Centre City Plan Refresh

Inclusive, Caring and Safe Centre City Brief

About this brief

This brief summarizes inputs collected and reviewed related to an inclusive, caring and safe centre city as part of the Centre City Plan Refresh project. This brief presents some preliminary ideas and proposals for Plan content based on the process to date. A detailed internal review of the ideas and proposals included within this brief is ongoing prior to the release of a formal draft Plan.

Through the project work to update the *Centre City Plan* there have been multiple inputs to consider. These inputs include:

- a review of the existing 2007 *Centre City Plan* to identify which information should remain in the Plan and be updated and which information should be removed;
- a review of related City of Calgary policy, guideline and strategy documents;
- input collected from various departments throughout The City;
- results of the Strategic Foresight process;
- stakeholder and public engagement that was compiled into a *What We Heard Report*;
- results from the Downtown Economic Summit that was held on 2017 March 2; and
- a review of best practice research.

All this information was used to compile several briefs relating to a variety of topics. This brief is a review of the information related to an inclusive, caring and safe centre city. The brief starts with an overview of the inclusive, caring and safe centre city topic, which includes a description and statistics. Then, through analysis of the inputs, key elements for an inclusive, caring and safe centre city were compiled. These elements include outcomes, goals, and challenges. All these elements informed topics for discussion in a workshop held April 10, 2019. Additional questions will be resolved prior to the new draft of the *Centre City Plan*. The workshop provided the opportunity for stakeholders to discuss goals for and inclusive, caring and safe Centre City and prioritize initiatives to achieve those goals.

After the workshop, a *What We Heard Report* was prepared for the inclusive, caring and safe centre city workshop and this brief was updated with a summary of findings. This brief has also been reviewed and updated with more recent information. This brief will inform the new Plan for the centre city.

Project overview

In 2007, based on extensive citizen input, City Council adopted the [*Centre City Plan*](#), a visionary document that describes what the Centre City could look like in 30 years. The *Centre City Plan* is a coordinated strategy document that pulls together the vision for the Centre City along with strategies and actions relating to land use planning, economic, cultural, and social development, and governance. With the approval of the adoption of the *Centre City Plan* (CPC2007-049), it included a recommendation for regular monitoring and reporting. In January 2017 the *Centre City Plan* was identified as one of 28 Council policies to be amended. It's time to review and refresh the original *Centre City Plan*.

Calgary's Centre City is the area south of the Bow River (including Prince's Island Park) from 17th Avenue Southwest and 14th Street Southwest, to the Elbow River. It also includes Downtown, Eau Claire, West End, West Connaught, Connaught Centre, Victoria Crossing Centre, East Victoria Crossing, East Village, Chinatown and Stampede Park area (a map is contained in the *Centre City Plan*, 2007).

The purpose of this refresh project is to: affirm the current plan's vision and principles; reassess the big-picture direction for the Centre City; identify actions to realize the vision; update the information in the Plan to align with other city policies; and eliminate overlap with other documents.

Engagement was approached with the understanding that the plan need not be re-written; rather it will be updated or, "refreshed", to reflect the current thinking within the Centre City. An update to the *Centre City Plan* is an opportunity to refocus Calgary's energy and reinvigorate a commitment to success in the Centre City. For more information, see [Calgary.ca/centrecityplan](#).

Table of Contents

Overview of an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City

A successful community is one where citizens feel safe, secure, valued, understood and included and where they have access to the goods and services necessary to meet their basic health and shelter needs. When these needs are met, citizens are able to contribute more fully to the economic and cultural life of their community and the city as a whole. The Centre City is Calgary's premier high-density urban environment. With such a large number of citizens and visitors in one place, social issues have the potential to be more acute.

Many elements contribute to the social wellbeing of a place. For example, a well-designed and maintained public realm makes for a safer environment, convenient transit allows people greater access to services and livable neighbourhoods make people feel included in and more connected to their community. Focusing on an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City through this project is using a lens to have a conversation. The goals and initiatives generated will contribute to city building strategies.

Through the project work to update the *Centre City Plan* there have been multiple inputs to consider. The project team has:

- reviewed the existing 2007 *Centre City Plan* to identify which information should remain in the Plan and be updated and which information should be removed;
- review other City policy, guideline and strategy documents;
- collected input from various departments throughout the City;
- participated in a Strategic Foresight process (This is a scenario-based methodology that immerses participants in a study of the future by asking them to create and explore multiple plausible alternatives for a domain or topic of interest.);
- conducted stakeholder and public engagement that is compiled into a *What We Heard Report*;
- held a focused workshop to discuss proposed outcomes, goals, and priorities;
- reviewed the results from the Downtown Economic Summit that was held on 2017 March 2; and
- conducted best practice research.

All this information has been used to compile several briefs relating to a variety of topics. This brief is a review of the information related to safety and wellbeing in the Centre City. The brief starts with an overview of the topic inclusive, caring and safe Centre City, which includes a description and statistics. Then, through the analysis of the inputs, key elements for an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City were compiled. These elements include outcomes, goals and questions for analysis. All these elements inform topics for discussion in a workshop setting. Additional questions will be resolved prior to the new draft of the *Centre City Plan*.

Analysis

Over the last ten years, Calgary's Centre City has seen an increase in population and the number of residential units, fluctuations in the economy impacting employment rates, and local emergencies. These changes and challenges impact the health and wellbeing of the Centre City.

The Centre City has been one of the fastest-growing parts of Calgary for the past decade. Civic Census results show that since 2007 the population of the Centre City has increased by over 10,000 people, with most growth in the Beltline. Additionally, the Centre City has seen an increase in residential dwelling units of 46 per cent between 2007 and 2018.

The Centre City contains approximately one quarter of all jobs in the city. The economic downturn has erased many of the job gains made over the past decade, particularly in the Centre City where

professional and technical workers were hit hard by the collapsing price of oil. Around 13 million square feet of office space was constructed since 2007; roughly the same amount is currently vacant.

Social wellbeing

There are several crucial land use and urban design choices, which, alongside the social and fiscal policy decisions of upper level governments, have major consequences for patterns of social inclusion and exclusion in cities. The spatial configuration of housing, jobs, and public spaces – and the way in which transit systems connect them – influences the degree to which all members of society can participate in urban life.

Social inclusion requires that communities act to ensure that all people, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, achieve their potential in life. Increasing amenities such as schools and grocery stores, and fostering the development of arts and culture in the City Centre will attract new residents and more visitors to the area, increase social interaction, and improve overall quality of life.

On 2019 April 8 City Council approved the *Social Wellbeing Policy*. The Policy states that "The City of Calgary will follow the *Social Wellbeing Principles* when making decisions; developing plans, policies and strategies; and delivering City services." The *Social Wellbeing Principles* are:

- Strive to provide equitable services. This includes removing barriers to access and inclusion;
- Advance the active and shared process of truth and reconciliation in collaboration with the community;
- Seek opportunities to support and grow culture in Calgary; and
- Aim to stop problems before they start, using a prevention approach.

The *Social Wellbeing Policy* will support The City in being proactive in developing and delivering services that meet the needs of Calgarians, while contributing to citizen quality of life.

The City of Calgary is convening community partners to develop a mental health and addictions strategy for the next five years (2019 to 2023). On 2018 July 30, Council approved the Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction Notice of Motion C2018-0956 in response to observed trends in the community related to mental health, addictions, and citizen concerns about crime and social disorder. Of the $25 million earmarked for programs and seed funding related to the strategy, $3 million has been invested in programs through 19 non-profit organizations in 2019. Up to $3 million has been approved to sustain successful programs in 2020. In 2019 March, Council allocated $1 million to support immediate actions that contribute to enhanced safety near the supervised consumption service site in the Beltline. In 2019 July, Council approved a strategic framework and governance model for the development of the strategy, and allocated a further $1 million towards the testing of promising initiatives through a fast pilot process to be developed in collaboration with other funding partners.

Police services

Calgary Police Services (CPS) works to create a community that is safe, diverse, inclusive and inspired. CPS partners with communities, providing crime prevention and education initiatives, early intervention programs, law enforcement and criminal investigations.

CPS directly addresses safety concerns of citizens and visitors, gives programs to prevent and reduce crime and victimization, provide quality criminal investigations, and ensures public safety for all through delivery of professional services.

Calgary Police Service (CPS) Community Crime statistics for the Centre City show that total crime in 2018 is nine per cent higher than in 2014. The largest components of the increase were commercial

break and enters, assault (non-domestic), and thefts from vehicles. The clear majority (83 per cent) of crimes in the Centre City are social disorder.

Council direction for CPS is to continue working towards the following directives:

- neighbourhoods, modes of transportation, and public spaces that are safe.
- help citizens understand the work that Police Services do, and ensure The City is well-run and efficient.
- develop a positive, strong and enduring relationship with Treaty 7 First Nations, Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3, and all urban Indigenous Calgarians.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is being used worldwide. It enhances safety by influencing the physical design of our environment and encouraging positive social interaction. CPTED recognizes that our environment directly affects our behaviour, because we constantly respond to what is around us. These responses help us to interact safely in our communities.

An environment designed using CPTED principles reduces opportunities for criminal acts to take place and helps us to feel safer. By doing so, it improves our quality of life. CPTED uses strategies that work together to create safer communities. It complements crime prevention strategies such as locks and bars, police and security personnel. Here are a few examples:

- A well-maintained building or community park creates a sense of guardianship and that helps deter criminals.
- Community activity is important. Criminal acts can be discouraged in public spaces when we encourage activities in those spaces by residents, visitors and other legitimate users.

Natural access control guides help people enter and have a space through the placement of entrances, exits, fences, landscaping and lighting. It can decrease opportunities for criminal activity by denying criminals access to potential targets and creating a perception of risk for would-be offenders.

In existing communities this is best done by a CPTED practitioner who has practiced many years of crime prevention and has completed several CPTED projects. With the assistance of community leaders, crime prevention advocates and input from community members to investigate the root causes of crime, combined with CPTED will greatly help with proper implementation.

In new communities CPTED is best implemented at the development stage and continued through the design and implementation stages.

Emergency services

The Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) works with city services, government agencies, businesses, non-profit groups, first responders and citizens to promote and strengthen emergency preparedness, resilience and the coordinated response to, and recovery from, major emergencies and disasters in Calgary.

"CEMA coordinates periodic city-wide disaster risk assessments in order to understand Calgary's disaster risk environment, share disaster risk information with Calgarians, and prioritize activities towards reducing disaster risk" (Disaster Risk Report 2018).

CEMA has identified 13 risks of high concern for Calgary, many of which are relevant for the Centre City. This work is reinforced by global risk reports, such as the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Report, which in 2019 identified natural disasters and extreme weather as top risks to economic and human development in a global context.

Since 2013, The Centre City has been impacted by three emergencies that required unanticipated activation or the Municipal Emergency Plan or a declaration of a State of Local Emergency. The 2013 flood, the 2014 September snow event, and the 2014 vault fire. These events had social, safety, and economic impacts to residents and businesses in the Centre City. In addition, CEMA regularly monitors mass-gathering events in the Centre City, such as the Stampede Parade and Red Mile festivities.

Urban resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, business and systems within a city to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. CEMA provides a number of services that promote urban resilience in the Centre City such as:

- Ready Calgary, which is a program that informs, educates and builds resiliency to the impacts of emergencies and disasters in the city. It is designed to first prepare individuals and families for emergencies, and then empower communities to act effectively and safely in response to an emergency impacting their residents;
- Corporate Business Continuity, which is designed to ensure city services and businesses can continue to operate or resume operations as soon as possible following a disruption.

In addition, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce and Calgary Economic Development are agency members of CEMA, a relationship that bridges a gap between municipal emergency management and economic resilience in Calgary, and will continue to result in business-specific emergency management planning in the future.

Affordable Housing

The following statistics regarding homelessness are from the City of Calgary:

- More than 3200 Calgarians are homeless;
- The City's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness resulted in a reduction in homelessness of 19 per cent between 2008 and 2018;
- The number of rental units in Calgary is only 28 per cent, lower than other cities such as Edmonton (35 per cent), Toronto (45 per cent), and Montreal (64 per cent);
- The income needed to afford average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Calgary is $53,000;
- Three quarters of Calgary households have insufficient income to buy a single-family home;
- Every billion dollars invested in housing grows Canada's economy by $1.4 billion and generates up to 13 000 direct and indirect jobs.

Affordable housing in the Centre City has typically been small, poor quality units, isolated from amenity spaces. The housing type is primarily apartment style, one or two-bedroom units. Changing demographics show many new immigrants may prefer to live in higher density area. Providing opportunities for larger families and/or multi-generational families to live together in affordable rental or entry level ownership units within the Centre City and will encourage a vibrant, active, liveable Centre City. Creating multi-bedroom apartment units with studio or one-bedroom units adjacent as lock-off units provides flexibility in family size and composition.

Location criteria for affordable housing has been broken into two groups – those with children and those without. Generally, the key criteria for locating affordable housing is access to transit, groceries and employment opportunities with the addition of schools and parks playing a role in households with children.

Density bonusing in the Centre City has been ineffective in the past and is just experiencing a slight uptake. Affordable housing if grouped with other density bonusing incentives seems to be the last option chosen by a developer. Affordable housing requires continual support and operating costs.

Recent federal financing incentives have encouraged private developers to take another look at providing affordable housing in downtown residential development.

Non-market housing providers have moved away from entire buildings that are low-end subsidized housing. Affordable housing is now indistinguishable from market housing and often interspersed within a market rental building.

New tools that are becoming available to increase the amount of affordable housing are:

- Housing agreements, recently enabled through a city charter, where the developer has an agreement registered on title that says **X** number of units within the building will be affordable housing (based on percent of market rent or percent of tenant's income) for **Y** number of years.
- Inclusionary housing was also enabled through a city charter (February 2019) and is in preliminary exploration but could potentially require developers to contribute to affordable housing by providing units or money.

NOTE: Clarification between housing affordability where private market housing may or may not be priced well for people to purchase or rent. Affordable housing is really non-market housing that is targeted to those households earning less than 65 per cent of Calgary's median income and spending more than 30 per cent of their gross income on housing costs.

Key elements for an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City

Alignment with Centre City Plan principles

The intent of the *Centre City Plan* is to strengthen the Centre City in accordance with eight fundamental principles. The principle most related to safety and social wellbeing is Principle 6: "Create and maintain a caring and safe Centre City environment."

Key outcomes over the next 10 to 20 years

These are the suggested outcomes for the Centre City over the next ten to twenty years and how these outcomes could be measured.

Improve urban well-being through:

1. A safer Centre City
   a. Reduction in crime
2. A more activated and interactive Centre City
   a. Residential units or population
   b. Number of visitors
   c. Number of businesses
   d. Number of places for social interaction
3. A more socially inclusive Centre City
   a. Percent growth in number of affordable housing units
   b. Number of programs for a diverse population
4. A more prepared Centre City
   a. Emergency preparedness
   b. Land uses and infrastructure that support resilience strategy

Key goals

The following goals are specific to the Centre City to achieve the key outcomes listed above. These goals are based on an analysis of all the inputs or information gathered relating to this topic in the Centre City. See the **Goals and Initiatives Overview** section in **Appendix D** at the end of this document to see how these goals were crafted. The goals below have been amended slightly since the inclusive, safe and caring Centre City workshop on April 10, 2019.

1. Better integrate emergency management, safety, and social wellbeing considerations into planning and design in the Centre City.
2. Increase urban activity and cleanliness in the Centre City to contribute to safety, health, and wellness.
3. Increase the affordability of housing in the Centre City.
4. Support a diverse population in the Centre City.
5. Support training, programs, and services in the Centre City to address the root causes of social disorder and prepare for emergencies.

The vision for the Centre City was established in the 2007 *Centre City Plan* with eight fundamental principles to support that vision. The current vision and principles are under review, but still valid for the purposes of evaluating outcomes and goals. Relating to the topic of an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City, there is principle that applies. The figure below (Figure 1) shows the relationship between the principle, outcomes and goals.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of Principles, Outcomes, Goals and Initiatives

The Vision for Calgary's Centre City Plan is built on

8 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8

Principle #6: Create and maintain a caring and safe Centre City environment

Principle 6 supports the measurement of **FOUR OUTCOMES**

Outcome #1: A safer Centre City

Outcome #2: A more activated and interactive Centre City

Outcome #3: A more socially inclusive Centre City

Outcome #4: A more prepared Centre City

...tracking progress towards **5 GOALS**

Goal #1: Better integrate emergency management, safety and social wellbeing concerns into planning and design in the Centre City.

Goal #2: Increase urban activity and cleanliness in the Centre City to contribute to safety, health and wellness.

Goal #3: Increase the affordability of housing in the Centre City.

Goal #4: Support a diverse population in the Centre City.

Goal #5: Support training, programs and services in the Centre City to address the root causes of social disorder and prepare for emergencies.

...with many **INITIATIVES** to achieve each goal

Key Challenges and opportunities

The following are key challenges/opportunities relating to an Inclusive, Caring and Safe Centre City:

1. High land and housing costs
2. Limited housing options.
3. Funding for special services in the Centre City.
4. Lack of amenities (schools, affordable food, and open space)
5. Social isolation and loneliness

Summary of workshop findings

An inclusive, caring and safe Centre City workshop was held on April 10, 2019. The workshop provided an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss The City's goals for an inclusive, caring and safe Centre City and prioritize initiatives to achieve those goals. After the workshop, a *What We Heard Report* was prepared and below is a summary of the findings from that workshop.

- Citizens may report feeling "unsafe" when they could more accurately be described as feeling "uncomfortable" due to exposure to vulnerable people. A lack of safety may not be the biggest issue, but rather the lack of comfort which can scare people away from the area and make vitality difficult to achieve. A more proactive police presence downtown may be beneficial.

- There are concerns that the concentration of services downtown may contribute to the negative safety perception of the Centre City.

- There has been a substantial increase in the quality of the public realm in recent years. High-quality spaces demonstrate the value The City places on downtown, and transportation improvements have brought more accessible mobility and more eyes to the street.

- Downtown is more intentionally inclusive of a wider variety of Calgarians but still lacks a sense of community, universal accessibility, appreciation of Indigenous issues and culture, integrated affordable housing, and success in combating homelessness and poverty.

- The Centre City is much more prepared for a disaster, but more work is needed to ensure that all buildings have evacuation plans, social agencies are prepared to assist vulnerable populations, critical points of failure for infrastructure are identified, and a suitable location for a new fire hall has been found.

