

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2019 June 20

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2019-0759

Land Use Amendment in Capitol Hill (Ward 7) at 1309 and 1313 – 20 Avenue NW, LOC2019-0006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This land use amendment application was submitted by CivicWorks Planning + Design on behalf of landowners Kuljinder Bhela and Konstantinos Margaritis on 2019 January 11. This application proposes to change the designation of the subject sites from Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District to a DC Direct Control District based on the Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District to allow for:

- a maximum of eight dwelling units, oriented with four in front, facing the street, and four in the rear above garages, creating a central courtyard;
- a maximum building height of 11 metres (same as the current maximum 11 metres); and
- the uses listed in the R-CG District with Secondary Suite moved to a discretionary use, and specific residential building forms (e.g. Rowhouse Building, Cottage Housing Cluster, Duplex Dwelling, Semi-detached Dwelling and Single Detached Dwelling) removed and Dwelling Unit added as a discretionary use.

The proposed land use amendment to DC Direct Control District is supported by Administration as it aligns with the applicable policies of the *Municipal Development Plan*.

A concurrent development permit for two rowhouse style buildings with a total of eight units has been submitted and Administration is ready to approve the development permit pending Council's decision on this redesignation application.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed redesignation of 0.11 hectares \pm (0.28 acres \pm) located at 1309 and 1313 – 20 Avenue NW (Plan 3150P, Block 17, Lots 33-36) from Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District to DC Direct Control District to accommodate eight dwelling units, with guidelines (Attachment 2); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

None.

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BACKGROUND

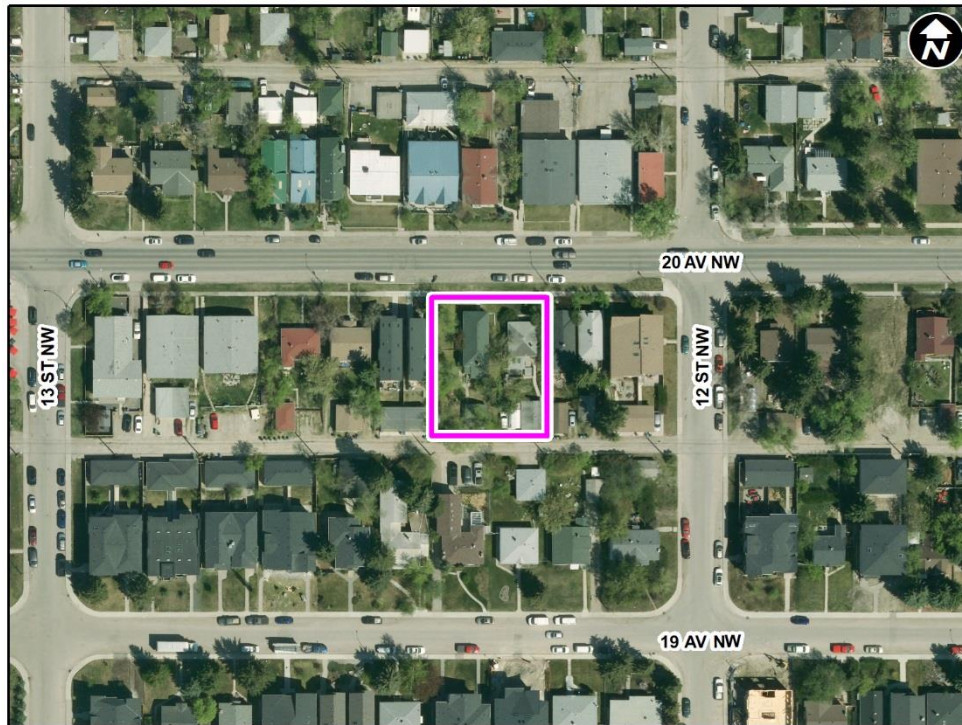
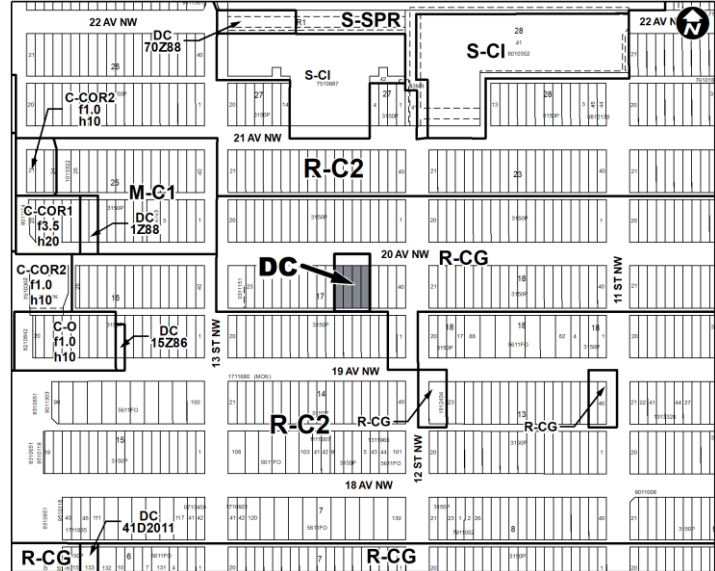
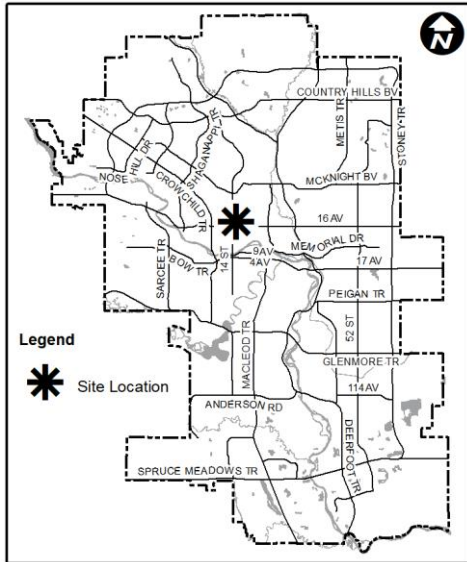
This land use amendment application was submitted by CivicWorks Planning + Design on behalf of landowners Kuljinder Bhela and Konstantinos Margaritis on 2019 January 11. The applicant has provided a summary of the proposal in the Applicant's Submission (Attachment 1). A concurrent development permit (DP2019-0487) for two townhouse style buildings with a total of eight units has been submitted and Administration is ready to approve the development permit pending Council's decision on this redesignation application (Attachment 3).

