

# 2020 Annual Report

## Message from the Chair



I am pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report of the Calgary Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB). This report highlights key statistics and other observations about the SDAB's operations in 2020, and forecasts changes for the year ahead.

The number of appeals (marginally) increased from 80 in 2019 to 81 in 2020. Most appeals were around issues of context in residential settings, primarily secondary/backyard suites and new developments in existing neighbourhoods.

The number of appeals filed as a proportion of development permit decisions remains low, at 1.4%. Of these, well over half of the appeals pertained to single and multi-residential property types (58%), followed by commercial (12%) and a varied mixture to round out the total.

Sixty decisions were issued over the course of 50 meetings, with decisions being issued on average 18 days from the close of the hearing. Of the 81 appeals filed in 2020, the SDAB overturned or amended 34% of the Development Authority's decisions.

The pandemic brought on by COVID-19 caused the SDAB to move to virtual hearings in the spring of 2020. The process of transitioning between in-person hearings to web-based videoconferencing hearings was relatively seamless thanks to the excellent work of SDAB staff and technologies enabled by The City of Calgary. The public has accepted, with little to no resistance, the new hearing format and, by all accounts, the SDAB was able to deliver its mandate successfully through 2020. Further, orders by the Minister of Municipal Affairs around protocol during COVID-19 have been steadfastly followed by the SDAB.

The Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act 2020, which alters the SDAB's jurisdiction to hear certain types of appeals, received Government of Alberta royal assent in December 2020. However, it did not impact any SDAB hearings in 2020.

The SDAB continues to invest in training in order to strengthen its expertise and foster sound succession

planning. In 2020, in-person training was provided for the first quarter of the year, with virtual training through web-based video communication for the balance of the year. Courses being offered by the Canadian Council of Administrative Tribunals (CCAT) and the Foundation of Administrative Justice (FOAJ) were made available to all SDAB members. Further, as per legislative requirements, various SDAB members and clerks successfully completed provincially mandated training in early 2020.

2021 will likely see several changes and activities. Firstly – and hopefully – in-person hearings will resume at some point; the SDAB in-person hearings, thanks to new technology having been installed in the SDAB's main hearing room, will be, for the most part, paperless; high quality web-based videoconferencing will remain a means of communicating in certain circumstances; and the changes to the Municipal Government Act (in fulfillment of the Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act) will impact the number of appeal hearings the SDAB will conduct in 2021.

We welcomed two new individuals to the 22-member SDAB complement for 2021: Elizabeth Hak and Earl Williams.

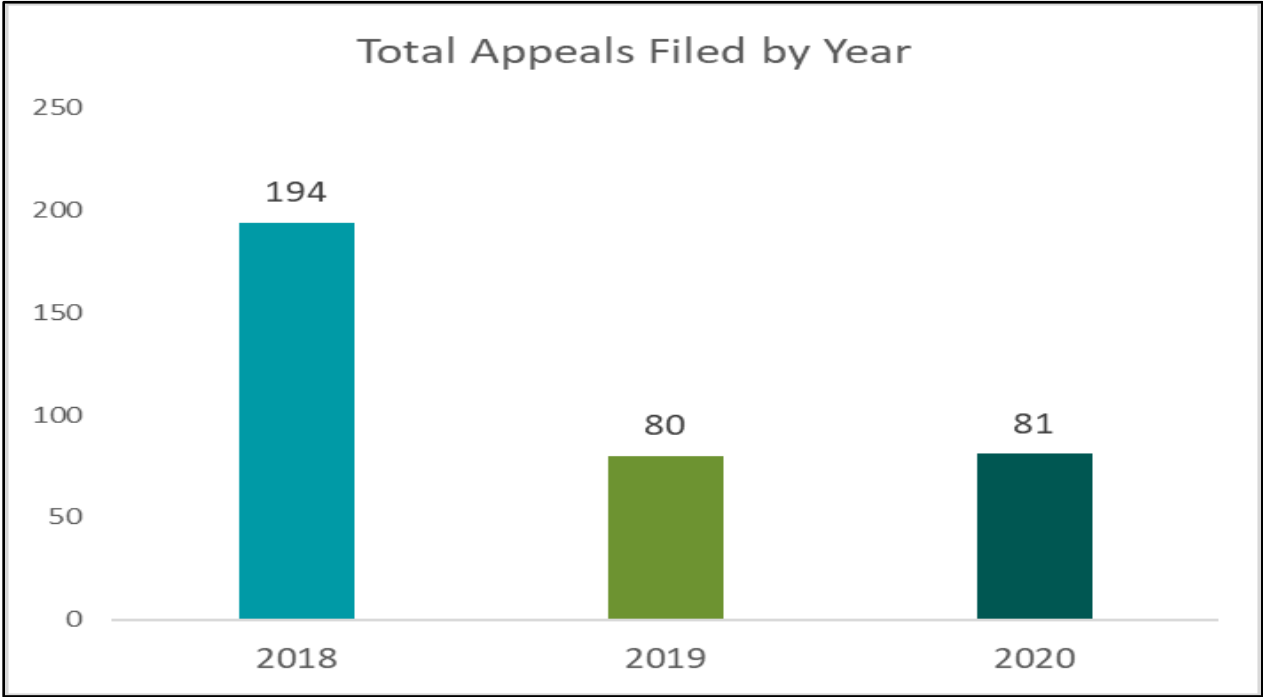
We thank out-going members Carolyn Dahl Rees, Patricia Hull and Rijalda Ozulu for their significant contributions this past year.

As always, I thank the entire SDAB for their exemplary public service, the SDAB Solicitor and Administration for their incredible support, and all public participants in the appeal process for their consideration and cooperation.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Chomik, Chair



*\*2018 experienced an influx of appeals due to legalization of cannabis*

