

## **City Planning and Policy Priorities and Workplan Report 2021**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development recommend that Council direct Administration to:

1. Base its City Planning & Policy Workplan for 2021 on the proposed policy priorities as contained in Attachment 2; and
2. Adjust the reporting timelines for three local area plan initiatives and two city-wide growth strategy initiatives as per the recommendations contained in Attachment 5.

### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, 2021 JANUARY 13:**

That Council direct Administration to:

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2. Adjust the reporting timelines for three local area plan initiatives and two city-wide growth strategy initiatives as per the recommendations contained in Attachment 5.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The City Planning & Policy service line plans for the needs of current and future Calgarians. The prioritized workplan for 2021 provides a foundation for land development, community growth, mobility and business activity in Calgary.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? Our plans and policies translate Council and citizens' priorities into tools for the development industry to plan and build communities, providing homes and jobs to Calgarians. We collaborate with communities and industry to consider the interests of the various groups and create balanced outcomes.
- Why does it matter? Focusing on the right initiatives will provide communities, businesses and investors the tools to thrive.
- Administration has identified six priorities that will guide which initiatives it will prioritize in 2021. The priorities are largely the same as the previous year.
- Staying on track and focusing on these priorities means delivering on key issues such as equity, climate action, attracting investment, and supporting economic recovery and economic resilience.
- Council direction: On 2020 February 3, Council directed Administration to report back to the SPC on Planning and Urban Development in 2021 Q1 with the proposed City Planning & Policy Service Priorities and Workplan for 2021.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

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### **DISCUSSION**

The City Planning & Policy service line's 2020 initiatives were guided by Council's interests and priorities. They are delivering on Council's direction to create a city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods by enabling development and growth and supporting business activity.

In 2020 increasing social awareness, the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic shift brought heightened attention to the need for action on equity, climate change, economic recovery and Calgary's economic resilience. Citizens and Council have highlighted the need to address these topics in city building initiatives. Doing so ensures that Calgary can continue to serve and attract an increasingly diverse population and business community. The service line's priorities and workplan were already designed to address these topics and most, if not all, of these priorities and accompanying initiatives are being carried out with a direct view to contributing to social equity, the economy, climate change, and a continuing response to the pandemic.

In 2020 the service line immediately pivoted to address COVID-19 and the struggles of the business community by shifting resources to initiatives that provided innovative solutions such as on-street retail and patios, rethinking the downtown strategy, removing commercial parking requirements and virtual public engagement. Given another year of uncertainty with the pandemic and associated economic, business and revenue challenges; public engagement impacts; the corporate realignment; and the municipal election, it is essential to focus resources in the 2021 workplan on those initiatives that are achievable and that can make a difference right now.

The six priorities that guided the service line in 2020 remain valid. They have been refined to highlight where resources need to be focused in 2021 to address the increased challenges resulting from COVID-19 and the economic situation. Refinement is also required to properly reflect corporate initiatives and legislative requirements. The proposed priorities for 2021 are:

- A. Implementing the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan
- B. A City-wide Growth Strategy
- C. Modernized Community Planning & Transit Oriented Development
- D. Connecting Planning and Investment
- E. Downtown Strategy – The Next Generation Downtown
- F. Corporate Initiatives & Legislative Requirements

These priorities (Attachment 2) focus resources on initiatives that provide communities, landowners and businesses with effective, modern planning tools. These tools remove barriers to desired development, create a level playing field for businesses and make the development process quicker and smoother. This supports private sector investment in Calgary's communities and enhances efforts to reinvest in established neighbourhoods as per the goals of the Municipal Development Plan. The workplan (Attachment 3) enables Administration to deliver on key initiatives to achieve the priorities. Initiatives that directly support these efforts will receive priority in terms of team resources. As they are completed, resources will be shifted to those initiatives that are currently of less benefit towards these goals.

Calgary has long been considered one of the most livable cities in the world. Sustaining our status as a great city requires us to be competitive and attractive, both locally and globally. Cities around the world have realized that to attract businesses, they must first attract people. Investing in inclusive communities that serve diverse lifestyle choices is critical for Calgary's continuing economic growth. A liveable and vibrant city will attract residents and businesses.

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### **Next Generation Planning**

The priorities and associated workplan items align and support the Next Generation Planning program (Attachment 4). This program helps us implement the policies and meet the goals in our Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan (MDP/CTP). The program

- provides a coordinated and clear planning system for the whole city;
- modernizes our planning and development approach;
- updates and simplifies policy to meet the MDP and CTP; and
- creates a better toolbox to allow for development and investment in Calgary.

### **Adjusted Reporting Timelines Due to the Deferral of the Guidebook for Great Communities and Newly Added City-wide Growth Strategy Work**

In July 2020 Council directed Administration to continue working on the Guidebook for Great Communities and to return with a refined document in January 2021 (PUD2020-0721). This shift in timing has affected Administration's ability to deliver local area plans that were to be based on the new Guidebook. Recommendation 2 is therefore proposed to adjust the timing of three local area plans. Council recently added four new elements of work in 2021 for the City-wide Growth Strategy, and in order to work efficiently and sequentially, two adjustments are also requested through Recommendation 2. Further details can be found in Attachment 5.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)**

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

In the course of 2020, Administration has had ongoing dialogue with Council, citizens and stakeholders about critical issues, areas that need to be addressed and prioritized. Although no formal engagement was undertaken for this report, these conversations have informed the recommendations and attached workplan.

Council has directed Administration to reinforce efforts towards supporting business recovery, economic resilience, social equity and taking action on climate change. Citizens have expressed a desire for reinvestment in their communities. Industry representatives have shared concerns over barriers to desired development and the need to enhance certainty of development processes as well as efforts to support local businesses. The initiatives on the workplan have been discussed with development industry partners and have informed the associated Industry/City Workplan for 2021.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Social**

The City Planning & Policy service line priorities support Council's Social Wellbeing Policy by dedicating resources to initiatives that promote equitable and inclusive community growth as well as by enabling City investments in amenities that serve the community.

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### **Environmental**

The City Planning & Policy Service line plays a key role in implementing Calgary's Environmental Resilience Strategy and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation plans. How we develop our communities, where we provide services and how we move around the city directly affect the city's environmental footprint. By delivering the initiatives on the workplan, guidance will be provided for the growth of an environmentally more resilient city.

### **Economic**

The proposed priorities and associated workplan initiatives in 2021 focus strongly on leveraging efforts in various areas of planning to improve The City's ability to invest strategically and in a fiscally responsible manner. Numerous initiatives are designed to deliver a citywide growth strategy as well as financial tools to support that growth.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

No anticipated financial impact

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There is no direct budget impact associated with this report. Delivering on the proposed priorities and the workplan will ensure that the service line's tax-supported budget is properly employed to implement the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan and Council's directive to create a city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods. Individual initiatives may, however, require specific budget asks, which will be determined as the work proceeds.

### **RISK**

In times of diverse challenges, it is more important than ever to ensure Administration is dedicating its resources to the right initiatives. The proposed priorities and associated workplan focus efforts on these priorities. Without consensus on what is to be prioritized The City will be at risk of not being able to allocate its resources to achieve the greatest benefit. Without guiding priorities, Administration is at risk of being tasked to do everything everywhere and subsequently achieving only marginal benefits.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Priorities Guiding the City Planning and Policy Service Workplan 2021
3. City Planning and Policy Service Workplan 2021
4. Next Generation Planning Program Overview
5. Overview of Adjusted Reporting Timelines

Department Circulation

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

**Planning & Development Report to  
SPC on Planning and Urban Development**

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