

BRIEFING

Page 1 of 3

Item # 5.2.1

Transportation Briefing to
SPC on Transportation and Transit
2021 March 17

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5A Network Funding and Implementation Update

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

During the 2021 budget discussions in November 2020, more information was requested on how the completion of the 5A Network would be implemented and funded and how The City includes all mobility options in our transportation infrastructure. This information was to be brought through the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation & Transit by end of 2021 Q1.

This briefing outlines the 5A Network development and the various funding mechanisms The City has to provide for the upgrading and completion of this infrastructure.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The updated 2020 Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) identifies the Always Available for All Ages and Abilities (5A) Network as one of the key components to help us achieve the long-range plan for Calgary's transportation system. The 5A Network map in the CTP demonstrates our long-term plan to build or upgrade existing infrastructure to the 5A standard.

Calgarians have told us to shift the focus of the pathway and bikeway network to create more community connections and increase accessibility for a variety of users. The 5A Network provides accessible, affordable, year-round options for transportation and recreation. It is an evolution of our previous plans and consists of off-street pathways and on-street bikeways. It also involves an operating component to provide a certain service level to be accessible for all Calgarians all day and year-round. The 5A Network principles will improve safety and create a reliable experience for Calgarians.

In addition, it aligns with the Complete Streets approach to street design that supports and compliments growth and development of our city, accommodating all transportation modes. This guiding policy directs development to provide mobility options for all modes, ensuring completion of the 5A Network in new and actively developing communities.

Implementation:

In order to implement the network, we developed the 5A Network Map. This map identifies where we need to build or upgrade existing infrastructure to the 5A standard and illustrates the vision of a complete transportation network. It updates and replaces the Primary Cycling Network, and the Pathways and Bikeways Plan with a more inclusive and accessible network.

Funding:

Similar to other networks in the CTP such as the Primary Transit Network and Goods Movement Network, the 5A Network has its own funding strategy.

Approval(s): Doug Morgan concurs with this report. Author: Katie Levin-Ferg

BRIEFING

Page 2 of 3

Item # 5.2.1

Administration works collaboratively together to identify and leverage existing projects to achieve the vision of the transportation network while at the same time, providing the least disruption to Calgarians and most effective use of funds.

We have various funding mechanisms available for completing the 5A Network; however, we would like to highlight three main categories: developing new infrastructure in the existing network, upgrading existing infrastructure to the 5A standard, and providing new infrastructure based on growth.

Developing new infrastructure in the existing network:

There are dedicated capital programs such as Pathways and Trails Lifecycle & Upgrades and Community Mobility Improvements that can be used to expand and/or upgrade the 5A Network. The Pathways and Trails Missing Links program was unfunded in the current One Calgary budget cycle but was previously used to provide missing connections within the existing network. The program has identified and prioritized the missing links in our pathway network and contributed to the development of the 5A Network map. Other programs, such as Main Streets, Optimization and Various Street Improvements, contribute to spot improvements or public realm improvements by incorporating as many transportation network upgrades as possible to optimize investments.

Administration also works together to coordinate upgrades along with pavement and concrete rehabilitation work to ensure minimal disruptions to Calgarians while making the best use of our funding programs through regular meetings between program managers and use of project mapping databases. Liveable Streets, which prioritizes the 5A links for concept design and retrofit funding, meets regularly with the corporate Capital Works Coordination Committee which includes representatives from the repaving program, bridge rehab program, and concrete rehab program. They seek to leverage planning, engagement, design and construction work of the 5A Network with complimentary projects such as roadway repaving, curb and gutter replacement, and bridge rehab. A recent example is 2 St SW, which was repaved at the same time that we built a new cross-section with protected wheeling space and curb extensions for shorter pedestrian crossings.

Upgrading existing infrastructure to the 5A standard:

5A Infrastructure is incorporated in large infrastructure projects such as roadway expansion, interchanges, bridges, BRT routes and LRT routes. Administration continuously seeks to update plans as they come to delivery to ensure that they align with the current standards and guidelines. This at times means including 5A infrastructure that was previously not considered at the time that the initial plan was drafted or scaling back on road requirements that are no longer required or in line with the goals of the project. New infrastructure projects will consider all current policy direction during scope and budget development and budget adjustments will be sought from Council to ensure we are building the right infrastructure at the right time.

Providing new infrastructure based on growth:

Certain aspects of the 5A Network, such as those in new and actively developing communities are delivered by developers as part of the infrastructure necessary to support development. Other new infrastructure that is recognized as needed due to overall growth within Calgary, such as certain pedestrian grade separations connecting communities, are included in the Off-Site Levy bylaw to be funded by a combination of levy funds and City contributions. The Off-Site Levy is a funding tool available to advance projects that are attributed to growth. The Off-Site Levy team will include aspects of the 5A Network as part of the Off-Site Levy review.

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BRIEFING

Page 3 of 3

Item # 5.2.1

Timeline:

Implementing the 5A Network depends on the amount of funding provided for ongoing City lifecycle programs, developer contributions, and available capital funding, as well as operating funding for winter maintenance and lighting.

Next steps:

A prioritization tool is being developed to identify priorities from the 5A Network to include in the next budget cycle. We currently track 5A projects as part of the Community Mobility Improvements Program, which uses metrics from the Step Forward pedestrian strategy, the Cycling Strategy, and the Complete Streets Policy. The adoption of the 5A Network's principles and plan demonstrates The City's commitment to improving service levels for mobility users and aligns with CTP/MDP policy. The CTP direction will also be reflected in the criteria that will be used to develop priorities within the transportation network. Network build-out status is included as part of monitoring CTP progress. Completion of this work will provide a list of additional projects, of which the growth-related projects may be included in the Off-Site Levy bylaw in the future.

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