

BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT GLOSSARY



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A

ACCESSORY

ACCESSORY BUILDING

A building that is smaller in scale and intended for the use of the principal building on a property. Accessory buildings include: detached garages, sheds, carports, pergolas, gazebos, arbors, greenhouses and playhouses.

ADDITION

Construction resulting in an increase in area to any building. This includes the attachment of any covered structure to the principal building, such as an accessory building, covered deck or porch.

AMENITY AREA

ASBESTOS

A naturally occurring mineral. It was once used in construction for its insulating and fire-resistance properties. It has been discovered to cause major health risks and diseases when disturbed and released into the air. The Government of Canada provides more information on [asbestos](#).

B

BACKFLOW

A term in plumbing for an unwanted flow of water in the reverse direction.

BACKWATER VALVE

A valve for preventing flowing liquid from reversing its direction.

BASEMENT

BLANK WALLS

BLOCKFACE PLAN

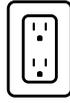
A plan view of all buildings on a given block, used to establish context.

BUILDING

Any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

BUILDING CODE (ALBERTA)

A provincial regulation that governs the construction or alteration of a building or structure that is governed by the Safety Codes Act.



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BUILDING PERMIT

A permit that is issued after the detailed construction drawings and all the supporting documentation are reviewed to ensure they meet the minimum standards set from the Alberta Building Code (ABC). A building permit is required for all new construction, most structural work including new structures, interior and exterior alterations and additions.

C

CANTILEVER

A portion of a structure which overhangs a support.
Examples: fireplace, a bay window or balcony

CARPORT

Roofed structure for the storage of vehicles (see also **GARAGE**).

COMBINATION PERMITS

Permits that combine both the development permit and building permit together under a single application. Examples of development issued with a combo permit include single detached housing, uncovered decks, and signs.

COMMERCIAL MECHANICAL PERMITS

Mechanical permits are mandatory when altering and installing plumbing, gas, heating and ventilation (including hydronic or hot water heating) and sewer and water servicing.

COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE

A report from the City of Edmonton confirming that all buildings and structures identified on the property have met the regulations under the [Zoning Bylaw](#) and have the appropriate development permits.

CONDENSATE

A liquid or vapour residue formed by the act of condensation.

CHANGE OF USE

A development permit for a Change of Use is required if the existing use of a building (or a portion) is changed to an alternate use under the same Zone in the Zoning Bylaw.

CORNER LOT

CORNER SITE

CORNER VISIBILITY TRIANGLE

A triangular area formed on a corner property by the two curb lines and a straight line intersecting 7.5 m from the corner where they meet.

CURB CUTTING

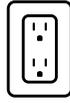
D

DECK

An elevated outdoor amenity space (also see **PATIO**)

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT



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DISCRETIONARY USES

DRIVEWAY

DUCT SYSTEM

Air distribution system used in heating and cooling.

DUPLEX

A building which contains two dwelling units, one located above the other, each with a separate entrance.

DWELLING

E

EAVES

The part of a roof that meets or overhangs the walls of a building, used to direct water away from the wall or for architectural style.

EGRESS

An exit pathway (i.e. an egress window within a bedroom).

ELECTRICAL PERMITS

Electrical permits must be applied for separately, except for the construction of a new single family home or new semi-detached dwelling.

ENCLOSED FRONT PORCH

ENCROACHMENT

Any portion of a building, fence, driveway, retaining wall or other structure which extends onto another property or City-owned land.

EXTERIOR EXHAUST HOODS

(An exterior wall or roof) Termination of an interior air exhaust duct for a dryer, bath fan, kitchen or heat recovery ventilator.

EXTERIOR INTAKE HOODS

Exterior wall or roof location of intake for fresh air, make up air, combustion air or heat recovery ventilator.

F

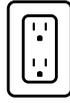
FACADE

Exterior outward face of a building.

FENCE

FIRE CODE (ALBERTA)

A provincial regulation that governs the fire safety and maintenance of existing buildings that is governed by the Safety Codes Act.