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Location Maps



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Site Context

The subject site is located in the northwest community of Capitol Hill and is mid-block between 12 and 13 Street NW on the south side of 20 Avenue NW. The site, comprised of two separate parcels, is approximately 0.11 hectares in size and has a rear lane. Together the parcels are approximately 30 metres wide and 37 metres long. Each parcel is currently developed with a single-storey single detached dwelling with a detached double-car garage accessed in the rear from the lane.

Surrounding development is characterized by primarily single and semi-detached dwellings with some commercial development at the corners of 20 Avenue NW and 10 Street NW and 14 Street NW. Confederation Park is located approximately 200 metres north and 16 Avenue NW is approximately 350 metres south, containing a mix of multi-residential and commercial parcels. SAIT (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology) is located directly south of 16 Avenue NW. As identified in *Figure 1*, the community of Capitol Hill reached peak population in 2018.

Figure 1: Community Peak Population

Capitol Hill	
Peak Population Year	2018
Peak Population	4,688
2018 Population	4,688
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 [Capitol Hill](#) community profile.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

This land use redesignation from R-CG District to DC Direct Control District will facilitate mid-block rowhouse style development that is sensitive to the adjacent low density residential homes that is otherwise unattainable with the current designation. The R-CG District aims for sensitive development next to low density districts, but has rules that limit the number of achievable units mid-block.

While there are some multi-residential districts that allow for similar courtyard style rowhouses mid-block, these districts have less restrictive rules, resulting in a greater potential to have negative impacts on adjacent low density homes. Multi-residential districts typically allow for additional heights and allow stacked units, which can affect the scale, massing, and function of the site. The R-CG District is intended to act as a transition between lower and higher density forms along the block face. The proposed DC District facilitates development to occur mid-block with rowhouses that are sensitive to neighbouring properties.

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Planning Considerations

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

Land Use

The current Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) District allows for two to three-storey (11 metres maximum height) rowhouse developments where each unit must provide an at-grade entrance located along a public street. Lanes, bridges and walkways are not considered public streets. The district provides for a maximum density of 75 units per hectare, which would enable up to eight dwelling units on the subject site. Additionally, the building must typically be 1.2 metres from each side property line, and the width of each unit facing the street must be at least 4.2 metres wide. As the lot is approximately 30 metres wide, the setback requirements and minimum façade widths would only allow a maximum of six units. The R-CG District also allows for a range of other low density housing forms such as single detached, semi-detached, duplex dwellings and secondary suites.

At present, the market has shown few developments mid-block on R-CG lands, as not only is land assembly typically required, but the stock district does not facilitate these types of buildings.

Based on an analysis of all development permits for new rowhouses on the R-CG lands, there have been only two applications for rowhouses located mid-block since the district was added to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 in 2014 October, while there have been 54 development permits for rowhouses on corner lots designated with the R-CG District. Of the two mid-block rowhouse applications, one has been cancelled as it did not meet the requirements for all units to have an entrance facing a public street. The other has been approved, but has not yet been built, and is for a four-unit rowhouse on two parcels, providing the same density and similar impact as a semi-detached form. All other rowhouse development permits in the R-CG District have been on corner lots, where three to five units are typical, and sometimes include secondary suites.

This suggests that the current rules, and / or market conditions which stem from designing sites within a mid-block context within the R-CG District create challenges to developing a rowhouse form when not on a corner lot. These types of examples have been flagged for future consideration for work on the R-CG District.

