

**Planning & Development Services Report to
Infrastructure and Planning Committee
2025 April 02**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
IP2025-0337**

**Growth Application in the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (Ward 2),
GA2024-002**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the capital and operating investments for the Growth Application within Community A of the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (“Glacier A North”) not be considered for funding through the 2025 November Adjustments to the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets, and that Administration continue collaborating with the applicant on planning for future stages of capital infrastructure.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

On 2023 July 26, Council endorsed a redesigned approach for how The City evaluates and enables growth opportunities to ensure that new community growth happens in the right place at the right time (IP2023-0559). This process was implemented starting 2023 August 1 (see Attachment 1).

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommend that Council:

1. Direct Administration to continue working with the applicant on the planning for future stages of capital infrastructure, including optimal timing of funding and delivery, to ensure the ability of continuity of growth in the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan; and
2. Direct Administration not to consider the capital and operating investments needed to enable this Growth Application (GA2024-002) in the prioritization of investments for the 2025 November Adjustments.

GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

General Manager Debra Hamilton concurs with this report based on the evaluation criteria outlined below. The City is committed to enabling growth in the right places at the right times. This advances environmental sustainability, financial responsibility and, critically, a high-quality of life for Calgarians.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Administration recommends that it is not the right time for the capital and operating investments required by this Growth Application to be considered in The City’s Service Plans and Budgets process for the following reasons:
 - Enabling this Growth Application would require an initial capital investment of \$22.1M for an Emergency Response Station to meet the Council-approved response time standard. These capital costs are more optimally considered in the 2027-2030 budget, which aligns with when the site selected for the Emergency Response Station is anticipated to become available.
 - Consideration of the required capital costs aligns with when the enabling developer-funded water infrastructure and North Calgary Water Servicing are expected to be completed in 2029.

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- Glacier A North is unfavourably located relative to existing amenities and services including activity centres, employment areas, public schools, recreation facilities, libraries and transit.
- Glacier A North proposes ±2,544 homes and ±6,503 square metres of commercial space in the North new community sector, which would add to the six to eight years of serviced land plus an additional four to five years of approved but not yet serviced land in the sector as of 2024 May.

DISCUSSION

Evaluation Overview

Within a context of strategic and sustainable growth, investment in new communities continues to play an important role in supporting The City's long-term vision and objectives on housing.

Guidance for how Growth Applications are evaluated against criteria is set out in section 5.2.2 of the Municipal Development Plan and section 4.3 of the New Community Planning Guidebook. The criteria focus on evaluating to what extent these applications align with the city building goals of the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan, respond to market demand, and are financially positive for The City and the local economy.

Growth Application Evaluation

The subject site is located between 69 Street NW and 85 Street NW, with the northern edge being the city limits. The application was received on 2024 January 26 and evaluated by a cross corporate team according to the criteria published at www.calgary.ca/growthapplication. This evaluation is summarized below and in Attachment 2.

Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan Alignment

- Not favourably located relative to existing amenities and services including activity centres, employment areas, public schools, recreation facilities, libraries and transit based on the evaluation criteria.
- Contiguous with the community of Glacier Ridge to the east. There is no existing development directly south of the application.

Market Demand

- The North Sector currently includes ten new communities at various stages of development.
- The Suburban Residential Growth Report indicates that as of 2024 May, the North Sector has six to eight years of serviced land plus an additional four to five years of approved but not yet serviced land. See Attachment 3 for more information. With growth accelerating to record levels in Calgary, land supply has diminished, and in 2024 November Council approved capacity for an additional 2,400 homes in the North sector.

Financial Impact

- Enabling this Growth Application requires an initial capital investment of \$22.1M for an Emergency Response Station. This investment requires land acquisition on a site

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selected on the east side of 69 Street NW, which is expected to occur in 2028. The area will also eventually benefit from the \$22.5M investment in the Top Hill Feedermain.

