

Speaking Notes on District Plans, Urban Planning Committee Dec 5, 2023

Chair: Anne Stevenson

Vice Chair: Keren Tang

Members: Tim Cartmell, Erin Rutherford

Good afternoon Councillors and thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. My name is Carol Secord. I am speaking to you as longtime resident of mature west end neighbourhoods and as a member of the Civics Committee of Glenora Community League.

The Need for a Pause

I am adding my voice, with others from Glenora, with an impassioned plea to City Council, that the community engagement on the District Plans be **extended**. And that during the extension, Administration be directed to work with the community to **co-develop** details for the 4 corridors in and around our community.

Inadequate Engagement to Date

With the District Planning process so far, many in our community and my friends from across mature neighbourhoods in Edmonton are feeling unheard.

It feels like it has been a very top-down process with minimal community involvement at a neighbourhood level.

Hearing that Administration's perspective of the entire planning process –is that engagement has been in-depth and adequate, I took the time to review all of the 'What we Heard' reports and the various engagement phases and surveys that are now closed.

It occurs to me that **Administration has been thinking and working inside the context of Districts** –not neighbourhoods while the **majority of Edmontonian’s still live and think AND engage inside the context of neighbourhoods. The marketing and public information strategies were designed from a district perspective**, reaching out to the individual persons and to stakeholder groups from a whole city perspective and then a district perspective.

Our Concerns:

1. **Individual Edmontonian’s, not connected to an identified stakeholder group** inside this ‘District focused process’ have **had the experience of being ‘left out’**. Community is the ‘connectedness’ inside the places/spaces that we overlap: School, preschool, spiritual community, sports fields, the arenas, gyms, Community League sponsored-neighbourhood focused events, the coffee shop and local businesses and our ways of transportation are communities of experience.
2. **ZBR – was a city-wide focus**, but the **impact of the ZBR depends on Nodes and Corridors Policy which impacts neighbourhoods.**
3. **Nodes and Corridors policy** is based on a high-level interpretation of the City Plan; without specific consultation and engagement with people in neighbourhoods. There has not been an opportunity for neighbourhoods to influence Administrations interpretation of City Plan at a neighbourhood level.
4. Administration revealed the Nodes and Corridors policy in August, while we were intensely focused on ZBR. Now we are immersed in a very condensed District Planning process with city-wide zoom meetings, district open houses and ‘meet with a planner sessions’, that is not reaching the neighbourhoods.
5. Many of us, in mature neighbourhoods and especially in Glenora
 - **were waiting for ‘neighbourhood focused’ Area Redevelopment Plan – type of conversations. Because this is what happens when**

there are changes that will have major impact on

neighbourhoods. For Glenora: 107 Ave, Stony Plain Road, 142 Street and 102 Avenue surround and dissect our neighbourhood. Surely this requires engaged conversation with the people who live in this community. **This is MAJOR impact!**

6. A very different approach:

- a. **Cambie Street Corridor Plan** – Vancouver shows an ‘engaged process’ to enhance the uniqueness of each area of the corridor.

(Email with attachments will follow my presentation)

- b. Working with the Community **p.11**

- i. 8600+ in-person interactions with residents.
- ii. 120+ public events

- c. Plan making timeline **p. 12 Inside each phase of Engagement** there were

- i. Open houses
- ii. Workshops

- iii. Open houses > **focusing on unique sections of the corridor:**

Then policy was developed.

This is the type of process we expected in our Mature Neighbourhood.

COVID prevented this process.... But it is not too late!

- 7. *Administration is missing the creative energy of Edmontonians’ talking with them** about how the best of community can be preserved **while we co-design and live into our emerging future.**

- 8. Collaborative co-creation is essential** to develop strong District Plans where we are all on board. We are confident that there is a way to build a much greater sense of consensus.

- **A one-size-fits all Nodes and Corridor Plan** without active focused citizen engagement at a neighbourhood focused level **destroys community cohesion.**
- **In Glenora – the current interpretation** of the Nodes and Corridor and Transit Oriented planning – **will create small islands of 10- 15 residential homes, many of them well maintained and on the heritage inventory, that could be directly adjacent to high, mid-rise and low-rise multi-family housing developments. Without space for gradual transitions. Without cohesive urban design.**

9. Heritage and the unique characteristics of Glenora have not been considered at all in this plan to densify and meet the City’s growth goals. Extending community engagement of District Planning will allow space for this work.

Summary Notes:

Thank you for hearing us and for seizing this opportunity to engage the ‘average Edmontonian living in mature neighbourhoods’ in this **important work of city building.**

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