



PLANNING COMMITTEE



GUIDE



FEDERATION OF
CALGARY COMMUNITIES

CREDITS

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION





Community association planning committees

and planning volunteers play a vital role in how our city is shaped. Public interest and participation in planning decisions has steadily increased all over Canada over the past century. This evolution of public involvement in planning decisions can be seen today in all types of practices, from the 'traditional' participation letter writing and public hearings, open houses, charettes and workshops, to newer online methods of engagement and grassroots place-making activities.

Community associations are often expected to play a significant role in articulating local needs, context and character to planning decision-makers. Being a 'go-to' source for local knowledge can put community associations under quite a bit of pressure. Meeting the expectations of an effective planning committee can be challenging: determining what issues are important within a community, knowing how to engage community residents, and advancing community planning objectives are all difficult tasks. However, doing this work well and encouraging citizen involvement can allow planning committees to contribute to stronger, more connected communities.

PURPOSE

This guide is intended to help planning committees of all shapes and sizes by providing guidance and case studies drawn from Calgary's diverse network of community associations (CAs). It will help brand-new planning committees get established, small planning committees grow, and help well-established planning committees improve the work they do. By using this guide and actively engaging residents in your neighbourhood, you are taking the first step towards establishing or maintaining a CA planning committee that can make neighbourhood improvements and provide an important voice in shaping your community and city. Consider this a hands-on guide for helping you and your CA shape and operate a reflective, collaborative and effective planning committee.

WHAT THIS GUIDE IS NOT

This guide will not tell you how Calgary's planning system works- if you want to learn more about Calgary's planning system and processes, have a look at [Community Guide to The Planning Process](#).

WHAT IS A PLANNING COMMITTEE?

Planning committees (also called development communities) vary by CA- however, they all have a few common characteristics. A planning committee is typically a **standing committee** authorized by a CA's board of directors. It is comprised of volunteer CA members and is led by a board member, who typically acts as the chair of the committee. In most cases, the CA board reviews and approves planning committee members. Planning committees and CA boards do not have formal decision-making powers in planning and development- this is in the hands of the **development authority** and Calgary City Council. However, they make important contributions to the process by providing input on local community needs, context and character, and by raising awareness around local planning issues and opportunities.

Each planning committee may have a different mandate, but the following are important principles that all CA planning committees should strive to follow:

- **Be a positive and proactive force** in the direction, development, and evolution of the community's physical environment.
- **Think big-picture** and be mindful of the community's role in the overall development of Calgary, including relationships with neighbouring

Standing Committee

A permanent committee, which reports to the board of directors and meets on a regular basis.

Development Authority

The Development Authority is an official appointed by City Council to exercise development powers and perform duties on behalf of the municipality, including rendering decisions on development permit applications. The Development Authority makes the decision on most development applications. However, at The City of Calgary, more complex applications are forwarded to the Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) for a decision. In these cases, CPC acts as the Development Authority.

Municipal Development Plan

The senior strategic planning document guiding growth and development in Calgary. It has policies relating to transportation, housing, economic activity, recreation, environment and social issues. It also provides the strategic framework for more detailed and specific plans, policies and programs.

Calgary Transportation Plan

The Calgary Transportation Plan provides policy direction on multiple aspects of the city's transportation system including the support of an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports land use, provides increased mobility choices, promotes vibrant and connected communities, protects the natural environment and supports a prosperous, and competitive economy.

communities and the role of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP).

- **Build and promote local interest** in planning and development, and facilitate community dialogue on planning and development issues.
- **Provide feedback that is reflective** of the community's perspective on local planning and development issues to The City of Calgary.
- **Improve the local community** for area residents by supporting high quality development and community planning.

THE BENEFITS OF A PLANNING COMMITTEE

Establishing a formalized planning committee with a solid structure enables community associations to contribute to the planning system in a constructive and consistent manner. A well-established planning committee helps communities achieve a number of things:

A Formal Structure to Deal with Planning Issues

Creating a formal structure helps CAs deal with planning issues in a consistent, effective and efficient manner. The formalized planning committee is able to better record and remember information and knowledge. This enables planning committees to contribute to planning issues in a more clear and intentional manner, as well as understand why and how previous priorities had been established.

For example, there might be an issue that frequently comes up at planning committee meetings, such as the need for street furniture on commercial streets. By having a formal structure, the group can document the position of the committee and refer back to this position when the issue arises in future applications. This will prevent the need to revisit common issues, and save the committee time in the process.

A well-structured planning committee can also collect information, monitor trends and recognize the changing needs and conditions within communities. This can help planning committees be more reflective of their community and provide stronger support for local community interests. With a structure, guiding principles and a record of knowledge, planning committees can contribute more consistent and relevant information to other planning stakeholders, improving their credibility and establishing themselves as collaborative 'partners in planning'.

Relationship Building

Collaborative discussions are easier once we know the people we are working alongside. By establishing a planning committee with a formal structure and committed members, planning committees can develop

functional and dependable relationships with other stakeholders in the planning system, including City of Calgary staff and development industry. This will improve the planning committee's abilities to obtain useful information and have meaningful discussions.

Membership Driving Tool

Many people want to be kept up to speed on changes in their communities. People get involved in their CAs for a wide variety of reasons, and among the top reasons is planning and development. Planning issues can be catalysts for recruiting volunteers into your CA board or planning committee.

THE WORK OF PLANNING COMMITTEES

Although planning committees have no formal jurisdiction or authority in planning matters, they may take on a number of roles related to community building, change and improvement. The core role of many planning committees is to review and respond to planning applications affecting the community and address general planning and development issues as they arise. However, this is a small piece of what CA planning committees do- there is potential to harness a lot of the energy and ideas of community volunteers for great community planning through your planning committee. Some examples of broader, proactive work include:

- Representing community character, context and needs through development review and community plan creation
- Contributing to city-wide planning policies
- Creating community-led plans
- Advocating for community improvements

Input on Community Character, Context & Needs

Community associations and their planning committees and residents have local expertise that is valuable to other planning system stakeholders. Community character is made up of many local elements- it includes the visible elements, like the community form and structure, local architectural styles and historical features, important public spaces like parks, playgrounds and pathways, and local landmarks. It may also include more intangible elements, such as the meanings people associate with different landmarks and places. Community character is made up of all of those shared, tangible and intangible elements of a community's identity. Similarly, context is that local information that is important for developers and planners working in your community to be aware of- it is extra information on your community's setting that higher-level plans

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Applications are sent to internal and external parties, including CAs, for comments.

A change of land use designation, approved at a public hearing of City Council. The City of Calgary refers to land use amendments as LOCs, which stands for land use ammendment, outline plan and road closure.

An area redevelopment plan is a type of statutory plan that directs redevelopment, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing lands and buildings, generally within the developed communities.

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policies. Examples of city-wide planning work that communities might provide feedback on include creation and updates to the [Municipal Development Plan](#), changes to the [Land Use Bylaw](#) for specific uses, or location criteria and guidelines for multi-family housing.

Community-Led Planning

Planning committees can take a proactive role by helping to direct change in their community. By facilitating community dialogue on local planning and development issues, planning committees can create guidance documents and plans to help guide new development in the community. These types of documents can help outline the goals and objectives of the community, provide community context, guide community associations' actions in dealing with planning applications in the community, and allow developers to understand the community's perspective. In addition, by developing plans and charters, communities can better understand necessary or desirable local community improvements. Some examples of community-led plans might include development guidelines, community priorities for development or a full community-led plan.



Map of Inglewoud District, Calgary, Alberta, 1973 (Glenbow Archives, NA-2864-22308)

Advocate for Specific Activities & Needs

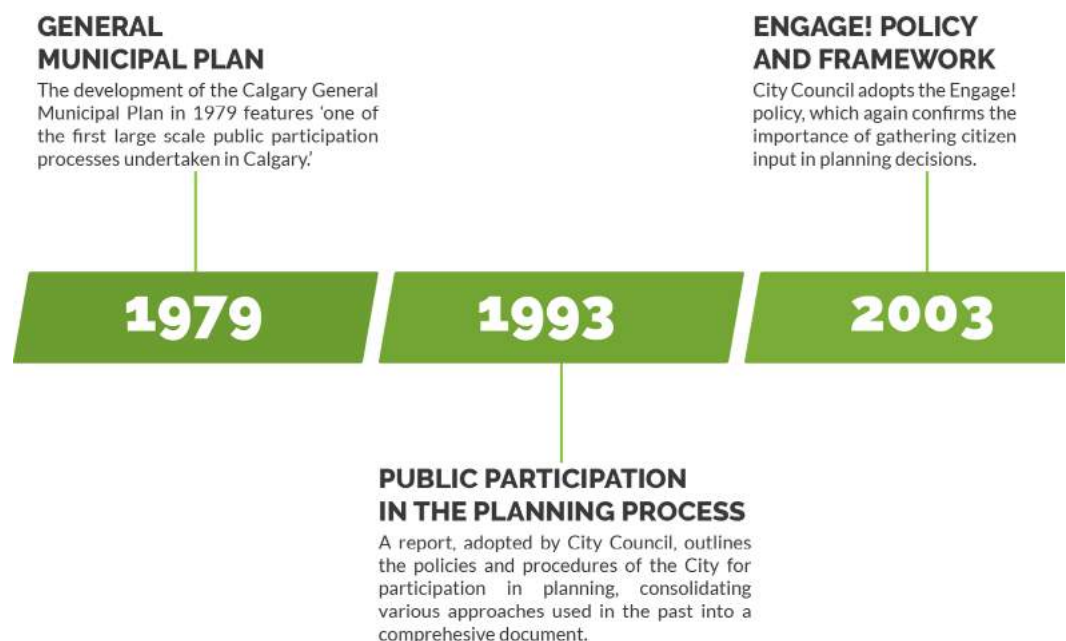
Another common, important role for planning committees is advocating for local planning, public realm and planning improvements. Some examples include transportation and traffic issues, public safety, long-range planning exercises, promoting good development, public improvements to streets and parks, environmental and heritage initiatives, and urban design. For larger issues or specific themes, you may want to form a subcommittee.

Through the activities listed above, planning committees can influence the direction of development and the evolution of the community's physical environment. Representing the community's perspective to The City of Calgary, applicants and other stakeholders is integral to the planning process. When determining what tasks planning committees take on, they should consider their own capacity, their resources and the amount of time that volunteers are willing to dedicate to the committee.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING IN CALGARY

Across North America, the 1970s to the 1990s heralded increasing formalization of public participation in all levels of municipal policy development. In previous eras, planning was considered a more value-neutral, technical exercise to be completed by trained professionals. Through the 1960's, across North American cities and elsewhere, citizens and activists, academics, and planners themselves began to question the efficacy of this 'top-down' approach to planning. Many felt that the people impacted should have more say in the planning decisions impacting them, and there was an increasing recognition of the complexity of these decisions- what is in the best interest of one group may negatively impact another. Value systems of different groups in a diverse, multicultural society mean that planning decisions must balance the needs of many different groups. As a result, there is much greater emphasis on participatory approaches to planning decisions in Canadian cities today.

FIGURE 1: PLANNING PARTICIPATION POLICY TIMELINE



While there are many instances of citizen involvement in planning decisions throughout the history of North American cities, there was a discernable and coordinated shift towards a more participatory planning system from the 1960's onward. Some of the more prominent examples of this shift include Jane Jacobs' fight to preserve her community of Greenwich Village in New York in the 1950's and '60s, and later the Annex in Toronto, as well as her very well-known book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. In 1969, Sherry Arnstein published her influential article outlining a 'ladder of citizen participation', a model that has been adapted and used in organizations all over the world today. In the following decades, participatory requirements and methods have become increasingly ingrained in legislation and policy in Canadian cities.

In Calgary, the first major effort to involve the public in a systematic way at the policy level was the writing of a proposed rezoning bylaw in the early 1970s. When City Council ordered a new zoning bylaw be prepared for Calgary, the direction to Administration included the requirement that citizens have the opportunity to participate. Throughout the public engagement process, perhaps the most significant recommendation was that citizens should not have to wait until the appeal process to formally participate in the process. Citizens felt they should be circulated development applications, be able to comment on new development proposals whilst the file was being circulated to various internal departments – before a decision has been made regarding the land use application. This meant that CA and resident comments would be included

in the file when the internal review was conducted. This recommendation was adopted and is embedded in today's process.

In the early 1990's, City Administration conducted a review of public engagement practices and developed written procedures. In 1993, the resulting Public Participation in the Planning Process report was adopted by the City as the then-current "policies and procedures of the City of Calgary with respect to public participation in the planning process." This confirmed City Council's commitment to a "much more far reaching set of procedures, which ensures the opportunity for full and effective public participation in the major planning activities" (City of Calgary, 1993).

In 2003, City Council adopted the engage! Policy, which again confirms the importance of getting input from citizens: "The City of Calgary (Council and Administration) recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups, where appropriate, and is committed to transparent and inclusive processes that are responsive and accountable, and within the Corporation's ability to finance and resource". The policy also speaks to involving stakeholders early on and throughout the process where the decision(s) impacts their lives. One way to effectively involve communities in the engagement process is through CA planning committees.

Calgary's Municipal Development Plan, adopted in 2009, states that "all Calgarians should be provided with opportunities to participate in shaping the future of their community". This means encouraging on-going education, engagement strategies and collaborative neighbourhood planning processes that consider MDP strategies and local community-based aspirations. Community planning is a way to engage local residents and businesses in the future of their community in a meaningful way and to provide a local interpretation and implementation of the MDP and CTP policies.

THE CITY OF CALGARY'S ENGAGE POLICY

The City of Calgary's Engage Policy provides a foundation to help ensure a consistent and effective approach to stakeholder engagement in all engagement processes led by the City. Both City Council and City Administration recognize that decisions are improved by engaging stakeholders, which is why The City's approach to stakeholder engagement is guided by this policy. Anyone who is impacted, or who has the ability to impact an issue, a project, a service or other activity of The City of Calgary is called a stakeholder. This may include citizens, the public, customers, businesses, community organizations, and other government agencies. The City of Calgary's Engage Policy defines engagement as "purposeful dialogue between The City and citizens and stakeholders to gather information to influence decision making."

Guiding Principles

The Engage Policy and Framework outlines five guiding principles for City of Calgary engagement initiatives:

- **Accountability:** Demonstrating that results and outcomes are consistent with promises.
- **Inclusiveness:** Reaching and hearing the voices of those interested or affected.
- **Transparency:** Ensuring decision, processes, procedures and constraints are understood, known and followed.
- **Commitment:** Leading and resourcing appropriately for effective engagement.
- **Responsiveness:** Being accessible to address stakeholder concerns.

Spectrum of Strategies and Promises

The "Spectrum of Strategies and Promises" is incorporated in The City's Engage Policy to help clarify the role stakeholders are being asked to play in engagement activities, along with their sphere of influence, and the commitment or promise made by The City as a result of that engagement. Different types of initiatives will require different engagement approaches with different levels of citizen control. The levels are:

- **Inform and Communicate-** all projects;
- **Listen and Learn-** the City listens to views to incorporate into decision making;
- **Consult-** feedback is obtained through consultation and incorporated;

- Collaborate- stakeholders are partners in the decision-making process; and
- Empower- some decision making delegated to stakeholders.

The Engage Policy in Action

The Engage Policy applies to opportunities for engagement “in specific planning, policy, and project initiatives that directly or indirectly impact citizens and stakeholders” as well as any mandated or legislated public participation processes. The City has a department called the Engage Resource Unit, who coordinates engagement on many (though not all) City of Calgary projects. However, the Engage Policy applies to decisions whether the Engage Resource Unit is involved or not.

For City of Calgary project managers working with the Engage Resource Unit, they complete an assessment to determine the approach to engagement for their project. If they determine that engagement is required, they follow through with an engagement plan for the project with support from the Engage Resource Unit.

In addition, citizens, communities and other stakeholders are encouraged to adopt the Engage Policy’s Cornerstones when invited to participate in City-led engagement initiatives. Stakeholder engagement is more meaningful and informed when both City representatives and stakeholders are committed throughout the process to upholding the Cornerstones, Strategies and Promises. For communities, it is also useful to understand how The City sees community consultation through the lens of the Engage Policy.

You can find the City of Calgary’s Engage Framework and Policy on [the City’s website here](#). For more information contact the City of Calgary Engage Resource Unit by email at engage@calgary.ca or phone at 3-1-1, or through their website at <http://engage.calgary.ca>.

CHAPTER 2: GOVERNANCE





Providing input on planning and development

in the community can be a significant amount of work. Good governance is the backbone for everything else a planning committee does, and by having good governance structures in place, planning committees can avoid difficulties later on. Setting up a separate planning committee becomes important once planning and development issues make it difficult for a community association board to fulfill their social and recreational mandates. Communities that face numerous proposals for development, overly complex applications or significant planning challenges should consider establishing a planning committee and perhaps even sub-committees for different types of issues. Some communities might also choose to establish a planning committee if the community association board wishes to proactively pursue other planning related initiatives, such as a redevelopment design initiative or a community sustainability plan, and the board requires additional volunteers or expertise.

This chapter focuses on planning committee governance- how are committees structured, who do they report to, and how should they report? A good governance structure, centered around a **terms of reference**, establishes the relationship between the planning committee

and the board and between committee members and the committee as a whole. A well-governed planning committee can allow members to feel their voices are heard and respected and that they know how to contribute and what their specific role might be, ultimately making participation in the committee a more rewarding experience.

Early on, and with smaller groups, formal governance structures may seem unnecessary. In these cases, you may only need an **ad-hoc committee**, or simply a designated Planning Director. However, if you anticipate growing your committee or taking on more planning work, getting a structure in place is essential. It is always better to have a structure in place to manage providing input on planning and development before controversial planning topics arise in your community! While a good governance structure may not prevent conflict and disagreements from arising, it will provide a structure to address them in a productive and positive way.



MANDATE

When creating (or formalizing) a planning committee, an important first step is to decide on your mandate: what will the committee focus on, and what are its responsibilities? Planning committees should consider their needs, issues and capacity when determining a mandate for the group. This will help the planning committee establish realistic and manageable objectives.

Below are several key considerations for the CA board when determining a mandate for a planning committee- these questions are equally relevant for active planning committees when they experience change, or have new priorities and opportunities.

Current and Future Community Planning Issues

What are the current planning issues in your community, and what do you anticipate to be of interest in the future?

Initially, your understanding of the local issues may be based on the board's experience working in the community- some common planning issues include increased redevelopment pressure in the community, changing community character, or traffic issues. Beyond looking at what is important for the community now, you may also want to consider future issues when establishing a planning committee's mandate. Is your community identified in any City policies or target areas for future development? This will influence future development and transportation issues in your community.

Priorities set by the CA Board

Are there community association board priorities that the planning committee would potentially support?

The CA board may have specific activities that they want a planning committee to pursue. For example, they may ask the committee to audit their local area plan to determine if it still reflects the needs of the community.

What Are the Neighbours Doing?

Neighboring community associations may have similar planning interests, and may be able to share resources, ideas, or experiences.

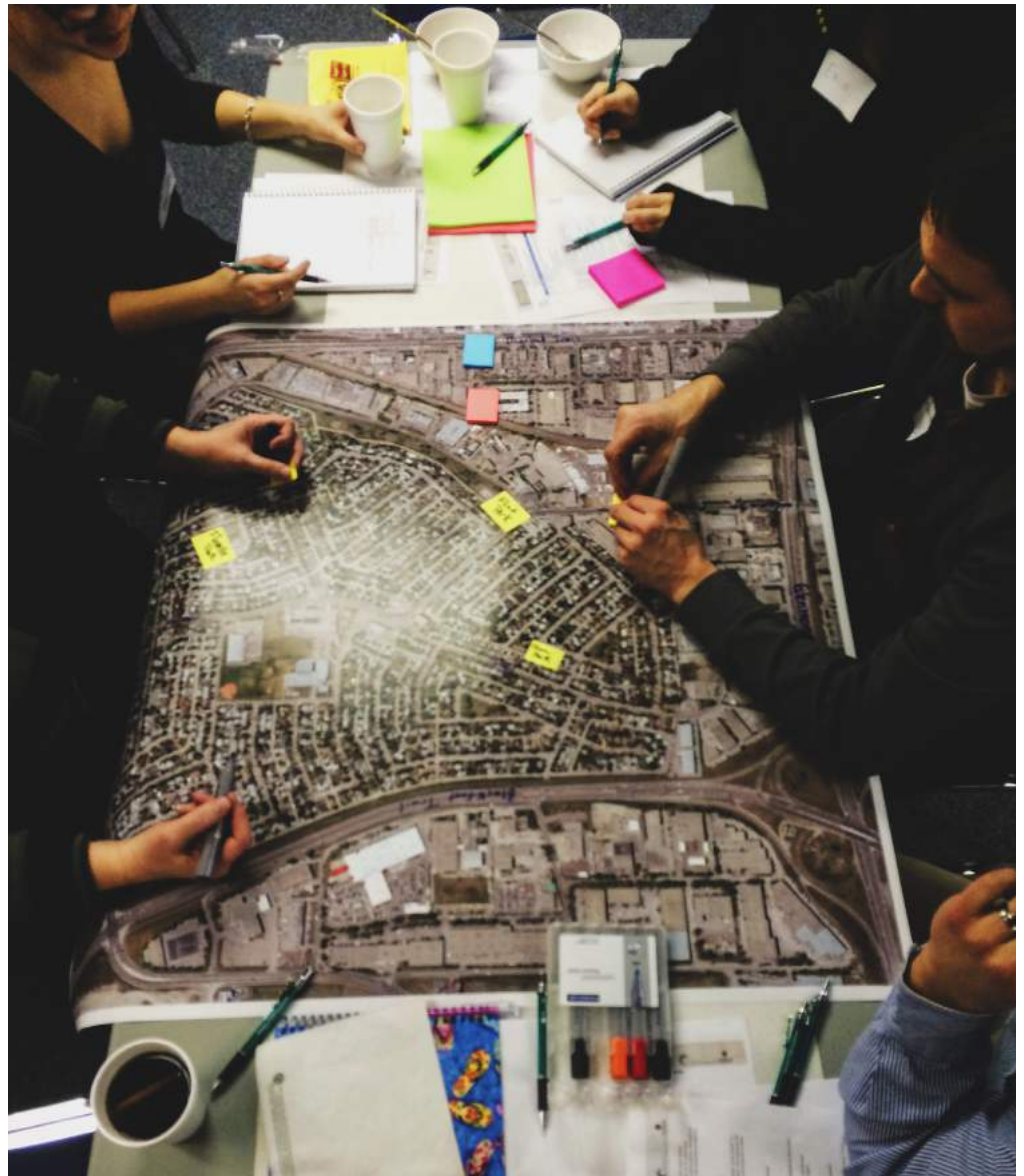
Often times neighbouring communities share similar planning issues or concerns. It could be very valuable to discuss what issues surrounding communities are facing to help a planning committee determine its work. With common issues, communities can also partner to address similar issues on a broader scale. A great example of communities that have partnered is the South Shaganappi Area Redevelopment Council, which sought to establish a clear and unified community position in response

to institutional and infrastructure development throughout their five communities.

Being Proactive or Reactive (or Both!)

Responding to development application circulations is the primary activity of many planning committees, but they are also in a good position to be community planning leaders.

You may want to consider how to balance reactive work with proactive work. Proactive work takes purposeful effort. Unless a planning committee intentionally institutes a system to be proactive, they tend to focus on reactive activities. Proactive planning committee activities might include creating development guidelines or hosting annual discussions with community residents to determine what planning issues residents in the community are facing. This work is very important for understanding



trends and issues in your community as they change over time. For some ideas on how to engage your community at different scales, check the engagement techniques table (Appendix B) or the [our Engagement Toolkit](#).

Proactive planning committee work can help communities establish positions and ideas for future development in the community, which ultimately helps with development review and working with other planning stakeholders. Proactive planning work can help planning committees better understand community interests. The ability of planning committees and communities to move from taking *positions* (“We don’t like this”) to advancing *interests* (“We are interested in seeing something that better integrates into the community”) goes a long way in adding legitimacy and strength to the planning committee from the perspective of The City and developers. A representative, fair, and constructive planning committee with well-founded views will often be more influential than one that takes a more hardline, reactive approach.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Once you understand what the mandate of your planning committee will be, the next step for most planning committees is to develop a terms of reference. Through a terms of reference, planning committees can determine and record the roles, responsibilities and job descriptions for committee members. As well, planning committees can also determine processes for accepting new members, decision making, and dealing with issues that may arise, such as conflicts of interest. A terms of reference provides the structure for your planning committee- the following are key pieces of information to include:

- **Purpose-** Why do you have a planning committee? One example purpose statement might be: “To promote community interest and facilitate community dialogue and education on planning and development issues”
- **Responsibilities-** What tasks or activities will the planning committee take on in order to fulfill its purpose? List them here. Some examples might include: “Monitor planning and development in the community” or “ensure that comments and suggestions from community members and other citizens are heard and considered”
- **Authority-** What power does the planning committee have, and what is the relationship of the planning committee to the Board of Directors? A planning committee should be authorized by the board of directors of the CA, who have the final say on CA decisions or positions.
- **Membership-** What are your requirements of members, how many members are on your committee, and how are they selected? This

Quorum

The minimum number of members that must be present to make a meeting and decisions valid.

Ad Hoc Committee

A temporary committee that is committed to specific purpose or issue.

section may also include provisions for voting privileges and loss of committee membership.

- **Meetings-** Details on how and when meetings happen- how many members make quorum, when are meetings held, how long they are, are they open to the public, and under what circumstances are they closed.
- **Member Conduct-** Basic rules describing how members should participate in the committee. Might include provisions for declaring a conflict of interest, and acting in the interest of the community.
- **Reporting-** How will the committee relay its discussion and positions to the Board of Directors and community? It is important that the Board is fully aware of the activities of your planning committee.
- **Subcommittees-** On occasion, there is significant interest in a particular theme that is too narrow a focus for the planning committee- in these cases it is good to form a subcommittee that reports to the planning committee. This section would describe requirements for such a committee, as well as listing active subcommittees.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES

In some cases, a formalized planning committee and terms of reference may be unnecessary. For example, community associations that receive very few planning applications, or have few planning issues, may instead opt to form an ad-hoc committee of the Board. In some cases, the CA executive may choose to act as the planning committee. Should your CA decide not to form a planning committee, a Planning Director (or development director) should be designated to manage issues that arise. The Planning Director should be responsible for checking the mail regularly for circulations from The City and providing written comments in return. When circulations that are beyond the scope or interest of the CA are received, the Planning Director should automatically send a “no comment” response to The City as a courtesy. Other circulations may be reviewed by the Board at its meetings and the comments and recommendations of the Board will be provided to The City by the Planning Director.

ADDRESSING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Understanding and avoiding conflicts of interest (both perceived and real) is important for planning committees- this is a challenge many planning committees face. Conflict of interest is defined as a situation where:

An individual could benefit disproportionately from others, directly or indirectly. From access to information or from a decision over which they might have influence or where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such benefit and influence (Page, 2007).

Many CA boards may already have policies to deal with conflicts of interest, which would apply at the committee level as well. However, it is also important to have the tools to deal with these issues at the planning committee level, and more specifically, to be able to recognize potential conflicts of interest as they relate to planning and development. Below are a few common situations in which planning committees experience perceived and actual conflicts of interest.

- Someone becomes involved in the work of a planning committee to advance their private interests or for their own financial benefit, for example a developer, builder, or realtor. Builders, developers, and realtors can be valuable planning committee members, but should not participate in discussion or votes on items that they stand to directly financially benefit from.
- A person uses the planning committee as a way to get an insider view of community issues and challenges within to bolster a political campaign. While many CA and planning committee volunteers may be interested in politics, it is important to consider underlying interests when vetting new membership.
- A homeowner becomes involved in order to fight a development adjacent to their own property. Local homeowners should of course be welcome on planning committees; however the planning committee should not be used as a platform to elevate an individual homeowner's concerns to a greater level of importance than other community members. Individual concerns should be presented separately from the planning committee's input, which takes a broader view.

Here are some general guidelines to avoid conflicts of interest:

- There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any board member and the organization, except as procedurally controlled to ensure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to otherwise inside information.
- When the CA board or planning committee is to decide on an issue, about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member should exclude themselves, without comment on the issue—not only from the vote, but also from the discussion.
- To ensure the commitment of people interested in joining a planning committee, many planning committees ask that people attend a certain number of meetings, usually three, as non-voting members to ensure that people have an intention of contributing to the community (and not only advancing an individual concern) and are committed to the role.

The Federation of Calgary Communities has a sample conflict of interest policy for CAs, available in the [members only](#) section of our website.

CHAPTER 2: MEMBERSHIP





Community planning work takes a significant amount of volunteer time and energy.

Finding the right people to join your planning committee and putting their skills to use can be challenging. This chapter will help with considerations and guidance for gathering and retaining planning committee volunteers.

While planning committee work is a great opportunity to make a positive contribution to your community, the work can be intimidating for new volunteers, and can lead to burn-out in experienced and long-term volunteers. The strategies and techniques outlined in this chapter are based on best practices and the experiences of your fellow community associations. While each CA planning committee faces unique challenges, a lot can be learned from looking at what others have done. We hope that the ideas contained here will help you establish and maintain a planning committee that is a strong, collaborative, and effective voice for community life.

MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY

Regardless of whether your planning committee is actively seeking new members, looking to get the most from your current members, or even looking to find ways to manage lots of interest, it's good to have a strategy for committee membership. Here are some basic considerations for planning committee membership:

1. Know *what* your planning committee's **needs and purpose** are (this should not be difficult if you've created a terms of reference, described in [Chapter 2](#)).
2. Think about *who* could contribute to your planning committee- what types of skill sets, interests, and knowledge are you looking for?
3. Decide *how* you will recruit planning committee members- how will they benefit? What is the 'cost' to volunteers? Include these considerations when you are advertising and promoting positions on your CA planning committee.
4. While your planning committee should be open to all community residents, sometimes it is necessary to screen those who might have narrow interests, or interests that are contrary to those of the CA or planning committee (see [Chapter 2](#) for more on this)
5. Have a system in place for orientation and training for new planning committee volunteers- orientation is helping volunteers feel welcome and connected, clear on their role, and how they fit into the bigger picture. Training will give them the skills to be a valuable contributor- we'd recommend all new planning committee volunteers take our [planning committee, orientation, and PIP workshops \(which we organize in conjunction with the City of Calgary\)](#).
6. Supervising and Evaluating- have systems in place, through your terms of reference and a code of conduct to moderate those whose actions or interests are contrary to a collaborative, community-focused approach.
7. Recognize your volunteers! Thank new members for their contributions. Consider thanking them formally at your CA's AGM, or by giving them a community hero award for significant contributions.

WHO SHOULD JOIN YOUR PLANNING COMMITTEE?

Planning committees benefit from a diversity of knowledge and experience- this might come from experts in planning and development, but people with knowledge of local community character and history of engagement and facilitation are equally valuable. Below is a list of some general categories to consider when recruiting members for planning committees.

Reasonable & Level-Headed People

Most importantly, planning committee members should be reasonable and level-headed. They can be citizens who are simply interested in planning issues, even though they do not possess expertise in areas related to planning and development. As urban planning is quite complex and there are many different perspectives held by many different stakeholders, it is critical that people maintain a sense of calm and level-headedness.

Planning & Development Experts

Finding people who understand the planning system and development and real estate industry can help planning committees get the ‘inside scoop’ on how planning works. These people will help the planning committee make sense of the chaos of planning! People who have direct experience and understanding in the following areas can be particularly valuable on a planning committee:

- Urban planning
- Architecture/design/drafting
- Communications, public involvement or engagement
- Real estate
- Business

Policy & Process Works

It is also extremely valuable to recruit people with a working knowledge of City of Calgary planning policies and development processes. This will help the planning committee improve their understanding of the planning system and how they can contribute to it. The Federation’s “Orientation to the Planning Process” and PIP workshops can be helpful in getting you on the way to wonkdom!

Community Institutions, Groups & Businesses

Communities are not only comprised of residents, but also of various other groups that have a stake in the community. Some of these groups may include Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs) and business groups, public institutions, religious organizations, citizen associations, clubs, ethnic groups, sports and recreational groups, cultural associations, service groups, seniors groups and major property owners. Each of these groups has their finger on the pulse of some aspect of the community—working together with these groups can help CA planning committees get a broader understanding of community needs and issues.

PLANNING COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

When thinking about the people you want on your planning committee, it can be helpful to create a 'job description' or a series of job descriptions for committee members. While this may not be as formal a description used for hiring, a description can help potential members understand what they can contribute to the committee, as well as helping the committee define the skills they are looking for.

A job description should include:

- Title
- Purpose of the Position
- Duties
- Time required
- Helpful Skills
- Who the position reports to

See [Appendix A](#) for sample planning committee job descriptions.



HOW MANY MEMBERS?

It is important to have enough committee members to provide a variety of perspectives on development proposals, and a pool of people you can draw upon if anyone is unavailable. The committee should have a minimum of three people, though many successful committees have 6 to 12 people. It is important to ensure that meetings are not too large. In some communities, if you have a large number of people interested

in participating in community planning work, you may want to divide your committee into breakout groups focusing on different topics or applications. The task of reviewing applications should not be left up to one person, as they will unlikely be able to anticipate all issues and reflect different perspectives.

RECRUITING MEMBERSHIP

Why do people volunteer? Some of the main reasons include:

- They're directly or indirectly affected by the cause
- They want to build their skills or their resume
- They want to connect with the community
- Their friends are doing it

People join a CA to meet people, to have fun, to learn new skills, to pursue an interest, and to contribute to their community. The personal benefits of getting involved in a CA include networking opportunities, access to information and resources, personal recognition, skill enhancement, and a sense of contribution and helpfulness in solving community problems. Joining a CA Planning Committee allows residents to take concrete steps to improving the quality of life in their communities.

When recruiting new planning committee volunteers, consider the following:

- **What benefits can you provide to planning committee volunteers?** Experience, connections/networking, ability to contribute to the community.
- **What will volunteering 'cost' new members?** The biggest cost for volunteers will be their time.
- **How can you increase the benefits and decrease costs for members?** For example, could potentially offer a leadership role on a planning committee issue or project as a resume-builder to a young planner, or reduce the time spent meeting by creating issue-based focus groups.

With a clear grasp on the benefits you can provide to volunteers, it is important to advertise the opportunity. Essential information for your call for volunteers includes: a description of your mandate, specific skills that might contribute to the role, and the expected time commitment. Depending on the space and format of your call out, you may want to include a volunteer 'job description' or a link to the description. When advertising, consider where you might find the volunteers you need, and 'cast a wide net'. Some easy options for community associations include:

- CA website

- CA social media and emails
- CA newsletter
- Posters at local community 'hubs'- the community hall, coffee shops, grocery stores
- Mobile Community Signs (often referred to as 'bold signs')
- At community events (AGM, neighbour day)
- Through universities and professional associations- ask the Federation!
- Include a recurring call for volunteers in your monthly update or community newsletter
- Connect with other local organizations and groups
- Word of mouth can be the most effective way to recruit members- ask committee and CA board members to spread the word to people they know

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

Planning committees have a lot to gain from having systems in place to maintain an 'institutional memory'. In brief, institutional memory refers to the knowledge, information, and data your planning committee creates in the course of its existence. This knowledge exists in two places- in the people of your committee, and in the committee's archives.

Having a record of past positions and issues can help you deal with issues that arise today- you may encounter similar developments, and knowing past positions can help you decide how to respond to present day proposals. In addition, some planning projects take years to complete, or are delayed in the process before they come back. Having a record of what the committee has said and learned in the past can be helpful in this regard.

MEMORY OF MEMBERSHIP

Continuity and turnover are both important for a planning committee. It is always valuable to have some people who have been around for a few years: just as it is important to bring in new membership for new perspectives and ideas on a regular basis, it is also important to have membership who can share past experiences and positions of the committee. Archives of information are most useful when they have a human connection. Knowledge transferred from person to person is often better absorbed than through reading 'stale' or static records. Make sure you utilize the knowledge and memory of your committee's longer-term membership.

It is also important to keep in mind that there is high turnover in City departments. The City planning staff that you interact with will change over time, and there will be varied levels of experience your community's specific character, context, and needs. People who understand the history of the community and have community-related experience can be quite beneficial to planning committees and City planners.

KEEPING MINUTES

Keeping and archiving minutes is an important way for planning committees to keep a record of their activities and positions. This archive can be physical, with hard copies of meeting minutes archived somewhere that is accessible to all planning committee members. Another option is to keep them in an archive using a cloud-based internet storage service—there is a huge number of options out there. Some of the more popular examples include [Dropbox](#) or [Google Drive](#). Some communities also use online discussion platforms such as [Mighty Bell](#), which allows for online discussion and sharing notes.

CHAPTER 4:

WORKING TOGETHER





No one likes to feel like they're wasting their time.

With a little preparation and thought, you can ensure that your planning committee meetings are productive and enjoyable. Many of the strategies and techniques in this chapter could be applied to any group that needs to get things done by working together- your board of directors, or other committees, for example. If you have an ad-hoc planning committee, or you discuss planning issues at the Board level instead, the suggestions in this chapter are also applicable. At a small or informal group level, they will be helpful, but when your planning committee grows, effective meeting management strategies will be essential. Planning can bring out lots of strong opinions and emotions, and it is important to keep these in check to ensure your planning committee is effective and participation is rewarding for everyone. In this chapter, we will review general principles for running effective meetings, strategies for managing conflict within the committee should it arise, and finally tools and techniques for effective and productive meetings.

3 PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Meeting management can be boiled down to three primary principles: inclusion, leadership, and accountability.

In this case, being accountable refers to understanding who the planning committee answers to- the CA Board of Directors. This means having systems in place to ensure the board understands how and why decisions and recommendations by the committee are made.

Inclusion refers to how members participate in the planning committee and meetings- the committee does not necessarily need to agree on what decisions or recommendations are ultimately made, but they do need to agree on how decisions are made. All members of the committee should have the opportunity to participate in discussion, and dissenting opinions should be respected (provided they are presented respectfully). See the section on conflict management below, and [Chapter 6](#) for more information on making your committee and meetings more inclusive.

Good committee leadership is the most important principle, as it is often a prerequisite for ensuring your planning committee is inclusive and accountable. Your committee's chairperson plays a very important role in providing leadership to the group. Some of the primary duties of a committee chairperson include:

- Setting tools (agendas, minutes, reports, etc.)
- Starting and ending meetings (which includes following the agenda, and moving conversation forward).
- Acting as a representative to the CA board of directors (and occasionally the public and media on planning matters, if authorized to do so by the board of directors).
- Remains neutral, facilitating discussion (but may appoint someone else to chair if they have a particular interest in participating in discussion).
- Ensures members have equal opportunity to talk.
- Summarizes conversations for the group (finds “the point”, and points of consensus).
- Monitors the “temperature” of conversation, and if the tone becomes combative or negative, intervenes as necessary.
- Enforces group policy (code of conduct, terms of reference).

Below are some of the things a chairperson may need to watch for during meetings, and may intervene or try new meeting strategies:

- Agenda is not followed

- Materials not given out ahead of time
- Feeling that little was accomplished
- More than one person talks at once
- Some people dominate conversation
- Meetings go longer than scheduled
- Not everyone participates



(Source: Independent Audit Limited, 2011)

An effective, experienced chairperson should rely on good meeting process and facilitation skills to avoid some of these 'time wasters'. The following sections are some common tools that are effective for keeping meetings on track, and potential conflict under control. Like nearly all skills, they are best learned through practice.

AGENDAS

Having an agenda prepared in advance can help keep meetings on track, providing a degree of predictability and accountability to committee members and the CA board. At its most basic, an agenda is simply a list of things to discuss, addressed in order. If there are a significant number of items, or items that will involve a fair amount of discussion, it can also be helpful to prioritize and give time limits for each item. For a planning committee, an agenda will typically include development permits and land use amendments circulated to the community, any land use or

transportation policies and plans being developed by the City that may impact the community, and any community-initiated projects or broader discussion items. It can also be helpful to include a short period of time at the end of the meeting for any member announcements. If you don't have a regularly scheduled meeting date and time, remember to set aside time to plan your next meeting.

The chair of the planning committee is typically responsible for preparing and distributing the agenda, although arrangements might vary between planning committees. Items that are not resolved during a meeting should be included in an 'old business' reminder for the next committee meeting. If committee members have items to add to an agenda, it is best practice to advise the chair in advance of the agenda distribution so that it can be included. It is useful for members if the committee chairperson prepares agendas in advance of meetings, so that committee members can attend meetings prepared for discussion. Meeting agendas also act as a tool for a committee to be accountable to achieving certain tasks during a meeting.

See [Appendix A](#) for a sample meeting agenda and template.

MEETING TIMES

Your committee's choice on how often and when to meet will depend on your objectives and the amount of planning activity in your community. Your meeting schedule should be laid out in your committee's terms of reference. Planning committees may decide to hold meetings either regularly or on an ad hoc basis. Some committees meet bi-weekly to ensure that they can discuss incoming development permit applications, to which CAs must respond to within three weeks. If a committee plans to pursue larger projects, such as a local area plan, they may wish to meet monthly to follow-up on progress and share information.

KEEPING MINUTES AND NOTES

While meeting minutes for committees are not typically required, they are advisable. They are an important way of ensuring your planning committee is accountable to the CA board and community. CA board of directors minutes are required under Alberta legislation, and must be publicly available upon any requests. Should the CA board agree on any positions or decisions as a result of a planning committee recommendation, they should be prepared to defend and provide justification- planning committee minutes are important in this regard.

Taking minutes is also important for maintaining records and continuity. Some projects take a long time to conclude or go dormant and resurface in other forms. It is good to have an avid archivist who will help you keep

good records and materials. To capture more information that may not be suitable for mass distribution, planning committees can maintain meeting notes that are not disseminated to the community. This ensures continuity of information and good record keeping. This archive can be physical, with hard copies of meeting minutes archived somewhere that is accessible to all planning committee members, or online.

Recording meeting minutes can be done in a couple of ways depending on the depth of information that the committee wants to retain. To ensure transparency with CA boards and the community, planning committees should maintain and share meeting minutes that record the recommendations or input that the committee has made.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

Often times your planning committee will find that members may disagree on how to proceed with a planning application, what types of comments to provide, or have very different positions on a development. You may also find that there is disagreement within the community on a planning application or bylaw change. The rest of this chapter provides information on how to manage these discussions within your planning committee- for information on addressing controversial topics within the community at large, see [Chapter 7: Addressing Controversial Issues](#).

Dialogue versus Debate

It is challenging to hear information that conflicts with one's position. Quite often, stakeholders become entrenched in their own positions and have difficulties hearing and understanding other perspectives. It is useful to consider the difference between debate and dialogue to help people learn to listen to one another and have more meaningful conversations (International Association for Public Participation, 2006). Awareness of which approach you are taking in any discussion (dialogue or debate) can help push forward issues where it feels all sides have become entrenched or stuck. This can be useful internally, within your planning committee as well as when the committee is meeting with other stakeholders.

TABLE 1: DIALOGUE VS. DEBATE

(International Association for Public Participation, 2006)

<i>Debate Is...</i>	<i>Dialogue Is...</i>
Assuming there is 1 right answer (& you have it)	Assuming that others have pieces of the answer
Combative: attempting to prove the other side wrong	Collaborative: attempting to find common understanding
About winning	About finding common ground
Listening to find flaws	Listening to understand
Defending your assumptions	Bringing up your assumptions for inspection & discussion
Defending one's views against others	Re-examining all points of view
Searching for weaknesses & flaws in the other position	Admitting that others' thinking can improve one's own
Seeking an outcome that agrees with your position	Searching for strengths & value in the other position
	Discovering new possibilities & opportunities

Conflict Management

Conflict may occur between applicants and the committee members, between committee members and residents, between the committee and CA board, or even between committee members internally. It is important to remember that conflict is certainly not always a bad thing- it can lead to productive outcomes and highlight important concerns. However, if not managed properly, conflict can inject faulty reasoning and exaggerated arguments that move the whole group further away from a solution. Frustration isn't the only downside of unmanaged conflict- sometimes good projects are lost because builders will not risk the uncertainty of the approval process for innovative or controversial projects, particularly if they fear unmitigated conflict with community groups.

11 WAYS TO MANAGE CONFLICT

Often planning committees will become involved in large or controversial planning projects. Below are some suggestions for effectively making the most of conflict and ensuring discussion remains productive, whether discussing with residents, industry, City or within the committee:

1. **Choose the best format for your purpose:** Large public meetings are very poor for discussion but good for giving information and

answering questions. If you are planning a public session, consider the range of formats you have available: community-wide meetings, block meetings, workshops, open houses, videos, surveys, etc. See Appendix B for more detail on engagement techniques.

2. **Make sure all parties are present:** Unless all major, affected parties involved in the dispute are sitting together talking, any meeting has a good chance of doing more harm than good. Agreements reached among certain parties can be easily disputed by non-attendees resulting in the need for another meeting to address the matter.
3. **Make sure good notes are taken and agreed upon:** Too often different parties leave a meeting thinking they have an agreement, which turns out not to exist. Be sure the details of any agreement have been reviewed and recorded before the meeting ends.
4. **If you are the chairperson, keep your opinion to yourself:** Controversial matters require a full-time chairperson. Your ability to maintain your credibility depends upon your effectiveness in handling the meeting. Save your opinions for the end of the discussion, if you need to state them at all.
5. **If you have conflicting points of view, record them all:** Sometimes you can avoid unnecessary debate by simply including all the opposing points of view in your circulation comments. City planners consider and evaluate all issues identified and attempt to address them, where possible, no matter how many people hold the opinion.
6. **Propose solutions or improvements:** If there are ways to improve the development proposal or offer alternative proposals include them in your response to The City.
7. **Break the problem down and deal with the parts:** It is often valuable to take an issue and get the parties to break it down into parts, which can be more easily addressed. Thus opposition to a new store can be dealt with in regard to traffic, garbage, noise, etc. – concrete, manageable topics which can be addressed one at a time. This will allow you to find the underlying cause of people’s concerns quickly and avoid constant recycling of arguments.
8. **Define group goals first:** Define the objective you want to achieve and focus on the specific concerns and issues you are trying to resolve not generalized positions. Focus on what is important to the parties rather than their position.

9. **Moderate strong individuals:** Your meeting will be much improved if you moderate individuals who tend to dominate discussion, and ensure all interested parties have generally equal opportunities to participate.
10. **Stay focused on the discussion at hand:** It is often useful to have a “parking lot” for questions and ideas that may be important, but not directly related to the issue being discussed. Write these on a separate piece of paper to bring up again in the future.
11. **Establish ground rules for discussion:**
 - Everyone has wisdom
 - We need everyone’s wisdom for the wisest result
 - There are no wrong answers
 - The whole is greater than the sum of its parts
 - Everyone will hear others and be heard

CHAPTER 5: WORKING WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS





Planning is a messy process- it involves technical, consultative, and political aspects, and the route to a planning decision is rarely straightforward. Planning decisions are the result of dialogue between many stakeholders with different requirements and motivations, balanced by planners and decision-making authorities. While planning processes are guided by formal, legislated requirements, as laid out in the **Municipal Government Act (MGA)**, there are many other informal processes and considerations at play as well.

With this in mind, it is important that planning committees take the time to get to know the stakeholders to better understand the role of each in the process and have reasonable expectations of them. With a better understanding of other stakeholders, planning committees will experience less frustration and gain a better understanding of how the planning system fits together. Better relationships with other planning stakeholders can build trust through improved understanding of other perspectives, and more open communication.

PLANNING STAKEHOLDERS

Major stakeholders in planning and development can be grouped into roughly three categories: community/the public (CAs provide one piece of this public perspective), the City and government stakeholders, and development industry. Each of these groups plays an important role, without which the planning system could not function. Keeping in mind each stakeholder's responsibilities and perspectives can help facilitate better planning outcomes for the whole.

Figure 3 illustrates the various perspectives of the planning stakeholders. Though their perspectives vary, when they converge they can result in powerful outcomes that benefit all of the stakeholders and the city as a whole.

Quorum

The minimum number of members that must be present to make a meeting and decisions valid.

FIGURE 3: STAKEHOLDER ROLES



PARTNERING WITH CITY PLANNERS AND ADMINISTRATION

Community association planning committees work most often with planners known as File Managers. These planners manage development permit or land use amendment applications. Establishing a good working relationship with a File Manager can be very fruitful- they can help educate planning committee volunteers about the applications, about planning issues in general and they can also help volunteers learn how to articulate their ideas in a way that is useful for planning analysis and decision making.

In addition to File Managers, there are many other planners that venture out into the communities. They may include transportation planners, parks planners, policy planners and members of the Land Use Bylaw team, for example. When City staff make changes to planning policy (such as Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP) or city-wide plans) or Land Use Bylaw 1P2007, they engage relevant stakeholders, including CAs. This provides an opportunity to meet planners at The City who specialize in specific areas.

Through establishing connections and relationships with City planners, planning committee representatives do many things:

- Improve their understanding of the issues and City perspective
- Raise issues that are important to the community
- Get help in finding the right City staff person to address issues
- Establish rapport to have more meaningful and trusting conversations

While reaching out to City staff is useful for planning committee representatives, it is also useful for City staff: City planners need to understand community issues and the community perspective, which planning committee representatives can share through discussions. This makes the relationship mutually beneficial!

DIVING IN WITH DEVELOPERS

Community association planning committees have a lot to gain by establishing meaningful and constructive relationships with developers and builders. After fluctuations in market demand, delays in the planning and development process are the biggest risk to a developer. As a result, consistency and clarity in communication are highly valued by development industry when working in communities- knowing what to expect goes a long way!

Planning committees can help encourage a high quality built environment that is reflective of the community's needs and preferences by creating and sharing a community planning statement or vision to help developers, and other stakeholders, know what to expect when working in a community. Including information on your CA website about how your community reviews DP and land use redesignation circulations, what criteria you use, and how you gather feedback can be helpful. Also be sure to include a contact email address or phone number on your CA website for your planning committee- this can help community-minded developers get in contact with you at the early stages of a project.

In fostering relationships and rapport with developers, planning committees can:

- Help improve quality of discussions
- Encourage developers to contact planning committees earlier in the development process
- Better understand one another
- Help developers better understand the community context



CONNECTING WITH COUNCILLORS

The formal role of a Councillor in the planning process is to vote at Public Hearings to make decisions regarding land use redesignation applications and changes or adoptions of statutory and non-statutory documents (e.g.

Area Redevelopment Plans). However, Councillors can be involved in land use planning decisions in many other ways.

It is always helpful for Councillors to know what is happening ‘on the ground’ in the communities they represent. If your communities’ planning committee does not have an existing relationship with your local Councillor, consider organizing an introductory meeting- the Councillor will benefit from a better understanding of local community planning issues, and your community can benefit from being better understood by your Councillor.

Councillors can act as a liaison between CAs and City staff, and help obtain information and advocate for good planning process. As this role is informal, your relationship with your local Councillor may be partly dependent on the ability of the CA to develop a relationship with their Councillor. Each Councillor may interpret their informal roles differently. It is also useful for planning committees to develop relationships with Councillors’ assistants, as they are the gateways to the Councillors themselves.

RELATING TO RESIDENTS

A good relationship with local residents is essential for an effective planning committee- the CA is often looked to for local community perspectives on planning matters by the City, Council, and the development industry. Many CA members and residents of communities also feel that the CA and its planning committee should represent the needs and preferences of residents in planning matters. These responsibilities and expectations can add up to a lot of pressure for any planning committee!

There are two key considerations for any CA and their relationship with residents on local planning matters: first, your planning committee and board should be clear on the role it takes. Each community is different, so approaches may vary. At a minimum, residents should understand how your committee reaches decisions and the types of positions taken by the CA.

The second consideration is developing a clear understanding on your committee and board on how and why you engage on any given issue. It is important that planning committees engage community residents when it is appropriate. This may differ for communities, depending on the types of development that occurs, the mandate, and the capacity of the planning committee. A good rule of thumb is that the people who will be impacted by a development should be engaged or at least informed of a potential change in the community. Note that the two adjacent properties

are notified by the City. Other residents are notified by a sign on the site.

Table 2 suggests the level of engagement that planning committees should coordinate for various sorts of planning activities. For more information, see Appendix F for more detailed options and descriptions of engagement tactics.

The next two chapters delve into more detail on major issues that many planning committees might face when it comes to residents: [Chapter 6](#) provides more detail on being reflective or representative of the local community, while [Chapter 7](#) provides a framework for dealing with controversial planning issues.

TABLE 2: GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGING RESIDENTS IN PLANNING WORK

Planning Work Engagement	Small Scale Applications	Medium Scale Applications	Large Scale Applications	Policy Changes	Community-Led Planning Projects
	<i>e.g. infills</i>	<i>e.g. infills</i>	<i>e.g. large multi-residential, large mixed-use</i>	<i>e.g. ARP amendments, LUB changes, LAPs</i>	<i>e.g. community design guidelines, community plans</i>
Engagement Strategy	• Notify adjacent residents of application • Solicit neighbour comments or provide resources for neighbours to comment on their own behalf	• Notify adjacent residents of application • Solicit neighbour comments or provide resources for neighbours to comment on their own behalf	• Notify community members of policy changes and opportunities for engagement from The City and/or developer	• Notify community members of policy changes and opportunities for engagement from The City and/or developer	• Host discussions or workshops to understand residents' current and future planning needs
Communication Strategy	• Inform community members¹ of broad community changes or development trends in newsletter or other communication tools	• Inform community residents of broad community changes or development trends in newsletter or other communication tools	• Inform community residents of engagement opportunities (from The City, developer or community) using all available communication tools	• Inform community residents of engagement opportunities (from The City, developer or community) using all available communication tools	• Inform community residents of engagement opportunities using all available communication tools

¹ Community members include community residents, as well as other groups within the community such as businesses, BRZs, churches, etc.

² Communication tools may include newsletters, website, emails, posters, notifications, announcements

CHAPTER 6:

REPRESENTATION





Representation is a very important and vigorously debated topic in planning:

when a planning committee provides feedback on planning matters through the Community Association's board of directors, they are taking a big picture role, commenting on behalf of the community as a whole. Because of this, planning committees need to take special consideration when providing input on planning decisions. Proper representation requires considered, applied knowledge. While CA planning volunteers are often some of the most passionate, engaged and knowledgeable individuals when it comes to local planning issues. However, broad community representation can still be a difficult ideal to achieve.

Representation presents a challenge for any person or group in the position to provide input and make decisions that will impact others, from all levels of government to small community organizations. This chapter will 'dig in' to the topic of representation in a bit more detail, providing important considerations and tools to help your CA provide planning input that is reflective of the community's character, context and needs.

REPRESENTATION AND COMMUNITY INPUT

Input that is representative of community character, context and needs can improve the quality of collective decision making. It can provide additional checks and balances for planning decisions and political decisions, and it allows planners to gather broad community interests at a manageable scale. The input provided by planning committees and all community-based and grassroots groups is most often gathered by volunteers, and is therefore limited by your organization's capacity. However, in speaking from a broad community perspective, communities have a responsibility to ensure planning feedback is as representative and reflective as possible.

With no formal power in the planning decision making process, the authority of a CA relies on its credibility. This credibility, in turn, is drawn from a demonstrated ability to accurately reflect the community's interests. In short, a representative CA is a credible CA. CAs represent one of many different community voices. For planners and planning decision makers, CAs can be a strong gauge of community values and priorities when the community has ensured they have adequate knowledge, information and input to provide a warranted opinion and act as a voice for community life.

At the core of it, the reasons a planning committee should be representative of the community are the same reasons that community-based input in planning is important. This is based in a belief that planning decisions should be arrived at through a transparent, democratic process, and that better outcomes for all can be achieved when we balance the interests of all planning stakeholders. This includes thoughtfully considered, accurate input from those with lived experience and knowledge about local context. The community level is a great scale at which to gather useful local information- at their best, CAs have the advantage of being less complex, and more immediately approachable and responsive than other organizations.

REPRESENTATIVE AND REFLECTIVE PLANNING COMMITTEES

A CA and its planning committee should strive to reflect the range of community members and should be selected through a process that is open and inclusive to people who live, work, own property or do business in the community. Achieving this can be difficult, but it is made much easier when the committee itself is reflective of the community.

Try to select people from different areas of the neighbourhood and

Community Profile

To find your community profile, go to calgary.ca and search for 'community profiles.'

include people who reflect a cross section of community members. Planning committees should have a mix of different ages and backgrounds, residents of different housing types and tenures, and a mix of long-time residents and newcomers to the community. A well-balanced committee will have a sense of continuity, inclusivity and will also be looking to the future. Think about what groups of people from your community are missing on your committee and what could be done to encourage their participation. Some examples of unintentional barriers in meetings include:

- Language as a barrier – is there anyone from your community that could be a translator? Is your communication simple enough for everyone to understand?
- Mobility challenges – does your meeting venue present an obstacle to some? Is there is a venue accessible to all?
- Technology challenges – are you only communicating electronically and can you expand that to include those who are less comfortable with the internet?
- Disabilities – are there people that need accommodations to be able to participate (e.g. hard of hearing, sight impaired, etc.)?
- Cultural barriers – have you ensured that everyone feels welcome no matter their cultural background?

REPRESENTATION AND REFLECTION

True *representation* can be difficult for CA planning committees to achieve- most CAs and their planning committees are small, volunteer run organizations. Representation can be difficult for politicians with dedicated budgets and staff, let alone such small groups with limited financial resources. Depending on the standard of representativeness one uses, it could be quite challenging for a community group to achieve 'representative' positions.

Beyond this, CA planning committees must deal with the varied expectations other planning system stakeholders may have of them. There are presently no agreed upon standards for representation from CAs and their planning committees, and decisions are typically not based on votes or community plebiscites.

While there are some instances where the community may feel it is appropriate to hold a vote on a particular issue, this is not always the best approach in community planning. CAs and planning committees are relied upon by other planning system stakeholders for their additional input on community character, context, and needs. This type of feedback is more

nuanced than a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer from a community plebiscite. It is also important to distinguish between immediate reactions and underlying interests. Often the immediate, superficial ‘gut’ reactions to a planning decision are heard the loudest, but these are not always in the best interest of the community. Underlying interests are more useful in planning decision-making. For example, a group of community members may be opposed to a new grocery store being built in the community. Immediate reactions might include comments like “we already have a grocery store in our community” or “this grocery store will lower our property values” or “we don’t want more shoppers in our community”. However, underlying these may be more specific concerns about community traffic, the design and layout of the grocery store site, or a misunderstanding of the role of planning. Where possible, take the time to understand the underlying reasons for the opinions you hear, to get at interests. The best results come from thoughtful and collaborative discussions that ‘get at’ and address the underlying concerns and interests of all stakeholders- these discussions require nuanced feedback rather than the yes or no results of a community poll.

Where does this leave CAs? It might be more accurate to describe the ideal CA planning committee as being *reflective* of their community. It would be difficult for any community to argue that a position is representative in statistical terms- ensuring that positions are drawn from a reflective crosscut of the community is more feasible, however. CAs can speak from broad, high level, community-wide positions, instead of taking up individual resident concerns (although individual resident concerns are important considerations when developing a higher level position!). Reflective positions should be based on the community’s vision, input gathered from the community, and any plans or policies guiding development in your community.

When providing input into the planning system, it is important to be clear about *who* planning committees speak for and how they arrived at the input they are providing, or the process in which they heard various perspectives. This helps decision makers weigh the information and make informed decisions. If a planning committee strives to reflect the community issues and needs in a way that engages those who will be affected, the planning committee can explain the robustness of their process and contributions to the process, enhancing the validity of their input.

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is important to consider the various parties a CA planning committee is accountable to, and in what ways. More discussion on relationships with other planning stakeholders can be found in [Chapter 5](#). A basic list includes:

- CA members- the primary group your CA board is responsible to. They are primarily held accountable through elections at the CA's AGM.
- The broader community- Even though they are primarily accountable to their membership, CAs are often looked to for feedback that will impact the entire community. If the CA takes this responsibility and provides feedback for the community, they have a responsibility to the community as a whole. This includes considering both current and future residents of the community.
- The City of Calgary (including City planners) - Planners often look to CAs for information on the local context- in their responses, planning committees should provide accurate and reflective feedback.

CHALLENGES

As volunteer based groups with limited time and resources, working towards reflective or representative positions can be tricky for CA planning committees. It is a challenge for professional planners to achieve outcomes that balance the many interests involved in any issue, let alone community volunteers. Many are likely familiar with the various barriers to gathering input for community planning feedback:

- There may be apathy or lack of interest from community. There may be many different reasons for this: some may simply not be interested in community planning issues. Others may feel that community leaders, Planners, and decision makers are 'doing their job' and don't feel the need to get involved.
- Perception of exclusion: sometimes it is difficult for CAs to gather a full range of input from community members because newcomers may be afraid to speak up, particularly if they have an opinion that is different from what they hear in the group.
- Lack time or energy: providing thoughtful feedback and participating in planning decisions can be exhausting- lack of time and energy for participation is one of the more common reasons for lack of community participation.
- Lack of clarity on what representation means: it can be difficult to provide feedback that is representative or reflective of the community if there is not a common understanding of what standard the community is being held to. It is important to communicate who the community is speaking for when providing feedback, and how input was gathered.

- Volunteer turnover in planning committees and CA leadership: accepted ways of gathering information and providing feedback, as well as relationships with other planning stakeholders may change with new membership. Volunteer turnover is inevitable, and committees must adjust over time.
- Expectations of other stakeholders (such as the City or developers) may be beyond of the capacity of the CA. Being transparent about your process will help with this- be clear with other stakeholders about what you are able to do in terms of community engagement.
- Challenges to legitimacy: other planning stakeholders may challenge the legitimacy of the CA if they do not favour the position a CA takes. The community may find themselves supported when they are supportive of a project, but less so when they voice opposition. Legitimacy is ultimately 'granted' to a CA by other planning system stakeholders- make sure your positions are defensible- based on accurate information and a transparent process, and present them respectfully to others.
- Leadership may not always be demographically representative of the community itself. CAs should strive to ensure that their planning committees (see membership) board are representative of a cross section of the community. However, taking on a leadership position with a CA is voluntary- it can be challenging to ensure that it is a complete cross section of the community's composition. It is important to consider what 'invisible' barriers to broader participation you may be creating- it can be scary for an 'outsider' to join a pre-existing group, particularly if that group has an established culture or they have been working together for a long time.

3 CORE PRINCIPLES FOR ENSURING REFLECTIVE PLANNING INPUT:

Three broad principles can help CA planning committees ensure their planning input is reflective of the community. CA boards and their planning committees should strive to be transparent, communicative, and accountable.

- **Transparency-** This principle is closely linked to the others- be clear about how decisions are made and how input is gathered. While you may not have public minutes for your planning committee, you must be prepared to explain how your committee arrived at a position on a planning matter. Transparency helps to build trust with other planning stakeholders.
- **Communication-** This goes both ways- be open to receiving input from community members on community planning issues, and make sure you provide regular updates on your committee's activities. For example, you may have an email address for your planning committee where community members can send input, and provide regular

updates through your community newsletter or an email list.

- **Accountability-** Know your CA's mission, bylaws, your planning committee's terms of reference, and any other community visions, plans or policies you may have in place, and let them guide your decision making. Abiding by your processes and rules also ensures the planning committee's transparency.

ENGAGEMENT FOR REPRESENTATIVE AND REFLECTIVE INPUT

Providing defensible positions and feedback on planning and development from a CA perspective requires the CA to have engaged the community at some level. How you engage your community and gather input on a planning matter will depend on a variety of factors- including the type and scale of development or policy change, and your own CA's capacity and policies for engaging residents. For a decision making model to help guide your approach, see [Chapter 7](#).

In some cases, your planning committee may only rely on a community vision statement, past experiences and the input of the committee and directly impacted residents. In other cases, it may be most appropriate for planning committees to engage community residents more broadly. Table 2, in [Chapter 5](#) suggests the level of engagement that planning committees should coordinate for various sorts of planning activities. For more information, see Appendix B for more detailed options and descriptions of engagement tactics.

CHAPTER 7: CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS



Many planning projects and initiatives will elicit strong reactions from community members-

recent Calgary examples include secondary suites, large scale transit initiatives, or the redevelopment of large parcels of land, such as golf courses or other parcels of land that have remained undeveloped for some time. When discussion goes wrong, these types of issues can be polarizing, pitting community members against each other and creating lose-lose situations.

Responding to these types of issues is one of the biggest challenges any planning committee will face. With these polarizing issues, CAs and their Planning Committees can be left feeling that they're 'between a rock and a hard place', where they will upset some segment of the community regardless of the position they take, whether for, against or neutral.

This chapter is intended to help CA boards and their planning committees navigate controversial planning projects and emerge on the other side having ensured the perspectives of community members are represented, conflict between viewpoints was minimized, and the planning committee remains a credible, reflective voice in the planning process.

WHAT MAKES AN ISSUE CONTROVERSIAL?

Urban development and community change can lead planning committees to face a variety of situations in which different parties might find themselves at odds. Varied opinions and understandings are an inevitable part of community planning! Being aware and prepared to discuss controversial planning issues within your planning committee and within your community can help you to ensure that your community's interests and needs can be heard in the planning process.

There are a number of situations a planning committee and CA might find themselves in. For example:

- A city-wide planning issue means that the CA feels pressure to formally respond, but there are a variety of community positions on the issue, or the CA is unsure of its members and resident's views.
- An individual or group of residents is concerned about a particular development, land use amendment, or policy change. They are looking to the CA to support them, or may be in opposition to the CA's own position.
- Members of a CA planning committee might have a difference of opinion that makes it difficult for them to arrive at a single position on an issue.

Below are a few questions to consider when assessing whether a planning application or policy change in your community might be contentious:

- Who will be impacted by the decision, and how?
- Will the decision be connected to any past issues or poor relationships?
- Will the issue impact property values or taxation levels?
- Will it create or increase health or safety risks?
- Will it create 'winners' and 'losers'?
- Will it create undesirable aesthetic changes?
- Will it interfere with daily lifestyle and habitual patterns (congestion, parking, access)?
- Is it an emotional or moral 'hot button' issue?

If the answer to any of the questions above is 'yes', then it has the potential to become controversial. It is also important to remember that it can be quite easy to unintentionally create controversy over a planning issue if rumors, misinformation or hot tempers take hold. This is why it's essential to get a good understanding of the issue at hand before diving in.

ISSUE TRIGGERED

DO YOU HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION?

YES

IS THERE CITY OR DEVELOPER LED ENGAGEMENT?

NO

WILL THE PROPOSAL OR ISSUE POTENTIALLY AFFECT THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMUNITY?

YES

IS THERE BROAD COMMUNITY CONSENSUS ON THE PROPOSAL OR ISSUE?

NO

WILL THE PROPOSAL POTENTIALLY CREATE 'WINNERS' AND 'LOSERS'?

NO

LEARN MORE

Ensure you have a good understanding of the project 'facts' before you proceed-talk to the file manager (if it is a development permit), the planners in charge of the policy amendment, and the Federation's planners. Many disagreements can be avoided by making sure everyone is acting on the same information!

Other important considerations:

- Is the proposal supported by policy (or not) (ARP, the MDP, Complete Streets)
- What is the decision being made, and by whom?

PARTICIPATE IN ENGAGEMENT

WILL IT POTENTIALLY IMPACT A GROUP OF RESIDENTS OR AN INDIVIDUAL?

GROUP OF RESIDENTS

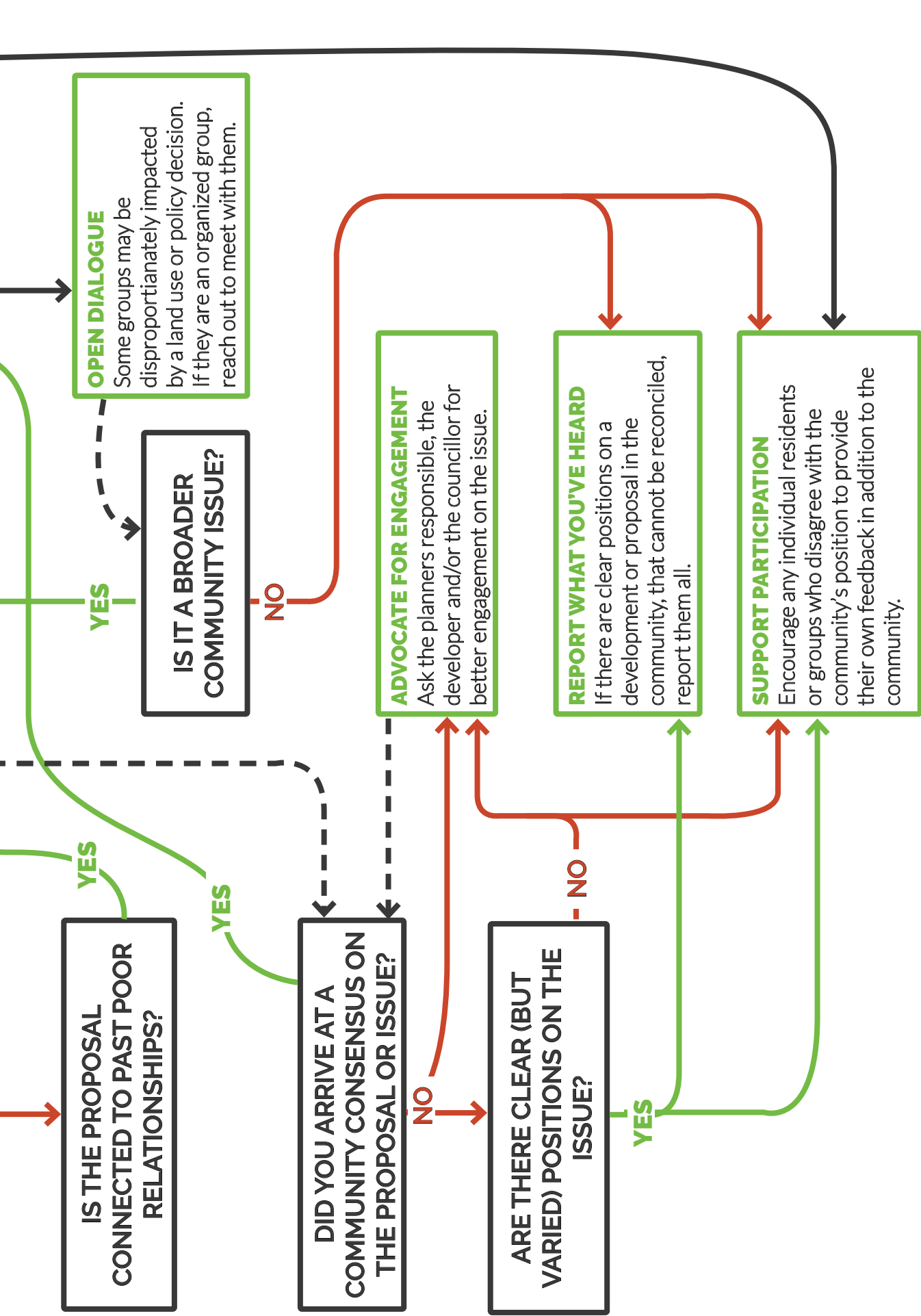
INDIVIDUAL

ADVOCATE FOR A POSITION

Write a letter to the planners responsible, to committee, to council based on your broad community position.

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

Consider a broad community engagement process. Know beforehand precisely what question you are asking of the community, and be clear about how you will use their input.



DO YOU HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED?

Learning More

Before addressing any major or controversial topic, it is essential to have a good grasp of the issue at hand and a clear understanding of the implications of the development or policy change for your CA, your neighborhood, and for the city as a whole. There are a number of aspects to any issue that should be considered, which include an understanding of the proposed project, an understanding of the social and political dynamics of the issue, and an understanding of your community's vision for the future.

Understand the Proposal

Don't rely on assumptions or partial knowledge of the issue! Before diving into discussing an important or controversial planning development with your committee, board, or community, make sure you fully understand what is being proposed. Find the planners responsible for the development permit (called **file managers**), or the City staff responsible for the bylaw or policy change to get a better picture of what is being proposed. If you are unsure of who to contact on a particular issue, contact the Federation planners, or call 3-1-1 at the City of Calgary.

Is it supported by policy?

It can also be helpful to understand the City's perspective on the development or policy change. For example, if you are discussing a major development permit application, meet with City staff to discuss what they have identified as opportunities in the area. In addition, you should try to be aware of and understand all of the City policies that might apply to a development or policy situation. This is something that a file manager or a Federation planner can help you with! An understanding of what the City wants for an area will help to manage expectations for what community improvements are achievable in the development, and will help your community find areas of 'common ground,' where community redevelopment can help all of Calgary meet the goals of our Municipal Development Plan (MDP).

What are the social and political dynamics?

Beyond understanding the subject matter, it is also important to spend some time considering the social and political dynamics of the issue itself. What makes the issue controversial? What are the various perspectives on the issue? How is your planning committee or CA defining the 'question'? Below are a few questions to help guide your thinking on this:

- How are different groups defining the question? What is the 'decision'

File Manager

A planning generalist at the City who oversees the management of an application through the application and review process.

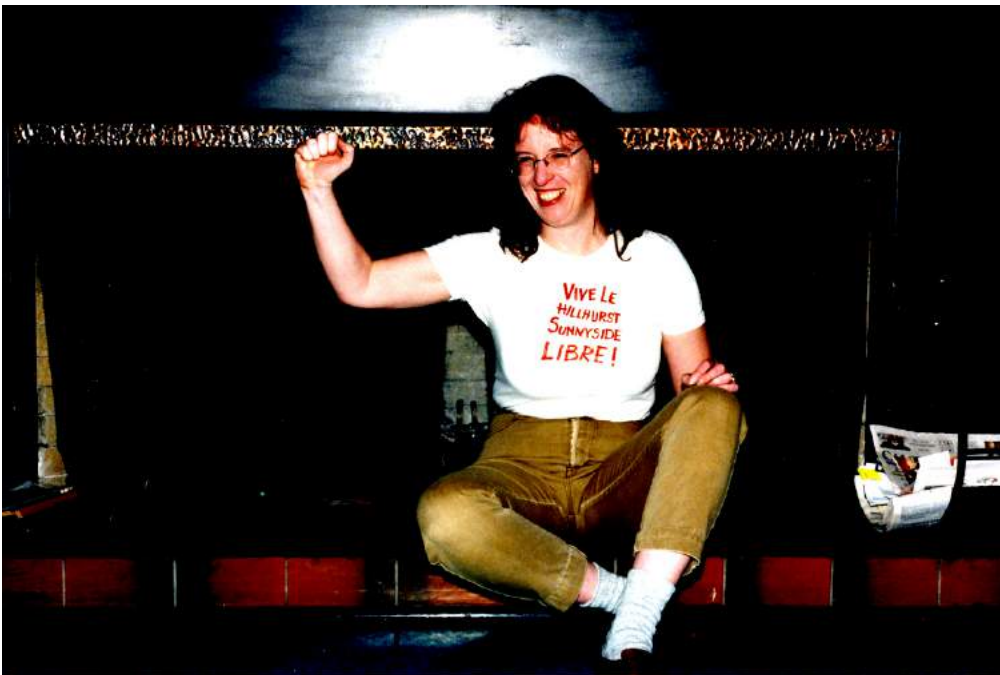
being made? A lot of anguish can be avoided by gaining a clear understanding of what is and is not 'on the table' in a discussion. Try to focus discussion and any community engagement on the specific proposed changes or development, and not unrelated issues.

- Does everyone have the same information? If different groups or individuals have different information, conflict might be based on varied understandings of the issue. Conflict can often be minimized by ensuring everyone is acting on the same information!
- What assumptions are different groups operating under? Are you operating under speculation or assumptions? Could you have a clearer understanding of the issue? If so, it may be good to seek further clarification or information.

Issues can easily 'get out of hand' when fears and misconceptions take over- knowing precisely what decision is being made, the details of the plan or policy, and your community dynamics can prepare are all important first steps- the questions above can help you get to that understanding.

Understand your Community

Know beforehand how you want your community to grow. The CA should have an idea how it wants the community to develop. Ideally, some type of visioning or strategic planning process should be undertaken to define long-term goals so you have a basis to respond to applications. Contact us if you want to be put in touch with communities that have done similar work.



WHAT IS THE FEDERATION'S ROLE?



The Federation of Calgary Communities' mission is to improve neighborhood life in Calgary by providing services and programs that create, support, and enhance vital and representative community based associations.

The Federation's planning team provides educational support, high-level guidance on community planning issues and advocacy for the community role in planning. We are typically not able to mediate disputes, but we can provide you and your planning committee the tools to manage potential disputes effectively. We are available to provide higher-level guidance and education about how to best approach potentially conflictual situations.

In some instances, disputes or conflicting opinions on planning issues might raise questions regarding governance and organizational structure, and processes. While the Federation cannot hold community associations accountable to their processes, we provide best practices for community associations to operate as autonomous, independent and well-functioning organizations. Only the membership of a CA can hold the organization accountable – the Societies Act of Alberta directs the members of the organization to manage conflict within the organization.

IS THERE CITY OR DEVELOPER INITIATED ENGAGEMENT?

In most cases for large or potentially controversial developments and policy creation or changes, there will be engagement organized by the developer or City. In these instances, it is, of course, important to be active participants in the process in good faith. In many instances, participating in these engagement exercises can help your CA or planning committee get a better understanding of what the broader community perspective is on a particular issue. The City or developer will have collected input from the broader community, and the CA can provide their own input as well.

ADVOCATING FOR ENGAGEMENT

If there is evidence that an issue might be a hot topic in your community, it is often prudent for the City or developers to be proactive and engage early. In some instances, public engagement or education is not sufficient for a project. There are many reasons this might happen- the developer or City may underestimate public interest, circumstances surrounding a project may change, or problems with communication may lead to misunderstandings surrounding a project. In these instances, it can be helpful to advocate with the developer or City staff responsible for engagement appropriate for the project. If you already have a contact with the developer responsible, follow up with them, and consider writing a letter to the file manager on development permits. If you have concerns about engagement, but are unsure about how to proceed, let us know- we may be able to help!

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THE ISSUE?

Another important consideration is who will be potentially affected by the issue- your approach might vary depending on the situation.

A segment of the community or an individual

In some instances, conflict or controversy over a planning issue is the result of the concerns of a small sub-section of the community, or even individual residents. In such situations, it is important to remember the CA's broad community role. Depending on the approach your CA takes, it may not always be appropriate for the CA to advocate on behalf of a small group or individual. Of course, this is not to suggest that these concerns should be ignored!

In some instances, your CA might be approached by organized groups of residents from within the community. Sometimes these groups may be reflective of broader community values or concerns, and in others they

may only represent a minority of the community. Start by opening up a dialogue with the group to hear their concerns, and determine if they align with broader community concerns. In some cases, a small but vocal group might be an indicator of a wider concern within the community. If this is a possibility, your next step might be to engage the community more broadly on the issue (see heading x).

In the case of individual residents, ensure their concerns are reflected in feedback your CA provides to the City. Your CA planning committee and board of directors are not required to take a specific, 'yes or no' position on developments or planning matters. In fact, including the variety of viewpoints you may hear within the community helps to ensure your CA is representative and establishes credibility. Concerns and suggestions for improvement are particularly useful for City file managers and the project applicant. Finally, if you are not able to directly support the positions of individual residents, you may consider encouraging them to present to council or provide feedback individually. The City of Calgary has resources on presenting to council [here](#), and the [Community Guide to the Planning Process](#) also includes resources on presenting to council and committees.

Issues affecting the community as a whole

Often, planning issues have potential to impact the entire community. Examples might include a local area plan or a major redevelopment along a community corridor. Depending on the level of potential impact, community engagement may be appropriate. In most instances, the City or developer will have an engagement plan in place- the CA can participate and notify residents of the process, and use these meetings to help determine a CA position as well.

In some instances, you may want to advocate for more thorough engagement on a particular issue. Often planners and politicians underestimate community interest or concern on an issue, and engagement is not sufficient.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

In many instances, the CA may want to engage residents and CA members on an issue as a supplement to City or developer engagement. The decision to do so will depend on many factors, including the scale and contentiousness of the project and the resources and energy of the CA to engage.

Planning engagement or meetings

What level of community engagement is necessary? Many controversial

planning issues in your community will surely make themselves known, but on some occasions, what may not initially seem to be an issue to the CA may be important to some groups in the community. Proactively working on this can help CAs represent the needs of your community. It is important to be deliberate about the format of your meetings to discuss potentially controversial issues. Depending on the issue, the context, and the resources your community has available, there are a range of methods for consultation and discussion.

Make sure your approach to engagement is appropriate for the scale and contentiousness of the issue, and what you want to get out of the meeting. Consider the range of formats you have available, and choose the best for your purpose and available resources. Some common approaches include door-knocking and flyering adjacent properties, block meetings, workshops, open houses, surveys, and community-wide meetings.

Table 3 includes different approaches to engagement and input gathering, depending on the potential level of impact, and the scale of the project. See Appendix B for more details on the spectrum of engagement techniques and approaches.

TABLE 3: ENAGING ON CONTROVERSIAL PLANNING TOPICS

	Low Impact	High Impact
Whole Community	Inform: Information, open house, newsletter, referral	Consult: Surveys, Open Houses, Presentations
Segment of the Community	Inform: Website, direct emails, community newsletter, social media Consult: meetings or 'kitchen table' conversations	Consult: Surveys, Open Houses, Presentations Collaborate: Charrettes, Workshops, Walkabouts Partner: Working Group or sub-committee, Task Force

Some examples:

- A small group of residents is impacted, but the level of impact is potentially high- for example, a multi-family development being built adjacent to a block of single family homes. In such a case, your CA may want to invite that group of neighbours to a planning committee or board meeting, but it may not require a community-wide meeting.
- A small group of residents may be impacted, and the level of impact is not high- for example, a modest addition to a home or some single-family infill development. In such cases, talking with neighbours about their perspectives or simply sharing information may be sufficient.
- The whole community is potentially impacted, but the level of impact is low- for example, a community traffic-calming project on a main

corridor. In this case, providing information through your community newsletter and social media may be sufficient.

- The whole community may be impacted, with a high level of potential impact- for example, a large multi-family redevelopment on a major community corridor, or a new area redevelopment plan. In such cases, workshops or special committees may be appropriate. Often times, projects of this nature will include more comprehensive engagement by the City or developer. If this is not the case, it is important for your community to make the planners or developers aware that more engagement could be required.

Deciding what level of engagement is appropriate can be tricky! Many times what may initially seem to be a minor issue can trigger tensions within the community, and what the CA may think of as a major issue elicits very little interest from the community. The matrix in figure x is intended to help guide you to the best approach to a planning issue- in many cases it might be difficult to decide- if you aren't sure the best approach to a particular planning issue in your community, feel free to contact one of the Federation's planners.

Tips for Managing Community Meetings on Controversial Topics

- For any discussions, regardless of how controversial they may initially seem, you should take a team approach. Try to bring your committee members, the neighbours and the applicants together to reach positive solutions that benefit everyone. It is important to articulate the interests of your community in a constructive manner and look for common ground in order to resolve conflicts. This is sometimes referred to as moving from positions ("we oppose your project") to interests ("this is what our community is looking for – how does your project support that?"). Success is more likely when all parties move beyond positions to find solutions based on their interests.
- Be clear at the beginning of a meeting on what role the CA intends to play in this particular issue: Will the CA be taking a specific position, or only gathering and providing feedback? This may change, but it is best to be clear about your intent at the start of the process. If you have materials or questions developed, distribute them ahead of time via email, and have printed copies at your meeting. The CA or planning committee should strive to act as a moderator, identifying and clarifying the community's position (or positions) on a subject. This is important, as it enables participants to feel they have somewhere to ensure their views are heard. When possible, allow many modes of input- larger group discussion, small group discussion, online tools and written comments.
- If you are expecting controversy, one simple and effective improvement to small group meetings is going around the table at the end of a discussion and giving each person a minute or less to summarize what is important to them about the discussed issue(s). Creating an

environment of openness and encouraging input is very important to group effectiveness. Without such an environment, certain members feel their opinions are undervalued and dissent forms within the group. As tension increases and people are not openly communicating, assumptions form and groups become polarized. Giving each member the opportunity to be heard reduces monopolization and moves the groups towards consensus (making the chairperson's job much easier).

- In some instances, you may want to hire a facilitator early to develop key messages for discussion with other stakeholders. The facilitator should determine and summarize what the community's questions and concerns about the development, and the priorities and needs of the community. This will help your community prepare to represent the community in discussions other stakeholders.

Finding Additional Resources

After initial meetings or discussions, you may find that the issue will require more consultation than your community association has the volunteer or technical capacity to handle. In cases where more extensive consultation may be necessary, contact the applicant or developer about arranging more thorough community consultation. Also contact the City file manager responsible for the project to inform them if a particular project may be contentious in your community.

In addition, you may want to look for resources that can help the community come to a consensus independently. Community Mediation Calgary Society (CMCS) is a not-for-profit organization that can provide free conflict management assistance. They can be contacted by phone at (403) 269-2707 (please leave a detailed message), or by email: cmcs@mediation.ab.ca. More information on CMCS can be found at <http://mediation.ab.ca/>.

For major planning projects, you may want to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the developer and the City. An MOU outlines the community consultation process for the development, so that you know what to expect from the process and you can hold each other to account.

Take positives from conflict

Instead of looking at conflict as a negative force, effective leaders see conflict as a 'value-added' commodity within organizations and committees. Why?

- Conflict provides information: like a toothache announcing a cavity, conflict is an error indicator in a committee.
- Conflict contributes to opportunity for change: managed appropriately and strategically, conflict reduces over-reliance on the status quo.

- Conflict alerts the committee to potential safety or human rights issues.
- Conflict offers clarity regarding roles, responsibilities and results.
- Conflict provides opportunities for ‘clearing the air’ and starting over.
- Conflict provides opportunities for self-expression, and expression of differences that have potential value for the committee or others.
- Conflict normalizes differences and allows for fuller expression of ideas, as well as enhances creativity.
- If conflict happens in meetings, committees, etc., consider the positives that can arise from this conflict.

REPORTING BACK: ADVOCATING FOR POSITIONS, REPORTING WHAT YOU'VE HEARD, AND SUPPORTING RESIDENT PARTICIPATION

Community Consensus and Advocating for Positions

Complete agreement on any community planning issue is a near impossibility- this will be as much the case for a planning committee of 10 as it is for a community of 10000. However, there may be instances where there is general agreement throughout the community on a particular issue: for example, there may be a large number of community members who want to see a park or green space remain, or maybe want to prevent a freeway from being built through their community. There may not be widespread agreement on what should happen with that particular park, or the alternatives to a freeway, but generally community members share the same principles about wanting to maintain green space or ensure their community is a pedestrian-friendly place to live.

In these cases, it may be appropriate for the CA or planning committee to advocate strongly for a particular position on an issue. If your planning committee and CA decides to advocate for a particular position on an issue or development, it is important for the committee and Board to be able to justify how they arrived at that decision. Thoroughly documenting discussions, and providing a written rationale for your decision is important.

Being transparent about how your committee arrived at a given position can also help in discussions with concerned resident groups to demonstrate that while you may not ‘side’ with them on an issue, you have considered their input and included it where possible. Providing concerned community groups with as much information about how and why a particular decision was made to is also a good way to build trust. Be as transparent as your time and resources will allow in order to avoid

misunderstandings and assumptions. While everyone may not be happy with the outcomes, they should feel like they were given an opportunity to provide input that was considered in the decision-making process.

Reporting What You've Heard

In some cases, there may be varied, but clear positions on a particular issue. Your CA planning committee is not obligated to come to a 'yes or no' position on any given planning topic- in fact, a more nuanced approach is often more helpful for planners. Often the best approach is to simply provide the range of feedback your planning committee has heard, and the range of perspectives within your planning committee on any given issue. You might provide the planning committee's position, in addition to resident concerns you gathered, or simply an organized list of the concerns and themes you hold or have gathered about a particular project.

Encouraging Resident Engagement

In addition to acting as a conduit for community perspectives on planning matters, planning committees and CAs can encourage and support independent resident participation in planning decisions. In their role providing the broader community-wide perspective, it is often not appropriate for a CA or planning committee to advocate on behalf of individual residents or groups. In addition to reporting concerns through the CA's own comments on an issue, it is also helpful to encourage individual residents or groups to participate independently. Share information on communicating with council and committees or planners with individual concerned residents.

CHAPTER 8: SKILLS FOR PLANNING COMMITTEES



REVIEWING DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

As a community association planning committee, you provide planners and decision makers with feedback and comments on an application, including the fit within the local community. The value of CAs is in providing expertise on the local context to planners. Below are some questions and considerations for when you are reviewing development permit applications.

1. Are you familiar with the site and site context (development and uses in the area)?
2. Does the proposal help achieve the intent and expectations of any approved policies such as an Area Redevelopment Plan or a Community Plan?
3. Are there ways to improve the application to better satisfy the community policy?
4. How will the proposal impact the neighbours and the community in regards to:
 - Compatibility with the neighbourhood- how well would it fit into its surroundings? Generally this refers to height, bulk, building materials, density, and setbacks.
 - The relationship to the surrounding buildings and the streetscape
 - Impact on the privacy of the neighbours (e.g. over viewing)
 - Driveway (access) locations
 - Parking
 - Landscaping, including the retention of mature vegetation
 - Safety - are there opportunities for appropriate surveillance, for people to watch what is going on in the space or be watched while in the space (window placement, fence height - can you see through or over the fence, is there adequate lighting)?

Some communities find it helpful to have a standard 'checklist' of considerations for consistency when reviewing applications- See [Appendix A](#) for a sample that you can adapt to your own community.

When providing feedback, deadlines are important. If a file manager does not hear from a community within the time allotted to respond to an application, they must assume that there are no concerns over the development. The time given to CAs to respond to circulations is three weeks from the mailing date. City planners understand that it is sometimes difficult for volunteers to be able to meet and review applications within the given deadlines. If you cannot comment by the date requested, call the file manager as soon as possible to see if more time is available. If you arrange a new deadline, make sure you provide your comments at the

time agreed upon.

Note that most circulation cover sheets ask communities to fax or email back immediately if there are “comments to follow.” This assures the file manager that you have the application in hand and that comments can be expected. If you have no concerns and do not intend to provide comments, you can indicate “no comment” on the response sheet, and the file manager will not expect anything further from the CA.

When reviewing development permits and providing feedback to planners, keep in mind that there are some matters that cannot be considered, as they are not valid planning considerations:

- The characteristics of people who may use the proposed development (e.g. renter vs. owner); comments must address the land uses, not the land users.
- The economic benefits or losses (e.g., increasing tax revenue to The City or the proposed development creating too much competition resulting in the loss of revenue to an existing business, etc.).

It is also important to consider your process for reviewing development permits- Would you like to inform or setup a meeting for the immediate neighbours, the surrounding block, or the entire community? If you hold a meeting to discuss the proposal it would be wise to invite the applicant or developer so that they can hear feedback directly, and be available to answer questions.

WRITING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

In your CA’s responses to other planning stakeholders (developers and the City), there are a few general principles to keep in mind:

- Be proactive: If possible, don’t wait until a situation ‘explodes’ to respond.
- Be focused: Be aware of the specific issue being discussed, and keep discussion to that topic. Be conscious of what your community like to achieve through resolving this issue.
- Be collaborative: be open to working with opposing groups. Where possible, the CA should act as a facilitator and gather input.
- Be realistic: Be clear about what your CA has the resources and authority to achieve. All stakeholders, whether it is various community groups or a CA and another stakeholder, should be clear on what roles they play.

Here are some suggestions for providing useful and effective feedback on planning applications:

- Provide planning rationale in support of or against the proposal and identify any important issues you feel should be addressed? It does not help the state if you just oppose or support a project without giving reasons.
- Make suggestions (as appropriate) to improve the proposed project and reduce any impacts it may have?
- Express your committee's opinions using planning concepts (e.g. height, mass, parking), and not personal preferences?
- Include comments and concerns from all positions in your response to The City and note when a special concern is limited to a particular group. There may be disagreement between the neighbours of a proposed development and the general community membership.
- Do not include a "community decision" in your comments. City staff cannot (and do not) consider whether a community has voted to "accept," "support" or "reject" an application. The planners are interested in the problems the application may raise and how they could be addressed.
- Refer to the Community Association Feedback form for guidance to provide comments. This is the City's preferred method for receiving community feedback. Keep in mind that you are not limited to the questions they provide. You may include additional pages of comments.

READING DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS, DRAWINGS, AND MAPS

Planning applications often come with a lot of highly detailed information. It can be difficult to dive into this information at first, although it certainly becomes easier with practice. Not all of the information on a set of drawings may be relevant to your CA and your concerns and areas of focus. Once you know how to find the information you need as a community planning volunteer, reviewing and understanding these documents becomes much easier. The following section will provide a guide to 4 of the most common types of diagrams and plans used in planning that a planning committee might encounter. They are:

1. Outline Plans, which are found with land use amendment applications. They provide a high level overview of the land use districts and street layout in an area. They provide the context that a large-scale development fits into. These are commonly found in the development of new communities, as well as in large-scale redevelopment in established communities.
2. Site Plans provide an overview of the development site itself and its context (the surrounding area). You'll find information about setbacks (distances of buildings from property lines), driveways and access points, landscaping, parking stalls, driveways, sidewalks, and

relationships with neighboring properties and the street.

3. Elevations are two dimensional views from each side of a building. They provide information on the height and massing of a building, roof pitch, as well as placement of windows access points and porches.
4. Floor Plans are another level of detail higher than site plans. As with site plans, they provide a top-down view the building itself and every floor within it. Here you might find the location and dimension of rooms, parking and garbage locations and more detailed information such as the position of windows and doors. At this level of detail, there is a lot of information that might not be important for planning committees, but they can be helpful in understanding the proposed development as well as its the relationship to neighboring properties, the street, and the community as a whole.

UNDERSTANDING THE LAND USE BYLAW

Alberta's Municipal Government Act requires that each municipality adopt a Land Use Bylaw (LUB). A LUB regulates the use and development of all buildings and land within the municipal boundaries. It does so by designating the range of uses considered appropriate for any particular site and setting out basic rules for site and building design. The LUB works in concert with other bylaws, plans and policies. It is the bylaw used, on a site-by-site basis, to implement Council policies established by the Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plans, Community Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans and policy studies.

A LUB also establishes the structure for the development permit decision-making process. It provides the Development Authority with the powers and duties responsible for administering the Bylaw and deciding upon all development permit applications.

This section assumes the reader has a basic understanding of Calgary's Land Use Bylaw- the types of districts, uses, and how they are applied. To learn more about this, see the Community Guide to the Planning Process. This section will provide some more specific pointers on how to navigate the land use bylaw and find the information you're looking for.

What's in the Land Use Bylaw?

Calgary's Land Use Bylaw is sometimes referred to by its bylaw number- 1P2007. Sections include:

- Interpretation of the Bylaw - Interpretive instructions and definitions
- Administration - Rules for development permit applications, notification requirements, appeals, and decision-making
- Rules Governing all Districts - Rules for parking, lighting, signs and

floodway/ flood fringe regulations

- Uses and Use Rules - Definitions for different land uses and rules applicable to the uses
- Land Use Districts- including Low Density Residential, Multi-family Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Special Purpose districts
- Land Use Maps- maps that indicate the districts in place throughout the city.

Finding Information

- **On a Property:** The easiest way to obtain information about the land use district of your property is to visit the City's [Land use Bylaw webpage](#). A textbox titled Property Information can be found on the right, and there you can simply type in your address to have your land use district displayed. You can also use the City's "My Property" map, which can be found [here](#). Using this map, you can search for a specific address, or zoom in and click on the property you want to learn more about. Once you have selected a specific property, a bar to the left of the map will provide information on the specific land use district. It will also provide you with links to any relevant policies in place, such as the Municipal Development Plan and Local Area Plans.
- **On an Area:** To find information on LUB districts in a particular area, use the City's map available at <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Planning-and-development-resource-library/Land-Use-bylaw-1P2007-maps.aspx>. Here, you can click on the area of the city you are looking for- this will lead you to a detailed PDF map of the area, which outlines Land Use Districts and lot boundaries. The index map is quite small, so it can be tricky to get the area you're looking for! Around the border of each detailed map you will find coordinates which consist of a number and city area (17C is map #17 in the centre city, for example). Use these to find the area you're looking for.
- **On a District:** If you know the name of the district you're looking for, and want to find more information, the online interactive Land Use Bylaw can be quite useful. It is located at lub.calgary.ca. From here, you can find an index menu on the left in which you can navigate to different districts in the land use bylaw- for example, when you click the + to drop down Part 5: Low Density Residential Districts, you will see a list of each of this type of district. The City also has a list of districts available at <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Calgary-Land-Use-bylaw-1P2007/Land-Use-Bylaw-Land-Use-Districts.aspx>.
- **On a Use:** The City now has a [webpage](#) on community associations, sports groups and social recreation site development. The webpage provides general information about relevant land use districts, as well as provides information about common inquiries such as those relating to rental space, child care services, and changes to a site. You can also use the interactive land use bylaw. Click on the drop down for Part 4 (Uses and Use Rules), and find the respective uses organized alphabetically. Keep in mind that uses are listed as the LUB defines

them, not how your average person might define them. For example, if you were looking for the use definition for a place where you could play a game of pool, you wouldn't find it under 'pool hall', but rather under "Billiard Parlour". If you don't know the precise name of the use you're looking for, try a few alternatives. The interactive LUB also has a search function, which can also help you find what you're looking for. The City also has a use matrix' available at http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Documents/Calgary-Land-Use-bylaw-1P2007/lub_matrix_by_use_1P2007.pdf, which lists the uses in the land use bylaw and the districts they are permitted in.

- **General Information:** general information about Calgary's Land Use Bylaw can be found in Parts 1 and 2 of the bylaw, either in the interactive version, the PDF version, or in person. The City's general LUB website is at http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Documents/Calgary-Land-Use-bylaw-1P2007/lub_matrix_by_use_1P2007.pdf. You can also find out more about the LUB and the Planning Process in the Community Guide to the Planning Process.

OUTLINE PLANS



ORIENTATION:

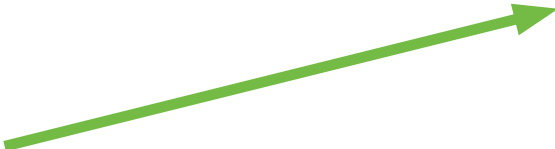
All drawings will include a north arrow for orientation.



*NOTE:

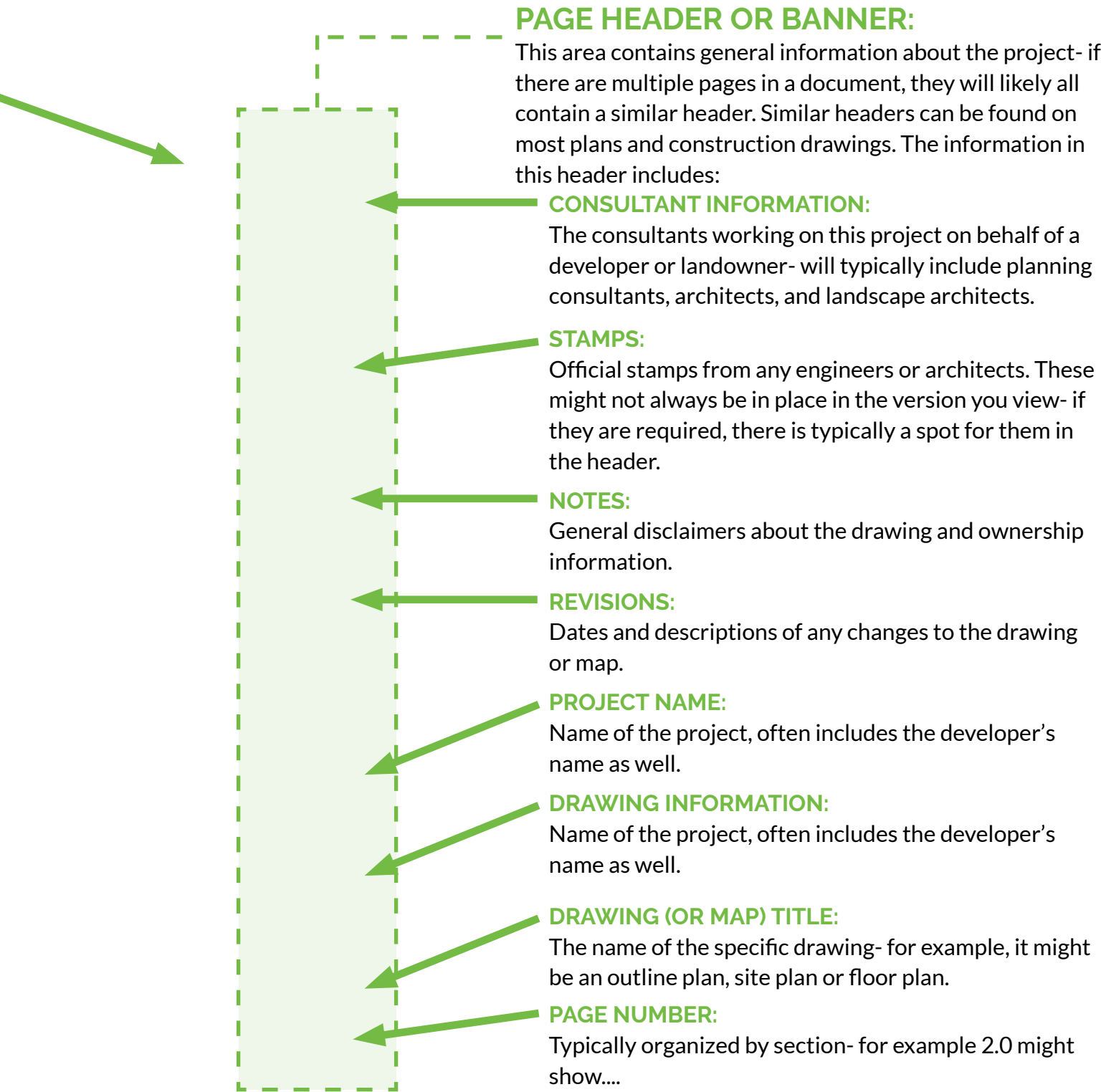
We are unable to secure the rights to an outline plan image at this time. We will be updating the file as soon as possible.

LEGEND:



Many drawings will include a legend , although sometimes commonly used engineering and architectural symbols are not included.

An outline plan gives a broad overview of land use districts in an area, green spaces, transportation networks, including roads and pathways, and the boundaries of a development project. These types of drawings typically accompany a land use ammendment application for a large site. These maps (or 'drawings') include a lot of information that you might find on other drawings, primarily in the header.



SITE PLANS

TREES AND LANDSCAPING:

Major landscaping elements, such as trees, will be included. Trees are typically indicated by circles.

ROOF LINES:

A dotted line around the outside of a building represents how far the roof extends.

PROPERTY LINE:

A solid or semi-dotted line indicates the boundaries of the property.

SETBACKS:

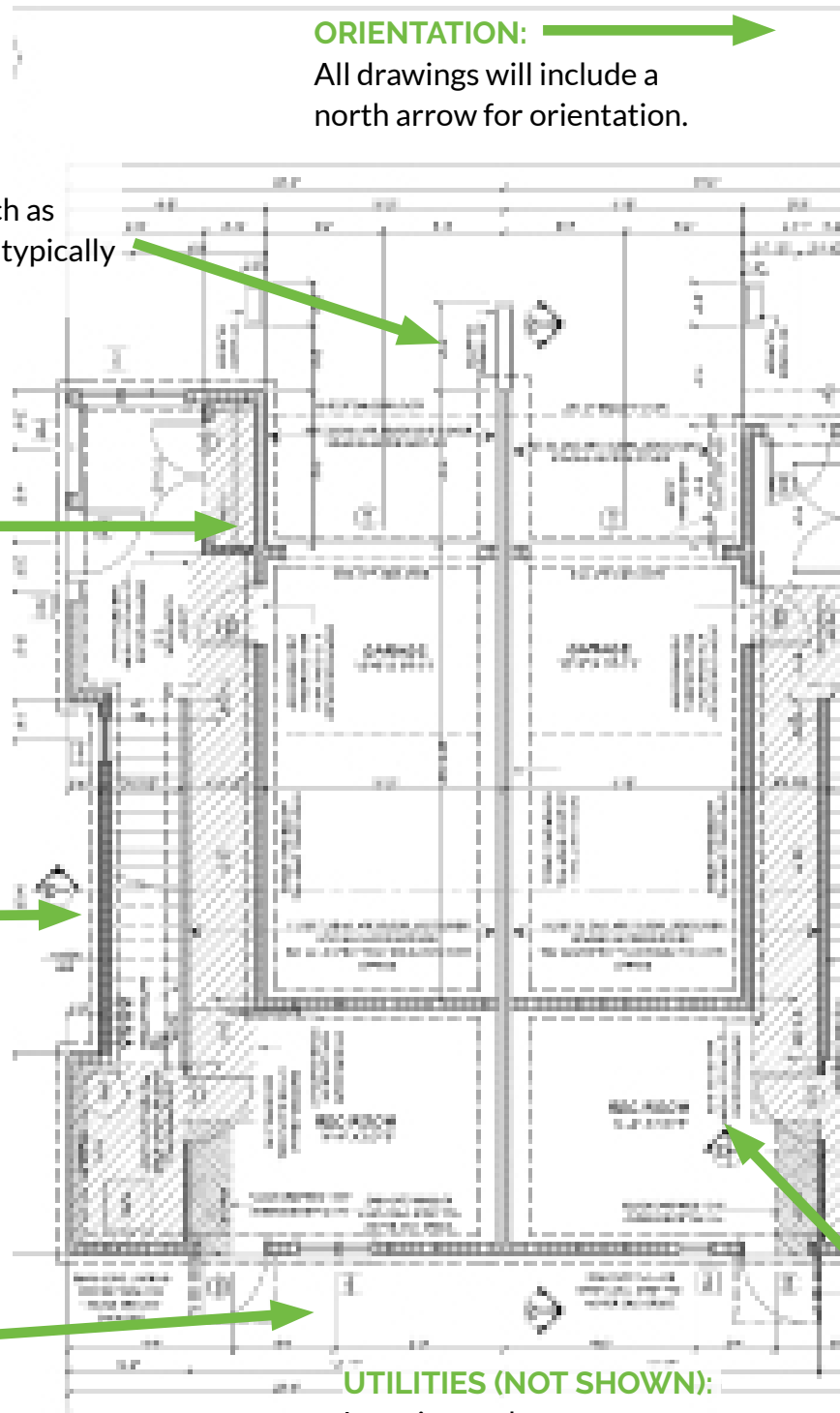
Lines (with distances in metres) show the distance of different building elements to the property line.

ORIENTATION:

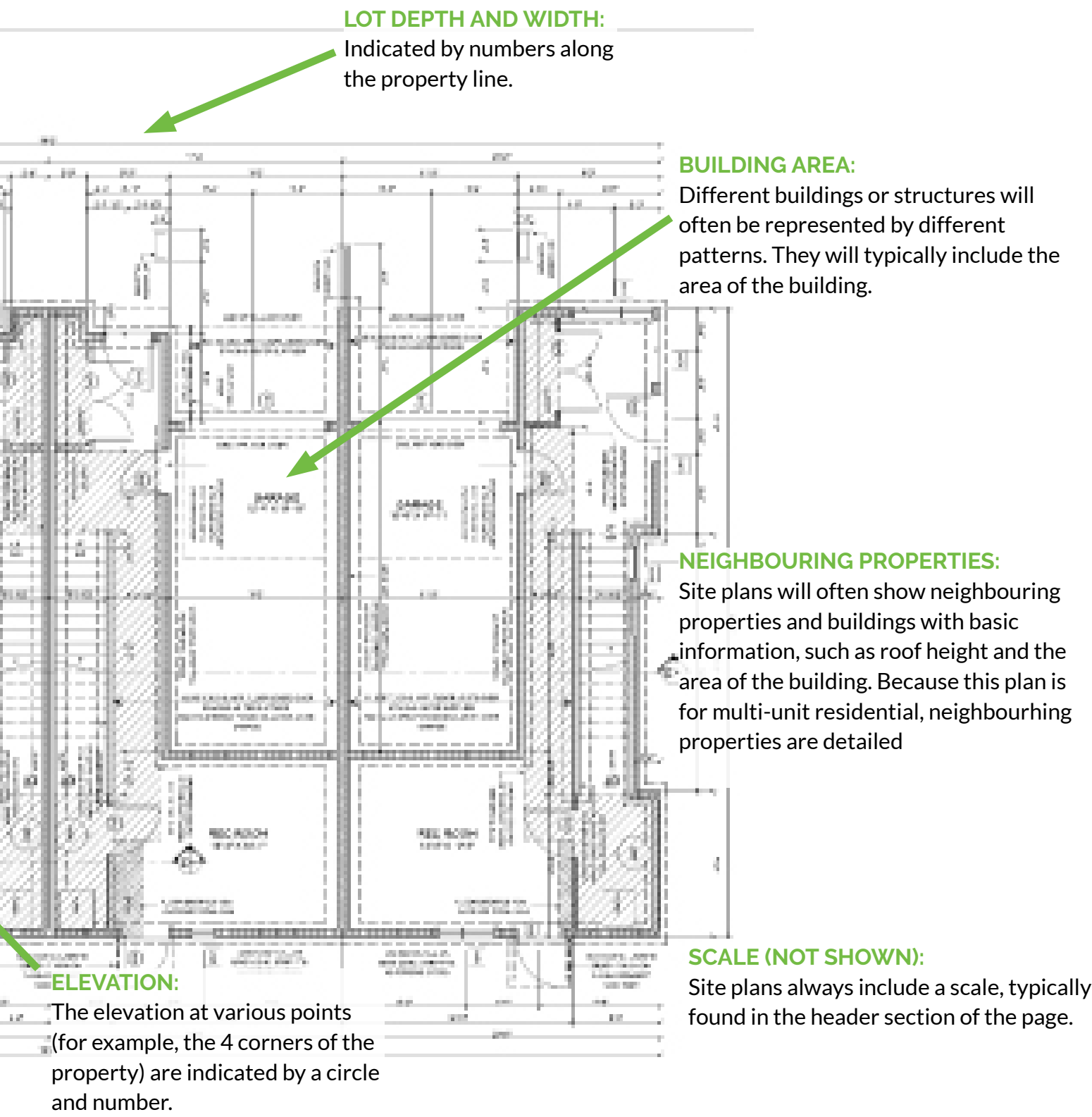
All drawings will include a north arrow for orientation.

UTILITIES (NOT SHOWN):

Location and type are typically included in site plans.



A site plan provides a view from above with detail on a particular site- it shows the existing buildings on a site, as well as any proposed new buildings or structures. It shows buildings in relation to the property boundaries, some detail on setbacks (distance from property line), overall dimensions of the building, and elevations at different points on the property. It also includes landscape features like trees, as well as information on drainage and utilities. As with other drawings, there is typically a header or banner that includes general information about the project.



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Roofs will include a ratio indicating the angle. The horizontal number (the run) is always 12, and the vertical number (the rise) is the number of vertical units over the span of the run. In this case, for every 12 horizontal inches, the roof rises 8 inches.



The distance of the building to the property line is included.

May or may not be represented on a site plan or floor plan. An elevation will illustrate it clearly.

Elevations present a 2-D view of one side of a building and lot, giving a sense of massing, height and window placement, They provide information on elevation

ROOF HEIGHT (NOT SHOWN):

Indicated as a horizontal line across the top of the building.

FLOOR HEIGHTS:

The floor plane of each level of a building are typically illustrated.



BUILDING FACE (NOT SHOWN):

For most buildings, you will have 4 elevations, one for each side of the building (north, south, west, east).

PROPERTY LINES:

The elevation at various points (for example, the 4 corners of the property) are indicated by a circle and number.

FLOOR PLANS

WINDOWS:

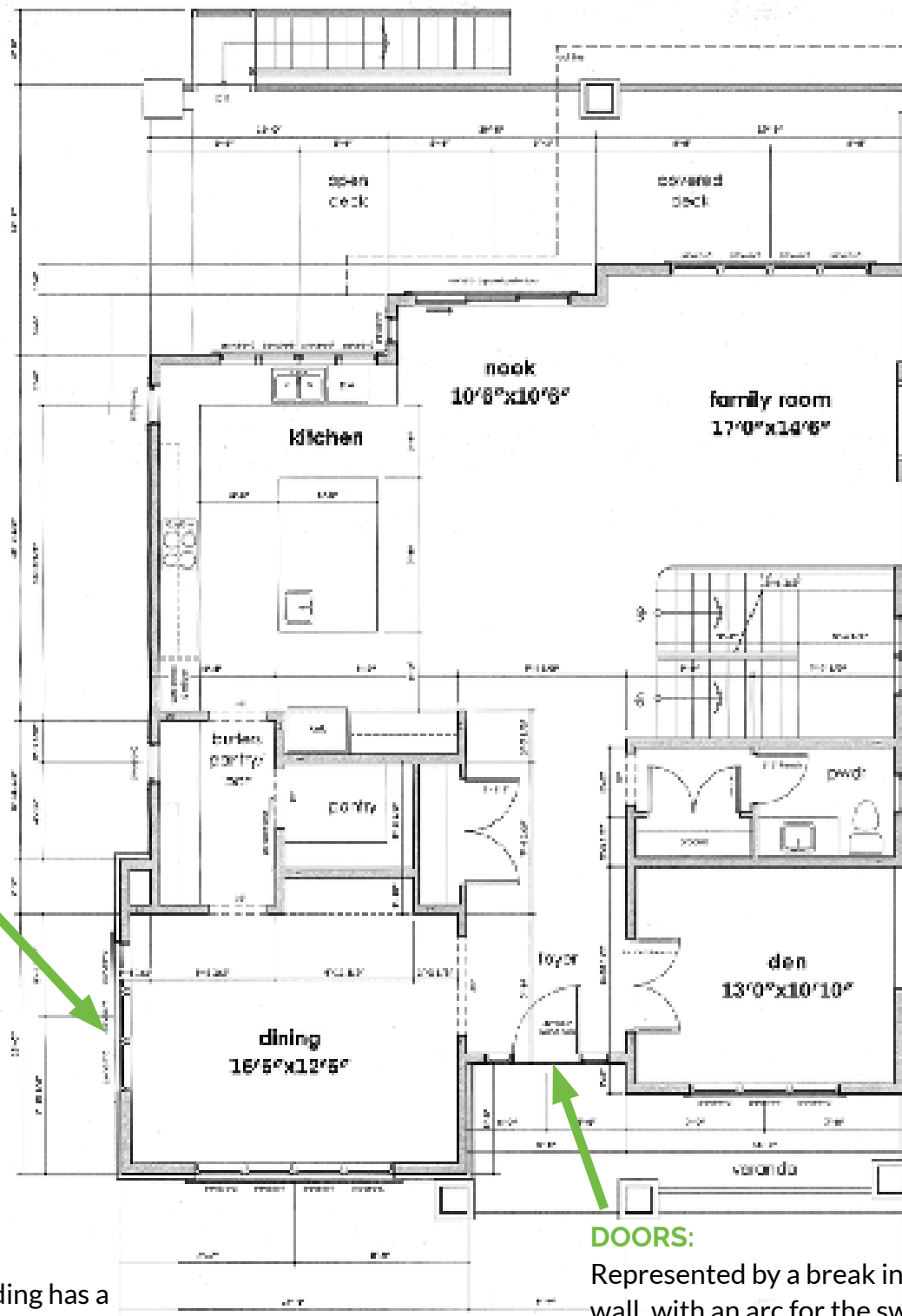
Represented by breaks in thicker wall lines, with narrow lines.

TITLE:

Each floor of a building has a drawing. It will either be indicated below the drawing, as it is here, or in the drawing title (not shown).

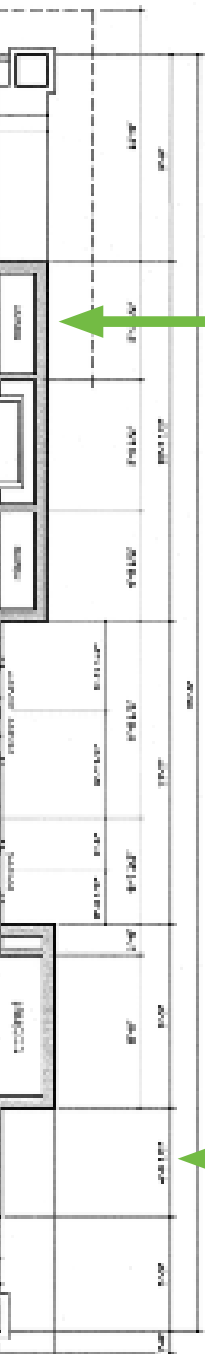
DOORS:

Represented by a break in wall, with an arc for the swing of the door.



These drawing show quite a bit more detail about the building- much of it may not be relevant for providing CA planning committee input, which makes it easier to 'filter' out the information you need. You will find a drawing for each floor of the building. They show detailed dimensions and positions of walls, doors, windows and other building features. Construction drawing are similar, but contain much more detail about the specific requirements to build the home.

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WALLS:

Represented by sets of parallel lines which are 'filled in'.

MEASUREMENTS:

The measurements of different elements of the building are often extended out to make them easier to read.

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ving of

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION



The Planning Committee Guide has described how planning committees are developed, how they operate, their work and how they can collaborate with other stakeholders in the planning system. Contributing to a planning committee may seem like a daunting task, but it is a very rewarding endeavour. Being involved with the community and helping to shape community planning and developing can contribute in creating a sense of place and community. In summary, below are some key best practices of planning committees.

- Education and ongoing awareness: Take advantage of ongoing opportunities to be educated and understand the system and your role. Contributing to the planning system on behalf of a community is a big responsibility!
- Know thy mandate: Set clear goals and objectives.
- Be both proactive and reactive: Prepare a sound foundation of ideas, community needs and conditions to contribute to the development review process.
- Maintain representative & reflective membership: Minimum membership should be 3 people, but it is best to have between 6 and 12. There should be no committees of one!
- Hold healthy expectations: Have reasonable expectations of the system, the role of the planning committee, other stakeholders and of volunteers.
- Engage your members: Maximize opportunities for participation by community residents and groups.
- Set a clear definition of success: Remember, success is contributing to a process in a constructive manner and respecting each other's perspectives in the planning system.
- Open mindedness: Be open to new ideas and ways of doing.

