

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the community of South Calgary and comprises approximately two thirds of a city block between 33 Avenue SW and 34 Avenue SW, and fronts onto 20 Street SW. The site totals approximately 0.71 hectares (1.76 acres) and is approximately 115 metres wide and 90 metres deep. It is currently occupied by one-storey commercial developments with a surface parking lot adjacent. The site is located within the heart of the Marda Loop Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Surrounding development is characterized by a mix of commercial and residential development. Directly to the south of the subject site, across 34 Avenue SW, is a six-story mixed-use building with at-grade commercial uses and residential units above as well as smaller scale multi-residential and duplex development. There is a laneway with surface parking for the adjacent one and two-storey commercial developments to the west of the subject site. To the north of the site, across 33 Avenue SW, there is one-storey commercial development with surface parking adjacent. To the east of the subject site, across 20 Street SW, there is a six-story mixed-use development with at-grade commercial uses and residential units above facing 33 Avenue SW. There is also a two-storey commercial development with dual frontage facing both 20 Street SW and 34 Avenue SW.

The subject site is directly adjacent to 33 Avenue SW and 34 Avenue SW, both of which are classified as Neighbourhood Main Streets and are the two main pedestrian and vehicular corridors through the Marda Loop community. The site is close to existing public open spaces, including Garrison Square Park, approximately 400 metres to the south west of the site (six-minute walk) and the Marda Loop Communities Association site, 800 metres to the north east of the site (13-minute walk). The site is also well served by local transit options, with bus routes along both 33 Avenue SW and 20 Street SW in addition to the MAX Yellow Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Route 304 (Woodpark/City Centre) bus stop at 33 Avenue SW and Crowchild Trail SW.

Community Peak Population Table

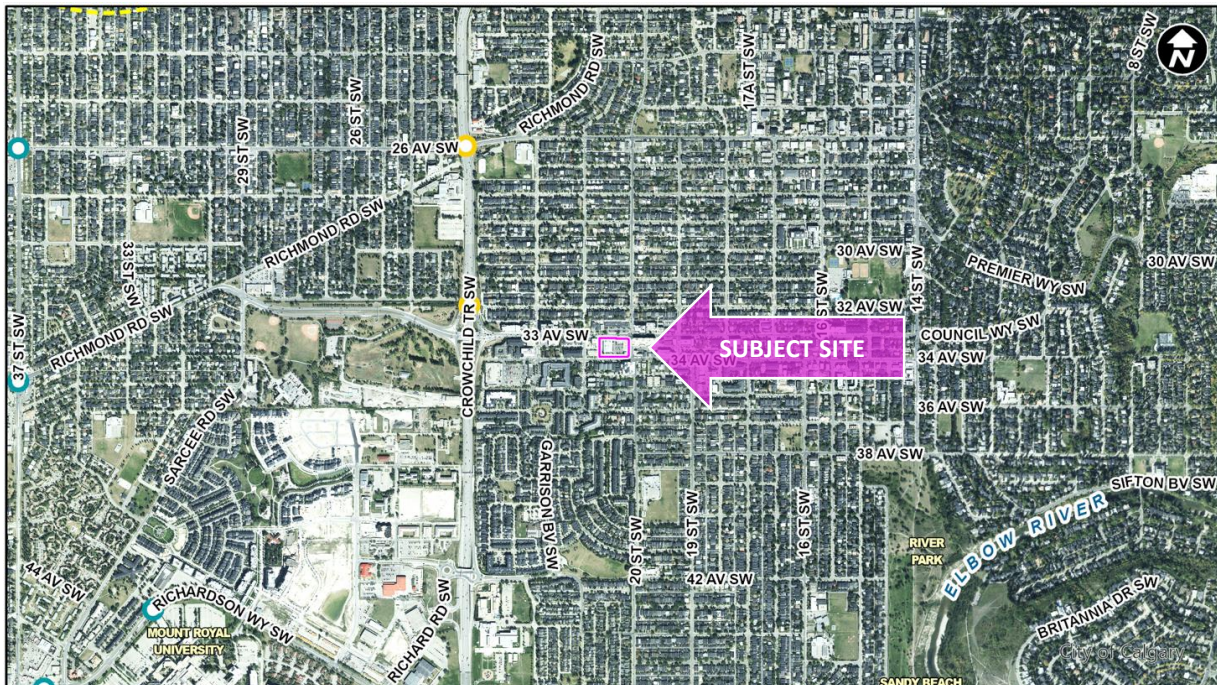
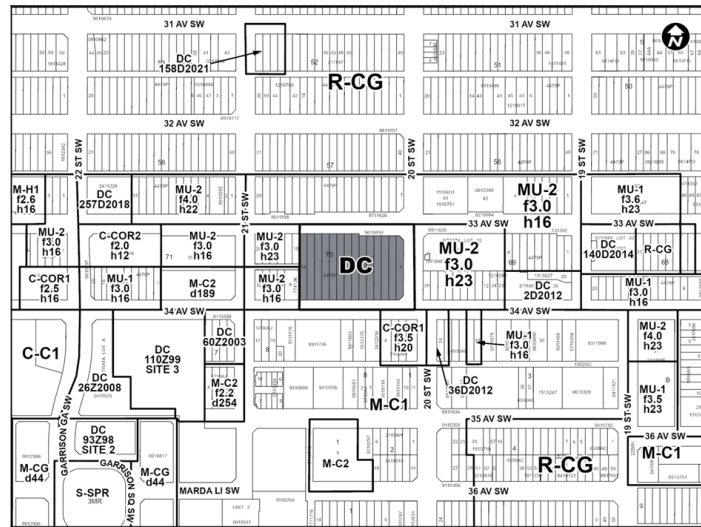
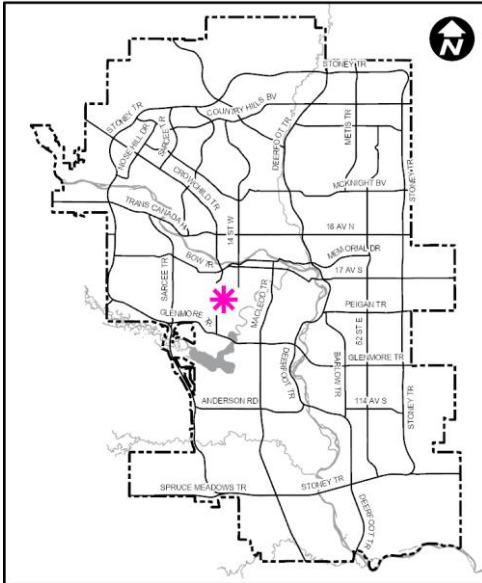
As identified below, South Calgary reached its peak population in 2019.

