

Land Use Amendment in Bowness (Ward 1) at 6623 Bowness Road NW, LOC2024-0196

RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission:

1. Forward this report (CPC2024-1120) to the 2024 November 12 Public Hearing Meeting of Council; and

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council:

2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 0.20 hectares \pm (0.50 acres \pm) located at 6623 Bowness Road NW (Plan 4610AJ, Block 23, Lots 5 and 6) from Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District to Mixed Use – General (MU-1f3.0h20.5) District.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This application proposes to redesignate the parcel to the Mixed Use – General (MU-1f3.0h20.5) District to allow for commercial and residential uses in street-oriented buildings with either commercial or residential uses at street level.
- The proposal aligns with the goals and policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and *Bowness Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP) including supporting higher residential densities in areas that are well-served by existing infrastructure, public amenities, and transit.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? This application allows for more housing options in close proximity to transit, a Neighbourhood Main Street, and local amenities.
- Why does this matter? By providing more housing choice within existing developed areas, Calgary will have a more diverse population living near existing services and facilities.
- A development permit for a five-storey building has been submitted and is under review.
- There is no previous Council direction related to this proposal.

DISCUSSION

This application, in the northwest community of Bowness, was submitted by LOLA Architecture and Trellis Society on behalf of the landowner, The City of Calgary, on 2024 July 29. The approximately 0.20 hectare (0.5 acre) site is located mid-block on Bowness Road NW. The City-owned parcel is not currently developed with any buildings or structures and site features include a small playground and tree plantings. The parcel was acquired by The City in 1973 in advance of plans for a future (now cancelled) Shaganappi Trail overpass. Since purchase, The City has been maintaining the property and in 2004, the small playground was installed.

As noted in the Applicant Submission (Attachment 2), the proposal is to construct an affordable housing facility accommodating up to 50 units, with 20 percent of those units being barrier-free. A development permit (DP2024-07137) for a five-storey residential building with grade-oriented units was submitted on 2024 October 4 and is under review.

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A detailed planning evaluation of the application, including location maps and site context, is provided in the Background and Planning Evaluation (Attachment 1).

Administration recommends forwarding this application to the 2024 November 12 Public Hearing of Council as the evaluation of City-owned land for development into non-market housing is prioritized as per *Home is Here: The City of Calgary's Housing Strategy*.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- Outreach was undertaken by the Applicant
- Public/interested parties were informed by Administration

Applicant-Led Outreach

As part of the review of the proposed land use amendment application, the applicant was encouraged to use the [Applicant Outreach Toolkit](#) to assess which level of outreach with the public/interested parties and the Community Association was appropriate. In response, the applicant attended a Bowness Community Association Planning & Development Committee meeting on 2024 June 5, launched a project website and online comment form, door-knocked and hand-delivered project information to nearby properties, and hosted an in-person open house on 2024 September 15 and 16. More details can be found in the Applicant Outreach Summary (Attachment 3).

City-Led Outreach

In keeping with Administration's practices, this application was circulated to the public/interested parties, notice posted on-site and published [online](#). Notification letters were also sent to adjacent landowners.

Administration received 49 letters of opposition from the public. A central theme of the concerns was related to the sale of the City-owned parcel and loss of green space, noting the playground is well used. The letters of opposition included the following additional areas of concern:

- compatibility with neighbourhood character (especially height);
- on-site parking capacity and offsite impacts;
- building density, height and shadowing;
- privacy and overlooking of neighbouring lots;
- neighbourhood, traffic, crime and noise effects;
- servicing capacity;
- affordable housing over-concentration; and
- reduction of adjacent property values.

Administration received 11 letters of support from the public. The letters of support included the following reasons:

- the need for more housing, and in particular, affordable housing;
- the desire to help break the cycle of poverty and crime;
- the more efficient use of land being proposed; and

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- a possible increase in neighbourhood vibrancy.

The Bowness Community Association (CA) provided comments on 2024 September 25 (Attachment 4) expressing an appreciation for the applicant's proactive engagement efforts with both the CA and the community. With respect to concerns, the CA noted parking, loss of greenspace, building height and over-concentration of affordable housing/social services.

Administration considered the relevant planning issues specific to the application and has determined the proposal to be appropriate. The City of Calgary's land disposition process falls outside the scope of this application review. The proposed land use amendment is consistent with the ARP and MDP policies, which encourage higher residential densities in areas well-served by existing infrastructure, public facilities, and transit. Issues related to parking, servicing, and the impacts of site design on adjacent properties will be reviewed at the development permit stage.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for a Public Hearing of Council for the land use amendment will be posted on-site and mailed to adjacent landowners. In addition, Commission's recommendation and the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposal will enhance housing diversity in the community by introducing affordable housing units, while also promoting a more efficient use of land and infrastructure adjacent to the primary transit network.

Environmental

Increasing density by placing more residents near the primary transit network contributes to the goal of creating zero carbon neighborhoods. The applicant has also indicated plans to incorporate energy efficient HVAC and lighting systems, a highly insulated building envelope, high efficiency windows, doors and appliances, solar-ready infrastructure and electric vehicle charging as part of the proposed development permit. These measures support Programs A, F, and G of the *Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050*.

Economic

Redevelopment of this site will create housing opportunities and support local businesses in the Bowness main street area. The proposal provides opportunities for affordable housing options conveniently located near places of employment.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact.

RISK

There are no known risks associated with this proposal.

**Planning and Development Services Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2024 October 17**

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ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Background and Planning Evaluation
- 2. Applicant Submission
- 3. Applicant Outreach Summary
- 4. Community Association Response

Department Circulation

General Manager (Name)	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform