

BILL 25 PROVINCIAL ALIGNMENT - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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GENERAL

What are the new provincial housing rules under Bill 25?

In November 2025, the Province enacted Bill 25, which expanded areas where Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) is allowed. This means more property owners across the city will have the option to add new housing over time, including in heritage areas.

To comply with Bill 25, the City is required to update its planning tools, including the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw, by June 30, 2026, to:

- Allow up to 6 dwelling units per lot in Frequent Transit Areas (areas within 400m of bus stops on frequent transit service routes).
- Remove minimum on-site parking requirements within Frequent Transit Areas.
- Replace all remaining single-detached and duplex zones with zoning that allows for the development of 3, 4, or 6 units of housing.

What is small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH)?

SSMUH is developments of 3, 4, or 6 dwelling units on a property. SSMUH can describe a range of ground-oriented housing, including: duplexes, laneway homes, triplexes, and townhomes. SSMUH is compatible in scale and form within established single-family neighbourhoods.

Learn more: <https://www.cnv.org/Community-Environment/Housing/Provincial-Housing-Legislation-Updates/Small-Scale-Housing-Changes>

What is the City's proposed response to the new provincial housing rules?

To comply with Bill 25, the City is required to update its planning tools, including the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw, by June 30, 2026, to:

- Allow up to 6 dwelling units per lot in Frequent Transit Areas (areas within 400m of bus stops on frequent transit service routes).
- Remove minimum on-site parking requirements within Frequent Transit Areas.
- Replace all remaining single-detached and duplex zones with zoning that allows for the development of 3, 4, or 6 units of housing.

The baseline application of the provincial Frequent Transit Area boundaries would result in different rules for neighbouring properties on certain blocks. To avoid this, the City's is preparing bylaw amendments that would extend the area of changes to achieve consistency across entire blocks where most properties fall within a Frequent Transit Area.

Maps showing the proposed OCP and Zoning Bylaw changes are available at: [cnv.org/Bill25Alignment](https://www.cnv.org/Bill25Alignment). As staff prepare bylaw amendments for Council to consider, the maps may change. The final maps are currently scheduled to be presented to Council for consideration in mid-May 2026.

When do the new housing rules come into effect?

To comply with Bill 25, the City is required to update its planning tools, including the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, by the provincial implementation deadline of June 30, 2026.

How do I know if additional units will be allowed on my property?

Maps showing the proposed Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw changes are available at cnv.org/Bill25Alignment

Property owners who may be affected by these recent changes in provincial legislation were sent a letter from the City on February 6, 2026.

If you have questions, please email zoningupdate@cnv.org

Are there exemptions to the new housing rules?

Buildings that were protected by Heritage Designation Bylaw prior to June 30, 2024, are exempt from provincial requirements.

Will new housing rules lead to higher neighbourhood density?

The new housing rules will lead to a small increase in density in existing single family and duplex areas of the City over time. To comply with Bill 25, the City is required to allow the option of up to 6 dwelling units per lot on properties within Frequent Transit Areas.

This change will mean some properties are changing from the “Low Rise Neighbourhood 1” designation which allows 3 or 4 dwelling units (a density of 0.85 FSR) to the “Low Rise Neighbourhood 2” designation which allows up to 6 dwelling units (a density of 1.0 FSR).

How quickly will redevelopment happen?

Market conditions will affect the pace of change, but the City expects that redevelopment will occur incrementally.

What if I don't want to build new housing on my property?

Redevelopment is **optional**. The City's Official Community Plan and Zoning bylaws determine the **maximum** number of units permitted on a property.

Will single-family and duplex housing still be allowed?

Yes, single-family and duplex development is still permitted. The City's Official Community Plan and Zoning bylaws determine the **maximum** number of units permitted on a property.

How does this relate to other recent provincial housing legislation?

The *Local Government Act* was amended in 2023 to require cities to allow up to 3, 4, or 6 dwelling units to be built on certain properties, referred to in the legislation as small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH). The City amended the Zoning Bylaw on June 9, 2025, to update 35 properties to comply with the legislation at that time.

On December 8, 2025, the City adopted the Ground Oriented Zone which added more than 6,600 units of residential capacity to the Zoning Bylaw to meet provincial 20-year housing need requirements.

