To:	PLANNING COMMITTEE (STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING)
Meeting Date:	**5/6/2025**
Subject:	**25-052-CD Statutory Public Meeting – Comprehensive Zoning By-law and companion Official Plan Amendment**
Submitted By:	Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner
Prepared By:	Bryan Cooper, Senior Policy Planner Breanna Syne, Policy Planner
Report No.:	25-052-CD
File No.:	D24
Wards Affected:	All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 25-052-CD Statutory Public Meeting – Comprehensive Zoning By-law and companion Official Plan Amendment be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

- To hold a statutory public meeting under the Planning Act to explain the current draft of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law and companion Official Plan Amendment.
- To obtain public and Committee comments.

Key Findings

- The new Comprehensive Zoning By-law is being prepared to implement the City's Official Plan. This includes new regulations and zones for all land uses in the City.
- The draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law includes "Residential Form Based Zones" which will enable more housing and is part of the City's Housing Accelerator Fund obligations with Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC).
- A companion Official Plan Amendment is proposed to update residential, commercial and site-specific policies to support the form-based zones and simplify the new Zoning By-law.

Financial Implications

This project has an approved $250,000 budget for professional services which is funded by CMHC.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

☒ Strategic Action

Objective(s): PLANNING FOR GROWTH - Provide for a mix of development, uses and amenities in order to meet the needs of a changing and diverse population

Strategic Action: Lay the foundation for future community-building

OR

☐ Core Service

Program: Not Applicable

Core Service: Not Applicable

BACKGROUND:

In 2012 the City adopted the Official Plan. The Official Plan provides the goals, vision and policies for future land use and change in the City. Following adoption of the Official Plan, the City began the process of preparing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. Zoning By-laws implement the Official Plan by providing specific requirements that are legally enforceable.

The Comprehensive Zoning By-law review process formally began in 2013. A preliminary draft was prepared in 2015 for review and comment. A second draft was prepared in 2018. An initial statutory public meeting was held in 2019 on a third draft of the Zoning By-law. In 2020, the project was put on hold.

This project has been reactivated, and the scope has, in part, been updated based on the City's Housing Accelerator Funding (HAF) projects (detailed further in the Analysis section of this report).

There have been multiple engagement sessions throughout the review process. Most recently, the City and consulting team for the project held in person engagement sessions in April on draft "form based" residential zoning regulations. The City's online engagement page for form based residential zoning can be found at: https://www.engagewr.ca/engage-cambridge

Purpose and Effect of the Zoning Bylaw

The existing Zoning Bylaw 150-85 is being repealed and replaced in its entirety, including all amendments, with the proposed Zoning By-law with the exception of certain areas that are being deferred.

The proposed Zoning Bylaw has been developed based on the following key goals:

- Alignment with the City's Official Plan
- Simplify and standardize regulations as much as possible
- Support the creation of new housing units, in part through the introduction of form base zoning

Subject Lands

The draft Zoning Bylaw applies to all lands within the boundary of the City of Cambridge with the exception of the deferred areas. Deferred areas include lands designated Regional Commercial, lands within the area subject to the proposed Preston Secondary Plan, and lands within the Hespeler Road Secondary Plan study area.

Draft Zoning Bylaw

The current draft of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law which is the subject of this statutory public meeting is included at the following City of Cambridge website link: https://www.cambridge.ca/en/learn-about/zoning-by-law-review.aspx

Included at the above link is the full text of the draft by-law and draft mapping for review and comment.

Following the statutory public meeting there is opportunity for comments to be submitted for review and where appropriate, further modifications can be made prior to bringing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law back to Council for a decision in Fall 2025. Comments are to be submitted by June 6, 2025.

Purpose and Effect of the Official Plan Amendment

An Official Plan Amendment (OPA) is proposed as a companion to the proposed Zoning Bylaw to eliminate residential density policies, simplify local commercial policies and eliminate the requirement of carrying forward every single site-specific amendment that has been passed to By-law 150-85. Theses policy changes will enable form-based zoning and simplify regulations in the new Zoning By-law.

