

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2020 February 06

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2020-0081

Policy Amendment to the Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan (Ward 8) at 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW, POL2019-0004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application was submitted by Gibbs Gage Architects on 2019 December 30 on behalf of the developer and landowner Place 10 Residential Corporation. This is a minor amendment to the *Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP) that seeks to revise the allowable floor plate size restriction (from 930 square metres to 1000 square metres) specifically for 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW to facilitate the construction of two high-rise residential towers.

Administration supports this applicant-initiated minor ARP amendment for the following reasons:

- it will facilitate the development of two high-rise residential towers in the Beltline community, contributing to vitality and vibrancy on a site that has been stalled since 2014 (the east tower, originally approved as office development, has a parkade constructed below grade and a podium is partially constructed above grade);
- it results in a small increase (70 square metres) to the overall floor plate size for a specific site;
- through Administration's evaluation and the applicant's submission two towers with a floor plate of 1000 square metres demonstrates no adverse shadow impact and will not unduly impact livability or residential amenity; and
- The development permit submissions (currently under review, to be brought forward to Calgary Planning Commission in the near future) demonstrate that the two residential towers will contribute to placemaking in the Beltline and will contribute positively to the Calgary skyline.

Two development permits for Multi-Residential Development have been submitted and are under review.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council hold a Public Hearing, and

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed amendment to the Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan (Attachment 2); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

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BACKGROUND

On 2019 December 30, the applicant submitted a minor amendment for the *Beltline ARP*. The amendment is specific to two subject sites, 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW, and has been initiated by the applicant. This minor ARP amendment is required to facilitate two development permits (DP2019-5667 and DP2019-5668) on the site as the floor plate planning policy is a mandatory provision (a shall statement in the ARP) that cannot be relaxed by the Development Authority.

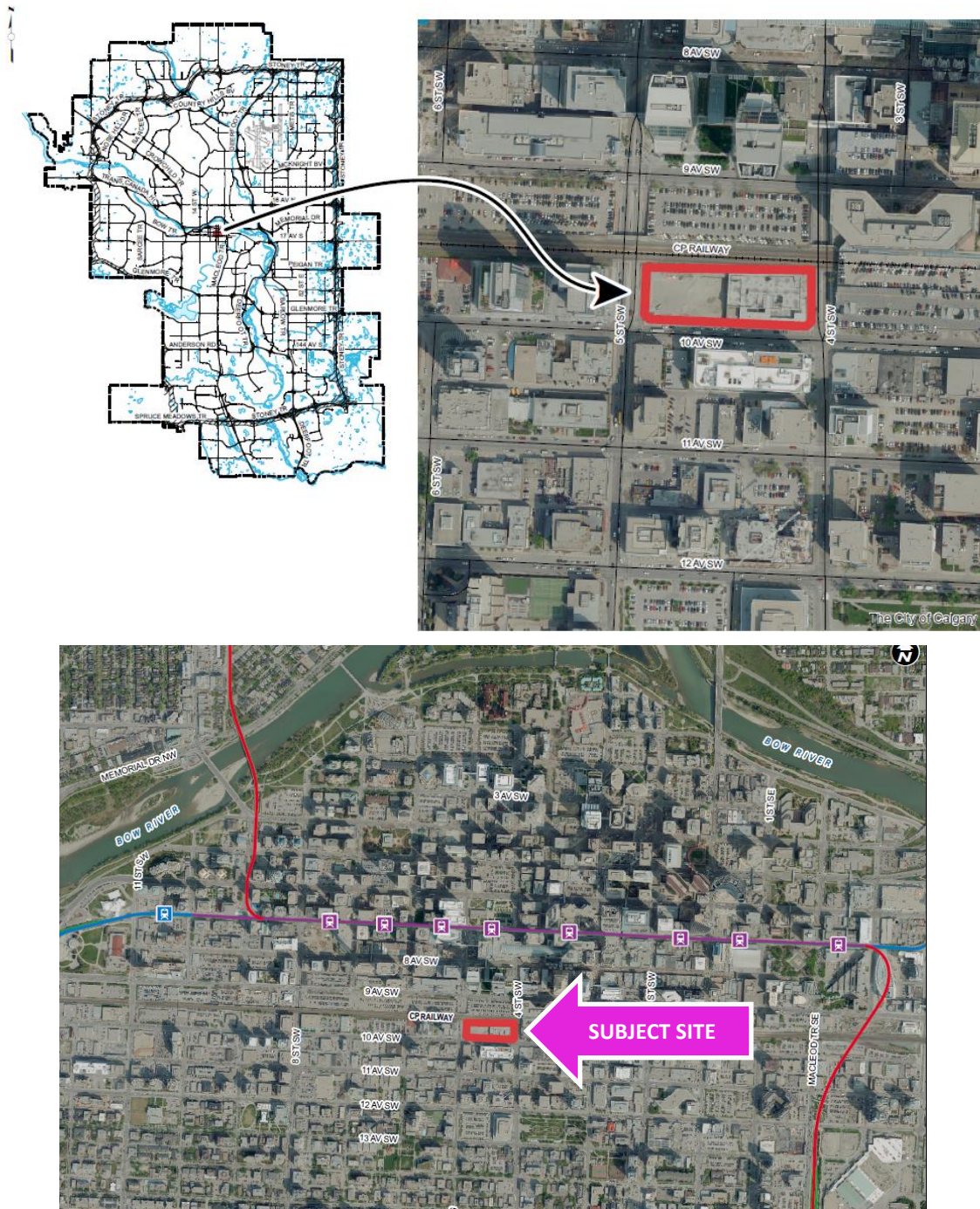
Both development permits will be brought forward to Calgary Planning Commission for decision in the near future.

