

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located on the north side of Country Hills Boulevard NW and east of Rocky Ridge Road NW in the currently unnamed community known as Residual Sub-Area 1K. The total parcel area is approximately 9.38 hectares (23.18 acres) and is currently designated Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R) District. This application proposes to redesignate a portion of the site approximately 1.91 hectares (4.72 acres) that is steeply sloped and located at the northeast corner of the parcel to Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District for the purpose of Environmental Reserve (ER) dedication pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA).

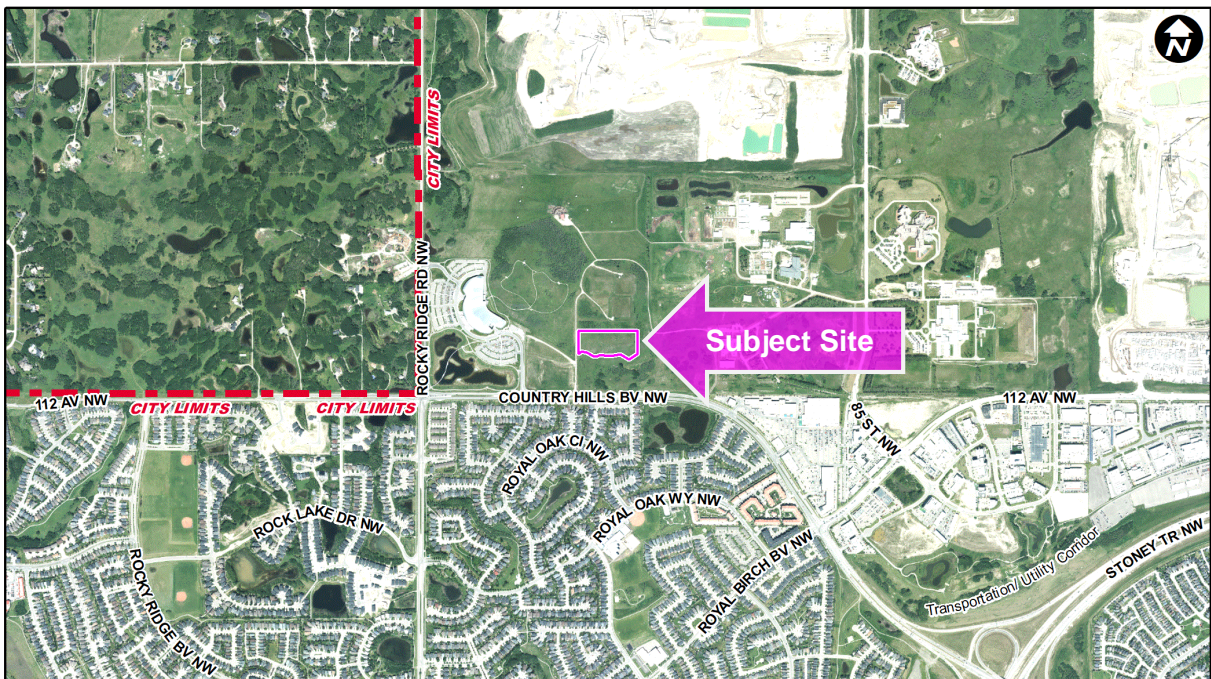
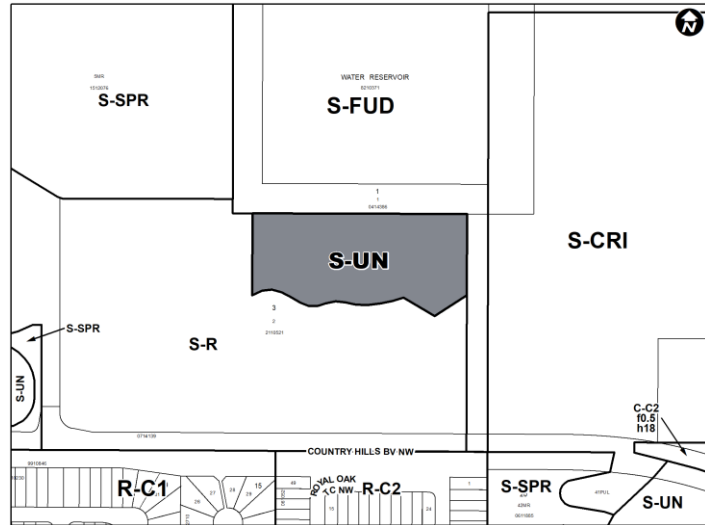
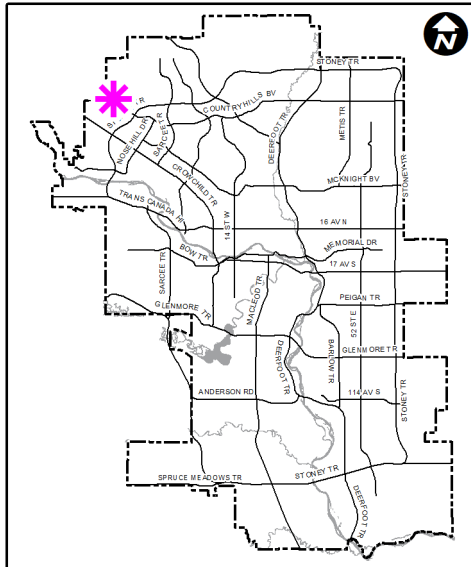
The Shane Homes YMCA is located immediately west of the site, and to the east is provincially-owned land that accommodates facilities for the University of Calgary's Spy Hill Campus. The community of Royal Oak is located south of the site and consists of predominantly low-density residential development along Country Hills Boulevard NW. The site is approximately 350 metres west of retail and services at Royal Oak Centre.

