

DTR & UDRP Comments – Applicant Response

September 30, 2019

The City of Calgary

Community Planning
P.O. Box 2100, Postal Station M
Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2M5

Attention: Lindsey Ganczar
Planner, Community Planning

**Reference: LOC # 2019-0076 Detailed Team Review
Glendale Commons Project**

Ms. Ganczar,

In response to your August 16, 2019 DTR letter, your email of August 14, 2019 relating to community non-support letters and subsequent discussions, I, on behalf of the developer, provide our response in the *What We Hear Report* (separate attachment). We also provide a copy of a "A final summary of the applicant-led public engagement undertaken for this application prior to the application being included on a future CPC agenda" as requested by you.

We understand the core issue with this application is a Drive-Through in a TOD zone and trust we have addressed the value of the proposal as an interim community investment that provides a place for people to meet, socialize, stop by on the way to the train and pick up a coffee on the way to work while providing the site the opportunity to become a mixed use, multi-story project in the future.

ITEM	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	CITY DTR1 COMMENTS	
MDP	The subject lands fall within the Developed Residential - Established Areas of the MDP. Section 3.5.1 states that future land use and development in the Developed Area should:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the predominantly low-density, residential nature of the community; 	Through feedback the project is designed to fit within the context of community in scale, configuration and buffers to adjacent use.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support moderate intensification that respects the scale and character of the neighborhood; and; 	The neighbourhood is largely single family homes on RC-1 lots. This land use can allow for up to 10M high buildings although many of the existing stock are less than this. This development proposal for a Direct Control District based on

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		MU-1 respects both character and scale of the area and is the same base as Main Streets uses for this type of interface. The building design will be sensitive to the context at the development permit stage.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment should support the local community by adding population and a mix of commercial and service uses. 	Currently the community has a 1km stretch on 17 th that is 100% residential. This project will create the first mix of commercial and service uses. When the market is ready, the site is zoned for adding residential and other uses.
	Section 3.5.3 provides more specific policy to the Established Area, including:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage modest redevelopment; 	This proposal provides for a sensitive transition to the existing residences to the south.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New developments should incorporate a mix of land uses and a pedestrian-friendly environment; and 	The proposed zoning allows for mixed use and development has been designed with pedestrians in mind.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities to increase pedestrian and cycling connectivity. 	Cycling parking and multiple pedestrian access points are incorporated.
	Section 1.3.3 outlines eight <i>Key Directions</i> approved by City Council for use in the MDP. They represent the strategic moves that need to be accomplished in order to guide Calgary towards the vision of imagine Calgary. Key Direction #4 is linking land use decisions to transit.	<p>This project looks forward to, and allows for, 'Linking to Transit' with a transition stage as a first step. In addition, this project supports many of the other goals and directions noted above and like with most projects does not hit them all. The application is part of a process of supporting the economy, allowing for a more compact form, creating what communities want, promoting great urban design, connecting people through multi modes to the city and adding landscapes to enhance public spaces and help clean the air.</p> <p>The community wants a meeting place that is within walking distance. This the primary function of the plan. The drive through</p>

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		<p>facilitates this from a financial perspective and being a Starbucks will balance sitting and consuming on site with driving through.</p> <p>The drive through is only a minor part of the design, accounting for only 13% of the site area and is not visible from the street nor alleyway.</p>
	<p>Section 1.4 (Implementing the MDP) lists the processes required to achieve the MDP objectives. Specifically, 1.4.2 refers to facilitating private sector investment, and states that buy-in and investment by the private sector is critical to achieving the vision of the MDP.</p>	
	<p>Section 2.2 <i>Shaping a More Compact Urban Form</i> of the MDP provides direction for fostering efficient use of land, complete communities, and greater mobility choices, as well as transit-supportive land use. Key directions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking land use decisions to transit. • Developing a land use framework that supports transit. • Mixing (and providing a variety of) land uses including higher density residential; • Creating a strong pedestrian environment. 	<p>Relating to Section 2.2 this project does;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link land use to transit by allowing transition in the future • Develops a future land use framework to support transit • Allows for future mix of uses including residential • Creates a robust high quality pedestrian environment • Allows for locating the right uses close to transit like meeting places and amenity • Will attract transit users as they pass by to and from work • Will promote walkability to transit as it is on the path of travel and will encourage community members to walk to the site and not drive to amenities elsewhere.
TOD	<p>The subject site falls within the 600 m radius surrounding a LRT station, located approximately 100 m to the southeast of the 45th Street station. The following sections apply to the proposal:</p>	

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	Section 4.0 provides policy for ensuring land uses around transit stations encourage transit use, and lists drive-throughs as “non-transit supportive” use.	The proposal is a community focused commercial project and plaza, that includes a drive through. The drive through is 13% of the plan area with the rest being dedicated to required parking, landscaping, plaza space and sidewalks. Through engagement we heard that residents that use the train plan on grabbing a coffee on the way to the train. We hope this will encourage greater transit use for others.
	Section 5.0 provides policy for increasing density around transit stations;	The proposed land use proposes to increase the allowable mixed-use density to 2.5 FAR that is consistent with the desires of the community.
	Section 7.0 provides policy for ensuring each station area becomes a “place” and a hub of mixed-use activity.	The key elements of the proposal for this site is to create a sense of place for people and the community to meet and get a coffee. Current uses around this TOD are only institutional and residential uses. This will create the mix by adding retail where none exists as well as a public gathering place where none or minimal exist.
West LRT Planning Study	Section 3.2 lists the Guiding Principles of the study, and they include:	
	Sensitively increasing residential densities within the vicinity of LRT stations;.	Our proposal proposes a three story height, that is consistent with the feedback for the project received through engagement discussions. The proposal will allow the sensitive addition of residential in the future. As evidenced by the Carlisle application the community is not ready for large scale multi family yet.
	Accommodating mixed-use development that includes retail, office, residential, and public services especially around the LRT stations and along major corridors; and	The proposed land use will allow for this to happen today and to a greater extent over time, as the project will provide the first of the retail amenities the community has requested on a street that is currently 100% residential and a TOD that doesn't have any retail.

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	<p>Enhancing 17 Avenue SW to be comfortable and pleasant for pedestrians.</p>	<p>This proposal is enhancing the streetscape with buildings fronting the street, a public meeting place and connections through the City sidewalks to the community and the Transit Station. This section of 17 Avenue is identified in the Calgary Transportation Plan as an Arterial Street and as such is intended to accommodate Autos, Goods and Transit to High Standards, Cycling between High and Variable Standards and Walking to Variable Standards. These streets are not intended to be destinations in themselves but provide a reasonably direct connection between multiple communities and major destinations. In addition, there is no street parking and four lanes of traffic. Not a great pedestrian environment and has about 25,000 cars passing by the site a day. This proposal is doing what it has control over.</p>
	<p>Section 4.0 provides a <i>Community Values Summary</i> as identified by the public through the West LRT public engagement process. Values specific to the 45th Street station vicinity include:</p>	
	<p>Small-scale, mixed-use developments with higher density next to the station; and</p>	<p>This project is in scale with the feedback received from the community and is small scale. This site is not directly adjacent to the Station and as such it is appropriate that the scale is lower. Again, this is a transitional phase of the site development and zoned for mixed use in the future.</p>
	<p>Mixed-uses should include residential, office, and main floor retail.</p>	<p>The proposed land use allows for this and would be realized in the future. Currently around this TOD, it is 100% residential and institutional, this will be the first retail thus creating mixed use today and to be realized to a greater extent in the future.</p>

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	Values specific to all stations along the 17 Avenue corridor include:	
	Mixed-use street edges that transitions to adjacent residential; and	The proposed land use allows for this and would be realized in the future.
	Residential uses should be located above commercial uses.	The proposed land use allows for this and would be realized in the future.
URBAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL	<p>Creativity The panel commends the applicant for experimenting with community gathering spaces and their effort to creatively resolve neighbour impacts with high quality material interventions, however foundational best practice approaches to the site are not being implemented.</p>	<p>The site is located in a TOD area that currently has zero retail and is 100% institutional and residential. Adding walk-able retail will increase the mixed use of the area. Zoning will allow for increased mixed use directly on the site in the future. The purpose of the proposed Land-Use is to put in place the ability to develop a project that will ultimately dedicate the grade level and above for people uses and have cars underground.</p>
	<p>Context The proposed low-density development vision does consider the low-density residential context, arguably to a fault. From an urban design perspective, it does not consider its transit-oriented development context or location along a major road which is far more impactful for good city building.</p>	<p>The current design is an interim step before a multi storey mixed use building. The TOD context is considered now and in future, with buildings fronting 17th Avenue and a public space, providing for pedestrians traveling to and from the station. All street fronting facades will have largely transparent facades, providing physical and visual activation to the street. In order to take advantage of the sun exposure, the frontage of Building 'B' will focus on the plaza from a physical connection perspective.</p>
	<p>Context While the proposed development is sensitive to the existing context of single-detached homes, it fails to consider the future context of 17 AV SW and does not adequately frame the street. Great effort is obvious in the attempt to camouflage the drive through nature of the development, however this <i>use</i> is simply not as meaningful as it could be to the public realm.</p>	<p>The site design for a small scale commercial project without a drive-through would largely have the same layout as proposed; buildings fronting the street, plaza with sun exposure and fronting the street, parking entrance off 17th Avenue (access off the lane would be detrimental to the residential to the south) and parking at the back.</p>

