

# ZONING BYLAW RENEWAL INITIATIVE

## DISCUSSION PAPER



### RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Edmonton

October 2020 | [edmonton.ca/ZoningBylawRenewal](https://edmonton.ca/ZoningBylawRenewal)

These papers were created in 2020 to support Phase 1 of engagement. The content of these documents is subject to change as the draft Zoning Bylaw continues to be refined.



## HOW TO USE THE DISCUSSION PAPERS

The discussion papers provide 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 explore various aspects of zoning and the new Zoning Bylaw, and provide the preliminary thinking and direction for the approach it may take. Please refer to the [Overview and Philosophy of the New Zoning Bylaw](#) for more information.

These papers are a **first attempt** at exploring potential directions for new zoning regulations. All Edmontonians – from developers to residents – are encouraged to explore the topics that interest them and provide feedback through the [Engaged Edmonton](#) platform. Information gathered through the discussion paper conversation will be used to help inform how the new Zoning Bylaw will be written.

## 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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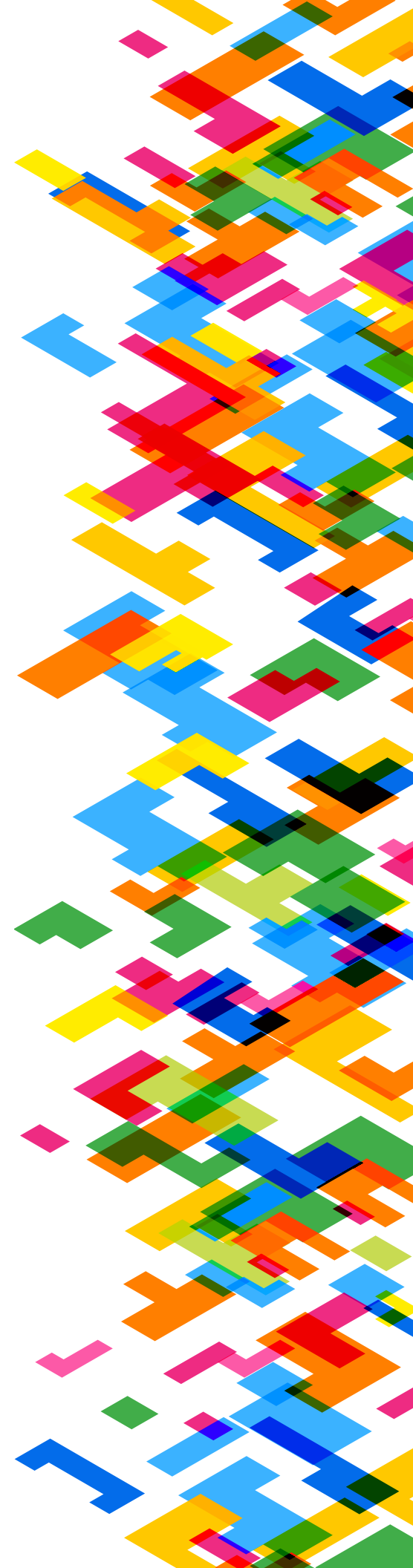
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# CONVERSATION STARTER

How can the new Zoning Bylaw help ensure **that everyone can afford a place to call home?**

This paper shows that the new Zoning Bylaw can help by

- 1** Simplifying and reducing overlap between zones by **consolidating existing standard zones**

  - From **15 Standard Residential Zones** To
  - 2 Residential Zones**
    - + Small Scale Residential Zone
    - + Low Rise Residential Zone
  - 3 Mixed Use Zones**
    - + Mixed Use 1 (MU1)
    - + Mixed Use 2 (MU2)
    - + Comprehensive Site (CS) Zone

For more info on the Mixed Use Zones, please see the [Nodes and Corridors discussion paper](#).
- 2** Providing room for **diverse housing types and more units**

  - Some examples of housing types that could be built in the proposed zones may include:

<p><b>Small Scale Residential Zone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Tiny Homes</li> <li>+ Garden Suites</li> <li>+ Single Detached</li> <li>+ Semi-Detached</li> <li>+ Duplex</li> <li>+ Row Housing</li> <li>+ Small Apartment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Low Rise Residential Zone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Fourplex</li> <li>+ Row Housing</li> <li>+ Stacked Row Housing</li> <li>+ Courtyard Apartment</li> <li>+ Low-Rise Apartment</li> <li>+ Mid-Rise Apartment</li> </ul>
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- 3** Advancing **15-minute districts and local nodes** throughout the city by allowing **more types of activities and uses** closer to where people live

  - Permitted Uses**
    - + Agriculture
    - + Civic Services
    - + Residential
  - Conditional Uses**
    - + Home Based Business
    - + Food, Cultural and Entertainment
    - + Indoor Sales and Service
    - + Public Utility
    - + Special Events / Temporary Uses
- 4** Enabling designs that are **flexible and compatible with their surroundings**

  - Compatibility** means that the form, scale and mass of buildings in a given zone are generally similar, and that the activities that are allowed in these buildings do not create undue impacts on their surroundings.

Please provide us feedback at [engaged.edmonton.ca](https://engaged.edmonton.ca)

# INTRODUCTION

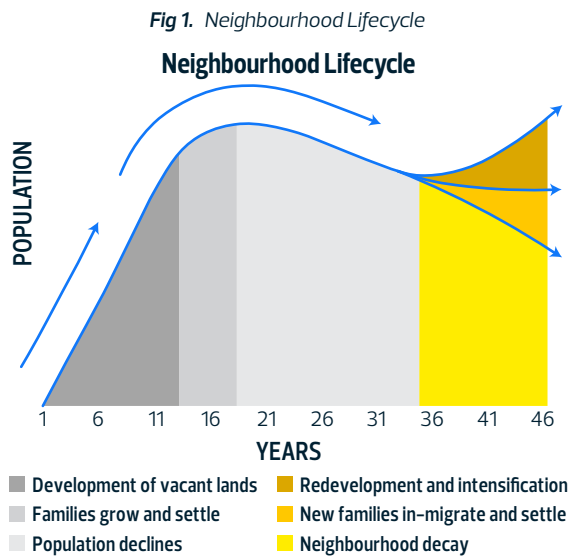
Neighbourhoods are the places we live, where we spend time with friends, where parents watch their kids grow up and play, and where we socialize with our neighbours. Neighbourhoods should be welcoming places of comfort where everyone feels safe. **As Edmonton plans to grow to a population of two million, it is important that everyone has a place to call home.** There are many ways to make this happen. One way is through the Zoning Bylaw, which sets the rules that shape how these neighbourhoods grow and change.

The purpose of this discussion paper is to describe how the residential zones in the new Zoning Bylaw can support Edmonton's residential neighbourhoods as they evolve over time, **to make it easier for residents to access housing, allow people to access more services and amenities close to where they live, and help build communities.**

## Life of a Neighbourhood

Neighbourhoods are constantly changing (see Fig 1), from people moving into a newly built subdivision (dark grey), to a neighbourhood's population being relatively stable (light grey), to life-long residents moving out of an older area as someone new moves in (dark yellow). Every single neighbourhood in Edmonton is somewhere within this cycle.

The Draft City Plan uses the term 'rebuildable city' to capture the idea that Edmonton, like any city, is never stagnant – it is constantly in a state of growth and change. Edmontonians continually rebuild and reimagine our city to adapt to change and accommodate more people and businesses. Being a rebuildable city means recognizing that all neighbourhoods are at some point in a continuous life cycle, and changes in how land is used are to be expected.



This diagram from The City Plan represents the change in a neighbourhood's population as it goes through its life cycle. After the population of a neighbourhood reaches a maximum and matures, the neighbourhood changes over time; its population can decline as people leave, remain stable as the number of people moving in equals the number of people moving out, or increase as areas become denser with more people moving in due to redevelopment.

## More Housing Choice

Every resident has different needs for a home, whether they are a person with mobility or health challenges, a family, living alone, or living with a group of unrelated people. Edmonton’s communities and its housing need to be adaptable to these different requirements. This means that the zoning rules governing how neighbourhoods are built and rebuilt need to accommodate as many different ways of living as possible.

The proportion of housing types in Edmonton has remained relatively unchanged over the last 20 years. In 2016, half of Edmonton’s total housing consisted of single detached houses, while apartment units, row housing, and semi-detached housing combined to make up the other half (see [Table 1](#)).

**Table 1.** Percentage of Different Housing Types in Edmonton from the Canadian Census in 2016

From [City Plan – Economic, Demographic and Market Study](#) Note: Statistics Canada percentages sometimes do not add up to 100%.

Housing Type in Edmonton	Percentage in 2016
Single Detached Housing	50%
Semi-Detached Housing	6%
Row Housing	10%
Apartment Housing	33%

The single detached house remains the preferred housing form for homebuyers across multiple age groups, according to The City Plan’s [demographic and market study](#). However, the [Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation \(CMHC\)](#) has found that this preference is influenced by factors such as price / affordability, number of rooms, proximity to transit, school, and work. When single detached houses are unaffordable to potential homebuyers, the other types of housing such as row housing or apartment housing can become the preferred choice either because they meet the needs of the homebuyer, such as price, proximity to work, or the desire to build equity

towards purchasing a single detached house. For example, a [2018 Market Housing and Affordability Study](#) identified demand and opportunity for semi detached or row housing as infill development because of its greater affordability for moderate-income households, even if it’s less preferred.

CMHC also saw [greater demand in 2019](#) for rental housing (typically in the form of row housing or apartment units), particularly those priced in the mid-range and larger apartment units that could accommodate families with children. This demand continues to be driven by new residents moving to Edmonton, who will typically rent before deciding to buy a home, and people who are renting longer and postponing the transition to homeownership due to affordability issues, if the transition occurs at all. As a result, the need to maintain a suitable supply of rental housing will likely continue as the city experiences uncertain economic conditions in the near future due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes to the Alberta economy.

