

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the City Shaping concept to be implemented by Community Services as part of the Green Line program. City Shaping is leveraging Calgary's investment in transit infrastructure to strengthen and support the social needs of communities along the Green Line. City Shaping forms Layer 4 of the Green Line program and will ensure that the Green Line is more than simply a transit line; it will change the way Calgarians live, work, play and move. It is intentional about The City's effort to create a series of well-planned, connected and vibrant community hubs that will evolve starting now, and over decades from the time the Green Line LRT is constructed.

Consideration of the visions established for Calgary through imagineCALGARY and community engagement specific to the program are key drivers of the City Shaping process and the goal of connecting people, places and programs along the Green Line. Through coordinated planning with the other Green Line layers and review of specific community demographics, gaps and trends, our aim is to foster vibrant, equitable neighbourhood networks and support healthy, active and affordable lifestyles within them. It is the provision of creative and purposefully-planned public spaces, housing options, community services and recreational opportunities that will serve communities well. It is about assisting communities along the Green Line in realizing their potential over time, as funding becomes available, to ensure efficient and intentionally planned use of land and resources. This has already begun with the master planning work at the 64th Avenue station area on the Thornhill Aquatic and Recreation Centre and the Judith Umbach Library site, occurring as part of the Green Line process.

The next step in City Shaping for the Green Line will be the development of a framework that will come forward to Council in 2017 June, establishing specific goals and outcomes for Layer 4 of the Green Line program. The framework will guide the development of a strategy for Community Services, internal and external partners, to identify opportunities, measurable targets, and investment priorities for communities along the Green Line. For consistency, this framework will be brought forward in conjunction with the Green Line Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Framework.

This report is accompanied by similar reports to the SPC on Planning and Urban Development (PUD2017-0249) and SPC on Transportation and Transit (TT2017-0236). The intentional linking of reports to Committees of Council highlights the integrated nature of the Green Line program.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommends that:

1. Council Receive this report for information;
2. Council Direct Administration to report back through the SPC on Community and Protective Services with a City Shaping framework no later than 2017 June; and
3. This report be forwarded as an Item of Urgent Business to the 2017 April 10 Combined Meeting of Council together with the associated reports of the SPC on Planning and Urban Development and the SPC on Transportation and Transit.

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

City Shaping was first presented in 2016 March, in the Green Line Update report (TT2016-0220). This was an important but preliminary outline of City Shaping and set the stage for including City Shaping with all Green Line updates to Council. City Shaping has been reported on in the subsequent quarterly reports. In 2016 June (TT2016-0483), 2016 September (TT2016-0705), and 2016 December (TT2016-0927).

BACKGROUND

It is expected that Calgary will double its population within the next 60 years, reaching a population of over two million people. Based on trends prevailing over the past 20 years, Calgarians continue to value greater choices when deciding where to live, work and play, as well as how to move around Calgary. The Green Line will play a significant role in adapting to this growth and a long-term vision is required to help guide The City's largest investment in infrastructure. This long-term vision is a Calgary-designed solution that invests in transit, people, places and programs that, when implemented, will make Calgary a more attractive, accessible and vibrant City.

Over the course of the past year, the public, stakeholders and Council have contributed to the development of the long-term vision for the Green Line. The City's long-term vision will be delivered through a strategy developed by Administration that involves a four-layered planning approach. The four-layered approach to the Green Line program, shown in Attachment 1, is a planning and communication tool to illustrate the complexity and interdependence of the work. The four layers illustrate transportation (Layers 1 and 2), planning (Layer 3) and City Shaping (Layer 4) work required to create more accessible, complete and vibrant communities.

Success in delivering the complete Green Line long-term vision (Layers 1, 2, 3, 4) will be measured over an extended period of time, potentially decades from now. Attachment 2 shows two sites where transit-oriented development and City Shaping initiatives have begun, laying the groundwork for the long-term vision. With the development of a long-term vision nearing completion, Administration is now shifting its focus to the implementation of the initial construction stages of the LRT and associated transit infrastructure within the realities of available funding.

Funding commitments for the transit infrastructure component of the Green Line and the associated financing terms continue to be unknown from the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Administration's City Shaping work will include: identifying collaborative opportunities internal to The City and externally with organizations like Calgary Economic Development, Alberta Health Services and boards of education; aligning with Council priorities, existing policies, and strategic and capital plans. Attachment 3 illustrates the concept of City Shaping. City Shaping is an approach to achieve outcomes linked by transit, focused on people. Investing in people, places, and programs with reliable multi-modal transportation options is the holistic approach connecting them all together.

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

People

The focus of City Shaping is on people and communities and their connection to the Green Line. Supported by public engagement and existing policy, City Shaping will explore opportunities to support individual and community well-being, through equitable planning and strengthen health, culture, resiliency and safety of neighbourhoods along the line.

Places

City Shaping puts a priority on citizen experience through great public spaces. The focus is to shift from creating 'transit spaces' to creating public spaces by developing urban villages, community hubs and walkable centres, activating places along the Green Line. Integrated with a mix of living, working and recreating, these hubs of activity will be planned to include affordable housing, parks and recreation facilities, schools, health centres, libraries, commercial opportunities and protective services, vital for developing vibrant, affordable and resilient communities.

Programs

City Shaping can optimize the delivery of City programs and services. Opportunities include encouraging healthy, active lifestyles; supporting inclusion, diversity and vulnerable populations; accommodating the needs of an aging population; supporting local businesses; and cultivating creativity through supporting arts and culture.

Reliable Multi-Modal Transportation

Opportunities for people, places and programs will be linked by the 46km and 30 stations of the Green Line, not only providing all the opportunities of rapid transit but new opportunities to conveniently use other modes of transportation (Layer 2) beyond the car and connecting major destinations such as the Entertainment District, the Music Mile, Quarry Park YMCA, South Health Campus, and Vivo, to mention a few. The Green Line will also connect to the larger transit network providing access to many of the City's major attractions.

Comprehensive consideration of City Shaping on a Calgary LRT project is a new approach. A cross-corporate team working in a coordinated intentional fashion will enhance collaboration and creative thinking. City Shaping has begun to influence projects on the proposed Green Line. The 64th Avenue station area is an example. The master planning being done on the site of the Thornhill Aquatic & Recreation Centre and Judith Umbach Library by Integrated Civic Facility Planning Program is a result of the integrated work that was done by the City Shaping and TOD teams in the charrette held in 2016 April. Current Layer 3 (TOD), and 4 (City Shaping) initiatives are seen in Attachment 2. To date, City Shaping has also influenced station and alignment evaluations, planning and analysis work for the Green Line.

Collaboration between Community Services and our other City departments is underway to identify opportunities to maximize investment and leverage new programs, facilities and spaces in support of the people and communities the Green Line will serve. This is creating opportunities for Community Services to identify high potential sites for City Shaping projects so the project can make strategic land acquisition for the future.

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

A City Shaping framework will be built from this collaboration and it will outline City Shaping goals and objectives in support of people and communities and their connection to the Green Line. The framework will be used as a strategic foundation to direct resources and facilitate partnerships, ensuring the Green Line connects people to essential places and programs that make Calgary a great place to live, work and play. The framework will weave together current policy objectives of Council and Administration, and be guided by strategies such as Enough for All, Age Friendly, the Culture Plan, and the Affordable Housing Strategy. The framework will also align with Layer 3 (TOD), and other City capital development where appropriate. Attachment 4 is a schedule of major milestones for the Green Line broken down by program layer.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

In 2015 and 2016 a total of six one-week-long charrettes were held to study opportunities for Transit Oriented Development at ten Green Line stations; the City Shaping Team participated in most of them. Administration continues to meet with stakeholders along the corridor to discuss opportunities to integrate the Green Line with existing and future initiatives and developments.

To provide insight into City Shaping, a four part speaker series was held from June to October 2016. The series looked at: City Shaping and what it means to The City; How to build a transit village; Shaping the way we move; and Calgary's potential. These were recorded and are available on Calgary.ca.

Engagement with internal City stakeholders and external service providers (for example Calgary Economic Development, YWCA, Alberta Health Services, and the school boards) will continue in 2017. Feedback on the City Shaping framework will be gathered and used to inform the outcomes. As the Green Line (Layer 1) continues through the planning, design and construction stages of the project, the City Shaping team alongside the TOD team will continue to build long-term partnerships with external organizations and foster internal relationships.

Strategic Alignment

The Green Line program aligns with Federal and Provincial government strategic objectives. For example initiatives to improve the quality of life for citizens by lowering the cost of transportation, creating employment opportunities, improving the environment, supporting seniors and providing affordable housing and low-cost accessible child care.

The City Shaping approach also provides an unprecedented opportunity to realize goals within imagineCALGARY, the Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan. The investment in transit, people, places, and programs is consistent in all of these plans. For example, Goal 2.2 of the MDP states: *Direct future growth of the city in a way that fosters a more compact efficient use of land, creates complete communities, allows for greater mobility choices and enhances vitality and character in local neighbourhoods.*

The City Shaping approach will also support alignment with RouteAhead, Main Streets, and the Triple Bottom Line. Within the Community Services Department, the project will also align with established strategies for seniors, recreation, parks, biodiversity, affordable housing,

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

accessibility and arts and culture. New opportunities through the City Charter and the Modernized Municipal Government Act are being considered and incorporated.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The Green Line program will result in City Shaping outcomes which include social, environmental, and economic benefits for generations to come.

Social

As a City Shaping initiative, Green Line supports mixed-use and mixed income neighbourhoods to reach community aspirations for vitality, sustainability and affordability. Mixed-use neighbourhoods are the places where people live, work, play, shop and learn. Mixed income communities are financially accessible to all Calgarians. A major benefit of increasing access to rapid transit is the overall lowering of transportation costs, and the fundamental link between cost and affordability of housing, especially lower income households. Consideration for multi-generational communities and places where residents can transition through all stages of life ensure a long-term, sustainable and resilient plan, creating welcoming, inviting, accessible public spaces where people feel safe to go about their daily lives.

Environmental

The City of Calgary has committed to reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) from its corporate operations, through energy efficiency and conservation programs and a shift to using lower carbon and renewable energy sources. Green Line presents opportunities to lead Calgary into the next phase of environmental sustainability and accountability through direct reductions in GHGs through the use of renewable energy, emission gains with fewer internal combustion engines in use, facilitating densification around transit villages and building The City's civic facilities to LEED standards.

Economic

Investing in Calgary's future results in economic resiliency through job creation, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, with direct benefits resulting from construction, operations and maintenance, increased property values, increased income tax revenue, savings for households, productivity gains, and contribution to economic diversification. The Green Line will contribute to the economy in Calgary and within Alberta in many ways.

Financial Capacity

Operating Budget:

There are no operating budget implications currently associated with these recommendations. Further operating budget considerations will be examined during the creation of the City Shaping framework. Projects that are underway, such as the Master Planning of 64 Avenue are covered through existing budgets.

Capital Budget:

There are no capital budget implications currently associated with these recommendations. Currently there is no available capital for City Shaping infrastructure projects. Further capital budget considerations will be examined during the creation of the City Shaping framework.

GREEN LINE CITY SHAPING UPDATE

Risk Assessment

The following risks are the focus of Administration's ongoing risk management as it relates to City Shaping for the Green Line:

Lost Opportunity

Given the significant long-term community benefits and outcomes provided by City Shaping and the added value it provides to a significant investment in infrastructure, it is crucial that the opportunity to properly implement is not lost. City Shaping is only successful when purposeful planning for community benefit occurs in concert with planning for infrastructure and community form in the early stages of the program. If City Shaping is not considered from the outset of the planning and visioning of this program, the Green Line risks providing a transportation option that does not maximize the opportunity to benefit Calgarians.

Funding

Currently, infrastructure investments and policy planning is not funded or included in the funding request to the Province and Federal Government. There is risk in not leveraging funding for City Shaping in coordination with Layer 2 and Layer 3 and the funding request for Layer 1. Funding for Layer 4 initiatives would provide significant benefits associated with the Green Line and without funding it poses the risk that momentum for community planning and transformation is lost.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

As the Green Line program moves forward a City Shaping framework is needed to ensure that the investment in the Green Line transportation infrastructure is planned and leveraged with people, places and programs in mind, to achieve the best possible community outcomes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Green Line – Transforming communities through transit (Four Layer outline)
2. Current TOD & City Shaping Initiatives (Green Line Map)
3. City Shaping Layer 4 Illustration
4. Green Line LRT – Program Milestone Level 1 Schedule