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**TO: The Chairs and Members of the Planning and Housing Committee and
Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee**

**DESTINATAIRE : Présidents et membres du Comité de la planification et du
logement et Comité de l'agriculture et des affaires rurales**

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**DATE: August 22, 2025
22 août 2025**

FILE NUMBER: ACS2025-PDB-PS-0054

SUBJECT: Q3 2025 – Status update on the new Zoning By-law - Final Draft

**OBJET : Troisième trimestre de 2025 – Le point sur l'examen du nouveau
Règlement de zonage**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update on the status of the final draft of the new Zoning By-law, scheduled to be released on [Engage Ottawa](#) on Monday, September 8. This update provides:

- A summary of the changes in the third and final draft,
- An overview of the joint committee process leading into approval of the new Zoning By-law,
- Details about public engagement opportunities in Q3 and Q4 2025,
- Information about continuation provisions for in-process and complete *Planning Act* applications commenced under Zoning By-law 2008-250 (included as Document 1),
- An As-We-Hear-It document that summarizes comments received since Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law was released in March 2025 (included as Document 2).

Ottawa is a growing city, with a population expected to grow by approximately 118,000 more households by 2035. That increase follows significant growth that took place between 2006 and 2021, when the city grew by more than 205,000 residents, outpacing growth reported in Toronto, Hamilton and Edmonton.

Approved in 2022, the new Official Plan provides a strong framework for managing growth across the city, in urban, suburban and rural areas. The new Zoning By-law implements the Official Plan and will ensure that the city is prepared for the coming growth by creating new opportunities for a wider range of housing choices and offering streamlined rules to make it easier for new housing to be built. This modernized Zoning By-law eliminates barriers and offers flexibility to facilitate increased housing construction. Key elements include:

- Expanded opportunities for housing and housing options with broad permissions
- Simpler and easier to use form-based zoning city-wide
- Straightforward permissions for mid- and high-rise development close to transit
- Choice-based parking framework
- Streamlined rules to achieve gentle density in neighbourhoods

- Removed restrictions to support economic opportunities

Given the clear link between the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law, the ongoing consultation for the final draft of the Zoning By-law has built on years of consultations and technical work to ensure growth in Ottawa balances the needs of a growing city with the interests of all residents. Following two years of public consultations on the first two drafts of the new Zoning By-law – and many changes and modifications – consultations on the final draft will begin on Monday, September 8.

BACKGROUND

On April 29, 2024, staff presented a [report](#) at a joint meeting of the Planning and Housing Committee and the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee that provided an overview of Draft 1 of the new Zoning By-law. Following release of that report, the draft Zoning By-law and Zoning Map were released on [May 31, 2024](#).

Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law was released on [March 20, 2025](#). The [report](#) for Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law was received by Council on April 16, 2025. Public consultations on Draft 2 occurred from March 20 through June 30, 2025.

Draft 3 of the new Zoning By-law will be the final draft and is scheduled for release on September 8, 2025. In December 2025 as part of the tabling of the new Zoning By-law to Joint Planning and Housing Committee and Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee, staff may also recommend revisions that implement complex secondary plan policies that are not currently implemented or drafted and addressing any errors that may arise through the review and consultation of the third and final draft.

DISCUSSION

Summary of changes in the final draft of the new Zoning By-law

Maximum Building Height in Neighbourhood Zones (N1 – N4)

In Draft 1 of the new Zoning By-law, the maximum building height proposed in the N1 and N2 Zones was 8.5 metres (two storeys) in all urban transects. In Draft 2, the maximum height in the Suburban transect was increased to 11 metres, to recognize building heights that are currently permitted in Zoning By-law 2008-250.

In the final draft of the Zoning By-law, staff will propose permitting a maximum height of 11 metres in N1 and N2 Zones in all urban transects. This implements a general permission for three storeys citywide, except where secondary plan policies require a

lower height or where height provisions are in place that limit heights to less than three storeys. It is noted that height provisions in the zone codes that limit heights to less than 11 metres in N1 and N2 Zones are relatively rare.

