

Definitions and Terms

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR): A provincially designated area where farming is encouraged and protected. Land in the ALR is subject to special rules that limit non-farm uses to preserve agricultural potential.

Bill 44: Provincial legislation that requires municipalities to pre-zone enough land to meet their 20-year housing needs, with updated zoning bylaws in place by December 31, 2025, and further updates every five years.

Density Bonusing: A planning tool that allows developers to build more units or a larger building than normally permitted by zoning, in exchange for providing community benefits, such as affordable housing, parks, public art, or other amenities.

Development Permit Area Guidelines: Specific design and environmental requirements for certain areas, intended to guide how development looks and functions. These guidelines may address building design, landscaping, environmental protection, or hazard mitigation.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): A measurement of building size in relation to lot size. For example, an FAR of 1.0 means the total floor area of all buildings on the lot can equal the total lot area.

Houseplex: A multi-unit residential building, typically containing three to six homes, designed to look and feel like a large house. Houseplexes provide more housing choices in established neighborhoods while maintaining a scale and character that fits with surrounding single-family homes.

Land Use Designation: A category in the OCP that describes the general intended use of an area, such as residential, commercial, industrial, or parkland. It sets the overall direction for future zoning and development.

Legal Non-Conforming Use: A use of land or buildings that was legally established under previous zoning rules but does not meet current zoning requirements. These uses can usually continue, but may be restricted from expanding

Lot Coverage: The percentage of a lot that can be covered by buildings or structures. The rest of the lot must remain as open space, landscaping, or other unbuilt areas.

Mixed-Use: A type of development that combines different uses—such as residential, commercial, and office space—in one building or site to create more vibrant, walkable communities.

Official Community Plan (OCP): A long-term plan that outlines the community's vision for future growth and development. It guides decisions on land use, housing, transportation, parks, and other community priorities.

Setbacks: The required minimum distance between a building and the property lines. Setbacks help provide space for light, air, privacy, and safety.

Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing: Small-scale multi-unit housing refers to housing with multiple homes on a single lot, designed to fit into existing neighbourhoods. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and cottage clusters.

Zoning Bylaw: A zoning bylaw is a set of rules that decide how land can be used — such as where homes, shops, or businesses can be built — and what buildings can look like, including their height and size.