Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the southeast developing community of Residual Ward 12 – Sub Area 12I. The site is within the central portion of the *Ricardo Ranch Area Structure Plan*, as shown on the Site Context Map below. Lands adjacent to the site to the east and west are currently being used for agricultural purposes, to the south across the Bow River are country residential neighbourhoods in Foothills County and there are developing neighbourhoods in Rangeview and Seton to the north. Seton Town Centre (1.8 km to the north) is a major activity centre that contains the South Health Campus, a large retail area, two future Green Line LRT stations, an interim bus rapid transit (BRT) line as well as residential areas, a high school, parks, and a recreation centre.

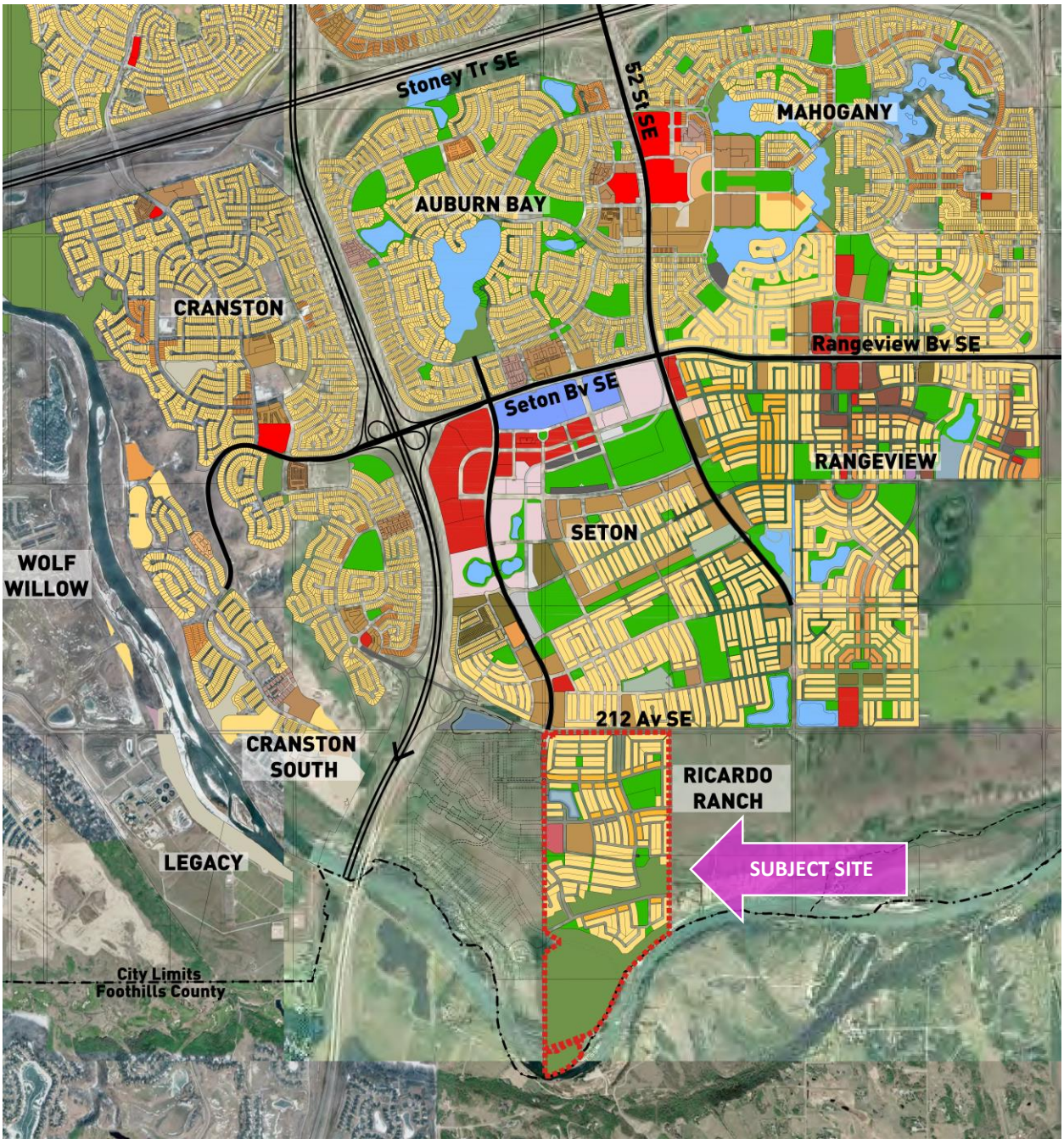
The subject site is approximately 147.71 hectares (365.0 acres) in size with dimensions of roughly 1,760 metres by 820 metres (approximately two and a half quarter sections). The subject site is currently undeveloped and has been used for agricultural purposes. The northern portion of the site is relatively flat with a moderate slope to the north. The southern portion slopes down to the Bow River which forms the southern boundary of the site and The City's southern border. 212 Avenue SE will traverse the northern end of the community and be a major connection to Deerfoot Trail SE and the broader transportation network of the city.

