



# Rezoning Guidelines

Guidelines for the rezoning application process in the City of Abbotsford

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**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

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## What is Zoning?

Every property in Abbotsford has a legal zoning classification specifying the types of buildings allowed on that property, types of uses or activities that can take place on that property, restrictions on the floor area and height of buildings, minimum distances separating buildings and property lines, and the amount of off-street parking required, among other requirements.

The purpose of zoning is to ensure that specific types of land uses (e.g. industrial) are located in appropriate areas and that the types of buildings or land uses on one property will not conflict with surrounding properties. A zoning map showing the zoning category for each property in Abbotsford is available online at:

<http://maps.abbotsford.ca>

A copy of Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw No. 2400-2014, which contains development regulations for each zoning category, is available online at:

[www.abbotsford.ca](http://www.abbotsford.ca).

**Rezoning** is the process of legally changing the zoning category or permitted uses and densities of a property. Before any development takes place on a property, whether it be constructing new buildings, or changing the types of uses or activities that occur on that property, the owner of the property should first check the existing zoning regulations for that property. If the proposed development is not permitted by the existing zoning, the property owner (or agent of the property owner) will have to apply to the City of Abbotsford for a change in the zoning of that property.

## What Should I Know Before Starting?

Your development proposal should be well planned before submitting an application. In preparing your proposal you should be aware of the City plans, policies and regulations that may apply to your property. Procedures can be complex - you should consider hiring a professional consultant. The following are some things you should consider:

- **Official Community Plan (OCP)** - Abbotsford's OCP divides the City into 22 land use designations. Each designation allows specific types of land uses and densities. Check the OCP for the designation of your property, the land uses, and zoning applicable to that designation.

- **Neighbourhood and Special Study Area Plans** - Neighbourhood Area Plans and Special Study Areas provide detailed plans for specific areas of Abbotsford. The OCP has flagged 8 areas for Neighbourhood Area Plans and 4 areas for Special Studies (Areas A, B, C, and D) (see OCP Section VII Maps 2 and 3 for their locations).
- **Zoning Bylaw and Maps** - Zoning maps show the existing zoning of your property. Refer to Abbotsford Zoning bylaw No. 2400-2014 to determine the zoning and regulations necessary for your project. It is possible that your proposal may also require Development Permits in addition to rezoning. If the development is within a Development Permit area as designated by the OCP see our brochure titled "Development Permit Guidelines".
- **Engineering Services** - All developments must provide adequate sewer, water, and other services at the developer's cost. Information on existing servicing can be obtained at the Engineering and Regional Utilities Department.
- **Development Inquiry Meeting (DIM)**: A very good place to begin is by requesting a DIM online with department staff. Many of the above questions or concerns can be addressed through the DIM process. Go to: [www.abbotsford.ca/dim](http://www.abbotsford.ca/dim) to request a free appointment.

## The Rezoning Application Process

### Submit an Application

Once you have prepared your proposal, you can submit a rezoning application form and pay the application fee. Application forms and fee schedule are available at the Planning & Development Services (2nd Floor, City Hall) or online at:

[www.abbotsford.ca/devapplications](http://www.abbotsford.ca/devapplications).

Planning staff will assist you but you must provide the following:

- completed Development Application form;
- application fee;
- title search(es) of subject property(ies) retrieved within the last 30 days;

- copies of any covenants, easements and rights-of-way registered on title;
- the property owner's name and contact information. If someone is applying on behalf of the property owner, a **Letter of Authorization** must be signed by all property owner(s) and submitted with the rezoning application. A standard **Letter of Authorization** is part of the application form. You must also indicate to whom all correspondence shall be sent. Staff will only deal with the applicant;
- a **Letter of Intent** outlining the proposal in full (background including justification/rationale); and
- a **Site Profile Questionnaire** to determine if the site requires a Site Profile review.

Plans; including floor plans, site layout, landscaping, context plan, site survey, fish habitat assessment report, arborist report, tree survey, tree condition assessment, and tree removal and replacement plan must be submitted along with the Development Application Form. A complete list of requirements can be found in the application form. Processing of your application cannot begin until these plans are submitted.

### Application Review

A City File Manager will coordinate your application review. The File Manager will contact you regarding the status of your application and may ask for clarification, additional information, or plan revisions if your proposal does not meet development regulations. Additional information required may include, but is not limited to, lot grading and topographic information, detailed building design and landscaping plans, tree surveys, arborist report, and survey plans.

### Development Sign

The applicant is responsible for erecting a Development Proposal sign on the subject property. Staff will inform you of the procedures for erecting this sign in the First Review Comments Letter. Handouts showing the sign specifications are available at Planning & Development Services or online at:

[www.abbotsford.ca/devapplications](http://www.abbotsford.ca/devapplications).

### Report to Executive Council

The Report to Executive Council is prepared by staff and includes an assessment of the application, a recommendation for the application to proceed or be denied, and any conditions to be addressed.

The report is considered by Council during a regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting held in Council Chambers and open to the public. At this meeting, Council will decide whether to give the application approval to proceed, to table the application, or to deny the application. Council may also request additional conditions or requirements to be met by the applicant.

### Regular Council

If your application is approved to proceed, the Rezoning Bylaw will be introduced, the bylaw will be given First and Second readings at the next available Regular Council meeting or as otherwise directed by Council and a date for Public Hearing will also be set. If your applications is denied, you will be notified of Council's decision and your application will be closed.

### Public Hearing

All zoning amendment bylaws are subject to a statutory Public Hearing held before City Council in Council Chambers. The owners and occupants of all properties located within a 100m radius of the subject property (500m radius within the ALR boundary) are formally notified. However, any person who deems their interests may be affected by the development proposal, has the opportunity to express their concerns to Council. You, or your representative, should attend the Public Hearing and be prepared to respond to any questions.

The Public Hearing is the last opportunity for Council to receive input from the applicant or the public before making a final decision on the application. Council may approve the application to proceed, may deny the application or return the application back to staff. If Council approves the application to proceed, Council will give Third Reading to the Zoning Bylaw.

### Final Adoption

If you satisfy the requirements for adoption established by Council, within the timelines set by the Development Application Procedures Bylaw, your bylaw will be presented to Council for adoption. If the bylaw is adopted you may proceed with your proposal.



*This brochure is not a legal document. Any contradiction, dispute or difference between the contents of this brochure and applicable City bylaws, plans, policies or guidelines will be resolved by reference to the bylaws or other official documents.*



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