

CALGARY PLAN | CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The first chapter sets a foundation for all the policies in the plan. It describes long-term goals and key directions for the next ten years, so Calgary remains a great place to make a living and a great place to make a life.

What is the Calgary Plan aiming to do?

ENVIRONMENT –

Calgary respects and protects natural systems as an essential part of our city.

Indigenous Stewardship: Stewardship of natural systems is based on a shared understanding and respect for inherent rights, the needs of all living beings and Indigenous worldview.

Natural Connectivity: Natural systems are protected, healthy and connected, supporting native biodiversity and providing other ecosystem services such as climate adaptation and carbon sequestration.

Nature & Urban Forest: Natural systems and the urban forest are integrated in and through the city as a key part of complete, healthy and climate-resilient communities.

Watershed Resilience: Waterways and watersheds are protected, maintaining water quality, flood resilience and drought resilience.

Access to Nature: All Calgarians have equitable access to natural areas and naturalized spaces.

Compact Growth: Compact growth focused on the primary transit network makes efficient use of land and infrastructure, retains natural systems and supports net-zero communities and active travel options.

Water Supply: Calgary has enough safe water for human wellbeing, ecosystem resilience and economic activities now and for future generations.

Net-Zero Emissions: Calgary has achieved net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

PEOPLE –

Calgary attracts and supports people of all backgrounds to build a healthy and fulfilling life.

Inclusive City: People of all cultures, backgrounds, abilities, ages and incomes are welcomed and safe in all areas of our city.

Indigenous Perspectives: Our shared history and present landscapes include Indigenous Peoples and their perspectives and worldviews.

Housing Supply: A diverse, affordable and resilient housing supply provides all Calgarians with housing choices to meet their needs.

Essential Services: All communities have nearby employment opportunities, healthy food, amenities, childcare and personal and essential services, supporting healthy mobility choices.

Travel Options: All Calgarians have access to safe, efficient, sustainable, accessible and affordable travel options that connect where they live and where they need to go, in all seasons.

Year-round Activity: All Calgarians have safe, year-round opportunities to be active in ways that suit to their abilities, ages, incomes, backgrounds and culture.

Municipal Services: Municipal services are equitable, reliable, safe, accessible and efficient.

Arts & Culture: All communities have affordable and equitable arts and culture amenities and services to improve arts expression, cultural celebration and social connection.

Climate Resilience: Communities are adaptive to a changing climate and have reduced exposure to climate impacts.

Recreation: All communities have affordable and equitable access to recreation opportunities.

ECONOMY –

Calgary's robust and diverse economy supports innovation and opportunity for all.

Vibrant Economy: Calgary has a vibrant local economy where it is easy to start, operate and grow businesses.

Regional Driver: Calgary is the primary driver of a strong regional economy, strengthening the Calgary Region as an economic entity.

Participation: All Calgarians, including Indigenous Peoples, systemically marginalized and equity-deserving groups, equitably participate in and benefit from economic development.

Public Transit: Calgary's public transit system provides convenient and affordable travel to employment, education and retail increasing economic participation and productivity.

Industrial Growth: Calgary has a thriving industrial sector with room to grow.

Amenity & Recreation: Calgary's amenities and recreational facilities attract visitors, stimulating economic activity, tourism and enhancing the overall quality of life for citizens.

Goods Movement: Calgary has a goods movement network that efficiently connects businesses to distribution and manufacturing systems.

Energy Transition: Calgary has an economy that can capitalize on the energy transition, including new energy markets and green industries.

Creative Industries: Calgary's creative industries and arts and culture sector thrive and are widely distributed to all communities.

Sustainable Growth: Calgary's growth is financially sustainable for The City.

Climate Resilience: Calgary's economy is more resilient to stresses and shocks, including climate change impacts.

What's included in the Key Directions?

The Calgary Plan combines existing direction for the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and the *Calgary Transportation Plan* (CTP).

