

Transportation Report to
SPC on Transportation and Transit
2018 April 24

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
TT2019-0429

Green Line LRT Public Gardens Scoping Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This scoping report provides an overview of the Public Gardens/Railway Gardens work that has occurred since the approval of the Notice of Motion (C2018-1445), and includes the Green Line Public Gardens Scoping Report (the “Scoping Report,” Attachment 1). For the purpose of this report, Railway Gardens will be broadened to the term, “Public Gardens.” The term Public Gardens contextualizes Railway Gardens in a 21st century urban setting to better align with the scope of work within this report.

The Green Line long term vision approached Calgary’s investment in transit infrastructure as a project that will shape Calgary’s landscape in an unprecedented way. Attachment 1 highlights the potential of the Public Gardens initiative as a mechanism for investment, collaboration and community building along the Green Line. This report focuses on a vision for greening the Green Line, promoting art, educating and creating outstanding public spaces. Modernizing gardens, designing year-round gathering spaces, identifying opportune land parcels, budgets and risks, and promoting public art initiatives and third-party investments, are identified as the first steps of the Public Gardens initiative. Through work with an Informal Steering Committee, the concept of quality green spaces was identified with six seed themes (community, art and history, seasonal and year-round, events, wayfinding and digital technology), to modernize Public Gardens for year-round placemaking. Work with the Informal Steering Committee also identified the need for a clear vision and a comprehensive plan, while highlighting a desire for investment opportunities. The investigation has determined that development of Public Gardens along the Green Line is feasible. Recommended next steps include Master Planning work and the development of an initial six Public Gardens projects. This work aligns with the goals and objectives of the City Shaping Framework and the Green Line long term vision.

The development of Public Gardens has the potential to benefit The City, Calgarians and visitors. Public Gardens would support Calgary’s commitment to invest in public spaces by leveraging past successes and continuing to lead in innovative design. Third-party investments are an opportunity for The City to optimize available funds with minimal risk to the delivery of the Green Line. City Shaping work remains a priority for the Green Line. Citizens who use transit and live in the city will benefit from early investment in City Shaping through this Public Gardens initiative for generations to come.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Transportation and Transit (T&T) recommend that Council:

1. Direct Administration to bring this report forward **as Urgent Business** to the 2019 April 29 meeting of Council; and
2. Direct Administration to report back to the SPC on T&T no later than Q4 2019 with a workplan including scope, cost, resources, funding source, engagement and delivery strategy for the Public Gardens Master Planning work and the development of six Public Garden Projects.

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, 2019 APRIL 24:

That Administration Recommendation 2 contained in Report TT2019-0429 be adopted.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2018 December 17 Council directed administration to report back on the Notice of Motion on Public Gardens C2018-1445 (Attachment 2) highlighting the findings in a Scoping Report that include the following:

- Form an explorative Informal Steering Committee.
- Explore the creation of railway gardens along the Green Line.
- Identify Alignment/Risks to Green Line Contract.
- Identify methods to modernize the concept of “Railway Garden” for year-round placemaking.
- Explore the feasibility of leveraging the public art budget to integrate art as part of potential gardens.
- Identify the ability to leverage private sector investment and sponsorship.

On 2018 December 05, as part of the Green Line City Shaping Update (CPS2018-1355) SPC on Community and Protective Services directed administration to provide status updates on City Shaping project inputs through SPC on Transportation and Transit as part of the quarterly Green Line update. On 2017 June 26 (CPS2017-0469), Council approved the approach of the City Shaping Framework. On 2017 April (CPS2017-0270), City Shaping was defined as the fourth layer of the Green Line. City Shaping has been reported on in quarterly reports to Council including: 2016 March (TT2016-0220), 2016 June (TT2016-0483), 2016 September (TT2016-0705), 2016 December (TT2016-0927), 2018 March (TT2018-0145), 2018 December (TT2018-1111) and 2019 March (TT2019-0245).

BACKGROUND

The Green Line is a multi-billion-dollar investment in Calgary's future that is essential to keep Calgarians moving today and into the future. As the City grows, the Green Line will provide high quality and affordable transit that connects people to the places and programs they care about. This is an unprecedented investment in public transit infrastructure and the largest in the City's history. The Green Line's City Shaping approach was to broaden the Project scope, requiring a new way to plan for Calgary's future. This approach identified four investment areas called the Quality of Life Indicators. The indicators (Equitable & Inclusive, Safe & Resilient, Healthy & Active, and Vibrant & Thriving) are outcomes that can be contributed to through the implementation of the Public Gardens initiative.

As referenced in the Executive Summary, this Scoping Report has been delivered in response to Councillor Keating's Notice of Motion (C2018-1445) brought forward on 2018 December 17 for consideration of the development of Public Gardens along the Green Line. Historically, such gardens were used to beautify public spaces through landscaping along railway lines. The City Shaping Team was tasked with the delivery of this Scoping Report and recommended next steps.

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INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The creation of Public Gardens along the Green Line is an opportunity to provide benefits to Green Line communities and Calgarians. Identified through stakeholder engagement with the Informal Steering Committee and a comparative analysis of several key Green Line documents, green public spaces and quality places are identified as common threads that will guide the creation of the Public Gardens.

An analysis and evaluation of the six key topics identified within the Notice of Motion are outlined below. An investigation, findings and recommended next steps can be found detailed in Attachment 1. It is important to note that while the risks identified within each of these topics are summarized under the related headings below, the attached report includes all of the noted risks in one section starting on page 33.

Form an Explorative Informal Steering Committee.

The Notice of Motion directed administration to strike an explorative Informal Steering Committee consisting of members from the Councillors' office, public art representation, Calgary Parks Foundation, Calgary Horticultural Society, The Green Line Team and other interested members that were identified through Councillors offices and by Administration. The Informal Steering Committee consisted of fifteen members contributing knowledge, insight and subject matter expertise to the topics outlined within the Notice of Motion. The Informal Steering Committee served as a forum for discussion with members of Council, delegates from identified stakeholder groups, and Administration. Over the course of two months, the Informal Steering Committee held two meetings to discuss the following two topics: i) Big Ideas, Possibilities & Potential; and ii) Report Back, Feasibility & Risks. Both meetings were well attended, and all topics outlined in the Notice of Motion were addressed. Attachment 1 – Appendix A 'What We Heard,' provides a comprehensive overview of the information generated and collected during the meetings. Collaboration with the Informal Steering Committee resulted in comments and inputs integrated into the Scoping Report and confirmation of appendix A. Administration has identified the need for an engagement plan as part of the next steps of work, which would identify the potential for future collaboration with the Informal Steering Committee.

Explore the creation of railway gardens along the Green Line.

Administration conducted a high-level analysis around the creation of Public Gardens through conversations with key individuals on the project team. Subject matter experts from Green Line, Law, Procurement, Planning, Public Art, Transit, Parks, Recreation and Real Estate and Development Services were all consulted. An initial review of land parcels along the Green Line identified that lands are available along the Green Line that present ideal platforms for Public Gardens. As the work around this initiative progresses, Administration has identified the need for coordination and collaboration with the Green Line Real Estate team to identify possibilities regarding available land while balancing corporate objectives and priorities.

Identify Alignment/Risks to Green Line Contract.

A high-level risk analysis was conducted identifying risks such as construction timing, cost management, quality management, integration with the main contract, public engagement, scope definition, and potential third-party damages. Three options were considered to mitigate these risks;

- 1) Green Line Gardens included in the main contract
- 2) Green Line Gardens as a supplementary contract to the main contract

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3) Green Line Gardens as a separate contract

Administration proposes mitigating these risks by offering a supplemental contract for the Public Gardens, option 2. This approach will allow more time for the public engagement, improve the quality and cost of custom work, and facilitate better integration into the main contract scope of work. Attachment 1 – Section 5 *Risks*, provides additional details on the risk analysis. Recommended next steps will be for Administration to determine the scope, budget and timelines of the supplementary contract, and the interface requirements with Green Line’s main contract.

Identify methods to modernize the concept of “Public Gardens” for year-round placemaking. Year-round placemaking is an important aspect of creating great public spaces. Through engagement with the Informal Steering Committee, research and undertaking the comparative analysis, a common thread that spoke to the success of Public Gardens for year-round placemaking was identified. Six seed themes emerged from the work to address modernization and activation year-round. The themes are:

- 1) Community: Public Gardens can become community hubs and should involve the community at all stages.
- 2) Art and Local History: Public Gardens must incorporate art and should incorporate historic and educational elements when appropriate.
- 3) Seasonal and Year-Round: Public Gardens must be designed for use in all four seasons.
- 4) Events: Public Gardens should consider flexible space that allows events when the scale is appropriate.
- 5) Wayfinding: Public Gardens should promote Green Line station wayfinding and connect to nearby amenities.
- 6) Digital Technology: Public Gardens should consider incorporating digital elements when appropriate to promote awareness, wayfinding, and education.

In parallel with the recommendation to develop a Public Gardens Master Plan, the development of six initial Public Gardens Projects will be identified matching the six seed themes. By identifying six initial projects, the Public Gardens can be phased incrementally. Also by considering the timing of land available and incorporating the seed themes, the development of Public Gardens will build and sustain excitement for investors over the course of the next decade. The intent of the work is to identify projects, partners and investment opportunities, and align with the opening day, 2026, of the Green Line LRT.

Explore the feasibility of leveraging the public art budget to integrate art as part of potential gardens.

Public Gardens along the Green Line provide ideal locations for public art to be sited and integrated. Through this Notice of Motion, and in alignment with the three foundational pillars (accessible, prioritize investment and transparency) of the Public Art Program, opportunities exist to integrate Public Art within Public Gardens. This could include: partnerships with local art organizations, providing funding for artist residencies, opportunities for third party investment, and involving the public to generate input on Public Art within the gardens. Risks associated with this approach have been identified, such as: expectation management, equitable distribution, reputation to proceed without engagement, conservation and maintenance costs, as

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well as the current suspension of new public art capital projects until 2020. Attachment 1 – Section 5 *Risks*, provides details for each of these risks. While consideration is being given towards utilizing the public art budget towards the Public Gardens, during the analysis Administration identified the potential to leverage some funds from the landscape budget for the implementation of Public Gardens. Further work will be required to understand the base requirements for both the landscape and public art and funds to be allocated from the Green Line budget.

