

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the community of Saddle Ridge, on the east corner of Saddleback Road NE and Saddleridge Drive NE. The site is approximately 0.12 hectares (0.33 acres) in size, with an approximate width of 32 metres and depth of 39 metres. The site currently contains a single detached dwelling along with two vacant parcels that were previously used as a temporary City of Calgary Fire Hall.

Vehicular access to the subject site is from Saddleback Road NE which intersects with Saddleridge Drive NE to the west. Saddleridge Drive NE provides direct access to Saddletowne Circle NE. Surrounding development is characterized by a mix of established residential, commercial, educational, and recreational uses. The Commercial Town Centre is located directly to the east along with the Nelson Mandela Secondary School and Genesis Centre to the south. The remaining boundaries are primarily comprised of low-density residential development that envelop Saddletowne Circle NE.

Access to the Primary Transit Network is available from the Saddletowne LRT Station which is located less than 100 metres (an approximate 2-minute walk) to the east of the subject site.

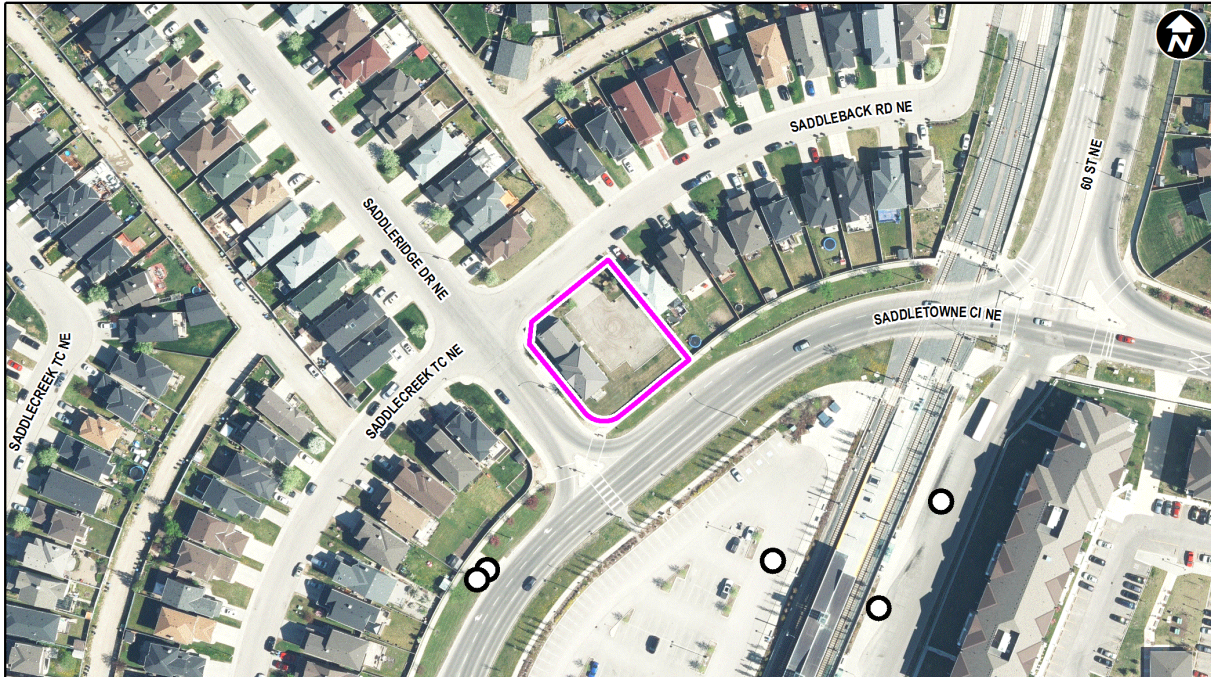
Community Peak Population Table

As identified below, the community of Saddle Ridge is a developing community according to recent census data that was obtained in 2019.

Saddle Ridge	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	22,321
2019 Population	22,321
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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



Previous Council Direction

In 2016 July, Council approved “Foundations for Home”, Calgary’s Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy, which identified affordable housing as a Council Priority. The Affordable Housing Strategy defines a ten-year strategic direction for The City across six objectives including leveraging City-owned land, which aims to support affordable housing development within the non-profit sector through land transactions.

At the 2019 September 30 Regular Meeting of Council, Council provided Administration with authorization to target market five parcels of City owned land to the affordable housing sector, including the subject parcel.

A full process of submission, evaluation, awarding, and sale authorization was undertaken for each of the parcels. Applicants were evaluated on several different criteria, including their experience in operating affordable housing, experience in developing affordable housing in the past, capital funds in place, development timeline and potential partnerships. Dashmesh Culture Centre Society was selected as the successful applicant for the subject site with the sales authorization approved by the Management Real Estate Review Committee on 2020 October 01.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The existing R-2 District is intended to accommodate residential development in the form of single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and duplex dwellings in the developing area. Protective and Emergency Services which include Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services are a permitted use under the R-2 District.

The proposed MU-1f4.0h22 District allows for a mix of residential and commercial development in the same building and responds to the local context by establishing maximum building height for individual parcels. A maximum FAR of 4.0 and a height modifier of 22 metres is proposed. This would allow for a maximum building floor area of 4,717 square metres and six-storeys along with appropriate setbacks to provide a compatible transition with surrounding development.

