

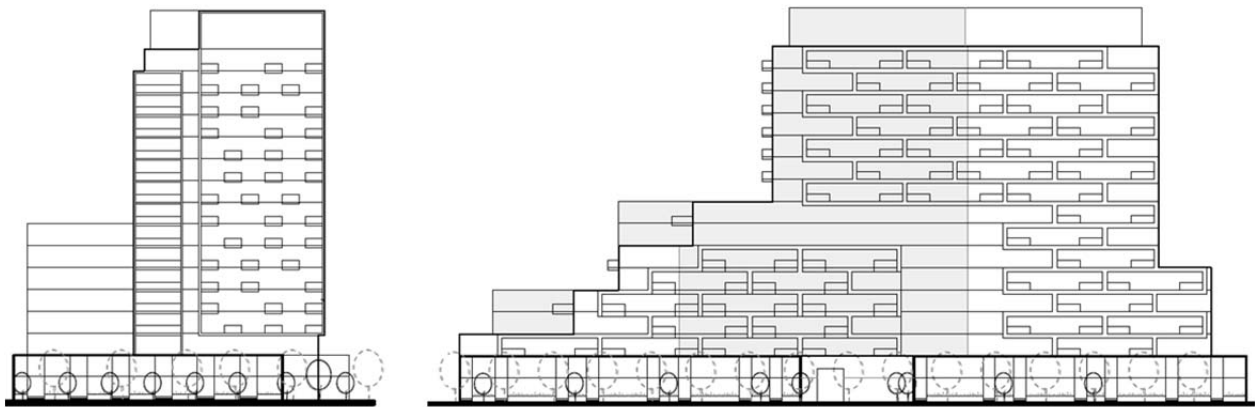


# REZONING AND PLAN AMENDMENTS APPLICATION

Queen Alexandra

## Multiple sites between 81 Avenue NW and 82 Avenue NW both to the east and west of 106 Street NW

To allow for high density development that accommodates a wide variety of uses including pedestrian oriented commercial and both high rise and ground oriented residential.



## RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION

Sustainable Development **SUPPORTS** this application because the proposed DC1 Provision:

- allows for high quality infill re-development of underutilized sites in a successful pedestrian oriented commercial area;
- adequately constrains development through regulations to ensure the potential negative impacts of infill tower developments are appropriately mitigated;
- will contribute thoughtfully and sensitively to the ongoing growth and change of the surrounding neighbourhood; and
- provides a unique and innovative built form to advance ongoing infill innovation in the city.

## THE APPLICATION

1. BYLAW 17846 to amend the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) to exempt the subject sites from several policies that do not support the scale and intensity of the proposed development. The boundaries of the ARP would also be modified to redesignate land associated with the rezoning from being in the Garneau ARP to the Strathcona ARP.
2. BYLAW 17847 to amend the Garneau Area Redevelopment Plan to modify boundaries of the ARP to redesignate lands associated with the rezoning from being in the Garneau ARP to the Strathcona ARP.
3. BYLAW 17848 to amend the Zoning Bylaw from (CB2) General Business Zone & (DC2.443) Site Specific Development Control Provision to a (DC1) Direct Development Control Provision for 10520 to 10570 - 81 Avenue NW, 10602 to 10618 - 81 Avenue NW, 10565 - 82 Avenue NW and 10615 to 10631 - 82 Avenue NW.

The proposed DC1 Provision has the following key characteristics:

- 4 distinct Areas with varying regulations (see below)
- Maximum Heights ranging from 21 to 56 metres (approximately 5 to 19 storeys)
- Maximum Floor Area Ratios ranging from 3.5 to 9.0
- Up to 840 residential dwellings (672 Dwellings per hectare)
- A “sunset clause” of 10 years

The proposal comes together to provide a livable, well-designed, and human-scale environment where new residents can find homes for themselves and their families, contribute to the evolving fabric of the community, and support the local commercial area which will enhance its vibrancy over time. As an initiative designed to support the growth of both new populations and businesses, this proposal seeks to build upon the historic success of the area and positively contribute to its future change.

Thoughtful attention to detail in terms of architecture and urban design are clearly articulated in this proposal. The building shapes, orientation and design treatments can provide a unique contribution to Edmonton's built form and may advance a new opportunity for continued infill innovation in the city. The building styles featured in this proposal represent a departure from past practice in terms of how middle and higher density living environments are designed. The proposal makes a clear effort to ensure that the buildings are sensitive to their context and that they land well on the ground to support an integrated interface with the public realm at the pedestrian level where people actually experience the street.



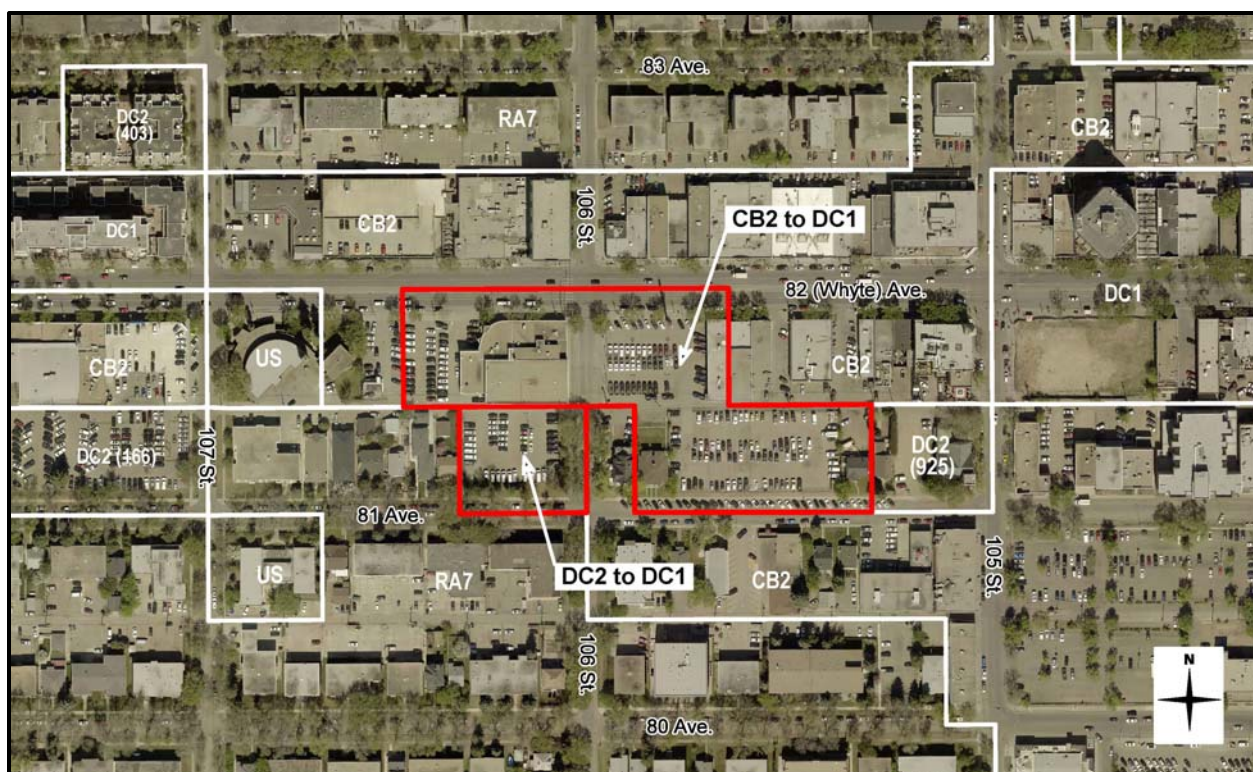
Area	Height (m)	FAR	# of Dwellings
1	56	9.0	250
2	56	7.25	400
3	21*	3.5	80
4	21*	3.5	110

\*Does not include rooftop mechanical equipment and other rooftop features

## SITES AND SURROUNDING AREA

The four Areas that comprise the proposed DC1 Provision are located in the Queen Alexandra neighbourhood, just west of the historic core of "Old Strathcona" and its associated Historical Commercial (DC1) Direct Development Control Provision. This site forms part of the fabric of the Whyte Avenue area and contributes to the mixed-use commercial street. It is surrounded by low scale mixed-use buildings of varying sizes on all sides, except to the east where the future 53 metre Mezzo tower at the corner of 81 Avenue NW and 105 Street NW (DC2.925) has been approved by City Council.

Combined, the four Areas outlined in the DC1 occupy a large area of land south of 82 (Whyte) Avenue NW at approximately 1.25 hectares or 12,500 square metres. This represents about a third of the size of the total land area found in the Historical Commercial DC1 to the east.



AERIAL VIEW OF APPLICATION AREA

	EXISTING ZONING	CURRENT USES
<b>SUBJECT SITE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (CB2) General Business Zone</li> <li>• (DC2.443) Site Specific Development Control Provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automotive and Minor Recreation Vehicle Sales/Rentals and associated parking areas (Southpark dealership, now closed)</li> <li>• One Single Detached House</li> <li>• One Fourplex on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton</li> </ul>
<b>CONTEXT</b>		
North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (CB2) General Business Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of commercial uses (Bars &amp; Neighbourhood Pubs, Restaurants, General Retail Stores, Hotels, etc.)</li> </ul>
East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (CB2) General Business Zone</li> <li>• (DC2.925) Site Specific Development Control Provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of commercial uses</li> <li>• DC2 Zoning for 16 storey mixed use building (not yet under construction)</li> </ul>
South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (CB2) General Business Zone</li> <li>• (RA7) Low Rise Apartment Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of commercial uses</li> <li>• Low Rise Apartment Housing</li> </ul>
West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (CB2) General Business Zone</li> <li>• (RA7) Low Rise Apartment Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automotive and Minor Recreation Vehicle Sales/Rentals Use</li> <li>• Single Detached Housing</li> <li>• Personal Service Shop Use</li> </ul>

## PLANNING ANALYSIS

### NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT

The Whyte Avenue area is one of the most successful, pedestrian oriented, highly connected and vibrant parts of Edmonton. It is a desirable place to live and is a year round destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, festivals and many other activities for Edmontonians from all parts of the city and the capital region. The area contains one of two designated Provincial Historic Areas in the province and the only one in a major urban setting.

Continued development in the city's core neighbourhoods, including infill redevelopment of underutilized sites, is an established goal in Council approved policy and guideline documents including the Municipal Development Plan. As neighbourhoods transition and evolve to accommodate these objectives, it is important that new development proposals contribute thoughtfully and sensitively to the ongoing growth and change of the surrounding neighbourhood. This area is particularly well-suited for ongoing, high quality, redevelopment as it is located along an established main street in an important corridor, it's well supported by transit and other modes of transportation, and it is connected to a wide variety of places, spaces and uses that serve many different needs and community interests.

This proposal offers an opportunity to reconnect and rebuild an important piece of the urban fabric along Whyte Avenue which has been interrupted by its former use as a large scale single-use commercial development. To leverage this potential, and to best manage the location and size of the proposed redevelopment areas, it is important that detailed and sensitive control of the use, development, siting and design of buildings is clearly regulated to enhance this special area of unique character that serves local residents, visitors, commercial interests and tourists alike.

### LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Within this proposed DC1 Provision, there are generally two types of development being proposed. Fronting 81 Avenue NW, Areas 1 and 2 propose high rise, primarily residential development and fronting 82 (Whyte) Avenue NW, Areas 3 and 4 propose 4 to 6 storey mixed use commercially focused buildings.

#### **Areas 1 and 2 – high-rise towers**

Areas 1 and 2 allow for a variety of residential, residential-related and limited commercial uses that are consistent with an urban mixed use area. Uses that could potentially have negative impacts on the lower density residential areas to the south are prohibited, including: bars, nightclubs, liquor stores or large general retail stores and restaurants. At the ground level, the built form and urban design regulations ensure a strong, pedestrian oriented podium for future development. These regulations include limiting the podium to 2-3 storeys before tower stepbacks and ensuring a "townhouse" style residential pattern of active individual entrances for units consistent with the character of the area.

