

Amendment 58 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan

December 11, 2024

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Richmond Hill Official Plan

Official Plan Amendment 58

The attached and explanatory text constitute Amendment No. 58 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan.

This amendment was prepared and recommended by the Richmond Hill Council and was adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill by By-law No. 145-24 in accordance with Section 17 of the Planning Act on the 11th day of December, 2024.

David West
Mayor

Stephen M.A. Huycke
City Clerk

The Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill

By-Law No. 145-24

A By-law to Adopt Amendment 58 to
The Richmond Hill Official Plan

The Council of the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill, in accordance with provisions of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That Amendment 58 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan, consisting of the attached Part Two is hereby adopted.
2. This by-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of the final passing thereof.

Passed this 11th day of December, 2024.

David West
Mayor

Stephen M.A. Huycke
City Clerk

File: MOPA-24-0001

Part One - The Preamble is not a part of the Amendment.

Part Two - The Amendment, consisting of text, constitutes Amendment 58 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan.

Part One – The Preamble

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Amendment to the Richmond Hill Official Plan is to allow for up to four (4) self-contained residential dwelling units on properties zoned for detached houses, semi-detached houses or rowhouse (including street townhouses and back-to-back townhouses, but not stacked townhouses), where currently only three (3) residential dwelling units are permitted. This amendment will permit additional residential units to be constructed to meet housing demand in Richmond Hill. It will increase housing choice and diversity, as well as facilitate aging-in-place. This change will use existing municipal infrastructure more efficiently.

1.2 Location

The Amendment applies to all lands within the City of Richmond Hill.

1.3 Basis

The proposed modifications to the Official Plan are intended to implement the following Provincial, Regional and City policies and direction:

- Policies of the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024* (PPS), which encourage the efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure.
 - OPA 58 updates key terms and policies with the goal of facilitating modest increases in densities in low-rise residential neighbourhoods. This gentle intensification is informed by PPS objectives to encourage the permitting and facilitation of all types of residential intensification in order to meet the housing needs of current and future residents (2.2). The permissions granted by OPA 58 give property owners more flexibility to create housing that suits their needs, meeting the PPS objective to address the full range of housing options.
- Policies of the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017* (ORMCP), which encourage the containment of urban growth within designated Settlement Areas in order to minimize impacts to ecological functions and hydrological features of the area;
 - OPA 58 minimizes the encroachment of development towards environmentally-sensitive lands by updating

definitions to encourage gentle intensification within areas designated as Settlement Areas. OPA 58 does not affect Official Plan policy 3.1.5(b) which prohibits ARUs in areas designated by the ORMCP as a Natural Core Area or Natural Linkage Area, nor does it increase the number of ARUs allowed in lands designated by the ORMCP as a Countryside Area (Official Plan policy 3.1.5(c)). Leaving these policies intact ensures that the objectives of the ORMCP are met and Richmond Hill's natural heritage remains protected.

- Policies of the *Greenbelt Plan, 2017* which restrict residential uses within the Plan's Protected Countryside to existing single dwellings, which may only contain second units if situated outside of the Natural Heritage System.
 - OPA 58 maintains the prohibition on additional residential units within the Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside – Natural Core designation.
- Policies of the *York Region Official Plan, 2022* which encourage the provision of an appropriate mix and range of housing options that meet the needs of residents and workers of all income levels, ages, abilities and stages of their lives (2.3.39);
 - OPA 58 will provide for increased housing diversity in low-rise residential neighborhoods by removing barriers in the OP that keep property owners from pursuing multi-unit housing configurations. Furthermore, the amendment implements direction from the Regional Official Plan that requires local municipalities to incorporate ARU policies into their official plans.
- The proposed amendment is also informed by consultation the City has undertaken to date in relation to the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) project. This consultation is documented in an Engagement Summary Report;
 - OPA 58 responds to community concerns regarding Richmond Hill's need for more housing supply and the impacts of ARUs on neighbourhood landscapes. This OPA additionally provides the policy foundation to address resident concerns through the zoning by-law and other municipal processes.

1.4 Implementation

The amendment will be implemented through Zoning By-law Amendment No. 143-24.

Part Two - The Amendment

2.1 Introduction

All of this part of the document entitled **Part Two – The Amendment**, consisting of the following text in Section 2.2 constitutes Amendment 58 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan.

2.2 Details of the Amendment

The Richmond Hill Official Plan is amended as follows:

2.2.1. That Section 3.1.5 **Housing** of the Richmond Hill Official Plan be amended as follows:

i. By adding a new policy 3.1.5(5)(f) with the following text:

“f. The provision of outdoor amenity space, which may include shared spaces, on lots containing additional residential units is encouraged.”

ii. By adding a new policy 3.1.5(5)(g) with the following text:

“g. Where an application is made under Section 45 of the *Planning Act*, as amended, in relation to an *additional residential unit*, the Committee of Adjustment is encouraged to consider minor variances to achieve the following objectives, as appropriate:

- i. minor variances related to setbacks, separation distance, height, and location in a flankage yard, to facilitate the conversion of legally existing accessory structures for *additional residential units*;
- ii. to create accessible or barrier-free *additional residential units*; and,
- iii. to preserve mature trees.”

iii. By adding a new policy 3.1.5(5)(h) with the following text:

“h. *Low-rise* housing forms arising through the creation of *additional residential units* are not considered medium density residential and will not be subject to the locational criteria of policy 4.9.1.2(2).

2.2.1. That Section 7.2 **Definitions** of the Richmond Hill Official Plan be amended by amending the definition of “ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT” to delete the words “a single” between the words “mean” and “accessory” to be replaced with the word “an”, and to delete the words “a single” between the words “and/or” and “accessory” to be replaced by the word “an,” so that it appears as follows:

“ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT means an *accessory* dwelling unit within a *ground-related dwelling* and/or an *accessory* dwelling unit within a structure *accessory* to a *ground-related dwelling* that consists of one or more rooms that are designed, occupied, or intended for use, including occupancy, by one or more persons as an independent and separate residence in which cooking facilities, sleeping facilities, and sanitary facilities are provided for the exclusive use of such person or persons.”