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✓ * I have read and understand that my name, contact information and comments will be made publicly available in the Council Agenda.

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* Subject LOC2019-0142 Northland Mall

* Comments - please refrain from providing personal information in this field (maximum 2500 characters)
Please include the attached submission for the Brentwood CA regarding LOC2019-0142 for Northland Mall.
Thank you.



Brentwood Community Association

Mailing Address 5107 – 33rd St. NW, Calgary, Alberta T2L 1V3
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July 13, 2020

Application: LOC2019-0142 (Northland Village Mall)

Application Type: Land Use Amendment to accommodate multi-residential development for a portion of the overall site.

Address: 5111 Northland Dr NW

Land Use Designation: DC

Proposed Use: DC

Development Background

Previous applications DP2019-4089 Sept 12, 2019 and DP2015-2676. The original concept for the site included retail and / or commercial space for ground floor uses.

Bylaw 35D2016 was passed as a result of the LOC2015-0025 rezoning application in 2015.

The guidelines for this Direct Control District were intended to accommodate:

- (a) redevelopment of the existing enclosed mall into a mixed-use **development** that conforms to the master concept plan in terms of **building** location, internal **street** network, **building** massing, elevations, landscaping, design elements & materials;
- (b) **buildings** that are sited and designed in an integrated manner with the overall public realm, where the range of ground floor **uses** are limited;
- (c) development of a walkable and pedestrian friendly **street** network that includes primary retail, secondary retail and gateway **streets**;
- (d) a publicly accessible **amenity space** that will be developed as an internally focused plaza;
- (e) phased **development** of the site in a manner that allows **development** within each phase to operate independently as well as comprehensively with future plans; and
- (f) a shared parking strategy that accommodates centralized parking facilities for all sites

LOC2019-0142 seeks to allow for a residential building with residential ground floor units, instead of retail or commercial space.





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Master Concept Plan Amendments (Notes from June 4 Calgary Planning Commission meeting)

- office / commercial uses adjacent Plaza replaced with residential use
- Plaza redesigned and shifted to interior of site
- Adjustments to development phasing
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist connectivity
- Building Elevations and Design identified for architectural intent (only)
- Design guidance for Phase 1 residential building
- Sustainability Approach added

Brentwood Development and Transportation Committee (DTC) comments:

The BCA is supportive of LOC2019—142, which would allow the residential building to be constructed with ground floor residences instead of retail or commercial spaces. As per the previous CA response to the LOC (dated October 17, 2019), we have no objection to a building that is entirely residential, including units at grade.

- Northland Village Mall is an asset to the Brentwood community and we are supportive of measures to engage local residents and draw them to Northland Village Mall rather than to other shopping or commercial options. Many residents feel a connection to Northland (“our mall”) that they don’t feel towards other nearby shopping options.
- A residential component is a welcome addition that will bring people to the site during all hours of the day.
- This proposed residential component will support MDP goals for an increase in density, as well as providing additional options for various housing forms in the area.
- The proposed residences will have excellent access to facilities and services without even having to leave the site. On or immediately adjacent to the Northland Mall site there is access to groceries (Walmart), pharmacy items (Shoppers), retail stores, a fitness gym, fast food restaurants, medical and professional services, car services (Fountain Tire and numerous vehicle dealerships).
- Directly across Northland Drive are 4 schools (Sir Winston Churchill High School, St. Jean Brebeuf Junior High School, Captain John Palliser Elementary School and Simon Fraser Junior High), as well as St. Luke’s Church, Nose Hill Public Library, the SWC Fitness and Aquatic Centre, tennis courts and playing fields (soccer, baseball, etc.) and the Brentwood Community Association (with an ice rink).
- The mall is well-situated with major access roads on all sides (Shaganappi Trail, Northland Drive, and Crowchild Trail), as well as major bus routes along Northland and Northmount Drives. In addition, Northland Drive has an on-street, separated bike lane. A new residential building would already have many excellent existing transportation options for future residents.

Overall Master Concept Plan

We would like to thank Darick Schmidt from Primaris, Undine MacLaine and Susan Carter from Dialog, and Hugo Haley from the City of Calgary for their willingness to meet with members of the Brentwood CA and for listening to our comments and suggestions to improve the overall Master Concept Plan for this redevelopment site.

