

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the community of Beltline, in the Stampede grounds at the junction of Stampede Trail SE and 12 Avenue SE. The site is approximately 3.9 hectares (9.6 acres) and is 186 metres in length and 211 metres in width. The site has been stripped and graded and shoring has commenced in line with previous development permit approvals. In order to allow for the proposed development 5 Street SE was closed by bylaw and a new 5A Street SE has been constructed. The site is surrounded by public streets on all four sides, with vehicular access to the proposed development to the east from 5A Street SE. The site (as well as lands to the south, east and west) are part of Direct Control (DC) District ([Bylaw 4Z2006](#), based on previous [Land Use Bylaw 2P80](#)), a comprehensive land use district for the Calgary Stampede grounds which allows for various commercial, entertainment, recreational, institutional and industrial uses.

North of the site are parking lots which are designated Centre City Mixed Use District (CC-X) in Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, allowing for a variety of uses, including high-density, high-rise development. The subject site is well served by public transit: it is four blocks (approximately 800 metres or a 10-minute walk) south of the Blue Line LRT at City Hall/Bow Valley College Station; and two blocks (approximately 630 metres or an eight-minute walk) northeast of the Red Line LRT at Victoria Park/Stampede Station.

Both prior to submission of a formal application and during the development permit review, Administration worked with the applicant team to refine various aspects of this application to align with planning policy. Examples include:

- refinements to the Stampede Trail elevation to encourage building transparency and improve the relationship of the western elevation to the street;
- revisions to the interface of the new building with the legally protected Stephenson building;
- a commitment from the applicant team to provide commemoration to the existing Saddledome in the new Calgary Event Centre (secured through permanent conditions);
- simplification of the landscaping concept to encourage better pedestrian movement and navigation;
- modifications to the informal play space above the community rink; and
- incorporation of distinct Indigenous worldviews and cultures through design and imagery in the public realm and eastern elevation and using species important to Indigenous communities specifically in the landscaping.

No land use amendment was submitted with this development permit, however an amendment is proposed to the non-statutory Stampede Park Concept Plan.

