



Review of Development Appeals Made to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB)

Appeals Summary: January 2023 – December 2025

*City of Calgary, Community Planning
February 2026*

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Section 1.0 – Executive Summary

The following report was developed by the City of Calgary Community Planning Business Unit to provide an overview of development permit applications appealed to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) between January 2023 and December 2025. The intent is to understand and illustrate the trend in number of submitted appeals, the types of appeals being made, and the amount of time it takes an application to proceed through the appeal process. The timeframe chosen reflects approximately one year prior and one year after the city-wide rezoning approval was adopted in May 2024 (implemented in August 2024).

Overall, the data shows that the number of development appeals continues to rise each year, with a substantial jump in appeal numbers from 2024 to 2025. Continued public interest in development applications has also increased the number of appeals on permitted use development permits that comply with all land use bylaw requirements.

Most appeals made on approved development permits prior to 2024 were for single detached dwellings. A shift started to occur in 2024, with an increase in appeals on approved rowhouse buildings, and by 2025, the highest number of appeals made were for rowhouse and townhouse developments. Single detached dwellings, secondary suites and accessory residential buildings (garages) also continue to have high appeal numbers.

Overall appeal timelines were also reviewed to understand the length of a development permit appeal process. Data shows that decision timelines have remained relatively high, but consistent, from 2023 to 2025 and the total appeal duration typically ranges from approximately 65 to 110 days. The City of Calgary supports the Board's efforts to manage and expand resources as necessary to ensure legislated timelines are met, particularly in response to rising appeal volumes and capacity requirements.

The enclosed report provides detailed data and trends on development permit appeals over the last three years.

Section 2.0 – Background

The Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB or the Board) is an independent, quasi-judicial board that hears from people who have been affected by a decision made by the City of Calgary Subdivision Authority or Development Authority (DA). If a permit is refused, the applicant may appeal to the Board and, in certain circumstances, if a permit is approved, affected parties, such as nearby neighbours, may appeal to the Board.

The Board hears appeals such as:

- a decision of the Development Authority concerning a development permit application. This includes deemed refusals;
- an enforcement order issued by the Development Authority;
- a decision of the Subdivision Authority concerning a subdivision application. This includes deemed refusals; and
- certain other decisions of the Development Authority.

Hearings and decisions of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board are based on criteria set out in Section 687(1-4) of the Municipal Government Act. In deciding an appeal, the Board can consider evidence and arguments which the Development Authority or Subdivision Authority did not consider in reaching its decision. The SDAB hears evidence from all parties involved and makes a decision in an impartial manner and applies the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

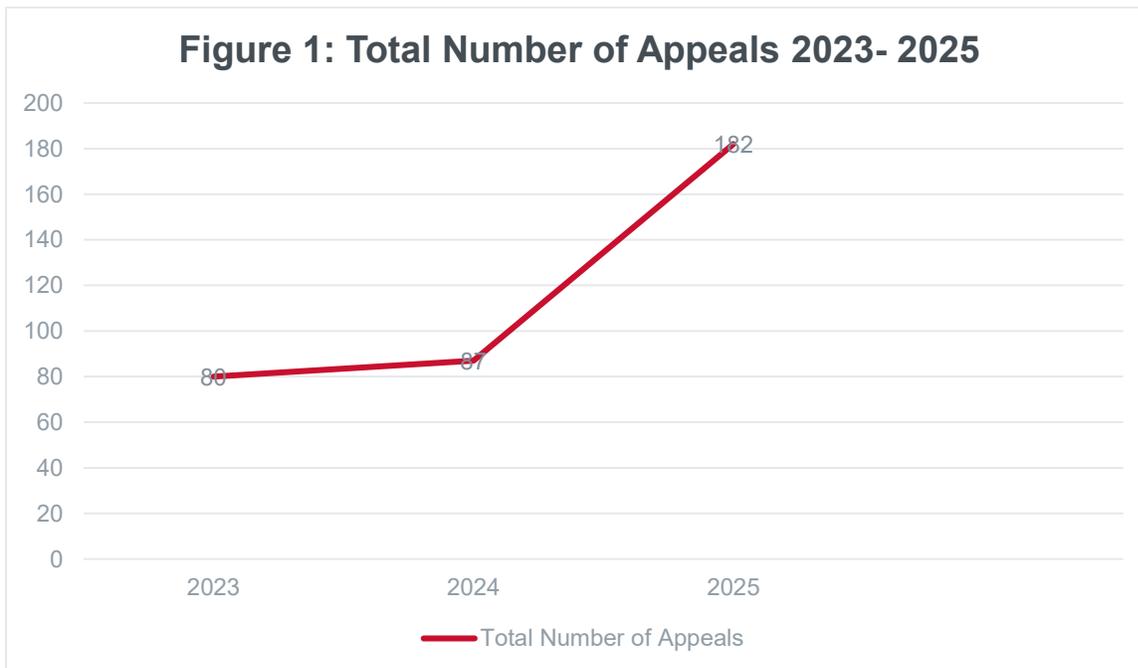
The following report provides a high-level overview of the number of development applications rendered by the Development Authority that have been appealed between January 2023 and December 2025. The intent of the report is to analyze the volume of appeals, the type of development applications that are being appealed, and the general timeline of appeals over the last few years.