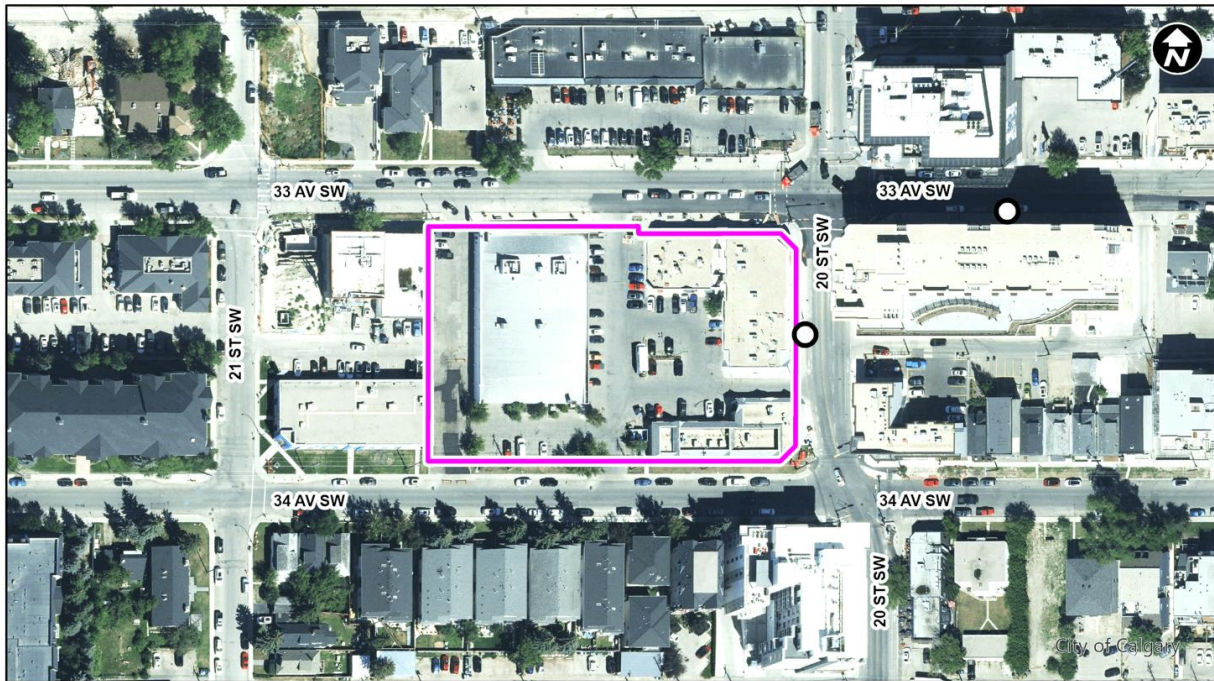
South Calgary	
Peak Population Year	2019
Peak Population	4,442
2019 Current Population	4,442
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The subject site is currently designated the Mixed Use – Active Frontage (MU-2) District with a density modifier of 3.0 floor area ratio (FAR) and a height modifier of 23.0 metres. The current land use allows for mixed-use developments with storefronts along a continuous block face on the commercial street with active commercial uses at grade to activate the street level and allows for a mix of commercial and residential development within the same building.

