

Planning & Development Report to
SPC on Planning and Urban Development
2020 March 04

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
PUD2020-0207

Guidebook for Great Communities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Calgary is a city of inspiring neighbourhoods, each on a journey of growth and evolution. To continue being a great city made of great communities and to support growth throughout Calgary, Administration is delivering modernized planning tools. The *Guidebook for Great Communities* is part of a group of interconnected planning initiatives, known as The Next Generation Planning System, which will improve the way we plan Calgary's future and help us implement and realize the Municipal Development Plan and its policies (see Attachment 1). This report builds on reporting that went to Committee and Council in 2019 November providing an update on progress made since that time.

The first component of this report brings forward for approval the proposed *Guidebook for Great Communities (Guidebook)* (Attachment 2). The *Guidebook* provides a consistent approach to local area planning through common planning policies and a plan framework that enables communities to evolve in a manner that responds to the needs of current and future residents. Since 2019 November, Administration has tested the document through the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan, which has resulted in changes. Administration will continue to monitor the pilot projects and implement further changes through an approach to ongoing sustainment, including working with stakeholders to address issues as they arise.

The second component of this report is to deliver an updated implementation timing, contained in Attachment 3, for the framework to align the Land Use Bylaw (Bylaw) with the Municipal Development Plan and the *Guidebook*. As presented and approved in 2019 November, the framework for the renewal conceptualizes how new districts and regulations could be integrated into the Bylaw and outlines the main regulatory changes that could be required. Updated timing is necessary to account for the additional time to complete the *Guidebook*. Upon approval of both the *Guidebook* and updated timing, Administration will scope out the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw in more detail including potential resource and budget needs and will report back before mid-cycle budget adjustments in Fall 2020. In addition, work associated with a motion arising from 2019 July 29 (Report CPC2019-0759), to bring forward land use amendments that better facilitate mid-block rowhouse implementation, is being proposed to come back with Phase 1b, contained in Attachment 3.

The proposed *Guidebook* represents a major step toward achieving the goals of the Municipal Development Plan and Council's priority on building safe and inspiring neighbourhoods.

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ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development:

1. Direct Administration to:
 - a. Prepare a bylaw for the *Guidebook for Great Communities* as outlined in Attachment 2; and
 - b. Forward the proposed Bylaw, to accommodate the required advertising, and this report, directly to the 2020 April 27 Combined Meeting of Council.
2. Recommend that Council:
 - a. Hold a Public Hearing for the proposed bylaw at the 2020 April 27 Combined Meeting of Council, and give three readings to the proposed Bylaw;
 - b. Direct Administration to use the policies of chapter 3 of the *Guidebook for Great Communities* throughout the built-out areas as guidelines when reviewing development permits;
 - c. Direct Administration to, upon approval of the *Guidebook*, develop a scope for the Renewal of the Land Use Bylaw, as contained in Attachment 3, and return to Council prior to the mid-cycle budget deliberations for 2020; and
 - d. Direct Administration to undertake the work associated with the motion arising from 2019 July 29 (Report CPC2019-0759), to bring forward land use bylaw amendments that better facilitate mid-block rowhouse implementation, and to return in conjunction with Phase 1b of the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2019 November 18 Combined Meeting of Council, it was moved by Councillor Gondek and seconded by Councillor Carra, that with respect to Report PUD2019-1015, the following be adopted:

That Council direct Administration to execute Option 2, as contained on page 7 of Attachment 13, with the following refinements:

- a. Build awareness among Calgarians about the changes being proposed and to allow Calgarians to participate in the community conversation on long-term planning and supporting growth with infrastructure and amenities;
- b. Communicate the vision & intent of the document within Calgary communities, in partnership with stakeholder groups, before the document becomes statutory. This communication should include examples from pilot communities;
- c. Prepare a clear engagement process for statutory planning work going forward, making expectations clear to all stakeholders about when to engage, what type of engagement is required, and what the outcomes of the work will be; and
- d. Provide further clarity on the relationship between this work and the City's shift to larger local area plans.

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At the 2019 November 18 Combined Meeting of Council, it was moved by Councillor Gondek and seconded by Councillor Carra, that with respect to Report PUD2019-1200, the following be adopted:

That Council direct Administration to:

1. Proceed with Phase 1 of the implementation scheduled for the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw as proposed in Attachment 1;
2. That Council direct Administration to return with an updated implementation schedule for the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw at the same time as bringing back the Guidebook for Great Communities; and
3. Report back through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development no later than Q1 2021.