Section 3.0 – Total Number of Appeals

The total number of appeals made to the SDAB has increased each year between 2023 and 2025, as shown in Table 1. A total of 80 appeals were made in 2023, 87 appeals in 2024 and 182 appeals in 2025. The number of appeals in 2025 increased by 128 percent from the total number of appeals in 2023 and increased by 109 percent from the total number of appeals in 2024. This is a significant increase in number of appeals considering the increase between 2023 and 2024 was only nine percent.

Table 1: Total Number of Appeals 2023-2025

Year	Total Number of Refused Permits Appealed to the Board	Total Number of Approved Permits Appealed to the Board	Total Number of Order Notices Appealed to the Board	Total Number of Permits Appealed to the Board
2023	19	53	8	80
2024	16	66	5	87
2025	25	144	13	182

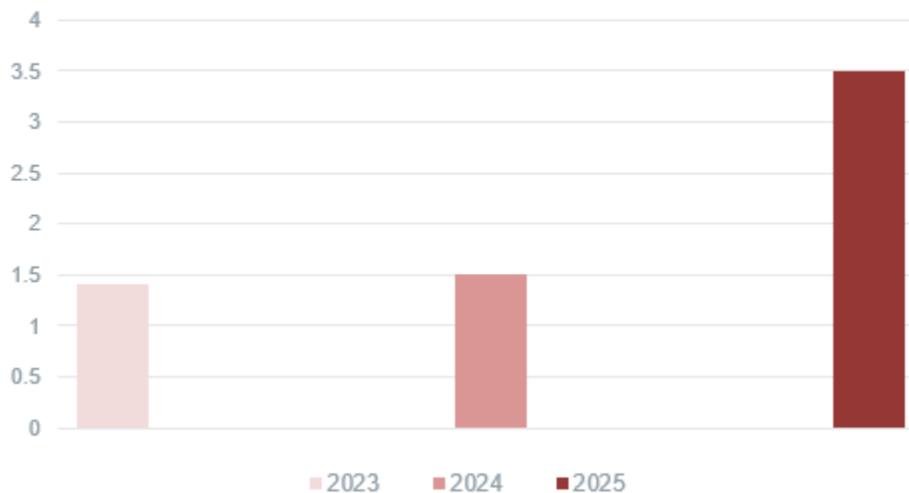


The number of appeals is a relatively small proportion of the total number of development permit decisions that are approved by the Development Authority (the City) each year (Table 2). However, there has been an increase each year from 2023 in the number of appeals versus the total number of development permit decisions, over doubling in amount from 2024 to 2025.

Table 2: Number of SDAB Appeals vs Total Number of Development Permit Decisions

Year	Total Number of Development Permit Decisions Rendered by the Development Authority	Total Number of Appeals	Percent of Appeals vs. Development Permit Decisions
2023	5826	80	1.4%
2024	5903	87	1.5%
2025	5252	182	3.5%

Figure 2: Number of Appeals as a Percent of Development Permit Decisions



Section 4.0 – Appeals on Permitted Uses (No Relaxations)

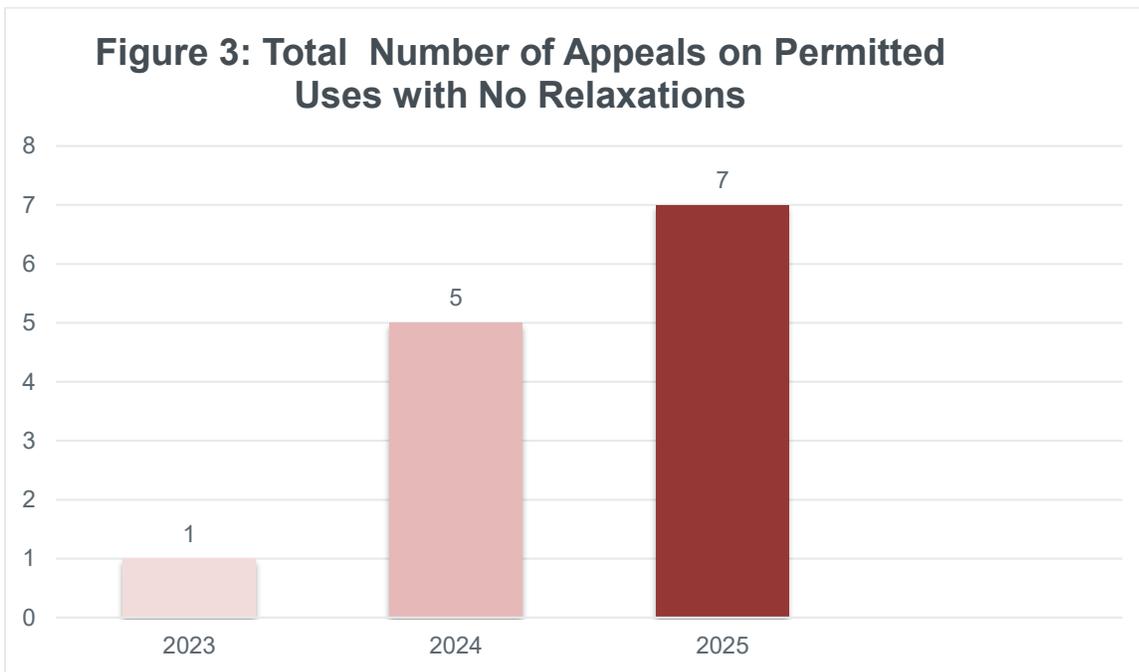
A permitted use means a proposed use of land or a building that is allowed by-right in a specific land use district if it meets all the rules of the land use bylaw. In Calgary's Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, where a development permit application is for a permitted use in a building or on a parcel, and the development conforms to all the requirements and rules of the Bylaw, the Development Authority must approve the application and issue the development permit. When the application is for a discretionary use, the proposed use of land or a building can be considered and analyzed by the Development Authority for possible impacts and mitigation strategies and may be approved with or without conditions or refused. For a permitted use application, the Development Authority has less authority to request specific changes to the development if all requirements of the land use district have been met.

