

**Date:** 2025-04-23

**Subject:** **Information Report – New Comprehensive Zoning By-law**

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David VanderBerg, Manager, Development Services, Development Services and Design

**Report number:** Planning, Bld & Growth Mgt-2025-324

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the report from Andrew Ramsammy, Development Planner III, Development Services and Design and David VanderBerg, Manager, Development Services, Development Services and Design to the Planning and Development Committee Meeting of May 12, 2025, re: **Information Report – New Comprehensive Zoning By-law**, be received.

**OVERVIEW:**

- The City is proposing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law (CZBL)
- The new CZBL would replace Zoning By-law 270-2004, as amended, and will apply to all lands in the city, except for the lands in the Brampton GO Major Transit Station Area and the Main Street North Development Permit System Area where the zoning is intended to be updated upon completion of the review of the Downtown Brampton Secondary Plan Area.
- The new CZBL is driven by inclusive and collaborative engagement, incorporating input from the public, internal and external stakeholders.
- Key objectives of the new CZBL include:
  - Implement *Brampton Plan* (Council approved Official Plan) and other strategic priorities, such as the Municipal Housing Pledge.
  - Reduce barriers for businesses and development in line with the City's planning policies.

- Simplify and modernize zoning regulations for residents and businesses.
- Meet new provincial planning legislation.
- Expand housing options and support economic development.
- Highlights of the changes proposed in the new CZBL are:
  - Making the By-law easier for residents and businesses to understand and use.
  - Pre-zoning Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) to allow the mix of land uses and higher densities of development identified in *Brampton Plan*.
  - Supporting efforts to increase the supply of housing through the pre-zoning of MTSAs and gentle intensification in neighbourhoods.
  - Reducing minimum parking requirements based on proximity to transit and setting maximum parking requirements in some areas to help create transit-oriented and walkable communities.
- The new CZBL directly supports Brampton's strategic focus areas by fostering sustainable, connected, and vibrant urban growth.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The City is proposing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law (CZBL) and is holding a public meeting as the latest step in community engagement for the project. This report provides background information on the new By-law.

### ***What is a Zoning By-law?***

A Zoning By-law sets rules for how land is used and developed. It includes rules on permitted uses, size and form of buildings, and where those buildings can be built.

Zoning affects every property and building in the city – from backyard sheds to high-rise buildings. It also provides rules for other site design matters, such as parking, landscaping and outdoor uses.

A Zoning By-law divides land into different zones based on permitted land uses and building types to help prevent conflicts between uses and ensure development happens in a planned and organized way.

### ***Why is the City preparing a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law?***

In November 2023, Council adopted the City's new Official Plan, *Brampton Plan*, which received the Region of Peel's approval in May 2024.

The new CZBL puts the Brampton Plan into action by aligning zoning rules with the City's long-term vision for growth and development. This also meets the requirements of the Planning Act, which says the City must update its Zoning By-law to match its Official Plan within three years.

The new CZBL:

- Aligns with *Brampton Plan*, the City's updated Official Plan.
- Simplifies and modernizes outdated zoning rules.
- Supports housing affordability and economic development.
- Reflects input from public and stakeholder engagement.
- Helps meet provincial planning legislation.

It also reflects city-wide design goals from the draft Urban Design Guidelines, another key tool in delivering *Brampton Plan*.

### ***Project History***

The City retained WSP Canada Group Limited as the lead consultant for the new Zoning By-law. WSP also worked on *Brampton Plan*.

Public engagement has been a key part of this project. To date, the City has held two public open houses and seven pop-up events across Brampton. The project team has also met with key stakeholders including the Brampton Board of Trade, industry groups, and public agencies to gather input.

See Attachment 1 for the full project timeline.

Residents and stakeholders shared feedback on the first two drafts of the By-law. The team reviewed all comments and made updates where appropriate. A [Public Comment Response](#) Matrix with all feedback and the City's responses is available on the City's website.

The City has also published background papers explaining the goals and strategies behind the new by-law. These are available on the [CZBL Review Project Library](#) webpage.

