

11450 - 79 Avenue NW

Position of Administration: Support



Summary

Bylaw 21133 proposes a rezoning from the Small Scale Residential Zone (RS) to the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM h12.0) to allow a range of small to medium scale housing. Public engagement for this application included a mailed notice, site signage and information on the City's webpage. Administration heard from 20 people, all in opposition. The main concern was about existing traffic congestion in the area and the belief this would make it worse. Many also believe the density allowed by the new RS Zone should be allowed to play out before new rezonings are approved.

Administration supports this application because it:

- Will facilitate an increase in residential density in a redeveloping area of the City near transit and active modes of transportation.

- Proposes a scale that is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and aligned with direction in the Scona District Plan and District Policy.

Application Details

This application was submitted by BM Homes Ltd. on behalf of the landowner.

The proposed Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM h12.0) would allow development with the following key characteristics:

- A range of small to medium scale housing.
- A maximum height of 12.0 m (approximately 3 storeys).
- A maximum site coverage of 60%.

The application was initially proposed as the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone with a 14 metre height maximum (RSM h14.0), but the height was reduced after Administration’s initial review and feedback to the applicant.

Site and Surrounding Area

	Existing Zoning	Current Development
Subject Site	Small Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Single detached house
North	Small Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Single detached house
East	Small Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Single detached house
South	Small Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Single detached house
West	Small Scale Residential Zone (RS)	Single detached house



View of site looking north from 79 Avenue NW



View of site looking south from the rear alley

Community Insights

This application was brought forward to the public using a basic approach. This approach was selected because it proposes a rezoning to a standard zone of the same category in the Zoning Bylaw. The basic approach included:

Mailed Notice, January 31, 2025

- Notification radius: 60 metres
- Recipients: 92
- Responses: 20, all in opposition

Site Signage, March 5, 2025

- One rezoning information sign was placed on the property so as to be visible from 79 Avenue NW.

Webpage

- edmonton.ca/rezoningapplications

Notified Community Organizations

- McKernan Community League
- Scona District Community Council

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

- Traffic congestion is already horrible and would be made worse (x11).
- New RS Zoning allows plenty of infill opportunities that are enough for this area. Don't need more upzonings before letting RS Zoning play out (x9).
- Mid block increases in scale are not in line with the character of the neighbourhood (x5).
- Worried about parking congestion increasing and illegal parking (x5).
- Worried about short term rentals and guests that won't respect the community - not disposing of waste properly and parking on others private property (x3).
- Increase in building size will increase shadow impacts nearby, including on houses with solar panels (x3).
- Increased site coverage leads to increased heat island effect and loss of vegetation (x3).
- No new development until traffic congestion issue is studied properly (x2).
- Concerned about the quality of development from proponents based on past history (x2).
- Loss of privacy with a bigger building (x2).
- Worried this will set a precedent for more rezonings (x2).
- Infill development should focus on growth priority areas (x2).
- This area is already over-developed with a new 6 storey building just to the north (x2).
- The alley is in poor condition and unpaved and can't handle more traffic (x2).
- Worried there won't be room for proper waste storage and collection (x2).

- I do not like the loss of backyard space.
- Increases in scale should be near larger apartments, not interior to RS Zoning.
- It doesn't make sense to tear down homes for infill when there are lots of vacant sites and parking lots in many places in the City.
- Do not agree with the District Plan replacing the Area Redevelopment Plan.
- Schools, hospitals, etc. are already at capacity in this area.
- I want to see more public engagement before decisions are made.
- There is a loss of mature trees on redevelopment sites and this takes decades to replace.
- Will decrease the value of nearby homes.
- There are existing construction impacts from two large projects near the LRT station and more construction can't be accommodated.
- Traffic congestion is starting to impact emergency response vehicles.
- Worried utility infrastructure can't handle more density.

Application Analysis

The City Plan

The proposed rezoning aligns with two Big City Moves in The City Plan: “A Rebuildable City”, and a “Community of Communities”. Goals associated with a Rebuildable City include adding 50% of net new units through infill city-wide, and welcoming 600,000 additional residents into the redeveloping area. Goals associated with the Community of Communities include: 50% of trips made by transit and active transportation, and the creation of areas that allow people to meet their daily needs within 15-minutes of where they live.