### A Report on Housing Needs of Seniors

commissioned by the Federal and Provincial governments identified the need for seniors to have access to affordable and diverse housing. This need can be affected by changes to a senior’s lifestyle, health needs, financial situation, or ability to maintain their existing home. It further identified that all levels of government should take actions to enable the variety of housing that would help fulfill those needs, such as:

- + Housing for intergenerational living
- + Housing for indigenous seniors
- + Smaller units for seniors who wish to down-size or reduce costs
- + Rental units in suburban settings
- + Mixed-use housing near services and amenities

Making these types of housing available to seniors in neighbourhoods across the city would allow them to ‘age in community’, continue to access services and amenities close to their home, and maintain their way of living with minimal disruption.

Homebuyers, renters, and seniors are only three examples of the types of Edmontonians seeking a place to live. There is also growing interest and demand in other housing types not considered in the referenced studies, such as garden suites, tiny homes, co-housing, and supportive housing. These various factors highlight the City's need to allow for a variety of housing options to meet people's different preferences and needs.

While the previous scenarios speak to the need to provide more and different forms of market-rate housing, thousands of individuals and households in Edmonton have difficulty finding and affording market-rate housing. This leaves

many people vulnerable or without a home. This type of affordability challenge is a significant issue facing Edmonton and other Canadian cities. Non-market or subsidized housing currently face a number of barriers to being built. Solutions require the development industry to be involved, significant support and investment from all levels of government, and a reimagining of how and where these solutions should be provided. The recent approval for a [housing village supporting Canadian veterans](#) by Homes for Heroes is an example of the type of housing development that should be more easily permitted in Edmonton's neighbourhoods without requiring extra planning permissions such as a rezoning.

## Building Better Neighbourhoods

The need to serve our existing residents, our future residents, and vulnerable populations remains as Edmonton continues to evolve according to new demands and opportunities. The City will face challenges as it addresses climate change (see [Climate Change discussion paper](#)) and other disruptions such as the current pandemic. **To do this, the future of Edmonton's neighbourhoods will need to be more than just a place where we live. Communities are created when people are able to interact with each other easily.** This means creating more opportunities within neighbourhoods for connection and support, such as parks, community gathering spaces, places of worship, and cafes. It means allowing enough people to live in the neighbourhood to make efficient use of transit, public utilities, and other services. It means a neighbourhood with housing that accommodates the needs and abilities of all its residents.

These ideas come together in the concept of the "15 minute district", where a person's everyday needs can be met within 15 minutes of walking, active transportation such as cycling, or transit. Cities such as Paris and Melbourne have begun implementing these ideas into their city building policies and processes (see [Case Studies](#)).







## Edmonton's Recent Shifts

Edmontonians and the City have recently taken steps towards adding more diverse housing into existing neighbourhoods. **The [Infill Roadmap 2018](#) is the City's work plan for a set of actions to support more and better residential development in Edmonton's redeveloping areas.** An outcome from one of these actions led to City Council approving simplified zoning regulations that encouraged more multi-unit housing (such as

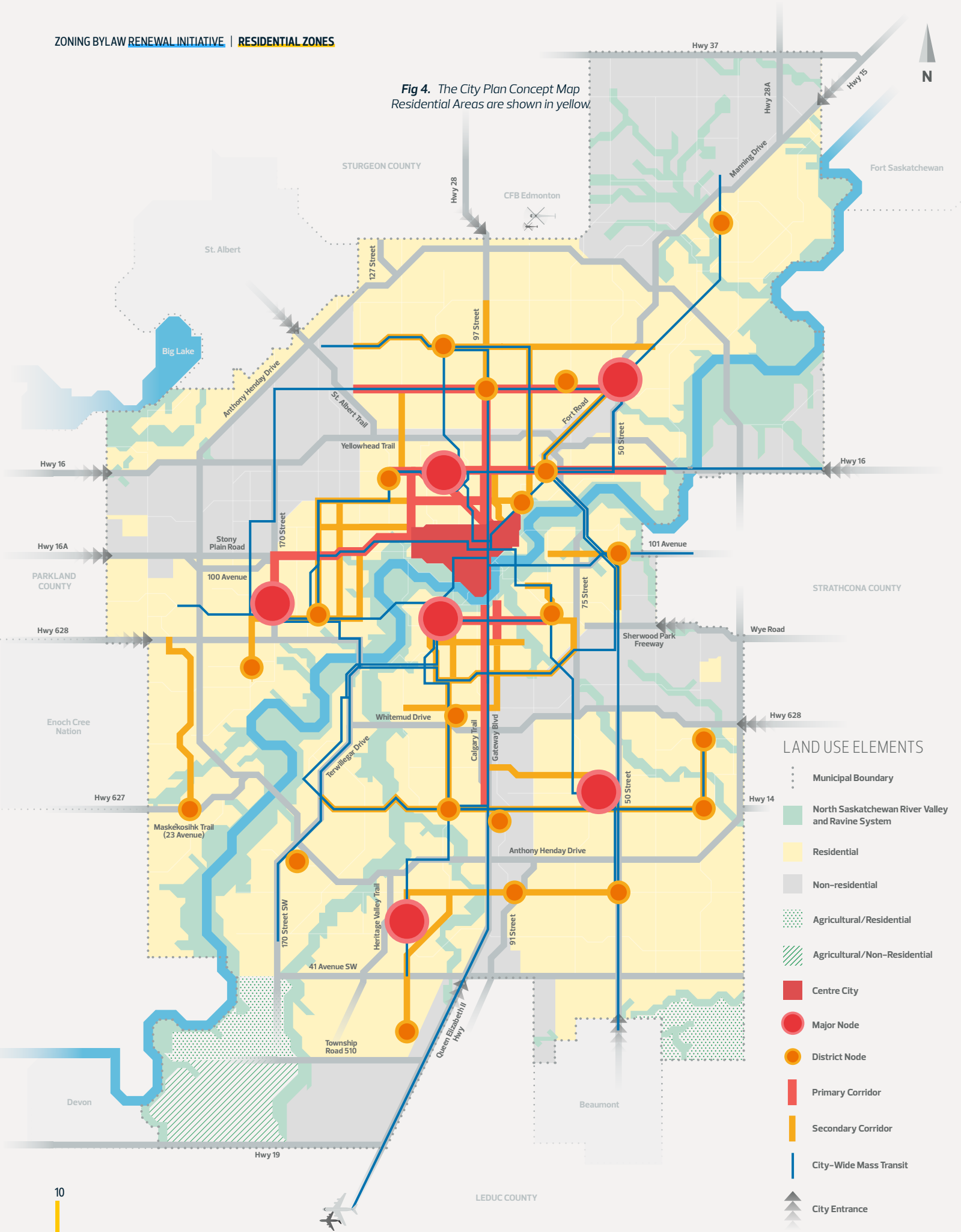
apartments or rowhousing) throughout the city and removed barriers so more supportive housing could be built. Another action made it easier for both a secondary suite and a garden suite to be built with a single-detached house in certain zones of the city. **These are positive steps in making more diverse housing readily available to address Edmonton's housing needs.**

## CITY PLAN INTENTIONS AND DIRECTIONS

As the City Plan Concept presents a long-term future for Edmonton at 2 million residents, **the new Zoning Bylaw will focus on enabling The Draft City Plan's first step of establishing where Edmonton's next 250,000 residents will live and work.** In addition, The City Plan policies will provide direction on the form and considerations around development that will shape the rules of the new Zoning Bylaw.

The City Plan Concept identifies large areas of the city as "Residential" ([Fig 4](#)). **These generally represent the interior of Edmonton's neighbourhoods, where we live, work, shop and access different services.**

**Fig 4.** The City Plan Concept Map Residential Areas are shown in yellow.



- LAND USE ELEMENTS**
- Municipal Boundary
  - North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System
  - Residential
  - Non-residential
  - Agricultural/Residential
  - Agricultural/Non-Residential
  - Centre City
  - Major Node
  - District Node
  - Primary Corridor
  - Secondary Corridor
  - City-Wide Mass Transit
  - City Entrance

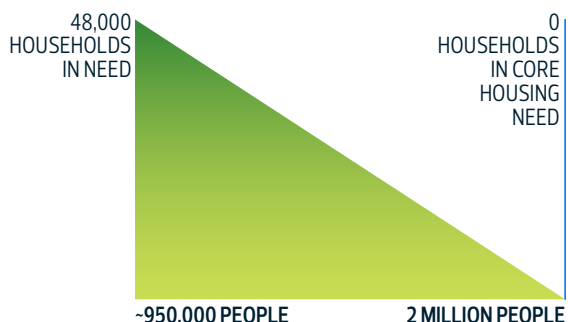
## Big City Moves

To focus and prioritize the general policies of The Draft City Plan, the plan proposes several “Big City Moves”. These moves set ambitious targets to ensure that a future Edmonton is a healthy, prosperous, resilient, inclusive, and compassionate city. To build a “Community of Communities,” one target is to create 15-minute districts throughout the city. These districts intend to allow residents with different abilities to access their daily needs within 15 minutes using their preferred mode of travel. This will mean allowing more businesses, services, and amenities to be located and built closer to where residents live.

Another Big City Move is to create an “Inclusive and Compassionate” Edmonton. Being inclusive and compassionate means we are rooted in concepts and efforts to improve equity, end poverty, eliminate racism and make clear progress towards Truth and Reconciliation. Edmontonians have asked, through The City Plan, the Zoning Bylaw Renewal, and other related planning initiatives, “What choices do we need to make to become a healthy, urban, and climate resilient city of 2 million people that supports a prosperous region?” Providing accessible, diverse, and affordable housing – citywide – can help begin to tackle this question and zoning is one of many tools that can support these goals. In rewriting Edmonton’s Zoning Bylaw, ensuring housing development is “inclusive and compassionate” begins with a contemplation of the types of urban spaces and places that are needed in order to accommodate people regardless of identity factors like age, gender, race, ability, and income.

The Big City Move of “Inclusive and Compassionate” has a target to ensure that no Edmontonian is in “core housing need”, which means everyone is able to spend less than 30% of their pre-tax income to pay for housing. In 2018, 48,000 households did not have suitable, adequate, and affordable housing (Fig 5). This means building more types of housing across the entire city, including non-market or subsidized housing, supportive housing, and collective housing, so that everyone has a place to call home.

