



BYLAW 02-23 – TILLOTSON NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA STRUCTURE PLAN

Purpose

The purpose of Bylaw 02-23 is to adopt the Tillotson Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan to facilitate phased urban development of approximately 63.97 ha (158.07 acres) of land in southwest Okotoks within NW ¼ 20-20-29-W4M.

Readings

This Bylaw is ready for first reading only.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications

Background

The Town of Okotoks utilizes two types of statutory planning documents to guide future development. An Area Structure Plan (ASP) provides a broad-based high-level planning framework to guide new community development on approximately 2-5 quarter sections of greenfield land. A Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan (NASP) provides a detailed planning framework that focuses on a smaller area within an approved ASP, typically at the quarter section level. The NASP addresses similar elements as the ASP, but in greater detail. The NASP is a more descriptive and detailed plan showing local street networks, the location of schools, parks and pathways, distribution of housing types and architectural themes. Both an ASP and NASP are considered statutory plans under the *Municipal Government Act* and are adopted by Council through a formal public hearing process.

In April 2020, Council adopted the West Okotoks Area Structure Plan (WOASP) which established a high level land use, transportation, servicing, and development phasing framework to guide the development of detailed neighbourhood level plans in southwest Okotoks. The proposed Tillotson NASP constitutes the first phase of neighbourhood development within the WOASP and establishes a detailed land use and servicing framework to guide future land use redesignations, subdivision, and development of these lands.

Following adoption of the WOASP, the applicant commenced preliminary work to prepare the NASP. Prior to submission of the NASP, Administration provided the applicant with information related to municipal policies, guidelines, technical standards, study requirements and engagement expectations to assist the applicant in preparing a complete NASP application.

Application

On November 23, 2021 B&A Planning Group (on behalf of Tristar Communities Ltd.) submitted a complete application for the Tillotson NASP to facilitate the development of a residential community within the WOASP. Since the time of original submission, Administration has worked with the applicant to ensure the proposed NASP considers higher order municipal plans, policies, standards, applicable legislation, and stakeholder and public feedback.

Location and Site Context

The Tillotson NASP is comprised of 63.97 hectares (158.07 acres) and is legally described as the NW 20-20-29-W4M. Located in southwest Okotoks, the lands are bounded by the residential communities of Sheep River Ridge to the North, Westridge to the East, and agricultural land to the South and West. The majority of the lands are presently cultivated with an existing country residential parcel located in the northwest corner and a telecommunications tower central to the site at the top of the escarpment. The lands are presently designated Agriculture and Land Holdings (ALH) District under Land Use Bylaw 17-21 and cannot be redesignated to urban land use districts until a neighbourhood area structure plan is in place for the lands, and sufficient water capacity is available in accordance with the Town's Water Allocation Policy.

The Biophysical Overview identified an ephemeral waterbody in the northeast corner of the site. A field review, however, confirmed that this waterbody could not be considered a wetland based on the Alberta Wetland Identification and Delineation Directive. There are no significant historical resources on the site as confirmed by the Historical Resources Overview that was completed in support of the West Okotoks ASP, and the Historical Resources Clearance that was granted by the Province for the Tillotson lands. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was completed for the site which concluded that no further environmental study is warranted. A geotechnical evaluation was completed for the site, which confirmed that the site is suitable for development of a residential community.

Topography and Design

The plan area is characterized by variable topography with the highest elevations generally in the west and southwest and the lowest elevations in the northeast. The defining feature of the Tillotson NASP is the central escarpment that bisects the plan area and is characterized by steep slopes, a large aspen tree stand and open grassed area. The preservation of this central escarpment has influenced the overall design of the community, including the proposed road network, distribution of land uses, parks and active transportation networks, as well as the servicing strategy for the area.

Land Use Concept Overview

The proposed Tillotson NASP is designed primarily as a residential community that will include a mix of single-family, semi-detached, row housing and multi-family developments interspersed throughout the community. A neighbourhood hub is identified at the main community entrance from Big Rock Trail and is intended to serve as a commercial and social hub for Tillotson and surrounding communities. The large central escarpment that bisects the plan area will be dedicated as Environmental Reserve and will be connected to the regional pathway network to ensure accessibility of this natural feature to all residents. Interspersed throughout the plan are a number of interconnected green spaces, a school site, playgrounds, cemetery expansion, and a stormwater facility that will also serve as a passive recreation amenity with a regional pathway encircling it. A new water reservoir site is also included within the plan which will support water servicing in Tillotson and the southwest growth area.

