

Land Use Amendment in Saddle Ridge (Ward 5) at 198, 202 and 206 Saddleback Road NE, LOC2021-0003

RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council:

Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for redesignation of 0.12 hectares ± (0.33 acres ±) located at 198, 202 and 206 Saddleback Road NE (Plan 0311201, Block 32, Lots 1 to 3) from Residential One / Two Dwelling (R-2) District to Mixed Use - General (MU-1f4.0h22) District.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This land use amendment application seeks to redesignate the subject property to allow for a six-storey mixed-use development.
- The proposal allows for an appropriate built form and uses that are located in close proximity to the Primary Transit Network and an adjacent town centre in the community of Saddle Ridge, and is in keeping with the applicable policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and the *Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan* (ASP).
- What does this mean to Calgarians? More housing opportunities with access to alternative transportation modes and employment areas while allowing for a more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- Why does this matter? This proposal will create 62 affordable housing units in the community of Saddle Ridge.
- A development permit application had been submitted and is currently under review.
- On 2019 September 30, Council adopted UCS2019-1148 Proposed Method of Disposition – Various Properties, authorizing Administration to sell five individual development sites to experienced non-profit housing providers for the purpose of developing new non-market housing units across Calgary.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods.

DISCUSSION

This land use amendment was submitted on 2021 January 15 by Rick Balbi Architecture on behalf of the future developer, Dashmesh Culture Centre. The site was previously a temporary fire station which was decommissioned when Fire Station #32 was opened in the community of Saddle Ridge. The site is owned and currently maintained by The City of Calgary, who has provided authorization for the subject application.

Council Priority [P6](#) – 'Increase affordable and accessible housing options', has a key focus area to increase the availability of affordable housing units. Furthermore, the [Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy](#) defines a ten-year strategic direction for The City of Calgary to guide the creation of safe, affordable homes.

The proposed project is part of the Council-approved Non-Market Housing Land Sale Program (CP2019-02) which provides surplus City-owned land to experienced non-profit providers to develop affordable housing. Ownership will remain with The City until the Dashmesh Culture

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Centre obtains the required development permits for the proposed project. Once the sale is completed to the Dashmesh Culture Centre, the affordable housing will be protected through a Housing Agreement registered on title for a minimum of 40 years.

This 0.33 hectare corner site in the northeast community of Saddle Ridge is located on the corner of Saddleback Road NE and Saddleridge Drive NE. The subject site consists of three parcels of which two are presently vacant. The corner parcel consists of a single detached dwelling and a gravel parking area. Vehicular access is provided from Saddleback Road NE.

As indicated in the Applicant Submission (Attachment 2), the proposed application will enable a mixed-use development designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses.

A development permit (DP2021-0272) for a seven-storey mixed-use development comprised of ground floor commercial uses and 71 transitional housing units was submitted on 2021 January 15 (Attachment 4). After a preliminary review of the application, Administration recommended the applicant explore reducing the size of the development to allow it an opportunity to better integrate with the existing built form of the area. In response, the applicant amended their original design and reduced the overall height to six-storeys and total number of units to 62.

A detailed planning evaluation of this land use amendment application, including location maps and site context is provided in Attachment 1, Background and Planning Evaluation.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Outreach was undertaken by the Applicant
- Public/Stakeholders were informed by Administration

Applicant-Led Outreach

As part of the review of the proposed land use amendment application, the applicant was encouraged to use the [Applicant Outreach Toolkit](#) to assess which level of outreach with public stakeholders was appropriate. In response, the Dashmesh Culture Centre (DCC) Leadership Committee delivered 10,000 letters to nearby residences, businesses, and adjacent communities on 2021 February 01 and February 02. They also held a two-day open house at the DCC and received 500 signatures in support of the application. Finally, the DCC Leadership Committee and their architect met with the Saddle Ridge Community Association on 2021 March 01 to discuss details of the project.

In response to specific concerns heard from neighbours, the applicant reduced the size of the future mixed-use development to six-storeys and 62 units along with implementing setbacks to limit the shadowing impact on adjacent properties and provide better integration with the street. The applicant also undertook a parking study to address traffic issues that may arise as a result of the project. The Applicant Outreach Summary can be found in Attachment 3.

City-Led Outreach

In keeping with Administration's practices, this application was circulated to stakeholders, notice posted on-site, published [online](#), and notification letters were sent to adjacent landowners.

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Administration received 27 letters of opposition from the public of which included an online petition with 205 signatures outlining the following concerns:

- traffic and the ability to exit the community;
- the density of the development being too high next to detached housing;
- potential shadowing on adjacent properties; and
- parking for tenants and patrons of the commercial complex.

The Saddle Ridge Community Association provided a letter on 2021 February 21 expressing some initial reservations to the application (Attachment 5). However, after further discussions with the applicant and the DCC Leadership Committee, they have become supportive of the proposed use. Engagement will continue throughout the remainder of the development permit review including further discussions in regards to the overall height and massing of the development.

Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the application and has determined the proposal to be appropriate based on the location, land use provisions around shadowing, step backs, and local context. Saddletowne LRT Station is located less than 100 metres away from the subject site (2-minute walk) and open space amenities, including an intricate pathway network that is approximately 250 metres northwest of the subject site. The building and site design, number of units, open space, landscaping, and on-site parking will be reviewed and determined at the development permit stage.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for a 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.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposed application would allow for a range of housing options to accommodate the housing needs of diverse age groups, lifestyles, and demographics. The proposal allows for efficient use of land by allowing moderate intensification of the parcel.

Environmental

This application does not include any actions that specifically address the objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). Further opportunities to align future development on this site with applicable climate resilience strategies will be explored and/or implemented at the development permit and building permit stages.

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Economic

The ability to develop a mixed-use development will support intensification and create a viable transit-oriented proposal close to the existing Saddletowne LRT Station and adjacent town centre. This will allow for a more efficient use of existing infrastructure while maximizing the uses that surround the subject site. Additionally, the sale of the city owned parcel is intended to leverage private investment back into the community.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact.

RISK

The proposed project represents a commitment from the Dashmesh Cultural Centre to build long term affordable housing on this site as part of the sale of this land. To ensure affordable housing is developed as part of the sale of the site, The City will utilize resources such as building commitments, housing agreements and options to repurchase, recorded on title at closing, to assure development is completed in a timely manner. Furthermore, occupancy by eligible residents is to be maintained through the 40-year term of the housing agreement.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Background and Planning Evaluation
2. Applicant Submission
3. Applicant Outreach Summary
4. Development Permit (DP2021-0272) Summary
5. Community Association Response

Department Circulation

General Manager	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform