

Calgary



Downtown West Revitalization Strategy

Publishing Information

Title: **Downtown West Revitalization Plan**

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ISC: Unrestricted

Web: **calgary.ca**

SR: 18-00854941

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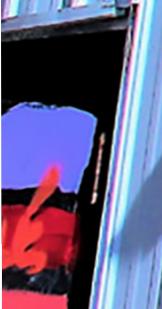
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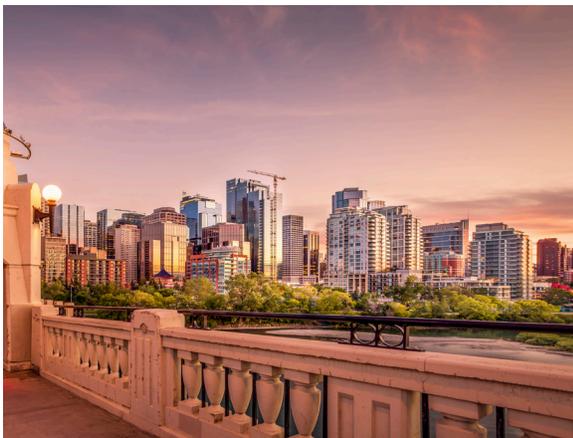
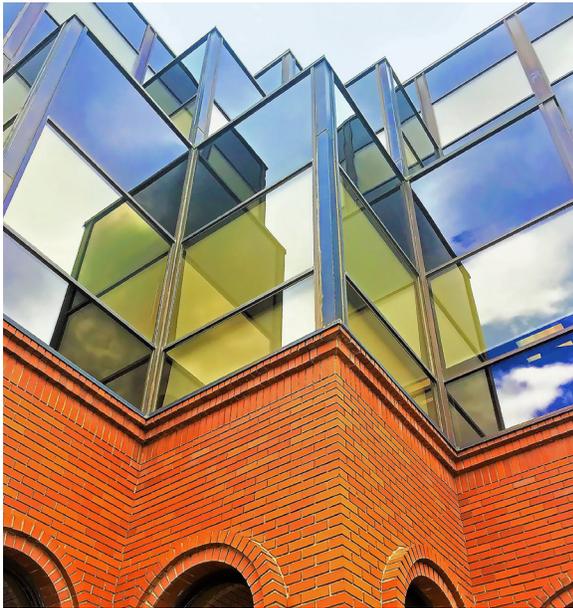
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Introduction



Downtown West has the potential to be one of the best parts of Centre City and Calgary: Its dense residential population; riverfront location; access to two LRT stations that link to each line of transit service; its regional attraction of Shaw Millenium Park; and its educational and cultural assets of the University of Calgary downtown campus, the Mewata Armoury and the future renovated art space of the old Planetarium - all invaluable assets that provide the foundation for an interesting, vibrant community.

However, in its present state, the west end remains largely disconnected from the rest of Centre City, and lacks amenities and draw to the area. Downtown West is also the last remaining neighbourhood of the Centre City to gain traction in both the development industry and the local economy. It trails other communities in a number of areas, including development activity, public investment, and property values. While Downtown West is the densest neighbourhood by area, and is home to nearly 2,800 Calgarians, these residents currently need to leave their community to serve many of their daily needs.

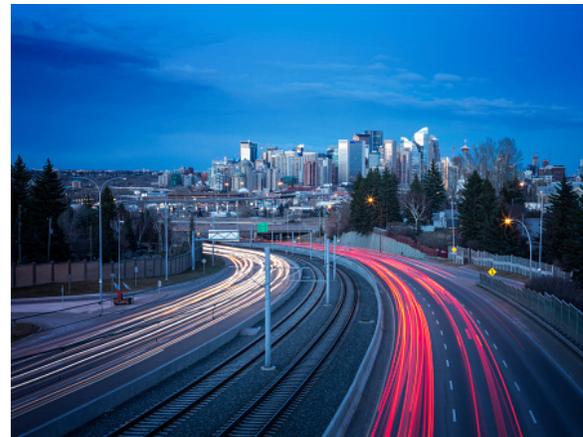
The purpose of the Downtown West Revitalization Strategy is to provide an implementation plan with short-term, low-cost initiatives that can provide immediate benefit and draw to the area, as well as longer term strategies and actions.

