

2710 and 2810 - 112 Street NW

Position of Administration: Support



Summary

Bylaw 20952 proposes a rezoning from the Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h16) to the Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h23) to allow for medium scale housing.

Public engagement for this application included a mailed notice, site signage, information on the City's webpage and a Public Engagement webpage. 15 people were heard from, with approximately 27% in support and 33% in opposition. Most concerns were related to losing greenspace/recreation fields and increased traffic.

Administration supports this application because it:

- Will create a diversity of housing choices.
- Is compatible with surrounding land uses.

- Contributes to the City Plan’s Big City Move, A Rebuildable City, to create 50% of new units added through infill city wide.
- Contributes to The City Plan’s Big City Move, Inclusive and Compassionate, by providing an opportunity for affordable housing, and reducing the number of Edmontonians who are in core housing need.
- Aligns with *City Policy C583A: Developing Surplus School Sites* and will facilitate development under the City’s Building Housing Choices program.

Application Details

This application was submitted by City of Edmonton’s Real Estate Branch on behalf of the City of Edmonton Housing Action Team.

The proposed Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h23) would allow development with the following key characteristics:

- Medium scale housing, including multi-unit housing in the form of row housing and/or apartment housing.
- Maximum building height of 23 m (approximately six storeys).
- Maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0.
- Minimum density of 75 dwellings/hectare (4.0 ha).

Site History

The subject site was originally planned for a school building; however, the school board determined that a school would not be built and, as a result, deemed the site surplus to their needs. In the interim, the site has been used as an open space.

The City received 20 surplus school sites from the Edmonton Public School Board in 2009 after they were no longer required for schools. In 2015, City Council designated 14 surplus school sites for affordable housing. The development of these sites is guided by policy C583A, which prioritizes access to affordable housing, increased housing choice as well as the integration of housing, services and amenities.

Site and Surrounding Area

	Existing Zoning	Current Development
Subject Site	Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h16)	Undeveloped
North	Public Utility Zone (PU)	Shared Use path
East	Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM h12)	Row housing

South	Parks and Services Zone (PS)	Open Space
West	Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h16)	Multi-unit housing



Aerial view looking south

Community Insights

This application was brought forward to the public using a broadened approach. This approach was selected because the proposed rezoning generated an influx of community feedback and comments. The broadened approach included:

Mailed Notice, May 13, 2024

- Notification radius: +120 metres
- Recipients: 1477
- Responses: 1
 - In support: 1

Engaged Edmonton Webpage, May 21, 2024 to June 2, 2024

- Aware: 309
- Informed: 141
- Engaged: 14
 - In support: 3
 - In opposition: 5
 - Mixed/Questions: 6

Site Signage, June 10, 2024

- One Rezoning information sign was placed on the property so as to be visible from Saddleback Road NW

Webpage

- edmonton.ca/rezoningapplications

Notified Community Organizations

- Blue Quill Community League
- Ermineskin Community League
- Southwest Area Business Council of Community Area Council

Common comments heard (number of similar comments in brackets beside comments below):

- Concern over the loss of green space and the loss of the baseball diamond (x5)
- General support of the proposal and its beneficial impacts on surrounding businesses and the community as a whole (x3)
- Concern over increased traffic congestion in the area (x2)
- Concern that the neighbourhood would become too densely populated (x2)

A full “What We Heard” Public Engagement Report is found in Appendix 1.

Application Analysis

The undeveloped subject site is approximately 1.4 hectares and is located south of Saddleback Road NW and west of 112 Street NW. The neighbourhood is predominantly a residential neighbourhood consisting of a variety of residential uses, open space, and commercial uses. Commercial uses are within 300 m of the site, providing daily commercial needs. Century Place LRT Station is southwest and approximately 450 m away from the site, which offers alternative modes of transportation.



Site analysis context

The City Plan

The City Plan identifies the site as a residential infill area, where infill is expected at a variety of scales as part of the goal to accommodate 50% of new homes through infill. The proposed rezoning is also supported by policies in The City Plan, which allow Edmontonians to live locally and support growth within neighbourhoods.

In alignment with the Big City Move to be a Rebuildable City, the repurposing of a planned school building envelope for affordable multi-unit housing reflects shifting needs and opportunities that have emerged since the neighbourhood was initially planned. The proposal aligns with policies to enable all districts to achieve more income-diverse neighbourhoods and a greater mix of land uses and ensure all districts meet or exceed regional density targets as they redevelop over time.

