

Engagement Summary Report

April to May 2022

Regulation Redesign

Draft Updated Zoning and Development By-law

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the City of Vancouver launched the Regulation Redesign project to review the City's land use regulations as part of the work to streamline permit processing, which is a corporate priority in the City's Corporate Plan. The project has focused on 3 key areas: modernizing the zoning by-law structure and format, simplifying land use regulations, and clarifying the land use framework.

A key outcome of Regulation Redesign will be an updated and reformatted Zoning and Development By-law (zoning by-law) that is more user-friendly and accessible. The updated zoning by-law will include:

- enhanced document navigation (e.g. use of hyperlinks) and features that enhance accessibility for persons with low vision and screen reader users;
- clearer rules with more explanatory diagrams;
- consolidated rules to reduce repetition and improve clarity; and
- document standards to maintain consistent format and wording over time.

As a companion to the updated zoning by-law, staff also introduced a digital zoning map to offer a convenience version of the District Zoning Plan.

Public engagement with industry stakeholders and the public on the updated zoning by-law was held in April and May 2022 on the Shape Your City Vancouver (SYC) platform, through online information sessions and office hours. Feedback was collected through an online survey and question-and-answer period following each information session. This report summarizes the engagement activities and the feedback received.

2.0 ABOUT REGULATION REDESIGN

2.1 Project Context

The current Zoning and Development By-law was adopted by City Council in 1956. It has been amended extensively but a comprehensive review has never been undertaken. To implement the City's goals and priorities, the zoning by-law has grown significantly more complex over the years. Some of the more than 8,000 amendments to the original 1956 zoning by-law introduced new terminology or regulations that have resulted in inconsistencies with other parts of the zoning by-law or with other City by-laws.

2.2 Objectives of Regulation Redesign

The key objectives of the project are to support streamlining permit process review by:

- simplifying and clarifying land use regulations to make them easier to understand and implement;
- modernizing regulations and wording, and improve the format of land use documents to make them more user-friendly;
- improving the consistency of land use regulations and policies;
- improving communication about land use tools; and
- establishing a robust and enduring land use framework.

2.3 Project Streams

Key issues and ideas identified during the launch phase of the project informed the development of strategic options and directions for prioritizing the work to simplify and modernize land use regulations and framework. Three streams of work emerged to address the key issues and meet the project objectives. These are 1) modernizing the zoning by-law structure and format; 2) simplifying land use regulations; and 3) clarifying the land use framework.

1. Modernizing the zoning by-law structure and format

A key outcome of the Regulation Redesign project is a newly formatted and updated zoning by-law that is easier to understand and more user-friendly. Building on input from industry stakeholders, businesses, organizations and residents (see summaries of engagement in [2020](#) and [2021](#)), the proposed update to the administrative sections, general regulations sections and district schedules of the zoning by-law include:

- enhanced document navigation (e.g. use of hyperlinks) and features that enhance accessibility for persons with low vision and screen reader users;
- clearer rules with more explanatory diagrams;
- consolidated rules to reduce repetition and improve clarity; and
- document standards to maintain consistent format and wording over time.

The proposed updates do not affect what can be built on a site, but instead create a clearer regulatory framework that will support the future implementation of plans and policies. The draft updated zoning by-law was presented for public review in spring 2022 and the results are summarized in this report.

2. Simplifying land use regulations

The second stream of work has been to simplify and clarify zoning regulations and improve their consistency. This work has included amendments to building height, introducing definitions for porches, decks and similar features, improving the consistency of related regulations, clarifying authorities, and consolidating administrative regulations. These are incremental changes toward more simplified zoning regulations and more streamlined permit processing.

Work has also been completed to update and improve Engineering tools and procedures, including those for regulating the use of streets associated with construction (e.g. street occupancy, lane use fees) and to clarify development permit application requirements related to official building grades.

