

WHAT ZONING CHANGES MEAN FOR ANCASTER

As residents of Ancaster, it's important to look at the city's recent decisions connected to zoning changes and assess and understand their implications for the town. As indicated on my [platform](#), I completely support the preservation of the historic village of Ancaster, and I also support gentle densification. These two positions are compatible and complementary. Here's how:

1. Let's start with the city's zoning changes:

- On Thursday, August 12, city council voted to delay the inclusion of Ancaster's existing residential zones (ER zones) into city-wide zoning changes until after the results of Phase 2 of a Stormwater Management study have been submitted. [The study](#) is already underway and will be completed in the fall and will better inform city council as to the likelihood of flooding in Ancaster. As a result, the 1,841 homes that comprise Ancaster's [current ER zone](#) have currently not been included in the zoning changes approved on August 12. No decision will be made until the results of the Stormwater Management study are known. If flooding is determined to be a risk, staff will recommend against the new zoning changes for the ER zones of Ancaster.
- The 1,841 homes are Ancaster's [current](#) ER zone, not a new addition.
- The Ancaster Wilson Street Secondary plan area is expressly excluded from any zoning changes regardless of the recent city council decision, so Wilson Street will not be affected.
- The new city-wide zoning bylaw changes from which much of Ancaster - the ER zone - is currently excluded allow for the conversion of an existing home's interior configuration to a multi-family unit, but do not allow new construction. [HERE](#) is a link to a description and map of the ER zones in Ancaster.
- The changes mean that in the rest of the city, an existing house could be converted to a multi-family dwelling, a duplex, tri or fourplex only through the reconfiguration of the home's interior. Construction of new multi-family homes is prohibited; only existing homes may be converted and would be subject to the regular planning processes, requirements and considerations, including the size of the home.
- While the reconfiguration of the interior of a home does not create more roofs, driveways, or impermeable surfaces, and while there is no expectation of flooding due to increased stormwater, in the interest of caution and sound decision-making, the city is awaiting the results of the stormwater management study.

There are currently additional stop-gap measures already in place in Ancaster. Unlike most of Hamilton, building applications in Ancaster are subject to the city's site-plan control process and require a stormwater management plan. In respect to the issue of secondary dwelling units, they have been permitted across the city since 2021, including Ancaster.

Ancaster's current zoning forbids the construction of anything other than single-family homes in our residential areas. As a result, Wilson Street is a target for developers. Because it allows for higher density than our residential neighbourhoods, developers concentrate on this area, pushing for higher and denser construction.

2. Let's look at how this issue relates to traffic and road safety:

- My [platform](#) prioritizes addressing traffic and road safety, both of which connect to the failure to ensure responsible development. For example, as it relates to the Village core, there are currently two development proposals on Wilson Street which have now been referred to the Ontario Land Tribunal. If the tribunal approves the proposals, traffic, congestion, and 'short-cutting' through neighbourhoods will worsen. Development proposals such as these exacerbate traffic and compromise pedestrian safety. They strain existing infrastructure and contribute to the over-densification of the core. My firm commitment to the prevention of over-densification informed my decision to refuse campaign donations from professional developers.

3. What is “gentle densification”, and how does it contribute to the preservation of the Village?

- [The Ancaster Wilson Street Secondary Plan](#) must be adhered to as closely as possible so as to retain the character of the Village. Encouragingly, just this week, a planning application for 327 and 335 Wilson Street East has been approved that represents planning much more in keeping with that envisioned by the Wilson Street Secondary Plan: a mixed-use building with shops at ground level and two storeys of accommodation above, blending the new with the character of the existing architecture of the core, and creating an inviting and walkable, liveable streetscape. This is the sort of densification that I support on Wilson Street.
- Adding smaller units, such as duplexes and secondary dwelling units, distributed evenly throughout Ancaster’s many neighbourhoods, enables Ancaster to accommodate its share of the projected growth in population without the need to over-develop or intensify in any one location, such as within the Village.

Hamilton's population is expected to grow by 236,000 by 2051. This growth will be shared across the city and among the wards, with the largest concentration within denser neighbourhoods in the lower city and close to the LRT line. Ancaster is expected to accommodate a small portion of this population growth.

By the year 2051:

Meadowlands : 608 housing units, or 21 extra housing units per year.

The rest of Ancaster: 540 housing units, or 19 extra housing units per year.

The equitable distribution of these new residents across our neighbourhoods prevents the over-densification of any one area. The addition of residents to existing neighbourhoods will also have the benefit of increasing our tax base and averting the cost to taxpayers associated with the servicing of the infrastructure required in the new neighbourhoods that would be created by urban sprawl.

In combination, then, ensuring that development is responsible and implementing gentle densification will protect the architectural character of the Village, distribute across all the town’s neighbourhoods the limited impact associated with population growth, and moderate the possible traffic and property tax impacts associated with irresponsible development and urban sprawl.

CRAIG CASSAR
For **Ward 12** Councillor