

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the Beltline neighbourhood at the northwest corner of 4 Street SW and 15 Avenue SW. The site is a consolidation of four separate parcels and is approximately 55 metres wide by 40 metres deep for a total area of 0.22 hectares (0.55 acres). The site slopes approximately 1.5 metres down from the intersection toward its northwest corner. Vehicular access is primarily from the lane to the north off 4 Street SW; however, the current tenant of the Williams Block uses a loading dock which directly accesses 4 Street SW. Travel on 15 Street SW consists of one-way eastbound vehicular traffic and a shared bicycle lane.

The subject site sits along the retail and pedestrian corridor portion of 4 Street SW, meaning that land uses fronting the street are a true mix of retail, residential and office. Land uses to the west, along 15 Avenue SW, are residential in a variety of forms. A single detached house is adjacent to the site, and heights and densities increase to mid-rise apartment buildings further west toward 5 Street SW.

Current development on the site consists of one vacant lot on its western edge and four two-storey buildings: two residential and two commercial. The westernmost building (Garfield Manor) dates to 1953 and contains 11 dwelling units. To the east of Garfield Manor is a two-storey office building dating to 1965. The northernmost building (Winston Manor) dates to 1941 and contains 11 dwelling units. None of these buildings are evaluated heritage resources, and all are slated for demolition under the current proposal. The southeast building, the [Williams Block](#), is an evaluated heritage resource, but not designated. It dates to 1926 and currently contains a restaurant and two upper-floor dwelling units. As proposed, the development is designed around preserving the Williams Block despite it not being formally designated or protected.

Retail and entertainment along 17 Avenue SW and 4 Street SW are accessible within a two-minute walk, and the 4 and 5 Street SW LRT Stations are within 850 metres (an 11-minute walk). The Sheldon M. Chumir Medical Centre, Central Memorial Park and Haultain Park are within two blocks of the site (a four-minute walk).

