

LAND USE AMENDMENT  
CRESCENT HEIGHTS (WARD 7)  
CENTRE STREET N BETWEEN 8 AVENUE NE AND 9 AVENUE NE  
BYLAW 305D2016

MAP 22C

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Land Use Amendment application seeks to redesignate one parcel of land located on Centre Street N between 8 Avenue NE and 9 Avenue NE in the community of Crescent Heights from Commercial – Corridor 2 (C-COR2 f2.0h12) District to Commercial – Corridor 2 (C-COR2 f3.5h30) District to allow for an increase in height and floor area ratio (FAR).

The proposed Land Use Amendment application complies with all elements of the Crescent Heights Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) and is contextually appropriate to the site.

A development permit application is currently being processed for this site.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

None.

<b>ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>	2016 October 06
That Calgary Planning Commission recommends <b>APPROVAL</b> of the proposed Land Use Amendment.	
<b>RECOMMENDATION(S) OF THE CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION</b>	
That Council hold a Public Hearing on Bylaw 305D2016; and	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>ADOPT</b> the proposed redesignation of 0.30 hectares ± (0.74 acres ±) located at 906 Centre Street NE (Plan 3946N, Block 25, Lots 1 to 10) from Commercial – Corridor 2 f2.0h12 (C-COR2 f2.0h12) District <b>to</b> Commercial – Corridor 2 f3.5h30 (C-COR2 f3.5h30) District, in accordance with Administration's recommendation; and</li><li>2. Give three readings to the proposed Bylaw 305D2016.</li></ol>	

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Administration is recommending approval of this land use amendment application. This recommendation is provided because: an increased height and floor area ratio for this site provides additional density at this strategic location – a site which is located along primary transit service, is along the future Greenline transit corridor, is located approximately 1 kilometre from the downtown core, and is within a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) defined Urban

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Corridor. The additional height and density will not significantly impact adjacent properties. The proposed height and density increases are also appropriate with the context of the area. The proposal meets the goals and policies of the MDP and the Crescent Heights Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP).

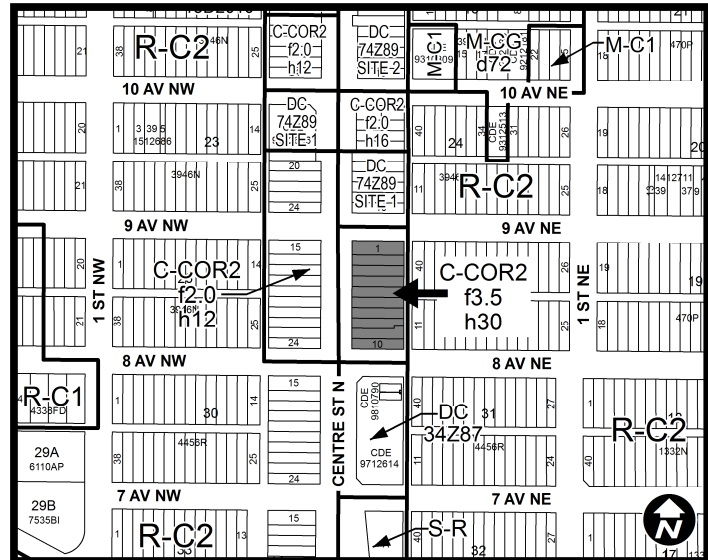
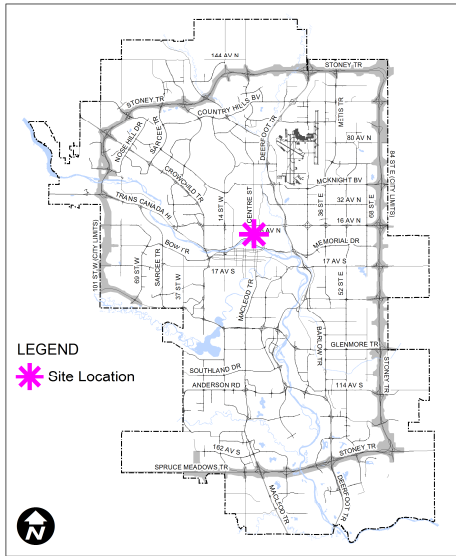
**ATTACHMENT**