Fig 5. Core Housing Need at 2 Million



### Supportive Housing

Supportive housing is for people who require housing that also provides continuous, on-site or off-site support specific to the needs of its residents.

Supportive housing helps people who have complex needs by bringing the services they need directly to them, rather than leaving them to manage on their own. It provides vulnerable Edmontonians with a permanent, safe place to call home and the consistency and support they need to lead healthy and connected lives.

Finally, in order to achieve the Big City Move to create a “Rebuildable City” and spend effectively on public services and amenities, a third target will be to welcome 600,000 new residents to live inside the Anthony Henday ring road. This means that already built-out neighbourhoods will have to adapt, change, and grow over time so that 50% of all new housing will be built within the Redeveloping Area (see [City Plan Map 9 – Pattern Areas](#)). While some of the housing for new residents will be accommodated in nodes and corridors (see [Nodes and Corridor Discussion Paper](#)), other parts of these neighbourhoods will also need to be ready to welcome new homes and residents.

These targets give some ideas about what Edmonton’s neighbourhoods need to provide as the city grows to its population target of two million. The Draft City Plan also has some clear directions on how this can be achieved.

## City Plan Intentions and Directions for Residential Areas

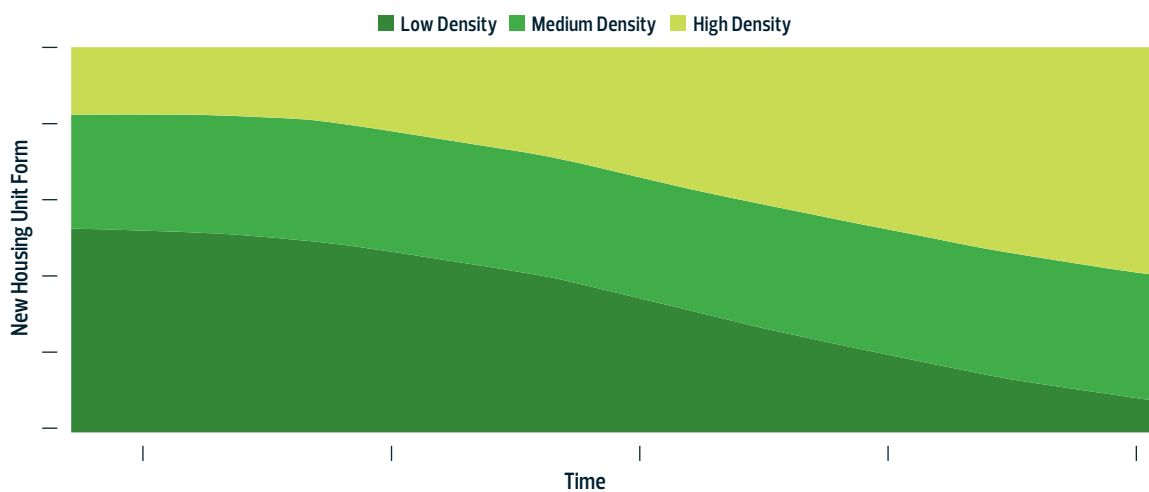
In order to achieve the goals and ambitions of The Draft City Plan, with 15-minute districts and a place for everyone to live, **Edmonton's neighbourhoods will have to grow and change in order to welcome one million more residents into the city.** It will look and feel similar in some ways to how residents experience their neighbourhood already, but different in other ways. The Draft City Plan provides a comprehensive set of policies (See [Appendix 1](#)) to guide these neighbourhood changes to meet the current and future needs of Edmontonians.

### More Housing Everywhere

More and different kinds of housing will need to be built in Edmonton's neighbourhoods for the next 1 million residents. Having a variety of housing within a neighbourhood would allow many people to stay in the same area and choose the housing form that meets their needs through different stages of life. Edmonton has already begun to diversify the type of housing that can be built in its neighbourhoods through the City's work of allowing accessory residential suites (e.g. secondary suites, garden suites) and encouraging more "missing middle housing" to be built.

As the city continues along this path, The Draft City Plan focuses much of the residential growth within Nodes and Corridor areas, where the taller and denser buildings are expected to be located. However, residential neighbourhoods will also see some redevelopment to welcome more housing, including townhouses, small apartment buildings, tiny homes, courtyard communities, and other new types of housing that may not exist yet. The Draft City Plan expects that the proportion of taller and denser residential development will increase to form the majority of development as we approach a population of 2 million residents (see [Fig 6](#)).

**Fig 6. Projected Residential Market Transition**



The City Plan describes how Edmonton will build fewer new low-density housing units (such as single-detached homes) over time and more high-density housing types (such as row housing and apartment-style housing).

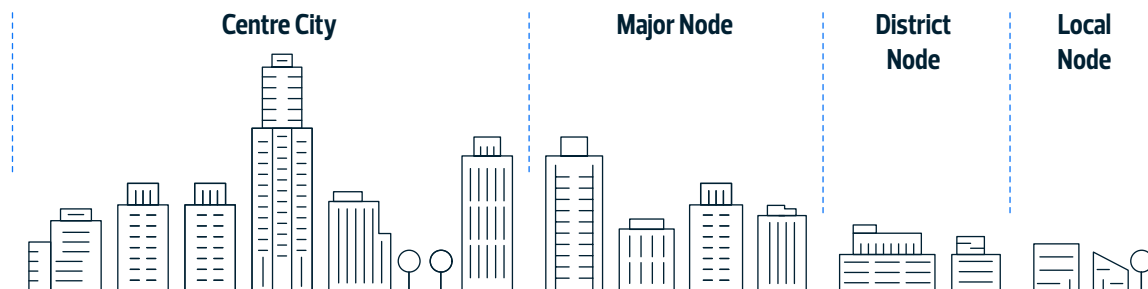
## Meeting Your Basic Needs

As an inclusive and compassionate city, the City strives to provide people with easy access to housing, services, and amenities. The goal of creating 15-minute districts aligns with this ambition. The Draft City Plan outlines several ways to achieve this. Neighbourhoods that can provide a variety of housing options will allow everyone, with or without specific needs, to call that place home.

In Edmonton's older neighbourhoods, there is often a small collection of locally-serving businesses and commercial spaces. Depending on the neighbourhood's era of original planning, this can be located near a park or school. These places currently provide some basic needs to residents and provide gathering spaces. The Draft City Plan intends to find more opportunities to strengthen these areas to evolve into true "Local Nodes" (see [Fig 7](#)). In addition to building on these existing neighbourhood assets, new local nodes will emerge over time in many neighbourhoods where they are absent today. District Planning will help determine appropriate locations for these local nodes.

These hubs of community activity are intended to provide health, social, cultural, recreational and economic benefits to the neighbourhood and its residents. A local node could contain a variety of services and amenities, including parks, businesses, cultural facilities such as places of worship, social services, schools, daycares, or other activities that meet the everyday needs of residents. Giving every neighbourhood more opportunity to foster these nodes or hubs will increase the vibrancy and livability of these neighbourhoods. In addition, identifying local nodes provides an opportunity to position these hubs as magnets for more housing units and housing diversity in nearly every neighbourhood in Edmonton. As a result, the 15-minute district becomes an important organizing principle to determine how to set the most appropriate rules in the new Zoning Bylaw to allow more housing, businesses, services, and community facilities to be built in all neighbourhoods.

Fig 7. Types of Nodes



From The City Plan, the Local Node is the smallest place of activity where a person can find a variety of housing, services, and business activities.

## Design is Important

How new residential buildings are designed and existing ones are improved can ensure that residents of all ages and abilities in Edmonton can easily access housing and local services in their neighbourhood. This could mean actions that ensure buildings maintain a comfortable outdoor environment in the winter or ensuring different kinds of housing units are able to serve residents with specific needs. Action 25 from [Infill Roadmap 2018](#) seeks to integrate urban design into the new Zoning Bylaw. As Edmonton also begins to consider how to address climate change (see [Climate Change discussion paper](#)) and other major disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, this can also be an opportunity to design resilient and sustainable housing.

## MUNICIPAL TRENDS

Cities continue to grow and evolve in the ways they meet their residents' housing needs. **The need to provide a greater range of housing options has prompted cities to pursue a variety of different approaches to organizing residential neighbourhoods.**<sup>1</sup>

1) See the [Nodes and Corridor discussion paper](#) for further details on municipal practices for denser, mixed use areas.

The municipality of **High River, Alberta** has adopted a Zoning Bylaw that focuses on the form and design of buildings, instead of the activities occurring within them. **Portland, Oregon** approved a suite of zoning changes intended to encourage a wider diversity of housing types to be built in its

neighbourhoods. Finally, **Minneapolis, Minnesota** was one of the first US cities to enable more housing by eliminating zones that only allowed single-detached homes. Please see [Appendix 2](#) to read more about these three cities.

## CURRENT ISSUES WITH THE RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Overlap in regulations and similarities between residential zones have emerged over time as the current Zoning Bylaw has been incrementally updated since 2001. **This redundancy has created confusion over the most appropriate zone to develop a particular type of housing.** There are **11 zones** regulating residential development generally up to three storeys, not including Special Area Zones. Consolidating and simplifying these zones will provide a better understanding of the type of housing that each zone should regulate. The new Zoning Bylaw will also complete Action 19 of [Infill Roadmap 2018](#) to "simplify the low scale residential zones for existing neighbourhoods."

The 2018–2019 [Missing Middle Housing Review](#) identified that the RF6 (Medium Density Multiple Family Zone) had significantly similar characteristics to the RA7 (Low Rise Apartment Zone) and that few developments were being built to the RF6 zone. As part of the Missing Middle

review Administration recommended that this zone be retired and these properties be rezoned to RA7. The new Zoning Bylaw will ensure that the proposed equivalent zone to regulate this scale of housing development will have similar characteristics to the RF6 and RA7 zones.

## GENERAL APPROACH TO THE NEW ZONES

The new Zoning Bylaw is an opportunity to fundamentally rethink how Edmonton's neighbourhoods **can best support the needs of a wide range of Edmontonians while advancing the goals of ConnectEdmonton and policies of The Draft City Plan.** The proposed approach to zoning for residential neighbourhoods also draws ideas from other cities, past engagement results, and recent actions the City has taken to make current zoning regulations more effective.

