1st Reading

DRAYTON VALLEY

'Pulling Together'

BYLAW NO. 2010/08/D

A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF DRAYTON VALLEY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA TO BE KNOWN AS THE RESIDENTIAL RENEWAL (DENSIFICATION) BYLAW

WHEREAS Section 634 of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000 Chapter M-26.1 and amendments thereto allows the Council of a municipality to enact, by bylaw, an Area Redevelopment Plan;

AND WHEREAS Section 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*, being Chapter M.26 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta, requires the Council of a municipality to hold a public hearing and advertise such a bylaw in accordance with Sections 203 and 606 of the Act, respectively;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Town of Drayton Valley, duly assembled, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That this Bylaw may be cited as the "Residential Renewal (Densification) Bylaw".

2. That the text and accompanying maps annexed hereto as Schedule "A" become the Residential Renewal (Densification) Bylaw.

AND THAT this bylaw shall come into force and have effect from and after the date of third reading thereof.

READ A FIRST TIME THIS 30th DAY OF June, 2010, A. D.

MAYOR

TOWN MANAGER

PUBLIC HEARING HELD THIS 4th DAY OF August, 2010, A. D.

READ A SECOND TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2010, A. D.

_____
MAYOR

_____
TOWN MANAGER

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2010, A. D.

_____
MAYOR

_____
TOWN MANAGER

SCHEDULE "A"

Town of Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal (Densification) Study

Background

Much of the housing stock in Drayton Valley dates from the late 1950s and early 1960s. The 2006 Census of Canada found 730 occupied dwellings built before 1971, and they make up 29% of the town's housing stock. In these older areas, residential lots are typically 50 by 120 feet. In most cases they are still occupied by the original 1,000 - 1,200 square foot bungalows, with a cluster of manufactured homes on 43 to 45 Streets north of 50 Avenue. These older residential lots are concentrated in NW 9 and SW 16-49-7-5, with a few in NE 8. Locations are shown on Map 1.

In recent years there have been many proposals to redevelop the lots on which these older homes stand. Some of the things driving this are:

- Buildings may be physically deteriorating to the point where repairs are uneconomic.
- Some buildings do not meet the desires of today's buyers: they are functionally obsolete.
- 1960s building standards make for high utility costs.
- Low basement heights and small windows make secondary suites impractical.
- The lot layout restricts the amount of parking available.
- The land would yield a better return to an investor if redeveloped to higher density.

As a result of these factors, developers frequently ask council to rezone individual lots to allow duplexes, effectively doubling density. To date there have not been any proposals for larger scale redevelopment, such as an entire block, but that is possible in future if developers are able to assemble multi-lot parcels of land.

Council can of course deal with each application on its own merits, but it is better public policy to adopt a clear policy, and apply it equally to all applicants.

This document therefore

- defines the areas of town where redevelopment is likely,
- sets out the advantages and disadvantages of redevelopment,
- considers the objections raised by neighbours in the past,

- discusses input from municipal departments, school boards, and the public on the costs and benefits of higher densities,

- identifies increased municipal or third-party costs and suggests how they should be paid, and

- proposes a strategy for redevelopment.

It must be stressed that most houses in the area are in good condition, and have many years of life remaining if their owners continue to maintain them. However, a policy is needed to deal with those houses which are reaching the end of their economic life, or which will do so over the next ten or twenty years.

Defining the area likely to be redeveloped

The town keeps records of rezoning applications. They show that the pressure for redevelopment is concentrated in the oldest subdivisions. There is less interest in redevelopment in the post-1960 areas. Staff and consultant therefore agreed that this study should be limited to pre-1960 subdivisions, where most houses are now at least 50 years old.

One isolated block in NE 8, on 48 Avenue west of 50 Street, dates back more than 50 years, but it has been excluded from the study area because all the homes are all in good condition, and none of the owners has proposed redevelopment.

One area is NE 8 has been included even though subdivision dates from 1970. This is an area of manufactured homes along 47, 48, and 48A Avenues west of 54 Street. The land was subdivided in 1970 and 1971 under Plans 4388 RS and 5712 RS. Many units are well kept, but others are showing their age, and it seems appropriate to consider how this area might be redeveloped.

The study area is shown on Map 2.

Population of the study area

The 2006 town census broke the town into 30 enumeration areas (EAs), and recorded the population of each, but many of these EAs cross the study area boundary, so it is not possible to calculate the study area population accurately. We can do this indirectly by counting the number of lots, and multiplying by the average household population per lot as found by the census. These numbers must be used with caution because they assume that the population per lot is the same as the population per household, which is not always true. However, they do provide a rough estimate of the affected population.

Quarter	Lots in study area	Assumed population per lot	Calculated area population
NE 8	80	2.6	208
NW 9	179	2.6	465
SW 16	344	2.6	894
Total	603	2.6	1,567

Enumeration Areas in the study area generally have densities similar to those in the rest of Drayton Valley. Most areas of single detached houses have around nine or ten people per acre (net of parks and open space). This is comparable to densities in newer areas of town, such as the Beckett Road quarter, which has 10.2 people per acre.

Unfortunately neither the town census nor the Canada census can provide demographic data on an EA basis.

Present zoning

Map 3 shows the present zoning in and around the study area.

Most land is zoned R1B, which allows only detached houses. A few blocks have R1A zoning, also detached residential, but on a slightly larger lot.

Within the study area, past councils have granted R2 (duplex) zoning on a site-specific basis in response to landowners' requests. In the absence of any overall policy on R2 conversion, duplexes are scattered throughout the study area, mostly in the oldest areas, or as replacements for manufactured houses.

In contrast, R3 and R4 zoning shows a clear pattern, concentrated along main roads.

What sort of redevelopment can be expected?

The most likely form of redevelopment in the study area is that 1950s bungalows and older manufactured units will be demolished and replaced by higher density housing. This higher density housing might take several forms:

- duplexes, with one 50 foot lot divided into two 25 foot lots
- narrow-lot detached residences, with two 50-foot lots subdivided into three 33 foot lots
- fourplexes and row houses
- apartment buildings.

Redevelopment will increase the population from present levels. However, families were larger in the 1950s and 1960s. Households of five and six were common, whereas the

average household size in Drayton Valley today is just 2.6 people. Replacing a 1955 bungalow with a duplex will only bring the population back to its original level.

Environmental considerations

Most municipalities have adopted "smart growth" policies, which try to minimize the use of resources and reduce environmental impacts.

Higher density achieves this. Putting more people close to the town centre reduces the distance to work, shopping, schools, and recreation. Shorter journeys encourage people to walk instead of driving, with obvious health and environmental benefits. (The 2006 Census of Canada found that only 275 people, 8% of the working population, walked to work in Drayton Valley.) Living near work also increases the housing choices available to people who do not have a car.

New houses cost less to heat than older houses because they are better insulated and sealed. This is even more true when new multi-family units replace old detached houses, because there are fewer outside walls though which heat is lost.

Other things being equal, higher density residential development reduces the town's per-person cost of providing roads, water, and sewer, as a given network serves more people. And smaller yards mean less lawn to water.

Not all environmental impacts are positive. Higher density may increase storm water flows. If there is less lawn area to absorb rainfall and snow melt, more water finds its way into the storm drains. In extreme cases this can lead to short-duration flooding of roads. But on balance, higher population densities have an overwhelmingly positive environmental impact.

Social considerations

Family and Community Services (FCS) sees no objections to the redevelopment of older detached houses to duplexes and narrow-lot single housing, with two important caveats. First, the community must be pedestrian-friendly. The present short-block grid layout with developed sidewalks provides good pedestrian access, and this must not be lost. Second, this is likely to be a community of young families, so it is important to have developed parks for young children.

School boards generally like having children within walking distance of schools. It reduces the need for busing, and allows children to walk home for lunch. Children who live close to school use playgrounds and sports fields in the evenings and at weekends, and having more eyes on the street (or in the playground) probably reduces vandalism.

Views of the public

At past rezoning hearings, neighbours expressed some very real concerns about redevelopment to a higher density:

Parking	Neighbours are concerned that if a single family house is demolished and replaced with a duplex, the number of vehicles will probably double, and all too often they will end up parked on the street in front of other people's houses. This is a valid concern, and is addressed in detail later.
Property values	Some neighbours are concerned that redevelopment will devalue their properties. The higher the density, the more the concern: apartments are resisted more strongly than duplexes. Developers counter this argument by saying that a new building will often raise the value of its neighbours. Developers also point out that many older houses are now owned by investors who hope to redevelop to a higher density. If this is not allowed, the properties may run down to the point where they devalue the whole neighbourhood. This is called Planning Blight. People seem more concerned about changes on their block front, and facing them across the street, than they are about changes across the back lane.
Renters / owners	Owner-occupiers sometimes worry that higher density housing will be occupied by renters. They feel that people with no investment in property will not share owners' protective attitude to the neighbourhood. This may or may not be true, but discriminating against renters is probably illegal under the Charter of Rights, and council should not attempt to do so. Developers often try to reassure neighbours by saying their target market is not the renter, but the first time buyer or empty-nester.

Paying to upgrade municipal services

Municipal departments have identified a number of improvements and upgrades which will be necessary to serve a higher population in the study area.

Council can deal with the cost in one of two ways. The town can absorb the cost, arguing that a small up-front cost to the taxpayers will generate big benefits though higher taxes in future years. Alternatively, it can require the developer to pay some or all of the municipal costs. Authority to do this is given in the Municipal Government Act.

The likely costs of redevelopment are as follows:

Roads	No major reconstruction should be needed, although many roads will need repaving in the foreseeable future. If repaving is done by local improvement levy, there is no justification for charging money at the time of redevelopment. However, if repaving is done as a general benefit, it can be argued

	that the need is precipitated by high density redevelopment, and a charge may be made under section 14 of the land use bylaw and sections 647 and 650 of the MGA.
Water / sewer lines	Redevelopment will bring population densities back to what they were in the 1950s and 60s, so there should be no need to upgrade water and sewer lines. Many lines are now fifty years old, and may need replacing in the foreseeable future. However, that is not caused by redevelopment, so the appropriate mechanism is a local improvement levy payable by all landowners, not just developers.
Storm drainage	A new duplex with four or more off-street parking stalls will probably increase the runoff and put more volume into the storm drainage system. The engineering department will determine if the system has sufficient capacity. If it must be upgraded, a dollar amount should be calculated and applied to new developments. Permeable paving of parking stalls can reduce runoff, and roof drainage can be directed into soak-away pits. Developers might be given the choice of using these design features instead of paying to upgrade the storm drainage system. Ideally, the town would move to a user-pay system for increased storm drainage. It could work like this. The estimated storm runoff from the new development would be compared with the present runoff from the site. If the new runoff is projected to be higher, the developer would be charged an amount of money based on the actual cost of handling the extra flow. This can be calculated by taking the town's total cost of storm water management at present (including a return on capital), and dividing that amount by the present volume to get a cost per cubic metre. Such a user-pay system would give developers an incentive to minimize runoff though appropriate design and engineering. The decision whether or not to adopt a user-pay system will be made by council.
Fire protection	An increase in residential density will not require any change in fire protection.
Parks	There appears to be adequate open space on school grounds and municipal parks in the area, but they may need to be upgraded The total cost of necessary upgrades should be divided by the number of existing residences in the study area to get a per-residence figure. That figure can then be charged to all additional lots or suites being constructed, using the proceeds of a redevelopment levy under section 647 the MGA.

