



September 21, 2018

Re: Changes to Planning & Development Public Notifications

The Federation of Calgary Communities (the Federation) is the support organization for over 230 community based non-profit organizations, including 151 community associations. We advocate for and assist community associations in navigating Calgary's planning process. We are pleased to have been a key stakeholder in communicating and providing input on changes to the planning & development notification process.

The format of the new notice postings has improved significantly, and the language has been made much more accessible to the average Calgarian. Jargon is a significant barrier in public participation, and we appreciate the opportunity to have provided input on encouraging the use of plain language more broadly.

Though advertisements through the Calgary Herald have long been a consistent method for Calgary's residents and community associations to stay updated on proposed development, we recognize that we are moving towards a time where digital notifications are more efficient and more accessible to a broader audience. Additionally, tools created by the City of Calgary, such as the Planning & Development map, offer superior solutions, like the ability to display graphics and background policy, when compared to traditional print media.

We sent out a survey to our membership on moving away from notifications in the Calgary Herald, and the results were mixed, though the majority were in favour if the City of Calgary continues to notify residents through multiple avenues. Specifically, community associations must be circulated in a timely fashion, and the City should continue to explore supporting communities with technology and the creation of email lists that residents can sign up for. Finally, on larger development items, the City should continue to ensure that some central physical notice posting takes place.

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We were also invited to a meeting to discuss the phasing out of notifications through the Herald and to provide input on how to best notify communities. Transitions and change are hard for people, and communication is key. We recognize that Administration has done great work in developing new tools, such as the Planning & Development map, and has refined its existing tools, such as the site notice posting. Together with Administration, the Federation is committed to working on tools and delivering accessible, plain language communications, so that more Calgarians can engage in our city's planning process.

Sincerely,

Ben Morin
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