



PUBLIC SUBMISSION FORM

CC 968 (R2023-11)

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I have read and understand the above statement.

ENDORSEMENT STATEMENT ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION, ANTI-RACISM, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

The purpose of The City of Calgary is to make life better every day. To fully realize our purpose, we are committed to addressing racism and other forms of discrimination within our programs, policies, and services and eliminating barriers that impact the lives of Indigenous, Racialized, and other marginalized people. It is expected that participants will behave respectfully and treat everyone with dignity and respect to allow for conversations free from bias and prejudice.

I have read and understand the above statement.

First name (required) Qinhong

Last name (required) Cao

What meeting do you wish to comment on? (If you are Council

Date of meeting (If you are providing input on service plans and budget adjustments, please select "November 20") (required) 2023-9-14

What agenda item do you wish to comment on? (If you are providing input on service plans and budget adjustments, please write "budget" below) (Refer to the Council or Committee agenda published [here](#).)



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(required - max 75 characters)

Banff Trail

Are you in favour or opposition of the issue? (required)

In favour

Comments - please refrain from providing personal information in this field (maximum 2500 characters)

**Individual Assignment – Council Public Hearing Submission,
Participation & Attendance**

Qinhong Cao

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary

REAL 317-L01: Real Estate Development & Urbanization

Instructor: Jessica Karpat

November 22, 2023

Regarding Banff Trail, there are proposed changes to the land use and area redevelopment plan. Bylaw 248D2023 aims to redesignate the land at 2015 – 26 Avenue NW from a Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to a Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District. In conjunction with this, Bylaw 86P2023 proposes amendments to the Banff Trail Area Redevelopment Plan, changing the land use policy for the same site from Low-Density Residential to Low-Density Rowhouse.

Banff Trail and Capitol Hill occupy a large part of the RCG subdistrict of Calgary, which focuses on grade-oriented townhouses. This form of housing is part of the "missing middle zone," bridging the gap between single-family homes and high-rise apartments. This shift in housing strategy is an important aspect of the city's urban planning aimed at diversifying housing options in the area (Klaszus, 2022). A key challenge for Banff Trail was the restrictive convention of the 1950s, which limited development to single-family or duplex homes. This is fundamentally at odds with contemporary city planning policies that promote densification and mixed-use developments, especially in areas close to transit stations and major corridors like 24th Avenue NW (Klaszus, 2022). The attitude of the community to these developments has been mixed. While some homeowners favour preserving Banff Trail's current single-family character, others recognize the importance of growth and densification. In 2019, a group of Banff Trail residents filed a lawsuit to halt multifamily housing projects based on a restrictive covenant from the 1950s. The basis of their complaint was that, although being in conflict with the Banff Trail area redevelopment plan, the covenant should take precedence (Klaszus, 2022). The development dispute in Banff Trail has broader economic and social repercussions. There are concerns that keeping the restricted covenant in place may result in economic segregation, with the neighbourhood becoming limited to individuals with higher incomes as pricey infills replace

older properties. Given Banff Trail's strategic placement near major employment centres and educational institutions, this issue is especially critical.

The Banff Trail Community Association's perspective on development problems has evolved. Initially, the group was in favour of development, especially given the area's proximity to light rail stations and the University of Calgary. However, the change in the board of directors has resulted in differing perspectives on development, reflecting a broader movement in the community's opinions. The Banff Trail area enhancement project comprises different infrastructure improvements to respond to the predicted increase in population density. These include widening the lanes on North 16th Avenue, constructing a new ramp to the Crowchild Trail, improving traffic conditions at the intersection of the Crowchild Trail and Northwest 24th Avenue, and improving pedestrian and cyclist traffic conditions along the Northwest 24th Avenue Corridor (City of Calgary, 2023).

Reasons to Support the Application

R-CG zoning addresses the "missing middle" in housing, offering dwellings that are smaller, less expensive, and located in desirable inner-city neighbourhoods. This diversification in housing types can cater to a range of demographics and needs, rejuvenating existing communities. The introduction of R-CG zoning leads to a gentle increase in density, making better use of existing infrastructure. This is particularly beneficial in combating urban sprawl and maintaining active, thriving communities. The optimization of infrastructure in developed areas is a key principle in sustainable urban planning (New Century Design, 2023). High-density housing, as facilitated by R-CG zoning, can contribute to increased economic activity in an area. This often leads to fewer abandoned buildings and empty lots, thus reducing urban decay and the risk of crime. Higher density can also enhance property values due to increased demand for

housing (Bajaj, 2023). High-density housing reduces the demand for cars and increases the availability of public transportation, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging a more sustainable transportation system. This is consistent with the goals of minimizing carbon footprint and encouraging environmental responsibility in urban development. High-density housing, like that encouraged by R-CG zoning, often results in more cost-effective, smaller living spaces. These can be rented or sold at lower prices, making them accessible to a broader range of income levels. This type of development can also help stabilize rent prices in an area by increasing the overall housing supply, which reduces competition and leads to more balanced rent prices (Bajaj, 2023). High-density housing often necessitates less area for roads and utilities, resulting in lower infrastructure expenses. This efficiency allows communities to devote more resources to other areas, such as public transport or parks, thus improving overall urban livability. Changes to the R-CG district allow for the addition of townhouses as a discretionary use, enabling flexibility in redevelopment beyond corner lots. This flexibility is crucial for adapting to varied urban development needs and efficiently utilizing land in established neighbourhoods (City of Calgary).

In conclusion, supporting the application for R-CG zoning in Banff Trail is compatible with a number of essential concepts of urban planning and real estate development. Enhancing housing diversity, optimizing infrastructure utilization, fostering economic vibrancy and sustainability, improving affordability, and expanding development flexibility are among these. These modifications aid in the development of dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive urban communities.

References

Klaszus, J. (2022, November 6). *The battle of Banff Trail*. The Sprawl. Retrieved from <https://www.sprawlcalgary.com/the-battle-of-banff-trail>

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New Century Design. (2023). *R-CG Calgary*. Retrieved from <https://newcenturydesign.ca/rcg/>

Bajaj, S. (2023, March 21). *High-Density Housing: Making Urban Living Affordable*. Retrieved from <https://www.swiftlane.com/blog/high-density-housing/#:~:text=Investing%20in%20high,as%20public%20transit%20or%20parks>

City of Calgary. (2023). *Changes to Calgary's housing rules*. Retrieved from <https://www.calgary.ca/planning/projects/housing-changes.html>