



**The Corporation of the  
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

**C O U N C I L   R E P O R T**

April 7, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council  
AUTHOR: Jonathan Kircal, RPP, Intermediate Planner  
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services  
RE: A-3-25-Z Housekeeping Amendments to Zoning By-law  
2005-150

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval of a City-initiated application of housekeeping amendments to Zoning By-law 2005-150 to clarify technical language and improve implementation. The proposed amendments confirm that limited residential development is permitted in the Rural Aggregate Extraction Zone (REX), rear yard setbacks are reduced to 1.2 metres for one-storey residential buildings in the Gentle Density Residential Zone (R2), and that dwelling units may be distributed across multiple residential buildings in the urban residential zones. These amendments will be city-wide in their effect.

**PROPOSED CHANGE**

Reintroduction of Residential Uses in the REX Zone:

Amend the Rural Aggregate Extraction Zone (REX) by permitting: “*a residential structure containing no more than one dwelling unit on an existing lot, subject to rural area zone regulations*”.

Rear Yard Setback Adjustment for One-Storey Homes in the R2 Zone:

Amend the Gentle Density Residential Zone (R2) to reduce the rear yard setback to 1.2 metres for one-storey residential structures on R2 lots except for those that abut Lake Superior and St. Mary’s River.

Clarification of Residential Structure and Unit Count Per Lot

Amend the list of permitted uses in the Rural Area Zone (RA) and the Estate Residential Zone (R1) by replacing “*Residential Structure containing up to 2 dwelling units*” with “*Residential Structure/s with no more than 2 dwelling units per lot*”.

Amend the list of permitted uses in the Gentle Density Residential Zone (R2) and the Low Density Residential Zone (R3) by replacing “*Residential Structure*” with “*Residential Structure/s*”.

Amend the list of permitted uses in the Medium Density Residential Zone (R4) by replacing “*Residential Structure – containing at least two dwelling units*” with “*Residential Structure/s – at least two dwelling units per lot*”.

Amend the list of permitted uses in the High Density Residential Zone (R5) by replacing “*Residential Structure – containing at least four dwelling units*” with “*Residential Structure/s – at least four dwelling units per lot*”.

**Subject Property:**

The proposed amendments apply City-wide.

**BACKGROUND**

In April 2024, City Council passed zoning amendment by-law 2024-48, *Gentle Density: Proposed Amendments to the Zoning By-law Regarding Residential Development Regulations*. A number of significant changes were made throughout the zoning by-law as a result of this amendment. The general purpose of these amendments is to allow for modest increases in residential density within existing neighbourhoods, with the goal of increasing housing supply, supporting affordability, and achieving other land use planning objectives while maintaining neighbourhood character.

**ANALYSIS**

**Conformity with Official Plan**

The proposed amendments aim to streamline the implementation of regulations designed to reduce barriers to residential development, thereby promoting a diverse range of housing options on urban residential lots without the need for a formal *Planning Act* application.

These amendments unlock significant development potential within the city’s urban serviced areas by supporting future growth through infill development and redevelopment.

Therefore, the following Official Plan policies and goals strongly support the recommended zoning amendments:

**Housing Policies**

- *HO.1 – Opportunities for a full range of housing types shall be provided to meet the present and expected needs of the community.*
- *HO.2 – Innovative and alternative residential development standards supporting affordable housing and compact urban form shall be encouraged...*

**Residential Land Use Policies**

- *R.1 – A mixture of housing types and diversity of ownership and tenure forms shall be encouraged in new development.*

- *R.2 – Low and high density development should be integrated and compatible in density, height and building setbacks. Generally, high density development shall be restricted to major arterial streets and areas abutting the downtown core.*
- *R.4 – Small-scale intensification may be permitted in all residential areas unless adequate supporting infrastructure is not available or significant physical constraints exist.*

#### **PART VI – Physical Development – Built Environment**

- *Goal: to develop flexible and adaptable land use plans and development procedures that respond rapidly to development opportunities.*

#### **Conformity with Provincial Planning Statement 2024**

These proposed housekeeping amendments enhance the zoning framework to better direct residential growth into existing serviced urban areas, optimizing current infrastructure and minimizing the need for the outward expansion of residential uses.