	Recognizing that good school playgrounds reduce the need for municipal parks, the town should talk to the school boards about sharing the cost of upgrading school grounds.
Sidewalks	The study area generally has a good network of sidewalks, but in many areas the concrete is showing its age and needs to be replaced. Unlike streets, which are best repaved a block at a time, sidewalks can be rebuilt in smaller sections, so when a lot is redeveloped, its sidewalk can be rebuilt to meet current standards. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street, wide enough for two people walking side by side, with curb cuts at corners, and separated from traffic by a grassed boulevard. Any upgrading or rebuilding should be done in front of each property at the developer's expense.

Summary of the advantages and disadvantages of redevelopment

Redevelopment of the older parts of Drayton Valley will have a number of advantages.

- Redevelopment will remove functionally obsolete or worn-out housing, and replace it with buildings that are closer to what the market wants today.
- Redevelopment will increase the assessed value and tax yield per acre, without requiring major investment in infrastructure.
- Much of the study area is within walking distance of downtown stores and jobs. Many people will be able to live in a one-car household, and some will be able to live without a car altogether.
- The study area is close to most of the town's schools (Map 4). Redevelopment to higher densities will allow more children to walk to school.
- The area is well served by parks and other open spaces (Map 5). No child living in the study area has to go more than three blocks to reach a playground.

At the same time, there are some disadvantages to development.

- Some people simply don't want their neighbourhood to change.
- Even if they are close to stores, jobs, schools, and parks, most households will still have a vehicle (or two or three) so parking may be a problem.
- More households on a street will mean more traffic.

Parking

At present the town's land use bylaw requires a single detached house to have two off-street parking stalls. This is probably inadequate as more and more households have

three or four vehicles. Council should raise the requirement to three stalls per house. They can easily be built on a fifty foot lot.

If the same lot is subdivided into two 25 foot lots, with a half duplex on each side, it is more difficult to provide the necessary stalls. Map 6 illustrates this. Drawing A shows the typical layout, with two stalls in the back yard and one on the street, for a total of three. If the household has an RV, or adult children, or a renter living in the basement, that is not enough.

Drawings B and C show how to get four stalls on a 25 foot duplex lot, with two in the rear and two at the front. Drawing B shows two parking stalls in the front yard. This requires the house to be set back further than the standard 20 feet, and major changes to the sidewalk and street. Drawing C shows angle parking on the street. Again, the sidewalk and road surface must be rebuilt.

Drawing D shows what can be done if the lot is widened. Three adjacent 50 foot lots can be resubdivided into four 37.5 foot lots for a duplex or fourplex. The extra lot width allows for three stalls off the land, two in the side yard, and one on the street, for a total of six. Of course, this is only possible if a developer can assemble three adjacent lots.

Drawing E shows duplexes with attached front garages. Again, ample parking can be provided on site.

Some of these parking designs interfere with pedestrian flows along the street, which goes against the advice of FCS, as noted above.

Another solution, not shown on Map 6, is for the town to purchase land in the vicinity and develop it for residents' parking. A developer would have the choice of providing on-site parking, or purchasing the right to use one or more stalls on the town parking lot. The price would be set to cover the town's costs, plus a profit to offset the loss of future tax revenue.

Developers should be free to suggest other ways of providing enough parking.

Development options

An open house was held in the town office on 18 May 2010. Five development scenarios were discussed.

A: No change

The area could remain very much as it is now. Densities would remain the same, with single detached houses on fifty foot lots. There would still be a certain amount of building activity. Some houses would be upgraded or enlarged. Some would be demolished and rebuilt. Without the opportunity to redevelop to higher densities, investors would lose interest, and property prices would probably fall relative to other parts of town. The area would remain

Drayton Valley's starter home district. Buyers would gain, and sellers would lose.

B: Limited development

This scenario revives the rules which applied to the manufactured housing area on 43/44/45 Streets between 1996 and 2007. The land use bylaw at that time zoned the area to Direct Control, and council adopted a policy of allowing up to 20% of the lots to be rezoned R2 to allow duplexes. Municipal records do not show any rationale for this number, but it was broadly accepted by residents because it seemed to solve the parking problem.

An unfortunate effect of the 20% policy was that the first applicant on a block might be given rezoning, while an equally good proposal by a neighbour, submitted a few weeks later, would be refused because the 20% quota was already taken up in that area. As a result, some run-down buildings were not replaced. Property values become something of a lottery.

The 20% policy was never applied in other areas with redevelopment potential, and it was dropped from the 2007 land use bylaw. Because of the inherent unfairness and inefficiency, it is not recommended.

C: Single family redevelopment

This would allow two adjacent 50 foot lots to be re-subdivided into three 33 foot lots for single detached houses, using the R1N district in the town's land use bylaw. R1N is a new district in Drayton Valley, adopted in 2006, and the first two blocks are now under construction in the Meraw development in SE 9.

(R1Z zero lot line also allows detached houses on small lots, but this form of housing has fallen out of favour with developers, so it has been rejected as a solution in the study area.)

Parking does not seem to be an issue in R1N, and the style of housing (single detached, probably owner occupied) is the same as at present. Because of the small degree of change, council could consider rezoning all R1A and R1B properties in the study area to R1N. This would avoid the administrative delays of spot zoning.

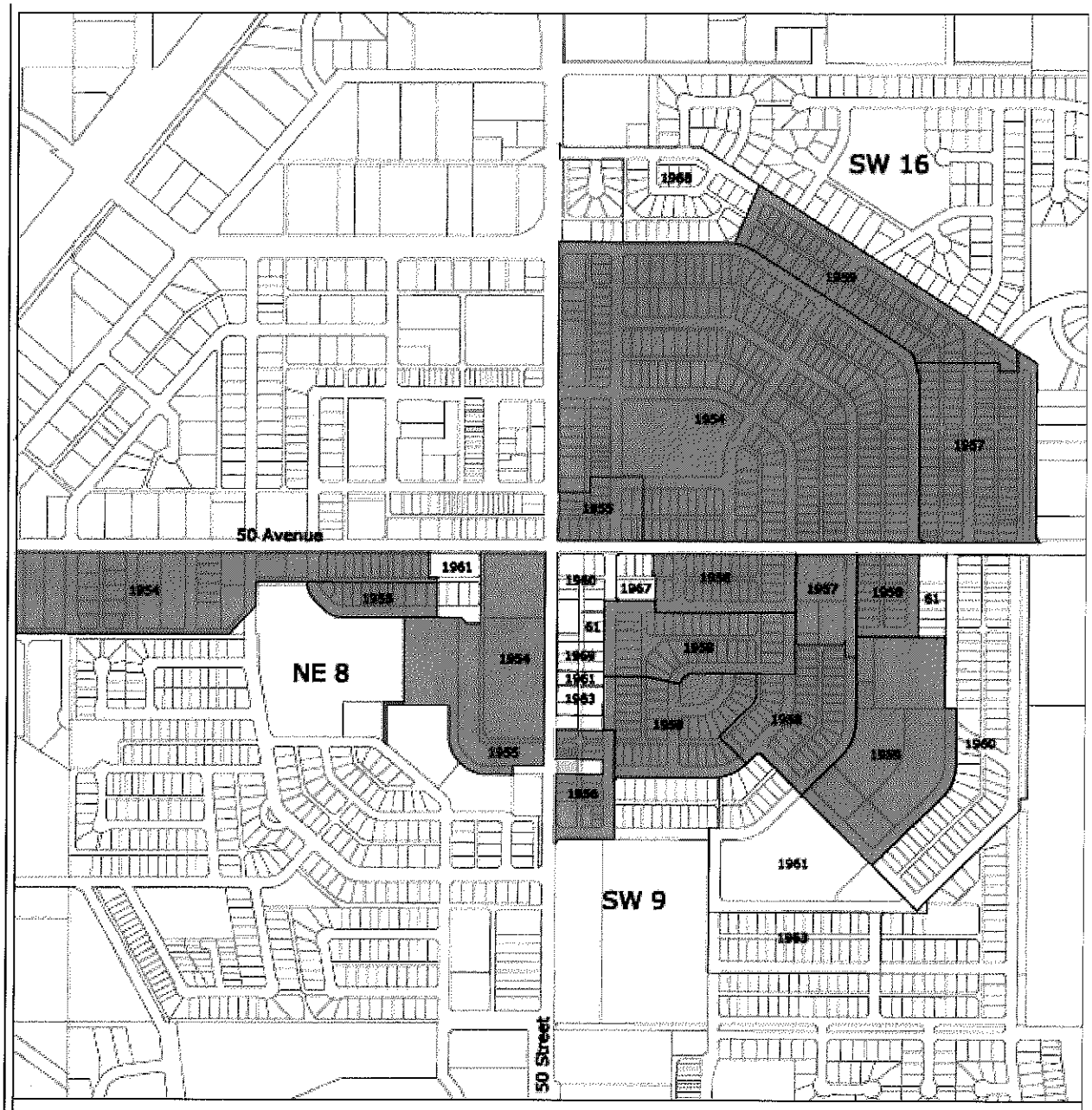
The main problem with R1N is that developers would find it difficult to assemble land, and even if they could, the limited increase in density might not give them a sufficient return, so nothing would happen.

D: Clustered development

In this scenario, redevelopment would initially be limited to land along main roads (to prevent any increase of traffic on local roads) and facing open spaces such as schools and larger parks (to reduce the unpopularity of higher density housing facing existing low density houses). Redevelopment would later spread throughout the study area.