- Operating impact is unfavourable in years 3-10 when comparing anticipated property tax and franchise fee revenue with estimated incremental direct and indirect operating costs through the New Community Incremental Operating Cost Model (IP2023-0981). The unfavourable impact is due to the triggered Emergency Response Station cost. Year 11 onwards is favourable.
- Glacier A North also requires or benefits from:
 - A developer-funded water main, which is expected to be completed by 2029
 - The North Calgary Water Servicing project, which is fully funded but not expected to be in service until 2029

Administration has determined that the Council direction to have “a practical strategy to incrementally achieve the long term city-wide fire/emergency response policy” (PUD2018-0173) would not be met if the Growth Application was approved without an Emergency Response Station. The entire area is outside of the seven-minute response standard 90 per cent of the time, and only a small fraction is within the eight-minute and 30-second threshold 90 per cent of the time, which determines the need for additional service. Administration’s approximate timeline of consideration in the 2027-2030 budget would coincide with permanent water capacity availability in 2029 and allow for more efficient service delivery as nearby development in the sector builds out. A temporary station is also not supported as it does not address the concern of cost-effectiveness. The required capital investment for the permanent Emergency Response Station would be funded using Off-Site Levies, while the operating costs would be tax funded.

In conclusion, while the Glacier A North Growth Application would provide additional housing supply, approval will trigger capital and operating investments at a time where there are already ten actively developing communities in the sector. This Growth Application is also not located favourably to any of the amenities tracked in the evaluation criteria. While this will improve over time, it does indicate that development here is currently premature.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input 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 |

As new communities are planned and designed, public engagement opportunities occur at the Area Structure Plan and Outline Plan/Land Use Amendment stages. These steps inform the Growth Application review. The Service Plans and Budgets process includes public engagement opportunities. Any member of the public is also able to speak on individual Growth Applications at both the Infrastructure and Planning Committee and as part of public hearing that is held on the broader budget adjustments in November.

Administration uses www.calgary.ca/growthapplication to share information about this and other Growth Applications. An applicants submission (Attachment 4) is also provided.

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IMPLICATIONS

Social

The City supports market housing needs through investing in a balanced supply of serviced land in new community areas. This can increase housing choice and affordability, and if well located, increase access to public and private amenities.

Glacier A North is not well-located with respect to amenities and services as it is not favourably located to existing activity centres, employment areas, civic and public facilities, and transit service. Without an Emergency Response Station, the application area will have reduced fire service below citywide targets.

Environmental

Generally, new community growth involves greater greenhouse gas emissions relative to redevelopment in established areas (particularly with respect to mobility), increases climate risk and removes natural assets. Climate resilience considerations are best considered through policy and planning approvals from Outline Plan to Development and Building Permit stages. City development standards and design guidelines can have significant carbon reduction and resilience benefits when applied universally to all development through these processes.

The location of Glacier A North will result in it being a vehicle dependent community, increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Opportunities exist to encourage more compact, mixed-use and complete communities, and to extend transit service and enable housing forms that are more sustainable or take advantage of more efficient building materials and appliances.

Economic

Enabling private housing development creates jobs, boosts economic activity, and can support housing affordability. This is an important part of Calgary's comparative advantage relative to other cities. New communities trigger significant economic activity both in the course of development and throughout their lifespan.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

Based on the recommendation there is no anticipated operating or capital investment impact to the 2025 November budget adjustments. Administration will continue to work with the applicant and identify the operating and capital investments required to be prioritized when it is the right time.

If this Growth Application were to move forward, base tax-supported operating funding of approximately ±\$0.44M would be required starting in 2028 and would require base tax-supported operating investment of \$5.93M (Attachment 2) by the time of build out, based on analysis done using the New Community Incremental Operating Cost Model (IP2023-0981). The Emergency Response Station is responsible for the majority of costs in the model. While the benefit will extend beyond Glacier A North, the cost is being incrementally triggered by this Growth Application.

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Additionally, \$22.1M would be required to build the new Emergency Response Station (Attachment 2). This would be eligible to be funded through Off-site Levies. In the future, ±\$22.5M will be required to deliver the Top Hill Feedermain, which will support the growth area by providing water servicing redundancy.

At the appropriate time, this Growth Application will present an opportunity to enable growth that leverages existing and funded infrastructure, while supporting private investment, jobs and housing choice.

RISK

New community growth is a long-term commitment that presents several risks which are discussed in further detail in Attachment 5.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Application Overview
3. Overview of New Community Land Supply
4. Applicant Submission
5. Risk Analysis for Growth Applications
6. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
D Hamilton	Planning and Development Services	Approve
L Tochor	Corporate Planning and Financial Services	Consult
M Thompson	Infrastructure Services	Consult
D Morgan	Operational Services	Consult
K Black	Community Services	Inform

Author: Lucie Stepanik, City and Regional Planning