

# INFILL ROADMAP 2018

*Welcoming More People and New Homes  
into Edmonton's Older Neighbourhoods*

Edmonton



# Acknowledgements

## INFILL ROADMAP 2018

June, 2018

We respectfully acknowledge that Edmonton is located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Dene, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

This project would not have been successful without the commitment of Edmontonians who gave their time to attend the many consultation sessions. Thank you for sharing your thoughts and aspirations about the future of your communities and for all of your contributions to the creation of the Infill Roadmap 2018.

## CONSULTING TEAM

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# FOREWORD

## HOW DO WE WELCOME MORE PEOPLE AND NEW HOMES INTO OUR COMMUNITIES?

Not surprisingly, we have asked this throughout the historical eras of Edmonton's growth, from pre-settlement times to today. As described in *Edmonton's Urban Neighbourhood Evolution*, this is marked in the early years by what historians call the Great Transformation. This was a time that saw massive immigration and change as settlers joined the Indigenous peoples on this land, leading up to the eventual signing of Treaty No. 6 in 1876. Since then we have all, as Treaty people, held the responsibility of ensuring that the opportunities for prosperity are shared and enjoyed by everyone. This is the spirit and intent signified by Treaty No. 6.

Today Edmonton continues to grow and change through Alberta's economic ups and downs, and we expect to continue welcoming more people and new homes into our communities and neighbourhoods. We may not refer to this era as a great transformation, but we are nonetheless undergoing a significant transition from a big small city to a metropolitan center with a need to accommodate a million people now, and hundreds of thousands more over the coming decades.

Among the most important challenges we face as a city is providing diverse housing options for our current and future residents so that they can find suitable homes for their needs in neighbourhoods that work for them. This requires keeping pace with changing demographics and resulting changes in housing preference and market demand. At the same time, we need to ensure that we have a balanced approach to city growth that respects our fiscal and ecological constraints. Residential infill will play an increasingly important role in how Edmonton manages growth while ensuring that we are meeting our commitments to future generations on energy transition and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Through the Evolving Infill project we have facilitated numerous conversations over the past 20 months

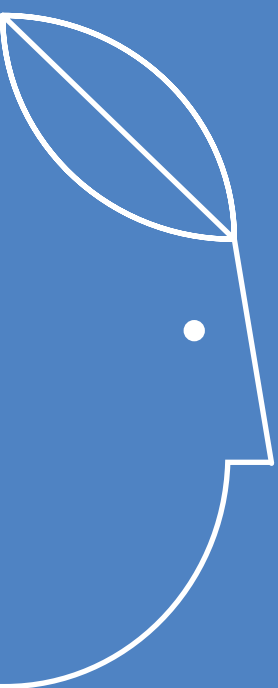
with developers and builders, community league members, housing providers, non-profit organizations, realtors, investors and lenders, children, seniors, multicultural groups, Indigenous organizations, and City staff. These conversations have ultimately been about how we can best welcome more people and new homes into our older neighbourhoods. I am proud to highlight the dedication we have seen from each and every participant during the course of the Evolving Infill project. It demonstrates the community spirit of Edmontonians to come together, roll up their sleeves, listen and learn from each other, and tackle tough problems. Because of these generous efforts, we are able to move forward with 25 actions that honour the process and help us make progress on our collective infill outcomes.

As you will see, a number of actions have been identified as "big moves" – actions that will have significant impacts on the urban shift that we are undergoing as a city. These "big moves" are foundational pieces that must happen if we are to enable more and better infill, which will in turn enable the housing and neighbourhood evolution that is needed in Edmonton. I expect that these foundational pieces will play a critical role as we begin to have conversations about the City Plan and Zoning Bylaw Renewal projects – both transformational projects that will guide Edmonton's growth and development.

As we continue to make space for new neighbours, we continue to ensure that everyone thrives. When each of us prospers, then Edmonton and the region will prosper. Looking forward, based on the commitment and passion that I have seen with infill, I continue to feel confident in the evolution of our great city. A special thanks is owed to those who participated in Evolving Infill and the development of the Infill Roadmap 2018.

**Peter Ohm**

*Chief Planner, City of Edmonton*



# 1

# INTRODUCTION

# How can we welcome more people and new homes into our older neighbourhoods?

## WHAT IS THE INFILL ROADMAP?

The Infill Roadmap 2018 is the City of Edmonton's workplan to support more and better infill in our city. In contrast to the first Roadmap in 2014, the 2018 Roadmap has an intentional focus on medium and high scale infill and laneway housing. Throughout the project, the overarching objective has been to answer the question of how can we welcome more people and new homes in our older neighbourhoods?

This Roadmap contains 25 actions which set us on the path to answer that question. The City will start all of these actions within the next two years. Some actions are characterized as Big Moves which may take more than two years to complete, but will have significant impacts on the outcomes related to infill. Other actions might have a smaller impact but are intended to address specific issues that were identified during the creation of the Roadmap.

The actions were developed through in-depth engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders, including citizens, public institutions, businesses and community organizations. A detailed summary of the engagement results can be found in this project's *What We Heard* report, available online from the City of Edmonton's infill website: [www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill](http://www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill)

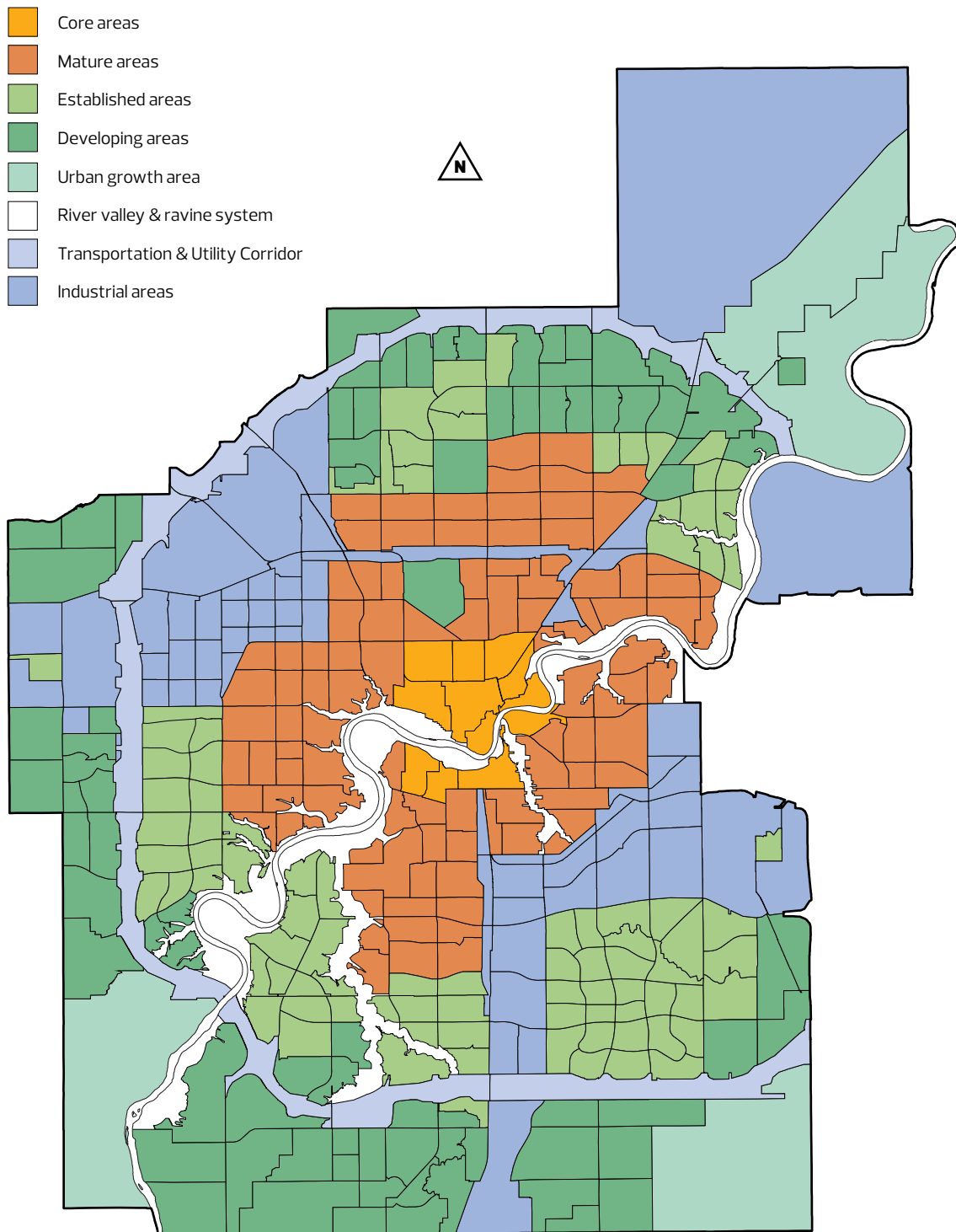
Three technical reports were prepared to complement the information gathered during the stakeholder and community consultation for Evolving Infill. These reports were:

- *Edmonton's Urban Neighbourhood Evolution*
- *Municipal Tools Review*
- *Market Housing and Affordability Study*

The technical reports provided a deeper level of understanding and knowledge on a specific set of infill topics which informed the development of the draft actions.

