

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

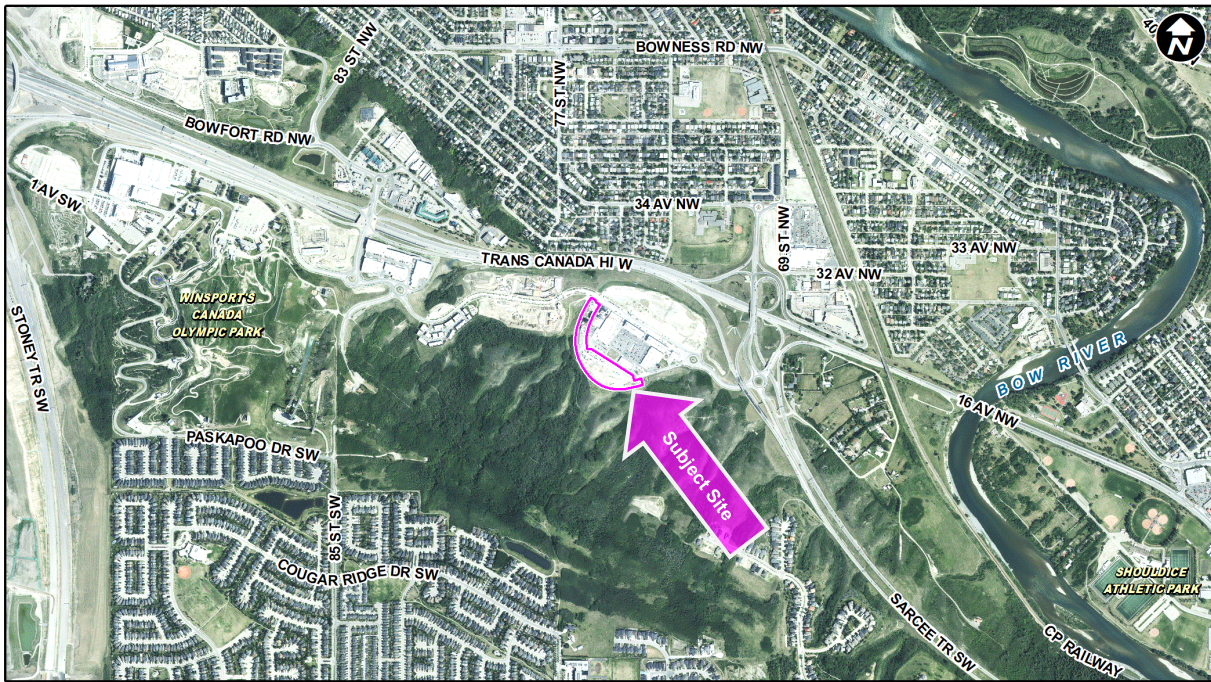
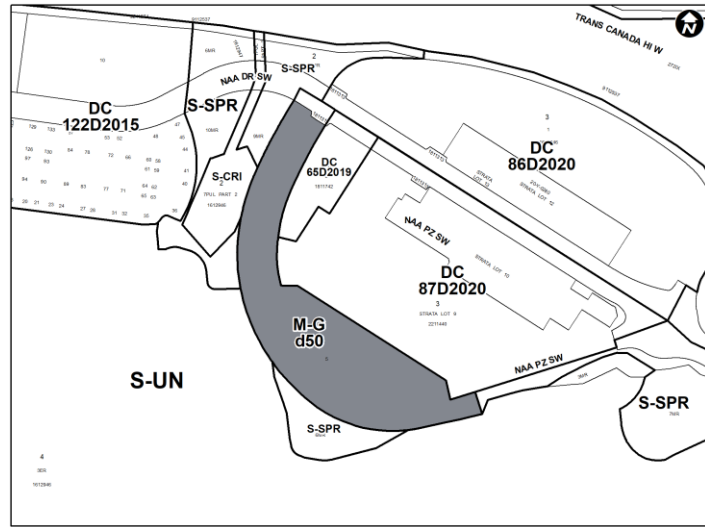
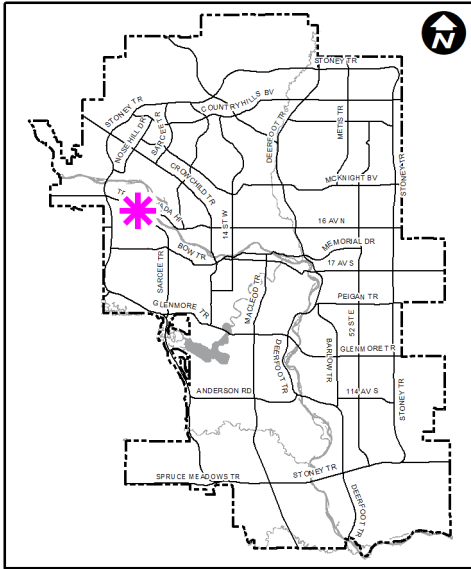
The subject site is located in the southwest community of Medicine Hill and is bound by Na'a Drive to the north and wraps along the southern limits of an existing mixed-use development. The site is also situated south of the Trans Canada Highway and west of Sarcee Trail SW. The parcel is irregularly shaped with highly complex topography and is approximately 2.58 hectares (6.37 acres) in size. Currently, the site is vacant and undeveloped. Vehicular access to the site would be from Na'a Drive SW.

