



COMMUNITY VISION GUIDE

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What is a Community Vision?

A community vision is a tool to identify what makes your community unique, and what you'd like to preserve. It allows you to describe your community in terms of the assets it has. Assets are things like buildings, infrastructure, and places.

A community vision allows you to share some of the knowledge you've gained during workshops and summarize it into a simple document. Community visions follow a standard format that is short, succinct, and easily accessible for people who want to learn more about Calgary's unique communities. Your community vision should include statements on each of the following:

Built Form



Specific ideas for preservation, building type and areas of densification. You can also discuss physical features like architectural style, construction technique, or original design.

Mobility:



Specific issues relating to mobility in your community. This can be related to connectivity within the community and access to other parts of the city. Examples to discuss include changes to parking or traffic calming.

Landscape:



Issues relating to your community's landscapes and vegetation. Examples can include community gardens or planters on the street.

Refer to page 10 for examples of each of the above sections.

Why Create a Community Vision?

A community vision is a proactive way to tell developers and the City what's important in your community. Many of Calgary's communities are facing major changes, with increased development and density. A community vision can help communities concretely describe their idea for the future, and can help to encourage discussion between planners, developers, and community members in communities facing change.

Your community association may have already created a statement of significance based off community visioning exercises. The idea of the community vision described in this document is unique because it follows a common template and is easily accessible. It can also be updated frequently as it is condensed.

Putting It Into Practice:

Community visions may not be able to get you everything you want when you negotiate with The City of Calgary and developers, but:

- Creating a community vision will proactively help the City and developers better understand your point of view and help to create dialogue
- Having a clear vision can help you articulate your community's character and better address changes
- Your community vision could be used when reviewing development applications circulated to your community association, saving time and helping with consistency
- When local area plans are being developed, having a prepared community vision can help to provide your community association with a strong starting point for discussion

Creating a community vision can also be a great way to connect with and engage community members around a common goal.

Starting Out

An easy way to start out is to look at existing plans (e.g. outline plans) and think of what elements of community character are being addressed. Be specific about what your community needs in relation to the plan.

Get Your Community Involved



Gaining input from your community, will make sure that your community association's positions are reflective of your community as a whole. It's hard to be completely representative when there are different understandings of what makes your community special, but by facilitating a broad conversation on character, you can make a document that reflects your community's diversity.

Having broad support for your community vision will also demonstrate support for positions on development issues and City planning projects. Here are ideas to help you gain community input:

Create a Survey



A survey is an easy way of getting feedback from a wide variety of residents in your community. With surveys, you can give a voice to people who might not be able to participate in face-to-face engagement sessions. There are lots of free websites for you to make surveys (e.g. Survey Monkey, Google). Try to make sure that your survey is short and has clear questions. People love prizes, so consider offering one!

Host a Visioning Workshop



A visioning workshop encourages neighbours to imagine what their community will look like in the future. A workshop will allow you to identify needs and desires, as well what the community already has in terms of assets. Use techniques like brainstorming, and materials like sticky notes and maps to have your participants write down their thoughts.

Helpful Tips

- Remember to keep your community vision updated regularly so that it stays relevant for your community association and residents
- Ensure that your vision is board-endorsed

Further Resources for Community Visions

The Federation has several other resources that can help you with your community vision. Feel free to click on the links (*italicized text*) below for access:

Presentation PowerPoints:

People, Places, Planning: Value and Significance in Communities. A presentation by Marilyn Williams

Britannia Community Association: Our Statement of Significance. A presentation by Karen Paul.

Community Character from the Perspective of a Developer. A presentation by Steve Norris of Sarina Homes.

The Engagement Toolkit:

The Engagement Toolkit is a recipe box full of 32 of what we think are some of the best tools out there to help community associations engage their neighbours.

PIP Workshops:

The Partners in Planning Program (PIP) is an award-winning planning certificate training program offered by the Federation in partnership with The City of Calgary. It is geared towards helping community association planning volunteers and the public develop skills for effective participation in the planning process.

The Community Guide to the Planning Process:

The Federation, in collaboration with The City of Calgary, maintains this large resource to assist communities dealing with development and planning issues.

Sharing your Vision



Once your community vision is created, make sure to spread the word! Write about it in your community newsletter, host it on your website, and be sure to send it to the Federation so we can also share it with our network.

The Federation of Calgary Communities:

Our urban planners are here to assist you! If you have questions, comments or ideas about community character, statements of significance and your community, contact us at:

planning@calgarycommunities.com,
engageinplanning@calgarycommunities.com.

T:403.244.4111 ext 203 & 210
F: 403.244.4129

This resource and many others available to Federation members can be found at:
calgarycommunities.com/members-only/. Password = community



Template and Mock Community Vision:

The following four pages explain the template step-by-step as well as demonstrate an example community vision. You can use it as inspiration to get started on yours!



Community Vision Template

This page details the first half of a community vision. Read the paragraphs circled in green for inspiration on each section.

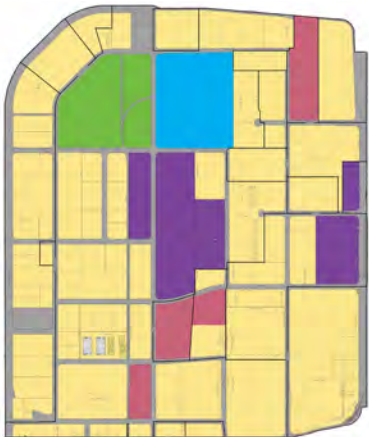
Community Map
Here is an opportunity to let the reader visualize your community. It can be an aerial map or a land use map. Try to make sure that it's easy to understand.

The Community
At a glance, tell your reader about your community and what makes it special. Talk about its history and where it's going. Don't focus on aspects that the reader can find on Google!

Mock Community Vision

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
CONTACT INFORMATION
t: (123) 456-7890
e: greenpoint@email.com
Social media:

- Low density residential
- Med/high density residential
- institutional
- commercial / mixed use
- Open space



The Community:

Greenpoint is a community distinguished from its surrounding neighbourhoods by its sandstone homes, ethnic diversity and walkable community centre. Neighbourhood resources include several unique heritage churches, small businesses, and Green Park in the community's north. Greenpoint has considerable canopy coverage as a result of its old growth poplar and elm trees. Finally, Greenpoint is a pedestrian-oriented community, though its walkable areas are mostly concentrated in the centre of the community.

As our community changes, we hope to improve opportunities for more business and sustainable, mixed-use development. We see our future as being a diverse community welcoming of neighbours through all stages of life and backgrounds.

What We Heard:

"Connectivity within the neighbourhood is great but I would love to see better access to the rest of the City"

"Historic properties in Greenpoint make the community unique, so we should try to find a balance between preserving them and allowing home owners to express themselves"

"I love how many small shops there are in the community. We should try to encourage even more similar businesses!"

What We Heard
Look back to visioning workshops or surveys that you held. What were some of the key messages? Write down the answers to one of the more general question and some more specific statements. Try to be reflective of what was said.

Community Vision Template:

This page details the first half of a community vision. Flip to the next page to see a sample community vision!

Built Form:



Greenpoint imagines a future with lots of housing choices so that people of all ages, income levels, and family situations can live in the community. It also recognizes the need for protecting historic resources. We also would like to celebrate the eclectic mix and diversity of home sizes, and styles (e.g. craftsman, ranch).

Mobility:



We have a great community centre so we would like to improve it further by making our community more walkable. We would like to add crosswalks, sidewalks, benches, and balance the functionality of our roads as both commuting corridors and neighborhood streets. We would like to see some signs that lead to the points of interest in our community.

