

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION**

*For consideration at the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on  
September 17, 2025*

### **5. Beyond Arterials: Creating More Housing Options on Low-Traffic Streets**

Submitted by: Councillor Maloney

#### **WHEREAS**

1. Young families find it profoundly difficult to build lives in Vancouver due to the shortage of housing, and especially due to the shortage of housing that they want most: in quiet neighbourhoods, on side streets, with access to mature trees and greenspace;
2. Like many North American cities, Vancouver has long restricted the development of apartment buildings and other higher-density forms to narrow strips along arterial streets, consigning those who cannot afford more expensive housing to live along these arterials, with less access to mature trees and more exposure to dust, pollution and safety risks;
3. People exposed to traffic pollution are at significantly greater risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease ([Mayer et al., 2024](#); [Pindus et al., 2015](#)). Residents living on arterials typically face much higher baseline noise levels inside their homes, which has documented negative cardiovascular effects ([Juneau, 2023](#)). Providing the majority of housing on arterial roads gives young families little choice as to where they can afford to raise their children;
4. Vancouver has a network of quiet, leafy streets that may be able to become home to additional residents without substantially adding to congestion - the active transportation network;
5. Vancouver has many world-class parks, which are presently accessible primarily by people living in the single family detached home neighbourhoods around them;
6. Current economic conditions have slowed new-home construction, particularly large-scale projects. Easing of restrictions on smaller-scale apartment buildings could help to stimulate our local economy by creating construction and associated jobs and meeting demand to address Vancouver's low vacancy rate;

7. Apartments can provide a more accessible option for seniors and disabled people than multi-level single-family homes and townhouses when mobility becomes difficult. A wider availability of housing choices in every neighbourhood can allow residents to stay in their neighbourhoods for longer;
8. Allowing low to medium-rise apartment buildings on the City's greenways, active transport routes and on low-traffic streets around parks, would allow the gradual, gentle densification of housing along these routes, providing more housing options in every neighbourhood and giving more residents access to housing on quieter streets;
9. Allowing housing to be built on side streets can reduce the displacement of treasured independent retail businesses on high streets by artificially providing greater incentives for redevelopment on commercial streets ([White, 2025](#); [Vancouver Plan](#));
10. Senior governments have prioritized housing construction and are presently providing substantial capital to finance necessary upgrades of associated infrastructure;
11. Despite the shortage of housing, zoning for an adequate supply of housing has been hampered by an infrastructure deficit. Identifying high-priority areas for net new housing that also advances other policy goals is a financially prudent and effective way to address the housing shortage;
12. Constrained housing supply requires more people who work in Vancouver to commute from neighbouring municipalities, exacerbating the noise, pollution and danger from motor vehicle traffic experienced by residents living on arterial roads; and
13. In order to build a brighter, more prosperous and more vibrant future for Vancouver, we need to build the homes on quiet, leafy streets that allow families to build the lives they want in the city they love.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to:

1. Explore and report back on zoning changes that would allow, as a permitted use, the following:
  - a. Residential and mixed-use apartment buildings of up to six floors with a maximum FSR of 3.0;
  - b. Ground-floor commercial, including but not limited to ground-floor retail at intersections. (the "Amended Zoning").

2. Explore and report back on by-law amendments implementing the Amended Zoning in the following areas:
  - a. Local streets adjacent to parks;
  - b. Local streets along existing and planned greenways and other designated active transportation routes in the City of Vancouver.

Excluding:

- a. Areas where the existing zoning already allows higher densities;
  - b. Existing commercially zoned areas.
3. For the zoning changes proposed in resolutions 1 and 2, undertake economic feasibility analyses demonstrating rate of change scenarios.
4. Identify where existing infrastructure can support the Amended Zoning and prioritize those areas for implementation of the Amended Zoning.
5. Engage with industry and experts to explore how new buildings can be designed to limit stormwater discharge levels, similar to existing direction for single family homes.
6. Identify funding opportunities from senior levels of government to support any required stormwater, sewer, or other infrastructure upgrades needed to service the Amended Zoning and
7. Report back to City Council with an implementation plan timeline and budget, and where possible, leverage the current Vancouver Official Development Plan and other relevant consultations and policy process.

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