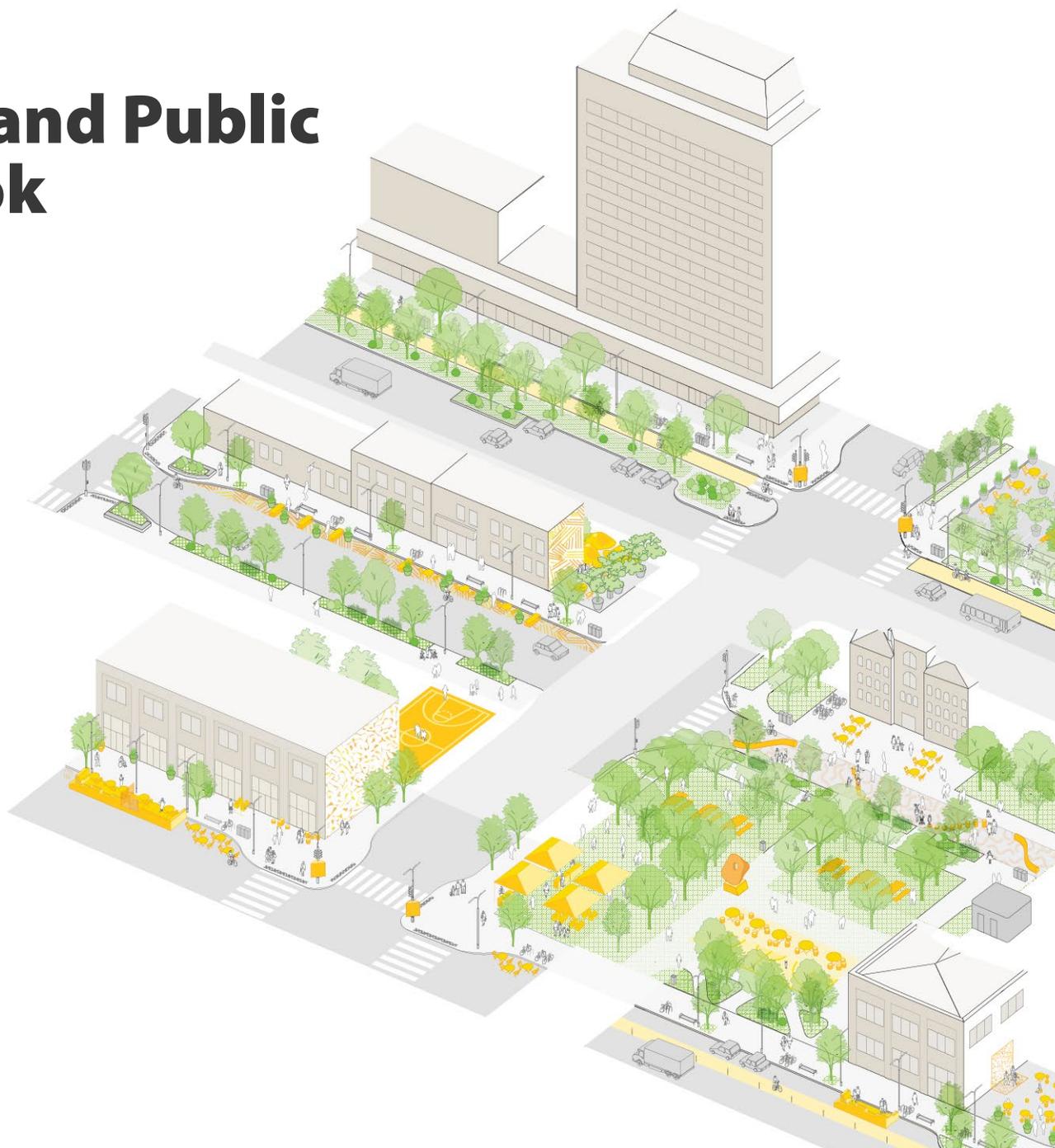


Beltline Parks and Public Realm Playbook



02

ISC:UNRESTRICTED

Executive Summary

The Issue

Beltline is a highly urban area that relies heavily on its open space networks to meet recreational, social and leisure functions due to its unique demographics of higher-than-average apartment dwellers, low-income residents and people who walk to work. Despite this, Beltline has less park space per person and does not meet tree canopy targets set by The City. In addition, the role and importance of open spaces in this already dense community will only continue to increase as Beltline's population grows and becomes increasingly diverse.

Note: This Playbook only applies to the geographical area addressed as Part 1 of Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan. The direction contained within does not apply to the Rivers District (east of 1 Street SE) which is subject to Part 2 of Beltline Area Redevelopment Plan.

The Approach

To address this deficit, the following philosophies have guided the development of The Playbook:

One Park:

Ensuring every park and public realm area is approached as components of a single, interconnected park experience



ISC:UNRESTRICTED

The Playbook Origins

Beltline Neighbourhood Association (BNA) and The City identified the need for a technical analysis of Beltline parks and public realm to arrive at data and research-driven recommendations to increase, enhance and improve the open space network within Beltline. The BNA worked with their local Councilor and advocated for funds to pay for this research.

To support this work, a cross-departmental City of Calgary advisory group was created; this group included a Beltline Neighbourhood Association representative, given their role in launching this work with The City. This Advisory Group:

- Advised on alignment with City direction, practices and local context
- Provided data and research suggestions
- Reviewed the communication of the analysis results
- Critiqued the presentation of ideas and recommendations

The Playbook was then circulated to additional contributors to review the direction for clarity, relevance, and alignment. All the direction within the Playbook reflects the findings of the quantitative analysis, qualitative research and existing approved City direction.

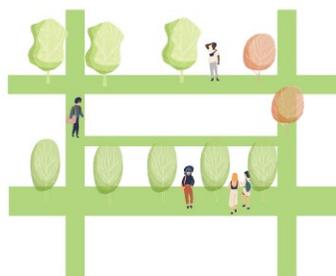
The Purpose and Intent

The Playbook is intended to identify park and public realm needs, using the latest data available. Best practice and other qualitative research then provides suggested direction for how to address those needs. Further public engagement is required before any improvements and investments are made.

Note: Playbook recommendations reflect the analysis and research conducted at the time of its writing (2022). Public engagement along with any subsequent studies, design processes and changes on the ground may result in a shift in direction or focus from the content contained here.

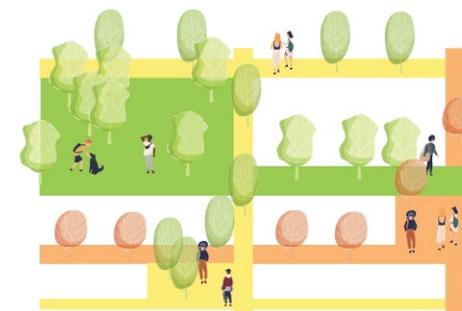
Park-like Public Realm :

Increasing the role streets play in providing recreational, social, and leisure functions to compensate for a lack of park space



Interwoven Green and Vibrant Networks:

Creating two types of experiences throughout Beltline, which sometimes overlap, thereby blending calming and relaxing experiences with lively and energetic experiences



Page 2 of 83

The Background

The Playbook is rooted in qualitative research and quantitative analysis developed in the following background documents



V1. Desktop City Plan Analysis:

An inventory of the most relevant approved City of Calgary guidance.



V2. Open Space Research Report:

An article review of the latest open space thinking from academia, professional publications, and popular media.



V3. Best Practice Report:

Lessons learned from urban open spaces at different scales from across the world.



V4. Parks Analysis:

An analysis of Beltline's parks with detailed profiles and a set of Beltline-wide analyses to identify park gaps where multiple needs overlap.



V5. Public Realm Analysis:

An analytical look at Beltline's public realm including key profiles and a set of maps locating pressures, quality improvements, and strategies.



V6. Land Acquisition Strategy:

A report that identifies the tools and locations to prioritize land acquisition for future parks.

The Recommendations

Recommendations apply to both parks and the public realm (the open space network) as well as each individually. **As noted earlier, these recommendations, specifically the park and public realm direction, may shift in response to future public engagement and design processes to inform investment.** These are summarized at a high-level below:

Open Space Network:

- Consider climate resiliency, timeless design, story telling, safety, mobility and equity in open space design
- Study washroom supply, curbside use, accessibility, mobility, wayfinding, and maintenance/operations efficiency
- Engage broadly and with historically under-represented groups before implementing open space improvements
- Provide amenities at the appropriate scale:
 - Urban life amenities at a high density to facilitate comfort and safety
 - Key function amenities at a moderate density to support social connection and activity
 - Attraction amenities sporadically to draw people

Parks:

- Provide a range of amenities and experiences throughout Beltline's parks while ensuring they remain flexible, resilient and use space efficiently
- Apply the following park focus areas:
 - Interlude: small, informal spaces for leisure and social functions in areas with high residential density or active street life
 - Neighbourhood: locally-focused recreational uses located in or near areas of high residential density
 - Regional: city-wide destinations anchored around an attraction, unique context or design
- Focus future parks acquisition in north and central Beltline

Public Realm:

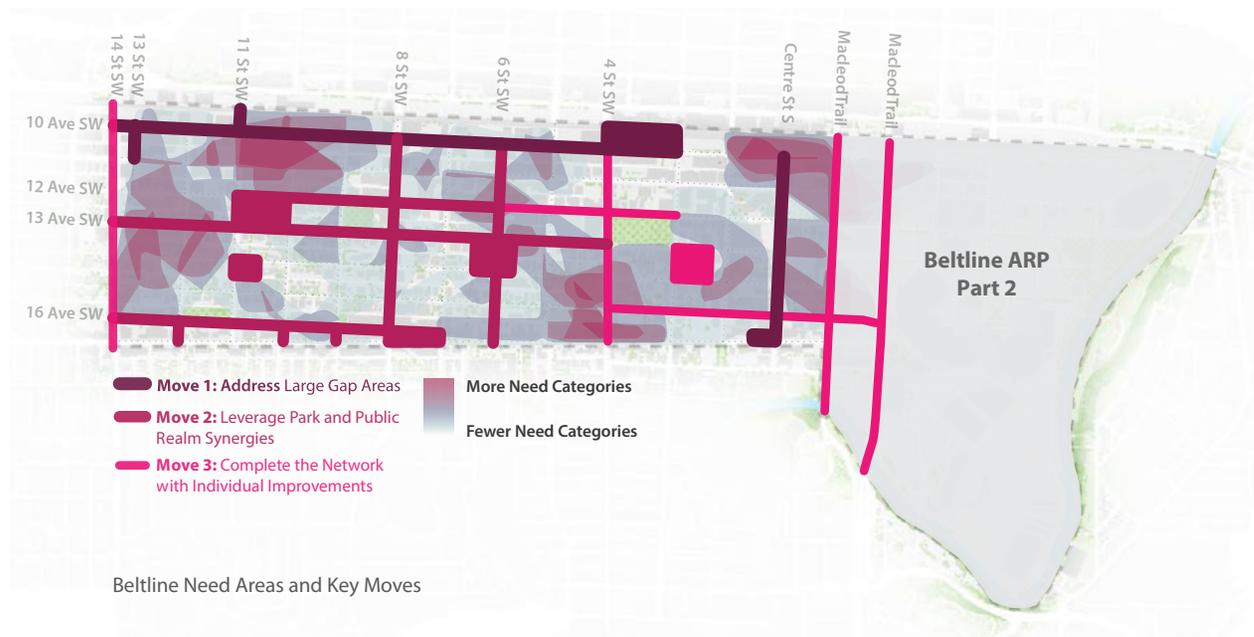
- Increase pedestrian space
- Define character through the following focus areas:
 - Green: extensive greenery that includes but isn't limited to trees
 - Corridor: safe, comfortable routes that primarily facilitate active mobility
 - Blended: areas for art, greenery and activation
 - Vision: an infusion of green and vibrant experiences in areas without a strong existing character
 - Park: extensions of existing parks in the public realm
 - Vibrant: support for Beltline's main streets
- Pilot lane improvements (art, green, recreation, activation)

The Key Moves

The foundation of the Playbook is an analysis of need based on the accessibility of parks, their proximity to key populations (concentrations of children, seniors, people with low incomes and people without homes), gaps in greenery and vibrancy and areas with a high concentration of people using public space. To address this need, the Playbook identifies parks and public realm areas for potential permanent investment based on a detailed review of data-driven analysis conducted in the parks and public realm analysis documents. These investments are organized into a sequence of three key moves based on the guiding philosophies of the Playbook.

Note: Key moves reflect a moment in time using the data and research available during the Playbook's development in 2022. They may change in response to public engagement, network changes, and future design processes.

Note: The Rivers District is everything east of 1 Street SE. Since 1 Street SE is a border street between the Rivers District and the rest of Beltline and functions as a couplet with MacLeod Trail and an important link north to the Bow River, this is the only recommended move in the Playbook within the Rivers District. However, the Playbook does not provide recommendations for this public realm specifically, instead it defers to Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) and the Calgary Stampede.



Move 1: Address Large Gap Areas

This move contains key investments that address the largest areas of need representing major gaps in the green and vibrant networks and areas where the public, and especially key populations, are the most underserved by park space. This move relies heavily on the “Park-like Public Realm” philosophy to relieve park pressure and bridge network gaps.

Move 2: Leverage Park and Public Realm Synergies

This move captures groups of key park and public realm investments that are connected, presenting opportunities to improve parks and public realm in tandem in order to increase impact. This move is based on the importance of the relationship between parks and the public realm in building an open space network, and in creating successful parks with active edges.

Move 3: Complete the Network with Individual Improvements

This move captures other potential permanent investments, which emphasize improving the quality of individual parks and public realm spaces. These locations were identified through the analysis as missing attributes or holding opportunities to more cohesively contribute to Beltline's open space network.

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Amenity Distribution		Blended Focus Areas	
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Introduction



Beltline's Open Spaces

Beltline is one of Calgary's densest communities and it is growing. This means that existing open space deficiencies will exacerbate over time. For this reason, action to improve and grow the open space network in the community is needed.

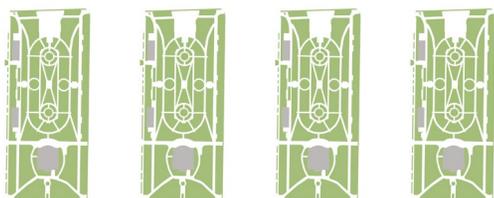
Publicly owned parks make up **3.7%** of Beltline's total area

Parks make up **5.2%** of the area west of 1 St SE

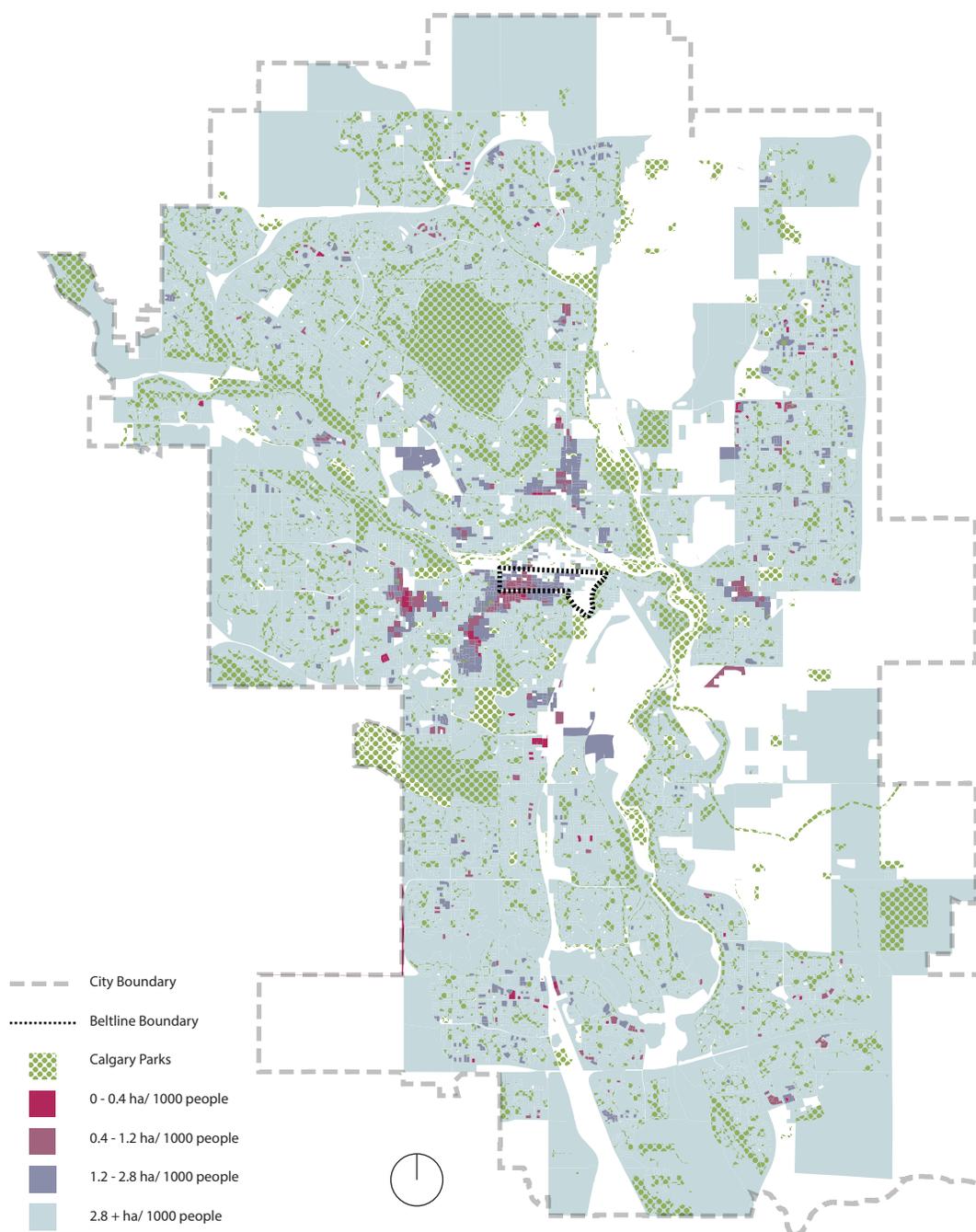
This is **8.2 hectares short** of matching the 10% citywide benchmark*

**See Open Space Plan. The 10% isn't required and some communities will not be able to achieve this provision, but it remains a useful benchmark. A lack of space can be offset by connections and amenities.*

To hit this target, this area would need to add approximately **4 more Central Memorial Parks.**



It is costly and difficult to meet this target in Beltline given the limited space available and land costs; however, new space needs to be acquired, where possible, and focused on the areas with the highest need. In the meantime, to offset a deficiency in space, the public realm needs to provide park functions, and both parks and the public realm need to be designed at a higher standard to compensate for less space.



Open Space Needs

Beltline’s current provision of open space is deficient from several perspectives. Like many urban areas across the world, Beltline is facing a challenge of too little space, too little greenery, an urban population with unique needs, and anticipated ongoing growth. The following opportunities exist to address these unique needs:



Beltline-wide Statistics

These statistics draw from the entire area defined as Beltline. Though the Playbook direction only applies to the areas west of 1 Street SE, it is useful to understand, at a high level, the performance of the open space network overall.

Overcome the growing open space deficit

Beltline has the lowest proportion of parks by population city-wide. Given the growth anticipated, this deficit will exacerbate over time.



0.588 hectares of open space/1,000 residents

Municipal Development Plan Target: 2.0 hectares/1,000 residents

Greater Downtown Plan Target 1.0 hectares/1,000 residents

Attend to the unique demands of a high density community

The housing options and population characteristics of Beltline emphasize the greater social, recreational, and leisure importance open spaces provide.



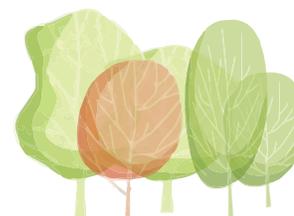
98% live in apartments
15% of residents are low income



56% of residents live in a 1 person household

Fill in the greenery and tree canopy gaps

Beltline’s tree canopy does not meet city-wide targets and it is inconsistent across the community.



7.84% tree canopy

10% target for the Greater Downtown by 2031

16% target for the city by 2058

Accommodate the high volumes of pedestrians

Walking is the most popular commuting mode in Beltline and given the walkability of the neighbourhood, it can be assumed that walking is the primary mode of travel for errands and leisure, as well.

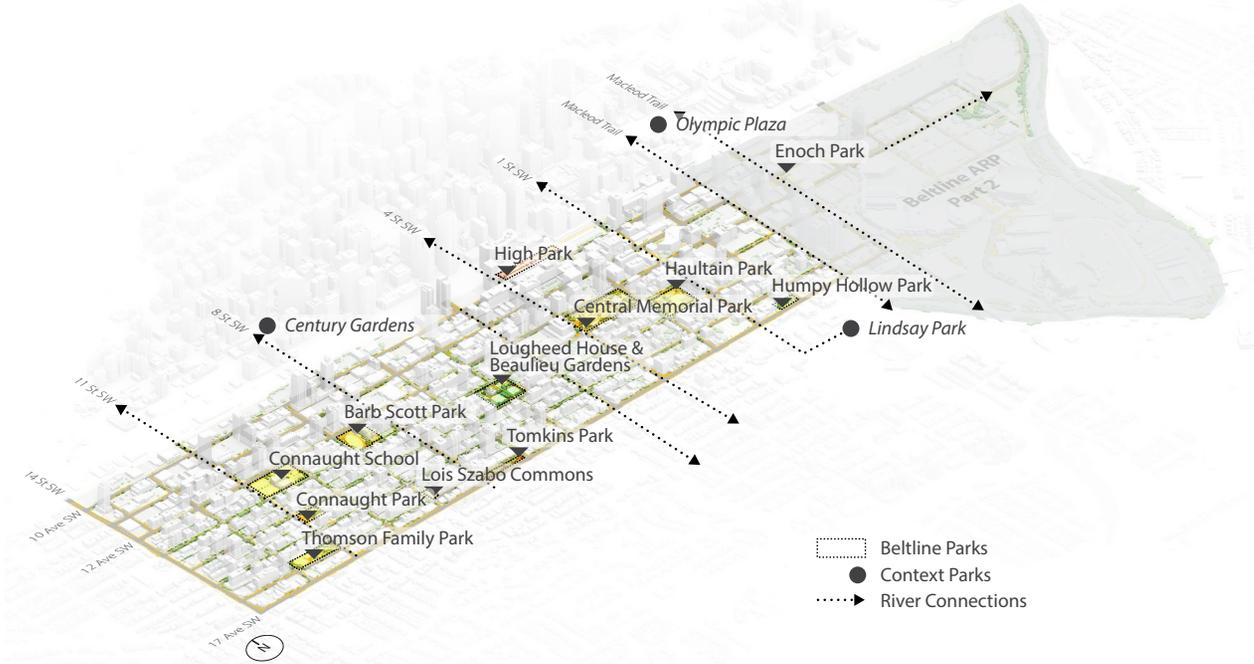


40% of Beltliners walk to work but only 30% of street space in the public realm is devoted to walking

Beltline's Open Space Network

In 2022, Beltline has 12 publicly-owned parks and park-like spaces including the Calgary Board of Education Connaught School and the provincially-owned Lougheed House (but not including the Stampede-owned Rundle Ruins/Stampede Youth Campus) within a gridded street network. Most of these parks are concentrated in the southern and western parts of the community. Residential density has historically concentrated in these same areas but Beltline's population growth is increasing in the northern and eastern parts of the community.

Beltline is part of the larger Greater Downtown open space network with several important links north through the downtown to the Bow River and south and east to the Elbow River. Though the walking distance to the rivers varies throughout the community, these are important routes connecting Beltline residents, workers, and visitors to Calgary's river pathway system.



Beltline parks and key connections



Note

Out of Scope: The Rivers District

The area east of 1 Street SE is part of the Rivers District Master Plan and overseen by Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC). Part 2 of Beltline ARP follows this master plan direction. Given the extensive work conducted to create this master plan, the community revitalization levy to fund improvements, the partnership with the Calgary Stampede, and the ongoing implementation work by CMLC, this Playbook does not apply to the Rivers District.



KEY

- 1 Stampede Trail
- 2 Event Plaza
- 3 Elbow Park North
- 4 Dog Park
- 5 17 Avenue Promenade
- 6 Light Rail Mews
- 7 Green Line Station Plaza
- 8 12 Avenue Promenade
- 9 10 Avenue Linear Park
- 10 Youth Campus Plaza
- 11 Convention Venue Plaza
- 12 Red Line Station Plaza
- 13 Possible Location for Integrated Stormwater/Water Quality Infrastructure

Rivers District Master Plan (CMLC)
Open Space Framework

Open Space, Parks and the Public Realm Definitions

Beltline’s parks and public realm areas, together, create the community’s open space network. Within this Playbook there are recommendations that apply to the entire open space network as well as to parks or the public realm, specifically. These two levels of recommendations will help ensure specific parks and public realm areas are considered as part of a comprehensive network.



Park and Public Realm Focus Areas

The City of Calgary has previously-approved park and street classifications and this Playbook is not intended to replace or override these. Instead the park and public realm ‘focus areas’ identified here will complement and supplement other classifications.

These ‘focus areas’ define the character of a space and its role within Beltline’s open space network rather than its destination, dimensions, or roles city-wide. These focus areas reflect the results of the analysis and research conducted as part of this Playbook. Later public engagement, studies and design processes conducted before investment may result in shifts to these focus areas and how they are defined.

Open Spaces:

Publicly accessible outdoor spaces, both publicly or privately owned. This includes parks, publicly accessible private open spaces, parking lots, streets, and lanes.

Parks:

City-owned parks



Public Realm:

Non-park publicly accessible outdoor spaces, including streets, squares, special places, linkages, interfaces, and pedestrian zones.



Research and Analysis

The Playbook’s recommendations are premised on a robust technical and research understanding, assembled through six background documents:

- **Desktop City Plan Analysis**
- **Open Space Research Report**
- **Best Practice Report**
- **Parks Analysis**
- **Public Realm Analysis**
- **Land Acquisition Strategy**

Though the results of these analyses are not summarized in detail within this Playbook, specific references to background documents are included, where relevant.

Qualitative Background Research

Desktop City Plan Analysis:

An inventory of the most relevant approved City of Calgary guidance. Overall, there was agreement on the need for more park spaces and advocacy for high quality design, and thinking broadly about the potential of the public realm for park functions.

Open Space Research Report:

An article review of the latest open space thinking from academia, professional publications, and popular media. The document is organized around six themes: multi-functionality, inclusivity, parks functions in non-park spaces, timeless design, health & wellbeing, and processes.

Best Practice Report:

Lessons learned from urban open spaces at different scales from across the world. Overall, insight included unifying parks within one network, partnering with communities, integrating natural systems, expanding parks beyond their boundaries, viewing streets as potential parks, and fostering creativity.

Quantitative Background Analysis

Parks Analysis:

An analysis of Beltline’s parks and how they serve Beltline as a whole, including:

- Detailed profiles of each park with visitation levels and peak hours, most used amenities, social media presence, qualitative factors, and multiple contextual factors
- An examination of how Beltline’s park space stacks up to the rest of Calgary, as well as comparable neighbourhoods in other cities
- A set of Beltline-wide analyses to identify park gaps where multiple needs overlap
- Areas where ideal conditions for new parks exist

Public Realm Analysis:

An analytical look at the roles and experiences of Beltline’s public realm as defined by:

- A set of analyses locating public realm character, pressures, quality improvements, and strategic approaches
- Key street profiles with trends, existing strategic direction, pressures, multi-modal usage, and relevant improvements and strategies

Land Acquisition Strategy:

A report that identifies the tools and locations to prioritize land acquisition for future parks

**Beltline Parks and Public Realm
Playbook**

Open Space Approach

The Playbook's Role

The Playbook provides recommendations to expand and improve Beltline's open spaces. These recommendations are grounded in analysis and research to support consistent, efficient, and informed decision-making. Overtime, these recommendations may change as a result of further studies, public engagement and design processes since they reflect the data and research available at the time of writing (2022). Specifically, this Playbook recommends:

- An **approach** to guide future open space planning
- **Direction** for a resilient, equitable, functional, and adaptable open space network
- **Focus areas** to ensure each park and public realm area has a defined role within Beltline's open space network. These may shift and evolve overtime as a result of public engagement and network changes
- Identification of areas in need of **investment**

Audiences and Users

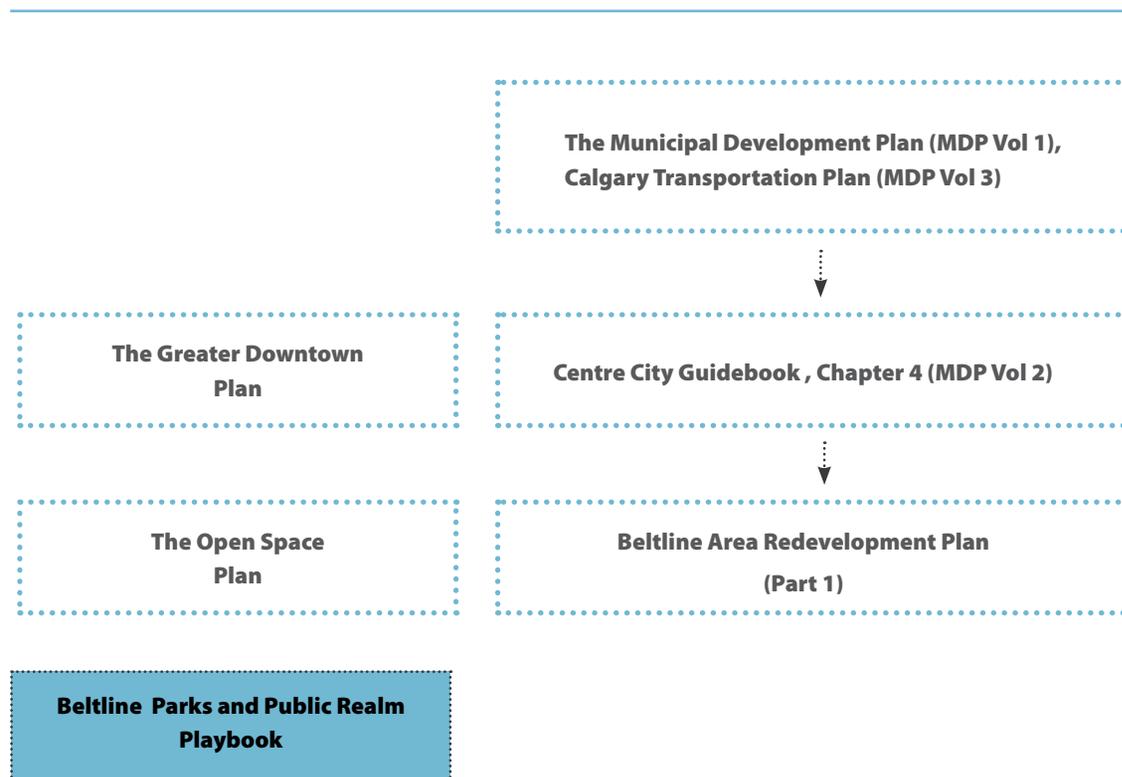
- **Administration:** to provide a starting point for public engagement, coordinate projects - their design, investment, and programming - and support administrative reviews of development applications
- **Developers:** to support the integration of development with the open space network, and to inform improvements to open spaces and publicly accessible privately owned spaces
- **Community members and people impacted by City decisions:** to support their advocacy and work to expand, program, and activate Beltline's parks and public realm

Place in Planning

The Playbook is a non-statutory document. It complements the policy direction within the ARP and aligns with the strategic direction of higher order plans and strategies as well as standards and guidelines (particularly the Greater Downtown Plan, the Municipal Development Plan, and the Open Space Plan, etc.)

Council Approved, non-statutory

Statutory



Philosophy

The Playbook's open space philosophy has three components that support a complete open space network: viewing all of Beltline's open spaces as components of one park, having a park-like public realm, and creating an interwoven vibrant and green network.

This philosophy arose out of the open space research which examined the latest thinking about open spaces in dense urban areas within academic, professional and popular media articles. Specifically, they are anchored in the need to make efficient use of existing parks space, maximize other public land to contribute park functions and offer a range of experiences to meet the community's daily needs. With these three components defined, the analysis followed the structure set by this philosophical grounding.



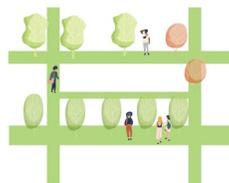
One Park



The One Park concept views every park and public realm area as components of a single park space. Each area can focus on how to best fulfill a specific need or role within the larger network rather than trying to do everything for everyone in every space. A One Park concept requires:

- Consistent design elements to tie spaces together with opportunities for unique expression in specific areas
- Prioritization of accessibility, comfort, and safety
- Focus areas for each park and public realm component that defines their role within the open space network, though these may shift overtime as the network evolves

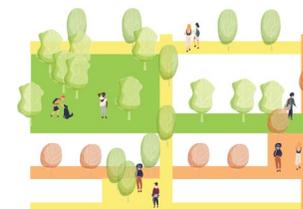
Park-like Public Realm



With a deficit of parks in Beltline, the public realm has to do more to provide recreational, leisure, and social functions outside of parks, by:

- Reconciling the different mobility, servicing, communication, comfort, and gathering functions of the public realm
- Strategically reducing the space allocated to vehicles to support an increased variety of uses
- Testing and monitoring expanding space for people into carriageways to refine designs over time

Interwoven Vibrant and Green Network



The open space network in Beltline has an existing and emergent interplay of different green and vibrant characteristics, which should be strengthened. The interwoven network will be comprised of:

- **Green spaces:** quieter, greener, and calmer spaces for relaxation, connection, and contemplation
- **Vibrant spaces:** exciting, dynamic and active spaces for socialization and stimulation
- **Hybrid spaces:** locations with both green and vibrant elements that support a range of leisure and recreational experiences

Values

Beltline must meet the needs of a dense, diverse, and growing community by expanding and improving the open space network. To do this, Beltline's open spaces must strive to be:

- **Equitable:** meet the diverse needs of residents, visitors and workers and create welcoming and comfortable spaces for all
- **Balanced:** create an open space network that provides access to a variety of experiences equivalent to, but not necessarily the same as other Calgary neighbourhoods
- **Resilient:** future proof the open space network from environmental, social, and economic shocks
- **Healthy and Green:** support mental, physical, and environmental well-being
- **Accessible:** accommodate people with different cognitive and physical abilities
- **Efficient:** ensure a sustainable use of space, time, and funding
- **Creative:** create an environment that supports and tests new ideas and approaches to open space design, provision, and programming
- **Flexible:** create multi-purpose, inclusive, and adaptable spaces
- **Safe:** create an environment that supports comfort and safety



Core Principles

These core principles form an approach to open space planning and design by setting expectations about what is needed to implement the recommendations in this Playbook.

Quality



What: Increasing the quality of open spaces beyond City-wide standards.

Why: It is unlikely Beltline can achieve the same amount of open space per person as other communities in Calgary, especially as it grows. This requires an enhanced level of quality to help offset a lack of quantity.

How:

- **Materials:** using robust materials that can withstand greater wear and tear
- **Greenery:** expanding drought resilient greenery with sufficient soil volumes
- **Design:** implementing creative and unique showcase designs for infrastructure, facilities, art, and other amenities
- **Function:** looking for multi-functional opportunities through overlapping uses, seasonal shifts in use, and different experiences

Coordination



What: Considering different transportation modes, users, services, and functions.

Why: Beltline's open spaces have more demands than other areas given the density of needs within a limited amount of space.

How: Considering and accommodating:

- **Mobility** (walking, cycling, driving, taking transit, micro-mobility, universal accessibility, drop offs and deliveries)
- **Servicing** (water, stormwater, wastewater, electricity, gas, waste removal, and telecommunications)
- **Communication** (amenities that raise awareness, provide direction, facilitate outreach, or enable connections)
- **Gathering** (places to socialize)
- **Comfort** (amenities that allow people to stay and enjoy a space safely)
- **Flexibility** (spaces that serve more than one purpose)
- **Recreation** (formal and informal as well as passive and active experiences)

Collaboration



What: Working with people and organizations that represent a range of experiences, perspectives, and expertise.

Why: Beltline is diverse and dynamic and the open space network needs to satisfy several needs and ambitions.

How: Communication, partnerships and engagement across:

- **City Departments:** planning, design and maintenance experts knowledgeable in transportation, parks, planning, community safety, culture, heritage, utilities, the environment, social planning and more
- **Community Members:** residents (housed and unhoused), business owners, workers, landowners, and visitors
- **Beltline Contributors:** Beltline Neighbourhood Association, institutions, Business Improvement Areas, Calgary Municipal Land Corporation, developers, and more

Investment



What: Applying different investment approaches allows The City to act quickly, progress, respond, and innovate.

Why: Some ideas are untested in Calgary with unknown success, where as others are well-established. Different investment approaches allows different levels of commitment based on the level of confidence in the results.

How:

- **Prototyping:** quick tests with low initial investment to evaluate new ideas
- **Piloting:** longer term tests with higher quality design and materials to apply ideas with demonstrated success in other locations
- **Interim Investment:** improvements and amenities implemented for a finite period of time
- **Permanent Investment:** Public realm redesigns, park redevelopments, and land acquisition

Playbook Structure

The rest of the Playbook will provide specific recommendations to realize an engaging, functional and adaptive open space network.

Chapter 2: Open Space Network

- Open space policy recommendations focused on ways to address climate resiliency, timeless design, mobility, storytelling, safety, and equity
- Amenity distribution recommendations to enhance and expand recreational, social, and leisure experiences
- Recommendations to help leverage publicly accessible private open space to better contribute to the open space network

Chapter 3: Beltline Parks

- Park policy recommendations to approach each park space consistently
- Park focus areas with specific park recommendations to identify ways that each park can contribute to the network as a whole. These need to be confirmed through public engagement before further investment and may shift overtime as the network evolves
- Land acquisition recommendations to identify locations to prioritize new park space

Chapter 4: Beltline Public Realm

- Public realm policy recommendations to guide future planning, design, and programming
- Public realm focus areas to define the character of different streets and how they can provide increased park functionality through the application of a consistent set of tools. These need to be confirmed through public engagement before further investment and may shift overtime as the network evolves
- Lane recommendations to help increase the role they can play in the open space network

Chapter 5: One Park Investment and Experiences

- An overview of investment types to guide future prototypes, pilots, interim investments, and permanent investments
- Experience loops that illustrate how amenity, park, public realm, and investment direction can work together to address Beltline's open space needs



Note

Implementation

The success of the Playbook's implementation depends on two key factors: (1) bold and purposeful implementation of its strategies, and (2) ongoing engagement. In this way, the Playbook can unite innovative investments with the community's ongoing vision and needs.



Note

Walkshed

Throughout the Playbook, you will notice references to walking distances or a 'walkshed'. Across Canada, cities use different measures for a 5-minute walk, with most falling between 400 metres and 500 metres. The Beltline Playbook uses 450 metres within its analysis. It is important to know that this isn't a precise measure since a 5-minute walk depends on an individual's mobility, the urban conditions and culture but, regardless, it is a good indicator to track park accessibility.

Beltline Open Space Network



Open Space Network

To ensure that parks and the public realm in Beltline complement each other, it is worthwhile to provide direction that applies to both since, together, they form the open space network. Cross-cutting direction will ensure consistency throughout Beltline to support the One Park philosophy.

To direct the open space network as a whole, this chapter includes:

- Policy recommendations that apply to both parks and the public realm
- Recommendations to guide the distribution and densities of different categories of amenities
- Policy recommendations that apply to publicly-accessible private open spaces

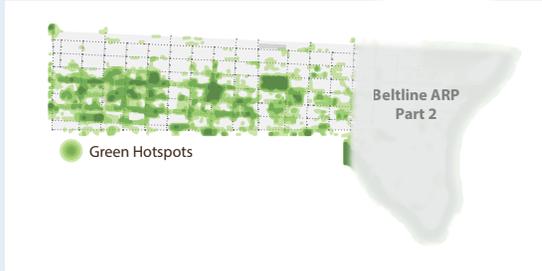
The policy recommendations in this section are intended to provide guidance for the development of statutory policies within Part 1 of the Beltline ARP.

Interwoven Vibrant and Green Network: Amenities

Amenities can contribute to green or vibrant experiences and realizing an interwoven green and vibrant open space network will require prioritizing different amenities in different locations based on what type of character they facilitate. Though most spaces will have a combination of both green and vibrant amenities, they likely tilt towards more of one kind versus another.

In this Playbook, amenities are defined broadly. They are any physical element that improves the comfort, ambiance, and function of the park or public realm. In addition to amenities that help reinforce and expand the green and vibrant networks, there are also supportive amenities that facilitate an inclusive and comfortable space for everyone.

Analysis



Importance of Greenery

People seek out open spaces and nature in stressful times. Greenery supports investment, property values, worker/resident/visitor attraction, biodiversity, physical activity, social cohesion, mental health, air quality, and water quality while providing a more comfortable environment (see Park Analysis, pages 86 to 87).

Open Space Network Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations in this section are intended to provide guidance for the development of statutory policies within Part 1 of the Beltline ARP. It focuses on major topics to improve the adaptability, inclusivity, and sustainability of the open space network.

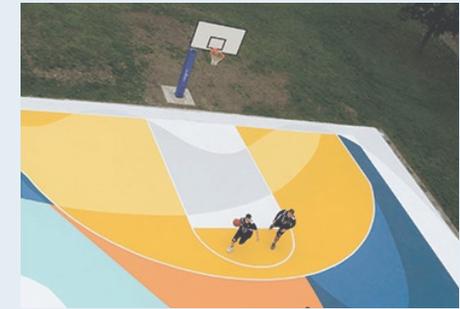
Climate Resilience

- Implement natural infrastructure and Low Impact Development (LID) strategies, where possible
- Use long-lasting materials that can withstand extreme weather fluctuations
- Increase the tree canopy, greenery, and permeability of the landscape
- Plant trees in trenches, gardens, and soil cells to ensure their health and increase their chances of success
- Focus on water efficient landscaping
- Integrate on-site renewable electricity generation for parks, whenever possible
- Provide comfortable micro-climates, including shelter and wind breaks for extreme weather events; and shade and water access for extreme heat events
- Include spaces for local food production in the public realm, where possible
- When trees are not possible, add other forms of planting to increase greenery, like ground cover, shrubs, planters, gardens, edible landscaping, etc.

Timeless Design

- Keep the designs simple and focused
- Exceed design standards for amenities in terms of material longevity and aesthetics
- Embrace temporary amenities to prototype, pilot or implement on an interim basis to test concepts ahead of permanent installations
- Overlap uses, when possible
- Offer a range of experiences - quiet and contemplative (green), playful and active (hybrid), and lively and social (vibrant)
- Screen urban noise with natural noise, whenever possible
- Design spaces that consider year-round use and support activities for all seasons
- Include a variety of plant species that are multi-season and tolerant of hot and cold temperatures
- Consider water and power servicing provision to enable flexible uses and programming (events, stalls, and food trucks) that can adapt over time

Best Practice



GUE basketball court, Alessandria, Italy

Photo source: [Architectural Record](#)

Stand-Out Design

Italian artist, GUE, creates unique recreational spaces like this basketball court in Alessandria, Italy. This bright space creates destinations out of common place recreational infrastructure (see Open Space Research, pages 4 to 5).

Analysis

Landscape Permeability

Increasing the amount of permeable surfaces throughout Beltline provides stormwater management and can contribute to the overall climate resiliency of the area. Beltline, as a whole, is 27% permeable. Recommendations to add additional permeable surfaces such as permeable paving, vegetated swales, rain gardens, and urban wetlands can help raise Beltline's permeability and increase the neighborhood's resiliency.

