



2021 May 25

**TO: Mayor Nenshi and Members of Council**

**FROM: Chris Arthurs**

**RE: Administrative Inquiry – Geographic Service Delivery**

---

This memo responds to the 2020 October 05 Administrative Inquiry submitted by Councillor Chahal, and includes responses to the following questions:

1. Is City of Calgary service delivery and capital infrastructure investment equitable, accountable, and transparent?
2. Are geographic and demographic factors considered in all City investment, and other business-related decisions, at an Organizational level as well as in individual Business Units? If so, how?
3. How will The City address existing service and infrastructure inequities in future budget deliberations while considering geographic and demographic factors?

---

**Is City of Calgary service delivery and capital infrastructure investment equitable, accountable and transparent?**

The City's policies and service plans and budgets demonstrate service delivery and capital infrastructure investment that is accountable and transparent, and strives for equitable decision-making.

The City's [service plans and budgets](#) describe how The City follows Council Direction to plan and respond to Calgarian's needs and aspirations. They are the roadmap for how we deliver services to people and the financial plan to support our actions. Our plans and budgets outline how tax dollars and funding will be used to deliver the services Calgarians want and need. As a key part of the plans and budgets, capital planning and investment play an important role in creating inclusive, accessible and connected communities, supports a dynamic economy and contributes to a resilient city.

In 2018, as part of the One Calgary service plans and budget process the Corporate Governance service was established with a focus on executing on strategic direction established by Council and Executive Leadership and providing administration policies, frameworks, rules and standards to direct service delivery and minimize exposure to legal, financial, reputational and health and safety risks. The service reviewed the policy environment and put in place the performance measure "Percent of administration policies reviewed and revised as per policy review due date". It was recognized that there was a need for support to policy owners to review policies consistently and regularly to ensure alignment to key strategic priorities and legislative compliance. As part of the development of an overall policy framework, policy review guidelines were developed to support policy owners. The guidelines include an equity, diversity and inclusion lens to be applied to policies as they are reviewed to support and guide the advancement of this strategic priority. The policy framework also includes a recurring four-year policy review program, which was launched in January 2021, where all Council and Administration policies will be reviewed and the equity, diversity and inclusion lens will be applied with the goal of



removing existing policy barriers and mitigating inequities. The Transparency and Accountability Council Policy (CC039) also acknowledges The City's responsibility to operate in a transparent and accountable manner. In addition, the following principles, criteria and policies support equitable, accountable and transparent results in service delivery and capital investment (details are provided in Attachment 1):

- *Strategic Plan (Service Plan and Budget) Principles*
- *Capital Infrastructure Investment Principles*
- *Investment criteria – City investments*
- *2020 Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) Criteria*
- *The Social Wellbeing Policy and Social Wellbeing Principles*
- *User Fees and Subsidies Council Policy – Guiding Principles*

**Are geographic and demographic factors considered in all City investment, and other business-related decisions, at an Organizational level as well as in individual Business Units? If so, how?**

An environmental scan, a method used to identify external and internal factors and includes trends, is typically completed as part of the development of the four-year service plans and budgets. Attachment 2 provides information on the planning and budgeting process.

Information on the environmental scans, completed by services, are included in the “What we are watching?” sections of each service’s plan and budget. In the One Calgary 2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets, several services specifically outlined demographic considerations (e.g. Affordable Housing, Arts & Culture, Business Licensing, Community Strategies, Economic Development & Tourism, Library Services, Social Programs, Bylaw Education & Compliance, Calgary 9-1-1, City Planning & Policy, Fire & Emergency Response, Fire Safety Education, Specialized Transit, Taxi, Limousine & Vehicles for Hire, and Recreation Opportunities).

Additionally, our service plans and budgets are living plans that adapt with Calgary’s changing needs. There are opportunities to bring forward adjustments in response to changing circumstances, stresses and shocks (economic, demographic and financial). The most recent year we have experienced has provided an extreme example of the flexibility needed to adjust our services and budgets in response to major disruption, as brought on by the pandemic, and in response to other opportunities, such as the stimulus and recovery funding achieved through advocacy. These provide time sensitive geographic and demographically considered opportunities to invest.

On an ongoing basis, Council’s Social Wellbeing Policy applies and indicates that The City will follow the Social Wellbeing Principles (including providing equitable services that includes removing barriers to Access and Inclusion) when making decisions; developing plans, policies and strategies; and delivering City Services. In the Social Wellbeing Policy, “Access” means services align with the ability for individuals to participate. This often is achieved through the removal of barriers impeding access, which may include social, financial, language, cultural, geographic and physical barriers. Administration, with the support of the Social Wellbeing Council Advisory Committee, continues to develop tools and mechanisms that will support staff in implementing the Social Wellbeing Policy and improve equitable decision-making and service delivery for all Calgarians.



Calgary Neighbourhoods has developed an Equity Index, a geographically-based tool that will support equity considerations for planning, decision-making, and prioritizing resource allocation in the city. As an objective and evidence-based screening tool, it provides a greater understanding of community need. The Calgary Equity Index indicator data will be accessible through our corporate GIS platform as well as through an interactive dashboard tool in the coming months (Q2 2021) and are excited to share the tool more broadly within Administration and with Council later this year. More work is required to holistically advance an equitable approach to decision-making in City services and investment across all department and service owners.

Attachment 3 provides additional examples of where geographic and demographic factors were considered in service delivery and investment decisions.

**How will The City address existing service and infrastructure inequities in future budget deliberations while considering geographic and demographic factors?**

Efforts are ongoing to continuously improve and advance our approach. There are opportunities to further embed equitable, accountable and transparent outcomes in service and capital planning. For example, the capital investment principles and criteria will be updated to further support these outcomes in the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets and there is further opportunity to use the Equity Index tool to support and guide infrastructure investment decisions.

An initiative already underway is the new approach to local area plans, with some specifics being that these plans are multi-community plans, updated on a periodic basis, and where – importantly – the vision and proposed public investments included in the plans are informed directly by citizen desires and aspirations for their communities. As this work progresses, it will further enhance how Administration would respond to the essential points included in this administration inquiry's three questions. Given the multi-year nature of this program, Administration is currently looking at how to incorporate this new approach into the 2023-2026 One Calgary Service Plans and Budgets.

There are other initiatives, including project mapping, underway to support investment decision-making incorporating geographic and demographic factors. This work will support transparency in investment decisions and visually enable us to see the distribution of investment. Attachment 3 includes additional information.

Should you have any further questions on this topic, please contact myself, Heather Kathol, Manager, Infrastructure Calgary, Kelly Gardner, Leader, Performance Measurement and Benchmarking and Risk, Teresa Goldstein, Manager, Community Planning North or Melanie Hulsker, A/Director, Calgary Neighbourhoods.

Sincerely,

Chris Arthurs  
Acting General Manager  
Deputy City Manager's Office



- Attachment 1: Principles, Criteria and Policies
- Attachment 2: Multi-year Planning and Budgeting Process
- Attachment 3: Examples



## Principles, Criteria and Policies

### **Strategic Plan (Service Plan and Budget) Principles (PFC2018-0445)**

Five principles were approved by Council (PFC2018-0445) that provided the framework for the development of our 2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets. These principles help the organization develop, monitor and continuously improve the value dimensions that are most important to citizens.

1. **Vision:** Address citizen needs and long-term quality of life aspirations.
2. **Strategy:** Use a Council-driven and corporately integrated approach to planning for service delivery.
3. **Value:** Focus on what matters most to citizens and customers and maximize their value for city services.
4. **Accountability:** Monitor the value generated through services by using performance measures, and reporting.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Seek to improve services and process and adjust on an ongoing basis.

### **Capital Infrastructure Investment Principles (C2015-0855 and C2018-0304)**

Six principles were approved by Council (C2015-0855 and C2018-0304) that guide our capital investments. The principles address inclusivity, the well-being of communities and meeting service needs, but do not explicitly address an equitable outcome for residents.

