

Auburn Bay Community Garden

Location

- Ward 12
- 40 Auburn Meadows Street S.E.



Parcel Size

- 1.9 acres

Related LRT Project

- Green Line

Current Status

- Exploring lease extension

Community Partners

- Auburn Bay Community Association
- Hands on Growing

Key Connected Initiatives

- Calgary Food Action Plan – Calgary Eats!



Partners

This activation was initiated by Calgary Growth Strategies in partnership with two community partners, local non-profit Hands on Growing and the Auburn Bay Community Association. Hands on Growing provided the expertise in education for the community on the food growing process as well as site preparation and food growing supplies and materials. The Auburn Bay Community Association provided the communication channels, volunteers, and system to rent the raised beds. The Auburn Bay Community Association was also the lease and insurance holder for the site.

Process, Permissions, and Requirements

The process of activating this site required Administration identifying and selecting community partners that could demonstrate a feasible and acceptable plan for the use of the site. Interested community partners submitted business plan that outlined intended use of the site, alignment with City policies and programs, and community (public) benefit.

Once the community partner was confirmed, a lease, a license of occupation and insurance was then required. For non-for-profits and Community Associations, this can be a nominal lease if there is a commitment to delivering a community benefit. In this case, there was both education and outreach related to food growing facilitated by Hands on Growing, as well as beds dedicated to growing food for charity. A one-year lease was secured for 2021.

In the spring of 2021, the site was prepared for the first growing season. This required clean up of construction debris and grading. Materials (growing beds, soil, water tanks, equipment shed, port-o-potty) were then mobilized to the site. A total of 40 beds were established in 2021, 24 were larger beds sized 8 feet x 3 feet, and 16 were 3 feet by 3 feet. This uses approximately one 0.3 acres or one-sixth of the overall parcel. Three smaller beds were dedicated community plots. All others were rented out by the Auburn Bay Community Association within 24 hours. Of the gardeners, 95% were from Auburn Bay, the others from Mahogany and Copperfield. A water connection was provided by the condominium development to the north.

Priorities for 2022 include renewing the lease for a longer 5-year term, working with Administration to secure a site-specific water source, getting existing beds ready for planting, and expand on some community features such as a gazebo and additional seating. Garden expansion will likely occur in 2023 as costs are recouped by the Community Association and additional funds raised.

Costs

In the first year, \$23,000 was incurred by the Community Association. Costs included site preparation (removal of sod, grading, woodchips), growing materials (beds and soil), equipment (garden shed, hoses) and site supports (portable shade structure, portable toilets).

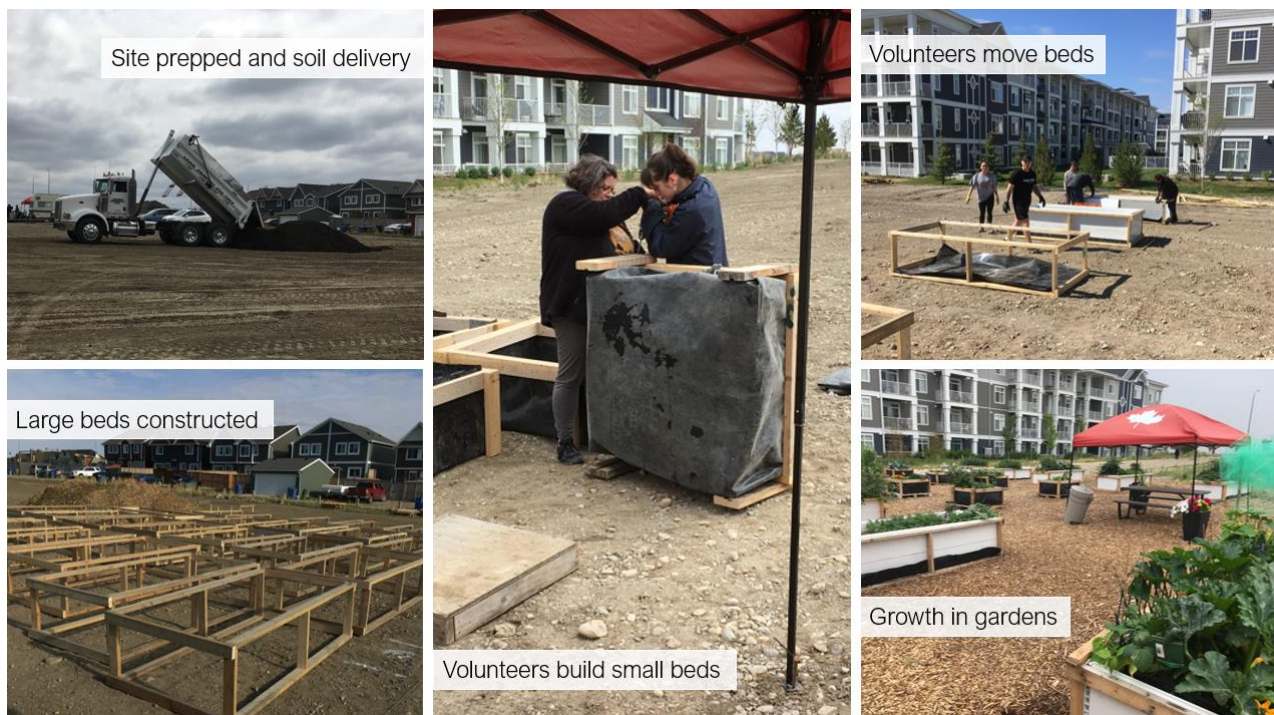
Wish list items not yet realized include: a permanent gazebo / shade structure, site specific water connection, outdoor games, additional seating. These costs are estimated at an additional \$44,000.

Measures of Effectiveness

- Economic: increases Community Association memberships, reduces maintenance for Administration
- Environmental: increases the habitat function of the site and increases local food growing opportunities
- Social: achieves strategic policy direction (i.e. Calgary Food Action Plan - Calgary Eats!), increases opportunities for social interaction and vibrancy in an underutilized space; builds partnerships between the City and community organizations

Lessons Learned

Costs of insurance and of cleaning up the site can be cost prohibitive for community partners. Access to a dedicated water supply is a challenge to sustaining the garden, let alone garden expansion. Community Association membership competes with Resident Association memberships. This initiative helped grow Community Association members.



Photos from Josh Hebb, Hands on Growing

40 Avenue Temporary Park

Location

- Ward 4
- 4020 and 4024 Centre Street N.E.



Parcel Size

- 0.3 acres

Related LRT Project

- Green Line

Current Status

- Detailed design

Key Connected Initiatives

- Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy
- North Hill Communities Local Area Plan
- North Central Mobility Study



Partners

This site was activated through the Established Areas Growth and Change Strategy (EACGS) Phase 1 public realm and capital projects.

Process, Permissions, and Requirements

Administration is leading the design and construction of a temporary park at this location through the \$1.75 million EACGS fund for the Greenview and Highland Park area. Concepts were developed in the summer of 2021 and two options put out to the public for feedback. A preferred concept has been identified and design is now at 30%.

Costs

- Part of a larger \$1.75 million EACGS fund for this area
- Construction cost estimated at \$250,000

Measures of Effectiveness

- Economic: increased visitation to the area and commercial node across Centre Street
- Environmental: increased habitat function of the space
- Social: increased opportunities for social interaction and community connection

Lessons Learned

- Coordination required among stakeholders to identify current and future constraints and considerations for the design process. For example, the site will require a future Traction Power Substation (TPSS), so the design of the temporary space considers the location and size of a TPSS. Trees are another consideration as there may be long-term impacts, such as pushback from the community, about removing trees in the future. A setback of seven feet is also being included in the design. Reducing throwaway costs important consideration when it comes to site design.
- Site visits critical to understanding context of the parcel – proximity to traffic, traffic noise, exposure, and existing illumination. Design considers these conditions.
- Maintenance agreements between departments is a consideration. The interim use as a park will be maintained by Parks (snow removal, garbage disposal, watering of landscaped elements) while future permanent use as a station will be maintained by Calgary Transit.
- Communication and education required to ensure community understands the project intent and timeline.

- Activations like community gardens explored, but Community Associations and Business Improvement Areas shared that they do not have capacity to program and maintain this kind of use. In the future, other groups may be interested in operating and maintaining a temporary garden space such as local non-profits, faith-based groups, or nearby schools.
- Working with internal partners helpful in understanding the full costs of this activation. This included working with Urban Forestry to understand costs of landscape elements like trees and Parks for site amenities like garbage and general maintenance.