The development proposed for this site complements other development in the area. Notable features of the proposal include:

- medium and low density residential in the form of apartments, townhouses, rowhouses as well as semi and single detached homes;
- a Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) central to the outline plan that provides local commercial and an open space area for neighbourhood activity and gathering;
- a primary school site and associated playfields;
- preservation of parts of the Bow River natural corridor, including riparian and escarpment corridors; and
- a block-based grid street network that fosters strong pedestrian and cycling connectivity.

This proposed outline plan and land use amendment provides a logical extension and connection to the street and block pattern planned for in adjacent neighbourhood areas while protecting parts of the Bow River corridor.

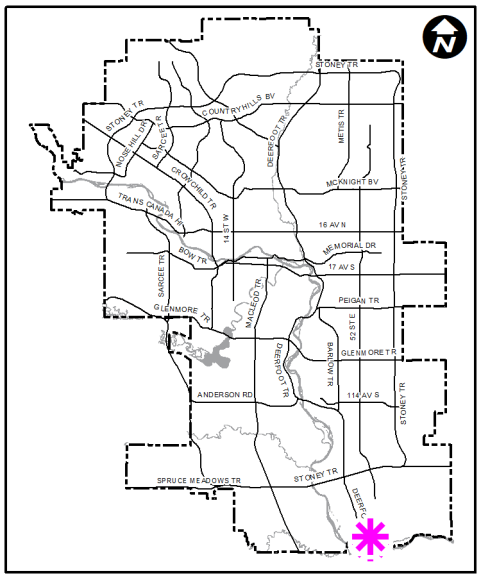
Site Context Map

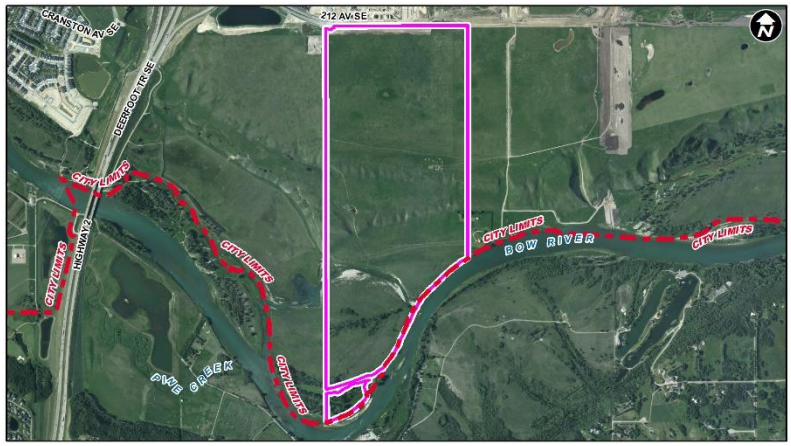


Community Peak Population Table

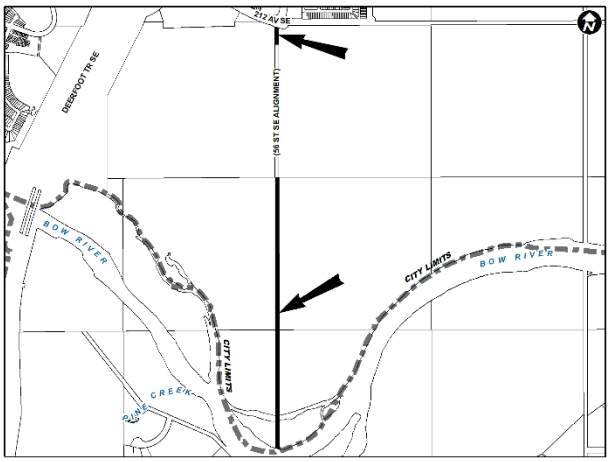
As of the 2019 City of Calgary Civic Census, there is no population data for the subject area as this is a new community.

Location Maps

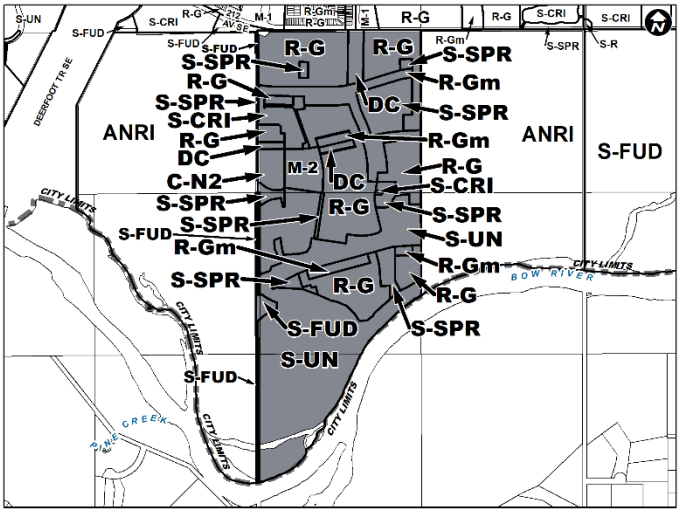


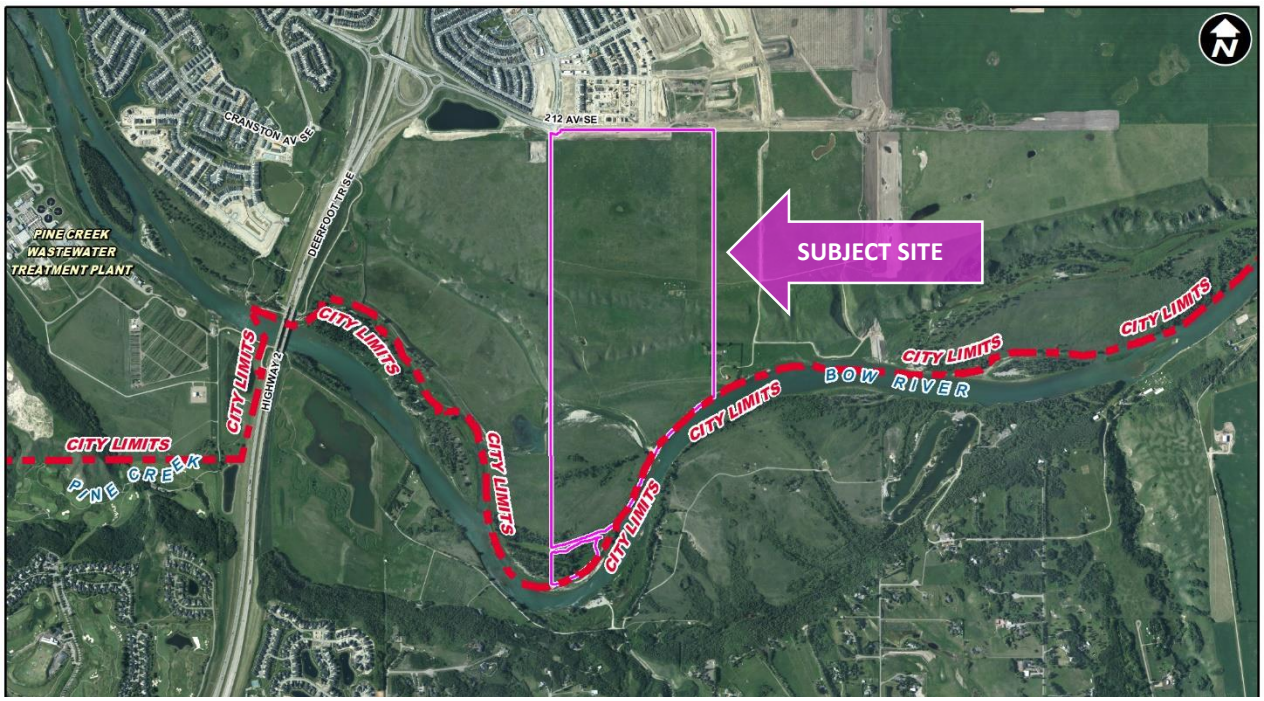


Road Closure Map



Proposed Land Use Map





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The existing land use is the Aggregate and Natural Resource Industry (ANRI) District under Rocky View County's *Land Use Bylaw C-4841-97* which is intended for aggregate extraction operations. The designation is a legacy of the annexation from the County and was intended to maintain a beneficial option for land prior to full urban development. A portion of the lands are also undesignated road right-of-way.

This application proposes several residential, commercial, mixed-use, and special purpose districts (see Attachment 9: Proposed Outline Plan Data Sheet for further information):

- Residential – Low Density Mixed Housing (R-G and R-Gm) District;
- Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District
- Commercial – Neighbourhood 2 (C-N2) District;
- Special Purpose – City and Regional Infrastructure (S-CRI) District;
- Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve (S-SPR) District;
- Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District;
- Special Purpose – Future Urban Development (S-FUD) District; and
- Direct Control (DC) District based on R-Gm;

The proposed R-G and R-Gm Districts are intended to support a variety of low-density residential building forms including single and semi-detached dwellings, duplex dwellings, and rowhouse buildings, along with secondary suites and backyard suites. The maximum building height in these Districts is 12.0 metres. R-Gm differs from R-G in that R-Gm designated lands

are not intended to accommodate single detached dwellings except where subdivision results in remnant single lots. R-G District sites comprise 43.73 hectares ± (108.1 acres ±) and R-Gm District sites comprise 6.84 hectares ± (16.9 acres ±) of the proposed redesignation area.