This document focuses on five essential pillars to the revitalization of the Downtown West community:

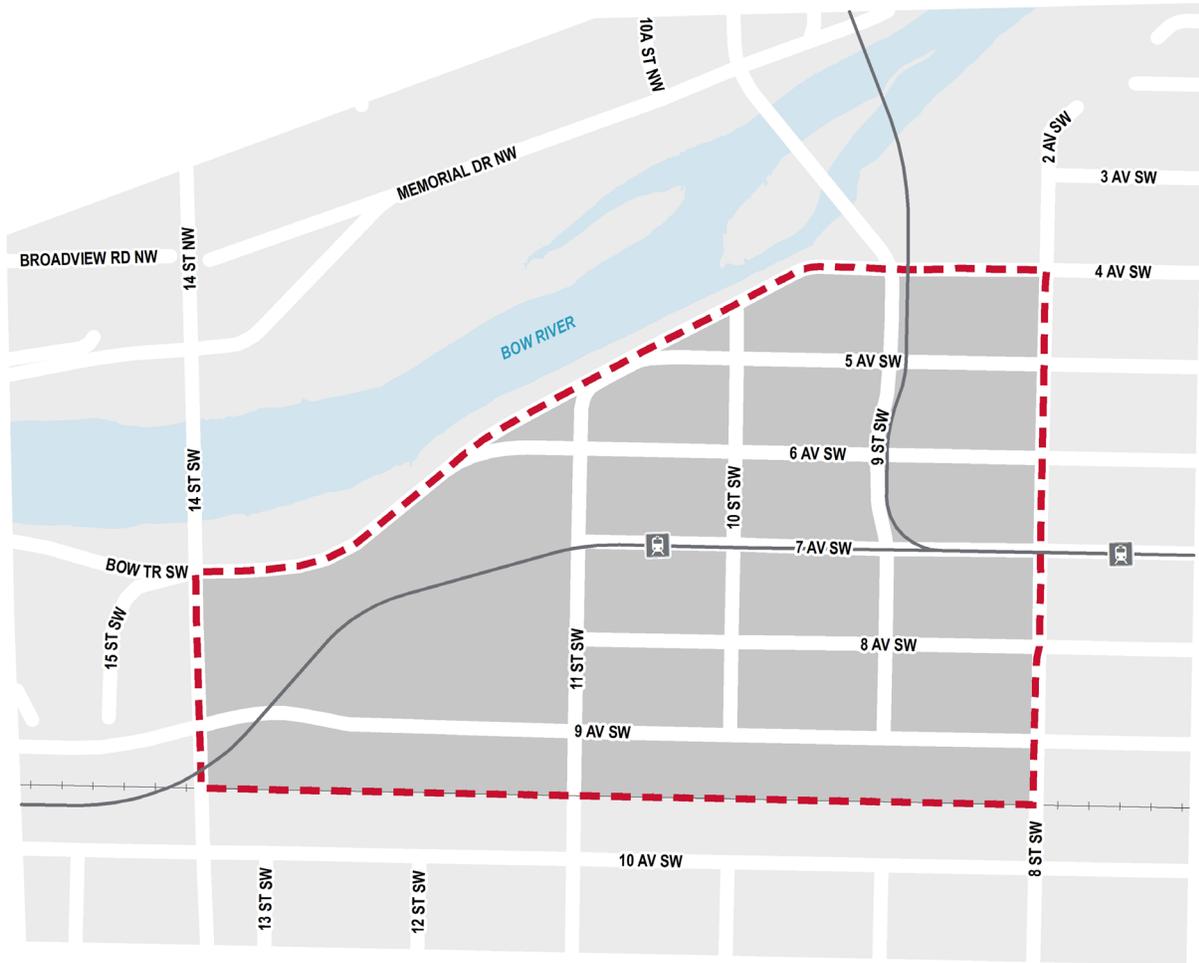
The Local Economy, The Physical Environment, Neighbourhood Vibrancy, Connections & Places and Community Identity. Within each of these areas, planned and proposed strategies and actions are outlined, some of which are already complete or underway.

While the Revitalization Strategy will be led by The City's Urban Strategy team, the success of the plan relies on partnerships, both internally and externally, and certain initiatives may be better executed and managed by other stakeholders. The foundation of this plan is the principle that 'we are better together', and the most benefit and impact will be realized for the community through a collective effort.

Downtown West is ripe for redevelopment and represents the greatest potential for development activity and economic stimulus in the Centre City. The strategies proposed in the Downtown West Strategy will help support existing residents and businesses, stimulate interest and attention in the area, and show that the City of Calgary believes in Downtown West and sees the value in investing in this community.



