

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2019 November 07

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2019-1369

Outline Plan in Sage Hill (Ward 2) at 3655 Sage Hill Drive NW and 625 Sage Valley Boulevard NW, LOC2017-0404 (OP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application has been submitted by B&A Planning Group on behalf of Genesis Land Development Corporation on 2017 December 27. This outline plan application proposes an outline for the future subdivision and development of approximately 20.85 hectares (51.51 acres) of land in the northwest community of Sage Hill. This proposal provides for:

- A pedestrian oriented neighbourhood including a commercial component and a variety of housing options, contributing to development of a Community Activity Centre;
- An anticipated total of 847 units with a maximum yield of 1528 units;
- An anticipated 284 low density housing units in the form of single detached, semi-detached and townhouse (R-G and R-Gm);
- An anticipated 112 units of low height and low density multi-residential development in a townhouse form (M-G);
- An anticipated 451 units of multi-residential development of medium height and medium density in a variety of forms up to 6 storeys (M-2 and MU-1);
- Approximately 3,720 square metres of small and medium format community commercial development on 1.66 hectares (4.10 acres) (C-C1);
- Anticipated residential density of 40.6 units per hectare (16.4 units per acre);
- Anticipated intensity of 105 people and jobs per hectare;
- Approximately 0.41 hectares (1.02 acres) of land for public parks (S-SPR);
- Approximately 0.30 hectares (0.70 acres) of Environmental Reserve (ER) for the protection of ecologically sensitive areas (S-UN); and
- The location of future roads, pathways, trails, major utilities, services, and other infrastructure.

The proposed outline plan serves to implement the objectives of the *Symons Valley Community Plan (ASP)* by providing a framework for the subdivision and development of portion of a community activity centre. The proposal is aligned with the *Municipal Development Plan*, and is being considered together with an associated land use amendment (CPC2019-1370).

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission **APPROVE** the proposed outline plan located at 3655 Sage Hill Drive NW and 625 Sage Valley Boulevard NW (SE1/4 Section 36-25-2-5; Plan 1810140, Block 1, Lot 4) to subdivide the 20.85 hectares \pm (51.51 acres \pm), with conditions (Attachment 1).

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

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BACKGROUND

This application was submitted by B&A Planning Group on behalf of Genesis Land Development Corporation on 2017 December 27. A summary of the proposal is provided in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 2).

The subject lands are part of an area annexed to The City of Calgary in 1989. The *Symons Valley Community Plan* was drafted and adopted in 2001. The plan envisioned a predominantly residential area with five distinct communities with over 54,000 residents.

Since that time, several amendments of the *Symons Valley Community Plan* were undertaken which affected the subject lands. In 2008, Council approved amendments to establish a Transit Oriented Planning Area around a future bus rapid transit (BRT) hub. These amendments included policies and several DC Direct Control Districts enabling high density residential and regional commercial land uses, as well as encouraging significant suburban office development. In 2009, the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) identified this area as a Community Activity Centre.

Initial development of the Transit Oriented Planning Area, based on the 2008 vision, was completed, including the commercial area south of the site, and construction of most of the roads and the roundabouts that are currently in place (with portions of Sage Hill Boulevard NW remaining unfinished).

Nine years later, much of the land within this area had yet to realize development. This led to policy amendments approved by Council in 2017 September (Bylaw 55P2017). The *Symons Valley Community Plan* was amended modifying the vision which more closely aligned with landowners' current development expectations as supported through market studies. Policy amendments were made to identify this as a pedestrian oriented multi-residential area, to provide for development of a variety of housing forms, achieving medium density, in a well connected, pedestrian oriented community framework.

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Site Context

Located in the developing community of Sage Hill, the subject site is east of Shaganappi Trail NW and South of Sage Valley Boulevard NW. This undeveloped site is approximately 20.85 hectares (51.51 acres) in size and has been partially graded in preparation for development.

The site slopes gently from west to east. A coulee, designated Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District, bounds the entire western edge and majority of the southern edge of the parcel and forms part of a larger coulee and ravine system in the area. These coulee features provide both opportunities and constraints for neighbourhood development; they provide both visual and recreational amenity, while also posing some challenge to site design.

