

# **Suggested submission to the City Development Permit Process re The Backlot lease termination and redevelopment of land**

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Click on the link <https://developmentmap.calgary.ca/?find=DP2022-08536>. The Application Summary will pop up. Click "Details" at the bottom of the summary. Then click on "Share your comments". A new window will open with the submission form and instructions.
- Please pick "in opposition of this application" in the drop-down menu.
- You can pick "other" for areas of interest or concern.
- In the general comments or concerns box, you can cut & paste the following submission, or modify it or craft your own!

I understand The Backlot Bar recently received notice of termination of its lease due to a project to redevelop the land into condos ([www.engagegallery.com](http://www.engagegallery.com); <https://developmentmap.calgary.ca/?find=DP2022-08536>) by its landlord and Truman Homes.

I am very concerned about this proposed development and the damage it will do to Calgary's 2SLGBTQ+ community, and I oppose this development.

The Backlot is one of only three queer spaces in the city. It has been a fixture of our community for 47 years (<https://calgarygayhistory.ca/tag/backlot/>), giving Calgary's 2SLGBTQ+ community a safe space to gather and avoid the discrimination our community continues to face in mainstream society. Calgary has historically struggled to be inclusive and queer-friendly, as exemplified recently by the demonstrations and threats of violence against drag events in our city. The Backlot provides a safe and welcoming space for our community to socialize. Many non-profit organizations have used the venue to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for community projects.

The building in which The Backlot is located is also a building with deep historical roots and significance in Calgary. It was built by Thomas Underwood, a former Mayor of Calgary, as the Calgary Gas Company Workshop in 1907. It is one of the last remaining structures of its type (wood-framed, wood-clad commercial

building) in Calgary from that era, and one of the oldest extant workshops associated with the oil and gas industries. It is cataloged in the City of Calgary Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources (<https://www.calgary.ca/arts-culture/heritage-sites/scripts/historic-sites.html?dhcResourceId=770>).

The Backlot, like many businesses, struggled during the COVID pandemic. They have invested significantly in recent years to improve the building, including interior renovations and a completely revamped back patio space, staircase and second-floor patio space.

Mixed-use spaces are great, but residential use must be compatible with commercial use, especially in the downtown core. I am concerned this proposed development will not fit with the current businesses in this area (bars, restaurants, office space). If the development is approved, it must be designed so that a restaurant/bar with a patio space can operate in the same manner as it can in the current space.

The loss of The Backlot will seriously harm our community. I implore the City to reject this proposed development as it is currently conceived.