

Procedure

Adopting and Amending Area Structure Plans & Neighbourhood Structure Plans

About This Procedure

1. This procedure guides both applicants and Administration through the application process for Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Neighbourhood Structure Plans (NSPs) that are authorized by City Council after May 4, 2025, as well as amendments to those plans.
2. This procedure constitutes one part of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Neighbourhood Structure Plans (NSPs). The other part of the TOR is a template package that standardizes the text, maps, and statistics in ASPs and NSPs. Together, these two parts of the TOR ensure that ASPs and NSPs align with the City's strategic goals and statutory plans and meet obligations under the Municipal Government Act when they are presented to Council for approval.
3. This procedure will be updated periodically by City Administration.

Template Requirement for New Plans

1. New plans must be drafted using an editable ASP or NSP Template Package that is given to applicants at the beginning of the plan creation process. A Template Package includes:
 - a. A Google Doc drafting template that is formatted to align with the City of Edmonton's Visual Guidelines. It contains universal mandatory content, placeholders for plan-specific content, and drafting instructions.
 - i. Text shown in black is universal mandatory content that is required in all new plans. This content must remain as written in the drafting template, and may only be removed if it does not apply to the plan area.
 - ii. Placeholders for plan-specific content are shown in **blue text**. Once drafting is complete, this text is to be coloured black.
 - iii. Instructions for drafting the plan-specific content are shown in **pink highlighted text**. Once drafting is complete, the instructions are to be deleted.
 - b. AutoCAD map templates to ensure consistency across all maps in the ASP or NSP.
 - c. A spreadsheet statistics template that contains the standardized formatting, formulas and land use designations that align with the drafting template and AutoCAD map template.

Policy Writing Standards

1. All policies must be evaluated for regulatory feasibility and drafted according to the following criteria:

- a. Implementation Check: Verify that a rezoning planner, subdivision planner, or technical agency can enforce the policy using existing regulatory tools. If it is unclear how they would implement it, either provide clarity in the policy or remove the policy.
- b. Drafting Requirements: Policies passing the implementation check must be clear and enforceable, containing the following elements:
 - i. Direction: Use "must" for mandatory outcomes. Use "may" only when granting discretion.
 - ii. Decision Criteria: Should be included whenever "may" is used, or when relying on qualitative terms like "appropriate" or "compatible".
 - iii. Implementation Mechanism: Include when clarification is needed about who applies the policy or at what stages of development it applies.
 - iv. Regulated Subject: Explicitly identify what the policy applies to, using recognized terms from sources such as District Plans, the Zoning Bylaw, or the Terms of Reference templates.
 - v. Rationale: Include optionally, and only if it clarifies intent; do not repeat the core direction.

New Plan Creation Process

- 1. Authorization to initiate a new plan
 - a. Initial inquiry: As per The City Plan, City Council authorization is required for all new statutory plans. The applicant contacts Administration to discuss the feasibility of advancing a plan authorization request to City Council.
 - b. Collaborative vision session (optional): The applicant and Administration meet to identify constraints and opportunities within the plan area. This is an optional step at Administration's discretion. For lands south of 41 Avenue SW, a District-level collaborative visioning process will be required before a new ASP is brought forward to City Council for authorization.
 - c. Authorization request letter: The applicant submits a letter to Administration formally requesting Council authorization to initiate a new ASP or NSP. The letter must include a brief description of the development vision. Administration may ask for additional information from the applicant as necessary to inform the Administration report.
 - i. For lands that are intended for primarily industrial development, an NSP, not an ASP, should be drafted to provide the appropriate level of planning detail for the area.
 - d. Administration report: Administration prepares a report for City Council that must include:
 - i. A recommendation for City Council to either support or not support the applicant's request for authorization

ii. Growth management analysis:

- An estimated percentage of developed land in surrounding neighbourhoods.
- The general direction and staging of development and services at the ASP level.
- The location of key infrastructure connections such as major roads and sanitary trunks.
- Permit or land development application trends in the surrounding area.
- For NSPs only, previously estimated lifecycle costs such as brief highlights from a pre-existing ASP-level Integrated Infrastructure Management Plan (IIMP).

- e. City Council authorization: Administration presents the applicant's authorization request letter and Administration's report to Urban Planning Committee (UPC). UPC in turn provides a recommendation to City Council, and Council must vote on the recommendation to authorize the new plan before plan preparation can start.

