



# RILEY COMMUNITIES

Local Area Planning Project

Phase 2: EXPLORE - What We Did Report

Fall 2023



**Riley Communities  
Local Area Planning Project**

**Phase 2: EXPLORE  
What We Did Report**

Report Back – Fall 2023

**Contents**

Riley Communities Local Area Planning Project..... 1

Project Overview..... 2

What did we do with the input received?..... 2

What We Heard / What We Did..... 2

Topic 1: Draft Vision and Core Values..... 3

Topic 2: Moderate to Large-Scale Growth ..... 5

Topic 3: Small-Scale Growth ..... 6

Topic 4: Draft Chapter Feedback ..... 8

Project next steps ..... 10

## Project Overview

The Riley Communities Local Area Planning project includes the communities of: Hillhurst, Hounsfield Heights - Briar Hill, Sunnyside, and West Hillhurst.

Through the local area planning process, we are working together to create a future vision for how land could be used and redeveloped in the area – building on the vision, goals and policies outlined in [Calgary's Municipal Development Plan](#) and [The Guide for Local Area Planning](#).

The Riley Communities Local Area Plan will identify gaps in communities/areas where no local plan currently exists and replace other plans that are largely outdated.

## What did we do with the input received?

The input received was used to update the concepts presented to the public for Phase 2: EXPLORE. This What We Did Report demonstrates how your feedback in Phase 2 was used by the project team to advance the Riley Communities Local Area Plan.

We encourage you to review the Phase 2: Explore What We Heard Report to understand our communications and engagement approach, the questions we asked, and the feedback we collected during this phase of the project. The report will also provide you with high-level feedback themes received in Phase 2, verbatim public responses, and context to understand how feedback helped inform the draft Local Area Plan. The City will collect public feedback again from October 23 – November 12 as part of Phase 3 engagement for the project.

## What We Heard / What We Did

Below you will see the top themes that emerged from each public engagement question in Phase 2. Each theme is accompanied by a What We Did response from the team outlining how that feedback has been used to further refine the plan.

## Topic 1: Draft Vision and Core Values

**Q1 – When thinking about the Riley Communities and how the area could evolve over the next 30 years, do the Vision and Core Values resonate with you? Please share your thoughts and let us know what you would add and/or change and why? Please review the draft Vision and Core Values to answer this question.**

Theme	What We Did
<b>Participants provided general support for the Vision and Core Values as presented.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Vision and Core Values were refined through extensive discussion with the Working Group as well as feedback obtained from the general public.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing as a topic was important to participants with comments centered on affordable housing and diverse housing choice.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “Housing Choice” Core Value ensures diverse housing choices by providing a range of housing options.</li> <li>Feedback on this Core Value helped shape policy around the future redevelopment of the North Hill Mall site, the Lions Park station area and the area’s main streets (particularly Kensington Road NW and 19<sup>th</sup> Street NW)</li> <li>Based on feedback, we drafted new limited scale policy. Limited scale policy addresses developments that are three storeys or less.</li> </ul>
<b>Respondents looked to integrate sensitive densification and transition zones in the Core Value language.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This reference is captured in the “Housing Choice” Core Value which states, “Ensure that as new housing is developed, it suits the evolving context of each of Riley’s individual communities”.</li> <li>In response to the feedback received, additional area-specific policies have been added to Chapter 2 to account for transitions between different scales and urban form categories as well.</li> </ul>
<b>Mobility, walkability, and year-round infrastructure utilization were frequent topics of interest.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “Moving to and through the Riley Communities” Core Value prioritizes walking, transit and active modes to move around the Riley Communities. This includes the importance of connections to surrounding destinations by building upon existing infrastructure such as the Red Line LRT system, Regional Pathway system and pedestrian realm improvements.</li> <li>In response to feedback received, additional policies regarding mobility were added to draft</li> </ul>

	<p>Chapter 2 and the project team will explore mobility improvements as part of the development Chapter 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additionally, a Mobility Plan is underway and will further inform the policies and recommendations in Chapter 3.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants referenced specific corridors, parks or streetscapes that highlighted Core Values.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Parks, Open Space and Recreation” directs policy to enhance these existing spaces, which includes the specific streets, parks and streetscapes that are mentioned in participant feedback.</li> <li>• In response to feedback received, Chapter 2 policies provide area-specific policies to help achieve these outcomes.</li> <li>• In our upcoming work for Phase 3, we will discuss potential further community improvement ideas surrounding parks, open space and recreation.</li> </ul>

## Topic 2: Moderate to Large-Scale Growth

**Q2 - Please review the Focus Areas for Growth Map above, specifically what is outlined in pink (additional potential focus areas for growth). Would you add additional or remove any of the areas that are being proposed in pink for moderate-to-large-scale growth? Please tell us where and why.**

Theme	What We Did
Participants provided corridor-specific observations and feedback regarding where growth and height should be removed or added.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on feedback from our internal Technical Advisory Committee, the Working Group and public outreach, several key ideas were accounted for in the development and refinement of the draft Urban Form and Building Scale maps. Examples include increased building scale on the North Hill mall site, reduced building heights in portions of Sunnyside, more Neighbourhood Commercial at the intersection of Kensington Road and 19 Street NW and Neighborhood Flex along Parkdale Blvd NW.</li> </ul>
The Lions Park Station, North Hill Mall site and neighbourhood of Briar Hill were highlighted as areas needing more growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft Urban Form and Building Scale maps were developed and evolved based on feedback received from the Focus Areas for Growth Map. Areas near the station have a range of building heights and mixed-use built forms with the highest scales located on the mall site north of the Lions Park LRT station.</li> </ul>
Respondents identified areas for additional growth often connecting responses to amenity proximity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on feedback from public engagement as well as the Working Group and inter-departmental discussions, a number of key ideas were factored into the corresponding draft Urban Form and Building Scale maps. These changes allow for more mixed-uses and/or higher building scales in areas within proximity to community amenities.</li> </ul>
General support was a significant theme in response to the Focus Areas for Growth Map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Potential Focus Areas for Growth map was developed and refined through extensive discussion with the Working Group as well as the general public throughout Phase 2.</li> </ul>
Respondents expressed concerns specific to potential building height and privacy loss and offered suggestions regarding transition zones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We've heard a lot of feedback regarding the need for height transitions within the Plan area. This has been addressed in two ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area-specific direction. The draft Urban Form and Building Scale maps use different building scale heights to create a gradual change in height between areas with substantially different building heights.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General Chapter 2 scale policy stating that new higher density development which shares a property line or lane with single detached, semi-detached or duplex residential development should step-back the building where it interfaces with lower density development. Such step backs should provide a clear and distinct transition in scale between the two development types. Within the updated draft Chapter 2, there also are other area specific policies that provide further policy direction.</li> </ul>
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### Topic 3: Small-Scale Growth

**Q3 - What opportunities and challenges exist when thinking of welcoming a variety of small-scale homes (three stories or less) into the plan area?**

Theme	What We Did
<b>Support for more housing choices and policies was the most frequent feedback theme.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Housing Choice” Core Value guides policy direction within the Riley communities to ensure diverse housing choices through providing a range of housing options.</li> <li>• The draft Urban Form and Building Scale maps enable a range of housing types and a variety of mixed-use developments that allow for more types of housing within all the Riley Communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Participants want small-scale growth to consider the aesthetics and community character of the local area.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2 policy supports small-scale (3 or more units) development that is designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ have a similar building envelope to that of building forms that contain one or two units;</li> <li>○ complement the surrounding context;</li> <li>○ protect existing, healthy trees on private property; and</li> <li>○ consider the impacts that massing, lot coverage and setback will have on adjacent parcel’s access to sunlight.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>General support was a top theme with participants indicating small-scale housing growth improved housing options in the Riley Communities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft small-scale housing policy was developed through ongoing discussion with the Working Group as well as the public. Comments received during the next phase of the plan may provide further insight into this draft policy and inform additional changes.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Respondents indicated massing, setback, lot coverage and transition area all needed to be considered when planning for small-scale growth.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2 policy supports small-scale (3 or more units) development that considers the impacts that massing, lot coverage and setback will have on adjacent parcels' access to sunlight.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants expressed concern about parking availability, traffic management and vehicle flow through the area.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility specialists from our Technical Advisory Committee are undertaking traffic modelling to better understand traffic flow throughout the Riley Communities and recommend development policies to help improve it in the future.</li> <li>• The Mobility Plan is assessing the current conditions of the transportation network in the area and will inform the recommended long-term infrastructure improvements that will be included in Chapter 3 of the Riley Local Area Plan.</li> <li>• The Local Area Plan will also support further development of the Always Available for All Ages &amp; Abilities (5A) network, which provides year-round transportation infrastructure for cycling, wheeling and pedestrians. This infrastructure is an attractive, safe, accessible, and affordable alternative to the private automobile.</li> <li>• The Local Area Plan will also support high quality transit infrastructure that integrates with new development (where feasible), helping to reduce vehicle use within the Riley Communities over time.</li> <li>• Over the longer term, providing more housing within the Riley Communities will help reduce overall vehicle traffic within the area by reducing housing growth in the farther developing areas of Calgary.</li> </ul>



## Topic 4: Draft Chapter Feedback

**Q4. Do you have any feedback on the initial draft Chapter 2 or refined draft Chapter 1 of the Riley Communities Local Area Plan?**

Theme	What We Did
Public infrastructure investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investment in a wide range of public infrastructure is an important part of the Riley LAP. The draft Chapter 3 work will identify and describe infrastructure investments that will support the growth and change that is described in Chapter 2.</li></ul>
Community character preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The protection of heritage character within different areas of the Riley Communities is accomplished through several different levels of municipal policy. The LAP includes policies that encourage the conservation and integration of existing heritage resources within new development. Areas that have higher concentrations of heritage resources (“Heritage Guideline Areas”) have policy that requires new development to be contextually sensitive to surrounding heritage assets. Policy for this section is envisioned to include direction for new development in these areas that provides direction items such as: roof pitch or style, front-yard setbacks; window and door patterns, front façade projections and general building massing.</li><li>As described in the “Small-scale Growth” section of this document, there is policy direction for Small-scale (3 or more units) development to be designed to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>have a similar building envelope to that of building forms that contain one or two units;</li><li>complement the surrounding context;</li><li>protect existing, healthy trees on private property; and,</li><li>consider the impacts that massing, lot coverage and setback will have on adjacent parcel’s access to sunlight.</li></ul></li><li>As described in the Moderate to Large Scale Growth section of this document, we’ve responded to feedback regarding the need for transitions between areas with two significantly different building heights. The Urban Form and Building Scale maps provide height transitions between different areas. The scale policy within Chapter 2 requires new development which shares a property line or lane with single detached, semi-detached or duplex residential development should step-back the building where it interfaces with lower density development.</li></ul>

<b>Community impact information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) affecting Hillhurst, Hounsfield Heights - Briar Hill and Sunnyside were reviewed by the core project team. Given that these plans were developed in 1988 and 1989 (with the Hillhurst-Sunnyside ARP having additional policies added in 2009), all the policies within these existing ARPs were analyzed to determine how they work with the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the Guide for Local Area Planning. These reviews helped to determine what policies were brought forward.</li> <li>• Using an iterative process, draft ideas, policies, potential growth areas and later Urban Form and Building Scale categories were developed by the core project team and then provided to the Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee and the public for analysis and feedback. This feedback provided further insight that resulted in further changes to the draft plan content.</li> <li>• Using this iterative analysis process, potential implications for existing residents were identified, evaluated and addressed in the updated version of the plan content.</li> <li>• Through this analysis, LAP built form policies were created to ensure new development considers the local built form context and shadow impacts on neighboring properties.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed growth not equitable across the Plan area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local area planning must balance the need for orderly future growth and change in the inner-city while evaluating existing conditions and acknowledging community character.</li> <li>• Among the changes that were influenced by these discussions, the latest Urban Form and Scale maps now allow for more growth within the Lions Park Station area.</li> </ul>
<b>Site-specific feedback and observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We heard many site-specific observations and suggestions that included details around traffic management, public realm, open spaces and street retail presence.</li> <li>• This feedback will support the ongoing development of the draft Chapter 3 and the Mobility Plan that is underway. In particular, the community improvements that will be discussed during Phase 3 of the Riley Communities Local Area Plan will be informed by these</li> </ul>

	site-specific observations and may spur additional ideas and discussions as refinements are made to the plan.
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## Project next steps

The Riley Local Area Planning team will be back in community from October 24 – November 12, 2023, for Phase 3: REFINE where we will be refining the draft plan and confirming community improvements for the Plan area. Phase 3: REFINE will offer multiple engagement opportunities for the public to provide feedback including in-person and online events and mail-in and online questionnaires.

For more details and information about upcoming engagement opportunities please visit the project website at [calgary.ca/Riley](https://calgary.ca/Riley) and sign-up for email updates.