

Applicant Submission

2024 July 09

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Updated Applicant Submission

On behalf of Crescent Heights Optometry Inc., O2 is proposing to amend the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) for a change of use for a commercial unit located at 116, 151 4 Street NE, located in the ground floor of the Minto "Era" building in Crescent Heights.

Crescent Heights Optometry Inc is seeking to use a ground floor retail space for an upscale vintage wine market retailer. The future establishment will sell luxury spirits and vintage wine not typically sold at a liquor depot, ultimately serving a specific clientele unlike a 'catch-all' liquor store that sells only standard spirits, beer and wine and may be more prone to attracting undesirable behavior from patrons.

The site is currently located within the 300-metre separation distance to an existing liquor store, Bridgeland Liquor Store. To enable the change of use, O2 is proposing to amend the existing Direct Control District (9D2015) to remove the limiting separation distance of 300 metres between Liquor Stores under Section 225 (e) and 40(h) of the Land Use Bylaw.

Site Context

The property borders two neighbourhoods of Bridgeland/Riverside and Crescent Heights at 4 Street NE, south of 1 Avenue NE. The site is well-situated to support a future upscale wine and liquor merchant with on-site residents living in the Minto ERA building and nearby development applications (LOC2024-0166, DP2024-02583 and DP2024-04008) proposing new multi-residential development, increasing the population in the immediate area to serve the new retailer. Access to the site is supported by a variety of transportation modes, including public transit stops less than 100 metres from the site on 4 Street and 1 Avenue. Walking and cycling paths are available around the site, with on-street cycling on 1st Avenue, supporting convenient trips for individuals without access to an automobile.

The commercial unit will use a private driveway that accesses a private loading dock for product delivery accessible off the lane. Garbage/recycling will be stored at the private loading area for the unit and collected via the private driveway, screening garbage from the street and away from patrons and everyday pedestrians. Twelve (12) underground parking stalls are provided on site for customers to park and shop at the building. In the event the underground stalls are full, there is on street parking on 1 Street NE and 4 Street NE. Overall the site has multiple opportunities to travel to and from the site, alleviating potential parking congestion on 1 Street or 4 Street.

Policy Framework

The Municipal Development Plan designates the subject site within the 'Inner City Developed Residential' area, planned to absorb a range of residential population, including local commercial services in close proximity to residents. The applicable policies of the MDP encourage the efficient use of infrastructure, public amenities and transit. Retail specific policies of the MDP aim to retain viable local retail and mixed-use areas that encourage business creation, residential development and community services while preserving compatibility with the retail character of the neighbourhood. A future wine/liquor merchant will occupy a vacant commercial space, adding a valuable amenity for residents and servicing a niche market with luxury products.

The site is well supported by transit and road infrastructure, with access to the primary transit network (Edmonton Trail), 100 metres east of the site, supporting higher volumes of activity including transit and vehicular traffic. Edmonton Trail is also an identified Urban Main Street, planned to support a mix of

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employment and retail uses that encourage an active street environment (Policy 3.4.1c). A new commercial tenant in this location will further activate the building frontage and encourage eyes on the street in proximity to a neighbourhood main street.

The surrounding neighbourhood is well-positioned to support future commercial development with existing residents on site, multi-residential development located to the northwest and west, and low-density development located to the south. The proposed wine/liquor merchant will fulfill a niche market demand by providing higher end products to support existing and future residents/visitors within the building and nearby residential developments.

Community Integration and Market Benefit

The Crescent Heights neighbourhood is characterized by a mix of low and medium density residential developments, with approximately 52% of residents living in multi-residential development, a 36% increase compared to broader Calgary. Currently there are several new development applications which propose multi-residential development (LOC2024-0166, DP2024-02583 and DP2024-04008) within 180 metres of the site that would add significant population to the area, expanding the customer base that would benefit from a future luxury wine and liquor retailer.

