

Integrated Approach to the Development of the Skyrattler Site

Recommendation:

That the April 12, 2015, Sustainable Development report CR_1068, be received for information.

Report Summary

This report summarizes the consultation done with the owner of Taylor College (810 Saddleback road) and the First Place home builder to explore if an integrated approach to development of the Taylor College and First Place Program sites in Skyrattler was supported by both groups. No development at Taylor College is expected in the near term, so there is limited opportunity to integrate development with the Skyrattler site.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 18, 2014, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration defer implementation of the Skyrattler site in the First Place Housing Program to the last phase of the program, and bring a report with an update on the results of discussions with the owners of 810 Saddleback Road site and the Skyrattler Neighbourhood Association, to explore an integrated approach to development of the two sites that would consolidate the open space within the existing park.

Report

Background

In 2006, City Council approved the First Place Program to develop new homes for first time homebuyers on 20 vacant and surplus school building sites, while retaining the planned adjacent open space for community use in the future.

Following the 2011 review of the First Place Program (2011SCO918), a development implementation schedule for the remaining First Place Program building sites was developed with new home builders implementing the program. At that time the Skyrattler First Place site engagement was scheduled to begin in 2013. In 2012, Community League representatives were advised by Administration that site implementation in Skyrattler would not begin until public engagement on three other First Place sites was complete.

On February 18, 2014, Executive Committee received report CR_788 [Skyrattler Neighbourhood - First Place Program (M. Walters)], regarding the development of First Place Program homes in the Skyrattler neighbourhood and instructed Administration to explore an integrated approach to First Place development in Skyrattler with Taylor College.

Results of discussion on development integration

Administration approached the First Place Program home builders to discuss changing the development implementation schedule in accordance with Council's direction. This resulted in changes to implementation dates on several First Place Program building sites (including Skyrattler) towards the end of the First Place Program implementation.

Community engagement timelines for the Skyrattler site has been changed from 2013 in the original implementation schedule to 2019 in the current implementation schedule (see Attachment 1). The City's website has been updated to reflect this change. The most recent changes to the Skyrattler implementation schedule have been accommodated by altering implementation dates for sites in Dunluce, Bulyea and Sifton Park.

After the builders and the City agreed on changes to the First Place Program implementation schedule, Administration sought out and met with the owner's representative of the Taylor College site (810 Saddleback Road) to discuss the motion and the possibility of development integration (see Attachment 2). Taylor College owners are operating a bible college on their site and requested information regarding infrastructure capacity in the Skyrattler neighbourhood (e.g. roadway, storm and sanitary servicing) and known development costs. This information was provided to the owner.

Administration and the First Place Program builder then met with the owner of the Taylor College site in July, 2015, to discuss the possible integration of the First Place Program and the college development plans. Discussions included the possibility of incorporating First Place development on the vacant Taylor college lands through land sales or increases to density, as well as alternative uses of college lands. It also considered collaboration on infrastructure servicing costs.

After sharing information and discussing development possibilities and challenges, the owner and the First Place builder could not reach a consensus regarding integrating development. From the First Place builder's perspective, there appeared to be little interest from the Taylor College landowner to undertake an immediate sale or redevelopment of the lands and it was clear that they would expect the potential buyer to undertake all the required planning and engineering work for the entire lands prior to committing to a firm sale agreement for a portion of the site. Administration remains open to the possibility of integrated development but the owner of the Taylor College site has not indicated that they intend to further develop their property within the time frame of the First Place program implementation schedule.

Policy

The Way We Grow, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan

Attachments

1. 2016 First Place Amended Implementation Plan
2. Location of approved First Place Program and 810 Saddleback Road (Taylor College and Seminary)

Others Reviewing this Report

- D. Wandzura, General Manager, City Operations
- T. Burge, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, and General Manager, Financial and Corporate Services