Planning, Development & Assessment Report to
SPC on Planning and Urban Development
2014 JANUARY 15

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TRANSFORMING PLANNING: PROGRAM WRAP UP AND SYSTEM SUSTAINMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Transforming Planning program was developed in response to Council direction to re-engineer and simplify the planning process. The objective of the program is to deliver a system that focuses on outcomes – achieving the goals of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), and provides excellent service to citizens and customers.

An outline of a new planning system for Calgary was created through collaboration with stakeholders involved and invested in planning in the city. The outline highlights that achieving great outcomes requires a culture that supports and generates visionary effort. The outline provided a strategic focus and orientation of work in the Transforming Planning program and throughout the department to create specific projects and processes that move towards the new system. A stakeholder shared culture of action, leadership, collaboration and informed risk taking is reinforced by a suite of changes to existing City processes and a work plan for change. This report provides information on successes realized by the Transforming Planning program.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS
That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development recommends that Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DATED 2014 JANUARY 15:

That Council receive Report PUD2014-0057 for information.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY
On 2011 November 21, Council approved the business plan for Planning, Development & Assessment (PDA), which includes Strategy 2P3: Re-engineer and simplify the planning process, including consideration of a new land use regime in order to implement the Municipal Development Plan (MDP). This strategy mirrors a directional statement in Council's Fiscal Plan for Calgary (approved on 2011 June 28) under the priority area "Investing in great communities and a vibrant urban fabric."

On 2012 June 25, Council adopted PUD2012-0354, *Planning Improvement Initiative*, which approved in principle the issue description, program goal and principles, preliminary program approach and scope, and exclusions, and directed Administration to confirm these with stakeholders. Council directed Administration to work with stakeholders to develop and implement the work plan, and to report to Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development with periodic updates three times per year, until the program concludes.

On 2012 December 10, Council received a program update in C2012-0839, and directed Administration to undertake the development of an outline of the new planning system, and to begin a project of continuously piloting new applications. Administration was also directed to report back through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development no later

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than July 2013 with an update including lessons learned and proposed projects to continue creating the new planning system.

On 2013 April 22, Council received PUD2013-0318, an update for the first quarter of 2013, for information. The report committed Administration to returning to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development in 2013 July to summarize findings from the second quarter of 2013, and recommend projects for the last half of the year.

On 2013 September 16, Council received PUD2013-0577, the update for the second quarter of 2013 (the 2013 July meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development was cancelled due to the flood and in lieu of this meeting a program update was sent to members of Council from the General Manager of Planning, Development & Assessment, in advance of the September report). PUD2013-0577 contained information on the Transforming Planning work plan for the second half of 2013. Council received the report for information, and directed Administration to report to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development no later than 2014 January with key program findings and a sustainment strategy.

BACKGROUND
In June 2012, Council directed Administration to examine the overarching system, or planning regime, rather than continuing to rely on ongoing changes to existing processes. This was identified as a priority for PDA's 2012-2014 business planning cycle. This approach was intended to address three key citizen and business outcomes:
   • Consistency - A lack of direction or clarity with respect to how the Municipal Development Plan (MDP)/Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) were to be used or interpreted and applied in land use and development decisions;
   • Coordination - The need to balance the process-owner or regulator perspective with the user experience viewpoint; and
   • Customer Service - Challenges presented by common observations related to a lack of trust, poor communication, little tolerance for risk, lack of decision-making ability, and siloed perspectives.

In September 2012, the Transforming Planning Working Group ("Working Group") was formed to respond to the direction set by Council in June 2012. The Working Group is comprised of seven members of Administration (representing various teams and sections within PDA) and seven external volunteers (representing the development and building sector, the community sector and the planning and architecture sector).The Working Group developed a work plan to undertake the development of an outline of the new planning system, and to begin a project of continuously piloting new applications, which was presented to Council in December 2012.

In January 2013, the Internal Advisory Committee ("Advisory Committee") for Transforming Planning held its first meeting. The Advisory Committee members include the Mayor, two members of Council, and the general managers of Planning, Development & Assessment; Transportation; and Community Services & Protective Services. At the meeting the Advisory Committee approved their terms of reference, provided input on the planning system vision and

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early outline, and provided direction on the program. The Advisory Committee has continued to meet monthly to provide input and direction on the work of Transforming Planning.

