

**Date:** September 1, 2021

**Name or Project:** A Strategy Model for Grass Roots Park Space Development in North-Central Calgary

**Sponsoring Councilor:** Councilor Jyoti Gondek

**Applicant Name:** Cynthia Watson & Sheila Taylor

**Applicant Contact #:** 403-567-4461 & 587-320-1514

**Applicant Business Unit or Org:** Vivo for Healthier Generations & Parks Foundation Calgary

**Affected Business Unit and/or Depts:** All Departments

**Amount of Funds Requested** – \$100,000

**Draft PFC cover report attached** Yes or No

**Please list supporting documents provided:**

1. Attachment 1: Project Budget Breakdown of City’s Innovation Funding Request
2. Attachment 2: Map of North- Central Calgary Communities Engaged in Project
3. Attachment 3: Project Phases, Deliverables & Timelines

**A. Provide a summary description of the project to a max of 2 pages. Also, identify how this project meets the criteria as outlined in the Terms of Reference for the Council Innovation Fund. Please attach additional information as required.**

**Project Description:** Together, Vivo and the Parks Foundation would like to re-imagine the development of grass roots park spaces with the ultimate goal of fostering a strong sense of belonging in North-Central Calgary. Our two organizations are joining forces to bring together local residents, community organizations and groups, businesses and future leaders to create, action and measure a strategy model for more active, connected, naturalized and sustainable park spaces across existing and new communities.

This pilot project will engage from start to the end City of Calgary departments including Parks, Recreation and Planning as well as other stakeholders in Calgary and Alberta. The scope and outcomes of the project are 1) to create a long-term strategy model for grassroots park development planning with stakeholders in a region of the city and 2) an initial project list developed together with stakeholders.

Any future projects will be focused only on adding, enhancing, or improving park space development. It will not include programming, events, pathways, or road infrastructure.

The strategy model will include the following elements:

- a process and tools for co-creation and engagement with all stakeholders
- types of stakeholders identified and engaged
- roles, responsibilities, and resources
- types of governance structure for the model

- summary of insights/ themes and decision-making criteria for different stages of the project
- evaluation methods and tools used during the project
- Initial project list defining and prioritizing specific park space additions, improvements, enhancements in north- central Calgary areas over the next 15-30 years.

**Project Need:** North-Central Calgary has fewer outdoor recreational spaces than other regions in the city, and a very young, diverse, and growing population. While there are several independent efforts taking place to create new and meaningful outdoor spaces in this part of the city, there is no cohesive, strategic and evidence-based model on working with stakeholders and partners over the long term for outdoor space infrastructure having positive environmental and educational benefits.

The funding for this pilot is designed specifically to create a planning process. To start, we require The City of Calgary's help in funding Phase 1: Strategy model with Stakeholders. This process ensures we will have a solid road map to secure future funding from diverse sources to implement any projects identified overtime. Any future funded projects will follow and be constructed in accordance to City processes, standards and guidelines. The City will be the ultimate decision maker on how construction is executed and who provides oversight

This project methodology applies to other Wards with active growth neighbouring existing communities, meaning that the City of Calgary can use this as a "plug and play" tool on a city-wide basis. This will also inform stewardship of Community Services Levy funds so that existing communities gain benefit from growth.

**Project Logistics:**

- The Project will be stewarded by 1-2 key Parks Foundation and Vivo staff and will engage all ages, abilities and cultures to participate in over the next twelve months.
- Vivo and the Parks Foundation will dedicate staff time to support advancing the project as well as engage consultants, university students and community members.
- Vivo and the Parks Foundation will engage the City's of Calgary's Parks department to be a part of all the project phases as well as the Recreation and Planning departments to help define specific activities that need more infrastructure planning.
- A Community-led Advisory Committee will be established to support engagement sessions, sense making and evaluation activities, drafting, testing and communicating with all stakeholders.
- Insights will be summarized, and a draft strategy model and initial project list will be shared and tested with all stakeholders for their input to inform future decision making.
- The final strategy model and potential project list will be shared with City of Calgary Departments like Parks, Recreation and Planning and all stakeholders.
- The Parks Foundation, Vivo and Community-led Advisory Committee will build the relationships and secure future funding to implement projects initially identified.
- Future funding will be through a combination of Parks Foundation and City of Calgary investment as the project list moves through the standard approvals process.
- The model and any evidence generated during the life span of the project will be shared with the City to help make better future decisions on social and green infrastructure across Calgary.

- This project will be an ongoing, committed initiative between the Calgary Parks Foundation and Vivo for the next 15-30 years to secure funding for the initial project list, construct the projects with partners and the community and measure its impact through specific indicators.

### **The Parks Foundation and Vivo for Healthier Generations**

The Parks Foundation and Vivo are Civic Partner organizations with well-established and complementary mandates that make them ideally suited to work together on this project. Parks Foundation's mission is to ensure Calgarians can enjoy a healthy lifestyle by providing easily accessible and unique sport and green spaces. Vivo is on a mission to raise healthier generations in Calgary and beyond through innovative programs and environments, research, and community involvement.

Both organizations have proven track records in collaboration, co-creation, innovating planning and development, implementing and measuring, fund raising and scaling to bring this to life together with the community, partners and resources.

#### **Project Responsibilities:**

- Acting as a convener, provide stewardship and 'backbone' leadership of the strategy and planning process with all partners and stakeholders
- Identify key stakeholders and partners to participate in the project including City of Calgary departments like Parks, Recreation and Planning
- Lead the stakeholder engagement, co-creation and planning process with Community-led Advisory Committee and consultants
- Communicate about the project, engagement of stakeholders and progress of milestones and outcomes during the project
- Measure the project's progress and impact with stakeholders
- Share the model to make better planning decisions within our organizations and with others in Calgary and Alberta
- Report back through PFC on the project progress and outcomes
- Secure the funding for the initial project list and future phases of the project

#### **The City of Calgary's Responsibilities:**

- Provide one time funding through the Council Innovation Fund to help support the development of a strategy model for grassroots parks development planning
- Be a key collaborator on the project with Vivo and Parks Foundation
- Communicate about the project and support its engagement of all stakeholders
- Use the project model and evidence generated to make better public engagement and planning decisions around future and existing community design and development initiatives
- Communicate and collaborate with Vivo and Parks Foundation on how The City is using the model and evidence
- Report back to Council through PFC on the pilot project outcomes

### **B. Alignment to Council and City of Calgary Priorities**

The proposed Project meets several key priorities of the City of Calgary:

### **1. Well Run City**

- a. The evidence generated by the project can help the City to "be as effective as possible, reducing future citizen engagement costs while maximizing social impact."
- b. This Project directly supports "diverse communication channels, including in-person and digital tools and methods to empower two-way communication with Calgarians."

### **2. Prosperous City**

- a. This Project seeks out partnerships with key industry sectors to advance community well-being including: Parks, Recreation, Planning, Education, Health and Community Development.
- b. This Project will attract and build capacity in local talent and skills across citizens, businesses, community groups, educators as well as young leaders of the future.

### **4. City of Safe and Inspiring Neighbourhoods**

- a. Evidence generated can help the City "systematically invest in established neighbourhoods as they evolve to accommodate changing community values and needs."
- b. The Project will provide information and tools necessary to "develop a new framework for stewarding more park space in new and re-developing neighbourhoods."
- c. Using the Project model overtime, we can encourage more citizen connection and sense of belonging, physical activity, community ownership and usage of neighbourhood places.

### **3. A Healthy and Green City**

- a. Over time, this Project helps "create and implement initiatives that are citizen centric, accessible, promote healthy lifestyles and focus on long-term community resilience and sustainability."
- b. Using the Project model and evidence, we can improve and enhance the development, maintenance and sustainability of more 'natural and citizen-driven approaches' to park spaces.

### **C. Outline the proposed timeline for this project, including the final report back date.**

#### **Phase 1: 15-30Y Strategy Model for grassroots park development planning with Stakeholders:**

- Identify and secure key resources and partners (October-November 2021)
- Engagement Sessions with Citizens, Stakeholders and Partners (February-March 2022)
- Draft 1.0 Strategy Model (April-May 2022)
- Test Strategy Model and identify initial project list (June-July 2022)
- Finalize Strategy Model and confirm initial project list (August- September 2022)
- Final Report to City (September-October 2022)

### **D. Identify what success looks like, and how it will be measured**

**Outcome:**

- A community and evidence-based strategy model that can be leveraged to improve and enhance park space to make better decisions and investments across the City of Calgary.

**Strategy:**

- Citizens are an integral and intentional part in the design, implementation and ownership of the communities they live, work and play in.

**Indicators:**

- Increase in Citizen's Sense of Belonging
- Increase in Community Well-being
- Increase in Community Participation and Involvement
- Increase in Community Physical Activity Levels

**Outputs:**

- More citizens know their neighbours and feel like they belong in their community
- More citizens are advocating for what they value and need in their community to live a healthy life
- More citizens are gathering outdoors in strategic areas
- More trees, grasses and natural elements are being implemented across neighbourhoods
- More citizens are finding, exploring, using, and sharing with others the 'magical places' in their communities
- More individuals and families are moving more in their daily life in the community