

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SCOPING STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Administration has been asked to provide a scoping report to identify how it would evaluate the efficacy of community associations (CAs) and resident's associations (RAs) as vehicles in building and representing communities. The City's policies, practices and role in supporting these organizations would be examined and key stakeholders consulted, in order to identify and clarify appropriate roles and relationships for these organizations. Contained within this report is a scope study (work plan) that proposes: background and analysis on the evolution of CAs and RAs, the current state of community-building and an exploration into the future of community-building and community representation, to ultimately answer the question of how to best represent Calgary's communities on issues related to land, facilities, and recreation.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council Direct Administration to proceed with work of the The Future of Community-Building Scoping Study, in accordance with the Attachment.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2015 November 09, 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? 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.

BACKGROUND

Calgary is a city of diverse communities reflecting the diversity of their residents. As Calgary changes and grows, the needs of our communities will continue to change. Community associations have long been an important vehicle for supporting and representing the needs of our communities. The City has worked with these CAs by providing resources such as land leases and funding for capital repairs, as well as consultative liaison staff to support CAs in their role as community-builders. In new suburban communities, CAs only form once a critical mass of residents move in. In the 1970's, developers started to establish resident's associations to develop and manage community amenities ahead of CAs forming. The result is that lands allocated for conventional CAs sit undeveloped for many years; in addition The City's relationship with RAs remains undefined and inconsistent, leaving gaps in service levels and confusion of roles and responsibilities.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SCOPING STUDY

Related questions continue to arise:

- Why are CA sites three-four acres? Why do they sit vacant for so many years?
- Are CA sites still viable (particularly when RAs exist in the same community)?
- Do CAs and RAs provide similar functions? Would it make sense to amalgamate them? What implication does each have on a community's social equity?
- What happens if there are multiple RAs within one community boundary (would this make amalgamation more difficult)?
- Are RAs legally entitled to exist on designated CA sites and/or public lands?
- Should CA facilities be co-located with other public facilities or supporting uses (eg. fire halls, daycares, medical services) in creating community hubs rather than stand alone single-function buildings?
- Should CAs or RAs have an official voice in City decisions related to planning and development?

Therefore, the model that once served our citizens effectively in community-building needs to be re-evaluated and options explored.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

In response to the Motion Arising, a cross-corporate work group of representatives from Community & Neighbourhood Services, Parks, Recreation, Corporate Properties and Buildings, and Local Area Planning and Implementation, formed to co-create a high-level work plan (Attachment: Terms of Reference: Future of Community-Building Study), that includes:

- 1) *History and Evolution of CAs & RAs (Background Research and Analysis)*: An overview of the evolution of community associations and of resident's associations in building community, in both new and established communities.
- 2) *Current State of Community-Building- Scan of Leading Practices and Lessons Learned*: An exploration of the current state of community-building and what CAs and RAs have accomplished with the resources provided to them, including funding models. This section would also provide an environmental scan of leading practices in other jurisdictions and an assessment of previous collaboration efforts within Calgary.
- 3) *The Future of Community-Building*: Considerations would inform a proposal addressing the needs of citizens in communities through potential cooperative and collaborative relationships and the sharing of amenities between community associations and resident's associations. It would also identify their respective roles in informing civic decisions and answer the question of how to best represent Calgary's communities on issues related to land, facilities, and recreation.

Project Timelines

A project plan has been developed to meet a Q4 2016 deliverable. Key project timelines include:

- 2016, Q1: Project Definition, Terms of Reference, Planning and Initiation/Launch
- 2016, Q2 – 2016, Q3: Project Research and Execution
- 2016, Q4: Report back.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SCOPING STUDY

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

In preparation of this Scoping Study, Administration met with several Councillors to capture their various perspectives regarding community associations and resident's associations.

The City's Engagement Resource Unit (engage!) will be called upon to support the project team with engagement strategies (both internal and external) to ensure objectives are met and that in-depth conversations capture the important perspectives of interested parties, including (but not limited to) Council, Federation of Calgary Communities, the development industry, and existing community associations and resident's associations.

The Future of Community-Building Study will be a cross-departmental collaboration and will build on the inputs and research previously undertaken by Community Services and others on this subject. This new study will integrate results of the engagement strategies to determine potential areas for exploring a new cooperative relationship between community associations and resident's associations.

Strategic Alignment

The Future of Community-Building Study will directly support *Council's Priorities – A City of Inspiring Neighbourhoods*, within Action Plan 2015-2018, where "Every Calgarian lives in a safe, mixed and just neighbourhood, and has the opportunity to participate in civic life." Specifically, the work will advance key focus areas of Great Neighbourhoods: "Revitalize the role and ability of community associations, and use of community facilities", and "Systematically invest in established neighbourhoods as they evolve to accommodate changing community needs."

The outcome of this investigation into the future of community-building will be aligned with Community Services and Protective Services' implementation of the Departmental Review Process in accordance to a new regional model.

This investigation will also inform the "Community Centres: An operational audit on the service delivery provided by community centres", identified in the City Auditor's 2017 work plan.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

The Future of Community-Building Study will identify key elements that are most important to Calgarians in creating inspired communities with spaces and amenities to deliver valued programs and services.

Environmental

The Future of Community-Building Study will support The City of Calgary's Environmental Policy, "Develop and implement strategies to mitigate impacts, promote conservation and minimize consumption of natural resources including land, energy and water."

Economic

A collaborative future for community-building will enhance amenities and services for citizens, thereby attracting people and investment dollars to existing and developing communities within Calgary.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SCOPING STUDY

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The cost of undertaking this study is within existing operating budgets of participating business units.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There is no anticipated impact on current capital budgets from undertaking the proposed study.

Risk Assessment

Current models for how The City works with community associations and resident's associations have remained unchanged since their inceptions, and without the support for this study, the result will be a missed opportunity to re-evaluate the current models and the potential for collaboration and cooperation between the CAs and RAs. Additionally, communities' need for representation is changing and this study affords an opportunity to understand and respond to those changing needs. Ultimately, the roles and responsibilities of these organizations in relation to The City and the residents of Calgary communities would remain undefined and inconsistent leaving gaps in service levels for Calgarians.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Future of Community-Building study would examine current policy and regulatory structure with regard to the roles of CAs and RAs in building complete and vibrant communities. This will lead to the exploration of the future of community-building and community representation and ultimately answer the question of how to best represent Calgary's communities on issues related to land, facilities, and recreation.

ATTACHMENT

The Future of Community-Building Work Plan