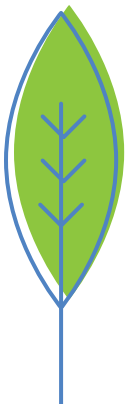
The 25 actions in this document will help to achieve the City of Edmonton's key strategic outcomes and contribute to a city that is more livable, resilient, and financially and environmentally sustainable





**FIGURE 1.** Edmonton's neighbourhood classification

*For the purpose of this document, Edmonton's "older neighbourhoods" include the neighbourhoods classified as Core, Mature and Established areas.*





# CURRENT SNAPSHOT OF INFILL IN EDMONTON

Infill continues to grow in popularity in Edmonton due in part to the work undertaken from the Infill Roadmap 2014, which resulted in a total of 53 infill actions. This has led to ongoing increases in the number of infill units being constructed year over year.

There is still work to be done to address issues related to infill including improving its affordability, construction timelines and lowering construction bylaw infractions. The following pages provide a high-level snapshot of some key indicators and how they've changed since the last Infill Roadmap.

## Ongoing Effects of the Economic Slowdown

Across the city, the number of new units being built and permitted has declined as a result of the ongoing economic slowdown in Alberta. This trend is visible below in the number of new housing units city-wide between 2007 and 2017.

This change is typical of economic slowdowns throughout Edmonton's history. Examples are explored in detail in the *Edmonton's Urban Neighbourhood Evolution* report.

### Net New Units in Edmonton 2007-2017

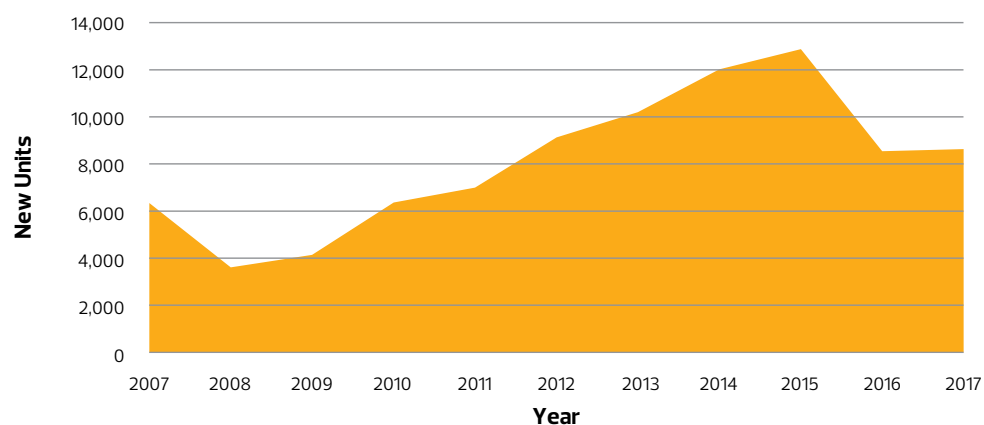
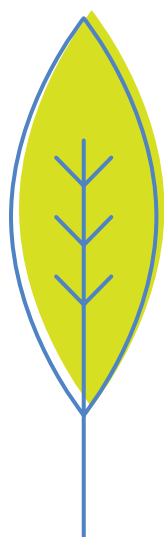


FIGURE 2. Net New Units in Edmonton





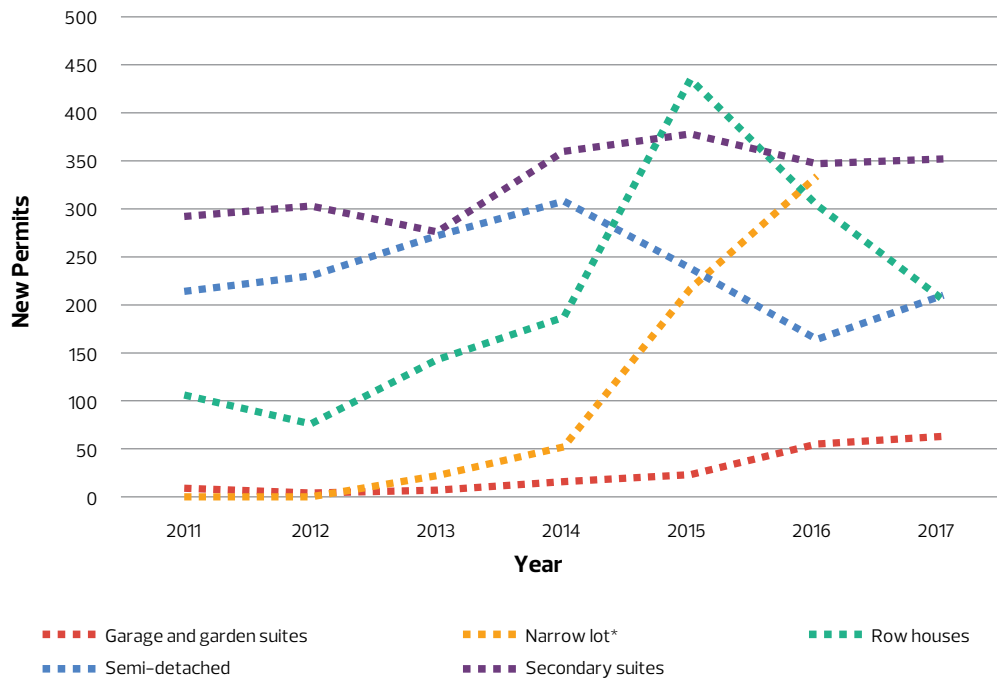


## Infill Development Trends

Despite the economic downturn, residential infill has continued to be developed across Edmonton's older neighbourhoods but with a decrease in the number of units constructed between 2015 and 2016. Narrow lot subdivisions and garage and garden suites have continued to see year over year increases despite the downturn.

### Building Permits in Core and Mature Areas

2011-2017



**FIGURE 3.** New Building Permits and Narrow Lot Subdivisions (2011-2017)

\*Data for Narrow Lot subdivisions for 2017 are not finalized.





# 2 INFILL ACTIONS

The following 25 actions will welcome more people and homes into Edmonton's older neighbourhoods. They address emerging needs, reduce the cost of infill development, create a diverse and inclusive mix of housing options, support laneway housing, align city investment with infill and provide clarity on the infill process.

Additional details for each action, including a brief description and connections to the project outcomes can be found on the following pages.

## Big Moves

Actions highlighted in blue are the actions that the City of Edmonton has identified as having the biggest impact when it comes to welcoming more homes and new people in Edmonton's older neighbourhoods. These actions address major issues that the Evolving Infill team heard during public engagement.

## In Progress Actions

The City of Edmonton's work to support and improve infill development has been an evolutionary process, with many changes having been made over the last four years. This Roadmap also acknowledges five projects underway at the time of writing which are already starting to address the issues and opportunities identified during the creation of this Roadmap.

## Project Outcomes

Six key project outcomes (displayed on the right) emerged based on the themes, ideas and comments received through the first phase of public engagement. These outcomes improve the quality of life of residents by contributing to a city that is more livable, resilient, and financially and environmentally sustainable. These outcomes serve as a foundation for the Roadmap and helped the Project Team in the development of the preferred actions.

## PROJECT OUTCOMES



**Infill development responds to context and addresses emerging needs.**



**The costs of doing infill development are reduced.**



**We have a diverse mix of housing options that support social and community inclusion in our neighbourhoods.**



**Laneway housing opportunities are expanded.**



**City infrastructure investment is aligned with infill development.**



**Everyone involved is clear about the development process and what to expect.**

# THE INFILL ROADMAP



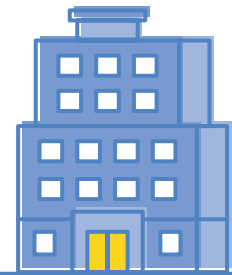
## KNOWLEDGE

**Action 1. Prioritize infill at key nodes and corridors**

**Action 2. Review infrastructure capacity**

Action 3. Investigate opportunities for tiny homes

Action 4. Re-examine collective housing regulations



## COLLABORATION

*Action 5. Partner to pilot innovative housing*

**Action 6. Improve housing affordability**

Action 7. Address land assembly and mixed use

Action 8. Pilot alley enhancements



## ADVOCACY

**Action 9. Better inform residents**

Action 10. Incentivize accessible laneway homes

**Action 11. Create optimal infill map**

Action 12. Reduce barriers to use of Low Impact Development

### LEGEND

**Bold actions** are Big Moves

*Italic actions* are In Progress





## PROCESS

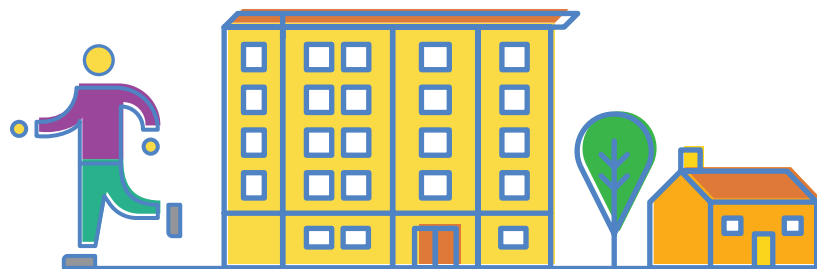
Action 13. Monitor and address construction issues

