

Applicant Submission

2022 November 14



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Road Closure and Land Use Redesignation

[Abstract](#)

A proposal to improve an essential part of Bridgeland that connects the community to the natural park on Tom Campbell Hill.

Denver Vannus

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APPLICATION	Road Closure and Land Use Redesignation
DATE	September 26, 2022
APPLICANTS	Denver Vannus & Floriano Cattoni
PARCEL ADDRESSES	202 Townsend Street NE & 123 Thomson Avenue NE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

I am pleased to present a proposal that will improve the corner of Townsend Street and Thomson Avenue; an essential part of Bridgeland that connects the community to the natural park on Tom Campbell Hill.

Currently, this area is a bit of an oddity within the community. There are only two homes that face Townsend Street, whereas the other twenty-two homes located on Townsend Street face away from Townsend Street. This creates an odd juxtaposition with the surrounding homes and is the source of other problems within this corridor, such as:

- There is no parking on Townsend Street because the street is not wide enough,
- There are no sidewalks on Townsend Street,
- There are limited sidewalks on Thomson Avenue,
- Townsend Street is not wide enough for 2-way traffic,
- Townsend Street has large sections of the road that have been washed away from heavy rains because the street was never paved properly,
- Vehicles and trailers are parked on the boulevard,
- Collection bins (Garbage, recycling, compost) are left on the street,
- There is minimal tree coverage, and
- The city-owned land adjacent to the parcels are unkept and over-grown.

In all regards, the City and the community maintain and utilize Townsend Street as a laneway. The proposed plan is designed to address these concerns and will provide numerous benefits including improved pedestrian connectivity, enhanced streetscape, and adding much needed trees and greenery. Overall, this plan will improve this corner and the escarpment.



Figure 1: An aerial view of Townsend Street and Thomson Avenue; facing East.



Figure 2: A street-level view of Townsend Street; facing South.

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DEVELOPMENT VISION + PROCESS

The vision is to consolidate a portion of the Townsend Street road right-of-way with the applicants' land. The intent is to improve the development potential of both parcels without compromising the existing road or service infrastructure. With the consolidated parcels, the applicants will develop two single detached homes, renovate the existing semi-detached homes, develop a backyard suite, and build garages along Townsend Street. The development concept will have all the homes facing Thomson Avenue with the garages accessed from Townsend Street.

The following are the steps required for the development vision:

1. Purchase Land from the City and Change the Land Use

The applicants have submitted a Land Sales Inquiry to the City to purchase a portion of the Road right-of-way adjacent to their property. This portion of land by itself is not developable by any other party due to its size and site constraints. However, the applicants can utilize it to build upon the character of the community and to enhance the escarpment.

With an approved sales agreement, a Road Closure application has been submitted along with a Land Use Redesignation Application to adjust this portion of land from being designated a 'Road right-of-way' to low-density residential districts, R-C2 and R-CG.

Appendix 1 illustrates the land in the Land Sales Inquiry.

Appendix 2 illustrates the parcels of land that will require Land Use Redesignations

2. Subdivide into 2 Additional Lots.

With the acquisition of a portion of the road right-of-way, this would allow enough area to subdivide 202 Townsend Street into two more additional parcels.

3. Develop 2 Single Detached Homes.

With an approved subdivision, the plan is to develop a single detached home on each parcel. These slope adaptive homes will be architecturally suited for Bridgeland's vibrant and rich history and will be sensitive to the surrounding low-density homes. As well, these homes will face Thomson Avenue, so they will be more aligned with the streetscape.

4. Renovate Semi-Detached Homes.

The owners of the semi-detached homes, 202 and 204 Townsend Street, will renovate by adding a second floor and refurbishing the exteriors to a finish that would compliment Bridgeland's unique characteristics. This will allow these homes to have their front doors face Thomson Avenue, which will drastically improve the streetscape.

5. Develop a Laneway Home

The owners of 123 Thomson Avenue will develop a backyard suite along Townsend Street. This will add to the vibrancy of Townsend Street, will make the laneway safer, and will provide safe and affordable housing in the community.

A conceptual site plan of the development vision is shown in Appendix 3.

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PLANNING RATIONALE

The development vision for the corner of Townsend Street and Thomson Avenue is supported by the site location, the policies and goals outlined by the City, and the numerous benefits that it will be provided to the City and the community.

