

## **Business Advisory Committee Update**

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### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Business Advisory Committee recommend that Council receive this Report for the Corporate Record

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) continues to provide insights and perspectives from across a variety of business sectors to guide and support Administration in the execution of business-friendly initiatives.
- The purpose of this report is for BAC to provide an update to Council on progress of this committee's work plan.
- What does this mean to Calgarians?
  - Business owners and investors should perceive The City of Calgary as "open for business" and to deliver our services in an efficient and effective manner. With the current economic climate, it is more important than ever that The City look for ways to enhance and promote Calgary as a destination for economic diversity and investment. It is especially important to continue to reduce barriers for businesses during Calgary's recovery both economically and through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Why does this matter?
  - Calgary will continue to grow as a magnet for talent, a place where there is opportunity for all, and strive to be the best place in Canada to start and grow a business. We must continually assess our business practices and processes to ensure we are removing barriers and providing value for our customers.
- Ongoing collaboration between BAC, Business and Local Economy (BLE), and business stakeholders will continue to advance a stronger level of service, improve the customer journey and customer satisfaction, and resolve service delivery issues.
- The most recent Council direction was for BAC to prioritize perceived system barriers and to work with BLE and Administration on the restaurant journey, change of use and industrial land.
- BAC and BLE have been working with the restaurant and brewery industry to understand and address concerns and systemic issues/barriers to open and manage a business when dealing with The City.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A prosperous city. In addition, this report aligns with Business Environment Focus area of Calgary's Economic Strategy by working with government and business to continually improve City services to foster Calgary's business environment, innovation ecosystem and help build the foundation for business success.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

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**DISCUSSION**

Several opportunities have been identified and prioritized through the BAC working group, which has resulted in one pilot project and three priorities to be explored.

The pilot project explored and evaluated solutions to resolve barriers for Indemnified Contractors when working with The City. This included streamlining the approvals processes for the necessary permits for Indemnified Contractors to conduct business in Calgary and in turn creating a flexible and functional customer service experience for them. After a year of continual dialogue, numerous meetings, and ongoing project management from BLE, 2020 July 16, BAC and BLE completed a “close the loop” meeting where representatives from Administration (Water and Roads business units), Indemnified Contractors, and BILD discussed the solutions implemented in response to confidential whiteboarding sessions held back in the Q2 2019. Administration has continued to engage with the stakeholder group on a regular basis.

Additionally, throughout 2019, BAC worked with Supply Management to gain feedback from the BAC Working Group on the Social Procurement Policy. BAC provided an opinion on the Social Procurement (BAC2019 -1524) at the Combined Meeting of Council 2019 December 16.

At the 2019 July 4 BAC Working Group meeting, the working group identified and approved BAC's top three priorities for 2020:

1. Restaurants

- Municipal and Provincial collaboration. Importance of being more responsive with timelines.

2. Change of Use

- Stakeholders would like a focus on streamlining process and permitting.

3. Industrial Land

- Work on ensuring City industrial land stays regionally competitive.

Two of the three priorities are now underway, exploring solutions to resolve barriers for businesses when working with The City. This includes streamlining the approvals processes for the necessary permits for entrepreneurs to conduct business in Calgary and in turn creating a flexible and functional customer service experience for them. See Attachment 2 for BAC Timeline and Workplan.

The meetings that BAC and BLE conducted with targeted stakeholders from the restaurant and brewery industry were based on a service design approach, where the conversation was focused on understanding the delivery of City services from a business perspective.

A customer journey map is a visual representation of the steps and the emotional states that a specific customer segment goes through over a period of time to accomplish a specific goal, including interactions with The City. By addressing the issues identified,

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the customer journey will immediately see improvements. Additionally, in collaboration with Administration, BLE will continue to work in a coordinated fashion to support activities to address issues, identify further ways to improve the customer journey, and start expanding this approach to create customer journey maps for different customer segments. Details related to the opportunities for improvement and the customer journey map are included in Attachment 3.

At the Regular Meeting of BAC 2020 November 16, BAC directed Administration to respond to the concerns and recommendations raised by targeted stakeholders during the restaurant and brewery meetings that BAC hosted, no later than Q1 2020, and for change of use, no later than Q2 2020.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)**

- ☐ Public Engagement was undertaken
- ☐ Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- ☐ Public/Stakeholders were informed
- ☒ Stakeholder or customer dialogue/relations were undertaken

Engagement and two-way communications with the business community and affiliated partners and stakeholders is a priority for The City. Strategic communications and ongoing engagement enables issues to be surfaced and improved, and as a result, create the ideal conditions for businesses to thrive. The BAC will continue to receive advice and recommendations from working groups, prioritize perceived systemic barriers and work with respective City departments to resolve, and extinguish issues and remove red tape. Essential to these conversations and improvements is creating awareness within the business community on how their feedback is being used or addressed, and new or improved services, information and resources. BAC will start to share updates with the broader community of business owners and investors once solutions or service improvements have been determined and implemented.

**IMPLICATIONS****Social**

Remaining responsive to the needs of the business community through these unprecedented times is a critical social consideration.

**Environmental**

There are no environmental implications anticipated to be associated with implementing these recommendations.

**Economic**

Ensuring Calgary's "open for business"/business-friendly reputation with investors and business owners is paramount in delivering services in an efficient and effective manner, further supporting Calgary's economic recovery.

**City Manager's Office Report to  
Business Advisory Committee**

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**Service and Financial Implications**

No anticipated financial impact

**RISK**

It is important to identify opportunities to improve the business journey to open and manage a business in Calgary. With the challenging economic conditions in 2019 and 2020, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the foundations of a strong and vibrant local economy are even more important. BAC will ensure the identification of person(s) in the collection of external stakeholder conversations in working group sessions remains confidential. Working group participants that partake in a whiteboard session are notified that all discussions are subject to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP Act) of Alberta. The breaching of this confidentiality would have every negative impacts so it is the role of BAC and BLE to sustain the anonymity of those providing the feedback that will inform improvements.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Previous Council Direction and Background
2. Business Advisory Committee Timeline and Workplan
3. What We Heard Report – Restaurants and Brewing Industry

Department Circulation

General Manager	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
David Duckworth	City Manager's Office	Approve