



PLANNING POLICY

TO: Council
DATE: June 29, 2021 **DIVISION:** 7
TIME: Morning Appointment
FILE: 1011-325 **APPLICATION:** N/A
SUBJECT: Adoption of proposed Bylaw C-8173-2021 (Balzac East Area Structure Plan Amendment)

POLICY DIRECTION:

Direction for preparation of this Area Structure Plan Amendment came from the Terms of Reference adopted by Council on October 27, 2020; the ASP Amendment has been prepared in accordance with that Terms of Reference and with Section 633 (1) of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). The ASP Amendment was assessed against the Interim Growth Plan, Rocky View County / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan, the County Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and the existing Balzac East Area Structure Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The draft Balzac East ASP Amendment would expand the Balzac East ASP boundary to include 465 acres of land located at the northeast corner of Range Road 291 and Highway 566, including the NE, SE, and SW portions of Section 13 immediately east of the Rocky View County campus. Council gave first reading to Bylaw C-8173-2021 on April 27, 2021. The ASP amendment has been revised following first reading to address feedback from adjacent landowners, Administration, and the City of Calgary.

The purpose of the boundary expansion is to add Special Development Area #6 (SDA#6) to the ASP to facilitate the development of a large-format industrial business park along Highway 566. The Alta Vista Landing development would complement existing uses on the Rocky View County Campus and higher intensity industrial uses being proposed south in the existing Balzac East ASP area. The Alta Vista Landing site is intended to be guided by a conceptual scheme to support the expansion if these proposed ASP amendments are approved by Council and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board.

In support of the ASP Amendment process, the proponent prepared technical studies to examine environmental impacts, historical resources, water and wastewater servicing strategies, stormwater management, and transportation impacts.

The ASP Amendment was assessed against the Interim Growth Plan, Rocky View County / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan, the County Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and the existing Balzac East Area Structure Plan. Overall, Administration finds the application aligns with the relevant policies.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION: Administration recommends approval in accordance with Option #1.

Administration Resources

Jessica Anderson, Planning Policy
 Robyn Erhardt, Planning Policy



OPTIONS:

- Option #1: Motion #1 THAT Bylaw C-8173-2021 be amended in accordance with Attachment A.
- Motion #2 THAT Bylaw C-8173-2021 be given second reading, as amended.
- Motion #3 THAT Bylaw C-8173-2021, as amended, be referred to the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board for approval.
- Option #2: THAT Bylaw C-8173-2021 be refused and the Balzac East Area Structure Plan amendment Terms of Reference be rescinded.

BACKGROUND:

The ASP Amendment was led by the ownership team Advent Project Ltd; they engaged WSP Canada Inc. to prepare the draft Plan amendments. The ASP Amendment supports the existing commercial and industrial development in the Balzac East ASP. A proposed Conceptual Scheme would provide a comprehensive planning framework to guide the development in a form which is consistent with Rocky View County's strategic objective of accommodating larger-format business development opportunities within the East Balzac major business/employment area.

Key points from the Terms of Reference that guided the development of the ASP Amendment include the following:

- i. develop a land use strategy including development sequencing for future redesignation, subdivision, and development of lands;
- ii. determine appropriate integration and transition policies for adjacent land uses;
- iii. determine potential servicing options for existing and future development;
- iv. determine current and planned transportation infrastructure under both Provincial and County jurisdiction, to determine future transportation needs and opportunities;
- v. identify possible pedestrian linkages to ensure the development of a cohesive community;
- vi. identify key environmental and natural features within the Balzac East ASP Amendment area and suggest methods to uphold their form and function;
- vii. explore phasing in conjunction with a review of the boundary of the Balzac East ASP Amendment area to accommodate growth projections, and to implement an appropriate mechanism for phasing growth; and,
- viii. establish a framework for monitoring the long-term effectiveness of the Balzac East ASP Amendment.

The proposed Balzac East ASP Amendment addresses each of these key points and provide appropriate policy to address them. If approved, the Balzac East ASP amendments would provide policy guidance for the preparation of a local plan and subsequent applications for redesignation, subdivision, and development within the Plan area.

