



# ZONING



for diverse housing needs

## Zoning Bylaw Review Backgrounder 2

# Zoning for Diverse Housing Needs

The City of North Vancouver continues to grow and change, and our Zoning Bylaw needs to change too. We are currently in the process of updating our Zoning Bylaw to be clearer, more effective, and easier to use.

In this backgrounder, we provide an overview of the City's existing Zoning Bylaw, its relationship to housing and how a new Zoning Bylaw can support the creation of diverse housing forms that meet the needs of various household types and income levels.

This backgrounder is one in a series of eight. You can find them all on our project webpage at [cnv.org/zoningupdate](http://cnv.org/zoningupdate).



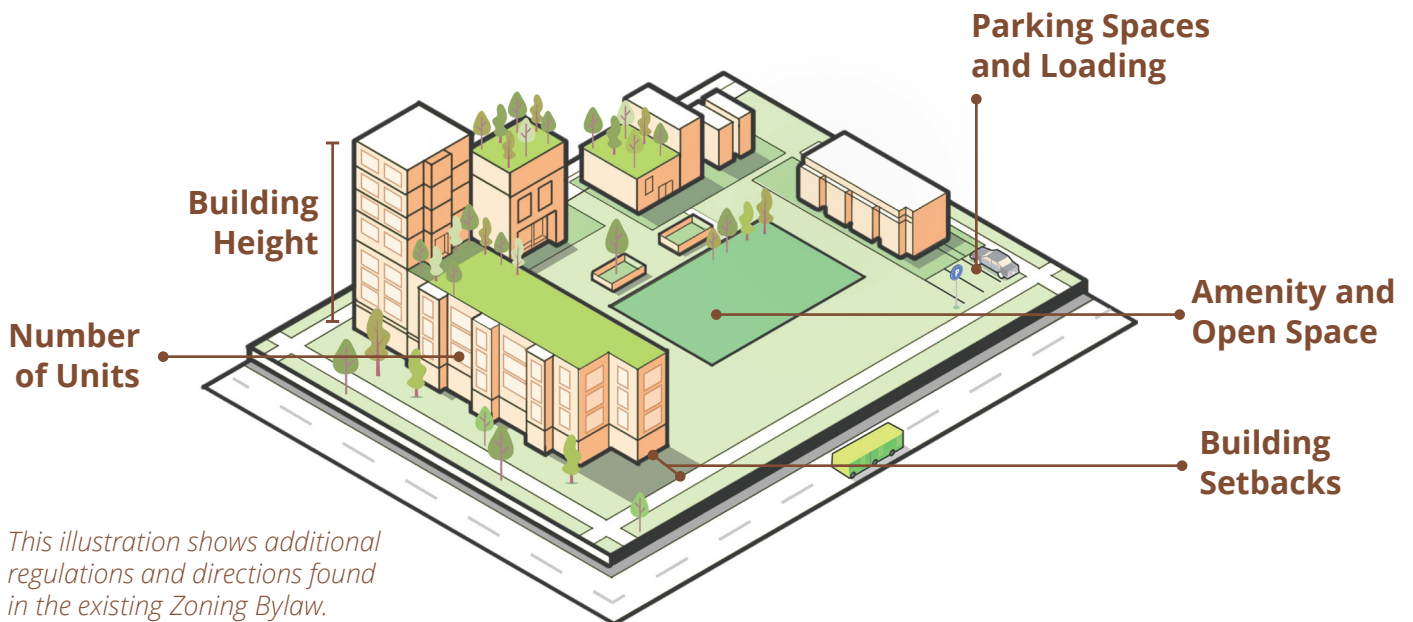
# Zoning and Housing

The City of North Vancouver and the Metro Vancouver region are growing. The Metro 2050 Plan, Metro Vancouver’s Regional Growth Strategy, calls for this growth to be guided to key locations across the region, including areas of the City of North Vancouver that are well supported by existing and future public transportation.



Source: Metro2050 Regional Growth Strategy (2022)

The City of North Vancouver’s existing Zoning Bylaw provides direction for how many buildings can be built on a given property, how tall or large they can be, and their physical relationship to sidewalks, streets and adjacent buildings, parks and open spaces.



This illustration shows additional regulations and directions found in the existing Zoning Bylaw.

There are 21 generic zones within the existing Zoning Bylaw. These zones regulate how buildings take shape within residential and mixed-use zones.