-  No/minimal new direction
-  Some new direction
-  All new direction

What are the direction highlights?	What's new to the Calgary Plan?	Why do this?
Accommodating a Growing City: Accommodate growth by intensifying existing built areas and enabling sustainable and financially responsible new growth.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP direction for “a strategic framework for growth and change” and the goal of “a prosperous and diverse economy,” maintaining direction for sustainable, balanced growth.	Concentrated growth around the primary transit network and within walkable, mixed use and compact communities is more environmentally sustainable and reduces the burden of cost for individuals, the public and The City.
Protecting, Connecting, and Integrating Natural Areas: Protect natural systems, increase connections between them and increase access to natural areas for Calgarians.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP goal of “greening the city.”	Protecting environmentally significant areas as a connected network, in addition to reconnecting and enhancing natural areas across the entire city, enables healthier natural systems and lets more people access nature in more parts of the city.
Creating Walkable, Complete Communities: Enable complete and walkable communities in all areas of the city, by supporting a diversity of housing, land uses and scales of development as we grow.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP goal of “shaping a more compact urban form” and “creating great communities.”	Complete communities are places where it is easier, safer and more attractive for people to be active and interact with other people, resulting in better mental and physical health. Expected growth can be accommodated in a sustainable, equitable, healthy and resilient way within complete communities.
Building Around Transit: Build communities around transit, enabling growth around all transit stations and connecting people to where they need and want to go.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP goal of “shaping a more compact urban form” and “creating great communities,” which stresses transit-oriented development.	Focusing development around a frequent and reliable public transit system keeps people moving while supporting and sustaining an affordable and environmentally sustainable city. It also enables people from all over Calgary to participate in the economy, realizing more equitable benefits and increased economic productivity.
Connecting Mobility Networks: Provide safe, affordable and convenient travel options for all Calgarians.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP goal of “connecting the city.”	An integrated and connected mobility system provides people, inclusive of age, ability and income, with multiple travel options to meet their needs across all seasons. Improving and expanding walking and wheeling networks enables healthier, more sustainable and equitable travel options.
Building a Strong Downtown: Build a people-focused downtown that is safe and welcoming for everyone, with connected neighbourhoods, active streets and well-used accessible public spaces.	 The plan elevates the Downtown as a key priority from the existing MDP.	The Greater Downtown is Calgary's primary area for commerce, employment, entertainment, culture, arts and urban living. It is a hub for mobility, housing, and employment, supporting a high intensity of housing and occupying an essential economic and cultural role in city and the region.
Expanding Housing Choice and Increasing Supply: Enable increased housing choice and supply by making it easier to provide different types of housing across the city.	 The plan elevates housing choice and supply as a key direction, given the Housing Strategy (2024).	Increasing the supply of housing to meet the broad needs of Calgarians will create more balanced market conditions and improve affordability. Increasing housing diversity provides more choices to individuals and families about where they live.
Achieving Quality Design Outcomes: Achieve design excellence, building a city that is livable, attractive, memorable and functional.	 This key direction continues to recognize the importance of urban design for the city and modernizes and streamlines the existing MDP “urban design” goal.	Good urban design results in inclusive, functional and distinctive spaces that inspire a sense of belonging providing people with diverse needs and backgrounds access to safe, comfortable and attractive amenities and spaces throughout all seasons.
Strengthening Calgary's Economy: Support the continued strength of key sectors of the economy, promote innovation and creativity to modernize the economy and increase inclusive economic participation.	 This key direction is a modernized version of the existing MDP goal for “a prosperous and diverse economy” with an increased focus on equitable participation	Increasing opportunities for more Calgarians to participate and succeed will make our economy more equitable and productive. Innovation and investment in renewable and net-zero energy, health, science, technologies, aerospace and agribusiness, result in a more diverse and resilient economy. A strong industrial sector strengthens and diversifies Calgary's economy.