When reviewing the total neighbourhood population against existing liquor stores in similar inner city neighbourhoods, the Crescent Heights community was found to be underserved by wine and liquor merchants, with four commercial shops supporting the entire community, resulting in one store per 1,560 persons (2021 Calgary Census Data). In addition, the population growth in Bridgeland and Crescent Heights is projected to outpace the city's growth rate by nearly 2 to 1 through 2042, reducing the concentration of liquor stores based on the current inventory available. Existing liquor stores provide similar products and general inventory to service the community. A future wine / liquor merchant will provide a unique commercial offering and serve a significant population targeted to increase without proliferation or market saturation, increasing businesses available to meet community needs.

Planning Rationale for Reduction of Separation Distance

In Calgary there are a variety of communities that have schools or sensitive uses in proximity to liquor/wine stores or cannabis shops. A mix of retail/commercial amenities are required to create a complete, walkable community, providing a mix of employment, retail and community uses to support the current resident and visitor population. As Calgary continues to grow, there is a greater demand for community services and amenities, particularly in locations well supported by transit, active travel and pedestrian pathways. Responding to growth requires a diversification of employment and retail uses to address the needs of a community, including wine/liquor retailers.

A review of similar urban neighbourhoods was undertaken to determine where other liquor stores exist in proximity to sensitive uses such as schools, addiction treatment centres or drop-in centres. The application is requesting the removal of the 300-metre separation distance from the subject site to the current location of Bridgeland Liquor, approximately 150 metres east of the site. A future high end luxury wine and liquor merchant is interested to locate in the subject site and will diversify inventory of alcoholic products in Crescent Heights, currently underserved by liquor stores at a rate of one store per 1,560 persons (2021 Calgary Census Data). There are several inner-city neighbourhoods that have either cannabis or liquor stores within or right at the 300-metre separation distance to sensitive uses such as schools or community services including shelters or addiction treatment centres that thrive and support the community.

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Mission

- Bin 905 Wine & Spirits is located 120 metres from Homes for Heroes Foundation.
- Bin 905 Wine & Spirits is located 300 metres from Aventa Centre for Excellence for Women with Addictions.
- J & J Liquor Store is located 38 metres from the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective.
- 17 Avenue Liquor Boutique is located 200 metres from the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective.

Hillhurst

- The Kensington Wine Market and Spirits of Kensington are located within 100 metres of each other.

Beltline

- The Co-op Midtown Wine Spirits Beer is located within 300 metres to the Canna Cabana, Edinburgh Liquor Store and Connaught School.
- Ace Liquor Store is located 110 metres from the Chevron Open Minds School Program and the Calgary Education Centre.
- The Crowfoot Wine & Spirits is located 250 metres from the Alpha House Veterans Housing Complex.
- Liquor Depot Mount Royal is located 63 metres from Value Buds on 17 Avenue SW.
- Crowfoot Wine & Spirits is located within 290 metres from the Sacred Heart School.

Bridgeland/Riverside:

- Piazza Wine & Spirits is located 230 metres to the Bridgeland Riverside Community Association.
- Bridgeland Liquor Store is located 150 metres to Riverside School AND the future location of the liquor store based on DP2024-01959 will bring the new liquor store location to 90 metres from the Riverside School.

On first glance, several sensitive uses do exist near the subject site, however based on business hours or service structure, do not pose the same degree of risk. For example, the Italian Cultural Centre is located near the subject site, however the centre is not a chartered school and only offers language classes on the weekends. It is understood a range of students could attend the language school and therefore it does not operate in the same capacity or schedule like a chartered public or catholic school, reducing the time in which both businesses would operate and may result in negative behavior. The women's centre is another potential sensitive use, however the operational hours of the centre are focused on daytime hours and are closed on the evenings and weekends, when stores selling alcohol are typically open and selling the highest volume of goods. The Calgary Drop in Centre is located approximately 500 metres from the proposed site. Similar uses exist in other communities located in closer proximity to the subject site, such as J & J Liquor Store located 38 metres from the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective on 4 Street SW. Through mitigation mechanisms, the applicant team believes negative or unwanted behavior can be deterred.

