



Housing Accelerator Fund Project City of Richmond Hill

Final Recommendations Report

November 6, 2024

Project Team



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1. Introduction

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Overview

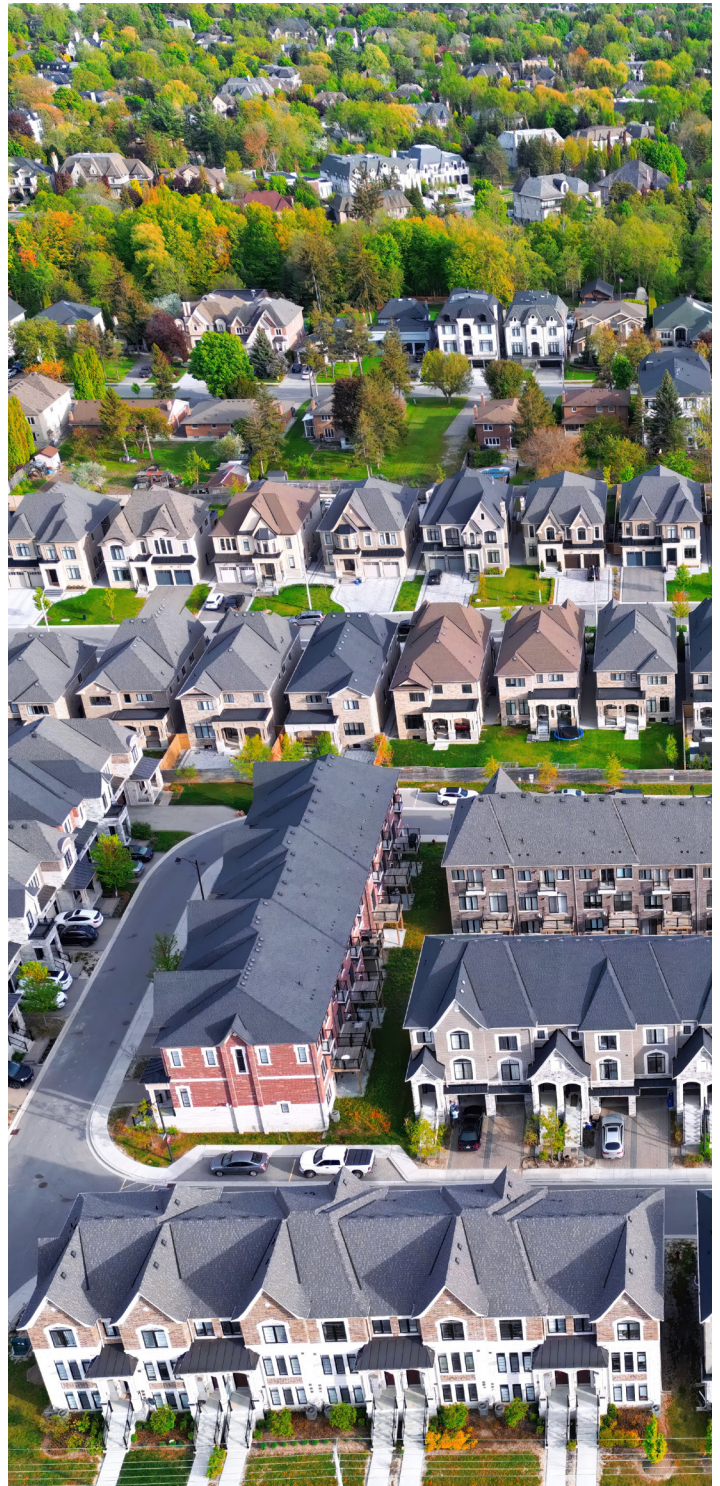
The City of Richmond Hill has retained Gladki Planning Associates Inc. (GPA), in association with LGA Architectural Partners (LGA), TYLin, and Aird & Berlis LLP, to undertake the Richmond Hill Housing Accelerator Fund Project.

In November 2023, the City of Richmond Hill announced that they had signed a \$31 million agreement with the Federal Government through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). This funding will support ongoing and new initiatives to remove barriers to housing development, improve City processes, and accelerate infrastructure projects to support growth.

This project, under the HAF agreement, will expand opportunities for gentle intensification and missing middle housing typologies in Richmond Hill by:

- Proposing amendments to the Official Plan (OP) and zoning by-law (ZBL) to permit up to 4 residential units where zoning permits single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling units.
- Proposing amendments to the OP and ZBL to permit up to 4 storeys as-of-right within the Newkirk Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and MTSA's along the Yonge Street and Highway 7 priority transit corridors where there is a mixed-use centre or corridor designation in the OP with permissions for building heights of 3 storeys or greater.

This project considers updates to the City of Richmond Hill's planning policy framework to allowing for these forms of gentle intensification. This new framework will adapt the scale of intensification in some areas of the City, permitting an expansion of available housing typologies and missing middle housing. The impacts of this on surrounding uses, servicing, and transportation have been assessed and inform our recommendations.



Aerial image of a neighbourhood in Richmond Hill. Image Source: Adobe Images

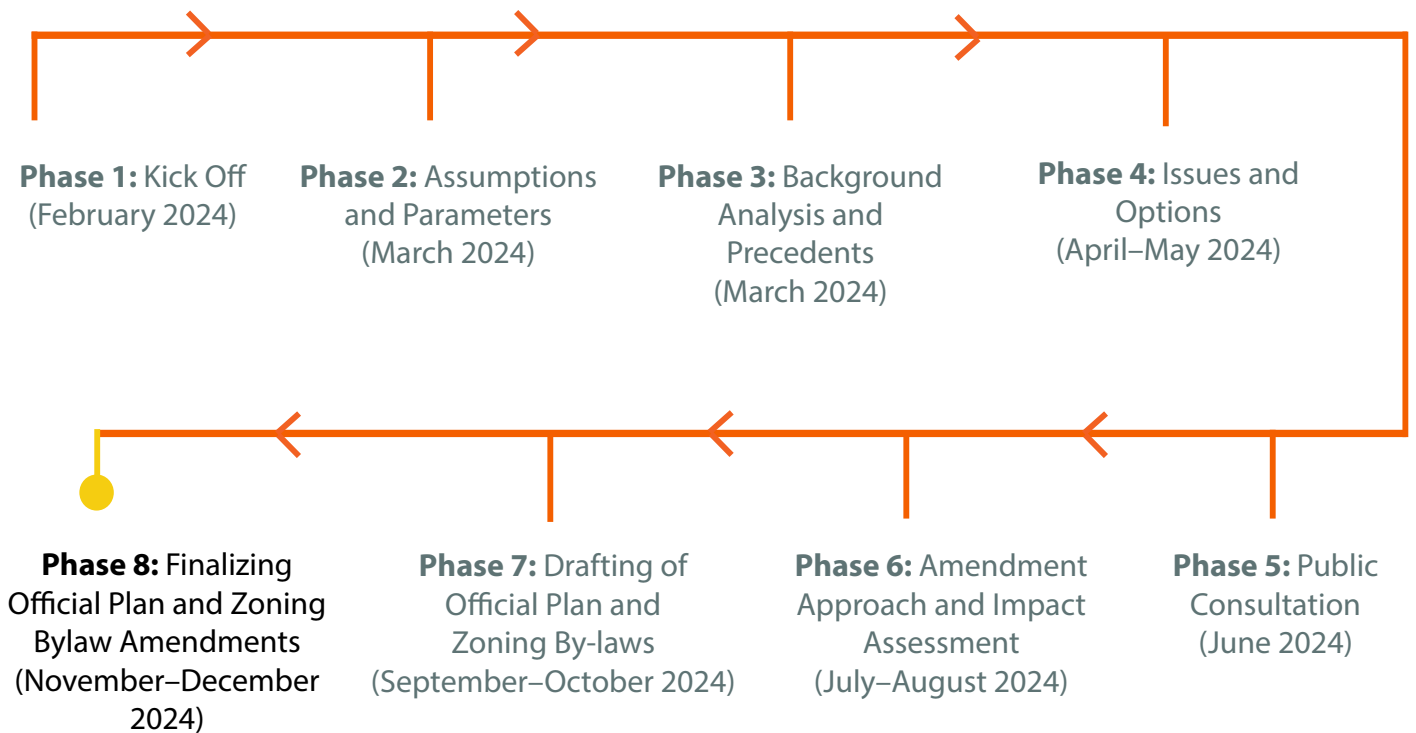
Project Methodology

This project has involved detailed study and analysis related to planning policy, built form, transportation, and municipal servicing.

Our multi-disciplinary consulting team assessed Richmond Hill’s existing conditions, precedent municipalities’ approaches to gentle intensification, built form options for the range of properties in Richmond Hill, parking and transportation impacts, and the capacity of municipal water and wastewater services to accommodate additional housing.

We hosted public open houses and online engagements to hear perspectives from residents on housing needs and the planning policy framework for gentle intensification (see, “Public Engagement Summary Report”).

We worked collaboratively with an Internal Technical Advisory Team (ITAT) of City staff from various departments throughout the project to interpret results, discuss options, and refine the recommendations.



Related City Studies and Projects

Official Plan Review

The City of Richmond Hill is currently revising its Official Plan to guide future land use and development through 2041.

This update aims to continue transforming suburban neighbourhoods into a more vibrant, inclusive community that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. The Planning Act requires municipalities to update their Official Plans every 5 years, ensuring alignment with provincial policies and current urban challenges.

To date, four OPAs have received final approval and are currently in effect:

- OPA 18.2 – Leslie Street Institutional Area (approved December 25, 2020)
- OPA 18.3 – Vision and City Structure (approved September 9, 2022)
- OPA 18.4 – Neighbourhoods (approved September 9, 2022)
- OPA 18.7 – Newkirk Local Centre (approved March 26, 2024)

The following OPAs have been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal:

- OPA 18.5 – Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA
- OPA 18.6 – Village Local Centre
- OPA 18.8 – Oak Ridges Local Centre

The City's planning team is working on the final amendment, which will focus on provincial policy conformity, employment, housekeeping, and MTSA/corridor planning.

Comprehensive Zoning By-law Project

The City of Richmond Hill is currently conducting a thorough review of its multiple existing Zoning By-laws to align with the policies and vision outlined in its Official Plan, which is also undergoing an update. The goal of the City's review is to create a single, Comprehensive Zoning By-law that is user-friendly, easy to administer, enforce, and understand; reflective of current and emerging planning and development trends; and fully accessible online in an interactive format.

The project is currently in Phase 2, known as Strategic Directions. This phase aims to provide key recommendations for drafting the Comprehensive Zoning By-law, which will be completed in stages. These recommendations are presented in a series of Strategic Directions Reports (SDRs) which, to date, have covered:

- Format, Structure, and Layout of the New Comprehensive Zoning By-law;
- Neighbourhoods;
- Yonge & Carrville/16th Key Development Area and three Local Centres (Village, Oak Ridges, and Newkirk); and,
- Parking and Loading.

Alignment with the HAF Project

Based on Council direction, the HAF project is highly focused, addressing specific goals and challenges. The Official Plan Update and Zone Richmond Hill projects may result in further revisions or harmonization of the proposed amendments from the HAF project.

2. Summary of City's Current Regulatory Approach

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The City of Richmond Hill's planning policy framework forms the basis for our understanding of this project and how the objectives relate to broader city-building goals. An updated policy analysis has been prepared and appended to this Report, which considers forthcoming changes to the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Most of the City's future development will happen through intensification. New growth, particularly residential intensification, will be prioritized for the centres and corridors and then, to a lesser extent, Neighbourhoods. Housing is an important priority for the City. A mix and range of housing types and affordability are encouraged to meet the needs of the whole community.

The gentle density envisioned through the HAF project aligns with the City's intensification and housing policy directions.

4 Units

The City has incrementally developed its current planning framework for ARUs, in step with evolving Provincial framework. In the OP, ARUs are defined as:

Additional Residential Unit means a single accessory dwelling unit within a ground-related dwelling and/ or a single 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.

The OP provides for ARUs, without specifying a number of permitted ARUs per lot, in accordance with Policy 3.1.5(5).

Policy 3.1.5(5)

Additional residential units may be permitted within the City in accordance with the following policies:

- a. *Additional residential units are permitted in areas zoned for residential development.*
- b. *Notwithstanding (a), an additional residential unit is not permitted:

 - i. *on hazard lands or hazardous sites;*
 - ii. *on lands within the "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core" and "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage" designations;*
 - or,
 - iii. *on lands within the Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside – Natural Core designation.**
- c. *Notwithstanding the definition of additional residential unit, where lands are designated "Oak Ridges Moraine Countryside", only one additional residential unit is permitted within a single detached dwelling.*
- d. *The dwelling and additional residential unit(s) meet all Provincial building code and fire code regulations and requirements.*
- e. *Exterior changes to the existing ground-related dwelling are compatible with the character of the area.*

ARUs are considered to be an accessory use to a residential use. Multi-unit housing forms arising from the development of ARUs are treated as if they are single dwellings, although this is not explicit in any policy or definition. There is a lack of clarity and consistency in OP policies applicable to low-rise multi-unit housing forms, mostly resulting from the Province-led incremental adjustments to the planning framework for ARUs.

There are several parent zoning by-laws that permit duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, and functionally equivalent variations of these typologies ("legacy multiplexes"). Although these dwelling types are permitted, they are uncommon in Richmond Hill, with developers of the day favouring single detached dwellings.

By-law 13-21 was adopted in 2021 and permits up to two ARUs (plus the primary dwelling unit) in zones city-wide that permit single detached houses, semi-detached houses, and specific types of townhouses with certain restrictions.

By-law 13-21 defines an ARU as "a self-contained dwelling unit accessory to the primary dwelling unit". By-law 13-21 provides development standards for ARUs, summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of ARU development standards from By-law 13-21.

Development Standard	ARU in Existing House	ARU in Detached Accessory Structure	ARU Attached to Detached Garage	ARU Above Detached Garage
Maximum # of ARU permitted	1 (total 2 per lot)	1 (total 2 per lot)		
Minimum Side and Rear Yard Setback	1.2 metres			
Maximum Height	<i>See applicable Zoning By-law</i>	4.2 metres	4.2 metres	8.5 metres (2 storeys)
Maximum Floor Area	<i>See applicable Zoning By-law</i>	40 square metres	40 square metres for ARU and 40 square metres for detached garage	55 square metres if enclosed stair access or 40 square metres with unenclosed stair access
Maximum Lot Coverage	<i>See applicable Zoning By-law</i>	See site specific Zoning By-law	See site specific Zoning By-law	See site specific Zoning By-law
Parking Spaces	1 parking space per ARU with some exceptions			

4 Storeys

The OP recognizes Centres and Corridors as areas appropriate for intensification, accommodating the highest densities and the widest range of uses within the city. From this perspective, Centres and Corridors are highly suitable locations for 4-storey (and taller) buildings.

- Richmond Hill Centre
- Yonge & Bernard KDA
- Yonge & 16th/Carville KDA
- Yonge Street Regional Corridor
- Highway 7 Regional Corridor
- Newkirk Local Centre
- Village Local Centre
- Major Mackenzie Local Corridor

The density of development within Centres and Corridors shall be informed by various factors, including transition to adjacent low-rise Neighbourhoods. The concept of transition is that building heights and densities will gradually decrease from their maximums within the Centres and Corridors designation to a lower-scale at the periphery of the Centres and Corridors designation that abuts a low-rise Neighbourhoods designation. The OP uses a 45-degree angular plane as the tool to provide transition.

Policy 3.4.1(55)

To ensure built form compatibility and transition of building heights with adjacent low-density residential and medium density residential areas in Neighbourhoods, development within the centres and corridors shall:

- a. Provide suitable massing and design, in order to achieve skyview, light and building separation. Unless otherwise specified in Chapter 4 (Land Use) of this Plan, the City shall apply a 45 degree angular view plane, as a means to measure suitability.

 - i. Where there is a street separating the Neighbourhood designation from the centres and corridors designation, the angular view plane shall be measured from the adjacent low density residential property line located in the Neighbourhood designation.*
 - ii. In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the centres and corridors, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, a building structure up to 10 metres in height may protrude into the angular view plane.**

Angular planes become problematic on properties closest to where the angular plane is measured from, especially when it is measured from grade. Angular planes can produce exaggeratedly low maximum building heights on properties designated for higher densities. This effect is most acute on constrained properties. To combat this, Policy 3.4.1(55) provides for buildings up to 10.0 metres in height to penetrate the angular plane. This facilitates the creation of 3 storey buildings on mixed-use properties abutting Neighbourhoods. Policies for Richmond Hill Centre (10.3.4(3)) and the Yonge Street & Bernard Avenue KDA (12.2.4.2(2)) address this issue in a slightly different way: by measuring the 45-degree angular plane from 10.0 metres above grade.

Policy 10.3.4(3)

In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the RHC, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, the angular plane as described in Policy 3.4.1(55) of the Part 1 Plan may be measured from 10 metres above grade at the lot line.

There are only a few specific locations within MTSA's with a centres or corridors designation where there are OP-designated maximum building heights (or base building heights) of less than 4 storeys:

- "Neighbourhood Edge" properties in the Yonge & Bernard Key Development Area (KDA);
- Base building heights in Newkirk Local Centre; and
- Base building heights in the Village Local Centre.

The in-force zoning for the centres and corridors is generally not up-to-date and not aligned with the OP policy. These areas are covered by an assortment of residential, commercial, and mixed-use zones with varying use permissions and maximum heights.

3. Recommendations

3. Recommendations

4 Units

Overall Approach

The directive from Council for this project is to bring forward amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law that will permit up to three additional residential units on properties with a single detached, semi-detached or rowhouse dwelling unit (for a total of four units per lot).

Under this directive from Council, we have been targeted in the amendments proposed, updating the City's existing regulatory framework only insofar as to permit the four units per lot and comply with applicable provincial planning legislation, regulation and policy.

Through our work on this project, we have discovered inconsistencies, overlap, and lack of clarity in some of the City's policies and zoning by-law regulations that have broader impacts beyond additional residential units. It is beyond the scope of this project to address these, and a task better suited to the Official Plan Review and Comprehensive Zoning By-law projects.

Recommendation #1: We recommend the Official Plan Review and Comprehensive Zoning By-law projects holistically assess the regulatory framework for low-rise, multi-unit housing forms and refine the framework.

Specifically, we recommend moving towards a framework that does not distinguish low-rise multi-unit housing forms based on the number of units they contain or the arrangement of these units within the building. The term "multiplex" may be used to refer, collectively, to dwellings with ARUs, duplexes, triplexes, quadruplexes, and other low-rise, multi-unit housing forms. Additionally, the definitions and city-wide permissions for low-density and medium-density residential uses should be reconsidered and aligned with the expanded permissions for ARUs.

Official Plan Amendment

Terms and definitions

We reviewed all relevant terms and definitions. Our recommended updates to terms and definitions are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Recommended amendments to defined terms in the Official Plan.

Term	Current Definition	Commentary	Recommended Definition
Additional Residential Unit	ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT means a single accessory dwelling unit within a ground-related dwelling and/or a single 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.	The use of the word “single” is likely a remnant of the definition of the term “secondary suite”, which was amended by OPA-23. Ground-related dwellings are no longer limited to one accessory dwelling unit. Recommendation #2: Remove the word “single” from the OP definition of additional residential unit	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.
Development	DEVELOPMENT means any land use proposal or application for which an approval is required under the Planning Act, including but not limited to the creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the erection of a building or structure, but does not include: a. Activities that create or maintain infrastructure authorized under an Environmental Assessment, Planning Act, or Condominium Act process; or b. Works subject to the Drainage Act.	Applications for minor variances under Section 45 of the Planning Act would cause ARUs to be considered development. OP policies related to development are generally inappropriate for small-scale development, such as creating ARUs. Recommendation #3: Consider the broader impacts of an OP definition of development that excludes activities related to the creation of one or more ARUs. Implement recommended definition, if appropriate.	DEVELOPMENT means any land use proposal or application for which approval is required under the Planning Act, including but not limited to the creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the erection of a building or structure, but does not include: a. Activities that create or maintain infrastructure authorized under an Environmental Assessment, Planning Act, or Condominium Act process; or b. Works subject to the Drainage Act; or c. Activities related to the creation of one or more additional residential units.

Outdoor amenity space

Access to outdoor amenity space is important for quality of life for residents of additional residential units. During public consultations, the idea of shared outdoor amenity space was further suggested as a way to build a sense of community between residents. The OP can encourage the provision of outdoor amenity space.

Recommendation #4: Create a new policy encouraging the provision of outdoor amenity space, which may include shared spaces, on lots containing ARUs.

Guidance for minor variance

Given the diversity of properties in Richmond Hill, it is inevitable that minor variances to the zoning by-law standards related to ARUs will be sought. There are certain worthwhile objectives that should be given additional weight when the Committee of Adjustment is considering approving variances. These include:

- The ability to convert a legally existing accessory structure for ARUs;
- The ability to create a third ARU on a small property that cannot accommodate multiple parking spaces;
- Creating accessible or barrier-free ARUs; and
- Preserving mature trees.

Recommendation #5: Encourage the Committee of Adjustment to consider minor variances under Section 45 of the Planning Act to achieve specified objectives.

Locational criteria for medium density residential

Policy 4.9.1.2(2) limits medium density residential development to lands with frontage on:

- an arterial street;
- a collector street within walking distance to a public transit stop;
- a local street in proximity to an existing medium- or high-density residential development; or
- a street adjacent to a designated centre or corridor.

Until such a time that Recommendation #1 can be completed, there will remain some ambiguity in the definitions of low-rise housing forms arising through the creation of ARUs and certain medium density residential typologies such as triplexes and fourplexes. For clarity in the short term, the OP should specify that the locational criteria of Policy 4.9.1.2(2) are not intended to apply to ARUs.

Recommendation #6: Create a new policy that states low-rise housing forms arising through the creation of ARUs are not considered medium density residential and will not be subject to policy 4.9.1.2(2).

Zoning By-law Amendment

Repeal of By-law 13-21

Many aspects of By-law 13-21 require updating. Considering scale of changes required, we recommend repealing By-law 13-21 and adopting a new by-law in a similar structure. In the absence of a single comprehensive zoning by-law, this approach makes zoning regulations for ARUs more accessible to the public and simpler for City staff to implement since they will not need to cross-reference multiple by-laws.

Recommendation #7: Repeal By-law 13-21 and adopt a new by-law to implement the omnibus zoning by-law amendment.

Terms and definitions

To facilitate effective regulation, “additional residential unit” and “accessory residential building” must be defined within the Zoning By-laws. We propose the following definitions:

Additional Residential Unit means a self-contained dwelling unit permitted in addition to a primary dwelling unit. The addition of an additional residential unit does not change a primary dwelling into any other type of residential building.

This proposed definition maintains the definition established under By-law 13-21, with clarification that the addition of an ARU does not change the primary dwelling into any other type of residential building, such as a duplex or triplex. The purpose is to prevent instances where the development of ARUs leads a dwelling to be reclassified (for example, as a triplex) as a dwelling type that is not permitted in the zone.

Accessory Residential Building means a detached building containing one or more Additional Residential Units located on the same lot as and accessory to a primary dwelling.

Previously under By-law 13-21, Additional Residential Units were permitted to locate within a Detached Accessory Structure. Detached Accessory Structures include detached garages, sheds, and gazebos. The definition for Detached Accessory Structure was incongruent with the type of building necessary for human habitation. We also wanted to apply different development standards for accessory buildings containing ARUs. The new term, Accessory Residential Building, more accurately describes the use and allows for independent regulation.

Recommendation #8: Add ZBL definitions for Additional Residential Unit and Accessory Residential Building.

Terms and definitions

Several additional terms must be defined within the by-law for the purpose of calculating certain metrics related to development standards for ARUs. These include:

- “Building coverage” to calculate building coverage for an Accessory Residential Building;
- “Soft landscaping” and “rear yard”, to calculate rear yard soft landscaping; and
- “Main wall” to calculate main wall height for an Accessory Residential Building.

Recommendation #9: Provide definitions for Building Coverage, Soft Landscaping, Rear Yard, and Main Wall when referenced within the amending by-law.

Uses permissions

To conform with the Planning Act the Zoning By-laws must permit Additional Residential Units in conjunction with a single detached house, semi-detached house, or rowhouse. Richmond Hill’s Zoning By-laws use assorted terminology to refer to these building types. Duplexes and triplexes are also eligible for Additional Residential Units because they meet the requirements under the Planning Act. Stacked townhouses are not eligible for Additional Residential Units because, legally, they are stratified condominium units, which do not meet the requirements under the Planning Act.

Recommendation #10: Permit Additional Residential Units in all dwelling types in the Zoning By-laws that are functionally-equivalent to single detached houses, semi-detached houses, and rowhouses and meet the requirements under the Planning Act.

Permitting up to three (3) ARUs per lot (for a total of four units) will facilitate the construction of new homes to meet demand in Richmond Hill. It will increase housing choice and diversity, as well as facilitate aging-in-place. This change will also use existing municipal infrastructure more efficiently.

We suggest flexibility in how ARUs are distributed between the primary dwelling unit and any Accessory Residential Building on the lot. Permitting up to two (2) ARUs in a Residential Accessory Structure would facilitate the creation of four units on a property (with two units in the primary dwelling unit and two units in the Accessory Residential Building) without triggering the more complicated and costly Ontario Building Code (OBC) requirements when three or more dwelling units are located in a single building. Without triggering the 3-unit-threshold for the OBC, small-scale development is more feasible from both a design and financial perspective.

Recommendation #11: Permit up to three (3) ARUs per lot, including a maximum of two (2) ARUs located in an Accessory Residential Building.

To conform with provincial and municipal planning policy, the Zoning By-laws must restrict development of ARUs on hazard lands and sites (such as flood plains) and in specified areas under the Greenbelt Plan (2017) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017). These restrictions may be a complete prohibition on ARUs or a limit of one ARU in conjunction with a single detached house.

Recommendation #12: Prohibit the development of ARUs in all flood plain zones, Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Zone, and Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core Zone. Place a limit of one (1) ARU per lot in the Oak Ridges Moraine Countryside Zone, Oak Ridges Moraine Hamlet Zone, and the Agricultural One Zone.

Primary dwelling unit

This zoning by-law amendment does not impact the development standards (including height, density, setbacks, lot coverage, etc.) established in the Zoning By-laws for the primary dwelling unit, with the exception of permitting multiple entrances on the front building elevation (with some restrictions) as well as permitting an entrance in a side wall provided a minimum 1.0 metre side yard setback is provided.

Accessory Residential Building

The standards for ARUs in an accessory building under By-law 13-21 facilitate small, studio or 1-bedroom units. In pursuit of housing diversity and choice, including accommodations appropriate for larger households, we recommend modifications to the standards to permit larger Accessory Residential Buildings. Larger structures can accommodate 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units. Larger structures also create opportunity for two (2) dwelling units to be contained within a single Accessory Residential Building.

Not all properties in Richmond Hill are suitable for larger Accessory Residential Buildings. We propose building envelope standards that control the Accessory Residential Building on all sides:

- Minimum side/flankage yard setback;
- Minimum rear yard setback;
- Minimum separation distance from a primary unit on the same lot; and
- Maximum main wall and building heights.

Setbacks and separation distance work together to control the footprint of the Accessory Residential Building based on the lot dimensions. As lot frontage or depth changes, the maximum footprint of the structure adjusts proportionally. Larger properties are permitted larger structures; smaller properties are permitted smaller structures. Some areas in Richmond Hill have very large properties, therefore a maximum lot coverage for Accessory Residential Building is proposed to ensure the scale of these structures remains appropriate in these

contexts.

Recommendation #13: Apply the following development standards for Accessory Residential

Permitted location on a lot	Rear yard
Minimum side yard setback	1.2 metres
Minimum rear yard setback	1.2 metres
Minimum separation distance	6.0 metres
Maximum building coverage	80.0 square metres
Maximum main wall height	6.0 metres
Maximum height	7.5 metres and 2 storeys

A detailed description of the rationale for each recommended development standard can be found in the “Built Form Memorandum”. Development standards are demonstrated in Figure 2 (Page 18).

To reduce overlook on neighbouring residential properties, rooftop amenity areas will not be permitted. Balconies will also be prohibited on side or rear building elevations facing a lot line that abuts a lot in a residential zone.

Recommendation #14: Restrict balconies and rooftop amenity areas on Accessory Residential Buildings.

Recognizing the existing permissions for an ARU to locate above a detached garage under By-law 13-21, we propose continuing this permission and removing the requirement for the detached garage to abut a lane.

Recommendation #15: Permit Accessory Residential Buildings to have an integral garage, provided development standards related to detached garages and Accessory Residential Buildings are met.

Soft landscaping allows stormwater to be absorbed into the ground, minimizing runoff. Stormwater retention is critical to prevent localized flooding (and associated risks to lives and property), recharge groundwater, and preserve the capacity of storm sewers during rainfall

events.

Soft landscaping has other environmental benefits such as supporting biodiversity and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Recommendation #16: For lots with an Accessory Residential Building, require that a minimum 50% of the rear yard be soft landscaping.

Unit entrances

City staff advised that current zoning standards requiring a minimum side yard setback of 1.2 metres where a dwelling unit entrance is located in the side yard or rear yard are difficult to interpret and are a common reason for minor variance applications related to ARUs. The intent is to provide clear access to unit entrances but the setback applies to the full extent of the side yard, regardless of where the unit entrance is located, which is not appropriate and created an unintended burden. Instead of a setback, we propose standards related to providing a clear access path to each unit entrance.

Recommendation #17: Require a 1.0-metre-wide, hard landscaped clear access path to each unit entrance. No encroachments are permitted. A vertical clearance of at least 2.1 metres must be provided for the length of the clear access path.

In addition to these clear access path standards, minimum side yard setbacks apply. For the primary dwelling unit on a lot, the parent ZBL dictates the setbacks. Generally, parent ZBLs require a setback of 1.2 metres or greater, with select encroachments permitted. For Accessory Residential Buildings, new standards for setbacks are proposed, as previously described.

These requirements have been coordinated with the City’s emergency services. They will be implemented through zoning but may not be reduced by the Committee of Adjustment (via applications under Section 45 of the Planning Act) because they also form requirements under the Ontario Building Code. We further recommend that Building Services develop a stamp with the access requirements, to be included on site plans for ARU developments.

Regulations around unit entrances can impact unit layouts and arrangement on a low-rise multi-unit property. To provide flexibility, we recommend not to limit the number of unit entrances on the front elevation of the building. However, we propose that a maximum of two (2) unit entrances are permitted to be visible on the front building elevation. Additional entrances may be located below grade or perpendicular to the street. This is demonstrated in Figure 1 (Page 17). This protects against a façade that is dominated by doors, thus maintaining neighbourhood character.

Recommendation #18: Permit up to two (2) entrances to dwelling units to be permitted above grade on the front building elevation of the primary dwelling and oriented parallel to the street. Additional entrances may be located below grade and/or oriented perpendicular to the street.

Parking

A “Transportation & Parking Memorandum” was prepared by TYLin to assess the parking needs of ARUs and recommend appropriate parking standards. The proposed parking standards also respond to requirements under the Planning Act and O.Reg. 299/19. Table 3 depicts our recommended minimum parking spaces per lot, which is based upon the number of ARUs on the lot and which Parking Strategy Area the lot is located within. There is also an adjustment for lots containing 3 ARUs that have a frontage of less than 9.0 metres, since these properties cannot physically accommodate more than two parking spaces.

Recommendation #19: Require minimum parking spaces for lots containing ARUs as depicted in Table 3 (Page 17).

Provision of bicycle parking spaces supports modal shift and strengthens the rationale for reduced parking minimums for multiplexes. This direction is aligned with City policies regarding transportation and environment. The characteristics of the bicycle parking spaces should not be so strictly controlled that it creates an unreasonable burden on the property owner.

Recommendation #20: Require a minimum of one (1) long-term, weather-protected bicycle parking space per ARU in PSA 1, PSA 2, and PSA 3.

Home occupations

A home occupation is an occupation or profession conducted from a dwelling unit but is accessory to the principal residential use. The OP policies of 3.3.3.3 support the establishment of home occupations and live-work units within Neighbourhoods to support a “work from neighbourhood” approach and help create complete communities. Policy 3.3.2(10) provides the requirements for home occupations, including limits on the number of employees, no outdoor storage or display, and that the built form of the dwelling keeps with the residential character of the area.

The Zoning By-laws define and regulate home occupations. For example, in By-law 91-13 home occupation is defined broadly:

HOME OCCUPATION means an economic enterprise operated within a dwelling unit. Incidental and secondary to the residential use.

The Zoning By-laws provide standards for the home occupation use and mitigate potential land use conflicts with the residential uses in the zone. Zoning restricts home occupations that are too large, create nuisance, generate noise or emissions, create too much vehicular or pedestrian traffic, or impact the aesthetic or residential character of the dwelling.

Considering the policy objectives for encouraging home occupation uses in Neighbourhoods, the broad definition of home occupation (which would include remote work), and the existing robust regulatory framework to mitigate potential land use conflicts, we find the current prohibition on home occupation uses in ARUs to be unsupportable. It may also have significant equity impacts, limiting the employment opportunities for renters compared to home owners.

Recommendation #21: Home occupations should be permitted in ARUs, subject to the appropriate zoning standards to mitigate land use conflicts. Alternatively, the definition of home occupation in the OP and ZBL could be narrowed.

Figure 1. Three entrances on the front elevation of a multiplex.

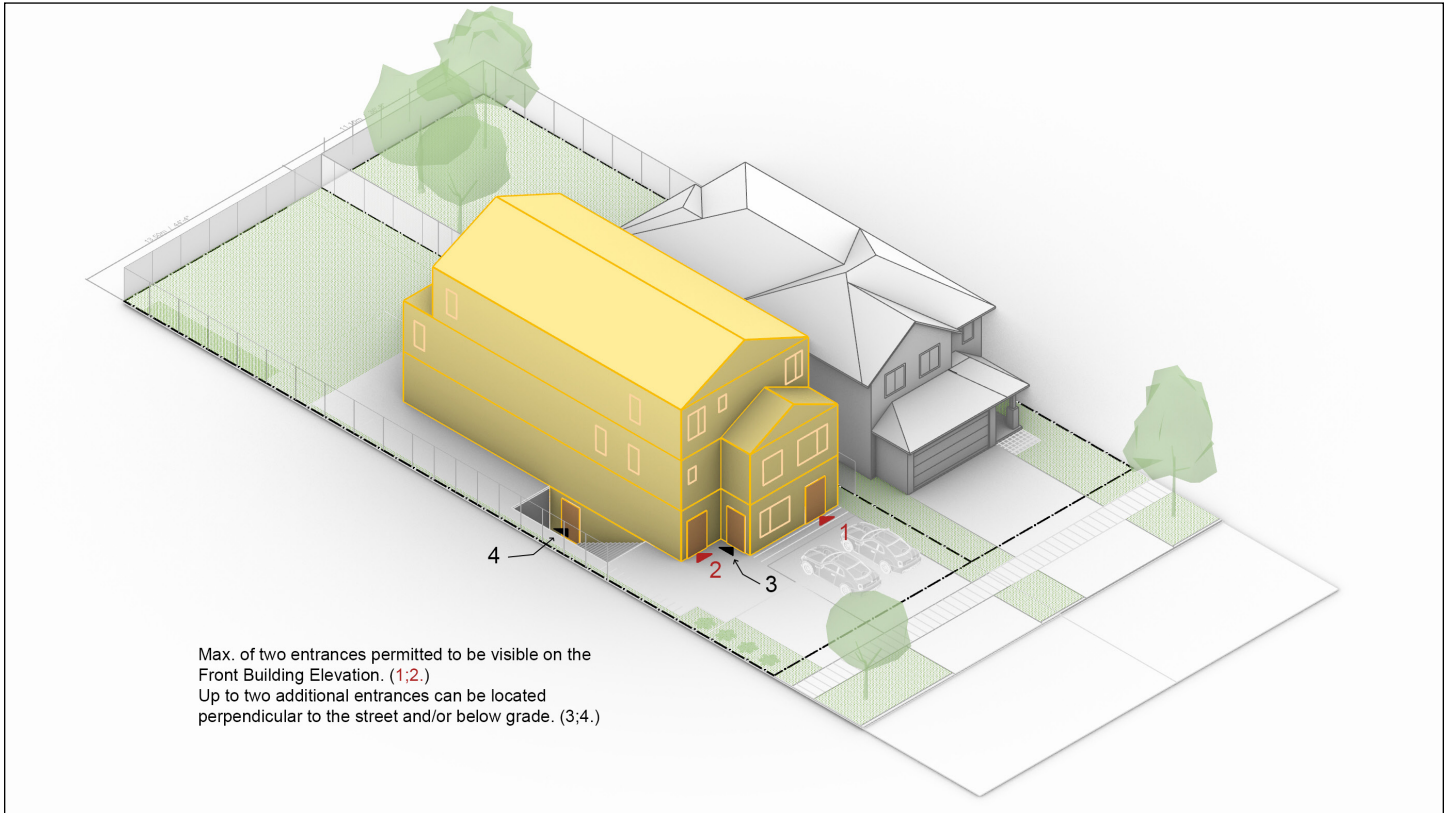
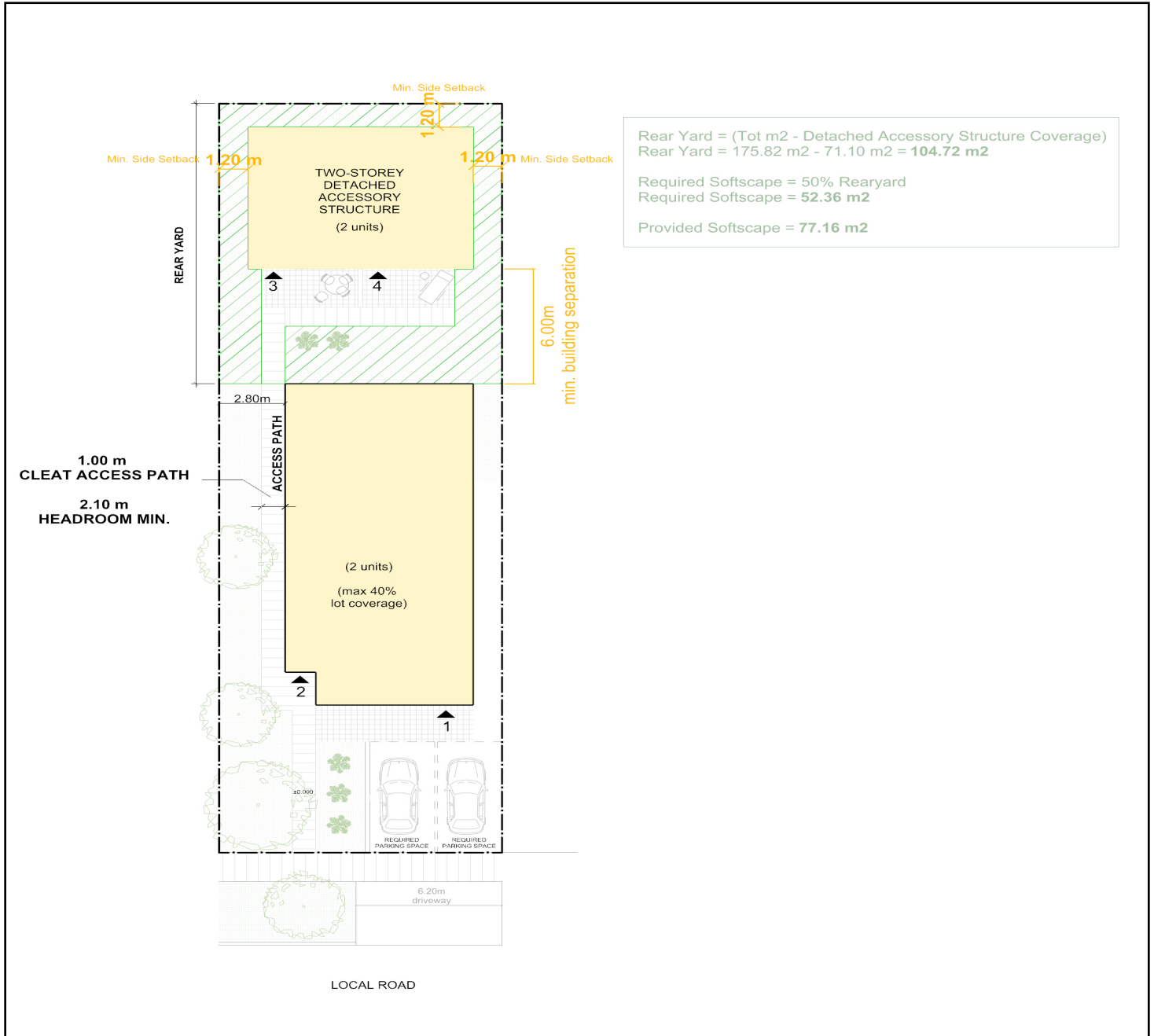


Table 3. Minimum number of parking spaces per lot, based on number of ARUs and the location of the lot

	PSA 1	PSA 2	PSA 3	PSA 4	<9 metre Frontage
Lot containing 1 ARU	0	1	1	2	As applicable based on PSA
Lot containing 2 ARUs	0	1	1	2	As applicable based on PSA
Lot containing 3 ARUs	0	1	2	3	2 for PSA 4; otherwise as applicable based on PSA

Figure 2. Recommended development standards for Accessory Residential Building (Recommendation #13)



Other Considerations

Municipal Servicing

TYLin conducted modelling of the City's water and wastewater to assess the ability of existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate ARUs now and through to the planning horizon of 2051. The modelling revealed there are areas of the city where the infrastructure can accommodate the development of ARUs. However, there are also areas of the city where there are existing constraints in the water and wastewater networks.

Where existing constraints exist, there is theoretically no remaining service capacity. In that context, no development of any kind should be considered in that area. In a more practical sense, these "constrained areas" really present a risk that allowing any number of new units could result in servicing conditions which fail to meet the intended level of service. As the total number of additional units in an area increases, so does the risk of a potential adverse impact.

While the City has identified infrastructure projects aimed at removing existing constraints from the water and wastewater networks, this will not permit ARUs to be constructed in all areas without introducing a degree of risk, which may or may not be acceptable to decision makers. Additional system upgrades may need to be considered, potentially on an accelerated basis, in order to "unlock" all areas of the city for ARU development.

If the City wishes to restrict the development of ARUs in areas with servicing constraints, the mechanisms (namely, servicing allocation) exist to do so. No amendments to the OP or Zoning By-laws are anticipated arising from these results.

Tree Preservation

Mature trees are a key part of the natural environment and are safeguarded under the Richmond Hill OP, the City's Tree Preservation By-law 41-07, and the Municipal Act. The development of Additional Residential Units (ARUs) can be significantly influenced by the presence of mature trees, as their root systems and protection measures may limit where ARUs can be built.

If constructed too close to a mature tree, the ARU's foundation may be at risk from the tree's roots, while the tree itself could suffer from restricted access to water and oxygen. To avoid these risks, construction protection measures are implemented to protect mature trees.

Residents raised concerns during public consultations about the potential impact of ARU development on mature trees, emphasizing the effect on neighbourhood quality of life. Recognizing the importance of preserving the urban forest, the OP and By-law 41-07 set clear guidelines for the protection of trees, particularly those over 20 centimeters in diameter at breast height (DBH). The OP mandates that trees be preserved during development and replaced if removal is necessary, as outlined in Policies 3.2.3.22, 3.2.3.23, and 3.2.3.24. Additionally, development must respect the character and features of neighbourhoods, ensuring that mature trees, which contribute to the area's identity, are preserved (Policy 4.9.2.4.h).

The City's Tree Preservation By-law 41-07 plays an integral role in protecting trees on private property, requiring permits for the removal of any tree with a DBH of 20 cm or more. This By-law is part of the City's broader strategy to maintain the urban forest with special protection for trees listed under the Endangered Species Act, 2007, and those located on public road allowances, regulated by By-law 40-07. Under the Municipal Act, Tree Preservation By-law Officers are authorized to conduct inspections and monitor impacts to trees (Subsection 436(1)).

We find that Richmond Hill's current policies and by-laws effectively mitigate concerns about the potential loss of mature trees due to ARU development. To reinforce the importance of preserving mature trees, we propose the inclusion of new OP policies encouraging the Committee of Adjustment to consider minor variances for ARU designs that preserve mature trees.

Enforcement Concerns

At public consultations, some residents had concerns related to ARUs that are beyond the scope of zoning. These concerns are discussed below. It is our opinion that these concerns are best handled through by-law enforcement.

