

**Infrastructure Services Briefing to
Infrastructure and Planning Committee
2024 October 16**

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Symons Valley Centre Program Update

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

To provide Council an update on the build-out of the Symons Valley Centre Program including providing updates on the following:

- 1. **Changes over time:** The site design of Symons Valley Centre has adapted over time to meet service needs while retaining the core elements initially directed by the Council.
- 2. **Housing:** Non-market housing will be delivered through a third-party non-profit housing provider instead of delivery as a City project and the budget (\$11.2 M) allocated for the housing component will be transferred for use on other housing projects.
- 3. **Next steps:** Once the design is completed and development and building permits are received in 2025, the library and infrastructure construction is estimated to commence in early 2026.

Council direction and program intent

The Symons Valley Centre Program was developed and approved in 2019 (*UCS2019-0249 Symons Valley Centre - Build Out and Investment Strategy*) to serve multiple needs within the greater Symons Valley area. Original plans included a multi-service facility with a library, spaces for arts and culture, commercial retail units, childcare services, and affordable housing options. Additionally, this program involved the sale of land to other government entities and the private sector for further development. Finally, Calgary Transit also proposed a bus rapid transit terminal to support transfers from northwest local routes to the Rapid Transit Network.

Since then, this program has evolved while staying true to The City’s vision of a multi-service facility centre in Calgary’s northwest. The changes include the removal of arts and culture component and of childcare, replacing the site partner facility with housing provided by external non-market housing providers, and design changes to the library. Moving away from a multi-services integrated facility was necessary due to funding constraints, inflationary pressures and changing service requirements; placing the non-market housing on its own parcel also allowed delivery by a 3rd party non-profit housing provider external to The City. Despite these changes, the program includes a connecting street, community commons, library, housing, mixed-use development and a transit terminal. This adaptability underscores Administration’s commitment to maximizing the value of The City’s investment while still meeting the core of Council’s vision.

The 2024 updated program implementation plan is based on a phased approach with each contributing to the community development goals and the overall vision for the site. Refer to Attachment 1 for location and phasing graphic. The 2024 updated program includes:

- A. Phases 1 and 2: connecting street and enabling infrastructure services, library facility, library temporary offsite parking, and community commons (2024-2028)
- B. Phase 3: land sale to third-party non-market housing provider (2026)
- C. Phase 4 land sale to private sector (2026)
- D. Phase 5: transit terminal (10-15 years)

A. Phases 1 and 2: connecting street and enabling infrastructure services, library facility, library temporary offsite parking, and community commons

Phases 1 and 2 are being designed and permitting approvals are projected to be in 2025. Construction of the connecting street and enabling infrastructure services is estimated to commence in early 2026 to service the site.

The multi-use facility serving the northwest area includes a full-service library and onsite parking estimated to open in 2028. The facility would also have two dedicated community rooms for local events and activities, and a commercial retail space. A temporary offsite parking will also be available to Library patrons, which will be replaced with the future Transit Terminal Park and Ride when built out. The library and transit terminal will then share the Park and Ride area maximizing access to services while reducing the amount of land dedicated to parking. The outdoor community commons will provide an open space as a transition between the library site and future non-market housing development.

B. Phase 3: land sale to third-party non-market housing provider (2026)

The Symons Valley Centre Program is set to deliver non-market housing aligned with Council's direction. This initiative will see a serviced and subdivided site provided to the non-market housing sector guided by the Non-Market Housing Land Disposition Policy. The land's future disposition will be brought forward to Council in an upcoming report planned for 2025, ensuring that the non-market housing is established as a separate entity distinct from the multi-service library facility. Funding for this portion of the site will come solely from a non-market housing provider, independent of the Symons Valley Centre Program's capital budget (except for supporting infrastructures to enable the sale). The previously approved \$11.2 million housing grant for City-led housing will be redirected to Housing Solutions to be redeployed to support other non-market housing opportunities, leveraging existing programs to ensure the funding can be allocated right away. This approval will be brought to 2024 November Budget Adjustments.

C. Phase 4: land sale to private sector (2026)

The previous Council direction requested Administration to sell surplus lands not needed for public services. Allocated through a subdivision and land title process, two parcels of land approximately 0.6 acres each, will be offered through the Real Estate & Development Services Land Sales Program for disposition. The sale will generate short-term proceeds and contribute to the tax base once developed. The sale is slated to happen after the Phase 1 servicing work begins and legal parcels for sale are created. This will ensure an optimal return on investment as the land will be ready for sale.

C. Phase 5: transit terminal

Symons Valley Terminal is envisioned as a vibrant hub for connecting northwest residents to the broader transit network. The 144 Avenue North Bus Rapid Transit Functional Planning Study, which includes the Symons Valley terminal, is underway and should be completed late 2025. The service date for the Symons Valley transit terminal was originally planned beyond 2030. However, due to rapid growth and development in the surrounding northwest communities, the timing of the terminal is now being reviewed as part of the Study.

ATTACHMENT

1. Symons Valley Centre Location and Phasing Information

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General Manager Michael Thompson concurs with the information in this Briefing.