



Centre Street South Public Realm

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

March 8, 2021

Project overview

The first phase of this project will include working with the community to identify areas of concern and opportunity for potential public realm improvements and pedestrian safety along Centre Street South from Riverfront Avenue to 4 Avenue South. The analysis is focused on the North Central Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study to ensure that any infrastructure or stations that are proposed are integrated to promote the public realm and do not prevent any potential future improvements.

Engagement overview

The project team wanted to hear from residents, property managers and business owners about the opportunities and challenges in Chinatown along Centre Street South. The project team also asked about various improvements that were being considered along Centre Street South from the bridge to 4 Avenue South.

What we asked

We asked questions related to specific locations in Chinatown bordering Centre Street South. Questions like:

- Where do you think the strengths of the corridor are from a public realm perspective?
- Where are the areas in the corridor that you think the project should aim to improve?

We asked participants to rate various potential streetscape improvements that are being considered for the corridor. Participants were also asked about the BRT along the corridor:

- A streetscape is made up of many component parts, please tell us which elements are of most importance to you as it relates to this corridor
 - Examples: comfortable and accessible walking areas, public gathering spaces, etc.
- When thinking of the future North Central BRT along the corridor and the opportunity for improved stations and features that could be included, what are you looking forward to the most with regards to improvements to the BRT service?

What we heard

We've heard that participants want a cleaner, vibrant area with trees, plantings and welcoming gathering spaces. Participants would also like to see the BRT stops more accessible, and to both look and feel like they are culturally appropriate for Chinatown.

- For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.



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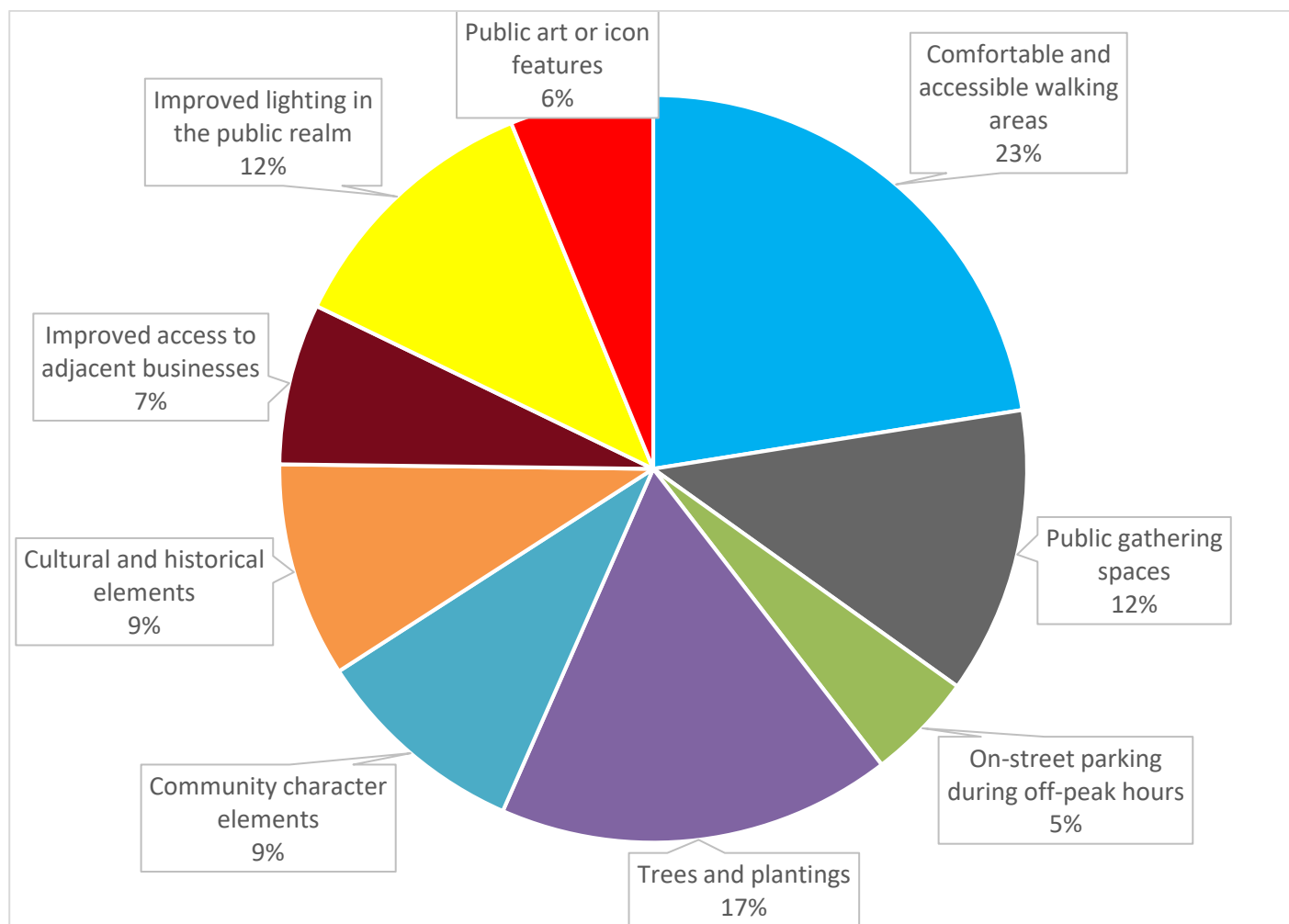
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Next steps

