

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT REVIEW CHECKLIST

Preparation for Development Permit Review

- ☐ Know the Community Guide to the Planning Process, maintained by the Federation of Calgary Communities. The most recent version is at <https://calgarycommunities.com/our-services/urban-planning/resources/>. Chapter 5, section C is specifically about Development Permit Review.
- ☐ Know your local area plan (Area Structure Plan, Area Redevelopment Plan or other statutory or non-statutory plan)¹.
 - a. <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Planning-and-development-resource-library/Publications.aspx>
- ☐ Understand pertinent guidelines (Infill Guidelines or other policies, etc.)
 - a. <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Planning-and-development-resource-library/Publications.aspx>
- ☐ Know the land use districts in your community and the potential uses associated with them in the Land Use Bylaw¹:
 - a. www.calgary.ca/landusebylaw
 - b. If you do not know the land use, you can search the address on the City's interactive map to look up individual properties and communities. There is information about the land use (zoning) and local area plans and other policy documents relevant to individual sites are usually listed. www.calgary.ca/myproperty
- ☐ Consider if the citywide Municipal Development Plan is relevant. This may be the case if this is a large project or in an area identified for change. You can access the plan and the related "User Guide" at www.calgary.ca/mdp
- ☐ If your community does not already have some, you should develop a vision or guidelines to guide your review panel's comments and influence.

Receiving and Responding to Development Permit Applications

- ☐ New Development Permit, Land Use and Subdivision Applications are posted on The City website every Tuesday, broken down by Community and Ward. (Go to <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Public-notice/Planning-applications-by-community-or-ward.aspx>.) This is "early notice" that there is an application in your area.

or you can use [the City's My Property Map](#)

1. Click on the map image to the left to take you to the interactive map.

2. Select the categories tab on the left side of the menu
 3. Select "Select Land Use and Development" under the categories menu.
 4. Select the individual layers to display for Building Permits, Development Permits, and etc.
 5. Zoom in to map view to view results.
- ☐ The community association is circulated (mailed) most significant discretionary-use applications and also permitted-use applications if they have relaxations. (These require planner discretion, so community comment is sought, and they may be appealed.)
 - ☐ The site is notice posted when required by the Land Use Bylaw, normally at the same time it is circulated to the community.

Applications approved with a relaxation or Discretionary uses are advertised and can be viewed online at www.calgary.ca/ApplicationMap

- ☐ In some cases, the applicant may informally meet with the community association and neighbours to inform them of their proposal. This can happen before or after a formal application to the City.
- ☐ Communities and neighbours normally have 21 days to provide comments in response to a circulation or notice posting.
 - a. In addition to plans, communities are also circulated Community Context Questionnaire (CCQ). The CCQ (see appendix for an example) consists of leading questions provided by the City that allow the Community to comment on the proposed development. Also, as of 2015, the circulation will no longer include a bylaw check or policy review.
 - b. Neighbours adjacent to the proposed development are encouraged to respond independently.
- ☐ If you cannot comment by the date requested and you need an extension (to meet with the neighbours or the applicant, for example) discuss the matter with the file manager noted on the circulation. It is important to meet the deadlines, as extensions will be given only in exceptional cases. If you will not have written comments, please call the contact person on the circulation sheet to let them know not to wait for your comments. If you do not have any comments, it is equally important to indicate that to the file manager as well.
- ☐ If the application is approved with a relaxation or is a Discretionary use, it will be advertised once in the Thursday Public Notice page of The Calgary Herald & be posted on The City website at <http://cocnmp.com/publicnotices>. There is a two-week appeal period. Notice of the approval with the final approved plans is often mailed to the community association, but the public notice is more reliable.

Development Permit Review Process & Comments

Here are some things you may want to consider when reviewing an application. Not all of these may be relevant in all cases, and you may have other things you want to consider that are important to your community. Some of these items were adapted from checklists used by City Staff.

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the site and site context (development and other land uses in the area). Google maps are a great resource for understanding the site and context quickly.
- ☐ How will the proposed development impact the neighbours and the community, in both a positive and a negative fashion, regarding such things as:
 - ☐ **Site Layout:**
 - Is the proposed development sensitive to the local context?
 - How does the building location and orientation impact surrounding land-uses?
 - Does the development address the street and provide a valuable contribution to the streetscape?
 - ☐ **Buffering:**
 - Is there a suitable buffer between land uses/properties/buildings?
 - What can be done to improve the buffering?
 - Can you propose the use of landscaping to act as a buffer?
 - ☐ **Generated noise:**
 - Is there any noise generated by mechanical equipment (e.g. air conditioners), entrances, speakers, etc.? If so, what could be done to mitigate the noise (e.g. reorienting equipment, speakers)?
 - ☐ **Screening:**
 - Should any mechanical equipment be screened? What do you propose?
 - ☐ **Visual impacts:**
 - Are there impacts, such as shadowing, from the proposed development? What do you propose to mitigate the impacts?
 - What visual impact does the rear of the building have on surrounding properties? What do you propose for the rear design of the building?
 - ☐ **Proper transitions** between land uses (e.g. between commercial and residential)
 - Does the proposed use conflict or compliment the surrounding uses?
 - How does this proposed development fit into the wider context of the community?
 - ☐ **Transportation and transit:**
 - Will transportation or access to surrounding land uses in the area be affected? What do you propose to address the issue?
 - Is a local Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) being requested by The City?
 - Were alternative transportation modes considered?
 - Is there cycling access and bicycle parking? Is bicycle parking provided close to building entrances?

