Introduction

Drainage Bylaw 18093 came into effect on January 1, 2018, replacing Drainage Bylaw 16200. This Bylaw requires that all land that is zoned for Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family Residential, and Urban Services be graded in accordance with an Approved Lot Grading Plan.

Definition

Lot grading for Commercial and Multi-family properties is the shaping or sloping of the land to direct surface drainage away from buildings and to control it within the property in a manner that does not impact adjacent properties and City right-of-ways.

Purpose

The purpose of lot grading is to provide proper drainage away from buildings for the benefit of property owners.

The purpose of Drainage Bylaw 18093 is to regulate drainage on private and public land.
Lot Grading Plan

A Lot Grading Plan has been part of the approval process for commercial and multi-family properties since 1993. A plan is required for all new developments and is approved by the City of Edmonton. A Lot Grading Plan specifies design elevations, surface gradients, swale locations, and other drainage information required for lot grading.

A Lot Grading Plan establishes the grading relationship between adjacent properties and its approval is an effective basis for the control of surface drainage.
Compliance with Encumbrances

Property owners must comply with the terms and conditions of any restrictive covenant, easement agreement, utility right-of-way, or any other document that is registered on the certificate of title for their property. With regard to lot grading, these encumbrances are intended to protect ravines, natural areas, structures, ditches, swales, overflow areas, or other drainage features like Stormwater Management Lakes. Such encumbrances are usually in the form of Right-of-Ways, Easements, and Restrictive Covenants; these legal instruments can be obtained from a licensed registry agent. Any and all such encumbrances should be checked prior to planting, grading, or building in these locations.

NOTE: The owner of a premises shall not install, or permit to be installed, any water retention structure or irrigation system on any slope unless the installation has been approved by the City Manager (Sec 12, Bylaw 18093).

Lot Grading Inspection Fee

A lot grading inspection fee will be assessed for Commercial and Multi-Family Residential land use. Current inspection fees are found on the Lot Grading website and are outlined in Drainage Bylaw 18093.

Documentation

- Drainage Bylaw 18093
- Alberta Building Code
- City of Edmonton Design and Construction Standards Manual
LOT GRADING PLANNING GUIDELINES
Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Properties

The owner of a premises shall ensure that a lot grading plan for the premises is approved by the City Manager prior to the construction of any buildings, additions to buildings, or alterations of surface drainage on the premises.

Lot Grading Plan Requirements:

- A scale drawing of the property in metric units, designed and certified by a professional acceptable to the City Manager (i.e. Professional Engineer, Registered Architect, or Professional Technologist)
- Existing surface elevations, contours, and surface grades of the property based on geodetic datum
- Proposed geodetic surface elevations at the property corners and at intervals around the perimeter of the property
- Proposed geodetic surface elevations adjacent to the foundation walls or concrete slab-on-grade for proposed buildings
- Proposed direction of surface drainage flow, indicated by arrows
- Proposed locations and gradients of swales
- Cross-section details of proposed swales
- Proposed surface conditions (i.e. sod, asphalt, concrete, gravel, etc.)
- Provisions for accommodating overland flows from adjacent undeveloped lands
- Private storm drainage system demonstrating compliance with the Drainage Bylaw 18093, including stormwater management locations and depths
- Information referring to Geotechnical Reports produced by a Geotechnical Engineer when unusual or special requirements are needed
- Property Information: Legal description, subdivision or neighbourhood, property address or road names, and north arrow
- Project Information: Project Name, applicant information, development boundary, revision box, legend, and notes
- Space near the bottom right hand corner of the plan for the Approval Stamp
- Once a proposed Lot Grading Plan has been reviewed, the applicant will be notified if the plan is approved or if revisions are required. If revisions are to be made, a list will be sent to the applicant to address the comments and to submit a revised Lot Grading Plan for further review.
- Approved Lot Grading Plans are stamped and signed by the City of Edmonton and returned to the applicant. This approved plan then becomes the Lot Grading Plan for the site.
- If revisions to the approved Lot Grading Plan are required, then a revised drawing (red-line revision) must be sent to the City of Edmonton along with the written consent of any affected property owners for review and approval. An approved revised Lot Grading Plan will supersede the previously approved Lot Grading Plan.
LOT GRADING GUIDELINES

LOT GRADING
APPROVAL PROCEDURE

Grading Approval Process

Within 18 months of the issuance of the building permit, the development should be graded to conform to the approved Lot Grading Plan. The following steps are required to obtain Final Grade Approval:

1. The developer/applicant has a Lot Grading Certificate prepared by a professional acceptable to the City Manager. As-built information must be presented on the approved Lot Grading Plan.

