

New Zoning By-law Fast Facts

INFILL AND DENSIFICATION

Encouraging complete neighbourhoods, revitalization and sustainability

The City of Yellowknife is introducing a new Zoning By-law. The Zoning By-law is a set of rules for development that implement the City's vision, principles and priorities for the community moving forward.

What the Zoning By-law says about infill and densification

The City's Community Plan states that infill and densification are important principles for the 20-year planning period. The Zoning By-law balances the interests of residents in established neighbourhoods and increased development density.

Flexibility in the regulations allows daycares, parks, and some commercial activities to locate near the residential areas they serve. Residential infill and development in the downtown core reduces the costs of building and maintaining the road, piped services and pedestrian infrastructure.

Infill and increased density revitalize downtowns, creates complete communities (offer options for living, working, shopping and playing); provides choice in housing types, curbs urban sprawl, protects the environment and reduces traffic gridlock with access to transit, pedestrian or active transportation options.



The Yellowknife Community Plan establishes the policy direction for densification and infill.



Key features of the Zoning By-law

- Permits a mix of compatible uses in the same zone;
- Daycares and community resource centers may locate in residential neighbourhoods;
- Residential zoning allows a mix of housing types, which increases flexibility for residential development. Changes include:
 - There are now only four residential zones, instead of eight;
 - Residential zones allow various dwelling unit types (e.g., stick and factory-built homes);
 - Larger multi-residential developments closer to the downtown core are encouraged;
 - Low-density multi-unit dwellings are permitted in more neighbourhoods; and,
 - Permission for alternative housing options, including tiny homes and secondary suites, are included.
- The height and maximum lot area of infill residential development is regulated to be compatible with the established neighbourhoods;
- Regulations gradually transition between lower to higher density neighbourhoods; and
- Greenfield Development, in undeveloped natural areas at the edges of the City, is restricted, to stimulate the re-development and infilling of existing lands in the downtown core.

What is behind the changes?

The City engaged with the public on the Zoning By-law in 2020. Here is what the public said about Infilling and Densification:

- Concerns that increasing flexibility in residential zones may change existing neighbourhoods;
- Some community groups were looking for operational allowances to provide specific types of community programming in an affordable way within different zones;
- Demand for smaller and alternative housing options, such as secondary suites, tiny homes, and converting older single dwelling units to duplex dwellings should be allowed;
- Services, amenities and housing should be accessible to people who do not own a car;
- Zoning flexibility near the downtown core should be allowed;
- Increased residential options downtown to bring potential consumers into the City's core;
- The regulations for condominiums can be removed as it duplicates GNWT legislation;
- Size and height matter to the community. Consideration should be given to how a housing development will fit in a neighbourhood and impact views of existing developments;
- Increase communication of zoning changes and how it could affect property owners; and
- Create infill guidelines to help support the transition.

The City also considered:

- Limited land available for development within the municipal boundary;
- The increased private and public cost of new development;
- Ensuring development is not "zoned out" of the city by allowing a mix of compatible uses within zones; and
- Land Use Planning across Canada is moving away from being highly prescriptive and allowing room for developers to determine how to meet their client's needs within certain parameters. For example, the By-law will specify the total building area, but not the size of each dwelling unit within that building.

Can you give me an example?

Infill and densification involve the redevelopment of underdeveloped lots through internal unit creation, structural additions, and demolition with reconstruction or new construction. Infill could include using a backyard or underused space on an existing parcel to add new units. The development form could include a secondary suite in a residential area or constructing new units on lots currently used for surface parking in a downtown area. Densification could be converting a non-residential building into residential or mixed-use units.



Find out more

Review the new Zoning By-law and learn about other changes at www.yellowknife.ca/ZoningReview

Key sections relating to infill include:

- *Definitions section: Dwelling types, Community Resource Centre*
- **Section 10: Residential Zones and Regulations (permitted uses)**
- **Section 10.1: Table 10-2 R1 Regulations (Maximum height and Maximum Site Area)**
- **Section 10.3.4: Site-Specific Regulations (in the Residential Central Zone)**
- **Section 11: Commercial Mixed Use Zones and Zone Regulations**

Have questions or feedback? Email zoningreview@yellowknife.ca