## Community Peak Population Table

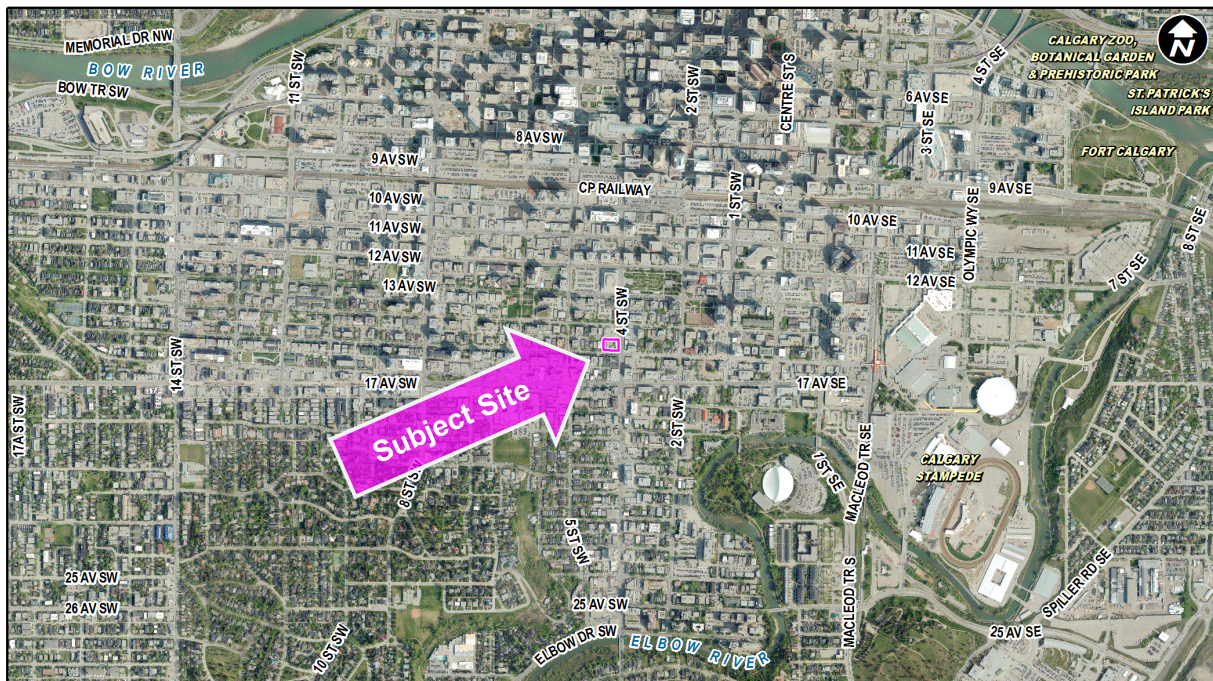
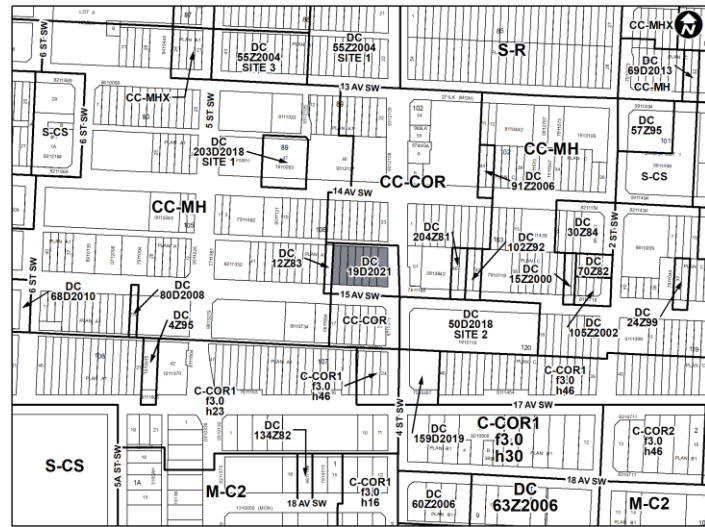
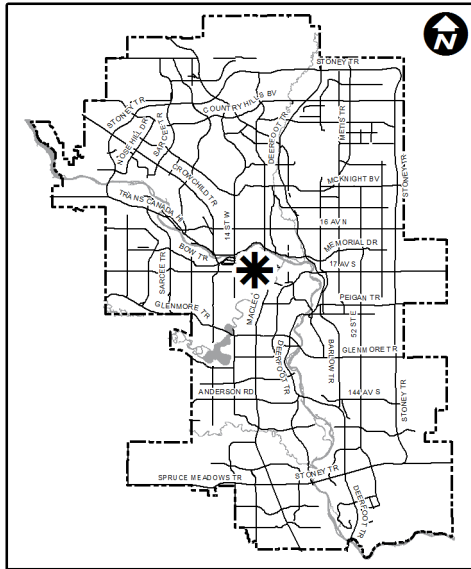
As identified below, the community of Beltline reached its peak population in 2019.

<b>Beltline</b>	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	25,129
2019 Current Population	25,129
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Per cent)	0%

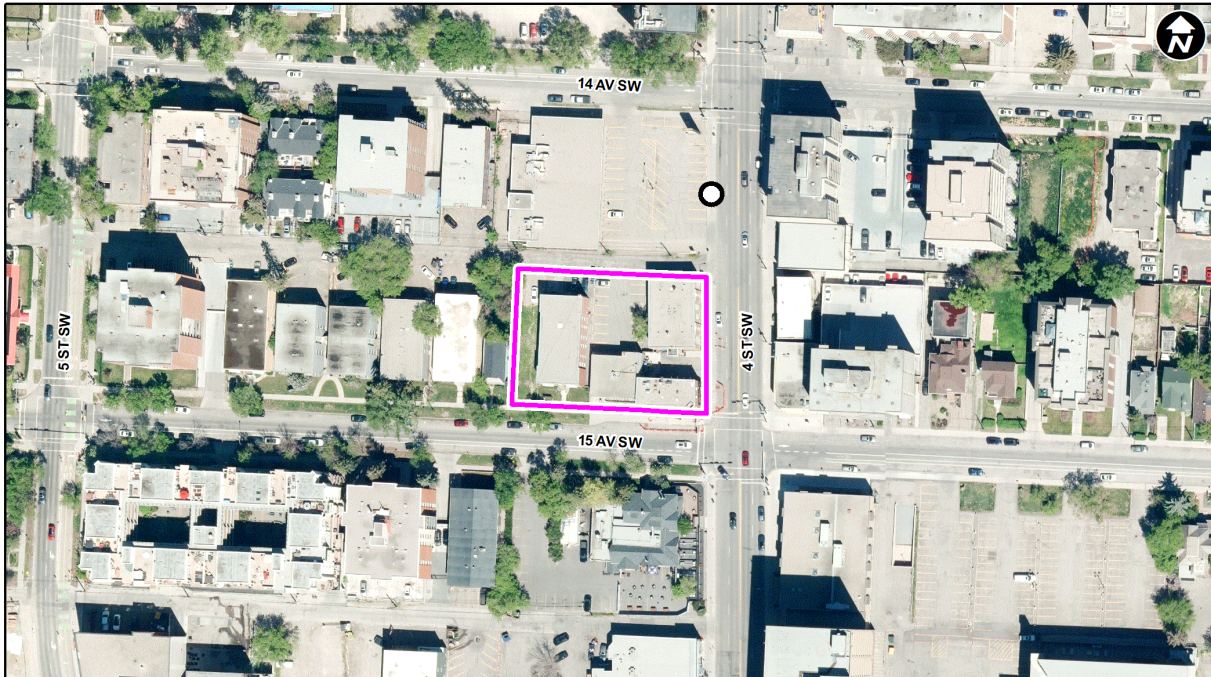
Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained online through the [Beltline Community Profile](#).

