

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The subject site is located in the northwest community of Hillhurst on the north side of 5 Avenue NW, immediately south of Riley Park. The site is approximately 0.31 hectares in size (0.76 acres) and is approximately 81 metres wide by 36 metres deep. The site fronts onto 5 Street NW and a lane exists to the north to provide access to the site.

Surrounding development is characterized by a mix of residential developments including the multi-residential development (“Ezra on Riley Park”) to the west, low density residential development to the south and east, and low rise (four storey) multi-residential development at the eastern end of the block. Further to the east (approximately 200 metres, a three-minute walk) is 10 Street NW, with a range of retail and commercial goods and services.

The site is ideally located near a range of transportation modes, including Hillhurst/Sunnyside LRT Station, approximately 400 metres to the east (a seven-minute walk); bus stops for Route 104 (Sunnyside/University of Calgary) immediately adjacent to the site on the north side of 5 Avenue NW and 50 metres east (a minute’s walk) on the south side.

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and the Alberta University of the Arts (AUA) are located just up the hill, within a 10-15 minute walk.

Community Peak Population Table

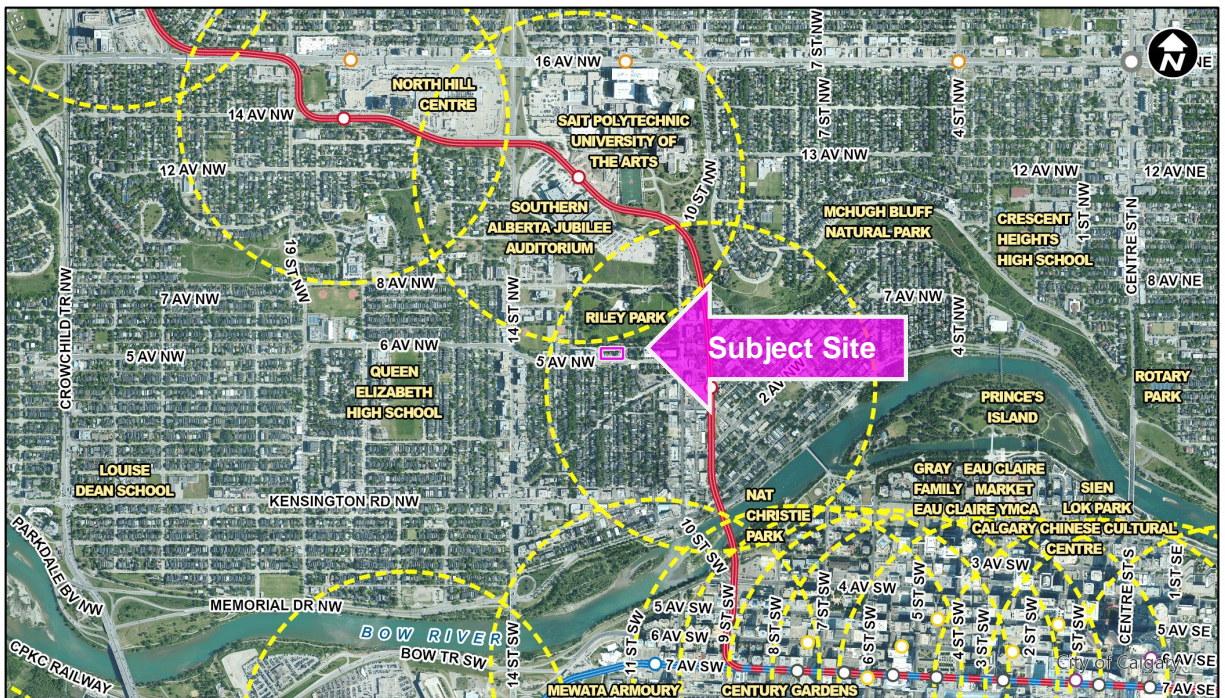
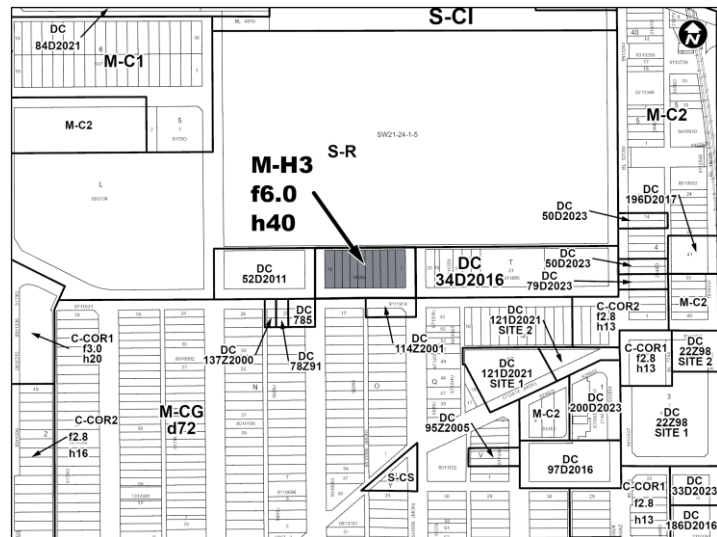
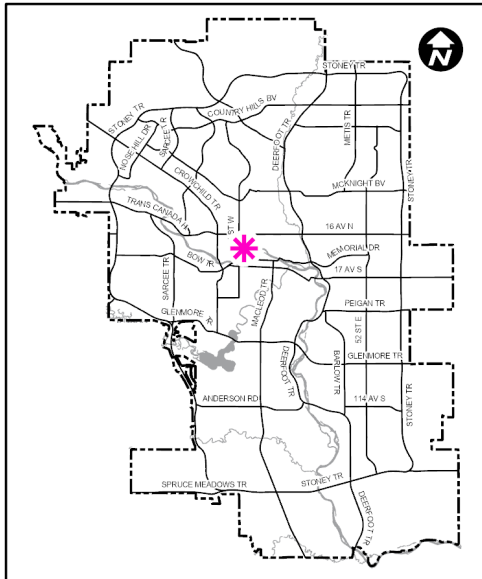
As identified below, the community of Hillhurst reached its peak population in 2015.