### ***What areas of the City does it address?***

The new CZBL will apply to all lands in Brampton, except for the Brampton GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and the Main Street North Development Permit System (DPS) Area.

The two exempted areas will be added to the new CZBL once the review of the Downtown Brampton Secondary Plan is complete. Until then, it is proposed that the

lands in the Downtown MTSA remain subject to the current Zoning By-law and those in the Main Street North DPS Area remain subject to the DPS By-law for the area.

### ***What is included in the new CZBL?***

The new CZBL includes three main parts:

- *By-law Text:* This is the main part of the CZBL. It sets out rules (requirements and restrictions) that apply to all uses and buildings for each of the zone categories: Residential, Commercial, Employment, Mixed-Use, Institutional, and Parks and Open Space. The full text can be found here: [Proposed Comprehensive Zoning By-law](#).
- *Mapping:* Mapping schedules included in the By-law assign a zone to every property to identify which rules apply to it. In addition to assigning the zones for properties, the CZBL also uses schedules for regulating other matters, such as the building heights and development densities that are permitted around MTSA's. The [Interactive Mapping Application](#) on the City's website provides all the proposed zoning schedules. It also includes a feature allowing users to compare the new proposed zoning with the current zoning.
- *Site-Specific Exception Zones:* are provisions that apply to a particular property or area, overriding the general regulations for the applicable zone. These sections typically reflect requirements and restrictions to implement specific development proposals for a location. There are currently over 3,000 site-specific exception zones. Through the CZBL review project the site-specific exception zones were examined, and a recommendation was made as to whether it was best to maintain them, or delete them and rezone the property. The [Proposed Zoning By-law page](#) of the City's website includes the text for the site exceptions retained and the [Site Exceptions Matrix](#) includes the rationale for the decision on both those retained and deleted. Further details about the criteria used for this process are included later in the report.

### **CURRENT SITUATION:**

#### ***Key Drivers***

The new CZBL is driven by an inclusive engagement process to achieve the following key aims:

- Implement *Brampton Plan* and other strategic priorities, such as the Municipal Housing Pledge.
- Reduce barriers for businesses and development in line with the City's planning policies.
- Simplify and modernize zoning regulations for residents and businesses.
- Meet new provincial planning legislation.

- Expand housing options and support economic development.

The purpose of this public meeting is to invite further input from the public and other stakeholders on the new CZBL.

### ***Major Changes in the CZBL***

This section identifies some of the major changes in the new CZBL from the current Zoning By-law and outlines how they align with the noted key drivers. The new CZBL is expected to have positive impacts for residents, businesses and landowners, and specific examples of these are provided throughout this report.

#### **Simplifying and Modernizing**

The City's current Zoning By-law was approved in 2004 with significant parts of it dating back even further. Aspects of it are outdated. The new CZBL attempts to modernize and simplify the By-law to make it easier for all to understand and use. This helps to remove barriers for people wanting to make changes to their properties, such as constructing a new building or addition and opening a new business.

Examples of changes in the CZBL to simplify and modernize zoning are:

- Adding new Mixed-Use zones to regulate developments with a mix of residential, commercial, business, institutional and office forms of development.
- Expanding and modernizing the types of uses allowed in each zone.
- Adding modern development standards. Notably, this includes improved regulations for higher density forms of development (i.e. apartments) but also includes changes for all development forms.
- Reducing the number of parent zones for each land use.
- Removing outdated Agricultural zones.

#### **Major Transit Station Areas**

Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) are the areas within walking distance of higher-order transit stations. *Brampton Plan* calls to transition MTSAs over time to become

#### ***Example: Modernizing***

*A person looking to start a pet day care business finds that the City's Zoning By-law does not include a pet day care as a permitted use in any parent commercial zone. This makes their search for a site more difficult, and may require them to seek a minor variance to start their business.*

*The new CZBL proposes to modernize and expand permitted uses in all zones, including adding pet day care in most commercial areas. The prospective business owner now has many more options for where to locate their business and are less likely to need a minor variance.*

#### ***Example: Simplifying***

*A resident wants to build a ramp to make their home accessible for a family member. However, they have limited space to do so without building into a minimum required setback area. Under the current Zoning By-law, they find they need to apply for a minor variance to build the ramp.*

*The new CZBL proposes to change the permitted setback encroachments to include barrier-free access ramps – reducing the chance the resident would need to spend money and be delayed because of a minor variance.*

vibrant, high-density, walkable places with open spaces, services and amenities, employment uses, and an attractive public realm. An important part of *Brampton Plan* is focusing growth towards these areas to meet housing and employment goals and build a more sustainable, walkable, and transit-oriented city.