During the first half of 2013, the Working Group engaged hundreds of staff and external stakeholders at workshops and speaking engagements. Through these engagements an outline of a new planning system was developed with the objective of performing a critical function as an organizing framework for decision making. As well, the pilot project began receiving and working on applications to test principles and processes in the new system. This work resulted in positive feedback from applicants, in terms of more effective processes resulting in better outcomes, and more constructive, transparent conversations among stakeholders.

In July 2013, the Transforming Planning team began work on projects to build out the system outline, and continued to test and learn through the Pilot Project.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS
Impact
Throughout 2013, the Transforming Planning program delivered four successful projects:
1. Developed the outline of the New Planning System in collaboration with stakeholders;
2. Implemented and began to operationalize the Pilot Project - a research and development project that considered specific applications for the purpose of testing and building out elements of the new planning system;
3. Assessed the current decision framework and designed a new Decision Framework that better aligns with the culture and function of the new planning system. Included an exploration of the roles and function of the Calgary Planning Commission, other review panels and City staff roles; and
4. Began the transition to the New Planning System, to begin delivery of system-wide transformation, and set in motion a sustainment model across City departments and stakeholder organizations.

Implementation of the new planning system has already started. City staff and stakeholders are commenting that the planning process and interactions are improving. Internal and external stakeholders share ownership of the new planning system. Evidence of this is shown through:
• Sustained interest in Transforming Planning projects – though the pilot project has ended, there is substantial interest in continuing this 'research and development' function;
• Demand for launching new system functions like EXPLORE (a new planning tool that provides an opportunity for up-front, outcome-focused discussions with key stakeholders). At the time that this report was produced, there were eight potential applicants requesting to go through an EXPLORE process;
• Customer satisfaction survey results for Development & Building Approvals (DBA), which demonstrate (among other things) a 13% increase in the number of applicants who say they received a unified response from The City on their application in 2013[1];

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[1] 2013 PDA Customer Satisfaction Survey

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- Increasingly widespread use of elements of the new planning system in both application review and policy creation, for example, the work plans for developer-funded Area Structure Plans (ASPs), Corridor Program proposal, Hillhurst Sunnyside Multi-stakeholder Task Force; and several Land Use Amendment proposals; and
- Testimonials received from City staff, community members and applicants.

In addition, the 16-month long term of engagement of the external members of the Working Group speaks to the commitment of external stakeholders and to the approach taken to advance transforming the planning system.

The above points all demonstrate that the new planning system, delivered in June of 2013, is beginning to take hold. Not only is the implementation of Transforming Planning underway, there are clear signs that ownership of the new system is shared across all stakeholders – not just held by the Working Group. This is a strong testament to the success of the program in initiating transformation.

Results
Major deliverables of the Transforming Planning program include:

1.   Design and delivery of the outline of a new planning system
The intent of developing the outline of a new planning system was to design a system that strives to focus on outcomes, and that creates clarity and predictability for all stakeholders. The system outline addresses an identified need for stronger alignment to Calgary's planning vision, and more opportunity for collaboration or co-creation. These needs were identified by stakeholders early in the program, and were validated by past engagement and research in to planning at The City – which highlighted challenges in planning related to mandate, capacity, and process.

The completed version 1.0 of the outline of a new planning system has significance moving forward as it becomes an organizing framework for decision-making, with regard to the business of or operation of planning in Calgary. It provides a focus for future work, and has guided program and departmental work over the last half of 2013. It also helps to shape and influence work of partner organizations that have a mandate to educate or inform members on planning in Calgary into the future.

More detail on the system outline is included on page 4 of Attachment 1.

2.   IMPLEMENT
Since their launch in February of 2013, the Pilot Team has tested and documented new approaches and tools in service of effectively focusing on outcomes. The team investigated multiple areas of improvement under the themes of:
- New workflows that reflect a more outcome-driven approach to file review;
- Working relationships and corporate/civic perspectives;
- Early collaboration in the application process;
- More efficient, focused communication and information sharing;

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- Clearer expectations around information required to support decision making; and
- Better documentation of decisions.