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Location Maps



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Site Context

The subject sites, 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW, are located in the Beltline community, immediately south of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) tracks and between 4 and 5 Streets SW. The sites are in the highest density land use district in the Beltline, with high density development to the south (office towers) and west (hotel and residential towers), and a parking structure to the east. North of the CPR tracks is the downtown core with a surface parking lot immediately north of the CPR tracks and Eighth Avenue Place office towers across the street on 9 Avenue SW

It was originally envisioned to construct 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW as office buildings (through DP2013-0881 and DP2013-1092). The eastern site (524 - 10 Avenue SW) has a partially constructed concrete podium (approximately two storeys) that is visible on site and 538 - 10 Avenue SW has been stripped and graded.

As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of Beltline has experienced a relatively substantial population decline from its peak in 1971.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

Beltline	
Peak Population Year	1971
Peak Population	5,341
2019 Current Population	4,688
Difference in Population (Number)	-653
Difference in Population (Percent)	-12%

Source: The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census

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

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Land Use

The subject sites are designated a DC Direct Control District ([Bylaw 100D2015](#)). This DC District is based on the Centre City Mixed Use (CC-X) District in the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 and allows for larger restaurants in the podium of a tower.

Floor plate restrictions are outlined in Section 1172(1)(a) of the Land Use Bylaw in the CC-X District, allows for floor plates up to 930 square metres. This Land Use Bylaw rule can be relaxed by the Development Authority; however, this ARP amendment is required to allow for a relaxation to this rule on a site-specific basis.

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Development and Site Design

The development and design of two residential towers will be considered as part of the development permits for these sites (DP2019-5667 and DP2019-5668) that are currently under review. However, the site history (in particular, previous approvals) and current site conditions are relevant in considering this site-specific minor ARP amendment.

Two 14-storey office towers were approved for 524 and 538 - 10 Avenue SW. At 524 -10 Avenue SW, construction of the four-storey parkade has been completed and the two-storey podium for the east tower is partially visible on-site. This partially built podium, with a partially built office core, is a driver of the minor ARP amendment. The location for the core for the future residential tower has been dictated (as it has been partially constructed) which influences the design of the future residential tower. The applicant has requested that the floor plate policy of the *Beltline ARP* be amended for both legal parcels to allow for both residential towers to have a similar appearance and maximize construction efficiencies for both residential towers.

Environmental

There are no known outstanding environmental or contamination concerns associated with the subject site or this proposal. An Environmental Site Assessment was not required as part of this application.

Transportation

This site-specific minor ARP amendment will not create any adverse transportation impacts. Transportation considerations for the two residential towers on this site will be evaluated through the review of DP2019-5667 and DP2019-5668.

Utilities and Servicing

This site-specific minor ARP amendment will not create any adverse utility or servicing impacts. Utilities and servicing considerations for the two residential towers on this site will be evaluated through the review of DP2019-5667 and DP2019-5668.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

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

To ensure affected parties were informed of this application, the applicant notified adjacent land owners, the Calgary Downtown Association, the Beltline Neighbourhood Association and the Ward Councillor's office of this file and hosted an open house on 2020 January 22.

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One letter of objection was received from Canadian Pacific Railway (responding as an adjacent land owner). The comments received can be summarized as follows:

- Canadian Pacific Railway is opposed to residential uses adjacent to the railway right of way;
- Residential land use is not compatible with railway operations; and
- Railway activities could detrimentally impact residential amenity.