Under the Municipal Government Act, an appeal on a permitted-use development permit can only be made and heard at the SDAB if the Land Use Bylaw was relaxed, varied, or misinterpreted in issuing the permit. When an appeal is filed, Calgary's SDAB first holds a procedural and jurisdictional (P&J) meeting that addresses issues regarding the Board's jurisdiction (authority) to review the appeal and provide the scheduling of a merit hearing. A merit hearing is where all parties (Development Authority, appellant, and applicant) debate the merits and details of the application to the Board. If a permitted-use development permit is appealed, the Board will review the application at the P&J meeting to determine if a potential relaxation or misinterpretation occurred in the permit. If there is not enough time to review the potential relaxation/misinterpretation at the P&J meeting, a subsequent jurisdictional meeting is scheduled for the Board to examine it in detail. If the Board determines they have the jurisdiction to review the permit (a relaxation or misinterpretation is perceived), a merit hearing is scheduled. While not as common practice, the Board also has the option to hold the P&J meeting and merit hearing on the same date.

In undertaking this evaluation, it can be seen there are a growing number of permitted use development permits with no relaxations to the Land Use Bylaw that are proceeding to a SDAB merit hearing for review by the Board. In 2023, only one permitted use (no relaxations) development permit appeal was heard by the Board, whereas there were five appeals in 2024 and seven appeals in 2025 that proceeded to a merit hearing (Table 3).

Table 3: Total Number of Permitted Use (No Relaxations) Development Permits referred to a SDAB Merit Hearing

Year	Total number of Appeals on Permitted Uses with No Relaxations
2023	1
2024	5
2025	7



Section 5.0 – Types of Appeals and Outcomes

Sections 5.1 to 5.3 of this report provide an overview of the development appeals that were submitted between January 2023 and December 2025. For each calendar year, the appeals are broken down in a table based on the type of appeal outlined below:

- **Appealed Approvals** – Development Permits approved by the City (Development Authority) that have been appealed by the public;
- **Appealed Refusals** – Development Permits refused by the City (Development Authority) that have been appealed by the developer/applicant; or
- **Appealed Enforcement Orders** – An Enforcement Order issued by the City (Development Authority) for a development or use of land that is not in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw. These orders could include stop work orders, removal of the development, or other actions listed in the notice so the development or use complies with the Land Use Bylaw. These orders are appealed by the owner/authorized agent.

Each table in Sections 5.1 to 5.4 lists the types of development permits that were appealed to the Board and the outcome of the appeal. The ‘permit type’ is the type of property use the development permit/enforcement order was given for. The outcomes of the Board can be described as follows:

- **Upheld by the Board** – the decision of the Development Authority is upheld by the Board and the appeal is denied;
- **Overtured by the Board** – the decision of the Development Authority is overturned by the Board and the appeal is allowed;
- **Appeal Allowed in Part** – the Board allows the development permit to proceed with modifications, the Board adds Conditions of Approval that the application must complete;
- **Board had no Jurisdiction** – an appeal where the Board did not have jurisdiction to hear the appeal (this may include appeal validity, affected party status, hearing notification, or submission timelines); or
- **Appeal Withdrawn** – An appellant (person that appealed the permit) withdraws the appeal, or the applicant/owner withdraws the development permit application for the proposed development.

Section 5.1 – 2023 Appeals

In 2023, a total of 80 appeals were made to the Board for 53 approvals, 19 refusals and eight enforcement orders. In 2023, the most appeals (both approval and refusal) were for Single Detached Dwellings, followed by Secondary Suites and Multi-Residential Developments.

Table 4: Approved Development Permits Appealed to SDAB (2023)

Permit Type	Total Number of Approvals Appealed to the Board	Number of Approvals Upheld by the Board	Number of Approvals Overturned by the Board	Number of Approvals where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Approvals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Approvals where Appeal Withdrawn
Single Detached Dwelling	18	6	5	3	2	2
Secondary Suite	6	1	2	2	-	1
Accessory Residential Building	3	2	-	1	-	-
Semi-detached Dwelling	1	-	1	-	-	-
Rowhouse Building or Townhouse	3	-	-	2	-	1
Multi-Residential Development	6	4	-	1	-	1
Commercial Development	5	3	1	-	-	1
Child Care Service	1	-	-	1	-	-
Other	10	3	3	1	1	2
Total	53	19 (36%)	12 (23%)	11 (21%)	3 (5%)	8 (15%)

Table 5: Refused Development Permits Appealed to SDAB (2023)

