



DEVELOPMENT PERMIT CHECKLIST



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Using this Resource

Welcome!

- This is a resource created by the Federation of Calgary Communities for new volunteers on planning committees, and other Calgarians interested in development in their communities. This resource has two sections; “Getting Involved in Planning” and the “Development Permit Checklist”.
- Getting involved in planning discusses the rationale that planners use when making decisions, and also details tips on how to review development permits efficiently and effectively.
- The Development Permit Checklist prompts you with different impacts that affect each development permit application. These impacts include the considerations that planners from the City of Calgary focus on.

Updates to The Resource

- The Development Permit Checklist is periodically updated with additional information. Contact the Federation of Calgary Communities or visit our website at calgarycommunities.com for the latest updates.
- If you see something that needs updating or if you have a suggestion to add something to this resource, contact a Federation planner.

New to Reviewing Development Permits?

We know that navigating the planning process can be difficult. Nothing is more challenging than receiving your first planning circulation and being asked to comment on things that you may or may not have considered before.

To help you you get started, we've created this simple resource!



Policies to Reference

Before you think about the file you're going to review, be sure to check out local and city-wide policy documents to help you understand your community's context and where Calgary is headed! Here are some examples to get you started:

- Your Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)
- Important guidelines (Infill Guidelines or other policies, etc.)
- The Land Use Bylaw
- The city-wide Municipal Development Plan
- Your Community Vision document - if your community has one!

Helpful Resources and Tips

- New Development Permit, Land Use, and Subdivision Applications are posted on The City website [here](#).
- The City of Calgary also has a resource called the [Planning & Development Map](#), which lists development permits by location, and provides opportunity to send comments and view supporting policy.
- The community association is circulated most discretionary applications. The City will periodically reach out to the community to review which files it wishes to receive.
- The site is notice posted when required by the Land Use Bylaw, normally at the same time it is circulated to the community.
- For complex applications, development committees are encouraged to reach out to the File Manager to encourage a pre-application meeting with the applicant and File Manager.
- Communities and neighbours normally have three weeks to provide comments in response to a circulation or notice posting.
- If you can't comment by the date requested and you need an extension, discuss the matter with the staff member noted on the circulation.
- If the application is Approved with a relaxation or is a Discretionary use, it will be posted on the City website [here](#). There is a two-week appeal period. Affected members of the public and the applicant may appeal approvals through the Subdivision & Development Appeal Board (SDAB).

Understanding Planning Rationale

There are some matters that can't be considered, and they include commenting on:

- The characteristics of people who may use the proposed development (e.g., renter vs. owner). Comments must address the land uses, not the land users.
- The economic benefits or losses (e.g., increasing tax revenue to The City)
- Precedence. Each application must be considered on its own merits.
- Business competition

Writing Effective Comments

- Make suggestions to improve the proposed project.
- Express your comments using planning rationale (e.g., height, massing) not personal preferences.
- Include comments from all positions and note when a concern is limited to a particular group. There may be disagreement between adjacent neighbours and the general community or members of the planning committee.
- Do not include a "community decision" in your comments. City staff can't consider whether a community has voted to "support" or "reject" an application. The City is interested in the impacts of the application and how they could be addressed.

Development Permit Checklist: Impacts

This checklist takes you through the many impacts that fall under the umbrella of planning rationale. This checklist prompts you to think about the impacts of a proposal on the neighbours and the community, in both a positive and negative way.



Checklist Part 1: Physical Impacts

The checklist is broken into two parts: physical impacts and character impacts. This section, physical impacts, will get you thinking about how the proposed development will impact its immediate surroundings. These impacts are somewhat easier to quantify, and they can affect neighbours' quality of life both positively and negatively.

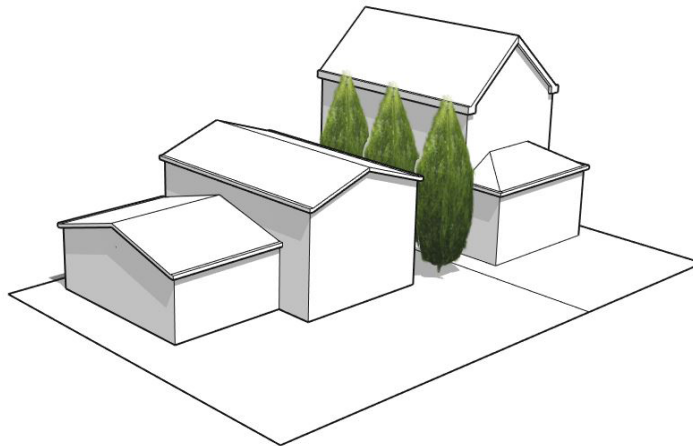


Figure 1: Example of buffering between two parcels

- ☐ **Buffering and screening:**
Is there a suitable buffer (space, plantings, or other barriers) between land uses or buildings?
- ☐ **Shadowing:**
Are there impacts, such as shadowing, from the proposed development?
- ☐ **Transportation and transit:**
Will access to surrounding land uses in the area be affected?
Were alternative transportation modes considered? Is there bicycle parking?

