



2014

EDMONTON'S INFILL ROADMAP

A TWO YEAR WORK PLAN TO ADVANCE INFILL

THINGS TO KNOW

DEFINITIONS

RESIDENTIAL INFILL means new housing in established neighbourhoods. It includes new secondary suites, garage suites, duplexes, semi-detached and detached houses, row houses, apartments, and other residential and mixed-use buildings.

ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS are neighbourhoods that are primarily residential, mostly planned and developed before 1995, and generally located within the Anthony Henday.

THE ACTIONS IN THE INFILL ACTION PLAN ARE ORGANIZED INTO THE FOLLOWING FIVE GROUPS:



COMMUNICATION



RULES



COLLABORATION



PROCESS



KNOWLEDGE



OUR FIRST PRIORITIES
(INDICATED BESIDE ACTIONS)

IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ALL THE ACTIONS TOGETHER, FLIP TO PAGE 16.



**INFILL STORIES FROM CITIZENS
AND BUILDERS**



EVOLVING INFILL SUPPORTING EDMONTONIANS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS BY 'BUILDING IN'



KEEPING OUR CITY AND OUR ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS THRIVING INTO THE FUTURE. PROVIDING DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR OUR RESIDENTS. USING OUR RESOURCES WISELY.

This is what residential infill in Edmonton is all about. People, homes, and our evolving communities.

More and more people are calling Edmonton home. By 2024 we will have a population of over one million. One million people and thousands of households with different housing preferences and needs: young and old, big and small, renters and owners, new Edmontonians and residents who have lived their whole lives in our city. Supporting residential infill in established neighbourhoods is an important way to help everyone find the right homes in the right communities.

Supporting infill is also an important way to sustain our established neighbourhoods. Each of them has changed over time and will continue to evolve into the future. More new homes, different types of housing, and more residents will help ensure ongoing neighbourhood vitality. They will also help ensure that as a city we make best use of our existing infrastructure, as well as help to support the local businesses and amenities that make life in our communities great.

Supporting more and better infill means that Edmonton and Edmontonians will continue to grow and prosper, now and into the future.



EDMONTON'S INFILL ROADMAP

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR INFILL IN EDMONTON

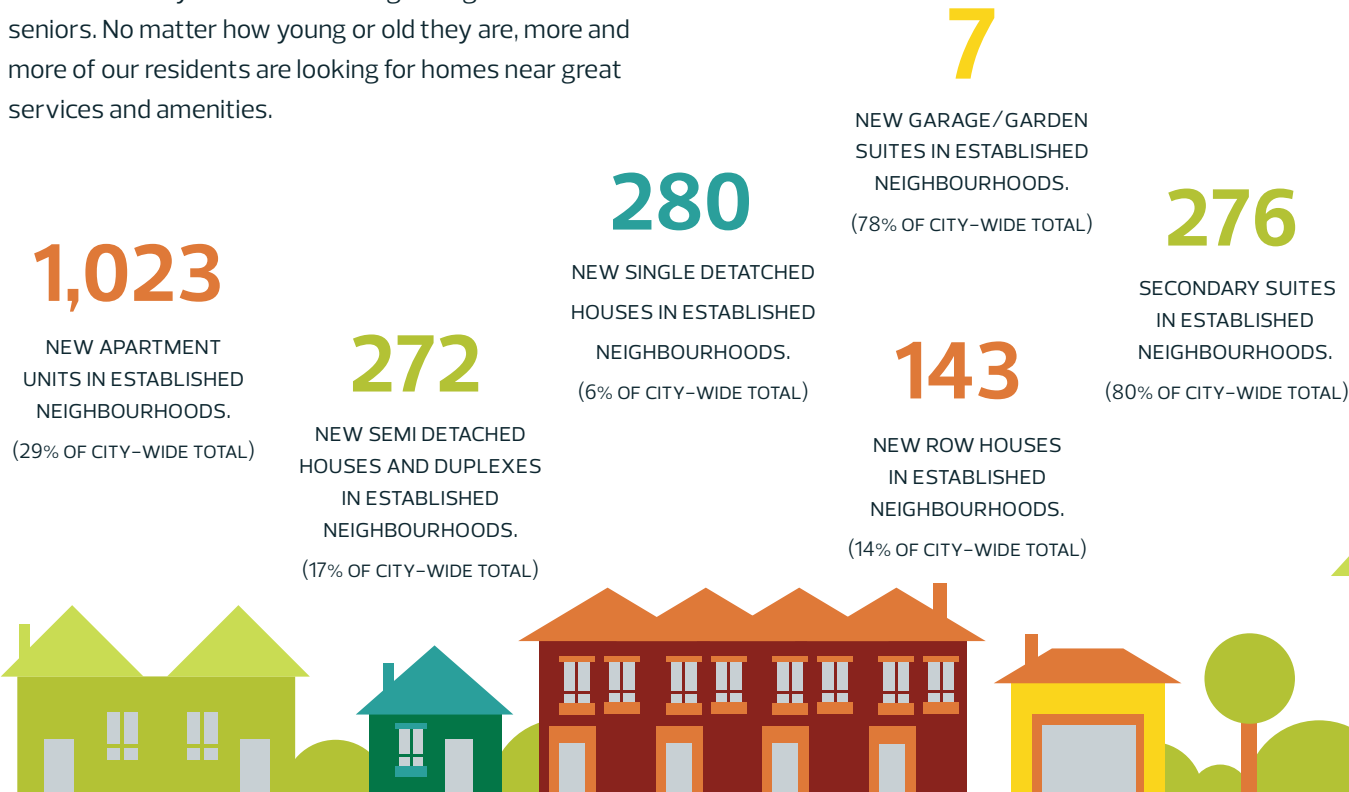


EDMONTON'S INFILL ROADMAP IS THE CITY'S WORK PLAN TO ADVANCE RESIDENTIAL INFILL. OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS IT WILL GUIDE OUR WORK INTERNALLY – AND WITH CITIZENS AND PARTNERS – AS WE MAKE CHANGES TO CURRENT PRACTICES AND RULES, AND CARRY OUT NEW ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT NEW HOUSING IN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS. THE 23 ACTIONS THAT THE ROADMAP CONTAINS WILL HELP US COMMUNICATE BETTER, REMOVE BARRIERS TO BUILDING INFILL, AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE INFILL IN OUR CITY.

This roadmap recognizes that the needs, priorities, and aspirations of Edmontonians are changing. Our population is one of the youngest in the country, with a significant number of residents in their mid-twenties to early thirties. Our city is also home to a growing number of seniors. No matter how young or old they are, more and more of our residents are looking for homes near great services and amenities.

As a result of these changes, we expect that the infill built in the coming years will be different than infill built in the past. Demand for row houses and other attached forms of housing is rising. So is demand for suites of all sorts – basement, garage, and garden. The popularity of apartments is also increasing, along with the market for smaller homes and housing near transit, amenities, and the urban core. There is a need for more affordable housing, as well as a growing desire for more quality and creativity in the design of our homes and city.


We can harness these exciting changes to provide more and better housing options for Edmontonians. By working together to realize the actions in this work plan, we can continue to support the vibrancy of our established neighbourhoods.



RESIDENTIAL INFILL – NUMBER OF PERMITS ISSUED IN 2013 AND POPULATION GROWTH BETWEEN 2001 AND 2011

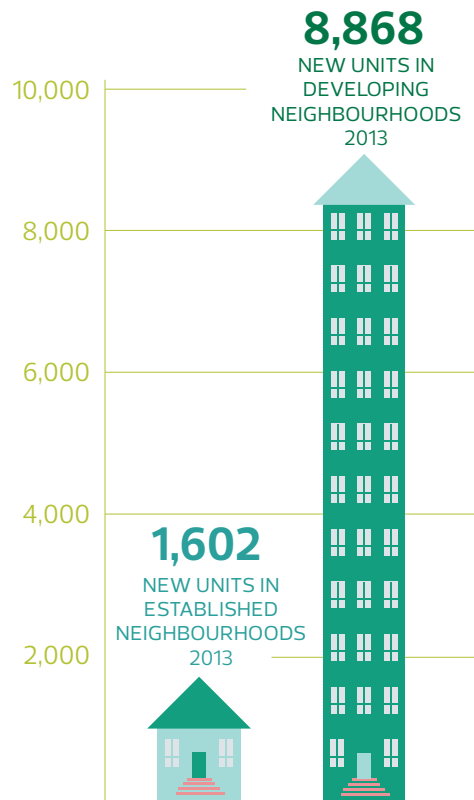
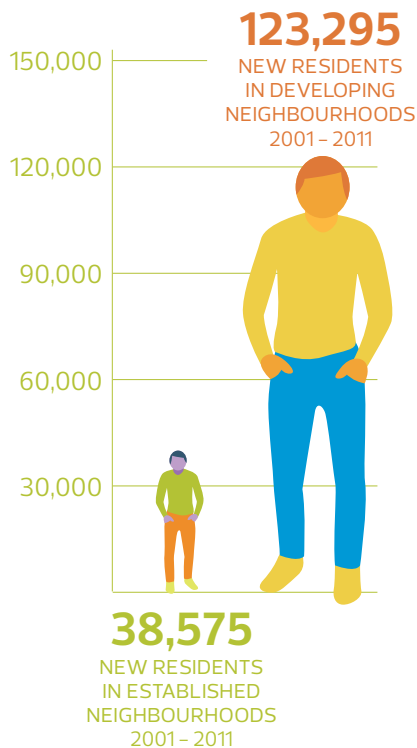
BASED ON CITY OF EDMONTON AND FEDERAL CENSUS DATA. ALL DATA EXCLUDES DOWNTOWN.

