

# Hillcrest



NEIGHBOURHOOD  
**PLAN**



Adopted by City Council, January 2014

INUKSHUK PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT LTD



**Cover Photo:**

Hillcrest neighbourhood, facing north-east.

**Aerial Photography:**

Alistair Maitland Photography.

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**Acknowledgments:**

The City of Whitehorse and Inukshuk Planning & Development Ltd. extend a big *thank you!* to the Hillcrest Local Advisory Committee, the Hillcrest Community Association, and all Hillcrest residents who participated in the Neighbourhood Planning Process. Thanks are also extended to the Yukon Department of Education for use of the beautiful Elijah Smith Elementary School as a meeting facility throughout the planning process.

**Corrections:**

Since City Council's adoption of this plan, a few minor corrections have been made to contextual information on pages 2, 9, 27, and 28.

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## Executive Summary

Hillcrest is a mature neighbourhood located in the municipality of the City of Whitehorse. The neighbourhood has a distinct character that residents wish to protect and build on over the next 20 years. Concerns regarding how new development and infrastructure replacement will fit into the existing neighbourhood fabric have set the context for preparing the Hillcrest Neighbourhood Plan.

The Plan is intended to serve as a roadmap to guide change and renewal over the next two decades providing clarity and direction for planning and development. It is the result of a transparent, inclusive and collaborative process between City staff and residents, facilitated by a planning consultant. Amendments to the City's Zoning Bylaw<sup>1</sup> will be required to achieve the full range of goals identified in the Plan. Implementation is subject to the availability of funding.

The Plan is divided into three sections:

1. An introduction that provides a description of Hillcrest, background and rationale for plan preparation;
2. An explanation of the planning process; and
3. A description of the vision, values, goals, objectives, policies<sup>2</sup>, guidelines<sup>3</sup>, and actions required for Plan implementation that arose from the issues and opportunities identified during the planning process.

The key recommendations of the Plan are:

- Modification should be made to the RS – Residential Single Detached zone in Hillcrest to mitigate privacy and shadow concerns associated with new development, while promoting architectural diversity and improving neighbourhood streetscapes.
  - For the RS lots located on Dalton Trail, Park Lane, and Hillcrest Drive (the 'Steelox' area): the maximum height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 8 metres; the maximum elevation of second storey floors should be restricted at 3.5 metres; rooflines should commence no higher than 6 metres; and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs should be allowed over 6 metres.

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<sup>1</sup> Zoning Bylaw 2012-20, consolidated July 26th, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Policies provide direction for implementing the actions recommended in the Plan.

<sup>3</sup> Guidelines are discretionary considerations.

- For all other RS lots: the maximum height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 9 metres<sup>4</sup>; the maximum elevation of second storey floors should be restricted at 4.5 metres; rooflines should commence no higher than 7 metres; and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs should be allowed over 7 metres.
- All new development should meet a minimum of 2 of 4 of the appearance requirements (façade treatments, siding type, trims and colour) specified for comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw section 6.4.3).
- All new development should meet the landscaping requirements specified for comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw sections 5.5.3.1 and 6.4.3). The principle change would be requirements for hard-surfacing.
- Modification should be made to the RCTx<sup>a</sup> – Comprehensive Residential Townhouses (modified) zone on upper Hillcrest Drive to similarly mitigate the privacy and shadow impacts associated with new development. The maximum building height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 9 metres, which provides consistency with the height recommendation for RS non-Steelox lots. The roofline of construction should commence no higher than 7 metres.
- Renovation and adaptation should be encouraged over replacement. Steelox units provide moderate cost, owner and renter occupied housing with a single storey design that supports accessibility principles and aging in place. This is consistent with Official Community Plan (OCP) policies that support housing affordability and provision of a range of housing choice throughout Whitehorse.
- Modest densification opportunities should continue to be supported in Hillcrest through promotion of garden and living suite development on lots that meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw.
- The RM – Residential Multiple Housing zoning, which applies to lots on and east of Summit Road, should be amended to RCM – Comprehensive Residential Multiple Family (this includes Lot 128 located at the corner of Burns Road and Roundel Road, which is a non-conforming industrial use within the RM zone). The intent of the amendment is to increase the qualitative requirements for future multiple-housing developments, for example, by requiring a minimum 4 metre front yard setback to encourage landscaping for an improved streetscape appearance.

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<sup>4</sup> Applies to RS properties on Chalet and Klwane Crescent, Roundel Road, and Sunset Drive North and South.

- Lot 130 – identified as a possible infill site in the 2010 Official Community Plan (OCP) – should continue to be explored. The timing of a decision for the site is best aligned with confirmation of infrastructure improvements. If City Council supports development, the recommended approach is to treat the site as a whole with disposition managed on a proposal call basis. This would be the best method to address neighbour concerns regarding possible building height, loss of mature trees and effects on privacy. Cluster housing would be encouraged to reduce the overall building footprint and provide greater flexibility for tree retention. A zoning amendment from RS to RCM3 – Cottage Cluster Homes should be considered with the provisions of the RS zone used as a guideline for density. A demographic analysis of housing needs should be carried out and the findings should be integrated into the evaluation criteria of the proposal call. Lot 130 could be managed as a pilot project for other potential infill areas.
- In principle, spot rezoning applications should be discouraged in the residential portions of Hillcrest. If future applications are considered by City Council, they should be assessed on their merits and onus should be placed on the proponent to consult with residents at the outset of the application process. Applicants should be required to demonstrate compatibility of the proposed zoning with the vision and goals of the Neighbourhood Plan. This consultation should be in addition to the provisions set out in sections 15.2 through 15.5 of the Zoning Bylaw.
- The City's Planning Services Department should explore the potential of Municipal Historic Site designation for several Hillcrest properties. An assessment was carried out in 2000 which identified heritage resources across Whitehorse and resulted in creation of the City's Heritage Registry. Two Steelox lots, three houses on Roundel Road, and one house on Sunset Drive North were identified on the Registry<sup>5</sup>. The City should assess the eligibility of these properties to become designated as Municipal Historic Sites and determine property owner interest. Benefits of designation would include the protection of military-era buildings from demolition and character altering modification, while providing property owners with access to the City's Heritage Restoration Incentive.
- The streetscapes of Roundel Road and Hillcrest Drive between the Alaska Highway and Burns Road should be enhanced to improve the "gateway" experience leading into the neighbourhood. This will reinforce neighbourhood character and identity, and will help calm traffic entering into the neighbourhood. The timing of these improvements should be coordinated with neighbourhood infrastructure renewal and Alaska Highway upgrades.

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<sup>5</sup> Municipal addresses: 113/114, 115/116 Park Lane; 24, 27, 35 Roundel Road; and 82 Sunset Drive North.

- The City's Planning Services Department should work with the owners of the undeveloped highway commercial lot (Lot 132) to encourage consistent building façades and landscaping treatments on all four of the lot's street frontages (Alaska Highway, Hillcrest Drive, Burns Road, and Roundel Road).
- Neighbourhood safety and circulation concerns can be resolved by incorporating traffic calming measures, parking restrictions, adding sidewalks, and similar treatments that encourage walking, cycling, and transit use. Until infrastructure can be renewed to incorporate such features, the City should modify speed limits in Hillcrest from 50 and 30 km to 40 km per hour for the area west of Burns Road.
- Consideration should be given to bus routing options so that circulation aligns with the existing sidewalk located on Sunset Drive North and potential new sidewalks on Hillcrest Drive and Roundel Road. These features are to be confirmed in the infrastructure pre-design report for the neighbourhood.
- Street lighting in active transportation areas where activities such as walking and cycling are encouraged, and near the neighbourhood playground, should be designed to provide a safer environment without excessively contributing to light pollution.
- A park management plan should be developed to address recreational use, environmental protection, and stewardship of the open space south of Hillcrest. This entails the Paddy's Pond/Ice Lake area, which was identified as a Park in the 2010 OCP.
- Methods such as improved trailhead signage, barriers, compliance monitoring patrols, etc. should be explored to ensure that All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles, and similar motorized recreational vehicles are used only on the multi-use trails designated for that purpose.
- The City's Planning Services and Parks & Trails Departments should work with residents to create a master plan for the central park area. A portion of this land could be set aside for a community garden or greenhouse. A connection to municipal water services to support this use should be considered at the time of infrastructure upgrades. Other improvements may include a gazebo, and/or barbeque area. It is envisaged that these uses will promote stewardship and cohesion in the neighbourhood, and support local food objectives.



## 1.0 Introduction

In January 2013, the City of Whitehorse engaged Inukshuk Planning & Development Ltd. and a local advisory committee to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for Hillcrest through a series of public consultation events. The planning area is located centrally within Whitehorse in close proximity to the Erik Nielsen International Airport. The neighbourhood is bounded by the Alaska Highway and the green spaces surrounding Roundel Road, Sunset Drive North, Park Lane, Dalton Trail, and Hillcrest Drive (**Figure 1**).

