

Guidebook for Great Communities

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development:

1. Postpone this report to the 2021 February 3 Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development for further discussion, and,
2. Recommend at the 2021 February 3 Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development, that Council hold a Public Hearing at the 2021 March 22 Combined Meeting of Council and give three readings to the proposed bylaw, the proposed Guidebook for Great Communities (Attachment 3).

HIGHLIGHTS

- Administration has revised the Guidebook for Great Communities in response to feedback and is bringing it forward for adoption.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? - The Guidebook implements the vision and goals of the Municipal Development Plan as we grow to 2 million people, by supporting safe and inspiring communities for our citizens and our economic recovery.
- Why does it matter? - This approach allows communities in Calgary to offer current and future citizens housing choices, closer amenities and services, transportation options, supporting community evolution, economic vitality, inclusivity and affordability. The Guidebook only applies to communities that participate in a local area planning process.
- Supporting Economic Recovery and a Thriving Economy – When we plan for the needs of Calgarians, we’re growing our communities to be more vibrant and prosperous places. Calgary remains an attractive destination for future development, investment and talent.
- Supporting Environmental Responsibility - The Guidebook attracts re-investment in our communities and drives development in key areas that lead to living and mobility patterns that reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHGs) emissions. It leverages Calgary’s existing infrastructure investment and aligns with the Climate Resilience Strategy.
- Supporting Social Equity and Inclusion - Calgary’s communities will offer a range of housing options and nearby services and amenities, so they meet the needs of everyone, regardless of income, ability, cultural background, age, or stage of life.
- Supporting consistency and certainty - Enabling communities to identify growth areas creates consistency and certainty for both the community and developers.
- The Guidebook was referred to Administration in 2020 July 27 (PUD2020-0721 Guidebook for Great Communities Referral for Additional Direction) to accommodate the inclusion of minor policies and an update to the Urban Form Classification system.
- Strategic Alignment to Council’s Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1

DISCUSSION

The Guidebook is part of the Next Generation Planning Program, a group of interconnected planning initiatives, working to meet the goals of the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary

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Transportation Plan and successfully planning for 2 million people. The Guidebook is an implementable policy towards planning a great Calgary (see Attachment 2 for more details).

Since July, Administration has been working to re-design the categories within the Guidebook. Administration has worked with targeted stakeholders including citizens, communities, planners, developers, and builders to get their feedback. Administration has tested the draft categories with North Hill Communities Local Area Plan and other in-flight local area plans. The final draft Guidebook is included as Attachment 3. The report focuses on five topics for Council's consideration – a Thriving Economy, Climate, Social Equity, Modernization and Resilience.

Economic Recovery and a Thriving Economy

Calgary in the New Economy, our city's economic strategy, features *place* and *talent* as two of its four pillars. *Place* supports how well we attract new *talent* and businesses and being a leading *destination* for *talent* is critical to Calgary's economic prosperity. By starting with the needs of the citizens who live here now, and in the future, our communities will grow to be more vibrant and prosperous places. This ensures Calgary remains one of the most livable places in the world. Communities that offer more value, housing choice, transportation options, amenities, and services keep Calgary as an attractive destination for investment and future talent. The Guidebook will plan our city in a way that can give us a competitive advantage over other cities.

Climate Change

Energy use in buildings accounts for approximately two thirds of Calgary's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and consumption of transportation fuels accounts for approximately one third. We know that our built form and how we move, areas where Council has regulatory influence, are key to meeting Calgary's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals. The Guidebook, together with local area plans, contains policy that will align with our Climate Resilience Strategy. Administration will explore the possibility of incorporating future community-scale climate change tools and policy that can reduce climate-related risks, once they are completed. The Guidebook will support Calgary's future as a green and healthy city.

Social Equity and Inclusion

Communities with more housing options are more inclusive to those citizens of a variety of household types; for example, multi-generational families, non-related families and household members, single-parent families, two-parent, couples without children, and citizens living on their own. When it comes to planning equitable communities, it starts with planning to have a range of housing options and nearby services and amenities. This approach will ensure all Calgarians can live in a community that best serves their needs, regardless of age, income, gender, race or stage of life. The Guidebook will support Calgary as a city with safe and inspiring neighbourhoods.

