

**PUBLIC HEARING
PLAYBOOK**
A Guide to Land Use
Statutory Public Hearings





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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

A land use Statutory Public Hearing invites the public to speak their minds, challenge proposals and provide input into decisions about proposed land use developments and plans. For some, it can be an intimidating space with complicated processes. This playbook explains the process and how to participate, and provides resources for more information.

Edmontonians inhabit, share and steward this land. The City's vitality and very existence is owed to the land itself, as well as the people that helped build the city. City planning and zoning are all about land. Statutory Public Hearings are an opportunity to apply an equity lens to land use conversations and decision-making, ensuring we build a city that respects and preserves the things we value today while fostering opportunities to attract and inspire its next million residents.

I want to present at a public hearing.
What should I do?

Download the [Quick Guide: Land Use Statutory Public Hearing](#)

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Edmonton honours and thanks the many Nations on whose historical and traditional lands Edmonton was founded, including the Cree, Dene, Sauteaux, Blackfoot and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge and embrace the fact that we are on the traditional land of Treaty 6 territory and the traditional Métis homeland. We acknowledge all the diverse Indigenous people, whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries – from First Nations, Métis, Inuit and now settlers from around the world.

What is a Land Use?

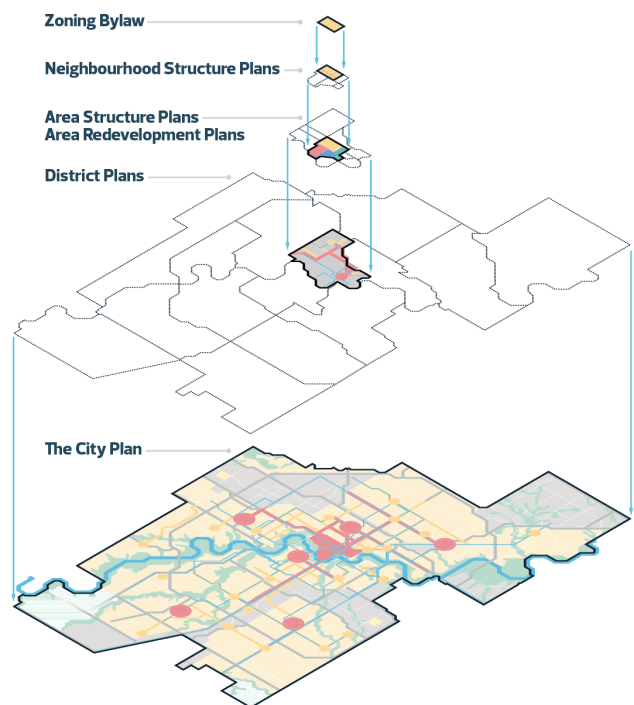
A land use describes the way land in our city can be used and developed. Here are some examples:

- + Open spaces
- + Recreation
- + Residential
- + Businesses
- + Schools
- + Hospitals
- + Manufacturing and production

These land uses are determined by the City of Edmonton and communicated through various rules and development plans, which occur at different levels: city (The City Plan), neighbourhood (district plans, Area Structure Plans, Neighbourhood Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans) and parcel (Zoning Bylaw). The plans are bylaws, but are also known as “statutory plans”, and the Zoning Bylaw as a “land use bylaw”. Visit edmonton.ca/urbanplanning to learn more about urban planning and design.

WHAT IS THE CITY PLAN?

The City Plan is Edmonton's long-term plan for growth and development. It envisions Edmonton's future growth and redevelopment, its roadway and mobility systems, open spaces, employment and social networks, and generally touches on all aspects of city life.



WHAT ARE DISTRICT PLANS, AREA STRUCTURE PLANS, NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE PLANS AND AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLANS?

These plans provide more detailed policy than The City Plan for how a particular area within the city will develop or redevelop and consider an area's geography and context. They typically address issues like:

- + Sequence of development
- + Land uses
- + Population density/areas of intensification
- + Opens spaces and natural areas
- + Major transportation routes and public utilities locations
- + Preservation or improvement of existing buildings
- + Any other matters that City Council considers necessary

WHAT IS THE ZONING BYLAW?

