



Annexation - Frequently Asked Questions

What is Annexation?

Annexation is a provincially legislated process of transferring land from one municipality to another. The [process](#) enables a municipality to expand its boundaries and acquire more land to accommodate future growth.

How does Annexation happen? Who decides?

Annexation is legislated by the Province through the [Municipal Government Act \(MGA\)](#). The process for annexation is as follows:

1. The municipality proposing the annexation must provide notice to the Municipal Government Board (MGB) and the municipality that it wants to annex land from.
2. Both Municipalities must meet, discuss the annexation proposal and negotiate in good faith.
3. A negotiation report is prepared and sent to the MGB.
4. If the annexation is a simple and uncontested application (with signed consents from the landowners and the responding municipality), the application is processed.
5. If the annexation is contested (there are no signed consents), the MGB will advertise for objections and anyone can submit objections or concerns.
6. If there are objections, and there is not general agreement and mediation attempts have failed, the MGB will conduct a public hearing(s).
7. After the hearing, the MGB will prepare a recommendation for consideration by the Minister
8. The Lieutenant Governor of Alberta will consider the Board's recommendation and approve, approve in part or refuse the annexation proposal.

How long will it be before a decision is made on the proposed annexation?

The annexation process, on average, can take two to five years to complete.

Where does Edmonton want to annex land?

The lands are in Leduc County and include about 12,050 hectares (30,000 acres) south of the City and west of the Queen Elizabeth II highway and about 3,900 hectares (9,635 acres) south of the City and east of the Queen Elizabeth II highway. More information on the location of the proposals can be found on the [Maps](#) page.



Why does Edmonton need to annex land?

We are running out of available land to develop for residential and industrial/commercial needs. Annexation helps the City to proactively plan for the addition of 1.2 million people who will come to Edmonton in the next 50 years. See The [Case for Annexation](#) for more information about growth.

Why does Edmonton need to annex lands south of City?

There are a number of factors that influence where the [City can grow](#).

These factors include:

- Already established urban municipalities such as St. Albert and Sherwood Park
- Areas under control of other levels of government such as Canadian Forces Base Namao and Enoch First Nations
- Areas that have large natural features such as wetlands
- Areas where there are existing industrial areas that could adversely impact another municipality's fiscal sustainability
- Areas where there are existing acreages, and
- Areas where there are a lot of oil and gas wells and pipelines that are expected to remain long term

Why can't Edmonton build on land it already has instead of expanding its borders?

The City's growth strategy is about building IN, UP, and OUT. This means that we are building "UP" by constructing new high rise condos and office towers and we are building "IN" by adding density in and around older neighbourhoods by encouraging infill development. Building "UP" and "IN" both help the City address its growth needs but these two strategies alone will not meet the demands of a growing population. We also need to build "OUT" to accommodate new industrial residential development that can't be accommodated within other areas of the City.



What are Edmonton's plans for the proposed annexation area?

As the need arises, the lands will be rezoned for various uses including: residential, industrial, commercial, institutional (for example, schools, police stations, hospitals), and parks and recreation areas.

Elements that will influence what development goes where will include:

- the airport plans and airport noise overlay
- conditions applied by the Province to the annexed land
- water body and sensitive area protection
- linkages with existing infrastructure
- parks and recreation areas
- existing and proposed employment and residential areas, and
- existing public transit and transportation corridors.

Any zoning and bylaw changes will require consultation with the public, citizens of the area, and discussions with adjacent municipalities.

Who is negotiating on behalf of each municipality?

Both the City of Edmonton and Leduc County have established negotiating committees that will meet to discuss the annexation proposal.

What is meant by “negotiating in good faith”?

Negotiating in good faith is the honest intent to negotiate without taking an unfair advantage, even when some legal technicality is not fulfilled. The intent is to achieve a “win-win” for each municipality and for landowners.



Farming

Why annex and develop good agricultural lands?

The Capital Region Board has developed a Growth Plan that helps to reduce consumption of farm land. The Growth Plan sets out certain areas that are targeted for development. This will help to preserve good farmland for as long as possible while also accommodating the growth of urban areas. [FRESH](#) is the City of Edmonton's policy on agriculture and urban food.

Can the land still be used for farming even if it is annexed?

In the near term, the current zoning (such as agricultural) will remain in effect until the landowner decides to rezone the land to comply with City policies. As the need arises, the lands will be rezoned for various uses including: residential, industrial, commercial, parks and recreation areas.

What are the rules about livestock?

Keeping livestock within urban boundaries will depend on the zoning of the land. If zoned agricultural, livestock is permitted subject to certain regulations (provincial and municipal). If the zoning changes to residential and the primary purpose of the community is no longer agricultural in nature, then consideration on how to address the livestock will take place at that time.

Can I still control pests on my farmland?

Farmers are allowed to control pests on their property under the Alberta Agricultural Pests Act and Regulation. If there is a need for the use of a gun on farmland for pest control, residents would be encouraged to let Edmonton Police Services know and provide the reason. Guns are regulated under the Criminal Code and in Edmonton under the Public Places Bylaw. Gun use must comply with the Criminal Code of Canada, and according to the City of Edmonton's bylaw, guns cannot be fired in any public place.



Assessment, Taxes and Finances

How will my taxes change?