Rationale for goals and priority actions

During the inclusive, safe and caring workshop on April 10, 2019 there were discussions regarding the viability of the proposed goals along with prioritization of related actions. The case for each goal along with its highest-priority actions are as follows:
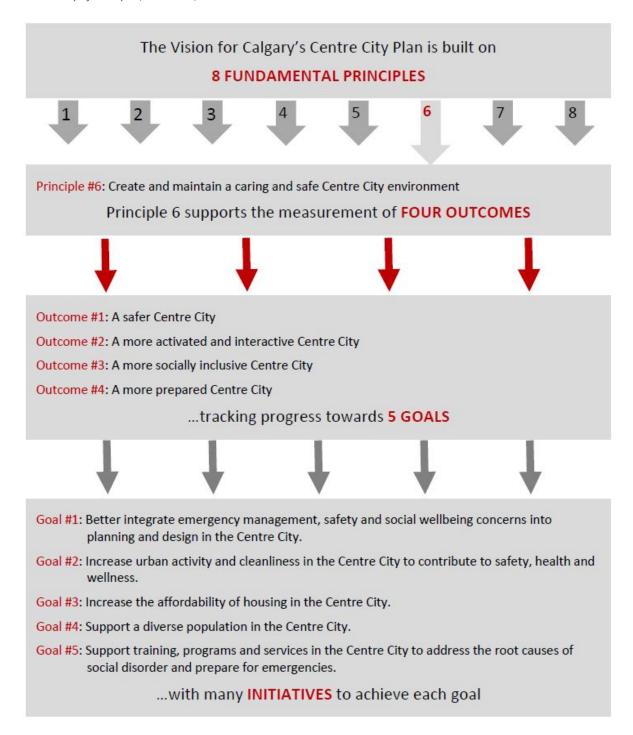
Goal 1: Better integrate emergency management, safety and social wellbeing considerations into planning and design in the Centre City

The way in which the Centre City's built form and public realm evolve over time has direct consequences for health and wellbeing. As these changes occur, the possible safety and social implications of the changes need to be carefully considered. Planning and design reviews should involve emergency response, safety and CPTED review, and social services to ensure that the relationship between the built form and the health of Calgarians is positive.

Soft services and programming can also be used to boost the Centre City's social wellbeing. The specific needs of each service or program should be taken into account at the beginning of the planning and design stage to ensure that the space is properly designed to support those who use it. This may require closer integration of safety and social agencies with the planning system when reviewing applications for proposed changes to the Centre City.

Priority actions:

- Invest in community development and strategies to boost social cohesion and engagement;
- Ensure infrastructure is accessible for the purposes of inclusivity and safety;
- Promote a safe alley environment by encouraging appropriate safety measures are taken into account; and
- Work with social service agencies to identify suitable locations for services that meet the needs of both the agency and local context.

Goal 2: Increase urban activity and cleanliness in the Centre City to contribute to safety, health and wellness

The Centre City is predominantly used during business hours due to its high proportion of daily users that live in the suburbs and commute to work each day. With the departure of so many people, many corners of the Centre City are left to be vacant at night, forgotten spaces not worth caring about. If our intent is to make the Centre City a place people genuinely care about, then our goal should be to encourage urban activity at all hours.

Another component of this is to ensure that there are attractive and interesting places in which activities can take place. This means ensuring a certain standard of cleanliness without being sterile. For instance, graffiti can make a space feel authentically urban without being unsafe. Spaces and events should be designed to enhance feelings of authenticity Calgarians can relate to or participate in.

Priority actions:

- Encourage residential development to increase street-level pedestrian activity, increase perception of vibrancy and safety, and make retail and amenities more cost-effective;
- Host more events to pull people onto the streets (other than Stephen Ave);
- Improve amenities including health and social services;
- Encourage the development of arts and culture and increase its exposure; and
- Preserve a critical mass of daily workers downtown by making it more attractive to small and medium enterprises.

Goal 3: Increase the affordability of housing in the Centre City

As Calgary has grown, new housing in the Centre City has most often taken the form of residential high-rises due to the cost and complexity of development. However, the units provided in this housing form tend to reflect the extremes of the cost spectrum: either being very small micro-units suitable for only one person, or extravagant luxury penthouses far out of the reach of the typical Calgary family.

The City should be exploring every option available to boost the construction of housing aimed at the bottom and middle of the affordability curve, and to ensure that some portion of the units being provided are suitable for families seeking an urban lifestyle. Recent interest in converting vacant office space to residential uses may provide an opportunity to do so, however it may require The City to offer non-market interventions in order to ensure development is profitable for builders and affordable for residents.

Priority actions:

- Support family-oriented housing;
- Identify future sites for innovative, purpose-built, non-market housing that is integrated in all Centre City communities and fund initiatives to encourage it such as inclusionary zoning; and
- Revise the municipal tax structure to enable the Centre City to compete with new suburban communities.

Goal 4: Support a diverse population in the Centre City

A wide variety of Calgarians use the Centre City as a place to live, work, shop, and be entertained. It is vital that the area's services and spaces are designed with the needs of different users in mind. Residential buildings and their associated services must cater to a variety of household sizes, types, incomes, and preferences to ensure that people in distress, with young children, or that are recent immigrants are able to find housing near important services.

Regardless of which community residents identify with, they should be able to find supportive social services and a sense of community. People who are part of different ethic or cultural groups, or part of LGBTQ communities may benefit from services that provide them with safe, supportive spaces to express themselves. The City should strive to ensure that festivals, celebrations, and the fabric of the built environment itself are inclusive and welcoming.

Priority actions:

- Create new community gathering spaces, events, schools, daycares, and programming for children;
- Improve health and social service amenities to meet basic needs such as washroom access, and higher-order needs such as child and elder care facilities and programs;
- Encourage inclusive recreation, arts and culture that is accessible to those from a wide variety of means and abilities using programs such as Fair Entry;
- Prioritize First Nations and Metis cultural reflections and expressions; and
- Consider how diverse communities are meaningfully celebrated and included through festivals, events and programming.

Goal 5: Support training, programs and services in the Centre City to address the root causes of social disorder and prepare for emergencies

The safety and wellbeing of people in the Centre City can be put at risk by both chronic stressors and acute shocks. As systemic issues like climate change and social instability are expected to grow in the future, the depth of the chronic issues and severity of acute shocks will also increase. The City has an obligation to prepare for both and have a plan to help those most at risk.

Issues of safety and wellbeing need to be addressed with a dual-pronged approach – by ensuring that social service agencies and responders are designed and trained to address the root causes of chronic stress; and by increasing the capacity of government, business, NGOs, and residents to respond in times of intense need.

Priority actions:

- Train first responders specifically on how to deal with issues and special circumstances faced by residents in the Centre City;
- Add non-police resources that can better address the root causes of issues rather than the symptoms;
- Continue to tackle the issue of homelessness by providing housing, advocating for funding, and making concerted efforts to target families with children in order to break the intergenerational cycle of family and housing instability; and
- Increase security on the CTrain system including at stations.

Appendix A: Inputs into the refreshed Plan

Strategic Foresight

Strategic Foresight is a scenario-based methodology that immerses participants in a study of the future by asking them to explore multiple plausible alternatives and identify the challenges and opportunities that may emerge within each.

"Income disparity" and "public realm & social equity" were both identified as uncertainties whose future outcomes were critical to overall success of the Centre City. Should public space become increasingly privately controlled and wealth inequality continue to grow, public realm vitality could decline alongside confidence in the democratic nature of public space.

Scenarios predicting a decline in the Centre City's economic strength also predict negative impacts to public tax revenue. Social services and assistance programs would be at risk, as would maintenance and upkeep of public spaces. Conversely, should economic strength return to the Centre City, the key risks would be housing affordability and displacement in the face of new urban development.

In either case, the adverse impacts of increased severe weather are likely to be inequitably felt. Less mobile low-income and vulnerable populations could be the hardest hit by flooding, extreme temperatures, and severe storms.

Strategies & tactics

- Increasing vitality in the public realm – a "Centre City for everyone"
  - Support economic development, attractiveness for small and medium enterprises to preserve a critical mass of daily workers downtown
  - Increase residential growth to make retail and amenities cost-effective
  - Affordable housing – securing funding and locations
- Climate change & disaster management
  - Ensure continuity of service
  - Mitigation & adaptation
  - Chronic response rather than acute response
- Truth & reconciliation
  - Support the "Indigenization of space"
  - Prioritize First Nations and Metis cultural reflections and expression throughout the Centre City

Downtown Economic Summit

The Downtown Economic Summit was held on 2017 March 2 and was hosted jointly by The City, CED and CMLC with approximately 160 participants. Throughout the event, participants answered specific questions about Calgary's Centre City, including its current strengths and possibilities to help address vacant office space and job creation. Participants then put the possibilities into priorities and identified tactics to consider moving forward.

The following actions are outlined in Attachment 2 of Report C2017-0344:

- 17. Explore and implement programming in Centre City that responds to the diverse interests and needs of the community, including for indigenous and ethno-cultural communities and for disadvantaged residents.

External stakeholder and public engagement

The details of engagement for the Centre City Plan Refresh project can be found in the *What We Heard Report* online at Calgary.ca/centrecityplan.