The M-2 District allows multi-residential development of medium height and density and it is intended to be in close proximity or adjacent to low density residential development. The M-2 District allows for a maximum building height of 16.0 metres (approximately four storeys). The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 3.0. The M-2 District has a minimum density of 60 units per hectare and no maximum density (limits on height and massing restrict potential density). The M-2 District site comprises 3.19 hectares ± (7.9 acres ±) of the proposed redesignation area.

The proposed C-N2 District is intended to allow for small scale commercial development with potential for residential uses on the upper floors at a compatible scale to nearby residential areas. While still supporting neighbourhood commercial, site design is allowed to be more auto-oriented and limited automotive service uses are also allowed. The C-N2 District allows for a maximum building height of 10 metres and a maximum FAR of 1.0 to ensure compatibility with adjacent neighbourhood areas. The C-N2 District site comprises 2.06 hectares ± (5.1 acres ±) of the proposed redesignation area.

The proposed S-CRI District is intended to provide for city and regional infrastructure necessary for the proper servicing of the development. This District is proposed for the stormwater pond and associated infrastructure as well as a capped decommissioned oil well and the sites will be designated as Public Utility Lots (PUL) pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). S-CRI District sites comprise 2.71 hectares ± (6.7 acres ±) of the proposed redesignation area.

The proposed S-SPR District is intended to provide for schools, parks, open space, and recreational facilities, with parcels of varying sizes and use intensities. This District is only applied to lands that will be dedicated as School Reserve or other forms of Municipal Reserve (MR) pursuant to the MGA. A joint use site for a proposed elementary school and corresponding playfields is located in the eastern portion of the plan area and is approximately 4.86 hectares (12.0 acres) in size. Throughout the subject site, parks are provided that serve varying functions and recreational opportunities, either as neighborhood parks or as complementary space to the natural area. S-SPR District sites comprise 9.87 hectares ± (24.4 acres ±), which is 10% of the gross developable area.