### More Housing Everywhere

To ensure that Edmonton continues to grow in an efficient and sustainable manner, more housing will be needed throughout the city. While much of the city's planned growth is expected to occur within **nodes and corridor areas** as identified in The Draft City Plan, there will be opportunities to add housing throughout other parts of Edmonton's residential neighbourhoods. This type of incremental intensification will allow neighbourhoods to accommodate change gradually as redevelopment will not happen all at once.

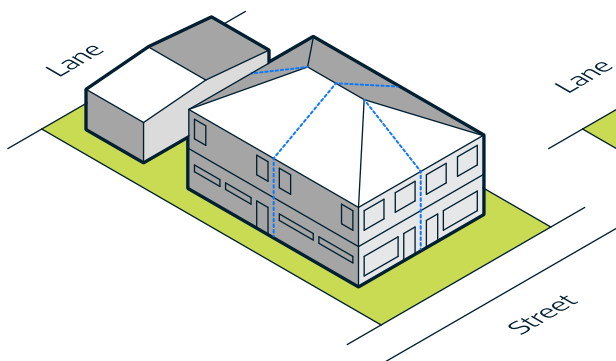
Edmonton's older neighbourhoods are currently seeing properties being redeveloped to include a wider variety of housing types, including row housing, dwelling units above garages, dwelling

units in basements, and small apartment buildings. This trend will continue as newer neighbourhoods progress through their lifecycle until they reach the point when they can also expect to see similar changes. While most people are familiar with single detached, semi-detached, and duplex housing, there could be a wider range of housing types offered within Edmonton's residential neighbourhoods than are commonly found today (**Fig 8**).

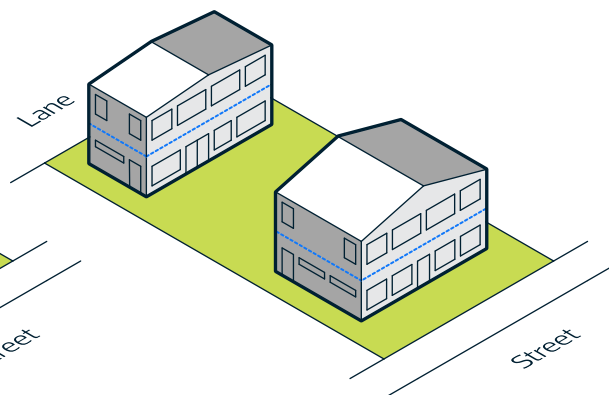


Fig 8. Other Types of Housing on a Typical Residential Lot

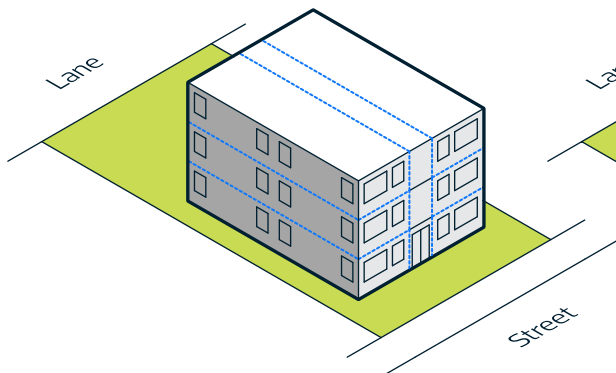
Four residential units



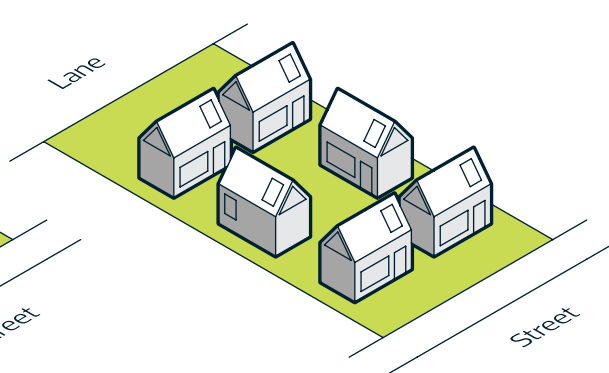
Four residential units



Six residential units



Six residential units



Recent changes to the existing Zoning Bylaw reduced barriers to where supportive housing can be located. Neighbourhoods will also need to accommodate other forms of housing, such as supportive housing and collective housing. This ensures that everyone can have a more equitable opportunity to find a safe place to call home in whichever part of the city suits their needs and their means.

The proposed residential zones are intended to allow many different housing options from market-rate housing to supportive housing to affordable housing of all sizes to be built in Edmonton's neighbourhoods. However, while more enabling zones will help provide the necessary opportunities for more housing, zoning alone is not enough. The Draft City Plan identifies that at least 48,000 households are in core housing need. To address

this issue, the City of Edmonton has several policies in place to [invest in affordable housing programs](#) and [seek affordable housing contributions](#) from specific residential developments.

In addition, the City works with private and non-profit sectors, and all levels of government employing a variety of social services, land policies, and funding programs to build the necessary housing. Working to provide housing for everyone will require the City to collaborate with these other sectors and determine how the new Zoning Bylaw will contribute to a comprehensive strategy in providing affordable housing across many neighbourhoods. Recognizing that this is a continued priority, it will need careful collaboration with the development industry and non-market housing providers.



## Meeting Your Basic Needs

To implement The Draft City Plan's Big City Move of "Community of Communities" and advancing 15-minute districts throughout the city, the new Zoning Bylaw will need to allow more types of activities and uses closer to where people live. This is partly accomplished through the development of [nodes and corridors](#) (Major and District Nodes, and Primary and Secondary Corridors) as components of many neighbourhoods and hubs of activity where people can access businesses and services. However, smaller local nodes of community activity will also need to be dispersed throughout the districts.

The new Zoning Bylaw proposes to allow small scale businesses and other services and activities to be permitted in the Small Scale Residential zone. This would allow existing local nodes (to be identified through the District Plans) to organically expand to include some adjacent sites as needed. In addition to the criteria found in the District Plans, there would also be requirements within the Small Scale Residential Zone to determine where businesses and services could be appropriately located, to ensure the neighbourhood has easy access and sufficient public infrastructure is available. Some of these location requirements could include:

- + Beside existing commercial development within a neighbourhood
- + More than 100 or 200 metres away from identified nodes and corridors areas, so as to avoid competing with the vitality of other nodes and corridors

Further consideration will be needed to determine how new local nodes could emerge in neighbourhoods. Additional location criteria such as being near or beside schools, parks, places

of worship, public facilities, or required along a collector road may be warranted.

Home-based businesses will continue to be permitted in residential units. The rules will be reviewed and are proposed to be simplified where possible. However, rules will remain to ensure that any home-based business is secondary and that the primary purpose of the site is residential. The dwelling unit must continue to appear from the outside as a place where someone lives and can't appear to be only a business operating out of the building.

There is growing interest in the possibility of allowing "micro-businesses", "small-scale retail space" or "accessory commercial units" that have a storefront (accessory building or in the primary dwelling) to be built on residential properties (See [Fig 9](#)). This has become particularly relevant due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with more people working from home and municipalities looking for new ways to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. Further examination will be needed to determine the benefits and impacts to a neighbourhood.

Finally, to increase opportunity for people to grow food where they live, the act of growing food (including the sale of some food on-site) will be permitted in all residential zones generally without needing a development permit (there may be some exceptions). Raising bees and hens in any residential zone would still require the existing permits and licences from the City. More information on the proposed directions for food production is identified in the [Agriculture and Rural Zones discussion paper](#).

**Fig 9.** Examples of "Accessory Commercial Units" or "Micro-Businesses"  
Image on left from [neighborhoodworkshop.org](#); image on right from [fastcompany.com](#)



## Design is Important

To achieve The Draft City Plan's target to accommodate 50% of Edmonton's future growth through redevelopment, it is proposed for the new Zoning Bylaw to be more flexible in the type of residential building that could be built on any given site. Housing design influences how people experience their neighbourhood, and greater design flexibility must be counterbalanced by regulations which address the potential impacts from new development. The current Zoning Bylaw controls how housing is built through regulations such as setbacks from the property line, height limits, site coverage limits, some design criteria and landscaping requirements. The proposed residential zones will continue to regulate the size and shape of buildings as well as other elements of the property.

The objective of these regulations is not to dictate a particular design or architectural style, but to ensure that whatever is built is compatible with its surroundings. Compatibility does not mean "the same as." Compatibility means that the form, scale and mass of buildings in a given zone are generally similar, and that the activities that are allowed in these buildings do not create undue impacts on their surroundings.

Regulating these elements of a development in too much detail would result in a new Zoning Bylaw as complicated and inflexible as the current bylaw. It is more practical to view compatibility based on the entire range of housing forms that exist, from tiny homes to high-rise buildings. The proposed new residential zones will support compatibility by grouping generally similar building forms and scales and applying thoughtful design regulations to support vibrant and attractive neighbourhoods without inhibiting the creativity and innovative potential of Edmonton's property owners and the development industry.

In Edmonton's older neighbourhoods or along major streets, the current Zoning Bylaw requires buildings to be designed with architectural features to create visual interest and to ensure the building complements the existing streetscape. While architectural design requirements are proposed for all residential zones, the level of architectural

control will differ based on the zone as a bigger building will require more design considerations to reduce any potential impacts.

The City has collaborated with different stakeholders to develop the [Winter Design Guidelines](#) and the [Light Efficient Community Guidelines](#) to guide the design of buildings to create comfortable winter environments or reduce light pollution, for example. Administration will review these documents and explore which elements could be implemented in the new Zoning Bylaw. In addition, the residential zones will have a role to play in supporting resiliency in Edmonton's neighbourhoods by ensuring climate measures are incorporated into future housing. Possible zoning actions and approaches are discussed further in the [Climate Resilience and Energy Transition discussion paper](#).

## Simplifying the Rules

As part of the process to create a "[strategic, simplified, and streamlined Zoning Bylaw](#)," Administration will examine everything from the number of zones to how uses and activities are defined to what actual rules should govern development. The current Zoning Bylaw uses 15 residential zones to regulate where people can live (see [Appendix 3](#)). The new Zoning Bylaw proposes to combine or consolidate down to two residential zones (see "Proposed New Zones"), as described in [Table 2](#).