Property Standards

Property standards play a critical role in regulating ARUs to ensure they meet safety, health, and quality of life for all residents. During public consultations, some concerns were raised about rental tenure, with a perception that rental properties could degrade property standards, create nuisances, or compromise safety. However, many residents also emphasized the need to change this negative stigma, recognizing rental units as a legitimate and necessary part of the housing supply. Richmond Hill's Property Standards By-law No. 62-24 regulates aspects of property maintenance, including structural integrity, utilities, exterior lighting, fences, retaining walls, signage, vacant properties, accessory buildings, and rental units. This by-law ensures that all residential properties, including ARUs, uphold a high standard of living. Additionally, ARUs must comply with public health and safety regulations, including the Ontario Building Code and Ontario Fire Code, to protect residents from potential hazards. Residents with a specific property standards concern should be advised to contact the City's by-law enforcement officers.

Noise

During public consultations, some residents expressed concerns about increased noise levels in neighbourhoods with higher population densities due to the development of ARUs. Additional residents may result in more noise from everyday activities, including increased vehicle traffic. Furthermore, noise transmission through shared walls or outdoor spaces can cause disturbances. Richmond Hill's Noise By-law No. 43-20 outlines certain times and limits that certain noises are allowed. The noise generated by small increases in density in neighbourhoods is not anticipated to be materially different than existing conditions. Residents with a specific noise concern should be advised to contact the City's by-law enforcement officers.

Illegal parking

Residents expressed concerns around increased demand for limited parking in neighbourhoods and how this may lead to illegal parking, where vehicles may be parked in unauthorized locations, such as on lawns, overnight on streets, in front of fire lanes, or blocking access to

driveways and entrances. Parking Control By-law No. 402-89 regulates parking city-wide and ensures that vehicles do not obstruct critical access points. The Zoning By-law also limits driveway widths and prohibits parking on landscaped areas, providing an enforcement mechanism for illegal parking on private property. Residents with a specific parking concern should be advised to contact the City's by-law enforcement officers.

Construction Nuisance

The construction of new Accessory Residential Structures or renovation of existing primary dwellings to create ARUs can lead to temporary nuisances for neighbours, including noise, dust, and heavy vehicle traffic. Richmond Hill's Noise By-law No. 43-20 specifies the hours during which construction-related noise is permitted within a residential neighbourhood.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring the development of ARUs following an update to the regulatory framework will be essential to understanding the effectiveness of the proposed OPA and ZBLA. A robust monitoring program will ensure that the goals of these amendments are achieved, identify challenges or unintended outcomes early, and allow for necessary adjustments to the Zoning By-law or Official Plan to improve implementation. Additionally, a monitoring program will provide valuable data for determining whether policy or zoning changes require adjustments and foster transparency by showing the public how these amendments are influencing development across the city.

An example monitoring program is the City of Toronto Garden Suite Monitoring Program. The City of Toronto permitted garden suites city-wide on February 2, 2022, in tandem with amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The monitoring program was designed to begin two years after the amendments were approved or after the issuance of 200 garden suites, providing flexibility and a practical timeline to evaluate implementation while ensuring enough data is available in order to recommend any necessary policy and zoning changes. Toronto's program focuses on assessing the effectiveness of the Garden Suites Initiative through public and stakeholder consultations and by monitoring impacts on the tree

canopy, building permit, and minor variance applications. The monitoring program is examining aspects such as the application and permit issuance process, public inquiries, location of garden suites, lot characteristics, tree protection measures, approved and refused minor variances, and design aspects such as angular planes and setbacks, height and massing. City Staff's findings will be compiled in a report to Council, recommending any necessary policy, zoning, or other changes to improve implementation of garden suites.

We propose a similar monitoring and evaluation program for ARUs in Richmond Hill. We recommend the City could track the implementation of ARUs through building permit and minor variance applications, including data on location, number of units per lot, type of ARUs (detached or attached), and unit sizes (floor area or number of bedrooms). Monitoring tree cutting permit applications will also help assess the impact on Richmond Hill's tree canopy. The collected data on ARUs should be comprehensively assessed upon issuance of the 200th ARU-related building permit or two years after the adoption of the proposed OPA and ZBLA. Tracking the development of ARUs will also allow the City to monitor water and wastewater servicing capacity in neighbourhoods with known constraints and place restrictions on development, if required, before functional issues arise.

Recommendation #22: Develop a monitoring and evaluation program for ARUs in Richmond Hill.

Public Communications

Richmond Hill's regulatory framework for ARUs will remain fairly complex and out-of-reach for average residents until the OP Review and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Projects are complete. It is important for property owners to easily understand the ARU permissions, including any servicing constraints that may limit their ability to develop, if they are to decide to create new housing on their properties.

A communications campaign should follow the adoption of the proposed amendments to the OP and Zoning By-Laws. The City may develop a "Guide to Additional Residential Units in Richmond Hill" to educate property owners about the process of creating additional

residential units, expected costs, available financing and incentives from various levels of government, and other considerations. This Guide should be made widely available and may be advertised through social media, the City website, flyers, and existing email distribution lists.

Recommendation #23: Following the adoption of the proposed amendments, the City should undertake a public communications campaign to educate property owners on the regulatory framework for ARUs.

City-produced Designs for Residential Accessory Buildings

The time and expense of designing and constructing custom Residential Accessory Buildings will dissuade some property owners from creating Additional Residential Units on their properties. The City may opt to use its buying power to commission several designs for Residential Accessory Buildings from qualified professionals. These designs would conform with the standards of the zoning by-law and be appropriate for typical residential properties in Richmond Hill. The City-produced designs would be high-quality and aesthetically consistent with the character of the City's residential neighbourhoods.

Recommendation #24: The City should consider commissioning designs for Residential Accessory Buildings from qualified professionals which could be made available to the public.

This recommendation would incentivize ARUs and encourage the rapid development of new housing in Neighbourhoods.

4 Storeys

Overall Approach

Generally, the OP policies are supportive of 4-storey buildings in MTSAs with a centres or corridors designation. The angular plane policies (and some maximum height policies that implement the angular plane) may preclude the development of 4-storey buildings on constrained properties that directly abut the Neighbourhoods designation. Our approach is to amend these policies, building in exemptions to permit 4-storey buildings. From a zoning perspective, an omnibus amendment will provide permissions for 4-storey buildings in these areas as-of-right.

Official Plan Amendment

Recommendation #25: Amend Policy 3.4.1(55) to allow protrusions of up to 15.0 metres into the angular plane.

15.0 metres is a height that will comfortably accommodate a 4-storey building, including additional ground floor height to accommodate retail, commercial or community uses. Retail, commercial or community uses are required by the OP in some areas of centres and corridors to activate street frontages. A new, non-policy illustration will replace the existing illustration.

The effect of this amendment is that Policy 4.3.1(55) will no longer preclude 4-storey buildings on properties that immediately abut low-rise neighbourhoods. This amendment will not alter how the angular plane is measured and therefore will not have an impact on maximum heights in more central areas within the centres and corridors. Since several other area-specific policies reference and rely upon Policy 3.4.1(55), this

amendment will also have the effect of modifying those area specific policies to provide the exemption for buildings up to 15.0 metres in height, without altering how the angular plane is measured (i.e. from 10.0 metres above grade).

Recommendation #26: Update the maximum base building height, maximum building height, and building height in Policies 4.3.3.1(11)(b), 4.4.3(2) and 12.2.2(1), respectively, to 4 storeys.

In the case of Policy 12.2.2(1), the allowable height of buildings will be 3 storeys or 4 storeys, providing flexibility for different medium-density residential typologies without precluding 4-storey buildings.

The effect of this amendment will be to enable 4-storey buildings in certain areas where current OP-designated maximum heights are 3 storeys.

Recommendation #27: Minor housekeeping amendments, including deleting a reference to an obsolete policy in Policy 12.2.2(1) and deleting redundant Policy 12.2.2(3).

The effect of the housekeeping amendments will be policies that are clearer and allow for consistent application.

Zoning By-law Amendment

Recommendation #28: Adopt an omnibus zoning by-law amendment specifying the maximum height for buildings shall be up to 4 storeys and 15.0 metres, or the maximum height permitted by current zoning, if in excess of 4 storeys or 15.0 metres.

The amendment will apply to a specified area consisting of lands within a Major Transit Station Area with a centres or corridors designation under the OP and maximum building heights of 3 storeys. Certain lands that are undesirable to redevelop have been excluded.

The effect of this amendment is that 4-storey buildings will be permitted as-of-right in the specified areas.

Other Considerations

Municipal Servicing

As previously described, TYLin's modelling of Richmond Hill's water and wastewater systems revealed existing constraints. In these areas, any development introduces a risk of servicing conditions which fail to meet the intended level of service. Some of the constraints affect the areas where we are proposing to allow as-of-right 4-storey development.

4. Conclusion

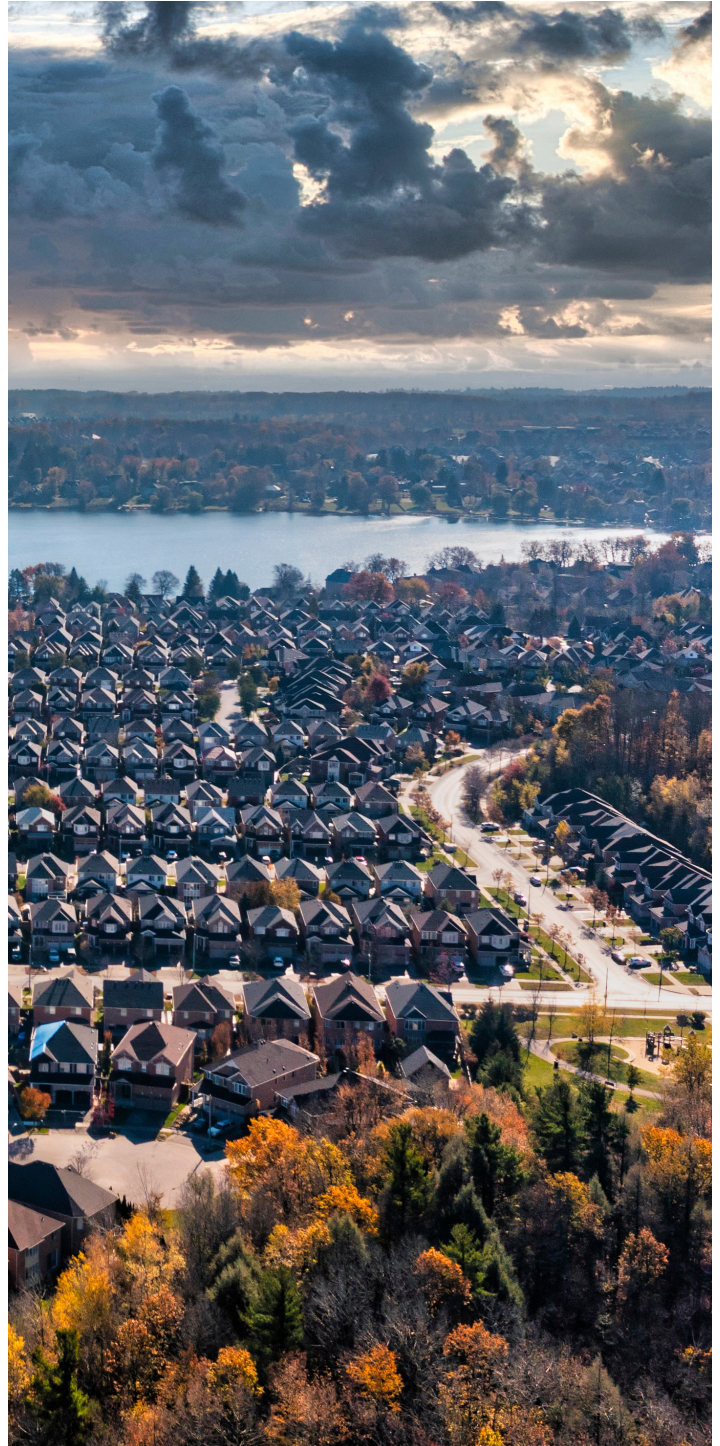
4. Conclusion

The Housing Accelerator Fund Project comes at a critical time, where housing needs are high across the province.

The project proposes amendments to the City of Richmond Hill's Official Plan and Zoning By-laws to introduce new opportunities for gentle density. The recommendations presented in this Recommendations Report will help the City remove barriers to housing development and streamline processes essential for accommodating growth.

The multi-disciplinary analysis conducted throughout this project has provided valuable insights into the existing conditions, challenges, and future opportunities in Richmond Hill and informed our recommendations. The comprehensive public engagement efforts underscored community perspectives and needs, ensuring that our planning policies are not only responsive but also inclusive.

By embracing this new planning framework, Richmond Hill can foster a more diverse housing landscape, ultimately creating a vibrant, livable community that meets the needs of all residents.



*Aerial image of a neighbourhood in Richmond Hill.
Image Source: Adobe Images*

Appendix 1

- Appendix 1A: OPA 58 (4 Units)
- Appendix 1B: By-law 143-24 (4 Units)
- Appendix 1C: OPA 59 (4 Storeys)
- Appendix 1D: By-law 144-24 (4 Storeys)
- Appendix 1E: Public Engagement Summary Report
- Appendix 1F: Planning Policy Analysis - updated October 2024
- Appendix 1G: Built Form Memorandum
- Appendix 1H: Transportation & Parking Memorandum
- Appendix 1I: Servicing Memorandum

1

**Appendix 1A:
OPA 58 (4 Units)**

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**Appendix 1B:
By-law 143-24 (4 Units)**

1

**Appendix 1C:
OPA 59 (4 Storeys)**

1

**Appendix 1D:
By-law 144-24 (4 Storeys)**

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Appendix 1E: Public Engagement Summary Report

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**Appendix 1F:
Planning Policy Analysis -
updated October 2024**

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**Appendix 1G:
Built Form Memorandum**

1

Appendix 1H: Transportation & Parking Memorandum

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**Appendix 1I:
Servicing Memorandum**



Image Source: Rehousing.ca

Engagement Summary Report

Housing Accelerator Fund Project

September 5, 2024

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Appendix C - Built Form Demonstrations	

Background

Project Overview

The City of Richmond Hill has retained Gladki Planning Associates Inc. (GPA), in association with LGA Architectural Partners (LGA), TYLin, and Aird & Berlis LLP, to undertake the Richmond Hill Housing Accelerator Fund Project.

The Federal Government has made funds available through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to local governments for initiatives aimed at increasing affordable housing supply and supporting the development of complete, low-carbon and climate resilient communities that are affordable, inclusive, equitable and diverse. In response to the City of Richmond Hill's application to the HAF, the Federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities issued two specific requests to enhance the City's application and create new housing. This project provides a response to the Minister's requests that best meets the needs and objectives of the City of Richmond Hill.

This project focuses on two related but distinct tasks to expand opportunities for gentle intensification and missing middle housing typologies in Richmond Hill:

- To propose amendments to the Official Plan (OP) and Zoning By-law (ZBL) to permit up to 4 residential units in the existing Additional Residential Unit (ARU) policies and definitions in the Official Plan and zoning by-law, where zoning permits single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling units.

- To propose amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit up to 4 storeys “as-of-right” within the Richmond Hill GO Station Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and MTSA’s along the Yonge Street and Highway 7 priority transit corridors where there is a mixed-use centre or corridor designation in the Official Plan with permissions for building heights of 3 storeys or greater.

Our work will contribute new draft policy and by-law regulation contemplating amendments to the City of Richmond Hill’s planning policy framework allowing for these new forms of gentle intensification. We will provide new planning instruments as appropriate for consideration allowing for the implementation of this new framework. This new framework will adapt the scale of intensification in some areas of the City, permitting an expansion of available housing typologies that support gentle forms of intensification and missing middle housing. The impacts of this on surrounding uses, servicing, and transportation will be assessed and will inform our recommendations.

Purpose of this Document

Public and stakeholder engagement was completed to inform the Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBLA) arising from this project. This memorandum describes the engagement programme, reports on outcomes, summarizes key themes for feedback, and suggests how public feedback may inform the OPA and ZBLA. A complete record of feedback received through engagement activities is included in *Appendices A and B*.

Overview of Engagement Activities

In June 2024, a series of public and stakeholder engagement activities sought to capture the opinions and feedback of Richmond Hill residents and other interested and impacted parties. Background on the project and education about gentle density and the planning process was shared. Several topics for public feedback were presented, including a description of the issues and options.

The engagement objectives for this project included:

- Educate the public on gentle density and the rationale for permitting additional residential units in low-rise residential neighbourhoods;
- Explain the chronology of the issue of additional residential units in Richmond Hill, including the Housing Accelerator Fund agreement entered with the Federal government;
- Build capacity for understanding the planning framework, including the Official Plan and Zoning By-laws; and
- Collect informed feedback on key issues related to the OPA and ZBLA through the use of built form demonstrations.

Built form demonstrations (*Appendix C*) were a key tool in the education and engagement programme. The demonstrations helped public audiences visualize additional residential units and understand the impact of certain proposed changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The demonstration sites represented the range of Richmond Hill’s residential properties (“4 unit” demonstrations) and mixed-use properties (“4 storey” demonstrations).

The demonstration sites included:

Six Typical Residential Sites	Two Typical Mixed-Use Sites
Single-detached house, standard lot	Small lot
Single-detached house, large lot	Large lot
Single-detached house, wide lot	
Single-detached house, deep lot	
Semi-detached house	
Townhouse	

Targeted and open-ended feedback was solicited through various means, depending on the engagement activity.

Public Engagement

Online Survey

An online survey consisting of 11 questions was open from June 4 through June 25 (3 weeks). The survey was hosted on Survey Monkey and linked from the City's project webpage. A total of **159** responses were received. 66% of respondents indicated they own a property that allows for single or semi-detached houses, or townhouses. The remaining 34% of respondents do not own such a property. Of the respondents who own a property that would be eligible for a multiplex, 60% said they are not interested in building additional residential units, 22% are interested in building additional residential units for family members, caregivers or friends, and 18% are interested in building additional residential units to earn rental income.

Summary statistics and all comments from the online survey are available in *Appendix B*.

In-person Public Meeting #1

On Tuesday, June 4, 2024, the City of Richmond Hill's Planning and Building Services department hosted an in-person public meeting at the Oak Ridges Community Centre from 6:00pm-8:00pm. The purpose was to receive feedback on the options for permitting up to four residential units on a property that is zoned to permit ground-related dwellings, as well as permitting 4 storey buildings within MTSAs with a mixed use centres or corridors designation. Approximately **6** people attended the event, primarily property owners interested in constructing additional residential units. The Ward 1 Councillor, Carol Davidson, was also in attendance.

City staff convened the meeting with opening remarks. Gladki Planning Associates (GPA) and LGA Architectural Partners (LGA) delivered a presentation that included:

- an introduction to the project, the in-force planning framework, the City's Housing Accelerator Fund agreement with the Federal government, and the concept of gentle density;
- a detailed description of the key topics for public consultation;
- an overview of the built form demonstrations; and
- how to provide feedback.

Following the presentation, an open discussion period was offered since the number of attendees was small. Attendees were able to ask questions of City staff and consultants, and share their feedback with the group. Attendees were then invited to engage with the boards around the room that displayed the built form demonstrations. Attendees reviewed the

demonstrations, wrote feedback on sticky notes, and had one-on-one conversations with members the project team.

Both the verbal and written feedback has been organized in a thematic summary in the following section. A complete record of *all* of the feedback received has been included in *Appendix A*.

Virtual Public Meeting

On Monday, June 10, 2024, the City of Richmond Hill's Planning and Building Services department hosted a virtual public meeting on Zoom from 7:00pm-9:00pm. The purpose was to receive feedback on the options for permitting up to four residential units on a property that is zoned to permit ground-related dwellings, as well as permitting 4 storey buildings within MTSA's with a mixed use centres or corridors designation. Approximately **45** people logged on to the event. Mayor David West, Deputy Mayor Godwin Chan, and Councillor Karen Cilevitz were in attendance.

City staff convened the meeting with opening remarks. GPA and LGA delivered a presentation that included:

- an introduction to the project, the in-force planning framework, the City's Housing Accelerator Fund agreement with the Federal government, and the concept of gentle density;
- a detailed description of the key topics for public consultation;
- an overview of the built form demonstrations; and
- how to provide feedback.

After the presentation, virtual participants were invited to ask questions of the project team and/or share their feedback by typing into the Q&A box or raising their (virtual) hand to speak. Participants preferred to type their comments. There were approximately **31** questions and comments submitted through the Q&A box. There were no verbal questions or comments received.

Feedback has been organized in a thematic summary in the following section. A complete record of *all* of the feedback received has been included in *Appendix A*.

In-person Public Meeting #2

On Thursday, June 13, 2024, the City of Richmond Hill's Planning and Building Services department hosted an in-person public meeting at Elgin Barrow Arena from 6:00pm-8:00pm. The purpose was to receive feedback on the options for permitting up to four residential units on a property that is zoned to permit ground-related dwellings, as well as permitting 4 storey buildings within MTSA's with a mixed use centres or corridors designation. Approximately **29** people attended the event with a variety of interests, such as tenants seeking housing within Richmond Hill, property owners interested in constructing additional residential units for various purposes, realtors, and concerned neighbours.

City staff convened the meeting with opening remarks. GPA and LGA delivered a presentation that included:

- an introduction to the project, the in-force planning framework, the City's Housing Accelerator Fund agreement with the Federal government, and the concept of gentle density;
- a detailed description of the key topics for public consultation;
- an overview of the built form demonstrations; and
- how to provide feedback.

Following the presentation, a few attendees requested the opportunity to share their feedback in town hall format instead of through the boards and one-on-one conversation with the project team. GPA facilitators were able to accommodate this request and facilitated a town hall-style conversation for approximately 30 minutes. Attendees were able to ask questions of City staff and consultants, and share their feedback with the group. Afterwards, attendees were encouraged to review the boards with the built form demonstrations, share feedback on sticky notes, and continue the conversation with members the project team. Attendees were assured that comments provided via sticky notes and directly to project team members would also form part of the public record and would be considered through the project.

Both the verbal and written feedback has been organized in a thematic summary in the following section. A complete record of *all* of the feedback received has been included in *Appendix A*.

Stakeholder Engagement

School Boards

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) noted that they will need to examine the impacts of additional residential units on student generation but at the time they did not have any comments. Regarding permitting 4 storeys as-of-right in mixed-use MTSAs, YRDSB explained that they identify new school sites and monitor development areas through the secondary planning process. If there is additional growth anticipated beyond what they have been circulated, they will need to reassess.