Demand for more diverse housing types is reflected in changing census data. Between 2001 and 2021, the proportion of single-detached dwellings has decreased from 20% to 11% of total dwelling units in the City of North Vancouver. Meanwhile, the proportion of apartments and buildings that are five storeys or more has almost doubled from 15% to 29% during the same time period.

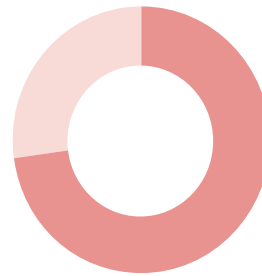
To address this demand for more diverse housing options, the City has taken an approach of site-specific rezonings to allow housing types that don't fit the existing zoning requirements. However, this is a very slow process that requires Council approval. A new zoning bylaw could include standardized zones that offer more flexibility in achieving different housing types, limiting the need for a rezoning.

While to date the focus on residential and area-specific zones has worked for the City, going forward, the City needs a zoning bylaw that can better manage the anticipated growth and the greater range of forms of development that this growth will bring.

**Today, approximately...**



**58%**  
of properties are zoned for **Single Household Residential Uses**



**73%**  
of the existing **Zoning Bylaw** is comprised of **Site- and Area-specific Zones**

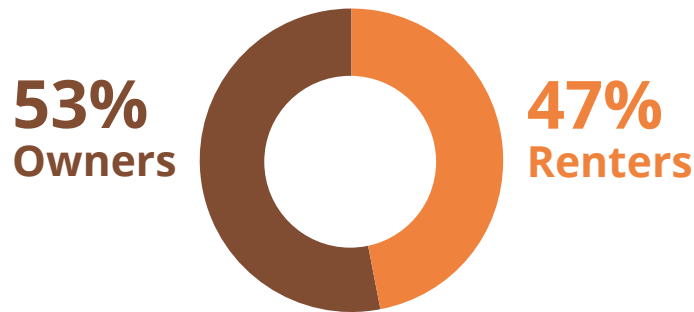
**Zoning & Equity**

Zoning regulations can have disproportionate impacts on our community members based on income, historical disadvantage and present day vulnerabilities. According to the American Planning Association (APA)'s Equity in Zoning Policy Guide (2022):

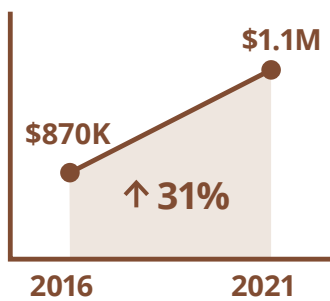
*“Large lot zoning, minimum house size requirements, higher parking minimums, and higher open space requirements make property more expensive.” They also limit the number of low- and middle-income households who can afford to rent, own or occupy homes within these neighbourhoods.*

## Context

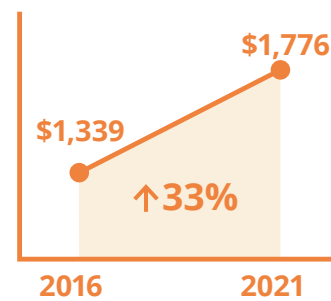
### Housing in the City of North Vancouver...



Average Home Value



Average Monthly Rent



 **1 in 3** households live in unaffordable housing...

 ...meaning they spend **>30%** of their income on shelter costs

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

### Planning for Complete Communities

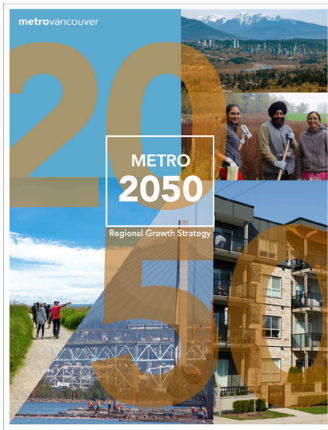
A complete community provides multiple housing options to meet the needs of different households as their needs change over time. Housing needs can vary due to many factors including:

- household size;
- age and ability;
- varying income over time;
- number of generations living together;
- people with or without children;
- people with or without pets; and
- shared living.

# Existing Objectives, Goals and Directions

The Zoning Bylaw Update will build upon and implement policy directions outlined in the **Metro Vancouver 2050 Regional Growth Strategy (2022)**, **City of North Vancouver's Official Community Plan (2014)**, and **Housing Action Plan (2016)** and align with the City's new Mobility, Community Wellbeing, Climate and Environment, and Economic Strategies.