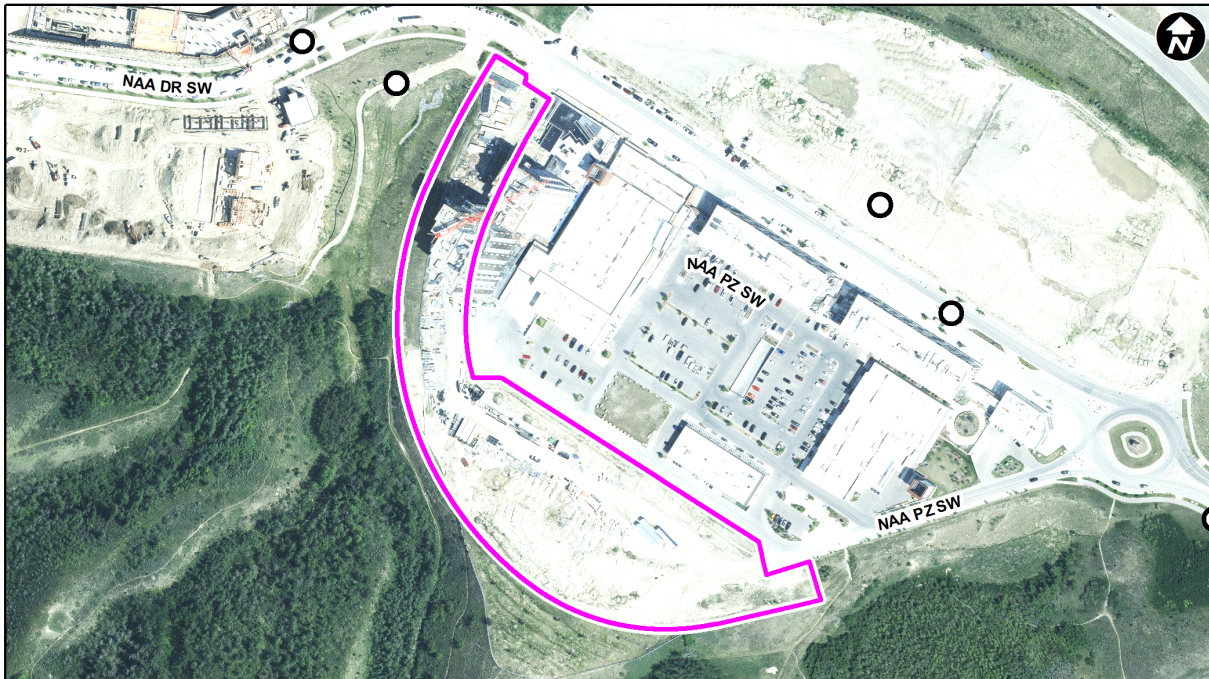
Surrounding development is mainly characterized by a mixed-use commercial plaza directly adjacent to the north which is comprised of a grocery store, dental office, residential apartments and other retail services. Further west, within 950 metres to 1,300 metres (approximately a 15 to 22-minute range in walking distance) from the subject site, are developing multi-residential sites and developed commercial sites such as Canada Olympic Park (Winsport), Goodlife Fitness, and other retail/restaurant establishments. The Paskapoo Slopes natural area, directly south to the site, is a culturally significant area that contains several archeological sites. The natural area will be protected from the proposed development.

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 residential area.

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The subject site is designated as Multi-Residential – At Grade Housing (M-Gd50) District which is intended to accommodate multi-residential development of low height and medium density in the developing area. The M-G District allows for a building form with at least three or more units in a building having separate at-grade direct access. With a density modifier of 50 units per hectare based on the area of this site, a maximum of 128 dwelling units is allowed. The proposed development contains 128 residential units in building forms that are supported by the M-G district. The district also allows for a maximum building height of 13.0 metres (approximately three storeys). The buildings proposed in this application are less than 13.0 metres in height.

