

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2020 June 04

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2020-0636

Land Use Amendment in Medicine Hill (Ward 6) at multiple addresses, LOC2019-0177

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This land use amendment application was submitted on 2019 November 22 by B&A Planning Group on behalf of Plateau Village Properties Inc. The purpose of the application is to update the existing commercial DC Direct Control Districts in Medicine Hill. The proposed DC Districts continue to implement the policies of the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (ASP)* that requires the two commercial main streets in the community to be lined with commercial uses that activate the street. This application would add additional retail and service businesses, expanding the range that is available for the local and surrounding area. The three existing DC Direct Control Districts will be updated to three new DC Direct Control Districts for the same locations with:

- The DC Direct Control District for Blocks A and B, as shown in the Location Maps below, allows for additional discretionary commercial uses, modifications to the use rules, and Digital Third Party Advertising signs.
- The DC Direct Control District for Block H is also proposing to allow for additional discretionary uses, modifications to the use rules, and an additional sign type.
- The DC Direct Control District for Block I is proposing the additional permitted use of Artist's Studio and the discretionary use of Live Work Unit as well as Third Party and Digital Third Party Advertising signs.

The proposed DC districts implement uses and rules that are consistent with the Mixed Use - Active Frontage (MU-2) District. The MU-2 District was developed as a standard district in *Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (LUB)* for main streets throughout the city. The original direct control districts for Medicine Hill were created before the introduction of the MU-2 District so it could not have been used as a base district at the time.

The addition of Vehicle Sales – Minor, and Vehicle Rentals – Minor would take the form of storefront businesses with a maximum of 5 vehicles. No ancillary mechanical servicing would be allowed, which aligns with recent commercial trends in these sectors.

Additional sign types will also be added to allow for multi-tenant comprehensive signage for tenants across the development.

Administration has reviewed the implications of amending the Direct Control Bylaw in accordance with Calgary Planning Commission's motion. Administration does not recommend modifying the purpose statement, as The City does not regulate the content of signs and allow for the development permit process to evaluate additional applications of this type.

The application is in alignment with the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP* for the respective Gateway and Commercial Districts and promotes the objectives of the *Municipal Development Plan* for developing communities and complete communities.

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ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **ADOPT** by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 6.60 hectares \pm (16.32 acres \pm) located at 862 Canada Olympic Drive SW and 2200 Na'a Drive SW (Plan 1910730, Block 1, Lot 1; Plan 1612946, Block 1, Lot 2) from DC Direct Control District to DC Direct Control District to accommodate a mixed use development, with guidelines (Attachment 3); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.
3. **ADOPT** by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 4.36 hectares \pm (10.78 acres \pm) located at 924 Na'a Drive SW (Plan 1612946, Block 3, Lot 1) from DC Direct Control District to DC Direct Control District to accommodate a mixed use development, with guidelines (Attachment 4); and
4. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.
5. **ADOPT** by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 4.50 hectares \pm (11.11 acres \pm) located at 885 Na'a Drive SW (Plan 1612946, Block 3, Lot 4) from DC Direct Control District to DC Direct Control District to a mixed use development, with guidelines (Attachment 5); and
6. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION DIRECTION

At the 2020 May 21 meeting of Calgary Planning Commission, Calgary Planning Commission referred Report CPC2020-0487 (Attachment 1) back to Administration to revise the proposed Direct Control Districts to confirm the intent of the third-party digital advertising for businesses and products within the Medicine Hill Community, and return to Calgary Planning Commission 2020 June 04.

BACKGROUND

B&A Planning Group, on behalf of Plateau Village Properties Inc, submitted the subject application to The City on 2019 November 22 and have provided a summary of their proposal in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 2).

The *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP* identifies two commercial districts at each end of Na'a Drive SW; the Gateway District to the west and the Commercial District to the east. Both districts are intended to develop around a central commercial main street and will be separated by a residential village district also along Na'a Drive SW.

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The outline plan for the area (LOC2014-0080) was approved in July 2015 (Attachment 3). The previous land use amendment for Blocks A, B, and I (LOC2017-0118) was approved by Council in November 2017, and the previous land use amendment for Block H (LOC2018-0205) was approved by council in March 2019.