The York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) stated that they are aware and monitoring various initiatives throughout the Region to meet Provincial housing and growth targets. They had no specific questions or comments at the time.

Other Stakeholders

York Region Transit was contacted for comments, but none have been received as of the date of this report.

Councillor Engagement


One-on-one sessions (one hour in duration) were offered to City elected officials with the objective of providing education and an opportunity to ask questions and share ideas with the project team. A brief presentation was made by Lindsay Toth from Gladki Planning Associates and Salvatore Aiello from the City, and an open discussion period followed. Eight elected officials participated in one-on-one sessions.



The elected officials who attended asked questions of clarification regarding the following topics:

- details of the Housing Accelerator Fund agreement with the Federal Government (i.e. how the funding will be spent, timing of transfers, requirement to repay if conditions not met, etc.);
- whether multiplexes may contain dwelling rooms (i.e. rooming houses);
- where multiplex permissions would apply geographically;
- what feedback has been received from the public;
- servicing requirements;
- how to prevent tree loss;
- tax/municipal finance implications; and
- how angular planes apply in MTSAs.

Promotion

Promotion of the consultation programme was handled by the City of Richmond Hill’s Communication Department. The following table contains a summary of how consultation activities were promoted to the public:

<p>Dedicated Webpage with the most up-to-date information on the consultation and overall initiative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created an easy-to-remember web address that residents can access: RichmondHill.ca/MoreHomes • Available at all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consultations details and registration information ○ Access the online survey
<p>Social Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook posts leading up to each open house and reminder posts to complete online survey leading up to its closing • X posts leading up to each open house and reminder posts to complete online survey leading up to its closing • Paid ads to increase the exposure of the consultation and online survey  <p>The image shows a banner for an 'OPEN HOUSE' event. On the left, there is a close-up of a door handle and a key hanging from it. To the right, the text reads 'OPEN HOUSE More Homes for More People'. At the bottom left of the banner, the URL 'RichmondHill.ca/MoreHomes' is visible, and at the bottom right, there is a signature for 'Richmond Hill'.</p>
<p>Public Service Announcement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying different media outlets
<p>Richmond Hill Homepage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent banners about the consultation
<p>Richmond Hill Public Notice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The official Notice of Consultation was posted
<p>Richmond Hill Event Calendar <i>calendar.richmondhill.ca</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation dates added to the calendar, linking to RichmondHill.ca/MoreHomes for more information

<p>Promotional Posters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posted in all Richmond Hill community centres  <p>The poster features the title 'More Homes for More People' and the subtitle 'Increasing housing supply in Richmond Hill'. It lists three open house events: an in-person event on Tuesday, June 4 (6-8 p.m. at Oak Ridges Community Centre), a virtual event on Thursday, June 13 (6-8 p.m. at Elgin Barrow Arena), and another virtual event on Monday, June 10 (7-9 p.m.). A QR code is provided for a survey to help increase housing supply (June 4-17). The bottom of the poster includes the website 'RichmondHill.ca/MoreHomes' and the City of Richmond Hill logo.</p>
<p>Outdoor Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadside signs were installed across the City in the weeks leading up to the open houses.  <p>The roadside sign is a rectangular panel on a metal stand. It displays the text 'OPEN HOUSE' in large letters, followed by 'Increasing Housing Supply'. Below this, it lists three events: 'June 4, 6 p.m. Oak Ridges Community Centre', 'June 10, 7 p.m. Virtual Meeting', and 'June 13, 6 p.m. Elgin Barrow Arena'. At the bottom of the sign is the website 'RichmondHill.ca/MoreHomes'. Below the sign, a small caption reads 'Mini B* Proof (Ad Panel - 58" h x 96" w)'.</p>
<p>LCD Displays Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In all Richmond Hill's community centres and other City facilities
<p>LED Digital Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In front of Richmond Hill's Beaver Creek building and other City facilities
<p>Mayor and Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor and Council helped to spread the word by sharing promotional initiatives with their constituents.
<p>Media Exposure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 3 article on YorkRegion.com

Frequently Asked Questions

Members of the public, elected officials, and stakeholders had several common questions. Answers to these questions have been provided, below.

Why is the City considering allowing up to four residential units on a property?

Ontario is experiencing a housing crisis. Gentle density will add rental homes to the market, offer housing choice, add vibrancy to neighbourhoods with declining population, and allow for aging-in-place. Since 2021, property owners are allowed to create up to three units on each property. The proposed amendments will help to build even more homes in the city.

In November 2023, the City announced a \$31 million-dollar HAF agreement with the Federal government. This investment will back a variety of initiatives to remove barriers and speed up the process of building more housing, create new affordable housing, and improve infrastructure needed to support residential development. Part of the HAF agreement with the Federal government includes a commitment from City Council to allow four residential units on properties where zoning permits single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling units.

How would building a multiplex affect my property taxes?

The [Municipal Property Assessment Corporation](#) (MPAC) is responsible for determining the assessed value of your property. The taxes you pay for owning your property are based on the property assessment value and the tax rate given to your property class. When you make improvements to your property, such as renovations or new construction, your assessed value may increase. The City does not have control over MPAC assessments. If you dispute the assessed value of your property, you can file an appeal directly with MPAC.

Will this project impact housing affordability?

Multiplex housing will not be “affordable housing” by definition, though it may impact affordability for individuals in various ways. New supply of rental units will help meet the demand the city is experiencing. Multiplex housing will introduce more choice in the types of rental units available city-wide. It will offer an alternative to condominium-living and offer a less expensive (since the units are smaller) alternative to renting an entire house in a neighbourhood. Rental income from additional residential units could help property owners offset home ownership costs. Additional residential units used for housing elderly relatives or caregivers may reduce overall care costs and enable aging-in-place. For younger individuals, additional residential units may provide an opportunity to stay within the community as they reach adulthood.

The HAF agreement, of which this project is a part, contains additional Federal investment to increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, in the City of Richmond Hill.

How will the City ensure its infrastructure can support these additional units in neighbourhoods?

This project includes an assessment of City infrastructure, including water (drinking water and fire flows), stormwater, wastewater (sewage), and transportation. This assessment will identify existing “pinch points” that may be exacerbated by additional residential units in neighbourhoods and recommend the necessary monitoring and/or upgrades to infrastructure. This will ensure all residents, new and existing, will have well-functioning infrastructure in neighbourhoods.

Will the presentation and/or the boards be made available to the public?

Copies of the presentation deck and display boards may be requested by emailing Salvatore.Aiello@richmondhill.ca.

Thematic Summary of Feedback

This section organizes and summarizes all of the feedback received according to 5 main themes:

- Housing Needs
- Detached Accessory Structures
- Urban Design
- Parking and Transportation
- 4 Storey Buildings in Mixed-Use MTSA's
- Miscellaneous

In total **95** pieces of feedback were received at public meetings, plus **159** online survey responses. All feedback is considered part of the public record and has been organized, analysed, and summarized herein.

The thematic summary is not intended to be a verbatim account of what was said during meetings. The summary provides an overview of the main themes and key pieces of feedback received by attendees during the meeting. *Appendix A* includes a complete record of comments and questions from the three public meetings. *Appendix B* contains the summary statistics for the online survey questions.

Overall, there was mixed opinion with comments generally corresponding to one of two ideologies:

1. **Against the idea of gentle density and multiplexes (including as currently permitted) in principle.** Belief that Richmond Hill's low-rise residential neighbourhoods should be single dwellings with large yards. There are some people who disagree with the idea that Richmond Hill should build more housing of any kind and are against population growth in the city.

Folks with this view typically did not provide specific feedback on the built form demonstrations and the potential Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments.
2. **Supportive of the idea of gentle density and multiplexes, including permitting four units per property.** Some threw broad support behind the goal of building more homes, while others were more measured in their support and included specific conditions about how they would like to see multiplexes deployed in neighbourhoods.

Housing Needs

Investors and rental units

Some people expressed concerns that allowing four units per property will primarily benefit investors and will drive property values further out of reach for "average people".

There were numerous comments that demonstrated stigma around rental tenure. The perception that rental tenure would degrade property standards, create nuisance, and impact safety seemed to be driving much of the opposition to multiplexes. At public meetings, this was often followed by calls from other attendees to change the negative perception of renting and recognize it as a legitimate and necessary part of the housing solution, particularly for younger generations, new immigrants, and those unable to afford homeownership.

Housing affordability

Nearly everyone who participated in the engagement understands housing affordability to be a critical and pressing issue. Opinions differed as to whether gentle density is part of the solution. Many shared personal stories about the impact of high housing costs. There were ideas about how multiplexes in neighbourhoods could help reduce costs for both homeowners and renters alike. Others thought that the City's attention should be focused on different solutions to the housing crisis.

Supporting communities and families

Comments express a desire for a mix of housing types to foster diverse and vibrant communities. Some community members described how multiplex housing has benefitted their families over the years and express support for more housing options that can accommodate different family structures and needs, such as housing for adult children, caregivers, or seniors. For example, multigenerational homes already exist in Richmond Hill and multiplex permissions may allow properties to better meet the needs of extended families living together.

Neighbourhood change

A significant number (but not a majority) of residents stated that they chose to live in Richmond Hill's neighbourhoods because of the low population density, calm, and space. Additional density will change the neighbourhood in a way that is undesirable to them.

City Infrastructure**Infrastructure readiness**

Concerns about infrastructure readiness are common. There is an impression that City services are currently at-capacity and unable to support additional population. People are concerned that the additional load arising from permitting four units per property may overwhelm City infrastructure and cause issues for existing residents.

Upgrades aligned with growth

There is broad support for upgrading community infrastructure of all sorts as the city grows. Public transit was commonly cited as a top priority, along with water, sewage, electricity, hospitals, recreation facilities, and social services.

Parking and Transportation**Integrated planning**

There were requests for better integrated land use and transportation planning for Richmond Hill's neighbourhoods. Participants in the engagement recommended a multi-prong approach of improving transit and active transportation infrastructure, providing commercial uses within walking distance of residential areas, and studying other innovative solutions to decrease the need for personal vehicles.

Transit service levels

There were numerous complaints about poor transit service levels in the city and how this necessitates vehicle ownership. Online survey respondents generally indicated a willingness to use public transit and, to a lesser extent, active transportation if service levels and infrastructure were improved. There is an understanding amongst those advocating for reduced parking requirements that transit service levels will need to increase over the long-term to serve residents without vehicles.

Minimum parking rates for multiplexes

There were mixed opinions on appropriate minimum parking rates with recommendations from the public ranging from 0 to 2 spaces per unit (Note: municipalities may not require more than 1 space per unit under the *Planning Act*). Some participants promoted a market-based approach for the provision of parking, with no minimums. There was moderate support for decreasing parking minimums for properties near transit.

Street parking

There were calls for and against street parking. Some suggested that allowing on-street parking will alleviate parking issues for both multiplexes and single dwellings, while generating revenue for the City and acting as a traffic calming measure. Others raised issue with on-street parking as being unsightly and exacerbating traffic congestion.

Traffic in the Village Core District

A couple individuals raised specific concerns about parking and traffic in the Village Core District.

Link to urban design

There was some understanding and discussion of the impact of parking on urban design. A few people commented that providing parking spaces decreases buildable area on a property. Some people remarked that too many vehicles parked in front of a home is distasteful. Other people called for parking maximums to ensure enough space for soft landscaping in front yards.

Detached Accessory Structures**Size of detached accessory structures**

There was split opinion on increasing the maximum lot coverage and allowing two storeys (with 53% favouring allowing larger structures on the online survey). We recorded concerns about privacy, access to sunlight, and setbacks from adjacent properties. Supporters of larger structures liked the idea that 2 and 3-bedroom units could be achieved, providing a new housing typology suitable for families.

Number of units

In general, there was support for two units in a detached accessory structure, as long as it is appropriately sized. One respondent questioned whether allowing two units will have the effect of producing small, condo-sized units rather than larger, family-sized units.

Separation distance

Although there were concerns about the related topics of shared amenity space, soft landscaping, trees, and side/rear yard setbacks, participants in the engagement did not have strong or consistent opinions about separation distance. Some thought it ought to be small, some thought it ought to be large, and some thought maximum flexibility would be best.

Privacy

Designing detached accessory structures to mitigate privacy concerns of neighbours was articulated as an important priority to many. Some suggestions included regulating the massing of the second storey, reducing the height of structures, and increasing setbacks. Although neighbours were concerned about the privacy impact of windows facing property lines, they were likewise unhappy with the idea of blank walls facing property lines.

Urban Design

Integration of multiplexes

There are mixed feelings about the design and integration of multiplexes into existing neighborhoods. Some appreciate the potential for well-designed multiplexes to “fit” in with existing houses. Some people shared examples of multiplexes at home and abroad that are well-integrated into neighbourhoods. Others fear that the size and scale of multiplexes will overpower neighbouring buildings. They also worry about the impact of poorly-planned or low-quality developments.

Heritage

Regarding heritage, the approach preferred by a majority is to require purpose-built or new multiplexes be of the same scale (height and massing) and heritage style as the existing buildings in neighbourhoods with unique cultural heritage values.

Quality of life

We received comments related to the quality of life for residents of multiplexes. Commenters urged the City to ensure future residents are provided with adequately-sized units, safe egress (for fire safety), high-quality design and construction, access to sunlight, outdoor amenity space with soft landscaping and trees, and sufficient privacy. A few people commented that they believed dense housing (compared to single dwellings) provides a poor quality of life for residents and opposed multiplexes on that foundation.

Unit entrances

There is very little concern with the idea of multiple “front” doors, regardless of whether or not the additional doors are visible from the street.

4 Storey Buildings in Mixed-Use MTSAs

Transition to Neighbourhoods

There was agreement that heights and densities should gradually transition from high-density areas along major streets to the low-density neighbourhoods. The majority of people we consulted did not have concerns about permitting four storey buildings as-of-right in mixed-use MTSAs that abut neighbourhoods, especially if it provides opportunities for housing. However, comments on the online survey indicated a lack of understanding the question, MTA map, or concept of transition. More public education on the issue may be required.

Miscellaneous

Financial incentives

Multiple participants in the engagement highlighted the challenging economic context of multiplex developments: high land values, high borrowing costs, high building costs, and lengthy planning and permitting processes. Others questioned if building a multiplex would increase assessed property value and the impact of higher taxes on project viability. One survey respondent cautioned that the City would see low-quality developments unless financial supports were available. Different financial incentives were proposed, including tax deductions, expedited planning approvals and permitting, fee refunds, and grants. Others suggested aligning the City’s requirements with available funding, particularly CMHC’s “MLI Select” program for project with five or more units.

City's decision making

Among some, there was a concern about the consultation process and a perceived bias in how the proposed amendments are being presented. Some community members felt that the City has already made up its mind and is not genuinely considering whether residents want increased density and multiplex housing. The need for more inclusive and transparent decision-making processes was emphasized, with some suggesting that consultation should have occurred prior to passing by-law 13-21 in 2021.

Enforcement

Several comments focus on the need for enforcement to ensure that the implementation of multiplexes follows the rules. This includes enforcement related to zoning by-laws and building permits, construction nuisance, tree removal/injury, illegal parking, the management of short-term rentals, noise, property standards, and landlord-tenant relations.

How Feedback Will Be Integrated

The feedback outlined above will be carefully considered and integrated to the greatest extent possible, while achieving overall project objectives and other principles of good planning. We should note that some comments are in conflict with Provincial planning legislation or policy. For example, the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to permit three units per property. It is not legal nor, in our professional planning opinion, desirable to restrict Richmond Hill's neighbourhoods to single dwellings. The rationale for permitting four units per property will be articulated in detail within other documents.

Below, we note some ways that we will respond to the most common concerns regarding the development of multiplexes.

Concern: Multiplexes will be built too big or too tall and will not match the scale of other houses in the neighbourhood.

- Multiplexes will be limited to the permitted building envelope for single dwellings in the zone, with the exception of detached accessory structures.
- We will develop appropriate zoning standards for detached accessory structures that reduce the perception of building mass and mitigate privacy concerns, particularly as they relate to the second storey.
- A separation distance will be introduced to ensure a good relationship between buildings on a lot is maintained, with space for outdoor amenity, trees, and soft landscaping.
- Existing setback requirements will be maintained.

Concern: Multiplexes will create parking issues and exacerbate traffic congestion.

- TYLin will undertake a Parking and Transportation Analysis in the next phase of the project.
- TYLin will recommend minimum parking requirements for multiplexes, and other measures to minimize transportation impacts.

Concern: Infrastructure (water, wastewater, stormwater, etc.) cannot accommodate the increased number of residents multiplexes will bring.

- TYLin will create servicing models to identify areas with existing "pinch points" for water infrastructure that may be exacerbated by additional residential units in neighbourhoods

and recommend the necessary monitoring and/or upgrades to infrastructure to mitigate any issues associated with growth.

Next Steps

Public feedback is vital to the OPA and ZBLA process. The consultant team is working closely with City staff to refine the recommended directions for the amendments, incorporating public feedback among other inputs. The staff report and Draft OPA and ZBLA are expected to go to City Council by the end of 2024. At this time, a statutory public meeting will be held. For more information and updates on this review process please contact the City's Project Manager, Salvatore Aiello (Salvatore.Aiello@richmondhill.ca).

Appendix A – Record of Public Meeting Feedback

All of the questions and comments that were said by participants during the three (3) public meetings or submitted on sticky notes and comment sheets have been included below. The questions and comments included have been edited for brevity and clarity and have been organized by the same themes used in the thematic summary for consistency. They are documented here as part of the public record.

The feedback captured below is a record of what was shared during the meetings. The feedback does not represent the opinions of GPA.

Housing Needs

1. I noticed the City is not asking many questions about if we even want this gentle density idea. What if we don't want increased density and multiplex housing and only want an increase in single family homes? This feels like you are biasing the results before even coming to a conclusion.
2. I notice some points being made about making multiplexes to increase property value, and also allowing more tenants to offset property ownership. Don't you think that one of the ways of lowering house prices is to disincentivize treating a property as an investment and to incentivize treating it as a home instead? It seems to me that ideally more people own their home and live in it than own the house and rent it out for maximum profit.
3. I feel like saying that you leave the option of whether or not to rent out to the property owner is ignoring the reality of the situation. If you make the property potentially more profitable for investors, then investors are more likely to buy the property for the purpose of renting it out. This increases the demand for the property, thus increasing the prices of the property. Realistically, I think it's unlikely that people will be making fourplexes for adult children, and far more likely that it will be for rent. Therefore, doing this will help landlords more than the regular people.
4. What regulations does the city have on properties that are short term rentals and could instead be used as long-term rentals in order to increase housing availability?
5. It almost seems to me that the fact that 3-plexes are allowed is used as support for 4-plexes to be allowed. This is not a very sound discussion point. I hate to bring up the slippery slope argument because the slippery slope argument is typically a fallacy. That's because each step on that slope is a separate decision. This doesn't work if we use previous steps as an argument for future steps. Therefore, I think that using the ability to have triplexes as an argument for fourplexes doesn't really work. Maybe I'm misunderstanding, but I'm essentially hearing "this won't be a big deal because we already allow triplexes and almost nobody uses them". Well that raises the question, if nobody uses that, why are we spending time allowing fourplexes? Is it just because of the federal government?
6. More options! Many types of gentle density! Mix of housing types in one neighbourhood so different types of people move in.
7. Our first home in Richmond Hill was a fourplex, very affordable and perfect starter home. So we're in favour of 3 and 4 units per lot.

8. Our adult son had to move out of Richmond Hill as he couldn't afford to live here. I'd love to have a basement apartment to house him in the future, or for a caregiver when we're even more elderly!
9. This presentation was a load of garbage and is some of the worst ideas I've seen in my life. You're talking about adding rental units to the community – that's the problem we're already facing. We need to remove the foreign investors and speculators who have bought all of our housing and don't respect what we have. This whole project is a disaster that is going to ruin Richmond Hill. The solution to affordable housing is to kick out speculators and foreign investors who are buying properties over asking and leaving them vacant. The grass doesn't get cut on these properties. It grows until it's several feet high. The neighbours go and ask what's going on there and they find out that no one is living there. We let investors buy these properties at \$200,000 above asking price and we wonder why we have a housing crisis.
10. There are problems being faced by people, especially new immigrants, when it comes to rentals. What is the solution? Build more homes. It makes more sense to strike a balance between building inside the existing infrastructure. We have new population. Richmond Hill has 500,000 people. There is a problem when it comes to housing that we need to fix.
11. How does this help housing affordability? This is the main problem.
12. The main focus should be on housing affordability. It is just adding rental units. If I build a unit in my backyard, does it help housing affordability?
13. We should all understand that the City cannot control the cost of housing with a single project. This stigma around renting needs to go. There are people in my generation who are never going to be able to afford to own a house. We need to rent. If your children want somewhere to live, they're going to have to rent. This is just one part of a larger framework that the City is working on. We need multiple solutions to the housing crisis. This is one solution that they're proposing. They put a lot of work into this. Let's not shoot it down.
14. Now we're in a situation where our adult son had to move to Newmarket because the rents here are too high. I want somewhere him to live so he can take care of us when we grow older. That's why I came out to this meeting, to see how we can make this work for us.
15. The federal government is allowing too many people coming in, yes, but we have to look at the reality of the situation. Other big cities around the world don't have the stigma around renting that we have here. We need to allow young people to move into our community. If we have more supply, then the rent will come down. It's supply and demand. That's part of their plan here. As more things get built, then the affordability will come down.
16. Affordability is the problem for my grandchildren. We need to insist that affordable homes are built on these new tracts. The City has the power to do this. They should put the money into building affordable post-war bungalows for young families, for my grandchildren to be able to buy a home and afford it. Homes need to be half a million dollars so that young people can afford them.
17. I am against the idea of adding more rental units on account of already having enough in the city. The main priority of the City is wrong. It has to be focused on affordability. We

have to get land out of the Greenbelt and lobby with the province. You should have consulted to get this plan in motion at the very beginning [i.e. before the first additional residential units by-law was passed in 2021] – it doesn't make sense to consult once you've already got a concrete plan that you're going to force on us.

18. Had an apartment for years. Best thing ever!
19. The City needs more projects like 360 Degree Kids (on Yonge) and Richmond Green (near Newkirk).
20. Why can't multiplex units be ownership? They would care for it better and it helps people build equity.
21. I am in favour of additional units because it provides housing options for younger generations in areas where they have roots, where they grew up and want to raise their own families.

Detached Accessory Structures

22. Will tents or semi-permanent structures be permitted as detached accessory structures? How could this be accommodated?