- *A maximum height of three storeys in N1 and N2 Zones implements Official Plan policies that generally permit three storeys in Neighbourhoods and allow up to four storeys “where appropriate.”*
- *A maximum height of three storeys will support the construction of larger, family-sized dwelling units in four- to six-unit buildings in N1 and N2 zones as a result of the additional floor area available within the third storey.*

Building heights are proposed to remain unchanged in the final draft of the Zoning By-law for the:

- *N3 Zone where the maximum height is three storeys*
- *N4 H(11) Zone where maximum height is three storeys*
- *N4 Zone where the maximum height is four storeys*

Building height transition framework for Mainstreet Zones

As part of the release of Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law, Council directed staff to consult with the public regarding the maximum height of high-rise buildings, and the setback for the tower portion of a high-rise building from a lot line shared with a low-rise Neighbourhood Zone (N1 – N4). Staff were also asked to consider applying lower heights for high-rise buildings in the Suburban transect, based on distance from existing or planned transit stations. In response to these motions, staff propose the following:

- *Increase the maximum height for a high-rise building from 27 storeys to 30 storeys*
- *Reduce the separation distance for the tower portion of the building from 30 metres to 25 metres and add an additional 1.5 metre setback at the front of the building to give more light to the street*
- *In the Suburban transect, limit the height of high-rise buildings to 18 storeys when they are located farther than 600 metres from an existing or planned transit station*

Minimum parking-space rate in villages

When Council received the report for Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law, it approved a motion directing staff to incorporate a minimum parking space rate of one parking space per dwelling unit in Village Residential Zones (V1- V5). To implement that motion, staff will add Section 614 – Minimum Parking Rates in Village Residential Zones to the final draft of the new Zoning By-law.

Review of Exceptions and Schedules

There are approximately 4,000 exceptions in the current Zoning By-law. These exceptions will carry forward unchanged in Part 15 of the draft new Zoning By-law. The exceptions include references to provisions, section numbers and terminology in the current Zoning By-law. Because Council may make modifications to the final draft of the new Zoning By-law, it will not be possible to align the provisions, section numbers and terminology in exceptions with the new Zoning By-law until it is approved by Council and in its final form.

The final draft will include new continuation provisions to ensure exception provisions carry forward from the current Zoning By-law. Staff will provide details about the interpretation and implementation of exceptions in the new Zoning By-law for in-process and complete *Planning Act* applications commenced under the current Zoning By-law.

- The effect of the new continuation provisions is to establish when provisions in exceptions will prevail, and when provisions in the new Zoning By-law will prevail over the exception provisions, without revising each individual exception.
- Staff will review all exceptions to align them with the intent of the Official Plan and the intent of the new Zoning By-law following approval of the new Zoning By-law in 2026.

Secondary Plan and Area-Specific Policy Implementation (Volumes 2A and 2B of the Official Plan)

The final draft will include subzones that implement secondary plans that were absent in draft 2 and necessary revisions to implement amendments through OPA 46 for PPS consistency. Provisions that do not implement secondary plan policies will also be removed from the secondary plan subzones.

Secondary plan policies straightforward enough to implement within the structure of the new Zoning By-law have generally been implemented.

Some secondary plans include complex policies, such as conditional permissions, that are not currently implemented through the Zoning By-law. Staff require additional time over the fall to further consider the implementation of these policies and staff will provide associated recommendations in the tabling of the new Zoning By-law in December 2025 to Joint Planning and Housing Committee and Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee.

Kanata North Economic District

The zone boundaries in the Kanata North Economic District (KNED) were modified to better align with policies in the Official Plan and the *Kanata North Economic District Urban Design Framework and Guidelines*. The zoning applied to KNED is flexible for development within the district and will provide land use regulations in the event the new Zoning By-law comes into effect before the forthcoming Community Planning Permit System (CPP) is approved by Council. If the CPP system is approved before the new Zoning By-law comes into effect, staff will recommend removing the Kanata North area from the new Zoning By-law.

Electric Vehicle Parking Space Provisions

The final draft requires a minimum amount of parking to be “EV-ready”, meaning that only energized outlets with electrical wiring is required to be installed rather than the electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) commonly referred to as “level 2 or 3 chargers”. The final draft revises the electric vehicle (EV) parking space provisions to apply only to mid-rise and high-rise buildings, instead of to all residential buildings. The required number of EV-ready parking spaces has been reduced from 100 per cent of provided parking spaces to 25 per cent. Office and light industrial uses smaller than 300 square metres are not required to provide EV-ready parking spaces when parking spaces are provided. These revisions conform with policies in [Section 4.1.4.4](#) of the Official Plan and were made in consultation with Hydro Ottawa. Zoning staff will monitor EV ownership rates in Ottawa and are proposing to undertake a review in 2031 to determine whether updates are needed to the EV parking space provisions.

