

Residential Infill Strategy Workplan

January 2017



1.0 Introduction

Residential Infill refers to new housing in established neighbourhoods. New housing can be single-family, two-family, townhouse or multi-family.

On December 5, 2016, Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development directed the Winnipeg Public Service to prepare a work plan within 90 days for a residential infill strategy which will prescribe anticipated stakeholder consultation and deliverables, including those that could be prepared within the OurWinnipeg Review, as well as the following:

1. A policy framework to encourage infill development.
2. Planning and design guidelines for residential infill.
3. An infill communications strategy to share information clearly and widely with builders and residents.

1.1 Complete Communities Direction Strategy

The focus for this project is the Areas of Stability identified in the Urban Structure Map. Although OurWinnipeg is under review, the core values currently expressed in the Complete Communities Direction Strategy are expected to remain largely the same for Areas of Stability, which include Mature Communities and Recent Communities. The Key Direction for Areas of Stability states: Enhance the quality, diversity, completeness and sustainability of stable neighbourhoods and expand housing options for Winnipeg's changing population. The Complete Communities Direction Strategy also seeks the following attributes for infill in Areas of Stability:

- low to moderate density;
- contextually suitable;
- context sensitive;
- complementary to the existing scale, character and built form.

1.2 Objectives

This project recognizes that, despite its benefits, infill housing can be a source of tension and conflict. Recent development proposals have demonstrated a lack of consensus on how and where different forms of infill should occur. Many cities have guidelines or policies around infill housing. Outside of a few local area plans, Winnipeg does not. The goal for this project would be to advance a shared vision for residential infill that helps address demand for new housing while preserving neighbourhood quality, character and livability. This project will achieve this goal by meeting the following objectives:

- Fostering an understanding of the challenges and decisions Winnipeg faces in accommodating growth in the years ahead;
- Ensuring that Winnipeg is accommodating a wide variety of housing options to meet all needs;
- Encouraging economically sustainable development that draws value from existing infrastructure and enhancements such as rapid transit and active transportation.
- Clarifying and building on *Complete Communities* concepts such as ‘context-sensitive development’;
- Understanding and mitigating the concerns most commonly associated with residential infill;
- Providing greater clarity, consistency and predictability in the development application process.

1.3 Scope of Work

The focus for this project is residential infill within the Areas of Stability. As stated in the Complete Communities Direction Strategy, infill will continue to be accommodated in *all areas* of the City. This strategy serves to strengthen that overarching policy direction. The proposed Infill Strategy will address, at a minimum, built form, design features, lot width and size, yards, landscape standards, density, and zoning. Commercial development and Transformative Areas (corridors, centres, TOD, redevelopment areas and downtown) are outside the scope of this project. A number of concurrent projects are being undertaken alongside the Infill Strategy. Although they are being managed as separate projects, coordination will occur to take advantage of efficiencies and to align policies and directions.

- Housing Needs Assessment
 - The Winnipeg Public Service will be reporting back to Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development to identify components and costs associated with a Housing Needs Assessment.
 - Data is required to determine what types of housing are most needed in specific areas of the city.
 - Considerations include where affordable housing might be appropriate and how it can be integrated into communities.
 - Specific programs will also be informed by related policy, including the Infill Strategy.

Residential Infill Strategy Workplan

- Heritage Conservation Districts Study
 - The City of Winnipeg, along with HTFC Planning & Design Inc., SPAR Planning and Historyworks have been exploring the creation of Heritage Conservation Districts in our city.
 - Armstrong Point has been identified as a case study. Consultation is currently underway.
 - The Heritage Conservation District is intended to conserve and support the values identified by the community as significant. It could provide a consistent approach to protecting and enhancing those features that give an area its unique identity. Design guidelines will likely be a component.
- Corridor Study
 - As part of the OurWinnipeg review, the Winnipeg Public Service will examine the existing corridor policy framework as articulated primarily in the Complete Communities Direction Strategy and look at opportunity to provide stronger direction and clarity.
 - The project will designate other corridors with transformative potential beyond the seven Regional Mixed Use Corridors that are currently identified.
 - Urban design guidelines would be drafted for commercial, residential and mixed use to inform the review of Corridor development. It is intended that these design guidelines could be translated into zoning regulation.

