

**Community Services Report to
SPC on Community and Protective Services
2018 December 05**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPS2018-1393**

Community Representation Framework – Final Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Calgary's rapid growth has transformed it into a city with an increasingly diverse population. This has led to a more vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape across the city, but it also represents one example of a range of new challenges decision-makers face when understanding the needs of Calgarians.

Recognizing this changing environment, Council directed Administration to develop a Community Representation Framework (the Framework) to guide the way a broader range of organized community groups contribute to community-building and representation including The City's supporting processes and practices. Council also directed the formation of the Community Representation Framework Task Force (the Task Force) to provide guidance and advice to help Administration develop the Framework.

Public engagement provided important input as the Task Force informed development of the Framework. In consultation with the Task Force, Administration conducted public engagement from April through June 2018 using online surveys and in-person workshop sessions. More than 4,000 ideas, opinions and insights were collected from representatives of more than 130 organized community groups.

Through facilitated workshops, the Task Force considered this public input and articulated a set of priorities and results that form the basis of the recommended Community Representation Framework (Attachment 1). Five priorities are identified, each with results describing outcomes that will improve community-building and representation processes in Calgary. Public input is clearly reflected in the results.

The Community Representation Framework proposes an approach to achieve the priorities and results starting in 2019:

- 1) Use community-building projects as local learning opportunities to pilot new practices, processes and collaborations.
- 2) Establish collaborative stakeholder teams comprised of organized community groups and citizens representing diverse community interests, members of industry and Administration to explore ways to achieve the priorities and results; and

A cross-departmental staff resource team will coordinate the efforts of the local learning opportunities and the collaborative stakeholder teams and ensure information flow between them. Program leadership and accountability for progress will rest with a directors' steering committee that will report back to the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Community and Protective Services by the end of 2020 Q1.

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ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Approve the Community Representation Framework (Attachment 1);
2. Direct Administration to return to Council through the SPC on Community and Protective Services with a progress report on the implementation of the Community Representation Framework no later than the end of 2020 Q1;
3. Accept this report as a summary of how the Council Innovation Fund has been allocated to help complete the Framework;
4. Thank the Community Representation Framework Task Force members for their hard work and contribution to this program; and
5. Direct Administration to disband the Community Representation Framework Task Force.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2018 February 26, Council in report CPS2018-0118 directed 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.

On 2016 June 20, Council in report CPS2016-0393 adopted the following recommendations:

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

On 2016 February 22, Council directed Administration to report back to the SPC 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 SPC on Community and Protective Services.

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

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? In order 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.

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BACKGROUND

Calgary's rapid growth and diverse population has created a more vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape across the city, but this transformation brings new challenges for decision-makers when it comes to understanding the needs of Calgarians.

In Calgary, community associations have played a central role in community life since the early 1900s. Initially formed to provide programs and services for local residents, the roles of community associations have evolved over time to include serving as representatives of community interests – that is, to speak and act on behalf of community residents. Since the 1980s, The City has worked with community associations as key contacts for planning and development activities, in addition to their role providing local programs and services.

However, just as Calgary's population has become more diverse, the range of organized community groups that serve their needs has also changed over time. Calgarians are members not just of community associations, but also of other types of groups like resident's associations, business improvement areas, senior's groups, sport and recreation groups, cultural and faith-based organizations and service organizations.

This shift has led The City to new ways of thinking about how people's interests are represented in community-building processes (like planning and development, infrastructure and public space improvements and community-led initiatives) and has even changed our understanding of the term 'community'. Beyond a discreet geographic area, a community can also describe a group of people who come together based on a shared cultural identity, social outlook, economic circumstance, or other defining interest or characteristic.

The initial Motion Arising proposed an examination of *"the evolution of community associations and resident's associations over time in an effort to identify appropriate roles as they apply to community-building"*. This included ways these two organizations might utilize municipal reserve land to provide community amenities. However, recognizing the way communities in Calgary are evolving, in June 2016 Council directed Administration to develop a Framework to help guide the way a broader range of organized community groups contribute to community-building and representation.

While the role of community associations and resident's associations in community-building, representation, and opportunities to leverage resources such as municipal reserve is still firmly embedded in this work, Council's revised scope of the Community Representation Framework program reflects the citizen priority to create a City of Safe and Inspiring Neighbourhoods.