Site Location

The site features characteristics that make it well suited for a land use change and the development vision. The site is less than 550 metres from the designated 1 Ave NE Main Street. Accordingly, the site benefits from its proximity to the many retail, business, and service amenities provided in Bridgeland. In addition, the Bridgeland-Memorial LRT Station is only 1 km away and can be reached in a convenient 13-minute walk. Appropriately, a goal of the City is to support transit-oriented development through strategic intensification of land near the Bridgeland-Memorial Station. Lastly, the site is situated on a corner parcel with a green space East of the property and a vacant lot to the South, this naturally lends the proposed development to have limited impact on the surrounding properties. For these reasons, the site is well positioned to accommodate a modest increase in density.

Policy Alignment

The development vision and proposed land use change are consistent with the city-wide goals and policies. The development of this site is regulated by the Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Development Plan (MDP), and the Bridgeland-Riverside Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) which situates the site within the Inner-City Area and “encourages intensification provided it is consistent and compatible with the surrounding context” (MDP). Furthermore, these policies encourage the development of innovative and varied housing options in established communities, more efficient use of infrastructure, and more built forms in locations with direct and easy access to transit, shopping, schools, and other community services.

Benefits to the City and Community

Overall, this proposal is aligned with Bridgeland’s overarching vision and core values. It integrates new developments into the community that will be compatible with existing developments and will contribute to the community character. Additionally, it will benefit the community and the City in the following ways:

- **Improved Streetscape** – The proposed plan would provide a more consistent streetscape along Thomson Avenue and Townsend Street. All the homes would face Thomson Avenue and the garages would be accessible from Townsend Street, which is more consistent with its current usage as a laneway.



Figure 3: Thomson Avenue Streetscape. The two homes shown in this picture are the applicants. The home on the left is 123 Thomson Avenue while the home on the right is 202 Townsend Street.

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- **Pedestrian Safety** – Thomson Avenue receives more pedestrian traffic than the average street, as it serves as the primary passage for Bridgeland residents to access the natural park on Tom Campbell Hill, which is popular for its skyline views and off-leash dog walking. However, there are no sidewalks for much of this road; this is a serious safety concern. With collaboration with the City, sidewalks could be added along Thomson Avenue which would increase pedestrian safety.

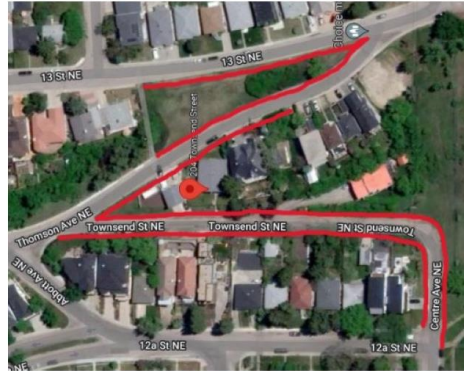


Figure 4: Aerial view of Townsend Street and Thomson Avenue. The red lines show the areas where there is no sidewalk.

- **Improved Environment** – A landscaping plan would be implemented to help overcome the lack of vegetation and tree cover. Currently, the City land along Townsend Street is overgrown, unkept, and has no trees. By changing the ownership of the land and implementing a landscaping plan this corner will be more aesthetically pleasing and will increase the overall well-being of surrounding neighbours.
- **Traffic Safety and Parking** – Thomson Avenue receives a fair amount of vehicle traffic as it's the main road to access the off-leash dog park. In the proposed development all the garages would be built along Townsend Street which receives a lot less traffic. This would reduce the potential for accidents as vehicles would not be backing onto Thomson Avenue. Additionally, this would increase pedestrian safety by not having the driveways cross the sidewalk to access Thomson Avenue.
- **Increased Safety to Public Spaces** – Lighting would be added along the laneway (Townsend Street) and Thomson Avenue which will make this corridor safer for pedestrians.
- **Affordable Housing** – Part of the proposed plan is to develop a laneway home on Townsend Street (behind 123 Thomson Ave). Laneway homes provide access to safe and stable housing, which helps to create more inclusive communities and makes our city a better place to live and work for citizens of all income levels.
- **Revenue for the City** – In addition to the above items, the City would benefit from revenue from the sale of the land that is unusable to the City or any other investor. As well, the City would benefit from continuing property taxes on an additional two single detached homes.

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LAND USE CHANGE

A Land Use Redesignation application has been submitted (as referred to in Step 2 in the Development Vision) to the City of Calgary. If approved, the proposed land use change will transition this from a Road right-of-way (green space next to existing street) to Residential – Contextual One/Two Dwelling District: R-C2. Additionally, the corner parcel will transition from R-C2 to Residential Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District. The sole reason for transitioning this parcel to R-CG is to accommodate the irregular parcel shape of this lot. This lot is triangular-shaped and the bylaws for R-C2 are designed for rectangular-shaped lots. Accordingly, one of the *purposes of R-CG is to provide flexible parcel dimensions to facilitate integration of a diversity of grade-oriented housing*. The land use change is required to enable the development vision outlined in this proposal.