## Metro Vancouver

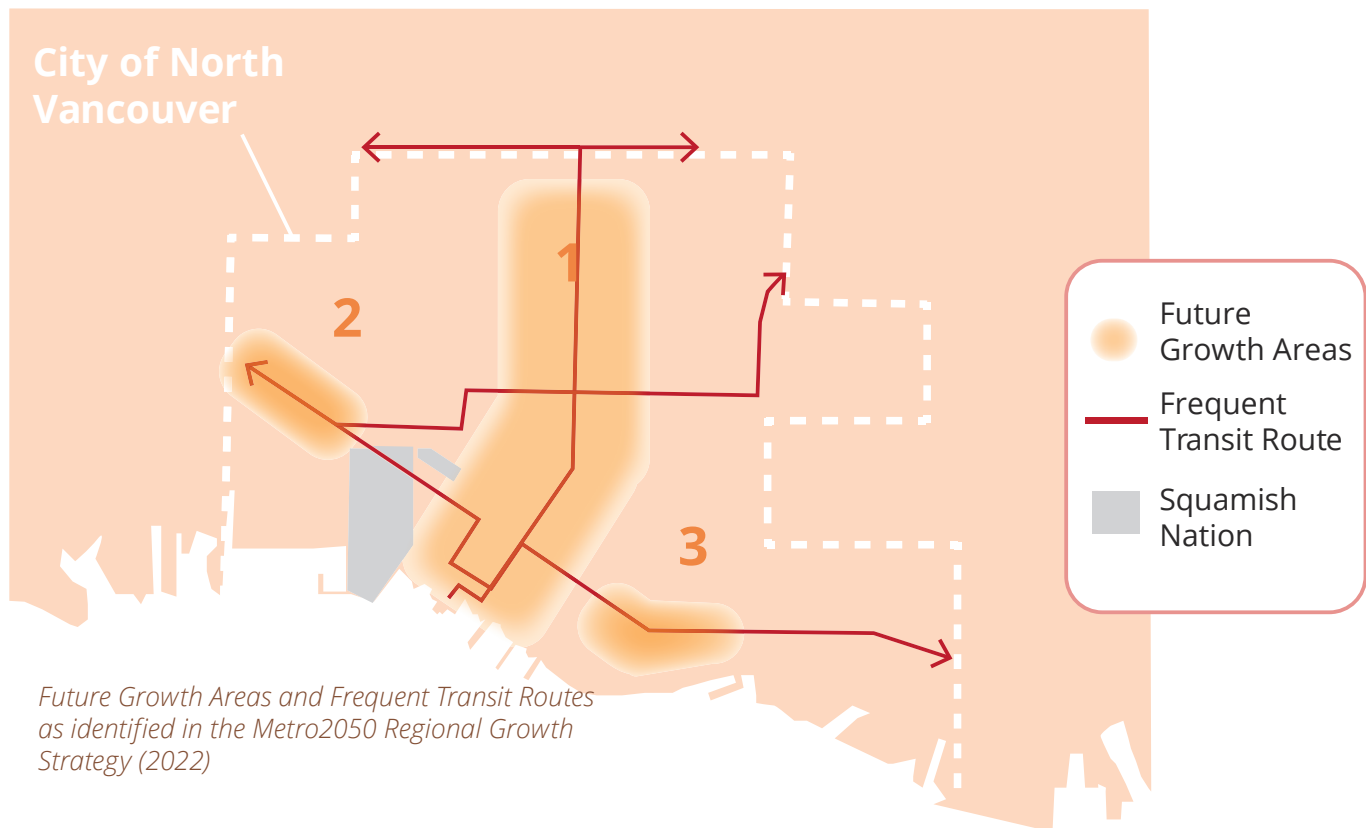


### Regional Growth Strategy

The [Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy \(2022\)](#) identifies key locations for future growth in the City of North Vancouver:

1. Lonsdale Avenue (identified as an Urban/Regional City Centre along a Major Transit Network)
2. Marine Drive
3. East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

These 3 areas will be primary focal points for concentrated growth and are priority locations for transit-oriented development in higher density forms, mixed residential tenures, affordable housing options and mixed uses.



