

ZONING BYLAW RENEWAL INITIATIVE

DISCUSSION PAPER HIGHLIGHTS

Edmonton

DISCUSSION PAPER HIGHLIGHTS

The discussion papers provided an entry point into the world of zoning by breaking it out into understandable parts and allowing Edmontonians to select topics that interest them. They explored various aspects of zoning and the new Zoning Bylaw, and provided the preliminary thinking and direction for the approach it may take. This document compiles the [highlights](#) of the direction that was presented for each paper.

These papers were a [first attempt](#) at exploring potential directions for new zoning regulations.

All Edmontonians were encouraged to provide feedback through the [Engaged Edmonton](#) platform. The next steps include doing more in-depth research and analysis on the feasibility of some of the proposed ideas and incorporating the feedback from what we heard to inform the new Zoning Bylaw. While the ideas outlined in this document are being considered, further change is anticipated. For more information on the general approach to the bylaw please refer to the [Philosophy of the New Zoning Bylaw](#).

TOPICS



**PHILOSOPHY OF THE
NEW ZONING BYLAW**



1 NODES & CORRIDORS



2 RESIDENTIAL ZONES



**3 COMMERCIAL &
INDUSTRIAL ZONES**



**4 AGRICULTURE &
RURAL ZONES**



**5 OPEN SPACE &
CIVIC SERVICES ZONES**



6 SPECIAL AREA ZONES



**7 DIRECT CONTROL
ZONES**



**8 NOTIFICATIONS &
VARIANCES**



9 OVERLAYS



10 SIGNS



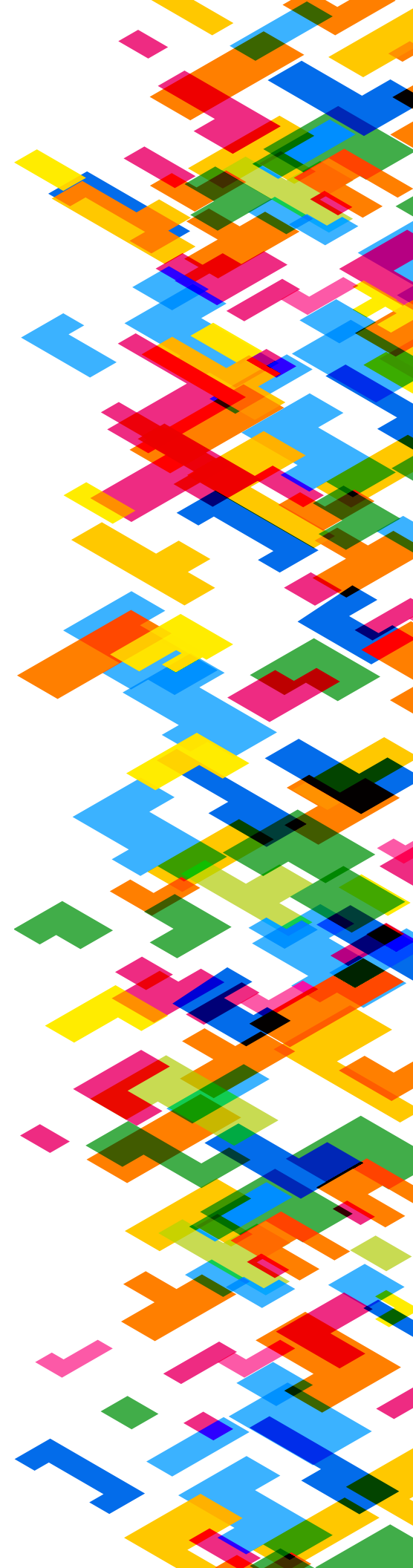
**11 CLIMATE RESILIENCE &
ENERGY TRANSITION**



12 ECONOMY

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NODES AND CORRIDORS

The Nodes and Corridors discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the new Zoning Bylaw can build on the City Plan's concept of the **15-minute city and develop a regulatory framework to make the nodes and corridor model a reality.**

The following policy intentions and directions outline how the nodes and corridors network will shape life within Edmonton:

- + Nodes and corridors are **intensification areas designated for housing and job growth**. To create inclusive mixed use areas, a variety of businesses, housing types and community amenities will be encouraged.
- + An integrated city transportation network with **an emphasis on mass transit and mobility hubs**, is a defining characteristic of the proposed zones.
- + The new Zoning Bylaw can achieve the City Plan's goals of integrating high quality urban design by using regulations to ensure **the design of buildings and sites are contextually appropriate and enhance the pedestrian experience**.
- + The draft nodes and corridors zones will also align with the **Metropolitan Regional Growth Plan**, the proposed District Planning Framework, and support the **innovation corridor concept**.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

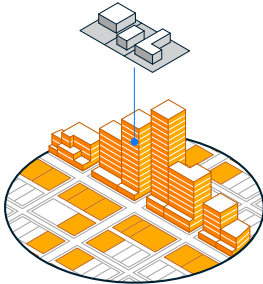
Key Directions Proposed

The following five items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Nodes and Corridors discussion paper.

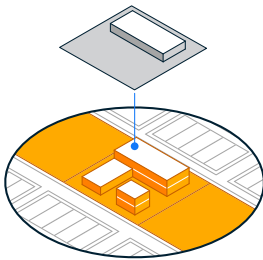


1 Three specific zones for mixed use development within the Nodes and Corridors framework

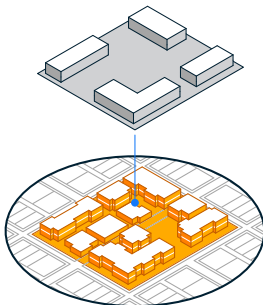
The City Plan’s approach to nodes and corridors is intended to direct investment, infrastructure enhancements and services to support greater density of people and jobs in a more sustainable way. Currently, Edmonton doesn’t have functional mixed use zones to achieve these objectives. To enable the development the City Plan envisions for the Nodes and Corridors network, three mixed use zones are proposed for the new Zoning Bylaw:



Mixed Use 1 Zone is intended to enable main street-type development similar to those you would see along Whyte Avenue or on 104 Street, with narrow front setbacks and a continuous building frontage along the street. It emphasizes the public realm through urban design that supports vibrant, walkable and accessible main street-like corridors and nodes. This zone will be primarily located within urban settings, pedestrian-oriented corridors and within some suburban contexts.



Mixed Use 2 Zone is intended to transition automobile-oriented sites to mixed-use pedestrian friendly development. It would be applied to sites greater than 2 ha in area, similar to Crestwood Centre, and will prioritize pedestrian movement, safety, and activity. This zone will allow for greater inward orientation of development with breaks in the building frontages to increase pedestrian movement and connectivity through the site.



The **Comprehensive Site Zone** is intended to transition large retail centres, shopping malls and sites greater than 2 ha, similar to Century Park, into high density, mixed use urban villages close to mass transit. As the areas will accommodate larger redevelopment, additional design information may be required at the initial development permit application to ensure the development integrates with the larger network and surrounding development.