Engagement was approached with the understanding that the *Centre City Plan* need not be re-written; rather it will be updated or, "refreshed", to reflect the current thinking within the Centre City. The targeted audience for this engagement was divided into three primary categories: key stakeholders, Calgarians interested in the Centre City, and internal stakeholders. The engagement approach intended to be respectful of the diversity of people living, working and spending time in the Centre City and a number of steps were taken as outlined in the above-mentioned report.

The following input from the *What We Heard Report* relates to this topic.

- Values (200 references)
  - #2 – Art, beauty, cleanliness, redevelopment & maintenance (64)
  - #5 – Community building and togetherness (22)
- Aspirations (126 references)
  - #3 – Vibrancy and liveliness (50)
  - #5 – Art, beauty, cleanliness, redevelopment & maintenance (39)
  - #8 – Safety (20)
- Concerns (233 references)
  - #2 – Safety (101)
  - #3 – Art, beauty, cleanliness, redevelopment & maintenance (59)
- Principle 6 – Create and maintain a caring and safe Centre City environment.
  - Top themes:
    - **Community connection, character and communication**
      - ✓ Gathering spaces and events to create community among tower residents. Coordinated social services to address issues. Innovative communications such as "urban ambassadors" and non-digital communication. Integrating different demographics.
    - **Ideas to support the most vulnerable populations**
      - ✓ Indoor/daytime gathering spaces for vulnerable populations. Sense of community should include vulnerable populations. Affordable housing, food and services. On the street staff who connect people with services.
    - **Ideas surrounding building & mixed-use development**
      - ✓ Variety of housing options. Housing to connect diverse populations, not separate them. Connecting seniors and young people.
    - **Ideas to address inclusion, diversity, and class separation**
      - ✓ Add services like childcare to make it more welcoming/appealing to children and families. Connection of classes through events, housing and gathering spaces. Gathering spaces for the homeless.
    - **Ideas and issues around safety (general)**
      - ✓ Need to enhance perceptions of safety. police patrols and non-police service to respond to minor social disorder. Lighting, designing for safety, and "help boxes".
- The full list of Quick Win Ideas can be found in the *What We Heard Report* online at Calgary.ca/centrecityplan and are also included in this document in the Appendix D: Goals and initiatives overview.

Existing policy review: Centre City Plan (2007)

Policies to remain in the Centre City Plan

The following is a list of existing policies within the 2007 Centre City Plan. A review of these policies identified a need to keep their intent in the updated Plan. Policies as written below may be consolidated or rewritten as necessary.

Land Use Policies

- 4.2 Neighbourhood Policy #5

    Support the development of housing to accommodate a diverse population in neighbourhoods by:

    o supporting family-oriented housing by:
        ▪ Identifying future sites for innovative and non-market housing types in neighbourhood planning exercises; and
        ▪ Providing recreational open spaces that appeal to families with children.

Public Realm

- 7.7.1.14 – Ensure the appropriate level of pedestrian-oriented lighting is provided to improve legibility and increase a sense of personal safety in vehicular and pedestrian zones.
- 7.7.1.15 – Incorporate the principles for Calgary Urban Braille System (CUBS) and way-finding.
- 7.7.1 – Alleys - 1 - Encourage an appropriate design (lighting, access, materials) and operations (cleanliness, maintenance) of all alleys throughout the Centre City, and further ensure that new buildings provide a safe alley environment by providing special design attention to: the building interface with the alley; pedestrian entrances; loading docks and ramps; and garbage access.
- 7.7.1 – Mid-block Pedestrian Connections – 6 – Safety shall be ensured through appropriate lighting and natural surveillance.
- 7.7.2 – Places – 3 – Discourage sunken plazas that have limited visibility from street level.
- 7.7.2 – Places – 8 – Creative lighting strategies to improve legibility and safety of places during the night and winter season;

Recreation

- 8.5.1 – Encourage artistic, cultural, sport and recreational enrichment to promote a more vibrant, healthy, safe and caring community.
- 8.5.2 - Provide, facilitate and enable services and programs that support active and creative lifestyles; and which lead to community health and wellness.
- 8.5.3 - Assure access to introductory and basic skill development recreation programs and services for all Centre City residents and workers, in particular children, youth, families and those who have low incomes.
- 8.5.4 - To foster an environment where opportunities for recreation programming are available to all Calgarians; provide, advocate, encourage and promote recreation programs, services, admissions and spaces that are accessible, safe and affordable.
- 8.5 – ACTION – Develop strategies to address the recreation needs of low-income residents in the Centre City.

Crime, Safety and Social Disorder

- 9.1.1 - As with all communities, some level of crime will always occur within the Centre City. No one strategy will solve all the problems. Therefore, crime shall be addressed with a sustained and long-term approach that uses a variety of enforcement and prevention measures including:
  - Increased policing levels for both the Calgary Police Service and Calgary Transit;
  - New methods of community policing;
  - Municipal bylaw education and enforcement;
  - Community development approaches to crime prevention and control;
  - Land use approaches that put eyes on the street and encourage people to use the public realm; and
  - Greater support of services and programs dealing with addictions and substance abuse.
- 9.1.2 - There are currently areas in the Centre City where people feel uncomfortable, unsafe or threatened. Increasing street level pedestrian activity through an increased residential population and a thriving business and cultural environment is supported as a principal way to reduce the perception that an area is "unsafe".
- 9.1.3 - This Plan recognizes that clustering social service agencies and providers in the Centre City or in individual neighbourhoods may create some unintended negative impacts and may create areas where residents or businesses may not choose to locate. At the same time, co-locating social services together can create economies of scale and synergies that improve service delivery. It is a policy of the Plan that where a new, or expansion of an existing, social service agency is proposed, the Development Authority shall give consideration to the potential cumulative impacts on the surrounding neighbourhoods. Particular attention shall be placed on proposals within 500 metres of an existing social service agency and along the 7 Avenue Free Fare Transit Corridor. Consideration should also be given to the nature of the services provided by the subject agencies and the scale of their respective operations.
- 9.1.4 - Where possible, The City will work with proponents of new or expanded social service agencies to find sites that meet the locational requirements necessary to serve the client base and will develop an inventory of available site options both within and outside the Centre City. Once a site is selected, The City will continue to work with the various stakeholders to develop a design that meets the needs of the agency and is sensitive to its local context. In undertaking such work, The City should engage appropriate expertise, where required, to develop effective plans and strategies. Such expertise may include the University of Calgary's People and Place Initiative.
- 9.1.5 - New development proposed near existing social service agencies may impact the ability of the agency to continue their operation in an efficient and effective manner. The City will, through the development approval process, work with the developer and the affected agency to develop plans that meet the needs of both parties.
- 9.1.6 - As a way to continually measure and improve safety in the Centre City the undertaking of community-based safety audits are supported and encouraged. Recommendations arising from such audits will be reviewed by The City and action plans should be developed and implemented in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- 9.1.7 - With the increase in population, density, activity and complexity associated with a developing Centre City, The City must be conscious of the need to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective fire protection and emergency services. To this end, CEMA, CFD, and CPS should be included and provide input into all major design projects.
- 9.1.8 - Protective Services shall continue to play a lead role in managing, monitoring and planning for disaster situations.

Homelessness

The 10-year plan to end homelessness has concluded, so this content needs updating.

- 9.2.2 - The City will not accept homelessness as a "natural state" within the Centre City. The City will use its resources and authority to address this issue with other levels of government in a sustained and vigorous manner. This will include advocating for increased government focus on and funding for those needs and services that, when not available, can lead to homelessness. Specific examples include: affordable housing, government income and support programs, crisis shelter, mental health services, addiction counseling and rehabilitation and skills development.
- 9.2.3 - An immediate focus should be on breaking the intergenerational cycle of family and housing instability, often associated with adult homelessness, by making concerted efforts to target interventions towards families with children who are homeless or at risk of becoming so, and to youngsters at risk of child welfare involvement.

Affordable Housing

- 9.3.1 - A mix of rental and owned, low-cost, moderate and high-end housing is vital to neighbourhood development, social sustainability, and social inclusion. Thus, increasing the supply of residential units in general, within the Centre City should be a primary focus of community renewal in the short-term and mid-term.
- 9.3.2 - Housing must be available in the Centre City to accommodate population diversity in all its dimensions including household type and size, socioeconomic status, and tenure preference.
- 9.3.3 - Given that the Centre City is currently home to a high proportion of rental units, future development and policy should seek to at least preserve and ideally increase that type of housing stock. This may include investigating measures such as the limiting of condominium conversions during periods of low rental vacancy rates.
- 9.3.4 - Non-market (subsidized) housing and rental supplement programs for individuals, families with children, and seniors should be fully integrated into all Centre City communities. This may be in purpose built, non-market housing or integrated within market housing developments.
- 9.3.5 - The density bonus system within the Centre City should continue to allow for the provision of affordable and non-market housing as a way of increasing density. To this end, The City will work with the development industry to develop effective measures in the long term.
- 9.3.6 - The City should make every effort to secure/provide non-market housing or housing sites in large redevelopment areas within the Centre City.

