

Applicant Submission

May 14, 2019

The intent for this Land Use application is to redesignate the property at 211-221 14 St NW from the current land use of C-Cor2 f2.8 h 16 to a DC Land Use District using MU-2. We are proposing a DC land use because the development will require an amendment to the Hillhurst/Sunnyside ARP to accommodate increased density. We are proposing a density of 5 FAR and a height of 26m. Below is our rationale detailing the policies and factors which we believe support our proposed application. A majority of the rationale is based upon the Municipal Design Plan for The City of Calgary.

MU-2 f5 h26m Land Use Rationale

The definition of an Urban Main Street in the MDP and CTP is a road in an area with 200 residents/employees per hectare - which clearly should apply to 14th Street NW from Memorial Drive northward to 5th Avenue. As an Urban Main Street, then, 14th Street is a suitable location for higher densities and building heights.

We have reviewed the local ARP, the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) as well as the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) and we consider the site to share many characteristics with other areas in the community where 5 FAR and building heights of 26m are acceptable. This site on 14th Street is similar to the areas of Hillhurst/Sunnyside where 5 FAR and 26m are typical (10th St NW and 14th ST NW at Kensington Road).

Due south on the same block of 14th Street, 5 FAR and 26m height is permitted. Our understanding is that the ARP limited the FAR further north on Kensington to 4 FAR because of the low density residential across the lane from the subject site. The land use adjacent to the 5 FAR/26m height on 14th Street south of Kensington Road is the same as the land use across the lane from our site (R-C2). We do not understand why there is any difference between the two adjacent sites on 14th. It is also interesting to note that 3 buildings just north of the site from the 1900's are also of similar height making this proposal consistent with the existing context.

The Site has several challenging setbacks, due to the ARP and the road widening ROW, which limit the flexibility we might have had to accommodate a 5 FAR development in a lower built form. The road-widening setback on 14th St NW is in excess of 5m while the rear setback (adjacent to the low density residential) varies from 5m to 11m depending on the relation to grade. These substantial setbacks have resulted in a narrow built form requiring a 26m tall building to achieve 5 FAR while providing set-backs to the building as a means to step down to the low density residential nearby.

Residential density and ground floor retail is the surest method to create vitality and economic growth in a community. To date, 14th St NW has seen little development and suffers from a lack of pedestrian activity on the street unlike other nearby corridors such as 10th St NW and Kensington Road NW. Within the MDP and ARP are several policies which support the type of development we are proposing:

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2.1.1 Create an Attractive City

The existing development on the site is auto oriented. The proposed mixed use development is pedestrian oriented (retail at grade, 140 secure bike stalls for visitors, shoppers, staff and residents) which will *'provide a safe and healthy community.'* We are proposing a dense development with modest sized units to create varied *'housing choices that can be served by transit.'* The site falls within the TOD boundary as defined in the Hillhurst Sunnyside ARP.

2.2.1 Compact Urban Form

This location on 14th St NW is ideal to achieve the following objectives:

- a) Higher density of residences outside the Centre City
- b) Local opportunity for employment and daily retail uses
- c) Walkable destinations

Policies that support this proposal:

- a) *Direct a greater share of new growth to Main Streets - Concentrate people and jobs in areas well served by primary transit service;*
- b) *Plan the development of Main Streets appropriate to the local context by: - Locating tallest buildings and higher densities closest to transit stops; stepping down heights and densities away from these sites.*

2.2.4 Complete Communities

- a) *Support the development of complete communities to ensure a compact and well-designed urban form*
- b) *Communities should be planned according to the following criteria: A range of housing choices, covering a mix of built forms and ownership tenures, at densities that support transit viability, local commercial and other services; Diversified employment opportunities that are integrated into the community or easily accessible by a number of modes of travel; Neighbourhood stores, services and public facilities that meet day-to-day needs, within walking distance for most residents; A connected street and mobility network that promotes comfortable, safe and universally accessible travel; A healthy natural environment with street trees and greenery, connections to the city's open space system: Public infrastructure and services that are... provided over the long term by stable community populations.*
- c) *Promote a greater balance of residential and employment within communities and across the city by:- Increasing residential housing opportunities in areas close to existing employment concentrations; Increasing employment opportunities in areas close to existing residential concentrations;*

2.2.5 Strong Residential Neighbourhoods

Reinforce the stability of Calgary's neighbourhoods and ensure housing quality and vitality of its residential areas.

- a) *Support development and redevelopment to help stabilize population declines and support the demographic needs of communities.*
- b) *Encourage higher residential densities in areas of the community that are more extensively served by existing infrastructure.*

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2.4 Urban Design

This proposal is an urban building on an Urban Main Street and supports Objective 2.4.3 by *enhancing the public realm and promoting pedestrian use*. The development calls for retail along the entire block face with the exception of the residential entrance. The development is located within the boundary of the Sunnyside TOD will attract cyclists due to the ample bicycle parking proposed. The street design will buffer pedestrian activity from the 4 lanes of traffic on 14th St NW with short term parking bays on the street to encourage retail use; the parking and retail activity along 14th St NW will slow down traffic and make the urban environment more conducive to pedestrian uses; pedestrians will have a safer space to walk, shop and linger which will enhance the urban environment. This position is supported by the Hillhurst Sunnyside ARP: See Mobility 3.4.1 Street Network #11: *“On-street parking bays should be created where possible to serve commercial and residential development. Parked vehicles can also act as a buffer between the pedestrians and the roadway.”*

2.5.3 Complete Streets.

The proposed streetscape supports Objective 2.5.3 by *‘increasing the attractiveness, convenience and safety of all modes of transportation by creating a new selection of multi-modal streets that emphasize the different modes of transportation and incorporate elements of green infrastructure.’* We see this objective as an opportunity to shift the importance of the urban street back to the pedestrian. The Right of Way along 14th St NW (ostensibly for road widening) should be considered as space that the land owners, the community and the City should be able to enhance as it is crucial urban space for pedestrians and alternate modes of transportation. We maintain that on-street parking and a robust landscape design will make the pedestrian realm safer and more frequently used and therefore more animated.

3.4 Main Streets, 3.4.1 General Main Street Policies

Recognizing that the Main Street is pedestrian and transit oriented, large format retail should support a good pedestrian frontage along the transit street and public sidewalk by: Bylaw 19P2017: *Locating buildings close to the transit street and sidewalk; and, Creating active building frontages by incorporating smaller retail units, public accesses and display areas visible to the sidewalk.*

Mobility Policies: *The impact on surrounding residential areas should be limited by providing a mix of short-stay and longer-stay parking for different users, bicycle parking and on-street parking; pedestrians and cyclists should be given the highest priority in the planning, design, operation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Main Streets; Create a human-scale environment along the Main Street by generally encouraging a maximum of a 1:1 building height to right-of-way width ratio. (The right-of-way width at this location on 14th St NW is approximately 31m; the proposed height of 26m is well below this recommendation.)*

Our intent is to provide density, services and employment to support the modernization and enhancement of the public realm on this vital section of 14th street consistent with the cities visions statements to transform a forgotten urban corridor into a vital urban environment.

Thank you,

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