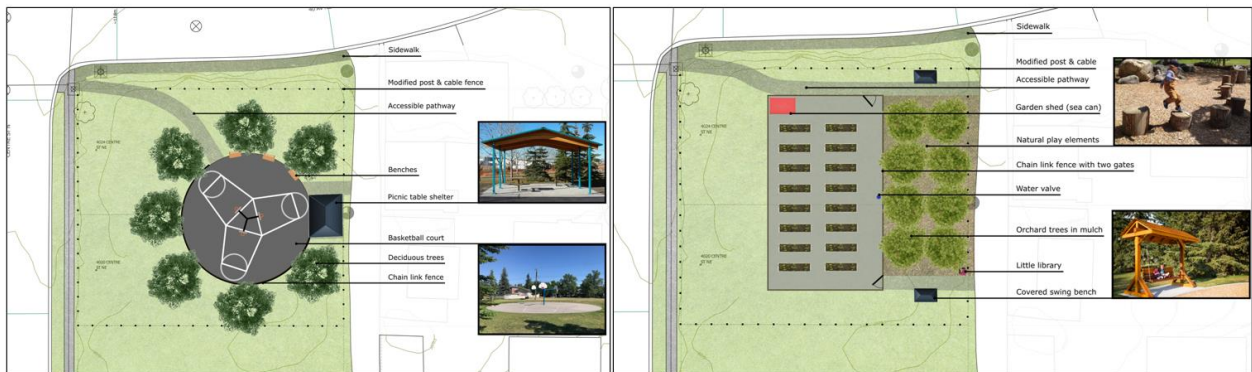
Parcel as of 2021:



Temporary Park Concepts:

Temporary Park Option 1 (Early Concept) – Basketball Court and Covered Picnic Tables

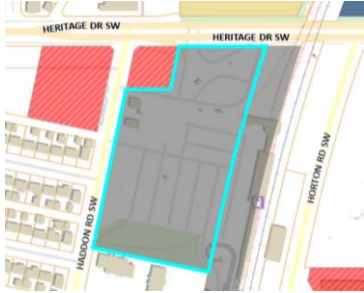
Temporary Park Option 2 (Early Concept) – Community Garden and Natural Play Area



Heritage Station Pop-up Plaza

Location

- Ward 11
- Heritage Station



Parcel Size

- 6.4 acres

Related LRT Project

- Red Line

Current Status

- Activation complete

Community Partners

- Sustainable Calgary
- Federation of Calgary Communities
- Calgary Dollars
- Vivo
- Acadia, Haysboro and Southwood Community Associations



Partners

This activation was initiated by Sustainable Calgary in partnership with City Administration, the Federation of Calgary Communities, Calgary Dollars, Vivo, the Arusha Centre, Arts Commons (Arts Expeditions), and the Acadia, Haysboro, and Southwood Community Associations (CAs).

Process, Permissions, and Requirements

Engagement from Sustainable Calgary's Active Neighbourhoods Canada project in Acadia and the wider Heritage Communities identified transit stations as a priority for activation and redevelopment. Drawing on early concepts developed for these projects, Sustainable Calgary reached out to Administration to activate the concourse and Park and Ride space at Heritage Station. Funding from the initiative came from Transportation Planning, Liveable Streets (\$5K), Take Action Grant from Calgary Dollars (\$2K), ActivateYYC Grant (\$3K), and Festivals and Events Microgrant (\$4.5K).

To occupy the space, Sustainable Calgary applied for a Calgary Transit special event permit (\$150/day) for each day of the proposed pop-up. The pop ups occurred over three weekends for a total of 10 days (July 21-24, August 11-13, and September 1-3). A ground mural was also completed during the weekend of the last pop-up. The pop-up space was defined by a parklet made from AstroTurf and planter baskets with lounge seating and a variety of outdoor games. Programming included food trucks, live music, and a community market.

Promotional activities included CA newsletters, Calgary Transit digital display units, and Sustainable Calgary social media (twitter and Instagram).

Costs

- Costs included equipment rentals, outdoor seating, games, flowers, storage container, mural artist fees, paint supplies, and maintenance/upkeep. Many materials such as milk crates and AstroTurf were donated.
- Total material and operational costs were \$14,500.