These technical amendments conform to the PPS.

#### **Conformity with Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011**

The housekeeping amendments do not conflict with the GPNO.

#### **COMMENTS**

Staff continually monitor feedback on the effectiveness of the zoning by-law, collecting input from internal sources, other departments, and the public. Based on this feedback, staff periodically propose housekeeping amendments to improve its implementation.

In 2024, application A-1-24-Z, referred to as *Gentle Density: Proposed Amendments to the Zoning By-law Regarding Residential Development Regulations*, and its corresponding by-law, 2024-48, were adopted by Council. This introduced significant changes to zoning provisions aimed at increasing flexibility for residential developments across the city. Since its adoption, Planning staff have collected feedback on ways to improve its implementation.

It has been noted that some of the changes to the zoning by-law as a result of A-1-24-Z, unintentionally removed certain permissions or introduced vagueness. This application seeks to reverse or clarify these changes to ensure that the by-law is implemented as originally intended.

A description of the amendments is provided below:

#### Reintroduction of Residential Uses in the REX Zone

Residential uses were inadvertently removed as a permitted use in the REX zone due to changes in housing terminology. Previously, single-detached dwellings were allowed in this zone; however, with the approval of A-1-24-Z, the term "single-detached dwelling" was replaced with "residential structure containing no more than one unit." The REX zone was not updated to reflect this change, resulting in the unintended exclusion of residential uses.

#### Rear Yard Setback Adjustment for One-Storey Homes in the R2 Zone

The zoning application intended to reduce the rear yard setback from 10 metres to 1.2 metres for one-storey residential uses in all urban residential zones; however this change was not applied to the R2 zone.

This application recommends aligning the R2 zone with other urban residential zones by reducing the rear yard setback for one-storey residential structures from 10 metres to 1.2 metres. R2 zoned lots that abut Lake Superior and St. Mary's River are excluded from this amendment due to environmental sensitivity, flooding, and shoreline stability concerns.

#### Clarification of Residential Structure and Unit Count Per Lot

These amendments aim to clarify the language in the zoning by-law regarding residential structures by specifying that multiple residential structures may be permitted on a lot, provided they meet the minimum or maximum unit requirements for the lot as prescribed in the respective zone.

These amendments clarify the zoning by-law by specifying that multiple residential structures may be permitted on a lot, as long as they comply with the minimum and maximum unit requirements of the respective zone and all other performance standards. Rural residential zones will continue to be subject to no more than one or two dwelling units per lot, whereas the zones intended for the highest density will require a minimum of 2 to 4 dwelling units per lot.

### **CONSULTATION**

Public notice was advertised in the following manner:

- Sault Star, Saturday, March 15, 2025.
- City website, Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

As this is a City-wide application, no physical notices were mailed out.

No comments from the public were received.

### **Application Circulation**

As part of the application review, this proposal was circulated to City divisions and external agencies for detailed technical review and comment.

No comments were received during application circulation.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Approval of this application will not result in any incremental changes to municipal finances.

**STRATEGIC PLAN / POLICY IMPACT**

Housekeeping amendments keep the zoning by-law relevant and streamlined to ensure ease of the development approvals process. This complements the service delivery focus area of the strategic plan.

**SUMMARY**

This is a City-initiated application to introduce housekeeping amendments to Zoning By-law 2005-150 for the purpose of clarifying technical language and improving implementation. The proposed amendments confirm that limited residential development is permitted in the Rural Aggregate Extraction Zone (REX), rear yard setbacks are reduced to 1.2 metres for one-storey residential buildings in the Gentle Density Residential Zone (R2), and that dwelling units may be distributed across multiple residential buildings in the residential zones.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the Planner dated April 7, 2025 concerning Application A-3-25-Z Technical Amendments to Zoning By-law 2005-150 be received and that Council approve the application to amend Zoning By-law 2005-150 as outlined in Schedule A;

And that the Legal Department be requested to prepare the necessary by-law(s) to effect the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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