

Planning & Development Report to  
Calgary Planning Commission  
2019 May 02

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CPC2019-0553

**Land Use Amendment in Sage Hill (Ward 2) at 150 Sage Hill Boulevard NW,  
LOC2018-0190**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This application was submitted by B&A Planning Group on behalf of Genesis Land Development Corp. on 2018 August 22. The subject parcel is approximately 6.24 hectares (15.41 acres) located in the community of Sage Hill. The land use amendment proposes to change the designation of the property from DC Direct Control District (Bylaw 79D2008) to DC Direct Control District based on the Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District and the Commercial – Community 1 (C-C1) District. The proposed DC Direct Control District is to provide for:

- multi-residential development of medium height and medium density;
- small to mid-scale commercial development;
- a wide range of residential and commercial uses listed in the proposed DC Direct Control District;
- the opportunity for vertically mixed-use development (e.g. small to mid-scale commercial development with apartments or offices above); and
- a maximum height of 18 metres for residential buildings and 12 metres for commercial buildings (a reduction from the current maximum of 95 metres).

The proposal is expected to achieve the *Municipal Development Plan* intensity targets for lands within a Community Activity Centre and meets the intent of the Town Centre Policies of the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. A Master Concept Plan has been submitted in support of this application demonstrating attention to comprehensive planning through which elements such as private streets and interface treatments have been clarified.

No development permit has been submitted at this time.

**ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 6.27 hectares  $\pm$  (15.49 acres  $\pm$ ) located at 150 Sage Hill Boulevard NW (Plan 1213664, Block 3, Lot 1) from DC Direct Control District to DC Direct Control District to accommodate residential and commercial development with guidelines (Attachment 2); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

None.

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**BACKGROUND**

The subject lands are part of an area annexed to The City of Calgary in 1989. The *Symons Valley Community Plan* was drafted and adopted in 2001. The plan envisioned a predominantly residential area with five distinct communities with over 54,000 residents.

Since that time, several amendments of the *Symons Valley Community Plan* were undertaken which affected the subject lands. In 2008, Council approved amendments to establish a Transit Oriented Planning Area around a future bus rapid transit (BRT) hub. These amendments included policies enabling high density residential and regional commercial land uses, as well as encouraging significant suburban office development. In 2009, the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) identified this area as a Community Activity Centre.

Initial development of the Transit Oriented Planning Area, based on the 2008 vision, was completed, including the commercial area south of the site, construction of most of the roads and the roundabouts that are currently in place (with portions of Sage Hill Boulevard NW remaining unfinished).

