



DID YOU KNOW: ZONING BYLAW RENEWAL INITIATIVE

October 2023

Did you know... residents will be informed and engaged if there is a rezoning application in their neighborhood.

Zoning describes the type of development allowed on a property, but sometimes a property owner might want to build something that the current zone doesn't allow. In order to do so, the property owner would need to apply to the City for a rezoning.

The municipality has a robust [rezoning process](#) that includes a technical review, notification of residents who live within 60 metres of the property, engagement with residents and a public hearing. On average, a rezoning can take between 20 to 30 weeks to complete, depending on the application's complexity.

The proposed new Zoning Bylaw **does not propose to change** the rezoning process. Edmontonians will still be directly notified anytime their feedback will impact a development or if there is a rezoning application—same as it is now.

When it comes to development permits, the proposed new Zoning Bylaw introduces a new requirement to publish all permit decisions on a public webpage. It also maintains the requirement for placing a development permit notification sign on a property within 14 days of an issued development permit for development (including for demolition). All information on current development and planning applications in the city is available at edmonton.ca/myneighbourhood.

Did you know... zoning plays a role in supporting more housing options across Edmonton.

Canada is facing a housing crisis. Housing affordability is tied to a number of factors, many of which are beyond the City's control. However, zoning is one of the factors the City does have control over that can help create the conditions that enable housing choice, housing supply and affordability.

The proposed new Zoning Bylaw will support more housing types everywhere, increasing the overall supply of homes. Not all housing will be single-detached homes because not everyone can afford or has a desire to own a single-detached home. The increase in supply and the diverse amount of options will support more people finding homes within their means, in the neighbourhood they want.

Still, housing affordability challenges cannot be addressed by zoning alone. Edmonton must work with its city-building partners and all levels of government to meet the growing housing need and ensure Edmonton remains one of the most affordable cities to live in Canada. Read more about how the proposed new Zoning Bylaw will support more housing in Edmonton [here](#).

Did you know... zoning is just one tool the City has to support climate resilience and energy transition.

The City has many ways to support a more climate resilient Edmonton. As a tool for regulating land use— what can be built where —the proposed new Zoning Bylaw supports a more compact built form, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Over time, these changes will influence the choices people make in how and where they live, how far they need to travel to access services and amenities, and what modes of transportation may be feasible for them to do so. Read more about how the proposed new Zoning Bylaw will support environmental actions [here](#).

The City will be developing a Climate Resilience Planning and Development Framework in Q4 2023. This framework will identify processes and tools required to integrate climate change into aspects of urban planning and the development process. The Planning and Development Framework will take a holistic approach to assess opportunities for change while also considering the potential trade-offs, costs and barriers to ensure the effective implementation of changes.

The City has also implemented rebates and incentive programs to encourage Edmontonians to become more energy efficient in their homes and businesses. For more information on City programs supporting climate action, visit [ChangeforClimate.ca](https://www.edmonton.ca/change-for-climate).

Did you know... zoning regulates where new buildings can be built, the types of buildings they can be and the activities allowed in them—it does not regulate people.

Since the early 20th century, communities have used zoning to organize land use and minimize conflicts between different activities to protect public health, safety and welfare of citizens and the environment. Over time and with social progress, we have learned how zoning has separated more than just land uses—it has also been used to segregate people and disconnect them from places, practices and production.

Regardless of intention, zoning rules have and can lead to disproportionate impacts for certain members of the population. For this reason, zoning has a dual legacy: promoting the public good and exclusion.

In renewing the Zoning Bylaw, the City is focusing regulations on land-use impacts rather than individual behaviours. Other bylaws and legislation are designed to ensure the health, safety and wellness of Edmontonians, including the [Business Licence Bylaw](#), [Community Standards Bylaw](#) and [Alberta Building Code](#).

Did you know... the City has a Historic Resources Management Program to protect Edmonton's historic resources.

Historic resources are buildings, structures, fragments, landscapes or features that represent an important development in Edmonton. A resource may have a unique architectural style or have been associated with a prominent person or event in Edmonton's history.