Permit Type	Total Number of Refusals Appealed to the Board	Number of Refusals Upheld by the Board	Number of Refusals Overturned by the Board	Number of Refusals where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Refusals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Refusals where Appeal Withdrawn
Single Detached Dwelling	8	6	2	-	-	-
Secondary Suite	2	-	1	-	-	1
Sign	6	2	4	-	-	-
Other	3	1	1	-	1	-
Total	19	9 (47%)	8 (43%)	0	1 (5%)	1 (5%)

Table 6: Order Notices Appealed to SDAB (2023)

Permit Type	Total Number of Orders Appealed to the Board	Number of Orders Upheld by the Board	Number of Orders Overturned by the Board	Number of Orders where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Orders where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Orders where Appeal Withdrawn
Order Notices	8	5 (63%)	-	-	-	3 (37%)

Section 5.2 – 2024 Appeals

In 2024, a total of 87 appeals were filed to the Board for 66 approvals, 16 refusals and five enforcement orders. Appeals for Single Detached Dwellings were still the highest number of approval appeals made to the Board, while appeals for Secondary Suites and Multi-Residential Developments stayed generally consistent between 2023 and 2024. A spike in appeals for Rowhouse Buildings or Townhouse development occurred in 2024, with 13 approval appeals compared to three appeals in 2023. This is generally aligned with the timing of the city-wide rezoning approval in May 2024 (implementation in August 2024).

Table 7: 2024 Approved Development Permits Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Approvals Appealed to the Board	Number of Approvals Upheld by the Board	Number of Approvals Overturned by the Board	Number of Approvals where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Approvals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Approvals where Appeal Withdrawn
Single Detached Dwelling	18	6	2	7	2	1
Secondary Suite	6	2	-	2	-	2
Accessory Residential Building	8	3	2	1	-	2
Semi-detached Dwelling	3	1	-	2	-	-
Rowhouse Building or Townhouse	13	5	2	4	1	1
Multi-Residential Development	8	2	-	4	-	2
Commercial Development	0	-	-	-	-	-
Child Care Service	1	-	-	1	-	-
Other	9	1	5	1	1	1
Total	66	20 (30%)	11 (17%)	22 (33%)	4 (6%)	9 (14%)

Table 8: 2024 Refused Development Permits Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Refused Permits Appealed to the Board	Number of Refusals Upheld by the Board	Number of Refusals Overturned by the Board	Number of Refusals where Appeal is Allowed in Part	Number of Refusals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Refusals where Appeal Withdrawn
Single Detached Dwelling	3	2	1	-	-	-
Semi-detached Dwelling	2	1	-	-	1	-
Secondary Suite	1	1	-	-	-	-
Commercial Development	3	1	2	-	-	-
Sign	5	1	3	1	-	-
Other	2	1		-	-	1
Total	16	7 (44%)	6 (38%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)

Table 9: 2024 Order Notices Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Orders Appealed to the Board	Number of Orders Upheld by the Board	Number of Orders Overturned by the Board	Number of Orders where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Orders where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Orders where Appeal Withdrawn
Order Notices	5	3 (60%)	-	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	-

Section 5.3 – 2025 Appeals

In 2025, 182 appeals were filed to the SDAB for 144 approvals, 25 refusals and 13 order notices. Many of these appeals are still in progress and an outcome has yet to be determined, therefore, the following tables have a 'Pending Decision' section that does not provide a true representation of the number of decisions upheld and overturned by the Board in 2025.

In 2025, the highest number of appeals were for Rowhouse Buildings or Townhouses, consisting of 34 appeals on approved permits, almost three times as many as 2024 and 11 times as many as 2023. Accessory Residential Buildings contained the second highest approval appeals, with 24 appeals, three times more than 2024 and eight times more than 2023. The number of appeals on Secondary Suites almost tripled between 2024 and 2025. The number of Child Care Service appeals went up in 2025, with four approval appeals compared to one appeal in 2023 and 2024.

Table 10: 2025 Approved Development Permits Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Approvals Appealed to the Board	Number of Approvals Upheld by the Board	Number of Approvals Overturned by the Board	Number of Approvals where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Approvals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Approvals where Appeal Withdrawn	Number of Approvals Pending Decision
Single Detached Dwelling	19	4	1	5	1	1	7
Secondary Suite	16	5	3	1	5	-	2
Accessory Residential Building	24	2	1	4	4	2	11
Semi-detached Dwelling	10	-	2	3	-	-	5
Rowhouse Building or Townhouse	34	4	2	5	2	2	19
Multi-Residential Development	17	1	1	1	3	4	7
Commercial Development	3	-	-	-	1	1	1
Child Care Service	4	2	-	1	-	-	1
Other	17	-	4	3	-	2	8
Total	144	18 (13%)	14 (10%)	23 (16%)	16 (11%)	12 (8%)	61 (42%)

Table 11: 2025 Refused Development Permits Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Refused Permits Appealed to the Board	Number of Refusals Upheld by the Board	Number of Refusals Overturned by the Board	Number of Refusals where Appeal is Allowed in Part	Number of Refusals where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Refusals where Appeal Withdrawn	Number of Refusals Pending Decision
Single Detached Dwelling	7	1	1	-	2	1	2
Accessory Residential Building/ Backyard Suite	4	1	-	1	-	-	2
Commercial Development	2	1	1	-	-	-	
Sign	8	2	2	1	-	-	3
Other	4	1	-	-	-	1	2
Total	25	6 (24%)	4 (16%)	2 (8%)	2 (8%)	2 (8%)	9 (36%)

