

# “WHAT WE HEARD” REPORT

## Public Engagement Session Feedback Summary Holyrood Gardens Rezoning Proposal

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**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 8310 and 8311 - 93 Avenue NW, Holyrood neighbourhood

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Rezoning from the current (DC2) Site Specific Development Control Provision Zone to a new (DC2) Site Specific Development Control Provision Zone

The applicant proposes a high density, transit oriented, mixed use development with a maximum of 1,450 residential units

**EVENT TYPE:** Public Engagement Session

**EVENT DATE:** May 2, 2018

**EVENT LOCATION:** Holyrood School, 7920 - 94 Avenue NW

**NUMBER OF ATTENDEES:** Approximately 260 people

**CITY WEBPAGE:** [www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning](http://www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning)

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## BACKGROUND

On November 17, 2017, City Council referred this rezoning proposal back for additional work. City Administration received direction to return with a proposal addressing the following:

- generally meet building height requirements in accordance with the Residential Infill Guidelines’ 35 degree angular plane;
- generally meet built form requirements in accordance with the Residential Infill Guidelines’ recommended tower floor plate sizes;
- mitigate traffic cutting through the neighbourhood, using measures such as potential road closures;
- address parkade ramp design and pedestrian access along 93 Avenue NW; and
- refer the revised proposal to the Edmonton Design Committee for feedback.

In response to this motion, City Planning, the applicant, and the Holyrood Community League’s Development Committee created and embarked on an engagement plan. The intent was to gather input from the community, primarily represented by the Holyrood Development Committee (HDC), and address each of the items in Council’s referral motion.

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This information presents feedback obtained during the City’s Public Engagement Session on May 2, 2018. This report is shared with the applicant, Ward Councillor Ben Henderson, the Holyrood Community League, the Holyrood Development Committee, and all attendees who provided email addresses at the event. Should the applicant choose to advance their proposal to a Public Hearing for Council’s consideration, this feedback will be included in City Administration’s information report.

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## EVENT FORMAT

The engagement session was a drop-in event, where attendees could view display boards with information about the City’s rezoning process and the applicant’s proposal. A computer model displayed the proposed buildings and the surrounding area. It showed sun shadows cast by the development at various times of the year. Participants were invited to discuss the application and ask questions of City staff and the applicant. Members of the HDC were also present.

Attendees were encouraged to provide written feedback and a total of 165 feedback forms were received. People were also asked to share their opinions on a “comment wall,” by responding to the following three questions:

- What are the positive aspects of this application?
- What would you change about this application?
- What do you want City Council to know before they make a decision?

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## WHAT WE HEARD

The following information summarizes the responses collected and the main themes that emerged.

### Community Context:

- Neighbourhood revitalization is important and new development brings necessary rejuvenation to the community.
- The opportunity to accommodate affordable housing within this development is welcome.
- Redevelopment of this site is largely supported, but this particular proposal is not appropriate.
- This type of development is better suited elsewhere, as it does not achieve the quality and design of other redevelopment in this area, both existing and proposed.
- The current proposal does not meet the needs of this community and it is developer oriented.
- The applicant failed to consider and adequately address issues previously identified by the community.

- The applicant must work more collaboratively with the community, City Council, and City Administration and adapt this proposal to fit the community's needs.
- Provide increased family housing with three or more bedrooms.
- Residential units will be expensive and this proposal is not offering low income housing.
- This development will have undesired effects on surrounding property values and property taxes.

### Density:

- The LRT Station's presence makes density appropriate here.
- Large scale infill opportunities counter suburban sprawl.
- Increased density can support new commercial opportunities in the neighbourhood.
- The proposal will require additional support services such as child daycare.
- This area is already too dense and surrounding communities will not be able to adequately manage this development's additional population.
- This development cannot be supported by existing infrastructure or by proposed improvements to the current system. Roadways, transit networks, and schools were specifically mentioned.
- Lack of support for the proposed increase in units to 1,450 when it was previously 1,200 in 2017 and that number was not even supported by citizens.
- More density increases noise pollution and crime rates, and the area will be less sanitary.

### Built Form and Site Design:

- This development helps to increase and diversify housing options in the area.
- This proposal is of less quality than the version that City Council considered in November 2017.
- Building heights should respect the Residential Infill Guidelines' 35 degree angle.
- Reduce building heights even further than what's presented.
- The current proposal creates a significant "wall" effect along 85 Street NW.
- This development prevents sun penetration to the surrounding area, generating large shadows.
- The proposed buildings will create a wind tunnel effect for pedestrians.
- The design lacks architectural creativity and has an unappealing streetscape aesthetic.
- Desire for more community gathering space on the site.
- Buildings and landscape should incorporate environmentally sustainable features.

