



Highland Park Community Association
3716 2nd St. NW
Calgary, AB T2K 0Y4

March 12, 2021

Mayor and Councillors
City of Calgary

RE: Guidebook for Great Communities – Letter of Support from Highland Park Community Association

We are writing this letter in support of the *Guidebook for Great Communities*. We ask that Council approve the *Guidebook for Great Communities*.

Highland Park is a community that has seen considerable change over the past 10 to 15 years. The older 1950's bungalows are being replaced by modern semi-detached houses, and now by some rowhouse developments. Regrettably, this redevelopment activity has not had over-arching guidance from a current local area plan, nor even from guidance documents such as the Infill Guidelines. Every redevelopment application has been reviewed and adjudged on a one-off basis. We are also a community with a designated Main Street (Centre Street) along which the future Green Line will run with a Transit Station to be located at 40th Avenue and Centre Street.

The *Guidebook for Great Communities* further develops the policies of the Municipal Development Plan and is a foundational document that sets the framework for multi-community local area plans. It is the foundational piece for the proposed *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan*. Both documents have informed each other throughout their evolution. In order for the *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* to be accepted, the *Guidebook* must also be accepted. The community of Highland Park needs both.

The *Guidebook* is intended to be used in the development of future local area plans. It sets out a framework for a standardized classification system and terminology of urban form categories (UFC's), scale modifiers and activity levels that are based on function and usage within a community. These UFC's are broad categories which enable a community to capture – in somewhat generalized terms – what they would like to see in certain areas of their community. The use of standardized terminology and categories allows all parties – the residents, developers, businesses, and the City – to understand what is wanted and intended in a consistent manner. The *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* is the first plan developed in conjunction with the *Guidebook*.

I recently attended the Standard Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development hearing, and it was quite apparent at that hearing that there are many people who are fearful that the *Guidebook* will mean the death of their community as they know it. But the *Guidebook* is not about everything being

torn down and rebuilt. It is about communities – through the local area planning process – being able to have a say about what are the unique characteristics of their community, where it might be logical to encourage redevelopment, where they would like to see local shops and businesses locate, and where they might want to preserve and safeguard certain features of the community. Those features could include park and green spaces, heritage buildings, character homes or mature trees lining the boulevards. It must be emphasized that “the Guidebook only applies to communities with local area plans that are completed using the Guidebook” [p. iv]. It does not supplant existing ARP’s or LAP’s until such time as a new local area plan using the *Guidebook* is undertaken for a community.

As indicated elsewhere, the *Guidebook for Great Communities* has been in development for several years. The approach taken has been an interactive and iterative one involving community residents, builders and developers, and local businesses as well as professional planners. Is the Guidebook a perfect and finished work? Of course not -- it will necessarily have to evolve over time. Our expectation is that any future changes to the *Guidebook* will follow a similar interactive and iterative process.

Throughout the time of the *Guidebook’s* development, the City staff involved in the process have been courteous, respectful and have demonstrated genuine and thoughtful consideration of the questions, comments and concerns that have arisen over the past few years. They have worked diligently to resolve any of those questions or concerns in such a way as to achieve consensual agreement. The engagement process has been extensive, and we truly appreciate the opportunities this has provided our community to participate and to learn.

Thank you for taking the time to review our letter of support for the *Guidebook*, and for giving consideration to Highland Park’s earnest desire to see both the *Guidebook* and the *North Hill Communities Local Area Plan* approved by Council.

Yours respectfully,



D. Jeanne Kimber
President, HPCA



Greg Miller
Development Director, HPCA