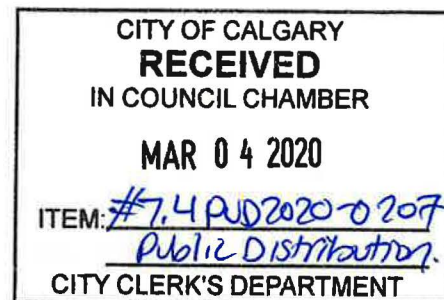




Calgary Climate Hub Submission *Great Communities Guidebook*



We are pleased that a start has been made on creating a *Guidebook* that will protect and revitalize great communities. Much more needs to be done.

Four problems with the *Guidebook* in its current form are:

- The *Guidebook* is **almost exclusively discretionary**. Somewhat better than what has been produced in the past, it does not prescribe what needs to be done.
- The *Guidebook* **does not set targets** to ensure success.
- The *Guidebook* **does not meaningfully address the climate crisis** and how community development can contribute to solutions.
- The **high-level “Next Generation” documents** (MDP, CTP, *Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy*) are **under review or not completed**.

We have identified a set of recommendations that will help resolve those problems. Several of the more important ones are:

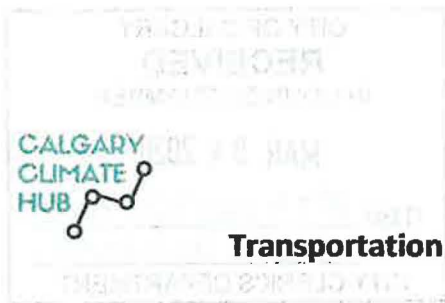
Goals

A 9th goal needs to be added:

Enable greenhouse gas emission reduction to a level compatible with a 1.5°C of global average temperature increase.

Natural Infrastructure

- **Set a target for what “natural areas should do” in terms of carbon sequestration and climate resilience.**
- **For all new developments going forward and for City properties, climate resilient landscaping should be a requirement.**



Development and redevelopment must support climate-friendly and active transportation to ensure that by 2025 the Primary Transit Network, the *Cycling Strategy*, *StepForward*, the *Safer Mobility Plan*, and the 5A Network are completed.

Development

The *Guidebook* does not identify the essential roles the City of Calgary must play in creating great communities – beyond the writing of plans and responding to development applications. For example, on p. 19, point “a” should be change to:

Direct **development** to Activity Centres, Main Streets, and transit-oriented development areas by pro-active City-led initiatives for land swaps, land consolidation, mutually advantageous developer coordination, financial incentives and other methods that maintain a community’s character while promoting population stability and growth that ensures the services and amenities a community needs.

The *Guidebook* does not include a program that clearly identifies the needs each community has to remain or become the “great communities” envisioned by the *Guidebook*.

The City should commit to initiating and completing by Q2 2021, a “complete community survey” to determine the advantages that need to be protected and the disadvantages that need to be eliminated in each community.

Financial Measures

The *Guidebook* does commit to reviewing funding and financing tools. That review, though, must be comprehensive and effective.

On p. 116, add

This review, to be completed by Q4 2020, will include all potential financial measures including, but not limited to reallocation of current budgets, curb space management, road pricing, pricing for flood protection works, and progressive pricing for resource use such as energy and water. The financial measures deemed



effective and feasible will be implemented to ensure that all City services are equitably priced and the funds that are secured are used to implement climate, transportation, and community development actions that benefit developed areas whether through local area plans or other means.

Connections to Other Policies

Finalization of the *Guidebook* should wait until revisions to the MDP/CTP are completed and the *Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy* is in place.

Full List of Recommendations

A 9th goal needs to be added:

Enable greenhouse gas emission reduction to a level compatible with a 1.5°C of global average temperature increase.

Parks Civic and Recreation Local (p. 56)

This category must include policies for wildlife habitat. Parks and recreation sites act as important habitat, stopover points for birds, and wildlife corridors. This is especially important in the downtown.

