

Edmonton

CITY PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

2018–2020





CITY PLANNING BRANCH

The City Planning Branch plays a key role in shaping Edmonton's future growth and transformation. The work integrates diverse city-building practices to support the evolution of networks and land use systems spanning different scales that range from an individual site to our city's interface with the entire metropolitan region. To accomplish this work, City Planning's vision within the integrated value-chain of the Modern Municipal Corporation is to help advance "an inspired vision for our city, supported by a community of aligned interests."

MISSION

The mission for the Branch is to deliver great design for a thriving city by:

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

INSPIRING GREAT DESIGN

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

BALANCING INTERESTS

INFORMING GOOD DECISIONS

BUILDING A GREAT CITY

VALUES

The values that underpin the work of this Branch are:

PEOPLE AND PERSPECTIVES

"We are dedicated to ensuring all communities have a voice in shaping Edmonton. We embrace the richness of diverse perspectives. We are objective and pursue the benefits of working in partnership".

TRUST AND PROFESSIONALISM

"We develop deep and diverse knowledge. We inspire trust and confidence in our decision-makers by providing advice that is evidence-based, strategic and pragmatic."

EXCELLENCE

"We judge our success through the eyes of the decision-makers and the communities we serve. We are brave, we take thoughtful risk and strive for innovation. We are continuously learning and improving to provide creative solutions and best practices."

INTEGRATION

"We work in a model of shared accountability and take an interest-based approach. We work together to achieve common outcomes. We operate in a complex system and bring clarity to its navigation."



1

PRIVATE-SECTOR LAND DEVELOPMENT

The City Planning staff complement includes approximately 275 permanent Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) and up to 70 temporary staff. The work encompasses a number of integrated practice areas, including: land use planning, urban design and heritage management, open space planning and ecological services, drainage and development engineering, and transportation and transit planning.

City Planning's work drives outputs for three major groups of clientele as part of the "value chain" of city-building in Edmonton, including serving the needs of:

- 1 Private-sector Land Development
- 2 Internal City of Edmonton Clients
- 3 Public Policy Development

There are three major portfolios of work that serve private sector interests and are predominantly market-driven. About 160 staff, which represent roughly 60% of all full time staff (FTEs) in the City Planning branch work on land development and engineering services that directly support private sector applicants. In addition to these dedicated resources, some other City Planning staff support private sector land development for at least a portion of their time, typically through the internal review process.



LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

- Rezoning
- Road closures
- Statutory plan adoption/ amendments (NSP, ASP, ARP)



SUBDIVISION AUTHORITY

- Subdivision application review and endorsement
- Municipal Reserve dedication and tracking
- Review of Development Permits from a Transportation Planning Perspective



SERVICING & ENGINEERING COORDINATION

- Servicing Agreements
- Engineering Drawing Review & Inspections



TO STEWARD THESE PORTFOLIOS, CITY PLANNING'S SERVICES TO PRIVATE LAND DEVELOPMENT CLIENTS INCLUDE THE DEDICATION OF TWO MAJOR SECTIONS OF THE BRANCH:

PLANNING COORDINATION SECTION

The Planning Coordination section provides integrated policy implementation through a decision assembly process that translates policies and plans into Administrative recommendations to City Council at Public Hearing about changing land use and the built form of Edmonton's communities. This includes rezoning applications, plan amendments, text amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and road closures. City Planning brings approximately 250–300 land development bylaws to City Council for decision in a typical year.

SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION SECTION

The Subdivision and Development Coordination section facilitates the development of land into subdivided and serviced lots, and manages servicing agreements that provide for the construction of municipal infrastructure, such as water mains, storm and sanitary sewers, roads, sidewalks, and power. Further, this area approves engineering drawings and inspects contributed assets as part of the land development process. In 2017, the section completed Servicing Agreements for 114 projects that accommodated the subdivision/creation of nearly 4700 lots for housing, made 499 subdivision conditional approval decisions and 420 endorsements for subdivision, and accepted 131 projects for engineering drawing review.

Administration's regulatory role, in this context, is to apply City policies, procedures and design standards to inform consistent decision-making, integrate professional and stakeholder feedback, and ensure good customer service. These activities are based on working directly with citizens, developers, consultants and communities. Because the work is market driven, by nature the pace and volume of applications fluctuate over the course of seasons and over the span of years.

To support more efficient delivery of service for private land development clients, some resources in City Planning are

dedicated to managing, tracking, monitoring and improving these processes; this built-in review function assists with ongoing evaluation of transactional work and provides a focus on ongoing process improvement initiatives such as the "Land Development Application Process Review" which was established in collaboration with the development industry in 2017. Further, as part of a more holistic approach, the current Urban Form Business Transformation Initiative is being undertaken department-wide to holistically review and improve private land development service in the City Planning and Development Services branches within the Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development department.

