Street
(g)	82 Azores Crescent (By-law 89-97)	(h)	30 Blair Road
(i)	247 Church Street	(j)	518 Coronation Boulevard
(k)	1139 Duke Street	(l)	118 Elmwood Avenue
(m)	1767 Franklin Boulevard	(n)	950 Hamilton Street
(o)	79 Henry Street	(p)	250 Lowther Street North
(q)	328 Lowther Street North	(r)	207 Main Street
(s)	619 Queenston Road	(t)	930 Queenston Road
(u)	1104 Queenston Road	(v)	32 Wright Avenue
(w)	91 Albert Street (By-law 227-98)	(x)	131 Beverly Street
(y)	63 Dudhope Avenue	(z)	134 Dyer Court
(aa)	94 Hammet Street	(bb)	64 Lansdowne Avenue South
(cc)	98 Oak Street	(dd)	107 Spruce Street
(ee)	1 State Street (101 Wellington Street)	(ff)	155 Westminster Drive South
(gg)	1328 Concession Road (By-law 29-00)	(ii)	68 Francis Street

(jj)	83 Glenmorris Street	(kk)	1476 Mary Avenue
(ll)	47 Spruce Street	(mm)	263 West River Road (By-law 244-01)
(nn)	79 Attwood Drive	(oo)	272 Bakersfield Drive
(pp)	43 Beverly Street	(qq)	98 Beverly Street
(rr)	47 Lansdowne Road North	(ss)	186 Limpert Avenue
(tt)	6 Portland Street	(uu)	163 St. Andrews Street (By-law 206-03)
(vv)	52 Attwood Drive	(ww)	5 Lowrey Avenue South
(xx)	236 Main Street	(yy)	50 Queen Street
(zz)	74 Samuelson Street	(aaa)	35 Shade Street
(bbb)	617 Vine Street	(ccc)	8 Close Avenue
(ddd)	290 Elliott Street	(eee)	35 Haddington Street
(fff)	87 Linnwood Avenue	(ggg)	100 Queen Street West

Ottawa Zoning Bylaw

The City of Ottawa has two sets of zoning regulations affecting 1 to 4 storey residential dwellings: the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay (Bylaw 2012-147) and Infill II (Bylaw 2020-228). The amendments are in force and the Zoning Bylaw has been updated to reflect these amendments.

Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay

The Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay applies to dwellings within the inner urban neighbourhoods. The Overlay provides regulations intended to recognize the established look along a street, including side yards, amount of landscaping, rear lane access, driveway widths and on-site parking, orientation of the primary entrance, and the minimum amount of livable floor area required on the first floor.

Section 140: Low-Rise Residential Infill Development in the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay

Section 140 of the Bylaw contains policies pertaining to low-rise residential infill development in the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay, and applies to the R1, R2, R3 and R4 zones within the overlay.

Streetscape Character Analysis (SCA)

A streetscape Character Analysis is required for development for:

- a new residential building
- an addition in the front, side or corner side yard

- modifying an existing residential building including removing the principal entranceway that faces the front or side lot line abutting a street, or the addition/ expansion of an attached garage that faces the front or side lot line abutting a street
- adding or expanding a driveway or parking space in the front yard or corner side yard.

An SCA remains valid for 18 months from its approval.

Driveways

- Prohibited in front or corner side yards if rear access is possible
- Dominant patterns guide whether single or double-wide driveways are aloud
- Legalized front yard parking from before 1965 or through amendments may influence new approvals

Garages/ Carports

- Placement must align with dominant streetscape patterns
- Width and design restrictions apply, with maximums set at 3m for single garages and 6m for double garages

Principal entranceways

- New developments must typically align the principal entrance with the street-facing façade, depending on the dwelling type
- Certain exceptions apply to multi-unit dwellings

Other Provisions

- A minimum of 40m2 of habitable floor space is required on the first floor

In addition to the regulations within this section, parking regulations from Part 4 – Parking, Queuing and Loading Provisions Sections 100, 105, 106, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 112, as well as all of Part 5 – General Residential Provisions and all of Part 6 – Residential Zones (other than what is specifically required in this section) continue to apply.

Section 133: Additional Dwelling Units and Coach Houses

According to Section 133, Additional Dwelling Units and coach Houses, an ADU or coach house is permitted on a lot containing a detached dwelling, link-detached dwelling, semi-detached, townhouse, or a duplex. An ADU or coach house must be located on the same lot as the principal use.

The section also contains provisions the physical standards for ADUs and coach houses.

General Provisions

- **Permitted Uses**: ADUs and coach houses are allowed on lots with specific dwelling types (e.g., detached, semi-detached, townhouses, or duplexes). In some areas, phased

development allows for coach houses before the primary dwelling is established, provided servicing requirements are met.