A primary component of early collaboration is a new tool called EXPLORE. It is intended to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to engage early in the process to share understanding of project intent, discuss issues and must-haves, and reach agreements. It meets the identified need for collaboration prior to committing to design for those projects that are complex or that push the boundaries to achieve big-picture objectives and needs. More detail on IMPLEMENT and the other themes above is included on page 5 of Attachment 1.

3. LEARN

LEARN is a formal function that provides an approach for ongoing improvements to the planning system. It is a tool to apply knowledge back into the system and to ensure that lessons learned are acted upon. Along with GUIDE/ALIGN, it was identified early on by stakeholders as a critical but missing or inconsistently applied function in the old planning system. LEARN was seen as a needed function to allow for systematic continuous improvement of process and policy/bylaws that actively follows through on feedback from stakeholders. In this sense, this new function represents a visible shift to a collaborative culture that continuously promotes learning, values constructive feedback, and learns from mistakes and successes in day to day activities.

LEARN actively captures insights and knowledge through intentional mechanisms and processes from IMPLEMENT phases and from stakeholder feedback for overall system improvement and maintenance. The LEARN mechanisms recognize and analyse conflicts and gaps in policy and best practices. Knowledge that is captured through LEARN is used to inform GUIDE/ALIGN for potential action. Additional information on the LEARN function is included on page 7 of Attachment 1.

4. GUIDE/ALIGN

The GUIDE/ALIGN function establishes a clear linkage between the vision and the operational part of the planning system. It was identified early on by stakeholders as a key element of the new planning system - necessary to give more clarity and predictability to all stakeholders, and to ground the MDP/CTP in day to day decision making.

GUIDE/ALIGN is an ongoing function that analyzes systemic trends, takes input from stakeholders (from LEARN described above), and integrates it across the system. It has three main elements:
1. Prioritize documents and processes that require clarification or updating;
2. Analyze and resolve conflicts and gaps in documents and processes; and
3. Communicate/educate on changes to documents and processes.

In delivering these elements, GUIDE/ALIGN provides integrated priorities, best practises and tools to the system. It ensures impacts of changes are understood by and work for stakeholders. Lastly, it creates a level of accountability in decision making – strengthening alignment to the MDP/CTP, and having clarity on the impacts of decisions for stakeholders. More information on the GUIDE/ALIGN function is included on page 8 of Attachment 1.

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5. Performance measurement/demonstrating performance

To measure performance of the planning system, metrics must be tied to The City's vision and objectives. Metrics drive performance and promote behaviours that are valued in the system. Historically performance has been assessed by volume and time measures, which can drive behaviours that are sometimes at odds with achieving great outcomes. Focusing on process and time measures was not moving the system towards the goals of the MDP/CTP. Metrics in the new system will be grounded in the goals of the MDP/CTP and objectives of the corporation. Metrics will focus on: accountability; impact; customer service; effectiveness and efficiency; learning and development; and culture.

Demonstrating performance aligned with the new system will not be achieved through creating a new 'dashboard', instead it will be done by consolidating and aligning existing measurement programs where applicable. As an example, the monitoring of vision-based indicators (through the work of the MDP Implementation team) can be integrated with monitoring the performance of application outputs (through the work of the Corporate Planning Applications Group Business Office) and stakeholder satisfaction (through customer and employee satisfaction surveys) to present a comprehensive view of the system. Additional information on performance measurement is included on page 9 of Attachment 1.

6. Clearer, more efficient decision framework

Conversations with stakeholders described the current state of decision making within the existing system. Key issues identified included a lack of understanding of the role of Calgary Planning Commission; how this commission added value to the items it heard; and how it added value to the decisions made by Council. Another theme identified by stakeholders was the lack of role clarity and questioning of valued added by the Urban Design Review Panel. There was a strong desire to maximize the potential of a body of experts during the early and formative stages of policy creation and application review that mimicked the emerging culture of collaboration, problem solving dialogue with efficient and easy access to this knowledge. There was also support to engage the broad range of expertise and perspectives that currently exist across Calgary Planning Commission, the Urban Design Review Panel and the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development, supplemented with ability for open design discussion and technical advice to create the best outcomes for a project.