Fostering Social Inclusion

- 9.4.1 - Encourage the development of recreation, arts and culture that is accessible to people with all levels of physical ability and ability to pay.
- 9.4.2 - Improve amenities, including health and social services, to meet the needs of the growing and changing population. Specific services may include basic needs such as public washrooms and basic medical services, as well as higher order needs such as child and elder care facilities and health and wellness programs.
- 9.4.3 - Invest in community development initiatives, and specifically in strategies to increase the sense of community and social cohesion, make communities more welcoming to diversity, promote civic engagement, and address neighbourhood stigma.
- 9.4.4 - Involve the local community and individual residents in the design of local public spaces.

Cleanliness

- 9.5.1 - A clean Centre City is a sign of the high regard and respect that Calgarians hold for their public places and their fellow citizens. A clean Centre City is perceived to be safe and can reduce damage to and vandalism of public property and increases the overall attractiveness of the Centre City to residents, businesses and visitors. The Plan supports all City led initiatives to keep the Centre City clean including ongoing support for the Mayor's "Clean to the Core" initiative.
- 9.5.2 - The Plan also supports all initiatives led by the private sector or other community organizations such as Business Revitalizations Zones, Building Owners and Managers Association and community associations to keep private property, and the public space around private property well-maintained and clean.

Redundant policies

The following is a list of existing policies within the 2007 Centre City Plan. A review of these policies identified that they should be or already are in a Local Area Plan, Guidelines or Strategy documents and do not need to be kept in the updated Plan. Policies as written below should be deleted.

Area redevelopment plans have been completed for Sunalta and Victoria Park, meaning the following actions are no longer required to be in the Centre City Plan.

- 4.2.5 – ACTION - Undertake a neighbourhood planning exercise between the Elbow River and 4 Street/Olympic Way SE and the CPR tracks and 11/12 Avenue SE to address opportunities for a diversity of multifamily housing types, non-market housing and mixed land uses as well as:
  - o Location of a new Neighbourhood Centre with local retail amenities;
  - o A neighbourhood park to meet the needs of the local population. Ensure adequate functionality of the open space with an optimal size of 0.2 hectares;
  - o Identification of sites for non-market housing;
  - o Street pattern with an emphasis on extending the grid;
  - o Incorporation of an Elbow Riverfront Park and associated connections and amenities;
  - o Opportunities to model urban sustainability. See Urban Ecology section; and
  - o Incorporation of transit including integrating the proposed Southeast LRT line.
- 4.2.9.2 – Planning for the area (West Park/Lower Sunalta) should include:
  - o Involvement of all land owners and community stakeholders;
  - o Exploring the possibility of relocating the roadway away from the Bow River to improve the quality and usability of the riverfront park space;
  - o Consideration of the area as a Brownfield Redevelopment site with opportunities to model sustainability;
  - o Exploration of opportunities for urban edges along the Bow riverfront in the form of restaurants, coffee shops, etc. and incorporation of active riverfront uses such as a boat launch area and river taxi;
  - o Integration of residential and commercial uses within a park setting;
  - o Opportunities for family-oriented housing;
  - o An inland water feature for stormwater; and
  - o Incorporation of Centre City snow removal storage.

In 2010 Council endorsed the "Downtown Underpass Urban Design Guidelines". The guidelines promote a unified vision for the underpasses, with careful consideration for the local context and current state of each.

- 7.7.1 – Underpasses / Overpasses – 1 - Regardless of elevation (underground, at-grade or above-grade) new built form, places and pedestrian/bicycle linkages related to an underpass/overpass should include the following considerations in their design:
    - Wherever possible, underpasses/overpasses shall have an active edge treatment that may include retail or community services, recreational or entertainment facilities;
    - Brighter colour schemes should be incorporated that create more inviting pedestrian environments;
    - Underpasses/overpasses should have full vertical and horizontal access for bicycles and the physically challenged including the full Calgary Urban Braille System (CUPS);
    - Underpasses/overpasses should be well lit and may incorporate electronic surveillance; and
    - Underpasses/overpasses should include embedded public art features.
- 7.7.1 – Underpasses / Overpasses – 2 - In the case of an improvement or restoration of an existing underpass the following should be considered:
    - Appropriate treatments of retaining walls with public art celebrating the CPR heritage in the form of murals, 3-D sculptural elements or any new electronic media that would animate the pedestrian zone and be complementary to structural elements;
    - Painting the original metal structure white to create a more inviting pedestrian environment; and
    - Adding colour at night with special lighting features to lighten the underpass for safety.

Ultimately, the goal is to include everything related to technical aspects of Urban Braille design in the Access Design Standards (ADS) (how wayfinding and warning tiles differ etc.). However, depending on the timing of making modifications to the ADS, the urban braille information may be retained in the Plan. The Centre City Plan may refer to integrating Urban Braille or tactile cues into design because they add vibrancy and animate spaces.

- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 1 – Introduce a comprehensive Calgary Urban Braille System for all linkages, including public transit facilities.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 2 – Ensure that The City of Calgary works with other interested partners (e.g. CNIB, CDA, BOMA, etc.) in order to create a comprehensive Urban Braille accessibility policy, construction standards and implementation strategy for major pedestrian linkages.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 3 – Provide full Urban Braille treatment on linkages and places with the highest concentrations of pedestrian traffic.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 4 – Provide limited Urban Braille treatment (at intersections only) on all other linkages.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 5 – Improve accessibility to all categories of physically challenged users in the Centre City when comprehensively re-developing existing streetscapes or partially re-developing individual sites.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 6 – Where possible, Urban Braille should be implemented at the block level. In cases of partial block redevelopment The City should consider funding the balance of the CUBS upgrade. If an individual redevelopment includes up to 30% of a block face, the CUBS system will be developed only in the front of the property. If a development includes more than 30% of the block face, the entire block/sidewalk should be developed at the time of re-development.

- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 7 – Remove all obstacles on sidewalks, and create an integrated system for locations of street furniture, traffic signalization and public transit infrastructure.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – 8 – Standardize sidewalk treatment with elements of Urban Braille for individual streets to provide consistency and legibility.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – ACTION – Develop a comprehensive Urban Braille System
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Urban Braille – ACTION – Implement an Urban Braille Pilot Study along Centre Street/Volunteer Way

The City of Calgary's [wayfinding program](#) helps people easily locate City Centre attractions and points of interest.

- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 1 – Reinforce the legibility and simplicity of way-finding and signage systems.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 2 – Integrate various signage types that integrate together to create less visual clutter.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 3 – Explore the use of digital technologies/interfaces for various way-finding/signage systems.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 4 – Promote high-quality graphic design for all wayfinding/signage systems.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 5 – Continue to provide and enhance the integration of the traffic signalization and the street lighting system.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – 6 – Create an attractive graphic design identity for public transit stops.
- 7.7.4 – Special Features: Way-finding – ACTION – Way-finding features shall be determined according to an overall Way-finding Plan that will determine locations, type, size and media appropriate for different uses. The Plan should address:
    - Primary way-finding information at the Centre City gateway locations for high-speed vehicular and public transit users;
    - Secondary way-finding information (general information) to slower vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian users; and
    - Tertiary way-finding information (detailed information) to pedestrian users.
- 9.1.9 - Increase the visibility and identity of all outside City of Calgary workers within the Centre City to clearly identify them. This increases the perception that there is someone to approach in case of emergency. To this end, outside City workers should receive training in responding to various issues and should all be equipped with direct communication to enforcement staff.
- 9.2.1 - Homeless people are equal members of our community and must be treated with dignity and respect. Each homeless person has unique circumstances that led to their situation. Additionally, broader structural factors continue to have an influence on homelessness in Calgary. The City will continue to learn about and understand the reasons behind homelessness in general and the particular needs of homeless Calgarians. The City will work with all stakeholders to strive to alleviate the immediate needs of the homeless, the homeless situation in general and to improve the opportunities for individuals who are homeless. To this end, The City will support the Calgary Committee to End Homelessness in their development of a 10-Year plan to end homelessness.

Internal stakeholder review

Internal stakeholders review the 2007 Centre City Plan and provided the following comments.

- Recreation will be providing community building policies content (Active Aging Strategy, children and youth strategy).
- 3.7.b – Sidewalks and Pathways "Wheelchair ramps at all corners with tactile strips per the City's accessibility standards, countdown timers and audible signals at all signalized intersections, signed and crosswalk markings at every crossing."
  - o Awaiting updated content for this point from the Accessibility Issue Strategist with CN.
- Applying the concept of Universal Design or simply ensuring infrastructure is accessible is part of social inclusion. When things are physically built as accessible the underlying value of inclusion is communicated. I know this isn't the only contributor to Social Inclusion but it's one aspect.
- Ensure inclusion of content on Accessibility.
- 7.4 Special Features: Calgary Urban Braille System (CUBS)
  - o The principles of CUBS (pg. 138 & 139) are great and I believe ACA would be supportive of having this in the Centre City Plan. I've only briefly heard about this before and I understand some senior planners worked on it; but I'm not sure how much progress it has had. Nonetheless, it's a great concept that would benefit people's way finding via the pedestrian paths of travel to and through the various recreation green places/parks identified in the Centre City; provided it was implemented consistently (otherwise it wouldn't provide much meaning to people). If it was consistently applied across the Centre City, then I believe Recreation would be supportive of it from an accessibility perspective.
  - o My assumption is that CUBS is all about the exterior environment (versus the interior built environment). Either way it has merits; but I'm not aware of how well-known CUBS is. It seems similar to Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (twsi); which is a thing; in fact CNIB outlines the requirements for twsi in a document called Clearing Our Path. FYI: twsi's are the raised truncated domes on the ground that you may have seen/feel at i.e. top of stairs, the C-train station, some intersections. It provides people with visual impairments a tactile warning of hazards; as well as guidance with travel. So for this reason, I like that the CUBS design concept and "accessibility for people with all levels of ability" (pg. 132) are included as a policy in the Centre City Plan.
  - o CUBS may also compliment the Tourism policies (pg. 146 & 147) and/or be beneficial to visitors and the walking tours identified under the Vitality section as it's about implementing a sensory way finding system.
- 9.3.x - Affordable Housing
  - o Policy: "A broad range of housing types for different households, income levels, age groups and lifestyles are encouraged within new development."
- 9.4.x – Build interactions and exchange between ethno-cultural communities, Indigenous communities and Calgary's cultural organizations to develop new programming, funding and exchange opportunities.
- 9.4.x – Strengthen and expand the use and promotion of festivals and events as one of the most effective means of responding to the cultural interests and needs of diverse communities.