Mitigation Opportunities

The proposed liquor store will not operate as a standard catch-all store serving all alcohol but operate a high-quality wine and liquor store selling luxury products. The type of product served will have limited inventory of lower priced items that are typically available at a standard liquor store. The luxury inventory will help deter patrons from loitering outside of a store in which they cannot purchase desired goods often found at a discount liquor store. The proposed luxury store will diversify commercial offerings that sell alcohol in Crescent Heights and attract clientele looking for high quality items.

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There is the potential to reduce store hours, similar to other luxury wine/liquor retailers like Bin 905, who close at 9 pm most days and 7 pm on Sundays. The reduced store hours will encourage patrons to shop during daytime hours and prevent late night shopping, often experienced at discount liquor stores.

The mixed-use building will provide natural surveillance on site supported by residents who live in the Minto Era building. Residents and visitors will enter and exit the building regularly creating eyes on the street and a constant awareness of activity near the building. Residents living on site have a greater sense of ownership to maintain a safe living environment and report negative or concerning behavior to the residential condominium board or appropriate authorities. The commercial portion of the building has a separate condominium board in addition to a management company for the entire building that regulates current tenants, monitors maintenance and provides a formal reporting mechanism to submit concerns related to resident safety, loitering or any unwanted behavior in and around the building. Potential concerns can be mitigated through the formal reporting structure provided by either the residential or condominium board, enabling residents and business owners to feel safe and given appropriate resources to record and report any issues on site.

Other mitigation measures may include:

- Enhanced lighting to promote safety and visibility
- Security cameras to monitor the exterior façade of the building, and
- On-site security personnel to deter crime and violence.

The project team strongly believes that the site context, luxury business model, ratio of liquor store to neighbourhood population and mitigation measures collectively creates a strong rationale to support luxury wine/liquor tenant in this location regardless of the limiting separation distance. Multiple liquor stores across the city successfully operate adjacent to sensitive uses and it is our belief the benefits of a luxury liquor store will diversify available retail amenities, fill a vacant storefront and provide property surveillance to allow for a successful business to thrive in this location.

Proposed Land Use Amendment

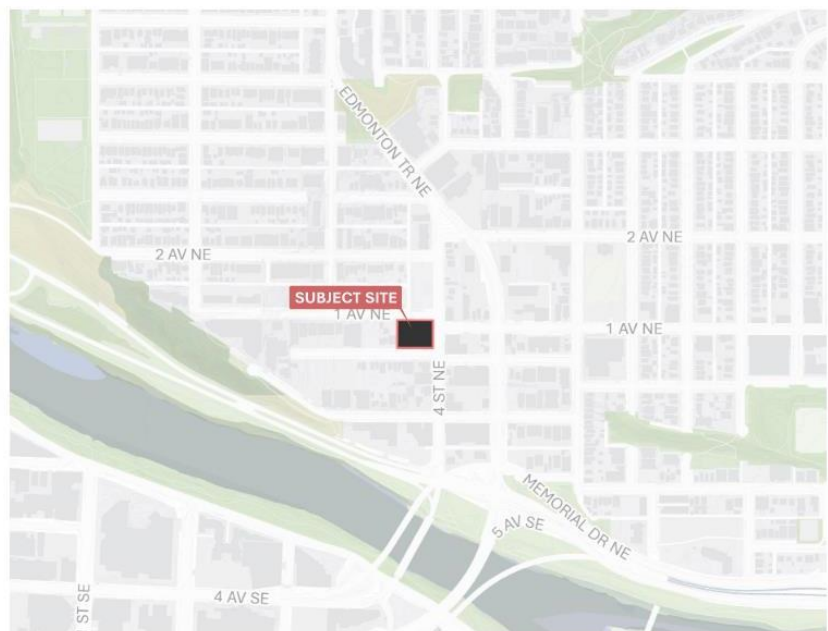
The proposed change of use amendment will:

- Support mixed-use development, incentivizing residents to access local shops to service their daily needs.
- Diversify available retail/commercial offerings and provide a convenient amenity to service a high population, inner city neighbourhood.
- Provide an opportunity to locate a desirable commercial amenity near the primary transit network, increasing pedestrian activity on 4 Street.
- Provide luxury products that may not be available in typical liquor stores and enable a mainstay amenity for residents of living in the immediate building, accommodating commercial needs of surrounding residential developments.



