

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The proposed development is located in the Downtown Commercial Core on the southwest corner of 4 Avenue SW and 5 Street SW. The subject site is approximately 0.26 hectares (0.64 acres) in size and approximately 63 metres wide by 36 metres deep. The site is currently vacant.

The surrounding area is characterized mainly by a mix of residential and commercial development. Directly to the west of the subject site is a vacant parcel that has an approved development permit for a 30-storey residential tower with retail uses at grade (DP2024-05672), approved by Calgary Planning Commission on 2025 March 13. To the south of the site is a six-storey parking structure with a residential tower above. To the east of the site across 5 Street SW is a high-rise commercial office tower. To the north of the site across 4 Avenue SW is a 13-storey hotel.

4 Avenue SW, which bounds the site to the north, is one of the main vehicular corridors through the downtown core which heads west one-way. Being in the downtown core, there are a variety of amenities in the immediate vicinity. Notably, the McDougall Centre publicly accessible open spaces are approximately 120 metres (one-minute walk) from the site, Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations running through downtown going both east and west are approximately 300 metres (a four-minute walk) to the south of the site and the Bow River Pathway is approximately 400 metres (a six-minute walk) to the north of the site.

Community Peak Population Table

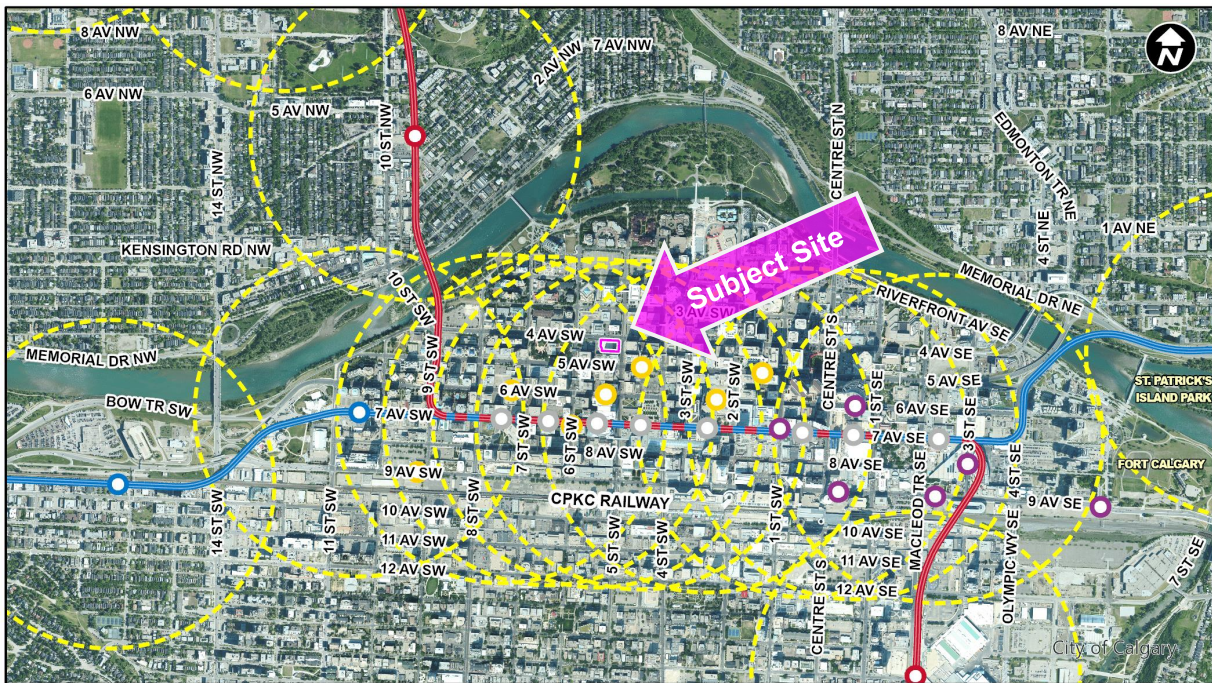
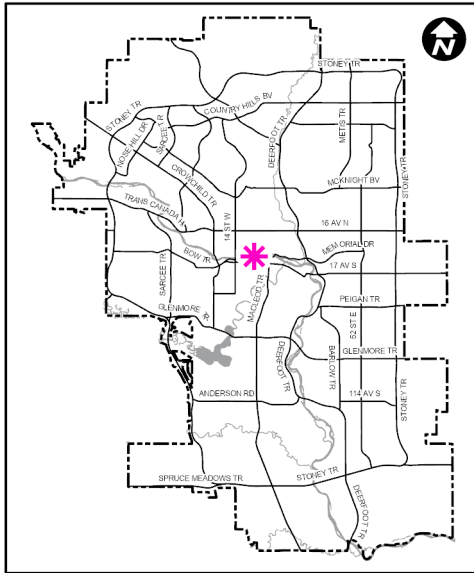
As identified below, the Downtown Commercial Core reached its peak population in 2015.

