

Planning & Development Report to  
Calgary Planning Commission  
2020 April 02

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CPC2020-0336

## **Development Liaison in Beltline (Ward 8) at 936 – 16 Avenue SW, DL2020-0001**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This development liaison application was submitted on 2020 January 02 by Ground Cubed Landscape Architects on behalf of City of Calgary Parks Department. The proposed development is located in the Beltline at the west end of the 900 block of 16 Avenue SW. The application is for a new neighborhood park to replace the former mid-block park displaced in 2014 through a land exchange to facilitate the BOSA/Mount Royal West residential and commercial development.

#### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

That Calgary Planning Commission Receive For The Corporate Record the proposed Development Liaison application, DL2020-0001 for a New: Park at 936 – 16 Avenue SW (Plan 1510893, Block 111, Lot 42).

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

None.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2014 a land exchange was executed between First Capital Holdings (ALB) Corporation, First Capital Realty Inc and The City of Calgary to facilitate relocation of an existing neighborhood park to allow a comprehensive mixed use development on the majority of the southern half of the block bounded by 8 Street SW to the east, 9 Street SW to the west and 16 Avenue to the south.

The existing park was located nearly mid-block in a location not well defined within the context of existing and new Beltline developments. Through a land use redesignation to a DC Direct Control District for the Mount Royal West development, the new park location became site 3 of the 3 sites within the DC Direct Control District ([Bylaw 11D2015](#)). The land exchange gave The City of Calgary ownership of the 814 square metre-parcel, addressed 939 - 16 Avenue SW, at the west end of the block. Development of the adjacent mixed use project began in earnest in 2014, taking the former park space out of service and is now complete.

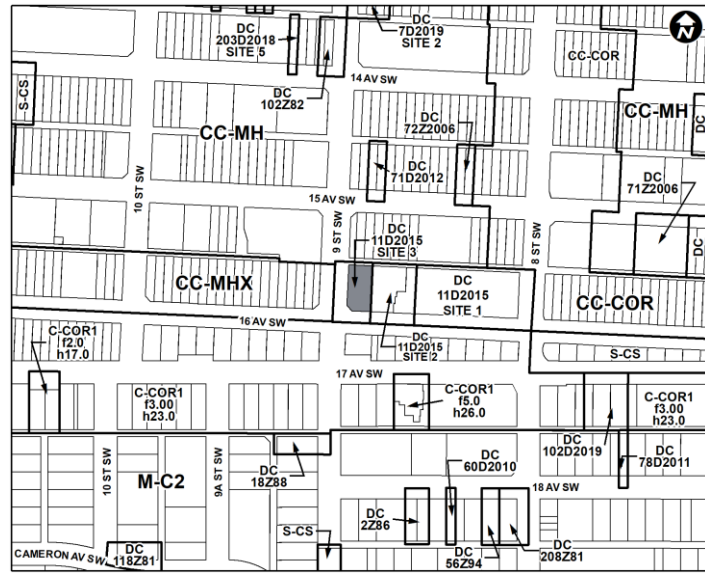
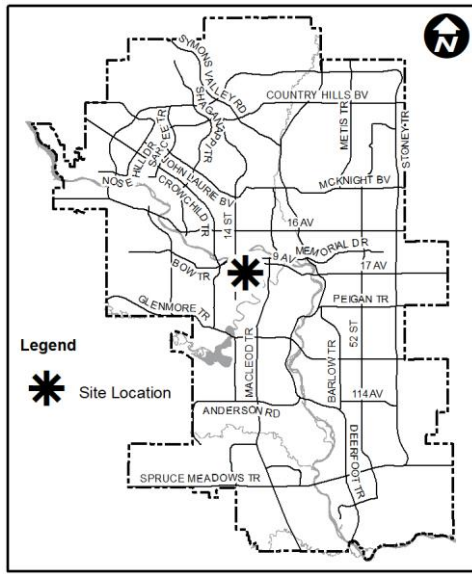
The City of Calgary Parks Department (Calgary Parks) selected Ground Cubed Landscape Architects in May 2019 to provide design for the new park space which, after considerable public engagement and design iterations, was submitted as a development liaison application.

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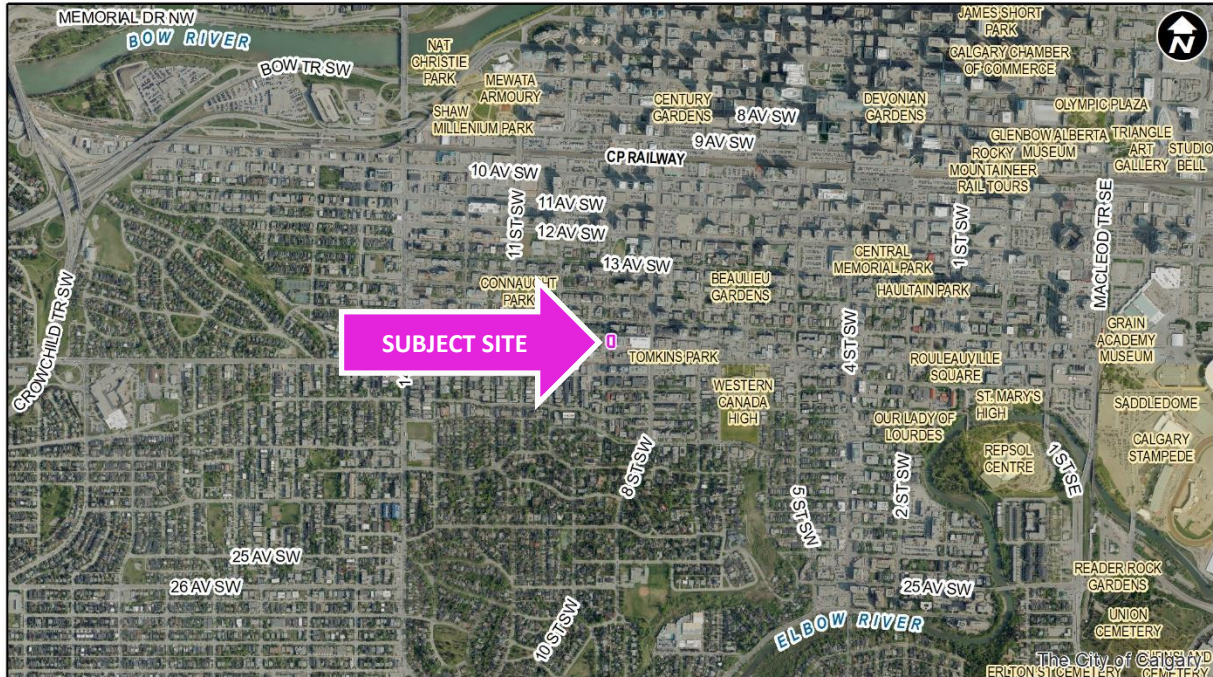
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Location Maps



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**Site Context**

The former and new park space reside within the Beltline community, one block north of 17 Avenue SW. The urban fabric of this area of the Beltline is characterized by older, multi-residential developments, generally in low-rise to mid-rise form. The exception to this predominant building form is the newly constructed Mount Royal West residential tower flanking the new park space along its east boundary.

New commercial uses have been introduced to this area within the eastern portion of the Mount Royal West mixed use development introducing Canadian Tire and Urban Fare to the area. One block south, 17 Avenue SW is characterized by predominantly retail, office and restaurant uses.

**INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

**Application Review**

Prior to gathering public input during the stakeholder engagement process, Calgary Parks developed a list of attributes deemed necessary to fulfill key components of the Park based on best practices, feasibility and budget considerations. Those key components include:

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- Maintaining a minimum of 50 percent of the park space as soft surface/landscaping;
- No fencing;
- No off-leash area for pets;
- No motor vehicle parking within the park;
- No water feature; and
- No playground or sports field(s).

Essentially a replacement of an existing City neighborhood park, equal in size but more contemporary in design, the appropriateness of the park in this location was approved with the adoption of DC Bylaw 11D2015 by City Council. As such, there are no planning related concerns regarding conformance with Land Use Bylaw 1P2007.

Notwithstanding over-lot grading plans, the proposal has no parking or site servicing needs.

