Workshop Feedback and City Administration's Response

The City of Regina held a workshop session with stakeholders from the Downtown and Warehouse Business Improvement Districts and development community to seek feedback on the draft Underutilized Land Improvement Strategy (ULIS). The feedback was provided in-person during the workshop as well as via email shortly after the session.

Discussion 1: Use of Barriers in Drafting Goals

Barriers identified in the Underutilized Land Study (ULS) completed by V3 Consultants and Praxis were used as key inputs to create draft goals for the Strategy (ULIS). The goals are intended to guide the strategies for the City to undertake in order to effectively address the barriers to the redevelopment of underutilized sites.

The following questions were asked to start the conversation:

- 1. Have we been able to address the barriers that were identified effectively through the goals?
- 2. What do you appreciate about the goals and how they were developed?
- 3. What concerns do you have?
- 4. What else should be done to further refine the goals?

Proposed Goals	Workshop Feedback	Response from City Administration
Draft Goal 1: RULES The Regulatory frameworks, (e.g. Zoning Bylaw,	 Concerned about the lack of attention on vacant buildings and recognition that heritage policy and the building code are sometimes at 	Examining this would be an example of what is referred to in 5-4: Consider how implementation of other City projects across the
Neighbourhood Plans) support redevelopment of underutilized lands.	 odds. Noted that as part of the Underutilized Land Study, the focus seemed 	organization indirectly impact development on underutilized sites. Added future long-term 'strategic action' that directs investigation of
Dest 0 0 DD00500	to be on vacant sites and not on vacant buildings and as such, barriers related to them was not a focus of the original inputs.	barriers to vacant buildings, and development of strategies to support how to address them.
Draft Goal 2: PROCESS Information for redevelopment applications is readily	- Biggest barriers are related to knowledge of infrastructure (i.e. what is there) and its capacity (i.e. what it can support). Felt that this is	In the Current Conditions section, lack of information on infrastructure is a barrier that has been identified and is addressed within a number of
available and the process is coordinated.	underlying theme for the Strategy that could be identified more clearly. It significantly impacts the financial viability of a project.	the goals, including Process, Finance and Promotion. Efforts to improve access to infrastructure information are underway and
Draft Goal 3: FINANCE	Knowledge about existing infrastructure capacity would greatly assist developers in the decision-making process. If there is enough	will be further enhanced with more specific information as neighbourhood planning proceeds, the Wastewater Master Plan is
Private investment in the redevelopment of underutilized properties is fostered through strategic public investment.	capacity, then a project may proceed. If not, a project will not proceed, or discussions can start on how to get capacity.	completed, and corridor studies, such as the one currently occurring along Saskatchewan Drive proceed.
Draft Goal 4: PROMOTE	Suggest that the City take a targeted approach by determining infrastructure capacity information first for the downtown and then expand it to the City Centre. A developer is unlikely to spend \$50k+ to understand whether an opportunity exists. Even high-density	