2.0 Background

Why is infill important?

2.1 Accommodating growth in a sustainable manner

Based on the latest population forecasts prepared by the Conference Board of Canada, the City of Winnipeg is expected to grow by over 200,000 new people by 2040. While the greatest percentage of residential growth continues to occur in emerging neighbourhoods at the edge of the City, 38% of all new residential units over the last five years have been located within Areas of Stability (Recent and Mature Communities). If this pattern is sustained, it would mean over 77,000 new residential infill units in Areas of Stability, or nearly 1,400 new units per year to 2040. Market demand for new units in Areas of Stability continues to remain high for the foreseeable future.

New & Emerging Communities	52%
Areas of Stability	38%
Corridors	5%
Downtown	5%
Major Redevelopment Sites	1%

Figure 1: Where growth has occurred 2011-15

Infill housing is desirable from a city-building perspective because it makes efficient use of existing services. Typically, little or no additional paving, piping, snow clearing, emergency services, schools, community centres, libraries or parks are required for new housing in existing neighbourhoods. All our Areas of Stability are already served by these forms of hard and soft infrastructure. Mature neighbourhoods are also well-served by transit, and are conducive to cycling and walking, meaning less congestion and less wear and tear on our arterial roadways. This is why infill is an important tool in addressing our infrastructure deficit.

2.2 Choice and Affordability

With the rising cost of urban land, the prospect of a single detached house with yards on all four sides is increasingly out of reach for many home buyers. Housing types such as semi-detached, townhouses, or low-rise multi-family provide more options at a broad array of price points. For singles and new families, this can mean being able to partake in and/or enter the housing market. For older Winnipeggers, this can mean the ability to age-in-place by opting for suitable housing types within their existing neighbourhoods of choice.

Cities tend to be good at doing single-detached houses. Approvals are easier and there is a development industry geared to building volumes of houses each year. The middle range of housing is much more challenging to do and therefore supply is very limited. It is often referred to as the Missing Middle housing types.



Figure 2: 'Middle Housing'

These middle housing types are intended to fit within the scale of lower density housing while offering more choice and price ranges to meet the growing demand for new housing in mature neighbourhoods.

2.3 Demographic Shift

While some growth attributed to infill has been occurring in recent years, our oldest neighbourhoods have experienced a significant population decline over the past 40 years. Although Winnipeg grew by 129,000 people between 1971-2011, population in our Mature Communities fell by 88,000 people during that same period. An infill strategy is important in order to identify where population growth is needed to restore a healthy balance. Restoring neighbourhood populations can help the viability of shops and services in a neighbourhood that depend on local visitors and customers.

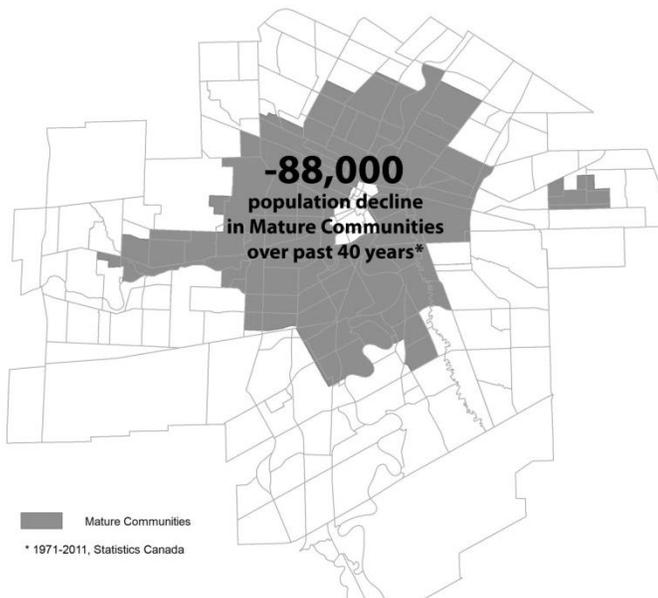


Figure 3: Population change in Mature Communities

Shrinking household sizes are the main contributor to this population shift. According to the 2011 census, only 26% of households in Canada represent the traditional 'nuclear family' of two parents with children. Empty-nest baby-boomers, singles and childless couples comprise the majority of household types. Demographers expect this shift to continue into the next decade.

