

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Site Context

The subject site is located on the west side of Elbow Drive SW, approximately 50 meters north of Southland Drive SW in the southwest community of Southwood. The site is 0.12 hectares ± (0.29 acres ±) in size and is approximately 34 meters wide by 42 meters long. The parcel is developed with a commercial strip plaza and abuts a lane to the north. The adjacent parcel to the south is undeveloped. The adjacent parcel to the west is developed with a public park and the Southwood Library.

Surrounding development is characterized by commercial and low-density residential developments in the form of single detached and semi-detached dwellings. Parcels to the north and east are developed with commercial and low-density residential developments that fall under the C-N2 District and the Residential – Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District. Parcels to the west and southwest are developed with a public park and library with the designations of Special Purpose – Community Service (S-CS) District and Special Purpose – Community Institution (S-CI) District. The parcel to the south is undeveloped and designated as the C-COR1f3.5h24 District.

## Community Peak Population Table

As identified below, the community of Southwood reached its peak population in 1978.

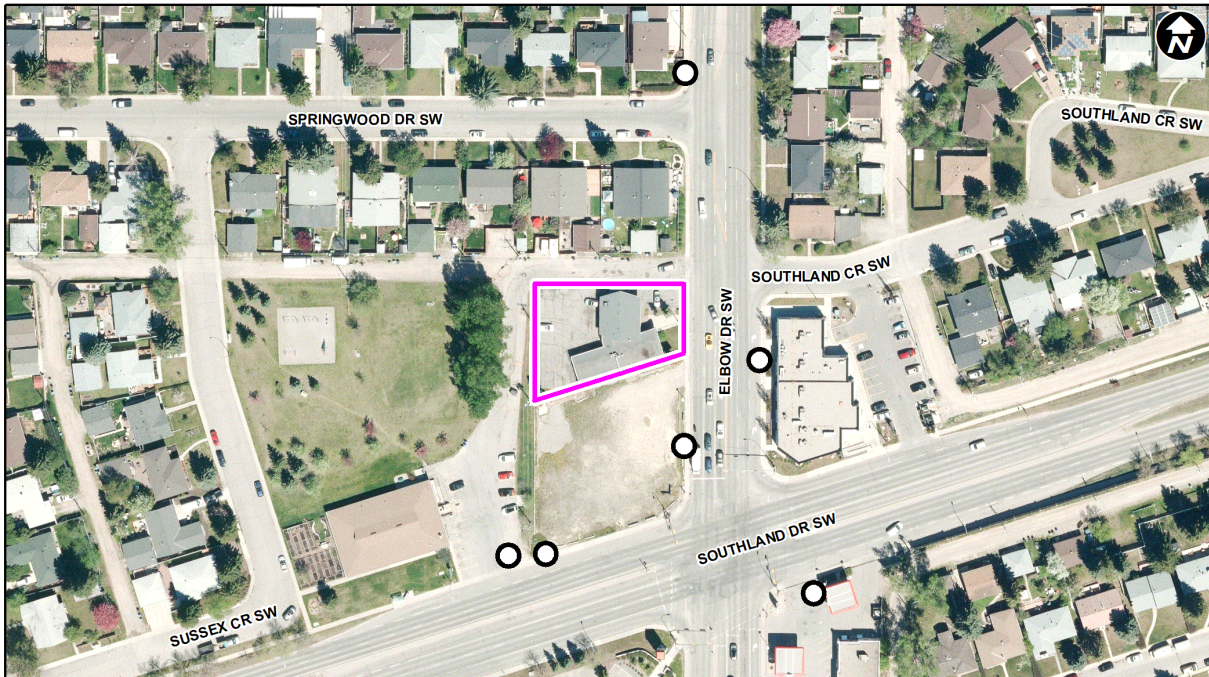
<b>Southwood</b>	
Peak Population Year	1978
Peak Population	8,101
2019 Current Population	6,246
Difference in Population (Number)	-1,855
Difference in Population (Percent)	-22.90%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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







## Previous Council Direction

None.

## Planning Evaluation

### Land Use

The existing C-N2 District is a commercial designation characterized by small scale commercial development with limited use sizes and types. It allows for a maximum building height of 10 metres and a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0. This district offers opportunities for residential uses to occur on the upper floors of buildings that contain commercial uses.

The proposed C-COR1d3.5f24 District is intended to accommodate storefronts along a continuous block face that are close to each other, the street, and the public sidewalk. The District is intended to be located where commercial development is found on both sides of a street and requires commercial uses at grade to promote activity at the street level. The District allows for a maximum building height of 24 metres and a maximum FAR of 3.5. The applicant intends to consolidate the subject parcel with the parcel to the south at the development permit stage.

The C-COR1 District has rules related to building entrance orientation and building façade requirements to ensure active commercial frontages on Elbow Drive SW. The proposed building height and FAR increase matches that of the parcel to the south and is mitigated by the fact that the land slopes down towards the existing residential properties. The District would also more intense land uses along Elbow Drive SW, making efficient use of existing infrastructure in the area.

## Development and Site Design

If approved by Council, the applicable land use policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and the rules of the proposed C-COR1f3.5h24 District would provide guidance for the future redevelopment of this site including appropriate uses, height, landscaping, community amenities, and parking. Given the specific context of this site with frontage on Elbow Drive SW and the adjacent transit stops in the vicinity, additional items that will be considered through the development permit process include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring an engaging front façade along Elbow Drive SW and Southland Drive SW;
- ensuring building and site design address aesthetical concerns associated with this highly visible location;
- improving pedestrian connections by ensuring vehicle access and parking is from the lane; and
- mitigating shadowing, overlooking, and privacy concerns.

## Transportation

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is available via Elbow Drive SW, and the rear lane to the north. Elbow Drive SW is classified a collector road as per the *Calgary Transportation Plan*.

The area is serviced by Calgary Transit Routes 37 (Heritage Station/Canyon Meadows), 95 (Palliser), 99 (Acadia/Oakridge), 125 (Cedarbrae), and 126 (Braeside). Route 95, 99, 125, and 126 provide transit service every 30 minutes during peak hours, and route 37 provides transit service every 35 minutes during peak hours. The site is approximately 25 metres (1-minute walk) from a Calgary Transit stop on Elbow Drive SW (Route 37) and 70 metres (1-minute walk) from a Calgary Transit stop on Southland Drive SW (Routes 95, 99, 125, and 126).

A Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) was not required in support of the land use redesignation application. At the development permit stage, a TIA and Parking Study may be required.

## Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental concerns were identified.

## Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary, and storm utilities exist within proximity to the subject lands. Development service requirements will be confirmed at the time of development permit application.

## 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 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 parcel is located within the Developed Residential Established area on Map 1 of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). Developed Residential Established areas encourage modest redevelopment and a mix of land uses within a pedestrian-friendly environment with transit access. The application supports the overarching objectives of the MDP and is in keeping with applicable MDP policies.

**Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)**

This application does not include any specific actions that address the objectives of the [Climate and Resilience Strategy](#). Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate resilience strategies will be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

**Local Area Plan**

There is no Local Area Plan that currently exists for the subject lands; however, Administration is currently working on the [Heritage Communities Local Area Plan](#) (LAP) which includes Southwood and surrounding communities. Planning applications are being accepted for processing during the local growth plan process. The Heritage Communities LAP is anticipated to be finalized in Fall 2022/Winter 2023.