Subject Lands

The proposed Official Plan amendment applies to all lands designated Low/Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential and commercial lands within Employment and Residential designations. The elimination of carrying forward every site-specific zoning amendment is a general Official Plan policy.

Proposed Official Plan Amendment:

The draft text of proposed the Official Plan Amendment is included in Appendix A to this report.

The following is a summary of the proposed amendments to OP policy:

- Residential policies:
  Updates to the Low/Medium Density and High Density Residential land use designations to remove density and FSI limits is required to enable form based residential zoning.

- Commercial policies:
  The policy framework for local commercial uses within residential and employment designations is proposed to be simplified.
- Site specific policy:
  Policy 8.10.7 of the Official Plan (established by OPA No. 38) requires that site-specific amendments be carried forward into the new Zoning By-law. This approach has been reconsidered and this policy is proposed to be eliminated.

ANALYSIS:

Description of Draft Zoning Bylaw:

The Comprehensive Zoning By-law review will result in an entirely new City-wide Zoning By-law (certain areas are being deferred at this time, detailed further below in this section).

The following is a summary of the main components of the new Zoning By-law:

Definitions:

The By-law includes a new chapter with simplified, modern definitions and terms.

General Provisions:

The By-law includes one chapter for “General Provisions”. General Provisions are regulations that are applicable in all areas of the City. This section has been simplified from the current Zoning By-law format which divides general provisions into two separate chapters, which can cause confusion in the administration of the By-law.

Parking:

There are three main components to the updated parking section of the draft new Zoning By-law – motor vehicle parking, electric vehicle parking and bicycle parking.

Motor vehicle parking:

- Rates are similar to current regulations in effect through Zoning By-law 150-85. The draft new By-law simplifies parking calculation rates and clarifies required parking for certain uses.
- Parking reductions currently in effect for the Core areas is maintained.
- Accessible parking requirements are included which is an improvement over the current By-law which does not require accessible parking.

Electric vehicle parking:

- Generally, 20% of all parking spaces for multiple dwelling and certain institutional and commercial uses is required to be for electric vehicles.

Bicycle parking:

- The draft new Zoning By-law includes requirements for short-term and long-term bicycle parking for various uses.

Core Area Zones:

Three new Core Mixed Use Zones (CMU1, CMU2 and CMU3) are proposed. These will apply to the Galt and Hespeler downtowns. The Preston Core area is deferred at this time due to the proposed Preston Secondary Plan.

The CMU zones permit a variety of commercial and residential uses, up to a maximum density of 2.0 floor space index (FSI - the ratio of floor area of a building to lot area). This FSI standard is based on the Official Plan.

Five storey maximum building heights are proposed for the Hespeler Village Core area in accordance with the Official Plan.

For the Galt Core, existing building heights permitted under Zoning By-law 150-85 are being retained at this time. A future study will be completed for the Galt Core area and the height regulations will be evaluated based on the outcome of that study.

Residential Zones:

Form based zoning is proposed to be incorporated into the new comprehensive Zoning By-law in residential areas. Form Based Zoning focuses on the physical form of development (height, building placement) rather than the separation 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.

The draft Zoning By-law includes the following four residential zones:

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

Form based zoning is one of nine initiatives the City committed to through the Housing Accelerator Fund agreement with CMHC.

Commercial Zones:

The Official Plan establishes a hierarchy of commercial areas based on scale and function. The new draft Zoning By-law includes the following commercial zones based on the Official Plan:

- Community Commercial Two (CC2) Zone:
  The CC2 Zone applies to the large commercial plaza on the western end of Holiday Inn Drive. These lands are designated Community Commercial by the Official Plan and permit up to 42,000 m^2 of commercial floor area.

- Neighbourhood (NC) Zone:
  The NC Zone applies to five commercial centres in the City (Cedar Street, Myers Road/Water Street, Dundas Street/Hespeler Road, Can-amera Parkway/Franklin Boulevard and Queen Street/Goebel Avenue). The planned function of the NC Zone is to provide retail and service uses that serve the daily and weekly needs of residents living in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

- Convenience Commercial (CV) Zone:
  The CV Zone applies to small scale local commercial uses that are within residential and employment areas of the City.