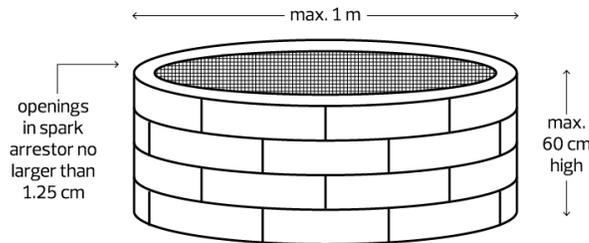


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FIRE PIT

A structure used for recreational fires:

- Be at least 3 metres (10 feet) from buildings, property lines and anything else that could catch fire
- Be less than 0.6 metres (2 feet) high
- Be less than 1 metre (3 feet) wide
- Have enclosed sides made from bricks, concrete or heavy-gauge metal
- Have a mesh screen on top to stop sparks (spark-arrestor) with openings smaller than 1.25 centimetres (1/2 inch)



FLOOD FRINGE

Land bordering the floodway.

FLOODWAY

The river channel and adjoining lands that would provide the pathway for water, in the event of a flood of a magnitude likely to occur once in one hundred years.

FLOOR AREA

FLOOR AREA RATIO

FLOOR PLATE

FRONTAGE

FRONT LOT LINE

FRONT SETBACK

FRONT YARD

FURNACE HUMIDIFIER MEDIA

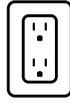
An element in the humidifier that enables water vaporization to maintain humidity levels.

G

GARAGE (ATTACHED & DETACHED)

GARDEN SUITE

A self-contained dwelling unit located in an accessory building that has separate living, cooking, sleeping and bathroom facilities. Garden suites are previously referred to as carriage houses, garage suites, backyard suites, or laneway homes.



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GAS FIREPLACE

An appliance fuelled by either liquid propane or natural gas. They are completely sealed from the area that is heated, and vent all exhaust gasses to the exterior of the structure.

GAS PERMIT- COMMERCIAL

A gas permit is required when installing or relocating any gas equipment: propane, piping and gas lines, boilers (hydronic), air units, fireplaces, furnaces (including rooftop units), gas pumps, kitchen equipment and meters.

GAS PERMIT- RESIDENTIAL

Gas permits are required under the provincial Safety Codes Act when installing, altering or relocating gas equipment such as: furnaces, hot water heaters, meters, piping and lines, dryers, BBQs, garage heaters, ranges, patio heaters, fireplaces, space heaters, and fire pits. Inspections are done throughout the project to verify each stage of work has been completed to code.

GAZEBO

A freestanding roofed structure that is usually open on the sides. Gazebos are considered an accessory building (also see **PERGOLA**).

GEODETTIC POINT

A point of reference related to a specific height above sea level.

GRADE

H

HARDSURFACED

HEAT RECOVERY VENTILATOR

Is an energy recovery ventilation system which employs a cross flow heat exchanger (countercurrent heat exchange) between the inbound and outbound air flow.

HOSE BIBB

An outdoor water faucet protruding from a building with a thread to allow for a hose connection.

HOT TUB

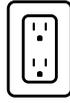
A large tub filled with hot aerated water used for recreation or physical therapy.

I

INTERIOR LOT

INTERIOR SITE

J



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K

L

LANDSCAPING

LANE

LANDING

An uncovered platform at an entrance to a building that provides direct access to the ground or stairs. (Interior Landing & Exterior Landing—separate definition).

LISTED USE

A use shown as either permitted or discretionary within the applicable zone. Uses not listed within a zone may not occur on that property.

LOT

M

MAIN RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

A building containing one or more dwelling units, like a house or other place to live.

MAINTENANCE ACCESS RIGHT-OF-WAY

A right-of-way that is registered on the land title of a property that allows access to a portion of the lot and restricts some aspects of development.

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Attached units, such as semi-detached dwellings and duplexes, as well as low and high-rise apartments/condominiums.

N

O

OVERLAY



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P

PARCEL

A piece of land enclosed by property lines.

PARTIAL PERMIT

Permit issued to do a portion of the work, such as building foundations.

PARKING AREA

PARKING GARAGE

PARTY WALL

PATIO

An at grade outdoor amenity space (also see **DECK**).

