

Report to Council



Date: December 7, 2015
File: 1200-40
To: City Manager
From: Ross Soward, Planner Specialist
Subject: Urban Centres Roadmap - Draft Principles and Targets
Report Prepared by: Ross Soward

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information the report from the Planner Specialist dated December 7, 2015 with respect to the Urban Centres Roadmap.

AND THAT Council endorses the proposed principles and targets as presented from the Planner Specialist dated December 7, 2015 with respect to the Urban Centres Roadmap.

AND THAT Council endorses the next steps of the project; with staff reporting back to Council with the final Urban Centres Roadmap report.

Purpose:

To receive Council endorsement for the Urban Centres Roadmap proposed principles and targets as well as the next steps of the project.

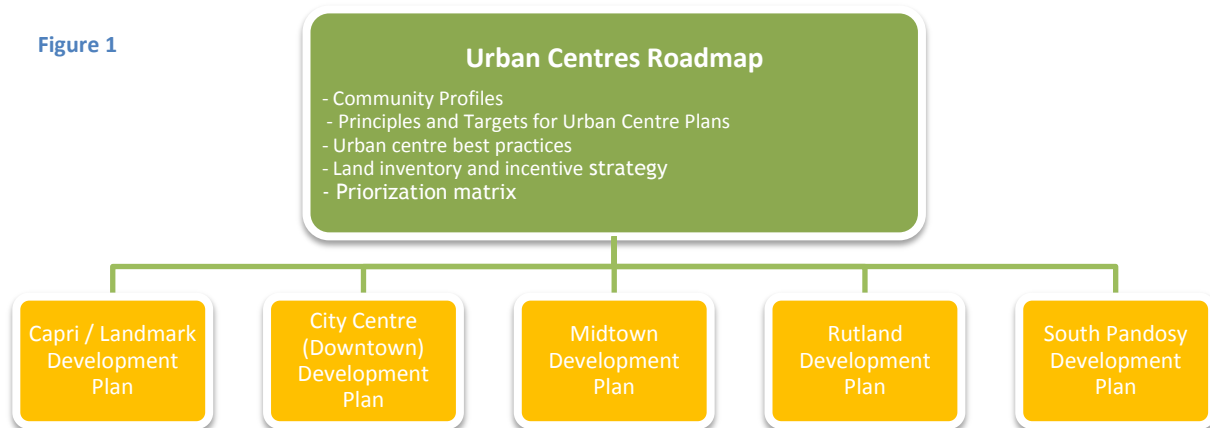
Background:

In today's cities, the development of successful urban centres is increasingly linked to broader economic, social, and environmental goals. In Kelowna, the OCP 2030 has established five urban centres (City Centre, Capri-Landmark, South Pandosy, Rutland and Midtown) that are expected to accommodate 44% of future growth to 2030. However, the City is in need of improved planning to ensure future development and investment within the five urban centres results in the development of cohesive urban centres that provide a high quality of life to the city's residents.

The Urban Centres Roadmap will establish an overarching planning framework to guide individual urban centre plans (as per figure 1). In this way, the Urban Centres Roadmap is similar to the City-wide Parking Management Strategy, which utilizes guiding principles to set the stage for detailed parking plans in specific areas of the city. The main project deliverables for the Urban Centers Roadmap include the following:

- Planning principles that will build consensus on the planning and development goals for urban centres.
- Performance targets that will guide future urban centre planning, inform priorities for future capital planning and enhance development application review criteria.
- Prioritization matrix to inform phasing of future urban centre plans.

Figure 1



Planning Process

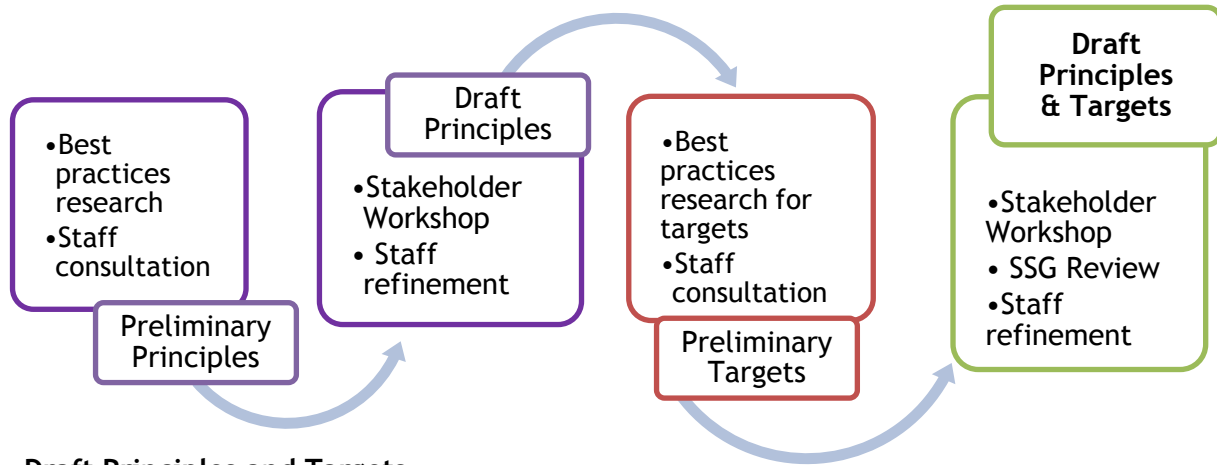
The proposed principles and targets are two of the key deliverables of the Urban Centres Roadmap. The following steps informed their development:

1. Best practices research affirmed the OCP goals and established key characteristics of urban centres, informing preliminary principles.
2. Stakeholder workshops in June and September brought together representatives from the development and design community; public health professionals, local business commission representatives, and academics to refine the principles and targets.
3. Three interdepartmental staff sessions were held to review and refine the principles and targets.
4. *Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG)* a third party consultancy with expertise in this field was retained in October to conduct an objective peer review of the draft principles and targets, affirming the direction and rigor of the principles and targets.¹

Overall, the proposed principles and targets balance best practices in urban centre development with existing OCP goals and the current challenges facing Kelowna's urban centres.

¹ Attachment B - SSG Peer Review Technical Summary of the Urban Centres Roadmap Council Report, dated November 30th, 2015.

The graphic below visually represents the iterative process used to develop the principles and targets with partners inside and outside of City Hall to arrive at an outcome that will position the city’s urban centres for future growth.



Draft Principles and Targets

The principles and targets will guide future urban centre planning, providing direction on land use-mix and density, urban design, public space planning and transportation investment (including transit planning). In addition, they will ensure consensus internally and externally on the future planning goals for the city’s five urban centres and the importance of developing and maintaining the city’s urban centres to a higher standard than other areas of the city. This will translate into higher operating costs for the City to uphold, and these details will be further scoped when each individual Urban Centre Area Redevelopment Plan comes forward.

The principles (described below) flow from the high level vision and goals in the OCP for the urban centres, while providing a greater level of detail on the priorities for urban centre planning, development and civic investment. These principles and targets will eliminate the need to establish a new set of objectives and goals for each of the Urban Centre Area Redevelopment Plans as they are advanced in the coming years.

The proposed principles are outlined in the table below with a supporting rationale. The principles relate to the OCP definition and vision for urban centres:

“A vibrant, amenity-rich area wherein different land uses frequently occur within the same building and almost always occur within a one-block area. Urban centres contain a variety of housing types, the presence of which contributes to social diversity. Urban centres are highly urbanized, pedestrian-friendly environments that draw people for work, shopping, and recreation...”

Draft Principle	Explanation of Principle
1. Promote vitality through a mix of land uses	A mix of land uses if appropriately configured can create a “critical mass” to support retail services and local shopping, as well as pedestrian access to parks and community facilities. A mix of uses along key streets ensures activity and vitality at different times, enhancing the safety and economic function of a place.
2 Encourage building and street proportions that are inviting for people	Through careful design of the relationship between buildings and streetscapes, it is possible to create well defined spaces that encourage walking and vitality. The quality and arrangement of physical elements such as building and streets contribute to the ability of spaces to be distinct, recognizable, and memorable.
3. Ensure a diversity of housing types	Communities that offer a range of housing choices and meet the full spectrum of housing needs are by definition more livable, more economically competitive and more resilient, providing for the economic transitions that individuals experience over the course of their lives. As Kelowna’s urban centres densify over time it is vital that future intensification results in a range of housing types and tenures (multi-family, townhouses, market and non-market, rental, ownership) to encourage a diverse population.
4. Establish flexible public spaces that promote social interaction	Access to public spaces (parks, plazas, city squares, and community facilities) is critical to enabling formal and informal opportunities for the public to gather, facilitating social interaction and improving well-being. Also, proximity to public spaces is consistently associated with higher rates of physical activity.
5. Promote local character and sense of place	The design of buildings, public spaces and streets plays a major role in shaping the identity of a place. The local geography, climate, history and culture should be reflected in the spaces we plan and design to differentiate and define our local communities.
6. Design for environmental sustainability	Environmental sustainability is enhanced through the integration of parks, community gardens, greenways, waterways, and green walls. These features make the natural environment more accessible and enhance the health and beauty of communities. They also reduce air pollution and enhance stormwater management.
7.Prioritize alternative transportation options and connections	Urban centres with their dense and diverse land uses have the greatest potential for reduced dependence on the automobile, but past policies and transportation investments have made the private automobile the only option for many personal transportation trips. Therefore, urban design and planning must be used strategically to create supportive conditions for walking, cycling and transit.
8. Create streets and blocks that are walkable and accessible for	Urban Centres with strong walkability and accessibility are associated with increased levels of walking and improved health and recreation outcomes. To ensure walking is a safe, desirable and practical option for all ages and abilities, pedestrians must be prioritized at various scales of the planning and design