LOC2019-0142 relates specifically to the amendment of DC Bylaw LOC2015-0025 for the residential component. Some of the BCA comments and questions are in regards to the proposed residential building site location and layout in terms of how it will fit in with the Master Concept Plan for Northland Mall. We understand that these aspects will be dealt with at a future Development Permit stage. We would however like to note several aspects that we feel will require further clarification or revision.



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1. Pedestrian and Cycle Access

Pedestrian and bike access from the Brentwood community is largely via a pathway connecting the community to the center of the mall. This pathway seems to be used more than Northmount Drive or 52nd Avenue as it is more direct, quieter, and features murals and designs painted by area residents (see page 8).



From the center access point to the mall, pedestrians (or cyclists) can move through the parking lot directly to the retail stores on either end. There is also a bus stop near this intersection on both sides of Northmount Drive.

Concern: A proposed residential building on this corner of the mall area will limit or restrict some access and visibility into the mall site.

Proposal: Better pedestrian access throughout the mall: improved sidewalks, lighting, trees and other features to enhance the route through the site.





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For example, possible Walking Loop routes through the site (with distance markers) could provide safe, attractive routes that would be an improvement over walking through a parking lot.

We note that these revised plans also include better access from the Dalhousie area where there is an existing pedestrian overpass over Shaganappi Trail. Bike and pedestrian route through the site have been enhanced and improved.

2. **The residential building as one u-shaped building (revised from an earlier drawing with 3 separate buildings).**

The building as proposed will span the distance from the pedestrian crossing above almost to the entry / exit vehicle access one block further south, approximately 120 meters.

Concern:

- The building is very close to Northland Drive and will be 6 storeys high. This may appear rather massive and “unfriendly” to pedestrians walking along Northmount trying to get around the building.
- There is a bus stop on Northland Drive, and pedestrians will have to walk around the building to get to the mall, a small detour for them. They also can’t see around the building to know which direction to go (i.e. which is shorter) to get to their destination.

Proposal:

- Specifics for the building will be determined at the future DP stage.
- The BCA looks forward to meetings or discussions with the builder regarding building forms and layouts.
- Proposals include a pedestrian walkthrough in the middle of the building. (see #3 below)
- Creating an “arcade” or pathway from the building through the site will enhance the likelihood of users going through the walkthrough area (i.e. it will become more apparent that this is an option).

3. **The Pedestrian walkthrough in the middle of the building.**

As noted above, instead of one building with significant massing when viewed from the sidewalk, an access point in the middle would encourage walkability and make it appear more pedestrian-friendly.

Concern:

The current plans show a vestibule area with doors on either end. There is a question of how long those doors would remain openly accessible to the general public, plus many pedestrians would likely not even know if they are “allowed” to go through them.

Proposal:

- At the DP stage, a Condition of Approval could be applied regarding the hours of opening (i.e. the doors have to remain open during normal Mall hours).
- If the center building section were designed with a defined, clearly visible area, it would be more obvious to passers-by that there was an entry or access point for them to use.





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4. The Central Plaza

Initial plans showed a welcoming central area free of vehicles. The current proposed plaza is divided up with vehicle access through the middle. Multiple small public realm areas may not readily lend themselves to use for activities or events. Strong place-making elements will be needed to make this a place to gather and linger.

