

People, Innovation & Collaboration Services Report to
Business Advisory Committee
2024 September 06

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
BAC2024-0877

Transition of the Business Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a final report on the activities of the Council-led Business Advisory Committee and request Council direction to disband the Business Advisory Committee and its subcommittees and to rescind its Terms of Reference.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the Regular Meeting of Council on 2024 June 18, Council approved Notice of Motion EC2024-0719 – Transitioning the Business Advisory Committee that directed this report and recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Business Advisory Committee recommend that Council:

1. Receive BAC2024-0877 as the final report of the Business Advisory Committee;
2. Disband the Council-led Business Advisory Committee and its subcommittees and rescind its Terms of Reference as adopted; and
3. Direct Administration to establish an administrative-led business advisory committee, to be co-chaired by Development Business & Building Approvals and Business & Local Economy, to continue the relationship between The City of Calgary and the business community.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 2024 SEPTEMBER 6:

That Council:

1. Receive BAC2024-0877 as the final report of the Business Advisory Committee;
2. Disband the Council-led Business Advisory Committee and its subcommittees and rescind its Terms of Reference as adopted; and
3. Direct Administration to establish an administrative-led business advisory committee, to be co-chaired by Development Business & Building Approvals and Business & Local Economy, to continue the relationship between The City of Calgary and the business community.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

General Manager Christine Arthurs concurs with this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) was created in 2018 by Council to ensure that The City was being responsive to the needs of the business community, by removing barriers and providing value for services.

Since that time, feedback from the BAC has led to many programs that have improved how The City of Calgary serves the business community. The BAC and its subcommittees have also

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influenced work in the areas of social procurement, the implementation of seasonal patios and how The City responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At this time, it is appropriate to transition the BAC from a Council committee to an Administration-led committee. By transitioning the business advisory committee to Administration, it can ensure continued dialogue with the business community and can work within Administration to meet their needs. Other opportunities can be developed for informing and involving Council as appropriate.

The internal business advisory committee will be co-chaired by Development Business & Building Services and Business & Local Economy section of Collaboration, Analytics & Innovation. It will be modeled on the Development Advisory Committee.

DISCUSSION

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) was created by Council in 2018 and held its inaugural meeting on 2019 April 03. For the past five years, it has provided an important conduit between City Administration and Calgary's business community. Feedback has been given, ideas shared, and the result has been the implementation of many initiatives that have made life better for Calgary businesses. Background and Previous Council Direction to create and disband the Committee can found in Attachment 1. A timeline of the progress of the BAC is in Attachment 2.

At its first meeting, the BAC established a Working Group that consisted of representatives from business-focused groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Calgary Economic Development, Tourism Calgary, Platform Calgary, Business Improvement Areas, Business Council of Alberta, the Calgary Hotels Association, BILD Calgary, NAIOP, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Alberta Small Brewers Association and the Alberta Hospitality Association. This Working Group met regularly to discuss challenges and shared ideas for improvements to City processes. Administration (usually through the Business & Local Economy or Business Licence team) would be engaged to address emerging issues, often without the need to go to the BAC or Council.

On two occasions, this feedback was gathered and shared with BAC via a What We Heard report. Administration prepared responses to the What We Heard report outlining what issues were already being addressed and would propose recommendations for the BAC to consider where there were gaps. If the BAC agreed with Administration, the report would be referred to Council for further consideration and adoption of the recommendations.

Some of the programs that emerged from this process were:

- The Business Experience Representative program
- Streamlining the Change of Use process
- The Calgary Covid Business Support program
- Benefit Driven Procurement

The ability to hear directly from representatives from the business community allowed Administration to prepare their own workplans and respond to concerns without needing Council direction through the BAC. An example is the Community & Business Relations team in Infrastructure Services and their Main Streets Construction Grant Pilot. An overview of several

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of the programs and projects that were initiated, influenced, or otherwise supported by the BAC can be found in Attachment 3.

The presence of the Business & Local Economy team, as well as the establishment of several other teams within Administration who are focused on improving the experience of businesses, means that in recent months the BAC has been meeting less frequently. The response to the What We Heard report that was presented to the Business Advisory Committee in September 2022 (Attachment 4) demonstrates how many of the needs of the business community were already being addressed throughout Administration. Now that the relationship between the business community and Administration has been firmly established, it is time to consider a different approach.

The current Chair of the BAC, Councillor Sharp, brought forward a Notice of Motion to the 2024 June 18 Regular Meeting of Council to direct Administration to report back to the BAC with a final report recommending that the BAC be disbanded and the work fully transition into Administration. The internal business advisory committee will be co-chaired by representatives from Business & Local Economy and Development Business & Building Services. It will be modeled on the Development Advisory Committee and continue to meet regularly with the business community to get feedback and initiate projects.

There are still some projects that were directed by Council that are ongoing. The internal business advisory committee will continue to engage with the business units that are leading this work to monitor progress and provide support and guidance as required. An example of this is the Customer Service Training project that was recommended and adopted in September 2022. This work has been transitioned from the Business & Local Economy team (who did the initial scoping) to the Chief Operating Officer's office for implementation.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

The current members of the Business Advisory Working Group were informed about this proposed direction at their meeting on 2024 June 24. The feedback from the group at that time was positive towards this change.

Administration has committed to working with the members of the BAC Working Group on the Terms of Reference for the new committee.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Not applicable

Environmental

Not applicable

Economic

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This transition will allow Administration to move more quickly on items identified by the BAC as necessary to improve the business environment in Calgary. This is aligned with the Business Environment pillar of Uplook, the Community Economic Strategy that The City has a primary responsibility to implement.

Service and Financial Implications

Removing a Committee of Council will reduce the workload of the City Clerk's Office proportionately and allow them to direct those resources to other endeavours.

Existing operating funding - base

This transition and subsequent operation of the internal business advisory committee will be funded out of current base operating funding in the Business & Local Economy budget. If additional administrative resources are required, Administration will do so within current budget allocations and no additional funding is anticipated.

RISK

There is a small risk that this change will not be viewed positively by members of the business community. However, given that the feedback received so far has been positive to this change, Administration believes that any further concerns can be addressed by the new BAC.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Business Advisory Committee Timeline and Progress
3. Overview of Projects Initiated or Influenced by the Business Advisory Committee
4. Response to What We Heard Report (BAC2022-0518, Attachment 4)
5. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Chris Arthurs, General Manager	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Approve
Rick Ciezki, Director	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Consult
Brenda Desjardin	Planning & Development Services	Consult

Author: Erin Chrusch, Collaboration, Analytics & Innovation

City Clerks: C. Doi / J. Booth