The proposed S-UN District is intended for lands that provide for naturally significant landforms, including river valley, natural drainage channels and their required setbacks, habitats, and natural vegetation. Development within these lands is limited to improvements that facilitate passive recreational use. This district is intended to apply only to those lands that will be dedicated as Environmental Reserve (ER) pursuant to the MGA. A significant portion of the Bow River Valley and heritage resources will be protected in the environmental reserve areas through this application. S-UN lands comprise approximately 46.60 hectares ± (115.1 acres ±) within the subject site.

The S-FUD District which is intended for lands awaiting urban development and utility servicing. This is being applied in two places. One is for half of the closed road, which will be incorporated into the future development to the west. The other is for a lands that are planned to be a stormwater pond, also to be incorporated into the future development to the west. S-FUD lands comprise approximately 3.02 hectares ± (7.5 acres ±) within the subject site.

The DC District is based on the R-Gm District with additional provisions that allow for more compact housing. The DC reduces the parcel depth and lot size and has no requirement for a rear yard. Use of the DC is limited to places with rear lane access, ensuring a pedestrian oriented streetscape. This innovative DC enables development that fills a gap between the rowhouse and townhouse form of development while having a height limit equivalent to nearby low-density blocks. DC District sites comprise 1.44 hectares ± (3.6 acres ±) of the proposed redesignation area.

Subdivision Design

The design of the proposed outline plan responds to the context and characteristics of the site. Given the presence of the Seton major activity centre 1.8 kilometres to the north and the Bow River and City boundary to the south, the Ricardo Ranch ASP area was not expected to have major concentrations of commercial activity, but rather have neighbourhood focal points and large natural areas. Growth in this area will support the vitality of the Seton major activity centre. The proposed outline plan includes two connections to the north across 212 Avenue SE, and that avenue is the edge of the neighbourhood. To the east and west are neighbourhoods that are at various stages of the planning process and preliminary designs show seamless connections across the sites. A neighbourhood activity centre is also located near the central-western edge of the site. This will provide a focal point to the neighbourhood and provide local services to the future residents. Other features of the proposal include:

- high, medium and low density residential in the form of apartments, townhouses, rowhouses and semi and single detached homes;
- a Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) central to the outline plan that provides an open space for neighbourhood activity and local services;
- a primary school site and associated playfields;
- a block-based grid street network that fosters strong pedestrian and cycling connectivity; and
- the north side of the Bow River Valley, large portions of which will be formally protected as Environmental Reserve.

This proposed outline plan and block layout provides a seamless extension and connection to the street and block pattern in adjacent outline plans. The east-west streets that connect to adjacent areas have blocks designated R-Gm, R-G and S-SPR, mostly with rear lanes. This will mean that the main movement corridors will have a more urban character by being lined with rowhouses and semi-detached dwellings without front driveways. The proposed design also accounts for laned vehicular access for lower density residential in some areas interior to the site, or consolidated vehicle access points for larger sites. This will ensure a strong public realm with a focus on the pedestrian experience.

<u>Road Closure</u>

An original range road (RR291) aligned north-south along the western boundary of the subject site is currently 56 Street SE. This application is proposing to partially close that street and rename the remaining portion Ricardo Ranch Boulevard SE (see Attachment 4). A short segment of road is proposed for closure near the intersection with 212 Avenue SE. Additionally, a road segment starting 800 metres south of the northern boundary of the site, and continuing to the Bow River is also being proposed for closure. A middle segment of the road is being retained and integrated with the proposed site design and the segments being closed are being re-aligned to better adapt to site topography.

Open Space

Throughout the outline plan area, parks are provided that serve varying functions and recreational opportunities. 9.85 hectares (24.34 acres) of land in total, which is 10% of gross developable land, is to be dedicated as MR in the application area. The open space in the upper plan area includes a storm pond on a PUL, a Catholic Separate School Division (CSSD) Kindergarden through Grade 9 (K-9) school site on Municipal School Reserve (MSR) and three sub-neighborhood parks with tot lots or multi-age creative play amenities on MR. Two neighborhood parks are proposed in the mid district of the subject site, which are to be outfitted with an amphitheater, playgrounds for different age groups, picnic tables, trails, look-outs and interpretive features, etc.

