



**The future of Richmond Green  
Frequently Asked Questions  
last updated: March 29, 2021**

**1. How does The City make land management decisions?**

Faced with a continued economic downturn and the impacts of COVID-19, The City of Calgary continuously seeks to deliver services more affordably and to strengthen our community's future. This includes, where it makes sense, positioning surplus City-owned lands and real estate expertise to increase the tax base, generate revenue and leverage existing infrastructure in support of the growth of our city. This approach recognizes that City-owned lands are valuable assets that provide long-term and strategic benefits – economic, environmental and social – to current and future generations.

**2. What is the Golf Course Real Estate Feasibility Assessment?**

In May 2019, Council directed Administration to proceed with a Golf Course Real Estate Feasibility Assessment to explore whether Golf and Sport Development can become tax neutral through repurposing and disposition of golf course land.

The City's Real Estate and Development Services team screened each course through a variety of criteria to identify which location(s) may have further real estate or land development potential. This included:

- An historical review of the current golf lands
- An environmental review and analysis of existing servicing infrastructure
- Planning and policy considerations
- A review of current golf operations and a number of other categories.

The review (Report PFC2020-0952) identified land development potential for Richmond Green and resulted in Council direction Administration to:

1. *Prepare land use and subdivision applications for the ±5 acre parcel at 33 AVE SW and Sarcee Road SW and if planning approvals are granted, proceed to market the property consistent with The City's established sales process;*
2. *Direct RE&DS to bring back a real estate feasibility assessment that substantiates Corporate needs at the remaining land at Richmond Green, and the Richmond Green Operations Workplace Centers (OWC), to determine further disposition opportunities and report to Priorities and Finance Committee (PFC) on or before Q4 2021;*
3. *Prepare and implement a plan to accommodate disc golf as an interim use at Richmond Green starting in 2021 and until such time that a future redevelopment plan has been completed and implemented;*

3. **Why develop the ±5 acre parcel at 33 AVE SW and Sarcee Road SW?**

With the closure of the golf course, the community is gaining access to space that was otherwise dedicated to one sport and required payment to access (6 months of the year). With this land opening up, in conjunction with the impending closure of the on-site City Depot, there are opportunities to review all the land at Richmond Green holistically. The 5-acre parcel allows the City to leverage potential proceeds from the sale of the land and existing infrastructure to increase the residential tax base and enhance the Richmond Green Park. These outcomes support our municipal development goals, specifically with regard to ensuring a well-run City.

4. **Will lost amenities be replaced?**

How the remaining 46 acres at Richmond Green will be used remains to be seen. An internal process within the City is occurring to validate and review existing uses. We call this process a “Needs Assessment” and the criteria we are considering includes:

- How to accommodate Little League Baseball
- How to re-purpose the existing buildings on site
- What existing uses must remain and what future uses can be added
- How to accommodate recreational spaces given the existing water infrastructure at Richmond Green

The findings of the needs assessment will be presented to Council for subsequent follow up work to be actioned.

5. **How do I voice my opinion for this project?**

Engagement is being conducted separately for the 5-acre land use amendment application. The City, in conjunction with its planning consultant, will be hosting a virtual open house to obtain comments on the application that will be compiled into a ‘What We Heard’ report for Calgary Planning Commission and Council’s consideration. **Dates, times and how to participate will be provided in the coming weeks.** You are also invited to attend the Public Hearing at City Council for this application and can sign up to speak virtually. Stay tuned to the website for these important dates.

6. **What is the scope of ‘the future of Richmond Green’ project?**

a. *5-acre subdivision and land use amendment application*

The portion identified for redevelopment is the ±5 acres in the northwest corner (i.e., the two small baseball diamonds).

b. *46-acre real estate feasibility assessment*

The remainder of the land (including the City operations depot approaching its lifecycle) will be assessed to substantiate Corporate need to determine future free and compatible public uses and further land development opportunities, if any.

c. *New bus rapid transit road (BRT)*

In 2015 Council approved a new road between Currie Barracks and 33 AVE SW, through Richmond Green Park, as part of the Currie Barracks development. The City is in the early process of determining how this road will be aligned, and what portions of land will be affected.

d. *Council directed that frisbee golf become an interim use starting 2021 at the former golf course. The City is working to implement this use, as well as ensuring that other free and compatible public uses are implemented; and*

e. *There is critical water infrastructure at Richmond Green and it needs to be maintained and protected. The City is working to determine if the water infrastructure needs to be expanded, where would it go, and what uses could co-locate with the water infrastructure.*

**7. Why did The City close the Richmond Green golf course?**

The decision to close Richmond Green golf course at the end of the 2019 golf season was based on a number of factors, including:

- The course had the lowest attendance and revenue of all City courses and the number of rounds played at Richmond had continued to decline.
- The infrastructure limitations limited the possibility of expanding golf service offerings
- Other viable golf facilities existed in the immediate area

**8. Is The City looking to redevelop all of its Parks?**

No. The City understands the importance of both passive and active open space. Opportunities such as Richmond Green are rare.

**9. What is the primary municipal need for the Richmond Green lands?**

The primary need for the former golf course lands and City depot site is to preserve lands for future critical water infrastructure and reservoir expansion at Richmond Green.

**10. For which portion of the Richmond Green Park has Council directed Administration to prepare a land use and subdivision application?**

The subject land for the land use and subdivision application is the northwest corner of the site located at Sarcee Rd and 34 Ave SW. The real estate feasibility assessment identified this land to have redevelopment potential. The land is between 5 and 6-acres in size.

**11. How is Richmond Green classified for open space policy purposes?**

Richmond Green is classified as a regional park. Regional parks are not included in community open space stats, because they serve a different function than smaller, community sized open spaces. They are planned and funded differently. There is typically more unique and larger amenities at the regional spaces and thus they pull from a larger catchment area than local open spaces.

**12. What amount of open space dedication will there be at Richmond Green**

It is too soon to say what amount of open space dedication will be at Richmond Green. This is being considered as part of the Needs Assessment.

**13. What is a Needs Assessment?**

The Needs Assessment documents and reviews all of the existing uses and amenities across Richmond Green. It is used to understand who stewards what land, who needs land in the future and what are the opportunities / constraints on the land.

**14. How will pathways be impacted?**

The pathways in Richmond Green are well utilized. Any development will consider replacing and re-connecting to the network.

**15. How will the toboggan hill be impacted?**

The tobogganing hill will be preserved until such time that Water Resources needs the land for future water infrastructure expansion.

**16. Will the two smaller ball diamonds be replaced?**

The baseball diamonds are well used and thus this project is maintaining the large baseball diamond (until such time that Water Resources needs the land). Real Estate is working with the Calgary West Little League and Parks/Recreation to explore no net loss of baseball usage. See also question 18 below.

**17. What is the Operations Workplace Centre (OWC) and what are the plans for it?**

The City owns and operates a ~10 ac Roads and Parks depot at Richmond Green. The City calls this an "Operations Workplace Centre" (OWC), and uses it to store materials, vehicles, and coordinate snow events. The OWC is closing in the next 1-2 years as The City has opened a new depot off Sarcee Trail SW. The OWC is not considered open space. Its land use designation is Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R), which allows for many uses that are not recreationally focused (i.e. – a Depot).

**18. Will the OWC become residential development?**

In 2014, Council approved the Currie Barracks Outline Plan (LOC2014-0109). The applicant depicted residential development at the adjacent OWC. City Administration, however, is re-thinking the OWC as residential, as there is critical water infrastructure under the former golf course that needs to expand to the OWC. Administration is exploring temporary open space across the OWC lands, until the reservoirs expand, and then permanent open space would be provided similar to how the golf course lands look / feel. This scenario requires Council approval (which has not occurred yet) and is part of our current work. If the OWC site is repurposed to open space, then it would offset the loss of open space where the two baseball diamonds are proposed for development;

**19. How will this project support the objectives of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP)?**

This project supports the MDP by adding density to an established area immediately adjacent to transit and open space, AND to significantly enhance the open space.

As the land use Development Authority, The City has an obligation to provide essential infrastructure, including core services, such as water, wastewater, stormwater, roads and fire and police services. The City is also responsible to its current and future citizens for ensuring the provision of complete community infrastructure including transit, libraries, parks and recreation facilities. In so doing, it acknowledges that the provision of infrastructure and the associated operating and maintenance costs require substantial ongoing investment.

The MDP states that land use, development and transportation planning should seek to conserve, protect and enhance natural asset features, parks and open spaces. However it also seeks to encourage the concentration of residential density in areas adjacent to open space, parks, wetlands and sports fields, especially where the area is served by transit, services and other community amenities. And it also calls for increased density in the established areas of Calgary, leveraging existing utility capacity to ensure more sustainable development in our City.

**20. What is the applicable Local Area Plan for Richmond Green Park?**

Richmond Green Park is within Local Area Plan #9, which does not have a name yet and has not begun. It is not within the Westbrook Local Area Plan.

**21. How does the CFB West Master Plan and Currie Outline Plan (LOC2014-0109) impact these streams of work?**

The CFB West Master plan is a non-statutory document and the Currie Outline Plan will have been reviewed by Planning in concert with the Master Plan. The Currie outline plan shows 10 per cent of its land as Municipal Reserve. It also shadow planned residential development at the city depot and includes a new road between Currie Barracks and 33 AVE SW cutting through Richmond Green Park. The upcoming subdivision and land use application on the 5-acre parcel will also be reviewed against the CFB West Master Plan. Community Planning will do its normal policy review upon submission of the application as the appropriate authority to discuss the relevance of the non-statutory master plan and how amendments to this policy are undertaken. The Richmond Green lands are designated as Special Purpose – Recreation (S-R). The S-R district has many uses that are not park nor recreation focused, (including a municipal depot), which is why the City does not include the depot lands (~10ac) as part of the open space available currently at Richmond Green.

**22. How are current and future park users from the surrounding communities being engaged?**

The first opportunity will be a virtual open house during which the proposed land use and subdivision application for the 5 to 6-acre parcel will be presented for comments. The project team will later solicit input on the Needs Assessment portion of the project to hear from stakeholders on how they would like to see the golf course, depot and surrounding lands to be used.

**23. How are nearby organizations and Community Association representatives being engaged?**

In an effort to provide factual information about the project, The City began engagement with organizations and Community Associations in January 2021. To date we have met with the Rutland Community Association, Carewest, the Lutheran Manor, Richmond/Knob Hill Community Association, Killarney Community Association and a representative from the Calgary West Little League.

**24. Was there an online survey in early February?**

After meeting with The City, one of the community associations in the vicinity launched a 3-day online survey to seek resident views. The survey was not prepared by The City or in accordance with City Engage standards.

**25. Will The City stop its investigations into disposing of land at Richmond Green Park?**

We understand there is concern about the potential loss of the 5-acre site to possible development. Administration will complete its work as directed by Council and strive to provide factual information regarding the application that is underway. We also see this project as being about what the community stands to gain, not lose, in open space and recreational opportunities. Our intention is to balance the need for smart growth with the need for park space. We come to this with an open mind, and will do our utmost to address, mitigate and incorporate comments into the planning for Richmond Green.

**26. How can Calgarians stay informed about this project?**

The project has been promoted on social media and on BOLD signs in the community to help get the word out. Calgarians are invited to visit [calgary.ca/RichmondGreen](http://calgary.ca/RichmondGreen) for information on engagement opportunities, and to sign-up for the project update e-newsletter.

27. What is The City’s response to the [Change.org](https://www.change.org/p/defend-calgary-parks) petition Defend Calgary Parks?

Petition	Response
<p>The City of Calgary was looking to save money through the potential sale of City golf courses. Richmond Green Golf Course was closed as a result. <b>It was quickly determined that the golf course could not be sold because of the City water reservoirs below the golf course.</b> <b>The City has now set its sights on the rest of Richmond Green Park</b>, and is already working on a proposal to sell off the upper baseball diamonds. The rest of the park is also being examined in hopes that more land can be sold for development.</p>	<p>The City has always been very much aware of the critical water infrastructure below the former golf course. In fact, the primary reason for The City holding these lands is because of this infrastructure. The reason the Richmond Green Golf Course was closed is explained in the golf course closure <a href="#">FAQ</a>.</p>
<p>The entire Richmond Green Park is “<b>protected</b>” by the revised CFB West Master Plan, and is intended to be green space for the second downtown which is being built in Currie Barracks. The projected population for Currie is 12000 residents, and this green space is being sold before the residents even arrive. Regional pathways in Currie have been designed to connect to this space, and it forms part of the Stormwater Management Plan for the entire area. It is extremely important to note that Richmond Green Park is not just a local park. <b>It is one of the original MAJOR parks in Calgary, along with Nose Hill Park, Confederation Park, Edworthy Park, Bowness Park, Fish Creek Park and Stanley Park. Selling any of Richmond Green Park sets a dangerous precedent for all park space in Calgary!</b></p>	<p>The CFB West Master Plan (LOC2014-0109) was first adopted May 12, 2015. The revision (LO2020-0012) was adopted October 5, 2020. Master plans can be revised in response to changing circumstances. In both versions, mixed use was not contemplated for the north west portion of the space (i.e., the two small ball diamonds), however this is inaccurately characterized as ‘protection’ from future revisions. The potential for future revision is why the Development Authority has a land use amendment process. The Council direction to pursue a land use amendment would support increased density adjacent to existing infrastructure, which is a more sustainable form of development, and also supports the future bus rapid transit planned for the area.</p>
<p><b>Defend Calgary Parks! Tell City Council to Save Richmond Green Park!</b>            Mayor Nenshi and City of Calgary Councillors--            The recent pandemic has shown us that we need more green space in Calgary, not less. Your 2020 Year End Climate Review recognizes Calgary’s natural infrastructure as key assets to manage for resilience and climate adaptation. <b>The 2020 Municipal Development Plan has a Natural Infrastructure Policy to prioritize ecological protection for natural areas, open spaces and parks.</b> Our parks are our heritage and need to be preserved for future generations. <b>Selling any of Richmond Green Park sets a dangerous precedent for all of our Major parks! Save Richmond Green Park! Say NO to the sale or development of the site.</b></p>	<p>The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) states that land use, development and transportation planning should seek to conserve, protect and enhance natural asset features, parks and open spaces. However, it also seeks to encourage the concentration of residential density in areas adjacent to open space, parks, wetlands and sports fields, especially where the area is served by transit, services and other community amenities. The MDP also calls for increased density in the established areas of Calgary, leveraging existing utility capacity to ensure more sustainable development in our City. The opportunity/challenge is to find the right balance. Given that some current uses at Richmond Green are no longer required (i.e. golf course, City depot) there are opportunities to introduce housing along with increasing the amount of open space.</p>

**28. What development is being proposed at the 5 acre site?**

A land-use amendment (LOC2021-0043) has been submitted to re-zone 5.45 acres to MU-1. This change is anticipated to allow for approximately 284 new residential units. The portion of the site adjacent to Sarcee Road will be limited in height to 4-stories and the portion along 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and adjacent to the large ball diamond will allow up to 6-stories in height. At this time, townhomes are contemplated for the west half of the site, with 4-6 story multi-family buildings on the eastern half of the site.