The City works with the [Edmonton Historical Board](#) to review nominations and amendments to the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton. Any resource listed on the Inventory may be designated as a Municipal Historic Resource. Designated Historic Resources are rezoned to a Direct Control Zone (DC1), which limits development and changes allowed on the property and to the building. It also prevents the building's demolition. There are also financial incentives available to assist with some costs of restoring the designated buildings. The proposed new Zoning Bylaw and city-wide rezoning will not impact existing Direct Control Zones. More information on historical resources, incentives and applications can be found at edmonton.ca/heritage.

Did you know... Edmonton is not being 'upzoned' to align with The City Plan's density targets through the Zoning Bylaw Renewal.

[The City Plan](#) sets the vision for Edmonton's growth to a population of two million people. It's the long-term view for the future and contains policy direction for the entire city. [District plans](#) will set policy direction to guide Edmonton's development as the city grows to 1.25 million people, which will happen gradually. If the district plans are approved by City Council at a public hearing (tentatively Spring 2024), they will provide direction for **future** development by informing the rezoning process.

When an application to rezone a property is made, a Development Planner will determine if the proposed development aligns with the relevant district plan (and any other relevant statutory plan) as a part of their analysis. They would then make a recommendation to City Council on whether or not the rezoning should be approved. City Council makes the final decision on all rezonings.

Zoning sets regulations (i.e. the rules) for what can be built on a site through the development permit process. This includes what activities and businesses can happen there, as well as controls for its height, location and footprint (among other things). As new homes and businesses are developed to welcome more Edmontonians, planners will review any future proposed development against these rules. In short, the Zoning Bylaw's proposed changes will help Edmonton start to realize The City's Plan's direction **today**.

Even within The City Plan, though, highrises are not imagined for quiet neighbourhoods. While all areas of the city will experience growth, the biggest changes will be accommodated within The City Plan's [Nodes and Corridors Network](#) (see Map 3). Nodes and corridors will be densely populated, mixed-use areas that are accessible by a wide range of mobility options, such as walking, rolling, transit and driving.

Did you know...the current Zoning Bylaw has been amended regularly over the past 60 years.

While Zoning Bylaw 12800 hasn't been comprehensively renewed since the 1960's, it has been amended regularly to respond to changes in building trends and housing needs. In 2019, an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw 12800 effectively removed single-detached-only zoning in Edmonton by allowing Duplex and Semi-detached housing in the (RF1) Single Detached Residential Zone. Since then, additional housing types have been added through more amendments, including Garden Suites, Secondary Suites, Supportive Housing and Lodging Housing. The new draft Zoning Bylaw proposes to offer even more housing types in the new (RS) Small Scale Residential Zone (the closest equivalent zone to the current RF1 Zone) including Row Housing, Cluster Housing and Small Apartment Housing to continue offering Edmontonians more housing choices.

While adjustments have kept the Zoning Bylaw functional, the high volume of amendments, Direct Control Zone applications, and Subdivision and Development Appeal Board appeals have demonstrated the need for a new bylaw.

Did you know... the City developed a podcast called Making Space to highlight some of the big issues faced in rethinking how we zone and plan the city.

In late 2020 and early 2021, the City team hosted a series of Community Conversations to learn about how individuals interact with the planning and land development process. Explicit attention was given to members of underrepresented communities, and through two-hour interviews, participants shared their personal experiences with the planning and development process.

The conversations, themes and stories these people shared, are incredibly important. And the idea of the podcast came from them—from a desire to share information on what zoning is, why it has unintended impacts and how we're trying to change.

[Making Space](#) is a five-episode series that uses buildings and spaces throughout Edmonton to make zoning and land-use discussions accessible and to spark conversation about how individuals and businesses are impacted by zoning decisions.

Did you know...The City has been working on the Zoning Bylaw since 2018.

The City has spent the past five years engaging with Edmontonians, community groups, stakeholders and industry on the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative. There have been workshops, online surveys and information sessions. The Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative engagement also builds on The City Plan's [engagement](#), which includes two years of robust consultation with Edmontonians, public institutions, community groups and industry, as well as a multitude of technical studies and analyses.

Edmontonians still have the opportunity to share their thoughts at a public hearing on October 16, 17, and 18 when the proposed new bylaw and zoning map are presented for approval by [registering to speak](#) directly with City Council. Read the [public engagement summary](#) and visit edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal to review documents related to the initiative, including What We Heard reports.