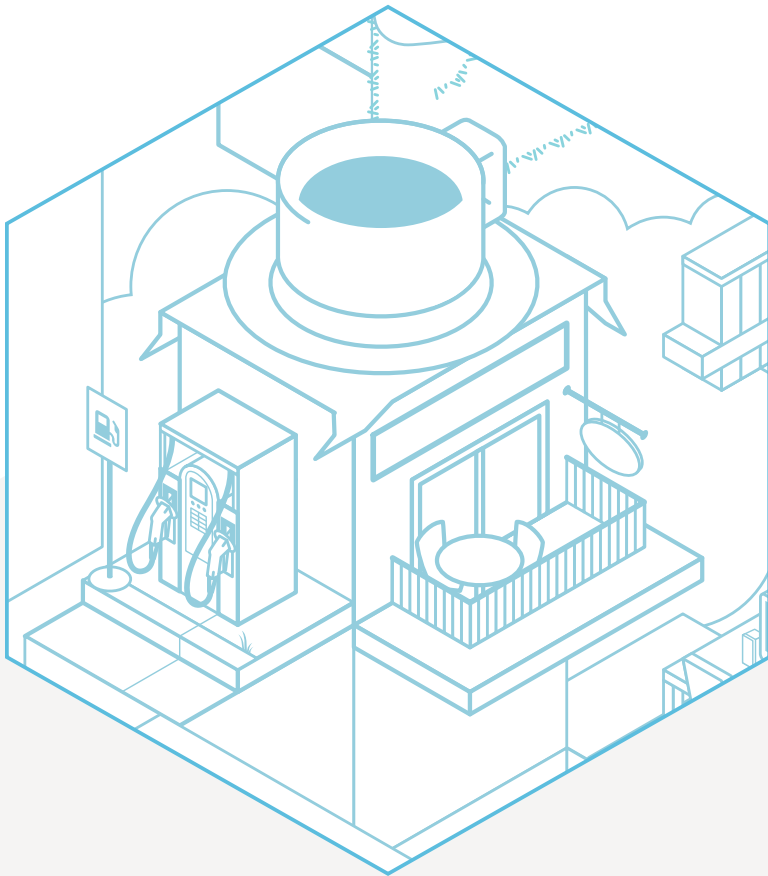
It sets the rules for where new buildings can go, what types of buildings they can be and what types of businesses and activities can happen on a particular property. Zoning guides growth in an orderly way to minimize conflicts between different land uses. Visit edmonton.ca/zoningbylaw to review Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw.

Zoning is about:

- + What can be built where
- + What activities are allowed where
- + Implementing municipal plans

Zoning is not about:

- + Regulating groups of people and behaviours
- + Techniques used for construction
- + Exactly what a building looks like
- + Building Code issues



Statutory Public Hearing 101

WHAT IS A LAND USE STATUTORY PUBLIC HEARING?

It is when City Council hears from the public before making decisions on a bylaw (Statutory Plan or Land Use Bylaw) that relates to land use. The hearing is a chance for anyone to express their opinion to City Council. These bylaws can change land uses and determine how land develops over time. Here are some example bylaws:

- + A city-wide plan
- + A neighbourhood-level plan
- + A rezoning for one or several lots

A new bylaw is required every time a plan or rezoning is changed, created or repealed.

WHO ATTENDS STATUTORY PUBLIC HEARINGS? WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES?

Stakeholder	Role
Speaker(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Are parties that wish to speak/present to City Council. They are grouped as "in support" or "non-support" of an application + They are heard from as panels. City Council will ask questions at the conclusion of panel presentations + Subject to the discretion of the Mayor, there are no restrictions on what a speaker can speak to during their allotted time
Mayor and City Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The decision makers at a Statutory Public Hearing + They must ensure that they meet the requirements of procedural fairness at the hearing + They must have an open mind, free from bias and remain focused on land use issues
City of Edmonton Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Provides a technical analysis of each land use application and offers recommendations of support or non-support based on land use factors, such as impact on neighbouring parcels, appropriateness of the size, scale and nature of the proposal and its alignment with city building objectives (as found in various policy with statutory plans and technical considerations such as transportation and servicing requirements) + They present their analysis to City Council for consideration in making their decision + Legal Council responds to City Councillor inquiries relating to the application, the law and assists when the discussion goes into unrelated topics + City Clerk assists with meeting procedure, registration and council communications before and during the Statutory Public Hearing. Questions about the meeting can be directed to the Clerk.

Land Use Considerations

WHAT IS A LAND USE CONSIDERATION?