To adopt the new Zoning Bylaw, a city-wide rezoning process will occur to align properties with the zones in the new Zoning Bylaw. To do this, Administration will establish equivalencies between existing zones in the current Zoning Bylaw and the new zones. The approach will apply like-for-like zones where possible.

Table 2. Summary of Current and Proposed Residential Zones

Proposed Zone	Intent of the Zone	Height Range	Anticipated Equivalent Zone in current Zoning Bylaw	
Small Scale Residential Zone	The intent of this zone is to allow for a variety of small scale housing options in most residential neighbourhoods. Small scale commercial and other non-residential uses will be permitted where District Plans identify these as local node areas.	1 to 3 storeys	RF1 RF2 RF3 RF4 RSL RPL RLD RMD RF5 RMH CNC	Single Detached Residential Zone Low Density Infill Zone Small Scale Infill Development Zone Semi-Detached Residential Zone Residential Small Lot Zone Planned Lot Residential Zone Residential Low Density Zone Residential Mixed-Dwelling Zone Row Housing Zone Mobile Home Zone Neighbourhood Convenience Commercial Zone
Low Rise Residential Zone	The intent of this zone is to provide opportunities for low-rise residential development: + along many secondary corridors, as identified in The City Plan, with specific opportunity areas to be defined by District Plans + beside some local nodes + in areas that were previously built or zoned to allow low-rise development Limited non-residential uses on the ground floor are also allowed.	3 to 6 storeys	UCRH RF6 RA7 RA8	Urban Character Row Housing Zone Medium Density Multiple Family Zone Low Rise Apartment Zone Medium Rise Apartment Zone
Mixed Use 1 (MU1), Mixed Use 2 (MU2), and Comprehensive Site (CS) Zone	Taller and denser residential development is expected to be located in Node and Corridor areas, which are proposed to be regulated through the Mixed Use 1 (MU1), Mixed Use 2 (MU2), and Comprehensive Site (CS) Zone.  See <a href="#">Nodes and Corridors Discussion Paper</a> for further details.	7 to 26 storeys	RA9	High Rise Apartment Zone

By simplifying and combining residential zones, the new Zoning Bylaw intends to create a clearer understanding of what housing types will be allowed as the built form increases in size and scale for each zone. The names of the zones are proposed to focus on the scale of the housing that is permitted, not the density, because the same density could result in different scales and sizes of residential buildings.

The new Zoning Bylaw will explore opportunities to refine and clarify the rules around residential and neighbourhood development. This means regulating the characteristics of a development that can have impacts on adjacent properties or the neighbourhood, or where the regulation would help to achieve a goal or objective of City policies or plans such as The Draft City Plan. For example, City Council recently approved a change to remove the rules determining how many parking spaces need to be provided for a development. However, if

parking is provided, rules are still in place to control how it is provided. This is intended to achieve City objectives to use land more efficiently while reducing the impacts to surrounding development.

Similarly, there are aspects of a development or use of the property that may not need to be as strictly regulated by the City, such as window location, or design requirements for mobile homes. Instead, the new Zoning Bylaw will ensure that the purpose of the proposed regulations is significant enough to establish the zoning rule, whether it is to address stormwater impacts (e.g. site coverage, landscaping requirements), provide guidance for infrastructure planning (e.g. density, floor area ratio), mitigating impacts (e.g. setbacks, design requirements), or achieving long-term city building objectives (e.g. allowing rooftop solar energy systems, allowing more commercial activities in residential areas).

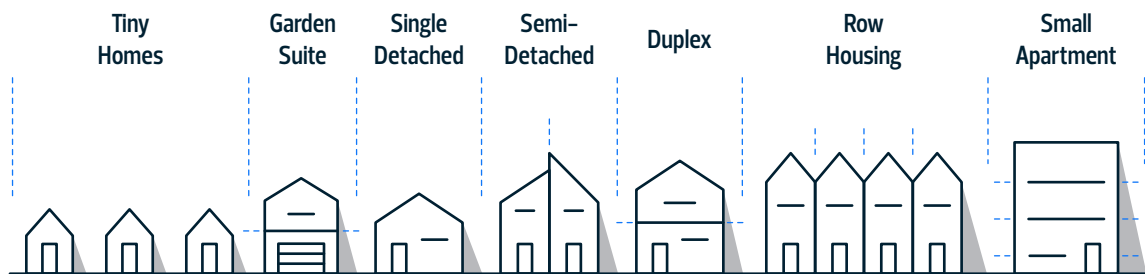
## PROPOSED NEW ZONES

### Small Scale Residential Zone

The Small Scale Residential Zone will apply to most of the residential areas of the city and will change how these areas are regulated. This residential zone will allow different forms of housing, typically up to three storeys in height (Fig 10). This zone

will also allow limited commercial and other non-residential uses to strengthen local nodes of community activity as identified in The Draft City Plan and future District Planning.

Fig 10. Forms of Housing in the Small-scale Residential Zone



Examples of the different forms of housing that may be found in the Small Scale Residential Zone. Housing images are not to scale.

## Uses

Residential use is the main type of activity in the Small Scale Residential Zone (See [Appendix 4](#) for a description of the uses). This will allow all types of residential buildings to be built to a similar scale, including houses, apartments, rowhouses, tiny homes, collective housing, supportive housing, and mobile homes within the urban areas of the city. Mobile home communities located in the rural parts of Edmonton are proposed to be zoned within a Rural Zone (see the [Agriculture and Rural Zone Discussion Paper](#)).

Small scale commercial and other non-residential uses may be permitted as conditional uses where District Plans identify these as local node areas or where locational criteria deem these uses to be appropriate. These nodes could include small retail shops, professional offices, cafes, bakeries, or places of worship. The intent is that the non-residential uses should be similar in scale as the residential uses of the surrounding area. Home based businesses and urban agriculture will be permitted activities.

**Conditional Uses** are uses that will be permitted in a given zone provided that a certain set of conditions are met. In this way, conditional uses function differently than the discretionary uses of the current Zoning Bylaw. If the conditions are not met, the proposal for the conditional use would either be refused or the Development Officer could consider exercising discretion in granting a variance to the condition. If a variance is granted, the approval would be subject to appeal and notification to surrounding neighbours would be required.

## Regulations

The intended scale of these residential areas is up to three storeys in height across the entire city, which is consistent with what is currently allowed in the standard residential zones of the Zoning Bylaw. This height will accommodate a range of housing types.

The following table outlines proposed minimum site area requirements and is intended to limit the potential for overdevelopment on smaller sites while recognizing that as more dwelling units are proposed, additional land is needed to accommodate requirements such as landscaping, parking, waste collection, and amenity areas.

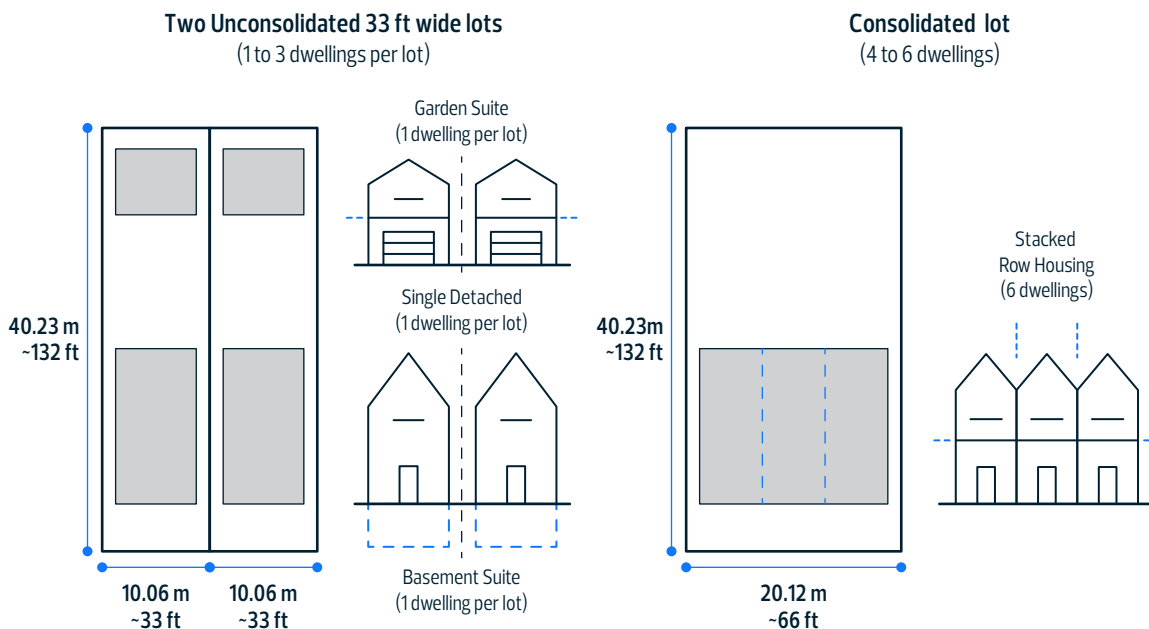
**Table 3.** Minimum Site Area Required Per Dwelling Unit

Dwelling Units	Minimum Site Area Requirements
1 to 3	75 m <sup>2</sup> per Dwelling Unit
4 to 6	110 m <sup>2</sup> per Dwelling Unit
7 or more	150 m <sup>2</sup> per Dwelling Unit

The proposed minimum site area requirements are partly based on the recent [Missing Middle Zoning Review](#) changes, which now permit a garden suite and a secondary suite to be built in association with a single-detached house on a minimum property size of 225 square metres (7.5 metres wide by 30 metres deep) for a total of three dwelling units. At the mid-range, two unconsolidated 33 feet (20.12 metres) wide lots (809 square metres) could be developed to have three dwelling units on each lot to yield six dwelling units. Alternatively, these two lots could be consolidated to develop a stacked rowhouse format (three units above, three units below) or three-unit row house with three dwelling units in the rear of the site (see [Fig 11](#)) to yield the same six dwelling units, as allowed by the minimum site area requirement of 110 square metres per dwelling unit.

The minimum site area requirement for a rowhouse development in the existing residential zones of the Zoning Bylaw is 150 square metres per dwelling unit and serves as an appropriate minimum threshold for residential development with more than six residential units. This intends to balance retaining existing development rights with expanding opportunities for different housing forms. Setbacks, site coverage, and height limits would exist to control the size of the building that could be allowed.

Fig 11. Consolidation of Two 33 Foot Wide Lots



A diagram depicting how two lots could be consolidated to develop into three to six residential developments

**What is an Overlay?**

An overlay is an additional set of rules applied to a defined area to achieve a specific purpose in the Zoning Bylaw. The overlay’s regulations can cut across zone boundaries and apply to different types of zones, if desired.

**What is the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay (MNO)?**

The Mature Neighbourhood Overlay is used to regulate residential development in Edmonton’s mature residential neighbourhoods, while responding to the context of surrounding development and maintaining the pedestrian-oriented design of the streetscape.

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

objectives to increase housing opportunity. For example, housing would be permitted to be 10.0 meters in height across the city or smaller buildings may be permitted with a smaller rear setback to accommodate courtyard-style housing.

There are some challenges to consider in implementing the Small Scale Residential Zone. As the City implements changes to its waste management system, an analysis will be needed to ensure new development provides enough space for waste collection. As well, current infill redevelopment with additional dwelling units often result in the requirement to upgrade existing infrastructure such as larger water pipes or fire hydrants. These upgrades are requested to ensure sufficient water pressure is available in case of a fire. However, these added costs are a significant barrier to redevelopment in certain neighbourhoods of the city.

Alternative solutions are being explored in collaboration with Fire and Rescue Services and EPCOR to determine how to meet safety requirements with a balanced approach to infrastructure provision. Further [fire flow analysis](#) to determine where deficiencies exist could help clarify where infrastructure upgrades are actually needed. Another option is to mandate more fire-resistant materials for wall construction or adding

sprinkler systems into dwelling units. While this is still an additional cost, it is less than the cost of additional infrastructure being built. Examples of these types of regulations can be found in the [Bon Accord](#) (Part 9, Section 6) and [Lacombe County](#) (Section 6.31) land use bylaws.

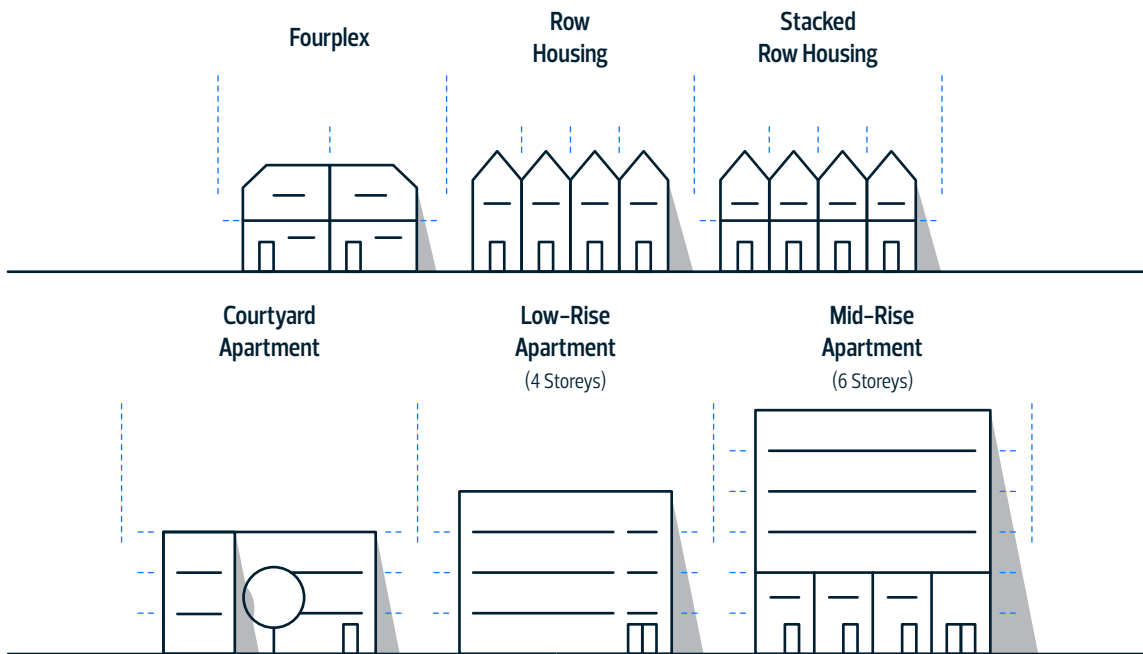
Some existing residential zones currently permit a house to have a building wall located directly on a property line. This is called "zero lot line

development". While this has provided builders with flexibility in lot configuration and building placement, it has created some challenges relating to complex servicing and access agreements, ensuring shared access for building repairs, and building overhang issues. This type of development will need to be re-examined to determine if zero lot line development is appropriate for Edmonton's neighbourhoods or if alternative but similar regulations can be substituted.

## Low Rise Residential Zone

The Low Rise Residential Zone is intended to allow the next larger scale in housing from the Small Scale Residential Zone. This zone will enable the development of "Missing Middle Housing," which can range from row housing or courtyard housing to four to six storey apartment buildings (Fig 12). These sites are currently dispersed throughout Edmonton's neighbourhoods, which helps to provide more options for different housing types across the city. Housing in the scale found in the Low Rise Residential Zone may also be appropriate in areas identified in District Plans as local nodes or secondary corridors.

Fig 12. Forms of Housing in the Low-Rise Residential Zone



Examples of the different forms of housing that may be found in the Low-Rise Residential Zone. Housing images are not to scale.



## Uses

The primary use for the Low Rise Residential Zone will be for a range of multi-unit housing types up to six storeys in height. The ground floor of an apartment building would permit a limited floor area for commercial, cultural, or civic uses to provide additional services to the local neighbourhood. Home based businesses and urban agriculture would be permitted activities in this zone.

## Regulations

The regulations for the Low Rise Residential Zone are proposed to be similar to those found in the current equivalent medium scale zones (i.e. RF5, RF6, RA7, RA8. See [Appendix 3](#) for a description of these zones) as these were recently updated and approved by Council in August 2019.

Height will be limited from three to six storeys and the scale and size of the building will be controlled through the use of Floor Area Ratio, which limits how big a building can be based on the total amount of floor space compared to the size of the site. Setbacks, landscaping, parking location, and design requirements will generally still apply, but as all regulations are reviewed, some of these may be adjusted slightly. Design requirements such as articulation and stepbacks will remain to provide a transition from adjacent shorter buildings and ensure impacts from the massing of the building are addressed. This zone may also incorporate design guideline recommendations such as the [Winter Design Guidelines](#) and the [Light Efficient Community Guidelines](#), where appropriate.

## Mid Rise and High Rise Residential Zones

Mid rise and high rise residential developments such as apartment buildings are generally expected to be developed in Node and Corridor areas as determined by The Draft City Plan and the District Plans. As Node and Corridor areas are proposed to be regulated using the mixed use zones (see [Nodes and Corridors discussion paper](#)), separate residential zones regulating this scale of development do not appear to be necessary and may create regulation overlap. If development for mid rise and high rise residential development is proposed to occur outside of node or corridor areas, there would need to be further analysis to determine if it would align with the City's plans, policies, and objectives, including The Draft City Plan and District Plans. If these proposals are appropriate, these may be situations where a Direct Control zone could be used to recognize the unique location of the proposal.



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The design and growth of Edmonton's neighbourhoods is complex and contains many areas for consideration. While this paper has attempted to address a variety of issues relating to residential development in Edmonton, **it is not exhaustive and there are additional issues that will require further examination as the new Zoning Bylaw is developed.**

### Universal Design

Section 93 of the current Zoning Bylaw outlines the requirements for providing dwelling units that are suitable for all ages and abilities in exchange for allowing additional dwelling units beyond what is permitted in the zone. Supporting these regulations are the City's [Access Design Guide](#) and the Alberta Safety Codes Council's [Barrier-Free Design Guide](#). However, as most small scale housing is exempt from the Alberta Building Code's barrier-free requirements, there is not currently mass adoption of barrier-free design into residential housing. As the City attempts to address issues such as the need to build more housing and incorporate climate resilience measures, Administration will need to explore how universal design can be incorporated at a wider scale to ensure that housing visitability and needs of people of all ages and abilities are met. Some opportunities could link universal design requirements with permissive bonusing schemes.

### Flag lot subdivision

In 2018, the City launched a pilot project to examine the possibility of [creating flag lot subdivisions](#) that allow dwelling units facing lanes to be subdivided and sold to create more opportunities for affordable home ownership. As this pilot is ongoing, Administration can explore the possibility of permitting this type of land subdivision once the pilot is complete and an analysis of its future feasibility has been carried out.

# ZONE SUMMARIES

## Small Scale Residential Zone

### General Purpose

The general purpose of this zone is to allow for a variety of small scale housing options and at specific locations allow small scale commercial, civic, and cultural uses to support local nodes of activity.

### Permitted Uses

- + Agriculture
- + Civic Services
- + Residential

### Conditional Uses

- + Home Based Business
- + Food, Cultural and Entertainment
- + Indoor Sales and Service
- + Public Utility
- + Special Events / Temporary Uses

### Regulations for Conditional Uses

#### Animal raising as part of an Agriculture use

- + Hens or bees are the only animals that can be raised as part of an Agricultural Use, in alignment with the limited number of animals allowed through the Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw. Other types of livestock are not allowed.