The proposed DC1 enables the development of 56 metre high (including roof top mechanical structures) towers in these two Areas while ensuring the negative impacts of the towers are



limited. The regulations adequately provide detailed, sensitive control of the siting and design of development that is necessary to preserve and enhance the local context. When introducing towers to sensitive infill areas, there are a number of impacts that need to be properly mitigated through design regulations, including:

1. Sun access and penetration to surrounding properties and key activity areas;
2. Privacy and overlook into adjacent sites;
3. Massing impact (perception of a building “looming” over people on the ground);
4. Transition to surrounding lower scale buildings; and
5. Architectural and urban design excellence for buildings visible from both the immediate area and from great distances.

Currently, the Zoning Bylaw and Residential Infill Guidelines seek to address these considerations through the application of regulations that require slender, point towers (750 square metre floor plates and maximum façade length of 36 m) with appropriate separation space between multiple towers. These types of design strategies have been demonstrated to be successful in the past and there are several such examples of achieving sensitive tower infill development in Edmonton using this methodology. Area 1 works to mitigate the above impacts generally using this established methodology but Area 2 proposes a different built form, which requires other, unique, mitigation techniques to ensure high-quality design within the local context.

#### *Summary of Tower Component Considerations*

While the proposed increase in height and massing from the current zones represent a significant departure in terms of built form, the potential negative impacts of tower infill development have been adequately mitigated. These areas represent large development parcels and appropriate design controls have been included to ensure compatibility and sensitive integration with the surrounding area through the DC1 Provision (via architectural treatments such as defined terracing, building sculpting and orientation). The DC1 Provision includes regulations to ensure that the shadow of buildings do not touch the north pedestrian sidewalk of Whyte Avenue from March 21 to September 21 and there are clearly defined breaks that allow for opportunities for sun penetration in other parts of the year.

#### *Built Form Analysis – Area 1*

The building proposed for Area 1 is a tower with a strong, pedestrian oriented podium that promotes active streets while creating amenity and defensible space through setbacks, grade changes and landscaping. Stepbacks from the podium to the tower of at least 3.5 metres ensure that the tower is pushed back and does not “loom” over the streets below.

Above the podium, the building takes the form of a wider mid-rise building with a narrower high-rise tower extending from it. The shorter portions of the building are oriented east-west with the taller portions oriented north-south which allows good sun penetration from the south to Whyte Avenue to the north. The maximum floor plate for the tower portion is 886 square metres. While this is larger than the recommended 750 square metres, both facades are less than the recommended 36 metre length (approximately 27.5 metres and 32.2 metres respectively).

The building proposed for this area is comparable to the approved “Mezzo Tower” DC2 Provision to the east of the site. Both towers are located on the northwest corners of intersections a block apart on 81 Avenue NW (105 Street NW and 106 Street NW) and share a similar built form, which is summarized in the table below.

<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Proposed DC1 Area 1</b>	<b>Mezzo DC2</b>
<b>Height</b>	56 m*	53.5 m*
<b>Mid Tower Floor Plate</b>	1,200 m <sup>2</sup>	1,140 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Top Tower Floor Plate</b>	886 m <sup>2</sup>	860 m <sup>2</sup>

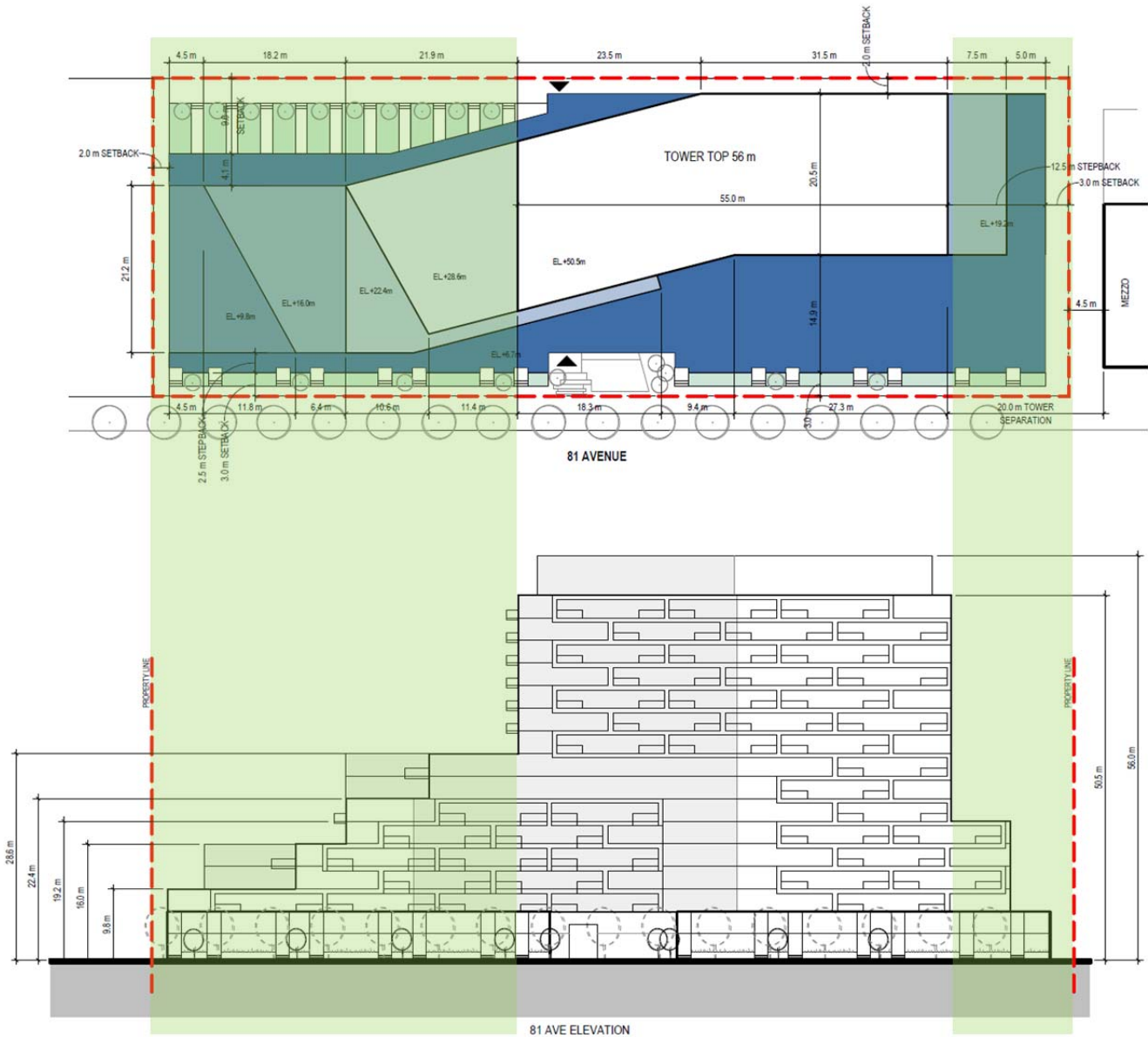
\*These heights include rooftop mechanical equipment and other rooftop features

### *Built Form Analysis – Area 2*

This building has a strong pedestrian oriented podium base and a long, articulated, mid-rise building section with a wide slab tower on top. Although the tower component of the architectural composition is not designed as a “point tower”, and the massing is larger than it is for Area 1 or The Mezzo, it mitigates its negative impacts through a high degree of articulation and terracing.

The land in Area 2 is almost half a hectare in size with an east-west length of nearly 120 m. Instead of proposing two slender point towers on this site, this application contemplates one tower that has an equivalent façade length (55 metres) as two point towers of 750 square metre floor plates combined (27.5 metres each).

By orienting the mass of the building in this way and providing significant terracing, it creates a very large break for sun penetration to Whyte Avenue with the tower top being 40 metres from the west podium façade of the building. As shown in the drawings from the DC1 Provision Appendices, included below, of the nearly 120 metre long site, less than half is above 30 metres in height. The green, shaded area indicates the portions of the site that would be less than 30 metres and thus maintain significant opportunity for sun penetration to Whyte Avenue. A 30 metre height at this location would not cast a shadow on the north side of Whyte Avenue well into the shoulder seasons.





### *Tower Separation*

The Residential Infill Guidelines call for high-rise towers to have a minimum separation distance of 30 meters if the tower faces are offset from one another, with an increase to 35 meters if the towers face directly onto each other. When analyzing the entire length of 81 Avenue NW from 105 Street NW to the west side of Area 1, it is determined that there is an appropriate amount of tower separation that will ensure sun access to the north on to Whyte Avenue.

By establishing that the tower portion of the building in Area 1 is 20 metres from the shared property line to the west, it is well positioned to absorb more than half of the required separation distance if the adjacent land were ever rezoned to allow tower development.

For Area 2, the separation between the proposed building and The Mezzo tower does not meet the 30 metre recommendation. The tower separation is 20 meters, but the towers are offset appropriately. The Mezzo tower is located on the south portion of its site, the proposed Area 2 tower is located on the north portion to improve this condition. Additionally, because of the length of Area 2 and the location of the tower within it, there are approximately 80 metres between the towers in Area 1 and Area 2 that will never be interrupted by future tower development, thereby preserving sunlight access.

### **Areas 3 and 4 – low-rise buildings**

Areas 3 and 4 allow for a variety of commercial uses consistent with those allowed along Whyte Avenue today, while providing opportunities for residential development in the upper storeys. Proposed development is generally in line with the existing (CB2) General Business Zone and Pedestrian Commercial Shopping Street Overlay, including maintaining the same Floor Area Ratio of 3.5, but with a proposed increase in height from 14.0 meters (for flat roofs) to 21.0 meters. It is important to note that the 21 metre height does not include rooftop mechanical equipment and other features, however, regulations require these features to be less than 27.0 metres, be setback from the facades of the building and are still included in the requirement for not casting a shadow on the the north pedestrian sidewalk of Whyte Avenue from March 21 to September 21. Impacts of this proposed increase in height are also mitigated by stepbacks above the 2-3 storey street wall of 3 to 6 meters for the portions facing Whyte Avenue.

The built form and urban design regulations also contribute to a pedestrian oriented commercial shopping street. These regulations include limiting the street wall to 2-3 storeys before stepbacks (in most cases), requiring transparent storefront glazing, having articulation intervals of approximately 10 metres and providing weather protection canopies over entrances.

Because of the low scale built form and detailed regulations provided, Areas 3 and 4 are positioned to successfully contribute towards, and enhance the character of, the Whyte Avenue and Old Strathcona area.

### **PLANWHYTE**

In 2015, Sustainable Development began a series of planning activities to determine the effectiveness of the existing Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP). This included meetings with key stakeholders, conducting focus groups, an online survey and review of case

studies. Initial findings indicated that the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan provides for strong heritage preservation but restricts new, more intensive redevelopment opportunities.

The study is examining heritage, land use, urban design, transportation, and development opportunities. It is establishing a design vision, set of principles and concept for the long-term evolution of Whyte Avenue based on City policy, public engagement, technical study and design analyses. Policy recommendations are being developed to:

- Strengthen preservation of the core heritage commercial area, which coincides with the boundaries of the Provincial Historic Area.
- Identify potential opportunities for additional development outside the core heritage commercial area.
- Invest in public infrastructure changes intended to enhance the quality of life within the Whyte Avenue corridor area.

Previous Council direction (see Appendix 3) has been that land development applications can run concurrently with the preparation of the planWhyte study with an expectation that Sustainable Development would work to evaluate proposals with respect to existing policies and guidelines and also consider the evolving draft recommendations of planWhyte.

After the referral motion on January 23, 2017, additional work was carried out with respect to the heights currently being contemplated by planWhyte. Areas 1 and 2 are within the Urbanization District of the draft height concept which suggests heights of 50 metres while Areas 3 and 4 are within the Main Street District that suggests heights of 21 metres. As such, Areas 1 and 2 (at 56 metres) are slightly higher than the draft concept of planWhyte while Areas 3 and 4 align at 21 metres. All four Areas share planWhyte's commitment to high quality architecture, a strong human-scaled design at the pedestrian level and an enhancement of the unique character of this special area while contributing sensitively to ongoing growth and change. A more detailed analysis is found in Appendix 3 to this report.