Following this phase of engagement the project team will develop design concepts based on public feedback and technical analysis. These concepts will be shared in spring 2021 for feedback.

Summary of Input

Q1. A streetscape is made up of many component parts, please tell us which elements are of most importance to you as it relates to this corridor



Participants indicated they prefer the corridor along Centre Street South from Riverfront Avenue to 4 Avenue South to be more inviting with comfortable and accessible walking areas. They would also like the area to be more vibrant with trees and plantings to brighten up the corridor.

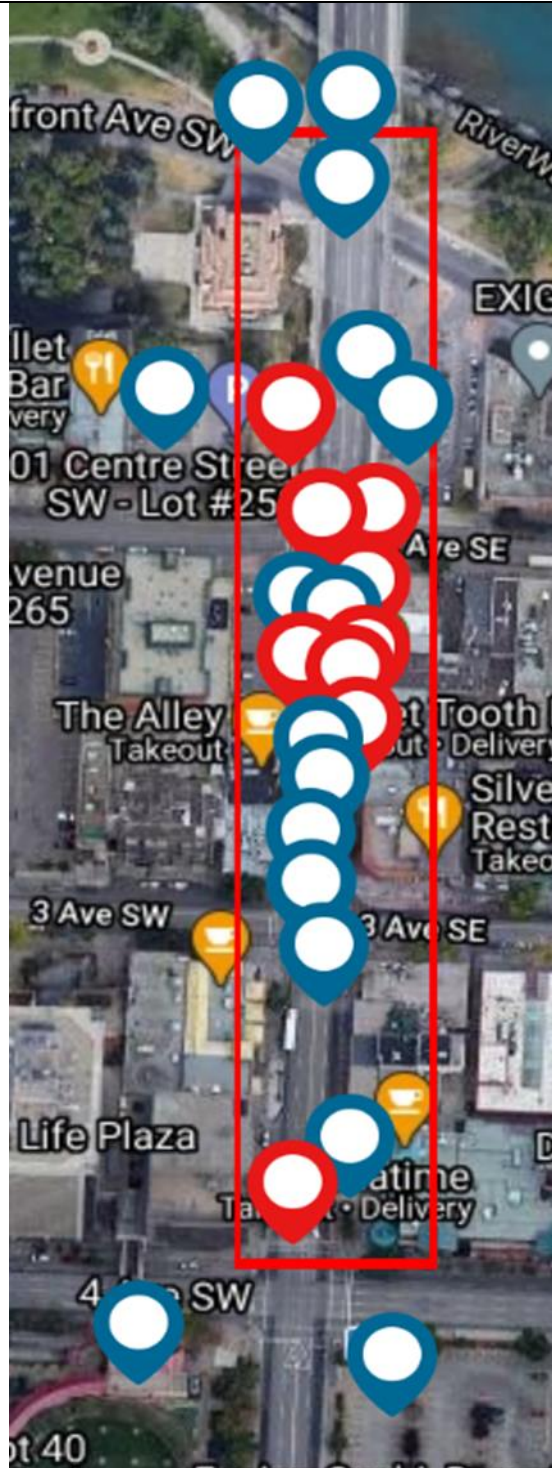
Q2. When thinking of the future North Central BRT along the corridor and the opportunity for improved stations and features that could be included, what are you looking forward to the most with regards to improvements to the BRT service?

