



EDMONTON'S NEW ZONING BYLAW: BIG SHIFTS

For the first time in nearly 60 years, Edmonton has completed a comprehensive renewal of its Zoning Bylaw. Although the previous Zoning Bylaw was reviewed, updated and adopted in 2001, the last significant overhaul was completed in 1961, when Edmonton's population was 276,000. Today, Edmonton has grown to a population of more than one million and is on pace to reach 1.25 million by 2030.

City building is a long game, with today's zoning shaping the future of our neighbourhoods. A modern city today, needs modern rules. Edmonton has made some bold moves with its new Zoning Bylaw, making our city a leader that other municipalities have been looking to for guidance and best practices when it comes to creating modern land development regulations.

Edmonton's new Zoning Bylaw...

Has fewer standard zones

Every property in Edmonton has a zone, and each zone serves a distinct purpose. The new bylaw contains fewer zones that are more enabling and inclusive than the previous Zoning Bylaw 12800.

- + The new bylaw reduces the number of residential zones by combining similar zones together. For example, the (RS) Small Scale Residential Zone replaced five similar residential zones, in whole or in part.

The new Zoning Bylaw also allows for a greater diversity of uses within standard zones.

- + For example, in the small-scale residential zones, including limited commercial uses and more opportunities for home based businesses, to help provide Edmontonians with access to amenities and services to meet their daily needs closer to where they live.
- + Together, these changes will reduce the number of required rezonings.

Has broader uses that outline what activities can happen on a property

Broader use categories enable a greater range of activities to occur in a particular building or space, which will accommodate emerging business models and housing forms, and reduce the need for change of use permits.

- + For example, if you are an owner of a small business, such as a coffee shop, you may now expand your services to add meal offerings without the hurdle of needing to apply for a new development permit.

The new bylaw also enables a greater variety of small-scale residential development by combining different housing types into a single-residential use. This approach creates the "box" that the building must fit within, while providing flexibility for how the dwellings inside the box can be arranged.

Introduces two new Mixed Use Zones

The new Mixed Use Zone will allow for higher-intensity development within nodes and corridors and the Neighbourhood Mixed Use Zone will enable low to medium intensity development within neighbourhoods over

time. As a result, Edmontonians can expect to see more mixed use development in their neighbourhoods (e.g. a building which contains a mix of residential, commercial and/or community-oriented uses).

Enables more housing everywhere

The Bylaw allows for a wider range of different living arrangements in all neighbourhoods such as:

- + supportive housing and lodging houses
- + multi-unit housing forms (such as row housing and small apartments),
- + cluster housing arrangements (a form of housing where at least two dwellings are located on the same site and share common property such as amenity areas or parking)
- + backyard housing (formerly known as garden suites)

Rules such as setbacks, site coverage, minimum site area and height maximums will also create practical limitations on how big buildings can be, and where on a property they can be located. This approach creates the “box” that the building must fit within, while providing flexibility for how the dwellings inside the box can be arranged.

Introduces a new tool called Zone Modifiers

Zone modifiers tailor development regulations to a specific site’s context, while allowing the rest of the zone to remain the same. This means more tailored and context-sensitive development that respects the uniqueness of each area. There are 3 modifiers:

- + maximum building height
- + maximum floor area ratio (building size relative to site size)
- + commercial frontage

Zone modifiers can be changed through the rezoning process depending on the context of the site and policy direction provided by statutory plans. Zone modifiers are only available in the (RSM) Small-Medium Scale Transition Residential Zone, (RM) Medium Scale Residential Zone, (RL) Large Scale Residential Zone, and (MU) Mixed Use Zone.

Shifts towards permitted uses

The Zoning Bylaw has shifted from discretionary uses to permitted uses. This means that the bylaw more clearly outlines what’s allowed in each zone. In doing so, it helps support greater certainty for both communities and applicants during the development review process, and more predictability around what may be built in their neighbourhoods.

Discretionary uses have been maintained in environmentally sensitive areas like the River Valley, where preservation is the priority over development.

Changes the way we notify

Notification letters for permitted developments have been retired, however the requirement for development permit notification signs (including for demolition) has been retained and expanded to more areas of the city. This means that community members continue to be aware of new developments in their neighbourhood and where to go for more information.

The new bylaw also requires all development permit application decisions to be posted publicly online. All development permit decisions on current development and planning applications in the city are available at edmonton.ca/myneighbourhood.