Housing Diversity and Density

The proposed land use concept has been designed to achieve an overall residential density between 8.2 to 9.3 units per acre to accommodate 3500 to 4000 new residents. Municipal Development Plan (MDP) policy 1.1.2 (a) requires a minimum residential density of 12 units per acre; however this policy also includes provisions for residential density to transition from 8 to 12 units per acre over time within the ASP area. Further NASP's in the West Okotoks area will need to continue this transition to higher densities over time.

To achieve this density the land use concept has identified low, medium and high density sites. Low density residential sites will primarily accommodate single family dwellings; however semi-detached dwellings could be accommodated in these areas. Medium density residential sites are intended to accommodate street-oriented row housing and semi-detached dwellings. High density sites are intended to accommodate row housing, multi-residential buildings and general retail and service uses in accordance with the land use bylaw. The provision of laned sites throughout the plan also enhances opportunities for homeowners to construct accessory dwelling units on their properties. This plan as proposed will result in more than 60% of total housing units being non-single detached as the community builds out, which exceeds the MDP target of ensuring at least 40% of the total proposed housing units are not single detached.

Neighbourhood Hub

A 2.35 ha (5.81 acre) neighbourhood hub is proposed adjacent to Big Rock Trail along the main entrance into the community. This neighbourhood hub is envisioned to serve as a unique gateway into the community with street fronting storefronts, wide sidewalks, pedestrian scale building design and parking interior to the site. The on and off-street pathway networks facilitate active connections between the neighbourhood hub and key destinations within and beyond Tillotson including parks and playgrounds, a future school site, the central escarpment and numerous multi-family sites. The proximity of the neighbourhood hub to the storm pond also facilitates opportunities for future development on the site to be designed and oriented to capitalize on this amenity. The NASP includes a concept and illustration (Figures 13 and 24) for the neighbourhood hub and supporting design guidelines intended to encourage and promote high quality site and building design at the development stage.

Parks and Open Space Network

The Tillotson NASP includes an extensive network of parks and pathways that includes the dedication of a large 5.18 ha (12.80 acres) central Environmental Reserve (ER) parcel, 5.88 ha (14.54 acres) of required Municipal Reserve (MR) dedication, and other municipal facilities that are not considered formal park spaces, but contribute to the communities overall open space network. Section 4 of the NASP includes conceptual layouts of the various parks spaces that include a number of passive and active recreation programming elements that were informed by the Town's Recreation, Parks and Leisure Master Plan. These concepts are intended to demonstrate how various amenities, features and programming elements can be

accommodated throughout the community and are used to inform and guide the detailed design of parks spaces that occurs at the subdivision stage.

- **Environmental Reserve (ER)** – the defining feature of Tillotson is the large central escarpment that is characterized by steep slopes and a mix of deciduous forest and grassland. As per the *Municipal Government Act* and MDP policy, this central escarpment qualifies as ER due to the presence of steep slopes that exceed 15% and these lands will be dedicated as such at the time of subdivision. Specifically, the lands identified as ER in the plan include those with slopes greater than 15% and a 15 m or greater setback off the top of slope in the forested portion and 6 m in the grassland section, and a 6 m setback off the toe of slope. This natural asset will be preserved in its natural state, and will include regional pathways in the setback areas at the top and toe of slope as well as a connection through it.
- **Municipal Reserve (MR)** – a total of six parks and one school site will form the required MR dedication for the plan area. Conceptual designs for these parks spaces include opportunities for passive and active recreation including, playgrounds, a sport court, viewing areas, community garden, dog social area, seating areas and connections to the on/off-street regional pathway network.
- **Joint Use School Site** – In alignment with the WOASP, a 2.98 ha (7.37 acre) portion of a joint use school site is identified within the plan area, which will extend into the adjacent ¼ section to the west. Early in the plan development process, Administration and the consultant preparing this plan met with local school divisions to discuss required programming needs. The resulting site is based on these discussions, and in consideration of MDP policy which promotes efficient use of limited municipal reserve lands in designing and allocating school sites. It is unclear at this time what the future grade configuration will be at this location.
- **Stormwater Pond & Park** – Though the primary function of the stormwater pond will be to manage stormwater within Tillotson, it will also function as a passive recreation amenity with a shared regional pathway/maintenance access encircling the pond, and may include seating areas adjacent to the commercial site to support outdoor gathering opportunities. The stormwater pond and park will be dedicated as a Public Utility Lot at the time of subdivision and does not form part of the required municipal reserve dedication for the plan area.
- **Cemetery and Municipal Reservoir** – The cemetery expansion area and municipal reservoir sites do not contribute to the functional open space network; however, as there will be minimal structures developed on these sites they will visually contribute to the overall greenspace in the community.

