

City Planning & Policy

Led by: Director of City & Regional Planning

Service Description

Our goal is to build a resilient city of attractive, inclusive and equitable communities that meet the various lifestyle choices of Calgarians, and employment areas that support diversity in our economy. We engage with Calgarians and the development industry to develop the long-range vision for the city, and multi-community local area plans that reflect the goals of individual communities. While looking to our future, we align equity, growth funding, and investment considerations with the regeneration of our environment and continuing economic prosperity.

Service Updates

Highlights

City Planning & Policy started the City Building Program by defining the scope of work, identifying the corporate team and hiring a consultant group. The program will spearhead the Calgary Plan revisioning, Land Use Bylaw renewal, and Complete Streets policy update.

An independent consultant-led equity audit of key City planning policies and regulations was also completed. It reviewed the Municipal Development Plan, North Hill Local Area Plan, and Land Use Bylaw. Work is currently underway to integrate findings into policy initiatives.

In June, the Citywide Growth Strategy team presented its new approach to growth applications to the Infrastructure and Planning Committee. Council decision on this work is expected in July 2023.

Finally, the Local Area Plan (LAP) Program received Council approval of the Westbrook Communities Plan, first reading of the Heritage Communities Plan, and is working on the Riley, Greater Forest Lawn Communities, South Shaganappi and Chinook Communities Plan.

Challenges

Calgary faces a housing affordability crisis. Administration is addressing it to assist Calgarians and ensure Calgary continues on a strong economic path. How The City responds to this crisis may have implications for ongoing policy work and may require adjustments to the service line's workplan and initiatives. More clarity will be gained when Council discusses the Corporate Housing Strategy in September.

A continued challenge is posed by the constraints to staff capacity due to multiple overlapping initiatives drawing effort, including the City Building Program, Area Structure Plans, mobility planning, climate action and efforts towards improving Equity Diversity Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB).

The Corporate Realignment has introduced new corporate team dynamics and beneficial collaboration. However, work continues to properly transfer policy content and responsibility to new teams. This may influence the progress of initiatives, their scope and their anticipated timelines.



Measuring Our Performance

Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

➔ Progressing as planned

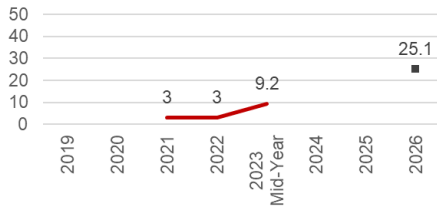
⊖ Not progressing as planned

Performance Measures

Story behind the numbers

Status

PM 2: Calgarians living in communities where a modernized Local Area Plan has been recommended to Council for approval (per cent)

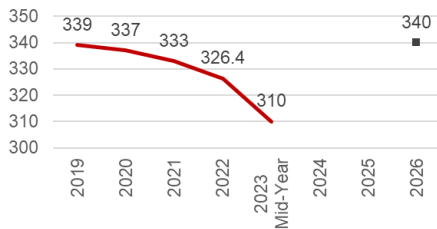


City Planning & Policy is making good progress towards completing two Local Area Plans (LAPs) this year. In April, Council approved the Westbrook Communities Plan, and the Heritage Communities Plan received its first reading in June.



In addition to the above, we are currently working on four plans in the communities of Riley, Greater Forest Lawn, Shaganappi, and Chinook Communities. All are on track to begin the next phase of work in the Fall. A fifth plan, the West Elbow Communities Plan, will also launch in the Fall.

PM 3: Land area where middle density housing is allowed, per 100,000 Calgarians (hectares)

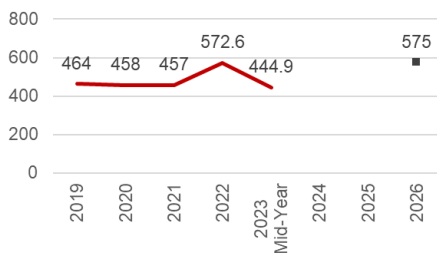


A major contributing factor to this measure is the growth of Calgary's population compared to middle density zoning availability. The city is projected to grow three per cent, while middle density zoning has increased only about one per cent annually since 2019.



Several Land Use Bylaw changes were adopted in 2023 to encourage middle density housing, including the new Housing Grade-Oriented district (H-GO). Despite enabling the market, progress continues to require approval through public hearings. Accelerated progress on this measure will require decisive action from The City and Council.