The City Plan envisions a future where nobody is in core housing need and less than 35% of average household expenditures are spent on housing and transportation as part of its Big City Move to be an Inclusive and Compassionate City. The proposed rezoning enables the future provision of affordable housing under *City Policy C583A: Developing Surplus School Sites*, contributing to the objectives of The City Plan to pursue partnerships to end poverty and streamline the provision of affordable housing in all neighbourhoods.

District Plan

At the time of the writing of this report, the District Policy and District Plans have received first and second reading from City Council and are now at the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Board before they return to Council for consideration of third reading. Given this, the following analysis is provided for Council's consideration.

The site is within the boundaries of the Whitemud District Plan, which designates the site as Urban Mix. District Policy directs administration to consider additional height at locations along arterial roads and adjacent to open space. Urban Mix includes housing, shops, services, and offices in one land use category, which includes stand alone residential, commercial, and mixed use development. The proposed RM h23 Zone allows for standalone residential with an opportunity for commercial uses on the ground floor. Therefore, the proposed rezoning aligns with the District Plan and Policy.

In addition, the proposed rezoning conforms to c. d. and e. of the District Policy 2.5.2.6 where consideration for additional scale in locations that meet at least two of the following criteria:

- a. In a Node or Corridor Area or within 100 metres of a Node or Corridor Area,
- b. Within 400 metres of a Mass Transit Station,
- **c. Along an Arterial Roadway or a Collector Roadway,**
- d. At a corner site, or adjacent to a park or open space, and/or
- **e. Adjacent to a site zoned for greater than Small Scale development.**

City Policy C583A

Approved in 2015, the *City Policy C583A: Developing Surplus School Sites* provides guidelines for the development of identified surplus school sites, including Blue Quill. The guidelines include the following principles:

- **Access to affordable housing:** Surplus school sites provide a valuable opportunity for increasing Edmontonians access to affordable housing, while utilizing existing infrastructure in established neighbourhoods.
- **Increase housing choice:** Development on the surplus school sites will align with the City Plan objective to establish housing for a range of household types and sizes, excluding single detached housing, and provide access to affordable housing in neighbourhoods where it may be limited.
- **Integrate housing, services and amenities:** Ensure housing services and amenities are available to support the needs of residents and the community, where possible.

The development of this site prioritizes access to affordable housing, increased housing choice and the integration of housing services and amenities.

Land Use Compatibility

The RM h23 zone permits multi-unit residential housing and provides opportunities for commercial uses at ground level. The most significant change will be an increase in height of 7.0 m and the number of residential units from 63 to 105. Given the site's location along Saddleback Road NW, this will have minimal impact on adjacent and surrounding land uses.

	RM h16 Zone Current	RM h23 Zone Proposed
Typical Uses	Residential with limited opportunities for commercial	Residential with limited opportunities for commercial
Maximum Height	16.0 m	23.0 m
Minimum Density	45 du/ha	75 du/ha
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	2.3 *	3.0*
Minimum Front Setback (Saddleback Road NW)	4.5 m	4.5 m
Minimum Interior Side Setback	3.0 m	3.0 m
Minimum Flanking Side Setback	3.0 m	3.0 m
Minimum Rear Setback	3.0 m	3.0 m
Minimum Number of Dwellings	63 units	105 units

* Floor area can increase by 0.7 depending on common amenity area, bulk storage, inclusive design, number of bedrooms and supportive housing units

Mobility

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was completed to review transportation impacts and mobility opportunities to the surrounding network with this rezoning. Safe Mobility implemented Blue Quill Street Labs in 2022/2023 to address speeding concerns and crosswalk safety concerns at Saddleback Road and 112 Street. The owner will be required to enhance the existing mid-block crossing on Saddleback Road adjacent to the site and provide a two-stage crossing to

further increase pedestrian safety when the site is developed. The developer will also construct a missing curb ramp on 112 Street and 28 Avenue to reduce barriers to mobility.

The rezoning area is located next to a district connector bike route along the Altalink right-of-way (ROW) and near a neighbourhood route along 112 Street. The owner will be required to construct a shared pathway along the western boundary of the site connecting to the Blue Quill basketball courts, which further connect the active mode network and the development to the neighbourhood amenities such as the school and the park.

Century Park Transit Centre and LRT Station is about 800m walking distance from the rezoning site; however, ETS local service adjacent to the rezoning area provides connection to Southgate Transit Centre and LRT Station. Nearby a School Special bus route provides service to Harry Ainlay High School.

Open Space

The subject site was deemed surplus to municipal requirements in 2009 by City Council and identified for affordable housing. The current location is based on direction from City Council following a targeted community engagement in 2015. The proposed location will impact a premium sports field that was developed prior to this location being confirmed for residential development. As a consideration in shifting to this location, relocation of the impacted sports field will be required, and the field will be relocated on the remnant park parcel.