Urban Design

In addition to establishing the detailed layout of land uses, mobility and servicing networks, the NASP also establishes the overall community character to inform architectural design themes and public realm features throughout the community. The plan includes design guidelines and conceptual illustrations of the commercial site, as well as design guidance for residential sites. Architectural controls were provided with the NASP, and these will be registered on individual lots at the time of subdivision. Additional guidance is also provided for common public realm features throughout the community as it builds out over time. The design guidance in the NASP is primarily intended to inform and guide the detailed design of park spaces, commercial and multi-family sites that occurs at the subdivision and development stages.

Mobility

The Tillotson NASP is the first phase of neighbourhood development within the WOASP area. The proposed mobility network has been designed to accommodate anticipated growth within Tillotson and the broader West Okotoks Area. Through the development of the WOASP a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) was undertaken which identified the high level collector road network and potential road closures areas to accommodate build-out of the West Okotoks area, and balance impacts to the broader transportation network. A more detailed TIA was undertaken to support the transportation network in the proposed Tillotson NASP.

- **Big Rock Trail Urbanization** – To support future development of Tillotson and the broader West Okotoks area, the Big Rock Trail Functional Study was undertaken to identify the most appropriate roadway design, intersection treatments, and the phasing and timing of improvements. Improvements to Big Rock Trail will be phased overtime as growth occurs; however the first phase of development within Tillotson will result in the urbanization of Big Rock Trail from Southridge Drive to the main commercial entrance to the community. Initial urbanization of Big Rock Trail will include a 2 lane cross section with curb and gutter, regional pathway on both sides, street lighting and street trees. Over time as the broader West Okotoks area begins to develop, Big Rock Trail will eventually transition to a future 4 lane arterial roadway.
- **Regional Network** – The main entrance to the community will be via Big Rock Trail with 2 connections identified. Secondary connections are provided to Westland Street; however the internal road network has been designed to discourage shortcutting through adjacent communities to the east and encourage Tillotson residents to utilize Big Rock Trail for access to the community.
- **Internal Network** – The internal road network has been designed to preserve the central escarpment and includes several on-street pathway options that facilitate active transportation connections to the various park spaces and destinations within and beyond the plan area. The internal road network is comprised of eight different road cross-sections that were selected based on anticipated traffic volumes as per the TIA. The road cross-sections are largely in alignment with the Town of Okotoks Complete Streets Guidelines.

- **Westland Street Closures** - Two future road closures along Westland Street are proposed within the plan area. These future road closures were first identified in the higher level WOASP that was adopted by Council in April 2020. The WOASP was supported by a TIA prepared by Watt Consulting Group that considered the impact of the plan area on adjacent communities and the greater Town transportation network. This TIA analyzed 14 different network connection options to the 2045 horizon which included: connections to Westland Drive, Westland Street, Highway 7, a disconnection to Westland Street, the potential of a new river crossing on the west edge of Town, one way, right-in-right-outs and no connections to Westridge and Westmount.

The Westland Street road closures that are shown in the adopted WOASP, and included for consideration of Council in the draft Tillotson NASP is the recommended solution to balance the increased traffic from new development within Tillotson and the broader West Okotoks areas by limiting shortcutting through residential local streets while still maintaining connectivity between communities.

