

## **RouteAhead 10-Year Update**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That with respect to Report IP2022-1354, the following be adopted:

That the Infrastructure and Planning Committee recommend that Council:

1. Approve the Proposed Key Changes to the RouteAhead plan in Attachment 2 and direct Administration to return to Committee with a final draft of the updated RouteAhead plan for approval no later than Q2 2023.
2. Approve the Updated Transit Capital Project Prioritization List in Attachment 3 and direct Administration to include the list in the final draft of the updated RouteAhead plan.
3. Receive the RouteAhead 10-Year Update Public Engagement What We Heard Report (Attachment 4) for information.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Administration requests Council direction on the capital project list and proposed key changes to RouteAhead (the Plan) to ensure strategic alignment before returning with the final updated Plan by Q2 2023.
- For Calgarians, the updated Plan will chart a new course for transit by focusing on building a frequent transit network that makes travel easier. Stronger transit options will support affordable and accessible travel for all Calgarians to lead a great life. Implementing the proposed key changes will lead to a faster and more reliable transit network, improved customer experience, and greater transportation choice.
- The RouteAhead update is important because it will guide all aspects of transit service over the next 30 years. The updated Plan will outline a vision that enables transit to be a preferred mode choice, aligning with Municipal Development Plan goals. Transit is a focus area of Resilient Calgary: Council's 2023 - 2026 Strategic Direction, and a key component of the Calgary Climate Strategy: Pathways to 2050 and Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan. Calgary is committed to building a world-class transit system to serve citizens and support achieving climate, equity, and downtown revitalization goals. The updated Plan will help realize City-wide goals of sustainable growth, building great communities, and climate resilience by expanding the transit network, improving service quality, and leveraging support from federal and provincial partners.
- The updated RouteAhead plan proposes a strategic shift to focus investment on frequency over coverage and implement the Primary Transit Network (PTN). This means some customers may have to travel further to a transit stop, but service will come more often.
- The RouteAhead 10-Year Update is a document refresh that will celebrate accomplishments since initial plan approval, update data and information, and update directions and strategies to reflect the current context of Calgary. It is not a complete redraft of the original document. This report provides check in with Council on the key changes and capital priorities before the Plan update is completed in Q2 2023.
- Attachment 2 presents the Proposed Key Changes, informed by the RouteAhead Advisory Group, values and priorities captured through public engagement, and cross-corporate collaboration with internal teams. Attachment 3 presents the Updated Transit Capital Project Prioritization List, developed with input from Infrastructure Services. The What We Heard report from public engagement is Attachment 4.

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- On 15 February 2022, Council endorsed in principle the RouteAhead 10-Year Update scope and directed Administration to proceed with updating RouteAhead and RouteAhead Project Prioritization with a programmatic approach, returning to Council no later than Q4 2022.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background**

Council first approved RouteAhead, a 30-year strategic plan for Calgary Transit, in 2012. RouteAhead has not been updated since initial approval 10 years ago; however, significant progress has been made on several strategies including building the MAX network. Yet, some key projects remain unfunded, assumptions and forecasts have evolved, and new priorities and trends are emerging. The context of Calgary has also changed since 2012. During this time Calgary has declared a climate emergency and making transit a reliable and consistent choice for Calgarians will support actions toward net zero. Downtown revitalization is also a priority that a well-structure transit plan can help support. Knowing that priorities change over time, RouteAhead built in a schedule to refresh the plan periodically. In February 2022, Council directed Administration to conduct a 10-Year Update to the plan to ensure it continues to effectively guide transit service delivery for the next 30 years.

### **Scope of Work and Progress to Date**

The RouteAhead 10-Year Update is a refresh of the existing 2012 document. The RouteAhead update will review and revise the plan's content based on internal and public feedback, ensuring alignment to values and priorities. The 10-Year Update will:

- Reflect current City plans, guidance documents, and data,
- Identify completed projects and policies,
- Remove plan content that is no longer relevant,
- Celebrate and build on successes over the past 10 years,
- Solicit updated feedback from internal and external collaborators,
- Investigate and include emerging trends and new initiatives,
- Affirm or modify as needed the vision for Calgary Transit's customer experience, transit network, and financing transit, and
- Revise the plan's directions and strategies to guide a clear path forward for the next 30 years.

A RouteAhead Advisory Group made up of representatives from Council and senior Administration was established to provide strategic guidance towards the RouteAhead plan. The Advisory Group proposed a strategic shift to focus on transit frequency rather than coverage. This means some customers may have to travel further to a transit stop, but service will come more often, eliminating the need to look at a schedule on PTN routes. Community-specific first-mile/last-mile connection improvements will provide more options for accessing transit stops and stations. Many items in Attachment 2: Proposed Key Changes reflect the strategic shift by emphasizing focus on frequency and the PTN.

Collaboration with internal teams has occurred throughout the project to gather feedback and ensure alignment with the proposed key changes to the RouteAhead plan. The Social Well-Being Advisory Committee provided feedback towards the project in September 2022.

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Attachment 2 provides further details of how Advisory Group, internal feedback, and public engagement will be incorporated into the updated RouteAhead plan.

To date, Administration has:

- conducted a comprehensive review of the 2012 document,
- researched best practices and emerging trends,
- reviewed corporate policy alignment,
- received strategic guidance from the RouteAhead Advisory Group,
- conducted internal and public engagement,
- updated background data and information, and
- used the results to affirm, modify, and revise the plan's background content, and visions, directions, and strategies.

### **Next Steps**

Administration is seeking Council direction on the key proposed changes to ensure alignment with strategic direction before going forward with a final draft of the updated Plan. Future work will involve incorporating Council feedback and internal review to ensure alignment and that all relevant internal teams are aware of how the Plan affects their areas of work. The draft Plan will be available for public review before returning to Council for final approval by Q2 2023. The final updated RouteAhead plan will be presented in lieu of an annual RouteAhead report for the year 2022. Administration will present the next RouteAhead annual report to Council for the year 2023.

## **EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

- ☒ Public Engagement was undertaken
- ☐ Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- ☒ Public/interested parties were informed
- ☐ Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken

Attachment 4 contains the details of public engagement for the RouteAhead 10-Year Update including tactics, who was involved, and what we heard. Attachment 2 provides details of how public engagement will inform content in the updated RouteAhead plan.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Social**

The updated RouteAhead plan will contain directions and strategies to support achieving the Social Well-Being Policy principle of providing equitable services by removing barriers to access and inclusion. The plan will also consider other Social Well-Being principles based on feedback provided by the Social Well-Being Advisory Committee and public engagement. The draft plan will be reviewed with an equity lens to reflect on assumptions and biases, and to create an updated plan aimed at improving the customer experience for all Calgarians and transit users.

### **Environmental**

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The RouteAhead Project Team is collaborating internally with the Climate and Environment team to ensure the updated plan aligns with the Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050 Plan. The RouteAhead team is working to incorporate climate actions into the updated plan through the following themes: fleet electrification/new fuel technology/zero emissions, linking transit planning and land use planning, planning for net-zero communities, and promoting transit as a preferred mode choice. The updated Plan will also reference Calgary's Climate Strategy and climate emergency declaration.

### **Economic**

The updated RouteAhead plan will contribute to economic development through policy guidance linking land use and transit to promote transit-oriented development and redevelopment along key corridors and in activity nodes. The plan will emphasize that transit provides increased access to jobs through improved transit service, supports the Downtown Strategy, helps revitalize main streets, and provides all Calgarians and visitors with a cost-efficient transportation option to all parts of the city.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

#### **Other: Guidance for Future Service Plans and Budgets**

The updated RouteAhead plan will guide future Service Plans and Budgets. The updated plan will contain high-level operating and capital estimates required to achieve the visions, directions, and strategies to improve transit service over the next 30 years.

### **RISK**

Without an update to the RouteAhead plan, the existing document will become further outdated, leading to a lack of relevant strategic guidance for the future of transit service in Calgary. Updating the RouteAhead plan now ensures relevant strategic direction for transit service in alignment with broader corporate goals and promotes advancing technology and innovation through up-to-date policy. Additionally, an updated plan ensures an updated transit capital project list to aid funding advocacy and corporate capital project planning. There is a risk the updated Plan's focus on frequency may impact accessibility; therefore, community specific improvements to connect to transit stops and stations will be implemented during transit service reviews.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Proposed Key Changes to the Updated RouteAhead Plan
3. Updated Transit Capital Project Prioritization List
4. Public Engagement What We Heard Report

#### **Department Circulation**

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Doug Morgan	OS	Approve
Michael Thompson	IS	Inform
Stuart Dalglish	PDS	Approve

**Operational Services Report to  
Infrastructure and Planning Committee  
2022 December 8**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
IP2022-1354  
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Transit Service Governance RouteAhead Sub-Committee	Multiple	Approve
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