Utilities

The applicant has submitted an 'Addendum to Site Servicing Assessment - Blue Quill Report' that has been reviewed and accepted by Development Services for the purpose of supporting this rezoning application.

Development allowed under the proposed zone would be required to include on-site stormwater management techniques utilizing a controlled outflow rate to mitigate its impact on the existing drainage infrastructure. Details of the required stormwater management is discussed in the accepted Drainage Servicing Report addendum.

Appendices

1. "What We Heard" Report

Written By: Vivian Gamache

Approved By: Tim Ford

Branch: Development Services

Section: Planning Coordination

What We Heard Report

Blue Quill LDA24-0151

Edmonton

Public Engagement Feedback Summary

Project Address:	2710 & 2810 - 112 Street NW
Project Description:	<p>The City is reviewing an application to rezone the Blue Quill Surplus School Site located at 2710 and 2810 - 112 Street NW from the Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h16) to the Medium Scale Residential Zone (RM h23) to allow for the development of multi-unit housing, including row housing and/or apartment housing. Key characteristics of the proposed RM h23 Zone include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium scale housing, including multi-unit housing in the form of row housing and/or apartment housing• A maximum height of 23 metres (or approximately 6 storeys)• A minimum of 75 dwelling units per hectare; and• A maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0.
Engagement Format:	Online Engagement Webpage - Engaged Edmonton: https://engaged.edmonton.ca/bluequillsurplusschoolsiterezoning
Engagement Dates:	May 21, 2024 - June 2, 2024
Number Of Visitors to Engaged Edmonton page:	Visited the page: 309 Submitted a question or forum response: 14

About This Report

The information in this report includes summarized feedback received between May 21 - June 2, 2024, through online engagement via the Engaged Edmonton platform and emails submitted directly to the file planner.

Public feedback received will be considered during the planning analysis to ensure the review of the application takes local context into consideration and is as complete as possible. It will also be used to inform conversations with the applicant about potential revisions to the proposal to address concerns or opportunities raised.

This report is shared with all web page visitors who provided their email addresses for updates on this file. This summary will also be shared with the applicant and the Ward Councillor and will be an appendix to the council report should the application proceed to a public hearing.

The planning analysis and how feedback informed that analysis will be summarized in Administration's report to City Council if the proposed rezoning goes to a future City Council Public Hearing for a decision. The City's report and finalized version of the applicant's proposal will be posted for public viewing on the City's public hearing agenda approximately three (3) weeks prior to a scheduled public hearing for the file.

Engagement Format

The Engaged Edmonton webpage included an overview of the application, information on the development and rezoning process, a brief history of the surplus school sites across the City and contact information for the file planner. Two participation tools were available for participants: the 'Ask a Question' and 'Share Your Thoughts'. The 'Ask a Question' tool allowed participants to ask questions directly to the project team. Once answered, the question and response would both either be shared publicly on the Engaged Edmonton page, or sent privately back to the participant. The 'Share Your Thoughts' tool allowed participants to share feedback on an open forum. They could also respond to and 'like' the comments of others, allowing participants to engage in conversation with each other.

The comments received are summarized by the main themes below, with the number of times a similar comment was made by participants recorded in brackets following that comment. The questions asked, and their answers are also included in this report.

Feedback Summary

This section summarizes the main themes collected.

Number of Responses (includes emails and phone calls received):

In Support: 3

In Opposition: 5

Mixed: 6

The most common **concerns** heard were:

Loss of Greenspace/Sports Fields: Putting a multi-level (up to 6 storeys) housing complex in such a small high density space between the current townhouses and 3-storey apartment complex is disruptive to the green space / recreational space of the neighbourhood.

Traffic: Adding a 6-storey apartment building to the area, without any sort of adjustment to traffic signalling, will lead to significant traffic delays for existing residents, especially along Saddleback Road and during peak construction.

The most recurring comments of **support** heard were:

Location/Amenities: The site's proximity to public transit and commercial opportunities will help support the existing businesses in the neighbourhood as well as support the use of active modes for the area.

What We Heard

The following section includes a summary of collected comments with the number of times a comment was recorded in brackets (comments received once do not have a number).