CREATING EDMONTON'S INFILL ROADMAP BUILDING IN. LET'S TALK.

THE FIRST STEP IN CREATING THIS ROADMAP WAS ASKING EDMONTONIANS TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND THOUGHTS ABOUT INFILL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHANGE. TOGETHER WE BUILT A SHARED STORY, INCLUDING SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, AND IDEAS FOR ADVANCING INFILL IN EDMONTON. SAMPLES OF THIS STORY ARE INCLUDED IN THE INFILL ACTION SECTION OF THIS DOCUMENT. THEY ARE IDENTIFIED BY A 

Between November 2013 and June 2014 more than 1,000 people took part in the discussion. Their contributions helped us identify the actions in this document. We also worked with the Infill Action Collaborative, a diverse group of 30 who helped us build on what we heard from the public conversation to begin to draft actions. We've crafted this roadmap based on their work, the collective ideas from all participants, and a commitment to change.

This city-wide conversation helped us understand what we need to do most to make infill easier and better for everyone involved – residents, builders, neighbourhoods, and the City.



RESIDENTIAL INFILL – NUMBER OF PERMITS ISSUED IN 2013 AND POPULATION GROWTH BETWEEN 2001 AND 2011

BASED ON CITY OF EDMONTON AND FEDERAL CENSUS DATA. ALL DATA EXCLUDES DOWNTOWN.



These 23 actions will support more and better infill across our established neighbourhoods. They will improve how we share information, work together, understand key issues, and encourage infill through enabling regulations and smoother processes. They respond to key challenges and opportunities for infill in Edmonton, and will help to remove barriers to new and more diverse housing.

Some actions are specific and concrete. Others give us a more general direction for change. These differences in scope and scale reflect the many different aspects of infill in our city. As a whole, these actions work together to make changes that meet a wide variety of needs. To see them all on one page, flip to page 16.



WHERE WE ARE GOING

INFILL ACTIONS



COMMUNICATION

LET'S TALK INFILL. AND LET'S TALK MORE OFTEN!

ACTION 1

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN INFILL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY TO SHARE INFORMATION CLEARLY AND WIDELY WITH A DIVERSE AUDIENCE, AND TO ENHANCE AND SIMPLIFY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE CITY, BUILDERS AND RESIDENTS.

This will improve the ways the City shares information about infill with Edmontonians, clarify how and where people can be engaged with the infill process, and encourage more discussions about new housing and change in established neighbourhoods.


ACTION 2

CREATE A HUB ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE TO SHARE CLEAR, COMPREHENSIBLE INFORMATION ON EVERYTHING INFILL.

This will help inform residents, communities, builders and other groups about infill rules, practices and activities by improving access to information and answering common questions.



"I CONSTRUCTED A BRAND NEW BUNGALOW IN 2012 – THE EXPERIENCE WAS GREAT AND IT HAS INSPIRED SOME OF THE OTHER RESIDENTS ON THE BLOCK TO IMPROVE THEIR DETERIORATING PROPERTIES."



"BECAUSE THEY KNEW THEY WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO BUILD WHAT THEY NEEDED, THEY OPTED TO MOVE AWAY."

