

Transportation Report to  
SPC on Transportation and Transit  
2019 December 18

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
TT2019-1431

## **Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan Update**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents an update to the *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan*, which was approved by Council in 2001.

The update includes the development of Always Available for All Ages & Abilities (5A) Network principles, for people of all ages and abilities to walk and wheel around Calgary communities. It supports travel for all purposes including to work, school, social, recreational or commercial activities.

The 5A Network provides long-term direction for the active transportation network in Calgary, consisting of off-street pathways and on-street bikeways. A set of network principles provide the framework to build safe, accessible, affordable, year-round options for transportation and recreation for Calgarians. Administration plans to bring forward the 5A Network map to replace the Primary Cycling Network in the update to the Calgary Transportation Plan in 2020.

### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit recommends that Council:

1. Approve the 'Always Available for All Ages & Abilities' (5A) Network Guiding Principles for prioritized walking and wheeling infrastructure in Calgary.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

At the 2018 February 26 Council Meeting, Report TT2018-0060, Council adopted the following recommendations:

1. Receive the status update of the Calgary and Area Pathway and Bikeway Plan for information.
2. Appoint a City of Calgary Ward Councillor to the Pathways and Bikeways Project Steering Committee.

See Attachment 1 for Previous Council Direction from 2014-2017.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2000 and 2001, Calgary City Council adopted the *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan*. The plan provided a map of built and approved pathways and bikeways, as well as guiding principles related to the planning, design and management of the network. It also outlined an implementation strategy.

Since the *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan's* adoption, there have been numerous changes to policy framework at The City. For a comprehensive list of updated plans and policies, see Attachment 1.

Over time, Calgary has grown and the needs of Calgarians have changed. Many of the connections identified in the original *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan* and in the Primary Cycling Network (CTP, 2009) have been constructed and changes to communities have

## Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan Update

rendered some planned routes obsolete. Additionally, the Cycling Strategy (2011) included updating the *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan* as an action item (6.1.1, C1).

### INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The project framework was developed and approved by Council in November 2014. An internal review process was established to guide the development of the updated plan. The process included the formation of two internal groups: a Steering Committee and a Technical Working Group. Both groups provided input on the direction of the plan and support to the project team.

Figure 1 summarizes the framework identified for the four phases of the project.

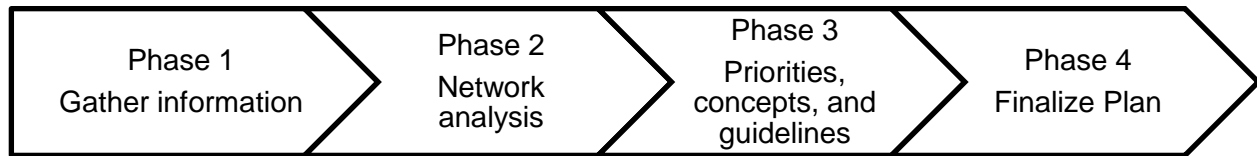


Figure 1

To learn more about Phases 1-3, which were the subjects of previous reports to Council, refer to Attachment 1.

### Phase 4: Finalize Plan

Engagement with Calgarians, network analysis, data from previous cycling projects, Council's priorities from One Calgary, academic research and an environmental scan from other municipalities confirmed the need for an Always Available for All Ages and Abilities (5A) Network in Calgary as part of the update to the *Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan*.

The design of the 5A Network will support the following five principles, based on feedback from Calgarians, to:

- Separate people by their speed  
Providing separation between people travelling at different speeds improves safety, predictability and comfort. Where appropriate, people will be separated to improve their experience travelling on the 5A Network.
- Improve visibility  
Lighting, signage and pavement markings encourage people to use public spaces and provides visibility on roadways, pathways and in parks. They help make people visible to each other, help identify hazards like water, ice, cracks and other debris along routes.
- Make it reliable  
Well-maintained pathways and bikeways will encourage more people to use them throughout the year, regardless of the weather conditions.
- Be accessible for everyone  
An accessible city benefits everyone. Accessible pathways and bikeways enable people of all abilities to travel around Calgary. Accessibility is improved by the removal of barriers that currently exist across the network. Barriers can be off-set gates, major roadways,

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## **Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan Update**

---

waterways, steep hills and uneven surfaces. Reducing or removing these barriers improves accessibility.

- **Make it easy to use**  
Signs and pavement markings help people make decisions about their route and confirm they are heading in the right direction. Improved signage and wayfinding will help Calgarians get to community destinations.