Community Peak Population Table

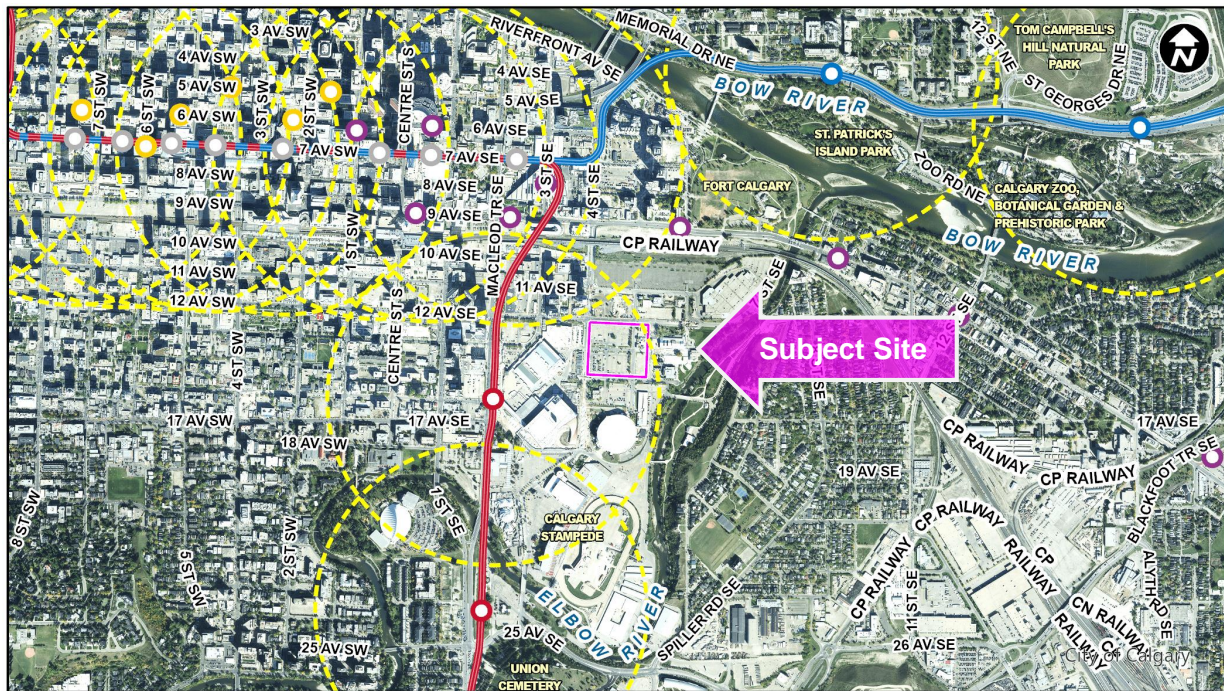
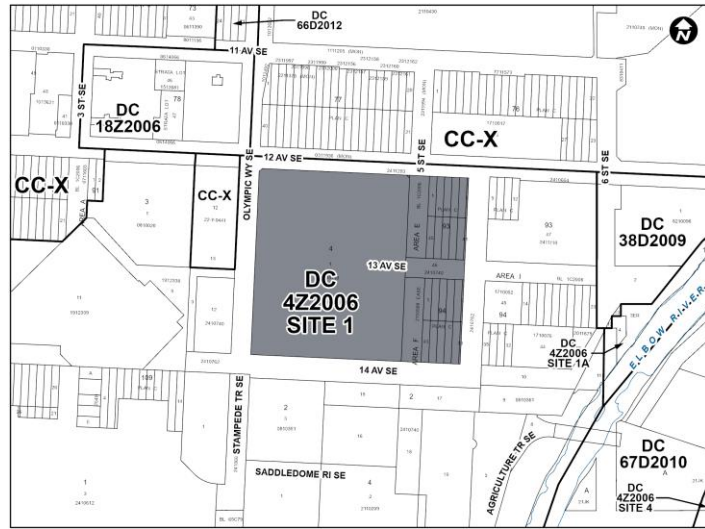
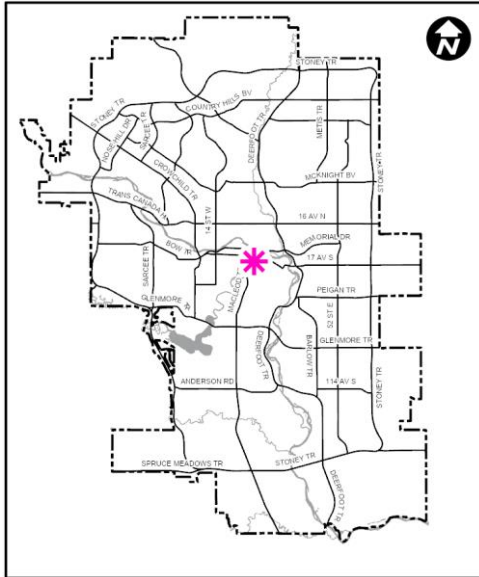
As identified below, the community of Beltline reached its peak population in 2019.