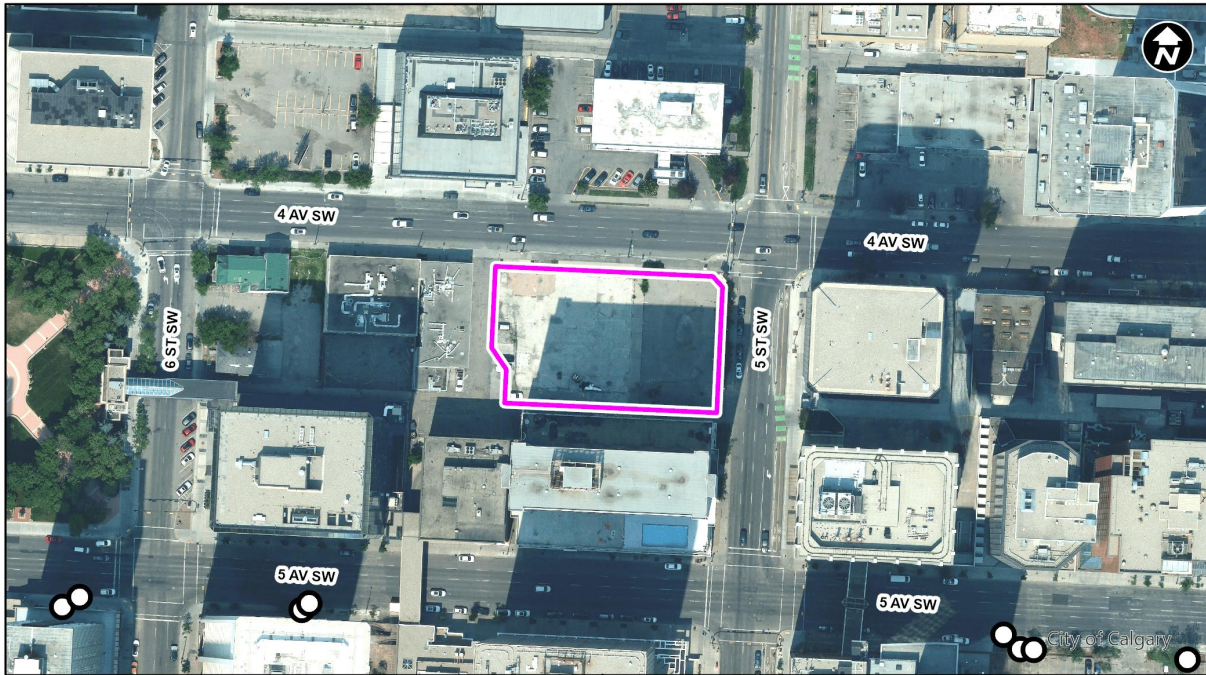
Downtown Commercial Core	
Peak Population Year	2015
Peak Population	9,083
2019 Current Population	8,683
Difference in Population (Number)	-400
Difference in Population (Percent)	-4.40%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained online through the [Downtown Commercial Core](#) community profile.

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The subject site is designated as the Commercial Residential District (CR20-C20/R20) which is the primary land use district in the Downtown Commercial Core. It is intended for high-density development with a variety of allowable uses. The district allows for a floor area ratio (FAR) of up to 20.0 in accordance with the incentive density provisions found in Part 13, Division 3 of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007. For residential development in the CR20-C20/R20 District, a maximum FAR of 15.0 can be achieved by providing the on-site pedestrian amenities listed under item 8.0 of Table 8 in Section 1332 of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007.

The proposed development aligns with the overall purpose of the CR20-C20/R20 District as the development provides for:

- a mix of commercial and residential uses;
- pedestrian-oriented ground level and improved public realm; and
- high-density development which complies with the incentive density rules.

Incentive Density

The proposed density for this development is a FAR of 10.15. In the CR20-C20/R20 District, an FAR greater than 3.0 can only be achieved through the incentive density requirements in Part 13, Division 3. Table 8.0 in Division 3 outlines public amenity items that every development must provide to exceed 3.0 FAR. For residential developments, these required items, listed in the table below, allow a development to achieve an additional 12.0 FAR.

