

Sustainability Principles for Land Use & Mobility

On Jan. 8, 2007, City Council approved the Terms of Reference for the integrated Land Use and Mobility Plan (LPT2006-121). This approval provides confirmation of the terms of reference to guide the project, which includes the review and amendment of the Calgary Plan (Municipal Development Plan) and the Calgary Transportation Plan by the end of 2008. As part of the report, Council approved 11 sustainability principles for Land Use & Mobility that will act as the overarching direction for the project.

In addition, Council approved the use of the sustainability principles as guiding principles for major land use and transportation studies until the integrated Land Use and Mobility Plan is completed in 2008. Current projects that will be informed by these principles include the intermunicipal development plans, transportation network plans, regional policy plans, area structure plans, area redevelopment plans, major outline plans and major development permits.

How these principles were developed

Three key sources of information were reviewed to develop these principles. They are 1) Smart Growth (as defined by the two Smart Growth networks in the United States and in Canada); 2) current City of Calgary policy including the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan; and, 3) the imagineCALGARY Long Range Urban Sustainability Plan, which in turn used the Melbourne Principles as a guide.

Two Smart Growth networks exist, one in the US and one in Canada. Both have developed a similar set of Smart Growth principles. Widely used and recognized within municipal government as well as the planning and transportation professions and the development industry, these Smart Growth principles are commonly referenced and understood in the community.

There are some important transportation-specific goals that aren't clearly articulated by Smart Growth. Therefore, transportation goals were selected from the Calgary Transportation Plan (1995), which represents current City of Calgary policy. In February 2004, a public survey was conducted to determine if Calgarians still supported the 1995 Calgary Transportation Plan. The results indicated that Calgarians generally support the vision and land use strategies of the 1995 Calgary Transportation Plan.

The result of an extensive public and expert engagement process, the imagineCALGARY Long Range Urban Sustainability Plan includes goals and targets that provide additional direction and clarity to the sustainability principles for Land Use & Mobility. By incorporating the targets created through imagineCALGARY, the sustainability principles will offer greater direction and create a "made-in-Calgary" approach to the broadly recognized Smart Growth principles. The Melbourne Principles for Sustainable Cities, adopted by Council, were used to guide the imagineCALGARY project.

How will the sustainability principles for Land Use & Mobility be applied

The sustainability principles should be considered as a whole and are not to be used as individual statements. Individually, they do not provide an integrated, systems-based framework for analysis that is required to achieve sustainability.

Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility Plan

- Principle 1:** Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Principle 2:** Create walkable environments.
- Principle 3:** Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Principle 4:** Provide a variety of transportation options.
- Principle 5:** Preserve open space, agricultural land, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
- Principle 6:** Mix land uses.
- Principle 7:** Strategically direct and manage redevelopment opportunities within existing areas.
- Principle 8:** Support compact development.
- Principle 9:** Connect people, goods and services locally, regionally and globally.
- Principle 10:** Provide transportation services in a safe, effective, affordable and efficient manner that ensures reasonable accessibility to all areas of the city for all citizens.
- Principle 11:** Utilize green infrastructure and buildings.

Details of Sustainability Principles for Land Use & Mobility

Principle 1: Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.

Provide a mix of housing types and ownerships in the same neighbourhood to allow residents to live affordably in the same community throughout their lives. A mix of housing creates a more adaptable and resilient community fabric as it is able to respond to demographic changes such as aging populations, empty nesters and smaller households.

Principle 2: Create walkable environments.

Create pedestrian-friendly environments with an interconnected street network to ensure walkable access to commercial and public services and amenities. Streets and arterials are designed for walking, cycling, transit access and cars. Neighbourhoods are sufficiently compact with mixed uses to provide sustained transit service.

Principle 3: Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.

Create distinctive, high-quality communities designed with architectural and natural elements that reflect local conditions and the values of residents.

Principle 4: Provide a variety of transportation options.

Couple a multi-modal approach to transportation with supportive development patterns to create a variety of transportation options. This principle includes increasing the availability of high-quality transit service, creating resiliency and connectivity within the road networks, and ensuring connectivity between pedestrian, bike, transit and road facilities.

Principle 5: Preserve open space, agricultural land, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.

Maintain and restore ecosystem functions. Respect the natural functions of the landscape, particularly working agricultural land, watersheds and aquatic habitats. Design communities to integrate natural systems with human activities while placing high value on community access to natural systems and parks.

Principle 6: Mix land uses.

Mix land uses by having homes, businesses, schools and recreational opportunities in closer proximity. Mixed land use will provide alternatives to driving such as walking and biking while increasing transit viability. The resulting increased number of people on the street can enhance the vitality and perceived security of an area. Mixed land use is key to achieving more complete communities.

Principle 7: Strategically direct and manage redevelopment opportunities within existing areas.

Direct redevelopment towards and within existing areas to create and enhance places in existing communities. Stable areas will be preserved and the existing community context will be valued. Strategic intensification makes more efficient use of existing infrastructure and increases transit efficiency.

Principle 8: Support compact development.

Compact development supports transit viability and modes of travel other than the automobile. It also allows for the preservation of open space and more efficient use of infrastructure.

Principle 9: Connect people, goods and services locally, regionally and globally.

Connectivity of all modes of transportation locally, regionally and globally ensures a more effective and efficient transportation system for people, goods and services.

Principle 10: Provide transportation services in a safe, effective, affordable and efficient manner that ensures reasonable accessibility to all areas of the city for all citizens.

Transportation services and infrastructure should be delivered in a cost-effective and energy-efficient manner. The transportation system should provide citizens with safe, barrier-free access to services that supply reasonable access to all areas of the city. Optimally designed and operated transportation systems help to improve the quality of life for citizens, support economic development and protect environmental health.

Principle 11: Utilize green infrastructure and buildings.

Utilizing ecological services provided by the environment will reduce community and environmental impacts as well as private, public and taxpayer costs of development and infrastructure. Green infrastructure can include energy solutions such as co-generation or renewable energy and water solutions such as stormwater retention and recharge. Green buildings include but aren't limited to externally certified standards such as LEED (Leading in Energy and Environmental Design), BOMA Go Green for commercial buildings and Built Green™ for residential applications.