

Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments



For CPC2025-0570 / LOC2024-0139
heard at Calgary Planning Commission
Meeting 2025 June 05



Member	Reasons for Decision or Comments
Commissioner Damiani	<p>Reasons for Approval to CPC's recommendation to Refuse and Abandon the Bylaws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed Road Closure is not supported for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road closure is premature and does not reflect the long-term North Hill Communities LAP. Council-approved LAP indicates a Pedestrian Connection on the proposed road closure parcel (Map C1: Pedestrian Corridors) which is a visible desire line currently existing on public land. Administration confirmed that LAP amendments are not being entertained as the plans are recently approved and long-term in nature. Administration indicated Map C1: Pedestrian Corridors is not statutory as it is in the appendix of the LAP. However as part of the comprehensive LAP the plan provides direction based on intensive community engagement and study of the area. Administration tasked the potential private owner of the road closure lands with integrating a pathway into the future development site through a public easement. This ask conflicts with the overall intent of closing the road for private development and resulted in the pathway being determined unfeasible. This is a publicly owned parcel on which the City can plan for an appropriate connection, not a private developer. Mobility indicated the 5A standards can not be met due to topography of the site. Many examples exist throughout the City on sloped sites that provide public access that may not meet 5A standards but are also important and desirable places and connections for many community members. The City of Calgary should maintain the opportunity for improved connections aligned with the Council-approved LAP within a redeveloping and intensifying area. Short term gain in the sale of this land is a lost opportunity for long term connectivity.

Commissioner Remtulla	Reasons for Opposition to CPC's recommendation to Refuse and Abandon the Bylaws
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This application was given a recommendation to refuse and abandon the bylaws by CPC. I voted in opposition to provide council recommendation to grant the land use primarily because the pathway connection is not considered a statutory requirement under the LAP. There will likely not be a pathway connection in the future between both parcels as the LAP does not force the need for one and with the grade differential, it will be very difficult to create a connection without steps (creating a larger liability for the city and for a private developer). My interpretation of the defeated motion was due to the likelihood that there will not be a pathway connection in the future. I believe that if this was the desire, an area should have been parceled out to allow for a connection point (granted for it to be barrier free, it would need a switch back pathway encompassing the entire parcel). While I agree with the notion that a removal of a pathway is not a positive for community members, I also understand that REDS has put together a sale and I would have assumed the City's intent is not to proceed with the connection. If there was a desire, REDS should not have proposed a land sale. If the intent was that the developer is required to construct a pathway, there is no current mechanism to enforce this presently and the LAP should have been written appropriately to ensure this was a requirement if this was the desire, otherwise it is unreasonable to expect a private landowner to provide pathway access on their lands.
Commissioner Hawryluk	<p>Reasons for Opposition to CPC's recommendation to Refuse and Abandon the Bylaws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This application includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A Land Use Amendment to the Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG), Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG), and Multi-Residential – High Density Low Rise (M-H1) Districts, and A Road Closure that Administration describes as "0.12 hectares (0.29 acres) of the original 36 Avenue NE road right-of-way. This road right-of-way is undeveloped due to the sloped conditions in the area" (Attachment 1, page 3). <p>During Commission's review, most of the discussion focussed on the Road Closure. To me, this suggests that Commission's recommendation to refuse and abandon this application was more connected to the Road Closure than the Land Use Amendment. I voted in favour of this application to support the Land Use Amendment, though I feel that the details of the Road Closure are not ideal. Council might need to give more direction to Administration about the Road Closure.</p> <p>The Land Use Amendment aligns with the following direction from Council:</p>

Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan (2020):

- This site is in the Developed Residential – Inner City Area (MDP, 2020, Map 1),
- ~100m from Centre St N, which is an Urban Main Street and part of the Primary Transit Network (MDP, 2020, Map 2), and
- ~400m from the 40 St North Central Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station, currently under construction.
- This location is consistent with planning around “nodes and corridors” (MDP, 2020, 2.2).

North Hill Communities Local Area Plan:

- Maps 3 and 4 envision this site with the Neighbourhood Local Urban Form Category, with additional policy guidance on the east for Industrial Transition, the Low (up to 6 storeys) Building Scale Modifier north of 36th Ave, and the Limited (up to 3 storeys) Building Scale Modifier south of 36th Ave.
- The proposed Residential – Grade-Oriented Infill (R-CG), Multi-Residential – Contextual Grade-Oriented (M-CG), and Multi-Residential – High Density Low Rise (M-H1) Districts are consistent with the Urban Form Category and Building Scale Modifier.