3. Clarifying the land use framework

Creating an enduring land use framework is essential to ensuring that improvements to land use regulations, policies and procedures are sustained. This work has included creating the Zoning and Land Use Document Library and a digital zoning map. The Zoning and Land Use Document Library is a comprehensive inventory of land use documents including the Zoning & Development By-law, as well as other land use regulation and policy documents. The digital zoning map is a consolidated convenience version of the Zoning District Plan of the Zoning and Development By-law, providing an easy way to find the zoning designation of a parcel with a direct link to the specific district schedule or CD-1 by-law.

Other work has included developing new templates for land use documents to ensure consistency and establishing clear procedures for creating, storing, amending, and monitoring land use documents. Making it easier to find the relevant land use documents and improving their consistency assists applicants in accessing the relevant information and supports more consistent application of regulations and policies. An improved filing and storing system also creates a foundation for future work to map and digitize land use regulations.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The proposed improvements to the zoning by-law were presented for broad community feedback from April 22 to May 6, 2022. Participants were offered multiple engagement opportunities to learn more about the proposed updates to the zoning by-law and provide input: a virtual open house and online survey through the SYC platform, virtual public and information sessions and remote office hours. A total of 581 people participated in these opportunities.

3.1 Engagement Activities

The sections below provide an overview of engagement activities.

Shape Your City Vancouver (SYC) virtual open house hub

Of the 581 participants, 476 visited SYC. In addition to an online survey, the site provided the following materials:

- links to view each draft updated zoning by-law section and district schedule;
- a reference guide that listed the former and proposed locations for regulations in the zoning by-law;
- a summary of amendments to zoning regulations; and
- a narrated [video presentation](#) and [presentation slides](#) explaining the proposed updates.

Survey

Participants were encouraged to complete a brief survey (see Appendix B for survey questions). Paper copies were provided upon request. 12 people responded to the survey.

Virtual Information Sessions

Four information sessions were held with stakeholder groups and the general public (see Table 1. Information sessions). A total of 105 people attended. The purpose of these information sessions was to:

- present an overview of proposed key changes to the draft updated zoning by-law;
- answer questions about the project and the proposed amendments to the administrative and general sections, district schedule structure and format, and proposed new terms; and
- collect feedback on the proposed changes.

Table 1. Information sessions

Virtual information session	Date
1. Small-scale development builders and designers, with Mandarin interpretation	April 13, 2022
2. Homebuilders Association of Vancouver (HAVAN), Designer’s Council	April 26, 2022
3. General Public	April 27, 2022
4. Urban Development Institute (UDI) members	April 28, 2022

Sessions 1, 2 and 4 were held in partnership with an industry member from their community or with an industry association. All sessions were held using Webex Events. Participants could join the virtual meetings online or by phone to listen to the presentation, ask questions, and provide feedback verbally and in the chat.

Remote Office Hours

Remote office hour appointments were offered for the public to ask questions and share their thoughts about the proposed updated zoning by-law. Staff were available to meet over the phone during the following times:

- April 26, 2022: 9:00am - 12:00pm
- April 28, 2022: 2:00pm - 5:00pm
- May 3, 2022: 9:00am - 12:00pm
- May 4, 2022: 9:00am - 12:00pm
- May 5, 2022: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Online Submission

Members of the public could also submit feedback through the vancouver.ca/RegRedesign webpage and by emailing regredesign@vancouver.ca.

3.2 Notification and Communications

Industry stakeholders and the public were notified about public engagement opportunities using multiple notification methods. All notifications included a link to the project website (vancouver.ca/RegRedesign) and the project's email address (regredesign@vancouver.ca).



Email notifications were sent to the Regulation Redesign distribution mailing list, the City's planning and development advisory committees, and Regulation Redesign External Advisory Group inviting members to participate, reaching a total of 424 members. Members were also encouraged to share the information about engagement opportunities with their networks.



The invitation to participate was posted for a period of 2 weeks on HAVAN's Government Relations Update newsfeed, and shared via Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC), Building Owners and Managers Association of British Columbia (BOMA BC), and UDI e-newsletters.



Information about the engagement period, including ways to participate and engagement materials were posted on the project website, vancouver.ca/RegRedesign and on the Shape Your City Vancouver online public engagement platform, ShapeYourCity.ca/regredesign-by-law.

