

Dear Residents of Old Strathcona Community

As you may already know, the partnership of Bateman and ONE Properties are requesting rezoning of their property at the northwest corner of 99 Street and 89 Avenue NW (9904 & 9920 - 99 Street NW and 9922, 9924 and 9926 89 Avenue NW. This is the site of the existing Wild Earth Foods, Cafe & Bakery property.

As a resident of Old Strathcona, the City of Edmonton is encouraging you to voice your opinion, concerns, suggested changes and vision for the redevelopment of this important location and the 99 Street corridor by writing/emailing City Planning as well as the Mayor and City Council.

The site is currently zoned a combination of the following two zones: (CNC) Neighbourhood Convenience Commercial Zone for the current commercial buildings, and (RA7) Low Rise Apartment Zone applied to the empty lots to the west. The rezoning proposal for the entire area is for a (DC2) Site Specific Development Control Provision, a customized zone that allows for a mixture of uses on the same property, but also allows for more specificity regarding the design of buildings. The first version of the proposal included a single 31-storey tower with commercial space on the ground floor; the most recent proposal, which is what they hope to take forward for Council approval, would now allow for two apartment/condo towers of reduced height:

- West Tower: approximately 18 storeys with townhouse style units at ground level
- East Tower: approximately 15 storeys with commercial uses at ground level
- Maximum of 242 residential units
- Parking provided underground.

Amendments to the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) are also proposed; currently the policies of the plan identify this location for neighbourhood-serving commercial services and apartments of 4-6 storeys.

The decision City Council will make sometime in March or April 2018 about this development will determine the future of development of the 99 Street corridor.

Please email your personal opinions to shape City Council's decision about the proposed rezoning request to the following:

- Andrew McLellan (City Planner responsible for this project at andrew.mclellan@edmonton.ca)
- City Councillors and Mayor Don Iveson in your email to council@edmonton.ca.
- Cc: Delianne Meenhorst, our Strathcona League Communications Director at communication@strathconacommunity.ca

Andrew McLellan has requested that your emails be sent to him no later than January 26, 2018.

INFORMATION THAT YOU MAY FIND HELPFUL TO INFORM YOUR OPINION

A. Main Project Concerns

The Strathcona Centre Community League has formed an ad hoc Planning Committee to assess the potential impact of the Bateman project on the community and 99 Street corridor, We have identified the following list of issues, concerns and questions with respect to the Bateman/ONE Properties proposal.

These may or may not concern you -- or you may wish to express other concerns.

SETBACK: A concern with the inadequate setback of both the 18-storey west tower and the 15-storey east tower, from the 89th avenue sidewalk. The sheer wall design of the towers on certain facades and inadequate setbacks may create wind problems. The proposed setbacks for both towers are as follows:

East Tower Stepbacks	From the north podium Façade – 7.5 m From the south podium Façade – 10.5 m From the east podium Façade – 2.0 m From the west podium Façade – 0.0 m
West Tower Stepbacks	From the north podium Façade – 0.0 m From the south podium Façade – 2.0 m From the east podium Façade – 0.0 m From the west podium Façade - 2.5 m

HEIGHT: Two towers of approximately 18 and 15 storeys. Current zoning (RA7) allows only 4 storeys for apartments.

DESIGN: Desire for design that integrates with the historic nature of our community. Design that encourages walkability. Design that encourages diverse demographics to live there and use the commercial spaces and amenities. Design that decreases wind and enhances the human scale.

RETAIL: A need for retail and commercial space that can adequately replace the amenities we've had on this site, including a grocery store, cafe and bakery, restaurant, wine bar, and space for small business enterprise.

FAMILIES: Any new developments should include sufficient family dwellings to ensure a vibrant demographic. The proposed development would add a minimum of 10, 2-3 bedroom units, which the Community feels is too few.

TRAFFIC: Concerns about traffic congestion which is already problematic along the 99 Street corridor. The addition of 242 dwellings will likely exacerbate traffic congestion. A Traffic Impact Study to assess the effects on 99th Street and on 89th and 90th Avenues is forthcoming.

PARKING: Parking is already a challenge in the area. The concern is that this development could cause additional parking problems on 89th and 90th Avenues.

SHADING: The construction of proposed apartment towers, a 15 storey (east tower) and 18 storey (west tower) would cause too much sun shading for residents to the north, south, east and west detracting from the current quality of life.

WIND: Concern about wind and the need for a wind impact study, especially along the west side and alley due to the limited setbacks.

NOISE: Would the mechanical systems and increased traffic add too much noise?