Table 12: 2025 Order Notices Appealed to SDAB

Permit Type	Total Number of Orders Appealed to the Board	Number of Orders Upheld by the Board	Number of Orders Overturned by the Board	Number of Orders where Appeal Allowed in Part	Number of Orders where the Board had No Jurisdiction	Number of Orders where Appeal Withdrawn	Number of Orders Pending Decision
Order Notices	13	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	-	3 (23%)	7 (53%)

Section 5.4 – Summary of Types of Approved Development Permit Appeals

Figure 4: Types of Approved Development Permits Appealed in 2023

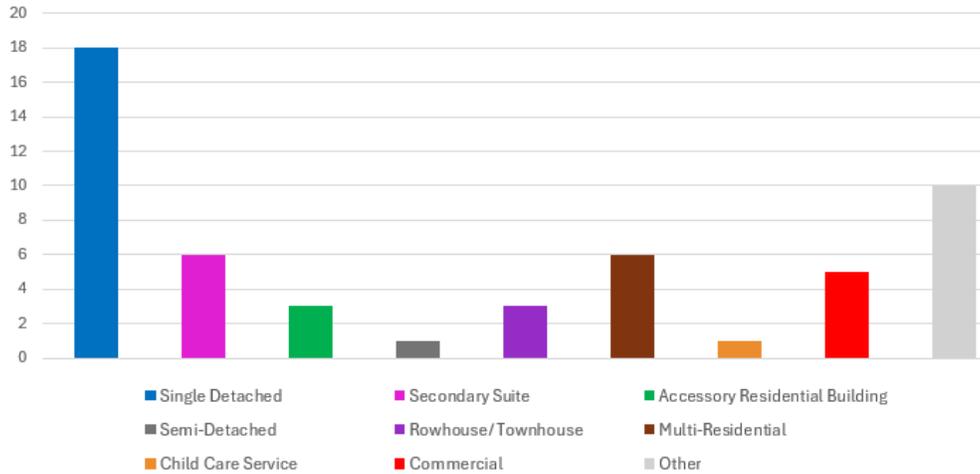


Figure 5: Types of Approved Development Permits Appealed in 2024

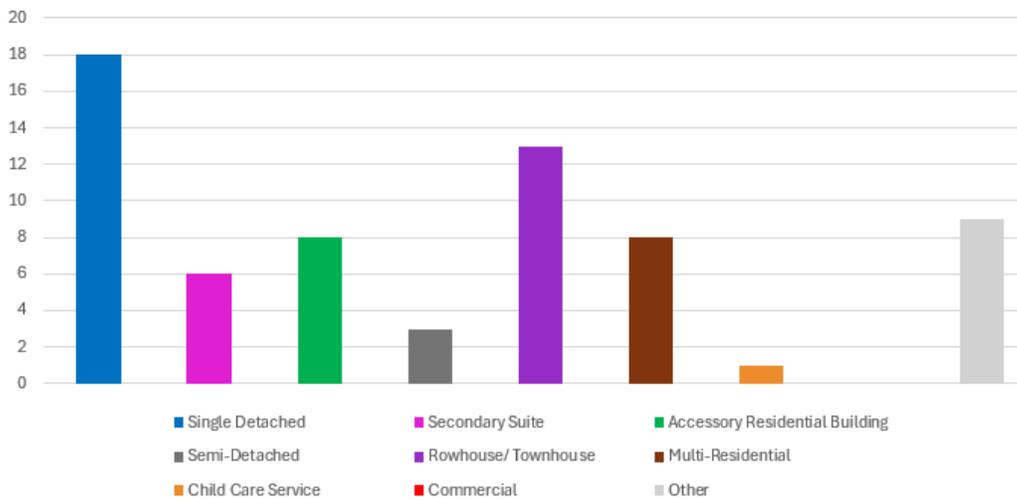
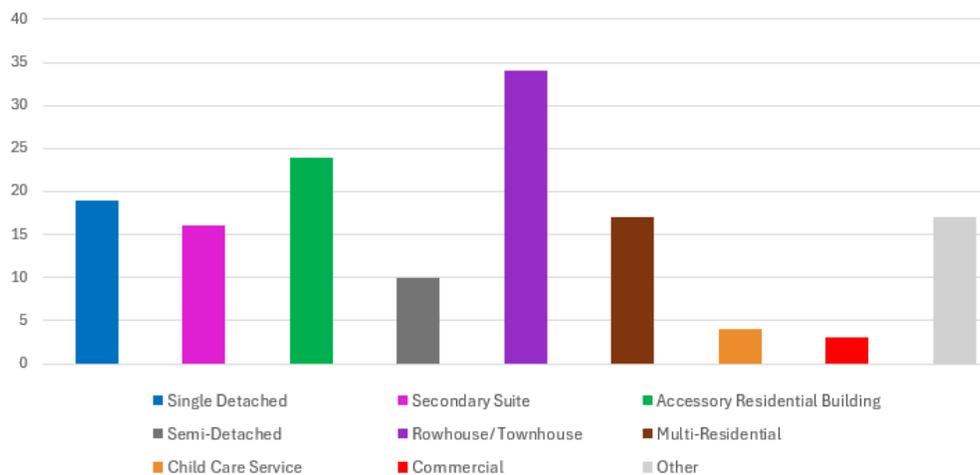


Figure 6: Types of Approved Development Permits Appealed in 2025



Section 6.0 – SDAB Appeal Timelines

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) sets clear regulations on timelines for development appeals. The amount of time an appeal takes from submission of the appeal to the date of decision from the Board is an important timeline for applicants who are awaiting a decision on their development application.

Section 686(1) of the MGA states that a Notice of Appeal must be filed within 21 days of the decision date or deemed refusal (for applicants) or within 21 days of notice being given to the affected persons under the Land Use Bylaw. The SDAB must hold a hearing within 30 days of receiving the notice of appeal and issue a written decision with reasons within 15 days after the hearing concludes (Figure 7 outlines the general appeal process and timelines).

In Calgary, the SDAB's first meeting for most appeals is a procedural and jurisdictional (P&J) meeting, at which the Board may:

- schedule the appeal to proceed and for the merits of the appeal to be argued on a future date or dates;
- provide guidance regarding the filing and exchange of materials;
- address issues regarding the Board's jurisdiction (authority) to decide the appeal, including dismissing appeals that are not under the Board's jurisdiction; and
- address any other matters the Board deems appropriate.

This P&J meeting initiates the hearing of the appeal as per the MGA requirements (Sec. 686.1) and then the hearing is paused or recessed until the merit hearing begins. A merit hearing is where all parties (Development Authority, appellant, and applicant) debate the merits and details of the application to the Board. According to the data, it takes on average 20-30 days to reach the P&J meeting after the notice of appeal and then the merit hearing is typically occurring 30-45 days after a P&J meeting is held. The SDAB is meeting the regulatory requirements of the MGA by initiating the appeal hearing with the P&J meeting within 30 days of a notice of appeal, however, the time it takes to reach a merit hearing is variable, generally adding an additional 30-60 days to the overall appeal process. This is additional time compared to if the P&J meeting and the merit hearing were conducted at one meeting. To note, the Board has the legislative option to hold the P&J meeting and merit hearing on the same day, if deemed appropriate, which may help to reduce overall appeal timelines. Notably, this approach could be considered on appeals where the application is for a permitted use with no relaxations.

The Notice of Decision from the Board is typically occurring 15 days after the merit hearing concludes. This meets the MGA requirements. However, the time between a notice of appeal to a decision date ranges between 65 - 110 days. This differs from the 45-day requirement if the P&J and merit hearings occurred on one date (at one meeting).

As shown in Table 13, the time it takes to reach a decision has been generally consistent over the last three years, with 2024 having slightly longer decision timelines than 2023 and 2025. Outliers do occur within these averages, with some appeals taking substantially longer than the timelines mandated in the MGA (Figure 9). The full data set for all appeals in 2025 is not available since there are still several appeals that were filed in 2025 that have not yet been heard by the Board. Therefore, the timelines provided in Table 13 are only for appeals that were concluded by December 2025.