Urban Design

23. I love the consideration of the trees and light. I feel they are critical to good health and wellbeing.
24. The current zoning allows my house to be max 2850 square feet only. If I go for 4 units, average unit size is only 712 square feet. That is too small!
25. Would this proposal discourage the building of "McMansions"?
26. What larger scope planning is being done to encourage new build projects to construct 4 plex units that are master planned, uniform in appearance, and will increase our housing, rather than individual projects that are not architecturally consistent with the neighbourhood?
27. The needs of neuro-diverse people for housing should be considered.
28. Fourplexes on Trench Street and surrounding area are a good example of transition to neighbourhoods.
29. How will amenity space in yards be managed as part of this?
30. Good for small neighbourhoods.
31. The fourplex designs in the demonstrations look better than those tall white mansions.
32. In Jamaica, there are really nice missing middle infill developments. Gated communities with good amenities and landscaping. Consider as a precedent.
33. Large fourplexes can work well on large lots.
34. Do we need fire escapes?
35. How do tenants and owners share greenspace/amenity area on a single property? Avoid large parties and nuisance from outdoor amenity use.
36. Heritage protections for more "modern" heritage homes from the 1950-60s.

37. Preference to restrict to interior renos (no additions) for heritage homes.
38. Any additions to heritage homes should keep with historic architecture.
39. "Fit" in the neighbourhood is the most important.
40. Need rules to ensure good, aesthetic design.
41. People will ultimately be OK with multiplexes as long as they are implemented well. Do it right.
42. Like the setback at the 3rd storey to reduce visual impact of additional height.
43. I would like to build a basement apartment. My house is like Site 3 with the garage tight to the property line making it difficult to provide adequate pathway width to a side or rear yard unit entrance. Reduced parking or possibly making use of the garage for entry to a unit could help solve this issue.
44. I would like to see City-approved architectural design(s) for detached ARU similar to Mississauga.

Parking and Transportation

45. Is the city going to allow street parking to allocate for enough parking space by laws?
46. Some of the built form demonstrations show tandem parking spots, so cars are "boxes in" and can't leave at their own time. Shouldn't we make the rules so that each of the parking spaces has access to the street?
47. I am concerned about plans that allow even 2 units to have only 2 parking spots. The reality is that in this area, virtually every adult needs a car.
48. Could we accommodate parking on streets? There is lots of room for this.
49. How will parking be changed? Will it be 1 spot per unit?
50. As a Mill Pond resident, I am upset that a bungalow next door to me was converted into three units. Was there a fire inspection done? Parking is an issue. I didn't even want to come to the meeting because we're not going to be able to make any difference. This is going to roll through City council no matter what we say. There's lots of conversions going on without building permits.
51. On-street permit parking could solve a lot of issues around parking for multiplexes – and even single-family homes with multiple vehicles.
52. Minimum 1 parking spot per unit.
53. Put parking on the street to build more homes.
54. Concerned about too much parking, too many cars.
55. Discourage parking on lawns.
56. Working people in Richmond Hill do need a car right now. Be creative with parking solutions though: stackers, street parking, off-site parking lots.
57. The City should really consider allowing street parking through this study. Roads are so wide in Richmond Hill neighbourhoods and this could make it easier to construct fourplexes with adequate parking for residents, until public transit improves.

- 58. Implement parking maximums to ensure front yards are still attractive and limit the number of cars.
- 59. Interlocking or other permeable pavers should be allowed for driveways and parking areas to help with drainage.
- 60. There is difficulty with transit proximity in some areas of Richmond Hill. Too many cars on a property take away opportunities for landscaping.
- 61. I am in favour of street parking but it needs to be boxed in with planting areas so snow plows don't drive through the lane and so people know where to park.
- 62. The City should consider on-street parking permits.

City Infrastructure

- 63. How is the City going to retrofit the infrastructure (electricity, sewage)? The demand will be increased considerably.
- 64. Assuming existing 2-storey detached home addition of 2 basement units would be straight forward BUT how would water electricity gas be divided (ie separate meters or share via area or up to homeowner)?
- 65. Why do we need the sewers when you have an open ditch? We don't need to have all this fancy infrastructure for our houses in the beginning. You build it affordably, and then wait to upgrade it over time. What, this is how Richmond Hill was built historically. Everything is too high price and we wonder why we have a crisis of affordability. For someone to build a house, you're talking 100,000 in fees alone. This presentation did nothing to tackle that problem
- 66. I am concerned with the impact of ARUs on water infrastructure.

4 Storey Buildings in Mixed-Use MTSAs

- 67. Could the 4 storey building include a mix of residential and non-residential uses?
- 68. I don't have strong opinions on angular planes – do what you must to build more homes!
- 69. Highest density should be near commercial/mixed-use zones and transit. Decrease as we move away from commercial/transit.
- 70. I think the angular plane measured from 10m above grade might be a good idea since it will help people who need public transportation to live close to it.
- 71. Looked at both options for angular plane and still prefer gradual transition to 3 storeys instead of 4 storeys.

Miscellaneous

- 72. Does the phrase "as of right" mean that the change can be made without need for applying for permission?
- 73. I was looking to rent a unit pre-2021 [when additional residential units were permitted] and I saw a number of units in multiplexes. This implies that people do not follow the rules. How are you accounting for this?

74. If only approximately 200 building permits have been issued for additional residential units since 2021, does the City know how many were refused? Perhaps the number is so low because people are having trouble getting the permits.
75. Are the zoning by-laws online?
76. Is there any chance of incentives to homeowners to add units to their home? For instance, could renovations be tax-deductible? Is there anything in the Housing Accelerator Fund agreement along this line?
77. Does this project help expedite the permit process even if the neighbor rejects the new building proposal?
78. How will property taxes be affected by these additional units per lot?
79. Will new addresses be issued for new units?
80. Will this presentation be made available to participants?
81. We need more commercial zoning in proximity to residential neighbourhoods.
82. Will the City be providing funding or financial incentives to encourage/help build 4 units?
83. I would like commercial areas within walking distance if we are adding more density to neighbourhoods.
84. Could multiplexes contain commercial uses and home businesses?
85. How tight is the timeline for this project?
86. How will this impact how property taxes are evaluated? This could make a multiplex project less financially feasible.
87. I believe that there would be a lot of seniors who would be glad to rent out their homes for extra security, but they don't have enough protections as landlords. The renter has too many protections. If you give seniors protection against renters, maybe then some of them will actually do this to their houses.
88. Legally, how does this work? More info on this would be helpful.
89. I hope this reduces complicated planning processes. How can the process be more smooth?
90. MLI Select funding eligibility starts at 5 units. Consider allowing up to 5 units as part of this project to make multiplexes more financially feasible.
91. Empty houses are a bigger issue that the City should address. The City should expropriate empty houses and build fourplexes.
92. People who have worked hard for their "nice houses" don't want renters or investors next door.
93. Don't let foreign speculators purchase properties to build multiplexes.
94. More protections for landlords are needed if multiplexes are to be successful.
95. By-law enforcement around noise and nuisance needs to happen.
96. I am concerned about the hassle and cost of building an additional unit. If this project is able to reduce the barriers (and the need for minor variances), I am supportive to build this type of housing without the need for additional approvals.

97. Condominiums in Ontario in many cases have statements included in their Declaration, By-laws and Rules governing document that state the following:(i) Each dwelling unit shall be occupied and used only as a private single-family residence and for no other purpose, and (ii) additionally no unit shall be occupied or used by anyone in such a manner as to result in an increase in the rate of fire insurance on the property that could result in cancellation or threat of cancellation of any policy of insurance. These conditions have been upheld in court, but often owners still use agencies such as Airbnb or VRBO to list and rent units despite the Condominium rules. This often results in significant conflict with other unit owners and costs if the issue has to go to arbitration or court, If the City of Richmond Hill does include Short Term Rentals in the new Zoning By-law currently being considered, that document should include wording that whoever approaches the City staff to obtain authority to provide short term rentals must provide written proof that the Condominium Board does allow the use of units for such rental under their Declaration, Bylaws and Rules. This step will prevent a lot of problems for the City, Condominium Boards and the people who want to short term rent their condominium unit. Would you please add this consideration to your review and hopefully add it to the final decision?

Appendix B – Online Survey Summary Statistics

Please contact City staff for a copy of this appendix. Accessibility needs will be accommodated.

Appendix C – Built Form Demonstrations

Please contact City staff for a copy of this appendix. Accessibility needs will be accommodated.

2. Planning Policy Context

2.1 Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990

The Planning Act, is the central piece of legislation governing land use planning in Ontario. The Act establishes a provincially-led, top-down planning system. At the top are matters of Provincial interest (s. 2), articulated through Provincial policy statements (s. 3) and Provincial plans prescribed by statute. Matters of Provincial interest (s. 2) that are relevant to this Project include:

- the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems (f);
- the orderly development of safe and healthy communities (h);
- the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing (j); and
- the appropriate location of growth and development (p);

Decisions of municipal councils must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement(s) and must conform or not conflict, as the case may be, with Provincial plans. The next layers in the top-down land use planning structure are the official plan of the upper-tier municipality and then the official plan of the lower-tier municipality (s. 16). Official plans are broad policy documents that provide for different uses and intensities throughout the municipality. These policies are subsequently implemented through zoning by-laws (s. 34) and site plan control (s. 41). The Act and its regulations outline specific procedures for approvals, amendments and appeals of official plans and zoning by-laws.

In recent years, the Provincial Government has incrementally strengthened provisions for Additional Residential Units in view of their significance to bolster housing affordability and housing diversity. In 2011, **Bill 140**, Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act, amended various sections of the Planning Act to encourage affordable housing through measures that included requirements for municipalities to include second unit provisions in their official plan policies and zoning by-laws. In 2016, **Bill 7**, the Promoting Affordable Housing Act, amended both the Planning Act and Development Charges Act to further encourage the creation and legalization of Additional Residential Units. In 2019, **Bill 108**, More Homes, More Choice Act, amended the Planning Act by mandating municipalities to permit up to two Additional Residential Units per parcel of land within single detached, semi-detached, and row houses and also within a structure that is ancillary to such housing forms. Most recently, **Bill 23**, the More Homes Built Faster Act, passed on November 28, 2022 and further amended and strengthened ARU provisions in the Planning Act.

At present, the *Planning Act* mandates that municipalities may not, through their official plan policies and zoning by-laws, on parcels of urban residential land containing a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse, prohibit the use of:

- two residential units in a house plus one residential unit in an ancillary structure;
- three residential units in a house if there are no residential units in an ancillary structure; or
- one residential unit in an ancillary structure (16.3, 35.1).

While municipalities must allow for ARUs as described above, the language of the *Act* does not preclude municipalities from authorizing more than three ARUs per lot or more than one ARU in an ancillary structure.

The *Act* further states that municipality official plans and zoning by-laws may not dictate minimum unit sizes or require more than one parking space for ARUs. The Minister can make regulations authorizing the use of Additional Residential Units as well as establishing requirements and standards for Secondary Units (35.2). These regulations apply as though they were Zoning By-Laws (35.3). Furthermore, regulations made by the Minister supersede local council By-Laws (35.4).

Bill 185, introduced to the legislature on April 10, 2024, received Royal Assent on June 6, 2024. Bill 185 enacted changes to the *Planning Act* that impact this project. The Minister's powers are broadened to regulate any ARU, the parcel of land on which an ARU is located, and a building or structure containing an ARU. The Provincial Government previously consulted on specific zoning by-law requirements that may be a barrier to the development of ARUs in order to inform future regulations. Bill 185 also authorizes regulations that exempt ARUs from Part V and/or Section 70.2 of the Act. Part V contains the basic tools to control land use including zoning by-laws, minor variances, site plan control, community benefits charge, parkland conveyance and Section 70.2 pertains to community planning permit systems. Bill 185 also bans parking minimums in pMTSAs. Under the Bill's amendments, the Regional Municipality of York's upper-tier municipality planning responsibilities have been removed, effective as of July 1, 2024.

Ontario Regulation 299/19

Ontario Regulation 299/19, as updated on December 23, 2022, states that each ARU shall, by default, have one parking space (may be a tandem parking space) provided for the exclusive use of the occupant. However, where a zoning by-law does not require a parking space to be provided for the primary residential unit on a property, a parking space then is not required to be provided for any ARUs. Alternatively, municipalities may choose to pass a zoning by-law that requires zero parking spaces for some or all ARUs and that by-law shall prevail over the regulation. The regulation clarifies that the occupants of the primary residential unit and any ARUs do not need to be related nor any of them the owner of the property.

On September 23, 2024, under the broader regulation-making authority provided by Bill 185, the Minister proposed amendments to O.Reg. 299/19 with the intent of eliminating zoning by-law barriers to creating ARUs. The proposal is open for public comments on the Environmental Registry of Ontario until October 23, 2024. The timeline for implementing any new regulations is unknown. The proposed amendments to O.Reg 299/19 would, if implemented:

- override all angular plane requirements for buildings containing ARUs;
- allow at least 45% lot coverage for all buildings and structure on parcels with ARUs;
- override all minimum lot size or minimum lot area requirements that are specific to parcels with ARUs; and
- restrict building distance separation requirements associated with any building containing ARUs to a maximum of 4.0 metres.

2.2 The Development Charges Act, 1997

The Development Charges Act, 1997 was amended by Bill 23 and exempts Additional Residential Units within or ancillary to existing (2.3.2) or new (2.3.3) single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, and row houses from development charges with no restrictions on floor area.

2.3 Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

In 2022, the Government initiated a review of both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS, 2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). The goal was to create a streamlined, province-wide land use planning framework that would remove barriers and provide streamlined province-wide housing-supportive policies.

From April to August 2023, the province conducted public consultations to gather feedback on the new framework. The proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024) was released in April 2024 for further public comment. The PPS, 2024 will replace both the PPS, 2020 and the Growth Plan, consolidating elements of both into a single policy document.

The PPS, 2024 will come into effect on October 20, 2024. Upon its implementation, the PPS 2020, the Growth Plan, and associated regulations will be repealed by the Province. Under the Planning Act, any decisions made by a planning authority on or after October 20, 2024 must be consistent with the PPS, 2024.

The PPS is the planning document that translates matters of provincial interest listed in the Planning Act into policy. It provides the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in Ontario. It acknowledges that the province is fast-growing and recognizes the importance of increasing the supply and mix of housing options, addressing the full range of housing affordability needs to support a diverse and growing population. It acknowledges that long-term goals for the province will be achieved through planning for strong, sustainable and resilient communities for people of all ages, a clean and healthy environment, and a strong and competitive economy.

The PPS, 2024 policies strongly promote general intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities, including by planning for a range and mix of housing options and prioritizing planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities (2.3.1.3).

Residential intensification is another prominent theme in the PPS, 2024. Planning authorities shall permit and facilitate all types of residential intensification, including, introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment which results in an increase in residential units (2.2.1.b).

The PPS, 2024 indicates that settlement areas such as strategic growth areas, including major transit station areas (MTSAs) shall be the focus of growth and development (2.3.1.1) and that planning authorities shall support intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities and a compact built form (2.3.1.3, 2.4.1.3.c). MTSAs will be designed to be transit-supportive, achieve minimum density targets, and be complete communities (2.4.2.3, 2.4.2.6). MTSAs on higher order transit corridors will be planned for a minimum density target of:

- 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by light rail or bus rapid transit; or
- 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by commuter or regional rail.

Further key policy direction includes:

- Supporting the achievement of complete communities and intensification by providing an appropriate range and mix of land uses and housing options, especially in strategic growth areas (2.1.6, 2.4.1.1, 2.4.1.2);
- Providing an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet current and long-term social, health, economic and well-being needs including establishing minimum targets for the provision of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households (2.2.1.a, 2.2.1.b.);
- Planning for densities for new housing that efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities and support public transit and active transportation (2.2.1.c);
- Identifying appropriate locations and promoting opportunities for transit-supportive development; focusing major employment, commercial, and a significant supply and range of housing options in areas well-served by transit (2.1.4, 2.2.1.d, 2.8.1.4).
- Identifying appropriate type and scale of development in strategic growth areas and the transition of built form to adjacent areas (2.4.1.3.b)
- Making efficient use of and optimize existing municipal sewage and water services and aligning development with the provision of infrastructure and public service facilities (2.3.1.6, 3.6.1.a).
- Maximizing the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces for stormwater management (3.6.8.e).
- Restricting development to protect natural heritage, water, natural resources, agricultural areas, and cultural heritage and archaeology (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6).
- Protecting public health and safety by directing development away from hazardous lands and hazardous sites (5.2.2).

2.5 Greenbelt Plan, 2017

The Greenbelt Plan, together with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, identifies where urbanization should not occur in the GGH in order to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological and hydrological features, areas and functions occurring on this landscape. For lands within the Greenbelt Plan's Protected Countryside, single dwellings are permitted on existing lots of record, provided they were zoned for such as of the date the Plan came into force (4.5.2). However, municipalities are encouraged to retain lots for agricultural uses and discourage other uses. The Plan allows for a second dwelling unit within existing single dwellings or accessory structures on the same lot, provided the lot is situated outside the Natural Heritage System (4.5.3). The expansion of existing buildings or structures, addition of accessory structures, and conversions of legally existing uses to align more closely with this Plan are allowed as long as they avoid significant natural heritage features, key hydrological features, and their respective vegetation protection zones (4.5.4.b). In specific circumstances, expansions to existing residential dwellings may be evaluated even within significant natural heritage features, key hydrological features, and their respective vegetation protection zones (4.5.5).

2.6 Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) is set out in O. Reg. 140/02 under the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001. The ORMCP was updated in 2017 and permits ARUs in existing and authorized single detached houses by amending the definition of “single dwelling”. Specifically, ARUs are not permitted in the Natural Core Area or Natural Linkage Area, but one ARU is permitted within an existing single detached dwelling in the Countryside Area. The definition of “single dwelling” also applies to the Settlement Area, but all uses permitted by municipal official plans are permitted, so long as they comply with the applicable provisions around protecting ecological and hydrological integrity in Part III of the Plan (18.3). This means that if the City of Richmond Hill’s official plan permits multiple ARUs per residential lot, they are also permitted under the ORMCP.

2.7 Regional Official Plan, 2022

The Regional Official Plan (ROP) for York Region was approved with modifications by Province’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in November 2022, however Provincial Bill 150 in December 2023 and proposed Bill 162 in February 2024 reverse some of those modifications. The ROP will guide growth and development across nine municipalities. It focuses on addressing provincial growth mandates while considering community priorities, sustainability, economic growth, and the protection of natural resources. The ROP has evolved through iterations since 1994, with updates emphasizing a triple bottom line approach, committing to building intensified urban systems, and aligning with York Region’s Vision for strong, caring, safe communities. The ROP aims to accommodate future population and job growth by 2051 while promoting complete and inclusive communities and preserving the region’s rich cultural heritage and greenspaces. Through partnerships with local municipalities and stakeholders, the ROP provides a framework for coordinated planning to create sustainable communities for current and future generations in York Region. As of July 1, 2024, the ROP is considered a local Official Plan due to the removal of upper-tier municipal planning responsibilities under Bill 185. The City of Richmond Hill now has two in-effect Official Plans.

Major elements of the ROP are based on a set of guiding principles, including:

- A minimum of 50% of residential development between 2021 to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051 to occur through intensification within the built-up area as well as a resident to job ratio of 2:1 focusing on Regional Centres and Corridors and major transit station areas.
- Provision of a full range of housing types with a region-wide target of 25% of all new housing units being affordable to low and middle-income households and in addition, a minimum of 35% of all new housing units within Regional Centres and major transit station areas.

Map 1 depicts the Regional Structure, with Richmond Hill Centre identified as a Regional Centre and Yonge Street and Highway 7 identified as Regional Corridors. Map 10 identifies Yonge Street and Highway 7 as Rapid Transit Corridors (with a small stretch of Yonge Street identified as BRT Curbside Service). Map 1B delineates a number of Protected Major Transit Station Areas along Yonge Street and Highway 7, and around the Richmond Hill GO Station.

Regional Centres, Regional Corridors, and MTSAs are the strategic growth areas and shall be the primary locations for concentrations of high density and mixed-use development in York Region (4.4.3). Beyond these intensification areas, the Region will work with local municipalities to encourage integration of gentle density and a mix and range of housing options through

redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods, where appropriate (4.4.10d, 4.4.16). The ROP requires local municipalities to target 35% of new housing units in Regional Centres and MTSAs to be affordable (4.4.21, 4.4.22, 4.4.42j).

The policies of the ROP state the importance of recognizing, conserving and promoting cultural heritage resources, cultural landscapes and built heritage of York Region (2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.4, 2.4.5). Additionally, the ROP encourages local municipalities to consider urban design standards or guidelines in core historic areas that reflect the areas heritage, character, and streetscape (2.4.10).

2.7 City of Richmond Hill Official Plan

Status

The Richmond Hill Official Plan was adopted by the Council of the Town of Richmond Hill on July 12, 2010. It was endorsed, with modifications, by the Regional Municipality of York on May 19, 2011. There were numerous OMB appeals. On April 5, 2012 the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) partially approved the OP and subsequently issued a number of amending Orders. The City is currently reviewing and updating its OP. Two batches of OPAs have been approved by Council thus far:

- Batch 1 approved December 2020 and September 2022 included policies on Leslie Street Institutional Area, Vision and City Structure, and Neighbourhoods; and
- Batch 2 approved March 2024 included policies on OPA 18.5 Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA, OPA 18.6, Village Local Centre, OPA 18.7 Newkirk Local Centre, and OPA 18.8 Oak Ridges Local Centre (OPA 18.5, OPA 18.6, and OPA 18.8 are under appeal and awaiting pre-merit hearings but they have been included in our analysis, below)

Vision

The policies of the OP will guide decisions to manage growth and development to implement the vision of the City over the 25-year planning horizon. The OP advances a vision of the City of Richmond Hill as “the centrepiece of York Region and one of the most prominent, complete communities in the Greater Toronto Area” (2.1). Complete Communities, Environment, Economy, Place-making, and Connectivity and Mobility are important themes in the OP. The policies advance the following guiding principles, among others:

- Direct growth to built-up urban areas with existing infrastructure and services in a network of centres and corridors;
- Create an integrated, vibrant and diverse community that provides a mix of land uses, including a balance of housing, employment, community services, parks and open spaces; and
- Plan for transit and pedestrian oriented development.

