
Infill Roundtable

Recommendation

That the report of the General Manager, Community Services Department, dated September 5, 2017, be forwarded to City Council for information.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the various initiatives underway, particularly as they relate to the outcomes of the Infill Roundtable hosted by the Saskatoon & Region Homebuilders' Association.

Report Highlights

1. This report accompanies a submission from the Saskatoon & Region Homebuilders' Association (Association) regarding the outcomes of the recent Infill Roundtable, organized by the Association.
2. As a result of the discussions at the Infill Roundtable, the Administration is proposing a pilot project to reduce or remove certain requirements for new development in an effort to reduce barriers and spur new development in the Downtown.

Strategic Goals

This report supports the City of Saskatoon's (City) Strategic Goals of Sustainable Growth and Moving Around by furthering implementation of the City Centre Plan and supporting the goals of the Growth Plan to Half a Million (Growth Plan).

Background

A key direction of the Growth Plan, approved in principle by City Council in April 2016, was to balance growth between infill and greenfield locations. Between 2005 and 2015, approximately 17.4% of all dwelling units built in Saskatoon were infill units. The Growth Plan recommends that 35% of new growth be dedicated to strategic and neighbourhood infill sites, and an additional 15% be targeted to corridor growth, as the city grows to a population of 500,000 people.

At its August 16, 2016 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation received two presentations related to lane paving for infill development. The Committee resolved:

- “1. That the matter be referred to the Administration for a report;
2. That the issue of developing a policy for lane paving around multi-family infill projects be referred to the Administration for a report; and
3. That the Administration bring forward an interim report outlining the scope of work for the development process for predictability and a

level playing field for infill development and greenfield developments in light of the Growth Plan goals.”

At its December 12, 2016 meeting, City Council received a report outlining a scope of work for an initiative to compare infill and greenfield development, in part addressing Recommendation No. 3 above. City Council requested that the Administration report back on a mechanism to undertake this comparison, with a suggestion for a roundtable meeting on infill development. Since that time, Downtown development has been identified as a City Council priority area.

Report

Infill Roundtable

In May and June of this year, the Association brought forward a proposal to the Mayor’s Office for the Association to convene an “Infill Roundtable” with representatives from the development industry. The focus of the meetings was to identify barriers and solutions that could be implemented quickly. Two Infill Roundtable meetings were held in July and August, and included City representatives. The results of the meetings have been documented by the Association and are to be submitted through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services. This report is a companion to those results, providing further insights into activities initiated by the Administration to support the outcomes of the Infill Roundtable.

The Infill Roundtable resulted in four main categories of items:

- a) access to information;
- b) communications;
- c) organizational change and coordination; and
- d) financial.

Several immediate items will be pursued as a result of these conversations:

1. A “Cut the Red Tape” initiative will be prepared, focusing on the Downtown as a pilot project area, to create a proactive approach to Downtown development. This will be further described within this report.
2. A new senior position in the Planning and Development Division will be included in the 2018 budget, with no mill rate impact, to provide high-level coordination for major infill and development projects.
3. A Major Applications Group will be coordinated on a regular basis to identify particular challenges for new development proposals early in the process, while providing enhanced coordination amongst the Administration.
4. The Developers’ Liaison Committee will be re-engaged to act as a stronger linkage with the development industry on policy and development items. A new mandate for the Committee will be jointly created with industry.

5. The Development Civic Service Review will continue, with the addition of one or more touch-points in the process for the development industry. This review is focused on the overall development process from initiation to project completion for both infill and greenfield development and includes representatives from all affected City divisions.

The other items identified by the Infill Roundtable will be pursued in partnership with industry representatives and other internal stakeholders.

Downtown Pilot Project: Cut the Red Tape Initiative

As a result of the Infill Roundtable, the Administration has determined that a pilot project could be created for the Downtown to remove a number of larger barriers and create a proactive environment for development.

The Administration's proposal to pilot this project in the Downtown is due to the flexibility of the existing land use and zoning in terms of permitted uses and size of buildings. As well, the City Centre Plan has already laid out the future vision for the Downtown. In other areas of the city, such as the major corridors, the land use and zoning is not currently in place to achieve the desired outcomes of the Growth Plan, therefore, incentivizing development in these areas may actually promote the development of undesirable uses. The outcomes of this pilot project will, however, be used to inform future approaches throughout the city.

The pilot project will consider the following items as a starting point:

- a) a grant to off-set the costs of off-site levies for applicable sites;
- b) waiver of storm water on-site storage requirements;
- c) waiver of requirements for comprehensive Traffic Impact Assessments;
- d) identification and funding of servicing upgrades in the Downtown;
- e) parking meter hooding and temporary right-of-way closure fees to be off-set by a new grant for major developments; and
- f) One-Stop Shop for major developments in the Downtown to be facilitated by the new senior position identified earlier within this report, in partnership with the Building Standards Division.

Attachment 1 provides further details on these items.

Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement

Public and external stakeholder involvement was not required in preparation of this report, but will be a key part of the forthcoming initiatives identified. Numerous internal City divisions were represented at the Association's Infill Roundtable, including Parks, Saskatoon Water, Planning and Development, and Building Standards. The Department of Transportation and Utilities was also represented. Internal stakeholders will continue to be engaged throughout the development of the pilot program.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no options, policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations; a communication plan is not required at this time.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

In late fall of 2017, the pilot program for Downtown Development will be brought back with further details to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services.

Reports on other items identified by the Infill Roundtable will be brought forward as necessary.

Public Notice

Public notice, pursuant to Section 3 of Public Notice Policy No. C01-021 is not required.

Attachment

1. Downtown Pilot Project: Cut the Red Tape Initiative

Report Approval

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