Development and Site Design

If this application is approved by Council, the applicable land use policies and the rules of the proposed MU-1f4.0h22 District will provide guidance for the development of the site including appropriate uses, height and massing, landscaping and parking. Other key factors that are being considered during the review of the development permit application include the following:

- Ensuring an engaging built interface on all elevations;
- Ensuring an appropriate interface with the existing built form of the established residential community; and
- Ensuring vehicular traffic and parking provision/layout is appropriate and does not unduly interfere with the established residential community.

A new development permit application (DP2021-0272) for a mixed use development was submitted on 2021 January 15 and is currently under review.

Transportation

Pedestrian access to the site is available via Saddletowne Circle NE, Saddleridge Drive NE and Saddleback Road NE. Saddletowne Circle and Saddleridge Drive are classified as an arterial street and collector street respectively, as per the *Calgary Transportation Plan*. Vehicular access to the site is exclusively from Saddleback Road NE. Access from Saddletowne Circle NE is not advisable due to the conflicts created by the sidewalk crossing and the proximity to the intersection with Saddleridge Drive NE. Street parking is available along both Saddleridge Drive NE and Saddleback Road NE.

The area is served by an assortment of Calgary Transit bus routes that originate from Saddletowne LRT Station directly east of the subject site. These routes provide feeder service from adjacent residential communities (Martindale, Taradale, Saddle Ridge and Skyview Ranch) to Saddletowne LRT Station. The Max Orange BRT (Route 303) also originates from the Saddletowne LRT Station providing rapid service to Brentwood LRT Station and other major NW employment hubs (Alberta Children's Hospital, Foothills Hospital) via 16 Avenue N.

Saddletowne LRT Station currently serves as the northeast terminus station for the Blue Line segment providing service from northeast Calgary into the Downtown Core. Recent analysis provided by Calgary Transit indicates the northeast portion of the Blue Line has the second-highest ridership of the four segments that comprise the greater LRT network. As such, Saddletowne LRT Station has one of the highest concentrations of boarding and alighting of any of the stations along the segment. The Saddletowne LRT Station is a major public transportation hub in the northeast quadrant and city overall. Based on many factors, including the location adjacent to high-quality transit service, the proposed land use amendment is in alignment with TOD principles and the applicable TOD policies.

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was not required in support of the land use amendment, though administration did undertake an internal review of the characteristics and potential magnitude of traffic associated with the application and deemed the proposed land use supportable based on the limited traffic impact. Of note, the trip generation was assessed to be below the threshold whereby a TIA is warranted based on The City's TIA Guidelines.

Parking demand and provision of parking for the site is being reviewed with the associated development permit application. Administration will consider the specific uses, mixed-use floor area, number of residential units, auto-usage of residents, and opportunities for shared parking in order to ensure the parking supply is properly sized for the site characteristics, and will not unnecessarily impose on the neighbouring local streets.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no environmental concerns with the redevelopment of this site. An Environmental Site Assessment is not required.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary, and storm sewer mains are available and can accommodate the proposed land use redesignation without the need for network upgrades at this time. Specific details of the servicing and stormwater management will be reviewed in detail 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 Interim Growth Plan \(IGP\)](#). The proposed land use amendment builds on the principles of the IGP by promoting efficient use of land, regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

The subject site is located within the Residential - Developing typology area as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure in the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). The MDP's City-wide policies in Section 2 speak directly to this application. Section 2.22: Shaping a More Compact Urban Form, provides direction to encourage transit use, make optimal use of transit infrastructure, and improve the quality of the environment in communities throughout the city. The intent of these policies is to direct future population growth and density in the city in a way that fosters a more compact and efficient use of land, creates complete communities, allows for greater mobility choices, and enhances vitality and character in local neighbourhoods. The proposed MU-1f4.0h22 land use is aligned with the MDP due to its close proximity to Saddletowne LRT Station and the greater Primary Transit Network.

Section 2.3.1: Housing encourages a wide variety and choice of housing forms, tenures, and affordability throughout our city to accommodate the needs of current and future Calgarians. The proposed MU-1f4.0h22 land use would allow for the provision of new affordable housing opportunities in a developing community. In terms of location, affordable housing projects should be located near parks, schools, recreation facilities, and commercial nodes. The proposed MU-1f4.0h22 land use is located within 500 metres of the Saddletowne Commercial Centre, Genesis Centre and Nelson Mandela Secondary School thus meeting the objectives of the MDP.

Overall, the application supports the objectives and applicable policies of the MDP by providing affordable housing options in a developing community that is serviced by the Primary Transit Network.

Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 1986)

Map 6 of the [Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan](#) (ASP), identifies the subject site within Developmental Cell C. The ASP designates the application area to be primarily used for a variety of low-density residential uses. However, the subject site is also located within the Transit Station Planning Area due to it being located less than 200 metres from the Town Centre and Saddletowne LRT Station. Applicable policy encourages higher density development located within these nodes of the local area policy.

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

This application does not include any specific actions that address the objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate resilience strategies are being explored and encouraged during the review of the development permit.

Transit Orientated Development Guidelines (Non Statutory – 2005)

Although the [Transit Orientated Development Guidelines](#) are not meant as a checklist, they do provide a framework to guide development along the Primary Transit Network. High density development with a mix of land uses is encouraged near LRT stations. As such, the application is in alignment with the objectives of the policy due to the subject site being located less than 500 metres away from the Saddletowne LRT Station.