

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

<b>TO:</b> Planning Committee
<b>FROM:</b> Administration
<b>DATE:</b> April 15, 2024
<b>RE:</b> Zoning Amendment – Municipal Services Building

### **ISSUE**

An application to amend the zoning of 4210 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue from CM2 – Mixed Use Commercial 2 to CM2(x) – Mixed Use Commercial 2 (modified) to ensure the redevelopment of the Municipal Service Building (MSB) site includes a residential use.

### **REFERENCE**

- [Zoning Bylaw 2012-20](#)
- [Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan](#)
- [2022-2024 Strategic Priorities](#)
- [2018 Downtown Plan](#)
- Location Map (Attachment 1)
- Proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2024-25 (Attachment 2)

### **HISTORY**

Administration is bringing forward an application to rezone 4210 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (the old Municipal Services Building) from CM2 – Mixed Use Commercial 2 to CMX2x – Mixed Use Commercial 2 (modified) to ensure future development includes a residential use.

The MSB was vacated in 2020 and is currently underutilized as it is only used for cold storage of active and seasonal equipment. Due to its condition, the building must be demolished and the land remediated in order to allow for redevelopment.

On March 13, 2024, the Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the proposed amendment and recommended including density targets with consideration to servicing capacity. Following the DRC meeting, Engineering Services confirmed that upon initial review current servicing in the vicinity of the MSB site is not considered prohibitive for larger developments. However, further review would be required at conceptual design.

At the 2024 Housing Summit, the City facilitated a breakout session on the “Next Life of the former Municipal Service Building”. The main concerns raised were related to traffic, wind, and market housing being constructed. Opportunities identified consisted of:

- Potential collaboration between private, public, and non-governmental sectors;
- Enhancement of the commercial streetscape, the pedestrian/cycling network, and greenspace/civic amenities along 4th Avenue; and
- Provision for a mixed-use high-density development with variations in built form and housing types.

On January 29, 2024, Council approved the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Action Plan for the City of Whitehorse and authorized the Mayor to enter into a contribution agreement with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to receive program funds which may be used for Housing-related Infrastructure, such as demolition, that prepares the site for residential development.

The proposed schedule for the Zoning Bylaw amendment is:

Planning Committee:	April 15, 2024
First Reading:	April 22, 2024
Newspaper Ads:	April 26 and May 3, 2024
Public Hearing:	May 27, 2024
Report to Committee:	June 17, 2024
Second and Third Reading:	June 24, 2024

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Proceed with the amendment under the bylaw process; or
2. Do not proceed with the amendment.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Site Context**

The subject site is located on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, nestled between Ogilvie Street and Baxter Street in Downtown. Directly northeast, the area is zoned CS – Commercial Service, while CM1 is designated to the southwest, and CM2 for the remaining surrounding properties. The subject site is located in close proximity to NVD Place at 4201 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Qwanlin Mall at 303 Ogilvie Street. Furthermore, there are established residential uses both south and west of the subject site. Buildings are generally one to two storeys in height. The proposed residential use will complement surrounding existing uses and also help support downtown commercial vitality.

### **Corporate Plans and Strategic Priorities**

Council's 2022 to 2024 Strategic Priorities seek to improve the overall housing supply and to evaluate the opportunities for redevelopment of the MSB site.

The subject site is designated as Mixed-use - Downtown Core in the Official Community Plan (OCP). The OCP seeks to increase the number of people living in this area by encouraging high density housing forms (Policy 8.32). OCP Policy 8.35 underscores the City's commitment to evaluating the redevelopment potential of the subject site (former MSB) to facilitate intensification of uses within the Downtown area.

Under Policy 15.8.7, buildings up to 30 m may be considered within the Mixed Use – Downtown Core designation to promote the concentration of commercial and higher-density residential uses within the Downtown.

The subject site is also located within the planning area of the Downtown Plan, which designates it as a high-priority site for redevelopment (Policy 6.3.17). This prioritization extends to the sale and redevelopment of the City's Municipal Services Building, following the relocation of staff and services.

### **Zoning Bylaw**

The purpose of the CM2 zone is to provide for a mix of low intensity commercial and residential uses for the transitional area around the periphery of the downtown commercial core. The CM2 zone allows for many principal uses including offices, retail services and housing, but does not restrict a development from providing just one of the uses permitted as principal or conditional uses in the zone. Therefore, the intention of the proposed amendment is to include a special modification ensuring that the site's redevelopment incorporates a mandatory residential use.

In addition, under Appendix C of the Zoning Bylaw, the maximum height for the MSB site and adjoining properties is 25 m. The proposed amendment therefore also includes a special modification to increase the height to 30 m to provide greater flexibility in designing a higher residential density development.

### **Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)**

Permitted Uses of HAF funding include investments in Housing-related Infrastructure such as site preparation for housing developments. CMHC has confirmed that demolition and land remediation meet the intent of site preparation for the purposes of allocating HAF funding to Permitted Uses.

This zoning amendment will allow Administration to demonstrate to CMHC that the demolition and land remediation work will effectively be undertaken to support the site preparation of a housing development, as a permitted use of the HAF program funding. The units achieved through this development are key to achieving the City's HAF targets.

### **Development Targets**

Density targets and any additional site and/or development design requirements such as servicing capacity, and/or the opportunity to enhance the landscape of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in its location through public amenities and building massing, have not been included in the special modification as they are considered better addressed through the land disposition process.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council direct that Bylaw 2024-25, a bylaw to amend the zoning at 4210 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, be brought forward for consideration under the bylaw process.