

GREEN LINE SOUTHEAST TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) study along the southeast leg of the Green Line from Fourth Street/10th Avenue S.E. to the community of Seton. The integration of TOD planning with the engineering pre-design informed the recommended alignment and station locations. A number of viable TOD sites were identified for short- to mid-term development and represent prime locations to provide mixed-use development that is supported by the high quality multi-mode transportation system planned for Green Line.

It is critical towards encouraging and enabling the desired development around the stations to put in place policies and land use designations that are aligned with the TOD concepts. City-initiated land use redesignations should be undertaken in 2016 to set the stage for redevelopment that will maximize The City's investment by bringing residences, workplaces, services and activity to the Green Line station areas.

A complimentary Report TT2015-0678 (Green Line Southeast Alignment and Stations) will be presented at the 2015 October 14 meeting of the SPC on Transportation and Transit.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Planning and Urban Development recommends that Council:

1. Direct Administration to investigate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy amendments as outlined in the Potential TOD Policy Implementation document (Attachment 2) and to undertake implementation by the end of December 2016.
2. Direct Administration to further investigate collaboration opportunities with the Office of Land Servicing and Housing (OLSH) and private sector landowners towards TOD to align with opening day of Green Line.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DATED 2015 OCTOBER 07:

That the Administration Recommendations contained in Report PUD2015-0765 be approved, **as amended**, as follows:

That the SPC on Planning and Urban Development recommends that Council:

1. Direct Administration to investigate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy amendments as outlined in the Potential TOD Policy Implementation document (Attachment 2) and to undertake implementation by the end of December 2016;
2. Direct Administration to further investigate collaboration opportunities with the Office of Land Servicing and Housing (OLSH) and private sector landowners towards TOD to align with opening day of Green Line; and
3. **Direct Administration to conduct a scoping report, and report to Council through the SPC on Transportation and Transit no later than 2015 December 11, on amending the TOD Policy Implementation Document contained in Report PUD2015-0765**

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(Attachment 2), by the addition of a Section 1 “Policy Tasks”, Subsection F, as follows:

“F That the economic development and diversification potential of the green line Transit Oriented Development (TOD) be investigated. And further, that this analysis includes an assessment of opportunities to attract high potential business sectors as identified by the Calgary Economic Development strategy of November 2014 and be continental in scope.”

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2014 March 31 Regular Meeting, NM2014-14 (Councillors Carra and Keating) was approved as follows:

“NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council direct Administration to hire a consultant to work collaboratively with Administration on SETway vision and objectives, TOD scoping and planning in conjunction with the Pre-design and other applicable processes and also undertake community-based visioning with the impacted neighbourhoods and stakeholders.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit no later than 2015 October with the associated functional plan amendments regarding any potential alignment and station location modifications including additions and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development with TOD area plans and the associated policy amendments and/or replacements.”

BACKGROUND

Functional planning studies for the Southeast Light Rail Transit (LRT) started in 1983 to establish alignment and station locations, and were completed in 2012. The Council approved alignment guided subsequent land use reviews and right-of-way purchases along the corridor.

A series of scoping and staging studies were undertaken from 2011 to 2014 validating previously completed work and identifying service options. In the absence of sufficient funding for LRT, options were developed including a staging plan for implementation using Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on opening day.

In 2012 December the SETway Staging Update (TT2012-0754) report was approved. Related reports have been presented to Council specifically addressing TOD planning status updates (PUD2014-0675), work plan and cost benefit analysis summaries for the Green Line (TT2014-0676 and TT2014-0690), and detail work plans and options for advancement of construction and staged openings (TT2014-0918).

