

Update Report on Business Advisory Committee 2022-2023 Priorities

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Business Advisory Committee recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as a response to 2022-2023 Business Advisory Committee Priorities What We Heard Report (BAC2022-0518 Att. 4);
2. Recommend that Administration conduct scoping of 2B – Streamlining Change of Use and 3A – Customer (Centric Training) Service for dealing with business items; and
3. Request that the Business and Local Economy team bring an update on the scoping work no later than the end of Q1 2023.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The City of Calgary is committed to responding to the needs of the business community and has made significant strides in addressing the specific issues identified in the Business Advisory Committee Update to Council (BAC2022-0518) on 2022 May 10.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? The City has a role to enable and facilitate a healthy business environment so that Calgarians have every opportunity to build the life they want here.
- Why does this matter? The City is responding and addressing issues that are meaningful to Calgarians, and demonstrates The City as a partner in helping businesses succeed.
- Creating and sustaining a healthy business environment must be a cross-corporate effort that has the customer as its primary focus.
- 16 business units and service lines across all six City of Calgary departments provided responses to the issues that were identified in BAC2022-0518 in the themes of Downtown Revitalization, Red Tape Reduction, Business-Friendly and Advocacy.
- Strategic Alignment to the Economic Resilience pillar of Council's Strategic Direction for 2023-2026 and the Business Environment focus area of Calgary in the New Economy: The Economic Strategy for Calgary.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) consults with key industry stakeholders and representatives from numerous sectors, who together form the committee's Working Group and Task Force.

Following meetings with the Working Group and Task Force (formerly the Business Sector Task Force), the BAC received recommendations and established priorities through 2022-2023. That information was compiled and presented to Council as Business Advisory Committee Update to Council (BAC2022-0518) on 2022 May 10.

The primary recommendation of BAC2022-0518 and adopted by Council was:

Request that the Business and Local Economy team, work with Planning and Development and report back to the Business Advisory Committee on focus areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 identified in the "What We Heard" report by the end of 2022 Q3.

Update Report on Business Advisory Committee 2022-2023 Priorities

In the 2022-2023 Business Advisory Committee Priorities What We Heard Report (What We Heard Report) which is Attachment 4 to BAC2022-0518, feedback and priorities were classified into four broad themes: Downtown Revitalization, Red Tape Reduction, Business-Friendly (improving customer service) and Advocacy. Over the past four months, the Business and Local Economy team (BLE) has been working with Planning and Development Services and colleagues throughout the Corporation to determine what work, if any, is taking place to address the specific issues that were identified.

BLE reviewed the feedback in the What We Heard Report and split it into specific actions. Those individuals or teams in the Corporation who were most closely affiliated with the action were requested to prepare a response in a standardized form to ensure a consistency of information provided. These responses in their entirety comprise Attachment 4 to this report. A blend of historic and new organizational structures are referenced throughout the document.

Through this discovery process, nearly all the recommendations or actions identified are being addressed in some respect. While the action may not identically correspond to the comment from the What We Heard Report, the intent and challenge to be addressed are similar, or the infrastructure is in place to explore these areas and it is part of a business unit's workplan. This report is not requesting any additional resources.

For example, one recommendation was that The City implement a marketing campaign to encourage people to come back downtown. Since May 2022, "Experience Downtown YYC" has been in market and a comprehensive vision and marketing program is being developed in conjunction with community partners such as Tourism Calgary, Calgary Municipal Land Corporation and the Calgary Downtown Association.

There were also instances where the recommendation has already been implemented. For example, following a Notice of Motion earlier in 2022, Parks & Open Spaces piloted the Vendors In Parks (VIP) Pop-up program, which directly aligns with Recommendation 2C-1, "*Enable pop-up commercialization in city parks and lands*". Another example is the Innovation Through Procurement pilot, which is trying to make it easier for The City to engage with new companies (Recommendation 2C-2).

Some actions, such as the suggestions regarding the creation of a strategy to address the needs of vulnerable people in our community are being addressed through cross-corporate and community-wide efforts. Much of this work is anchored in the Community Strategy on Mental Health and Addiction and requires supports from all orders of government and the involvement of community partners like Alberta Health Services, Calgary Police Services, and various non-profit organizations.

There are other areas where some progress has been made but not completed. This is largely due to the complexity of these projects, and the current volume of work within a business unit. For example, a significant amount of discovery work has taken place with respect to Change of Use, and there is a need to hire staff in order to create capacity. This hiring process is currently underway and will be completed by the end of 2022. An update will be provided to the Business Advisory Committee by the end of Q1 2023.

Similarly, additional scoping is needed regarding the provision of customer service training for employees. Past efforts were focused on the specific needs and processes of different business units. The scoping will include exploring approaches and tools to design and implement a training course on customer service. Ownership and accountability for the development of this training will be key to its successful implementation and requires further input from the

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Executive Leadership Team and Council. The Business and Local Economy team is conducting initial scoping work and will report back to the BAC by the end of Q1 2023. The report by the Business and Local Economy team will integrate updates from other lines of service, as appropriate.

It should be noted that many services have submitted requests for funding as part of the 2023-2026 budget process to continue the efforts they have identified as part of the response to the What We Heard Report. The ability to continue work on these specific initiatives will depend on the funding that is available as well as their prioritization within their service line's workplan. Much of this is outlined in the "Next Steps" section of the responses in Attachment 4. The responses in Attachment 4 are not an exhaustive list of the actions being taken throughout the Corporation to meet the needs of the business community; they are those most closely align with the feedback received through the Business Advisory Committee. Additionally, the decisions made during the 2023-2026 budget process may impact the ability of the Corporation to respond to these specific concerns. Where there has been a budget request to support the work, it has been identified in the "Next Steps" section of Attachment 4.

Finally, BLE is currently preparing a report to bring back to Council through the Executive Committee in December 2022 regarding the communication and coordination of all the programs that The City of Calgary provides to support economic development.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Not applicable

Environmental

Not applicable

Economic

Support that The City provides to Calgary's business community improves the economic resilience of our citizens and the Corporation. A thriving business community is important to making Calgary a great place to live and a great place to make a life. Working with the businesses to address their concerns will most often result in improved outcomes for both The City and the business community.

Update Report on Business Advisory Committee 2022-2023 Priorities

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

There is no financial impact associated with this report, although there may be future impacts related to any Council direction to advance specific initiatives.

RISK

There are no specific risks associated with this report. There are reputational risks associated with not being seen as responsive to feedback from the business community. It is important that The City continues to look for new ways to engage with businesses to better understand their needs and challenges, and to help share The City's context and processes. Improving our communication is key to achieving this outcome.

If The City of Calgary is not responsive or adaptive to the needs of businesses, it could impact our ability to attract new businesses to our community and the ability of all businesses to grow and thrive.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Business Advisory Committee Timeline and Workplan
3. Summary of Administration Responses to 2022-2023 Priorities What We Heard Report
4. Comprehensive Administration Responses to 2022-2023 Priorities What We Heard Report
5. Presentation
6. 2022-2023 Business Advisory Committee Priorities What We Heard Report (BAC2022-0518 Att.4)

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Chris Arthurs	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Approve
Bruce Cullen	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Approve
Stuart Dalgleish	Planning & Development Services	Consult