

# Subdivision of Residential Lots 50 Feet or Greater

## Recommendation:

That the June 29, 2011, Sustainable Development report 2011SCP013 be received for information.

## Report Summary

**This report provides information on the options and implications of decreasing the minimum residential site width for the Low Density Infill Zone (RF2), Low Density Development Zone (RF3), and Semi-detached Residential Zone (RF4) in order to allow for the subdivision of residential lots 50 feet wide or greater.**

## Previous Council/Committee Action

- At the June 6, 2011, Agenda Review Committee meeting, the June 29, 2011, Sustainable Development report 2011SCP013 was postponed to the June 29, 2011, Executive Committee meeting.
- At the February 9, 2011, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to the June 15, 2011, Executive Committee meeting with a review of the tools, options and implications of a possible amendment to allow for the subdivision of residential lots that are 50 feet (15 metres) or greater in RF2, RF3 and RF4 zones, and information on initial public consultations.

## Report

Within the Zoning Bylaw, the minimum site width for single detached homes in the RF2, RF3, and RF4 zones is 12 metres (39 feet). The minimum site width would need to be decreased to 7.62 metres (25 feet) to allow the subdivision of 50 foot lots for development of two single-detached homes.

Decreasing the minimum site width will provide additional development opportunities for sites with a width of 15.24 metres (50 feet) to 23.78 metres (78 feet). There are approximately 8,610 sites in the RF2, RF3, RF4 zones within the width range, most located in mature neighbourhoods (Attachment 1).

When the minimum site width is set to 7.62 metres (25 feet), with a site depth of 30 metres, a site coverage of 28% yields a development window of 675 square feet or greater in most small scale infill zones.

Potential amendments to allow narrow site single detached housing may:

- increase housing variety
- increase residential density
- renew neighbourhood housing stock

The following regulatory tools may be affected or require amendments in order to allow the subdivision of 50 foot lots:

- Edmonton Zoning Bylaw 12800.
- Residential Infill Guidelines.
- Mature Neighbourhood Overlay.

The Edmonton Zoning Bylaw's RF2, RF3, and RF4 Zones would require amendment to:

- Decrease minimum site width from 12 metres to 7.62 metres for single detached housing.
- Decrease minimum site area from 360 square metres to 228.6 square metres for single detached housing.
- Amend other regulations, such as site coverage, front yard setbacks or rear yard setbacks to establish suitable development envelopes.
- Decrease the minimum site area for semi-detached and duplex housing to be consistent with proposed amendments for single detached housing on narrow sites.

The Mature Neighbourhood Overlay may require amendments that would:

- Adjust front yard setback requirements, in order to increase amenity area.
- Adjust height maximums and basement height maximums so that narrow site single detached housing is a feasible development opportunity.

Implementation of Residential Infill Guidelines may require adjustments to allow 7.62 metre site widths for single detached housing, without considering the average site width on the block.

Site width averages in most mature neighbourhoods would result in a minimum site width between 9.75 – 14.3 metres, essentially negating any additional development opportunities intended by the potential amendments.

Initial consultation efforts revealed that stakeholders favoured lowering the minimum site width for single detached housing in the RF2, RF3, and RF4 zones. Stakeholders support altering some regulations within the zones to

improve the quality of narrow site single detached housing (Attachment 2).

### Policy

This report supports the following policies in The Way We Grow:

- Encourage 25 percent of city-wide housing unit growth to locate in the Downtown and mature neighbourhoods and around LRT stations and transit centres where infrastructure capacity supports redevelopment (3.1.1.2).
- Support redevelopment and residential infill that contributes to the liveability and adaptability of established neighbourhoods and which are sensitive to existing development (3.5.1.1).
- Promote the development of family oriented housing and walkability in established neighbourhoods to support existing school and institutional infrastructure (3.5.2.5).
- Provide a broad and varied housing choice, incorporating housing for various demographic and income groups in all neighbourhoods (4.4.1.1).

### Corporate Outcomes

The information contained in this report supports the Strategic Goal to Transform Edmonton's Urban Form as defined by the Way Ahead, City of Edmonton Strategic Plan 2009 – 2018.

### Public Consultation

Consultation efforts initiated by Administration were:

- A webpage describing the report and potential implications was added to the City's website. The Urban Development Institute, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Canadian Home Builders

Association were advised of the website by email. Three responses were received from the general public, expressing concerns about fire safety and increased density.

- April 11, 2011: One member of the Urban Development Institute and three members of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues met with Administration to discuss options and implications of decreasing the minimum lot size for small scale infill zones; and
- April 13, 2011: Two members of the Canadian Home Builders Association met with Administration to discuss options and implications of decreasing the minimum lot size for small scale infill zones.

Stakeholders support lowering the minimum site width for single detached housing in the RF2, RF3, and RF4 zones. Feedback from the April 11 and April 13, 2011, meetings is summarized in Attachment 2.

### **Attachments**

1. Number of RF2, RF3, RF4 sites with site width between 15 – 23 metres (49.5 – 78 feet) in Edmonton
2. Additional regulation amendment options from stakeholders to support narrow site single detached housing development

**Number of RF2, RF3, RF4 sites with site width between 15 – 23 metres (49.5 – 78 feet) in Edmonton**

Table 1:

Number of RF2, RF3, RF4 sites Inside Mature Neighbourhood Overlay	
Site Width	Total
15 - 23 m (49.5 - 78 ft)	6336

Table 2:

Number of RF2, RF3, RF4 sites Outside Mature Neighbourhood Overlay	
Site Width	Total
15 - 23 m (49.5 - 78 ft)	1518

Table 3:

Number of RF2, RF3, RF4 sites with particular site widths in Edmonton				
Site Width	Number of RF2 Lots	Number of RF3 Lots	Number of RF4 Lots	Total
15 - 15.2 m (49.5 - 50 ft)	814	2952	844	4610
15.3 - 18 m (50.1 - 60 ft)	98	737	1254	2089
18.1 - 23 m (60.1 - 78 ft)	127	500	1284	1911
Total	1039	4189	3382	8610

**Additional regulation amendment options from stakeholders to support narrow site single detached housing development**

Type of Regulation	Options provided by Stakeholders
Amenity Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain amenity space</li> <li>• Apply front yard maximums to optimize back yard amenity area</li> <li>• Include opportunity for creative amenity spaces, such as garage top patios or balconies</li> </ul>
Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease accessory building setback from laneways to increase amenity space</li> <li>• Maintain current side yards</li> <li>• Some concern regarding fire safety of small lot development (proximity)</li> </ul>
Corner Lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corner lots should be wider than 25 feet</li> <li>• Decrease side yard when roadway features such as treed boulevards are present</li> </ul>
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for garages, parking pads, or tandem parking alternatives</li> <li>• Consider how sites can incorporate parking for secondary suites on narrow lots</li> <li>• Increase accessory building coverage to accommodate double garages</li> </ul>
Site Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No consensus as to whether or not to increase site coverage for the principle building. Some participants felt it would be beneficial</li> <li>• Some participants expressed interest in adjusting basement heights or height maximums in the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay</li> <li>• Some concern regarding impacts of increased density</li> </ul>