

Planning & Development Report to
Calgary Planning Commission
2019 November 07

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPC2019-1387

Policy Amendment to the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In keeping with Council direction, the purpose of this report is to recommend approval of a major amendment to the *Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan* (ASP) in order to include comprehensive policy direction for the Keystone Hills Core Area.

The Keystone Hills Core Area encompasses a Major Activity Centre and Urban Main Street located along Centre Street N between Stoney Trail and 160 Avenue N. The proposed amendment provides a vision and policy framework for the long-term future development of a mixed-use employment hub, including a range of services and higher density housing centralized around two future Green Line LRT stations.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed amendments to the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan (Attachment 1); and
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2015 January 12, the Keystone Hills Core Plan and associated report (TT2014-0890) were accepted by Council with the following recommendations:

- Direct Administration to bring an amended Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan to Calgary Planning Commission by the end of 2015; and
- Direct Administration to collaborate with landowners on a concurrent Area Structure Plan Amendment and Outline Plan/Land Use process which addresses the outstanding details.

BACKGROUND

In 2012, Council adopted the *Keystone Hills ASP* including a basic policy framework for a Major Activity Centre (MAC) and Urban Main Street located on Centre Street N between Stoney Trail and 160 Avenue N. The ASP outlined a requirement to conduct a special study (e.g., Keystone Hills Core Plan) to inform supplementary ASP amendments that would provide additional direction on future transportation connections, land use and building form within the future MAC and Urban Main Street.

Phase 1 of the Keystone Hills Core Plan (KHCP) was completed in 2015 by Administration in cooperation with Brookfield Residential and Genstar Ltd (landowner group). Based on available policy direction in the *Municipal Development Plan*, *Calgary Transportation Plan* and the *Keystone Hills ASP*, the KHCP translated these applicable policies into a land use and

