

Developing a Plan for the New Kids on the Block

By Carmen Wyton, CEO, BILD Alberta

Have you ever driven through your city, town, or countryside and thought I would really like to live in this area? Or you think – hey, I can do this myself!

Communities seem to pop up out of nowhere all the time, but there is a lot of planning and work you can't see that goes into making a new and exciting community.

Let's break it down.

Get that land

It starts with land. Land developers purchase land but it's up to the municipality to decide where and when new communities can be built which means land can stand idle for years before it becomes a community.

With the land come the initial studies and concept plans. These provide a very broad picture of what development will look like for the region while taking natural features such as wetlands into consideration. Once these studies are done it's time to plan!

Plan, plan, plan

First up is the Area Structure Plan (ASP) which looks at the specifics of a new community and creates a plan that is reviewed (and hopefully approved!) by municipal council. The plan includes details on:

- Land use;
- Types of development;
- Recreational facilities and schools;
- Parks and open space;
- Essential services;
- Residential, retail and commercial space;
- Sequence of development; and so much more!

Next up are either Outline Plans or Neighbourhood Area Structure Plans which go deeper into how the community will look and sketches out where the houses, parks and commercial areas will go.

Thought the planning was over? Think again!



The Tentative Plan dives even deeper into detail. It breaks down the land into even smaller parcels and outlines the exact lots and where utilities like telephone and cable lines will go.

This is where a development agreement between the municipality and developer comes in. This agreement states what the developers will pay the municipality for the new infrastructure it will take to connect the new community with the rest of the municipality.

Once these planning stages are done, the digging can start.

Shovels hit the ground

Before the homes start to go up, the essential infrastructure (or off-site improvements) need to be in place. These are all your services like roads, water, sewer, electrical, paving and sidewalks.

Once this is all in place and the municipality approves it the developers can start releasing lots for sale and you can really imagine your future home.

As you can see, community development is a long, well thought out process that is all worthwhile when you get into a new home and community you love.

If you're an Edmontonian curious to dive even deeper into the anatomy of a community, head to www.udiedmonton.com. If you're from the Calgary region, check out www.smartergrowth.ca.

Until next month,

Carmen

BILD Alberta (Building Industry and Land Development) is the unified voice for the land development, home building and renovation industry in Alberta. BILD Alberta represents over 1,800 business members from 10 constituent associations committed to building communities throughout Alberta.

[View this month's issue of NextHome magazine here.](#)