2 Horizontal and Vertical Mixed Use

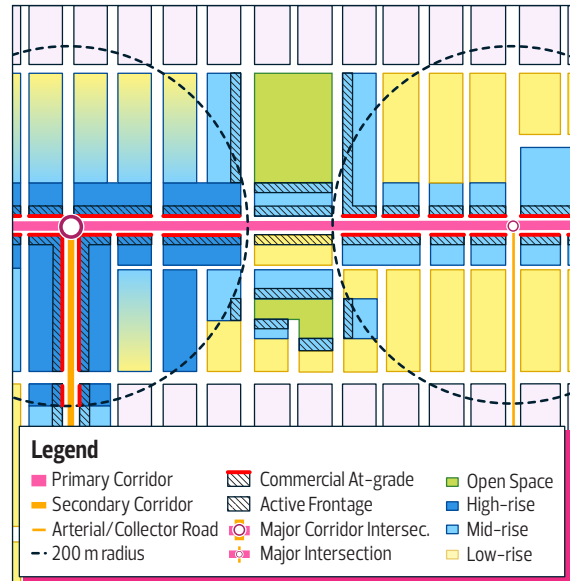
The mixed use zones will enable a broad range of uses and will allow for both vertical and horizontal mixed use development. Traditionally mixed use development is characterized by commercial at-grade and residential above, and sometimes zoning prevents residential uses at the ground level. However, allowing for variety in how land use is organized in new development will help the nodes and corridors intensify, thrive, and innovate. It will also help enable market-ready development that can adapt over time.



3 Context Modifiers

The discussion paper proposes using context modifiers as levers to increase land use intensity (height, floor area ratio, and density) based on a site's location within the network. For example, Major Nodes are intended to comprise of both mid and high-rise developments, whereas District Nodes are intended to accommodate mostly mid-rise and some high-rise development.

The paper proposes to categorize low-rise development as falling within the range of 3 to 6 storeys, mid-rise in the range of 7 to 12 storeys, and high-rise in the range of 13 to 26 storeys. Height modifiers would be applied to sites based on their location within the node or corridor hierarchy area outlined in The City Plan, and as guided by other higher policies and plans, such as District Planning.



Modifiers would also be used to apply certain use and design requirements. For example, active frontage, to require more frequent doors and windows at ground level would be applied along major streets, and commercial uses at-grade would be required for development within close proximity to major intersections. This will allow for a more visually interesting and interactive relationship between new shops and businesses and the public realm in key areas of the nodes and corridors network.

4 Urban Design

Nodes and Corridors will reflect a high standard of design for public and private development. They will contribute to an enhanced public realm that is connected, walkable, and celebrates Edmonton as a winter city. The nodes and corridor zones will integrate regulations that reflect the principles of the City's urban design policies that apply to podium, mid-rise, and tower configurations, setbacks and stepbacks, and building articulation that strengthen the relationship with the street and promotes human-scale development comfortable to pedestrians.

Additional work will be done to determine additional design information required, such as an urban design brief in relation to Edmonton Design Committee reviews and the City's urban design policies and guidelines.

5 Incentive Based Regulations

The discussion paper also proposes using standardized incentives-based regulations to encourage public amenity contributions within a development through bonusing provisions associated with additional height, floor area ratio, and/or dwelling units. So for example, this might include contributions that enhance a nearby playground in exchange for additional dwelling units for a new development. Incentive based regulations will continue to be explored for their use and application within the mixed use zones and to reduce the reliance on direct control zoning.

See the [Nodes and Corridors discussion paper](#) for more details.

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

The Residential Zones discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the new Zoning Bylaw can serve our existing and future residents **with housing options for those of different means and in different stages of life.**

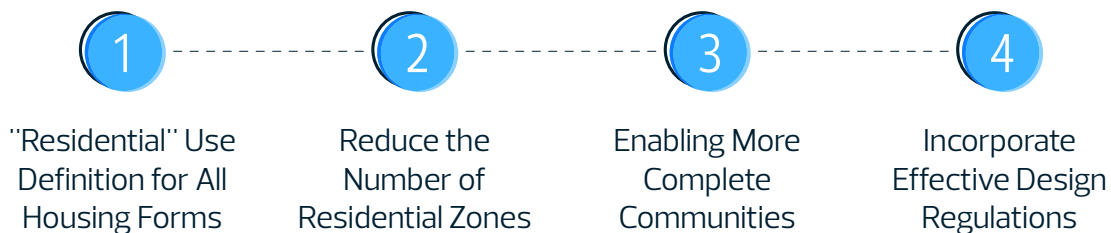
The proposed approach will achieve the following Big City Moves from The City Plan:

- + To establish a **"Community of Communities"** by creating **15-minute districts** where residents would have more access to businesses, services, and amenities within 15 minutes from where they live.
- + To become more **"Inclusive and Compassionate"** by providing more **housing options** in more neighbourhoods throughout the city to help ensure everyone has access to safe housing.
- + To become a **"Rebuildable City"** by supporting neighbourhoods as they **grow and redevelop** to adapt to the changing needs of Edmontonians

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

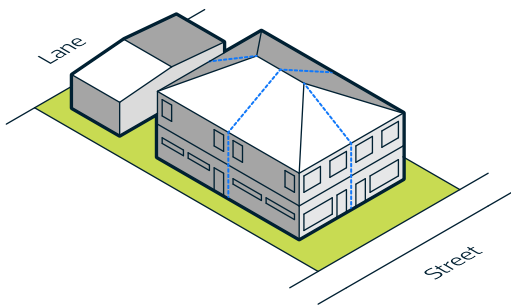
The following four items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Residential Zones discussion paper.



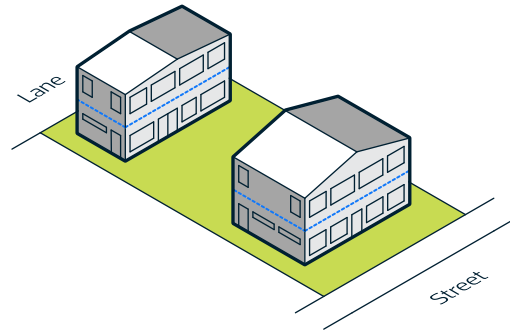
1 “Residential” Use Definition for All Housing Forms

Zoning Bylaw 12800 currently divides housing into different use definitions, based on the form of the building (such as single detached house, row house and garden suite). Rigidly defining housing in such a narrow prescribed way prevents sites from adapting to building and/or living trends. Rather than continuing to regulate based on multiple residential uses, the discussion paper proposes to have one use – Residential – and to focus regulations more on the form and massing of the building, in addition to site planning considerations like amenity space. This will allow sites to adapt to emerging trends and provide Edmonton with more housing options.

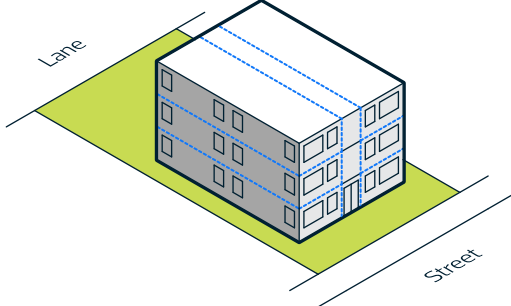
Four residential units



Four residential units



Six residential units



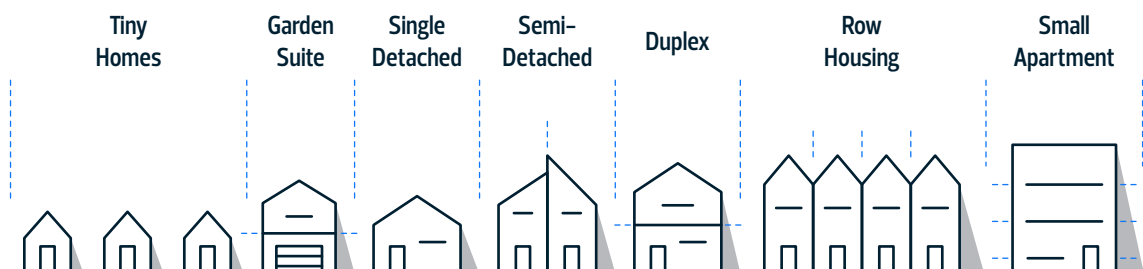
Six residential units



2 Reduce the Number of Residential Zones

There are 15 residential zones currently regulating housing in the urban area. Many of these residential zones are very similar to one another which creates both redundancy and complexity in the Zoning Bylaw without providing much additional opportunity in each zone. To simplify and streamline processes, Administration is proposing to consolidate down to the following two residential zones:

- + Small Scale Residential Zone for residences up to 3 storeys in height. This allows for a range of housing options and will be regulated by the number of units allowed on a housing site.



- + Low Rise Residential Zone for residences between three and six stories high. These zones will be located in areas supporting local nodes or other node and corridor areas. Limited non-residential uses would be allowed on the ground floor. Design regulations to reduce impact from the bulk of the building are also proposed.



- + Higher density residential developments that are higher than six storeys are proposed to be regulated through the mixed-use zones as proposed in the Nodes and Corridor discussion paper.

3 Enabling More Complete Communities

Recognizing the importance of neighbourhoods and living locally, the Residential Zones discussion paper proposes to enable local services in residential neighbourhoods. For example, the Small Scale Residential Zone would allow local neighbourhood services such as shops and cafes to develop without a rezoning on the condition that these are located beside existing non-residential sites. This will help enhance existing Local Nodes as discussed in The City Plan.

4 Incorporate Effective Design Regulations

Incorporating effective design regulations in the Zoning Bylaw will help create a sense of visual identity in neighbourhoods. Administration will explore where design regulations controlling different housing forms would be most appropriate. Another option being considered is retiring the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay, but identify effective regulations from the overlay and incorporating these into the proposed residential zones. This would also remove an additional layer of regulations for users to understand and navigate.

See the [Residential Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

The Commercial and Industrial Zones discussion paper highlights Administrations **first attempt** at simplifying Edmonton’s commercial and industrial zones to create more **certainty and adaptability** while also introducing elements to implement the City Plan’s policies related to the **Non-residential Opportunities Network**.

The proposed approach will implement the policies of City Plan in four ways:

- + Ensuring safe development by managing potential risk associated with heavy industry, oil and gas facilities, pipelines, railway and utility corridors **through the provision of adequate buffers, separation distances, and effective transition zones.**
- + Encouraging investment and redevelopment by increasing development opportunities within the commercial and industrial zones by **allowing for a broader range and configuration of uses** in the commercial and light industrial zones and enhancing the development potential **to enable the adaptive reuse of existing development.**
- + Maintaining viability for industrial growth by restricting commercial uses in some areas **to preserve opportunities for industrial development.**
- + Enhancing pedestrian safety by ensuring new development is **walkable and well-designed.**

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

The following three items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Commercial and Industrial Zones discussion paper.

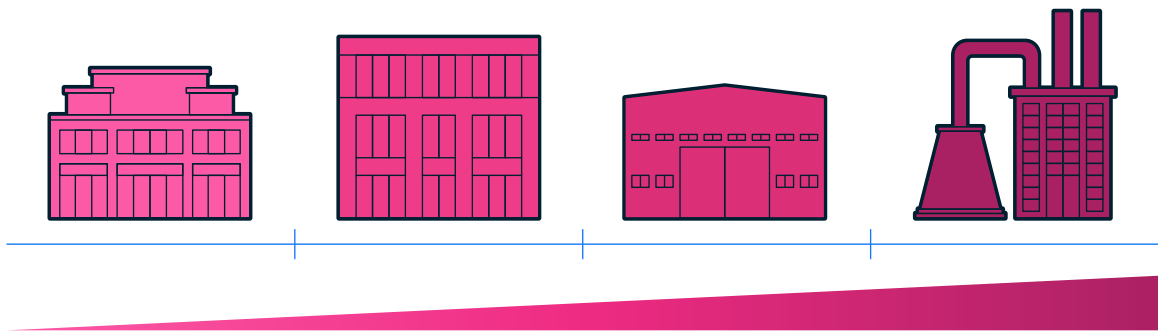


1 Simplify and Consolidate Commercial and Industrial Zones

Zoning Bylaw 12800 currently has seven standard commercial zones and five standard industrial zones. Several of these zones are similar and have overlapping development outcomes. To streamline and simplify regulations, Administration proposes to consolidate the commercial and industrial zones into four new standard zones:

- + **General Commercial Zone** for commercial development up to three storeys high that will be located in areas supporting node and corridor areas to meet the everyday needs of local and regional shoppers. This zone will also enable limited residential uses above the ground floor.
- + **Business Employment Zone** for commercial and light industrial activities up to six storeys high that will also be located in areas supporting node and corridors areas, and may be located in non-residential local node contexts. This zone will accommodate high quality light industrial, office, commercial and civic service developments where activities are occurring within a building. It will also serve as a transition zone to buffer adjacent more intensive industrial zones.
- + **General Industrial Zone** for light to medium industrial activities up to six storeys high that require larger sites. These developments may carry out a portion of their operations outdoors or require outdoor storage areas, but any nuisance activities would not extend beyond the boundaries of the site.
- + **Heavy Industrial Zone** for intensive industrial activities up to six storeys high or higher to accommodate specific industrial activities (such as smokestacks). This zone is proposed to accommodate developments that are incompatible with non-industrial and minor industrial uses due to their appearance, noise, odour, risk of toxic emissions, or other hazards. This zone would be generally located on the interior of industrial or agricultural areas in order to not impact the safety, use, amenity or enjoyment of surrounding zones.

Summary of Current and Proposed Commercial and Industrial Zones



Commercial Zone	Industrial Zones		
General Commercial	Business Employment	General Industrial	Heavy Industrial
Example Developments			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Corner Stores + Medical Offices + Big Box Retail + Strip Malls + Offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Business Centres/ Offices + Warehouses + Strip Malls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Warehouses + Storage Yards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Land Treatment + Chemical Processing + Hazardous Material Storage

2 Increase Development Certainty and Adaptability

To create zoning regulations that can maintain and enhance Edmonton's competitiveness for non-residential investment within the region, the discussion paper proposes to increase development certainty and adaptability by:

- + Including broader and more inclusive use categories in the General Commercial and Business Employment zones to allow for innovation and flexibility in businesses operations, products and/or services.
- + Dedicating moderate to heavier industrial activities to the General Industrial and Heavy Industrial zones will maintain industrial lands for industrial growth and will ensure impacts associated with these activities are minimized towards non-industrial uses and zones.
- + Future-proofing Edmonton's commercial and industrial development through requirements such as minimum ground floor heights that can facilitate the adaptive reuse of buildings as their purpose and use evolve over time.

3 Enhancing Pedestrian Safety and Urban Design

In large scale commercial and business industrial areas, development is often auto-oriented, leaving pedestrians having to navigate walking through parking lots, climbing fences, or walking down the side of incomplete roadways and drive-aisles to get to their destination. To ensure safer development for pedestrians, the discussion paper proposes to use design regulations to incorporate accessible pedestrian walkways through large parking areas and new development to locate closer and oriented towards the street in pedestrian oriented contexts.