#### Home Based Business regulations

- + A Home Based Business occurring inside a dwelling unit or accessory building is allowed but must be a secondary function of the dwelling unit
- + Additional regulations similar to what currently exists in the Zoning Bylaw will be required to ensure a Home Based Business operates with minimal impact

#### Non-residential regulations

- + New non-residential uses are only allowed:
  - On or beside existing non-residential sites identified as Local Nodes in District Plans, and
  - More than 100-200m from a node or corridor as identified in the District Plans

*Other location criteria may be considered with the drafting of the new Zoning Bylaw*

### Development Regulations

#### Minimum Site Area

Dwelling Units	Minimum site area requirements
1 to 3	75 m <sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit
4 to 6	110 m <sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit
7 or more	150 m <sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit

#### Minimum Front Setback

- + Contextual front setback with a 3.0m minimum. This is carried over from the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay

#### Minimum Side Setback

- + 1.2m. A separate requirement may apply to zero lot line-type developments

#### Minimum Rear Setback

- + 7.5m, except that individual buildings that are 6.5m or less in Height may have a minimum Rear Setback of 1.2 m to allow buildings to locate and orient in different configurations, similar to what is currently allowed in the RF5 Zone.

#### Maximum Site Coverage

- + Maximum site coverage is proposed and will be within the range of existing maximums

#### Maximum Height

- + 10.0m for residential and non-residential buildings is proposed. This continues existing requirements from the standard zones.

#### Larger Dwelling Units

- + In a development with at least 20 dwelling units, the average number of bedrooms per dwelling unit in a development shall be at least 2.25. This ensures some units are large enough to accommodate larger households in developments in this zone without creating a barrier for developments with fewer dwelling units proposed.

### **Moveable Dwelling (mobile homes and tiny homes) Regulations**

These types of dwellings:

- + shall screen the undercarriage of the structure from view by the foundation or skirting;
- + shall remove the towing apparatus, axle or wheels. The towing apparatus may remain attached if it is concealed to the satisfaction of the Development Officer;
- + shall be placed on a permanent foundation, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer in consultation with Safety Codes Permits & Inspections.
- + shall be connected to city services

### **Landscaping Requirements**

- + Landscaping requirements will apply.

### **Impermeable Surface Coverage**

- + Impermeable surface coverage maximums will apply.

### **Amenity Area**

- + Amenity Area requirements will apply. This continues existing requirements.

### **Parking Location**

- + Parking location will be regulated. This continues existing requirements.

### **Vehicle Access**

- + Vehicle access to the site shall be from a lane where a lane exists.

### **Design Regulations**

#### **Maximum Facade Width**

- + Maximum facade width of 28.1 metres is maintained to ensure the streetscape does not consist of one solid building wall.

#### **Building Design Regulations**

- + Requirements for design and articulation are proposed to be incorporated from the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay.

#### **Dwelling Unit Entrances**

- + Dwelling unit entrances should face the street as much as possible.

#### **Mechanical and Ventilation Systems**

- + Non-residential buildings should ensure mechanical and ventilation systems are directed away from residential buildings as much as possible to mitigate impacts of noise and smell.

### **Performance Standards**

#### **Lighting Requirements**

- + Basic lighting standards would be required as recommended through the [Light Efficient Community Guidelines](#).

## **Low Rise Residential Zone**

### **General Purpose**

The intent of this zone is to provide opportunities for low-rise residential development:

- + along many secondary corridors, as identified in The City Plan, with specific opportunity areas to be defined by District Plans
- + beside some local nodes
- + in areas that were previously built or zoned to allow low-rise development

Limited non-residential uses on the ground floor are also allowed.

### **Permitted Uses**

- + Agriculture
- + Civic Services
- + Residential

### **Conditional Uses**

- + Home Based Business
- + Food, Cultural and Entertainment
- + Indoor Sales and Service
- + Public Utility
- + Special Events / Temporary Uses

### **Regulations for Conditional Uses**

#### **Animal raising as part of an Agriculture use**

- + Hens or bees are the only animals that can be raised as part of an Agricultural Use, in alignment with the limited number of animals allowed through the Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw. Other types of livestock are not allowed.

#### **Home Based Business regulations**

- + A Home Based Business occurring inside a dwelling unit or accessory building is allowed but must be a secondary function of the dwelling unit
- + Additional regulations similar to what currently exists in the Zoning Bylaw will be required to ensure a Home Based Business operates with minimal impact

#### **Non-residential regulations**

- + Non-Residential Uses are restricted to the ground floor and limited in floor area

### **Development Regulations**

#### **Minimum Density**

- + Minimum density of 35 dwelling units / hectare. This is the current minimum density for the RF5 Zone

#### **Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)+**

- + Maximum Floor Area Ratio of 2.3 for up to 4 storeys. This is in keeping with the existing FAR for RA7-type developments
- + Maximum Floor Area Ratio of 3.0 for 5 to 6 storeys. This is in keeping with the existing FAR for RA8-type developments

#### **Height**

- + Minimum height: 3 storeys
- + Maximum height: 5 storeys; 6 storeys when additional performance is achieved (see below)

#### **Minimum Front Setback**

- + Range of 1m to 4.5m depending on the context of its location (smaller setbacks in node and corridor areas)

#### **Minimum Side Setback**

- + 1.2m. This is in keeping with existing RA7 and RA8 requirements

#### **Minimum Rear Setback**

- + 7.5m, except that individual buildings that are 6.5m or less in Height may have a minimum Rear Setback of 1.2 m

#### **Landscaping Requirements**

- + Landscaping requirements will apply.

#### **Impermeable Surface Coverage**

- + Impermeable surface coverage maximums will apply.

#### **Amenity Area**

- + Amenity Area requirements will apply. This continues existing requirements.

#### **Parking Location**

- + Parking location will be regulated. This continues existing requirements.

### **Vehicle Access**

- + Access from a lane where a lane exists. Access location to minimize pedestrian and vehicle interaction where possible.

### **Waste / Loading**

- + Waste or loading areas would be screened from view from public roadways.

### **Reports and Studies**

- + Reports and studies may be required as part of an application depending on the design and scale of the proposed development, such as:
  - Sun/Shadow impact study
  - Any other study or information necessary for the Development Officer to make a decision.

### **Design Regulations**

#### **Building Design**

- + Use of different materials, articulation, and other design techniques will be required to break up the massing.

#### **Stepbacks**

- + Stepbacks would be required above three storeys where the building is beside smaller-scale residential sites. Stepbacks would not be required if the equivalent amount of distance is provided as a side setback.

#### **Dwelling Unit Entrances**

- + Dwelling units at ground level should feature entrances to the street.

#### **Design Guidelines**

- + Incorporate design guideline recommendations where possible.

### **Performance Standards**

#### **Lighting Requirements**

- + Basic lighting standards would be required as recommended through the [Light Efficient Community Guidelines](#).

#### **Bonusing**

- + One additional storey would be permitted if any of these are provided (this mirrors the incentives proposed for the Mixed-Use 1 Zone):
  - when 10% of total units are larger dwelling units (greater than 100 m2 and at least 3 bedrooms)
  - climate resilient design features are incorporated
  - universal design is incorporated within the building and dwelling units

## NEXT STEPS

As Edmonton begins to welcome one million more people, The Draft City Plan provides policy direction **to ensure that everyone can afford a place to call home and where people of all abilities can access their everyday needs within 15 minutes of where they live.**

The proposed residential zones in the new Zoning Bylaw look to implement The City Plan **by enabling a greater variety of housing in all of Edmonton's neighbourhoods and becoming more efficient in what the Zoning Bylaw does and does not regulate.** These proposed zones and regulations are a first attempt at creating a new Zoning Bylaw. This will require input from everyone to help refine and improve these ideas to ensure the final regulations will help create neighbourhoods where everyone has a home and a community that feels safe and welcoming.



## GET INVOLVED!

- Submit your feedback about this discussion paper at [engaged.edmonton.ca](https://engaged.edmonton.ca)
- Visit [edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal](https://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](mailto:zoningbylawrenewal@edmonton.ca)



## Appendix 1 | City Plan Residential Policies

I want to BELONG and contribute.		
Direction	1.1.1.5	Develop, enable and animate community hubs for intergenerational gathering.
Intention	1.1.4	Ensure seniors have the opportunity to access services and amenities that support a high quality of life.
Direction	1.1.4.1	Improve access to equitable, appropriate and culturally relevant amenities and facilities for seniors at the district level.
Direction	1.1.4.3	Integrate age-friendly design to connect seniors and reduce social isolation.
Intention	1.2.2	Ensure vibrant and inclusive communities where children, youth and families can live, learn and grow together.
Direction	1.2.2.3	Enable convenient child care facilities in a variety of locations throughout the city.
Direction	1.2.2.4	Encourage medium and high density residential development that serves households above the average Edmonton household size.
Outcome	1.3	Edmonton’s city design fosters a sense of place by celebrating our unique attributes, diversity and opportunities within the region.
Intention	1.3.1	Promote and celebrate the distinct communities that contribute to Edmonton, its quality of life and unique sense of place.
Direction	1.3.1.3	Encourage diverse design and development in all neighbourhoods so communities can continue to evolve over time.
Direction	1.3.1.5	Encourage high quality urban design that celebrates the unique physical pattern of the city’s systems, networks and places.
Direction	1.3.2.4	Improve and integrate winter city design through the development of buildings, the public realm and open spaces.
Direction	1.3.3.4	Enable all districts to achieve more income diverse neighbourhoods and a greater mix of land uses.



I want to LIVE in a place that feels like home.		
Outcome	2.2	Edmontonians have the ability to live locally, with access to diverse and affordable housing options in communities that support their daily needs.
Direction	2.2.1.4	Use full City authority in the provision of municipal reserve, school reserve, or municipal and school reserve, or cash-in-lieu in accordance with the Municipal Government Act
Direction	2.2.1.6	Enable ongoing residential infill to occur at a variety of scales, densities and designs within all parts of the residential area
Direction	2.2.2.1	Streamline provision of affordable housing in all neighbourhoods through continual regulatory and procedural review and improvement.
Direction	2.2.3.4	Enable the development and redevelopment of small commercial sites and centres to support mixed use local nodes city-wide.
Intention	2.3.1	Promote opportunities to accommodate growth through the compact development of new and existing neighbourhoods.
Direction	2.3.1.2	Encourage residential and nonresidential redevelopment that contributes to the livability and adaptability of districts.
Direction	2.3.2.6	Require that all districts meet or exceed regional density targets as they develop and redevelop over time

## Appendix 2 | Examples of Recent Changes to the Approach of Regulating Residential Development

### High River, Alberta

In 2017 the Municipality of High River in Alberta became one of the few Canadian municipalities to adopt a form-based Zoning Bylaw. This Zoning Bylaw focuses on controlling the size, shape and appearance of the building, rather than the activity itself. For example, in its "[Traditional Neighbourhood District](#)", the bylaw allows as-of-right residential activity but also a variety of commercial, institutional, and arts and crafts-

based manufacturing uses to meet the daily needs of residents. The regulations ensure that buildings, regardless of the activity within, have the 'form and appearance' of residential buildings to maintain the 'nature' of a residential neighbourhood (**Fig A**). There is no distinction to what type of housing is permitted in this zone as long as it meets the development and design requirements of the zone.

*Fig A. Traditional Neighbourhood District, High River*



This provides a visual representation of the "Traditional Neighbourhood District" as envisioned in the land use bylaw and should guide the reader to understand the intended outcome of how development should occur.

### Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis is seen as an early adopter in the United States of expanding housing options by eliminating zones that only permitted single-detached housing. The [Minneapolis 2040 Plan](#) approved in 2018, directed a change to zoning rules that allows three residential units on any residential site across the entire city, permits three

to six storey developments near major transit lines or job centres, eliminates minimum parking requirements throughout the city, and adds requirements for new development to set aside some units as affordable housing. The plan also directed the City to increase funding for affordable housing programs.

## Portland, Oregon

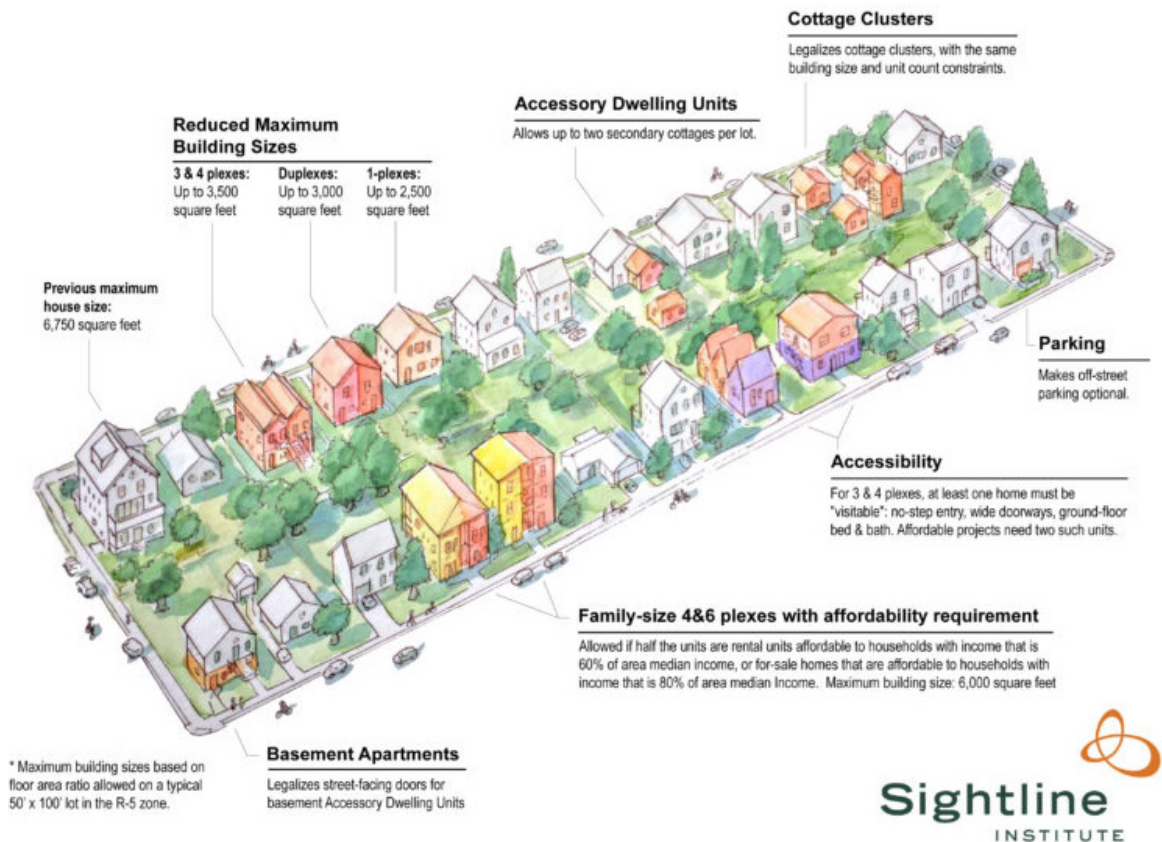
The City of Portland recently approved zoning amendments in August 2020 that will reshape its neighbourhoods for years to come. The “[Residential Infill Project’s](#)” purpose was to propose zoning rule changes to allow for a greater diversity of housing types to be permitted in its neighbourhoods as the city anticipates at least 100,000 more households by 2035. The following zoning changes are intended to open the possibilities for a greater range of housing to be built in these neighbourhoods (**Fig B**):

- + Up to four dwelling units in different configurations are permitted on a site, including basement units, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes,

and cottage housing clusters

- + For three and four dwelling unit buildings, at least one unit must meet Portland’s accessibility requirements
- + Building sizes are restricted but limits are increased as the number of units increase
- + Up to six dwelling units are permitted on a site if at least three of the units meet [Portland’s affordability requirements](#), which were established in 1998
- + Minimum parking requirements are removed for these sites

Fig B Proposed Zoning Changes, City of Portland



A visual representation of the proposed zoning changes to be approved by the City of Portland. Image courtesy of [Sightline Institute](#) and Alfred Twu

## Appendix 3 | General Descriptions of existing Residential Zones in Zoning Bylaw 12800

Existing Zone	General Purpose of the Zone
RF1 – Single Detached Residential Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for Single Detached Housing while allowing other forms of small scale housing in the form of Secondary Suites, Garden Suites, Semi-detached Housing and Duplex Housing.
RSL – Residential Small Lot Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for smaller lot Single Detached Housing with attached Garages in a suburban setting that provides the opportunity for the more efficient utilization of undeveloped suburban areas and includes the opportunity for Secondary Suites and Garden Suites.
RF2 – Low Density Infill Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to allow for Single Detached Housing, infill on narrow lots, Semi-detached Housing, Duplex Housing, Secondary Suites and Garden Suites.
RPL – Planned Lot Residential Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for small lot Single Detached Housing serviced by both a Public Roadway and a Lane, including Zero Lot Line Development and Reverse Housing forms, that provides the opportunity for the more efficient utilization of land in developing neighbourhoods, while maintaining the privacy and independence afforded by Single Detached Housing forms.
RLD – Residential Low Density Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to facilitate a range of ground-oriented housing forms that use land and infrastructure more efficiently than typical low-density development. The zone provides flexibility of lot sizes and widths to provide choice and to accommodate a mix of housing types including Zero Lot Line Development in developing neighbourhoods.
RF3 – Small Scale Infill Development Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for a mix of small scale housing.
RF4 – Semi-Detached Residential Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide a zone primarily for Semi-detached Housing and Duplex Housing.
RMD – Residential Mixed Dwelling Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for a range of dwelling types and densities including Single Detached, Semi-detached and Row Housing that provides the opportunity for more efficient utilization of land in developing neighbourhoods, while encouraging diversity in built form.
RF5 – Row Housing Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for ground oriented housing.

Existing Zone	General Purpose of the Zone
UCRH – Urban Character Row Housing Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for medium density ground-oriented Multi-unit Housing in a manner that is characteristic of urban settings and can include more intensive development in the form of, but not limited to, smaller yards, greater Height, orientation to a public street, and greater attention to architectural detail. This Zone is intended as a transition zone between low and higher density housing.
RF6 – Medium Density Multiple Family Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for medium density housing, where some units may not have access at ground level.
RA7 – Low Rise Apartment Zone	To provide a Zone for low rise Multi-unit Housing.
RA8 – Medium Rise Apartment Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for medium rise Multi-unit Housing.
RA9 – High Rise Apartment Zone	To develop high rise residential buildings that contain active residential or non-residential Frontages at ground level. This Zone is intended to allow supportive non-residential Uses that complement the primary residential Uses, and improve the pedestrian experience at ground level. Design regulations are included in the Zone to manage impacts that tall buildings can have in relation to shadow, wind, parking, context, massing and interface at ground level.
RMH – Mobile Home Zone	The purpose of this Zone is to provide for Mobile Homes developed within a Mobile Home Park or Mobile Home Subdivision.

## Appendix 4 | Proposed Uses and General Descriptions for Reference in the Residential Zones

Use	Description	Some Examples
Residential	Any building or activity where people live	Houses, Apartments etc.
Home Based Business	Business activity or service secondary to a Residential use that may generate multiple business-related visits per day, some noise, and/or outdoor storage	Accountants, hairdressers, contractors operating off-site, etc.
Indoor Sales and Services	Any sales or service activity occurring in a building; no off-site impacts or all impacts should be contained in the building	Retail stores, offices, salons, doctors clinics, makerspaces, etc.
Food, Culture, and Entertainment	Spaces where people come together for entertainment, food and drink, or recreational purposes.  Occurs at a variety of scales and requires regulations to minimize impacts appropriate to the zones.	Restaurants, pubs, cafes, nightclubs, theatres, concert halls, church, stadium, etc.
Civic Services	Activities or uses that provide a public service but can have impacts to the surrounding areas	Schools, libraries, rec facilities, fire stations, police stations, transit centre, City Hall
Public Utility	Spaces, buildings, structures, or facilities that provide common utilities to neighbourhoods and the city overall.  Require regulations to minimize impacts appropriate to the zone.	Utility corridors and substation, solar facilities, stormwater ponds.
Special Events Temporary Uses	Temporary activities that occur in a space.  Require regulations to minimize impacts appropriate to the zone.	Festivals, pop-up shops, business/customer appreciation events
Agricultural	Any activity associated with raising animals or growing plants, except for Cannabis. Allows the sale of agricultural products raise or grown on site; Accessory products permitted to be sold	Produce farms, livestock operations, urban agriculture, hobby farms.

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Edmonton