The Gateway District is characterized by a vibrant mixed-use development centered around a commercial main street with options for single use residential, office, institutional, or other commercial buildings off the main street. It is also intended to feature a central plaza serving as a social and recreational gathering place and an iconic marquee tower to enhance the distinctive character of the district.

The Gateway District is comprised of Blocks A, B, and C as identified in the approved Outline Plan (Attachment 3). Only Blocks A and B form part of the subject site for the purposes of this application. Currently Blocks A and B are designated as one DC Direct Control District and this application maintains that approach.

A development permit (DP2019-0509) to facilitate development of Block B was released in June 2019. The site is now under construction, but there has been no development permit applied for Block A at this time.

The Commercial District is intended to accommodate a wide range of commercial uses such as retail, office, hotel, and residential development along a commercial main street. The Gateway District should predominantly contain mixed-use buildings but single use residential, office, institutional, or other commercial buildings may be considered appropriate off the main street. It will serve as a draw for residents from surrounding communities and will also provide everyday services and amenities for local residents.

The Commercial District is comprised of Blocks H, I, J, and L as identified in the approved Outline Plan (Attachment 3). Only Blocks H and I form part of the subject site for the purposes of this application. Currently Block H and Block I are designated as two separate and distinct DC Direct Control Districts and this application proposes to maintain that approach.

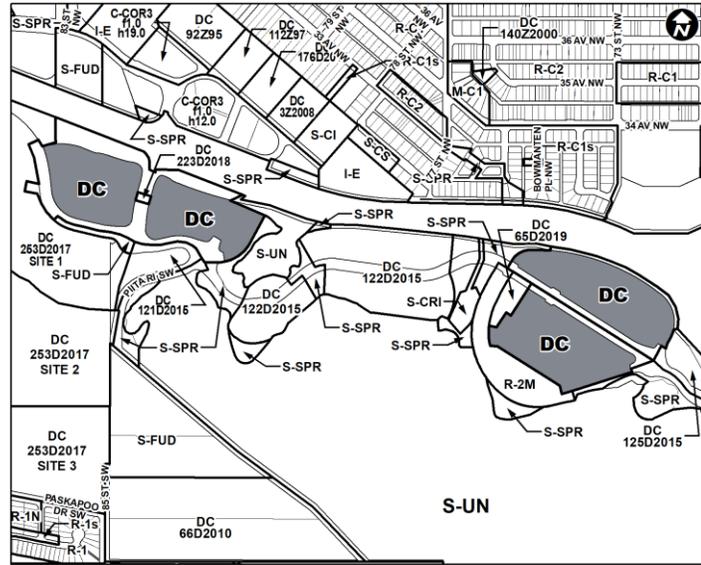
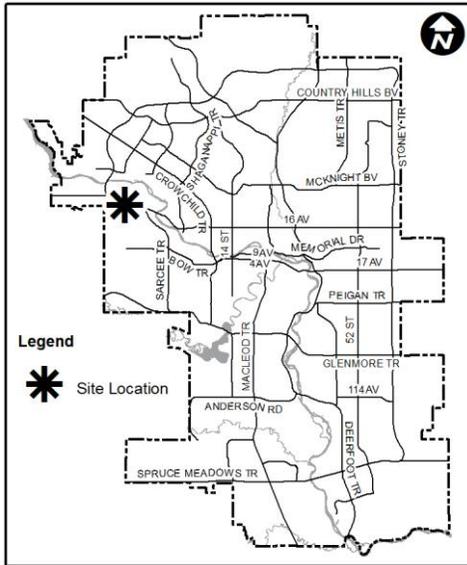
A Development Permit (DP2016-4580) was released in September 2018 to facilitate development of Block I, but there has been no development permit applied for on Block H at this time.

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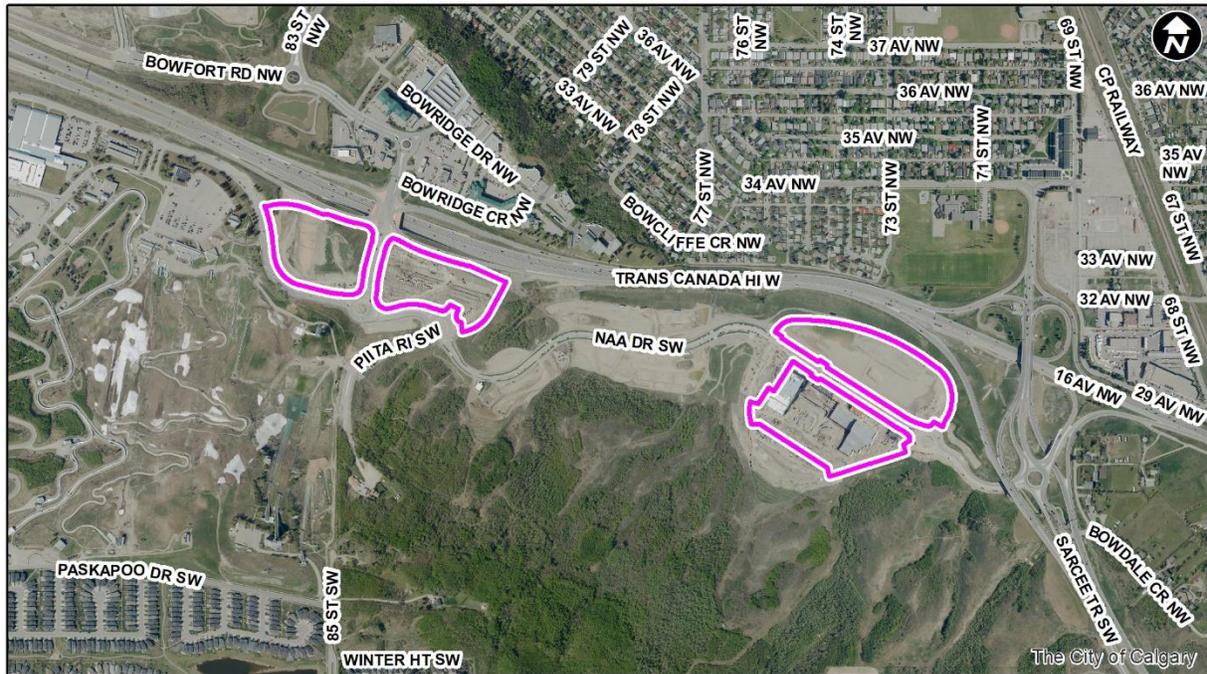
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Location Maps



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Site Context

Medicine Hill is a new community at the base of the Paskapoo Slopes in North West Calgary. The application sites are south of the Trans-Canada highway, adjacent to Canada Olympic Park on the west and Sarcree Trail SW to the east. The application area consists of four separate parcels, Blocks A, B, H, and I totaling approximately 15.46 hectares (38.22 Acres).

The area between the two subject sites, along Na'a Drive SW, is identified as the Village district in the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP*. This area is intended to accommodate neighbourhood development through a mix of multi-residential forms and two development permits for a multi-residential development (DP2019-0211 and DP2019-0949) are currently under review.

To the north of the subject sites and the Trans-Canada Highway is the residential community of Bowness. Along this northern section of Trans-Canada Highway is existing commercial development in the form of hotels and mixed commercial businesses, it is designated as the Commercial – Corridor 3 f1.0h12 (C-COR3 f1.0h12) District.

The base of the slopes has been stripped and graded in preparation for development, with construction currently underway for Blocks B and I. There is steeply sloping topography to the north, adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway. The upper portions of the slopes to the south are owned by The City of Calgary and will become a future City park.

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The land has significant archeological history with the Paskapoo Slopes known to contain First Nations artefacts of Blackfoot origin. The site is a former Buffalo kill site of Provincial significance, one of the largest in the Calgary area.

There are no population statistics and no community profile available for the community of Medicine Hill as there are not yet any inhabited dwelling units.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The subject sites currently consist of 3 separate DC Direct Control Districts:

- Blocks A & B are designated under [Bylaw 339D2017](#) which is based on the Commercial – Corridor 1 (C-COR1) District;
- Block H is designated under [Bylaw 66D2019](#) which is also based on C-COR1; and
- Block I is designated under [Bylaw 341D2017](#) which is based on the Commercial – Regional 3 (C-R3) district with multi-residential development using the rules of the Multi-Residential – High Density (M-H2) District.

This application proposes to retain the three separate Direct Control Districts, add additional uses and sign types to all the subject sites and to modify the use rules for Blocks A, B, and H.