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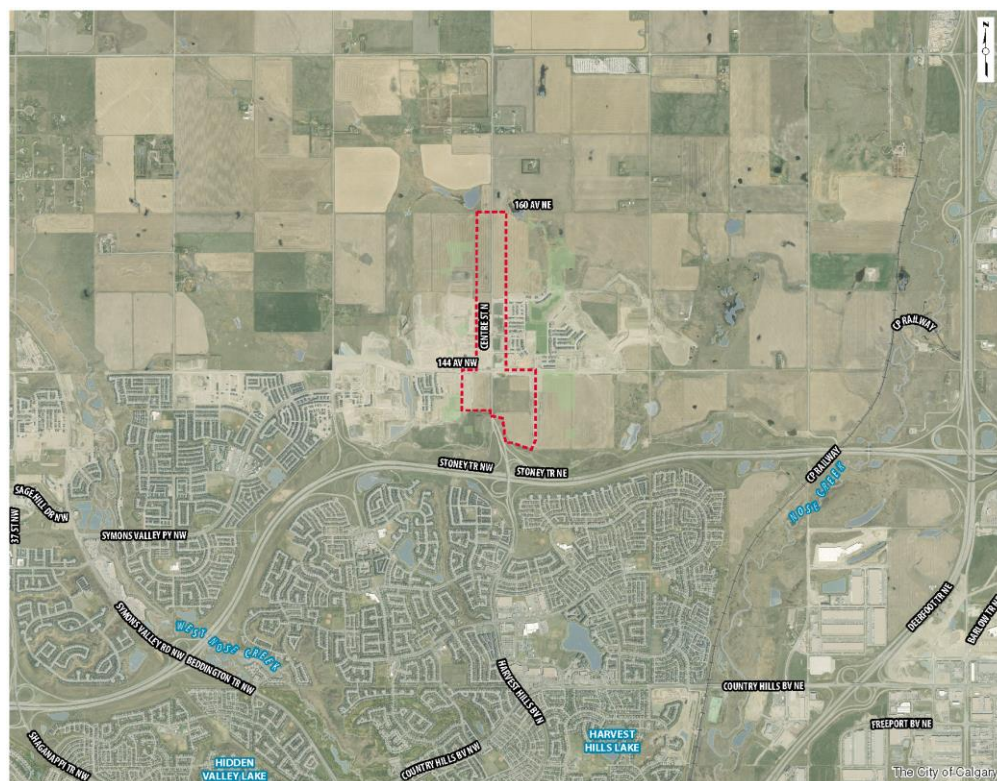
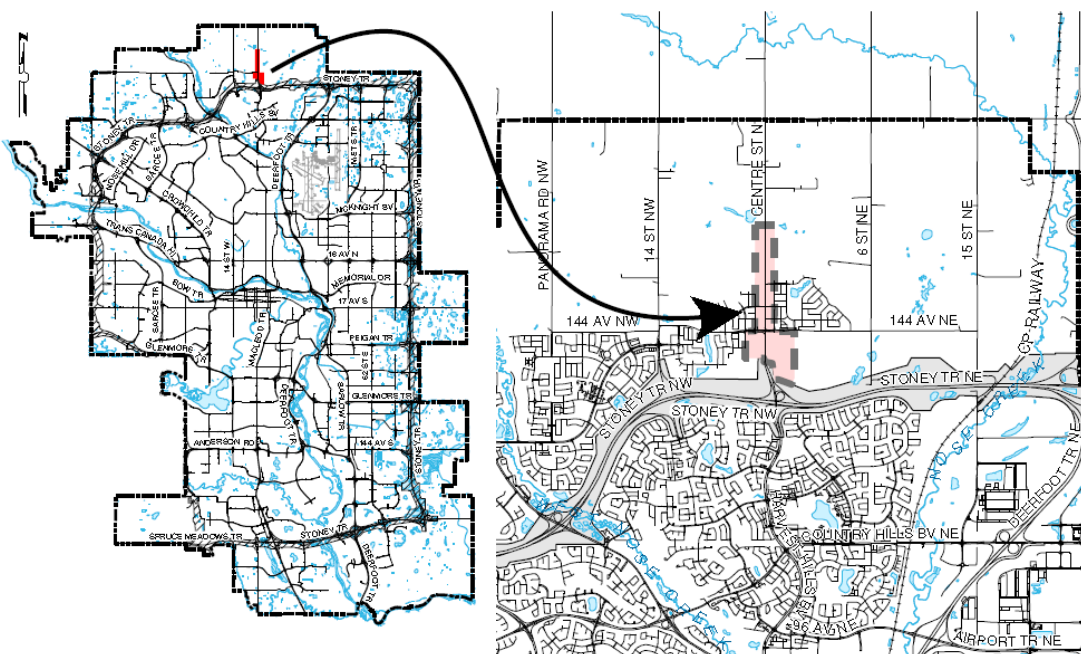
transportation plan for lands in this area. On 2015 January 12 Council received the KHCP for information and directed Administration to bring an amended *Keystone Hills ASP* to Calgary Planning Commission by the end of 2015 concurrently with land use and outline plan applications.

Administration and the landowner group agreed to defer the ASP update while the group completed Phase 2 of the KHCP, and to such time where the landowner group was prepared to bring forward land use and outline plan proposals for the Centre Street N MAC and Urban Main Street. The Transportation Functional Plan was completed July 2017 and confirmed the function and nature of the future built environment within this area.

Administration has worked with the landowners (see Stakeholder Comments, Attachment 2) to bring forward amendments to the *Keystone Hills ASP* to provide for statutory policy guidance for the Keystone Hills Core Area (or Core Area). The proposed policies are based on the work undertaken as part of the KHCP, as well as additional work with key area stakeholders. The proposed ASP policies and guidelines (Attachment 1) are specific to the Core Area while also supplementing the general area-wide policies of the *Keystone Hills ASP*.

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Location Maps



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Site Context

The *Keystone Hills ASP* area is located in the northwest and northeast quadrants of the City of Calgary on lands annexed from Rocky View County in 1989 and 2007. The plan area is bounded by Stoney Trail to the south, 160 Avenue N to the north, 14 Street NW to the west, and the Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) contour to the east.

The Keystone Hills Core Area is situated along Centre Street N and is bounded on the north side of 144 Avenue N by 160 Avenue N to the north and 1 Street NE to the east and 1 Street NW to the west. South of 144 Avenue N the area is bounded by Stoney Trail and Carrington Gate NW to the south, Livingston Gate NE to the east and Carrington Boulevard NW to the west.

The area north of 144 Avenue N is indicated as an Urban Main Street and the area south of 144 Avenue N is a Major Activity Centre. The proposed future Green Line LRT alignment runs up Centre Street N through the Core Area with a future station located south of 144 Avenue N and a second station located in the northern portion of the area closer to 160 Avenue N. The terrain in this area is not flat, and as such, Centre Street N and the future Green Line LRT are designed to pass under 144 Avenue N in order to allow 144 Avenue N, in this location, to remain relatively flat. Centre Street N, from Stoney Trail N, splits into a couplet as it approaches the Core Area to direct traffic flows north and south along 1 Street NW and 1 Street NE, until the two-way traffic returns north of 144 Avenue N.

The subject area is currently undeveloped, although stripping and grading has taken place on portions of the area and construction of some of the streets is currently being undertaken. Some of the lands both east and west of the Core Area have approved land use amendments and outline plans and are being developed. These lands are primarily low density residential with some multi-residential as well as park, school sites. Two outline plans are currently under review for within the Core Area. One of the outline plan applications is associated with a land use application included on today's agenda (CPC2019-1386) in response to Council's direction. The other outline plan is proposed near the future LRT station within the MAC, and will likely be proceeding to Calgary Planning Commission by Q1 2020.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The proposed policy amendments refine and implement the strategic objectives and policies of the *Municipal Development Plan*, the *Keystone Hills ASP* and the *Keystone Hills Core Plan*. Further information on how this proposal aligns with applicable policies is found in the Strategic Alignment section of this report.

Planning Considerations

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

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Policy Overview

The proposed Core Area policies provide a vision and framework for the long-term future development of the subject lands. Policies found in the amendment support sensitive planning and urban design best practices to create a comprehensive community that integrates well with the rest of the Keystone area.

Development within the Core Area is intended to create a community that has a distinct identity and promotes a clear sense of place in its residents, employees and visitors. The Core Area will not simply be an area to travel through, but instead a place that people desire to live and work in; a place where people come to spend leisure time and which becomes well known locally and throughout the city.

The policies recognize that this will happen over a longer term development plan which will likely be phased over time with the eventual construction of the LRT. Interim uses and lower intensity development types will be considered appropriate initially, while still protecting for the higher intensity development envisioned in the long term.

Administration worked collaboratively with the landowner group, building on the previous work undertaken on the Keystone Hills Core Area to create a guiding, long-range planning document for the Core Area that prioritizes planning best practices, while balancing market and private landowner considerations.

Vision

The Keystone Hills Core Area is centralized around the future Green Line LRT alignment to form a high intensity employment hub, including services and higher density housing. The Core Area is an area that will be highly supportive of sustainable travel choices for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit customers. It is an area for people of all ages and lifestyles and provides residents the opportunity to live, work, shop, socialize, gather and recreate locally.

The Urban Main Street of Centre Street will primarily consist of medium-density residential, employment and local commercial uses with a strong pedestrian environment providing active street frontages. The Major Activity Centre is anticipated to incorporate a significant institutional use, either a major hospital or post-secondary institution, in addition to other high-intensity uses including residential, retail, entertainment and employment uses focused around the future LRT station.

Land Use

The proposed amendments introduce three Land Use Zones for the Core Area (Station Area Zone, Flex Zone, and Employment Zone). The Zones provide a structure to achieve the overall vision of the Core Area, at present and with the construction of the Green Line in the future (See Map 8: Core Area Land Use Zones – Attachment 1). Each Land Use Zone facilitates a mix of uses including institutional, office, retail and residential, while some Zones focus more specifically on certain uses than others based on their location within the Core Area. Specific

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land use designations will be determined at the land use amendment and outline plan stage.

As the Core Area is expected to take many years to build-out, the Land Use policies are intended to allow for market changes over time. Policies set out the ultimate intention for development while still providing for flexibility of use. As such, office, higher density multi-residential and commercial can be provided if market demand is more robust in any one category while also allowing for development to transition over time.

The Station Area Zone is found in two locations in the Core Area, south of 144 Avenue surrounding the future LRT Station and north along Centre Street N around the second future LRT Station. Lands within these areas are intended to ultimately accommodate higher density development with a mix of uses, including multi-residential, office and retail/commercial.

The Flex Zone areas are located adjacent to the Station Area Zones and act as a transition from these higher intensity mixed-use areas to the lower intensity of the adjacent residential areas outside of the Core Area. The Flex Zone areas are intended to consist of a wide variety of uses including multi-residential of different levels of intensity, as well as a range of retail, services, office uses.

The Employment Zone area is located within the MAC, east of the future LRT Station. This area is specifically located to accommodate convenient access from Stoney Trail, Centre Street N and the future LRT Station. The area is made up of larger parcels of land and may accommodate a larger scale institutional use such as a hospital or a post-secondary institution, which is a critical component for the success of the MAC.

Built Form and Urban Design

The proposed built form and design policies of the Core Area are intended to ensure high quality streetscapes and public realm that encourages social interaction among residents, shoppers and employees. A certain degree of flexibility has been applied to ensure the intent of the Core Area is achieved in a manner that responds to the context. Active frontages have been identified within the proposed policies and require buildings to be sited and designed properly to create a more vibrant pedestrian environment and contribute to activity on the streets throughout the day and evening. Two types of active frontages have been identified for the Core Area, primary and secondary. Primary active frontages are the higher activity, retail oriented areas with the secondary active frontages being less active, more flexible with a greater variety of uses.

Buildings within the Core Area are expected to ultimately establish a continuous streetwall with building frontages sited along street fronts. Higher buildings are to be strategically located on sites that are chosen for their development potential and context. Building facades are to be designed and located such that they generate a sense of enclosure around public spaces and streets, provide for active streetwalls and contribute to comfortable and inviting pedestrian experience.

The proposed policies emphasize the creation of a quality public realm that encourages walking

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and community activity. Streets are an essential part of the public realm and lively streetscapes comprised of a variety of design elements are key to a pleasurable pedestrian experience. Parks and open spaces are also key public realm components, providing valuable spaces for outdoor activity and leisure as well as social interaction and community participation and are to be designed as part of a safe and comfortable pedestrian realm.

Mobility

The street network within the Core Area is primarily a grid of streets, with Centre Street as the focal point, functioning as the transit spine, as well as an active modes and pedestrian corridor, while also providing a localized vehicular access function. The Center Street N corridor is planned to encompass several elements, including sidewalks and pathways, cycling infrastructure, local vehicular access, as well as the future extension of the Green Line LRT. Bicycle infrastructure is provided throughout the Core Area including shared multi-use pathways and bike lanes providing connections within and to the adjacent communities. Accommodation of vehicles within the Core Area is based on separating most of the vehicular traffic to the two adjacent north-south roadways (1 Street NE and NW) and away from Centre Street. The east-west grid network crossing Centre Street allows traffic to circulate within the Core Area as well as to and from the adjacent neighbourhoods.

The Green Line will be designed for BRT and low-floor LRT. Transit operations will be similar to Downtown Calgary with speeds complementary to adjacent traffic (slower), line-of-sight/un-gated intersections and limited active modes barriers along the transitway. BRT station facilities will be designed in a way that can be adapted and extended in the future for LRT. Stations should be designed to have a more direct relationship to urban streetscape and adjacent plazas with low platforms. Transfers from Local Feeder Buses will occur from adjacent, intersecting collector streets with bus stops flanking both sides of Centre Street at primary transit stations or on Centre Street itself, near these stations.

