

Federation
of Calgary Communities
Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

December 4th, 2013

To: Members of the Planning and Urban Development Standing Policy Committee

Re: Comment on PUD2013-0716, Corridors Program Proposal

Dear Council Members,

The Federation of Calgary Communities presented at the December 4th, 2013 Planning and Urban Development Standing Policy Committee in regards PUD2013-0716, Corridors Program Proposal. Attached is the Federation's presentation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Natasha Kuzmak".

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Good morning,

My name is Natasha Kuzmak and I am an urban planner with the Federation of Calgary Communities, the support organization for 150 community associations. We cannot speak for every community, but we do try to represent a broad community perspective. I would like to provide my high-level comments as they relate to the Corridors Program Proposal report.

Administration has prepared a strategic and well-considered proposal to deal with the separate issues directed to Administration and to support intensification on corridors. While The Federation is excited about much of this work and supports the strategic nature of the proposed Corridors Program, we are still concerned with a couple of elements of the program.

First, in focussing on and developing policies for the corridors themselves, the rest of the areas within communities on these corridors are neglected. In other words, there will only be policy updates for the corridor, but not the rest of the community. Though I understand that Administration does not have the resources to create new Area Redevelopment Plans for all of the communities along the corridors, it is still important to allocate some attention to the communities as a whole to recognize changing community conditions and needs, as well as to prevent decline within the communities. There needs to be some sort of forum for high-level community discussions that deal with change and redevelopment within communities, not just in specific areas in communities.

Here I will suggest a couple of ways to do this, though there are probably other ways as well. One way to deal with this could be to include the full communities on the corridors, though placing significantly more attention to the corridor and the adjacent lands to the corridor. This may ensure that there are sensitive transitions from the corridors to the communities and that the corridor profiles consider broad community needs.

Secondly, the engagement sessions could be planned in such a way that some questions touch on broad community issues. The communities could extract some of the collected feedback to craft their broad community priorities as they relate to the entire community. Another way would be to either collaborate with the Federation or directly support communities to have high-level discussions about their aspirations in community-led visioning exercises.

This all being said, I am not very knowledgeable about the new Commercial Residential District and how it can be used as an alternate tool as opposed to local area plans. I look forward to learning more about it and how it can be used in the context of Corridors Program.

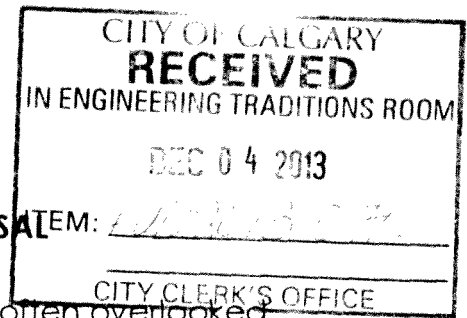
In the vein of engagement, the Federation has observed that some communities are not prepared for significant change. They often do not understand how some redevelopment will be of benefit to them and they struggle to connect the dots between their needs with new development. Because this work touches upon various elements of community planning including transportation, redevelopment, streetscape and public realm improvements, as well as other planning matters, we are hopeful that the engagement strategy will begin to tackle this challenge and take steps to educate and prepare communities for change.

The Federation's second concern regards maintaining community character, as it is very important to communities' identities and sense of place. Though I think that part of the intent of creating the corridor profile is to encapsulate the surrounding community character and context, I wish to reinforce the importance of the role of community character in the process of developing the Corridors Program.

Again, the Federation is excited about this work, though asks Council to consider the need to provide some attention to broad community planning needs, and ensure the community character is considered in this work. We look forward to learning more about this program and collaborating with Administration on this work.

Governance, Finance, and Infrastructure Group

Submission on PUD2013-0716: CORRIDOR PROGRAM PROPOSAL



Redevelopment of corridors represents one of the best, yet often overlooked ways to manage growth in a financially and socially responsible manner.

We are pleased Administration is taking the initiative to develop a comprehensive, consistent framework for planning Urban and Neighbourhood Corridors. This will increase administrative efficiency, optimize the City's investment in transit and other services, and maximize the benefits to existing communities. In particular, the program will allow the City, businesses, and communities to find the best ways to control social disorder and eliminate counter-productive barriers to redevelopment.

We support Administration's recommendation.