



URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE – PACIFIC REGION

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December 18, 2018

Mayor Kennedy Stewart and Council
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Potential By-law Amendments to Remove Two-family Dwellings as a permitted use in RS Zones

On behalf of the 850 members of the Urban Development Institute – Pacific Region (UDI), we respectfully share our comments and recommendation regarding the motion and subsequent staff report on potentially removing two-family dwellings (duplex) as a permitted use in most RS zones.

As you are well aware, Vancouverites are suffering from our region's housing crisis and it's clear our long-established housing policies won't solve it. Our residents are seeking more housing options and that's why UDI supports the inclusion of duplexes in most RS zones, as a first step towards planning more housing options in traditionally single family home dominated neighbourhoods.

We recognize that permitting of duplexes in RS zones is not the silver bullet for solving our housing crisis. However, it is a positive first step, and if the RS zoning for duplexes were to be rescinded, we fear this step backwards would send a strong signal to the public that this Council is not interested in planning for more housing options in neighbourhoods, including more 'missing middle' housing.

Furthermore, there is substantial doubt for homeowners and home builders when reversals in zoning occur. As city staff state in the Administrative Report to Council, *"The proposed referral motion to amend the Zoning and Development By-law to remove duplex as an option in most RS zones has created significant uncertainty and concern for small-scale builders and their clients."* This is a challenging situation for home builders and property owners who have based their decisions on City policy and rely on a stable regulatory framework. Rescinding this zoning for duplexes, would create further uncertainty and discourage builders' progress towards delivering increased home choice.

Given Council's priority of undertaking an extensive city-wide plan in 2019, UDI recommends Council retain duplex zoning as an initial step towards planning for more diverse housing options in RS zones, and that any future duplex changes be considered within the context of Council's broader city-wide plan process.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments regarding the inclusion of duplexes within RS zones. We look forward to working in partnership with Council, staff and the community during the city-wide plan to improve affordable housing options for all Vancouverites.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne McMullin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anne McMullin
President & CEO