



Developed Areas Guidebook

Stakeholder Report Back: What We Heard

February 15, 2019 Heritage Workshop

Project overview

The Developed Areas Guidebook (DAG) Workshop on Heritage Conservation Policies served two primary purposes:

- As a response to previous meetings with 'Calgarians for Heritage Districts' who have been lobbying Councillors and Administration for a conservation district approach; and,
- A critical opportunity to receive stakeholder feedback on heritage-specific content of the proposed update to the Developed Areas Guidebook, prior to Calgary Planning Commission July 4, 2019.

Administration has received explicit direction from Council to explore additional heritage conservation 'tools' in the updated Developed Areas Guidebook. Due to project timelines, the February 15th workshop provided a time-sensitive opportunity to engage specifically on the proposed heritage content, outside of the general DAG update engagement.

Engagement overview

The invite only event was to inform subject matter enthusiasts/experts on the concept of a heritage overlay district and the possibility that the Developed Area Guidebook (DAG) 2.0 could lay out the framework for this tool – which would be applied/undertaken when a Local Area Plan project is underway. Using a fabricated heritage windshield survey, the exercises were created to engage and gain feedback from the participants on the opportunities and challenges faced when 1. Determining a boundary of a potential overlay and 2. What kinds of regulations and incentives could apply to a boundary/boundaries.

The workshop began with a PowerPoint presentation which first briefly introduced the direction that the DAG is taking – building blocks based on street experience and activity. Next, the concept of overlays applied to building blocks was explained as the mechanism by which heritage (or TOD or other unique area features) could be addressed when a local area plan is underway. The heritage team presented on Heritage Districts in general and how provincial legislation is distinct in Alberta making the application of this type planning tool challenging. To prep for the exercises, the process of conducting a "windshield survey" and using the framework of "contributing", "contributing-altered" and "non-contributing" assets was introduced. Key to this process is ensuring there is initial engagement with community/plan area stakeholders to determine the heritage values(s) that existing in the area.

What we heard

Using a hypothetical completed windshield survey map with "contributing", "contributing-altered" and "non-contributing" assets marked, creating a boundary in the first exercise was difficult. By and large participants noted that the determining the boundary/boundaries couldn't happen in isolation from other community conversations, such as infrastructure, density/intensity targets and the types of incentives/financing that is or isn't available. The windshield surveys would likely need to be supplemented by further studies and



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community conversations. How to consider “contributing altered” sites is challenging. Of the tables who did decide on overlay boundary(ies), sub areas of concentrations of historic assets was employed rather than applying boundaries to whole communities. Furthermore, those subareas were delineated by type of historic assets thus creating residential and commercial (mainstreet) overlay subareas.

For the second exercise participants were given a hypothetical Heritage District Overlay (HDO) applied to a portion of a windshield survey, assets in this boundary included “contributing”, “contributing-altered” and “non-contributing” sites; primarily all residential on interior streets but adjacent to a future transit station. Generally the participants indicated form, scale and massing was an important regulation for an HDO in order to address the streetscape not necessarily only address an individual site, as well as setbacks. Incentivizing retention of historic sites – in this HOD exercise that being residential – was suggested to be achieved with permitted uses and support of additional units (laneway house)

Feedback Forms

Generally participants felt the workshop was a good introduction to how the DAG could set out the process by which a Local Area Plan would engage, research and design an HDO. Also the process could facilitate discussions and thus highlight what is the heritage value(s) of an area(s) within a community/local plan area. However, concern was noted as to how to enforce/implement the HDO guidelines; how it would tie into other policies and city-shaping goals. Challenges of HDO highlighted by the participants included gaining “buy-in” from all stakeholders, not just heritage advocates; addressing financial implications; and balancing regulation with opportunity/flexibility.

Next steps

In the weeks following this workshop staff adjusted the proposed wording in the DAG that would explain the HDO process. Clarity on requiring pre-windshield survey research was made, as well as implementation of an HDO’s guidelines was added. The team will also meet specifically with industry as that has been requested since the workshop concluded.



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Verbatim Comments

Exercise 1 – Heritage District Overlay Boundary: as group discuss and determine an overlay boundary(ies).

1. *What factors influenced the location of your table’s proposed boundary / boundaries?*

NOT EASY. Inglewood – cultural landscape – CBD, train, industrial. – consensus - heritage -
Start small – like 9 th ave (commercial zone); the key areas are easier to defend; Streetscape is important too – landscaping, trees, context so you don’t want to just pinpoint houses/building. Railroad boundaries?
Also felt that 2 large is appropriate w/ maybe subsets of regulation
Inventory sites adjacency; TOD; creating density at appropriate scale; outliers, one offs how do we deal with them; sliding scale incentives to restrictions eg. Laneway homes; some older neighborhoods have dif uses, commercial districts, industrial, residential; defining community character – trees, setbacks, massing.
Do we leave large sites separate? Decided “no” – function as part of the whole. Community based knowledge important in forming functional districts – not just able to look at a map. Outliers (one off’s) are ok but not enough to inform the streetscape or character-policy for outliers. Factor in potential TOD or other major infrastructure investment.

2. *Given the boundary location (s) proposed by your table, what opportunities and challenges would you anticipate?*

WINSHEILD SURVEYS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT – context paper and/or community SOS’s, local knowledge/values should inform the boundary process.
Too many districts -> system gets complex; too big a district -> lose specific nuances within community
Challenges – should we just draw a huge border around the entire 2 areas? That way it covers everything. Or sub areas?; worry is if the boundary is too big we will miss really protecting specific areas – character.
TOD
Opportunities: concentrations recognized; keep scale with yellow (Contributing Altered) preservation to impact new infill
Challenges: what do you do with large concentration of yellow (contributing altered)?; some outliers need addressed.

Exercise 2 – Heritage District Overlay Guidelines: as group discuss and determine what elements could make up an overlay’s guidelines.

1. *What guidelines – permissive & regulatory – does your table propose for the example Heritage District Overlay?*

Possible to increase density on a street and retain streetscape by retaining hist(sic) street rhythm up to corners, but allowing building on corners (max. 2 lots?, 4 storeys)
Consider “enforceability”; can we mitigate disputes differently than SDAB?



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<i>Comments on individual cards:</i>
<i>Soft landscaping:</i> encourage retention of mature trees and plantings
<i>Lot coverage:</i> consider paved surface/storm requirements; retain front setback – wider community input regarding side setbacks.
<i>Uses/Activities:</i> Make uses permitted to enable more incentive to retain bldg. heritage. Not discretionary.
<i>Historic lot patterns:</i> apply statutorily – preferable on corners
<i>Shadowing & overlooking:</i> retain historic (not necessarily existing) heights.
<i>Materials:</i> retain use of historic materials on facades visible from the front street
<i>Additions:</i> rear of property or modest if side yard
<i>Driveways & garages:</i> no front driveways if not historic norm.
<i>Setbacks:</i> retain front setbacks (0 lot line for commercial)
<i>Scale/Height:</i> maintain historic norm.
<i>Roof line/Pitch:</i> Retain existing variety
<i>Suites & Laneway Housing:</i> incentive to encourage preservation. YES encourage with incentives if house preserved.
<i>Window & Door Openings:</i> retain.
Integrate new development very important to a heritage district; street character is as important as the built form.
All of the cards – fencing maybe not as its changeable
street experience; Direct control; unintended consequences
1. Tools First 2. Typologies (big, medium – precincts) fine grain/character streets, open space 3. Large zones of significance; what does overlay imply – remove like GMO (growth management overlay)?
Regulatory: retain current zoning in a TOD>; density bonusing used as incentive; adjacency rules; scale, height respectful to overlay; driveways; historic lot patterns – discourages parcel assembly; landscaping; additions; scale/height; roofline/pitch ; suites & laneways – relax lot coverage; uses/activities.
<i>Architectural Design:</i> we think massing & scale are important; materials for longevity – no vinyl/chain link; suites & laneway -> permissible -> incentive for heritage ->how big?
Challenge: monstrosity – underground development + attached garage – does height + scale take precedent
<i>Setbacks:</i> relatively consistent w/ relation to context – site specific + building purpose.
Not as important: materials, fences, shadow impact – addressed thru massing/roofline
<i>Scale + height/massing:</i> peaked roof makes a difference
Has to mirror pattern of block for driveway/garage orientation
<i>Lot Coverage:</i> Is it about keeping tree canopy + relates to scale/massing/height.
Landscaping in front setback
<i>Historic Lot Patterns:</i> Yes, this matters but can be dealt with design is. Make it look separate
<i>Roofline/Pitch:</i> very important; angled roof ok/shed roof; prefer pitched roof
<i>Additions:</i> not overwhelming/don't have to mimic/no faux heritage; sympathetic to street
<i>Window/Door openings:</i> commercial key;very important to keep fine grain; be consistent on street wall with what else is on historic street; Sonic (sic) Tomic's "lines"



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FEEDBACK FORMS:

1. Did the workshop provide you with a good understanding of the proposed Heritage District Overlay tool? If not, what additional information would have been useful?

It was a great overview & a welcome direction. It is a complex planning exercise & and it would be nice to see/be involved in how this evolves
Nothing upfront that the overlay would be implemented via DC
Yes, a good introduction to the potential of overlay districts; What I learned is that, depending upon the overlay district boundaries and the particular location in Calgary, there are innumerable approaches to each district. Good thing is that there is maximum flexibility to tailor-make each district.
Needed deeper dive on tool; like "GMO"(growth management overlay)/ or just a zone?
Not sure how enforceable it is in a TOD; not clear what appetite there is for the to implement given pressure from developers
Yes. I want to know more. How soon can we develop it?
Needed a 3 hour session to fully delve into the ideas/concepts; good layout of background, ongoing work & how it ties into other policy.
More or less. Need a stronger understanding of the financial implications of both restrictions and incentives.
Yes
Yes, good mix of groups and I felt the exercise-based workshop allowed us to contribute meaningfully. Very respectful environment and information.
Yes, and phasing out the activity into stages of understanding was helpful – I.E. boundaries -> rules & restrictions
Yes! The workshop was very helpful. The exercises helped put the ideas into plans.
Context of each community should be included in overlay - districts need to be functional

2. What are the aspects of a Heritage District Overlay that you find most valuable?

The fact that there is one! Long overdue! Philosophy & Values & education = compliance vs (sic) enforcement
Focus for communities to identify heritage value
It probably represents, through the DAG and the Local Area Plan process, a historical opportunity to get SOME form of protection for our build historical resources. This needs to get approved and started in 2019. 2020 should see the start of many heritage districts DC overlays as possible!
Addressing some of the issues that repeatedly occur with infill development
All of it. It is time to finally have this conversation.
Preservation of unique aspects of buildings that doesn't exists anywhere else; Allow flexibility for opportunity = permitted use
Preserve built heritage to allow for the sharing of our history and experiences; provide stronger incentives; support more restrictive development transitions; promote sense of place and experience; promote pedestrian oriented streetscapes.
Mapping exercise and general discussion
Defining community character and laying the debate to rest. Let's figure out the character areas and stop throwing out the nebulous term wherever.



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Recognition of the character of a particular area. Preserving a district as a whole makes it a more compelling asset. Would be helpful to see incentives that would encourage & promote districts.
The cards were very helpful with the examples on the back
Context is established in terms of streetscape; keys are height/mass/scale & fine grain nature.

3. What are some challenges with a Heritage Overlay District tool as proposed?

The development industry is very focused on revenue – maximizing investment vs doing the right thing.
Common criteria; addressing market & financial impacts; being flexible; considering upcoming climate initiatives (eg:lelabelling, retrofits, code); Aligning & prioritizing council direction (eg:TOD/MDP/CTP) - greenline impacts; Common process & approach (implementation)
Funding & financial tools are needed first
Lack of support from developers and council
The current state of our ARP. We need this stuff, but our ARP is rolling forward without it. This is a disservice to the community. I want to see community engagement on this, I think the community would have valuable “on the ground” insight.
Ensuring there is still opportunity for growth & change; how does this district relate to other priorities (i.e. TOD, Mainstreets); how do you incentivize preserving to counter economic factors?
Hurt affordability and diversity of people; potential for gentrification and exclusion; potential that they are used as a club against all change; potential that communities with overlays are in a way “better” than others; potential to reduce existing property rights of certain elements; potential to compromise MDP and TOD objectives.
May not always be clear “window/windshield”; owners might not be supportive; can it be implementable in a timely manner
Understanding for CPC/developers/file managers. The architectural controls are useless if they’re subverted through the DP process. We should allow for flexibility of uses but stick to what matters e.g. scale & massing
It’s almost impossible to accommodate all heritage resources...at least is can’t be done without sacrificing some development potential. Also the specificity of an area factors into how the rules/restrictions are perceived and implemented.
Buy-in from non-heritage types in the community; How developers will look a heritage district overlay; what incentives will come with overlay districts
Funding; how to upkeep individual houses? Bonusing more likely to go to mainstreets heritage instead of indiv..(sic) houses.

4. Are there additional considerations that are needed as the team moves towards creating this tool for the Developed Areas Guidebook?

Get it done while there is support on council
Funding & financing tools; value of Heritage; willingness to put value on this relative to other priorities – city & corporate wide; servicing; environmental considerations
Prioritize values/objectives and do Trade offs
TOD’s will trump overlays unless height is restricted



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It feels like there are two different processes happening. LAP's and this. Historic East Calgary LAP should be a combination of both process and I am so concerned this is happening in two different conversations. How do we stop this and get the conversation happening in one spot.
Too prescriptive allow less adaptation, flexibility or innovation in how to use a district appropriately
Mostly financial implications need to be better understood; who is better or worse of(f) with an overlay & do the privileged benefit at the expense of more marginalized.
Intangible heritage is important as well
Maybe there needs to be some more focus on incentives for heritage districting, as opposed to just restrictions.
I think you need some quick wins where the overlay can be implemented. Until people actually see it in use I fear it could be a tool that just sits on a shelf.
Developers/financial model needs to be a part of it for it to work; citizens in heritage areas should be brought on board to encourage homeowners to get on board down the road; This is a city driven initiative – do it!

5. Do you have any other thoughts to share with the project team?

Inglewood & Ramsay should be created definitely
A mediation process from the beginning before municipal approval to save time and \$
Cards are great – tangible illustrations of the problems
Using Inglewood Ramsay as the case study – less objective for a citywide framework
Challenge in aligning ARPs & statutory plans/direction
Hillhurst Sunnyside ARP currently has no tools to incentivize heritage preservation (density bonusing @ 17.85 sq/m does not count). Can we amend HS?
How do we rectify this situation? How do we get the heritage conversation as part of the ARP. This needs to be in our local area plan. Ramsay/Inglewood should be one of the starting points.
Great workshop
Ensure that tools/numbers are available and understood by CAs and other stakeholders. If there are funds for public realm/heritage, they shouldn't be hidden in fine print.
I think this could make an effective too to add to the DAG. Thank you for the opportunity to test it out!
Job well done!
Let communities talk about tradeoffs & make hard choices – it's a this or that compromise