

Lot Grading Information for Development Permits

Recommendation:

That the May 3, 2017, Sustainable Development report CR_4121, be received for information.

Report Summary

This report provides information about the effectiveness of the changes to Zoning Bylaw 12800 to require Lot Grading Plans at the time of the development permit application.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the September 28, 2016, Urban Planning Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a status report on the effectiveness of the changes to the Zoning Bylaw of requiring lot grading information at the time of Development Permit application.

Report

Residential infill Lot Grading Plans are engineering drawings that identify the finished elevation of the proposed development and illustrate how and where surface water will be directed off the property to City right-of-way. These plans require approval from Drainage Planning and Engineering prior to construction of the development. This allows drainage professionals to determine whether proposed drainage methods and lot grading conform to Drainage Bylaw 16200.

Past Practice

Prior to a Zoning Bylaw 12800 amendment (Bylaw 17277) passed on July 6, 2015, there was no mechanism in place to have Lot Grading Plan submissions tied to the development permit review process. Permits were being issued and construction often began without the submission and approval of Lot Grading Plans. The absence of Lot Grading Plan preparation, plan review, final grade approval and inspections resulted in drainage issues for both the new infill development and neighbouring properties. Less than 10 percent of all new infill development in mature and established areas had approved Lot Grading Plans prior to the amendment.

New Practice

Administration recognized that minor amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 could link the lot grading and development permit processes to ensure consistent and timely review and approval. The Zoning Bylaw 12800 amendment (Bylaw 17277), passed on July 6, 2015, involved an update of the Special Information Requirements (Section 14.10) to require the submission of a Lot Grading Plan as part of a development permit application. This effectively ensured Lot Grading Plans were approved alongside all new infill development permits.

Outcomes

Requiring a Lot Grading Plan and integrating the process with development permit review has successfully resolved a process disconnect. Implementation of this amendment required phased internal process changes and training for industry and Administration. The requirement for Lot Grading Plans had a phase-in period that started on July 6, 2015, with Lot Grading Plans becoming mandatory on October 1, 2015. As of March 1, 2016, Administration had completed internal training and process updates that enabled tracking the lot grading review process.

Prior to implementing the new lot grading process, in a one year period (July 1, 2014 to July 1, 2015):

- 484 development permits were issued
- 35 Lot Grading Plans were submitted and approved
- seven percent of all development permits issued in this timeframe were accompanied by an approved Lot Grading Plan

After implementing the new lot grading process, in the nine month period of March 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016:

- 388 development permits were issued that required Lot Grading Plans
- 388 Lot Grading Plans were submitted and approved
- 15 of the 388 permits had approved Lot Grading Plans submitted prior to development permit application, which were then linked to the property profile within the City's permitting database
- 100 percent of all development permits issued that required Lot Grading Plans in this timeframe had approved Lot Grading Plans

There has been insufficient time elapsed to determine if there has been a drop in the number of drainage complaints as a result of this process change. This is for two reasons: the timeframe for landowners or developers to obtain final lot grading approval is up to 30 months from the date a building permit is issued and the ability and method to track drainage complaints has recently been changed.

Administration continues to track the effectiveness of this process and to establish confirmation that outcomes are resulting in ongoing compliance with Drainage Bylaw 16200. Administration will keep monitoring this progress and provide reports to Council as directed.

Policy

The Way We Grow, Municipal Development Plan, Bylaw 15100

- Objective 3.5.1 – Established neighbourhoods gain a greater portion of new growth, accommodating changes and growth with certainty.

Corporate Outcomes

This report contributes to the corporate outcome “Edmonton is attractive and compact” as this report supports *The Way We Grow*, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan (Objective 3.5.1) by reporting on, and supporting, the ongoing efforts to address challenges to residential infill development such as residential lot grading.

Public Consultation

The report was circulated to internal and external stakeholders between February 13 and March 13, 2017. No concerns were raised by internal and external stakeholders.

Metrics, Targets and Outcomes

| Metrics | Targets | Outcomes |
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| <p>Timeframe: March 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016</p> <p>388 total Lot Grading Plans approved out of 388 development permits issued.</p> <p>15 of the development permits issued had approved Lot Grading Plans submitted prior to development permit application, which are then linked to the property profile within the City's permitting database.</p> <p>100 percent of all development permits issued in this timeframe had approved Lot Grading Plans</p> | <p>100 percent of all development permit applications for house combo permits in the mature areas will contain a Lot Grading Plan by 2018.</p> | <p>Approved Lot Grading Plans on all infill sites in areas where Lot Grading Plans do not exist.</p> |

Attachment

1. Summary of Development Permits and Lot Grading Plans Issued in Mature and Established Neighbourhoods

Others Reviewing this Report

- R. G. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- T. Burge, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services