

# DEVELOPMENT PERMIT CHECKLISTS



2023  
EDITION



# PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE

This resource was adapted from the Calgary Federation of Communities for volunteers on planning committees! It is intended to help orient your thinking about development in your neighbourhood by considering the physical, social and character impacts of a proposed development.

This resource is meant to be adaptable - not every item on the checklist will apply and you may even wish to consider other factors, but it provides a good baseline to get you started!

# NEW TO REVIEWING DEVELOPMENT PERMITS?

We know that navigating the planning process can be a bit overwhelming. To help, we've developed this resource which includes both a list of potential impacts of proposed developments in addition to helpful tips that include City of Edmonton policies to reference and how to write effective comments!



# POLICIES TO REFERENCE

Before you think about the file you're going to review, it's important to understand current City of Edmonton policy as it ultimately decides the direction your community and the greater city is taking. Some examples to get you started are:

## 1. DISTRICT PLAN

Your District Plan and the District General Policy will help you understand how the City envisions growth and change occurring in your neighbourhood.

## 2. IMPORTANT GUIDELINES

You may wish to review City guidelines related to residential onfill, transportation, nodes and corridors, mature neighbourhoods, and others, to gain an understanding of existing policy.

## 3. THE ZONING BYLAW

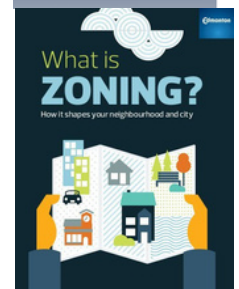
This provides the exact rules for every kind of development on every parcel of land.

## 4. THE CITY PLAN

This document will help you understand Council's vision for Edmonton in the coming years.

## 5. YOUR COMMUNITY VISION DOCUMENT

If your community has developed a vision, you should give it a read to understand the direction your community has in mind for the neighbourhood! If not, the EFCL has a visioning toolkit to help you get started.



DOVERCOURT  
COMMUNITY VISION

2019 - 2021



## ***OTHER RESOURCES AND TIPS***

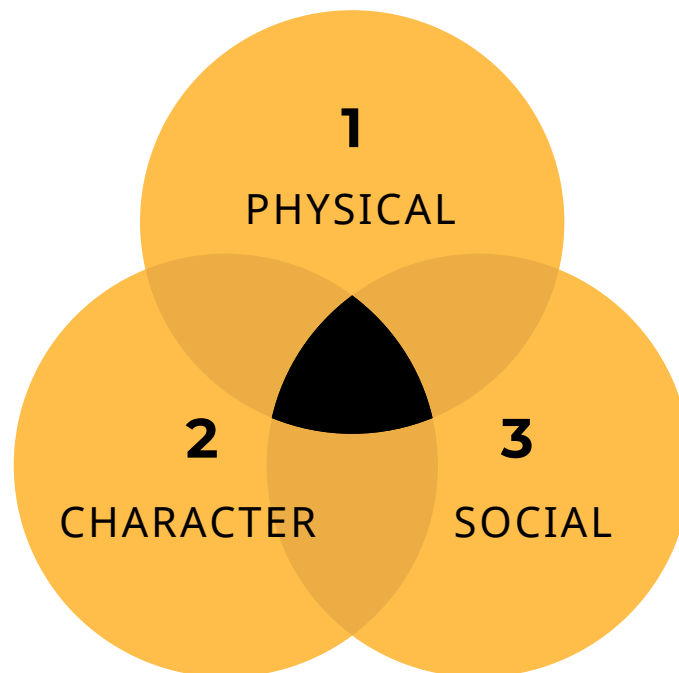
- New development permits, land use and subdivision applications are posted on the City website [here](#).
- The City also has an [Infill Data Explorer](#) that allows you to view development permits by location.
- The Community League is circulated most discretionary applications, most variance applications and every rezoning application.
- The Community League and neighbours have 21 days to provide comments in response to a circulation. You can always ask the file manager for an extension if this isn't enough time.

If the application is complex, your League's planning committee is encouraged to reach out to the file manager and ask for a pre-application meeting with the applicant.

- If the application is approved with a variance or is a discretionary use, you have a two week appeal period through the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB).

# THE CHECKLISTS

The following checklists will take you through the many potential impacts a development may have on your neighbourhood. They will prompt you to think about the impacts of a proposal on the neighbours and community, in a both a positive and negative way.



This resource is adaptable! As you work through the checklists, you may find factors we've mentioned don't apply or, alternatively, there may be factors your community considers important that we haven't considered! Go ahead and add or omit as necessary.

For any impact you believe a development will have - be sure to consider what could be changed about the development to IMPROVE this factor and make a note of it! Keeping a record as you work through the checklists will help you when you sit down to write your comments.

