

Community Services Report to  
SPC on Community and Protective Services  
2019 June 12

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CPS2019-0769

## **Saddleridge Road Right of Way as Park Space**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the 2019 February 25 meeting of Council, Councillor Chahal brought forward a Motion Arising related to report CPC2018-1417 in the community of Saddleridge. The Motion Arising was adopted by Council and directed Administration to evaluate whether an unused Road Right of Way at the end of 89<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE could be repurposed as a municipal park. A map of the area is included as Attachment 1. Administration has determined that this request can largely be accommodated and is reporting back to the SPC on Community and Protective Services as per Council direction. This additional public amenity space of 0.15 hectares (0.37 acres) will help alleviate a lack of public open space in the community. The Road Right of Way will remain in place but will be turned over to Calgary Parks for maintenance. A key regional pathway connection and a seating area will be provided on the site, the timing of which is dependent on adjacent development.

#### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommends that Council receive this report for information.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

On 2019 February 25, in relation to discussion on LOC2018-0221 in Saddleridge (City-initiated land use amendment for over-dedication of Municipal Reserve) and with respect to Report CPC2018-1417, Council adopted the following Motion Arising (moved by Councillor Chahal):

That Council:

1. Recognizing the lack of park space in this area, direct Administration, in consultation with the Ward Councillor, to evaluate whether the unused Road Right of Way at the end of 89<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE could be repurposed as a municipal park for the community that is integrated with and connects into the regional pathway system, and includes a seating node and play structure.
2. Direct that Administration report back to Council through the Community and Protective Services Committee with recommendations including a full costing of this proposal and funding source no later than the end of Q2 2019.

### **BACKGROUND**

An area in the northeastern portion of Saddle Ridge contains eight acreage properties, ranging in size from 1.4 to 1.5 hectares (3.5 to 3.7 acres). Through the review of applications in the area, Administration has determined that Municipal Reserve is no longer owing on these lands due to an earlier subdivision, however these parcels are beginning to undergo redevelopment to more urban densities. Although there are no opportunities to secure new Municipal Reserve in this area, there is an unused Road Right of Way located at the east end of 89 Avenue NE where it meets 68 Street NE. This 0.15 hectare (0.37 acre) site can accommodate a seating node and a key regional pathway connection and serve as a community park in the future.

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### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

As the lands are subdivided and built out, the adjacent developer is obligated to construct the regional pathway and grade, loam and seed this site. Options to provide a play structure at this location were explored, but this option is not feasible due to both future and existing utilities that will run through the site, encumbering the small park area and negating the ability to include a play structure. As the design for the area is finalized, Calgary Parks will coordinate with the developer to ensure a seating area is also included in the construction drawings, at The City's cost, if required.

The option of closing the road and formalizing it as a park parcel was explored, but site constraints would not allow for enhanced amenities, such as a play structure, that would necessitate the closure. The pathway and benches that will be provided on site are allowable on a Road Right Of Way. The cost to formally close the road would be up \$30,000 and would lead to no tangible difference in how the site functions and how it is perceived by the public.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

The developer is aware of their obligation to provide the pathway connections adjacent to their site, and has agreed to this through their Outline Plan conditions.

### **Strategic Alignment**

This report aligns with the Parks and Open Space line of service and the One Calgary 2019-2022 Healthy and Green City Citizen Priority:

- *Calgary is a leader in caring about the health of the environment and promotes resilient neighbourhoods where residents connect with one another and can live active, healthy lifestyles.*

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

#### **Social**

This regional pathway connection will allow for improved pathway connectivity throughout the community, including to the school site located directly to the north. The benches will provide an opportunity for rest and gathering in the area, and the landscaping will provide respite from the urban environment.

#### **Environmental**

The increase in landscaped area will allow for improved stormwater management, assist in cleaning the air, and reduction of the urban heat island effect.

#### **Economic**

Parks and pathways increase neighbourhood attractiveness and overall desirability of an area, thus positively impacting property values.

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### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

The cost for supplemental park amenities such as benches will be covered by Parks' existing operating budget, Program 445. Best efforts to contain costs will be made through exploring reuse of existing benches.

#### ***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

No current or future capital budget implications are associated with this report.

### **Risk Assessment**

No risks have been identified with the closure of this section of 89 Avenue NE Road Right of Way for open space purposes.

#### **REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

The Road Right of Way will remain but will provide community open space that includes a seating area and regional pathway connection. This responds to Councillor Chahal's Motion Arising and addresses the need for additional park space in this area of Saddleridge.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment – Park Location Map