Reasons For Opposition

Greenspace/Sports Fields

- Disappointed to lose the gravel baseball diamond (1)
- Putting a multi-level (up to 6 stories) housing complex will disrupt the green space / recreational space of the neighbourhood (1)
- Hopefully, one of the baseball diamonds could be refurbished in the western part of the greenspace (1)
- The area is condensed enough for the green space and services (1)
- Many people come here to play baseball and cricket. Each diamond and field is constantly preoccupied by people playing (1)

Traffic

- Adding a 6-story apartment building to the area, without any sort of adjustment to traffic signalling, will lead to significant traffic delays for existing residents (1)
- Saddleback Road already experiences significant traffic delays during the morning commute due to the LRT line, with traffic backing up as far as 112 Street (1)

Density

- Building a high density here is not suitable (2)

Other

- Worry about the impact on school capacity (1)
- Worry about the impact on existing infrastructure (1)

Reasons For Support

- The site is close to transit and a variety of amenities (3)
- A great location for affordable housing (1)
- The nearby park is a great place for kids and families to spend time (1)
- Rental units/affordable housing will not cause any significant changes to the neighbourhood (1)

Suggestions For Improvement

- Townhouses or apartments only up to 3 storeys would be more appropriate (1)
- A 3-4 story building would fit better with the existing neighbourhood and minimize congestion during peak hours (1)
- Upgrades to the local infrastructure to support the development and prevent flooding (1)
- Amend the proposed 6 storeys development to add a few more stories (1)
- Seniors housing would be more appropriate (1)
- Relocate the baseball diamond (1)

Questions & Answers

- 1. Hello, I'm trying to understand what is being built here. I'm the vice president of the condo board here at The Quarters, Blue Quill. The townhomes that are adjacent to the proposed site. Owners want to know if this property will be built for Alberta housing or Seniors housing?**

Blue Quill was one of 14 surplus school sites designated for affordable housing by City Council in 2015. At this stage, an affordable housing developer has not been selected. The City will consider all proposals, including for affordable seniors housing. Project updates regarding the development of the site will be shared at Edmonton.ca/HousingDevelopments, where you can also sign up to receive email updates.

- 2. Why can you not be more specific about the type of housing on the proposal. Is it going to be Seniors housing or market housing for low income or first choice? Blue Quill already has a lot of market housing and subsidize housing for low income. There are other sites that are old and in need of replacement that you could choose to do this build on. Why are you taking away more of the green space on the main road so the field won't be visible anymore. I do not want this site to move forward with a build unless you state exactly who your audience is. Senior housing is something we need more of in this neighborhood but why build it on the North side of the field instead of the East side? We do not need more First choice and market housing here. I have lived in Blue Quill for over 30 years and I do not believe this neighborhood needs more apartments or row houses of that nature. Why did you choose this spit and why in this neighborhood?**

The Blue Quill surplus school site is one of 12 that have been designated for affordable housing. It will not be used for the First Place program, which offered attainable homeownership to first-time homebuyers. A portion of the site was originally intended for a school. In 2009, the public school board declared a site surplus to its needs and gave it to the City. The City relocated the surplus school site to the current location in 2015. Affordable housing is operated, funded, or created through direct government subsidies. It is rental housing offered at below-market rates for households that earn less than the median income for their household size. The building will be apartments or townhomes or a mix of both. There is a range of affordable housing, from social housing for low to very low-income households to near-market (80% of market rents) for moderate income households that need some financial assistance. The type of affordable housing has not been determined at this stage of the development process. If the rezoning application is approved, the City will select a developer by reviewing proposals. The depth of subsidy and the number of affordable units will be factors in the selection of a developer. We will consider all proposals, including any for affordable seniors housing. Other surplus school sites have been used for mixed-market housing, which combines units offered at market rent and units offered below-market.

Engaged and informed are subsets of aware. That means that every engaged visitor is also always informed AND aware. In other words, a visitor cannot be engaged without also being informed AND aware. At the same time, an informed visitor is also always aware.

Next Steps

The public feedback received will be considered during the planning analysis and will be included in the administration report for City Council. The administration report and finalized version of the applicant's proposal will be posted for public viewing on the [City's public hearing agenda](#) website approximately three (3) weeks prior to a scheduled public hearing for the file.

When the applicant is ready to take the application to Council (the Administration makes a recommendation of Support or Non-Support):

- Notice of Public Hearing date will be sent to surrounding property owners, residents and applicable nearby Community Leagues and Business Associations.
- Once the Council Public Hearing Agenda is posted online, members of the public may register to speak at Council by completing the form at edmonton.ca/meetings or calling the Office of the City Clerk at 780-496-8178.
- Members of the public may listen to the Public hearing on-line via edmonton.ca/meetings.
- Members of the public can submit written comments to the City Clerk (city.clerk@edmonton.ca).

If you have questions about this application please contact:

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