



URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE – PACIFIC REGION

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Gerald Minchuk
Director of Development Services & Economic Development
City of Langley
Langley City Hall
20399 Douglas Crescent
Langley, BC V3A 4B3

Dear Mr. Minchuk:

Re: Draft Zoning Bylaw No. 3000

I would like to thank you and your staff for providing the development industry with the opportunity to comment on the update to your *Zoning Bylaw*. The Urban Development Institute (UDI) appreciates the efforts that the City has taken to answer questions and obtain feedback from developers and builders through the two Open Houses last week. UDI has reviewed the draft *Zoning Bylaw* and is supportive of the changes. Below are our comments regarding some of the specific provisions in the draft.

Increased Floor Area for Multi-family Housing: We are pleased that as part of the proposed update to the *Zoning Bylaw*, the City is considering increasing floor area for multi-family housing. Given the lack of overall housing supply in the region, municipalities need to find ways to allow for the growth that is coming to Langley and Metro Vancouver; growth that will add to the vibrancy of the City and assist local retailers.

Increased Heights for Multi-family Housing: For the same reasons, noted above, UDI is very supportive of the proposed increases in heights in the RM-3 Zones from four to six stories. We are pleased that the *Zoning Bylaw* will allow for the increases in height for wood-frame construction that are in the *B.C. Building Code*. The industry is well versed in this type of construction, as several developers have built this product type. We are also pleased that the City is increasing the heights in the RM-1 zone from two to three stories.

Subdivided Rowhomes: UDI is pleased that the City of Langley is clarifying the acceptance of non-strata rowhomes. We and other stakeholders worked with the Province to establish a regulatory framework, so this type of housing can be more readily available to homebuyers. It is a type of housing that is common in other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world, and is ideal for consumers who cannot afford (or desire) a single-family detached home, but want to avoid living in a strata arrangement.

Floor Area Calculations: Over the next 15 years, the Province will be implementing near-zero energy policies for new building construction that will rely on more substantial envelopes with increased insulation and thicker walls. The City of Langley may also choose to move quickly to these standards through the *Energy Step Code (ESC)*. UDI recommends that the City consider adjusting its floor area calculations as these envelope standards increase to ensure that the effective floor space in buildings is not lost.

Riparian Setbacks: UDI is supportive of the City's approach to allow developers to hire Qualified Environmental Professionals to modify streamside setbacks while ensuring that riparian areas are protected as outlined in the *Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR)*. However, there is a potential issue with the Class B and C waterbodies. These are generally ditches that should be directly connected to waterbodies, as required by the *RAR*, opposed to connected through miles of culverts. UDI has an Environmental Committee that has worked with the Federal and Provincial governments as well as with local governments regarding the *RAR*. We would be pleased to discuss this issue further with you and your staff.

Residential Amenity Spaces: The City is proposing more flexibility in how developers can provide required amenity spaces within multi-family buildings by allowing the spaces to be inside or outside buildings. We agree with these changes because of the limited space available within building sites to provide these spaces.

Adaptable Housing: The requirements proposed in the new *Zoning Bylaw* are reasonable. We are pleased that they are limited to apartment buildings, which are the most suitable housing types for seniors and those facing mobility challenges.

Electrical Vehicle Charging: The proposed requirements are reasonable.

Commercial/Industrial Allowed Uses: We recommend that the City discuss the proposed uses allowed in these categories with brokers to ensure that there is market acceptance of where the proposed uses will be located. Brokers could assist the City with regard to the parking requirements in the *Zoning Bylaw* as well.

Parking Requirements for Employees: A couple of the parking requirements (Tourist Accommodation for vehicles and bike parking in Industrial Zones) are linked to the number of employees. It will be difficult for our members to determine what the number of employees will be immediately after occupancy; and the number of employees will change over time. We recommend that a different standard be used.

Tree Canopy for Parking Areas: UDI is not opposed to the tree canopy requirements in the *Bylaw* – especially since the City will be providing information to proponents on how to implement them efficiently. We do, however, suggest that the City also consider allowing some flexibility to reduce the number of parking spots that are required as the proposed tree canopies will reduce the number of parking spots by nearly 10%.

UDI would like to thank you and your staff again for involving the industry in the development of the new *Zoning Bylaw* – especially this early in the consultation process. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to working with you on this and other initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

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

Anne McMullin
President and CEO