

Development Approvals

Led by: Director of Community Planning

Description

Development Approvals works with Calgarians, communities and customers to enable building a great city through developing land in Calgary. As a regulatory authority, Development Approvals supports customers with advisory services to help them through all regulatory requirements for land development projects, while balancing customer, citizen, and community needs.

Value and benefits

The Development Approvals service ensures communities continue to prosper, by attracting growth and supporting businesses. The result is new homes, businesses, institutions and amenities within vibrant neighbourhoods, which contribute to an equitable, affordable and climate resilient city.

Customers

Development Approvals works directly with homeowners, business owners, land developers and their supporting professionals, builders, and contractors.

What we deliver

Development Approvals delivers land use amendment and outline plan recommendations, subdivision endorsements, development permit approvals, executed development agreements, and infrastructure construction permissions.

Partners

External entities involved in the application process include Federal and Provincial departments, community associations, school boards, utility companies and various advocacy and industry groups. Internally, Development Approvals works collaboratively with Service Lines across the organization.

10,843	Total applications received in 2021
57,681,147	m2 of all parcels released in 2021
13,997	Total approved development permits
181,992	m2 of industrial development approved

Development Approvals
2022 Budgeted Gross Operating Expenditures Funding
Breakdown (\$ Millions)*



* Gross operating budget may include internal recoveries that are also included in other services' gross operating cost.

Note: Internal recoveries is how The City accounts for the costs of goods or services between services

Key assets

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What we have heard & what we are watching

What we have heard

Customer and industry stakeholder feedback identified the desire for online submission portals and a streamlined application process. Customers want increased transparency and predictability through improved customer service and communication. Providing new and relevant tools and features will improve the quality of submissions.

The service engages Calgarians in a meaningful way in order to balance development opportunities and associated economic impacts with community priorities and preferences. The City ensures rules and standards for development approvals are applied in a consistent, fair and transparent manner that result in quality and safe developments for customers and Calgarians.

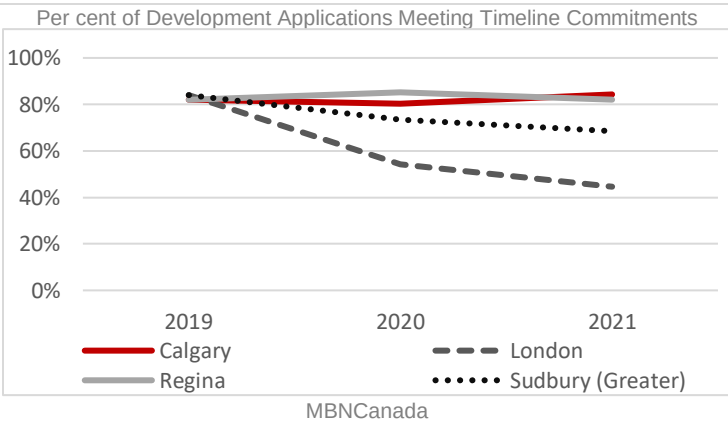
From the perspective of Calgarians, Fairness and Quality are key service value dimensions, while Responsiveness, Convenience, and Legislative Compliance are considered slightly less important.

What Council has directed

Economic, social and climate resilience are highlighted as Council priorities for the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budget. Development Approvals enables the building of great neighbourhoods for current and future Calgarians that is inclusive of these principles. We do this through the delivery of quality planning outcomes supported by innovative engineering solutions.

What we are watching

As Calgary's population continues to grow, the demand for housing, employment, and amenities keeps pace. Development Approvals monitors the projected application volumes to meet the needs of customers and respond to these market demands. Development Approvals has expanded self-serve options and will continue prioritizing enhancements of online services for customers.



Comparing our service

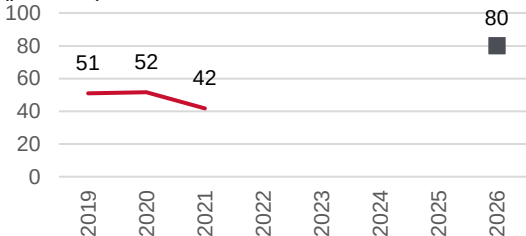
Though an important measure of customer satisfaction, there is a lack of uniformity in timeline commitments and legislative requirements. Legislated timelines in other jurisdictions may unintentionally increase pre-emptive refusals or appeals, hindering new development. Customized timelines, a feature unique to Calgary's approval process, allows for The City to meet timeline commitments consistently by better aligning to applicant needs, increasing communication, predictability, and collaboration. Calgary's 2021 results compared favourably to peers and has surpassed 2019 pre-pandemic numbers.