Figure 7: SDAB Appeal Process and Timelines

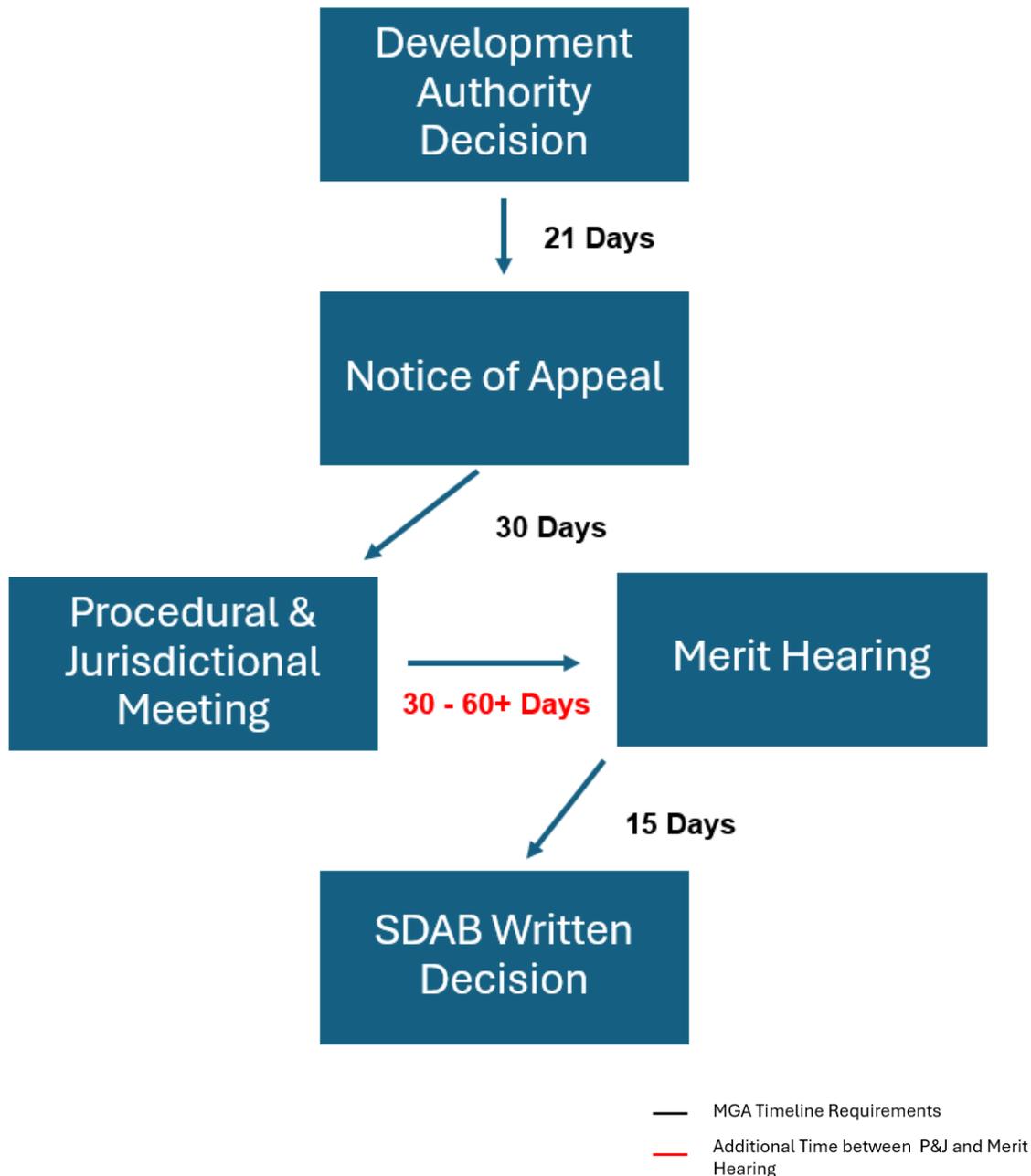


Table 13: SDAB Appeal Timelines

	Number of Days to Reach Procedural & Jurisdictional Hearing*	Number of Days to Reach Merit Hearing*	Number of Days to Reach a Decision*
2023	23	63	78
Q1	21	52	66
Q2	22	69	82
Q3	24	62	77
Q4	25	68	82
2024	24	69	85
Q1	26	92	110
Q2	23	56	71
Q3	21	50	65
Q4	25	71	84
2025	26	66	81
Q1	26	60	74
Q2	27	60	85
Q3	24	77	94
Q4	24	40	50

