

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2020 October 15

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2020-0907

Land Use Amendment in Spruce Cliff (Ward 8) at multiple properties, LOC2020-0070

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This land use amendment application was submitted by Darren Langille, from Redline Real Estate, on 2020 May 14 on behalf of the landowners Redline Realty Investment Inc, Brett Turner and Chen Nu Chen. The application proposes to redesignate the subject lands from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to Mixed Use – General (MU-1f3.0h22) District to allow for:

- a mix of residential and commercial uses in the same building;
- a maximum building height of 22 metres, approximately 6 storeys (an increase from the current maximum of 10 metres);
- a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.0, approximately 7,233 square metres of building floor area; and
- the uses listed in the MU-1 District.

The proposal is in keeping with applicable policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP). Further, the subject site is adjacent to the work plan area for the Main Street initiative and Streetscape Master Plan for the 37 Street SW corridor.

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 redesignation of 0.24 hectares ± (0.59 acres ±) located at 3704, 3708, 3712 and 3716 - 8 Avenue SW (Plan 2566GQ, Block 15, Lots 15 to 18) from Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District **to** Mixed Use – General (MU-1f3.0h22) District; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

BACKGROUND

This land use amendment application was submitted by Darren Langille, from Redline Real Estate, on 2020 May 14 on behalf of the landowners Redline Realty Investment Inc, Brett Turner and Chen Nu Chen (Attachment 1).

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Redline Realty Investment Inc, acting on behalf of the other property owners, submitted a pre-application (PE2019-01938) on 2019 October 28 to receive Administration's feedback on a proposed land use redesignation to facilitate a mixed-use development. Administration completed a preliminary assessment of the proposal and provided comments, including the following:

- that Applicant-led community outreach be conducted and documented, as per the City of Calgary [Applicant Outreach Toolkit](#);
- that while there was no applicable statutory plan, Administration was undertaking the [Westbrook Communities Local Growth Planning](#) initiative and the applicant was encouraged to participate in the process; and
- that Administration would be supportive in principle of a medium profile mixed use development which provides sensitive transition to the low density residential neighbourhood to the north.

The initial application submitted on 2020 May 14 proposed the MU-1 District with:

- a maximum FAR of 4.0, and;
- a maximum height modifier of 26 metres (approximately seven storeys).

The applicant indicated at the initial submission that they would consider revising their application following their community outreach activities and review of the public feedback. On 2020 September 12, following consultations with community residents and Administration, the applicant amended the application to:

- a maximum FAR modifier of 3.0; and
- a maximum height modifier of 22 metres (approximately six storeys).

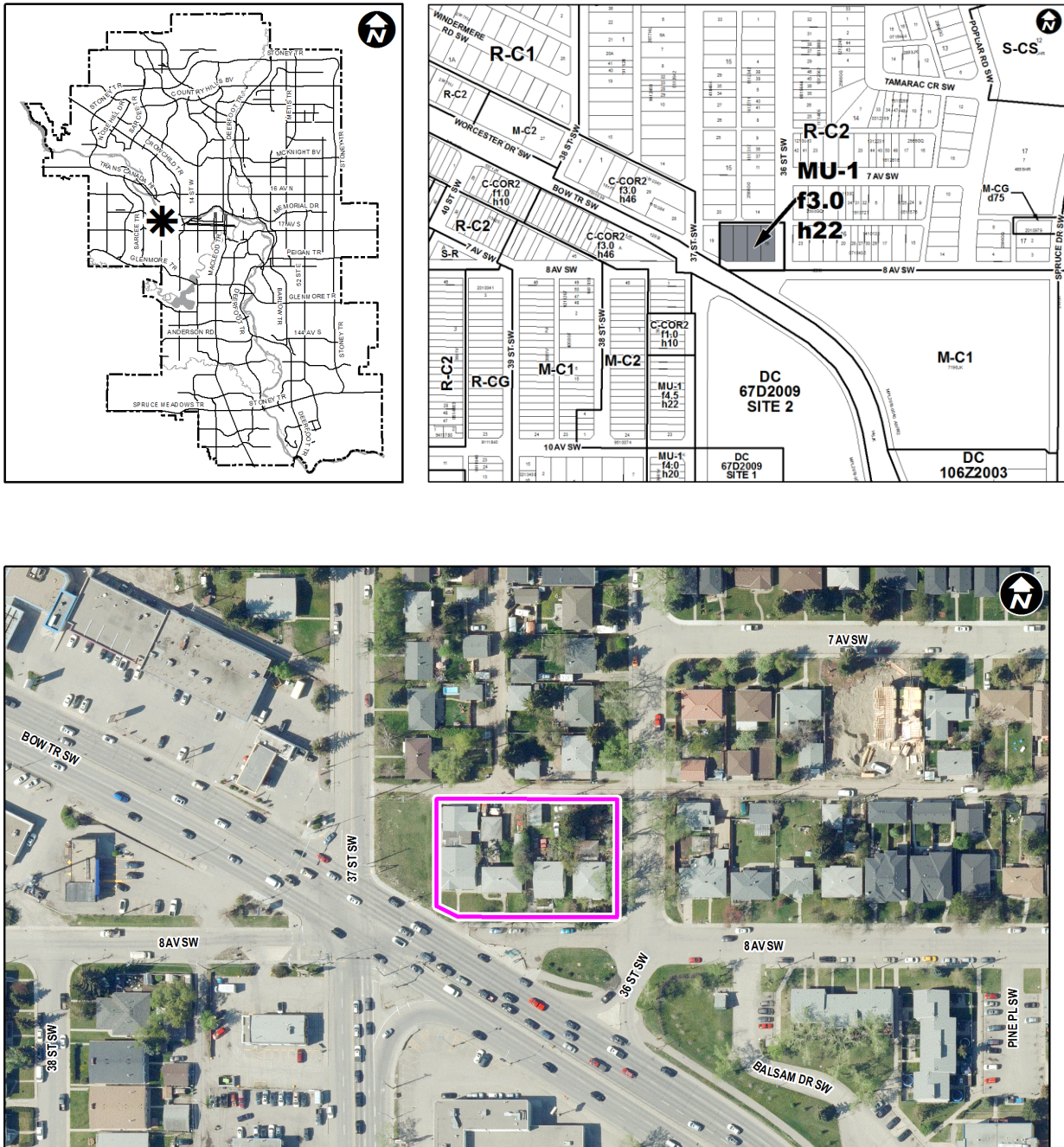
As noted in the Applicant's Submission, while there is no intention of an immediate development permit submission, a residential builder intends to pursue a development permit application for multi-residential development in the near future.

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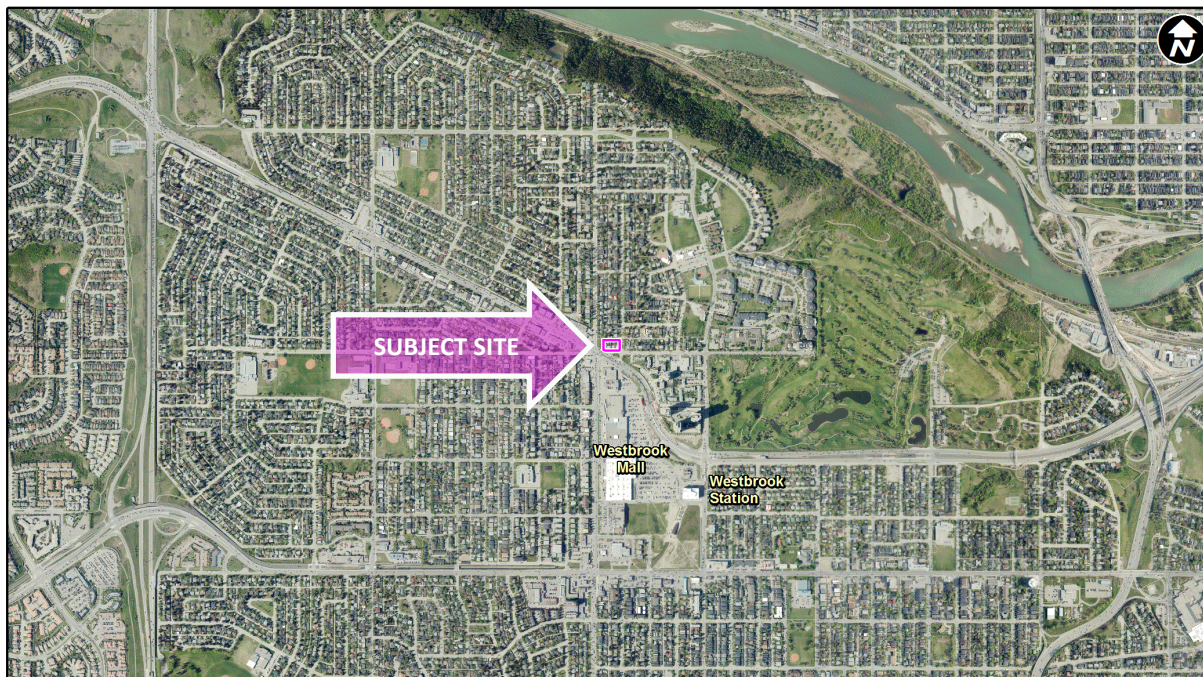
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Location Maps