Theme	Verbatim comments
Improved bus stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better bus stops/shelters in what is currently a highly congested and unsafe area for seniors, and handicapped users Thinking of winter-time BRT service would be important. The bus stations should have coverings and ideally be enclosed/heated. They should be well lit as well.
More amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honestly I'm more interested in the public spaces than the transit service. I hope the area approaching downtown is approachable and pleasant for walking and cycling. Attractive design and accessibility elements, good lighting to enhance safety. Provide protection from extreme weather elements due to our harsh climate.

Q3. Is there anything else that you would like to share with the project team about the public realm on Centre Street South?

Theme	Verbatim Comments
Pedestrian travels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk and pedestrian space needs to be wider, protected from the road and traffic and more friendly and comfortable. Celebrate the culture of Chinatown through placemaking and allow people more room to gather and enjoy walking from business to business. Make Chinatown and Centre Street South a destination for people.
Destination and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinatown may be more like Stephen's Ave., or perhaps the traffic could be diverted around the area to encourage people to use city transportation to arrive and enjoy the historical and unique amenities.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES Summary of input from the portal page map.



General Theme and Verbatim Comments

Opportunities: Better connectivity across Chinatown

- There is no need for 4 vehicle lanes here given the amount of traffic. Removing even one of these and allocating the space to wider sidewalks would immensely improve the streetscape and benefit adjacent retail.
- now that Centre Street N is becoming one lane each direction, perhaps one of the lanes on the bridge could be turned into a bike/scooter-lane
- I think the City should purchase a part (or all) of this parking lot to create a pedestrian corridor from the LRT station, through the cut-de-sac, and through this area to downtown. There does not appear to be many areas where a corridor could be created (due to existing development), and it would be a shame to lose this opportunity!!
The City seems to be looking for solutions that already exist, but in some cases a bolder step may be required. This type of action was not necessary in East Village, as open spaces were already available, but we have a chance to REALLY make an impact on the pedestrian experience, efficiency of the LRT's location, promotion of Chinatown, and many other unique opportunities.

Challenges: Narrow sidewalk, dangerous intersections

- This area of the sidewalk is very narrow and not sure what can be done with it. I find this block in general feels very un-kept. A wider walking area with more trees would be more appealing. Maybe some Chinese symbols or architecture to enhance the ethnic feel.
- Cars come too fast and too loud down the hill. should be slower to support pedestrian environment.
- Signal timing is too long, makes crossing delay uncomfortably long when walking and encourages speeding.



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Verbatim Comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with The [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

Q1. A streetscape is made up of many component parts, please tell us which elements are of most importance to you as it relates to this corridor

Other comments:

- Painted crosswalks (with those large horizontal lines) - perhaps even a 'criss cross' intersection?
- Comfortable and accessible biking areas
- Patio space for restaurants and cafes.

Q2. When thinking of the future North Central BRT along the corridor and the opportunity for improved stations and features that could be included, what are you looking forward to the most with regards to improvements to the BRT service?

- Better bus stops/shelters in what is currently a highly congested and unsafe area for seniors, and handicapped users
- Honestly I'm more interested in the public spaces than the transit service. I hope the area approaching downtown is approachable and pleasant for walking and cycling.
- Thinking of winter-time BRT service would be important. The bus stations should have coverings and ideally be enclosed/heated. They should be well lit as well.
- quicker access to get onto BRT lines - ensure you are collecting all of us
- The city of Calgary shall have a team dedicated for the modernization of center street from south all the way to McKnight Boulevard
- Bus only lanes and wider sidewalks
- I love the idea of the main street being a destination people choose to spend time at. A community hub if you will.

