

Community Representation Framework Program Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This update report provides an overview of the progress of the Community Representation Framework program. The work is intended to optimize the effectiveness of organized community groups in representing the diverse interests and perspectives within their communities and to work more effectively with The City when addressing community-building matters like planning and development processes or community-driven initiatives.

Since 2016 December, Administration has worked with the Community Representation Framework Task Force (the task force) to develop the foundations of a framework. Through investigation and facilitated discussions, the task force has identified three areas of focus for a community representation framework:

- *Representation structure* – a system by which organized community groups and individuals collaborate with City staff on community-building issues.
- *Community involvement* – clear roles, responsibilities and expectations of different stakeholders in community-building, with significant focus on the processes and practices of The City with respect to community involvement.
- *Supports and resources* – human resources, funding and programs required to build the capacity of individuals and organized community groups so they can effectively contribute to community-building processes.

The primary focus of the task force at this point is on *representation structure*. Through a discussion paper that explored the systems used in a selection of North American cities and facilitated conversations, the task force has expressed a preference for an approach by which organized community groups and individuals collaborate through a ‘forum’ on community-building issues (Attachment 1). In the winter and spring of 2018, Administration will engage with community and the development industry to review this preferred *representation structure* and key elements related to all three areas of focus.

A cross-corporate team of City staff is collaborating to ensure alignment of current and future work that will contribute to a successfully implemented framework. This group is also working to ensure projects and initiatives are included in the business planning of the One Calgary process, wherever possible.

Given the substantial work still required, including public and industry engagement and review, completion and delivery to Council of the final report on the framework is anticipated by the end of 2018 Q4.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council direct Administration to:

1. Continue work to establish a new approach to community representation based on the direction of the Community Representation Framework Task Force by engaging with community stakeholders, and
2. Return to Council with a final report on the Community Representation Framework no later than the end of 2018 Q4.

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PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2016 June 1 (CPS2016-0393), the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services proposed the following recommendations to Council:

1. Approve the formation of the Community Representation Framework Task Force, and
2. Adopt the Community Representation Framework Task Force Terms of Reference.

On 2016 February 22 (CPS2016-0107), Council directed Administration to report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services, by no later than 2016 June 01, with a Terms of Reference for a steering committee, an engagement plan, and any implications for the work plan and timeline, with consideration given to the discussion and input provided at the 2016 February 03 meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services.

On 2015 November 09 (CPC2015-182), Council referred a Motion Arising from Calgary Planning Commission (CPC):

REFER, Moved by Councillor Stevenson, Seconded by Councillor Keating, that Calgary Planning Commission Recommendation 3 contained in Report CPC2015-182, as follows, be referred to the Administration to develop a scoping study on these matters and to return to the SPC on Community and Protective Services no later than 2016 February 03:

3. Create a working group or similar entity that examines the evolution of community associations and resident's associations over time in an effort to identify appropriate roles as they apply to community building. For example, do both entities deserve an official voice when weighing in on community plans, land use plans or development permits? To be inclusive, this working group should involve representation from City Administration, industry, Federation of Calgary Communities, existing Resident's Associations and perhaps a post-secondary institution to act in a research capacity. There is potential to run such an initiative under the Urban Alliance memorandum of understanding between The City and the University of Calgary.

BACKGROUND

The Community Representation Framework Task Force began meeting in 2016 December (Attachment 2). As directed by Council, the task force consists of 15 members representing Council, community, industry and Administration (Attachment 3).

Through meetings and facilitated conversations, the task force has identified three areas of focus for a community representation framework:

- *Representation structure* – a system by which organized community groups and individuals collaborate with City staff on community-building issues.
- *Community involvement*– clear roles, responsibilities and expectations of different stakeholders in community-building, with significant focus on the processes and practices of The City with respect to community involvement.
- *Supports and resources* – human resources, funding and programs required to build the capacity of individuals and organized community groups so they can effectively contribute to community-building processes.

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The task force has focused its efforts on defining components of a *representation structure* with the expectation that elements *community involvement* and *supports and resources* will be aligned to ensure successful implementation and sustainment of the framework.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

The Community Representation Framework staff team reviewed approaches to representation used in ten North American cities (Attachment 1) to generate a set of options for the task force to consider. In the Canadian context, Calgary's system of community associations is very well-organized. However, several cities in the United States provide examples of *representation structures*, *community involvement* and *supports and resources* that are worth considering.

Some cities have established more formalized representation structures, developed civic processes that improve community involvement and committed staff and funding to enhance the capacity of communities to participate in such processes more effectively. For example, cities like Los Angeles California and St. Paul Minnesota have established terms of reference that clarify the roles and responsibilities of community groups and the municipality with respect to the operation and support of their respective *representation structures*. These terms of reference are formalized through policy and / or city ordinance.

Seattle Washington and Portland Oregon have recognized that not all members of a neighbourhood are members of community-based groups, but instead participate in cultural or faith-based groups (to name just a few) that span communities. These cities have shifted more resources and staff to ensure the voices of these identity-based groups are also being heard through engagement efforts.

