

B6 Zoning Review Focus Group – Additional Information

Mandate / Purpose

The Planning and Development Department is undertaking a review of the B6 – Downtown Commercial District, the primary zoning district in Downtown Saskatoon that encompasses most of its land area. The intent of the review is to identify and implement amendments to the zone’s regulations that better reflect current building practices, emphasize flexibility and encourage development of the Downtown while ensuring a high-quality built environment.

The B6 Zoning Review Focus Group will be comprised of Downtown and industry stakeholders who will work with Administration to review topic areas and amendment options and provide feedback from a technical perspective. Feedback from the Focus Group will be used to refine amendment options that are brought forward for broader public engagement and inform final recommendations for City Council to consider during the Public Hearing process.

Scope of B6 Zoning Review

Planning and Development has undertaken preliminary work to identify known issues and topic areas for review. The following key topic areas have been identified:

1. “Open Volume” regulations;
2. Surface parking lots;
3. Design Guidelines for the Downtown;
4. Adaptive reuse; and
5. Miscellaneous/Housekeeping.

Considerations related to the Downtown Event and Entertainment District are not within the scope of the B6 Zoning Review. A District Plan for that project will consider land use and development objectives within its study area, which includes land currently zoned B6. Any land use and zoning amendments required to specifically achieve the District Plan’s vision for its study area will be put forward by that plan.

Composition

The Focus Group will be comprised of 6-8 individuals with representation from Downtown and industry stakeholder groups. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Designers/Architects;
- Developers/Builders;
- Planners; and
- Downtown Business Improvement District representation.

Preferred Qualifications

- Ability to commit time to attend meetings and participate in related activities (e.g. – site visits undertaken by the group);
- Members must be able to meet either in-person and/or be competent in using an online format, such as Microsoft Teams;
- Ability to work respectfully and collaboratively;
- Experience/involvement with designing and/or developing in Downtown Saskatoon; and
- Experience with the City of Saskatoon Zoning Bylaw and the B6 zoning regulations.
 - Note: The work of the Focus Group will have a particular emphasis on Open Volume. Applicants that have experience with the Open Volume regulations and in matters of design and development relating to these regulations are encouraged.

Appointment

A call for prospective Focus Group members will be made through communication to identified Downtown and industry stakeholder groups. The qualifications of the candidates and the range of expertise and diversity of experience in the composition of the group overall will be considered in the selection of members.

Conduct of Members

Members shall be given the opportunity to debate and discuss items in a respectful and cooperative manner.

Confidentiality

Members are bound to maintain the confidentiality of information received by them as such in their capacity as members. Information which is confidential, proprietary to the B6 Zoning Review Focus Group, Civic Board, Commission, Authority, Committee, the City or non-public must not be divulged to anyone, other than persons who are authorized to receive the information.

Meetings and Timeframes

The first meeting is expected to occur in March 2023. It is anticipated the group will be required to meet 4 – 5 times over the course of 2023. Most meetings are anticipated to take place during the second quarter of the year, but project timelines are subject to change. The mandate of the Focus Group will be considered complete once the proposed B6 Zoning Review amendments have been presented to City Council for consideration at a Public Hearing. This is tentatively expected for late 2023 or early 2024.

Each meeting will have an agenda to guide discussions. Materials will be provided to Focus Group members in advance of the meeting, whenever possible.

Administration will work with Focus Group members to determine suitable meeting dates and times.

Decisions

The Focus Group will provide feedback to Administration on the proposed changes to the B6 zoning regulations. The Focus Group is not a decision-making body, so where the group is unable to come to agreement on an item, the varying points of view will be noted by Administration for consideration during the review process.

Communication

A summary of discussions and recommendations will be provided to City Council when they are considering the bylaw amendments. This report will be publicly available for Focus Group participants and the general public to review.

B6 Zoning Review Project Team

- Brent McAdam, Senior Planner
- Zoe Hagen, Planner