Calgary Planning Commission Review

On 2019 September 19, Administration presented a draft of the Core Area policies, for information and input, to Calgary Planning Commission (CPC). Administration requested feedback from CPC members on several key questions relating to flexibility, placemaking and development prior to the construction of the LRT. CPC, while generally supportive of The Plan's policies, had questions and comments regarding how to provide enough flexibility while also getting the right type of development in the area early.

As a result of CPC's input, Administration included some revisions to the proposed policies. Primarily these focused on balancing the need for flexibility of initial development with the desire to achieve certain levels of development around key locations.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Through the work on the Keystone Hills Core Plan, a number of engagement opportunities were undertaken. In total, ten meetings and workshops with the developers, four internal stakeholder

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meetings, two external stakeholder meetings, and two public open houses were held through that process. 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.

Subsequent work on the *Keystone Hills ASP* amendments included engagement with landowners along with internal and external stakeholders. Engagement took place through on-going meetings, circulation of draft policies and continued communication throughout the project.

Following Calgary Planning Commission the date of the Public Hearing will be advertised.

Strategic Alignment

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The Core Area is located within the 'City, Town' area as identified on Schedule C: South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Map in the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan* (SSRP). While the SSRP makes no specific reference to this area, the proposed amendment is consistent with policies on Land Use Patterns.

Interim Growth Plan (2018)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the *Interim Growth Plan*. The proposed 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.

Rocky View/Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2012)

These lands are subject to the *Intermunicipal Development Plan* (IDP) and as such the application was circulated to Rocky View County for comment in accordance with the requirements of the IDP. No response was received for this application.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

The *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP), Map 1: Urban Structure, identifies the subject lands as Urban Main Street and Major Activity Centre (MAC). Major Activity Centres (MAC) are located strategically across the city to provide a major mixed-use destination central to larger residential or business catchment areas. MACs should be developed to function as an "urban centre" for a sub-region of the city and provide opportunities for people to work, live, shop, recreate, be entertained and meet their daily needs.

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Urban Main Streets provide for a high level of residential and employment intensification along an Urban Boulevard street type. Urban Main Streets emphasize a walkable pedestrian environment fronted by a broad range of employment, commercial and retail uses as well as housing to accommodate a diverse range of the population.

The proposed amendment meets the MDP policies for both MACs and Urban Main Streets.

Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan (Statutory – 2012)

The *Keystone Hills ASP* was adopted in 2012 and indicates the subject lands as within a MAC and Urban Main Street. The ASP also provides direction to undertake amendments to the Plan to refine the boundary of these areas and provide more specific direction and detailed policies and guidelines for development in these areas.

Administration is bringing forward a major amendment to the ASP in response to this direction. This proposed amendment will replace the existing sections of the ASP related to the MAC and Urban Main Street and insert a new section providing the policy for the Keystone Hills Core Area. Associated amendments to the ASP are also included to ensure overall consistency with the new policies.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The proposed amendment will guide development in the Core Area towards the creation of a new community that provides housing diversity organized around a MAC and Urban Main Street that are well connected, serviced and sustainable.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

There is no impact to the current operating budget as a result of this report. As development proceeds in this area and additional services come online, operating costs will be incurred related to services such as roads, parks, and transit. These anticipated costs for Livingston have been incorporated into the One Calgary 2019-2022 service plans and budgets.

Current and Future Capital Budget

There is no impact to the current capital budget as a result of this report. The capital investment required to construct and upgrade the required local infrastructure will be funded entirely by the developer. The City's capital investment contribution required for the construction of the Centre Street N/Stoney Trail interchange upgrade has been included in the One Calgary 2019-2022 service plans and budgets.

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Risk Assessment

There are no known risks associated with the adoption of the amendments as recommended.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed *Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan* amendment responds to direction from Council to bring forward policy to support the development of the Major Activity Centre and Urban Main Street. Policies provide statutory guidance for the development of a comprehensive community, focussing on flexible land uses, multi-modal connectivity, and transit oriented development along two future Green Line LRT stations.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Proposed Amendment to the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan
2. Stakeholder Comments