

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the southwest community of Beltline. The site is comprised of a single lot with an approximate area of 0.12 hectares (0.3 acres), measuring approximately 30 metres wide and 39.8 metres long. The site is accessible from the rear lane adjacent to 1 Street SW. Central Memorial and Haultain Parks are located two blocks southwest of the subject site. The Canadian Pacific Railway line is approximately 100 metres north, with the 1 Street SW underpass providing walking, wheeling and vehicular connections to the Downtown Core.

Surrounding development is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial and office developments, including low-, mid- and high-rise building forms. These adjacent properties are subject to a variety of land uses, including the Centre City Mixed Use (CC-X) District, Centre City Commercial Corridor (CC-COR) District, Centre City Multi-Residential High Rise (CC-MH) District, Centre City Multi-Residential High Rise Support Commercial (CC-MHX) District and several Direct Control Districts.

## Community Peak Population Table

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

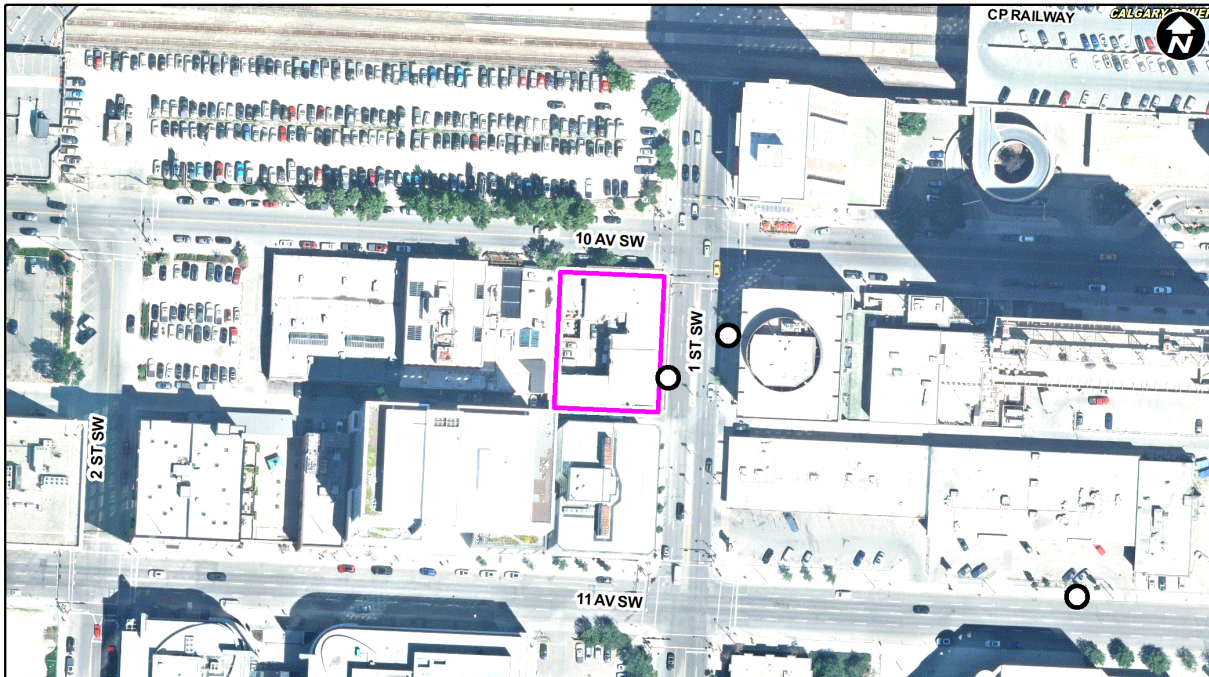
<b>Beltline</b>	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	25,129
2019 Current Population	25,129
Difference in Population (Number)	± 0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained online through the [Beltline Community Profile](#).







## Previous Council Direction

None.

## Planning Evaluation

### Land Use

The existing Centre City Mixed Use (CC-X) District accommodates a mix of commercial, residential and a limited range of light industrial uses. The CC-X District is intended for mixed use developments that are sensitive to adjacent residential uses and provide for a building form that is street-oriented at grade.

In this density area of Beltline, The CC-X District allows for a maximum base density of 8.0 FAR for mixed use developments with the opportunity for a density bonus of up to 12.0 FAR to achieve public benefit and amenities within the community. There is no maximum height in the CC-X District.

### Development and Site Design

#### *Site and Building Design*

The proposed mixed-use tower would provide 120 dwelling units in an 18-storey building (73.15 metres in height) and a two-storey commercial/retail podium and an underground parkade, which includes historic commemorative elements and some material re-use in its design.

**Figure 1: East Rendered Elevation from 1 Street SW**



**Figure 2: North Rendered Elevation from 10 Avenue SW**



### ***Heritage Significance***

The proposed development includes the demolition of two buildings, including a two-storey 1905 Edwardian-style commercial building known as the [Western \(Underwood\) Block](#), and an adjoining two-storey wood-frame structure known as the [Calgary Gas Co. Workshop](#), which have been listed on Calgary's [Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources](#) (Inventory). The Inventory is a record of sites which have been assessed by [Heritage Calgary](#) (Civic Partner) according to Council-approved policy. Although listing on the Inventory does not legally regulate a property without further voluntary action by the property owner (e.g. requesting designation as a Municipal Historic Resource), conservation of these sites is considered to be to the greater benefit of Calgarians and is supported through policy.

The Western (Underwood) Block is understood to be a highly significant heritage resource, both to the surrounding Beltline community, and to Calgary as a whole. In addition to the value of its architectural style, the Western (Underwood) Block is directly associated with builder Thomas Underwood, a former City Councillor, Mayor, and notable advocate for Calgary's early immigrant Chinese community. The Western (Underwood) Block and the adjoining Calgary Gas Co. Workshop are the only known extant buildings directly associated with a second Chinatown

location which briefly existed in Beltline (prior to the founding of the third, and current location) – offering a rare opportunity for place-based conservation and/or recognition of this important cultural heritage.

Originally constructed as a light-industrial annex to the Western (Underwood) Block, the Calgary Gas Co. Workshop later gained significant importance for the LGBTQ2+ community associated with the long-term occupancy of the “Backlot” bar as a safe gathering space in Beltline. The Calgary Gas Co. Workshop is characterized by the following elements of building massing, form and historic materials:

- design and finished appearance as a rectangular, wood-frame, wood-clad annex, with uncommon vernacular elements (such as the side-slope roof)
- slight ‘false front’ with wooden façade rising to form a parapet; and
- wooden tongue-and-groove siding on north, west and south elevations, metal cladding on east elevation.

In addition, the Western (Underwood) Block and Calgary Gas Co. Workshop represent the lynchpin corner connecting the two remaining stretches of commercial heritage concentrations in the Beltline: 1 Street SW (to the south) and 10 Avenue SW (to the west). Through The City’s “Heritage Value Analysis & Conservation Tool Development Focused on Commercial Streets” report, completed in 2022, this concentration of commercial heritage resources was found to be one of the most productive and valuable in the city. Within this concentration, the heritage buildings provide 86.2% of the overall economic value (\$9.5M per acre) and support 94.8 jobs per acre—values well above average, only exceeded by Stephen Avenue. The value of the area also created economic lift for the surrounding properties (known as the Heritage Halo). The report found that *“any negative impacts on the current [historic] conditions would have a deleterious economic effect. Similarly...a loss or degradation of any of the heritage areas would result in a social cost, and commensurate economic loss, to the citizens of Calgary”*.

The demolition and redevelopment of the Western (Underwood) Block and Calgary Gas Co. Workshop will result in the fragmentation of this large and productive historic streetscape into two, smaller areas that will be more vulnerable to demolition and unsympathetic development.

Administration worked early on to explore the formal designation and conservation of both buildings and offered incentives including The City of Calgary’s Historic Resource Conservation Grant Program, and Density Bonusing policies in the ARP. The applicant was unwilling and there is no policy in place to compel them, so the focus of the review shifted from full conservation to material conservation and heritage commemoration. At the request of Administration, the applicant provided a building condition and material salvage report prepared by a professional with demonstrated heritage experience that highlighted the opportunity for salvage and re-use of existing sandstone and leaded glass. The brick was determined to be inappropriate for re-use.

Through an iterative process between the applicant and Administration the plans have been amended to include several heritage commemorative elements related to the architectural significance of the buildings themselves and the cultural and activity significance to the Chinese and LGBTQ2+ communities. These proposed elements include:

- Commemorative wayfinding signage;



- A commemorative wall/story-telling element for the Second Chinatown;
- Commemorative Backlot/LGBTQ2+ mural wall;
- Enhance transit shelter with a commemorative plaque for the Western (Underwood) Block;
- Re-use of salvaged sandstone in proposed cladding, sandstone bench and sandstone transit shelter;
- Re-use of salvaged transom leaded glass element; and,
- A paving inlay in the public realm highlighting the former Western (Underwood) Block and Calgary Gas Co. Workshop storefront footprints and storefront locations.

These items are further detailed in Figures 3-5 below.

**Figure 3: Northeast Corner**



**Figure 4: Northwest Corner**



**Figure 5: Southeast Corner**





**Figure 6: Enhanced Transit Shelter with Heritage Commemoration Elements**



## Urban Design & Open Space

The proposed development was reviewed by the Urban Design & Open Space team at both Pre-application (PE2022-01860) and Development Permit stages.

Considering the challenges of developing a relatively small site and the heritage resources on the site, together with the potential placemaking opportunities, any new development of exceptional architectural merit, that may not closely align with the ARP policies but meet the spirit and intent of the 6 Elements of Urban Design in the MDP, could be recognized. Based on this, Administration has been open during the negotiation process to provide a level of flexibility to support the high-density, residential mixed-use development at this prominent location. For example, Administration has been working together with the applicant to resolve the following design-related concerns:

- inadequate tower separation distances;
- grade separated pedestrian realm along 1 Street SW;
- narrow and cluttered pedestrian realm along 1 Street SW;
- incoherent design approach to podium and tower; and
- flat podium design with irregular spacing and limited articulation or definition.

The existing streetscape pattern along 1 Street SW and 10 Avenue SW is established by the Western (Underwood) Block and Calgary Gas Co. Workshop buildings with a specific building scale, spacing of entrances and storefront width typical of the heritage structures in the Warehouse District. Earlier versions of the proposed podium design, with its flatness, lack of detail, and irregular spacing of openings did not meet the expectations conveyed by the relevant ARP policies.



Administration has worked together with the applicant team on an improved podium design in terms of materiality, façade composition, and visual interest at the pedestrian level which reinforces the existing streetscape pattern by incorporating the following elements:

- podium façade modulation defined by the recessions of the curtain walls with a regular rhythm of piers and arches that define the retail bays and entrances.  
improved compatibility of building materials with the surrounding Warehouse District, along with lighting, blade signage and other details offering visual interest at street level (e.g., Tyndall stone along the podium, brass return details at the recesses, sandstone at the base of the arches, leaded glass over the residential entrance);
- increased frequency of storefront entrances;
- a better accentuated residential entrance that is distinguished from the retail entrances;
- design emphasis on the northeast building/street corner to create a stronger visual sense of building's presence at the street level; and
- a more robust approach to heritage commemoration/interpretation, including select historic material salvage/re-use (sandstone at building podium and transit shelter, leaded glass above residential entrance), informational plaque integrated into transit shelter, inlay surface element indicating original footprint of the Western (Underwood) Block, freestanding & mural elements celebrating associated Chinatown and LGBTQ2+ heritage.

The Applicant's rationale and resulting revisions to the public realm, site and building design elements were deemed appropriate and to respond sufficiently to the associated ARP policies.

### ***Landscaping***

Along 1 Street SW and 10 Avenue SW, landscaping is provided by street trees in the public realm. Additional landscaped areas are provided on the second floor and rooftop amenity area of the building.