Land Use

Blocks A, B and H

The existing DC Districts for Blocks A, B and H currently share the same set of rules, except for building height, so the proposed changes are consistent across these two proposed DC Districts.

This application proposes to add the following discretionary uses to the already approved uses for Blocks A, B, and H:

- Amusement Arcade;
- Dinner Theatre;
- Performing Arts Centre;
- Sign – Class G (Digital Third Party Advertising);
- Vehicle Rental – Minor; and
- Vehicles Sales – Minor.

The *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP* characterizes the Gateway district as a shopping concourse that features mixed-use buildings with retail, entertainment, outdoor cafes, bars and restaurants at grade with residential, office, institutional, and other commercial uses above. The Commercial District is intended to provide everyday services and amenities for both local residents and those from surrounding communities. It should also pre-dominantly contain mixed use buildings with residential, office, institutional, and other commercial uses above

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active uses at grade. Both the Gateway and Commercial District should feature limited frontage widths to better activate the public realm.

Vehicles Sales – Minor is intended to accommodate a potential boutique or specialized retailer such as Tesla as seen in other major indoor and outdoor shopping centres in Canada and abroad. When aligned to the policies of the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP*, such as narrow façade widths, and entrances facing the commercial street, as well as the built form requirements in the LUB, this type of business could provide a welcome diversity to the commercial landscape while contributing to the success of the commercial main street. Vehicle Sales – Minor is restricted to five vehicles and is proposed as a discretionary use which allows administration to determine if a proposed development is appropriate and acceptable for the area.

Vehicle Rental – Minor is also restricted to five vehicles and is intended to accommodate a possible ride share business that could successfully support businesses and residents of the community. It would also be subject to the policies and rules for built form of the area but could also increase the viability of potential hotels in the area. Vehicles Rental – Minor is also proposed as discretionary use allowing administration to determine if the uses are appropriate and acceptable for the community.

The existing land use allows for both third party advertising and digital message signs, this application is also proposing to allow digital third party advertising signs as a discretionary use. As stated in the applicant submission (Attachment 2), the intent is to create standard comprehensive signage for tenants across all four blocks, as each block is its own parcel, third party advertising signs may be required to achieve this goal. This is supported by policy in *Improving Calgary's Entranceways*, to have one identification sign when shared between multiple users.

Additionally, *Improving Calgary's Entranceways* discourages digital signs along this section of the Trans-Canada Highway, and the LUB restricts the copy on third party advertising and digital third party advertising signs from being viewable from this part of the Trans-Canada Highway as well. The LUB also limits the copy on the signs to 450 metres from major parks, escarpments, pathways, and natural areas. Rules restricting location and proximity to each other also limit the placing of standard third party and digital third party advertising signs in these areas.

Except for Sign – Class G, these additional uses align to the main streets oriented Mixed Use - Active Frontage (MU-2) District. The MU-2 District is intended for commercial streets where active commercial uses are mandatory at grade to activate the street level. This aligns to the intent and policy of the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands ASP* for both the Gateway and Commercial Districts. The MU-2 District was incorporated into LUB after the creation of the original direct control districts for Medicine Hill, so it was not available at the time to be used as a base district.

In the existing DC Districts the following uses are not allowed to locate on the ground floor of buildings as these uses would provide for an active street frontage:

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- Assisted Living;
- Catering Service – Minor;
- Child Care Service;
- Counselling Service;
- Health Services Laboratory – With Clients;
- Instructional Facility;
- Live Work Unit;
- Medical Clinic;
- Place of Worship – Small;
- Post-Secondary Learning Institution;
- Residential Care;
- Social Organization; and
- Veterinary Clinic.

This application proposes to remove the location restriction and instead make any of the permitted uses into discretionary uses on the ground floor and to maintain the discretionary uses as such on the ground floor and above. This change also aligns to the MU-2 District and provides some additional flexibility for the development.

Administration explored the possibility of lifting this restriction only when located off the main street, but Blocks A, B, and H are limited by development only occurring along the commercial main street. This presents a challenge in creating a complete community as uses such as child care and medical clinic would not be allowed in any single story development and would be forced into specific developments that provide a second storey or more of mixed commercial development.

The option was also explored to limit the number of the uses in the list per block face, but it was determined that approach would be overly prescriptive and retaining discretion was the appropriate way to determine if a use was compatible with the development and community.

Additionally, it is proposed that one of the rules regarding the location of uses is modified to better align to the MU-2 District. The current rule states that:

With the exception of Multi-Residential Development, “Commercial Uses” must occupy a minimum of 80 percent of the area of the floor closest to grade.

This rule would change to:

With the exception of Dwelling Unit, Residential Care, and Assisted Living, lobbies or entrances for upper floor uses must not occupy more than 20 percent of the at grade façade facing a street.

This change allows for some additional flexibility on the main floor, while protecting and promoting an active street front.

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Block I

The base land use District for Block I is the Commercial – Regional (C-R3) District but uses the rules of the Multi-Residential – High Density Medium Rise (M-H2) District for any multi-residential development. This arrangement has made some uses unavailable for multi-residential development that are available in the M-H2 District. For that reason, this application proposes to add the additional permitted use of Artist’s Studio and the discretionary use of Live Work Unit.

As part of this proposal the following sign types are also proposed for Block I:

- Sign – Class F (Third Party Advertising); and
- Sign – Class G (Digital Third Party Advertising).

Third party advertising and digital third party advertising are proposed in Block I to create comprehensive standard signage for the tenants across all 4 blocks of the development as indicated in the applicant’s submission (Attachment 2). The rules and restrictions laid out above for Blocks A, B, and H also apply to Block I.

Motion from Calgary Planning Commission 2020 May 21

Administration has reviewed the implications of amending the Direct Control Bylaw in accordance with Calgary Planning Commission’s motion. Administration does not recommend modifying the Purpose Statement in the subject DC Districts, as The City does not regulate the content of signs.

A proposal for a new freestanding Digital Third Party Advertising Sign for the subject sites would be evaluated on its planning merits and applicable rules, as is currently the case for already listed freestanding and digital sign types in this area. Administration is not currently in support of additional freestanding digital third party advertising signs above the quantity proposed in the applicant’s development permit application, and the existing rules in the LUB can be used to support this stance. The rules for digital third party advertising signs are extensive and include:

- prohibited on any site where the sign is positioned such that the copy of the sign is visible from this portion of the Trans-Canada Highway;
- must be 450 metres from major parks, escarpments and pathways, riverbanks, and natural area when the copy is visible;
- prohibited if the sign is located less than 125 metres from the face of a building containing a dwelling unit and the digital display is visible;
- must not be located within 30 metres of any freestanding sign facing the same oncoming traffic; and
- must be located at least 300 metres from any other digital message sign or digital third party advertising sign.

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When assessing a Digital Third Party Advertising Sign the LUB also states that:

- the Development Authority must consider if the proposed Digital Third Party Advertising Sign is compatible with the general architectural lines and forms of nearby buildings and the character of the streetscape or area within which it is to be located, and does not severely obstruct the horizon line; and
- a development permit for a Digital Third Party Advertising Sign may only be issued for a period not exceeding three (3) years.

At this time, the applicant has indicated (Attachment 2) that the intended use for Digital Third Party Advertising Signs would be to include additional copy within approved digital signage for businesses, their products, and events within the Medicine Hill community and Canada Olympic Park. As businesses and land ownership changes in the area, over time, the sign rules in the LUB will govern sign approvals for the area.

Development and Site Design

Any future developments for this site would be guided by the rules of the proposed DC Districts. Items to consider for future development include, but are not limited to building frontage, building height, density, setback, landscaping, parking, and use compatibility.

Transportation

The Medicine Hill community is accessed by the Trans-Canada Highway through the Bowfort interchange and from Sarcee Trail SW. Na'a Drive SW runs through the community with a local bus route serving the future community. All vehicular, and bicycle parking are to remain at Bylaw standards, and any requests for relaxations will require parking studies.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no environmental concerns with the proposed land use.

Utilities and Servicing

The overall utilities and servicing for this development area were reviewed and approved under the previous outline plan (LOC2014-0080). The proposed change in uses does not significantly impact the proposed services for the area which have capacity to service the proposed development.

Climate Resilience

The applicant has not identified any climate resilience measures as part of this land use application. Further opportunities will be explored at later development approval stages.

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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 land owners, relevant community associations and the application was advertised online.

The Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society, the Edworthy Heritage Society, and Rocky View County were also circulated as part of this application.

The West Springs/Cougar Ridge Community Association provided comments supporting the additional uses in the Gateway District but questioning their inclusion in the Commercial District (Attachment 7). The community association was also opposed to the inclusion of the additional sign uses. Lastly, the community association strongly urged The City to prioritize a park management plan for the site, and this comment has been relayed to Parks.

Administration presented this application to the Paskapoo Slopes Joint Advisory Committee on 2020 April 14 and comments were provided by The Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society and The Artist View Cultural & Natural Heritage Society.

The Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society provided comments on changes over time moving the development further away from the original vision for the community. The Preservation Society also questioned the need to change the use rule regarding percentage of commercial uses on the ground floor. The Preservation Society also objected to the addition of vehicles sales due to not fitting the natural context of the community and the additional sign uses due to restrictions within the LUB.

The Artists View Cultural & Natural Heritage Society also provided comments objecting to new commercial uses in Blocks H and I due to the number of residential units and the proximity to the Paskapoo Slopes natural area. They also objected to the additional sign uses in all Blocks within the subject site due to the proximity to the natural, residential, and pedestrian areas. The Heritage Society also strongly advocated for the development of a Park Management Plan for the area.

No comments were received from the public.

Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the proposed redesignation and have determined the proposal to be appropriate for the area. Administration maintains discretion at the DP stage to address all the concerns expressed by the community comments.

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.

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Strategic Alignment

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](#), which directs population growth in the region to Cities and Towns and promotes the efficient use of land.

Interim Growth Plan (2018)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's [Interim Growth Plan](#). The associated 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)

[Map1: Urban Structure](#) of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) identifies the subject lands as Planned Greenfield with Area Structure Plan. The MDP provides guidance for the development of new communities through the policies of the ASP. The proposal meets the following MDP objectives (Section 3.6.2):

- Providing land use diversity;
- Providing residential diversity; and
- Mix of local and regional retail.

The proposal also promotes development of a complete community by providing access to additional uses and meets the following objectives of the MDP (2.2.4):

- Diversified employment opportunities that are integrated into the community or easily accessible by a number of modes of travel; and
- Neighbourhood stores, services and public facilities that meet day-to-day needs, within walking distance for most residents;

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

This application does not include any actions that specifically meet objectives of this plan, however, opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate resilience strategies may be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

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Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2019)

The [Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan](#) was amended in 2015 to reflect a revised vision for the lands around Canada Olympic Drive SW and east to Sarcee Trail. The proposed revisions represent the outcome of an extensive review process, including public engagement with citizens of Calgary as well as Elders representing the Blackfoot Confederacy. Part of this vision was to develop a distinct, compact, mixed-use area that contains entertainment, employment, and retail amenities for local residents and visitors. The proposal is in alignment with the Gateway District policies (5.6.2) and the Commercial District policies (5.8.2) of the ASP.

Improving Calgary's Entranceways: A Guide for Development Adjacent to Entranceways (Non-Statutory – 2012)

This [document](#) provides recommendations and guidance for developments adjacent to entranceways as identified on Map 1 and includes the portion of the Trans-Canada Highway to the north of the subject sites. This application does not propose any changes to the built form but is in alignment with the guidelines for signs (7.9) of the guide.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposal helps to achieve a greater diversity of businesses in the community of Medicine Hill that contributes to an active and vibrant street front.

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

Risk Assessment

There are no known risks associated with this application.

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REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed land use redesignation allows for additional uses and flexibility of uses to facilitate a comprehensive mixed use development while contributing to Medicine Hill establishing itself as a complete community. The proposal also brings the land use into alignment with the other mixed use main street developments throughout The City of Calgary. Further, the application is in alignment with the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan* and will contribute to the economic diversity of the community.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Report from May 21, 2020 CPC Meeting (CPC2020-0487)
2. Applicant Submission
3. Approved Outline Plan (LOC2014-0080)
4. Proposed DC Direct Control District (Blocks A and B)
5. Proposed DC Direct Control District (Block H)
6. Proposed DC Direct Control District (Block I)
7. Community Association Letter