The proposed road closures along Westland Street, as shown in the Tillotson NASP and WOASP are recommended for the following reasons:

- The connectivity between communities is maintained and there is significant primary active transportation connections between Tillotson and existing adjacent residential communities;
- It disconnects the long straight Westland Street to provide a calming impact to north-south traffic on this existing route; and
- The modelling results showed that the proposed road closures balance traffic well and limit pressures to the greater network, including Cimarron Boulevard, local shortcutting, and Westland Street.

It is important to note that the proposed Westland Street road closures are not intended to be closed immediately should the Tillotson NASP be adopted by Council. The timing of the proposed road closures would be determined based on current and anticipated traffic volumes, traffic monitoring programs, and completion of suitable alternative road connections within Tillotson to Big Rock Trail and to Westland Street.

- **Active Transportation and Transit**
As per the hierarchy in Policy 3.1.1.b of the MDP, active transportation and transit connectivity has guided the orientation of the transportation network and application of roadway standards as per the Town of Okotoks Complete Streets Guidelines. The on-street regional pathway network has been designed to integrate with the off-street regional pathway network and facilitate active connections to various destinations within and beyond the community. To promote an attractive pedestrian-friendly streetscape, Policy 3.5 of the NASP prohibits front drive housing product where lane access exists along the

collector network and on blocks across from multi-family, parks and school sites. In other areas that have lane access, front-drive access to residential units is discouraged.

The Town of Okotoks currently operates an on-demand curb to curb transit service; however the collector road network could accommodate a future fixed route transit service.

Utility Servicing

The servicing strategy for water, wastewater, shallow utilities and stormwater has been informed by a Servicing Study and Master Drainage Plan prepared by Jubilee Engineering Consultants Ltd. in support of this plan. The WOASP, identified the need for a municipal reservoir to service part of the Tillotson plan area and the broader West Okotoks area.

- **Water Servicing** – Water infrastructure within Tillotson will not only support water servicing within the plan area, but will support water service to the southwest growth area for the Town in the form of a new water reservoir and associated lines to multiple pressure zones. Development within Tillotson will be limited to Phases 1 and 2, as shown in Figure 40: Phasing Plan, until the new reservoir and associated infrastructure is constructed. Additionally, water servicing within Tillotson will be subject to the Water Allocation Policy to limit land use redesignation and subdivision approvals based on availability of licensed capacity to service new development.
- **Sanitary Servicing** – The sanitary servicing concept within the NASP is supported by the Servicing Study which confirmed that there are no sanitary constraints that would preclude full build-out of the plan area.
- **Stormwater Servicing** – The stormwater management system within Tillotson is supported by a stormpond located in the northeast corner of the plan area. In alignment with MDP policy related to stormwater re-use, the developer will be responsible for installing the necessary infrastructure to ensure the stormwater management facility is stormwater re-use ready for irrigation of the adjacent school fields and cemetery. Suggestions on additional stormwater management techniques and best management practices are included in the plan to provide direction and encouragement to developers and private builders within Tillotson.
- **Telecommunications** – the developer intends to have the existing telecommunication tower and associated infrastructure removed upon expiration of the existing lease. This intent has been communicated with the leaseholder. Siting of a potential new telecommunications tower in the area is a federally regulated process and will be subject to the Town's Telecommunications Antenna Structures Siting Protocols.

- **Lifecycle Costs** – As per the MDP, a lifecycle cost analysis and approach to natural assets is a required component of new NASP's. The intent of this requirement is to ensure natural assets are considered in neighbourhood design and to understand the long-term operating and replacement costs associated with approving new development areas. The central escarpment, a large natural asset, will be preserved in its natural state through dedication as ER. Furthermore, the community has been designed to preserve and enhance this natural asset. In terms of engineered assets, the developer has provided the Town with linear infrastructure lengths and estimates of the capital costs of constructing roadways, pathways, deep utility infrastructure, and parks. This information will be used internally to inform costs to the Town to maintain and replace infrastructure assets within Tillotson, and will inform operations and budgeting decisions as the community develops over time.

