

How to respond to a

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION



Communities are always changing and growing. It's important to city planners that this change meets the needs of current and future residents and reflects important community values. **This booklet focuses on how residents can respond to land development applications in their neighbourhood.** It is designed to provide you with a better understanding of when and why city planners ask for feedback and how you can effectively share your thoughts with the right people.

If you would like to know more about land use planning and city planning in general, the City of Edmonton offers courses designed for the public through Planning Academy. You can sign up for these courses at edmonton.ca/planningacademy.

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Land development applications in your neighbourhood

Planning a great city involves the entire community—neighbours, community groups, planners, businesses and developers. When these groups work together to share information, we can support decision-making by City Council that best balances sustainable growth in Edmonton as a whole.

Planning decisions occur at different scales. Some decisions are broad and can include input from citizens across the city, such as deciding on city-wide policy (including The Way We Grow, our Municipal Development Plan) or making changes to the Zoning Bylaw. Some decisions are very local, like what might be built (or rebuilt) on the land next door.

Have you received a letter, postcard or been notified of a land development application in your neighbourhood? Your comments, thoughts and opinions are considered in a city planner's evaluation and decisions regarding land development applications. **Your feedback is important.**

Examples of notification letters could include a development permit notice, a notification of subdivision, a notice of public meeting, a notice of Public Hearing or a notice of proposed land use changes.



The first step to responding to a land development application is to consider the proposal. The following checklist will help you review and comment on a planning proposal:

Review your notice

Notices for land development applications might be shared in a number of different ways, including:

- notification letters mailed to neighbours
- notification letters mailed to community leagues
- meetings in your neighbourhood
- the applicant consulting with neighbours
- signs on lots
- ads in the newspaper

The notice will tell you what is proposed for a site and who is involved. Not every application will be shared using the same methods, or using all the methods listed above. Different types of proposed redevelopments are communicated in different ways. The standards for notification are set out in the Edmonton Zoning Bylaw, as well as in the Municipal Government Act (MGA) which is the legislative framework under which all municipalities in Alberta operate.

What is being proposed?

Is the notification for a proposed rezoning, a potential subdivision, a development permit, a subdivision or development permit appeal, or something else? The type of feedback the City is looking for may be different depending on what is being proposed. Understanding the type of application will help you to direct your comments to the right people at the City. We want to help you get your questions and comments to the right team as quickly as we can.



*Click '**VIEW MAP**'
Enter address (top left)
Click '**FIND ADDRESS**'
Choose the '**NEARBY APPLICATIONS**' tab
(bottom right frame)
Click '**SEARCH**'

Visit the City website

City-wide planning goals and strategies, such as those in The Way Ahead and The Way We Grow, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan, will influence how planning proposals are considered. Other documents, such as neighbourhood plans, the Residential Infill Guidelines and the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines, may also be considered. Visit the City's website to read any plans that might affect the site and to learn more about different land use zones.

Check out maps.edmonton.ca to see what specific plans or Zoning might apply to the site. *At this time, subdivisions are not included in this map.

To find out more about a particular zone and the types of buildings and uses it allows, please see the Zoning Bylaw at edmonton.ca/zoningbylaw.

Do you have any other questions?

If you would like more information, you can contact the planner indicated on the development application notice by email or telephone, or you can call the City of Edmonton at 311 (inside Edmonton) or 780-442-5311 (outside Edmonton).

What do you think?

Now that you understand what is proposed and have read any applicable plans and zoning, it is time to determine what you think about the application. Some questions to think about may include:

- Does the application affect the use, enjoyment or value of your property or affect your personal interests? If so, How?
- What are the pros and cons of the application for the neighbourhood? How do these relate to your personal interests?
- What changes might help the application to better address the situation?
- Does the application fit with the broader community and overall city goals*?



Our Strategic Plans

The City of Edmonton's overarching strategic plan, **The Way Ahead**, captures the City's vision for Edmonton in 2040 and establishes six 10-year strategic goals to provide a clear focus for the future. You can read it at edmonton.ca/thewayahead.

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP), **The Way We Grow**, is the City's strategic growth and development plan. Through its MDP, the City of Edmonton will shape the city's urban form and direct the development and implementation of more detailed plans. You can find it online at edmonton.ca/thewaywegrow.



It is important to remember that land development applications involve decisions about how the land is used. The table below gives an example of some topics that relate to how land is used for two different kinds of land development applications, as well as some topics or concerns that don't relate to land use—and therefore are not regulated by the City.

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|---|---|
| <p>Topics that MAY RELATE to subdivision</p> | <p>Does the proposed subdivision(s) comply with Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw (minimum area, width and depth)</p> <p>Who do you represent (are you a property owner, speaking for a community association, etc?)</p> |
| <p>Topics that MAY RELATE to development permits</p> | <p>Alignment with approved City policy direction and compliance to Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are reasons for variance(s) or discretionary uses appropriate or not Observations about the current condition of the site <p>Suggestions for how your concerns might be addressed</p> <p>Who do you represent (are you a property owner, speaking for a community association, etc?)</p> |
| <p>Topics that DO NOT relate to land use</p> | <p>Type of tenure (own vs. rent)</p> <p>Property values</p> <p>Disputes between private property owners (such as property damage, removal of private trees and shared amenities)</p> |

Share your thoughts!