PLAN PREPARATION:

The ASP Amendment was prepared through a collaborative planning process that began late in 2020 and resulted in a draft ASP Amendment in spring 2021. Landowners within the study area, stakeholders, and agencies were involved throughout the project to provide feedback and input into the vision, goals, and policies.

A critical component of plan preparation included the development of supporting technical studies to examine transportation infrastructure, water and wastewater servicing, stormwater management,



environmental considerations, and historical resources. These studies were also made available on the County's project website page for review and comment by landowners, residents, and stakeholders as part of the process.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The public engagement component of the Plan included a mail-out to adjacent landowners notifying them of the project and a virtual open house on April 8, 2021 where the draft amendments were presented. The materials from the event were posted to the County webpage, including a Q&A document that provided some responses to the feedback received during the Open House.

All landowners within and adjacent to the Plan area were notified of the public hearing.

The level of engagement proposed for this project was outlined in the Terms of Reference as follows:

- To implement effective, inclusive and transparent community engagement;
- To collaborate with any identified key stakeholders and agencies and address any issues and opportunities at the earliest point.

As an amendment proposing a modest expansion to the existing ASP area, the engagement process followed by the developer-group is considered to be appropriate by Administration.

PLAN CONTENT:

The purpose of the ASP Amendment is to adjust the Balzac East ASP boundary to include an additional three quarter sections of land to the overall plan area. Proposed policies within the amended ASP would support the proposed Alta Vista Landing Concept Scheme and provide the comprehensive planning framework for business industrial development.

Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy in the amended Balzac East ASP would establish high level direction for development of the additional lands in SDA #6 as well as continue to guide development in the entire Balzac East ASP area. Details regarding the build-out of the SDA would be provided in the proposed Alta Vista Landing Conceptual Scheme and would take effect upon approval by Rocky View County Council.

The Amended ASP would provide clear policy guidance for development in SDA #6, as well as assist in ensuring that the direction of preferred development as established in the original ASP is followed. The subject lands are proposed to accommodate a number of business development opportunities comprised of commercial and light industrial uses, primarily focused towards large logistics centres and warehouses.

The additional lands are located immediately north of existing Balzac East's Special Development Area #5, which currently accommodates similar uses but with higher planned intensities. Including the subject lands in the Balzac East ASP as SDA #6 would establish the policy framework to guide adoption of the proposed land use and to integrate development through complimentary uses in the area. Lands within the new SDA #6 are expected to remain as agricultural until needed for development. They would then be transitioned to business uses in a series of orderly, planned, properly serviced and market-driven stages.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

In support of the amendment to the Balzac East ASP, six technical studies were prepared:

- Servicing Strategy (Water and Wastewater)
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Transportation Impact Assessment



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- Biophysical Impact Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Historical Resources Overview

The studies identify future infrastructure needs and required upgrades to support the proposed land uses identified in the proposed Atla Vista Landing Conceptual Scheme. Technical studies for future planning stages would be required to align with County policies and Servicing Standards. The technical policies have been aligned to facilitate comprehensive implementation.

The servicing, stormwater, and transportation policies have been written to ensure the appropriate technical design and implementation of infrastructure as development proceeds. Required infrastructure and servicing acquisition, construction, and upgrades would be the responsibility of the development proponent, who would also be required to pay all applicable County infrastructure levies. A general description of proposed infrastructure for the Plan area is provided below.

Biophysical Impact Assessment

A desktop review of the study area indicates that the subject lands are situated within a fragmented landscape where there is ongoing agricultural and industrial land use within and surrounding the Study Area.

Based on the integrity assessment completed, natural features within the subject lands were deemed to be of low value. However, the final concept plan incorporates one natural feature and this feature will be retained as Environmental Reserve; two other features are to be functionally retained through the incorporation of a stormwater management facility and a proposed bioswale system.

Overall, the project is anticipated to have some permanent impacts to the local environment. However, through the application of various mitigation measures, it is anticipated that the overall project will not have a significant adverse effect on the subject lands and surrounding area.

Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was undertaken in support of the amendment and identified items that may need to be addressed at later development stages of development and/or through submission of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.

