



Message from RIWG

Building the Right Infill, In the Right Place, at the Right Scale

People are reacting to negative growth that overwhelms neighbourhoods. The role of urban planning is to resolve this issue by balancing the right building, at the right scale, in the right place. This is what the Zoning By-law and District Plans are meant to achieve together.

Urban Planning success is measured by public confidence in: reducing pressure points, conflict and increasing protection of established places & neighbourhoods, livability, and identifying predictable development opportunities in areas with high absorption ability and few constraints.

The City is exploring options: Residents want balanced solutions

Balanced development is not achieved by tweaking height or unit counts. It is about fit of a development within its neighbouring context. The core issue is massing, meaning the total size and volume of a building on its lot and relative to its neighbours. If this is not resolved, the same conflicts will continue for both communities and developers. It will divide communities.

Under current rules and the options offered in the City Survey, large mid-block infill will still be allowed. New buildings can still legally reach 1.5–1.8 FAR (floor area ratio, that measures volume), compared to about 0.35 FAR for most homes on the same street (four to five times larger than their neighbours). The impacts are predictable: loss of privacy, trees, green space, increased shadowing, drainage protections, and a constant uncertainty about what comes next.

While contributing only about 1% of the city's rental supply, large interior RS Zone lots redevelopments have disproportional impacts on many residents living nearby. They replace homes that once were affordable. It's fair to ask why this intensive scale of development is pushed into sensitive neighbourhood cores when vacant land in nearby corridors and nodes is better suited to absorb it, with fewer restrictions?

Current City Options and RIWG Planning Options Respecting Context

Issue	Current City Options	Scale-Sensitive Alternative
What's being controlled	Height	Building volume adjusted to neighbourhood context using FAR
Effect on massing	Minimal change on the ground	Directly limits oversized buildings in RS Zone
Building form	Single large building envelope	Two smaller buildings (front & rear)
Neighbourhood fit	Out-of-scale mid-block allowed	Alignment with surrounding homes
Trees & green space	Limited protection	30% tree canopy achieved through standards
Unit Count	6 limit cap with stretch to 8+ when lots are split.	Adjusted to lot and context to neighbours. No lot-splitting allowed.
Community Process	None.	Developers, Community, City at one table on community-based planning.
Planning Outcomes	Ongoing conflict & uncertainty	Predictable growth, reduced impacts, certainty and conflict resolution

Support Balanced Development: ask your councillor to explore this alternative.