

# Background and Previous Council Direction

## Background – Downtown Strategy

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Downtown Calgary is a critical component to Calgary's resilience in the face of economic, social and environmental shocks. Our Downtown needs to transform to position it for success in the new economy and in a post-pandemic world. When the Greater Downtown thrives, so does the rest of the city. Calgary's Greater Downtown is an economic driver and employment centre, historically generating 40 percent of non-residential tax revenue and 25 per cent of city-wide employment. However, an economic downturn has had a significant impact on Calgary's Greater Downtown with high unemployment and office vacancy rates. To address the issues in Calgary's Greater Downtown, there is a need for a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that can leverage the efforts of The City and its strategic partners to invest in infrastructure and stimulate the economy.

### Greater Downtown Plan

Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan: Roadmap to Reinvention (The Plan) is our vision, roadmap and commitment to build a thriving, future-focused downtown over the next decade and beyond. It will replace the 2007 Centre City Plan and is a component of the Next Generation Planning System. The Plan is an initiative of the Downtown Strategy which will be the principle driver for implementation.

The Plan is downtown's roadmap for the future and like a roadmap, there are many ways to get to a destination. The strategic moves and actions provide many ways to achieve a future where our downtown is a resilient and vibrant place for everyone, with welcoming neighbourhoods, active streets and well-used public spaces.

### Calgary in the New Economy

The economic strategy for Calgary, identifies four pillars of focus – Talent, Innovation, Place, and Business Environment – that are interconnected and an integral part of a prosperous economy – with investment in place-making important for each focus area. This Plan aligns with Calgary's economic strategy by providing the roadmap for placemaking in Greater Downtown to attract business, talent and residents, which supports growth in innovation. People are at the centre of vibrancy and putting people at centre of strategic action and decision-making in Greater Downtown will allow Calgary's downtown to be a more vibrant and prosperous place.

### Downtown Strategy

The Downtown Strategy brings together civic and community partners through coordinated and collaborative work with the commitment to making life better every day for citizens, customers, residents and businesses through a focus on four pillars: place, work, live and connect. The Plan is an initiative of the Downtown Strategy with a focus on these pillars. The Downtown Strategy will be the principle driver and coordinator of implementation over time and will help coordinate future budget requests (both capital and operating) and prioritize corporate action across all Service Lines. It will also ensure ongoing community dialogue and alignment with other Civic Partners and partnerships.

## Previous Council Direction – Downtown Strategy

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At the 2021 April 26 Strategic Meeting of Council, with respect to report PUD2021-20 *Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan Roadmap to Reinvention*, the following was approved:

That Council:

1. Approve, by resolution, Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan (amended Attachment 3); and
2. Rescind, by resolution, the Centre City Plan.

At the 2021 April 26 Strategic Meeting of Council, with respect to report C2021-0524 *Realizing Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan: Initial Investments and Incentives*, the following was approved:

That Council:

1. Approve **revised** Attachment 3, "Greater Downtown Plan – Initial Investment and Approvals", including investment categories and allocations, and with the \$200 million initial investment funded by \$60 million from the Budget Savings Account, \$63 million from the Fiscal Stability Reserve and \$77 million from the Canada Community Building Fund subject to receipt of the 2021 increase;
2. Request the Mayor write letters to the provincial and federal governments, advocating for funding and other support for Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan, and direct Administration to pursue the same support by contacting provincial and federal government officials and departments;
3. Authorize entering into a Housing Agreement on Sierra Place at 706 7 Avenue SW and authorize the Community Services General Manager to develop, approve, and execute the agreements identified in Attachment 7 and necessary to implement the HomeSpace project; and,
4. Direct Administration to report back to Council no later than 2022 Q2.

In 2020 December, Council approved *Notice of Motion C2020-1439 Providing Incentive to Residential Development in the Downtown Core*. That with respect to Notice of Motion C2020-1439, the following be adopted, as amended: NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council direct City Administration to explore the potential creation of regulatory and financial investment incentives for the development of new high-density residential complexes and the conversion of office buildings to various forms of residential occupancy or other uses within the downtown generally, but with a focus on the Downtown Core, to coordinate with the work of the Real Estate Working Group and Urban Initiatives Downtown Strategy team. AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration report to the Priorities and Finance Committee with its findings no later than the end of 2021 April.

## Background - Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative

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The objective of the Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative (CMSI) program is to maximize The City's investment in cultural infrastructure for optimal social, learning, entertainment, and economic value in the sector, and doing so by leveraging community initiatives and addressing The City's strategic interests.

In 2008 Council directed that five percent of the province's MSI allocation to The City be invested in cultural infrastructure. The total allocation of \$165 million to Cultural MSI is available for culture-related projects at the rate that the province allocates in its multi-year capital budgets.

To date, twelve projects have been completed and are operational. A further four projects are in progress and are able to access CMSI funding within the program timeline.

## Previous Council Direction - Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative

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On 2016 April 25, Council ADOPT that SPC on Community and Protective Services Recommendation 1 contained in Report CPS2016-0297 Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative Program Update and Recommended Projects for Funding be adopted, as follows:

That Council:

1. Approve a capital appropriation increase to Capital Budget Program 519 by \$2 million in 2016, \$10.9 million in 2017 and \$11.6 million in 2018, a total of \$24.5 million, for the Centennial Planetarium from the Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative program, subject to approval by the Government of Alberta, with no match funding requirement (Attachment 2).

ADOPT that SPC on Community and Protective Services Recommendations 2, 3, 5 and 6 contained in Report CPS2016-0297 be adopted, as follows:

That Council:

2. Approve a capital appropriation increase to Capital Budget Program 510 Calgary Zoo by \$2 million in 2016 and \$6.15 million in 2017, a total of \$8.15 million, for the Treasures of China Giant Panda Exhibit Project funded by the Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative, subject to approval by the Government of Alberta (Attachment 3).

3. Approve a capital appropriation increase to Capital Budget Program 639 by \$500 thousand in 2016 and \$1 million in 2017, a total of \$1.5 million, for the King Edward School Arts Incubator Project from the Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative program, subject to approval by the Government of Alberta (Attachment 4).

5. Direct Administration to continue to work with Calgary Arts Development Authority to utilize the proposed Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative guiding principles in Revised Attachment 1 to renew the program strategy to direct CMSI allocations.

6. Direct Administration to pursue replenishing capital funds for cultural capital infrastructure

On 2009 July 13, Council approved CPS2009-34, Updated Cultural Infrastructure Funding Framework and City – Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative Requirements.

On 2008 November 24, Council approved CPS2008-90, MSI Program Guidelines for Culture-Related Infrastructure, and CPS2008-91, Calgary Arts Development Authority's Strategic Plan and Arts Space Investment Process (ASIP) was received for information.

At the 2008 February 19 Special Meeting of Council, Council approved CPS2007-74, Updated Culture, Parks, Recreation Infrastructure Investment Plan (CPRIIP) and Emergency Response Infrastructure Investment Plan (ERIIP), approving 5 per cent (up to \$165 million) of Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) funds towards culture-related infrastructure projects.

On 2007 April 16, Council approved CPS2007-20, Cultural Spaces for the Arts Strategy and Capital Plan, receiving for information CADA's Summary Report, Reclaiming Calgary's Cultural Identity: Arts Spaces Strategy and Capital Plan.