Site Context

- Site is a commercial unit located at 116, 151 4 Street NE, located in the existing Minto "Era" building.
- The site is located on the eastern border of Bridgeland/Riverside at 4 Street NE, south of 1 Avenue NE.
- Surrounding area features a mix of low and medium-density mixed-use and residential buildings, along with several commercial shops along 1 Avenue NE.
- On street parking is available on 1 Street NE and 4 Street NE, providing patrons with nearby parking to access the store throughout the day and evening.
- Parking for the commercial unit are provided through twelve (12) underground visitor parking stalls and a dedicated loading stall.



Transportation

The subject site is well-connected to the surrounding transportation network.

- Public transit operates less than 100 metres from the site, north on 4 Street and east on 1 Avenue NE, providing convenient connections from the future retail location to the broader neighbourhood.
- Walking and cycling paths are available around the site, with on-street cycling on 1 Avenue, supporting convenient trips for individuals without access to an automobile.



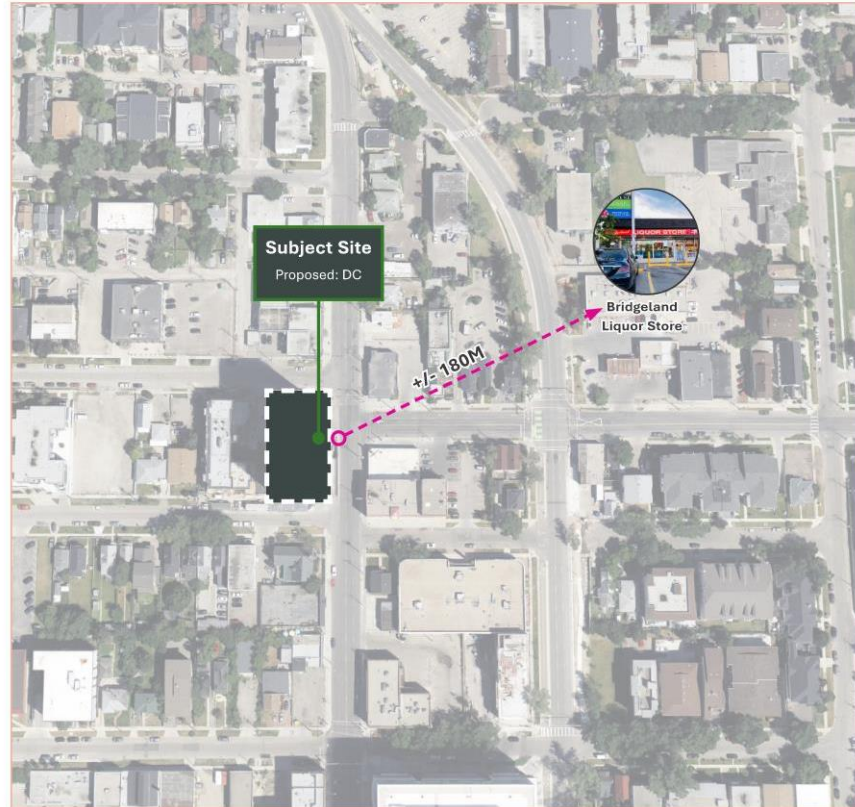
Development Vision

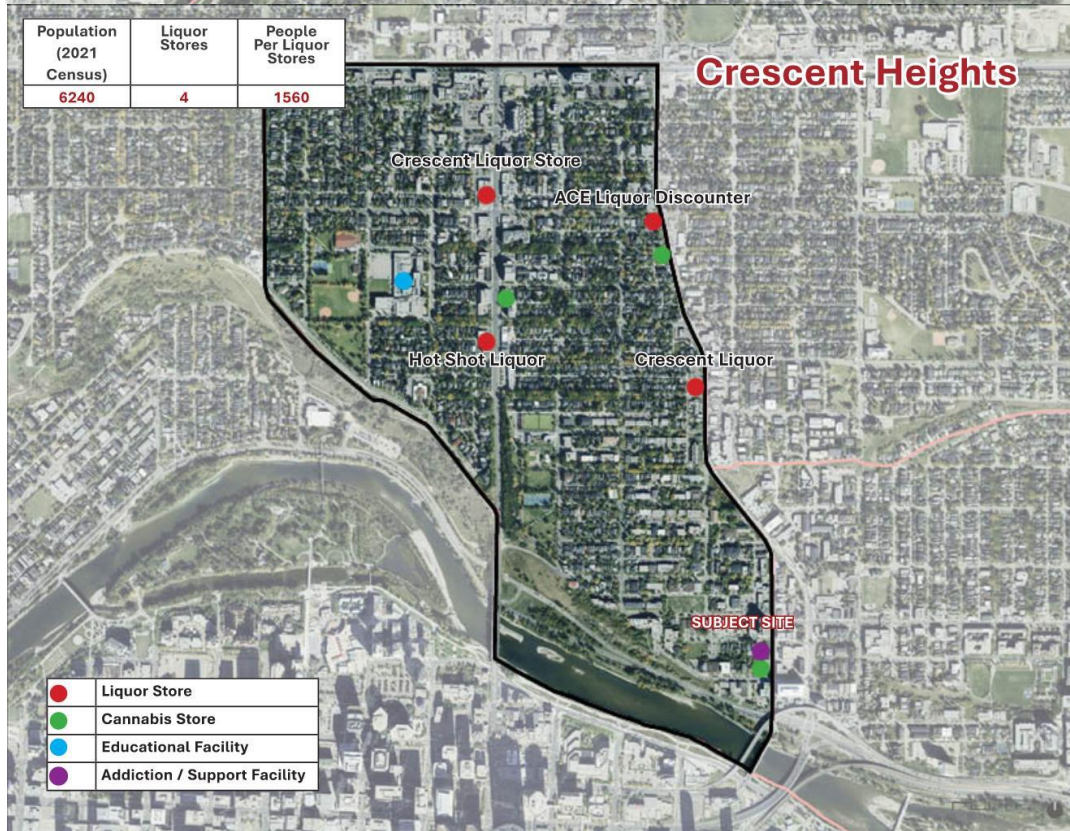
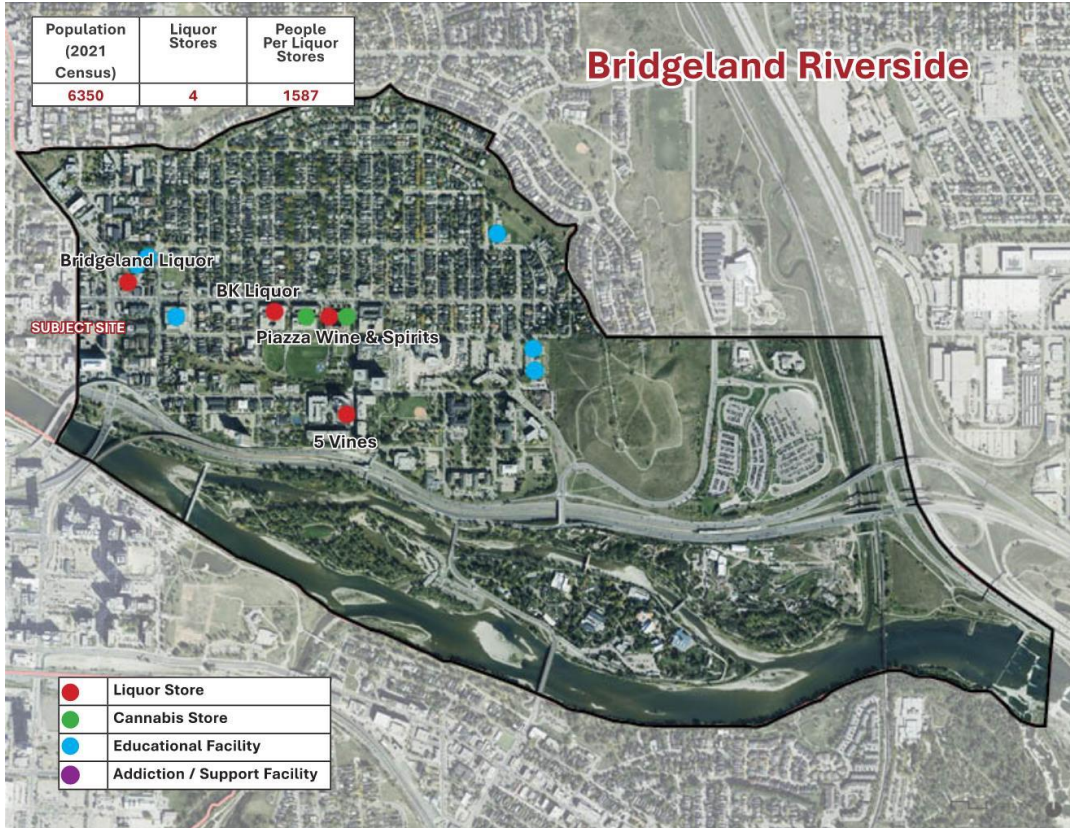
- The development vision for the site aims to:
- Establish a luxury wine and liquor tenant.
- Offer a range of high-end products not typically found in corner store liquor stores.
- Provide a unique amenity for residents of the immediate building.
- Meet the commercial needs of the surrounding residential area and beyond.
- Fill a vacant commercial space with a tenant to enhance the area's appeal.