Natural Areas Urban Form (p. 57)

It is positive that the introduction to this section cites the benefits of natural areas “including improving air quality, mitigating climate change, managing and filtering water, supporting biodiversity and enhancing resilience.” Strengthening the category requires:

- **Set a target for what “natural areas should do” in terms of carbon sequestration and climate resilience.**
- **For all new developments going forward and for City properties, climate resilient landscaping should be a requirement.**
- **A target should be established for the minimum % of land area devoted to natural areas per community**

Section 3.14 Revisions

- **Add to “h” as the first point**
 - i. **prioritize climate mitigation through protection of natural habitat and services**
- **Add to “h.iv”**
 - **iv. add additional ... festival activities where appropriate and where such services and events would not impact natural habitat**
- **Add to “h.v”**
 - v. **provide public art or cultural spaces where appropriate and where such spaces would not impact natural habitat**

- The *Guidebook* needs to address wetlands and establish a target for increasing the amount of wetlands in communities. Add a new section “i”
- i. Ensure that the requirements of the Wetland Conservation Plan are met or exceeded

Landscape Design (p. 101)

If the City's tree canopy policy is to have any impact it needs to both

- a) specify what counts as contributing toward a canopy (providing significant shade over sidewalks and streets) including which trees do and which do not count as contributing toward the canopy, and
- b) specify who is responsible for ensuring the creation of the tree canopy.

As it stands, the tree canopy policy is a nice aspirational statement with no teeth.

Active Transportation

p. 109, Pedestrians (Section 3.16)

- The *Guidebook* still relegates pedestrian infrastructure to sidewalks. While wider sidewalks are nice, having direct routes for pedestrians that do not piggyback on roads is important moving forward, especially to promote active transportation (which requires direct routes) in order to mitigate climate change.

p. 110, Cycling (Section 3.17)

- Design guidelines are given for bike signals, cycle track direction, use levels, storage etc., but no mention of reducing private vehicle infrastructure in order to better accommodate cycle traffic and how to do this (installing cul-de-tracs, or de-paving for greenways, for example).

Connections to Other Policies

The *Guidebook* mentions its connection to the MDP, but not the *Climate Resilience Strategy*, *Resilient Calgary Strategy*, *CalgaryEATS*, and the CTP.

The MDP and CTP are being revised and, based on an initial review of the revisions being proposed, the *Guidebook* already appears to be out-of-date. The *Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy* has not been completed.



Finalization of the *Guidebook* should wait until revisions to the MDP/CTP are completed and the *Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy* is in place.

The *Guidebook* must have policies that are specific and prescriptive in terms of how community development will meet the targets in those documents. For example, how will the *Guidebook* achieve targets for future modal split.

The *Guidebook* should establish or be designed to meet standards for such things as building efficiency, green roofs, passive heating, water consumption, stormwater, tree canopy, albedo effect, road width, and solar panel integration

Sustainable Development Policies

The *Guidebook* needs climate-friendly changes to section 3.13 to

- Tie development to specific goals and timelines

Sections “a” through “c” need to be combined and revised to read:

- a. All developments are encouraged to and, after 2022, will incorporate sustainable building and infrastructure features to:
 - i. capture solar energy, include solar energy equipment on new buildings or major additions, or in other ways reduce total energy use and greenhouse gas emissions to net zero within the Calgary footprint;
 - ii. reduce water consumption by setting water consumption targets so that the City’s water licences will be sufficient to meet peak demand in 2036 and daily demand in 2046;
 - iii. use innovative wastewater technologies, stormwater quantity management, water collection, filtering and reuse, or in other ways avoid further decreases in the water quality of the Bow River, Elbow River, and Nose Creek;
 - iv. support climate-friendly and active transportation to ensure that by 2025 the Primary Transit Network, the *Cycling Strategy*, *StepForward*, the *Safer Mobility Plan*, and the 5A Network are completed,

In section 3.13.d & e, the *Guidebook* has provided the assertive type of climate-friendly policy that will open the door for implementing large scale district energy or district heating projects.

What are now points “d” and “e” should be combined and revised to make sure that opportunities for renewable or low-carbon technologies are fully identified, assessed, and, where beneficial, implemented.