*Number of days from Board receiving Notice of Appeal

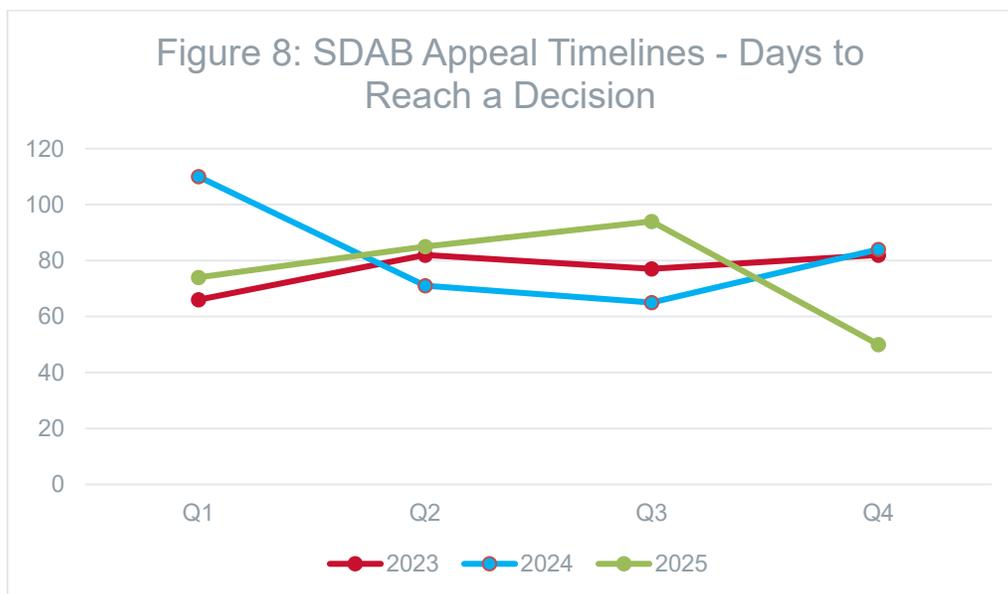
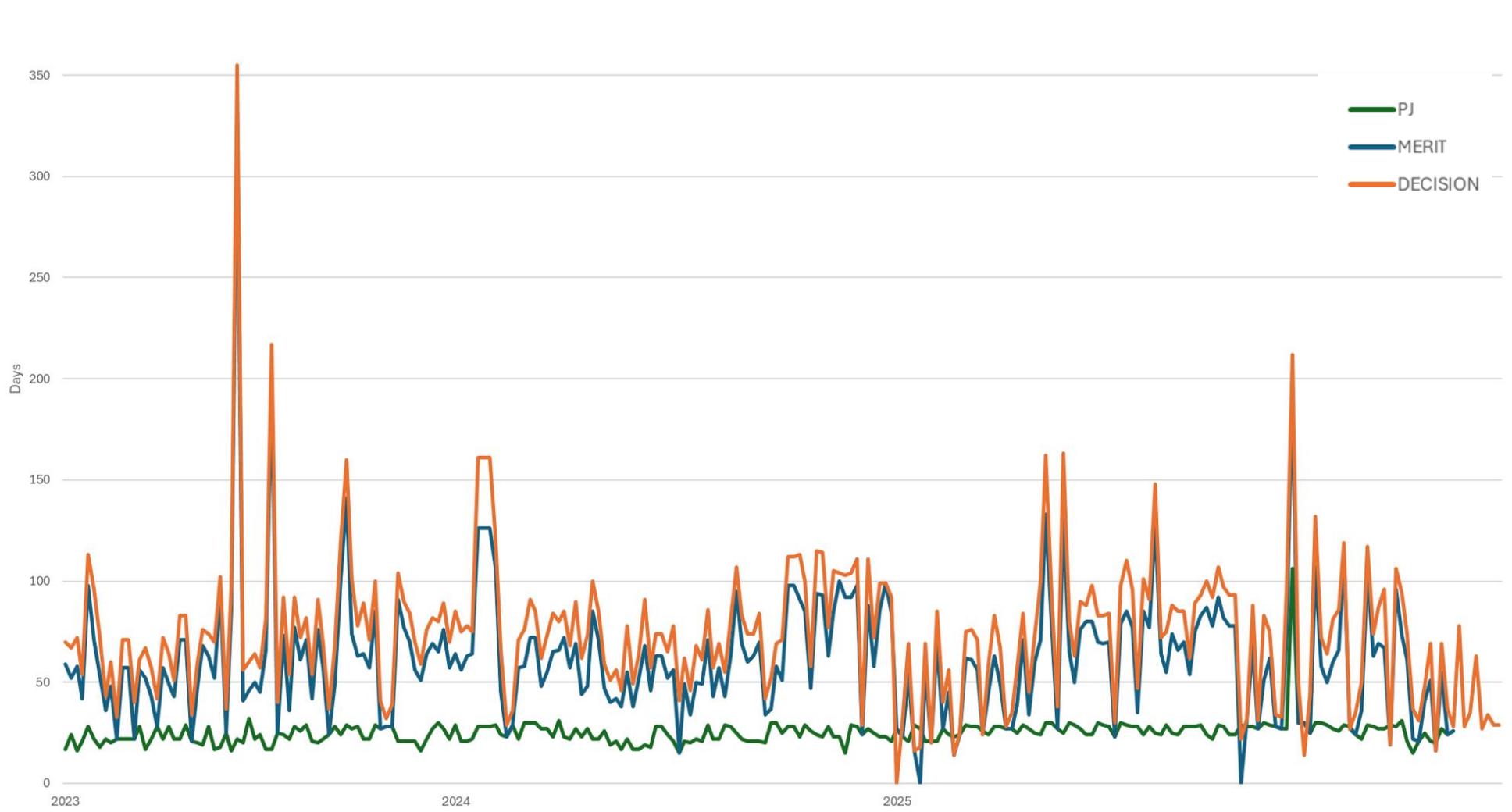


Figure 9: SDAB Appeal Timelines from Notice of Appeal to Decision Date (January 2023 - December 2025)



Section 7.0 – Conclusions

Overall, the number of appeals to the SDAB has risen between 2023 to 2025. While appeals remain a small fraction of total development permit applications, the percentage has doubled from 2024 to 2025, indicating a growing trend in appealed permit decisions.

In May 2024, the city-wide rezoning was adopted by Council (and implemented in August 2024). The rezoning created a new base residential district (zone) in the land use bylaw, identified as Residential – Grade Oriented Infill (R-CG) District. The R-CG District allows a variety of housing types on a residential lot, including rowhouses and townhouses. The district also allows a secondary suite and a backyard suite on the same property. The data shows that since the city-wide rezoning, appeals for rowhouse buildings and townhouses have increased substantially, increasing by over 11 times from 2023 to 2025. Appeals on secondary suites and accessory residential buildings (garages) have also significantly increased from 2023, while appeals on single-detached dwellings remain relatively consistent between all three years.

Permitted use development permits with no bylaw relaxations are also increasingly being appealed and reviewed by the SDAB, rising from just one case in 2023 to five in 2024 and seven in 2025. This trend highlights growing public scrutiny of applications and additional delays for permitted use development permits that fully comply with zoning regulations.

Between 2023 and 2025, the Board's decisions on appealed applications have remained generally consistent. Refusal appeals were evenly split between upholding or overturning the Development Authority's decision. Approval appeals were divided among upholding the decision, overturning it or allowing the appeal in part. The greater share of SDAB decisions resulted in the Development Authority's decision being upheld or partially upheld (the appeal was allowed in part).

With regards to appeal timelines, the SDAB is meeting the MGA requirement to initiate hearings within 30 days of a notice of appeal. However, the current structure of separating the procedural and jurisdictional (P&J) meetings from the merit hearings significantly extends the overall timeline. This structure adds approximately 30–60 days to the process, resulting in total appeal durations ranging from approximately 65 to 110 days, which is beyond the 45-day timeline that would apply if both the meeting and hearing were held together. These decision timelines have remained relatively consistent from 2023 to 2025. An option to help reduce timelines, especially for appeals on permitted uses with no relaxations, is for the Board to hold the P&J meeting and merit hearing on the same day, if deemed appropriate by the Board and the resources are available.