There are 14 MTSA's as shown on the map of the Primary Major Transit Station Areas in Attachment 2. In line with provincial requirements, the CZBL proposes to pre-zone 11 of the MTSA's to allow the mix of land uses and density of development identified in *Brampton Plan*. Three MTSA's – Brampton GO, Bramalea GO and Steeles at Mississauga – are not being pre-zoned because there is ongoing work being done to develop policies for growth in these areas. The intent is to pre-zone these 3 MTSA's when this policy work is completed.

The CZBL proposes to establish development permissions for higher density, mixed-use forms of development in the 11 MTSA's. This includes allowing high-rise buildings, even up to unlimited heights in the general vicinity of higher-order transit stations.

The site-specific MTSA regulations proposed in the new CZBL include the following:

- Maximum height and density limits.
- Minimum at-grade commercial gross floor area requirements along Boulevards.
- Minimum gross floor area of business/institutional uses per site for lands zoned 'Mixed-Use Office (MO)'.
- Site-specific rear-yard setbacks within the Rutherford MTSA.
- Holding provisions to protect for the delivery of community hubs.

Lands designated and planned to remain for low-rise residential uses in MTSA's are not proposed to be pre-zoned. These lands will be identified with the applicable zoning category in the new CZBL. Site-specific zoning provisions on lands rezoned since 2019 will be retained, unless a change is specifically requested.

Pre-zoning MTSA's assists in delivering transit-oriented communities more efficiently. Currently, a property owner looking to redevelop in a MTSA would typically need to submit a rezoning application to permit the use, and a Site Plan Application to approve the details of the development. Pre-zoning MTSA's will remove the need for the rezoning application for those projects that conform with the new CZBL. Removing the rezoning step reduces the time needed to obtain development approvals, removes uncertainty associated with the rezoning process, and lowers costs for development proponents.

### Housing

*Brampton Plan* identifies housing affordability as one of the key drivers of change influencing Brampton's evolution. The province has set an ambitious 10-year target of 113,000 new homes for the City of Brampton (11,300 homes per year) in Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan.

Pre-zoning MTSAs as described in the previous section is the biggest step in the CZBL to address housing needs. It will significantly increase the supply of land ready to be developed for housing quickly. The CZBL also adds standards for mixed-use and higher density forms of development and modernizes standards for other forms. Establishing such standards makes it easier to build these types of developments because it sets clear expectations and reduces uncertainty about what will be required for them.

In addition to these higher density forms of development, *Brampton Plan* also promotes gentle intensification in neighbourhoods to increase housing supply. One measure it identifies is allowing four-unit dwellings on residential lots along transit corridors. Council also approved the inclusion of a commitment to explore increasing the permitted size of detached additional residential units (garden suites) in its application to the federal government for Housing Accelerator funding. The new CZBL proposes to rezone properties along transit corridors to permit four-unit dwellings and proposes to increase the permitted size of garden suites to 100 m<sup>2</sup>.

