

Public Hearing

Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call of Councillors**
- 3. Public Hearings Re:**
 - a) Proposed amendments to the Central Richmond, Isle Madame, and St. Peters Plan Area Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-Laws to update definitions related to dwelling types; to increase the number of multiple-unit dwellings permitted as-of-right, allowing the development of fourplexes and other small-scale multi-unit housing forms; and to remove, within the Central Richmond Land Use By-law, the requirement that accessory buildings be located no closer to the street than the main building.
 - i) Presentation from Staff - Verbal
 - ii) Receipt of Oral or Written Submissions
- 4. Adjournment**

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY AND LAND USE BY-LAW
AMENDMENTS FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND
APPLICABLE TO THE CENTRAL RICHMOND, ISLE MADAME, ST. PETERS PLAN
AREAS

These amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws for the Central Richmond, Isle Madame, and St. Peters Plan Areas align Richmond County's planning framework with contemporary housing needs identified through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Design Catalogue review. The amendments address existing definitions and increase the threshold for multiple-unit dwellings permitted as-of right, facilitating the development of fourplexes and other modest multi-unit housing forms.

Further the Central Richmond Land Use By-law is amended to remove the restriction on accessory buildings to be located closer to a street on which the main building fronts than the main building is to that street.

Appendix A: Amending Pages

BYLAW TO AMEND THE CENTRAL RICHMOND PLAN AREA LAND-USE BY-LAW

The Land-Use By-Law for the Central Richmond Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. Part 6, Section 3, of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough:

“Accessory uses, buildings and structures shall be permitted in any zone within the Central Richmond Plan Area. Such uses, buildings or structures shall:

...

~~c) not be built closer to a street on which the main building fronts than the main building is to that street;.”~~

2. Part 7, Section 2, Bullet Point 2 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 7, Section 2, Bullet Point 2:

“The following uses shall not be permitted uses except by Development Agreement in accordance with Policy A-5 of the Municipal Planning Strategy:

- Tourist Cabins
- Multiple Dwellings with ~~four~~ **five** or more units.”

3. Part 8, Section 2 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 8, Section 2:

“The following uses shall not be permitted uses except by development agreement in accordance with Policy A-5 of the Municipal Planning Strategy:

- Tourist Cabins
- Multiple Dwellings with ~~four~~ **five** or more units
- Campgrounds and Mobile Home Parks
- Medium-intensity industrial uses as listed on Appendix “D”.

4. Part 11 bullet point 22 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 11 bullet point 22:

“DWELLING, MULTIPLE UNIT means a dwelling which contains ~~3~~ **five** or more dwelling units.”

This is to certify that the by-law of which this is a true copy, was passed at a duly called meeting of the Council of the Municipality of the County of Richmond held on the _____ day of _____ 2025.

Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW TO AMEND THE CENTRAL RICHMOND PLAN AREA MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The Municipal Planning Strategy for the Central Richmond Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. Chapter 2 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2:
“Any form of Residential use is permitted in the Village Residential (VR-1) zone, however, certain restrictions apply: Multiple Dwellings in excess of ~~three~~ **four** dwelling units and Tourist Cabin developments may also be approved but must enter into a Development Agreement with the Municipality.”
2. Chapter 2 Subsection A Policy 1.3 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2 subsection A, Policy 1.3:
“[...] subject to the following additional provisions: Multiple Dwellings in excess of ~~three~~ **four** dwelling units and Tourist Cabin developments shall be permitted by way of Development Agreement in accordance with the Land Use By-law and Policy A-5 of this Municipal Planning Strategy.”
3. Chapter 2 Subsection A Policy 1.5 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2 subsection A, Policy 1.5:
“[...] subject to the following additional provisions: Multiple Dwellings in excess of ~~three~~ **four** dwelling units, Tourist Cabins, Campgrounds, Mobile Home Parks and all Medium-intensity Industrial uses shall be permitted by way of Development Agreement only, in accordance with the Land Use By-law and Policy A-5 of this Municipal Planning Strategy.”
4. Chapter 2, Subsection A Policy 1.7 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2 subsection A, Policy 1.7:
“It shall be the policy of Council to establish within the Village General designation, parking standards for multiple unit dwellings of ~~four~~ **five** or more dwelling units that are higher than the standard for dwellings with ~~three~~ **four** or fewer dwelling units. This will permit additional parking spaces for visitor parking or in the event that a tenant has more than one automobile.”



