

Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) CMRB Administration Recommendation

Member Municipality	City of Calgary
Application Name	Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan
REF Application Number	2023-02
Type of Application	Area Redevelopment Plan
Municipal Bylaw #	64P2022
Date Application Circulated	January 23, 2023
Date of CMRB Administration Recommendation	February 2, 2023
CMRB Recommendation <p>That the Board APPROVE REF Application 2023-02, the City of Calgary Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REF 2023-02 application is for the City of Calgary Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan (Chinatown ARP). The Chinatown ARP proposes to guide the infill and intensification of the Chinatown area in downtown Calgary. The plan area includes 24.76 hectares of land. The proposed development within the plan area consists of the Intensification and Infill Placetype, which is a Preferred Placetype, with additional lands for parks, open space, and natural areas. The Growth Plan requires that the Infill and Intensification Placetype be located within a Preferred Growth Area. The City of Calgary is a Preferred Growth Area (Urban Municipality). Chinatown is projected to become home to more than 5,000 residents living in up to 1,600 housing units within a 30-year time horizon. Employment growth is projected to include more than 5,000 jobs. There are Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) located on-site or within 100m of the plan area. REF Application 2023-02's Growth Plan Alignment Statement identifies the potential impact of the proposed development on identified ESAs, including flood prone areas, along with the mitigation measures needed to minimize the undesirable impacts of development on ESAs. The third party consultant review, completed by Lovatt Planning Consultants, found the application to be generally consistent with the Growth Plan. CMRB Administration finds REF Application 2023-02 to be generally consistent with the principles and policies of the Growth Plan and recommends the application for approval. 	
Attachment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third-Party Consultant Review, Lovatt Planning Consultants 	

1.0 Background

The City of Calgary has submitted a Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) application for a new Area Redevelopment Plan, the Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan (Chinatown ARP), proposed Bylaw 64P2022. The Chinatown ARP was submitted to the CMRB through REF submission criteria 4.1 (c) which requires municipalities to refer all new Area Redevelopment Plans or Area Redevelopment Plans to the Board. The Chinatown ARP proposes to infill and intensify 24.75 ha of land within a Preferred Growth Area.

CMRB Administration notified CMRB members of REF Application 2023-02 on January 23, 2023.

2.0 Consistency with the Growth Plan

2.1 *Third Party Review*

CMRB Administration retained Lovatt Planning Consultants to evaluate the application with respect to the REF requirements. The third party evaluation (attached) reviewed the proposed Chinatown ARP in relation to the goals, objectives, and policies of the Growth Plan. Lovatt Planning Consultants found REF Application 2023-02 to be generally consistent with the Growth Plan.

2.2 *CMRB Administration Review*

As outlined in the City of Calgary submission and the third party review, and in consideration of its own review of REF Application 2023-02 materials, CMRB Administration finds REF Application 2023-02 to be generally consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Growth Plan.

3.0 REF 2023-02 Application Overview

The following provides an overview of the consistency of REF 2023-02 application for key areas of the Growth Plan applicable to this REF application. See the attached third party review report for an overview of REF Application 2023-02's consistency with all Growth Plan policies.

3.1 *Placetype and Location*

REF Application 2023-02 proposes to develop the Infill and Intensification Placetype, which is a Preferred Placetype that must be located within a Preferred Growth Area. The City of Calgary is a Preferred Growth Area (Urban Municipality) making REF Application 2023-02 consistent with Growth Plan Section 3.1.2 Preferred Placetypes. The Chinatown ARP promotes a compact urban form and the concept of "complete community" by planning for a high-density residential base, mix of uses, and easy access to open spaces, amenities, and pedestrian corridors. This is consistent with Growth Plan policy 3.1.2.1. which requires that Preferred Placetypes be planned and developed as complete communities.

3.2 Protect and Enjoy the Environment

The Chinatown ARP includes specific policies that mitigate the effect of the proposed infill and intensification on Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) on-site and within 100m of the plan area, including the Bow River. REF Application 2023-02's Growth Plan Alignment Statement provides an overview of the ESAs that are on-site or within 100m of the Chinatown ARP plan area. The presence of these ESAs triggered the need to complete an Environmental Study, as required by Growth Plan Policy 3.3.2.1. As noted in the REF Interpretation Guide, "environmental reports or studies previously completed as part of the development planning process, or as part of another municipal process, can be used to fulfill the requirement for an Environmental Study provided they are consistent with the Growth Plan and consider a regional perspective using the CMR's definition of ESAs" (see [page 20 of the REF Interpretation Guide](#)). REF Application 2023-02's Growth Plan Alignment Statement notes that a range of ESA studies were used to inform the development of the Chinatown ARP policies. The Growth Plan Alignment Statement also identifies the various policies and mitigation measures that work together to minimize the undesirable impacts of development on identified ESAs. Please refer to REF Application 2023-02, Growth Plan Alignment Statement (see especially Appendix 1) for further information about specific mitigation measures related to ESAs, including flood prone areas.

4.0 Recommendation

That the Board **APPROVE** REF Application 2023-02, the City of Calgary Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan.



**Lovatt
Planning Consultants Inc.**

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January 27, 2023

**Jordon Copping, Chief Officer
Calgary Metropolitan Region Board
305, 602 – 11th Avenue SW
Calgary, AB,
T2R 1J8**

Dear Mr. Copping:

Reference: **REF# 2023-02 for the Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan in the City of Calgary.**

Please find attached the third-party evaluation of the Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan.

It is our opinion that the proposed plan is generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, being Schedule A to Ministerial Order MSD:064/22.

Olga Lovatt, RPP
Principal

LOVATT PLANNING CONSULTANTS Inc.

O. Lovatt,

REGIONAL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK (REF)

THIRD-PARTY REVIEW

Member Municipality	City of Calgary
Application Name	Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan
REF Number	2023-02
Type of Application	New Area Redevelopment Plan (Infill and Redevelopment)
Municipality Bylaw #	64P2022
Date of Third-Party Review Report	January 27, 2023

Findings

That the City of Calgary Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan is generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Growth Plan, Schedule A to Ministerial Order MSD:064/22.

Summary of Review

- The Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) comprises 24.76 hectares located adjacent to the south bank of the Bow River in the centre of the City of Calgary. The plan is based on the following five core ideas developed in the foundational Chinatown Cultural Plan.
 - Affordable attractive neighbourhood;
 - Built environment expresses unique Chinatown character;
 - Chinatown's historic significance preserved;
 - Vibrant streets and eclectic commercial offerings; and,
 - Support for community, family and individual health and harmony.
- The Land Use Concept (Map 2) designates the majority of the Plan area as Residential Mixed-Use. The minority land uses include: Natural Areas; Parks and Open Space; and, City Civic and are described as the centres of neighbourhood activity that greatly contribute to sense of place. The Density Concept (Map 3) divides the mixed use residential area into areas A, B, C, C1, and C2 each with assigned Floor Area Ratios (FAR) ranging from 3.0 to 7.0 and to 12.0 if density bonusing is applied. Plan area population is estimated to double by 2049 to 5,000 residents with significant potential to increase the number of jobs.
- The ARP emphasizes the need to maintain the character of the area. Its unique neighbourhood character and historical significance will continue to be expressed and preserved through its built environment.
- Flood Hazard Areas (5.2.4) is a policy relevant to the Plan area's location adjacent to the Bow River. Regional mobility corridors are also recognized.
- The review found that the Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan is generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Growth Plan.

Review Prepared by

Olga Lovatt, RPP
Principal
Lovatt Planning Consultants Inc.

Part A: REF Review

The purpose of the REF review process is to confirm the alignment of statutory plans or statutory plan amendments with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Growth Plan. The following tables provide a summary of the third party review findings. Growth Plan policy areas that are “not applicable” to this REF application have been marked accordingly.

3.1 Blueprint for Growth	
3.1.1 Region-Wide Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although located far from viable agricultural lands the Chinatown ARP has policy that advocates for the local production of food through rooftop and community gardens. Chinatown’s vibrant streets and eclectic commercial offerings support a thriving local economy.
3.1.2 Preferred Placetypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of the Plan area is for Infill and Redevelopment place type with subsidiary uses including parks and natural areas. A variety of mixed-use configurations with emphasis on residential developments is possible resulting in a more intense urban form and a comparable diversity of housing types. The Plan area is well connected to transit with active transportation links and interconnected streets.
3.1.3 Preferred Growth Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan area is located within the City of Calgary preferred growth area.
3.1.4 Placetype Targets for Population Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Infill and Redevelopment placetype represents 100% of potential growth areas.
3.1.5 Rural and Country Cluster Placetype	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

3.1.6 Rural Employment Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
3.1.7 Location Criteria for Placetypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chinatown ARP is within the City of Calgary Preferred Growth Area.
3.1.8 Hamlet Growth Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
3.1.9 Joint Planning Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chinatown ARP is not located within a joint planning area as designated by Schedule 1.
3.1.10 Existing Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed Chinatown ARP will replace the existing ARP. The ARP has the potential to significantly increase residential and employment densities.
3.1.11 Municipal Development Plan Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
3.1.12 Exceptions to the Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

3.2 Economic Wellbeing

3.2.1 Municipal Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit and active transportation methods are readily available to residents and workers within the Plan area. Increased residential density coupled with increased employment density will allow for more live, work, play opportunities.
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3.2.2 Regional Transportation Planning Support for Economic Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.
3.2.3 Agricultural Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan policy (3.3.1.2 c ii) directs that new development should include rooftop gardens and or edible landscaping.

3.3 Protect and Enjoy the Environment

3.3.1 Flood Prone Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Natural Area is located within the Provincially Designated Floodway. A new downtown flood barrier (completion in 2024) and ARP policy respecting riverside development are intended to mitigate impact in anticipation of more severe and frequent flood events.
3.3.2 Environmentally Sensitive Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Environmental screening report was prepared for the area designated Natural Area in the northwest corner of the Plan area with recommended mitigation measures proposed. The City of Calgary's extensive knowledge and robust policy regarding environmentally sensitive areas supplants the need for a new specific Environmental Study for the designated Natural Area.
3.3.3 Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy consistent with higher order Plans is directed at climate change mitigation and adaptation.

3.4 Water Stewardship

3.4.1 Watershed Protection	Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.
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3.4.2 Stormwater Management	Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.
3.4.3 Water Efficiency	Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.
3.4.4 Collaboration and Governance	Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.

3.5 Shared Services Optimization	
3.5.1 Transportation & Transit Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ARP boasts a highly accessible and connected neighbourhood that supports bus rapid transit and proposed LRT corridors as well as robust cycling and pedestrian systems. • The future LRT corridor adjacent the Plan area's west boundary is anticipated to play an important role in the total transportation network.
3.5.2 Energy and Utility Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map 6: Regional Corridors and Context Map is located in Appendix D of the ARP. • Plan policies promote high standards and continued monitoring of corridors.
3.5.3 Planning and Protection for Regional Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan policy identifies and protects the future LRT corridor adjacent the west side of the Plan area.
3.5.4 Recreation	Not applicable to individual statutory plans for the purposes of REF.

Part B: Consistency with applicable Context Study

As per Growth Plan policy 4.1.1.3, “prior to the incorporation of outcomes of Context Studies within amendments to the Growth Plan, the Board must consider approved context studies in its decision-making.”

1. Is any portion of the plan area of the statutory plan or plan amendment within a Joint Planning Area?
Yes ☐ No ☒
2. If yes, has a Context Study been approved by the Board for this Joint Planning Area?
Yes ☐ No ☐
3. If yes, please complete the appropriate Context Study review template and attach to this third party review.