***Example: Achieving Housing & MTSA Goals***

*The high-density mixed-use building projects referred to as Park Place (located at 125 Queen St E), Symphony (located at 145 Queen St E) and Rhythm (located at 205 / 215 Queen St E) are examples of developments that were recently built in a MTSA that meet the current planning goals for it and also make valuable contributions to the City's housing supply.*

*The Zoning By-law had not permitted those developments when they were proposed. The landowners had to apply for a Zoning By-law Amendment to be able to build them. The rezoning process took an average of 1 year and 10 months for the three.*

*The new CZBL proposes to permit this type of development in designated areas by right. Landowners proposing similar development would no longer need to apply for a Zoning By-law Amendment. It reduces the time required for this process to **zero**, making it easier to build new housing and development contributing to transit-oriented complete communities.*

**Parking**

On November 22, 2023, Council endorsed Brampton's first Citywide Parking Plan that proposes a made-in-Brampton approach to managing parking. Big moves include removing minimum parking requirements and setting parking maximums in appropriate locations, increasing parking fees toward a market rate, enhancing enforcement tools, and setting strategies to address truck parking. Some of these are relevant to the CZBL and have been addressed in the proposed By-law.

The CZBL is introducing a new regime for regulating required parking. In particular, it links how much parking is required on a site to the site's proximity to transit and establishes maximum parking requirements in some parts of the City.

The CZBL creates three Parking Regulation Areas (PRAs) and assigns each part of the City to one of them. Refer to Attachment 3 for the proposed PRAs.

PRA 1 is comprised of MTSA lands. In PRA 1, minimum parking requirements are removed, aligning with provincial policies and *Brampton Plan*. Removing minimum parking requirements will reduce the cost of development, given the significant costs to build structured or underground parking. It will also help to expand housing options, and support business opportunities and economic development. It is another step in removing barriers for development.

Maximum parking requirements are also introduced for the PRA 1 areas. They set a cap on how many parking spaces can be built on a site. This cap will help achieve policies that support transit-oriented development and create walkable communities.

The PRA 2 area includes lands identified as corridors and boulevards in *Brampton Plan*. These areas are served by transit, such as priority bus linkages. PRA 2 lands are subject to lower minimum parking requirements for some residential, commercial, community and institutional land uses. Similar to PRA 1, this will help expand housing options, and support business opportunities and economic development by lessening the obstacle of minimum parking requirements to accommodate infill development.

PRA 3 captures the remaining areas of the city where minimum parking requirements are higher as compared to the parts of the city better served by transit.

### **Site-Specific Exception Zones Review Criteria**

The CZBL work included a review of each of the site-specific exception zones. The review examined whether to keep or delete each exception. The work did not include revising standards in each site-specific zone, with the exception of changes needed to make the zoning provisions functional (i.e. assigning a new parent zone and removing references to the current Zoning By-law).

A significant number of the public comments received on the CZBL to date have been from people who own land that is subject to a site-specific exception.

#### **Example: Parking Reduction**

*A store owner is looking to build a new retail store (approximately 500 m<sup>2</sup> in size) and is looking at some locations along Steeles Avenue.*

*They are trying to find sites where they can construct the store and provide enough parking to meet minimum zoning requirements, even though they may not actually need that much parking for their business. The current Zoning B-law requires that they provide at least 27 parking spaces, which limits potential sites.*

*The new CZBL identifies that the sites the store owner is looking at are all in Parking Regulation Area 2, where parking is reduced because of the transit service level on Steeles. The minimum parking requirement is now only 12 spaces, opening up more options for where they can locate.*



The review criteria were based on the following:

- Does the special section conform with *Brampton Plan* and other related planning documents (i.e. The Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statements, Urban Design Guidelines)?
- Does the special section provide flexibility and reduce barriers to development, while not disturbing the existing neighbourhood?
- Was the site exception recently approved?
- Is the special section still relevant? Does the proposed new By-law cover what was in the special section?
- Has the development already been built?
- Does the special section cause undue barriers to development? Is the special section overly restrictive?

Of the over 3000 site-specific zoning exceptions that exist, the large majority of these have been carried over to the proposed CZBL based on the above criteria. A significant number of the public comments received on the CZBL to date have been from people who own land that is subject to a site-specific exception, and they have generally requested to retain it.

Retaining the site exceptions reduces uncertainty for those landowners and potential conformity issues for sites that are often already built. It is also noted that the retained exceptions are the outcome of a detailed review through a Zoning By-law Amendment application process. Site exceptions that are in conflict with *Brampton Plan*, particularly in MTSAs, are proposed to be deleted, with new zoning applied in line with *Brampton Plan*.

