

Planning & Development Report to  
Calgary Planning Commission  
2019 March 21

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CPC2019-0311

**Policy Amendment and Land Use Amendment in Residual Sub - Area 02K (Ward 2) at 14555 Symons Valley Road NW, LOC2017-0232**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This land use and policy amendment application was submitted on 2017 August 14 by IBI Group Ltd on behalf of the owners Symons Valley Ranch GP Inc. This application proposes to allow for the future subdivision and development of 12.44 hectares (30.74 acres) to create a Community Activity Centre. This application provides for:

- an anticipated 1500 multi-residential dwelling units and 50,000 square metres of commercial development in standalone and mixed-use forms (DC);
- 1.24 hectares (3.07 acres) of public open space (S-SPR);
- the location and size of future public roads and public pathways; and
- the location of major utilities and services.

This application has been applied for with the support of a related outline plan application (CPC2019-0310) to provide the future subdivision layout and commitments for infrastructure development to guide the site's development.

This Community Activity Centre is intended to develop as a mixed-use village that fosters a farm-to-table hub centred by the rebuilt Symons Valley Farmers' Market and attracting complementary industries that focus on innovation in food and agriculture. Together, this policy amendment, land use redesignation, and the outline plan serve to implement the objectives of the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* to create a vibrant Community Activity Centre for surrounding existing and future communities.

A development permit for a Market has been submitted by Frank Architecture on 2017 September 01 and is under review.

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**ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed amendment to the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (Attachment 4); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.
3. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 12.44 hectares± (30.74 acres±) located at 14555 Symons Valley Road NW (Plan 1643JK, Block A) from DC Direct Control District to Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve (S-SPR) District and DC Direct Control District to accommodate the future development of a Community Activity Centre, with guidelines (Attachment 3).
4. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

On 2018 July 30 at the Combined Meeting of Council, Report C2018-0585 was presented regarding Growth Management Overlays affecting communities within several Area Structure Plans. Council held a Public Hearing and gave three readings of Bylaw 53P2018, removing portions of the Glacier Ridge Growth Management Overlay that affect the subject lands.

**BACKGROUND**

IBI Group, on behalf of Symons Valley Ranch GP Inc, submitted the subject application on 2017 August 14 and have provided a summary of their proposal in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 1).

A development permit for the new Symons Valley Farmers' Market has also been submitted by Frank Architecture on 2017 September 1 and is under review with some remaining prior to decision items to be addressed. See Attachment 6 for additional information.

The subject site was part of land annexed to the City of Calgary from Rocky View County in 2007. At the time, various uses were being operated on site including a rodeo ground, RV parking and storage, and a restaurant and bar.

In 2015, this parcel was included within the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* which encompassed a large area of land in northwest Calgary and lays out future roads, parks, schools, community areas, and activity centres. This site is identified as a Community Activity Centre in that plan.

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The Symons Valley Farmers' Market had been operating on the subject site for several years. In early 2017, a fire destroyed the building that housed it. Unfortunately, the Direct Control District on the site was written in a way that prevented rebuilding the Market without first obtaining a land use redesignation. The desire to rebuild the Symons Valley Farmers' Market resulted in the application that is the subject of this report although this application also includes several additional elements and a vastly increased overall intensity from what has previously existed on the site.

