

New development rules could affect your community



PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

Learn how neighborhoods can apply for tools to retain their residential character

Recent changes to the City's development code will allow developers to build homes on smaller lots than before. This will benefit Houstonians by creating a more dense single-family residential community and increase the amount and type of housing available. It could also forever change the look and feel of some neighborhoods.

If your neighborhood is residential and would like to prevent these changes, the City has adopted tools to help.

A **Special Minimum Lot Size** designation prevents lots from being divided below a certain size, which in most cases, prevents redevelopment into townhomes. For example, if 5,000 square feet was established as the *Special Minimum Lot Size*, no lots within that area could be subdivided into lots smaller than 5,000 square feet.

A **Special Minimum Building Line** designation prevents new buildings from being built closer to the street than a portion of the buildings that are already there. For example, if a block of homes has been constructed where the typical distance from the front of the building to the sidewalk is 20 feet, new construction must be placed no closer than 20 feet from the sidewalk.

Is your neighborhood eligible?

Exact eligibility requirements vary for the different programs. In general, if your

neighborhood currently had Deed Restrictions that dictate the minimum size of lots or the minimum distance a building can be placed against the property line, you are already protected and are not eligible. All other neighborhoods may be eligible, depending on the size of the area that applies for designation.

What is the process?

The designations require an application, demonstrated property owner support and approval by the Houston City Council. In some instances the property owner support can be obtained before the application is filed, but if the designation will be for a large area (the maximum number of homes that may be included in one application is 500), then the support requires a mailed-in ballot. Once the required property owner support is proven, the designation will go to City Council for their approval.

Who do we call?

Start the process immediately by calling the Houston Planning & Development Department at 832-393-6600.

A series of community meetings is being held to help residents understand these designations. To find a meeting near you and for more information, go to www.HoustonPlanning.com and look under the *Notice* heading.