- Village Commercial (VC) Zone:
  The VC zone applies to the Blair Village area and permits a variety of commercial uses.

- Automotive Commercial (AC) Zone:
  The AC Zone applies to lands throughout the City that are primarily used for automotive purposes.

Areas designated as “Regional Commercial” (Hespeler Rd/Pinebush Blvd and Cambridge Mall) are being deferred since these areas are within the ongoing Hespeler Road Secondary Plan study. Employment Zones:

The following four Employment Zones are proposed which implement the City's Employment land use designations:

- Employment Prestige (M1) Zone:
  The M1 Zone applies to lands in the vicinity of Maple Grove Rd and Speedsville Rd. These lands are intended to be developed for employment uses exhibiting a high standard of building design and landscaping.

- Employment Corridor (M2) Zone:
  The M2 Zone applies to lands along the 401 corridor at the Fountain St, Highway 8, Hespeler Rd, Franklin Blvd. and Townline Rd. interchanges. These lands are intended for advanced manufacturing, major office complexes and offices employment uses.

- Employment Business Industrial (M3) Zone
  The M3 Zone applies to older traditional industrial areas that are located throughout the City.

- Employment Industrial (M4) Zone:
  The M4 Zone primarily applies to lands that are the site of heavier industrial uses such as the City's eastern industrial business park near Clyde Rd. and Franklin Blvd.

Other Zones:

- Floodway and Floodplain Overlays – F Zone and F1,F2 and F3 Overlay:
  The mapping of the draft Zoning By-law zones the regulatory floodplain. Development within the floodplain is generally prohibited. Floodplain overlay zones are also proposed which are based on the Galt Special Policy Area and two-zone floodplain areas.

- Environmental Protection – EP Zone:
  Environmental areas such as core environmental features and wetlands are protected through the Environmental Protection – EP Zone. Development is prohibited within the EP Zone.

- Established Neighbourhoods – EN Zone:
  Special zoning regulations for "established neighbourhoods" have been drafted. The purpose of these additional regulations is to guide new development to ensure that it fits within the established character of these neighbourhoods. This includes regulations that require new development to meet building placement standards such as average front and side yards, detached and attached garage placement, building height, and the requirement for driveways to only be accessed off public laneways in the case of West Galt.

Site Specific Exceptions

The City has approved over 500 site specific zoning by-law amendments to By-law 150-85. These are exceptions to the current By-law and much of the City has been built under standards that are tailored to individual developments. This creates a very complicated set of zoning rules since standards vary across the City.

All site-specific amendments were originally intended to be re-written and carried forward into the new by-law. Staff have evaluated this approach further and believe that a more appropriate approach is to only retain site specific amendments when warranted.

Site specific amendments will generally not be carried forward into the new Zoning By-law if one or more of the following circumstances is met:

1) The development is built out.
2) If the site-specific amendment is written in a manner that is inconsistent with the intent of form-based zoning (e.g. the wording of the amendment restricts residential uses to only specific dwelling types, which would be in conflict with the form-based zoning objective of permitting a variety of residential dwelling types).
3) If the site-specific amendment is made redundant by the regulations of the new by-law (e.g. the new by-law is generally more permissive than the existing site-specific amendment).
4) If the site-specific amendment is inconsistent with the policy objectives of the City's Official Plan.

Chapter 14 of the draft Zoning By-law contains site specific exemptions that are proposed to be brought forward into the new Zoning By-law at this time. The review of site-specific amendments is ongoing and will be finalized at the time of the recommendation report for the final by-law.

Holding Provisions

Properties can be placed in a "Holding" - H" zone to secure certain requirements before development occurs on a property. The City's Official Plan includes policies which enable Holds and includes servicing, orderly development, contamination mitigation among other requirements.

Areas subject to a Holding Zone are under review and could include properties that are within the urban area but remain without full municipal services as well as properties that could potentially be impacted by the Trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination area in the Bishop Street community.