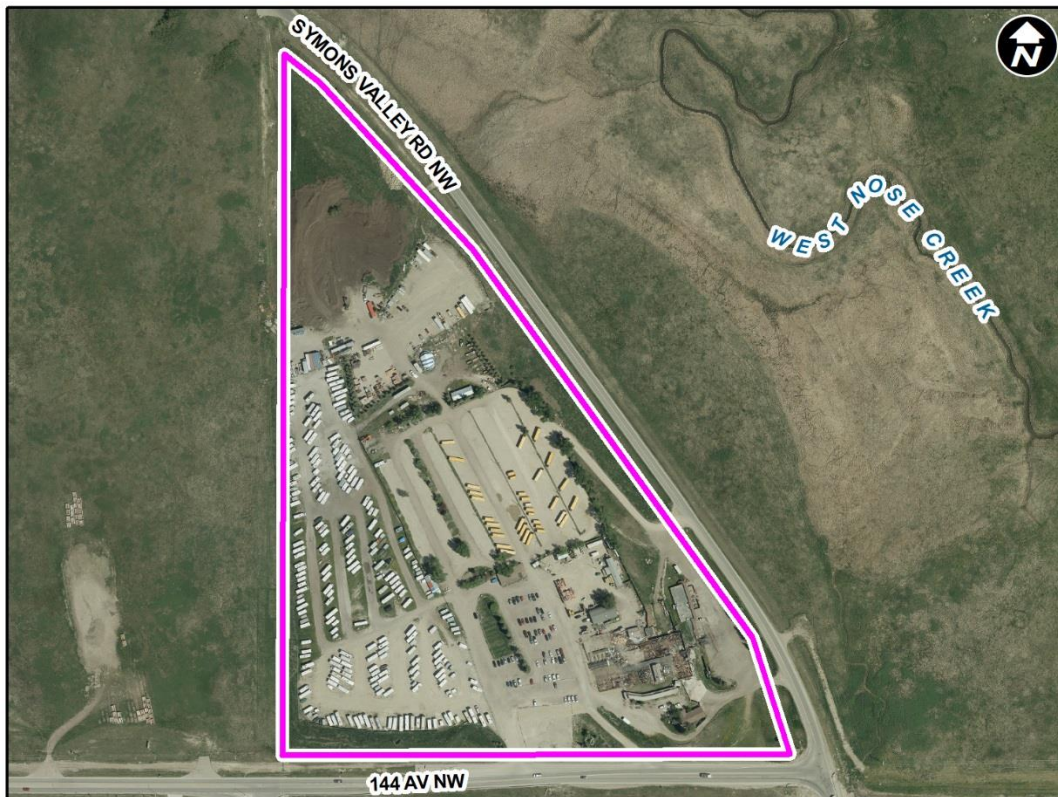
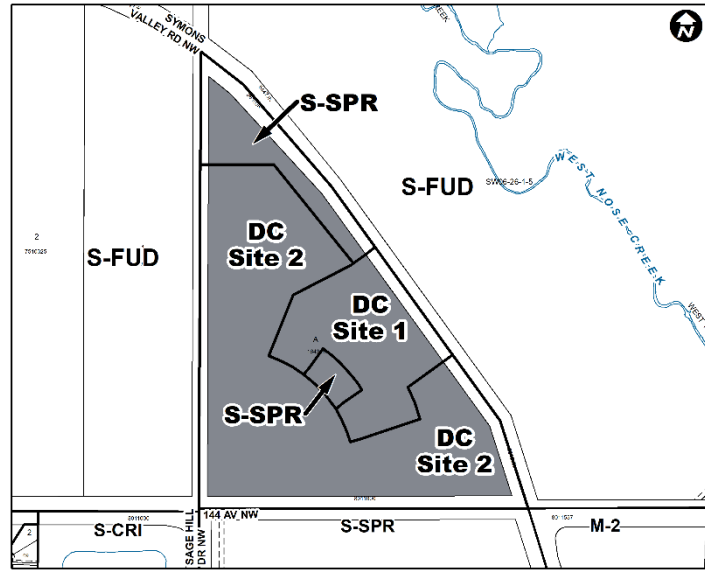
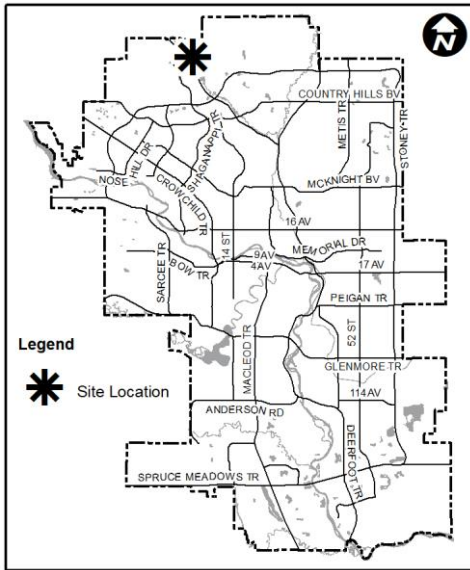
At the time of the application submission, a Growth Management Overlay was in place as indicated in Map 10 of the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan*. It was removed 2018 July 31 along with areas corresponding to two other outline plans applications within the Glacier Ridge policy area.

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Location Maps



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### **Site Context**

Situated west of West Nose Creek and north of the community of Sage Hill, the site is a triangular parcel comprising approximately 12.44 hectares (30.74 acres) of land located at the northwest corner of 144 Avenue NW and Symons Valley Road NW. The site currently contains several buildings including a restaurant and site office. Portions of the site are being used for the Symons Valley Farmers' Market and vehicle storage.

Surrounding parcels to the north, west and east of the site remain in an agricultural and/or natural state but are identified for future development at urban densities. South of 144 Avenue NW is a City of Calgary park with a Parks depot and a storm pond. Further south is the community of Sage Hill.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

This policy amendment and land use redesignation, along with the associated outline plan (CPC2019-0310), will provide for a vibrant Community Activity Centre with opportunities for local housing, employment, and services that will meet citizens' day to day needs and provide access to primary transit routes.

### **Planning Considerations**

As part of the review of this application, several key factors were considered by Administration including the alignment with relevant policies, the appropriateness of the land use districts, and the technical merits of the proposed activity centre design. The following sections highlight the scope of technical planning analysis conducted by Administration.

#### ***Subdivision Design***

The proposed subdivision area comprises approximately 12.44 hectares (30.74 acres) of land. The associated outline plan proposes six mixed-use development parcels with a public street (Symons Valley Plaza NW) bridging the parcel between 144 Avenue NW and 37 Street NW. The street will tie into the future road network planned as part of an outline plan currently under review to the west of this site (LOC2017-0368). A publicly accessible privately owned and maintained street will provide access from Symons Valley Road NW to Symons Valley Plaza NW. The development sites as proposed are larger parcels that will be further defined in future subdivision and development permit applications. To mitigate the size of the parcels, design guidelines are proposed as part of this policy amendment (Attachment 4) to the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan*. These are intended to help ensure that future buildings realize a pedestrian prioritized, block based development form using a hierarchy of streets, whether public or private, and well-planned integration of building sites. Submission of a comprehensive plan of the site will be required information supporting future development permit applications. This is intended to function as a flexible tool that helps to ensure mixed-use and residential or commercial-only buildings are distributed logically throughout the site.

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Two Municipal Reserve parcels will be provided within the Community Activity Centre. A centrally located public park is proposed which will be complementary to and benefit from activity generated by the adjacent future Farmers' Market. This space may include amenities such as a picnic area with tables, informal seating areas, a creative play space, and an entryway path from the street to the market plaza. A mid-block pedestrian crossing is provided south of the park which will allow people to conveniently access the park from the south portion of the plan area.

A second public park space is located along the north and east of the subject site and is proposed to provide a children's play park and walking paths with a look-out point taking advantage of views across the West Nose Creek valley.

***Land use***

The current land use district for the site is a DC Direct Control District based on Special Purpose – Future Urban Development (S-FUD) District. The DC District is intended to allow for the continued operation and some expansion of existing retail, entertainment, food service and storage uses. However, the Market use is limited to locations within existing buildings only. The DC District provides development approval terms of five years and restricts premature subdivision and development of the site until comprehensive planning for the area is complete.

The proposed land use districts for the site include:

- DC Direct Control District based on Community – Commercial 2 (C-C2) District, and
- Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve (S-SPR) District.

The proposed DC District uses the Commercial – Community 2 (C-C2) District as the base, with rules added to provide a “main street” type of interface with the public street that bisects the subject site (Symons Valley Plaza NW). A Mixed-Use District for the lands bordering the main internal street was considered, however the C-C2 District provides flexibility regarding building form and shared parking rules.

A DC District was required as the C-C2 District did not list Market as an allowable use, nor did any other suitable district. The proposed DC District is intended to provide for mixed-use development anchored by the Symons Valley Farmers' Market which will be housed in a new facility on the site (Attachment 6). The Applicant's intention for this Community Activity Centre is to develop a “farm to table” urban village with a focus on the Market and other food related activities such as culinary schools and restaurants (Attachment 1). To facilitate this, Market and Food Kiosk are proposed as additional discretionary uses in the DC District. In association with this, an agricultural hub is envisioned with the potential for housing satellite post-secondary campuses and innovation and research facilities. The use Specialized Industrial has been added as a discretionary use to allow the opportunity to attract these facilities.

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The DC District provides for two sites with the following rules:

- Site 1 encompasses the Market site and provides a floor area ratio of 2.0 and a maximum building height of 26 metres (approximately seven to eight storeys). The DC Direct Control District specifies a maximum use area for a Market.
- Site 2 encompasses the northern and southwestern portions of the site and provides a floor area ratio of 3.0. Two maximum heights (36 metres and 16 metres) are proposed with a lower maximum height adjacent the Market site to mitigate shadowing impacts as well as frame the south access with a streetwall. These heights correspond to buildings of approximately ten to twelve storeys and four to five storeys, respectively.

While the land use for Site 2 allows heights of up to approximately ten to twelve storeys, it is anticipated that the build out of the Community Activity Centre will employ a range of heights and densities.

Together the allowable floor area ratio would correspond to a total building floor area of approximately 270,000 square metres across the Community Activity Centre site.

The S-SPR District is intended for and accommodates two public parks in the activity centre, one of which is intended to be complementary to the Market development.

***Environmental***

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was submitted. A Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment, assessing the areas of potential concern noted in the Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, is required prior to approval of stripping and grading, or the affected tentative plan, whichever comes first.

***Transportation***

The regional transportation network that supports the proposed Community Activity Centre includes Symons Valley Road NW, 144 Avenue NW, and a future extension of 37 Street NW. An Activity Centre Street (Symons Valley Plaza NW) is proposed to be developed connecting 144 Avenue NW and 37 Street NW, as shown on the outline plan (Attachment 4). Access to the future developments in the Community Activity Centre will be primarily from the proposed Activity Centre Street and from 37 Street NW, in addition to direct access to Symons Valley Road NW for the Farmers' Market site (DC Site 1).

Symons Valley Road NW connects to Stoney Trail NW which is approximately five kilometres south of the subject site. A 144 Avenue NW crossing of West Nose Creek will connect the Community Activity Centre with the communities of Evanston, Carrington, and Livingston to the east. The 144 Avenue NW creek crossing as well as a new interchange at Stoney Trail and 14 Street NW are included within the current four year budget.

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The 144 Avenue NW creek crossing is currently in the design stage. The location of the bridge over the creek will be finalized through this design and this may result in some small refinements to the alignments of both 144 Avenue NW and Symons Valley Road NW. The Applicant is aware of the potential adjustments to the alignments along the south and east boundaries of the site, and the Applicant and The City are coordinating the design of the roadways and the initial development phase to ensure that the development permit for the Farmers' Market can proceed alongside the engineering of the creek crossing.

The Activity Centre Street is comprised of two travel lanes (one in each direction) with parking and on-street bike lanes on both sides of the street. A mid-block, signalized pedestrian crossing will be established connecting the Municipal Reserve parcel and adjacent Farmers' Market with the future uses on the west side of the Community Activity Centre. Regional pathways are provided along Symons Valley Road NW and 144 Avenue NW and will provide connections to the natural area to the east and destinations west and north of the site.

Primary transit service will be provided along 144 Avenue NW and 37 Street NW, with the potential for local service along the proposed Activity Centre Street. 144 Avenue NW is proposed as a primary east-west transit route. Service along 37 Street NW would connect to the Sage Hill Transit Hub, located approximately 1.2 kilometres to the south of the subject site. The Sage Hill Transit Hub will service two Bus Rapid Transit routes and will ultimately connect the area with the existing Red Line stations at Tuscany and at Brentwood as well as the future Green Line station at North Pointe.

### ***Utilities and Servicing***

Extensions to existing water and sanitary services are required to service the subject lands. These extensions are developer funded and do not require City funded capital improvements.

Stormwater servicing will rely on a future storm pond currently proposed east of Symons Valley Road NW as part of LOC2017-0368. To accommodate Phase 1 of the proposed development, the applicant will be providing an interim stormwater servicing solution. An on-site location is being considered by the Applicant which, if pursued, would be temporary in nature.

Emergency services will be provided from the Symons Valley Emergency Response Station located approximately 1.5 kilometres south of the site.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

In keeping with Administration's practices, this application was circulated to stakeholders and notice posted on-site. Notification letters were sent to adjacent landowners and the application was advertised online.

There is no community association identified for this parcel, however, a circulation to the Sage Hill Community Association was provided due to their proximity to the site. They responded that they are in favour of the project. They do have some concerns around the street networks in



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the area and that improvements to those come along with these new developments (Attachment 2).

Four letters were received from citizens which expressed concerns with:

- building more apartments;
- increased population and traffic; and
- the timing of surrounding road infrastructure to support the development.

Two of the letters at the same time expressed support for the redevelopment of the Symons Valley Farmers' Market as well as amenities such as parks, pathways, and commercial development.

### **Strategic Alignment**

#### ***South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)***

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered and 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.

#### ***Interim Growth Plan (2018)***

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the *Interim Growth Plan*. The proposed land use and policy amendment builds on the principles of the *Interim Growth Plan* by means of promoting collaboration, efficient use of land, regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

#### ***Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2012)***

These lands are subject to the *Intermunicipal Development Plan* (IDP) and the application was circulated to Rocky View County for comment in accordance with the requirements of the IDP. No comments or objections were received in response to the circulation.

#### ***Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)***

The parcel is in the Future Greenfield area as identified on the Urban Structure map of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP). While the policy in the MDP refers to these areas as unplanned, the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* (ASP), which includes this parcel, was subsequently adopted. As such, the policies within the ASP are aligned with the policies of the MDP and the *New Community Planning Guidebook* (Volume 2 of the MDP).

The proposed policy amendment and land use designations are aligned with the policies and principles of the MDP and *New Community Planning Guidebook* through the proposed application achieving target intensities for population and jobs in a Community Activity Centre,

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providing opportunities for local employment and services that meet people's day to day needs, and providing access to frequent transit routes.

### ***Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2015)***

The subject site is identified as a Community Activity Centre on Map 3: Land Use Concept of the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* (ASP). The proposed plan conforms to the policies of the ASP by retaining connections with the history of the Symons Valley Ranch and utilizing views overlooking the Symons Valley escarpment and West Nose Creek.

### **Policy Amendment**

The proposed policy amendment adds further policies specific to the Central Community Activity Centre section of the *Glacier Ridge ASP* to provide urban design direction for future development applications (Attachment 4). The proposed policies are included to provide more specific design guidance to develop an attractive and pedestrian oriented mixed-use activity centre. The amendment also provides a minimum residential density to achieve the *New Community Planning Guidebook* intent for Community Activity Centres to contain a mix of commercial and multi-residential land uses. The minimum residential density is intended to compel residential development while allowing flexibility in its ultimate form and location within the activity centre.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

The proposed land use and policy amendment will provide the framework within which the Symons Valley Farmers' Market can rebuild. This will allow people to return to work as well as allow the Market to attract new tenants. The Community Activity Centre is intended to develop as an agricultural hub as indicated in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 1). They intend to attract schools and industries that cater to food and food production to provide jobs and services. This is intended to support a local residential population providing a unique location to work, live, and play.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

There is currently no impact to the current operating budget. As development proceeds, the provision of City services such as roads, transit, parks maintenance and waste and recycling would have an operating budget impact when they are provided. The projected operating costs for this development during 2019-2022 have been included in the One Calgary service plans and budgets.

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***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

There is no impact to the current capital budget as a result of this report. The capital investment required to construct and upgrade the required local infrastructure will be funded entirely by the developer. The proposed development will leverage existing City funded capital investment, and will require additional utility and transportation infrastructure that has been included in the 2019-2022 budget cycle. This additional infrastructure will be funded by The City through off-site levies paid by developers.

**Risk Assessment**

The location of the bridge crossing of 144 Avenue NW over the West Nose Creek may result in some small refinements to the alignments of 144 Avenue NW and Symons Valley Road NW in the area. It is not anticipated that these changes would necessitate an outline plan adjustment and will be able to be accommodated within the tentative plan process. The Applicant is aware of the potential adjustments to the alignments along the south and east sides of the outline plan area, and the Applicant and The City are coordinating the design of the roadways and the initial development phase to ensure that the development permit for the Farmers' Market can proceed alongside the engineering of the creek crossing.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The proposed policy amendment and land use redesignation serves to implement the relevant policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* by providing an activity centre that achieves target residential and employment intensities providing a vibrant mixed-use node where daily retail and service needs can be met, including access to frequent transit. This activity centre will serve existing neighbourhoods south of 144 Avenue NW as well as future neighbourhoods envisioned by the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan*.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Applicant's Submission
2. Community Association Letter
3. Proposed Direct Control District Guidelines
4. Proposed Policy Amendment
5. Outline Plan
6. Development Permit Summary