2. Plan Preparation

- a. Pre-application meeting: The applicant presents a preliminary land use concept for the plan area based on their interpreted higher level plan vision and initial analysis of existing policies as well as constraints and opportunities in the area.
- i. Administration provides feedback and determines which technical studies must be submitted with the draft plan. Any of the studies listed in the "Supporting Technical Studies" section of this procedure may be required.
- ii. Administration will provide access to the applicable Template Package for the applicant to begin drafting the plan. The draft plan must be submitted using the Google Doc provided in the Template Package.
- b. Applicant public engagement: The applicant engages with affected residents, landowners, and Indigenous groups, to request input on their vision for the new plan and identifies participating and non-participating landowners.
- c. Drafting: The applicant drafts initial versions of the plan, technical studies, and any necessary amendments to higher level statutory plans, such as District Plans.
- d. Document confirmation: The applicant submits a draft version of the plan, technical studies, maps and pre-application public consultation summary to Administration. The Administration will accept the application once all required documents have been received.

3. Plan Review and Refinement

- a. Initial review: Administration reviews and analyses initial versions of the plan and technical studies and provides comments to the applicants. A GBA+ lens is applied through the review of the NSP document and technical studies.
 - b. City led public engagement: Administration engages with affected residents, landowners, and Indigenous groups, to request feedback on the initial draft of the plan. This feedback may be used to inform Administration's review comments to the applicant. A GBA+ lens is applied through public engagement.
 - c. Review response: The applicant responds to review comments provided by Administration and updates and resubmits the complete package including the revised draft plan and required updated technical studies.
 - d. Iterative reviews and responses: The draft plan and technical studies are reviewed by Administration and updated by the applicant over repeated iterations until Administration's comments are resolved, the draft plan is finalized, and all technical studies are accepted.
4. Plan Completion
- a. Integrated Infrastructure Management Plan (IIMP): Administration prepares an analysis of the future cost implications and revenue potential of development in the new plan area.
 - b. Public Hearing preparation: Administration schedules and advertises the Public Hearing date and prepares a report which includes a recommendation for City Council to either support or not support the new plan.
 - c. Council decision: Administration presents the new plan to City Council at a Public Hearing. City Council must vote to adopt the new plan for it to come into effect, which will facilitate subsequent stages of development such as rezoning and subdivision to occur.

Plan Amendment Process

1. Amendment Preparation
- a. Pre-application meeting (optional): The applicant presents their proposed amendment to the plan. Administration provides feedback and determines which technical studies must be submitted with the amendment. The pre-application meeting is an optional step at the applicant's discretion, but is highly recommended. Benefits include a reduced number of review cycles, fewer required revisions, and the potential for quicker plan approval.
 - b. Application submission: The applicant requests an up-to-date version of the plan's Template Package and submits the proposed amendments and supporting documentation.
 - i. The Template Package is required to clearly communicate proposed changes to the plan, and allow for an efficient review by Administration. The Template Package for an amendment consists of the proposed AutoCAD map files, a comparison table

showing proposed text changes, and a statistics calculator populated with proposed land uses.

- ii. Any of the studies listed in the “Supporting Technical Studies” section of this procedure may be required, as a complete package, prior to circulation.
 - c. Current Plan Consolidation: Administration provides the applicant with a shareable link to the most recent plan consolidation, and in collaboration with the applicant marks-up the Google Doc with the proposed amendments. The Google Doc is used as the reference point for the remainder of the application process.
2. Amendment Review and Refinement
 - a. Iterative reviews and responses: The draft amendment and technical studies are reviewed by Administration and updated by the applicant over repeated iterations of complete packages until:
 - i. Administration’s comments are resolved, the draft amendment is finalized, and technical studies are accepted, or
 - ii. Administration’s comments are unresolved or technical studies are not accepted, but the applicant wishes to move the application forward to Council with a recommendation of non-support from Administration.
3. Amendment Completion
 - a. Public Hearing preparation: Administration schedules and advertises the Public Hearing date and prepares a report which includes a recommendation for City Council to either support or not support the plan amendment.
 - b. City Council decision: Administration presents the plan amendment to City Council at a Public Hearing. City Council must vote to adopt the amendment for it to come into effect.

Land Use Designation Hierarchy

1. The land use designations in the table below must be used for all new ASPs and NSPs, and their amendments, to align with the land use and policy direction provided by District Plans.
2. If a new ASP or NSP is proposing land uses that are not aligned with the District Plan as per the table below, the District Plan must be amended to ensure alignment across all statutory plans.

Land Use Designation Hierarchy			
District Plan Map 4 Land Use Designation	ASP Map 1 Land Use Designation	NSP Map 1 Land Use Designation	NSP Land Use Designation Description
Urban Mix	Residential	Existing Rural Residential	Existing rural or country residential housing that is intended to redevelop over time. Planned density of 0 du/nrha until non-Rural Residential land uses are applied to the area.

