

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Site Context

The site consists of two contiguous parcels located at the southeast corner of Centre Street N and 43 Avenue NE in the community of Highland Park. These parcels have a cumulative area of approximately 0.13 hectares (0.31 acres), have a total frontage of approximately 32 metres along Centre Street N, and are approximately 40 metres deep. The parcels are currently developed with single detached dwellings and have rear lane access.

Surrounding development is characterized by low-density residential developments in the form of single detached dwellings. However, the surrounding area has recently seen land use redesignations aiming for higher intensity multi-residential and/or mixed-use development in the future. The MU-1f4.0h21 District proposed with this application already exists on the block located west of Centre Street N between 43 Avenue NW and 42 Avenue NW. Other high-intensity land use districts such as Mixed Use - Active Frontage (MU-2f5.0h40) District, Multi-Residential – Low Profile Support Commercial (M-X1) District, and Direct Control ([Bylaw 5D2008](#)) District are located within close proximity to the subject parcels.

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 250 metres (a three-minute walk) south of the site along Centre Street N at 40 Avenue N.

## Community Peak Population Table

As identified below, the community of Highland Park reached its peak population in 1969.

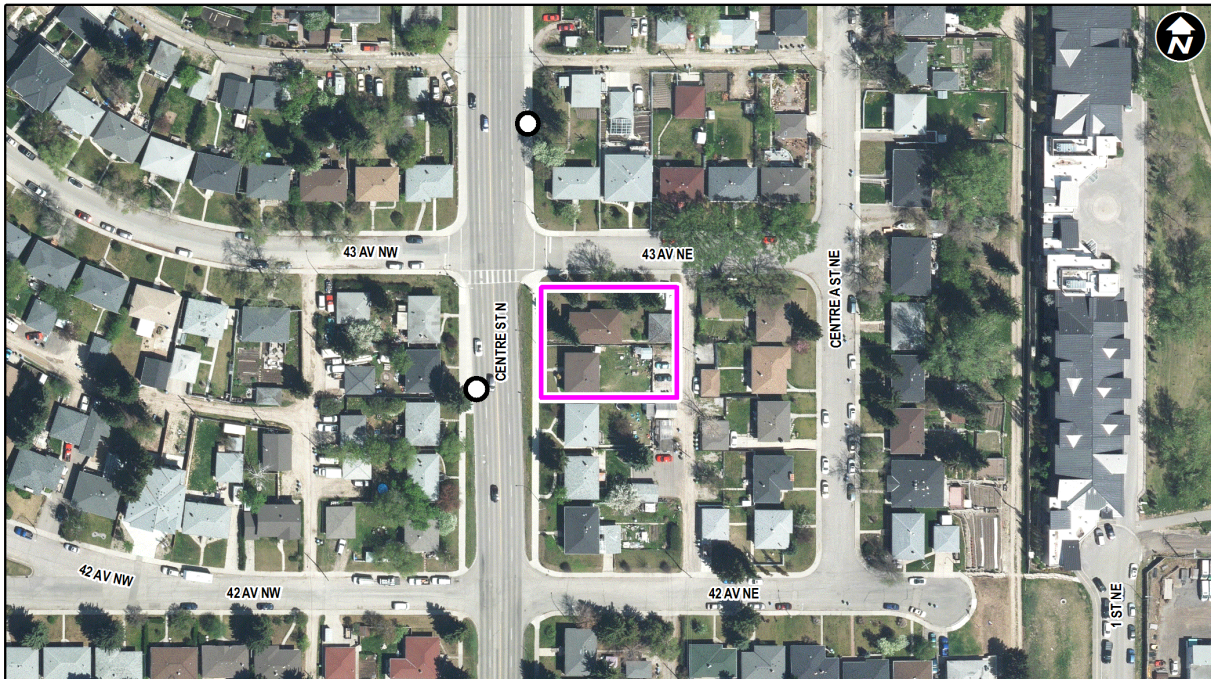
<b>Highland Park</b>	
Peak Population Year	1969
Peak Population	4,875
2019 Current Population	3,838
Difference in Population (Number)	-1,037
Difference in Population (Percent)	-21.27%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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







## Previous Council Direction

None.

## Planning Evaluation

### Land Use

The existing 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 density of two dwelling units.

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 floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.0 and a maximum building height of 21 metres (approximately six storeys).

The MU-1f4.0h21 District has rules related to building setback requirements, building setbacks from property lines, and façade widths which respond to immediate urban context. The proposed building height increase is mitigated by the required setbacks 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 as it recognizes the transit-oriented development site context. It also 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 west across Centre Street N has already been redesignated to the same MU-1f4.0h21 District. It is anticipated that the whole block-face will intensify due to its 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 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 redevelop the subject parcels individually with the proposed 21 metre maximum building height because of the step back requirement from adjacent low-density residential lands. In addition to the standard MU-1 land use district setback, there is an additional Bylawed right-of-way setback of 3.048 metres along the frontage of the properties adjacent to Centre Street, and the future construction of the Green Line LRT may have further impacts on the subject parcels. The applicant has provided written acknowledgment of the above-mentioned constraints, which will be evaluated during a future development permit application. It is anticipated that further parcel consolidations along this block may occur in the future.

### **Transportation**

The site is located on the Primary Transit Network along Centre Street N and are about 250 metres (a three-minute walk) to the future Green Line LRT station planned 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 west of the site across Centre Street N and serves Route 3 (Sandstone / Elbow Drive). A BRT bus stop is currently located approximately 250 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).

A 3.048 metre Bylawed right-of-way setback applies to the subject site (Section 53, Land Use Bylaw 1P2007) in addition to the front setback area required in the land use district. As there is no front setback area in the proposed MU-1f4.0h21 District, future buildings will require a total setback of 3.048 metres. 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**

No environmental concerns were identified.

## **Utilities and Servicing**

Water and sanitary sewer mains are available and can accommodate the proposed land use redesignation without the need for network upgrades at this time. Storm sewer is not immediately available for connection. 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.

## **Legislation and Policy**

### **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](#) (IGP). The proposed land use amendment builds on the principles of the IGP by means of promoting efficient use of land, regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

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

The subject parcels are located within the Urban Main Street typology as identified on [Map 1](#) of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (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.

The 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. Urban Main Streets emphasize a walkable pedestrian environment fronted by a mix of higher intensity residential and business uses. Highland Park community does not currently have an approved statutory local area plan and consideration on the planning guidance is provided from the MDP. The application supports the overarching objectives of the MDP and is in keeping with applicable MDP policies.

### **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.

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 250 metres (a three-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.

**Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)**

This application does not include any specific actions that address objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate resilience strategies may be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

**North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (Draft)**

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 Local Area Plan](#) (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*.