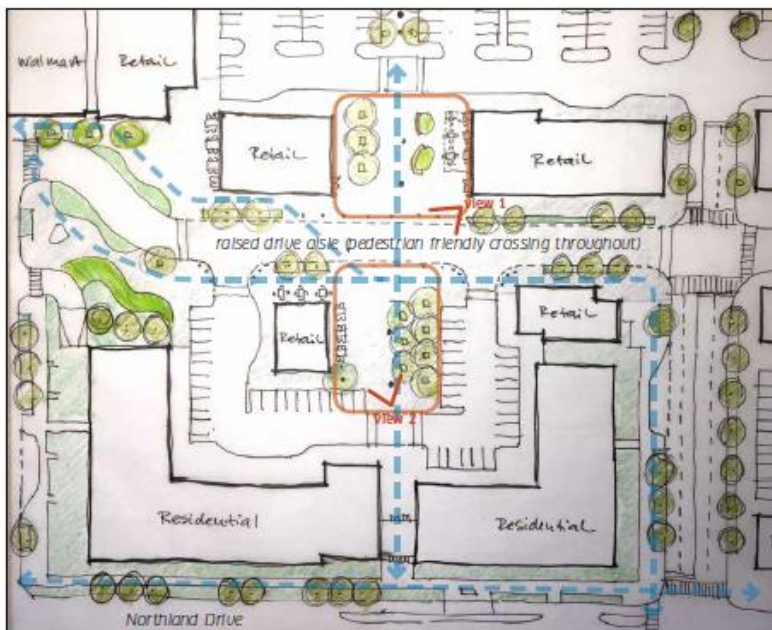
Concern:

Without a welcoming space and without a central plaza as a destination, this becomes a collection of stores in a parking lot. Efforts must be made so there is a reason for shoppers to go to this mall and linger, or to choose this over all shopping destinations within close proximity.

Proposal:

Site details are subject to many current unknowns, including COVID and economic factors. At this point, nobody can accurately predict what types of businesses may occupy the central spaces, or if the smaller retail / commercial building in the center of the residential complex will even be built initially (or in a phased approach).

- In any case, a stronger pedestrian corridor through the site will go a long way to ensuring that this becomes an active space. If there is an obvious path through the site, smaller “pocket parks” can provide plaza-type space.
- A raised drive aisle will act as a visual cue to slow down traffic, helping ensure that it is pedestrian friendly.
- This small section of road could be closed off for events such as a farmer’s market (which ran for many years in the Northland Mall parking lot) or food trucks or other gatherings.
- Other aspects that have been proposed include improved lighting, benches and resting places, trees and plantings for green spaces, twinkle lights in trees for winter interest, pathways with distance markers for pedestrians, etc.
- We look forward to further discussions with Primaris regarding ways to ensure that these areas become attractive and engaging so that they draw customers and nearby residents to the area.



POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS

smaller Retail Building in the center
 allowing for more public space



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- We note that a plaza space does not have to be large to be a successful gathering space. (See page 7)
Even a relatively small park can become a valued and vibrant feature, as shown by these photos.
- The BCA welcomes the opportunity for input on future phases of redevelopment at Northland Mall.

Summary

This could become a great town center type of mall for the Northwest.

It could distinguish itself from other shopping areas such Market Mall (which has no outdoor features other than parking lots) and could become a gathering spot for area residents. Many area residents have commented that they would welcome new restaurants into the area.

Having residential units on site will provide greater vibrancy and activity, which is also welcomed. It would also provide new housing forms for the Brentwood area. The Northland Mall site has good access from all sides via 3 major roads (Northland Drive, Shaganappi Trail and Crowchild Trail), as well as bike lanes on Northland Drive and pedestrian access via an overpass on Shaganappi and a paved pathway from the Brentwood community.

While not a requirement of the overall mall redevelopment, some public art would be a welcome addition. The addition of items such as a marked walking route, twinkly lights for winter interest, benches and resting spaces, trees and greenery would be welcome additions to help enhance “our mall”.

Further details for the residential building will be determined at the DP stage. The BCA looks forward to working with the developer as well as Primaris and Dialog on future phases and future plans for Northland Mall.

We look forward to seeing the mall progress on the renovations, and we support this application to allow for the residential component (without retail or commercial at grade).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application.

Sincerely,

Melanie Swailes

Peter Johnson

On behalf of the Development and Transportation Committee
Brentwood Community Association

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Example of small plaza in Brentwood (at Northland and Northmount Drives): not a very large plaza, but one that gets heavily used.



Photo taken June 24, 2020.

Many people use this plaza as a meeting and gathering point!





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Pedestrian / cyclist access via the painted pathway leading from Brentwood to Northland Mall.

This is the main access for pedestrians and cyclists from most of the Brentwood community.

Photo below: Northland Mall is visible at top of small rise in the pathway.