Floor Area Ratio Summary		
Land Use Bylaw Section	Land Use Bylaw Provisions	Proposed Floor Area Ratio
1332, Table 7 (for Assisted Living, Dwelling Units, Live Work Units uses)	3.0 FAR	3.0 FAR
1332, Table 7 (for Assisted Living, Dwelling Units, Live Work Units uses)	<p>Additional 12.0 FAR with provision of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.0.4(a) setback areas for pedestrian circulation; • 8.0.4(b) corner cut for pedestrian circulation; and • 8.0.4(c) Plus 15 Network elements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public easement space through the building; - structural supports to facilitate expansion of the Plus 15 Network; - publicly accessible elevator and escalators/stairs; and - contribution to the Plus 15 fund. 	7.15 FAR
Total Proposed FAR		10.15 FAR

The proposed development meets the bonusing requirements of 8.04 by providing the appropriate setbacks and corner cut at grade, and by providing all of the required Plus 15 Network elements.

Development and Site Design

This development permit application proposes a 12-storey multi-residential building with retail at grade. Key aspects of the development are described below.

Site and Building Design

A Supermarket use lines the 4 Avenue SW edge at grade, totaling approximately 970 square metres of commercial floor space, with access provided at the northeast corner of the building. The primary residential entrance fronts onto 5 Street SW. Vehicular access is provided via the lane to the west of the development where the underground parkade entrance is located on the east side of the building. All loading and back-of-house functions are located on the south side of the building and accessed via a private lane along the south of the building.

The ground level houses the commercial use, residential lobby, bicycle parking, waste and recycling and back-of-house functions. Residential units are located from levels two to 12. The total unit count is 234 units, with a mix of 147 one-bedroom units, 53 two-bedroom units and 31 three-bedroom units. Level two contains the Plus 15 public easement space as required under Section 1332 of the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, which runs east-west along the south edge of level two. The public easement space will be used as temporary storage space for the building until such a time that there is a need to connect to the overall Plus 15 Network.

The ground-level façade is finished with clear glazing, creating a differentiation with the rest of the building that is composed of black, white and brown metal paneling. The ground level is slightly inset from the rest of the building above. As per Section 1314 of the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, there are no floorplate size restrictions below 36 metres in height. Therefore, there is no change in floorplate size from level two to 11. The use of colours and recessed balconies create an impression of massing differentiation, which help reduce the impact of the larger floor plates up to level 11 on the overall look of the building. The floorplate size restrictions apply to level 12 only and thus it is smaller than the other floors with the additional space used as rooftop amenity.

Amenity Areas

Common residential amenity areas are all located on level 12 of the building. These include outdoor dining areas with barbeques, multi-use lawn/game areas and a dog run, accessible from the level 12 rooftop. Level 12 also includes multi-purpose indoor amenity spaces. Additionally, every unit in the proposed development includes a private balcony.

Office of Urban Design Review

The development permit proposal was reviewed by the Office of Urban Design (OUD). The focus of the review was to bring activation to 5 Street SW and enhance the design of the ground floor to provide improved articulation and differentiation of commercial and residential entrances. This included discussion on adding finer-grain detail to the ground level in the form of canopies, lighting and signage to emphasize the pedestrian-oriented intent of the street. Another noted concern was the visual impact of the podium rooftop from units that overlook.

Urban Design Review Panel

This development permit application was brought to the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) on 2024 July 10 during the pre-application stage. UDRP presented concerns regarding two main items. First was the activation of the 5 Street SW edge, including the need to improve the articulation of the main entry points. The Panel suggested shifting retail or residential entries to 5 Street SW to provide more activity on that edge while also enhancing the architectural detailing around entries to make them more pronounced. The second main point was the lack of access to the non-accessible rooftop landscaped area on level 2. As many units face this rooftop area, the Panel felt strongly that this presented an opportunity to provide greater amenity space to residents. The Panel suggested this space be activated with a usable amenity or be integrated with the adjacent units to provide larger balconies.

Administration worked with the applicant to refine this development permit in response to both the comments from OUD and the comments from UDRP. Some of the above noted recommendations were implemented. Of note is the shifting of the residential entrance to 5 Street SW along with some architectural enhancements of the main entries.

No further review by UDRP was required.

Transportation

Pedestrian access is available from both the 4 Avenue SW and the 5 Street SW frontages. The grid network of sidewalks throughout the neighbourhood provides multiple routing options for pedestrians.

The site benefits from strong connectivity for all mobility modes. As the site is in the downtown core, it is well served by a variety of transit routes. A stop for Route 300 (Airport/City Centre) is

approximately 100 metres (a two-minute walk) from the site to the south along 5 Street SW and a stop for Route 1 (Bowness/Forest Lawn) is approximately 150 metres (a three-minute walk) to the south along 5 Avenue SW. In addition, the subject site is approximately 300 metres (a five-minute walk) from the 7 Avenue LRT line, specifically the eastbound 6 Street SW station and the westbound 4 Street SW station. On-street bicycle lanes are along both 5 Street SW and 7 Street SW.

