How is land use determined?

Municipalities are required to comply with their adopted statutory plans, and all further planning and development decisions of a municipality must be consistent with these plans.

Land Use Bylaws (also known as 'Zoning Bylaws') are not statutory plans, but they are important because they set the rules for where land uses can occur and the placement of new buildings on each parcel. Land Use Bylaws are the tool to implement the municipality's statutory plans and to guide growth in an orderly way to minimize conflicts between different land uses.

What is a public hearing, and why is it required?

The Municipal Government Act regulates how municipalities adopt statutory land use plans and Land Use Bylaws. This process includes three readings of a bylaw, with a public hearing held before second reading. The approval of a bylaw - including a public hearing - is required every time a statutory plan or Land Use Bylaw is created, changed/amended or repealed.

The public hearing process is designed to ensure a fair and transparent process for all persons who deem themselves to be affected by land use plans and bylaws.

What happens to my personal information submitted at the public hearing?

Personal information provided in a public hearing submission is collected under the authority of Section 4(c) of the Privacy Protection Act of Alberta and/or Section 636 the Municipal Government Act for the purpose of public participation in municipal decision-making. Your name, address, contact information and comments may be made publicly available in the Council Agenda and will be retained in the record of the Public Hearing.

What happens after the public hearing?

After the public hearing, the Administration will compile all written submissions to be kept for the public record and provide them to the Council. The Council will consider the bylaw for second and/or third reading during a regular portion of the Council meeting. The Council can adopt the bylaw as it was presented at first reading, amend the bylaw, or defeat the bylaw.

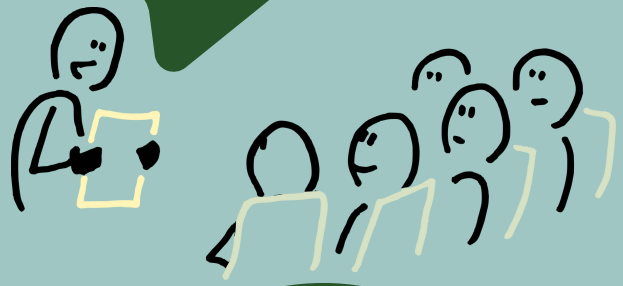
Where do I get more information on the purpose and content of the Public Hearing?

A copy of the proposed bylaws and plans relating to the Public Hearing are available from each municipality. Check the municipal website or visit the municipal office.

Palliser
Regional Municipal Services

Guide for Participating in Public Hearings for Land Use Decisions

A Public Hearing is an invitation to the public to speak their concerns, provide support, challenge proposals and provide input into land use decisions. Public hearings can be intimidating and seem complicated. This guide will help explain land use decisions, the public hearing process, and provide information on how to effectively participate in a public hearing



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What is Land Use?

Land use describes the way that land in your town, village or county can be used and developed. Some examples of types of land use include parks and recreational spaces, agriculture, residential, schools and hospitals, shops and manufacturing.

How is land use determined?

Land uses are determined by the Council of a municipality* and are communicated through various plans, policies and rules. These include the following statutory plans:

- Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP) which consider the development of land on the boundaries between two or more neighbouring municipalities;
- Municipal Development Plans (MDP) which consider the long-term vision and plans for future growth within the municipality boundaries; and
- Area Structure Plans (ASP) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP), which consider more detailed plans for how a particular area within a municipality will grow and redevelop.

Some land uses are approved by a Federal or Provincial agency, and municipalities may not have jurisdiction. This includes land uses such as railways, highways, cell towers, and confined feeding operations.

What can I expect at the Public Hearing?

A public hearing will occur at a regular meeting of Council or at a special meeting and will be advertised weeks in advance of the public hearing.

- After the Mayor calls the public hearing to order, the applicant and/or the municipal administrative staff will provide an overview of the proposed application or bylaw.
- The Mayor will then invite any person who wishes to address the Council in person on any matter that relates to the proposed bylaw to speak. Persons should clearly identify themselves (name and address) at the start of their presentation. Each speaker will be given an allotted time to speak
- The Council may then ask the speaker questions, if they require clarification. The speaker will be invited to provide a written submission to the Clerk to accompany the presentation.
- Once all the speakers have concluded, the Mayor will ask the Administrative staff statements of clarification and concluding remarks.
- The public hearing will then be closed.

Tips for Speakers

Keep your presentation clear and concise – explain your reasons for support or opposition and how the proposal affects you.

Submit written comments too! It helps Council remember.

Focus your presentation on land use matters. For example, land use does not consider:

- regulating individuals or groups of people or behaviors, or the character of the applicant
- tax implications
- tenure (renters vs owners) or land ownership
- construction techniques
- Building Code issues

- Direct your statements to the Council
- When speaking about a specific statement in a bylaw, provide a reference to the numbering in the bylaw
- Be sure not to disclose any personal information that you wouldn't want the public to know
- Speak clearly and loudly when presenting
- Do not speak or make noise while others are speaking – be respectful of other's opinions

Can I provide a written submission?

Yes! Persons wishing to make written submission may do so by sending a letter that is typewritten or legibly written. Ensure to include your name and mailing address in the written submission. Any submissions with defamatory content and/or offensive language will be filed, but will not be printed for the public record or shared with members of Council.