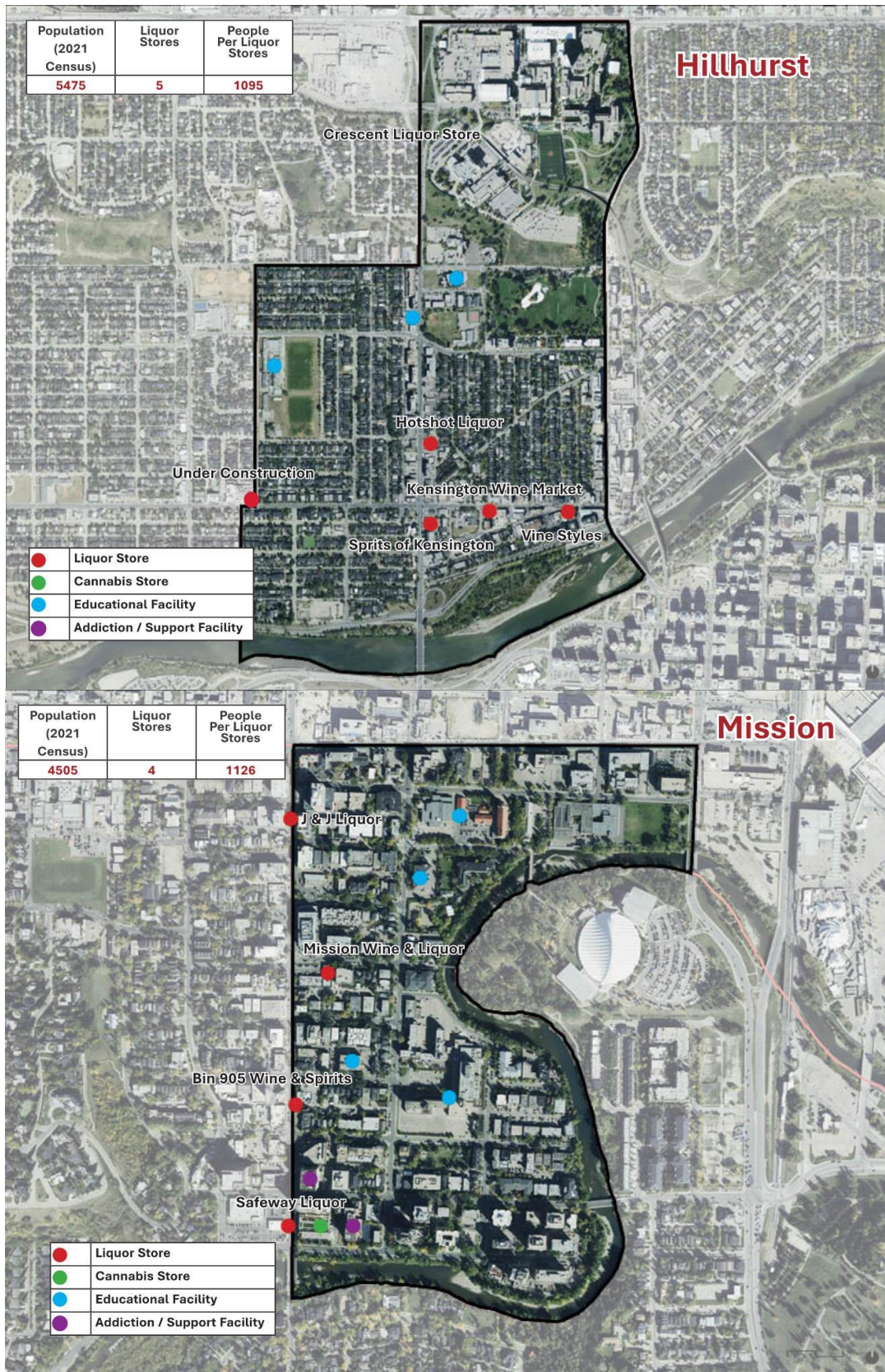


Land Use Redesignation

- Section 225(e) and 40(h) of the Calgary Zoning Bylaw 20071P states that:
- In all districts, except for C-R2, C-R3, and CR20-C20/R20 districts, liquor stores must not be located within 300.0 metres of any other liquor store, measured from the closest point of one liquor store to the closest point of another.
- To enable the change of use and establish a luxury wine store on site, O2 is proposing to:
- Amend the existing Direct Control District (9D2015).
- Remove the limiting separation distance of 300 metres between liquor stores as specified in Section 225(e) and 40(h) of the land use bylaw.







Neighbourhood Comparison

Trends

- Compared to Hillhurst and Mission, both Bridgeland and Crescent Heights have a higher number of residents per liquor store.
- The addition of one store in either Crescent Heights or Bridgeland will still result in more people-per-store compared to Hillhurst or Mission.
- Population growth in Bridgeland and Crescent Heights is projected to outpace the city's growth rate by nearly 2-to-1 through 2042, which will reduce the concentration of liquor stores based on the current inventory available.

Community	Population (2021 Census)	Number of Stores	People per Store
Bridgeland Riverside	6350	4	1587
Crescent Heights	6240	4	1560
Mission	4505	4	1126
Hillhurst	5475	5	1095

Mitigation Techniques



Natural Surveillance & Condominium Support

On site residents will provide natural surveillance for commercial units, including a residential and commercial condominium board to maintain building appearance and monitor and report any unwanted behavior.



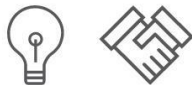
Diversifying Retail and Commercial Offerings

Offering luxury products currently not provided in the neighbourhood.



Addressing Service Gaps in Growing Communities

Provides a liquor store on the boundary between two communities that have fewer stores per capita and are continuing to grow.



Reduced Store Hours, Enhanced lighting and potential for security personnel on site.

Reduced Store hours similar to other wine market retailers and enhanced lighting and on site security to deter loitering.

Engagement Strategy and Next Steps



Community
Association Meeting



On-Site Signage

Application Timeline

