

# Background and Planning Evaluation

## Background and Community Context

The South Shaganappi Communities Local Area Plan (Plan) comprises nine inner-city and established communities: Banff Trail, Montgomery, Parkdale, Point McKay, St. Andrews Heights, University District, University Heights, University of Calgary, and Varsity.

Bounded by Crowchild Trail NW, Morley Trail NW, and West Confederation Park to the north; 19 Street NW, 18 Street NW, Crowchild Trail NW, and 28 Street NW to the east; the Bow River to the south; and the Bow River, Dale Hodges Park, and Silver Springs Gate NW to the west, these communities are collectively known as the South Shaganappi Communities. The South Shaganappi Communities share common amenities including major institutions such as the University of Calgary, Foothills Medical Centre, and Alberta Children's Hospital, as well as public and transit infrastructure including four Red Line LRT stations, natural areas, regional and neighbourhood parks and schools.

There is an extensive history within the South Shaganappi Communities, with Indigenous foundations and eventually permanent settlement in the late 1800s. These communities were annexed into the city of Calgary by 1910, developing into primarily residential areas starting in the 1950s and most communities were developed by the 1980s.

The nine individual communities that comprise the South Shaganappi Communities have all experienced population decline since their peak population, ranging from a loss of 1.4% to 27.7% since their peak. Population declines have impacted the housing stock and the viability of local amenities and businesses in these communities. Additionally, major institutions including the University of Calgary, Foothills Medical Centre, and Alberta Children's Hospital employ and attracts tens of thousands of visitors, workers, and students.

By setting out a comprehensive vision and policies for growth and change, the South Shaganappi Communities Local Area Plan will stabilize and reverse the declines in population in these communities while providing more certainty and direction for population growth and change for residents, developers, Administration and City Council.

The Plan envisions accommodating more diverse housing types and choices, as well as commercial opportunities which will allow more Calgarians to choose where to live and operate businesses in the South Shaganappi Communities. By enabling additional growth and providing a variety of housing options around transit station areas, Main Streets, Activity Centres, and the Primary Transit Network, including single-detached, semi-detached, row homes, townhomes, and multi-residential people of all ages can find suitable accommodations that fit their lifestyle and needs.

Location Maps



- Legend**
- Community Boundary
  - Plan Area Boundary

## Planning Evaluation

The Plan implements the strategic goals and objectives of The City’s municipal development plan at the local level. The Plan’s future growth concept aligns with direction from the municipal development plan by supporting intensification around Main Streets, Activity Centres, and in transit station areas. The Plan also supports continued incremental evolution and change within primarily residential areas including the potential for increased development intensities along community corridors and the Primary Transit Network.

An analysis of future population projections shows that the Plan will enable an average of 192 people and jobs per hectare, exceeding minimum intensity thresholds outlined in The City’s municipal development plan.

## Policy Areas

Figure 1: Community Characteristics



**Map 1: Urban Form**



**Legend**

**Urban Form**

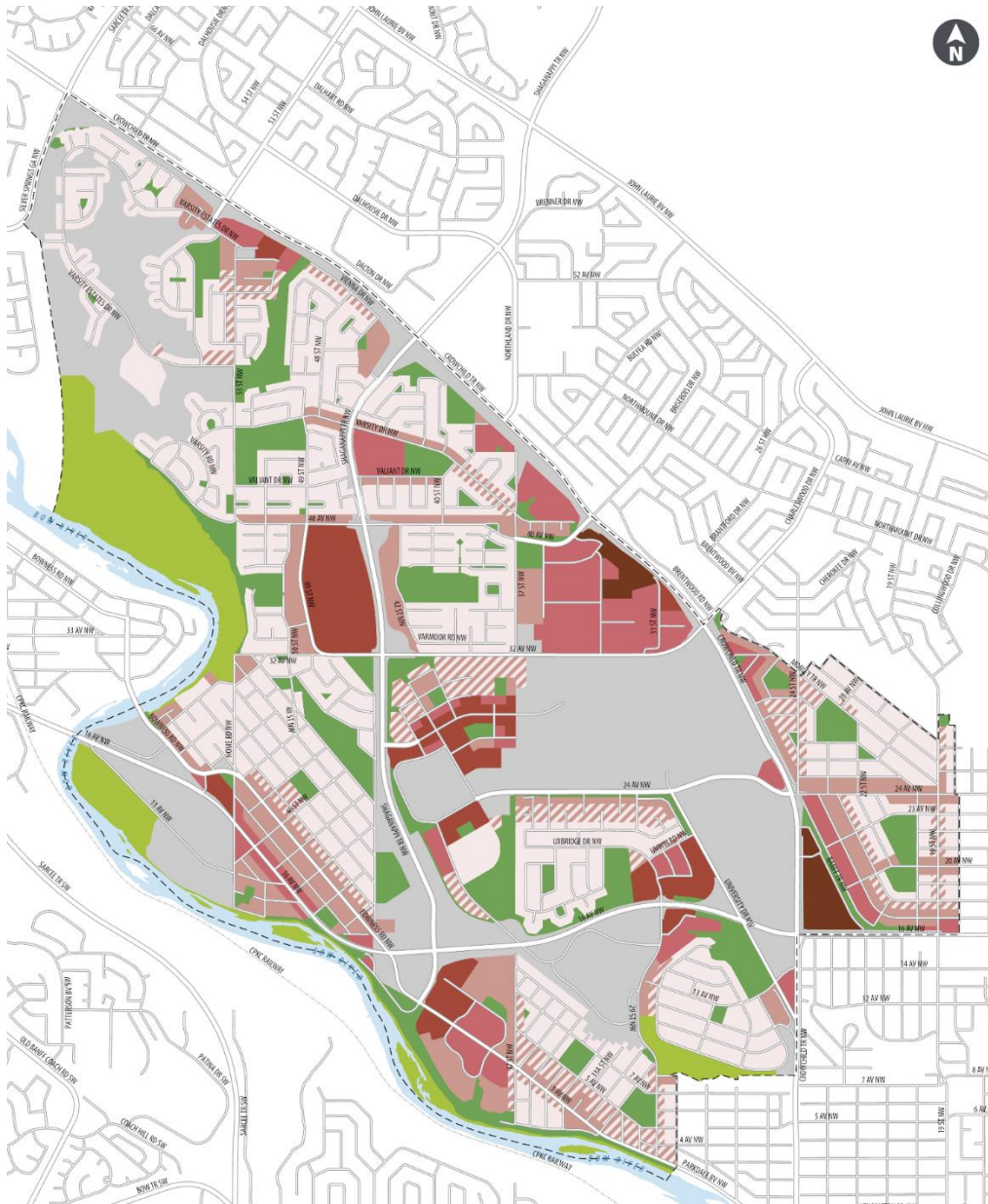
- Neighbourhood Commercial
- Neighbourhood Flex
- Neighbourhood Connector
- Neighbourhood Local
- Commercial Centre
- Commercial Corridor
- Natural Areas
- Parks and Open Space

- City Civic and Recreation
- Private Institutional and Recreation
- Regional Campus
- No Urban Form Category

**Additional Policy Guidance**

- Comprehensive Planning Site
- Active Frontage
- Plan Area Boundary

**Map 2: Building Scale**



**Legend**

 Limited (up to 3 Storeys)	 Mid (up to 12 Storeys)	 No Scale Modifier
 Low - Modified (up to 4 Storeys)	 High (up to 26 Storeys)	 Natural Areas
 Low (up to 6 Storeys)	 Highest (over 26 Storeys)	 Parks and Open Space
		 Plan Area Boundary

## Main Streets

The Plan identifies 16 Avenue NW, between 19 Street NW and 21 Street NW, as an Urban Main Street. Two Neighbourhood Main Streets are also identified within the Plan area including 16 Avenue NW, between 43 Street NW and 49 Street NW, and Bowness Road NW, between 43 Street NW and 49 Street NW. The Plan includes policies that are intended to encourage the creation of high-quality buildings on Main Streets that enhance the pedestrian experience and public space.

Specifically, the 16 Avenue NW Urban Main Street is envisioned to continue to facilitate the efficient movement of pedestrians, cyclists, transit, vehicles, and goods while accommodating a limited range of vehicle-oriented commercial uses with improved street-orientation. Urban form categories of Neighborhood Commercial and Neighbourhood Flex have been applied along this Main Street to reflect existing businesses and zoning, while allowing for flexibility in future uses.

The Plan envisions the 16 Avenue NW Neighbourhood Main Street to accommodate mixed-use development and continue to offer a range of commercial uses, including retail and restaurants. A mixture of urban form categories including Neighbourhood Commercial and Neighbourhood Flex are applied along this street to provide flexibility for future uses at-grade. The Main Street is primarily Mid Scale (up to 12 storeys) with High Scale (up to 26 storeys) applied to the gateway area between 49 Street NW and Home Road NW. Building scale transitions away from the Main Street towards the primarily residential area of the community, from Mid Scale (up to 12 storeys) to Low Scale (up to 6 storeys).

