

Planning & Development Services Report to  
Infrastructure and Planning Committee  
2024 July 03

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
IP2024-0784

## Calgary Planning Commission Governance Review and Amendments to the Calgary Planning Commission Bylaw 28P95

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the governance review of Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) and to seek approval of a first phase of updates.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

None.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommends that Council:

1. Give three readings to Proposed Bylaw 64P2024 to amend the Calgary Planning Commission Bylaw 28P95.

### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

General Manager Debra Hamilton concurs with this report. This first phase of updating the Calgary Planning Commission Bylaw will strengthen the Commission's role as a technical review body and broaden its membership, which in turn will support Council in making well-informed decisions that enable quality development outcomes for Calgarians city-wide.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The proposed CPC Bylaw amendments include removing Council Members from CPC, removing the Mayor as an ex officio member, increasing the number of public members by four and moving the start date for members to January.
- In 2023, Administration began a governance review of Calgary Planning Commission with the support of an external consultant.
- A comprehensive review of the CPC Bylaw has not been undertaken since its adoption in 1995.
- The governance review explored opportunities to strengthen processes and structures for interested parties, increase the value in the decision-making process for all application types and ensure efficiencies and value add from CPC meetings.
- The proposed changes will help support the modernization of CPC, allow for a diversity of members and perspectives to be provided and ensure it is functioning effectively as a technical review body when carrying out its mandate.
- The second phase of work will be completed by Q4 2024 and includes additional updates to governance structures, process improvements and revisions to what applications go to CPC for decision.

### DISCUSSION

In 2023, Administration engaged an external consultant to conduct a comprehensive governance review of Calgary Planning Commission (CPC). The scope of the review included evaluating the recruitment process and composition of Commission members, ensuring

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efficiencies in CPC meetings, improving governance and strengthening processes to ensure that the decisions of CPC are leading to better planning outcomes through their technical review on land use and planning items.

Targeted engagement with Council, CPC members, frequent applicants, community representatives and Administration began in late 2023. In addition to the interviews conducted, a jurisdictional review was undertaken to determine how planning commissions were functioning throughout other similar sized municipalities in North America.

The Governance Review Report (Attachment 2) considered a variety of options for the future of CPC. Ultimately, weighing the feedback received throughout the process, an evaluation of the different options presented and the results of the jurisdictional review, Administration is recommending the modernization of CPC as a technical review body. Administration is undertaking a two phased approach to implement the proposed changes.

Phase one, which is being undertaken this summer, is focused on strengthening the governance of CPC through adjustments to the membership of CPC, particularly member composition. Amendments to the CPC Bylaw (Attachment 1) are proposed to implement this first phase of work prior to the Fall recruitment for Boards, Commissions and Committees (BCCs). The main updates to the Bylaw include:

- **Removing Members of Council from Calgary Planning Commission.** Through the review it was noted by interviewees that including Councillors on CPC can politicize the work of CPC, shift discussion away from the technical review of applications and that the technical skills required for CPC may not be aligned to the member assigned to the Commission. The amendments also include the removal of the Mayor as an ex officio member of CPC. These changes will align with other similar technical review bodies, namely the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, which deals with planning matters. All members of Council would still be available to attend CPC meetings for items of particular interest and ask questions but would not be voting members.
- **Adding four new CPC members for a total of 10 public members.** The additional members will increase the variety of skills that are available on CPC, increase the diversity of opinions and will likely help manage the workload associated with CPC. Though no changes are proposed to quorum, the additional members will ensure that quorum is met when conflicts arise or during scheduled absences of members.
- **Changing the start date for new CPC members to a January commencement.** The current practice is that members of CPC begin to serve on Commission immediately following their appointment at the Organizational Meeting of Council. Adjusting this date will allow for proper training and onboarding opportunities and provide the opportunity for new members to observe meetings prior to becoming full voting members.

These amendments are complemented by two other approved pieces of work related to BCCs. First, a Council Policy to establish remuneration for Public Members, including Public Members of CPC, was endorsed at the 19 March 2024 Regular Meeting of Council. Providing remuneration is anticipated to help to address barriers to membership on CPC due to the heavy workloads, number of meetings and preparation time associated with the materials. It is also anticipated to help provide access for greater membership leading to increased equity and diversity during recruitment. Details of this work are expected to return to Council later in 2024

## Calgary Planning Commission Governance Review and Amendments to the Calgary Planning Commission Bylaw 28P95

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for implementation in 2026. Second, the use of an external recruiter for specific BCCs, which includes CPC, will help to ensure a diverse membership with the skills required to review a variety of application types. At its 18 June 2024 Regular Meeting, Council directed that the costs of an external recruiter be included for its consideration during Mid-Cycle Adjustments to Service Plans and Budgets.

Administration will return to Committee in Q4 2024 with the second phase of recommendations related to the CPC governance review. Further amendments to the Bylaw, along with a governance manual, will be brought forward to support changes to established process, clear articulation of the role and value of CPC for different application types, finalization of a skills matrix and development of additional onboarding materials.

Following implementation of these recommendations, it is expected that CPC will be comprised of a greater variety of skills, experience and perspectives, there will be a sound understanding of roles and responsibilities for internal and external parties, there will be improvements to timelines and process and that clear value is being added to the decision-making process to support the work of Council.

### EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required        |

During this project a total of 44 interviews were conducted by the external consultant. The interviewees included:

- The Mayor and Members of Council;
- Current Calgary Planning Commission Members;
- Past Calgary Planning Commission Members;
- Members of Administration;
- Frequent applicants; and
- Federation of Calgary Communities and Community Association representatives.

Interviews were focused on their past and/ or current experiences with CPC as well as expectations as to what the future of Commission should be. Comments received from the interviews were summarized in a What We Heard Report (Attachment 3) and informed the recommendations as presented.

### IMPLICATIONS

#### Social

Improved recruitment, addition of four public members and development of a skills matrix will allow for a greater variety of backgrounds, experience and expertise that will help to make the planning of developments more representative of the diverse needs of Calgarians.

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### Environmental

Including additional members on CPC and developing a skills matrix will ensure that a variety of experience is represented, including environmental and climate considerations.

### Economic

There is no anticipated economic impact on the proposed changes to the CPC Bylaw.

### Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact.

### RISK

Should the recommendations not be supported, no changes to membership or recruitment for Calgary Planning Commission will occur prior to the Organizational Meeting of Council in October, delaying the implementation of the recommendations to recruitment in 2025 Q4.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Amendments to Calgary Planning Commission Bylaw 28P95
2. Governance Review Report
3. What We Heard Report

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Debra Hamilton	Planning & Development Services	Approve

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