2. The Lot Grading Certificate is submitted to the City of Edmonton for approval. The applicant must provide information for their preferred method of contact (fax, email, or mail) to receive a Lot Grading Inspection Report.

3. A Lot Grading Inspector will conduct a site inspection to verify that the lot is graded in accordance with the approved Lot Grading Plan and Drainage Bylaw 18093. The inspection is usually done within 5 working days from receipt of the certificate, depending on workload and weather conditions.

4. The applicant will receive an Inspection Report indicating whether the site grading has Passed (approved) or Failed (deficiencies exist).

5. The applicant must correct any deficiencies within 60 days and call 311 to request a reinspection from the City of Edmonton. If resubmission of a Lot Grading Certificate is indicated, reinspection cannot occur until receipt of the new Lot Grading Certificate.

6. If the Inspection Report indicates a failure, it will identify the deficiencies and their locations. Please note, deficiency items are labeled “left,” “right,” “front,” and “back.” The “front” of a lot is typically determined when facing the property from the City street. In the case of a corner lot, the front property line is the shortest of the two that abut the City street.

7. The applicant will be notified when the site grading is approved. This approval is based on the site conditions observed at the time of the lot grading inspection.

Final Grading in progress at a condominium / multi-family site
LOT GRADING REQUIREMENTS

Site Servicing

As per Drainage Bylaw 18093 and EPCOR Drainage Services Bylaw 18100, all commercial and multi-family properties must provide private drainage systems for stormwater and subsurface water. Surface drainage must be controlled within the property.

Elevation Tolerance at Final Grade

+ Acceptable as-built tolerances from the approved grades (provided minimum slopes are achieved):

+ **Between 0 cm and 10 cm below final grade for topsoil (black dirt).** Note: “0” is at approved design grade.
  Example: Design Grade 682.25 m, Existing Grade 682.20 m = 5 cm below design grade.

+ **Between 10 cm below and 10 cm above final grade for finished landscaping (sod or concrete).**
  Example: Design Grade 682.25 m, Existing Grade 682.30 m = 5 cm above design grade.

NOTE: Where decorative ground covers are used (rock, wood chips, etc.) all elevation measurements must be taken from the surface underlying the decorative material.

+ The Lot Grading Inspector has the discretion to accept elevations that are not within tolerance when the following occurs:

+ The developer has provided adequate slope to protect the buildings and the on-site surface drainage and swales meet the minimum slope requirement to convey surface drainage to the on-site catchment system.

+ The property is graded to match adjacent properties and it appears that on-site surface drainage complies with the requirements of Drainage Bylaw 18093.
Minimum Grade from Foundation Walls and Concrete Slab-on-Grade Buildings

A sloped surface is required to effectively drain water away from all foundation walls and concrete slab-on-grade buildings. This includes areas underneath steps and decks (see the Lot Grading Detail Drawings for more information).

- Minimum grade requirements:
  - 10% for the first 2 m – Minimum 20 cm drop for final grade on soft landscaping.
  - 5% for the first 2 m (slab-on-grade) – Minimum 15 cm drop for final grade on soft landscaping.
  - 0.75% for concrete, asphalt, or other impervious surface treatment provided a minimum 15 cm drop occurs between a building and an on-site drainage swale.
LOT GRADING REQUIREMENTS (CONT.)

Drainage Swales

**Swale:** a shallow, and often wet, tract of land that is sloped to convey surface drainage toward the catchment facilities on the site.

Swales are located between or around buildings and are graded to intercept and convey surface drainage to the on-site stormwater management and catchment system. See the Lot Grading Detail Drawings.

- Minimum swale slope requirements:
  - 1.5% for a grass drainage swale
  - 0.75% for a concrete drainage swale
LOT GRADING REQUIREMENTS (CONT.)

Grass swale and catch basin at an apartment site

Typical grading of a commercial parking lot with a catch basin

Drainage into a catch basin during a storm

Apartment parking lot with a catch basin
Downspouts

Downspouts convey roof water to the on-site storm sewer service by direct connection or overland via on-site drainage swales. If the downspout is discharging to the ground, then the downspout must have an elbow and a hinged extension or concrete splash pad. The downspout elbows should be directed away from the foundation walls towards the drainage swales. Downspout extensions or splash pads must not project past property lines.
Foundation Drainage

The sump pump is part of a building’s foundation drainage system and it has been a requirement since 1988. The sump pump discharges subsurface water from the weeping tile to the on-site storm sewer system by a direct connection.

Splash Pads

Splash pads convey roof water away from foundation walls and concrete slab-on-grade buildings. They minimize soil erosion and recycling of water through the foundation drainage system. The recommended standard concrete splash pad is 30 cm x 107 cm. Please refer to the splash pad detail below.

Where direct connections to the storm sewer are not utilized, splash pads may be placed underneath downspouts draining onto soft landscaping (sod, topsoil, and/or gravel).
Lot Grading Certificate (As-Built Plan) Requirements

Lot Grading Certificates are required for grade approvals for all commercial, multi-family, and industrial developments and must follow these guidelines:

- Certification by a Professional acceptable to the City Manager (i.e. an Alberta Land Surveyor or a Professional Engineer). **NOTE:** any grading information relative to a legal boundary must be acquired and certified under the supervision and authority of an Alberta Land Surveyor.

- As-built elevations **must be** presented on the approved Lot Grading Plan.

- Existing geodetic surface elevations **at the same locations** as the design elevations on the approved Lot Grading Plan and any **alterations** to the proposed surface slopes and elevations such as a relocated high point.

- Existing surface elevations adjacent to the foundation walls and/or top of concrete slab on grade for each building.

- As-built provisions for accommodating overland flows from adjacent undeveloped lands.

- Private storm drainage system demonstrating compliance with the EPCOR Drainage Services Bylaw 18100.

- Property address, legal description, road names, and applicant contact information.

- Reference to the Alberta Survey Control Monuments that were used to obtain as-built elevations.

Example of an Approved Lot Grading Plan for a multi-family site

Example of an As-built Plan displayed on the approved Lot Grading Plan for a multi-family site
Lot Grading Maintenance

After Final Grade Approval has been issued, it becomes the owner’s responsibility to maintain the surface grades to the standards established at the time of Final Grade Approval in perpetuity. The City of Edmonton may, at any time, require maintenance on the surface grading if alterations or settlements result in surface drainage problems. This requirement is enforceable under the provisions of the Drainage Bylaw 18093.

Enforcement

Reports or Notices to Comply will be utilized to notify property owners of non-compliant grading and impending enforcement. Subsequently, bylaw penalties may then be imposed for those properties where grading does not comply with Drainage Bylaw 18093 and the Lot Grading Guidelines by the deadline date specified in a non-compliance notice.

In consideration of enforcing the bylaw, the City takes into account the damaging impact on properties related to non-compliant surface drainage.

The City does not provide any funding for repairing surface grading.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Lot Grading Details and Drawings

+ “Commercial - Lot Types A & B”
  Final Grade Stage

+ “Multi-Family - Lot Types A, B, C, D, F & W”
  After Final Grade Stage

Pamphlet Series

+ “Lot Grading Inspections”
  Residential Properties

+ “Lot Grading Inspections”
  Final Grade Stage

+ “Lot Grading Maintenance”
  After Final Grade Stage

CONTACT INFORMATION

Telephone Numbers

Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development, Development and Zoning Services, Lot Grading

780-496-5576 - Lot Grading - 8:00am - 4:30pm, Monday to Friday

780-496-2865 - Lot Grading Fax

311 - General Inquiries - 24 Hours
  - Reinspection Requests
  - Drainage and Sewer Trouble
    (EPCOR will respond)

Internet Addresses

Commercial & Multi-Family Residential:
https://www.edmonton.ca/business_economy/lot-grading-commercial.aspx

Low-Density Residential:
www.edmonton.ca/lotgrading

Email Address

lot.grading@edmonton.ca

EPCOR

EPCOR Water and Sewer Servicing Information
8:00am - 4:30pm Monday to Friday
780-496-5444
wass.drainage@epcor.com

EPCOR Flood Prevention Home Check-up Program
780-944-7777
floodprevention@epcor.com

Address

City of Edmonton
Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
Development and Zoning Services
Lot Grading

Edmonton Service Centre
2nd Floor, Edmonton Tower
10111 104 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0J4

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