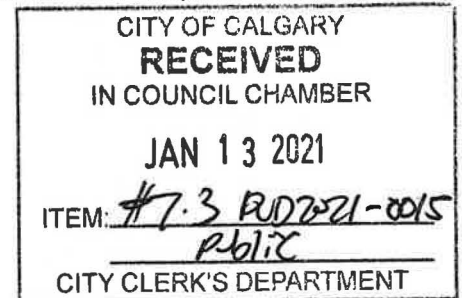


December 30, 2020

Re: **File Number PUD2021-0015; January 13th**
Guidebook for Great Communities; Letter of Support



I am writing this letter in support of the amended Guidebook for Great Communities.

As a citizen, member of an established neighborhood, and individual with professional experience in the development industry, I believe this version of the Guidebook achieves its intent. **The Guidebook provides a comprehensive and inclusive approach to ensuring future developments align with the communities' long-term vision of themselves.**

I am a member of the Heritage Communities Local Area Planning Group. Our group ranged in demographic, professional background, affiliation to the subject communities, and included business owners, community members and development representatives. We worked through the first stages of planning our community and started at the end of 2019. Throughout the process, our group found the framework workable, applicable and enjoyed talking about the future of the Heritage Communities. At no point were there comments regarding lack of options or appropriate development when we planned our future community.

Our group has not been able to meet since the spring given the Guidebook's delays. We have lost momentum and our group's shared history and process is at risk of being lost if there are further delays.

While waiting for the Heritage Communities Group work to proceed, I participated in the supplementary Guidebook Focus Group to provide feedback on improved Urban Form Categories. The group again included a wide range of interests – personal and professional. Discussions were comprehensive and lively on how to improve the Guidebook Urban Form Categories. I am happy to see the results of the engagement and feel **the recent revisions made improvements to usability, clarified where there was confusion and addressed community members concerns over residential categories.**

Delaying this framework any longer will result in a loss of resources, hours spent to date by City staff, community members and industry on a project that is complete. Without approving this framework our communities have no unified plan to direct changes as development requests (permits) are submitted. Personally, as someone who participated in the Local Area Plan and Guidebook Engagement focus groups it is disheartening to think that all of our work may be for nothing.

Following are the key reasons I believe the Guidebook needs to be approved in its current, revised form:

- **The Guidebook has been tested through three concurrent Local Area Planning Groups.** Concerns raised in these groups have been addressed and integrated into the revised Guidebook.
- **Engagement has been extensive** – including additional focus group engagement sessions on revised sections. – always with a mix of citizens, industry representation, and professional planners. We need to trust this work and engagement process and respect the professionals who have contributed to the framework.
- **Communities each self-determine how the framework is applied** through Community Local Area Plans. This is not a top-down direction of development from the City. Using the local area plan approach, as in the case of the Heritage Communities Local Area Plan, North Hill and Westbrook, a mix of community members, planners, business owners and other interested in that community each contribute to the long-term vision. Each of these Local Area Plans include fulsome

engagement processes. Any fear of development being forced into an area inappropriately is addressed through the rigorous process of engagement, consultation and follow-up engagement.

- **The majority of delays have been due to misinformation** – there is a website full of incorrect information, fear mongering and even Councillor staff who are feeding misinformation about what the framework is, how it's applied and how development works. Further delays and changes to the policies are catering to misinformation rather than improving the framework. **Public policy makers should not be forced to make bad policy due to misinformation.** As noted above, engagement has been extensive and inclusive. We cannot waste further resources trying to correct misinformation rather than improving policy. We are spinning our professional planning and communicator's resources in circles as they attempt to please the political jockeying and misinformation.
- **The framework improves un-coordinated policies that overlap creating a one clear place to define development.** Currently, whether you are a homeowner, future homeowner, business owner etc., the ability for you to understand what you can and cannot do with your property can be challenging. We need to remember that the Guidebook applies to all levels of development and that all of us benefit from having one clear set of documents to define our options.
- **Development does not happen without a market – providing options does not equate to certain build out. Updated Residential Urban Form Category supports options.** At the end of the day, the Guidebook provides a framework, with Local Area Plans determining where the Urban Forms apply in the community. Regardless of what is "planned", the change will not happen without a private market desire to make the change happen. We need to hope for a City with more density, more vibrancy, and more choice rather than sprawl. Many outspoken voices highlight fears about densification disregarding the fact that development matches the market demand, not that development happens everywhere that it can. The updated Guidebook includes a good compromise on residential urban form to allow more people to live at a residence through secondary suites or carriage homes, while supporting the feel of single family homes that some are concerned about preserving. If our City is to be resilient for years to come, and support options, and higher density, this is the least we can do.

Thank you for taking the time to review my reasons to support the Guidebook. I would like to thank the hard work of the planning and communications teams at the City of Calgary for all of their work in the past year and a half on the Heritage Communities Area Plan and hope we can continue to progress our vision for our community as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Jacqueline Grabowski

January 5, 2021

Re: Guidebook for Great Communities, Statement of Support

To read aloud at the January 13, 2021 meeting of the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Planning and Urban Development (PUD).