- Are bus stops located in a high traffic area and highly visible to pedestrians?
- Are bus shelters connected to the pedestrian network?
- **Parking:**
 - Does the proposed development provide sufficient onsite parking?
 - Is the location of parking stalls suitable for customers/residents and visitors? Why or why not? What would you propose?
 - Does the parking lot design minimise traffic congestion close to the building entrance on commercial sites?
 - Is the loading zone situated, so as to minimise conflict with pedestrian and vehicular traffic on commercial sites?
 - For large parking areas, is the parking area divided into smaller cells (approximately 125 stalls per section) to break up the expanse of the parking area?
- **Site Access (Vehicular and Pedestrian):**
 - Where are the access points situated?
 - How do the access points relate to internal circulation patterns on commercial and multi-residential sites? Are there any conflicts?
 - How do the access points relate to Public Transit and the LRT?
 - Is the internal road network designed to minimise visitor confusion?
- **Pedestrian connections:**
 - Are there adequate pedestrian connections? For example, if a commercial site were going in, would there be adequate access to it?
 - Might additional walkways or paths be useful?
 - Does the proposed pedestrian network link up to the existing infrastructure?
 - Are sidewalks wide enough for those with mobility challenges?
- **Landscaping:**
 - Does the development proposal, where possible, retain existing healthy, mature trees?
 - Are city trees affected by this development (pre and post development)? Have they identified trees that will be affected and provided a replacement plan?
 - Is there suitable and sufficient landscaping (Bylaw Requirement)?
 - Does the landscaping contribute to privacy on residential sites and screening on commercial sites?
 - Is landscaping used to delineate the separation between public, semi public, and private space?
 - On corner sites, will the landscaping at the edge of the property block the sight lines of vehicles?
- **Community character/context** (relationship to surrounding buildings and streetscape)
 - Does the proposed development compliment or conflict with the existing characters? What suggestions can be provided to improve the character?
- **Density:**
 - Is it consistent with your local area plan or the direction of the Municipal Development Plan? Should there be more or less density?

- **Lighting:**
 - Will any lighting affect adjacent properties? If so, where could the lighting be moved to fulfil the needs of the proposed use, as well as consider the needs of the neighbours?
- **Signage:**
 - Is the signage appropriate (e.g. size, materials, brightness, character, auto or pedestrian-oriented, etc.)?
 - Is the proposed development located at an access to the community? If so, could the proposing developer help locate signage for the community?
- **Finishing materials (façade):**
 - Do the finishing materials reflect the context of the community?
 - Do the finishing materials contribute to aesthetic qualities of the community? Why or why not? If not, what would you propose instead?
- **Building height:**
 - Does the building height fit within the context of the community? Why or why not? What would you propose instead?
- **Massing:**
 - Is the massing of the building appropriate for the location? Why or why not? What would you propose?
 - Are all facades that face public views articulated to reduce the size of the massing and add visual interest?
 - Is the building articulated at the base and first storey to reduce the perception of its massing?
 - Is there a change in the materials or colours used that would reduce the perception of the development's massing?
 - Is the development human scale?
- **Setbacks:**
 - Are the setbacks appropriate for the location? Why or why not? What would you propose?
- **Privacy:**
 - Is reasonable privacy maintained in surrounding land uses? (This pertains mostly to residential districts.) Why or why not? What would you propose?
- **Safety:**
 - Are there safety issues associated with the proposed development? If so, what do you propose to address the issues?
 - What safety measures are being put into place during construction? (Will roads be closed off? Will alternative access be required?)
- **Garbage and recycling facilities:**
 - Are these appropriately located? How does it look? Do you have other suggestions?

