

COUNCIL REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: August 18, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: A. Renneberg, Senior Planner

PREPARED BY: A. Renneberg, Senior Planner

REPORT TITLE: Bylaw No. 1237-2025 – Amendment to Land Use Bylaw 809-2013, Direct Control (Redistricting Woodbend Stage 11) (1st Reading)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bylaw No. 1237-2025 will amend Bylaw No. 809-2013, Section 27.0 – Land Use Map, by redistricting part of the SW ¼ Section 33-49-25-W4 from UR – Urban Reserve to DC(33) – Direct Control Distinctive Design. The redistricting will also include an amendment to Appendix 1 of the Land Use Bylaw, with the addition of new Direct Control regulations for the implementation of narrow lot townhouses within Woodbend Stage 11, including a mix of 14', 18', and 20' building pockets through narrowed lot width.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council give Bylaw No. 1237-2025 first reading.

COUNCIL HISTORY

N/A

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE

Administration received an application for Direct Control (DC) to implement regulations to allow a mix of 14', 18' and 20' fee-simple townhouse product within a new block of housing in Woodbend.¹ The application was contextualized with a corresponding subdivision application, showing application of new DC regulations limited in scope to a single block within the stage – creating an area of 10 lots of development with a 14' building pocket intermixed with 11 lots with an 18' building pocket and one at 20'. Both 14' and 18' units are narrower than those supported under the City's Land Use Bylaw– which is currently a 20' minimum building pocket for townhouses through a 6.1m internal lot width. Direct Control districts are an option available to applicants and which are intended to trial new forms of development in a limited scope, thereby providing an opportunity for municipal evaluation prior to establishing standard regulations to adopt the development typology throughout the city. Every Direct Control application is evaluated on its own merits, and approval of one subdivision or rezoning in no way implies responsibility nor sets a precedent for the municipality to continue to approve the same in other areas.

The narrow-lot housing facilitated through Bylaw No. 1237-2025 is being presented by the applicant as an approach to allow a new level of housing affordability in the Leduc housing market, as is encouraged by various levels of City policy. Fee-simple products like that proposed within Woodbend Stage 11 are just one type of housing available on the housing market to purchasers. By decreasing the minimum lot width from a 20' building pocket down to accommodate both 18' and 14' building pockets within this proposal, this reduces the overall lot costs to developers, thereby potentially allowing for the transfer of that development savings onto the homeowner at purchase. Other opportunities for affordability exist through different forms of housing as well, which Administration is still promoting throughout the development community to help

¹ Note: Industry uses Imperial measurements (e.g., 14' or 18') for purposes of defining the building pocket and metric (e.g., 6.1 metres) for purposes of defining lot dimensions. This is echoed in this report to ensure consistency and accuracy with the applicant's request.

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create a healthy mix of building type and tenure in our neighbourhoods and the community as a whole. Narrow lot, fee-simple housing such as this, however, is becoming a housing typology more frequently sought by the development community within the regional housing market to help support market affordable housing options at a time when increasing housing costs are continually squeezing out buyers. The City does not employ any mechanism that controls the purchase price of home sold on the free market or whether these homes are purchased for the purpose of rental or will be owner occupied.

Following receipt of the applications, Administration reached out to nearby property owners in May 2025 who were determined most likely to be impacted by the proposed subdivision and redistricting given their proximity to the DC area. No feedback was received through that referral. This process appears to demonstrate little public opposition to the proposal in this greenfield area. The developer did not undertake additional engagement targeted to their DC proposal, indicating to Administration that public acceptance was generally proven through limited public opposition to previous implementation of similar 18' townhouse DC zoning in the Woodbend neighbourhood over the past few years.

Through evaluation of the Woodbend Stage 11 proposal at an interdepartmental level, Administration is satisfied with the information provided related the 14'/18'/20' fee-simple housing proposal. Being a narrow lot design, opportunity for suites is restricted naturally through the on-site parking requirements of the Land Use Bylaw. Where lot widths can accommodate the additional on-site parking, a suite can be considered; however, the width of the proposed lots would in most cases limit parking opportunities and a suite could not be considered. Although this restricts housing options to some degree, the limitation on suites is likely to have a somewhat positive impact on the function of the street by lowering additional demand for on street parking as well as waste bin storage in the lane area. It is the opinion of Administration that overall operational impacts to such things as waste collection, snow removal, and street parking are likely to be minimal or manageable; however, if these private snow storage areas are not utilized and snow gets pushed into the lane, there may well be operational impact requiring the City to clear the snow more frequently to keep the road suitable for travel. This housing product requires the homeowner to place their bins at the end of their driveway on collection day and not in the space in between driveways. This means that homeowners must remove the garbage bins to access their garage or parking pads. Administration is satisfied that garbage collection can still proceed uninhibited, but this does pose an inconvenience to the homeowner on garbage collection days.

