

Background

Building a great city involves the entire community—neighbours, community groups, planners, businesses and developers. In the past, it has been unclear and unpredictable who should lead outreach and when and how the public should be involved in planning decisions. Planning and development decisions happen at different scales. Community outreach on planning decisions can be comprehensive and involve input from a wide range of citizens across the entire city or multiple communities, such as the development of policy plans, or it can be very localized and involve what might be built on a single lot within a community.

Context

In early 2018, City Administration kicked off a multi-phased project known as the Baseline Engagement Project. The aim of the Baseline Engagement Project was to create a more predictable, best-practice approach to community outreach on planning applications and policy plans.

Through an iterative engagement approach with a range of impacted stakeholders, clear roles and responsibilities were defined and tools and resources were created to ensure stakeholders can be successful in their community outreach roles. To ensure this information is transparent and accessible, this information has been made available to anyone who is interested or impacted through an online toolkit called the Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit (calgary.ca/planningoutreach).

The Toolkit was launched in 2019 and was created based on international outreach best practices and engagement with a range of local stakeholders. The Toolkit includes three key sections:

1. The Applicant Outreach Toolkit – for applicants proposing rezoning or development. The Applicant Outreach Toolkit includes information and resources to support applicants as they consider and execute community outreach connected to their proposal.
2. The Community Involvement Toolkit – for citizens who are interested in getting involved in local planning and development matters. The toolkit includes information and resources to help citizens understand when, where and how to get involved in the planning and development of Calgary and our communities.
3. Outreach Roles and Responsibilities – outlines key roles and associated responsibilities for those involved in planning and development matters.

The Toolkit and associated process improvements have:

Increased clarity and predictability about who leads community outreach. The outreach lead is always the initiator or proponent of the project.

For new City planning policies (such as local area plans):

- The City leads community outreach connected to the project.
- The City notifies and involves interested and impacted citizens and stakeholders.

For land use and development proposals:

- The applicant leads outreach connected to their proposal/project.

- The City notifies, circulates, reviews/considers comments & holds public hearings – as outlined in the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and Land Use Bylaw.

Supported citizens interested in getting involved in planning matters.

- The City created the Community Involvement Toolkit for citizens interested in getting involved in local planning and development matters. The toolkit includes information and resources to help citizens understand when, where and how to get involved in the planning and development of Calgary and our communities.
- The City leads a Partners in Planning course in collaboration with the Federation of Calgary Communities titled: Community and Citizen Involvement. The course runs annually and syncs with the toolkit, focusing on how citizens can get involved in planning matters.
- The Community Involvement Toolkit is linked directly from Development Maps, where citizens provide comments to The City on proposals.
- Citizens education and knowledge building also take place directly in connection with City planning projects such as local area plans.

Ensured resources and support for applicant-led outreach.

- The Applicant Outreach Toolkit was created by The City for applicants proposing rezoning or development. The Applicant Outreach Toolkit includes information and resources to support applicants with their outreach efforts.
- Outreach recommendations and requirements are provided by file managers and discussed with applicants.
- File managers support applicant-led outreach efforts (i.e. participating in applicant-led sessions, providing citizens with information about City policies and clarifying The City review and decision-making process, etc.).

Clarified recommendation and requirements for applicant-led outreach:

Recommended:

- Review Applicant Outreach Toolkit & Complete Outreach Assessment Tool, which will help assess the potential impact of the proposal within the context of the community.
- Connect with the surrounding neighbours, community association or relevant member-based organizations and area Councillor early in the process to discuss your development ideas. From there, applicants are likely to gain a better sense of the sentiment of the proposal within the community and can then make a more informed decision about what additional community outreach efforts may be required and/or beneficial.

Required:

- Submit an Applicant Outreach Summary to explain what community outreach efforts were undertaken. The Applicant Outreach Summary is now included on the Complete Application Requirement List (CARL).