Rules and rates for property assessment and taxation differ in some instances between the County and the City. It is quite common to provide special consideration to annexed property owners so their tax rates are not immediately impacted. The annexation negotiation teams will work out a transition plan for property taxes. For example, in Edmonton's last annexation in 1982, a farm building exemption was mandated and set to expire in 1986; however, the exemption continued until 2013 through support by Edmonton's Council and the Province. Edmonton is looking for amicable solutions for all parties involved. Please see [information](#) provided at the November 2013 Open Houses.

Edmonton International Airport

Why did Edmonton close their municipal airport?

When Edmontonians voted in 1995 to consolidate scheduled air service at the Edmonton International Airport, most cast their ballots believing that consolidation was the best way to support the long term viability of the region's airport and to maintain its status as an international airport. Edmonton recognizes that the Edmonton International Airport is a major economic and community asset for the region and the province. The transfer of flight traffic from the City Centre Airport to the Edmonton International Airport was meant to enhance the scale of operations from two regional airports competing for market share to one healthy international airport to serve northern and central Alberta.

As a result of the decision the EIA has successfully focused on financing and developing its services. The EIA is well on its way to achieve their target to have 10 million passengers by 2020, has a thriving business aviation service, and is currently Canada's fastest growing airport.

Will Edmonton gain a large property tax base if this annexation including the international airport is approved?

There is an existing tri-partite agreement governing the airport that directs revenues to the County of Leduc, the City of Leduc and the Federal Government. Discussions with all parties will need to take place to determine how the agreement might be affected.



How will the revenue from the Edmonton International Airport be divided between Leduc County, the City of Leduc and the City of Edmonton?

This is currently unknown. Any Edmonton International Airport revenue distribution agreement will be the result of an extensive negotiation process.

Will Edmonton support the proposed third runway?

There is an existing tri-partite agreement governing the airport that directs revenues to the County of Leduc, the City of Leduc and the Federal Government. Discussions with all parties will need to take place to determine how the agreement might be affected.

Service Delivery

How will agriculture services change?

The City recognizes that farmers within the annexation area have access to certain agriculture services provided by the Province and by Leduc County. As part of the negotiation process the City will work to ensure that those who wish to continue farming will continue to have access to similar agriculture services. The City is researching how it might best provide such services.

How will ambulance services change?

Ambulance services and general health care services will not change due to annexation since these services are not regulated by municipal governments.

How will fire protection services change?

The City of Edmonton offers many services to its residents, including full-time professional [fire protection services](#). The City will work out a transition plan for fire services into the annexation area and will, at minimum, maintain existing service levels.

How will garbage collection services change?

Waste management service will vary depending on the tax classification of your property. If your property is strictly residential (not farmland), you will receive [waste collection services](#) for a fee. If your property has a residence, but is classified as farmland, you can request to receive waste collection services, also for a fee. If your property is strictly farmland, with no residence, waste collection services will not be provided.



How will law enforcement services change?

Police services are provided by the [Edmonton Police Service \(EPS\)](#). The City will work out a transition plan for law enforcement services into the annexation area and will, at minimum, maintain existing service levels.

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How will roads and services change?

Roads will improve as the land is developed and improved infrastructure is installed. New development must be strategically managed so that taxpayers are not covering the expense of installing new infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, and roads) prior to land development. This would result in an unfair burden on taxpayers.

The policies of the City of Edmonton and Leduc County regarding snow clearance on rural roads are similar. Our aim will be to match or possibly exceed the level of service that County residents already enjoy.

How will schools change?

We have begun to talk to the school boards but more work is needed to fully understand the implications of annexation on school choice and commuting times. We know that questions about where children will go to school and how will they get there are important to you, and we are working with our school board counterparts to develop a plan for transition of educational services.

How will sewage, septic, sewer change?

City sewer services will not be provided until development occurs and the sewer is extended. If you do not live near development, you will not be expected to connect to the municipal system and can maintain your own septic fields or systems until the services become available in your area. You will not be assessed a fee for City water or sewer until you are hooked up to the City's systems. Note that the City has a standard municipal system and does not entertain a mix of systems to ensure efficiencies in the system provision and maintenance.



How will water change?

City water service will not be provided until development occurs and the sewer is extended. If you do not live near development, you will not be expected to connect to the municipal system and can maintain your own septic fields or systems until the services become available in your area. You will not be assessed a fee for City water or sewer until you are hooked up to the City's systems. Note that the City has a standard municipal system to ensure efficiencies in the system provision and maintenance.

Leduc County

How will Edmonton's proposed annexations affect Leduc County?

Edmonton is seeking a fair and equitable solution with Leduc County that will allow Edmonton the land it needs to grow while maintaining Leduc County's economic sustainability. The City of Edmonton and Leduc County, through negotiation discussions, will assess the degree and type of impact the annexation will have on the County. A negotiated settlement will reflect the impact assessment.

Why is Edmonton proposing to annex part of the Nisku business park and surrounding lands? Does this limit Nisku's long term growth potential?

With few exceptions, Edmonton is not proposing to annex developed land in the Nisku Business Park. Edmonton needs undeveloped land to accommodate future industrial development at urban densities and standards.

Leduc County would continue to administer development and redevelopment in the Nisku Business Park on lands extending east from the Queen Elizabeth II highway as well as other industrial areas in other parts of the County. Development of urban serviced industrial properties west of the Queen Elizabeth II administered by Edmonton will complement the Nisku Business Park and provide new opportunity and resilience to the regional economy.