Modernizing and Improving – understandability, predictability, timeliness

A modern and efficient approach to planning that focuses on consistency, predictability and continuous improvement ensures that builders and developers realize their developments, citizens have plans and developments that reflect their community's vision for the future, and The City is efficient and effective in planning decisions. The Guidebook streamlines the local area planning process with easy-to-understand urban form categories and guiding policy. The Guidebook sets up the renewal of the Land Use Bylaw that will improve and modernize land use districts, uses and rules. The Guidebook is a key step toward modernizing and improving of our approach to planning ensuring Calgary remains a well-run city.

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Resilience

To keep Calgary and its communities strong, we must be prepared for stresses and shocks. By focusing on our future, our communities become more resilient through a strong economy, inclusive and equitable communities, coordinated and integrated natural environmental assets, and infrastructure investment that is strategic, coordinated and future focused. The Guidebook helps to implement the actions of *Resilient Calgary*, The City's resiliency strategy, by focusing on citizens who live here now and, in the future, and our built and natural environment to ensure Calgary's communities remain vibrant and resilient.

Key Refinements

Administration has augmented policy to address Climate Change, Heritage, and Single Detached Dwelling areas, aligning with the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. Details can be found in Attachment 4. Policy to address Council direction on Single Detached Dwelling areas, including all options considered, can be found in Attachment 5. Administration has also re-designed the categories within the Guidebook. Details on the new categories can be found in Attachment 6.

Sustainment Committee

Through the creation of the Guidebook, stakeholders expressed the importance of ensuring the document responds to trends and that any issues with policies would be dealt with in a timely and proactive manner. Sustainment of the Guidebook will occur through a Sustainment Committee created after the approval of the Guidebook. See Attachment 7 for more details.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Administration hosted internal and external engagements with stakeholders to gather feedback on two drafts of the urban form categories. Some stakeholders support the Guidebook and other stakeholders have concerns including a lack of understanding about how the Guidebook will impact them. These concerns can be addressed through ongoing and already planned outreach and education, ongoing local area plan processes, and sustainment and monitoring. The Guidebook will be a living document, and as such, updates and course corrections to the Guidebook will be discovered through these mechanisms and other Next Generation Planning projects. More information on the engagement process can be found in Attachment 8.

Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) workshop

On 2020 October 1, Administration conducted a closed session workshop with members of Calgary Planning Commission. Overall, the workshop was productive, receiving mainly positive comments regarding the streamlined approach taken towards the categories. Key themes focused on the urban form categories being more detailed and easier to understand, as well as positive responses on the reduction in the amount of policy modifiers. Concerns raised have been addressed in the proposed Guidebook. More details can be found in Attachment 9.

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IMPLICATIONS

Social

The Guidebook helps to plan equitable communities that make it easier for citizens to live and grow in any community, regardless of stage of life, income, cultural background or age.

Environmental

Removing barriers and encouraging redevelopment in Calgary's oldest communities makes efficient use of existing infrastructure and brings people closer services and amenities in the Centre City and established communities, resulting in reduced GHG emissions.

Economic

Calgary's future success relies on placemaking that attracts investment and talent. The Guidebook sets policies to ensure Calgary's communities remain attractive and vibrant. Moving forward, we need our communities to reflect our citizens: diverse and inclusive to different cultures, ages and financial means. When our communities are attractive, diverse and vibrant, so is Calgary.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

RISK

The Guidebook sets the path for all future local area plans, ensuring a consistent and flexible approach for the evolution of Calgary's built-out areas. Without the Guidebook, local area plans will revert to using the Council approved Developed Areas Guidebook, which does not respond to several concerns raised by Council and stakeholders. The Developed Areas Guidebook uses a dated planning approach without some of the policies needed to ensure equity for all Calgarians. Not approving the Guidebook would also signal to many investors that it is difficult to do business in Calgary and could have impacts on the entire Next Generation Planning Program. This could impact the ability for Calgary to remain a choice for business investment, economic recovery, and could add to the number of Calgarians leaving for other locations. More information on the background discussion and risks can be found in Attachment 10.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Previous Council Direction
2. Next Generation Planning System Overview
3. The Guidebook for Great Communities
4. Details on Minor Amendments
5. Low Density Residential – Alternative Options
6. Urban Form Classification System Details
7. Technical Sustainment Committee
8. Engagement Summary
9. Calgary Planning Commission Summary
10. Background Discussions and Risks
11. **Public Submissions to Committee**

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Department Circulation

General Manager	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Stuart Dalglish	Planning & Development	Approve