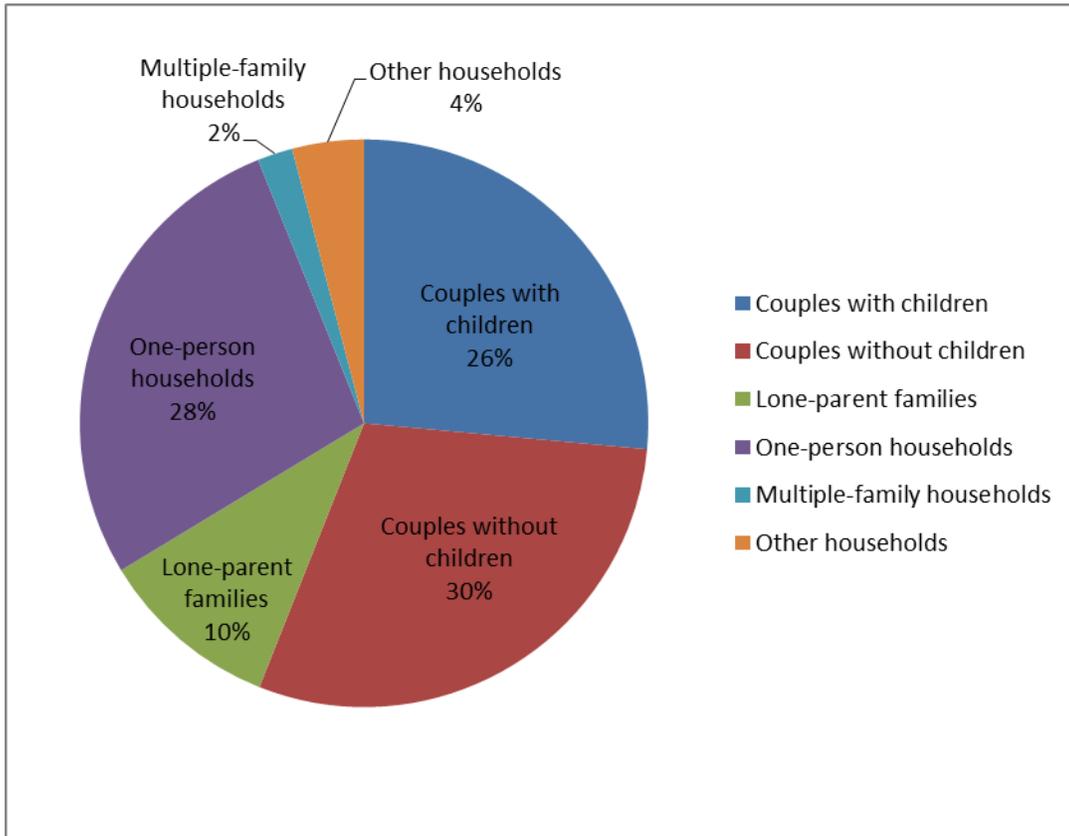


Figure 4: 2011 Census - Canadian households by family type

2.4 Neighbourhood Reinvestment

Healthy diverse neighbourhoods have a mix of both old and new housing. Infill housing is a form of reinvestment in a neighbourhood. Much of our older housing stock is in good to fair condition and brings a historical flavor to a neighbourhood. But a portion of the older housing stock is in poor condition, and this housing can bring down the value of adjacent properties. As Winnipeg's housing stock continues to age, more opportunities for infill development will arise. Facilitating infill and renewal benefits not only new residents but also the neighbourhood at large.

3.0 Recommended Approach

Planning, Property and Development will collaborate with the Office of Public Engagement in the preparation of the final public engagement strategy and in the roll out of consultation materials. The tasks below represent potential engagement exercises under consideration.

It is expected that there could be opportunities to link with consultation activities under the OurWinnipeg review in the first round of consultation in order to make efficient use of resources.

The project is intended to roll out in three phases. See attached project timeline.