**Action 14. Improve permitting process timelines and consistency**

Action 15. Review, update or retire plans and policies

**Action 16. Develop infrastructure cost sharing system**

Action 17. Improve lot grading



## RULES

**Action 18. Improve medium scale zones**

Action 19. Simplify low scale zones

**Action 20. Reduce parking requirements**

Action 21. Increase opportunities for semi-detached housing

Action 22. Create opportunities for small apartment buildings

Action 23. Create opportunities for more suites on a property

**Action 24. Remove zoning barriers for medium scale**

Action 25. Integrate urban design into Zoning Bylaw





# KNOWLEDGE

## ACTION 1

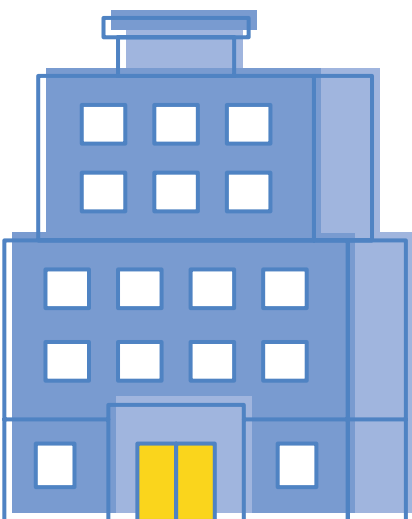
Build an approach to prioritize infill at key transit nodes and corridors.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

This action will result in the creation of appropriate data, criteria and evidence to help prioritize and make decisions about where and what kinds of investments the City should make. This information will also help the private development industry make decisions about where to invest.



## ACTION 2

Review infrastructure capacity in Edmonton's older neighbourhoods and identify the infrastructure investments needed to support infill.

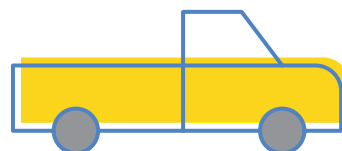
### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

The City currently reviews capacity when it receives a new application for medium or high scale development. This action seeks to proactively assess that capacity for larger areas of Edmonton's older neighbourhoods. This will help to provide a clear picture of where there is capacity available for services such as stormwater, sewer, water, and transportation. This action may lead to the review of existing levels of service for quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness, safety and cost. Infrastructure investments pertaining to the infrastructure capacity in Edmonton's older neighborhoods should take into consideration the preferred level of service that will be established.

In alignment with the Energy Transition Strategy, a later phase of this action could integrate work to reduce the demand on energy infrastructure through tactics like improving the efficiency of buildings, and on-site or localized power generation.





### ACTION 3

Investigate opportunities for tiny homes and find multiple ways to accommodate them.

#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

Currently, City of Edmonton policy and regulations do not provide any direction on how to handle development applications featuring tiny homes. This action will seek to understand how tiny homes can be incorporated into communities and the different ways that cities have managed this type of housing.

### ACTION 4

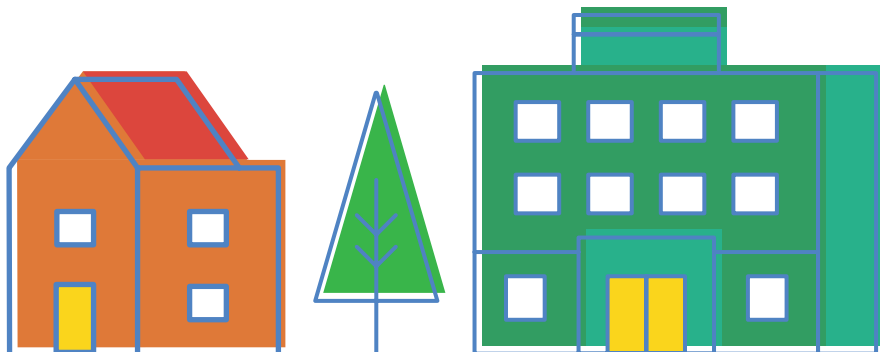
Re-examine the rationale for distinguishing and restricting collective housing options, and update regulations as needed.

#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

The current Zoning Bylaw contains a number of restrictions and special requirements for the development of collective housing options (such as group homes and lodging houses). The City intends to review the intent and impact of the existing restrictions and take informed action based on that review.





# COLLABORATION

## ACTION 5

Pursue partnerships to pilot innovative housing forms.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action is a continuation of a previous action from the Infill Roadmap 2014. The action highlights the City of Edmonton's ongoing commitment to cooperate with interested parties to pilot and test innovative housing ideas. For example, the Flag-Lot Pilot currently underway will help to test alternative forms of lot configuration and home ownership.

## ACTION 6

Develop tools to improve housing affordability in all neighbourhoods.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

Research different options and work to implement a suite of programs and tools that improve housing affordability in all neighbourhoods. This might include regulations such as affordable housing requirements, development incentives for affordable housing developments or additional aid to overcome barriers to development.







### ACTION 7

Investigate available tools to address the challenges of infill land assembly and financing mixed use developments.

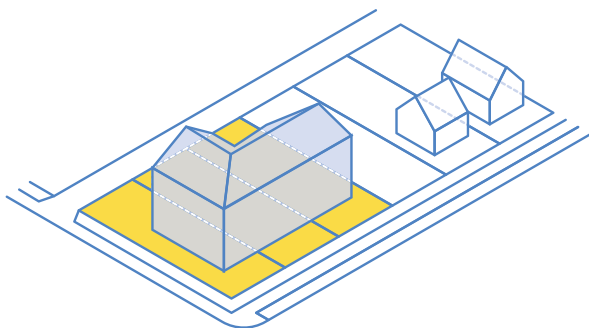
#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

Investigate options for supporting the development industry in addressing the challenges associated with land assembly and financing mixed-use developments.

The *Municipal Tools Review* report (discussed on page 31) explores potential tools that could be utilized, such as density bonusing, which may encourage the assembly of land to facilitate medium and high scale developments.



### ACTION 8

Pilot enhancements to alley to encourage laneway housing development.

#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES

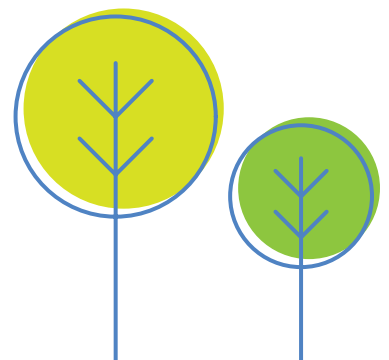
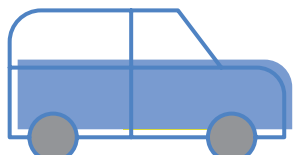
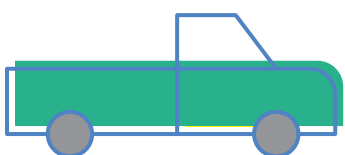


#### DESCRIPTION

This action will include investigating best practices for improving alley livability that incentivises laneway housing development.

This may include the addition of placemaking features, such as naming alleys, additional lighting and alternative surface treatments, to help improve alley livability.

In addition, this action will benefit from the data made available in action 11 to help identify where alley improvements may be best located to support the development of laneway housing.





# ADVOCACY

## ACTION 9

Better inform residents on how they can effectively participate in the planning process.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

Ensure that resources and education opportunities are available that provide clarity to community members and residents who want to be engaged and involved during the infill development process. For example, this may include accessible resources like videos and infographics for simple developments or more detailed publications and updates with specific details of the expected process for more complex developments.

## ACTION 10

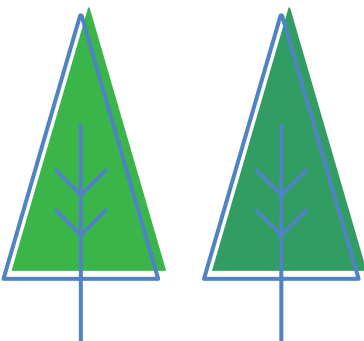
Incentivize the development of fully accessible and seniors friendly laneway homes.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

Investigate the most effective ways to increase the number of accessible laneway homes that are built. For example, this action could include the relaxation of certain zoning regulations in exchange for accessible design.





### ACTION 11

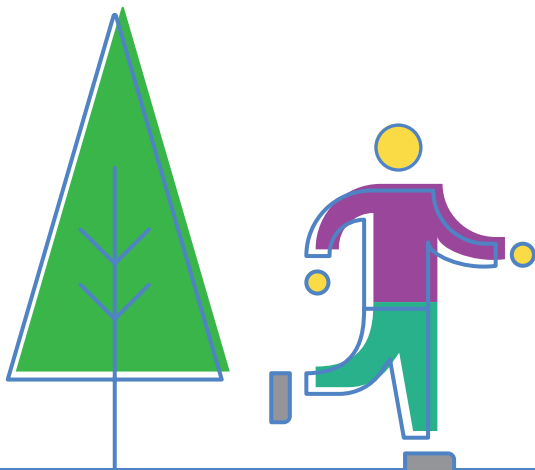
Create a publicly available map of optimal infill development locations for medium, high scale and mixed use developments based on best evidence and neighbourhood level indicators.

#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

Create a publicly available online dashboard and map that compiles development activity trends, available infrastructure capacity (following completion of action 2), neighbourhood indicators and other evidence to identify the areas in Edmonton that are best suited for medium scale, high scale and mixed-use infill development.