An information board with QR code to the SYC virtual open house hub was set up in the Development and Building Services Centre.



Social media posts over the City's social media platforms were used to boost awareness, including a radio broadcast on a local Chinese-language radio station.

4.0 WHAT WE HEARD

This section summarizes the responses from the survey and information sessions. The results are presented under each survey question. Any comments and suggestions that are outside the scope of the Regulation Redesign project will be shared with the appropriate City departments. See Appendix A for survey questions. All verbatim responses are recorded in Appendix B.

1. How easy is it to find information in the new Zoning and Development By-law format?

This question was only asked in the survey. Of the 12 survey responses received, 6 respondents found the draft updated zoning by-law to be very easy or easy to find information, 4 responded with neutral, while 2 found it difficult or very difficult.

2. Tell us why:

Many participants across several engagement activities indicated that the new design and structure of the updated zoning by-law makes it easier to read and find information compared to the current zoning by-law format. Frequent users of the zoning by-law mentioned they were happy with the changes, especially the use of hyperlinks and colour-coding to help find information more easily, and the new use terms. Some respondents made suggestions to clarify graphics and the land use classification colour-coding.

A few survey respondents shared that the zoning by-law regulations are overly complex and can be overwhelming, especially for people who do not use the zoning by-law regularly.

3. What content in the draft By-law did you find confusing?

Overall, respondents were supportive of the proposed amendments to the zoning by-law and said the updates were much needed to streamline regulations and reduce confusion. Participants appreciated the new terms being introduced as they more clearly identify the type of multiple dwelling permitted in a district (apartment, townhouse, triplex) as well as the new terms that reflect built form (mixed-use residential building, single detached house, duplex).

Some noted that the use of legal wording makes it hard to understand the zoning regulations and that they are still confusing.

4. Are there other improvements you would like incorporated into the By-law in the future?

Suggestions from survey participants included adding video explanations to complement the zoning by-law. Feedback from information session participants included a caution that hyperlinks needed to be updated and maintained to be useful.

Please see Appendix B for verbatim responses, including responses that fall outside the scope of Regulation Redesign objectives.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

The engagement results will be reported to Council in June 2022.

Please visit the project webpage at vancouver.ca/RegRedesign or ShapeYourCity/regredesign-by-law to stay up-to-date on the project.

Appendix A

Shape Your City Vancouver Survey

Questions

Paper copies are available upon request, and can be submitted by mail.

Tell us your thoughts on the proposed improvements to simplify and clarify the Zoning and Development By-law by completing the survey (4 questions).

Here are the links to the draft updated By-law, Reference Guide and Amendment Summary.

1. How easy is it to find information in the new Zoning and Development By-law format?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neutral
- Difficult
- Very difficult

2. Tell us why

3. What content in the draft By-law did you find confusing?

4. Are there other improvements you would like incorporated into the By-law in the future?

Appendix B

Verbatim Responses

1. How easy is it to find information in the new Zoning and Development By-law format?
2. Tell us why?

Survey
The design has a good structure that clearly defines separate sections. The colour coding helps to navigate the document. The tables are easy to read.
It appears to be more of a linear read versus the current format.
It is far more online-user friendly and just generally laid out in an aesthetically pleasing, simple way.
Too much info, is overwhelming. Need more concise info. And charts and graphs need to be clearer - not just colours. Needs writing to key people know exactly what areas they are and what the colours mean.
The Reference Guide is excellent. The summary is excellent.
I am an individual homeowner . this is not set out logically for identifying what i would want to approach the city for. set it up as a "how do I" tool. add a bathroom , permit a coachhouse, add living space to add suites. add windows or a gas fireplace
Information Sessions
New format looks good so far, definitely more legible and easier to read, happy to see the change. Fresh look will be easier for new users, especially color coding to help find info
Proposed new terms: apartment, townhouse, triplex, mixed-use residential building - fantastic!
Very happy with the change over so far with what I've seen so far and looking forward to digging deeper into the new format
Thank you! I look forward to working with the new format
Thank you for the great presentation, the new info sounds great!
Thanks. Will look it over more thoroughly.
Thank you for making life easier and enabling higher productivity for everyone
I'm new to this, so I'm just happy to listen in at this point
Congratulations on the digital upgrade!This is what the current Zoning Bylaw is like to use: https://youtu.be/JMC3QwMtQk0