Deferred Areas:

Properties within the Hespeler Road Secondary Plan area and Preston Secondary Plan study area will be deferred from the new Zoning By-law at this time. This is because the ongoing land use planning studies for these areas are required to be completed prior to implementation through zoning. Following the approval of these studies the new Zoning

By-law will be amended to incorporate zones and regulations for these areas. Until that time these areas will remain subject to Zoning By-law 150-85.

Mapping:

Draft mapping for the new zoning by-law has been prepared and included for review and comment at https://www.cambridge.ca/en/learn-about/zoning-by-law-review.aspx

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

By-law 150-85:

Zoning By-law 150-85 will ultimately be repealed, save and except for the Preston Secondary Plan study area, the area subject to the Hespeler Secondary Plan study area and the Galt Heights study.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This project has an approved $250,000 budget for professional services which is funded by CMHC.

PUBLIC VALUE:

This project supports the public value of Engagement. Public involvement was invited at key milestones throughout the project by:

- Previous statutory public meetings and public information sessions
- Current statutory public meeting
- In person engagement sessions
- Engage Cambridge website
- Newspaper and mailout notifications
- Social media

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Upcoming consultation is planned in May and June with advisory committees.

PUBLIC INPUT:

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

The notice of statutory public meeting was advertised in the Waterloo Region Record on April 16th 2025. The notice was also mailed/emailed to local boards and agencies, and the project mailing list. The proposed zoning bylaw and official plan amendment was posted to the City's website on April 16, 2025 at the following link https://www.cambridge.ca/en/learn-about/zoning-by-law-review.aspx

Following the statutory public meeting there is opportunity for comments to be submitted for review and where appropriate, further modifications can be made prior to bringing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law back to Council for a decision in Fall 2025.

June 6, 2025 is set as the deadline for receiving comments on the new By-law so that they may be addressed in the recommended Bylaw.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

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

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:

The report provides an overview of the latest draft of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law and companion Official Plan Amendment as part of the required statutory public meeting.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **Yes**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **Yes**

APPROVALS:

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

Director

Deputy City Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

25-052-CD Appendix A – Draft Companion Official Plan Amendment

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 91
TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BY-LAW NO. _____-2025

Being a by-law of the Corporation of the City of Cambridge to adopt Amendment No. 91 of the City of Cambridge Official Plan (2012)

WHEREAS sections 17 and 22 of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990 c. P. 13, as amended empower the City of Cambridge to adopt an Official Plan and make amendments thereto:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Corporation of the City of Cambridge enacts as follows:

1. **THAT** Amendment No. 91 to the Official Plan (2012) of the City of Cambridge is hereby adopted.

2. **THAT** the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the giving of notice under Section 17(23) of the Planning Act.

3. **AND THAT** This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of final passing thereof.

Enacted and passed this XXth day of XX, 2025.

_____
MAYOR

_____
CLERK

~~Strikethrough~~: deleted text
Bold: new text

The Official Plan of the City of Cambridge is hereby amended as follows:

1. Revising section 8.4.6.2 as follows:

   Deleting subsection a) "~~Low/Medium Density Residential~~" and replacing with:

   a) **Low-Rise Residential**

   Deleting subsection b) "~~High Density Residential~~" and replacing with:

   b) **Medium/High-Rise Residential**

2. Deleting section 8.4.6.3 in its entirety:

   ~~3. The following residential *density targets* for new *development* in residential designations will be implemented through such means as the approval of plans of subdivision as well as site specific *development* applications:~~

   ~~a) a maximum of 40 units per gross hectare for the Low/Medium Density Residential designation, excluding only provincially constrained environmental areas as defined in the Regional Official Plan and secondary units; and,~~
   ~~b) a minimum of 0.5 *Floor Space Index* and maximum of 2.0 *Floor Space Index* for the High Density Residential designation.~~

3. Deleting section 8.4.6.6 in its entirety:

   ~~6. The minimum residential *density target* established in Policy 8.4.6.3 shall be reviewed periodically to monitor residential *development trends and Provincial and Regional targets.*~~