### ACTION 12

Reduce barriers to the use of Low Impact Development (LID) practices for low and medium scale infill.

#### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action highlights the City's efforts to make better use of stormwater, to protect our rivers, and to reduce the impact of sudden weather events on our older neighbourhoods. The existing Low Impact Development Best Management Practices Design Guide is an abundant resource providing site developers with options to improve their on-site water management. This action will research what barriers exist and explore scaleable LID practices. Considerations would be made for both site developers and individual homeowners wanting to participate in creating more environmentally sustainable solutions for stormwater runoff. It could also include changes to Zoning Bylaw regulations such as soil depth, landscaping requirements for permeable surfaces and lot grading solutions such as common swales.



# PROCESS

## ACTION 13

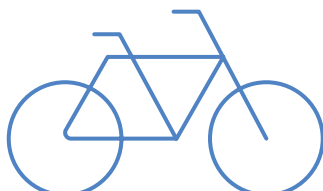
Monitor and make the necessary improvements to regulate how the City addresses emerging issues related to infill construction.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action highlights the City's ongoing commitment to monitor issues related to infill development such as changing construction practices or declining tree canopies. For example, this may include making necessary regulatory changes and creating new educational approaches to help encourage good construction practices and mature tree protection. This action supports the expectation that, similar to the Infill Roadmap 2014, additional actions may need to be taken to address emerging construction-related issues. Ongoing efforts will be aligned with existing City goals and strategies, such as Breathe and the Energy Transition Strategy.



## ACTION 14

Improve the consistency and timelines for the infill development permitting process.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This work is being undertaken as part of the Urban Form Business Transformation Initiative and could include improvements to the circulation process, and automating certain development review components.

## ACTION 15

Develop a process to review and update or retire plans and policies that are not aligned with current policy and regulations.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action includes the development of a process to comprehensively review and update policies, guidelines, and statutory plans, including the Residential Infill Guidelines. Plans and policies which are not supportive of infill may be updated or retired. The policies and plans could be replaced with a modern and simplified infill policy framework.



### **ACTION 16**

Develop an equitable, transparent and predictable system to share the costs of infrastructure upgrades and renewal costs for infill projects.

#### **CONNECTED OUTCOMES**



#### **DESCRIPTION**

This action will establish a clear system that fairly distributes the costs of required infrastructure upgrades needed to support infill developments. The City will investigate the mechanisms available and, in conjunction with consultation with the development industry and utility providers, determine what options will be most effective.

### **ACTION 17**

Investigate new processes and mechanisms to improve lot grading in infill situations.

#### **CONNECTED OUTCOMES**



#### **DESCRIPTION**

This action will include a review of current regulations, research into best practices, and innovative drainage techniques and enforcement. Evaluation and implementation of any appropriate actions would follow.

This could include private drainage improvements, such as Low Impact Development strategies, allowing more intensive plantings as on-site stormwater management, or implementing block-level stormwater management practices.





# RULES

## ACTION 18

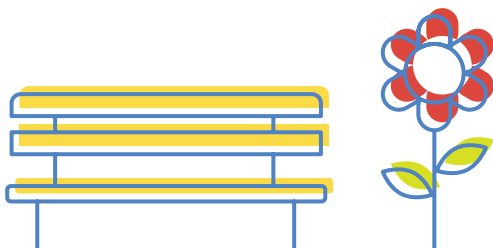
Undertake a review of Edmonton's middle density residential zones and associated overlays to identify what regulation changes are needed to reduce barriers preventing the development of "missing middle" housing.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action will include a review of best practices from across North America, with emphasis on communities where medium-scale built forms are more common. Specific barriers will be identified and removed if possible to enable more diverse medium scale building types.



## ACTION 19

Simplify the low scale residential zones for existing neighbourhoods.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

Overlap in zoning regulations has become more common as zones are updated over time. This action will remove the overlap and duplication among the multiple low scale zones.

## ACTION 20

Reduce barriers to infill caused by parking requirements as part of the Comprehensive Parking Review.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



#### DESCRIPTION

This action will contribute to the Comprehensive Parking Review that is currently underway by examining how parking requirements impact the cost of infill development. This work will consider a variety of ways to reduce the costs, such as tying parking requirements to a site's development context.



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### **ACTION 21**

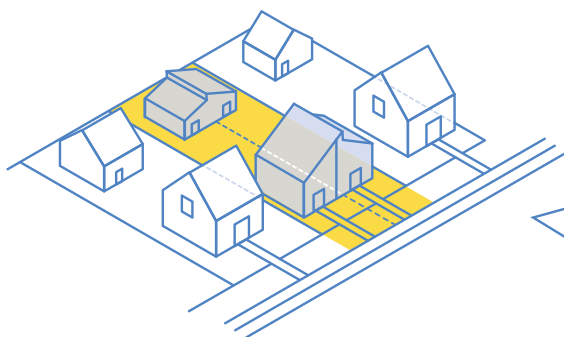
Pursue regulatory changes in RF1 and RF2 Zones that allow semi-detached housing to be permitted uses and to be located mid-block.

#### **CONNECTED OUTCOMES**



#### **DESCRIPTION**

Currently, semi-detached housing is limited to corner sites in RF1 and RF2 Zones. This action will allow semi-detached houses to be constructed anywhere on a block in those zones.



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### **ACTION 22**

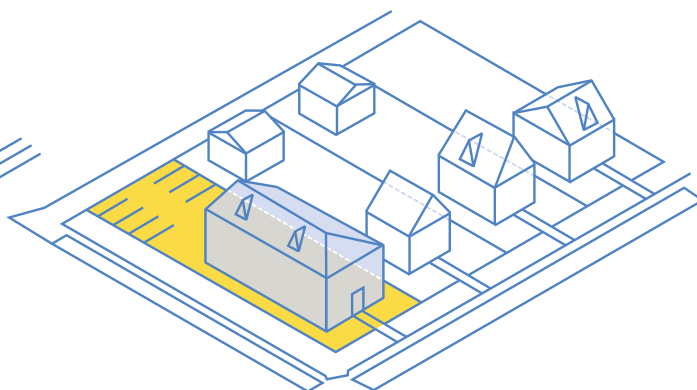
Create opportunities for small apartment buildings on smaller lots in medium scale zones.

#### **CONNECTED OUTCOMES**



#### **DESCRIPTION**

Adapt regulations in the Zoning Bylaw to enable small apartment buildings on small lots that cannot meet the requirements of the current medium scale zone.





# RULES

## ACTION 23

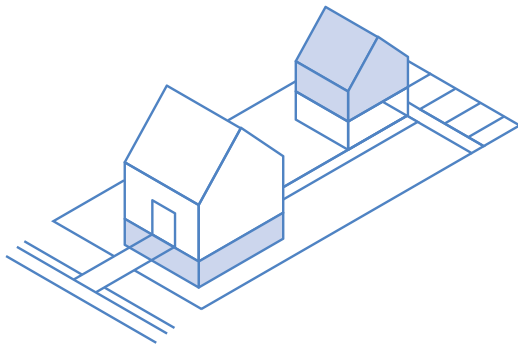
Create opportunities to include a mix of suites on a property.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

The Zoning Bylaw currently sets a limit of one secondary suite (basement, garage or garden) on a single residential lot. This action is intended to allow for additional suites to be constructed on a lot in order to allow for additional opportunities for low-scale infill.



## ACTION 24

Remove zoning barriers in areas identified as optimal for medium scale development.

### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

This action is intended to encompass a wide variety of possible approaches to removing unnecessary regulations and barriers to medium scale infill. For example, this may include proactively upzoning lands in accordance with newer Area Redevelopment Plans.

## ACTION 25

Integrate urban design regulations into the Zoning Bylaw through the Zoning Bylaw Renewal project.

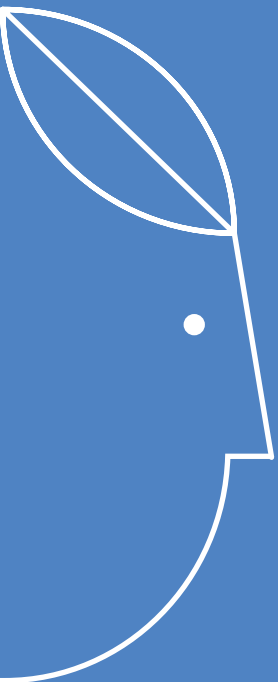
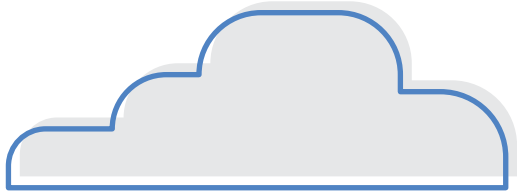
### CONNECTED OUTCOMES



### DESCRIPTION

This action will focus on putting urban design regulations into the Zoning Bylaw through the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Project. This may include regulations on building-street interfaces, building orientation, site layout and pedestrian access.