Growth and Urban Structure

The OP establishes that most of the City’s future development will happen through intensification. It sets out a City Structure framework (3.1.3.1) and an Intensification Hierarchy to guide this development (3.1.3.4). The majority of mixed-use intensification will be directed to the centres and corridors. New growth, particularly residential intensification, should be directed to the following areas, in order of priority:

1. Richmond Hill Centre
2. Key Development Areas (KDAs) and Regional Corridors
3. Local Centres
4. Local Development Areas (LDAs) and Local Corridors
5. Neighbourhoods



Figure 1. Richmond Hill Intensification Hierarchy

In the Intensification Hierarchy (Figure 1), Centres are recognized as focal areas, whereas Corridors play a supporting role to these, providing connection and continuity between Centres to form a network of mixed-use lands (3.1.3.5). Development in the Centres and Corridors shall accommodate the highest densities and widest range of uses within the City and shall be provided at an appropriate scale and intensity (3.1.3.4). This includes a built form transitioning to the surrounding areas and ensures the creation of a high-quality, human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented public realm (3.1.3.6).

The Centres and Corridors relevant to this Project are:

- Richmond Hill Centre
- Yonge & Bernard KDA
- Yonge & 16th/Carville KDA
- Yonge Street Regional Corridor
- Highway 7 Regional Corridor
- Newkirk Local Centre
- Village Local Centre
- Major Mackenzie Local Corridor

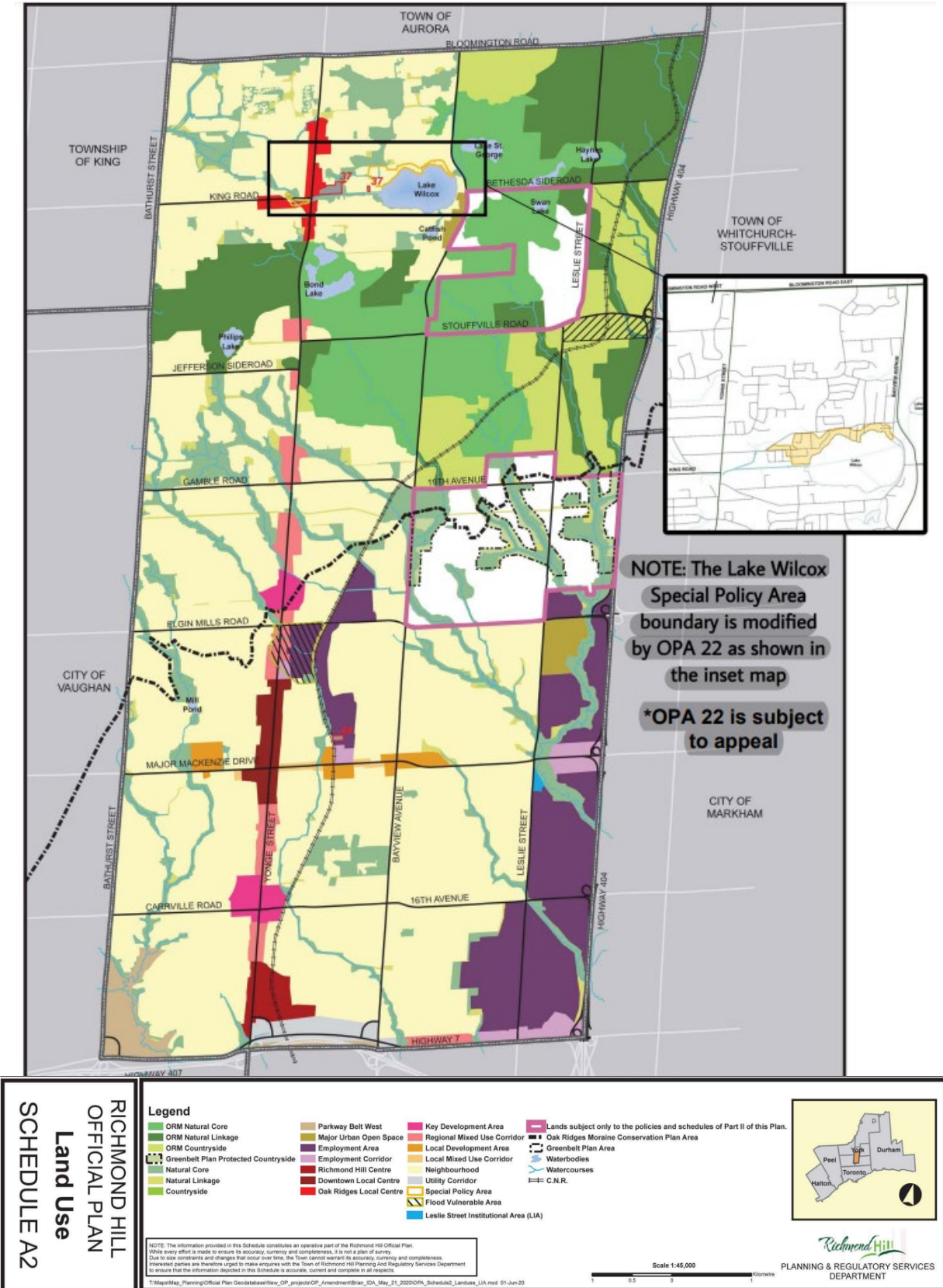


Figure 2. Richmond Hill Official Plan Schedule A2 (Land Use).

Transition and Angular Plane

The density of development within Centres and Corridors shall be informed by various factors, including transit infrastructure, servicing infrastructure, compatibility with the surrounding area, and non-developable natural heritage or hazard lands (3.1.4.3). Unless otherwise specified by Chapter 4 (Land Use) policies, where Centres and Corridors abut Neighbourhoods, a 45-degree angular plane will be applied to ensure appropriate transition (3.4.1.55). Where there is a street separating the Neighbourhood designation from the Centres and Corridors designation, the angular plane shall be measured from the adjacent low-density residential property line located in the Neighbourhood designation. In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the Centres and Corridors, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, a building structure up to 10 metres in height may protrude into the angular plane.

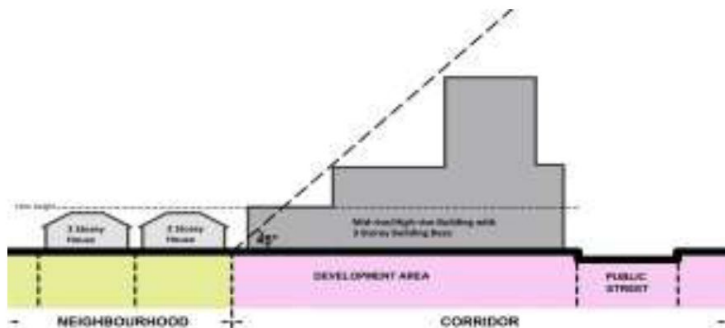


Figure 3. Angular plane when a street does not separate Neighbourhood designation from Centre or Corridor. A building structure up to 10 metres in height may protrude into the angular plane.

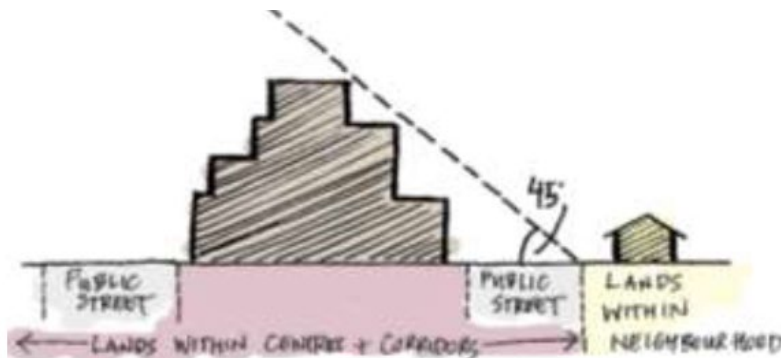


Figure 4. Angular plane when a street separates Neighbourhood designation from Centre or Corridor.

The following policies, applicable to specific Centres and Corridors, provide slightly modified angular plane policies that override Policy 3.4.1.55 (our *emphasis* added):

Richmond Hill Centre

- 10.3.4.3 In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the RHC, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, the angular plane as described in Policy 3.4.1(55) of the Part 1 Plan *may be measured from 10 metres above grade* at the lot line.
- 10.3.4.5 In the RHC, projections may be permitted into the angular plane where it has been demonstrated that:

- a) The projection is minor in scale, adheres to the policies in Section 10.3.6 of this Secondary Plan, and does not result in densities above those permitted on Schedule 2;
- b) The resulting development maintains the intent of achieving a transition from higher density development to the Transition Areas as described in 10.3.3(1) and 10.3.4(1);
- c) The resulting development does not create undesirable:
 - i) wind conditions;
 - ii) shadowing impacts;
 - iii) access to light;
 - iv) view impacts; and,
 - v) privacy impacts.

Yonge Street and Bernard Avenue KDA

- 12.2.2.3 *A building may not penetrate the 45-degree angular plane* measured from the closest adjacent Neighbourhood designation property line.
- 12.2.4.2.2 In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the KDA, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, the angular plane *may be measured from 10 metres above grade* at the lot line.

Village Local Centre

- 4.3.1.1.12 Development fronting on Yonge Street shall maintain a maximum 45-degree angular view plane projected from the adjacent property line on the opposite side of Yonge Street *to maintain the significant views to the church spires*.
- 4.3.1.2.8a *Development fronting on Church Street shall maintain a 30-degree angular plane* projected from the edge of the adjacent property line on the opposite side of Church Street.

Housing

The City's housing policies emphasize the importance of providing a mix and range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of the whole community (3.1.5.1). Additional residential units are permitted in areas zoned for residential development, excluding hazard lands or sites and lands designated "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core", "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage" or "Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside – Natural Core" (3.1.5.5a-b). Further, on lands with the designation "Oak Ridges Moraine Countryside, only one ARU is permitted within a single detached dwelling (3.1.5.5c). Where lands designated Neighbourhood are identified as being located in "Area "A"" of the Special Policy Area as shown on Schedule A2 (Land Use) and Schedule A7 (Floodplain Regulation Areas, Special Policy Areas and Flood Vulnerable Areas), ARUs are not permitted (3.2.2.4.3c). Regarding ARUs, policies also stipulate that Provincial building code and fire code must be met, and that exterior changes to the existing ground-related dwelling are compatible with the character of the area (3.1.5.5d-e). ARUs are exempt from site plan control under policy 5.14.4a.

Urban Design

The land use policies pertaining to the Centres and Corridors applicable to this Project may prescribe maximum and minimum heights and densities. Most areas within the Centres and Corridors allow maximum building heights of at least 4 storeys. The following policies for the Yonge Street and Bernard Avenue KDA may need to be amended as part of this Project, as they contain maximum building heights below 4 storeys (our *emphasis* added):

Yonge Street and Bernard Avenue KDA

- 4.4.3.2 *Development abutting the Neighbourhood designation shall have a maximum height of 3 storeys except where it abuts existing mid-rise or high-rise residential buildings in the Neighbourhood designation, subject to the angular plane policies of Section 3.4.1.55 of this Plan. Building heights may progressively increase away from lands within the Neighbourhood designation.*
- 12.2.2.1 *The height of buildings within the Neighbourhood Edge Character area shall be 3 storeys. The height of new buildings within the Interior Character and Corridor Character Area shall be a minimum of 4 storeys.*



Figure 5. Yonge Street and Bernard Avenue KDA Secondary Plan, Schedule 1 (Character Areas).

Neighbourhoods are generally characterized as low-density residential areas. Low-density residential uses and medium-density residential uses are permitted, as well as several non-residential uses that support the intended residential function of the area (4.9.1.2). Development within the Neighbourhood designation shall have a maximum building height of 3 storeys, except on an arterial street where the maximum building height shall be 4 storeys (4.9.1.4). Maintaining the character of neighbourhood areas is an important policy objective (4.9.1.3, 4.9.2). Medium-density residential uses are restricted geographically based on their frontage on arterial streets, collector streets in proximity to public transit stops, and other streets where the lands proposed for the medium-density residential uses abut a Centre or Corridor designation (4.9.1.2.2). In several locations in the OP and secondary plans there are policies relating to the maximum density of units per hectare, which are calculated excluding additional residential units. These policies should be revisited to ensure their continued appropriateness if more ARUs per lot are permitted.

Secondary Plans

The City's Secondary Plans were reviewed and policies that are applicable to the Project have been described under the thematic headings above. Of note, OPA 23 amended the Secondary Plans to include ARU policies, as applicable.

Official Plan Amendment 23

OPA 23 was adopted in March 2021 and allows an additional residential unit within ground-related dwellings and an ancillary structure on the same lot, effectively permitting a maximum of three dwelling units per property. This change responds to new provincial requirements under the Planning Act and O. Reg. 299/19 and promotes housing diversity, ultimately increasing the supply of affordable housing for Richmond Hill residents. ARU policies are discussed in detail under Housing policies, above.

Definitions

Official Plan definitions will be reviewed in more detail once we have recommended policy directions, but we are aware that some definitions may need to be updated to ensure clarity and avoid unintended consequences. We will review the following definitions at a later date:

- Accessory/Accessory Use
- Additional Residential Unit
- Ground-related Dwelling
- Home Business
- Low-density Residential
- Low-rise
- Medium-density Residential
- Mid-rise
- Single-detached Dwelling
- Single Dwelling (referenced in other definitions but only defined in the North Leslie Secondary Plan)

2.8 Zoning By-laws

The City is presently undertaking a comprehensive City-wide zoning by-law review (Zone Richmond Hill) with the intent of developing one comprehensive modern zoning by-law to implement the Official Plan, and repealing the multiple zoning parent by-laws that were enacted

from various periods in the City's history that presently apply throughout the city. Parent zoning by-laws cover different geography and differently zone, define and regulate residential uses.

Residential zoning across the city is varied but many zones permit only single detached houses. There have been certain omnibus zoning by-law amendments over the years to harmonize aspects of the residential zoning, such as definitions and standards pertaining to driveways, parking space dimensions, landscaping, detached accessory structures, rear yard amenity areas, and lot coverage.

Our assessment of the in-force zoning for the "4 Storey" Project Area finds that there is significant variation in zones and parent zoning by-laws. There is no single "most common zone" throughout the entire area that could be identified. Several locations within the Project Area are the subject of Secondary Plans, including some very recently adopted through OPAs (and subsequently appealed). Section 27 of the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to update zoning by-laws to comply with the OP. The Zone Richmond Hill project is ongoing and may be better positioned to optimize zoning standards to facilitate as-of-right 4-storey development in the Centres and Corridors during harmonization, while ensuring no unintended consequences.

Omnibus Zoning By-law Amendment 13-21

City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 23 (OPA 23) and Omnibus Zoning By-law Amendment 13-21 on March 24, 2021. The Omnibus Zoning By-law 13-21 implements policies outlined in OPA 23 and includes the regulations under Bill 108. The aim of the revised Zoning By-law 13-21 is to allow up to two ARUs in zones city-wide that permit single detached houses, semi-detached houses, and specific types of townhouses. By-law 13-21 defines “Additional Residential Unit” as a self-contained dwelling unit accessory to the primary dwelling unit. The by-law permits up to two ARUs, with a maximum of one ARU within the primary dwelling unit and one ARU in a separate accessory structure or above a detached garage, provided that the structure has a side or rear lot line adjacent to a lane, subject to appropriate development regulations.

Although By-law 13-21 applies city-wide (with a few exemptions), not all properties will be able to accommodate two ARUs. Properties must adhere to the applicable zoning provisions, development standards, and other requirements such as the Ontario Building Code. ARUs are not permitted within Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) regulated areas and are also not permitted or permitted with conditions on lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area.

By-law 13-21 regulates minimum side and rear yard setbacks of 1.2 metres to ensure adequate access for ARUs in the primary dwelling (with side or rear wall access) and ARUs in an accessory detached structure or detached garage. Accessory structures containing ARUs are subject to maximum heights of 4.2 metres or 8.5 metres for ARUs located in detached garages. ARUs may not be accessed from within a garage. Furthermore, home occupations are not permitted within ARUs.

A minimum of one parking space is required for each ARU and must be located on a dedicated driveway and/or within a garage. Where there are no parking spaces required by-law for the primary dwelling unit, no parking spaces shall be required for an ARU.

Table 2. Zoning by-law 13-21 ARU Development Standards.

Development Standard	ARU in existing house	ARU in detached accessory structure	ARU attached to detached garage	ARU above detached garage
Maximum # of ARU permitted	1 (total 2 per lot)	1 (total 2 per lot)	1 (total 2 per lot)	1 (total 2 per lot)
Minimum Side and Rear Yard Setback	1.2 metres	1.2 metres	1.2 metres	1.2 metres
Maximum Height	<i>See applicable Zoning By-law</i>	4.2 metres	4.2 metres	8.5 metres (2 storeys)
Maximum Floor Area	<i>See applicable Zoning By-law</i>	40 square metres	40 square metres for ARU and 40 square metres for detached garage	55 square metres if enclosed stair access or 40 square metres with unenclosed stair access

Maximum Lot Coverage	See applicable Zoning By-law	See site specific Zoning By-law	See site specific Zoning By-law	See site specific Zoning By-law
Parking Spaces	1 parking space per ARU with some exceptions	1 parking space per ARU with some exceptions	1 parking space per ARU with some exceptions	1 parking space per ARU with some exceptions

**Please note this table provides general detail. See Zoning by-law 13-21 for full development standard details.*

2.9 Relevant Design & Development Standards

LGA Architectural Partners reviewed the following design and development standards, as relevant to the ARU component of this Project:

- Waste Management Design and Collection Standards for Development (Division J)
- Accessory Structure and Detached Garage Standards (Zoning By-law 100-10)
- Planting Standards (Division K)
- Tree Protection By-law 41-07

Based on their professional experience, they find the standards to be appropriate and similar to other Ontario municipalities. Therefore, we do not anticipate that the standards will create insurmountable design challenges to achieving four residential units per lot.

Zoning By-law 100-10 was an omnibus by-law that amends all parent zoning by-laws created prior to 2010. It harmonizes the definitions of accessory structures, lot coverage, and height standards. Maximum height for a detached garage is 4.2 metres. Maximum height for an accessory structure with a peaked roof is 3.6 metres and for an accessory structure with a flat roof the maximum height is 2.75 metres. Both of these are lower than the maximum height of 4.2 metres for a detached ARU. Beyond reducing the ease of direct ARU conversions from other accessory structures to ARUs, it calls into question the defensibility of the lower height limits if 4.2 metres is appropriate for ARUs and detached garages. Some newer zoning by-laws approved after 2010 include maximum heights of 4.5 metres.

MEMORANDUM

To: Salvatore Aiello, City of Richmond Hill
From: Gladki Planning Associates Inc., LGA Architectural Partners
CC: TYLin, Aird & Berlis LLP
Date: August 29, 2024
Subject: Built Form Memo – Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Project

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Please note: Yellow highlighted text indicates information or sections that are pending review or confirmation prior to being incorporated into the Draft Recommendations Report and draft amendments in Phase 7.

Project Overview

The City of Richmond Hill has retained Gladki Planning Associates Inc. (GPA), in association with LGA Architectural Partners (LGA), TYLin, and Aird & Berlis LLP, to undertake the Richmond Hill Housing Accelerator Fund Project.

The Federal Government has made funds available through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to local governments for initiatives aimed at increasing affordable housing supply and supporting the development of complete, low-carbon and climate resilient communities that are affordable, inclusive, equitable and diverse. In response to the City of Richmond Hill’s application to the HAF, the Federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities issued two specific requests to enhance the City’s application and create new housing. This project provides a response to the Minister’s requests that best meets the needs and objectives of the City of Richmond Hill.

This project focuses on two related but distinct tasks to expand opportunities for gentle intensification and missing middle housing typologies in Richmond Hill:

- To propose amendments to the Official Plan (OP) and zoning by-law (ZBL) to permit up to 4 residential units where zoning permits single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling units.
- To propose amendments to the OP and ZBL to permit up to 4 storeys as-of-right within the Newkirk Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and MTSA’s along the Yonge Street and Highway 7 priority transit corridors where there is a mixed-use centre or corridor designation in the OP with permissions for building heights of 3 storeys or greater.

Our work will contribute new draft policy and by-law regulation contemplating updates to the City of Richmond Hill’s planning policy framework allowing for these new forms of gentle intensification. We will provide new planning instruments as appropriate for consideration allowing for the implementation of this new framework. This new framework will adapt the scale of intensification in some areas of the City, permitting an expansion of available housing typologies and missing middle housing. The impacts of this on surrounding uses, servicing, and transportation will be assessed and will inform our recommendations.

Purpose of this Memorandum

This memorandum outlines key directions related to built form. The following sections detail the central issues related to built form, options, our recommended approach, and a brief rationale. These key directions consider the following inputs:

- findings from Phase 3 background review and analysis;
- precedent research on other municipalities' approaches to permitting and regulating multiplexes;
- feedback from the public and stakeholders in Phase 5;
- built form demonstrations from Phase 5;
- the Parking & Transportation Memo, prepared by TYLin;
- feedback from City staff and consultants on the comprehensive zoning by-law project; and
- our professional expertise and experience as architects and planners.

If endorsed by City staff, these key directions will form the basis of the Official Plan amendment (OPA) and zoning by-law amendment (ZBLA).

Key Directions

Additional Residential Units

Permit up to four residential units on properties zoned for ground-related dwellings

We recommend permitting up to four (4) self-contained residential dwelling units on properties zoned for detached houses, semi-detached houses, and townhouses (including street townhouses and back-to-back townhouses, but not stacked townhouses), where currently only three (3) units are permitted. Ontario has a well-documented housing crisis. This amendment will permit additional residential units to be constructed to meet 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. This amendment will conform to or not conflict with, as the case may be, with the policies and objectives of the Provincial Policy Statement ("PPS"), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ("Growth Plan"), the York Region Official Plan ("ROP"), and the Richmond Hill Official Plan ("OP").

Terminology

OP and ZBL definitions will be reviewed and updated in the next phase of this project (Phase 7), once the overall approach to regulating the four residential units per property is confirmed with input from City staff. For the purpose of this document, we will use the following terms:

“Multiplex”

A low-density residential property that contains two, three, or four units. These units may be located within:

- a converted detached house, semi-detached house, or townhouse (i.e. a primary unit plus additional residential units);
- a detached accessory structure;
- a purpose-built multiplex building; or
- any combination of the above building types.

The term multiplex shall refer to the whole property, including the principal building and any detached accessory structures containing residential units.