Collaboration with others is fostered and opportunities within existing communities is promoted.	redevelopment will be challenging without this information unless there are enough dwelling units to offset the due diligence cost.	
Draft Goal 5: MONITOR Through implementation, progress is monitored and	- Another theme of first four goals seems to be around 'Finance'. Felt like this is the biggest hurdle. If the financial hurdle can be figured out and thereby reduce risks, then the redeveloping underutilized sites will be more viable.	In the Goals section, added clarification that the goals are connected and support one another and do not stand-alone.
reported on regularly and informs refinements to the Strategy over time to respond to barriers.	These goals are good ideas; however, it is felt that the financial aspect is the 'paramount pillar' that will need to be focused on to be successful (+1 sticker).	The City acknowledges that each of the four action-oriented goals all contribute to the financial viability of developing underutilized lands. It is reiterated through Strategy that the Goals and Strategies recognize the connection of the barrier to the financial aspect of development and have intended to create a work plan that guides the City towards addressing them over time. This has been stated more clearly.
	- There is a need to better understand the costs for all the pieces associated with infill development; all the pieces of the 'puzzle' must be available to effectively determine the costs and make an informed decision on whether to proceed or not. (+1 sticker)	Recognized that access to information and awareness of the process is important it is and addressed through a number of proposed strategies, including: 2-5: Tool to describe application process; 2-7: GIS infrastructure viewer online; 3-1: Target areas and apply specific programs or incentives; 3-3: Explore incentive programs and initiatives; 3-5: Redevelopment Levy; 4-7: Demonstration Projects
	- NIMBY (i.e. Not In My Back Yard) comes out when an application goes to Council which increases the risk of development projects.	Recognized and addressed through "Promotion" goal.
	- May want to consider splitting this Strategy into two sections: residential and commercial. Rationale is that they have different issues. The focus of the residential section could be on the 30% intensification target. (+ 1 sticker)	Based on recent development challenges in the City, it is felt that most of the barriers that apply to one land use also apply to the other. If, as the Strategy is implemented, it is determined that that a different approach is needed for different land uses, it would be considered at that time.
	 Have an annual education session with City Council and Regina Planning Commission about the value of intensification and redevelopment of underutilized land; some decisions that are made seem counter intuitive to fostering the development of underutilized sites. (+ 3 stickers) 	Added as part of action under 4-2: Champion and promote development of underutilized lands and infill development.
	 Noted that some developers when undertaking projects on underutilized sites experienced every barrier; suggestion to use this information as a case study for current state. 	Recognized that numerous barriers can be experienced in a single application; next steps to focus on actions to address them and reflect over time on whether they are successfully doing so.

Discussion 2: Goals and Strategies 1 (Rules) and 2 (Process)

The overall approach for the Strategy was explained and the goals and associated strategies were reviewed by timeframe of implementation.

Identified timing is associated with the 'start' of the project; many will be ongoing while others are an action that will be completed and influence future work.

Questions to encourage discussion:

- 1. What do you appreciate about the goals and strategies?
- 2. What concerns do you have?
- 3. What else should be done to further refine the strategies?

3. What else should be done to further refine the strategies?			
Draft Goals and Strategies	Workshop Feedback	Response from City Administration	
GOAL 1: RULES	 Reducing time to get through the approval process is welcome (+ 1 sticker). 	Appreciate support for proposed direction.	
Immediate Start (2019)	Enforcing response time for development applications is	The implementation of the Planning and Building	
1-1: Update Zoning Bylaw to align with the Official Community Plan (OCP).	needed and should meet timelines identified in the P&D	Software (2-1) is intended to address this concern	
1-4: Consider using contract zoning where specific uses are restricted due to known contaminants to allow development to occur that is not affected by the contaminants.	Act	through prompts to the reviewers and notifications to managers when deadlines are not met. It is also	
·	- Appreciate action to have one point of contact, but this	intended to support action 2-8 to track the time it	
1-5: Consider locations of underutilized lands, their viability from an intensification and redevelopment perspective, what the ultimate land uses in those locations should be, and how zoning should be applied (i.e. contextual zoning). And as appropriate, use with other strategies, including 1-6, 1-7, and 1-8).	should include having it be someone's job to track time it takes to have every department review and complete requirements and draft agreements within the time period.	takes to complete infill development applications. As a follow up, 2-9 identifies the need to consider setting a service standard for infill development applications.	
1-6: Consider pre-zoning sites with an ability to add a holding symbol that identifies	- In response to the Downtown-focused strategy (2-6), it	Identifying areas of focus is important to ensure that	
requirements to be completed by the developer; it is expected that this would be implemented as part of the neighbourhood planning processes to assign the ultimately desired land use in strategic sites, but it could also be advanced on its own.	was noted that often the Warehouse District is often forgotten and it is hoped that it can be mentioned as a future area to receive focus, in the medium-term, for	efforts are not spread too thin and that results have impact. The areas of focus are likely to evolve over time and are intended to be informed by the	
1-8: Ensure consistency between the OCP, Zoning Bylaw, and Site Design Standards through regular review and update accordingly.	example based on experience in the downtown (i.e. consider it a future step) (+1 sticker).	Neighbourhood Planning process, which will be undertaken as per the Sequencing Plan.	
Short-Term Start (2020-2021)		In terms of the Warehouse District specifically, it is an area that most directly benefits from its proximity to	
1-7: Explore supporting mid-rise (6-8 story) developments in zoning and identify key zones where mid-rise development can occur 'as of right'.		the Railyard Renewal Project (3-9).	
Medium-Term Start (2022-2024)	- A process barrier that does not seem to be mentioned is dealing with the challenges associated with "inspections"	This is not directly in scope of this Strategy as inspections were not identified as a barrier through	
1-2: Explore expanding Zoning Bylaw to allow a broader range of temporary uses on vacant lots.	 there are inconsistencies and challenges with the current state (+4 stickers). 	the Study. As well, the way that they are conducted in infill areas is the same as how they are done in greenfield. Inconsistencies in approach by individual	
Long-Term Start (2025-2030)	 Further on the inspections point, there are additional requests for information being made that previously were not requested, such as truss design. 	inspectors has been identified and seeking ways to improve consistency are being sought. If there are immediate concerns with the Inspections for a	