To further enhance pedestrian comfort, safety, and building frontages the discussion paper proposes to include clear, objective, and measurable design regulations informed by the current Major Commercial Corridors Overlay and Main Streets Overlay.

See the [Commercial and Industrial Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL ZONES

The Agriculture and Rural Zones discussion paper is Administration's **first attempt** to reimagine how Edmonton's agricultural and rural areas will be regulated in the new Zoning Bylaw.

The City Plan's policy framework **reserves agricultural lands to be used for agricultural purposes until Edmonton's future growth requires these lands to transition to another use.** As large tracts of farmland become less productive when fragmented and converted for other non-agricultural uses, existing rural areas will be used **to support limited agriculture-supporting activity in order to preserve prime farmland.** The City Plan also provides direction to support and expand urban agricultural activity within the city in order to strengthen Edmonton's food system.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

The following three items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Agriculture and Rural Zones discussion paper.



1 One Agriculture Zone

This proposed zone is intended to protect viable agricultural properties from premature fragmentation and subdivision. It would support new and existing agricultural operations such as growing plants and crops and raising animals while also allowing agriculturally-supportive activities like farm tourism and farm cafes.

2 One Rural Zone

This proposed zone would allow limited commercial and industrial uses that generally do not require municipal servicing and would support Edmonton's rural community. These are intended to occur on sites that may already be fragmented and not suitable for agricultural activity. Existing rural residential development and existing rural mobile home parks would continue to be permitted, but future rural residential development would be prohibited. Renewable energy facilities may be appropriate if the land is not viable agricultural land and can be developed sensitively to the surrounding area context

3 Allow More Urban Agriculture in the City

The new Zoning Bylaw intends to support urban agriculture by allowing it more permissively in more areas of the city. It's proposed that outdoor urban agricultural activity with on-site sales be allowed throughout the city's residential and commercial zones without need for a development permit. However, livestock operations are still proposed to be prohibited in the urban areas of the city, while raising hens and bees would continue to follow existing regulations.

It is proposed that indoor urban agricultural activity would still require a development permit to consider situations where a new building is required or a conversion of existing space.

Other Considerations

Agricultural land annexed from Leduc County in 2019 will continue to be regulated by the **existing zoning regulations**, as agreed upon between the County and the City. The new Zoning Bylaw would apply if lands are rezoned.

See the [Agriculture and Rural Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

OPEN SPACES AND CIVIC SERVICES

Edmonton's open space policies ensure decisions about development in open spaces, natural areas, and the river valley **balance preserving natural areas and providing access and amenities**. The Open Space and Civic Services discussion paper highlights Administrations **first attempt** to align a zoning framework with recently approved open space policy.

The City Plan's policies will implement the vision of the Green and Blue Network in four ways:

- + **Protect and enhance** natural systems
- + Ensure open space is **welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all**
- + Honour **indigenous connections** to the river valley and open space
- + Support development that is **sensitive to nature**

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

The discussion paper proposes the following three key action items/changes:



1 Consolidate Three Park Zones into One Urban Parks and Services Zone

The Urban Parks and Services Zone is proposed to regulate development on all parkland in Edmonton. This consists of school sites, community league space, intensive recreation opportunities, open space, sports fields, playgrounds and sites of interest. This zone will be applied primarily outside of the River Valley, but will contain those areas currently captured under the Activity Node Zone, such as the Edmonton Valley Zoo.

As part of the Urban Parks and Services Zone, the discussion paper proposes to:

- + Increase maximum building heights (compared to the Urban Services zone) to accommodate new school development and alterations
- + Explore alternative measurements for landscaping requirements
- + Ensure school site locations and site programming or park plans are approved by parks planning prior to development permit approval
- + Enable limited commercial opportunities on non-municipal and school reserve designated land

2 Retain Zones for Natural Areas, River Valley Activities, Urban Institutional Development, and Public Utilities

The discussion paper proposes to carry over the intent and purpose for the zones for natural areas, river valley activities, urban institutional development, and public utilities through the following zones:

- + Natural Areas Zone
- + River Valley Recreation Zone; and
- + Urban Institutional Zone
- + Public Utility Zone

Though the Urban Institutional Zone will be retained for locations such as Concordia University and MacEwan University, it is proposed that new urban institutional development would be candidates for the mixed use zones proposed for the Nodes and Corridors.

3 Retire the Community Services Zones

The Community Services (CS1/CS2/CS3/CS4) Zones were created to make use of approximately 20 surplus school sites for residential developments for first time home buyers. As these sites are intended for residential purposes and the developments are near completion, the discussion paper proposes to retire the Community Services Zones and rezone these sites to their closest applicable residential zone.

See the [Open Space and Civic Services Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

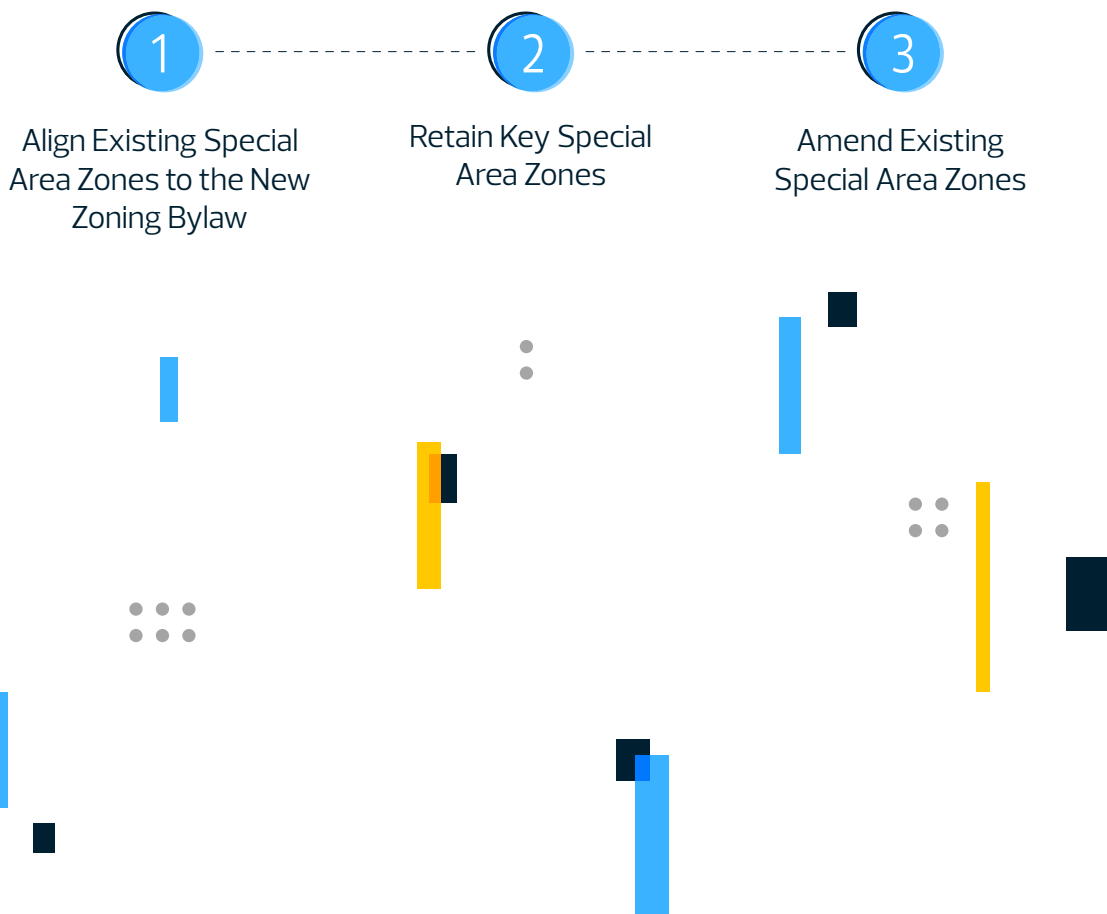
SPECIAL AREA ZONES

The Special Area Zones discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the new Zoning Bylaw can serve to simplify and streamline development regulations for Special Areas. The proposed approach **reduces our reliance on special area zones by creating more flexible and adaptable standard zones**. This will simplify the development process and **help businesses thrive**.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

