

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Horacio Galanti, City Manager	DATE: March 22, 2021
FROM: Dan Whelton Senior Planner	MEETING: City Council
SUBJECT: Bylaw C-1407 Avondale High School Sites Area Redevelopment Plan	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- 1) Give 1st reading to Bylaw **C-1407**, being the Avondale High School Sites Area Redevelopment Plan;
- 2) Give 2nd reading to Bylaw **C-1407**;
- 3) Have 3rd reading for Bylaw **C-1407**; and
- 4) Give 3rd reading to Bylaw **C-1407**.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the May 14, 2019 Infrastructure and Protective Services Committee, the following motion was passed:

Committee accept the Terms of Reference for the Avondale High Schools Area Redevelopment Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Avondale High School Sites Area Redevelopment Plan (Avondale ARP) area is located at the north end of the Avondale neighbourhood. It currently contains two high schools; the Grande Prairie Composite High School, owned by the Grande Prairie Public School District (GPPSD); and the Peace Wapiti Academy, owned by the Peace Wapiti Public School District (PWPSD). The plan area also contains the Leisure Centre, a City-owned recreation complex that included a 25-metre swimming pool, fitness room and indoor soccer field. The pool and fitness area were closed in 2010 when the Eastlink Centre, the City's new recreation facility on 68 Avenue, was opened. The Grande Prairie Soccer Centre, comprised of an indoor soccer field, is located directly north of the Leisure Centre.

The GPPSD is building a new high school nearby, and much of the Leisure Centre needs to be demolished due to structural deterioration. The City and GPPSD intend to partner to demolish both

the Composite High School and part of the Leisure Centre at the same time. Demolition of these facilities provides the City and school districts with the opportunity to review the future use of the area and identify possibilities for infill redevelopment. In 2019 City Council gave direction to prepare an Area Redevelopment Plan for the area.

ANALYSIS

Avondale High School Sites Area Redevelopment Plan

The vision for the Avondale ARP is based on engagement with both the landowners within the plan area and the public. A visioning session was held with the landowners in October 2019 to identify guiding principles for several topics (land use, transportation, public space, etc.). Attendees at the public engagement session, held in December 2019, identified what they liked about the area, how they used it and what improvements they would like to see.

The results from both sessions were consolidated into the Vision contained in Section 2 of the ARP.

The main components of the ARP are:

I. Short-term land use concept

The short-term begins with the demolition of the Composite High School and the pool portion of the Leisure Centre. The elements of the short-term land use concept include:

- Construction of replacement sports fields on the Composite High Site
- Realignment of 112 Avenue
- Stormwater management upgrades

II. Medium -term land use concept

Demolition of the indoor soccer field portion of the Leisure Centre and the Soccer Centre represents the start of the medium-term. The elements of the medium-term land use concept include:

- Demolition of the two indoor soccer field buildings and the construction of a new indoor recreation facility in the southeast corner of the ARP area.
- The construction of two sports fields to the east of 106 Street.

III. A long-term land use concept

The eventual demolition of the Peace Wapiti Academy school represents the start of the long-term. Elements of the long-term land use concept include:

- Commercial and multi-family sites in the northeast corner of the ARP area, adjacent to 116 Avenue
- Possible connection of 105 Street to 116 Avenue.

Maps 7A, 8A, and 9A show alternate land use concepts that would apply if the City chooses not to realign 112 Avenue.

Plan Implementation

Section 8 of the ARP (Implementation) contains a list of steps that the City should take to facilitate redevelopment and achieve the vision of the ARP. These steps include:

- Reconfiguring the lot lines and land ownership through discussion and negotiation between the owners of the land in the plan area
- Realignment of 112 Avenue and connection of 105 Street to 116 Avenue
- Stormwater management projects
- Tree planting
- New and realigned sidewalks and trails
- Future architectural controls for the commercial and residential areas

Relationship to City Council's Focus Areas / Strategic Directions

The ARP supported by the following Result Definitions in Council's Strategic Plan

- Encourages and supports well-planned, sufficiently regulated and appropriately balanced development, redevelopment and community revitalization that stimulates economic growth within Grande Prairie.
- Engages in both near and long-range planning to ensure the community's future needs are always considered.
- Designs, develops, and enhances safe, well-maintained, accessible, open spaces, parks, trails, recreational, cultural, and other municipal facilities.
- Establishes and maintains constructive relations with other governing authorities in the region including municipalities, First Nations and School Boards.