Development and Site Design

This application proposes 20 townhouse buildings and two outdoor common amenity spaces which are to be developed in 42 phases. Key aspects of the development are described below.

Site and Building Design

The 20 proposed townhouse-style buildings range between two and three storeys in height and provide a total of 128 dwelling units.

Building types 1-4 (three storey, six side-by-side townhouse format) will not have attached garages, while building types 5-12 (three storey, six side-by-side townhouse format) will have

attached garages. The units at the end of these buildings will each contain three bedrooms (a total of 24 dwelling units) while the interior units will each contain two bedrooms (a total of 48 dwelling units). Buildings 1-12 will also be oriented to have direct frontage onto the private road.

Building types 13-20 (four back-to-back townhouse format), which are clustered around the central amenity space to the east, will not have direct frontage onto the private road. Each dwelling unit within these buildings will also contain three bedrooms (a total of 32 dwelling units).

These multi-residential forms provide a diverse range of housing options within close proximity to a diverse commercial area. The front door accesses to the dwelling units are oriented in manner that enhances the public realm within the site, through direct grade access to the onsite pedestrian network. The colour palette for the development includes white, grey, sage, blue, black, bright and dark tones, with a design that articulates the façade and emphasizes the architectural character of the buildings.

Four vehicle canopy structures are proposed along the north side of the private road for buildings 13-20. These structures are also being used as a modulation to break up the visual impact of large surface parking area within the development. The site's main vehicular entrance is to be located at the north side (adjacent to Na'a Drive SW). A secondary vehicle access will also be available through the adjacent development from the southeast.

Public Realm and Outdoor Amenity Spaces

To enhance and activate the public realm, direct pedestrian access will be provided for all units to connect to the public realm within the site. Pathways within the site will also provide connection to the commercial development to the north, to Na'a Drive SW, and to the two public gathering spaces will be provided (at the east and the southeast areas of the site). The east common amenity space will contain a playground, dog park, community garden, vegetative landscaping, community shed and seating area. The southeast common amenity area will be a reflection space with vegetative landscaping, an interpretative sign, and sandstone boulders that would also function as seatings.

Landscaping

Public and private landscaping has been designed to provide visual interest at the interior of the site using raised planters, native and low water vegetative species. Street trees along the private road are proposed to enhance the public realm and enable a traffic-calmed street. Facing the adjacent commercial development to the east is a chain link fence (1.20 metres in height) along the property line. Some portions of the chain link fence are attached to retaining walls between 0.15 metres and 0.56 metres in height. Drought-resistant trees and shrubs are also proposed on the edge of the property line to soften the visual impact of the fence and retaining wall. Overall, the proposed landscaping elements are anticipated to complement the built form and contribute positively to the slope-adaptive site design.

Historical Context

The Paskapoo Slopes are known to contain First Nations artifacts of Blackfoot origin that have a significant archeological history. A former buffalo kill site is in the vicinity, which was one of the largest in the Calgary area.

In alignment with updated *Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (ASP)* policies and the outline plan, which were approved in 2015 (LOC2014-0080), Traditional Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous Elders have been engaged in the design of Medicine Hill.

These engagements informed the ASP policies, which contain specific site guidance that is currently reflected in the site design, public art, and landscaping of developments in the Medicine Hill community.

The cultural and historical significance of the area is represented in this application using material palettes reflecting colourings of the moose, coyote, buffalo and the natural habitat. Two interpretative signs/panels (one in the community garden and the second in the reflective seating area) are proposed and intended to be storytelling panels with content to be developed with key Indigenous collaborators. Additional Indigenous representations are proposed to be supplemented with the use of rock and clay landscaping elements to honour mother earth, playground to highlight the importance of children in the society, including local/natural vegetative species like saskatoon, paper birch, creeping juniper, blue fox willow and western chokecherry that would be meaningful to the Blackfoot culture.

Urban Design Review

The applicant presented the proposed development to the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) on 2023 November 29. The Panel suggested improvements to the legibility and connectivity of the pedestrian circulation within the site, the landscaping amenity and adaptation of the site design to the slope of the site.

Administration worked with the applicant to revise the development permit drawings in response to both the UDRP and Urban Design and Open Space comments. The applicant made changes to the proposed development by incorporating a slope-adaptive site design and increasing landscaping to enhance the public realm. Specific changes included:

- an improved pedestrian network;
- the addition of public outdoor spaces that will be interconnected by pathways;
- sidewalks with landscape buffers that would enable traffic-calmed street and create a vibrant urban experience for residents and visitors;
- additional native plantings identified through the Indigenous engagement; and
- incorporation of indigenous history interpretive panels in the central amenity area.