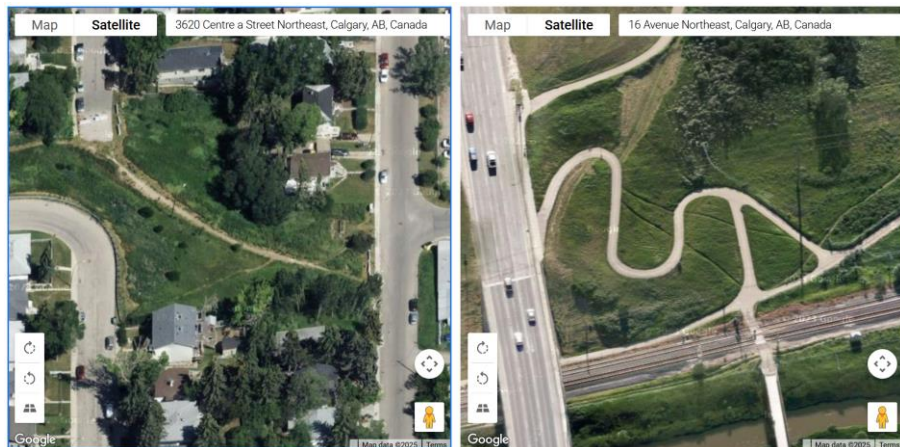
During Commission’s review, the following points were raised about the Road Closure:

- A path has been worn into the hill from Centre A St to 1st St NE.
- This path has been marked as an existing pathway on Map C1: Pedestrian Corridors and Map C2: Cycling Network in the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. Both maps are in Appendix C, and therefore non-statutory, which is why Administration did not recommend updating the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan if the Road Closure was approved.
- The hill is too steep to create a connection that would meet the requirements of the Always Available for All Ages and Abilities (5A) Network within the available space.

Below, two satellite views are shown at the same scale. The left shows the area in this application. The right shows the connection from 16th Ave NE to the Nose Creek Pathway.

A connection from Centre A St to 1st St NE would change elevation by 17m over 80m, which is a slope of 21cm/m. The connection from 16th Ave NE to the Nose Creek Pathway changes elevation by 12m over 170m, which is a slope of 7cm/m (a third of the slope of the subject site). It appears that a 5A connection would probably need all of the green space

between Centre A St and 1st St NE and about three times as many switchbacks.



The Applicant reported that a connection is part of the contract to buy the land. The Applicant has reported a willingness to build stairs, but it is unclear which City department would maintain those stairs. Therefore, the stairs have become an impasse.

Administration can decide how much of the road area to sell. Stairs or some other connection could be built on public or private land.

Council appears to have a few options:

1. Council could refuse both the Land Use Amendment and the Road Closure. This would keep Commission's recommendation to file and abandon the application. The Applicant could reapply after 6 months. This status quo approach would not help Council meet its larger goals nor respond to the Community Association's request for a public right-of-way between Centre Street and Greenview Industrial.
2. Council could separate the vote on the Land Use Amendment and Road Closure to vote in favour of the Land Use Amendment and refuse the Road Closure. This would let the Applicant build but would keep the area of the unconstructed road right-of-way in its current state. The Applicant might not be able to build the M-H1 proposal without the area in the road right-of-way. The area in the road right-of-way would continue to be too steep to be used for a 5A connection. Council could extend Centre A St to meet 1 St NE (per the Community Association's letter in Attachment 6, pages 1-2), fund a corkscrew-like structure

	<p>similar to those found at some older LRT stations, or fund a funicular. All of those options are expensive and unlikely.</p> <p>3. Council could approve both the Land Use Amendment and the Road Closure. A motion would be required to revert to Administration's original recommendation.</p> <p>There are a couple variations on this theme, each of which would benefit from additional Council direction:</p> <p>3a. Completely close the road and direct Administration to sell all of the right-of-way. This would mean accepting that people will need to use 34th Ave NE or 38th Ave NE to move between Centre A St and 1st St NE. Council could direct Administration to remove the requirement for a connection from the contract with the Applicant, and remove the connection from Map C1: Pedestrian Corridors and Map C2: Cycling Network in the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan.</p> <p>3b. Allow the Applicant to build stairs, which would not meet 5A requirements, and direct a specific business unit in Administration to maintain the stairs. If a specific business unit maintains the stairs, the City would likely continue to own that part of the right-of-way. Then stewardship of the stairs would be transferred to that business unit. Roads is likely the appropriate business unit because both the 2017 Infrastructure Status Report and the 2022 Corporate Asset Management Plan describe timber stairways as part of Roads' asset portfolio.</p> <p>If Council selected this option, Council could also direct Administration to update the connection in Map C1: Pedestrian Corridors and remove the connection in Map C2: Cycling Network in the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan. These are non-statutory maps, so these updates are not required.</p> <p>None of these options are ideal. Perhaps options that are superior to these can be found before Council holds a public hearing. In my opinion, option 3b best aligns public and private interests in meeting the goals of the Municipal Development Plan and the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan.</p>
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