

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

This proposed development is located in Downtown West End on the southwest corner of 9 Avenue SW and 11 Street SW which serves as a gateway into Greater Downtown. The parcel is approximately 0.74 hectares (1.83 acres) in size and approximately 150 metres wide by 49 metres deep. The site is currently developed with a single storey commercial building operated by Staples Office Supplies with at grade parking and vehicular access from both 9 Avenue SW and 11 Street SW.

Surrounding development is characterized by public open space, amenities and a mix of commercial and residential development. Millennium Park and Mewata Armoury are directly north of the site across 9 Avenue SW. To the south is a rail corridor, adjacent to the west is an existing one storey commercial office building and across 11 Street SW to the east is the vacated Metro Ford Car dealership. The West Village Towers high density mixed-use development is located on the northeast corner of the 9 Avenue SW and 11 Street SW intersection.

The subject site is two blocks south of the Downtown West-Kerby LRT Station along the main LRT line running through downtown Calgary. It is also near other transit stops, bike lanes, the riverfront, and a multitude of other amenities in walkable distance, including the Contemporary Calgary Art Gallery and Co-op Midtown grocery store, both approximately 200 metres away (three-minute walking distance).

Community Peak Population Table

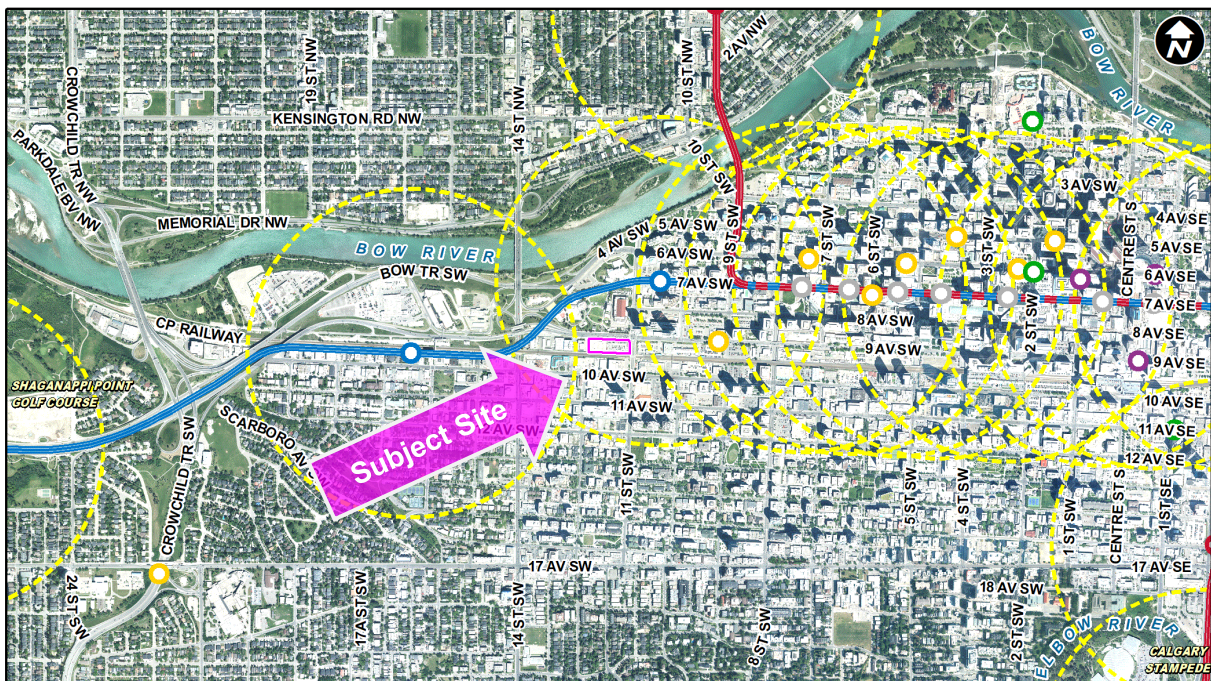
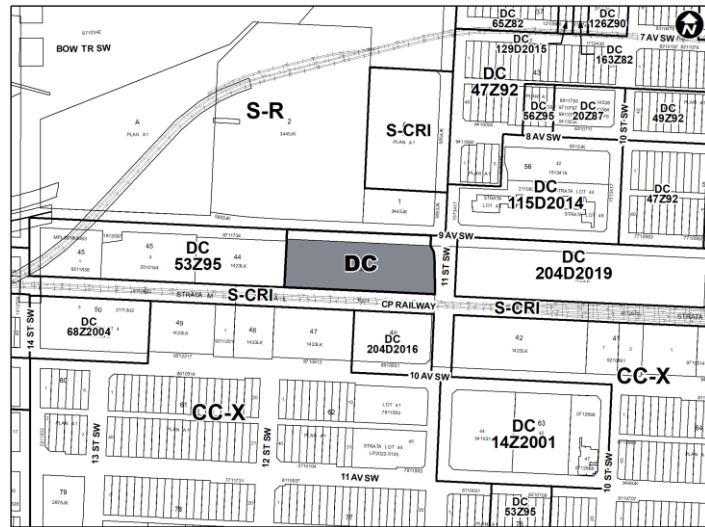
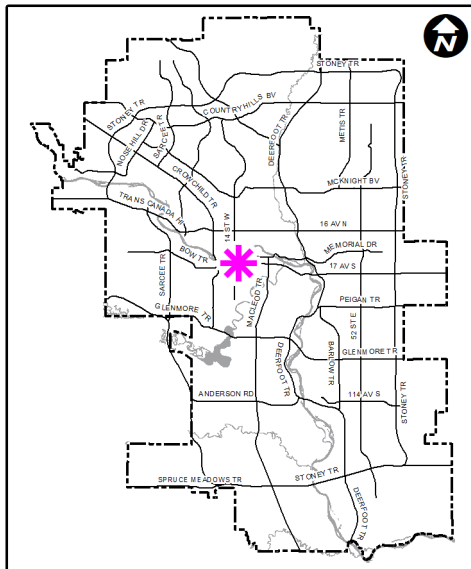
As identified below, the community of Downtown West End reached its peak population in 2021.

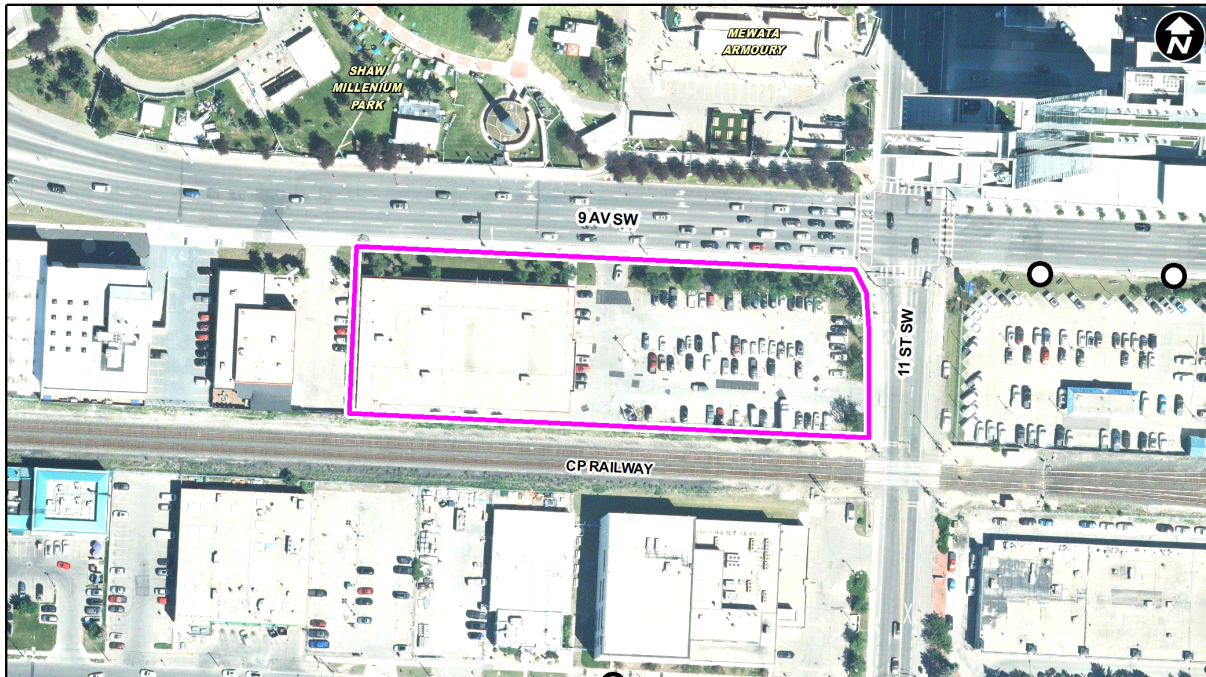
Downtown West End	
Peak Population Year	2021
Peak Population	2,825
2021 Current Population	2,825
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: 2021 Federal Census

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

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The existing Direct Control (DC) District ([Bylaw 53Z95](#)) is based on the rules of Land Use Bylaw 2P80 allowing for limited scale mix of commercial, light industrial and residential uses which are compatible in the downtown area.

The proposed DC District is based on the Centre City Mixed Use District (CC-X) of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007. The intent of the DC District is to accommodate a distinctive and innovative built form that complies with sunlight protection rules, allow a maximum density through the provision of public benefit and amenities within Downtown West End, and guidance that will provide for a high-quality public realm.

This DC District allows for a base floor area ratio (FAR) of 5.0 up to a maximum FAR of 8.0 if the additional 3.0 FAR are used for residential uses. A further increase to 12.0 FAR may be achieved through the provision of public amenities, through the density bonus system, as identified in Schedule C of the proposed DC District. The proposed DC District does not include a maximum building height requirement. Although a maximum FAR of 12.0 is possible, additional rules within the proposed DC District will ensure that a high-quality built form considers the subject site's proximity to Millennium Park, the rail corridor, and the future 11 Street SW underpass project.

In conjunction with the *West Village Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)* sunlight protection rules, the proposed DC District further defines acceptable potential shadowing based on sun-shadow and massing studies undertaken by both Administration and the applicant. The rules will guide the future redevelopment of the subject parcel by influencing the height, density, architectural elements, massing and setbacks. The sunlight protection area as shown in Schedule D of the proposed DC District ensures areas of Millennium Park are not shadowed between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. between March 21 and September 21. While there is no maximum building height proposed, the massing studies have demonstrated that a maximum density of 12.0 FAR can be accommodated while maintaining full compliance with the sunlight protection rules.

In order to accommodate higher density mixed-use development adjacent to the rail corridor and the applicable *Development Next to Freight Rail Corridors Policy*, specific rules are contained in the proposed DC District to guide design, location and floor area exemption of above-grade parking. These rules also provide more flexibility to ensure noise susceptible uses such as dwelling units are located above a certain height.

In acknowledgement of the future 11 Street SW underpass project and gateway nature of the site, rules are also proposed to ensure that a high-quality corner treatment and interface between the private and public realm are achieved. This includes a larger setback on the 11 Street SW side and language to promote improved surface treatments, visual interest and accessibility.

Pursuant to Section 20 of the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, this application for a DC District has been reviewed by Administration, and the use of a Direct Control District is necessary to provide for the applicant's proposed development due to the unique characteristics and site constraints attributed to the site.

This proposal allows for the applicant's intended vision of a mixed-use development to be fulfilled and high-quality public realm to be delivered by utilizing a bonus system with a CC-X District base to accommodate various building forms and uses influenced by sunlight protection rules. Given the location of the subject site is within the downtown area, Commercial Residential District (CR20-C20/R20) was an option considered as a proposed land use base district. However, the intent of the CR20 District is more suitable for sites within the downtown core. The rules and bonus provisions of the CC-X District, found in the Beltline, were deemed more appropriate based on the site's location one block north of the Beltline on the west end of downtown. The same result could not be achieved using a standard land use district in the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007.

The proposed DC District includes a rule that allows the Development Authority to relax Section 7 of the DC District Bylaw. Section 7 incorporates the rules of the CC-X District that is the base district found in Bylaw 1P2007, where the DC District does not provide for specific regulation. In a standard district, many of these rules can be relaxed if they meet the test for relaxation of Bylaw 1P2007. The intent of the proposed DC District rule is to ensure that rules of Bylaw 1P2007 that regulate aspects of development that are not specifically regulated in this DC District can also be relaxed in the same way that they would be in a standard district. Site specific rules for floor plate restrictions, building separation and setbacks, architectural elements, motor vehicle and bicycle parking stall requirements are also listed as rules that may be relaxed, subject to the Development Authority finding criteria of Section 36 in the Land Use Bylaw being satisfied.

Development and Site Design

The rules of the DC District along with policies of the ARP, specifically the sunlight protection area rules, will provide guidance for future site development including building massing, height, landscaping, and parking. The sunlight protection area rules shown in Schedule D of the proposed DC District will be a requirement in determining the allowable built form on the site. Additional items that will be considered through the development permit process include, but are not limited to:

- floor plate variations and street wall and façade articulation;
- integration of the development and commercial uses within the public realm area shared with the future 11 Street SW underpass project;
- ensuring high-quality finishes and materials that are visually distinctive are used at this prominent gateway location; and
- architectural elements that may project into a setback area such as colonnades and other features that may improve the public realm.

Historical Context

The Mewata Armoury is in close proximity of the subject site located at 801 – 11 Street SW. It is one of two armouries constructed in Alberta during the First World War and is historically significant for its architectural value and for its association with Canada's military and war efforts. It continues to be used by the Canadian Military. It is a designated Provincial Historic Resource and a designated National Historic Site.

The proposed development does not affect Mewata Armoury from a heritage value or protected character-defining element perspective. The sun-shadow massing studies show a limited impact on the building midday on September 21 only.

Urban Design & Open Space

The Urban Design & Open Space team advised on including guidance which would encourage an architectural form and massing strategy which would meet the shadow regulations in an innovative way. They also focused on encouraging articulation and architectural features which would add scale, detail and visual interest to the street walls in response to the high visibility and gateway location of the site. Activation of the frontages and corner treatment along 9 Avenue SW and 11 Street SW will be required in anticipation of the future 11 Street SW underpass project, along with a high-quality of design and materials for the public and private realms and appropriate screening of above-grade parking.

Transportation

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is available from 9 Avenue SW and 11 Street SW. There is no lane access to the site due to adjacency to the Canadian Pacific Kanas City rail corridor. A future condition due to the 11 Street SW underpass project and possible closure of 11 Street SW to vehicles may limit access to a right in right out access off 9 Avenue SW only.

A Transportation Impact Statement was submitted by the applicant in support of the application. The document was reviewed and accepted by Administration.

The subject site is well served by the City's existing bicycle network. There are on-street bikeways on 8 Avenue SW and on 11 Street SW, and the Bow River pathway is approximately 400 metres away.

The site is located two blocks south of the Downtown West-Kerby LRT Station and is also well served by Calgary Transit bus service. Route 65 (Market Mall/Downtown West) stops at 11 Street SW and 8 Avenue SW. Stops for Route 22 (Richmond Road), Route 66 (Lakeview), Route 304 (MAX Yellow) are all within 400 metres of the subject site.

Based on the development's location on the primary bicycle network and Always Available for All Ages and Abilities Network (5A Network), it was recommended that the Applicant include additional bike parking (both class 1 and class 2) above the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw to support employees and residents in choosing alternative modes of transportation. To serve the anticipated needs of a development in this location, a minimum of 1.5 class 1 bicycle parking stalls per unit are required.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental considerations were identified.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer mains are available to service the subject site. Details of site servicing, as well as appropriate stormwater management will be considered and reviewed at the development permit stage.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

Administration's recommendation is aligned with the policy direction of the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#), which directs population growth in the region to cities 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 and policy amendment 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 – 2020)

The subject site is situated in the Greater Downtown area as shown on Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). This application is in alignment with the vision in the MDP for the Greater Downtown communities which includes mixed-use areas with high-density residential, that are vibrant destinations, connected with great streets and transit opportunities that are truly complete communities. These communities offer a variety of housing choices, diverse employment opportunities, are distinct neighbourhoods and have great public spaces for residents and Calgarians alike.

The MDP identifies the subject site as a gateway since it is a major entry point into the Greater Downtown. These sites are to be celebrated entranceways using distinctive urban design features, lighting, enhanced vegetation.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

This application does not include any specific actions that address the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#). Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate strategies will be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

Greater Downtown Plan (Non-Statutory 2021)

This application is supported by [Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan](#) as it will help to strengthen Downtown West End as a community that has variety in housing choice, a significant increase in commercial opportunities for residents and the broader public as well as will help to address the need for public realm improvements.

Development Next to Freight Rail Corridor Policy (Non-Statutory – 2018)

The parcel is located adjacent to a freight rail corridor as defined in the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 and is subject to the [Development Next to Freight Rail Corridors Policy](#). The purpose of the policy is to proactively manage the risk of development adjacent to freight rail corridors and ensure a high quality of life and facilitates responsible development. The policy guides and evaluates new and redevelopment applications from a physical risk and noise perspective. The policy does not prohibit development adjacent to the corridor but requires additional consideration for mitigating the possible risks. In addition to the rules acknowledging this policy in the proposed DC District rules, further consideration will also be applied at the development permit stage.

West Village Area Redevelopment Plan (Statutory – 2010)

The [West Village Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP) outlines many policies to guide the proposed development, particularly built form and urban design, sunlight preservation and higher buildings to be strategically located on sites that are chosen for their landmark potential. The ARP currently identifies the subject site within a Special Study Area precinct. This area flanking the rail corridor presents unique development challenges and opportunities in terms of the potential land uses, building forms, public spaces and crossings.

In order to support the proposed redesignation, amendments to Map 5.1, 5.2 and 5.4 and Table 5.1 include:

- Map 5.1 accommodates a land use typology change from 'Special Study Area' to 'Gateway Precinct.' Gateway precinct sites are defined as adjacent to major transportation infrastructure and well situated to accommodate higher densities and a wide range of uses in signature buildings.
- Map 5.2 and Table 5.1 acknowledge the allowable density at a minimum 2.0 FAR and maximum 12.0 FAR.
- Map 5.4 outlines the allowable height as per the proposed land use based on the massing studies influencing the sunlight protection areas.

The ARP amendment will allow the proposed land use typology to fit within the Gateway Precinct to allow for higher densities and uses in a signature building.