

Land Use Amendment in Royal Vista (Ward 1) at multiple addresses, LOC2021-0170

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Calgary Planning Commission forward this report (CPC2022-0023) to the 2022 March 29 Combined Meeting of Council to the Public Hearing portion of the Agenda.

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council:

1. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 17.93 hectares \pm (44.30 acres \pm) located at various addresses (Attachment 2) from the Industrial – Business (I-B) District, Industrial – Commercial (I-C) District and Direct Control (DC) District to Direct Control (DC) District to accommodate additional uses, with guidelines (Attachment 4);
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 4.89 hectares \pm (12.08 acres \pm) located at various addresses (Attachment 2) from the Industrial – Business (I-B) District and Direct Control (DC) District to Direct Control (DC) District to accommodate additional uses, with guidelines (Attachment 5);
3. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 7.49 hectares \pm (18.5 acres \pm) located at 8450 –112 Avenue NW (Portion of Plan 0813886, Block 4, Lot 1) from the Industrial – Business (I-B) District to Direct Control (DC) District to accommodate commercial development, with guidelines (Attachment 6); and
4. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 3.2 hectares \pm (7.97 acres \pm) located at 8 Royal Vista Place NW (Portion of Plan 0813886, Block 1, Lot 12) from the Special Purpose – City and Regional Infrastructure (S-CI) District to Direct Control (DC) District to accommodate additional uses in conjunction with a place of worship, with guidelines (Attachment 7).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of this application is to bring forward a city-initiated land use amendment for various properties in Royal Vista Business Park in accordance with direction provided by Council.
- The proposed land use amendment would allow for additional uses that are appropriate and complimentary to the existing adjoining uses in the community, is designed to accelerate development/ redevelopment in the area, and is in keeping with the *Municipal Development Plan (MDP)* and the *North Regional Context Study*.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? The proposal would provide a more flexible land use framework to allow businesses to flourish and adapt in the area over time, while drawing in other business activity. An updated land use base is proposed that allows additional flexibility in the evolution of businesses within the area.
- Why does it matter? To date, parcels with land use designations are not aligned with the local real estate market interest. Parcels have remained vacant or underutilized for several years, have historically required multiple site specific land use amendments and

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do not contribute to a prosperous city. Vacant sites do not provide the facilities, services, and economic growth (jobs) to build vibrant communities.

- No development permits have been submitted at this time.
- On 2021 April 12 Council adopted a Motion Arising that directed Administration to explore and address the land use district challenges in fostering healthy business and industrial growth in Royal Vista Business Park.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A prosperous city.

DISCUSSION

This land use amendment was submitted on 2021 October 19 by The City of Calgary in response to a Motion Arising adopted by Council on 2021 April 12. The development vision for Royal Vista dates back to 2006. The first outline plan and land use amendment application (LOC2006-0122) established the framework for development within the area and was approved by Council on 2007 June 11. This included over 32 hectares of land earmarked for a high-quality, employee intensive business park under the Industrial – Business (I-B) District of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007. The Royal Vista Business Park was intended to be an area characterized by office development, high employee uses and complimentary light industrial uses that would be contained within buildings. The MDP designates the area as Industrial- Employee Intensive.

Over the years, the stated vision for Royal Vista Business Park has not been realized due to an array of external factors. The following reasons have been identified both by the landowners and through analysis by Administration as the primary reasons behind the failure to fulfill the original development vision:

- **Location:** Royal Vista Business Park is situated on the northern edge of the city, south of the Spyhill Landfill. As such, there is a lack of surrounding residential density to support its Employment Intensive typology.
- **Transit:** Royal Vista Business Park is not served by the Primary Transit Network, which is a vital component of the Industrial – Employment Intensive typology as designated in the MDP.
- **Transportation:** Road network constraints have been created by other uses to the north of Royal Vista due to a lack of direct access to Stoney Trail. The intersection of Country Hills Boulevard NW and 112 Avenue NW has been a transportation concern for several years due to limited road access to the residential community of Royal Oak and Rocky Ridge, as well as the users in the area.
- **Economics:** The downturn in the economy and the surge in more affordable office space availability elsewhere in Calgary has led to office demand collapsing in Royal Vista.
- **Land use district:** The existing I-B District is the primary land use district which governs development in the Royal Vista Business Park. The I-B District does not allow for commercial or institutional uses, which have been the main gap identified by the market and from a real estate perspective.

Due to the historical challenges in fostering business and industrial growth within Royal Vista Business Park, Council instructed Administration to investigate and address policy and land use district constraints that have prevented the business park from being developed as originally envisioned.

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

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

Applicant-Led Outreach

As the applicant for the subject application, Administration utilized the [Applicant Outreach Toolkit](#) to assess which level of outreach with public stakeholders was appropriate. In response, Administration delivered letters to all landowners and business owners within Royal Vista Business Park informing them of the application and scheduled two online public engagement sessions on 2021 August 12 to discuss the proposed City-initiated land use amendment application (Attachment 5). Engagement activities were limited to an online format due to the ongoing pandemic and subsequent restrictions regarding in-person gatherings.

Attendees indicated that they would welcome changes that would make it easier to recruit prospective tenants along with new land and business owners to Royal Vista. They emphasized the need for greater flexibility in the uses currently allowed and indicated that the current I-B land use district that governs the area is far too restrictive and not economically viable for the specific circumstances found in Royal Vista Business Park.

City-Led Outreach

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

Administration received one letter of support from a landowner and one letter of opposition to the application. The landowner letter expressed support for the application in terms of the greater flexibility it would provide them as they finalize their planning vision for the site as a major cultural hub/campus that is comprised by a place of worship, assisted living and affordable/market housing uses. The letter of opposition was received from an adjacent landowner outside of the land use amendment area and voiced concerns about the engagement process and how this application would deviate from the original planning vision for the area as a high-quality business park that will be primarily comprised of industrial offices.

There is no community association for the subject area.

Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the application and has determined the proposal to be appropriate. All matters pertaining to building and site design, parking, landscaping, and number of units will be reviewed and determined when land and business owners submit future development permit applications. The overall expansion of uses may enable increased development in the area which is beneficial to the overall success of this area and adjacent commercial areas.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for Public Hearing of Council will be posted on-site and mailed to adjacent landowners. In addition, Commission's recommendation and the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised.

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IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposal would allow for additional commercial, institutional, and cultural uses that will contribute to the building of a healthy and economically-stable community. The additional uses may provide employment opportunities, instructional facilities, institutional uses, assisted and affordable housing and entertainment services that are not presently operating in Royal Vista but are in close proximity to several residential communities.

Environmental

This proposal does not include any actions that specifically address the objectives of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). Further opportunities to align future development in Royal Vista Business Park with applicable climate resilience strategies may be explored and/or implemented when future development permits and building permits are submitted to Administration for review.

Economic

Although a few high-quality office buildings have been constructed in Royal Vista, vacancy rates have been unusually high. The proposal will allow for greater flexibility in uses and the potential for a wider variety of tenants to support the economic health of Royal Vista.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact.

RISK

There are no known risks associated with this application.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Background and Planning Evaluation
2. Municipal Addresses for Redesignation
3. Applicant Outreach Summary
4. Proposed Direct Control District (Area 1)
5. Proposed Direct Control District (Area 2)
6. Proposed Direct Control District (Area 3)
7. Proposed Direct Control District (Area 4)
8. Applicant Submission

Department Circulation

General Manager (Name)	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform