

Planning & Development Services Report to  
Intergovernmental Affairs Committee  
2024 October 16

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
IP2024-0938

## **Riley Communities Local Area Plan**

---

### **PURPOSE**

This report seeks approval of the proposed Riley Communities Local Area Plan (the Plan).

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

At the 2022 February 15 Combined Meeting of Council, the recommendations of the 2022 City Planning Policy Roadmap ([IP2022-0053](#)) were adopted. The Riley Communities Local Area Plan was identified in Attachment 2 of the report under the Local Area Planning Program.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Infrastructure and Planning Committee:

1. Forward this Report to the 2024 December 03 Public Hearing Meeting of Council; and

That the Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommend that Council:

2. Give FIRST READING to the proposed bylaw, the proposed Riley Communities Local Area Plan (Attachment 2);
3. WITHHOLD second and third readings of the proposed bylaw until the Riley Communities Local Area Plan has been approved by the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board;
4. Give FIRST READING to the proposed bylaw for amendments to the 1P2007 Land Use Bylaw to implement Heritage Guideline Areas (Attachment 6);
5. WITHHOLD second and third readings of the proposed bylaw for amendments to the 1P2007 Land Use Bylaw to implement Heritage Guideline Areas until the Riley Communities Local Area Plan has been approved by the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board; and
6. Following third reading of the proposed bylaw to adopt the proposed Riley Communities Local Area Plan and the proposed bylaw for amendments to the 1P2007 Land Use Bylaw to implement Heritage Guideline Areas, REPEAL by bylaw the Hillhurst/Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan and Hounsfeld Heights/Briar Hill Area Redevelopment Plan, and RESCIND, by resolution, the North Bow Design Brief.

### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS**

General Manager Debra Hamilton concurs with this report. The proposed Local Area Plan sets the vision for future growth across the Riley Communities. The Plan supports a range of housing forms, diverse mobility options and distinct commercial areas, as well as improved parks, natural areas and public spaces. The Plan also supports the implementation of Home is Here: The City of Calgary's Housing Strategy, specifically:

- Outcome 1: Increase the supply of housing to meet demand and increase affordability

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Riley Communities Local Area Plan outlines the vision and development policies that will guide new development and investment in the Riley Communities over the next 30 years. The Plan refines and implements the strategic goals and objectives of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) at the local level.

## **Riley Communities Local Area Plan**

---

- Calgarians living and working in Hillhurst, Hounsfeld Heights-Briar Hill, Sunnyside and West Hillhurst will benefit from strategic and consistent development policies. The Plan also outlines investment priorities and implementation options to support the growth and change in an area strategically located just north of the Bow River and the Greater Downtown.
- Riley Communities are home to some of Calgary's oldest developed areas that have experienced continuous growth and development for several decades. Certain communities of the Plan have policies that pre-date to the adoption of MDP in 2009. Other communities, such as West Hillhurst, have never had a local area plan to strategically guide new developments and outline necessary investments.
- The Plan Area's distinct histories and heritage were key considerations when developing the Plan. The Plan designates Heritage Guideline Areas in heritage-rich parts of the Plan Area and is the first local area plan to develop these residential guidelines in tandem with the formulation of the Plan.
- The greatest proportion of growth and change within the Plan Area is concentrated along the three Neighbourhood Main Streets (Kensington Road NW, 10 Street NW, 14 Street NW), within Activity Centres, along Memorial Drive NW, within portions along 19 Street NW and throughout the Sunnyside and Lions Park LRT transit station areas. Incremental growth is supported across all residential areas.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Riley Communities Local Area Plan includes four inner-city communities: Hillhurst, Hounsfeld Heights-Briar Hill, Sunnyside and West Hillhurst. The Plan Area is bounded by 16 Avenue NW, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and the Alberta University of the Arts (AUArts) campuses and McHugh Bluff to the north, Centre Street North to the east, the Bow River to the south and Crowchild Trail NW and 28 Street NW to the west.

While each community has its own individual boundaries, the Riley Communities share common assets, amenities, public and transit infrastructure, natural features and parks. They also have easy access to the Greater Downtown and the Bow River. The proposed Plan sets out a long-term vision, policies and objectives for supporting growth that build upon these shared assets.

The Plan's policies are shaped by five core values developed and refined throughout the engagement process:

- i) Housing Choice – expanding range of housing options to meet evolving needs, life stages and household compositions;
- ii) Moving to and Through the Riley Communities – focusing growth and investment around the mobility network to enhance walking, wheeling and transit experiences;
- iii) Parks, Recreation and Public Space – improving the quality of and access to parks, natural areas and public spaces;
- iv) Climate Resilience – improving energy use, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and better adapting to climate related hazards; and,
- v) Safe and Accessible Communities – ensuring safety and accessibility are key considerations in improvements and investments, especially around transit stations.

Demographic trends were accounted for in the development of the Plan. Despite sustained development activity in specific communities, the overall population in the Plan Area shows a decline of 271 people since its peak in 2018, which represents a total decline of 0.9 percent. The peak population year of individual communities varies across the Plan Area. West

## Riley Communities Local Area Plan

---

Hillhurst's population peaked in 1968 and Hounsfield Heights-Briar Hill's population peaked in 1971. Most recently, Hillhurst's population peaked in 2016 and Sunnyside's population peaked in 2019. Hounsfield Heights-Briar Hill has experienced the greatest population decline relative to the other Riley Communities with a decrease in population of 15 percent since its 1971 peak.

The Plan's future growth concept aligns with MDP direction and identifies strategic growth areas and specific local development policies for multi-residential, commercial and mixed-use developments along three Neighbourhood Main Streets, within Activity Centres and along Memorial Drive NW and within portions of 19 Street NW. The Plan also provides direction to guide redevelopment within the Sunnyside and the Lions Park LRT transit station areas, including the highest building scales at the North Hill Mall site.

