

City of St. John's Development Regulations, 2021

Amendment Number 57, 2025

Residential Uses and Subsidiary Dwelling Unit Text Amendment

August 2025



URBAN AND RURAL PLANNING ACT, 2000

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT

City of St. John's Development Regulations, 2021

Amendment Number 57, 2025

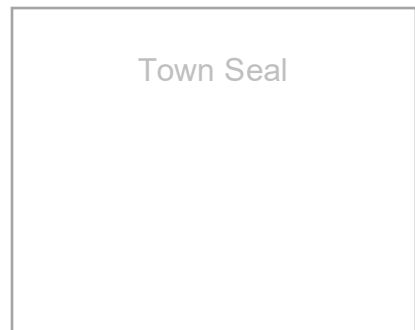
Under the authority of section 16 of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*, the City Council of St. John's adopts the City of St. John's Development Regulations Amendment Number 57, 2025.

Adopted by the City Council of St. John's on the 12th day of August, 2025.

Signed and sealed this ____ day of _____.

Mayor: _____

Clerk: _____



Canadian Institute of Planners Certification

I certify that the attached City of St. John's Development Regulations Amendment Number 57, 2025 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*.

MCIP/FCIP: _____



Development Regulations/Amendment	
REGISTERED	
Number	_____
Date	_____
Signature	_____

CITY OF ST. JOHN'S

Development Regulations Amendment Number 57, 2025

BACKGROUND

On March 14, 2024, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced that the City had been allocated over \$10.4 million in federal funding through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to increase housing supply throughout the City. Since then, the City has amended the City of St. John's Development Regulations, 2021 to allow for increased density and introduce new housing types across various zones. That amendment was approved by Council on June 25, 2024.

The City remains committed to its goal to allow increased density where appropriate and remove barriers to housing. In line with this goal, staff have completed a review of residential uses across various zones. This review included identifying zones where discretionary residential uses could fit better as permitted uses, determining where new residential uses can be added, and reevaluating the requirements for Subsidiary Dwelling Unit to allow more flexibility in unit sizes.

The proposed amendments align with the City's efforts in cooperation with CMHC under the Housing Accelerator Fund to stimulate housing growth throughout the City.

ANALYSIS

This amendment proposes the following changes:

- Adding Semi-Detached Dwelling as a permitted use in the Residential 1 (R1) Zone. This will introduce a new housing type in the R1 Zone to support a moderate increase in density. This change aligns with the density already enabled in the R1 Zone in other housing forms, such as up to two Subsidiary Dwelling Units within a Single Detached Dwelling and one Backyard Suite.
- Adding "Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher" as a Permitted Use in the Residential Mixed (RM) Zone.
- Adding "Dwelling Unit – 1st storey" as a Discretionary Use in the Residential Mixed (RM) Zone.
- Changing "Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher" from a Discretionary Use to a Permitted Use in the Commercial Regional (CR) Zone. As permitted uses do not require public advertising, this change would remove an additional step in the review and processing of applications and is intended to speed up the development approval process for residential proposals. The change is not intended to circumvent the public consultation process but rather focus public consultation where it is most needed.
- Correcting the wording from "Dwelling Unit – 2nd Floor" to "Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher" in the Commercial Local (CL) and Commercial Local Downtown (CLD) Zones. This change is to correct a typo.

- Changing “Accessory Dwelling Unit” from a Permitted Use to a Discretionary Use in the Industrial General (IG) Zone. Currently, a proposal for an Accessory Dwelling Unit would not require public review or a decision of Council, so the proposed change will still enable the use in the IG Zone, but proposals will now require public review and will be at Council’s discretion.
- Adding “Lodging House associated with Forestry or Agricultural Use on the Lot that has been in continuous operation for a minimum of 3 years” and “Accessory Dwelling Unit” as Discretionary Uses in the Agriculture (AG) Zone. This change is to enable alternative forms of on-site accommodation for essential workers on farms and similar agricultural or forestry operations.
- Changing Section 6.36 (1) respecting Subsidiary Dwelling Units. Currently, a maximum of two Subsidiary Dwelling Units are permitted within a Single Detached Dwelling. The proposed change is to remove the requirement for the Gross Floor Area of both units combined to be less than the main unit. This change is intended to support the creation of additional housing units by allowing more flexibility in unit size, provided each Subsidiary Dwelling Unit is smaller than and subordinate to the main Dwelling Unit.

The Municipal Plan enables a wide range of housing types and forms, supports mixed-use development that provides access to a variety housing options and amenities in the same neighbourhood, encourages higher density around key transportation corridors, and promotes infill development that uses existing infrastructure and services. The proposed amendments align with several policies of the Municipal Plan, including the following housing policies outlined in Section 4.1:

2. Enable a range of housing to create diverse neighbourhoods that include a mix of housing forms and tenures, including single, semi-detached, townhousing, medium and higher density and mixed-use residential developments.
3. Promote a broad range of housing choice for all ages, income groups, and family types by supporting the development of housing that is appropriate, accessible and affordable for low-income and moderate-income households.