And finally, cities like Atlanta Georgia and Dayton Ohio dedicate annual funding and staff to support the operation of the *representation structure*. In addition, several cities support programs and training opportunities like community leadership programs and planning process orientations to build the capacity of individuals and their communities.

After considering the research provided, the task force expressed a preference for a *representation structure* based on a community or district 'forum' (Attachment 1). The forum is envisioned as a means for organized community groups and individuals to share information, debate alternative approaches and collaborate with one another and with City staff on community-building issues.

Questions remain about the geographic scale these forums should encompass (community-based or district-based) the scope of issues the forum should address, who can best convene the forum (community associations, City staff or a mix of representatives) and what policies and rules would be established to guide the operation of the forum (e.g. conflict of interest policy, inclusion/non-discrimination, transparency and record keeping, etc.). Administration will engage with community and industry stakeholders to review a proposed *representation structure* and help answer these questions. Engagement will be targeted toward organized community groups like community associations, resident's associations and business improvement area groups, as well as individuals from populations that are often under-represented within those groups. Members of BILD Calgary Region, including the Established Areas Working Group, will contribute their expertise and perspectives to our investigation as well.

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In addition, a cross-corporate internal working group of City staff is in the process of reviewing current and future work and developing a business plan to ensure successful implementation of the framework. For example, a new *representation structure* will require clearly defined rules about its governance, operations and scope – this will likely lead to a project to develop a terms of reference for the forum. As aspects of the overall framework develop, resources required to achieve desired outcomes will be identified and aligned through the One Calgary service plans and budget for 2019 – 2022. These will either be introduced as part of One Calgary plans presented to Council in 2018 or as mid-cycle updates, depending on the timing of a final report of the framework and on the progress of an iterative implementation process.

Strategic Alignment

This report's recommendations align with and contribute to the following of Council's key strategic objectives in Action Plan 2015-2018:

- **City of Inspiring Neighbourhoods:** Every Calgarian lives in a safe, mixed and just neighbourhood, and has the opportunity to participate in civic life.
 - Strategic Actions:
 - N4 Revitalize the role and ability of community associations, and use of community facilities
 - N5 Systematically invest in established neighbourhoods as they evolve to accommodate changing community needs.
 - N9 Provide great public spaces and public realm improvements across the city to foster opportunity for well used public spaces and places for citizen connections and urban vitality

This program also aligns with:

- **Engage initiatives:** The Engage Resource Unit has initiated a review of its practices and processes with the objective of expanding the accessibility of engagement opportunities to a broader range of citizens and ensuring consistent engagement related to planning and development reviews.
- **Investing in Local Area Planning:** an approach intended to bring a more consistent manner of determining the geographic scope and depth of future local area plans, and a method for prioritizing their completion.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social, economic and environmental objectives are best identified and achieved when the community is actively engaged in decisions, and empowered to carry out some of the actions needed to affect change. The framework is intended to create an inclusive structure where persons and groups from varied social, cultural or economic backgrounds can become involved in community-building activities that promote safe, livable, complete communities, with convenient access to transit, employment, services, parks, open space and other amenities.

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Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The Community Representation Framework program is funded through the Council Innovation Fund and the current operating budgets of Calgary Neighbourhoods and Community Planning. Future operating budget for implementation of the framework (once approved by Council) will be aligned through the One Calgary process, either as part of plans presented later in 2018 or as mid-cycle adjustments.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There is no anticipated impact on capital budgets from undertaking the Community Representation Framework program.

Risk Assessment

1. Stakeholders have expressed a wide range of expectations about the scope of the Community Representation Framework; some stakeholders may be disappointed that the scope is limited to aspects of community representation. The engagement work proposed in this report will provide an opportunity to 'level-set' with stakeholders and articulate the scope of our work in greater detail.
2. Communities in Calgary vary in many respects including size, demographics, area, development patterns, mix of organizations and experience with redevelopment. To mitigate this risk and ensure the outcomes of this program serve the needs of communities across the city, the framework must allow for flexible approaches to implementation.
3. Organized community groups are largely independent of the City and will not be required to participate in a *representation structure*. Hence, the framework must provide community stakeholders with clear benefits to participation.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

These recommendations are intended to gain Council support for the direction provided by the Community Representation Framework Task Force. Administration also wants to secure adequate time to carry out an engagement plan and for the task force to deliberate on the feedback received through that process.

Approval of these recommendations will allow Administration, in partnership with the task force, to complete a framework that meets the needs of a broad and diverse range of stakeholders and an implementation schedule that will help us align future work through the One Calgary service plans and budgets process for 2019 - 2022.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 – Summary of the discussion paper on approaches to community representation in North American cities, prepared for the Community Representation Framework Task Force
2. Attachment 2 – Community Representation Framework Task Force Meetings Summary
3. Attachment 3 – Community Representation Framework Task Force Membership