Environmental Impact

No negative impacts are expected.

Economic Impact

In the long-term, commercial and multi-family development in the northeast corner of the plan area will have a positive economic impact.

Social Impact

The ARP recommends the development of new sports fields to replace those being lost due to construction of the new high school. It also recommends the development of a new indoor recreation facility. These facilities would have a positive social impact on the community.

Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents

Municipal Government Act (MGA)

This ARP is being adopted in accordance with the MGA.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

The MDP contains several relevant policies and sections. They include:

Guiding Principle 5

Enhance and sustain our existing neighbourhoods by promoting redevelopment that embraces their character and by providing required infrastructure and community support services.

Guiding Principle 14

Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions and make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.

Section 4.3 – Infill Development

Council supports infill residential and commercial development where appropriate on vacant or underutilized parcels of land in established areas, particularly along transit routes.

Section 6.1 - Residential Infill in Established Neighbourhoods

It is Council's intention to encourage residential infill and intensification in established neighbourhoods pursuant to a Direct Control District process.

Sections 6.3 and 15.8 also refer to Area Redevelopment Plans.

The ARP area is currently designated **Public Service / Institutional** in the MDP. This is consistent with the short-term and medium-term land use concepts. Any development of the commercial and / or residential areas shown in the long-term concept would require an amendment to the MDP. It is recommended that the MDP not be amended until such development is imminent.

Land Use Bylaw (LUB)

The entire plan area is currently zoned **PS – Public Service**, which is appropriate for the current uses of the land, as well as the uses proposed in the short-term and medium-term land use concepts. In the long term, amendments to the LUB would be required to facilitate the commercial and multi-family residential development shown in the long-term concept.

Risk

None foreseen.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

There was significant stakeholder and public engagement in the process of developing the ARP. This included:

Landowner discussion regarding property lines	September 2019
Visioning Workshop & Mini-Charrette with landowners in the ARP area, which included members of City Council and administration from numerous City departments, and Trustees and senior administrators from the Grande Prairie Public and Peace Wapiti Public School Districts	November 2019
Public Engagement (Open House) Session #1 – Values Identification	December 2019

Landowner session to review preliminary land use concepts	February 2020
Public Engagement (Open House and Online) Session #2 - Review of land use concepts. This included in-person sessions over two evenings and an online session.	November 2020
Public Engagement (Online) Session #3 – Final draft of ARP	March 2021

The public engagements sessions were advertised, and letters sent to landowners in the north part of Avondale and to the neighbourhood association.

The public hearing was advertised twice in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Government Act. The letters to the surrounding landowners about the March 2, 2021 public engagement session also included information about the public hearing date.

Based on responses gathered through the public engagement, the short-term and medium-term land use concepts are well supported by the public. Retaining open space and sports fields was supported, as were the possible recreation facility and enhanced trail connections. Concerns and objections were expressed about the multi-family and commercial uses shown in the long-term land use concept, as well as about the possible future connection of 105 Street to 116 Avenue. However, at least one resident expressed support for that connection.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The ARP recommends that 112 Avenue be relocated to the north. Engineering Services has estimated the cost at approximately \$1.08 million.

The long-term land use concept shows a possible future connection of 105 Street (Willie deWit Drive) to 116 Avenue. Engineering Services has estimated the cost to be approximately \$3.5 - \$5 million.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The ARP includes short-term, medium-term, and long-term land use concepts that show how the land uses in the area are intended to transition over time and as milestones, such as the demolition of the Composite High School and Leisure Centre take place.

The main feature of the ARP is that it intends the area to remain a main center for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities for the City of Grande Prairie.

It also identifies an opportunity for redevelopment of the northeast corner of the area in the long term.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bylaw C-1407 – Avondale High School Sites Area Redevelopment Plan.