

Community Association Response



Highland Park Community Association
3716 2nd St. NW
Calgary, AB T2K 0Y4

August 13, 2024

Circulation Control, Planning and Development
City of Calgary
Attn: Callen Strang, File Manager

RE: LOC2024-0177 119 – 131 41 Avenue NW

The application referenced above is for a land use change from M-C1 to M-H1f3d270 for 4 parcels along 41 Avenue NW. The properties are just off of Centre Street. There are existing older bungalows at either end of the block. Behind the proposed development is the laneway separating the properties from the commercial and residential developments along the north side of 40 Avenue NW. These structures are all low rise. The developer's intention is to build a 6-storey, 60-unit apartment building containing mostly 2- and 3-bedroom units. M-H1 allows for 4-8 storey buildings with a maximum FAR of 4.0 and a maximum building height of 26 m.

First, we commend the applicant for their previous engagement with the Planning and Development Committee of the Highland Park Community Association. Second, we recognize that the parcels in question were designated with a Low (up to 6-storeys) building scale in the *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (NHCLAP)*, although they are still considered Neighbourhood Local. The middle of the block is roughly a 230m walk to the southbound buses at 40 Avenue and Centre Street. Centre Street is a Calgary Main Street and the intersection with 40 Avenue is a transit hub. When the *NHCLAP* was approved, the Green Line North was still a viable project and 40 Avenue was to be a station on the line. The concept of TOD was based on light rail station stops, and although the intersection is still a transit hub, the idea of TOD might no longer apply. Regardless, higher housing density around the hub is appropriate, and agrees with the often-expressed view that transportation "nodes and corridors" are the most appropriate places for higher density. The parcels under review are within range of the Centre Street corridor and 40 Avenue node although they are not exactly on the corridor or at the actual node.

Members of the Planning and Development Committee are not wholly in agreement on the proposed density cap of 270. While an apartment building is generally seen as desirable, there is some controversy over the proposed 6-storey height. In addition to the older bungalows at either end of the block there are bungalows and newer semi-detached houses immediately across the avenue. The intrusion of a 6-storey building into this setting would be an anomaly. Even the apartment buildings on 17 Avenue NW that back onto 16 Avenue are usually only 4-storeys in height. It is acknowledged that M-H1 does provide for stepped building height transitions when adjacent to low density residential (max. height is 16 m within 6 m of the shared property line.)

The current land use of M-C1 would allow for a 4-storey apartment building with a maximum height of 14.0 m and a maximum density of 148 uph. We concur that M-H1 is perhaps a more suitable land use designation for this location, but we ask the applicant to reconsider the FAR and density limiters

currently proposed by the application to ensure an optimum integration into the community. M-H1 is considered a high density land use district, whereas the surrounding properties are low density residential.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at development@hpca.ca

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Jeanne Kimber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

D. Jeanne Kimber

Development Director on behalf of the Planning and Development Committee
Highland Park Community Association



Highland Park Community Association
3716 2nd St. NW

February 3, 2025

Circulation Control, Planning and Development
City of Calgary
Attn: Callen Strang, File Manager

RE: LOC2024-0177 119 – 131 41 Avenue NW

The HPCA Planning and Development Committee first responded to Land Use Change application LOC2024-0177 in August 2024. The site under consideration is in close proximity to transit on Centre Street and 40 Avenue NW. Prior to the decision on the alignment of the Green Line North, a public charrette was held in which residents agreed in principle to increased housing density and commercial development in the immediate surrounding area. In line with the results of the charrette, the building scale factor in the *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* for this block shows a Low building scale of up to 6 storeys. Even if the Green Line North is never built, the intersection at 40 Avenue and Centre Street is a transit hub. In lieu of the Green Line North there have been some road and transit upgrades along Centre Street recently.

Our original letter contended that a 6-storey building would be incongruous in its immediate surroundings. Section 2.2.1.4.d of the *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* states that for Neighbourhood Connector and Neighbourhood Local Streets "Development in Neighbourhood Connector and Neighbourhood Local areas should:

- " i. consider the local built form context;
- ii. be oriented towards the street;
- iii. consider shadowing impact on neighbouring properties; and,
- iv. provide access to off-street parking..."

Certainly an apartment building would be oriented towards the street and would provide access to off-street parking. However, the local built form context is low rise and low density. The envisioned apartment building would be sandwiched in-between older bungalows. Immediately behind the project site are low rise buildings including a 1-storey commercial building, a 1-storey office building, Tim Horton's, a 2-storey apartment building and a few older bungalows. There is nothing in the immediate surroundings that would mitigate the impact of inserting a 6-storey structure amongst all these low rise buildings. We realize that this will inevitably change over time but when is not known. The *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* is intended to guide future development over the next 25 to 30 years. Developments currently proposed, approved or underway along 40 Avenue NW are in the form of 2-3

storey rowhouses and townhomes. Broadly speaking, large-scale developments like the imagined apartment building are encouraged for Centre Street, which is a designated urban Main Street. In general, residents prefer higher density along the “nodes and corridors”, not on residential side streets.

Because the land use change would support such a significant building project, we encourage the applicant to hold an open house for all residents and make concept drawings available. Better yet would be the provision of some architectural drawings. There should also be shadow studies showing how a building of this height - even with the stepped profile - impacts the neighbouring properties, both adjacent and across the street. We also suggest that this information be posted on the applicant's Goldmark Homes website (<https://goldmarkhomes.ca/>) so that it is made available to the public.

One neighbour has submitted concerns about the shadowing impact of a 6-storey building on their house as well as the amount of traffic that would be generated on that block of 41 Avenue NW. Another resident also raised concerns about traffic on the avenue. As an older community we are always concerned that the increase in housing density will overtax our aging infrastructure. The HPCA Planning and Development Committee has queried the state and capacities of the civic infrastructure whenever there is a rowhouse or townhome complex considered for development. There will be large impacts to the civic infrastructure due to the construction of the Wing Kei care facilities on the northeast corner of Centre Street and 41 Avenue NE. Therefore, the city should be considering what additional impacts a large residential development would have on the infrastructure even before the land use is changed. If factors such as infrastructure capacities constrain what can be built on a parcel, then the developers should be aware of those constraints before expending time and financial resources on the land use redesignation process.

Again, it is understood that the current application is for a change in the land use, not a Development Permit application. Regardless, there has to be a justification for going through the process to change the land use from M-C1 – which allows for 3 or 4 storey apartment buildings – to M-H1 to permit a taller building with greater density. The Goldmark Homes website shows that the company's experience is primarily with single, semi-detached and rowhouses, so it is surprising that Goldmark Homes would contemplate something on a much larger scale.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at development@hpca.ca

Thank you.



D. Jeanne Kimber

Development Director on behalf of the Planning and Development Committee
Highland Park Community Association