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Site Context

The subject site is located in the southwest community of Spruce Cliff, on the northwest corner of 8 Avenue SW and 36 Street SW. The subject site is mostly surrounded by the R-C2 District to the north and east, however to the west of the site, across 37 Street SW, is a Commercial-Corridor 2 (C-COR2f3.0h46) District with an FAR maximum of 3.0 and a maximum height of 46 metres. Directly to the south is Westbrook Mall, which is designated as DC Direct Control District (Bylaw [67D2009 Site 2](#)) which allows for a maximum FAR of 8.0 (which may be increased by 1.0 with bonusing provisions) and a maximum height of 100 metres.

The site is located adjacent to a significant community intersection of 37 Street SW and Bow Trail SW. Further, 37 Street SW has also been classified as a Neighbourhood Main Street, and at the northeast corner of this intersection, there will be the construction of a multi-use crossing and pathway. In 2020 July, a new pedestrian bridge was constructed over Bow Trail SW (from Balsam Drive SW) connecting Westbrook Mall and residential development to the east.

The site contains four separate parcels which have a consolidated site area of approximately 0.24 hectares (0.59 acres) in size, approximately 61 metres (fronting 8 Avenue SW) and 53 metres deep. The subject site slopes up from 8 Avenue SW. The site contains four single detached dwellings with detached garages/parking pads and rear lane access.

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The subject application includes all the lots within the block, with exception of the property at adjacent to 37 Street SW at 716 - 37 Street SW, which is currently owned by The City. The property owners have inquired with The City on the possible purchase of the property and an assessment by the City's Real Estate & Development Services department is ongoing. This assessment should be completed in Q1 of 2021.

As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of Spruce Cliff has experienced a slight decrease from its peak population in 2018. As such, the proposal could be seen as an opportunity to increase the number of residents providing more housing choice within the community.

Figure 1: Peak Population

Peak Population Year	2018
Peak Population	4,749
2019 Current Population	4,673
Difference in Population (Number)	-76
Difference in Population (Percent)	-1.60%

Source: The City of Calgary 2019 Census

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

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

This proposal allows for a range of building types that are recognize and address sensitive transition to the existing build environment. The proposal meets the objectives of applicable policies as discussed in the Strategic Alignment section of this report.

Land Use

The existing R-C2 District is intended to accommodate existing residential development and contextually sensitive redevelopment in the form of duplex dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and single detached dwellings in the developed area. The maximum height is 10 metres and the maximum number of residential units is two (a total of eight units on four parcels).

The proposed MU-1 District is characterized by buildings having a street-oriented design and accommodating a mix of residential and commercial uses. The proposed district will have a maximum height of 22 metres (which will require a stepback from the existing low density development across the lane) and a maximum floor area ratio of 3.0. While the MU-1 district does not require commercial/retail uses at grade, the applicant has indicated that there may be an interest to develop a mixed-use development on the site. Administration considers future commercial space as appropriate as this would be in alignment with MDP guidelines which encourages a mix of commercial and service uses in the established areas.

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The proposed land use district is considered to be compatible with existing lower density development as it promotes transitions to lower scale residential buildings on adjacent parcels through building massing and landscaping.

Development and Site Design

At the development permit stage, the subject site will be evaluated against the rules of the proposed MU-1 District and will be reviewed in relation to height, massing, parking and landscaping. Other key factors that will be important to consider include, but are not limited to the following:

- ensure acceptable vehicular access from the rear lane;
- mitigate any potential impacts on the existing R-C2 properties directly to the north and east of the subject site;
- articulate long building facades to add scale and visual interest;
- integrate sufficient amenity space (public and private) in the site plan; and
- green building and climate resiliency mitigation and adaptation considerations.

Transportation

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is available from 8 Avenue SW, 36 Street SW and the rear lane. The area is served by Calgary Transit (Bus Route 9), within approximately 40 metres walking distance of the site on Bow Trail SW with service to the Westbrook LRT Station. On-street parking adjacent to the site is not regulated by the Calgary Parking Authority. The site is approximately 550 metres from the Primary Transit Network on Bow Trail SW to the Westbrook LRT Station.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no environmental concerns associated with the subject site or this proposal.

Utilities and Servicing

Public water and sanitary exist within the adjacent public right-of-way. Development servicing will be determined at the development permit and Development Site Servicing Plan (DSSP) stage.

Climate Resilience

Administration has reviewed this application in relation to the objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#) programs and actions, and no specific measures are being proposed. Further opportunities to align future development on this site with applicable climate resilience strategies will be explored and encouraged at the development permit stage.

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Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

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

According to the applicant, their community outreach (Attachment 2), included engagement with the Spruce Cliff Community Association, surrounding neighbours and the local Councillor, involved the following items:

- On 2020 June 18, an outreach package and invitation to attend three online meetings (via Zoom platform) was provided to the properties in the immediate vicinity of the subject site (42 homes) – this included the description of the proposed land use amendment, and rationale for the proposal.
- On 2020 June 20 the online meetings were canceled in order to take additional time to review the public comments received.
- On 2020 July 14, outreach packages were once again provided to properties (following consultations with Administration, the circulation area was extended to include 67 homes) in the immediate vicinity with invitations to attend online meetings (via Zoom platform). The meetings were held on the following dates:

Meeting 1 – 2020 July 20 – seven residents attended;

Meeting 2 – 2020 July 21 – six residents; and

Meeting 3 – 2020 July 22 – seven residents attended.

Primary concerns and questions related to, but were not limited to, the proposed height, mitigating building shadowing and privacy concerns, on-street parking and future commercial spaces.

The Spruce Cliff Community Association has written in opposition to the initial proposal (Attachment 3) and their comments include the following primary concerns:

- such a proposal is premature in advance of the completion of the Westbrook Policy Project;
- negative impacts on vehicular traffic;
- negative impacts on pedestrian safety;
- negative impacts on potential commercial uses i.e. parking and traffic impacts; and
- proposed density does not fit the within the existing lower density neighbourhoods.

Thirty-five letters of objection were received from the public on the initial application which was a proposal for a redesignation to the MU-1 District with a height modifier of 26 metres and a FAR modifier of 4.0. The following is a summary of the concerns received:

- increase in vehicular traffic on surrounding streets – notably Bow Trail SW and 37 Street SW;

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- negative impact on pedestrian safety;
- lack of information on the future development design - future access to site, on-site parking, and location of commercial uses.
- increase in on-street parking;
- proposed density and height are too high and do not fit within the existing low density neighbourhood – single detached dwellings, townhomes or a three to four storey apartment building would be more appropriate;
- shadow impacts on adjacent properties;
- increase in noise;
- site is inappropriate for commercial uses – Westbrook Mall to the south is the more appropriate location;
- negative impacts on property values and community character;
- concerns with the lack of engagement and details provided by the applicant towards the residents and community association;
- concerns with engagement conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic – not the usual community outreach;
- already a high concentration of shops and services at all sides of the intersection of Bow Trail SW and 37 Street SW – do not need more; and
- the proposal is inconsistent with MDP guidelines – not respecting the existing low density character of the neighbourhood.