1. Proposed Bylaw 305D2016

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LOCATION MAPS



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**ADMINISTRATIONS RECOMMENDATION TO CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Recommend that Council **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 0.30 hectares ± (0.74 acres ±) located at 906 Centre Street NE (Plan 3946N, Block 25, Lots 1 to 10) from Commercial – Corridor 2 f2.0h12 (C-COR2 f2.0h12) District ~~to~~ Commercial – Corridor 2 f3.5h30 (C-COR2 f3.5h30) District.

**Moved by: M. Foht**

**Carried: 6 – 0**

Reasons for Approval from Ms. Gondek:

- It appears from the rapport that Mr. Gordon has had with the Community Association that there is support for the land use change and that there is understanding of the difference between land use and development permit stages. Given that our decision today is on the land use, I am in favor of the recommendation.

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**Applicant:**

Steven Ho Architect

**Landowner:**

Certus Developments Inc

**PLANNING EVALUATION**

**SITE CONTEXT**

The subject site is a laned rectangular parcel of land located on the east side of Centre Street N between 8 Avenue NE and 9 Avenue NE. The site measures approximately 79.25 metres  $\pm$  by 38.10  $\pm$  metres and is approximately 0.3 hectares  $\pm$  in area. The site is located within the Centre Street MDP defined Urban Corridor.

The site is currently developed with 4 vacant buildings. Three buildings on the parcel front Centre Street NE. Extending from the corner of 9 Avenue NE to the south is a single storey commercial building which previously held a mix of commercial and restaurant uses. This commercial building contains an evaluated historic resource in the "Tigerstead Block" sign. The middle building is a commercial building which previously contained a liquor store. Making up the rest of the frontage to 8 Avenue NE is a converted residential building previously containing retail uses. The fourth building on site is another converted residential building previously containing a retail use. Together these buildings make up the entire block between 8 and 9 Avenue NE along Centre Street NE.

East of the site across the lane are low density parcels designated with the R-C2 District. This general area is characterized by single and semi-detached dwellings, originally developed in the 1920's. Infill redevelopment is occurring in the area with a moderate level of infill redevelopment along 9 Avenue NE.

Surrounding the site on all other sides is a mix of commercial and office uses. Generally the area surrounding the development is characteristic of an automobile oriented corridor. The area was predominantly developed between 1970 and 1980 and architecture is reflective of that time. Large scale redevelopment has not been occurring on this section of Centre Street N.

Immediately north of the site along Centre Street NE is a DC Direct Control District site. The site is developed with a six storey office above a mixed use retail commercial podium. Immediately south of the site is a Commercial Corridor 2 (C-COR2 f2.0h12) one storey strip mall development containing commercial retail units.

Immediately west of the site is a Commercial – Corridor 2 (C-COR2 f2.0h12) site which is split into two developments. The south half of the site is developed with a three storey office building and the north half with a 2 storey auto oriented strip mall containing commercial retail units.

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The site is encumbered with a 3.81 metre setback area for ROW widening along Centre Street. This additional right of way will serve as a new property line and setback area for any future development.

**LAND USE DISTRICTS**

The site is currently designated Commercial - Corridor 2 District (C-COR2 f2.0h12) with a maximum height of 12 metres and a maximum FAR of 2.0. This Land Use District is intended for commercial developments with opportunity for residential and office uses.

The proposal retains the existing C-COR2 designation, but increases the allowable building height to 30 metres and FAR to 3.5.

