

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2020 August 06

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2020-0864

Land Use Amendment in West Hillhurst (Ward 7) at 1902 – 2 Avenue NW, LOC2020-0042

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application was submitted by Verdeep Ubhi on behalf of the landowner Perminder S. Ubhi Professional Corporation on 2020 March 27. The application proposes to change the designation of this property from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District to allow for:

- rowhouses in addition to building types already allowed (e.g. single detached, semi-detached, and duplex homes and secondary suites);
- a maximum building height of 11 metres (an increase from the current maximum of 10 metres);
- a maximum of 3 dwelling units (an increase from the current maximum of 2 dwelling units); and
- the uses listed in the R-CG District.

The proposed land use amendment is consistent with the policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP). A related development permit application (DP2020-1959) was submitted on 2020 April 6 and is currently under review by Administration.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 0.05 hectares \pm (0.12 acres \pm) located at 1902 - 2 Avenue NW (Plan 1435GB, Block A, Lot 1) from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District **to** Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

BACKGROUND

This application was submitted by Verdeep Ubhi on 2020 March 27, on behalf of Perminder S. Ubhi Professional Corporation to enable construction of a three-unit rowhouse, as noted in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 1).

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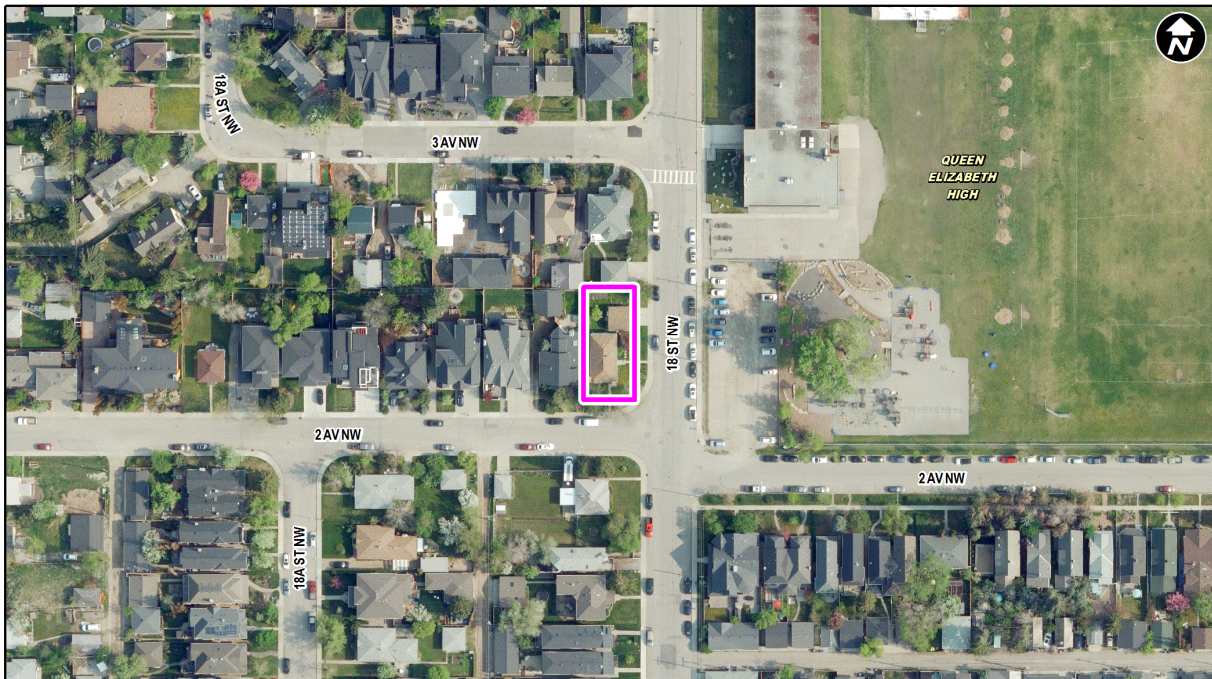
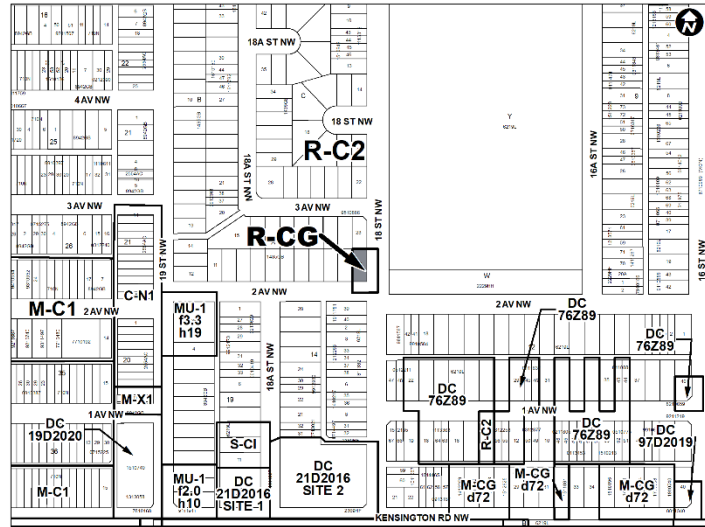
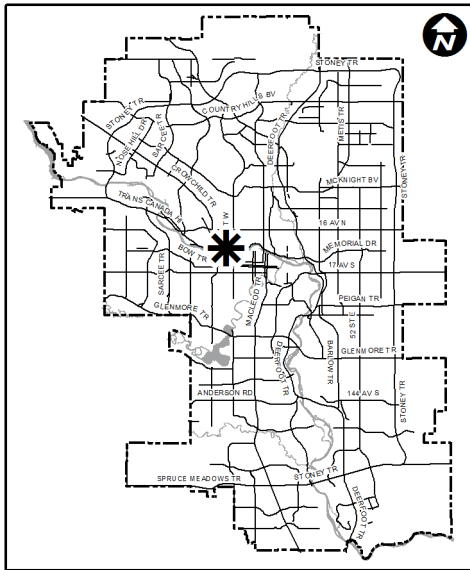
The applicant had originally indicated a desire to pursue a four-unit rowhouse development under the M-CG land use district at the time of their first submission. However, based on feedback provided by Administration and relevant stakeholders, as well as the constraints of not having a rear lane, the applicant amended their application to pursue a three-unit rowhouse development under the R-CG District.

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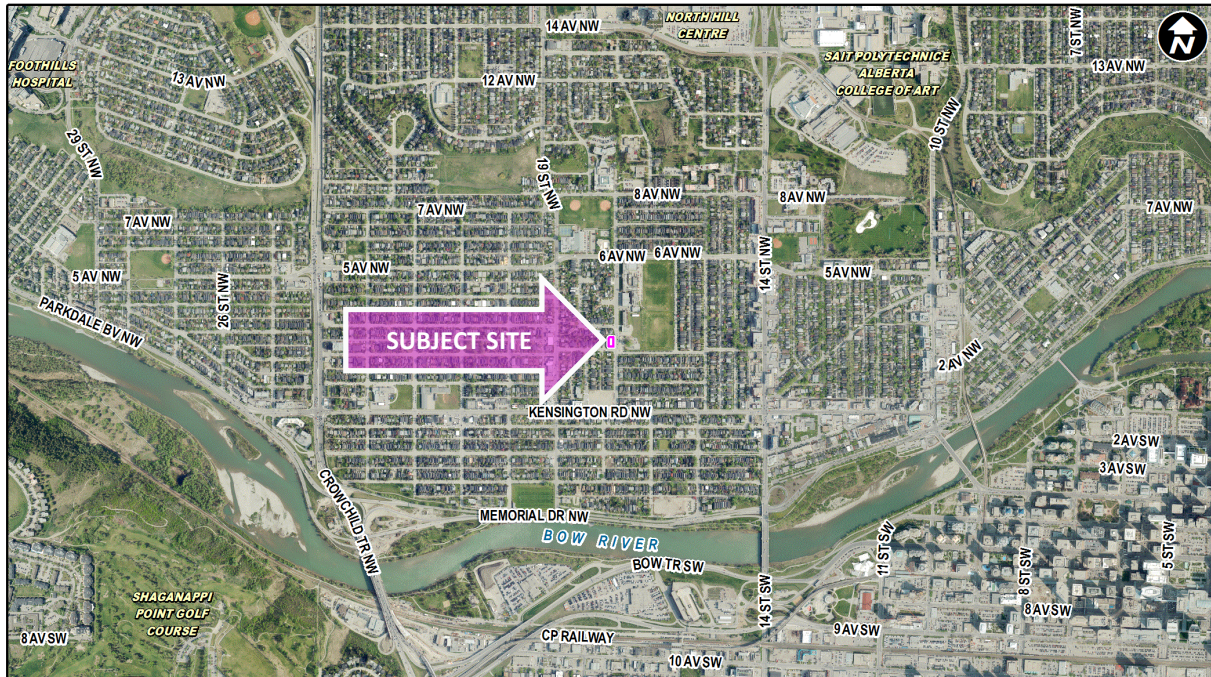
Location Maps



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Site Context

The subject site is located in the community of West Hillhurst at the northwest corner of 18 Street NW and 2 Avenue NW. The site is approximately 0.05 hectares (0.12 acres) in size, measuring 14 metres wide by 32 metres long. This corner parcel is currently developed with a single detached dwelling and has a rear detached garage. There is no lane at the rear of the site, with access to the detached garage currently coming off 18 Street NW.

Surrounding development is characterized by a mix of single and semi-detached dwellings designated as either Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District or the proposed Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG). Queen Elizabeth School is immediately east of the site across 18 Street NW and there are a number of commercial uses further west of the site along 19 Street NW.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the community of West Hillhurst has seen a population decline from a peak in 1968.

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Figure 1: Community Peak Population

West Hillhurst	
Peak Population Year	1968
Peak Population	6,871
2019 Current Population	6,447
Difference in Population (Number)	-424
Difference in Population (Percent)	-6%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The proposal represents a modest increase in density for a corner parcel of land in an inner-city area and allows for a range of building forms that respect the scale and character of the existing neighbourhood. The proposal generally meets the objectives of applicable policies as discussed in the Strategic Alignment section of this report.

Land Use

The existing Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District is a residential designation applied to developed areas that is primarily for single detached, semi-detached, duplex dwellings, and secondary suites. The R-C2 District allows for a maximum building height of 10 metres and a maximum of two dwelling units.

The proposed Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District is a low density district that allows for two to three-storey (11 metres maximum height) rowhouse developments where one façade of each dwelling unit must directly face a public street. The district provides for a maximum density of 75 units per hectare which would enable up to three dwelling units on the subject site. The R-CG District also allows for a range of other low-density housing forms such as single detached, semi-detached, duplex dwellings, and secondary suites.

The applicant had originally indicated to Administration and local residents that their desire was to pursue a four-unit rowhouse development under the Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG) District. However, after consultation with all relevant stakeholders and Administration, the applicant amended their original application from M-CG to R-CG in an effort to better contextually align with the existing built form in the community.

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Development and Site Design

A development permit was submitted on 2020 April 6 for a three-unit rowhouse building. The development concept has entrances to one unit from 2 Avenue NW and two units with entrances along 18 Street NW. As the site has no rear lane vehicular access follows the unit entrances with one garage accessed from 2 Avenue NW and two from 18 Street NW.

If approved, the rules of the proposed R-CG District would provide guidance for the development on the site, including height and building massing and landscaping. Given the specific context of this site, additional items being considered as part of the development permit that has been submitted (DP2020-1959) include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring an engaging built interface along both the 18 Street NW and 2 Avenue NW frontages; and
- Mitigation of shadowing, overlooking, and privacy concerns.

Transportation

Pedestrian access to the site is available from existing sidewalks along 18 Street NW and 2 Avenue NW. Direct vehicular access for new development would be from both 2 Avenue NW and 18 Street as there is no rear lane. The site is serviced by Calgary Transit with bus stops for Routes 1 and 305 located approximately 290 metres away (less than a five-minute walking distance) on Kensington Road NW.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no known outstanding environmentally related concerns associated with the proposal nor site at this time. As such, an environmental site assessment was not deemed required.

Utilities and Servicing

Water and sanitary mains are available and can accommodate potential redevelopment of the subject site without the need for off-site improvements at this time. Individual servicing connections, as well as appropriate stormwater management will be considered and reviewed as part of a development permit.

Climate Resilience

The applicant has not identified any specific climate resilience measures as part of this application. Further opportunities to align future development on this site with applicable climate resilience strategies may be explored and encouraged at the development permit stage.

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Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

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

No public meetings were held by the applicant or Administration in association with this application.

The West Hillhurst Community Association responded to the original and subsequent amended application respectively, with their most recent correspondence included in (Attachment 2). The Community Association indicated that they are opposed to the application as proposed. Their letter identified the following concerns:

- Impacts on the pedestrian realm;
- Development on an undersized site with no rear lane; and
- No public realm benefits associated with the proposed development.

Administration received 25 citizen responses in opposition to both the initial and amended application noting concerns related to the proposed land use redesignation and potential future development. The citizen concerns are generally summarized as follows:

- Decrease in property values;
- Increase in height, density, and lot coverage;
- Reduced privacy and shadowing impacts on neighbouring properties;
- Increase traffic and parking issues;
- Pedestrian safety due to increased driveway crossings;
- Lack of neighbourhood fit; and
- Development on an undersized site.

Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the proposed re-designation and has determined the proposal to be appropriate given the site specific context and location. The proposed R-CG District is a low-density district intended for development on sites that are located in close proximity and adjacent to low density residential development within inner city communities. Furthermore, development can be contextually sensitive in terms of height and setback. Based on these criteria, R-CG is considered appropriate as it would result in a moderate increase in density that would be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for Public Hearing of Council will be posted on-site and mailed out to adjacent landowners. 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](#) (SSRP) 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 [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)

The subject parcel is located within the Residential - Developed - Inner City area as identified on [Map 1: Urban Structure](#) in the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). The applicable MDP policies encourage redevelopment and modest intensification of inner-city communities to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, public amenities and transit. Such redevelopment is intended to occur in a form and nature that respects the scale and character of the neighbourhood context.

The proposal is in keeping with relevant MDP policies as the R-CG District provides for a modest increase in density in a form that is sensitive to existing residential development in terms of height, scale and massing.

Local Area Policy

There is no existing local area plan affecting this site. Administration is currently working on the [Riley Communities Local Growth Plan](#) that includes West Hillhurst and surrounding communities. Planning applications will still be accepted for processing during the local growth plan process. The local growth plan is anticipated to be finalized in 2021 and will include more detailed direction regarding suitability of densification in alignment with The Guidebook for Great Communities.

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

The [Climate Resilience Strategy](#) contains the Climate Mitigation Action Plan (CMAP) and the Climate Adaptation Action Plan (CAAP), which identify actions that will reduce Calgary's greenhouse gas emissions and manage climate risks. This application has not identified any actions that specifically meet policies in this plan.

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Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposed land use district will provide a further range of housing types than the existing R-C2 District. The proposed land use district allows for a wider range of low-density housing types and as such, the proposed changes may better accommodate the housing needs of different age groups, lifestyles and demographics.

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 there are no growth management concerns at this time.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposal aligns with applicable policy directives of the *Municipal Development Plan*. The proposal represents a low density building form that would allow for a modest increase in density for an established area parcel, while still compatible with the built form and character of the existing community. Furthermore, the proposal provides modest redevelopment that is in very close proximity to commercial, schools, and open space amenities, while maintaining easy access to nearby transit services.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant's Submission
2. Community Association Letter