Residential use on the second storey or higher throughout commercial and mixed-use zones aligns with Municipal Plan Policy 8.5.1 which enables a wide range of uses including retail, restaurants, entertainment and assembly, hotel, office, service shop, clinics, residential, day care centres, schools, place of worship, parking, and light industrial uses, as permitted and discretionary uses within the Commercial Land Use District.

The proposed change to the Agricultural zone aligns with Municipal Plan Policy 8.12.4 which permits residential uses where the use is approved by the Land Development Advisory Authority, or the use is accessory to an established agricultural operation.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The proposed amendment was advertised on four occasions in the Telegram Newspaper on July 11, July 18, July 25, and August 1, 2025. A notice of the amendment was posted on the City's website, on digital screens in the City's community centres, and on the Planning Engage Page. Submissions received are included in the August 12, 2025, Regular Council Meeting agenda package.

The City received one written submission and several responses on the Engage Page. Generally, feedback on the proposed amendment was mixed. The proposed change to add Semi-Detached Dwellings in the R1 Zone generated the most feedback. Some were supportive of the proposed changes and expressed the need for more housing in various forms, while others expressed concerns about the addition of Semi-Detached Dwellings in the R1 Zone and how that may impact older R1 Zone neighbourhoods.

During the consultation process, staff became aware of another zone where additional residential uses can be added. The Residential Mixed (RM) Zone allows a mix of residential and some commercial uses but does not currently allow Dwelling Units on the 2nd storey or higher or Dwelling Units on the 1st storey. The RM Zone would benefit from these additional residential uses as this will enable more mixed-use style developments in the Zone. As a result, the proposed amendment has been updated to include two additional changes: adding Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher as a Permitted Use in the RM Zone and adding Dwelling Unit – 1st storey as a Discretionary Use in the RM Zone.

ST. JOHN'S URBAN REGION REGIONAL PLAN

The proposed amendment is in line with the St. John's Urban Region Regional Plan and an amendment to the Regional Plan is not required.

CITY OF ST. JOHN'S DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2021 AMENDMENT NUMBER 57, 2025

The City of St. John's Development Regulations, 2021 is amended by:

- 1) Adding "**Semi-Detached Dwelling**" as a Permitted Use to the Residential 1 (R1) Zone.
- 2) Adding the following zone standards for Semi-Detached Dwelling to the Residential 1 (R1) Zone Section (4):

“(4) ZONE STANDARDS FOR SEMI-DETACHED DWELLING

(a) Lot Area (minimum)	360 metres square
(b) Lot Frontage (minimum)	12 metres
(c) Building Line (minimum)	6 metres
(d) Building Height (maximum)	10 metres
(e) Side Yards (minimum)	One of 1.2 metres, except on a

**Corner Lot where the Side Yard
abutting the Street shall be 6 metres
6 metres.”**

(f) Rear Yard (minimum)

and renumbering the remaining sections.

- 3) Adding **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher”** as a Permitted Use in the Residential Mixed (RM) Zone.
- 4) Adding **“Dwelling Unit – 1st storey”** as a Discretionary Use in the Residential Mixed (RM) Zone.
- 5) Repealing **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd floor”** as a Permitted Use in the Commercial Local (CL) Zone and adding **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher”** as a Permitted Use in the Commercial Local (CL) Zone.
- 6) Repealing **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd floor”** as a Permitted Use in the Commercial Local – Downtown (CLD) Zone and adding **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher”** as a Permitted Use in the Commercial Local - Downtown (CLD) Zone.
- 7) Repealing **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher”** as a Discretionary Use in the Commercial Regional (CR) Zone and adding **“Dwelling Unit – 2nd storey or higher”** as a Permitted Use in the Commercial Regional (CR) Zone.
- 8) Repealing **“Accessory Dwelling Unit”** as a Permitted Use in the Industrial General (IG) Zone and adding **“Accessory Dwelling Unit”** as a Discretionary Use in the Industrial General (IG) Zone.
- 9) Adding **“Lodging House associated with Forestry or Agricultural Use on the Lot that has been in continuous operation for a minimum of 3 years”** as a Discretionary Use in the Agriculture (AG) Zone.
- 10) Adding **“Accessory Dwelling Unit”** as a Discretionary Use in the Agriculture (AG) Zone.
- 11) Repealing Section 6.36 (1) related to Subsidiary Dwelling Units which states:

“6.36 SUBSIDIARY DWELLING UNIT

(1) Single Detached Dwelling shall have a maximum of two (2) Subsidiary Dwelling Units with the total Gross Floor Area of such units being subordinate to the main Dwelling Unit.”

and substituting the following:

“6.36 SUBSIDIARY DWELLING UNIT

(1) Single Detached Dwelling shall have a maximum of two (2) Subsidiary Dwelling Units with the Gross Floor Area of each subsidiary unit being subordinate to the main Dwelling Unit.”