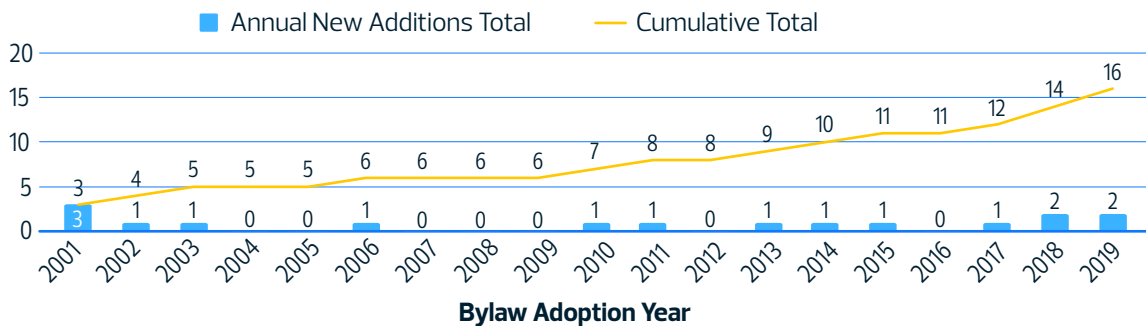
The following three items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Special Areas Zones discussion paper.



1 Align Existing Special Area Zones to the New Zoning Bylaw

Over the past two decades, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Special Area Zones. While Special Area Zones serve an important purpose, their use adds a layer of complexity to development which impacts the Zoning Bylaw’s accessibility and can increase permitting timelines.

Special Area Additions to the Zoning Bylaw, by Year



As the new Zoning Bylaw is being written, Administration will develop an approach to align existing Special Area zones to the new Zoning Bylaw. This approach will involve rezoning some Special Area zones to the closest equivalent standard zone.

2 Align Existing Special Area Zones to the New Zoning Bylaw

Some Special Area zones will be retained in the new Zoning Bylaw because they fulfill a unique purpose. The following examples are four Special Areas that are proposed to be retained in the new Zoning Bylaw:

Special Area Name	Reason for Retention
910. Special Area Downtown	Further planning work will be done to align existing downtown statutory plans with The City Plan. This may inform the future zoning of this area. Information about the direction of the Downtown Special Area zones can be found in the Nodes and Corridors discussion paper .
970. Special Area Edmonton Energy and Technology Park	To enable the continued work of developing the Edmonton Energy and Technology Park.
997. Special Area Blatchford	To realize the innovative redevelopment of the Blatchford lands currently underway.
1000. Special Area Edmonton South	The terms of the recent annexation agreement require the City to maintain existing zoning on newly annexed lands, to ensure alignment with the former Leduc Land Use Bylaw. Over time, it is expected that these zones will be rezoned to new standard zones at the request of property owners, following a comprehensive planning process.

Further analysis will be required to identify other existing Special Area zones that will need to be retained.

3 Amend Existing Special Area Zones

Some of the retained Special Area zones may need to be amended to align with the new Zoning Bylaw. Potential amendments will be subject to many of the same considerations as rezonings, particularly ensuring alignment with the relevant statutory plans.

See the [Special Areas Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

DIRECT CONTROL ZONES

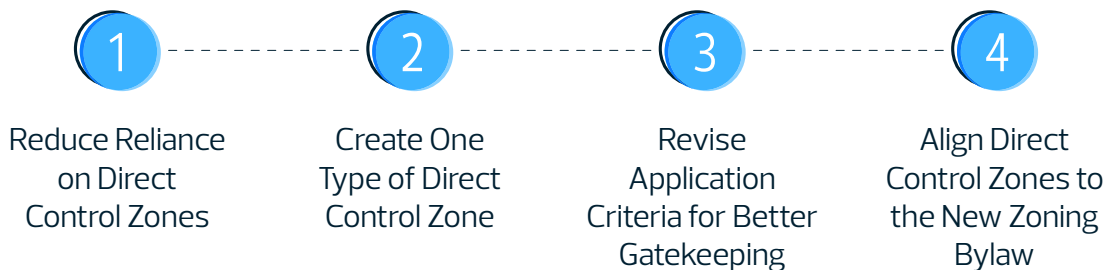
The Direct Control Zones discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the new Zoning Bylaw can support **the use of standard zones** while clarifying **the appropriate use of Direct Control zoning**.

While Direct Control Zones serve an important function, they also **lack flexibility and adaptability over time, and add time and cost to the development process**. While it is important to ensure that unique development is regulated appropriately, Direct Control zones should only be used in limited, specific situations, otherwise **development will be over-regulated and Direct Control zones will hinder the development process more than aid it in the long term**.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

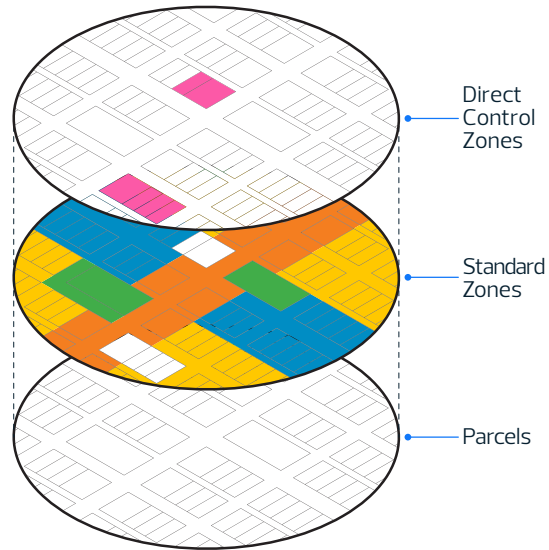
Key Directions Proposed

The following are four key directions proposed to help reduce the use of Direct Control zones in the new Zoning Bylaw.



1 Reduce Reliance on Direct Control Zones

Edmonton's outdated and inflexible Zoning Bylaw, coupled with an ongoing desire for certainty and control over development outcomes, have led to a proliferation of Direct Control zones. The new Zoning Bylaw proposes to simplify zones by consolidating uses and development regulations within standard zones. This will mean taking a new approach to regulation, with simpler and more adaptable standard zones that can accommodate a greater range of development and can be updated over time to align with market trends. As a result, the need to custom-zone sites and areas through the use of Direct Control zones will be reduced.



