

## Rethinking the Way We Zone

In 2020, Administration published the Philosophy of the New Zoning Bylaw on edmonton.ca as part of the discussion paper engagement that described a number of priorities outlined in other Council-adopted policies, including the The City Plan. The new Zoning Bylaw is the primary tool the City has to implement many of those policies within the context of land use planning and regulation.

As Edmonton grows, so must its ability to accommodate the building and development needs of its future residents. The City Plan provides the desired outcomes in which this should be done. This will mean changes. The following tables outline some of the big shifts and desired outcomes proposed. They will challenge the City’s conventional way of regulating land use to enable a better life for all Edmontonians.

Table 1: Big Shifts	
Approach	Outcome
<p><b>Advancing equity through zoning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Considering the unintended social impacts of regulation</li> <li>- Taking thoughtful and decisive action to create Everyone’s Edmonton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regulations address land use impacts — not people’s behaviours</li> <li>- Diverse, attainable and affordable types of housing options can be built throughout the city</li> <li>- Informal gatherings, recreation, arts, culture and spirituality are accommodated throughout the city</li> <li>- Any inequitable zoning and permitting processes are considered and addressed</li> <li>- The bylaw is approachable in its presentation and is easy to understand</li> </ul>
<p><b>Streamlined and purposeful regulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regulations need to balance reducing regulatory burden with achieving policy outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Zoning Bylaw’s regulations enable the Big City Moves, helping implement many of The City Plan’s intentions and directions to bring the plan to life</li> <li>- Regulatory complexity is reduced, making it easier to build and do business in Edmonton and to streamline service delivery</li> <li>- Businesses can shift and accommodate their changing needs and new business models</li> <li>- Achieving these outcomes requires making some trade-offs; allowing some regulatory flexibility means easing control over some things while accepting a degree of risk</li> </ul>

<p><b>Fewer, more enabling zones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 46 standard zones to approximately 20 proposed zones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zones are more adaptable, with each zone accommodating a greater range of development outcomes</li> <li>- Flexibility in building types and use combinations, allowing communities to adapt over time</li> <li>- Standard zones are broad and adaptable enough to satisfy the evolving needs of the market. This will reduce the number of rezonings required and past reliance on Direct Control Zones and Special Area Zones. In turn, time and cost savings will be generated as well as more certainty of outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Broader Use categories</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 127 Land Uses to approximately 30 proposed Uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater range of activities to occur in a building or space is enabled</li> <li>- New and emerging business models and trends, and housing forms are accommodated</li> <li>- Uses are regulated based on land use impact, not users</li> <li>- Change of Use development permit applications and Zoning Bylaw text amendments to accommodate new uses are reduced</li> </ul>
<p><b>Move towards more Permitted Uses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to address land use impacts, previous Discretionary Uses will be permitted provided an additional set of regulations and conditions are met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater certainty for applicants and communities is provided by knowing what is allowed in a zone and under what circumstances</li> <li>- Customer service is improved by creating a more transparent and efficient permitting process (reduced notifications)</li> <li>- Opportunities for appeals to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) are reduced with fewer Discretionary Uses</li> <li>- Equity in the decision-making process is improved by providing greater consistency, clarity and predictability in the bylaw</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advancing Climate Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better land use planning</li> <li>- Protect floodplains</li> <li>- Managing stormwater runoff at its source</li> <li>- Improve food security</li> <li>- Ecosystem resilience</li> <li>- Enabling regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The introduction of standard mixed-use zones, allowing more business opportunities in residential neighbourhoods and increasing housing options and densities</li> <li>- Development in flood risk areas continues to be limited and flood proof design is required</li> <li>- Maximum site coverage of impermeable surfaces for low density residential developments will continue to be limited</li> <li>- More urban agriculture allowed without the need for permits</li> <li>- Natural areas will continue to be preserved and on-site landscaping to include diverse plant material and incentivize the preservation of trees</li> <li>- Height exemptions for renewable energy devices or green roofs are allowed and</li> </ul>

	setbacks for energy efficiency are reduced
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Table 2: Overview of Zones and Potential Outcomes		
Zone Category	Outcome	Policy Guidance
<b>Residential Zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retirement of the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay and incorporation of select regulations into the residential zones</li> <li>• 10 metre maximum height in most small scale residential neighbourhoods</li> <li>• A broader range of housing types, building configurations and residential activities is allowed in more neighbourhoods</li> <li>• A range of community services and businesses in key locations is allowed across the city</li> <li>• Similar existing zones are combined to help reduce the number of required rezonings (e.g., RF1 to RF3 rezonings)</li> <li>• Potential automation of single detached and semi-detached greenfield permits</li> </ul>	<p>1.3.1.3 Provide diverse design and development in all neighbourhoods so communities can continue to evolve over time.</p> <p>1.3.3.4 Enable all districts to achieve more income-diverse neighbourhoods and a greater mix of land uses.</p> <p>2.2 Edmontonians have the ability to live locally, with access to diverse and affordable housing options in communities that support their daily needs.</p> <p>2.2.1.6 Enable ongoing residential infill to occur at a variety of scales, densities and designs within all parts of the residential area.</p> <p>2.2.3.4 Enable the development and redevelopment of small commercial sites and centres to support mixed-use local nodes city-wide.</p>
<b>Mixed Use Zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New standard mixed use zones will enable different scales of mixed use development envisioned through City Plan and district planning nodes and corridors</li> </ul>	<p>1.3.1.1 Establish and invigorate districts where daily life, work and play intersect.</p> <p>1.3.3.4 Enable all districts to achieve more income-diverse neighbourhoods and a greater mix of land uses.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for more custom-zone sites through the use of Direct Control Zones will be reduced</li> <li>• These zones will generally be applied through rezonings with direction from future District Plans</li> <li>• New Custom Manufacturing Use will allow more opportunity for specialized production-oriented business models (e.g., microbreweries, maker spaces, coffee roasters) in mixed use zones</li> </ul>	<p>2.2.1 Promote compact, mixed use development within districts that supports equitable access to employment, education and amenities.</p> <p>2.2.1.5 Facilitate housing and job growth and intensification within nodes and corridors.</p> <p>2.2.3 Ensure walkable and attractive mixed use development occurs at nodes and along corridors in a manner that is integrated with accessible mass transit.</p> <p>2.2.3.4 Enable the development and redevelopment of small commercial sites and centres to support mixed-use local nodes city-wide.</p> <p>3.2.1.1 Adapt the planning and regulatory environment to support innovative business models and operations.</p>
<p><b>Commercial Zones</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidating uses will allow businesses to easily shift to new and emerging business models and trends, or for commercial spaces to easily change tenants without the constant need for change of use permits</li> <li>• Regulations for larger site will support better site planning and safer environments for pedestrians</li> <li>• New Custom Manufacturing Use will allow more opportunity for specialized production-oriented business models (e.g., microbreweries, maker spaces, coffee</li> </ul>	<p>2.2.3.4 Enable the development and redevelopment of small commercial sites and centres to support mixed-use local nodes city-wide.</p> <p>3.1.3 Support access to employment and a broad range of economic opportunities for all of Edmonton’s diverse communities.</p> <p>3.2.1.1 Adapt the planning and regulatory environment to support innovative business models and operations.</p> <p>3.2.2.2 Provide pedestrian connections, amenities and facilities to support employees in non-residential areas.</p> <p>3.3.1 Support opportunity for local economic and community</p>

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	roasters) in commercial zones	<p>resilience through development, revitalization and renewal.</p> <p>3.3.2 Promote the continuous improvement, evolution and intensification of Edmonton’s non-residential lands.</p> <p>6.3.2.2 Facilitate opportunities for short-term and temporary creative use of commercial spaces through programs and incentives, and regulatory flexibility.</p>
<b>Industrial Zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed Business Employment (BE) zone recognizes the current shift in the character of light and business industrial areas and eliminates the need to rezone light industrial sites to accommodate these business opportunities</li> <li>• Opportunity for more commercial uses in the BE zone</li> <li>• 18 metre maximum height for the BE zone compared to the current IB zone, which has a maximum height of 12 metres</li> </ul>	<p>2.1.3 Ensure that development occurs in an orderly and safe manner to protect public health and the environment.</p> <p>3.1.3.5 Develop regulations and processes that are efficient, streamlined and easily understood in order to enhance Edmonton’s competitiveness for investors and entrepreneurs.</p> <p>3.2.1.1 Adapt the planning and regulatory environment to support innovative business models and operations.</p> <p>3.2.1.2 Enable growth of new and emerging sectors in Edmonton’s non-residential areas.</p> <p>3.3.2 Promote the continuous improvement, evolution and intensification of Edmonton’s non-residential lands.</p>
<b>Open Space and Civic Services Zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River and ravine systems, including natural areas are protected and preserved</li> <li>• Discretionary Uses are maintained under specific conditions</li> <li>• Flexibility exists to allow for publicly owned lands and buildings to be used for other community focused</li> </ul>	<p>1.4.2.1 Protect, restore, maintain and enhance a system of conserved natural areas within a functioning and interconnected ecological network.</p> <p>2.1.3 Ensure that development occurs in an orderly and safe manner to protect public health and the environment.</p> <p>2.3.3 Promote gathering spaces for culture, sports,</p>

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	<p>activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased height in some parks and open space zones to allow for increased flexibility for unique development needs (e.g., school gymnasiums, recreation centres)</li> </ul>	<p>recreation and entertainment opportunities to support both formal and informal uses.</p> <p>5.1 Edmonton protects, expands and improves access to its natural systems and open spaces in support of biodiversity and the health and enjoyment of all Edmontonians.</p> <p>5.1.1 Ensure protection, enhancement and opportunities for access to open space and the river valley and ravine system.</p> <p>5.1.1.5 Maintain the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine system’s key role as an environmental protection area and for open space, cultural and recreational uses.</p> <p>5.3.2.3 Prevent resource extraction within the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine system in order to preserve its ecological value.</p>
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