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	<p>Integration The applicant has demonstrated a consideration of the site’s integration, incorporating landscaped buffers to screen the drive-through and soften the street edge, however parking entrances, loading areas, and at-grade parking diminish the quality of the areas designed for congregation. Applicant to consider integrating plaza space on east boundary, fronting Glenmount Drive Southwest.</p>	<p>The property on the east is City Land and would require a license of occupation. At the development permit stage, consideration will be given to enhance the public edges of the project. Having a variety of places to sit will be an asset as each side can have opportunities at different times of the day and with different noise levels and activity.</p>
	<p>Connectivity Relatively good connectivity demonstrated from Glenmount Drive Southwest to the public plaza area. The applicant has not indicated primary building entries, so the Panel is unable to comment on overall connectivity at his time.</p>	<p>Connectivity will be clarified with the development of the buildings and identification of tenants. District 2 Community Police Resource Officer and crime prevention are collaborating to help with input to maximize visibility and safety with the connectivity.</p>
	<p>Diversity The retail units provide reasonable street variety and the at-grade area is certainly a focus of the development. Success of the flexible nature of the parking area remains in question. The transparency and building design are not yet known, however the framework appears to be in place for successful diversity.</p>	<p>The use of the parking area as public space is aspirational and is an attempt to provide space like you would find in Europe where on the weekend the piazza is a market on weekends.</p>
	<p>Flexibility While the Panel appreciates the ‘first-in’ redevelopment context of a primarily low-density single detached neighbourhood, the current building design and corresponding Land Use fails to capitalize on the site’s TOD location and recent City investment in the West LRT. It is clear to the Panel the Starbucks anchoring tenant is driving design factors based solely from a business perspective, however future redevelopment interest will accordingly suffer. As presented, land use decisions are not linked to transit, but rather neighbour concerns. This sets a dangerous precedent for all TOD areas within the city.</p>	<p>The land-use allows for future intensification with a mixed use form and underground parking. The land use is linked to transit and neighbor concerns. We are trying to find the balance between what the community wants and what is viable now and developing a high quality project that adds value to the community. This precedent is in a number of shopping centre locations one of which is Brentwood, where the development still has Gas Bars and parking lots. So the precedent is already set. The key is to develop projects that allow for the future.</p>

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	<p>Safety A CPTED concern is identified on west property line, adjacent the CRU. This area is both landscaped and fenced with very little sightlines for safety.</p>	<p>This will be addressed at the DP stage and is a concern. We are working with District 2 community resource officer and crime prevention for expert experience and local knowledge to develop a safe site. In addition, we will use the feedback from planning and others to re-organize the site to maximize site safety.</p>
	<p>Orientation The two buildings are placed on the site provide adequate urban navigation.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
PLANNING	<p>The neighbourhood circulation, notice posting at 4503- 17 Avenue SW, and response from the Glendale / Glendale Meadows Community Association resulted in nine letters of support and 53 letters in opposition to the application. Provide a formal written response that addresses the comments sent to you by email on August 14, 2019, as well as a final summary of the applicant-led public engagement undertaken for this application prior to the application being included on a future CPC agenda.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
	<p>Consider and respond to the following: a) How the proposed land use (C-COR2) meets the intent of the relevant policies listed above, including the Municipal Development Plan, the Transit Oriented Development Policy Guidelines, and the West LRT Land Use Study (refer to the <i>Comments on Relevant City Policies</i> listed above)</p>	<p>See above. Through discussions and meetings with the planning department, the developer has agreed to revise the Land Use from the C-COR2 to a Direct Control District based on MU-1. MU-1 is the land use of choice for the Main Streets fronting the street and is a nodal policy suitable for a TOD. By using this as the base for the Direct Control District, the site can transform over time to a form that more closely aligns with the principles outlined in the TOD Guidelines without the need for new land use in the future.</p>
	<p>Consider and respond to the following: b) The comments provided by the Urban Design Review Panel (see</p>	<p>See above</p>

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	above) as a result of the meeting held on August 7, 2019.	
	Consider and respond to the following: c) The opportunity to develop the entire block face cohesively, including the lot located at 4515- 17 Avenue SW.	The fourth lot owners are aware of the project and are not interested in selling at this time. The design is expandable and does account for the future integration of the lot. At the DP stage we can provide an expandability plan for context.
	ADVISORY COMMENTS	
Transportation		
Signal Warrant	At the Development Permit stage, a signal warrant will be required for the intersection of 17 Avenue S.W., and Glenmount Drive S.W.	Noted. Bunt & Associates has been retained.
	At the Development Permit stage, a vehicle queuing study will be required for the drive thru component. This is to ensure vehicles do not back out onto 17 th Avenue S.W.	Noted. Bunt & Associates has been retained.
	At the Development Permit stage, the South flare of the drive thru exit must provide 1m of separation from the North lane flare.	Noted
	At the Development Permit stage, if the existing driveway accessing Glenmount Drive S.W. is not reused as it stands for the site exit, it is to be "removed and rehabilitated at the Developers expense	Noted

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In closing I hope that above provides a balanced response to a long term vision we all embrace, but allows for investment to happen now, to provide the community what it has said they want. A community meeting place where you can get a coffee and socialize.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Barrington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "B".

Ben Barrington, AAA, MRAIC, LEED AP

Cc: Lee Dowd
Chris Jones