

PUBLIC TOILET STRATEGY FOR CENTRE CITY

SUMMARY/ISSUE

To provide information and an update on actions to address citizen concerns about the availability and use of public toilets in the Centre City.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION/POLICY

On 2005 March 07, Ald. Ceci and Ald. Farrell submitted an item of Urgent Business, Integrated Plan for Social Action in Calgary's Centre City, for consideration in conjunction with the East Village ARP, directing Administration to develop an integrated social plan that should align with the Centre City Plan.

On 2005 June 13, Ald. Burrows introduced NM2005-17 A Vibrant and Safe Downtown, directing Administration to report on best practices from other municipalities to deal with problem behaviors in public areas (urination, defecation, loitering, etc.)

On 2006 January 04, Committee approved CPS2006-03 A Vibrant and Safe Downtown, directing Administration to establish an interdepartmental committee to assess the bylaws and programs which should be implemented in Calgary, and bring forward recommendations for action, in conjunction with the Centre City Social Action Strategy.

On 2006 July 05, Committee approved SPC2006-41 Public Behaviour Bylaw. This report addressed enforcement options however, in keeping with the Fair Calgary Policy, adopted by Council on 2006 November 13, a broader range of responses is needed to ensure accessibility of public washrooms.

In 2006 the Clean to the Core initiative brought key business units together to address cleanliness and perceptions of safety in the Centre City through a variety of means. The issue of public toilets has been identified

as part of this longer term strategy to improve the downtown.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council:

1. Endorse a comprehensive approach to provide a range of public toilet facilities in the Centre City; and
2. Direct Administration to bring forward operating and capital budget implications for consideration directly through the 2007 November budget adjustment process.

INVESTIGATION

During consultations for the Centre City Plan, stakeholders identified the need for more public toilets as an issue. The availability and quality of public washrooms contributes to a people-friendly atmosphere. Lack of facilities contributes to inappropriate behaviour, a public health hazard, compromised perceptions of safety and security, and deterrence of people coming to the Centre City.

To address the provision of public toilets the following steps were taken.

- A working group was formed with representatives from many business units and the Calgary Downtown Association (CDA).
- Information was gathered from other cities in North America and Europe, as well as manufacturers of public toilets.
- A map was created of the Centre City identifying what facilities exist, problem areas and future potential locations (Attachment 1).
- Potential sites were identified in concert with the CDA and the relevant Business Revitalization Zones.

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- Action was taken to address immediate needs by deploying two portable toilets in critical areas.
- A Request for Information from Manufacturers of Automatic Public Toilets is being developed for up to four Automatic Public Toilets (APT's).

The final suitability of potential sites will be determined using criteria developed for this purpose (Attachment 2).

The findings of the investigation have led the work group to recommend a multi-faceted approach including:

- Installing APT's on City land and in locations with which the CDA and BRZ's agree.
- Expanding the use of portable toilets in locations where other options are not suitable.
- Expanding availability of current public toilets by determining resources required to extend hours of operation or enhance safety.
- Communicating the location and availability of public toilets to the public.
- Evaluating and monitoring the outcomes of the strategy.

IMPLICATIONS

General

This report has been reviewed for alignment with The City of Calgary's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework.

Social

Public toilets are a necessary component in creating places which are attractive and welcoming to people. They contribute to the creation of a Centre City that is vibrant, livable, and caring.

Environmental

Improper disposal of human waste constitutes an environmental and biohazard. Although this strategy can not ensure elimination of this hazard, it constitutes a positive step in addressing the risk.

Economic (External)

This initiative is an investment in existing and new infrastructure that contributes to making the Centre City an attractive safe place for people to live, work and visit.

BUSINESS PLAN/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The cost of action taken to date has been managed within the existing operating budgets in the Transportation Department, totalling approximately \$7200 in 2007 for two portable toilets. If additional portable toilets are added, beginning in 2007 June, the cost is projected to be \$16,800 for 2007 for eighteen portable toilets. Implications for the capital budget (Attachment 3) are the cost of four APT's, projected to be no less than \$250,000 US per unit. There are also operating costs associated with cleaning and maintaining the APT's, as well as portable toilets as estimated in Attachment 3. This work is not currently in the three-year operating budget and business plans. The capital dollars for the purchase of the units is also not currently funded.

RISKS

While this report has been completed in accordance with the Integrated Risk Management Policy and Framework, there is no guarantee that a public toilet of any design, location, or hours of operation will be immune to vandalism or entirely curtail inappropriate behaviour. Using modern technology and CPTED principles to locate portable and public toilets can minimize these risks. In other cities access to and use of public toilets has become a normal part of city life. Educating people about locations and

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hours of operation will also contribute to their effective use. A program of monitoring and evaluation will identify problems and enable timely resolution of any unanticipated consequences.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Inventory of Existing Facilities, Problem Locations and Potential Sites
2. Criteria for Location
3. Projected Cost

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Criteria for Location

- Good sight lines
- All approaches should be highly visible.
- Brightly lit area
- Not isolated
- Passive surveillance of high traffic, pedestrian and/or vehicle
- Entrance facing outward toward busy road/foot path
- On existing police patrol routes, if possible
- No entrapment areas – not located within in-set areas, tall fences, earth berms, high vegetation, etc.
- Good visibility around corners
- Ease of maintenance and cleaning
- Ease of delivery and removal
- Not in a location that is trying to reduce trespassing – such as Impark Lots.
- Convenient locations for highest need
- Sufficient space in roadway right of way
- Not blocking anything/anyone
- Sensitive to cultural and symbolic sites

Other

- Units should have emergency assistance information clearly posted.
- Telephone numbers to report vandalism or maintenance problems should be clearly posted.
- Do we need to locate waste receptacles at these locations?
- Temporary way finding signage required?

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PROJECTED COST

	Capital Costs (including preparation of site)		Operating Costs (Annual)
4 Automatic Public Toilets	Urillift	US\$75,000 /unit**	CDN\$25,000/unit/year
	Above Ground APT	US\$250,000 to US\$375,000/unit**	CDN\$100,000
	Site Preparation	CND\$15,000 to CDN\$30,000/unit**	
Portable Toilets (18)	N/A		CDN \$32, 400
Projected Costs Site Preparation	CDN\$60,000 to CDN\$120,000		
Projected Costs Purchase	US\$300,000 to US\$1,500,000		CDN\$132,400
Total	US\$360,000 to US\$1,620,000		CDN\$132,400

**The City of Victoria, Social Planning & Housing Division, Planning and Development Department. (2006). *Public toilets in downtown Victoria: A discussion paper.* p. 11.