

# Applicant Submission

7 March 2022

This land use amendment application, submitted by The University of Calgary Properties Group and HOOPP Realty Inc./Les Immeubles HOOPP Inc. requests the addition of School - Private and School Authority - School to the list of uses allowed by the current land use district of Special Purpose – University Research Park (S-URP).

## Parcel Description

The subject parcel is located at 3536 and 3636 Research Road NW, Calgary, Plan 9812871 Block 3 Plan 4 and 5. It is 1.04 hectares (2.6 acres) in area.

The property is occupied by a five-storey building, known as the SMART building. The building is currently occupied by research and scientific laboratories, offices and child care facility. It is the intention to allow the STEM Innovation Academy, a public charter school, grades 10 through to 12, to occupy approximately 91,000 square feet of the existing building previously used for an office.

The subject parcel is located on the north-western edge of the University of Calgary Research Park, just west of the Brentwood LRT Station, bound by 40 Avenue to the north at the intersection of 36 Street NW to the west and Research Road NW to the south.

## Context

The adjacent uses are:

- To the west (across 36 Street NW) is Dip Bars Athletic Park and park lands with pond, trees and pathways – designated Special Purpose – School Park Recreation district (S-SPR)
- To the south (across Research Road NW) is a 2 storey office building occupied by Canadian Food Inspection Agency and a 4 storey building occupied by Alberta Precision Laboratories Testing Lab both parcels - designated Special Purpose – University Research Park (S-URP)
- To the east is a vacant parcel currently grassed. Designated (S-URP)
- To the north (across 40 Avenue NW) is parkland (S-SPR) and single detached dwellings designated Residential Contextual – One Dwelling (RC-1)

The University of Calgary Properties Group is responsible for the management of the lands formerly known as the University Research Park. The U of C Properties Group has given consent to submit and support of the land use application for this parcel. The responsibility for land use, development permits and building permits falls within the City of Calgary jurisdiction.

## Policy

The Brentwood Station Area Redevelopment Plan outlines redevelopment of the former Brentwood Shopping Centre lands and the lands currently used as parking for the Brentwood LRT. The Municipal Development Plan supports uses that use public transit and locating a school that caters to Grade 10 to 12 students within easy walking distance to the Brentwood LRT Station would meet the objectives of the Plan.

### Proposed Use

The STEM Innovation Academy would occupy a portion of the existing SMART Technologies building. STEM Innovation Academy is a public charter school with an estimated an enrolment of approximately 1000 students with 55 full time equivalent staff. An estimated breakdown of the students by grades would be as follows: Grade 10 – 333 students; Grade 11 – 333 students; and Grade 12 – 333 students.

The use School Authority - School, as found in Section 291 of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, includes in its definition a “society or company named within a charter approved by the Minister of Education operating a charter school” that “teaches students the education curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12 pursuant to the *School Act*”, (named changed to the *Education Act*). The STEM Innovation Academy would meet the definition of School Authority – School.

The STEM Innovation Academy is a new public charter school that would provide courses and lessons in critical technology areas such as: artificial intelligence and machine learning, nanotechnology, medical technologies, advanced manufacturing (including 3D printing and rapid prototyping), virtual reality and gaming, blockchain, cybersecurity, energy and environmental technologies. There is currently a severe undersupply of high school classrooms within the City and this new public charter school will provide an innovative solution to the issue. According to Calgary Board of Education’s own data, there is a shortage of 2,000 high school spaces by 2025. This is the only solution available to alleviate this crisis in time. The alternative is for high school students to be forced into unnecessarily higher class sizes and a reduction in options – negatively impacting their transition to post-secondary and beyond. As a public school, STEM Innovation Academy does not charge tuition, just like any other public board.

A provincial requirement of all public charter schools is to have a research component in the curriculum aligned with a post-secondary institution. The location of STEM Innovation Academy within close proximity to the University of Calgary’s research park is ideal. Students and staff are within walking distance of the Brentwood LRT station, Red Line C-Train LRT, and numerous City buses that service the LRT station.

A student population of grades 10 to 12 would be able to take public transport to school. The school would also be able to have funding for additional private bus service for those students that live outside of the public bus catchment areas. Approximately 125 parking stalls would be available in the building underground and surface parking area.

One of City Council’s priorities is to ensure projects help meet climate targets. It should be noted the proximity to the C-Train station and the major bus hub nearby will ensure that transportation to and from the school uses existing public transit, therefore not increasing carbon emissions used for transportation. The existing building is a LEED gold building with efficient building systems. Re-purposing an office to a school is an innovative use of vacant

space, and by doing so will ensure that substantial CO2 emissions typically created with new construction will be avoided.

The Special Purpose – University Research Park land use district lists very specific uses that are engaged in scientific research and technology commercialization in association with the University of Calgary, other levels of government. A limited range of complementary support uses are allowed such as instructional facility, child care, convenience food store and restaurants which would provide services to the employees in the surrounding building. The SMART building will be occupied by the existing tenants and any land use designation must ensure that their approvals remain conforming.

The additional uses of School - Private and School Authority – School would be complementary uses to the nearby research and technology uses in the Research Park and the post-secondary educational resources at the University of Calgary campus. The use of a school located within this building demonstrates a creative solution to successfully utilize vacant office space. Given the critical state of our excess office capacity, any large absorption like this will positively impact the overall office market and honours Calgary's reputation as innovators.

The proposed land use designation would be a Direct Control District DC to add two uses of School – Private and School Authority – School to the list of existing uses that are allowed within the Special Purpose – University Research Park land use district. The proposed land use district would allow for the existing uses to remain, that is not become non-conforming, and still provide for the high standards of building design, development standards and site landscaping. The school uses would be located within the existing building and the site development standard would be maintained.

The suggested Direct Control Bylaw DC is provided, Attachment A.

The University of Calgary Properties Group and HOOP Realty Inc./Les Immeubles HOOPP Inc. respectfully requests approval of the redesignation of the subject parcel to Direct Control DC as it is the most appropriate land use district to direct any future development while maintaining the existing standards of development and complementary land uses.

Attachment A

Draft of Proposed Direct Control Guidelines for consideration:

## **APPLICANT PROPOSED DIRECT CONTROL GUIDELINES**

### **Purpose**

- 1 This Direct Control District is intended to:
  - (a) allow for the additional **uses** of **School – Private** and **School Authority – School** to the list of existing uses listed in the Special Purpose – University Research Park district (S-URP)
  - (b) accommodate a limited range of **uses** engaged in scientific research, research and **development**, and technology commercialization in association with the University of Calgary, the Province of Alberta or the Government of Canada; and
  - (c) accommodate a limited range of complementary support **uses**.

### **Compliance with Bylaw 1P2007**

2. Unless otherwise specified, the rules and provisions of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Bylaw 1P2007 apply to this Direct Control District.

### **Reference to Bylaw 1P2007**

- 3 Within this Direct Control District, a reference to a section of Bylaw 1P2007 is deemed to be a reference to the section as amended from time to time.

### **Permitted Uses**

- 4 The **permitted uses** of the Special Purpose – University Research S-URP) District of Bylaw 1P2007 are the **permitted uses** in this Direct Control District with the addition of :
  - (a) **School - Private**; and
  - (b) **School Authority - School**

### **Discretionary Uses**

- 5 The **discretionary uses** of the Special Purpose – University Research Park (S-URP) District of Bylaw 1P2007 are the **discretionary uses** in this Direct Control District.

### **Bylaw 1P2007 District Rules**

- 6 Unless otherwise specified, the rules of the Special Purpose – University Research Park (S-URP) District of Bylaw 1P2007 apply in this Direct Control District.