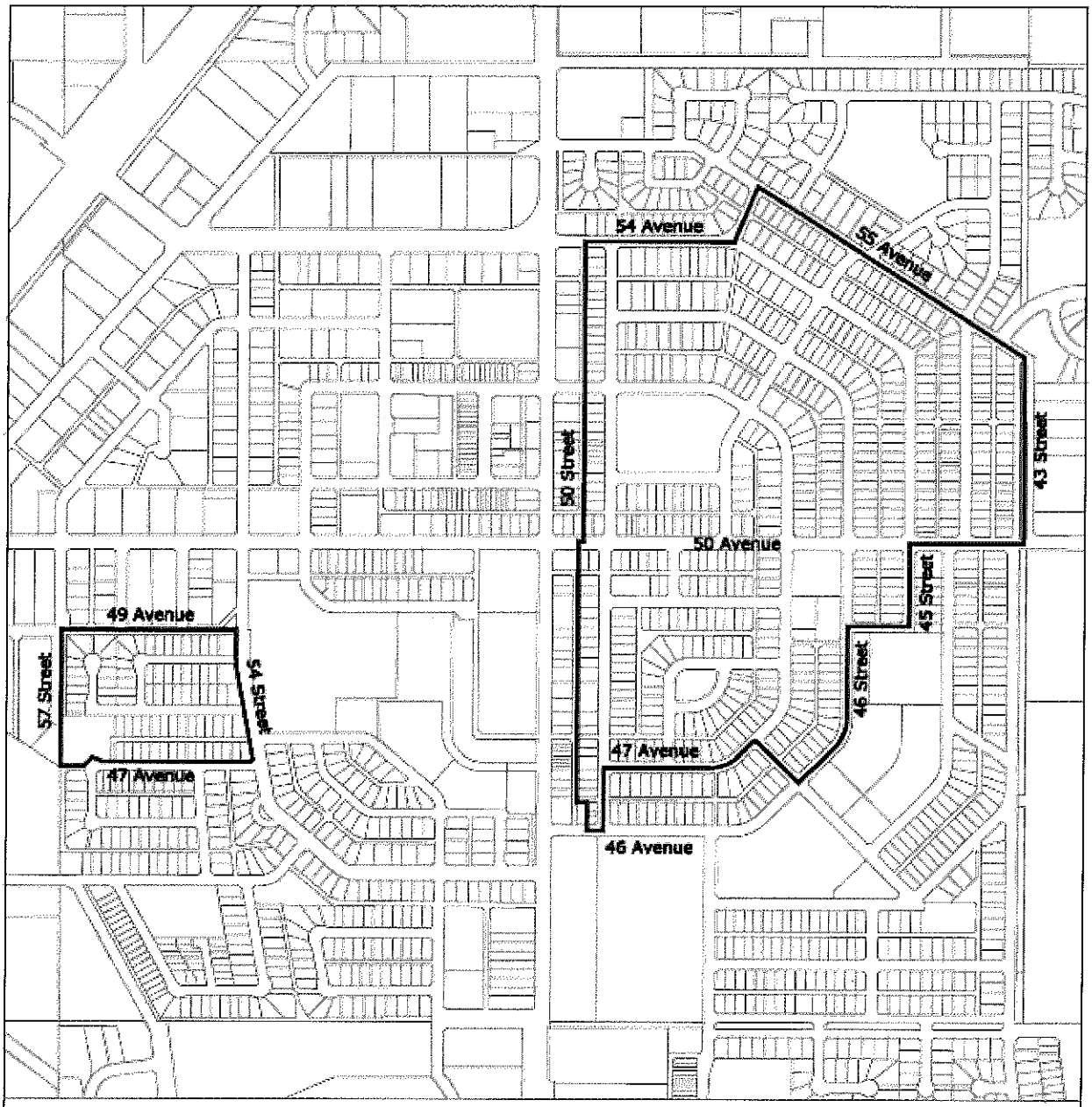
E: Comprehensive redevelopment

Scenario E opens up the entire study area to redevelopment. Existing R1A and R1B properties would be rezoned to R2 (duplex) zoning. Higher densities (R3 and R4) would be considered along 50 Avenue, but this would require spot zoning.

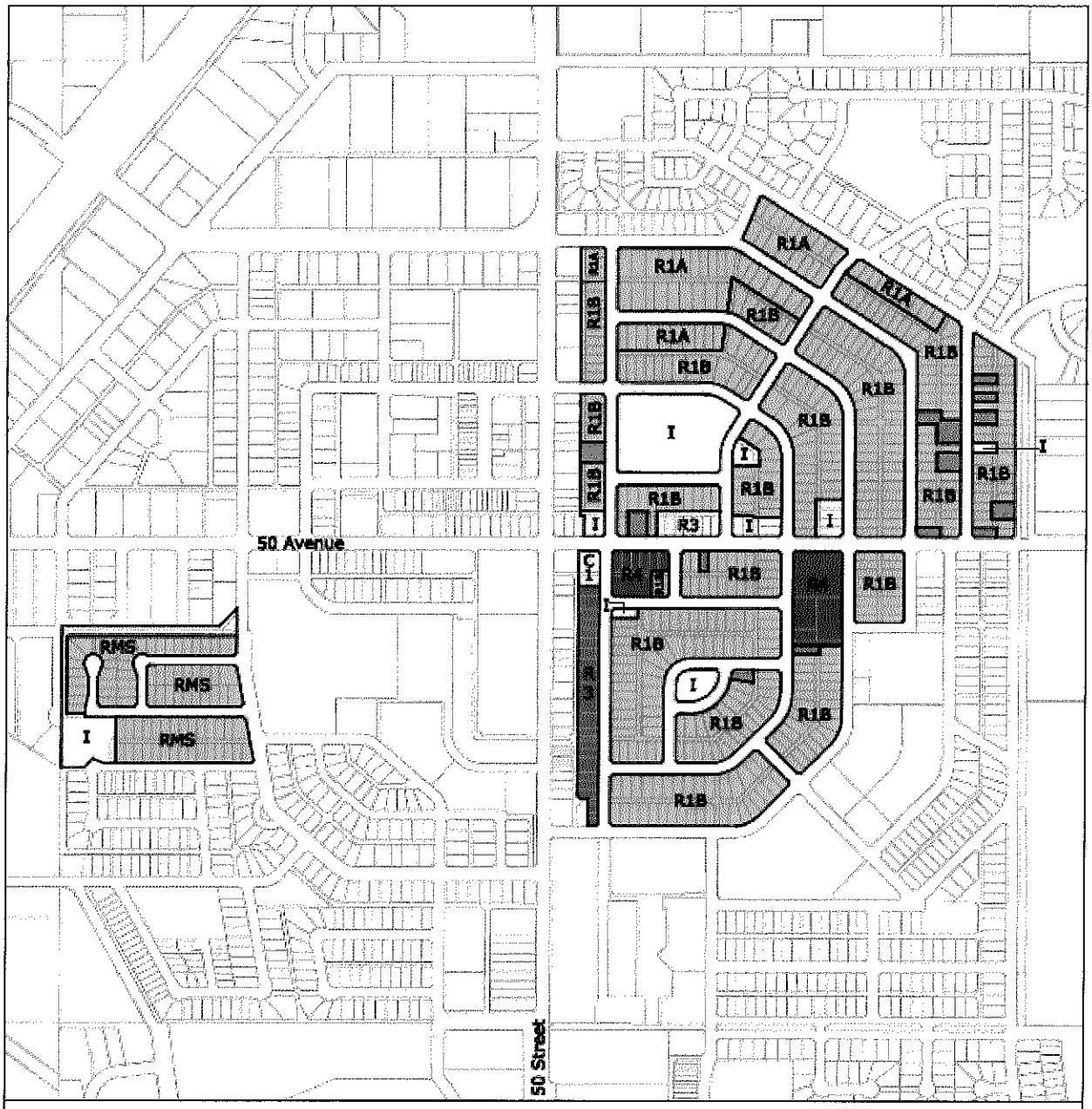


Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 1
Date of First Subdivision
NE 8, NW 9, and SW 16-49-7-5
1950s subdivisions shown shaded

Where no date is shown, the land was first subdivided in 1970 or later



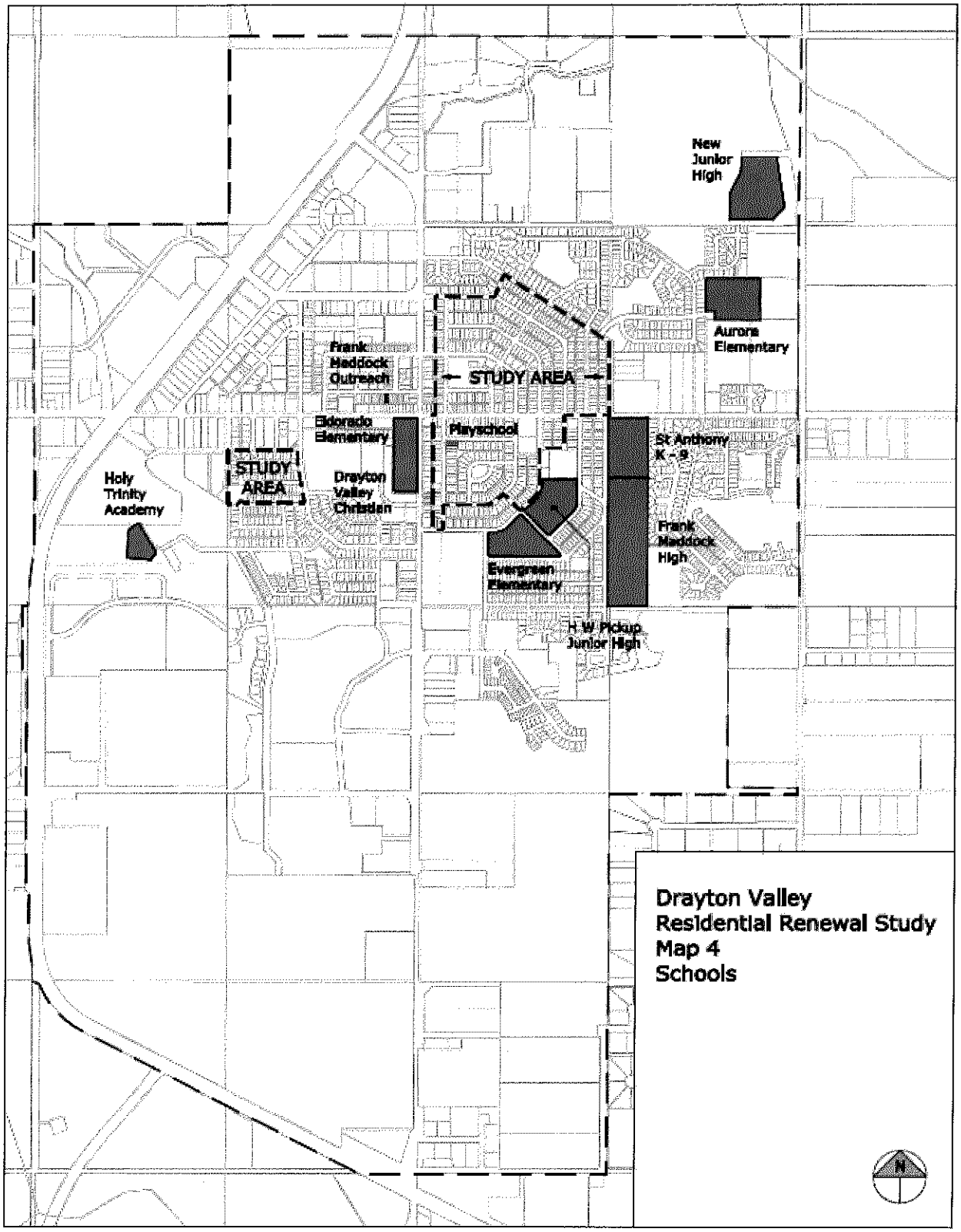
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 2
Study Area