- Is the garbage facility enclosed in an animal proof enclosure? Does the facility have a gate and a lid?
- Is the facility screened and does the screening material fit in with the building design and materials?
- **Sidewalks:**
 - Does the proposal ensure the integrity of the boulevard is maintained?
 - Do obstacles like utility poles and light stands, compromise the pedestrian environment?
- **Phasing:**
 - Is phasing of the development proposed and what impact could phasing have on surrounding properties.
 - Can each section of the phasing plan stand alone?
 - In cases where long term development takes place, has the landscaping plan been phased in ahead of final completion of the project in order to reduce the effects of bare lots on the community?
- There are some matters that cannot be considered and they include commenting on:
 - The characteristics of people who may use the proposed development (e.g., renter vs. owner) cannot be considered; comments must address the land *uses*, not the land *users*.
 - The economic benefits or losses (e.g., increasing tax revenue to The City or the proposed development creating too much competition resulting in the loss of revenue to an existing business, etc.).
 - Precedence: The Development Authority and SDAB consider each application on its own merits, regardless of whether or not a similar development or business already exists in the community.
 - Business competition
- When completing your written comments here are some things to consider:
 - Provide planning rationale in support of or against the proposal and identify any important issues you feel should be addressed. It does not help the staff if you just oppose or support a project without giving reasons. Specifically, The City uses the terms *Approve*, *Approve with conditions* and *Refuse*.
 - Where appropriate, make suggestions to improve the proposed project and reduce any impacts it may have.
 - Express your opinions using planning concepts (e.g. height, mass, parking) not personal preferences.
 - Include comments and concerns from all positions in your response to The City and note when a specific concern is limited to a particular group. There may be disagreement

between the neighbours of a proposed development and the general community membership or the members of the planning committee.

- Do not include a “community decision” in your comments. City staff cannot (and do not) consider whether a community has voted to “accept,” “support” or “reject” an application. The planners are interested in the problems the application may raise and how they could be addressed.

Planning Review Tools for Community Associations

1. Development permit operating conditions: These conditions are listed in the development permit and put conditions on the operations of the land use. The File Manager develops the operating conditions. Are there operating conditions that can be included in the development permit that might mitigate some impacts (e.g. hours of operation)?

Development Permit Decisions

1. Development Permit decisions are made by the Development Authority, which is either a designated City official or the Calgary Planning Commission (CPC).

To provide greater transparency in the City’s decision making process, The City is introducing a “Reasons for Decision” document. This document details the rationale behind the decision maker’s decision to approve or refuse an application.

2. Approvals of discretionary use and permitted use with relaxation development permits are advertised in Thursday’s newspapers. Affected members of the public and the applicant may appeal development permit decisions through the Subdivision & Development Appeal Board.

Post-Development Permit Review Process

Community association boards or planning committees can review application results to determine which types of comments have bearing with File Managers and the SDAB.

Appendix A: Community Context Questionnaire

Below is a sample of the City of Calgary's Community Context Questionnaire form. It can be accessed at <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Documents/development/community-context-questionnaire.docx>.



THE CITY OF
CALGARY
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT

Dear Community Association Planning Representative/Committee,

A new development has been proposed in your community and we are sending you this information about it so you can tell us what you think. In addition to the information about the proposed development, you will also find a **Community Context Questionnaire**.

The Community Context Questionnaire is the way we learn about impacts this development may have on your community. We send it to Community Associations early in our development permit process so that your input can be discussed with the applicant proposing this development and so it can be considered by City staff as they review the development permit.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it within the next three weeks. An electronic version of this form is also available on our website at www.calgary.ca/development/permit_forms. The completed questionnaire can either be mailed to the file manager or emailed to dp.circ@calgary.ca.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the Community Context Questionnaire. Your input is greatly appreciated. If you have questions or concerns related to this development permit, please contact the file manager directly at any point in the review process.

Best Regards,

Planning, Development & Assessment
The City of Calgary



Community Context Questionnaire – Development Permit

Development Permit Number: _____

By providing feedback on the proposed development that is enclosed in this package, you are providing your community association's perspective as the "eyes of the community." This helps City staff better understand what is important to your community as we work with the applicant who has proposed this development, and it enables us to make an informed decision about whether to issue this development permit. In the course of this development permit evaluation, the planning department will review all relevant statutory plans including the Municipal Development Plan, Area Redevelopment or Area Structure Plans as well as the Land Use Bylaw.

Please provide your Community Association perspective and respond to the following questions:

1. What are the strengths and challenges of the proposed development?

2. Are there changes that could be made to the proposed development to make it more compatible or beneficial to the area?

3. Provide comments on
 - a. The use (if identified – not applicable for single-detached houses, semi-detached dwellings or duplexes)

 - b. The site design

 - c. The building design

You may wish to consider height, privacy, parking, vehicle or pedestrian access and landscaping as you respond to question #3.

4. Has the applicant discussed the development permit application with the Community Association?
If yes, what information was provided?

5. Please provide any additional comments or concerns regarding the proposed development.

Name of Planning Representative/s who completed this form:

Community Association:

Date: