

What would you change along Macleod Trail and Bonaventure Drive?



Help the ACA advise business land owners on positive development for our community.



FROM CARCADIA TO ACADIA

Anderson to Heritage Coalition Community Proposal

Acadia. Fairview. Haysboro. Kingsland. Southwood. Willowridge

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MISSION STATEMENT

The six communities involved in the AH! “A better Macleod” Coalition are similar in age, structure, and demographic composition. Some of them were designed as stand-alone entities, and others were designed as filler, to connect other communities. What they all share is the “Island Effect”. On all sides, these communities are segregated from their neighbours by large arterial roads. This makes navigation by automobile necessary for our youngest and oldest residents - more truthfully by anyone who is unable to safely cross a four to eight lane road in 30 seconds or less.

As the buildings along Macleod age, there will be an opportunity for these communities to encourage connectivity with new developments. We are already seeing local landowners re-invest in our neighbourhoods. Rather than be approached individually, the six communities surrounding Macleod Tr. between Heritage Dr. and Anderson Rd. would like to work together in order to ensure future generations have the best experience possible. This approach will increase both investor and resident certainty that the piecemeal design effect to redevelopment inherent to individual land ownership will be minimized. Communities have always cared what happens in their backyards - rather than reacting, the AH! Coalition is focused on being proactive in identifying what the communities would like to see from development going forward.

Access between communities is crucial - if we are to embrace all ages and abilities, our connections must be planned for pleasant flow by stroller, foot, bike, car, walker and wheelchair. The realities of living in a winter city do not escape us. All of these modes of transportation are not going to be ideal year-round. However, we endeavor to do our best to accommodate all modes in our recommendations - to reduce through traffic, to enable healthy residents, and to enhance the beauty and desirability of our communities.

By joining our community associations, we, the founding members of the AH! Coalition have been rewarded with a chance to connect with friends down the street. This is rare in areas where most of the community navigates by automobile, in a time where not everyone has children and, even if they do, local schools do not always draw from the surrounding streets. **We want to enhance the neighbourly aspects of our communities - to create gathering spaces and hubs of activity, to ensure that everyone has a chance to meet their neighbours and play an active role in making our communities welcoming to visitors to Macleod, but still feel like ‘home’ to the residents.**

PUBLIC SPACE?

A public space refers to an area or place that is open and accessible to all citizens, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level”; that is, a place where anyone can come, and further, where most events are spontaneous rather than pre-planned, where people mix with others or simply move about or sit and watch others. Public spaces have no entrance fee, no dress code, and no script. They offer surprises and unexpected pleasures: the sight of children playing, youth strolling, the elderly chatting, the fatigued resting, the lonely and melancholy and bored escaping their troubles. There are no clear distinctions between observers and observed; all are on stage, all are part of the audience.

We sincerely hope you will join us.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

THIS DOCUMENT REPRESENTS AN OVERVIEW OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS POINT IN TIME, AND INCLUDES EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY COMMENTARY TAKEN FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES AND ENGAGEMENTS. IT IS AN INTRODUCTORY DOCUMENT, MEANT TO BE ADDED TO AS THE COMMUNITIES UNDERTAKE MORE DISCUSSIONS AND COLLABORATION. IT IS NOT A REPORT SO MUCH AS A STORY OF OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS, ORIGINAL REPORTS AND IN-DEPTH STUDIES CAN BE ACCESSED BY REACHING OUT TO YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

HISTORY OF MACLEOD TR SOUTH

Original Intent and Design

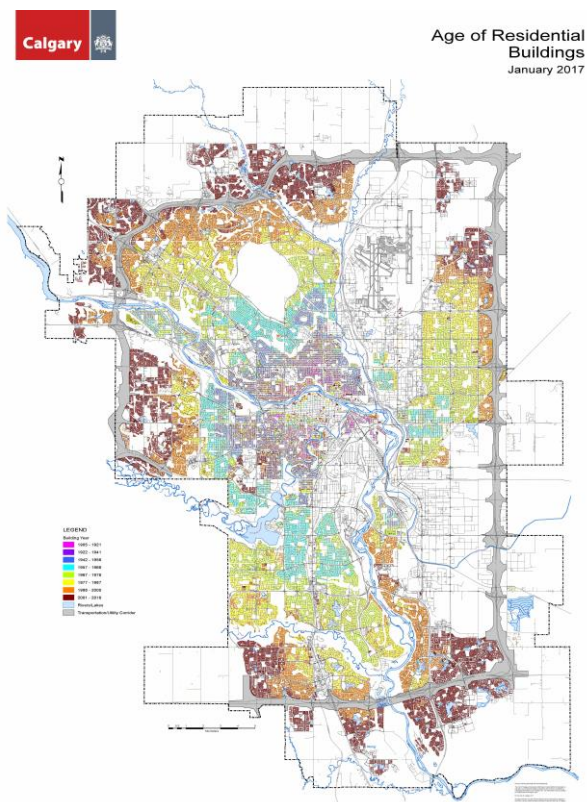
Macleod Trail was historically a trail used by the Treaty 7 First Nations, worn out over many years of families following their neighbours. Settlers continued this trend, using the trail to travel between Calgary and Fort Macleod.



The corridor is still a major connecting route, now used not only to join municipalities but also to join communities within the City of Calgary. We need this major thoroughfare - but we also need to make it as enjoyable to live beside as it is convenient to travel along.

Community Buildout

The Communities of Acadia, Fairview, Haysboro, Kingsland, Southwood, and Willowridge (Willow Park and Maple Ridge have a single community association) were variously built up between 1957 and 1976, with the majority being completed by 1966. The Age of Calgary's Residential Buildings map indicates this era is the third "ring" of residential developments in the City. At the time, the land was being transformed from fields and farms to master planned developments.



While the communities themselves are well organized internally, they lack connectivity to services and each other in a way that is navigable by those residents who are too young or old to drive or have limited mobility. The prevalence of large corridor roadways surrounding these communities means that moving between them is difficult for anyone, of any ability, to negotiate without a vehicle.

At the time of build-out, this made a lot of sense. These communities were at the edge of the City, and Macleod Trail was a highway to Fort Macleod. This has recently been highlighted by

historians and ranchers along the route, who have refurbished some of the original markers from our past. Initially, the new communities were full of young families. The local services were well used - streets, parking lots, pools, corner stores. Anyone familiar with the current Acadia Aquatic Centre might be surprised by this photo from 1961.

Over the years, the kids grew up and moved away. This is a cycle familiar to many post-war era communities: the family dwelling, once home to an average of 4-5 people, now often only houses one or two. The communities got a bit quieter. This change didn't happen overnight, but the numbers are pretty clear.

We are now in a resurgence of young families moving to our communities, and many of our original residents are living longer, healthier lives than they may have in the past. This means our seniors are staying in their homes longer, as we would hope they would be able to.



It also means that our demographics are shifting - if we are to keep our longest residents as part of our communities, many of them are asking for our understanding. Their ability to rent out part of their homes to folks who have the willingness to help with payments and yardwork or snow shoveling is part of the equation. Another part of the equation is ensuring that they are able to take part in the social fabric of our communities, close to their homes, even if they can no longer drive. Many of the original residents are heavily invested in the community and amazing volunteers- we want to keep learning from them!



Calgary households are also not as homogenous as they once were: many singles and couples are living in homes without children, from their early 20's to their late 90's. Many children no longer attend the neighbourhood school, where they can easily make friends down the street, but go to specialized schools with much larger catchments.

The research is clear - mental and physical well-being are supported by strong social networks and active lives. As mental and physical costs increasingly ramp up healthcare budgets across the country, by designing our communities to enable connection and physical well being save taxpayer dollars, just as the densification of our communities saves on infrastructure costs. The Smart Prosperity Institute reports on an example close to home:

“Across just 17 of the more than 40 new developments underway or planned in Edmonton, net costs have been projected to exceed revenues by nearly \$4 billion over 60 years”.¹

While development and densification are inevitable, they do not have to lead to battles between landowners and community members. The underlying motivation for the Anderson to Heritage Coalition is to work together to create areas within and between our communities where our residents can be active and



¹ Smart Prosperity Institute, *“The Cost of Sprawl”*, available at <http://thecostofsprawl.com/> See also

City of Edmonton, *“Costs and Revenues for New Areas”* (May 11, 2011), available at http://www.chba.ca/uploads/urban_council/Oct2011/Tab%206%20-%20Costs%20and%20Revenues%20for%20New%20Areas%20-%20City%20of%20Edmonton%20paper.pdf.



meet each other. Because developments along Macleod Trail and the adjacent streets are often addressed piecemeal, we have decided to reach out to the residents and landowners before many of these developments take place- to find opportunities for individual investments which will find support with the residents, to advocate for development which will enhance the lives of our members and the bottom line for our investors, and to help coordinate the larger picture.

| Acadia | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Peak Population Year | 1972 |
| Peak Population | 13,589 |
| 2017 Current Population | 10,660 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | - 2,929 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -22% |

| Fairview | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Peak Population Year | 1968 |
| Peak Population | 6,425 |
| 2016 Current Population | 3,847 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | -2,578 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -40% |

| Haysboro | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Peak Population Year | 1968 |
| Peak Population | 8,044 |
| 2017 Current Population | 7,076 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | -968 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -12% |

| Kingsland | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Peak Population Year | 1971 |
| Peak Population | 5,341 |
| 2016 Current Population | 4,667 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | -647 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -13% |

| Southwood | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Peak Population Year | 1978 |
| Peak Population | 8,101 |
| 2017 Current Population | 6,214 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | -1,887 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -23% |

| Willow Park | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Peak Population Year | 1978 |
| Peak Population | 7,496 |
| 2015 Current Population | 5,423 |
| Difference in Population (Number) | -2,073 |
| Difference in Population (Percent) | -28% |

Development Past, Present, and Future

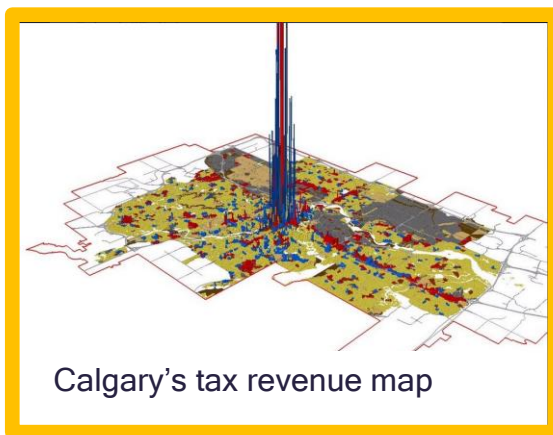
Over the years, the services that appeared along Macleod Trail were car-oriented because they were built to service the highway- this meant lots of space between them, large parking lots, and multiple entry and exit points (driveways). Almost no-one walks down Macleod - and who can blame them! It is very good at meeting the needs of vehicles, not so great at meeting the needs of people.



Calgarians are active people and exhibit some of the highest frequency of pathway use in North America. Part of this lifestyle is due to our nearly 800 KM of pathways within the city - the ability to go on an adventure with your family, under your own power, is one of the most

accessible forms of recreation both in terms of financial and physical reach. These two historical infrastructure investments, and their use patterns, show very clearly that the decisions we make today around our built environment affect our lifestyles tomorrow.

As the City densifies over the next generation in order to save money on infrastructure costs, the ability of Calgarians to go about their daily lives under their own power will become increasingly important.² Not everyone wants to, or indeed can, choose to use alternative transportation. It is our duty as good stewards of our communities to ensure those who choose to, or need to, have enough space to park and drive within their communities. This means removing necessity, and making vehicle ownership a choice, to the best of our abilities, in order to make the roads better for everyone.



This also means preserving the vehicular artery that is Macleod Trail, and ensuring the needs of vehicles are met. There are parallel roads which connect the surrounding communities to the backs (mostly) of the buildings and services along Macleod. These areas offer an opportunity to increase other modes of transportation options. There are significant parcels of underutilized land which could become mid-rise developments - three storey homes, for

example, could help to form a barrier between the communities and a busy Macleod as well as increasing connectivity at a human scale. The points above are simply illustrations of different possibilities - our goal is to understand which possibilities the communities want to explore, and to encourage local landowners to build a community that makes all of our lives a bit calmer while supporting local businesses

The underlying motivation for the Anderson to Heritage Coalition is to work together to create areas within and between our communities where our residents can be active and meet each other.

² *Plan it Calgary - The Implications of Alternative Growth Patterns on Infrastructure Costs.* City of Calgary, 2009

21st CENTURY HABITS AND TRENDS

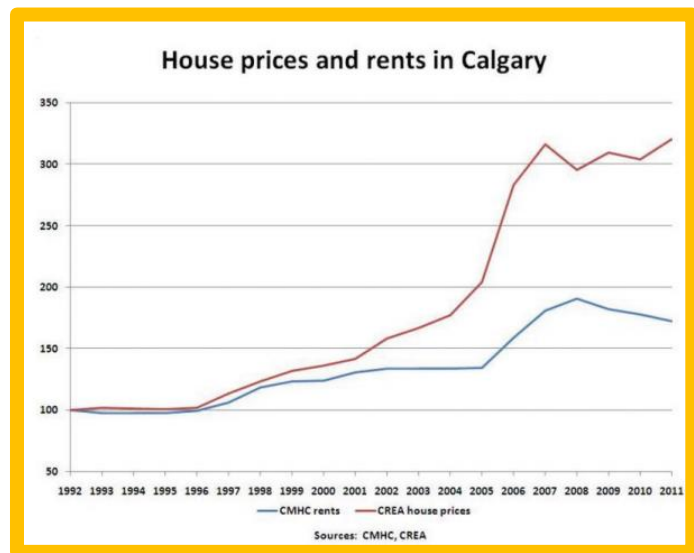
There are many differences in the way our society now functions from the time our neighbourhoods were designed. Clearly, the organization of the basic family unit have shifted, but there are other subtler changes that are equally important to our quality of life in our communities.

Recreation

Many post-war communities are home to ball diamonds, for example. These are great facilities for outdoor recreation and are still used - just not in the same way they once were. Gone are the days you could scrounge up two teams from the kids roaming the neighbourhood, as most kids have friends that live across the city, not down the block. Initiatives such as pump parks are becoming more popular, as a child can take their bike to the park and make friends when they get there or enjoy the facilities on their own. Because there is no requirement to show up with two teams worth of participants, more people actually end up making use of these parks.

Property ownership

In the 1960's, if you had a decent job you could buy a house. Those who rented in post war communities were often viewed as outliers, as they were seen as having no real reason to not invest in a home. While we are now more careful to acknowledge that poverty has many faces and causes, we are also in a time where the price of housing is much larger, in relative terms, than it once was. This alone has contributed to more people being unable to purchase- in some cases despite graduate level education and decent wages. The change in employment patterns has also led to a larger rental population. In today's economy, the likelihood of having long term employment at one organization, or even in one industry, in a single city is much less dependable an outcome. This can lead to hesitancy to commit oneself to long term investments such as a mortgage. The generational

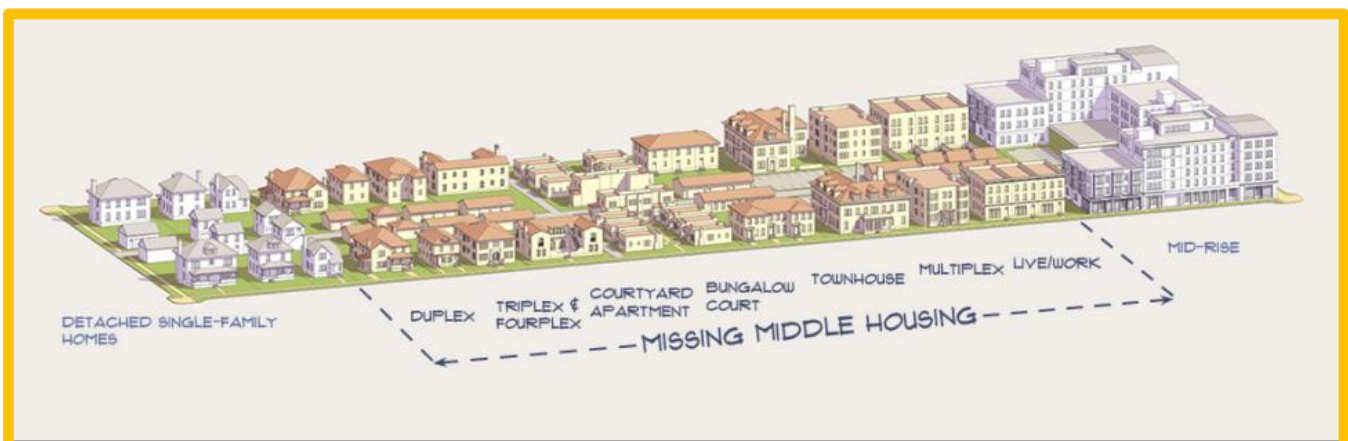


divide in property ownership of any type is large: the 2016 Census indicates 83.1% of the Boomer generation owns, while the rate among those under 35 years old is just under half.

To be clear, these trends are not signs of decreased community involvement. More and more, renters are investing in their communities with their time and efforts, planting gardens, and making connections in ways that the post-war generation is not always familiar with. The stigma around renters is inappropriate, and in order to ensure our communities are vibrant and in market demand we need to find spaces that are within reach of all. The common knowledge is that rental properties and apartments decrease the value of nearby properties. This is untrue. Communities that have seen re-investment in the form of multi-family homes have often seen a corresponding increase in other property types in the area. This is because these developments are able to increase the number of people looking for services in the area, which in turn attracts quality businesses and supports those already in the area. It also makes the single-family homes rarer, relatively speaking, thus often allowing them to command a premium.

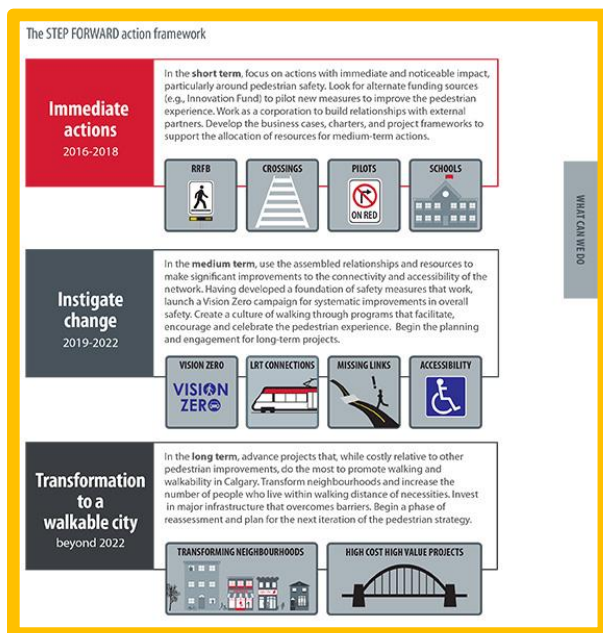
Housing style choice

Another result of changing employment patterns is an increase in the number of hours worked. Taken in conjunction with the changing household composition, many people simply do not have the time or inclination to take care of a yard. There is increased demand for different forms of home ownership in recent years, due in part to changes in time use prioritization such as yard maintenance. Another example would be the changes in home-based hosting patterns. Calgary's large footprint means it is often more convenient to meet friends at a restaurant rather than hosting them at your home. This means the need for more space, such as in formal dining rooms, is limited for certain populations.



Getting around

Many areas in Calgary are seeing a change in transportation habits as well. While many are aware of the recent trend in commuter cycling, there are larger areas of change which speak to shifting demographics as well. Teenagers are no longer fighting to get their driver's license when they turn 16. Some still do, but the percentage is much lower than it once was. According to Alberta Transportation, the amount of overall 16-24 year olds with a driver's license has decreased 20% over the last 20 years.³ Using broad strokes to paint a very generalized picture, seniors, children, and those with different levels of physical ability all have similar needs as far as community infrastructure is concerned. This is true of park design, sidewalk design (and size), and safe connection patterns through and between the neighbourhoods to businesses and social activities. Investments in this infrastructure have been shown to make the journey through our neighbourhoods more pleasant for all, and to increase property values. If visitors to hotels along Macleod Trail are tempted to explore by foot, nearby businesses will see increased impulse purchase behavior rather than having to market themselves individually as a destination and the surrounding communities are likely to see less vehicular traffic. We see the positive impacts of foot traffic in other communities in Calgary, like Kensington, and in other cities, such as Canmore and Nanton (also on Macleod Trail!)



These are just a few examples of changing habits our communities need to take into consideration to ensure they are attractive, vibrant places which can avoid the cyclic nature of boom and bust. The larger the variation of ages, stages, and wages of a community, the more likely the schools will stay open and the nearby amenities will be financially sound investments into the future.

³ Statistics available at

<https://www.transportation.alberta.ca/query.aspx?q=previous+reports&sitesearch=http%3A%2F%2Ftransportation.alberta.ca&btnG=Search>

Change, death, and taxes

This all leads to the need for great public spaces. Increased opportunities for those aged 8-80 to navigate our communities, and common gathering spaces for those in smaller dwellings by extension means a better community experience for everyone. The efforts undertaken by the Anderson to Heritage Coalition will lead to joint advocacy, wherever possible, for improvements to our local public spaces as opportunities present themselves. We are not looking to remove opportunities for the communities, but to add to them as re-investment in the area becomes more prominent. We are committed to working with the City and Investors to break down the silos often apparent in parcel by parcel re-development and ensure that the needs of the communities are met in the process. Much like death and taxes, change is inevitable. The more we know about the types of changes the communities would like to see, the better we can convey these opportunities to local leaders and landowners. Investments may be small, such as a few added benches or trees, or larger, such as collaborative projects to expand a sidewalk. If the Community Associations are armed with a variety of wishes from residents, we can advocate for these investments.

Recent Research –

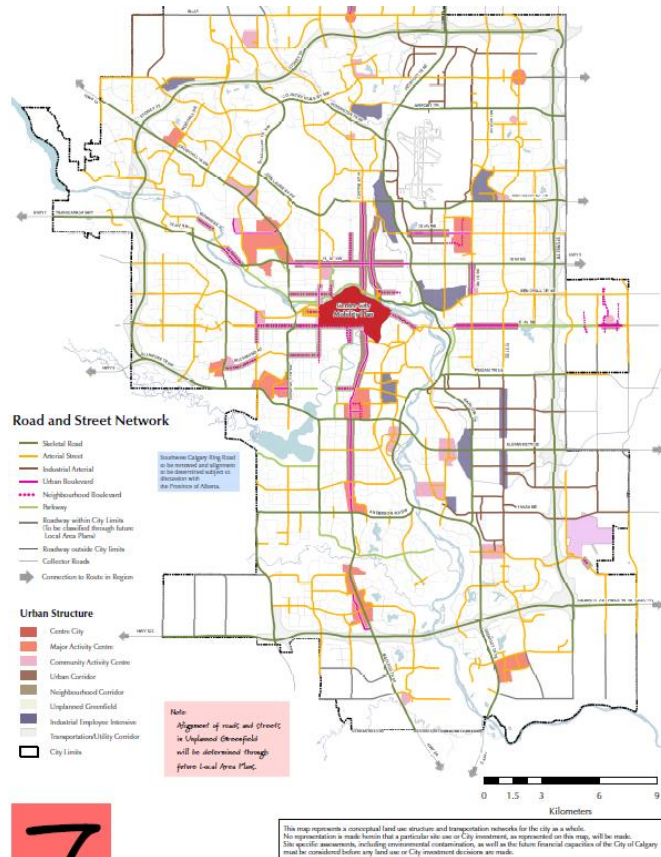
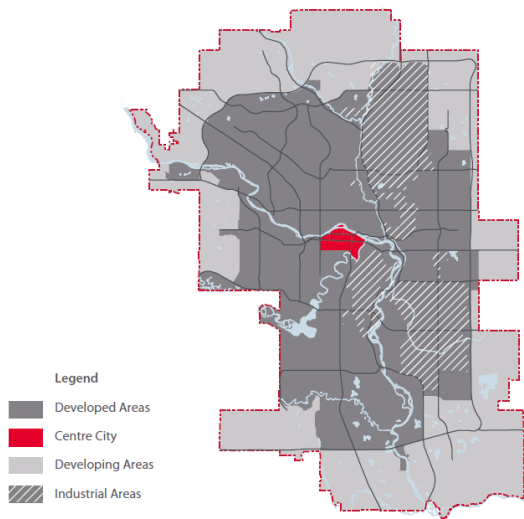
Best Design for Mobility, Growth, & Local Businesses

There is a growing body of research on how the design of communities impacts the ability of its residents to get around, what kinds of investments are made by the private sector, and the viability of both independent and big box businesses. This document is not the place to describe all of the available research, however there are a number of information hubs which house some of these documents.

In Calgary, we created our first Municipal Development Plan just over 20 years ago. This was mandated by the provincial government, and a plan was quickly put in place. Efforts were then made to come up with a longer-range development plan, which culminated in our current Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan. These documents were meant to work together to ensure that development and transportation worked with each other. The maps below are from those documents and are examples of the areas of focus of each plan.

