

## Backgrounder: First Place Program Design Engagement Process

Communication and public engagement are key aspects of responsible government for the City of Edmonton. Public information sharing and engagement (including the formation of design engagement groups) occurs in every neighbourhood where First Place housing has been approved. To date, eight design engagements have been completed (Bears paw, Caernarvon, Canon Ridge, Casselman, Greenview, Kernohan, Larkspur and Tawa).

The City selected two award-winning home builders, Rohit Communities and Landmark Group of Builders, to develop of the First Place Program sites. These builders were selected in large part due to their public consultation expertise and experience working with communities on new developments.

Generally, the design engagement process follows these steps:



### Builder Engagement Process



During public meetings, the City asks for 6-8 neighbourhood volunteers to meet with the builder to make decisions about the look and feel of the development.

A series of meetings allows builders and residents to consider all aspects of the site. 3D modeling and artists' illustrations of some of the construction options are presented. Over time, an optimal plan for the housing layout emerges.

Further meetings dive into more details – how to vary rooflines for interest, what architectural details might add character, exterior finishing materials, and landscaping, down to the individual placement of trees and shrubs.

Fencing and house lighting are discussed for safety and aesthetics, street lighting is adjusted to minimize glare for neighbours, garbage containers are placed so as not to be visible to passers-by, and parking details are likewise discussed to ensure neighbourhood norms and character are maintained.

Recent comments from the design engagement group in Larkspur included:

*“As a fairly vocal opponent to this project ... I have to acknowledge I was very pleasantly surprised by the design engagement process. We were able to be involved to a much larger degree than anticipated in meaningful aspects, such as building configuration, number and layout of units, and parking options.”*

*“I was very impressed by the amount of input we had into this project. Great job everyone!”*