This desire aligns with the new culture of the planning system that will be reinforced with a new staff structure for the Planning, Development & Assessment department, which is expected to be finalized in 2014. Beginning in the first quarter of 2014, to start changes toward improving the decision framework, the General Manager's office will consider and implement those changes that could be made to the functioning of Calgary Planning Commission which would not require bylaw changes. This would include:
1. The types of development permits requiring review by Calgary Planning Commission;
2. Testing or 'piloting' the use of the Commission as dispute resolution body earlier in the application or policy process; and
3. Determine the most effective design review method by examining the function and role of the design panel and city staff.

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By the end of 2014, a new model for decision making will be proposed to Council, which will incorporate lessons learned from this testing period during the first half of the year. Testing of the new decision framework will allow stakeholders to determine the best methods of injecting knowledge earlier into the IMPLEMENT stream and judge how best to support outcome based decisions. Additional information on the decision framework findings and recommendations is included on page 10 of Attachment 1.

Sustaining Transformation – Making it Happen
Transforming Planning was an ambitious undertaking to affect meaningful change and focus on outcomes not by fixing processes, but by committing to change a culture through creating a high-performing system. As was recognized in the scoping report brought to the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Development in 2012 June, this approach was necessary to address recurring issues with planning, and to bring about enduring change. This approach has resulted in significant ownership and support from internal and external stakeholders. A summary of external Working Group member viewpoints with regard to the impact of the program is contained in Attachment 2.

To continue to move the new planning system forward, it will be imperative to ensure that the 2014 department work plan and the 2015-2018 department business plan support and validate the cultural shift and momentum that Transforming Planning has achieved.

Short Term Priorities – Work to be Done in 2014
Transforming Planning has sent a strong signal that things can be done differently, and they are being done differently. 2014 will be a year of building on what the program has already accomplished over the past year and a half. It will be a year of continuing to transition into the new culture and the new planning system. The focus will be on continuing to identify entry points and stewards to ensure that the new planning system continues to take hold and to thrive. Listed below are some of the key functions that the department will be taking on in 2014, described by system function.

Work on many of these items has already started with staff in Development & Building Approvals and in Land Use Planning & Policy, through realignment of projects that had been previously identified across the system. For example, work identified under the first two items below has already been introduced to some groups of staff (as well as had staff included in development of IMPLEMENT and EXPLORE), and has been 'handed over' to the Corporate Planning Applications Group (CPAG) Business Office.

1. IMPLEMENT – Continue Research & Development
    - Continue to roll out and test better approaches for applications and policies
    - Deliver new tools across system
2. EXPLORE – Continue to Engage with Stakeholders Early
    - Roll out EXPLORE with bigger populations and more complex applications and policies
    - Track resourcing to establish the fee for service
3. LEARN – Continuous Improvement
    - Develop a LEARN strategy and governance structure for learning across the system

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- Establish 'Communities of Practice' to incent and formalize learning amongst all stakeholders
4. GUIDE/ALIGN – Continuous Alignment with Plans
   - Establish 'General Manager Advisory Panel' to prioritize and ensure alignment with MDP/CTP
   - Elevate MDP and CTP Implementation

Decision framework
- Review of Calgary Planning Commission list of applications
- Review of role and function of Urban Design Review Panel
- Testing or 'piloting' the use of the commission to expedite decisions by involving it earlier in the application or policy process when to resolve competing viewpoints.

In addition to the above, in 2014 emphasis will continue to be placed on creating ownership in the system, and this will be linked to recognizing and rewarding performance that focuses on outcomes. As well, the work done by Transforming Planning will continue to inform and shape the new organizational structure.

Transitioning to and sustaining a new planning system requires working across established silos, and changing behaviours. While the work noted above outlines some of the most important priorities for the system, it requires strong leadership and monitoring to succeed. Leaders within PDA are committed to the success of these efforts, and will provide the support and oversight required to deliver and to maintain the new planning system.

Long Term Priorities
Beyond 2014, continued sustainment of the new planning system requires focused efforts on a few key areas. These include realignment of:
1. Performance measurement and accountabilities;
2. Resources to support LEARN function;
3. Resources to support GUIDE/ALIGN function; and
4. IT requirements to deliver system:
   - IMPLEMENT workflows (including EXPLORE)
   - Customer centric web
   - LEARN

These areas of focus will be inputs to the development of the 2015-2018 business plan and budget for Planning, Development & Assessment.