2 Create One Type of Direct Control Zone

To support the simplification and user-friendliness of the new Zoning Bylaw, it is proposed to collapse the two types of Direct Control zones (DC1 and DC2) into a single Direct Control zone. Having one Direct Control zone with a clearer purpose and application criteria guiding its use will contribute to a simplified regulatory approach and help provide straightforward direction to applicants, citizens, Council and Administration to ensure that the tool is used as intended.

3 Revise Application Criteria for Better Gatekeeping

A set of revised, clearly articulated criteria in the Zoning Bylaw will help to guide the appropriate use of Direct Control zones. The proposed criteria could be informed by asking the following questions:

- + Could the development be accommodated by a standard zone?
- + Is the uniqueness of the development site enough of a constraint to justify the creation of a Direct Control zone?
- + Does a statutory plan or the Historical Resources Act support the use of a Direct Control zone?

Gatekeeping the use of Direct Control zoning would need to be further supported by administrative changes to ensure the question of whether to use a Direct Control zone is given appropriate scrutiny. This will be a necessary step to support the culture shift that will be required to ensure that standard zones are recommended and used more frequently.

4 Align Direct Control Zones to the New Zoning Bylaw

Alongside the creation of the new Zoning Bylaw, Administration will develop options to align existing Direct Control zones with the new Zoning Bylaw. This approach could include rezoning to the closest equivalent standard zone, incorporating site-specific elements into the standard zones, or in limited circumstances, developing regulations that would allow for existing direct control regulations to more closely align with the new Zoning Bylaw.

See the [Direct Control Zones discussion paper](#) for more details.

NOTIFICATION AND VARIANCES

The Notifications and Variances discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how residents may be better notified about **rezoning and development permit applications**, and how to provide **clearer criteria** for how variances may be considered.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed to Address Variances

1 Introduce Criteria to Consider When Granting a Variance

To consider more comprehensively whether a variance should be granted, to provide more transparency and a common understanding for all Zoning Bylaw users – whether they are a developer, builder, or resident – the discussion paper proposes to incorporate four criteria that would be used to consider whether a variance is appropriate in the new Zoning Bylaw:

- + Does the proposed variance meet the intent of the Municipal Development Plan (The City Plan)?
- + Does the proposed variance meet the general intent of the Zoning Bylaw?
- + Does the proposed variance create undue impacts on neighbouring properties?
- + Does the proposed variance address a practical difficulty such as a physical constraint of the site (e.g. unusual shape, topographic feature)?

Though the criteria will expand the scope for how variances will be considered, Administration is proposing to retain current restrictions on variances to maximum density, floor area ratio, and height.

2 Allow Variances to Site Width for Single Detached Housing

The current Zoning Bylaw restricts Administration's ability to grant variances to lot widths for rectangular lots for single detached house developments in the RF1, RF2, RF3 and RF4 zone. Administration is proposing to remove this restriction as it creates an inconsistency in whether this type of variance can be granted to the same type of lot and development depending on its location and zone. Removing this restriction would provide the same opportunity for the same residential development regardless of location in the city. It also re-establishes a fuller set of tools to determine the appropriateness of land subdivision and the proposed variance tests will provide guidance on whether future site width variances are appropriate.

Key Directions Proposed to Address Notifications

1 Require Development Application Signage at Beginning of Review Process

Currently, on site signage is required for specific development permit applications after it's been approved to inform residents of potential future construction. This limits opportunities for neighbours and the community to provide input or obtain information about the project earlier in the development review process. To address this, the discussion paper proposes to revise the signage requirements so that the on-site signage is posted at the start of the review process. If the application is approved, the sign would remain on-site until the development is completed.

2 Retire Newspaper Ads and Expand Online Notifications

The discussion paper proposes to retire the use of newspaper ads as a means to notify and inform residents about development permit applications and rezoning applications, and use online notification tools instead. Administration is currently upgrading the City's mapping software, which provides an opportunity to explore how maps can display development information. Administration is also researching technologies that allow residents to opt-in and request notification of development projects in their neighbourhood that they're interested in. With this, notifications will be better targeted to impacted and concerned residents. Such changes would be monitored to ensure effectiveness.

3 Changes to Mailed Notification

There are several changes proposed to mailed notifications for development permit applications:

- + Retire Class A notifications for development that meet all zoning regulations. Administration feels that this is not the most effective tool for communicating approved developments and that the combination of on-site signage and online notification would provide a suitable alternative.
- + Change who receives Class B notifications:
 - To include tenants of a building within the affected area. Administration believes that both the owner and occupant of the building could be affected by a proposed development so it would be fairer that both are notified.
 - Based on the impact of the variance, similar to how current community consultation notices are sent, as per the notification tiers shown below:

Notification Tier	"Class B" permit notices would be sent to:
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Owners and renters within 60m of the subject site + President of the Community League + Executive Director of the affected Business Improvement Area Association
Tier 2	Owners and renters of adjacent properties and across the lane
Tier 3	Owners and renters of adjacent properties

- + Retire Community Consultation notifications and rely on online notification methods and onsite signage to keep residents and the community informed.

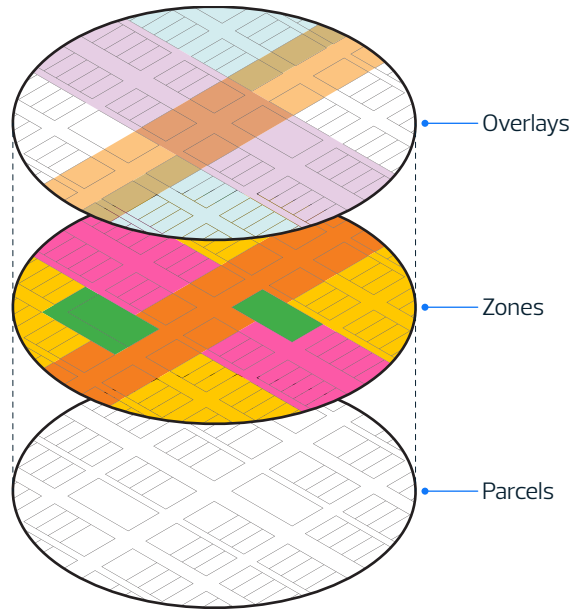
See the [Notifications and Variances discussion paper](#) for more details.

OVERLAYS

The Overlays discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how overlays can **support The City Plan's policy directions and building outcomes.**

The purpose of an overlay is to **control the built form, reduce risk (e.g., safety), and to preserve land for future, unknown uses.** Overlays help achieve a specific function across a geographical area, but over time they can deviate from this and can serve as an unnecessary barrier to development or act as a zone in their own right. Overlays have been created or had regulations added to them to address specific problems in need of an immediate fix. Assessing the validity and objectives of each overlay is necessary to determine if existing overlays are needed to direct desired development outcomes or if the outcomes could be controlled through conventional zoning.

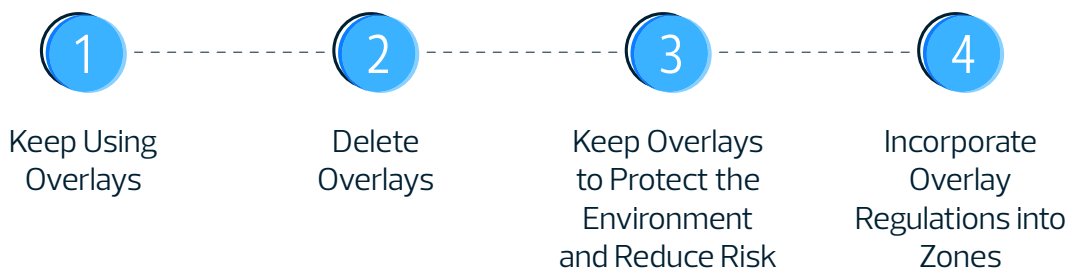
Through public consultation and assessment of overlays, Administration proposes to select a direction in Phase 2 of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative. The direction will be communicated to Council and the wider public at a future Urban Planning Committee meeting.



The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

Four options for how overlays can be integrated into the new Zoning Bylaw are proposed in this paper:



1 Keep Using Overlays

This approach acknowledges that overlays have a specific role to play in zoning and it is reasonable to carry forward the concept of controlling specific areas by modifying the standard zones. An assessment of existing overlays would still need to be undertaken to determine which ones are relevant and fit within the new zoning bylaw's framework and retire any that do not.

2 Delete Overlays

This approach rejects overlay's geographic nature in favour of a blanket approach and treats all lots in the city equally.

3 Keep Overlays to Protect the Environment and Reduce Risk

Rather than controlling design, the built form and other elements that may not be development-oriented, the use of overlays, under this approach, will be focused on the reduction of risk and the protection of public and private property. As such, the overlays in the new Zoning Bylaw would solely focus on establishing setbacks and no development zones in the public interest.

4 Incorporate Overlay Regulations into Zones

This approach calls for the removal of specific overlays that are ineffective and restrict development or that add an additional layer of complexity that does not align with the new Zoning Bylaw.

See the [Overlays discussion paper](#) for more details.

SIGNS

The Signs discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the new Zoning Bylaw can serve to **simplify and streamline signage regulations.**

Signs in Edmonton have historically been considered a minor part of larger building projects. Sometimes their integration into a development may appear as afterthoughts. The current way signs are regulated has resulted in unintended consequences such as a **lack of integration of signs with development, minimal development standards and a confusing regulatory approach.** The proposed approach to sign regulation seeks to address these issues.

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

The following three items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Signs discussion paper.



1 Integrate Sign Regulations in New Zones

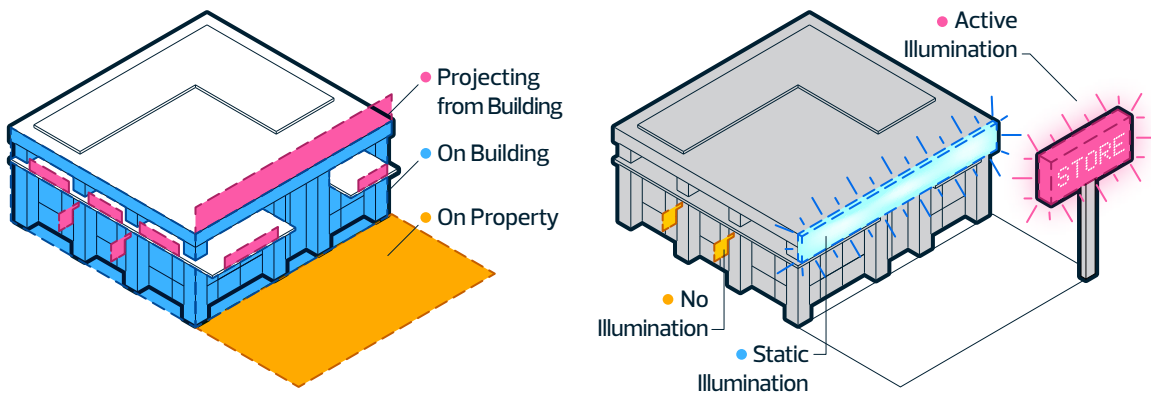
Sign regulations are currently spread throughout the Zoning Bylaw’s various sections, making it difficult for users to find and understand. The approach presented in the discussion paper proposes to remove existing Sign Schedules and embed applicable sign regulations into each new land-use zone. Regulations will be further simplified by shifting from lengthy text-based regulations to a matrix-based format, as seen below. This change will improve the user experience of the Zoning Bylaw by increasing ease of access for sign regulations

Example of Non-Illuminated Permanent Signs Development Regulations			
	Use	a. On building	b. Projecting from a building
Sign Area, maximum	Residential Use: Minor Home-Based Business	10.0 cm x 30.5 cm	N/A
	Residential Use: Major Home-Based Business	20 cm x 30.5 cm	N/A
	Indoor Sales and Service Use	May cover up to 50% of the face of the wall where it is displayed	

This table illustrates a potential method of displaying hypothetical permanent sign regulations within a new low-scale residential zone. Regulations in this table is for illustrative purposes only

2 Regulate Signs Based on Location and Illumination

Currently, the Zoning Bylaw regulates based on the sign type rather than the impact the sign has on surrounding areas. The proposed approach will see a focus on regulations by sign location (on a building, projecting from a building, or on the property) and further modified by level of illumination (active illumination, static illumination, or no illumination). An example can be seen below.



3 Align Regulations with New Sign Design Guidelines

Administration is currently in the process of developing Sign Design Guidelines to provide overarching design principles to inform the development of sign regulations for the new Zoning Bylaw. These guidelines will help ensure signs are well designed, integrated with the surrounding area and complement development on site, are visually interesting, and do not pose a safety hazard to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

See the [Overlays discussion paper](#) for more details.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ENERGY TRANSITION

The Climate Resilience and Energy Transition discussion paper represents Administration's **first attempt** at integrating climate resiliency regulations in the Zoning Bylaw to help residents and businesses **reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change impacts.**

City Council has provided numerous directions to Administration that addressing climate change is a priority requiring a city-wide collaborative effort. These include:

- + **2018 Edmonton Declaration** pledging to limit global temperature rise to 1.5C
- + Council declaring a **Climate Emergency**
- + Policy direction from The City Plan to **address climate change in future development**
- + Recommendations from the **Climate Resilient Edmonton** strategy document
- + Recommendations from the **Energy Transition** strategy document
- + Recommendations from the **Getting to 1.5C** strategy document

The directions proposed are **subject to change** and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Key Directions Proposed

The following three items are the key actions/changes proposed in the Climate Resilience and Energy Transition discussion paper.



1 Introduce a Development Permit Point System

Administration proposes to implement a point system where different development projects are required to achieve a certain number of points of climate measure in order to be granted approval. The climate measures would be assigned a value based on a set of criteria, such as cost/ease to implement, complexity, effectiveness, etc. For example:

Example Climate Measure	Example Requirement	Example Point Value	Type of Development	Minimum Point Required
Net Zero Building	Whole building is net-zero	10	Single detached house	3
Solar panels	50% of a roof is covered with solar panels	3	Row housing project	5
Rain Garden	25% of the site is a rain garden	1	Multi-unit housing	10
etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.

Each project will be required to achieve a certain point value and applicants would then be able to choose from a menu of options on the climate measure that they feel best fits into their design. The point system offers flexibility and choice to the applicant without the City prescribing what must be incorporated while ensuring that each development has measures that will perform to address climate impacts. Performance bonuses could be provided to projects that go above and beyond the minimum point requirements.

