

Bylaw 18089

Text Amendment to the Zoning Bylaw 12800 - Information Requirements for the Demolition of Historic Resources

Purpose

To amend Zoning Bylaw 12800 to introduce information requirements for applications to demolish structures listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton.

Readings

Bylaw 18089 is ready for three readings after the public hearing has been held. If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, Council must unanimously agree "That Bylaw 18089 be considered for third reading."

Advertising and Signing

This Bylaw has been advertised in the Edmonton Journal on Friday, June 9, 2017, and Saturday, June 17, 2017. The Bylaw can be passed following third reading.

Position of Administration

Administration supports this Bylaw.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the March 15, 2017, Urban Planning Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 to include information requirements for the demolition of buildings listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton, as generally outlined in Option 3 and Attachment 2 of the March 15, 2017, Sustainable Development report CR_4123, and return to a future City Council Public Hearing.

Report

Structures listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton do not have any formal protection and can be demolished. At present, Administration works with owners of buildings listed on the Inventory to offer financial grant and rezoning incentives to encourage the designation of these buildings and ensure their preservation. If an owner refuses to designate a building on the Inventory, and wishes to pursue demolition, the only way the City can prevent this is by designating the building as a Municipal Historic Resource without the consent of the owner. The legal authority for this is outlined in section 26 of the *Historical Resources Act* ("Act"). However, the *Act* requires the City to compensate the owner for any decrease in economic value. To date, no municipality in Alberta has undertaken the designation of a Municipal Historic Resource without consent from the owner, including the City of Edmonton.

If an owner does not wish to designate a building on the Inventory, and City Council does not wish to designate the building without the owner's consent, the building can be demolished.

Architectural and historical documentation of buildings on the Inventory prior to their demolition is a way to preserve a record of the city's historic fabric. Administration has been seeking this information on an informal basis, but has no means to ensure an applicant provides this important information. In many cases, applicants refuse to provide the information at all.

The proposed amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 would provide a mechanism for the City to require applicants to provide this information. Having formal documentation requirements in the Zoning Bylaw will ensure this information is provided prior to the issuance of a development permit to demolish a building on the Inventory. Information collected would then be transferred to the City Archives to be made available for future reference or research.

Documentation of historic resources prior to demolition is a requirement in several municipalities in Canada, including Calgary, Lacombe, Victoria, New Westminster, Ottawa, Oshawa, Toronto, Oakville, Brantford and Mississauga, to name a few. The level of documentation ranges from basic photographs of the exterior, to as-built drawings (i.e. scaled elevation drawings) and to more detailed heritage impact statements or assessments, depending on the municipality, and the significance of the structure. It is also common practice in other jurisdictions, including the United States, United Kingdom and Australia. General historic preservation practices also recommend proper documentation of historic structures prior to significant alteration or demolition. Many of these were established in 1996 by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) through its Principles for the Recording of Monuments, Groups of Buildings and Sites.

Increased redevelopment in the historic and mature parts of Edmonton is placing pressures on the remaining historic resources in these areas, with a resulting increase in applications for demolitions. The introduction of requirements in Zoning Bylaw 12800 for the demolition of historic resources will allow the City to document these significant buildings prior to their loss, and retain a record for potential future use.

Policy

This amendment supports City Policy C450B - Policy to Encourage the Designation and Rehabilitation of Municipal Historic Resources in Edmonton, Purpose 5 - Broader Heritage Initiatives: "The City of Edmonton will integrate the Historic Resources Management Program with other heritage initiatives such as museums, archives and archaeological work."

Corporate Outcomes

This report contributes to the corporate outcome “Edmonton is an environmentally sustainable and resilient city” as it will ensure proper documentation of historic buildings is undertaken prior to their demolition. Through that process, Administration will have an opportunity to encourage owners to salvage materials from the demolished structures for re-use in other development, diverting these materials from the waste stream.

Public Consultation

This report was circulated to key external stakeholders, including Infill Development Edmonton Association, Canadian Home Builders Association - Edmonton Region, Urban Development Institute - Edmonton Region, and Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues submitted comments that the wording should be strengthened to “shall require” and that the provision should apply to applications for the demolition of any buildings built prior to 1960.

Attachment

1. Bylaw 18089