

Calgary Planning Commission Review – Administration Follow-up

Summary of CPC Comments – 2020 March 19 Closed Session of CPC Meeting

On 2020 March 19, Administration held a closed session workshop with members of Calgary Planning Commission to review the draft proposal for *Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan* and to answer any questions. Discussions remained high-level with a focus on the vision, principles and strategic moves. Feedback was generally positive, identifying no “red flags” and expressing the thought that Administration was on the right track.

Below is a summary of the overall themes of questions discussed at the meeting and how Administration has responded.

Comment	Edits	Administration Follow-up
Overall Content		
As a non-statutory document, it can be bolder in its language.	The Plan has been revised to be bolder and more direct in actions.	The Greater Downtown Plan is intended to be a living and evolving document that gets updated regularly. Ongoing conversations with Calgarians, through new projects in Greater Downtown, will influence actions to keep them inspirational and future focused.
Cover and introduction		
The picture of Limes on the front cover might mean the Plan looks dated.	A revision was made to the final cover photo.	The cover photo reflects the downtown vision of vibrancy.
The greater downtown map could use more detail and perhaps defining street boundaries.	Revisions were made to the map to add more road names.	
How does the Plan consider adjacent neighbourhoods?	N/A	Main Streets from adjacent neighbourhoods are aligned through Greater Downtown. Some adjacent neighbourhoods will be undergoing local area planning processes to ensure further alignment.
Make the Plan more vision and show the statistics in a more visual way.	Illustrations have been added.	The proposed Plan shows statistics, mapping and imagery in a more visual way.
Vision and principles		
Generally, Calgary Planning Commission was supportive of the vision and principles.	Minor revisions were made to the vision and significant revisions were made to the principles.	The vision and principles are more inclusive and aligned with other City documents.
How were the principles achieved?	N/A	Principles were derived from public input for the Greater Downtown Plan update project and in alignment with the Guidebook for Great Communities.

Strategic moves in general		
Generally, Calgary Planning Commission was supportive of the Strategic Moves and actions, stating they should be The City's commitment to making Greater Downtown better. The Implementation section should prioritize and demonstrate their coordination.	N/A	Implementation section has been revised, but it does not list and prioritize each action. This gives the Downtown Strategy team flexibility to re-evaluate as priorities change.
Too much in the Strategic Moves. Less is more, which will aid readability. Focus it on fewer things and make the whole document more achievable.	Revisions were made to streamline the strategic moves.	Strategic moves have been streamlined for clarity.
There may be a gap in addressing problematic places like near the DI and Alpha House. They are users and spaces that must be there and should be discussed.	Revisions were made to the Plan to be more inclusive.	Greater Downtown is a place for everyone. Inclusion, vibrancy and safety are addressed throughout the Plan.
Smart city technologies like new lighting. Why is this being promoted only on 7 Avenue?	Revisions were made to apply Smart City technologies throughout Greater Downtown	No follow-up required.
Is it possible there are areas most suitable for tactical urbanism that can be made more formal through this Plan? What can be done quickly and at low cost to show municipal action? Lots of low-hanging fruit.	The Plan has been revised to include proposed pilot projects.	The Plan is also flexible enough to allow tactical urbanism to happen at the implementation stage of the Plan through the Downtown Strategy.
It's hard to differentiate between the strategic moves and policies. What is the boldest move in this plan? They should be clear for each department.	Policies have been removed from the document and strategic moves more refined.	We intend the Greater Downtown Plan to be a living and evolving document that gets updated regularly. Ongoing conversations with Calgarians, through new projects in Greater Downtown, will influence actions to keep them inspirational and future focused.
Strategic moves related to transportation		
Calgary Planning Commission generally supportive of re-envisioning the road right-of way, implementing the transportation sustainability triangle and activating alley ways.	N/A	These elements remain in the Plan

Regarding the conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets, would we want to go back to this?	The Plan has been revised to remove reference to conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets.	The Plan has direction to prepare a strategy to identify and prioritize networks across all modes. Through this project, there could be a review of the street network which includes one-way streets.
Fire department's 6 metre requirement for roadways will make it a challenge to tighten up our ROWs, like on 14/15 Avenue.	N/A	Cycle tracks and sidewalks are designed to withstand the weight of a fire truck's outriggers. Transportation Planning is working on accommodating their needs.
Concerns with identifying and showing enhanced pedestrian corridors.	The Plan has been revised to remove these.	The Plan identifies existing and proposed main streets instead.
Questions relating to the freight rail corridor, the challenge of crossing it and the future of it.	N/A	This Plan assumes the freight rail corridor will remain and that integration with it is key. There have been major improvements underpasses. The Plan supports good connections across it and an underpass at 11 Street S.W.
Calgary Planning Commission generally supportive of prioritizing transit and the expansion of the free-fare zone.	N/A	No follow-up required.
Strategic moves related to parks		
The Parks action for "explore opportunities for acquisition" is an old goal and we've failed. The bold move is actually in re-envisioning those smaller pocket parks.	The Plan has been revised to explore alternative ways to fund and provide new park spaces.	The revisions are bolder and provide enough direction for implementation through the Downtown Strategy.
Strategic moves related to Neighbourhoods and Districts		
Regarding the strategy to evolve the Downtown Core, the strategy to "support additional residential development" seems a bit nebulous and circular. How will you support new residential development? Are there areas you'd like to emphasize? Additional services? Parks? Walkable streetscapes?	The Plan has been revised to provide more specific direction in this regard.	Amendments to the Plan direct the review of regulations and incentives to support adaptive reuse of empty office buildings and development and/or conversion to residential uses. Shifting the image of the core also includes actions to support public realm improvements.
Item D – why and how would any development near the Calgary tower connect the beltline with downtown? Do you have anything specific in mind? That area along 9 Ave seems completely built out on both sides of the tracks.	The Plan has been revised to remove this reference.	No follow-up required.
Strategic moves related to resiliency and climate change		

Calgary Planning Commission was generally supportive of recognizing resilience and climate change and incentivizing sustainable development.	The Plan has been revised to add more climate change detail and actions to support climate initiatives.	The Plan recognizes the importance of Climate Change mitigation and adaptation and weaves it throughout the document.
Policy direction chapter		
Calgary Planning Commission was generally unsupportive of this chapter stating that the content belonged in a guidebook and that it made the document too long.	The Plan has been revised to remove this chapter	This chapter was removed and any key ideas moved into the strategic moves chapter such as gateways, landmarks and view corridors.
Implementation Chapter		
Calgary Planning Commission was very interested in how the vision and actions of this Plan would be implemented, especially with respect to funding.	The Plan has been revised to provide more specific direction for implementation.	Through the Downtown Strategy, actions will be reviewed and coordinated through Administration's asks at each budget cycle.