

# What is a Zoning By-law Amendment?

## What is Zoning?

The Province of Ontario's Planning Act allows the City of Ottawa to determine what is and is not allowed to be built on properties within the City's boundaries through what is known as zoning.

- Zoning can permit land to be used for agricultural, residential, industrial, commercial and other uses.
- Zoning can also include a specific set of regulations that shape development by setting limits, such as:
  - » the location of the building on the property;
  - » the height of the building;
  - » the number of parking spaces required.
- Zoning does not regulate who lives in the building. Zoning also does not determine if the building is owner-occupied or rented.

Zoning regulations are detailed in the City of Ottawa's Zoning By-law. The Zoning By-law implements the policies of the City's primary land use plan known as the Official Plan.

- If a proposed development is not in accordance with the Zoning By-law, a Zoning By-law amendment, also known as a rezoning, is required. For example, a Zoning By-law amendment may:
  - » Request a change of land use from residential to commercial to permit a development with stores and restaurants, instead of residential homes;
  - » Seek more units or height for a building;
  - » Decrease the number of parking spaces required.

Understanding what is zoning and how it affects you is the first step to getting involved.

## What a Zoning By-law Amendment Can Change

Each Zoning By-law amendment proposal is unique. However, here are few things to keep in mind.

### It can change the ...



- » use of land;
- » maximum number of units in a building;
- » minimum lot area or width;
- » distance between the lot line and the building;
- » minimum landscape requirements;
- » parking and loading facilities.

## What is the Zoning By-law Amendment Process?

### **1 Pre-application consultation meeting**

Those who apply for a Zoning By-law amendment must meet with Development Review staff from the City of Ottawa for a pre-application consultation meeting. Development Review staff outline what studies and plans are required and provide an overview of the land use principles that must be addressed by the proposed Zoning By-law amendment before it will be reviewed.

### **2 Public notification**

The City installs a notification sign on the lands affected by the proposed Zoning By-law amendment and notifies nearby property owners and registered community groups once the application is submitted to the City.

### **3 Technical review**

Reviewing a Zoning By-law amendment application involves many individuals including Development Review Planners, Engineers, Architects, City Councillors, registered community groups, residents and other professionals.

The Planning Act lays out the rules on when consultation takes place, with whom, and to what degree.

### **4 Staff recommendation at Committee meeting**

Development Review staff provide a recommendation, in most cases, to either the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee (for rural area amendments) or the Planning Committee (for all other proposed amendments).

### **5 Council decision and appeal period**

Committee considers the report and the opinion of public delegations and makes a recommendation to City Council. City Council then approves or refuses the Zoning By-law amendment. This decision may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, the provincial tribunal that is the final arbiter of any planning decisions, by a community member, an organization, or the property owner. The process takes approximately six months.

## How to Get Involved

- Submit written comments to the Development Review Planner.
- Attend the public open house and/or committee meeting(s) at City Hall.
- Make a presentation when the proposed amendment is presented for review at a City committee meeting. Be prepared to come with information about how you believe the proposal impacts you such as:
  - » your ability to use and enjoy your property;
  - » any traffic concerns;
  - » any concerns about how the development may fit into the existing character of your neighbourhood.
- Only by submitting written comments or making a presentation at a committee meeting at City Hall, can you make an appeal to Council's decision to the Ontario Municipal Board.



## For More Information:

For information regarding a specific application, please contact the Development Review Planner assigned to the application or visit:

**[ottawa.ca/devapps](http://ottawa.ca/devapps)**

For general zoning information, please call 3-1-1 and ask to speak to a Development Information Officer. To consult the Zoning By-law visit:

**[ottawa.ca/zoning](http://ottawa.ca/zoning)**