



THE GUIDEBOOK FOR GREAT COMMUNITIES: OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS CALGARY'S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLARIZATION

CALGARY
CLIMATE
HUB

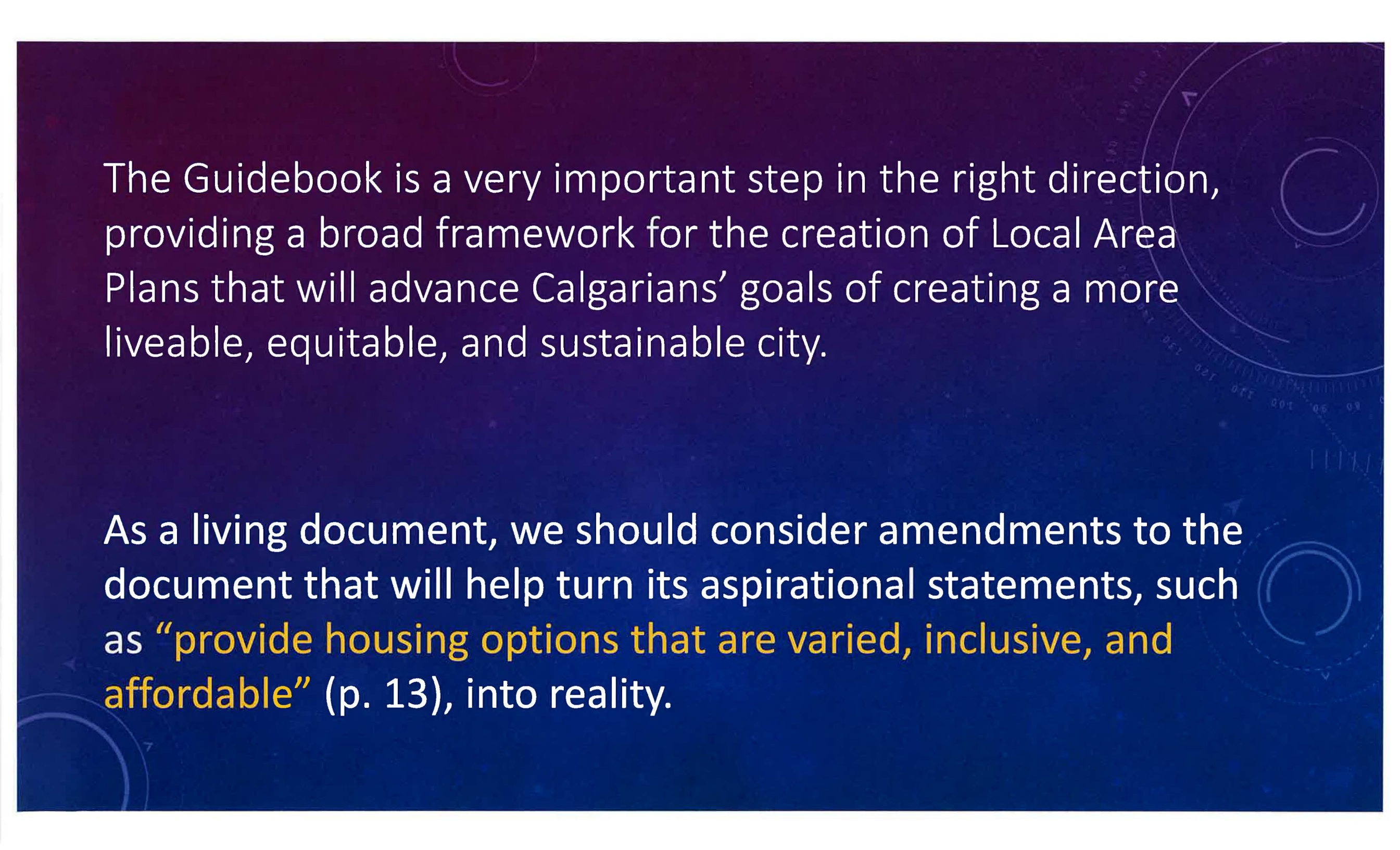


Sustainable
Calgary

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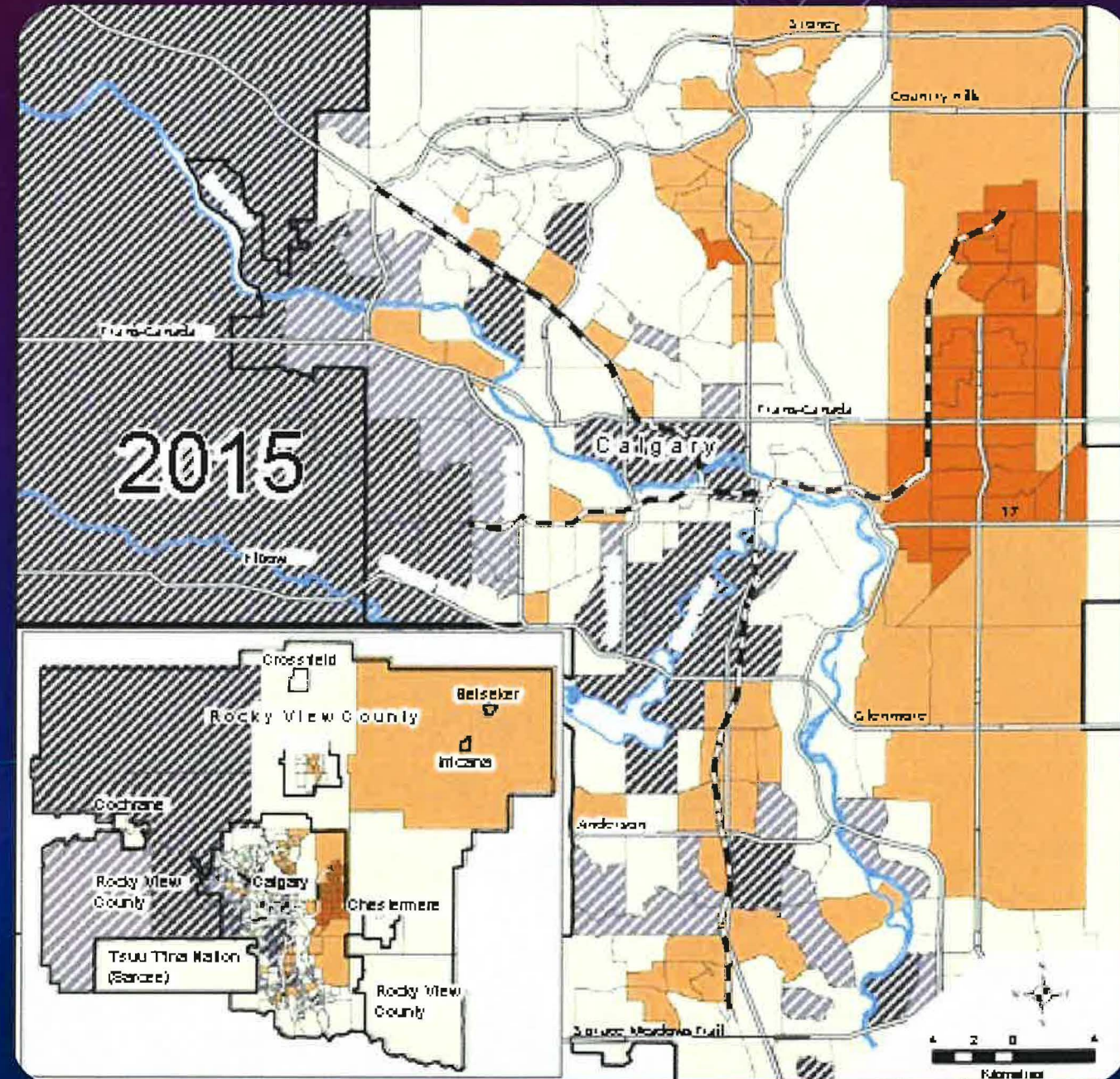


The Guidebook is a very important step in the right direction, providing a broad framework for the creation of Local Area Plans that will advance Calgarians' goals of creating a more liveable, equitable, and sustainable city.

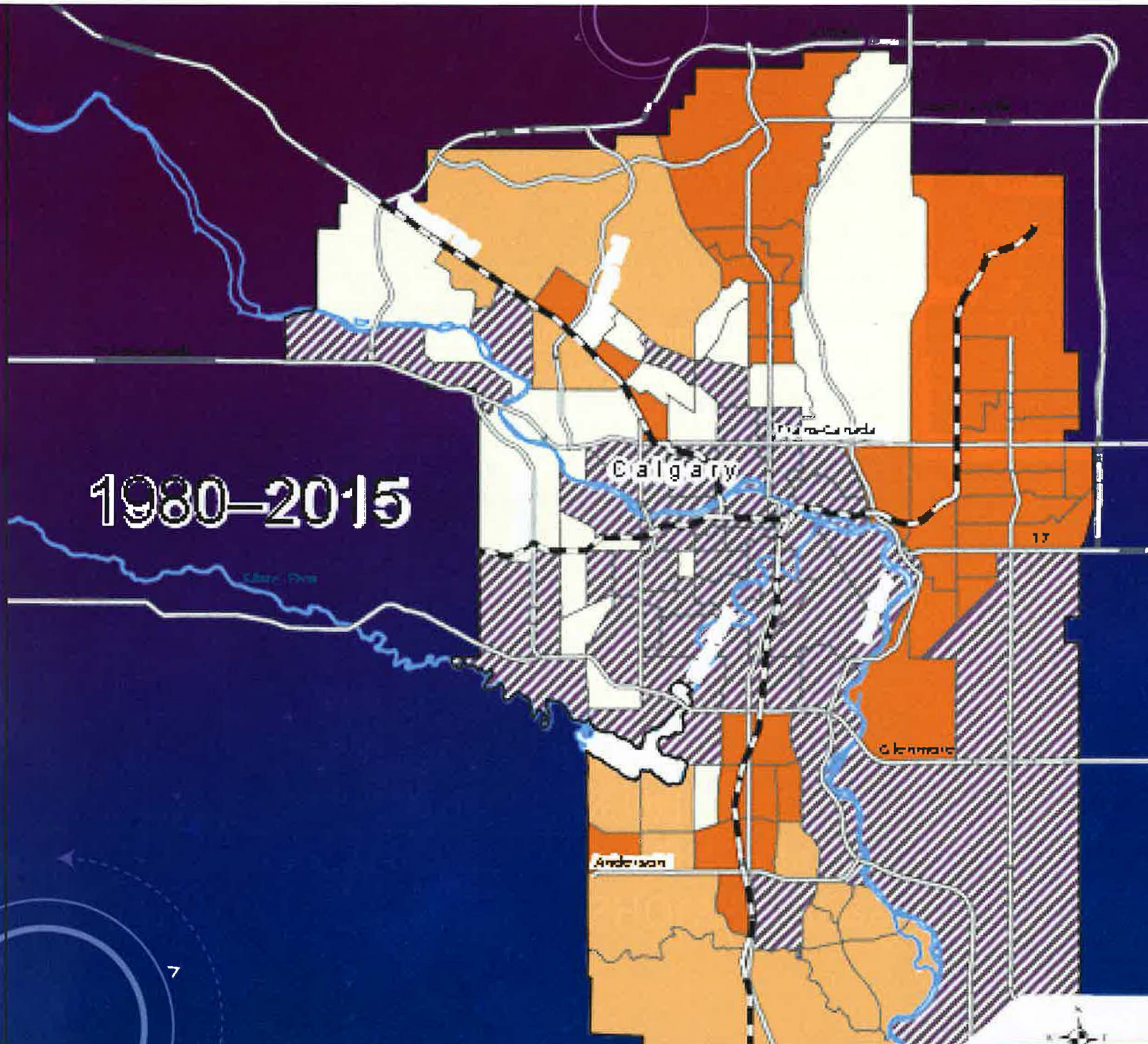
As a living document, we should consider amendments to the document that will help turn its aspirational statements, such as “provide housing options that are varied, inclusive, and affordable” (p. 13), into reality.

AS IT STANDS, CALGARY SHOWS A VERY HIGH DEGREE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLARIZATION. THIS IS RELATED TO THE GEOGRAPHY OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES. (2015 INCOME MAP)

Townshend, Miller, and Cook (2020) Neighbourhood Change in Calgary: an Evolving Geography of Income Inequality and Social Difference, in Grant, Walks, and Ramos (eds) *Changing Neighbourhoods: Social and Spatial Polarization in Canadian Cities*, UBC Press.



1980–2015



THE GEOGRAPHY OF INCOME CHANGE HAS BEEN VERY UNEVEN, 1980-2015

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Social and Spatial Polarization in Canadian
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THESE CHANGES HAVE BEEN...



Largely market-driven



Gone hand in hand with
densification



Gone hand in hand with the
diversification of housing types

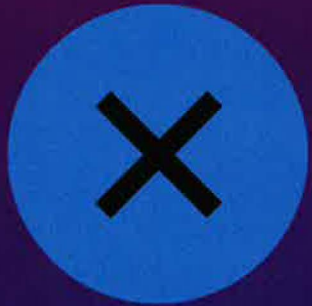
THERE ARE MANY
SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO
DENSIFICATION AND
MARKET-ORIENTED
HOUSING
DIVERSIFICATION, BUT...

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY
AND REDUCING SOCIO-
ECONOMIC POLARIZATION
AREN'T AMONG THEM

Former Vancouver planning director Brent Toderian, discussing densification policy in 2007, observed that “EcoDensity won’t provide housing that meets average incomes... I don’t think we could affect [housing] supply to the point that prices would go down”

In Edmonton in 2018, City Council recognized the limitations of relying on market-based approaches to affordable housing and adopted a policy target of at least 16% affordable housing in every neighbourhood. The City is developing a suite of policies to achieve this goal.