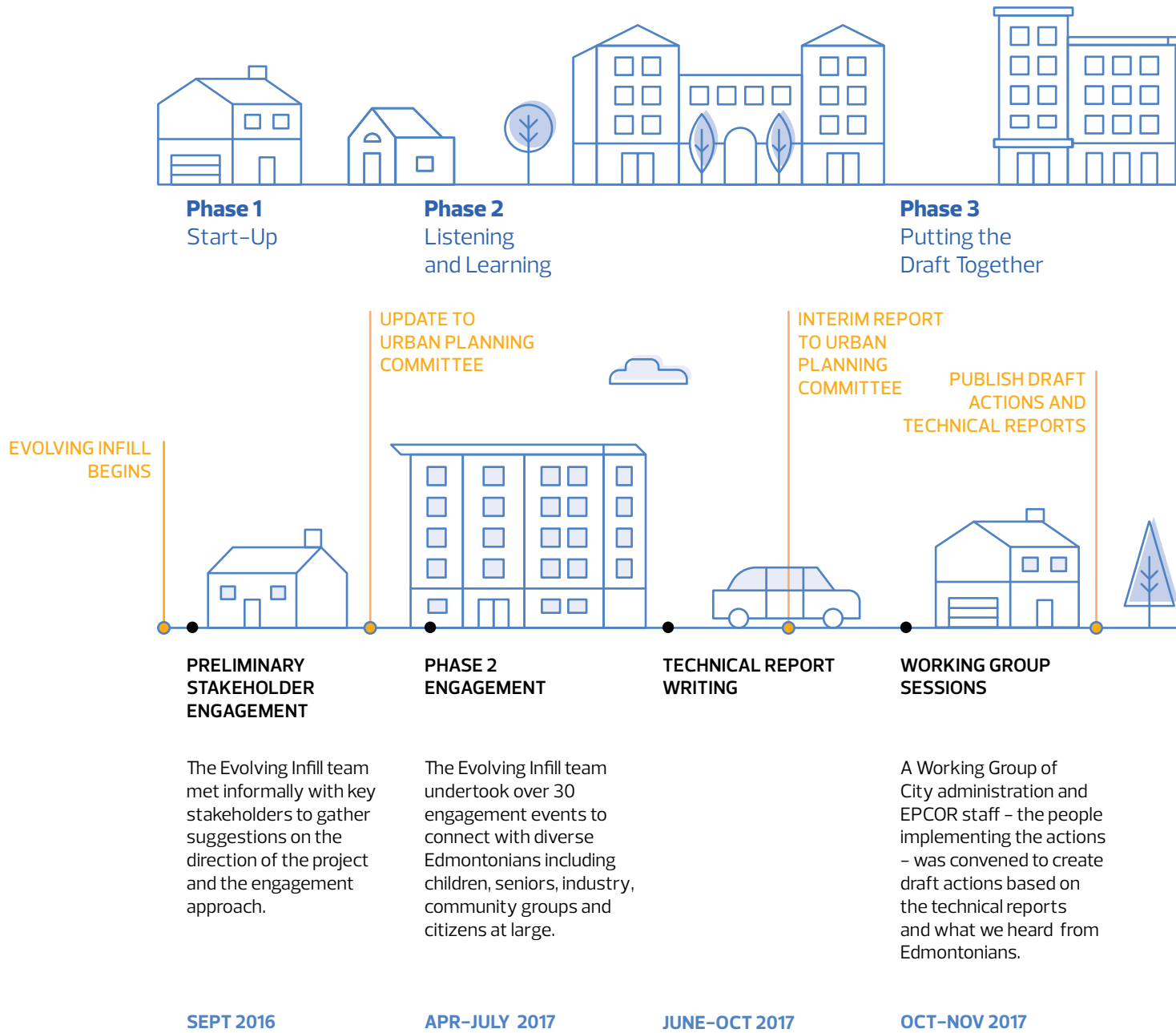


# 3

# MAKING THE ROADMAP

# PROJECT TIMELINE

Roadmap 2018 was created through a collaborative process that involved citizens, community organizations, the building and development industry and City administration (see p. 32 for more details on this model of city systems).

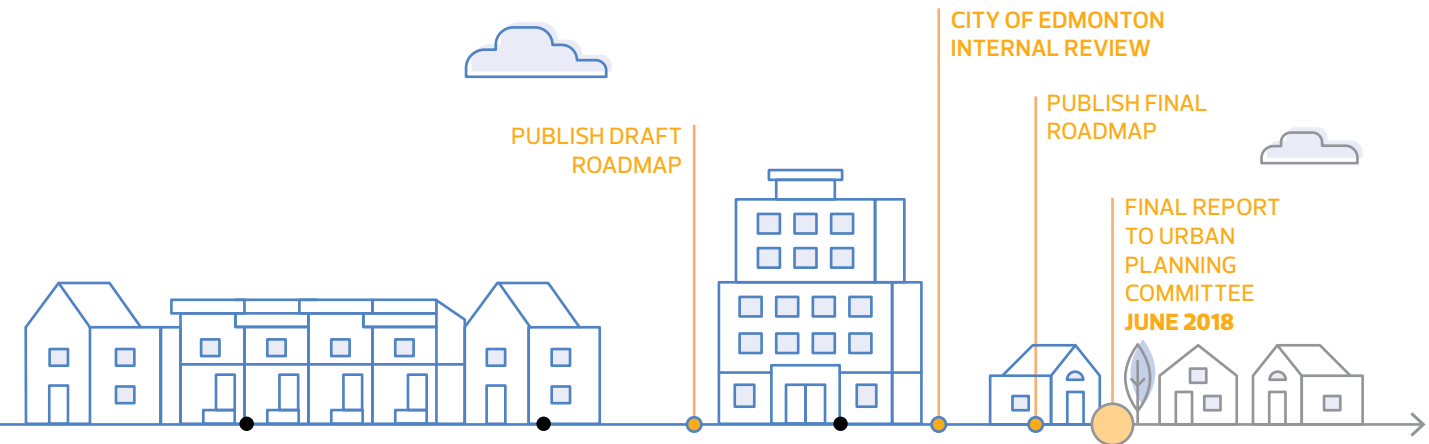


**FIGURE 4.** Evolving Infill Project Timeline



**Phase 4**  
Public Review  
and Discussion

**Phase 5**  
Implementation



**PHASE 4 ENGAGEMENT  
PUBLIC WORKSHOPS**

**WORKING GROUP  
SESSIONS**

**PHASE 4 ENGAGEMENT  
CONVERSATION FAIRS**

The Evolving Infill team held six public workshops to where Edmontonians rolled up their sleeves to learn about, evaluate and test the draft actions. These results were directly relayed to the Working Group during their next meetings.

Informed by the Phase 4 engagement results, the Working Group confirmed the actions to pursue, to clarify, combine or eliminate. Administrative capacity and support for the actions was also identified.

The Evolving Infill team held two drop-in conversation fairs to share information and receive input on how to improve the proposed actions.

**JAN–FEB 2018**

**FEB 2018**

**MAR 2018**

**JUNE 2018**

# SUMMARY OF THE EVOLVING INFILL PROJECT

Evolving Infill was a comprehensive planning process driven and supported by in-depth public engagement and detailed technical reports. The following sections detail how the different aspects of the project were used to create and refine the actions in this Roadmap and to ensure that their implementation occurs in a timely, coordinated and efficient way.

## Project Mandate and Guiding Question

The main mandate of this project was to focus on supporting infill as it relates to "missing middle" housing forms. This mandate was established directly by City Council to ensure that Administration explore options related to those housing forms that had not received as much attention as lower scale housing forms.

With this mandate in mind, the project team created a unifying question that captured the ultimate goal of the project:

**How can we welcome more people and new homes into our older neighbourhoods?**

This question framed the conversations during public engagement sessions and directed the creation of the Technical Reports, and ultimately the actions. Throughout all phases of this project, this question has provided a unified lens that highlights the overall goal of the actions.

Other key features of the project that guided the creation of the Roadmap are shown below.