Lands south of the site designated DC Direct Control District ([Bylaw 130D2019](#)) are currently vacant and are anticipated for a mix of multi-residential and commercial development based on recent land use approvals (LOC2018-0190, approved 2019 July). East of the subject site, multi-residential development is currently under construction on portions of the lands designated Commercial – Corridor 2 (C-C2) District and Mixed Use - General (MU-1) District and Mixed Use – Active Frontage (MU-2) District.

Also to the south of the site, between Sage Hill Link NW and Sage Hill Gate NW, are lands owned by The City of Calgary designated DC Direct Control District ([Bylaw 155D2019](#)). Planned as a future integrated civic facility, these lands will include a public library, arts and culture space, affordable housing, and a bus rapid transit (BRT) hub including Park and Ride. An existing regional commercial centre (Sage Hill Crossing) is located offering a mix of large and medium format retail uses is located south of Sage Hill Gate NW and Sage Hill Boulevard NW.

This area is part of the Transit Oriented Planning Area in *Symons Valley Community Plan* and is identified within a Community Activity Centre in the *Municipal Development Plan*.

As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of Sage Hill reached peak population in 2018, with 7,219 residents.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

Sage Hill	
Peak Population Year	2018
Peak Population	7219
2018 Current Population	7219
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2018 Civic Census*

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Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained online through the [Sage Hill](#) community profile.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

This outline plan (Attachment 3), along with the associated land use amendment application, will facilitate development of a pedestrian oriented neighbourhood that will contribute to the buildout of a community activity centre as envisioned by the *Municipal Development Plan* and in accordance with the *Symons Valley Community Plan*.

Planning Considerations

The following sections highlight the scope of technical planning analysis conducted by Administration.

Subdivision Design

The outline plan comprises approximately 20.85 hectares (51.51 acres). The subdivision design responds to the natural features of the site, and the already developed pattern of streets and development. An inter-connected network of pedestrian oriented streets and pathways is provided, which frames a block pattern that will accommodate a variety of land uses.

The plan demonstrates an adaptive grid street network that responds to the adjacent coulees that frame the south and west boundaries of the site. The overall network of streets, and pathways emphasises connection to the coulees and to the shopping areas, public transit, and public facilities to the south.

The street pattern allows for a variety of housing forms with a combination of laned and non-laned product types. Front garages have been generally limited to improve the residential street interface and access conditions on collector streets. A restrictive covenant will be registered against certain laned parcels through an outline plan condition. Land identified for multi-residential and commercial uses either takes advantage of access from major roads, or allows for more efficient land development of constrained sites. The proposed subdivision anticipates 846 units, with a maximum of 1,552 units possible.

The proposed pedestrian bridge located on the south boundary of the plan area is a key feature of the outline plan. Approximately 80 metres in length, it will be delivered by the developer along with other infrastructure. The bridge will span the coulee and provide pedestrians and cyclists more direct access to the commercial areas, and public facilities (library and BRT) located to the south of the outline plan area.

Municipal Reserves (MR) owing on these lands were previously provided on another nearby site within the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. This was done in accordance with rules that allow deferral of Municipal Reserves under the *Municipal Government Act*. To ensure the plan area

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included recreational amenity space to support the proposed land uses, the applicant has provided 1.02 acres of non-credit MR in two locations. This represents an over-dedication of approximately 2 percent. The adjacent coulee system (Environmental Reserve lands) provide residents with additional greenspace for passive recreation.

Land Use

The existing land use districts are:

- DC Direct Control District ([Bylaw 44D2008](#)) based on the Multi-Residential – High Density High Rise (M-H3) District;
- Commercial – Regional 3 f0.3h18 (C-R3 f0.3h18) District; and
- Commercial – Community 1 (C-C1) District.

The existing DC Direct Control District (Bylaw 44D2008) provided for very high density residential uses to be developed in conjunction with an indoor recreation facility. It provided for development up to 140 meters in height, and maximum residential densities of 400 units per hectare. The 2017 ASP amendment process planned for a much more modest land use approach, which is considered more appropriate and able to be implemented given the site's location in the city.

The site's existing commercial land uses (C-R3 f0.3h18 and C-C1) provide both community and regional scaled commercial land uses. Recent market studies indicated unbuilt regional commercial land uses (C-R3 f0.3h18) have limited prospect of developing due mainly to changing retail market dynamics and existing supply.

