Changes being considered through this process

- In 2024, the Established Residential (ER) zone regulations for Regional Centre were updated to allow a broader range of housing types in the ER-2 and ER-3 zones through the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing. Find fact sheets on the initial changes here.

- The new rules have been successful in allowing a variety of housing forms in ER neighbourhoods, including new four to eight unit dwellings, internal conversions of existing dwellings, and rear additions.

- Recent development trends and initial community feedback suggest that there is room to improve the current standards for missing middle developments. Key issues include:
    - Rear additions may exceed eight units, adding significant density to a neighbourhood
    - New development and rear additions tend to be taller and larger in scale than surrounding homes, raising concerns related to privacy, shadows, safety, parking and traffic
    - Where several exemptions and encroachments are used together, new developments can achieve a scale that is significantly larger than neighbouring properties
    - Higher lot coverage maximums leave less room for soft landscaping and trees, making it harder to protect existing vegetation

How these changes will be developed

As part of the 2025-2026 Centre Plan annual review, staff are reassessing how the shape and size of multi-unit dwellings are regulated in the ER-3 zone. Stronger design and built form rules can promote buildings that are more compatible with the look and feel of the surrounding neighbourhood and align with the pedestrian first, human-scale objectives of the Centre Plan.

Community engagement, industry consultation and 3D modelling will inform these changes. Inspiration will also be drawn from the CMHC Atlantic Design Catalogue, which was developed in partnership with the municipality.

	Existing requirement	Potential change
Rear additions	• No maximum number of units *(also applies to internal conversions)* • Max building height: 11m or 14m with sloped roof • Cannot be wider/larger than the footprint of the main building and must follow standard setback requirements	• Limit number of units *(also apply to internal conversions)* • Limit max height to match the scale of the main building • Require greater side setbacks to improve access and reduce privacy concerns
Building scale	• Max building height: 11m or 14m with sloped roof • Lot coverage: 50 to 60 per cent depending on lot size • Maximum dimensions: 20m (width), 30m (depth)	• Limit max height to 11m, but allow up to 13-14m if massing of top storey is substantially reduced • Reduce lot coverage to 40 to50 per cent depending on lot size, with exemptions for certain building features
Building siting	• Front setback: between 0.5-4m, based on location • Standard side setback: 1.25m • Standard rear setback: 6m • Non-conforming setbacks allow structures to be extended, enlarged or reconstructed, even if the number of units increases significantly	• Increase front setback to improve public/private transition and/or match adjacent properties • Increase standard side setback or relate to lot size • Non-conforming setbacks may not be used if the existing low-density dwelling (1-4 units) is redeveloped into a multi-unit dwelling (5+ units)
Encroachments	• Staircases can fully encroach into any setback • Window bays can encroach up to 1m into a setback • Enclosed porches can encroach into a front/flanking setback up to 0.5m from the property line	• Do not allow staircases to encroach into side setbacks and limit encroachments into the front/rear setbacks • Require window bays to meet minimum glazing and design requirements to encroach into a setback
Design requirements	• For each wall facing the street, multi-unit dwellings must have at least 15-25% glazing and one entrance • Multi-unit dwellings wider than 10m must have at least two of the following features: 1. a balcony on each storey 2. at least 20 per cent of the façade is recessed 3. a window bay of at least 1m in depth 4. a covered/enclosed porch of at least $2m^2$ in area	• Extend design requirements to dwellings with 4+ units and require more design features for wider buildings • Adjust glazing requirements to improve window placement; consider privacy screening for balconies and porches • Add/adjust minimum dimensions for design features to ensure they match the scale of the building • Remove window bays as an optional design feature, replace with material/colour changes
Parking and landscaping	• Lot area that is not covered by a structure, driveway or parking area must be soft or hard landscaped • One new tree is required for new main buildings (unless a tree is retained) • Up to 4 parking spots can be provided to the side or rear of the building • Grade-related dwelling units must provide a tree, shrubs, a planter or masonry wall for privacy	• Require more soft landscaping and limit hard landscaping • Allow 5+ parking spots on a lot with a multi-unit dwelling, subject to screening requirements • Increase minimum height of privacy walls/planters for grade-related dwelling units