The proposed DC District is based on the MU-2 District and allows for a base density of 3.0 FAR, but with the option of increasing the density to a maximum of 6.0 FAR provided certain amenity items are provided with any proposed development. These amenity items include provision of affordable housing units and/or publicly accessible private open space. The development permit that has been submitted for this site shows a fairly significant plaza space on the corner of 34 Avenue SW and 20 Street SW, with a smaller plaza space proposed for the corner of 33 Avenue SW and 20 Street SW. As well, the applicant has worked with the Housing Solutions team to determine that 17 affordable housing units will be provided with the proposed development.

This DC District also allows for significantly greater heights than previously allowed for portions of the site, with the southwest and southeast portions being able to have heights of up to 66.0 metres (19 storeys) and the remainder of the south portion of the site of up to 40.0 metres (11 storeys) in height. Those portions of the site adjacent to 33 Avenue SW remain essentially

the same height as currently allowed, with up to 24.0 metres (six storeys) as an allowable height, in comparison to the currently allowed heights of 23.0 metres. The increased height provisions within the DC District are directly related back to the allowable increases in height that have been outlined in the *West Elbow Communities Local Area Plan* (LAP). The LAP specifically has identified the north side of 34 Avenue SW between 20 Street SW and Crowchild Trail SW as within a 'Modified Building Scale Area', where heights can be up to 16 storeys. However, this can be increased if shadowing on the north side of 33 Avenue SW is demonstrated as having been minimized during the spring and fall equinoxes. In addition, the LAP also outlines that proposed developments in transit station areas should provide publicly accessible private open space or non-market/mixed-market housing in order to exceed the maximum heights of 16 storeys. This land use application aligns with this direction as found within the LAP, as allowable heights are up to 19 storeys, but with the provision of both publicly accessible private open space and affordable housing.

The DC District also outlines specific maximum floor plate sizes allowed, with 550 square metre floor plates for portions of the development 30 metres from the west property line and 800.0 square metres for portions of the development that are 30 metres from the property line shared with 20 Street SW. The rules around building façade widths, street wall stepbacks and building separation have also been adjusted in the proposed DC District.

Pursuant to Section 20 of the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, this application for a DC District has been reviewed by Administration and the use of a Direct Control District is necessary to enable the applicant's proposed development due to the need to implement the proposed density bonus provisions as outlined in the LAP. This proposal allows for the applicant's intended development while maintaining the MU-2 District base. The same result could not be achieved through the use of a standard land use district in the Land Use Bylaw.

The proposed DC District includes a rule that allows the Development Authority to relax Sections 7 and 10 through 14 of the DC District Bylaw. Section 7 incorporates the rules of the base district in Bylaw 1P2007 where the DC District does not provide for specific regulation. In a standard district, many of these rules can be relaxed if they meet the test for relaxation of Bylaw 1P2007. The intent of this DC District rule is to ensure that rules of Bylaw 1P2007 that regulate aspects of development that are not specifically regulated in this DC District can also be relaxed in the same way that they would be in a standard district. Sections 10 through 14 include site specific rules for building façade widths, stepbacks and building separation, and these are also listed as rules that may be relaxed, subject to Section 36 of the Land Use Bylaw being met to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

Development and Site Design

If the land use redesignation is approved by Council, the rules of the proposed DC District would provide guidance for the future redevelopment of the site, including appropriate uses, building height and massing, landscaping and site access. Additional items that will be considered through the development permit process would include:

- ensuring an engaging built interface along all frontages of the development, including 33 Avenue SW, 34 Avenue SW and 20 Street SW;
- integration of new development with the public realm, including the integration of the publicly accessible private open spaces on site; and
- ensuring high quality finishes and materials that are in keeping with the surrounding context.

