

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 91
TO THE
OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BY-LAW NO. _____-2025

Being a by-law of the Corporation of the City of Cambridge to adopt
Amendment No. 91 of the City of Cambridge Official Plan (2012)

WHEREAS sections 17 and 22 of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990 c. P. 13, as amended empower the City of Cambridge to adopt an Official Plan and make amendments thereto:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Corporation of the City of Cambridge enacts as follows:

1. **THAT** Amendment No. 91 to the Official Plan (2012) of the City of Cambridge is hereby adopted.
2. **THAT** the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the giving of notice under Section 17(23) of the Planning Act.
3. **AND THAT** This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of final passing thereof.

Enacted and passed this 15th day of December, 2025.

MAYOR

CLERK

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 91 TO THE
OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE:**

Companion Official Plan Amendment to Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review – Phase
1 – Form Based Residential Zones

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PART A – THE PREAMBLE

1.0 TITLE AND COMPONENTS

This document is entitled “Companion Official Plan Amendment to Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review – Phase 1 – Form Based Residential Zones” and will be referred to as Amendment No. 91. “Part A – The Preamble” provides an explanation of the amendment including the purpose and format of the amendment but does not form part of this amendment.

“Part B – The Amendment” forms Amendment No. 91 to the Official Plan of the City of Cambridge and contains a comprehensive expression of the new, deleted and amended text.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of Amendment No. 91 is to facilitate form based residential zoning and future phases of the By-law review.

3.0 BACKGROUND

In 2012 the City updated and adopted the current Official Plan. Following adoption of the Official Plan, staff and land use planning consultants from Meridian Planning began the process of preparing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

In 2024 the City entered into a Contribution Agreement with Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) to complete a series of housing initiatives as part of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) program.

Initiative No.4 under this program is to:

“Further Relax Zoning Regulations: Advance a statutory process to remove density regulations and replace with form-based zoning”.

Form based residential zoning has been integrated into the Comprehensive Zoning By-law review process. To permit form based residential zoning, amendments to certain Official Plan policies is required.

4.0 LOCATION

Official Plan Amendment No. 91 applies to land currently designated Low/Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential in the City of Cambridge Official Plan, except for lands located within the Galt Special Policy Area as shown on Map 12 of the Official Plan.

5.0 BASIS OF THE AMENDMENT

The basis of the amendment is to enable Phase 1 of the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review and future phases of the By-law review.

This amendment supports the following legislative and policy considerations:

Planning Act:

Section 2 of the Planning Act outlines matters of provincial interest which municipalities must have regard for in making decisions. Relevant matters of provincial interest include:

- The protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions.
- The orderly development of safe and healthy communities.
- The accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which this Act applies.
- The adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing
- The appropriate location of growth and development.
- The promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians:

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS):

The amendment and associated Zoning By-law is consistent with the PPS requirements that Planning authorities shall permit:

- All housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirement of current and future residents.
- All types of residential intensification including development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas.

Region of Waterloo Official Plan (ROP):

The amendment and associated Zoning By-law implements the following policy objectives of the ROP:

- Permitting more housing to help meet the City's population growth forecasts of 214,900 people by 2051.
- Supporting gentle density and a range of housing types in the urban area.
- Supporting the overall annual Cambridge intensification target of 65%.

City of Cambridge Official Plan (OP):

The amendment and associated Zoning By-law conform to the following policies of the City's Official Plan:

- Growth management
- Compatibility Requirements

6.0 SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN

The following is a summary of the amendments to Official Plan policy:

- Residential policies:
Updates to the Low/Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential land use designations to remove density and floor space index (FSI) limits to enable form based residential zoning.
- Site specific policy:
Policy 8.10.7 of the Official Plan (established by OPA No. 38) requires that site-specific amendments be carried forward into the new Zoning By-law. This approach has been reconsidered and this policy is eliminated.

7.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Report 25-052-CD – May 6, 2025 – Statutory Public Meeting:

The purpose of this report was to formally introduce the proposed Comprehensive Zoning By-law with form based residential zones and companion Official Plan Amendment to Council and the public through a statutory public meeting.

Further Public Engagement:

Staff and the consulting team comprised of The Planning Partnership and Meridian Planning completed the following as part of the engagement process:

- In person workshops
- City-wide Mailout advising of the form-based zoning project
- Engage Cambridge Project Page
- Social Media campaign
- Cambridge Today Advertisements
- Farmer's Market Drop-in sessions
- Community Drop-in sessions
- Online survey

PART B – THE AMENDMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

All of this part of the document entitled “Part B – The Amendment” consisting of the following text, constitutes Amendment No. 91 to the Official Plan of the City of Cambridge.