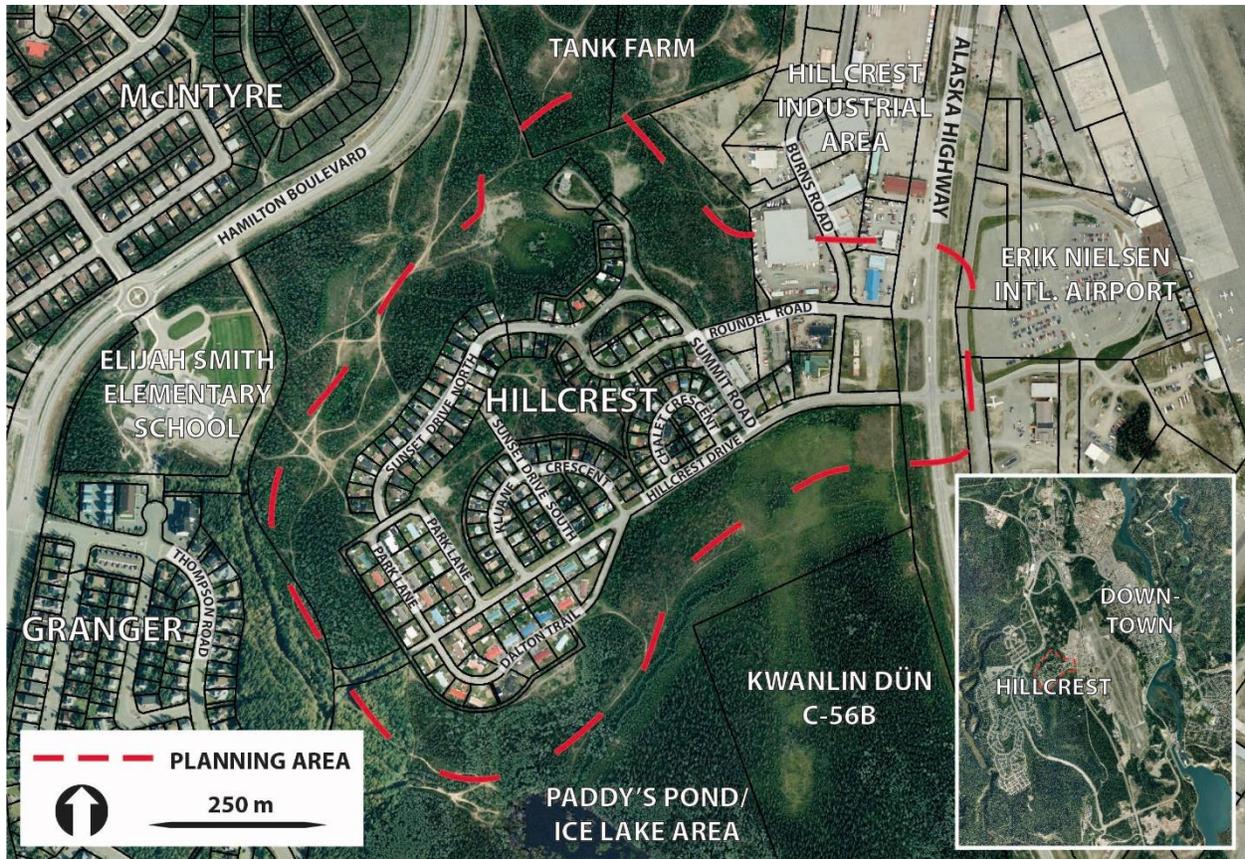


Figure 1: Hillcrest planning area.

### 1.1 Background

The majority of Hillcrest was constructed in the 1940s and 50s to serve as the permanent married quarters of the Canadian Forces station in Whitehorse. The neighbourhood was planned with narrow and curved roads surrounding a large, central green space. Overhead utilities were placed at the rear of lots in undeveloped lanes. Many homes remain oriented towards their backyards, adjacent green spaces, and peripheral greenbelts.

The neighbourhood's design incorporates principles of the British garden city movement first promoted by Ebenezer Howard, Sir Patrick Geddes, and Clarence Perry at the turn of the century. American planner Clarence Stein and architect Henry Wright introduced these principles to North America through the 1929 Radburn, New Jersey town site plan, notably including a network of walking paths within the area's greenbelts.

Hillcrest was originally designed to be a self-contained community. A grocery store and bowling alley were amongst the conveniences once available in the neighbourhood. Across the highway, the airport grounds provided employment and services such as a canteen, medical station, and curling rink. These amenities have since been replaced with light-industrial uses along Burns Road which provide a transition between the residential neighbourhood and commercial uses along the highway.

Seven house designs were used in the initial construction of Hillcrest (**Figure 2**), six of which were common to Canadian military bases at the time. Unique to Hillcrest is the 'Steelox' model of prefabricated units designed by Armco Drainage and Metal Products of Canada Ltd. Thirty-eight Steelox buildings are located on Park Lane, Dalton Trail, and the upper (western) portion of Hillcrest Drive. These buildings continue to provide over one quarter of the neighbourhood's housing stock.



**Figure 2:** Military residences in Hillcrest. Clockwise from top left: Steelox units on Park Lane; Type "C" units adjacent to Hillcrest Drive (foreground); mixed units on Kluane Crescent. Photo sources: Yukon Archives, Rolf and Margaret Hougen Fonds, 2010/91, #321; Whitehorse Star Ltd. Fonds, 82/563, f.164 #41; Whitehorse Star Ltd. Fonds, 82/563, 82/563, f. 164 #91.

In the late 1960s, housing in Hillcrest was considered to be surplus to the needs of the military and was sold for private ownership<sup>6</sup>. The neighbourhood expanded in the 1970s to include 36 single detached residences along Sunset Drive North. The street is built to a modern servicing standard that includes a sidewalk on the south side, curbs, and storm drains.

In the decades that followed, the area west of Summit Road has maintained a relatively consistent residential scale and density. Denser housing in the forms of apartment buildings and townhouses has occurred along Summit Road, Roundel Road, and the lower portion of Hillcrest Drive. Another notable change to the neighbourhood has included a shift from single to dual car ownership, which has increased local traffic circulation and demand for on-street parking.

Approximately 615 people<sup>7</sup> live in Hillcrest residing in 272 household units: 126 (46%) of these units are single detached homes; 74 units (27%) are half-duplexes; 48 units (18%) are apartments; and 24 units (9%) are townhouses. Approximately 30% of all Hillcrest residences are rented, the majority of which are located on and east of Summit Road. Approximately 25% of all SteeloX units are rented. A substantial number of renters are long term neighbourhood residents.



**Figure 3:** Renovations in Hillcrest. Clockwise from top left: SteeloX addition facing Hillcrest Drive; adaptive expansion on Klwane Crescent; garage addition on Klwane Crescent; energy-efficiency retrofit on Dalton Trail.

<sup>6</sup> DPW Housing: An overview of federal government post-war housing in Whitehorse, Midnight Arts, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Yukon Bureau of Statistics Population Report, June 2013.

Hillcrest's former military housing has reached a point where property owners are starting to investigate their options to either renovate or redevelop their residences to meet modern preferences in housing form while improving energy-efficiency. These improvements range from modest upgrades that retain the look and feel of the original building to additions and enlargements that substantially alter their physical appearance, reflecting the contemporary needs of current owners (**Figure 3**, previous page).

Much of the area's infrastructure has also reached a point where major expenditures on rehabilitation or replacement are required. Infrastructure improvements are both desirable and necessary, but could significantly alter the character and amenity of the neighbourhood.

## *1.2 Purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan*

In 2012, the rezoning of four Steelox lots<sup>8</sup> on upper Hillcrest Drive from RS – Residential Single Detached to RCTx<sup>a</sup> – Residential Comprehensive Townhouse (modified)<sup>9</sup> raised concern amongst residents about the incongruence between existing residential development and the potential allowed in the RS and RCT zones.

During the public hearing process, it was expressed by residents that densification and redevelopment which occurs in an ad hoc manner could substantially alter the character and amenity of Hillcrest if the pace, type, and nature of densification is not guided by a land use plan that acknowledges resident values.

The City responded to these concerns by initiating a process to develop a Neighbourhood Plan to guide future development decisions in Hillcrest. City Council also responded to concern raised by the Hillcrest Community Association (HCA) that redevelopment might occur while the planning process was underway, potentially compromising or undermining the recommendations that would emerge from the planning process.

To ensure the integrity of the process and maintain a level playing field, Council brought forward a Zoning Amendment<sup>10</sup> to restrict the allowable height of construction in the Steelox portion of Hillcrest. The amendment sought to reduce the height allowance from 10 to 8 metres for RS lots and reduce the height allowance to 9 metres for the four RCTx<sup>a</sup> lots on upper Hillcrest Drive. A further restriction was added to the RCTx<sup>a</sup> zone to cap habitable space at 7 metres. An Interim Development Control effectuated the restrictions for the duration of the planning process<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Four duplexes (8 dwelling units) located at 122 to 125 and 128 to 131 Hillcrest Drive.

<sup>9</sup> Bylaw 2012-37.

<sup>10</sup> Bylaw 2013-18.

<sup>11</sup> Resolution 2013-18-10.

Consultation for the neighbourhood planning process was coordinated with ongoing consultation linked to infrastructure upgrades because such decisions will similarly affect the future appearance and feel of the neighbourhood. An opportunity was also created to discuss residential options for Lot 130, located at the east end of Sunset Drive North, which is identified in the 2010 Official Community Plan (OCP) for potential infill development (**Figure 4**).

Appropriate planning will encourage redevelopment, densification, and renewal at a scale that can be comfortably accommodated in the neighbourhood. The Plan will act as a road map providing some certainty about how the neighbourhood will evolve over the next 20 years.