The proposed DC Direct Control District allows for mid-block rowhouse forms that are sensitive to neighbouring low density homes. This is achieved by adjusting several rules within the R-CG District, including removing the rule requiring each unit to directly face onto the adjacent public street, and the rule prohibiting intervening buildings located between the street facing façade of a dwelling unit and the adjacent street. The resulting proposed DC District allows for courtyard style rowhouses that prohibits stacked individual units, and uses height chamfers for the side and rear portions of the site, which decrease massing and shadow impacts on neighbouring properties. Additionally, the district provides rules for separation between residential buildings on the parcel to ensure usable and functional courtyard space between the two buildings.

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Development and Site Design

The rules of the proposed DC District will provide basic guidance for the future development of the site, including appropriate uses, height and building massing, landscaping and parking. Given the specific context of this site, additional items that have been considered through the concurrent development permit process include, but are not limited to:

- emphasizing individual at-grade entrances;
- provision of amenity space for individual units;
- provision of trees and landscaping; and
- building placement, height and transitioning of massing.

Environmental

There are no environmental concerns associated with the site or this proposal.

Transportation

Pedestrian access to the site is available from existing sidewalks along 20 Avenue NW with vehicular access from the rear lane. Parking on 20 Avenue NW is restricted to two-hour parking from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.

The site is serviced by Calgary Transit with local bus stops located approximately 80 metres from the site on 20 Avenue NW. The nearest primary transit location is the MAX Orange BRT on 16 Avenue NW, approximately 550 metres from the site.

A Transportation Impact Assessment or Parking Study was not required as part of this application.

Utilities and Servicing

Water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer mains are available and can accommodate the potential redevelopment of the subject site without the need for off-site improvements at this time.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

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

The applicant has engaged the public through several initiatives. Approximately 100 surrounding area neighbours were delivered postcards outlining the project and on-site signage was installed at the time of submission. Both the signs and postcards guided interested parties to a corresponding project website, which included general information, answers to frequently asked questions, and the opportunity to submitted feedback electronically. The applicant also

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held a meeting with the Capitol Hill Community Association Planning Committee, which was attended by Administration, and followed up the meeting with a response on the feedback received.

Administration received a letter of objection from the Capitol Hill Community Association (Attachment 4) and four letters of concern from the public. The comments and objections received focused on the following:

- economic viability based on the number of units;
- market viability on courtyard-based design, as a similar project has remained empty for quite a while;
- community character;
- the courtyard typology is not new, and can be accommodated through other land use districts;
- a single rowhouse would provide better massing and larger rear yards;
- rear units not being visible from the street;
- shadowing;
- traffic congestion in the lane and street;
- overlooking; and
- lack of space in garages for cars and bins can lead to lane way congestion.

The proposed Direct Control District addresses many of these concerns, and includes height chamfers to encourage sensitive development, and aims to address height, overlooking, and massing concerns. The specific design, as well as traffic, parking and garbage bin storage locations are also under consideration as part of the development permit process.

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 recommendation by Administration in this report has considered and is aligned with the policy direction of the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan* (SSRP) 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 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)

The subject parcel is located within the Residential - Developed - Inner City area as identified on Map 1: Urban Structure in the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP). The applicable MDP policies encourage redevelopment and modest intensification of inner-city communities to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, public amenities and transit. Such redevelopment is intended to occur in a form and nature that respects the scale and character of the neighbourhood context.

The proposal is in keeping with relevant MDP policies as the proposed DC Direct Control District provides for a modest increase in density in a form that is sensitive to existing residential development in terms of height, scale and massing.

North Hill Area Redevelopment Plan (Statutory – 2008)

The subject parcel is located within the Low Density Rowhouse land use policy area as identified on Map 4 of the plan. The area is to be characterized by low-density, grade-oriented residential development consisting of rowhouse buildings, duplexes, single-detached and semi-detached buildings. The proposed development fits within this policy direction, and is sensitive to the surrounding low density forms.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

This proposal has the potential to improve access to safe and affordable housing stock and increase choice in the housing market, helping to attract and retain employees in Calgary. It also has the potential to utilize existing infrastructure more efficiently and increase density without significantly changing the character of the neighbourhood.

The recommended DC Direct Control District allows for a wider range of housing configurations on the site than the existing R-CG District and as such, the proposed change may better accommodate the housing needs of different age groups, lifestyles and demographics. Further, the ability to develop up to eight units will make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.

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 there are no growth management concerns at this time.

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Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

This proposal is keeping with applicable policies including the *Municipal Development Plan* and the *North Hill Area Redevelopment Plan*, both of which promote having a variety of housing forms to meet the needs of residents. The proposed DC Direct Control District will provide an opportunity to achieve rowhouse units mid-block that are sensitive to the surrounding low density residential area.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Applicant's Submission
2. Proposed Direct Control District Guidelines
3. Development Permit (DP2019-0487) Summary
4. Community Association Letter