

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Shane Bourke, City Manager	DATE: April 7, 2025
FROM: Brian Glavin, Chief Operating Officer	MEETING: City Council
REPORT WRITER: Alison Downing, Manager, Planning & Development Permitting	
SUBJECT: Planning Amendments for a Recreational Facility Site in Trader Ridge	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Give three readings to Bylaw C-1212J, being an amendment to the Arbour Hills ASP;
2. Give three readings to Bylaw C-1281-6, being an amendment of the Arbour Hills 2 OP;
3. Give three readings to Bylaw C-1307B, being an amendment of the Trader Ridge OP; and
4. Give three readings to Bylaw C-1260-197, being an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the February 19, 2025, City Council meeting, the following motions were passed:

1. Approve the approximately 3.21 hectares (7.94 acres) site [in Trader Ridge] 1 as the location for the proposed recreation facility (the “Facility Site”); and
2. Direct Administration to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the design, engineering and construction of an air-supported structure on the Facility Site to accommodate a FIFA regulation-size soccer field, with flexibility for various sports activities.

BACKGROUND

The City is initiating amendments to rezone 4.05 hectares of land in the northwest corner of the Trader Ridge neighbourhood from General Commercial (CG) to Direct Control (DC-38). The purpose of the amendment is to accommodate the development of a recreational facility with a maximum height of 30 metres. The proposed rezoning requires amendments to the Arbour Hills Area Structure Plan, the Arbour Hills II Outline Plan, and the Trader Ridge Outline Plan.

In 2023, Council began searching for a suitable site for a recreational facility that could accommodate indoor soccer and other sports requiring a large turf field, following concerns from Swan City F.C.

about the impact of the Leisure Centre closure. After evaluating options, on February 19, 2025, Council selected a property in Trader Ridge for the proposed facility.

ANALYSIS

Location and Context

The subject property is at the northern edge of the City, adjacent to the County of Grande Prairie, within the Trader Ridge neighbourhood. The area includes future residential development to the west, commercial development to the south and east, and industrial development to the north, as shown on the map below.



Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities

This project aligns with Council's Strategic Priorities of Quality of Life and Innovative Efficiencies & Economic Readiness.

Environmental Impact

The environmental characteristics of the site do not present any limitations to the proposed recreational facility.

Economic Impact

The facility is expected to generate economic benefits by attracting regional and provincial competitions that support sport tourism, while its location in Trader Ridge may drive further development in the City's north end.

Social Impact

Developing a recreational facility in Trader Ridge will enhance community well-being by providing access to sports and leisure activities, promoting active lifestyles, and fostering social connections among residents.

Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents

Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

Quality of Life

“7.3 The City shall continue to maintain a high quality of life to attract a skilled labour force by providing a) a variety of recreation and open space opportunities”

Arbour Hills Area Structure Plan (ASP)

The Arbour Hills Structure Plan (ASP) applies to four quarter-sections at the north end of the City. An ASP is a high-level planning document in the development process. It provides the generalized development concept in terms of land use and servicing.

The site is currently designated as commercial in the Arbour Hills ASP. The proposed change from commercial to a recreational site is not expected to create adverse land use impacts on existing or future development in the area.

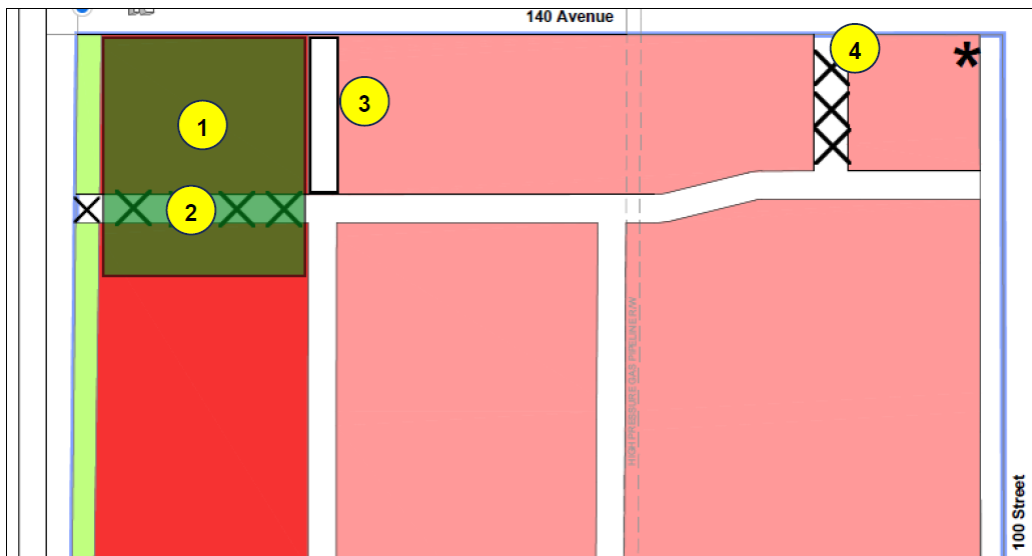
The amendments also include changes to the road network to prevent traffic from the commercial area from shortcutting through the residential neighborhood while maintaining vehicle connectivity via collector and arterial roads. Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity will be preserved to ensure accessibility.

