

Applicant Submission

2025 June 5



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DATE: March 27, 2025
TO: Development Application Review Team, City of Calgary
SUBJECT: Land Use Redesignation (S-R to M-CG)
FROM: CITYTREND

1.0 Project Overview and Team

The Erin Woods Affordable Housing Project is an initiative led by Siksika Off-Reserve Affordable Housing Project Ltd. (SORAH). SORAH is a non-profit organization committed to providing safe, clean, and affordable housing for qualifying Siksika Nation members living in Calgary. Its existing portfolio includes 31 residential units across four buildings in Calgary: Kingsland, Bridgeland, Bankview, and Huntington Hills.

This project will expand SORAH's impact through the development of a 60 unit, 30 Townhouses and 30 Secondary Suites, community on a ±0.7 hectare parcel located at 295 Erin Woods Drive SE. The site is offered through the City of Calgary's Non-Market Housing Land Sale Program, which aligns directly with the City's Housing Strategy, a plan of 98 actions that address the housing crisis and promote equity for Indigenous and equity-deserving communities.

To facilitate the development, this application seeks to redesignate the site from Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R) to Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG). This district allows for ground-oriented multi-family housing that complements the existing neighbourhood character while responding to the growing demand for affordable housing in Calgary.

The project is being managed by Bryan Romanesky, Principal Planner and Founder of CITYTREND, a Calgary-based urban planning consultancy with over 18 years of experience navigating complex planning and regulatory processes. Bryan is a recognized leader in affordable housing, having played a pivotal role in the delivery of thousands of units for vulnerable and equity-deserving populations. As Chair of Horizon Housing (now Onward Homes), Bryan led the development and acquisition of 1,600 units of non-market housing and oversaw Canada's largest affordable housing non-profit merger. Bryan also brings a unique combination of policy expertise, Indigenous housing experience, and practical delivery focus. His team has led successful planning efforts for Indigenous organizations, municipal partners, and non-profits across Western Canada.

FAAS Architecture has been retained as the project's design lead. Renowned for their human-centred and inclusive approach, FAAS brings deep experience in the design of affordable, accessible, and community-driven housing. Their concept for the Erin Woods project emphasizes walkability, family-oriented layouts, and culturally sensitive public spaces that honour the values and identity of the Siksika Nation.

A Development Permit (DP) application is scheduled for submission in June 2025, overlapping a portion of the land use redesignation process. This parallel approach is intended to streamline approvals, align planning and design frameworks, and accelerate project delivery. Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2026, with completion targeted for late 2027.

This project represents a powerful example of Indigenous-led development that furthers the City's goals around housing, reconciliation, and equity. Together, SORAH, CITYTREND, FAAS Architecture are advancing a shared vision to create safe, dignified, and affordable homes for Siksika Nation members living off-reserve in Calgary.

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2.0 SITE CONTEXT

The subject site is a 0.713-hectare (1.76 acre) parcel located at 295 Erin Woods Drive SE, in the community of Erin Woods in southeast Calgary. The site was subdivided from the larger parcel containing the East Calgary Twin Arenas, following a determination by the City of Calgary that this portion of the site was surplus to the arena's operational needs. The parcel was made available through the Non-Market Housing Land Sale Program, identifying it as a candidate for affordable housing development.

The legal description of the site is a portion of Lot 7, Block 15, Plan 2412090. The site is bound by:

- Erin Woods Drive SE to the south, providing direct vehicle and pedestrian access,
- Existing M-CG zoned townhouses to the west,
- A public right-of-way (ROW) and light industrial uses to the north, and
- The East Calgary Twin Arenas facility to the east.

A registered right-of-way (Plan 4368JK) traverses the site diagonally from southwest to northeast. The ROW will be reviewed further during the permitting phases to ensure appropriate integration and access.

The site benefits from:

- Established municipal infrastructure, including water, sanitary, and storm services;
- Proximity to community amenities, such as schools, parks, transit routes, and recreational facilities; and
- Land use compatibility, with surrounding residential development to the west and south, and civic/recreational and light industrial uses to the east and north.

The parcel's infill location provides an ideal setting for non-market, ground-oriented housing that responds to Indigenous housing needs in a familiar urban environment. The property is currently designated Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R) under Calgary's Land Use Bylaw, which does not permit residential uses. A redesignation to Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG) is therefore required to enable the proposed development.

This parcel's availability, supported by clear municipal intent and adjacency to compatible uses, makes it an excellent candidate for affordable housing development. It presents an opportunity to maximize underutilized public land, align with municipal policy priorities, and deliver urgently needed Indigenous-led housing within an established neighbourhood context.