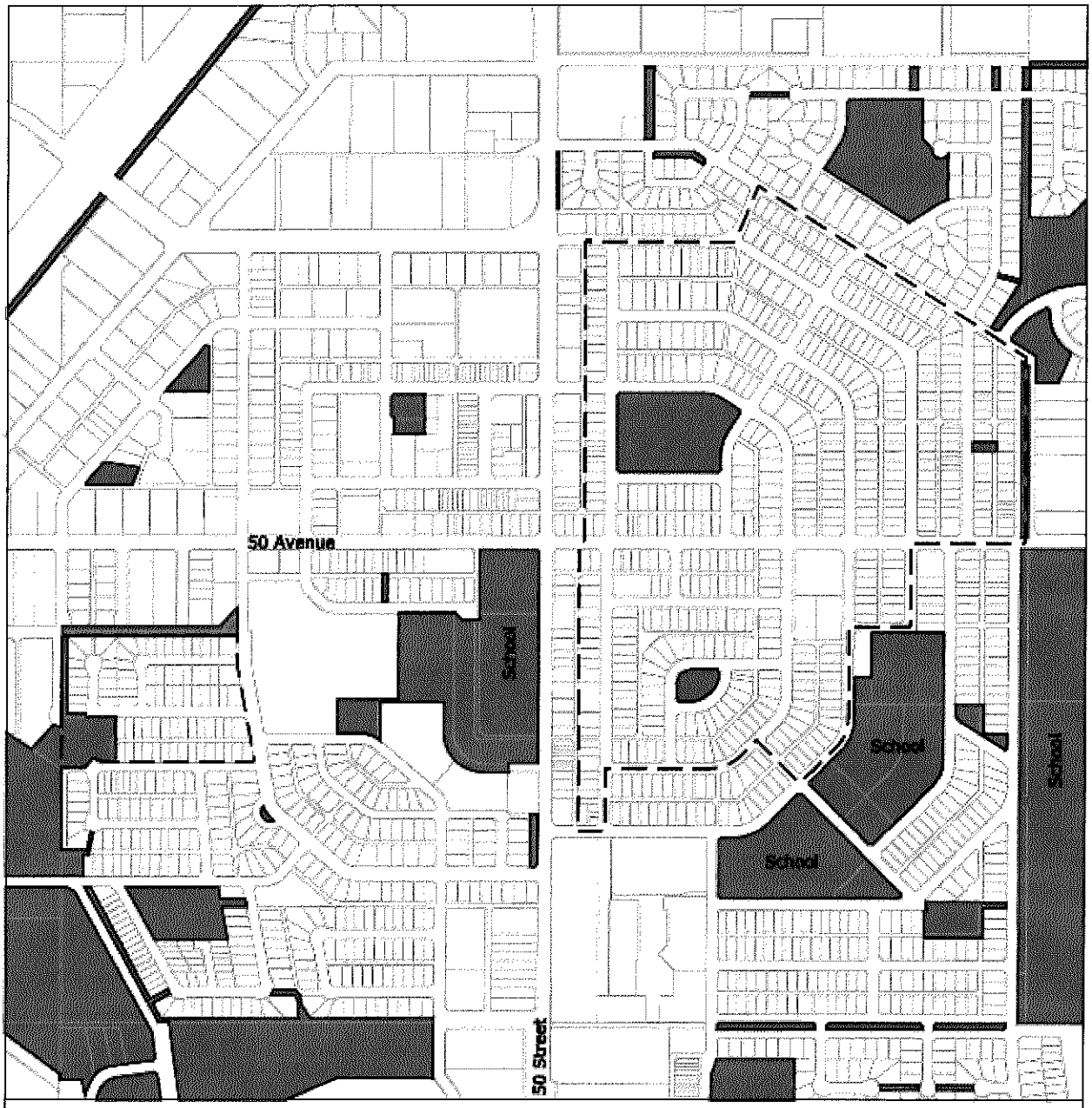


Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 3
Current Zoning in the Study Area

- Detached residential: R1A, R1B, and RMS
- Duplex residential: R2
- Multiple residential: R3 and R4
- I (Institutional and Public) and C1 (Commercial)

For clarity, zoning boundaries ignore lanes

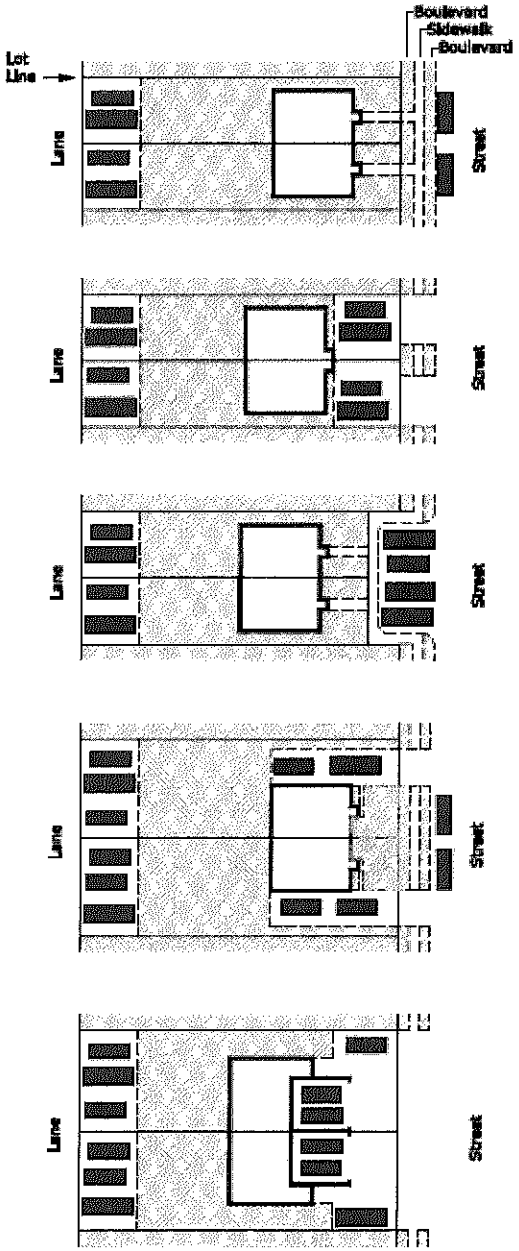

New
Junior
High
Aurora
Elementary
Frank
Maddock
Outreach
STUDY AREA
Eldorado
Elementary
Playschool
St Anthony
K - 9
STUDY
AREA
Holy
Trinity
Academy
Drayton
Valley
Christian
Frank
Maddock
High
Evergreen
Elementary
H W Pickup
Junior High
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 4
Schools
N



Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 5
Parks, Schools, and Public Open Spaces

Study Area Boundaries

Open space



A
Standard duplex subdivision gives only three parking stalls for each dwelling: one on street, two in back yard

41% hard surface

B
Parking in front yard gives four stalls for each dwelling: two in front, two in rear, none on street

60% hard surface

C
Front 12 feet of lot is dedicated as road, allowing angle parking on street, giving four stalls per dwelling: two in front, two in rear

51% hard surface
(including newly dedicated road)

D
Three 50 foot lots are replotted into four 37.5 foot lots, each with three stalls in rear yard, two in side yard, and one on street, for total of six stalls

This gives enough parking for each side of the duplex to have a basement suite

47% hard surface

E
Three 50 foot lots are replotted into four 37.5 foot lots, each with three stalls in rear yard, two in garage, and one beside the house, for a total of six stalls

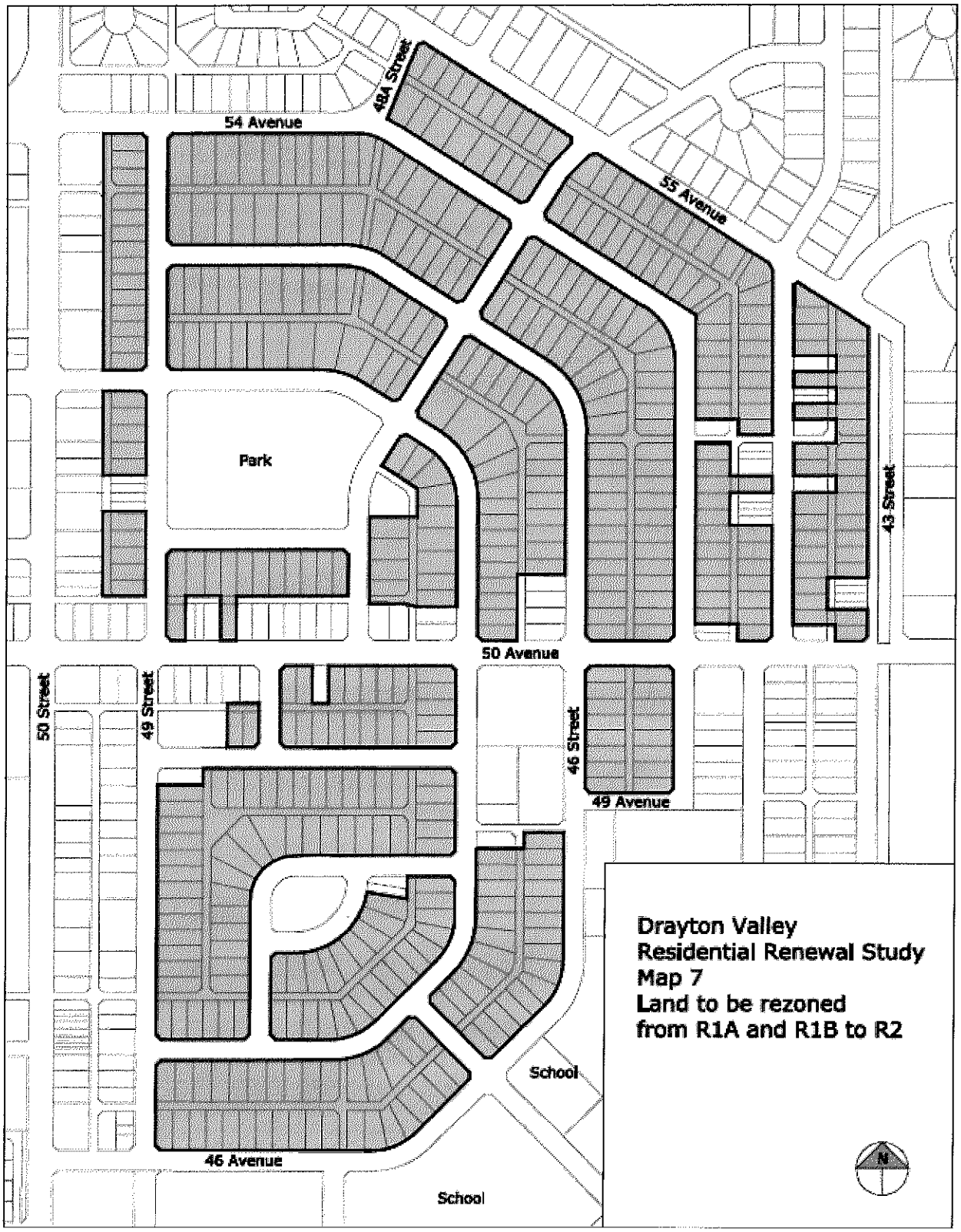
This gives enough parking for each side of the duplex to have a basement suite

62% hard surface

Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 6
Parking Alternatives

Developers are free to suggest other designs to achieve the required number of stalls

Landscaping
Vehicles


54 Avenue
48A Street
55 Avenue
Park
43 Street
50 Avenue
50 Street
49 Street
46 Street
49 Avenue
School
46 Avenue
School
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 7
Land to be rezoned
from R1A and R1B to R2
N

Amended 2nd & 3rd Readings

DRAYTON VALLEY

'Pulling Together'

BYLAW NO. 2010/08/D

A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF DRAYTON VALLEY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA TO BE KNOWN AS THE RESIDENTIAL RENEWAL (DENSIFICATION) BYLAW

WHEREAS Section 634 of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 Chapter M-26.1 and amendments thereto allows the Council of a municipality to enact, by bylaw, an Area Redevelopment Plan;

AND WHEREAS Section 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*, being Chapter M.26 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta, requires the Council of a municipality to hold a public hearing and advertise such a bylaw in accordance with Sections 203 and 606 of the Act, respectively;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Town of Drayton Valley, duly assembled, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That this Bylaw may be cited as the "Residential Renewal (Densification) Bylaw".