The 5A Network Guiding Principles are described in detail in Attachment 2, Always Available for All Ages & Abilities (5A) Guiding Principles Report. The principles outline how to update existing and build new pathways and bikeways to improve user experience.

If the 5A Network principles are approved, Administration will identify and update existing policies and guidelines to incorporate the principles. Administration will continue to work with developers and City of Calgary staff to educate stakeholders about the network principles.

Administration plans to bring forward the 5A Network Map to replace the Primary Cycling Network in the update to the Calgary Transportation Plan in Q2 2020.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Over 6,500 Calgarians from 180 communities and 14 wards participated in the two phases of engagement. Engagement events sought to capture input from a broad audience of Calgarians including seniors and families, youth and children, vulnerable populations, Calgarians who do not identify as cyclists, and members of the public.

The goals of public engagement were to gather input about how Calgarians currently use the pathway and bikeway network, what barriers they encounter when using the network, how to prioritize the build-out of the network, and to select the types of pathways and bikeways they would be most likely to use.

A summary of public input is included in Attachment 3, 'What We Did' Report. The 'What We Heard' reports from both phases of engagement can be found online at [engage.calgary.ca/pathwaybikeway](https://engage.calgary.ca/pathwaybikeway).

Some stakeholders have provided letters of support for the 5A Network Principles. Please see Attachment 4.

### **Strategic Alignment**

Pathways and bikeways connect our communities, providing Calgarians of all ages and abilities with safe and accessible year-round opportunities to walk, run, ride, and use mobility devices throughout the city. The 5A Network principles support travel for any reason, including to work, school, social, recreational or commercial activities and provides connectivity to other transportation services like public transit and parking.

The 5A Network principles support all five Citizen Priorities identified in One Calgary and align with the goals outlined in the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan. Refer to Attachment 1 for the complete list of supporting plans, policies and strategies.

## **Calgary Pathway and Bikeway Plan Update**

---

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

**Social:** Calgarians of all ages and abilities want walkable communities, with convenient and attractive connections to neighbours, shopping, services, cultural experiences, natural spaces, workplaces, public transit and educational opportunities. Pathways and bikeways provide the ability to connect with these destinations, support healthy lifestyles, and reduce and prevent social isolation.

**Environment:** Creating a city where Calgarians have safe and accessible places to walk and wheel will result in improved water and air quality and decrease greenhouse gas emissions associated with vehicle use. More Calgarians walking and wheeling supports long-term strategies for reducing Calgary's per capita ecological footprint. A resilient and adaptive transportation network for people walking and wheeling assists in moving goods and services during times of severe weather events.

**Economic:** Providing safe, low-cost, active transportation and recreation options to Calgarians can help attract and retain employees which can help attract, retain and nurture business in Calgary. This supports Calgary as a city where people want to live, visit, and invest, and keeps Calgary a competitive international city. The 5A Network provides all Calgarians, regardless of income, age or ability, affordable and healthy options for transportation and recreation.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

Administration will work within approved operating budgets to best achieve the 5A principles for the broadest possible range of the identified network.

Additional budget requests are not part of the recommendations presented in this report.

#### ***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

Administration will work within approved capital budgets to best achieve the 5A principles for the broadest possible range of the identified network.

Future capital investment will be required to build out the 5A Network over time.

Additional budget requests are not part of the recommendations presented in this report.

### **Risk Assessment**

The potential risks of not implementing the principles of the 5A Network include:

- Reduced ability to provide safe, accessible, connected and affordable year-round transportation and recreation options for Calgarians
- Increased risk of not meeting MDP & CTP goals related to providing safe, accessible and affordable travel options for Calgarians
- Increased risk of not meeting Climate Mitigation Actions from the Climate Resilience Strategy
- Reduced ability to deliver consistent rationale related to user experience for decision making for sidewalks, pathways and streets projects.

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---

The potential risks of implementing the principles of the 5A Network include:

- Maintaining service level expectations along a growing network with constrained budgets

#### **REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Direction from Council to invest in the safety and mobility of Calgarians by providing 'Always Available for All Ages & Abilities (5A) network principles for prioritized walking and wheeling infrastructure in Calgary to support safe, accessible, and affordable year-round transportation and recreation options.

#### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Attachment 1 – Project Background
2. Attachment 2 – Always Available for All Ages & Abilities (5A) Network Guiding Principles Report
3. Attachment 3 – 'What We Did' Engagement Report
4. Attachment 4 – Letters of Support