

External Circulation Comments

The draft report and amendment on minimum tree requirements in small scale residential developments was circulated for the June 10, 2024, Urban Planning and Economy Report Charter Bylaw 20775. A summary of the comments are noted below:

- Canadian Home Builders' Association - Edmonton Region indicated non-support for the proposed amendment, noting challenges to implement successfully due to the low compliance rates, concerns around tree health, risk of damage to property and the needs for private open space of residents. It was also outlined that the scenarios modeled in Attachment 1 could be discouraged depending on the location of gas and water lines. It was also outlined that the models in Attachment 1 - Modelling for Minimum Tree Requirements, do not consider the location of gas and water lines which would further constrain the location of trees on a property.
- Urban Development Institute indicated non-support for the proposed amendment for reasons including limited planting space, potential negative impacts on tree health due to insufficient root space, constraints on tree diversity, considering the space requirements for fully grown trees, and limitations on homeowners' use of their amenity space. It was advised that concerns regarding installation and maintenance costs are also pertinent and should be carefully considered as they are significant factors influencing compliance and the feasibility of implementing any changes to the existing regulations.
- Feedback from one community league member noted that the requirement for two trees would cause damage to the adjacent buildings, driveway or cement/asphalt application for rainwater control. This resident has experience of having to remove trees from their property due to damages to their garage and front sidewalk.
- Feedback from one community league raised questions about the dangers of allowing intensification of full build-out in tight spaces and how there is almost no room for any trees or shrubs to provide respite from the base expenses or impermeable surfaces, built forms, and heat island. It was recommended to look into tree requirements for larger lot sizes in order to prevent Urban Heat Island Effect.
- Feedback from one community league supports the amendment and further proposes an amendment to Subsection 3.1.2 of Section 5.60, "Where the Site Width is 8.0 m to 15.0 m - Minimum Tree Requirements of 3 trees and 6 shrubs".