

# BRIEFING

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Item # 11.2

**Operational Services Briefing to  
Community Development Committee  
2023 June 28**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CD2023-0510**

## **Place Matters Project Update**

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### **PURPOSE OF BRIEFING**

Parks Foundation Calgary and Vivo For Healthier Generations submitted a Council Innovation Fund application in September 2021 (PFC2021-1349) that was approved for \$100,000 to fund a grassroots engagement initiative in North Central Calgary led by the two organizations. A condition of the funding was to report back to Council by Q2 2023, but the project team requires more time to complete final engagement sessions and compile a list of priority projects. The project team anticipates completion of the project and ability to bring a final report, including a prioritized list of projects, to Council by Q4 2023.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

This project, now titled “Place Matters – A North Calgary Project”, intends to reimagine the development of grass roots park spaces with the goal of fostering a sense of belonging in North Central Calgary. VIVO and Parks Foundation Calgary have brought together 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 new and existing communities. The deliverables of this project include both a long-term strategy model for grassroots park development and a list of prioritized projects for North Central Calgary.

#### Summary of Work Completed to Date:

Phase One of the project included engagement of community members to gain an understanding of what they felt would help develop vibrant, thriving neighborhoods. Over 300 people participated in the engagement for this event.

Using a co-development model, we collaborated with key community mobilizers on an event held in October 2022 that included targeted engagements such as:

- A Blessing of the Land (open to the public)
- Bus tours targeting business owners and operators and community activators
- VIVO Engagement with children & parents, using loose parts play and visual notetaking
- Asking community members questions such as “I want a place where...” and “I feel like I belong when...”
- Video storytelling about the community

The following themes were the key takeaways from the Phase One event:

1. Build Things that People Care for and are Sustainable:
  - Spaces where community has been given a feeling of input or ownership become more sustainable as citizens are more likely to proactively collaborate to maintain these areas.
2. A Well-Run Community:
  - Community members overarchingly said they valued a space where they felt safe, could create real connections and could learn more about other perspectives, cultures, and living healthier lives.

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## 3. Prosperous Communities:

- Local business owners were focused on growth and connection with other businesses/owners; identified vibrant public spaces as an ideal way to attract other businesses and a critical mass of customers.

## 4. Safe & Inspiring Neighborhoods:

- Community activators valued the creation of safe, flexible adaptable and accessible spaces. Integration of art and targeted infrastructure are important in public spaces to help shape the community and lead to diverse impacts.

Phase Two of the project is in progress. To date, Vivo has conducted twelve interviews at a community and city level to identify and understand the 'grass roots' roles and process for developing, activating, and maintaining outdoor public/park spaces. This included process mapping the major tasks and steps, identifying primary audiences involved, affected parties, input and outputs, facilitators, barriers, unique elements for specific projects and recommendations. The process findings and learnings from the 12 interviews will be validated with interviewees to ensure the major themes are captured effectively.

As part of this phase of the project, Parks Foundation Calgary is working to understand existing outdoor amenities in North Calgary, and identify exciting planned/in progress projects, as well as those that are dreamed of by members of the community, including community associations, cultural groups, school, sports groups, and community champions. Work to date has included a community survey, review of existing parks database, building an initial list of projects to be prioritized as part of the Phase 3 event, reviewing The City's Equity Gap Analysis to ensure alignment and working with Human Insights consultant to begin drafting final report and develop toolkits for future use.

### Next Steps

Phase 3 of the project will include a final community event where participants will prioritize the initial list of projects. Following the event, Human Insights will compile engagement results and complete the Place Matters – A North Calgary Project final report.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Status of Project Financials
2. Proposed Final Report Structure