

# Frequently Asked Questions



## ■ **What is this bylaw about?**

This bylaw proposes to introduce a maximum size for houses (principal dwelling units) in certain zones where no limits currently exist.

## ■ **Why is the District proposing this change?**

Right now, some zones in the Highlands do not have any limit on house size. The proposed bylaw would:

- Help manage the size and scale of homes
- Reduce potential environmental impacts
- Bring the Highlands in line with common practice in other communities
- Support future regulations, such as for home-based businesses

## ■ **Will this impact the size of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) I can build on my property?**

This bylaw focuses on the maximum size of the principal dwelling (main house), not standalone accessory buildings. It is important to know:

- Accessory dwelling units, whether in the house or in an accessory building, are limited to 90m<sup>2</sup> (969 sq. ft.)
- Secondary suites inside the main house count toward the 700m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.) limit

## ■ **What if I want to build a home larger than 700m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.)?**

You can apply for a Development Variance Permit or apply to Rezone.

## ■ **Why is the limit set at 700 m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.)?**

The proposed limit:

- Reflects current building patterns in Highlands
- Helps account for properties where buildings have already been combined with the house
- Aims to minimize disruption while still introducing reasonable limits

## ■ **What are the benefits of introducing house size limits?**

Potential benefits include:

- More consistent development across the community
- Reduced environmental impacts from very large homes/buildings
- Better long-term planning for infrastructure and services
- Supporting a balanced and healthy community

## ■ **Which properties would this impact?**

The bylaw would apply to properties in zones that allow residential use and do not already have a house size limit.

## ■ **What is the proposed size limit?**

The bylaw proposes a maximum size of 700m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.) per house including garages and suites. This limit applies only in zones that currently have no maximum size.

## ■ **How are accessory buildings affected?**

They are not affected by this bylaw. In many of the affected zones, that means that the total combined floor area of all buildings and structures would be between 1,025m<sup>2</sup> (11,033 sq. ft) and 1,225m<sup>2</sup> (13,186 sq. ft).

## ■ **Will this affect existing homes?**

Most existing homes are expected to be accommodated as the limit is set sufficiently high to minimize impacts on current properties. Existing homes larger than 700m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.) with an Occupancy Permit can continue as “non-conforming structures.” They would not be able to be made larger and, if damaged or destroyed by more than 75%, would have to meet the 700m<sup>2</sup> (7,535 sq. ft.) limit upon reconstruction.

## ■ **How does this relate to home-based businesses?**

Currently, there is no limit on how much of a home can be used for a business. Setting a house size limit is a first step toward:

## ■ **Will this affect property taxes?**

House size can influence assessed value and taxes. Generally, larger homes lead to higher taxes.

## ■ **Why add “principal” to “dwelling unit” for some zones?**

To provide clarity across all zones. It does not change any provisions in the zoning; it is a housekeeping amendment.

## **How can I provide feedback?**

Comments can be provided at the public hearing on **June 15, 2026 at 7pm at the Highlands Community Hall**, prior to bylaw adoption.