The application proposes about 1.98 hectares (4.90 acres) of MR park space planned in the lower portion of the subject site, providing complementary open space in addition to the adjacent ER lands. These two main parks feature an active play area, community plaza, play equipment, art components, as well as picnic tables and trails.

Two north-south view corridors are proposed through the plan. By locating a linear park, a school site and neighbor parks of diverse size and amenities along the corridor, people who live in the upper district will be encouraged to head south to the Bow River Valley for enjoyment.

The previously mentioned CSSD school site (K-9) is provided in the central-east portion of the proposed outline plan. The overall school site is 4.85 hectares (12.0 acres) in size. The school site has access to two collector roads and the overall site is visible from all four sides, allowing for passive surveillance to enhance safety. In addition to the school envelope, two soccer fields and one baseball field are provided with space on the edges for landscaping.

Pathways

Regional, multi-use and local pathways form a comprehensive pathway network and are located throughout the outline plan area. Three east-west regional pathways (or green corridor) and one north-south regional pathway are proposed within or along the plan boundary, which will connect to the existing or future pathway system in the rest of Ricardo Ranch ASP area and to the adjacent communities. Pathways along the Bow River Valley will extend an important city-wide amenity. Both regional pathways and multi-use pathways are proposed along the top of the escarpment and along a proposed single loaded road, which will provide opportunity for the public to enjoy the view of Bow River Valley while walking or cycling on the pathways.

Density and Intensity

At build-out, the proposed plan area is expected to have an anticipated 2,073 units (see Proposed Outline Plan Data Sheet Attachment 9). The proposed development is anticipated to achieve a residential density of 21.13 units per hectare (8.6 units per acre). The anticipated population and jobs of the proposed development is 6,323 people and 644 jobs and therefore the anticipated intensity is 71 people and jobs per gross developable hectare.

The MDP sets out minimum density and intensity (population and jobs) targets for new communities at a density of 20 units per hectare (8 units per acre) and 60 people and/or jobs per gross developable hectare, respectively. The Ricardo Ranch ASP sets out the same density and intensity targets as the MDP. Based on the anticipated residential density of 21.13 units per hectare and the anticipated intensity of 71 persons per gross developable hectare, the proposed development meets the targets of both the MDP and ASP.

Transportation
The subject site is bounded by 212 Avenue SE to the north and by the Bow River to the south. Lands to the east and west are planned as future neighbourhoods. Convenient access to Deerfoot Trail SE (800 metres west) is available via 212 Avenue SE and Stoney Trail is another 2.2 kilometers to the north (3 km total). 88 Street SE is the continuation of Stoney Trail and is 2.85 km to the east. Primary access to the site will be available through Ricardo Ranch Boulevard SE and Wild Rose Way SE at the north end of the site. A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was submitted to establish street classifications and intersection configurations for the plan area as part of the outline plan process. The TIA was reviewed and accepted by Administration.

The proposed outline plan has four access points to the east and another four to the west, which will distribute the local traffic effectively and evenly when future development occurs. The proposed active transportation network includes regional pathways, local multi-use pathways and streets with on-street bike lanes, which allows for excellent bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Customized street cross-sections have been proposed to accommodate unique circumstances and requirements. The future Green Line LRT station will be located approximately 1.5 kilometres north of the plan area in Seton. Currently that area is serviced by the Route 302 BRT from the hospital to downtown. Future transit service for the community will be provided along Ricardo Ranch Drive SE.

Environmental Site Considerations

Biophysical Impacts
The Bow River Valley area within the proposed Outline Plan was identified as an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA). It is within a provincial Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zone, providing winter ungulate habitat, has a wide range of species diversity, and serves as an ecological corridor. The proposed Outline Plan dedicates approximately 56% (46.6 hectares) of the 83 hectares of pre-development ESA as ER. The permanent loss of about 36.4 ha (44%) of the pre-development ESA in the Bow River Valley is a negative impact with high significance. Not all ESA area within the plan qualifies to be protected as ER: portions of escarpment that are stable and flat terraces within the river valley outside of the Bow River setback are ESA lands that do not qualify as ER and are developable. Some ER-qualifying lands (i.e., the sloped wetlands) are being proposed for conversion to developable land. These areas are small and nearly all of the ESA that qualifies as ER is being protected. The loss of 44% of ESA is nearly all on those developable lands within the river valley where ER cannot be used to protect the ESAs. Mitigation measures for the loss of ESA included the use of planning tools (i.e. ER) to protect ESA as future natural area, with some MR lands adjacent to the ER functioning as a buffer. ER lands include riparian areas adjacent to the Bow River and avulsion channel, the river meander belt, the lower escarpment including natural drainage courses and setbacks, and a small portion of the upper escarpment. Protected ESAs include spatially contiguous riparian and escarpment lands that maintain an ecological corridor. Further development within the Bow River Valley is likely to result in increased habitat fragmentation and loss, with upstream connectivity also significantly disrupted.

Two groundwater-fed sloped seasonal wetlands along the escarpment are not being dedicated as ER due to impacts to the groundwater source from the collector road and residential development. Due to the predicted long-term negative impacts to the groundwater source and wetland function, the wetlands (0.33 hectares ± total area) are not being retained and mitigation will follow provincial requirements under the *Alberta Wetland Policy*.

The great blue heron colony within the Outline Plan is the last known colony within the city boundary (the other two known colonies have been abandoned), highlighting the importance of conservation and successful implementation of the mitigation measures. The measures prescribed in the Biophysical Impact Assessment (BIA) include avoidance of direct disturbance to the colony and maintaining the setbacks identified in the Mitigation Plan; these mitigations and setback recommendations have also been accepted by Alberta Environment and Protected Areas. On a regional scale, the occurrence of the great blue heron colony is significant, and while the rookery is not being removed by the future development footprint, indirect residual impacts may occur to the colony. Residual impacts are likely to be the result of increased recreational pressures within the Bow River Valley and habitat disruption resulting in species stressors. Additional proposed developments in the adjacent lands will further increase cumulative effects and potential residual impacts. Strong public education, signage, and appropriate setbacks are crucial to ensure the longevity of the colony as development expands in the area and within the Bow River Valley as a whole.

The occurrence of bank swallow nesting sites within the avulsion channel of the Bow River Valley in proximity to the subject site is also significant. The nesting sites and associated habitat will be maintained with setbacks and no direct impacts to the nesting sites are anticipated. Indirect residual impacts may occur to species populations because of increased recreation in the area and surrounding changes in land use. Successful implementation of all mitigation measures outlined in the BIA is crucial to minimize residual impacts and ensure that the nesting can continue to occur as development expands in the area.

A Park Management Plan will be prepared to guide ongoing mitigation and natural area management in the Ricardo Ranch area to support habitat function and biodiversity. The document will incorporate the Habitat Restoration Plan, Heritage Resources Management Plan, Natural Area Management Plan, Heron Rookery Mitigation Plan, and landscape design and drawings.

Impacts of Past Site Use

No significant contamination concerns were identified through the Environmental Site Assessment from the previous agricultural uses on the site. However, there is an abandoned well on the site that required some reclamation of petroleum hydrocarbon contamination localized around the well site. Any remaining reclamation will be completed in advance of any development in the affected area. The proposed Outline Plan respects the required setbacks from the abandoned well and assures it is accessible for future inspections and maintenance.

Utilities and Servicing

The proposed Outline Plan is located within an area that had a recent removal of the Growth Management Overlay. As a result, regional servicing installations underway in the area are now substantially complete. Servicing can be provided with some developer funded extensions to the site connecting to the City funded regional infrastructure installations.

Water Infrastructure

Water servicing will be provided through main extensions connecting to the Ogden Feedermain extension that is being constructed along 212 Avenue SE, along with supporting connections to the developing lands to the north in Seton.

Sanitary Infrastructure

Sanitary servicing is proposed to be provided through main extensions connecting to the Rangeview Sanitary Trunk Sewer constructed by The City along 212 Avenue SE. Sanitary

servicing for the north half of the plan area will be by gravity. Due to grade constraints, sanitary servicing for the south half of the plan area will be through a future off-site sanitary lift station on the adjacent site immediately southwest of the plan area. Development of the southern catchment area will be restricted until the adjacent plan area is approved and the required downstream infrastructure is constructed.

Storm Infrastructure
Storm servicing for the north half of the plan area is proposed to be provided through the construction of an on-site stormwater management pond with controlled discharge to a proposed new outfall the Bow River at the south edge of the plan area. The storm servicing for the south half of the plan area will be accommodated through a future off-site storm water management facility and new outfall to the Bow River on the adjacent site immediately southwest of the plan area. Development of the southern catchment area will be restricted until the adjacent plan area is approved and the required downstream infrastructure is constructed.

Flood Risk
A portion of the site is located within the Bow River Floodway and Flood Fringe. However, based on a number of factors, those affected portions of the site are all identified as Environmental Reserve. The lands that are proposed for development within the river valley are located on an existing elevated bench well above the flood levels. Furthermore, in determining the appropriate setback from the riverbank for the proposed development, slope stability and river morphology reports were prepared and reviewed to look at erosion potential from future flood events for the next 200 years. Therefore, the Outline Plan does not include any proposed development within potential flood risk areas.

Fire Infrastructure
Emergency services will be provided from the nearby existing Seton Fire Hall.

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.

Our Shared Boundary: An Intermunicipal Development Plan for the Municipal District of Foothills and The City of Calgary (Statutory – 2017)
The site is within the IDP Area on Map 1: Plan Area of the *Our Shared Boundary: An Intermunicipal Development Plan for the Municipal District of Foothills and The City of Calgary* (IDP). While the subject site is not within any specific interface or policy area of the IDP, the IDP does note that there are regional assets in the IDP Area, such as the Bow River Valley, that provide significant environmental/biophysical benefit, culturally significant sites, recreational opportunities and services. The application was circulated to Foothills County for their review and no concerns were identified.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)
The subject parcel is located within a Developing Planned Greenfield areas with an existing Area Structure Plan as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure in the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP). The proposed outline plan and land use amendment meets the MDP's more specific policy direction, including the New Community Planning Guidebook. This application proposes: integrating a mix of dwelling types and land uses; including an activity centre within a neighbourhood; using a grid based pattern of complete streets in the subdivision design; protecting and integrating elements of the ecological network into the design; and meeting minimum intensity and density targets.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)
This application includes actions that specifically address the mitigation objectives of the *Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050*. The applicant has committed to providing all homes with rough-ins for solar photo-voltaic cells and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, high-efficiency furnace and water tanks, LED lighting, and smart home technology. Roof designs (including orientations, shading, and placement of protrusion) will maximize potential for solar energy. Requirements for solar photo-voltaic cells and electric vehicle charging will be ensured for any lots that the developer will be selling to other builders. Further opportunities to align development with applicable climate strategies such as maximizing carbon sink potential, mitigating river and stormwater flood risk, and integrating natural infrastructure and asset management will be encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

Ricardo Ranch Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2019)
The subject site is located within the *Ricardo Ranch Area Structure Plan* (ASP). The ASP identifies the subject lands as predominantly residential, commercial and mixed-use, with a NAC policy area in the central-northeast portion of the subject site. This application fulfills the policy objectives for this area by providing a range of housing forms within the community, open spaces that are sufficiently sized and spread throughout the plan area, and the provision of a joint-use site which is anticipated to contain a K-9 school and associated playfields. This application aligns with most of the applicable ASP policies.

An amendment to the ASP is required to allow for the proposed development. There is a policy in the ASP that states that all areas that qualify as ER within the Bow River Valley shall be dedicated as ER. This is a more stringent version of the normal practice of evaluating the significance and long-term viability of ER areas prior to establishing whether or not they will be preserved. There are features in the Bow River Valley that could qualify as ER that cannot be maintained over the long run and there are places where the logical route for a street impacts a potential ER. To maintain flexibility and to allow for neighbourhood development, an amendment is proposed that will bring the ER dedication in line with normal City practice of allowing some ER disturbance at the discretion of the Approving Authority, where disturbance of these lands is supported by technical studies completed by registered professionals. Based on the application of this, 32% of the overall site is being protected as ER through the proposed land use amendment.