The draft planWhyte concept is currently undergoing performance testing, market analysis and development and stakeholder review. The applicant articulated a desire for increased development rights that will include slightly higher buildings than the heights currently contemplated through draft planWhyte scenarios. However, based on performance standards and regulations to mitigate negative impacts of tall buildings, it has been demonstrated by this particular application, on these particular sites, that the proposed taller buildings still generally meet the same objectives for the area as those outlined in planWhyte.

## **RESIDENTIAL INFILL GUIDELINES**

Only Areas 1 and 2 were reviewed relative to the Infill Guidelines for High Rise Apartments. Areas 3 and 4 are along an existing commercial corridor and are generally in line with existing zoning so the Residential Infill Guidelines are not applicable.

Areas 1 and 2 meet the majority of guidelines for High Rise Apartments, with Area 1 being more closely aligned. A full analysis of these areas is found in Appendix 1 to this report.

## **PLANS IN EFFECT**

Both the Strathcona and Garneau Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) apply to this application. Areas 2, 3 and 4 are currently within the boundaries of the Strathcona ARP while Area 1 is currently within the boundaries of the Garneau ARP. The application proposes to redesignate the land in Area 1 from the Garneau to the Strathcona plan so as to have the entire area subject to the DC1 Provision within the same plan.

Two objectives and two policies of the Strathcona ARP are also proposed to be amended. The current plan does not support the scale and intensity of development at this location and requires building height to be compatible with the low-rise characteristic of the commercial area.

## **EDMONTON DESIGN COMMITTEE**

On August 16, 2016, this application was reviewed by the Edmonton Design Committee. The committee provided an initial recommendation of non-support on the basis that the regulations in the DC1 Provision submitted did not capture the vision and ambition of the project as presented.

On December 6, 2016, a revised application, with additional design detail embedded in the DC regulations, was reviewed by the Edmonton Design Committee. Upon review, the committee provided a recommendation of support for the project, without conditions.

## **HERITAGE**

Area 2 contains a building that is on the Inventory of Historical Resources in Edmonton known as the Barraclough/Treau Residence. This building is a one-storey fourplex that is significant as an example of a mid-century residential fourplex and for its association with the theme of post-oil boom residential development in the Queen Alexandra neighbourhood. If this application is approved, it is more likely that the building will be demolished as part of subsequent development permits for the buildings within the proposed DC1 Provision.

Area 3 contains the iconic "Southpark-On-Whyte" sign which is also on the Inventory of Historical Resources in Edmonton. While the proposed DC1 Provision does not require the retention of this sign, there are regulations that encourage it to remain on site as an identifiable landmark and a link to the historical use of the site and the broader history of Whyte Avenue.

## **PUBLIC AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS**

The contributions proposed by this DC1 Provision are:

1. A minimum of 17 of the 840 dwellings are required to be Family Oriented Dwellings that must have private access to grade, have an average of 2.25 bedrooms and provide access to an outdoor amenity area. This reflects the same number of houses the historical street pattern of single family homes would accommodate on a site of this size.

2. Provide public realm and streetscape improvements to 81 Avenue NW, 82 Avenue NW, 106 Street NW and the lane on both sides of 106 Street NW. Exact details of the improvements would be determined at the Development Permit stage but could include unique street lighting, street furniture, tree planting, bicycle facilities, and unique paving materials.
3. Provide a contribution to Public Art at a rate of \$6.95/m<sup>2</sup> of floor area (excluding any underground parking facilities). The art can be created by an artist or be in the form of structural art and/or the artistic application of hard and soft landscaping. The art must be provided on site or in abutting public realms with the appropriate agreements for maintenance. The DC1 Provision is designed for the contribution to be phased as development occurs in the separate Areas.
4. Provide a combination of dwellings, associated office space and/or financial contribution towards off site amenities in the surrounding communities in coordination with the Community Leagues. The DC1 Provision contains three options that the owner can choose for this contribution. If dwellings and space are donated to the organization for use, there is no financial contribution and the financial contribution increases to a maximum of \$1,500,000 if no dwellings or space is provided.

## TECHNICAL REVIEW

All comments from affected City Departments and utility agencies have been addressed.

A Drainage Servicing Report was submitted for review and no concerns were raised with the conclusion that by providing on site storm storage and limiting storm discharge to the sewer under 106 Street NW, sufficient capacity will be created in the downstream system to account for the increased sanitary contribution.

Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site Assessments were submitted and reviewed with this application. Additional remediation work will be required and the DC1 Provision contains regulation that ensures this is dealt with at the Development Permit stage.

## PARKING AND TRAFFIC

All vehicular access is required to be from the abutting lanes and the majority of vehicular parking is required to be below grade. Vehicular parking requirements are lower than what would normally be required by the Zoning Bylaw at 0.5 spaces per dwelling, regardless of the number of bedrooms. Commercial uses will generally not require any vehicular parking spaces. Bicycle Parking is provided at a level equal to the vehicular parking numbers which is a significant increase from what would normally be required by the Zoning Bylaw.

A Transportation Impact Assessment was submitted and reviewed for this application and no concerns with the proposed level of parking and intensity of development were raised relative to the impacts on surrounding streets and lanes.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Old Strathcona Business Association generally supports redevelopment of these sites but acknowledged that the height and massing of the buildings are issues. They support the stepbacks, “twists” and articulation of the buildings as they saw in the renderings and images shown to them by the applicant but noted that, in the draft material that was shared as part of the public engagement process, these design details were not required by the DC1 Provision. Their primary concern was that this project was being allowed to be processed and considered before Council prior to the completion of the planWhyte study.

The Queen Alexandra Community League does not support this application citing concerns related to height and massing, the nature of the public contributions, and the lack of regulation in the DC1 Provision that would ensure the images and renderings they were shown by the applicant during consultation would actually be what is built.

Since the time that draft regulations were presented for community feedback and stakeholder review, a significant amount of work to improve the level of design detail in the DC1 Provision was undertaken by the applicant. These changes addressed Administration’s concerns with the initial draft and effectively incorporated feedback from the community and Edmonton Design Committee related to design detail.

The table below summarizes all consultation steps taken and general topics that were discussed. More details on comments and concerns received is found in Appendix 2 to this report.

<b>PRE-APPLICATION NOTICE</b> October 14, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Recipients: 548</li> </ul> <p><u>As reported by applicant</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of responses: 4</li> <li>• Number of responses without concerns: 0</li> <li>• Number of responses with concerns: 4</li> <li>• Comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Height and density would impact character</li> <li>- More density would lead to increase in crime</li> <li>- Impact on traffic and parking</li> <li>- Noise</li> <li>- Does not conform with ARP</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>PRE-APPLICATION OPEN HOUSE</b> October 28, 2015	<p><u>As reported by applicant</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended by 60 people</li> <li>• Comments about positive aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Filling in vacant car lot</li> <li>- More people living and walking in area</li> <li>- Podium level good</li> <li>- Addition of retail space</li> <li>- Keep Southpark sign</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments with concerns/wanting changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Want to see exactly what it will look like (not pictures from other places)</li> <li>- Want more appreciation of historic area</li> <li>- Too tall, want shorter</li> <li>- More open/green space</li> <li>- Want more affordable housing and public art</li> <li>- Should be more pedestrian scale</li> <li>- Want development to respect existing zoning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED NOTICE</b> March 3, 2016 March 16, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Recipients: 586</li> <li>• Number of responses without concerns: 1</li> <li>• Number of responses with concerns: 5</li> <li>• Comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parking and Traffic concerns</li> <li>- Impact on property values</li> <li>- Not aligned with character of area</li> <li>- Want Southpark Sign retained</li> <li>- Height too much</li> <li>- Want more detail of what the buildings will look like</li> <li>- Precedent for future development</li> <li>- Want ground level pedestrian oriented</li> <li>- Don't want towers, out of character</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE</b> August 30, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of attendees: 39</li> <li>• Number of feedback forms returned: 12</li> <li>• See Appendix 2 for complete "What We Heard" report.</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

Sustainable Development recommends that City Council APPROVE this application.

## APPENDICES

- 1 Residential Infill Guidelines Analysis
- 2 Public Engagement "What We Heard" Report
- 3 PlanWhyte Height Analysis
- 4 Application Summary



## RESIDENTIAL INFILL GUIDELINES ANALYSIS

Areas 1 and 2 of this application were reviewed for conformance to the recommendations for High Rise Apartments and Large Site Infill Guidelines due to the proposed DC1 dealing with a high rise form, having potential phasing of the project and being adjacent to residential neighbourhoods that may be impacted by such issues shadowing, traffic and parking and loss of views. A breakdown by Area of the DC1 Provision is provided indicating if a particular guideline is met by that Area or not.

### LOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Guideline	Area 1	Area 2
High Rise apartments should have direct access to an arterial or collector road or a road with the demonstrated capacity to accommodate the development without undue impact on adjacent areas.	Yes	Yes
High Rise Residential Buildings should locate in the City's key activity centres, including the central area of the City (Downtown, the Station Lands, and Downtown North Edge), areas adjacent to LRT Stations and at existing regional or community level shopping centre sites.	No	No
High Rise Residential Infill buildings may also be located on other sites in mature neighbourhoods where they can meet the Large Site Infill Guidelines.	No	No
The preferred locations for High Rise Residential Buildings may be further defined through an Area Redevelopment Plan, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan, or Site Vision and Context Plan.	No	No

### BUILT FORM AND DESIGN

Guideline	Area 1	Area 2
High Rise residential towers should be designed with a distinctive expression of a base, middle, and top to better respond to the context of views to and from the tower.	Yes	Yes
High Rise residential towers should be constructed on a podium base that creates a human scale street wall with a minimum height of 3 storeys and a maximum height of 4 storeys.	Yes	Yes
Storeys above the 3rd floor should be stepped back and aesthetically be of a secondary character to the main base form.	Yes	Yes
The podium façade should be divided into segments and articulated to support a walkable environment and reduce the building mass	Yes	Yes
A sun/shadow analysis should be prepared, including analyses of shade impacts for the spring and fall Equinoxes and the winter Solstice.	Yes	Yes
The building should front a street.	Yes	Yes

All ground level units with street frontage should have an individual entrance that fronts onto the street and private outdoor amenity space; all other units should be accessed through an entrance hall fronting onto a street.	No	No
Retail/commercial uses should be developed on the ground floor of buildings which front onto a commercial/shopping street or provide for retail uses in the context of a comprehensively planned development.	No	No
The massing of High Rise buildings should be arranged to minimize shadowing of onsite or adjacent amenity space	Yes	Yes
The maximum height of High Rise buildings on specific sites should be determined using the Large Site Infill Guidelines.	No	No
High Rise residential towers should be designed as slender point towers with small floorplates to protect views and maximize access to sunlight for surrounding development.	Yes	No
High Rise residential towers should be designed with significant shaping to break down the scale of the tower.	No	Yes
High Rise residential towers should be designed with floorplates generally no larger than 750 square metres gross.	No	No
The mass of the tower should be stepped back above the base podium by at least 3 metres.	Yes	No
The massing of High Rise buildings should be arranged to resolve shadowing, overlook, and loss of privacy issues on adjacent areas in accordance with the "Large Site Infill Guidelines"	No	No
The massing of High Rise buildings should be arranged to Provide for a transition between the building and adjacent residential areas in accordance with the "Large Site Infill Guidelines".	No	No
High Rise residential towers should be separated from each other by a minimum of 30 metres if they are offset on the site such that one tower does not directly face the other or a minimum of 35 metres if they face directly on to each other.	Yes	No
The width of a High Rise residential tower should not exceed 36 metres.	Yes	No

## SITE DESIGN AND STREETSCAPE

Guideline	Area 1	Area 2
The site should be landscaped in accordance with an approved Landscape Plan which provides for a high standard of landscaping on the site.	Yes	Yes
The Landscape Plan should Incorporate the design and planting of public sidewalk and boulevard areas adjacent to the site.	Yes	Yes

The Landscape Plan should Illustrate the landscaping of yards and common outdoor amenity areas.	Yes	Yes
Upgrading of the adjacent public sidewalks and boulevard areas may be a requirement of development approval if warranted by the existing conditions.	Yes	Yes
Common, outdoor amenity space should be provided on site to accommodate the recreational and social needs of residents, including families with children when family units are proposed	Yes	Yes
The streetscape design, including building features and landscape treatment along street frontages, should integrate the new development into the existing neighbourhood by providing entry transitions (e.g. use of steps, fences, gates, hedges, low walls) and semi-private outdoor spaces that create a comfortable relationship between the public realm of the street and the private space of the dwelling units.	Yes	Yes
The streetscape design, including building features and landscape treatment along street frontages, should integrate the new development into the existing neighbourhood by providing individual, private front entries and landscaped yards for ground floor units.	No	No
The streetscape design, including building features and landscape treatment along street frontages, should integrate the new development into the existing neighbourhood by maintaining the existing development pattern along the street, including setbacks, treed boulevards and no vehicular access from the street.	Yes	Yes
The site design should, in concert with the design of the building contribute to optimizing sunlight on adjacent properties and on common outdoor amenity areas and maintain the privacy of adjacent homes through the use of fencing, screening, and landscaping.	Yes	Yes
Common outdoor amenity space should be provided on site at a location where there is surveillance, sunlight, and weather protection.	Yes	Yes
The streetscape design, including building features and landscape treatment along street frontages, should integrate the new development into the existing neighbourhood by providing a prominent front entrance to the building.	Yes	Yes
The streetscape design, including building features and landscape treatment along street frontages, should integrate the new development into the existing neighbourhood by using articulated building facades and quality building materials, and creating recessed balconies and roofline features along street fronts.	Yes	Yes
The Landscape Plan should include an assessment of mature trees on site.	No	No
The Landscape Plan should provide for the retention of mature trees to the greatest extent possible.	No	No

**PARKING**

<b>Guideline</b>		<b>Area 1</b>	<b>Area 2</b>
All parking should be accessed from the adjacent lane.		Yes	Yes
Any surface visitor parking areas provided for High Rise buildings should be developed at the side or rear of the building		Yes	Yes
Resident parking should be provided on site in either underground or above ground parking structures.		Yes	Yes
Above ground parking structures should be fully screened with residential, commercial, or community uses to provide for active frontages.		Yes	Yes
Any surface visitor parking areas provided for High Rise buildings should be separated from residential units by landscaped buffers and not impact the street or outdoor amenity areas.		Yes	Yes
Any surface visitor parking areas provided for High Rise buildings should be clustered into smaller parking lots and divided with landscaping (including trees).		No	No

## ‘WHAT WE HEARD’ REPORT

# Rezoning Application

## LDA15-0648

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**PROJECT ADDRESSES:** 10520 to 10570 - 81 Avenue NW, 10602 to 10618 - 81 Avenue NW, 10565 - 82 Avenue NW and 10615 to 10631 - 82 Avenue NW

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

- Amendment to the Garneau and Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP)
- Rezoning from (CB2) General Business Zone and (DC2.443) Site Specific Development Control Provision Zone to (DC1) Direct Development Control Provision to allow for the development of a mid-rise Apartment with surface and underground parking

**EVENT TYPE:** Open House

**MEETING DATE:** August 30, 2016

**NUMBER OF ATTENDEES:** 39 (does not include media, City staff or applicants in attendance)

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### ABOUT THIS REPORT

The information in this report includes feedback gathered during the August 30th, 2016 open house. This report is shared with all attendees who provided their email address during the event on August 30th, 2016. This summary will also be shared with the applicant and the Ward Councillor. If/when the proposed rezoning and plan amendment advances to Public Hearing, these comments will be summarized in the Report to Council.

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### MEETING FORMAT

The meeting format was a station-based open house where attendees were able to view display boards with project information and ask questions of City Staff, the applicant, and the developer. Participants were invited to share their feedback on a “Graffiti wall” by offering general feedback as well as by answering the questions:

- What opportunities are associated with this application?

- What challenges are associated with this application?

We also received 12 feedback forms and 1 phone call with written comments. The comments & feedback we received are summarized by main themes below.

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## **WHAT WE HEARD**

### **What Opportunities does this application present?**

#### **Residential and Commercial Uses and Parking:**

- Development would allow for mixed-use, family oriented housing that will increase diversity in the neighbourhood, rather than the typical Whyte Ave bar
- Provides for a diversity of living options and unit types, and increased densification
- Opportunity for local business development through street-level retail/commercial and office spaces
- Potential to revitalize the south side of Whyte Ave Commercial Overlay
- Opportunity to revitalize the area to create a vibrant place for people to live, work and play
- Support for more cycling and guest parking
- The DC1 Zone should have parking maximums not minimums to encourage transit and active transportation
- There should be more specificity in the zone about bicycle parking (provided on the main floor)

#### **Building Design:**

- The development has active residential frontages
- Potential for an energy efficient design and conservation
- Experiment with pedestrian friendly environmental design features, design on all sides of the buildings, setback and greenspaces
- Development would allow for infrastructure and building upgrades
- Would like to incorporate car dealership sign into the development
- Potential for creative and innovative design
- Potential for a more defined podium
- Potential to use higher quality of materials on the building
- Could explore streetscape improvements (not just landscaping) along Whyte Avenue, such as sidewalk cafes, heated transit shelters and park sites

### **What Challenges does this application present?**

#### **Existing Plans and Policy:**

- Concerned that this isn't following the Area Redevelopment Plans
- The ARP should be re-evaluated every five years and higher density may be appropriate if the ARP directs it



- Concerned it isn't following the current zone
- Concerned that the development sets a precedent for future development and that higher density will spread into the Queen Alexandra neighbourhood
- Prefer to develop the Whyte Ave plan and have that plan in place before any rezoning occurs
- Concerned about the lack of information provided on what the developer is planning to do

#### **Residential and Commercial Uses and Parking:**

- Concerned about mixed uses that cause people to loiter all hours of the day
- Concerned there will be a lack of diversity in dwellings if there are not 3 bedroom units, rental units, and ownership units
- There should be a limit to the size of businesses to maintain the character of commercial on Whyte Avenue
- Concerned about lack of parking spaces with the amount of proposed residents that will move in

#### **Building Design:**

- The condos are too high
- Development does not fit the character of the neighbourhood
- Concerned about car dealership sign
- Concerned that the design on the south side of of the building (81 Ave) is not creative enough
- Concerned about building aesthetics. Felt that the design should be more creative and that the building needs more character. Would like to keep area "unique".
- Concerned about impacts on existing residents
- Concerned about street-level development. Would like to have a great deal of focus on it
- Concerned about Edmonton being a winter city - products, textures and colours should be able to endure Edmonton Winters
- Concerned about stepbacks towards 81 Ave

#### **Developer Contributions:**

- Concerned about a lack of public art provided
- Concerned about a lack of public amenities/community benefit provided as part of the rezoning and that this should be communicated to Council

#### **Greenspace:**

- Concerned about a lack of landscaping - the development should create an inviting space for residents and visitors
- Concerned there won't be any private green space associated with the townhomes

- Concerned there will be a lack of greenspace in general and would like to see a parkette for kids, pets and people to relax
  - If a greenspace is developed, ensure that it has sun exposure
- 

## **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

When will this development start?

- It depends on a number of factors. First the applicant has to provide further information to complete the application and the City has to finish review of the application. Once the application review is complete it can be scheduled for Council. Council may decide to accept or refuse the rezoning or send it back to administration to make changes. If the rezoning is approved, the applicant can apply for permits (development and building). Most likely the applicant will choose to develop the site in stages. Depending on all these factors, construction could start in about one year.

Will there be rental and owner condos available?

- The applicant has the choice to do either or a combination of both. The City of Edmonton does not regulate tenure. The Zone just regulates the use, Apartment Housing, not whether it is rented or owned.

Will there be enough parking for tenants?

- A Parking and Traffic Impact Assessment has been submitted by the applicant and is being reviewed by the City's Urban Transportation group. They will provide an indication of whether the amount of parking being proposed would be sufficient or not. Parking requirements may be accepted at lower levels than what would normally be required by the Zoning Bylaw due to the location's strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections. The proposal includes the same requirements for the number of vehicular parking spaces as bicycle parking spaces for the main residential portions.
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If you have questions about this application please contact:

Andrew McLellan, Planner

780-496-2939

[andrew.mclellan@edmonton.ca](mailto:andrew.mclellan@edmonton.ca)

## PlanWhyte Height Analysis

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### ABOUT THIS APPENDIX

This appendix provides an update on Administration's work to date on building heights for the planWhyte study area in consideration of the Southpark plan amendment and rezoning applications (Bylaws 17846, 17847, and 17848).

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### CONTEXT

Over the next ten years, Edmonton's population is forecast to increase by 170,000 people. Growth within Edmonton and its communities presents both opportunities and risks relative to their future prosperity, attractiveness and livability. The Strathcona neighbourhood, and in particular, the Whyte Avenue commercial area, is a key area where redevelopment needs to be managed and opportunity for positive change leveraged to sustain the corridor's long-term success.

In late 2015, Administration undertook a series of activities to determine the effectiveness of the existing Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP), its impact on heritage preservation and prospect for future development opportunities. These activities included meetings with key stakeholders and focus groups, an online survey, and review of case studies. Findings indicated that while the Strathcona ARP encourages robust heritage preservation, it also constrains new opportunities for development and intensification.

On February 2, 2016, Executive Committee received Sustainable Development report CR\_3171 (Old Strathcona Heritage - Commercial Area) for information. The report summarized scoping work that Administration had done and intended to further undertake as a focused planning study for a portion of the Strathcona ARP area. In consideration of recent development proposals and sensitivity of the area's heritage and character, members of Executive Committee asked Administration to process land development applications concurrently with the preparation of the study, which was later dubbed planWhyte. The expectation was that Administration would evaluate proposals with respect to existing policies and guidelines and in consideration of planWhyte's evolving draft recommendations. In like manner, City Council decisions regarding development proposals would necessarily inform planWhyte policies.

On April 20, 2016, City Council approved Bylaw 17621 to rezone the site of the former Strathcona Presbyterian Church from CB2 (14.5 m in height; approximately 4 storeys) to DC2.925 (53.5 m in height, including rooftop mechanical equipment or 50.0 m in height, excluding rooftop mechanical equipment; approximately 16 storeys) to allow for a mixed-use residential tower called The Mezzo. The site fronts 81 Avenue on the west

side of 105 Street and is located within the Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area, but is outside the City's Historical Commercial DC1 Provision boundary. The Mezzo rezoning decision was followed by a proposal to redevelop the Southpark auto dealership site along Whyte Avenue and 106 Street (LDA15-0648) that came at the same time that Administration was starting work on development scenarios for the entire Whyte Avenue corridor area (planWhyte).

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

The planWhyte planning study generally applies to area 5 of the Strathcona ARP, the Whyte Avenue Commercial Area. The area is generally bounded by 109 Street, 86 Avenue, 99 Street, and 79 Avenue. The goal of the study is to better understand how the area's heritage, character and livability can be further strengthened while exploring opportunities for additional development over the next 20-25 years.

The study is examining heritage, land use, urban design, transportation, and development opportunities. It is establishing a design vision, set of principles and concept for the long-term evolution of Whyte Avenue based on City policy, public engagement, technical study and design analyses. Policy recommendations are being developed to:

- Strengthen preservation of the core heritage commercial area, which coincides with the boundaries of the Provincial Historic Area.
- Identify potential opportunities for additional development outside the core heritage commercial area.
- Invest in public infrastructure changes intended to enhance the quality of life within the Whyte Avenue corridor area.

PlanWhyte's recommendations will be presented to City Council's Urban Planning Committee. If accepted by the committee, the recommendations will be readied for approval by Council as amendments to the Strathcona ARP.

The planWhyte work is supported by technical consultants and public input. It is organized into four phases:

- Phase 1: February - June 2016 (Gathering Information; Exploring Opportunities and Constraints).
- Phase 2: July - September 2016 (Development and Evaluation of Alternatives).
- Phase 3: October - April 2017 (Draft Study Concept and Recommendations).
- Phase 4: May - September 2017 (Final Study Report and Presentation to Urban Planning Committee).