The application proposes to redesignate the lands from the districts described above, to:

- Residential – Low Density Mixed Housing (R-G) (R-Gm) District;
- Multi-Residential – Ground Oriented (M-G) District;
- Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District;
- Mixed Use - General (MU-1h22) District;
- Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve (S-SPR) District; and
- Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District.

The above districts are located strategically within the plan area with higher densities (M-2, MU-1h22) generally located adjacent to higher order roads and closer to BRT infrastructure. The MU-1 District, with potential for at-grade commercial uses, is located adjacent a primary collector roadway and opposite a mixed-use area currently under construction.

Low density R-G land uses have been located adjacent to environmental reserve areas where more modest forms such as single and semi-detached buildings can integrate more effectively with natural features and irregular boundary conditions. The R-Gm District is used to frame the collector street entrances to the plan area with Duplex Dwellings and Rowhouses to create a

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more safe and pleasant public realm. The R-Gm District is also proposed for the important streetscape that connects the Municipal Reserve (S-SPR) with the Environmental Reserve (S-UN) in the coulee as it also suggest a more pleasant urban design. The proposed Land Use Map can be found in Attachment 2.

Density and Intensity

The *Municipal Development Plan* (Map 1: Urban Structure) identifies these lands as part of a Community Activity Centre. Community Activity Centres must achieve a minimum intensity of 150 people and jobs per hectare.

The development anticipated through this proposal will achieve intensities estimated at approximately 105 people and jobs per hectare. While to be confirmed through future development permits, this application contemplates development of approximately 848 units. The majority, approximately 452 units, will be in a multi-residential, apartment form. Roughly 270 units are expected to be in a multi-residential townhouse form, with the remaining 126 units expected in a single detached or semi-detached form. This mix is expected to create a diverse and active neighbourhood in keeping with the objectives of the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. Approximately 4,150 square metres of commercial space will also contribute to the overall jobs intensity of the plan area.

Although this area will demonstrate a slightly lower land use intensity than the 150 people and jobs targeted by the *Municipal Development Plan*, the policy objective is nevertheless expected to be met as several other sites within the larger Community Activity Centre are either developing or expected to develop at intensities that will bring up the average for the overall Community Activity Centre area. Furthermore, the *Symons Valley Community Plan*, allows intensity requirements to be relaxed on individual sites where urban design excellence and enhanced contributions to sustainability are demonstrated. This requirement is satisfied by the developer's commitment to constructing the pedestrian bridge over the coulee, and committing to ensure all new homes can easily accommodate both solar energy equipment and electric vehicle charging equipment (built solar ready and EV ready).

The Subdivision Data Sheet with additional detail can be found in Attachment 4.

Environmental

This proposal identifies additional lands for environmental reserve adjacent the existing environmental reserve areas south and west of the outline plan area. The construction of the pedestrian bridge across the coulee is considered to be an important piece of infrastructure that will both serve to protect the coulee, while resulting in some environmental impacts. The bridge will provide a high-quality connection reducing the irregular, or informal routes often chosen across these natural features. Nevertheless, bridge construction and any permanent bridge supports accommodated through the detailed design process may have an impact on the

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natural features. These impacts will be managed through conditions and requirements applied through the tentative plan process.

Transportation

The mobility network within the plan area aims to support active modes by making walking and cycling as safe, pleasant and convenient as possible. The plan area is well served by regional pathways, multi-use pathways, and trails. Street design has emphasised curb extensions wherever possible to ensure vehicle speeds are moderated and pedestrian comfort at intersections is enhanced.

Important connections for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided via a pedestrian bridge over the coulee south of the site. The bridge will provide a key link between the outline plan area, through to Sage Hill Boulevard NW. A private street, protected through public and mutual access easement and maintenance agreements, will be built at the southern end of the bridge extending further south to Sage Hill Drive NW.

The subject lands are located within 600 metres of the planned integrated civic facility which will include a new public library, arts and culture space, affordable housing and transit hub (BRT). The BRT location currently provides access to several routes including Route 82 (service to Brentwood LRT Station and the University), Route 115 (service to Tuscany LRT Station), Route 123 (service to North Pointe, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Route 301, future Green Line), and Route 129 (service to Dalhousie LRT Station). As the communities of Sage Hill, Kincora, Nolan Hill, and areas within the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* build out, the transit hub will deliver further enhanced transit service and high frequency buses, including one BRT service connecting the transit hub itself to Brentwood/University and another BRT service running between North Pointe and Tuscany LRT Stations.

