



December 13, 2017

Delivered by Hand

**Standing Policy Committee for Planning and Urban Development**

City of Calgary

P.O.Box 2100, Station "M"

Calgary, Alberta

Attention: Joe Magliocca, Chair & Members of SPC for Planning & Urban Development

**Re: PUD 2017-1125 Infill Property Development Policy Improvements – Scoping Report**

Regarding the above noted Report, BILD Calgary Region (BILD) would like to express our appreciation to The City of Calgary Administration and Senior Management for their efforts in engaging stakeholders, including BILD, and preparing the above referenced report and attachments directed to SPC for Planning & Urban Development on December 13, 2017.

By way of Background: The scoping report work arose out of the annual report back to Committee and Council in relation to the Contextual Single and Semi-Detached Residential Land Use. The land use had been in place for upwards of nine-plus years and was subject to an annual review with community associations, Federation of Calgary Communities, Canadian Home Builders Association – Calgary Region & Urban Development Institute - Calgary (merged to form BILD Calgary Region). Over the years, stakeholders reviewed and occasionally revised requirements pertaining to a variety of matters include building height, trees and tree caliper, setbacks, lot coverage, massing, etc. After several years of review, The City and stakeholders agreed we had landed in a place where we have a district that was something of a compromise for all interested parties, and which was clearly supporting infill development based upon the uptake of context dwelling permits released over the last number of years. Hence, the recommendation that was made by Administration and stakeholders to discontinue annual reporting back to Council. Also, in that report to Committee and Council, was a list of issues that had been raised through the engagement generally dealing with infill development, accompanied by a summary of initiatives and projects underway to respond to the issues on the list. It was a surprise to Administration and stakeholders that a motion was made at Council for administration to come back with recommendations for land use bylaw amendments to address these issues – notwithstanding the history of discussion on related concerns and current initiatives.

Going Forward: As noted in the Report, BILD does generally support the direction proposed by Administration in the report with the exception of one or two concerns, which are noted as follows.

BILD supports the recommendation to address **Front Porches** in Phase 1 as referenced in the report. Not only does BILD support this approach but Industry has requested for some time a means of modifying the lot coverage requirements to specifically encourage the design of more porches and outdoor living space. BILD will be pleased to work with Administration in this regard.

**Subterranean Structures:**

BILD does not, however, support addressing **Subterranean Structures** in Phase 1 as we believe it should be more appropriately included in Phase 2, being the more comprehensive review approach for the following reasons.

In our discussions with administration leading to this report, we were unable to discern exactly what the problem is that we are being tasked with resolving and what the scope or magnitude of the problem might be.

We do note that Attachment 1 makes reference to 'most of the concerns are during excavation and construction' which leads us to believe that this is not necessarily an issue that must be addressed exclusively through the land use bylaw regulation (if at all) but possibly more appropriately through alternatives such as best practices (i.e. in the case of excavation in proximity to neighbouring property lines), or other mitigating approaches.

In addition, there is strong overlap between the subterranean structure conversation and those related to landscaping, trees and drainage, which are also to be discussed in Phase 2.

Finally, if potential amendments are to be applied to single-family and multi-family development, there are a number of complexities associated with underground parking that must be considered.

Again, we ask that the subterranean structures review be included in the Phase 2 Work.

**Phase 2:**

Regarding **Phase 2**, BILD endorses the more fulsome conversation that would take place in Phase 2 around supporting successful infill development and the engagement proposed in Q1 and Q2 - particularly as it relates to BILD's primary mandate being **Homebuyer Choice and Affordability**.

BILD agrees with Administration and Community stakeholders regarding the importance of understanding the needs of communities as they grow and change and, in parallel, facilitating and encouraging successful infill development.

At the centre of the discussion will be recognizing how the evolution of a community takes place, appreciating that redevelopment by its definition implies 'change' while at the same time respecting the nature of a community that distinguishes it from another – beyond built form – whether that be through the people and how they live in the community, the natural amenities and features, community culture, open space, and so on.

In the course of the scoping review to date, our members have emphasized the economic realities of infill development and that infill projects do compete with other housing options located across the city. To attract families to the existing communities, it is necessary that infill offers a variety of built-forms, including ground oriented development, potentially maximizing developable area on land which may be more costly than further away from the core, in order for this segment of the market to offer value and provide relative affordability.

As noted, BILD fundamentally advocates in favour of choice and affordability and we recognize infill development as an integral part of achieving the growth aspirations of the Municipal Development Plan. We are appreciative of the opportunity to be a part of balanced discussions in Phase 2 regarding the evolution of communities as they grow and change in order to continue to support successful infill development.

Again, we ask that the subterranean structures issues be moved to Phase 2 and request that SPC for Planning & Urban Development otherwise endorse the Administration Recommendations for Council approval.

BILD and our members look forward to the opportunity to continue to participate as a key stakeholder in this critical project as it moves forward.

Respectfully,  
**BILD Calgary Region**



Beverly Jarvis  
Director of Policy and Government Relations

cc. City of Calgary: Lisa Kahn, Tammy Henry, Stephen Pearce  
Federation of Calgary Communities: Carrie Yap