Funding for the Green Line Southeast has come in phases starting with \$8 million from the Government of Alberta’s Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP) and \$4 million from the

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Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) towards pre-design and TOD studies in December 2012. In November 2013 Council approved the Green Line Fund, an amount of \$52 million annually from 2015 to 2024. In July 2015, the Federal government announced funding of up to \$1.53 billion towards the Green Line LRT from the Public Transit Fund. Application guidelines and funding details have yet to be released from the Federal Government. Administration is preparing a report as directed by Council (NM 2015-09) for the December SPC on Transportation and Transit meeting in response to this funding opportunity.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The southeast portion of the Green Line will provide a critical link from downtown Calgary to the Seton town centre and provides an opportunity to influence the development pace along the corridor. Green Line will be a catalyst for urban development, development densification and will encourage community growth around TOD hubs.

Attachment 1 provides a detailed summary of the alternatives and analysis evaluation criteria used to determine the recommended alignment, station locations, and short- to mid- term TOD viable sites. Attachment 2 provides an overview of the potential policy tasks required for implementation.

Below is a synopsis of the TOD study outcomes:

TOD Priority Site Selection

The 15 stations along the southeast leg of the Green Line vary in terms of location, built form, stage of development and their local area policies. A TOD site selection process was undertaken through which five station areas were identified as having the greatest short- to mid-term TOD benefit and opportunity (10-20 years).

The priority site selection study illustrates that stations in newer communities already benefit from contemporary policies and Area Structure Plans (ASPs). Evidence of TOD is seen through higher density development, i.e. Quarry Park, McKenzie Towne, and Hospital stations. Established communities with older policies were found to warrant further study to establish policy amendments and other work required to enable TOD.

A real estate market study (Attachment 3) was used to inform the creation of TOD concepts at select stations through the charrette process. The study illustrates the potential demand for residential, commercial and office development in southeast Calgary. It also demonstrates potential urban demand and market opportunities which would result from the stimulus of a new transit service, such as Green Line, on real estate development patterns. Its findings influenced select station locations and alignment decisions.

Built form, use and scale of development must respond to the area context. TOD is not a one-size fits all solution. Density takes various forms and urban development plans should reflect the various types of densification outside of high-rise towers. Evaluation of the real estate market potential of station sites along the southeast leg of the Green Line informed the proposed development concepts. They reflect viable densities that are supported by stakeholders and align with The City's strategic growth objectives.

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Green Line Southeast Charrette Overview

As a result of the TOD priority site selection process, the five stations selected as being most viable were further studied in the form of public charrettes. A charrette is an intensive, multi-day design workshop led by a consultant team. It brings stakeholders together to develop a feasible, desirable development concept that all participants support. Three charrettes, which encompassed five station areas, were held in the following communities:

- Inglewood/Ramsay and 26th Avenue
- Lynnwood/Millican and Ogden
- South Hill

The goal of the charrettes was to identify development opportunities within a TOD zone (600m station radius), while determining the appropriate scale and type of development. Community issues and aspirations for redevelopment were discussed and were incorporated into the conceptual designs. The discussions of initial ideas were then refined into preliminary concepts. These concepts were reviewed and discussed with the community to create a preferred development plan.

This process and the individual results for the charrettes are the subject of Attachment 4.

Development Potential Analysis

An evaluation was undertaken to analyse the economic and development potential for residential, retail and office development, including their respective potential for tax revenue generation. The evaluation compared development situations in their current state without policy that enables TOD, versus site potential when developed according to concepts identified in the charrettes. The latter would require updated land use policies and land use redesignations.

The results of the development potential analysis are included in Attachment 5.

Potential TOD Policy Implementation

The Green Line project has been a collaboration between Planning and Development and Assessment (PDA), Transportation, and stakeholders; creating feasible and supportable concepts. During the next phases of the Green Line project, collaboration is envisioned to continue and include PDA, Transportation, OLSH and the private sector landowners. The focus will be at select catalyst sites where there is potential for development to open with the Green Line. This will support ridership and contribute to the creation of vibrant and active communities. Development concurrent with the Green Line supports economic activity with many mobility choices, ensures the vision established through stakeholder engagement is delivered and eliminates duplication of planning at a later date.