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Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW TO AMEND THE ISLE MADAME PLAN AREA LAND-USE BY-LAW

The Land-Use By-Law for the Isle Madame Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. Part 7, Section 1, Bullet Point 10 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 7, Section 1, Bullet Point 10:

~~“[...] Dwellings, townhouse or rowhouse~~ **Dwellings, multiple unit (both new and conversion) to a maximum of four (4) dwelling units”**

2. Part 7, Section 2 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 7, Section 2:

~~“The requirements in the following table shall apply to semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and rowhouses and multiple unit dwellings.”~~

3. Part 21, Bullet Point 36 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 21 Bullet Point 36:

~~“DWELLING, MULTIPLE UNIT means a dwelling which contains 3~~ **five (5)** or more dwelling units.”

4. Part 21, Bullet Point 39 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough:

~~DWELLING, TOWNHOUSE OR ROW HOUSE means a building that is divided vertically into three or more dwelling units, each of which has independent entrances to a front and rear yard immediately abutting the front and rear walls of each dwelling unit.~~

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Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW TO AMEND THE ISLE MADAME PLAN AREA MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The Municipal Planning Strategy for the Isle Madame Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. Policy L-2.1.1 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Policy L-2.1.1:

“[...] residential dwelling units including single detached units and single detached units with an apartment unit; semi detached units; duplexes; ~~townhouses;~~
~~rowhouses~~ **multiple unit dwellings** and; mobile homes;[..].”

2. Chapter 3, Subsection 2, Preamble of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2 subsection A, Policy 1.5:

“Multiple unit dwellings (dwellings with ~~three~~ **five** or more units) [...].”

3. Policy G-2.1 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Policy G-2.1:

“It shall be the policy of Council to limit the density of multiple unit dwellings **and** grouped dwellings ~~and rowhouse dwellings~~ anywhere these uses are permitted throughout the plan area.”

4. Policy G-2.2 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Policy G-2.2:

“It shall be the policy of Council to prohibit the development of multiple units **and** grouped dwellings ~~or rowhouse dwellings~~ unless they can be serviced by central sewer and water systems.”

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Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW TO AMEND THE ST. PETERS PLAN AREA LAND-USE BY-LAW

The Land-Use By-Law for the St. Peters Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. Part 7, Section 1, Bullet Point 6 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 7, Subsection 1, Bullet Point 6:

“[...] Dwellings, multiple unit (both new & conversion) to a maximum of ~~three (3)~~ **four (4)** dwelling units”

2. The header of the second table in Part 7, Section 2 of the Land Use By-law is hereby amended by removing the text shown in strikethrough and adding the text shown in bold:

“Multiple unit dwellings including up to ~~3~~ **4** dwelling units.”

3. Part 8 Section 1 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by adding the following text in bold to Part 8 subsection 1 after bullet point 9:

“**Multiple dwellings (both new and conversion) to a maximum of four (4) dwelling units.**”

4. Part 10, Section 1, Bullet Points 1 and 2 of the Land Use By-law are hereby amended by removing the text shown in strikethrough and adding the text shown in bold to Part 10, Section 1, Bullet Points 1 and 2:

a. Dwellings, converted which exceed ~~three~~ **four** units in total

b. Dwellings, multiple-unit which exceed ~~three~~ **four** units in total

5. Part 21, Bullet Point 28 of the Land-Use By-Law is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Part 21, Bullet Point 28:

“Dwelling multiple-unit means a dwelling which contains ~~3~~ **five** or more dwelling units”

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Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW TO AMEND THE ST. PETERS PLAN AREA MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The Municipal Planning Strategy for the St. Peters Plan Area is hereby amended by:

1. The Preamble under the “Residential” heading within the “Residential Development” section of Chapter 2, Land Use Patterns and Policies, of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the text shown in strikethrough and adding the text shown in bold:

[...] Included will be dwellings containing up to a maximum of ~~three~~**four** dwelling units, mini homes, home occupations, tourist or guest homes, public recreational uses such as playing fields and institutional uses such as schools, churches and cemeteries.