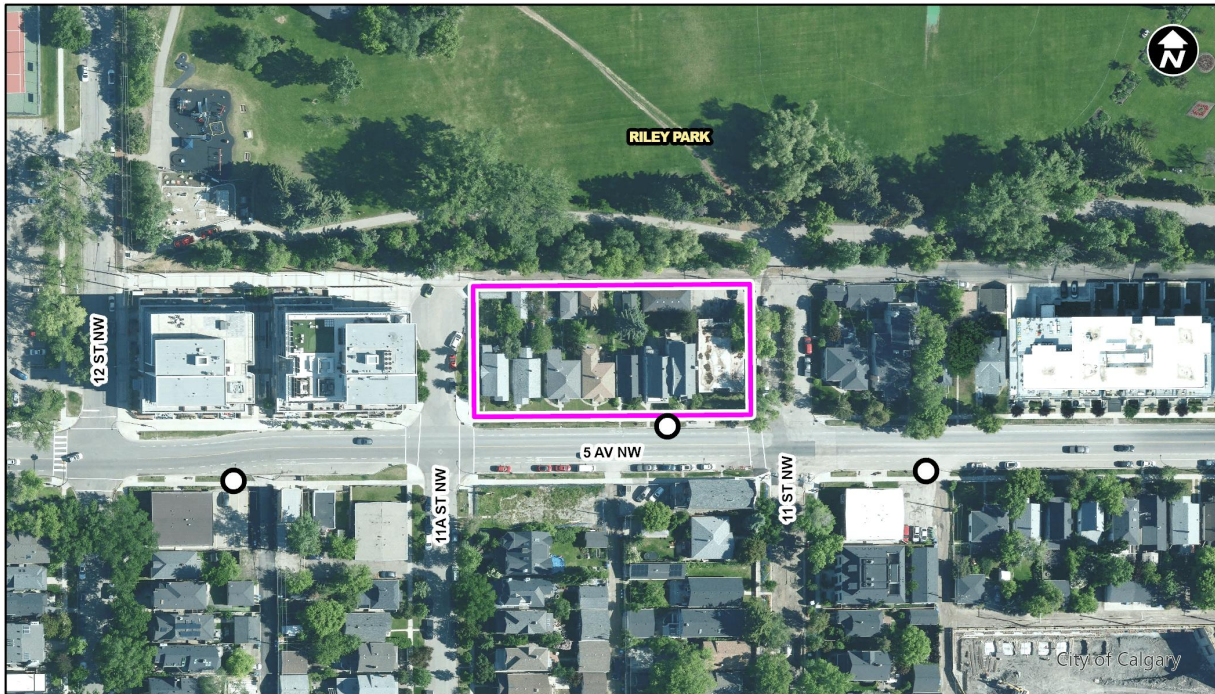
Hillhurst	
Peak Population Year	2015
Peak Population	6,737
2019 Current Population	6,558
Difference in Population (Number)	-179
Difference in Population (Percent)	-2.66%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

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

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

None.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The site is currently designated as a Direct Control (DC) District ([Bylaw 34D2016](#)) which is based on the Multi-Residential – High Density Low Rise (M-H1) District, with a maximum building height of 26 metres and floor area ratio FAR 4.0. The existing District would enable a minimum of 46 dwelling units on the site; there is no maximum number of dwelling units. The District contemplates street oriented multi-residential development and a limited range of support commercial uses, together with an opportunity for density bonusing which was previously available in the *Hillhurst/Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP). The ARP has been replaced by the LAP and the policies for density bonusing are no longer relevant. Notwithstanding this, the existing District has specific policy to enable density bonusing even without the ARP.