2.0 FORMAT OF THE AMENDMENT

This section of Amendment No. 91 sets out additions and changes to the text in the Official Plan.

Text that is proposed to be amended is illustrated by various font types (e.g., ~~struck-out~~ is to be deleted and **bold** text is to be added). Unchanged text represents existing Official Plan policy that is being carried forward that has been included for context and does not constitute part of Amendment No. 91. *Italicized* font indicates defined terms.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

The implementation of this amendment shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act. The further implementation and associated interpretation of this amendment shall be in accordance with the relevant text and mapping schedules of the existing Official Plan of the City of Cambridge and applicable legislation. Amendment No. 91 should be read in conjunction with the current Official Plan (2012) as amended, which is available on the City’s website at cambridge.ca, or at the Planning Services kiosk located at 50 Dickson Street in the 1st Floor lobby.

4.0 DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT

~~Strikethrough~~: deleted text

Bold: new text

1. Revising section 8.4.6.3 as follows:

3. **Within the lands identified as the Galt City Centre Floodplain Special Policy Area on Map 12**, the following residential *density targets* for new *development* in residential designations will be implemented through such means as the approval of plans of subdivision as well as site specific *development* applications:

- a) a maximum of 40 units per gross hectare for the Low/Medium Density Residential designation, excluding only provincially constrained environmental areas as defined in the Regional Official Plan and secondary units; and,
- b) a minimum of 0.5 *Floor Space Index* and maximum of 2.0 *Floor Space Index* for the High Density Residential designation.

2. Revising section 8.4.6.6 as follows:

6. ~~The minimum residential *density target* established in Policy 8.4.6.3 of residential areas shall be reviewed periodically to monitor residential development trends and Provincial and Regional targets.~~

3. Deleting section 8.4.6.7 in its entirety:

- ~~7. Notwithstanding the permitted minimum density established in Policy 8.4.6.3, the City may allow a lower density, without amendment to this Plan, where it is warranted by at least two of the following criteria:~~

- ~~a) the nature of the soils, topography, geomorphology, vegetation or other environmental features of the lands proposed for *development*;~~
- ~~b) the established character of the neighbourhood in which the lands proposed for *development* are located;~~
- ~~c) the unreasonably high cost of providing and/or upgrading required *infrastructure* such as water supply, sewage disposal, stormwater drainage or access road facilities;~~
- ~~d) the projected negative impact of the proposed *development* on adjoining environmental features; and/or~~
- ~~e) the projected negative impact of the proposed *development* on *cultural heritage resources*.~~

4. Revising section 8.4.6.9 as follows:

9. Lands in a Low/Medium Density Residential designation where a municipal water supply and municipal wastewater systems are currently available may be developed and used for uses such as single detached dwellings, **attached dwellings** townhouses and/or walk-up apartments **low-rise multiple dwellings**. **Maximum building heights shall be implemented in the Zoning By-law.**

5. Revising section 8.4.6.12 as follows:

- ~~12. The City recognizes existing buildings and those properties with approval for a density of up to 75 units per hectare in the Zoning By-law as of the date of adoption of this Plan. The High Density Residential designation is intended to evolve over the horizon of this Plan to High Density Residential uses and mixed use *development* as specified in Policy 8.4.6.11.~~

6. Deleting section 8.4.6.15 in its entirety:

~~15. Residential and mixed use developments legally existing on the date of Council adoption of this Plan, with a maximum density of 75 units per hectare, which are located on a property within a “Low/Medium Density Residential” designation are deemed to be in conformity with this Plan.~~

7. Revising section 8.4.6.16 as follows:

16. Notwithstanding Policy 8.4.6.3 a) any property designated “Low/Medium Density Residential”, which is located with a “Regeneration Area” is permitted in the interim to develop for residential or mixed use purposes ~~to a maximum density of 75 units per hectare~~ and deemed to be in conformity with this Plan, subject to the compatibility criteria in Section 8.4.2.

8. Deleting policy 10.3.7 in its entirety.

~~7. When preparing a new city-wide comprehensive zoning by-law to conform to this Plan, previous zoning by-law exceptions that may not conform to this Plan are carried forward, in order to recognize uses that were legally established at the time in response to a development application and to reduce the hardship that may be created if the exception is not carried forward. In carrying forward these exceptions, the implementing zoning by-law shall restrict those uses that do not conform to this Plan to the floor area and the use existing on the property on the effective date of the new city-wide comprehensive zoning by-law.~~