On November 27, 2025, the Province introduced Bill 25 to update SSMUH requirements. The change is intended to allow SSMUH more consistently in areas that have traditionally been limited to single-detached and duplex homes. To comply with Bill 25, the City is required to update its planning tools, including the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, by June 30, 2026.

What is a Frequent Transit Area?

The Province requires the City to allow up to 6 units on properties within “Frequent Transit Areas”, which are areas within 400 metres of bus stops which is served by a bus route with an average frequency of at least every 15 minutes (during daytime hours).

In the case of the City, this means the R2 and 240 bus routes.

The Frequent Transit Areas are outlined in Figures 1 & 2 on the City’s [Bill 25: Response to provincial requirements](#) webpage.

Will the boundaries of Frequent Transit Areas change over time?

The Province determines Frequent Transit Areas based on the frequency of bus service during certain hours of the day. If the frequency of service on a bus route changes or if the locations of frequent service bus stop changes, the boundaries of the Frequent Transit Area could change. To address this, the City plans to review the Frequent Transit Area boundaries periodically.

PARKING

What are the parking requirements under the new housing rules?

The City is required to remove any minimum on-site parking requirements in Frequent Transit Areas. The City’s proposed response would also extend the removal of minimum on-site parking requirements in some blocks so that zoning requirements are applied consistently on impacted blocks.

Will the increased density cause overflow of parking?

The new provincial requirements are not anticipated to result in any major changes to on-street parking occupancies, which are actively monitored and managed through the City’s Resident Exempt parking permit system.

Most residential properties outside of the Frequent Transit Areas are permitted up to 4 dwelling units per lot today with a current parking requirement of 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit.

In Frequent Transit Areas, the City is now required to allow up to 6 units per lot and to remove minimum parking requirements. However, the City expects that developers will continue to provide parking spaces to meet market demand. Properties inside of the Frequent Transit Areas also have good access to transit, which helps to reduce the need for individual car ownership.

What is the current curbside parking utilization in heritage areas? Is there space in these areas for more cars without parking requirements?

Street parking is managed by the City, and in residential areas with high demand the City uses tools such as residential permit parking, time limits, and other curb management measures to prioritize access for local residents and manage overflow. Parking utilization varies across the City's heritage areas.

For details on utilization in specific areas or streets please refer to the City's [Curb Access & Parking Plan](#).

Will the cost of street parking pressure and overflow be borne by developers who benefit from lower development costs?

Reducing parking requirements can directly reduce housing costs for new development. It can also indirectly reduce housing costs by making it more viable to increase the number of dwelling units on a lot, contributing to an increase in housing supply. This can be a shared benefit between the developer and the purchaser.

How are developers required to support alternative transportation support like bike storage, car share, bike lanes, transit shelters?

The Ground Oriented Zone requires that developers provide a secure bike storage area and there are floor space incentives to make this possible. Car share programs are not applied at this level of development however they may be negotiated in adjacent, higher density areas, as a publicly accessible community benefit. Development Cost Charges (DCCs) are collected by the City and are used for a variety of improvements including transit improvements such as transit shelters.

ENGAGEMENT

Why was community engagement related to Bill 25 focused on heritage character?

Of the remaining approximately 400 single-detached and duplex properties, about 260 are located in the City's Heritage Character and Conservation Areas and must be rezoned to the Ground Oriented Zone.

Community engagement will help the City to gather input on how to best integrate heritage character with new provincial requirements. Public input will inform any potential updates to the City's design guidelines to help ensure future growth and development respects neighbourhood character and livability.

Will there be a public hearing?

Yes, there will be a public hearing. For more information, visit the City's [Bill 25: Response to provincial requirements webpage](#).

How will community feedback be used by the City?

When someone constructs a new building or makes major changes to their property like adding another unit, they must get a permit from the City. The City uses a set of design guidelines to evaluate the application. The design guidelines exist to help ensure that developments will fit

into the neighbourhoods, in a way that respects character and livability while still meeting requirements. Community feedback will help the City update its design guidelines with a specific focus on heritage character neighbourhoods.

How do I participate in engagement?

Community engagement activities finished on March 13, 2026, and an OCP Town Hall was held on April 1, 2026. Members of the public can participate in the public hearing in spring 2026 and send any feedback to zoningupdate@cnv.org. Up to date information on engagement continues to be available online at letstalk.cnv.org/bill25alignment.