The work of a planning committee will always come with challenges that will often not have simple solutions. Try to develop a sound structure, and use common sense and reason to find a path through challenging times in community development. Also remember, you are not in this alone. Federation planners are always available to provide assistance, respond to questions and direct you to appropriate resources. Lastly, promote your successes and have fun!

APPENDIX A: TEMPLATES



1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

How to Use the TOR Template:

CA planning committees are most commonly used to review Development Permit (DP) and Land Use Amendment (LUA) applications within the community. However, CA planning committees may take on a number of planning-related roles and tasks related to community-building, change and improvement. Although the application review process is the most common activity undertaken by a CA planning committee, there are other equally important (and in some ways more proactive) opportunities for planning committees to effect change in their communities. The ultimate goal of any planning committee is to move beyond a reactive position (strictly responding to applications) and include more proactive planning pursuits (such as community development initiatives and projects). Another key to successful CA planning committees is to encourage broad participation of the wider community whenever possible and to keep the community informed.

CAs with established planning committees may use this template to refine and improve their processes, expand upon the scope of their work, and should strive to engage more meaningfully with the broader community. Communities that face numerous proposals for development or significant planning challenges should consider establishing a strong CA planning committee. CAs that are just establishing a new planning committee should include only those items that they have the capacity to achieve - at least initially.

Community associations that receive very few planning applications, or have few planning issues, may feel it is unnecessary to set up a fully functioning planning committee and may opt to form an ad-hoc committee of the Board. It may be better for the CA executive to act as the planning committee in these situations, but at a minimum, a “Planning Director” should be designated to manage issues that arise. The Planning Director should be responsible for checking the mail regularly for circulations from The City and providing written comments in return. The Board of Directors as a whole should decide which types of circulations it does not feel the need to review. When these types of circulations are received, the Planning Director should automatically send a “no comment” response to The City. Other items may be reviewed by the Board at its meetings and the comments and recommendations of the Board will be provided to The City by the Planning Director.

It is up to each individual CA to decide what to ultimately include in its Terms of Reference and to make the necessary additions, deletions, and changes to reflect the unique perspective and capacity of their community. You can find a customisable word document version of the terms of reference in our members only resource here. The agreed upon Terms of Reference will require approval by the Board of Directors at which point the CA Planning Committee will be held to the approved Terms of Reference.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Terms of Reference

Date adopted

Date amended

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The **Community Association** Planning Committee addresses any planning or development matter within the community including, but not limited to: residential, commercial, institutional, agricultural, and industrial development and land use; parks; pathways; transportation; environmental considerations; and community development initiatives and planning projects that may impact the community.
- 1.2 The committee's roles, responsibilities, and terms of reference should be reviewed annually by the Board, and by at the AGM as required.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the **Community Association** Planning Committee is to:
 - a) be a positive and pro-active force in the direction, development, and evolution of the physical environment of the community;
 - b) be mindful of the community's role in the overall development of Calgary, including relationships with neighbouring communities and role of the Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan;
 - c) promote community interest and facilitate community dialogue and education on planning and development issues;
 - d) support the role and involvement of community groups and individuals in planning and development issues and processes; and
 - e) further the goals of the **Community** residents by supporting high quality development and community planning in **Community Name**.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The **Community Association** Planning Committee's responsibilities are as follows: providing advice, background information and community context; expressing community issues and concerns to the City of Calgary and to applicants; advocating for planning activity in the community when required; and attracting desirable development to the community.
- 3.2 General Responsibilities
 - a) monitor planning and development in the community;
 - b) provide advice and comments to the City of Calgary on planning issues that directly or indirectly affect the community;
 - c) determine what types of development permit applications the committee feels are important to review and which do not require comment;
 - d) respond to development application circulations from The City (and pre-application meetings with development applicants as requested) on the types of applications that the committee has agreed to review;

- e) appeal development approvals when in the opinion of the **Community Association** Planning Committee, and with the concurrence of the Board, doing so is in the interest of the purpose as stated in section 2.0;

3.3 Commenting on applications:

- a) comment on the effect of the proposal on the adjacent properties and the surrounding community;
- b) comment on the effect of the proposal on community environment and transportation issues;
- c) where appropriate, put forward possible alternatives to the proposal;
- d) identify issues relating to the community context specific to the proposal.
- e) include neighbouring residents in application review and decision-making processes; and
- f) where neighbouring residents are in an adjacent community, collaborate with the adjacent CA Planning Committee on the review and decision-making process.

3.4 Engaging with the community:

- a) ensure that the community receives periodic updates on the planning committees' work, issues, and successes;
- b) provide a means for the community to provide suggestions to the CA Planning Committee;
- c) ensure that comments and suggestions from community members and other citizens are heard and considered;
- d) conduct outreach when the magnitude of development warrants a broader committee mandate, such as community-wide information meetings, opinion polls, petitions, or any other methods as appropriate.
- e) provide a forum for the community to exchange ideas with developers as appropriate.

3.5 Proactive work and non-application planning issues:

- a) advocate for planning activity by the City, or for community-based planning initiatives, when it is necessary to the purpose as stated in section 2.0;
- b) advocate for improvements to the planning processes that strengthen the role of Community Associations and the involvement of the broader community;
- c) assist with the review and development of plans and policies, in particular those that may impact the community, including:
 - land use bylaws;
 - local area plans;
 - park and recreation plans;
 - transportation and traffic plans; and
 - major development proposals with potential impact on the community.
- d) respond to planning and development issues which may arise in the community in general.

- 3.6 In the case that the views of some residents are in opposition to the comments expressed by the **Community Association** Planning Committee, the residents' views will also be noted in any correspondence with the City of Calgary Planning Department, and residents will be encouraged to make independent comments.

4. Authority

- 4.1 The **Community Association** Planning Committee is a standing Committee authorized by the **Community**

Association Board of Directors;

4. 2 The **Community Association** Planning Committee is chaired by a member of the **Community Association** Board of Directors, who is appointed Planning Director by the Board. A Vice-Chair may also be appointed to act in the Director's absence.
4. 3 The **Community Association** Planning Committee is authorized by the **Community Association** Board of Directors to undertake any activity within its terms of reference;
4. 4 The **Community Association** Planning Committee must seek **Community Association** Board approval on anything outside of its terms of reference;
4. 5 The **Community Association** Planning Committee should seek **Community Association** Board approval to submit an appeal to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB). If doing so is made impractical, the Planning Committee should confirm board support to pursue the appeal once it has been filed;
4. 6 Members of the **Community Association** Planning Committee should refrain from speaking to the media unless permission is expressly granted by the President of the **Community Association** Board of Directors.

5. Qualifications of Committee Members

5. 1 Voting Members

- a) Should be voting members in good standing of the **Community Association**; and
- b) Should have attended three (3) consecutive meetings of the **Community Association** Planning Committee with a motion granting voting privileges at the beginning of the fourth meeting.

5. 2 Loss of Voting Privilege

Committee members shall lose voting privilege when:

- a) That individual is no longer a voting member of the **Community Association**;
- b) The individual fails to attend **three (3)** consecutive meetings, unless formally excused by the planning committee. Voting privileges may be reinstated according to voting members procedure outlined above;
- c) The individual fails to abide by the bylaws of the **Community Association**; or
- d) The individual is removed by a vote of the majority of **Community Association** Board members.

5. 3 Non-Voting Members

- a) May include the Councillor for **Ward #**, a City of Calgary Neighborhood Partnership Coordinator or other Calgary Neighborhoods representative or City of Calgary Community Planner;
- b) May include any resident, property owner, business owner, and/or agency within the geographical boundaries of the **Community Association** as defined in the **Community Association** bylaws; and
- c) May include other non-voting members added by the Planning Director/Chair as deemed necessary.

6. Membership

6. 1 **Community Association** Planning Committee membership should:

- a) reflect the range of community diversity and interests and should be selected through a process that is open and welcoming to all members of the **Community Association**;

- b) be reviewed annually, prior to the **Community Association** AGM, to encourage representation from a cross section of the community; and
 - c) be limited to no more than **10 (ten)** voting members.
- 6.2 Members should be chosen based on factors including experience, expertise, and a demonstrated interest in and understanding of community planning and consultation issues as they relate to **Community Associations** citywide.
 - 6.3 The Committee may include people with professional planning, architecture, real estate, business, or development experience as long as they are interested in supporting the **Community Association** planning role and their participation does not create a real or perceived conflict of interest.
 - 6.4 All members are encouraged to advance their knowledge and understanding of the planning process through participation in planning workshops as scheduled by The City of Calgary, the Federation of Calgary Communities, and/or other groups.

7. Meetings

- 7.1 Will be held on **the first Monday of every month from 7-9pm**. Additional meetings may also be held as required.
- 7.2 Quorum shall consist of at least **5 (five)** voting members. Where the committee is unable to reach quorum on an issue requiring timely response, members may vote via e-mail.
- 7.3 Meetings should be open to all residents of **Community** to observe whenever possible. Public participation in meetings is at the discretion of the committee.
- 7.4 The **Community Association** Planning Committee may occasionally meet in camera to deal with internal matters or unusual circumstances; however the planning committee **Director/Chair** must be present, and the planning decisions of these meetings must be reported in the open portion of the meeting at the next opportunity, and all decisions made in camera are reported to the to the Board.

8. Conduct of Members

- 8.1 **Community Association** Planning Committee members:
 - a) Must declare conflict of interest and refrain from voting on any matter or application in which they have a priority interest or are personally affected (they may, however, comment to the committee); and
 - b) Must present a balanced view and objective community perspective when engaging in dialogue with community residents regarding development and planning issues.
- 8.2 If any member of the CA Planning Committee (including the Director or Chair) is contacted by a developer, they should refer the matter to the next **Community Association** Planning Committee meeting for discussion.
- 8.3 Planning Committee members shall not take public positions on behalf of the planning committee (e.g. writing letters, speaking at public hearings, filing appeals) contrary to decisions of the Planning Committee. If the planning member chooses to take a public position contrary to that of the planning committee, they must clearly express that they are acting as an individual, not as a **Community Association** Planning Committee member.

9. Reporting

9. 1 The **Community Association** Planning Committee should present the monthly meeting minutes and reports to the Board of Directors; and
9. 2 The **Community Association** Planning Committee should provide monthly updates on Planning Committee activities to the general community by means of the **(list any General Meetings, community newsletter, community website, etc. here)**.

10. Subcommittees

10. 1 May be made up of voting members and non-voting members, although the Chair of the subcommittee must be a voting member; and
10. 2 Must report to the CA Planning Committee.
10. 3 The active subcommittees of the **Community Association** planning committee are:
 - a) transportation and traffic issues;
 - b) open space;
 - c) crime and public safety;
 - d) long range planning;
 - e) public improvements to streets and parks;
 - f) environmental initiatives;
 - g) heritage initiatives; and
 - h) urban design.

2. SAMPLE PLANNING COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Director of Planning or Committee Director/Chair:

The Director/Chair is an elected member of the community association Board of Directors. Appointed to the Planning Director position by the Board (or elected by the AGM) in accordance with the community association bylaws.

Primary responsibility:

Form relationships with, and act as a liaison between, community residents, developers, property owners, and City planners. This position requires a working knowledge of the Land Use Bylaw (1P2007) and any relevant community plans.

Tasks include:

- Meeting with applicants (architects, property owners, business owners)
- Asking the applicant to invite the neighbours
- Receiving correspondence from The City and developers
- Attending the monthly community association Board Meeting
- Preparing a report of community association Planning Committee recommendations to the community association Board of Directors
- Planning and conducting monthly community association planning committee meetings
- Distributing the meeting agenda to community association planning committee members in advance of each meeting
- Delegating the following tasks to committee members to ensure they are carried out:
 - Checking the City website regularly for new development activity in the community
 - Checking the City website in advance of each community association planning committee meeting and City of Calgary Public Hearing for matters pertaining to the community
 - Following up on development permits (i.e. when do permits lapse?)
 - Following up on development projects (i.e. does the finished project comply with the development permit?)
- Signing all acts, orders, and proceedings of the community association planning committee along with correspondence directed to elected representatives or senior City Administration, except where it is deemed that the community association President's signature is required
- Attending Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) meetings when necessary
- Attending Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) hearings when necessary
- Attending Public Hearings of City Council when necessary

Planning Coordinator

Should be a voting member of the community association planning committee and should be appointed to the job by the community association planning committee for a term of one year. This person may also be appointed Vice Chair to act in the Planning Director's absence, such appointment to be ratified by the Board.

Primary responsibility:

Drafting communications regarding the recommendations of the community association planning committee for distribution to government, staff and applicants. Assist the Chair in carrying out his/her duties. Act as Chair in the absence of the Planning Director. This position should be held by a knowledgeable and experienced member of the CA Planning Committee.

Tasks include:

- Preparing correspondence (written letters, emails, etc.) regarding community association planning committee recommendations to government, staff, and developers
 - Providing copies of such correspondence to:
 - The Chair for approval and signature
 - The Secretary for noting, filing, and publishing (website, newsletter, etc.)
-

Secretary

Primary responsibility:

Record and distribute community association planning committee meeting minutes.

Tasks include:

- Recording the meeting minutes
- Distribute meeting minutes within ten calendar days after each committee meeting to community association planning committee members, and the community association Board and members at the next Board of Directors meeting
- Provide notes as required to the Planning Coordinator to assist in the drafting of response letters, and to the Community Engagement Coordinator to assist in the drafting of newsletter articles and other communications.
- Making portions of the minutes available to other parties who attended a committee meeting (at the discretion of the Director)

Community Engagement Coordinator

Primary responsibility:

Ensure that neighbouring residents are included in the review and decision-making process, and advocate for the involvement of the broader community in planning and development issues and processes whenever possible.

Tasks include:

- Providing neighbours of developments and other affected parties advance notice of community association planning committee meetings
- Advocating for proper notification procedures by the City (i.e. notice posting)
- Ensuring that the broader community receives periodic updates on the planning effort, issues, and successes (e.g. ensuring there is a regular planning information in the newsletter).
- Collecting feedback and suggestions for the community association planning committee from the broader community
- Ensuring that comments and suggestions from community members and other citizens are heard and considered by the community association planning committee

3. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT REVIEW CHECKLIST

The list below outlines some of the things to consider when reviewing an application in your community. Not all of these considerations may be relevant to your committee, and you may have other things you want to consider that are important to your community- [click here](#) for a word format version of this document that you can customize for your community.

As a first step, familiarize yourself with the site and site context, that is, development and other land uses in the surrounding area. If you are able, walk around the site (without trespassing of course!) to get a sense of the area. If you are not able to visit the site in person, Google maps can be a great resource for understanding the site and context quickly, although it is good to keep in mind that the images may be out of date.

When reviewing a proposed development, consider how it could impact the neighbours and the community, both positively and negatively, with the following considerations in mind:

SITE LAYOUT:	
• Is the proposed development sensitive to the local context? • How does the building location and orientation impact surrounding land-uses? • Does the development provide a sense of connection with the street or contribute to the streetscape?	
BUFFERING:	
• Is there a suitable buffer space between land uses/properties/buildings? • What can be done to improve the buffering? • Can you propose the use of landscaping to act as a buffer?	Comments
NOISE:	
• Is there any noise generated by mechanical equipment (e.g. air conditioners), entrances, speakers, etc.? If so, what could be done to reduce the noise (e.g. reorienting equipment, speakers)?	Comments
SCREENING:	
• Should any mechanical equipment be screened? What do you propose?	Comments

VISUAL IMPACTS:	
• Are there impacts, such as shadowing, from the proposed development? What do you propose to reduce the impacts? • What visual impact does the rear of the building have on surrounding properties? What do you propose for the rear design of the building?	Comments
TRANSITIONS BETWEEN LAND USE:	
• Does the proposed use conflict or compliment the surrounding uses? • How does this proposed development fit into the wider context of the community?	Comments
SCREENING:	
• Will transportation or access to surrounding land uses in the area be affected? What do you propose to address the issue? • Is a local Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) being requested by The City? • Were alternative transportation modes (cycling, walking, transit) considered? • Is there cycling access and bicycle parking? Is bicycle parking provided close to building entrances? • Are bus stops located in a high traffic area and highly visible to pedestrians? • Are bus shelters connected to the pedestrian network?	Comments

PARKING:	
• Does the proposed development provide sufficient onsite parking? • Is the location of parking stalls suitable for customers/residents and visitors? Why or why not? What would you propose? • Does the parking lot design minimise traffic congestion close to the building entrance (on commercial sites)? • Is the loading zone situated so as to minimise conflict with pedestrian and vehicular traffic (on commercial sites)? • For large parking areas, is the parking area divided into smaller sections to break up the expanse of the parking area?	Comments
SITE ACCESS (VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN):	
• Where are the entrances and exits to the site (access points) situated? • How do the access points relate to internal patterns of movement on commercial and multi-residential sites? Are there any conflicts? • How do the access points relate to Public Transit and the LRT? • Is the internal road network designed to minimise visitor confusion?	Comments
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS:	
• Are there adequate pedestrian connections? For example, if a commercial site were going in, would there be adequate access to it? • Would additional walkways or paths be useful? • Does the proposed pedestrian network link up to the existing infrastructure? • Are sidewalks wide enough for those with mobility challenges?	Comments

LANDSCAPING:	
- Does the development proposal, where possible, retain existing healthy, mature trees? - Are city trees affected by this development (pre and post development)? Have they identified trees that will be affected and provided a replacement plan? - Is there suitable and sufficient landscaping (according to bylaw requirements)? - Does the landscaping contribute to privacy on residential sites and screening on commercial sites? - Is landscaping used to show the separation between public, semi public, and private space? - On corner sites, will the landscaping at the edge of the property block the sight lines of vehicles?	Comments
COMMUNITY CHARACTER/CONTEXT (relationship to surrounding buildings and streetscape):	
Does the proposed development compliment or conflict with the existing character? Can you provide suggestions to improve the fit?	Comments
DENSITY:	
Does the plan align with your local area plan or the direction of the Municipal Development Plan? Should there be more or less density?	
LIGHTING:	
Will any lighting affect neighbouring properties? If so, where could the lighting be moved to be considerate of the needs of the neighbours?	

SIGNAGE:	
- Is the signage appropriate (e.g. size, materials, brightness, character, auto or pedestrian-oriented, etc.)? - Is the proposed development located at an access to the community? If so, could the proposing developer help locate signage for the community?	
FINISHING MATERIALS:	
- Do the finishing materials reflect the context of the community? - Do the finishing materials contribute to aesthetic qualities of the community? Why or why not? If not, what would you propose instead?	
BUILDING HEIGHT:	
Does the building height fit within the context of the community? Why or why not? What would you propose instead?	
MASSING:	
- Is the massing (the perceived size and shape of a building) appropriate for the location? Why or why not? What would you propose? - Are all public building faces public views differentiated enough to reduce the size of the massing and add visual interest? - Is there enough variation and interesting or engaging design (articulation) at the base and first storey to reduce the perception of its massing? - Is there a change in the materials or colours used that would reduce the perception of the development's massing? - Is the development human scale?	

SETBACKS:	
Are the setbacks (distance from buildings to the edge of the property) appropriate for the location? Why or why not? What would you propose?	
PRIVACY:	
Is reasonable privacy maintained in surrounding land uses? (This pertains mostly to residential districts.) Why or why not? What would you propose?	
SAFETY:	
- Are there safety issues associated with the proposed development? If so, what do you propose to address the issues? - What safety measures are being put into place during construction? (Will roads be closed off? Will alternative access be required?)	
GARBAGE AND RECYCLING FACILITIES:	
- Are these appropriately located? How does it look? Do you have other suggestions? - Is the garbage facility enclosed in an animal proof enclosure? Does the facility have a gate and a lid? - Is the facility screened and does the screening material fit in with the building design and materials?	
SIDEWALKS:	
- Does the proposal disrupt the existing sidewalks, or does it maintain or enhance them? - Do obstacles like utility poles and light stands compromise the pedestrian environment?	