Stakeholder input to date has been:

- Stakeholder meetings, emails, phone conversations (November 2015 to present).
- Heritage walking tour (June 2016).
- Open house public workshop #1 (June 2016).
- Whyte Avenue pop-up events (August 2016).

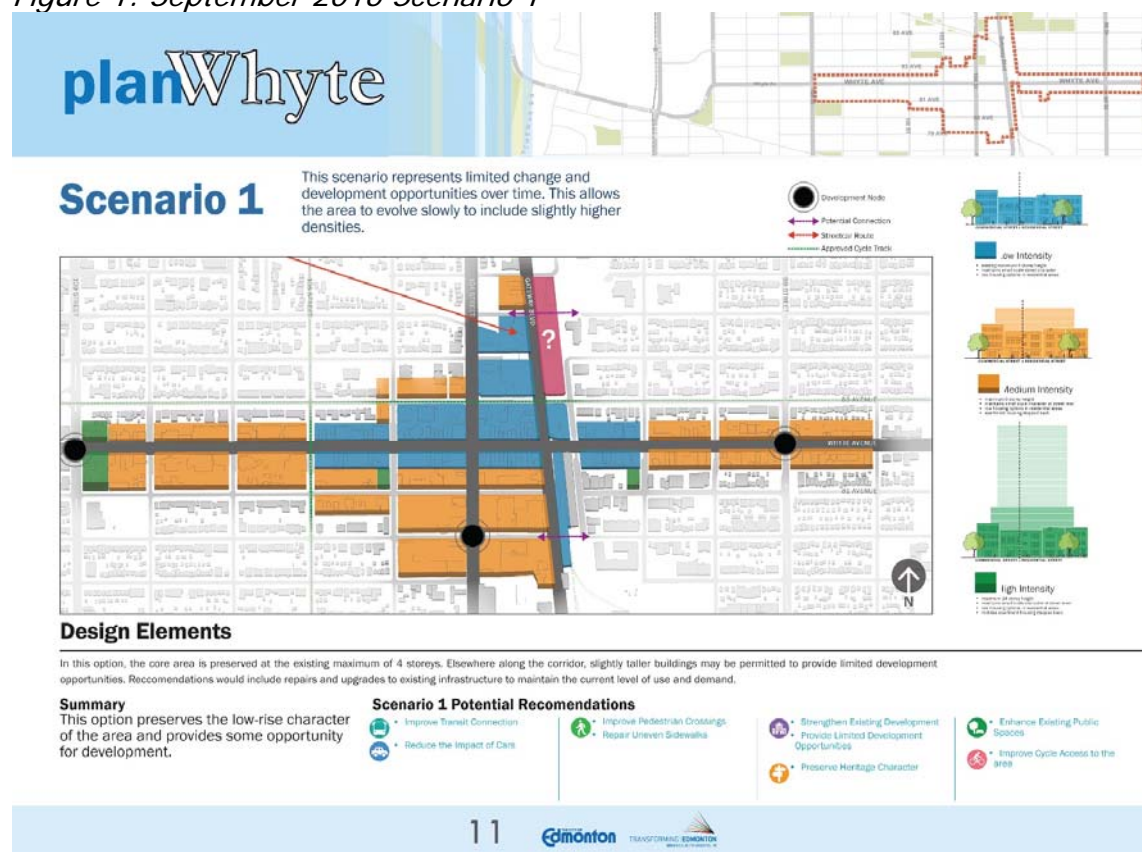
- Open house public workshop #2 (September 2016).
- Edmonton Insight Surveys (June, July, October 2016).

A third public meeting is tentatively planned for May 2017. At this meeting Administration will summarize stakeholder feedback and technical analysis and present a preferred design vision, principles, concept and draft study recommendations for public comment.

## SEPTEMBER 2016 SCENARIOS

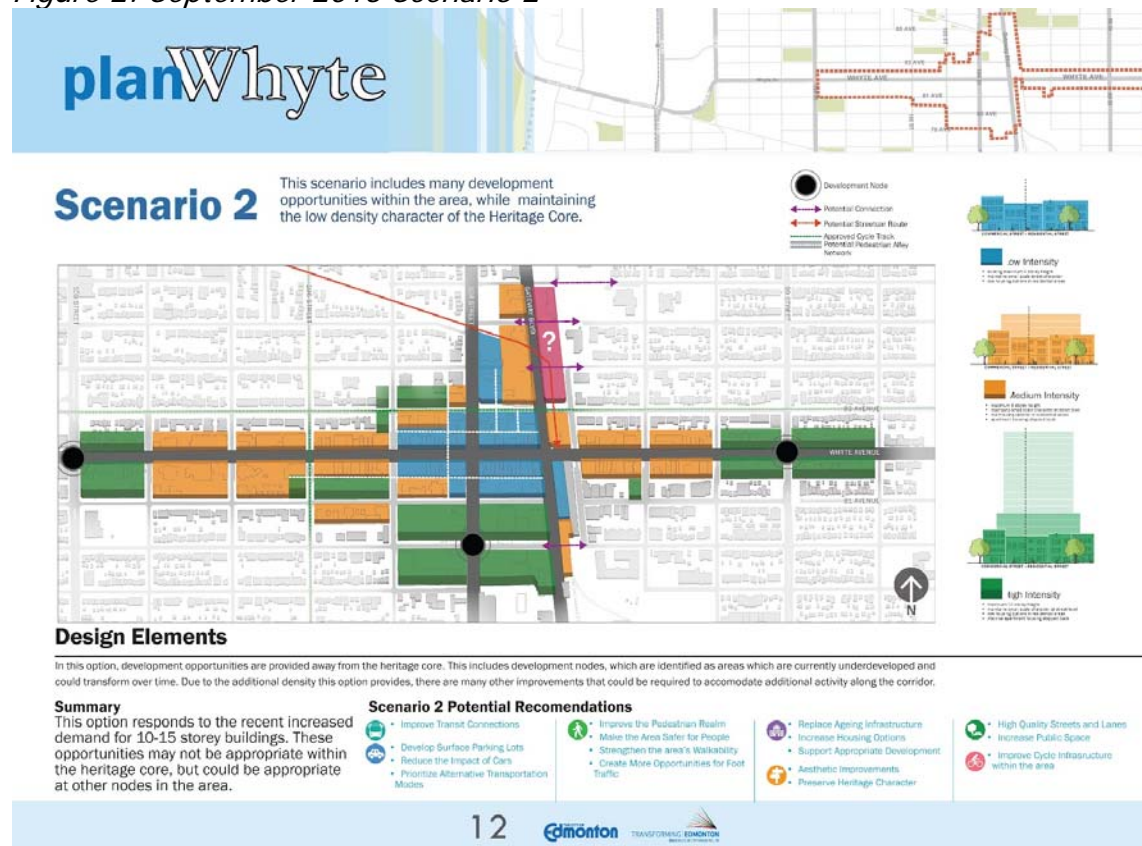
At the September 2016 open house, Administration presented two redevelopment scenarios (see Figures 1 and 2). The scenarios were intended to generate discussion and help inform the preparation of a preferred development concept. They were based on three basic building types: a low intensity type up to four storeys in height, a medium intensity type up to six storeys, and a high intensity type up to 14 storeys. It is important to note that while there is a connection between height and intensity / density, they are different concepts and the relationship between the two is not one-to-one. The word intensity was used to name the three building types to help people quickly grasp the different types and not to render a final technical verdict on the height - density issue.

Figure 1: September 2016 Scenario 1



Scenario 1 was prepared to represent limited change and redevelopment opportunity over time. It showed low intensity development between 101 and 106 Streets roughly from Whyte Avenue to 85 Avenue. Medium intensity development was shown to the west, east and south and to a small extent north. High intensity development was shown limited to a node at 109 Street and two sites with existing zoning permission above six storeys (The Mezzo and a site on 101 Street), recognizing that the height permission in those two zonings did not correlate exactly with the 14 storeys in the high intensity type. Scenario 1 also illustrated upgrades to mobility and public space infrastructure that make sense given existing levels of mobility and demand.

Figure 2: September 2016 Scenario 2



Scenario 2 considered the opportunity for more significant development in the Whyte Avenue area while maintaining the current scale of the heritage core. Low intensity development was illustrated between 102 and 105 Streets. Medium intensity development was shown to the east, west and north. High intensity development was shown between 108 and 109 Streets, 98 and 100 Street, between 79 Avenue and the north side of 81 Avenue and along 83 Avenue near 105 Street. Reflecting this higher density alternative, Scenario 2 contemplated additional infrastructure improvements reflecting higher population levels and demand.



In both scenarios, the City-owned site used as a parking lot for the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market and including the building currently occupied by the Roxy on Gateway and the Yardbird Suite were illustrated with a question mark. This reflected the fact that additional discussion and work was (and still is) required to determine the future for this area. A separate presentation board asked people to comment on what they thought the right balance was between space for cars, recreation, living and shopping / dining.

## **SOUTHPARK APPLICATIONS**

Administration prepared Bylaws 17846, 17847 and 17848 in accordance with Urban Planning Committee's direction that applications be processed with respect to existing City policies and guidelines and in consideration of evolving planWhyte findings. Administration's decision to recommend support for the bylaws came after:

- Review of the two scenarios described above in relation to the Southpark proposal.
- Analysis of the Southpark proposal's expected performance.
- Negotiations regarding regulations to mitigate the perceived negative impacts of tall buildings.

Administration determined that although Southpark would include higher buildings than the heights contemplated in Scenario 2, it was generally consistent with planWhyte's objectives for the Whyte Avenue area. The proposed zoning was in line with the draft design vision, principles and qualities of building types presented, and reflected the more intensive of the two potential development scenarios with sites located off Whyte Avenue albeit with somewhat taller buildings. These taller buildings were deemed to have adequately addressed:

- Sun access and penetration to surrounding properties and key activity areas.
- Privacy and overlook into adjacent sites.
- Reduction in the overall mass of the building (i.e. perception of 'looming' over people on the ground).
- Transition to surrounding lower scale buildings through stepbacks, tiered building form and positioning.
- Emphasis on architectural and urban design excellence for buildings visible from both the immediate area and afar.

## **HEIGHT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The nature of building height and its appropriateness is complex. Many factors influence the design of a taller building and its acceptable fit within its immediate surroundings and neighbourhood. For this reason, a number of sources are being used to help develop an overall approach to building heights within the Whyte Avenue corridor. These include:

- Policy review.
- Stakeholder input.
- Urban design elements.

### **Policy Review**

Building heights for planWhyte need to be informed by relevant City policies, guidelines, regulation and Council direction plus applicable provincial legislation. The careful use of building height in addition to other urban design elements can be used to achieve City policy aims, accommodate community changing needs, and satisfy regulatory requirements. Key height-related policy items considered to date include:

- **Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) (1998)**

Policies in the the ARP related to height include the following:

- Preserve the existing character and structure of the community, by retaining its residential and commercial functions and its historic qualities.
- Maintain the existing low scale of built forms in the commercial area, and provide a transition of heights and densities abutting residential areas.
- Encourage the architectural and urban design elements of major new development to be harmonious with the traditional forms of existing development, by reflecting the basic proportions, materials, mass and height of existing structures.
- Maintain prominent views and familiar landmarks, buildings, period architecture, streetscapes and natural features, associated with Strathcona and ensure they are not obscured from view, or significantly shaded by new development.
- Intensification or growth of businesses is encouraged within the Whyte Avenue Commercial Area provided building height is compatible with the low rise characteristic of the commercial area and the surrounding residential development, with certain exceptions.
- New developments and renovations will respect, complement and be compatible with the surrounding architectural and site development styles of the immediate area by limiting maximum building height to 4 storeys, with certain exceptions.

- **Edmonton Zoning Bylaw 12800 (2001)**

Height in zones and Direct Control provisions related to the planWhyte area:

- CB2 (General Business Zone) height limit: 14.5 m for flat, mansard and gambrel roofs; 16.0 m for a roof type with a pitch of 4/12 (18.4 degrees) or greater; 30.0 m for hotels or apartment hotels.
- Pedestrian Commercial Shopping Street Overlay: hotels and apartment hotels developments shall not exceed 23.0 m, in accordance with Section 52 for buildings fronting onto an arterial roadway, and shall not exceed 15.0 m nor four Storeys for buildings fronting onto a collector or local roadway.