Measuring performance & where we want to go

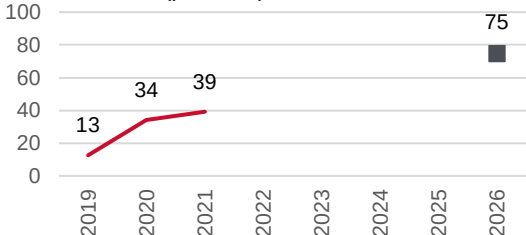
For Council Approval

Actuals Expected Future Performance

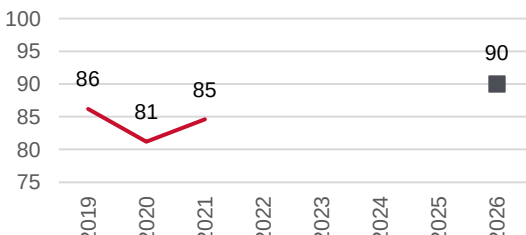
PM1: Significant development proposals approved with a better-than-satisfactory urban design rating (per cent)



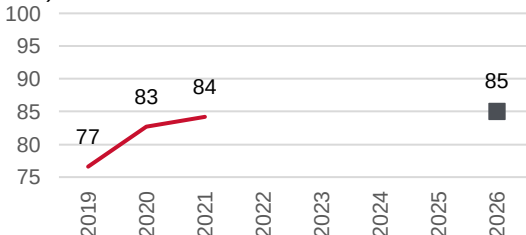
PM2: Civil engineering designs approved with one or no revisions (per cent)



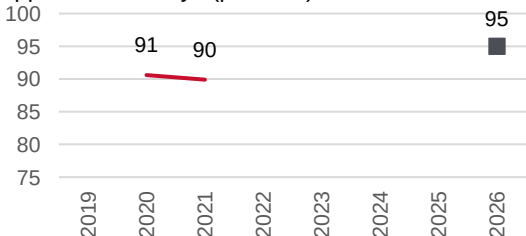
PM3: Technical development applications where decision timelines were met (per cent)



PM4: Multidisciplinary development applications where decision timeline commitments were met (per cent)



PM5: Average customer satisfaction from post-application surveys (per cent)



Story behind the curve

This measure speaks to the urban design quality of approved development applications and alignment to the urban design principles of the Municipal Development Plan. Higher ratings mean better quality urban spaces for Calgarians to experience and enjoy.

The construction of public infrastructure in new communities is managed through the review of the civil engineering designs of underground utilities and surface improvements. Drawings submitted are reviewed in collaboration with City staff and revisions may be required before the City grants permission to the land developer to start construction, especially for the initial phase of a new community. The number of revisions required reflects the quality of initial submissions, the quality of City engagement, location, complexity, as well as applicant experience.

A major consideration for customers navigating the approvals process is the time it takes for development permits to be approved. This measure provides a view of how often Development Approvals meets its commitments on smaller-scale development and subdivision applications. Customers include homeowners, business owners, and builders. Development Approvals aims to maintain its commitment to meet decision deadlines while finding opportunities to reduce the overall timeline for customers.

Planning applications that benefit from a multidisciplinary perspective are reviewed by the Development Applications Review Team (DART). This measure speaks to continuous improvements made to the intake and application review process which allows Development Approvals to continue meeting decision timelines for its customers, and to identify opportunities to reduce overall timelines for multidisciplinary applications.

Customers that submit applications for review expect convenience, simple application requirements, consistency, predictability, and flexibility to meet their unique needs. They seek a seamless experience from land use to occupancy. This measure will capture customer satisfaction with each application through surveys at key approval milestones.

What we plan to do

Result for 2023-2026

We are focused on delivering quality planning outcomes supported by innovative engineering solutions.

How we are going to get there

Support the realization of development in Calgary, enhance the consistency of application reviews, and encourage greater certainty and predictability for customers by increasing the responsiveness and timely review of development applications. Continuous improvement towards a streamlined applications process, including better ways to track and measure effort along the approvals continuum, and improvements and updates to systems and tools.

Support quality service delivery by ensuring we have the right resources at the right time to support the changing customer demands and market conditions. This can be accomplished through resource management, volume forecasting and proactive data analysis.

Improve the experience and interaction of customers and Calgarians with the applications process through enhanced online service delivery that leverages technology to modernize, consolidate and streamline the products offered. This includes products on ApplyCentral, transitioning to digital advertisement, and building a “mobile friendly” development map.

Encourage high quality development aligned with the urban design principles identified in the Municipal Development Plan by reviewing, rating, and monitoring the urban design merits of applications. This includes regularly reviewing the evaluation criteria and current processes to ensure customers receive the appropriate feedback to improve quality where and when necessary.

Promote the successful realization of residential, commercial, and industrial development that reflects community and Calgarian interests through execution of a clear, consistent, easy to understand and updated Land Use Bylaw developed in partnership with City and industry partners.