## City of North Vancouver

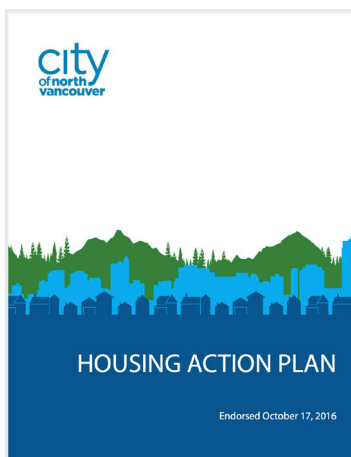
### Official Community Plan

The [City of North Vancouver's Official Community Plan \(OCP\) \(2014\)](#) seeks to:

- create a city that is compact and highly livable with easy access to a variety of housing choices by encouraging the development of diverse and affordable housing to help attract and retain young families, to assist people with disabilities and provide age-friendly housing options for an aging population; and
- manage change through its Conceptual City Structure where major focal nodes, medium density and low density/transitional areas are identified and implemented across thirteen residential and mixed-use land use categories.

In addition to these goals, the OCP provides direction on where different housing types can be located, in the form of a Land Use Map. Land Use Designations (as shown on the Land Use Map) determine maximum density, permitted uses, and building form such as single-family, duplex, townhouse and rowhouse and mid- and high-rise buildings.

Any changes to the Zoning Bylaw must be aligned with the requirements for density, height and building form as identified in the OCP.



### Housing Action Plan

The [City of North Vancouver's Housing Action Plan \(2016\)](#) recognizes:

- that housing costs continue to rise rapidly and have placed pressure on all households;
- the need to increase housing supply across the housing continuum, including households that experience significant challenges in finding affordable and suitable housing; and
- the need to increase the types of housing that support low-income and moderate-income households, at-risk youth and adults, persons experiencing homelessness or at-risk

# Unlocking Opportunities with a New Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw Update presents a significant opportunity for us to better achieve our local and regional housing objectives. These objectives include the development of efficient regulations that:

- support the creation of diverse and attainable housing forms that easily permit gentle density and infill;
- increase the supply of affordable, rental, family and age friendly housing; and
- create the conditions necessary for the development of mixed-use transit-oriented communities.

The City of North Vancouver’s new Zoning Bylaw cannot alone solve our affordable housing crisis, but it can be better aligned with existing policy directions and address some of the known issues we are facing.

Through this update, we will also give consideration to how we can restructure or consolidate residential and mixed-use zones to enable simplified navigation, understanding and application of the Zoning Bylaw. The new Zoning Bylaw will prioritize form-based standards that flexibly regulate the built form of buildings first, and the use of buildings second.

There are a few other ways that the Zoning Bylaw can help to support affordability.

Action	Outcome
Building affordable housing requirements into new development.	This may take several forms, including purpose-built market rental and below-market rental housing.
Allowing, and encouraging, smaller units, with more shared building amenities.	Reduced unit size translates to savings for renters and buyers. Less private space is needed when shared amenities like a fitness room, outdoor area, pool, garden or theater room are provided in the building.
Allowing more housing options for those who would like to downsize within their community.	Ability to stay in your community by moving a very short distance to a home that meets your new lifestyle needs.
Reducing parking requirements in areas that are well-served by transit, walking and cycling infrastructure.	Allows those who want to live car-free to realize the full financial benefits of doing so.



Put simply, we will be exploring how a new zoning bylaw could make it easier to permit and enable more types of housing that align with the City's housing priorities (e.g. rental housing, age-friendly and family friendly housing, Indigenous housing, accessible housing and supportive housing) without requiring the time and cost of rezoning processes.

However, the delivery of new housing supply – rental and ownership, market and non-market – will require working together with residents, developers and all levels of government to get shovels in the ground.

Let's work together to create a new Zoning Bylaw for the City of North Vancouver that works for all of us.



## Stay Informed

For more information on this exciting initiative, please visit the Zoning Bylaw Update project webpage and subscribe to our mailing list.

### Links To Related Policies + Background Documents

- [Metro 2050: Regional Growth Strategy \(2022\)](#)
- [City of North Vancouver Housing Needs Report \(2021\)](#)
- [City of North Vancouver Strategic Plan \(2018\)](#)
- [City of North Vancouver Housing Action Plan \(2016\)](#)
- [City of North Vancouver Active Design Guidelines \(2015\)](#)
- [City of North Vancouver Official Community Plan \(2014\)](#)

city  
of north  
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