2. That the text and accompanying maps annexed hereto as Schedule "A" become the Residential Renewal (Densification) Bylaw.

AND THAT this bylaw shall come into force and have effect from and after the date of third reading thereof.

READ A FIRST TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2010, A. D.

_____
MAYOR

_____
TOWN MANAGER

PUBLIC HEARING HELD THIS 4th DAY OF August, 2010, A. D.

READ A SECOND TIME THIS 3rd DAY OF February, 2011, A. D., AS AMENDED

MAYOR

TOWN MANAGER

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME THIS 3rd DAY OF February, 2011, A. D., AS AMENDED

MAYOR

TOWN MANAGER

SCHEDULE "A"

Town of Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study

Adopted as an Area Redevelopment Plan
by Bylaw 2010/08/D

Background

Much of the housing stock in Drayton Valley dates from the late 1950s and early 1960s. The 2006 Census of Canada found 730 occupied dwellings built before 1971, and they make up 29% of the town's housing stock. In these older areas, residential lots are typically 50 by 120 feet. In most cases they are still occupied by the original 1,000 - 1,200 square foot bungalows, with a cluster of manufactured homes on 43 to 45 Streets north of 50 Avenue. These older residential lots are concentrated in NW 9 and SW 16-49-7-5, with a few in NE 8. Locations are shown on Map 1.

In recent years there have been many proposals to redevelop the lots on which these older homes stand. Some of the things driving this are:

- Buildings may be physically deteriorating to the point where repairs are uneconomic.
- Some buildings do not meet the desires of today's buyers: they are functionally obsolete.
- 1960s building standards make for high utility costs.
- Low basement heights and small windows make secondary suites impractical.
- The lot layout restricts the amount of parking available.
- The land would yield a better return to an investor if redeveloped to higher density.

As a result of these factors, developers frequently ask council to rezone individual lots to allow duplexes, effectively doubling density. To date there have not been any proposals for larger scale redevelopment, such as an entire block, but that is possible in future if developers are able to assemble multi-lot parcels of land.

Council can of course deal with each application on its own merits, but it is better public policy to adopt a clear policy, and apply it equally to all applicants.

This document therefore

- defines the areas of town where redevelopment is likely,
- sets out the advantages and disadvantages of redevelopment,
- considers the objections raised by neighbours in the past,
- discusses input from municipal departments, school boards, and the public on the costs and benefits of higher densities,
- identifies increased municipal or third-party costs and suggests how they should be paid, and
- proposes a strategy for redevelopment.

It must be stressed that most houses in the area are in good condition, and have many years of life remaining if their owners continue to maintain them. However, a policy is needed to deal with those houses which are reaching the end of their economic life, or which will do so over the next ten or twenty years.

Defining the area likely to be redeveloped

The town keeps records of rezoning applications. They show that the pressure for redevelopment is concentrated in the oldest subdivisions. There is less interest in redevelopment in the post-1960 areas. Staff and consultant therefore agreed that this study should be limited to pre-1960 subdivisions, where most houses are now at least 50 years old.

One isolated block in NE 8, on 48 Avenue west of 50 Street, dates back more than 50 years, but it has been excluded from the study area because all the homes are all in good condition, and none of the owners has proposed redevelopment.

The study area is shown on Map 2.

Population of the study area

The 2006 town census broke the town into 30 enumeration areas (EAs), and recorded the population of each, but many of these EAs cross the study area boundary, so it is not possible to calculate the study area population accurately. We can do this indirectly by counting the number of lots, and multiplying by the average household population per lot as found by the census. These numbers must be used with caution because they assume that the population per lot is the same as the population per household, which is not always true. However, they do provide a rough estimate of the affected population.

Quarter	Lots in study area	Assumed population per lot	Calculated area population
NW 9	179	2.6	465
SW 16	344	2.6	894
Total	532	2.6	1,359

Enumeration Areas in the study area generally have densities similar to those in the rest of Drayton Valley. Most areas of single detached houses have around nine or ten people per acre (net of parks and open space). This is comparable to densities in newer areas of town, such as the Beckett Road quarter, which has 10.2 people per acre.

Present zoning

Map 3 shows the present zoning in and around the study area.

Most land is zoned R1B, which allows only detached houses. A few blocks have R1A zoning, also detached residential, but on a slightly larger lot.

Within the study area, past councils have granted R2 (duplex) zoning on a site-specific basis in response to landowners' requests. In the absence of any overall policy on R2 conversion, duplexes are scattered throughout the study area, mostly in the oldest areas, or as replacements for manufactured houses.

In contrast, R3 and R4 zoning shows a clear pattern, concentrated along main roads.

What sort of redevelopment can be expected?

The most likely form of redevelopment in the study area is that 1950s bungalows and older manufactured units will be demolished and replaced by higher density housing. This higher density housing might take several forms:

- duplexes, with one 50 foot lot divided into two 25 foot lots
- narrow-lot detached residences, with two 50-foot lots subdivided into three 33 foot lots
- fourplexes and row houses
- apartment buildings.

Redevelopment will increase the population from present levels. However, families were larger in the 1950s and 1960s. Households of five and six were common, whereas the average household size in Drayton Valley today is just 2.6 people. Replacing a 1955 bungalow with a duplex will only bring the population back to its original level.

Environmental considerations

Most municipalities have adopted "smart growth" policies, which try to minimize the use of resources and reduce environmental impacts.

Higher density achieves this. Putting more people close to the town centre reduces the distance to work, shopping, schools, and recreation. Shorter journeys encourage people to walk instead of driving, with obvious health and environmental benefits. (The 2006 Census of Canada found that only 275 people, 8% of the working population, walked to work in Drayton Valley.) Living near work also increases the housing choices available to people who do not have a car.

New houses cost less to heat than older houses because they are better insulated and sealed. This is even more true when new multi-family units replace old detached houses, because there are fewer outside walls though which heat is lost.

Other things being equal, higher density residential development reduces the town's per-person cost of providing roads, water, and sewer, as a given network serves more people. And smaller yards mean less lawn to water.

Not all environmental impacts are positive. Higher density may increase storm water flows. If there is less lawn area to absorb rainfall and snow melt, more water finds its way into the storm drains. In extreme cases this can lead to short-duration flooding of roads. But on balance, higher population densities have an overwhelmingly positive environmental impact.

Social considerations

Family and Community Services (FCS) sees no objections to the redevelopment of older detached houses to duplexes and narrow-lot single housing, with two important caveats. First, the community must be pedestrian-friendly. The present short-block grid layout with developed sidewalks provides good pedestrian access, and this must not be lost. Second, this is likely to be a community of young families, so it is important to have developed parks for young children.

School boards generally like having children within walking distance of schools. It reduces the need for busing, and allows children to walk home for lunch. Children who live close to school use playgrounds and sports fields in the evenings and at weekends, and having more eyes on the street (or in the playground) probably reduces vandalism.

Views of the public

At past rezoning hearings, neighbours expressed some very real concerns about redevelopment to a higher density:

Parking	Neighbours are concerned that if a single family house is demolished and replaced with a duplex, the number of vehicles will probably double, and all too often they will end up parked on

the street in front of other people's houses. This is a valid concern, and is addressed in detail later.

Property values

Some neighbours are concerned that redevelopment will devalue their properties. The higher the density, the more the concern: apartments are resisted more strongly than duplexes.

Developers counter this argument by saying that a new building will often raise the value of its neighbours.

Developers also point out that many older houses are now owned by investors who hope to redevelop to a higher density. If this is not allowed, the properties may run down to the point where they devalue the whole neighbourhood. This is called Planning Blight.

People seem more concerned about changes on their block front, and facing them across the street, than they are about changes across the back lane.

Renters / owners

Owner-occupiers sometimes worry that higher density housing will be occupied by renters. They feel that people with no investment in property will not share owners' protective attitude to the neighbourhood. This may or may not be true, but discriminating against renters is probably illegal under the Charter of Rights, and council should not attempt to do so.

Developers often try to reassure neighbours by saying their target market is not the renter, but the first time buyer or empty-nester.

Paying to upgrade municipal services

Municipal departments have identified a number of improvements and upgrades which will be necessary to serve a higher population in the study area.

Council can deal with the cost in one of two ways. The town can absorb the cost, arguing that a small up-front cost to the taxpayers will generate big benefits though higher taxes in future years. Alternatively, it can require the developer to pay some or all of the municipal costs. Authority to do this is given in the Municipal Government Act.

The likely costs of redevelopment are as follows:

Roads

No major reconstruction should be needed, although many roads will need repaving in the foreseeable future.

If repaving is done by local improvement levy, there is no justification for charging money at the time of redevelopment. However, if repaving is done as a general benefit, it can be argued that the need is precipitated by high density redevelopment, and a charge may be made under section 14 of the land use bylaw and sections 647 and 650 of the MGA.

Water / sewer lines	Redevelopment will bring population densities back to what they were in the 1950s and 60s, so there should be no need to upgrade water and sewer lines. Many lines are now fifty years old, and may need replacing in the foreseeable future. However, that is not caused by redevelopment, so the appropriate mechanism is a local improvement levy payable by all landowners, not just developers.
Storm drainage	A new duplex with four or more off-street parking stalls will probably increase the runoff and put more volume into the storm drainage system. The engineering department will determine if the system has sufficient capacity. If it must be upgraded, a dollar amount should be calculated and applied to new developments. Permeable paving of parking stalls can reduce runoff, and roof drainage can be directed into soak-away pits. Developers might be given the choice of using these design features instead of paying to upgrade the storm drainage system. Ideally, the town would move to a user-pay system for increased storm drainage. It could work like this. The estimated storm runoff from the new development would be compared with the present runoff from the site. If the new runoff is projected to be higher, the developer would be charged an amount of money based on the actual cost of handling the extra flow. This can be calculated by taking the town's total cost of storm water management at present (including a return on capital), and dividing that amount by the present volume to get a cost per cubic metre. Such a user-pay system would give developers an incentive to minimize runoff though appropriate design and engineering. The decision whether or not to adopt a user-pay system will be made by council.
Fire protection	An increase in residential density will not require any change in fire protection.
Parks	There appears to be adequate open space on school grounds and municipal parks in the area, but they may need to be upgraded The total cost of necessary upgrades should be divided by the number of existing residences in the study area to get a per-residence figure. That figure can then be charged to all additional lots or suites being constructed, using the proceeds of a redevelopment levy under section 647 the MGA. Recognizing that good school playgrounds reduce the need for municipal parks, the town should talk to the school boards about sharing the cost of upgrading school grounds.

Sidewalks	The study area generally has a good network of sidewalks, but in many areas the concrete is showing its age and needs to be replaced. Unlike streets, which are best repaved a block at a time, sidewalks can be rebuilt in smaller sections, so when a lot is redeveloped, its sidewalk can be rebuilt to meet current standards. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street, wide enough for two people walking side by side, with curb cuts at corners, and separated from traffic by a grassed boulevard. Any upgrading or rebuilding should be done in front of each property at the developer's expense.

Summary of the advantages and disadvantages of redevelopment

Redevelopment of the older parts of Drayton Valley will have a number of advantages.

