

Proposed Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020 Text Amendment – High-Density Mixed-Use

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Administration received an application, from AODBT Architecture + Interior Design on behalf of S.S. Pacific Imports Inc., to amend Bylaw No. 9700, Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020, to add a new land use designation; High-Density Mixed-Use. The proposed new land use designation has been requested to enable a development application at 555 Eastlake Avenue and 403 12th Street East.

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be submitted to City Council, recommending that, at the time of the Public Hearing, City Council consider Administration's recommendation that the proposed text amendments to Bylaw No. 9700, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020, as outlined in this report, be approved.

BACKGROUND

Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020

The City of Saskatoon (City) received an application for a text amendment to [Bylaw No. 9700, Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020](#) (OCP). The application is to consider a new land use designation to accommodate high-density, mixed-use developments.

The OCP is the collective long-term vision for Saskatoon, which guides physical, environmental, economic, social and cultural development of our community. It is a statutory plan created under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, and the principal document that establishes the City's form, structure and land use pattern, providing guidance and prioritization of growth.

Land Use Designations

Land use designations are included in the OCP and used in its implementation. The land use designations describe general use and character of lands to ensure development takes place in an orderly, rational manner. Each designation is distinct in its purpose, density and intensity of use. Land use designations may reaffirm existing development patterns to guide how an area's character and uses may change in the future. Descriptions of land use designations are general in nature, providing the types of uses, densities, as well as intensities and location criteria, which then guide [Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009](#), to prescribe precise regulations and uses. Land use patterns and zoning districts must conform with the designations shown on the OCP Land Use Map.

DISCUSSION

Current Development Framework

Currently, the City's development framework only allows for high-density mixed-use developments to be built Downtown. This is based on the City's development framework as outlined in the OCP. The objectives and policies within the OCP were informed by engagement and analysis that occurred through the [Growth Plan to Half a Million](#).

Specific policies within the OCP supporting high-density, mixed-use development Downtown are as follows:

- Section F2.2(1) – Land Use Designations – Downtown:
“Land designated as ‘Downtown’ has the potential for high density mixed use development that includes residential, commercial, institutional, recreational, cultural, and community uses. The Downtown land use and zoning pattern will follow the general direction illustrated on the Downtown Land Use Map (refer to Section G1.1, Map 2 – Downtown Land Use).”
- Section G1.1(2)(b) – Downtown and City Centre – Policies:
“The Downtown land use and zoning pattern will follow the general direction illustrated on the Downtown Land Use Map (refer to Map 2 – Downtown Land Use). Intended use areas include:
 - (i) Retail Core: The primary retail area for the Downtown. In addition to a mix of office, business, and residential uses on upper floors, this area is intended to provide leasable space at grade level, occupied primarily by retail and service uses.
 - (iii) Residential/Office: Intended as one of the primary residential areas within the Downtown, in addition to permitting a variety of office and institutional uses complementing the riverbank”.
- Section G1.1(2)(c) – Downtown and City Centre – Policies:
“In general, the highest development densities in the city will be facilitated in the Downtown, reflected by the overall zoning pattern. The City Centre will provide an area of transition from the highest densities down to that of surrounding established neighbourhoods.”

Given its location, the proposed development at 555 Eastlake Avenue and 403 12th Street East, does not align with the City’s current development framework. This type of development is enabled in the Downtown and would have been able to proceed with no land use amendment in the Downtown. The combination of the proposal and the location, not the proposal itself, resulted in the need for an OCP amendment in order to be eligible for City Council’s consideration.

High-Density Mixed-Use

In order to provide a framework for the proposed development to proceed, the applicant proposed a new land use designation, “High-Density Mixed-Use”, be added to the OCP, which would provide for this land use designation in locations other than Downtown. With this information, Administration completed a review which included online engagement to evaluate if and/or how the proposed land use designation could become part of the City’s development framework.

The following was considered as part of Administration's review:

- Existing City policy support;
- Impacts to existing City policy;
- Locations within the City where this type of development may be appropriate;
- Proximities and access to public amenities; and
- Needed infrastructure access and support.

Based on the review and feedback received from the engagement process, Administration developed changes to the proposed land use designation description, originally submitted by the applicant. These changes have been made to ensure land designated as High-Density Mixed-Use is located where it can support and be supported by needed infrastructure, without being cost prohibitive, while ensuring development takes place in an orderly, rational manner. The changes are also meant to ensure unintended impacts on growth are avoided, while maintaining intent of the applicant's request. The changes Administration incorporated into the proposed land use designation have been discussed with the applicant.

As the proposed land use designation is not within the City's current development framework, Administration is also proposing to include supporting objectives and policies as part of this amendment.

The High-Density Mixed-Use designation is proposed to embody the following values and criteria:

- That it allows for high-density mixed-use development, which may include residential, commercial, office, cultural and community uses;
- That it is located in areas supported by all modes of transportation and accessible to high-frequency transit;
- That it is developed to be pedestrian-oriented, human-scaled and transit-oriented;
- That it is located within walking distance (± 400 metres) to Downtown and Bus Rapid Transit Stations;
- That it may be located within the Downtown, City Centre and/or Strategic Infill Areas;
- That it is located in proximity to public amenities and with access to appropriate infrastructure; and
- May include horizontal or vertical mixed-use high-density development.

If adopted by City Council, sites identified in the Potential Locations Map (See Appendix 1) have potential to be designated as High-Density Mixed-Use. The above-mentioned criteria provide the flexibility for High-Density Mixed-Use sites to be located within the Downtown, or within walking distance (± 400 metres) of the Downtown and a Bus Rapid Transit station. This means there is potential for these sites to be within the City Centre, a Strategic Infill Area, the Corridor Growth Area, or a neighbourhood, provided it meets all other criteria as well.

This designation could be utilized by the applicants at 555 Eastlake Avenue and 403 12th Street East development. However, if adopted, it does not guarantee approval of the development application, which will be considered on its own merit through a formal review process and consideration by City Council at a Public Hearing.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

An online survey was made available to the public on the City's engage page, from January 6 to February 28, 2023, to receive feedback on the proposed High-Density Mixed-Use Land Use Designation. Additionally, a communication plan was developed to inform and educate the public of this amendment and the planned public hearing, which will include website updates, social media posts, e-newsletters to subscribers and City Page ads (see Appendix 2 for a summary of the feedback received).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 11(a) of Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice Policy.

Once this application has been considered by the Municipal Planning Commission, it will be advertised in accordance with Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice Policy, and a date for a public hearing will be set. A notice will be placed in The StarPhoenix two weeks prior to the public hearing.

APPENDICES

1. High-Density Mixed-Use – Potential Locations Map
2. High-Density Mixed-Use Engagement Summary

REPORT APPROVAL

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