GUIDELINES: The proposal wants to amend the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan, which currently limits height to 4 storeys on this site.

PRECEDENT: The height of this development could set a precedent for further redevelopments on 99th Street.

If you share similar opinions on these or have any additional issues, we urge you to write Andrew McLellan and City Council with your concerns.

B. FIRST BATEMAN REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SURVEY RESULTS (MAY 2017)

In April 2017 a community-wide survey was conducted of opinions about plans for development along Whyte Avenue and 99 Street, including the first Bateman/ONE Properties proposal (a 31-storey tower) for development at the Wild Earth Foods/Cafe site.

The survey resulted in 437 responses (a statistically valid sample size) of a community of roughly 9,000 people.

The survey results were as follows:

The existing height and mass limits of 4-storey buildings along the 99 Street corridor from Whyte Avenue north to Saskatchewan Drive/92 Avenue) should be maintained:

- 63.6% strongly agree or agree
- 22.7% disagree or strongly disagree
- 13.7% neither agree nor disagree

Medium sized buildings (e.g. 6-storey condos) along the 99 Street corridor (from Whyte Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive/92 Avenue) should be allowed and are appropriate:

- 52.6% strongly agree or agree
- 36.8% disagree or strongly disagree
- 10.6% neither agree nor disagree

Tall towers exceeding 10 storeys should be allowed along the 99 Street corridor from Whyte Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive/92 Avenue and would be considered appropriate for the neighbourhood.

- 20.4% strongly agree or agree
- 72.9% disagree or strongly disagree

- 6.7% neither agree nor disagree

The proposed 31-storey (95 metre) Bateman condominium, townhouse and commercial tower at the Wild Earth Bakery, Cafe and Foods (99 street and 89-90 Avenue) is appropriate for the neighbourhood.

- 16.0% strongly agree or agree
- 79.2% disagree or strongly disagree
- 4.8% neither agree nor disagree

The results of this survey suggest that the majority of residents surveyed would like to see the current zoning standards with respect to height maintained at 4-storeys along 99 Street and would strongly oppose any tall towers along the corridor.

Here is a summary of some of the written comments (both positive and negative) you provided with respect to the potential impacts that high rise development on both 99 Street and Whyte Avenue might have on the quality of life in Old Strathcona:

Positive

- Increase in population would enhance commercial opportunities and contribute positively to school population
- There are currently other high-rises in the vicinity and it would generate greater foot traffic in the area
- The addition of new commercial space and new residential space will be an excellent feature of the neighbourhood and draw residents to live here.

Negative

- Increased traffic would have negative impact. Traffic flow already is an issue and this increase in population would add to the problem.
- Shading and shadow from high-rise will block the sun on adjacent properties especially in winter months.
- This development is a move away from family oriented neighbourhood.
- Development would be precedent setting for 99 street and not a precedent wanted.
- Increase in number of vehicles adding pressure to an existing parking problem
- Concern aging infrastructure cannot handle the development. There are already drainage and sewer issues
- Type of high-rise development will change the character of the area and positive quality of life that presently exists. It would take away the family oriented character that presently exists.
- Lose the character and feel of the current community with small 4-story buildings
- High-rise developments in this area would alter the unique heritage character of the Old Strathcona neighbourhood.
- Noise from the building would impact residential neighbourhood.

You might use these to form your own email commentary to the City and City Council.

C1. Bateman/ONE Properties Proposed Development:

On December 5th, 2017 Bateman Properties and ONE Properties showcased their proposed development at a City of Edmonton-sponsored open house at the TransAlta Art Barns. The City has received a revised planning application from the Batemans/ONE Properties to rezone the Bateman Lands on 99 Street in the Strathcona neighbourhood from the current RA7 (4-storey walk up apartments) and CNC (neighbourhood commercial, with 2-3 storey height limits) to DC2 zoning, which includes a proposed plan amendment to the Strathcona ARP (Area Redevelopment Plan) and partial lane closure.

Bateman/ONE Properties is asking the City of Edmonton to approve the following changes to the current Strathcona ARP and zoning guidelines:

“To accommodate a mixed-use development comprising of two high density residential towers (15 and 18 storeys, respectively) with ground oriented commercial uses in the east podium and ground oriented residential uses in the west podium that provide active and inviting pedestrian oriented streetscapes fronting onto 99 Street NW and 89 Avenue NW. The west and east towers will be linked at the third level to provide common indoor private amenity space.”

Currently, the plan recommends that development along the 99 Street corridor be limited to a maximum of 6 storeys, with pockets of small-scale commercial.