1-3: Maintain regular review schedule to ensure the Zoning Bylaw is current and ensuring development is aligned with the OCP as well as considering its impact on addressing barriers identified through the Underutilized Land Study.

GOAL 2: PROCESS

Immediate Start (2019)

- 2-1: Focus implementation on new Planning and Building Software (i.e. Cityview) and review for improvements over time that support development process on underutilized sites.
- 2-3: Focus implementation of one-point of contact through the entire application process for development.
- 2-7: Seek opportunities to make the GIS Infrastructure Viewer available on regina.ca for use by prospective developers in developing their applications.
- 2-8: Track the time taken for steps in the approval processes for infill development.

Short-Term Start (2020-2021)

- 2-2: Consider opportunities in the Planning and Building Software to prioritize development applications for underutilized sites.
- 2-6: Explore opportunities to improve the internal process to support redevelopment on underutilized sites specific to the Downtown.

Medium-Term Start (2022-2024)

- 2-4: Reflect on whether a specific role is needed for infill development of underutilized sites given the complexity of applications to foster effective cross-departmental coordination.
- 2-5: Consider the need to develop an online tool to assist developers in understanding what they can expect through the application process for development on underutilized sites.
- 2-9: Consider developing a service standard for processing infill development applications as part of Planning and Sustainability Fee reviews.

Long-Term Start (2025-2030)

None identified at this time

- Suggestion to create a training/education and awareness building program/exercise that helps those at the City involved in approvals experience what it feels like on the application side of a development application; this should include the impacts that are felt by delays, for example (e.g. the financial implications, Impact on the timing for a development, etc.). This could assist with future work that considers process improvements to help "get to yes".
- Suggest a strategy be for the City to plan in the medium to long term to do the actual assessment of infrastructure's condition and included in the evolution of a micro-model. This could be an add-on to the GIS viewer that could also include information such as the material that the pipe is constructed from (+3 stickers).
- Suggest that providing infrastructure information be thought of as a progression that the City can help make simpler: first provide the GIS viewer application that advises on what pipes and their sizes; then start to fill in capacity gaps; then the conversation with City staff is needed to demonstrate that the site can be serviced; and finally it is confirmed that there is enough capacity to support the proposed development. To assist with this, it would be nice to see the City having information that would effectively inform the likelihood of existing infrastructure to support the proposed development – can this be a part of the strategy?
- Noted that GIS viewer online cannot replace the detailed conversation with City staff; recognized that it may be a first step of three or five (+1 sticker).
- Currently, there are challenges with finding out information from the City's different departments – they seem fragmented (e.g. it is has taken a long time to get information on when a temporary occupancy permit has

current project, please contact the Building Standards Branch.

