



Outline Plans (Neighbourhood Plans)

Introduction

In accordance with the Municipal Government Act Section (636) the City of Lethbridge and/or consultants prepare Area Structure Plans (ASPs) to define future growth in sectors of the City. The Area Structure Plan must comply with Provincial Legislation and Regulations such as the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and higher order Statutory Plans (the Municipal Development Plan). Following the adoption of an ASP by City Council, landowners may begin the process of completing an Outline Plan (OP) in accordance with the policies outlined in the ASP.

The Assets & Infrastructure Standing Policy Committee (AISPC) reviews an Outline Plan's Land Use Concept and gives a recommendation on its approval to City Council. City Council then renders a decision on the approval of the Outline Plan's Land Use Concept. City Administration, through Plan Review Team (PRT), has the role of reviewing and making a decision on the other Technical Elements of an Outline Plan, once City Council has given approval to the Land Use Concept.

Outline Plan Purpose

The Outline Plan focuses on smaller, discreet areas of land (called a Stage) than the ASP and provides a finer level of technical engineering detail as to how the land will be further subdivided, serviced and developed. A Stage is typically defined as a neighbourhood¹ area that is no less than 16 hectares. These areas must fit into overall City infrastructure capacities and provide for the needs of the market while being economically developable for landowners and fiscally responsible to the existing residents of Lethbridge.

While the Outline Plan looks at a specific area of land, the planning and engineering must take into account the adjacent lands, whether developed or not, in terms of constraints, opportunities, servicing, transportation networks and land use compatibility. Adjacent lands within Lethbridge County must also be taken into account and the County staff consulted during the Outline Plan process, in accordance with the Intermunicipal Development Plan.

Outline Plan Content

It is expected that the Consultant has reviewed the governing ASP through the application

¹ A neighbourhood should include a balance of housing, recreation and employment based uses.

form/checklist (Appendix B) and is using the background and technical information as provided in the ASP when writing the Outline Plan. A confirmation statement of such is required.

The Outline Plan shall provide for a written discussion around the following topic headings and be accompanied by illustrative maps and/or concept drawings. Maps and drawings must be clear and legible and properly labelled with a legend, north arrow and title block.

1. **Introduction and Plan Context** - This section contains an introduction stating the vision/purpose of the plan and its location within the City. This section shall also take into account the following policy plans and describe how the Outline Plan complies with them:
 - South Saskatchewan Regional Plan
 - Statutory Plans that have been approved by Lethbridge City Council
 - o Municipal Development Plan
 - o Intermunicipal Development Plan
 - o The relevant Area Structure Plan containing the Outline Plan area
 - Non-Statutory Master Plans approved by resolution of City Council including:
 - o Bikeways and Pathways Master Plan
 - o Parks Master Plan
 - o Recreation and Culture Master Plan
 - o Transportation Master Plan
 - o Fire Master Plan
 - o Transit Master Plan
 - o Cycling Master Plan
 - o Mobility/Accessibility Master Plan
 - o Traffic Safety Plan

2. **Opportunities and Constraints** – must clearly articulate both in written and visual form the topography of the area along with natural or man-made constraints or opportunities to the development. This shall include, but is not limited to: adjacent development and land use interface, oil and gas wells and underground lines; electrical or telecommunications infrastructure, extensive and intensive agricultural operations, dugouts, existing buildings or structures, roads and access points, drainage corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat areas, historic resource sites, coulees, natural grasslands, and vegetation. If such information was provided in the ASP then the Outline Plan should reference and present this information contextually in the Plan.

3. **Land Use Concept** – this includes identification of general land uses (i.e. low, medium or high density residential, commercial, industrial, parks, public lands etc.), and does NOT identify specific Land Use Districts from the Land Use Bylaw. This provides greater flexibility to adjust land use districts within the same general

land use category and/or density range based upon market conditions.

Land uses and densities proposed at the Outline Plan stage will generally conform with the ASP, recognizing that the ASP shows these at a high level. Minor variations in use are acceptable recognizing that markets and demands change over time. However, such changes cannot substantially alter the servicing or transportation requirements resulting from significant changes in planned density (e.g. single family to multi-family) or major changes in use categories (e.g. Residential to Commercial), which would require amendments to the ASP if not already addressed or anticipated within the ASP. A range of options for potential specific Land Use Districts from the Land Use Bylaw may be presented in this section, recognizing that zoning is to occur later on, closer to the time of subdivision and under approval of City Council.

This section will include a Land Use Concept map, the land use statistics and proposed population density for the OP area.

4. **Open Space Concept** – the layout of parks and school sites identified in the ASP shall be refined to clearly show concepts for the layout of school, parks amenities and linear pathway connections within the Outline Plan and to existing and future neighbourhoods. Open space should attempt to incorporate natural features where possible. Parks and schools should be incorporated into the earliest phases as are practical and not left to the final phases of the Outline Plan area. Communication between the developer and the school districts is required throughout the OP process and City staff should be present when this occurs. Creditable and Non-Creditable Open Space lands should be acknowledged.
5. **Servicing Network** – shall identify the location of required electrical, major storm water facilities (ponds, storm sewer lines), sanitary sewer facilities (sewer lines and lift stations), water facilities (water lines and reservoirs) and size requirements, address any off site funded requirements, and outline any alternative designs that may have been considered by other City Master Plans or identified by higher order Policy Plans. The servicing network shall also consider lands adjacent to the Outline Plan area and how the servicing will interface with existing and future neighbourhoods.
6. **Transportation Network**- shall describe and illustrate the planned location and capacity of roads, how multi-modal options are being included, any traffic control devices such as roundabouts or right in/right outs that are being employed, the interface with existing and future road networks and the effects of any proposed alternative designs that may have been considered in an approved ASP.
7. **Implementation and Phasing Strategy** – the Outline Plan shall clearly show the proposed phases of subdivision and sequence of development that the landowner or developer intends to follow in constructing new subdivisions. Clear language articulating which infrastructure requirements must be constructed for

each phase to begin must be included.

If two adjacent Outline Plans are being worked on simultaneously it is expected that there will be communication between the consultants and developers in regards to the integration of open space and pathways, boundary conditions, infrastructure design, transportation systems and the transitioning between the two Outline Plan areas. During the Outline Plan process, the consultants drafting the affected Outline Plans will need to confirm with PRT and state in their Outline Plans that they have communicated with each other and that both Outline Plan areas will align with each other.

Supporting Technical Background Documents

The following supporting documentation is required to be presented as part of the Outline Plan and may be included as an Appendix to the Outline Plan if:

- it has not been previously been provided to a sufficient level of detail, or
 - if previous reports surfaced matters/issues that require further deliberation and/or
 - there is a policy direction to obtain such information set up in higher order Policy Plans (the ASP).
1. **Geotechnical Reports** – These reports must be at a sufficient level of detail to confirm that there are no major underground conditions that will affect the ability of the development to take place. It is recommended that geotechnical reports include sufficient borehole samples to confirm significant changes in conditions and to reduce the requirement for site specific sampling at subsequent subdivision and development stages.
 2. **Environmental Reports** – This includes any Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) Phase 1, 2 or 3 and Wetland Assessment (in accordance with the Alberta Water Act) that are required, as well as a Biophysical Impact Assessment (BIA).
 3. **Historical Resource Assessments or Historic Resource Impact Assessment** – Prior to approval of the Outline Plan, clearance under the Alberta Historic Resources Act must be granted by the Province. This includes a review of Alberta Culture Historic and Archaeological known site (the assessment) and, if required, a Historic Resource Impact Assessment (HRIA). If Historic Resources Act clearance has been granted at the previous ASP stage a new HRIA is not required for the Outline Plan, but may be required at the subdivision stage, depending on the location of the subject site in relation to land that has been identified in the province's Listing of Historic Resources (see section 5 (5) of the Alberta Subdivision and Development Regulation).
 4. **Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study** - This includes an analysis of the Outline Plan area to determine the presence and significance of Indigenous traditional knowledge and land use. This includes identifying and documenting

the following types of sites and use areas: native vegetation, animal habitat and corridors, resource extraction, human habitation and economic use, human spiritual and ceremonial use, as well as ecological knowledge and places of history, legend and other accounts. If a Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study has been completed at the ASP stage a new Study is not required, unless specified in the ASP.

5. **Traffic Impact Assessment** - This includes outlining local road networks and verifying and supporting traffic impact assessments (TIA) work undertaken within an ASP. The TIA completed for the Outline Plan shall be done according to the City's Traffic Impact Study Guidelines concerning the Outline Plan level TIAs and at the discretion of the City's Transportation department.
6. **Servicing Master Plan** – This includes defining local area servicing networks and connection points and verifying that they are consistent with servicing information presented through City Master Plans and/or the ASP.

City Outline Plan Review Body

On behalf of the City of Lethbridge, the review body for all Outline Plans and any amendments is PRT. PRT is comprised of technical experts from Planning and Development Services, Infrastructure Services and Community Services. The Terms of Reference for PRT is found in Appendix A and includes roles and responsibilities of the committee as well as a delineation of what departments are represented, regular meeting times for PRT and how PRT functions in terms of the review process.

Outline Plan Document Drafting and Review Process

The steps of the process are listed below in chronological order:

1. **Pre-application Assets & Infrastructure Standing Policy Committee (AISPC) Meeting**

Prior to making an application for Outline Plan approval, the Developer must attend a meeting of the Assets & Infrastructure Standing Policy Committee (AISPC) to present the Developer's vision of the Outline Plan. The presentation must explain the connection of the area to the applicable Area Structure Plan, and may include a draft preliminary Land Use Concept and other information the Developer may wish to share about a proposed Land Use Concept.

2. **Start-up meeting with PRT**

At this meeting the applicant and their consulting team will meet with the City of Lethbridge Planning Review Team (PRT) to discuss the area intended for development. The applicant will contact the Senior Subdivision Planner to be scheduled onto a PRT Agenda. The applicant will review the application form/checklist (Appendix B) with PRT members for completeness. The vision for the plan area is discussed, specific requirements, issues, concerns or challenges are identified from the application form/checklist.

At this meeting, the applicant is also afforded the opportunity to present additional information and any preliminary conceptual drawings to PRT for discussion in terms of conformity with the overall planning framework of the City and any Infrastructure Master Plans or other Master Plans that may be in place. The applicant may also take the opportunity at this time or shortly thereafter to host a design and visioning charette with PRT members and other applicable City staff.

This meeting should take place at the start of the Outline Plan process, prior to the submission of a completed application form.

3. **Agreement to Proceed**

Once the applicant has outlined the intended vision and confirmed that the Outline Plan aligns with any applicable policies of the ASP in regards to infrastructure availability, then the applicant can proceed with preparation of the Outline Plan.

4. **Submission**

The Applicant then submits a completed application form and required fees, (Appendix B). If the proposed OP is located within an ASP that undertaken or presented to the City of Lethbridge for review after January 1, 2013, then a work plan and timeline demonstrating planning and technical milestones and a PRT check in at each milestone will accompany this submission. The purpose of the PRT check in is to ensure that the applicant does not complete technical work that requires adjustment at a later time wasting time and resources in the process.

If the proposed OP is located within an ASP that undertaken or presented to the City of Lethbridge for review prior January 1, 2013, then the Gated process will be used in place of the work plan and timeline and PRT milestones. The Gated Process is better described in section 6 below and in Appendix C.

5. **Information Sharing Meeting at AISPC (Optional)**

The applicant/developer may attend a meeting of the AISPC to present additional information about the Developer, their vision, a draft Land Use Concept, and their overall intent for the outline plan area. The Developer may provide information about the conditions that will influence the Outline Plan development. This is

intended to afford the applicant the opportunity to engage AISPC in a discussion about the conditions (e.g. market) and values that will influence the Outline Plan's development. The content presented is at the Developer's discretion. The AISPC may provide feedback to the Developer on a draft Land Use Concept.

6. **Draft Review**

Contemporary ASPs undertaken or presented to the City of Lethbridge for review after January 1, 2013 are designed to include sufficient levels of technical engineering detail so as to avoid the duplication of cost, time and effort at the subsequent Outline Plan stage. Outline Plans within ASPs approved after this date will follow the requirements and process for drafting and review by PRT as outlined below.

ASPs approved prior to 2013 were not required to provide the same level of details and in other cases Outline Plans were allowed to proceed outside the boundaries of an ASP. As such, the information requirements to be provided in the Outline Plan may vary based on these circumstances. Outline Plans within an ASP approved prior to January 1, 2013 will continue to follow the "Gated Outline Plan" process for drafting and review by PRT, which is outlined in Appendix C.

The draft Outline Plan shall be submitted according to the format as agreed to in the previous steps. The Outline Plan shall be drafted based on goals and policies of the overarching planning documents (i.e. SSRP, ICSP/MDP, ASP), the plan visioning that was previously conducted and the results of the technical investigation and documentation conducted as background information for the Outline Plan.

It is expected that when the document is submitted at each milestone to PRT for review it will be formatted in the final version so each section is populated much like a book with chapters.

Submissions are made to the Senior Subdivision Planner and will be distributed to PRT members for review at the next PRT meeting which occur every Thursday afternoon (exceptions occur during the holidays and on dates where the PRT meeting conflicts with AISPC).

PRT members are afforded two weeks to review a submission and provide the Chairperson with comments. The comments will be circulated in the form of a letter to the applicant.

The applicant is welcome to book a time on the regular PRT agenda to discuss any comment or concerns and work through any of those as a group if appropriate.

