

Application for Special Minimum Lot Size Block

Section 42-197 of Chapter 42 of the Code of Ordinances



**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

This packet provides the information and forms needed to apply for the Special Minimum Lot Size Block (SMLSB). Staff from the Planning and Development Department will check whether your application meets the requirements and can help you through the process.

This packet includes:

- A Special Minimum Lot Size Block (SMLSB) Application
- A Step-By-Step Guide for Applicants
- Example of a Boundary Map and Notification Sign
- Frequently asked Questions and helpful tips
- A blank "Evidence of Support" page for other property owners to sign

Before you submit the application, you must meet with a staff member for a preliminary submittal review. This meeting helps confirm whether your application meets the eligibility requirements which are:

1. Contains at least one blockface, but not more than two opposing blockfaces;
2. Contain all lots on each blockface;
3. Form a contiguous area;
4. Have at least 60% of the lots developed for or restricted to single-family use (exclusive of land used for a park, library, place of worship, or school); and
5. Contain at least one lot that does not have a minimum lot size established by deed restrictions

A completed application package, after you have had a successful preliminary submittal meeting, may be mailed or delivered in person during regular business hours to:

Planning and Development Department
Attn: Community and Regional Planning
611 Walker Street, 6th Floor
Houston, TX 77002

If you have questions or would like to schedule your required preliminary submittal meeting, please contact the Community and Regional Planning Division at (832) 393-6637. More information is also available at www.houstonplanning.com.

¡ATENCIÓN! Si necesita ayuda en español o gustaría recibir más información acerca de este asunto, comuníquese al número 832-393-6659.

Application for Special Minimum Lot Size Block

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PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Application Information (Required)

Describe the location of the application area.

Example: 1600-1700 block of Planning St, north and south sides, between Renew St and Welcome Ave.

Date and name of Planner at your Preliminary Meeting: _____

Does the boundary have active deed restrictions that establish a lot size? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

If yes, are your deed restrictions attached to this application ☐

If not, how do you know that you don't have deed restrictions

Main Applicant (Required)

Applicant's Name: _____

If not a property owner within the boundary, what is your role? _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

****By signing this application, I certify that the information provided is true and correct.****

Co - Applicant (Optional)

Applicant's Name: _____

If not a property owner within the boundary, what is your role? _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

****By signing this application, I certify that the information provided is true and correct.****

STAFF USE ONLY

File Number: _____

Super Neighborhood: _____

Council District: _____

Planner Assigned: _____

Historic District: _____

Restricted ☐

Planner Notes:

Special Minimum Lot Size Block

Step-By-Step Guide For Applicants



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

☐ **Step 1: Preliminary Meeting with the Planning Department**

To schedule, call Community and Regional Planning at (832) 393-6637.

☐ **Step 2: Submit a complete application to the Planning Department**

Mail or hand-deliver the full application to the Planning and Development Department. If anything is missing, the application will be returned with instructions. Within two business days, staff will notify you whether the application is accepted or needs revisions. If it is accepted it will be added to the City's website and will notify the District Council Member.

☐ **Step 3: Planning Application Review**

Staff will begin to review the application and determine eligibility within 30 business days. If your application is ineligible, you will be contacted by staff.

☐ **Step 4: Posting of Signs and 30-Day Protest Period**

If your application is eligible, staff will deem your application complete and will send you instructions for posting notification signs. Signs must be posted within 10 days of the date of the letter. Simultaneously, staff will send notifications to property owners within the proposed boundaries. The notifications will include instructions on how property owners may support or protest the application. Any protest must be made in writing within 30 days of the date of the letter.

☐ **Step 5: After 30-Day Protest Period**

After the 30-day period:

- If there is no protest, the application is forwarded to City Council.
- If there is a protest, the application goes to the Planning Commission for a public hearing.

☐ **Step 6: Planning Commission - Public Hearing (if applicable)**

All property owners will receive a letter with the hearing date, time, and location. The public may provide comments. After the hearing, the Commission will decide whether to recommend renewal to City Council. If the Commission denies the request, the decision is final.

☐ **Step 7: City Council Action**

City Council will consider the recommendation by the Planning Commission, if applicable. City Council's decision to approve or deny the application is final. To speak during the public comment session, contact the City Secretary at (832) 393-1100 or citysecretary@houstontx.gov. Speaking and/or attending is not mandatory.

☐ **Step 8: Recordation**

After City Council approval, the Planning Department will file the ordinance with Harris County Property Records for recordation.

Special Minimum Lot Size Block

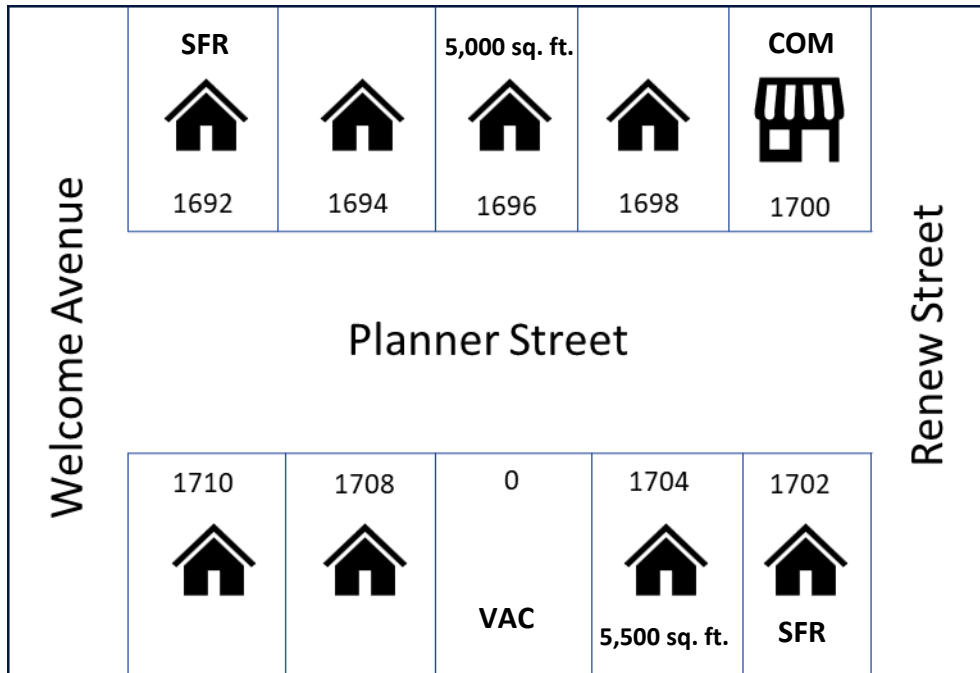
Example of Boundary Description and Notification Signs



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EXAMPLE OF A BOUNDARY MAP

1600 - 1700 block of Planning St, north and south sides, between Renew St and Welcome Ave.



For Your Reference:

SFR = Single Family

COM = Commercial

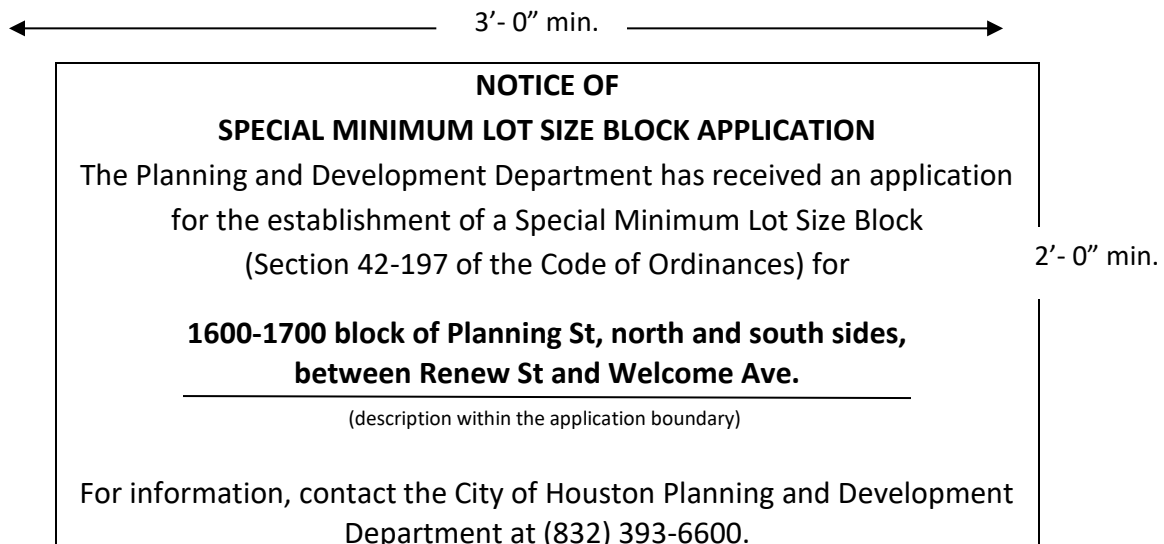
VAC = Vacant

MF = Multifamily

EXC = Church, Park, School

EXAMPLE OF A NOTIFCATION SIGN

The applicant must post at least two signs per blockface within the SMLSB boundary within 10 days of receiving written notice. Staff may approve a different number of signs if appropriate. Signs must be at least 2' x 3', face the street, and be easy to read. After posting, the applicant must notify Planning staff and keep the signs in place until the application is approved.





