

Downtown ARP Working Group – Kick-off Meeting

MEETING DATE: August 24, 2021
TIME: 6:30 – 8:30 pm
LOCATION: Sheep River Library, Turner Valley

Present:

Council:

Ruth Goodwin, Mayor
Daryl Lalonde, Deputy Mayor
Sharon Hart, Councilor
Ted Bain, Councilor

Working Group Members:

Robert Smulders
Quinton Brown
Pam Lyken
Jessica Harcombe-Fleming
Richard Brotherston

Staff:

Sharlene Brown, CAO
Rod Ross, Planning Manager
Denice Stewart, Planning & Development Officer
Shelley Broadley, Planning & Economic
Development Assistant

Members of the Public:

Ken Dutton, Resident
Nancy Dutton, Resident

Meeting Purpose

Why are we here today?

- Get to know each other
- Introduce the project, the desired outcomes and schedule
- Share what we have learned to date
- Discuss elements of the Communication & Engagement Strategy
- Review the Terms of Reference for the Working Group
- Confirm Next Steps
 - Guide preparation of ARP
 - Ken thought it was a public meeting and came to listen.
 - Will vote if can't reach a consensus.

Working Group Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Working Group

- Guide the preparation of the ARP
- Consider the interests and perspectives of various stakeholders
- Assist in creating a public engagement strategy
- Review feedback provided through public consultation
- Review, identify, explore and discuss relevant planning matters at key points in the process

- Provide direction in the preparation of ARP strategy and policy

Roles, Decision Making and Procedures

- Intended to bring together a variety of perspectives
- Endeavour to have open, comprehensive discussions with the goal of reaching consensus
- Where agreement cannot be reached, the matter shall be decided by a vote
- Meeting notes will be recorded and circulated as part of the next meeting agenda
- A chairperson shall be appointed at each meeting
- Quorum for the Working Group is a minimum of 7
- Meetings will be open to the public

How do we want to work together?

- Create a space of trust, kind and respectful
- Respect each other's ideas and thoughts; work together as a group
- Nothing is wrong – if there's something on your mind, just speak it. Don't be shy, feel free to share your perspectives
- Kind and respectful communication

How are we accountable for making this happen?

- Come prepared for meeting
- Be prepared to respond if there's a question directed at you – be able to expand on what you commented on.
- Have a think outside the box, beyond Cochrane, Canmore something different.
- Hope this is fun, and enjoyable.
- Is this something we can keep adding to, throughout the project?
- Understand that people are seeking to understand. Feel free to ask questions at any point to help collective understanding
- Build on the different thoughts that people are contributing
- Ask questions if you don't know (terminology, theories)

Elect a chair – Ruth nominated herself for today. A different chair will be nominated for each meeting.

Role of the Chair

- Open and close the meeting
- Maintain order
- Coordinate a vote if consensus cannot be reached
- Meetings will be facilitated by the consultant

Project Overview

Background and context

- Downtown Black Diamond is the physical, social and economic heart of the community
- Investments are needed to ensure enhanced safety, accessibility, vibrancy, and long-term economic viability
- Town wishes to ensure redevelopment continues to reinforce the area's unique identity and creates a comfortable pedestrian experience
- Alberta Transportation has a long-term plan to widen Centre Avenue and Government Road from 2 to 4 lanes to provide additional vehicular capacity

What are we trying to achieve?

- Long term vision of Downtown Black Diamond and actions to achieve that vision
- Design Guidelines - principal based design guidelines to inform appropriate redevelopment
- Market Overview - consider current business health & opportunities to enhance long term
- Land Use Direction - review and revise policy to support long term vision
- Mobility & Accessibility - consider investments to enhance accessibility and connectivity
- Key Corridor Cross-sections - consider how best to allocate space withing each corridor
- Infrastructure Plan - identify improvements required to support anticipated redevelopment
- Financing Strategy - determine how improvements will be paid for & maintained over time
- Trying to achieve a vision, how do we get there, what is the plan and actions to achieve this.
- Need to look at how we are moving people and not just vehicles
- Want to achieve ultimate cross sections to show how the different areas will function
- What infrastructure requirements are needed to support these improvements and how do we finance it over time
- STUDY AREA – see slide
 - Global study area
 - Doesn't mean change will happen in every square of area, but need to consider the key corridors in the broader context
 - No comments
- PROJECT SCHEDULE
 - Identifies where project team will connect with working group, council, timing of election
 - Initial phase is understanding the background
 - Will come back to working group with formalize C&E plan
 - Then will take to Council for information
 - Current conditions assessment
 - Get back with working group to discuss current conditions
 - Initial public engagement targeted for early November following election
 - Second phase – vision, plan framework
 - Prepare framework and come back to working group to go over framework

- ALBERTA TRANSPORTATION
 - Meeting with AT a week ago
 - Open to alternatives
 - Amenable, but focus will be on moving traffic along highway
 - Willingness to accommodate temporary
 - Will continue to keep them in the loop
- PARKING STUDY
 - Completed parking count on weekend
 - Intent is to confirm what the demand is in the study area and understanding where the parking is most in demand
 - Still to complete the analysis of the parking count to determine what recommendation for future parking demands should be considered
 - Analysis will provide baseline on what existing parking challenges
 - On street and parking lots both private and public were counted

Communications and Engagement Strategy Overview & Discussion

- Town has key policy on C&E, see slide for key principles
- Italics are the ones that we want to focus on during this process
- Will need to ensure that we listen to public and speak to why or why not we didn't do something – what we heard, what we did, why we didn't do something...
- IAP2 Spectrum on Public Participation, see slide
- Empower – Council has ultimate decision. However, Ruth indicated that there are 4 (of 11) members of Council on this working group, so there is influence on ultimate decision by Council. 11 total votes for working group (exclude USL and BD administration), 4 Councilors in group and require minimum 7 for quorum.