“Accessory residential building”

A detached structure containing residential units. It shall be accessory to and located on the same lot as:

- a single-unit dwelling (detached house, semi-detached house, or townhouse);
- a converted detached house, semi-detached house, or townhouse containing multiple residential units; or
- a purpose-built multiplex building.

Multiplex permissions

We recommend the following general permissions for *multiplexes*:

- *Multiplexes* will be permitted in all zones that permit detached houses, semi-detached houses, townhouses. This effectively permits up to four residential units per lot. This approach complies with the *Planning Act* and associated regulations.
- *Multiplexes* will be subject to the same building envelope standards that apply to other ground-related dwelling types in the zone based on the applicable parent ZBL. This ensures the scale of *multiplexes* is compatible with neighbouring dwellings and maintains neighbourhood character.
- A *accessory residential building* may be located in the rear yard or side yard.
- A *accessory residential building* may contain an integral garage provided all standards related to detached garages and *accessory residential buildings* are met. The requirement that such a building abut a lane will be removed. This will continue the current permission for a residential unit (or units) to be constructed on top of or attached to a detached garage.

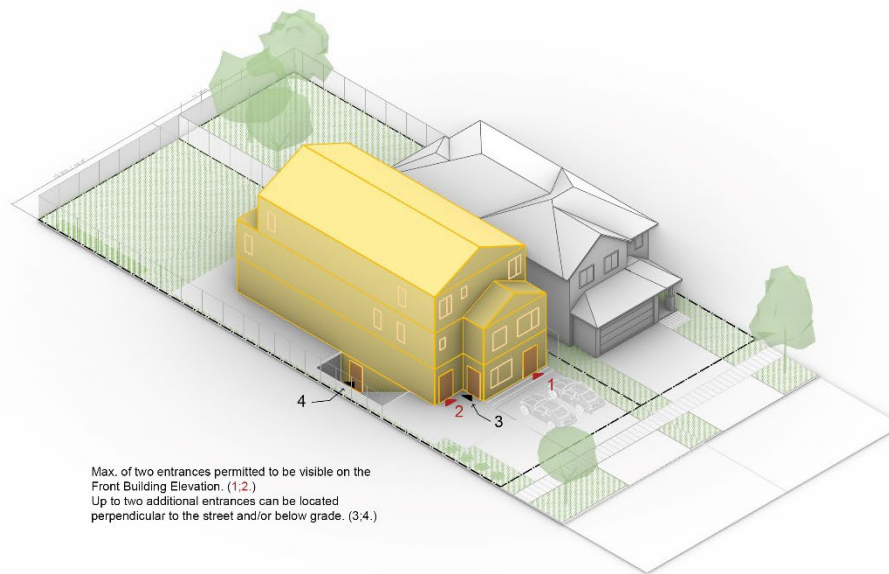
Clarify regulations regarding unit entrances

As the number of residential units per property increases, regulations regarding unit entrances should be revisited to ensure safe, convenient access for residents and emergency services.

Unit entrances on the front elevation

Regulations around unit entrances can impact unit layouts and arrangement on a *multiplex* property. To provide flexibility, we recommend not to limit the number of unit entrances on the front elevation of the building. However, we propose that a maximum of two (2) unit entrances are permitted to be visible on the front building elevation. Additional entrances may be located below grade or perpendicular to the street. This is demonstrated in Figure 1. This protects against a façade that is dominated by doors, thus maintaining neighbourhood character.

Figure 1. Three entrances on the front elevation of a multiplex.



Clear access

City staff stated that current zoning standards requiring a minimum side yard setback of 1.2 metres where the unit entrance is located in the side yard or rear yard are difficult to interpret and are a common reason for minor variance applications related to additional residential units. The intent is to provide clear access to unit entrances but the setback applies to the full extent of the side yard, regardless of where the unit entrance is located, which is not appropriate and created an unintended burden. We propose the following changes that ensure clear access to unit entrances and are straightforward to interpret for both developers and zoning examiners:

- Where unit entrances (including those to a *accessory residential building*) are located in the rear yard or side yard of a *multiplex* property, a minimum 1.0-metre-wide clear access path must be provided from a street or lane to the unit entrance. The clear access path must be hardscaped. No encroachments are permitted into the clear access path.
- A minimum 2.1 metre vertical clearance must be provided for the length of the clear access path.

In addition to these clear access path standards, minimum side yard setbacks apply. For the principal building on a lot, the parent ZBL dictates the setbacks. Generally, parent ZBLs require a setback of 1.2 metres or greater, with select encroachments permitted. For *accessory residential buildings*, new standards for setbacks are proposed (see Setbacks section below).

These requirements have been coordinated with the City's emergency services. They will be implemented through zoning but may not be reduced by the Committee of Adjustment (via minor variance) because they also form requirements under the Ontario Building Code. We further recommend that Building Services develop a stamp with the access requirements, to be included on site plans for *multiplex* developments.

Provide flexibility for larger accessory residential buildings on adequately-sized properties

Currently, detached accessory structures containing residential units are limited to:

- the lesser of:
 - 40.0 square metres of floor area, or
 - 5% lot coverage for all detached accessory structures;
- one (1) storey, unless located above a detached garage;
- containing a maximum of one (1) dwelling unit.

The current standards facilitate small, studio or 1-bedroom units. In pursuit of housing diversity and choice, including accommodations appropriate for larger households, we recommend modifications to the standards to permit larger *accessory residential buildings*. Larger structures can accommodate 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units.

Larger structures also create opportunity for two (2) dwelling units to be contained within a single *accessory residential building*. This would facilitate the creation of four units on a property (with two units in the principal building and two units in the *accessory residential building*) without triggering more complicated and costly Ontario Building Code (OBC) requirements when three or more dwelling units are located in a single building. Without triggering the 3-unit-threshold for the OBC, small-scale development is more feasible from both a design and financial perspective.

Not all properties in Richmond Hill are suitable for larger *accessory residential buildings*. We propose building envelope standards that control the *accessory residential building* on all sides:

- Minimum side and flankage yard setbacks;
- Minimum rear yard setback;
- Minimum separation distance from principal building; and
- Maximum building height.

Setbacks and separation distance work together to control the size of the *accessory residential building* based on the lot dimensions. As lot frontage or depth changes, the maximum footprint of the structure adjusts proportionally. Larger properties are permitted larger structures; smaller properties are permitted smaller structures. Some areas in Richmond Hill have very large

properties, therefore a maximum lot coverage for *accessory residential buildings* is proposed to ensure the scale of these structures remains appropriate in these contexts.

Figure 2 and Figure 3, below, demonstrate how the building envelope is controlled on differently-sized properties.

Figure 2. Small property where size of the accessory residential building is limited by setbacks and separation distance.

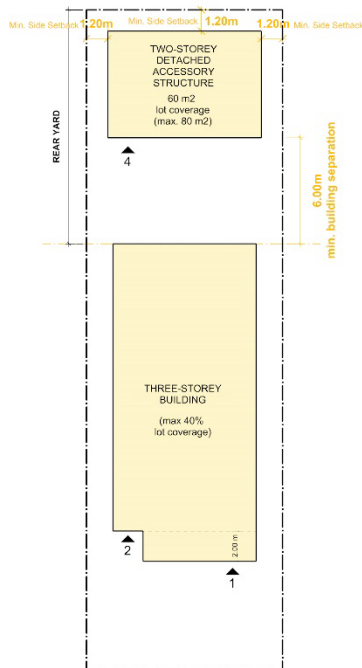
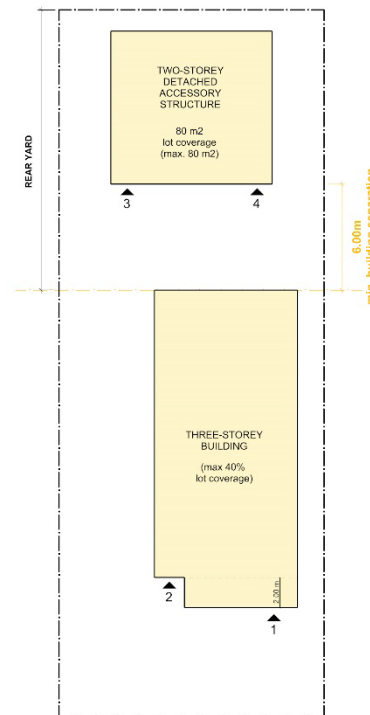


Figure 3. Large property where lot coverage for the accessory residential building is limited to the maximum 80.0 square metres.



Lot coverage

Currently, detached accessory structures containing residential units are subject to a maximum floor area of 40.0 square metres and are counted as part of the 5% maximum lot coverage for all detached accessory structures (including detached garages, sheds, etc.). We propose the following alternative regulatory scheme for lot coverage:

- Maximum lot coverage standards in the parent ZBL (generally, 30-50%) apply to the principal building on a *multiplex* property.
- *Accessory residential buildings* are not included in either the lot coverage calculation for the principal building or for detached accessory structures.
- *Accessory residential buildings* may have a maximum lot coverage of 80.0 square metres, assuming standards for side and rear yard setbacks and separation distance are met.

- On a lot containing a *accessory residential building*, no other detached accessory structures are permitted, except bicycle parking.

Separation distance

Separation distance is the perpendicular distance between the closest walls of the principal building and the *accessory residential building*. Often, this will be the distance between the rear wall of the principal building and the front wall of the *accessory residential building*.

We recommend a minimum separation distance of 6.0 metres between the principal building and a *accessory residential building* located on the same lot. Separation distance provides space for outdoor amenity area and soft landscaping, including trees. Six metres was selected because this distance creates an approximately 1:1 relationship for 2-storey structures, which is considered an industry standard to ensure buildings have a good spatial relationship to one another. Based on analysis and demonstration plans produced in earlier phases of this project, we observe that many ground-related dwellings in Richmond Hill are “underbuilt”, meaning they are smaller than the building envelopes permitted as-of-right by parent ZBLs. Therefore, a 6.0-metre minimum separation distance will, in practice, also limit principal building depth when *multiplex* properties are redeveloped, protecting them becoming overbuilt.

Setbacks

Parent ZBLs generally require side and rear yard setbacks of 0.6 metres for detached accessory structures, including those containing residential units. By-law 13-21 requires side and rear yard setbacks of 1.2 metres where it is needed to provide access to unit entrances. In our opinion, it is appropriate to require 1.2-metre side and rear yard setbacks for *accessory residential buildings*, which is consistent with the minimum setbacks for other buildings for human habitation in low-density residential zones. These setbacks create space for the maintenance of *accessory residential buildings* and provide separation from neighbouring properties and buildings. This setback is also consistent with OBC Part 9 requirements to allow glazing. Recognizing that the conversion of existing detached accessory structures and detached garages may be desirable, there are two options:

- OP policy text could encourage the Committee of Adjustment to consider minor variances to setbacks to permit the conversion of existing structures to *accessory residential buildings*; or
- The ZBL amendment could provide an exemption for legally existing structures as of the date of adoption of the by-law amendment. This second option would allow for as-of-right conversions for structures with setbacks less than 1.2 metres.

Regarding corner lots and flankage yard setbacks, on most properties it would difficult to locate a *accessory residential building* in the flankage yard and achieve the required separation distance with the principal building on the lot. When we examined property parcel data, we observed that a meaningful amount of what appears to be flankage yard is part of the City-owned boulevard and therefore unavailable for development. There are also daylighting triangles that must be maintained on corner lots. Perhaps most importantly, accessory residential buildings located in flankage yards do not *generally* follow the existing lot patterns in

Richmond Hill's neighbourhoods. In certain areas, there may be existing detached garages and driveways located in flankage lots. On a case-by-case basis, it may be appropriate to allow the conversions of detached garages in flankage yards to *accessory residential buildings*. We recommend that *accessory residential buildings* be prohibited in flankage yards in the ZBL, but we propose OP policy text encouraging the Committee of Adjustment to consider minor variances to permit the conversion of existing structures, where appropriate. For clarity, *accessory residential buildings* are permitted to locate in the interior side yard of a corner lot, applying the same standards as non-corner lot properties.

Height and massing

We recommend permitting 2-storey *accessory residential buildings*. Two-storey built form is permitted under current zoning for detached accessory structures where an additional residential unit is constructed above a detached garage abutting a lane. In our view, there is no planning rationale to restrict the ground floor use to parking. Further, we find it appropriate to permit 2-storeys on properties that do not abut lanes. Lanes create additional separation between properties but a similar effect can be achieved by increasing setbacks from 0.6 metres to 1.2 metres, as we have suggested. Since Richmond Hill's current zoning permits 2 and 3-storey principal buildings with 1.2 metre side setbacks, this change would be consistent with how residential buildings are currently regulated.

We recommend a maximum main wall height of 6.0 metres (Figure 4), which is adequate for two storeys considering these structures are typically feature "slab on grade" construction with 2.5-metre to 3.0-metre storey heights. An additional height allowance (to be determined) would be available for structures with pitched roofs (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Accessory residential building with a maximum main wall height of 6.0 metres and a flat roof.

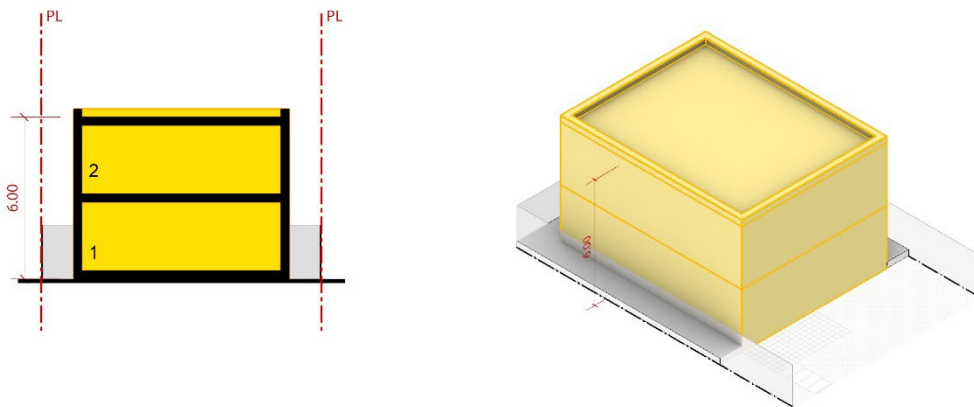
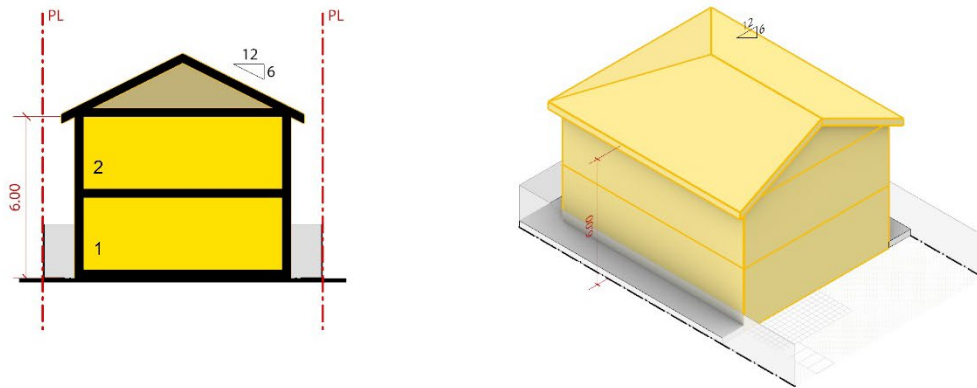


Figure 5. Accessory residential building with a maximum main wall height of 6.0 metres and a pitched roof.



During public consultations for this project, we heard some concern from neighbours about overlook onto their properties from 2-storey *accessory residential buildings*. Below, we present options and a recommendation in response to this concern.

Option #1: Rely on Ontario Building Code requirements

The OBC regulates a maximum percent of glazed openings per building façade based on setbacks. With setbacks of 1.2 metres, as recommended, only 8% of the façade may be glazed without additional fire protective measures (Table 1). It is important to note that this 8% is spread over both storeys and, in practice, many designs favour larger windows in common living areas located on the ground floor. Based on the OBC requirements, we predict that second storey windows facing adjacent residential properties will, in most cases, be minimal. As setbacks increase, additional glazing is permitted but the larger setbacks mitigate overlook.

Table 1. Ontario Building Code, Maximum Area of Glazed Openings in Exterior Walls of Houses (Table 9.10.15.4.)

Table 9.10.15.4.
Maximum Area of Glazed Openings in Exterior Walls of Houses
 Forming Part of Subclause 9.10.15.2.(1)(b)(iii) and Sentences 9.10.15.4.(1) and (2)

Maximum Total Area of Exposing Building Face, m ²	Maximum Aggregate Area of Glazed Openings, % of Exposing Building Face Area													
	Limiting Distance, m													
	Less than 1.2	1.2	1.5	2	2.5	3	4	6	8	10	12	16	20	25
10	0	8	12	21	33	55	96	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
15	0	8	10	17	25	37	67	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
20	0	8	10	15	21	30	53	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
25	0	8	9	13	19	26	45	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
30	0	7	9	12	17	23	39	88	100	100	100	100	100	100
40	0	7	8	11	15	20	32	69	100	100	100	100	100	100
50	0	7	8	10	14	18	28	57	100	100	100	100	100	100
100	0	7	8	9	11	13	18	34	56	84	100	100	100	100
Over 100	0	7	7	8	9	10	12	19	28	40	55	92	100	100

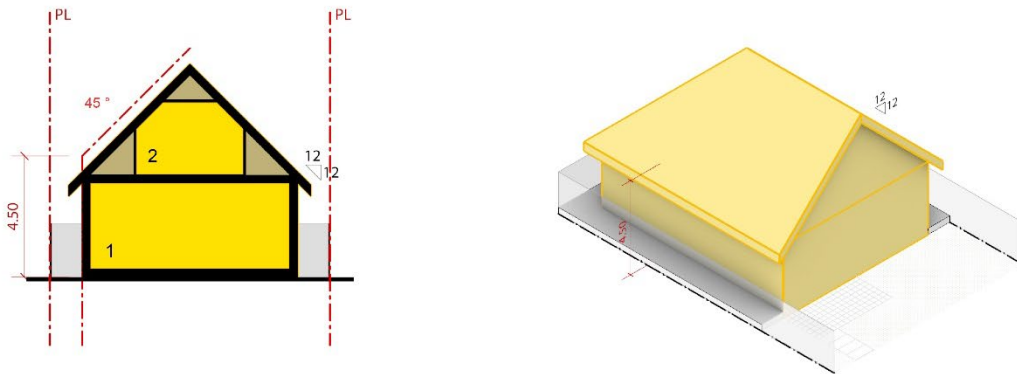
Option #2: Sculpt the second storey

We could use zoning to control the massing of the second storey, which could help mitigate overlook and enhance privacy on adjacent properties. Massing would be dictated by applying a 45-degree angular plane measured from 4.5 metres above grade at the required side and rear setbacks (1.2 metres) from the property lines. Angular planes would only apply along lot lines directly abutting another property zoned for low-density residential uses. Sculpting would not be required on the portion of the *accessory residential building* facing the principal building on the same lot. While angular planes are not primarily used as privacy mitigation, its application in this context has the effect of reducing overlook because of the impact on built form.

On large properties, the *accessory residential building* could have two full storeys if large enough setbacks can be accommodated. Larger setbacks minimize overlook. On more constrained sites where angular planes will sculpt the building, the following built forms are likely:

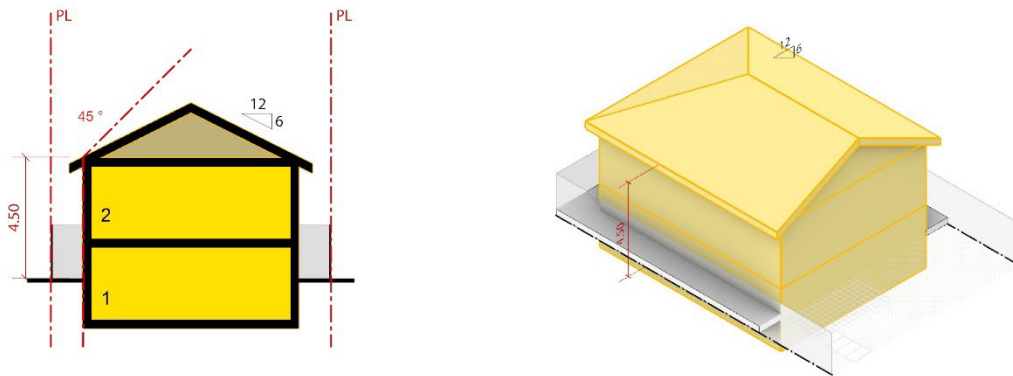
- One storey plus attic loft (Figure 6); or
- Sunken first storey to allow two full-height storeys (Figure 7).

Figure 6. Built form created by a 45-degree angular plane applied from 4.5 metres above grade: one storey plus attic loft.



For a one-storey plus loft structure, the second storey would have sloping walls, rather than vertical walls. Windows would be permitted on the second storey but they too would be sloping. A person standing inside the *accessory residential building* at the window would be further from the property line (due to low ceiling heights), thus reducing overlook.

Figure 7. Built form created by a 45-degree angular plane applied from 4.5 metres above grade: sunken first storey to allow two full-height storeys.



For a sunken two-storey structure, the second-storey windows would be located below 4.5 metres, which is only slightly higher than the height of windows on a typical first storey. The lower height reduces overlook and provides a similar level of privacy as a one-storey structure, which, generally, does not seem to concern neighbours. The design response of sinking the first storey to accommodate two full-height storeys within the angular plane may impact the provision of barrier-free/accessible units.

Sculpting the second storey does increase construction costs, but since other municipalities (namely, Toronto) have similar regulations, many architects are familiar with suitable design approaches and there are even pre-fabricated buildings on the market that meet these requirements.

If this Option is selected as the preferred option, some consideration may be given to allowing dormers to increase useable floor area on the second storey. The inclusion of windows in dormers, however, may negate the overlook mitigation impacts of the angular plane.

Option #3: Restrict windows on second storey

To prevent or reduce overlook onto adjacent properties, windows in the *accessory residential building* could be restricted in various ways. These options and some commentary are presented in Table 2. Window restrictions would only apply along lot lines directly abutting another property zoned for low-density residential uses. Window restrictions would not apply on the portion of the *accessory residential building* facing the principal building on the same lot.

Table 2. Options to restrict windows in an accessory residential building.

