

Stakeholder Letters

Crescent Heights Village Business Improvement Area

Crescent Heights Village BIA

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Troy Gonzalez, File Manager
Senior Planner Community Planning (North Team)
The City of Calgary

Emailed to: troy.gonzalez@calgary.ca

June 19, 2020

RE: North Hill Communities Local Area Plan Letter of Support, Request for Elaboration

Dear Troy:

Apologies for sending this letter so late in the process. I am brand new to the job and, as you know, have been working hard on the Green Line file, which passed on Monday, freeing me up to work on some other great projects - like the North Hill Communities LAP!

Having reviewed the proposed North Hill Communities Local Area Plan for April 2020, The Crescent Heights Village BIA offers its support for the plan as a great beginning.

With a goal of creating vibrancy, walkability and character along Centre St. N, our BIA strongly supports any initiative that builds density, encourages growth and will bring people to work, live and play in North Hill Communities. Further, we welcome the provision of housing for a diverse population, the integration of mobility networks allowing people of all ages and abilities safe and accessible ways to get around, and high-quality, people-focused design.

There is a good emphasis in the document on active frontages, high-quality building finishes, and pedestrian safety and comfort on Main Streets which will help to create a more walkable environment on Centre Street.

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Given this is the first plan of its kind for the City and will set the precedent for future Local Area Plans, we have identified a number of gaps that, if included, would better allow us to interpret and help realize the plan along Centre St. N. and, potentially other areas.

These include:

- Expanded historical and character context and maps that include indigenous and multicultural history
- An elaborated parking policy/plan to support commercial activity along Centre St. N.
- Revisions resulting from the confirmation of the Green Line LRT alignment
- Clear and specific guidelines for Main Streets to create an attractive, fine-grain and animated pedestrian-friendly street frontages that encourage and support active, safe, engaging and healthy street life and events for all ages. These might include:
 - **Uses:** Incorporate at-grade active outdoor dining and retail uses to activate buildings. With large-format retail development, when located at grade, line this with smaller shops to reduce its building bulk, increase fine grain in its street frontage and prevent blank wall frontages.
 - **Transparency:** Ensure a high degree of transparency at street-level to provide views into internal uses. Place doors and windows and street-level uses to provide lines of sight for natural surveillance of the street. Use transparent and visually light canopies to allow for passive surveillance of the street from upper building levels.
 - **Materials:** Use varying design details, different wall surface treatments and modulations as well as different high-quality materials to create streetwall facades that contribute positively to pedestrian experience of the streetscape. Use contrasting and saturated colours to provide visual vibrancy in winter.
 - **Sun:** Site and shape buildings to preserve and optimize sunlight access. Orient and design buildings to minimize shadow impact on streets. Step back street walls by a minimum of 2.5m at the upper levels of buildings to allow sunlight access to sidewalks.
 - **Weather Protection:** Provide transparent canopies along building frontages whenever possible to shelter pedestrians from the weather.
 - **Lighting:** Encourage seasonal, decorative and experiential lighting installations. Provide lighting for safety on buildings to illuminate sidewalks, entrances, pedestrian pathways and amenities.
 - **Sidewalks:** To ensure contiguous public realm and sidewalks, avoid locating vehicle access on the Main Street. Provide all service and parking access through service lanes in all new developments.

- **Entrances:** Orient all primary lobby entrances and active ground floor uses towards the main street. Provide a fine-grain rhythm of shop-fronts (20.0 m spacing) building entrances to suit the surrounding use intensity, at-grade. Locate transparent canopies at primary building entries to both protect users and define entries. Provide a seamless grade transition between shops and the sidewalk.
- **Street wall:** Develop continuous street wall definition with street walls that have articulation and fine grain quality frontages to generate active and attractive streets and open spaces. Minimize building setbacks to achieve street wall consistency. Design buildings to form a consistent and strong edge to streets.

We thank the project team for the development of this precedent-setting plan and very much look forward to working with you to continue its development and implementation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Camie Leard', written in a cursive style.

Camie Leard, Executive Director

Crescent Heights Village BIA

Cc: Drug Farrell, Councillor, Ward 7
Dale Calkins, Senior Policy & Planning Advisor, Ward 7 Councillor's Office

Capitol Hill Community Association

Mr. Troy Gonzalez
Senior Planner | Community Planning
Planning & Development
City of Calgary



June 25, 2020

Re: North Hill Communities Local Area Plan

Thank you for allowing the Capitol Hill Community Association (CHCA) to participate in the North Hill Communities Working Group over the last several months and for accepting our informal feedback and recommendations at those working sessions. Contained in this letter, please find our formal comments on the proposed North Hill Communities Local Area Plan that will go before Calgary City Council for approval in the near future.

1. Building Scale

In reviewing Map 4: Building Scale, we feel that allowing builds up to six stories along 20th Avenue NW, specifically from 14th Street to 18th Street, is not appropriate. We understand that for the purposes of this project that it was desirable to treat 20th Avenue consistently throughout the plan area but each community and block of 20th Avenue has its own unique aspects. Given that the Capitol Hill portion of the North Hill Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) was only just recently revised and approved by City Council in 2016, we have spent considerable time contemplating the vision for 20th Avenue in Capitol Hill and feel a blanket six story allowance is not necessary. As per our ARP, we envisioned buildings of this scale being more appropriate along 16th Avenue, portions of 17th Avenue and clustered along 14th Street and 10th Street. If six story builds are deemed appropriate on 20th Avenue then we would request they be given mixed use zoning as the amenities in our community will need to keep pace with the added density.

2. Changes to Land Use Bylaw

The Board of Directors, the Planning & Development committee and the community residents of Capitol Hill have generally all been very welcoming of increased density over the last several years when it's been done thoughtfully. We have already seen numerous corner lots on the interior of our community redeveloped with higher density forms such as rowhouses, so we don't take issue with allowing a diverse range of building forms under the Neighbourhood Housing Local category (Section 2.2 – Urban Form Category). We do however have some hesitation about accepting a significant change to the zoning of essentially our entire community without knowing exactly what the land use bylaw will entail. We understand that a revision to the Calgary Land Use Bylaw is due in the next few years and we trust that great care will be taken to ensure a smooth transition for communities like Capitol Hill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cam Collingwood
Director, Planning & Development
Capitol Hill Community Association