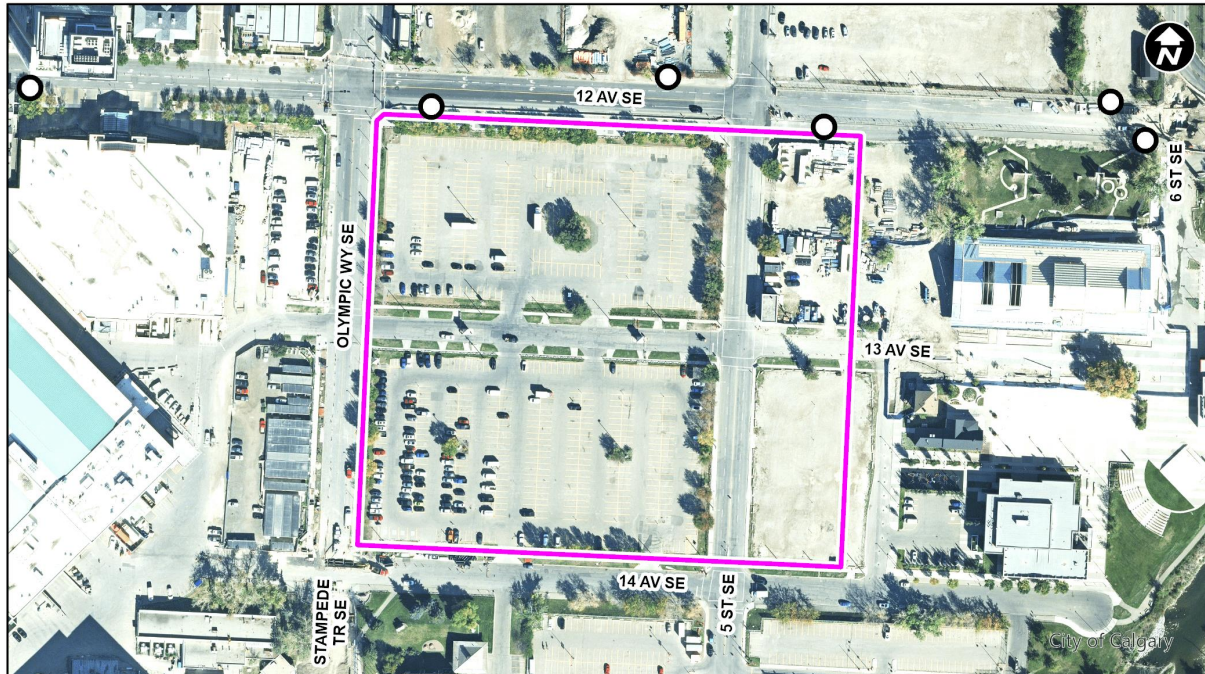
Beltline	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	25,129
2019 Current Population	25,129
Difference in Population (Number)	± 0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0.0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

On 2024 September Council approved LOC202024-0081 and LOC2024-0085 for road closure of 13 Avenue SE and 5 Street SE and a corner cut on 12 Avenue SE and 5 Street SE to facilitate this Development Permit.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The site is located in Site 1 of DC District Bylaw 4Z2006. This DC District is based on Land Use Bylaw 2P80 and applies to the entire Calgary Stampede Grounds. This DC District divides the Stampede Grounds into six sites and allows for a range of uses and development rules to cater to the long range redevelopment of the Stampede Grounds in a manner that is sensitive to the adjacent communities of Beltline and Ramsay. This development permit aligns with Bylaw 4Z2006, subject to the relaxations below.

Development and Site Design

The new Calgary Event Centre building is orientated east-west on the site. The applicant team notes that the building is inspired by the themes of fire and ice with the bowl, providing seating for the arena, seen as a cauldron which shows flames with coloured lighting, particularly visible at night. The ice can be seen in the use of white metal panels in the building elevations (most prominent on the north and south facades). These two architectural themes were further developed by the applicant's engagement with Indigenous communities, including the Blackfoot Confederacy, with participants from the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations; the Îlethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, with participants from the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations; participants from the Tsuut'ina First Nation; and participants from the Métis Nation of Alberta, Calgary Nose Hill Métis District and Calgary Elbow Métis District. Representatives

from Calgary's diverse urban Indigenous community also participated in Indigenous-focused engagements. For example, First Nations participants noted the importance of air and water during engagements, which lead to distinct design responses including integration of water imagery seen through blue glass embedded in the concrete of the public realm (seen in particular on the south plaza and building edges).

The landscaping design also took a thematic approach, with the applicant team's landscape concept of mountains to meadows further developed with input from Indigenous communities, with inclusion of species important to Indigenous communities on the site, and reference made to the Indigenous communities in the public realm design on the east and southern portions of the site. In particular, the integration of First Nations tipi rings and Métis trapper's tent rectangle in the southern plaza captures the distinctness of diverse Indigenous communities in the territories that Calgary resides within.

The new Calgary Event Centre is approximately 34 metres in height, over five storeys. The ice level is two storeys below grade, allowing for the main level to be at grade, providing activation and street integration while significantly reducing the overall height of the building above grade. Seating is provided in the bowl, both two levels below and two levels above grade.

At grade, active uses line three sides of the building, with the eastern elevation adjacent to 5A Street SE serving as the back of house functions.

In the building, the bowl will be lined by an internal corridor at grade, which will provide access from the principal building entrances to the lower and upper bowl seating areas. Food service and washrooms will be adjacent to the bowl. The first floor of the new Calgary Event Centre will contain additional seating in the bowl with suites accessible from the corridor lining the bowl. Calgary Sports and Entertainment Corporation (CSEC) offices will be to the north of the new building, with the historic Stephenson building (also north in the building) activated by a banquet/meeting space. The upper concourse/second storey will contain additional seating in the bowl, with additional food and washrooms surrounding the bowl, accessed from a circulation corridor.

Northern Elevation

The northern elevation will be the principal building entrance for visitors to the Event Centre arriving from downtown or any future primary transit station north of the site. A plaza at the junction of Stampede Trail SE and 12 Avenue SE provides sight lines directing visitors to the northwest principal building entrance. Adjacent to the northwest entrance is a restaurant and food hall, with the historic Stephenson building (that will include a café at grade) adjacent and a further entrance at the northeast corner of the building.

Western Elevation

A team merchandise store occupies the northwest corner of the site, with a cocktail lounge and multi-level restaurant/sports bar behind. The southwest corner forms the principal entrance to the building, for visitors from the south, either walking from 17 Avenue SE and the Beltline or via the Red Line LRT at Victoria Park/Stampede Station.

Eastern Elevation

The eastern elevation comprises the parkade entrance and exit, and bike parking as well as access to underground loading and waste and recycling. Public art showing images important to Indigenous communities will be incorporated in the eastern elevation and will soften the relationship of the parkade with the adjacent Calgary Stampede youth campus further east.

Southern Elevation

The southern elevation will be the principal building entrance for visitors of the Event Centre when walking through the Stampede Grounds, parcels to the south and from the Red Line LRT at Victoria Park/Stampede Station. Internally, the southern elevation will contain an indoor plaza and circulation space. Externally, plaza spaces will also be provided to the southwest and south, with capacity for 3,000 people (which may be increased to 5,000 people with closure of 14 Avenue SE).

The southeastern corner of the building will comprise the entrance to the community rink with a staircase and elevator providing access to the 1,000 seat community rink two storeys below grade. An informal community play space with a seating area and astro turf providing recreational opportunities for the local community is located in the southeast corner of the site, above the community rink.

Future Development Site

The northeast corner of the site represents a future development site, which will be the subject of a future development permit process (and may also require a land use amendment, subject to the intended use). With the new Calgary Event Centre, the applicant team will provide an interim grass treatment with a sidewalk linking 12 Avenue SE to 5A Street SE.

Historical Significance

Stephenson Building

The site contains a two-storey brick heritage building dating from 1911 which was an original grocer for the residential community of Victoria Park prior to establishment of the Calgary Stampede. As this heritage building is legally protected (by a heritage agreement with the original landowner, the Calgary Stampede) the building will be re-positioned from its original location and incorporated into the new Calgary Event Centre. To allow for construction work to commence, Administration took a unique approach to allow for the building to be dismantled, catalogued and stored and then re-built.

The new Stephenson building will be positioned on the north side of the Event Centre parcel and will project out from the front of the building face. A café will be provided at grade which will be accessible as an independent use during non-event times and will complement the food hall during event times. The first floor of the Stephenson building will be accessible through the Event Centre building and will be a conference and meeting place.

Administration took great care to minimize the harm to the fabric of this heritage building and is satisfied the design of the Stephenson building aligns with expectations of planning policy in the Calgary Heritage Strategy, *Municipal Development Plan* and *Beltline ARP*.

Saddledome Commemoration

The Olympic Saddledome was constructed in 1981, is owned by the City of Calgary and is a municipally designated heritage resource. The Saddledome is outside of the application site boundary and is due to be demolished following construction of the new Calgary Event Centre. The Saddledome holds an iconic image on the Calgary skyline and has significant history to Calgarians. By virtue of this, Administration worked with the applicant team to craft conditions on this development permit to require commemoration of the Saddledome be incorporated in

the new Calgary Event Centre prior to demolition of the Saddledome and prior to occupancy of the Event Centre.

Urban Design and Open Space (UDOS)

The Urban Design and Open Space team was closely involved throughout the project's design evolution, ensuring that expectations around the guiding "Urban Design Elements" were clearly communicated and responded to. Key design objectives included achieving a high degree of transparency and animation on all facades to ensure an appropriately scaled and detailed street edge to complement a high-quality pedestrian-focused public realm. They worked collaboratively with the file manager to ensure that theirs and the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) comments were addressed appropriately.

Urban Design Review Panel

At Administration's recommendation, and with the full support of the applicant, UDRP reviewed and provided comments four times during the design and application process. In late 2023 December, the applicant team set out its vision for the site and showed early massing models to the Panel. The pre-application package was presented to the Panel in 2024 April, the building design was presented to the Panel with the submission of a development permit in 2024 July and in 2024 September, the landscaping design was presented to the Panel. The applicant team worked collaboratively with UDRP to refine various aspects of the application in response to the Panel's comments and feedback.

Transportation

Pedestrian access to the subject site is available from all sides of the development, with the primary entrances for the main event centre focused on the NW and SW corners of the building. The entrance for the community rink facility is located in the SE corner of the site, and the east side of the parcel has access, but is predominantly meant for servicing and parking access. An active modes analysis was submitted as part of this development permit, and the project team provided the Mobility & Event Management Plan, the overarching area mobility plan, in support of this application.

5A Street SE will provide vehicle access as well as the service entrances and parkade entrances. A comprehensive loading plan was prepared for the adjacent streets through the Mobility & Event Management Plan, including a thorough analysis of expected pick-up/drop-off locations for ride-sharing and taxis, active mode accessibility and connectivity, and general access via transit.

Current transit access consists of the Red Line, with the recently upgraded Victoria Park/Stampede Station and local bus Route 24 (Ogden) servicing this location.

The surrounding street network will be designed and developed through a parallel program of work, meeting the intentions set out in the *Beltline ARP*. This work is a separate project from this development permit but will be undertaken in parallel while the Event Centre is under construction.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental concerns were identified.

Utilities and Servicing

Public water, sanitary and storm sewer mains exist in the adjacent public right-of-way. Development servicing will be reviewed by Utility Specialists as part of the Storm Water Management Report and the Development Site Servicing Plan application.

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 of the new Calgary Event Centre falls in the Greater Downtown Activity Centre in Map 1: Urban Structure in the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). Greater Downtown MDP planning policies emphasize this area of the city as the primary hub for business, employment, living, culture, recreation and entertainment. Administration's recommendation to approve this development permit subject to conditions aligns with higher level planning policy direction in the MDP by creating a world-class sport and entertainment hub in the Beltline community which contributes to a greater downtown and city of Calgary as a whole.

Calgary Heritage Strategy (Non Statutory – 2008)

As the subject site encompasses a legally protected heritage building, which is also a City heritage asset, the applicant team worked with Administration to creatively relocate and re-purpose the Stephenson building with active uses throughout the building, while at the same time seeking to retain as much historic fabric and authenticity of the historic building as possible. Subject to the conditions attached, Administration considers this development permit outlines with the policies and expectations of the [Calgary Heritage Strategy](#).

Calgary Climate Strategy (Non Statutory – 2022)

Administration reviewed this development permit in relation to the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#) programs and actions. The applicant team has proposed a number of climate measures as part of this development permit application including:

- a commitment to district energy connection, resulting in an energy consumption in the building and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (in alignment with Program Pathway D: Renewable Energy implementation);
- installation of solar panels covering 16,500 square feet of the roof area of the Event Centre (also in alignment with Program Pathway D: Renewable Energy implementation); and
- delivery of LEED Silver certification through improvements to building envelope efficiencies.

Greater Downtown Plan (Non Statutory - 2021)

The [Greater Downtown Plan](#) (GDP) notes the new Calgary Event Centre as a strategic City investment for the East Beltline/Rivers District. The proposed Event Centre is intended to act as a catalytic project for East Beltline and will hopefully further additional development and confidence in adjacent undeveloped lands surrounding the site, further contributing to Greater Downtown.

Administration considers this development permit to align with the GDP in particular, as the new Calgary Event Centre will align with the five strategic moves of the GDP (of vibrant neighbourhood, healthy environment and streets, transit and forward-thinking development) as the proposal will introduce a world-class sports and concert venue to the site, will enhance the local streets with a better public realm, will capitalize on Council's existing investment in transit (in particularly LRT with the existing Red and Blue Line stations in close proximity) and is future-focused, tying in to adjacent development and potential future developments, in terms of the site design, building layout and proposed uses.

Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan Part 2 (Statutory – 2019)

The proposed Event Centre will complement other City investments in the Beltline, envisaged in the [Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP), including the recently expanded BMO Centre, the 17 Avenue SE extension, and the rebuild of Victoria Park/Stampede Station. Administration considers this development permit to be in alignment with the relevant planning policies in the *Beltline ARP* which contemplate a new sports and concert venue in this location in the Stampede grounds and encourage an accessible arena, lined with active uses, particularly along Stampede Trail SE.

Land Use Bylaw (2P80 and Direct Control District 4Z2006)

Administration has identified the following relaxations with this development permit submission. Administration considers these relaxations supportable for the reasons mentioned below.

Bylaw Relaxations		
Regulation	Standard	Provided
(4) OVERLAND FLOW AREA REGULATIONS	(d) All Buildings Except for Existing Low Density Residential (I) Building Design (C) All electrical and mechanical equipment within a building shall be located at or above the designated flood level.	Plans indicate Electrical and Mechanical Rooms on the event and mezzanine levels which will be below the designated flood level. Note: Plans indicate the main electrical room as being located on the concourse level which is located above the designated flood level. Administration is supportive of relaxing the overland flood rules, based on the applicant's flood mitigation measures as well as future upstream flood storage capacity
37(3)(f) / 37(5)(c) Landscaped Area (min) & 33(9) Landscaping	(iv) Except for City boulevards, trees shall be planted in the overall minimum ratio of one tree per 35.0m ² of landscaped area provided	Plans indicate 127 (-218) trees located on the subject parcel. Note: An additional 84 trees (78 Large Deciduous, 3 Small Deciduous, & 3 Large

		<p>Coniferous) are provided outside the parcel in the boulevard.</p> <p>Administration is supportive of a numerical relaxation to the tree count, based on the quality of landscaping being provided, the downtown nature of the site and the broader benefit being delivered through this development permit</p>
	<p>(ii) The mixture of tree sizes at the time of planting shall be equivalent to a minimum of 50.0% larger trees.</p>	<p>Plans indicate 93 (-80) large trees provided on the subject parcel.</p> <p>Note: An additional 78 large trees are provided outside the parcel in the boulevard.</p> <p>Administration is supportive of a numerical relaxation to the tree count, based on the quality of landscaping being provided, the downtown nature of the site and the broader benefit being delivered through this development permit</p>
	<p>(v) Coniferous trees shall comprise a minimum proportion of 1/3 of all trees planted.</p>	<p>Plans indicate a total of 75 (-40) coniferous trees provided on the parcel.</p> <p>Note: An additional 3 coniferous trees are provided outside the parcel in the boulevard.</p> <p>Administration is supportive of a numerical relaxation to the tree count, based on the quality of landscaping being provided, the downtown nature of the site and the broader benefit being delivered through this development permit</p>
<p>18(1.02)</p>	<p>(e) Parking stall dimensions shall be clear of obstructions, other than wheel stops.</p>	<p>Plans indicate some parking stalls as having a structural column projecting at the end of the stall.</p> <p>Administration is supportive of minor technical relaxations to parking stalls which do not compromise the overall useability of the parkade</p>