Storytelling

- Integrate temporary and permanent interpretive elements throughout the community (exhibits, signs, plaques, art, etc.)
- Tell lesser-known stories about Beltline (e.g. Indigenous history, LGBTQ2IA+ history, immigrant history, etc.)
- Support public art (ephemeral, temporary, permanent) in various forms (sculpture, murals, performance, digital, etc.)
- Integrate storytelling functionality within place-based and digital wayfinding strategies
- Support a curator to coordinate art and storytelling integration
- Partner with local institutions to help integrate entertainment, educational, and supportive programming throughout Beltline

Safety

- Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles
- Partner with local service agencies to develop relationships and trust amongst community members
- Consider an ambassador program to connect community members with local programs and services
- Design spaces to support feelings of safety through place-making, lighting, active frontages, and programming

Mobility

- Integrate transit corridors, bus stops, and LRT stations with parks and the public realm
- Extend curbs at intersections, where possible
- Expand travel paths and parking for bicycles and micro-mobility
- Create and expand buffer space for pedestrian comfort (on-street parking, boulevards, furniture zones, etc.)
- Enhance pedestrian and cycling connections to neighbouring areas and the rivers
- Align with The City's 5A (Always Available for All Ages and Abilities) principles
- Consider loading, delivery, and servicing needs in all road designs
- Ensure safe and convenient access for people with different abilities is provided
- Explore opportunities for further traffic calming and public realm expansion to increase pedestrian safety and space
- Support electric vehicles
- Ensure continuous, accessible clearway on all sidewalks
- Explore alternative 'last-mile', non-motorized delivery

Best Practice



Photo source: [Halifax Public Libraries](#)

Story-Telling

The Walking Gottingen project is an immersive storytelling experience. Participants are guided to specific landmarks and institutions as they walk along the street. It uses storytelling, natural sound, and diverse voices to provide listeners with a first-hand account of the changes happening along this street, an area that has been home to African Nova Scotians, members of the LGBTQ2IA+ community, and Mi'kmaq First Nations for many years (see Open Space Report, pages 8 to 9).

Analysis

Perceived Safety Analysis

Perceived safety focuses on the conditions that make people feel more comfortable, including a sense of enclosure, high use, lighting, and clear sight lines. Aggregating these datasets can initially help identify locations to focus interventions to improve pedestrian comfort. However, further public engagement is required to confirm how safe these locations feel for different people rather than assuming everyone feels safe or unsafe under the same conditions (see Public Realm Analysis, pages 80 to 85).



Equity

- Design streets to safely support events and gatherings, formal and informal
- Provide refuge areas near busy, loud, and/or hardscaped areas that are green, quiet, and comfortable
- Integrate drinking water and edible landscaping
- Provide emergency services in parks and the public realm, including charging stations, water wagon space, etc.
- Promote community expression through advocacy, engagement, arts and culture
- Create flexible spaces that can adapt and shift to different needs
- Support the coexistence of housed and unhoused park users through education, engagement, and programming partnerships
- Build relationships with Indigenous communities, incorporating Indigenous placemaking practices, and acknowledging Indigenous culture and history under the direction of these communities
- Implement universal accessibility throughout the open space network
- Incorporate accessible design and inclusive language in a Wayfinding Strategy
- Consider integrating a service kiosk in a park to both act as a resource and support for those who need assistance and as an information booth for visitors
- Avoid hostile design measures that discourage sitting and lingering
- Use wayfinding to direct people to unique facilities and amenities and facilitate community exploration
- Support families by integrating play amenities within a three minute walk of all residents

Best Practice

Supporting People in Open Spaces

“Designing for dignity is a recognition that people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity will always inhabit parks and public spaces and that hostile design will never resolve the root causes of homelessness (880 Cities and AARP, 2021)”



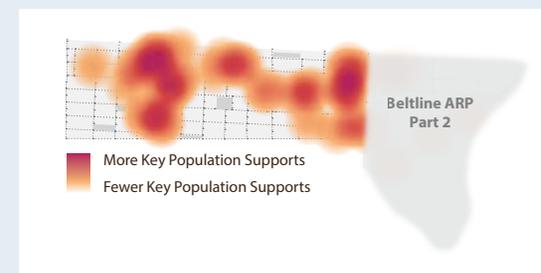
Photo source: [Next City](#)

Atlanta’s Woodruff Park has a dedicated case manager stationed within the park who provides a human first approach to those requiring more assistance such as seniors, low income people, and people without homes, including connecting them with the services they need. Additionally, the cart provides tourist information and free programming and games for other park users (see Open Space Research, page 17).

Analysis

Significance of Key Populations

There are segments of the population that depend more heavily on the open space network than others, either because they do not have access to private spaces (people without homes), they have limited means to pay for recreational activities and relaxation space (people with low incomes), or they are more likely to have mobility and social isolation concerns (seniors, children, and newcomers). Determining the areas that have a higher concentration of these populations can help prioritize improvements to the public realm where they can serve the most need (see Public Realm Analysis, pages 72 to 78).



Process Guidance

- Take advantage of life-cycle improvements or upgrades to transportation and/or utility infrastructure to improve the public realm and neighbouring parks
- Couple public investment with private investment, when opportunities arise
- Undertake a Curbside Study to optimize the use of a street's furniture zone for pedestrian comfort, accessibility, wayfinding, bicycle/micro mobility parking, deliveries, parklettes, patios, and more
- Create a Beltline Public Washroom Strategy with design, location, operations and maintenance recommendations
- Prioritize an Accessibility Study and Implementation Plan
- Update Beltline's wayfinding strategy to consider accessibility more fulsomely and integrate it with digital strategies
- Undertake a Beltline-wide (neighbourhood/district level) Mobility Study that looks at mobility needs holistically, including micro-mobility. This study should focus on how mobility is evolving and quantify health impacts rather than prioritizing traffic impacts
- Undertake a Beltline-wide Maintenance and Operational Stewardship Study to inform future improvements and enhancements
- Explore developing Greater Downtown Area-specific design standards for lighting, furniture, signs and other amenities that are higher than city-wide standards to withstand greater use
- Prototype, pilot, monitor and record lessons learned to advance untested ideas
- Explore maintenance partnerships with residents, condo boards, the community association, business improvement areas, and management companies, among others
- Consider maintenance costs during the design process
- Promote water efficiency approaches in the future design of parks and the public realm
- Conduct Health Impact Assessments for new projects
- Consider monitoring implementation and coordinate with other corporate monitoring programs (e.g. Main Streets, etc.)
- Update analysis for Beltline Playbook when Beltline ARP is updated

Best Practice



Patio Program Success

Photo Credit: CTV News

Kick-started by the impacts of COVID-19, Calgary's temporary patio initiative allowed business to easily apply to use sidewalks, parking areas and roadways for additional seating. Removing the red tape (development permit, license of occupation and temporary permission fees) ensured that this program could be implemented quickly and to great success - with 219 temporary patios in 2021.

Engagement Guidance

- Create a Governance/Partnership Strategy for the open space network (include institutions, business improvement areas, Beltline Neighbourhood Association, The City of Calgary and development community representatives)
- Engage with nearby residents (housed and un-housed), Beltline Neighbourhood Association, Business Improvement Areas, institutions and other people impacted by City decisions to define the character, functions and amenities of parks and the public realm before investment to confirm the direction provided within this Playbook with community needs.
- Partner with institutions, Beltline Neighbourhood Association and business improvement areas on the design, programming and maintenance of open spaces
- For every engagement, note who is not represented in the feedback, consider how to address barriers, and focus outreach on historically under-represented groups

Best Practice



International Children’s Park collaborative redesign, Seattle, Washington

Photo source: seattle.gov

Participatory design

This project is a partnership between the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington, the Friends of International Children’s Park, elders from the Chinatown-International District and thirteen students from the Wilderness Inner-city Leadership Development. The goal was to improve intergenerational use of the space. The participation involved site visits and visual surveys with youth and elders. Then bilingual design activities were followed up with a social hour with the elders and children to review the concepts.

Best Practice



Spirit Garden, Thunder Bay, Canada

Photo source: [Brook McIlroy Inc on Twitter](https://twitter.com/BrookMcIlroyInc)

Relationship Building Example

This waterfront park was designed in collaboration with the Indigenous communities of Thunder Bay. The space incorporates gathering spaces where both traditional Indigenous ceremonies and non-indigenous events take place. (see Open Space Research, pages 15 to 26).

Amenity Distribution

When considering where to locate amenities, it is important to define different densities of distribution based on need:

- Amenities that contribute to user comfort and safety benefit from a greater density distribution
- Amenities that facilitate social connections and activity benefit from a moderate density distribution
- Amenities that support special events or attractions can be more sporadic

The diagram to the right outlines the parameters to identify amenity distribution aligned with different types of green, vibrant, and support amenities.

- **Green:** amenities that increase greenery, bring nature and natural experiences into the city and support natural processes
- **Vibrant:** amenities that showcase culture and community expression, bring people together and support activities
- **Support:** amenities that improve the comfort of spaces, increase accessibility and support mobility

Public engagement is needed to confirm what amenities are needed in specific parks and public realm locations.

Analysis

Amenities and Park Popularity

Amenity density correlates with park popularity. Central Memorial Park, Tomkins Park, and Connaught School have some of the highest amounts of amenities as well as some of the highest shares of park visitors. Central Memorial Park has extensive seating, trees, planting beds, water features, a library, a restaurant and a public washroom. Tomkins Park also has several seats, planting beds, picnic tables and a public washroom. Connaught School has a playground, field, community garden, seating and several trees (see Park Analysis, page 66).

Urban Life Amenities

Scale: small size

Draw: local, immediate vicinity

Green examples: trees, planters, rain gardens, shrubs, etc.

Vibrant examples: art, cafe seating, etc.

Support examples: seating, shade structures, wayfinding, water fountains, etc.



Key Function Amenities

Scale: space allocated based on the need

Draw: community

Green examples: water features, edible landscapes, lawns, etc.

Vibrant examples: sports courts, games, picnic spaces, playgrounds, etc.

Support examples: washrooms, dog infrastructure, etc.



Attraction Amenities

Scale: space allocated based on opportunity

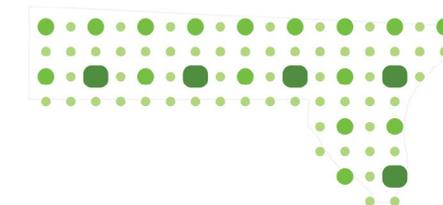
Draw: city and beyond

Green examples: formal gardens, urban marsh, public orchard, etc.

Vibrant examples: event/performance space, amphitheater, heritage buildings, ruins, market stalls, etc.



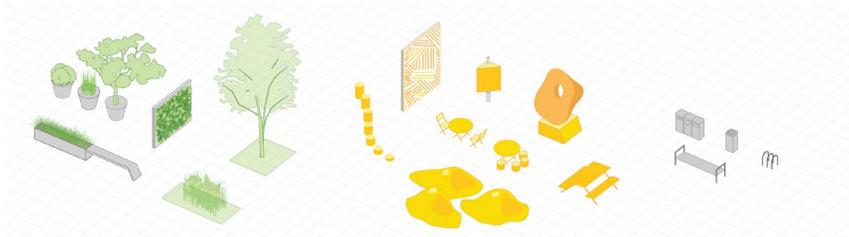
Complete Amenity Distribution





Urban Life Amenity Recommendations

Since there is often a relatively small amount of private outdoor space for residents in Beltline, parks and the public realm have an important role in their day-to-day lives. Beltline also has high concentrations of people without a home and people with limited means to fund private recreational and social experiences. A high distribution of smaller scale green, vibrant, and support amenities can help ensure everyone feels comfortable and welcome in the open space network.



Green Element Examples

Vibrant Element Examples

Support Element Examples

Drinking Water

- Place water fountains/water bottle filling stations at each park, prioritizing spaces with longer anticipated use. Consider public realm locations in areas lacking park space

Comfort

- Provide climate adaptive infrastructure for comfort (e.g. shade devices, shelters, wind screens, etc.)
- Integrate lighting to provide security, beauty, and the opportunity to enjoy parks and public realm areas longer into the evening
- Prioritize pedestrian lighting over traffic lighting

Seating

- Provide movable seating in parks to allow users to customize their experience
- Provide a diversity of seating forms and styles for different needs including accessibility
- Integrate seating throughout the public realm
- Integrate multi-functional amenities that can also work as seating

Trees and Greenery

(see direction under Open Space Policy Recommendations: Climate Resilience)

Emergency Functions

(see direction under Open Space Policy Recommendations: Equity)

Dog Infrastructure

- Provide dog waste bags and waste bins throughout the public realm

- At water fountains/water bottle filling stations, provide water stations for dogs where possible
- Explore integrating dog waste areas along boulevards
- Avoid the use of grates that are hard on dog's paws

Art

- Explore different timescales for art installations - ephemeral to permanent
- Support community artistic expression as well as commissions for professional artists who are local, national, and international
- Look for opportunities to create landmark, interactive, and playful art to anchor a park or the public realm
- Explore a variety of mediums including, digital, lighting, painting, sculpture, performance, and more

Waste

- Integrate recycling, garbage, and composting facilities in each park and at busy locations within the public realm

Analysis

A Growing Population of Dogs

Dogs have daily needs for exercise and bathroom breaks, for which the public realm serves an important role. Dog ownership within Calgary is increasing and, as of September 2019, there were 2,674 licensed dogs in the Greater Downtown Area with Beltline having 900 licenses, this results in 2 to 4 dogs per hectare. Given this trend, as the community grows so will the dog population.



Key Function Amenity Recommendations

In most Calgary communities, sports fields, courts and facilities are often provided by schools or tied to recreational centres. Though Beltline is near indoor facilities (like Lindsay Park), formalized outdoor opportunities for sport and recreation are limited. The role specific sports and recreational facilities play in peoples' lives varies and, as a result, they do not need to be provided at a similar density as amenities that support comfort.

Opportunities to gather and connect in public space provide an important local service to Beltliners because, given the apartment-style living, people likely do not have significant space to entertain. Private social spaces, like restaurants, bars, and cafes, though an important community asset, are unaffordable to many on a regular basis. More opportunities to gather with friends and family or connect with other members of the community spontaneously and without cost are vital to social cohesion and inclusion.

Lastly, greenery at larger scales can help increase nature within the community, support climate change adaptation, increase shade and comfort and support mental health.



General

- Avoid single-purpose amenities within parks to ensure they can be used for different purposes across the day, week, and year.

Public Washrooms

- Prioritize public washrooms in areas where people are likely to spend significant time socializing and recreating, as well as in visible locations
- Ensure public washrooms meet a variety of needs, including parents with small children, the elderly, people with different abilities, etc.
- Partner with private businesses or institutions on the maintenance and oversight of washrooms. Consider appropriate agreements to ensure level of service is maintained over time

Sports, Games and Play Features

- Prototype different games, monitor their use and design them for hardiness and easy removal
- Test different forms of urban sports fields and courts (such as basketball)
- Design sport and play facilities as unique destinations
- Prototype overlapping sports fields
- Integrate informal play features and adult exercise in the public realm
- Add simple, easy-to-maintain water features, particularly in south west Beltline

Social Spaces

- Vary the form and size of tables
- Prototype social space configurations to support talks, lessons, meetings and other types of gatherings
- Integrate food spaces (e.g. barbecues, outdoor ovens, etc.)
- Look for opportunities for additional off-leash dog areas and dog runs in accordance with the Downtown Off-leash Area Study

Greenery

- Consider community gardens in the public realm rather than in parks. Instead provide edible landscaping in parks.
- Protect existing flexible lawn spaces

Analysis

The Importance of Washrooms

In order for parks and the public realm to become destinations where people want to spend time, they need public washrooms. Washrooms are critical to parents with small children, the elderly, people without homes, people with different health needs and everyone else. Washrooms require oversight, frequent cleaning and ongoing maintenance to feel safe and comfortable, which is why it is important to consider their location, design and number carefully. However, they are vital in supporting the dignity of all park users (see Open Space Research, page 17).

Analysis

Limited Recreational Facilities

Beltline has three skating rinks, four lawns, two interactive water features, three tennis courts, three playgrounds and several game stations (e.g. ping pong, tether-ball, etc.). Compared to similar neighbourhoods in Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and Portland, Beltline is missing basketball courts, sports fields, and wading pools (see Parks Analysis, pages 10 to 64, Best Practice Report, pages 40 to 44).



Attraction Amenity Recommendations

Attractions contribute to the identity of Beltline by drawing people from the rest of Calgary and beyond. These amenities are more external facing and might include cultural features, and event spaces. Though visitors to the community seek these amenities out, they also benefit Beltline residents and workers by adding local character, experiences, and beauty to the community not often experienced in other neighbourhoods. It is important to note that attractions are opportunity-based, therefore their distribution is sporadic. They may be anchored in an existing local landmark or institution or they may emerge out of a unique design or context.

Vibrant elements

- Define meeting and gathering points along main streets with artistic or other forms of installations
- Support outdoor concerts, performance spaces, events, and festivals of a range of sizes throughout Beltline
- Look for opportunities like road closures, parking lots, roofs, and other spaces to host events
- Integrate commemorative and interpretive opportunities throughout Beltline, particularly for under-represented groups and lesser known histories
- Look for opportunities to integrate market stalls within Beltline

Greenery

- Explore an urban wetland or marsh or the integration of stormwater storage under a park for water reuse and stormwater management
- Protect Beltline's formal gardens and consider other forms of garden and plant attractions within Beltline



Parks in Beltline with the biggest draw

The parks in Beltline with the largest city-wide draw are Central Memorial Park, Tomkins Park and High Park. Central Memorial Park's attraction is the historic garden, commemorations, and historic library. High Park benefits from its unique location at the top of a parkade and the cohesive and photogenic designs of the games and features. Tomkins Park is located along one of Calgary's busiest main streets and provides a green reprieve from the liveliness of the cafes, bars, and restaurants. The common amenities across these spaces is performance areas, plentiful seating and the ability to offer a variety of experiences and activities (see Parks Analysis, page 66).



Recommendations for Evaluating New Amenities

Needs change and recreational and leisure interests are subject to trends, cultural shifts, and evolving preferences. Before adding, or removing an amenity to Beltline, public research (understanding met and unmet needs) and public engagement (collecting public opinions) are required.

Triggers for (re)assessing amenities:

- New suggestions arising out of public engagement or research
- Emergence of a new activity (identified through best practices, city-wide demand patterns, requests)
- Shifts in popularity of a certain activity
- Demographic shift (density, users, etc.)

Recommendations to Monitor Amenity Need

For amenities, monitoring is required to identify shifting needs. The following can help pinpoint these shifts:

- Level of maintenance required (311 complaints, operations spending, resource tracking)
- Use (based on opt-in, anonymous cellular data and/or sensors to track interest and use)
- Public surveys (at regular intervals - what is missing, what they use, what they want)

Through this regular monitoring, some existing amenities may need to be increased where as others may need to be scaled back to meet the needs of a growing community.



Note

Movable Seating: A Success Story

A hallmark of the Lois Szabo Common's design is the seating choice, particularly the large amount of movable seating. This seating allows visitors to customize their environment to what makes them most comfortable. In the year after its opening, all of these movable seats remain; none have been taken. This demonstrates the success of this infrastructure by both improving user experience and maintaining the level of service.

Evaluating new urban life amenities

Goal

Support universal accessibility, human dignity, comfort, and the perception of safety

Trigger

Public Driven: Equity and comfort improvement
City Driven: Demographic shift, outcome of research

1. Identify amenities (through research, consultation, etc.) that can support a more inclusive open space network
2. Prototype different solutions and monitor their impact and use (including public opinion)
3. Evaluate the success of prototype(s) and provide provision and design recommendations
4. Implement the amenity throughout the network, as opportunities arise

Evaluating new key function amenities

Goal

Provide a range of recreational and social experiences for residents

Trigger

Public Driven: Suggestion from public engagement, emergence of a new activity
City Driven: Wear on an existing amenity

1. Does the amenity fulfill a need within Beltline and is not provided within a 5-minute walk (450 m) of Beltline? *If not, further research and engagement is required to determine the local demand*
2. Can the amenity be prototyped to test its function and interest first before more permanent investment?
3. Can other activities overlap with the space taken by the proposed amenity? *If not, further research and engagement is required to confirm local demand*
4. Does the activity take away from flexible lawn space? *If so, then the amenity is not appropriate*

Evaluating new attractor amenities

Goal

Create new and creative attractions for the residents, workers, and visitors

Trigger

Public Driven: Suggestion
City Driven: Land acquisition opportunity

1. Study the spatial needs, off-site impacts, potential draw and risks of the proposed amenity
2. Prototype the amenity in the public realm or a park that suits its needs and monitor for key success factors
3. If successful, confirm a long term location for the amenity
4. Promote the amenity and develop partners for its ongoing programming and maintenance

Publicly Accessible Private Open Space

Recommendations

All space accessible to the broader public contributes to Beltline’s open space network though private space cannot replace public space. For this reason, it is important to work with the development community, businesses, and landowners to ensure their publicly accessible spaces support the goals of this Playbook.

Publicly accessible private open space can support the Playbook’s philosophy by contributing to the “One Park” approach, creating a “Park-like Public Realm”, and extending “Green and Vibrant Networks”. To effectively contribute to the open space network, publicly accessible private open spaces need to read as public and provide amenities that support public use and lingering.

Design:

- Prioritize public space bonus density provision in areas of need
- Consider the design guidance specific to the development location’s public realm focus area in the absence of a streetscape plan (see Chapter 4: Public Realm). This should include connecting the space with the adjacent parks and/or public realm by continuing paving design, lighting standards, etc.
- Increase greenery through trees, planters, gardens or other forms of soft landscaping for mixed-use and residential projects
- Integrate seating
- Adds signs to identify any space provided as bonusable public space as ‘public’ (see Open Space Research, pg 33)
- Ensure publicly accessible private open space (including bonusable spaces) are a minimum of 5 metres wide in order to accommodate seating and healthy tree growth
- Prevent publicly accessible private open space (including bonusable spaces) from being used as car parking

- Implement public easements on sites, when required
- Design spaces that are welcoming to the public and contribute attractive and comfortable amenities. This should include elements such as weather protection and lighting and discourage barriers to access

Development Process:

- Explore incentives like grants or cost sharing between The City and developers to enhance the public realm following any approved streetscape design plans (if prepared) or the high-level guidance for the relevant public realm focus area provided in Chapter 4: Public Realm
- Support Publicly Accessible Private Open Space above private underground parking

Setbacks:

- Encourage setbacks in areas where there is limited pedestrian space in the adjacent public realm
- Partner between landowners and The City during a streetscape redesign process to improve setback areas concurrent with development applications
- Investigate setback improvement grants to incentivize seating, planting, and other amenities
- Support developer-provided improvements in setback areas in the absence of approved streetscape or infrastructure plans following the high-level guidance for the relevant public realm focus area provided in Chapter 4: Public Realm

Best Practice



Photo source: [Forest and Field Landscape Architecture Inc.](#)

The Potential of Setbacks

A collaboration between The City and landowners to review setback areas and improve their contribution to the open space network can maximize the limited space available for public use and enjoyment benefiting residents, visitors, and businesses. Even if setback regulations are revisited and later removed, historic setback spaces remain to integrate into the open space fabric (see Best Practice Report, pages 15 to 16).

Best Practice



Photo source: [The Cultural Landscape Foundation](#)

Privately-Owned Public Space

New York pioneered Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) with varying degrees of success over the past six decades. One of the most successful POPS is Paley Park (1967). Its success is attributed to its visibility from the street, movable seats, extensive greenery, water features, concession stand, and heat lamps. It offers a nook of respite along a busy street, attracting professionals, tourists, and shoppers. Because it is small, the space is not multi-functional. Instead it focuses on seating and a calm atmosphere (see Open Space Report, pages 33 to 34).

Beltline Parks



Park Focus Areas

This chapter identifies different focus areas for parks based on their size and role within the open space network - **Interlude**, **Neighbourhood** and **Regional**. These focus areas may shift or change overtime based on public engagement and future study. To support direction in this chapter, the analysis of need and provision also considered parks beyond the boundaries of Beltline, such as Shaw Millennium Park, when assessing the provision of **Regional** parks.

Park Focus Areas are intended to function as an overlay to existing Beltline parks and guide the acquisition of new parks. These Focus Areas complement City of Calgary parks classifications.

To guide the future of Beltline parks, this chapter includes:

- Policy recommendations that apply to parks overall
- Recommendations for each Focus Area, including park-specific direction. Amenity direction is based on best practice research and analysis. This direction is a starting point for consideration but should be refined through future engagement
- Land acquisition guidance to direct the location of new parks

Interwoven Vibrant and Green Network: Parks

Each park's Focus Area can contribute towards a green, hybrid, or vibrant experience depending on the needs and character of the area. The map below shows the Focus Areas of existing Beltline parks and how they currently offer these experiences throughout the community.



Interlude Focus Areas



Definition: Small, informal spaces for leisure and social gathering

Neighbourhood Focus Areas



Definition: Half block to full block, locally-focused social and recreational use

Regional Focus Areas



Definition: City-wide destinations anchored around an attraction, unique context, or design.

Park Policy Recommendations

The One Park philosophy relies on the individual contribution each park plays towards a complete recreational, social, and leisure experience within Beltline’s open space network. Too many experiences and functions within a single park will result in clutter, reduced flexibility, and may limit the appeal of the park. Instead, each park should focus on a subset of experiences and functions that complement different experiences and functions offered by nearby parks and the public realm. This prevents individual spaces from trying to do too much.

Flexible open spaces are more inclusive because they allow people to adapt a space to their needs instead of a park’s design directing a specific use. Since needs can shift over time, designing for flexibility, rather than prescription, is also more future proof.

Multi-functionality can also include different experiences — quiet and contemplative spaces, playful and active spaces, and lively and social spaces. Focusing individual parks towards a specific experience that differs from nearby spaces will provide options for the people of Beltline based on their needs and preferences.

Recommendations

- Confirm the design and programming guidance of the parks outlined in this chapter through a public engagement process before implementation
- Focus on efficient and resilient infrastructure and planting (e.g. stormwater management, drought resistant plants, shade structures, electricity generation, etc.)
- Provide flexible spaces, blending softscapes (i.e. lawns) and hardscapes (i.e. plazas), in each park
- Avoid duplicating **Key Function Amenities** present within a nearby park (15 minute walk or 1,350 m) unless those amenities are proven very popular as determined by increased maintenance needs, use, and local demand

- Allocate park experiences throughout Beltline based on the following priorities:
 - Direct hybrid spaces (blended green and vibrant experiences) to areas with the highest residential concentrations
 - Focus vibrant spaces near main streets with existing street life
 - Integrate green spaces within vibrant areas to act as a refuge
- Add more trees, plants, shrubs, and ground cover in areas lacking in greenery
- Explore public and private partnership models to deliver maintenance and operations as an option where enhanced levels of service are desired

Best Practice Example

Parks without Borders

New York City has a program to improve the openness of parks by making entrances easier to find, ensuring the edges are greener, adding more furnishing, programming and amenities, and improving sight lines. Eight parks were selected based on community feedback for the first round of capital improvements, totaling \$40 million. Defining clear design parameters with the goal of creating more welcoming spaces provides a unifying philosophy for this program (see nycgovparks.org).

Public & private partnerships in park maintenance

The Bryant Park Corporation is a not-for-profit, private management company that oversees maintenance and operations of Bryant Park, since its refurbishment in 1992. Their responsibilities include garbage pickups, security, cleaning washrooms, landscaping upkeep, and programming stewardship (see bryantpark.org).

Analysis

Defining Experiences

The elements that contribute to a green or vibrant character were mapped. Green character is an aggregation of tree canopy, gardens, permeable land cover and planting. Vibrant character is an aggregation of ground floor businesses, art, transit, and historic sites. When acquiring a new park or revisiting the design of an existing park, the trending characteristics will help guide the design focus — expanding greenery, enhancing vibrancy, or balancing the two. In this map you can see the areas without a dominant green or vibrant character as well as areas with traits of both.



Photo source: City of Calgary

Typical Regional Park Functions

Regional parks (like Bowness, Prairie Winds, Carburn, and Edworthy Parks) typically offer the following range of amenities that can be considered within Beltline to implement the One Park philosophy:

- + Play features (playgrounds, playscapes)
- + Pathways, trails, and tracks
- + Winter activities (skating, crokicurl, curling, tobogganing)
- + Washrooms, drinking fountains
- + Water features (wading pools, spray parks, fountains)
- + Food and gathering spaces (picnic facilities, gazebos, fire pits, barbecue pits)
- + Fields and courts (tennis, soccer, basketball, etc.)
- + Off-leash areas

Interlude Focus Areas

Positive moments in a city make it livable. A place to sit in some shade, have a coffee, or soak in the city's atmosphere.



Interlude focus illustrative vignette

Definition

Small, informal spaces for leisure and social gathering

Priority when conflicts occur:

- Greenery
- Seating and gathering areas

Keys to Success

- Urban Life Amenities
- Flexible seating
- Residential density and/or street life
- Clear placemaking
- A flexible, multipurpose space
- Integration with the public realm



Existing interlude focus parks

Interlude Focus Areas Recommendations

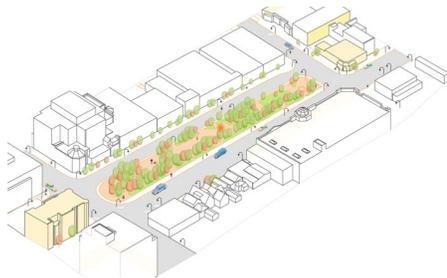
- Extend the design of these spaces along adjacent streets and intersections through materials and amenities
- Protect a portion of flexible, unprogrammed space for customization by users, either soft or hardscaped
- In busy and active locations, limit amenities to specific immediate recreational, social, or other needs to avoid too many specific programming elements
- In quieter locations, consider expanding the amenity provision to create a draw
- Locate in areas with higher pedestrian use
- Consider micro-climate in the design of these spaces
- Maximize trees, greenery, seating and gathering spaces with an openness to the street
- Integrate flexible and movable seating - formalize as a pilot for each case first, and if proven successful, make an ongoing practice. Consider learnings from Lois Szabo Commons
- Consider rooftop, indoor and other unique locations for potential future interlude focus areas



Photo source: [Alex Wilson Community Garden Facebook Page](#)

Increasing the use of small spaces

Good condition, maintenance and management of litter and vandalism increase use. “Thermal comfort” (warmth, shelter, and a lack of wind) and “sky-view factor” (sun access, views and openness) are also associated with increased use. Additionally, water features, trees, play areas, seating and gathering areas help draw people to small spaces (Best Practice Research, pages 12 to 14).



Tomkins Park | Vibrant

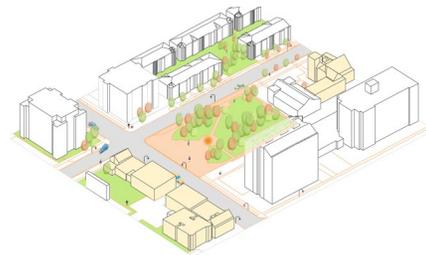
Redesign Required? Yes (Move 2), balancing greenery and vibrancy within a simple design. Extensive multi-functionality is not required given the street life

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: Yes, design alongside 16 Avenue SW (closure potential and patio use), 8 Street SW and 7 Street SW

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Consider dog amenities (e.g. dog waste bags, drinking fountain). Not off-leash
- Protect mature trees and greenery
- Mitigate noise

ISC:UNRESTRICTED

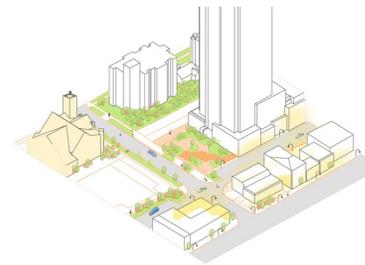


Connaught Park | Hybrid

Redesign Required? Yes (Move 2), with a focus on expanding the dog park and improving the plaza’s and surrounding green space’s function

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: Yes, recent 11 Street improvements
Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Expand seating options, particularly movable seating
- Explore unmet recreational needs with the community
- Integrate fire pits
- Improve dog park



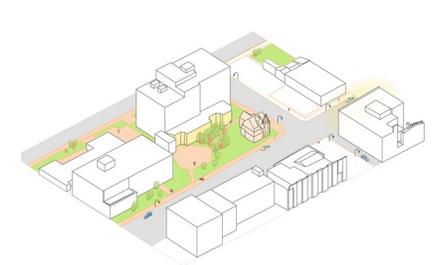
Lois Szabo Commons | Hybrid

Redesign Required? No, redesign complete in 2021

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: Yes, connect any 16 Avenue SW improvements with this park space

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Explore ways to provide paddles and ping pong balls



Humpy Hollow Park | Hybrid

Redesign Required? Improvements are in progress (2022/2023)

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: Yes, connect any Centre Street S improvements with this park space

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Support Beltline Neighbourhood Association programming from McHugh house into the park, including an outdoor stage and seating

Neighbourhood Focus Areas

Lively and playful places for residents and workers to participate in recreational activities and the community's social life.



Neighbourhood focus illustrative vignette



Existing neighbourhood focus parks

**Beltline ARP
Part 2**

Definition

Half block to full block, locally-focused social and recreational use

Priority when conflicts occur:

- Resident recreation need based on future research and engagement
- Flexible lawn space

Keys to Success

- Key Function Amenities
- Urban Life Amenities
- Residential density
- Flexible lawn space
- Winter programming

Best Practice



Photo source: *Claude Cormier and Associates*

Berczy Park, Toronto, Canada

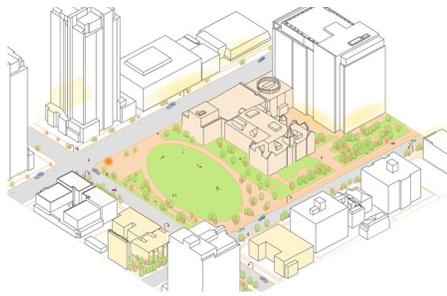
Berczy Park is an example of a creative urban park that includes a wide central plaza, wide sidewalks, grassy berms, a dog park and garden beds. The centrepiece of the park is a large two-tiered fountain with whimsical dog and cat sculptures. This park also features a public art piece and integration with adjacent streets through curbsless borders.

Neighbourhood Focus Areas Recommendations

- Limit new **Key Function Amenities** to where they meet an unmet need within a 15 minute walk (1,350 m), or to relieve pressure on a popular existing amenity
- Maximize lawn space and avoid fragmenting existing lawns
- Provide multi-functional amenities (e.g. informal play features and artworks as seating, etc.)
- Incorporate multi-functional amenities, greenery, and programming within parks to encourage diverse patrons and use all year round
- Integrate food growing, preparation and eating spaces and pilot different crops and partnerships
- Add water features designed for easy maintenance (e.g. pop-up spray parks, wading pools, crying walls, and features that can convert into rinks)
- Encourage a variety of informal and formal activities through the addition of trails, gathering spaces, and quiet areas of respite
- Expand the use of fireplaces and pits in the winter
- Direct single purpose facilities to the public realm, unused public space, and publicly accessible private open spaces instead of parks
- Design all parks as multi-seasonal spaces from the beginning, even if they are interim

Seasonal Park Use

All the existing parks within Beltline are more popular outside of the summer months. This is likely due to Beltline residents and workers traveling further for summer recreation within and beyond the city limits. With this in mind, it is important to both expand summer recreational possibilities close to home and to focus on fall, winter, and spring programming in park redevelopment (see Park Analysis, pages 10 to 64).



Barb Scott Park | Green

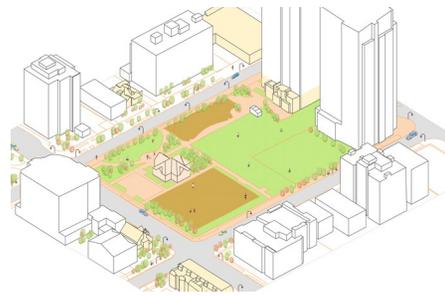
Redesign Required? No, the park was built in 2014

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus

Areas: Yes, the streetscape redesign processes for 8 Street SW, 12 Avenue S and 13 Avenue S needs to integrate with Barb Scott Park

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Consider formalizing public washroom access to encourage longer stays
- Monitor use patterns and wear and tear to inform a future refresh



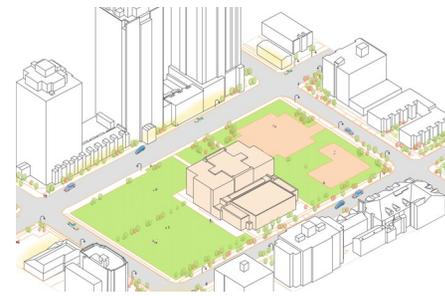
Haultain Park | Hybrid

Redesign Required? Partial (Move 3)

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: No

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Explore multi-season use of tennis courts
- Protect most of the area dedicated to the flexible lawn space
- Consider dog infrastructure
- Collaborate with the Park's Foundation to revisit their entrance garden with the potential of public edible landscaping
- Expand upon First Street Market interface



Connaught School | Hybrid

Redesign Required? In partnership with the school and Calgary Board of Education (Move 2)

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus

Areas: Yes, any 13 Avenue S or 12 Avenue S streetscape redesign process needs to be integrated. Evaluate the success of the 10 Street S temporary closure

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Consider formalizing a sport field or court
- Improve the edges



Thomson Family Park | Hybrid

Redesign Required? No, upgraded in 2016

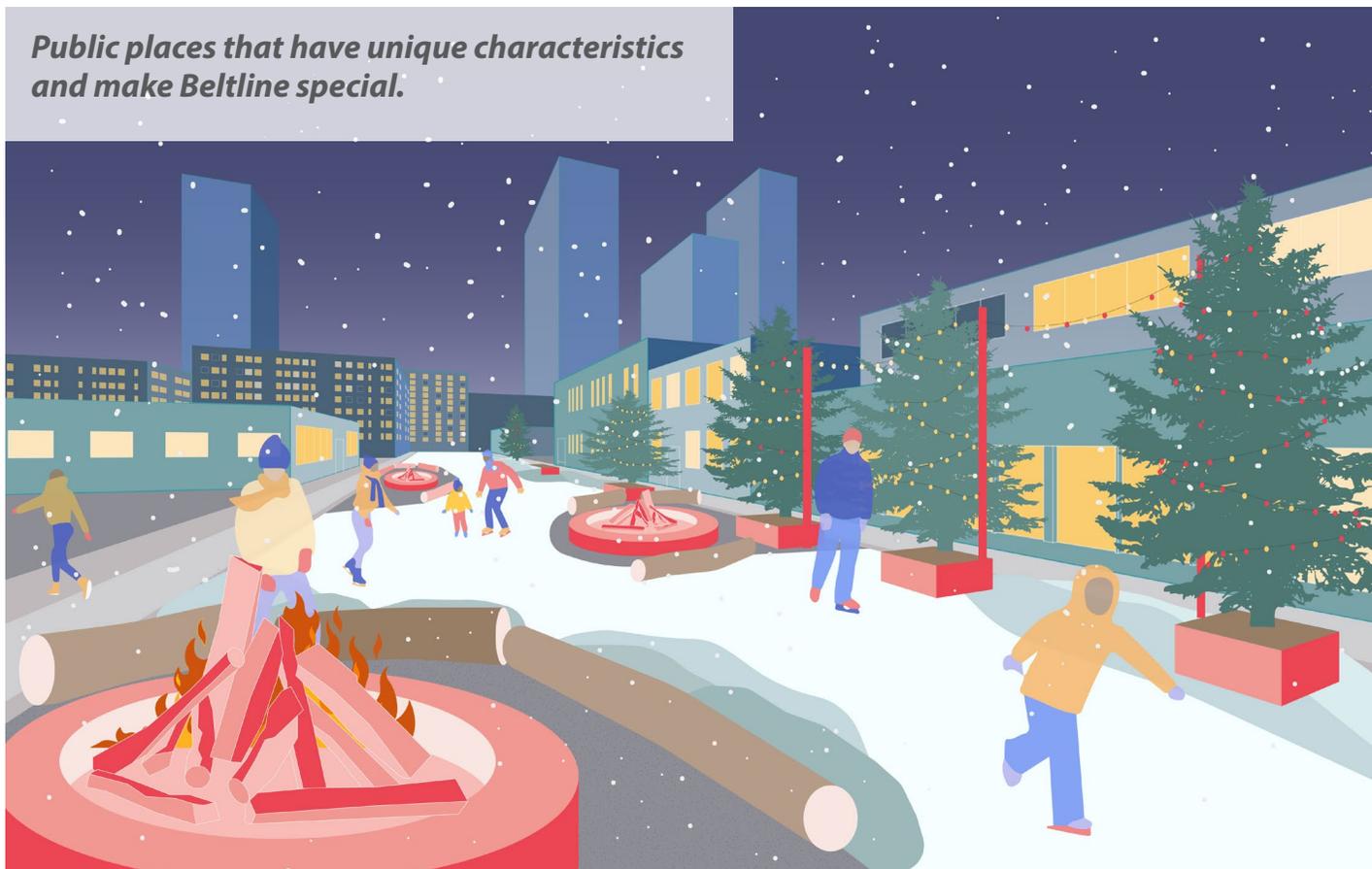
Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas: Yes, the streetscape redesign process for 16 Avenue S needs to integrate with the park.

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Consider formalizing public washroom access to encourage longer stays
- Monitor use patterns and wear and tear to inform a later refresh

Regional Focus Areas

Public places that have unique characteristics and make Beltline special.



Regional focus illustrative vignette

Definition

City-wide destinations anchored around an attraction, unique context, or design.

Priority when conflicts occur:

- Unique experiences, drawing residents city-wide and beyond (e.g. the gardens/fountain at Central Memorial Park)
- A special design anchored in an historic site or stand-out design language (e.g. Copenhagen's Superkilen Park's coloured rubber surface and art)

Keys to Success

- Strong historic, cultural or design character
- Public art
- Event space
- **Urban Life Amenities**
- **Attractor Amenities**
- Wayfinding and interpretive elements
- Different micro-climates



Existing regional focus parks

Regional Focus Areas Recommendations

- Ensure additional amenities respect existing historic, architectural or artistic character, where it exists
- Create an identity for these statement spaces based on history, design, or context
- Provide opportunities and infrastructure to support festivals, performances, and other gatherings
- Integrate art, aesthetic lighting, and a clear visual language
- Create new regional parks in unique locations, such as closed streets, interior spaces, parking lots, roofs, or mid-block parcels
- Consider the transportation network when reviewing locations of regional parks to ensure it is accessible to a range modes
- Ensure adjacent development activates the park edge (i.e. retail, commercial, dining uses) and helps steward the space
- Provide designated space for food trucks
- Encourage active uses (e.g. restaurants, cafes, etc.) within these parks
- Ensure safe and convenient access for people with different abilities is provided
- Consider micro-climate and provide different conditions for different preferences - shade, sun, quiet, vibrant, etc.
- Integrate public washrooms, drinking water, lighting, and other support services
- Explore statement green spaces like urban marshes, public orchards, and more



Central Memorial Park | Hybrid

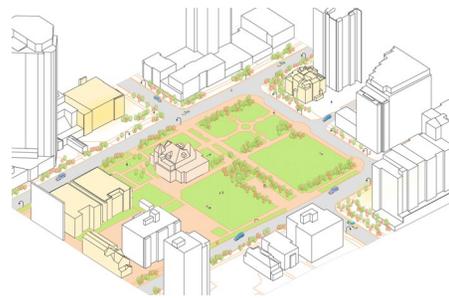
Redesign Required? No, the park was upgraded in 2010

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas:

Yes, the streetscape redesign process for 12 Avenue S needs to integrate with Central Memorial Park

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Add tables and bistro chairs to support the lunch crowd
- Work with the Library and other groups to increase programming



Lougheed House/Beaulieu Gardens | Green

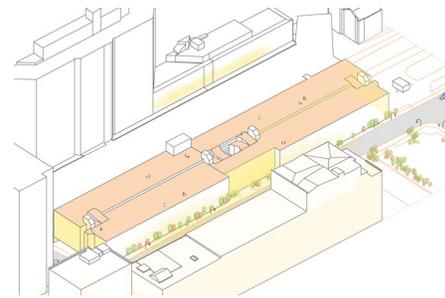
Redesign Required? Yes (Move 2), to partner with Lougheed House and Province

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas:

Yes, integrate with 6 Street SW and 13 Avenue S

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Protect as much lawn space as possible
- Consider expanding edible landscaping
- Explore dog infrastructure
- Add seating and lighting



High Park | Vibrant

Redesign Required? Yes (Move 1), to formalize its successful elements, improve access, and create a street level presence

Alignment with Key Public Realm Focus Areas:

Yes, integrate street level improvements with 10 Avenue S and the Green Line

Amenity Direction to be confirmed through public engagement:

- Explore greenery opportunities
- Assess current level of accessibility

Best Practice



The High Park Success Story

High Park is the result of a unique vision, a clear identity, and careful prototyping. Originally built in 2021, improvements have been phased and expanded overtime. Within Beltline, High Park has the fourth highest proportion of use, the third largest catchment and the second highest presence on Instagram (see Park Analysis, pages 42 to 44).

Best Practice



Photo source: [Future Landscapes](#)

Tanner Springs Park, Portland, USA

Tanner Springs is a neighborhood park that incorporates the natural landscape found beneath its urban surface. Stormwater runoff from the park feeds into a natural water feature, art performances take place on the floating deck, and visitors explore the natural refuge.

Park Acquisition

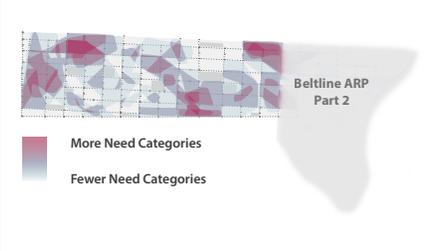
Based on the current and growing shortage of parks in Beltline, acquisition of new park space is a key priority for strengthening the open space network. Based on the park focus areas outlined in the previous pages, the maps to the right identify potential new locations for each area of focus.

These areas were selected by cross referencing areas with park need (see Park Analysis, pages 90 to 91), with areas that have appropriately sized parcels with acquisition potential for each focus area (see Land Acquisition Strategy, pages 12 to 21). It is important to note that opportunities may arise that do not align perfectly with these locations and, in that instance, the criteria provided on the following page will help guide the decision-making process about whether to acquire a site or not.

Additional acquisition consideration for each focus area includes:

- **New Interlude Parks** should be focused in areas with park capacity concerns to relieve the pressure on existing parks. Given their small size, they are less valuable in areas deficient in parks.
- **New Neighbourhood Parks** should be focused in the areas most deficient in parks to provide residents and workers with the opportunity to satisfy their daily recreational, social, and leisure needs.
- **New Regional Parks** should be focused around a unique urban condition (e.g. street closure, parking lot, roof, etc.), adjacent to active uses, reflect tangible or intangible Beltline history (e.g. LGBTQ2IA+) and designed to a high standard. This will allow the statement to be based on the context and design of the new park.

Analysis



Identifying Park Space Need

Park need is based on: population density, park access, opportunities to expand greenery and vibrancy, use hot spots, and locations of concentrated seniors, low income households and people without housing. This analysis has informed acquisition recommendations and other priorities throughout the Playbook (see Park Analysis, pages 90 to 91).



Land Acquisition Recommendations

- Prioritize interlude focus areas in the locations identified on the previous page
- Prioritize neighbourhood focus areas as follows:
 - The neighbourhood focus area locations identified on the previous page
 - Any need area identified on maps on previous page (see also Park Analysis, pg 90-91)
 - Anywhere in Beltline where a half block to a full block of space is available
- Prioritize regional focus areas in the locations identified on the previous page or any opportunity to enhance a local institution, landmark, or unique space

Different tools can help increase park space, like:

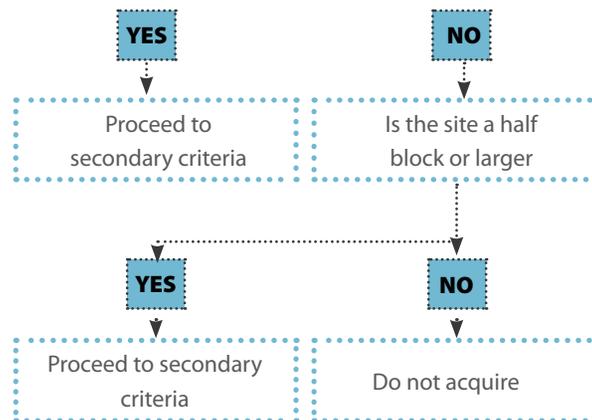
- Using municipal reserve land dedication, where applicable
- Partnering with private landholders to temporarily use a vacant site or parking lot as a park
- Leveraging small spaces to create high functioning interlude parks and parkettes
- Acting quickly to acquire any larger size lot (a half block to a full block in size), as they become available
- Explore feasibility of a Beltline land acquisition fund to purchase new park space

New parks should be located:

- Near land uses that offer activation such as active commercial edges, ground floor residential units, apartment lobbies, and transit nodes
- To be visible from a public street or pathway
- Close to places that benefit from parks, including affordable housing developments, seniors facilities, and recreational/community/cultural facilities
- To expand spaces in high need areas, even if the space is located mid-block or small in size

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Is the site in a need area?



Secondary criteria

Is the site suitable for a park (size, shape, utility)?	YES	NO
Is the value of the acquisition reasonable relative to the number of people who would benefit?	YES	NO
Is the site located in an area with a high percentage of low income residents, seniors or people without housing?	YES	NO
Is the site located in central or north Beltline?	YES	NO

If three out of the four criteria are yes, consider acquiring when possible

Analysis

Two Types of Park Need

Park need within Beltline falls into two categories (see Park Analysis, page 90):

- + Park Gaps (north and central Beltline): these are areas with less parks, amenities, greenery, and vibrancy. They are also areas with concentrations of populations that would benefit more from the services parks provide such as free recreation, stress relief, and health benefits
- + Park Pressure Areas (west and south Beltline): these are areas with a higher density of users (both residential density and street life) placing increased pressure on existing parks

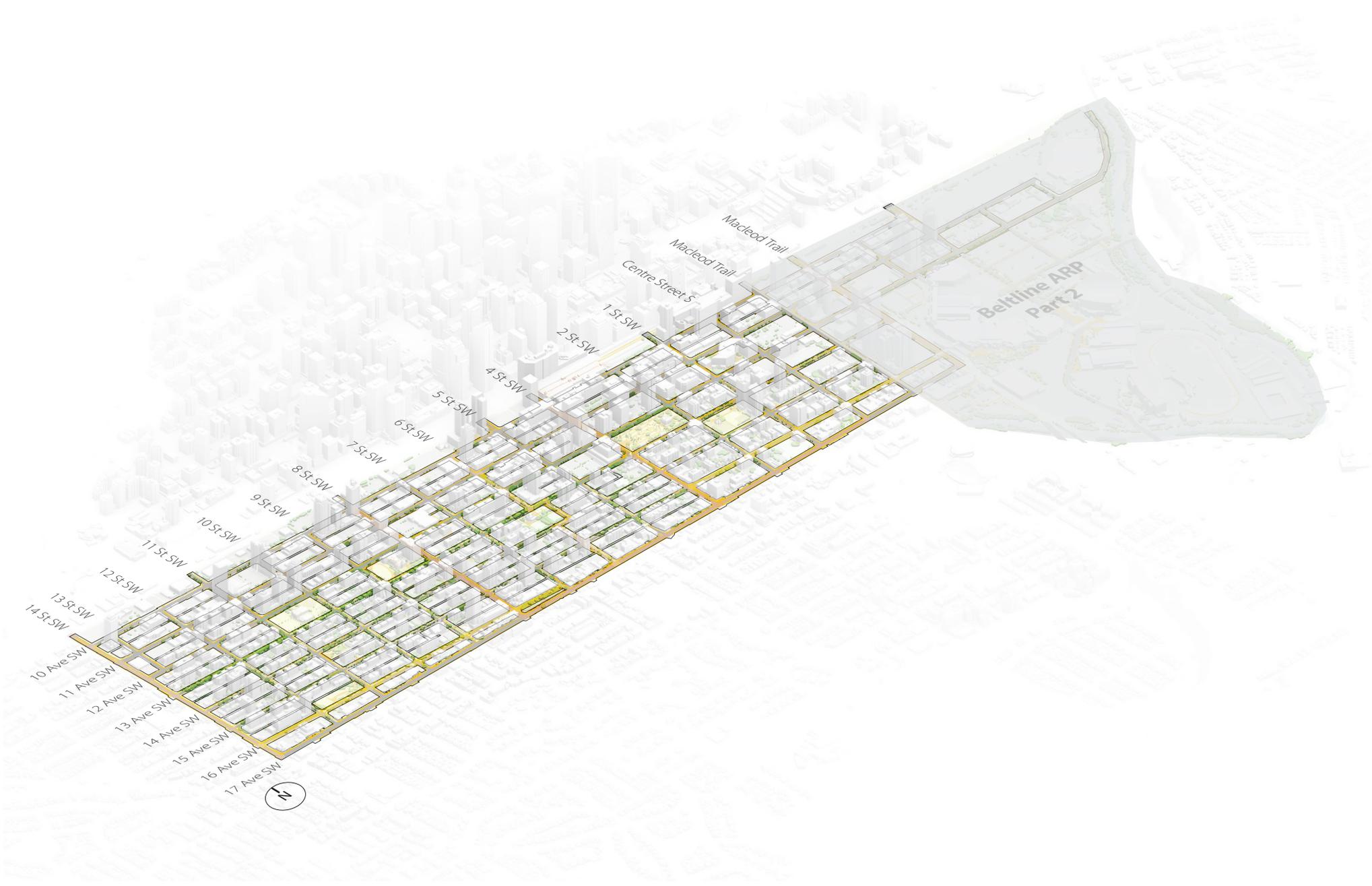
Best Practice

Open Space Acquisition Fund

San Francisco established an Open Space Fund that is used to finance acquisitions and capital improvements for its Recreation and Park Department. The money is tax funded, and between 2007-2017, the fund was used to add 16 acres of new park land for an estimated \$15.2 million.

Sites can be identified by staff or the public by submitting a "Suggested Site Acquisition Form", which is then evaluated by municipal staff and presented to a committee that sits every six months or as needed.

Beltline Public Realm



Public Realm Focus Areas

Implementing the Park-like Public Realm philosophy requires increased multi-functionality and space along Beltline’s streets as well as a stronger connection with Beltline’s parks. The public realm makes up the largest portion of Beltline’s open space network and can be re-imagined to facilitate more park functions.

The analysis and research conducted as part of the Playbook has enabled the identification of focus areas for different components of the public realm. These focus areas are intended to complement existing classifications to ensure a diversity of experiences and functions throughout the community to support a high quality of life. These focus areas may shift or change overtime based on public engagement and future study.

To direct the future of the public realm, this chapter includes:

- Recommendations that apply to Beltline public realm, as a whole
- An overview of different tools to support increased green and vibrant experiences
- Recommendations for six focus areas applying public realm tools that, as noted, may change overtime as needs evolve and based on public engagement
- Recommendations for how lanes can contribute to the open space network

Interwoven Vibrant and Green Network: Public Realm

A legible, connected, green, and vibrant public realm is attractive and entices people to enjoy and explore. The public realm focus areas have been organized along a spectrum based on their potential to contribute to green, vibrant, and hybrid experiences. Public engagement, design processes and the evolution of the network may refine these definitions over time.

- 
- **Green Focus Areas:** components of the public realm that link several Beltline parks together through a green character, which is either existing or emergent. It is important to note that the Greater Downtown Plan refers to ‘Green Streets’ which are streets that connect to the Bow and Elbow Rivers. These overlap with the Playbook’s ‘Green Focus Areas’ but are not exactly the same since green focus areas also must have the space to expand greenery within the public realm itself
 - **Corridor Focus Areas:** the major transportation corridors on either side of Beltline can help facilitate safe, accessible, and comfortable multi-modal movement north and south, particularly north to the Downtown and Bow River
 - **Blended Focus Areas:** quieter streets, one block north of 17 Avenue, provide opportunities to connect parks and create shared spaces due to less vehicle demands
 - **Vision Focus Areas:** areas with little greenery, limited vibrancy, few parks, and some space to acquire future parks or link with major public destinations, like the Bow River, that provide an opportunity to cultivate a hybrid green and vibrant identity
 - **Park Focus Areas:** streets with lower traffic density and significant park spaces where the public realm can perform greater recreational, leisure, and social functions
 - **Vibrant Focus Areas:** over the years, several plans have defined the major “high” or “main” streets of Beltline that provide important north-south and east-west connections and are the busiest, most vibrant streets in the community



Public Realm Policy Recommendations

To realize a “Park-like Public Realm”, Beltline’s streets need to maximize their functionality outside of mobility. To achieve this it is important to increase the space available for pedestrians.

- Include on-street parking, boulevards, furniture zones or parklettes to create a buffer for pedestrians
- Design park-adjacent streets to extend and connect green spaces
- Prioritize safety, accessibility, and maintenance along multi-modal routes
- Consider the applicability of alternative and innovative standards for utilities where needed to achieve prioritized streetscape outcomes
- Activate streets through pop-ups, art and culture initiatives, and year round outdoor programming
- Confirm the design and programming guidance of the public realm outlined in this chapter through a public engagement process before implementation
- Provide adequate soil volumes for street trees and use salt tolerant species of trees & other forms of planting to ensure survivability
- Explore increasing pedestrian space through:
 - Curb extensions & traffic calming
 - Seasonal on-street parking spot occupation (parklettes or patios)
 - Temporary (day, week, year or event) or permanent road closures and restrictions on vehicular use
 - Sidewalk widening, shrinking the road carriage-way
 - Permanent parklettes and boulevards in former on-street parking spots
 - Shared spaces to mix pedestrians, cyclists and cars

- When increasing pedestrian space:
 - Engage and collaborate with adjacent residents, businesses, landowners and people impacted by City decisions
 - Partner with Beltline Neighbourhood Association and, if relevant, Business Improvement Area
 - Conduct an impact study
 - Pilot different configurations, engage on making successful solutions permanent
 - Monitor performance
 - Consider year round implications (e.g. snow storage)
- The potential triggers for pedestrianizing a space (from expanding the pedestrian area to closing the street) are (must meet four or more):
 - Comparatively low on-street parking use compared to Beltline-wide
 - Comparatively low traffic volumes compared to Beltline-wide & no transit movement
 - High park need
 - High residential density
 - High pedestrian and/or high cycling volumes

Best Practice

One-way vs two-way traffic

Several cities have converted multi-lane one-way traffic streets to two-way, including Atlanta and Chicago. To assist decision making, cities should consider the overall priority against what has been observed through these conversions:

Multi-lane one-way streets tend to be efficient in shuttling volumes of traffic and, often, have opportunities to expand the public realm.

Two-way conversions tend to lead to increases in safety, pedestrian use, vitality of local businesses, and shorter travel distances for drivers. But, in certain cases, they may present challenges in competing with other uses such as parking, bike lanes, or boulevards.

See Jeff Speck's *Walkable City Rules*, 2018

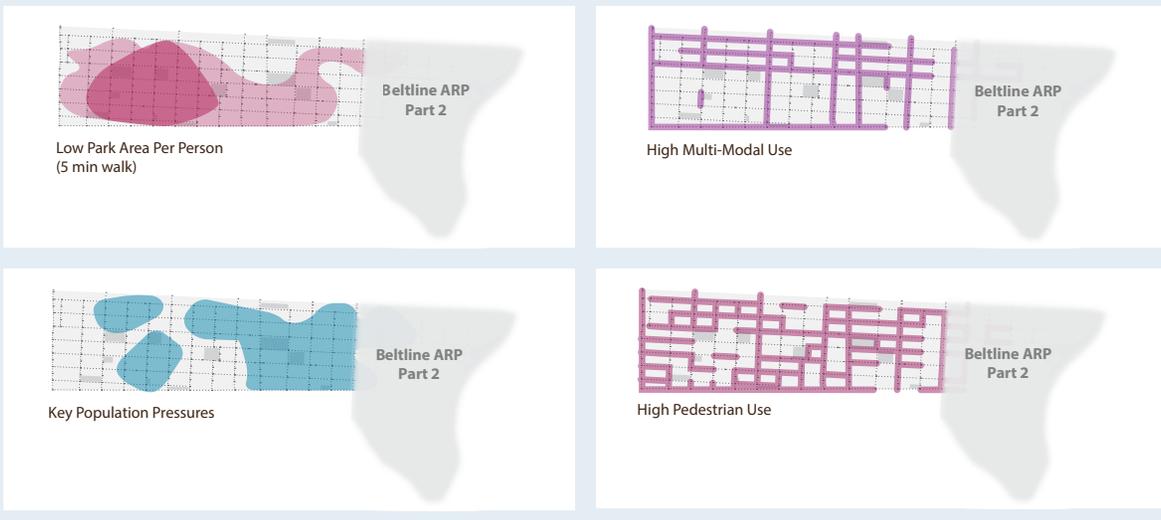
 Analysis

Pressures on the Open Space Network

Beltline's open space network faces several pressures:

- + Not enough park space and/or existing parks facing capacity concerns due to high residential density
- + High concentrations of **key populations**, which are people who rely more heavily on open space (children, seniors, newcomers, people with lower incomes, and people without homes)
- + High pedestrian use
- + High multi-modal use

These pressures emphasize the value of expanding the public realm spatially and functionally (see Public Realm Analysis, pages 72 to 78).



Public Realm Tools

Public realm recommendations are categorized into tools that can be applied across different focus areas in different concentrations and combinations. These tools also support a vibrant or green network depending on their application. These two pages provide an overview of the tools applied to the relevant focus areas on the subsequent pages.

City Initiative

Undertake a streetscape planning process to provide public realm design guidance.
Street Anatomy: Entire streetscape

Curbside Management

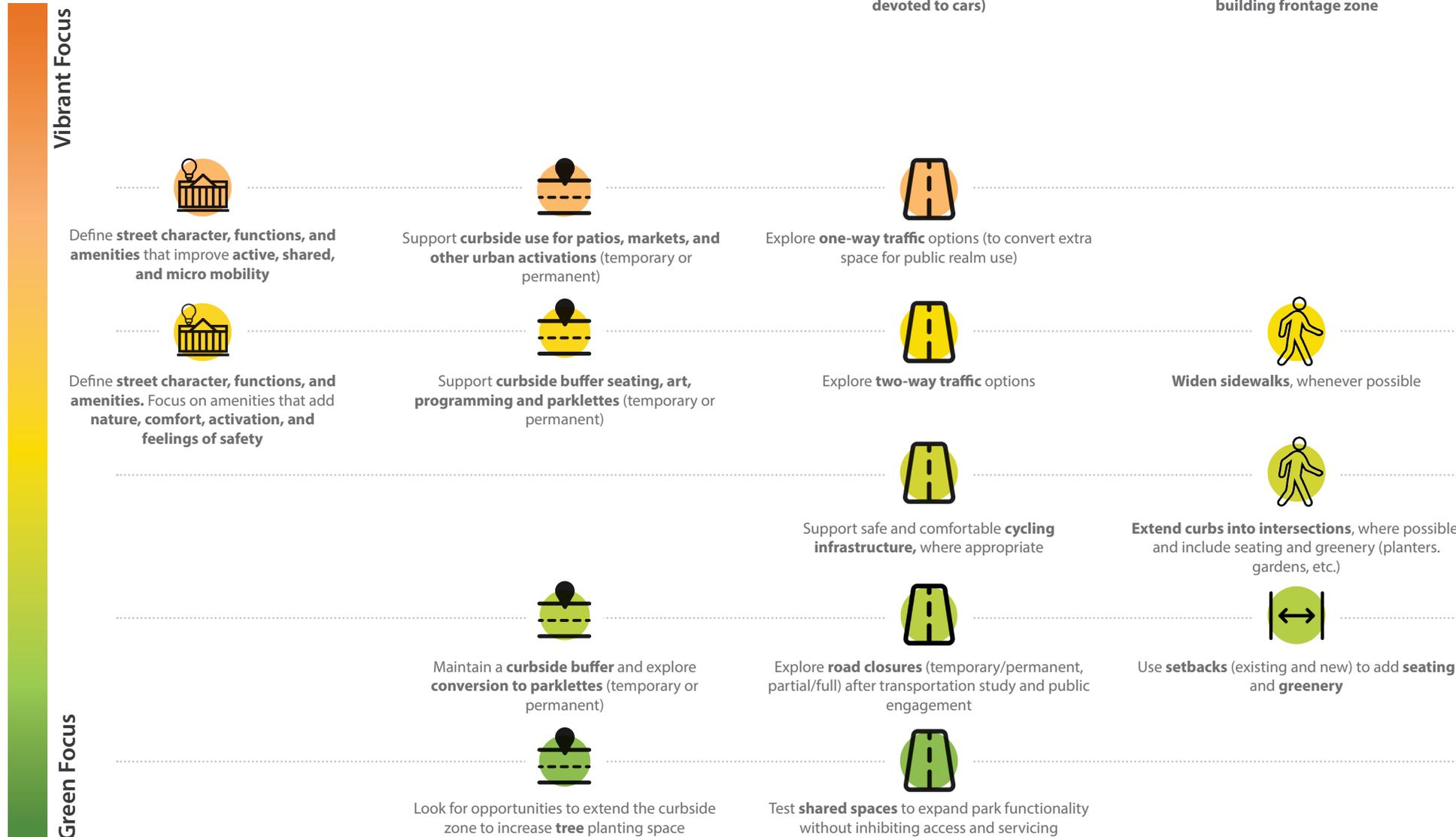
Balance competing demands along the curb
Street Anatomy: Curbside zone (includes on-street parking zone and sidewalk edge)

Roadway

Adjust road designs as required to support pedestrian and cyclist comfort and space
Street Anatomy: Carriageway (the area devoted to cars)

Sidewalk & Setback

Increase pedestrian space and improve the pedestrian experience
Street Anatomy: Sidewalk, Setback area/ building frontage zone



Trees

Plant and maintain a healthy tree canopy
**Street Anatomy: Furniture zone, setback area/
building frontage zone**



Where trees are not possible due to soil volume and setback constraints, investigate **other forms of planting** (e.g. shrubs, planters, grass, etc.)



Plant as many **trees** as possible and support their health through green infrastructure and sufficient soil volumes



Protect **mature trees** and add additional trees



Protect **mature trees** and, when possible, add **double rows of trees**

ISO: UNRESTRICTED

Greenery

Expand greenery and green connections
**Street Anatomy: Furniture zone, setback area/
building frontage zone**



Add **greenery that supports activity** like gardening, play, exercise, dog walking, etc.



Create different **green/recreational loop options**



Create and connect **green refuges and breaks** (trees, planters, ground cover and/or gardens)



Maintain or reintroduce **boulevards**



Add **greenery, low impact development, xeriscaping/drought tolerant species** to sustainably increase greenery

[Public Realm Analysis, p 86-87]

Urban Activation

Activate through creative installations, gathering areas, and shelter.
**Street Anatomy: Furniture zone, setback area/
building frontage zone**



Prioritize **activations** (e.g. seating, gathering spaces, amenities like poster boards/community pantries/little libraries, sidewalk shopping, etc.)



Prioritize **public art investment** (e.g. murals, installations, performance spaces, etc.)



Prioritize **sheltered seating and places to pause**

[Public Realm Analysis, p 88-89]

Development

Improve the integration and contribution of private spaces in the open space network
Street Anatomy: Setback area/frontage zone



Encourage **outdoor display and dining space**



Consolidate access points and/or integrate a **wider furniture zone** to improve accessibility



Encourage **privately-owned public spaces along quieter streets**



Direct **privately-owned public spaces** to blend **soft and hard landscaping, clear sightlines, seating and greenery**



Direct **privately-owned public spaces** to **maximize greenery**

[Public Realm Analysis, p 89-93]

Green Focus Areas

Green focus streets are the routes you take when you need a recharge. They are quiet and lush, and link together neighbourhood and regional parks.



Green focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Greenery
- Active mobility

Keys to Success

- Continuous, diverse greenery
- Boulevards
- Cycling Infrastructure
- Residential density
- Parks to connect

Best Practice



Photo source: [San Francisco Better Streets](#)

San Francisco street/pocket parks

To address park deficiencies, San Francisco allows community members to propose parkettes in road right-of-ways. The use of these spaces are unique. They can provide gardens, fitness equipment, ecological improvement or habitat, lawns, and community hubs, among others. They can span an entire block, intersection or a small corner. The only requirements are a landscaping or paving material to differentiate the space, an edge to create a buffer with traffic, stormwater retention and infiltration, accessible access, and seating. The maintenance of these sites are up to the neighbouring property owners and The City is involved in ensuring the design is appropriate and safe (see Open Space Research, page 32).

Green Focus Areas Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

-  Explore **road closures** (temporary/permanent, partial/full) after transportation study and public engagement
-  Prioritize **sheltered seating and places to pause**
-  Use **setbacks** (existing and new) to add **seating and greenery**. Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Add **greenery, silva cells, low impact development, xeriscaping/drought tolerant species** to sustainably increase greenery
-  Where trees are not possible, investigate **other forms of planting** (e.g. shrubs, planters, grass, etc.)
-  Maintain **curbside buffer** and explore **conversion to parkettes** (temporary or permanent)
-  Look for opportunities to extend the curbside zone to increase **tree planting space**

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  Maintain or reintroduce **boulevards**
-  Create different **green/recreational loops options** (see the Experiences section of Chapter 5)
-  Widen **sidewalks**
-  Direct **publicly accessible private open spaces** to maximize greenery (trees, planters, ground cover). Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Explore two-way traffic options on 12 Avenue S
-  Support safe and comfortable **cycling infrastructure** where appropriate
-  Protect **mature trees** and, when possible, add **double rows of trees**
-  **Extend curbs into intersections**, where possible, and include seating and greenery (planters, gardens, etc.)

Green Focus Areas

Major 12 Avenue S characteristics
(Public Realm Analysis, pages 48 to 52):

- + High park pressure
- + High pedestrian pressure
- + Concentration of key populations
- + High sidewalk width
- + High street wall consistency
- + High cycling density and bicycle parking
- + High auto density

Major 13 Avenue S characteristics
(Public Realm Analysis, pages 52 to 56):

- + High park pressure
- + Stormwater challenges
- + Ability to expand and complete Greenway

Key Green Focus Areas (based on analysis and research)

13 Avenue S

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Extend the greenway atmosphere from 4 Street SW to 14 Street SW
- Prototype boulevard greening approaches (gardens, planters, edible landscaping, etc.)
- Add seating and bicycle parking along boulevards
- Examine opportunities to create shared spaces and closed streets along park boundaries during any park redevelopment process

12 Avenue S

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Formalize food truck, event parking, and other types of activations alongside parks
- Review the mobility needs of 12 Avenue S to explore the following:
 - Converting 12 Avenue S into two way traffic
 - Expanding the public realm for greening and wider sidewalks
 - Formalizing the bike lane into a multi-use pathway to the river
 - Creating an uninterrupted green atmosphere from the Elbow River to 14 Street S



Corridor Focus Areas

Beltline is bookended by important mobility corridors. These streets focus on supporting safe and comfortable bicycle and pedestrian movement alongside transit and automobile infrastructure.



Movement focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Active mobility
- Safety

Keys to Success

- Cycling Infrastructure
- Wide sidewalks
- Benches
- Street trees
- Wide furniture zones
- Micro mobility and bicycle parking

Best Practice



Photo source: [trulyhandpicked.com](https://www.trulyhandpicked.com)

Pearl District, Portland

Streets throughout the Pearl District extend and connect green spaces. Landscaping, a variety of seating options, and tree lined streets all help to blend the boundaries between streets and parks. There is ample pedestrian infrastructure including garbage bins, bike racks, wayfinding tools, and wide sidewalks (see Best Practice Research, page 43).

Corridor Focus Areas Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

-  Prioritize **sheltered seating and places to pause**
-  Use **setbacks** (existing and new) to add **seating and greenery** (aligned with streetscape plan or guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network)
-  Where trees are not possible, investigate **other forms of planting** (e.g. shrubs, planters, grass, etc.)
-  Add **greenery, silva cells, low impact development, xeriscaping/drought tolerant species** to sustainably increase greenery

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  **Extend curbs into intersections**, where possible, and include seating and greenery (planters, gardens, etc.)
-  Direct **publicly accessible private open spaces** to blend soft and hard landscaping, clear sight lines, seating and greenery. Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Plant as many **trees** as possible and support through green infrastructure and sufficient soil volumes
-  Protect mature **trees** and add additional trees
-  Maintain or reintroduce **boulevards**
-  Widen **sidewalks**, whenever possible
-  Support safe and comfortable **cycling infrastructure**, where appropriate
-  Encourage **publicly accessible private open spaces** along quieter streets
-  Define **street character, functions, and amenities** to improve **active, shared, and micro mobility**

Mobility Focus Areas

Major 14 Street S characteristics
(Public Realm Analysis, pages 20 to 24):

- + High park pressure
- + High pedestrian pressure
- + Designated Main Street
- + Low development activity
- + Inconsistent street wall
- + Mix of frontage quality
- + No on-street parking
- + Narrow sidewalks

Major Macleod Trail Couplet characteristics
(Public Realm Analysis, pages 40 to 44):

- + Near park pressure area
- + Near concentration of key populations
- + Wide road
- + Mix of active and inactive frontages

Key Corridor Focus Areas (based on analysis and research)

14 Street SW

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Undertake a Main Street Streetscape Plan
- Partner with adjacent landowners to improve their setback spaces alongside any Main Street improvements during the development application process
- Consider grants to support Main Street setback improvements

Macleod Trail S/1 Street SE Couplet

(to confirm through public engagement)

The Rivers District is everything east of 1 Street SE. Since 1 Street SE is a border street between the Rivers District and the rest of Beltline and it functions as a couplet with MacLeod Trail and an important link north to the Bow River, this is the only recommended move in the Playbook within the Rivers District.

- CMLC in partnership with the Calgary Stampede will lead and implement the design guidance for this couplet in alignment with the Rivers District Master Plan



Blended Focus Areas

Blended focus streets are main streets' cooler, more laid back siblings. They create an escape from the hustle and bustle, and get their character from greenery, back patios, murals, and active transportation users with any number of wheels.



Blended focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Community expression
- Experimentation

Keys to Success

- Public art
- Wide sidewalks
- Greenery
- Shared spaces
- Low traffic volumes
- Mixed uses
- Servicing

Best Practice



Photo source: *Halifax City News*, Meghan Groff

Argyle Street, Halifax

Over ten years, Argyle Street went through a series of pop-up patios and other activations during the summer months. Given the success of this initiative, the Halifax Regional Municipality decided to transform the street into a shared space to allow for year-round outdoor dining and flexible programming (see Best Practice Report, page 30).

Blended Focus Areas Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

Both Sides of the Street

-  Prioritize **sheltered seating** and **places to pause**
-  Explore **road closures** (temporary/permanent, partial/full) after transportation study and public engagement

North Side of the Street

-  Use **setbacks** (existing and new) to add **seating** and **greenery** (aligned with streetscape plan or guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network)
-  Add **greenery, silva cells, low impact development, xeriscaping/drought tolerant species** to sustainably increase greenery
-  Where trees are not possible, increase **greenery** and **low impact development**

South Side of the Street

-  Prioritize **public art investment** (e.g. murals, installations, performance spaces, etc.)
-  Encourage **outdoor display and dining space** alongside access and servicing

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  **Extend curbs into intersections**, where possible, and include seating and greenery (planters, gardens, etc.)
-  **Widen sidewalks**, whenever possible
-  Explore one-way traffic options on 16 Avenue S
-  Direct **publicly accessible private open spaces** to maximize greenery (trees, planters, ground cover). Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Maintain or reintroduce **boulevards**
-  Protect mature **trees** and add additional trees
-  Consolidate access points and/or integrate a **wider furniture zone to improve accessibility**

Blended Focus Areas

Major 16 Avenue SW characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 56 to 60):

- + Park pressure
- + Low on-street parking availability
- + Low vehicle density
- + Low cycling density
- + High amount of benches
- + Good tree quality
- + Consistent street wall
- + Mix of frontages

Major 15 Avenue S characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 60 to 64):

- + Park pressure
- + High pedestrian use
- + Concentrations of key populations
- + High sidewalk width
- + High amount of trees of a high quality
- + Consistent street wall
- + Low vehicle density

Key Blended Focus Areas (based on analysis and research)

16 Avenue S

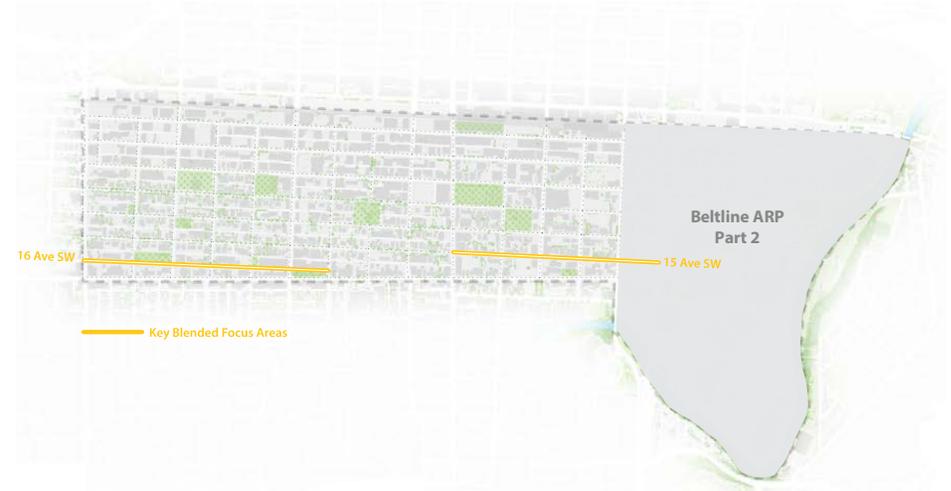
(to confirm through public engagement)

- Explore shared spaces adjacent to parks
- Explore shared spaces or closed streets (temporary or permanent) on 12 Street SW, 10 Street SW and 9 Street SW between 17 Avenue S and 16 Avenue SW
- Improve active transportation and micro-mobility
- Widen sidewalks to facilitate running, strollers, and accessibility
- Pilot stormwater management and low impact development improvements

15 Avenue S

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Study traffic movement and explore ways to reintroduce a boulevard along the north side of the street and a wider furniture space along the south side
- Work to reduce driveways and, on the north side, to focus access off the alley
- Integrate a protected cycle track and coordinate with the mobility project underway (temporary improvements as part of 17 Ave construction; preferred concepts developed)

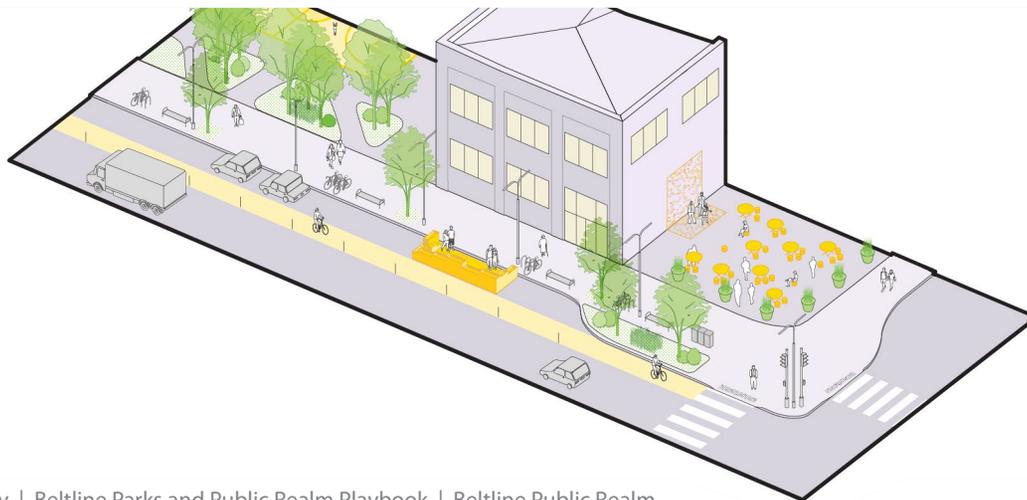


Vision Focus Areas

Vision focus streets present the greatest opportunity to increase greenery, vibrancy, and park amenities in highly populated areas that are lacking defined character and park space.



Vision focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Greenery
- Improved park functionality

Keys to Success

- Greenery
- Recreational and social amenities
- Buffers from traffic (boulevards, on-street parking, wide furniture zones)
- Wide sidewalks
- New park spaces
- Partnerships with nearby institutions, landowners, and businesses

Best Practice



Photo source: PMA Landscape Architects

Dundas West Streetscape, Toronto

The Dundas West Business Improvement Area undertook a comprehensive plan to improve their streetscape and add trees, gardens, vegetation, seating, and bike parking, wherever possible, along the 1.5 km street. Creating parkettes and streetscapes as one project allows the street to be considered and designed comprehensively. Greenery and amenities are distributed strategically creating a cohesive look, function, and experience (Best Practice Report, pages 15 to 16).

Vision Focus Areas Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

-  Prioritize **sheltered seating** and **places to pause**
-  Use **setbacks** (existing and new) to add **seating** and **greenery** (aligned with streetscape plan or guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network)
-  Prioritize **activations** (e.g. seating, gathering spaces, exercise amenities like poster boards/community pantries/little libraries, sidewalk shopping, etc.)
-  Plant as many **trees** as possible and support their health through green infrastructure and sufficient soil volumes (e.g. soil cells)
-  Where trees are not possible, investigate **other forms of planting** (e.g. shrubs, planters, grass, etc.)

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  Direct **publicly accessible private open spaces** to blend soft and hard landscaping, clear sight lines, seating and trees. Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Maintain **curbside buffer** and explore **conversion to parkettes** (temporary or permanent)
-  Widen **sidewalks**, wherever possible
-  Define **street character, functions, and amenities**. Focus on amenities that add **nature, comfort, activation, and feelings of safety**
-  Explore two-way traffic options on 11 Avenue S or one-way couplet with 10 Avenue S instead of 12 Avenue S

Vision Focus Areas

Major 10 Avenue S characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 44 to 48):

- + Park pressure
- + High pedestrian pressure
- + Low transit counts
- + Moderate vehicle density
- + Moderate on-street parking availability

Major Centre Street S characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 36 to 40):

- + Park pressure
- + Concentrations of key populations
- + Inconsistent street wall
- + Few vibrant or active frontages
- + Low pedestrian and cyclist density

Major 8 Street SW characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 32 to 34):

- + Multi-modal pressure
- + Pedestrian pressure
- + High residential density
- + Consistent street wall
- + Active and vibrant frontages

Key Vision Focus Areas (based on analysis and research)

10 Avenue S & 13th Street SW

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Acquire park space and connect them to the public realm
- Explore the closure or shared space conversion of 13 Street SW
- Create a street level presence for High Park
- Prototype parkettes aligned with nightlife uses
- Add flexible seating to facilitate lunch and socializing
- Explore opportunities and amenities to support dog walking
- Align design and reinforce connections to the Sunalta Main Street across 14 Street SW
- Connect with 11 Street SW underpass

Centre Street S

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Connect the public realm improvements to Humpy Hollow Park and any new park space
- Explore partnerships with nearby institutions for programming and operations
- Consider this street as a green refuge between 1 Street SW and 1 Street SE

8 Street SW

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Implement the streetscape master plan
- Connect public realm improvements to Tomkins Park and Barb Scott Park
- Connect with Stephen Avenue, Century Gardens, and Bow River
- Improve active transportation and increase bike racks



Park Focus Areas

Park focus streets let parks grow beyond their boundaries. They maximize the potential of Park-like Public Realm, and prioritize playing, hanging out, and strolling.



Park focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Greenery
- Amenities

Keys to Success

- Recreational and social amenities integrated into boulevard and furniture zones
- Shared spaces and road closures
- Greenery
- Lower traffic volumes
- Cycling Infrastructure

Best Practice



Photo source: [Landzine](#)

Circling the Avenue Hadera

Incorporating play within city streets can be seen on Amir Avenue in Hadera, Israel. The street's wide median was re-imagined into a dynamic space for adults and children to use. Play elements include wooden logs, informal sculptures, creative seating options, and seesaws. Lighting was built into the design to provide illumination and increased safety while additional crosswalks ensure safe connectivity with the adjacent streets (see Open Space Research, page 13).

Park Focus Area Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

-  Prioritize **sheltered seating** and places to pause
-  Add **greenery that supports activity** like gardening, play, exercise, dog walking, etc.
-  Where trees are not possible, investigate **other forms of planting** (e.g. shrubs, planters, grass, etc.)
-  Support **curbside buffer seating, art, and programming** (temporary or permanent)
-  Test **shared spaces** to expand park functionality without inhibiting access and servicing

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  Maintain or reintroduce **boulevards**
-  Widen **sidewalks**
-  Create different **green/recreational loop** options (see the Experiences section of Chapter 5)
-  **Extend curbs into intersections**, where possible, include seating and greenery (planters, gardens, etc.)
-  Protect mature **trees** and add additional trees with sufficient soil volumes (e.g. soil cells)
-  Support safe and comfortable **cycling infrastructure**, where appropriate

Analysis

Park Focus Areas

Major 6 Street SW characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 24 to 28):

- + Park pressure
- + High residential density
- + Narrow street
- + High solar exposure
- + Low pedestrian and cycling density

Key Park Focus Areas (based on analysis and research)

6 Street SW

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Explore a shared space or road closure along Loughheed House/Beaulieu Gardens
- Consider different times for the street closure - times of day, week, or year
- Prototype recreational and social amenities in the furniture zone along this street
- Focus greenery expansion north of 12 Avenue
- Increase trees

Analysis

Potential Park Extensions

Park extension opportunities into the road right-of-way were identified by selecting park edges that have low roadway usage, and thus may be quieter and more hospitable for a park extension (see Public Realm Analysis, page 91).

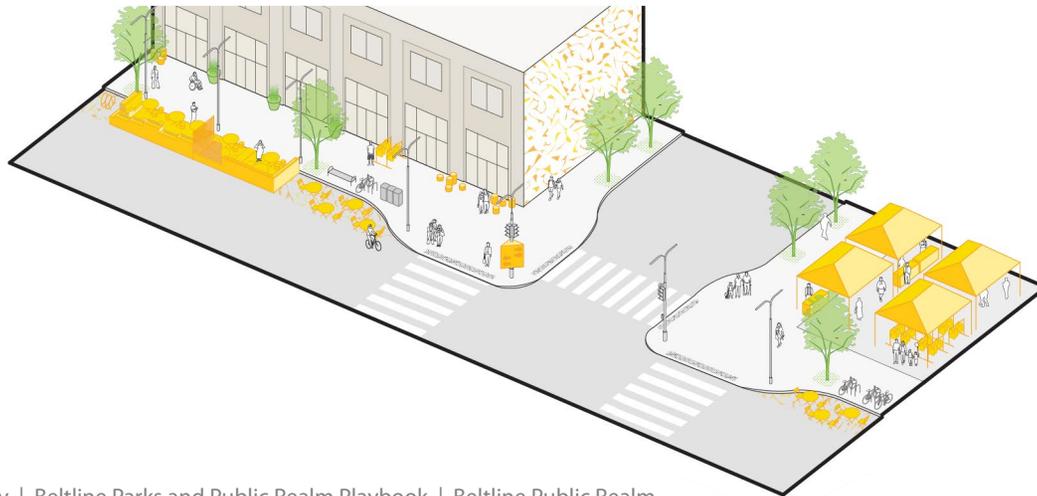


Vibrant Focus Areas

Vibrant focus streets are where social life, culture, and commercial activity spill into the public realm. These streets provide a strong sense of place and offer a variety of activities throughout the year.



Vibrant focus illustrative vignette & isometric



Priority when conflicts occur:

- Daily vibrancy
- Special events

Keys to Success

- Wide sidewalks
- Expansions into on-street parking (patios, parkettes, market stalls)
- Cycling Infrastructure
- Street trees and planters
- Curb extensions and pedestrian/cyclist safety measures



Photo source: [Safe Spaces](#), [Active Spaces](#), [NYC Criminal Justice](#)

Be on Belmont

The Be on Belmont Weekend Walk is coordinated by community-based organizations and local businesses to activate Belmont Avenue and looks to bring together engagement and community service (see Open Space Research, page 9).

Vibrant Focus Area Recommendations

Quick Wins (Prototypes and Pilots)

-  Prioritize **sheltered seating** and **places to pause**
-  Prioritize **public art investment** (e.g. murals, installations, performance spaces, etc.)
-  Prioritize **activations** (e.g. seating, gathering spaces, amenities like poster boards/community pantries/little libraries, sidewalk shopping, etc.)
-  Support **curbside use for patios, markets, and other urban activations** (temporary or permanent)
-  Use **setbacks** (existing and new) to add **seating and greenery** (aligned with streetscape plan, if one exists, and publicly accessible private open space direction)
-  Create and connect **green refuges and breaks** (trees with silva cells, planters, ground cover and/or gardens)

Longer Term Investments (Interim and Permanent)

-  Direct **publicly accessible private open spaces** to blend **soft and hard landscaping, clear sight lines, seating and greenery**. Align with streetscape plan, if one exists, and the guidance provided in Chapter 2: Open Space Network
-  Widen **sidewalks**, whenever possible
-  Define street **character, functions, and amenities**. Focus on amenities that add **nature, comfort, activation, and feelings of safety**
-  **Extend curbs into intersections**, include seating and greenery (planters, gardens, etc.)
-  Support safe and comfortable **cycling infrastructure** where appropriate

Vibrant Focus Area

Major 4 Street SW characteristics (Public Realm Analysis, pages 28 to 32):

- + Multi-modal pressure
- + High pedestrian pressure
- + High residential density
- + Concentrations of key populations
- + High development activity
- + Consistent street wall

Key Vibrant Focus Area (based on analysis and research)

4 Street SW

(to confirm through public engagement)

- Promote accessibility and healthy city design principles around the Sheldon Chumir Health Centre
- Connect to potential future lane improvements
- Improve wayfinding to High Park
- Partner with developers to enhance the public realm during the development process through incentives, like cost-sharing



Lanes

Beltline is fortunate that most of the community's lanes remain intact. They provide a large amount of space to test different approaches to activation. Lane improvements are largely untested in Calgary, so a methodical prototyping approach with robust public engagement is required to create a process, design, and programming structure for lane improvements that works in Calgary.

Through the open space research and best practice background work, character typologies were identified that were contextually appropriate to Beltline: (1) art-ways, (2) green-ways (3) recreation pop-ups (4) and urban activations. The analysis phase selected twelve lane segments based on locations with the highest conditions of success for each of the four typologies. These candidates are intended to enable testing, refinement, and monitoring at a manageable scale, while not precluding replication and expansion to occur in the future.

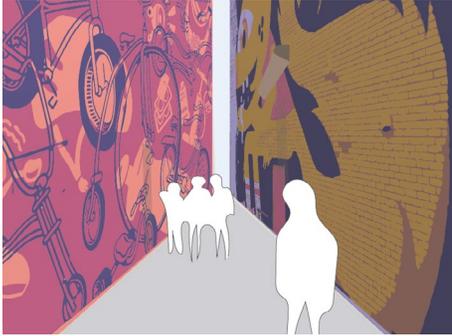
Lane Recommendations

- Engage with adjacent landowners, residents, businesses, and people impacted by City decisions about the improvement of the lane and it's long term stewardship, maintenance, and operations
- Study impacts to access, servicing, and utilities
- Develop a prototype design and monitoring program in collaboration with the adjacent landowners alongside Beltline Neighbourhood Association and, if relevant, Business Improvement Area
- Monitor the success of the prototype and use the findings to develop a longer pilot and eventually a permanent installation, if the lane improvement is successful



Lane Typologies

Art-Ways



Lanes with an existing artistic character and the potential to house additional pieces, performances, programming, or events

Criteria:

- Existing BUMP Murals
- Large blank walls
- Nearby vibrant character areas and commercial areas
- Nearby high pedestrian use

Recommendations:

- Work with existing arts programs, initiatives and organizations (e.g. Beltline Urban Murals Project, etc.)
- Test a range of artistic approaches (e.g. graffiti, light, film, digital, performance, etc.)
- Consider temporary and permanent displays (e.g. treating the lane as an outdoor gallery space)

Green Lanes



Lanes with the potential to benefit from enhanced greenery and improved stormwater management

Criteria:

- Stormwater improvement area identified
- Residential concentration
- Connections between parks

Recommendations:

- Focus green lanes in locations with existing stormwater challenges
- Test permeable paving, stormwater tanks, rain gardens, bioswales, trees and other low impact development techniques
- Identify appropriate stewards to maintain green facilities and establish agreed-upon maintenance practices
- Monitor maintenance requirements, water quality improvement and storage capacity

Recreation Pop-ups



Lanes with the potential to accommodate recreational activities (like pop-up sport courts)

Criteria:

- Nearby streets with high pedestrian and traffic use
- Nearby park connections
- Sight lines through existing parking lots
- High employment use

Recommendations:

- Focus on areas with high employment concentrations and existing night-time use
- Begin with an active use, like basketball, to test the concept
- Consider lighting, bright colours and programming
- Monitor cost, noise, use, maintenance and feedback from adjacent users

Urban Activations



Lanes with the potential to include rear activations for existing businesses to support patio and street culture.

Criteria:

- Nearby high pedestrian use
- Sight lines from the street
- Adjacent vibrant character and commercial areas
- Low-scale buildings and sun access
- Heritage character and/or murals

Recommendations:

- Partner with a business to test a back lane patio and monitor for success
- Explore alternative servicing schedules with delivery providers and monitor any cost or efficiency implications
- Expand successful tests, focusing on one lane at a time
- Integrate signage to direct people to the activated lane
- Identify a steward for maintenance and operations

One Park Investment and Experiences



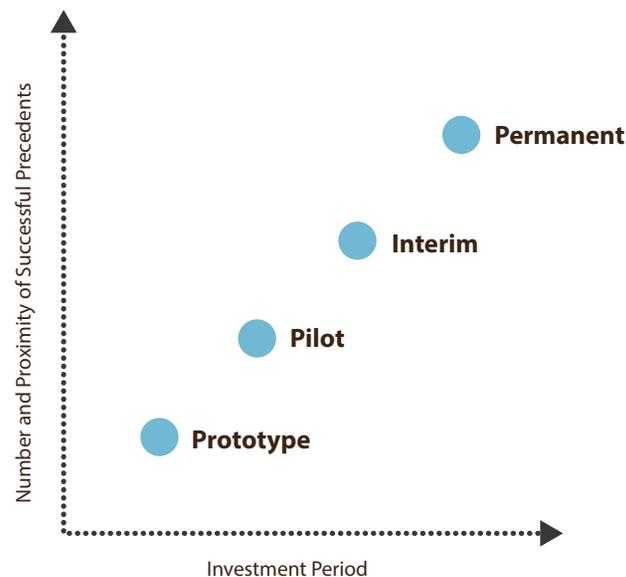
Investment and Implementation Recommendations

Open space investment can be thought of along a spectrum based on the level of confidence in the improvement's success with higher levels of confidence associated with higher cost and more permanent investment. The less demonstrated local success an idea has, the more testing is required. To support a range of improvements and open space ideas, the following investment types have been identified and expanded upon in the following pages:

- **Prototype Investments**
- **Pilot Investments**
- **Interim Investments**
- **Permanent Investment**

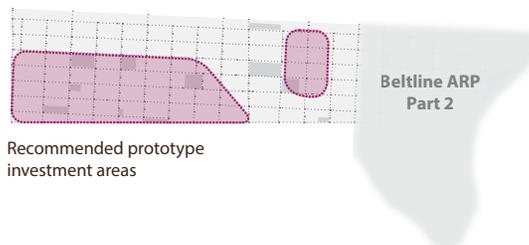
These different investment types will enable The City, community and other people impacted by City decisions the freedom to test new ideas in a lower risk format (prototyping and piloting) while investing in proven ideas and processes, when required (interim and permanent investments). To do this effectively, barriers need to be removed to prototyping and piloting processes. An ongoing monitoring program to understand what works and what does not in the community would also support confidence in investment decisions and continuous learning. It is important to note that investment does not have to go through prototyping, piloting, or interim investment if there is confidence in the result from experience with similar projects.

This section concludes by outlining how the direction in the Playbook enhances the open space network by illustrating the contribution of park and public realm focus areas and key moves to interwoven green, hybrid, and vibrant experience routes.



Prototype Investment Recommendations

Prototyping can provide the opportunity to quickly test new ideas without a precedent in Calgary. These ideas can be implemented quickly with temporary materials in temporary locations. Ideally, multiple iterations (layouts, designs, functions, etc.) will build an understanding of whether these prototypes add value to Beltline’s open space network.



Recommended prototype investment areas

Location: Areas with a concentration of users to test effectiveness (main streets with an active street life and areas with residential density)

Identified ideas to prototype based on research (requires public engagement):

- Lane improvements in partnership with adjacent landowners, businesses and residents
- Temporary road closures

Other ideas to consider prototyping

- Pop-up parklettes (small scale public spaces, typically one or two on-street parking spaces in size)
- Uncommon surfacing materials
- New amenities, not present in Calgary
- Different wayfinding approaches

Implementation

- City or community-initiated
- Partnerships with adjacent Business Improvement Areas, landowners, businesses, residents, and Beltline Neighbourhood Association are beneficial
- Engagement with adjacent residents, businesses, and landowners required
- Education required to communicate what success looks like and that if a prototype is not successful, it may be tested again in another location, with another design and/or a refined function. If the results are definitive, it may not develop further into a pilot
- Monitoring success is required

Sequencing

- Benefits from several iterations and tests
- Successful prototypes should become pilots

Best Practice Example



Market & Octavia, San Francisco, USA

Photo source: [SmartCitiesDive](#)

Prototype Investment Example

The Market and Octavia area in San Francisco has successfully tested lane activations through added greenery and other amenities. This has led to longer term investments altering the lane’s function to connect between and extend existing parks allowing them to contribute to the open space network and overall connectivity (see Open Space Research, pages 26 to 29).

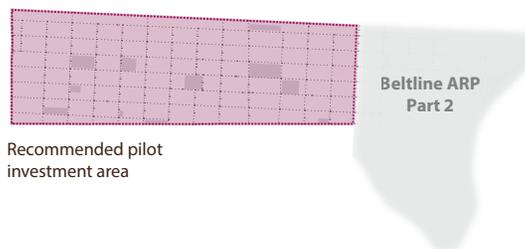
Note

Integrating Prototype, Pilots and Interim investment types within a Permanent investment project

It is possible that a single project may integrate several different investment types. The structure of the improvement may be permanent but the programming of the space may require different levels of testing and investment.

Pilot Investment Recommendations

Pilots have longer testing time frames and higher quality materials. This enables successful pilots to be made permanent with minimal extra investment. Pilots are best for ideas with demonstrated success in other areas in Calgary or extensive successful implementation in similar conditions as Beltline.



Recommended pilot investment area

Beltline ARP Part 2

Location: Beltline-wide

Identified ideas to pilot based on research (requires public engagement):

- Food amenities (e.g. ovens, barbecues, fire pits, edible landscaping, etc.)
- Green or programmed curb extensions
- Setback improvement grants
- Low impact development and green infrastructure improvements in a dense urban area
- Naturalization techniques in urban areas (vegetation and tree planting may require longer pilot time frames to allow time for plants to establish themselves)

Other ideas to consider piloting:

- Water reuse systems
- Temporary plazas

Implementation:

- City or community-initiated
- Targeted engagement at implementation
- User feedback is needed to gauge success
- Partnerships with adjacent Business Improvement Areas, landowners, businesses, residents and Beltline Neighbourhood Association are beneficial
- Education is required to clarify what success looks like
- Must be monitored for success
- Maintenance and oversight partnerships
- Must be in place for at least two years
- Downtown Strategy Revitalization Program coordination required
- If a pilot is not successful, it should not be made permanent
- If successful, may require additional investment to make permanent

Sequencing:

- Does not always grow from a prototype, an idea with success in Calgary or a similar city can proceed directly to a pilot
- If successful, make permanent

Best Practice Example



Bloorcourt Parkettes, Toronto, Canada

Photo source: [Forest and Field Landscape Architecture Inc.](#)

Pilot Investment Example

Toronto's Bloorcourt parkettes include setback improvements with fresh paving, greenery, seating, and art. These amenities are enhanced by a local design inspiration - a nearby fruit market, and provide a bright, functional, and interesting element to the streetscape. This program resulted in three revamped parkettes along the street (Best Practice Report, pages 15 to 16).

Interim Investment Recommendations

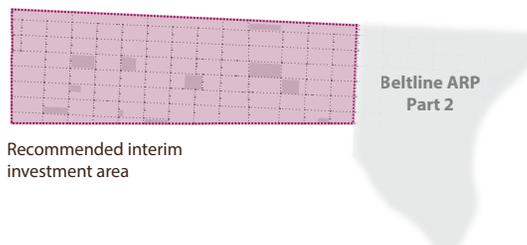
Beltline has several underused spaces that, despite anticipated future development, can contribute to the open space network on an interim basis. This includes surface parking lots and vacant sites. The temporary introduction of greenery and amenities in these locations can help reduce the pressures on existing open spaces. Additionally, some sports and leisure pursuits may be trendy or have an unknown long-term demand. It may be worthwhile to locate these amenities in the public realm or underused sites on an interim basis.

Identified ideas for interim use based on research (requires public engagement):

- Temporary sports fields or courts in a surface parking lot
- Boulevard and furniture zone programming - gardens, play structures, social spaces, etc.
- Shared spaces

Other ideas to consider for interim investment:

- Emerging sports and recreational amenities within the public realm or underused site



Location: Beltline-wide but not in parks to protect the limited available flexible park space.

Implementation:

- City or community-initiated
- Public engagement required
- Education required to clarify that these improvements are not permanent
- Partnerships with landowners required
- The site must be clearly signed explaining its temporary nature
- Must be monitored for success
- Must be able to be removed easily
- Must be in place for at least five years

Sequencing:

- Does not require prototyping or piloting first
- Does not need to become permanent, this investment category is for uses known from the beginning to be temporary

Best Practice Example



A'Beckett Urban Square, Melbourne, Australia

Photo source: [Landzine](#)

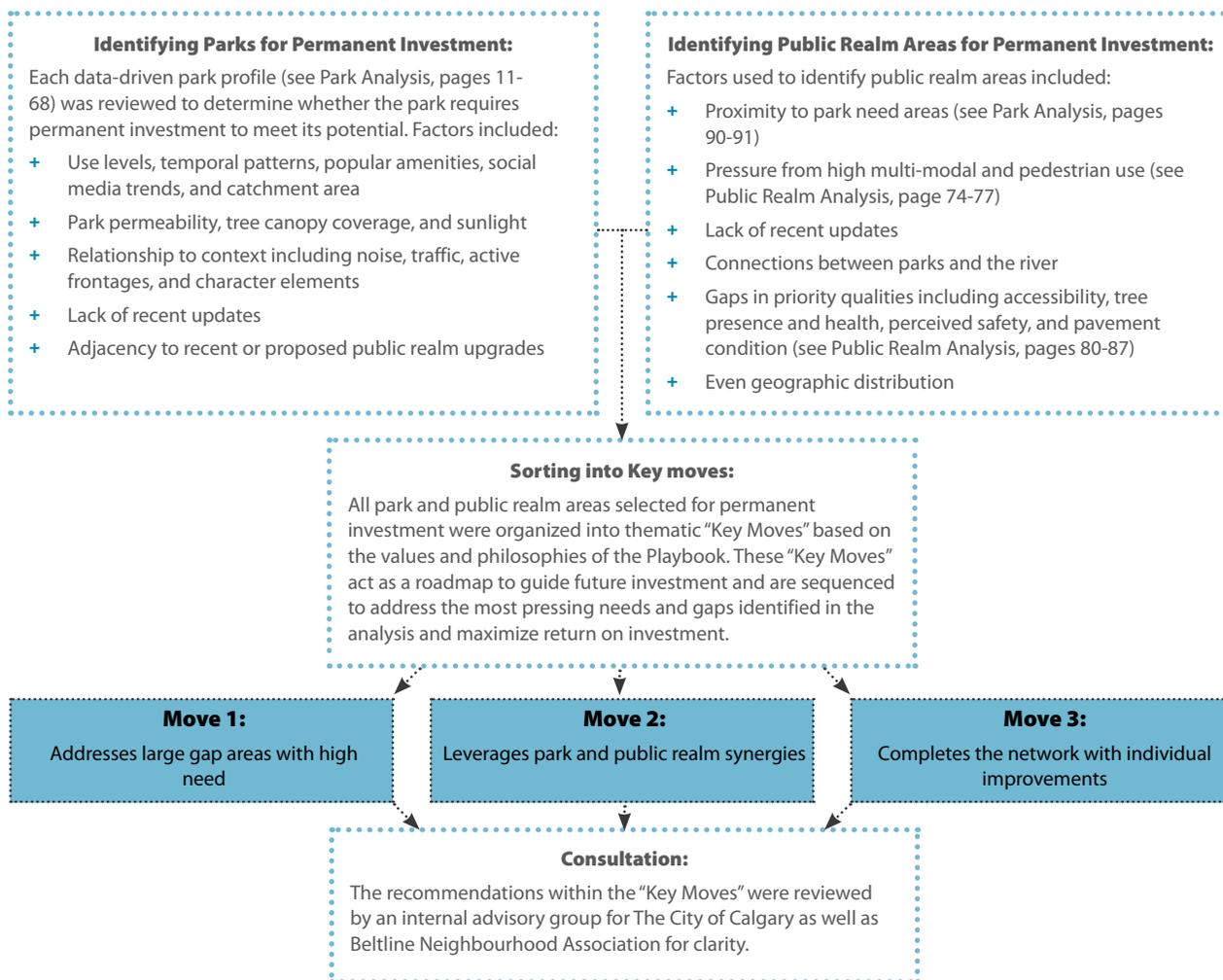
Interim Investment Example

A'Beckett Urban Square is a temporary sports field in inner city Melbourne, Australia. This sports field is located on an underused surface parking lot and will remain there until the site is redeveloped. Though temporary, the space has become a well-used destination that contributes colour and energy to the area (see Open Space Research, pages 4 to 5).

Permanent Investment Recommendations

The following process was used to identify streets and public realm areas for permanent investment and to sort them into a sequence of key moves:

Note: Key moves reflect a moment in time using the data and research available during the Playbook's development in 2022. They may change in response to public engagement, network changes, and future design processes.



Implementation:

- City-initiated
- Participatory planning with Business Improvement Areas, residents, businesses, Beltline Neighbourhood Association and other people impacted by City decisions
- Targeted outreach to historically underrepresented groups
- Formalized programming and/or maintenance and operations partnerships, if appropriate
- Concurrent utility, transportation and private improvements, if possible

Sequencing:

- Does not require prototyping or piloting before permanent investment if the idea is a result of a robust planning, design, and engagement process applying best practices and lessons learned from previous park redevelopments and public realm redesigns.



Note

Deviating from the Move Sequence: Responsive Investment

The following opportunities may arise that justify expediting a Move 2 or 3 improvement in the near term:

1. Development of adjacent sites
2. Utility upgrades or infrastructure life-cycling
3. Transportation improvements
4. Existing approved streetscape or park plan

To be ready to take advantage of these opportunities, close collaboration with other City departments and the development community is required to ensure there is time to design, engage with the public and tender any improvements concurrently, if possible.



Best Practice Example

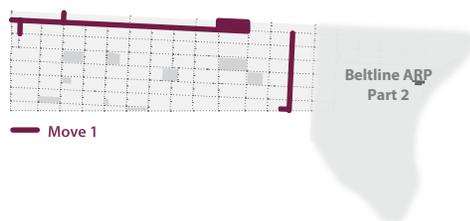


Flatiron Public Plazas, New York, USA

Photo source: Flatiron 23rd Street Partnership

Permanent Investment Example

In conjunction with other public realm improvements, four flatiron plazas were identified in a streetscape master plan. Initiatives included pedestrian space expansion, traffic reconfigurations, and plaza activations to ensure cohesiveness and guide the prioritization of improvements. Amenities included greenery, furniture, umbrellas, crosswalks, and bike lanes (see Best Practice Report, pages 8 to 9).

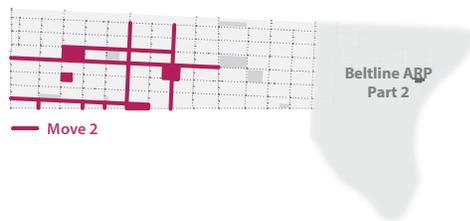


Move 1: Address Large Gap Areas

This move contains potential investments that address the largest areas of need representing major gaps in the green and vibrant networks and areas where the public, especially key populations, are the most underserved by park space. This move relies heavily on the “Park-like Public Realm” philosophy to relieve park pressure and bridge network gaps. Parks and public realm focus areas are aggregated together in the moves identified.

The Playbook’s analysis and research arrived at these moves that need to be confirmed through public engagement before investment. The design process and open space network evolution may result in changes.

- *10 Avenue S // High Park // 13 Street SW // 11 Street SW Underpass*
 - High Park permanent investment and streetscape improvement
 - 13 Street investigation (shared space or closure possibility)
 - Greenery investment
 - Expanded public realm
 - Temporary sports field or court in a parking lot (partnership possibility)
- Connection with Main Street improvements along 10 Avenue in Sunalta
- 11 Street SW underpass and streetscape connection
- Cycling infrastructure improvements to connect major destinations along the street
- *Humpy Hollow Park // Centre Street S*
 - Humpy Hollow Park redevelopment
 - Centre Street connection to Humpy Hollow
 - Greenery investment
 - Connection to 13 Avenue Greenway

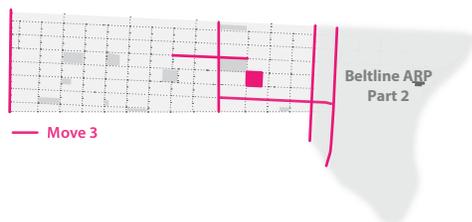


Move 2: Leverage Park and Public Realm Synergies

This move captures groups of potentially connected park and public realm investments, presenting opportunities to improve both in tandem to amplify impact. This move is based on the important relationship between parks and the public realm in building an open space network, and in creating successful parks with active edges.

The Playbook’s analysis and research arrived at these moves that need to be confirmed through public engagement before investment. The design process and open space network evolution may result in changes.

- *Lougheed House // Beaulieu Gardens // 6 Street SW*
 - Potential shared space or street closure east of park
 - Partnership with Lougheed House and the Province
 - 13 Avenue S Greenway improvements between 4 and 8 Street SW
- *Connaught School // 12 Avenue S (11 Street SW to 8 Street SW) // 13 Avenue S (8 Street SW to 14 Street SW)*
 - Partner with Calgary Board of Education
 - Learn from Sustainability Calgary pilot (10 Street SW)
- *Tomkins Park // 16 Avenue S // 8 Street SW // 7 Street SW*
 - Shared space north of Tomkins Park
 - 8 and 7 Street SW design alignment
- 8 Street SW Streetscape Master Plan implementation
- Improved connection from 17 Avenue and Tomkins Park to Stephen Avenue and the Bow River
- Potential shared spaces or closures between 17 and 16 Avenue S at 12, 10 or 9 Street SW
- Need a detailed design exercise that looks at waste management, pedestrian, parking, and vehicle use
- Park connection opportunity (Lois Szabo Commons, Thomson Family Park)
- *Connaught Park Redevelopment // tie into recent 11 Street Improvements*
 - 11 Street SW tie-in to recent mobility improvements
 - Opportunity to improve the highly used urban dog park



Move 3: Complete the Network with Individual Improvements

This move captures the remaining key permanent investments, which emphasize improving the quality of individual parks and public realm spaces. These locations were identified through the analysis as missing attributes or holding opportunities to more cohesively contribute to Beltline open space network.

The Playbook's analysis and research arrived at these moves that need to be confirmed through public engagement before investment. The design process and open space network evolution may result in changes.

- *15 Avenue S*
 - Centre Street connection
 - Active mobility connections
- *Haultain Park Redevelopment*
 - Partnership possibility with the Parks Foundation on their front garden
 - Protect the open lawn
- *14 Street SW*
 - Main Street program alignment
 - Pedestrian improvements required
- *12 Avenue S*
 - 8 Street SW to 2 Street SW
 - Central Memorial Park connection to improve food truck parking and drop off space
 - Potential to create a consistent green experience
- *4 Street SW*
 - Continuation with the 4 Street SW Main Street, south of 17 Avenue S
- *Macleod Trail // 1 Street SE*
 - Align with the realization of Rivers District streetscape design direction led by CMLC and the Calgary Stampede

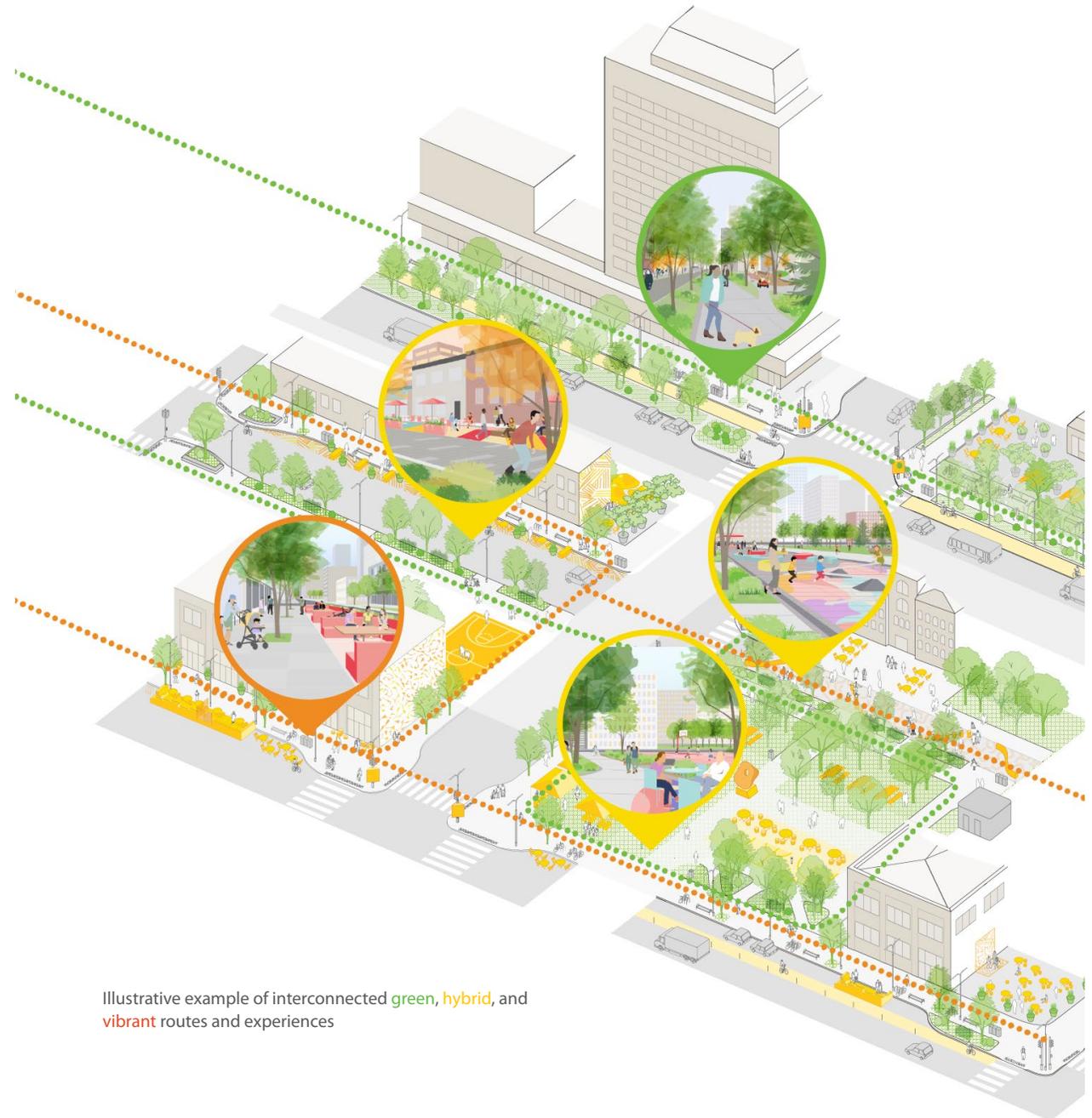
Conclusion: Complete Experiences

To see how the open space network, park and public realm improvements come together as One Park, it is helpful to consolidate improvements under experiences. These three categories of experiences help further define the contribution that each park and public realm focus area can offer.

- **Green experiences:** activities that depend on quiet and green routes
- **Hybrid experiences:** socially-focused experiences that blend active and natural spaces with more formalized facilities
- **Vibrant experiences:** main street and cultural experiences with an active street life

Given the bustle and energy of the community, the vibrant street experiences offered by several streets within Beltline can dominate the overall neighbourhood character, and it is for this reason, as well as the under supply of greenery, that quiet and relaxing environments are prioritized alongside investment in the community's main streets.

In addition to easy access to restorative natural elements, residents and workers also require the opportunity to participate in recreational, leisure, and social experiences, emphasizing the role of hybrid spaces that exist between green and vibrant.



Illustrative example of interconnected green, hybrid, and vibrant routes and experiences

Defining Experience Routes

Identifying experiences requires an understanding about typical open space use to pinpoint needs and the conditions required to meet those needs. Though there are many evolving activities within open spaces, from mainstream to niche, specific “indicator” activities can help identify needs that are likely shared across a range of activities.

The Open Space Research identified seven “indicator” activities: exercising (running and leisure walking), dog walking, family outings, socializing, lunching, site-seeing and perusing (activities like window shopping, people-watching, etc.). The qualities that support those experiences were then cross referenced with the parks and public realm analysis results to identify routes, specifically:

- **Anchors:** amenities tailored to a specific use (e.g. playgrounds for family outings) were a starting point
- **Route conditions:** green and vibrancy scores, as well as pedestrian, cycling, and auto activity data from multiple sources were used to inform key networks
- **Special attractions:** other features that round out the experience were also integrated (e.g. historic walking tours for site-seeing, libraries for family friendly, etc.)

Primary routes are focused on the public realm focus areas, existing features, and emerging characteristics that best support the experiences profiled. The primary routes also align with the “Key Moves”, recently completed public realm improvement areas, and areas with a strong existing green or vibrant character.

Secondary routes highlight connections to these primary routes. These secondary routes also need to integrate features to support the experiences highlighted but can accommodate them to a lesser degree.

Note: Each park and public realm component may support several experiences. In addition, experiences may shift and evolve as the open space network develops.

Method for Defining a Complete Network of Experiences

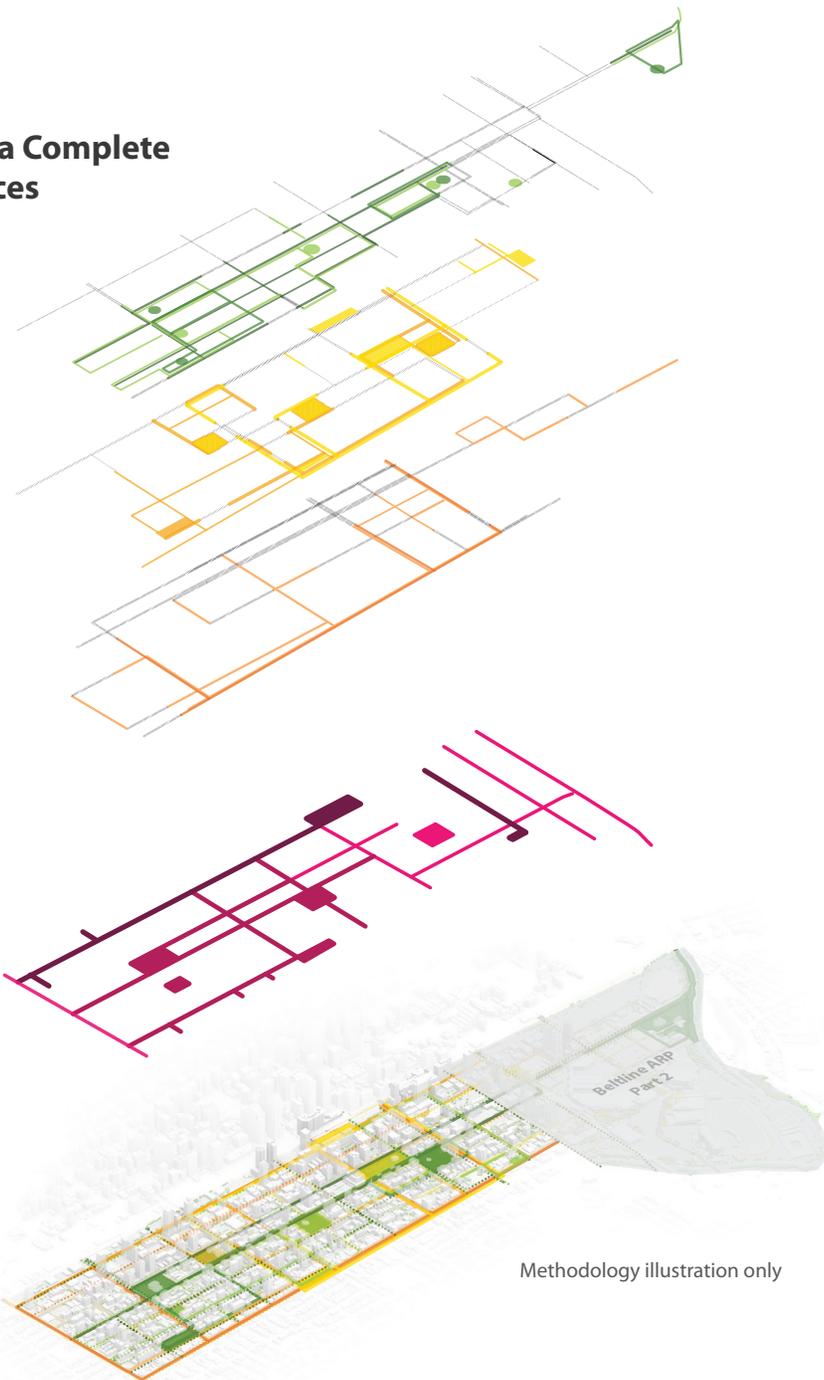
Incomplete Green, Hybrid, and Vibrant Experience Routes



Key Moves



Complete Network of Experiences



Methodology illustration only

Green Experiences

Access to quiet and lush green infrastructure is important to human health and well-being, and in dense urban communities like Beltline, the tree canopy and softscapes are less present in daily life. For this reason, it is important to define and extend greenery throughout parks and the public realm by highlighting the following indicator activities:

- **Exercise:** Providing space for people to exercise away from the crowds will support a healthy community. These exercise routes also provide the most logical and direct connections to the rivers and, as a result, the nearest natural experience for people in Beltline.
- **Family outing:** Though there are proportionally fewer kids in Beltline than other communities, playgrounds are popular and considering family needs will create a more inclusive community.
- **Dog walking:** Since dogs need to go out several times a day, considering their spatial needs is important to avoid excessive wear on public infrastructure and conflicts between user groups.



Key Green Experience Components

(note that focus areas may evolve and change overtime based on public engagement and design processes)

Amenity Focus Areas:

- **Urban Life:** drinking water, trees and greenery, emergency measures, seating and tables, dog infrastructure, art
- **Key Functions:** playgrounds, play features, exercise equipment, paths, sports courts and fields, washrooms, water features
- **Attractions:** historic sites, interpretive signs and materials, wayfinding experiences, green attractions

Park Focus Areas:

Interlude, Neighbourhood and Regional focus areas, particularly green and hybrid spaces, all play a role in green experiences. Specific parks components to support green experiences include:

- Off-leash areas
- Open lawns
- River parks
- All season spaces
- Water features

Public Realm Focus Areas:

- Largely green, park and blended focus areas with opportunities to connect to vibrant focus areas to grab drinks, snacks and enjoy dog-friendly patios

Key public realm features that support green experiences include:

- Treed boulevards and other buffers from traffic
- Play and recreational amenities in the public realm
- Bioswales, native grasses and shrubs

Alignment with Key Moves

(to be confirmed through public engagement)

Move 1 Areas:

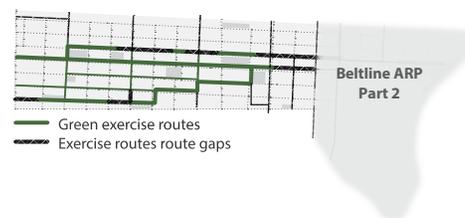
- **10 Avenue S // High Park // 13 Street SW // 11 Street SW Underpass:** exercise and dog
- **Humpy Hollow Park // Centre Street S:** exercise, family, and dog

Move 2 Areas:

- **Connaught School // 12 Avenue S // 13 Avenue S:** exercise, family, and dog
- **Tomkins Park // 16 Avenue S // 8 Street SW // 7 Street SW:** exercise, family, and dog
- **Lougheed House // Beaulieu Gardens // 6 Street SW:** family and dog
- **Connaught Park Redevelopment // tie into recent 11 Street Improvements:** exercise, family, and dog

Move 3 Areas:

- **Haultain Park Redevelopment:** exercise, family, and dog
- **12 Avenue S:** exercise
- **4 Street SW:** exercise, family, and dog
- **Macleod Trail/1 Street SE:** exercise
- **15 Avenue S:** dog



Analysis

Guiding Features

The following qualities, identified in the Parks Analysis and Public Realm Analysis, were used to map each Green Experience Route:

All Green Experiences:

- + High green scores incorporating presence of tree canopy, planting beds, lawns, and other softscapes (see Public Realm Analysis, page 9)
- + Low auto and pedestrian use from opt-in anonymized cell phone data (see Public Realm Analysis, page 74-77)
- + River connections and connections to streets with high vibrancy scores (see Public Realm Analysis, page 9)

Exercise:

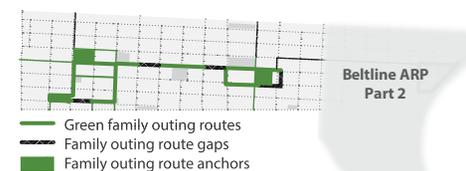
- + Popular run, walk and hike street segments from Strava

Family outing:

- + Playgrounds
- + High sidewalk width (see Public Realm Analysis, page 82)
- + Parks with water features and open fields
- + Parks with libraries and historic features

Dog walking:

- + Official and unofficial dog parks



Hybrid Experiences

Hybrid experiences blend together components of vibrant and green experiences. They are also opportunities to increase the recreation facilities and amenities in Beltline. These hybrid spaces provide opportunities to relax with friends and family or participate in a sport or activity that brings people together.

- **Socializing:** These experiences are anchored in parks that have a lawn or recreational facility to accommodate group activities. They link up with the main streets to connect to private gathering spaces.
- **Lunch break:** These areas are similar to social routes in that they connect to parks where people have a variety of options to eat, alone or as part of a group. Connections to main streets facilitate take-out or coffee stops on the way to and from work. The main difference is that the lunch routes are anchored in the areas with the largest concentration of jobs.

In the future there is an opportunity to view Beltline through other vibrancy lenses, like:

- **Winter routes:** Connecting people with local outdoor winter activities and experiences with public and private places to warm up can help the designers, community members, and planners facilitate all-season use.



Key Hybrid Experience Components

(note that focus areas may evolve and change overtime based on public engagement and design processes)

Amenity Focus Areas:

- **Urban Life:** drinking water, trees and greenery, variety of seating and tables, waste bins
- **Key Functions:** gathering spaces (to facilitate talks, meetings, outdoor classrooms, social gatherings like craft circles, etc.), sports courts and games, water features, washrooms
- **Attractions:** larger event and gathering spaces

Park Focus Areas:

Interlude, Neighbourhood and Regional focus areas can all play a role in these experiences. Specific park components to support hybrid experiences include:

- Lawns
- Plazas
- Variety of seating and table options
- Range of environments (busy/quiet, sunny/shady, etc.)

Public Realm Focus Areas:

- All focus areas (green, corridor, blended, vision, park, and vibrant)

Key route features that support hybrid activities include:

- Seating
- Patios
- Curb extensions
- Parklettes
- Wayfinding

Alignment with Key Move

(to be confirmed through public engagement)

Move 1 Areas:

- **10 Avenue S // High Park // 13 Street SW // 11 Street SW**
Underpass: socializing and lunching

Move 2 Areas:

- **Connaught School // 12 Avenue S // 13 Avenue S:** socializing and lunching
- **Tomkins Park // 16 Avenue S // 8 Street SW // 7 Street SW:** socializing and lunching
- **Lougheed House // Beaulieu Gardens // 6 Street SW:** lunching

Move 3 Areas:

- **Haultain Park Redevelopment:** socializing and lunching
- **12 Avenue S:** socializing
- **4 Street SW:** socializing and lunching
- **Macleod Trail/1 Street SE:** socializing

Analysis

Guiding Features

The following qualities identified in the Parks Analysis and Public Realm Analysis were used to map each Hybrid Experience Route:

All Hybrid Experiences:

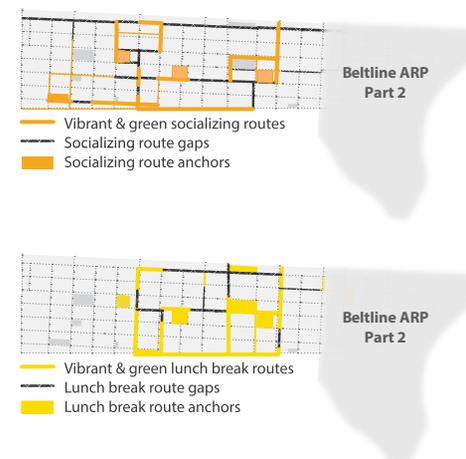
- + Streets with both moderate to high green scores (tree canopy, planting beds, lawns, and other softscapes) as well as vibrancy scores (commercial activity, heritage assets, public art, and wayfinding) (see Public Realm Analysis, page 9)

Socializing:

- + Parks with open fields and picnic infrastructure

Lunch breaks:

- + Areas with high employment density
- + Parks with seating, open fields and picnic infrastructure



Vibrant Experiences

Beltline is known for its vibrant street life and it is important to enhance and build upon this community strength. Vibrant experiences revolve around main streets and concentrations of art, culture, and history. Parks in Beltline often connect to local history (like Central Memorial Park or Lougheed House/Beaulieu Gardens) or to art (like the Chinook Arch in Barb Scott Park and the murals in High Park). Parks also provide spaces to come together, celebrate, and enjoy performances. Main Streets complement these experiences by offering street life and energy. The indicator routes used to define the vibrant experiences are framed around these roles. Specifically:

- **Perusing:** These routes are anchored along the main streets and routed through areas with higher vibrant characteristics. In the future, 10 Avenue S can embrace the vibrancy emerging through nightlife uses and new development.
- **Site-seeing:** A lot of work has been completed by Calgary Historian Harry Saunders and, more recently, The Calgary Atlas Project, to identify and celebrate historic sites, cultural landscapes and stories throughout Beltline. Intersecting site-seeing routes are emerging through the pairing of public art assets and Beltline Urban Mural Project.

In the future there is an opportunity to view Beltline through other vibrancy lenses, like:

- **Selfie/social media concentrations:** People post pictures and content about what they value and social networks provide insight into what is capturing people's attention within Beltline's public realm.



Key Vibrant Experience Components

(note that focus areas may evolve and change overtime based on public engagement and design processes)

Amenity Focus Areas:

- **Urban Life:** drinking water, trees and greenery, variety of seating and tables, waste bins, art
- **Key Functions:** gathering spaces, plazas, washrooms
- **Attractors:** performance spaces (gazebos, stages, etc.), interpretation panels

Park Focus Areas:

Interlude, Neighbourhood and Regional focus areas all play a role in vibrant experiences. Specific parks components to support these experiences include:

- Gathering opportunities and plazas
- Festival and event opportunities
- Art and heritage sites (particularly lesser known stories of historically under-represented groups)
- Gardens and unique design and amenity elements

Public Realm Focus Areas:

- Vision and vibrant focus areas with connections to historic sites and art along the green, corridor, blended, and park focus areas

Key route features that support vibrant activities:

- Interpretive elements (temporary and permanent)
- Public art
- Wayfinding
- Parklettes
- Display space and patios

Alignment with Key Moves

(to be confirmed through public engagement)

Move 1 Areas:

- **10 Avenue S // High Park // 13 Street SW // 11 Street SW Underpass:** perusing and site-seeing
- **Humpy Hollow Park // Centre Street S:** site-seeing

Move 2 Areas:

- **Connaught School // 12 Avenue S // 13 Avenue S:** site-seeing
- **Tomkins Park // 16 Avenue S // 8 Street SW // 7 Street SW:** perusing and site-seeing
- **Lougheed House // Beaulieu Gardens // 6 Street SW:** site-seeing
- **Connaught Park Redevelopment // tie into recent 11 Street Improvements:** perusing and site-seeing

Move 3 Areas:

- **Haultain Park Redevelopment:** site-seeing
- **12 Avenue S:** perusing
- **4 Street SW:** perusing and site-seeing
- **14 Street SW:** perusing and site-seeing

Analysis

Guiding Features

The following qualities identified in the Parks Analysis and Public Realm Analysis were used to map each Vibrant Experience Route:

All Vibrant Experiences:

- + Streets with high vibrancy scores (commercial activity, heritage assets, public art, and wayfinding) (see Public Realm Analysis, page 9)

Perusing:

- + Commercially dense areas
- + High density of pedestrians on sidewalks

Site-seeing:

- + Presence of public art and BUMP murals
- + Historic resources
- + Historic walking tour routes (Harry Saunders and Calgary Atlas Project)