The lots proposed under the Woodbend Stage 11 DC are directly nearby a developed park amenity with park benches and a picnic table. A partially developed commercial area provides significant value to residents within this neighbourhood as well. Although not developed, a school site is located partially within the neighbourhood to the northwest for future school construction opportunities within walking distance. Transit stops are also nearby. The narrowest of lots proposed is well-mixed with some larger sizes, creating diversity to the streetscape as well as decreasing lot concentration and intensity on the block. Overall, given the limited scale of the proposal in Woodbend Stage 11 at a single block frontage with only 22 units, Administration is supportive of the use of the DC proposed under Bylaw No. 1237-2025 for the purpose of developing a small-scale, mix of 14', 18' and 20' townhouse units within Woodbend Stage 11.

Recent approval of the subdivision of Woodbend Stage 11 is conditional upon various things, including the approval of the redistricting of the land by Council – to both DC – Direct Control under Bylaw No. 1237-2025 as well as RCD, US and GR land use districts being brought before Council under separate bylaw. Bylaw No. 1237-2025 to redistricting to Direct Control was drafted by Administration to ensure lot widths are reflective only of the sizing within the Stage 11 subdivision area. The regulation is also drafted to limit the paved driveway surface off the garage in the rear to the width of the garage opening only, intending to help provide and protect space for snow storage and waste bin storage off the laneway. All other regulations related to the development of the parcels will fall to the current standards within the Land Use Bylaw.

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Key considerations the lead to Administration's recommended support of introducing this new housing product include:

- limited scale at which it is being proposed;
- distribution of lot widths between 20', 18' and 14' foot;
- location considerate to specific siting criteria intended to maintain quality of life for residents despite less private amenity space (backyards);
- driveway designed with practical solutions for snow storage and waste bin storage; and
- limitation on suites which reduces potential concerns around congestion due to the as-built dwelling density of the area being less than standard lot width with suites accommodated.

STRATEGIC / RELEVANT PLANS ALIGNMENT

The redistricting proposed under Bylaw No. 1237-2025 is supported by the following City policies:

- Council Strategic Plan – prioritizes housing diversity and affordability
- Municipal Development Plan – encourages the provision of affordable market and non-market housing, along with strategic placement of certain housing nearby transit routes, diverse park amenities and other community services.
- Housing Strategy – prioritizes diversification of housing, and residential densification and affordability.
- Neighbourhood Design Guidelines – encourages efficient use of land within the city while contributing to a more diverse housing mix in each neighbourhood.
- West Area Structure Plan and Woodbend Outline Plan– supports fee-simple townhouses developed within areas identified for Low Density Residential under the plan, at residential densities reasonable for the scale of development proposed within Stage 11.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

ADMINISTRATION:

With any DC development, it is Administration's intent to evaluate the success of this new type of development. Although operational impacts may arise, the scope and scale of the proposal is minimal at a single block of 22 narrow lot design. At this scale Administration is confident that the overall function of the neighbourhood will not be negatively impacted.

The approved Area Structure Plan generally supports fee-simple townhouses such as this at this scale within the neighbourhood. On a go-forward basis, new neighbourhood Area Structure Plans and Outline Plans will be required to identify where narrow townhouse products will be located in lieu of using the siting criteria at the subdivision stage. If a neighbourhood plan is already approved and allows for townhouses, these applications will be evaluated using the siting criteria to make sure the narrow lot product is in the right location and will be a positive addition to the neighbourhood. Administration will continue to research regional strategies for this type of housing form as well as the appetite for and approaches to integration of this form of housing as a standard within the Land Use Bylaw renewal project.

RISK ANALYSIS: FINANCIAL / LEGAL:

There are no financial or legal implications to the City related to this proposal.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATIONS:

A public hearing for Bylaw No. 1237-2025 is scheduled for the regular meeting of Council held September 8, 2025. The hearing will be advertised in accordance with the Municipal Government Act and the City's Advertising Bylaw No. 1043-2019.

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ALTERNATIVES:

That Council amend Bylaw No. 1237-2025.

That Council defeat Bylaw No. 1237-2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bylaw No. 1237-2025
2. Key Plan
3. Redistricting Plan
4. Subdivision Plan (for reference only)
5. Land Use Concept Plan – Woodbend Outline Plan (for reference only)