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3.1 Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Policies

Subject Site

Legend:

- Urban Center:**
 - Urban Center
 - Urban Growth
 - Urban Growth (Core)
 - Urban Growth (Outer)
- Suburban:**
 - Suburban
 - Suburban (Core)
 - Suburban (Outer)
- Rural:**
 - Rural
 - Rural (Core)
 - Rural (Outer)
- Industrial:**
 - Industrial
 - Industrial (Core)
 - Industrial (Outer)
- Other:**
 - Water Park / Open Space
 - Water Park
 - Water Park (Core)
 - Water Park (Outer)
 - Water Park (Core)
 - Water Park (Outer)
 - Water Park (Core)
 - Water Park (Outer)

MDP – Urban Structure



The proposed redesignation supports several key MDP policies from Section 3.5.1, including:

- Policy 3.5.1(a) – Recognizes the predominantly low-density character of Developed Residential Areas and supports moderate intensification in a form that respects neighbourhood scale and character.
- Policy 3.5.1(b) – Calls for redevelopment in multi-family areas to be compatible with the established pattern of development, emphasizing appropriate transitions between uses and a variety of housing types.
- Policy 3.5.1(c) – Encourages redevelopment that adds population and contributes to revitalizing local communities, including through support for nearby commercial services.

The proposed M-CG district enables a transition between the civic function of the East Calgary Twin Arenas to the east, and the existing medium-density townhome development to the west and southeast. The future development is envisioned as a mix of approximately 30 standard townhouse units and 30 smaller townhomes, secondary-suite style, offering a diversity of housing types and sizes to meet the varied needs of families and individuals.

3.1.2 Creating Great Communities (Section 2.3): The project advances MDP objectives related to housing diversity, affordability, and inclusivity:

- Policy 2.3.1 a. (Housing diversity and choice): Encourages a mix of housing types, including affordable and supportive housing, for all ages and income groups.
- Policy 2.3.8 (Equity & Inclusion): Promotes equity and inclusion in community planning by addressing systemic barriers and providing opportunities for diverse populations to access housing and community amenities.

3.1.3 Shaping a More Compact Urban Form (Section 2.2):

- The project aligns with intensification goals by making efficient use of an underutilized parcel in an inner-city context.
- Supports proximity to transit and services, reducing reliance on personal vehicles and promoting sustainability.
- Offers a housing typology that complements existing residential uses while enhancing local vibrancy and diversity.

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3.2 Local Area Plan (LAP) Policies

The subject site is located within the East Calgary International Avenue Communities Local Area Plan (LAP) and is designated as City Civic and Recreation on the Urban Form Map. This category generally accommodates indoor and outdoor facilities on public land, including athletic, cultural, and civic amenities.

The LAP explicitly supports the integration of non-market housing, making this project a strong fit with both the land use and policy intent of the LAP.

Section 2.2.4.3 b. City Civic and Recreation

All types of care facilities and non-market housing are appropriate in this category and are encouraged to locate where there is convenient access to community services and amenity.

The LAP direct residential uses to be below 3 storeys. The proposed M-CG designation has a maximum of 12 metres in height allowing for 3 storeys and a sloped roof, making this project consistent with the policy intent of the LAP.

Section 2.2.4.3 g. City Civic and Recreation

Supplementary uses, such as residential or commercial uses within the City Civic and Recreation areas should be located in buildings less than three storeys...



LAP – Urban Form

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3.3 Calgary Housing Strategy and Non-Market Housing Framework

This project directly supports the objectives of “Home is Here – The City of Calgary’s Housing Strategy 2024–2030”, a comprehensive response to Calgary’s housing crisis built around five key outcomes. The proposal, led by SORAH, is an example of Indigenous-led housing delivery that embodies the strategy’s priorities in both form and intent.

The five outcomes:

1. Increase the supply of housing to meet demand and increase affordability.
2. Support affordable housing providers to deliver services that make a positive impact.
3. Enable The City’s housing subsidiaries to improve service delivery.
4. Ensure diverse housing choice to meet the needs of equity-deserving populations.
5. Address the affordable housing needs of Indigenous people living in Calgary.

The project contributes to **Outcome 1** by increasing the supply of affordable housing in an established neighbourhood. Located on a surplus civic parcel identified through the Non-Market Housing Land Sale Program, the proposed 60 unit development, 30 Townhouses and 30 Secondary Suites, will introduce a mix of unit types—including smaller townhome-style units—within walking distance of transit, schools, recreation amenities, and commercial services. This moderate-density infill helps address demand while supporting more complete and connected communities.

Under **Outcome 4**, which emphasizes the need to ensure diverse housing choice for equity-deserving populations, the project will deliver ground-oriented homes suitable for a range of household types and income levels. The proposed units will support multigenerational living, accessibility, and family-oriented layouts—critical for residents who have been underserved in the traditional housing market.

The project also strongly aligns with **Outcome 5**, which focuses on addressing the housing needs of Indigenous people living in Calgary. As a project entirely led by SORAH, it delivers culturally appropriate, safe, and responsive housing for Siksika Nation members. The City’s Housing Strategy calls for stronger partnerships with Indigenous organizations, and this project exemplifies how such collaboration can turn strategic intent into impactful, community-rooted development.

By coordinating the Land Use Redesignation and Development Permit applications, SORAH and the project team are advancing the Strategy’s goals of accelerating housing delivery and reducing regulatory delays. The Erin Woods project demonstrates how public land, Indigenous leadership, and City policy can come together to address pressing housing needs while advancing reconciliation, equity, and neighbourhood resilience.

