

CHARTER BYLAW 21214 - To Amend the District Policy Charter Bylaw 24000 for Small-Medium Scale Developments

Purpose

To provide policy direction for where small scale development with additional massing and intensity, such as that enabled by the Small-Medium Scale Transition (RSM) Zone, can be supported within the redeveloping area, in locations outside node and corridor areas in the District Policy.

Readings

Charter Bylaw 21214 is ready for three readings after the public hearing has been held. If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, Council must unanimously agree that Charter Bylaw 21214 be considered for third reading.

Advertising and Signing

Charter Bylaw 21214 was advertised in the Edmonton Journal on June 13, 2025 and June 21, 2025 and can be passed following third reading.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the April 28, 2025, City Council Public Hearing, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to District Policy, Bylaw 24000, Section 2.5 (Land use) and/or the Zoning Bylaw, Bylaw 20001, to limit opportunities and review the General Purpose for the RSM - Small-Medium Scale Transition Zone outside of nodes and corridors and return to a future Public Hearing.

Position of Administration

Administration supports proposed Charter Bylaw 21214.

REPORT

This report is to be cross referenced with Council Report - Land Use Planning Bylaw 21215 in response to a City Council motion passed on April 28, 2025.

Zoning Bylaw 20001 has been in effect since January 2024 and the new suite of district plans and District Policy have been in effect since October 2024. These statutory documents have

been used extensively through the Land Development Application (LDA) process to provide direction for rezoning and plan amendment applications. During this time, Administration has been continuously listening and learning how industry, community and City Council interpret and apply these statutory documents when making applications, providing feedback or rendering decisions at Public Hearing.

Since the adoption of the Zoning Bylaw, District Policy and district plans, there has been a growing number of rezoning applications from the Small Scale Residential (RS) Zone to the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential (RSM) Zone to provide additional density and development site coverage in redeveloping areas outside node and corridor areas. District Policy 2.5.2.6 is often cited to rationalize additional height and site coverage for these sites.

These types of rezoning applications have contributed to increased tension within communities and at City Council Public Hearings regarding the appropriateness of additional scale and the ability of the zone to provide transition from nodes and corridors to surrounding development. The number of dwellings and diversity of housing forms already available through the RS zone are frequently noted as well.

On April 28, 2025, City Council passed a motion directing Administration to specifically address these concerns by limiting RSM zone opportunities outside nodes and corridors through amendments to District Policy Bylaw 24000 and/or Zoning Bylaw 20001.

In response to this motion, Administration has proposed amendments to both the Zoning Bylaw and District Policy. This includes amending the RSM Zone purpose statement, as outlined in Cover Report for Bylaw 21215, to connect the zone's intended use outside nodes and corridors to direction provided by statutory plans. Proposed amendments to the District Policy provide new policy direction on where additional scale (less than low rise or four storeys) should be supported within the redeveloping area, in locations outside of nodes and corridors, if certain criteria are met. This combined approach provides communities and applicants greater clarity over where RSM Zone is intended and policy distinction between different building scales.

Amendment to the District Policy

Applications to rezone properties to the RSM zone outside node and corridor areas rely heavily on District Policy 2.5.2.6 for additional development rights, where no other local statutory plan exists. Since adoption and implementation of the District Policy, RSM zoning applications have increased. Communities have expressed concerns over increased development intensity (particularly at mid-block locations), and a lack of transition to adjacent small-scale development. This sentiment, along with City Council's motion, clarifies the need to limit RSM opportunities while still enabling residential infill at a variety of scales, densities and designs to meet community housing needs.

As detailed in Attachment 2, Administration proposes to amend the District Policy to provide clear direction for where small-medium scale development (less than four storeys) can be

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supported within the redeveloping area and in locations outside of nodes and corridors under certain conditions. The proposed new policy 2.5.2.5 will direct small-medium scale development to corner sites provided at least one of the additional locational criteria is met. Focusing larger scale development on corner sites is a common planning practice that leverages typically better block position, access, size and visibility when accommodating more intense forms of residential development. Corner sites also offer a greater potential to mitigate impacts on neighbouring development through design, with more street frontage and lot sizes that are typically larger.

In addition to the new policy 2.5.2.5, Administration proposes newly numbered District Policy 2.5.2.7 be amended to restrict consideration of additional scale to Low Rise or greater developments where site size and context allow for appropriate transition to surrounding development. This change will effectively prevent mid-block RSMh12 rezoning proposals from being considered for additional scale while providing more detail about the types of sites where additional scale may be considered. These policy changes provide appropriate location criteria for development that provides a transition from nodes and corridors, and from small scale to larger scale developments.

Community Insight

Administration considered previous public input from rezonings from the Small Scale Residential Zone (RS) to the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM) between January 1, 2024 and April 28, 2025, in the preparation of this report. Administration believes the proposed changes will help clarify where small scale residential development with greater intensity and massing is supported within the redeveloping area, in locations outside Node and Corridor Area for applicants, community and Council. Due to the nature of City Council's motion and the required timing, no engagement was conducted specifically about these proposed amendments.

Public notification of proposed changes to Charter Bylaw 21214 were advertised in the Edmonton Journal on June 13, 2025 and June 21, 2025.

Attachments

1. Charter Bylaw 21214
2. Markup and Rationale of Proposed District Policy Amendments

Others Reviewing the Report

- M. Gunther, Acting City Solicitor