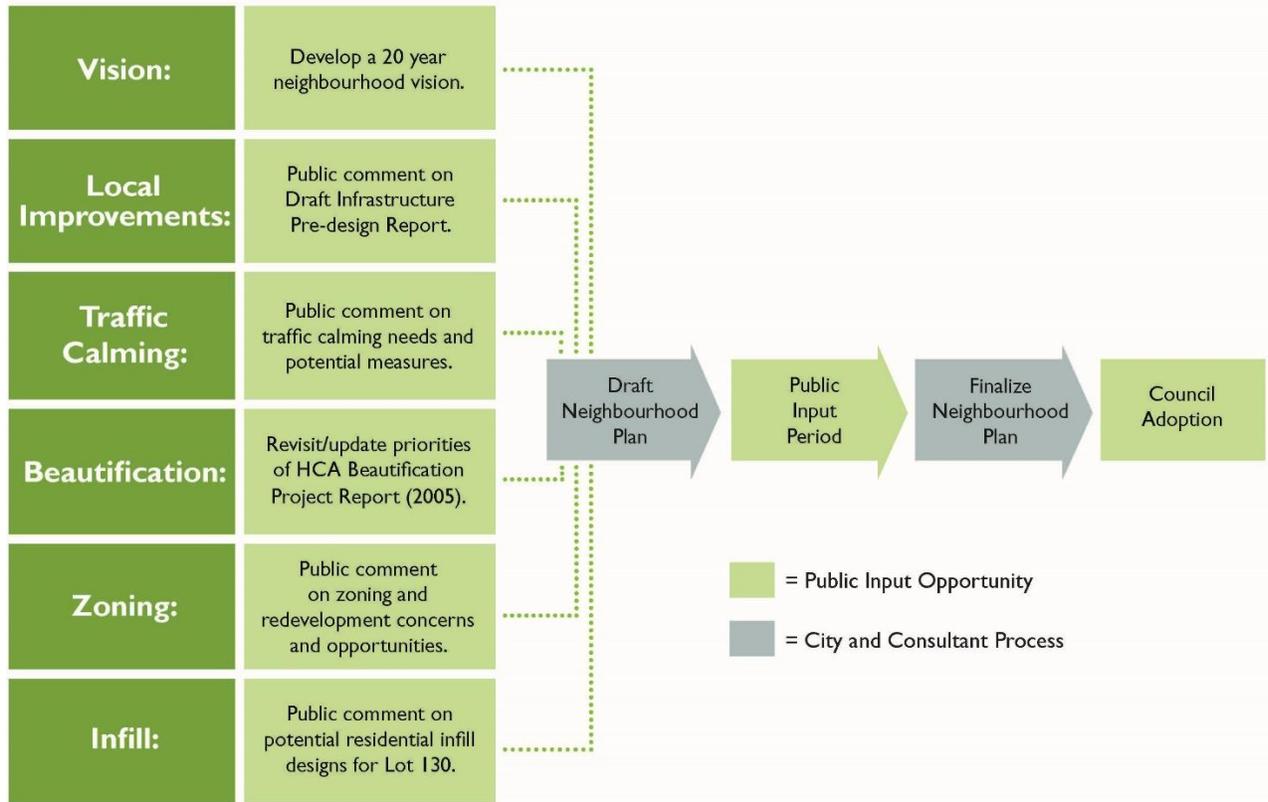
The Plan supports city-wide objectives identified in the OCP and provides a greater level of policy detail that is appropriate to the needs and context of the neighbourhood. Amendments to the City's Zoning Bylaw will be required to achieve some of the goals outlined in this document.



**Figure 4:** *Neighbourhood consultation at Elijah Smith Elementary School.*

## 2.0 The Planning Process

Inukshuk Planning & Development Ltd. worked with the City’s Planning Services Department and an advisory committee of neighbourhood residents to develop the proactive, transparent, and consultative approach outlined in **Figure 5**.



**Figure 5:** Neighbourhood consultation process, Spring 2013 to Winter 2014.

A Visioning Workshop and two themed Charrettes were held in the spring of 2013 to generate neighbourhood input. Background information was provided ahead of time through the HCA and City of Whitehorse websites. The events were held on Saturdays at the Elijah Smith Elementary School. Each event was followed by an hour-long Open House intended for residents that were unable to attend. Consultation results were posted online.

### 2.1 Visioning Workshop

Nineteen people attended the Visioning Workshop which took place on April 6th, 2013. The goal of the workshop was to create a Vision Statement that reflects resident values and will provide guidance on how Hillcrest will develop over the next 20 years. The workshop was assisted by graphic facilitator, Avril Orloff, who illustrated the ideas of the day (**Figures 6 and 7**, following pages).

Three over-arching themes were identified during the event:

- Hillcrest as a “connected” community;
- Hillcrest’s “village” character, defined by its surrounding greenbelt, curved and narrow roads, and eclectic architectural styles; and
- A desire for growth at a reasonable pace, with the retention of the social and architectural diversity of the neighbourhood.



**Figure 6:** Vision statement illustrated by Avril Orloff.



Figure 7: Neighbourhood values illustrated by Avril Orloff.

## ***2.2 Charrette 1: Local Improvements, Traffic Calming, and Beautification***

The first Charrette occurred on April 20th, 2013 and was attended by forty-one residents. The event focused on local improvements, traffic calming, and beautification. Staff from the City's Planning Services, Engineering Services, and Parks & Trails Departments assisted with facilitation. A presentation on electrical upgrades was provided by Yukon Electrical Company Ltd.

The following key themes emerged from the feedback received at the event:

- A desire for retention of narrow road widths and more traffic calming;
- Support for tree planting on public and private land within the neighbourhood in conjunction with infrastructure improvements;
- Recognition that the highway entranceways at Hillcrest Drive and Roundel Road are important "gateways" to the neighbourhood and this should be acknowledged through appropriate signage and other amenities combined with traffic calming features to transition from highway to residential speeds leading into the neighbourhood;
- Recognition of the importance of connectivity to the rest of Whitehorse through alternative transportation modes and amenities (e.g. public transit, sidewalks, trails, commuter lanes, and bike paths) rather than through new roads;
- Interest to improve public transit in ways that complement infrastructure improvements and strengthen pedestrian connections;
- Interest to preserve the open space buffers surrounding the neighbourhood which contribute to the neighbourhood's compact form; and
- Interest to enhance investment for recreational features in the neighbourhood's central green space (e.g. addition of a community garden, greenhouse, barbeque facility, and/or gazebo).

## ***2.3 Charrette 2: Zoning, Redevelopment, and Infill***

The second Charrette occurred on May 11th, 2013 and was attended by twenty-two residents. Zoning, redevelopment, and infill were discussed. While many different ideas were explored, the key themes that arose included:

- Interest to retain character defining elements that relate to building height, massing, and site coverage. Participants were generally not adverse to new housing solutions, but requested that the heritage values associated with the neighbourhood's original housing styles be respected in new development;

- Support and preference for the renovation of existing buildings as opposed to their replacement, which could potentially change the neighbourhood character;
- It was noted that Lot 128 on the corner of Burns and Roundel roads (**Figure 8**) is a non-conforming industrial use in the RM – Residential Multiple Housing zone. Participants generally felt that multiple housing zoning is appropriate for the future development of the site, but that comprehensive zoning standards should apply to encourage a higher quality of development; and
- Concern about the City’s development review process, with the suggestion made that there should be more opportunity for direct resident input into the permit review process as well as the rezoning process when the proposed development might potentially alter the neighbourhood’s character.

Overall, the consultation process helped to articulate resident concerns and preferences, clarify expectations, and identify the issues and opportunities that need to be addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan. The principal challenge is managing the pace and scale of redevelopment over time as the neighbourhood enters a new phase in its life cycle.



**Figure 8:** Non-conforming industrial use in the RM – Residential Multiple Housing zone at the corner of Burns Road and Roundel Road.

## 3.0 The Neighbourhood Plan

### 3.1 Vision Statement

The vision for Hillcrest that emerged from the April 6th, 2013 workshop is as follows:

***“Hillcrest conserves its village character and is connected by trails to shared natural spaces, neighbourhoods, and amenities.”***

### 3.2 Values

The values that are important to Hillcrest residents can be summarized in the following statements:

- The “village” feel of Hillcrest is reflected by diversity, compactness, walkability, and neighbourliness;
- Hillcrest is connected to the rest of the city by active transportation trails and residents support alternative transportation options;
- Narrow streets are an important part of the community character;
- Many renters and owners are long-time residents that are active, engaged, and connected to their neighbourhood;
- Small-scale increases in residential density are acceptable;
- Renewal in Hillcrest should be an “organic evolution” that occurs at a pace and scale which enhances rather than changes the existing neighbourhood character;
- The housing stock should be well-designed, affordable, diverse, available to all incomes and lifestyles, and should support aging in place;
- Homes and buildings should be maintained to a good standard;
- Residents value living close to nature. Local amenities include the central park area, the Paddy’s Pond/Ice Lake area, and the trails and greenbelts that surround the neighbourhood. These areas are essential to the health and wellness of residents and are utilized year round;
- Stewardship responsibilities are taken seriously to protect the natural landscape of local green spaces; and
- Hillcrest residents value being informed and actively involved in influencing how the future of the neighbourhood unfolds. Residents have a number of diverse skills to contribute to planning the neighbourhood and the surrounding area.

### 3.3 Planning Goals

The planning goals for Hillcrest are to:

- Preserve the neighbourhood's unique character, values, and heritage for the enjoyment of present and future generations;
- Maintain a safe, affordable, and diverse neighbourhood; and
- Maintain the small, friendly, and cohesive feel of the area within the larger Whitehorse community.

