

## Attachment 2

### *Incentives Program Framework*

## **ATTACHMENT 2: INCENTIVES PROGRAM FRAMEWORK AND DESCRIPTIONS**

Incentives identified through a Discussion Paper (March, 2018) and community consultation (April, 2018).

### *Summary of Proposed Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area Implementation Framework*

<b>Categories of Incentives</b>	<b>Short Term Implementation</b>	<b>Medium Term Implementation</b>	<b>Long Term Implementation</b>
1. Increase in Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase principal dwelling FSR</li><li>• More achievable laneway house density</li></ul>	-	-
2. Relaxation of Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relax laneway house guidelines</li><li>• Relax Building Code</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heritage Development Variance Permit Policy</li></ul>	-
3. Change of Tenure	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stratify Laneway House and Principal Dwelling</li><li>• Multiple Unit Conversion (Rental)</li></ul>	-
4. Process and Other Changes	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expedite related city permits.</li><li>• Add services for owners doing renovations</li><li>• Refine Evaluation Checklist</li><li>• Develop additional design guidelines</li></ul>	-
Citywide Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sewer separation relaxations</li></ul>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interpretive Sign Program</li><li>• Heritage Home Grant Program</li></ul>

## **Short Term Incentives (Implemented)**

### Increased Density in Principal Dwelling

In 2018, Council adopted the RS-4 zone, a new Zoning Bylaw district specifically for the Queen's Park neighbourhood. This zone is based on the area's previous RS-1 zone (the standard single-detached zone for the mainland of the city). Though includes provisions for additional density of up to 0.2 floor space ratio (FSR) for houses that are protected under the policy. Non-protected properties, and new houses, are not entitled to the additional density.

Intentionally, there were no changes made to the regulations for site coverage or setbacks: the goal was to protect greenspace and the space between houses. Additionally, it means that the footprint of the house would not be permitted to be expanded to accommodate the additional FSR. Rather, the density could be used for additions, where the existing house is small, or for basement or attic conversions where the house is large. This would allow property owners to choose what best suited their needs. If the changes prompted by the addition of the density were to impact the aspects of the house visible from the street, a Heritage Alteration Permit would be used to ensure the design was consistent with the heritage character of the house. Changes to the interior and rear of the house would not be regulated for design.

Another benefit of a separate zone is to identify properties in Queen's Park as having distinct regulations, as compared to other neighbourhoods in the city. This is important to signal to prospective purchasers or those looking to do work on a house.

### Building Code Alternate Compliance

Alternate compliance methods for certain elements of the BC Building Code became stronger for heritage properties in 2018, and are now fully integrated into the code. Currently, for properties across the city, owners can 'opt in' to these provisions, if it would be beneficial to renovation scope, by listing their property on the Heritage Register. Protected properties in the Queen's Park Conservation Area now automatically qualify for these alternate compliance options for their renovations.

### More Achievable Laneway and Carriage Houses

Site area (size and density) limits for laneway and carriage houses were changed through the RS-4 zoning, which was implemented in June 2018. The changes allow unused density from protected principal houses to be transferred to their laneway houses, in order to support those laneway houses in achieving the maximum size permissive in the program. This also supports continued use, and incentivizes retention, of small heritage houses. Additionally, as part of this incentive, design guidelines relaxations which were previously available only for energy efficient or accessible units may be applied to any protected property in the neighbourhood.

### Servicing Upgrade Relaxations

The Engineering Department has integrated language into their laneway house sewer servicing policy work that indicates sewer separation exemptions for the principal dwelling could be granted related to renovations for protected properties, subject to the approval of the Director of Engineering.

### **Medium Term Incentives (Implemented)**

#### Added Services for Owners

In July 2018, the Planning Division launched a no-fee pre-application service for Queen's Park property owners. This program allows an owner or project designer to meet with a heritage planning staff member "one-on-one" for an hour to review potential project designs, in advance of submitting a formal application. This program was advertised in the neighbourhood that summer, to align with the adoption of the first round of the incentives program and the RS-4 zone. Staff held roughly 75 meetings in the first summer. From September 2018-March 2020, there was continuous uptake of the program at the rate of about one applicant meeting per month. These meetings have been very successful in reducing costly and time intensive permit revisions and have ranged from rough concept renovation "dreams" to fully developed plan review, to workshopping new house design. Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic, the service was offered through online meetings and over the phone, though uptake was reduced by about half. As the community becomes more familiar with the regulations and design guidelines, it is expected the number of meetings may remain relatively low.

#### Expedited Permit Process

In March 2019, the City launched a combined permitting process for single-detached houses, which included the Queen's Park neighbourhood. The new centralized process is now one application for Zoning Bylaw review, Building Permit, Tree protection or removal Permit(s), and Heritage Alteration Permit. This new system has reduced the number of trips applicants make to City Hall, removed the need for owners to provide repeat documentation, reduced the overall timeline from submission to construction, resulted in fewer drawing or permit revisions, and has streamlined the review process overall.

In response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the permitting process for single-detached houses was relaunched as an online service. In order to achieve this, heritage and tree permits were decoupled from building permits. Though, documentation sharing of an applicants' submission package between the divisions was retained, the overall timeline for review has not increased, and heritage permits remain free of charge.

### Support of Development Variance Permits

Further work to streamline and update the Development Variance Permit (DVP) policy is anticipated to include provisions for non-conforming heights and setbacks on protected Queen's Park and other heritage properties, in order to allow more consistent and simpler renovations. The principles of the policy work were endorsed by Council in June 2018 (as part of the first round of incentives) and have already been integrated into regular practice: they have been considered as part of six DVP applications issued by Council since endorsement.

### **Long Term Incentives (Integrated into Future Work Planning)**

#### Grants and Neighbourhood Signage

There are two incentives Council endorsed for a long-term work plan: exploring a grant program to allow funding for restoration of heritage houses, and a Queen's Park and neighbourhood-wide interpretive signage strategy. Implementation of these two items would be led by the Museum and Heritage Services Division, of the Office of the CAO. This Division has integrated the actions into relevant work plans and timelines, as guided by Council's Strategic Plan.