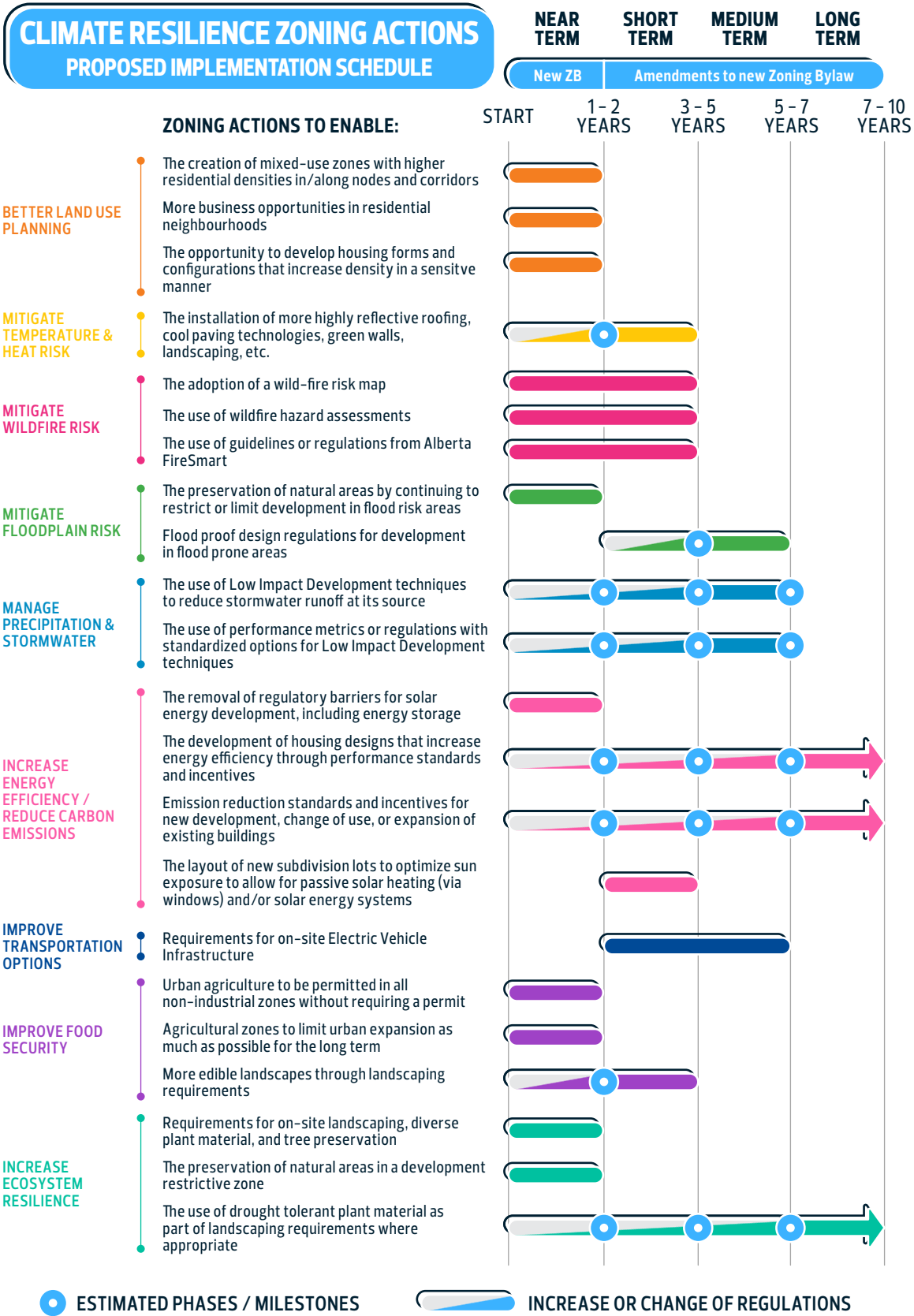
2 Coordinate with Supporting Resources, Tools and Programs

Climate change is a complex and urgent issue that requires a coordinated and collaborative effort from across the city to Administration to address. Incorporating new Zoning Bylaw regulations cannot be the only solution to tackle climate change. It will need to be coordinated with other research, funding mechanisms, strategies, and action programs to ensure the City's success.

3 Monitor and Adjust the Development Permit Point System Over Time

Administration recognizes that action on climate change requires the city to address a wide variety of issues and in an urgent manner. Administration also understands that any proposed climate action needs to balance future risks and impacts with the current economic conditions. As a result, the discussion paper proposes to implement the development permit point system incrementally over time.

Introducing and adapting the point system allows ongoing research on Edmonton-specific climate impacts to proceed that could provide appropriate recommendations for inclusion into the new Zoning Bylaw and the point system once these are completed. This would also allow time for the development industry and residents to increase the knowledge and skill capacity to incorporate climate measures into development projects and build up the supply chain necessary for widespread use by the industry.



See the [Climate Resilience and Energy Transition discussion paper](#) for more details.

ECONOMY: SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

The Economy: Supporting Small Businesses discussion paper presents Administration's **first attempt** at reimagining how the Zoning Bylaw can help support a thriving local business economy.

Potential small business owners experience many of the same constraints and barriers with the current Zoning Bylaw as other applicants and developers. However, adding to these challenges is that for a **first-time applicant**, the learning curve for the bylaw and permitting process can be steep and the applicant may not have the resources to get help navigating the process.

Key Directions Proposed

The Economy discussion paper builds on the ideas presented in the Philosophy of the New Zoning Bylaw document. The directions proposed are subject to change and will be refined as a result of further analysis and stakeholder feedback.

1 Encouraging Risk-Taking and Innovative Business Models

The new Zoning Bylaw will combine uses into broader use categories which can allow a greater range of activities to occur in a particular building or space. This will encourage risk-taking and support new business models by creating more opportunities for potential new businesses to find a home or existing businesses to quickly and easily shift their business model without the added time and cost associated with permitting. Grouping activities with generally similar impacts into fewer use categories will create a more versatile Zoning Bylaw with fewer barriers to business.

2 Attracting Business and Regional Competitiveness

An agile, less prescriptive Zoning Bylaw will allow Edmontonians greater ability to respond to major shifts in how we use land, office space and housing. Administration has heard from the development and business communities that the Zoning Bylaw is complex and that the process to obtain permits can be unpredictable and inconsistent. This perception negatively impacts the City's reputation as a preferred destination for capital, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Simplifying or removing unnecessary or ineffective regulatory barriers will help enable greater speed to market, increased clarity for Industry, and a wider range of development options.

3 Leveling the Playing Field

The new Zoning Bylaw will adopt a user-focused model and mindset in both creating the regulations and delivering accessible, empathetic and high-quality customer service. To do this, the new Zoning Bylaw will:

- + Use simpler language so regulations are easier to understand
- + Streamline and simplify regulations and use category to reduce regulatory complexity
- + Adopt a better layout and interface so the bylaw is easier to interpret and use for everyone.

These changes will help ensure all entrepreneurs are able to navigate the regulatory environment in order to open a business, rather than relying on businesses and stakeholders to have the expertise, experience and/or funds to work through the system.

See the [Economy discussion paper](#) for more details.



GET INVOLVED!

- For further information to get involved visit engaged.edmonton.ca
- For more information about the initiative visit edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal
- For all other ideas and feedback regarding Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative, please use the [General Feedback Form](#)
- Subscribe to our [newsletter](#)
- Contact us at zoningbylawrenewal@edmonton.ca



ZONING BYLAW RENEWAL INITIATIVE

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