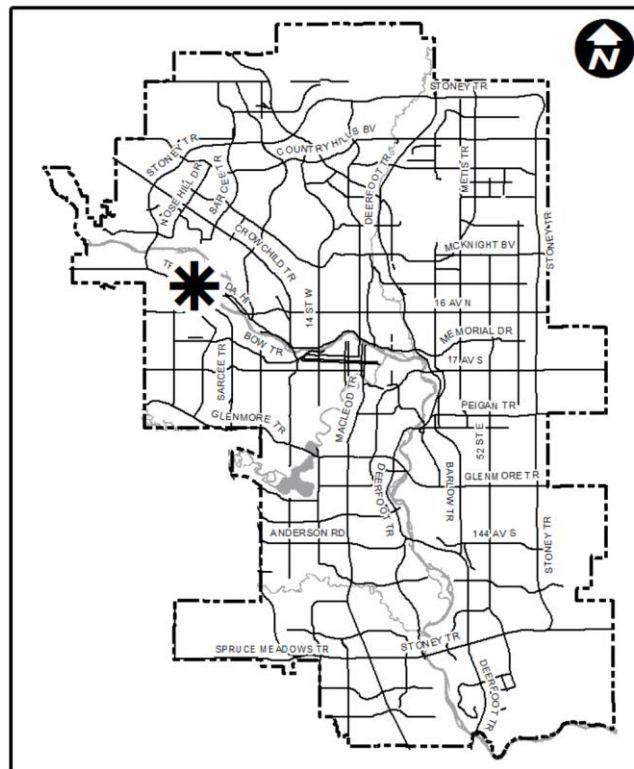


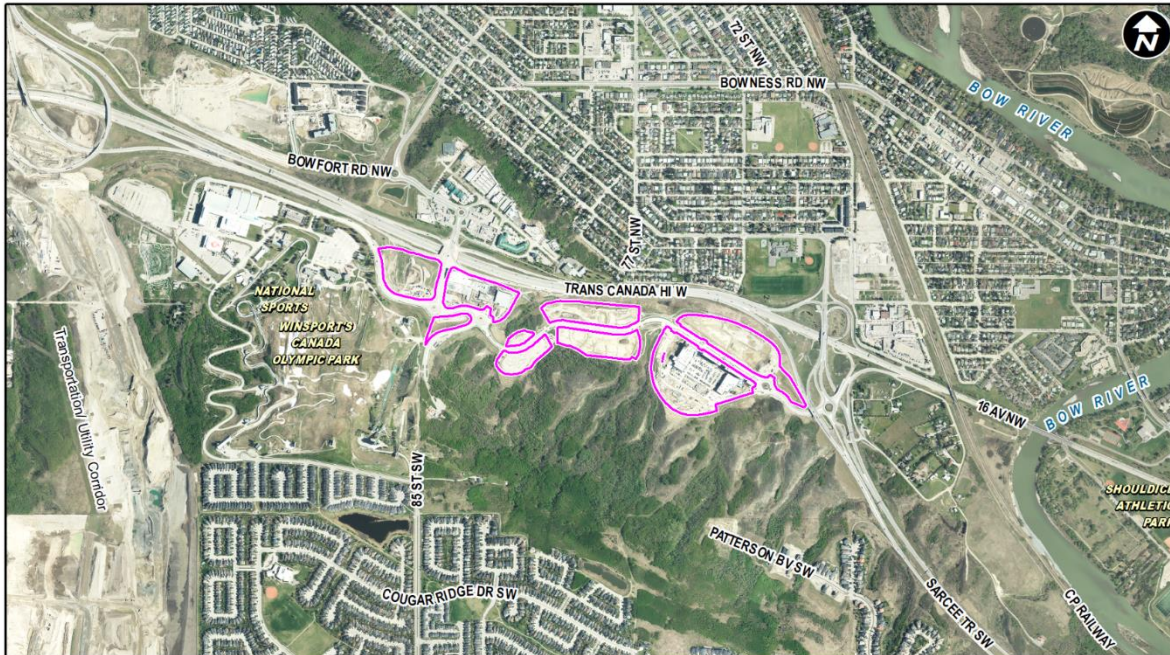
Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the community of Medicine Hill in the southwest quadrant of the City. The site is characterized by its location along the northern edge of the Paskapoo Slopes Natural Area, an approximately 165 hectare environmentally significant natural area that has been previously dedicated as Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District with an Environmental Reserve (ER) designation, as well as its adjacency to Canada Olympic Park bordering the western edge of the subject site. To the north, there is the Trans Canada Highway and beyond that, the community of Bowness. To the east of the subject site is Sarcee Trail, a significant connector road between the City's north-west and south-west quadrants.

