



BOOK 1

An Introduction to Plan It Calgary

Final Copy of Draft for Public Consultation

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DRAFT

Part 1 – The case for change

Look into the future

Imagine yourself transported 60 years into the future. The city has grown by over 1 million people. Standing at the top of the Calgary Tower, take a look out the panoramic windows and ask yourself a few questions.

What does your city look like?

Where do you live?

Where do you work?

Where do you buy your groceries?

Where do you and your family play?

And how do you get around from place to place?

These are the questions asked by Plan It Calgary. By answering them, a new plan for Calgary's future has emerged.

What is known about the future of Calgary?

Over the next 60 to 70 years the population of Calgary is expected to more than double from 1 million people to 2.3 million. Job growth in the city will keep pace, adding over 600,000 new jobs.

On average, Calgary will have more elderly people as a portion of the population. In 60 years, the number of people 85 or older will have increased by over 1000 per cent. Calgary will still have young families, but they'll make up a smaller part of the population than they do today. People throughout North America are also having fewer children than in the past. This means that much of the city's growth will be a result of new Calgarians arriving from other countries.

More people also means more activity. Activities like working, shopping, running errands, going to school and playing at the park. The result – more travel throughout Calgary, by foot, bike, transit, truck or car. And it almost certainly means more traffic on Calgary streets.

Calgarians will need more homes and places to work. They will also need more choices in how they move around the city. Finding ways to accommodate these needs in a manner that promotes our economy, protects the environment and enhances our community is the goal of the Plan It Calgary project.

What else will affect Calgary in the future?

Calgary is a prosperous and energetic city. But like most larger cities, a variety of local and global issues will impact the way it grows. These include:

Reducing our impact on the environment

Citizens, businesses and governments are increasingly aware of the need to conserve, protect and restore the natural environment. The shape and size of a city, along with how people travel within it, has a direct impact on the natural environment. Seeking ways to reduce impacts on water, air, land and habitat will have an impact on how Calgary grows.

Lifestyle changes

Calgary will be home to an increasingly diverse population including more older people and more people from other countries. They will be looking for a wider variety of choices in how they live their daily lives. It is likely that they will want to change their housing type more than once. Even today, feedback from citizens indicates that many people may want to live, work and grow old in communities that offer a wider range of services and amenities. And they will expect travel between home, work and other services to be convenient. The City will need to provide these choices.

Public health and wellness

There is a clear connection between the design of cities and health of its citizens. In cities where homes are located far from jobs, schools and services, most people need to drive. More driving results in increased air pollution, noise, water pollution off of hard surfaces such as roads and buildings, and increases in the number of people injured in collisions. It also means that fewer people walk or ride a bike to get where they are going. Studies have shown that this leads to increased obesity, which is becoming one of the leading health problems in North America. Future development in Calgary should minimize these risks through better design of communities and transportation systems.

Cost of living

In recent years, rapid growth and demand for housing has caused the Calgary Region to become one of the least affordable places to live in Canada. The strong economy has created incredible opportunities for some people. It has also left some unable to afford adequate housing, or struggling to deal with high transportation costs. Providing a wide range of housing choices for all income groups in places that also provide a range of transportation choices is a key challenge in planning the city.

Fiscal constraints

Growth costs money. No matter how Calgary grows, it will require investments by The City and taxpayers to accommodate another 1.3 million people. The City has a responsibility to Calgarians to spend their money wisely. Much of the cost from growth comes from infrastructure like roads, transit, water pipes and sewers, fire stations and associated staffing costs. Evidence shows that the larger the land area covered by a city, the more these costs rise. The City must make smart decisions about where and when to grow to be financially responsible.

Why plan land use and transportation at the same time?

In 2006, City Council requested that Calgary's land use planning and transportation planning be integrated. In the past, land use and transportation plans were often separate. Although each considered the needs of the other, there were some conflicting priorities and missed opportunities.