Vehicular access to the site is available from 4 Avenue SW via a lane located directly to the west of the site. The proposal will provide 96 residential parking stalls and 24 visitor parking stalls over two parkade levels, in line with Land Use Bylaw rules.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental concerns were noted for this site.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, storm and sanitary mains are available to service the subject site.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

Administration's recommendations 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.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2020)

The subject site is located in the Greater Downtown area as shown on Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). The MDP's vision for the Greater Downtown is to create livable and vibrant high-density mixed-use neighbourhoods that function as complete communities. This includes the desire to add more varied housing to the downtown core. This application supports that vision and aligns with the applicable policies in the MDP by providing varied unit types within a high-density mixed-use development that brings activity to the street level through a supermarket use.

Calgary Climate Strategy (2022)

Administration has reviewed this application in relation to the objectives of the [Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050](#) programs and actions. This application supports Program Pathway A: New Buildings – Build new buildings to a net-zero emissions standard by ensuring the building is 'solar ready' and can accommodate a solar photovoltaic array on the rooftop in the future. Additionally, the development provides 123 EV-capable stalls with conduit and reserved electrical capacity across both levels of the parkade. This action supports Program Pathway F: Zero Emissions Vehicle – Accelerate the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan (Non-Statutory – 2021)

This application is supported by [Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan](#) as it adds new housing in varied types to the downtown core. It also provides commercial opportunities and amenities for residents and the broader public.

Plus 15 Policy (Non-Statutory – 2021)

The subject site is located within the Plus 15 boundary as per Figure 3 of the [Plus 15 Policy](#). The policy provides detail and guidance on the goals and objectives of the Plus 15 Network.

This includes the standards to which the incentive density requirements in the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 should be met. The proposed development aligns with the *Plus 15 Policy* by providing the required Plus 15 Network elements to the standards laid out in the policy.

Land Use Bylaw (2007)

Administration highlights the following relaxations to the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 in the table below. Administration has reviewed each relaxation individually and considers each relaxation to be acceptable for the reasons outlined.

Bylaw Relaxations			
Regulation	Standard	Provided	Administration Rationale Supporting a Relaxation
1313 Residential Window Separation from the Property Line	(1) Windows for Assisted Living, Dwelling Units or Live Work Units, where they are located in the Transition Area as illustrated on Map 11, must provide a horizontal separation of: (a) 9.0m from a property line shared with another parcel; and	Plans indicate a 3.12m (-5.88m) south setback	The proposed building is lower in scale than adjacent buildings. Upon review of the residential window locations in relation to adjacent developments, there are large enough separation distances to ensure no undesired impacts.
	(b) 6.0m from a property line shared with a lane.	Plans indicate a 0.09m (-5.91m) west setback.	Same as above.
1314 Floor Plate Restrictions	(1) Each floor of a building located partially or wholly above 36.0m above grade and containing Assisted Living, Dwelling Units, Hotel suites or Live Work Units has a maximum horizontal dimension of 44.0m where they are located in the Transition Area as illustrated on Map 11.	Plans indicate the 12 th floor has a horizontal dimension of 46.73m (+2.73m).	This is a minor relaxation that applies only to the top floor and does not create any undesired impacts. The massing of this floor is shifted toward the corner of the site reducing the impact of the minor amount of additional floor space on adjacent development.
Bicycle / Loading / Motor Vehicle Parking Stalls (min.)	116 residential stalls required.	Plans indicate 86 (-30) residential parking stalls.	Relaxation supported as the downtown location ensures easy access to transit, bicycle infrastructure and walkable amenities.
	24 visitor stalls required.	Plans indicate 23 (-1) visitor stalls.	Minor variance supported. Minimal to no impact on the overall parking provisions.
122 Standards for Motor Vehicle Parking Stalls	(1.1) The minimum width of a motor vehicle parking stall when it abuts a physical barrier, is:	Plans indicate stalls less than 2.85m when adjacent to a	Minor variance supported. Minimal to no impact on the overall parking provisions.

	(b) 2.85m when a physical barrier abuts only one side.	physical barrier on one side.	
	(11) Where structural columns encroach into a motor vehicle parking stall, such columns: (b) must be located within 1.2m of either end of the motor vehicle parking stall; and	Plans indicate structural columns beyond 1.2m of either end of the motor vehicle parking stall.	Minor variance supported. Minimal to no impact on the overall parking provisions.
	(c) must not encroach into a motor vehicle parking stall within 0.3m of a drive aisle.	Plans indicate structural columns within 0.3m of a drive aisle.	Minor variance supported. Minimal to no impact on the overall parking provisions.
125 Bicycle Parking Stalls	(6) A bicycle parking stall that is not an individual locker and is attached to the ground must be located at least 0.6m from any physical barrier.	Plans indicate several stalls less than 0.6m from a physical barrier.	Minor variance supported. Minimal to no impact on the overall bicycle parking provisions which are very robust and easily accessible.