

Growth Application in the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (Ward 2), GA2024-008

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend that operating investments for a portion of the Growth Application within Community C of the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (“Escher Valley & the Woodlands”) be considered for funding through the 2025 November Adjustments to the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets. This portion is referred to in this report as the “East portion” and can be viewed in Map 2 in Attachment 2.

This report also recommends that the remaining lands (referred to in this report as the “remaining lands” and viewable in Map 3 in Attachment 2) of the Growth Application not be considered for funding through the 2025 November Adjustments to the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets.

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).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommend that Council:

1. Direct Administration to consider the 2026 operating investments, if any, needed to enable the East portion (Attachment 2, Map 2) of this Growth Application (GA2024-008) in the prioritization of investments for the 2025 November Adjustments;
2. Direct Administration to consider future capital and operating investments (2027+), as required, for the East portion (Attachment 2, Map 2) of this Growth Application (GA2024-008) in the prioritization of investments in future Service Plans and Budgets; and
3. Direct Administration to continue working with the applicant on the planning for future stages of capital infrastructure for the remaining lands (Attachment 2, Map 3) in the Growth Application (GA2024-008), including optimal timing of funding and delivery, to ensure the ability for continuity of growth in the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan.

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**RECOMMENDATION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE,
2025 APRIL 2:**

That Council:

1. Direct Administration to consider the 2026 operating investments, if any, needed to enable the East portion (Attachment 2, Map 2) of this Growth Application (GA2024-008) in the prioritization of investments for the 2025 November Adjustments;
2. Direct Administration to consider future capital and operating investments (2027+), as required, for the East portion (Attachment 2, Map 2) of this Growth Application (GA2024-008) in the prioritization of investments in future Service Plans and Budgets; and
3. Direct Administration to continue working with the applicant on the planning for future stages of capital infrastructure for the remaining lands (Attachment 2, Map 3) in the Growth Application (GA2024-008), including optimal timing of funding and delivery, to ensure the ability for continuity of growth in the Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan.

Excerpt from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Infrastructure and Planning Committee, 2025 April 2:

“A presentation entitled "Esper Valley & The Woodlands" was distributed with respect to Report IP2025-0334.”

GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

General Manager Debra Hamilton concurs with this report. 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 the right time for the operating investments required by the East portion (Attachment 2, Map 2) of this Growth Application to be considered in The City’s Service Plans and Budgets process to help support the growing demand for housing.
- The East portion does not require capital to initiate development but will require \$101.2M for continued growth. This portion enables ±700 homes in the North sector.
- The remaining lands require mobility capital investment of \$41M and therefore were not considered for interim capacity from Stage 1 of the North Calgary Water Servicing project. This capacity has been prioritized for lands that only require operating costs in order to enable housing quickly. The remaining lands will also require an additional \$101.2M capital for continued growth, for a total investment of \$142.2M.
- This Growth Application would continue development from areas to the east and south. It is favourably located relative to the Sage Hill transit hub, and unfavourably located relative to retail and commercial amenities, schools, recreation centres, and libraries.
- Capital investment to enable growth on the remaining lands (Attachment 2, Map 2) would be better timed to align with the anticipated 2029 completion of the North Calgary Water Servicing Project. The remaining lands represent a further ±1,370 homes.

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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

This subject site is contiguous with the community of Ambleridge. The application was received 2024 November 29 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

- Contiguous with ongoing development in Ambleridge to the east.
- Favourably located relative to the Sage Hill transit hub, and unfavourably located relative to retail and commercial amenities, schools, recreation centres, and libraries.

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 and 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

- The innovative approach of splitting this application into portions (Attachment 2, Map 1) allows for lands that do not require capital investment (the East portion) to move forward quickly. Proceeding with the Growth Application as a whole would have resulted in capital investment requirements and the application not being recommended for budget consideration.
- Operating impact is favourable for both the East portion and the total Growth Application 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 total Growth Application requires additional investment in unfunded capital infrastructure, while also leveraging existing and/or funded infrastructure in the area. See the Service and Financial Implications section of this report and Attachment 2 for more information.

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In conclusion, the East portion represents an operating cost only approach that is a logical continuation of adjacent development and well positioned to take advantage of interim capacity from the North Calgary Water Servicing project in 2027, for an area that is currently distant from existing amenities. Proceeding with the entire Growth Application area would trigger \$41.0M in capital investment to fund the Mountain View Road Realignment and Bridge. For these reasons this capital request is best considered along the timelines associated with delivery of the North Calgary Water Servicing project.

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 the public hearing that is held on the broader annual 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.

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.

This Growth Application is not favourably located relative to activity centres and employment areas, with the nearest both being greater than three kilometres away. It is favourably located to transit access as it is within four kilometres of the Sage Hill Transit Terminal and the East portion will benefit from transit services in the adjacent developing community of Ambleridge.

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.

In the near term, the location of this Growth Application will likely result in it being a vehicle dependent community, increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Over the longer term, strategic opportunities exist to encourage more compact, mixed-use and complete communities, and to

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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

New operating funding request

Based on the recommendation for the "East portion" (recommended), while operating costs for this Growth Application may be zero in the final year of the current budget cycle, it is important to highlight that the long-term investment commitment to this area should be considered in future cycles, as required. Base tax-supported operating investments of \$0.01M will be required in 2027 and will require base tax-supported operating investment of \$0.34M by the final build out year in the future budget cycles (Attachment 2) for the East portion of the application based on the analysis done using the New Community Incremental Operating Cost Model (IP2023-0981). Should this Growth Application proceed, required operating funding will be requested at the appropriate time by the impacted services (Attachment 2, Table 4).

For the Full Growth Application (not recommended), base tax-supported operating investments of \$0.35M will be required in 2027 and will require base tax-supported operating investment of \$1.11M by the final build out year in the future budget cycles (Attachment 2) based on the analysis done using the New Community Incremental Operating Cost Model (IP2023-0981). Should this Growth Application proceed, required operating funding will be requested at the appropriate time by the impacted services (Attachment 2, Table 4).

The City budgets for additional revenues from redevelopment and new development, meaning the estimate of property taxes used in the model is not implied to be additional unbudgeted tax revenue. Rather, this indicates how much property tax could be generated by the anticipated homes in the Growth Application (at current tax rates).

Other: Capital Investments

The East portion (recommended) of the Growth Application requires no capital infrastructure investment (Attachment 2). Additional investments of \$101.2M will be required to support the full build out of the Growth Application or to support continued growth in the area and will be brought forward in future Service Plans and Budgets (Attachment 2, Table 4).

The Full Growth Application (not recommended) will initially require \$41M in unfunded capital infrastructure investment (Attachment 2), and \$101.2M in future investments to support the full build out of the Growth Application or to support continued growth in the area. Approximately ±\$20.87M of the initial \$41M investment is eligible to be funded through Off-site Levies, with the remainder to be funded through other City funding sources which have not yet been identified.

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

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
IP2025-0334**

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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
7. **Public Submission Received at Committee**

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

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