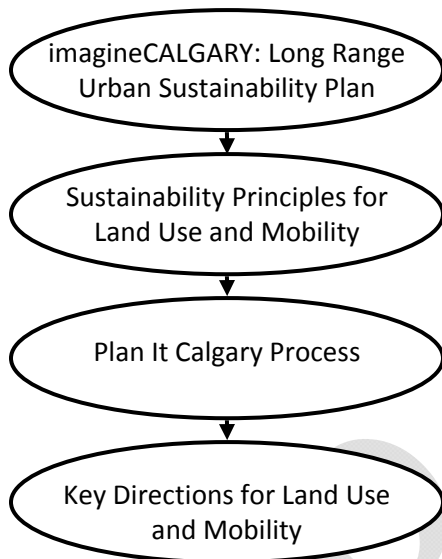
Land use and transportation have a significant impact on each other. Where land uses (homes, jobs, services and amenities) are located impacts how people travel. If destinations are far apart, the car is often the only convenient way to get around. If destinations are closer together, walking, cycling and transit can become convenient options. Similarly, the type and location of transportation infrastructure The City builds (roads, transit, bike facilities, etc.) influences where homes and businesses can locate. Freeways like Deerfoot Trail are useful for moving large volumes of cars and trucks, but are not good places for houses or local shops.

Combining land use and transportation planning allows The City to make smarter decisions. The City can identify places with potential to grow, both in the existing built area and at the city's edge, and match them with the appropriate transportation infrastructure. The City can also see where upgrading transportation can make parts of the city more attractive for businesses, and make living in Calgary more affordable.

What guided the creation of the new plan for Calgary?

With all of these issues to consider, it was important for Plan It Calgary to have clear direction. This direction came from City Council.

In addition to Calgary's Triple Bottom Line policy (which requires all City projects to consider the needs of the economy, environment and community), Plan It Calgary used the following Council-approved sources to guide the development of the new plan for Calgary. Each source lower in the diagram is more detailed than the one above, and explains how to achieve the intent of the previous sources.



imagineCALGARY: Long Range Urban Sustainability Plan

From the outset, Plan It Calgary was directed to use the vision of imagineCALGARY – the blueprint for creating a sustainable city and exceptional quality of life for generations to come. More than 18,000 Calgarians participated in the development of this vision, making it the largest community visioning process of its kind anywhere in the world.

imagineCALGARY Vision

For thousands of years, people have met at the confluence of two vital rivers to imagine and realize their futures. Together, we have built a city of energy, born of a powerful convergence of people, ideas and place. Together, we continue to imagine Calgary, making a community in which:

- We are each connected to one another. Our diverse skills and heritage interweave to create a resilient communal fabric, while our collective spirit generates opportunity, prosperity and choice for us all.
- We are each connected to our places. We treasure and protect our natural environment.
- Magnificent mountain vistas and boundless prairie skies inspire each of us to build spaces worthy of their surroundings.
- We are each connected to our communities. Whether social, cultural or physical, these communities are mixed, safe and just. They welcome meaningful participation from everyone and people move freely between them.
- We are each connected beyond our boundaries. We understand our impacts upon and responsibilities to others. Our talent and caring, combined with a truly Canadian sense of citizenship, make positive change across Alberta, throughout Canada and around the world.
- We can make it happen!

Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility

These principles were derived from the imagineCALGARY vision, as well as current City of Calgary policy direction, and Smart Growth principles employed by many North American cities. At the start of the Plan It Calgary project in January of 2007, City Council approved the use of these Principles for development of the new plan for Calgary. The Principles are:

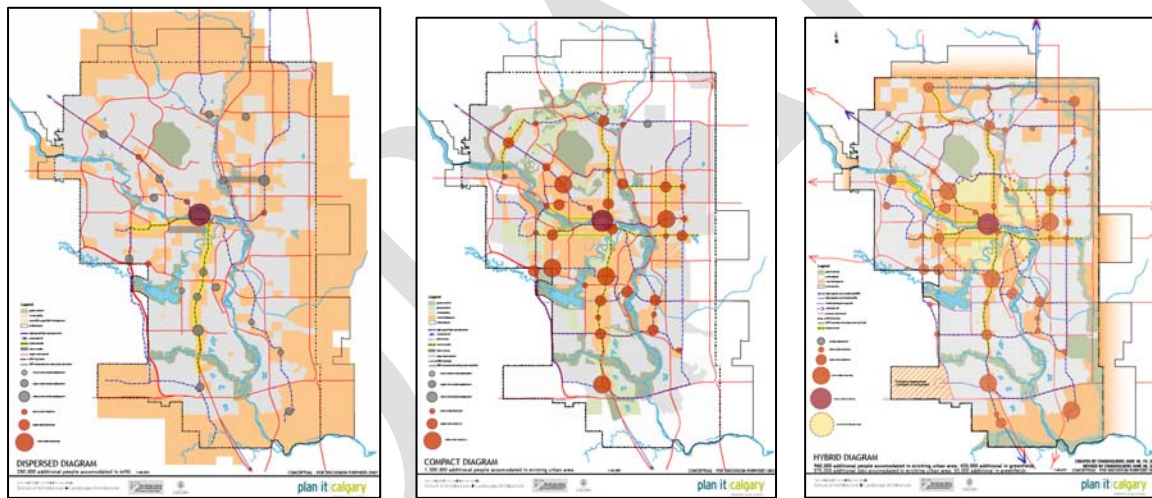
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable environments.
- Foster distinct, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Provide a variety of transportation options.
- Preserve open space, agricultural land, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
- Mix land uses.
- Strategically direct and manage redevelopment opportunities within existing areas.
- Support compact development.
- Connect people, goods and services locally, regionally and globally.
- Provide transportation services in a safe, effective, affordable and efficient manner that ensures reasonable accessibility to all areas of the city for all citizens.
- Utilize green infrastructure and buildings.

Plan It Calgary process

To understand how Calgary could grow differently and achieve the imagineCALGARY vision and Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility, Plan It Calgary created three scenarios. One scenario showed what Calgary would be if it continued to build outwards, while another examined what would happen to Calgary if all new growth occurred in the existing parts of the city. The third scenario fell between the first two, with growth occurring both at the edge and in existing parts of the city.

The Plan It Calgary Scenarios

Plan It Calgary used a process called “scenario planning” to understand the different ways that Calgary could grow by 1.3 million people in the future. Three scenarios were created. The first, called Dispersed, was based on current City policies and saw Calgary double to twice its current land area. A second scenario, called Compact, tried to see if all the growth could happen in existing parts of the city. This scenario would mean many changes to existing communities. The third scenario, called Hybrid, took lessons from the other two scenarios. It gave an idea of what Calgary could look like if some growth happened in existing communities, and the rest went to the edges.



Dispersed

Compact

Hybrid

The scenario process was used by Plan It Calgary to understand what elements of city design would have the greatest impact on how the city would look and operate after growing to 2.3 million people. Over 20 indicators that measured these design features (such as how many people would be within walking distance of rapid transit) were developed. Plan It Calgary compared all three scenarios, and took the best elements of each one to develop the Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility. Research conducted by a variety of urban planning and transportation experts on subjects like housing affordability, health and urban form, and demographics was also used to develop the new plan for Calgary.

Between January of 2007 and October of 2008, over 5,000 Calgarians were engaged by Plan It Calgary. Using a workbook and questionnaire citizens were able to comment on each of the three scenarios created in 2007. A telephone survey of Calgarians provided additional feedback. In 2008, a survey was conducted asking Calgarians to give Plan It Calgary their opinions on the Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility. Key stakeholders and the public also had the opportunity to provide detailed feedback about the Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility. Over 80 per cent of Calgarians who responded indicated support, and input from the survey was used to refine the Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility before they were presented to City Council for approval. During 2007 and 2008, stakeholder groups (such as the development and building industries, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, Sustainable Calgary, the Federation for Calgary Communities, and others) were engaged in a series of workshops to develop one of the three scenarios and to examine more detailed planning options for new or redeveloping communities.

