

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2020 September 17

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2020-0961

Land Use Amendment in Highland Park (Ward 4) at 4203 and 4219 Centre Street NW, LOC2018-0108

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application was submitted by K5 Designs on 2018 May 09 on behalf of landowners Gracilda Leung, Kent Tsui and Yin Ha Magdalena Tsui. The application proposes to redesignate two separate parcels of land from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to Mixed Use - General (MU-1f4.0h21) District to allow for:

- a mix of commercial and residential uses in street-oriented buildings with either commercial or residential uses at street level;
- a maximum building height of 21 metres, about 6 storeys (an increase from the current maximum of 10 metres);
- a maximum building floor area of 5,320 square metres cumulatively, based on a building floor to parcel area ratio (FAR) of 4.0;
- the uses listed in the proposed MU-1 District.

The proposal complies with the applicable policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP), and there is not an existing / approved local area plan for this community. No development permit application has been submitted at this time.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed land use redesignation of 0.13 hectares \pm (0.33 acres \pm) located at 4203 and 4219 Centre Street NE (Plan 5422GK, Block 9, Lots 1 and 5) from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to Mixed Use - General (MU-1f4.0h21) District; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

BACKGROUND

This land use amendment application was submitted by K5 Designs on 2018 May 09 on behalf of landowners Gracilda Leung, Kent Tsui and Yin Ha Magdalena Tsui. Centre Street N is experiencing an increase in redevelopment throughout this area due to the Green Line LRT and future station planned at 40 Avenue N, as well as the draft *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (LAP)*.

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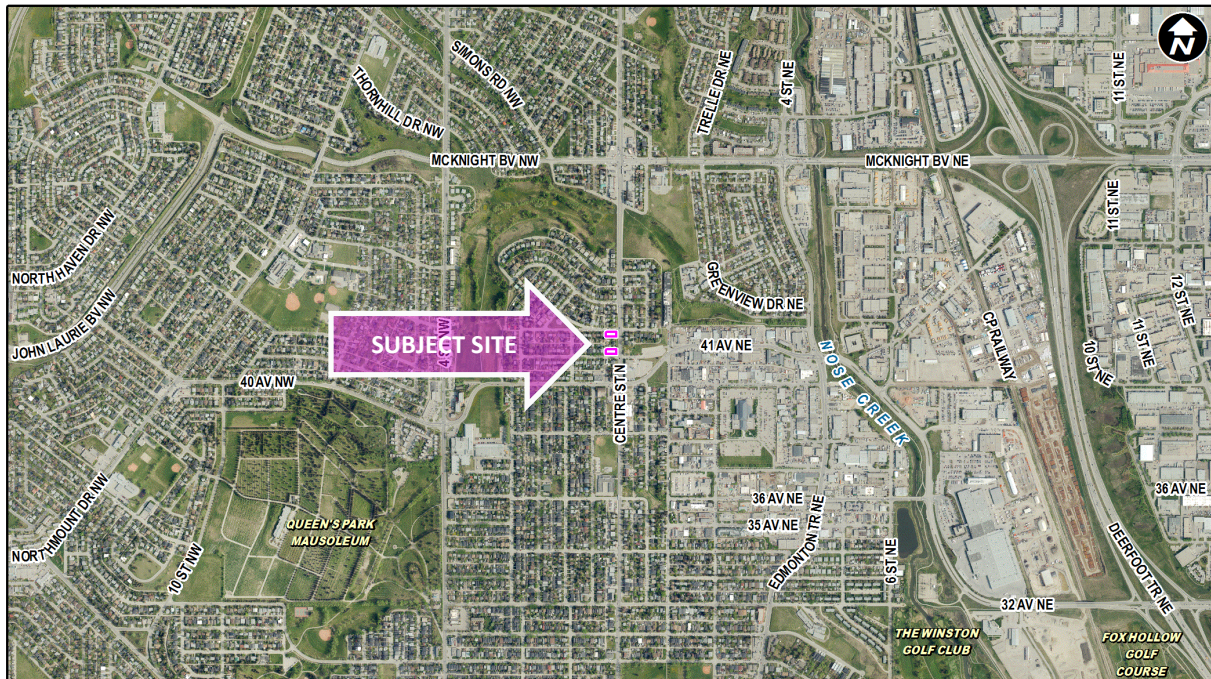
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As noted in Applicant Submission (Attachment 1), the applicant intends to redesignate the subject parcels to allow for multi-residential development with or without commercial/employment uses in future. No development permit has been submitted at this time.

The applicant has approached owners of the three mid-block parcels located between the two subject corner parcels for their consideration of simultaneously redesignating their parcels. The owners of the three mid-block parcels are not interested in redesignating their properties at this time.

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Site Context

The subject parcels are two corner lots located in the community of Highland Park on the west side of Centre Street N between 41 Avenue NW and 42 Avenue NW. The subject parcels are non-contiguous and have rear lane access. The subject parcels have a cumulative area of approximately 0.13 hectares (0.33 acres) with individual dimensions of approximately 40 metres by 16.5 metres. The sites are currently developed with single detached dwellings.

Centre Street N gently slopes down along the block from 42 Avenue NW to 41 Avenue NW. The three other mid-block parcels are not part of this application and are also developed with single detached dwellings. The surrounding area contains low density residential and institutional uses with commercial uses in close proximity near 40 Avenue NW.

Adjacent land uses consist of the following:

- North – low-density residential (single detached dwellings) with Mixed Use - General (MU-1f4.0h21) District;
- East – low-density residential (single detached dwellings) with Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District
- West – low-density residential (single detached dwellings) with Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District; and

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- South – low-density residential (single detached dwellings) with Multi-Residential – Contextual Low Profile (M-C1) District.
- Between the two parcels - low-density residential (single detached dwellings) with Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District.

These sites are approximately 110 metres (a two-minute walk) from the proposed Green Line LRT station at 40 Avenue N and Centre Street N. A high frequency bus rapid transit service (BRT) is currently operating along Centre Street N among other local bus routes. A BRT bus stop is currently located approximately 70 metres south of the site along Centre Street N.

As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of Highland Park has seen a population decline since its population peak in 1969.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

Highland Park	
Peak Population Year	1969
Peak Population	4,875
2019 Current Population	3,838
Difference in Population (Number)	-1,037
Difference in Population (Percent)	-21.27%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The proposed MU-1f4.0h21 District would enable transit-oriented development by providing multi-residential housing with the potential for at-grade commercial uses close to a future Green Line LRT station. The proposal meets the objectives of the applicable policies as discussed in the Strategic Alignment section of this report.

Land Use

The current R-C2 District is a low-density residential designation in developed areas that is primarily for single detached, semi-detached and duplex dwellings. The R-C2 District allows for a maximum building height of 10 metres and a maximum of two dwelling units on a parcel.

The proposed MU-1f4.0h21 District is intended to accommodate commercial and residential uses in street-oriented buildings. It is intended to be located along commercial streets with either commercial or residential uses at street level. It allows for a maximum FAR of 4.0 and a maximum building height of 21 metres (approximately six storeys).

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The MU-1f4.0h21 District has rules related to building setback requirements, building step backs from property lines, and façade widths which respond to immediate urban context. The proposed building height increase is mitigated by the required step backs from low-density residential lands located adjacent to subject sites, allowing for a transitional building height. The proposed land use district including the FAR and building height modifiers is appropriate for these sites because it recognizes the transit-oriented development site context and intensifies land uses along the Centre Street corridor and near the future Green Line LRT station at 40 Avenue N. The block located to the north across 42 Avenue NW has previously been redesignated to the same MU-1f4.0h21 District. It is anticipated that the whole block-face would intensify due to the proximity to the future Green Line LRT station at 40 Avenue N.

Development and Site Design

The applicable land use policies and the rules of the proposed MU-1f4.0h21 District will provide guidance for the future redevelopment of these sites including appropriate uses, height and building massing, landscaping and parking. Given the specific context of these sites with frontage on Centre Street N and proximity to the future Green Line 40 Avenue N LRT station, additional items that will be considered through the development permit process include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring engaging front facade along Centre Street N;
- ensuring building and site design addresses aesthetical concerns associated with this highly visible location;
- improving pedestrian connections by ensuring vehicle access to the sites is from the rear lane; and
- mitigating shadowing, overlooking, and privacy concerns.

It may be challenging to develop the subject parcels individually at this time with the maximum proposed 21 metres height because of the building step backs requirement from adjacent low-density residential lands. In addition to the standard MU-1 land use district setback, there is an additional right-of-way setback of 3.048 metres along the frontage of the properties adjacent to Centre Street and the future construction of Green Line LRT may have further impacts on the subject parcels. The applicant has provided written acknowledgment of the abovementioned constraints, which will be evaluated during a future development permit application.

Although the three mid-block parcels located between the two subject corner parcels are not part of the current land use redesignation application, a comprehensive redevelopment of the entire block or certain contiguous parcels could also be contemplated and encouraged in the future, if the owners of these three mid-block parcels decide to redevelop simultaneously.

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Transportation

Both sites are located on the Primary Transit Network along Centre Street N and are about 110 metres (a two-minute walk) to the proposed Green Line LRT station at 40 Avenue N and Centre Street N. A bus rapid transit service (BRT) is currently operating along Centre Street N among other local bus routes. A bus stop is currently located approximately 70 metres south of the site along Centre Street N and serves Route 300 (BRT Airport / City Centre), Route 301 (BRT North) and Route 3 (Sandstone / Elbow Drive).

The subject sites require a public realm enhancement setback equal to the required setback in the applicable land use district plus 3.048 metres (right-of-way setback) along Centre Street. Future development will be subject to review by Green Line Transportation in order to confirm right-of-way requirements. As part of Administration's Main Streets / Green Line work, a Streetscape Master Plan will be created providing a streetscape design for this area. Depending upon the timing of Administration's Streetscape Master Plan and development of the subject sites, the owners may be responsible for the public realm enhancements adjacent to these sites. Vehicular access to the subject sites will be provided from the existing rear lane.

A Transportation Impact Assessment was not required for this land use proposal.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no environmental concerns associated with this proposal.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary and storm sewer mains are available and can accommodate the proposed land use redesignation without the need for network upgrades at this time. Specific details of site servicing and stormwater management will be reviewed in detail at the development permit stage. A Sanitary Servicing Study may be required at the development permit stage.

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.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

In keeping with Administration's standard practices, this application was circulated to relevant stakeholders, including the Highland Park Community Association (CA), and was notice posted on-site. Notification letters were sent to adjacent landowners and the application was advertised online.

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No public meetings were held by the applicant or Administration for this application. The applicant-led engagement included discussions with the CA. The CA provided a letter of support for this land use redesignation application (Attachment 2).

The applicant has also approached owners of the three mid-block parcels located between the two subject corner parcels for their consideration of simultaneously redesignating their parcels. The owners of the three mid-block parcels are not interested in redesignating their properties at this time.

Administration received one letter in support and one letter in opposition to the proposed redesignation. The letter in support cited the need for more shops and restaurants in this area. The letter in opposition expressed concerns regarding changing the residential character of this area, lack of planning for adjacent intersections, and potential for increased traffic, overshadowing and overlooking. Administration has reviewed these concerns and has determined the proposal to be appropriate for the site considering the proximity to the future Green Line LRT station at 40 Avenue N. The specific concerns related to traffic, overshadowing and overlooking will be examined and reviewed at the development permit stage.

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.

Strategic Alignment

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered and is aligned with the policy directions 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 (2019)

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 [Municipal Development Plan \(MDP\)](#) aims to shape a more compact urban form and directs a greater share of new growth to be focused along Main Streets, in established areas of the city, in a manner that:

- creates a compact, mixed-use, high-quality urban development;
- concentrates jobs and people in areas well served by primary transit service;

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- provides a mix of employment, residential, retail and service uses that support the needs of adjacent communities;
- creates an urban environment and streets that promote walkability and local connectivity; and
- ensures transitions in development intensity between low density residential areas and more intensive multi-unit residential or commercial areas.

The subject sites are located within the Urban Main Street typology as identified on [Map 1](#) of the MDP. Urban Main Streets should contain a broad range of employment, commercial and retail uses as well as housing to accommodate a diverse range of population.

Urban Main Streets emphasize a walkable pedestrian environment fronted by a mix of higher intensity residential and business uses. The application supports the overarching objectives of the MDP and is in keeping with applicable MDP policies.

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

The [Climate Resilience Strategy](#) identifies programs and actions intended to reduce Calgary's greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate risks. This application does not include any specific actions that address objectives of this plan. Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate resilience strategies may be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

Local Area Policy

The subject sites are located in Highland Park community which does not currently have an approved statutory local area plan. Administration is currently working on the [North Hill Communities LAP](#) which includes Highland Park and surrounding communities. Planning applications are being accepted for processing during the local growth plan process.

The *North Hill Communities LAP* is anticipated to be finalized in 2021. The proposed land use is in alignment with the Urban Form and Building Scale categories of the draft *North Hill Communities LAP*.

Transit Oriented Development Policy Guidelines (Non-statutory – 2004)

The [Transit Oriented Development \(TOD\) Policy Guidelines](#) provide direction for the development of areas typically within a radius of 600 metres (ten-minute walking distance) of a transit station.

The guidelines call for higher density, walkable, mixed-use areas around LRT stations to optimize the use of transit infrastructure and create mobility options for local residents.

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The intersection of 40 Avenue N and Centre Street N is earmarked as the location for a future Green Line LRT station and the subject sites are located approximately 110 metres (two-minute walk) from the proposed station.

The subject sites are also situated on the Primary Transit Network along Centre Street N which is well served with numerous bus routes including the Bus Rapid Transit lines. The sites are therefore well situated for increased development intensity with great access to public transit.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposed land use district allows for a wider range of commercial and residential uses and as such, the proposed amendment may better accommodate increased housing choice and shopping needs of different age groups, lifestyles and demographics in Highland Park.

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 significant risks associated with this proposal.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed land use redesignation conforms to the policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* regarding land use intensification along Centre Street as an Urban Main Street, in an established area of the City. In addition, the height and intensity of the proposed land use district provide for redevelopment that appropriately captures the potential for future redevelopment intensities while responding to the existing context, transit-oriented development, and draft *North Hill Local Area Plan*.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant Submission
2. Community Association Letter