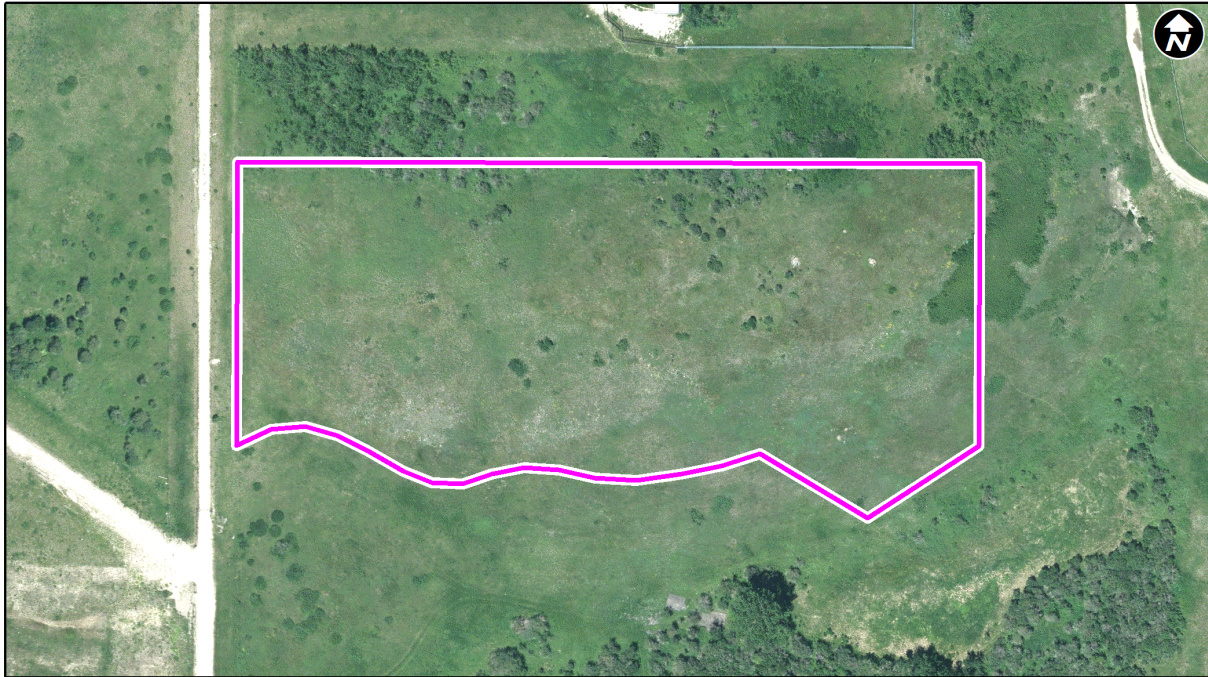
Currently, the site is undeveloped except for a gravel road that provides access from Country Hills Boulevard NW to the Top Hill Water Reservoir to the north. A development permit is under review for an athletic park including two soccer fields adjacent to Country Hills Boulevard NW and south of the proposed S-UN area. In 2021, the subject parcel was redesignated from Special Purpose – Future Urban Development (S-FUD) District to S-R to accommodate the proposed athletic park. At that time, the opportunity to retain an escarpment on the northern side of the parcel was identified. It was determined the exact boundaries of the natural area and the S-UN District lands would be confirmed in conjunction with site planning for the athletic park development.