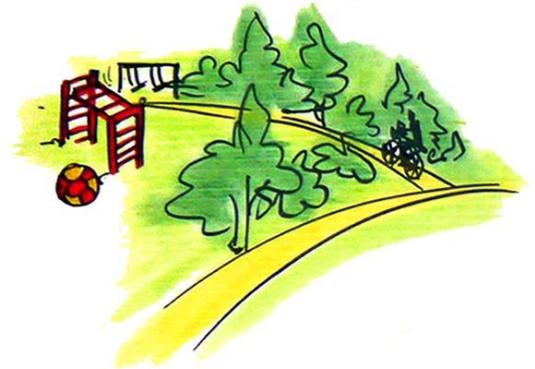
### 3.4 Open Space, Trails, and Natural Environment

#### 3.4.1 Objective

To maintain and enhance the natural values in the Hillcrest neighbourhood in terms of the retention of vegetation, preservation of the abundance of open green spaces in and around the neighbourhood, and connection to other neighbourhoods.

Supports OCP Objectives:

- Objective 1: Protect and Use Green Space
- Objective 18: Promote Active Living



#### 3.4.2 Issues and Opportunities

Development of the Granger and McIntyre neighbourhoods to the west of Hillcrest did not occur until the late 1970s in anticipation of the Alaska Highway Pipeline. As the city has expanded to include these, and other new neighbourhoods, so has the need for greenbelt protection. The landmark decision that affects Hillcrest today was the decision not to build a road connection from the Granger neighbourhood down Hillcrest Drive and out to the Alaska Highway. Preserving the separation between Granger and Hillcrest, while allowing for a non-vehicular trail connection, remains a priority for Hillcrest residents.

##### 3.4.2.1 Public Open Space

Hillcrest is almost entirely surrounded by greenbelt and environmentally protected lands, which includes the 190 hectare Paddy's Pond/Ice Lake Park to the south of the neighbourhood. These green buffers are used for recreation purposes, providing residents with a local connection to nature and, to a limited degree, providing opportunities for wildlife movement. Access to these open spaces is an integral part of the neighbourhood's character.

A key open space management consideration is the mitigation of wildfire risk. Parts of the greenbelt surrounding the neighbourhood have been “fire-smarted”, which requires thinning understory vegetation. Fire-smarting has created challenges for the monitoring and limitation of unplanned trail development.

### 3.4.2.2 Trails

**Figure 9** illustrates trail development within Hillcrest and its surrounding green spaces. In addition to providing access for recreational use, the trail system is part of a city-wide strategy to link neighbourhoods for recreational, sustainability, and wellness purposes.

Impediments to the enjoyment of the trails include poor and/or non-existent signage at trailheads, conflicts between non-motorized and motorized trail users, and inappropriate user behaviour that adversely affects other values.



**Figure 9:** Popular trails in and around Hillcrest.

From a resident’s perspective, the local trail system is viewed as an important neighbourhood asset. It is both a key connector to other parts of the city, and internally supports resident interaction. A paved commuter connection from Sunset Drive North to the Elijah Smith Elementary School was

recently completed in October, 2012 (**Figure 10**). The missing link in the larger city context is completing a commuter connection from Hillcrest to the paved trail that leads around the airport to the city's Downtown area.



**Figure 10:** Paved trail leading to the Elijah Smith Elementary School and view of Paddy's Pond.

### 3.4.3 Policies

**3.4.3.1** The greenbelt surrounding Hillcrest shall be preserved and continue to be fire-smarted where necessary, to reduce the risk of wildfire.

**3.4.3.2** The City, HCA, and YG shall continue to investigate opportunities for paved and unpaved trail connections that link Hillcrest to other city amenities and neighbourhoods. This includes exploring non-vehicular connections to Granger<sup>12</sup> and the Airport Trail which leads to the Black Street stairs and Downtown.

**3.4.3.3** The City shall work with the property owners of future development areas to explore the potential for new trail connections. These areas include the Tank Farm, located north of Hillcrest, and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation parcel, located south of Hillcrest. Timing of these discussions should occur during the planning phase for these areas.

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<sup>12</sup> The City's 3 metre width standard for non-motorized, multi-use trails would apply.

### 3.4.4 Guidelines

**3.4.4.1** The City’s Parks & Trails Department should assist the HCA to identify opportunities to reclaim disturbed public lands, and organize and undertake community planting days.

**3.4.4.2** The City should work with residents throughout Whitehorse to develop a park management plan for the improvement and maintenance of the Paddy’s Pond/Ice Lake area.

**3.4.4.3** The City should continue to explore methods such as improved signage, barriers (**Figure 11**), and compliance monitoring, to ensure All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles are used only on trails where motorized vehicles are permitted.



**Figure 11:** Trail barriers. Left: gate on the connector path to Elijah Smith Elementary School. Right: boulders in Takhini North.

### 3.4.5 Implementation

| Action:  | Lead:      | Timing:        | Results Expected:   |
|--|------------|----------------|---|
| 1. Develop a park management plan for the Paddy’s Pond/Ice Lake area.          | CW and HCA | Within 2 years | Improved and strategic administration of green spaces; neighbourhood involvement in land management; transparency in decision making. |
| 2. Organize and undertake annual planting days in neighbourhood public places. | CW and HCA | Annually       | Increased amenity of Hillcrest; enhanced neighbourhood cohesion; local stewardship of green spaces.                                   |

| Action:  | Lead:                  | Timing:                            | Results Expected:   |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 3. Consider paving the trail connection to Granger.*   | CW                     | Within 2 years                     | Increased connectivity with other neighbourhoods; support for active transportation.  |
| 4. Consider a paved trail connection along the Alaska Highway, to link with the paved trail that leads to the Black Street stairs and Downtown.*   | HCA and YG             | 5 years                            | Increased connectivity with other neighbourhoods; support for active transportation.  |
| 5. Consider a trail connection to the potential Tank Farm residential neighbourhood.   | CW and Tank Farm owner | Coordinate with Tank Farm planning | Increased connectivity with other neighbourhoods; support for active transportation.  |
| 6. Consider a trail connection to the KDFN C-56B land parcel.  | CW and KDFN            | When development plans are known   | Increased connectivity with other neighbourhoods; support for active transportation.  |
| 7. Develop and deliver a public education campaign and other measures to address issues with inappropriate motorized use of trails in all seasons. | CW and HCA             | Initiate by Summer 2014            | Safer active transportation environment; clearer understanding of which trails are multi-use in all seasons; trail stewardship. |
| 8. Explore locations for improved and potential new trail barricades through the City's Parks & Trails, Greenbelt Barricades annual project work.  | CW                     | Spring 2014                        | Safer active transportation environment; clearer understanding of which trails are multi-use in all seasons; trail stewardship. |
| 9. Continue to erect and/or improve trailheads with junction parking and signage.  | CW                     | Initiate by Summer 2014            | Safer and more pleasant active transportation environment.  |

City of Whitehorse (CW); Hillcrest Community Association (HCA); Government of Yukon (YG); Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN).

\*See action item 5 in section 3.5.5 for paved connection in Hillcrest linking inter-neighbourhood trails.

### 3.5 *Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal*



#### 3.5.1 **Objective**

**3.5.1.1** To ensure Hillcrest is connected to other Whitehorse neighbourhoods by trails, transit, bike paths, and roads, and these routings are efficient, convenient, accessible, and safe to use.

**3.5.1.2** To ensure infrastructure renewal is undertaken in an efficient and cost effective manner to standards appropriate to current and future neighbourhood needs, and consistent with city-wide asset management objectives.

Supports OCP Objectives:

- Objective 12: Improve Transportation
- Objective 20: Provide Accessible Community Infrastructure



#### 3.5.2 **Issues and Opportunities**

In response to requests from residents and the HCA, the City initiated a Local Improvement (LI) Process in 2012 to investigate the condition of the neighbourhood's infrastructure and explore potential upgrades through consultation with residents. The key objectives of the process are to:

- Eliminate residential water services that bleed;
- Renew aging water and sewer infrastructure;
- Enhance pedestrian infrastructure, especially in areas serviced by transit;
- Enhance cycling connections; and
- Update road infrastructure to improve traffic safety and meet universal accessibility goals.

While the LI Process is supported by many residents, some are concerned about updating the roads to wider standards due to issues with the high speed of traffic and the potential for changes to neighbourhood character. The LI Process provides an opportunity to consider alternative development standards and ensure that the neighbourhood has sufficient and reliable services to meet the needs of residents, now and in the future.

##### **3.5.2.1 Road Widths and Parking**

Engineering Services staff drafted an Infrastructure Pre-design Report for the neighbourhood that was presented to residents at the second Charrette event for discussion. Residents identified a number of areas requiring attention including the design of surface improvements related to vehicle and pedestrian movement, drainage management, sidewalk location, and on-street parking. Road width standards are a specific concern with residents favouring narrow road widths over wider streets.

When the neighbourhood was constructed in the 1940s and 50s one-vehicle households were the norm. Today multiple-vehicle ownership is common and is augmented by the ownership of recreational “toys” such as motor homes, boats, etc. Some lots, due to their terrain and frontage, do not have the dimensions to accommodate multiple vehicles and storage of recreational equipment without leading to encroachment into the road right-of-way.

The desire to maintain narrow streets must be balanced with desires to improve walkability and drainage. The addition of sidewalks and improvements to bio-swales, or replacement of swales with curbs and gutters, will affect the neighbourhood’s appearance, safety, and availability of on-street parking. Residents have requested that provisions for managing parking congestion be incorporated into road improvement works. Residents have also identified areas where improved lighting is desired, but note concerns for light pollution and its effect on viewing the night sky.

Residents have expressed that they favour improvements which support alternative transportation modes, such as walking and cycling, and stress the importance of connections to the local trail system.