Council also directed the formation of a Community Representation Framework Task Force to *"Offer strategic advice on the development of a framework for inputs into decision making that have traditionally been provided by organized community groups on matters related to community-building"*. The Task Force began meeting in January 2017 and has been actively involved in the development of the Framework since then, generally meeting monthly.

The Task Force investigated a more formally structured partnership between organized community groups (referred to as a district forum model) to foster greater diversity and collaboration in community building and representation and to allow them to leverage their resources more effectively. Input received through public engagement contributed to the evolution of a comprehensive Framework with a less formal approach to start.

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INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Outcome of Task Force Considerations

Overall, more than 4,000 ideas, opinions and insights were received through engagement, then recorded and summarized in What We Heard reports for the Task Force to consider as it developed the components of the proposed Community Representation Framework. Through facilitated workshops, the Task Force began to articulate a shared vision of priorities and results that form the basis of the Framework (Attachment 1).

The five priorities identified by the Task Force to improve community-building and representation are:

- Increase Participation and Diversity
- Build Trust and Respect Among Stakeholders
- Raise the Capacity of Citizens and Organized Community Groups
- Better Align the Work of the City
- Support the Evolving Role and Needs of Community Associations

Each priority includes results that describe specific outcomes that together will improve community-building and representation and help achieve a city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods. A summary of public engagement and how it was used to develop the Framework priorities and results is provided in a What We Did engagement summary (Attachment 2).

Based on the input received, the proposed Framework supports collaboration and partnerships through less-formal approaches than a district forum model. As different practices and approaches are developed and tested more formal partnership structures may emerge. However, more investigation is needed before any such arrangements are formalized.

Next steps

Administration proposes to advance the Framework priorities and results starting in Q1 2019 by identifying local learning opportunities and establishing collaborative stakeholder teams. A staff team from Calgary Neighbourhoods, Community Planning and Customer Service and Communication will support the exchange of information and ideas between the learning opportunities and the stakeholder teams to ensure the work is coordinated and aligned.

Ongoing community-building work such as policy planning, development permit reviews, community asset mapping, and community-led public space improvements can serve as local learning opportunities. They will provide a chance for stakeholders to co-create new practices and approaches that contribute to better community-building and representation in the context of the communities involved.

Councillors, communities, builders, developers and Administration can champion local learning opportunities and coordinate with the cross-corporate staff team to ensure it meets basic criteria. For example, local learning opportunities should provide lessons that are pertinent and transferrable to other types of projects, they should have adequate resources to support a robust learning process and affected stakeholders should be supportive of the initiative.

Collaborative stakeholder teams will address the more complex, strategic priorities and results that will help create an environment in which local community-building and representation thrives. For example, the Framework result promoting more participation and diversity is a

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complex, multi-faceted challenge. A collaborative stakeholder team will be formed to achieve this result by suggesting new practices and strategies for use in local learning opportunities. Collaborative stakeholder teams will also be established to address other complex priorities and results that support collaborative partnerships between organized community groups and improve the membership and volunteer base of community associations.

As the work of the local learning opportunities and the collaborative stakeholder teams proceed, new relationships, practices or structures will emerge. The most promising approaches will be 'scaled-up' by developing new guidelines, policy or structures that will imbed them as standard ways The City works in community. Similarly, community groups, builders, developers and other partners may also adopt new guidelines, policies or standards that promote adoption of best practices by their members and associates.

Advancing and implementing the Framework will be supported with current staff and resource allocations and with new resources identified in One Calgary. In 2020, additional planning staff will help implement new engagement strategies that promote more diverse participation in The City's community-building and representation processes. In 2021, a community grant program will be introduced. Grants will support safe and inspiring neighbourhoods by helping community associations fulfil their goals, funding community-driven initiatives, and providing citizens and organized community groups with access to capacity-building opportunities.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

At Council's direction, public engagement took place from April to June 2018 using a two-phase strategy. First, online surveys gathered current practices and collected initial thoughts about a district forum approach to community representation. More than 200 responses were received from representatives of 130 organized community groups (including around 100 community associations) across the city.

Second, a series of in-person workshops allowed facilitators to explore the survey responses in greater depth. Almost 100 participants attended six workshops held in June. The findings of engagement were summarized in What We Heard reports shared publicly.

