Aurora Area Structure Plan

Phase 1 - Envision: What We Did Report

September 2024

Project Overview

Calgary's population is growing and will continue to grow well into the future. We need to continue to make our city an attractive place for people to want to live and make a great life. To accommodate the growing population and housing needs, an ASP outlines how development can occur in greenfield areas in ways that align with city-wide ambitions for new development.

The Aurora ASP will guide development and investments over the next 30 years, serving as a reference for landowners, builders, City Planners, and Councillors as they consider future projects in this area. It will also inform land use, transportation and utility networks and implement the broad planning objectives of the Municipal Development Plan, Calgary Transportation Plan and other City-wide Policies & Strategies.

When we build new communities, some of the most important considerations are making sure we include all the elements of a complete community:

- A mix of housing types, forms and tenures
- Opportunities for commercial, business and industrial uses
- Proximity to major transit routes and future transit networks
- Opportunities for recreational and public amenities
- Space for schools and other community infrastructure
- Access to safe and sustainable servicing
- Parks, natural areas and pathways
- High quality pathways and street connections designed to allow for easy access to the neighbourhood.

Why is The City developing a new ASP for Aurora?

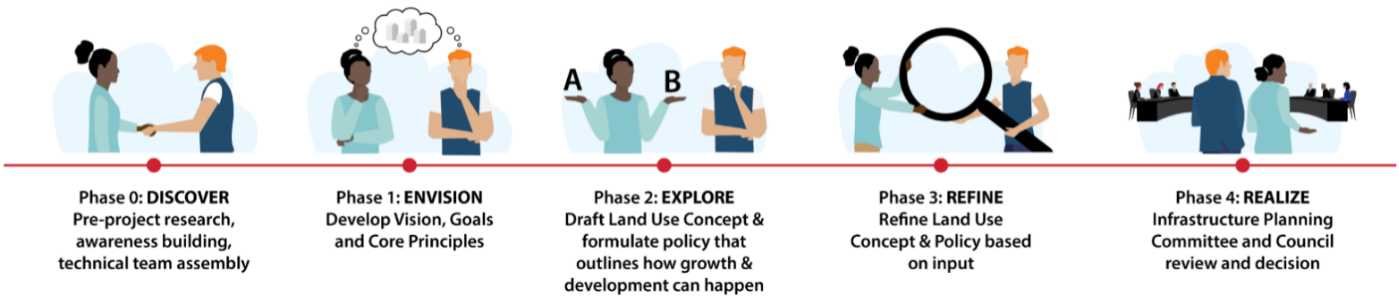
Here are some of the reasons why we are revisiting the 2008 Aurora Business Park ASP:

- **Outdated plan:** The Aurora Business Park ASP was approved in 2008 and zoned for a business park. This no longer aligns with The City's current priorities and needs. A new plan for the lands will better respond to the needs of Calgarians.
- **More options:** A new plan will set a vision that allows for a variety of uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, school sites and other community amenities.
- **Housing:** The new ASP provides an opportunity to help address Calgary's housing crisis.

- **Environment:** The new ASP aims to create connections between neighbourhoods and parks, as well as preserving these natural spaces.
- **Complete community:** Creating a new plan will allow for a mix of uses to meet the needs of residents for an entire lifetime.

Phase 1: ENVISION

We engaged with Calgarians for Phase 1: ENVISION between in May and June 2024 at in-person events and online. Respondents shared their feedback and their visions for the Aurora lands.



What We Did with the Input Received

The Aurora ASP project team prepared two reports:

This ***What We Did Report*** (this report) is intended to demonstrate how and where public feedback we received in Phase 1 was used to inform the draft concept presented to the public for Phase 2: EXPLORE.

We encourage you to review this report in conjunction with the ***What We Heard Report*** from Phase 1: ENVISION to understand our communications and engagement approach, the questions we asked, and the feedback we collected during Phase 1 of the project.

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What We Heard

After reviewing the public input and ongoing discussions with the technical advisory committee and consultant team, various themes emerged from our public engagement in Phase 1.

- **Greenspace conservation and community value:** respondents shared that they use the Aurora lands and adjacent green spaces for recreation and off-leash uses. There is concern that any development on the Aurora lands could result in the loss of natural habitats and wildlife and negatively impact public use.

- **Housing diversity, affordability, and density:** we heard that respondents would like to see the ASP provide a range of housing options that cater to a variety of living needs and preferences including the unique needs of seniors. We also heard concerns that increased density development could lead to increased traffic and less green space.

- **Connected communities:** respondents let us know that they envision well-connected communities where green spaces, residential areas, and shopping amenities are easily accessible to residents by car, on foot and by transit.

- **Pathways:** we heard that respondents really like the multi-use pathway system in the area and would like to see the system extended in the ASP for activities like walking, jogging, or wheeling.

- **Dog-friendly spaces:** we heard from users of the space that they are concerned that they might lose off-leash areas due to development and that they would like to see designated and larger off-leash areas reflected in the ASP.

- **Support for small businesses:** respondents would prefer to see small businesses enabled by the ASP rather than large retail chains, industrial or manufacturing industries.

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What We Did

The themes that emerged from Phase 1 feedback are repeated below, along with responses from the team as to how that feedback was used, or will be used, to further refine the new area structure plan.

Where feasible, the project team incorporated themes and ideas that advanced the overall project goals and objectives of creating a complete community. it is important to note that in addition to public input, there are major constraints and influencers that impact what could be included in the draft plan including legislation, existing policies, and previous council direction.

Theme	What we did
Preserve greenspaces and public parks	The draft core value: **Model Sustainable and Environmentally Responsible Development** was developed in response to feedback heard in Phase 1. This statement recognizes the significance of natural areas as it relates to social, recreational, and ecological functions. The project team has identified areas of interest for new parks and environmental features in the draft land use concept. Areas of the plan have been identified as potential environmental reserve (ER), environmental open space, recreational trail, regional pathway, and green corridors. The draft land use concept does not reduce or negatively impact the West Nose Creek ravine area.
Create a neighbourhood that is accessible to all income levels and age groups	The draft core value: **Create New Housing Opportunities** was developed in response to feedback heard in Phase 1. The project team considered providing areas of the plan which would facilitate the development of seniors housing and mix market and non-market housing opportunities. The project team proposed two (2) residential regions within the draft concept plan – first, a multi-family residential area and secondly, a ground-oriented

Theme	What we did
	residential area. These areas provide opportunities for the development of a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of Calgarians over their lifespans. Multi-family residential area accommodates apartment buildings, seniors housing and stacked row housing developments. The ground-oriented residential area can accommodate lower density forms of housing including townhomes otherwise compatible with semi-detached and single detached dwellings. The residential development policies of the final area structure plan could also encourage a mixing of dwelling typologies on a given block or street.
Maintain access to parkland	The draft core value: **Foster a Sense of Place** was developed to ensure that the area's unique features and attributes are celebrated and incorporated into the new policies and plan. West Nose Creek is a municipal park, as well as an ecologically significant area within the City's north. For this reason, a key consideration of the draft land use concept is to maintain access between this municipal park and the adjacent communities of Harvest Hills and Beddington Heights. The road network in the draft concept plan aligns with the streets network in Harvest Hills. The draft land use concept includes other pedestrian features such as regional pathway network, a community high street, as well as a potential boardwalk. Further opportunities can be explored to locate encourage the development of new neighbourhood parks and school sites close to West Nose Creek.

Theme	What we did
Dog-friendly spaces	The project team explored opportunities to promote dog friendly spaces. The area structure planning process does not provide direction on what types of amenities or features are to be found in local parks within the plan area. The location of neighborhood parks and off leash areas are determined in subsequent planning applications such as Outline Plan.
Support for small businesses (respondents would prefer to see small businesses enabled by the ASP rather than large retail chains, industrial or manufacturing industries)	The draft core value: **Foster a Sense of Place** was developed to celebrate existing features of the plan area and encourage the development of unique spaces. Small businesses foster good social connections and create opportunities for new forms of entrepreneurship. They are important to building place, a sense of belonging and create unique places. The draft concept plan includes a proposed high street where polity priority is given to the development of small restaurants, patios and unique retail spaces.

Project Next Steps

We will engage with Calgarians for Phase 2 – Explore, from September 11 – October 9, 2024. Phase will include in-person and online engagement opportunities to gather feedback on the draft concept plan and further refine the concepts in the draft area structure plan.

To stay up to date on project details and future engagement opportunities please visit the project website **calgary.ca/auroraasp** and sign-up for email updates.