Trader Ridge Outline Plan (OP)

The subject properties are within the boundary of the Trader Ridge Outline Plan. Outline Plans provide a detailed framework for future development, including the layout of future roads and lanes, open spaces, land uses and zoning.

The proposed amendments to the outline plan include:

1. Redesignating the site from General Commercial to Recreation Site
2. Removing the collector road extending west into the Arbour Hills neighbourhood
3. Adding a collector road extending 103rd Street north
4. Removing the collector road extending north at 101st Street



From a land use planning perspective, recreational facilities are generally compatible within commercial areas. They attract visitors, support local businesses, and enhance community well-being by promoting active lifestyles and social connections.

The amendment also includes road network adjustments to enhance site access and circulation. Removing the 139 Avenue connection to the Arbour Hills residential neighbourhood helps prevent shortcutting traffic, ensuring local roads primarily serve residents rather than acting as a bypass. Meanwhile, extending 103 Street north formalizes an existing traffic pattern. Paving this road will improve accessibility and safety, contributing to a more efficient and functional road network.

Arbour Hills 2 Outline Plan (OP)

The Arbour Hills 2 Outline Plan covers the quarter-section directly to the west of Trader Ridge. It is primarily a low-density residential neighbourhood.

Amendments are required to the Arbour Hills OP to remove the road connection from Trader Ridge into that neighbourhood.



Land Use Bylaw (LUB)

The subject land is currently zoned UR (Urban Reserve) under the Land Use Bylaw. The purpose of the UR district is to protect land designated for future urban development from premature subdivision and development.

The proposed amendment would rezone the land to a Site-Specific Direct Control District. A *Community Recreation Facility* is allowed in the Public Service District, as well as in all of the City's conventional commercial land use districts and the Muskoseepi Park District.

While rezoning to the Public Service District could be an option with a significant height variance, the preferred approach is a Direct Control District to accommodate the 28-metre-high air-supported dome structure. The Direct Control District will follow general development standards for parking, landscaping, and other site requirements.

The site design will include green space buffers to reduce impacts on surrounding uses, while any shadowing effects, particularly on residential areas, will be assessed and addressed during the development permit stage.

Administration does not anticipate any land use compatibility issues, as the subject land is surrounded by compatible uses.

Risk

Failure to approve these bylaws may lead to significant delays in the development of the proposed facility, impacting project timelines, investment commitments, and the anticipated benefits to the community.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Advertising of the public hearing has been completed in accordance with both the Municipal Government Act and the Land Use Bylaw requirements. The proposed amendment was also posted on the City's Public Hearings webpage.

The County reviewed the proposed amendments and raised concerns about road network changes. After administrative-level meetings, the County is not objecting to the proposed amendments as the City provided a letter supporting a future 140 Ave connection between NE-2-72-6-W6 and NW-2-72-6-W6. This connection would help address concerns about losing the 139 Ave east-west extension and long-term traffic impacts on 102 Street in the County.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City's internal operating budget funded the proposed amendments.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments support the development of a new recreational facility in Trader Ridge, aligning with Council's strategic priorities of enhancing quality of life and promoting economic readiness. The amendments address land use compatibility, road network adjustments, and zoning requirements to facilitate the project while minimizing impacts on surrounding areas.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bylaw C-1212J
2. Bylaw C-1281-6
3. Bylaw C-1307B
4. Bylaw C-1260-197