Landscape:



We are proud of Green Park, in the north of the community, as well as our many street trees. We would like to have continued commitment to environmental protection, to maintain our landscaping and tree canopies, and to add additional elm and poplar trees. We want to encourage more urban gardens and landscape features that promote friendly interactions, evening strolls, and neighborhood pride.

Images:



Image showcasing local businesses and the vibrant streetscape in the commercial centre.

What does the Community Need?

- We would like to increase our community's inventory of senior-friendly housing to ensure that our residents can age in place.
- We would also like improved access to key services including clinics, pharmacies, fitness, centres, entertainment centres, etc.
- We would like more placemaking features, such as murals, to put our community on the map
- We would like to maintain our canopy coverage and historic trees, as well as new landscaping features.

What are your Favourite Things about the Community?

1. Mature trees and canopy coverage (23% of respondents)
 2. Unique sandstone and diverse architecture (21% of respondents)
 3. Connective pathway system (15% of respondents)
3. Etiam vehicula dui libero, ut eleifend tellus pretium sit amet.

Built Form

This is your opportunity to describe how your residents would like to see your community's built environment develop. Discuss preservation, and areas of concentration. Try to focus on what you want more of rather than what you want less of.

Mobility

What do you like about your community's connectivity? Are there aspects of mobility that you would like to see improved in the community? Changes to parking? More traffic calming?

Photos

Show your audience some photos of your community. Focus on various aspects that you discussed throughout the other sections of your community vision document.

Landscape

Discuss some of your community's assets in terms of landscapes and vegetation. Are there certain kinds of vegetation you value? Do you want to see more planters on your streets?

What the Community Needs

Include other assets that you would like to improve or have more of in your community. You can also reiterate important aspects from other sections.

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Community Map

Based off mental mapping exercises created during the workshop, try to summarize where residents would like to see housing diversity and growth in the community. Add a description and analysis, and any other information.

The Community

Where would your community like to see commercial growth. What makes these areas important?

Where Would You Like to see Residential Growth Concentrated?



Based on a survey and two open houses with residents, Greenpoint would like to see the majority of residential growth occur in several area. We would like housing options to grow near the Greenpoint commercial centre, and along the busier road near far east of the community. The community would also like some residential growth in the southeast corner, near the secondary commercial centre. Greenpoint would like to see a diversity of housing opportunities explored.

Where Would You Like to see Commercial Growth Concentrated?



Greenpoint currently celebrates the mom & pop shops that exist along Greendale St. The community would like to see commercial growth along the street, as well as towards Greenwood St., which acts as a gateway to the edge of the community. Greenpoint would like to preserve the small-town feel of the existing retail options, as well as integrate new amenities, such as medical offices, which don't exist in the community.

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Where Would You Like to see Improved Transit Accessibility?



Greenpoint would like to improve the pedestrian experience. This would include sidewalk and street lighting improvements from the Greenway commercial centre towards the low-density residential areas, as well as towards the school, and Greenleaf Boulevard on the east of the community. As the community is relatively small, transit access should be focused on the surrounding collector roads, as well as into Greenpoint commercial centre.

Built Form

Prompt your residents with questions about what makes them enjoy walking in certain areas. What kinds of features make walking enjoyable? What areas do they feel safest and why?

Where Would You Like to see Improved Community Spaces?



Greenpoint would like to see future placemaking opportunities concentrated in two areas: near Greenpoint school, and near Greenwood school and Greenleaf Boulevard. These improved spaces would help to make the community feel more complete and help to serve as wayfinding.