Any new site-specific exceptions approved between now and the adoption of the proposed CBZL will also be transferred.

### ***Alignment with Council Direction on Specific Zoning-related Issues***

Council has directed staff to address several specific zoning-related issues in the new CZBL, as described below:

- *Residential Driveway Size:* In October 2024, Council directed staff to present updated regulations for permitted driveway size in mature neighbourhoods at a public meeting, which was held in December of that year. The proposed regulations generally reduced the permitted size of driveways and would apply to the parts of the City built before 1990. The CZBL includes the updated standards. Driveway regulations for other parts of the city remain generally unchanged.
- *Expanded Outdoor Storage Permission in Industrial Zones:* In February, 2025 Council directed staff to hold a public meeting to expand outdoor storage permissions in industrial zones to allow trucks to be stored on properties that are not associated with a business located at the property. The intent is to reduce illegal truck parking by increasing the supply of land that can be used for

appropriate and legal truck parking. A separate public meeting is being held at the May 12, 2025, Planning and Development Committee meeting to amend the current Zoning By-law to make these noted changes. These will also be incorporated into the new CZBL.

- *Large Statues:* In January 2025, Council directed staff to develop new regulations for large statues. The proposed CZBL includes new performance standards for large statues, including height limits, that align with the direction in the report.
- *Restaurant Waste Storage:* In October 2024, Council directed staff to develop performance standards for in-ground waste storage units and incorporate those performance standards through the CZBL. The CZBL includes these new performance standards, including allowing in-ground waste storage to be used for restaurant waste.
- *Food Trucks:* On April 23, 2025, Committee of Council considered a report on the regulation of food trucks. While the timing of the two projects did not allow provisions for food trucks to be added to the CZBL, staff will coordinate the work on the two projects and new provisions, if needed, may be added and requirements for public consultation met.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

### **Financial Implications:**

There is no financial impact resulting from the planned actions in this report. The cost of the project is covered within the existing budget.

### **Communications Implications:**

An email about the CZBL public meeting was sent to everyone who gave feedback on the draft by-law, key stakeholders, and anyone who signed up through the Let's Connect webpage or asked to be notified. The meeting notice was also posted online on the Brampton Guardian and the Let's Connect project page.

## **STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:**

The new CZBL directly supports Brampton's strategic focus areas by fostering sustainable, connected, and vibrant urban growth.

**Health & Well-being:** The CZBL promotes health, wellness and safety as it aims to minimize conflicts between land uses and ensure there is proper access to roads, utilities and other infrastructure. Overall, it shapes the places and communities in which we live, work, learn and play.

**Transit & Connectivity:** The CZBL supports the connectivity and livability of streets and infrastructure that are safe, convenient, efficient and sustainable. It encourages transit-oriented development that supports pedestrian, cycling, and transit connections that are safe and connected.

**Growing Urban Centres & Neighbourhoods:** The CZBL promotes economic growth, local investment, and strong community ties while enhancing the quality of urban life. It will help balance new development, accommodate growth and unlock more housing in the City as it broadens housing options.

**Environmental Resilience & Sustainability:** The CZBL supports nurturing and protecting our environment for a sustainable future. It proposes to implement appropriate limitations to development on natural systems, aligning with Brampton's environmental goals. New zoning designations pertaining to Open Space, Natural Systems and Parks have been incorporated to preserve and maintain Brampton's robust park and trail systems.

**Government & Leadership:** The CZBL project promotes service excellence, efficiency, transparency and effectiveness with equity and innovation. Public engagement and participation have been a priority with a number of open house events and engagement pop-ups held to inform the public and seek input.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The new CZBL implements the policy direction in *Brampton Plan*, reflects the best practices in zoning and development standards, and addresses changes to provincial legislation and policies. It also helps expand housing options and supports business opportunities and economic development.

The CZBL will contribute to achieving the City's strategic goals by fostering economic, environmental, and social well-being.

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Attachments:

Attachment 1: Project Timeline

Attachment 2: Primary Major Transit Station Area Map

Attachment 3: Parking Regulation Area Map