Stormwater Management Plan

In support of the ASP Amendment, an assessment of the stormwater management options was undertaken. The SMP recommendations that stormwater management should be initially dealt with by way of implementation of on-site low impact development design measures prior to discharge to the overall system. The wider stormwater management system would utilize a ditch system to collect stormwater to a central pond where sufficient storage would be provided to maintain the appropriate release volume in accordance with the Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan. It is anticipated that a detailed Stormwater Management Plan would be required at the future development stages and updated as development progresses to ensure the stormwater run-off is properly managed.

Servicing (Water and Wastewater)

In support of the ASP Amendment, a technical assessment of water and wastewater servicing options was completed. The assessment aims to determine if a cost effective servicing system that provides efficient, economic, and sustainable municipal services is feasible for the Plan area. The Servicing Study provides an overview of the options available to service the Plan area and the upgrades required to support the full build-out of the Plan area.

Potable water would be provided to the plan area via connection to the County's existing water infrastructure in the East Balzac area. Existing and planned infrastructure in the area including an



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existing 400 mm water main at Range Road 291 and planned transmission main will connect the lands to the Rocky View County water system. At a minimum, two supply points are recommended for the lands to provide redundancy and looping for the system. The exact number of connections, looping and sizing should be determined through subsequent design and modeling and in conjunction with the planned Rocky View County infrastructure for the area. The development would be a focus on lower consumption rates that aligns within the planned water network for the area. Further, the water consumption and fire flow requirements projected for the future development, align with the capacities identified in past studies. These would be confirmed in subsequent design stages and implemented through future approvals.

With respect to wastewater, the plan area would be serviced by the East Balzac Wastewater Transmission Main and Balzac East Lift Stations. The developer would need to contribute to the expansion of these facilities, as identified in the Off-Site Levy Update. The Project will expand the service area of the noted infrastructure and a review of the needed capacity and financial contributions would be required as part of subsequent development stages.

The wastewater from each lot would drain by gravity through collection systems and eventually connect to the Balzac East Lift Station and sanitary forcemain.

Transportation Impact Assessment

The development envisaged by the ASP amendments is connected internally with two-lane Industrial/Commercial roads, supplemented by an internal multi-use trail through the central green space and a sidewalk running along the main east to west roadway. The intersections of the internal road with the external network are proposed on Range Road 291, Range Road 290, and a proposed right-in right-out access on Highway 566 at the mid-point. Highway 566 is under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation so all access points would require further collaboration and approvals from the Province.

The TIA indicates that no significant upgrades are needed as a result of predicted background traffic prior to 2024. Based on the phasing of the proposed development, upgrades to Range Road 291 may be warranted at the start of the project.

If the site was to be fully built-out over the next 10 years, upgrades to the major intersections of Range Road 290 and 291 with Highway 566 would be required. However, these upgrades fall within those identified through the Highway 566 Functional Planning Study and are driven by local and regional development traffic.

Market Demand and Fiscal Analysis Reports

The Applicant prepared a *Land Use Upgrade Feasibility Study (February 2019)* that indicated demand was steady, with decreasing land availability due to absorption in the region; particularly in Balzac. The report demonstrated that the proposal presents the opportunity not only to meet the existing and anticipated demand for these and similar uses, but also to increase employment numbers, the commercial tax base, and available commercial/industrial space in the area.

In support of the expansion, the proponent has also prepared a *Financial Analysis Report (April 2021)*. The intent of the analysis was to evaluate the financial impacts of the full build-out of the proposed BEASP amendment area to County municipal operations. The report demonstrates a reduction to the County tax rate given the significant increase the proposed development land assessment would have on the overall non-residential assessment, which would in return result in a decrease in the overall tax rate. With respect to the capital cost, the developer funded on-site infrastructure costs are estimated to be \$44 million for the BEASP amendment project. These infrastructure assets would be eventually dedicated to the County after they are constructed. The estimated Off-site Levy contributed by the BEASP Amendment development is estimated to be \$33,565,000 in total, including Transportation Off-Site Levy in the range of \$7,900,000, and Water and Wastewater Levy in the amount of



\$25,655,000. All the infrastructure cost recoveries and Off-site Levy amounts would need to be further verified at a future development stage.