- Redevelopment will remove functionally obsolete or worn-out housing, and replace it with buildings that are closer to what the market wants today.
- Redevelopment will increase the assessed value and tax yield per acre, without requiring major investment in infrastructure.
- Much of the study area is within walking distance of downtown stores and jobs. Many people will be able to live in a one-car household, and some will be able to live without a car altogether.
- The study area is close to most of the town's schools (Map 4). Redevelopment to higher densities will allow more children to walk to school.
- The area is well served by parks and other open spaces (Map 5). No child living in the study area has to go more than three blocks to reach a playground.

At the same time, there are some disadvantages to development.

- Some people simply don't want their neighbourhood to change.
- Even if they are close to stores, jobs, schools, and parks, most households will still have a vehicle (or two or three) so parking may be a problem.
- More households on a street will mean more traffic.

Parking

At present the town's land use bylaw requires a single detached house to have two off-street parking stalls. This is probably inadequate as more and more households have three or four vehicles. Council should raise the requirement to three stalls per house. They can easily be built on a fifty foot lot.

Even if a 50 foot lot is subdivided into two 25 foot lots, with a half duplex on each side, it is quite possible to provide the necessary stalls. Map 6 illustrates this. Drawing A shows the typical layout, with a double garage in the back yard, parking for two vehicles between the garage and lane, and one stall on the street, for a total of five stalls for each half-duplex, sufficient for the family vehicles, an RV, and a vehicle belonging to a renter living in the basement.

Drawing B shows how to get four stalls on a 25 foot duplex lot, with two in the rear and two at the front.

Drawing C shows two rear-yard parking stalls plus two in angled stall on a widened street. This requires the house to be set back further than the standard 20 feet. It also requires rebuilding of the sidewalk and street, which may be too expensive.

Drawing D shows what can be done if the lot is widened. Three adjacent 50 foot lots can be resubdivided into four 37.5 foot lots for a duplex or fourplex. The extra lot width allows for three stalls off the lane, two in the side yard, and one on the street, for a total of six. Of course, this is only possible if a developer can assemble three adjacent lots.

Some of these parking designs interfere with pedestrian flows along the street, which goes against the advice of FCS, as noted above.

Another solution, not shown on Map 6, is for the town to purchase land in the vicinity and develop it for residents' parking. A developer would have the choice of providing on-site parking, or purchasing the right to use one or more stalls on the town parking lot. The price would be set to cover the town's costs, plus a profit to offset the loss of future tax revenue.

Developers should be free to suggest other ways of providing enough parking.

In summary, there is no problems supplying adequate parking for duplexes on 25 foot lots.

Development options

An open house was held in the town office on 18 May 2010. Five development scenarios were discussed.

A: No change

The area could remain very much as it is now. Densities would remain the same, with single detached houses on fifty foot lots. There would still be a certain amount of building activity. Some houses would be upgraded or enlarged. Some would be demolished and rebuilt. Without the opportunity to redevelop to higher densities, investors would lose interest, and property prices would probably fall relative to other parts of town. The area would remain Drayton Valley's starter home district. Buyers would gain, and sellers would lose.

B: Limited development

This scenario revives the rules which applied to the manufactured housing area on 43/44/45 Streets between 1996 and 2007. The land use bylaw at that time zoned the area to Direct Control, and council adopted a policy of allowing up to 20% of the lots to be rezoned R2 to allow duplexes. Municipal records do not show any rationale for this number, but it was broadly accepted by residents because it seemed to solve the parking problem.

An unfortunate effect of the 20% policy was that the first applicant on a block might be given rezoning, while an equally good proposal by a neighbour, submitted a few weeks later, would be refused because the 20% quota was already taken up in that area. As a result, some run-down buildings were not replaced. Property values become something of a lottery.

The 20% policy was never applied in other areas with redevelopment potential, and it was dropped from the 2007 land use bylaw. Because of the inherent unfairness and inefficiency, it is not recommended.

C: Single family redevelopment

This would allow two adjacent 50 foot lots to be re-subdivided into three 33 foot lots for single detached houses, using the R1N district in the town's land use bylaw. R1N is a new district in Drayton Valley, adopted in 2006, and the first two blocks are now under construction in the Meraw development in SE 9.

(R1Z zero lot line also allows detached houses on small lots, but this form of housing has fallen out of favour with developers, so it has been rejected as a solution in the study area.)

Parking does not seem to be an issue in R1N, and the style of housing (single detached, probably owner occupied) is the same as at present. Because of the small degree of change, council could consider rezoning all R1A and R1B properties in the study area to R1N. This would avoid the administrative delays of spot zoning.

The main problem with R1N is that developers would find it difficult to assemble land, and even if they could, the limited increase in density

might not give them a sufficient return, so nothing would happen.

D: Clustered development — In this scenario, redevelopment would initially be limited to land along main roads (to prevent any increase of traffic on local roads) and facing open spaces such as schools and larger parks (to reduce the unpopularity of higher density housing facing existing low density houses). Redevelopment would later spread throughout the study area.

E: Comprehensive redevelopment — Scenario E opens up the entire study area to redevelopment. Existing R1A and R1B properties would be rezoned to R2 (duplex) zoning. Higher densities (R3 and R4) would be considered along 50 Avenue, but this would require spot zoning.

Recommendations

Those present at the open house on 18 May agreed that many of the houses in the area were nearing the end of their useful life, and should be replaced. Duplexes were acceptable as long as the parking issues were solved.

Town staff agree with this conclusion.

It is therefore recommended that council

1 Adopt this document as an area redevelopment plan under sections 634 and 635 of the Municipal Government Act.

2 Instruct the engineering department to prepare cost estimates for improved storm drainage, the upgrading of parks and playgrounds, and any road improvements necessary to accommodate higher density development, and use those figures to draft a redevelopment area levy bylaw under section 634(d) of the MGA.

3 Amend the classification of all R1A and R1B lots in the study area to R2.

4 Amend the text of the land use bylaw

4.1 to require three off-street parking spaces to be supplied when new detached dwellings and duplexes are built, and

4.2 to allow detached houses in the R2 district to be built on 33 foot wide lots, as they are now in the R1N district.

Proposed Amendments to the Land Use Bylaw

Town of Drayton Valley

Bylaw 2010/09/D

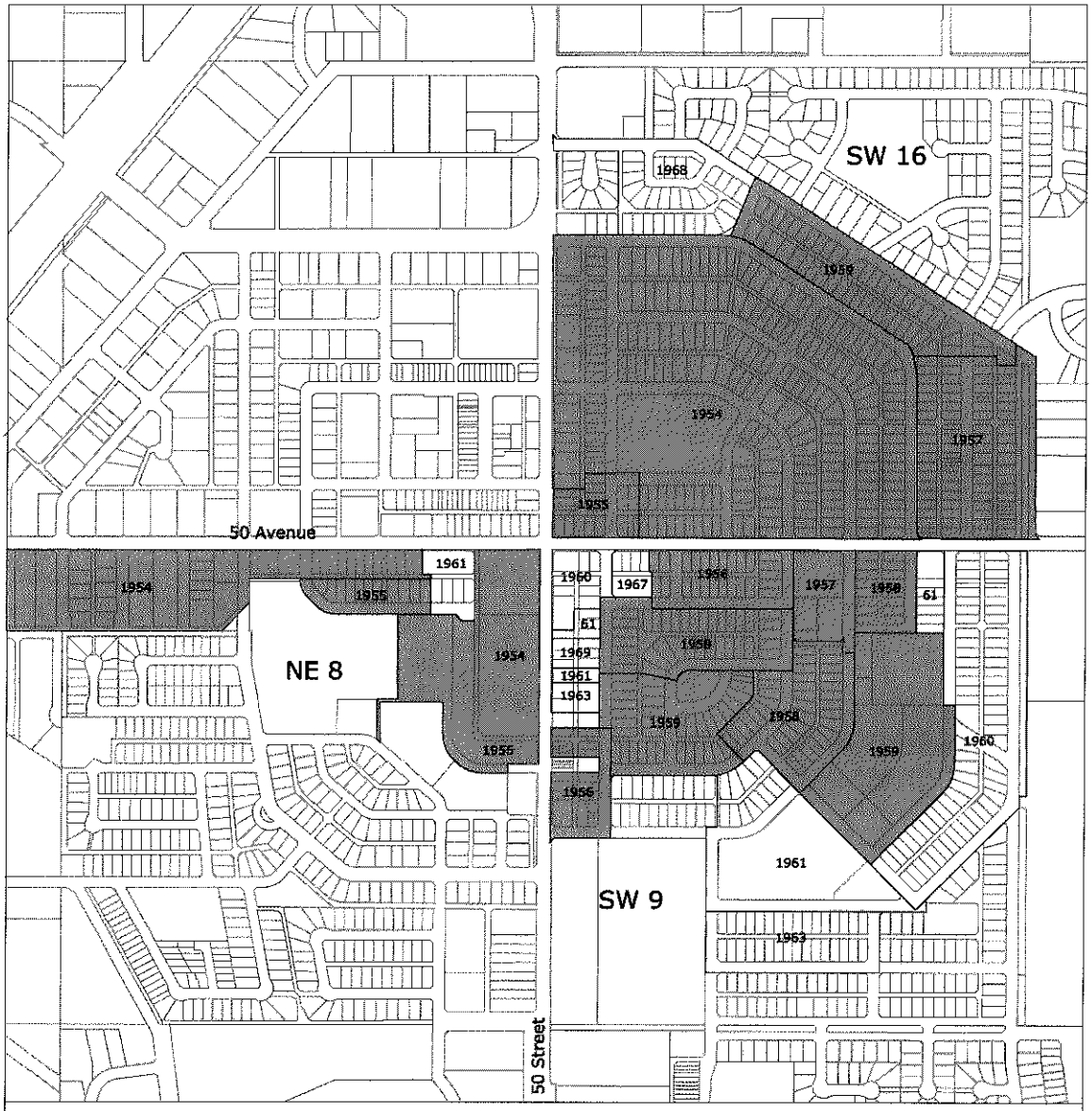
A Bylaw to amend Bylaw 2007/24/D, the Land Use Bylaw

Pursuant to Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act, and having advertised the intention to enact this bylaw and held a public hearing as required by the Act, the council of the Town of Drayton Valley enacts the following changes to Bylaw 2007/24/D, the Land Use Bylaw.

1 In Schedule A of the bylaw, section 32.1 (number of parking stalls required) is amended so that the number of stalls required for new detached houses and new duplexes is changed from 2 to 3.