Development Rule	Existing C-COR2 (f2.0h12)	Proposed C-COR2 (f3.5h30)
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	2.0	3.5
Maximum Gross Floor Area (GFA)	4523 square metres	10554 square metres
Maximum Building Height	12 metres	30 metres

**LEGISLATION & POLICY**

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) (2014)

The parcel is located within the “Calgary” area as identified on Schedule C: South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Map in the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)*. The SSRP makes no specific reference to this site. The land use proposal is consistent with the applicable SSRP strategies for Land Use Patterns.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

The application is consistent with MDP policies regarding corridors and intensification.

On Map 1: Urban Structure of the MDP, the site is identified as part of an Urban Corridor. The MDP states that the Urban Corridor should contain a broad range of employment, commercial and retail uses as well as housing (form, tenure, and affordability) to accommodate a diverse range of the population. Apartments, mixed-use developments and ground-oriented housing are encouraged.

The application will contribute to achieving the intensity threshold of 200 jobs and population per gross developable hectare as per the MDP.

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The MDP also states that a range of intensification strategies should be employed to allow for modest intensification of Inner City areas, from parcel-by-parcel to larger more comprehensively planned approaches at the block level.

The MDP policies strive for street oriented development with front door access to the street to encourage pedestrian activity.

Crescent Heights Area Redevelopment Plan

The proposed location is included within the commercial development section of the Crescent Heights Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP). The proposal meets the intent of the ARP. Relevant policies provide strong direction for transit supportive density, mixed use commercial residential buildings, and an attractive pedestrian realm. Building setback and parking relaxations are encouraged through ARP policy as noted in the specific policies below.

Housing Units above Commercial Development (Section 3.7)

The commercial designations along Centre Street and Edmonton Trail allow residential units to be developed above the first floor. The ARP encourages 'residential above commercial' development, particularly on Centre Street and Edmonton Trail. This provides an alternative housing form supporting the transit corridor development envisaged in the Calgary Transportation Plan and adds vitality to the commercial areas.

Other policies include allowing the Development Authority to consider relaxation of the aggregate parking requirements for mixed use residential development, based on the potential for sharing the commercial parking, and to facilitate residential development above grade level commercial on Edmonton Trail and Centre Street. Bicycle parking should be included at the front of new commercial developments.

Design Guidelines for Transit Support and Street Enhancement (Section 4.4.6)

The Crescent Heights ARP contains design guidelines for transit support and street enhancement with the goal of creating an attractive shopping precinct servicing the local neighborhoods.

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These design guidelines support new residential units above commercial, retail, personal service and small restaurant uses, and discourage developments which require large parking areas or vehicle handling areas close to the street.

All new developments will be expected to contribute to the overall pedestrian environment, preferably through the type of use proposed, facade, design, landscaping and pedestrian features provided. New development should provide full or partial development frontage as close to the front setback or property line as possible. New development should also incorporate transit shelters/protected waiting areas where appropriate.

It is Administration's assessment that the proposed amendments to the Land Use District support the direction of the local ARP.

## **TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS**

The subject site is located on Centre Street, which is classified as an Urban Boulevard. The site is laned and situated on Primary Transit Network (PTN). Transit service is available directly in front of the proposed development. Both local and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service is available directly in front of the subject parcel. A future Green Line LRT station is currently planned north of 9 Avenue NE on Centre Street.

Vehicular access to the site will be provided by a rear lane which currently meets City of Calgary Standards.

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) and Parking Study were reviewed and accepted for this application and concurrent development permit.

## **UTILITIES & SERVICING**

No utility or servicing issues were identified for the Land Use Amendment application. A Sanitary Servicing Study was reviewed and approved as part of the concurrent development permit application and no network upgrades were warranted.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

No environmental issues were identified in review of this Land Use Amendment application. An Environmental Assessment was reviewed as part of the concurrent development permit application and no further reports or assessments were required.