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Relevant Planning History

When the community of Medicine Hill was first envisioned, there were extensive amendments made to the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (ASP)* to accommodate the vision for this community. The intent for Medicine Hill was for it to be a vibrant, mixed-use community that had a range of amenities and services that complemented its location adjacent to Canada Olympic Park. There were 11 blocks of development ultimately approved as part of Medicine Hill within three “districts”:

- the “Gateway District” in the west portion of the site;
- the “Village District” in the middle of the site; and
- the “Commercial District” in the east portion of the site (see Figure 1 below).

Both the “Gateway” and “Commercial Districts” are envisioned as mixed-use areas with an active main street running through the core of these areas. The “Village District” is envisioned as a residential area. The upper Paskapoo Slopes portion of the site was designated as a natural area and will be subject to a future parks management plan when funding is made available. The amendments to the ASP to facilitate this vision were approved on 2015 July 20 (LOC2014-0080, CPC2015-124).

Since the 2015 approval, over 50 percent of the area has either been already developed or has active development permits on the parcels. For example, Block B has 140,805 square feet of commercial space being developed, Block E has 71 townhome units under construction, Block

H has 158 apartment rental units and 24,542 square feet of commercial space to be developed, Block I has 158 apartment rental units and 189,204 square feet of commercial developed as well as a senior’s mixed-use apartment development with 275 rental units and 5,834 square feet of commercial space under construction (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Existing Blocks within Medicine Hill and Status of Development



Discussion on Proposed Amendments to the ASP

As mentioned, the main intent of the proposed amendments to the ASP is to respond to changing market demand, where there is a decreased demand for traditional office and commercial spaces, and an increase in demand for residential development. A significant portion of the proposed commercial space within Medicine Hill has already been developed (specifically in Blocks I and B as seen in Figure 1 above). However, the developer has reported that the commercial spaces located along the Main Street have proven to be difficult to lease. In addition, a market study submitted with this application shows that there is likely not enough market opportunity to absorb any major office space in this area within the next 10-15 years, with only locally serving retail spaces being able to best survive in this community. Therefore, the amendments are intended to allow for flexibility in uses and allow for more residential development in some of the blocks than what was originally envisioned. These amendments will only have a more significant impact on those “Blocks” that have yet to be developed, specifically Blocks A, C, F, the northern portions of Block H and Block L in the Gateway and Commercial Districts that have seen no development as yet under the current ASP (although a portion of Block H has seen recent approval of a development permit). The requested amendments will have no impact on the Paskapoo Slopes Natural Area to the south of the development site.

The following section outlines the main proposed amendments to the ASP:

- Supersede the existing density tables contained in “Section 8.4 – Use Intensity in the Gateway, Village and Commercial Districts”, and replace with a policy requirement for a Traffic Impact Assessment at DP application(s) stage to monitor development intensity

and capacity. The existing density tables that outline minimum and maximum use requirements for each block of development are proposed to be removed from the ASP. The rationale for this change is that these tables do not allow flexibility in terms of the amount of each type of use, and would not allow for the increase in residential development that is now being contemplated for Medicine Hill. As an example of where the tables have not currently been working is with Block C, where the ASP has identified this block has having two prominent buildings of up to 15 storeys, but the existing density table only allows a maximum of 130 units, below what would be expected for development of two towers. The proposed amendment would use the transportation and sewer capacity for the area as a means of monitoring densities and ensuring that proposed development does not exceed the capacity as outlined in the Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) and the Sanitary Sewer Study submitted with the subject application. The applicant has suggested that no minimum density requirements are needed, as the type and form of development that has occurred in Medicine Hill is above any minimum requirements that were set.