Scona District Plan

The McKernan neighbourhood is located within the Scona District Plan. The site is located within the Urban Mix land use designation, and is west of the 114 Street Secondary Corridor. The Urban Mix designation includes all types of housing, shops, services, and offices in one land use category. Outside of nodes and corridors, Urban Mix allows for small scale buildings (up to 3 storeys) throughout. Additional scale can be considered if the site meets a minimum of two contextual criteria. These criteria are outlined in the table below, with an associated assessment of whether this site is compliant or not:

District Policy Criteria for Consideration of Additional Scale	Analysis	Compliance (Yes or No)
In a Node or Corridor Area or within 100 metres of a Node or Corridor Area	The site is within 100 metres of the 114 Street Secondary Corridor (approx. 65 metres to the north and 75 metres to the east).	Yes
Within 400 metres of a Mass Transit Station	The site is approximately 215 metres from the McKernan/Belgravia LRT Station.	Yes
Along an Arterial Roadway or a Collector Roadway	79 Avenue NW is a local roadway, not collector or arterial roadway.	No
At a corner site or adjacent to a park or open space	The site is not a corner site. The site is not adjacent to a park or open space.	No
Adjacent to a site zoned for greater than Small Scale development	Adjacent sites are zoned for small scale development.	No

With the site meeting two of the above criteria, consideration can be given to the addition scale of the proposed RSM h12.0 Zone at this location. Additional context included in this analysis is that the site is approximately 150 metres from the University-Garneau Major Node to the north and that, while not directly adjacent to open space, Charles Simmonds Park is only 2 lots to the west and there is a shared pathway at the end of the block to the east.



Site analysis context

Land within the nearby Secondary Corridor is anticipated for low and mid rise development of approximately 4 to 8 storeys. As the name of the proposed zone suggests, the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM h12.0) is considered the ideal zone for transition areas near these kinds of corridors and also supports the following District Policies:

- 2.1.1.4 - Transition from taller buildings within Nodes and Corridors to shorter ones in Urban Mix areas outside of Nodes and Corridors.
- Policy 2.5.2.3 - Support development at the edges of Nodes and Corridors that provides transition to the scale of the surrounding development.

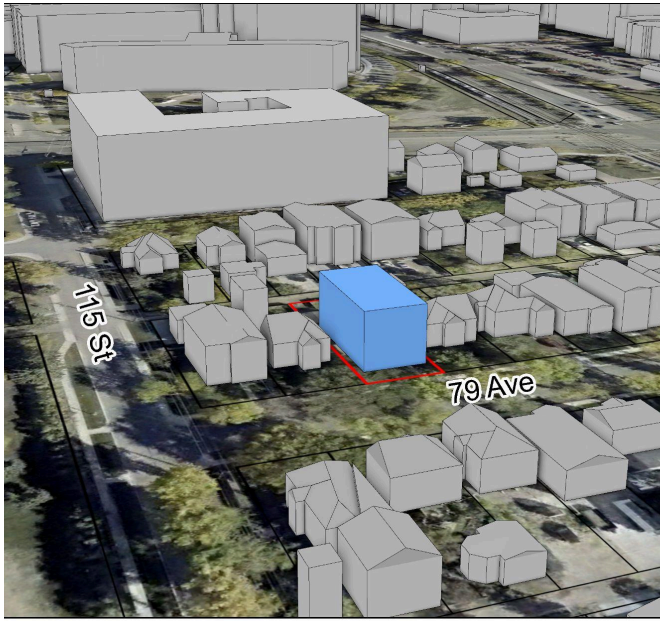
Land Use Compatibility

The RSM h12.0 Zone is considered compatible with the mostly small scale residential development in the immediate area. The proposed zone would allow for more development intensity than the current RS Zone:

