

**THE
CALGARY
PARTY**

PUBLIC SAFETY TOOLKIT

Building a safer, compassionate and vibrant downtown core

Calgary's downtown core is the heart of our city—an economic engine for Canada, the centre of our vibrant arts and culture scene, and an emerging hub of community life as office-to-residential conversions and new-builds welcome a growing permanent residential population. However, like most urban centres throughout North America today, Calgary faces challenges related to homelessness, mental health, addictions, and public safety that seem to be spiralling out of control. The interconnected nature of these issues requires a comprehensive and balanced approach that prioritizes compassion, accountability, and revitalization. While experts have mapped out the scale of the problem and developed comprehensive responses, our political leadership has so far been unwilling or unable to act and solve the problem.

The Calgary Party offers a real solution to this political loggerhead. Our Downtown Public Safety Strategy is built on three pillars: (1) a housing-first approach to address homelessness, (2) 24/7 mental health and addictions support integrated with law enforcement, and (3) targeted measures to enhance safety, accessibility, and vibrancy in the downtown core. By addressing root causes while enforcing public order, we aim to create a downtown that is safe, welcoming, and thriving for all Calgarians and visitors. The alternative is ongoing piecemeal responses and platitudes while the situation only worsens.

KEY CHALLENGES

1. Addressing criminal behaviour

- Open drug use, property damage, and violent incidents undermine public safety and deter people from visiting downtown.
- A lack of clear enforcement mechanisms for public behaviour exacerbates these issues.

2. Revitalizing the downtown core

- Declining foot traffic, safety concerns, and under utilized public spaces have diminished the vibrancy of downtown Calgary.
- Infrastructure and bylaws need modernization to support a dynamic, people-centric urban environment.

3. Compassionate response for vulnerable populations

- Homelessness, mental illness, and addiction require tailored, humane solutions that prioritize dignity and recovery.
- Current resources are fragmented, underfunded, and concentrated in specific areas, creating strain on certain neighbourhoods.



PROPOSED MEASURE

1

Reforming municipal bylaws to enforce public behaviour standards

We propose adopting a bylaw modelled after Edmonton's 2025 public spaces bylaw to set clear expectations for behaviour in public spaces.

Key elements include:

- **Prohibited Behaviours:** Open drug use, panhandling near roadways, loitering in transit areas, unauthorized encampments, public urination, defecating, and displaying or using weapons.
- **Zero-Tolerance Policy:** Strict enforcement against drug trafficking, property damage, and open-air drug use.
- **Balanced Enforcement:** While enforcement is necessary, it must be paired with outreach services such as the HELP team to connect individuals to housing, mental health, and addiction supports.

These measures will ensure public spaces are safe, clean, and welcoming for all while addressing harmful behaviours in a compassionate but firm manner.

Enhancing safety and accessibility on Stephen Avenue and the downtown core

Stephen Avenue and the downtown core are critical to Calgary's identity and economic vitality. To make these areas safer and more vibrant, we propose:

- **Improved reporting mechanisms:** Expand and promote call-in lines (e.g., 311) for citizens to report illegal behaviours, encampments, or medical emergencies.
- **Safe Pick up and Drop Off:** Allow safe drop-off/pick-up zones for restaurant & bar patrons during evening hours to improve accessibility.
- **Enhanced waste management:** Increase waste collection and sanitation efforts in alleys adjacent to Stephen Avenue.
- **End overnight sleeping on Stephen Avenue:** Targeted community outreach to provide safe transitional housing alternatives & wraparound supports, eliminating the need for overnight camping/rough sleeping.
- **Increased police presence:** Deploy more visible police and peace officers in high-traffic areas, including the Plus 15 network, LRT platforms, East Village, and the downtown core.
- **Permanent public washrooms:** Install accessible, permanent and staffed public washrooms throughout the inner city to improve hygiene and dignity for all users.
- **Police community hubs:** Establish high-visibility hubs near transit areas and the downtown west end to provide rapid response and community support.

PROPOSED MEASURE

2

PROPOSED MEASURE 3

Expanding support for the homeless & vulnerable populations

A housing-first approach is critical to addressing homelessness and its root causes. We propose:

- **Housing:** Shelters should not be “permanent residences”. When they serve as permanent residences, they fail both the homeless population and the community as a whole. Support not for profit partners and other partners in providing permanent, year-round housing for unhoused individuals.
- **Year-round emergency facilities:** Support the Calgary Homeless Foundation and other partners in providing permanent, year-round, emergency facilities for unhoused individuals to access showers, washrooms, and community supports, including a pipeline to permanent housing.
- **Decentralized support services:** Distribute these services across all Calgary communities to reduce over-concentration in the East Village and Beltline.
- **Emergency task force:** Establish a single task force to coordinate emergency shelters and services during extreme weather or crises.
- **Integrated mental health and addictions support:** Fund and execute the planned co-location of 24/7 mental health and addictions specialists with Calgary Police Service (CPS) in a central downtown facility. This model ensures immediate, expert intervention for individuals in crisis while reducing strain on law enforcement.
- **Invest in relevant supports:** Support and partner with organizations that provide community-led outreach, shelter, and housing options to populations disproportionately impacted by the housing crisis, including organizations that focus on women, youth, ethnic and Indigenous populations

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Immediate (0-6 months):

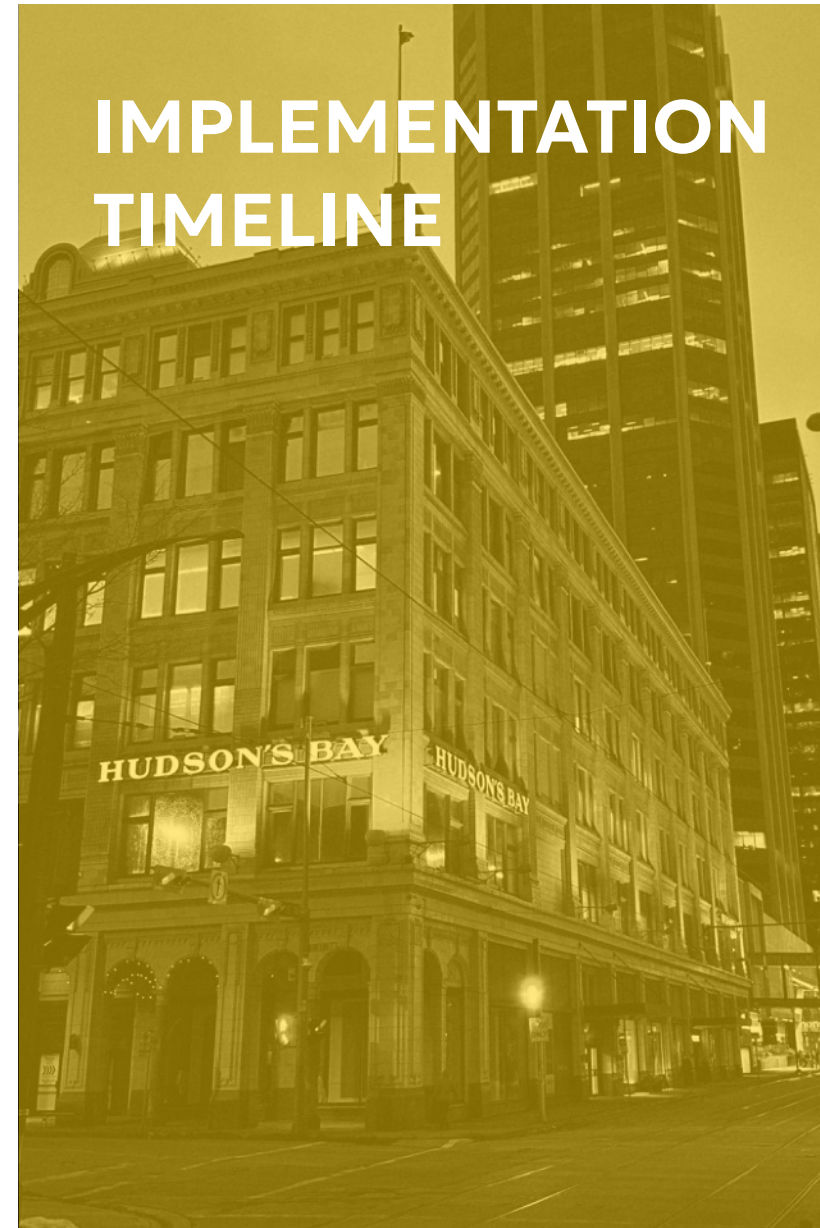
- Introduce and pass municipal bylaw reforms.
- Launch public awareness campaigns for reporting mechanisms and new bylaws.
- Begin pilot programs for visible police presence and mental health/addictions specialists.

Short-term (6-12 months):

- Install permanent and staffed public washrooms.
- Expand year-round homelessness facilities and services.
- Create safer pick up and drop off zones and other pedestrian improvements.

Medium-term (1-2 years):

- Fully implement decentralized homelessness services.
- Establish Police Community Hubs and integrated mental health/addictions facilities.
- Evaluate and refine bylaw enforcement and public safety measures.





Conclusion

Calgary's downtown core is a vital part of our city's identity and economy. By addressing homelessness, mental health, and addictions with compassion and urgency, while enforcing public safety standards, we can restore downtown Calgary to its full potential. These measures will create a safer, more vibrant, and inclusive downtown for all Calgarians and visitors, ensuring our city remains a beacon of livability and prosperity.

Let's work together to make Calgary's downtown a place we can all be proud of—safe, thriving, and full of opportunity.

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