

Applicant Submission

Received on 2023, June 16



460 - 5119 Elbow Drive SW P 403 201 5305
Calgary, Alberta T2V 1H2 E info@civicworks.ca

Proposed Land Use Change Applicant Summary

Project Location: 1606 RUSSET RD NE (RE1606)
Existing Land Use: Residential - Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District
Proposed Land Use: Housing – Grade-Oriented (H-GO) District

APPLICATION SUMMARY

On behalf of EC Living, CivicWorks has made a Land Use Redesignation (rezoning) application to transition the property at 1606 RUSSET RD NE from the existing Residential - Contextual One / Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to the Housing - Grade-Oriented (H-GO) District. The proposed land use change and development vision will realize new and much needed 'Missing Middle' rental housing options in Renfrew. EC Living will develop the proposed project using the Canada Housing & Mortgage Corporation's *Rental Construction Financing Program*, which enables the delivery of well-located, high quality, and affordable rental housing options for Canadians of all ages, wages and stages.

WHAT IS PROPOSED?

A street-oriented stacked townhouse development is proposed. A summary of key project details is included below:

Building Height: 3 storeys (12m maximum building height)
Residential Buildings: 1 (60% maximum lot coverage, 1.5 maximum Floor Area Ratio)
Residential Units: 10 (5 larger 2-3 bedroom upper townhomes and 5 smaller 1 bedroom secondary suites)
Vehicle Parking Stalls: 5, contained within a carport (0.5 parking stalls / unit or suite)
Secure Bike / Scooter / Stroller Storage Units: 5 (1 / suite without an assigned vehicle parking stall)

To provide The City of Calgary, surrounding area residents and the general public with additional information about the proposed development vision, the project team has prepared preliminary plans and concept drawings, available online at: www.ecliving.ca/engage

These preliminary plans and concept drawings will inform a supporting Development Permit (DP) application that will be submitted by the project team in the coming months, which will be reviewed for completeness by The City of Calgary and available to surrounding area residents and broader public for additional review and comment.

WHAT IS 'MISSING MIDDLE' HOUSING?

'Missing Middle' housing refers to a broad range of 2 to 3 storey buildings with multiple units and a variety of unit sizes, located in walkable inner city neighborhoods with easy access to transit, amenities and daily needs. This type of housing is typically 'Missing' from many of Calgary's neighbourhoods because it has been historically restricted by strict zoning regulations and parking requirements. In terms of form, scale, density and affordability, this form of housing sits in the 'Middle' of the development spectrum – between single-detached or semi-detached homes and mid-to-high-rise apartment buildings.

Since 2015, The City of Calgary has continuously evolved the Land Use Bylaw to address the need for greater housing choice and the general lack of 'Missing Middle' housing in our city. These changes have been primarily aimed at solving the mismatch between available housing stock and shifting demographic needs, including the ever-growing market demand for more diverse ground-oriented housing in amenity-rich inner city communities.



WHY IS 'MISSING MIDDLE' HOUSING IN DEMAND?

In recent years, the emergence and market interest in 'Missing Middle' housing, both locally and nationally, has been driven by:

- Significant market demand for housing options with a front door in desirable and amenity-rich inner city communities.
- A generally low supply of both vintage and new / modern 'Missing Middle' housing options within inner city communities.
- A shift in market demand towards purpose-built-rental options over traditional home ownership, driven by both relative affordability and lifestyle flexibility.
- An increase in market demand for relatively more affordable and smaller units (i.e. less than 500ft²), without an on-site parking stall where convenient alternative mobility options are available (i.e. Uber, carshare, transit, biking, walking).
- Attractive construction funding opportunities from Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation aimed at tackling Canada's housing shortage and encouraging the development of 'Missing Middle' housing, with associated project requirements (i.e. minimum number of units and minimum levels of affordability).
- Fundamental land development economics related to land prices, construction costs, minimum return-on-investment, and what the market can afford.

WHAT IS THE HOUSING - GRADE-ORIENTED (H-GO) DISTRICT?

In late 2022, Council added the new Housing – Grade-Oriented (H-GO) District to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 to address key regulatory and policy gaps related to certain forms of 'Missing Middle' housing in Calgary's inner city communities. Like the existing Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) and Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG) Districts, the new H-GO District generally allows for multi-residential development of up to 3-storeys (12m) in a variety of forms, including rowhomes and townhomes, with direct ground-level access for all homes.

Unlike existing Districts, the new H-GO District is specifically intended for amenity-rich inner city areas along higher order streets or close to Activity Centres, Main Streets and frequent transit service. Rather than a maximum number of units, the H-GO District limits maximum buildable floor area (up to 1.5x total site area). H-GO District rules also allow for stacked units and lower overall parking requirements based on proximity to frequent transit service and the provision of alternative mobility storage options.

For more information about the H-GO District and other recent Land Use Bylaw changes related to greater housing choice in our city, The City of Calgary has created an information-rich online resource available at: www.calgary.ca/housingchoice

WHY HERE?

The H-GO District is only appropriate in inner city areas along higher order streets or close to Activity Centres, Main Streets and frequent transit service, as well as within the specific policy boundaries of contemporary Local Area Plans. The specific bylaw location criteria for the H-GO District, including criteria met by the project site, are listed below:

1. An area within an approved Local Area Plan (eg. *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan*) identified as a "Neighbourhood Connector" or "Neighbourhood Flex" Urban Form; or
2. If not within an approved Local Area Plan, an area within the "Centre City" or "Inner City" as identified in the *Municipal Development Plan Urban Structure Map*, that is also within one or more of the following:
 - (a) 200m of a Main Street or Activity Centre;
 - (b) 600m of an existing or capital-funded LRT station;
 - (c) 400m of an existing or capital-funded BRT station; or
 - (d) 200m of a roadway that hosts Primary Transit Service.



PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Beyond the relevant H-GO District location criteria noted above, the proposed development vision is well-suited to the project site given its lot characteristics, strategic location, and the character and scale of surrounding area development:

Corner Lot: The project site is located on a corner parcel, allowing the proposed development to enhance both fronting streets with a steady rhythm of plantings, porches, front doors and other architectural features that reflect existing residential design and streetscape patterns.

Rear Lane Access: The project site has rear lane access for all vehicle movements, eliminating the need for driveway cuts and creating an uninterrupted and pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Sites with direct lane access minimize the impact of vehicles on adjacent streets and sidewalks and also allow for organized waste and recycling collection from the lane.

Higher Activity Street: The project site is located on Russet RD NE, a higher order Collector street that connects surrounding area communities and generally sees higher levels of vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian activity.

Nearby Transit Service: The project site is within 50m (~1 min. walk) of MAX Orange BRT primary transit service on 16 AV NE, adjacent to Route 19 local transit service on Russet RD NE, and within 400m (~5 min. walk) to Route 17 local transit service on Regal CR NE. The availability of various transit route options within easy walking distance of the project site provides access to key local and regional destinations, and supports vehicle-reduced and vehicle-free lifestyles.

Nearby Main Street: The project site is located 50m from the 16 AV NE Urban Main Street, a municipally-identified corridor for future population growth and incremental redevelopment. This corridor includes a Calgary Co-op 550m away (~7 min. walk) from the project site and wide variety of commercial and employment opportunities, accessible by active transportation and transit.

Nearby Open Spaces & Community Amenities: The project site is directly adjacent to Renfrew Athletic Park and Aquatic & Recreation Centre, is 2 blocks away from two schools: Children's Village School and St. Alphonsus School, and is within a short 10 minute walk of a variety of local area destinations and amenities including Trellis Renfrew Club, Renfrew Tennis Courts, Colonel Macleod School, and Winston Heights Off Leash Area. Nearby cycling infrastructure along Regal CR NE allows for even easier access to some of these destinations.

Nearby Multi-Unit Development: The project site is located within 300m of 9 parcels designated as Multi-Residential - Contextual Low Profile (M-C1) District along 15 AV NE and Remington RD NE, which contain 6 multi-residential apartment-style buildings and an approved multi-residential Development Permit at 967 15 AV NE (4-unit townhome), allowing the future development vision to complement the scale of surrounding area development. The project site is also within 200m of the approved Midfield Heights development, a high-intensity mixed-use community with a diversity of housing options.

ALIGNMENT WITH CALGARY'S GROWTH PLANS

Contemporary city-wide plans like the *Municipal Development Plan (MDP)* and *Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP)* guide Calgary's current planning policy, placing priority on building complete and resilient communities that make more sustainable and efficient use of limited resources like land, energy, infrastructure, services and municipal capital.

The proposed change and development vision are consistent with the city-wide goals and policies of these plans, which encourage: the development of innovative and varied housing options in established communities; more efficient use of infrastructure; and more compact built forms in locations with direct and easy access to transit, shopping, schools and other community services.

In order to support greater housing choice and reinforce more complete and resilient residential neighbourhoods, the *MDP* also identifies ground-oriented housing as a key component of complete communities (Policy 2.3.1[a]) and encourages growth



and change in low density residential neighbourhoods through the addition of a diverse mix of ground-oriented housing options (Policy 2.2.5[a]).

ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL AREA PLANS

The project site is located within the boundary of the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (2021), and falls within the "Neighbourhood Connector" and "Low" scale category, allowing for future mixed use or multi-residential development of up to 6 storeys. The proposed land use change and development vision are fully aligned with local area policy and no amendments to the plan are required.

APPLICANT-LED OUTREACH

We are committed to being good neighbours and hosting open, honest conversations within the communities we work. As part of our Applicant-led outreach process, and in addition to standard City of Calgary requirements, we provide local area organizations, surrounding area residents and broader community with multi-channel opportunities to learn more about a proposed change and share feedback directly with the project team, all while maintaining respectful and transparent dialogue about housing choice in our city.

Each application is supported by a dedicated web portal, phone line and email inbox for public questions and comments, along with custom on-site signage and mailers hand delivered to residents living within 200m of the project site. Key application materials are also shared directly with the local area Ward Councillor's Office and Community Association, with opportunities to share feedback, find out more about the project or meet with the project team as helpful.

As our outreach process draws to a close and we approach key decision points in the application process, an *Applicant-led Outreach Summary* will be shared with community groups and The City, and also published on the dedicated web portal for broader public access. The *Applicant-led Outreach Summary* highlights the outreach strategies used throughout the application process, what we heard, and how we responded.

CITY OF CALGARY NOTICE & OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the Applicant-led outreach process, all land use change and development applications are subject to standard City of Calgary notice and outreach requirements:

1. City of Calgary notice letters are sent to directly affected adjacent property owners, with key application information and contact details for the City of Calgary File Manager and the Applicant.
2. Application materials submitted to the City of Calgary are circulated to the local Community Association and Ward Councillor's Office for review and comment.
3. Standard large-format City of Calgary application notice signage is posted on site by the Applicant, with key application information and contact details for the City of Calgary File Manager and the Applicant.

CONCLUSION

The proposed land use change and development vision is in keeping with the city-wide goals and policies of the *Municipal Development Plan*, and will introduce new and innovative housing options for Calgarians looking to live in established communities that enjoy excellent access to transit, existing infrastructure and community amenities. For the reasons outlined above, we respectfully request your support for this application.

Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us at 587.747.0317 or engage@civicworks.ca, referencing RE1606 (1606 Russet RD NE).