

Road Closure and Land Use Amendment in Haskayne (Ward 1) at 9000 – 149 Street NW, LOC2025-0052

RECOMMENDATION:

That Calgary Planning Commission:

1. Forward this report (CPC2025-0362) to the 2025 May 6 Public Hearing Meeting of Council;

That Calgary Planning Commission recommend that Council:

2. Give three readings to the proposed closure of 2.49 hectares \pm (6.15 acres \pm) of road between sections NW $\frac{1}{4}$ 12 and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 13, TWP 25, RGE 3, W5M, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 13 and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ 14, TWP 25, RGE 3, W5M, portion of road plan 741 0769 adjacent to 9000 – 149 Street NW (Plan 251____, Areas A and B), with conditions (Attachment 3); and
3. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw for the redesignation of 2.49 hectares \pm (6.15 acres \pm) of road between sections NW $\frac{1}{4}$ 12 and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 13, TWP 25, RGE 3, W5M, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 13 and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ 14, TWP 25, RGE 3, W5M, portion of road plan 741 0769 adjacent to 9000 – 149 Street NW (Plan 251____, Areas A and B) from Undesignated Road Right-of-Way to Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This application seeks to close portions of undeveloped road allowances and designate the road closure areas to Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) District to allow for consolidation with adjacent parcels.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? Closing the undeveloped road allowances and amalgamating with the adjacent park would ensure public safety, protect Calgary's drinking water supply, maintain the ongoing safe and efficient operation of critical infrastructure in the Bearspaw Reservoir and help preserve Haskayne Legacy Park as a natural space.
- Why does this matter? Closing the undeveloped road allowances discourages access to the Reservoir and any on-water activities. This is important as The City and Rocky View County do not provide on-water emergency response.
- TransAlta Corporation, the operator of the Bearspaw Dam and Reservoir and the owner of the lands directly adjacent to the Reservoir, has requested that The City take steps to close the road allowances due to the safety risks associated with Reservoir operations.
- The City will install fencing and signage to discourage informal and unsafe access to the reservoir through Haskayne Park. The road closures ensure that the park remains a conservation focused space.
- The proposed road closure aligns with the policies of the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and *Haskayne Area Structure Plan* (ASP).
- A development permit is not required for fencing or "no access" regulatory signage.
- There is no previous Council direction related to this road closure and land use redesignation.

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DISCUSSION

This application in the northwest community of Haskayne was submitted by Tronnes Geomatics Inc. on behalf of the landowner, The City of Calgary, on 2025 March 10. Attachment 2 outlines the 2.49 hectare portions of road rights-of-way to be redesignated and closed through a registered road closure plan. The conditions of the closure are included as Attachment 3. As noted in the Applicant Submission (Attachment 4), the intent of the application is to ensure public safety on and around the Bearspaw Reservoir, provide safe and clean drinking water and to protect nearby environmentally significant areas. The road closure areas are bounded by City of Calgary Parks land and do not impact access to other private parcels.

TransAlta Corporation, the operator of the Bearspaw Dam and Reservoir and the owner of the lands directly adjacent to the reservoir and a portion of the road allowance being closed, has requested the road closure in light of the public safety, environmental and operational risks associated with activities occurring along the road allowance. As stated by TransAlta, the combination of the Reservoir's minimal storage capacity and its regulating function (to absorb water fluctuations caused by the Ghost facility) makes the Bearspaw Reservoir susceptible to fluctuating water levels which can rise or fall by more than 2 meters throughout the day. Sudden changes in water levels can create strong currents and waves, including backflow effects that alter current speeds and water depths unexpectedly, posing significant safety hazards for the public, especially for recreational users such as boaters and swimmers, who may not be prepared for the sudden change. (Attachment 6).

The road closure will impact the general public's access to Bearspaw Reservoir through Haskayne Park. In 2024, a private marina set up docks in the Reservoir and, without authorization from The City, made disturbances to the land and directed the public to access the marina using a portion of the road allowance being closed. Upon closure of the roads, this business, or any other marina or business wishing to set up in the same location, will not have access to the Reservoir through Haskayne Park.

The Bearspaw Trilateral Task Force is a partnership between The City of Calgary, Rocky View County and TransAlta set-up to address emerging concerns and develop a long-term management plan for the reservoir. The Bearspaw Trilateral Task Force is looking at the potential support of safe and appropriate recreational activities on the reservoir in locations where risks can be effectively mitigated.

A detailed planning evaluation of the application, including location maps and site context, are provided in the Background and Planning Evaluation (Attachment 1).

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- ☐ Outreach was undertaken by the Applicant
- ☒ Public/interested parties were informed by Administration

Applicant-Led Outreach

The Applicant Outreach Summary (Attachment 5) states that the road closures are entirely within City of Calgary property and access to other parcels is not impacted. While the road allowances do cross over lands owned by TransAlta Corporation, access to these lands is not

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impacted and the closure was requested by this landowner. Considering this, the Applicant did not conduct community outreach prior to submitting the application.

City-Led Outreach

This application was published [online](#). City Administration reached out to interested parties on 2025 March 20 to inform them of the application and the expected dates for Calgary Planning Commission and the Public Hearing. The City received 323 comments objecting to the road closure and land use redesignation application, including objections from the owner of the private marina referenced above. Objections include:

- loss of access to the marina and boating activities on Bearspaw Reservoir, and
- loss of a local business and employment.

The City received 2 comments supporting the road closure and land use redesignation application. Support includes reduction of litter and restricting vehicles driving in the park to access the marina.

The City received comments from Rocky View County stating that the road closure within The City of Calgary municipal boundary does not have an impact on Rocky View County lands.

Following the Calgary Planning Commission, the Commission's recommendation and the date of a Public Hearing of Council will be advertised.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposed road closure will ensure public safety and protect Calgary's drinking water supply by discouraging informal and unsafe access to the reservoir through Haskayne Legacy Park.

Environmental

This application does not include any actions that specifically address the objectives of the *Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050*. The proposed redesignation protects the river bank area from further disturbance, protects environmentally sensitive areas and source water.

Economic

Potential for Increased Healthcare Costs: Contaminated water can cause widespread health issues, leading to higher medical expenses and lost productivity. Infrastructure Damage: Poor water management can result in floods or droughts, damaging roads, buildings, and utilities, which are costly to repair. Higher Utility Costs: Treating polluted water or sourcing alternative supplies can increase operational costs for municipalities.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact.

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RISK

Risks to approval include loss of a business and reputational risks. Risks to not approving include public safety, dam operations and source water protection – clean drinking water.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Planning Evaluation
2. Proposed Road Closure Plan
3. Proposed Road Closure Conditions
4. Applicant Submission
5. Applicant Outreach Summary
6. TransAlta Utilities Comments

Department Circulation

| General Manager (Name) | Department | Approve/Consult/Inform |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Debra Hamilton | Planning and Development Services | Inform |