Recognized and this is considered within the advancement of 2-6 in the downtown which will require a deeper look into specific challenges to effectively determine specific actions to address them. As well, the City's restructuring of its Planning functions is intended to provide an improved customer experience, which includes improving processes.

In the Current Conditions section lack of information on infrastructure is a barrier that has been identified and is addressed within a number of the goals, including Process, Finance and Promotion.

As noted previously, efforts to improve access to infrastructure information are underway and will be further enhanced with more specific information as neighbourhood planning proceeds, the Wastewater Master Plan is completed, and corridor studies, such as the one currently occurring along Saskatchewan Drive proceed.

Recognized and addressed through Process strategic actions, particularly those focused on providing one point of contact (i.e. 2-3). As well, the City's restructuring is intended to provide customers with an improved service experience.

	been issued). Improved streamlining of this kind of a thing is suggested.	
-	When the City sells its own land, all requirements for the sale should be completed by the City before the property was listed, not after.	Outside the scope of this Strategy. Comment shared with the Land and Real Estate Management Division.
-	Appreciate seeing feedback being used to define the goals and strategies.	Appreciation noted.

Discussion 3: Draft Goals and Strategies 3 (Finance), 4 (Promote), and 5 (Monitor) Continued discussion from Discussion 2 to the other Goals and Strategies.

3. What else should be done to further refine the strategies?			
Draft Goals and Strategies	Workshop Feedback	Response from City Administration	
GOAL 3: FINANCE	- Recommend doing Cost of Growth Study	This Study requires cross-departmental coordination for staffing	
Immediate Start (2019)	sooner than medium-term as it is linked to the facts about infill, 4-5 which is an immediate	and data and informational resources which are not anticipated to be available until 2021 or 2022.	
3-2: Review Housing Incentive Policy (HIP) to determine options for considering the application to the redevelopment of underutilized sites.	item (+1 sticker).	In the meantime, efforts are planned to begin to improve infill awareness in 2019 and be built on over time with the Cost of	
3-9: Invest in the Railyard Renewal Project with other levels of government.		Growth Study among other resources as they become	
Short-Term Start (2020-2021)		available. Education and outreach are intended to be ongoing.	
3-4: Consider investment strategies to improve the attractiveness of existing neighbourhoods and/or areas specifically identified for redevelopment through Neighbourhood Planning.	Consider impact of the Intensification Levy and how it relates to underutilized sites and consider grants to offset costs in order to encourage infill development.	This was considered through development of the Levy. The Levy is applied to cover the costs of growth for major infrastructure servicing associated with intensification.	
3-6: Improve ability of the Construction Programming and Integration group to identify and prioritize opportunities to upgrade infrastructure to foster development opportunities on	Gilocarage IIIIII acvolopinionia	Credits are applied where a structure existed on the site in the last ten years.	
underutilized sites.		Consideration of options to mitigate the impact on the	
3-8: Explore development of a program to invest in upsizing underground infrastructure annually.		redevelopment of sites for residential uses is starting through the Housing Incentive Policy (HIP) Review; consultation on that project is planned for later this spring.	
Medium-Term Start (2022-2024)	Along with identifying RRP and RRI, also	Captured within actions to be undertaken as part of	
3-1: Identify defined area(s) to focus efforts to develop specific programs and/or infrastructure improvements to encourage development of underutilized lands in a targeted way (e.g. specific blocks within a broader neighbourhood area).	identify the Saskatchewan Drive Corridor Study and subsequent work as a project to use as a catalyst for further intensification and	Neighbourhood and Corridor Planning.	
3-3: Review incentive program options identified in the Study, research their effectiveness, applicability to our community, and other considerations to inform development of a more	redevelopment of underutilized sites; this Strategy can help support this.		
specific incentive program for defined areas (linked to 3-1), specific types of underutilized lands (e.g. gas stations sites), or city-wide.	Recommend that the process of developing Neighbourhood Plans is used to have the	The Neighbourhood Planning process is intended to be an important way to start communities thinking about	
3-5: Consider creation of a 'redevelopment levy' where there are multiple land owners with a collective interest in upgrading local infrastructure to enable development of their sites.	conversation with the community about intensification and use of underutilized sites (i.e. proactively address NIMBY) and that the website not be the only place that information	intensification. This will be supported by a number of actions under the Promotion goal.	

To be considered as part of action 3-3 to research incentive programs to better understand options, their application, and

impact.

3-7: Undertaken the cost of growth study to understand the financial implications of growth on the City (and community) depending on its location.	is provided. This could include putting up signs on vacant sites during the Plan development	
Long-Term Start (2025-2030)	process that say, "What could this lot be?" and use that to initiate the generation of ideas.	
3-10: Consider opportunities to use the Regina Revitalization Initiative as a catalyst for further redevelopment.	In developing Neighbourhood Plans, use pictures to help people think about what the development could be like.	Efforts to improve education and awareness are planned to begin immediately as part of the actions under the Promotion goal, with the use of videos and graphics. Being able to visually present ideas is considered an important element.
GOAL 4: PROMOTE		· ·
Immediate Start (2019)	- Consider adding working with the Province and Wascana Centre Authority to consider	Considered out of scope of this Strategy.
4-1: Continue to seek opportunities to coordinate utility upgrades with other organizations, including SaskEnergy, SaskPower, SaskTel and Access Communications.	opportunities for Wascana Park (for 5-4).	
4-2: Champion and promote development of underutilized lands and infill development (link to 4-5).	messages about incentive programs. For instance, messages about current programs	Comment shared with the Tax and Assessment Department to consider as part of future communications.
4-4: Empower departments to work collaboratively on supporting the ability of intensification to occur within the existing city.	are sent out to people whose developments do not qualify.	
4-5: Develop and implement a communications strategy/campaign as a frame to prepare and provide facts about infill development and the value of fostering development on underutilized lands (linked to 4-2).	Property tax incentives may help with the utilization of underutilized buildings/lands; this includes not immediately taxing land that was not previously contributing taxes until such time	Added for consideration as part of action 3-3 to research incentive programs to better understand options, their application, and impact.
Short-Term Start (2020-2021)	as a home is built and the purchaser takes	
4-6: Support collaboration with City Council, Administration, and the development community in discussing the opportunities and challenges in redeveloping underutilized	possession and require the services that taxes fund (+ 4 stickers).	
sites and determining next steps.	 Vacancy rates may create a barrier to private investment in underutilized lands/buildings in 	This is outside the scope of this Strategy. A review of the Office Policy in the OCP is underway. To mitigate downtown vacancy,
4-8: Explore opportunities to promote, market, and enable prospective clients to be aware of available sites.	the downtown.	the office policy in the OCP currently states that the vacancy rate, as interpreted by the City, pertaining to medium office and
Medium-Term Start (2022-2024)		major office development in the downtown does not exceed
4-3: Explore development of Infill Development Awards to publicly showcase projects and		6.5%.
their value to the community.	- Grants for downtown commercial conversions	To be considered as part of action 3-3 to research incentive

underutilized commercial property (+1 sticker).

to rental/condo units may help utilize

4-7: Develop and implement a demonstration project competition to encourage creative design to introduce and support new development trends (also supports Goal 3).

Long-Term Start (2025-2030)

4-9: Work with the Province, and others, to make information on the remediation of contaminated sites more available and accessible.

GOAL 5: MONITOR

Immediate Start (2019)

None identified at this time.