ACTION 3

OFFER A PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE ONLINE TOOL THAT HELPS RESIDENTS AND BUILDERS VISUALIZE WHAT COULD BE BUILT ON A LOT IN AN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOOD.

This will increase residents' and builders' general understanding of the Zoning Bylaw's rules related to infill and the development potential of a property by visually communicating what sorts of new development may occur on a site that is zoned a particular way.

ACTION 4

REQUIRE VISIBLE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND SIGNS ABOUT APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PERMITS TO BE POSTED ON A BUILDING SITE IN ORDER TO LET EVERYONE KNOW WHAT WILL BE BUILT AND WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION.

This will help keep community members informed about construction in their neighbourhoods, direct them to the right people for more information, and support better information sharing and relationships between the City, citizens and builders.


ACTION 5

CREATE A "GOOD NEIGHBOUR CONSTRUCTION GUIDE" THAT CONTAINS INFORMATION FOR BUILDERS AND RESIDENTS ABOUT RULES AND GOOD PRACTICES FOR INFILL CONSTRUCTION, AND IDENTIFIES WHO TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

This will help minimize conflicts between builders and local residents, and help support friendlier infill construction practices by clarifying the expectations and existing City bylaws governing activities during the construction of infill.



"THE INFILL PROJECTS IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD ARE RATHER ANNOYING. THE ANNOYANCE COMES FROM SLOPPY CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES, THE WORST OF WHICH IS TRACKING MUD ALL OVER THE SIDEWALKS MAKING THEM VERY SLIPPERY AND MESSY AFTER A RAIN."



"THE DEVELOPER COMMUNICATED WELL AND EARLY WITH THE COMMUNITY AND GAINED VOCAL SUPPORT."





COLLABORATION

WE WANT TO WORK TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THE BEST INFILL FOR EDMONTON.

ACTION 6

PILOT AN 'INFILL ACTION INSIGHT GROUP' MADE UP OF CITIZENS AND BUILDERS WHOSE ROLE WOULD BE TO OFFER DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES TO CITY ADMINISTRATION AS WE WORK TO ADVANCE INFILL.

This will help bring a broad range of insights into infill projects and activities, provide an opportunity for the City to learn from a new approach to engaging Edmontonians in advancing infill development, and help to improve communication and build trust between citizens, builders and the City.

ACTION 7

PROVIDE TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR RESIDENTS AND GROUPS THAT ARE AIMED AT SUPPORTING THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN AND OWNERSHIP OF INFILL CONVERSATIONS AND ACTIVITIES.

This will increase the capacity of all Edmontonians to discuss and engage with the issues around residential infill, as well as provide support for an ongoing conversation about infill and neighbourhood change.



"WE HAVE BEGUN BRAINSTORMING IDEAS SUCH AS BUILDING A GARDEN SUITE ON OUR LOT, SUBDIVIDING, OR DEVELOPING A MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING UNIT IN A HOUSING CO-OP MODEL."

ACTION 8

SUPPORT AND WORK WITH PARTNERS TO CREATE PROGRAMS AND EVENTS AIMED AT FOSTERING ONGOING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT INFILL, SHOWCASING BEST PRACTICES, ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN DESIGN, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, AND EXCHANGING INFORMATION.

This will catalyze new infill projects and ideas, foster dialogue around the design of new housing, and create opportunities for residents, builders and the City to strengthen their relationships and contribute to the ongoing conversation about what great infill means for Edmonton. Examples include conferences, tours, and infill design competitions and awards.

ACTION 9

DEVELOP AN INFILL FOCUSED MODULE OR COURSE FOR THE CITY'S PLANNING ACADEMY PROGRAM TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH INTERESTED EDMONTONIANS IN AN INTERACTIVE SETTING.

This will create opportunities for conversations, engagement and increasing awareness of infill development in our city, as well as clarify the City's vision for infill that is outlined in 'The Ways' documents and explain what that means for neighbourhoods.

ACTION 10

IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT A RANGE OF PILOT PROJECTS THAT EXPLORE CREATIVE AND NEW FORMS OF INFILL IN ORDER TO PROVIDE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE.

This will allow the City, builders and residents to test and learn from new ideas in creative and exciting ways. Examples include: trial zoning regulations, green infill building design, mixed-use buildings, and new ways to support more affordable infill housing.





KNOWLEDGE

LET'S BROADEN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS AS WE BUILD MORE AND BETTER INFILL.

ACTION 11

UNDERTAKE A PROJECT WITHIN THE CITY'S ADMINISTRATION TO BUILD A HIGH LEVEL SNAPSHOT OF NEIGHBOURHOOD INDICATORS AND PLANNED INVESTMENTS IN GROUPS OF ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS IN ORDER TO BETTER INFORM PLANNING DECISIONS, INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY.

This will provide a more thorough, shared understanding of conditions and current activities (e.g. land use and development, infrastructure, civic amenities and investments) in established neighbourhoods, which will help the City improve its ongoing dialogue with citizens and ability to plan for and respond to the needs and opportunities in different areas.

ACTION 12

DEVELOP AN INFILL SPECIFIC INFORMATION RESOURCE TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS AND BUILDERS WITH EASY ACCESS TO INFORMATION RELATED TO HOW THE CITY PLANS FOR, ASSESSES AND RESPONDS TO DRAINAGE NEEDS IN ESTABLISHED AREAS, AND WHAT PEOPLE CAN DO TO ADDRESS ISSUES OR CONCERNS ON THEIR OWN LOTS.

This will help answer residents' questions related to lot grading, drainage improvements and planning, as well as provide options for individual actions that address drainage issues on private lots.

ACTION 13

INCLUDE POTENTIAL INFILL GROWTH SCENARIOS IN NEIGHBOURHOOD SEWER MODELING ASSESSMENTS WHERE POSSIBLE, IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE POSSIBLE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF NEW HOUSING ON DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.

This will improve our knowledge of the existing drainage system and potential future capacity and needs in established neighbourhoods, and help us plan for infill growth that makes best use of our existing infrastructure.



"MY NEIGHBOURHOOD DESPERATELY NEEDS TO INFILL TO REPLACE TIRED HOUSING STOCK, AND ALSO TO PROVIDE ENOUGH DENSITY TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOLS AND COMMERCIAL BUSINESS IN THE AREA."



RULES

WE ARE CHANGING SOME OF THE RULES TO BETTER SUPPORT INFILL IN EDMONTON.

ACTION 14

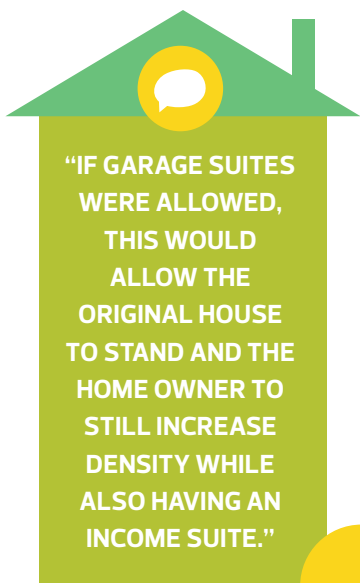
CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GARAGE AND GARDEN SUITES IN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS BY AMENDING THE ZONING BYLAW'S LOCATION CRITERIA AND SITE REGULATIONS FOR THESE TYPES OF HOUSING.

This will reduce regulatory barriers to garage and garden suites, and increase the number of diverse and affordable housing options for both homeowners and renters.