**2**

INTERNAL CITY OF EDMONTON CLIENTS

A number of resources across various City Planning sections provide necessary internal-facing supports and key management functions to support Administration's work across the corporation. This comprises approximately 20% of full-time staff allocations. Examples of this work include:

- System modelling for transportation infrastructure projects such as LRT, Yellowhead Trail, arterial renewals and reconstruction, building great neighbourhoods
- Acquiring data, administering surveys and monitoring and forecasting city growth to inform policy development, operating programs and capital investments,
- Geospatial mapping, visualization and analytics services to support both branch and department activities,
- Analyzing, evaluating, and prioritizing the City's strategic investment in infrastructure growth and renewal initiatives,
- Land planning and assembly to identify and prioritize land that the City needs to acquire for open space municipal needs, including the management of municipal reserves,
- Providing professional planning, engineering and urban design expertise to internal departments on projects, and
- Ensuring effective land stewardship, particularly in relation to managing Edmonton's publicly-accessible open space network and ecological assets.

Collectively, this body of work manages, evaluates and monitors Edmonton's city-building outcomes and ensures integration and translation of the City's policies and priorities for effective implementation of both public infrastructure investments by departments such as Integrated Infrastructure Services as well as for programming delivered by departments such as Citizen Services.

**3**

PUBLIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A significant role of City Planning on behalf of the City of Edmonton is to create and review policies for urban growth and development. The work at this "strategy" end of the city-building value chain operates at many scales from the metropolitan to site-specific. This broadly includes: land stewardship, review and the creation of policies, guidelines and actions plans related to managing Edmonton heritage assets, urban design policies and frameworks, and policies for the location and appropriate quantity and usage of open space. It also includes city-wide strategic planning, network level planning, and action-specific planning related to all modes of travel. Additionally, special area planning initiatives, such as River Crossing in Rosedale, are advanced by City Planning to leverage specific city-building opportunities. Public policy development also frequently involves coordinating responses to Council motions and public inquiries related to the priority policy work, as well as addressing many diverse topics related to urban change and transformation in Edmonton or in broader society in collaboration with diverse multidisciplinary partners. Additional information is provided in Attachment 2.

AN INTEGRATED CITY PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The three streams of work in City Planning operate in a mutually reinforcing and integrated manner to deliver desired city-building outcomes for Edmonton in alignment with Council's vision and in partnership with diverse stakeholders. City Planning's work involves various parts of the land development cycle as highlighted below (see Figure 1 below).

Rather than being viewed as purely sequential or linear in nature, however, the work operates in feedback loops. Just as policy creation can inform transactional decision-making related to private land development or City infrastructure design, so too can transactional work and real-time feedback from stakeholders help identify policy gaps and inform creative ways that they can best be filled. A good example of the latter was the recent Community Amenity Contribution policy (C599), where a gap in consistency of approach was identified through a pattern of transactions with land developers and communities across multiple Direct Control zone applications. Upon identification the need, a solution was proactively created through a new corporate policy thereby improving future practice.

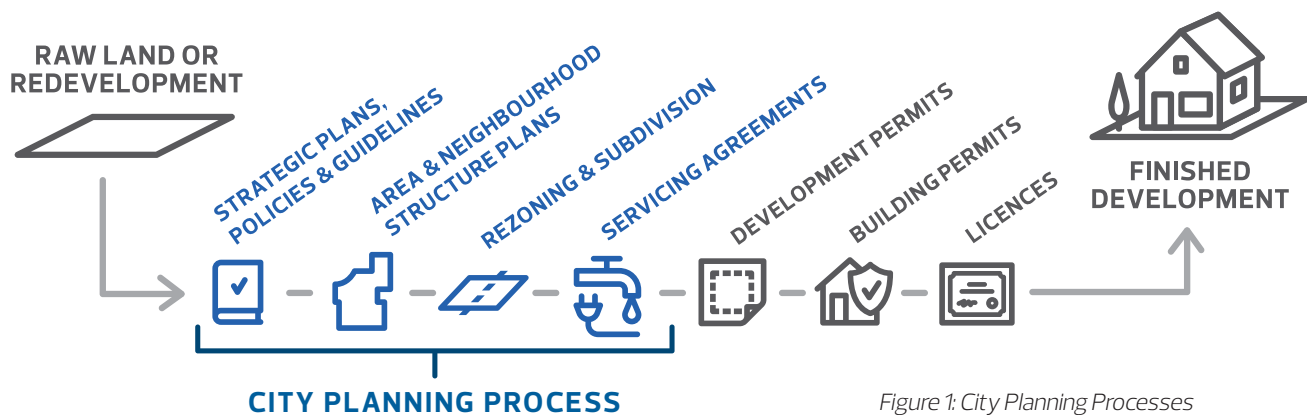


Figure 1: City Planning Processes

In summary, the city planning work program delivers core services to businesses and citizens through land development activities, provides decision-support services to internal and external clients, creates policy implementation frameworks to inform consistent decision-making and clear communication, and plans the expansion and renewal of key city-building systems and networks to inform and support both public and private sector investment.

Edmonton

