



Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative

Edmonton

Overview of Special Areas

April 2023

edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal

This document was created to support Edmontonians during the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative's Spring 2023 public engagement. This content is subject to change as the draft Zoning Bylaw continues to be refined.

Overview

This Overview of Special Areas document provides details on what a Special Area is, what changes are being proposed, how decisions were made and what additional changes are within the scope of the project. This document does not provide details on the proposed new River Valley Special Area Zones, which are available for review as part of the draft Zoning Bylaw.

As part of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative, the City is reviewing its Special Areas and their associated Special Area Zones. Prior to releasing the proposed Special Areas Zones, the City shared the [Approach to Special Areas](#) document to support Fall 2022 public engagement on the Initiative. This public engagement period detailed which Special Areas were proposed to be retired and rezoned to the new proposed Zones, and which Special Areas were proposed to be kept and updated.

The City has now released the draft Special Area Zones that are proposed to be kept in the new Zoning Bylaw, as well as an update of which zones are proposed to be retired, and is seeking feedback on this proposal. Please note that the Special Area Zones are in draft form, and may contain discrepancies that will be resolved through ongoing review and refinement.

The draft Special Area Zones were released on April 17, 2023 to allow for additional time to review the draft Zones prior to public engagement from May 1 to May 31, 2023. During this public engagement period, Edmontonians can provide direct comments using the online interactive tool Konveio, or sign up for a chat with a planner. Visit engaged.edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal to learn more and to view the draft Special Area Zones. Feedback from public engagement will be used to refine the final draft of the Special Area Zones.

What is a Special Area?

Special Areas are parts of the city that are planned to have unique development outcomes, such as Downtown, Blatchford and Edmonton Energy and Technology Park.

The City allows for a Special Area to be created when:

1. a high-level 'statutory' plan, like an [Area Structure Plan](#), states that a Special Area must be established to achieve certain objectives, and
2. when a standard zone could not achieve the unique development objectives of the specified geographic area.

Currently, Edmonton has 19 Special Areas:

Special Areas in Edmonton	
Special Area	Number of Special Area Zones
River Valley	6
Graydon Hill	1
Orchards	3
Riverview	1
Riverview Town Centre	3
Edmonton Energy and Technology Park	6
Stillwater	3
Downtown	8
Blatchford	5
Clareview Campus	5
Edmonton South	8
Marquis Town Centre	4
Heritage Valley Low Density	2
Heritage Valley Town Centre	1
Ambleside	3
Ellerslie Industrial	3
Terwillegar Towne	6
Griesbach	6
Central McDougall Urban Village Special Area	1

Proposed Changes

The table below outlines the proposed changes to Special Area Zones. A map of all Special Area Zones and their update type can be viewed [here](#).

How Each Special Area is Changing		
Update Type	Details	Applicable Special Areas
Keep and Update	<p>Keep and provide minor updates to these Special Areas and Zones. There are minor changes to development rights.</p> <p>Updates include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning current uses with new proposed use classes wherever possible, which may increase development rights Simplifying regulations Removing regulations that are similar to other regulations listed in other sections of the new Zoning Bylaw Formatting improvements to improve clarity and readability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Valley Town Centre Orchards Riverview Riverview Town Centre Edmonton Energy and Technology Park Stillwater Downtown Blatchford Clareview Campus Edmonton South Special Area Marquis Town Centre Heritage Valley Low Density Ambleside Ellerslie Industrial Griesbach Central McDougall Urban Village
Proposed for Retirement	<p>Propose to retire these Special Areas and replace them with the closest equivalent zones, as proposed in the new Zoning Bylaw. Minimal impacts on development rights are expected with these updates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terwillegar Towne Graydon Hill

Proposed for Retirement and Rezoning

As part of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative, a city-wide rezoning process will change all current zones to the proposed new zones. The table below outlines the Special Area zones that are proposed to be retired and rezoned.

Special Areas Proposed for Retirement: Rezoning Information		
Special Area	Current Zone	Proposed New Zone
Terwillegar Towne Special Area	RPLt - Terwillegar Planned Lot Residential Zone	RSF - Small Scale Flex Residential Zone
	RF4t - Terwillegar Semi-detached Residential Zone	RS - Small Scale Residential Zone
	RF5t - Terwillegar Row Housing Zone	RSM - Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone
	TSDR - Terwillegar Single Detached Residential Zone	RSF - Small Scale Flex Residential Zone
	TSLR - Terwillegar Small Lot Residential Zone	RSF - Small Scale Flex Residential Zone
	TMU - Terwillegar Mixed Use Zone	MU - Mixed Use Zone
Graydon Hill Special Area	GHLD - Graydon Hill Low Density Residential Zone	RSF - Small Scale Flex Residential Zone

Decision-Making Approach

The following framework was developed within the scope of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative to provide guidance on deciding which Special Areas can be retired and rezoned.

Step 1 - Determine the Level of Effort to Update a Special Area

This step helped identify more complex zones that would require significant analysis, resources and time to update, and zones that were required to achieve certain city building outcomes. These Special Areas are:

- Blatchford
- Edmonton Energy and Technology Park
- Downtown
- Edmonton South

Step 2 - Planning Analysis

A planning analysis was completed on the remaining Special Areas, comparing them to the new draft standard zones and identifying incompatibilities in regulations between the current Special Area Zone and the closest new equivalent zone. This analysis also looked at the level of compatibility between these zones and used the following criteria to determine the proposed direction for each Special Area.

Special Area Analysis - Key Questions and Criteria		
Question	Criteria to Answer Question	Outcome
To what extent has the Special Area fulfilled its purpose?	Degree to which the Special Area goals can be achieved in a new draft zone	If the Special Area has fulfilled its purpose it may be retired and rezoned
	Degree to which the Special Area has been developed	
	Number of amendments to the Special Area	
	Extent of additional development rights allowed in the new draft zone	
	Date the Special Area was created	
What extent of special characteristics does the Special Area have?	Whether the Special Area has an associated higher level policy, such as an Area Structure Plan, that details a unique vision for the area that cannot be accommodated in a new draft zone	If the Special Area does not have significant special characteristics it may be retired and rezoned
	Extent of special architectural regulations that achieve a certain style of development	
	Special regulations to achieve special forms of development that are not accommodated in a new draft zone	

Scope of Change

Based on feedback from Edmontonians, the City will consider changes to ensure that:

- The proposed uses are appropriate for each Zone
- The proposed changes to regulations improve clarity and ease of use
- The proposed changes do not unintentionally change an intended development outcome

Next Steps

Feedback gathered during Phase 3 of engagement will be used to refine the final Special Area Zones.

The City will present the final draft of the Zoning Bylaw to Urban Planning Committee in June 2023. The new Zoning Bylaw and Rezoning Map will then be presented to City Council at a Statutory Public Hearing in October 2023, where the public will be invited to share their opinions with City Council. Pending the bylaw's approval at public hearing in October 2023, the new Zoning Bylaw and Rezoning Map will come into effect on January 1, 2024.