

## CHARTER BYLAW 21472

### To Amend the District Policy Charter Bylaw 24000 for Urban Mix Developments

#### Purpose

To provide policy direction for where small scale and low rise development may be supported, and where additional scale may be considered, in the urban mix area.

#### Readings

Charter Bylaw 21472 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 21472 be considered for third reading.

#### Advertising and Signing

This Bylaw was advertised in the Edmonton Journal on March 20, 2026 and March 28, 2026. The Bylaw can be passed following third reading.

#### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 17, 2026 City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to the District Policy as shown in Attachment 1 and to Zoning Bylaw 20001 as shown in Attachment 2 of the February 9, 2026, Urban Planning and Economy report UPE03201 and return to a City Council Public Hearing.

## REPORT

The City Plan seeks to direct large scale development to nodes and corridors, but also to “[e]nable ongoing residential infill to occur at a variety of scales, densities and designs within all parts of the residential area.”<sup>1</sup> Zoning Bylaw 20001 fulfills this policy, in part, by allowing a variety of infill development under the Small Scale Residential (RS) Zone. The District Policy adds to this by describing the contextual features that can support additional development opportunities through rezoning.

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<sup>1</sup> *The City Plan*, Policy Direction 2.2.1.6, page 54.

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Council adopted the District Policy and Plans in October 2024. Administration uses this statutory plan to guide recommendations on Land Development Applications, including rezoning. Council has amended the District Policy once since its adoption, to further refine the locations where rezoning to larger scale are supported on midblock sites outside of nodes and corridors. The amendments presented in this report continue these adjustments towards a greater focus on nodes and corridors, as the City seeks the correct balance between encouraging infill development and minimizing disruption to established areas.

### **Summary of Proposed Changes to District Policy**

The proposed changes are to policies in Section 2.5.2 Urban Mix of the District Policy and to the Glossary. Urban Mix is a land use category that includes housing, shops, services and offices and comprises all residential areas. The policies in this section describe the appropriate scale of development outside of nodes and corridors.

Current policy applies lists of criteria (such as proximity to mass transit or major roadways) to either “support” or to “consider” particular scales of development. Where the policy uses the term “support,” it provides a strong commitment that the City will support rezonings up to the specified scale on sites that meet the criteria. Where the policy uses the term “consider,” it indicates that rezoning for additional scale may be supported if it meets the criteria, depending on local context.

The proposed changes combine the “support” policies into a single policy for developments up to low rise (four storeys), such as the Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone (RSM) and the Medium Scale Residential (RM) h16 zones. They support this scale at two types of sites:

- Sites that are both within 400 metres of a mass transit station and along an arterial road (including midblock sites).
- Corner sites along an arterial road.

Proximity to nodes and corridors and along collector roads are removed as eligible criteria. These changes reflect a stronger commitment to support larger development through City-wide policy and direct more intense development to more appropriate sites within the nodes and corridors.

The proposed change to the “consider” policy shifts it away from a criteria-based approach to a more neutral description of the contextual factors that can make larger scale development appropriate. The policy provides a comprehensive list of eight factors used in planning analysis.

Glossary changes to the terms “Small Scale” and “Low Rise” support related changes in the zoning bylaw to limit the use of the RSM - Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone. The definition of “Mass Transit Station” will also change to clarify how distances from these are measured, now that an illustration showing measurements is proposed to be removed from the Urban Mix section.

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The proposed policy changes are shown in detail in Attachment 2 - Markup and Rationale of Proposed District Policy Amendments.

### **Rationale for Proposed Changes to District Policy**

The proposed approach offers several advantages over the status quo:

- Reinforces that nodes and corridors are the best locations to pursue rezoning for intensification.
- Discretion to evaluate all aspects of local context that supports robust debate at public hearing.
- Reduced need for continuous policy amendments to align with local context.
- Greater flexibility to align proposed development with local context.
- Better public engagement by expanding the factors under consideration.

Administration has been using the current policy for 16 months and has found that strict criteria-based policy limits the scope of discussion and opportunities to improve rezoning outcomes. Criteria-based policies are appropriate to provide certainty for applicants and communities at sites prioritized for development, such as in nodes and corridors, near mass-transit stations and along arterial roads. However, greater flexibility to focus on relevant local context is needed to evaluate, engage upon and prepare recommendations for other sites.

### **Community Insight**

Administration considered feedback received from registered speakers at past public hearings, previous public engagement, targeted meetings with community and industry groups, and feedback collected via an online feedback form.

All public hearings from the adoption of district plans in October 2024 until November 2025 were reviewed. Through analysis of comments from registered speakers regarding all bylaws involving the RSM zone, the following top themes emerged:

- Concern over spot zoning and erosion of policy consistency
- Increased traffic and parking congestion
- RS Small Scale zone already allows sufficient density
- Detrimental impact on heritage and neighbourhood character
- Inappropriate scale and excessive height

Comments received during public engagement for the District Planning project in 2023 were also reviewed. These comments included those from members of the community and industry. Analysis of comments on the draft urban mix policies within the District Policy revealed the following top themes:

- The need for precise, clear and consistent language
- Transition from nodes and corridors is important
- General support for intensification in nodes and corridors and around high quality transit

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- Need for policy flexibility and context

Administration also conducted targeted meetings with industry and community groups in January 2026 and posted a feedback form from January 12 to 29, 2026 to provide Edmontonians the opportunity to review potential changes in advance of the Urban Planning Committee discussion on February 9, 2026. The form solicited feedback on proposed changes to the RS zone, RSM zone and District Policy. It was viewed by over 11,000 people and over 3,600 responses were received.

Comments specific to the District Policy indicated support for additional limitations on infill and density, as well as full or conditional support for the proposed changes. Some respondents oppose the proposed changes because they expressed the current policies are enabling affordability, equity, housing supply and housing diversity. The larger themes from the comments generally included:

- Concerns with building height
- Focus infill/density in specific areas
- Desire to maintain neighbourhood character
- Opinions on location criteria for where additional scales of development can be supported
- Desire to address parking

The proposed amendments address the above concerns in the following ways:

- Removing the RSM zone as an option for infill development in most areas recognizes that the RS zone already allows for sufficient additional density for most locations.
- Reducing the number of locations where policy requires Administration to support higher density outside of nodes and corridors reinforces that nodes and corridors are the best locations to pursue rezoning in support of greater intensification.
- Maintaining proximity to mass transit as a factor for increased density outside nodes and corridors aligns with comments supporting density near high quality transit.
- Allowing for increased discretion through the “consider” policy will allow Administration and Council to account for local context.

### **Attachments**

1. Charter Bylaw 21472
2. Markup and Rationale of Proposed District Policy Amendments

### **Others Reviewing the Report**

- M. Gunther, Acting City Solicitor