4. Deleting section 8.4.6.7 in its entirety:

   ~~7. Notwithstanding the permitted minimum density established in Policy 8.4.6.3, the *City* may allow a lower density, without amendment to this Plan, where it is warranted by at least two of the following criteria:~~

   ~~a) the nature of the soils, topography, geomorphology, vegetation or other environmental features of the lands proposed for *development*;~~

   ~~b) the established character of the neighbourhood in which the lands proposed for *development* are located;~~

~~c) the unreasonably high cost of providing and/or upgrading required *infrastructure* such as water supply, sewage disposal, stormwater drainage or access road facilities;~~

~~d) the projected negative impact of the proposed *development* on adjoining environmental features; and/or~~

~~e) the projected negative impact of the proposed *development* on *cultural heritage resources*.~~

5. Revising section 8.4.6.9 as follows:

   9. Lands in a **Low-Rise** ~~Low/Medium Density~~ Residential designation where a municipal water supply and municipal wastewater systems are currently available may be developed and used for uses such as ~~single~~ detached dwellings, **attached dwellings** ~~townhouses~~ and/or walk up ~~apartments~~ **multiple dwellings**.

6. Revising section 8.4.6.10 as follows:

   10. Lands in a Low**-Rise** ~~Density~~ Residential designation where a piped municipal water supply and/or wastewater systems have not yet been made available may be used for the following uses:

7. Revising section 8.4.6.11 as follows:

   11. Lands in a **Medium/High-Rise** ~~Density~~ Residential designation may be developed and used for residential uses such as apartment buildings and mixed use *development* provided the non-residential component does not exceed 50% of the total building floor area.

8. Deleting section 8.4.6.12 in its entirety:

   ~~12. The *City* recognizes existing buildings and those properties with approval for a density of up to 75 units per hectare in the Zoning By-law as of the date of adoption of this Plan. The High Density Residential designation is intended to evolve over the horizon of this Plan to High Density Residential uses and mixed use *development* as specified in Policy 8.4.6.11.~~

9. Deleting section 8.4.6.15 in its entirety:

   ~~15. Residential and mixed use developments legally existing on the date of Council adoption of this Plan, with a maximum density of 75 units per hectare, which are located on a property within a "Low/Medium Density Residential" designation are deemed to be in conformity with this Plan.~~

10. Deleting section 8.4.6.16 in its entirety:

16. ~~Notwithstanding Policy 8.4.6.3 a) any property designated "Low/Medium Density Residential", which is located with a "Regeneration Area" is permitted in the interim to develop for residential or mixed use purposes to a maximum density of 75 units per hectare and deemed to be in conformity with this Plan, subject to the compatibility criteria in Section 8.4.2.~~

11. Revising section 8.5.2.6.1 as follows:

    1. *Major retail* uses are not permitted within the employment designations of this Plan. Lands designated for employment or residential as shown on Map 2 may be zoned to permit convenience commercial uses with a maximum of 2,500 m^2 *gross leasable area*~~.~~**,** ~~if located at the intersection of Arterial and/or Collector Roads.~~

12. Revising section 8.6.1.5.1 as follows:

    1. Lands designated for residential or employment uses as shown on Map 2 may be zoned to permit convenience commercial uses with a maximum of 2,500 m^2 *gross leasable area*~~., if located at the intersection of Arterial and/or Collector roads.~~ The planned function of convenience commercial uses is to provide retail and service uses that serve the day-to-day shopping needs of residents living in the surrounding neighbourhood or employees in the area.

13. Deleting section 8.6.1.5.5 in its entirety:

    ~~4. The lands are located at the intersection of Arterial Roads and/or Collector Roads as shown on Map 7A.~~

14. Deleting policy 10.3.7 in its entirety:

    7. ~~When preparing a new city-wide comprehensive zoning by-law to conform to this Plan, previous zoning by-law exceptions that may not conform to this Plan are carried forward, in order to recognize uses that were legally established at the time in response to a development application and to reduce the hardship that may be created if the exception is not carried forward. In carrying forward these exceptions, the implementing zoning by- law shall restrict those uses that do not conform to this Plan to the floor area and the use existing on the property on the effective date of the new city-wide comprehensive zoning by-law.~~