Community Peak Population Table

There is no population data available for Residual Sub-Area 1K as this community is primarily a mix of industrial and institutional uses.

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The existing S-R District is intended to accommodate a range of indoor and outdoor recreation uses on parcels of various sizes, including complementary uses located within buildings.

The proposed S-UN District is intended for lands that provide for natural landforms, vegetation, or wetlands. In addition, the S-UN District is used for lands that preserve existing characteristics of a natural plant or animal community or are undergoing naturalization. This district is intended to apply only to those lands that will be dedicated as ER pursuant to the MGA.

Development and Site Design

The rules of the proposed S-UN District would provide guidance for any future development of the site. The intent for the site is for the land to be dedicated as ER and preserve the existing steep slope of the site, development will be limited to improvements that facilitate passive recreational use.

Transportation

Vehicle access to the subject site is available from Country Hills Boulevard NW. An access easement exists on the site for a gravel road which currently provides access to The City of Calgary Top Hill Water Reservoir to the north.

Transit service is available nearby, with routes serving the Shane Homes YMCA site to the west (Routes 115 – Symons Valley Parkway and 158 – Royal Oak).

Future development of the site will allow for the construction of pedestrian infrastructure along the south edge of the proposed S-UN District area, and provide an extension of the existing multi-use pathway from the Shane Homes YMCA site to the frontage of the subject parcel on Country Hills Boulevard NW.

Environmental Site Considerations

The sloped land on the northern side of the proposed athletic park will be retained as ER. The approved Biophysical Impact Assessment identified this area as being of high environmental significance, with rare and sensitive vegetative communities and known historical archaeological features.

A seasonal wetland has been identified on the athletic park site, south of the proposed S-UN District lands; however, it will not be retained due to development constraints, low biodiversity and limited potential for habitat. Provincial Water Act approval will be required prior to any disturbance of the wetland.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer mains are available to service the subject parcel. Details of servicing and storm water management will be finalized with the development permit.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

Administration's recommendation aligns 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)

Administration's 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.

Rocky View/Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (2012)

The subject parcel is located within the Policy Area of the [Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan](#). The Policy Area contains lands immediately adjacent to the shared border. The site is not located within any special policy areas or key focus areas.

The proposed land use amendment was circulated to Rocky View County in accordance with the policy; however, no response was received.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

The subject parcel is located within the Standard Industrial Area of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure. The proposal aligns with the relevant land use and public realm policies for the Standard Industrial area, which note public open space should be provided where possible to provide outdoor recreational opportunities and spaces for area employees. The application is also in alignment with Greening the City policies which focus

on addressing climate change in part by protecting environmentally-sensitive areas and natural infrastructure.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

This application does not include any actions that specifically address the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#). The proposed redesignation does however provide small and incremental climate benefits by enabling the protection of natural infrastructure. The Climate Strategy identifies natural infrastructure such as grasslands, forests and waterbodies as an important component of climate resiliency by providing stormwater retention, urban heat reduction and carbon sequestration.

North Regional Context Study (Non-Statutory – 2010)

The [North Regional Context Study](#) applies to this site. Map 3: Land Use & Transportation identifies this parcel as being within the Industrial/Employment area which is intended to accommodate a range of fully serviced industrial, research and office uses. However, recreational uses that are considered appropriate and compatible can also be considered in this area.

The proposed land use amendment will allow for the preservation of a natural landform within the parcel, allow for passive recreational use and complement the nearby Shane Homes YMCA and proposed Rocky Ridge Athletic Park developments.