### Public Engagement: Public Engagement was undertaken during two phases.

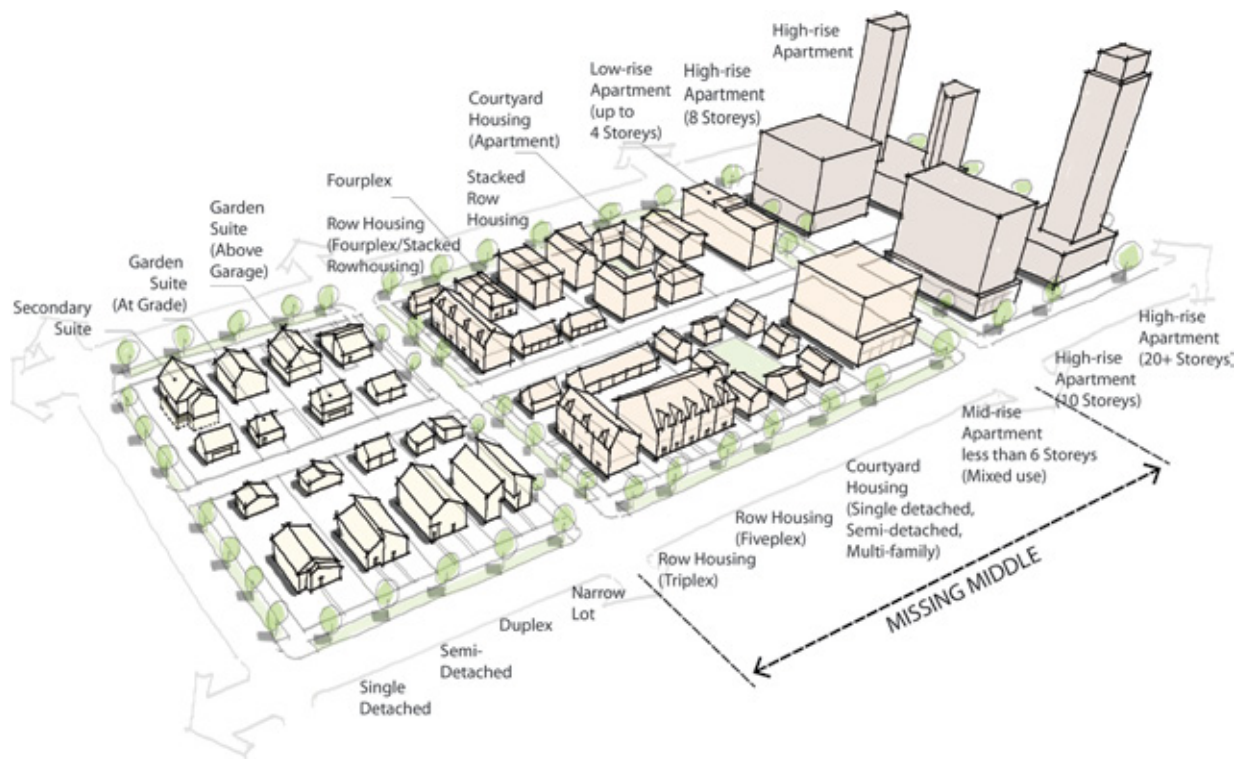
- Phase 2: Listening and Learning involved over 30 meetings with citizens, community organizations and the building and development community to identify key themes and issues related to infill.
- Phase 4: Public Review and Discussion involved in-depth workshops, pop-ups and conversation fairs to gather feedback on the draft actions.

### Infill Working Group: An internal City of Edmonton working group met to provide in-depth support during the creation of the actions.

- After the engagement in Phase 2, the Working Group met to identify potential actions that would address what was heard.
- After the engagement in Phase 4, the Working Group met to refine the draft actions and identify administrative capacity for implementation.

### Technical Reports: Three technical reports support this Roadmap:

- The *Market Housing and Affordability Study* provides a quantitative review of Edmonton's current housing market in 2017.
- *Edmonton's Urban Neighbourhood Evolution* provides a history of Edmonton's urban development.
- The *Municipal Tools Review* provides background information on actions and programs taken by other cities around the world to address issues related to infill.



**FIGURE 5.** Edmonton's "Missing Middle"

## Focusing on Edmonton's "Missing Middle"

The types of housing that were identified as Edmonton's "missing middle" can be seen above in Figure 5. In the Edmonton context, "missing middle" housing forms include triplex homes, fourplexes, row-houses, stacked row-houses, low rise (four stories or less) and mid rise (up to six stories) apartments.

These housing types are referred to as "missing" as they only make up a small fraction of the units available and have not received the same level of attention by the public, developers or the City.

At the beginning of the project, there was an increased focus on opportunities for middle density housing forms which would allow a wider variety of housing options in Edmonton's older communities. It was also felt that they were an opportunity to allow a greater

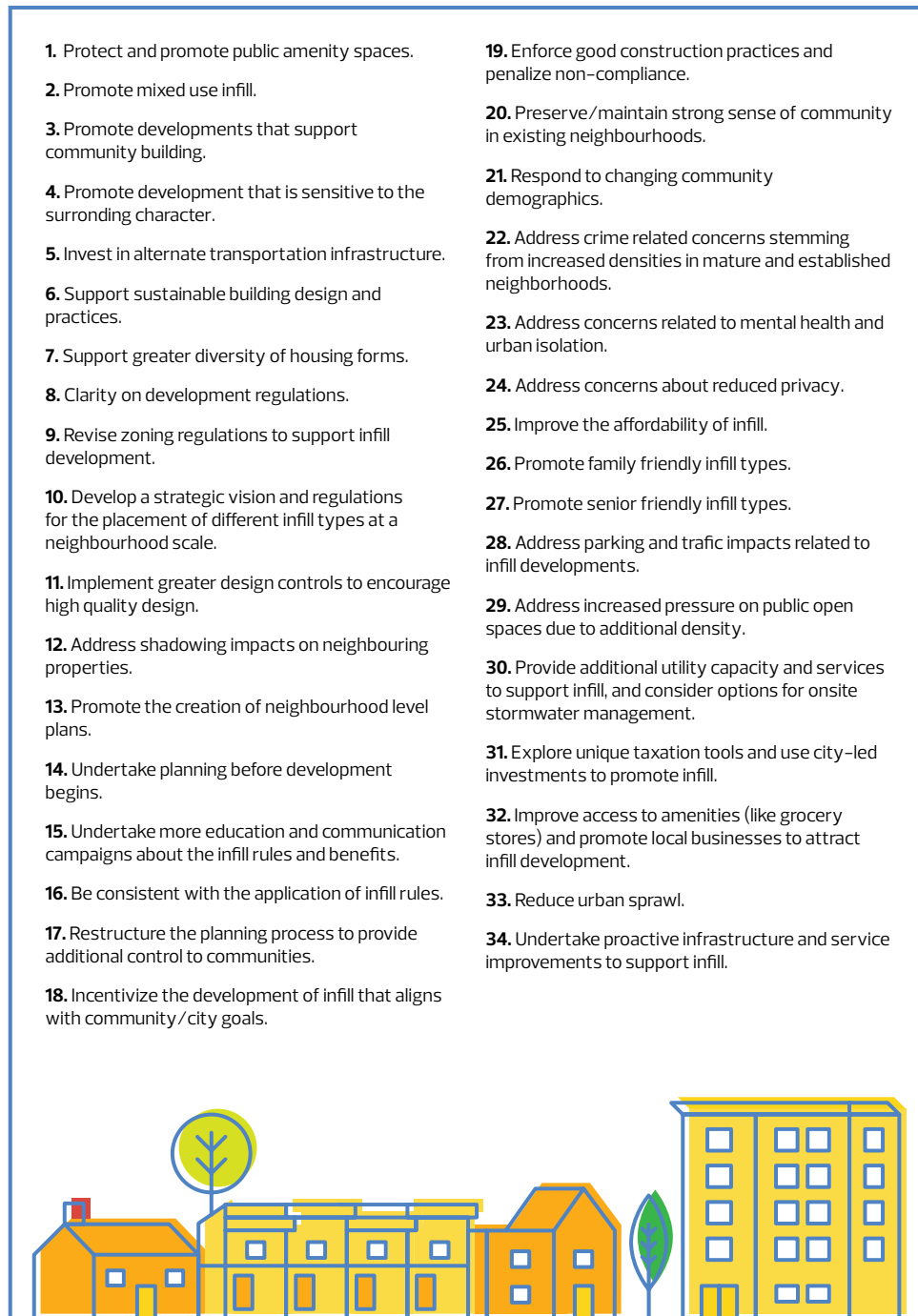
number of units to be established in a form that is preferable to high rise apartments and more compatible with lower scale residential areas.

Edmontonian's preference for lower density and ground oriented forms compared to high rise apartments was one of the key findings of the *Market Housing and Affordability Study*. The report found that although single detached housing was still the top choice for housing in Edmonton, other ground oriented housing forms like row housing, stacked row housing or courtyard buildings were preferred over apartment buildings. Additionally, these forms of housing did not raise the same concerns that high rise apartments did including issues of shadowing, infrastructure capacity, and parking.

# FROM IDEAS TO ACTIONS

This diagram shows the conceptual relationship between the themes, actions and outcomes of this project. Actions were created to address specific Themes while being directed by the Outcomes.

## Themes From Engagement

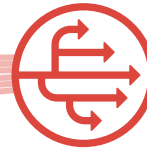


**FIGURE 6.** Connections between Themes, Actions and Outcomes

## Actions

- Action 1. Prioritize infill at key nodes and corridors
- Action 2. Review infrastructure capacity
- Action 3. Investigate opportunities for tiny homes
- Action 4. Re-examine collective housing regulations
- Action 5. Partner to pilot innovative housing
- Action 6. Improve housing affordability
- Action 7. Address land assembly and mixed use
- Action 8. Pilot alley enhancements
- Action 9. Better inform residents
- Action 10. Incentivize accessible laneway homes
- Action 11. Create optimal infill map
- Action 12. Reduce barriers to use of Low Impact Development
- Action 13. Monitor and address construction issues
- Action 14. Improve permitting process timelines and consistency
- Action 15. Review, update or retire plans and policies
- Action 16. Develop infrastructure cost sharing system
- Action 17. Improve lot grading
- Action 18. Improve medium scale zones
- Action 19. Simplify low scale zones
- Action 20. Reduce parking requirements
- Action 21. Create opportunities for small apartment buildings
- Action 22. Increase opportunities for semi-detached housing
- Action 23. Create opportunities for more suites on a property
- Action 24. Remove zoning barriers for medium scale
- Action 25. Integrate urban design into Zoning Bylaw

## Outcomes



1. Infill development responds to the context and addresses emerging needs.



2. The costs of doing infill development are reduced.



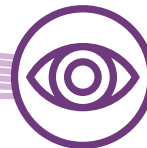
3. We have a diverse mix of housing options in our neighbourhoods that support social and community inclusion.



