

BRIEFING

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Item # 12.3

Operational Services Briefing to

Executive Committee
2023 November 01

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
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Place Matters Project Update

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, herein titled “Place Matters”. A Briefing was provided June 28, 2023 to the Community Development Committee (CD2023-0510). This Briefing will describe the final results of the initiative.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Vivo and Parks Foundation Calgary completed the following project components with outcomes outlined below, in order to fulfil the conditions of the approved Council Innovation Fund for the Place Matters initiative:

1. Summarize the outcomes of the engagement
 - The project team carried out a series of community engagement activities to solicit input from North Calgary community members, organizations, and subject matter experts. Feedback from these activities served as the principal data source to inform the development of project deliverables. The communities engaged and the number of community members who contributed to the results of the report are outlined in the detailed report.
 - Engagement activities resulted in describing characteristics, purpose, and activities that participants value and would like to see in their public spaces and included four main strategies to obtain information: Values & Needs Event, Subject Matter Expert Interviews, Capital Projects Interest Survey, and a Prioritization Event. These strategies resulted in categorization of values which were: spaces that provide connection to nature, opportunities for play, ability to connect and make social connection, and multi-purpose usability. Participants also value being close to park locations, and spaces should incorporate equity and inclusivity.
 - The detailed report outlines the methodology, engagement tactics, metrics and strategies, timelines, and communities engaged.
 - The engagement strategy also resulted in a list of resources and toolkit for community groups and organizations to navigate City administration and external governance structures. The toolkit will be available as a document to support individuals or organizations navigating community engagement and community advocacy to impact a park space (Attachment 2).
2. Create a “community planning model” for groups to plan and contribute to community spaces, showing how to navigate various governance structures and City processes

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- The deliverable of this section was to create a strategy model for grassroots community engagement and park development (Attachment 2). Through the engagement tactics VIVO and Parks Foundation Calgary created a strategy model, also referred to as a “toolkit”, to support groups looking to inspire to create active, connected, naturalized and sustainable park spaces across new and existing communities. Place Matters intends to reimagine development of grassroots park spaces with the goal of fostering a sense of belonging in North Central Calgary by having community members engaged in the change process.
 - The report outlines key contacts, roles and responsibilities of community members, City Administration, partner groups and resources to support community-level projects of varying scopes with a focus on revitalizing existing parks spaces. This information is available to not only Administration, but also to grassroots individuals or organizations as a toolkit, to help them navigate the complexities of undertaking a project in a public space.
3. Identify a list of public space projects for development within 5-30 years
- The Place Matters report also includes a list of 11 community-driven projects and priorities (Attachment 3) which serve as a suggested starting point for future North Calgary outdoor public space projects. Six of the projects are identified as initiated or in progress through partnerships with the Parks Foundation. Additional community engagement and review of existing asset distributions is recommended by both the project team and Administration to ensure that projects meet the needs of the communities they are proposed for. This provides more opportunity to advocate through partners for implementation funding.

The \$100,000 from the Council Innovation Fund was allocated towards project stewardship, data evaluation, marketing and communications, and materials and supplies. An overview of the project budget as well as additional in-kind services is included as Attachment 4.

Next Steps

The list of projects identified is with Parks Foundation Calgary for their consideration. The project list will also be shared with Administration who will look for opportunities to progress these projects through the corporate project prioritization process.

VIVO and Parks Foundation Calgary will make the grassroots Toolkit available to their partner groups and community representatives seeking support navigating governance structures and City processes as they initiate projects within public spaces.

The outcome of this project provides a great step and injection of innovative thinking to drive continuous improvement in our process and mindset. The outcome of creating great places for a connected community will improve due to this evolution.

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Place Matters Report Executive Summary
2. Community Engagement Toolkit
3. Place Matters Project Listing
4. Place Matters Budget Overview