Strategic Alignment

This report's recommendations align with A City of Safe and Inspiring Neighbourhoods: Every Calgarian lives in a safe, mixed and inclusive neighbourhood, and has the right and opportunity to participate in civic life. All neighbourhoods are desirable and have equitable public investments. City strategies to support this citizen priority include the following:

- Work with residents to help them increase their community connections and participation in civic life
- Provide residents and community groups a gateway to the resources they need to contribute meaningfully to their neighbourhoods
- Support community groups in building their organizational health, towards achieving greater sustainability
- Provide support to community associations in being more accessible and reflective of residents of all ages, cultures and stages of life
- Deliver a new grant to support community representation and resident-driven initiatives to create engaged neighbourhoods

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Components of the Community Representation Framework also align with:

- **Improved engagement strategies:** The Engage Resource Unit has initiated work to reduce barriers to participation and better include a broader range of citizens. They are also developing a more predictable approach to engagement related to planning and development processes.
- **Investing in Local Area Plans:** Planning and Development is launching a new approach to bring a more consistent manner of determining the geographic scope and depth of future plans, and a method for prioritizing their completion.
- **This is My Neighbourhood:** A program created through Calgary Neighbourhoods for residents to partner with The City to identify ways to make their neighbourhood an even better place to live, work and play.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

The Framework will provide more opportunities for Calgarians to contribute to a city of inspiring neighbourhoods and directs stakeholders to view community-building through an equity lens. Priorities and results related to participation and diversity, building trust and respect between stakeholders, and raising the capacity of citizens and community groups will contribute to stronger organized community groups and lead to more fruitful collaborations between citizens, builders, developers, social service providers and The City.

Environmental

The Framework will support collaborative community dialogue and relationship-building to address the environmental challenges Calgarians face. Through new approaches to community involvement, citizens can contribute more effectively to “strategies to mitigate impacts, promote conservation and minimize consumption of natural resources including land, energy and water” as identified in The City’s Environmental Policy.

Economic

The Framework will foster opportunities for citizens, organized community groups and businesses to better understand each other’s interests. When businesses and communities work collaboratively, communities will offer greater opportunities for private investment that provides clear public benefit.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Operating budget for initiatives related to the Community Representation Framework are included for Council consideration as part of the 2019-2022 One Calgary Service Plan and Budget. Collaborative stakeholder teams and local learning opportunities will help identify whether additional resources are required to achieve Framework priorities and results that may be provided as part of mid-cycle budget adjustments for consideration in 2020.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There is no anticipated impact on current or future capital budgets from implementing the Community Representation Framework.

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Council Innovation Fund summary:

The Community Representation Framework was supported with \$250,000 from the Council Innovation Fund. Funds were used toward the Community Representation Framework Program Manager and facilitation services to help the Task Force develop the Framework. Additional staff resources and operating expenses were funded through existing budgets of City departments.

Risk Assessment

1. Several City projects and initiatives already underway relate closely to the Framework priorities and results. Uncoordinated initiatives could lead to missed opportunities and inefficient deployment of City resources. An approved Framework will help coordinate the work of The City.
2. Communities vary widely in Calgary, based on their population, development, size, demographics, mix of organizations, experience with redevelopment, etc. This could lead to many approaches that serve local needs but also create a sense that City processes are unpredictable. The Framework proposes processes that are flexible and scalable to local conditions while providing a predictable approach.
3. Encouraging more diverse participation and creating equitable opportunity to participate in community-building processes will require changes to current attitudes, processes and systems. The Framework encourages a collaborative approach between stakeholders that will raise awareness of barriers to equity in community-building and representation.
4. Organized community groups are largely independent of The City and are not required to participate in collaborative processes and partnerships described in the Framework. If clear benefits to participation cannot be identified and implemented effectively, many of the priorities and results will not be achieved. The broad representation envisioned for the collaborative stakeholder teams will provide an opportunity to discuss challenges and benefits of various approaches to achieve the Framework priorities and results.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Approving the Community Representation Framework gives Administration clear direction to initiate the next phase of work starting in 2019;

Directing Administration to report back to the SPC on Community and Protective Services keeps Council informed of ongoing progress toward better community-building and representation in Calgary;

Accepting this report as the final summary explaining how the Council Innovation Fund was used fulfils the requirement set out in the application for funding; and

Recognizing the hard work and contribution of the Community Representation Task Force to fulfil their mandate should precede the Task Force's dissolution.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 - Community Representation Framework
2. Attachment 2 - Stakeholder Report Back: What we Did