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Delegation information
Committee: Executive Policy Committee
Committee - council: N/A
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): Item No. 19 Strategic Priorities Action Plan (SPAP)

Service inquiry: Submit Comments in writing
Participation preference: N/A
Comments in writing: Hello members of the Executive Policy Committee,

I am writing today about the Strategic Priorities Action Plan (SPAP) and how important it is to support transit-oriented infill development. In this respect, two priority action items have the potential to complement one another. Item #14 (Amend zoning bylaws to allow residential construction "as-of-right" over commercial sites including retail malls) and Item #28 (Accelerate the implementation of the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan) can work together to facilitate the development of transit-oriented development corridors where people are able to make fewer vehicle trips and significant property tax revenue is generated for city services. When Council gets closer to operationalizing and implementing these items, however, it is important to get the details right. We need a bylaw amendment for residential at commercial which ensures most residential developments won't end up getting bogged down in the variance process for other issues (i.e. excessive parking minimums). For transit, its essential that Council take, as a benchmark, the pre-2019 cuts level of funding to the service.

There are many other positive items in the SPAP. These include Item #6 to develop a city-wide housing strategy, Item #12 to review the process for land development decisions (particularly if a climate and fiscal lens is added to compare infill and greenfield development proposals), and Item #13 to hire more development officers. The City should specifically hire more development officers as well as planners and enforcement officials for infill along the lines of Edmonton's infill planning team. Dedicated city staff can serve a vital function in diffusing tensions around infill projects.

Item #16 to identify strategic opportunities to partner with Indigenous governments to build economic opportunity through urban reserves is important and will be beneficial for the future evolution of our city.

Item #27 to accelerate completion and implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategy is important to reducing vehicle trips and meeting climate goals. The addition of reference to the Community Energy Investment Roadmap may help strengthen the climate emphasis in the SPAP.

Committee members should be skeptical of the Chief Peguis Trail extension (Item #17), which will facilitate further greenfield sprawl in the northern exurbs of Winnipeg. Item #18, improvements to Route 90, must not include freeway style widening.

Best regards,

Dylon Martin