PERGOLA

A structure that incorporates an open rafter design (also see **GAZEBO**).

PERMITTED USES

PLATFORM STRUCTURES

PRIVACY SCREENING

PRIVACY ZONE

PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY AREA

PROPERTY LINE

The legal boundary of a property.

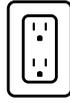
P TRAP

A fitting or device that is designed to promote a protective liquid seal that will aid in the prevention of sewer gases entering occupied spaces but will not materially affect the drainage flow of liquids.

PUBLIC AMENITY AREA

PUBLIC SPACE

Q



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

R

REAL PROPERTY REPORT

A document prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor which shows the location of buildings and other structures on a property.

REAR LOT LINE

REAR SETBACK

REAR YARD

RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVICE

RECESSED BALCONY

A balcony that is enclosed on at least two sides other than by a railing or privacy wall.

RESIDENTIAL MECHANICAL PERMITS

A permit that is applied for to cover Heating, Ventilation or Air Conditioning work or Plumbing or Gas work. Mechanical permits are not included in the Building Permit. The mechanical permits are applied for separately, except for the construction of a new single family home or a new semi-detached dwelling.

RESTRICTIVE COVENANT

A clause registered on the land title of a property that limits what the owner can do with the property. Rules set out in a restrictive covenant may have different regulations than that of the Land Use Bylaw.

RETAINING WALL

REZONING

A planning application to change the land use designation of a property to enable development.

ROWHOUSE

A building that contains three or more dwellings located side by side and separated by common party walls. Each dwelling unit has a separate entrance at grade and no dwelling is located wholly or partially above another dwelling.

S

SECONDARY SUITE

A second self-contained dwelling unit that is located within a primary dwelling unit, where both dwelling units are registered under the same land title.

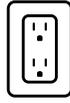
SEMI-DETACHED DWELLING

A building that contains two dwellings located side by side separated by a common party wall. Each dwelling has a separate entrance at grade and no dwelling is located wholly or partially above another dwelling.

SETBACK

SIDE LOT LINE

SIDE SETBACK



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

SIDE YARD

SINGLE DETACHED DWELLING

A building containing only one dwelling, which is separate from any other dwelling or building. Where a Secondary Suite is a permitted or discretionary use in a zone, a building which contains Single-Detached Housing may also contain a Secondary Suite.

SITE

SITE COVERAGE

SITE SIDE SETBACK

SITE WIDTH

SOLENOID VALVE

A electrically controlled valve. Examples: humidifier, hydronic heating (hot water heating).

STEPBACK

STOREY

STREETScape

An elevation drawing of adjacent buildings, used to establish context.

SUBDIVISION

The division of a property.

SUMP

A pit or reservoir serving as a container for liquids to collect. Examples: weeping tile or garage surface water.

SWIMMING POOL

A structure, basin or tank containing an artificially created pool of water and includes all buildings, equipment and facilities used in conjunction with it.

T

TEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT

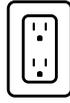
TREED LANDSCAPED BOULEVARD

U

UNENCLOSED FRONT PORCH

USE

The purposes or activities for which a piece of land or its buildings are designed, arranged, developed or intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained.



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UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAY

A right-of-way registered on the land title of a property and is an agreement that allows the right for an individual, company or municipality to use a landowner's property in some way. A utility right-of-way may contain gas lines, electrical lines, telephone and internet cables.

V

VACUUM BREAKER

An attachment commonly placed on a hose bibb connection to prevent water from being siphoned back into the public water system. This prevents contamination if the water system's pressure drops.

VENT TERMINATION

When referring to furnace exhausts, vent terminations are fittings installed on the outside of a building that carries the products of combustion outdoors and brings in fresh air required for proper combustion in a gas fired appliance.

W

WALKWAY

WATER RETENTION STRUCTURES

WOOD BURNING APPLIANCE (FIREPLACE OR STOVE)

A heating appliance (either masonry or factory built) capable of burning solid fuel, such as wood, coal or pellets.

X

Y

YARD

Z

ZERO LOT LINE DEVELOPMENT

ZONE

ZONING BYLAW