Downtown West Plan Area



 LRT Station  LRT Alignment  Revitalization Area

1 The Local Economy



Vision

Downtown West is a vibrant community for entrepreneurs, local businesses, culinary venues, office space, and cultural and arts enterprise. It offers a range of services and amenities to serve the needs and wants of both residents and visitors alike.



Challenge

Residents currently have to leave the community to meet their daily needs. The current business mix is dominated by fast food restaurants, convenience-type retail, and distribution retail. There is a clear gap in both the traditional restaurant and retail sector. There is very little draw for both residents and visitors to the neighbourhood for leisure activities, such as shopping, dining, and entertainment.

Opportunity

There is opportunity to fill in some of the amenity gaps by attracting new business to locate through incentive programs, marketing tactics, and support for catalysts, incubators and testing grounds.

Local Economy Strategies and Actions		Target	Status	Timing
1	Create and implement a new use rule across all land use districts of the area to allow for temporary retail, pop-up shops, culinary space and cultural enterprise to test the market.	A flexible temporary use rule is applied to all land use districts.	Underway (City-wide)	2019
2	Conduct a business gap analysis, comparing existing tenancy in Downtown West to the tenancy of surrounding Business Improvement Areas and vibrant communities.	Existing business license inventory and desired business list created.	Underway	2019
3	Investigate the potential for a Business Improvement Area (BIA) to represent Downtown West.	Connect Downtown West Community Association with the Calgary Downtown Association (the BIA for the Downtown Core). Conduct stakeholder meetings to explore BIA formation.	Underway	2019
4	Ensure integration of Downtown West in any strategy addressing Downtown vacancies.	Connect with Calgary Economic Development and other organizations working on Downtown vacancies.	Underway	On-going
5	Investigate development of a vacant retail space inventory in Downtown West.	Determine value of proposal.	Unfunded	TBD
6	Develop a Tenant Mix Incentive Program based on business gap analysis to incent specific business types to locate within the neighbourhood.	Program created and funded. 3 desired tenants located within 3 years of program creation.	Unfunded	TBD

- Confirmed projects
- Seeking partnerships to proceed
- Long-term/currently unfunded

2 The Physical Environment



Vision

Downtown West is an attractive neighbourhood, with clean and well-maintained streetscapes and buildings. Public areas are well-lit and people feel safe to be out after dark.



Challenge

Downtown West is an older community, with aging infrastructure and building stock. Little has been done over the decades to maintain the physical environment and beautify the area.

Opportunity

There is opportunity for Downtown West to become a beautiful and attractive place for residents, visitors and prospective business. With the recent development projects and planned improvements, the neighbourhood appearance will start to shift and reflect public and private investment.

Physical Environment Strategies & Actions		Target	Status	Timing
7	Develop a surface infrastructure inventory, ranking the conditions of sidewalks, boulevards, bus stops, etc., throughout the neighbourhood.	Map and spreadsheet are created providing a snapshot of current conditions.	Complete	2018
8	Develop a Facade Improvement Program to incent building owners to renovate and restore building facades.	Program funding for 1 year pilot & minimum 1 application submitted.	Underway	2018/2019
9	Review current lighting conditions at dark and develop a map of areas that could benefit from additional lighting.	Map complete with priority areas identified.	Complete	2018
10	From infrastructure inventory, prioritize areas for repair and improvement.	3 areas are approved and funded for upgrades.	Underway	2019
11	Investigate community interest and commitment for a bi-annual community clean-up event.	Research and provide precedent examples to Community Association and gauge interest.	Underway	2019
12	Administer Flower Pot program along key pedestrian corridor(s).	Find partner(s) to continue program.	Underway	2019

- Confirmed projects
- Seeking partnerships to proceed
- Long-term/currently unfunded

3 Neighbourhood Vibrancy



Vision

Downtown West is a fun and energetic community, with unique elements that provide visual interest throughout the area. The neighbourhood feels bright and lively.



Challenge

One of the biggest hindrances to vibrancy in Downtown West is the amount of vacant lots, which amounts to nearly half the total area. These lots create dead zones and large breaks in the urban fabric, and full build out of the community is still decades away.

Opportunity

There is opportunity to activate and program some of these vacant spaces for public art, events, and other community benefit uses. There is also opportunity to inject some life and colour into the neighbourhood through simple measures such as mural art and urban animation tactics.