Environmental Considerations

The defining feature of the Tillotson NASP is the large central escarpment (or natural asset) that will be preserved in its natural state. The allocation of land uses, parks spaces and the transportation and servicing strategy is founded on preserving and enhancing this natural asset for the benefit of the community. The developer has made commitments to ensure the stormwater pond not only handles the stormwater requirements of the plan area, but that it is designed to be stormwater re-use ready to support irrigation of the cemetery and adjacent playfields. Additional stormwater management techniques are identified in the plan to encourage the developer and private landowners to explore opportunities to use these techniques as development occurs. The NASP also includes examples of green street features that can be explored by the developer in collaboration with the Town at the time of subdivision.

Development Phasing

Phasing of development within Tillotson is shown on Figure 40 of the NASP. Development within Tillotson will commence in the north portion of the ¼ section and will generally progress in a clockwise direction. The first phase of development within Tillotson will include the dedication of the central escarpment as ER, construction of a stormwater facility, cemetery expansion, the neighbourhood hub, low, medium and high density residential sites, and the urbanization of Big Rock Trail from the main community entrance to Southridge Drive. Phase one is the subject of a concurrent land use redesignation that is the subject of another report. Generally, phases 3 to 6 cannot be developed until the water reservoir and pump station are constructed and operational.

Regional Considerations and Legislation

The *Municipal Government Act* prescribes minimum requirements for the content of an area structure plan (s. 633) and the process for preparing one (s. 636). The proposed Tillotson NASP fully addresses the content requirements, including development phasing provisions, a detailed land use concept, population density, and the location of transportation routes as well as public utilities.

The Calgary Metropolitan Region Board Growth Plan guides land use, growth and infrastructure planning in the Calgary Region. The Tillotson NASP aligns with the policies of the Growth Plan as it will facilitate the development of a complete community that optimizes the use of existing infrastructure, preserves and enhances an important natural feature and meets the density provisions of the plan. As the Tillotson NASP is considered a sub-area structure plan within the already approved WOASP, it is not required to be submitted to the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board for review.

The Tillotson NASP falls outside of the Intermunicipal referral area identified in the Okotoks-Foothills County Intermunicipal Development Plan (Bylaw 12-16) and as such the plan was not circulated to Foothills County for review and comment.

Municipal Plans and Policy

The Tillotson NASP is consistent with the MDP and West Okotoks ASP. The Developer has incorporated many design and policy changes into the NASP based on municipal policy and technical standards, public and stakeholder feedback to present a plan to Council that meets the Town’s standards and objectives for new residential communities. The Tillotson NASP has been designed to facilitate the development of a complete community that provides opportunities for diverse housing forms and neighbourhood scale commercial opportunities, prioritizes active modes, preserves a large natural asset, includes a variety of passive and active park spaces, and includes provisions for stormwater reuse and green infrastructure, and facilitates the efficient use of existing and future utility infrastructure.

Under the guidance and overarching direction of the NASP, future land use redesignation, subdivision and development within Tillotson will be implemented through the Land Use Bylaw. Table 3 of the NASP outlines the proposed land use districts that correspond with the land use concept shown in Figure 6 of the NASP.

Development of the lands will be subject to the Water Allocation Policy, which limits the land use redesignation, subdivision and development approval process based on the availability of licenced water supply. The provisions under the Policy and the associated Administrative Clarifications will guide when and how much development can be approved at any one time.

Strategic Plan Goals

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Responsibly Managed Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrated Environmental Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Local Economy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Culture & Community Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational Excellence		

Public Hearing / Participation Strategy

A public participation process was put in place by the applicant in consultation with Town Administration. The strategy included a public website for project updates, information materials mailed out to property owners in proximity to the plan area, email updates, and two separate public participation events. Formal notification of plan preparation as per Section 636(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* was also undertaken.

