

December 15, 2020

Stephen Avenue Revitalization Team
The City of Calgary
800 Macleod Trail SE
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

Re: *Feedback on the Stephen Avenue Revitalization Presentation*

Dear Members of the Stephen Avenue Revitalization Team,

We would like to thank you for engaging with us and many other crucial stakeholder groups as you develop and implement a plan to revitalize an iconic part of our city's downtown core. BOMA Calgary and its members see Stephen Avenue as a crucial part of Calgary's overall identity and recognizes that its long-term vibrancy is an essential part of the well-being of Calgarians' as well as the businesses that call downtown Calgary home.

In your public presentations on the revitalization project, you had identified several areas where enhancements and improvements could be made. While we generally agree with many of them, there are two areas that we would like to see enhanced focus and emphasis:

First, to drive vitality at street level on Stephen Avenue, there must be significant residency in the immediate vicinity. We acknowledge that Stephen Avenue west of 6th Street SW has a reasonably dense concentration of residences. However, this does not seem to be translating into meaningful pedestrian non-destination activity after normal business hours in the areas further east (between City Hall and 6th Street SW). It would seem to us that adding a critical mass of residences within, or immediately adjacent, to this area would stimulate street level activity and facilitate an environment that would motivate other Calgarians to proactively visit the area. On this basis, we believe that a key component to the enabling of this specific area to thrive is to adjust public policy to drive the creation of a telling number of residential units around the Stephen Avenue area between City Hall and 6th Street SW.

BOMA Calgary also believes that a continuing barrier to the development of Stephen Avenue is the actual and perceived problems of personal safety resulting from vulnerable populations and social disorder. While the plan identifies that the streetscape design is not sufficient to catalyze the transformation of Stephen Avenue, one of the key features in activating the Avenue will be the perception of personal safety. We are pleased to hear that the revitalization plan speaks to improvements. BOMA Calgary is interested in understanding what future improvements are being planned for the Avenue that will address public safety concerns. Property Owners and Managers continue to share the risk and responsibility for providing security resources to help manage these concerns. These activities are a deterrent to attracting visitors and changing the current demographic. BOMA Calgary would be in support of a comprehensive plan to improve security, which will be an essential factor in the successful transformation of Stephen Avenue. BOMA Calgary and our members are also engaged with social organizations working with vulnerable populations downtown and in the Beltline, and through this collaboration would be pleased to support this work. A downtown that is safe for all visitors goes hand in glove with providing the vulnerable populations who call the area home with support and public services.

We would like to thank you once again for engaging with the community at large and continuing to keep all stakeholders apprised of your findings as you undertake this project. BOMA Calgary and our members are appreciative of the opportunity to be involved in projects, such as this one, which aim to improve our city. We are looking forward to continuing our involvement with you and the team going forward to ensure that the project meets its initial goals.

Sincerely,



Lloyd Suchet
Executive Director
BOMA Calgary