- Waste of money. Let's skip steps 2-4 and go straight to 5 new LRT. Typical Calgary. Build something new only to demo and replace it 2 years later.
- Priority lanes for buses so that it can be an actual BRT and not just a bus with BRT in the name
- Wider sidewalks and additional street trees.
- Heated stations, plantings integrated into the station
- Cleanliness of the area
- bus stops that are comfortable and friendly, considers the comfort and safety of people waiting, but also need to be aesthetic and part of the public realm design
- The BRT service should not interfere with local business access, signage or visual appeal. The strength of this realm is customers ability to see and feel part of the Chinese commercial heart of Calgary. That should not be damaged.
- Attractive design and accessibility elements, good lighting to enhance safety. Provide protection from extreme weather elements due to our harsh climate.
- "空间舒展，不建议在市中心搞烧烤功能的公园。"
- Expect adequate space. But a park with barbeque setting is not recommended. "

Q3. Is there anything else that you would like to share with the project team about the public realm on Centre Street South?

- Please DO NOT REMOVE any of the current trees along Centre Street, there is not much greenery in this area and it would be a shame for it to become devoid of any greenery. Consider getting a FENG SHUI expert to examine Chinatown in terms of 'flow'.
- there is a lot of space dedicated to vehicles. much more than for people (walking, biking). putting in pretty benches and sidewalks won't do much if it is a hostile place to be. I walk through the area daily, yet other than on Riverwalk I don't find it to be a place that calls to hang out
- The most important thing for the public realm is to prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety! Crossings should be safe and frequently located. This area has so much promise to highlight the cultural diversity of our city! Family-friendly public spaces should be paramount.
- The team responsible of "Center Street Modernization project" shall encourage developers and builders to build new buildings and businesses all along center street all the way to McKnight Boulevard,
- As a single woman who commutes through this area around 6am on weekdays, safety is my primary concern.
- Wider sidewalks and connections to the main pathway network are really needed.
- Please provide physically separated lanes for pedestrians - keep cyclists, scooters, roller bladers on a separate lane with a hard barrier. Pedestrians and their safety are not catered for well in Calgary.
- Looking forward to how you incorporate enough space to cycle safely and lots of room for bicycle parking. Please remember the future will have a variety of bikes and renders should show seniors on tricycles, parents on cargo bikes and very wide strollers all with enough space.

- Chinatown may be more like Stephen's Ave., or perhaps the traffic could be diverted around the area to encourage people to use city transportation to arrive and enjoy the historical and unique amenities.
- The team has great opportunity to change the city for future generations. Look towards other cities to see what they're doing well and emulate where possible. Don't hold back
- Public space is more important than parking, especially within the immediate vicinity of BRT stops
- More garbage bins/ recycling and seating needed in the area as a whole
- Sidewalk and pedestrian space needs to be wider, protected from the road and traffic and more friendly and comfortable. Celebrate the culture of Chinatown through placemaking and allow people more room to gather and enjoy walking from business to business. Make Chinatown and Centre Street South a destination for people.
- A BRT should not materially change anything about the current Centre Street. Instead, spending should be reviewed on this project as Calgary should be focused on reducing spending to prevent tax offloads out of the core.
- attractive barrier free links to adjacent commercial buildings.
- "空间舒展，人行道宽敞安全（尤其冬天上下坡道危险）"
- Adequate space for pedestrians, especially on sidewalks. Also improve the road accessibility especially during winter conditions (e.g. reducing slippery sections)."

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Is there anything else that you would like to share with the project team about the public realm on Centre Street South?

- This location plus the current 'Asian bus stop' in front of Dragon City Mall area high traffic areas that require better lighting, safety, and room for expansion. I suggest the City consider purchasing a portion of this parking lot, and MOVE the current location of the 'Asian busy stop' to make one large bus stop with improvements that don't need to be duplicated in both areas. This will better facilitate transfers for transit users, and allow for things like handicapped access + security cameras (which do not currently exist at the Chinatown bus stop).
- I believe the City should purchase part of this parking lot to help create a pedestrian thoroughfare from the LRT station, behind the Cultural Centre, and through Lot 264. People will want to have easy access to downtown, and a natural path does not currently exist that could accommodate the increased pedestrian traffic flow. I have already made comments on Lot 264. There needs to be a vision and planning for the future.... purchase and develop these currently available areas that could really enhance and benefit both the LRT passenger experience, and pedestrian experience from LRT station through Chinatown.
- "I think the City should purchase a part (or all) of this parking lot to create a pedestrian corridor from the LRT station, through the cut-de-sac, and through this area to downtown. There does not appear

to be many areas where a corridor could be created (due to existing development), and it would be a shame to lose this opportunity!!

