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Density Bonusing
Citizen Engagement Workshop
What We Heard



Cliff Bungalow – Mission Community Association CBMCA

March 4, 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Community engagement is the cornerstone of good planning. It figures prominently in imagineCALGARY, the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) for Cliff Bungalow and Mission.

In our community, we are fortunate to have many volunteers and residents who continue to be passionate about creating and maintaining great community. Over the years, they have contributed thousands of hours to help realize a shared vision for the neighbourhood. We are heartened by their ongoing efforts, and while we can't thank them all here, we wish to acknowledge the following volunteers who helped make our latest engagement effort such a success:

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ABOUT CLIFF BUNGALOW - MISSION

- We are a member of imagineCALGARY and committed to realizing Calgary's long-range plan for urban sustainability.
- We are twin turn of the century communities whose unique character has created a strong sense of place, grounded by historical context.
- We are one of Calgary's most dense communities (Calgary Herald, 2013). At an average density of 8,945 people/km², Cliff Bungalow Mission is Calgary's fourth most dense, yet its urban form remains ostensibly human-scale in comparison to its peer group (see for example, China Town at 8,274 people/km² and Beltline at 8,999 people/km²).
- We are one of Calgary's most walkable communities (Walk Score of Calgary Alberta, 2014). This walkability has translated into our community being the only known neighbourhood where car ownership is less than 1 per capita (NCR, 2009).
- We are one of the few examples of a complete community. This is readily apparent to anybody walking down 4th Street. Our selection of services includes health and dental care, banks, pharmacies, grocery stores and a variety of shops, restaurants and boutiques.
- We are Calgary's most sustainability community. If all of Calgary were built like Mission, it would use 60% less energy (with data from NRC, 2009 and City of Calgary, 2011).
- These qualities provide the City of Calgary (The City) with its best example of a neighbourhood, which embodies the principles of Smart Growth (compact, walkable, sense of place, mixed-use, human-scale) and is leading the way on realizing the imagineCALGARY vision.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On the evening of February 18, 2015 approximately 65 citizens attended a workshop on density bonusing. The workshop lasted three hours. It included a presentation on density bonusing, a survey and facilitated group discussion.
- This report presents a summary of what we heard at the workshop. It provides The City with i) a response to density bonusing in the context of LOC2012-0025 and ii) a more general consideration of how we want our community to grow and what citizens think of density bonusing as a planning tool for our community.

This is what we heard:

- Community residents are opposed to density bonusing as a planning tool.
- A clear majority of residents (82%) believe that spot upzoning should not be allowed and planning decisions should respect our Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs).
- If a density bonusing scheme is imposed on our neighbourhood, a clear majority of residents (84%) believe the community should receive a public benefit.
- Density bonusing (if implemented) needs to be tailored to our community.
- The governance model should place community at the centre of decision making.
- Approval should only occur where the following conditions have been met: 1) proof that the proposed site can not be economically redeveloped under existing zoning; 2) commitment from The City to provide matching funds or dedicate tax dollars associated with the extra density, to fund projects that will benefit the community; and 3) the community has a clearly identified project for enhancing the neighbourhood that requires funding.

FOREWORD

This report has been prepared to provide The City with our community's perspective on density bonusing. As we noted in the acknowledgements, community engagement is the cornerstone of good planning and it is with this in mind that we are pleased to present The City with the results of our stakeholder engagement workshop. It is a summary of what we heard and is intended to help The City make informed decisions about our community.

We are passionate about building and maintaining great community. We believe our neighbourhood provides The City with its best example of Smart Growth. It is a compact, walkable, energy-efficient, mixed-use, human-scale neighbourhood with a strong sense of place. We have achieved the same density of places like Chinatown and Beltline but without the need for tall buildings. We believe that is a testament to the continued validity of our ARPs as planning documents that should be respected and upheld. It is from this standpoint that we continue to oppose spot upzoning and density bonusing as valid responses to densification.

Tall buildings have few if any benefits. As our community has shown, tall buildings are not a perquisite for densification. However, there is a growing body of evidence that shows they have poor environmental performance, threaten the social cohesion of communities, lead to poorer health outcomes, degrade the public realm and destroy the human scale of a city (Gifford, 2007; NCR, 2011 and Loomans, 2014).

1. INTRODUCTION

On the evening of February 18, 2015 the CBMCA hosted a stakeholder engagement workshop on density bonusing. Approximately 65 citizens attended the workshop. This included residents of the community in the majority but also a minority of property developers who lived outside the community. Results of the workshop should therefore be read with the understanding that a small but un-quantified number of participants were *not* residents. The event lasted three hours and was structured around three main activities. A presentation was given at the start of the event, followed by a short question and answer session. Participants were then asked to join one of six table discussions where facilitators and scribes worked with participants to answer three questions. Finally, at the conclusion of the workshop, each table presented the results of their discussion back to the other participants at the workshop. In addition to the workshop, a voluntary survey form was distributed for participants to fill out and return.

2. WORKSHOP RESULTS - WHAT WE HEARD

2.1. Survey Results

Participants were invited to fill out a survey. A total of 38 respondents filled out the survey comprised of three questions. A summary of responses received is presented below.

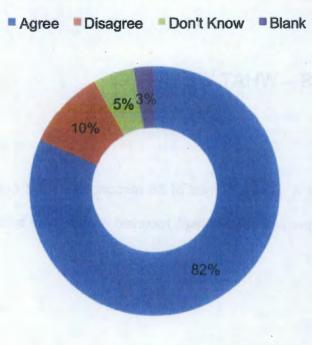
2.1.1. Percentage of Respondents Against Tall Buildings

QUESTION 1

"I do not support LAND USE CHANGE LOC2012-0025 to increase height from 15 m. normally permitted to 24 m. Spot upzoning undermines our ARP and could lead to unplanned high-rise development. Numerous examples of developments in our community demonstrate that economic and density targets have been achieved under our ARP and zoning."

Figure 1 below summarizes the response to question one. A clear majority of respondents (82%) supported the idea that building height should respect the limits specified in our ARP.

Figure 1: Respondents Who Agree Building Height Should Respect our ARP



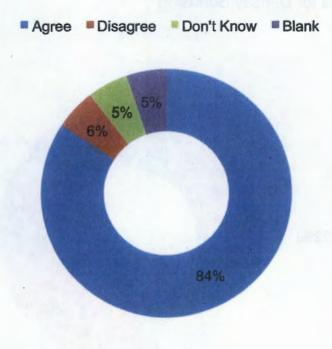
2.1.2. Percentage of Respondents in Favour of Community Benefits

QUESTION 2

"If, despite the lack of support by the Community, Council proceeds with a decision to increase the building height on this site, there should be some form of compensation/benefits to offset the negative impacts and increased demands of taller buildings on the community."

Figure 2 below summarizes the response to question two. A clear majority of respondents (84%) support the idea that the community should be compensated for allowing tall buildings to be built in our community.

Figure 2: Respondents Who Agree the Community Should be Compensated



2.1.3. Community Priorities for Density Bonusing

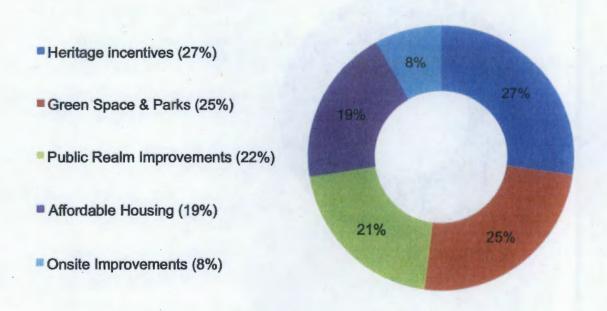
QUESTION 3

"Please rank the following types of benefits according to their importance to the community:

Onsite Improvements	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Public Realm Improvements	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Affordable Housing	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Heritage incentives	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW

Figure 3 below, summarizes the response to question three. The aggregated responses show that 27% of respondents favour heritage, followed by green space and parks at 25%, improvements to the public realm at 21% and affordable housing at 19%. A minority of respondents (8%) favoured onsite improvements.

Figure 3: Community Priorities for Density Bonusing



2.2. Discussion Results

Participants attending the workshop were asked a series of three questions. Once each table of participants had finished discussion, they were asked to report back to the group. Based on this feedback several key themes emerged. These themes are summarized below. A transcript of all recorded responses is presented in Appendix 1.

2.2.1. "How do you think our community should grow?"

KEY THEMES:

- Our ARP's should to be respected and upheld by The City.
- Our ARP's are the result of considerable stakeholder engagement.
- Residents have a right to expect a stable planning regime.
- Our ARP's already allow for some of the highest density in Calgary.
- Further densification should be harmonized between Cliff Bungalow and Mission.
- Tall buildings are not required for densification.

REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES:

"Our ARP's should be respected and upheld."

"The ARP has been done for a reason and many hours have been spent on it."

"There is a difference between piecemeal development and planned development. We need a strategic view to development."

"Taller buildings don't necessarily mean more density."

2.2.2. "What are your thoughts about density bonusing?"

KEY THEMES:

- The community (not the developer) should identify the spending priorities.
- · A density bonusing scheme could lead to a proliferation of tall buildings.
- · Density bonusing (if it's implemented) should be planned for, not driven by the market.
- We should only accept density bonusing where the community has clearly identified a
 project that needs funding (e.g. heritage designation for a specific building).
- The City should match funds or dedicate tax revenue from any increased density to our community.
- Unclear if a density bonusing scheme could actually offset the impacts caused by tall buildings.

REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES:

"We need to work with The City to identify appropriate areas for densification."

"Density bonusing is not a realistic tool for our community. No process is set up for community to administer funds."

"We are concerned that density bonusing would lead to greater approval of density in order for the community to gain greater funds."

"I have zero faith that density bonusing creates meaningful funds for communities."

"The City of Calgary should match funds."

2.2.3. "If funding is available what are your priorities?"

KEY THEMES:

- Density bonusing looks like a scheme to pay for public goods that The City should already be providing (e.g. affordable housing).
- We should not accept funding unless the community has clearly identified a project it would like to fund.
- Improvements to the public realm should benefit residents of all ages and walks of life.
- Heritage conservation (especially long 4th Street).
- Better parks, more green space and access to the Elbow River.
- Plazas, pocket parks and public places where people can meet and mingle.

REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES:

"The City should be supporting affordable housing, heritage conservation and improvements to the public realm as part of their normal business."

"Pocket parks on 4th street."

"The majority of our table supports heritage conservation."

"Affordable housing is a priority for some people at our table."

"Our table would like to see Elbow Island Park made a priority."

"Community should be involved / consulted on a project by project basis."

3. SUMMARY

- Approximately 65 people participated in our workshop on density bonusing. We
 consider this to be a high level of engagement and believe it reflects the importance of
 this issue to the community.
- A clear majority of participants (82%) oppose LOC2012-0025 and the introduction of a density bonusing scheme for our neighbourhood.
- However, if Council plans to proceed with the approval for tall buildings in our community, then a clear majority of participants (84%) support the idea that the community should be compensated through some type of density bonusing scheme.
- Heritage conservation (27%), green space and parks (25%), improvements to the public realm (21%) and affordable housing (19%) were the top priorities for the community. Onsite improvements (8%) were considered the lowest priority.
- Approval should only occur where the following conditions have been met: 1) proof
 that the proposed site can not be economically redeveloped under existing zoning; 2)
 commitment from The City to provide matching funds or dedicate tax dollars
 associated with the extra density, to fund projects that will benefit the community; and
 3) the community has a clearly identified project for enhancing the neighbourhood that
 requires funding.

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APPENDIX 1 TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED RESPONSES

Question 1

"How do you think our community should grow? What role should our ARP play? How do you feel about making our community more compact/dense? What are your thoughts on high-rise development?"

Responses to Question 1:

- "We are already meeting our density contribution to the city."
- "Existing policy already allows for a great deal of additional density."
- "Plenty of other mechanisms for accommodating greater population density."
- "Put the towers along the major roadways such as 17th Avenue."
- "Someone left the Beltline because of shadowing from towers. Northern communities need to be sensitive to shadowing issues."
- "Concern expressed about facilities and services for a larger population."
- "Encourage the development community to work with the ARP to achieve its goals."
- "We need to make politicians respect and value the ARP."
- "There is a difference between piecemeal development and planned development.
 We need a strategic view to development."
- "Some people at our table are open to change, but subject to conditions. e.g. must prove economics, prove increase density."
- "There is already amply opportunity for tall buildings."
- · "Height increase does not equal a density increase."
- "We see the provision of affordable housing as being a potential benefit for allowing more high-rise development."