### Transportation and Movement:

- This project enhances pedestrian and cyclist movement in the community.
- The proposed density will create multiple traffic related issues in Holyrood.
- Major access points in and out of the community will be overburdened.
- Roadway networks will take on increased congestion, both in the immediate and surrounding vicinity of this development.
- Traffic increases are not being responded to with creative solutions.

- The LRT will not be able to sufficiently service this development, because of the high ridership anticipated from nearby Valley Line stations.
- This proposal segregates the community and makes the streetscape less walkable.
- This development does not support pedestrian permeability and connectivity on and around the site.
- More parking should be provided on site for the development's residents.
- The LRT stop adjacent to this site will turn Holyrood into a "park and ride".
- Additional traffic elevates risks to children, pedestrians, and cyclists.

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## CLARIFYING QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

The following information provides a general overview of common questions received.

### **Why aren't all of the proposed building heights within in the 35 degree angular plane?**

- The City's Residential Infill Guidelines use both 35 and 45 degree angular planes, depending on context.
- The applicant's previous proposal had a maximum height of 78 metres and some of the buildings exceeded the 45 degree angular plane.
- The current proposal has reduced the maximum height to 60 metres (approximately 17 storeys). Majority of the site's buildings are within the 35 degree angular plane, and those that exceed it are within the 45 degree angular plane.

### **Why has the number of residential units increased from 1,200 to 1,450?**

- The applicant advised that they revised the project's density to make the current proposal more economically viable to them, as all buildings will now be concrete structures which is more expensive to build.

### **Does this proposal include any low income housing?**

- The City of Edmonton will have the option to purchase 5% of this development's residential units, at 85% of their market cost, in order to provide affordable housing.
- Occupancy of these units is subsidized, targeting residents earning less than median income for their household size. Their monthly rents/payments are below average cost.

### **Is this development comprised of rental units or will they be sold?**

- The applicant has yet to make this determination. A number of variables will impact this decision, including construction timelines.
- The City does not consider tenure (rental versus ownership) in the planning analysis.

### **Will the residential units include balconies?**

- The applicant currently intends for the majority of units to have balconies. Their location and size will be determined in the future, during the detailed design stage.

### **What is the difference between “park space” and “amenity space”?**

- Park space is land that's accessible to the public, for active or passive uses. Types of this space range from pedestrian trails and picnic areas to band shells and playground facilities.
- Amenity spaces are areas intentionally provided to a building's inhabitants, for their enjoyment and recreation. Types of this space can include balconies, an indoor gym for communal use, or outdoor space specifically intended for the development's residents.

### **Can area schools accommodate this development's density increase?**

- Neighbourhood rejuvenation can help revitalize schools in older communities. The decline of student populations has been the trend in older neighbourhoods. Infill development provides opportunities for family friendly housing which, in turn, can support increased student enrolment.
- Regarding family housing, the current proposal includes a minimum of 450 two-bedroom units. Additionally, 120 family friendly units of two or more bedrooms will be situated in the buildings' lower storeys, with direct access to outdoor amenity space.
- Edmonton's Public and Catholic School Boards reviewed this development proposal and indicated no concerns.

### **Can existing infrastructure support this proposal?**

- Infrastructure use has changed as the total population in Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods has declined by over 73,000 people over the last 40 years.
- New technologies and shrinking average household sizes mean that infrastructure in mature communities has unused capacity. Edmonton is working to maximize the use of existing infrastructure assets to integrate new residents. This is a cost saving measure for all residents, in the long run.

### **How will this development positively contribute to neighbourhood amenities and services?**

- Infill redevelopment improves neighbourhood sustainability by supporting underutilized parks, schools, community services, and businesses in the vicinity.
- This development proposes small scale commercial opportunities to serve residents on-site and in the vicinity.
- Publicly accessible paths for pedestrians and cyclists are provided across this development, offering connectivity in and through the Holyrood Gardens site.

### **What types of technical reports were required with this application?**

- A Sun Shadow Analysis evaluated the development's shadow effect on the surrounding area. This report is available at [www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning](http://www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning)

- A Residential and Retail Market Study was submitted since this proposal includes small scale commercial components near 93 Avenue NW.
- Studies were provided to City departments and utility agencies regarding drainage, water, and fire servicing capacities. These reports assess what's required to provide adequate water flow, water pressure, and on-street fire protection coverage (fire hydrants).
- A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was submitted, estimating the proposed development's impact on traffic, parking, and pedestrian networks in the area. The report analyzes current and anticipated future conditions.