Changes to the Zoning Map

Staff divided the Zoning Map into 600 grid squares and undertook a review of each.

- *Many changes were made to zone codes and zone boundaries to better align them with the intent and boundaries of designations in the Official Plan,*

secondary plan designations and area-specific policies in Volumes 2A and 2B of the Official Plan.

- *The boundaries of environmental designations in the Official Plan changed in hundreds of locations. Staff have worked throughout 2025 to align zone boundaries with those revised Official Plan boundaries.*

Maximum building height can be regulated through provisions in the primary zone or subzone, or through a height suffix in the zone code on the Zoning Map, shown as a capital H with a number in brackets. The number in brackets provides the maximum height in metres. For example, the height suffix H(30) means that the maximum height of a building is 30 metres.

- *In mixed-use zones outside of secondary plan areas, where a zone code included a height suffix that limited the height to less than what was permitted in the primary zone, the height suffix was deleted. This will increase development potential across the city, and upwards of 60 subzones will benefit from this change citywide. Mixed-use zone codes that include a height suffix and an exception, floor space index or schedule were not modified and will be reviewed in 2026, following approval of the new Zoning By-law.*
- *For height suffixes affecting properties that are subject to secondary plans, where the policies provide heights that are not conditional on a privately-initiated zoning by-law amendment, those heights were implemented on the Zoning Map using height suffixes in the zone code, wherever possible given the complexity of the policies.*
- *In Industrial Zones, where a zone code included a height suffix that limited the height to less than what is permitted in the primary zone, the height suffix was deleted. Industrial zone codes that are complex and include a height suffix and another suffix such as an exception, floor space index or schedule, were not modified and will be reviewed in 2026, following approval of the new Zoning By-law.*

Neighbourhood Communal Parking Lots

The provisions for communal parking lots in Neighbourhood Zones were revised to offer new options for parking:

- *Draft 1 and Draft 2 proposed to permit a communal parking lot as part of a planned unit development (development with more than one residential building on a lot).*
- *The final draft proposes to add permissions for communal parking where they meet the following conditions:*
 - *Must be accessory to another residential use within 400 metres of the property*
 - *Must be an interior (not corner) lot and no more than one drive aisle with one row of parking spaces on each side is permitted*
 - *30 per cent of the lot must be soft landscaped and an opaque screen is required between the parking lot and the side and rear lot lines*
 - *Not permitted in the Downtown transect or within 600 metres of a rapid transit station*

Update on the 3D Twin

The Geospatial Analytics, Technology and Solutions (GATS) team continues to improve the Digital Twin with enhancements to the datasets that support City Planning and developing tools that enable users to harness its abilities to greater extents.

A key component of this work is the OTwin Viewer, a web-based application scheduled for release to City staff in Fall 2025. The viewer allows staff to explore the Digital Twin and perform spatial analysis tasks such as sun/shadow studies, sightline assessments, elevation profiling, and data queries.

The OTwin Viewer is currently undergoing user testing and will continue to be developed with new features and data layers following its initial publication. A public version of the viewer is planned for 2026.

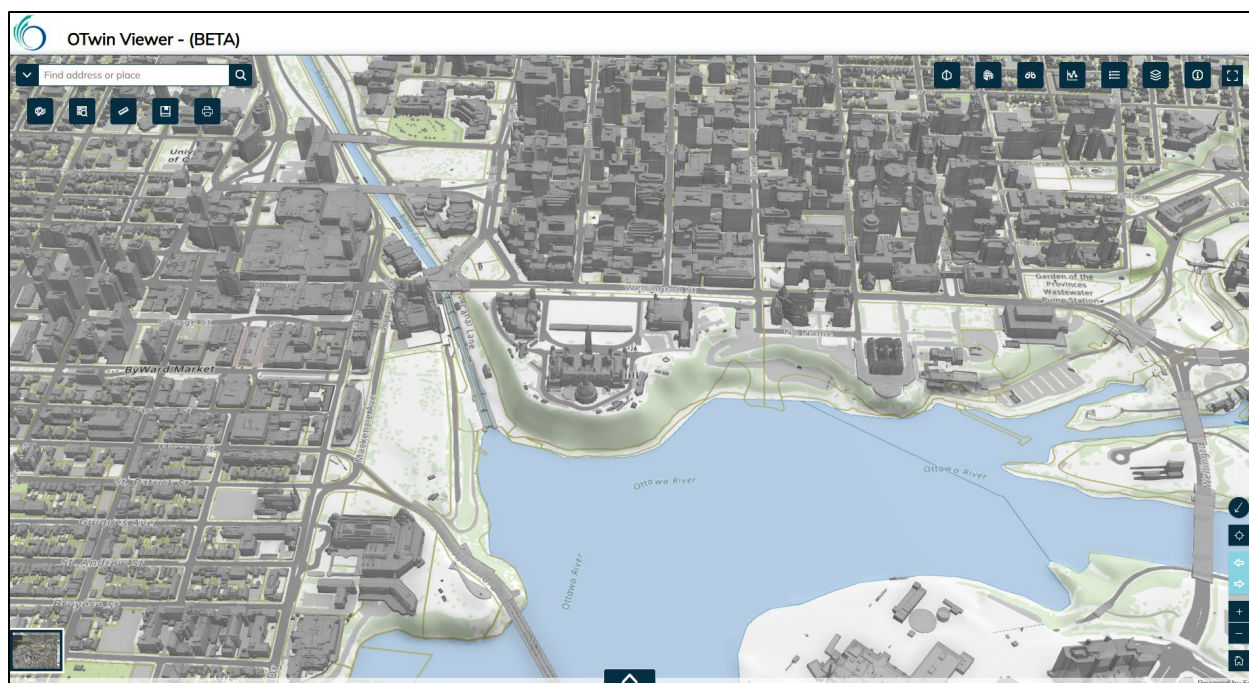


Image of the OTwin Viewer's user interface

Public consultation

The City will continue its established public engagement process with the release of the third and final draft of the new Zoning By-law. As with previous drafts, a combination of virtual and in-person open houses will be offered to gather feedback from the public.

This final phase of consultation builds on a multi-year process that began in 2018 with the development of the new Official Plan. The Zoning By-law serves as an implementation tool of the Official Plan and has been informed by public input throughout its development. Since 2018, the City has conducted almost 80 public meetings, including 38 in-person and virtual open house events on the new Zoning By-law, and received input from over 8,000 Ottawa residents. The comments and perspectives shared by participants have shaped both the Official Plan and the proposed new Zoning By-law to build a by-law that guides and supports Ottawa's growth today and over the next two decades.

Supporting materials previous consultations, including those related to the Official Plan and Drafts 1 and 2 of the Zoning By-law, remain available through the City's online engagement platform.

Draft 2 consultation

Public engagement for Draft 2 of the new Zoning By-law was carried out from late May through to the end of July. The City hosted two virtual city-wide open houses, as well as an in-person city-wide open house at Ben Franklin Place. At this event, attendees could explore 40 boards for self-directed reading or attend four breakout rooms which were organized as roundtable discussions.

The project's [EngageOttawa](#) page has seen more than 115,000 visitors since the start of the project. During the Draft 2 period alone, the City received over 400 emails and comments and collected nearly 400 survey responses focused on key zoning issues that were identified in developing Draft 2 or arose as Motions to the Draft 2 staff report.

The consultation process also incorporated outreach to specific stakeholder groups. The City held four joint sessions with the Federation of Citizen Associations (FCA) and the Greater Ottawa Home Builders Association (GOHBA). The Zoning Team also presented to both the FCA's quarterly Working Group meeting and the City of Ottawa Ambassador's Working Group. Furthermore, staff consulted with the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Final Draft Public Engagement

Engagement opportunities for the final draft will occur during the 28-day statutory circulation which starts on September 8. The statutory open house for the draft By-law will take place on September 23 at the EY Centre, and there will also be two virtual open houses on September 17 and 25. Details on these engagement opportunities will be posted on the project's [EngageOttawa](#).

Joint Committee process leading to Council approval of the new Zoning By-law in early 2026

The version of the new Zoning By-law released on Monday, September 8 will be the final draft version prepared by staff. The Planning and Housing Committee and the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee will consider the final draft of the new Zoning By-law at a joint meeting on Wednesday, December 17. To respond to comments received during the public consultations in September and October, the report to Joint Committee will include supporting documents that propose staff recommended amendments. The Joint Committee and Council may approve the recommendations at their discretion:

- *Document 1 will include staff recommended changes to correct errors in the text of the draft Zoning By-law*
- *Document 2 will include staff recommended changes to correct errors on the Zoning Map*
- *Document 3 will include staff recommended changes that modify the intent of the draft Zoning By-law*
- *Document 4 will include staff recommended changes to ensure the new Zoning By-law is in conformity with the Planning Act, Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, the Official Plan and secondary plans.*

Following consideration by the Joint Committee, the report for the new Zoning By-law will rise to Council on Wednesday, January 28. Should Council decide to adopt the draft Zoning By-law, final approval would occur at a subsequent meeting of Council. This will provide staff time to incorporate amendments to the text of the Zoning By-law or the Zoning Map resulting from approval of staff recommended changes and motions approved at the January 28 Council meeting. Once the new Zoning By-law is formally approved, the appeal period for new Zoning By-law will begin.

Original signed by

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CC: Wendy Stephanson, City Manager

Marcia Wallace, General Manager, Planning, Development and Building Services
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

1. Document 1 – Continuation provisions for in-process and complete *Planning Act* applications commenced under Zoning By-law 2008-250
2. Document 2 – As-We-Hear-It Report on comments received concerning Draft 2 of the Zoning By-law

Document 1 – Continuation provisions for in-process and complete *Planning Act* applications commenced under Zoning By-law 2008-250

Continuation provisions are included in the final draft of the Zoning By-law to allow orderly continuation of in-process and approved *Planning Act* applications under Zoning By-law 2008-250 following approval of the new Zoning By-law.

Sections 109 and 110 of the draft Zoning By-law provide for *Planning Act* applications that were approved or commenced during the time Zoning By-law 2008-250 was in effect, to continue through to issuance of building permit despite Zoning By-law 2008-250 being repealed when the new Zoning By-law is approved by Council. These provisions allow approved applications to be carried forward, and also amended if needed, subsequent to passage of the new Zoning By-law. Development may proceed to issuance of a building permit, as if Zoning By-law 2008-250 remains in effect.

In-process *Planning Act* applications that are complete at the time the new Zoning By-law is approved will have five years from the date the new Zoning By-law is approved to obtain a building permit. Approved *Planning Act* applications obtained during the time Zoning By-law 2008-250 was in effect will have three years to obtain a building permit.

Additional continuation provisions have been included concerning interpretation of exceptions brought forward from Zoning By-law 2008-250. Exceptions are achieved through *Planning Act* applications to amend the Zoning By-law. The continuation provisions ensure exception provisions carried forward from the current Zoning By-law remain operational. Review of each exception to align the provisions, terminology and section numbers, with the intent of the Official Plan and the intent of the new Zoning By-law, will occur following approval of the new Zoning By-law in 2026.

The continuation provisions for properties with exceptions provide for both the exception and former zone code from Zoning By-law 2008-250 to be used as if Zoning By-law 2008-250 is still in effect.

The effect of new continuation provisions relating to exceptions is to establish when provisions in exceptions will prevail, and when provisions in the new Zoning By-law 2026-50 will prevail over the exception provisions, without revising each individual exception.

The intent of the provisions is to move towards meeting the intent of the Official Plan and the intent of the new Zoning By-law regarding requirements for: stormwater management, general setbacks, permitted uses in Industrial Zones that are *areas of*

employment for the purposes of the *Planning Act* and Official Plan, broader permissions for land uses when not limited by policies in the Official Plan, and parking provisions. Further details about the new continuation provisions are below.

A provision has been added to “undo” provisions in exceptions that restrict the range of land uses that are permitted when there is no policy basis for limiting the range of uses. Secondary plan areas are excluded from this broader permission for land uses, as exceptions in secondary plan areas may be implementing limitations on land uses resulting from secondary plan policies. Work to review exceptions in secondary plans areas will occur in 2026, to determine if there is a policy basis in a secondary plan area that requires a limited range of permitted uses in an exception.

Exceptions that limit land uses in AG-Agricultural and ME-Mineral Extraction Zones were also excluded from the broader permissions for land uses in the continuation provisions as there are policies in the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*, and the Official Plan that limit the range of uses permitted in these zones, and those restrictions must prevail.

A further provision has been added to “undo” requirements for minimum parking space rates to accord with the intent of the new Zoning By-law. However, the provisions provide for requirements in exceptions concerning Minimum Visitor Parking Spaces and Maximum Parking Space rates to continue to be required.

The continuation provisions may be extended longer than three years or repealed earlier than three years after the date of passing of the new Zoning By-law to accommodate the time needed to align exceptions with the new Zoning By-law, or to allow a complete or in-process application, such as for issuance of a building permit for a dwelling in a plan of subdivision, to proceed to issuance of a building permit.