everybody	process from the street network design to intersection and sidewalk standards.
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For the purposes of this report, the first principle and several associated targets are outlined below as an example. The targets relate to the principle, and translate each into an outcome that is measurable and enforceable. The targets are not intended to be additional indicators to monitor, but instead will provide detailed quantitative measures that will be used to guide future urban centre planning (for .e.g. *My Downtown Plan*). The performance targets will largely be used at the urban centre planning stage, but will also provide additional criteria to assess future development applications and capital planning priorities. A comprehensive list of principles and targets is provided in 'Attachment A' for further detail. Below is a sample.

Principle: Promote Vitality through a mix of land uses	
<p>Proposed Target: Encourage 150-250 people and jobs combined per ha (gross land area) with a ratio of 2:1 people to jobs² vitality through a mix of land uses</p>	<p>Explanation: To contain urban growth, the City of Kelowna will need to densify, preserving agricultural land, and reducing energy use and infrastructure costs. Urban centres are designated to accommodate increased urban density and several urban centres already report densities of 100 people/jobs per ha, indicating the need for a target range that can shift depending on how established the centre is. The urban centres with the highest densities have a higher ratio of jobs to residents, highlighting the importance of enhancing the residential base to encourage a more complete community.</p>
<p>Proposed Target: Encourage a variety of activities (Housing, Services, Amenities, Public space) within 400M or a 5 minute walk of all residents</p>	<p>Explanation: By developing urban centres that have a range of uses and amenities within 400-650m, residents are able to walk on a daily basis for local trips supporting healthy behaviours and increased social interaction. Services and amenities such as grocery stores, coffee shops, and local amenities are more compatible with transportation-based walking, while contributing to the vitality of an urban centre.</p>

Next Steps

Should Council choose to endorse the proposed targets and principles, staff will move forward with the next steps of the project, including:

- Principles and targets will be refined with supporting visuals and illustrations to ensure they are easily understood.
- The final report of the roadmap will be developed and additional supporting materials will be prepared (for e.g. supporting policies, tool-kit for urban centre development, and a prioritization matrix to establish sequencing of the Area Redevelopment Plans).

² Upper range of target (250 people and jobs combined per/ha) associated with more established urban centres such as City Centre.

- A final stakeholder consultation event will be hosted to inform participants of the outcome of their contribution.
- Council will be presented with the final report and recommendations in early 2016.

Summary

The Urban Centres Roadmap is a critical step in implementing the Kelowna 2030 OCP, providing detailed direction on land use planning, urban design, public space planning and transportation goals for the urban centres. The principles establish a common understanding of the ingredients of great urban centres that will be prioritized and balanced in future urban centre planning, development review, and capital planning. The draft targets make the principles measurable, providing quantitative direction to assess future developments and capital improvements in the urban centres. Together the principles and targets represent the foundation of the Urban Centres Roadmap project that will ensure the City's urban centres are able to capitalize on future development and densification to create healthy and sustainable communities.

Internal Circulation:

Divisional Director, Community Planning and Real Estate
Department Manager, Policy and Planning
Manager, Long Range Policy and Planning
Manager, Urban Planning
Department Manager, Community Planning
Planner Specialist, Park and Building Services
Sustainability Planner, Policy and Planning
Manager, Transportation and Mobility
Department Manager, Infrastructure Planning

Existing Policy:

2030 Official Community Plan Goals

Contain urban growth, include distinctive and attractive neighbourhoods, address housing needs of all residents, feature a balanced transportation network, foster sustainable prosperity, protect and enhance natural areas, provide spectacular parks, and encourage cultural vibrancy.

Urban Centre / Town Centre Definition

A vibrant, amenity-rich area wherein different land uses frequently occur within the same building and almost always occur within a one-block area. Urban Centres contain a variety of housing types, the presence of which contributes to social diversity. Urban Centres are highly

urbanized, pedestrian-friendly environments that draw people for work, shopping, and recreation from a broad community of approximately 25,000 residents living within approximately 2 kms. Town Centre cores are located at least 2 kms from the core of other Urban Centres, a City Centre, or a Highway Centre. Density will decrease as the distance from the core increases.

Submitted by: R. Soward, Planner Specialist

Approved for inclusion:



D. Noble-Brandt, Department Manager of Policy & Planning

cc:

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