		Small Scale Residential	Single detached and semi-detached housing, with row housing also allowed, but not required. Planned density of 30 du/nrha.
		Row Housing	Row housing up to 4 storeys in height. Planned density of 50 du/nrha.
		Low Rise Residential	Multi-unit housing that is 3 to 4 storeys in height, with commercial uses also allowed, but not required, at ground level. Planned density of 110 du/nrha. Row housing is not allowed unless the planned density can be demonstrated at the subdivision stage or, if demonstration at subdivision is not feasible, at the development permit stage.
		Mid Rise Residential	Multi-unit housing that is 5 to 8 storeys in height, with commercial uses also allowed, but not required, at ground level. Planned density of 170 du/nrha.
		High Rise Residential	Multi-unit housing in buildings that are 9 storeys in height or taller. Planned density will be determined on a case by case basis.
	Mixed Use	High Rise Mixed Use	A mix of housing and commercial uses in buildings that are 9 storeys in height or taller. Planned density will be determined on a case by case basis.
		Mid Rise Mixed Use	A mix of housing and commercial uses in buildings that are 5 to 8 storeys in height. Planned density of 85 du/nrha.
		Low Rise Mixed Use	A mix of housing and commercial uses in buildings that are 3 to 4 storeys in height. Planned density of 55 du/nrha.
	Commercial	Neighbourhood Commercial	Small scale commercial uses that serve the daily needs of nearby residents.
		General Commercial	A variety of commercial uses that serve the needs of nearby residents and beyond.
	Commercial/ Industrial Employment	Business Commercial	A variety of commercial and limited light industrial uses that require large sites or a location with good visibility from a street.
		Business Employment	Light industrial uses and a variety of small commercial businesses with a higher standard of design that carry out their operations in a manner where no nuisance is created or apparent outside an enclosed building.
		Medium Industrial	Light to medium industrial uses that may carry out a portion of their operation outdoors or require outdoor storage areas, with limited supporting commercial businesses.
		Heavy Industrial	Heavy industrial uses that may have the potential to create nuisance conditions that extend beyond the boundaries of the site.

Institutional Employment	Institutional	Institutional	Employment uses of a primarily institutional nature that provide both employment and services. Examples include hospitals, post-secondary institutions, and major government buildings.
North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System	North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System	North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System	Land that is guided by the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan and the Ribbon of Green strategic plan.
Open Space - Current OR Planned Municipal Park	Open Space	Open Space	All open space and park categories as shown in Open Space & Natural Areas (Map 3) of the NSP.
	Urban Facilities	Urban Facilities	Larger facilities that provide institutional services, community services, or recreational activities. Examples include emergency services, cemeteries, private schools and religious assemblies.
	Local Utility	Local Utility	Municipal services including stormwater ponds, lift stations, district energy, and distribution networks.
	Regional Utility	Regional Utility	Infrastructure systems including high pressure oil/gas pipelines, high voltage overhead transmission lines, power substations, heavy rail lines, and telecommunication towers.
Any	Any	Street Oriented	An overlay that may be applied on top of any of the above designations to indicate where development must take its vehicle access from an alley. When applied to residential areas, the planned density is that of the underlying residential land use designation.

Supporting Technical Studies

- Administration may require any of the technical studies, including but not limited to, those listed in the table below, for an application to adopt or amend an ASP or NSP. The option to waive the requirement for any specific study remains at Administration's discretion.

Technical Study
Commercial Needs Assessment
Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA)
Shadow Plan
Noise Attenuation Study
Parkland Impact Assessment (PIA)
Community Knowledge Campus Needs Assessment (CKCNA)

Ecological Network Report (ENR) – Phase I (ASP), Phase II (NSP)
Top-of-Bank Walk/Study
Flood Risk Study
Waterbody Crown Ownership Assessment and Legal Survey
Strategic Assessment (SA) for outfalls and river crossings
Park Size Assessment
Geotechnical Investigation Reports
Hydro-Geotechnical Impact Assessment Reports
Geotechnical Slope Stability Assessment Reports
Grading Plan
Area Master Plan (AMP)
Neighbourhood Design Report (NDR)
Water Planning Report (WPR)
Environmental Overview (EO)
Site-Confirmed Oil and Gas Well Coordinates
Risk Assessment
Provincial sign-off for Historic Resource Overview (HRO) or Historic Resource Impact Assessment (HRIA)