Plan It Calgary Research

Extensive research was conducted by leading experts in urban planning and transportation for Plan It Calgary. This research, along with the results from the Plan It Calgary scenarios, guided the creation of the new plan for Calgary. Topics included:

- A Context for Change Management: Demographic Changes
- The Built Environment and Health & Wellness
- Housing Affordability and Smart Growth in Calgary
- Commercial and Retail Strategies
- Green Infrastructure for Streets
- Energy Mapping in Calgary
- 17th Avenue SE Case Study Charrette
- Greenfield Community Case Study Charrette

City of Calgary staff also completed several pieces of research, including the opportunities and challenges of growth, ways to change the layout of streets in future communities (called “connectivity”), and new design guidelines for streets.

Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility

The Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility are the strategies that need to be followed to achieve the Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility and the imagineCALGARY vision. In November of 2008, City Council approved the Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility for use in developing the long-range land use and transportation plan for Calgary. They are:

1. Achieve a balance of growth between established and greenfield communities
2. Provide more choice within complete communities
3. Direct land use change within a framework of nodes and corridors
4. Link land use decisions to transit
5. Increase mobility choices
6. Develop a Primary Transit Network
7. Create complete streets
8. Optimize infrastructure

So what do these mean for Calgarians? The next part of this booklet explains the steps Calgary must take to reach its vision. These are called the “steps towards change”.

Part 2 – The steps towards change

The steps described below explain what changes Calgarians can expect to see in the city over the next 60 years. It may take time for some of them to be noticeable, since many decisions about growth and investment over the next few years have already been made. Changes in the built form of the city are viewed in decades, not in years. Over time, the changes will become more obvious, and will move Calgary closer to achieving the imagineCALGARY vision, the Sustainability Principles and Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility.

Slowing growth at the edge

Today, most of the growth in Calgary happens at the edge of the city. Although some condominiums and apartments have been built in the downtown or near major transit stations, most development occurs in suburban communities. Most North American cities are experiencing the same trends, and the problems that come with “urban sprawl”. These include:

- Increased use of valuable agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas for residential and other uses.
- Rising costs to governments and taxpayers for infrastructure (roads, transit, water pipes and sewers and fire stations) and for the costs of operating and maintaining these facilities as the city expands in size.
- Increased traffic congestion since people must drive from new communities to jobs and services located farther and farther away from home.

Over the past 100 years, Calgary has become a great city to live, work and play. In the future, Calgary must grow responsibly to avoid the problems of urban sprawl to keep this a great place to live for current Calgarians while attracting new businesses and citizens to our city.

Some existing areas of the city can accommodate more homes, jobs and services than they do today. By planning for these areas early, and focusing infrastructure spending in the right places, Calgary can increase the amount of growth that will happen in existing parts of the city. Over time, the amount of growth on the edges of the city will slow down.

The Plan It Calgary target is for half of all new growth over the next 60 to 70 years to happen in existing parts of the city. This change in the way the city grows will take time. Over the next 10 years, most of the growth in Calgary will continue to be at the edge of the city. Within 30 years, the target is for a third of all new growth to occur in existing parts of Calgary. The “Strategic Framework for Growth and Change” described in the Municipal Development Plan (MDP – see Book 2) will guide growth decisions and infrastructure spending towards this target.

Growing In – Activity Centres and Corridors

Plan It Calgary identifies that half of the growth in Calgary over the next 60 to 70 years should occur in existing parts of the city. But that doesn't mean it will happen in every part of the city.