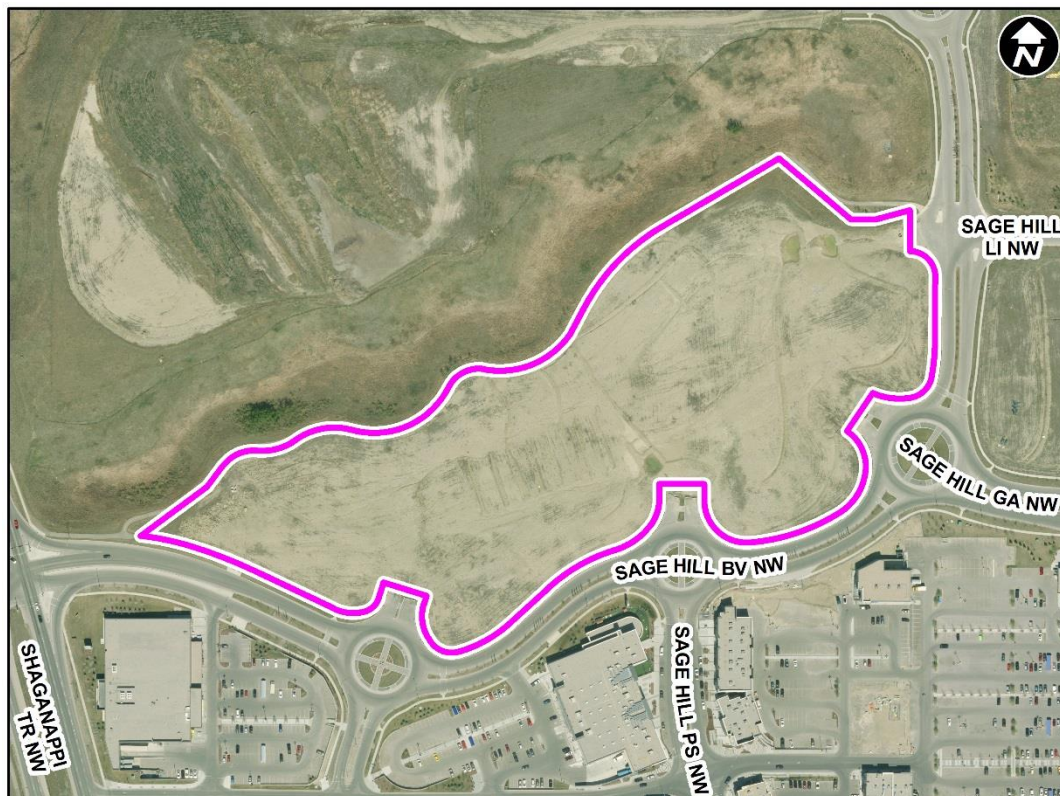
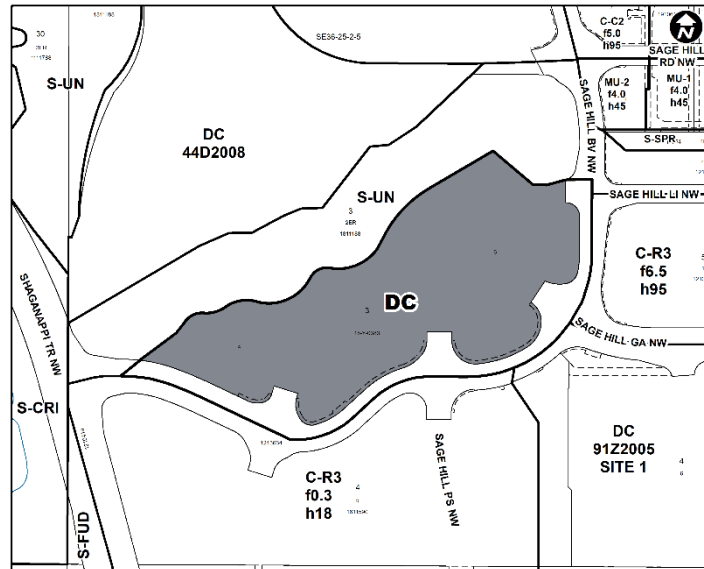
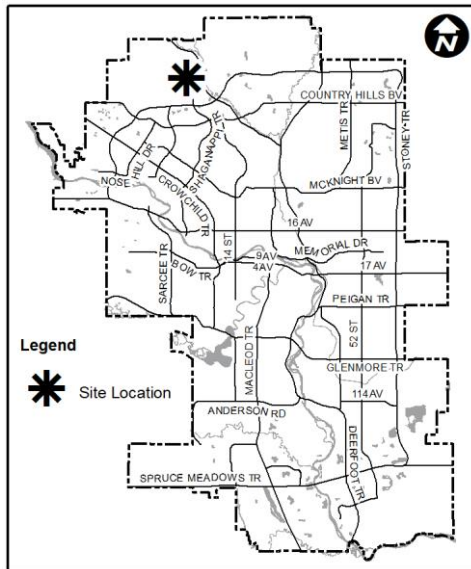
Nine years later, much of the land within this area had yet to realize development. This led to policy amendments approved by Council in 2017 September (Bylaw 55P2017). The *Symons Valley Community Plan* was amended modifying the vision which more closely aligned with landowners' current development expectations as supported through market studies. Minor amendments were made to the policies affecting this site allowing the potential for residential uses to be located at grade within comprehensively planned developments. This adjustment to policy was considered important to encourage development interest in a strategically located, undeveloped parcel.

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Location Maps



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**Site Context**

Located in the developing community of Sage Hill, the subject site is north and west of Sage Hill Boulevard NW. This undeveloped site is approximately 6.24 hectares (15.41 acres) in size and has been graded in preparation for development.

The site slopes from west to east, with a change in elevation of approximately 18 metres over 475 metres, a grade of approximately 4 percent. A coulee, designated Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District to reflect its environmental reserve status, bounds the entire northern edge of the parcel and forms part of a larger coulee and ravine system in the area.

Lands north of the coulee are currently vacant but are anticipated for a mix of residential and commercial development and are subject to an outline plan and land use application currently under review (LOC2017-0404). East of the subject site, across Sage Hill Boulevard NW is an undeveloped parcel owned by The City of Calgary. An integrated civic facility including a public library, Arts and Culture space and future affordable housing, as well as a bus transit hub is proposed under an outline plan and land use application also currently under review (LOC2018-0157). South of the site, is an existing regional commercial centre (Sage Hill Crossing) offering a mix of large and medium format retail uses.

The site is an irregular shape due to the influence of the coulee feature and previous planning for the area. The large traffic circles were originally anticipated to accommodate much higher development intensities thought possible when initial land use and outline planning was undertaken in 2008 (LOC2008-0003). These traffic circles create some challenges to rational and efficient development of the site.

As identified in Figure 1, the community of Sage Hill reached peak population in 2018, with 7,219 residents.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

<b>Sage Hill</b>	
Peak Population Year	2018
Peak Population	7219
2018 Current Population	7219
Difference in Population (Number)	0
Difference in Population (Percent)	0%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2018 Civic Census*

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

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**INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

The subject parcel was redesignated in 2008 to DC Direct Control District (Bylaw 79D2008) to provide for a comprehensively planned, designed and phased development accommodating mixed-use retail, commercial and office uses. The site has however remained undeveloped for the past decade despite its strategic location north of an existing regional commercial centre, west of a future bus rapid transit (BRT) hub, and south of future residential development and natural amenities. This proposed land use amendment will refine the land use on the site in order to improve the development potential for both the residential and commercial uses.

This land use application will facilitate development of a comprehensively planned multi-residential and commercial area that is expected to achieve the intensities required by the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) for a Community Activity Centre. This future development is expected to meet the intent of the Town Centre policies of the *Symons Valley Community Plan* where development oriented around a central pedestrian corridor is achieved.

**Planning Considerations**

The following sections highlight the scope of technical planning analysis conducted by Administration.

***Land Use***

The site's existing DC Direct Control District (Bylaw 79D2008) contemplates a comprehensively planned mixed use development oriented around a central pedestrian corridor. The DC District provides for development of up to 95 meters in height and envisioned roughly 187,000 square meters of development. At this location in the city, a very ambitious, detailed and prescriptive DC Direct Control District has challenged the developability of the site.

This application proposes a new DC Direct Control District based on a more modest development concept that will still achieve the development intensities expected for Community Activity Centres and meet the policy intent of the *Symons Valley Community Plan*.

The proposed DC Direct Control District divides the site into two parcels. The western site (Site 1) is based on the Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District, and the eastern site (Site 2) is based on the Commercial – Community 1 (C-C1) District. The Multi-Residential – Medium Profile (M-2) District has been modified for Site 1 in order provide the opportunity for a variety of commercial uses to be integrated in a vertically mixed-use format. The district is similar to the Mixed Use – General (MU-1) District in terms of providing the opportunity for retail and commercial uses to be integrated with residential uses, but does not to require it; thereby providing flexibility to residential builders. No adjustments to the uses in the base C-C1 District were required in the proposed DC Direct Control District.

Given the availability of frequent bus service and the transit hub (BRT) located to the east of the site, reduced parking requirements have also been included in the proposed DC Direct Control District to recognize transit availability and support its use. The proposed DC Direct Control

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District also provides for a moderate (2 metre) height increase above what is typically accommodated within the stock M-2 and C-C1 Districts. This is to recognize some of the challenges of achieving the development intensities expected within a Community Activity Centre resulting from the irregular parcel shape.

***Development and Site Design***

A master concept plan was submitted in support of the application, which provides non-statutory conceptual supporting information regarding how the site could develop along with guidance regarding key comprehensive planning considerations (Attachment 3).

A private street will form the interface between the predominantly residential and commercial areas connecting Sage Hill Boulevard NW with a future pedestrian bridge that will span the environmental reserve area coulee north of the site providing a link to planned residential development. Pedestrian connections throughout the site will be further clarified through development permit applications to ensure connections to future civic facilities and transit hub to the east.

A subdivision application has also been submitted through which key elements of comprehensive planning related to public and mutual access easements and rights of way will be protected.

***Environmental***

No environmental issues were identified for the subject site.

***Transportation***

The entire subject lands are located within 600 metres of the planned integrated civic facility which will include a new public library, arts and culture space, affordable housing and transit hub (BRT). The BRT location currently provides access to several routes including Route 82 (service to Brentwood Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station and the University), Route 115 (service to Tuscany LRT Station), Route 123 (service to North Pointe, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Route 301, future Green Line), and Route 129 (service to Dalhousie LRT Station). As Sage Hill, Kincora, Nolan Hill, and areas within the *Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan* build out, the transit hub will deliver further enhanced transit service and high frequency buses, including one BRT service connecting the transit hub itself to Brentwood/University and another BRT service running between North Pointe and Tuscany LRT stations.