- Flexibility added as to the types of uses that can be located along the Main Street, specifically on the ground floor in the Commercial and Gateway Districts. In addition, clarification has been added that allows for single-use buildings along the Main Street where appropriate. The existing ASP envisions development along the Main Street as being mixed-use buildings with retail uses at grade and other uses such as residential and office above. However, due to the shift to potentially more residential in the area, flexibility has been added to allow for uses other than just retail to be located at ground level. Office uses above 465 square metres are still excluded from the ground floor, except for health service uses, such as a medical clinic, which will be an allowable use. In addition, the amendments specify that the west portion of the Gateway District will be primarily residential in nature and the east portion primarily commercial.
- Additional language has been added to the policies and guidelines governing uses proposed on the Main Street and on the ground floor to ensure that these uses meet a certain standard of design, and fit within the overall vision of a Main Street.
- Clarification has been added to confirm that while structured and underground parking is the preferred option along the Main Street, there may be some circumstances where limited surface parking may be allowed for drop-off areas in relation to hotel or residential uses.
- Additional detail has been added to several of the guidelines within Appendix A to clarify urban design intent. For example, additional design requirements have been added for developments directly adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway. Detail has also been added in regards to the architectural treatment of the storefronts along the Main Street to ensure that the appearance of narrow, individual storefronts is maintained where possible. Additional clarity has also been added for design of developments on significantly sloped sites.

Land Use

As mentioned, no changes to the land use districts are required as a result of the proposed amendments to the ASP.

Transportation

No changes are proposed to the primary access points to the site, provided from two interchanges, the Bowfort Interchange on the western edge of the site and the Sarcee Interchange on the eastern edge. Both of these interchanges were developed within the last few years following approval in 2015 of the initial amendments to the *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands* ASP. Na'a Drive is the primary public road within the plan area, providing connectivity between the Bowfort interchange and the Sarcee interchange.

No changes are contemplated for pedestrian connectivity and pathways proposed through the site and connecting to surrounding areas. Pedestrian connectivity is provided along Na'a Drive which travels through the three districts within the plan area.

Transit service will be provided along Na'a Drive with stops located in each of the districts per the approved Trinity Hills Outline Plan. It is not anticipated that the proposed amendments to the ASP will result in changes to Transit routing, however route schedules may ultimately change due to the potential increase in residential uses. Transit service will be further evaluated as the area is developed pending the ultimate use and densities proposed.

Revisions were required to the TIA submitted as part of the original amendments to the ASP in 2015 to evaluate potential impacts that may result from an increase in residential uses and a decrease in commercial uses. Findings from the TIA indicated that the infrastructure within the plan area will accommodate anticipated volumes, however additional signalization may be required at some of the intersections along Na'a Drive. Pending the ultimate uses and densities proposed, additional TIA's may be required with each Development Permit application in the area to further evaluate the need for signalization and other improvements.

Environmental Site Considerations

The application was reviewed by the Environmental & Safety Management group at the City of Calgary and no environmental issues were identified.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary and storm sewer mains are available and can accommodate the proposed application. Development servicing will be determined at the subdivision or development permit stage, with separate service connections to a public main to be provided for each proposed parcel.

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](#) (SSRP) 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 proposal builds on the principles of the IGP by promoting efficient use of land and regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

The subject site is located within the Developing Residential – Planned Greenfield with Area Structure Plan area as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP).

The MDP refers to the applicable ASP as the guiding document for development in these areas and provides guidance for what should be included within these ASPs, for example, provision of a Neighbourhood Main Street that includes transit, a school, and retail services, accessibility to the Primary Transit Network and street, and walking connections throughout the community. This application aligns with this direction, as there is a Main Street within the community that provides many of these features, and there are planned connections within and to the open spaces on the borders of the plan area.

The proposal also aligns with many of the applicable city-wide policies. For example, development of complete communities in regards to provision of open space areas, and a range of housing choices within the community.

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

The applicant has indicated that there are a few potential ways in which this community will support objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). For example, by allowing for increased residential options within the community, there will be a greater density of people to support the commercial development that is located in the area. This will attract future commercial retail as well which will potentially reduce the need for more vehicle trips away from the community as there are increased options for shopping, dining etc. within the community itself.

Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2005)

The proposed amendments align with and generally retain the intent of the [Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan](#) as discussed throughout this report.