

Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments



For CPC2024-0922 / LOC2024-0146
heard at Calgary Planning Commission
Meeting 2024 September 5



Member	Reasons for Decision or Comments
<p>Commissioner Hawryluk</p>	<p>Reasons for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This proposed Direct Control allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 5.0, ○ no height limit, ○ Multi-Residential Development as permitted use if the Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ upgrades sidewalks, ▪ provides an art mural, and ▪ a roof-top amenity space that is at least 300m², and ○ no required parking if the Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provides at least one Class 1 bicycle parking stall/unit, and ▪ provides a bicycle repair facility. <p>There are also rules for the setback area, building setbacks, landscaping, and fences that are tailored to this site.</p> <p>This application would turn a parking lot that is within 150m of one LRT station and 600m of another two LRT stations (both of which are on the Red and Blue LRT lines) into housing. Adding housing supports Council's Downtown Strategy, which seeks "a balanced mix of residential, office, retail, entertainment, tourism and culture" (https://www.calgary.ca/planning/downtown-strategy.html).</p> <p>Cities that have to use Direct Control Districts to achieve their objectives, like those in the Municipal Development Plan, Downtown Strategy, and Climate Strategy, might want to consider examining the rules that force those Direct Control Districts. If setbacks and parking minimums are obstacles to Council's broader objectives, as they are in this case, then policymakers might want to review and change or eliminate those rules. In 2019, Bruce Belmore, then-President of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, wrote that "minimum parking requirements ... result in an over-supply of parking" and suggested that cities "eliminate mandatory minimum parking requirements – This elimination will not only give people more say over how they live their lives and use their property, but it's also an important step in developing</p>

	<p>affordable housing” (https://community.ite.org/blogs/mr-bruce-belmore-peng-ptoe-avs/2019/02/12/rethinking-parking-minimums). Relaxing bad policy on a case-by-case basis by allowing bike parking and a bike repair facility in this application is good. Removing bad policy by eliminating mandatory minimum parking requirements would be better.</p> <p>According to the Applicant Submission, all of the homes built on this site will be affordable (less than 30% of their pre-tax income) for people who earn less than 47.55% of Calgary’s Area Median Income (\$56,000, based on Calgary’s Area Median Income of \$118,000) (Attachment 3, pages 2-3). This application supports the City’s Housing Strategy.</p> <p>From what I can tell, the Applicant and Administration are supporting Council’s direction on the Housing Strategy. The Applicant reported that they submitted their application in May. Through Administration’s fast-track process, this was at the Planning Commission in September and is scheduled for Council in October. It could be approved in less than 6 months. The Applicant and Administration should be commended on their work on this application.</p>
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