

April 23, 2014

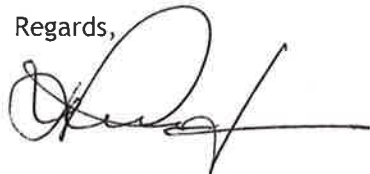
Calgary City Council,

On behalf of Calgary's commercial real estate industry, BOMA Calgary is very encouraged by the Downtown Office Parking Notice of Motion from Councillors Carra, Woolley, Chabot, and Mayor Nenshi. BOMA shares the City's goal in promoting downtown as a premiere place to work, live, and play. The availability and cost of parking plays a role in where people decide to work, go for dinner, or shop, so there is great importance in getting the policies right. The key point to our members - which the Notice of Motion recognizes - is that downtown Calgary is a dramatically different place than in 1972 when the parking ratio was set at one parking stall per 140 square metres.

BOMA members favour a transportation network that best responds to the demands of downtown workers. Public transit is a key to the success of our downtown, and must continue to play a key role in accommodating growth in employment. However, downtown businesses also need a supply of parking to compete for workers, accommodate contractors and service calls, and to accommodate customers of shops and restaurants. To accommodate this in the context of Calgary's Downtown Parking Strategy it is important to evaluate changes in the industry since 1972. As Calgary's economy has grown, so has the cost of downtown office space. Businesses have adjusted to this by having less and smaller private offices, and more open space work stations. This means the amount of employees per square foot has increased. Because this is the same metric that the current parking ratio uses, in real terms the allowable amount of stalls per employee has actually decreased significantly. This has created a serious undersupply that is reflected in the astronomical price of downtown parking. We've heard this before but it is worth repeating - downtown Calgary has the second highest parking rates in North America behind only New York. This puts a significant cost premium on locating a business downtown, and risks its competitive position relative to other jurisdictions.

We believe that these are important factors in the overall Downtown Parking Strategy and are pleased to see recognition of such in the Notice of Motion. We therefore believe that it is timely to carry out a comprehensive and systematic review to determine the effectiveness of the strategy, including the cash-in-lieu of parking program, and its relevance. BOMA would be pleased to provide our expertise to the City should you ask.

Regards,



William G.R. Partridge, CAE
President & Chief Staff Officer
BOMA Calgary