More details on the project and legislative requirements can be found on the City's [Bill 25: Response to provincial requirements webpage](#).

How do I share input on the City's housing planning on topics other than heritage?

You are welcome to reach out to zoningupdate@cnv.org and we can help direct you to the best way of providing your feedback on other housing topics.

HERITAGE

Are heritage properties exempt from the new housing rules?

Only buildings protected by a Heritage Designation Bylaw prior to June 30, 2024, are exempt from the Province's requirements.

Will homes with heritage character be protected?

The City is exploring options to incentivise the protection of buildings with heritage character in these areas. Buildings protected by Heritage Designation Bylaw (prior to June 30, 2024) are exempt from these changes.

What is a Heritage Special Study Area?

The Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments that Council adopted on December 8, 2025, changed the land use designations for Heritage Areas (Grand Boulevard, East 10th, and Finlay's Row), but did not change the zoning. The Heritage Areas were not rezoned in 2025, and Special Study Areas were created to allow for more community engagement on how to balance increases in density with heritage values.

How does the City support Heritage Conservation?

The City encourages heritage conservation through a number of measures including:

Heritage Awards: Celebrate the accomplishments of individuals, organizations, and businesses that have made a significant effort to support heritage conservation in the community.

Heritage Conservation Area: A Heritage Conservation Area is a distinct area with special heritage value and character identified for heritage conservation purposes in an Official Community Plan. The City has one Heritage Conservation Area – Ottawa Gardens. New development and some home improvements in Ottawa Gardens require a Heritage Alteration Permit and must follow the Ottawa Gardens Heritage Conservation Area Guidelines.

Heritage Revitalization Agreements: The City can use Heritage Revitalization Agreements to vary zoning requirements and provide incentives that allow for a property to be restored, preserved, and protected. To be eligible for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, a property must be on the Heritage Register.

DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

Does lot size have an impact on the types of units you can build?

Yes. The City is required by new provincial legislation to rezone single detached and duplex properties to the Ground Oriented Zone. The maximum number of housing units in the Ground Oriented Zone are as following:

- 3 units, for lots less than or equal to 280 square metres
- 4 units for lots greater than 280 square meters and within the “Low Rise Neighbourhood 1” Designation
- 6 units, for lots greater than 280 square meters and within the “Low Rise Neighbourhood 2” or other Designation.

More information is available on the City’s [Ground Oriented Housing](#) webpage.

Are there changes to building height maximums or setbacks under the new housing rules?

The Ground Oriented Zone permits a range of low density, ground-oriented residential housing.

The Ground Oriented Zone permits additional dwelling units on a lot compared to existing single-family and duplexes zones. Compared to the single-detached and duplex zoning requirements, the Ground Oriented Zone has a smaller front setback requirement. The side setback requirements are the same, and the rear setback requirement is about the same as the Coach House rear setback requirements.

The maximum height allowed in the Ground Oriented Zone is 3 storeys, which is no change from the maximum 3 storeys (including basements) for the single-family and duplex zones. Given that basements are partially underground in single-family and duplex zones today, the effective overall height increase in the Ground Oriented Zone will be around half a storey.

Are there design guidelines for multiplex housing?

Yes, new construction in the Ground Oriented Zone is subject to the City’s [Low Rise Development Permit Guidelines](#). These guidelines are intended to ensure that new development fits well into the existing neighbourhood fabric. A development permit is not required for home improvements.

Is the Ground Oriented Zone family-friendly housing?

Yes, the Ground Oriented Zone supports family-friendly housing forms. Some of the features of the Ground Oriented Zone include:

- Flexibility on the size of units, with the anticipation that many units will likely be sized around 150 sq. meters (around 1600 sq. feet);
- Functional storage space for strollers, bicycles and mobility aids;
- Permissions for secondary suites;
- Requirements for outdoor spaces with landscaping and trees; and
- Guidelines that encourage all dwellings to be above ground with level entries.

Do the new housing rules allow for short-term rentals allowed in small-scale multi-unit housing?

Yes. Property owners can apply to operate a short-term rental in their principal residence and/or one other unit on the same parcel. If a property is stratified, a property owner can apply to operate a short-term rental with authorization from the strata.

More information is available at cnv.org/Business-Development/Business-Licences/Short-Term-Rentals

Are there tenant protections in place on properties that choose to redevelop following new housing rules?