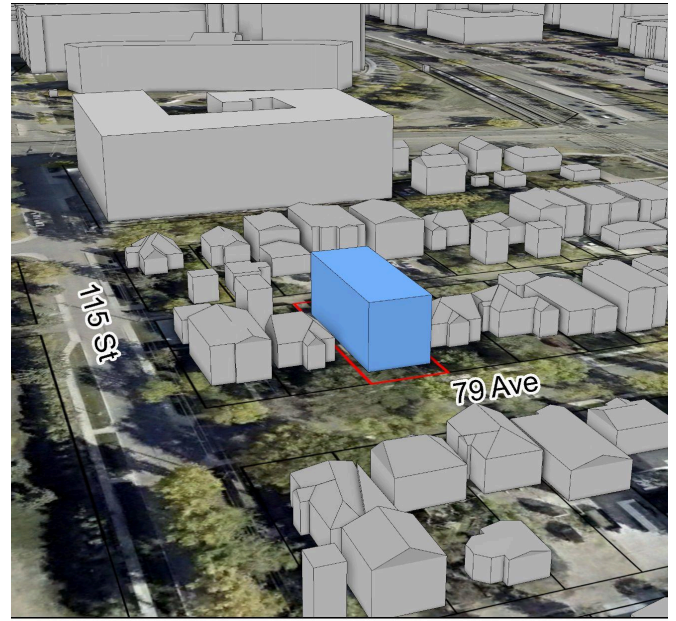
- An increase in maximum height from 10.5 m to 12.0 m.
- An increase in maximum site coverage from 45% to 60%.
- Density would change from a maximum of 7 dwellings to a minimum of 3 dwellings with no maximum.

A comparison of key differences between the zones is provided below.

	RS Zone Current	RSM h12.0 Proposed
Typical Uses	Small scale residential	
Maximum Height	10.5 m	12.0 m
Minimum Front Setback (79 Avenue NW)	4.5 m	3.0 m
Minimum Interior Side Setbacks	1.2 m	
Minimum Rear Setback (Alley)	10.0 m	5.5 m
Maximum Site Coverage	45%	60%
Minimum Soft Landscaped Area	30%	25%
Number of Dwellings	No minimum, maximum of 7	Minimum of 3, no maximum



Current RS Zone



Proposed RSM h12.0 Zone

Mobility

The site is well served by multiple travel modes; it is located close to neighbourhood connector bike routes along 115 Street NW, 114 Street NW and University Avenue NW, as well as frequent and rapid bus route service along 114 Street NW and University Avenue NW. The McKernan/Belgravia LRT Station is within a 350 metre walking distance to the site. Minimal impacts to the mobility network are anticipated with this rezoning.

Through public engagement with this application, Administration has received feedback regarding the significant peak hour traffic congestion within the Belgravia neighbourhood. This congestion is generally due to high commuter traffic volumes along the 114 Street NW and University Avenue NW arterials interacting with the at-grade Capital Line LRT at the University Avenue NW and 76 Avenue NW intersections. Motorists have been using Belgravia's interior roads to bypass the busier arterial routes. In order to reduce the amount of traffic shortcutting through Belgravia, "Local Traffic Only" signs were installed south of University Avenue NW along Saskatchewan Drive NW, 119 Street NW, and 115 Street NW. Administration has also submitted feedback through Google Maps to prevent identification of alternate routes through the neighbourhood.

It is noted that recent residential development construction projects have contributed to neighbourhood traffic congestion as well. To accommodate the partial road closure of 76 Avenue NW that is required due to the ongoing construction of the 6 storey building near 76 Avenue NW and 114 Street NW, parking along 76 Avenue NW between 114 Street NW and 115 Street NW has been banned. The parking ban along the south curb lane will be evaluated once the construction is complete to determine if it should remain to facilitate traffic flow.

Administration will continue to monitor the neighbourhood roads to determine whether other mitigation measures are appropriate in order to improve neighbourhood safety and congestion.

Utilities

Development allowed under the proposed zone would be required to include Low Impact Development or on-site stormwater management techniques utilizing a controlled outflow rate to mitigate its impact on the existing drainage infrastructure. Details of the required Low Impact Development or stormwater management will be reviewed at the Development Permit stage.

There is a deficiency in on-street fire protection adjacent to the property in terms of hydrant spacing and flow rates. Edmonton Fire Rescue Services (EFRS) may be able to perform an Infill Fire Protection Assessment (IFPA) at the Development Permit stage to potentially alter or lessen on-street fire protection infrastructure upgrades, assuming certain criteria are met.

The applicant/owner will be responsible for all costs associated with infrastructure changes required by this application.

Written By: Andrew McLellan

Approved By: Tim Ford

Branch: Development Services

Section: Planning Coordination