

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the northwest community of Sage Hill on the north side of Sage Hill Boulevard NW. The site is an irregular shaped parcel approximately 2.93 hectares (7.24 acres) in area. The irregular shape is due to the two traffic circles located along the southern property line. There is vehicular access to the site from the traffic circle at the intersection of Sage Hill Boulevard NW and Sage Hill Gate NW. The site slopes from west to east, with a change in elevation of approximately 10 metres over 475 metres (a grade of approximately 4 percent). A ravine designated Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District to reflect its environmental reserve status, runs along the entire northern edge of the parcel and forms part of a larger coulee and ravine system in the area.

Surrounding development is characterized by existing and future multi-residential development to the west and northeast of the site. East of the site is the proposed Symons Valley Civic Centre, which will contain a new library, affordable housing, and a future bus rapid transit (BRT) station. South of the site is an existing regional shopping centre with a mix of large and medium format retail users, including a grocery store.

In 2008, Council approved amendments to the *Symons Valley Community Plan* to establish a Transit Oriented Planning area around a future BRT hub. These amendments included policies enabling high density residential and regional commercial land uses. In 2019, a new land use district was approved to accommodate a medium-density development with residential and commercial uses in a mid-rise form while still meeting the minimum density and intensity targets for the area.

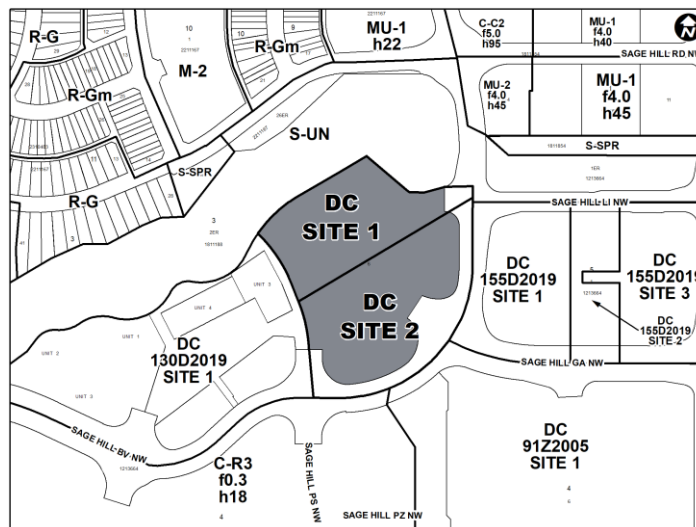
Community Peak Population Table

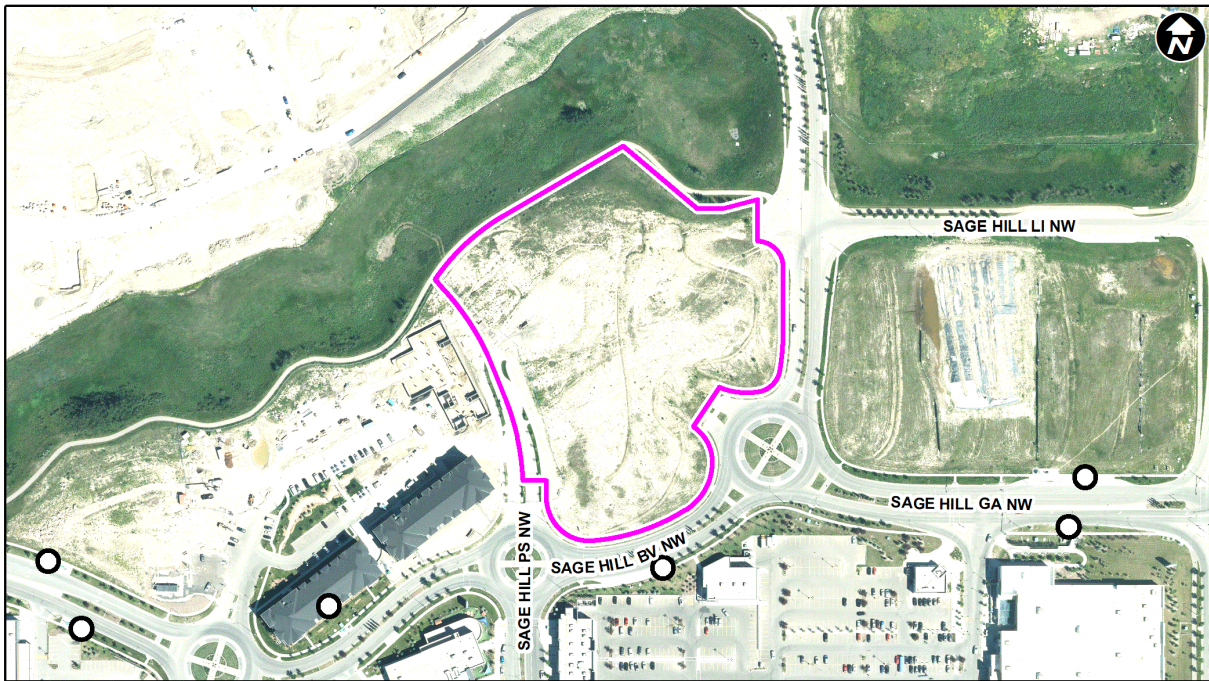
As identified below, the community of Sage Hill reached its peak population in 2019.

Sage Hill	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	7924
2019 Current Population	7924
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 [Sage Hill](#) community profile.





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The existing DC District ([Bylaw 130D2019](#)) was approved in 2019 and is part of a larger DC District intended to accommodate commercial uses. The DC District is based on the Commercial – Community 1 (C-C1) District and provides for a variety of commercial uses, with a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0 and a maximum building height of 12 metres.