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**GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

No growth management issues have been identified from this land use amendment application. No capital growth impacts are anticipated. The proposed units will be subject to the standard development cost charges for inner city redevelopment.

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

**Community Association Comments**

The Crescent Heights Community Association provided comments on this application jointly with their comments on the concurrent development permit. While not specific to the proposed Land Use Amendment application, the following concerns were identified through the circulation process:

- 1) Short cutting and traffic congestion on the north/south alley.
- 2) A desire to soften the abrupt height and density through building design and landscape features.
- 3) Privacy issues due the height from proposed balconies.

The community association also included positive comments in regards to the materials, awnings, small storefront feel, wide sidewalks and landscaping plan.

The community association comments were received and the second design of the building was also brought back to the community association meeting for further comments. The community association commented that enhanced rear lane planting was desirable and that the development should be tied to plans.

**Citizen Comments**

Ten letters of objection were received in regards to this application and concurrent development permit from citizens. Impacted neighbors from the low density area to the east were the main respondents to the circulation.

Their comments focused on that the proposed land use amendment and development permit applications would create impacts regarding shadow, privacy, parking, noise, and a change to the low density feel of the area.

These concerns were addressed through the concurrent development permit through the use of building setbacks of the main building mass, use of a Molok collection system, and orientation of building entrances to the three public streets.

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**Public Meetings**

The applicant group met with the community association three times during the application process. The project was also shown at a community association based public open house on 2015 August 25. City administration attended one meeting in order to gauge support from members of the public and the community association.

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**APPENDIX I**

**APPLICANT'S SUBMISSION**

Certus Developments Inc. Is seeking a Land Use Re-Designation and Development Permit to allow for the development of a multi family residential and commercial retail project to be constructed on the East side of Centre Street N.E. between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

The development will incorporate a single storey retail/commercial street front with five floors of residential apartment units above consisting of 89 units. Parking for the development will be contained within a below grade parkade containing 68 stalls with surface loading and 17 convenient stalls at grade.

The development project creates an exciting opportunity to enhance the neighbourhood liveability and character by creating a vibrant urban redevelopment on an underutilized commercial site. Our proposal visualizes a significant mixed-use development at a significant location that will create a main street retail character with a diversity of uses not presently evident in this area of Centre Street.

Certus Developments Inc. Intends to incorporate a character Brooklyn brick exterior with articulated character storefronts reminiscent of urban main street shopping streetscapes. Living spaces will be light and open with large windows designed to capture natural light in an architectural style reminiscent of a period loft style residence.

The project is intended to integrate an urban shopping experience with well-designed inner city living. The location offers future residents walkability to nearby parks, shopping and the downtown.

The Land Use Re-designation is required to slightly increase the overall height and density of the project. The rationale for this request is that the proposed re-designation is consistent with City of Calgary's desire to create higher density commercial and residential development adjacent to transit hubs, within walking distance to the downtown core, and recognizing the consumer preferences to rent or own in proximity to recreation, employment, and shopping nodes.

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APPENDIX II

LETTERS SUBMITTED

Crescent Height Community Association (Letter 2: Updated response, received 2016 April 26)

Hi Jim,

Thanks again for taking the time to meet with us at our planning meeting: we really appreciated it.

As follow up to our discussion Tuesday night, we wanted to highlight a few things:

1. We are really pleased to receive confirmation yesterday from Ron about the bricks. This was really important to us. The building, as presented, reminded us of the Bay building or Burns building - and fits the era of the community. Thank you for your consideration on this.
2. Planting trees between the alley and the property is another priority for us. This was mentioned at the open house and our comments below. The tree canopy will provide privacy, transition the height difference, and create softness. We recognize this is unconventional; but we think the extra effort here will benefit both the development and the residents.
3. Tying the LOC to plans remains an issue for the community. Without this, the community is exposed to FAR creep. This property has had many development applications submitted, but things happen and issues arise, and, so far, nothing has been developed yet. A process that depends heavily on appeals should not be considered a working model for community engagement. We maintain our original position to have the plans tied to the DP application.
4. Corner cuts do not seem appropriate for this development. As we mentioned earlier, the building reminds us of the Bay or Burns building. We think the architecture should maintain the square corners; cutting the corners would detract from the design.

