



Suite 1440, The Edison Building
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July 4, 2022

Meghan Mahoney
Business Strategist, Business Improvement Areas
Calgary Neighbourhoods
The City of Calgary

Sent via email: Meghan.Mahoney@calgary.ca

Dear Meghan;

Thank you for your on-going assistance regarding the Calgary Downtown Association's proposed boundary expansion to 14 Street SW. Following is a summary of the origins of the expansion initiative and actions to date.

Boundary Expansion Proposal

The CDA's boundary on the west end of downtown is currently 9th Street SW, which leaves a fragment of downtown disconnected from the larger geographic area.

Expansion of the CDA boundary to 14 Street was first discussed and approved by the Board of Directors in November 2019, however, action on this initiative was shelved due to the Covid pandemic.

Re-evaluation of the boundary expansion was tabled this year, following Council's approval of the Greater Downtown Plan. On February 2, 2022, the following motion was approved by the CDA Board:

8. Boundary Expansion - Motion to Expand CDA Boundaries

8.1 Process and Timeline for CDA Boundary Expansion

- Board had agreed in 2019 and made motions to expand boundary.
- Staffing changes and COVID stalled this expansion.
- Now there is opportunity in the west-end of downtown.
- Expansion is in line with City's Greater Downtown Plan. City is in support of expansion.
- Very high vacancy rate in the west end of downtown (46%).
- Strong push for residential properties in the area.



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- Great place making opportunities, with Millennium Park and Contemporary Calgary.
- Expansion will be of value to the West Downtown Community Association.

MOTION TO APPROVE CDA Boundary Expansion Calgary Downtown Association will proceed with the application process and steps necessary to meeting Section 8 of the BIA Regulation to extend its boundaries to include Downtown West, which is located in the western part of Calgary's City Centre adjacent to the CDA's existing western boundary. The proposed expansion comprises the area between 9 St SW and 14 St SW, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) tracks and the Bow River. These adjustments ensure that existing and new commercial developments in Calgary's City Centre can participate in, benefit from, and contribute to the activities of the BIA on the same basis as their established neighbors. (Motion- Colton Lewis/ Seconded- Tyler Varga)

Service Priorities

Service priorities from CDA to west downtown businesses will include:

- Ensuring the area is safe and clean, both of which impact perceptions of safety.
- Presence of Downtown Ambassadors in the area to build ties with businesses and community organizations, connect visitors to services and link vulnerable community members with social services.
- Marketing and promotion of businesses to residents in downtown and adjacent communities.
- Activation of events in Lot 6, a CPA surface lot at 311 - 8 Street SW that will be programmed for and available for use by the community.
- Mid-term report on state of good repair and improved accessibility into west end.
- Advocacy with City of Calgary for programs and services that will enhance the environment for residents and businesses.

Engagement Summary

Engagement with prospective ratepayers in the west end of downtown commenced in April.

The objective of the boundary expansion campaign was to engage with the 120 businesses in the west end to understand their service needs and to share with them how CDA can help with advocacy, enhancing vibrancy, fostering economic well-being and community building.

The following engagement initiatives were undertaken:

- o Landing page established: engage.downtowncalgary.com
- o Hand delivered flyers to street level retailers (attached)
- o Mailer to 120 prospective ratepayers (attached)
- o Mailer to 2530 existing ratepayers (attached)
- o E-mail to West Downtown, Downtown Core and Eau Claire Community Associations



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- Open House May 3 @ Kerby Centre
- Report made to City of Calgary advising of actions

The landing page, engage.downtowncalgary.com, was deployed in April and will remain available until the proposed boundary expansion is approved. Visits to street-level retailers were done over a series of days in late April; everyone received a copy of the mailer (attached here). All exchanges were polite and only a few retailers engaged in a larger conversation around how the expansion would benefit their business. In those cases, there was genuine interest that CDA could help to improve the business environment in the west end. There are many empty spaces and locked doors in the area at this time.

All prospective new ratepayers were mailed an information flyer, attached here, which provides a website link for further information and advises of an open house on May 3 @ Kerby Centre. (includes all businesses that received a personal visit)

All existing ratepayers were mailed a letter advising of the proposed boundary change (attached).

An open house was hosted at Kerby Centre on Tuesday, May 3, 4-7 pm. We had only a few RSVPs for the event and no one attended. This was a beautiful spring evening and the first night of hockey playoffs, with a game in Calgary.

Next steps

- CDA leadership and Downtown Ambassadors will visit the area over the summer to continue relationship building.
- CDA hosted meet & greet opportunities will be conducted through local businesses.

CDA is committed to fulsome communication with downtown businesses, stakeholders and residents, and enriching the community as a great place to live, work, play, learn and shop. We continue to work directly with existing ratepayers to address issues impacting our downtown community.

I am available to answer any further questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Garner', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Mark Garner
Executive Director
Calgary Downtown Association

The Downtown Calgary BIA Could Soon Include West Downtown

The inclusion of west downtown will enable holistic improvement and revitalization across downtown Calgary

Downtown Calgary is finally getting the attention it needs to become the thriving business environment we know it can be. That's why the Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) is proposing to **include west downtown as part of the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA).**

The inclusion of west downtown is scheduled to be reviewed by Calgary City Council in September and **we want to hear your thoughts first.**



LEARN MORE & SUBMIT FEEDBACK

The CDA is hosting an open house on **May 3, 2022** where you can learn more about the proposed boundary expansion.

To **RSVP and submit feedback** about the proposed expansion, visit

engage.downtowncalgary.com





What is a BIA?

BIA stands for **Business Improvement Area** and there are currently 15 BIAs in Calgary. Each BIA is typically run by its member businesses to improve business conditions and overall vibrancy in their local area.

BIAs advocate on behalf of their members with the government to make it easier to do business in their area and more attractive for customers and employees.

Is there a cost?

A BIA levy is added to BIA members' City of Calgary assessment. Here's how CDA fees work:

STEP 1

CDA member businesses vote to elect the CDA Board of Directors



STEP 2

The Board of Directors **sets a budget for CDA activities** promoting downtown Calgary and downtown businesses' interests



STEP 3

The cost of **the budget is split between member ratepayers** proportionate to their assessment



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April 25, 2022

Dear CDA member:

Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) is proposing a boundary expansion that would see west downtown incorporated into the existing downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA). This would ensure greater connectivity throughout the core, and better execution of the city's greater downtown strategy. The inclusion of west downtown is scheduled to be reviewed by Calgary City Council in September and we want to hear your thoughts first.

Why now and how will downtown businesses benefit?

The City is focused on redevelopment in the downtown area. Programming and capital investments are planned for, and funding is secured. By expanding the CDA's boundaries we will have the mandate to work with businesses and the community to ensure those funds are invested to create more vibrancy throughout downtown.

West downtown is poised for significant growth. Arts venues such as Contemporary Calgary and residential developments such as West Village mean more activity and investment opportunities are opening up for downtown businesses. By including west downtown, the CDA can advocate for greater integration of community and business needs, resulting in a vibrant, thriving, future-focused downtown.

Learn more!

Further information about the CDA's current and proposed boundaries can be found online at engage.downtowncalgary.com. Please submit your questions here and sign up for updates.

You can also learn more about the proposed boundary expansion and future opportunities by attending our open house on **May 3, 4-7 pm** at the **Kerby Centre, 1133 7 Avenue SW**.

Alternatively, you can email Heatherm@downtowncalgary.com to share your comments and ask questions.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Heather McRae'.

Heather McRae
Director Strategic Communications and Marketing
Calgary Downtown Association