Frequently Asked Questions

What is an SMLSB application?

A SMLSB application allows property owners to preserve the existing lot sizes on one or two opposing blockfaces. A property owner within the application area, or a representative for the neighborhood, may submit the application. Once City Council approves the ordinance, any new lots created in the block must be at least as large as the established Special Minimum Lot Size.

What if my lot is smaller than the designated Special Minimum Lot Size?

For example, if your block has a 5,000-square-foot minimum lot size, no lot can be divided into anything smaller. If your current lot is smaller than 5,000 square feet, you cannot divide it. If your lot is 10,000 square feet, you could divide it into two 5,000-square-foot lots.

What can I build on my lot?

On a single-family lot, you may build a single-family home, a single-family home with a detached apartment up to **900** square feet, or a duplex. The Special Minimum Lot Size Ordinance does not control building design.

Can I add to or rebuild my single-family/multifamily/commercial property?

Yes. If you have an existing single-family lot, you may rebuild, improve, or add to your home. If you have an existing commercial or multifamily lot, you may rebuild, improve, or add to that building.

What will happen to my commercial/multifamily lot if the Special Minimum Lot Size Block application is approved?

If you have a commercial or multifamily lot, it will stay that way. If you later choose to convert it to single-family use, you cannot switch it back to commercial or multifamily. If you subdivide the property, all new lots must meet the special minimum lot size.

What happens during the application process?

An applicant will submit a complete application. Staff will conduct an application data analysis to determine eligibility. Once complete, staff will notify the applicant and property owners within the boundary area to start a 30-day protest period.

What if I support or disagree with the application?

If you receive notice of a 30-day protest and you support the application; no further action will be required. If you disagree, you may file a written protest, and the application will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Special Minimum Lot Size Block

Frequently Asked Questions



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Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

What happens at Planning Commission?

Planning Commission will hold a public hearing, comments and concerns will be heard, and commissioners will vote to approve or deny the application. If approved, the case goes to City Council. If denied, the decision is final.

What happens if there's no protest or it's approved and it goes to City Council?

If City Council approves the application, the SMLSB is extended for 40 years.

How is the Special Minimum Lot Size calculated?

The Planning and Development Department calculates the Special Minimum Lot Size using these steps:

1. List all lot sizes in the application area from largest to smallest.
2. Add all lot sizes to get the total square footage.
3. Calculate each lot's percentage of the total area.
4. Keep a running (cumulative) percentage.
5. The first lot that brings the cumulative total to at least 70% (or 60% in City-designated historic districts) becomes the proposed Special Minimum Lot Size.

In the example table, the cumulative percentage reaches 70% at the fifth-largest lot. Because that lot is 5,830 square feet, the Special Minimum Lot Size for the block would be 5,830 square feet.

Lots Ranked By Size	Address	Size	% by Area	Cumulative % by Area
1	1510 Cocker Spaniel	6,500 sf	15.4%	15.4%
2	1502 Cocker Spaniel	6,000 sf	14.3%	29.7%
3	1508 Cocker Spaniel	6,000 sf	14.3%	43.9%
4	1506 Cocker Spaniel	6,000 sf	14.3%	58.2%
5	1504 Cocker Spaniel	5,830 sf	13.8%	72.0%
6	1500 Cocker Spaniel	5,500 sf	13.1%	85.1%
7	1512 Cocker Spaniel	3,270 sf	7.8%	92.9%
8	1514 Cocker Spaniel	3,000 sf	7.1%	100.0%
Total		42,100 sf	100.0%	

If you have questions or need assistance at any time, please call the Planning and Development Department at (832) 393-6600 or visit the department's website at www.houstonplanning.com.

Si tiene preguntas o necesita ayuda en cualquier momento, llame al Departamento de Planificación y Desarrollo al (832) 393-6659 o visite el sitio web del departamento en www.houstonplanning.com.

Evidence of Support

Special Minimum Lot Size Block



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PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Below are signatures of property owners within the proposed Special Minimum Lot Size Area boundary who support the request to preserve the character of the existing lot sizes and the creation of a Special Minimum Lot Size Block for the following area: _____

By signing this evidence of support, I hereby represent:

- (1) That I am the lot owner or representative of the property listed with my signature, and
- (2) I support the petition to create a Special Minimum Lot Size Block.

Property Owner Information Form

Property Owner (Please Print Name): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Property Owner (Please Print Name): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Property Owner (Please Print Name): _____

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