

Lessons Learned

Over the past six years, the Local Area Planning team in Community Planning has taken an iterative approach that continues to improve and enhance how local area plans are developed through the Local Area Planning Program. The South Shaganappi Communities project team has continued to incorporate lessons learned from the previous four local area plans, resulting in additional innovative strategies and improvements to engagement, policy, and internal processes.

Engagement Highlights

A robust engagement process is at the heart of the Local Area Planning Program. Continuous process improvements through lessons learned will continue to enhance our Program as new plans are developed across Calgary.

Innovative Strategies

Joint Community Association / Industry / Institutional Sessions

- We heard from community associations that they would like to hear more from other interested parties during engagement sessions. In Phases 3 and 4, we held joint sessions with community associations, development industry, and institutional (University of Calgary) representatives.
- Joint sessions allowed for discussion and exchange of ideas across various groups with different perspectives and provided opportunities to connect and understand one another's viewpoint, bringing a variety of opinions to the conversation.

Targeted Engagement

- The South Shaganappi Communities has a unique cluster of amenities and services including major institutions like the University of Calgary, Foothills Medical Centre, and Alberta Children's Hospital and this was the first local area planning project to initiate engagement specifically focused on university students.
- We collaborated with the Students' Union, Urban Calgary Students Association, and School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape to host workshops with undergraduate and graduate planning students as well as pop-ups at MacEwan Hall for the general student population. Targeted engagement with students across Calgary will continue for ongoing and future local area plans.
- We also hosted a targeted engagement session with the Parkdale Nifty Fifties Seniors Association which allowed the project team to connect with seniors in the area, providing an educational opportunity for sharing information, answering questions, and receiving feedback.

Improvements

Conversational Video Presentations

- Building on lessons learned from Phases 1 and 2 of the project, we shortened the length of online video presentations for Phases 3 and 4 to be more conversational and consumable for the public. The new video presentation formats are approximately three to five minutes, highlighting the key ideas and topics for each phase of the project, with a greater focus on graphics to explain our work and what feedback we are collecting.

Enhanced Engagement Booklets

- Several enhancements have been made to the phase engagement booklets to improve user experience and readability. The cover page now includes a QR code that links to the project webpage, the phase's engagement timeline, and a larger font to identify the booklet as an important City of Calgary engagement booklet. Additionally, the booklet content has been further refined to include more effective graphics and project-specific FAQs.

New Engagement Activities

- In response to Council's decision on citywide rezoning, we updated Working Group Session 4 which previously engaged on small-scale homes to focus on hypothetical case studies which provided working group members an educational opportunity to apply development policies and urban form and building scale maps to development situations.
- We responded to Council's decision on citywide rezoning by asking a question about small-scale homes to the public in our Phase 2 engagement (October/November 2023). We provided engagement themes from the public to support the Home is Here project team in their engagement efforts that they hosted in early 2024.
- We hosted several engagement activities for students at the University of Calgary including workshops, pop-ups, and open houses. In Phases 2 and 3 we held in-person workshops to gather feedback on the Urban Form and Building Scale maps. In Phase 4, we held an open house for students to increase awareness of the project and answer questions at four different interactive booths.

Policy Highlights

Policies in local area plans guide future growth and change. As the Local Area Planning Program continues to evolve, additional policy considerations and enhancements are being introduced into local area plans.

Innovative Strategies

New Executive Summary

- As a result of the discussion when the Riley Communities Local Area Plan was presented at the Infrastructure and Planning Committee in 2024 October, an executive summary was added to the South Shaganappi Communities Local Area Plan (Plan) to provide an overview of the Plan in an easy to understand, visually appealing way. The executive summary speaks to the current context and future evolution of the South Shaganappi Communities and highlights the key moves of the Plan, linking to the community investment priorities in Chapter 3. The section also provides readers with information on how to read the Plan, which enables better interpretation of policy.

New Area Specific Policies

- The Plan provides policies for future development surrounding the Foothills Medical Centre to consider potential impacts of adjacent development on medical and institutional facilities.
- The Plan connects the two parallel Neighbourhood Main Streets, 16 Avenue NW and Bowness Road NW, by implementing the Neighbourhood Commercial urban form category along 46 Street NW. This approach aims to create continuous commercial activity and establish a connection between the two Main Streets.

Improvements

Plan Specific Community Improvements

- Investment opportunities/community improvements found in Chapter 3 of the Plan provides a high-level direction for future community improvement projects but allows for flexibility when specific improvements are implemented.
- These changes allow for better alignment with projects chosen to be funded through the Local Area Implementation Fund.

Comprehensive Planning Sites

- Throughout the development of the Plan, additional comprehensive planning sites were identified based on public feedback and internal discussions. These sites include University Innovation Quarter, Foothills Athletic Park/Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse, a

site between University Drive NW and Crowchild Trail NW, and a site between Shaganappi Drive NW and West Campus Boulevard NW.

Internal Processes

Continuous process improvements are integral to the Local Area Planning Program. We consistently seek opportunities to enhance our methods, workflows and ways we work together to create and sustain local area plans.

Innovative Strategies

Simultaneous Projects

- The South Shaganappi Communities and Chinook Communities local area plans worked together closely as simultaneously run projects. The two projects developed concurrently, allowing for greater efficiencies and collaboration across the two projects.

Cross-departmental Coordination

- Mobility representatives attended our Conversation Series to provide support on answering questions related to mobility, which was a key topic throughout all phases of the project.
- In Phase 4, we held an open house at the University of Calgary and collaborated with the Shaganappi Trail NW Study project which allowed us to work cross-corporately, reducing duplication of engagement efforts.

Improvements

Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) Workshop

- The project team held a CPC Closed Session Workshop earlier in the process than previous local area plans. By having this session prior to finalizing materials for the Phase 3 launch, the project team was able to incorporate Commissioners' input into the draft Plan prior to it being publicly released.

Project Alignment and Consistency

- The South Shaganappi Communities, Chinook Communities, and West Elbow Communities local area planning projects continued to improve consistency and alignment in policies through meeting and collaborating regularly. Achieving greater consistency across local area plans allows planners, industry, and the public to interpret policies more easily.