

Commercial Stakeholder Insight

Administration conducted surveys and interviews with four small business owners, three developers, six Business Improvement Area representatives and one arts organization to inquire about business space needs.

Stakeholder Criteria

Stakeholder	Criteria	Number Contacted	Number Responded
Small Business Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business type must be a permitted use in the RS Zone Business must be less than 300 m² 	10	4
Commercial Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience developing small-scale commercial retail units 	3	3
Business Improvement Area Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIAs that have a high concentration of small commercial businesses in proximity to residential development. 	6	6
Arts and Culture Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience supporting development of spaces for the arts 	1	1

A majority of respondents stated that 100 m² would be too small for some of the business types allowed under the (RS) Small Scale Residential, (RSF) Small Scale Flex Residential, and (RSM) Small-Medium Scale Transition Zones, and that 300 m² may be too large for a small-scale residential zone. The majority of respondents indicated that a maximum floor area of 200 m² would meet the needs of most small-scale businesses.

Interviews highlighted that some business types need more space than others. For example, the owner of an ice cream shop and the owner of a coffee shop both indicated that 100-120 m² of space is adequate for their needs. However, interviews with a small home builder’s office and a psychology office indicated that at least 170 - 230 m² of space is needed for their business. The reasons provided to explain why more space was needed were multiple private offices for counselling and large boardrooms. An arts and culture organization stated that 100 m² would be

Attachment 5

sufficient for one artist, but that more space would be needed to allow for a creative hub space with multiple artists and opportunities for public involvement.

Interviews also revealed that restaurants tend to need more space. A Business Improvement Area representative noted that one of the restaurants in their area compensates for a lack of indoor seating by providing outdoor seating. In the RS, RSF, and RSM Zones, outdoor seating is an option but is limited to a maximum area of 20 m² in the front or flanking side yard.

One of the small business owners interviewed operates a psychology office out of a converted single detached house. The building is approximately 230 m² and they stated that they use “every inch of the space.” The interviewee mentioned that not being able to use the whole house would make purchasing the home for a business a less desirable option. Further examples of small businesses that operate out of repurposed homes larger than 100 m² include The Little Brick in Riverdale and Red Leaf Wellness in Westmount (Attachment 3).