The strategy to realize the supported TOD concepts as part of the Green Line will consist of numerous components. These include policy updates, potential Municipal Development Plan (MDP) amendments, reviews of other city wide policies, City-initiated land use redesignations of parcels identified in the three charrettes as TOD opportunities at five stations areas, and catalyst collaboration projects and pilot projects.

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An overview of the potential TOD implementation tools are identified in Attachment 2.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Public engagement has been ongoing since the development of the functional studies. Continued engagement over the past year has included three streams of stakeholders: The development market sector, City wide business units, and the public. Input from all three streams has been critical to the recommendation for alignment, station locations, and development of TOD concepts. Coordination with adjacent developers/landowners was critical to integrating the alignment and station locations to influence development plans and reflect those already underway. The recommendations balance community priorities, are supportable by the market, align with City objectives, and demonstrate the vision that the Green Line is more than a transit line; it is a city shaping initiative.

The development market sector included both the real estate market study and a separate Developer Advisory Group (DAG). The DAG was created to provide insight into the requirements and priorities of the real estate development community. With approximately 30 representatives the DAG included all sectors of Calgary's development industry. From January to September 2015, six meetings were held to discuss alignment recommendations, station locations and development opportunities. The DAG members were taken on a site visit of the southeast leg of the Green Line to understand the urban context. Individual DAG members contributed to the charrettes by providing market insight into the evolving concepts. The majority of DAG participants have expressed a desire to continue this engagement for further planning of the Green Line.

The public engagement process was a successful, collaborative endeavour with stakeholders who have expressed support for not only the recommended alignment, stations, and TOD sites, but also for the Green Line initiative being a transformational urban development mechanism. The letters of support received from the various stakeholders are included in Attachment 6.

Strategic Alignment

The Green Line is identified as part of the City's RouteAhead 30-year Strategic Plan for Transit in Calgary. The RouteAhead plan is aligned with the policy direction and strategic goals of the MDP and Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP), the 2020 Sustainability Direction and Council's Action Plan priorities.

The TOD focus for the Green Line aligns with the MDP outcomes for major activity centres, neighborhood and urban corridors. The MDP and CTP aim to build a city in which people have more choices of where to live and how to travel. To achieve the 60-year outcomes of the MDP and CTP, a balance of cumulative growth between established and green field communities is required. This means an incremental, continuous shift of where the city grows. Facilitating development in the Centre City, Activity Centres and Corridors will help achieve this goal. Creating more choice in housing and linking areas by transit are key steps towards implementing the MDP and CTP policies. The need for the city to grow and densify in strategic areas can be linked to achieving a better balance between population and jobs. Creating this balance and creating opportunities is critical towards meeting the needs of future citizens and markets for development.

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The Green Line continues to coordinate with several City departments and business units and has been supported throughout the process. Key projects from other departments include: Main Streets, Pedestrian Strategy, Bonnybrook Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion, 12th Street S.E. bridge replacement, Ninth Avenue S.E. bridge replacement, Seton Recreation Facility, Glenmore Trail/Ogden Road S.E. Interchange, and the Highfield Landfill Remediation. Coordination with OLSH has focused on maximizing the TOD potential of City-owned lands in alignment with the citywide TOD strategy.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The Green Line will contribute directly to The City's social, environmental, and economic goals. It is a strategic infrastructure investment that facilitates more compact development patterns identified in the MDP. Improving travel options in established communities makes them more attractive to live in and develop. This potentially slows the rate of urban expansion, which reduces the associated loss of natural habitat and agricultural land, instead promoting urban densification. Longer extents of transit infrastructure help create complete communities in suburban areas while encouraging development.

Social

Attraction and retention of international investment in a competitive world market are potential benefits of Green Line. Great communities are adaptable to the needs of current and future residents. Communities that provide a broad range of housing choices and commercial services, supported by high quality transit and transportation choices, allow people to meet day-to-day needs within their own neighborhood. A variety of transportation network options across the city, along with a more diverse built form, provides for adaptability and flexibility of the built environment over the long term. This diversity provides more options and facilitates access to housing, recreation and commercial services.