- DC1 (Historical Commercial Direct Development Control Provision) height limit: 15.0 m or 4 storeys. Sub Area 1 (Raymond Block) height limit: 27 m or 6 storeys. Sub Area 3 (Crawford Block) height limit: 17 m or 5 storeys.
  - DC1 (Historic West Ritchie Direct Development Control Provision) height limit: as per CB2 Zone.
  - US (Urban Services Zone) height limit: 10 m.
  - DC2.925 (The Mezzo) height limit: 53.5 m in height, including rooftop mechanical equipment or 50.0 m in height, excluding rooftop mechanical equipment; approximately 16 storeys.
  - DC2.129 (Minchau blacksmith shop site) height limit: 33.65 m or 12 storeys fronting 81 Avenue (Site A); 21.64 m or 7 storeys fronting Whyte Avenue (Site B).
- **Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area Establishment Regulation 13/2007 (2007)**

This Regulation adopted the Provincial Historic Area, which is commemorative in nature. No regulations apply to properties contained within the area.
  - **Residential Infill Guidelines (2009)**

These guidelines state that:

    - Mid-rise (defined as 5 - 8 storeys) apartment buildings:
      - Should be located in the City's key activity centres, including the central area of the city, adjacent to LRT stations and at regional or community level shopping centres.
      - May be located on redevelopment sites of 1 hectare or more and on other sites where the context warrants.
      - Are ideally located through an area-specific planning study.
      - Should have direct access to a road that can accommodate the development without undue impact on adjacent areas.
    - High-rise (defined as 9 storeys or higher) apartment buildings:
      - Should be located in the City's key activity centres, including the central area of the city, adjacent to LRT stations and at regional or community level shopping centres.
      - May be located on other sites where they can meet detailed large scale infill guidelines
      - Are ideally located through an area-specific planning study.
      - Should have direct access to a road that can accommodate the development without undue impact on adjacent areas.
  - **LRT Network Plan (2009)**

It shows an LRT line, which had been called the "circulator" and has since been named the Festival Line, running east - west in the general vicinity of Whyte Avenue. A project to select the alignment of this line was funded through the

federal - provincial Public Transit Infrastructure Fund announced in September 2016 and will start in 2017.

- ***The Way We Grow*, the City of Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan (2010)**

It does not contain any specificity about building heights but includes a number of policies that are generally relevant:

- Policy 3.1.1.1 calls for higher density development to be integrated with LRT.
- Policy 3.1.1.2 encourages a minimum of 25% of housing unit growth to be in the downtown and mature neighbourhoods.
- Policy 3.3.1.2 promotes growth that is sensitive to existing development along Transit Avenues.
- Policy 3.5.1.1 supports redevelopment that contributes to the livability and adaptability of established neighbourhoods.
- Policy 4.2.1.3 suggests that density increases in established neighbourhoods should be accompanied with public realm enhancements and provision of other amenities.
- Policy 5.2.1.1 requires development to fit in with the neighbourhood context, to respect the scale, form, massing, style and materials of a neighbourhood and to create a transition between new and existing development.
- Policy 5.2.1.7 supports traditional retail shopping streets by amongst other things encouraging good quality development that is compatible with the character of the area.
- Policy 5.6.1.4 directs denser development to be located within a short walking distance of transit service.
- Policy 5.8.1.2 ensures that new development adjacent to buildings on the City's heritage inventory respects the scale, massing, proportions and character of those heritage buildings.

- **Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines (2012)**

The guidelines provide guidance regarding the use, intensity and design of development as well as the design of public infrastructure such as sidewalks, streets, parks and plazas within LRT station and transit centre areas. Because an alignment for the Festival Line had not been determined by the time of the preparation of the guidelines, no station areas are identified or categorized for this line. Of the station area types in the guidelines, the Neighbourhood, Enhanced Neighbourhood, Centre and Downtown types have some applicability to the Whyte Avenue area. The guidelines state that development over six storeys in height should only be located where a plan has been prepared to accommodate transitions or on a large site of 1 or more hectares so that appropriate transitions can be accommodated on site.

- **Urban Design Framework (2015)**

This document was prepared to elevate the practice of urban design in Edmonton. One of its four priorities is to create a new suite of urban design procedures and guidelines. The first guidelines being prepared (2017 initiation) are tall building guidelines.

- **Alberta *Safety Codes Act* (2015)**

An amendment to the *Safety Codes Act* passed in 2015 allows wood-framed buildings in the province to be built up to six storeys in height.

- ***The Way Ahead* Implementation Plan (2016-18)**

One of the 23 initiatives laid out in this document is Nodes and Corridors Planning. This initiative is an important evolution of redevelopment planning in Edmonton intended to:

- Integrate transportation and land use.
- Significantly increase vibrancy and density.
- Provide meaningful place-making opportunities.
- Maximize the benefit of public infrastructure investments.

The planWhyte project is a key aspect of the Nodes and Corridors Planning initiative.

- **Winter City Design Guidelines (2016)**

Guidelines relevant to building height include:

- Consider designing streetwall height to be no higher than the width of the abutting road, ideally creating a 1:1 ratio.
- Consider solar access in the placement of buildings. Building massing and siting should create minimum shade onto open spaces that are, or could be, used in the wintertime.
- Accommodate taller structures on the north side of streets to avoid excess shadow-casting over sidewalks, patios and outdoor spaces.
- Determine optimal site orientation and massing to reduce wind speeds at the street level.
- Vary building heights along a block length to reduce ground-level wind speeds.

- **Motion passed at Urban Planning Committee on February 1, 2017**

- "That in anticipation of Evolving Infill 2.0, Administration bring a framework to Committee for addressing areas where more diverse and affordable housing opportunities should be clustered - perhaps a "Missing Middle Overlay" (and/or base zone revisions) for mature areas where higher heights, smaller front setbacks, bigger building pockets and more flexibility for multi-family buildings could be warranted, such as: pre-war areas with taller existing homes, areas near transit nodes and corridors, areas with deteriorating housing stock that would benefit from

revitalization, and/or areas with existing clustered ground-oriented multi-family zoning.”

## **STAKEHOLDER INPUT**

A number of methods and sources of stakeholder engagement are being used to inform the planWhyte study and building heights. What follows is a summary of key engagements to date as they relate to understanding building heights and preferences within the Whyte Avenue corridor context.

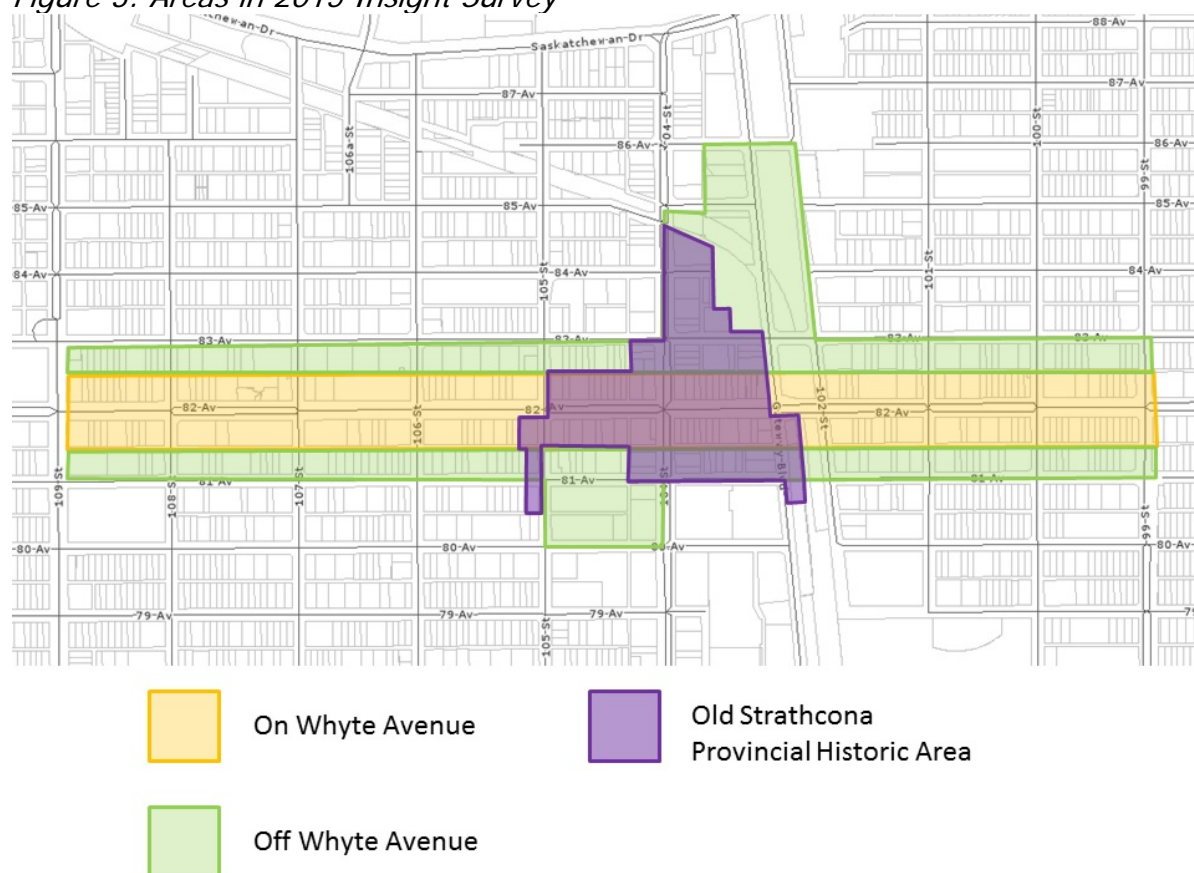
### **Pre-planWhyte Scoping (October 2015 - January 2016)**

On February 2, 2016, Executive Committee received for information a report entitled Old Strathcona Heritage - Commercial Area - Report Back on Initial Findings (CR\_3171). This report provided an update on scoping work undertaken by Administration regarding a potential planning response to development pressure in the Whyte Avenue area. As part of this work, an Insight Survey was conducted in which 766 Edmontonians provided feedback on heights for three different areas in the Whyte Avenue area (see Figure 3).

- Approximately 70% of respondents wanted no change in heights within the Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area (approximately 4 storeys).
- On Whyte Avenue but outside the historic core, respondents were split, with slightly more preferring no change to the existing 4 storey limit (45%) than were open to change to allow up to 6 storeys (40%).
- Off Whyte Avenue but outside the historic core, approximately 45% of people were supportive of some change to allow 6 storey heights, and close to 35% were supportive of significant change to allow up to 20 storeys.

This information was carefully considered in developing a strategy reflective of the order and magnitude of potential change for the area.

*Figure 3: Areas in 2015 Insight Survey*



### **planWhyte Public Engagement**

Public engagement is incorporated into each phase of the planWhyte study to obtain input and gain a better understanding of local issues and preferences including height. During Phase 1 of planWhyte, stakeholders were engaged through a series of conversations, pop-up events, and an open house public workshop supported by online surveys. Initial findings revealed a strong desire to maintain the core heritage commercial area and some openness to change outside this area that could assist redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lands, contribute to Whyte Avenue's main street character, and ensure well-designed buildings. Most input favored building forms that would relate strongly to the character of the area, provide similar building widths with multiple storefronts and entrances, sensitive transition between buildings, and maintain the existing 4 storey height limit. However, there was also some support for taller buildings that would incorporate stepbacks, create a strong human-scaled design at the street level and be located outside the core heritage commercial area, ideally behind Whyte Avenue.

This feedback was used during Phase 2 to develop a draft design vision, set of principles and the three different building types and two scenarios described above. Stakeholders evaluated these materials and provided their feedback at a second public

open house workshop and online survey. Results indicated strong support for strengthening the core heritage commercial area, controlling development on Whyte Avenue, and locating more intensive change and density to key areas behind Whyte Avenue. There was general agreement that low (up to 4 storeys), medium (up to 6 storeys) and high intensity (up to 14 storeys) buildings should be designed to have a historic feel or character at the lower levels of buildings, ensure high quality materials and podium design with taller buildings located away from Whyte Avenue.