Identify the ability to leverage private sector investment and sponsorship.

In 2016 City Council adopted the *Municipal Naming, Sponsorship and Naming Rights* policy (CP2016-01) supporting alternate revenue generation strategies as a means to offset costs associated with the provision of municipal services. Business units including Calgary Transit, Calgary Parks and Calgary Recreation have invested staff and resources to establish and investigate alternative revenue models including, but not limited to, third party investments in the form of sponsorships and naming rights. Alternative revenue models can be viable options that move unfunded municipal projects forward, help leverage existing public funding and would support funding operational costs for municipal services.

New municipal infrastructure projects, such as Green Line, present unique opportunities for third party investment. Investors regard such projects as community-building investments that enhance their existing business and marketing platforms. Third party investment can yield a high return on investment and value back to The City and its citizens. Attachment 1 – Section 3. *Leverage Third Party Investments*, provides additional details to address Third Party Investments. Recommended next steps include development of an engagement plan and funding/third party investor plan that links to the workplan for the development of a Public Gardens Master Plan and the initial six Public Gardens projects.

Next Steps

To move forward with the Public Garden initiative, a detailed workplan including scope, cost, resources, funding source, engagement and a delivery strategy is required. Cross corporate collaboration is an important component of the workplan to ensure alignment with other corporate initiatives. Many of the scope exclusions (refer to Attachment 1 – Section 2b. *Scope Exclusions*) identified for this Scoping Report will be included in next steps to ensure a comprehensive analysis to evaluate lifecycle costs and considerations.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Partnerships and engagement were essential to developing this Scoping Report. Administration engaged the Informal Steering Committee in two formal meetings to address the topics from the Notice of Motion. Attachment 1 – Appendix A *'What We Heard'*, provides a comprehensive overview of the information generated and collected during the meetings. Building partnerships internally and externally is critical to the success of the Public Gardens initiative and to leverage the Green Line investment to benefit all Calgarians. Engagement with the public, internal, and external stakeholders, including members of the Informal Steering Committee will be required as the work progresses.

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Strategic Alignment

Public Gardens is closely tied with the City Shaping program embedded within Green Line. City Shaping speaks directly to improving the social fabric of Calgary along the Green Line, through key components such as reducing barriers for vulnerable populations, ensuring affordable housing is provisioned for, and providing parks, recreation and public services. City Shaping looks for opportunities to provide services to enable programs that increase exposure to arts, culture, heritage and education in communities along the Green Line. Public Gardens has the potential to help deliver those services within the Green Line communities and transit is key to these outcomes as it provides a reliable and affordable service connecting Calgarians and supporting their needs.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social:

City Shaping speaks directly to improving the social fabric of Calgary along the Green Line. The implementation of Public Gardens would foster exposure to arts, culture, and vibrant spaces along the alignment.

Environmental:

City Shaping will aim to preserve and highlight natural environments along the Green Line. These spaces can help protect and strengthen biodiversity, the urban forest and parks along the Green Line. The implementation of Public Gardens that include an increased number of trees would move towards the MDP target of 16% urban tree canopy city wide.

Economic:

The investment of Green Line is significant for the City of Calgary. The ability to attract and leverage third party investment would benefit the outcomes of the Public Gardens Master Plan and the delivery for Public Gardens.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There is no impact to the current operating budget from this report. There may be impacts identified for future operating budgets as the investigation moves forward.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

Future resourcing and consideration of utilizing the public art and landscaping budget for Green Line will be analyzed through the development of a work plan and resource plan. Capital budget impacts will be identified in the report back to Council no later than 2019 Q4 as part of the recommended next steps of work.

Risk Assessment

This Scoping Report provides an overview of the feasibility of developing Public Gardens along the Green Line. The ability to leverage the investment in the Green Line was evaluated and recommended next steps were developed to minimize risk to the Green Line budget and main contract. The Public Gardens initiative provides the opportunity to attract investment, identify strategic land parcels and deliver on several strategies and goals within the approved City

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Shaping Framework and Green Line long term vision. Completing the work after Green Line opens or not at all will result in lost opportunities for The City, partners and Calgarians.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Public Gardens initiative is an opportunity to help connect and create great spaces and places along the Green Line. Through leveraging the investment of the Green Line there is an opportunity to bring in third party investment to realize the full potential of this initiative, maximizing benefits to communities, investors and The City. A Public Gardens Master Plan and development of an initial six projects will support this vision and make it a reality.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 – Green Line Public Gardens Scoping Report
2. Attachment 2 – Minutes Regular Meeting of Council December 17, 2018 – Amended Notice of Motion (C2018-1445)