- 9.4.x – Increase awareness of and support low-cost access to exhibitions, performances and events, particularly targeting families, ethno-cultural and Indigenous communities.

Regarding fostering social inclusion:

- Add additional item on community gathering space and public access to City-owned facilities.

Appendix B: Existing policy reviews

A Blueprint for Social Action (2006 April 30)

In March 2005, Calgary City Council called for a plan to address social issues in the Centre City. The plan for social action was to align with the Centre City Plan. The Blueprint for Social Action was prepared to help in the development of a sustainable plan for social action in the Centre City.

The Blueprint identifies five priority action areas needed to create a caring Centre City:

1. Addressing crime, safety, and social disorder by:

    • Increasing the presence of police through community policing initiatives

    • Increasing security on the C-Train and, particularly, on C-Train platforms, and

    • Making changes to environmental design, including changes to lighting, street layout, building design and management, and public spaces, as well as creating design features to foster social interaction.

2. Helping the homeless through:

    • Social and health programs, and

    • Initiatives to increase and improve non-market housing.

3. Increasing affordable housing and residential density by:

    • Encouraging the development of a range of housing types, including non-market housing and affordable market housing, and

    • Revisiting the municipal tax structure to enable the Centre City to compete with new suburban communities as a viable place to live.

4. Fostering social inclusion by:

    • Encouraging the development of arts and culture

    • Improving amenities, including health and social services, and

    • Investing in community development, and specifically in strategies to increase sense of community and social cohesion, make communities more welcoming to diversity, promote civic engagement, and address neighbourhood stigma.

5. Managing pedestrian and vehicular traffic by:

    • Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists

    • Reducing traffic and surface parking lots

    • Increasing public transit, and

    • Addressing the CPR tracks, which are seen as a barrier that splits the Centre City in two.

Appendix C: Best practice research

City of Edmonton – RECOVER: Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan

RECOVER: Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan

The following text is taken from the City of Edmonton web page for the RECOVER program.

Over the last year, the City of Edmonton has been working with residents, businesses and government to develop Recover, Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan.

In Edmonton, we value wellness, which means ensuring the right systems are in place to promote and sustain the conditions for people and neighbourhoods to thrive.

Starting in the 5 core neighbourhoods (Boyle Street, Central McDougall, Downtown, McCauley and Queen Mary Park) we are using a social innovation framework, testing, learning and adapting solutions while considering their cumulative impact.

This isn't about replacing existing strategies, policies, programs or services. Instead, we're focused on finding ways to better align and collaborate across different orders of government, social agencies, local businesses and the community.

Together, we're building on what's already working, using social innovation to co-design and test solutions that can improve the well-being of all Edmontonians.

We learned that tackling a complex issue like urban wellness is not likely to happen if we keep approaching it in linear ways. The innovative approach makes us look at the problems and solutions from a whole new angle.

There is no one path to wellness. We need many paths to achieve it and they are all connected to one another. Instead of looking for a "silver bullet", we need to have a "silver buckshot" mentality. What's more, we must find ways to test the smaller ideas quickly and cheaply to gain rich learnings and insights that can lead to bigger solutions. These are the "circles" that guided our cycle of learning.

We learned that it is important to not be afraid to change direction - to be always ready to rethink, respond and redo; that no solution is perfect, and we need to be flexible to change as more information becomes available. Our world is constantly changing and so too must our solutions to problems.

We started in July 2017 with a proposal for a wellness centre – a centre with integrated services for vulnerable people. While RECOVER is not recommending a wellness centre in the core, that does not mean that facilities with services from multiple agencies are not effective. It's just that our research shows that other activities can significantly contribute to urban wellness as well.

A year later, the landscape of the five communities have already changed – more services, advancing developments, and new people in the community.

Town of Okotoks – Social Wellness Framework

Social Wellness Framework

The following text is taken from the Town of Okotoks web page for Community Wellness.

Social Wellness and Sustainability

The concept of social wellness and sustainability operates at two levels: at the individual level and at the level of the community. Social wellness implies that the basic needs of residents are being met and that individuals enjoy a satisfactory level of wellbeing. In addition, it requires resources and capacity at the community level to support the collective actions necessary to protect its natural resources, plan for and weather changes in the economic environment and rebound from adversity. As such, a framework for social wellness and sustainability requires a focus on both individual values and community resources. The components to be addressed by the Social Wellness Framework, as outlined in the Request for Proposals, set the foundation for the development of a comprehensive approach to social wellness. The components identified were:

- *Playing: leisure activities, arts and culture, parks, sports, recreation;*
- *Working: employment and the supports required for it, income, volunteerism and unpaid work, job skills and training;*
- *Learning: formal and informal education, literacy, skills training, lifelong learning;*
- *Moving: movement of people and goods by various modes of transportation (public and private), and the associated infrastructure;*
- *Engaging: public processes for a civil society, accessibility of and opportunities for people to provide input into decisions that affect them;*
- *Living: shelter and housing, individual health and well-being, personal safety, the fulfillment of basic needs for all; and*
- *Sense of place: community identity, history and heritage, public art, public spaces, and community events.*

Loneliness: Planning and Design in the Centre City to Foster Community

http://www.livablecities.org/blog/loneliness-life-threatening-we-can-design-cities-foster-community

Loneliness is Life Threatening: We Can Design Cities to Foster Community

by Suzanne H. Crowhurst Lennard, Ph.D.(Arch.)

We urban planners need to stop creating a built environment that is making people sick and causing premature deaths. I am not talking here about the dangers of traffic or pollution, lack of healthy food, or damage to the eco-system. I am talking about how some of the most common forms of urban development – suburban sprawl and vertical high-rise sprawl - cause loneliness, which can lead to depression, chronic inflammation, and life-threatening diseases, including increased risk of cancer. "Loneliness", says Steve Cole, a genomics researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles, "really is one of the most threatening experiences we can have."…

So what should urban planners be doing to protect health? Every effort should be made to create a built environment that facilitates the development of social life and community in a safe and hospitable public realm. Social interactions should be facilitated by wide sidewalks, traffic-free or traffic-tamed streets and public squares. The public realm should be enclosed by human-scale buildings providing eyes on the street, and ensuring sunlight at street level. Children and elders should live within eyesight and earshot of people on the street. Streets should be well-populated by local shoppers and pedestrians on their way to school or work. This requires a compact urban fabric for the city center and neighborhood that brings everything within a walking radius, and neighborhoods that are interconnected with public transit so that part of every trip is made on foot in the public realm.

http://www.livablecities.org/articles/planning-healthy-living-next-challenge

Planning for Healthy Living: the Next Challenge

Suzanne H. Crowhurst Lennard, Ph.D. (Arch.)

It is common today to talk about health only in terms of physical health. The "Active Living" program is often considered the solution to all health problems. In fact, even as cities enact "Active Living" programs to solve obesity, they discover the programs are ineffectual if the society is fragmented or the individual is marginalized. Social health is the foundation for physical health. This has serious implications for planning and urban design. A healthy city must have a healthy "social immune system". …

The opportunity for social interaction, companionship, people-watching, and a "friendly neighborhood" were reported as reasons why adults chose to walk in their neighborhood, whether to shop, run errands, recreate, or simply to get exercise (Ball et al, 2001; Giles-Corti and Donovan, 2002; Booth et al, 2000; Ståhl et al, 2001; Humpel et al, 2002). Indeed, as Ståhl reported in a study of adults across six countries, "The social environment was the strongest predictor of being physically active." …

Williams and Pocock (2010) emphasize that the more informal "third places" there are in a neighborhood, the greater the opportunity for serendipitous social interaction that can lead to caring relationships and social capital. They also stress that people of different age groups need different kinds of places that facilitate unplanned meetings. …

The key element is the public realm, specifically, the availability of community squares that support positive face-to-face social interaction between young and old.

http://www.livablecities.org/blog/principles-designing-successful-neighborhood-squares

By Suzanne H. Crowhurst Lennard

Principles for designing successful neighborhood squares

A square's success is dependent on the subtle interaction of many factors – the right proportions of the architectural frame, appropriate building uses and urban fabric, hospitable streetscaping, a pedestrian-friendly transportation policy, and good management of the square. When any one of these factors is lacking, the square fails to achieve its potential for social life, community and democratic engagement. …

…the basic principles of designing successful neighborhood squares. …

1.Location: at the heart of the neighborhood; 2. Accessibility; 3. Appropriate size and shape; 4. The community's "living room"; 5. Entrances, thresholds. 6. Appropriate building heights; 7. Facades and setbacks. 8. Community-oriented building uses. 9. A hospitable setting. 10. Paving for pedestrians. 11. Focal points, public art. 12. Urban space management.

https://www.avenuecalgary.com/city-life/loneliness-an-epidemic/

Loneliness: An Epidemic

...An American study released this spring showed the high rates of loneliness, with nearly half of the 20,000 survey respondents saying they sometimes or always felt alone or left out and one in four said they rarely or never feel as though there are people who really understand them. And, it was the youngest generation surveyed, those aged 18 to 22, who felt the loneliest.

No similar study exists for Canada, but experts say loneliness is hurting Canadians at unprecedented levels. "We are experiencing an epidemic of loneliness and isolation," says Lisa Androulidakis, executive lead, Centre of Excellence for Peer Support and Recovery at the Calgary branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association*.*

Smaller studies show loneliness is prevalent in certain groups across Canada: a 2016 survey found two-thirds of university students felt lonely in the last year; for Canadians aged 75 and older not living in an institution, almost one in six has no close friends they can confide in or call on for help.

Humans have never been so technologically connected, but we have less social contact than in the past, according to data from Statistics Canada. Consider your interactions over a day in Calgary, a growing metropolis with a population of more than 1.4 million. …

At the Calgary Seniors' Resource Society*, Stevens spends her days finding volunteers to help isolated seniors throughout the city….*

Loneliness *differs from* ***social isolation****, a problem easier to identify and easier to address, says Rokach. "Social isolation happens when a person doesn't have enough people to interact with. Loneliness is the experience we endure when we feel that we are not important to others, that no one truly cares about us, that we do not have emotionally intimate relationships and when we do not succeed in getting out of that situation." …*

A 2015 study by American psychologists showed loneliness, social isolation and living alone were associated with a higher risk of early death – even more so than obesity. …

Bui's colleague Marichu Antonio, the executive director of the Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary*, says addressing loneliness in Calgary needs an approach that's three-pronged: individual, community, systems.*

Appendix D: Goals and initiatives overview

Goal 1

Goal #1	Better integrate emergency management, safety, and social wellbeing considerations into planning and design in the Centre City.
Source	**Initiative**
CCP 9.1.3	Where a new, or expansion of an existing, social service agency is proposed, the Development Authority shall give consideration to the potential cumulative impacts on the surrounding neighbourhoods. Particular attention shall be placed on proposals within 500 metres of an existing social service agency and along the 7 Avenue Free Fare Transit Corridor. Consideration should also be given to the nature of the services provided by the subject agencies and the scale of their respective operations.
CCP 9.1.4	Where possible, The City will work with proponents of new or expanded social service agencies to find sites that meet the locational requirements necessary to serve the client base and will develop an inventory of available site options both within and outside the Centre City. Once a site is selected, The City will continue to work with the various stakeholders to develop a design that meets the needs of the agency and is sensitive to its local context. In undertaking such work, The City should engage appropriate expertise, where required, to develop effective plans and strategies. Such expertise may include the University of Calgary's People and Place Initiative.
CCP 9.1.5	New development proposed near existing social service agencies may impact the ability of the agency to continue their operation in an efficient and effective manner. The City will, through the development approval process, work with the developer and the affected agency to develop plans that meet the needs of both parties.
CCP 9.1.7	With the increase in population, density, activity and complexity associated with a developing Centre City, The City must be conscious of the need to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective fire protection and emergency services. To this end, Protective Services should be included and provide input into all major design projects.
CCP 7.7.1.14	Ensure the appropriate level of pedestrian-oriented lighting is provided to improve legibility and increase a sense of personal safety in vehicular and pedestrian zones.
CCP 7.7.1	Alleys - Encourage an appropriate design (lighting, access, materials) and operations (cleanliness, maintenance) of all alleys throughout the Centre City, and further ensure that new buildings provide a safe alley environment by providing special design attention to: the building interface with the alley; pedestrian entrances; loading docks and ramps; and garbage access.
CCP 7.7.1	Mid-block Pedestrian Connections - Safety shall be ensured through appropriate lighting and natural surveillance.
CCP 7.7.2	Places - 3 - Discourage sunken plazas that have limited visibility from the street.
CCP 7.7.2	Places - 8 - Creative lighting strategies to improve legibility and safety of places during the night and winter season.
Quick Wins	Urban design standards on Stephen Ave to protect pedestrians from hostile vehicle attacks
Quick Wins	CPTED principles, lighting, activating dead zones
Quick Wins	Unique lighting solutions / public art that doubles as light
Quick Wins	Public safety devices, call boxes
CCP 7.7.1.15	Incorporate the principles for Calgary Urban Braille System (CUBS) or Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWS) and way-finding.
CCP 3.7.b	Wheelchair ramps at all corners with tactile strips per the City's accessibility standards, countdown timers and audible signals at all signalized intersections, signed and crosswalk markings at every crossing.

TAC Feedback	Applying the concept of Universal Design or simply ensuring infrastructure is accessible is part of social inclusion. When things are physically built as accessible the underlying value of inclusion is communicated. I know this isn't the only contributor to Social Inclusion but it's one aspect.
Quick Wins	Community notice boards, video screens in elevators, non-internet communications
A Blueprint for Social Action	Making changes to environmental design, including changes to lighting, street layout, building design and management, and public spaces, as well as creating design features to foster social interaction
A Blueprint for Social Action	Investing in community development, and specifically in strategies to increase sense of community and social cohesion, make communities more welcoming to diversity, promote civic engagement, and address neighbourhood stigma
A Blueprint for Social Action	Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
A Blueprint for Social Action	Reducing traffic and surface parking lots
A Blueprint for Social Action	Increasing public transit, and
A Blueprint for Social Action	Addressing the CPR tracks, which are seen as a barrier that splits the Centre City in two.

Goal 2

Goal #2	Increase urban activity and cleanliness in the Centre City to contribute to safety, health, and wellness.
Source	**Initiative**
CCP 9.1.2	There are currently areas in the Centre City where people feel uncomfortable, unsafe or threatened. Increasing street level pedestrian activity through an increased residential population and a thriving business and cultural environment is supported as a principal way to reduce the perception that an area is "unsafe".
CCP 9.5.1	The Plan supports all City led initiatives to keep the Centre City clean including ongoing support for the Mayor's "Clean to the Core" initiative.
CCP 9.5.2	The Plan also supports all initiatives led by the private sector or other community organizations such as Business Revitalizations Zones, Building Owners and Managers Association and community associations to keep private property, and the public space around private property well-maintained and clean.
Strategic Foresight	Support economic development, attractiveness for small and medium enterprises to preserve a critical mass of daily workers downtown
Strategic Foresight	Increase residential growth to make retail and amenities cost-effective
Quick Wins	Address real and perceived dangers and feeling of safety essential to activating Centre City in evenings
Quick Wins	More events that pull people onto the streets - festivals, patios on roads other than Stephen Ave
CCP 8.5.1	Encourage artistic, cultural, sport and recreational enrichment to promote a more vibrant, healthy, safe and caring community.
CCP 8.5.2	Provide, facilitate and enable services and programs that support active and creative lifestyles; and which lead to community health and wellness.

A Blueprint for Social Action	Encouraging the development of arts and culture
A Blueprint for Social Action	Improving amenities, including health and social services

Goal 3

Goal #3	Increase the affordability of housing in the Centre City.
Source	**Initiative**
CCP 4.2.5	Support the development of housing to accommodate a diverse population in neighbourhoods by: - supporting family-oriented housing; - identifying future sites for innovative and non-market housing types in neighbourhood planning exercises for East Victoria Crossing and West Park/Lower Sunalta; and - providing recreational open spaces that appeal to families with children.
TAC Feedback	A broad range of housing types for different households, income levels, age groups and lifestyles is encouraged within new development.
CCP 9.3.1	A mix of rental and owned, low-cost and high-end housing is vital to neighbourhood development, social sustainability, and social inclusion. Thus, increasing the supply of residential units in general, within the Centre City should be a primary focus of community renewal in the short-term and mid-term.
CCP 9.3.2	Housing must be available in the Centre City to accommodate population diversity in all its dimensions including household type and size, socioeconomic status, and tenure preference.
CCP 9.3.3	Given that the Centre City is currently home to a high proportion of rental units, future development and policy should seek to at least preserve and ideally increase that type of housing stock. This may include investigating measures such as the limiting of condominium conversions during periods of low rental vacancy rates.
CCP 9.3.4	Non-market (subsidized) housing and rental supplement programs for individuals, families with children, and seniors should be fully integrated into all Centre City communities. This may be in purpose built, non-market housing or integrated within market housing developments.
CCP 9.3.5	The density bonus system within the Centre City should continue to allow for the provision of affordable and non-market housing as a way of increasing density. To this end, The City will work with the development industry to develop effective measures in the long term.
CCP 9.3.6	The City should make every effort to secure/provide non-market housing or housing sites in large redevelopment areas within the Centre City.
Strategic Foresight	Secure funding and locations for publicly-provided housing, and identify appropriate incentives to encourage private provision of affordable housing.
Quick Wins	Challenges with high cost of real estate
Quick Wins	Relatively few three bedroom & sized housing units
Quick Wins	Non-luxury housing, mixed uses including different kinds of housing, housing co-ops
Quick Wins	Inclusionary zoning
A Blueprint for Social Action	Encouraging the development of a range of housing types, including non-market housing and affordable market housing,

A Blueprint for Social Action	Initiatives to increase and improve non-market housing
A Blueprint for Social Action	Revisiting the municipal tax structure to enable the Centre City to compete with new suburban communities as a viable place to live.

Goal 4

Goal #4	Support a diverse population in the Centre City.
Source	**Initiative**
TAC Feedback	Build interactions and exchange between ethno-cultural communities, Indigenous communities and Calgary's cultural organizations to develop new programming, funding and exchange opportunities.
TAC Feedback	Strengthen and expand the use and promotion of festivals and events as one of the most effective means of responding to the cultural interests and needs of diverse communities.
TAC Feedback	Increase awareness of and support low-cost access to exhibitions, performances and events, particularly targeting families, ethno-cultural and Indigenous communities.
CCP 9.4.1	Encourage the development of recreation, arts and culture that is accessible to people with all levels of physical ability and ability to pay.
CCP 9.4.2	Improve amenities, including health and social services, to meet the needs of the growing and changing population. Specific services may include basic needs such as public washrooms and basic medical services, as well as higher order needs such as child and elder care facilities and health and wellness programs.
CCP 9.4.3	Invest in community development initiatives, and specifically in strategies to increase the sense of community and social cohesion, make communities more welcoming to diversity, promote civic engagement, and address neighbourhood stigma.
CCP 9.4.4	Involve the local community and individual residents in the design of local public spaces.
Strategic Foresight	Support the "Indigenization" of space
Strategic Foresight	Prioritize First Nations and Metis cultural reflections and expression throughout the Centre City
Economic Summit #17	Explore and implement programming in Centre City that responds to the diverse interests and needs of the community, including for indigenous and ethno-cultural communities and for disadvantaged residents.
Quick Wins	Get more kids downtown
Quick Wins	Integrate schools, daycare, kids programming, and libraries
Quick Wins	Tax incentives and creative facilities for child care uses
Quick Wins	Permanent true adventure playground downtown
Quick Wins	Foster a sense of community for Centre City neighbourhoods - create new community gathering space, events, gardens
Quick Wins	Indoor daytime social spaces, resources, lockers for vulnerable and homeless populations - vacant office space?
Quick Wins	Inclusion of different income levels, health issues, addictions, social divides.
Quick Wins	Public toilets with attendants on-site
Quick Wins	Fair Entry Point for more arts events
CCP 8.5.3	Assure access to introductory and basic skill development recreation programs and services for all Centre City residents and workers, in particular children, youth, families and those who have low incomes.

CCP 8.5.4	To foster an environment where opportunities for recreation programming are available to all Calgarians; provide, advocate, encourage and promote recreation programs, services, admissions and spaces that are accessible, safe and affordable.
CCP 8.5 ACTION	Develop strategies to address the recreation needs of low-income residents in the Centre City.
A Blueprint for Social Action	Social and health programs

Goal 5

Goal #5	Support training, programs, and services in the Centre City to address the root causes of social disorder and prepare for emergencies.
Source	**Initiative**
CCP 9.1.1	As with all communities, some level of crime will always occur within the Centre City. No one strategy will solve all the problems. Therefore, crime shall be addressed with a sustained and long-term approach that uses a variety of enforcement and prevention measures including: o Increased policing levels for both the Calgary Police Service and Calgary Transit; o New methods of community policing; o Municipal bylaw education and enforcement
Strategic Foresight	Prepare for climate adaptation and disaster management. Ensure service continuity and prepare for chronic responses rather than acute responses.
Quick Wins	More police resources
Quick Wins	More non-police resources
A Blueprint for Social Action	Increasing the presence of police through community policing initiatives
A Blueprint for Social Action	Increasing security on the C-Train and, particularly, on C-Train platforms
CCP 9.1.8	Protective Services shall continue to play a lead role in managing, monitoring and planning for disaster situations.
Quick Wins	Emergency planning for residents of towers.
CCP 9.1.6	As a way to continually measure and improve safety in the Centre City the undertaking of community-based safety audits are supported and encouraged. Recommendations arising from such audits will be reviewed by The City and action plans should be developed and implemented in collaboration with other stakeholders.
CCP 9.2.2	The City will not accept homelessness as a "natural state" within the Centre City. The City will use its resources and authority to address this issue with other levels of government in a sustained and vigorous manner. This will include advocating for increased government focus on and funding for those needs and services that, when not available, can lead to homelessness. Specific examples include: affordable housing, government income and support programs, crisis shelter, mental health services, addiction counseling and rehabilitation and skills development.
CCP 9.2.3	An immediate focus should be on breaking the intergenerational cycle of family and housing instability, often associated with adult homelessness, by making concerted efforts to target interventions towards families with children who are homeless or at risk of becoming so, and to youngsters at risk of child welfare involvement.
Quick Wins	"Urban Ambassadors" communicating laws, by-laws and norms
Quick Wins	Service delivery out of public libraries

Quick Wins	Train people offering essential services (police, paramedics) for dealing w/ issues/ special circumstances in the core.

Appendix E: Questions

During review of all the inputs, several questions arose that needed to be addressed prior to finalizing the draft Plan. These questions were placed in this section and answers were provided.

Social Wellbeing

1. How can we plan and design in the Centre City to foster community to address social isolation and loneliness?

2. How can the Centre City Plan best support the Social Wellbeing Policy, Affordable Housing Strategy, Mental Health and Addiction Strategy, White Goose Flying, and the Cultural Plan for Calgary? To what degree are accessibility issues covered by other policy documents? What is the gap that is needed to be addressed in the Centre City Plan?

Crime / Safety / Prevention

3. Is there a benefit to identifying crime hot spots in the Centre City, then propose mitigating strategies?

4. How do we reduce the amount or concentration of social disorder?

5. Public Realm policies. What are these trying to do? Good public realm design to reduce perceived safety concerns? Or actual safety concerns related to pedestrian/vehicle conflicts? Does wayfinding strategy belong to this section?

6. Natural surveillance and visibility of public realm should be a key design strategy addressing both perceived and actual safety concerns.

7. Height of building 7-storeys maximum keeps eyes on the street – may be suitable for City Centre fringe areas. What do you think? Is this feasible?

Emergencies

8. How can the Centre City Plan best support emergency response times?

9. What are the major land use and infrastructure challenges for CEMA in the Centre City?

    a. How can CCP influence building standards above and beyond code to ensure they are resilient to Calgary's volatile climate, which will become more extreme in the future;

    b. How can CCP promote redundancy in critical infrastructure, such as electricity, heating, transportation, and health-care, to reduce single-points of failure in these systems that are critical to the economy and livability of the Centre City?

    c. How can CCP direct urban design controls to protect pedestrians from hostile vehicle attacks, particularly in areas that will be conducive to high pedestrian traffic or mass-gatherings.

10. Understand how urban design poses challenges for first responders when addressing both acute and chronic social disorder.

11. Identify the main improvements needed to ensure proper safety in the event of a major emergency.

12. Identify policy opportunities to reduce the exposure to and impact of emergency events on people, and businesses, and critical infrastructure in the Centre City.

    a. Reinforce the importance of including CEMA, CFD, and CPS on major downstream policy works from the CCP to ensure alignment with the outcomes of this plan.

13. There's something to be said about clustering as a planned single-point of failure. For example, if a square block was evacuated for a prolonged period….if that entire block were composed of social service agencies, the impact would be greatly exacerbated as clients don't only lose one service, but several, and the associated emergency social service operation becomes much more costly and complex. Definitely a balancing act.

Affordable Housing

14. What are the barriers to achieving affordable housing in the Centre City?

15. What are the mechanisms to encourage private provision of affordable housing in the Centre City?

16. Ideas:

- Including affordable housing with fire stations is already happening in places and is at Louise Station (4th Av SW). Fire stations are built to post disaster standards. This is one way to secure against extreme weather but expensive.
- Inclusionary housing & density bonusing with housing agreements could help to secure affordable housing.

Inclusive

17. In addition to the specific questions listed above, how inclusive is the plan? Some guiding questions:

a. What ASSUMPTIONS are you making (about the needs of people living, working and visiting the Centre City)?

b. Who is left BEHIND (whose needs are not being met by the current plan)?

c. Who did you CONSULT?

d. What DATA did you use to inform the development of the Centre City Plan (e.g.: disaggregated data)?

e. How have you ensured EQUALITY of outcomes (of people living, working and visiting the Centre City)?

18. What improvements can be made to urban design to enhance feelings of safety for people living in and visiting the Centre City. E.g. CPTED, accessibility, age-friendliness, pedestrians friendliness/pedestrian strategy, gender equity, etc.

19. How can we advance social wellbeing through equitable, welcoming, and universal public spaces?

a. Identify possible improvements to ensure livability, e.g. public bathrooms, water fountains, heated public spaces

b. Enable and encourage cultural, social, and civic amenities that meet the needs and preferences of diverse Calgarians (e.g. Calgarians of different ages, income, abilities, cultures, genders, knowledge of languages, Indigenous peoples, etc.)

Accessibility

20. Understand what goals of the 2007 Centre City Plan have been addressed through the Accessible Design Standards and Alberta Building Code, and identify next steps.