2. Chapter 2 Policy R-2 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2, Policy R-2:

“[...]residential dwellings to a maximum of ~~three~~**four** dwelling units including mini homes, bed and breakfasts, institutional, recreational and [..].”

3. Chapter 2, Policy R-8 of the Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended by removing the following text shown in strikethrough and adding the following text in bold to Chapter 2, Policy R-8:

“It shall be the policy of Council to establish in the Land Use By-law a “Residential Multiple Unit” (R-3) zone and to permit within this zone the following and similar types of uses: multiple-unit dwellings containing ~~four~~**five** or more dwelling units, town houses and public recreational facilities. Within the R 3 zone, parking standards for multiple unit dwellings of ~~four~~**five** or more dwelling units will be higher than the standard for dwellings with ~~three~~**four** dwelling units or less. This will allow additional parking spaces for visitor parking or cases where a tenant has more than one automobile.”



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Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the Municipality this _____ day of _____ 2025.

Troy MacCulloch,
Chief Administrative Officer

To: **Richmond Planning Advisory Committee
Richmond County Council**

From: **Planning Staff (EDPC)**

Date: **October 7, 2025**

Reference: **Review of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Design Catalogue and assess compatibility with the Richmond County Land Use By-law and Secondary Plan Area Land Use By-law**

Recommendation:

That the Planning Advisory Committee and Council receive this report for information purposes only. The purpose of this best practice review is to review the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Design Catalogue and assess compatibility with the Richmond County Land Use By-law and Secondary Plan Area Land Use By-law. No recommendation is required currently.

Background:

Across Canada, there is a growing need for affordable housing, and Richmond County is no exception. The County has seen increased demand for housing in recent years, while new supply has grown only modestly. This imbalance has contributed to higher-than-expected housing prices and limited options for residents. In response to the national housing challenge, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has developed a Housing Design Catalogue that provides standardized designs for a range of multi-unit and “missing middle” housing types.

The catalogue includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes, rowhouses, and accessory dwelling units. For the Maritime region (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador), the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has specifically released designs for fourplexes, sixplexes, stacked townhouses, and accessory dwelling units. These housing forms are intended to provide gentle infill, broaden housing choice, and introduce incremental density increases while maintaining neighbourhood character.

This report examines the barriers within the Land Use By-laws for Central Richmond, Isle Madame, and St. Peters, as well as broader servicing and regulatory constraints, that limit the ability to accommodate housing designs from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation catalogue. The analysis focuses on fourplexes, sixplexes, and stacked townhouses, while accessory dwelling units are noted here for context but are being addressed through a separate staff report.

Analysis:

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's federal crown corporation responsible for administering the National Housing Act, with the mandate to improve housing and living conditions across the country. Originally established after World War II to assist returning war veterans in securing housing, CMHC's role has since expanded to improving access to housing more broadly.

As part of Canada's Housing Plan, the new Housing Design Catalogue presents a collection of low-rise residential building designs, including rowhouses, fourplexes, sixplexes, and accessory dwelling units. Developed in collaboration with local architects and engineers across each region, the catalogue provides regionally tailored, and adaptable designs that aim to address a variety of housing needs throughout Canada.

The CMHC Housing Design Catalogue includes several standardized housing typologies intended to support affordable residential development. The fourplex category includes two design variations as well. A single design is offered for the sixplex, while the townhouse typology includes two options, each representing a stacked two-unit format. Further details related to building size, height, and design specifications can be found in Appendix A.

The table below summarizes where each of these building types are permitted within Richmond County. Permissions are identified as permitted as-of-right, permitted through site plan approval, permitted by development agreement, or not permitted. Stacked townhouses represent 6 units in the charts below.

Plan Richmond

Zone	Units Permitted as of Right	Fourplex	Sixplex	Stacked Townhouse
Main Street	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
General Centre	6	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Commercial Recreation	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Residential Centre	4	Permitted as of right	Site Plan Approval	Site Plan Approval
Hamlet Residential	4	Permitted as of right	Site Plan Approval	Site Plan Approval
Hamlet Core	6	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Rural General	4	Permitted as of right	No Permitted	Not Permitted

Rural Commercial	6	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
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Central Richmond Plan Area

In the table below, the Rural General and Rural residential Zone both permit any residential use, which is defined per the Central Richmond Land-Use Bylaw as” *The following may not constitute a complete list of uses, but they are examples of the type of use included in this category: Mobile and mini-homes, Single detached Duplex, Semi-detached, Multiple housing (three or more units) [..].*”

Zone	Units Permitted as of Right	Fourplex	Sixplex	Stacked Townhouse
Village Residential	3	Development Agreement	Development Agreement	Development Agreement
Village General	3	Development Agreement	Development Agreement	Development Agreement
Rural General	Any Residential Use	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Rural Residential	Any Residential Use	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right

Isle Madame Plan Area

In the Isle Madame Plan Area, the Village Low Density Residential, Village Agricultural and Rural Resource Zone specifically permit Townhouses/Rowhouses. The definition is: *“Dwelling, Townhouse or Row House means a building that is divided vertically into three or more dwelling units, each of which has independent entrances to a front and rear yard immediately abutting the front and rear walls of each dwelling unit”*. In the table below these zones permit 3 or more units but only for townhouses.

Zone	Units Permitted as of Right	Fourplex	Sixplex	Stacked Townhouse
Village Low Density Residential	3 or more	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Permitted as of right
Village Residential Multiple Units	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Village Mixed Use	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right

Village Commercial	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Village Light Industrial	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Village Agricultural	3 or more	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Permitted as of Right
Rural Resource	3 or more	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Permitted as of Right
Rural General	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of Right	Permitted as of Right
Rural Industrial	12	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Water Supply	3	Permitted by Development Agreement	Permitted by Development Agreement	Permitted by Development Agreement

St. Peters Plan Area

Zone	Units Permitted as of Right	Fourplex	Sixplex	Stacked Townhouse
Residential Village	3	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
Residential Rural	2	Not permitted	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
Residential Multiple Unit	3 or more	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right
Mixed Use	3 or more	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right	Permitted as of right

West Richmond

Residential dwellings will not be considered for West Richmond as it is a strictly industrial plan area that only permits existing residential dwellings.

Barriers

A number of barriers continue to limit the ability of Richmond County's planning framework to support diverse and affordable housing forms.

The Land Use By-laws for St. Peters and Isle Madame contain ambiguous provisions, such as broadly permitting "any residential building" or cross-referencing permitted uses from other zones. This lack of clarity makes it difficult for members of the public and municipal staff to determine what is permitted, increases the likelihood of misinterpretation, and adds unnecessary complexity to the approval process. Beyond this ambiguity, both plan areas share similar challenges when it comes to enabling "missing middle" housing. In St. Peters, the Residential

Village and Residential Rural Zones restrict development to a maximum of three units as-of-right, while in Isle Madame the VR-1 Zone permits townhouses with no limit on the number of units but prohibits fourplexes and sixplexes. In both cases, the uneven policy prevents modest, small-scale multi-unit housing forms such as fourplexes, sixplexes, and stacked townhouses that provide gentle infill, broaden housing choice, and increase density without altering neighbourhood character. By restricting or excluding these missing-middle options, the planning framework forces a jump from low-density housing directly to larger projects, undermining the County's ability to support incremental, community-compatible growth.

In Central Richmond, both the Village Residential and Village General Zones also restrict development to three units as-of-right, with any additional units requiring a Development Agreement. While Development Agreements are effective tools for regulating complex or large-scale projects, they are overly burdensome when applied to modest density increases such as fourplexes or sixplexes. The process is costly, resource-heavy, and lengthy, which discourages smaller-scale projects that could otherwise contribute to meeting local housing needs.

Infrastructure capacity is another barrier. While much of Richmond County is serviced by municipal water and wastewater systems, coverage and capacity vary across communities, and multi-unit developments may strain existing infrastructure. In areas without municipal servicing, development depends on private systems that require approval from Nova Scotia Environment. While this review process can add time, cost, and uncertainty, it also ensures that new housing meets environmental and public health standards by requiring safe and sustainable water and wastewater solutions.

Conclusion

This report has identified barriers within the Land Use By-laws for Central Richmond, Isle Madame, and St. Peters, as well as servicing regulations, that limit the ability to accommodate the housing forms included in the CMHC Housing Design Catalogue. No recommendation is required at this time.

Appendix A. Summary Packages of CMHC Housing Designs



Unit Summary

Number of Units	4
Number of Storeys	3
Unit 1 (U1):	2 Bedrooms, 1 Bathroom
Unit 2 (U2):	1 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom, *
Unit 2 (U2a):	1 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom, **
Unit 3 (U3):	2 Bedrooms, 1 Bathroom
Unit 4 (U4):	3 Bedrooms, 1 Bathroom

Building Summary

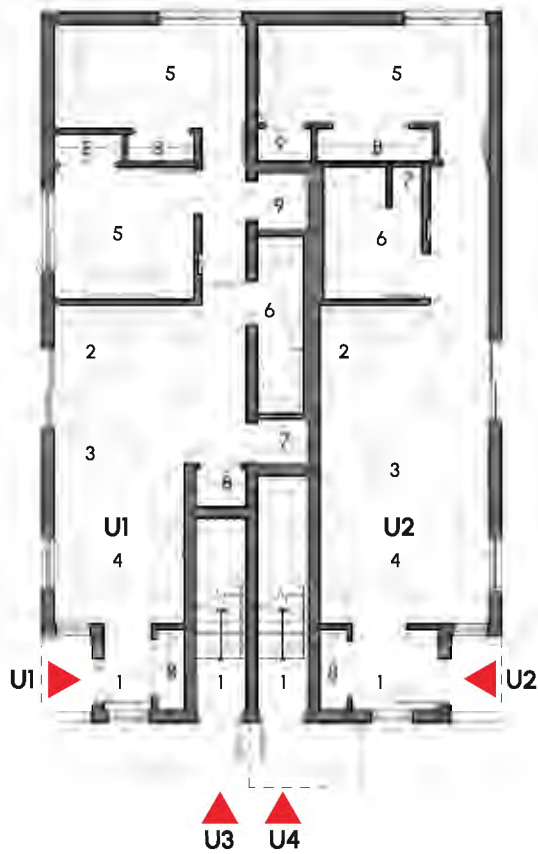
Building Footprint	154 sq. m [1,658 sq. ft]
Building Height (Roof Peak)	9.90 m [32 ft. 5 ¾ in.]
Building Height (Midpoint of slope Highest Roof)	7.89 m [25 ft. 10 ⅜ in.]
Building Width	10.12 m [33 ft. 2 ¼ in.]
Building Depth	15.65 m [51 ft. 4 in.]

***Accessible-Ready** designs can be converted to an accessible unit aligned with ASC-2.8: Accessible-Ready Housing.

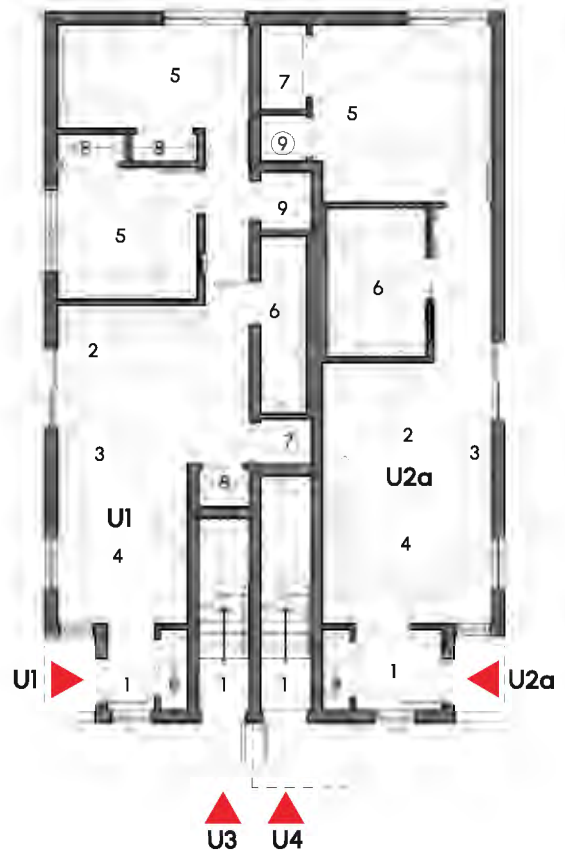
****Enhanced Accessible** architectural layouts follow key accessibility principles aligned with CSA/ASC B652:23 – Accessible Dwellings Standard.