Neighbourhood Vibrancy Strategies and Actions		Target	Status	Timing
13	Facilitate the temporary use and activation of vacant City-owned lands located between 4th & 5th Avenues SW, prior to their development. (Location indicated on map)	Site is cleaned up and graded. Outdoor furniture is placed.	Underway	2019
14	Canvas building owners on new temporary use rules that will allow for pop-up retail and other businesses to test the market.	Once bylaw change has been made, ensure all building owners with vacant commercial space are aware of the program	Pending bylaw changes	2019
15	Continue the Community Mural Program.	Identify lead to administer program in 2019.	Underway	2019
16	Develop an Underutilized Land Activation program.	Encourage 2 events or activities to occur on vacant or underutilized land in Downtown West.	Unfunded	2020

- Confirmed projects
- Seeking partnerships to proceed
- Long-term/currently unfunded

4 Connections and Places



Vision

Downtown West is well-connected to adjacent communities of Downtown Core, Beltline, and Kensington. It is regionally connected through transit access, cycle tracks and an upgraded pathway system. These connections lead to interesting places and urban nodes within the community.



Challenge

Despite its central location, Downtown West feels disconnected from the rest of Centre City. The physical and perceived barriers of the CPR tracks to the south, Bow Trail to the west, and the River to the north make pedestrian connectivity challenging.

Opportunity

Downtown West is a prime location with the amenities of the riverfront, access to two LRT stations that connect in all directions, and adjacent to the Downtown Core. There is opportunity to take advantage of its location and showcase its assets through enhanced connections and by creating much-needed community places and activity nodes.

Connections and Places Strategies and Actions		Target	Status	Timing
17	Maintain Banner Program along 10th St Bridge.	Centre city public art banners are installed in 2019 with an updated design.	Underway	2019
18	Develop a master plan for Stephen Avenue extending from City Hall to Mewata Armoury.	Masterplan complete.	Underway	2019
19	Realign 4th Avenue SW to be more efficient and to allow for an enhanced riverfront and pathway connection.	Project Initiated.	Underway	2019
20	Establish the Old Planetarium as an important and active cultural hub for citizens and tourists.	Renovations complete and tenant established.	Underway	TBD
21	Advance the approved 8th Street Masterplan with a construction schedule.	Secure funding for construction.	Unfunded	TBD
22	New streetscape design for 11th St SW, which includes pedestrian & cycle underpass connection under CPR tracks.	Masterplan complete.	Unfunded	TBD
23	Investigate the potential for an Illumination Program on 10th St Bridge.	Determine project scope and costing.	Unfunded	TBD
24	Investigate the need for a pedestrian / cycle overpass from River-front pathway Bow Tr into the community.	Include in scope of River-front pathway design.	Unfunded	TBD

- Confirmed projects
- Seeking partnerships to proceed
- Long-term/currently unfunded

5 Community Identity



Vision

Downtown West is known across Calgary as a distinct and unique community, with a definitive sense of place and arrival when you visit the area. It is considered a destination neighbourhood, and there is a strong feeling of community pride.



Challenge

Downtown West does not have a distinctive brand or identity. There is no sense of place in the neighbourhood, and no indication that you have arrived to a unique, and special community. There is no cohesion among development, businesses, or streetscapes.

Opportunity

With so much vacant land and potential for significant future development, there is great opportunity to establish a brand and identity that can be integrated and supported through these projects. Developing a Downtown West brand that can be reflected through a banner program and community signage, and can be incorporated into the Community Association, local business, development projects and neighbourhood marketing tactics, will establish a foundation for identity that the community can build on.

Community Identity		Target		Timing
25	Establish a forum for business owners, community members and other stakeholders to network and collaborate.	Stakeholder group established and meetings initiated.	Complete	On-going
26	Create a City of Calgary website designated to Downtown West and on-going projects and programs.	Webpage created with content and links.	Complete	On-going
27	Develop a Brand Strategy with major community partners and facilities.	Funding secured for branding effort with partnerships in private sector.	Pending partnerships & funding	2019
28	Establish a Banner Program for Downtown West with community brand and logo.	Banner program funded and installed in key locations.	Unfunded	TBD

- Confirmed projects
- Seeking partnerships to proceed
- Long-term/currently unfunded