Ensure customer and industry expectations around value for service are met and reflected in user fees. This enables The City to continue delivering superior and equitable approvals service.

Advance the City's building and energy performance objectives through the implementation of the Net Zero Prioritization pilot program, by offering a prioritized development review process to builders that exceed the current minimum code requirements and meet the strict requirements of nationally recognized labelling and certification programs.

Advance the work of the White Goose Flying Report's Calls-to-Action by identifying and mapping areas of cultural importance to the Nations that were signatories to Treaty 7, Metis and urban Indigenous peoples in and around the Calgary area. This initiative will gather Four stories central to Calgary's downtown, including the creation story for Elbow/The Confluence (Moh-kins-stis in Blackfoot; Wicispa Oyade in Stoney Nakoda; Gut'stis'sti in Tsuu'tina; and Otokwunee in Cree/Michif).

Build and maintain a respectful, inclusive and equitable workplace that is representative of the community by ensuring our policies and services support The City's commitment to our employees.

Operating budget needed to achieve results

For Council Approval

Breakdown of net operating budget (\$000s)

	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Base	One-time	Base	One-time	Base	One-time	Base	One-time
Previous Year's Net Budget	5		5		6		6	
Previously approved One-time budget		-		-		-		-
2022 One-time carry forward		-		-		-		-
Revenue Changes	(7,336)	(6,152)	-	(6,267)	-	(2,227)	-	(2,236)
Internal Recoveries Changes	(470)	-	-	-	(359)	-	-	-
Inflation	-	20	-	46	-	20	-	27
Operating Impact of Previously Approved Capital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Impact of New Capital (Incremental)	470	-	-	-	359	-	-	-
Service Reductions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Service Increases	7,336	6,132	-	6,221	-	2,207	-	2,209
Total net budget	5	-	5	-	5	-	5	-

Total Operating Budget (\$000s) for Approval

	2022 Budget	2023			2024			2025			2026		
	At April 30	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total	Base	One-Time	Total
Expenditures	43,830	51,636	6,152	57,788	51,636	6,267	57,903	51,995	2,227	54,222	51,995	2,236	54,231
Recoveries	(264)	(734)	-	(734)	(734)	-	(734)	(1,093)	-	(1,093)	(1,093)	-	(1,093)
Revenue	(43,562)	(50,898)	(6,152)	(57,050)	(50,898)	(6,267)	(57,165)	(50,898)	(2,227)	(53,125)	(50,898)	(2,236)	(53,134)
Net	5	5	-	5	5	-	5	5	-	5	5	-	5

Note: Figures may not add up due to rounding.

Capital budget needed to deliver service

For Council Approval

Activity	Investment Name	2023 Request (\$000s)	2024 Request (\$000s)	2025 Request (\$000s)	2026 Request (\$000s)	2027+ Request (\$000s)	Total Request (\$000s)
Annual Investment Program(s)							
481251	Development Approvals Technology Enhancements	-	2,160	2,160	2,160	-	6,480
Program(s)							
470040	PDS Work Space	7,600	-	-	-	-	7,600
Projects(s)							
470013	Ititaa' paisoop: City of Calgary Traditional Heat Mapping	25	25	25	25	-	100
Sub-Total (New Budget Requests)		7,625	2,185	2,185	2,185	-	14,180
Previously Approved Budget Remaining		5,790	-	-	-	-	5,790
Total Capital Investment		13,415	2,185	2,185	2,185	-	19,970

Explanation of capital budget requests

Annual Investment Program(s)

Activity 481251: Development Approvals Technology Enhancements

Creating an online approvals service that is best in class for Canadian municipalities. We will achieve consistent and well understood service that supports applicants in timely approvals and continued investment in Calgary.

Funding From: Capital Reserves (\$6,480 thousand)

Contributing Services: None

Operating Impact: This request requires \$470 thousand base funding of operating costs starting in 2023, and \$359 thousand base funding of operating costs starting in 2025.

Program(s)

Activity 470040: PDS Work Space

An improved work space that incorporates hotel and drop-in spaces for mobile employees as well as large collaboration spaces. Creating an efficient work space that is innovative and collaborative for all employees, so customers are better served.

Funding From: Capital Reserves (\$7,600 thousand)

Contributing Services: None

Operating Impact: None

Projects(s)

Activity 470013: Ititaa' paisoop: City of Calgary Traditional Heat Mapping

Collecting information on the Calgary area's history prior to Canadian assimilation policies to advance the City's Reconciliation commitments. The goal is to gain information to better equip business units in the creation of an equitable City that celebrates its indigenous heritage.

Funding From: Capital Reserves (\$100 thousand)

Contributing Services: None

Operating Impact: None