- The City seems to be looking for solutions that already exist, but in some cases a bolder step may be required. This type of action was not necessary in East Village, as open spaces were already available, but we have a chance to REALLY make an impact on the pedestrian experience, efficiency of the LRT's location, promotion of Chinatown, and many other unique opportunities."
- "As Chinatown develops, parking will continue to be an ongoing challenge. So too is the challenge of upkeep of the unique Asian aspects of the area. I think the City should consider giving the James Short Parkade the revenue or ownership of this facility, to encourage visitors to Chinatown. For example, discounted parking with proof of Chinatown purchase.
- As is well documented, James Short was a racist who tried to prevent the Chinese from establishing Chinatown in this third location. It could be gifted to the community with an 'apology' for transgressions toward the Chinese community. Funds could be used to upkeep this unique area, and parking could be given to owners who give up parking spaces in Chinatown (for e.g., the parking spaces in Mural Alley could be compensated with parking, so the City could turn the alley into a really unique park/shopping area/destination.)"
- I think the City should consider purchasing this parking lot to create a better pedestrian corridor through Chinatown. The green space just East of the lot is far too small to accommodate the volume of foot traffic that can be expected
- This area of the sidewalk is very narrow and not sure what can be done with it. I find this block in general feels very un-kept. A wider walking area with more trees would be more appealing. Maybe some Chinese symbols or architecture to enhance the ethnic feel.
- This area is very dirty feeling and unsafe. It would be great if this parking lot was taken out and a nice approach into China town replaced it. This is our entry into downtown and it feels like we don't care.
- With the BRT proposal initiative. Would this be a better advantage for business and future advancement to have transit corridor remain in place along the centre street existing route and accommodation within the centre st north boundary and keeping the LRT on bridge for better access to businesses along centre st
- Traffic lights should be added to ensure safe pedestrian access from Chinatown to the riverwalk!
- Please put a pathway connection here and a safe crossing to the pathway network.
- This pathway connection ends at a dangerous street. Please make a path extension here
- A bike lane on 3rd avenue will be great and provide lots of business to China town
- These sidewalks are way too narrow, we need them to be expanded.
- It's simple, if you put bus only dedicated lanes next to the sidewalk, this will move the main flow of traffic to the middle lanes. That will provide a gap between the sidewalk and busy street making it more pedestrian friendly.
- Since the new LRT bridge will not connect the river pathways maybe the lower deck of Centre Street Bridge should provide that connection instead. I never liked the narrow lanes when it is a vehicle road anyway. Having it open for bikes and pedestrians in the summer was great. Perhaps this



Centre Street South Public Realm

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should be a road in the winter when more people drive and MUP in the summer when more people walk or bike. The other idea is that you can reduce it to one vehicle lane (reversible) and a MUP.

- Removing a lane of traffic to prioritize buses needs to be done to improve the streetscape and BRT performance.
- There is no need for 4 vehicle lanes here given the amount of traffic. Removing even one of these and allocating the space to wider sidewalks would immensely improve the streetscape and benefit adjacent retail.
- The narrow sidewalk, below the grade of the road and adjacent to a concrete crash barrier, is a terribly cramped and uncomfortable pedestrian environment.
- the bus waiting area is kind of in everyone's way. maybe it should be moved a little south
- now that Centre Street N is becoming one lane each direction, perhaps one of the lanes on the bridge could be turned into a bike/scooter-lane
- this is a somewhat unpredictable e-w crossing. in fact, there was a fatal accident here. this intersection should be made safer
- ped n-s crossings should be provided near centre st bridge lower deck
- visibility-challenged corner dangerous to cross south-north
- sunken and narrow sidewalk
- At grade crosswalk to connect the river pathways to Centre somehow would be better than the bizarre and steep pedestrian overpasses.
- Signal timing is too long, makes crossing delay uncomfortably long when walking and encourages speeding.
- Remove the collision barrier here - just slow down the traffic and you don't need one. Very anti-pedestrian
- Cars come too fast and too loud down the hill. should be slower to support pedestrian environment.