Checklist Part 1: Physical Impacts

- ☐ **Site Access (Vehicles and Pedestrian):**
How do the access points relate to internal circulation patterns on larger sites?
Is the internal road network designed to minimize visitor confusion?
- ☐ **Privacy:**
Do features like landscaping, window placements, and buffering contribute to privacy?
- ☐ **Safety:**
Is there a safety issue associated with the proposed development? If so, how should it be addressed?
- ☐ **Phasing:**
Is the development being phased (one section constructed before the next)? What impact could phasing have on surrounding properties?
- ☐ **Accessibility:**
Does the proposed development have accessibility considerations (e.g. wheelchair access)?
- ☐ **Garbage and recycling facilities:**
Are the garbage and recycling facilities appropriately located? How do they look?
- ☐ **Parking:**
Is sufficient onsite parking provided?
Is the location of parking stalls suitable for users?
For commercial sites, is the loading zone properly situated?
- ☐ **Lighting:**
Will any lighting affect adjacent properties?

Checklist Part 2: Character Impacts

Every community has character, as a result of its heritage and design standards. Community character is the relationship that proposed developments have to surrounding buildings and streetscape. The definition of community character is often debated by planners, though the Developed Areas Guidebook does provide a good definition [here](#).

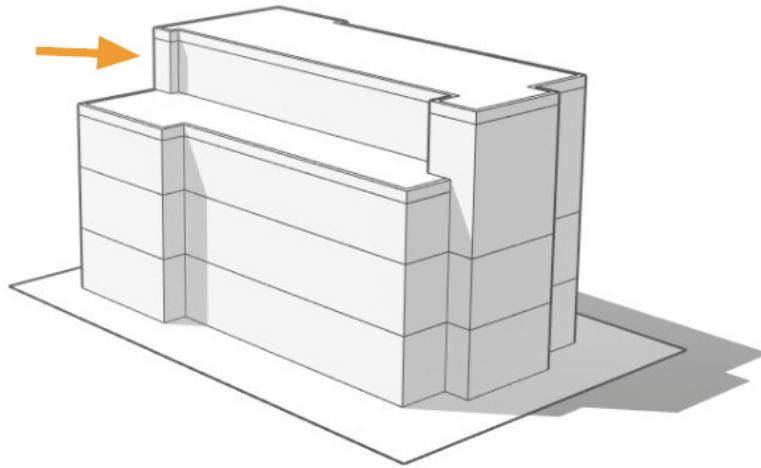


Figure 2: This building is articulated with 'stepbacks' to reduce the impression of size on the ground

- ☐ **Massing:**
Does the building feel appropriate or overwhelming in size?
Are the facades articulated to reduce the size of the massing and add visual interest? Does the building have step-backs?
- ☐ **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?
- ☐

Building height:

Does the building height fit within the context of the community?

Checklist Part 2: Character Impacts

- ☐ **Landscaping:**
Are existing healthy, mature trees kept?
Is there suitable and sufficient landscaping?
- ☐ **Site Layout:**
Is the proposed development sensitive to the local context?
Does the building location and orientation impact the surrounding streetscape?
- ☐ **Density:**
Is it consistent with your local area plan or the direction of the Municipal Development Plan?
- ☐ **Signage:**
Is the signage appropriate?
- ☐ **Sidewalks:**
Do obstacles like utility poles and light stands, compromise the pedestrian environment?
Are there adequate pedestrian connections?
- ☐ **Setbacks:**
Are the setbacks appropriate for the location?

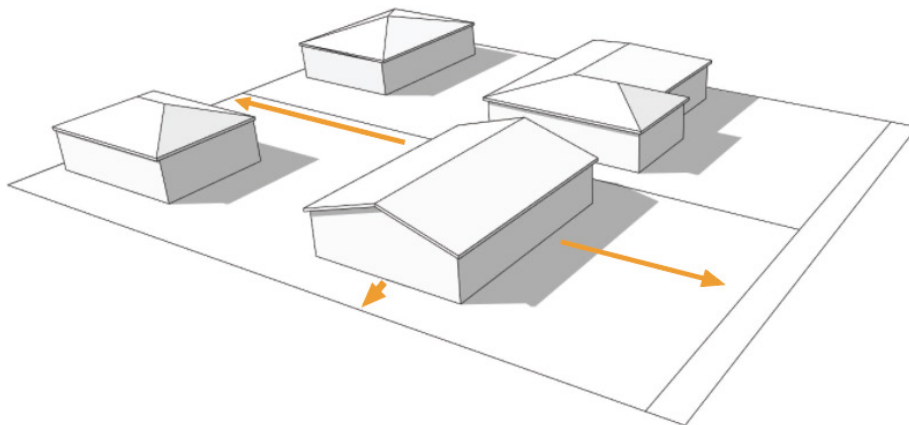


Figure 3: Illustration showing front, side, and rear setbacks.

The Federation of Calgary Communities:

Our urban planners are here to assist you! If you have questions, comments or ideas about community character, development permit review, or planning rationale, contact us at:

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engageinplanning@calgarycommunities.com.

T: 403.244.4111 ext 203 & 210

F: 403.244.4129

This resource and many others available to Federation members can be found at:
calgarycommunities.com/members-only/. Password = community