1. **Support the delivery of City of Calgary services, at approved service levels**  
Capital investments facilitate the delivery of services to residents. The primary criteria for identifying, prioritizing and funding capital investments will be the need for capital to deliver services and the associated operating impact of this capital.
2. **Promote the well-being of communities, environment, and economy**  
Capital investments are intended to promote the well-being of a community through improved connectivity, accessibility, inclusion, and environmental health as well as long-term resilience.
3. **Build an adaptable, resilient and smart city**  
Resilient infrastructure helps service delivery meet citizen needs, provide capacity to withstand disruption (both natural and man-made), and supports community preparedness and financial strength. Smart cities utilize data innovation and technology to inform decisions on service delivery, purpose and size of capital investments, economic development and resident empowerment and inclusion.
4. **Enhance the long-term value of City assets**  
Capital planning and investment requires an understanding of the long-term implications of service demand and asset needs, legal and regulatory provisions, technological trends, and finance and asset ownership.
5. **Integrate, coordinate and optimize The City's investment**  
An integrated and coordinated approach to capital planning, prioritization and funding at the corporate level refines investments, identifies efficiencies and achieves economies of scale. Infrastructure investments may be coordinated or focused upon an identified investment need, support a service gap in the community, and/or contribute to alignment with external (i.e. private, provincial, federal) investment for a specific time.



#### 6. Optimize financing and funding sources

The development of a fiscally sustainable corporate approach to financing and funding will maximize The City's opportunity to provide capital investments that support service delivery. Allocating the most restricted funding sources first and switching accordingly (where permissible) to free up more flexible funding, will enable The City to more effectively respond to current and emerging funding opportunities.

#### **Investment Criteria – City Investments (2019-2022 Corporate Capital Prioritization Criteria)**

- Legal, Regulatory, Health & Safety Requirement
- Critical Infrastructure
- Critical Asset Risk Mitigation
- Minimize Service Delivery Costs
- Deliver Existing Levels of Service
- Attracts Private Investment, And / Or Public & Other Government Funding (Regional)
- Improves Connectivity, Accessibility & Inclusion of Communities\*

\*This criterion is targeted at investment that fosters distinctive and complete communities with a strong sense of place (MDP 2.2.4) by identifying and addressing service gaps. Improving connectivity accessibility and inclusion enables all residents of varying ages, cultures, incomes, interests and lifestyles to access equitable services and opportunities. Examples include, but are not limited to, increased mobility choices, access to recreational opportunities or cultural events and a range of housing choices.

#### **2020 Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) Criteria**

On 2020 July 28, the Government of Alberta announced funding for infrastructure investments as part of Alberta's Recovery Plan to help with the COVID-19 recovery. The City of Calgary's share of the \$500 million Municipal Stimulus Program is \$152.8 million for capital investments in 2020 and 2021.

The MSP is intended to provide funding that will create and sustain local jobs, enhance provincial competitiveness and productivity, position communities to participate in future economic growth, reduce municipal red-tape and promote job-creating private sector investment.

Infrastructure Calgary worked with Service Owners and teams to create a list of infrastructure projects that support job creation and contribute to economic recovery. To aid in the prioritization of potential projects that could be advanced pending stimulus funding, Infrastructure Calgary created seven criteria to evaluate investments. The Infrastructure Calgary Prioritization Stimulus Criteria was approved by Council on 2020 May 11 (C2020-0524), they are as follows:

- Creates jobs and stimulates the economy
- Contributes to a resilient city
- Enables economic diversification
- Enhances long-term value of assets and reduces operating cost
- Attracts investment and supports the growth and change strategy
- Facilitates equitable services\*
- Supports the post COVID-19 service environment



\*This criterion focused on projects that provide equal access across the city and populations (e.g. recreation upgrades in underserved communities). A higher ranking was given to projects that proved the investment allowed for greater access to service for underserved communities or vulnerable populations. This criterion is in alignment with The City's Social Wellbeing Policy.

### **The Social Wellbeing Policy (CP2019-01) and Social Wellbeing Principles**

According to the Social Wellbeing Policy, The City will follow the Social Wellbeing Principles when making decisions; developing plans, policies and strategies; and delivering City Services.

- The City will strive to provide Equitable Services. This includes removing barriers to Access and Inclusion.
- The City will advance the active and shared process of Truth and Reconciliation in collaboration with the community.
- The City will seek opportunities to support and grown Culture in Calgary.
- The City will aim to stop problems before they start, using a Prevention approach.

### **User Fees and Subsidies Council Policy (CFO010) Guiding Principles**

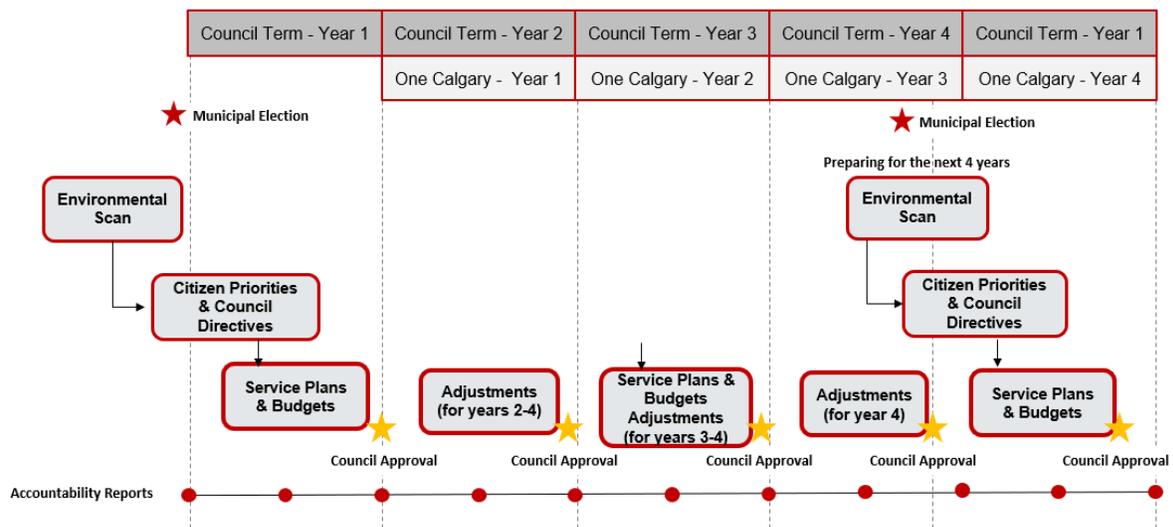
- 1. Benefits Principle:** Those who receive benefits from a particular municipally provided good or service should pay for that good or services according to the level of the value of the benefit received.
- 2. Cost Recovery Principle:** The full cost of providing a good or service including operating expenses, administrative costs, capital expenses (including depreciation) as well as implicit costs of foregone opportunities or activities that are not being undertaken, environmental costs and social costs, should be the starting point when calculating the appropriate user fee.
- 3. Management of Public Assets Principle:** Public assets have a value and The City has a responsibility to recognize this value and protect these assets.
- 4. Allocation of Resources Principle:** In an environment with limited resources available and increasing public demand for goods and services, user fees have value as a mechanism for allocating scarce resources.
- 5. General Tax-supported Subsidies Principle:** When consumption or use of a good or service benefits society as a whole, all citizens should pay for the societal benefit.
- 6. Tax-supported Subsidies for Individuals Principle:** In cases where individuals may have resources below an acceptable level and are not able to make the choice to consume and pay for City goods and services, The City could provide a subsidy to the individual in order that they are allowed the choice to consume.

## Multi-year Planning and Budgeting Process

The City’s service plan and budgets are living plans that will adapt with Calgary’s changing needs. The figure below illustrates the four-year planning and budgeting cycle.

As part of this process, there are opportunities to bring forward adjustments in response to changing circumstances, stresses and shocks (economic, demographic and financial).

Environmental scans, a method used to identify external and internal factors, including trends, is typically completed from both an organizational and service perspective as a key part of the development of plans and budgets.





## Examples

### General Business Unit Practices

Generally, yes, services and individual Business Units do consider geographic and demographic factors in prioritizing investment. Some general notes include:

- Geographic and demographic factors are one aspect of many criteria that are applied to prioritize projects.
- Other factors include (but are not limited to):
  - Current condition of existing assets
  - Maintenance requirements of existing assets and level of risk to existing service levels
  - Growth decisions – necessary infrastructure required to provide service in actively developing and new growth areas
  - Regulatory requirements
  - Safety expectations and better access

### Specific Business Unit Practices

Specifically, individual Business Units consider geographic and demographic factors in the following ways:

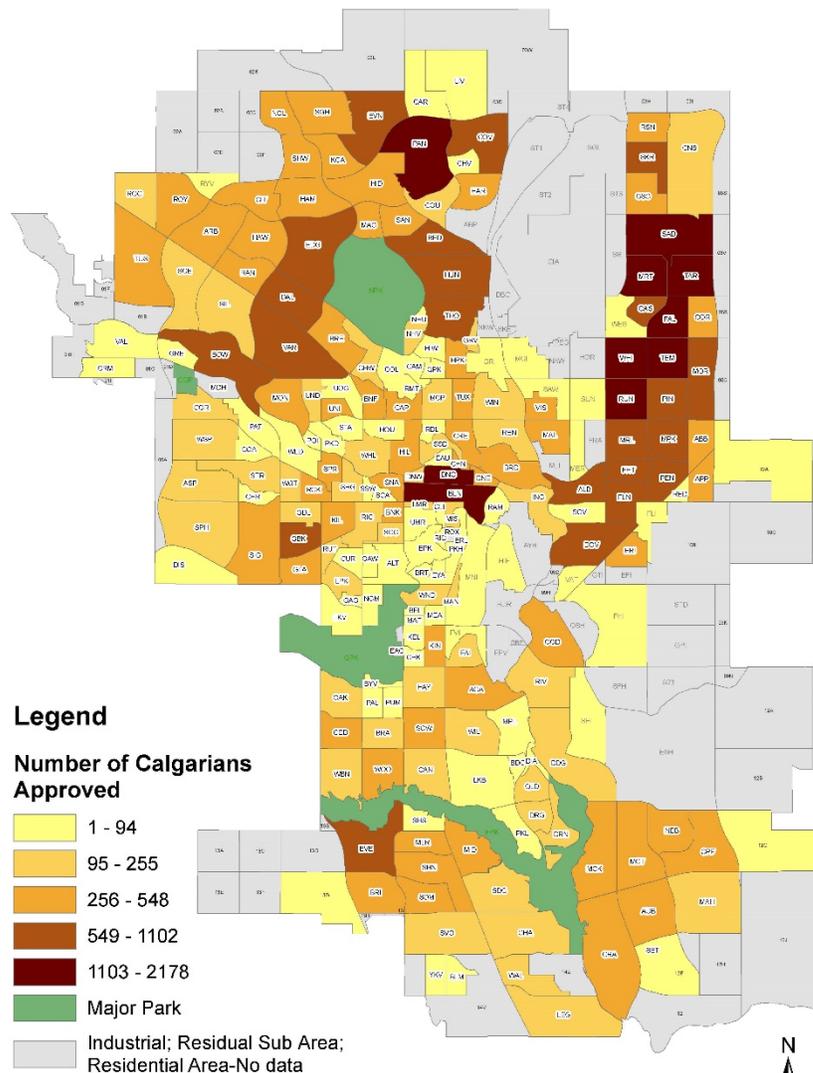
- Recreation uses the following guidelines and best practices:
  - Square Foot Service Provision: 2 square foot per capita guideline for publicly accessible aquatics, fitness and community space
  - Suitability of Purpose Matrix: Ranked each facility on a 1 to 5 ranking system (1- poor in general condition, functionality and serviceability)
  - Practice and Play Facility Planning Guidelines: e.g. Arenas – 1 for 18,000 people
- Recreation conducts studies to identify minimum catchment areas for amenities which is paired with demographic analysis and if current user demand is being met. When establishing initial capital investment prioritization needs, a dynamic process based on a variety of considerations is undertaken:
  - Most critical needs
  - City-wide service gap for practice and play space in new and established communities
  - Aging recreation infrastructure, and associated service inefficiencies
  - equitably distribute in-demand amenities throughout Calgary
  - Available partnership opportunities (Sport for Life Policy Investment prioritization considerations (CPS2018-0358))
- Parks current service level standards is park access available to Calgarians, within approximately a 5-minute walk or 450 meters.
- Fire takes geographic information into consideration to ensure equal distribution of stations based on times that the engines can get to area locations.
- Fire takes into consideration demographics when developing infrastructure and service requirements – e.g. building an ambulance bay if building in an area that has a high per cent of seniors.
- Calgary Neighbourhoods' Community Social Work (CSW) program uses the Calgary Equity Index, in terms of those areas scoring below benchmark indicating inequity, as an initial screen for the placement of CSWs. In 2020, 26 communities that were initially screened underwent a community assessment to validate need and inform community work plans.



- Calgary Neighbourhoods' Fair Entry program is targeted towards low-income Calgarians applying for subsidized City services. As such, demographic analysis was undertaken to determine where applicants reside to identify where front-facing counters would be located (Village Square Leisure Centre and the Municipal Building as permanent sites as well as additional temporary pop-up sites during peak periods). The program utilizes 17 drop off sites around the city, accepts mail-in/fax-in applications, and has an online application method to ensure all low-income Calgarians have access to apply for subsidy regardless of their geographic location. The following is a map of approved Fair Entry clients demonstrates program uptake density by community.



**Total Number of Calgarians who were APPROVED by Fair Entry between April 2020 - March 2021**



This map reflects all Calgarians Approved for one or more Fair Entry programs between April 1, 2020 to March 30, 2021.  
Map created on May 1, 2021.



- Transportation's investment in infrastructure is guided by the MDP and CTP, which look to prioritize investments in travel options that are more sustainable and available to all Calgarians, hence the focus on supporting Complete Streets that improve walking and wheeling, building out the 5A network and supporting transit, which will consider communities with more newcomers, lower household income and with less access to a car. Specific criteria we have incorporated in our current planning includes if projects support furthering complete streets, if they are supporting increased physical accessibility or providing increased service for underserved populations (criteria varies by category). Further specifics can be provided if needed. Individual programs will have their own, additional criteria. This is an evolving topic and our processes will improve over time as we learn how to use data better or have new data that helps increase our understanding of inequity in the transportation system and how best to address it. Our analysis also feeds into the Infrastructure Calgary process, which can consider additional equity elements.
- Transportation uses demographics that are included in the Regional Transportation Model for traffic modelling and therefore plans to build / update infrastructure.
- Transportation collects geographic metrics that influence prioritization of investments including:
  - Transit and access Ridership
  - On time Performance
  - Traffic/pedestrian/bike counts
  - Asset condition
  - Customer feedback (demand and usage patterns) including 311
  - Permit activity (business, community and citizen)
  - Parking usage (on street and parking in lots)
  - Community engagement
- Further, Transportation would also like to point out we don't use 'geography' criteria. Transportation gives general consideration to the distribution of projects to see if there is any area of the city that is not being invested in, but it is not a specific criteria. A geography approach is also an equality approach, which is not the same as an equity approach (that would focus improvements based on the highest need).
- Planning & Development considers geographic and demographic factors at different points in the planning approvals spectrum. Key examples include:
  - The *Citywide Growth Strategy* which helps prioritize growth enabling infrastructure and service investments in new community, established, and industrial areas.
  - For new communities, geographic distribution and recognizing socioeconomic diversity is an important consideration, in order to facilitate affordable new housing choices for Calgarians in all new community geographic sectors.
  - For established areas, once the priority market areas were determined, a portfolio of growth enabling public realm investments was created that were balanced spatially across the areas, and in alignment with any emerging local area planning initiatives.
  - Further considerations are made throughout the development of local area plans, and in the sequencing of upcoming local area plans. For example, communities with more multi-generational households may have different mobility or amenity needs than other communities that could be reflected in the local area plan policy.
  - Considerations are also made in public engagement activities, such as providing interpreters at events to support multiple languages and hosting our events in a central location within the community so those without access to a vehicle are able to attend.



- Ahead of the 2023-2026 budget cycle, it is anticipated that an even more comprehensive growth investment prioritization will occur in conjunction with the development of service plans and budgets, and that growth enabling investments will be identified for all of new, established and industrial areas.
- Special event planning

### **Project Mapping**

At the present time, there are two avenues for information on current and upcoming projects and work activities.

The first is the Roads Activity eMap. This online, interactive map is populated with information pertaining to work occurring in proximity to road rights-of-way. The eMap is primarily used for coordination of projects and other work activities. Work coordination efforts include Utilities, Transportation and external third-party utilities (e.g. ENMAX, TELUS, ATCO). The Roads Activity eMap shows activity across the city. While it only shows a subset of projects and work activities, it is still a good source of work activity information. The Road Activity eMap was recently updated with the current approved Green Line LRT alignment to facilitate coordination of work activities. Roads Activity eMap can be accessed using the following internal link: <http://roadsemap.coc.ca/>

The second avenue is the PDF-based Capital Works Map, produced on a monthly basis, that provides information on projects and work activities across the city from a broader perspective. A link to the Capital Works Map can be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.calgary.ca/Transportation/Roads/Documents/Traffic/capital-works-map.pdf>

Work is underway on a City-wide interactive project mapping solution. This project will utilize existing data sources to present projects from across the city in an online, interactive format. Filtering of project information will be available based on different layers configured in the geospatial mapping system. This will be developed incrementally, but, the first release is expected in 2021.