

City Building Program

DRAFT ZONING BYLAW | SPRING 2025

The new Zoning Bylaw is currently under development to replace the existing Land Use Bylaw 1P2007.

It will simplify the rules that determine how land is used and the form of buildings in Calgary. Learn more: calgary.ca/citybuilding



Starting, operating, and changing businesses

Grouping activities with similar impacts into fewer use categories creates a more flexible Zoning Bylaw—reducing barriers for businesses while still ensuring appropriate rules exist to reduce negative impacts to others nearby. Streamlining the business change process means fewer empty storefronts and faster openings for local businesses throughout the city.

How can zoning make it easier to open, grow, or change a business while still ensuring the right fit in each community?

Key ideas

Consolidated uses

The Zoning Bylaw combines similar business types into broader categories with general definitions, allowing a greater range of activities to occur in a particular space. This makes it easier for new businesses to find a location and for existing businesses to change their space to meet new demands.

Streamlined process

Permitted use business change applications in commercial, mixed-use, and industrial zones will no longer require a development permit—just a quick, no-fee process that confirms rules are met.

Refining parking regulations

Building on the 2020 Council removal of parking requirement for businesses, the new rules let businesses decide how much parking to provide to meet the needs of their customers and employees.

Simplified rules for development

Outdated or redundant rules are removed or consolidated, allowing for a greater range of business activities while keeping the focus on land use impacts.

Greater approval certainty

More permitted uses across zones means businesses can feel more confident their application will be approved—especially when changing the type of use in an existing space.

Considerations

- Having too many land uses may create extra permitting requirements and reviews—even when the land use impacts are very similar between use categories. Having fewer land uses allows spaces to change easier with new tenants, new services or seasonal programming such as patios.
- Consolidating uses allows more flexibility for activities in a building or on a parcel, making it easier for businesses to modernize, grow, or change.
- By reducing permit steps The City can support the success of local businesses and attract new businesses to Calgary.
- Making it easier to open and operate a business in Calgary supports job creation and retention—providing income for residents and tax revenue for The City. New businesses can also boost competition and innovation, increase choice and access to goods and services for Calgarians.

Concepts



Permitted use

A type of land use or building that is allowed in a zone, as listed in the Zoning Bylaw.



Land use

A defined activity that occurs on a site or within a building.



Land use impact

Any negative effect caused by a land use activity—such as loud noise, dust, or odours—that can affect neighbouring properties.

Connections to the Calgary Plan

Business-friendly and future-focused

- The Calgary Plan promotes a supportive environment for businesses of all sizes and stages by calling for user-friendly municipal processes. It emphasizes reducing barriers and making it easier to launch, run, and grow a business in Calgary.
- The Calgary Plan supports a modern, adaptable economy by encouraging flexible spaces, mixed use areas, and processes that respond to changing business models, helping Calgary stay competitive as it grows.

Read the Calgary Plan

Chapter 2: Growing Calgary

- 2.1 Growth

Learn more:

calgary.ca/citybuilding

Connections to other plans and strategies

Other documents

- **Economic Strategy (*Calgary in the New Economy*):** Facilitate business development and growth by streamlining processes and creating a welcoming economic environment for existing and new businesses.

Other zoning subjects

- **Businesses in Residential Areas:** Integrating small businesses into residential areas provides more opportunities for entrepreneurs in Calgary.



Notes
