



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: January 5, 2023  
Contact: Neil Hrushowy  
Contact No.: 604-829-9622  
RTS No.: 15472  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: January 18, 2023  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability  
SUBJECT: Adding Missing Middle Housing and Simplifying Regulations in Low Density Neighbourhoods

### Recommendation

THAT Council receive the *Adding Missing Middle Housing and Simplifying Regulations in Low Density Neighbourhoods* presentation for information.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report provides Council with an update on the work program and a targeted timeline to add missing middle housing options and simplify regulations in low density areas (RS zones). This report also highlights the launch of the public engagement and upcoming dates and tools for engagement.

### Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- January 2022: Council passed the motion [Making Home: Housing For All Of Us \(Member's Motion B.3\) \(2022\)](#)
- July 2022: Council approved the [Vancouver Plan \(2022\)](#)
- June 2022: Council extended resolutions in the [Development Application and Permitting Modernization Task Force – Report back on Design Guidelines and Protection of Trees By-law Policies \(2022\)](#) to continue to enable faster processing of permit applications.

### City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations. This initiative is a key component of the 2023 work program and will help address a number of city priorities for housing and permit processing.

## **Context and Background**

### Adding Housing Choice

Through work on the Vancouver Plan and Housing Vancouver Strategy, many residents of Vancouver have indicated a desire for more housing choice, including strong support for missing middle housing types that fill the gap between single detached houses and large apartment buildings in neighbourhoods across Vancouver. We know that residents also have major concerns about affordability and support shifting to the ‘Right Supply’ of housing that more households can afford.

On January 26, 2022, Council passed motion B.3 (Making Home: Housing For All of Us) asking staff to investigate allowing up to six units on a lot in lower density areas. As directed by that motion, the *Adding Missing Middle Housing and Simplifying Regulations in Low Density Neighbourhoods* work program is exploring ways to add new missing middle housing options, namely multiplexes with up to 6 units on larger lots, in low density (RS-zoned) areas.

### Simplifying Regulations in Low Density (RS) Zones

The current low density (RS) regulations have built up over decades and are very complex. Over the years, the RS zones have been amended extensively and new RS districts have been introduced to respond to specific design preferences in certain areas and address changing community needs, resulting in multiple low density districts with minor regulatory variations between them. This has resulted in a high degree of design review for houses in some neighbourhoods, and the creation of numerous district schedules with complex regulations. This is challenging for applicants and has implications for staffing resources and processing times.

## **Discussion**

Staff are advancing work to evaluate options for adding new missing middle housing in low density (RS) zones. The work program also includes changes to simplify the RS regulations in order to create capacity in the permitting system to handle new missing middle options and make it simpler and easier to process permits.

Further details on the new multiplex concept and other changes to RS zoning that are being explored can be found in the *Adding Missing Middle Housing and Simplifying Regulations in Low Density Neighbourhoods* presentation being delivered to Council in conjunction with this report.

### Engagement

Technical work and industry workshops during 2022 have helped shape the draft proposal. The public engagement component of this project is set to launch in early February 2023.

Engagement will include open houses, a Shape Your City web page, and an online survey that will seek feedback on the draft multiplex proposal and on proposed changes to simplify RS regulations.

Timeline

Following early-2023 public engagement, staff will work to refine the proposal over the spring and a refined draft proposal will be shared with the public for further feedback. A final report with recommendations on changes to the Zoning and Development By-law is targeted for consideration by Council in Q3 2023. Should changes be approved following a public hearing, staff anticipate that new permit applications could begin to be accepted in early 2024.

**Figure 1: Project Timeline**

