

April 10, 2014

Members of the SPC on Transportation and Transit,

On behalf of Calgary's commercial real estate industry, BOMA Calgary would like to thank the City of Calgary for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the City Centre cycle track network (CCCTN). The entire CCCTN team has been exceptionally accommodating throughout the engagement process, and BOMA has been pleased to contribute to the Centre City Bicycle Projects Committee along with the other stakeholders. To best represent our members, BOMA has over the past 6 months been engaging with members through our Government Affairs Committee, member surveys, and in February the CCCTN team gave a presentation to about 30 downtown building managers. In short, our membership has been engaged and we are confident that we have come to our conclusions using all the information available.

BOMA shares the City of Calgary's goal in making downtown the best possible place to work, live, and play. To this end, our members have demonstrated this over the years by making considerable investments in buildings and public spaces. Our members have also demonstrated a commitment to environmental sustainability. They make real improvements in energy efficiency, water use, waste reduction, emissions, and indoor health, and verify these through programs like BOMA BEST. They also voluntarily provide bicycle storage, shower, and locker room facilities within buildings, recognizing that this is valued by some tenants.

Commercial real estate can in a sense be seen as a service industry in that buildings only have value inasmuch as they are attractive to tenants. For this reason, BOMA members to the best of their ability try to view potential changes from the point of view of tenant satisfaction - what do downtown workers want from a building and is it being provided? Because of this, BOMA and our members seek a transportation network that best represents the actual and future travel patterns of those who work downtown. If changes are made to one mode of travel, all effort should be taken to lessen the negative consequences on the other modes.

With all of this in mind, BOMA members have clearly expressed little interest in further cycle tracks on downtown streets as the network proscribes at this time. This is confirmed by BOMA's Government Affairs Committee and nearly 80% of respondents to our recent survey. They come to this conclusion simply because they perceive that the costs, both financial and social, outweigh the benefits. From our perspective, the cost of removing a lane that is used by at least 50% of downtown users outweighs the benefit to the 2% who would use cycle tracks.

A multitude of variables factor into a business's choice of location, not the least of which are ease of movement for goods and people. Congested roads for vehicles and buses is not conducive to happy, productive employees. If we are not responsive to the vast majority of downtown users, we run the risk of reducing downtown Calgary's attractiveness as a place for business, and there is no guarantee that a business that decides to move out of downtown will stay in Calgary. This is not a threat but a market reality.

On top of our opposition to adding additional cycle tracks downtown, we feel it necessary to specify our strong opposition to cyclists being allowed on Stephen Avenue. The majority of our members see serious safety issues associated with this concept. Beyond that, Stephen Avenue's pedestrian activity makes it a key component of our downtown's vibrancy, and in our view is not worth jeopardizing.

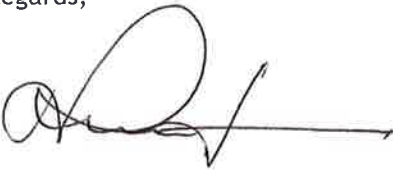
South of the tracks, BOMA is generally supportive of an east-west cycle track in the Beltline. This notion has the support of nearly 60% of survey respondents. We feel that this track, in conjunction with the 7<sup>th</sup> Street cycle track and the Regional Pathway system would comprise an ambitious network that would improve bicycle accessibility in the City Centre at minimal disruption to the other modes.

In summary, our members support initiatives that attempt to make cycling safer, easier, and more appealing to Calgarians, but not at such a steep expense to other modes. The best way that we believe this can be achieved is by leveraging our world-class Regional Pathway system with a modest network spurring into the City Centre. The 7<sup>th</sup> Street Cycle track already provides a link between the Bow River pathway and downtown.

If this were complemented by an east-west track in the Beltline, cyclists would have an efficient network that would only require cyclists to share the roads with vehicles in the City Centre for a few blocks. This would be a significant improvement for cyclists that we believe would make cycling more attractive without significant adverse effects on vehicle or transit users.

Moving forward, BOMA looks forward to our continued involvement with the City in strengthening our downtown and improving cycling opportunities through the Centre City Bicycle Projects Committee. We would be happy to provide any additional information and expertise to council and administration.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Partridge", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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