## Location Maps







## Previous Council Direction

None.

## Planning Evaluation

### Land Use

The site is designated as Direct Control (DC) District ([Bylaw 19D2021](#)). This DC District is based on the Centre City Multi-Residential High Rise Support Commercial District (CC-MHX), which is intended to support primarily residential buildings that are street-oriented at grade as befitting their urban setting in the Beltline. The CC-MHX District limits development to a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 5.0, which may be increased up to 8.0 through the provision of bonus amenities providing public benefit.

The proposed DC District was designed to allow for this specific project. It differs from the base district in several key ways: it increases the maximum floor plate size from 750 to 800 square metres; it increases the FAR achievable through standard bonusing from 8.0 to 9.0; and it adds another opportunity for bonus density by allowing for an additional 2.0 FAR (for an overall total of 11.0 FAR) through the provision of affordable housing at a unique rate.

### Development and Site Design

#### *Site and Building Design*

The proposed building consists of a podium and tower, totaling 97 metres in height. The podium is two storeys in height, matching the height of the existing Williams Block. The building's placement attempts to balance maximal separation distance from two future towers on the adjacent site, the setback from 4 Street SW so as not to overwhelm the street, distance from lower-density residences to the west, and the realities of parkade geometry limiting options for the elevator core. A total of 274 residential units are proposed.

Commercial retail uses at grade are oriented toward the major pedestrian corridor of 4 Street SW and are set just over three metres back from the shared property line. The sloping grade of the street prevents continuation of the sidewalk onto the property, however a series of steps and planters have been provided to define entrances to the building lobby and individual retail units.

The residential character of 15 Avenue SW is carried over into the at-grade podium design. This frontage is defined by two-storey townhouse lofts with front entrances and south-facing patios. The residential character of the podium is defined by lofts, with smaller suites in the tower above. Bicycle parking and a fitness centre are proposed for the second floor, with an outdoor dog run on the third floor along the west edge of the site. A rooftop amenity space will also be provided.

### ***Public Realm and Outdoor Amenity Spaces***

The northern-most retail bay is designed to interface with the building's rear lane, with retail activity intended to spill over outside of the bay, onto the 4 Street SW sidewalk, and wrap the building by taking over flex space in the lane. A steel canopy projecting from the building façade is intended to support the use of the flex space by creating a sense of enclosure for pedestrians enjoying the space on movable furniture.

Use of this space is further supported by cosmetic improvements to the vertical surfaces of the lane designed to enhance the atmosphere of the publicly accessible private open space. One loft on the east side of the building and two lofts on the north side will have private patios that project over the sidewalk and laneway plaza, creating visual interest on the street and bringing residential activity closer to the pedestrian realm.

### ***Affordable Housing***

This application also includes the provision of seven units of affordable housing. Through a housing agreement required prior to release of the development permit, the owner commits to The City that these units will be dedicated to eligible tenants based on income. These units will be leased at or below specified monthly rent limits for a 40-year term.