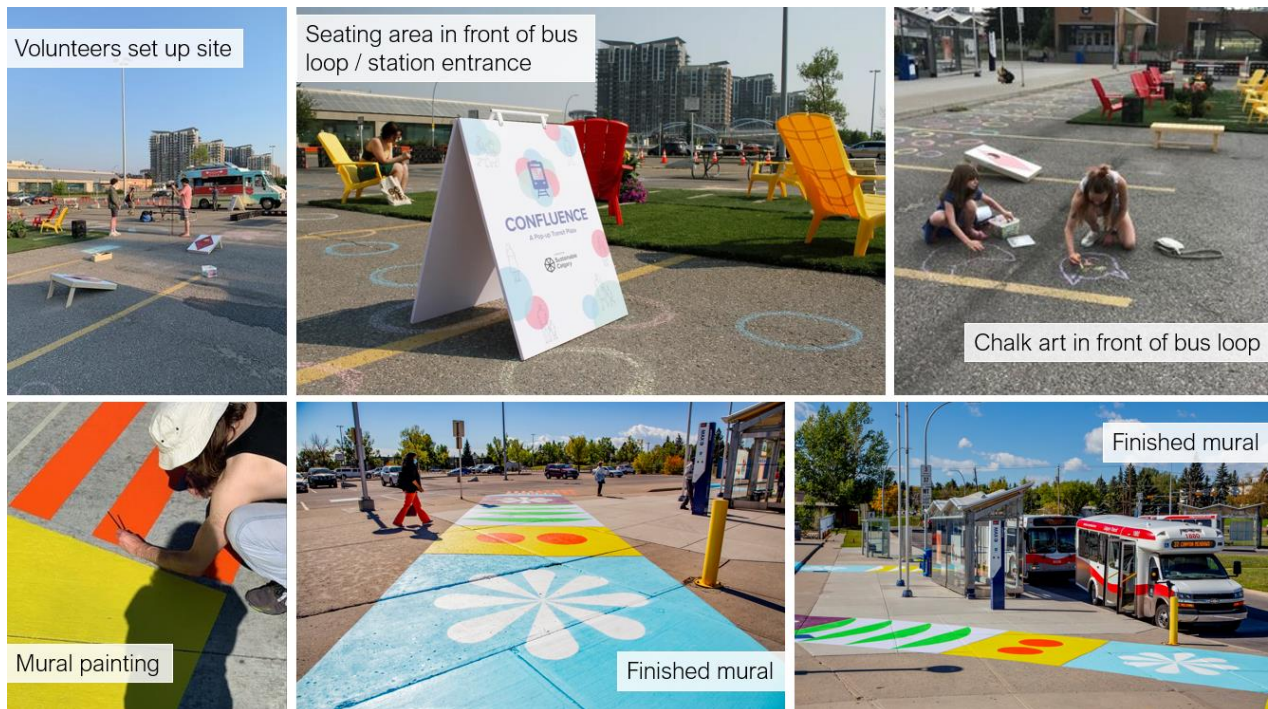
Measures of Effectiveness

- Economic: increased ridership, opportunities for local businesses to participate in pop-up markets
- Environmental: use of recycled materials to activate space (i.e. milk crates, donated Astroturf)

- Social: opportunities for social interaction and community connection, increased passive surveillance at the station, improved waiting environment for Calgary Transit drivers and passengers

Lessons Learned

- Feedback identified public toilets and shade as something that was needed and missing from the station outside of the pop-up.
- The timing of the pop-ups presented an issue as traffic through the station was slow during the summer. Traffic was noticeably higher during the September pop-up with schools and work starting up again after summer break.
- A coffee vendor was attempted during the day though engagement and sales were too low to make it worthwhile, as a result, that vendor dropped out. Instead, vendors were scheduled over specific times in conjunction with other programming.
- The live music was by far the most successful and well received programming. The musicians that were amplified created an ambience throughout the station and drew people from the surrounding community. Passersby were also able to turn and watch while they waited for the bus.
- The food trucks were the largest shortfall, as there was not enough engagement for them to make their time worthwhile. It was originally planned to have a food truck on site each evening, but the vendor group dropped out halfway through the August pop-up.
- The ground mural also received a lot of praise from passersby, noting it as an exciting and vibrant contribution to the space.



Photos courtesy of Sustainable Calgary