### ***Urban Design Review Panel***

The development was reviewed by Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) on 2022 December 14. The Panel recommended that the applicant consider incorporating additional public realm landscaping, paving materials, seating areas, pedestrian connections to the intersection and the prominence of the corner. They noted the original design language of the architecture was not developed holistically and reads as three buildings added on top of one another. The Panel complimented the podium design, but suggested further refinements could be made to the tower to improve all elevations and its skyline presence. The Panel recommended providing a broader range of unit types that can invite a wide demographic of residents and called for a strong and exemplary demonstration of sustainability initiatives that are echoed and expected among other high-rise projects. The applicant made refinements to the design and provided additional rationale where they did not, which are included in the Applicant Response to UDRP Comments (Attachment 5).

### **Transportation**

#### ***Site Access and Traffic***

Pedestrian access to the site is from the adjacent sidewalks on 1 Street SW and 10 Avenue SW. Vehicular traffic and loading are from the rear lane.

#### ***Transit***

The site is well served by Calgary Transit. The southbound stop adjacent to the site on 1 Street SW serves routes #7 (Marda Loop), #13 (Altadore), #90 (Bridgeland / University of Calgary) and

#449 (Eau Claire / Parkhill). The site is 400m (seven-minute walk) from the Red/ Blue LRT lines and 300m (five-minute walk) from a future Green Line station.

### ***Motor Vehicle Parking***

Parking for residents, visitors and commercial uses are in the underground parkade (provided at a rate of 0.425 per dwelling unit). The site will provide 60 motor vehicle parking stalls in the underground parkade, 51 of which will be dedicated to the building residents (at a rate of 0.425 per dwelling unit) and the remaining nine spaces to residential visitor and commercial uses.

### ***Bicycle Parking Facilities***

154 Class 1 bicycle parking stalls are provided on site (1.25 stalls per dwelling unit). Sixteen Class 2 bicycle parking are being proposed along the site frontage on 1 Street SW and 10 Avenue SW.

### ***Curbside Management***

There is a no-stopping zone (except for buses) along the site frontage on 1 Street SW. Two-hour pay parking and a loading zones are available on 10 Avenue SW. A new loading space is being provided on site off the rear lane.

### **Environmental Site Considerations**

At this time, there are no known outstanding environmental concerns associated with the site and/or proposal; however, considering the historical land use at the site and adjacent properties, the applicant shall provide a Soil Management Plan that addresses how potential soil impacts will be identified and mitigated during excavation of the underground parkade.

### **Utilities and Servicing**

Water, sanitary and storm (deep) utilities exist adjacent to the site. Servicing requirements are being reviewed as part of the Development Site Servicing Plan (DSSP) application. An approved or tentative legal plan will be required as part of the DSSP review. A sanitary servicing study has been accepted by the Utility Specialist group and the downstream capacity is sufficient for this development.

## **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 development permit 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)**

The site is located within the Greater Downtown as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure in the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). This area is made up of diverse and unique "neighbourhoods" focused around the Downtown Core and includes Stampede Park. The Greater Downtown is well connected with the rest of the city by multiple routes on the Primary

Transit Network and high quality pedestrian connections within and beyond its boundaries. The proposed development is in keeping with the relevant MDP policies.

### **Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)**

The proposed development includes electric vehicle capable stalls in the parkade. This feature is in alignment with F1.1 Implement local and regional public electric vehicle Level 2 and 3 fast charging infrastructure of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#), and will contribute to lower emissions.

### **Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan: Part 1 (Statutory – 2006)**

The [Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan: Part 1](#) (ARP) identifies the subject site as part of the Mixed-Use Urban Area as well as the Warehouse District.

The Urban Mixed-Use Area policies allow for a wide range and mix of uses in many possible configurations, both within buildings and within the local context resulting in vibrant, pedestrian streets. They provide for uses that serve the local and broader population and aim to create streetscapes that respond to the context of the particular area, that have buildings that are built to and frame the sidewalk, and that have a high degree of permeability between interior and exterior space through the use of transparent windows and doors.

The Warehouse District policies of the ARP specify design guidelines for new development to be compatible with and complement the existing historic warehouse building forms of the area. New development should respect the existing street wall heights and cornice lines through building massing, setbacks or other architectural detailing. The use of brick and masonry, in a colour palette that is representative of the warehouse era, is strongly encouraged to be used on the building base with the addition and integration of appropriate contemporary building materials. The use of veneer or artificial masonry products is discouraged.

In keeping with the ARP policies, Administration requested a Pedestrian Wind Comfort and Safety Study and Shadow Impact Analysis and have deemed the results of both studies acceptable.

The proposed development does not meet tower separation regulations above 36 metres; however, acknowledging the ability to exercise greater design control in the case of developments on small infill or constrained sites or with multiple towers as part of a comprehensive development, these separation and view plane requirements may be relaxed provided the intent of this section can be addressed to the satisfaction of the Development Authority. Administration supports a relaxation to this policy.

Administration is currently working on amending several chapters the Beltline ARP: Part 1. The proposed development is in alignment with the current and draft versions of this plan. Planning applications are being accepted for processing during the policy amendment process and are reviewed using existing legislation and Council approved policy.

### **Land Use Bylaw 1P2007**

Administration highlights the following relaxations to the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 in the table below. Administration has reviewed each relaxation individually and considers each relaxation to be acceptable for the reasons outlined in the table below.



<b>Bylaw Discrepancies</b>			
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Provided</b>	<b>Rationale for Relaxation</b>
1169 Front Setback Area	(2) The front setback area must have a minimum depth of 1.5 metres and a maximum depth of 6.0 metres for parcels located on the following streets:	Plans indicate a front setback of -0.18m (-1.32m), measured to the upper balconies, and is located in the ROW.	Administration supports a relaxation for these balcony projections located above 32 metres above grade as upper balcony extents are shifted out of the Public Realm setback along the north façade. Given the combined constraints of a right-of-way setback, a front setback, and ARP tower separation policies on the subject site, there are limited options for providing balcony space to residents of northwest corner suites.
1176 Use Area	(3.1) The maximum public area for a Restaurant: Food Service Only or Restaurant: Licensed is 300.0m <sup>2</sup>	Plans indicate the combined public area for Bays 101, 201 and 202 would have a floor area greater than 300.0m <sup>2</sup> .	Administration supports a relaxation to the maximum use area as Bay 202 is an unconditioned, not fully enclosed amenity space, similar to an Outdoor Café use. This space has a seasonal nature of this space, distribution of public area and service area for the Restaurant use will be reviewed through subsequent processes.
1175 Location of Uses within Buildings	(2) Only those uses listed in the Residential Group of Schedule A to this Bylaw, with the exception of Hotel uses, may share a hallway with residential uses.	Plans indicate a shared hallway between the Second floor Mezzanine and the common Multi-Residential Development shared spaces.	Administration supports a relaxation as the residential and commercial uses of the proposed building share access to the elevator lobby on the main and second floors. Door access control points are noted at the second-floor amenity space and residential level stair entries, restricting those areas to residential use only.

1148 Planting Requirements	(3) Deciduous trees min. caliper of 50mm, 50.0% of the provided trees must have min. caliper of 75mm	Plans indicate the number of provided trees within the subject parcel is 0 (-2)	Administration supports a relaxation as this as two of the existing street trees along 10 Avenue SW will be replaced and three trees have been provided on the roof level.
Residential Parking Stalls	Requires a minimum of 90 residential parking stalls.	Plans indicate 48 (-42) residential parking stalls.	Administration supports a relaxation as a parking study determined that the site meets 4.5 out of 5 criteria for Multi-Family Parking Reduction Policy, and the lower residential parking count is offset by the following Transportation Demand Management strategies: additional Class 1 Bike Parking, required Class 2 Bike Parking, and a Bicycle Repair Station for resident use.
Loading Stall	Requires a minimum of 2 Loading stalls.	Plans indicate 1 (-1) loading stall.	Administration supports a relaxation as a shared Loading stall is proposed to accommodate both Residential and Commercial demand. Residential and Commercial uses have differing peak loading periods, which support the shared stall approach. Additionally, Residential loading will be managed by the Property Manager to limit conflicts.
Bicycle Parking – Class 2	Requires a minimum of 16 Bicycle Parking stalls.	Plans indicate 0 (-16) Bicycle Parking stalls located on the subject parcel.	Administration supports a relaxation as the site plan includes 16 bicycle parking stalls within the “furniture zone” along 10 Avenue SW and 1 Street SW (in