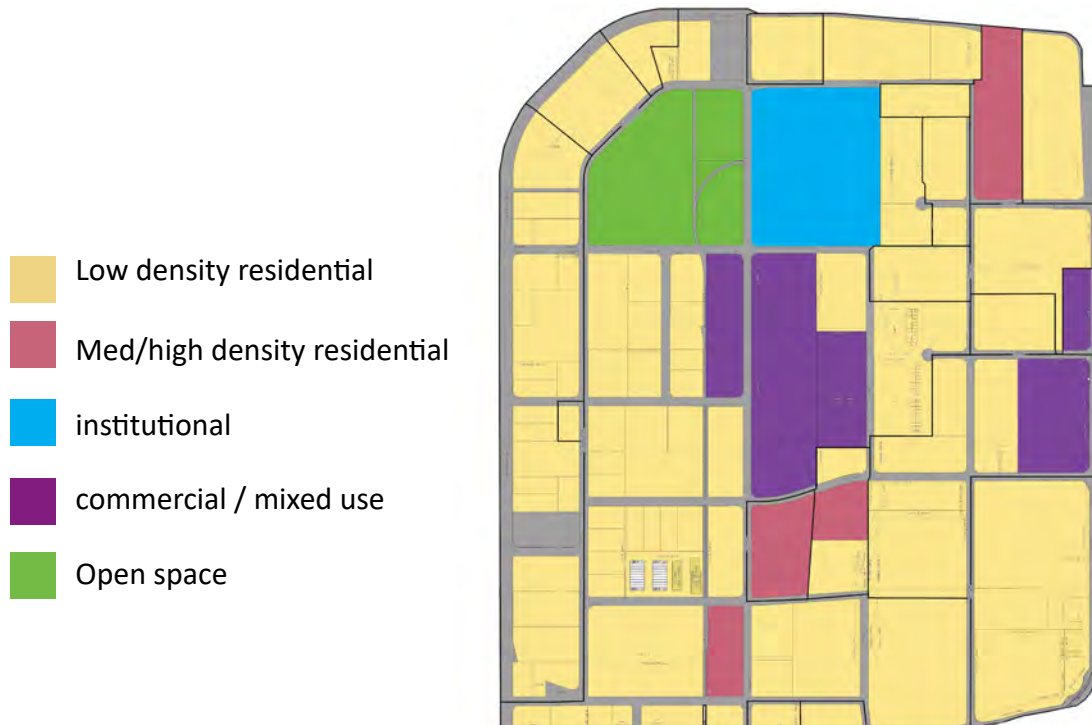
Built Form

Ask your residents about their favourite spaces in the City. What could be done to recreate them in your community?

Mock Community Vision

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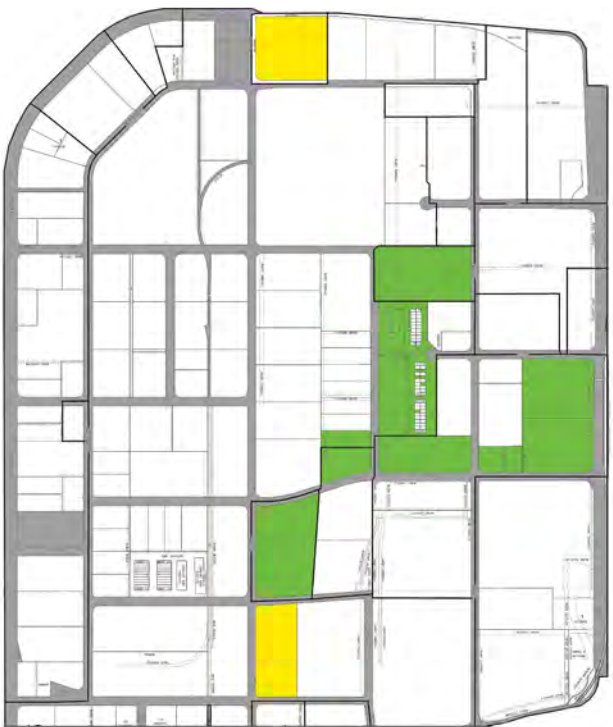
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- High Growth
- Some Growth

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- High Growth
- Some Growth

Where Would You Like to see Improved Walking and Biking?



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 Pedestrian and Cyclist Improvement Area

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 Key Improvement Area