



Land Use Bylaw Update

Urban Service Area

Purpose

This document aims to provide an overview of the Land Use Bylaw (LUB), highlight the key changes in the updated LUB, and outline the next steps for its implementation.

What is a Land Use Bylaw?

The Municipal Government Act requires all municipalities in Alberta to adopt a Land Use Bylaw (LUB). The LUB regulates the use and development of land and buildings within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The purpose of the LUB is to:

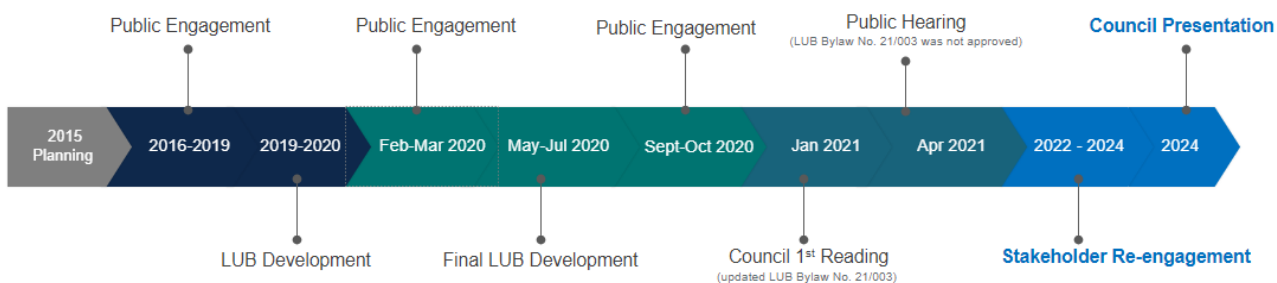
- Separate the Municipality into land use districts.
- Establish site provisions and determine permitted and discretionary land uses.
- Establish the development permit and amendment process.
- Regulate standards for the height, size, and location of buildings.
- Determine parking, signage, landscaping, and urban design standards.
- Implement the vision of the Municipal Development Plan and Area Structure Plans.

Land Use Bylaw History and Timeline

The current LUB was adopted in 1999, with several amendments since. An update to the LUB is necessary to remove inconsistencies, respond to changes in development trends, and align with current statutory plans.

An updated LUB has been drafted based on extensive engagement and feedback from residents, the business community, and Indigenous partners. Planning and Development Services intends to bring the updated LUB to Council for adoption in late 2024.

The below timeline highlights the key phases and milestones of the LUB rewrite:



What We Heard During Engagement

USER-FRIENDLY BYLAW

“Make the Land Use Bylaw clearer and easier to use.”

HOW WE DID IT

- The updated Land Use Bylaw offers clear, concise language and is in a format that is easier to follow.
- Graphics have been improved and definitions have been clarified and consolidated wherever possible.

SERVICES

“Allow for a broad range of land uses.”

HOW WE DID IT

- The updated LUB allows for a range of land uses.
- Definitions have been updated to capture more land uses and provide greater flexibility where possible.

RECREATION

“Provide more opportunity for recreation and tourist related facilities and

HOW WE DID IT

- Many proposed land use districts allow for the development of facilities and spaces that promote recreational and tourism activities in the area.

HOUSING

“Allow for more housing types.”

HOW WE DID IT

- Additional secondary suite types have been proposed in residential districts to encourage a wider variety of housing options.

PARKING

“Consider more parking types & review parking requirements.”

HOW WE DID IT

- New senior citizen parking stall regulations have been introduced.
- Introduced new variance authority for parking requirements.

SIGNAGE

“Make signage regulations clear and consistent.”

HOW WE DID IT

- The signage regulations are now consolidated into one section (previously three) that applies to all areas.
- Signage regulations were reviewed and updated based on extensive community feedback.



General Updates on Regulations

Below is a summary of some of the key regulations in the updated Land Use Bylaw.

Secondary Suites: The current LUB only allows for the development of basement suites in most residential districts. The updated LUB proposes additional types of secondary suite options. These include basement suites, loft suites, garden suites, and detached garage suites.



Basement Suite

Self-contained secondary dwelling unit located on the basement level of a principal dwelling



Loft Suite

Self-contained secondary dwelling located on the loft level of a principal dwelling



Garden Suite

Accessory dwelling unit located in a single storey building separate from the principal dwelling



Detached Garage Suite:

Accessory dwelling unit located above a detached garage

Urban Residential Districts: The updated LUB simplifies and reduces the number of residential districts. Key changes proposed in the updated LUB for new residential development in urban residential districts include:

- Smaller lot sizes and width requirements in some districts.
- Smaller front yard setback requirements in some districts.
- Increase in the maximum building height for single detached and semi-detached dwellings from 10.0 m to 12.0 m (not exceeding three storeys) in some districts.