- ****NOTE**: To clarify, an **ADU** is an additional dwelling unit located within the same building as the associated principal dwelling unit, and a **coach house** is a separate additional dwelling unit that is located on the same lot as the principal dwelling but is in its own building.
- **Lot Requirements**: These units must be located on the same lot as the principal dwelling. The total number of units (principal, ADUs, and coach houses) cannot exceed three per lot, with no more than one coach house allowed.

Servicing and Location

- **Servicing Requirements**: Coach houses must be serviced via the principal dwelling, depending on the availability of municipal or communal water and wastewater systems. Restrictions apply to areas without sufficient services.
- **Specific Areas**: In some zones, additional requirements apply, such as a minimum lot size of 0.4 hectares for unserviced properties.

Dimensions and Design

- **Size and Height**: The size of coach houses is limited to a percentage of the principal dwelling's footprint or the yard in which they are located, with maximums ranging from 80–95 square meters. Height is limited based on the zone and the principal dwelling's height.
- **Setbacks**: Minimum distances from lot lines are defined for various scenarios, with allowances for easements or specific yard configurations.

Parking and Access

- **Parking**: Parking spaces for ADUs or coach houses must be in permitted driveways and can be tandem with the principal dwelling's parking.
- **Walkways**: A walkway must connect the coach house to a driveway, public street, or lane.

Special Conditions

- **Conversion of Existing Buildings**: Existing accessory buildings can be converted to coach houses under specific conditions, with limitations on enlargements and placement of windows or entrances.
- **Environmental Features**: Coach house roofs may not have patios or gardens, except for non-amenity green roofs.

Exceptions

- Additional allowances and restrictions apply to existing structures predating September 14, 2015, and properties located in specific areas (A, B, C, or D) outlined in Schedule 1.

City of Toronto Zoning Bylaw

Chapter 10 Residential - 10.5.20 Permitted Uses

10.5.20.40 : Conversions of lawfully Existing Buildings

In the Residential Zone:

- Detached house may be converted to a duplex, triplex or fourplex through constructing additional dwelling units
- Additions or extensions to lawfully existing buildings are permitted under certain conditions

10.20 Residential Detached Zone (RD)

- Permitted uses: includes garden suite, laneway suite, multi-tenant house, secondary suite (among others).
- Permitted building types: detached house, duplex, triplex, and fourplex

Sixplexes As of Right in Ward 23 Scarborough North

On January 23, the Housing and Planning Committee approved Official Plan and zoning bylaw amendments to permit buildings in Ward 23 Scarborough North with increased heights and up to six dwelling units, clearing the way for larger multiplexes city wide.

Toronto City Council is to vote on the proposal at its Feb. 5 meeting

Ward 23 Multiplex Study

In Spring of 2023, Toronto City Council approved city wide permissions for multiplexes with up to 4 dwelling units (BY-LAW 474-2023). As part of this decision, City Council directed staff to undertake an area-specific study (Ward 23) to explore opportunities to permit multiplexes with up to 6 dwelling units within the principal building of a property designated *Neighbourhoods*. Council also directed staff to review the potential of permitting a building depth of 19 m for all multiplexes in Ward 23.

As part of the City's commitments under the federal Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), the City has committed to permit more low-rise, multi-unit housing development through as-of-right zoning by-laws in Neighbourhoods.

Recommended OP and ZBL Amendments

Staff Decision Report from Jan.7, 2025 recommends amendments to the City's OP and Zoning Bylaw to permit sixplexes on any residential lot in Ward 23. Lands designated as Neighbourhoods

would be subject to a Site and Area Specific Policy, building off of the City-wide Multiplex Study with minor modifications. Consistent with SASP No. 826, the proposed SASP would:

- exempt multiplexes from certain policies contained in Section 4.1 - Neighbourhoods of the Official Plan, to clarify that multiplex building types are among those that contribute to their physically stable, low-rise scale across the city;
- implement criteria for the development of multiplexes in Neighbourhoods, to ensure they maintain the general development pattern and physical features of the area;
- encourage safe, accessible and livable units;
- encourage green and sustainable building practices as well as expanding the tree canopy;
- include policy language that emphasizes the need for multiplex building types to accommodate more ground-related units, with some alternative standards but within the same general scale of the local area; and,
- enable the consideration of zoning variances where they are needed to achieve sustainable design and/or tree preservation.

Additionally, a new policy is proposed to encourage parking for active modes of transportation, such as bicycles.

The key change introduced through the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBLA) is to permit fiveplexes and sixplexes on lots zoned RD (Residential Detached), RS (Residential Semi-Detached), RT (Residential Townhouse), and RM (Residential Multiple) in Ward 23. This includes the permission to create a new building with up to six dwelling units, and the ability to convert an existing detached house to have up to six dwelling units and maintain the built form of the existing detached house. Furthermore, the ZBLA intends to maintain the existing performance standards for multiplexes with four units. No change to the existing building depth or other performance standards, such as building length or height is proposed currently.