**Were any transportation assessments conducted for this proposal? How is traffic from this development being managed?**

- A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was submitted with the original application which analyzed the proposed development's impact on the traffic network in the area. This TIA is available at [www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning](http://www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning)
- A supplemental TIA was requested by the City with the revised DC2 rezoning. This report includes an additional analysis scenario. It contemplates a higher percentage of traffic permeating into the neighbourhood from the development, as well as a review of traffic around Holyrood School and a pedestrian assessment along 93 Avenue NW. The supplemental TIA is currently under review. When it is finalized and accepted by the City, it will be available at [www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning](http://www.edmonton.ca/HolyroodGardensRezoning)
- It should also be noted that an additional TIA is required and will be submitted prior to any development being constructed on the portion of this site located north of 93 Avenue NW. This additional TIA will verify assumptions from the original TIA and ensure that the development traffic is as it was assumed in the original TIA, that any additional analysis be carried out, and that any additional required mitigations be identified.
- Given the LRT station immediately adjacent to the site, this development is anticipated to be a transit-oriented development, with a significant portion of trips using transit, especially in the peak hours. The development's vehicular traffic will be dispersed via the four parkade accesses and is anticipated to be accommodated on the adjacent street network. Existing congestion points such as Connors Road and 85 Street NW will continue to be congested during peak hours of travel in the future.

**How will the LRT sufficiently serve this development? High ridership is anticipated from other Valley Line stations. What if train cars arrive at the Holyrood station, full of riders and inaccessible to users?**

- The City is working to provide a safe, accessible, and reliable LRT network. About 100,000 daily boardings are anticipated for the Valley Line extension and planning is underway to ensure riders are accommodated.
- Trains along the Valley Line system will run on a five-minute frequency during peak times, including rush hour. Each train car will have the capacity for approximately 275 passengers.

- If the LRT's level of service does not meet anticipated demand once it's operational, then the number of trains and/or cars may be increased.

**How is the City ensuring that surrounding streets won't be used as a "park and ride" for this LRT Station?**

- The City has developed a Residential Parking Program to manage the availability of parking in areas that are experiencing growth and increased visitor demand. The parking program applies to certain residential areas, including those that are adjacent to LRT stations.
- The introduction of parking restrictions is another potential method for responding to increased on-street parking concerns.
- There are benefits and issues associated with both of these options. The City's Parking Services Section will work with area Community Leagues to determine the best way to proceed.

**Will a unifying community plan be created, accounting for the integration of area development? Examples of development in the vicinity of Holyrood Gardens include Strathearn Heights, Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre, and Bonnie Doon Campus Park.**

- An overarching plan is not currently anticipated for this area.
- Development applications will continue to be assessed in accordance with their community context, any applicable neighbourhood-level plans, zoning regulations, and technical feasibility. Guidelines are also tools that can enhance certain aspects of redevelopment, providing flexibility when considering a proposal's unique context.
- Edmonton's Residential Infill Guidelines integrate new development in mature neighbourhoods with surrounding land uses. They promote redevelopment that contributes to neighbourhood renewal and revitalization. Goals include locating density where it can maximize walkability, support transit, increase housing options, and improve levels of neighbourhood amenities and commercial services.
- Edmonton's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines aim to transform underutilized areas around transit hubs into vibrant, mixed use neighbourhoods. They influence design components within the public realm including streetscapes, pedestrian and cycling connections, urban plazas and park space.

**Why is density occurring at this location, when densification is anticipated with other redevelopment projects in the area?**

- Changing demographics and growth pressures are behind the City's desire to create more infill. The goal is to have at least 25% of new growth occur downtown, in mature neighbourhoods, and around transit hubs.
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) concentrates housing, shopping, and employment growth around all LRT and transit stations. Development along the Valley LRT line is expected to be dense and compact near each station. Therefore, what's anticipated in proximity to one LRT stop will not necessarily prevent densification around others.

- All development applications undergo significant technical review by City departments and utility agencies. These measures help ensure that utility infrastructure and transportation networks have suitable capacities for the proposed population density.

**How will this development affect the community's property taxes?**

- Existing infrastructure assets in Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods have unused capacity. This is due to decreasing household sizes, coupled with new technologies. Therefore, communities like Holyrood can accommodate increased forms of housing and additional residents.
- The City generates additional revenue from new construction and, meanwhile, minimal new infrastructure is required. The City's bottom line receives a positive net effect which helps keep taxes low for property owners.

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**Thank you.**

**Questions and comments about this application  
or the City's rezoning process can be directed to:**

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