Disclaimer

The designs depicted in this document are for illustrative and general information purposes only and should not be used to obtain a site plan approval or building permit, or for other construction purposes. These designs and this document may be updated by CMHC from time to time. In accessing these designs and this document, CMHC's Website Terms and Conditions shall apply.



Ground Floor



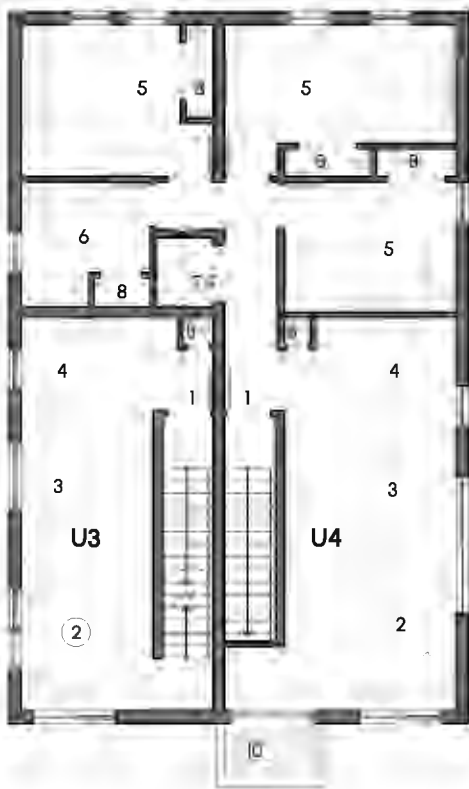
Ground Floor – Enhanced Accessible (U2a)

Legend:

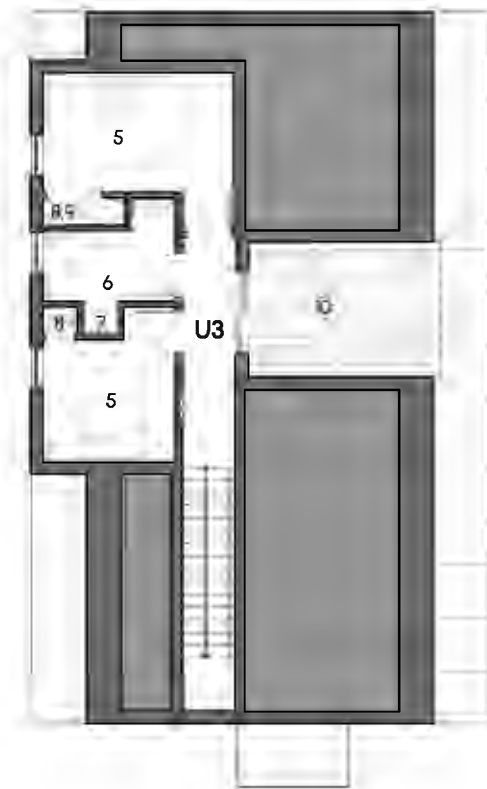
- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Entry | 4. Kitchen | 7. Laundry | 10. Terrace/Patio |
| 2. Living | 5. Bedroom | 8. Storage | 11. N/A |
| 3. Dining | 6. Washroom | 9. Mechanical | |

0 1 2 5m

0 3 6 16ft



Second Floor



Third Floor

Legend:

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Entry | 4. Kitchen | 7. Laundry | 10. Terrace/Patio |
| 2. Living | 5. Bedroom | 8. Storage | 11. N/A |
| 3. Dining | 6. Washroom | 9. Mechanical | |