Existing Multiplex Permissions

The current multiplex performance standards include maximum building length and maximum building depth, proportionate to the existing lot dimensions. For example, on shallow lots in the RD Zone with a lot frontage of 18 metres or less, the maximum permitted building length for a multiplex is 17 metres, whereas on a deep lot, the maximum permitted building length is 19 metres. The zoning by-law permits a maximum 19-metre building depth on a deep lot and does not regulate shallow lots. In the Zoning By-law:

- **Building Length** is defined as the horizontal distance between the portion of the front main wall of a building on a lot closest to the front lot line, and the portion of the rear main wall of the building closest to the rear lot line, measured along the lot centreline. If the main walls are not intersected by the lot centreline, the measurement is from the point on the lot centreline where a line drawn perpendicular to the lot centreline connects with the main wall.

- **Building Depth** is defined as the horizontal distance between the front yard setback required on a lot and the portion of the building's rear main wall furthest from the required front yard setback, measured along a line that is perpendicular to the front yard setback line.
- **Shallow lots** are identified as:
    - lots with a depth of less than 36.0 metres and a lot frontage of less than 10.0 metres; or
    - lots with a depth of less than 40.0 metres or greater and a lot frontage of 10.0 metres or greater.
- **Deep lots** are identified as:
    - lots with a depth of 36.0 metres or greater and a lot frontage of less than 10.0 metres; or
    - lots with a depth of 40.0 metres or greater and a lot frontage of 10.0 metres or greater.

Edmonton Zoning Bylaw

The City of Edmonton has been moving towards and striving for removing/ reducing zoning barriers since their first Infill Roadmap in 2014. This was essentially an action plan aimed at supporting more opportunities for infill in Edmonton's established neighbourhoods. These actions led to modest changes. A second Infill Roadmap in 2018 directed zoning changes to allow duplexes and semi-detached houses in ALL established neighbourhoods, essentially eliminating single detached zoning throughout a majority of the city.

This flexibility is evident in the new Zoning Bylaw, as a Residential use is defined as "...a building containing 1 or more Dwellings or 1 or more Sleeping Units, including Backyard Housing, Duplex Housing, lodging Houses, Multi-unit Housing, Row Housing, Secondary Suites, Semi-detached Housing, Single Detached Housing, and Supportive Housing." Even their Rural Residential Zone permits Secondary Suites, Supportive Housing, and Backyard Housing.

The lower density residential zones are Small Scale Residential Zone (RS) and Small Scale Flex Residential Zone (RSF), permitting a maximum of 8 dwellings on an Interior Site and 8 Lodging House Sleeping Units per Site. The bylaw eliminates the differentiation between principal and accessory dwelling units because of the flexibility they have given within the Small Scale Residential zone.

Vancouver Zoning Bylaw

Vancouver's Zoning bylaw has various residential zones categorized under "Duplexes and multiple dwellings (RT)" or "multiple dwelling (RM)".

In 2023, Council approved zoning changes to add multiplexes with up to 6 units per lot as a new missing middle housing option and to simplify rules for other housing options in low-density neighbourhoods across the city. The new R1-1 zone took effect on October 17, 2023, and applies in all areas previously zoned RS areas (the city's single family areas, which makes the majority of residential zones).

The Residential Inclusive Zone (R1-1 Zone) is meant to enable a variety of small-scale housing options while retaining the single lot character of the area. Housing options include multiplex (up to 6 dwelling units or up to 8 rental dwelling units), duplexes, and single detached houses.

- Multiplexes (up to 1.0 FSR)
- Character retention (renovation and restoration of an existing character house; can include conversion to multiple strata units and/or addition of a new building, up to 0.85 FSR)
- Duplex (2 strata units, up to 2 secondary suites, up to 0.7 FSR)
- Single detached house (can include a secondary suite and/or laneway house, up to 0.6 FSR + 0.25 FSR laneway house)

Guidelines for Additions, Infill and Multiple Conversion Dwelling in the R1-1, RT-7, and RT-9 Zones

These guidelines are meant to be used in conjunction with the R1-1 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development Bylaw. The document contains guidelines for infill – including FSR, yard setbacks, building height, parking, and landscaping:

Infill location:

- typically in the rear yard of sites with lanes;
- on large sites with no lane access, rear yard infill can be considered;
- front or side yard infill buildings may be considered

FSR:

- No more than 0.25 FSR or 186 m2
- May exceed 0.25 where the size of an addition would compromise the form or character of the retained house
- On large sites, more than one infill may be considered to break up the massing. Max. floor area of each shouldn't exceed 186m2

Yards, separating and building width:

- Min. side yard setback should be 1.2m

- Min. rear yard setback should be 0.9m
- Min. separation between existing character house and infill building should be 4.9m

Infill building height:

- 2 storeys (8.5m)

Parking:

- On 33 foot wide lots, 2 parking spaces (one internal, one external)
- On wider lots, mx. 2 spaces contained within an infill building, excluded from floor area. Surface

Landscaping:

- The 0.9m min. setback between infill building and the lane should be permeable and landscaped where not required for vehicle or pedestrian access.