Pedestrian crosswalks of Sage Hill Boulevard NW are located approximately every 150 metres, along the southern edge of the parcel. Additional planning and design will be required at development permit stages to provide quality pedestrian linkages within and through the subject lands to Sage Hill Drive NW and by extension, the Civic site.

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Important connections for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided via pedestrian bridge over the coulee north of the site. The bridge will provide a key link between the planned neighbourhood to the north, through the site to Sage Hill Boulevard NW. A private street, protected through public and mutual access easement and maintenance agreements, will be implemented through subdivision and development.

A Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) submitted with this application was reviewed and accepted by Administration. The TIA confirmed that the proposed land use can be accommodated with the established road network. The established roundabouts provide sufficient access to the site. Access and internal circulation will be further detailed at the development permit stage.

***Utilities and Servicing***

Sanitary, water and storm services are available to service the plan area from Sage Hill Boulevard NW.

**Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

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

No comments were received from The Sage Hill Community Association.

Following Calgary Planning Commission, notifications for Public Hearing of Council will be posted on-site and mailed out to adjacent land owners. In addition, Commission's recommendation and the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised.

**Strategic Alignment**

***South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (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.

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

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

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***Municipal Development Plan (Statutory - 2009)***

Map 1 “Urban Structure” of the *Municipal Development Plan* identifies the subject lands as part of the Residential Developing Planned Greenfield Area subject to an Area Structure plan. Additionally, it is located within a Community Activity Centre.

Community Activity Centres should be locations for a mix of medium and higher density employment and residential uses. They should contain a broad range of ground-oriented and medium to high density apartment housing and a mix of housing tenure and affordability levels to accommodate a diverse range of the population (section 3.3.3(e)). Intensities in the Community Activity Centre should be a minimum of 150 people and jobs per hectare. The proposed land use districts is aligned with the policy intent of the Community Activity Centre typology. The addition of multi-residential, and small and medium scale commercial development will support and complement the existing regional commercial development to the south of the site. Furthermore, the proposed land use districts will allow the development to meet the land use intensities envisioned in the *Municipal Development Plan*.

***Symons Valley Community Plan (Statutory - 2001)***

The subject site is in the Transit Oriented Planning Area as identified in Map 3 Land Use Concept. Within this area, the subject parcel is also identified as the Town Centre Area.

Development within the Town Centre Area is to consist of retail, commercial and residential uses, and demonstrate a strong pedestrian-orientation in order to create a cohesive shopping and living environment. As per section 5.12.2(1), development should be provided within a mixed use setting. Although, mixed use development is strongly encouraged in a vertical mixed use configuration, it is not required. The current proposal anticipates the mix of uses will be divided horizontally between a predominantly residential western portion of the site and the predominantly commercial eastern portion of the site. Nevertheless, the proposed Direct Control District provides the option to undertake vertically mixed in the presence of supportive market demand.

The Town Centre Area should also contain a well-defined pedestrian-oriented corridor as part of its design. This has been designed through the master concept plan and will be implemented through subsequent subdivision and development.

Future development permit applications will need to demonstrate compliance with the Design Guidelines in Appendix 1 of the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. The Design Guidelines provide flexible guidance for design features in the Transit Oriented Planning Area. Provisions qualitatively address building form, pedestrian connectivity, building setbacks, and amenity space.



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

The proposed land use redesignation will provide an intensity of uses that supports transit and active modes of transportation, and makes an efficient use of land and infrastructure. The proposed Direct Control District will also provide a refined land use framework that supports development of a site that has remained vacant for more than a decade.

Although encouraged by policy, no additional sustainability measures have been proposed by the applicant. This item will be revisited this issue at the time of subsequent development permits.

**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 land use amendment does not trigger capital infrastructure investment.

**Risk Assessment**

Changing and challenging market conditions have already affected the site and this remains a risk. A variety of factors could affect and prolong development. Of particular concern are overly ambitious or unrealistic development expectations for the site that don't align with real estate market realities. These risks have been mitigated by working closely with the applicant team to ensure the proposal is well aligned with market conditions.

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

This proposal is keeping with applicable policies including the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *Symons Valley Community Plan*. The proposed land use will allow the development to achieve the minimum intensities required to meet MDP targets for the Community Activity Centre. The proposed DC Direct Control District recognises proximity to frequent transit service and the challenges of developing an irregularly shaped site with adjusted land use rules related to height and parking. The supporting master concept plan provides an understanding of the key details of the overall site's development which will be further detailed and implemented at future individual development permit stages.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Applicant Submission
2. Proposed DC Direct Control District Guidelines
3. Master Concept Plan