Plan Implementation

The proposed amendments to facilitate the development are limited to mapping, minor textual amendments throughout and the addition of a new Special Development Area #6 to provide specific requirements for the expansion area. A comprehensive conceptual scheme for all 465 acres has been submitted and is in processing. The conceptual scheme would provide a detailed planning framework to support future redesignation, subdivision and development on the site. All policies in the existing Balzac East ASP would continue to guide development.

Policies within the local plan are expected to include direction for evaluating applications, phasing, continuing collaboration with the City of Calgary, and provide clear expectations for infrastructure and funding requirements.

POLICY DIRECTION AND SUPPORT:

The key policy direction for the Balzac East ASP Amendment is provided in the Interim Growth Plan, Intermunicipal Development Plan, County Plan, and the existing Balzac East ASP.

Interim Growth Plan

The proposed Plan was evaluated in accordance with the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's (CMRB's) Interim Growth Plan (IGP). The IGP provides a policy framework for growth in the Calgary region, including the designation of employment areas; the proposed ASP Amendment facilitates the expansion of an existing employment area consistent with the definition and applicable policies of the IGP. The IGP also provides policy direction to plan employment areas through the preparation of statutory plans or amendments, and this proposed Balzac East ASP Amendment meets this requirement.

Policy 3.4.5.1 of the IGP notes that employment areas shall be planned and developed to make efficient and cost-effective use of existing and planned infrastructure and services. The servicing strategy, transportation assessment and other technical studies, alongside the policy framework within the ASP demonstrate that the document aligns with this policy.

The IGP provides policy direction on Intermunicipal collaboration in Section 3.2.2. Collaboration processes undertaken with the City of Calgary have resulted in discussions on transportation and, in particular, future transit opportunities. Administration has executed a structured engagement process, which included notification and circulation of materials as the Plan was developed. Administration provided all technical studies for review and comment, and the proponent revised both the draft Plan and technical studies to respond to comments received during circulation. The intermunicipal aspect of the project and resulting Plan are consistent with the goals of the IGP, ensuring coordination on planning matters of regional significance.

The IGP includes key Region-Wide Policies on collaboration (3.2.2), and sourcewater protection (3.2.3) to be considered for new ASP's. The existing ASP addresses these matters through existing policy and further consideration of sourcewater protection, stormwater management, impacts to wetlands, and regional corridors will be further addressed through specific policies in subsequent local plans.

The proposal is consistent with the Mobility Corridors policies in Section 3.5; the proposal sufficiently demonstrates that the proposed land use and built form optimizes the proximity and adjacency to regionally significant mobility corridors. The proposal also provides mitigation measures and policies to address identified/potential adverse impacts on regionally significant mobility corridors.



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It is Administration's assessment that the proposed land use strategy aligns with the IGP direction for Employment Area development type and that the overall ASP amendments meet the wider requirements of the IGP.

Rocky View / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)

While the lands proposed to be added to the Balzac East ASP are not part of the Policy Area of the Rocky View / City of Calgary IDP, the ASP is adjacent to the municipal boundary with The City of Calgary. Therefore, it was considered appropriate to follow the referral process outlined in the IDP to ensure The City was afforded an opportunity to comment. Map 4 of the IDP identifies the area as a County Growth Corridor. Policy 8.1.2 provides direction for County Growth Corridor stating that they should be developed in accordance with Rocky View County statutory and local area plans. The relevant statutory plan in this case is both the County Plan and existing Balzac East ASP as discussed below.

The most recent feedback received from The City is included in Attachment 'B'. Administration and the proponent has sought to incorporate The City's feedback into the development of the Plan where comments were material to intermunicipal matters and necessary to ensure compliance to the guiding statutory framework; Administration considers that the resulting policy additions and amendments ensure that specified concerns are appropriately mitigated.