The City of Calgary also has a Planning and Development library (search at www.calgary.ca) which contains area plans, guiding documents, best practices and policy currently in place.

For those wishing to explore more broadly, www.strongtowns.org offers a large amount of information presented in blog form, which specifically addresses the struggles many American towns with large suburban rings are facing. In particular, the myth that new developments automatically pay for themselves is examined in many of their documents, and they look at how the ways cities are designed impact the need to raise taxes, or mitigating policies.



Road and Street Network

PREVIOUS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: THE IMPORTANT BIT

Project- Specific engagement has occurred in a variety of areas, as well as larger community wide studies in partnership with the Federation of Calgary Communities, The University of Calgary Faculty of Environmental Design, and Sustainable Calgary. There have also been studies by international Masters of Urban Planning students, who did a significant amount of outreach as they undertook their final projects. Please remember, this is a general list to date and we hope to add to it with your input. We have come together to find out more - what follows is the information available from previous public engagement sessions, by community. See a gap? Let us know!

So...what do community members want?

The categories below are summaries of the comments your neighbours have given at previous planning engagement sessions. This is not a complete list, it is a list of examples we have heard repeated across the communities.

Buildings:

Community members seem to prefer that any additional medium or high density residential developments are built along the periphery of communities, specifically along the corridor of Macleod and along major connector routes such as Heritage and Southland Drives.

Businesses:

Suggestions of moving some business in towards the community, or facing them towards the community, rather than making residents go to the major corridors. Parking nestled in the middle of sites has been referenced in multiple engagements. Particularly requested have been gathering-oriented spaces such as coffee shops, in 5 out of the six communities.

Recreation:

More useable (multi-use) parks suggested in every community.
Better connections between the arenas and the Heritage LRT

Better way-finding signage for bike routes

Getting around:

Reduced speed within the communities.

Better consistency of signage for pedestrians, including road painting (crosswalks?)

Wider sidewalks on Southland bridge

Fill in missing sidewalk sections

Improve sidewalks and curb cuts at major intersections

Ensure continuity of curb cuts

Create shortcuts to the bigger stores from the communities

Make LRT stations more pleasant to be at. Creation of community hubs, small scale retail, and food trucks have all been suggested.

Better lighting at LRT

Better access to Southland LRT (stairs are horrible)

Better protection from vehicles exiting Southland Crossing (behind Safeway)

Crosswalk at Macleod and 94th - light not long enough for people with mobility issues.

Pathway connections need better signs so people don't get lost in the communities

What communities want to keep or enhance

Walkable paths to schools and shops

Lots of green space

People know each other

Mixed age demographics

Preservation of mid century character (bungalows)

Access to LRT stations (Southwood is the only community home to two!)

Suggested additions to the community:

Wooden or ornamental metal benches

Waste separation cans (public waste cans in general)

Planters

Rain Garden

Community gardens

Trees for open green spaces (ie: perimeter of school fields)

Ornamental bike racks (simple ones not as popular in half the communities)

Simple lighting in public areas (ornate not as popular in 4 communities)

Boulevard signage or community welcome signs (Fairview is working towards this already!)

Public art - paintings much more popular than sculpture. Many big box store backs are ugly.

More families to fill the schools

More seating in parks, away from playgrounds

Coffee shops in the neighbourhood strip malls

Pump parks (mentioned in 3 communities)

Community bulletin boards - especially at business hubs or on transit desire-lines (paths people take to get to transit)

Recreation hubs (clear connections at the places that do exist)

Connect Elbow and Bow river pathway systems

NEXT STEPS

The communities endeavor to get a better idea of lines of desire (where people want to get to and from), more clarity and direction on the ideas listed above, and creative ideas residents may have for larger landowners looking to re-develop.

This is particularly true along the streets and intersections that form a loop around Macleod - Heritage, Southland, Bonaventure, and Horton. It also includes the park spaces adjacent to the train tracks, the new Anderson TOD, and the connections between the stations and the surrounding communities. The boundaries of the study area extend north past Heritage to roughly 75th avenue, despite our name, as this is where a more natural break in the geography occurs. We look forward to working with you in the future, either in person or online at www.AHcoalition.rocks