### Mobility Study

The Riley Communities Local Area Plan is unique in comparison to other approved and in-progress Local Area Plans as it included an additional Mobility Study. The Mobility Study, a non-statutory document, was identified in the Hillhurst / Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan to address growth and change around the Sunnyside LRT transit station area. The scope expanded to the entire Plan Area and it was prepared in tandem with the Plan by an external consultant to inform the policy and implementation options. The Mobility Study examines existing conditions and outlines a series of prioritized mobility improvements to support growth and change. A summary is provided within Attachment 5.

### Heritage Guidelines

The Riley Communities Local Area Plan is the first plan to develop Heritage Guidelines in tandem with the Plan. The Heritage Guideline Areas were identified using Council-approved criteria that are applied consistently across the city. Heritage Guidelines will direct new development within these identified areas to be contextually sensitive and consistent with existing residential heritage assets. The Guidelines encourage new residential development to draw design reference from nearby heritage assets while still allowing for contemporary features.

Amendments to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 are necessary to enable the implementation of the Heritage Guidelines (Attachment 6). These amendments focus on adding maps attached as Schedule "A" as the Heritage Guidelines. Previous amendments to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, as part of the adoption of the North Hill Communities Heritage Guidelines ([IP2022-1045](#)), ensured that all housing types (including Contextual Single Detached Dwelling, Contextual Semi-detached Dwelling and Rowhouse Building), that are allowed within Heritage Guideline Areas become Discretionary Uses. The discretionary development permit application review will apply the Heritage Guidelines to ensure the application meets the policies. More details are captured in the Background and Planning Evaluation, refer to Attachment 3.

## **EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required        |

## **Riley Communities Local Area Plan**

---

### **Engagement Overview**

The proposed Plan was developed over two years using a phased engagement approach to advance neighbourhood planning in Calgary. Public input gathered through an extensive engagement and communications plan identified opportunities and challenges, as well as solutions to guide growth and change in this area. In addition, a Working Group consisting of 35 members from four Community Associations, area residents and industry representatives met a total of nine times to provide detailed feedback through each phase of engagement.

Administration also undertook a pro-active relationship-building approach throughout all phases of the work. This strategy aimed to build mutual trust and respect between all those involved and enhance understanding of the planning continuum. The proposed Plan incorporates feedback and ideas from Community Associations, Working Group members and internal Technical Advisory Committee members from various City business units. A detailed summary of the engagement and communications strategy, tactics and what we heard and how feedback was actioned are included as part of Attachment 4.

### **Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) Workshop**

A closed session workshop with CPC was held on 2024 January 25. The workshop focused on the draft Plan including the Urban Form and Building Scale maps, development policies supporting growth and implementation options. There was support for the draft Plan and feedback provided informed revisions. CPC also supported Administration's efforts to focus development in and around key nodes and corridors and transit stations areas, particularly the Lions Park LRT station. Attachment 7 provides a summary of the CPC workshop.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Social**

Equity is one of the five key considerations when a Local Area Plan is created, alongside trends, participant input, professional expertise and City policies. The Riley Communities Local Area Plan supports a range of housing options to meet the evolving needs, life stages and household compositions of individuals. The Plan also supports the creation of non-market and mixed-market housing in transit station areas through incentives, including but not limited to, using direct control bylaws for floor area exemptions for areas of a new development that provide non-market housing. This approach benefits individuals from both an affordable housing and affordable mobility lens, allowing more individuals to be able to call these communities home. The Plan also is informed by Mobility Study to ensure that mobility improvements are looked at holistically across all communities and to facilitate equitable mobility choices for all residents.

### **Environmental**

Situated along the Bow River, the Riley Communities are already experiencing the impacts of climate change hazards, which are increasing in intensity and frequency. These hazards may be significant in cost to communities and infrastructure. As a result, the Plan focuses on climate resilience with calls for actions that minimize the adverse effects of climate change on people, businesses, homes and the environment. The Plan also provides direction to protect, maintain and support the urban tree canopy while supporting the preservation and restoration of riparian areas using natural infrastructure to enhance resilience to river flooding. The Plan enables more people to live in closer proximity to their daily needs by strategically focusing growth in transit station areas and along Main Streets and key corridors. This type of redevelopment makes

## **Riley Communities Local Area Plan**

---

sustainable travel options, such as walking, wheeling and transit, more viable and assists in broader efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Economic**

The Plan will guide development and investment in the community over the next 30 years and is intended to be updated regularly. Policies support multi-residential, commercial and mixed-use developments in key nodes and corridors of the Plan Area in addition to supporting incremental growth in primarily residential areas. To support increased population growth, Chapter 3 of the Plan provides high-level strategic direction to inform investment decisions across all communities. These area improvement options are in addition to ongoing City investments and projects in the Plan Area.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

No anticipated financial impact. Investments will be reviewed during future service plans and budgets.

### **RISK**

Over the past two years, there has been a significant investment of time and effort from The City and members of the public, the Working Group, Community Associations and industry towards the development of the proposed Plan. If it is not approved, community trust, support and involvement may be negatively impacted and individuals may have less willingness to participate in future City initiatives. Council's approval of the Plan is necessary to ensure implementation and action planning can commence to realize the vision and policies of the proposed Plan.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Previous Council Direction
2. Riley Communities Local Area Plan
3. Background and Planning Evaluation
4. Engagement Summary
5. Riley Communities Mobility Study - Brief
6. Proposed Amendments to the 1P2007 Land Use Bylaw
7. Calgary Planning Commission Review
8. Presentation
9. Public Submissions

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Debra Hamilton	Planning & Development Services	Approve

Author: F. McLeod, F. Elahi, Community Planning