THE GUIDEBOOK CONTAINS NO MECHANISMS FOR ACHIEVING ITS INCLUSIVE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING GOALS, OTHER THAN DENSIFICATION AND THE MARKET



This will not get the job done



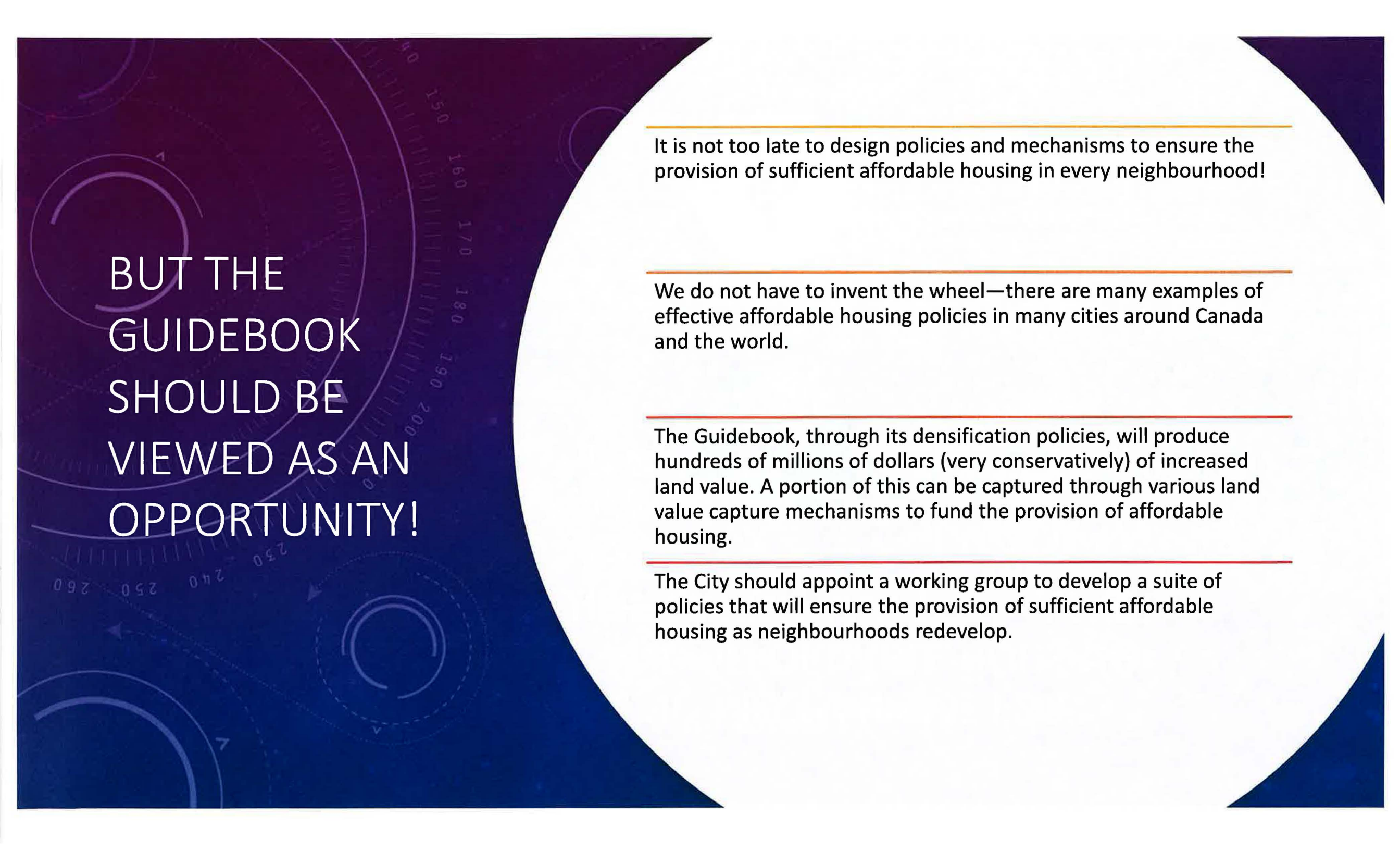
Calgary desperately needs to address and reverse its increasing social and spatial polarization



Redevelopment of established communities, without policies explicitly designed to ensure adequate affordable housing, will likely worsen Calgary's polarization



This is an extremely serious problem for reasons ranging from inequity in access to jobs and civic amenities, constrained social capital formation, weakened civic bonds, and greater commuting to jobs, services, and more, resulting in greater energy consumption and GHGs.



BUT THE GUIDEBOOK SHOULD BE VIEWED AS AN OPPORTUNITY!

It is not too late to design policies and mechanisms to ensure the provision of sufficient affordable housing in every neighbourhood!

We do not have to invent the wheel—there are many examples of effective affordable housing policies in many cities around Canada and the world.

The Guidebook, through its densification policies, will produce hundreds of millions of dollars (very conservatively) of increased land value. A portion of this can be captured through various land value capture mechanisms to fund the provision of affordable housing.

The City should appoint a working group to develop a suite of policies that will ensure the provision of sufficient affordable housing as neighbourhoods redevelop.