The proposed Direct Control (DC) District would create two Direct Control site areas, each with a different main focus for development. The north site (Site 1) is based on the Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District, with a maximum FAR of 1.8 and a maximum building height of 23 metres, in order to accommodate a six-storey residential building with the opportunity for commercial uses at grade. The south site (Site 2) is based on the Commercial – Community 1 (C-C1) District, which can accommodate both residential and commercial development either vertically or horizontally integrated on a site. The south site has a maximum FAR of 1.0 and a maximum building height of 13 metres. Additional clauses have been included to limit the number of Drive Throughs on the site.

An amendment to the Symons Valley Community Plan is proposed to provide design considerations for both the residential and commercial sites at time of development permit. These considerations include building design and orientation, pedestrian connections, landscaping, and slope adaptive development.

Pursuant to Section 20 of the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, this application for a DC District has been reviewed by Administration. A DC District is necessary based on the unique characteristics of the site. The proposed DC District allows for the applicant's intended mixed-use development while accommodating additional uses, density, and height restrictions in a transit-oriented development (TOD) area. The same result could not be achieved through the use of a standard land use district in the Land Use Bylaw.

The proposed DC District includes a rule that allows the Development Authority to relax Sections 7 and 15 of the DC District Bylaw. Sections 7 and 15 incorporate the rules of the base district in Bylaw 1P2007 where the DC District does not provide for specific regulation. In a standard district, many of these rules can be relaxed if they meet the test for relaxation of Bylaw 1P2007. The intent of this DC District rule is to ensure that rules of Bylaw 1P2007 that regulate aspects of development that are not specifically regulated in this DC District can also be relaxed in the same way that they would be in a standard district.

Development and Site Design

If the land use redesignation is approved by Council, the rules of the proposed DC District along with the policies of the amended *Symons Valley Community Plan* would provide guidance for future site development including building massing, landscaping, and parking. Additional items that will be considered through the development permit process include, but are not limited to:

- Pedestrian connectivity through the site to the future civic centre and BRT to the west, commercial development to the south, and the pedestrian bridge to the west;
- Ensuring development is compatible with The City's Transit Oriented Development policies, noting the site is in a suburban area;
- Minimizing impacts on the ravine to the north;
- Slope adaptive design in order to address the significant grade change on the site; and
- Provision of a high-quality public realm and public spaces within the site.

Transportation

At present, transit stops for route 82 (Beacon Hill/Brentwood) and 115 (Symons Valley Parkway/Tuscany) are located south of the site across Sage Hill Boulevard NW. The subject site is located 100 metres (a two-minute walk) west of the future transit hub (BRT) located at the Symons Valley Civic Centre site. It is anticipated that a future BRT would connect Sage Hill to the downtown. As communities to the west and north build out, the transit hub will deliver further enhanced transit service and high frequency buses. On-street parking can be accommodated on Sage Hill Boulevard NW.

Pedestrian crosswalks on Sage Hill Boulevard NW are located approximately every 150 metres, along the southern edge of the parcel. Additional planning and design will be required at development permit stages to provide quality pedestrian linkages within and through the subject lands to the adjacent developments. Connections for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided via a pedestrian bridge over the ravine north of the site. The bridge will provide a key link between the planned neighbourhood to the north, through the site to Sage Hill Boulevard NW.

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) submitted with this application was reviewed and accepted by Administration. The TIA confirmed that the proposed land use can be accommodated with the established road network. The established traffic circles provide sufficient access to the site. Access and internal circulation will be further detailed at the development permit stage.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental considerations were identified for this land use amendment.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer mains are available to service the subject site. Details of site servicing, as well as appropriate stormwater management will be considered and reviewed as part of a development permit review 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.

Growth Plan (2022)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's [Growth Plan](#) (GP). The proposed land use amendment builds on the principles of the GP by promoting efficient use of land and regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

Map 1 “Urban Structure” of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) identifies the subject lands as part of the Residential Developing Planned Greenfield Area subject to an Area Structure Plan. Additionally, the site is located within a Community Activity Centre.

Community Activity Centres should be locations for a mix of medium and higher density employment and residential uses. They should contain a broad range of ground-oriented and medium to high density apartment housing and a mix of housing tenure and affordability levels to accommodate a diverse range of the population (section 3.3.3(e)). Intensities in the Community Activity Centre should be a minimum of 150 people and jobs per hectare. The proposed land use district is aligned with the policy intent of the Community Activity Centre typology. The increase in multi-residential, combined with the existing small and medium scale commercial development will support and complement the existing regional commercial development to the south of the site.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

While this application does not include any specific actions that address the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#), the addition of significant residential density located adjacent to a transit hub meets the objectives of Program Pathway H: Focus land use planning to prioritize zero emissions city design. Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate strategies will be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

Symons Valley Community Plan (Statutory – 2001)

The Transit Oriented Planning Area Map of the [Symons Valley Community Plan](#) identifies that the parcel is located in the Town Centre Area. The purpose of the Town Centre Area is to accommodate a comprehensively planned commercial centre consisting of mixed-use retail, residential, and commercial buildings. The Town Centre Area should include a component of

buildings oriented along a central pedestrian corridor and building design should include a strong pedestrian orientation. The Town Centre Area identifies that the highest intensity development should be located closest to the Civic and Mixed-Use Area and the Transit Hub.

The site is within the 600 metre BRT radius, where the policy identifies the need for increased density to support the high frequency, rapid transit bus service. This transit-oriented development area will provide a base for a variety of housing, employment, local services, and amenities that support a vibrant community.

An amendment to the *Symons Valley Community Plan* is proposed to provide design considerations for both the residential and commercial sites at time of development permit. These considerations include building design and orientation, pedestrian connections, landscaping, and slope adaptive development.