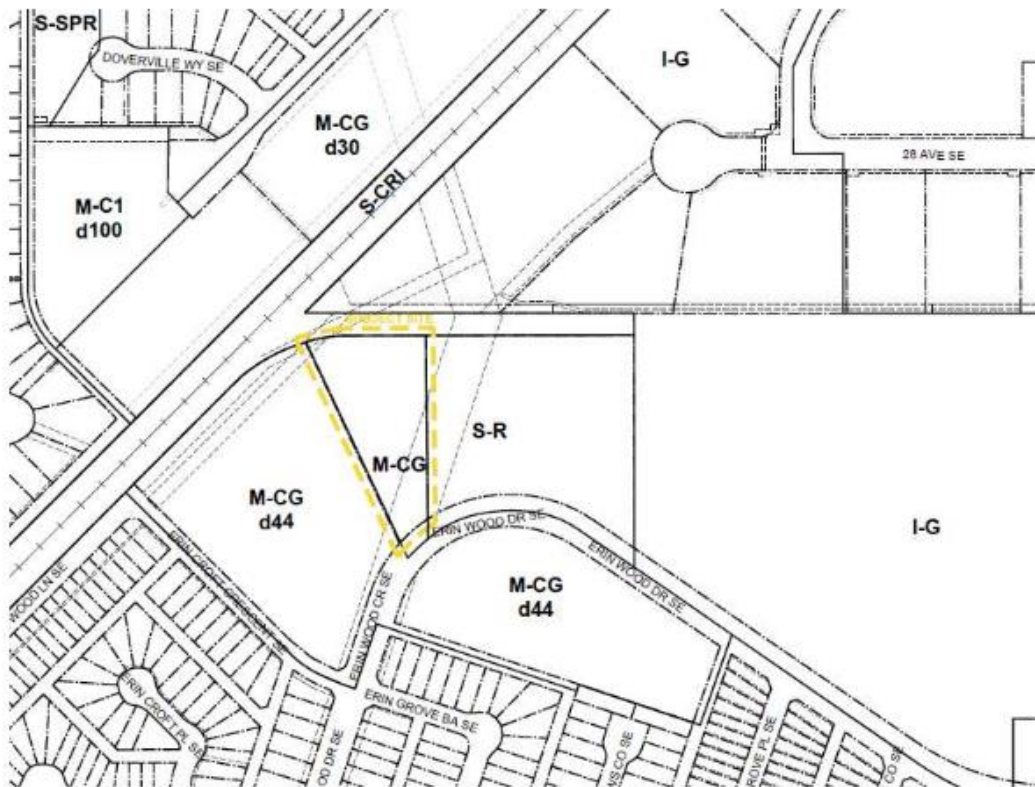
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3.4 Land Use Rational

This application proposes to redesignate the subject parcel from Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R) to Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG) to enable the development of approximately 60 non-market, ground-oriented residential units led by (SORAH).



The M-CG district is the most appropriate land use for this site and project for the following reasons:

3.5.1 Enables Culturally Appropriate, Affordable Housing

The M-CG designation permits rowhouse and townhouse forms that are compatible with surrounding development and supportive of family-oriented, ground-access homes. This aligns with SORAH's goal of providing culturally appropriate, accessible housing for Siksika Nation members living in Calgary. The district allows flexibility to deliver both larger and smaller townhome-style units, enabling housing diversity while supporting affordability.

3.5.2 Compatible with Surrounding Built Form

The subject parcel is surrounded by a mix of land uses:

- M-CG development to the west and southeast, consisting of medium-density townhomes;
- The East Calgary Twin Arena to the east; and

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- Light industrial and institutional uses further north.

The proposed M-CG designation maintains a logical transition between these uses. The future development will be under three storeys, consistent with adjacent buildings and in line with both the LAP and MDP's urban design objectives. The site's location at the edge of a civic facility provides a natural buffer and edge condition for residential intensification.

3.5.3 Walkable, Service-Rich Location

The parcel is well-connected to the existing infrastructure and is located within walking distance of:

- Public schools and parks,
- Transit routes,
- The East Calgary Twin Arenas; and
- Commercial amenities along 52 Street SE.

This context supports a walkable, community-integrated form of housing that is less reliant on private vehicles and aligns with the City's broader goals for complete communities and climate resilience.

3.5.4 Delivers on City Policy Objectives

The M-CG district enables a project that directly responds to:

- The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) direction for modest intensification and revitalization in Established Areas;
- The Local Area Plan (LAP) policies that encourage non-market housing uses in City Civic and Recreation areas; and
- The Calgary Housing Strategy's focus on Indigenous-led housing, housing equity, and activation of surplus public lands.

3.5.5 Development Feasibility and Timing

The proposed M-CG zoning is not only suitable in policy and context, but also in practical implementation.

The site:

- Has already been subdivided from the East Calgary Twin Arenas site,
- Has existing service connections and no known site constraints,
- Will be accompanied by a Development Permit submission in June 2025, allowing for coordinated and streamlined approvals.

The M-CG district allows SORAH to move forward confidently with a form of development that is feasible, fundable, and aligned with both housing need and community character.

Sincerely,

Bryan Romanesky, CEO
CITYTREND

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