Should resolution to a comment or concern not be achieved the proponent can follow the Dispute Resolution process which is outlined below.

The applicant shall make agreed upon changes to the necessary plans, concepts and documentation as required and submit completed changes to the Senior Subdivision Planner. Outline Plans are complex documents that usually go through multiple revisions based on new information and feedback. This part of the Outline Plan Document Drafting and Review Process will likely take the majority of time.

7. Public Consultation

Upon completion of the Outline Plan's Land Use Concept, the applicant/developer must hold a minimum of one public open house for the purposes of providing an opportunity for the public to see and hear about plans for the area and for the public to provide feedback to the applicant/developer. The applicant/developer must have available at the public open house, a draft of the proposed Land Use Concept and the connection to the overall Area Structure Plan, for the public to review.

Please note that the Outline Plan Open House should be held in conjunction with any other City projects in the area that also require an Open House, if possible. The Senior Subdivision Planner will determine this prior to the Outline Plan Open House being confirmed.

Feedback shall be shared with PRT and any necessary revisions to the proposed Land Use Concept shall be made with the guidance of PRT, prior to it going to AISPC and City Council.

8. Review by AISPC and Decision on Approval

After the Public Open House and any final revisions to the proposed Land Use Concept are made, the applicant/developer shall submit a final draft of the land use concept to the Senior Subdivision Planner for inclusion on a AISPC agenda. At this AISPC meeting, the applicant/developer will present the Land Use Concept to AISPC for their review.

This AISPC meeting will be advertised and the public will be notified in advance in the same manner as statutory plan amendments are advertised. The public will be allowed to provide input at and make submissions to the AISPC meeting, in a manner similar to a public hearing that is conducted with City Council. The Chairperson of PRT will also present the opinion of City Administration on the draft land use concept at this meeting.

AISPC will then make a recommendation to City Council on whether or not to approve the Land Use Concept. If AISPC chooses not to recommend the draft land use concept, they can suggest changes to the land use concept for the applicant/developer to make and allow the revised land use concept to be presented to AISPC at a subsequent date again to ask for their recommendation on the land use concept to City Council.

Once AISPC has rendered a recommendation on whether or not to approve the land use concept, it will then proceed to City Council to make a final decision on the approval of the land use concept via Council Resolution. There will be no presentations or public hearings on the proposed land use concept at this meeting of City Council.

Once City Council has given approval to the Land Use Concept, PRT will make a decision on the approval of the other Technical Elements of the Outline Plan.

Processing Time

Depending on the degree to which an Outline Plan conforms to an ASP and information has previously been reviewed it can be anticipated that the City staff processing time for an Outline Plan will be approximately 12 months (270 working days).

It should be noted that this does not take into account interruptions from the landowner/developer/applicant based on market or other externalities and does not take into account the time required by the applicant to draft, make changes or adjustments to the Outline Plan or its supporting documents. Finally, the above does not apply to Outline Plans that are within areas that have a previously approved ASP prior to January 1, 2013 or have no ASP.

Making Changes to an Outline Plan

As discussed above, a new Outline Plan's Land Use Concept is initially reviewed and given recommendation by AISPC and is approved by City Council. Likewise, the Technical Elements of a new Outline Plan are reviewed and approved by PRT. However, neighbourhoods take a number of years to fully develop from the time that the Outline Plan is first adopted and over this time many factors can change. This often necessitates a change to the Outline Plan, whether it be to the Land Use Concept or to its Technical Elements.

Like with the initial Outline Plan approval, subsequent amendments to the Land Use Concept are also subject to review and recommendation by AISPC and approval by City Council. This is not as comprehensive as the initial approval is, but requires the following:

1. The applicant/developer conduct a public open house.
2. The AISPC conduct a meeting to review the proposed changes to the Land Use Concept and consider recommendation of the proposed changes to

City Council. The applicant/developer will make a submission and presentation at this meeting, as can members of the public.

3. City Council will consider the proposed amendment to the Land Use Concept and may approve the proposed amendment via Council Resolution.

Subsequent amendment to the Technical Elements of an Outline Plan will be reviewed and considered for approval by PRT, as they approve the Technical Elements of the initial Outline Plan. This requires the following to occur:

1. Provide ongoing review of proposed changes to the Outline Plan's Technical Elements, giving feedback to the applicant/developer
2. Consider the proposed amendment to the Technical Elements for approval.

Dispute Resolution

A proponent can appeal a decision of the PRT by submitting a formal request to the General Manager of Planning and Design. If still unsatisfied after these steps have been undertaken, the proponent can then escalate the decision to the Director(s) responsible for Infrastructure and Planning, for a final decision on the matter.