4. Laneway housing opportunities are expanded.



5. City infrastructure investment is aligned with infill development.



6. Everyone involved is clear about the development process and what to expect.

## Technical Reports

Three technical reports were created to provide detailed background information on important aspects of infill development.

*All the Technical Reports can be found online from the City of Edmonton's infill website: [www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill](http://www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill).*

## Edmonton's Urban Neighbourhood Evolution

This report outlines a history of Edmonton's urban development. It begins with the City's pre-settlement history and follows its periods of boom and bust in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The report highlights the historic and ongoing challenges Edmonton faces as a municipality when considering how to manage its growth and plan for the future. The report focuses on Edmonton's history through a series of distinct periods of growth, often followed by recessions which slowed or stopped housing construction. The following are some of the key lessons learned in the report:

- Since the first housing boom in the early 20th century, boom times have meant explosive growth for the city as new residents arrive looking to benefit from the region's prosperity.
- Invariably, those boom times had coincided with increases in demand for housing. This drove up housing prices and damaged Edmonton's affordability for those whose incomes had not increased as a result of the boom.
- Housing in Edmonton has focused almost exclusively on single detached home ownership for a variety of reasons, including affordable land, limited barriers to growth, speculation, national housing policy and mortgage practices.
- For residents who could afford it, single detached homeownership was the norm. For those who could not afford to own their homes, rental accommodations or inadequate housing were the typical alternatives.

## Municipal Tools Review

The Municipal Tools Review contains research about approaches that other cities around Canada, the United States and Great Britain have used to promote and manage infill development. These tools focused on four types of approaches: policy, advocacy and partnerships, financial incentives and administrative processes.

The tools in the report were used as inspiration for what kinds of actions could be taken by the City. The report also identified how similar tools might be viable in Edmonton or highlighted any constraints to their implementation. Key findings from the report included:

- Other municipalities have faced similar infill challenges and that there is a large body of existing work that can inform the implementation of the actions taken by the City of Edmonton.
- A combination of tools is recommended to influence different aspects of the infill development process and encourage infill.
- The tools should be applied differently across Edmonton to ensure that a tool addresses the specific context of an area.







## Market Housing and Affordability Study

The Market Housing and Affordability study is a quantitative analysis of the housing market in Edmonton. It includes an overview of key housing market indicators like new home construction (known as housing starts), the purchase price of homes in developing areas compared to infill, types of available housing, and how the supply of housing relates to demand. Key findings from the report include:

- Infill continues to face an ongoing challenge as developments in older neighbourhoods are still less affordable than similar housing forms in developing areas.
- Overall, housing in Edmonton is generally affordable for most income groups.
- Families making up to \$30,000/year are currently priced out of home ownership opportunities. For these groups, rental is their only housing option.
- Infill is shifting Edmonton's traditional housing stock. For example, 50% of Edmonton's traditional housing stock is single detached while only 30% of new infill is single detached.
- There is still a strong consumer preference for single detached housing options compared to other forms. In addition, ground-oriented forms like town homes and courtyard housing are seen as more desirable than high-rise apartments.

These findings confirmed the focus on medium scale infill opportunities, such as row houses, stacked row houses, and courtyard housing. The commercial portion of the market study also found that medium scale forms (like low rises and apartments), which are currently seen as less desirable by buyers, should be located closer to amenities like stores, schools, and transit to boost their desirability.

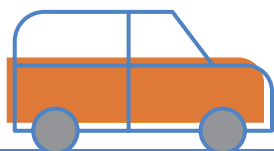
## Working Together: Public Engagement

The public engagement process used for the Infill Roadmap 2018 draws on the work of Dr. Marilyn Hamilton's Integral City model. Engagement activities recognized four distinct but overlapping perspectives of city life: citizens, civil society, the business community and public institutions. It is recognized that these perspectives offer a variety of views and opinions about infill and its role in Edmonton's future. The consultation approach focused on hearing diverse perspectives on infill and understanding people's values and concerns related to infill.

Over the course of the project, the Evolving Infill team engaged in-person with hundreds of Edmontonians. This work was structured around two different phases.

Phase 2 of Evolving Infill, Listening and Learning, was about hearing Edmontonians' opinions and values about infill including its challenges and opportunities. In the summer of 2017, the Evolving Infill team met with over 600 Edmontonians at over 30 different events including public workshops, meetings with different stakeholders and specific interest groups. The engagement resulted in the identification of 34 Themes as well as other trends related to the location of infill, barriers to infill and laneway homes. The Themes were developed qualitatively from the notes, comments, and discussions in the engagement sessions. The Themes were then used to establish the six Outcomes of the project. The Outcomes provided high level direction for any actions identified in this project.

Together, the Themes and Outcomes formed the "river banks" that would frame any proposed actions. Each action would be linked to one or more Themes and would work toward one or more of the Outcomes. This way, the actions are directly accountable to what was heard during the engagement in 2017.



These relationships are illustrated conceptually on Page 36.

Phase 4 of Evolving Infill, Public Review and Discussion, involved testing the draft actions with members of all four stakeholders groups. In early 2018, the Evolving Infill team hosted six engagement workshops. These included three two-hour workshops and three four-hour 'in-depth' workshops which had over 150 total participants. Each workshop was open to anyone to attend in order to provide opportunities for participants to hear diverse perspectives – something that participants from Phase 2 explicitly requested. These workshops provided time and space for participants to familiarize themselves with the draft actions and to provide input on what actions that they were most interested in.

A final round of engagement events occurred in March 2018, to give stakeholders a chance to review a draft of this Roadmap, to discuss the actions with the Evolving Infill team and provide input on how the actions could be improved and implemented. As the actions had mostly been confirmed at this point in the project, engagement feedback was received as advice on ways for the proposed actions to be improved and much of the feedback will be passed on to the teams responsible for implementing the actions.

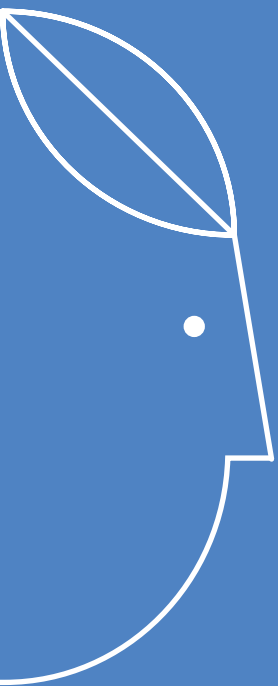
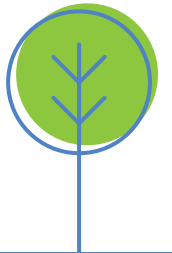
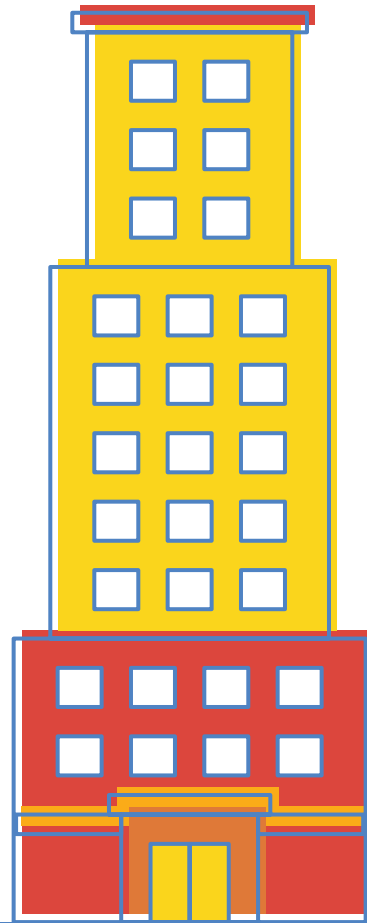
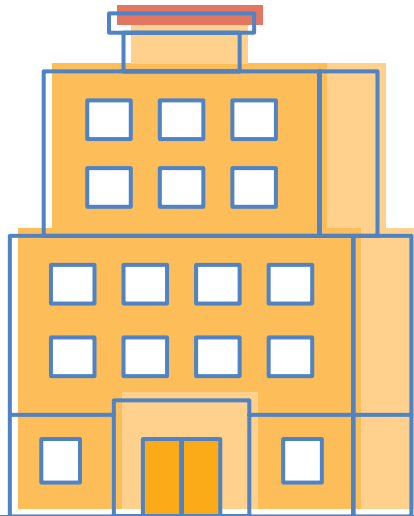
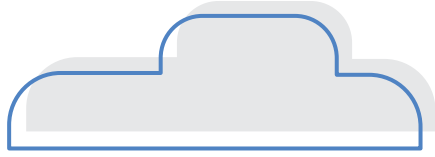
***A detailed summary of all of the engagement events that were held can be found in this project's What We Heard document available from the City of Edmonton's infill website: [www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill](http://www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill)***

## **Infill Working Group**

In addition to the wide range of external stakeholders, the project was also supported by an internal Working Group. The Working Group was comprised of staff members from EPCOR and from every department in the City of Edmonton. The group provided detailed input on the potential actions related to their areas of expertise. The Working Group sessions occurred twice during the project, each time following the completion of a significant phase of public engagement.

