

Public Engagement

Recent Applicants

In order to understand the impacts of the July 10, 2017, amendments, Administration sent a questionnaire to 32 applicants who have had development permits for garden suites approved since the new regulations went into effect. Five questionnaires were filled out and returned to Administration. Feedback generally focused on regulations and process, and is summarized below.

Regulations

- the new regulations are great
- height regulations are easier now
- reduction in parking requirements helps
- would also like to see basement suite and garden suite allowed on the same lot
- like being able to put living space on both levels
- facade articulation requirements are difficult to meet
- design regulations (particularly shrubs) are frivolous and create uncertainty
- increased site coverage is helpful
- maximum total site coverage is not enough
- mechanical room counts as living space
- maximum total floor area is too small; should be increased to 130 square metres to accommodate parking areas and stairs
- maximum floor area limits ability to develop 3-car garages that were possible under the old regulations
- difference in size regulations between infill and greenfield sites creates difficulty in the design process

Process

- tough to go through the process by yourself
- lack of consistency in interpretation
- given conflicting information throughout the process
- more staff are needed; review timelines are too long
- there is a mismatch between the city's vision for garden suites and the strict enforcement of regulations
- staff interpretations of regulations need to be available to the public
- submission requirements are confusing
- available materials are helpful
- hard to find information online
- how-to guide needs to be more comprehensive

Edmonton Design Committee

Administration attended the June 19, 2018 Edmonton Design Committee meeting to make a presentation about design-related regulations for garden suites and solicit feedback. Comments from the committee are summarized below.

Feedback from Edmonton Design Committee

- landscaping with shrubs is not sufficient for facade articulation
- could require a ground floor entrance facing the lane
- the How-to Guide should include illustrated examples of the desired architectural features
- could add variation in roofline and provision of glazing to articulation options
- possibly require more than two design elements on each facade
- make the intent of reducing the second storey massing more clear in the preamble to the facade articulation regulation
- second storey should be smaller when the building is larger
- some design requirements can be too expensive

Draft Urban Planning Committee Report Circulation

A draft of Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development Report CR_5113 was circulated on August 2, 2018, to the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues Planning Committee, each individual Community League, Urban Development Institute - Edmonton Region, Canadian Homebuilders' Association - Edmonton Region, Infill Development in Edmonton Association, surrounding municipalities, stakeholders who expressed concern over impacts to accessibility at the July 10, 2017 Public Hearing, and applicants who provided feedback through the questionnaire.

The Calder Community League responded in opposition to retaining the 50 square metre second storey floor area limit, but supported the increase in the maximum total floor area from 120 square metres to 130 square metres. YEGarden Suites also opposed maintaining the second storey floor area limit, but supported the removal of the 75 square metre maximum for living space and the increase in total floor area. They also supported allowances for tiny homes and the removal of the minimum lot size. Infill Development in Edmonton Association supported the increase in total floor area and the removal of minimum lot size. They also supported amendments for accessible design but felt they should be linked to increased floor area. Other recommendations made by IDEA included increasing the maximum second storey floor area, decreasing the minimum separation distance to the principal building, harmonizing height regulations for all roof types, and making design regulations less prescriptive.

In response to this feedback, Administration has adjusted the proposed amendments to allow a 60 square meter second storey for garden suites that meet Inclusive Design standards.

Strathcona County

Strathcona County requested information about the cumulative potential increases in residential units within the Joint Planning Study Area as a result of this and other recent amendments. Administration provided data demonstrating that the projected increase in residential units would be minimal.