Transportation

Pedestrian access is available from the 33 Avenue SW frontage, the 34 Avenue SW frontage as well as the 20 Street SW frontage. The grid network of sidewalks throughout the neighbourhood provides multiple routing options for pedestrians.

The site benefits from strong connectivity for all mobility modes. The site is well served by Calgary Transit, with an eastbound and westbound bus stop for Route 22 (Richmond Road SW) along 33 Avenue SW approximately 60 metres to the east of the site (a one-minute walk) and the southbound bus stop for Route 7 (Marda Loop) directly adjacent to the site along 20 Street SW. In addition, there is the MAX Yellow Route 304 (Woodpark/City Centre) bus stop at 33 Avenue SW and Crowchild Trail SW, approximately 450 metres to the west of the site (a seven-minute walk). In addition, there is an on-street bikeway along 20 Street SW.

Vehicular access to the site will be available from both 33 Avenue SW as well as 34 Avenue SW. There is on-street parking available along 33 Avenue SW, 34 Avenue SW and 20 Street SW. A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was submitted by the applicant in support of the application. The TIA was reviewed and accepted by Administration.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental concerns have been identified at this time.

Utilities and Servicing

Public water, sanitary, and storm deep main utilities exist within the adjacent public right-of-way. Ultimate development servicing will be determined at the future development permit stage.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

Administration's recommendation is aligned 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.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2020)

The subject site is within the Developed Residential – Inner City area as shown on Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). This application aligns with many of the policies within the MDP for areas within the Developed Residential Area. For example, this will help to intensify inner-city redevelopment by increasing the population in the area and providing new commercial and service uses to support the local residents. In addition, 33 Avenue SW is situated in the Neighbourhood Main Street land use typology and has also been identified as part of the Primary Transit Network as outlined on Map 2: Primary Transit Network. This application also aligns with some of the policies outlined for a Neighbourhood Main Street. For example, creating mixed-use areas that create a transition from the Main Street area to the surrounding neighbourhood. In addition, with the proposed taller heights towards the south portion of the site, this will minimize shadow impacts of development on the 33 Avenue SW Main Street.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

This application does not include any specific actions that address the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#). Further opportunities to align development of this site with applicable climate strategies will be explored and encouraged at subsequent development approval stages.

West Elbow Communities Local Area Plan (Statutory - 2025)

The [West Elbow Communities Local Area Plan](#) (LAP) identifies the subject site on Map 3: Urban Form as 'Neighbourhood Commercial' and for the portion of the site facing 33 Avenue SW as also 'Active Frontage'. On Map 4: Building Scale, the north section of the site facing 33 Avenue SW is classified as 'Low (up to 6 Storeys)' while the south section of the site facing 34 Avenue SW is classified as 'Modified Building Scale Area'. This application generally aligns with policies for these areas as identified. For example, policies for the 'Neighbourhood Commercial' area outline that development should be oriented towards the street, commercial uses be positioned on high activity streets and larger commercial uses should be behind smaller uses facing the street. The policies specific to 'Active Frontage' areas outline that developments should support active uses and have setbacks to accommodate the extension of uses outside of the building.

This site is also subject to the policies within the LAP specific to Main Streets under Section 2.5.1, such as minimizing shadow impacts on the opposite sides of the street through tower separation, reduced floor plates and stepbacks as well as supporting a human scaled street environment through reduction in building massing and provision of street furniture and tree plantings to enhance the pedestrian experience.

In addition, this site falls within the Marda Loop BRT Station Area. Therefore, policies under Section 2.5.4 Transit Station Areas are applicable to this site, which includes the ability to increase the heights of development if certain criteria are met, including the provision of publicly accessible private open space and non-market or mixed-market housing. As mentioned above, the proposed DC District includes the provision for additional density if these amenity items are provided.