

Memorial Parkway Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommends that Council:

1. Direct Administration to proceed with the integrated Memorial Parkway Program.
2. Direct Administration to complete the Sunnyside flood barrier by 2025 through the Memorial Parkway Program and its city building vision.
3. Direct Administration to bring a Program progress report to the Infrastructure and Planning Committee no later than Q2 2023.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Memorial Parkway Program (Program)** is an opportunity to pursue an integrated and city building vision for commemorative and natural spaces along the north bank of the Bow River, adjacent to the communities of Hillhurst and Sunnyside. This vision will encompass the Sunnyside flood barrier and opportunities for a reimagined Memorial Drive.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** Citizen values and uses for the space will be nurtured through implementation of the flood barrier with new places for commemoration, vibrancy, and opportunities to reimagine Memorial Drive to evolve mobility options and the public realm. Flood protection will be achieved before spring of 2025.
- **Why does this matter?** A critical infrastructure project will be delivered through an integrated Program that will celebrate the commemorative legacy of the space.
- **The Sunnyside flood barrier** is a key part of Calgary's Flood Resilience Plan and will protect Sunnyside and Hillhurst from 1:100 flood event. Design work to-date has identified an opportunity to preserve and replant trees to maintain commemorative places with the barrier construction. This highlights the need for focused vision, engineering innovation, and integrated design.
- **The Landscape of Memory** (2005) established the vision for the Memorial Drive corridor incorporating living memorial trees and commemorative places, setting the course for the Calgary Soldiers Memorial, Poppy Plaza, and more. The Program will bring an updated vision to encompass flood protection and place-making opportunities for Memorial Drive.
- **Communication and Engagement**, a key component of the Program, will capture the perspectives from a broad suite of stakeholders that use and rely on this corridor and space for commemoration, access to natural spaces, flood resilience, recreation, and mobility.
- **Previous Council Direction:** 2020 April 27, Council approved recommendations per Report UCS2020-0372 that included proceeding with Sunnyside flood barrier to 1:100 level.
- **Strategic Alignment of Council's citizen priorities:** 1) *A City of Safe and Inspiring Neighborhoods*: through resilience and places that provide opportunity to participate in civic life, 2) *A City that Moves*: through evolved mobility for all Calgarians; and 3) *A Healthy and Green City*: through flood resilience, public spaces, and pathways.

DISCUSSION

The Sunnyside flood barrier will protect the communities of Sunnyside and Hillhurst. During the 2013 flood, the Bow River overtopped the north bank. The community was

Memorial Parkway Program

evacuated, buildings were damaged, and businesses were closed for days. It is estimated that if such a flood were to occur again, damages could reach \$320 million. Calgary's Flood Resilience Plan (the Plan) included the Sunnyside Flood Barrier and was approved by Council in 2017 June. Along with other components of the Plan, the flood barrier will protect the community from at least a 1:100 flood. In 2020, design work indicated the barrier would be 2.5 km long between Mewata Bridge (14th St. NW) and Centre St. with an average height 0.8 m higher than the existing bank. It estimated 788 trees would need to be removed for construction, including 276 memorial trees.

The Memorial Drive corridor has been home to 3278 memorial trees planted between 1922 and 1928 for each fallen soldier of World War One. The first trees were planted on Sunnyside Boulevard (now Memorial Drive). In 2005, recognizing the importance of the space, Council approved the following vision statement for the area:

“The Memorial Drive corridor is both a Major Street in Calgary’s road network, and a unique urban landscape that is shaped by an understanding of its social and physical role, and by a deep respect for its commemorative history. Integral to this vision is a landscape that is supportive, safe, accessible and active, and is enriched by a unifying identity, trees and meaningful places to observe individual and collective memory.”

Mobility in Calgary has evolved since 2005. In 2021, Council approved the Always Available for All Ages & Abilities' (5A) Network Guiding Principles for prioritized walking and wheeling infrastructure in Calgary. These principles were central during the pandemic when one half of Memorial Drive was temporarily repurposed for walking and wheeling. A new vision for the corridor should consider this evolution in mobility needs.

The above factors all come together in an integrated Program with six objectives:

- Continue the living memorial through preserving and replanting memorial trees,
- Create nodes that will enhance the vibrancy of the area,
- Improve mobility, safety and connectivity for all user types,
- Build the 1:100 flood barrier with limited delay,
- Preserve and enhance the connection to the natural environment, and
- Provide more and safer access points to the Bow River.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Previous work on the Sunnyside flood barrier reveals an engaged community with interest in all aspects of this Program. Continued use of the space for commemoration reflect the legacy of the earlier engagement that shaped the Landscape of Memory in 2005. The Program will include broad engagement and communications to hear a representative voice from stakeholders on all aspects of the Program.

IMPLICATIONS

Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

Preserving and replanting memorial trees will maintain the legacy established since 1922 and improve local climate adaptation for users. New placemaking presents an opportunity to showcase the trees and draw users to their social significance. Creation of new placemaking nodes will transform the corridor to a parkway supporting movement, gathering, and reflecting.

Memorial Parkway Program

Mobility and open spaces will enhance connections to nature with trails and access points to the Bow River. By Spring 2025, the flood barrier will protect Hillhurst and Sunnyside from future flood events with a changing climate, averting an estimated \$2.7 million in flood damages annually.

Service and Financial Implications

Other:

A \$32M budget through the Water Utility Stormwater Service Line is allocated to early visioning, initial Memorial Drive technical studies, and barrier design and construction.

Funding for the reimagining Memorial Drive and final visioning will be managed at each stage through 2023-2026 capital budgeting and may be a future budget request to Council.

RISK

1. Flood occurs before flood barrier completion

Additional time is needed to integrate the Program objectives and vision into the barrier design. The probability of a flood large enough to overtop the existing bank through 2022, 2023, and 2024 is estimated to be 2.5% however Risk is partly mitigated by The City's flood emergency response measures.

2. Engagement Fatigue

This Program will seek input from the community and stakeholders on many topics. In light of previous communications with the community, as well as upcoming engagement associated with the Riley Communities Local Area Plan (starting in 2022), there is risk of engagement fatigue in the community. This will be mitigated through a Program-wide engagement and communication plan that will be more efficient and will target stakeholders.

3. Funding Commitment for all Program Streams

Funding is allocated to the early visioning, initial Memorial Drive technical studies, and integrated barrier design and construction. Funding for reimagining Memorial Drive and final visioning may not be prioritized and available within the Project timeline. The Program employs adaptive design approaches so that funded work can proceed as other work streams are prioritized.

4. Impacts to Calgary's Transportation Networks

Alternate configurations of Memorial Drive could impact established transportation networks that may have far-reaching impacts to transportation of goods, commuting, and emergency vehicle response. This will be mitigated with careful and rigorous network and operational planning.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 - Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Attachment 2 - Schedule
3. Attachment 3 - Presentation

Department Circulation

Continued next page.

**Utilities & Environmental Protection Report to
Infrastructure and Planning Committee
2022 February 3**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
IP2022-0035
Page 4 of 4**

Memorial Parkway Program

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Michael Thompson	Utilities and Environmental Protection	Approve
Francois Bouchart	Utilities and Environmental Protection	Approve
Doug Morgan	Transportation	Approve
Stuart Dagleish	Planning and Development	Inform
Katie Black	Community Services	Inform
Debra Hamilton	Community Planning	Inform
Kyle Ripley	Calgary Parks	Inform
Ryan Vanderputten	Transportation Planning	Inform
Troy McLeod	Roads	Inform