### ***Heritage Preservation***

The Williams Block was added to The City's inventory of evaluated historic resources in 1982 as the home of the first independently owned designer shop for women's clothing, including tailored suits. Originally constructed in 1926, the building is a typical example of Edwardian Commercial architecture with its brick walls and angled corner entrance, and was an important contributor to the creation of retail activity on 4 Street SW.

Though it is not a designated or protected heritage asset, this application proposes to retain the building and commit to refurbish it. Proposed work includes refinishing the exterior brick, upgrading the roof and mechanical equipment, and reconfiguring some of the interior space to reflect the building's new surroundings.

### ***Transportation***

The site benefits from strong connectivity for all mobility modes. Both local and rapid transit (Route 3 - Sandstone/Elbow Dr SW) are available immediately adjacent to the site, as are on-street bicycle lanes along both 14 and 15 Avenue SW. The grid network of sidewalks throughout the neighbourhood provides multiple routing options for pedestrians.

Commercial loading and servicing bays will be accessed from the lane, as will the four-level underground parkade with 232 stalls for residents and 28 for visitors. Five surface stalls are provided for commercial users, though these stalls are intended to be repurposed as flexible plaza space during the summer months.

The project has been designed with cycling in mind. Class 1 bicycle parking will be provided in secure storage by the fitness centre and units will be permitted to have in-suite bicycle parking.

### **Environmental Site Considerations**

An environmental site assessment was provided that identified no evident environmental concerns.

### **Utilities and Servicing**

Water, sewer and storm sewer connections are all available. Relevant studies have been provided that confirm capacity exists to service the proposed development.

## **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 Region Board's [Interim Growth Plan](#) (IGP). The proposed development 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)**

Map 1: Urban Structure in the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) identifies the site as being within the Greater Downtown land use typology. This area is intended to be Calgary's primary hub for business, employment, living, culture, recreation and entertainment. Policy for this area supports high-density residential development in the neighbourhoods surrounding the Downtown Core. Buildings in this area should be street-oriented and contribute to a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

This application also aligns with the MDP's goal of creating great communities by pursuing housing diversification, increasing social equity and recognizing Calgary's built and cultural heritage.

### **Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)**

This application promotes more efficient use of land in alignment with Program 6: Land-Use and Transportation Planning of the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#), but no other significant climate adaptation or mitigation measures are provided.

### **Greater Downtown Plan (Non-statutory – 2021)**

This application aligns with nine out of ten principles for the [Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan](#) (GDP), with the exception of promoting climate resilience. The proposed development supports the GDP goal of increasing the residential population living within walking distance of downtown, further incentivizing new businesses and amenities. The street-oriented nature of the

development supports the continued evolution of the 4 Street SW pedestrian corridor as well as business activity on 17 Avenue SW.

### **Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan (Statutory – 2006)**

The [Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP) identifies the site as being within the neighbourhood of Connaught Centre, bordering Victoria Park to the east across 4 Street SW. The ARP envisions a total population of 10,000 in the neighbourhood; its 2019 population was 6,241.

Map 3: Land Use Concept of the ARP classifies the site as Urban Mixed Use Districts, which are areas intended for vibrant pedestrian streets with street-oriented buildings that have residences above the main floor. Street-level activity is paramount and should be supported by active retail frontages, permeability of grade-level facades, building articulation and activity in rear lanes.

Existing development west of the site falls within the Primarily Residential areas which support street-fronting townhouse units. The proposed southern elevation respects the street character of 15 Avenue SW and creates a softer transition between the more commercial character of 4 Street SW.

### **Land Use Bylaw 1P2007**

This development permit requires the following relaxations to the Land Use Bylaw. Administration has reviewed each relaxation individually and considers each acceptable for the reasons outlined below.