### *3.5.2.2 Neighbourhood Entrances and Signage*

Hillcrest is accessed from the Alaska Highway at Hillcrest Drive and at Roundel Road. Roundel Road functions as the secondary access, which will likely continue given that Hillcrest Drive aligns with the main airport entrance road.

As presently constructed, the Hillcrest Drive entrance has one entry lane and two exit lanes, with the central lane reserved for left-turning and airport-bound traffic (**Figure 12**, next page). Lane markings are often difficult to see, especially in winter months, due to snow cover and grading by snow removal equipment. Residents note that vehicles entering the neighbourhood will sometimes travel into on-coming traffic in the central lane. The highway turn-off is also problematic due to proximity of the south-bound, turning lane to highway light poles.

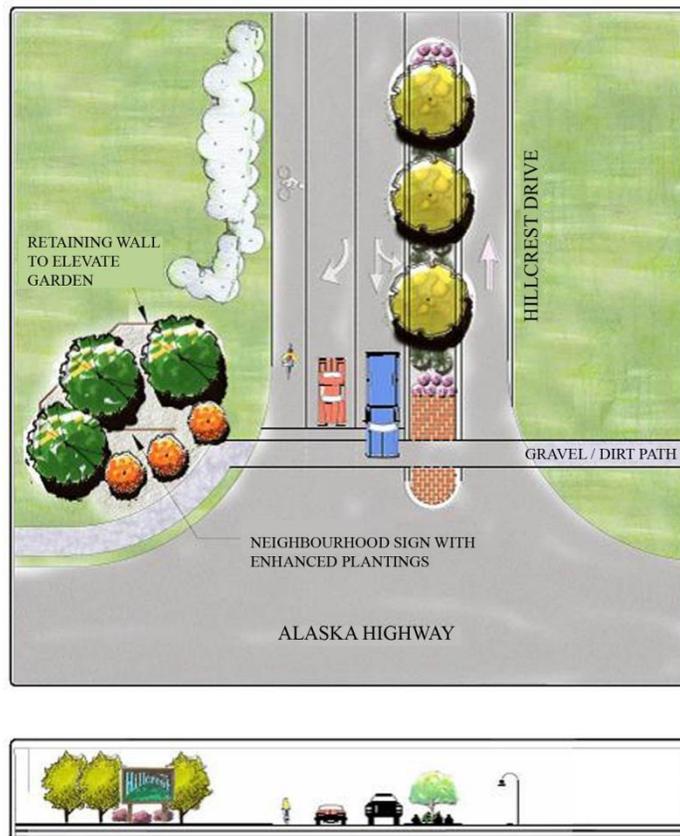
Entry concerns are compounded by the confusion caused by multiple neighbourhood entrances and the poor visibility of the neighbourhood sign located at the Hillcrest Drive entrance (**Figure 12**, next page). The sign is angled and oriented for south-bound traffic and is set low relative to the highway. As a neighbourhood identifier, the sign’s effectiveness could be improved.

Residents have suggested relocating the sign to improve its visibility and suggest that a separate neighbourhood street map could be added near the intersection of Burns Road where a similar sign existed in the past. The sign would orient pedestrians to the neighbourhood’s layout, trail system, and landmarks, and could serve as a place for community notices.



**Figure 12:** Hillcrest Drive entrance. Left: facing the Alaska Highway and airport. Right: neighbourhood sign from the Alaska Highway.

Gateway improvement measures will need to be coordinated with the Alaska Highway corridor improvements being explored by Yukon Government, as well as through infrastructure upgrades planned by the City for the rest of the neighbourhood. **Figure 13** illustrates a conceptual entry way treatment for Hillcrest Drive.



**Figure 13:** Conceptual entry way treatment of Hillcrest Drive at the Alaska Highway.

In addition to improving the gateway appearance, residents have requested that traffic calming measures be applied to create a transition from highway to residential speeds and improve safety throughout the neighbourhood. To slow traffic, measures should begin between the Alaska Highway and Burns Road, and should apply to both Roundel Road and Hillcrest Drive. Examples of potential traffic calming measures that could be incorporated in the neighbourhood’s design are illustrated in **Figure 14**.



**Figure 14:** Potential traffic calming measures. Clockwise from top left: chicanes in Ingram; pinched crossing in Takhini North; roundabout in Takhini North.

### **3.5.2.3 Highway Commercial, Lot 132**

Lot 132 is the vacant lot bounded by Roundel Road, Burns Road, Hillcrest Drive, and the Alaska Highway (**Figure 15**, next page). Given the parcel’s size (8,435 m<sup>2</sup>) and its CH – Highway Commercial zoning, development would logically be oriented to highway traffic, but with vehicle access allowed only from Hillcrest Drive, Roundel Road, and Burns Road. As part of the process of obtaining a future development permit from the City, landscaping and site layout should be designed to result in improvements to the “gateway” appearance of both Hillcrest Drive and Roundel Road.



**Figure 15:** Highway Commercial, Lot 132. Yellow lines indicate property boundary and extent of right-of-way.

### 3.5.3 Policies

**3.5.3.1** The City will work with the HCA and residents to enhance the existing trail network by helping to maintain public walkway connections within the neighbourhood, supporting improvements to trailhead parking and signage, and helping to ensure that all trails on public lands are properly marked.

**3.5.3.2** The City's Engineering Services Department will work with the Bylaw Services Department and residents to identify viable parking solutions for neighbourhood roads along with an enforcement policy to support the preferred choice of residents for narrow roads with vehicles parked on private property.

### 3.5.4 Guidelines

**3.5.4.1** The City should continue to consult with residents regarding infrastructure improvements, and ensure that any upgrades provide for the current and future needs of the neighbourhood.

**3.5.4.2** In Hillcrest, roadways that can be shared amongst all users (including pedestrians and cyclists) are preferred for local roads and should be encouraged.

**3.5.4.3** The speed limit in the residential portion of Hillcrest on and west of Burns Road should be modified from 50 and 30 km to 40 km per hour. The City should monitor the effectiveness of this measure for improving motorist, pedestrian, and cyclist safety. The speed limit should be reassessed once local infrastructure upgrades are complete.

**3.5.4.4** The City should make best efforts to plan and coordinate the installation of infrastructure upgrades, traffic calming measures, and beautification initiatives in a timely manner.

### 3.5.5 Implementation

| Action:  | Lead:       | Timing:   | Results Expected:  |
|--|-------------|---|--|
| 1. Allow for narrower formed roads than set by the current standards, while incorporating traffic calming measures, landscaping, and pedestrian access.  | CW          | Coordinate with LI Process                                      | Consistency with existing road character; reduced traffic speed; increased safety.                           |
| 2. Explore transit loop reversal to match the existing sidewalk on Sunset Drive North and potential sidewalks on Hillcrest Drive and Roundel Road.   | CW          | Coordinate with LI Process                                      | Continuity between transit and pedestrian flows; safer pedestrian environment.                               |
| 3. Investigate parking restriction options for neighbourhood streets (e.g. one side of the road/timed restrictions/no parking zones) in new and existing road designs.   | CW and HCA  | Coordinate with LI Process                                      | Reduced vehicular congestion; more effective parking management.   |
| 4. Relocate neighbourhood sign and upgrade Hillcrest Drive and Roundel Road entrances with beautification/traffic calming features. Consider inclusion of a neighbourhood map/notice board in close proximity. | CW and YG   | Coordinate with LI Process and Alaska Highway corridor upgrades | Increased neighbourhood visibility; traffic calming; enhanced neighbourhood image from highway; way-finding. |
| 5. Consider a paved trail parallel to Hillcrest Drive to complete the Granger/Alaska Highway commuter link.*   | CW          | Coordinate with LI Process                                      | Increased non-vehicular connectivity with other neighbourhoods.  |
| 6. Install downward-facing, low-level energy-efficient light fixtures in central area park and as part of future light replacement on streets.   | CW and YECL | Coordinate with LI Process and electrical utility upgrades      | Safer playground area; decreased light pollution; greater energy efficiency                                  |
| 7. Post 40 km per hour signage in the residential portion of Hillcrest west of Burns Road.   | CW          | Initiate by Spring 2014   | Traffic calming; increased safety for motorist, pedestrians, and cyclists.                                   |

City of Whitehorse (CW); Hillcrest Community Association (HCA); Yukon Electrical Company Ltd (YECL).

\*See action items 3 and 4 in section 3.4.5 for Granger and Alaska Highway paved trails.

### 3.6 Residential Development



#### 3.6.1 Objective

To protect the “village character” of the Hillcrest neighbourhood by ensuring the history and principles behind the established built form are considered by those putting forward and reviewing proposed new developments, including how the size, scale, density, and architectural treatment may support or detract from the character of the neighbourhood.

Supports OCP Objectives:

- Objective 5: Ensure Sustainable Land Development
- Objective 10: Provide Land for Residential Development
- Objective 19: Support Arts and Culture

#### 3.6.2 Issues and Opportunities

The current zoning throughout Hillcrest (**Figure 16**) allows for a scale of built form that is considered by residents to be inconsistent with the existing character of the area. The majority of Hillcrest is zoned RS – Residential Single Detached. One RS lot on Roundel Road is modified with a relaxed rear and side yard setback to accommodate a garden suite. There are two small areas zoned RCTx<sup>a</sup> – Residential Comprehensive Townhouses (modified), an area of RM – Residential Multiple Housing near the Alaska Highway, and a lot zoned PS – Public Service which accommodates the Yukon Bible Fellowship Church.

