

Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments



For CPC2022-0258 / LOC2021-0185
heard at Calgary Planning Commission
Meeting 2022 March 10



Member	Reasons for Decision or Comments																					
<p>Commissioner Tiedemann</p>	<p>Reasons for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a very simple land use application (literally the most simple application possible) from the lowest density district to the second lowest density district. Items such as these sit on the consent agenda for a reason and continued removal of applications such as these undermines good planning principles and makes the most basic urban redevelopment in Calgary unnecessarily difficult. The main issue here lies with the community in question needing updated high level planning policy and not with the individual application itself. I urge council to approve this application based on its low impact and its support of the 50/50 growth targets identified in the MDP. 																					
<p>Commissioner Hawryluk</p>	<p>Reasons for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A landowner has requested a change in land use from Residential – Contextual One Dwelling (R-C1) District to Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District. This application would permit the smallest increase in growth under the current Land Use Bylaw. <p>Let's compare the characteristics of a permitted building under the existing R-C1 District (left column) and a building under the proposed R-C2 District (right column):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="506 1388 1416 1885"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Characteristics Comparison between R-C1 and R-C2</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>R-C1 (Land Use Bylaw section)</th> <th>R-C2 (Land Use Bylaw section)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Parcel Coverage</td> <td>45%, reduced by 21m² for each parking stall not in a garage (393)</td> <td>45%, reduced by 21m² for each parking stall not in a garage (432)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minimum Front Setback</td> <td>The greater of: the contextual front setback less 1.5m, or 3.0m (396.1)</td> <td>The greater of: the contextual front setback less 1.5m, or 3.0m (435.1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minimum Side Setback for a laned parcel</td> <td>1.2m (397.1)</td> <td>1.2m (436.1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minimum Rear Setback</td> <td>7.5m (398)</td> <td>7.5m (437)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maximum Height</td> <td>The greater of:</td> <td>The greater of:</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Characteristics Comparison between R-C1 and R-C2				R-C1 (Land Use Bylaw section)	R-C2 (Land Use Bylaw section)	Parcel Coverage	45%, reduced by 21m ² for each parking stall not in a garage (393)	45%, reduced by 21m ² for each parking stall not in a garage (432)	Minimum Front Setback	The greater of: the contextual front setback less 1.5m, or 3.0m (396.1)	The greater of: the contextual front setback less 1.5m, or 3.0m (435.1)	Minimum Side Setback for a laned parcel	1.2m (397.1)	1.2m (436.1)	Minimum Rear Setback	7.5m (398)	7.5m (437)	Maximum Height	The greater of:	The greater of:
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	8.6m, or the contextual height plus 1.5m to a maximum of 10m. Maximum of 10m for all other uses. (399)	8.6m, or the contextual height plus 1.5m to a maximum of 10m. Maximum of 10m for all other uses. (438)
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In short, the R-C1 and R-C2 Land Use Districts allow the same size of buildings. A building in either Land Use District would be permitted to cover the same amount of the lot, in the same part of the lot, with the same maximum height. Essentially, this landowner has requested permission to build the same size of building as is already allowed. The main difference between the buildings in these two Land Use Districts is the number of doors and homes.

By allowing the same size of building and shadow as the current Land Use District and use, this application treats adjacent neighbours with as much respect as the current Land Use District. Simultaneously, this application adds more family-sized housing options for future neighbours.

Some older Area Redevelopment Plans have very fine-grained distinctions within low-density areas, such as separating different types of detached houses from each other and from semi-detached houses. According to historian Max Foran, “When the City [of Calgary] accepted the row housing principle in 1960, it stipulated that no project could face R1 [detached] housing.”¹ The current Land Use Bylaw, recent Local Area Plans, and recent Area Structure Plans consider detached houses, semi-detached houses, and rowhouses as low-density Land Use Districts and do not use such fine-grained distinctions. The City of Calgary might struggle to plan and adapt for the needs of future Calgarians—for growing and shrinking families—with such a fine-grained separation of low-density Districts, which have the same fundamental use: housing.

Housing is like a game of musical chairs. If there are more rich people than available homes, they will bid up the price of homes with each sale and drive up the price of housing in general. Poorer people will be left with fewer options. This process decouples local earnings and home prices, distorting price-to-income ratios. Applications like these are the smallest market-based step that the City can take to try to let supply meet demand while respecting adjacent neighbours. For me, these are the easiest applications to approve.

¹ Max Foran, *Expansive Discourses: Urban Sprawl in Calgary, 1945-1978* (Edmonton: Athabasca University), 2009, 74.