This application originally sought a new DC District based on the Multi-Residential – High Density Medium Rise (M-H2) District with a proposed height of 40 metres (12 storeys) and density bonusing up to a maximum FAR of 6.0, however Administration did not consider that the test for DC in Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (Section 20) was met as the development intent could be achieved through the use of a different standard district. Instead, Administration advised the applicant that the available land use district to meet their needs is the Multi-Residential – High Density High Rise (M-H3) District with a maximum floor area ratio of 6.0 and a maximum height of 40 metres. This complies most closely with the land use and development policies in the LAP and Land Use Bylaw.

Development and Site Design

The rules of the proposed M-H3f6.0h40 District would provide guidance for the development of the site, including appropriate uses, building height, massing, landscaping, parcel coverage and parking. Other factors that will be reviewed with the submission of a development permit application would include:

- interface with the lane;
- parkade access and number of parking stalls;
- shadow impact on Riley Park;
- building massing in relation to existing adjacent properties;
- preservation of existing heritage assets (e.g. sidewalk stamps and lilac bushes);
- mix of uses within the building; and
- appropriate amenity space for residents.

Density

The applicant has indicated the site to be capable of accommodating up to 175 residential dwelling units, 25 of which are intended to qualify as 10-year affordable units. The minimum density in the M-H3 District is 300 dwelling units per hectare. With a site area of 0.31 hectares, this would equate to 90 dwelling units. The M-H3 density would allow for the projected 175 units.

Urban Design

This application was reviewed by Administration's Office of Urban Design, who referred the application to the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) on 2025 December 10. The panel's comments were provided to the applicant on 2025 December 22 and a formal written response received 2026 January 29.

The Panel noted the uniqueness of the location, adjacent to Riley Park, and was generally supportive of the potential development. It noted that the early-stage massing and scale, including the stepped height up to 12 storeys, was appropriate for the site. The inclusion of grade-oriented units to the 5 Avenue NW and laneway frontages would be a welcome addition and add vibrancy. UDRP also noted that there are opportunities to refine the development and this will be explored at detailed design and development permit stages. A future development permit application will be reviewed by the City's Office of Urban Design and UDRP at the appropriate time.

Transportation

Pedestrian access is available from the existing sidewalk on the north side of 5 Avenue NW. This site is also located along the Always Available for All Ages and Abilities (5A) Network and supports a range of non-motorized modes of transport.

The nearest bus stop is immediately adjacent to the site on 5 Avenue NW, with another on the south side of the road approximately 50 metres (a minute's walk) to the east. The Hillhurst/Sunnyside LRT Station is approximately 400 metres to the east (a seven-minute walk).

No major concerns have been identified in terms of mobility requirements.

Environmental Site Considerations

No environmental concerns were identified.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, storm and sanitary sewer mains are available to service the site. Details of site servicing, as well as appropriate stormwater management, will be considered as part of a development permit application.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

Administration's recommendation 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 – 2009)

The site is located in the Developed Inner City Area (Map 1: Urban Structure) of the [Municipal Development Plan](#) (MDP). The applicable MDP policies encourage redevelopment and modest intensification of established areas to make a more efficient use of existing infrastructure, public amenities and transit.

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.

Riley Communities Local Area Plan (2025)

The [Riley Communities Local Area Plan](#) (LAP) identifies 5 Avenue NW as a "Neighbourhood Connector" (Map 3: Urban Form) with a "Mid (up to 12 storeys)" Building Scale (Map 4).

Section 2.2.1.4 notes that Neighbourhood Connector (as well as Neighbourhood Local) areas represent the more residentially oriented areas of Riley Communities. The policy directs that land use should be predominantly residential in nature, along with supporting a broad range and mix of housing types, unit structures and forms.

Neighbourhood Connector areas are characterized by a broad range of housing types along higher activity, predominantly residential streets. These areas may accommodate small-scale commercial uses to meet residents' daily needs. Section 2.2.1.5 adds support for higher frequency of units and entrances facing the street. It also provides policies that support minor commercial uses (e.g. cafes, corner stores, live/work units and home based businesses).

The site is also located in the Sunnyside LRT Transit Station Area (Figure 12), within Section 2.5.4.2 of the LAP. This provides policy relating to development and improvements to the 5A network. Generally, it envisions the continued development of a mixed-use neighbourhood with higher densities that support transit infrastructure and promote a highly walkable and well-connected neighbourhood.

This Land Use application is consistent with the policies contained in the LAP. Further review of the LAP will be required during an assessment of a development permit application.