

Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments



For CPC2024-1028
heard at Calgary Planning Commission
Meeting 2024 September 19



Member	Reasons for Decision or Comments
<p>Commissioner Hawryluk</p>	<p>Reasons for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normally, an amendment like this would go to the Infrastructure and Planning Committee (IPC) before going to Council. IPC was cancelled on September 18th, so the Planning Commission reviewed this item. I am glad that we were able to review it. <p>The trigger for this amendment was Bylaw 21P2024 (Rezoning for Housing), which came into effect on August 6th. According to Administration, the “R-CG and H-GO Districts have building depth rules that are now applicable to the single detached and semi-detached dwellings that existed before the rezoning. Some of the existing single detached and semi-detached dwellings in the developed area have become not conforming from the building depth regulations (535(1)) and are now considered existing non-conforming buildings. Non-conforming buildings in their current state are acceptable, but additional requirements arise when changes to the building’s exterior are proposed” (Attachment 1, page 1).</p> <p>Attachment 1, page 3 has an excellent diagram showing how some existing detached and semi-detached dwellings do not conform with the new rule that prohibits homes in the rear 35% of the lot. During Commission’s review, Administration reported that they are seeing 2-3 applications per day that need a Development Permit where a Building Permit would have sufficed before August 6th. Administration gave examples of installing a bay window that looks into the backyard or adding a sun room off of the back of the house. Administration also reported that non-conforming dwellings tend to be in areas that were built between 1990 and 2010.</p> <p>In response, Administration has proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw’s sections for Exempt Developments (see Attachment 2, section 1a), Dwellings Deemed Conforming (Attachment 2, section 1b), Exempt Additions (Attachment 2, section 1c), and the Building Depth and Separation section of the H-GO District (Attachment 2, section 1d).</p>

Administration should be commended for responding quickly to this situation and finding a technically sufficient response. Therefore, I supported it.

Administration could have recommended removing Building Depth regulations from the R-CG and H-GO Districts (LUB, 535(1) and 1393(1)). Lot coverage, setback, and building separation regulations would have determined building placement.

When Council approved the Building Depth rule in the R-CG District in 2016, Calgary's price-to-income ratio was 4.35; in 2023, it was 4.95[1, 2]. Price-to-income ratios between 4.1 and 5.0 are considered seriously unaffordable. I have heard that our price-to-income ratio is now above 5.0, which is severely unaffordable. A reasonable policy response to rising price-to-income ratios would reduce regulations that hinder adding more homes. This is particularly pressing in the Calgary Economic Region where the working-age population (those aged 15 and older) increased by 73,600 people (5.1%) from Q2 2023 to Q2 2024.[3]

In summary, this amendment is appropriate, but Administration could have approached it with the other end of the pencil.

[1] <https://pub-calgary.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=18625>

[2] The City of Calgary, Housing Needs Assessment 2023, pg. 46.

[3] The City of Calgary, Housing Review, Second Quarter 2024, pg. 1.