			the public realm) and will be co-ordinated through a License of Occupation at the Prior to Release stage.
1152 Visibility Setback	Buildings, finished grade of a parcel and vegetation within a corner visibility triangle must not be located between 0.75m and 4.60m above the lowest elevation of the street.	Plans indicate portions of building located in the corner visibility triangle, when measured in relation to the ROW.	Administration supports a relaxation as the southeast corner of the proposed building has been revised to a curved wall, allowing for greater visibility of pedestrians from the perspective of vehicle drivers exiting the lane. Drivers have clear, unobstructed views of approaching pedestrians from the north and south, assuming a binocular field of view of 130 degrees.
1156 Screening	When a parcel shares a property line with: (b) a lane, a fence with a max. height of 2.0m must be provided for screening along the property line.	Plans do not indicate screening on the south property line.	Administration supports a relaxation as screening along the south property line would interfere with on-site vehicular paths and loading stalls, maintenance activity, and access to the emergency generator room. Given that the lane is less than 7.2m in width, and all adjacent land uses are designated CC-X, the applicant proposes no screening along the south property line.
61 Overland Flow	(1) All buildings in the overland flow area must be designed in the following manner (c) all electrical and mechanical equipment within a building must be located at or above the first floor of the building referenced in subsection (b);	Plans indicate mechanical equipment below the first floor.	Administration supports a relaxation as no mechanical equipment, aside from necessary exhaust air ducting, is located below the minimum required floor elevation of 1047.50. Areas labelled as "Mech" at parkade levels are for an exhaust well and its associated ducting.



			<p>The applicant team confirmed an overland flow main floor elevation relaxation with Administration. The proposed design will meet the following conditions of relaxation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flood gate will be installed at the parkade entrance</li> <li>- Main floor elevation will be no lower than 1047.10 m (geodetic)</li> <li>- Emergency generator will be at or above 1047.50 m (geodetic)</li> <li>- Training and annual response preparedness plan will be in place for operating the flood gate</li> <li>- Training must be provided to ensure flood gate can be put in place in the event of a flood</li> <li>- Maintenance plans for flood gate to be included</li> <li>- Annual testing of flood gate to ensure the gate is operable/ functional</li> </ul> <p>The applicant team will provide flood gate system details and protocols at the Prior to Release stage of the Development Permit review process. Flood gate to be installed at top of parkade entrance ramp. Refer to revised sheets DP.100, DP.300, DP.301, DP.400, DP.401 for floor elevation updates, based on the proposed relaxation.</p>
73 Rules Governing All Signs	(9) Signs, sign supports and structures for signs must not be located in the required road rights-of-way setbacks as	Plans indicate a projecting sign located in a setback as referenced in section 53 Table 1.	Administration supports a relaxation as Regulation 73(11) provides conditional allowance of projecting signage in a road rights-of-

	referenced in section 53 Table 1.		<p>way setback, if the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) the sign owner agrees in writing to remove the sign from its location within 30 days of being asked to remove it by the City;</li><li>b) the sign will have a minimum clearance of 4.6 metres over a City owned driveway, lane or alley; and</li><li>c) the sign will have a minimum clearance of 2.4 metres in any instance not referenced in subsection (b).</li></ul> <p>The applicant has confirmed that signs are to be removed within 30 days of City request, and the proposed signage is located 4 meters above grade.</p>
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