- On June 22, 2021, the applicant hosted a virtual information session to share information on the plan being developed and to provide the opportunity for the public to ask questions and provide feedback on the preliminary concept. 41 people attend this virtual event. Following this virtual engagement event a survey was sent to all stakeholders who attended. For two weeks after this event an interactive draft of the preliminary land use concept was posted on the project website where members of the public could leave comments and/or questions directly on the interactive map. A full summary and response to the feedback received during this engagement is included as Attachment 3.
- To support preparation of the Tillotson NASP, in August 2021 the consultant and Administration met with local school divisions to share information on the plan under development and to solicit feedback on school programming needs for the joint school site identified in the plan. The proposed school site and supporting concept has been designed to accommodate the programming needs identified by the school divisions.
- Following receipt of a complete application in November 2021, Administration commenced formal notification of government agencies, school divisions, utility companies, plan area and adjacent landowners as per the requirements of Section 636(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* for statutory plan preparation. One formal written response was received from Alberta Transportation, accepting the Tillotson NASP to guide future subdivision of the lands as per Section 18(e) of the *Matters Related to Subdivision and Development Regulation*. The letter also suggested that the Town mitigate traffic impacts on the regional network resulting from the development, and that the Town collect off-site levies for transportation infrastructure. Alberta Transportation's response is included as Attachment 5.
- In early 2022, Administration met with the owner of the small country residential parcel located within the northwest corner of the plan area. The intent of this meeting was to share information on the draft plan and the overall plan preparation and formal approval processes. The landowner did not indicate any concerns with the draft plan.
- On September 7, 2022 a follow up open house was held at Foothills Centennial Centre to share a revised draft of the plan, collect feedback and answer questions. Over 100 people attended this event and 62 surveys were completed. A full summary and responses to the feedback received during this engagement is included as Attachment 4.

The majority of public feedback on the plan is related to transportation and water servicing considerations. Substantive concerns have been received regarding the proposed closures of segments of Westland Street. These concerns are summarized in detail in Attachment 4 and generally include the potential for increased traffic at Westmount School, and the impacts these closures will have on local roadways within the communities of Westmount and Westridge. Despite negative feedback received on the proposed road closures they have been retained in the plan. The proposed road closures are based on substantive traffic modeling that was undertaken when the WOASP was developed, and additional modeling to support the Tillotson NASP. The transportation network proposed in the Tillotson NASP has been designed to not only manage traffic volumes generated from this community, but to also manage the anticipated traffic volumes resulting from continued growth in southwest Okotoks. The transportation modeling results show that the proposed road closures balance traffic well and limits pressures to the greater network, including Cimarron Boulevard, local shortcutting, and Westland Street. It is important to note that the proposed road closures would not happen immediately. As development progresses in Tillotson, traffic monitoring programs will be implemented, which will inform the appropriate timing of road closures.

Concerns have also been raised about increased noise from Big Rock Trail and the need for sound attenuation, as well as overall construction impacts resulting from development within Tillotson. A noise attenuation study will be required for any subdivision and development proposals adjacent to Big Rock Trail. Should project noise volumes exceed Town standards, noise mitigation will be required. Construction impacts (i.e., construction traffic, dust and erosion, weed control, etc) resulting from development are managed by the developer through guidelines and agreements that are put in place during the subdivision and development processes.

Feedback was received regarding the ability of the Town to approve a new growth area amid the Town's limited water resources and watering restrictions during the summer months. Any development of lands within Tillotson will be subject to the Water Allocation Policy, which limits land use redesignation, subdivision and development based on the availability of licenced water supply.

All stakeholder and public feedback on the plan has been considered in the context of higher level planning policies of the Town, including the MDP and WOASP, technical analysis of professional consultants, constraints with land and existing development, and the differing perspectives of the public.

The public hearing for Bylaw 02-23, the Tillotson NASP, has been tentatively scheduled for Monday February 27th at 7:00 p.m. during the Regular Council Meeting. The public hearing will be advertised in the Western Wheel, on the Town's webpage, and by direct mail to adjacent landowners in accordance with the requirements of Section 606 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

This Bylaw will be referred to the Municipal Planning Commission for review and comment at their February 16, 2023 meeting.

Alternatives for Consideration

n/a

CAO Comments

I support first reading of this bylaw.

Attachment(s)

1. Attachment 1 – Draft Bylaw 02-23
2. Attachment 2 - NASP Document
3. Attachment 3 - What We Heard Report (August 2021)
4. Attachment 4 – What We Heard Report (November 2022)
5. Attachment 5 – Alberta Transportation Response

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