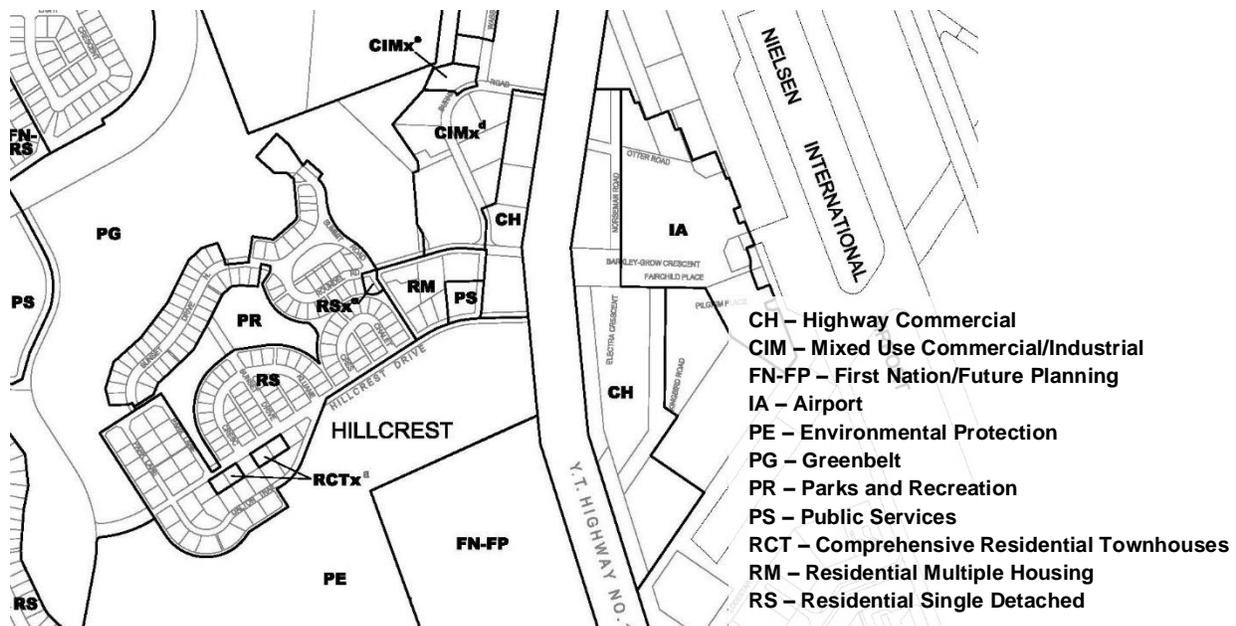


Figure 16: Hillcrest zones, Zoning Bylaw 2012-20, Map 13.

### *3.6.2.1 Redevelopment of Single Detached and Duplex Lots*

In general, the RS zone provides for single detached, duplex and triplex housing on urban lots. Duplexes and triplexes are only allowed on lots that meet minimum size requirements. Garden and living suites are also allowed in conjunction with single detached housing. The allowable building height of the zone is 10 metres and the maximum allowable site coverage is 40%. However, the majority of buildings in Hillcrest are less than 8 metres tall and typical site coverage is considerably less than 40%.

The character of Hillcrest is defined, in part, by the built form in the neighbourhood which has typically seen smaller scale buildings and a broad variety of architectural styles. In the SteeloX area, buildings are generally 5 metres tall and site coverage is between 20 and 30%. In the remainder of the neighbourhood, residences are between 6 and 9 metres tall with site coverage ranging between 20 and 40%. While residents seek to protect this neighbourhood character, they are not opposed to architectural diversity if it supports housing affordability, aging in place, and complements the surrounding scale of development.

The RS zone is designed to apply across all parts of Whitehorse and encourage densification. Hillcrest residents suggest that if maximized, the permitted building height and density of the zone would seriously change the look and feel of the neighbourhood. Modifications to Zoning Bylaw 2012-20 are therefore recommended to ensure that the existing character is not compromised by dominant buildings.

Two factors warrant consideration in adjusting current regulations. The first is the nature and style of past development which has set the tone of the neighbourhood character, including the type of changes that have evolved over time since the seven original housing styles were built in the 1940s and 50s.

Homes of that era were smaller, did not include garages, and only one vehicle was common per household. Hence the building footprint was also small, which is often not the case with new development. What is unique about Hillcrest is how housing has been adapted over time through renovation and expansion without changing the fundamental characteristics of the neighbourhood. To date, none of the existing housing stock has been torn down.

The second issue relates to neighbourhood topography and how building height and increased size may affect sun shading on adjacent residences. The shading analysis in **Figure 17** (next page) was prepared in association with the townhouse developments proposed for the RCTx<sup>a</sup> lots located on upper Hillcrest Drive. The analysis indicates the difference in shadows cast by 8 and 10 metre buildings at different times of the year.

**Spring/Fall Equinox (March/September 21) 9:30 a.m.:**

8 metre building height



10 metre building height



**Summer Solstice (June 21) 9:30 a.m.:**

8 metre building height

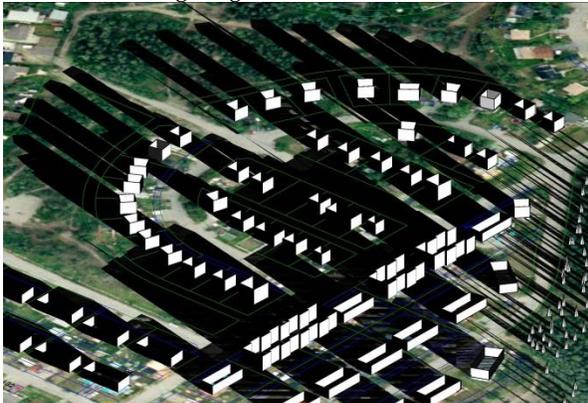


10 metre building height

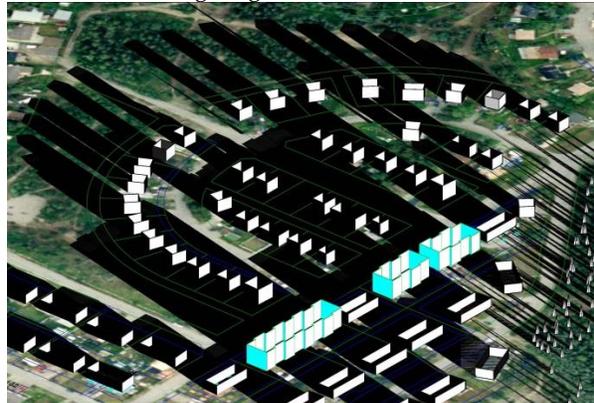


**Winter Solstice (December 21) 12:30 p.m.: (Sunrise: 10:09 a.m.)**

8 metre building height



10 metre building height

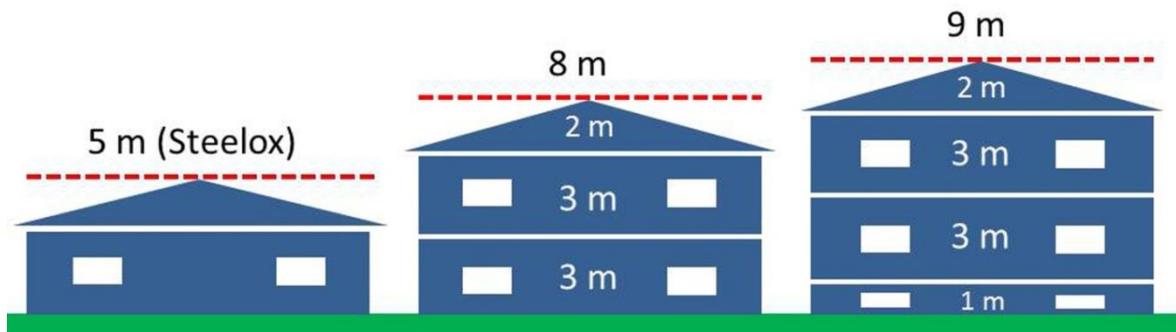


**Figure 17:** *Shading analysis of proposed townhouses on Hillcrest Drive.*

Modifications are recommended for the RS zone within Hillcrest to mitigate privacy and shadow concerns associated with new development while also promoting architectural diversity and improving streetscapes. The following amendments are proposed:

- For the RS Steelox lots located on Dalton Trail, Park Lane, and Hillcrest Drive: the maximum height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 8 metres; the maximum second storey floor elevation should be restricted at 3.5 metres; rooflines should commence no higher than 6 metres; and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs should be allowed over 6 metres.
- For all other RS lots: the maximum height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 9 metres; the maximum second storey floor elevation should be restricted at 4.5 metres; rooflines should commence no higher than 7 metres; and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs should be allowed over 7 metres.
- All new development should meet a minimum of 2 of 4 of the appearance requirements (façade treatments, siding type, trims and colour) specified for comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw section 6.4.3).
- All new development should meet the landscaping requirements specified for comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw sections 5.5.3.1 and 6.4.3). The principle change would be requirements for hard-surfacing.

Earlier in 2013, a survey was conducted which revealed that 85% of Steelox property owners support an 8 metre height restriction along Dalton Trail, Park Lane, and upper Hillcrest Drive<sup>13</sup>. One implication of the 8 metre height limit with a second storey elevation cap of 3.5 metres is that it could constrain housing designs that incorporate basement-level living space and basement windows (Figure 18). This would mainly affect redevelopment cases where a basement suite is desired as part of a two storey, single detached house.



**Figure 18:** Building height comparison. Image not to scale.

<sup>13</sup> Survey conducted by Jim Gilpin, Dalton Trail resident.