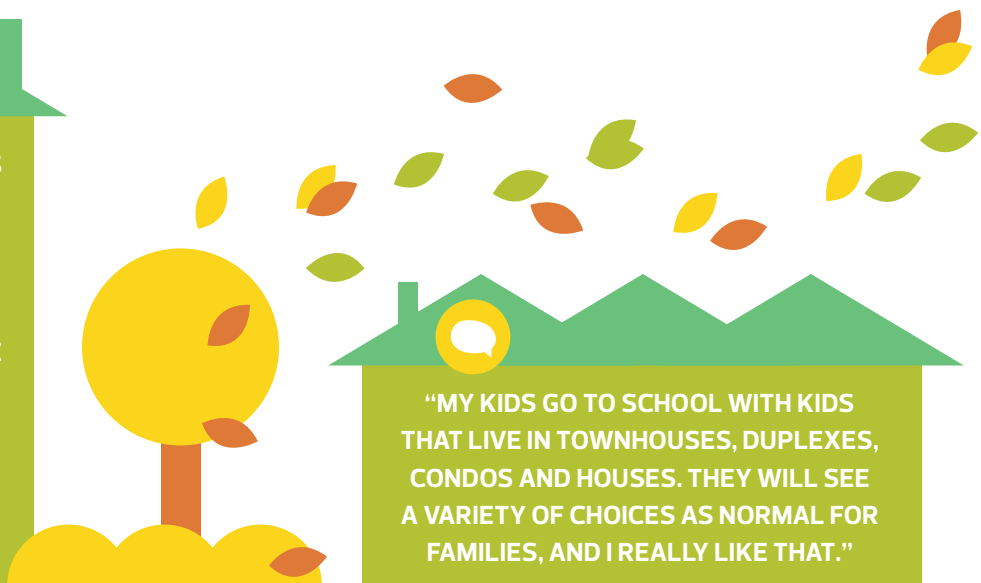
ACTION 15

CHANGE THE RF1 (SINGLE DETACHED) ZONE TO ALLOW THE SUBDIVISION OF PROPERTIES INTO NARROWER LOTS THAT ARE HALF THE AVERAGE WIDTH OF THE OTHER LOTS ON THE BLOCK (BUT NOT LESS THAN 25FT WIDE).

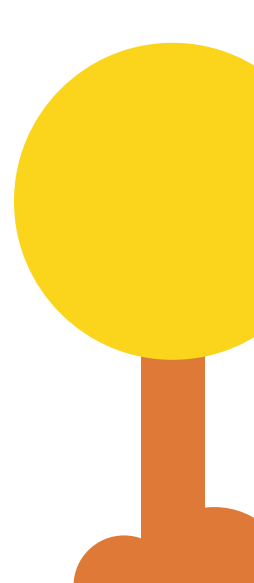
This will support more new single detached housing in the RF1 zone, encourage the creation of more affordable lots in a manner that reflects the context of existing blocks, and help meet market demand for new homes in older neighbourhoods.



"IF GARAGE SUITES WERE ALLOWED, THIS WOULD ALLOW THE ORIGINAL HOUSE TO STAND AND THE HOME OWNER TO STILL INCREASE DENSITY WHILE ALSO HAVING AN INCOME SUITE."



"MY KIDS GO TO SCHOOL WITH KIDS THAT LIVE IN TOWNHOUSES, DUPLEXES, CONDOS AND HOUSES. THEY WILL SEE A VARIETY OF CHOICES AS NORMAL FOR FAMILIES, AND I REALLY LIKE THAT."



ACTION 16

CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROW HOUSING IN THE RF3 (SMALL SCALE INFILL DEVELOPMENT) ZONE BY REMOVING LOCATION RESTRICTIONS AND CHANGING THE SITE REGULATIONS THAT CURRENTLY LIMIT THIS FORM OF INFILL ON RF3 LOTS.

This will make row housing easier to build by simplifying the approval process, will respond to growing market demand for row housing, and may help increase affordability in older neighbourhoods by supporting more housing options.

ACTION 17

REVISE THE MATURE NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERLAY OF THE ZONING BYLAW IN ORDER TO MAKE IT A MORE EFFECTIVE TOOL TO SUPPORT INFILL IN OUR MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS, REDUCE THE NEED FOR VARIANCES AND CLASS B DEVELOPMENT PERMITS, AND IMPROVE THE APPROVALS PROCESS.

This will help support more infill across the wide diversity of established neighbourhoods by continuing to encourage infill that responds to the context of a property, increasing predictability in the approvals process, and providing more design flexibility for new housing.

ACTION 18

DEVELOP ZONING REGULATIONS THAT WILL PROACTIVELY SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL INFILL THROUGH TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT IN EXISTING AND FUTURE HIGH FREQUENCY TRANSIT AREAS.

This will support denser infill that is integrated with transit, and that encourages walkability, livability and mixed-use development while capitalizing on transit investments in established neighbourhoods.



“EVEN IF THERE IS SUPPORT FROM 100 NEIGHBORS AND 1 COMPLAINT, THE PROCESS IS DELAYED AND PUT TO A SUBJECTIVE DECISION. THIS IS A MAJOR DISINCENTIVE TO CREATIVE INFILL DEVELOPMENT.”





PROCESS

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WE WILL IMPROVE AND CLARIFY OUR PROCESSES.