Tenant rights are protected under the Province's *Residential Tenancy Act*.

Will new housing rules affect tree protection bylaws?

No, the new housing rules will not affect existing tree protection bylaws. The Ground Oriented Zone does require new construction to plant trees and have landscaped areas with soil.

More information is available at: cnv.org/community-environment/trees/private-trees

Are basement units still allowed under new housing rules?

Yes, the Ground Oriented Zone allows basements.

The Ground Oriented Zone allows for a maximum of 3 storey buildings, and if a development has a basement, then that basement would count as one storey. Basement areas also count towards the total density permitted on a lot.

Are building permits still required under the new housing rules?

Yes, a building permit is always required for construction projects.

More information is available at cnv.org/Business-Development/Permits-Inspections/Building-Permits

Do the new housing rules change permitted floor space ratios?

Yes, the City's existing single family and duplex zones permit up to 0.5 FSR. The [Ground Oriented Zone](#) allows for 0.85 FSR for properties in the "Low Rise Neighbourhood 1" designation or 1.0 FSR in the "Low Rise Neighbourhood 2" designation.

How will the City's infrastructure and services handle increased housing and density because of the new housing rules?

The City studied the potential infrastructure serving needs to accommodate growth with the Ground Oriented Zone and generally has enough servicing capacity to support growth. As growth happens over time the City can perform infrastructure servicing upgrades as needed.

New housing development can also put pressure on provincial services such as schools, healthcare, childcare, and more. As such, the City shares housing data with the province which is used to plan for future services and facilities needs.

Are there development or amenity cost charges required for new developments under the new housing rules?

Developers are required to pay development cost charges under both the existing and new housing rules. At this time, amenity cost charges are not applicable.

More information is available at cnv.org/Business-Development/Building/development-cost-charges

When can I apply to build additional units on my property if it is impacted by new housing rules?

Development applications can be submitted once the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments related to Bill 25 are approved by Council and come into effect.

Council is expected to consider the amendments for adoption in mid-June 2026. The provincial implementation deadline is June 30, 2026.

What is the impact on active development applications?

City staff are liaising directly with any applicants with existing development applications to ensure these applicants are aware of the upcoming changes.

Will my property taxes and/or property value increase because of the new housing rules?

The new provincial housing rules could have an impact on property values but do not automatically raise property taxes.

Property taxes are set annually based on two things: A property's assessed value from BC Assessment and the City's tax rates

The City does not control or predict property assessments. BC Assessment determines values using market data, including recent home sales. They look at many factors, not just zoning changes. Any change in property tax would depend in part on how a property's assessed value compares to the average for homes in the City. BC Assessment has indicated that there has been no market evidence to date showing a significant change in property value based on the increase in density generated by small-scale multi-unit housing legislation.

Where can I get more information about new housing rules?

More information is available on the City's webpage at cnv.org/Bill25Alignment and engagement portal at letstalk.cnv.org/bill25alignment.

More information from the Province is available at gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/local-governments-and-housing/housing-initiatives/smale-scale-multi-unit-housing.

If you have questions, please email zoningupdate@cnv.org.

Why does development have to pay for off-site works, services, and street improvements in a piecemeal fashion? Why can't the City build an entire street all in one go?

The City ensures that new development pays its share of infrastructure costs through tools like Development Cost Charges (DCCs). Because development occurs incrementally across different sites and timelines, upgrades to streets and services are typically delivered in phases.

What are the proposed changes to the Development Permit Guidelines?

- Updates for clarity, and removing redundancy/repetition;
- Updates for consistency with the zoning, and resolving conflicts with other guidelines;
- Limiting certain guidelines (e.g. siting) to new buildings only;
- Removing guidelines that are inconsistent with the ground-oriented scale of development (e.g. removing references to shared lobbies);
- Updating the Exemption section of the guidelines to:
 - Apply the Guidelines to Coach Houses, replacing the City's previous Coach House DPGs
 - Ensure renovations, minor additions, new detached garages and other minor changes to existing SFDs and duplexes will not trigger a DP, and
 - Ensure minor changes to buildings *and structures* will not trigger a DP;
- Adding incentives for protection of existing heritage buildings, and exemptions to some of the guidelines; and
- Adding new guidelines to ensure new developments on heritage properties or in Heritage Character Areas complement the heritage character of these properties/areas.