- "Our table believes that redevelopment (densification) should be spread evenly between our two communities."
- "We need to work with The City to identify appropriate areas for densification."
- · "Make process proactive."
- "Taller buildings don't necessarily mean more density."
- "If it was a high-rise for seniors our table would treat it differently."
- "We have to consider that we have to take some of the density along with the rest
 of the city."
- "A number of houses in a land assembly turns into a high-rise how does this happen?"
- "If the development doesn't add to densification it should not be allowed."
- "The ARP has been done for a reason and many hours have been spent on it."
- "The ARP should be updated."
- "Our table is concerned property values might go down if density bonusing is implemented."
- "We need to be open to some change."
- "We need a visionary view."
- "It might be time to revise our ARP."
- "There is still lots of space for densification in Cliff Bungalow Mission, so why force densification of this one site?"
- · "Some luxury developments do not actually increase density."
- "If density means a meaningful increase in residential population (instead of more square feet for fewer people) it is welcome, but it must include housing options for

people at all phases of life – young and single, young couples, families, retirees, and a wide range of economic situations."

- "In the right place a high-rise is ok."
- "Misunderstanding between density and high-rise need a clear definition."
- "Location need to consider surrounding area."
- "Increased population is a reality of the city's current situation and direction."
- "Our table is ok with increasing population and understands the pressure on this community."
- "If adding density/high-rises, add other uses, especially along the river."
- "Add density only in areas that are least harmful to existing public realm."
- "Fear loss of green spaces need to identify important 'gems' to the community and ensure they are protected."
- "There are already opportunities for densification under the present system."
- "If I wanted to live amongst high-rises I would have bought in Beltline."
- "We need balance on densification between our two ARPs."
- "We already have incredible density. We should be getting a density bonus already."
- "The mission ARP allows for a theoretical build out to accommodate 30,000 people. This compares with 45,000 people under the Beltline ARP."
- "We need to preserve what we have."
- "If the ARP is not being respected then we're into market driven planning."
- "High-rise development will wreck our quality of life."
- "Traffic problems will increase."
- "Property taxes will go up."

- "We may get more sinkholes after future flooding events."
- · High-rise development will block out more sun."
- "Our ARP's should be respected and upheld"
- "There could be orderly ways to develop."
- "Developers shouldn't be asking for relaxations."
- "Mission is close to downtown and change is good for young people to live and work."
- "Density can come in many different forms including what we already have."
- "I'm concerned about traffic volumes increasing."

Question 2

"What are your thoughts about density bonusing? What do you see as the positives and negatives? Do you think it could be an effective tool for managing growth? How would you like to see it implemented?"

Responses to Question 2:

- "Sacrificing valued aspects of the community in exchange for money."
- "No support at this table for density bonusing in a general sense, but there can be some advantage for saving heritage buildings ("heritage bonusing")."
- "Some confusion about a lack of track record in this city... unsure how the process would work and what benefits could realistically be realized."
- "Implemented as a community-managed system. If this is going to be forced on us, the community needs to direct how the money is spent."
- "Important that funds are not allocated to things that are the City's responsibilities (reasonable levels of service and maintenance)."
- "Density bonusing is not a realistic tool for our community. No process is set up for community to administer funds."
- "Density bonusing should not be used for onsite improvements."
- "Density bonusing should only be used for heritage buildings and we need to inventory our remaining heritage buildings."
- "Other density bonusing offsets (e.g. parks) are unrealistic."
- "Density bonusing should be used for creating a small community gathering space."
- "The City of Calgary should match funds."

- "We are concerned that density bonusing would lead to greater approval of density in order for the community to gain greater funds."
- "The City should be responsible for doing the improvements that are being proposed under density bonusing themselves."
- "Our table does not see density bonusing as an effective tool for managing growth."
- "Areas already designated for higher density should be dealing with higher density."
- "Our community should have a list of things that preserve the character of the community."
- "It needs to spread out in a rational way rather than along 4th Street."
- "Could we direct density bonusing to the Holy Cross site?"
- "Valuation for density bonusing should not be based on historical comparable market data but should be based on the value paid for an actual unit."
- "Make the guy who has the application before The City pay so that next time this happens they think twice."
- "We really need to define how density bonusing is calculated and what we are expecting in return."
- "Density bonusing will place increased pressure on our existing infrastructure."
- "We should have a mix of medium density spread throughout the community."
- "Huge responsibility for the community to administer funds."
- "The Holy Cross site has already been identified as a site for tall buildings."
- "We should identify which area, street etc. are most appropriate. Which ones are better able to receive density bonusing."

