



**Calgary  
Construction  
Association**

# **CCA Advocacy Update Q1 2022**

## ***An update on our advocacy efforts – Q1 2022***

### **Raising Your Voice – Calgary Construction Association**

To start this year right, our advocacy efforts were focused on familiarizing ourselves with the policy environment in Calgary, while creating key connections with stakeholders in the City of Calgary. To that end, we've developed important relationships with many City Councillors, senior officials in the Mayor's Office, the Green Line LRT Board, and other key figures in City Administration. Here is an update on the positions we've taken, our media coverage, and what we're looking at in Q2 2022.

#### **1. Our Position on the Issues:**

**Green Line LRT Project** - The Calgary Construction Association and its members have been engaging directly in dialogue regarding the Green Line Project with the City of Calgary and Alberta Transportation on behalf of industry and Calgarians for over two years. We categorically support this project as a major element in Calgary's continued growth and a stimulus for local industry firms.

We have expressed concerns related to procurement Issues around the project. In particular, the Province has unilaterally insisted on a single large bundled mega-project which we believe substantially increases the cost risk to the project and ensures only foreign consortiums can oversee the project.

The alarming reality is that the recent decision to reverse the course of smaller packages has effectively not only deferred obtaining cost certainty on the less complex leg of the line but has also prevented getting local companies to work on this shovel-ready piece of the project now. Projects like the Green Line LRT are for Calgarians - and should be built and managed by Calgarians.

***Why does it matter to us?*** The Green Line LRT project is the largest infrastructure project in Calgary's history. Thousands of Calgarians will work on it, and the project has important implications for the connectivity and livability of our City.

**Climate Emergency and Sustainable City-Building** – Now that the City Council has declared a climate emergency, the Calgary Construction Association is prepared to work with the city to build Calgary sustainably. We implore City Council to consider the expertise and voice of our local construction industry on this issue.

***Why does this matter to us?*** We believe that a greater emphasis on climate initiatives will see new demands on local industry to construct new rail lines, stations and more. New transportation projects

are catalysts for construction jobs and growth, and we wish to see that these projects are contracted out to local companies – see them built by Calgarians, for Calgarians.

Should the City of Calgary develop new building material standards for new projects and existing buildings (retrofits), we hope to see our membership engaged. Our members provide both knowledge and expertise in this area that we believe to be valuable for consideration.

**Buildout of the Culture and Entertainment District** – we fully support the build-out of the culture and entertainment district anchored by the BMO Centre Expansion, new Event Centre, and Arts Commons Transformation.

While these projects are important as they create jobs and economic activity for the local construction industry, the reality is we are excited to see the development of a district that all Calgarians can be proud of.

The build-out of a culture and entertainment district is important as it adds to the culture and social fabric of our city promotes community building and sets Calgary apart as a destination to live, work and play.

***Why does this matter to us?*** In 2019, Ernst & Young prepared an economic impact assessment on the full build-out of the district (event centre, BMO Centre expansion and Arts Commons) and estimated that 4,750 full-time jobs could be created during the construction phase of the projects, with a direct economic impact of \$600 million. It's about more than just jobs and economic figures – it's about building a city we can all be proud of.

## **2. Media Exposure**

This quarter, we worked hard to expand our voice in the media. From the Green Line LRT project to the Event Centre, there was no shortage of controversy for the CCA to lend its voice.

- A. In January, we wrote an op-ed in the Calgary Herald on the Event Centre Agreement collapse and the impact on the construction industry and City buildings;
- B. In February, we raised the alarm about potential cost overruns on the Green Line LRT project and the impact on Calgarians

- C. We openly criticized the Province of Alberta for bundling the Green Line LRT, and the potential that a foreign consortium will now lead the project.
- D. We commented on the Provincial Budget and broke down what it means for Calgary's Construction Industry.

### 3. Issues on the Horizon:

#### **Green Line LRT Project**

The Green Line LRT will continue to be top of mind for the CCA in Q2. At the end of March, an RFQ for the project was released by the City of Calgary. Details are available [here](#).

On the issue of a foreign consortium managing the project, our conversations with the Green Line LRT Board and various Councillors indicate that this is a likely outcome. To that end, our goal will be to ensure that any agreements offer both work and protection to the local construction industry.

#### **Event Centre**

Following the collapse of a new agreement for the Event Centre, City Council has struck a new committee to assess the feasibility of a new entertainment complex. The committee members include Cllrs. Sharp, McLean, Walcott, Deborah Yedlin from the Calgary Chamber of Commerce and Brad Parry from Calgary Economic Development.

Our position remains that our industry's voice on the matter cannot be ignored - and we will advocate that we are a part of the conversation on the project.

#### **Calgary Climate Policy**

Following the City Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency late in 2021, City Administration has been tasked with creating a new climate strategy, which is expected to be finalized towards the end of Q2 2022.

The existing *Climate Resiliency Strategy* calls to action include collaborating with external partners to develop regionally appropriate climate data to inform new design standards for City Infrastructure;

improved energy code for buildings, and updated design guidelines and standards for City infrastructure to ensure resilience to extreme weather events and chronic climate change.

Our position remains that the conversation must shift towards building our city sustainability – together, with the input of our local construction industry. These conversations have begun, and input on the feasibility of the City’s goals and milestones has been provided by the Association. We will continue to monitor the development of the new strategy and voice our concerns about the impact on the local construction industry.

### **Downtown Revitalization**

The success of Calgary’s downtown is imperative to the success of our whole City. City documents show 28 potential empty office buildings have been identified that can be converted to residential space, students or seniors housing, or other uses. We support Calgary’s Greater Downtown Plan to attract vibrancy and investment in our downtown core and offer our voice to provide expertise and leadership in the retrofitting of old space, building and material standards, and more.

In Budget 2022, the Province of Alberta funded \$5M of the City’s \$250M+ asks for downtown revitalization. On March 21, 2022, it was hinted by the Province that further provincial funding could be on the way. Our position remains that we encourage the participation of the Government of Alberta in fully supporting Calgary's downtown strategy.

### **Stay in Touch!**

If you have issues, questions or concerns, about our advocacy please feel free to reach out! I can be reached by email at [franocavar@cgyc.ca](mailto:franocavar@cgyc.ca).