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) submitted with this application was reviewed and accepted by Administration. The TIA confirmed that the corresponding land uses can be accommodated with the proposed and established road network.

Utilities and Servicing

Sanitary, water and storm services are available to service the plan area from Sage Hill Boulevard NW, Sage Hill Drive NW, and Sage Valley Boulevard NW.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

In keeping with Administration's standard practices, this application was circulated to relevant stakeholders and notice posted on-site. Notification letters were sent to adjacent landowners and the application was advertised online.

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One comment was received during circulation from a resident north of the site concerned with the proposed intensity of commercial development and multi-residential development. Administration felt the significant reductions in density from the existing land uses will deliver a neighbourhood form and character more compatible with adjacent, existing development.

No comments were received from the Sage Hill Community Association. No public meetings were held by the applicant or The City.

Strategic Alignment

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The site is located within the City, Town area as identified on Schedule C: South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Map in the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan* (SSRP). While the SSRP makes no specific reference to this site, the proposal is consistent with policies on Land Use Patterns.

Interim Growth Plan (2018)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the *Interim Growth Plan*. The proposed land use amendment builds on the principles of the *Interim Growth Plan* by means of promoting efficient use of land, regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

Map 1: Urban Structure of the *Municipal Development Plan* identifies the subject lands as part of the Residential Developing Planned Greenfield Area subject to an Area Structure plan. Additionally, it is located within a Community Activity Centre.

Community Activity Centres should be locations for a mix of medium and higher density employment and residential uses. They should contain a broad range of ground-oriented and medium to high density apartment housing and a mix of housing tenure and affordability levels to accommodate a diverse range of the population (Section 3.3.3(e)).

Intensities in the Community Activity Centre should be a minimum of 150 people and jobs per hectare. While this proposal is not expected on its own to achieve this intensity target, Administration are confident the Community Activity Centre will, as a whole achieve the target when considered with other recently approved and adjacent projects. The proposed land use districts are aligned with the policy intent of the Community Activity Centre typology. The addition of multi-residential, and small and medium scale commercial development will support and complement the existing regional commercial development to the south of the site.

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Symons Valley Community Plan (Statutory – 2001)

The subject site is in the Transit Oriented Planning Area as identified in Map 3: Land Use Concept. Within this area, the subject parcel is also identified as the Pedestrian Oriented Multi-Residential policy area.

Development within the Pedestrian Oriented Multi-Residential Area should accommodate multi-residential development where the neighbourhood design encourages walking and cycling, and includes a network of mobility connections serving both the neighbourhood and linking to the nearby commercial and civic areas. A fine-grained network of streets and blocks should be designed to support pedestrian connectivity.

Future development permit applications will need to demonstrate compliance with the Design Guidelines in Appendix 1 of the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. The Design Guidelines provide flexible guidance for design features in the Transit Oriented Planning Area. Provisions qualitatively address building form, pedestrian connectivity, building setbacks, and amenity space.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposed outline plan and accompanying land use will provide an intensity of uses that supports transit and active modes of transportation, and makes an efficient use of land and infrastructure. The proposal also delivers a more modest and refined land use framework that supports development of a site that has remained vacant for more than a decade.

As noted earlier, the applicant has committed to additional sustainability measures supporting future installation of solar photovoltaic equipment and electric vehicle charging equipment. This is to be implemented with the subdivision process through a review of the Developer's architectural controls.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

There are no known impacts to the current and future operating budgets at this time.

Current and Future Capital Budget

The proposed land use amendment does not trigger capital infrastructure investment.

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Risk Assessment

Changing and challenging market conditions resulted in the delay of site development to date. These risks have been mitigated by working closely with the applicant team to ensure the proposal is well aligned with current and future projected market conditions.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

This proposal is keeping with the applicable policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Symons Valley Community Plan* supporting the efficient utilization of land and infrastructure. The proposed outline plan provides a framework for subdivision of new land use districts that will create a pedestrian oriented neighbourhood contributing to achieving the policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* for this Community Activity Centre.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Conditions of Approval
2. Applicant Submission
3. Proposed Outline Plan
4. Subdivision Data Sheet
5. Proposed Land Use District Map