6 A Coordinated Strategy



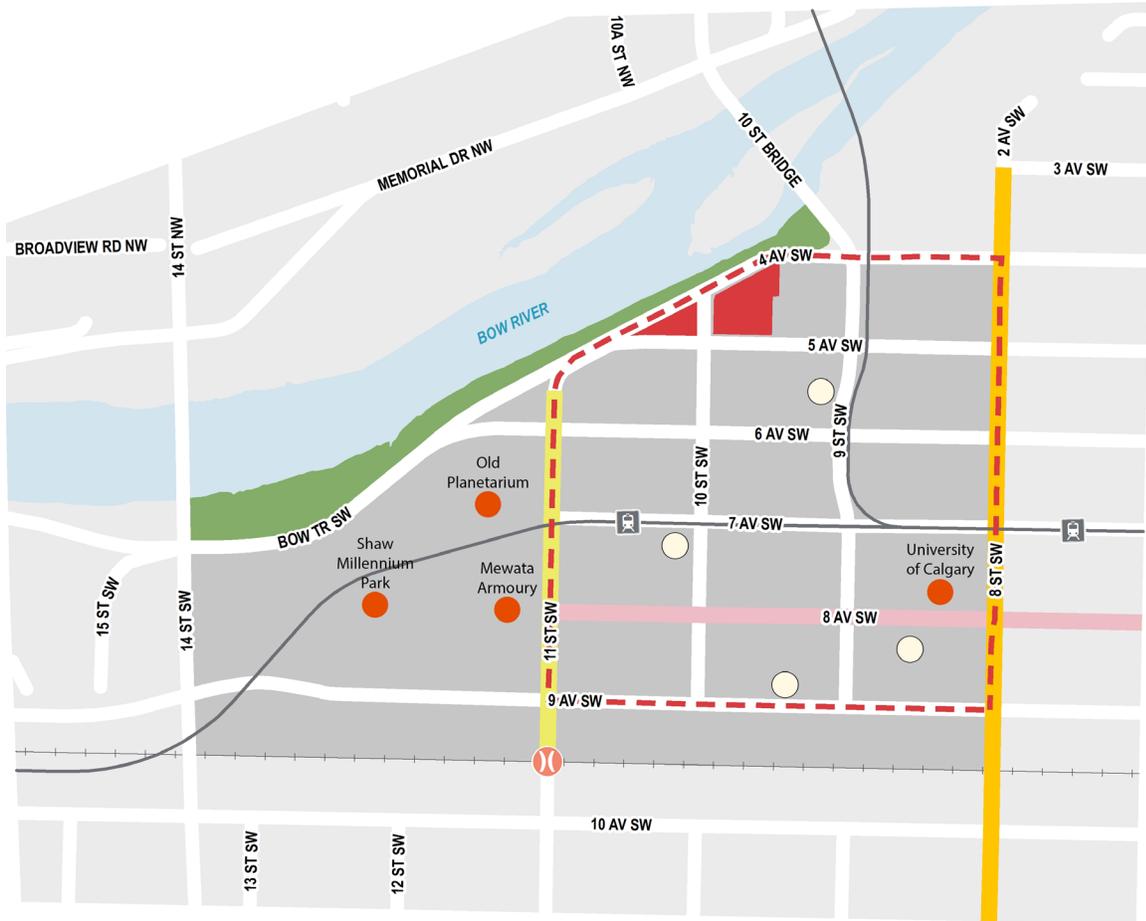
The framework of the Downtown West Revitalization Strategy is based on five focus areas: **The Local Economy, The Physical Environment, Neighbourhood Vibrancy, Connections & Places, and Community Identity.** These five pillars work together as a comprehensive strategy, and cannot succeed in isolation. For instance, an enhanced physical environment will support the local economy, which will contribute to neighbourhood vibrancy.

There are many overlapping action items across the five pillars, highlighting the synergies within the overall strategy and how each pillar supports the other.

The success of the Downtown West Revitalization Strategy relies on action and progress in each of the areas over a similar timeframe, as outlined in each of the Strategies & Actions sections. As action items are completed, the document should be updated to reflect completed work and add or remove items as necessary.

Together, the actions set out in this Strategy will result in major change for the community and will lay the foundation for a complete community as the area continues to develop over time.

Downtown West Stratgy Map



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|--|----------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| | LRT Station | | Proposed 11 Street SW Underpass | | Temporary Park Site |
| | LRT Alignment | | Stephen Avenue Master Plan | | Riverfront Pathway Design |
| | Points of Interest | | 8 Street Master Plan Construction | | Facade Improvement Area |
| | Completed Mural Site | | 11 Street Streetscape Master Plan Area | | Revitalization Area |