<b>Bylaw Relaxations</b>		
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Provided</b>
1138 Building Setbacks	(1) The building setback from a property line shared with all other streets is a minimum of 3.0m and a maximum of 6.0m	<p>Plans indicate the existing portion of the building as being within the east and south setback areas.</p> <p><b>This refers to the existing Williams Block. A relaxation is supported.</b></p> <p>Plans indicate the east setback area, when measured to the proposed balconies, as being 0.16m (-2.84m)</p> <p><b>A balcony is proposed overlooking 4 Street SW. As the balcony serves to frame the pedestrian environment and create a sense of enclosure and visual interest, as well as providing natural surveillance and activity, a relaxation is supported.</b></p> <p>Plans indicate the south setback area, when measured to the proposed balconies, as being 1.80m (-1.20m)</p>

		<b>The potential for development north of the site pushes the tower toward the south property line. The second-storey loft unit balcony can provide a sense of enclosure for the at-grade patios and soften the perceived mass of the building above. A relaxation is supported.</b>
1099 Projections Into Setback Areas (max.)	(5) Eaves may project a maximum of 0.6m, and window wells may project a maximum of 0.8m, into any setback area.	<p>Plans indicate the south canopy as projecting 2.84m (+2.24m) and the east canopy as projecting 1.13m (+0.53m) into the setback areas.</p> <p><b>The south canopy is a residential lobby entrance and also serves to soften the visual impact of the large building on the street character.</b></p> <p><b>The east canopy is intended to wrap the corner into the lane and create a feeling of one contiguous space, promoting activity in the lane. Relaxations are supported.</b></p>
1106 Amenity Space	Private amenity space (7)(b) have no min. dimensions of less than 2.0m	<p>Plans indicate the west balconies as being 1.53m (-0.47m).</p> <p><b>The large private patios on floor 3 are L-shaped; the smaller portion of them does not affect their overall amenity or usability. A relaxation is supported.</b></p>
1106 Amenity Space	Common Amenity space Outdoors (8)(c) No dimension less than 6.0m;	<p>Plans indicate the outdoor amenity space on the 29<sup>th</sup> floor as having a minimum dimension of 3.26m (-2.74m)</p> <p><b>This space is a very large rooftop terrace that is very wide facing south. A relaxation is supported.</b></p> <p>Plans indicate the level 3 outdoor amenity space as being 2.16m (-3.84m).</p> <p><b>This space is a relief area for dogs. A relaxation is supported.</b></p>
1106 Amenity Space	Common Amenity space Indoors (8)(c) No dimension less than 6.0m;	Plans indicate the indoor amenity space on the 29 <sup>th</sup> floor as having a minimum dimension of 2.12m (-3.88m).

		<b>The indoor amenity space is intended to support the outdoor amenity space. A relaxation is supported.</b>
1100 General Landscaped Area Rules	(6) All setback areas adjacent to a street or another parcel, except for those portions specifically required for motor vehicle access, must be a landscaped area.	Plans indicate the existing portion of the building as being within the east and south setback areas.  <b>This refers to the existing Williams Block. A relaxation is supported.</b>
1141 Landscaping	(2) Unless otherwise referenced in a District, a min. of 30.0% of the parcel area must be a landscaped area. 1101(5) Only landscaping provided at grade or between grade and 25m above grade may be counted towards the required landscaped area.	Plans indicate 32.33% (-2.67%) or 717.97m <sup>2</sup> (-59.38m <sup>2</sup> )  <b>This deficiency is minor. A relaxation is supported.</b>
1101 Specific Rules for Landscaped Areas	(2) The maximum hard surfaced landscaped area is 50.0% of the required landscaped area.	Plans indicate the hard surfaced landscaping as being 83.90% (+33.90%) or 652.22m <sup>2</sup> (+263.55m <sup>2</sup> )
1101 Specific Rules for Landscaped Areas	(3) For landscaped areas above grade, a minimum of 30.0% of the area must be covered with soft surfaced landscaping.	Plans indicate the soft surface landscaping as being 8.74% (-21.26%) or 21.65m <sup>2</sup> (-52.69m <sup>2</sup> )  <b>There is little opportunity to increase the soft-surfaced landscape, given the necessary location of the building, the existing Williams Block, and the grade change affecting the eastern interface. A relaxation is supported.</b>
1107 Parking Stalls	(1)(a) 0.75 stalls per unit	Plans indicate 178 (-25) stalls.
1107 Visitor Parking Stalls	(1)(b) 0.10 stalls per unit	Plans indicate 21 (-6) compliant stalls.  <b>Note: 5 stalls are non-compliant as per Section 122 with a width less than 2.60m.</b>
1108 Bicycle Stalls Class 2	(1)(2)(b) 5% of stalls	Plans indicate 0 (-14) compliant stalls)  <b>Note: 24 stalls not counted as they are provided along the street off the property.</b>