County Plan

The County Plan provides a number of business areas and development forms which accommodate the wide variety of businesses wishing to locate in the county. This Plan identifies business areas where the majority of commercial and industrial development should locate. By focusing development in these locations, the County provides for orderly growth and economic efficiencies in the development of its transportation and infrastructure systems.

The Balzac East area is identified as a regional business centre per Map 1 of the County Plan. Regional business centres are large areas of commercial and industrial development within the County and their purpose is to provide regional and national business services.

Policy 14.3 states that the County will encourage the infilling or intensification of existing business areas and hamlet main streets in order to complement other businesses, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize land use conflicts with agriculture uses, and minimize the amount of traffic being drawn into rural areas. The proposal is an expansion to the existing business area which maximizes the use of existing infrastructure, minimizes land use conflicts with agriculture uses as only two boundaries are adjacent to agricultural uses, and minimizes the amount of traffic being drawn into rural areas as the proposal connects to existing regional infrastructure. Further, the County Plan (Policy 14.5) requires that boundary expansion of a business area shall require an area structure plan or an area structure plan amendment. The proposed Balzac East ASP amendment is consistent with the County Plan.

In addition, Policy 14.8 states that the County shall direct new commercial and industrial development to existing, identified regional business centres and ensure development complies with existing area structure plans. Business activity in Rocky View County's Balzac East area has been growing steadily in recent years and is anticipated to continue in a pattern of growth over the next ten years per the Feasibility Study undertaken by the Applicant. A significant majority of the existing Balzac East ASP lands have conceptual scheme and/or land use approvals for development. Steady absorption rates are expected to lead to demand for more commercial and light industrial land in the area, especially as the Balzac East's Area Structure Plan (ASP) encourages diversification of business within its plan area and as industry in the area continues to expand.

If approved, the Balzac East ASP Amendment would supplement the existing commercial and industrial land inventory in Balzac East ASP. The ASP Amendment area is ideally situated along a



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major transportation corridor and can easily be connected to the County's existing infrastructure and therefore aligns with the County's Strategic Plan for responsible growth.

Existing Balzac East ASP

The existing Balzac East ASP was adopted in 2000 and provides a planning and development framework to guide future growth in the Plan Area by establishing a range of appropriate and compatible land uses within a sequential development strategy. It is intended to provide a flexible long-term framework for development in the Plan Area. The lands adjacent to the proposed expansion (within the ASP) are located in Special Development Area #5 where industrial and business development is supported. The plan includes transition policies, business use performance standards and development guidelines. The proposed expansion area and new Special Development Area #6 is consistent with the vision, goals and policies of the existing ASP and particular the adjacent Special Development Area #5.

Section 8.2 of the Plan speaks to periodic plan reviews and amendments. The policy states that the future land use and development outlined in the BEASP is intended to address a long-term time horizon, but that periodic review and occasional amendment of the BEASP through public hearing may be required. It further states that the BEASP is flexible enough to allow for review and amendment every five years should the Municipality deem that appropriate. In the event that variables or external policy that determines the rate or extent of development within the plan area change dramatically, then the Municipality may initiate a review of this plan earlier than five years. The proposed amendment appears consistent with these policies and in addition, is intended to be forward thinking to provide for development to occur in a 3-5 year timeframe when current capacity may become diminished based on demand.

CHANGES SINCE FIRST READING:

- Additional policies to detail further studies required at the local plan stage; and
- Additional policies to address intermunicipal cooperation requirements at the local plan stage;

All changes are detailed in Schedule 'A' of the Bylaw (see Attachment 'A').

PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS:

Public Hearing notices for the draft Balzac East ASP Amendment were sent to 108 properties within, and 1 mile adjacent to, the proposed Plan area. No letters were received in response.



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Respectfully submitted,

“Brock Beach”

Acting Executive Director
Community Development Services

Concurrence,

“Kent Robinson”

Acting Chief Administrative Officer

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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT ‘A’: Bylaw C-8173-2021 and Schedule “A” Balzac East Area Structure Plan Amendment (redline)

ATTACHMENT ‘B’: City of Calgary Comments dated June 3, 2021

ATTACHMENT ‘C’: Landowner Circulation Map