PM 4: Land area designated for industrial uses, per 100,000 Calgarians (hectares)

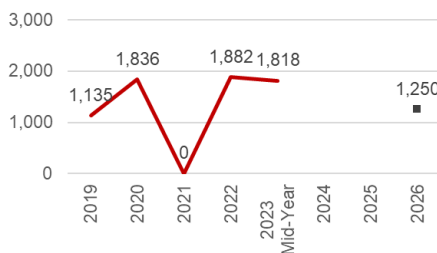


Industrial land supply has stayed relatively flat compared to previous years. Although there were increases in industrial land inventory in one area of the city, there were corresponding redesignations in other areas which have resulted in net zero growth. Industrial lands continue to face conversion pressures into non-industrial land types.



The Industrial Action Plan will address some of these concerns through regulatory improvements, investment opportunities and other means. This work requires time to implement, but once fully integrated it is anticipated to positively impact performance.

PM 5: Serviced land supply for new communities (hectares)



This measure captures the amount of land supply available to accommodate the Calgary's growth. A balanced approach enables growth while reducing The City's financial risk associated with the cost of infrastructure and service delivery.



Although there has been a reduction of inventory in 2023 compared to 2022, this is largely due to absorption where building permits have been issued, signaling that development is under way. The 2023 numbers represent approximately 10-13 years of land supply, well above the Municipal Development Plan's target of three to five years of serviced land supply.

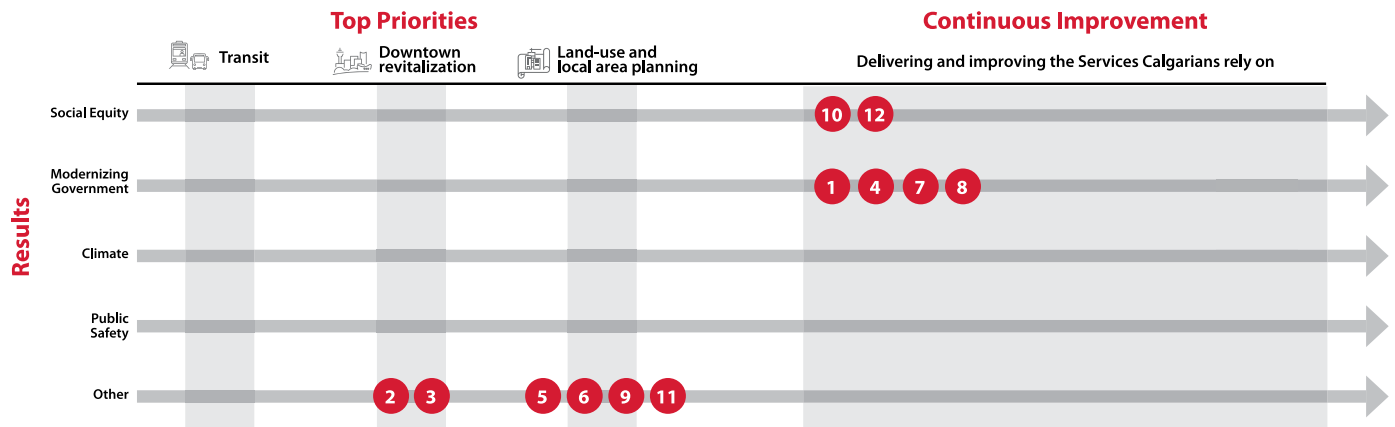
Note: Not all performance measures were reported on for this report. To see the 2022 data for performance measures, please visit [Service plans and budgets \(calgary.ca\)](https://www.calgary.ca/service-plans-and-budgets). Additional measures that will be included in the 2023 year-end performance report include:

PM 1: Downtown Surplus Office Inventory Reduction (million sq ft)



Progress on Service Delivery

Alignment with Council Refined Priorities and Result Areas



Legend



Completed



Progressing as planned












Not progressing as planned



Initiative number

| Initiative | Initiative Update | Status |
|--|--|--------|
| 1 Continue to rank as one of the most livable, attractive, and successful cities in the world, by aligning and combining the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan into one user-friendly document, The Calgary Plan. This new policy will enable us to effectively address the climate emergency, social equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, anti-racism, and Truth and Reconciliation. | The City's project team has been largely identified and contract negotiations with an external planning consultant were completed in June. In this phase of work, the team has already tackled and finalized its program charter and is currently working to clarify scope, timelines, and create communication channels to ensure collaboration and integration with other initiatives. Adjustments to this initiative may be required in the future to support The City's efforts to address the housing affordability crisis. | |
| 2 Revitalize Calgary's downtown by investing in (1) major civic projects to support trade, tourism, job creation and building strong regional economies; and (2) priority public infrastructure projects to provide necessary public amenity for a thriving community and that complement developer investment. | Downtown Strategy has committed funding for priority capital projects like Eau Claire Plaza, Olympic Plaza, Stephen Avenue, 8th Street SW, 1st Street Underpass and RiverWalk. In collaboration with the Calgary Downtown Association and Inn from the Cold, The City established the Downtown Safety Leadership table - a group tasked with taking immediate action to address public safety concerns in the downtown core. | |
| 3 Diversify the mix of uses and increase housing opportunities in the downtown core to attract new residents and increase vibrancy in the heart of our city by implementing the Downtown Calgary Development Incentive Program, which, offers financial incentives to building owners to convert surplus office space into non-office uses and homes for Calgarians. | 10 projects were approved through the Downtown Calgary Development Incentive Program and two additional projects approved through other city-supported office conversion grants. Once completed, these projects will create approximately 1,420 new homes and remove approximately 1.35M square feet of vacant office space. We have also supported several Business Improvement Area and Community Association programming initiatives like Mount Royal's AccelerateU and activated public spaces with design, like the wayfinding mural installed at the Municipal Building to connect downtown with East Village. | |

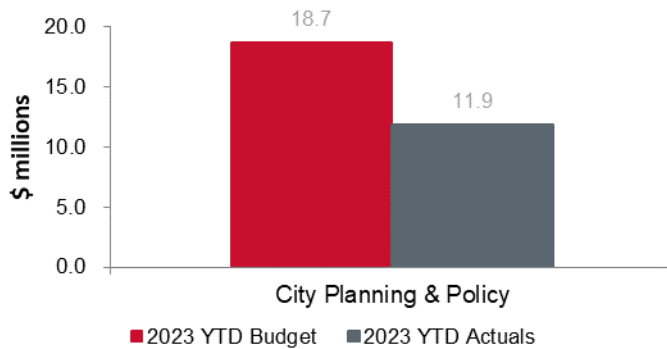
| Initiative | Initiative Update | Status |
|---|---|---|
| 4 Deliver the residential, commercial and industrial opportunities that will continue to make Calgary one of the world's most livable and attractive cities by renewing the Land Use Bylaw to implement the vision of the Municipal Development Plan more effectively, while removing barriers from desired development and business activities. | <p>The Land Use Bylaw, Calgary Plan and Complete Streets Policy and Guide renewal have been integrated into the City Building Program. The project team has been largely identified and an external planning consultant was identified in June.</p> <p>The team is currently working to clarify scope, timelines, and create communication channels to ensure collaboration and integration with other initiatives. Next steps are being reassessed due to the housing affordability crisis and a report to Council in September 2023. Council's direction may influence the timing and approach to the renewed land use bylaw.</p> |  |
| 5 Attract further investment, create jobs and support climate mitigation efforts, while supporting growing communities and business areas, by refining and improving our Citywide Growth Strategy to achieve compact, strategic and sustainable growth through targeted and balanced investments. | Work has progressed on redesigning and implementing a new process for growth applications that was presented to Infrastructure Planning Committee in June. In established areas, the team has defined the workplan for Phase 3 of the strategy. This includes delivering an update to Committee on financial tools and activating internal and external working groups. Main Streets and Transit-Oriented Design strategy are prioritizing nodes and corridors for action in support of redevelopment in established areas. Finally, the team delivered an update on the Industrial Action Plan to committee. |  |
| 6 Enable industrial growth through the modernization of Calgary's industrial policy and regulation and incentivize strategic short and long-term sector growth by pursuing growth-focused land use policy, regulatory and development initiatives to streamline city planning processes for industrial development and increase development flexibility and competitiveness. | <p>The Industrial Action Plan includes actions ranging from policy improvements, utilizing public lands to enable growth, creating awareness of competitive advantages in Calgary, and adjusting development standards. The plan was presented to Infrastructure Planning Committee and will be brought to Council in July.</p> <p>The team also received the final draft of a consultant-led report that provides an updated view of the industrial sector and future land supply. Information from this report will feed into several City initiatives and will be published publicly.</p> |  |
| 7 Enable The City to make transparent, informed, and sustainable investment decisions by evolving The City's understanding of the full financial impacts of a fast-growing city. | The evaluation criteria for growth applications has been refined to better reflect capital costs required to build communities, incorporate The City's funding from off-site levies, and make improvements to cost and revenue assumptions in the operating model. Financial impacts of established area growth continue to be explored with a report delivered to Council on the North Hill Property Tax Uplift Pilot in Q2 of 2023. Improvements to the Off-site and Centre City Levy reports include increased clarity and transparency of the \$166M investment in levy-funded growth-related capital infrastructure. |  |
| 8 Provide a consistent approach to funding new infrastructure, that supports growth and development, increases awareness of the impacts of growth decisions; provides a more sustainable funding source for complete communities; and improves timing between levy collection and infrastructure investment by refining, implementing and continuously improving Calgary's Off-site Levy Program. | The Off-site Levy Bylaw is currently under review and on track to be brought to Executive Committee by the end of the year, with a Public Hearing anticipated for early 2024. Since the start of the year, the team has engaged and consulted with industry working groups on the financial formulas or rates for the new levy bylaw. Additional broader consultation with the building and development industry is planned throughout the year until September. In addition to the Off-site Levy review, the team has also nearly completed the development of a new greenfield offsite levy calculation and rate. |  |
| 9 Support efforts in planning for up-to-date, livable, equitable and diverse communities by updating, replacing, and implementing over 250 outdated policy documents with approximately 40 new multi-community local area plans. | The LAP team has made significant headway this year. Council has approved the Westbrook Communities Plan and has given first reading to the Heritage Communities Plan. Riley and Greater Forest Lawn Communities will launch Phase Three of their plan, while Shaganappi and Chinook will launch Phase Two. Finally, West Elbow will start Phase One all in the Fall. The \$20 million Local Area Plan Fund Governance Framework is also nearing completion, with a review of projects anticipated near the end of 2023. |  |

| Initiative | Initiative Update | Status |
|--|--|---|
| 10 Build and maintain a respectful, inclusive and equitable workplace that is representative of the community by ensuring our policies and services support The City's commitment to (our employees). | Planning & Development Services has formally recognized the importance of supporting its people as a foundational goal in our strategic blueprint document, Making Places for People. This means actively engaging and integrating staff feedback, expanding professional and personal development opportunities, and enabling health, wellness, and safety amongst staff. To support this initiative the People and Culture Oversight Committee has been re-envisioned as the People Experience Committee, with supporting working groups to action focus areas like celebration & recognition and health & wellness. |  |
| 11 Increase supply of industrial and residential lands within Calgary to meet increasing demands on market supply by implementing Council-directed annexations in Rocky View County and Foothills County. | The Rocky View Annexation project expanded its scope under Council direction and the team is exploring alternatives to annexation and investigating collaborative options for servicing a joint planning area. The Foothills County Annexation progressed as planned and the team completed its first phase of public engagement in the first half of the year. However, City Council gave direction to cease work on the Foothills Annexation project on July 25th. |  |
| 12 Cultivate a food system that works with partners to ensure food is consistently available, accessible, appropriate, and healthy for all Calgarians by developing a Council-approved Food Resilience Plan. | The Food Resilience program continues to be a collaborative effort between the City Planning & Policy Service Line and Climate & Environmental Management Service Line. This program supports food security for all Calgarians by developing a Council-approved plan. With the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets, Council approved funding to expand the team in 2023. The hiring of two food strategists is currently underway. These strategists will better enable the program to reach more communities, as demand has proven to be strong. |  |



Service Updates on Financial Performance

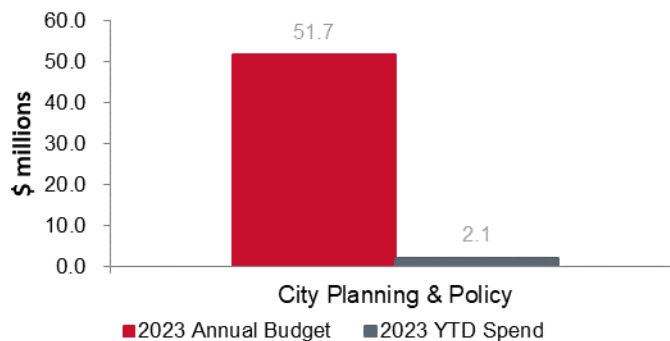
**Net Operating Budget and Actuals
as of June 30, 2023**



Operating Budget Updates - 2023 YTD net operating budget vs actuals:

City Planning & Policy has a favourable year-to-date operating variance of \$6.79 million. The main reasons that have contributed to the variance are savings in salary and wage costs from vacancies and intentionally managing the workforce, coupled with savings in consulting, contracted service providers and communication costs due mainly to timing of actual spend versus budget.

**Capital Budget and Spend as of June 30,
2023**



Capital Budget Updates - 2023 total capital budget vs 2023 YTD spend:

City Planning & Policy has spent 4% of the 2023 approved capital budget. Year-to-date, the capital expenditures have been used to advance various strategic initiatives, including Downtown Revitalization, Public Realm (EAGCS), Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Local Area Plans. The capital budget was underspent primarily due to lower spending in Downtown Revitalization and Public Realm (EAGCS) as a result of design and construction timelines, while spending in Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Local Area Plans have been delayed as these are new programs currently within the planning and onboarding stages.