Additional previous council direction can be found in Attachment 4.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the Developed Areas Guidebook (Municipal Development Plan: Volume 2, Part 3) was approved by Council as one of three guidebooks intended to help implement the broad vision of the Municipal Development Plan by providing consistent planning policies across communities. On 2019 October 2 Administration presented to the SPC on Planning and Urban Development an evolution of this work in the form of the *Guidebook for Great Communities* (PUD2019-1015 - Great Communities for Everyone). At the same time, Administration also presented a potential plan regarding a renewal of the Bylaw based on policy provided in the *Guidebook* (PUD2019-1200 – Implementing Great Communities for Everyone). It was however, acknowledged that there were outstanding concerns with the *Guidebook* and thus timing associated with the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw. The committee determined that through the creation of a panel, stakeholder representatives and members of Administration could come together to: 1) confirm the expectations of the *Guidebook*, 2) discuss any outstanding areas of disagreement in the *Guidebook*, and 3) propose possible testing methods of the *Guidebook's* practices and policies.

On 2019 November 6, the SPC on Planning and Urban Development heard from the members of the panel regarding issues identified with the *Guidebook*. Instead of adopting the *Guidebook* at that time, Committee and Council directed Administration to return with the *Guidebook* together with the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan to provide stakeholders with more time to understand the document and provide more opportunity to create awareness of the document. It was accepted by Council that by delaying the adoption of the *Guidebook*, future work on the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw would be delayed as well.

Next Generation Planning System

The *Guidebook* is part of a group of interconnected planning initiatives, which lay the foundation for the next generation of planning in Calgary. Working with, and building on existing policies, the Next Generation Planning System realizes thriving communities that are loved by everyone, by enabling development and investment through clear, accessible plans, strategies and tools that strategically guide and support growth. This program of initiatives provides a coordinated and clear planning system for the whole city, removes outdated and redundant policy and

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creates a more robust toolbox to enable development and investment in Calgary (see Attachment 1 for more information).

The *Guidebook for Great Communities* is a set of policies towards planning a great Calgary. It connects the overall vision for Calgary, as contained in the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan, to implementation at the community level. The *Guidebook* provides consistent, best-practice, community development policies in one document. It works together with a community's local area plan to guide and enable investment in the community. Providing consistent policies for all areas in one *Guidebook* allows each local area plan to focus its policy guidance on the unique aspects of the individual community. This combination of consistency and certainty creates a user-friendly, enabling environment for investment in Calgary's communities. The *Guidebook* incorporates tools from the City-Wide Growth Strategy and Funding and Financing initiatives, and will be the foundation for a renewed Land Use Bylaw. The *Guidebook for Great Communities* aims to:

- Focus on how people experience their community at the street level, rather than on buildings and uses;
- Provide more housing choice and services to residents of all communities;
- Increase certainty in the planning redevelopment process; and
- Connect guiding policy directly with Land Use Bylaw districts.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

To fulfill Council's direction in sections (a) and (b) above (provided at the 2019 November 06 meeting), Administration focused efforts on two main tasks: outreach and testing. Through these efforts, Administration heard that there are some other desired changes to the *Guidebook* that went beyond the issues identified through the testing. While Administration has considered these changes, work was prioritized to ensure changes were made to the *Guidebook* that were absolutely required before the *Guidebook* could be adopted. Future changes and updates will be considered through the sustainment approach outlined below.

Outreach

Council's direction was to focus on outreach and ensure Calgarians understood the vision and intent of the document. Administration worked to achieve this through a range of outreach options. These were designed for different audiences, ranging from those with little to no previous understanding of planning or the *Guidebook*, to those who have been involved with the creation of the *Guidebook* for the past year. The actions allowed stakeholders to participate in community conversations and awareness building regarding not only the *Guidebook*, but also long-term planning objectives. Administration was able to share examples from the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan to help communicate the intent of the *Guidebook* and show how it would be used with future local area plans. For a full list of outreach activities and additional detail please see Attachment 5.

Testing

Since 2019 November, the *Guidebook* policies have been tested through the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. Testing of the *Guidebook* policies has also occurred through an internal review of existing and already approved development applications. In addition,

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Administration held a couple sessions with development industry stakeholders to go through approved applications to show how the *Guidebook* policies would be applied.

Further, Administration has also been collaborating on the Heritage Communities Local Area Plan as well as the Westbrook Local Area Plan. Being part of these pilot plans from the beginning has allowed Administration to build on the findings from the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan and process, modify some of the engagement sessions and begin to have a different conversation with communities about how to achieve desired outcomes.