Although community outreach is highly encouraged, and supporting tools and resources are available to assist with each step in an outreach process, it is ultimately up to applicants to determine if they will undertake outreach and at what level. If an applicant chooses not to undertake community outreach, they must provide rationale for why. The City is required to share information and collect feedback on applications in alignment with the Municipal Government Act and Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 through notice

posting, circulation and the commenting process. In addition, Administration supports the community outreach process by: i) providing applicants with community outreach recommendations and advice through the Applicant Outreach Toolkit, through key stages in the applications process and/or by providing customized recommendations; ii) sharing information with the community and answering citizen questions about: City goals, City policies, City application review and decision-making processes as well as clarifying outreach roles and responsibilities and explaining where, when, and how community members can get involved in planning decisions throughout the planning process; and iii) attending applicant-led outreach sessions to speak to the above.

In the past, The City would conduct outreach on some applications for reasons that were unclear. Stakeholders indicated that this caused confusion and, as the reviewer of the application, stakeholders indicated the need for The City to be impartial and balanced rather than appearing to be advocating for the proposed change on behalf of the applicant. As the reviewer and in some cases decision maker (as Development Authority) on applications, City Administration's role should focus on the review of the application as well as supporting increased public understanding of any City policies or other factors that may be considered through the review. When it comes to the creation of new planning policies, such as local area plans, The City leads community outreach efforts in alignment with The City's Engage Policy.

Through this work, there is now increased predictability and clarity about who is responsible for leading community outreach on private applications and City policy plans. The key deliverable associated with this work is the creation of the Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit which clearly outlines roles and responsibilities and contains a number of tools and resources for applicants and community members to support their success in their outreach roles. The toolkit was launched in 2019 June, and is now in effect, but will continue to see ongoing refinements and improvements over time.

Previous Council Direction

At the 2018 September 24 meeting of Council, the following direction was moved by Councillor Davison and seconded by Councillor Farkas: "That with respect to Report CPC2018-0883 (Enabling Successful Rowhouse Development), the following Motion Arising be adopted: That Council direct Administration to explore requirements related to communications and/or engagement for redesignations from R-C1 to R-CG and to report back to Council, through the SPC on Planning and Urban Development, by Q3, 2019."

At the 2019 September 04 meeting of SPC on Planning and Urban Development, the following direction was moved by Councillor Davison: "That with respect to Report PUD2019-1104, the following be approved: That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development receive this report and presentation for the Corporate Record; and Administration report back to Committee in 12 months."

At the 2020 June 15 Combined Meeting of Council the City Clerk's Office Procedural Request C2020-0698 to defer 2020 Q3 and Q4 Reports to a later date in 2021 was approved. Council authorized Administration, through the City Manager and appropriate General Manager, to defer any Council or Committee report due Q3 or Q4 2020 to a later date in 2021, without further Council approval, unless Council or Committee approval is required by legislation.

Timeline

2018 September 24

CPC2018-0883

“That with respect to Report CPC2018-0883 (Enabling Successful Rowhouse Development), the following Motion Arising be adopted: That Council direct Administration to explore requirements related to communications and/or engagement for redesignations from R-C1 to R-CG and to report back to Council, through the SPC on Planning and Urban Development, by Q3, 2019.”

2019 September 04

PUD2019-1104

The purpose of this report was to: i) respond to a Motion Arising directing Administration to explore requirements related to communications and/or engagement for land use redesignation applications from Residential – One Dwelling (R-1) (R-1s) Districts and Residential – Contextual One Dwelling (R-C1) (R-C1s) Districts to Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG) Districts, and ii) provide an update on the outcome of a recent City-led engagement.

2020 June 15

C2020-0698

Deferral of 2020 Q3 and Q4 Reports to Later Date in 2021 – That Council authorize Administration, through the City Manager and appropriate General Manager, to defer any Council or Committee report due Q3 or Q4 2020 to a later date in 2021, without further Council approval, unless Council or Committee approval is required by legislation.