In the remainder of the RS zone, the recommended reduction in height allowance from 10 to 9 metres would have minimal consequence. While a limited number of properties may be put into non-conformance, the majority of existing residences are less than 9 metres in height. The proposed requirements related to building façade and landscaping would only apply to new development and in cases of substantial building renovation/modification.

Modification to height allowance should also be made to the RCTx<sup>a</sup> zone on upper Hillcrest Drive to similarly mitigate privacy and shadow impacts associated with new development. The maximum building height allowance should be reduced from 10 to 9 metres, keeping in line with the interim height decision made by City Council for these properties. The building roofline should commence no higher than 7 metres to require that an angled roof design be used in the top 2 metres of development.

### 3.6.2.2 *Densification*

The City supports residential densification to promote the efficient use of infrastructure and help to prevent urban sprawl. Densification opportunities in Hillcrest are found primarily in areas zoned RS and can occur through different forms including lot consolidation, rezoning, redevelopment, and intensified use of existing lots through renovations, additions, etc.

**Figure 19** illustrates the maximum densification potential under the present zoning for triplex development and garden and/or living suite development<sup>14</sup>, as determined through minimum lot size requirements. It is worth noting that it is primarily the Steelox lots that have triplex redevelopment potential and that this coincides with some of the most affordable rental and purchase housing currently available in the neighbourhood.



**Figure 19:** Densification scenarios for: ■ Triplex ■ Garden or living suite ■ Living suite only

<sup>14</sup> Estimated using the City's digital mapping.

There are 38 Steelox lots in total (37 are occupied by duplex units; 1 lot is occupied by a single unit). Of these, 14 lots are able to accommodate triplex development based on the minimum lot size requirement specified for the RS zone (1,208 m<sup>2</sup>). The spot rezoning of the four RCTx<sup>a</sup> lots on upper Hillcrest Drive provides four additional locations for potential triplex development. The Steelox area has a distinct character within Hillcrest given the uniform building design and site coverage, as well as the diversity of residents and owners. To minimize potential negative effects, densification needs to be sensitive to the surrounding environment. Renovation, expansion, and replacement should proportionally respect and complement the existing built form.

### ***3.6.2.3 Potential Infill Scenario, Lot 130***

The 2010 OCP has numerous policies that provide for infill development and identifies sixteen sites across the city for potential new development in established residential neighbourhoods. One site, Lot 130 (**Figure 20**), is located in Hillcrest at the east end of Sunset Drive North. The area is approximately 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> in size, zoned RS, and owned by Yukon Government. Currently undeveloped, the site contains mature trees and is used by some residents for recreational purposes. Unauthorized storage of wood, vehicles, and other equipment also occurs at the site.



**Figure 20:** Potential infill site, Lot 130. Clockwise from top left: view facing north-east from Sunset Drive North and Roundel Road; clearing at rear of Roundel Road residences; property boundaries indicated by yellow lines.

The possibility of development at Lot 130 was discussed during the second Charrette not as a question of “if”, but rather “how”, on the understanding that a final decision to proceed or not rests with City Council. Residents opposed to such use will have a future opportunity to express their opinions before City Council.

Infill development can have positive and negative effects on established neighbourhoods. From a City and taxpayer perspective, infill can help to make efficient use of existing municipal infrastructure and help delay building new neighbourhoods and extending costly services. New investment in older neighbourhoods also generally results in an increase in neighbouring property values. Residents who oppose infill development cite impacts including loss of green space, loss of privacy, increased traffic, fear of reduction in property values, and potential development incompatibility (e.g. new development that dwarfs older development) due to the allowances of the RS zone.

Charrette participants discussed several development options including subdividing the parcel into single detached lots and selling them to individual owners, developing the site as a park, splitting the site into a combination of residential lots and a park, and keeping the parcel intact to develop it in a comprehensive fashion at the density of the RS zone.

To reflect neighbourhood values and help ensure that future development is compatible with neighbouring land use, the following design considerations were suggested:

- Maintain a low profile, building height and scale that incorporates pitched roof lines to reduce building mass;
- Retain as many mature trees as possible, especially along the rear property line to minimize the impact on Roundel Road properties (e.g. to preserve personal yard privacy);
- Set houses closer to the street with living spaces oriented to the south (backyards); and
- Require significant landscaping to compensate for tree removal.

An assessment of the various residential zones was undertaken. The RCM3 – Cottage Cluster Home zone, with the RS zone as a guideline for height and density and a modified requirement for a 6 metre rear yard setback, would provide the greatest level of control over building size and location, especially if the allowable building height of the RS zone in Hillcrest is reduced from 10 to 9 metres.

The advantages of lot subdivision and disposition were also considered. Subdivision and lot sale prior to site design is not recommended for several reasons. First, this approach reduces the City’s ability to influence the development’s design. Second, by subdividing the parcel into 4 or 5 residential lots, the likelihood of effectively addressing privacy concerns and minimizing tree loss is significantly diminished. Third, keeping the lot intact provides greater flexibility for building location since there would be fewer lot lines and setbacks to adhere to. The approach would still allow the option for condominium subdivision, post-construction.

The suggested process is to hold a design competition through a “proposal call” and to use this site as a demonstration project for other potential infill sites. Developers interested in acquiring the property

would have their designs evaluated against agreed upon criteria that address neighbour concerns and the larger city interest. The winner would have first option to acquire the property and build their design as a condition of sale. If that option is not pursued, the second ranked proponent could either build the winning design or adapt their proposal to achieve similar ends.

#### ***3.6.2.4 Heritage Considerations***

During the planning process, interest was expressed in the opportunity to preserve examples of the original seven housing styles that are viewed as an integral part of the neighbourhood's character.

An assessment was carried out in 2000 that identified heritage resources across Whitehorse and resulted in creation of the City's Heritage Registry. Two Steelex lots, three houses on Roundel Road, and one house on Sunset Drive North were identified on the Registry as well-preserved examples of military-era housing. The properties are located at municipal addresses: 113/114 and 115/116 Park Lane; 24, 27, and 35 Roundel Road; and 82 Sunset Drive North.

Under the City's Heritage Bylaw, and with property owner consent, any person or group can petition City Council to designate a site or building as a Municipal Historic Site. The City should assess the eligibility of these properties for designation and engage property owners to determine if interest exists for pursuing the designation process.

Benefits to designation include retaining examples of the neighbourhood's original housing form and style, and providing owners with access to City-funding for restorative purposes. Owners of Historic Sites can apply for funds through the City's Heritage Restoration Incentive Policy<sup>15</sup> to cover up to 50% of restoration costs, to a maximum of \$20,000. Eligibility to the fund is renewed every 10 years.

Once designated, certain development restrictions apply to Municipal Historic Sites. Alterations to the character defining elements of historic buildings and property grounds are restricted. Demolition of historic buildings is prohibited unless the designation is first removed, which requires a public hearing process and approval by City Council.

#### ***3.6.2.5 Redevelopment of Multiple Housing Lots***

Densification is supported by residents in principle in the RM – Residential Multiple Housing zone to provide affordable housing choice. Concern has been raised, however, that the form and style of development allowed in the RM zone is inconsistent with the neighbourhood's residential character and that specifications of the zone have limited requirements for landscaping.

The RM zone allows for a zero metre front yard setback when parking is accommodated at the rear of the development. The draw-back to a zero lot line is that it can undermine objectives for improving streetscape aesthetics to enhance the pedestrian environment. In effect, what is meant to be the "front door" of a development may become a back entrance, discouraging interaction between the private and public realm.

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<sup>15</sup> Heritage Restoration Incentive Policy, revised May 27th, 2013.

Amending the zoning of multiple housing lots in Hillcrest from RM to RCM – Comprehensive Residential Multiple Family would help to address this concern. It is recommended that the amendment should apply to all RM lots located between Summit Road and Burns Road, including Lot 128 which is a non-conforming industrial use.

Applying comprehensive zoning regulations to multiple housing lots would ensure that a minimum 4 metre front yard setback is required for future developments. The RCM zone restricts site density at 35 units per hectare. The height allowance of the RM and RCM zones is consistent at 15 metres.

#### ***3.6.2.6 Highway Commercial, Lot 132***

How the owner of Lot 132, zoned CH – Highway Commercial, develops the vacant lot between the neighbourhood entrance roads is important from a functional and neighbourhood aesthetic perspective (see **Figure 15**, page 21). While spot rezoning in principle should be discouraged, the highest and best use of this particular site in a neighbourhood planning context may be as a mixed commercial/residential development, with highway commercial uses fronting onto the Alaska Highway and residential use along Burns Road.

A spot rezoning based on a comprehensive development proposal would achieve two objectives. First, it would provide access to neighbourhood service commercial facilities within walking distance of Hillcrest’s residential area. Second, a comprehensive approach would allow the City and property owner to achieve a mutually beneficial development pattern, such as allowing increased density in exchange for additional landscaping. The net result would be an improvement to the neighbourhood entrance and would make the new development more a part of the Hillcrest community.

#### ***3.6.2.7 Landscaping***

Landscaping is a major contributor to the character and amenity of Hillcrest. The neighbourhood has a significant amount of mature vegetation in many parts with exceptions found on Dalton Trail and Park Lane. With renovation, redevelopment, and densification, vegetation is often displaced to accommodate buildings, parking, and fencing that detract from the transition between the public and private space. The loss of mature vegetation and landscaping is a neighbourhood aesthetic concern.

Where vegetation is sparse, property owners should be encouraged to plant trees in front yards as a long term investment in streetscape improvements. In cases of redevelopment, it is recommended that the comprehensive landscaping requirements of the Zoning Bylaw should apply.