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Crescent Height Community Association (Initial comments: Letter 1, received 2015 October 10)

Hi Jim,

I am responding on behalf of the Crescent Heights Community Association; thank you for the opportunity to comment.

We reviewed the application at our planning meeting last night, joined by a group of residents from the 100 blocks of 7, 8 & 9 Avenues NE. Most had not attended the Aug 25 open house.

The group identified some logistical concerns they have about living beside a commercial/high density residential building:

1. The east-west alley is the primary exit point of the residents on 8 & 9 Avenue since they use their back lane garages. The Tigerstedt creates a T-intersection with the north-south alley. Residents are concerned about alley congestion north-south with increased commercial and residential traffic.
2. Further, there is concern that the east-west alley will be used as a secondary roadway for the commercial and residential traffic belonging to the Tigerstedt.
3. As well, they are concerned that the commercial (delivery, garbage, moving, etc) and retail traffic will use the residential avenues as cut through: further increasing cut through traffic issues in the community. For this reason, they are requesting defined barriers between commercial and residential traffic on the roadways and controlled traffic management in the alleys (which might include restricting access on the north-south alley at the opening of the east-west alley, height restrictions, etc).
3. No permitted parking passes.
4. Finally, the commercial loading docks need to be managed with enforced policies on loading times, refrigerated trailers, idling, etc.

The group identified quality of life issues such as:

1. No ventilation fans at residential height. HVAC noise needs to be kept away from the residents. This is a problem with the building north, across 9 Ave NE
2. Sensitivity to drainage management. Currently, the Tigerstedt property is the highest property so water drains east toward the residents. They are worried the increased hard surfaces will create drainage and icy conditions if this isn't considered during design.
3. The side of the building facing the residents is stark with a sharp increase in height between the single family homes and the tall building. They would like to see trees planted between the alley and the property to help transition the height difference, create softness and use the tree canopy to provide privacy. This issue was also raised in the open house.

J. Gordon

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4. Further, there is an issue with balconies facing south and east. The residents feel there are inconsistencies between what is allowed when homes are built side-by-side vs what is allowed when high density residential is built along side homes with respect to overlooking/privacy concerns. This development has potential to negatively impact their enjoyment of their homes and yards so they are requesting a concerted effort to consider and create proper privacy.
5. Although it is acknowledged the proposed building will be 5m lower than the neighboring building north of 9 Ave, the residents are opposed to any height relaxations beyond what the currently zoning allows. Increased height increases shadowing and overlooking issues.

Regarding landscaping:

1. It is important to preserve and protect the boulevard trees on both 8 & 9 Ave ( this was raised at the open house).
2. It is important to plant the street trees along Centre Street per the drawing and landscaping plan (this was raised at the open house).

General:

1. Glad to see the Tigerstedt sign incorporated (also raised at the open house). 2. Pleased with the timeless finish - brick exterior, large windows with divided lights, timeless colors.
2. Like to see the small store front bays in the retail space to create small storefront scale.
3. The awnings on Centre Street side are a nice addition.
4. Pleased the store frontage is primarily transparent glass and not blank walls along the pedestrian area.
5. Glad to see the wide sidewalks along Centre Street.
6. Like the landscaping plan overall.
7. Would prefer to see residential condo units vs rental apartments. There is a feeling condo owners are more invested in the community plus there is a condo board to manage issues.
8. Not too keen on the possibility of another liquor store. Residents feel there are enough in the community.

Lastly, I received an email from a resident who has seen the historical medallions incorporated into the street to pay homage to the earlier buildings.

It was suggested this would be a good addition.