Of the two design scenarios presented to stakeholders for discussion at workshop two and through the online survey, a significant majority preferred Scenario 1 (see Figure 1: September 2016 Scenario 1). Many people preferred this scenario for its limited change, lower heights, and perceived lower impact on Whyte Avenue's main street character. However, a number of people commented that Scenario 1 was too conservative, not dense enough to support the needs of the area over time, and lacked public realm enhancements.

Most respondents felt that Scenario 2 was too intensive overall, did not fit the low scale character of Whyte Avenue, and would likely contribute to increased traffic and congestion for local residents (see Figure 2: September 2016 Scenario 2). Despite this, many people liked that this scenario would preserve the 4 storey heights within the core heritage commercial area, feature stronger east - west pedestrian connections across Gateway Boulevard, and add more development opportunities that could support local businesses and institutions.

The recommended height policy approach discussed below, plus all the other planWhyte recommendations, will be presented to the public, tentatively in May 2017, for feedback. Input received will help determine what is ultimately presented to the Urban Planning Committee.

## **URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS**

In addition to considering the City's policy framework and public input, Administration has examined a number of urban design elements relevant to building heights within the planWhyte study area. A review of other cities' urban design approaches revealed a common set of design elements to be considered when evaluating building height. These include street-width to building height ratio, massing, transition, sun-shadow and wind impacts, views and gateways, and local context such as heritage character. The following is a brief summary of these elements. Combined, they help to establish appropriate building heights from a design perspective.

### **Street-width to Building Height Ratio**

Buildings are the primary feature of urban areas that create a sense of definition and enclosure to a thoroughfare (e.g. street, promenade). When determining building height, a common approach is to consider the width of the thoroughfare a building will frame. In Toronto, for example, a mid-rise building is one that is generally taller than



four storeys, but no taller than the width of the adjacent street right-of-way. High-rise buildings in Toronto are those generally taller than the width of the adjacent street right-of-way, or the wider of two streets if located at an intersection. The ratio of right-of-way to building height was considered as part of the planWhyte height policy approach outlined below.

### **Building Form and Mass**

Building height is expressed through form and mass. These qualities help define the context and character of a thoroughfare as well as the pedestrian experience. Tall buildings with a strong form contribute to the architectural character at the neighbourhood level, create landmarks, and contribute to the image and identity of a street and community. Building mass affects how people near the building experience both the building and the environment in which they perceive it. Generally, wider buildings should be visually broken up into smaller building fronts and tall buildings should provide a sense of enclosure that reflects the local context. Together, these qualities help to establish a comfortable human scale based upon interesting streets with multiple entrances, smaller storefronts, a consistent street wall, sense of enclosure, and contribution to neighbourhood identity. Whyte Avenue's existing built form is typically small, with detailed buildings reflective of Strathcona's early railroad community heritage. Low scale, 1890s - 1920s boom-town architecture followed by subsequent construction has produced a 2 - 3 storey streetwall comprised of small storefronts. These qualities are important and influence how height should be addressed in the planWhyte study area.

### **Building Transition**

Building transitions add visual coherence to buildings of different heights within a neighbourhood and address micro-level shadowing and overlook issues. Developments should consider their surrounding context and be sympathetic to the scale, form and use of nearby building types. A number of techniques can be used to provide appropriate transition between buildings. These include the setback of buildings from a property line, stepback of upper portions of a building, smaller building floorplates, separation and offset of a portion of a building from another. The visual and physical impacts of taller buildings can often be mitigated or adequately addressed using these techniques. Transitions are fundamental to building heights proposed for planWhyte and will be further refined through the study process.

### **Sun-Shadow Analysis**

Shadow studies illustrate the impact of development in terms of sun and daylight access to the surrounding context including nearby buildings, the public realm (sidewalks and streets) and public and private open space. Typically, shadows are measured at the spring and autumnal equinox (roughly March 21 / September 21), when shadows are midway through a period of contraction or lengthening. Shadow studies are particularly important along main streets that are oriented east - west, as

the uses on the north side of the street could become shadowed by development on the south. It is expected that the south side of the street would usually be in shadow. For this reason, a common urban design practice is to restrict the amount of shadow that is permitted on the north sidewalk of an east - west main street. A typical standard is that there should be no new shadow in any one spot on the north sidewalk for more than three consecutive hours on September 21.

Current shadowing along Whyte Avenue's north sidewalk is minimal. The maximum height (with certain exceptions) for new development under the CB2 zoning that prevails along Whyte Avenue is 14.5 m and under the Historical Commercial DC1 Provision is 15 m. In relation to the above standard, this height generates no shadows on the north sidewalk between February 28 and October 12 (see Figure 4). This is 42 days longer than the standard, and supports the Winter City Strategy and encourages greater outdoor activity on Whyte Avenue.

*Figure 4: Whyte Avenue shadow with 14.5 m building height*

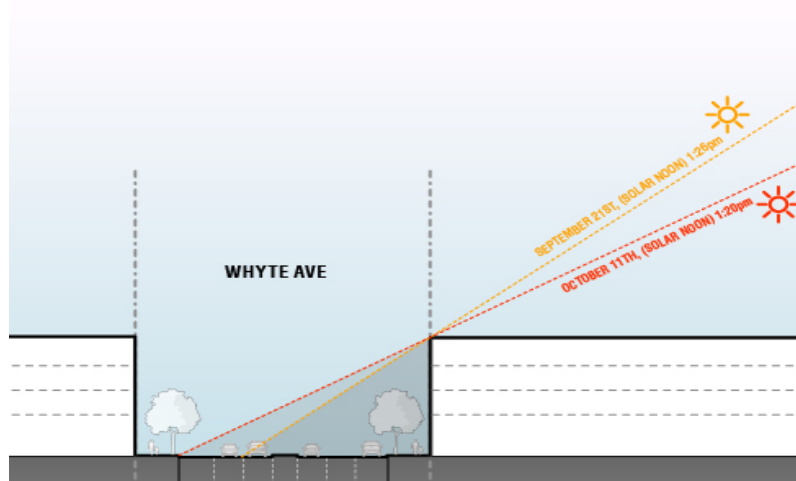
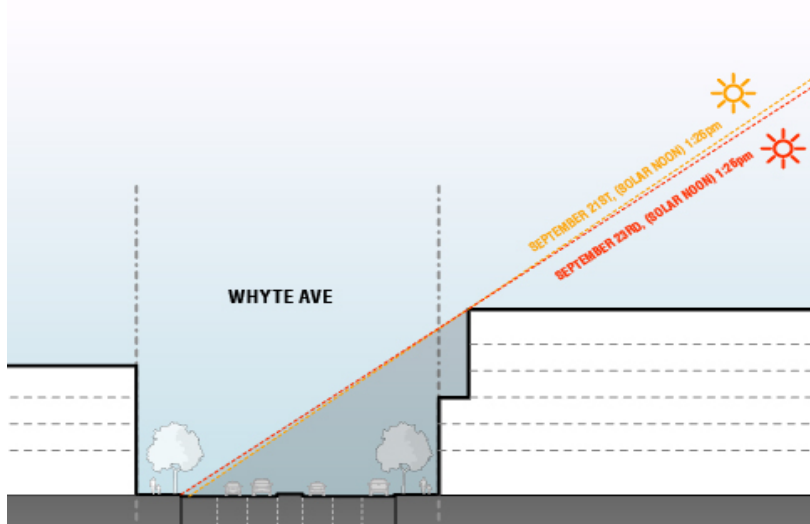


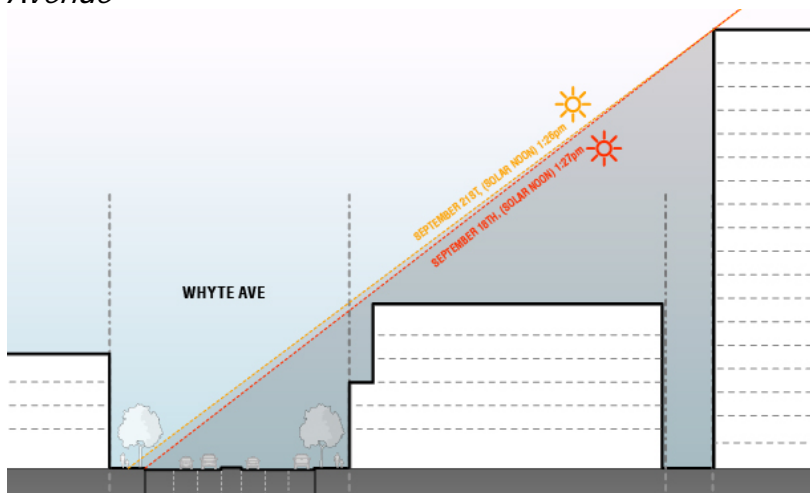
Figure 5 illustrates the shadow generated by a 21 m tall building with a 3 m stepback. This building form is consistent with the six storey building type included in the two September 2016 engagement scenarios. This form would increase shadows but give the north sidewalk six additional shadow-free days each year beyond the September 21 standard.

*Figure 5: Whyte Avenue shadow with 21.0 m building height*



Sun-shadow analysis demonstrates that a tall building can be constructed on the north side of 81 Avenue without impinging on the September 21 standard. Figure 6 illustrates the shadow of the 56 m tower -- the height of the towers proposed as part of the Southpark development. While this would result in a limited amount of shadow on the Whyte Avenue's north sidewalk on September 21, the zoning has additional regulation preventing this which means that portions of the tower would need to be reduced in height or sculpted to prevent this. However, even if this was not done, the shadow impact of a 56 m tower would be relatively minor and not exceed the standard of three hours of shadow in any one spot.

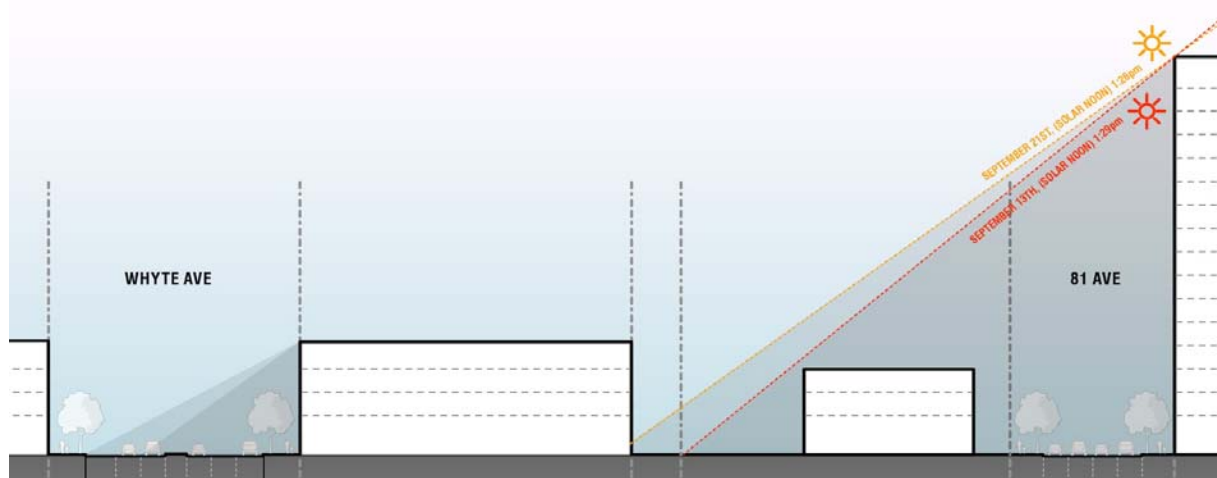
*Figure 6: Whyte Avenue shadow with 56.0 m building height on north side of 81 Avenue*



The September 2016 Scenario 2 showed high intensity buildings between 79 and 81 Avenues and Gateway Boulevard and 105 Street. Figure 7 models the shadow of a

building south of 81 Avenue that is 50 m (approximately 16 storeys), taller than the 14 storeys contemplated in Scenario 2 but shorter than Southpark and consistent with the Council-approved height of the Mezzo. It would shadow the property on the north side of 81 Avenue but be well away from even the south edge of Whyte Avenue.

