

KEYSTONE HILLS CORE PLAN UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the land use and mobility study sections of the Keystone Hills Core Plan that was completed by Transportation Planning, Planning and Development and Assessment with the assistance of CH2MHill (consultant), Brookfield Residential Properties and Genstar Development Company (developers). The goal of this project is to plan a Major Activity Centre (MAC) and an Urban Corridor (UC) that consists of high-density residential, institutional, employment and local commercial uses with a sustainable transportation system that supports all modes including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit. A summary of the public and stakeholder engagement program undertaken as part of this project is included.

The study considered numerous land use and transportation options. The project team developed evaluation criteria to compare all alternatives that included accessibility, road classifications, Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations, MAC locations, planning and urban design, financial/economic factors, process and engagement, and buildable and implementable considerations. However, at the last project workshop in June, The City, developers and consultant all agreed that the use of the evaluation criteria was not successful in determining the preferred option. Instead, the preferred option was developed by identifying components where consensus was gained for the Keystone Hills Core Plan.

The recommendations are the results of the partnership between The City and the developers but don't necessarily represent complete agreement between The City and the developers on all aspects. As such, The City and the major developers continue to discuss some aspects of the plan, but have generally agreed on the major items within the plan. The recommendations for the land use and road network are shown on pages 9 and 13 of Attachment 1. The objectives of this study are in alignment with The City's Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) and Municipal Development Plan (MDP) goals. It is anticipated that the recommendations will help in achieving sustainable community development in the Keystone Hills Core Plan area.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Transportation and Transit recommends that Council:

1. Receive the Keystone Hills Core Plan, Summary of Land Use and Mobility Recommendations as presented in Attachment 1 for information.
2. Direct Administration to bring an amended Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan to Calgary Planning Commission by the end of 2015 June.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

In June 2010, Council approved the North Regional Context Study which established the MAC as the primary activity centre in north Calgary and confirmed the alignment of the LRT on Centre Street north of Stoney Trail. Subsequently, in August 2012, Council approved the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan (ASP) for lands north of Stoney Trail between 14 Street northwest and the Canadian Pacific rail line and Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) contour to the east in north Calgary.

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BACKGROUND

The Keystone Hills ASP includes basic policy framework for a MAC and an UC located on Centre Street North between Stoney Trail and 160 Avenue North. The Keystone Hills ASP requires the preparation of a Special Study for the MAC and UC to provide more details regarding the location, form and design criteria for both types of areas. The Keystone Hills Core Plan (KHCP) is the result of the Special Study and will be used by Administration to prepare appropriate amendments to the Keystone Hills ASP. The ASP requires such amendments to be approved by City Council prior to the approval of any outline plans or land use designations within the study area.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The goal of this project is to plan a MAC and an UC that consists of high-density residential, institutional, employment and local commercial uses with a sustainable transportation system that supports all modes including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit.

At the initial stage, a total of 11 options were assessed based on high level criteria. The criteria included accessibility, road classifications, LRT stations, and MAC locations. Through the evaluation process, the project team shortened the options to a total of three options. These three options (Concepts A, B and C) are included in Attachment 2.

On April 10 and 11, 2014, The City, developers, and consultants agreed to develop detailed evaluation criteria to evaluate the three options in a collaborative workshop. The detailed evaluation criteria included transportation, planning and urban design, financial/economic factors, process and engagement, and buildable and implementable considerations. However, at the last collaborative workshop held on June 10 and 11, 2014, all parties agreed that the use of the evaluation criteria was not successful in determining the preferred option. Instead, the preferred option (based on Concept C) was developed by identifying components where consensus was gained for the Keystone Hills Core Plan.

The key components and features of the recommended Land Use Intensity and Mix plan as shown on page 9 of Attachment 1 include:

- Intensity is planned to be in nodes – the primary node at the transit station within the MAC and a secondary node at the UC's north transit station;
- A density gradient and transition will occur between the nodes and secondarily to the east and west as the Core Plan Area transitions to surrounding neighbourhoods;
- The MAC accommodates a combination of a Major Institutional Use, small-, medium- and large-format Retail, Flex Use and High Density Multi-family Residential.
- The MAC boundary encompasses land on both sides of the Transit Corridor to ensure good transit access and to encourage its integration with its abutting neighbourhoods;
- The urban grid of access streets is designed to provide balanced access to these land uses for all modes in attractive streetscapes.

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The key components and features of the Road Framework plan as shown on page 13 of Attachment 1 include:

- Centre Street is the focal point of the MAC, functions as the transit spine and bicycle and pedestrian corridor, and provides the vehicular mobility function;
- Centre Street Transit Greenway will be designed for low-floor BRT and LRT. BRT station facilities will be designed in a way that can be adapted in the future for LRT;
- Streets are planned to be pedestrian-friendly and connected; regional and local trails connecting to neighbourhood schools, parks, community centers, recreation fields and natural habitat greenways are all part of the KHCP vision;
- The proposed streets include a variety of bike facilities including shared multiuse pathways for the primary cycling network on 144 Avenue and buffered bike lanes on Centre Street and the east-west collector roads;
- The Road Framework is predicated on separating the traffic mobility function from Center Street. This is accomplished by distributing most of the vehicular traffic to two adjacent north-south collector roadways, parallel to Centre Street (C East and C West);
- South of 144 Avenue, the C East and C West roadways function as arterials to provide three lanes of peak period capacity in each direction on each side of Centre Street;
- Between 144 Avenue and 160 Avenue, C East and C West have two lanes of peak period capacity in each direction on each side of Centre Street, while Centre Street has a single lane of traffic in each direction;
- The three north-south roadways, as a system, are capable of supporting the forecast volumes for future traffic growth and provide access/egress to individual parcels;
- 144 Avenue and 160 Avenue are the east-west arterials serving the KHCP area. 144 Avenue is planned as a four lane roadway, but with a wide median to protect for widening to six lanes if future traffic demands require it;
- A robust east-west grid network crossing the Urban Corridor allows traffic to circulate within the KHCP area or distribute throughout the adjacent neighbourhoods.

In summary the recommended plan proposes a more urban style development in a greenfield context by providing for a significant mixture of uses, and density supported by a mobility network that accommodates all modes of travel with high quality infrastructure.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Based on The City's engage! Policy, the project team was able to encourage participants from communities and key stakeholders and gained valuable input that fed into the decision making process. In addition, City employees, developers, and consultants made up a Project Steering Committee to work collaboratively to achieve the final objectives.

In total, ten meetings and workshops with the developers, four internal stakeholder meetings, two external stakeholder meetings, and two public open houses were held. At the project initial stage meetings, City employees, developers and consultants developed initial concepts and determined the approach to engage the key stakeholders. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed off by The City and developers to determine the goals, objectives and principles of this project.

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The City held an open house on March 5, 2014 at the Coventry Hills Superstore. The Public Open House presented an overview of the project, introduced key planning concepts, and asked the public to provide their input regarding key elements that would make the community attractive to future users.

After the open house, another developer workshop was held on April 10 and 11, 2014. In addition to the normal attendees at the Developer Workshop, Alberta Health Services also attended to discuss the future hospital location. The workshop refined the previous options by establishing locations for the MAC and second LRT station, and resulted in three concepts be carried forward for evaluation.

A second public open house was held on May 15, 2014 at Cardel Place to re-establish the study overview and present the three concepts developed for the Centre Street corridor, the evaluation criteria, and the next steps. Approximately 109 people attended the open house, with 61 feedback forms submitted. There were no major concerns identified by the public and many felt that the open house was useful in helping them understand the scope of the project.

The last developer workshop was held on June 10 and 11, prior to the workshop, all parties were asked to do their own evaluation of the options for discussion. In the workshop, all parties agreed that the use of the evaluation criteria was not successful in determining the preferred option. Instead, the preferred option was developed by identifying components where consensus was gained for the Keystone Hills Core Plan. During the workshop, Concept C was chosen to be the preferred plan with some revisions in details such as intersection usages, bus stop locations, and fire station location.

In summary, the project team made extensive public engagement efforts in this project in order to achieve an agreement with the key stakeholders and will continue to engage and work with stakeholders during the ASP amendment. A future public open house will be held in early 2015 to present the recommended plan and proposed amendments to the Keystone Hills ASP.

Strategic Alignment

The study objectives are in alignment with the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP), Municipal Development Plan (MDP), and the 2020 Sustainability Direction including:

- Transportation Goal #1 to Align transportation planning and infrastructure investment with city and regional land use directions and implementation strategies;
- Transportation Goal #2 to Promote safety for all transportation system users;
- Transportation Goal #3 to Provide affordable mobility and universal access for all;
- Transportation Goal #4 to Enable public transit, walking and cycling as the preferred mobility choices for more people;
- Make Calgary a liveable, attractive, memorable and functional city by recognizing its unique setting and dynamic urban character and creating a legacy of quality public and private developments for future generations (MDP Goal 2.4);
- Develop an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports land use, provides increased mobility choices for citizens, promotes vibrant, connected communities, protects the natural environment and supports a prosperous, and competitive economy (MDP Goal 2.5);

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- 2020 Sustainability Direction Goal by providing smart growth and mobility choice through the development of complete communities in greenfield.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The City and major developers worked as partners on this development proposal. Through promoting the use of public transit, constructing sidewalks to encourage foot traffic, and providing bike facilities to cyclists, the future communities are expected to manage to reduce emissions and pollution.

The implementation of the recommended plan will provide a place for people to live, work, shop and play. The design will support the development of local businesses and new job opportunities for the future communities in the north area of the city. All these strategies will help in achieving sustainable communities in the KHCP area.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Currently, the study area is greenfield. After the development is completed, the operating budget will be much higher due to the future infrastructure operation and maintenance costs. The additional operating cost was not quantified in this study.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

The recommendations from this project will be used by Administration to align appropriate capital budgets to help achieve the vision of the KHCP. The capital cost of the plan was not quantified in this study.

Risk Assessment

Developing a master plan for the MAC while the lands are undesignated increases the likelihood the development vision can be achieved. The project recommendations and maps are developed for the long term vision after all the developments in the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan are fully built out. Individual development from the surrounding developers will need to meet the detailed requirements depending on the time the development permit application is applied. The preferred solution at the south of the road network will need to be confirmed with the developers at a later stage.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The recommended plans will not only promote mixed land uses, but also encourage all transportation modes including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit. The recommendations are the results of the partnership between The City and the major developers. The objectives of this study are in alignment with The City's CTP and MDP. It is anticipated that the recommended strategies will help in achieving sustainable community development in the Keystone Hills Core Plan greenfield area.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Summary of Land Use and Mobility Recommendations – Keystone Hills Core Plan Major Activity Center & Urban Corridor;
2. Keystone Hills Core Plan Concepts A, B and C

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SPC on Transportation and Transit
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