

# BRIEFING

Page 1 of 3

Item # 11.1

Planning & Development Briefing to  
Infrastructure and Planning Committee  
2022 September 09

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## Municipal Development Plan / Calgary Transportation Plan Monitoring Report 2022

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### PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

The Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan (the Plans) outline Calgary's city building vision and goals. Measuring the progress in meeting these goals is critical. Doing so helps prioritize how we invest and where to direct efforts to maintain or change direction. The Plans progress is based on measuring 14 Core Indicators. This briefing is a review of the progress on the indicators focusing on The City's objectives regarding growth, social, environmental, and economic considerations. This is the third Monitoring Progress update to Council. The first occurred in 2013 and the second in 2018. A summary of each of the fourteen Core Indicators is available on the City's website at <https://www.calgary.ca/planning/progress-report.html>.

Data-based decision making helps Council and Administration identify where good progress is being made and identify areas that need more attention while potentially avoiding significant economic, environmental and social costs to Calgarians. By recognizing areas where The City of Calgary is behind on achieving its goals, we are able to course correct and get back on track.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### Key Findings:

While progress has been made in some important areas, such as increased density and diversity of housing choices, other areas, such as urban expansion or transportation mode split are not on track. The Progress Trend Summary (Page 1 in Attachment 2) provides a view of all fourteen indicators. Many of these indicators are interdependent and affect one another. There is no single headline indicator that measures the Plans' success alone. Instead, the suite of indicators should be considered together to make a general assessment of progress. When considered holistically, the indicators are used to inform better decision-making when planning for growth and change in our city.

Highlights from this year's analysis, categorized by Municipal Development Plan goal, include:

#### Creating Great Communities (Core Indicator: Residential Land Use Mix)

- Residential land use mix is trending positively. New communities are composed of an increasing amount of medium, and higher-density residential land uses allowing for a greater diversity of housing choice. Diverse communities allow for better aging in place opportunities, social diversity, and communities that are less susceptible to population loss as residents age and occupancy rates decline. While newer communities are being built with greater land use diversity, some established communities have fewer land uses, making them less resilient to population decline.

# BRIEFING

- The proposed Land Use Bylaw Renewal initiative is expected to further improve the results of this indicator.

## A Strategic Framework for Growth and Change (Core Indicator: Urban Expansion)

- Over the past five years, progress towards achieving the Urban Expansion target has declined. Investment and growth in new communities far outpaces investment and growth in the developed areas of the city. Typically slow or negative population growth occurs in the developed areas during times of low economic growth.
- Population decline in the developed areas is not uniform. Many inner city communities are seeing strong growth and investment, but these population gains are being offset by population losses in more outer established neighbourhoods. Despite only absorbing 12.4% of population growth from 2006 to 2021, the developed areas absorbed 28.9% of net new units built citywide.
- The Municipal Development Plan encourages balanced growth between developed and developing areas and offers the opportunity to support ongoing investments in civic amenities and infrastructure that result in complete communities for all Calgarians. Building in developed areas has a lower cost per capita for infrastructure than developing areas, enhances initial investment, and reinforces community development.

## Shaping a More Compact Urban Form (Core Indicator: Accessibility to Daily Needs)

- Population density continues to increase in the city, and the proportion of housing being built in Activity Centres and Main Streets is increasing. This increase improves the efficiency of city investments and municipal services, and benefits from programs such as the Main Streets initiative and the Calgary Climate Strategy.

## Connecting the City (Core Indicator: Transportation Mode Split, Accessibility to PTN)

- Active modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling, e-cycling and riding scooters, increased significantly in 2020. However, this result may be a temporary effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and it remains to be seen if it continues in the future. Investing in equitable access to safe and active transportation options encourages a healthy population, lowers Calgarians' need to use cars for daily trips, reduces the need for expensive new infrastructure on the periphery of the city and supports climate action.
- Conversely, transit usage has decreased significantly during the pandemic. This decline may be temporary, given the positive increase in years before 2020, or may face a slow recovery if remote and hybrid work continues long-term. As we emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic, The City is working to improve transit through initiatives such as the Calgary Transit Recovery Strategy.
- No transit routes currently operate at a level of service necessary to be considered a primary transit network (PTN) route since service levels were reduced in 2019 due to budget adjustments and further still due to ridership declines throughout the pandemic. The share of housing being built near potential PTN routes is proportional to housing growth citywide.

### **Core Indicator Review:**

While the Core Indicators have been useful in the past, some are no longer effectively fulfilling their ability to monitor and drive the outcomes envisioned in the Plans. Although Council had

originally directed Administration to bring proposed changes to the 14 Core Indicators, the review was deferred through the City Planning and Policy Roadmap (IP2022-0053) to occur as part of the proposed Calgary Plan. This initiative will combine the Municipal Development Plan Volume 1 (MDP) and Volume 3 (CTP) into one user-friendly document to guide growth, mobility, and community development in Calgary. It is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024. A key initiative of the Core Indicator review will provide the opportunity to revise the indicators to better align with Council's priorities and focus areas, such as social equity, transit, climate change, and land use and local area planning review. The review would also ensure there is alignment between the proposed targets in the Plans and the policies of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) Growth Plan, which was approved in July 2022.

## **Data Sourcing**

During the 2018-2022 reporting cycle, Administration changed data sources for multiple indicators. For example, because the Civic Census has not been conducted since 2019, the Statistics Canada Federal Census was referenced for various indicators. As a result, some indicators may not align with previously reported values. Where data is not available, alternate data sources have been provided to estimate missing data. These alternate sources may not reflect the original intent of the indicator but are the best proxy available. A key component of the indicator review will be determining new data sources where required.

## **The Effects of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged Calgarians in unfamiliar ways. The degree to which COVID-19 impacts the Plans' goals is not yet fully understood as the pandemic is only now abating. However, some early indications suggest we are emerging from the pandemic in a good position with relatively strong population and jobs growth returning to Greater Downtown. Trends emerging from the pandemic do not diminish the need to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plans. The Plans continue to provide a clear sense of direction of what needs to be done to build a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable city, even in the face of uncertain times. Attachment 2 speaks specifically to the observed effects of the pandemic on the Core Indicators. It also discusses potential future scenarios of how the indicators may continue to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through an update of the Strategic Foresight work first undertaken in 2020.

## **Opportunities for Conversation**

If Committee members would like to have a more in-depth conversation beyond the material on the website or in the attachments about Core Indicators and how they are measured and inform decision making, Administration is available to incorporate this topic into an upcoming Learning Session (September 19) or Strategic Council Session on Growth (September 20), and is also available for informal one-on-one meetings.

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Attachment 1 – Previous Council Direction
2. Attachment 2 – 14 Core Indicators for Land Use and Mobility