*Figure 7: Shadow with 50.0 m building height south of 81 Avenue*



## **Wind**

Buildings should not negatively affect the environmental conditions of the public realm. This is particularly important for tall buildings, which tend to create their own microclimates, both by overshadowing large areas and by channelling strong winds to ground level. Important wind impacts include winter winds (prevailing north-westerly winds), downdrafts, wind channeling and corner acceleration.

The existing built form of the planWhyte project area is varied, with height typically between 1 - 4 storeys. A variety of heights along a block length reduces ground-level wind speeds. The current conditions on Whyte Avenue are typically suitable for standing or sitting in both the summer and winter seasons, which benefits year-round patios and gathering spaces. However, it should be noted that the cumulative effect of existing, approved and proposed development on local pedestrian wind conditions remains unknown.

A wind impact assessment was submitted for the Southpark site, and such assessments would be required for future high-intensity development.

## **Views**

The amount of sky visible from the public realm contributes to the character of a street. The effect of significantly reduced sky views is a 'street canyon' condition. Sky view is influenced by both building mass and height. The Whyte Avenue corridor has a large percentage of sky view which is caused by both narrow and low built form. Limited increases in height on Whyte Avenue would preserve an adequate sky view while enabling more intense development off Whyte Avenue.

Key horizontal views should also be maintained in order to enhance and preserve the legibility of the area. Important views include those to heritage buildings, public spaces, landmarks and destinations. As the Whyte Avenue area consists of a rectilinear grid of streets, horizontal views along and across Whyte Avenue and its important cross streets are the predominant ones experienced by people travelling in the area. These views are not generally affected by building height. In the case of the development on the west side of 102 Street that blocked the vista to the historic Strathcona Canadian Pacific Railway station from the east, even a two storey building would have eliminated the view. In the Whyte Avenue area, views to the station, the Strathcona Hotel, and buildings with towers or cupolas (especially the post office, Dominion Hotel and Walterdale Theatre) are some of the most popular views, although the most commonly photographed view seems to be the perspective down the avenue.

### **Heritage Character**

As one of Edmonton's oldest communities, the built heritage of Old Strathcona is one of its greatest assets. As the community developed from the early 1890s with a concentration of government and commercial buildings in the core area, a typical character of height and scale of buildings was established. Prior to 1903, this character was largely in the form of one or two-storey wood frame buildings. After 1903, changes in building codes required non-combustible construction, which resulted in larger scale brick buildings. This character, represented today by a combination of wood and brick buildings one to three storeys in height, built to the front property line, and with narrow frontages, remains largely intact to this day within the core commercial area and the Provincial Historic Area.

The integration of new development within nodes of established architectural character must be carefully considered in order to not compromise the uniqueness of the area. However, this does not necessarily mean that buildings taller than existing structures are detrimental to that established character. New and taller buildings can be designed in ways that complement and enhance existing character, but many considerations must be made to their individual sites and adjacent contexts to achieve this.

In Old Strathcona, the established height of buildings in the core heritage commercial area and Provincial Historic Area has been identified as the most significant element to retaining historic character. This area's existing height limit of four storeys ensures that any new development within it is of a scale consistent with that of the historic built environment.

In all cases, impacts on existing structures and the public realm within the core commercial area and the Provincial Historic Area (e.g. built form and massing, transition, materiality, sun-shadow impact) need to be considered, with particular attention paid to structures that are designated Municipal or Provincial Historic Resources, or are listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton. Where

redevelopment is proposed immediately surrounding the Provincial Historic Area, buildings should be required to provide design features to properly integrate them into the established character of the area and minimize impact on the adjacent Provincial Heritage Area properties, for example by having the upper storeys of a building stepped back.

## **DRAFT HEIGHT POLICY APPROACH**

### **Height Principles**

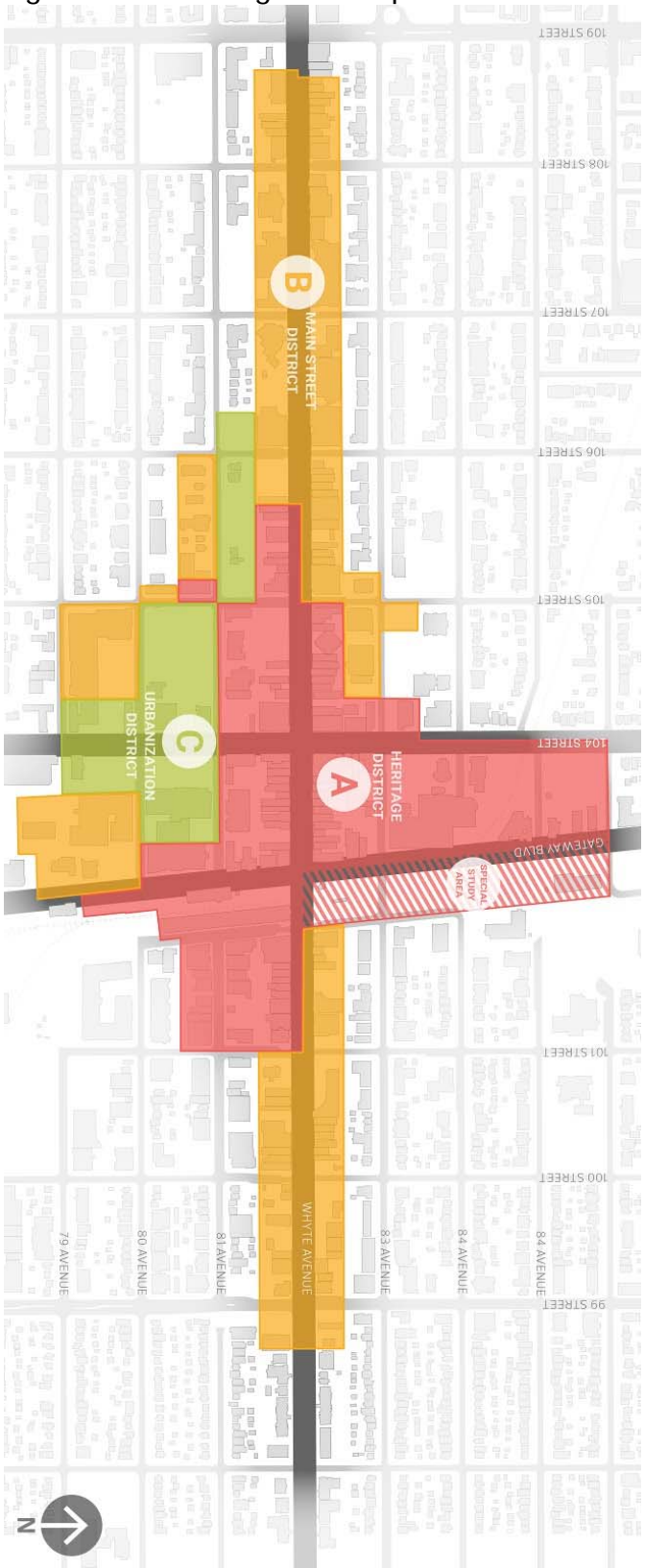
On the basis of the information contained above, Administration suggests that height policy in the Whyte Avenue area should be calibrated to:

- Promote a vibrant and interesting pedestrian-scaled environment through fine-grain articulation at the street level.
- Create a continuous street wall and employ techniques to reduce massing of upper building volumes.
- Mitigate negative impacts of tall buildings, including sun-shadow and wind-climate issues.
- Promote increased density.
- Respect views within, or gateways into the Whyte Avenue corridor area.
- Integrate with and complement the heritage character of the area.
- Optimize existing infrastructure, larger vacant and underutilized parcels.

### **Height Concept**

A draft height concept for planWhyte based on these principles is illustrated in Figure 8. It would establish three height districts: a Heritage District, a Main Street District and an Urbanization District. Building heights in the Heritage District, which would be larger than the existing Provincial Historic Area, would be generally maintained at 15 m (approximately 4 storeys). To the west, east and south, the Main Street District would allow buildings up to 21 m (approximately 6 storeys). Opportunities for taller buildings (up to 50 m or approximately 16 storeys) would be provided south of Whyte Avenue in order to manage long-term redevelopment pressure and community needs. This approach would preserve the core heritage area; locate more intensive redevelopment on currently vacant or underutilized parcels more conducive to immediate development; make more efficient use of infrastructure; and provide for future housing, business and services to the benefit of surrounding communities.

Figure 8: Draft Height Concept





## **Height Policies**

While an overall preferred development concept and set of policies for planWhyte remains under development, the following height-related policies have been drafted in conjunction with preparation of the height concept map in Figure 8:

1. Maximum permitted heights:
  - Heritage District - 15 m.
  - Main Street District - 21 m.
  - Urbanization District - 50 m.
2. Rezoning:
  - The City to rezone properties in the Main Street and Urbanization Districts to permit heights up to 21 m.
  - Owners of property within the Urbanization District to apply to rezone to obtain permission for building heights between 21 - 50 m. Rezoning approval subject to planning policies of the day and evaluation of the specific site context and building design.
3. Building Setback Requirements:
  - Built to property line or setback up to 2.5 metres to provide additional amenity spaces or where sidewalk does not meet main street standards.
4. Streetwall / stepback:
  - Streetwall of 2 - 3 storeys, with stepback for portions of building above the streetwall.
5. Articulation:
  - Facades to be articulated at 10 metre intervals, through use of entrances, signage, vertical articulation, canopies/awnings, use of materials.
6. Other height-related regulations, including:
  - Transition requirements (to low-density areas).
  - View corridor preservation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The foregoing has addressed factors directly related to a planWhyte height policy that Administration has been able to document in the time available after receiving direction from Council on January 23, 2017. Additional considerations that Administration has not been able to finalize, at the time of writing this report, include the connection between height, floor area ratio, unit count and density. Taller buildings generally mean more housing units, but this depends on the building's floor area and how large / small its housing units are. This in turn is informed by infrastructure capacity; market demand; requirements for such things as affordable housing, family-oriented housing, amenity space; and the resulting development economics. As planWhyte proceeds, Administration will do more work on these questions and flesh out the policy framework accordingly. This may include determining that although certain building heights are acceptable from a design perspective, their impact on the area's anticipated market

demand over time is so great that additional contributions are necessary to justify their approval.

The draft height policy approach outlined in this report has not been fully vetted with stakeholders. Further discussion is expected regarding the acceptability of proposed heights and measures to address the impacts of tall buildings. As planWhyte advances to completion, the height considerations discussed in this report will be connected with other planning policy and urban design topics in order to prepare final project recommendations.

## APPLICATION SUMMARY

### INFORMATION

Application Type:	Rezoning and Plan Amendments
Bylaw(s):	17846, 17847, 17848
Location:	Generally between 81 Avenue NW and 82 Avenue NW both to the east and west of 106 Street NW
Address(es):	10520 to 10570 - 81 Avenue NW, 10602 to 10618 - 81 Avenue NW, 10565 - 82 Avenue NW and 10615 to 10631 - 82 Avenue NW
Legal Description(s):	Lots 6 & 7, Block 64, Plan 5809KS Lots 13-18 & Lots 20-31 Block 63, Plan I Lots 1-5 & Lots 27-32, Block 64, Plan I
Site Area:	12,500 m <sup>2</sup> (1.25 hectares)
Neighbourhood:	Queen Alexandra
Ward - Councillor:	8 - Ben Henderson
Notified Community Organization(s):	Queen Alexandra Community League, Strathcona Centre Community League, Garneau Community League, Central Area Council of Community Area Council, Old Strathcona Business Revitalization Zone
Applicant:	Stantec Planning

### PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Current Zone(s) and Overlay(s):	(CB2) General Business Zone & (DC2.443) Site Specific Development Control Provision
Proposed Zone(s) and Overlay(s):	(DC1) Direct Development Control Provision
Plan(s) in Effect:	Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan, Garneau Area Redevelopment Plan
Historic Status:	"Southpark-on-Whyte" Freestanding Sign and Barraclough/Treau Residence are on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton

Written By:	Andrew McLellan
Approved By:	Tim Ford
Department:	Sustainable Development
Section:	Planning Coordination