3.1 Phase One – Data Collection and Sharing – March to May 2017

- 3.1.1 Develop a communication strategy to convey project scope, intent and background info
- 3.1.2 Publish project web page
- 3.1.3 Complete best practice research from other cities
- 3.1.4 Review existing design guidelines found in zoning, secondary plans, and other City documents
- 3.1.5 Conduct an analysis of the types of infill currently occurring in Winnipeg
- 3.1.6 Compile known issues around infill applications, for example:
 - Compatibility
 - Design
 - Size and scale
 - Traffic
 - Property values
- 3.1.7 Prepare consultation materials

3.2 Phase Two – Connect with Stakeholders – May to September 2017

- 3.2.1 Establish a Technical Advisory Committee of staff across other departments
- 3.2.2 Focus group session with key stakeholder groups, for example:
 - Industry (developers, real estate association, planners, architects, landscape architects)
 - Business Improvement Zones
 - School divisions
 - Residents' associations
 - Community organizations
- 3.2.3 Launch media campaign to advance awareness of project and ways to engage

Residential Infill Strategy Workplan

- 3.2.4 Online survey
- 3.2.5 Public Open House:
 - focused on project scope, related engagement opportunities (surveys) and building a stakeholder contact list
- 3.2.6 Pop up planners:
 - Planners set up information booths at community events and public places
- 3.2.7 Develop a workbook around identified issues
- 3.2.8 Technical Advisory Committee meeting
- 3.2.9 Stakeholders Workshop:
 - A facilitated session conducted by city staff;
 - Discussion in round table group format
 - Content informed by focus groups, open house and pop-up sessions.
 - Participants fill out a workbook that provides illustrations, definitions, and explanations of various infill concepts and then asks stakeholders to answer questions based on the information presented.
- 3.2.10 Host your own infill talks:
 - Variation on the facilitated workshop
 - Volunteers to host a discussion and complete a workbook about infill at their house or community venue.
- 3.2.11 Jane's walk – investigate linking with event organized by JanesWalk.org.:
 - These are facilitated neighbourhood walks intended to familiarize people with an area's architecture, history, and urban geography.
- 3.2.12 Newsletters

3.3 Phase Three – Report Back – September 2017 to January 2018

- 3.3.1 Compile and analyse consultation results
- 3.3.2 Prepare a summary/synthesis of results
- 3.3.3 Prepare draft recommendations for implementation
- 3.3.4 Newsletters
- 3.3.5 Technical Advisory Committee meeting
- 3.3.6 Focus group session with key stakeholder groups
- 3.3.7 Update web site

Residential Infill Strategy Workplan

3.3.8 Stakeholders Workshop:

- A facilitated session conducted by city staff;
- Discussion in round table group format
- Content informed by focus groups, open house and pop-up sessions.
- Participants fill out a workbook that provides illustrations, definitions, and explanations of various recommendations and then asks stakeholders to answer questions based on the information presented.

3.3.9 On line survey

3.3.10 Pop up planners:

- information booths at community events and public places

3.3.11 Public Open House - focused on implementation action items

3.3.12 Draft and submit results to Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development

Subsequent phases of work, as contemplated in 4.2 below, will be laid out for endorsement by the Standing Policy Committee prior to implementation.

4.0 Deliverables

4.1 Consultation Report

- What the public and other stakeholders shared about residential infill
- How the feedback received was addressed and how it shaped the Implementation Action Plan

4.2 Implementation Action Plan

It is expected that a combination of tools will be needed to meet the objectives of the project and address community expectations. The Implementation Action Plan will detail the recommended tools and categorize them as short, medium or long-term priorities. Some potential outcomes that will be considered are:

- On line resources
- Planning Education module
- Guides/brochures
- Additional policy direction incorporated into *OurWinnipeg* or *Complete Communities*
- Stand-alone infill policy document
- Development approval process improvements
- Changes to zoning standards
- Construction site standards
- Design guidelines
- Tracking/reporting of infill patterns over time

5.0 Budget

The Urban Planning Division will require additional resources in order to adequately undertake the consultation program identified in section 3. Additional resources are primarily needed to address expenses such as: advertising, facility rental, refreshments, and print costs. An additional \$12,500 is reserved for design and graphic services, which are anticipated to be needed for the development of consultation materials. Staff time is assumed as in kind and does not form any part of this budget.

Focus Group Sessions, Pop-Up Planners & Stakeholder Workshops	\$7,500
Public Open Houses	\$19,000
Administration and Incidentals (including advertising)	\$3,000
Design Services	\$12,500
TOTAL:	\$42,000

