



The new bylaw for low-density residential could blend R-C1, R-C2, R-CG and M-CG zoning (explained below) into ONE district, therefore, changing density and height restrictions in ALL communities. Multi-dwelling buildings (i.e. small apartment buildings) could be built next to single detached homes and approved without the need for land use re-designation. A lack of stability is introduced when sporadic redevelopment is allowed next to your home, not to mention it raises questions about the future value of your real estate.

The Calgary Land Use Bylaw (LUB) is a statutory document that sets out requirements and rules that govern the construction (and redevelopment) of any building in Calgary. It defines what a building can be used for (e.g. commercial, residential) and its general shape and size (e.g. lot coverage, building height), as well as how many dwelling units can be built per hectare (density).

These requirements and rules are enforced through the Development Permit approval process where the City decides if a proposed development complies with the LUB.

Next Generation Planning introduces a combination of new policies, programs, strategies and tools that will enable growth and shape future development. The urban forms and modifiers in the Guidebook for Great Communities provide the foundation for a new Land Use Bylaw for 'local housing' expected in 2021.

Districts in Land Use Bylaw (LUB): Current State

The LUB divides Calgary into land use “districts” (zones). Every piece of property is designated a particular land use district. Each district has a specific set of requirements and rules. There are currently over 66 individual districts, including: 22 residential districts and 44 other districts.

Low-Density Residential Districts

This discussion focuses on the low-density residential parts of Calgary’s Developed Areas (the areas that have buildings on all its lots with little vacant land – about 2/3rds of Calgary – including your community).

There are 5 Low Density Residential Districts and 1 Multi-Residential District that apply to low-density areas. The “C” denotes Contextual Developments that are “intended to accommodate existing residential development and contextually sensitive redevelopment.”

- R-C1: RC-1 Large, R-C1 Narrow, R-C1 - Contextual One Dwelling Districts - houses
- R-C2: Contextual One / Two Dwelling District - duplexes
- R-CG: Grade-Oriented Infill District - rowhouses, townhouses

- M-CG: Contextual Grade-Oriented Multi-Residential Development District - a multi-residential development has one or more buildings containing one or more units. It would typically have higher density and generate more traffic and parking requirements.

Planning Policy and Implementation

The districts established in 2007 were based on buildings that existed at that time. Since then, many land parcels have been re-designated to different districts. Any property owner may ask the City to re-designate their property. Each re-designation requires a Public Hearing before Council to approve/reject the application to re-designate. The City can also change a property's designation through initiatives such as Area Redevelopment Plans.

Benefits of current LUB:

- More granular definitions of permitted and discretionary uses help to ensure contextually sensitive redevelopment;
- Clarity and predictability: the 6 districts allow the planning process to generate a detailed map of what will be allowed where. This creates predictability and provides citizens some assurance about what to expect in the future. The current trend is to re-designate, but at least residents have a voice and an ability to object to re-designation.
- Public input: the voice of adjacent neighbours and the community are included in new planning initiatives. District re-designations must go through a Public Hearing that allows the public to provide commentary on the future of their neighbourhoods. The public can also provide input to the Development Permit approval process and appeal decisions made by the Development Authority at the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

City's Concerns:

- complicated, restrictive, slow to implement City growth strategy;
- time taken at Council to approve district re-designations.

LUB Revisions: Future State

The City describes proposed changes to the LUB on their webpage "*Toward a Renewed Land Use Bylaw.*"¹ The main goal of the changes would be to create one new all-inclusive "Limited Scale Neighbourhood Housing District" that will:

- allow and encourage the construction of multi-unit buildings anywhere and everywhere;
- eliminate current LUB districts that "are assigned according to development that is already there," i.e. R-C1, RC2.

City Objectives:

- enable development aligned with future policy direction
- provide the City more flexibility to define, encourage and approve "desired built forms"

¹ <https://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Current-studies-and-ongoing-activities/Toward-a-Renewed-Land-Use-Bylaw.aspx>. Accessed May 25, 2020.

Community Concerns:

- lack of clarity and predictability; ambiguous rules. What type of building and where it would be built will be at the discretion of the Developers and the Development Authority;
- lack of stability. The unique character and form of all residential areas will change as any type of low rise residential will be allowed anywhere.
- limited public input. Since many more building forms would be allowed under the ambiguous rules, the City could approve any development proposed that they deem a “desired built form” without requiring a re-designation and therefore no Public Hearing.

Table 3.1: Most relevant requirements for 3 districts: R-C1, R-CG and M-CG. It is not complete and meant to be used for discussion purposes only. Refer to the LUB for the complete requirements and rules.²

SELECT RULES		
R-C1. Residential – Contextual One Dwelling	R-CG. Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill	M-CG. Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented
<i>Allowed Building Forms</i>		
Single-detached dwelling	Rowhouses, Semi-detached, Cottage Housing Clusters	Multi-residential developments (multiple buildings with multiple units)
<i>Max Coverage</i> <i>(area of a parcel covered by a building, excluding backyard suites)</i>		
45%	45% to 60%	60% to 70%
<i>Max. Density</i> <i>(number of Dwelling Units and Live-Work Units on a parcel excluding secondary suites)</i> <i>Typical single-detached parcel: 20m x 30m (65ft x 100ft)</i>		
20 units/hectare	75 units/hectare	111 units/hectare
1 unit/parcel	4 unit/parcel	6 unit/parcel
2 unit/parcel (including secondary suites)	8 unit/parcel (including secondary suites)	12 unit/parcel (including secondary suites)
<i>Max Building Height (above grade)</i>		
11m	11m	12m

² <https://www.calgary.ca/pda/pd/Pages/Calgary-Land-Use-bylaw-1P2007/Calgary-Land-Use-Bylaw-1P2007.aspx>. Accessed May 25, 2020.