Comprehensive landscaping calls for single detached homes and duplexes to have internal sidewalks and a hard surfaced driveway for residences without lane access (**Figure 21**, left on next page). Landscaping of the front yard is required to have a minimum of one tree or three shrubs, and where a lot fronts onto two streets the standard applies to both frontages. Requiring comprehensive landscaping for new development is intended to increase the contribution made by private development to the neighbourhood’s appearance.



**Figure 21:** *Landscape requirements and opportunities. Left: comprehensive landscaping in Takhini North. Right: boulevard planting in Porter Creek.*

Renewal of infrastructure presents both a concern and opportunity. Infrastructure replacement may disrupt landscaped portions of the road right-of-way that property owners have improved at their own expense. At the same time, renewal can be an occasion to incorporate new plantings within boulevard areas (**Figure 21**, above right). For example, a narrow street design would leave more room to add vegetation that can improve the pedestrian environment, facilitate traffic calming, and encourage walkability. Boulevard maintenance is the responsibility of adjacent property owners under the City's Maintenance Bylaw.

**3.6.3 Policies**

**3.6.3.1** Renovation and adaptation of the existing residential building character is the preferred housing strategy for densification. Spot rezonings shall generally be discouraged in the residential portions of Hillcrest. In rare exceptions, applications may be carefully considered with input received from residents.

**3.6.3.2** When new development or redevelopment of a site is contemplated, the form, style and scale of development on adjacent lots including site coverage, setbacks, and building height, shall be considered and complemented whenever practicable.

**3.6.3.3** To mitigate privacy and shadow impacts that may result from new development, the maximum height allowance for RS lots located on Dalton Trail, Park Lane, and Hillcrest Drive shall be 8 metres with a maximum second storey floor elevation cap of 3.5 metres. In addition, the building roofline shall commence no higher than 6 metres and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs shall be allowed over 6 metres.

- 3.6.3.4** To preserve the modest scale of development found in Hillcrest and promote compatible architectural design, the maximum height allowance for RS lots on Chalet Crescent, Klwane Crescent, Sunset Drive North, Sunset Drive South, and Roundel Road shall be 9 metres with a maximum second storey floor elevation cap of 4.5 metres. The building roofline shall commence no higher than 7 metres and only hip, gable, and gambrel roof designs shall be allowed over 7 metres.
- 3.6.3.5** All new development in the RS zone shall meet a minimum of 2 of 4 of the material and colour requirements specified for comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw section 6.4.3).
- 3.6.3.6** The RS zone in Hillcrest shall require that landscaping specifications of comprehensive residential zones (Zoning Bylaw sections 5.5.3.1 and 6.4.3) be met to improve the pedestrian environment.
- 3.6.3.7** The RCTx<sup>a</sup> – Comprehensive Residential Townhouses zone shall have a maximum allowable height of 9 metres, with a roofline commencing no higher than 7 metres, to mitigate shadow and privacy concerns.
- 3.6.3.8** Where properties are redeveloped, existing vegetation shall be shown on the building drawings noting which is to be retained or lost. To the extent possible, best efforts shall be made to retain and incorporate existing vegetation as part of the development plan, except where the vegetation is an invasive plant species.
- 3.6.3.9** To increase the design standard that applies to multiple housing developments, the zoning of RM – Residential Multiple Housing lots located on and east of Summit Road shall be amended to RCM – Comprehensive Residential Multiple Family.

#### **3.6.4 Guidelines**

- 3.6.4.1** The City should investigate the Municipal Historic Site eligibility of Hillcrest properties listed on the City's Heritage Registry. Consultation should occur with property owners to assess interest in the designation process.
- 3.6.4.2** If development proceeds on Lot 130, the site should be designed as one lot to a height and density consistent with the modifications recommended for the RS zone. The RCM3 – Cottage Cluster Homes zone (with modification) would allow for a comprehensive design with flexibility for building siting to address neighbour concerns regarding privacy and building scale. Disposition and development should occur through a design competition to encourage innovative development that supports affordable housing and preservation of trees and other values present on the site.

**3.6.4.3** The City should work with the owner of Lot 132, zoned CH – Highway Commercial, to explore options that help to integrate the site into the fabric of the neighbourhood through a comprehensive site design. The option of a mixed residential/commercial development should be explored.

**3.6.4.4** Landscaping, especially the use of indigenous trees and edible plant species, should be encouraged on all private and public properties in the neighbourhood to provide for site beautification and privacy from adjoining properties.

### 3.6.5 Implementation

| Action:  | Lead:                  | Timing:  | Results Expected:   |
|--|------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Amend RS zone (Hillcrest only) to include the recommended height, roofline, second storey, building façade, and landscaping requirements. | CW                     | Initiate by Winter 2014                          | Consistency with built form and character of Hillcrest; mitigation of privacy and shadow concerns.              |
| 2. Amend RCTx <sup>a</sup> zone to include the recommended height and roofline requirements.   | CW                     | Initiate by Winter 2014                          | Consistency with built form and character of Hillcrest; mitigation of privacy and shadow concerns.              |
| 3. Amend zoning of multiple housing lots, including Lot 128, from RM to RCM (Hillcrest only).  | CW                     | Initiate by Winter 2014                          | Increased development standards for future multiple-housing developments; promotion of architectural diversity. |
| 4. Investigate property owner interest for designating examples of the original military housing types as Municipal Historic Sites.          | CW and property owners | 2014 - 2015                                      | Protection of heritage values; property owner access to City funding for restoration purposes.                  |
| 5. Continue to investigate the residential infill potential of Lot 130.  | CW                     | Tie decision to construction phase of LI Process | Densification; increase in housing options/availability.  |
| 6. Investigate potential of mixed residential/commercial use for Lot 132.  | CW and property owner  | Initiate by 2014                                 | Comprehensive site design; parcel integration into neighbourhood fabric.  |

City of Whitehorse (CW); Hillcrest Community Association (HCA).



### 3.7 Social Environment

#### 3.7.1 Objective

To maintain and enhance neighbourhood cohesion and pride of place by ensuring the pace and scale of future development respects the values, character, and vision set out in this plan so that Hillcrest may continue to be a healthy, robust, and diversified neighbourhood that is safe and affordable for all.

Supports OCP Objectives:

- Objective 17: Support Local Food Production
- Objective 20: Provide Accessible Community Infrastructure
- Objective 21: Meet Basic Human Needs
- Objective 22: Leadership and Education



#### 3.7.2 Issues and Opportunities

Hillcrest has evolved from its start as military housing and its eventual disposition as surplus to the needs of the military in the late 1960s. Current residents hold a strong sense of community (“common unity”) and have expressed local values through this, and previous, planning processes.

Neighbourhoods all go through change over time and residents acknowledge this inevitability. Hillcrest residents are concerned with the pace and scale of change and their ability to influence when and how change occurs so it does not undermine or erode the social cohesion and character of the community that has taken many years to build. Residents want Hillcrest to remain a safe, inclusive, interactive, and affordable neighbourhood with its own sense of place within the larger Whitehorse community.

It is important that the social values that have created the strong sense of community are retained and enhanced in the future. The importance of community is an integral part of this neighbourhood plan, which can be reinforced by creating new opportunities for resident interaction, for example through communal gardening (**Figure 22**, next page).



**Figure 22:** Community gardens. Left: Valleyview Community Greenhouse. Right: raised planter box at the Downtown Urban Gardeners Society.

### 3.7.3 Policies

**3.7.3.1** Hillcrest’s stewardship ethic is valued and will be supported by the City by encouraging walkability, promoting resident interaction, and creating partnering opportunities for residents to contribute directly to sustainability and stewardship goals.

**3.7.3.2** The City will partner with HCA on initiatives that support social interaction, personal safety and neighbourhood well-being. For example, the Parks & Trails Department will assist the neighbourhood to complete a master plan for the development of new features and other upgrades to the central park area, including their subsequent maintenance.

**3.7.3.3** If there is sufficient resident interest, the City shall assist residents to establish a community garden and/or greenhouse in the central park area, and shall consider including a municipal water connection to facilitate this use at the time of infrastructure improvements. Interest should be assessed through the park master plan consultation process.

### 3.7.4 Guidelines

**3.7.4.1** The City’s Planning Services Department should monitor plan implementation to help ensure the pace and scale of redevelopment activity occurring in Hillcrest retains a broad range of residents in terms of income, family composition, and age.

**3.7.4.2** The City should continue to work with residents and commercial landowners to beautify entry-way properties and identify ways to better integrate these businesses into the neighbourhood fabric.

**3.7.4.3** The City should continue to work with Hillcrest residents to provide a safe environment for residents of all ages. Such measures might include improved lighting in and around playgrounds and removing mobility barriers through universally accessible infrastructure design.

### 3.7.5 Implementation

| Action:   | Lead:      | Timing:                              | Results Expected:   |
|---|------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Complete a master plan for the central park area.  | CW and HCA | Fall 2014                            | Neighbourhood cohesion; stewardship; enhanced amenities.                                    |
| 2. Consider providing a water connection to central park area for gardening purposes.                               | CW         | Coordinate with LI Process           | Neighbourhood cohesion; promotion of local access to food.                                  |
| 3. Organize and undertake annual public land clean-ups and planting days for public lands within the neighbourhood. | CW and HCA | Initiate by Summer 2014 and on-going | Improved maintenance of public lands; neighbourhood cohesion; stewardship; community pride. |

City of Whitehorse (CW); Hillcrest Community Association (HCA).