Communications and Engagement

Who will be impacted/interested in this project?

- Youth – how do we keep youths in community after they graduate? (talk to high school?)
- Young families
- Families and property owners that live within 1-2 blocks of study area
- In town residents
- Senior citizens – mobility and access to services
- Those with mobility & accessibility challenges; evolves over time
- Community at large – Turner Valley, Foothills County areas
- Griffith Centre – parking, communications, transportation
- Chambers of Commerce
- Intermunicipal Economic and Development Committee (Jess and deputy mayor are on that committee)
- School boards
- DT business owners, in the study area, in the broader area
- Incubators – businesses that have yet to arrive – transition, what is preventing them from coming to main street? Home base businesses – not enough commercial spaces
- Restaurants – real draw to the main street
- Delivery services – mostly alley, AG Foods on highway

- Other business owners (outside study area) – going up Hwy 7 going east
- Investors – local and regional
- Builders and developers – how they market area, picturesque view
- Destination visitors – tourists & travelling public
- RCMP – want to ensure safety, lighting, design that mitigates risk factors
- Maintenance crew – snow removal, spring cleaning
- Service providers – Fortis, Atco, etc.
- Waste & recycle services
- Accessibility – mobility and limited vision

What will their interests be?

- Look at efficiency, convenience, and safety
- Accessible and barrier free
- Functionality – has to work in a practical sense (delivery), maintenance, physical space for businesses and pedestrians
- Proximity to services and amenities
- Complimentary businesses – a variety that support each other
- Aesthetics
- Financial impacts and opportunities
- Expediency and timing of implementation of redevelopment – potential impacts to businesses if construction is during peak season
- Welcoming and inclusive – will see immigrants, indigenous and people with disabilities, need to be inclusive and welcoming.
- Capture why people who are coming here come here
- Making DT a destination
- What makes someone wants to spend money in downtown?
- What experiences do people want downtown?
- Existing visitors that are using the town – dog park and trails, providing opportunities to expand the desires to stop and spend time downtown
- Youth employment opportunities, and continue to attract opportunities
- Youth/younger families - greater variety of housing types
- Youth/younger families - proximity to the different services within the Town
- Youth - a reason to stop, rather than a thoroughfare; a reason to spend time in the downtown area, a place to go
- Visitors - creating a destination, a place to stop
- Creating physical spaces as well that complement the businesses
- Greater housing choices – different options for younger people to live
- Transportation services (regional) – transit opportunities for employees
- Drawing people for employment from broader regional area – and offering transportation opportunities
- Signage inside town – wayfinding so people can find their ways to businesses, keeps people moving; explore best practice - aesthetic, unique to Black Diamond

- Signage outside of town – for future logging truck bypass? Signage for destinations into town (for attracting travelers)
- Opportunities for growth, for businesses that are looking to transition into the main street, and into the study area
- Opportunities for greater awareness of home-based businesses and opportunities to transition into storefronts, downtown and in the study area

What are tactics we can use to engage? How do we best engage these stakeholders?

- One-on-one, focus on smaller groups and more opportunities. Not one event covers all businesses. Personal touch – on what matters to them.
- Focus groups
 - Administration and High Schools
 - Seniors – lodge (older – more mobility issues), directly with them, condo association, Griffith Centre (55+). More interactive with seniors
 - Online and in person, for differing comfort levels. Social media. The Diamond Newsletter
 - Need a formal meeting with the Intermunicipal Economic and Development Committee
- Western Wheel – through web media, print media
- Interactive online/virtual engagement opportunities; ensure that engagement events/activities can be shared across multiple platforms - virtual, newspaper, social media, etc.
- Survey – concerns that anyone not in community can respond. Taking surveys directly to stakeholders.
- Public forums – community wide, cover people outside study area
- What is the timeline for the engagement? Will it be one event, series of events over a few weeks?
- Informal conversations and feedback of working groups with stakeholders
- Project team will work through all the ideas and circle back to working group of what we heard.

Next Steps

- Refer to slides
- Next working group meeting date is week of Sept 6 (Tue/Wed/Thu) – IEDC on 9th, JFAC 8th – target Tuesday the 7th (6:30pm to 8:30pm), location to finalized (to be in Black Diamond). Potential for walking tour.
- Take Communications and Engagement to Council
- Following working group meeting dates:
 - Oct 5th, same time.
 - Nov 30th, same time
- Dec 4th is Towns light up event – could do public event
- After election, there will be an organizational meeting to inform of all committees and role/responsibility so that they are caught up.
 - Ruth adjourned meeting at 8:28pm.