The City of Edmonton’s newly updated Main Street Overlay guidelines that will ultimately guide decisions for future development along main street corridors like 99 Street and that will ultimately supersede portions of the Strathcona ARP. “The purpose of the Main Street Overlay is to encourage and strengthen the pedestrian-oriented character of Edmonton’s main street commercial areas that are located in proximity to residential and transit-oriented areas, by providing visual interest, transparent storefront displays, and amenities for pedestrians.”

C2. Why a DC2 rezoning proposal that would amend Strathcona’s ARP?

The current Bateman (Wild Earth) property is identified as being within the “Walk Up Apartment Area” (Area 4) as per the current Strathcona ARP which is the guiding document for redevelopment in our community. The plan provides guidance to City Planners as to which zones are appropriate for application within the area. Currently, the majority of the 99 Street corridor is zoned (RA8) Mid Rise Apartment Zone, which allows for apartment development of up to 6 storeys. The current zoning is consistent with the policies and direction of the ARP.

Bateman/ONE Properties would like to rezone the current area to DC2. Because the details of the DC2 are not consistent with the policies of the plan, this proposed rezoning would also require City Council approval of an amendment to the Strathcona ARP that limits apartment/condo height along 99 Street.

The proposal is to build a two-tower complex as follows:

East Tower: approximately 15 storeys (55 metres) in height with commercial uses at the base

West Tower: approximately 18 storeys (65 metres) with townhouse style units at the base

The development would have a maximum of 242 units including 5 town houses and the remaining units being apartments. There will be underground parking on site that meets City of Edmonton requirements. The precise mix of unit sizes is not identified in the DC2 zoning proposal, though a minimum of 5 units will be in townhouse form and a minimum of 10 2-4 bedroom units will be designated as “family-oriented.”

There is provision for commercial retail space on the main-street level, however, the re-establishment of a grocery store, cafe or other retail space is ultimately at the future discretion of the developer. The DC2 zoning proposal would allow for a maximum of 11,000 square feet of commercial floor space, which is less than a typical grocery store. It is our understanding that the Wild Earth Café and Bakery intends to return in the new building, should it be approved.

C3. Strathcona ARP Apartment Guidelines:

Page 19 of the Strathcona ARP states- "The general intent of this area is to continue to accommodate walk up apartment development and to ensure that future apartment development or redevelopment maintains the pedestrian friendly character of the streetscape, is compatible with the scale of apartments that have been built to date, and has minimal impact on the adjacent single family development."

Apartments are recognized as being an important form of housing in the community, and there is a need to ensure that they maintain the desirable qualities that have made Strathcona an interesting area for pedestrians and residents who live there.

Page 6 of the ARP states requires that "apartment development be sensitive in scale with the existing development and retain the character and pattern of low density development."

Page 20 of the ARP states that "Future apartment development will be compatible with the existing scale of development and will reflect the interesting qualities and character of the streetscape that is currently present in the community. This may be achieved by:

- a) Reducing the height of apartments to 3 storeys, including habitable basement development, or requiring that the building is stepped back above the 3rd store.;
- b) Requiring articulation of the front façade, and regular placement of front entrances;
- c) Reducing side yard requirements to provide a pattern of breaks in development that is more consistent with single family housing; and
- d) Accommodating features at the first storey level to provide interest on the front street and reduce the appearance of height and mass.

C4. Strathcona ARP Commercial Development Guidelines:

Strathcona's ARP has the following commercial development guidelines for areas like the 99 Street on Page 5 of the ARP: "Require commercial development outside of the Whyte Avenue Commercial Area to be of low scale and intensity, and to maintain a pedestrian orientation onto the street by emphasizing retail and service uses at ground level."

What we know is that future development along main street corridors like 99 Street will be guided by the City's new Main Street Overlay guidelines which calls for pedestrian-oriented corridors along main street commercial areas that are located in proximity to residential and transit-oriented areas, by providing visual interest, transparent storefront displays, and amenities for pedestrians. All developers will be required to demonstrate that their proposals meet these new guidelines.

D. Other Information Sources and Websites

For more information to help you understand the issues please see the following on-line sources:

1. Bateman/ONE Properties Proposal

https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/neighbourhoods/bateman-lands-on-99-street.aspx

2. Strathcona Community Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP):

https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/plans_in_effect/Strathcona_ARP_Consolidation.pdf

3. City of Edmonton's new Main Street Overlay guidelines:

http://webdocs.edmonton.ca/InfraPlan/zoningbylaw/ZoningBylaw/Part2/Overlays/819_Main_Streets_Overlay.html