# CHECKLIST 1: PHYSICAL IMPACTS

## COMMENTS:



### BUFFERING AND SCREENING

Is there a suitable buffer (space, plantings, fencing, or other barriers) between land uses and buildings?



### SHADOWING

Will the proposed development cause excessive shadowing on neighbouring properties?



### TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

Will the development impact access to transit by surrounding land uses? Were alternative transportation modes considered (e.g. bicycle parking is provided)?



### SITE ACCESS

How do the access points relate to internal circulation patterns of larger sites? Is the internal road network designed to minimize visitor confusion? Does the site provide pedestrian access through it for non-residents?



### PRIVACY

Is privacy unduly compromised? Do features like landscaping, window placement, and buffering contribute to privacy?



### SAFETY

Is there a safety issue associated with the proposed development?

# CHECKLIST 1: PHYSICAL IMPACTS

## COMMENTS:



### PHASIN

Is the development being phased (one section constructed before the next)?  
How could this impact surrounding properties?



### ACCESSIBILITY

Does the proposed development consider all users (e.g. wheel chair access)?



### GARBAGE & RECYCLING

Are these facilities appropriately located?  
How do they look? If they are near to housing, are they screened through landscaping, fencing or other measures?



### PARKING

Is sufficient parking provided? If not, is the residence or establishment near to transit? For commercial sites, is the loading zone properly situated to minimize impacts on neighbouring properties?



### LIGHTING

Will lighting unduly impact adjacent properties?



### OTHER:



### OTHER:

# CHECKLIST 2: CHARACTER IMPACTS

## COMMENTS:

### MASSING

O

Does the building feel appropriate or overwhelming in size? Are the facades articulated to reduce massing and add visual interest? Does the building have step-backs?

O

### FINISHING MATERIALS (FACADE)

Do the finishing materials reflect the context of the community? Do they contribute to the aesthetic quality of the community? Why or why not?

O

### HEIGHT

Does the building height fit in with the context of the community?

O

### LANDSCAPING

Are existing, healthy trees kept? Is there suitable and sufficient landscaping?

O

### SITE LAYOUT

Is the proposed development sensitive to the local context? Does the building location and orientation impact the surrounding streetscape?

O

### DENSITY

Is it consistent with your local area plan or the direction of the Municipal Development Plan?



# CHECKLIST 2: CHARACTER IMPACTS

O

## SIGNAGE

Is the signage appropriate?

COMMENTS:

O

## SIDEWALKS

Do obstacles like utility poles and light stands compromise the pedestrian environment? Are there adequate pedestrian connections?

O

## SETBACKS

Is the building set back from the property in a way that is harmonious with neighbouring properties?

O

## OTHER

O

## OTHER

# CHECKLIST 3: SOCIAL IMPACTS

## COMMENTS:

**O FAMILY HOUSING**  
Does the development have suites with 3+ bedrooms? Are these suites ground-oriented? Do they have access to adequate on-site amenity space for play?

**O AFFORDABLE HOUSING**  
Does the development have some suites being rented at non-market value?

**O MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT**  
Is the street front 'active'? Does it have a human scale podium? Will the shops contribute to fabric of the community? Are there individual entrances for residential and commercial?

**O AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS (DC2)**  
Will the development contribute anything amenities to the public space (e.g. sidewalk improvement, park space, etc)? Is there a clearly articulated public benefit?

**O ENVIRONMENTAL BEST PRACTICES**  
Will the development use green building materials? Low impact development strategies? If there is an existing structure on the site, will they demolish it or deconstruct it?

**O OTHER**

**O OTHER**

## WRITING EFFECTIVE COMMENTS

**Now that you've reviewed the development, you're ready to write some comments.**

1) Don't simply reject a development proposal, make suggestions to improve the proposed project!

2) Express yourself using planning rationale (e.g. height, massing) and avoid including personal preferences.

3) Do not reference land users (people who will be occupying the property) and focus only on land uses (residential, commercial, etc).

4) Include comments from all positions and note when a concern is limited to a particular group.

5) Avoid using references to "community decisions." It's great that your Community League is so engaged, but City staff can not consider whether your League has voted to support or reject a development. They are only interested in the impacts of the application and how they can be addressed.



# ANY QUESTIONS?

The contact information of the file manager for all development applications is listed on the development application as well as on the site notice that gets posted in your neighbourhood. Feel free to reach out to them if you have any further questions! This is the same person you will be forwarding your comments to.

## EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

The EFCL also has an urban planner on staff who is happy to assist you with more general questions about planning and development in your neighbourhood! Feel free to contact us at:

E: [info@efcl.org](mailto:info@efcl.org)

T: 780-437-2913