3. What content in the draft By-law did you find confusing?

Survey
I didn't find anything confusing. It seemed like an excellent streamlining of the By-law and, in general, a great and much needed update.
too much. too legalise about your processes. not user friendly at all.
No links, having to manually bounce between documents, too compressed and mashed up
Why are there so many districts for RS? It seems like we should simplify all of these districts and make it easier for various forms to fit within a few key districts
The regulations are comically restrictive, and primarily design to exclude the middle class from most of the city. Apartments almost always require a CD-1 rezoning anyway.
That it exists.

4. Are there other improvements you would like incorporated into the By-law in the future?

Survey
Not at the moment.
I don't have particular suggestions here but I suggest more streamlining and simplicity to By-laws in general. The process needs to be far more efficient.
Would like to see a consolidation of various districts and removal of many districts. We need greater simplicity in order to streamline adding new homes.
Before you rewrite this the city should eliminate the single family zones that have resulted in the affordability crisis. streamline to only a few zones and they deal with what is allowable in each, process for approval and service standards. make it easy for addition of housing, units, suites and density in the city NOW under the careful guidance of homeowners not giving all opportunity to buildings. have specific groups of land owners run scenarios through the guide and process to see if they can do key renos ie. add a bathroom, divide into multi units, add density to suite properties, build a laneway coachhouse, convert a garage to studio space etc. ask commercial, industrial owners the same thing
Please stop high rises and Renovictions. It ya horrible living in constant fear and insecurity of losing homes. I rent and am disabled with low income and am terrifued of rezoning and threat of losing home and neighborhood.
Yes. Throw it in the garbage. Rewrite it from scratch so that it is in line with all other city policies, like CEAP, Greenest City, etc.
Put in a shredder. No one should have to ask permission of a planner or council to construct a building on any lot from Abbotsford to Horseshoe Bay. Enforce a sane building code but people live/work/play where & how they want.

Information Sessions

Could I suggest a link in RS-1 to the basement suite guidelines in Section 10.3.21?

DEOD has two versions on line and missing links, or link to incorrect document, e.g. By-law adoption at City of Vancouver. Need to add direct link to ODP.
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Some links don't auto launch on every browser. E.g. RS-1 has to open in new window and then hit PDF to launch the document
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Appendix C




Presentation Slides

City of VANCOUVER | Regulation Redesign | Simplifying Rules for City Building

Draft Updated Zoning and Development By-law

SHAPE YOUR CITY – APRIL 22 TO MAY 6, 2022

Acknowledging the Unceded Homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm
MUSQUEAM

Skwxwú7mesh
SQUAMISH

səliwətaʔt
TSLEIL-WAUTUTH

Presentation outline

1. Background and timeline
2. Proposed updates to administrative sections and general regulations
3. Proposed district schedule format
4. Digital Zoning Map
5. Next steps

About the Regulation Redesign project

Regulation Redesign supports the corporate goal to improve permit processing.

Key objectives

- Simplify and clarify land use regulations to make them easier to understand and implement
- Modernize regulations and language and improve the format of land use documents to make them more user-friendly
- Improve the consistency of land use regulations and policies
- Improve communication about land use tools
- Establish a robust and enduring land use framework

Key issues identified

I CAN'T FIND THE INFORMATION I NEED

EVEN WHEN I FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT

THE RULES ARE BEING INCONSISTENTLY INTERPRETED AND APPLIED

INFORMATION CONFLICTS WITHIN BY-LAWS AND ACROSS REGULATIONS/POLICIES

Industry, public and staff input

2018 – 2022

- Regulation Redesign External Group
- Listening Sessions and Roundtables

2019 – 2020

- Open house and pop-up engagement

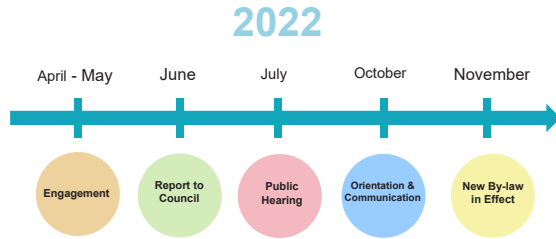
2020

- Focus groups on by-law format

2021

- Shape Your City engagement
- District schedule format tests
- Document accessibility tests

Timeline for By-law rollout



Features of the new By-law format

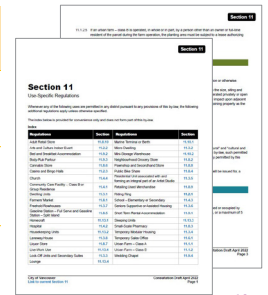
- Enhanced document navigation and accessibility
- Clear rules with explanatory diagrams
- Consolidated rules
- Document standards

Presentation outline

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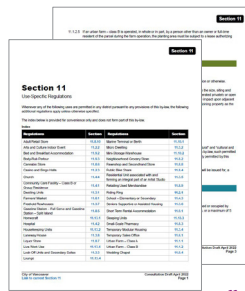
Proposed updates to admin and general sections

- Section 1 Administration**
 - Clarified intent of the by-law
- Section 2 Definitions**
 - Added terms to clarify regulations
 - Consolidated terms from district schedules
- Section 10 General Regs**
 - Consolidated regulations that apply to many districts
 - Introduced hyperlinked index
- Section 11 Use-Specific Regs**
 - Reorganized regulations by land use categories
 - Introduced hyperlinked index



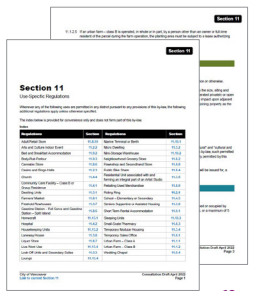
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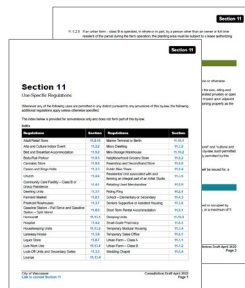
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Proposed new terms

Current term	Proposed defined term
Multiple dwelling	Apartment Townhouse Triplex
Dwelling units in conjunction with...	Mixed-use residential building
One-family dwelling	Single detached house
Two-family dwelling	Duplex
Infill one-family dwelling	Infill single detached house
Infill two-family dwelling	Infill duplex

Clear rules and diagrams

Proposed new terms

Current term	Proposed defined term
Multiple dwelling	Apartment Townhouse Triplex
Dwelling units in conjunction with...	Mixed-use residential building
One-family dwelling Two-family dwelling Infill one-family dwelling Infill two-family dwelling	Single detached house Duplex Infill single detached house Infill duplex



Clear rules and diagrams

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Proposed new terms

Current term	Proposed defined term
Multiple dwelling	Apartment Townhouse Triplex
Dwelling units in conjunction with...	Mixed-use residential building
One-family dwelling Two-family dwelling Infill one-family dwelling Infill two-family dwelling	Single detached house Duplex Infill single detached house Infill duplex



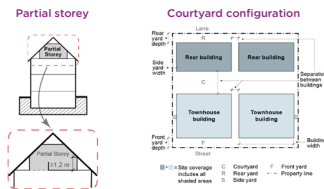
Clear rules and diagrams

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Proposed new terms

Proposed defined terms

- Courtyard configuration
- Rear building
- Principal building
- Building width
- Partial storey
- Ultimate property line
- Impermeable materials
- Permeable materials



Consolidated rules

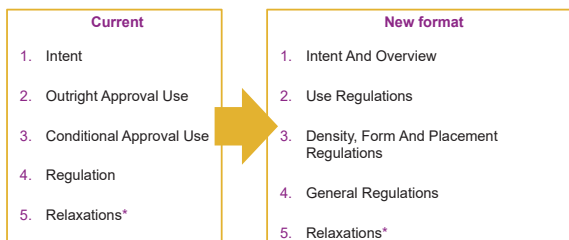
17

Presentation outline

1. Background and timeline
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Proposed district schedule format



*Included only when applicable in a district schedule

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Proposed district schedule format

- Designed for digital viewing and accessibility
- Interactive navigation to improve wayfinding
- Overview of land uses



Enhanced document navigation and accessibility

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Proposed new format

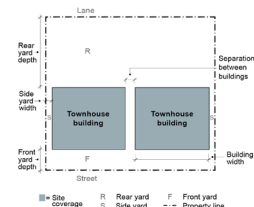
Minimum Size Area	Use	Density, Form and Placement Requirements
	Residence	1.0
400 sq	Mixed Use Residential Building	3.1
	Financial Building	3.2
	Seniors Supportive or Assisted Housing	3.3

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Proposed district schedule format

- Improved clarity of regulatory language
- Improved consistency of rules
- Removed outdated rules to reflect current practice
- Added explanatory diagrams

Proposed new format



Clear rules and diagrams

21

Proposed district schedule format

- Organized conditional and outright approval uses into 1 table

Proposed new format

Use	Approval	Use Specific Requirements
Agricultural Uses		
Urban Farm Centre 6	Conditional	
Cultural and Recreational Uses		
Club	Conditional	
Community Centre or Neighbourhood House	Conditional	
Library in combination with Community Centre	Conditional	
Park or Playground	Conditional	
Place	Conditional	
Dwelling Uses		
Duplex	Outright	
Duplex with Secondary Suite	Conditional	2.2.1
Duplex in combination with another principal building	Conditional	2.2.2
Duplex with Secondary Suite in combination with another principal building	Conditional	2.2.3
Fourplex	Conditional	2.2.4
HR Duplex in combination with the retention of a building existing on the site prior to January 1, 1980	Conditional	2.2.4
HR Single Detached House in combination with the retention of a building existing on the site prior to January 1, 1980	Conditional	2.2.4
Library House	Conditional	2.2.5
Mixed-Use Residential Building	Conditional	2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8
Multiple Concession Dwelling, containing 2 dwelling units	Outright	2.2.5
Multiple Concession Dwelling, not permitted as an outright approval use and existing prior to the conversion of a building existing as of September 18, 2018	Conditional	2.2.6



Consolidated rules

22

Proposed district schedule format

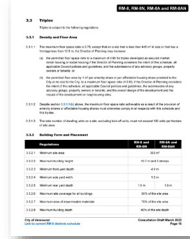
- Organized by density, form and placement regulations

Examples
RM, RR and C districts by land use
I and M districts by sub-area



Consolidated rules

Proposed new format

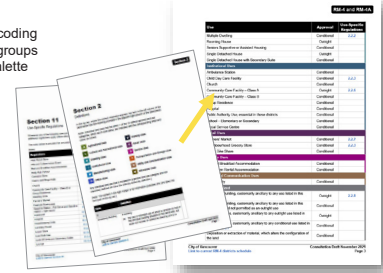


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Proposed district schedule format

- Developed consistent wording and document structure
- Developed consistent colour-coding and organization of land use groups in a new, accessible colour palette

Proposed new format



Document Standards

24

Presentation outline

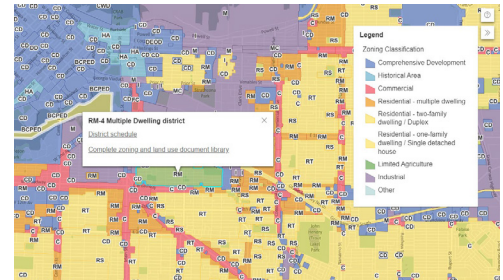
- Background and timeline
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- Digital Zoning Map**
- Next steps

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Digital Zoning Map

Digital Zoning Map

an easier way to visualize and access zoning information



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Presentation outline

- Background and timeline
- Proposed updates to administrative sections and general regulations
- Proposed district schedule format
- Digital Zoning Map
- Next steps**

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Share Your Comments!

Take the survey on
Shape Your City



Virtual Open House

April 22 - May 6



Online Information Session

April 27



Remote Office Hours

April 26 - May 5

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