Revisions

Overall, Administration revised the *Guidebook* based on the learnings and findings from this testing. There are findings that could not be included in the *Guidebook* given the need to do additional engagement to determine appropriate revisions; however, these will be included in the next phase of updates as part of the sustainment process. While the details of these refinements (and potential future amendments) can be found in Attachment 6, the biggest changes include:

- Recommending that chapter 3 of the *Guidebook* be a statutory document only when a local area plan has been created using the urban form categories of the *Guidebook*
- Ensuring alignment between the *Guidebook* and the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (that will lend to the clarity with future local area plans)
- Changes to mapping and colour tones to improve legibility and accessibility
- Clarity in the wording of some policies to ensure they are understood and implementable

Sustainment Approach

The *Guidebook* team will continue to be part of resolving any issues as they arise on development applications and plan creation. In addition, any changes or feedback collected through the Next Generation Planning System work, will be reviewed in a coordinated way amongst internal teams. Upon adoption of the *Guidebook*, Administration will also create a sustainment process comprised of panel members and other invested stakeholders, where issues can both be identified and examined (more information on this process can be found in Attachment 7). This will provide a venue to discuss necessary future changes and to support the transition to the new urban form categories, both internally and externally.

Clear Engagement Process

The Baseline Engagement and Communications Project establishes a predictable engagement and communications approach for planning and development projects (ranging from policy to land use amendments). Attachment 8 provides a summary of this project. This project concluded in 2019 September with the launch of the Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit (refer to calgary.ca/planningoutreach). The toolkit clearly outlines community outreach roles and responsibilities across a variety of planning and development initiatives - from policy plans to development permit applications - and provides a range of tools and resources to support effective community outreach across all file types. Administration will continue to use this approach for future Next Generation Planning System projects, including the next steps of the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw.

This work should help to provide a clear engagement process for statutory planning work going forward, making expectations clear to all stakeholders about when to engage, what type of

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engagement is required, and what the outcomes of the work will be, ultimately fulfilling Council's direction (c) above (provided at the 2019 November 06 meeting).

City's Shift to Larger Local Area Plans

Knowing this is one of Council's directions (section (d) of direction above from 2019 November 18), the *Guidebook* aims to provide a consistent framework to plan complete communities across Calgary's built-out areas. In order to achieve the goals and principles of the *Guidebook*, larger areas to develop local policy plans will provide an efficient way to discuss how multiple communities evolve and change together to create complete communities that all benefit from the shared elements that connect these communities. By providing a common set of policies and urban form categories, the *Guidebook* allows local area plans to be more efficient and focus on truly local issues rather than redefining general planning policies with every plan. Combined with consolidating many communities into a single plan, this allows planning policy to be more up-to-date and responsive to changes in technology, market trends and demographics. The *Guidebook* provides a planning policy system that focuses on how people experience their community. It will be used in all future local area planning projects.

Calgary Planning Commission

Since presenting to Council in 2019 November, Administration met for a closed session workshop with Calgary Planning Commission regarding the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. This meeting showed the Commission how the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan used and implemented the *Guidebook for Great Communities* allowing Commission members to see how the two documents worked together. This included testing interpretation of the two plans using two development scenarios. Commission members provided positive feedback and support regarding how the two documents worked together. Since the workshop was primarily for the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan, all comments and suggestions received by Calgary Planning Commission as well as Administration's follow-up to each item are included in the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan report to Committee (refer to Attachment 3 in report PUD2020-0164).

Update on timing of the Land Use Bylaw Renewal work

A framework for a renewal of the Land Use Bylaw was presented in 2019 November and approved by Council. This framework conceptualizes how new districts and regulations could be integrated into the Land Use Bylaw and outlines the main regulatory changes that could be required. Updated timing is necessary to account for the additional time to complete the *Guidebook*. Attachment 3 provides more details on this updated timeline. Upon approval of both the *Guidebook* and updated timing Administration will scope out the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw in more detail including potential resource and budget needs in Fall 2020.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Since 2019 November, Administration has been part of the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan process, working with the stakeholders to ensure that the *Guidebook* was being tested and reflected the needs of this plan. Administration also provided an update to the panel created in 2019 October to discuss amendments and changes.

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While the *Guidebook* presented in this report represents the culmination of content-specific engagement sessions with various key stakeholders, this work has also been informed by conversations with Council, communities, the development and building industry and other stakeholders over many years. Letters of support from stakeholders can be found in Attachment 9.

Since the adoption of the Municipal Development Plan and the Land Use Bylaw, more than 75 engagement sessions have occurred on various topics. In addition, there have been hundreds of public hearings of Council on planning matters that have helped show communities' perspectives and concerns, as well as Council's direction.