Good morning, my name is Teresa Tousignant. I am speaking today in support of the Guidebook for Great Communities and asking that the committee move forward with recommending the Guidebook to the Combined Meeting of Council at your next meeting, and to do what you are able to get this document formalized and available for use as soon as possible for the Local Area Planning process.

I serve as the chair of the Planning Committee for the Haysboro Community Association and am the Haysboro delegate to the 34-member working group for the Heritage Communities Local Area Plan.

The Heritage LAP is the second of three multi-community plans, in various stages of completion, that are in limbo because of delays finalizing the Guidebook for Great Communities. Thousands of hours of work by community volunteers and paid City of Calgary professionals have been put into the nearly completed North Hills plan, the partially drafted Heritage plan, and the early stages of the Westbrook plan. City planning staff have done an amazing job collecting, and collating, and applying the learnings from a robust and detailed public engagement process. The resulting multi-community plans will document neighborhood-specific understanding of where development and redevelopment is well suited, and where greater density can be sensitively incorporated.

All of our work on these plans, however, and the momentum of this important planning process, is at risk because of the fact that the Guidebook for Great Communities has not been finalized and approved by Council.

Why has the Guidebook not been approved? It is a technical reference document incorporating planning techniques and policy that represent the best of our current knowledge about how to sensitively guide growth, re-development, and densification. The initial feedback asking for simplification and clarification of the urban form categories has been addressed by the planners and is reflected in the draft released on January 4. There is also, however, an ongoing effort to repeatedly delay this document by some members of the public who put themselves forward as speaking on behalf of dozens of Community Associations, but refuse us the courtesy of stating their names. It is my perception that this effort to indefinitely delay the Guidebook is based on a fear that densification will negatively impact the quality of life in neighborhoods dominated by single family homes, and possibly a misunderstanding that our current planning and development processes somehow protects us from having a large or ugly building put in next to us.

I live in one of the early suburbs of Calgary. I like my neighborhood, which is primarily made up of single-family homes. I like living in a single-family home, because as a parent of young children, I like having a yard to kick them out into. But I am also keenly aware of how little I can get to on foot. When my husband and I were looking to buy a house, we took a map and drew walking circles around train stations, elementary schools, and grocery stores, and looked for any place you could have all three

intersect. It is extremely rare. It reflects a lack of basic human-scale functionality in Calgary's urban layout that can only be addressed by greater density.

While Calgary as a whole has grown dramatically in both population and footprint, those of us who live in middle-aged suburbs are currently seeing the results of having our local population dwindle after peaking in the 70's. We have a school in danger of closing due to low enrollment. We have small businesses struggling to survive (even before COVID). We have lost recreation facilities to newer communities further out.

We need sensitively guided redevelopment and additional people to provide the socioeconomic boost that can keep our neighborhoods functional and avoid a hollowing out of the middle ring of neighborhoods. Furthermore, we need a diversification of housing types to allow us greater choice and the ability to stay near our friends and with our community as we move through the stages of life.

Our local area plan can help this re-development happen in a way that respects the individual feel and spirit of our neighborhood. I can tell you that during the urban form and scale mapping exercises we did as part of the working group, at no point did someone plunk down a giant tower in the middle of a bunch of single-family homes. Those areas were naturally respected as reasonably cohesive clusters, and development goals were focused along collector roads and major intersections, which makes good sense. The Local Area Plans built on the framework of the Guidebook for Great Communities will offer a greater 'protection' for groupings of single-family homes than exists under our current system.

Members of the committee, please do not allow fearmongering and a misinformation campaign to prevent you from listening to the recommendations of your professional planners and moving forward with the Guidebook for Great Communities. Thank you for your time and your good judgement in this matter.

Teresa Tousignant

104 Chinook Drive SW

Calgary, AB T2V 2P9

Ward 11



Public Submission

City Clerk's Office

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Personal information provided in submissions relating to matters before Council or Council Committees is collected under the authority of Bylaw 35M2017 and Section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act of Alberta, and/or the Municipal Government Act (MGA) Section 230 and 636, for the purpose of receiving public participation in municipal decision-making. Your name and comments will be made publicly available in the Council agenda. If you have questions regarding the collection and use of your personal information, please contact City Clerk's Legislative Coordinator at 403-268-5861, or City Clerk's Office, 700 Macleod Trail S.E., P.O. Box 2100, Postal Station 'M' 8007, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2M5.

- I have read and understand that my name and comments will be made publicly available in the Council agenda. My email address will not be included in the public record.

First name (required)

Sonja

Last name (required)

Johnson

What do you want to do?
(required)

Request to speak, Submit a comment

Public hearing item (required -
max 75 characters)

SPC of PUD2021-0015 Letter of Support for Guidebook for Great Communities

Date of meeting

Jan 13, 2021

Comments - please refrain from
providing personal information in
this field (maximum 2500
characters)

I, Sonja Johnson, am submitting a letter of support for the Guidebook for Great Communities.

ISC:

1/1

Unrestricted

Jan 11, 2021

11:51:38 AM

January 7, 2021

Re: File Number PUD2021-0015

Letter of Support for the Guidebook for Great Communities

I am writing this letter in **support** of the amended, Guidebook for Great Communities. I am asking that the committee move forward with recommending the Guidebook to the Combined Meeting of Council and ensure that this document is formalized and available for use as soon as possible for the LAP process.

As member of an established community in the City of Calgary, I strongly believe that the Guidebook not only achieves the intent for which it was written, but the principles and guidelines it lays out are essential for the future success of the City. It DOES NOT allow “free range” density but in fact encourages communities to think about where density makes the most sense. Like most living things, cities need to adapt and change or else they die. The Guidebook is an inclusive tool that guides communities through the planning process and ensures that these communities are vibrant and liveable for the current residents as well as for future generations.

I served as chair of the Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge Community Association Planning Committee until May 2020 (5 years). I am also the delegate to the Working Group for the Heritage Communities Local Area Plan and I participated in the Guidebook Focus Group, which helped to improve the Urban Form Classifications, as requested by Council in July 2020.

I, and many, many others, have given countless hours to both projects. The momentum we had during the working group sessions is lost and if there are further delays, the entire process may be lost – meaning that the many thousands of hours that volunteers have given will be lost as well. If the Guidebook for Great Communities is not finalized and approved by Council, the LAP process that will bring Calgary communities into the future is in jeopardy.

The City of Calgary Planning staff have done an amazing job guiding the working groups through the planning process. Their professionalism and knowledge helped the groups create neighborhood specific plans that took into consideration the working group’s local knowledge. This allowed community members to give input into the type of development needed and where it should go. It allowed the working groups to give feedback on where greater density could be sensitively incorporated within communities. I have been taking my Certificate of Urban Design from Simon Fraser University concurrently with this project. I can honestly say that best practices from around the world are being reflected in our LAP and this is due to the principles found in the Guidebook.

Given the usefulness of the Guidebook to date and given that the Guidebook is a key component to many other plans, **why has the Guidebook still not been approved by Council?**

As stated in the in the introduction to the Guidebook, the Guidebook:

- provides **direction** on how to create great communities and builds on the MDP – which is based on best practices from around the world.
- considers how communities **adapt and evolve** over time – a necessity if we want to attract new businesses and citizens to our city.
- helps communities remain vibrant and prosperous over **the LONG TERM** for **ALL** Calgarians – essential to make Calgary a great place for a diverse population to live AND do business.
- is a **TOOL** used by citizens, stakeholders and the City to develop LAP's by applying the Urban Form Categories.
- is a modern, updated document combines new **and** existing policies all in one place so that communities creating new LAP's have all the information in one place.

The initial feedback asking for the simplification and clarification of the UFC's was thoughtfully and fully addressed in the focus groups. This is reflected in the draft release of the Guidebook on Jan.4, 2020.

There has been an ongoing effort to delay this document. There is a website named "Calgary Guidebook" that is full of misinformation and fear mongering about the Guidebook and its' impact on communities. I believe that the efforts to delay the Guidebook are based on the fear that density will negatively impact the quality of life in established neighborhoods. One example given is that a 6- storey apartment building can be erected anywhere in a neighborhood. This is simply untrue. As well there may be a misunderstanding that our current planning and development processes protect us from having large and or unsightly buildings constructed next to us. It does not.

I live in a single-family home in an established neighborhood. At this moment in time, I enjoy living in this type of housing, however, I am keenly aware of the downsides of living in a neighborhood dominated by single- family homes. I require a car to do most errands. There are few amenities I can walk easily to. Our community has lost many amenities (YMCA, Movie Theatre) over the years because the variety of housing types in our community has remained stagnant. Many residents who first bought in my community in the 1960's are now looking for housing alternatives in their communities as they age, and there are none. Our children will remain in Calgary only if Calgary has a variety of housing and transportation options available to them. Many are leaving now for jobs and school and they will be comparing Calgary to other places they have lived. Calgary needs to innovate and grow to attract them back. What we wanted or what our parents wanted in their communities and cities will be very different from what our children will want or even be able to have. The Guidebook addresses this and is a much-needed tool that is able to flex and pivot with the different circumstances in which our city may find itself in the future.

The LAP can help re-development of our established communities. No one in our working group proposed high density development in areas that don't make sense. The LAP's, built with the tool of the Guidebook for Great Communities, will actually offer **MORE** protection for groupings of single-family dwellings than what currently exists in our planning processes.

Members of the Committee, any further delays and changes are catering to those spreading misinformation about the Guidebook. The professional planners the City has in their employ are top in their field and their knowledge and skills must be respected. Please do not have these professionals make bad policy due to misinformation. Do not waste the thousands of hours given by citizens of Calgary who are trying to better their communities and ready them for a bright future. Move forward with the Guidebook for Great Communities. Calgary's viability depends on it. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Sonja Johnson