Environmental

As a city shaping initiative, the Green Line requires the project to plan with the intent of delivering on TOD sites that are mixed used, mixed income and provide for all generations, thereby attracting and maintaining a diverse community that ensures economic development and vitality. Mixed-use neighbourhoods are the places where people live, work, play, shop and learn. Mixed income communities are financially accessible to all Calgarians. Consideration for multi-generational communities and the places where residents can transition through all stages of life ensure a long term, sustainable plan.

Economic

Recommendations in this report were strategically conceived by integrating transit and planning. Leveraging the transit investment maximizes the economic return through land use with the intent of exposing new and redevelopment opportunities along the corridor. This reduces the fiscal impact of growth, and promotes integrated and sustainable development. The investment in transit not only provides improved service but connects communities and activity centers. As a result, more population and activity generates sustained ridership and economic growth thereby creating a multiplier effect of the infrastructure investment.

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Emphasis was placed on demonstrating the development potential that transit offers and the benefit of having all modes of travel choice. The success of community-based visioning and the DAG engagement created awareness and interest in potential development sites presented by the Green Line. Complete communities that are connected and served by the Green Line support economic growth and offer significant investment opportunities.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Maximizing the public investment, enabling the highest and best use of lands at transit stations and developing the primary LRT transit network to provide mobility options to all Calgarians are corporate priorities.

The policy work required to deliver the visions established through the charrettes and as outlined in the Potential TOD Policy Implementation document (Attachment 2) will require staff resources. These resources are required in addition to those already committed to undertake the Main Streets project, which is also a corporate priority. Both of these resource demands may impact ongoing policy and application review work. Additional staff or the services of consultants may be required for certain tasks.

Reprioritization of current and future work plans may be required in order to realize TOD in conjunction with the Green Line opening and within existing budgets.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no additional capital budget implications associated with these recommendations.

The Green Line provides more than transit functionality. Further investment in infrastructure that goes beyond stations will connect transit to communities and promotes ridership. To enable development activity, fully realize the TOD potential and maximize the return on transit investment, additional infrastructure investment may also be required. This may have impacts on capital projects across various City business units and may include streetscape improvements, new multi-use pathways, and utility upgrades. These infrastructure investments are not currently included in the current Green Line budget.

Risk Assessment

The primary risk to the TOD concepts developed is the potential restrictions imposed from The City's review of land use policies and risk mitigation requirements for developments in proximity to heavy rail corridors. An increase in awareness of hazardous goods movements has raised a number of concerns across Canada. Municipalities are reviewing the implications of this potential risk to development.

While the TOD planning work should continue, clear guidance to all stakeholders will be required. Particular emphasis should be placed on establishing guidelines and policies that do not unreasonably constrain TOD and mixed-use in station areas or established communities. A critical mass of population density is a prerequisite for mixed-use and urban vibrancy. Furthermore, similar scales and types of development on both sides of a street are critical for

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creating attractive, vibrant streetscapes. Railway setback policies should be carefully considered so as not to preclude these aspects of redevelopment.

Additional risk is presented if the City allows temporary or single-purpose uses to be developed in TOD areas. Such uses may not maximize the transit infrastructure investment, may contradict TOD policies in place, and may not meet the TOD vision established through this project.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Immediate action to update Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policies is required to facilitate timely development along the Green Line. The Green Line project, in addition to constructing rapid transit infrastructure should proactively spur new TOD projects.

Continued integration of Planning and Transit infrastructure design will be critical to promote and facilitate redevelopment and/or new development towards the Green Line TOD vision.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. The Green Line Southeast – Where We Are and Where We're Going
2. Potential TOD Policy Implementation
3. Market Study Summary
4. Green Line Southeast Charrette Overview
5. Development Potential Analysis
6. Letters of Support