- b. Each local area plan will identify opportunities for renewable or low-carbon energy technologies within an area.
 - i. Opportunities not requiring a feasibility study will be implemented.
 - ii. If a feasibility study is required to be completed, the following studies shall be completed in accordance with a scope and terms of reference provided by The City:
 - Renewable and District Energy Feasibility Screening Assessments for sites greater than 1.0 hectare; or,
 - Technology Feasibility Assessments for proposed buildings more than 3,000 square metres.
 - iii. Where a feasibility study or assessment of renewable or low-carbon energy technologies exhibits net positive or neutral economic and environmental benefits, the technologies will be incorporated into the development.

Opportunities for large scale redevelopment on brownfield sites are rare (North Hill Shopping Mall, Midfield Trailer Park site) and should require special parameters and stipulations to exploit the amazing opportunity they represent in terms of supporting innovative urban form (see redevelopment of the Western Harbour in Malmo, Sweden; SE False Creek in Vancouver).

Design of Communities

The *Guidebook* has reinforced good practice in the physical design of communities.

The *Guidebook* is missing key elements:

- Identifying the essential roles the City of Calgary must play in creating great communities – beyond the writing of plans and responding to development applications.

This is particularly important in terms of Chapter 4 where the City should be using policy tools to encourage or direct development.

- Committing to a program that clearly identifies the needs each community has to remain or become the “great communities envisioned by the *Guidebook*.”
- Developing a full and equitable toolbox of effective and efficient financial instruments for growth and change. \$30 million to fund public realm improvements is a positive step forward. More needs to be done.

The following changes should be made:

- p. 19: Direct development to Activity Centres, Main Streets, and transit-oriented development areas by pro-active City-led initiatives for land swaps, land consolidation,

mutually advantageous developer coordination, financial incentives and other methods that maintain a community's character while promoting population stability and growth that ensures the services and amenities a community needs.

Direct development to locations that optimize public infrastructure, facilities and investment and private infrastructure and facilities that complement and support the City's objectives.

- p. 70: For those communities adjacent to regional malls or commercial centres, put top priority on completing Comprehensive Development Sites.
- pp. 3 & 18-19: Commit to initiating and completing by Q2 2021, a "complete community survey" to determine the advantages that need to be protected and the disadvantages that need to be eliminated in each community. This will ensure that the conversations "about the needs and wants of current and future residents, businesses and visitors begin from a solid foundation.
- p. 116: Change 3rd paragraph to

The City is reviewing funding and financing tools that will support evolution and change in our communities with the objective of creating a long-term, sustainable financial policy. This review, to be completed by Q4 2020, will include all potential financial measures including, but not limited to reallocation of current budgets, curb space management, road pricing, pricing for flood protection works, and progressive pricing for resource use such as energy and water and wastewater management. The financial measures deemed effective and feasible will be implemented to ensure that all City services are equitably priced and the funds that are secured are used to implement climate, transportation, and community development actions that benefit developed areas whether through local area plans or other means.

- (p. 75) When determining the feasibility of minimizing driveway width, the City must ensure that
 - The priority for walking is maintained.
 - The parking, road, and laneway configurations are designed to maximize safety and vehicle access to the driveway.
- Traffic control is a top priority for communities. The options range from speed bumps to reduced speed limits to improved signal management to more effective use of traffic circles. The *Guidebook* does not pay enough attention to how those measures can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while alleviating the concerns of communities.

Heritage Resources (p. 103)

Add a second paragraph:

Heritage buildings can be the most sustainable option even if they are less efficient in terms of internal energy use because of the emissions created during demolition and construction. Heritage buildings and streetscapes were also built with pedestrians and transit in mind and encourage these low-carbon forms of transportation. Heritage resources will be maintained and, where needed, retrofitted or rehabilitated unless a sound and compelling case can be made that doing so is less desirable in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, community character, low-carbon mobility, and streetscape quality.

Revise "3.11.b."

b. Encourage property owners to designate inventory properties as Municipal Historic Resources by providing access to grants and tax benefits to preserve the resource and ensure that any additional development will maintain the context and value of the resource.