

Calgary Planning Commission Report to
Public Hearing Meeting of Council
2018 June 11

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2018-0257
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Land Use Amendment in West Hillhurst (Ward 7) at 2002 Westmount Drive NW, LOC2018-0006, Bylaw 172D2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application has been submitted by Jennifer Dobbin on January 10, 2017 on behalf of Pritma Puneet Dhillon-Chattha. This application proposes to change the designation of a single parcel (± 0.04 hectares) to allow for:

- mixed-use buildings (e.g. commercial storefronts with apartments or offices above);
- commercial uses facing a commercial street;
- the conversion of existing residential buildings into commercial uses;
- a maximum building height of 11.0 metres (an increase from the current maximum of 10.0 metres);
- a maximum floor to parcel area ratio (FAR) of 0.4; and
- the uses listed in the proposed M-U1 designation.

This application is deemed appropriate and in keeping with applicable policies in the *Municipal Development Plan*. There is no local area plan for the community.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council hold a Public Hearing; and

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 0.04 hectares \pm (0.10 acres \pm) located at 2002 Westmount Road NW (Plan 1197FW, Block 5, Lot 5) from Residential - Contextual One / Two Dwelling District (R-C2) District **to** Mixed Use – General (MU-1f0.4h11) District; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

Moved by: C. Friesen

Absent: A. Palmiere and L. Juan

Carried: 4 – 2

Opposed: J. Scott and D. Leighton

RECOMMENDATION(S) OF THE CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION

That Council hold a Public Hearing on Bylaw 172D2018; and

1. **ADOPT** the proposed redesignation of 0.04 hectares \pm (0.10 acres \pm) located at 2002 Westmount Road NW (Plan 1197FW, Block 5, Lot 5) from Residential - Contextual One / Two Dwelling District (R-C2) District **to** Mixed Use – General (MU-1f0.4h11) District, in accordance with Administration's recommendation; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed Bylaw 172D2018.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

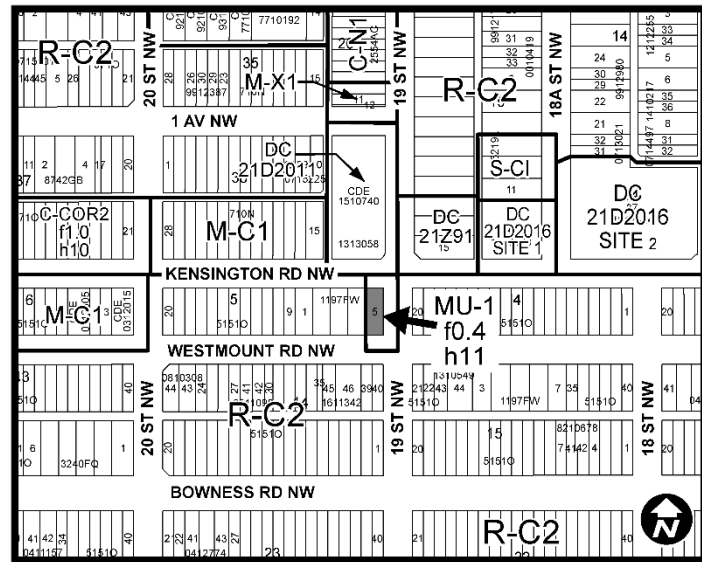
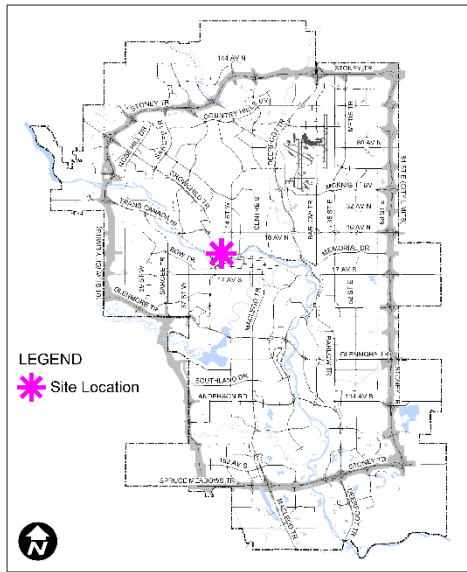
None.

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Location Maps



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BACKGROUND

Site Context

The subject site is located in the northwest community of West Hillhurst. The subject site is located on and addressed from Westmount Road, but has a rear property line with Kensington Road NW. Kensington Road NW is identified as a Neighbourhood Main Street on Map 1- Urban Structure of the Municipal Development Plan.

Development along Kensington Road NW consists of a mix of commercial and residential uses, at a variety of scales. Development along the north side of Kensington Road NW consists of a mix of residential, commercial, mixed-use and institutional development (i.e. schools and places of worship) at a variety of scales including older bungalows, townhouses, low-rise apartments, mid-rise apartment buildings, strip commercial developments and newer mixed use developments (Savoy condominiums and the redeveloped Kensington Legion). The south side of Kensington Road NW (parcels addressed to Westmount Road NW), generally consists of low-density residential development (single detached, semi-detached and rowhouse developments), with a small commercial node at 21 Street NW.

The block located on the northern half of Westmount Road/southern half of Kensington Road NW between 14 Street NW and Crowchild Trail NW is a unique circumstance in the city of Calgary for two reasons: first, it has an unusual block orientation, with lots backing, rather than fronting onto a main street, and second, this portion of Kensington Road NW was not originally intended as a main street due to particular historic circumstances.

Originally, what is now Bowness Road NW (one block to the south of Westmount Road NW) was designed and oriented as the main street through the community. As early as the 1920s, Bowness Road NW was the primary east/west road from the then developing community of Hillhurst and Sunnyside to the areas to the west (Bowness or Montgomery had not developed as residential communities at this time, but farmsteads were located in these areas). The design of the road, with median boulevards, reflects this intent. By the 1940s, with the development of Bowness and Montgomery (there was no development between West Hillhurst and Montgomery at this time), Bowness Road NW further solidified its function as the main connection to these new communities, as Kensington Road NW had not been extended much past 14 Street NW. When Kensington Road NW was extended west in the late 1940s/early 1950s towards what is now Crowchild Trail NW, because there was only room for 3 blocks of residential lots between Bowness Road and Kensington Road NW, lots along Westmount Road NW were made to “back” onto Kensington Road NW.

However, in the 1950s, the function of Bowness Road and Kensington Road NW changed. Kensington Road NW was extended west from 14 Street NW and connected to what is now Parkdale Boulevard NW. Bowness Road NW (from 14 Street NW to what is now Crowchild Trail NW), was then realigned to intersect with Kensington Road at 25 Street NW. Bowness Road NW was no longer a direct east/west connector to the developing communities of Parkdale, Montgomery and the remainder of West Hillhurst – Kensington Road took on that function. This connection for Bowness Road was further severed on the west end when Crowchild Trail NW

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was built in the 1970s and on the east end the 1980s when the intersection of Bowness Road and 14 Street NW was removed, with only limited turns provided onto Bowness Road NW, with no through movements allowed.

These developments, occurring over several decades, had the effect of relocating the east/west main street through West Hillhurst from Bowness Road to Kensington Road NW. However, as the parcels backing on the south side of Kensington Road NW demonstrate, the road was not originally intended as a main street, and it's scattered and poorly oriented development pattern is a reflection of that history.

In addition to its unique lot orientation, Kensington Road, between 14 Street and Crowchild Trail NW, is also undergoing a transition from a primarily low-density residential street to a commercial street. This transition is not new to Calgary, as it was the same for many of Calgary's main streets such as 17 Avenue SW, 33 Avenue SW (Marda Loop), and Kensington Road NW east of 14 Street NW. Each of these streets were originally developed with primarily single detached homes. As the city grew around them, and the neighbourhoods they served increased in population, these streets transitioned gradually from a primarily residential street to a primarily commercial street. These transitions typically involved a progression of development that started with conversion of original residences into commercial spaces (for example the several homes located east of 8 Street on the south side of 17 Avenue), then involved small additions to residential buildings to allow for a commercial use, moving on to redevelopment of small scale commercial buildings and eventually larger scale redevelopments for mixed use or commercial buildings. The proposed redesignation represents an early step in this transition.

As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of West Hillhurst peaked either at or before 1968 (the earliest census numbers available are from 1968). The community has experienced gradual growth from its nadir in 1995 and is trending to regain the population it has lost over the last 50 years.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

West Hillhurst	
Peak Population Year	1968
Peak Population	6,871
2017 Current Population	6,338
Difference in Population (Number)	-533
Difference in Population (Percent)	-7.8%

Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained on [West Hillhurst - Community Profile](#) online page.

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INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Land Use

The application proposes to redesignate the parcel from Residential Contextual One/Two Dwelling (R-C2) District to the Mixed Use – General (MU-1f0.4h11) District. The M-U1 district allows for wide array of commercial and residential uses and provides for flexibility of uses at grade (a wide variety of commercial and residential uses are allowed at grade).

The proposed redesignation will allow for the conversion of the existing residence into a commercial use (retail and consumer service) as intended by the applicant. The FAR and height are proposed to be of a moderate intensity given that the parcel has not been consolidated with others, and that greater intensity redevelopment of the parcel will be difficult without consolidation. Additionally, given the parcel is located on a main street, it is expected to undergo a main streets exercise within the next five years. The M-U1 designation is generally in keeping with main streets land uses, so a future main streets initiated redesignation may not be a fundamental change in the use of the parcel (although the FAR and height may increase).

Other land uses, such as C-N1 and C-COR1 were investigated for this application. The C-N1 land use was deemed inappropriate for the parcel, as it would not facilitate future redevelopment at a scale envisioned for main streets (the maximum floor area ratio is 1.0) and is primarily intended for small-scale commercial development. The C-COR1 district was deemed inappropriate as it does not allow residential uses at grade (which may be necessary if the proposed use does not prove to be viable, or in a redevelopment scenario where residential uses should face Westmount Road), nor does it allow various other commercial uses at grade, such as medical clinics, instructional facilities or offices which restrict the flexibility of the site to develop in the future as a mixed-use building.

The proposed land use redesignation is a natural and organic transition for the parcel, and Kensington Road NW in general, from a residential character to a commercial character. The proposed land use allows for the conversion of the existing residence to a commercial use, while also allowing future redevelopment, ideally if the parcel can be consolidated with several other parcels adjacent. The proposed land use district also allows flexibility in the use of the parcel by allowing residential uses at grade. This may be required should the proposed commercial use not prove to be viable, and the building converted back to residential, or in the case of a redevelopment scenario, where residential uses at grade facing Westmount Road NW may be more appropriate given the residential nature of that street.

Infrastructure

Transportation Networks

The roadway network has sufficient roadway and intersection capacity to accommodate the land use change.

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Kensington Road NW forms the northern boundary of this site. Kensington Road NW is classified as a Neighborhood Boulevard, and will support the Bowness / 17 Avenue NE BRT as a primary transit route.

Nineteenth Street NW is a collector road, and has a cycle lane along the curb adjacent to the site.

Bus routes 1, 305, and 404 are within close proximity to the site. The nearest bus stops are within 50 metre walking distance (westbound Route 1) and 115 metre walking distance (eastbound Routes 1, 305, and 404).

The site is conducive to active modes and transit as alternative modes of transportation.

Utilities and Servicing

Water and sanitary sewer mains are available to service site. Storm sewers are unavailable. Low impact development measures, a temporary drywell/catch basin system or a main extension may be designed for the site at the Development Site Servicing Plan stage.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

In keeping with Administration's standard practices, this application was circulated to relevant external stakeholders (e.g. YYC, Enmax, etc.) and notice was posted on-site. Notification letters were sent to adjacent land owners and the application was advertised online. Following this Calgary Planning Commission meeting, notifications for Public Hearing of Council will be posted on-site and mailed out to adjacent land owners. In addition, the Commission's recommendation and the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised. The applicant held a meeting with the community association prior to submission of the application.

Citizen and Community Association Comments

The West Hillhurst Community Association identified by email that they generally supported the application but noted concerns in the area regarding parking, and expressed a desire for a more comprehensive development in this location (see Attachment 2).

Eight citizens' comments were received by the Calgary Planning Commission report submission date. Concerns and comments included:

- Concerns about lack of off-street parking for the proposed development;
- Increase in traffic at Kensington Road/19 Street NW, and resulting impacts on transit and emergency services;
- General support for redevelopment and rejuvenation of the parcel; and
- Decrease in property values.

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Resident concerns regarding on-street parking will be assessed at the development permit stage. Given the small-scale nature of the use, a parking relaxation may be warranted. For traffic concerns, while there may be some increase in traffic, given the size of the intended use, the impact will be minimal. Property values are not a consideration for planning applications.

Strategic Alignment

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (Statutory, 2014)

The site is located within the 'City, Town' area as identified on Schedule C: South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Map in the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)*. While the SSRP makes no specific reference to this site, the proposal is consistent with policies on Land Use Patterns.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory, 2009)

The subject site is located within a Neighbourhood Main Street according to Urban Structure Map (Map 1) of the *Municipal Development Plan (MDP)*.

Several policies for the main streets in the *Municipal Development Plan* pertain the subject site. Some of these policies include:

- 3.4.1 (a) Main Streets should provide for a broad mix of residential, employment and retail uses.
- 3.4.1 (c) Commercial development along the Main Street should be oriented to the transit street and public sidewalk.
- 3.4.1 (d) Develop an active street environment by encouraging retail and service uses at-grade with residential and office uses on upper floors along the Main Street core areas, with grade oriented residential uses in other areas.
- 3.4.1 (g) Retail buildings should provide front-door openings facing the transit street and principal public areas.
- 3.4.1 (h) Appropriate transition of building scale between developments in the *Main Street*.

The proposed development adheres to these policies by providing a mix of uses along Kensington Road, allowing for the access for the parcel to switch to Kensington Road (at development permit stage) and keeping within the scale and character of the community.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposal has the potential to continue allow for and further support a mix of uses in West Hillhurst and provide local amenities for community residents.

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Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no known impacts to the current and future operating budgets at this time.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

The proposed amendment does not trigger capital infrastructure investment and therefore there are no growth management concerns at this time.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed land use redesignation is aligned with applicable policies identified in the Municipal Development Plan. The proposal allows for the conversion of an existing residential dwelling into a commercial use, more in keeping with the policies for the Neighbourhood Main Street of Kensington Road, and the function and orientation of the street. The proposed redesignation also sets the stage for future redevelopment of the site.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant's Statement
2. Community Association Comments
3. Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments
4. Proposed Bylaw 172D2018
5. Public Submissions