One letter of support was received from the public on the initial submission which stated that the proposal would be a positive development for the community.

Administration considered all relevant planning issues specific to the proposed redesignation and worked with the applicant to facilitate the recommended (amended) proposal. Based on the review of the relevant policy and assessment of the existing character of the surrounding neighbourhood and public feedback, Administration indicated to the applicant that the initial proposal of a maximum height of 26 metres and an FAR of 4.0 would not be supported.

Administration recommended that the applicant consider revising the application to reduce both the height and FAR modifiers, which would provide a more appropriate transition and interface with the existing low-density residential development. Following further discussions with Administration, and further community outreach, the applicant decided to follow Administration's recommendation and amended the application to a maximum height of 22 metres and an FAR of 3.0. The design compatibility and parking requirements will be reviewed at the development permit stage. This will assist in managing concerns related to privacy, shadowing, massing and other built form considerations. Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the proposed redesignation and has determined the proposal to be appropriate due to its located adjacent to Bow Trail, the 37 Street SW Neighbourhood Main Street and walking distance to the Westbrook LRT Station.

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The Community Association was given notice on the application revisions, however, they did not wish to change their comments.

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 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 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 site is designated as within the Developed Residential Areas – Established Areas within [Municipal Development Plan](#) which encourages modest redevelopment and new developments that incorporates appropriate densities and transition. Multi-residential housing types to meet the diverse needs of present and future populations.

The proposal is in keeping with relevant MDP policies as the MU-1 District is characterized by buildings with a street-oriented design and accommodating a mix of residential and commercial uses. The District is considered to be compatible with existing lower density development as it promotes transitions to lower scale residential buildings on adjacent parcels through building massing and landscaping.

While the community of Spruce Cliff does not have a local area plan, it is part of the [Westbrook Local Growth Planning Project](#), which is currently under review by Administration. The multi-community planning process does not prohibit applications from being submitted. While the project was originally launched in 2019 September, project and engagement timelines are being adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and work being completed on the *Guidebook for Great Communities* and does not currently have an anticipated date for completion.

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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.

Location Criteria for Multi-Residential Infill (Non-Statutory – 2016)

The proposed land use amendment generally aligns with the [*location criteria for multi-residential infill*](#). The subject site is:

- on a corner parcel;
- adjacent to or across from an existing or planned open space, park or community amenity (Spruce Cliff Centre);
- along or in close proximity to an existing or planned corridor (37 Street SW – Main Street);
- within 400 metres of a transit stop (bus stop directly adjacent to the south);
- adjacent to existing or planned non-residential development or multi-unit development (Westbrook Mall to the south);
- direct lane access (at rear); and
- within 600 metres of an existing primary transit stop (approximately 550 metres from Westbrook LRT Station).

These criteria provide a framework in which Administration evaluates a site's appropriateness for intensification. The subject site's size, scale and type of development proposed in relation to existing local context indicate that the subject site is an appropriate location for sensitive residential intensification.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The recommended land use amendment will provide for a moderate increase in residential density and allow for a more efficient use of existing public infrastructure. In addition, this proposal would encourage an increase in socio-economic diversity within the area by providing a variety of housing types and forms as well as opportunities for local at-grade retail.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

There are no known impacts to the current and future operating budgets at this time.

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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.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed land use redesignation is compatible with the applicable policies identified in the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Location Criteria for Multi-Residential Infill*. The subject site is also adjacent to a designated Main Street and provides for a moderate increase in residential density and a future development in a form that respects the existing low-density residential development. Further, the subject site is located within walking distance of transit stops, LRT, and is in proximity to commercial, non-residential and multi-residential development.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant's Submission
2. Applicant-Led Outreach Summary
3. Community Association's Submission