

The Land Use Redesignation (Rezoning) Process

Land use designation (zoning) is an important stabilizing influence in a city and changing the designation is a serious matter as it will affect the use of that parcel of land long into the future.

Redesignation (rezoning) is an important change to a land parcel with long term effects on the neighbouring lands and people, as well as the parcel that has been redesignated (rezoned). For this reason, The City of Calgary makes a great effort to ensure affected people can make their concerns known before a parcel of land is redesignated.

Any owner of a site, their authorized agent or other persons having a legal or equitable interest in the site may apply to have the land use designation of the titled parcel changed (amended).

The land use redesignation (rezoning) process is lengthy with a wide scope and several steps. These steps include:

- Pre-Application
- Application
- Circulation
- Planning Review / Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) Recommendation
- Notice Posting / Advertizing
- Public Hearing of Council

Pre-Application

In most instances, it will be necessary to schedule a pre-application meeting with a Planner from the Development and Building Approvals prior to making the application.

If the proposed redesignation is likely to be controversial, applicants may be advised to meet with the respective community association.

Application

Applications are made in person at City Hall. However, as of 2009 June 1, applications will only be accepted online.

The application is received by The City's Planning Implementation Division and assigned a file manager.

Circulation

The File Manager reviews the application and circulates plans to the community association, Ward Alderman, any relevant special interest groups, as well as, a number of City and Provincial departments for their comments.

Affected neighbours may not included in the formal circulation, but their comments and feedback are welcomed.

Planning Review / Calgary Planning Commission Recommendations

When all circulation comments have been received and a recommendation is determined, the file manager advises the applicant of the Calgary Planning Commission meeting date.

Recommendations are made to the Calgary Planning Commission (CPC). The public may attend but can not address CPC. The CPC recommendations are then taken forward to City Council in a formal Public Hearing.

Notice Posting / Advertizing

The general public is notified of the Public Hearing of Council date via the following:

- A sign posted on the site
- Letters sent to adjacent land owners
- Advertizing – The Public Hearing is advertized once in the Calgary Herald and two consecutive Thursdays in the Calgary Sun (under Public Notices). The first ads appear approximately 25 days prior to the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing of City Council

A Public Hearing is held by City Council to make a decision on the application. The public can attend the hearing and may also submit written comments for inclusion on the agenda.

At the Public Hearing the Mayor will invite anyone opposed to, and anyone in favour of, the redesignation to speak to Council. Comments must relate to the planning impacts and people may speak for 5 minutes not including any possible questions posed to the public respondent by any Member of Council.

Decisions of City Council on redesignation can only be appealed to the courts based on matters of law. In other words, Council's decision on the planning merits of the proposal is final.

Role of the Ward Alderman

The Ward Alderman plays an important role in redesignations. The other Members of City Council look to the Ward Alderman for an evaluation of the redesignation. The Alderman is expected to consider the city-wide implications as well as the local community impacts.

Role of the Community Association

The Community Association will receive a copy of the redesignation application for comment. The Community Association may invite residents to a meeting to discuss the proposal; others will simply consider the application at a regular meeting and forward their comments to the file manager.

Role of Neighbours

The opinions of the neighbours on an application are important to City Council. They may be consulted through the Community Association or they may respond to the newspaper ads or notification letter.

How long does Land Use Redesignation (Rezoning) take?

It is very difficult to determine how long this entire process can take. In past some applications that are simple, and with little to no opposition from the Community Association and neighbours can take as little as 6 months to complete the process. However, others larger applications that have greater opposition from Community Associations and neighbours have taken up to 5 years.