ACTION 19

REVISE THE CONTENT AND FORMAT OF NOTIFICATION LETTERS FOR INFILL RELATED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND REZONING APPLICATIONS IN ORDER TO CLARIFY THE PURPOSE OF THESE LETTERS, AND TO PROVIDE RELEVANT AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED, ALLOWED OR VARIED.

This will improve the infill process by helping people to better understand the changes that are proposed, clarify expectations around notification for those who receive these letters, and improve communication between the City and residents in established neighbourhoods.

ACTION 20

PILOT A TEAM OF CITY STAFF FOCUSED ON APPROVALS AND PERMITTING FOR SMALL SCALE INFILL (UP TO ROW HOUSING), ALONG WITH RELATED COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES, TO IMPROVE INFILL PROCESSES AND BUILD INTERNAL EXPERTISE.

This will improve and streamline the approval processes for infill, support more consistent decision making within the City, and improve communication with residents and builders by providing one point of contact for questions about infill.



ACTION 21

TEST NEW APPROACHES TO THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS PROCESS IN ORDER TO STEWARD CREATIVE RESIDENTIAL INFILL PROJECTS OR SHOWCASE NEW-TO-EDMONTON FORMS OF INFILL.

This has the potential to position Edmonton as a leader in infill design by improving opportunities for infill projects and housing forms that may not fit into our existing rules and definitions by creating more efficient and effective management processes.

ACTION 22

PURSUE CHANGES TO PROCESSES TO HELP REDUCE COSTS, EXPEDITE APPROVALS, AND SUPPORT AFFORDABILITY.

This will help to ease some of the challenges builders and homebuyers face in established neighbourhoods, and help to make our established neighbourhoods an easier choice for everyone.



ACTION 23

RE-EXAMINE INFILL-RELATED NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESSES AND APPROACHES IN ORDER TO INFORM POTENTIAL CHANGES THAT CAN IMPROVE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AND TRANSPARENCY.

This will help make approval processes clear and efficient by supporting process changes and information sharing that help everyone understand the opportunities available for involvement, and that encourage effective participation and communication between residents, builders and the City.




COMMUNICATION

- 1 Communications strategy 
- 2 Infill website
- 3 Online visualization tool
- 4 Signs on building sites
- 5 Good Neighbour Construction Guide 

THE INFILL ROADMAP

THESE 23 ACTIONS WILL HELP US NAVIGATE OUR WORK TO SUPPORT MORE AND BETTER INFILL ACROSS OUR ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS.

COLLABORATION

- 6 Infill Action Insight Group 
- 7 Public tools and resources
- 8 Infill activities and events
- 9 Infill in Planning Academy
- 10 Pilot projects

KNOWLEDGE

- 11 Snapshot of existing conditions
- 12 Drainage information resource
- 13 Infill in infrastructure modeling

RULES

- 14 More garage and garden suites
- 15 Narrower lots in RF1
- 16 More row housing in RF3
- 17 Mature Neighbourhood Overlay changes
- 18 Transit oriented development zoning

PROCESS

- 19 Better notification letters
- 20 City Infill Team
- 21 Process for creative projects
- 22 Cost and time improvements
- 23 Clear and effective notification and consultation

where we
are going

A BRIGHT AND EXCITING FUTURE FOR
INFILL IN EDMONTON.




MOVING FORWARD



MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

EDMONTON'S INFILL ROADMAP IS A SPRINGBOARD FOR ACTION TO ADVANCE INFILL. IT IS ABOUT SUPPORTING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR INFILL HOUSING, PEOPLE, AND ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS IN OUR CITY.

We are committed to the 23 actions in this work plan. They will demonstrate real change. They are key activities that are needed to remove barriers to the development of more new housing and to proactively manage growth.

We have identified 8 priority actions. They are marked on previous pages with a . We will start these right away. Work on the other actions will happen over the next two years. If other needs or opportunities to support infill come up along the way, we may act on them too!

As the actions in this roadmap are completed – and as our city, residents, and neighbourhoods continue to evolve – we will look ahead to determine what our next priorities and directions for infill might be.

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS HERE:
WWW.EDMONTON.CA/EVOLVINGINFILL

Our conversation about evolving infill is just beginning.





WWW.EDMONTON.CA/EVOLVINGINFILL

THE CITY OF
Edmonton