The first round of Working Group meetings occurred in October 2017 to identify the draft actions. The Working Group was convened again in March 2018 to finalize the list of actions and to finalize Administration's support and commitment to complete the actions. During these meetings, the Working Group refined the actions based on their judgement and feedback received during the January workshops. This included reframing some actions to focus on identified gaps, clarifying the actions, combining similar actions and identifying relationships between the actions seen as "Big Moves." This step was important as to ensure that there was an understanding of when actions would be implemented and by whom.





# 4 IMPLEMENTING THE ROADMAP

# Getting Started

## IMPLEMENTING THE ROADMAP

Implementation of the Infill Roadmap has already begun through work on the In Progress Actions and internal conversations about resources, timing and scope for future actions. When it comes time to start working, more detailed decisions about scoping and implementation of each action will be made. To help start the conversation about implementation, the Evolving Infill team and Working Group collaborated to develop some key principles for action implementation.

**Continued Stewardship:** The Evolving Infill team is committed to a continued role as stewards of the actions in the Roadmap. Phase 5 of Evolving Infill was intentionally named "Implementation" to highlight that the Evolving Infill team will continue to provide support and ongoing stewardship of the actions in the early stages of implementation.

**Hand-off from Evolving Infill:** The Evolving Infill team is a small group of planners and consultants who shepherded the creation of the Roadmap on behalf of the City of Edmonton Administration. Implementing all of the actions is beyond the capacity of the team. As actions are started by the different work areas, the Evolving Infill team will pass on the direction and feedback already received on the actions and ensure that projects are scoped with that feedback already in mind.

**An Integrated Approach:** The implementation of actions will require a diverse set of knowledge and disciplines to be accomplished effectively. These knowledge areas

within the City of Edmonton and externally will come together to ensure that decisions are being made to align with the overall direction of the City's strategic goals.

**Continuing the Conversation:** Engagement results were clear: participants want ongoing engagement as part of the implementation of individual actions. The City is committed to hosting ongoing discussions, check-ins and receiving feedback from stakeholders as the actions are completed.

**Commitment to begin the actions by 2020:** During the initial creation of the actions, the project team made it clear that all projects need to be started by the summer of 2020. This timeline ensures that there is sufficient time for resources and funding to be allocated effectively, while also ensuring that the projects are started in a timely manner.

**Operationalization of the actions:** Some of the actions will require ongoing or regular support to be implemented successfully. This includes ensuring that data is kept up to date and that processes remain responsive to the needs of citizens.

**Monitoring Implementation:** Monitoring is expected to occur alongside the implementation of individual actions. The measures used will be determined once the projects to implement the actions are appropriately scoped and defined.



## KEEPING CONNECTED

There are a number of ways to stay connected as the infill actions are implemented. The Evolving Infill team promotes events online through social media and its dedicated website: [www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca](http://www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca). You can also stay up to date through the Evolving Infill newsletter and mailing list.

# MONITORING AND METRICS

## Outcome reporting

This project is aligned to help achieve the City of Edmonton's overarching strategic goals. This includes working towards an Edmonton that is attractive and compact by achieving an increased residential density, providing neighbourhoods that have a range of housing options and encouraging development that meets the needs of today and tomorrow.

At a city-wide level, the following two measures are being used to gauge whether the City is achieving its strategic goals:

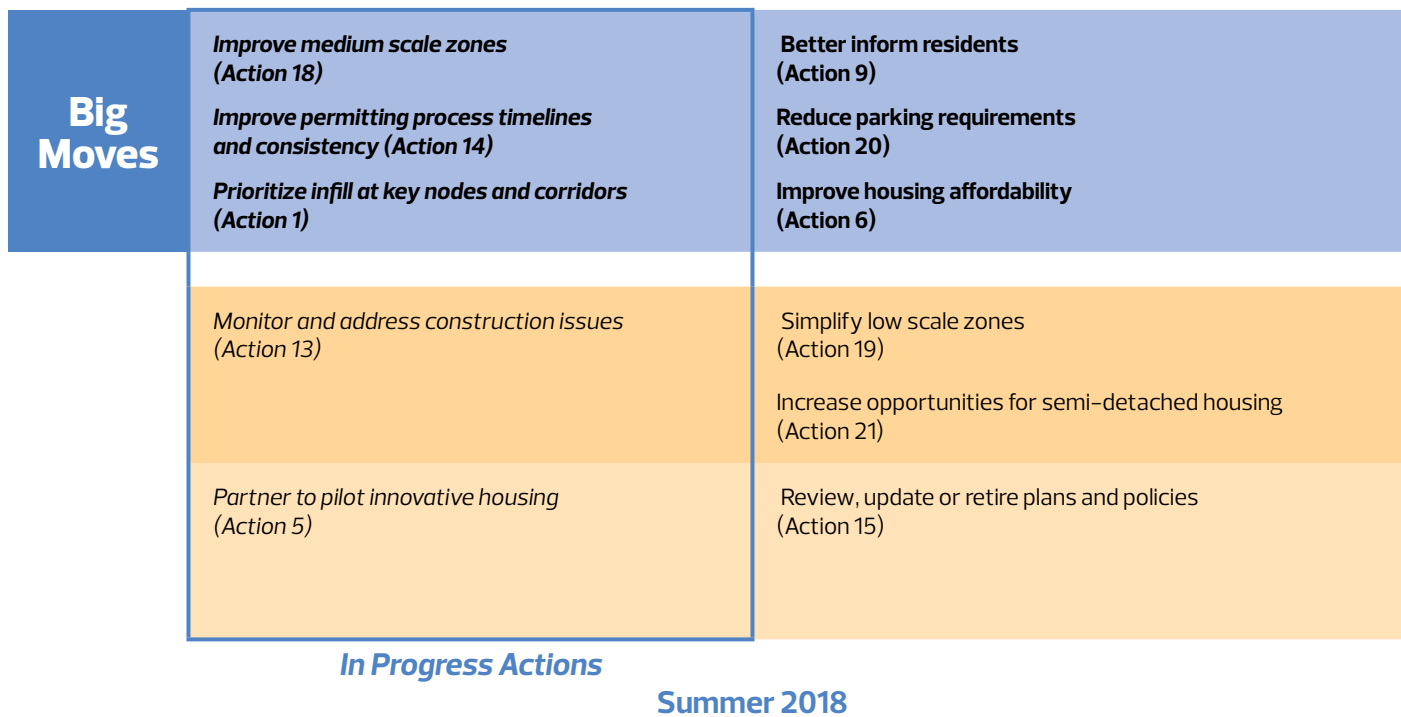
- 1. New residential units in mature neighbourhoods (as a percentage of total new residential units city-wide).** The City's Municipal Development Plan The Way We Grow has mandated ongoing reporting on infill metrics. Since 2010, the City has tracked and reported the annual breakdown on the percentage of net new housing units between Core/Mature neighbourhoods and Established/Developing neighbourhoods.
- 2. Residential Housing Diversity Index.** In recent years, additional metrics for infill housing have been identified and collected to provide the City of Edmonton, residents and industry with better data on infill in their communities and on which to make decisions about infill. One of these measures is of housing diversity. This measure looks at the proportion of different housing types in Edmonton's neighbourhoods. Improving this metric will mean that there is a better balance of different housing types available to Edmontonians.

## Improving monitoring

The City is still exploring ways to improve how it monitors and reports infill data. This includes both reporting on more refined measures of infill development, making infill related data more accessible and making it easier to understand. At the time that this document was written, a new online resource became available that uses recent building permit data to show both Building Permit Activity and Mature Neighbourhood Reinvestment. This data is now available online through the City of Edmonton's Growth Analysis group and will continue to be monitored and reported on over time.

*Growth analysis data is available online at:*  
[www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/urban\\_planning\\_and\\_design/growth-analysis.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/growth-analysis.aspx)

# IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE



**FIGURE 7.** Implementation Timeline



The Infill Roadmap 2018 is a two-year implementation plan. Figure 7 illustrates the approximate implementation timeline and expected of each action.

The proposed actions identified as 'Big Moves' are the larger projects, which are expected to have the biggest impact in addressing major issues related to medium and high scale infill development. Big Moves include ongoing projects like reviewing the medium

scale zones, improving the consistency and timelines for infill developments and developing an approach to promote infill at key transit nodes and corridors. They also include new work to understand where infrastructure capacity is available to support infill and establish a more transparent and consistent system for medium and high scale infills to share costs for needed infrastructure upgrades.

<p><b>Review infrastructure capacity (Action 2)</b></p>	<p><b>Create optimal infill map (Action 11)</b></p>	<p><b>Remove zoning barriers for medium scale (Action 24)</b></p>
<p><b>Develop infrastructure cost sharing system (Action 16)</b></p>		
<p>Improve lot grading (Action 17)</p>	<p>Create opportunities for more suites on a property (Action 23)</p>	<p>Integrate urban design into Zoning Bylaw (Action 25)</p>
<p>Create opportunities for small apartment buildings (Action 22)</p>	<p>Re-examine collective housing regulations (Action 4)</p>	
<p>Incentivize accessible laneway homes (Action 10)</p>	<p>Investigate opportunities for tiny homes (Action 3)</p>	<p>Pilot alley enhancements (Action 8)</p>
	<p>Address land assembly and mixed use (Action 7)</p>	<p>Reduce barriers to use of Low Impact Development (Action 12)</p>

Winter 2019

Summer 2019

Winter 2020

Summer 2020



Edmonton

[www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill](http://www.cityofedmontoninfill.ca/about/evolving-infill)