PHASING:

- Is development proposed in stages, and what impact could this have on surrounding properties?
- Can each section of the phasing plan stand alone?
- In cases where long term development takes place, has the landscaping plan been phased in ahead of final completion of the project in order to reduce the effects of bare lots on the community?

4. MEETING AGENDA

Community Association

Planning Committee Meeting Agenda

March 20, 2017

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Meeting Place Name (address)

Chair: Name

Secretary: Name

Planning Coordinator: Name

Call to order

	Time Allotted	Name
Approve [meeting date] agenda	5 min	Chair
Approve [previous meeting date] minutes	5 min	Chair

New Business	Time Allotted	Name
DP 2016-1420	20 min	Doug Dougson, Calgary Starchitects
DP 2016-2238	20 min	Matt Mattson, GDI Group
DP 2016-5672	20 min	Wendy Wenderson, homeowner
Community Greening Plan	20 min	Chair

Old Business	Time Allotted	Name
Community Traffic Study	20 min	Chair

Other Issues	Time Allotted	Name
Roundtable/Member Announcements	10 min	Chair

Upcoming 2017 CA Planning Committee Meetings:

Name CA (address- room)

- April 17, 2017, 7pm-9pm
- June 19, 2017, 7pm-9pm

APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE				
A group of stakeholders or proxies for stakeholder groups provide input to a project	Collaborate	- Develop continuity of information & commitment for a project - Effective way for people with different interests to collaborate & provide input	- Volunteers must dedicate a substantial amount of time - If stakeholders change often, momentum may be lost	Stakeholders acting as proxies should report back to their groups
BRIEFINGS				
Taking the opportunity to inform & learn from organizations, groups, or clubs	Inform	Requires little time	- Contact early to learn of upcoming meetings/ - conferences	- These groups are always looking for speakers & keynote presenters - Make sure your material is easy to understand & captures the interest of the audience
COFFEE PARTY				
Small groups that informally meet at an individual's home	Consult	- Only requires a couple of hours - Informal method to foster dialogue	Not used for decision-making	Be polite & appreciative

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
COMMUNITY INFORMATION & FEEDBACK SESSION				
Usually a one-day event at a nominated site where participants view plans for a proposed development, discuss issues with the sponsoring organization &/or provide comments or written feedback about the project. Most of information is presented through graphics.	Consult	- Only requires a single meeting - Especially useful if done before or during a plan is finalized - Encourages participation of those less willing to speak in front of people - Develops credibility of the sponsoring organization	- Difficult to contact all people within the community to ensure information is representative - Requires a large facility to host the event - Requires significant planning	Session are best used to identify key community issues
DESIGN CHARRETTE				
Mostly used with planning issues, the design charrette is an intense problem-solving session where a facilitator leads a group to alternative solutions. Facilitators & designers can develop images of the ideas of the participants. While the structure of a charrette varies, depending on the design problem & the individuals in the group, they often take place in multiple sessions in which the group divides into sub-groups.	Consult Involve	- Use of visual techniques by artists, architects in designing issues can be helpful to develop an in-depth understanding - Allows time for stakeholders to express opinions & hear others - Use brainstorming techniques to get ideas on the table	- Requires a lot of time: a couple of hours to several days - To help participants understand their design ideas visually, this process requires people with artistic capabilities & ability to understand what participants are describing - Requires significant facilitation	It is important to be clear regarding how the input will be use

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
FIELD TRIPS				
Group(s) of stakeholders tour specific site(s) to acquire greater knowledge about an issue or project	Inform	- Only requires a couple of hours - Develop better site-specific information	Have to coordinate people	- Can be done with developers to build rapport - Useful for development permit & land use redesignation applications reviews
FOCUS GROUPS				
Small selected groups are used to discuss ideas, opinions & beliefs; it is essentially a group interview.	Consult	- Could use one meeting or several: require 2 to 3 hours per meeting - Effective way to collect very specific information regarding issues - Can develop an excellent understanding of the community issues	Facilitation needs to be excellent to ensure discussions are kept on track & that everyone has an opportunity to contribute Requires significant time to analyse collected data	Be clear about the target audience when inviting participants
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS				
An interviewer asks a participant specific questions about a subject	Consult	- Individual interviews require little time - Can garner significant amounts of information	- Conducting several interviews requires significant organization & flexibility with time - Requires significant time to analyse collected data	- Be clear about why you are there & how the data will be treated - Confidentiality should be discussed - Interviews can be done in-person or over the telephone

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
ONE-ON-ONES				
Informal meeting with individual stakeholders used to gather information & learn about concerns or issues	Consult	- Individual meetings require little time - Some people are more at ease in expressing their views individually & informally, rather than in a group setting	Conducting several meetings requires significant organization & flexibility with time	Coffee or lunch could be an option
QUESTIONNAIRE				
A face-to-face, postal or electronic set of predetermined questions designed to obtain information, views & concerns	Consult	- Fast method for community members to provide feedback - Simple method to solicit feedback	- To develop a representative response, need to disseminate questionnaire to a high percentage of community residents - Interpreting results of questionnaires can be time & resource intensive	Important to develop a questionnaire that is easy to understand, does not have jargon & cannot be interpreted in more than one way
ROUND TABLE				
A form of discussion where participants agree on a specific topic to discuss & debate. Each person is given equal right to participate, because of the circular layout usually used in round table discussions.	Consult Involve	Usually a single meeting, but may be used several times to gather information from more than one or the same large group.	- Facilitator needs to ensure that all participants contribute to the discussion - Powerful tool for decision makes if opinions & comments voiced provide consistent messages	Powerful tool for decision makes if opinions & comments voiced provide consistent messages

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
STUDY CIRCLE				
Small group meetings that examine & study a community issue. The purpose is to hear others & study the issues. Good for controversial issues.	Consult	• Could be an ongoing process • Number of participants is suitable to discuss controversial issues	• Requires more than one meeting	• Reading materials & other information can be provided before the meetings • Choosing who to invite & for what reasons is the key to success
TASK FORCE				
A small group of stakeholders or experts who develop a product within a limited time. Examples include a set of recommendations, a white paper, policy, or proposal. The product is transferred to official decision-makers.	Consult	• Can develop a comprehensive response to an issue within a limited time frame	• Requires facilitation and leadership	• Be prepared to work through issues & make compromises • Diverse perspectives are required • It is important to establish a deadline for projects results
WORKSHOPS				
Interactive working groups focused on a particular task, topic or issue. A presenter or speaker may introduce the tasks followed by working sessions.	Involve	• Can develop an in-depth understanding of an issue	• Usually requires about half a day	• Need activities that promote participation • Can build credibility and buy-in

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
WORLD CAFE				
A world café is a conversational process that allows tables of people to respond to a question. After an allotted time has been fulfilled, the participants all move to different tables allowing people to discuss subsequent questions with different participants. Each table discussion is facilitated.	Involve	Useful tool to mix participants allowing facilitator to reduce tension and destructive partnerships amongst participants, as well as allow for mixing of different ideas	- Need several facilitators, one at each table - Requires the same number of facilitators as small round table groups	
BROCHURES/FLYERS/POSTERS				
Technique that works well for reaching a large audience, but limit the amount of information/advice that can be presented. Can provide information on policies, strategies, services, plans, & proposals.	Inform	- Requires minimal time to coordinate - Can garner a high response rate	- Have to pay for advertisements - If stakeholders change often, momentum may be lost	Q & A format, graphic depictions such as themes & worksheets (questionnaire workbooks) work well
COMMUNITY FAIRS				
Usually based in a community & used to build awareness or provide & share information about issues through exhibits & interactive activities. Usually celebratory rather than focused on difficult issues.	Inform	Simple way to disseminate information	- Requires several hours of volunteer time - Usually lasts 1 to 2 days	- Be prepared for crowds if advertised widely & effectively - Use the media wisely - May be indoors or outdoors – consider weather, ample parking, venue signage

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS				
Paid advertisements in community newsletters	Inform	- Can provide monthly information - Requires minimal time to coordinate - Sometimes useful for disseminating information to several surrounding communities (see Tips)	Community newsletter deadlines may vary	One publisher often has the account for a large percentage of the community newsletters. Placing one ad to appear in all can be achieved by contacting the publisher
EMAILS				
Can be used to solicit input from an existing website. Used to contact stakeholders & receive feedback	Inform	Simple way to distribute & collect information	Significant amounts of time can be required to read, respond to & direct email	One may be overwhelmed with responses; it is important to develop a way to analyze responses to ensure the data is useful
INTERNET / WEBSITES / PORTALS				
Use a website to reach out & inform stakeholders; this can be the community association website	Inform Consult	- Can be an interactive & provide current information - Inexpensive	- Requires time & expertise to develop website - Commitment to maintain the site & keep it current - Some people may not have internet access	
NEWS CONFERENCES				
The media are called together to a newsworthy event	Inform	Effective method to release information to a wide audience	It is important to ensure that all speakers are prepared; this can require significant time & planning	- Expect the unexpected - Involve communication experts if available

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS				
Paid advertisements in newspapers, community sections	Inform	- Can provide weekly information - Requires minimal time to coordinate	Have to pay for advertisements	Each week a community section appears in major papers
NEWS RELEASES				
Used to inform the media of an issue, project or an event	Inform	Effective method to release information to a wide audience	Take time to prepare appropriate message	Involve communication experts if possible
PUBLIC PETITIONS				
Stakeholders can create petitions to show interest & urgency about a particular issue. The goal is to gain the attention of decision makers by showing large public support.	Consult	Sends a strong message if enough signatures are obtained	Time-consuming	Initiated by stakeholders
TV/RADIO				
The use of the media through radio talk shows, public/cable TV channels & community TV segments can be used to reach out to a broader audience	Inform	Reaches a wide audience	- Time-consuming to prepare the messages before airing - May be costly	- Try to obtain an invitation to appear - Involve communication experts if available
WEB SURVEYS / QUESTIONNAIRES / POLLS				
Using the internet to obtain data on issues, satisfaction levels, opinions & concerns (e.g. Survey Monkey)	Involve	- Cost effective method to collect information - Can garner high response rate - Can collect a large amount of data that is easy to analyse	- Takes time & expertise to develop a valid, effective & reliable survey - Must develop a clear objective - Not be suitable if responders lack internet access	An evolving & developing form of engagement

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
EXPERT PANEL				
Large meetings in which a panel of experts are moderated. Stakeholders participate in Q & A. Increased visibility of issues.	Inform Involve	- Usually a single meeting, though could be more - Opportunity to develop partnerships & in depth understanding of stakeholders' perspectives	- Requires facilitation - Need to organize panel presenters	Interviewers/moderators are sometimes well known to the stakeholder
OPEN HOUSE				
Materials, plans, & exhibits are displayed in a station format & the public is invited to tour through. Can garner public perception & comment for larger projects, as well as introduce or develop rapport between community members & developer(s)	Inform Consult	- Usually one meeting; however, duplicate meetings may be held on different days/times in order to accommodate stakeholders - Opportunity to disseminate large amount of information & develop dialogue between stakeholders	- Requires facilitation - Need to coordinate a suitable time for community members & other stakeholders to meet - May require a larger space, such as a community hall	- Handouts are helpful - Comment sheets could gather stakeholder feedback & reaction - Useful to have a Q & A period
PUBLIC FORUM				
Usually one meeting centered on an important issue of community concern. Opportunities to hear community views are provided.	Inform Involve	- Usually one meeting, but could be more - Useful to determine community sentiments regarding issues	- Requires facilitation - May require a larger space, such as a community hall - Group dynamics can sometimes generate negative sentiments & "group mind"	- Balanced, accurate & timely information is helpful - Comment sheets could gather stakeholder feedback
TOWN HALL/PUBLIC MEETING				

TECHNIQUE & DESCRIPTION	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
TOWN HALL/PUBLIC MEETING				
Usually a meeting where all interested stakeholders are welcome to attend. Opportunities are provided for stakeholders to speak. Requires large reach to build attendance.	Inform Consult Involve	Usually one meeting	- Requires facilitation - May require a larger space, such as a community hall - Group dynamics can affect momentum – sometimes generate negative sentiments & “group mind”	- Requires preparation, clear direction to stakeholders, & effort to alert stakeholders - Beware of conflict & adversarial dynamics

APPENDIX C: CONTACTS



1. CONTACTS & LINKS

Federation of Calgary Communities

Suite 101, 720 28th Street N.E.

Calgary, AB T2A 6R3

Phone: (403) 244-4111, Urban Planner Extensions: 203 and 210

Fax: (403) 244-4129

Email: planning@calgarycommunities.com or

engageinplanning@calgarycommunities.com

Web: www.calgarycommunities.com

Partners In Planning – upcoming planning workshops:

Web: <https://calgarycommunities.com/our-services/urban-planning/education/>

Other planning information:

Web: <https://calgarycommunities.com/our-services/urban-planning/>

Other planning resources: Members' Only webpage

Web: www.calgarycommunities.com/members-only/

City of Calgary - General

All City departments can be reached by calling 3-1-1 within Calgary or (403) 268-CITY (or 268-2489). Using 'Browse by Topic' or the search function on the front page of The City of Calgary website is a useful way of finding web-based information, calgary.ca

City of Calgary – City Council

calgary.ca/council

Councillors

Phone: (403) 268-2430

Fax: (403) 268-8091 or 403-268-3823

Email: councillorweb@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/councillors

Courier Address:

The City of Calgary

Councillor Offices (8001)

700 Macleod Trail South S.E.

Mailing Address:

Offices of the Councillor (8001)

P.O. Box 2100, Station M

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

1. CONTACTS & LINKS

The Mayor

Office of the Mayor

The City of Calgary

P.O. Box 2100, Station M

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Phone: (403) 268-5622

Fax: (403) 268-8130

Email: themayor@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/mayor

City of Calgary - Planning & Development

Local Area Planning & Implementation

Planning Services Centre

3rd Floor, Municipal Building

Phone: 311 or (403) 268-5311

Email: plngbldg@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/pd

Mailing Address:

PO Box 2100, Station M (#8117)

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

City of Calgary - Other Contacts

City Clerk's Office (City Council and Committee Meetings)

Sandstone Building

700 Macleod Trail S.E.

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Phone: 403-268-5861

Fax: (403) 268-2362

Email: cityclerk@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/cityclerks or click [here](#) for Agendas and Minutes

Mailing Address:

City Clerk's Office

PO Box 2100, Station M (#8007)

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

City Council Policy Library (City Clerks department)

This includes Council policies on planning and other items.

Web: calgary.ca/council-policy-library

Calgary Planning Commission

For information contact:

Secretary, Calgary Planning Commission

The City of Calgary

800 Macleod Trail S.E.

Phone: 3-1-1 within Calgary or (403) 268-2489

Web: calgary.ca/cpc

- Information includes agendas and a list of CPC members

1. CONTACTS & LINKS

Community Transportation (Community Traffic Studies, Traffic Calming)

Transportation Planning Business Unit Mailing Address:

Calgary Municipal Building P.O. Box 2100, Station M, (#8124)

7th Floor, 800 Macleod Trail S.E. Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Phone: 3-1-1

Web: calgary.ca/transportationplanning

Corporate Properties & Buildings (Encroachments, Sales & Leasing)

Municipal Building Mailing Address:

9th Floor, 800 Macleod Trail SE Corporate Properties

Phone: 3-1-1 PO Box 2100, Station M (#8052)

Fax: (403) 268-1948 Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Email: cpadministration@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/corporateproperties

Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators

Phone: 3-1-1 within Calgary or (403) 268-2489

Web: calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Pages/Neighbourhood-Services/Neighbourhood-Partnership-Coordinators.aspx

Engagement Resource Unit

Phone: 3-1-1 within Calgary or (403) 268-2489

Email: engage@calgary.ca

Web: calgary.ca/engage

Subdivision & Development Appeal Board

Deerfoot Junction Building (DJ3)

4th Floor, 1212 31 Avenue N.E.

Phone: (403) 268-5312

Fax: (403) 268-5982

Email: info@calgarysdab.ca

Web: <http://www.calgarysdab.ca/>

Mailing Address:

City Appeal Boards, The Subdivision & Development Appeal Board

PO Box 2100, Station M (#8110)

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Obtaining Information about Properties, Plans & Applications

MyProperty – calgary.ca/MyProperty

Through “My Property”, you can look up City of Calgary information about:

- The land use designation or zoning of property
- Any building permit or development permit issued on a property in the last three years
- Some policy plans that may impact a property (note: data may be incomplete; on specific applications check with City staff)
- You can look up individual properties or look at a map of several blocks.

1. CONTACTS & LINKS

Planning Applications by Community

- New planning applications are posted every Tuesday on The City website in a PDF file.
- Go to calgary.ca/Planning-Applications-by-community-or-ward.aspx
- Applications for land use changes, and stream 4 development permits are listed at developmentmap.calgary.ca.

Property Research Centre (Document & Map Sales)

Municipal Building, 3rd Floor, 800 Macleod Trail S.E.

Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Phone: 311 within Calgary or (403) 268-2489

Fax: (403) 268-4615

Email: plngbldg@calgary.ca

More information and Online Publications: calgary.ca/planningpublications

Planning Publications

Also see the [City Council Policy Library](#) at City Clerks, which includes some planning related documents.

Other Contacts:

Calgary Regional Partnership (Calgary Metropolitan Plan)

Phone: (403) 851-2509

Email: info@calgaryregion.ca

Web: www.calgaryregion.ca

Community Mediation Calgary Society

Suite 301, 1609 14th Street S.W.

Calgary, AB T2R 1B2

Phone: (403) 269-2707

Fax: (403) 269-2804

Email: info@mediation.ab.ca

Web: www.communitymediation.ca

Province of Alberta (Land Titles)

Service Alberta Building

710 4 Avenue S.W.

Calgary, AB T2P 0K3

Phone: (403) 297-6511

Fax: (403) 297-8641

Email: lto@gov.ab.ca

Web: www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca > Land Titles

1. CONTACTS & LINKS

Department of Municipal Affairs

Web: www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca

Department of Environment and Parks

Web: aep.alberta.ca

Calgary Horticultural Society (Community Gardens)

208 50th Avenue S.W.

Calgary, AB T2S 2S1

Phone: (403) 287-3469

Fax: (403) 287-6986

Email: office@calhort.org

Website: www.calhort.org

GLOSSARY



Ad Hoc Committee

A temporary committee that is committed to specific purpose or issue.

Area Redevelopment Plan

An area redevelopment plan is a type of statutory plan that directs redevelopment, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing lands and buildings, generally within the developed communities.

Calgary Transportation Plan

The Calgary Transportation Plan provides policy direction on multiple aspects of the city's transportation system including the support of an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports land use, provides increased mobility choices, promotes vibrant and connected communities, protects the natural environment and supports a prosperous, and competitive economy.

Circulate

Applications are sent to internal and external parties, including CAs, for comments.

Community Profile

To find your community profile, go to calgary.ca and search for 'community profiles.'

Development Authority

The Development Authority is an official appointed by City Council to exercise development powers and perform duties on behalf of the municipality, including rendering decisions on development permit applications. The Development Authority makes the decision on most development applications. However, at The City of Calgary, more complex applications are forwarded to the Calgary Planning Commission (CPC) for a decision. In these cases, CPC acts as the Development Authority.

Standing Committee

A permanent committee, which reports to the board of directors and meets on a regular basis.

Municipal Development Plan

The senior strategic planning document guiding growth and development in Calgary. It has policies relating to transportation, housing, economic activity, recreation, environment and social issues. It also provides the strategic framework for more detailed and specific plans, policies and programs.

Land Use Amendment

A change of land use designation, approved at a public hearing of City Council. The City of Calgary refers to land use amendments as LOCs, which stands for land use amendment, outline plan and road closure.

Quorum

The minimum number of members that must be present to make a meeting and decisions valid.

File Manager

A planning generalist at the City who oversees the management of an application through the application and review process.