Short-Term Start (2020-2021)

- 5-2: Provide Underutilized Land Improvement Strategy Annual Report to City Council that includes results on the measures and progress on targets (e.g. intensification rate; change in vacant lot inventory; etc.).
- 5-3: Reflect on strategies as they are implemented to evaluate if intended outcomes are being met; make minor refinements as needed.
- 5-5: As part of implementation of and reflection on the strategies, consult with stakeholders to confirm where improvements have been made, identify challenges, and consider solutions.

Medium-Term Start (2022-2024)

- 5-1: Update GIS vacant land inventory.
- 5-4: Consider how implementation of other City projects across the organization indirectly impacts redevelopment of underutilized sites.
- 5-6: Implement a survey process to determine applicant satisfaction levels and where opportunities to improve lay.
- 5-7: Conduct a major review of the Strategy every five years.

Long-Term Start (2025-2030)

None identified at this time.

Consider the opportunity for public investment in infrastructure in the downtown (e.g. sidewalks, roads, green space) (+2 stickers with a note that this is very important).

Recognized and addressed through a number of actions in the Strategy, including: 3-1 in developing programs for specific areas; 3-4 in considering investment strategies to improve neighbourhood attractiveness; and 3-6 to improve the ability of the Construction Programming and Integration team to identify and prioritize opportunities to upgrade infrastructure; and 4-4 to empower departments to work collaboratively to support intensification. As well, investing in infrastructure improvements in the downtown is underway through various projects, including the Sask. Dr. Corridor Study and improvements being made to Victoria Avenue.

Targets and Measures Feedback sought on:

- How the City measure the success of the strategy?
- What kinds of targets could be set to work towards?

Workshop Feedback	Response from City Administration
Make sure goals are measurable	This feedback will be considered in the development of the targets and measures.
Use a mix of quantitative and qualitative (e.g. social aspects; developer satisfaction; impact on NIMBY) measures	
Develop a measure to evaluate change for each strategy (e.g. # of requests for information; time to process applications; etc.)	
Use the Intensification target that is already set in the OCP	
Record and track questions asked at RPC and Council around infill	
Go back 10 years and see who was doing infill development and inquire as to why they are no longer doing projects.	

Q&A Through Workshop Session		
Question	Response from City Administration	
What is "vacant residential" referring to?	It is understood that it would typically refer to lots in residential areas/with residential zoning that are vacant.	
How is heritage preservation as it relates to "vacant heritage buildings" considered through Strategy?	It is not directly; preservation of built heritage is identified in the OCP and in the Cultural Plan. Long term action (3-11) added that directs an investigation into the barriers to vacant buildings, and development of strategies to support how to address them.	
Can contract zones be used for something other than contaminated sites?	As per the OCP, contact zones can be used for unique situations, and for the purposes of this strategy, it would be contaminated sites. Through the proposed Zoning Bylaw, a time limit for use of a contract zone on a site has been recommended.	
Is the organization being changed to implement the building software?	The City Administration is currently going through a reorganization; it has not yet been completed, but one of the first changes was bringing the Planning and Development Services Departments together into a single Department.	
	The organization is evolving to consolidate departments to bring functions together, improve service delivery, and enhance customer experiences.	
For 2-6, why is downtown referred to and not "City Centre"?	We need to start somewhere and be targeted with our efforts. Advice received from the City of Saskatoon that is currently implementing a program of this nature is that there are things that they can do in the downtown (i.e. make assumptions) that are more difficult elsewhere. That said, it is possible that subsequent areas would be looked at through future refinements to the Strategy.	
What Neighbourhood Plans are being done and in what order?	The neighbourhoods are identified to start this year are: Al Ritchie and Hillsdale.	
	A full list of neighbourhoods and when their plans will be started can be found here: http://reginask.igm2.com/Citizens/Detail LegiFile.	
	aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=4591&MediaPosition=&ID=3771&CssClass=	
What are the end points for the Sask. Drive Corridor Study?	Princess Street to Winnipeg Street	