Way to restrict windows	Commentary
Windows on the second storey could be prohibited unless larger setbacks (e.g. 3.0 metres) are accommodated.	Requiring larger setbacks in order to have windows would reduce overlook. However, there are several disadvantages with this option. Second storeys without windows offer poor living conditions for residents and unaesthetic blank walls. Stepbacks (to accommodate additional setback on the second storey) increase construction costs significantly, result in loss of floorspace, and may contain balconies (which provide similar possibility for overlook onto neighbouring properties).
The height of second-storey windows could be regulated to only allow for clerestory windows (Figure 8) and skylights.	This option would provide units with natural light but not views. It would create challenges with unit layouts because bedrooms require a second means of egress (i.e. an operable window of a certain size) under the OBC. Authority to regulate the minimum elevation of windows is provided under Section 34(1)(5) of the <i>Planning Act</i> .
Windows on the second storey could contain obscure/frosted glass.	The <i>Planning Act</i> does not provide authority to regulate the type of glass.

Figure 8. Clerestory windows in a bedroom. (Source: DigsDigs.com)



Everything considered, window restrictions are not our preferred option. Implementation through zoning is difficult and open to appeal. Light and air provided by windows are essential for quality housing. Applying window restrictions complicates design and risks the creation of poor-quality living spaces on the second storey.

Our recommendation is to rely on Ontario Building Code requirements (Option #1). It is our opinion that OBC requirements produce built form that sufficiently mitigates concerns about overlook. Since residents may not be familiar with the details and application of the OBC, we suspect their fear is wall-to-wall glazing, which is unlikely to be the reality. Option #1 allows for simpler, cost-effective *accessory residential building* designs which will facilitate the construction of more new homes. Sculpting the second storey (Option #2) is also an acceptable solution, though we recognize it will result in higher building costs and may reduce the viability of certain multiplex developments.

Number of units

We recommend that the ZBL permit a *accessory residential building* to contain a maximum of two (2) dwelling units. As previously described, this recommendation would make it easier for property owners to develop four residential units by reducing cost and complexity involved with meeting OBC requirements for 3+ units in a single building. It may also facilitate the development of more residential units where the property owner wishes to retain the primary

building as a single unit (e.g. for personal use), which would otherwise limit the multiplex property to two units total.

Outdoor amenity space

Multiplex properties will not be subject to rear yard amenity provisions of the current ZBLs; these only apply to detached and semi-detached properties. We recommend introducing OP policies to encourage provision of outdoor amenity space, which may include shared spaces, for units within multiplexes.

To reduce overlook, on *accessory residential buildings* we recommend prohibiting rooftop amenity areas and balconies on building façades that face a lot line abutting a property zoned for low-density residential uses. Balconies may be permitted facing the principal building on the same lot and on façades facing lot lines abutting non-residential uses, streets, lanes, parks and open space, and medium- or high-density residential properties.

Review parking requirements for multiplex properties

Minimum parking requirements

The demonstrations created for this project clearly show the impact of parking on the built form of multiplexes. Most significant is the interplay between lot frontage, maximum driveway widths, and parking minimums in the parent ZBLs. In the parent ZBLs, narrow lots (less than 9.0 metres frontage) typically required one parking space located in a garage. Driveways on these lots are limited to 3.0 metres in width under Omnibus Amending By-law 84-03. This results in the potential maximum of two parking spaces: one in the garage and one on the driveway. Wider lots (greater than 9.0 metres frontage) are more likely to be constructed with double-car garages to accommodate the required 1-2 parking spaces under the parent ZBLs. Under By-law 84-03, wide lots are permitted driveways that are 6.0 metres wide or more. This means many wide lots were constructed in a way that can accommodate 4 parking spaces: two in the garage and two on the driveway.

Our recommended minimum parking requirements for multiplexes have been prepared based on analysis by TYLin, further elaborated within the Phase 6 Parking & Transportation Memo. Our recommendations also recognize that, in general, more space dedicated to vehicles means less space available for housing. Facilitating the creation of more housing is a primary objective of this project. Therefore, we attempt to find a balance between low minimum parking requirements to reserve maximum space on-site for housing and ensuring that sufficient parking is available to meet the needs of multiplex residents. Lower parking rates support modal shift, reduce impermeable surfaces, improve property aesthetics, and lower the cost of individual rental units since parking is not an amenity tenants must pay for.

It is important to note that no parking maximums have been proposed, only minimums. If property owners wish to provide additional parking spaces, they may, as long as their property is sufficiently sized. As previously discussed, properties with less than 9.0 metres frontage can generally accommodate up to two parking spaces and properties with greater than 9.0 metres frontage can generally accommodate at least 4 parking spaces. When parking minimums are lower than the number of parking spaces a property can reasonably accommodate, it provides

the *option* to reclaim some garage space, for example, as living space. Whether property owners take advantage of this option will be largely determined by the market and the needs of target tenants.

Minimum parking for a multiplex property

Parking requirements for single dwellings, as required by the parent by-laws, are unaffected. The proposed omnibus amending by-law will introduce new parking requirements for multiplexes only.

Table 3 depicts our recommendations for minimum parking for multiplex properties. Minimum parking requirements are based on the City’s established Parking Strategy Areas (PSAs) and will be implemented through a zoning overlay. Since the number of units in multiplexes are low (relative to apartment buildings, for example), we opted to provide parking minimums as the number of spaces required per property, rather than a rate per unit, for ease of interpretation. Accordingly, parking minimums vary based on the number of units in a multiplex. Bill 185 amended the *Planning Act* to eliminate parking minimums within MTSAs. As such, no parking is required for multiplex properties located within PSA 1 and PSA 2.

Table 3. Recommended minimum number of required parking spaces for a multiplex property.

# Units in a Multiplex	PSA 1	PSA 2	PSA 3	PSA 4
2 Units	0	0	1	2
3 Units	0	0	1	2
4 Units	0	0	2	3

Notwithstanding Table 3, multiplex properties subject to By-laws 986 and 1275, which do not contain minimum parking requirements, will not be required to provide any parking for up to three units (see Table 4). This ensures conformity with the *Planning Act* O.Reg. 299/19 Section 2(2), which does not require a parking space for the first two additional residential units if the primary residential unit has no parking minimums prescribed in a ZBL.

Table 4. Alternative minimum required parking for by-laws 986 and 1275.

# Units in a Multiplex	Minimum # of Parking Spaces
2 Units	0
3 Units	0
4 Units	1

Properties with a lot frontage of less than 9.0 metres have a maximum driveway width of 3.0 metres under Omnibus Amending By-law 84-03. On these constrained properties, assuming the existence or development of an integral garage, a maximum of two parking spaces can be provided. In accordance with Section 16(3) of the *Planning Act*, the required minimum parking spaces for multiplex properties containing three residential units may not exceed 2. Development of a fourth unit on properties with a lot frontage of less than 9.0 metres would

require a minor variance to reduce the parking requirement. OP policies can encourage the Committee of Adjustment to positively consider granting these variances, as appropriate.

O.Reg. 299/19 (Section 2(1)) requires a maximum of one parking space for each additional residential unit. O.Reg. 299/19 (Section 3) does, however, permit municipalities to pass a ZBL which requires zero parking spaces for the first and/or second additional residential unit. The regulation does not allow modification of the parking requirement by by-law for the third additional residential unit. Accordingly, we have set the “trigger point” for requiring an additional parking space to be provided on a multiplex property at the fourth unit.

Bicycle parking

Provision of bicycle parking spaces supports modal shift and strengthens the rationale for reduced parking minimums for multiplexes. This direction is aligned with City policies regarding transportation and environment. We recommend requiring one (1) bicycle parking space per unit in PSA 1, PSA 2, and PSA 3 (broadly, the MTSAs and 400-metre transit corridors). No bicycle parking would be required in PSA 4 (rest of the city). Bicycle parking for low-density residential properties may need to be separately defined in the ZBL, since the standards for bicycle parking in high-density developments may be inappropriate in a different context. Definitions will be reviewed in collaboration with the comprehensive zoning by-law project team. We recommend standards for bicycle parking that provide maximum flexibility (i.e. not being overly prescriptive of location, size, weather protection, etc.), recognizing that other low-rise dwelling types have no applicable standards relating to bicycle parking. Bicycle parking facilities would be the sole exemption from the prohibition on other detached accessory structures for multiplex properties containing a accessory residential building.

Soft landscaping

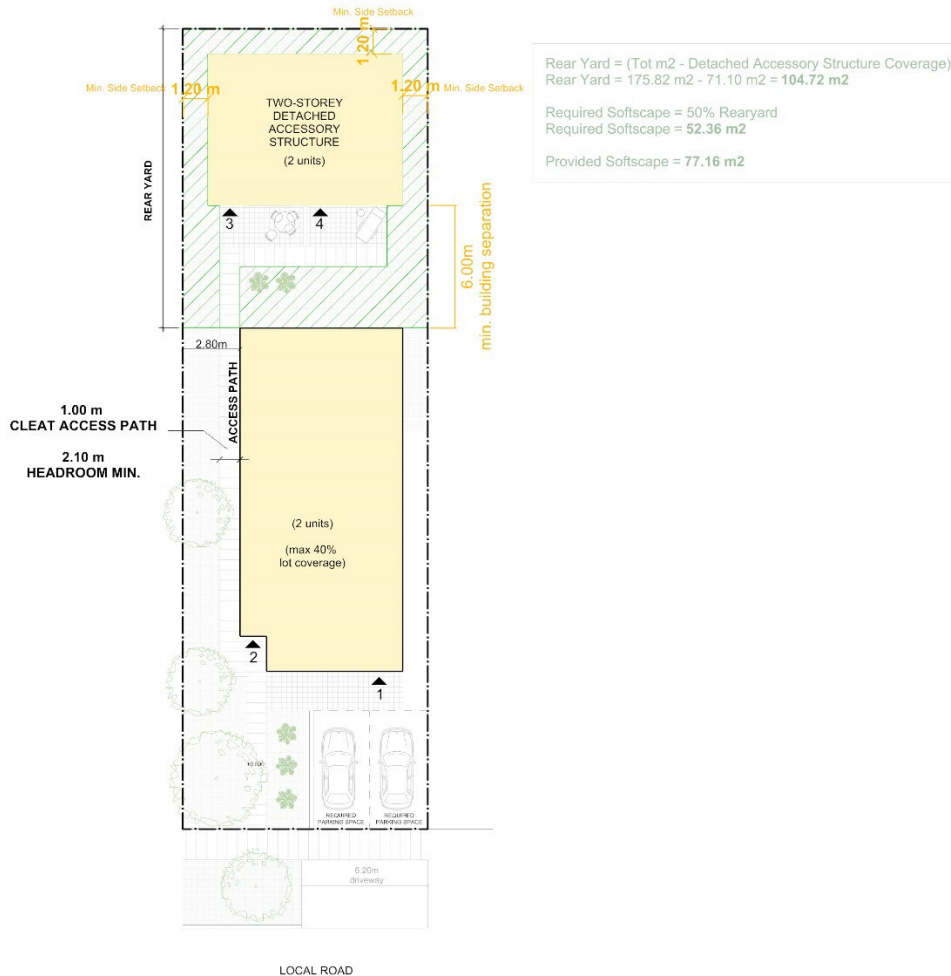
Soft landscaping means gardens, lawns, groundcover, and other soft/porous surfaces. Soft landscaping allows stormwater to be absorbed into the ground, minimizing runoff. Stormwater retention is critical to prevent localized flooding (and associated risks to lives and property), recharge groundwater, and preserve the capacity of storm sewers during rainfall events. Soft landscaping has other environmental benefits such as supporting biodiversity and reducing the urban heat island effect.

In front yards, there is an observed trend of illegal parking of vehicles on hard landscaping. Zoning only permits parking of vehicles on driveways and in garages, not on landscaped areas. Problematically, landscaped areas are defined to include hard landscaping. A front yard soft landscaping requirement would have the added benefit of creating a *de facto* parking maximum and reducing illegal parking on landscaped areas, since residents will presumably be less inclined to park on lawns and gardens.

For all these reasons, front and rear yard soft landscape standards are recommended. In consultation with the City’s comprehensive zoning by-law project team, it was determined that a front yard soft landscape standard would be best implemented through that other project. For multiplex properties, we recommend a minimum of 50% of the rear yard area be soft landscaping. Rear yard shall be defined as the area between the rear wall of the principal

building and the rear property line, excluding any area covered by a accessory residential building. Figure 9 demonstrates the rear yard soft landscape requirement.

Figure 9. Demonstration of rear yard soft landscape requirements.



Four Storeys in Mixed-use MTSAs

The Centres and Corridors are Richmond Hill’s mixed-use intensification areas. They are locations for greater densities, including mid-rise and high-rise buildings. Where Centres and Corridors overlap with MTSAs, there is potential to achieve complete communities with access to transit in close proximity. Opportunities for housing should be maximized in these locations. The challenge lies where intensification areas abut low-density residential neighbourhoods. “Transition” is the idea that heights and densities should gradually reduce from the Centres and Corridors to the Neighbourhoods. In Richmond Hill, transition is accomplished with OP angular plane policies and corresponding maximum permitted heights (in storeys). Angular planes become problematic on properties closest to where the angular plane is measured from, especially when it is measured from grade. Angular planes can produce exaggeratedly low maximum building heights on properties designated for higher densities. This effect is most acute on constrained properties. To combat this, the OP provides for buildings up to 10.0

metres in height to penetrate the angular plane. This facilitates the creation of 3 storey buildings on mixed-use properties abutting Neighbourhoods. We argue that permitting 4 storeys is highly desirable and still provides adequate transition to Neighbourhoods. Low-density residential zones typically permit ground-related dwellings with a maximum height of 3 storeys (11.0 metres). Transition does not necessitate matching the height of an adjacent property, it simply involves moving densities in that direction. Permitting buildings up to 4 storeys enables more housing to be built in proximity to transit and provides flexibility for different housing typologies, such as stacked townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings.

Increase maximum building heights and maximum base building heights from 3 storeys to 4 storeys, where appropriate

There are a few specific locations in mixed-use MTSAs where there are OP-designated maximum building heights (or base building heights) of less than 4 storeys. We recommend amending the following maximum heights in the OP to 4 storeys:

- “Neighbourhood Edge” properties in the Yonge & Bernard Key Development Area (KDA); and
- base building heights in Newkirk Local Centre.

An omnibus amending by-law would permit, notwithstanding any standards within a parent ZBL, 4 storeys (15.0 metres) as-of-right anywhere within an MTSA with a mixed-use Centres or Corridors OP designation. This area would be delineated in a zoning overlay.

The Village Local Centre would be an exception to both the proposed OPA and ZBLA. The Village Local Centre has maximum base building heights of 3 storeys, which reinforce the heritage streetwall height. We find it appropriate to maintain this maximum height for the Village Local Centre due to its unique heritage character.

Amend OP angular plane policies to allow 4-storey buildings to penetrate the prescribed angular plane

The City of Richmond Hill’s OP policy 3.1.4.3 addresses transition between the Centres and Corridors (the City’s intensification areas) and Neighbourhoods. The current policy directs, unless otherwise specified, a 45-degree angular plane will be applied, measured from grade. In the event that the Neighbourhood designation immediately abuts the lot line of lands within the Centres and Corridors, such as a side-lot or back-lot condition, a building structure up to 10 metres in height may protrude into the angular plane. Certain areas (namely, Richmond Hill Centre, Yonge Street & Bernard Avenue KDA, and the Village Local Centre) have slightly modified angular plane policies that override policy 3.1.4.3. In Richmond Hill Centre and Yonge Street & Bernard KDA, 45-degree angular planes are measured from 10 metres above grade, while in the Village Local Centre a 30-degree angular plane with no allowable penetrations applies.

We recommend amending the OP to permit buildings or structures up to 15.0 metres in height to penetrate *any* angular planes intended to provide transition between Centres/Corridors and Neighbourhoods (Figure 10 and Figure 11). Fifteen metres was selected as an appropriate

building height to accommodate four storeys, including flexibility for increased ground floor height for commercial uses and a rooftop parapet.

Figure 10. 45-degree angular plane measured from grade with a 4-storey (15.0-metre) building as an allowable penetration.

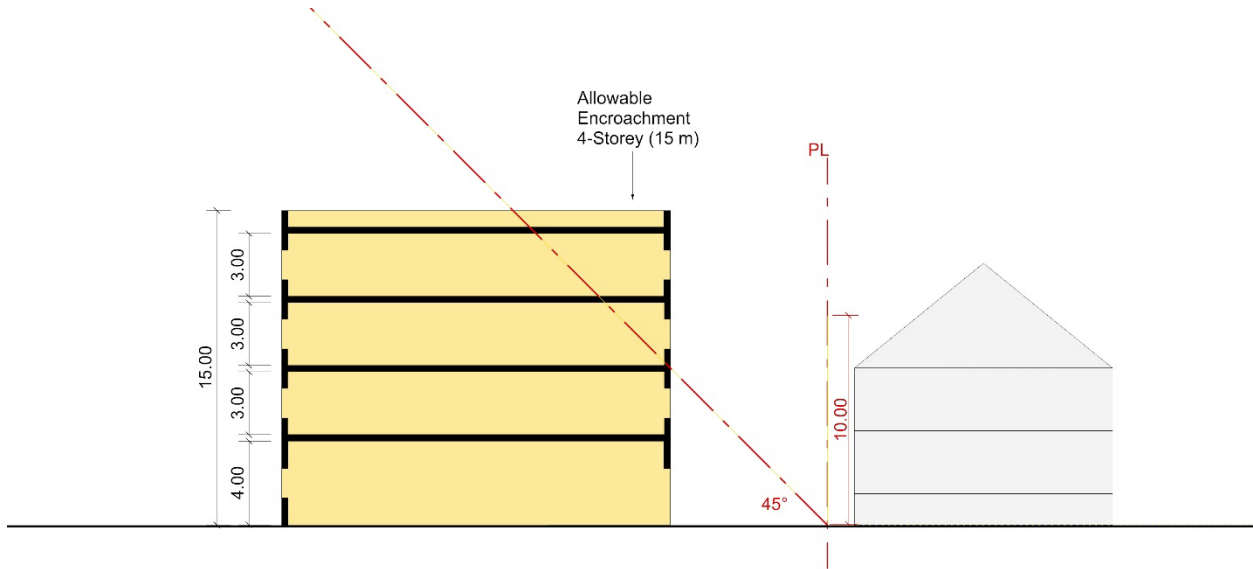
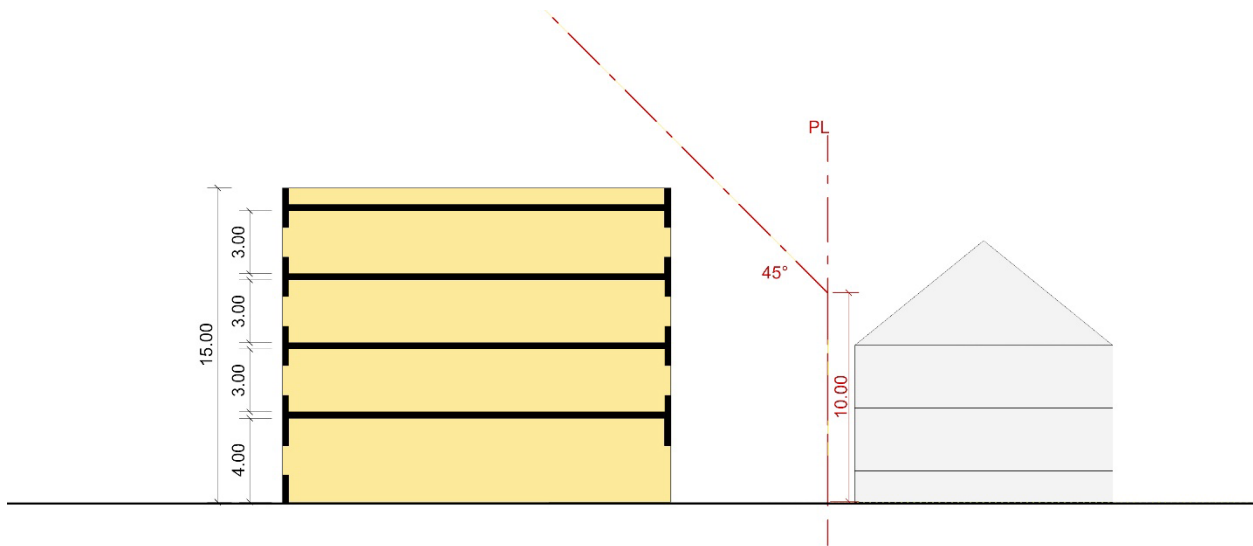


Figure 11. 45-degree angular plane measured from 10.0 metres above grade. Buildings up to 15.0 metres in height are permitted to penetrate the angular plane, however this would only occur with atypically small setbacks.



There shall be two area-specific exceptions:

1. **Yonge Street & Bernard Avenue KDA:** Policies 12.2.2.3 and 12.2.4.2.2 will not be changed. These policies were very recently adopted and are considered to be appropriate for that reason.
2. **Village Local Centre:** Policy 4.3.1.1.12 maintains significant views and will not be changed. Policy 4.3.1.2.8(a) provides transition in a way that responds to steeper-than-

typical grade conditions. We recommend that the 30-degree angular plane (with no penetrations permitted) continue to apply for the Village Local Centre.

Next Steps

This memorandum presents the consulting team's recommendations regarding built form for *multiplexes* and 4-storey buildings within mixed-use MTSAs. Our immediate next step is to work collaboratively with our colleagues at the City to receive feedback, seek consensus, and confirm key directions. Alignment between City staff and the consulting team is the goal, as this will allow us to work expediently towards the project deadline.

Another next step will be determining the approach to the amendments (the planning instruments), particularly:

- whether to repeal or amend By-law 13-21;
- how to define *multiplexes* and *accessory residential buildings*, and harmonize similar definitions;
- how to best coordinate with the in-progress Official Plan Review and comprehensive zoning by-law projects;
- ensuring conformity with the *Planning Act*, other applicable legislations, and associated regulations.

Then, we will undertake the detailed review of the OP policies and ZBL regulations to determine the scope of amendments required to achieve the recommended built form. This work will allow us to prepare the draft amendments. At this point, it may be advisable to have the City's legal team review the draft amendments and consider utilizing the project's legal contingency for Aird & Berlis to provide an opinion on any complex legal issues arising.

Phase 7 will conclude by presenting the Draft OPA and ZBLA and the Draft Recommendations Report to Council and the public and accepting comments. After this, the final amendments and Final Recommendations Report will be prepared and will be considered by Council in December 2024.