- "The community should have input as to what sites should be available for density bonusing and to what amount the density should be worth."
- "Concern about shading from towers. Density bonusing should only be allowed where shade will fall on major roadways."
- "Density bonusing could be used for preserving historical buildings."
- "Density bonusing could be used for public improvements."
- "The City should match funds."
- "At present there is not process for management of density bonusing funds."
- "Contravening the ARP should only be done in exceptional circumstances."
- "I have zero faith that density bonusing creates meaningful funds for communities."
- "Worried about lack of parking."
- "Do not like idea of density bonusing because we don't trust developers to pull through or fulfill promise."
- "Surprised The City has not put density bonusing in place."
- "Don't support the increased height of buildings."
- Who should be managing money from density bonusing? The Developer should have no say! Community Association and The City should work together. The City should not have full responsibility of money."
- "System should be implemented only when pre-conditions are met."
- "Tiered system for where density bonusing can be allowed."
- "Priority should be given to protecting heritage buildings along 4th street.
- "Green space and parks make more available and improve them."
- "Improve accessibility to the River (river pathway)."
- "More community amenities (e.g. river pathway)."

- "affordable housing precludes diversity which is enjoyed a lot by the people in the community."
- "What would we spend the money on? We don't have any specific projects identified."
- "There should be an emphasis on preserving historical resources along 4th Street."
- "We should identify areas that need conservation protection."
- "Conservation is important."
- "I don't like density bonusing."
- "We already pay taxes and believe this should be spent in our community to cover the things being proposed under density bonusing."
- "We think The City should take leadership instead of off-loading affordable housing and parks, etc. onto us."
- "We have vacant lots in our community, why aren't they being used for densification?"
- "Instead of a onetime payment, taxes from in the increased density should be earmarked for our community."
- "I'm in favour of preserving heritage."
- "We should keep our present zoning bylaws."

Question 3

"If funding is available, what are your priorities for the neighbourhood? We have identified affordable housing, heritage conservation, and improvements to the public realm as possible priorities. Do you think one area deserves greater attention than another? Are they equally important? Do you have any other priorities we should consider?"

Responses to Question 3:

- "If we value our heritage and lower density, you could purchase key properties in the community."
- "Heritage incentives offer the best benefits for the community, while other options on the list should already be the mandate/responsibility of the developer or the City."
- "Replace the deteriorating artworks on 4th Street, perhaps on a cost-sharing basis with the BRZ."
- "Improved light standards and street furniture, cost shared with City/BRZ?"
- "Improvements should be in the heart of the community, not in far flung spots where most residents would not benefit."
- "Fund art initiatives, creation of art spaces."
- "Most cities should take responsibility for affordable housing. We should not have to consider this as an 'amenity'."
- "Our table would like to see Elbow Island Park made a priority."
- "Affordable housing."
- "Public space improvements."
- "Community composting bins."
- "Restoration of heritage houses."

- "updating the Holy Cross Centre."
- "funds should go immediately into an identified project."
- "Clean-up vandalism."
- · "Street art."
- "Public realm, heritage conservation, affordable housing, parks."
- "Inner city communities should be working together to speak with one voice as long
 as we are all speaking the same language."
- "Social media is powerful."
- "Pocket parks on 4th street."
- "The majority of our table supports heritage conservation."
- "Affordable housing is a priority for some people at our table."
- "More street art."
- "Affordable housing should be the responsibility of The City."
- · "Density bonusing could be used for preservation of heritage buildings."
- · "Improvement of existing parks."
- "Neighbourhood gathering places such as pocket parks on 4th Street."
- "The City should be supporting affordable housing, heritage conservation and improvements to the public realm as part of their normal business."
- "Funding priorities should be consistent with existing ARP and bylaw."
- "It would be great if the BRZ supported meaningful efforts to create a truly walkable community by ensuring the shops and services necessary for a complete community."
- "There is an increase of young children, it would be great if there were more child and family specific services and amenities to keep families in the hood."
- · "Community should be involved / consulted on a project by project basis."

- "We should have an idea of what the community association is looking for when this group goes to council and advocates for a fund."
- "Preserve 4th Street. Make it walkable, beautiful. New build sterilizes the street."
- "Heritage conservation along 4th Street."
- "Green space and parks. Places for wildlife. More/better boulevards."
- "Dedicated bike lanes. Close 2nd Street and make it a walkway."
- "We should use the term social housing not affordable housing."
- "We are deficient in park space. We need green space. We should have plazas on 4th
 Street."
- "We need public places where people can hang out."
- · "Heritage development should be our top priority."
- "Onsite improvements should be our bottom priority."
- "We already have affordable housing in terms of secondary suites and this is degrading our housing stock."
- · "I question whether density bonusing funds collected can pay for any of this."