CONCLUSION

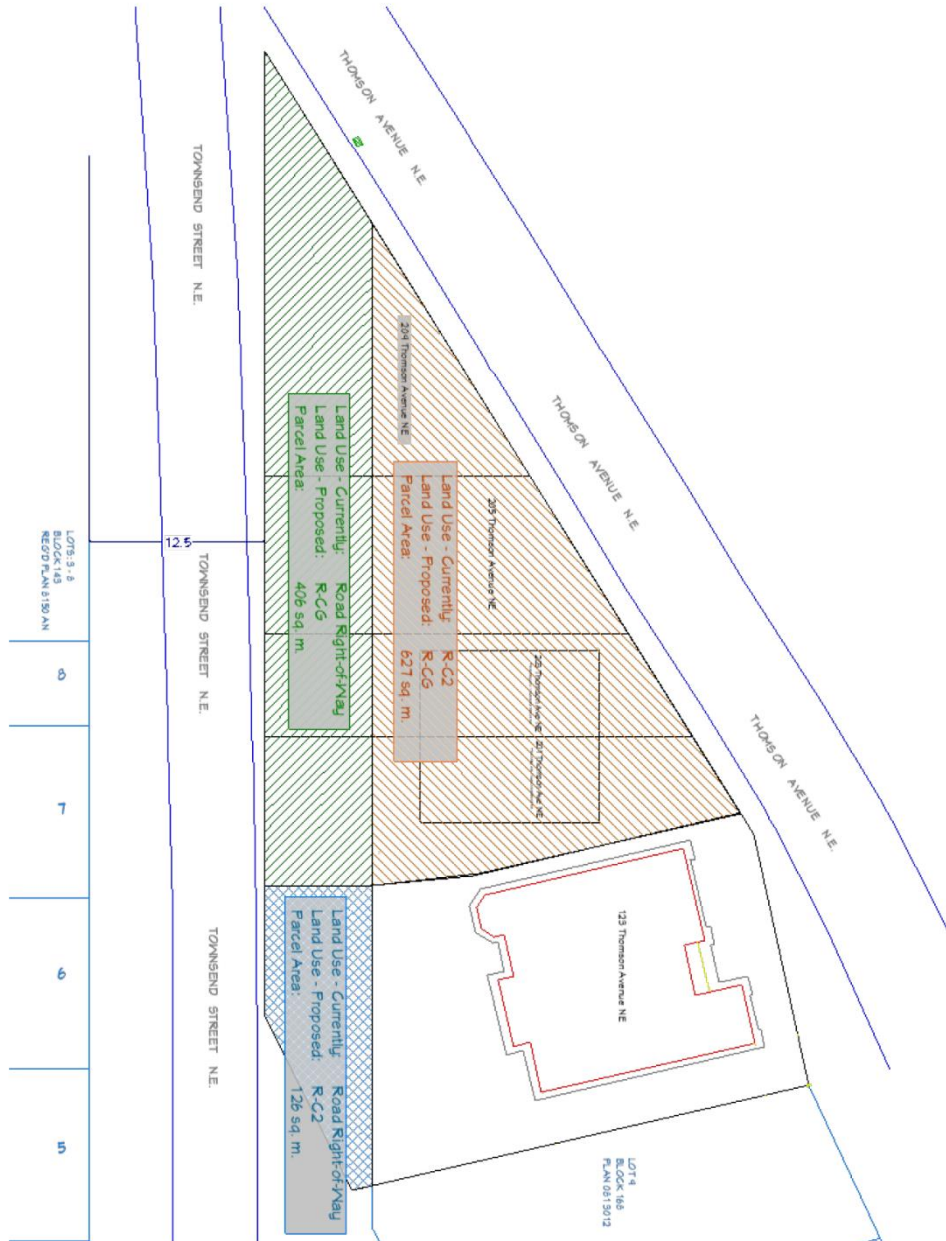
Overall, the development vision is to utilize a remnant parcel of unkept land and transform it into an improved public space. The development vision also has numerous benefits all while having a positive impact on the surrounding homes and community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal.

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Appendix 2

This site plan shows the parcels that will require a Land Use Redesignation.



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Appendix 3

Conceptual Site Plan for the proposed developments along Thomson Avenue NE and Townsend Street NE