Strategic Alignment

The revised *Guidebook* contributes to advancing the Next Generation Planning System in Calgary and aligns with other initiatives being delivered as part of this program. Initiatives within the program are part of a systematic change to The City's approach to planning, focused on implementing the Municipal Development Plan and advancing the Citizen Priority of A City of Safe & Inspiring Neighbourhoods. The initiatives within this program deliver on five of the Council Priorities for the City Planning & Policy Service Line for 2020: A. Implementing the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan; B. City-Wide Growth Strategy; C. Modernized Community Planning; D. Connecting Planning and Investment; and, E. A Renewed Land Use Bylaw.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Calgary is at a critical moment in time where demographics and household income are changing, along with the environment around us. Further, business needs and trends are also changing, resulting in an opportunity to think about how to shape a city that responds to all Calgarians regardless of age, income, or gender. Attracting new businesses relies on being able to provide for workers and business owners, both in terms of shelter and cultural needs. This body of work will also help to increase development certainty and built form outcomes, reducing time required for applications and fewer site-specific applications for land use redesignations. The *Guidebook* is the first step to a more inclusive and equitable city, and one that retains and attracts residents and businesses.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no impacts to the current and future operating budget as a result of this report; however, to support successful sustainment of this policy and program of work, future additional resources may be required. Administration will evaluate those resourcing requirements once direction has been provided on the *Guidebook* and scoping for next steps has been completed.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no current or future capital budget implications associated with this report. However, to deliver on the next generation of planning, individual planning initiatives may present capital recommendations necessary to support budget investments to support the City-Wide Growth Strategy and/or Main Streets Investment Program. It is anticipated that capital

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recommendations to allow for policy implementation will be prepared for the One Calgary Mid-Cycle budget adjustment in 2020 and for future budget cycles.

Risk Assessment

In addition to the risks identified in 2019 November (PUD2019-1015 - Great Communities for Everyone), there are three risks that Administration would like to detail further in this report. The first risk is the fear of change and that the *Guidebook* will change the fabric of communities. There is a substantial amount of apprehension around how and when change will happen in communities, what growth looks like and what the needs are of Calgarians given the economic challenges being faced. Calgary communities have been evolving for over 100 years and will continue to change to accommodate existing and new Calgarians. It is because of this evolution that The City embarks on the creation of local area plans for multiple communities – in order to ensure that growth happens in a thoughtful way.

In addition, while the *Guidebook* itself does not prescribe densities, intensities, use or height to any parcel of land in the city, there is uncertainty as to what that process will look like with the upcoming local area plans, particularly given that they will encompass more communities than has historically been done. Further, there are outstanding projects that will not be completed prior to the *Guidebook* being brought back for adoption, which has led to questions about how they will be implemented post-*Guidebook* adoption. These projects include work on funding and policy tools for heritage conservation (2020 April) and Established Area Growth and Change Strategy (2020 May), which may result in future amendments to the *Guidebook*. Given this, Administration will work closely on future local area plans to ensure the *Guidebook* is implemented consistently. Further, through the Next Generation Planning System work, increased collaboration and coordination between initiatives will ensure that all communities are approached in a thoughtful manner to discuss change and growth.

The second risk is the perception that the *Guidebook* changes land use districts on the ground, and that there is a perception of how the *Guidebook* relates to the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw and upcoming new districts, despite multiple efforts to provide correct information. While the *Guidebook* itself does not change any existing land use on the ground, it does set up the framework for the delivery of potential new districts. Despite Administration's outreach efforts, a better understanding around community change takes both time and trust. This needs to be built between all parties and must be looked at as a two-way approach. Administration is confident that this trust can be established over time through on-going education and events.

The third risk is that should the *Guidebook* not be adopted by Council, future work plans will be impacted by any delay. Based on the *Guidebook* (if adopted), new districts will be created, starting with those that address the Limited scale Neighbourhood Housing areas, often referred to as low density areas. Without adoption of the *Guidebook*, Administration cannot embark on the Renewal of the Land Use Bylaw, and this could impact the alignment with other Next Generation Planning System projects or deliverables, since policy sets the direction for implementation. Without a clear vision, implementation will remain as is currently done today with existing districts. Administration intends to begin work on scoping out the Renewal of the Land Use Bylaw once the *Guidebook* is approved and will return to Council to provide more certainty around what that next piece of work will look like and mitigate this risk.

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REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

With a fluctuating economy, reluctance towards change, and shifting demographics, it is more important than ever for The City to be proactive, inclusive and bold. While this report presents a significant change to our established practice of planning communities, it accommodates an outcome that is the focus of all of Calgary's communities - *making life better every day* for the people within our city. The *Guidebook for Great Communities*, focuses on the experiences people have in the places they love. Administration recommends adoption of the recommendations in this report – the approval of the *Guidebook* for Great Communities and revised timing for the Renewal of the Land Use Bylaw.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 – Next Generation Planning System Overview
2. Attachment 2 – *Guidebook for Great Communities*
3. Attachment 3 – Renewed Land Use Bylaw Implementation – Revised Timing
4. Attachment 4 – Additional Previous Council Direction
5. Attachment 5 – Summary of Education and Awareness Campaign
6. Attachment 6 – Summary of *Guidebook* Revisions
7. Attachment 7 – Sustainment Process for *Guidebook*
8. Attachment 8 – Baseline Engagement and Communication Project Summary
9. Attachment 9 – Letters of Support