The plan recommends that most of the growth occur in relatively small, dense urban centres located near major transit stations. The plan refers to these as Activity Centres, since they will be lively places where the most concentrated activity (working, shopping and living) will happen in Calgary. There will be wide variety of housing for different income levels, a range of jobs and many of the services a person would need within walking distance. Activity Centres will come in different sizes. Some will be almost like a small city centre, while others will be smaller centres with townhomes and low-rise apartments and shops that are appropriate beside or within residential neighbourhoods. The larger Activity Centres will also have the best transit service in the city, with multiple high-frequency transit routes. Future examples of some larger Activity Centres include:

- The University of Calgary and Brentwood LRT station area
- Chinook LRT station area
- Westbrook Mall

Some streets in Calgary can also change into higher-density areas that offer a range of housing, jobs and services. The plan refers to these as Corridors. Corridors are designed to transition into the residential neighbourhoods to either side, and provide many amenities and social gathering places for local residents. The streets would be designed to offer wider sidewalks and be made more attractive places to walk. These Corridors would also benefit from frequent transit service, leading to many of the nearby Activity Centres. Corridors would also come in a variety of sizes. Calgary already has several smaller Corridors, like Kensington Road and 17th Avenue SW. Examples of some future Corridors include:

- Centre Street (from 12th Avenue N to McKnight Boulevard)
- 17th Avenue SE (from 28th Street to 52nd Street)
- MacLeod Trail (from Anderson Road to the downtown)

So what does this mean for existing residential communities? By putting most growth in Activity Centres and Corridors, it means that most residential communities will stay relatively unchanged. In fact, single family homes in existing communities will continue to be great places for new families to move into in the future. The shops and services in nearby Activity Centres and Corridors will also make it easier for people living in residential communities to meet their daily needs close to home.

More information about future Activity Centres and Corridors can be found in the MDP (Book 2).

Creating complete communities

What makes up a complete community, and how is that different from what the city has now?

Plan It Calgary considers a community “complete” if it has the following features:

- A wide range of housing choices (single family houses, townhouses, apartments)
- Neighbourhood stores, services and public facilities (like schools, libraries and recreational centres)
- Attractive design of buildings and streets
- Easy access to public spaces and parks
- Convenient and quick access to good transit service
- A well connected network of streets, walkways and pathways that make it easy to get around the neighbourhood
- A healthy and sustainable habitat for local wildlife

Some communities in Calgary have these features today. But others have only a few. Many of the communities built in the last 30 years have limited types of housing, mostly single family homes. As a result, if people want to change the type of home they have (perhaps after the children have moved away), they often have to leave their community and neighbours to find the home they want somewhere else. Many communities also lack local shops and services, relying instead on retail centres located further away. Schools in newer communities often take years to be built, and some are never built at all. Creating the opportunity for future communities to have these essential elements is a high priority for Plan It Calgary.

Most communities built in recent years also have winding streets and cul-de-sacs. These do a good job of preventing traffic from cutting through communities. But they also make it very hard to get between places our own neighbourhoods, whether we’re driving, walking or riding a bike. Many cities in North America are finding new ways to design streets, walkways and pathways to make it easier to move around communities. Calgary can learn from these examples.

The policies and actions developed by Plan It Calgary address these issues to promote the development of more complete communities in the future.

Providing more transportation choices

Choice and convenience are very important to Calgarians; choice in where to live and work, but also in how to travel in our city.

The most popular and easiest way to get around Calgary today is the car. This is partly because the car is more convenient than transit in many parts of the city. In most communities, transit only runs frequently during rush hour, and the best service leads to the downtown. Today, using the car lets people travel whenever they want, and go pretty much anywhere. Walking and cycling can be as flexible as the car. The problem is that you can only walk or ride your bike

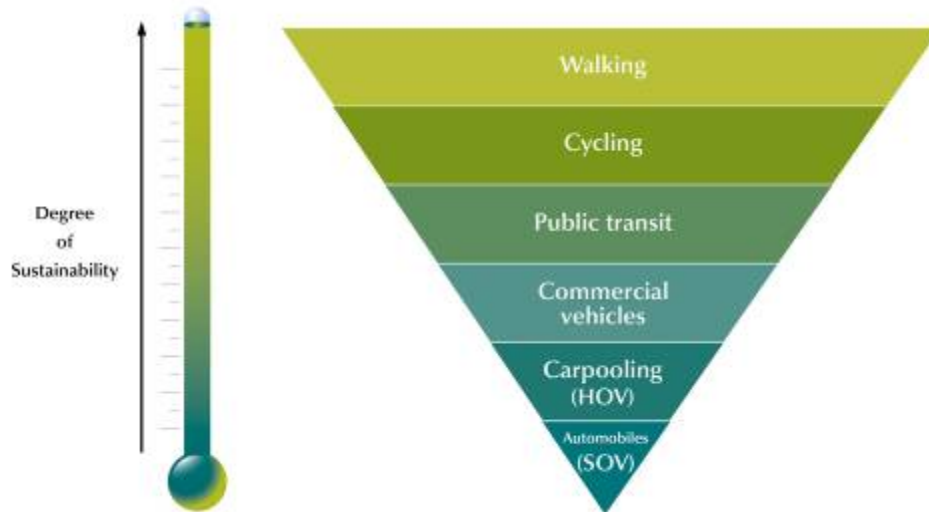
so far. If the places you want or need to reach are further away, then walking and cycling aren't convenient. And if sidewalks or pathways are in poor condition or covered with snow all winter, the trip becomes even less convenient.

One of the goals of Plan It Calgary is to make all types of transportation more convenient so that they become real choices for Calgarians. Creating Activity Centres, Corridors and complete communities, where destinations are close together, is a critical part of making walking, cycling and transit convenient. Calgary must also provide new transit services that make using transit fast, frequent, reliable and comfortable in many parts of the city. Calgary needs to build better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists that connect Activity Centres and Corridors, and make sure they are well maintained all year.

The car will also continue to be a popular choice, and at the edges of the city it will continue to be the most convenient. The City needs to find cost-effective ways to keep traffic moving. The City also has to think about the needs of commercial trucks and service vehicles (plumbers, delivery vehicles, recycling trucks, etc.). Keeping these vehicles moving keeps our economy moving.

The Transportation Hierarchy

Achieving the Plan It Calgary vision means changing the way Calgary thinks about transportation. To do this, Plan It Calgary introduced The Transportation Hierarchy.



The Transportation Hierarchy puts walking, cycling and transit at the top because they are the most sustainable modes of transportation. They use the least energy per person, usually take up less space and cost less than driving.

What does this mean? For one, Calgary will keep planning for the car. The car will always be a popular and convenient way to travel. But providing for the car shouldn't make it harder to get around by foot, bike or transit. It also means Calgary needs more and better quality facilities for walking, cycling and transit than in the past.

The policies and actions contained in the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP – see Book 3) ensure that Calgary will have better quality and more types of transportation in the future.

Enhancing transit service

Can transit be a convenient, or even preferred, way to travel around Calgary? The answer is yes. But transit service in Calgary needs to be enhanced and expanded to make this possible.

The CTrain, Calgary's light rail transit (LRT) system, is one of the best in North America. All of the LRT lines feed the downtown. This works well for people who work downtown but isn't a great way to get to other destinations in our city. Plan It Calgary recommends the creation of a new "Primary Transit Network" that includes the LRT, but adds more high-quality transit routes across the city.

The Primary Transit Network could include a mix of LRT lines (including new lines to the west, north and southeast), bus rapid transit (BRT) routes, streetcars, express buses and mainline bus

routes. These routes will connect the various Activity Centres and Corridors across Calgary. The routes will be as direct as possible, and benefit from priority at traffic lights, and in some cases from lanes designed to get buses out of congestion. Buses and trains on the Primary Transit Network will come every 10 minutes (or sooner), 15 hours a day, 7 days a week. This means you can leave your home or job at your convenience and know that a bus or train will arrive within minutes.

In 60 to 70 years, the plan expects half of all Calgarians will live within walking distance of the Primary Transit Network. So what about everyone else? Providing transit service to all Calgarians is important, particularly for people who can't drive (such as children, people with certain disabilities, and those who cannot afford a car). Calgary Transit will continue to offer regular bus, feeder bus and shared-ride services for people with disabilities to virtually every community in Calgary to make sure everybody has the ability to travel in our city.

More information on the future of transit in Calgary can be found in the CTP (Book 3).

Creating complete streets

What is meant by the term “complete” street? It is a street that:

- moves people, by foot, bike, bus or car
- is a place where people can live, work, shop and play
- supports the natural environment
- moves trucks, services and our economy

Very few streets in Calgary, or any city, can do all of these things perfectly. However, over the last 50 years many of the streets built in Calgary have put top priority on the car and commercial trucks. As a result, many of the streets in the city are uncomfortable places for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

Some of the larger roads in the city, such as Deerfoot Trail and Glenmore Trail, need to give priority to cars and commercial trucks. They are designed to move traffic quickly across long distances. These larger roads connect major employment centres and industrial areas that are easiest to reach by car. They are also designed to fit the heavy commercial trucks that move large volumes of goods around our city and beyond.

As new Activity Centres and Corridors begin to grow, Calgary will need new types of streets to go with them. These streets will need to be more complete than most that have been built before. Shops and homes will line the streets in these areas, and that means more people walking and using bikes. They will be attractive places where people can enjoy spending time, either browsing shop windows or sitting with a cup of coffee. With so many transit routes connecting these places, these streets will also need to make it easy to get to the bus or train. Businesses will need regular deliveries, and that means good access for trucks. And the city will

still need space for cars on these streets, along with parking spaces that don't interfere with all the other activities.

All streets, from larger roads like Deerfoot Trail to small ones like Kensington Road, can also use what is called "green infrastructure". This includes practices that reduce the amount of polluted water that runs off our streets, but also trees that absorb the carbon dioxide from our cars.

New ways to design more complete streets are included in the CTP (Book 3).

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Part 3 –THE MDP AND CTP

The result of the Plan It Calgary project is a new integrated long-range land use and transportation plan for Calgary. The plan shows how our city can grow differently to achieve the vision of imagineCALGARY, the Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility and the subsequent Key Directions for Land Use and Mobility. To meet existing provincial legislation and be adopted by City Council, the policies and actions of Plan It Calgary have been separated into two documents.

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) define and explain the long range plan for Calgary in detail. They must be used together to guide both long term planning decisions, and shorter term growth and investment decisions. Where necessary, each document refers to related sections in the other document.

Book 2 – The MDP provides Calgary’s statutory policies for future land uses and growth Decisions. It describes future land uses, and maps where they will be located across Calgary. This includes Activity Centres, Corridors, residential communities, industrial and commercial areas and natural and open spaces. The MDP also outlines key transportation networks and infrastructure that will be required to support future growth. The Strategic Framework for Growth and Change is contained in the MDP, and will guide The City’s growth and investment decisions. The MDP provides an urban structure map and a map for growth and change. The MDP also provides policies on a variety of other topics as required by the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

Book 3 – The CTP contains policies to guide the development of Calgary’s transportation networks over the next 60 to 70 years. A variety of other important issues are discussed in the CTP, such as safety and improving the quality of service for all types of transportation. Key actions are also identified that should be finished over the next decade to start moving Calgary towards the long range plan. The CTP provides maps for new transportation networks, including cycling, transit, trucking and carpooling. It also shows where new types of streets will be built, or rebuilt, in the future.