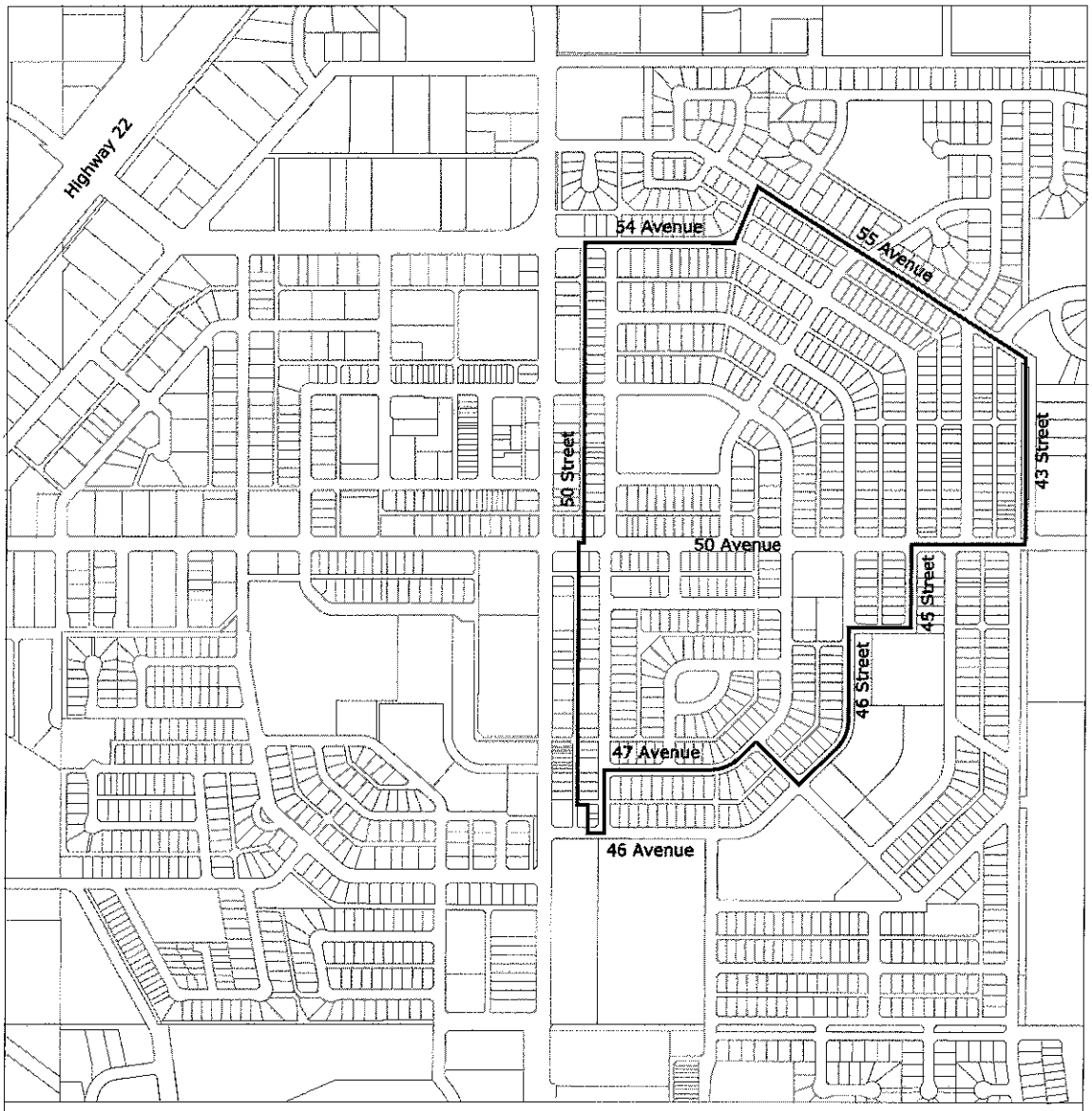
2 In Schedule B of the bylaw, section 6.6 (lot size requirements in the R2 district) is amended so that the minimum width of a lot for a detached house is reduced from 15.24 metres (50 feet) to 10.00 metres (32.8 feet).

3 The land shown on the map attached to this bylaw is reclassified from R1A Low Density Residential and R1B Standard Residential to R2 General Residential.

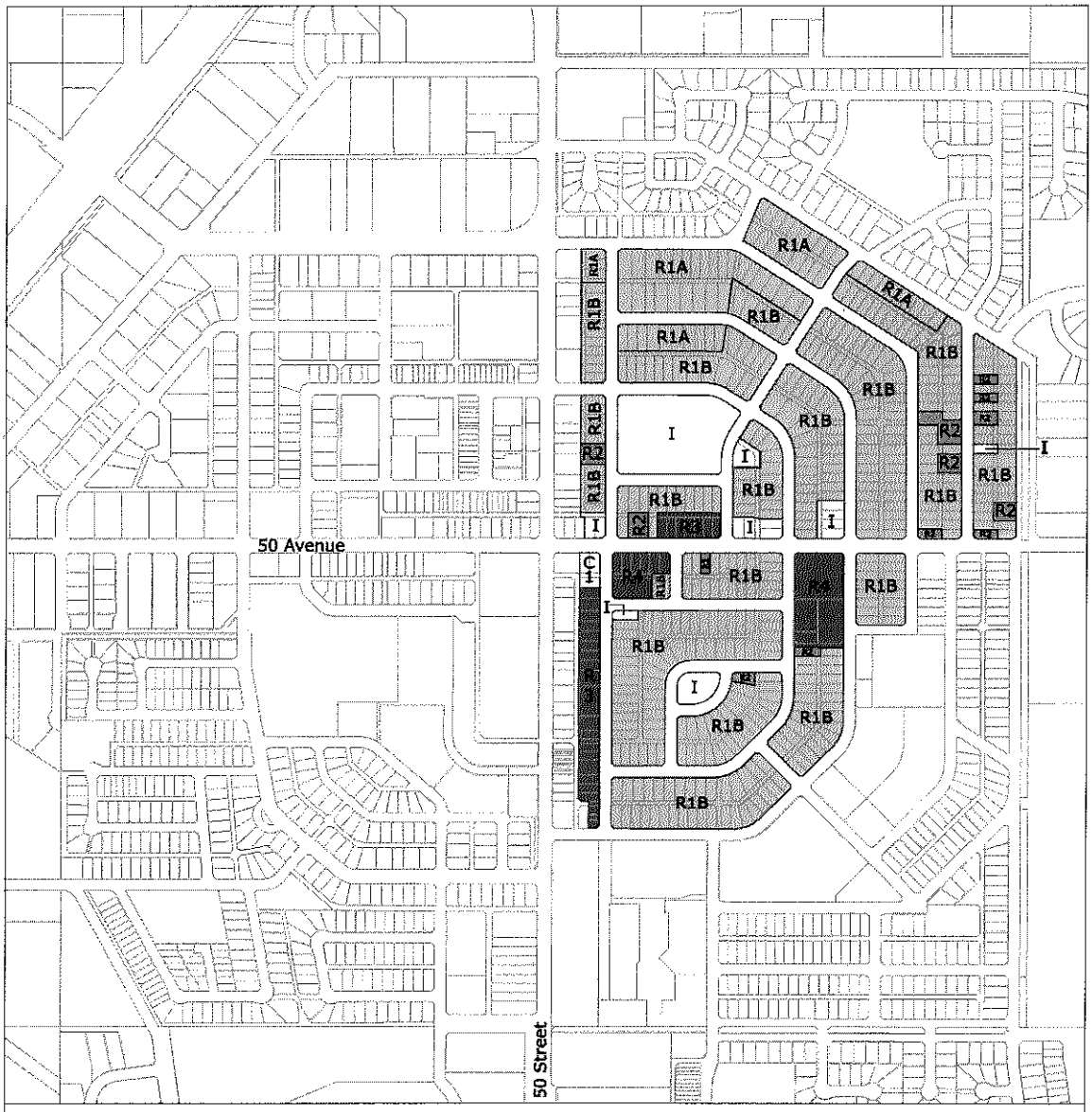


Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 1
Date of First Subdivision
NE 8, NW 9, and SW 16-49-7-5
1950s subdivisions shown shaded

Where no date is shown, the land was first subdivided in 1970 or later



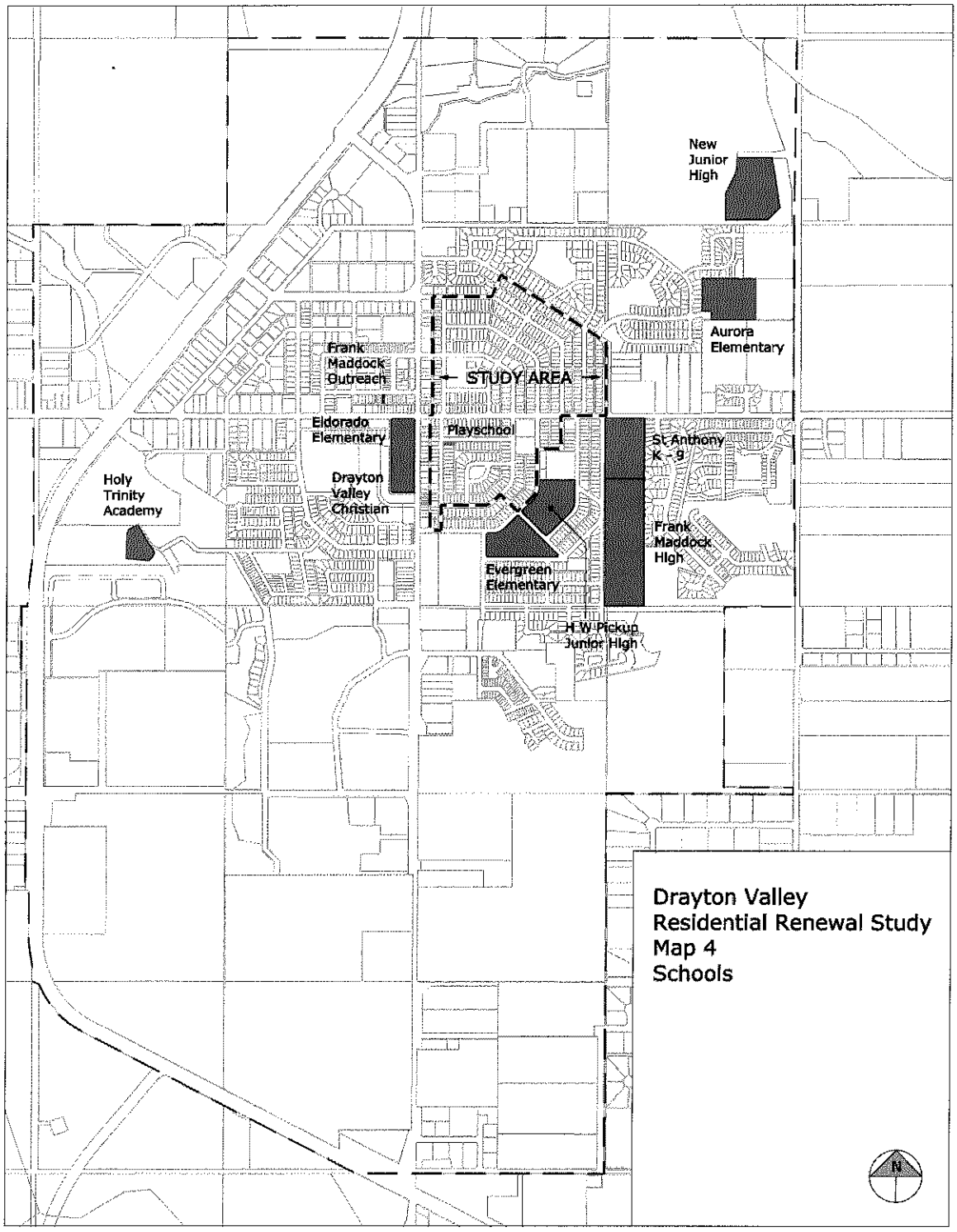
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 2
Study Area