With respect to the comments received, Administration provides the following response:

- This application is for a site-specific policy amendment;
- The existing land use already allows for residential development; and
- Development in close proximity to rail is a relevant consideration to the two development permits on this site.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for Public Hearing of Council will be posted on-site and mailed out to adjacent land owners. In addition, Commission's recommendation and the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised.

Strategic Alignment

Administration considered this site-specific minor ARP amendment against the relevant planning policies listed below and found the proposal to be acceptable.

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered and is aligned with the policy direction of the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#) (SSRP) which directs population growth in the region to Cities and Towns and promotes efficient use of land.

Interim Growth Plan (2018)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the [Interim Growth Plan](#). The proposed development 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)

The subject site is situated in the Centre City area as shown on [Map 1: Urban Structure](#) of the [Municipal Development Plan](#).

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Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan (Statutory – 2006)

This area of the Beltline allows for larger floor plates up to 930 square metres (Map 5A) due to the proximity of parcels to the downtown core, which typically have office towers with larger floor plates. The 930 square metre (10,000 square feet) floor plate requirement was drafted by Administration based on consultation with the development industry in 2006, as this was considered the minimum viable floor plate size for an office tower in this area. Due to the proximity of these parcels to the railway, while residential towers were encouraged in this area of the Beltline, Administration considered office towers more likely given the proximity of parcels to downtown and livability considerations associated with the railway adjacent to these lands.

Floor plate planning policies exist in the [Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP) to provide design direction (to individual sites and the broader Beltline community) to maximize livability for existing and future occupants in the Beltline with respect to adequate separation space for:

1. Privacy between dwelling units;
2. Sunlight access between, and to buildings, and at grade;
3. Mitigate shadowing of the public realm (especially of protected areas in the Centre City such as City parks); and
4. Mitigate the effect of the cumulative massing of tall buildings in an area.

The Beltline floor plate planning policies work in tandem with other design planning policies such as tower separation planning policies and podium/tower design policies.

In 2011 January 10, Administration brought forward an amendment to the 2006 Beltline ARP to Council to modify the floor plate planning policy in the Beltline ARP to allow for larger floor plates (up to 930 square metres) on five stalled sites in the Beltline where construction had commenced but not completed.

This applicant-initiated site-specific minor ARP amendment is similar to previous work brought forward by Administration in 2011 (albeit this application allows for a slightly larger floor plate, with a narrower site scope).

Administration considers the subject application to be a site-specific minor ARP amendment (in attachment 2) which aligns with the intent of the existing Beltline ARP planning policies, as the applicant has demonstrated that:

- the proposed floor plate increase is minor in scale (from 930 square metres to 1000 square metres);
- existing tall building tower separation policies (of 24 metres between residential towers above 36 metres in height) can be met;
- the massing of tall buildings on this site with a floor plate of 1000 square metres will have no adverse shadowing impacts on any City parks (see Attachment 1), and will have a minimal shadow impact on lands to the north;

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- The massing of two tall buildings on this site with a 1000 square metre floor plate preserves views through this site, when compared with three tall buildings, with a floor plate of 930 square metres and 24 metres between towers (as identified in Attachment 1); and
- the design of tall buildings on this site with a floor plate of 1000 square metres will have a positive influence on the Beltline community and the Calgary skyline (through the forthcoming development permit plans for DP2019-5667 and DP2019-5668).

Centre City Plan (Non-Statutory – 2007)

The subject site is located in Connaught Centre in the [Centre City Plan](#), where Four and Five Streets SW are identified as high pedestrian movement streets (Concept 13: Connaught Centre).

The Centre City Plan built form policies (Section 7.7.3) seek to encourage smaller floor plates in residential areas to ensure sunlight access to the street and other residential units.

The applicant demonstrated that this site-specific minor ARP amendment will not shadow city parks, will not have adverse shadowing impacts on nearby streets and avenues, and will maintain sufficient tower separation so as not to detract from livability/residential amenity.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposed development contributes to housing diversity and will allow for more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

There are no known impacts to the current or future operating budget at this time.

Current and Future Capital Budget

The proposed land use amendment does not trigger capital infrastructure investment and therefore there are no growth management concerns at this time.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.

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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

This site-specific amendment to the *Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan* aligns with the overall intent of the area redevelopment plan and is not in contravention with existing planning policy in the Centre City Plan.

Further, this site-specific amendment will facilitate the development of two towers, providing a residential population which will contribute to the local neighbourhood.

Lastly, Administration is satisfied that future development will not create any adverse shadow impacts which would be harmful to livability/residential amenity.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant's Submission
2. Proposed Amendment to the Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan