

# Applicant Submission

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## Applicant Submission

Vesta Properties and O2 are proposing to redesignate the north-east corner of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW from the existing C-COR1 f3h46 and Direct Control districts (50D2018 and 159D2019) to a new comprehensive Direct Control (DC) district based on the Centre City Multi-Residential High Rise (CC-X). This site sits at one of the most important and prominent intersections in the city and bridges the Mission and the Beltline neighbourhoods. The proposed DC is required to provide a set of rules that enables:

- The introduction of a new southwest facing plaza on the corner of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street;
- Development of a high-quality, pedestrian-oriented public realm including a courtyard, pedestrian laneways, and pedestrian corridors along 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
- The introduction of new mid-block pedestrian connections on one of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue's longest blocks;
- A vehicle servicing strategy that eliminates all vehicle sidewalk crossings on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
- A massing strategy that frames the streets and public spaces at a scale informed by the area's existing urban fabric and the setback of towers from their podiums to maintain a human-scaled street wall along 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue; and
- The transition of tower height from north to south, and a tower placement that prioritizes sunlight penetration and respects resident privacy.

The development vision for this site recognizes its role as “centre ice” for Calgary’s urban vibrancy, and is a direct response to the importance of this intersection between two of the city’s most beloved main streets. The proposed land use redesignation will enable three residential towers placed on two mixed-use podiums with active commercial at-grade on all three frontages. The site focuses on creating a quality pedestrian experience by maximizing the opportunity for public gathering and animated patio spaces, as well as animating the north frontage along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue with grade-oriented units along the site’s eastern end.

The surrounding Beltline area is characterized by active retail frontage along both 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue but exists at a critical transition point along 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. West of 4<sup>th</sup> Street 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue is vibrant, lively, and energetic. This area of the Beltline features façade articulation, small corner-facing shops, active frontages, street trees, and patios. These features create an attractive and inviting space for people to shop and enjoy the Beltline. East of 4<sup>th</sup> Street the energy of the public realm struggles to continue, featuring land uses without active frontages, fenced off properties, surface parking lots, and inconsistent setbacks and landscaping conditions.

The subject site itself sits at the junction of these two distinct energies and is currently vacant land itself. It comprises a large void space in the current urban fabric that marks an end of vibrancy along 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue moving eastwards. This redesignation will enable a development that can act as a catalyst for changes of use and street frontage improvements along the east end of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Benefits from the proposed development include:

- **Supporting Housing Diversity:** This development will provide a variety of unit types at different price points to provide a range of housing options in the centre of the city. The unit mix will help attract a range of residents to add to the diverse community that exists within the Beltline already and continue its growth into the future.
- **Fostering Diverse Neighbourhoods:** The intersection of 17th Avenue and 4th Street SW is appropriate for higher density because of its proximity to goods and services, transportation connections, and employment areas. The addition of density will provide the following:
  - In-demand housing supply in a sustainable manner.
  - Support for existing commercial areas.
  - Enhancement of natural and social environments.

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- Passive public safety.
- Convenient access to a variety of community amenities.

As such, the proposal will act upon the local policy goals of fostering diverse neighbourhoods by adding residential and employment density to the area.

- **Building on City Investment:** The City of Calgary and CMLC have recently made significant investments in the Green Line LRT, Victoria Park LRT Station, 17th Avenue, 1st Street SW, and the BMO Centre. The City must now capitalize on these investments by maximizing their use through increased residential density and additional private investment. This development provides these benefits by locating itself within walking distance of each of these projects, leading to increased use of each.
- **Enhancing the Public Realm:** The proposal will contribute to the public realm through its podium design that reflects the existing built form of 17th Avenue while creating an inviting public space in the centre of the block featuring greenery, public art, and a gathering space that is currently lacking from the nearby area. The design will provide a landmark feature for the entertainment district that acts as a central location for people to fully experience the district throughout each day and season. Furthermore, the podium is designed to maximize sunlight exposure on the central plaza while providing patrons with a safe public space that is protected from the elements. As a result, the podium and plaza design will create a gathering place that unifies the energy along both streets.

Increasing density in this location aligns the proposal with the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan. The proposed redesignation will require a minor change to the Special Policy Area 1 text of the draft Beltline ARP in order to ensure the density proposed is supported by statutory policy, but the overall proposal is well-aligned with the ARP.

As the application progresses, on-site activations will be installed to help Calgarians envision the future public plaza space and learn more about the proposed development. Vesta Properties along with O2 look forward to working collaboratively with officials at the City of Calgary, representatives from the local Councillor's office, and residents of the Beltline and the broader Greater Downtown in progressing this application to approval.