Bowness Road NW is envisioned to continue to be a pedestrian friendly mixed-use area, accommodating additional residential and commercial growth including locally focused uses, such as restaurants, corner stores, and cafes. The Neighbourhood Flex urban form category is primarily applied along this Main Street, with Neighbourhood Commercial and Active Frontage focused between 45 Street NW and 47 Street NW to enhance commercial activity and public space. Additionally, Neighbourhood Commercial is applied along 46 Street NW to connect the two Neighbourhood Main Streets together. Building scale transitions away from the Main Street towards the primarily residential area of the community, from Low Scale (up to 6 storeys) to Low-Modified Scale (up to 4 storeys).

## Transit Station Areas

There are a total of four Red Line LRT transit station areas within the Plan area: Banff Trail Station, University Station, Brentwood Station, and Dalhousie Station. There are three MAX Orange BRT transit station areas within the Plan area: Alberta Children's Hospital, Foothills Medical Centres, and 31 Street NW. Additionally, a portion of the North Hill BRT transit station area falls within the Plan boundary, to capture this, a portion of the transit station area for this BRT station is included in the Plan.

The Plan applies a variety of urban form categories and building scales within transit station areas, taking a contextual and balanced approach through considering the existing context of the area. The highest building scales are concentrated in the core zones of the transit station

areas with a focus on areas that are under-utilized or undeveloped. Transition in building scales is applied further away from the transit stations through applying low- to mid-scales that consider the context of existing built forms and streetscape. Transit station area policies also allow development to exceed (with a limited number of storeys) the building scale modifiers while meeting the overall intent of the building scale. Neighbourhood Commercial or Neighbourhood Flex urban form categories are applied in strategic locations within the transit station areas to provide flexibility on mixed-use development in proximity to the transit stations. Additionally, the Plan provides policies for transit station areas that are intended to improve mobility connections both to the LRT and BRT stations and surrounding communities. Policies also support high-quality public space surrounding the stations to encourage social gathering, cultural, and recreational activities.

Notably, the Highest Scale (27 storeys or more) is applied to the Motel Village area located in the Banff Trail Station Area, west of the LRT station. This area hosts a concentration of hotels and commercial uses and is identified to support the highest scales and mixture of uses within the transit station area. The Plan provides policies for Motel Village that consider advancing the conceptual mobility network. Additionally, the Highest Scale (27 storeys or more) is applied to the existing Park and Ride lot located in the Brentwood Station Area. The majority of the Brentwood Station Area is comprised of the University Innovation Quarter, envisioned to provide increased mixed-use development, employment, and service options while continuing to provide residents with improved mobility choices.

Moderate- to large-scale growth is applied within the University Station Area, with higher scales concentrated around the LRT station and lower scales transitioning away from the LRT station. A variety of building scales are applied throughout this transit station area, ranging from Limited Scale (up to 3 storeys) to High Scale (up to 26 storeys). Various urban form categories are also applied throughout the transit station area, including Neighbourhood Flex, Neighbourhood Connector, and Neighbourhood Local to provide a mixture of uses while concentrating activity towards the LRT stations.

The Plan applies a mixture of low-, moderate-, and high-scale growth within the Dalhousie Station Area, ranging from Limited Scale (up to 3 storeys) to High Scale (up to 26 storeys). Higher building scales are applied strategically near the LRT station, while lower scales transition into primarily residential areas. The existing street network allows for development and housing types that are more suitable for Limited Scale (up to 3 storeys), Low-Modified Scale (up to 4 storeys), and Low Scale (up to 6 storeys). By applying a wide range of building scales within the Dalhousie Station Area and recognizing the context of the area, a greater variety of housing types can be provided for people with different needs and lifestyles.

### Activity Centres

The Plan identifies several Activity Centres, intended to support compact, mixed-use developments in locations where high-quality transit and a diversity of commercial, residential, and service uses currently exist, or where they could be encouraged.

Three Major Activity Centres (MACs) are in the South Shaganappi Communities, including the University of Calgary, the University District, Alberta's Children's Hospital, and the Foothills Medical Centre. These MACs are the main employment centres in the Plan area. Policies within the University District guide future development for the area, including incorporating residential and mixed-use development of various building scales. The Regional Campus urban form category is applied to the University of Calgary, Alberta's Children's Hospital, and Foothills Medical Centre, where the City does not have the authority to govern or make decisions about these areas as they are subject to regulations set forth by the provincial or federal government.

There is one Community Activity Centre (CAC) in the Plan area, CF Market Mall, located at the northwest corner of Shaganappi Trail NW and 32 Avenue NW. The Plan envisions the area to be redeveloped over time to provide various commercial and residential uses through mixed-use development. CF Market Mall is identified as Commercial Centre urban form category and High Scale (up to 26 storeys). Additional policies provide specific guidance on future development within the area to consider pedestrian-oriented design, appropriate building scale transition adjacent to residential development, and access to mobility options surrounding the site.

There are three Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NACs) within the Plan area including in Parkdale, University Heights, and Varsity. Neighbourhood Activity Centres are small mixed-use areas with local catchment businesses that offer a broad range of community activities, amenities, and services within the Plan area. These Activity Centres are walkable destinations for local communities and serve as gathering spaces for social interaction while providing opportunities for local jobs and supporting moderate intensification and each has a mixture of urban form categories and building scales applied, taking local context and existing built form into consideration while providing flexibility for future development.

### Community Corridors

Nine community corridors are identified in the Plan: Varsity Drive NW, 40 Avenue NW, 32 Avenue NW, 3 Avenue NW/Parkdale Boulevard NW, Morley Trail NW, 24 Avenue NW, 19 Street NW, 29 Street NW, and Home Road NW. Community Corridors are pedestrian-focused streets that are intended to support low- to moderate-growth in a range of primarily residential and small-scale mixed-use and commercial building forms. These corridors serve as important links connecting services, amenities, and communities to one another.

Community Corridors are primarily identified as Neighbourhood Connector urban form category with portions of Neighbourhood Commercial and Neighbourhood Flex in strategic locations or where commercial uses already exist. Building scales along the Community Corridors vary based on the local context and existing streetscape, ranging from Limited Scale (up to 3 storeys) to Low Scale (up to 6 storeys).

### Comprehensive Planning Sites

Four Comprehensive Planning Sites are identified in the Plan. These include University Innovation Quarter, Foothills Athletic Park (the future Foothills Multisport Fieldhouse), a sloped



portion of University District lands and a site located between University Drive NW and Crowchild Trail NW (identified within the Crowchild Trail Study).

Comprehensive Planning Sites provide direction for one or more parcels where additional planning or supplementary site design will be needed to support future planning applications. These sites may have private infrastructure, such as internal publicly-accessible private streets that service the site and are envisioned to redevelop over time in a way that integrates well with the surrounding community.

### **Addressing Housing Needs**

The South Shaganappi Communities has a unique cluster of amenities and services including major institutions and employment centre, such as the University of Calgary, Foothills Medical Centre, Alberta Children's Hospital, University Innovation Quarter, and CF Market Mall, drawing in a large population such as students, faculty members, healthcare professionals, workers, families, and young adults and creating a demand for diverse housing options to meet the needs of different age groups, abilities, and lifestyles.

Throughout the Plan's engagement process, we heard a large amount of feedback from students on the need for more affordable student housing and a greater variety of housing options. We also heard from many aging residents that they desire to age in place and stay in their community. By providing a variety of housing options including single-detached, semi-detached, row homes, townhomes, and multi-residential, people of all ages can find suitable accommodations that fit their lifestyle and needs. The Plan takes a balanced approach by applying low-scale growth throughout the Plan area and focusing moderate- to large-scale growth in key locations including transit station areas, Activity Centres, Main Streets, and the Primary Transit Network.

The South Shaganappi Communities has a higher proportion of young adults ages 15 to 24 than the overall city-wide percentage in Calgary (see Table 1). Young adults comprise 17% of the population in the Plan area, whereas in Calgary, this is 11%. In addition, a greater proportion of the population aged 65 and older are in the South Shaganappi Communities than the city-wide percentage. The Plan has 17% of the population aged 65 or older, compared to 12% in Calgary. The higher concentration of young adults and population aged 65 or older reflects the unique attributes of the Plan area.

To better accommodate the evolving needs of residents in the Plan area, providing opportunities for a wider variety of housing options, including single-detached homes, semi-detached homes, rowhouses/townhouses and apartments, is essential. Diverse housing choices will enable the community to adapt to changing needs over time by providing flexible living options that cater to various demographics and life stages, ensuring that all residents can find suitable accommodation as their circumstances and lifestyles evolve.

Table 1: Population Distribution by Age Group

Age Group	South Shaganappi Communities	Calgary
<b>0-14</b>	12.61%	18.71%
<b>Young Adults (15-24)</b>	17.18%	11.26%
<b>25-44</b>	32.99%	32.97%
<b>45-64</b>	20.23%	25.42%
<b>65+</b>	16.99%	11.97%

The nine individual communities that comprise the South Shaganappi Communities have all experienced population decline since their peak population, ranging from a loss of 1.4% to 27.7% (see Table 2). Since 1968, the South Shaganappi Communities experienced an increase in total dwellings and occupied dwellings (see Table 3). This decrease in population, despite an increase in the number of dwellings, is due to a decrease in the average number of people living in a dwelling from 3.99 in 1968 to 2.53 in 2019 (See Table 3).

The City's municipal development plan supports development of a greater range of housing options to support changing household needs and trends of all Calgarians. By providing a variety of housing types including single-detached, semi-detached, row homes, townhomes, and multi-family, communities can attract people from all ages and stages of life. It can also support aging in place, allowing residents who want to down-size or find alternative accommodations to continue living in their community.

Table 2: South Shaganappi Individual Communities Population Tables

Community	2019 Population	Peak Population	Peak Year	Loss Since Peak	% Change since Peak
Banff Trail	4,153	4,883	1968	-730	-14.95%
Montgomery	4,515	5,287	1969	-772	-14.60%
Parkdale	2,566	2,602	2018	-36	-1.38%
Point McKay	1,486	1,486	1986	-143	-9.62%
St. Andrews Heights	1,795	2,484	1970	-689	-27.74%
University District	705	780	2016	-75	-9.62%
University Heights	2,921	3,147	1980	-226	-7.18%
University of Calgary	2,367	2,968	2015	-601	-20.25%

Varsity	12,874	13,645	1981	-771	-5.65%
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**Table 3: South Shaganappi Communities Dwelling Summary**

	<b>Total Dwellings</b>	<b>Occupied Dwellings</b>	<b>Persons per Unit</b>
<b>1968</b>	5,997	5,831	3.99
<b>2019</b>	14,158	13,159	2.53
<b>% Change</b>	136%	126%	-37%

Additional demographic and socio-economic information for each community may be obtained online through [Community Profiles \(calgary.ca\)](https://www.calgary.ca/CommunityProfiles).

## Engagement

The South Shaganappi Communities Local Area Planning Project spanned over 2 years, including four phases of public participation and 65 public engagement events. A working group comprised of community association representatives, residents, and development industry members provided feedback throughout the engagement process. Engagement sessions were also conducted with specific groups, including community associations, University of Calgary students, the South Shaganappi Area Strategic Planning Group, and the Nifty Fifties Seniors Association.

Public input is one of the five key considerations when developing a local area plan. Through each phase, public feedback was gathered, reviewed, and considered, resulting in refinements to the Plan. The project team heard a variety of feedback and balanced the feedback through refinements to policies and maps within the Plan. In addition to public input, there are four other key considerations including context and trends, City Policies such as The City’s municipal development plan, Climate Strategy and other higher-order policies, professional expertise on best practices and technical feasibility, and equity. As the local area planning process is iterative, all five key considerations are incorporated in developing the Plan over time. What We Did and What We Heard Reports were shared for each phase of the project.

Changes to the Plan resulting from public feedback included revisions to the Urban Form and Building Scale maps. Throughout all phases of the project, feedback about location-specific comments on future moderate- to large-scale growth were received. The [Summary of Map Changes](#) illustrates the key changes made to the maps between each phase of the project. Policies throughout the Plan were also refined and added based on public feedback such as concerns related to traffic, pedestrian safety, and shadowing of future development.

## Legislation and Policy

### South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The Plan and recommendations in this report have considered, and are aligned with, the policy direction of the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#) which directs population growth in the region to cities and towns and promotes the efficient use of land.

### Growth Plan (2022)

The Plan and recommendations in this report align with the policy direction of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's Growth Plan (GP). The Plan builds on the principles of the GP by promoting efficient use of land and regional infrastructure and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

### **Municipal Development Plan (2009)**

The City's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) establishes overall goals and directions for decision making about growth, future land use, mobility networks, servicing, and investment for all of Calgary. The South Shaganappi Communities Local Area Plan aligns with policies found in the MDP and further supports growth and change at a local level. The Plan envisions accommodating growth and change in key areas such as in close proximity to transit, main streets, activity centres and to increase housing diversity throughout the Shaganappi Communities.