

District Planning Circulation #1 What We're Hearing Report

Introduction

This first phase of the District Planning project is about gathering input on testing out the structure, organization and look of the District General Policy and sample district plans. This *Circulation #1 What We're Hearing Report* provides a summary of the input received from staff and a targeted group of external stakeholders from April 2021. While not every suggestion was possible, we strove to revise the drafts as best we could to reflect the feedback received. This report highlights changes we have made, items we will continue to work on, common themes heard and next steps. Following Circulation #2, this first phase of the project identified as “prototype development” will be completed. The project will shift to the next phase to prepare the remaining plans ahead of engagement in 2022.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, expertise and input as part of the District Planning project so far!

Background

Districts are diverse, accessible collections of neighbourhoods that contain most of the services and amenities Edmontonians rely on. The District Planning project responds to the feedback heard from *The City Plan's* engagement to foster a "Community of Communities". The first iteration of District Planning, to be brought to Council in 2022, will be to establish the District General Policy and 15 district plans. They will incorporate policies from existing strategies and approved plans (i.e. keeping what's aligned with *The City Plan*) and guide growth to 1.25 million people. Once district plans are established, future planning and policy work will update and add to them over time.

Circulation #1 Recap

The purpose of the first circulation was to introduce the District Planning project to staff and a targeted group of external stakeholders. It was an opportunity to gather initial input on the first drafts of the District General Policy and two sample plans—the 118 Avenue District Plan and Mill Woods and Meadows District Plan—to help refine the structure, organization and content.

In early April, the project team hosted information sessions and shared the first drafts (week of April 5th). Engagement Sessions were then hosted to hear initial reactions and answer any questions (week of April 12th). Staff and stakeholders were then invited to provide additional feedback until the end of April.

What We Have Changed

This section highlights changes or major edits made based on the input received:

District General Policy

- Added a Land Acknowledgement to formally acknowledge Treaty 6 territory as the ancestral homeland and territories of the Metis Nation of Alberta Region 4, Cree, Dene, Sauleaux, Stoney and Blackfoot Nations and Indigenous peoples. We do this both out of respect and honour of their histories and enduring relationship to these lands, and to help ground our collective work to create a community of communities now and in the future.
- Included more on *The City Plan's* 15-minute districts and its Big City Move: a "Community of Communities" to set the context for the policies in the introduction.
- Added more on how to use the District General Policy and district plans. This will help clarify what to expect regarding development outcomes in the districts.
- Added a brief paragraph under all topic headings, to provide a summary of that section's policy intentions or description of the policy area.
- Reviewed all policies and adjusted for clarity and readability for all audiences.

Glossary

- Added a glossary to help define key terms in the District General Policy, district plans and their maps. Mapping symbology will also be shown in the glossary to help with map and policy interpretation.

118 Avenue District Plan and Mill Woods and Meadows District Plan

- Updated introductions to set the overall context to ensure connection to the District General Policy and *The City Plan*.
- Listed the neighbourhoods within the district boundary in the District Context section.
- Defined the types of projects, the activation categories and timeframes (for activation), and references to any Priority Growth Areas in the Growth Activation section.

District Plan Maps

- Added a brief introduction to outline the content and purpose of each map.
- Updated the line types and colours to improve readability.
- Added references into the text to help with reading and navigating the documents.

- Updated the Direction to 1.25 Million Map to respond to feedback, clarifying that this is intended to highlight the major expected changes in the district out to 1.25 million (additional detail moved to other maps). This map now includes enhanced call-out boxes to emphasize aspirations in areas expected for major changes.
- Errors or omissions in content that were noted have been corrected where possible at this stage. Additional issues have been identified and are being reviewed with dataset holders.

What We Will Continue to Work On

This section highlights common topics or themes we are still reviewing or need additional time to consider based on your input. The most common themes are summarized in the subheadings below. Beneath each subheading, we've included a brief response to help provide clarification.

