



Calgary River Valleys champions and engages the public in the protection, appreciation and stewardship of Calgary's rivers, creeks, wetlands and watershed resources.

We are the voice of our rivers.

November 26, 2015

Office of the City Clerk  
The City of Calgary  
700 Macleod Trail SE  
P.O. Box 2100, Postal Station M  
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

**Attention: His Worship Mayor Nenshi and Members of City Council**

**Re: Proposed Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan (ASP)**

President  
Steve Meadows

Vice President  
Michael Kenny

Secretary  
Bill Morrison

Treasurer  
Dave McIver

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Muhan Guna

Director  
Terry Klassen

Director  
Hugh Magill

Director  
Mike Murray

Director  
Sarah Nevill

Advisor  
Brian Pincott  
(Calgary Councillor, Ward 11)

Advisor  
Harpreet Sandhu  
(Calgary Water Resources)

Advisor  
Darrell Sargent  
(Calgary City Wide Policy)

Advisor  
Robin Sauvé  
(Calgary Community Initiatives)

Advisor  
George Stalker  
(Calgary Parks)

Calgary River Valleys (CRV) as part of its mandate provides a platform for our members and partners to provide comments on development in the Calgary area. Please accept these comments on the proposed Glacier Ridge Area Structure Plan that have been generated through discussions with our membership.

While the Glacier Ridge area has been largely under agricultural use for a number of years, these lands offer a number of important ecological functions and unique landform features that demand thoughtful treatment. These include numerous streams and wetlands, and various groundwater seeps, six coulees, several bedrock outcrops and glacial erratic, and a variety of Species of Management Concern. The *Phase 3 Open Space Study: North Stoney Annexation Lands* and the *Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan* both highlight the sensitivity of the area and the ecological, social and economic impact of future development on downstream conditions. The incorporation of the principle of *Design with Nature* into the Glacier Ridge ASP is strongly supported. This site offers many natural attributes that can be a significant asset to the overall development if they are protected and even enhanced as appropriate.

Those members of Calgary River Valleys who reviewed the Plan do note many positive aspects of the Glacier Ridge ASP that should be acknowledged and supported in future documents including but not limited to the protection of existing landscapes and views, use of adaptive grid street pattern, support of urban agriculture, and provisions for interface with natural areas.

The following comments have been generated through discussions with our membership and staff.

1. Of particular note is policy 5.3.8 that calls for the transformation of a major portion of Symons Valley Road to a regional pedestrian and cycle pathway offering protection of ecological function and wildlife corridor attributes of the West Nose Creek and surrounding lands. The policy that would result in the redirection of vehicular traffic and associated development to new streets away from the creek is critical to achieving important objectives of this ASP. There is concern that there may be significant pressure to abandon this proposal in favour of increased development along an existing road. Section 5.3.8.



identifies several criteria for the realization of this Plan objective. **Council and City Administration are strongly urged to work to meet the provisions of 5.3.8 in advance of land use amendments.**

2. In addition to and in support of this major feature of the ASP, is the inclusion of lands between the main branch of West Nose Creek to a tributary from the northeast in the Environmental Open Space (EOS) Study Area. The large study area will afford an opportunity to better assess this area at the Land Use Amendment/Outline Plan stage. It should determine appropriate management of these lands to ensure long term ecological function and accommodation of passive recreation opportunities and corridors. Once again, it is anticipated that there may be pressure to reduce this portion of the EOS study area in favour of development but **Council is urged to ensure that the EOS Study Area as proposed remains intact to ensure proper review before approval of a Land Use Amendment/Outline Plan.**
3. Several documents would have been referenced in determining the boundary of the EOS Study Area that has been applied to the Glacier Ridge ASP including *The Environmental Reserve Setback Guidelines*, *The Calgary Annexation Territory Study Phase 3 Open Space Study* and *The Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan*. The *Glacier Ridge ASP Biophysical Inventory* also ranks and identifies lands, coulees and watercourses with regard to their environmental sensitivity. While the scale and graphic nature of the Glacier Ridge Concept Map in the proposed ASP does not lend itself to accurate measurements, Calgary River Valleys members who reviewed the draft ASP are generally satisfied that the findings and recommendations of these various studies are reflected within the proposed EOS Study Area in the Glacier Ridge ASP.

Concerns were raised by those CRV members who reviewed the ASP that while the above noted studies address environmentally significant features and the identification of appropriate setbacks to offer protection of ecological function, they do not address the possible addition of uses such as pedestrian and/or cycle corridors which may necessitate a larger study area. This is a particular concern for narrow corridors and lower order streams. Recognizing this is a complex issue, Calgary River Valleys is hoping to provide input to the proposed Ecological Inventory Framework to better address this matter.

4. Appendix B Section B.2.3. of the North Regional Context (NRC) Study (adopted by City Council June 2010) refers to a Master Drainage Plan (MDP) that was being undertaken at the time and directed that each ASP within the NRC Study area must undertake “a more detailed, site specific stormwater report which must reference this Master Drainage Plan and adhere to the conceptual principles outlined within”. To our knowledge, the NRC Master Drainage Plan has not been completed as it has not been referenced. Neither has the site specific stormwater report required by the NRC Study been completed. These are studies that should be informing an ASP. While section 6.3 of the Glacier Ridge ASP requires that a Master Drainage Plan be approved prior to the Outline Plan/Land Use amendment, the requirement for the site specific stormwater report called for by the NRC Study at the ASP stage has been overlooked. It is our position that an ASP process would benefit when informed by a comprehensive drainage study.

5. Calgary River Valleys members have been part of past planning and policy processes which have recommended and identified the importance of the West Nose Creek valley as a significant urban wildlife corridor. Despite some planning defaults and lost opportunities in past years, this corridor should provide support and critical mass for the natural areas in North Calgary such as Nose Hill Park and Nose Creek Parks. We note and support the signature statement of Section 4.1 stating that the valley provides opportunities for recreational amenities and pathway opportunities within the plan area and across North Calgary to Nose Creek. We recommend that section 4.1 of the ASP be amended to recognize the wildlife corridor contribution of this reach of West Nose Creek as part of the larger natural area corridor across North Calgary.

**It is recommended that the introductory statement of section 4.1 be deleted and be replaced with the following:**

***“Symons Valley is home to the West Nose Creek. The Valley contributes to the larger natural area and wildlife corridor extending across north Calgary and also offers opportunities for recreational amenities and pathway connections within the Plan Area and to the south where West Nose Creek joins Nose Creek at the junction of Beddington Trail and Deerfoot Trail.*”**

***West Nose Creek and its tributaries are part of the Nose Creek Watershed and subject to the Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan.”***

**It is recommended that the Intent statement of Section 4.1 be deleted and replaced with the following:**

***“Provide for Symons Valley to become the signature feature of the Plan Area, supporting a wildlife corridor while offering recreation opportunities, and access to West Nose Creek and community connections.”***

Overall, Calgary River Valley members who reviewed this Plan are impressed by the way the Glacier Ridge ASP addressed a significant and challenging landscape and sought to retain and sensitively integrate natural attributes while striving to protect ecological function. We appreciate your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Steve Meadows,  
President, Calgary River Valleys



Bill Morrison,  
Chair, Watershed Policy and Planning  
Committee, Calgary River Valleys

cc: Jordan Furness, Glacier Ridge ASP Project Manager  
CRV circulation