Transportation

The site fronts onto Na'a Drive SW, which is a collector road that connects to the Trans Canada Highway on the west and Sarcee Trail SW on the east. Pedestrian connectivity in the neighbourhood is provided through the sidewalks along Na'a Drive SW.

Transit service to Winsport, Crestmont, Market Mall, University of Calgary and Crowchild CTrain station is provided by bus Route 108 (Paskapoo Slopes), located on Na'a Drive SW approximately 130 metres (a two-minute walk) from the subject site.

The site has direct access to the Always Available for All Ages & Abilities (5A) Network through the Na'a Drive pathway system. There are no parking restrictions on Na'a Drive SW currently.

Environmental Site Considerations

There are no environmental concerns to note.

Utilities and Servicing

Public water, sanitary and storm sewer mains exist in the adjacent public rights-of-way and have sufficient capacity to support this development.

City-Led Outreach

Administration facilitated an online engagement meeting on behalf of the Applicant to discuss this development permit application with the Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society (PSPS) on 2023 November 16. Administration's recommendation for approval of this application is based on the following considerations in response to the PSPS comments:

- setbacks – Administration has worked with the applicant to minimize the impact of the townhouses that are setback less than 7.5 metres from the property line shared with the natural area. Sufficient landscape buffering will be available between the rear of the buildings and the perimeter of the property line. Storm drainage will also be contained within the property limits.
- fencing – the fencing along the southern perimeter of the development will be wholly contained within the property limits. Notes have also been added on the development permit plans to restrict access (no gates) to the adjacent Paskapoo Slopes natural area. The first phase of the development (Phase A) includes the construction of the fencing. This is also supplemented with conditions of approval that require fencing to be completed prior to occupancy.
- landscaping - the landscaping at the rear yard of buildings located at the southern interface of the Paskapoo Slopes natural area will be native plantings only (drought tolerant sod). Notes included on the development permit plans, including conditions of approval specifically require that that protection fencing be installed adjacent to the natural area prior to construction.
- surface parking – the proposed number of parking stalls, including the percentage of soft and hard landscaping, meet the bylaw requirement. No relaxation was required. The review of the Development and Site Servicing Plan (DSSP2024-0042) and the grading plans are currently ongoing. The review of these plans will ensure there are no negative impacts resulting from stormwater loading and that water run-off absorption will be contained within the site.

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 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)

Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP) identifies the subject site as being within the Developing Residential Area, and is referenced as a Planned Greenfield Community with an Area Structure Plan. The MDP supports the development of complete and diverse neighbourhoods which provide a range of housing choices including a mix of built forms and ownership tenures at densities that support transit viability, local commercial and other services. This typology promotes resilient neighbourhoods that feature architectural and natural

elements that contribute to a local identity and sense of place.

This application proposes a medium-density housing type, which aligns with the policies of the MDP.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

Administration has reviewed this application in relation to the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#) programs and actions. The applicant has proposed the following climate measures:

- the installation of electric vehicle charging stations in four visitor stalls and 48 electric-vehicle-ready wiring/conduit (within the dwelling units with attached garages) in line with the actions set out in Program 4: Electric and Low-Emission Vehicles;
- 20 solar-ready buildings that can accommodate roof panels for electric power generation; and
- low-water and drought-tolerant landscaping.

Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2005)

The [Canada Olympic Park and Adjacent Lands Area Structure Plan](#) (ASP) identifies the subject site as 'Commercial District' land use classification (Map 2: Land Use Concept).

The ASP land use policies support commercial, retail and mixed-use residential development that serve as a draw for residents from surrounding communities and provide everyday services and amenities for local residents. The ASP policies further that, public art, signage, and other urban design elements are to reflect the cultural and historic significance of the area to the Blackfoot people.

The composition and density of the proposed development aligns with the ASP. As density is regulated on a wider basis beyond the subject site, the 128 units proposed by this application will not impact the maximum allowed for the residential district and will allow other areas to develop to their full potential. The site is identified as 'Development Block Cell J' is located within the three-storey low-profile height allowance zone (Map 6 – Building Height of the ASP).

The proposed development meets the policies outlined in the ASP.

Land Use Bylaw 1P2007

Administration has reviewed the applicable bylaw rules of the M-G District individually and considers the proposed development to be acceptable. No bylaw relaxation is required.