

May 8, 2015

The City of Calgary
Office of the Councillors (8001)
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB, Canada T2P 2M5

Attention: Councillor Gian-Carlo Carra

Councillor Carra,

Here in Acadia I'm concerned about the possible negative consequences this effective blanket rezoning proposal will have on the community of Acadia (and the City of Calgary), as well as the changes to R-1 zoning not addressing the concerns around suiteing and rentals in general.

There is no correlation between suite safety, landlord/tenant concerns, neighbor concerns; and zoning. For example, there are 120,000 properties in the city that are already zoned for suites, but only 550 legal ones (a number of which are in R-1 neighborhoods), and that is across the entire city. People presently do not choose to legalize suites, changes to R-1 zoning will do nothing to change that.

Calgary hasn't caught up to the current pitfalls of secondary suites (legal or no). Calgary Fire is doing their level best to ensure fire safety, but at present we can't keep up with bylaw enforcement concerns, we have no requirement for licensing suites, and no registry. Currently there is no department or office dedicated to remedying the concerns voiced by Calgarians around suites. How does this rezoning scheme solve the concerns around parking and lack of maintenance concerns voiced? Without these types of mechanisms in place, this rezoning scheme will do nothing to remedy these concerns, if anything it makes it easier to hide more illegal suites - at that our zoning construct can't and won't keep people from renting rooms or their basement to others.

Should it be the desire of council to better utilize council time, download the lion's share of the land use consideration to the Development Permit process. Calgary has knowledgeable staff and neighbors willing to consider applications, on the rare occasion when the process stalemates – then take it to council.

In short, with just these points considered I oppose the proposed changes to R-1 zoning as an answer to Calgary's Secondary Suite concerns at this juncture.

As such I would hope you consider this view and not vote to change R-1 zoning. I hope the work continues towards a proposal that begins with the safety of renters and a more interactive renter/landlord market (ie registry).

We need to fix the existing system first, and we need to have confidence in that system. Changes to R-1 zoning does neither.

Sincerely,

Keith Simmons,
President
Acadia Community Association