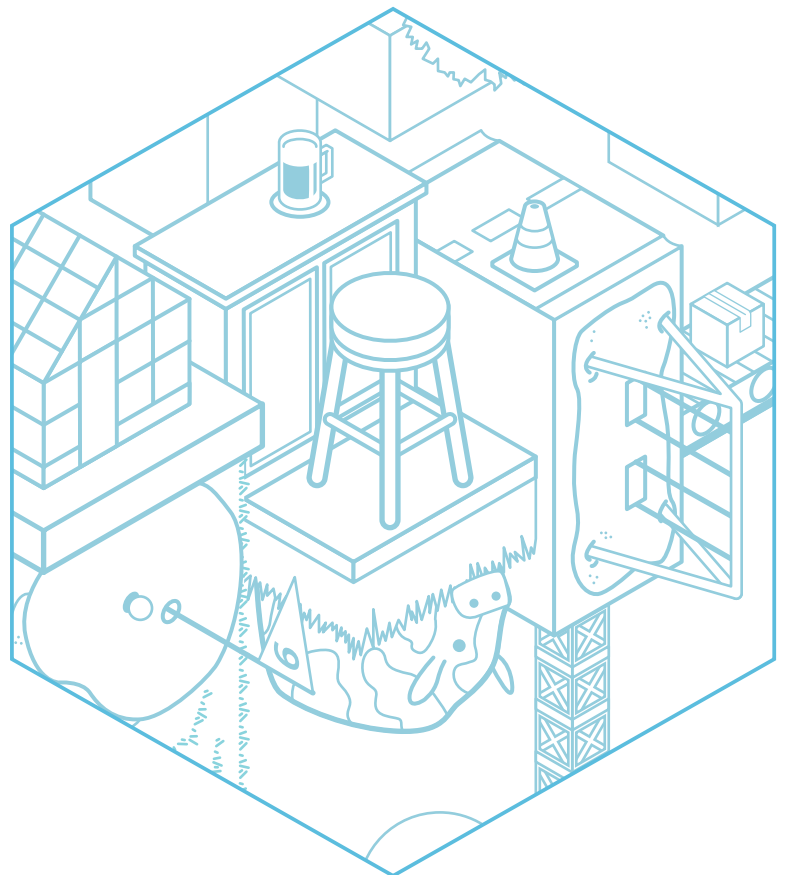
Refers to those impacts that result only from the use of land rather than the impact of the individuals associated with the land. Below are some common examples:

What is a land use consideration:

- + Impact on the surrounding properties and environment
- + Building size/proximity
- + Distance to transit
- + Car and roadway access / Transportation
- + Servicing/utilities

What is not a land use consideration:

- + Tax implications
- + Tenure (renters vs. owners)
- + Users
- + Morality
- + Character of the applicant



Equity, City Planning and the Statutory Public Hearing Process

WHAT IS EQUITY IN THE CONTEXT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE?

Equity means enabling access to all parts of the city for residents to live, work and play while accounting for the impact of the use of land on adjoining properties.

(Source: [Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw: Under the Lens of Equity](#))

While equity alone is not a land use consideration, applying equity as a lens to look at the impact(s) of land use is an appropriate practice.

There are many ways to provide equitable access to the city for all residents, and there are multiple dimensions of equity that a municipality can address:

- + How goods, services and opportunities are distributed throughout the city
- + How people with different experiences and their concerns around land use are considered (e.g. engagement processes or participation in public hearings)
- + How policy and regulations are drafted to:
 - Accommodate all housing needs
 - Support access to transportation, recreation and other municipal services
 - Enable informal gatherings, recreation, arts, culture and spirituality
 - Be easier to understand and interpret

The [City created a Gender Based Analysis Plus \(GBA+\) and Equity Toolkit](#) to help planners apply an equity lens when drafting policy and regulations.

The City of Edmonton uses a **GBA+** process to examine how policies, programs and services can impact diverse individuals and groups. The plus (+) prompts us to consider multiple **Identity Factors** (like age, race, ability, education, ethnicity, geography, health, language, class, sex and gender) and how they intersect and interact to make them who they are (intersectionality).

Looking Ahead

All of us are city builders — all committed to building a future Edmonton that welcomes and accommodates an additional one million people. This means building a city for everyone, and that's going to require engaging a diverse demographic of people — residents, developers, builders, businesses and more. Visit edmonton.ca/development to learn more about how the City of Edmonton is advancing policies and regulations to be a more healthy, urban and climate resilient city that supports a prosperous region.

