



EDMONTON • DESIGN • COMMITTEE

PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN



ASPIRATIONS

The Edmonton Design Committee (EDC) is committed to working with proponents presenting their designs to the committee. We regard the process as a collaborative one in which we hope to work together for the betterment of the design and the City of Edmonton as a whole. The following Principles of Urban Design express the aspirations of the EDC. It is our hope that we will engage in a collaborative process with proponents that generates evocative discussions and leads to exemplary urban design. These principles should not be interpreted as a “checklist”. Rather, the EDC members will look to the applicant to explain how the project has addressed relevant principles and the best practices of contemporary urban design.

There are three overarching principles that the Committee consider to be essential to achieving good urban design.

Each overarching principle contains supporting principles that are elaborated through questions intended to stimulate discussion and guide proponent presentations. Some questions may not be applicable to a particular project.

Exploration of a project may reveal other questions not contained in this document. As a result of this uncertainty and collaborative process we envision a dynamic, creative and delightful new urban landscape.

PRINCIPLE A - URBANISM

STRIVE TO CREATE AND RESTORE THE EXISTING URBAN FABRIC WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN REGION, CREATE REAL COMMUNITIES AND DIVERSE DISTRICTS, CONSERVE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RESPECT EDMONTON'S BUILT LEGACY.

A1 CREATING + ENHANCING THE CITY

- Is new development integrated with the broader existing city pattern?
- Does this project respect historical boundaries, patterns and precedents?
- Does this project support or enhance the city's alternative transportation framework?

A2 CREATING + ENHANCING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, DISTRICT + CORRIDOR

- Does this project contribute to creating a neighbourhood that is diverse, compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use?
- Does this project create opportunities for daily living activities within walking distance?
- Does this project contribute to creating a broad range of housing types?
- Does this project embed civic, cultural or commercial uses within the neighbourhood or district (avoids creating remote, single-use complexes)?
- Does this project respect or use conservation areas or open space to define and link different neighbourhoods or districts?
- How do the landscape and amenities enhance the project and the community?

A3 CREATING + ENHANCING THE BLOCK, STREET + BUILDING

- What elements does the project design exhibit that contribute to a positive human experience?
- How does the project respect human scale, encourage activity and engage the passer-by at street level?
- How does this project enhance the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use?
- Are there window openings and diversity of uses to encourage active edges?
- How does this project provide its inhabitants with a clear sense of time, weather and location?
- How are quiet spaces integrated into the project?
- How does the project encourage a safe environment?
- How is the project designed for both day and night?
- If a civic building or public gathering space - how does this project reinforce the community identity?



PRINCIPLE B – DESIGN EXCELLENCE

EXEMPLIFY DESIGN EXCELLENCE BY INCORPORATING, TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING ALL THREE DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, CONSISTENT WITH BEST CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES.

B1 SUSTAINABILITY IS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF THE DESIGN

- Has the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the project been considered?
- Has a recognized standard sustainability evaluation tool been used?
- Have air, water and energy conservation + quality strategies been incorporated?

B2 INTEGRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ARTS AND CULTURE

- How does the design intend to embrace and incorporate the arts such as visual and performing arts into its design?
- How do the design and the project intend to contribute to Edmonton's cultural fabric?
- Does it treat architecture as art?

B3 CELEBRATE THE WINTER CITY + EDMONTON'S CLIMATE

- Does the design interpret and embrace Edmonton's four season climate?
- How is the design adaptable to constantly changing weather patterns?
- How is protection from the elements built into the design?
- How does the design address indoor and outdoor connectivity during extreme weather conditions?
- How does the design celebrate the extended daylight hours in Edmonton in the summer and the minimal daylight hours in the winter?
- Does it provide public and private outdoor spaces?

B4 DURABLE, PERMANENT AND TIMELESS MATERIALS

- How and what materials have been selected that fit with the climate and the urban environment?
- How are the materials appropriate to the project?
- How does the choice of materials contribute to longevity of the project?
- How are workmanship and craftsmanship addressed in this project?

B5 APPROPRIATE USE OF INNOVATION

- How has innovation been incorporated into the design?
- How is this project different from comparable projects?
- Does this project address or challenge current development policy?



PRINCIPLE C – SCALE, CONNECTIONS + CONTEXT

DEMONSTRATE APPROPRIATE SCALE, INTEGRATION OF DESIGN ELEMENTS AND FIT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRECINCT.

C1 EXEMPLIFY NEIGHBOURLINESS: CELEBRATE, ENGAGE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE CONTEXT OF LOCATION

- What are the unique features of the precinct that the design is celebrating and building upon?
- How does the project contribute to the surrounding neighbourhood?
- How does the visual impact of the project relate to its surroundings?
- Does it provide clarity and consistency of form and detail?
- Is the signage compatible with the building and surrounding community?
- How does this project deal with the roofscapes that it creates?

C2 CELEBRATE + RESPECT HERITAGE

- How does the project respect, contribute or renew the memory or heritage of buildings, districts and landscapes?
- If the project does not respect and contribute to the heritage of the area, why not?

C3 ENHANCE + PRESERVE CONNECTIONS

- Are there clear and multiple points of arrival to the development?
- How does the project address wayfinding to key destinations in the community?
- How does the project encourage and support non-motorized modes of transportation including pedestrian circulation?
- How does the project connect with or incorporate public transit?
- How does the project incorporate vehicles and parking?
- How does this project impact the movement or activities of animals and birds, or visibility of plantings, at the edges of the development?
- How does the project preserve or establish connections with significant landmarks, public spaces and the river valley?
- How does the project respect the coherence of the current urban structure in the area (hierarchy of streets, green spaces and local daily activity patterns)?
- How is the ecology of the surrounding community holistically connected with the project design?

For more information, please visit our website at
edmonton.ca/designcommittee