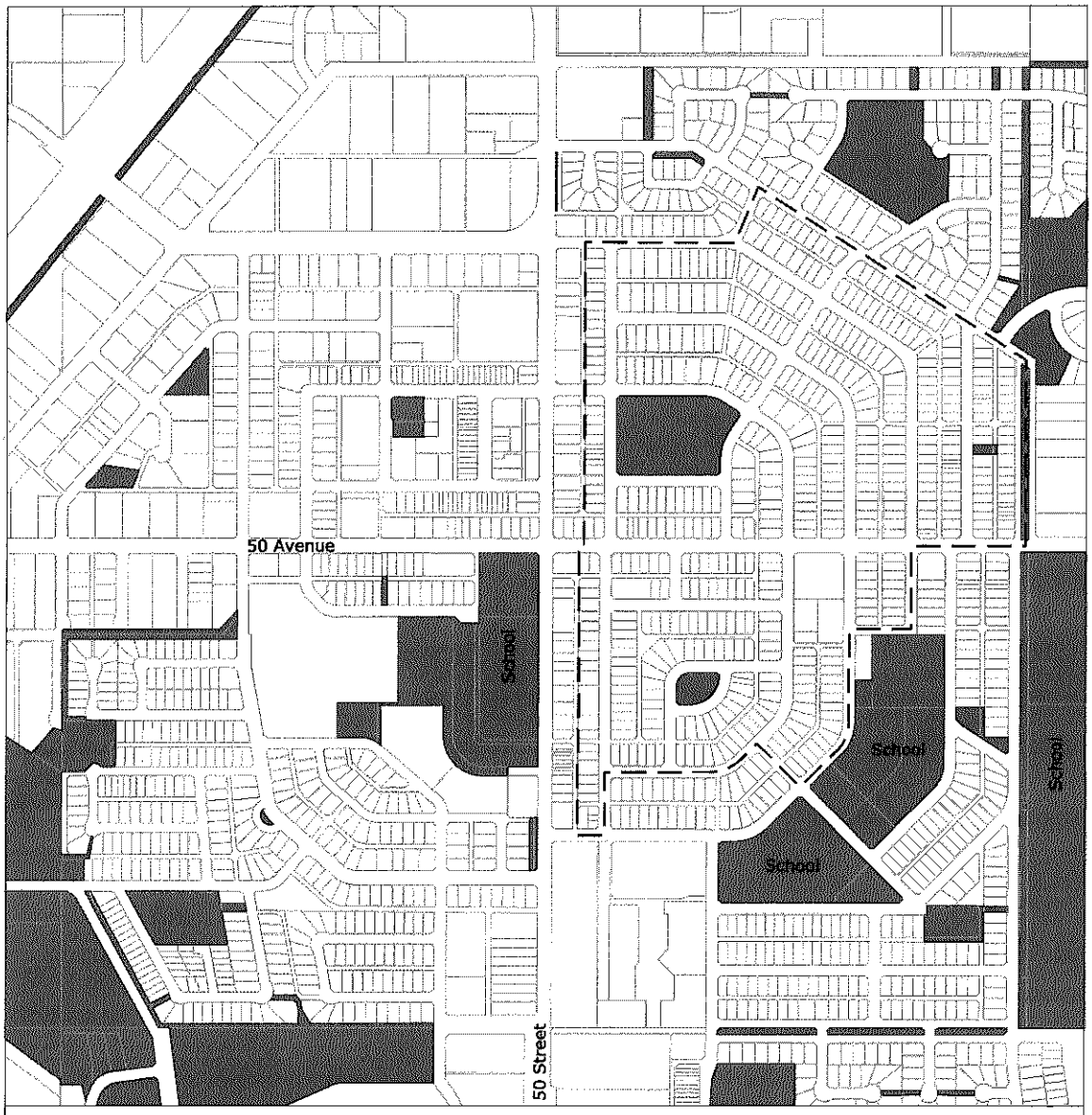


Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 3
Current Zoning in the Study Area

Detached residential: R1A and R1B
Duplex residential: R2
Multiple residential: R3 and R4
I (Institutional and Public) and C1 (Commercial)

For clarity, zoning boundaries ignore lanes

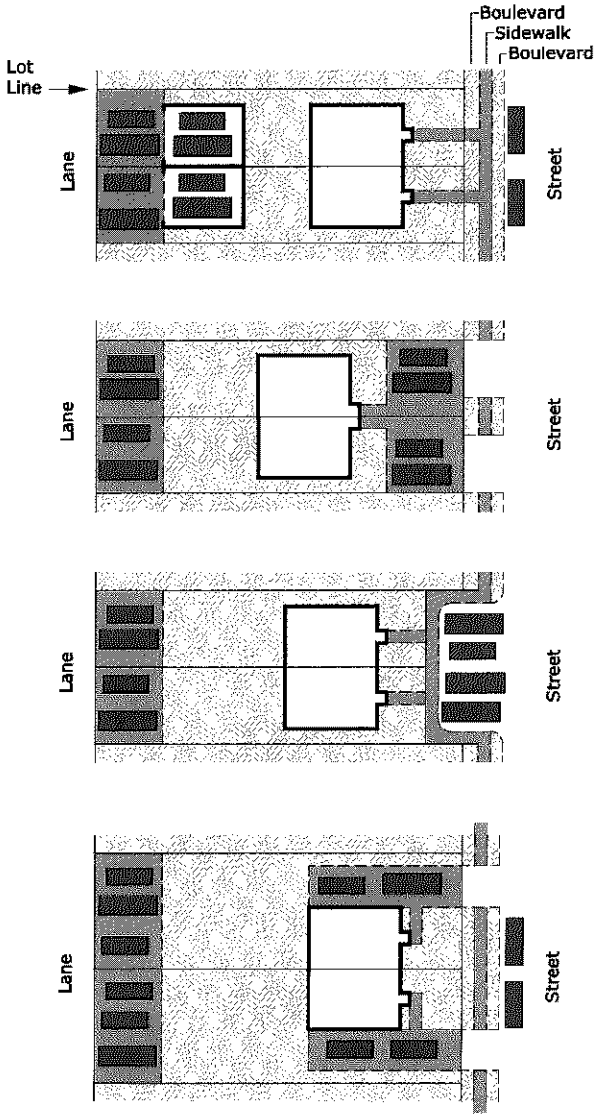

New
Junior
High
Aurora
Elementary
Frank
Maddock
Outreach
STUDY AREA
Eldorado
Elementary
Playschool
St Anthony
K - 9
Holy
Trinity
Academy
Drayton
Valley
Christian
Frank
Maddock
High
Evergreen
Elementary
H W Pickup
Junior High
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 4
Schools
N



Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 5
Public Open Spaces in and near the Study Area

— — — Study Area Boundary

Open space



A
Standard duplex subdivision with detached garages provides four off-street and one on-street parking stalls per dwelling

58% hard surfaced

B
If the dwellings are moved back, there is room for two stalls in front and two in the rear yard making four per dwelling

61% hard surfaced

C
Front 12 feet of lot is dedicated as road, allowing angle parking on street, giving four stalls per dwelling: two in front, two in rear

50% hard surfaced. (including newly dedicated road)

D
Three 50 foot lots are replotted into four 37.5 foot lots, each with three stalls in rear yard, two in side yard, and one on street, for total of six stalls

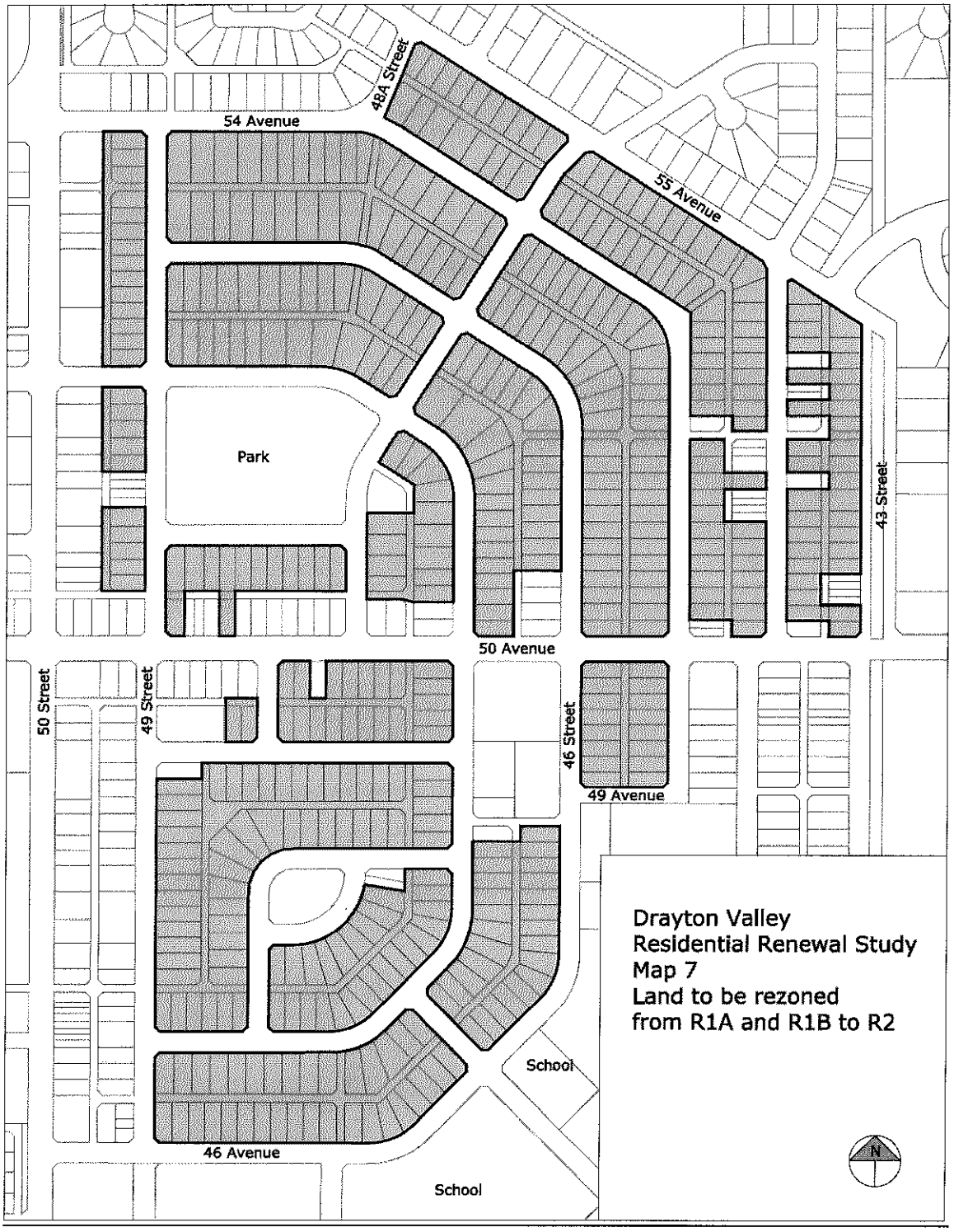
This gives enough parking for each side of the duplex to have a basement suite

64% hard surfaced

Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 6
Parking Alternatives

Developers are free to suggest other designs to achieve the required number of stalls

Landscaping
Sidewalks and parking stalls
Vehicles


54 Avenue
48A Street
55 Avenue
Park
43 Street
50 Avenue
50 Street
49 Street
46 Street
49 Avenue
School
46 Avenue
School
Drayton Valley
Residential Renewal Study
Map 7
Land to be rezoned
from R1A and R1B to R2
N