Governance
In recognizing the strong link between sustainment and leadership, the Transforming Planning Advisory Committee will be transitioned to a "nextCITY Advisory Committee". The establishment of the new committee recognizes the inherent benefits of reviewing transformational changes with a group of executive leadership, prior to bringing items forward to committee or Council. Administration will engage the committee as needed on matters of transformational changes in achieving the goals of the Municipal Development Plan. To be

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effective, the committee will also include the Chair of the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Development.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication
Extensive engagement and communication has occurred throughout the work of the Transforming Planning program. Opportunities ranged from the 'hands on' involvement of the external stakeholder members of the Working Group, to multi-stakeholder workshops to develop and upgrade projects under the program, to an active social media presence and a program website containing most of the content produced through the program. Transparency, accessibility and impact are hallmarks of the digital communications approach. Web metrics confirm success, with 6,781 visits to the Transforming Planning website between January 1 - December 12, 2013 and 8,895 views in the same time period.

Transforming Planning has used its network of interested stakeholders to distribute information and share engagement opportunities. For example: during the promotion of the March-April public workshops, Transforming Planning leveraged a small Twitter audience of 323 people to reach a non-discrete audience on Twitter of 62,201 followers through re-tweets via The City of Calgary, imagineCalgary, Calgary Economic Development, Canadian Homebuilder's Association, various Council members and other stakeholders. Likewise, May-June workshop promotion via Twitter reached an audience of 63,749 non-discrete followers. A listing of specific tactics and audience reach is provided in Attachment 3.

Strategic Alignment
The Transforming Planning program aligns with the goals and objectives of imagineCALGARY, 2020 Sustainability Direction, Council's Fiscal Plan and the 2012-2014 Business Plan. It supports the implementation of the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan by providing an organizing framework for the entire planning system to learn and act on the monitoring of these documents.

The program aligns with the mission of the Corporate Cultural Transformation Project, which is to develop a set of common Corporate-wide practices, behaviours, values and norms to further align organizational performance and service delivery towards a citizen-centric point of view. The Corporate Cultural Transformation Project is also intended to prepare Administration to strategically implement the elements of a common citizen-focused culture in current and future business plan cycles and relevant administrative systems.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)
The work accomplished to date is a comprehensive approach to the creation of a new planning system with dialogue and input from citizens and stakeholders. The project promotes and supports Council policy that protects the natural environment and creates economic growth. The work builds on the model of shared responsibility that is an underpinning of imagineCALGARY, by acknowledging the role of all stakeholders within the system – Administration, development industry, communities and citizens. As such, it aligns with all facets of the triple bottom line.

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Financial Capacity

 Current and Future Operating Budget:
No operating budget impacts have been identified for 2014 – ongoing sustainment work has been incorporated in existing work plans. Budget impacts have not yet been identified for 2015-2018, and will be addressed in the development of the department plans and budgets.

 Current and Future Capital Budget:
No capital budget impacts have been identified at this time.

Risk Assessment
Originally outlined with Council's endorsement of this program in PUD2012-0354, and again with the approval of the two program projects in C2012-0839, a primary risk associated with the program is the collaborative approach to the system outline creation, combined with an emphasis on culture change across all stakeholder groups, may not result in 'quick wins' related to streamlined processes that some stakeholders, including Council, may be expecting.

Another significant risk to the program is the negative impact it may have on staff morale, including interpretations of the need for the improvement program as a statement of the calibre or commitment of staff. A comprehensive internal communication strategy that includes key messages related to overall satisfaction with performance, celebration of past successes and increasing opportunity to pursue professional excellence will continue with the program.

The risk related to proceeding with an approach that focuses solely on streamlining and changing processes is that a material change in outcomes will not be realized, as the stakeholders that function within the revised processes will not be able to use the processes to their fullest potential.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:
The Transforming Planning program was a limited term initiative ending in 2013. The report provides information on the success of the program, by summarizing program achievements. It indicates how sustainment of the new planning system, and the culture change required to drive it, will continue in 2014 and beyond.

Attachments
1. Transforming Planning: Transition Summary
2. Working Group External Members - Observations
3. Communication and Engagement Tactics and Reach – 2013