There are five main ways to share your thoughts about a land development application with city planners. Not every method will be available for every land development application.

1 Contact the planner directly (by phone, email or letter)

If you are writing a letter or an email, you must respond to the address on the public notice or notification letter before the indicated deadline.

2 Attend a public meeting or workshop

If a public meeting or workshop is being held to discuss the land development application, be sure to note the location and date on the public notice or notification letter.

3 Fill out an online survey

Applications that are larger in scale may involve an online survey. You can see what online surveys are currently active at edmonton.ca/surveys. You can also join the Edmonton Insight Community, an online panel of citizens who receive surveys on City issues at least twice a month. The Insight Community is a quick and easy way to influence City Council decisions and help make your City better. You can join at edmonton.ca/insightcommunity.

4 Speak directly with your Ward Councillor

You can connect with your City Councillor in a variety of ways, including by telephone, email and through the City website. Please visit edmonton.ca/council to find the best way to contact your Councillor.

5 Speak at a Council or Council Committee meeting

If you are interested in presenting your comments directly to City Council at a Public Hearing or at a Committee of Council (such as the Urban Planning Committee), please submit a request to speak to the City Clerk. You can do so online at cowebapps.edmonton.ca/forms/requesttospeak, by phone or in person before the meeting. You can find out when an item is being discussed at City Council or a Committee of Council by checking the agenda at edmonton.ca/city_government/city_organization/council-committee-meetings.aspx.

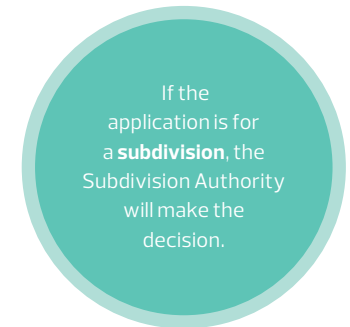


What happens next?

Your comments, thoughts and opinions will be considered in the evaluation of the land development application. Your feedback will be considered by the planner, along with feedback from associated workshops or online surveys and other comments from citizens, organizations and city departments. Zoning and any associated plans and guidelines for the area or type of development will also be considered, as well as the technical comments from other City departments and reviewing agencies (such as Transportation and EPCOR Water). City planners and City Council will review all factors when making a decision.



Sometimes city planners receive a lot of feedback, and sometimes there is very little. Often feedback can be contradictory: some people are in support, others are not. Edmontonians have many different opinions and viewpoints!



A **Development Officer** is a city planner who has been appointed as an Approving Authority to exercise development power on behalf of the City.

The Subdivision Authority is comprised of the Chief Subdivision Officer, the Chief Planner and the General Manager of Sustainable Development. The recommendations to the Subdivision Authority are made by planners and Subdivision Officers within the Planning Coordination team.

If the application is for a **change to the Zoning Bylaw, to rezone a property** or for a **new or amendment to a Policy or Area Plan**, city planners will make a recommendation to City Council based on the feedback they receive, best practices and planning documents to either support or not support an application. City Council makes the final decision at a Public Hearing.

What if I don't agree with the outcome?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a development permit or subdivision decision, you can contact the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) to learn whether or not you have the right to appeal.

The SDAB hears appeals from applicants who have been affected by a decision of the Development Authority, or from subdivision applicants, government departments or school boards who have been affected by a decision from the Subdivision Authority. The Board is appointed by City Council and consists of citizens living in the City of Edmonton.

The SDAB is an independent, quasi-judicial body that was created by the Municipal Government Act. After holding a hearing, the SDAB may confirm, revoke or vary the decision of the Development Authority or the Subdivision Authority.

Appeals to development permit decisions must be filed with the SDAB, either online or in person, within 21 days after the date on which the notice of the issuance of the permit was given.



To file an appeal in person:

Churchill Building
10019 103 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 0G9
T: 780 496 6079
E: sdab@edmonton.ca



To file an appeal online:

sdab.edmonton.ca
Under the Alberta Municipal Government Act (section 678), a citizen does not have a right to appeal subdivision decisions unless they are the applicant.

Glossary of terms

A **Land Development Application** is made to the City to change the regulations for how a particular area of land can be used or developed and may include one, or any combination of, a rezoning application, a land use plan amendment application or a road closure application. The change is usually initiated by the property owner or a developer.

A **Subdivision** is the process where a parcel of land is divided into two or more parcels in order to obtain separate legal titles for each parcel.

Rezoning is the process of changing the zone that applies to a specific area of land and requires approval through a City Council Public Hearing. Rezoning is required if you wish to develop your site in a manner that is not allowed by current zoning.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a city planning approach to build Edmonton into a more sustainable city, where more people walk, cycle, and use transit than they do today. TOD integrates transportation and land use by concentrating housing, shopping, and employment along walkable and bikeable streets located within a five-minute walk of a transit station.

A **Text Amendment** is an amendment to the regulations of the Zoning Bylaw and requires approval through a City Council Public hearing. Text amendments are not the same as a rezoning. They apply to the entire city instead of to one specific property. See edmonton.ca for more detail.

An **Appeal** is the review of a decision by a higher decision-making body.

Learn more about land development at edmonton.ca

Edmonton