Relationship to The City Plan, existing plans-in-effect and other guiding documents

- The District General Policy and district plans are an extension of *The City Plan*. Where *The City Plan* provides the overall vision and directions for Edmonton, the district plan will provide the details.
- The District General Policy contains city-wide policy direction applicable to places and features found in all districts while the 15 district plans include district specific context, maps, additional policy direction(s) and growth activation projects.
- All plans-in-effect will be reviewed as part of the establishment of individual district plans. This includes ASPs and NSPs in actively developing areas, as well as ARPs in infill areas. Generally, plans that provide specific guidance and are in alignment with *The City Plan* are likely to be retained. District plans will recognize these plans and defer to their specific direction.

Relationship to other City processes or projects

- District Planning is aligned with concurrent projects contributing to *The City Plan's* implementation:
 - The City Planning Framework's establishment of a monitoring and review process will be applicable to all district plans.
 - The Growth Management Framework's outcomes will eventually inform the Growth Activation Table and Growth Activation Map in each district plan.
 - District plans will serve as that policy link between *The City Plan* and Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw. District Planning is occurring alongside a comprehensive renewal of the zoning bylaw to align policy and regulations to *The City Plan*.
- We recognize that District Plans should be available on a digital, web-based interface. While it is currently out of scope we are working with our internal partners to prepare District Planning for 'digital implementation'.

Amending District Plans

- District plans will be amended by Administration from time to time to reflect system or land use updates, such as new historical sites, significant new infrastructure priorities, the repeal of statutory plans or to provide additional policy direction.
- Where changes are required to accommodate a land development application, the applicant will be required to prepare the necessary plan amendment documentation in support of the application. The amendment process is anticipated to follow the existing process currently in place.
- We will work with City Planning Framework's process to ensure the district plans are kept up-to-date.
- We will continue to gather input on the amendment process as part of the overall communication on the use of district plans.
- We will be testing a number of hypothetical Land Development Applications against the sample district plans, in part to ensure that the type of developments we want to see does not trigger amendments.

Infrastructure, Growth Activation and Growth Management

- The City is currently exploring how to advance growth in priority areas based on *The City Plan*. District Planning will support this work by clarifying *where* growth should occur and to what scale. The Growth Management Framework will determine *how* the City supports and activates growth, through a combination of infrastructure investment, incentives and policy.
- Information on growth priorities and activation approaches within district plans will be updated based on work done as part of the Growth Management Framework. In advance of that, the sample district plans include capital projects drawn from existing sources.

Measures

- Renamed from 'District Measures' to 'District Snapshot', this subsection reflects the state of the district at the time of plan approval. It will indicate where the district is starting from and how it is performing relative to other districts and *The City Plan's* targets and Big City Moves.
- Further consideration will be given to what measures should be included as part of the District Snapshot subsection and alignment with overall monitoring of *The City Plan's* targets.

Maps

- We'll make adjustments to the maps based on feedback received from Circulation #2.

- We recognize that more elements or features exist within a district (e.g. skateparks, splash parks) than currently shown. The inclusion of elements is partly dependent on sources of data as well as striking the balance of what to highlight within a district.
- Future iterations of district plans (beyond 2022), combined with further engagement, may identify more features to include as part of the District Context and/or the Heritage and Culture maps, and could contemplate additional maps if required.

Next Steps

The second circulation is now underway. The second draft of the District General Policy and the 118 Avenue, Mill Woods and Meadows and first draft of Ellersie district plans are available. Staff and stakeholders can submit feedback up to July 9, 2021. Following Circulation #2, this first phase of the project identified as “prototype development” will be completed. The project will shift to the next phase and to prepare remaining plans and engagement in 2022.

We will introduce District Planning to the general public through a series of Information Sessions over the coming weeks for residents and community members. This will include information about what districts are, what district plans will be, how they connect to *The City Plan* and how they respond to what was heard during *The City Plan's* Engagement.

From August 1 to October 27, 2021, there will be limited communications and engagement during Edmonton’s municipal election period. During this time, the remaining 12 district plans will be prepared and incorporate the feedback received on both the District General Policy and sample district plans. Drafts of these will be available for review beginning in early 2022. Communities, residents, organizations and developers will all be invited to provide input to shape district plans.

If you have any questions or need additional information you can contact us at

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