Architectural Elements and Pedestrian-friendly Development: Several regulations are proposed in urban residential districts to improve the appearance of future development in residential areas. The proposed changes include:

- The width of a front attached garage for a single detached dwelling cannot exceed 70 per cent of the width of the house in the R1- Low Density Residential District and R1E – Estate Residential District.
- The front and primary entrance of a dwelling must include elements like porches, stairs, and windows.
- The façade of multi-unit dwellings shall be defined through architectural features.
- For apartment buildings, no parking is permitted between a road and the front of the building.



Accessory Buildings: The updated LUB proposes to increase the maximum lot coverage allowed for all accessory buildings on a lot in the Urban Service Area from 12 per cent to 15 per cent of the total lot area, up to a maximum of 100sq. m (whichever is less).

Home-based Businesses: To provide clarity for home-based businesses, the proposed types of homes businesses in the updated LUB have been renamed.

- Home Business is renamed “Home Business, Major” and may include client visits and a commercial vehicle for the primary use of the business.
- Home Occupation is renamed “Home Business, Minor” and is where all business activity is conducted by the resident and will not generate client vehicular traffic.

Landscaping: In the updated LUB, a minimum of 30 per cent soft landscaping (grass and planting beds) continues to be required on most residential lots to assist with stormwater management and provide for a pleasant environment. FireSmart landscaping principles have been proposed in commercial, institutional, industrial, and some residential developments to reduce the risk of wildfire damage.

Parking: The proposed changes to parking in the updated LUB vary depending on land use. The dimensions of parking stalls remain unchanged. The changes in the updated LUB are proposed to create parking design standards, encourage pedestrian safety, and support universal design principles and include:

- Parking stalls in commercial, institutional, and industrial districts shall maintain a 1.5 m buffer from residential uses.
- A minimum of one barrier-free pedestrian access shall be provided from a sidewalk to a building.
- A new requirement to allocate designated senior citizen parking stalls for non-residential development.
- Mandatory bicycle parking requirements for apartments, commercial, and institutional developments.
- New variance authority on parking to reduce the number of parking stalls required if supported by a parking study.

Urban Commercial Districts: The number of commercial districts has been consolidated in the proposed LUB to create a consistent set of rules for commercial development across the Urban Service Area. The updated LUB also proposes provisions that promote architectural elements, lively store fronts and pedestrian-friendly development through:

- Requiring buildings to be located closer to the road in pedestrian oriented commercial districts by defining a minimum and maximum front yard setback for buildings.
- Incorporating architectural elements into commercial building design to include different materials, colours and windows.



Industrial Districts: The number of industrial districts in the updated LUB has increased from two to three, Light Industrial (IL), Medium Industrial (IM) and Heavy Industrial (IH) Districts. The Business Industrial District and the Business Industrial Unserviced Lot District were removed. The creation of the three new districts will:

- Ensure that similar industrial uses are located within the same area.
- Prevent heavy industrial uses from being located near residential areas.

Downtown Area: In response to past Council direction and community feedback, minor revisions have been proposed to better facilitate development in the Downtown and include:

- Removing provisions that make development difficult to implement, such as green building standards, green utilities requirements and through block connections.
- Removing references to boards and requirements that do not presently exist, such as the Design Review Panel and City Centre Adjudicating Development Officer and references to development near rapid transit.
- Removing redundancies within the LUB by removing provisions in the Downtown portion of the LUB that are the same or similar to the general regulations that apply to the entire Municipality.
- Consolidating the number of frontage types. All frontage types are now available across the Downtown to assist in facilitating development to provide maximum flexibility and options while retaining high-quality frontages.

Next Steps for the Updated Land Use Bylaw

- Planning and Development Services is reviewing the updated LUB.
- Public engagement is currently taking place.
- The updated LUB will be presented to Council.

Land Use Bylaw Resources

Visit the Participate Wood Buffalo website for the updated Land Use Bylaw document, maps and to learn about feedback opportunities at participate.rmwb.ca/LUB.

A paper copy of the updated LUB is also available to view at the Planning and Development Services office located Downtown in the Jubilee Building.