### ***Urban Design Review Panel***

While in circulation to the various internal and external referees for input on the proposal, the application was taken to the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) on 2020 January 29. Most prominent in the UDRP remarks was the recommendation to simplify the design rather than attempting a design that had multiple expressions due to the small size of the park. The detailed UDRP commentary and applicant responses are detailed in Attachment 3.

### ***Site Design***

Although small in size, the design is intended to provide a broader spectrum of uses through passive spaces, active spaces and programmable spaces than the previous mid-block park. Taking advantage of the corner location on the block, the edges of the park along 9 Street SW and 16 Avenue SW offer multiple points of entry, seating opportunities, soft landscaping and bollard style lighting. More dense plantings have been concentrated along the north and east inaccessible sides of the park.

For all intents and purposes, the park is flat. The predominant diagonal access has been conceived to invite and facilitate primary pedestrian movement to and through the park. This diagonal orientation is flanked on the north and south sides by distinctive colored paving patterned spaces outfitted for seating, gathering, and performing uses. Slight grading has been designed for final hardscape surfaces to allow water to migrate to the soft landscaping areas. A smaller pathway connects this park to the Mount Royal West residential tower on the east side without compromising the privacy and safety of residents and visitors to that building.

Situated at the corner of the block and surrounded by low-rise residential and commercial buildings to the north, west and south, the site receives generous amounts of sunlight throughout a good portion of the year.

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### ***Environmental***

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was conducted as part of the land use application in 2014 and found no evidence of contamination within the site.

### ***Utilities and Servicing***

Public water, sanitary and storm sewer mains exist within the adjacent rights-of-way.

### ***Transportation***

The application does not include parking on the subject site. On-street parking is available on both sides of 9 Street SW and along 16 Avenue SW. Intended as a neighborhood park rather than a regional park, this location is within easy walking and cycling distance from the surrounding residential and mixed use development.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

The application was accompanied by a detailed summary of the public engagement, open houses and online feedback conducted by Calgary Parks in the lead-up to submitting the development liaison application. A two phased approach was taken with the first phase conducted as an open meeting in June of 2019 followed by a two week window for online feedback. The first engagement was focused around collecting input around patterns of preference for key features contained in the design such as soft landscape areas, site furnishings and expressive elements.

The second phase of engagement considered the input gathered from the phase one exercise and brought forward two concept plans in another open house in late September 2019 with an invitation to the public to provide feedback on what features they liked and disliked about each of the two plans. The meeting was again followed by a two week period for online input. Both phases of the engagement considered, the final preferred concept was then prepared and shared online.

### **Strategic Alignment**

#### ***South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)***

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered alignment with the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#) (SSRP) was recognized with the adoption of the direct control bylaw 11D2014 in place for the subject parcel and that no changes to alignment with those policies have been identified.

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***Interim Growth Plan (2018)***

Administration's recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the [Interim Growth Plan](#). relocation of an existing neighborhood park promotes establishing strong, sustainable communities.

***Municipal Development Plan (Statutory –2009)***

The recommendation by Administration is alignment with the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) was recognized in the adoption of DC Direct Control Bylaw 11D2014 in place for the subject site and that no changes to alignment with those policies have been identified.

***Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan: Part 1 (Statutory – 2006)***

The recommendation by Administration is alignment with the [Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP) was recognized in the adoption of direct control bylaw 11D2014 in place for the subject site. The only change since adoption of the existing DC Direct Control Bylaw is the changes to the new *Beltline ARP* by dividing the Beltline into 2 parts; Part 1 applies to the west half of the community in which this site resides, with Part 2 providing policy for the East Beltline and Cultural and Entertainment District.

**Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

The relocation of an existing neighborhood park to a more convenient and recognizable location improves access and visibility to the surrounding neighborhood.

**Financial Capacity**

***Current and Future Operating Budget***

There are no know impacts to the current and future operating budgets.

***Current and Future Capital Budget***

The proposal does not trigger capital infrastructure investment.

**Risk Assessment**

There are no significant risks to the City of Calgary associated with the proposal.

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**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Administration finds the proposal to be a positive upgrade and replacement of an existing neighborhood park. The application is in alignment with relevant statutory and non-statutory planning policies.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Development Liaison Plans
2. Applicant's Submission
3. UDRP Comments with Applicant Response
4. Calgary Parks Development Liaison Illustrations