West Springs: *Vibrant & Serene*

Land Use & Development Strategy

April 2013

WSCR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN | UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

April 2013

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Prepared for:
West Springs/Cougar Ridge Community Association

Winter 2013 EVDP 644 Advanced Professional Planning Project
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Executive Summary

The West Springs Development Plan will guide the management and development of the community of West Springs. This plan was developed for academic purposes for the fulfillment of the Master of Planning final studio project. With the collaboration of the University along with the West Springs/Cougar Ridge Community Association, this development guide addresses the community's key issues and will help improve the quality and overall development of the existing undeveloped parcels, ensuring continuity and consistency throughout all phases of the build out.

The West Springs development guide addresses four main issues to develop a comprehensive and integrative plan:

- Low Connectivity- WSDP ensures conscious connectivity for all modes of transportation
- Lack of Housing diversity- WSDP offers a wide range of diverse housing options that target various socio-economic backgrounds as well as multi-generational solutions
- Disconnected Open Spaces-WSDP will ensure that open spaces remain connected throughout the community with various uses from community gardens, basketball courts to pedestrian and cycling paths. Recreational uses that are accessible for all ages and ranges of ability are included.
- Auto-Centric and Monotonous Community Nodes- WSDP proposes mixed-use areas that include commercial, retail, residential and public plazas, promoting integrative spaces.

The guide offers direction and identifies a phasing strategy to ensure that development occurs consistently and that all phases of development have the same standards for quality development.

Acknowledgements

We thank the community association for participating throughout the various phases of this project and for allowing us to gain practical experience. We would also like to thank our studio professor Francisco Alaniz-Uribe as well as our TA Cristina Badescu for providing support and insights throughout this process.

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1.0 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This proposal is in response to the request for a flexible and comprehensive land use and development plan for the community of West Springs, with a focus on the future direction of the 5-acre land parcels. Our final concept will capitalize on the existing opportunity presented in West Springs by offering a holistic plan that integrates the open lots with the rest of the site in a cohesive, legible manner that is responsive to local needs and desires.

The Site

City Context

N

West Springs

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Context

West Springs is a suburban community located in the southwest quadrant of the City of Calgary. Bound by Old Banff Coach Rd to the north, Coach Hill Rd to the east, Bow Trail to the south, and 101 St to the west. West Springs neighbours the residential communities of Cougar Ridge, Coach Hill, and Aspen Woods. The area was annexed to the City in 1995, along with the neighbourhood of Cougar Ridge, and the community was formally established in 2001. The site offers many attractive aspects, including its proximity to downtown and the mountains, as well as its unique landscape and panoramic views. Today, the built form in West Springs is predominantly residential, consisting largely of single detached family homes (80.5% of housing stock). A small commercial strip exists along 85 St and offers amenities such as banks and grocery stores. There are several schools and churches within the neighbourhood, and the remainder of the area consists of 5-acre ranch lots. These land parcels will soon become available for development, signifying a huge opportunity for the future of West Springs. The neighbourhood currently supports a population of nearly 8,000 people, and is expected to attract an additional 3,000 people in the coming years with the further development of the area.

West Springs is located within close proximity to downtown, Calgary Olympic Park (C.O.P.), and the west LRT station at 69 Street.
The site boasts many environmental features including natural grasslands and forests and neighbours a variety of eco-regions, including the Paskapoo Slopes.

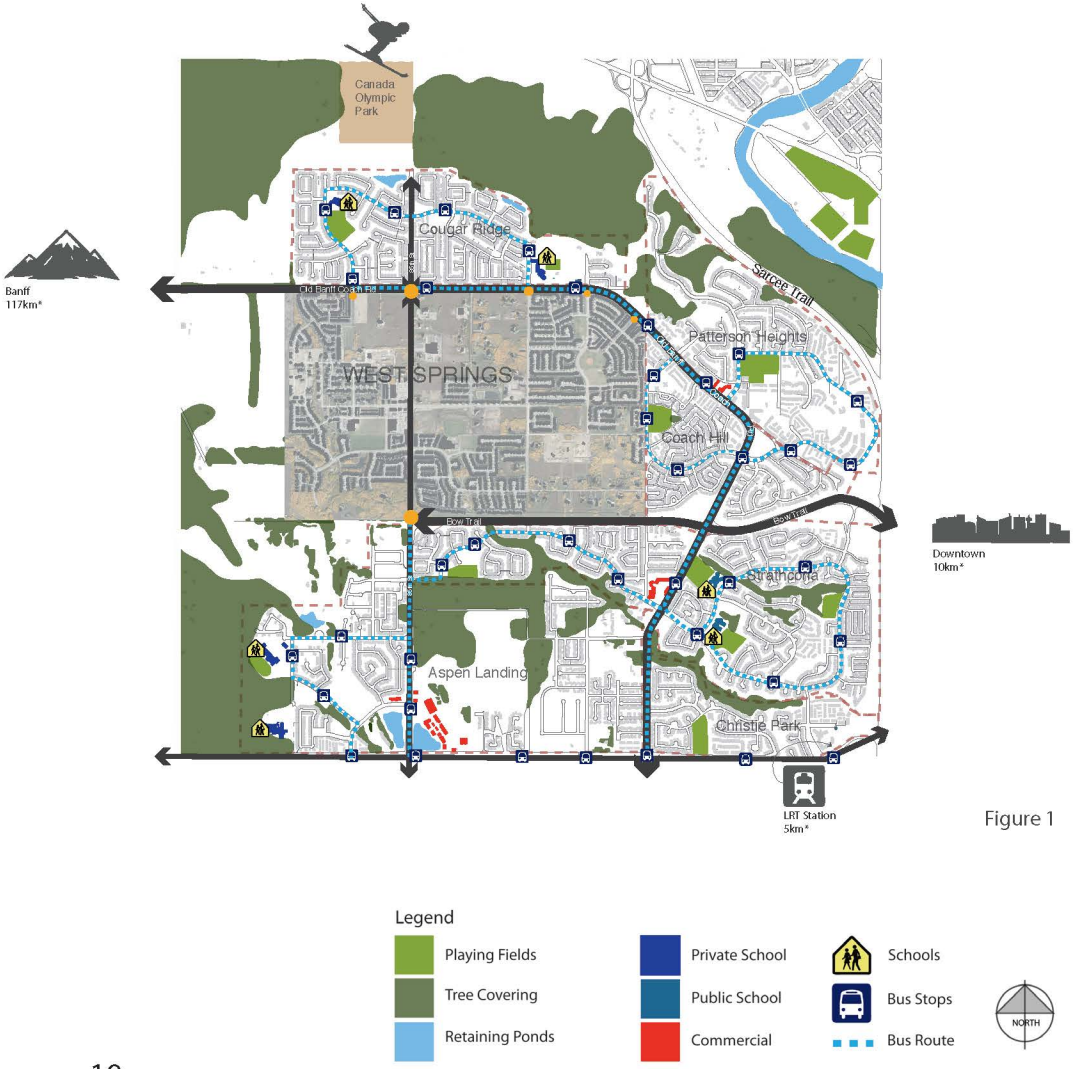


Figure 1

2.0 Analysis

2.0 Analysis

The analysis is one of the major components to the plan. Here we have outlined three major aims for this phase; historical, existing site (natural and built), and a summary.

Historical analysis for this project consists of analyzing aerial photographs in order to gain a better understanding of the site's historical context, urban morphology, changes in vegetation, as well as the evolution of transportation and infrastructure.

It is equally important to analyze the existing conditions of the site, both natural and built forms. Natural conditions will include topography, vegetation, storm run-off, surface water, and sun and wind. The conditions for the built environment will include studies of the current open space systems, buildings and surface parking, circulation infrastructure, transit system, density, residential typology, land use and zoning, and walkability.

Finally, a summary of our analysis, supplemented with a SWOT analysis, will help address the major issues and provide disclosure for the Draft Concept (Phase III).

2.0 Analysis

2.1 Historical Evolution

West Springs is located on the far western edge of the City of Calgary, and was historically used for ranching and farm lands. Prior to the lands being annexed to the City of Calgary in 1995, the area was part the Municipal District of Rocky View and contained largely acreage style housing.

The community of West Springs was officially established in 2001, and development instensified at this time. Early development occured primarily along the major roads of 85th Street, Old Banff Coach Road, and 77th Street.

The internal street network began to take shape by 2004, and vegetation at this time also changed drastically with a large amount of treed areas cleared.

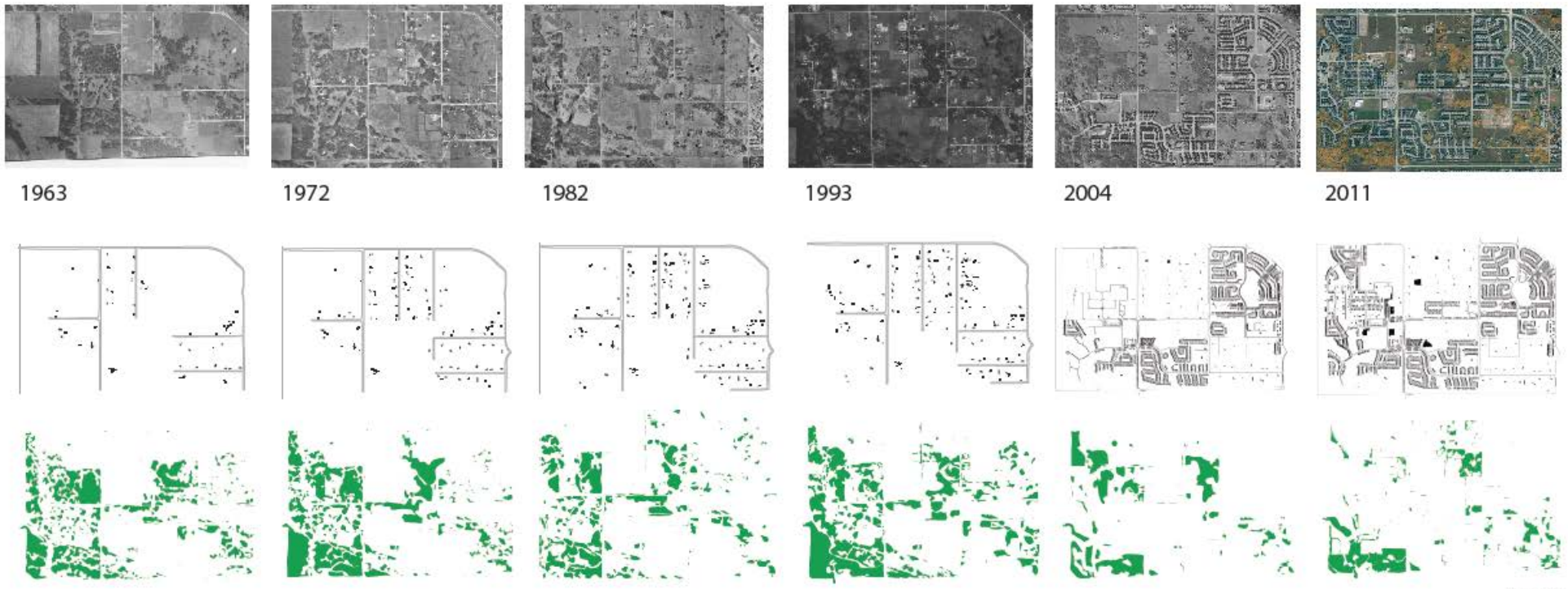


Figure 2

2.0 Analysis

2.2 Existing Natural

2.2.1 topography and surface water

The community of West Springs is located on a plateau, where topography is mainly unchanged with little variations that don't really have significant impacts on development. The map to the right indicates the elevation changes for the site and its surrounding lands, including neighbourhing communities (figure 3). Major elevations changes occur to the north where Canada Olympica Park is located.
Surface water, water run off areas and directional flow are also identified using the same topographics analysis.

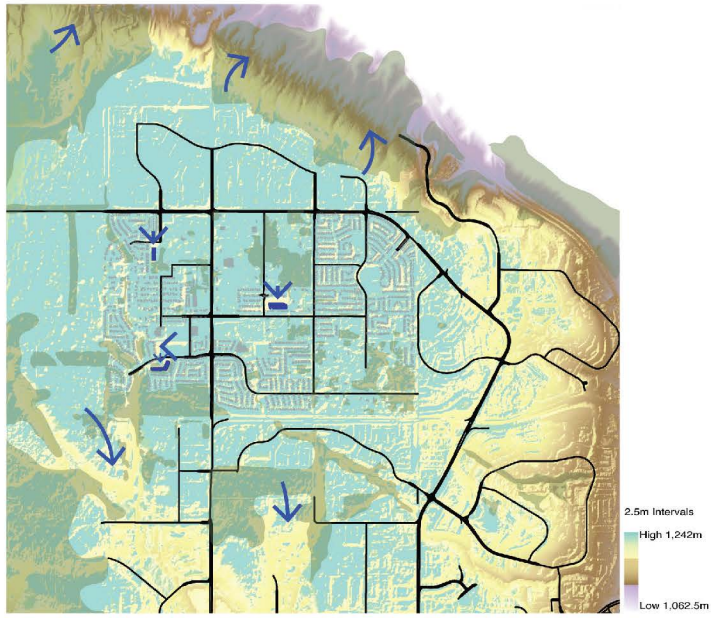


Figure 3

2.2.2 sun, wind, and existing vegetation

Sun and wind analysis is an important componant of the analysis of the site. Understanding the sun's path at various times of the year as well as wind patterns allows for the planning of better and more comfortable outdoor public spaces.

Furthermore, an existing vegetation analysis was conducted in order to maintain and preserve as many existing mature trees in the outlined concept plan.

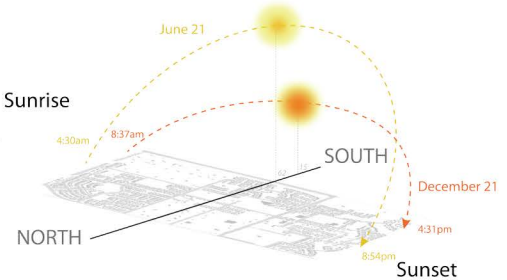


Figure 4


Figure 5

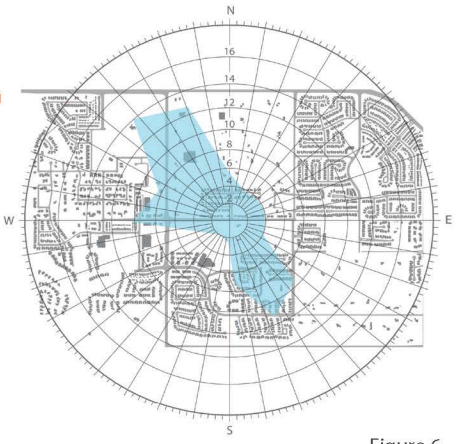


Figure 6

2.0 Analysis

2.3 Existing Built

2.3.1 land use

The existing land use in West Springs is predominantly residential, consuming approximately 90% of the site. There are several institutional uses, including three religious institutions and two schools sites. A major commercial district is located at the intersection of 85th St. & 9th Ave., with a smaller commercial node located in the northeast quadrant of the site. The site also has a rather large area of Environmental Reserve located in the southwest region of the site, which runs north towards Old Banff Coach Rd. A unique land use within this site, is the large service parcel located in the northwest quadrant. This parcel is currently vacant except for a small building and radio tower, offering a great deal of potential open space.

Figure 7

2.3.2 open space system

The existing open space system consists of both natural green space and planned park space. The natural space is, in certain areas, connected to the community through the pathway system. There are, however, many areas of under-utlized and inaccessible green space.

The existing parks are located centrally within residential pockets and offer a range of uses. Sports facilities and dog parks, however, are somewhat limited throughout the site.

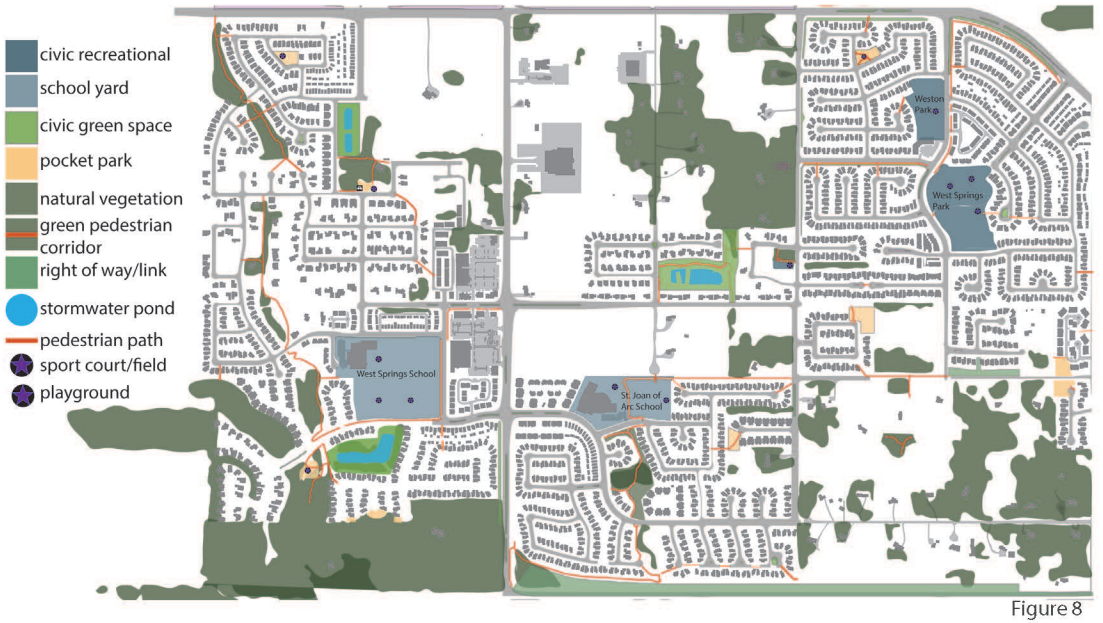


Figure 8

2.0 Analysis

2.3 Existing Built

2.3.3 connectivity

West Springs has rather poor connectivity to surrounding communities and major streets. With one point of entry along the southern edge and no entry points along the western or eastern edges, the most access is along Old Banff Coach Rd to the north. Within the community, circulation is inhibited by a street network comprised predominantly of cul-de-sacs, and a fragmented pathway system.

Walkability for park space is fair, with most residents within a 400m walking distance, though new residents will be largely outside of existing walksheds. Walkability for commercial use is rather restricted, with few residents within the 400m walkshed.

Circulation infrastructure

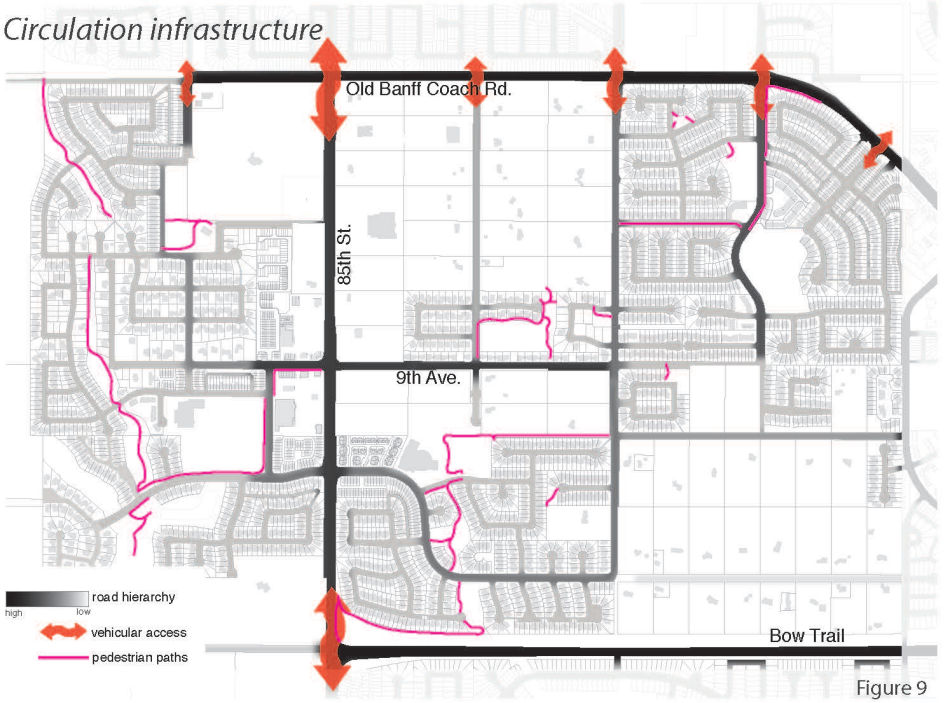


Figure 9

Walk shed
Commercial spaces

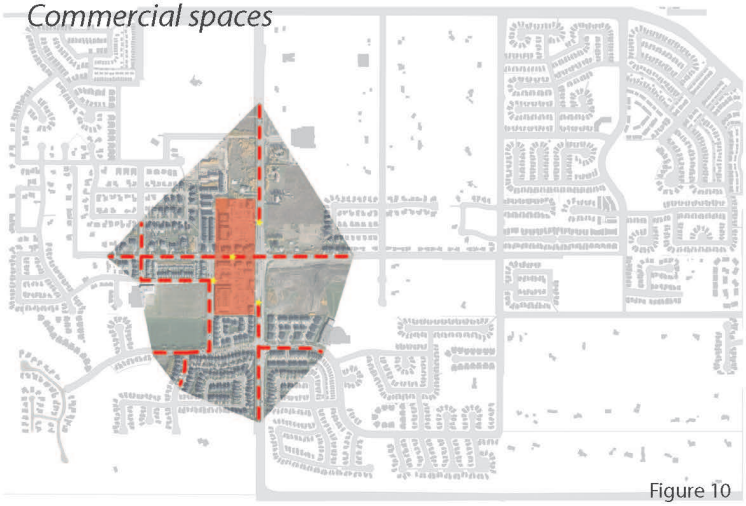


Figure 10

Walk shed
Park spaces

Figure 11

2.0 Analysis

2.3 Existing Built

2.3.4 residential typology

The site's current residential typology is pre-dominantly single family dwelling units, attributing to nearly 81% of the total housing stock. Attached units and rowhousing are located throughout the site, while multi-family buildings are scarce and make up only 4% of the total housing stock (figure 12).

2.3.5 density

Densities across the site vary, but are typically low given the amount of single-dwelling, 5-acre lots. These ranch lots host approximately 0.5 persons per acre. A typical, fully developed 5-acre parcel is comprised of single-detached units and supports a density of approximately 12 persons per acre. The few areas that host multi-family buildings support a density of nearly 35 persons per acre (figure 13).

Cul-de-sac blocks are common in the community, but tend to support less housing units than a through-street design, with up to 24 units, or a density of approximately 12 persons per acre (figure 14)

Figure 12

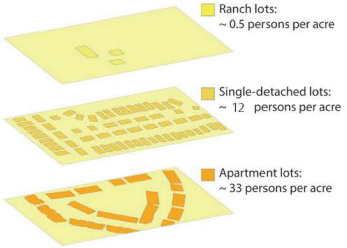


Figure 13

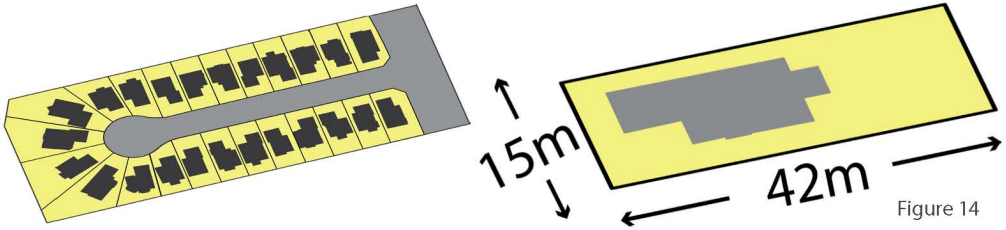


Figure 14

2.0 Analysis

2.4 Social Statistics

2.4.1 Demographics

As per the 2012 census data, West Springs has a population of 8,228, a 4.8% increase from 2011. West Springs is largely a family community, with *'family persons'* accounting for 92% of the resident population, and a proportion of 0-15 year olds 12% higer than the Calgary average. Senior population (75 years+) is very low at only 0.8% of total resident population. This may be due to the fact that West Springs is a relatively new community, however, seniors housing is not provided within the area, which may also contribute to the low senior population.

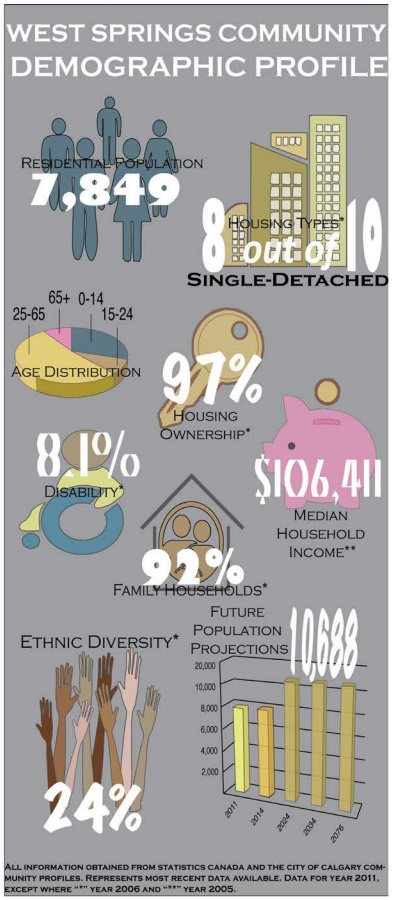
West Springs is a wealthy community, with median household income of $106,411 - nearly double the Calgary average. Furthermore, low-income households account for only 7% of the total resident population - less than half of the Calgary average. This is likely due to a lack of affordable housing options within the community.

The resident population is somewhat diverse, with both immigrant and visible minority populations on par with Calgary averages, though the immigrant population is predominantly South Korean accounting for nearly 25%.

As mentioned, housing diversity is rather low in West Springs, with only 10% of total housing stock consisting of rowhousing and apartment units. Not suprisingly, a mere 3% of the resident population are renters, while the remaining 97% own their dwelling. West Springs has a rather distinct demographic, and largely supports the family household. With projected population to reach nearly 11,000, there is opportunity through the development of the 5-acre parcels to provide a mix of housing types and amenities in order to support a more diverse community in the future.

2.4.2 Survey Results

The survey conducted by the WSCR CA provided some interesting data and insight into the needs and desires of existing residents (see figure #). Of most significance and prevalence was the desire for safer streets, additional sports facilities, more green space, and connected pathways to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. All of these requests can be achieved through strategic and conscious planning.



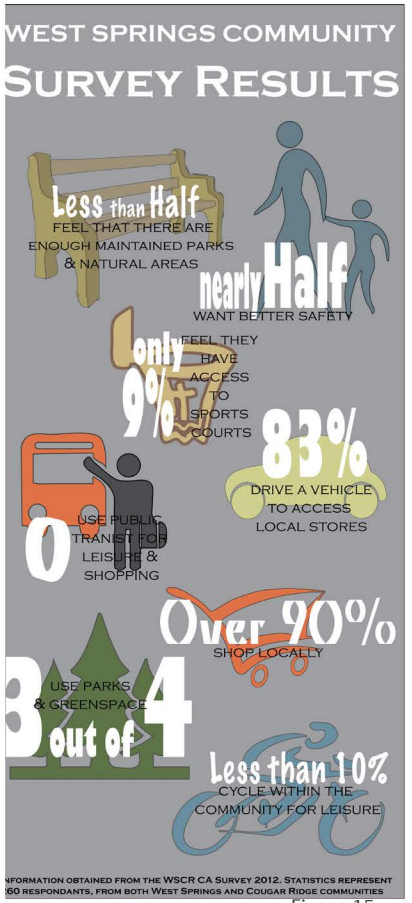


Figure 15

2.0 Analysis

2.5 Summary of Analysis

Issues and Opportunities

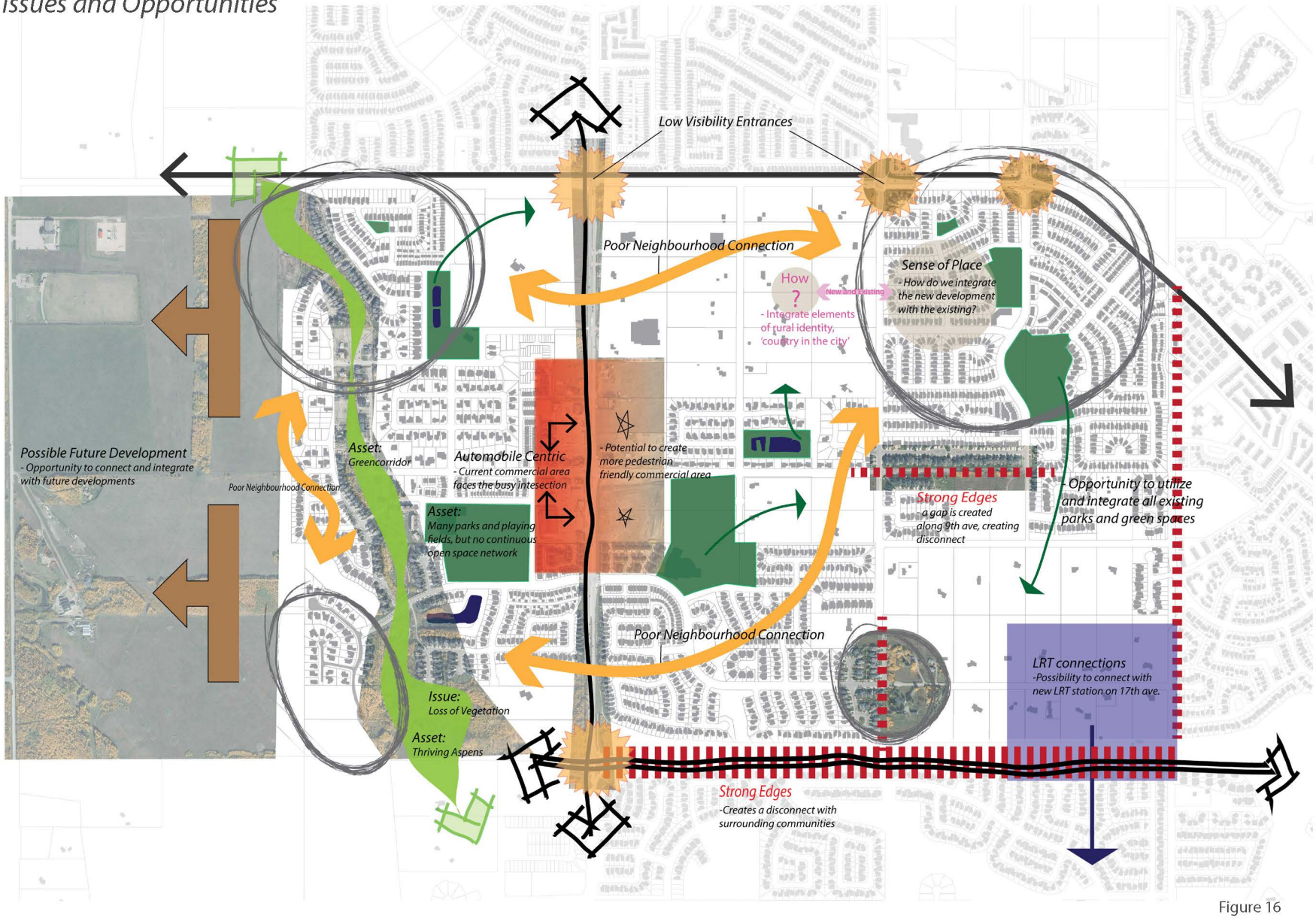


Figure 16

2.0 Analysis

2.5 Summary of Analysis

From the analysis, a number of issues and opportunities have been identified:

1) *Low connectivity*
Both vehicular and pedestrian connectivity throughout the neighbourhood is hindered by streets leading into dead-ends and cul-de-sacs, and a highly fragmented pedestrian pathway system. Low connectivity and a low walkability score lowers land values and encourages auto-centric lifestyles, which lead to environmental and health issues.

2) *Lack of recreational diversity and a connected open space system*
Parks are located in walking distances to the existing developed neighbourhoods, however new park space will be necessary in the developable areas. The open space system is currently disjointed, and residents report a need for additional sports courts.

3) *Lack of housing diversity*
The existing housing stock in West Springs consists predominantly of single-detached dwelling units, with listing prices beginning around $500,000 and well-exceeding $1,000,000. Less than 5% of the current housing stock consists of apartment or condo units. Furthermore, only 3% of the resident population are renters. West Springs must provide increased diversity in housing options in order to support a multi-generational community.

4) *Auto centric commercial nodes*
The main commercial node at 85th St. & 9th Ave is largely auto-centric, with a sprawling parking lot along the main street. Nearly 85% of respondants in the WSCR survey reported that they always drive to the community's local shops. The existing design of the commercial node largely ignores the pedestrian, and is not easily accessible by foot.

1


2


3


4


2.0 Analysis

2.6 Guiding Themes

From the site analysis and the WSCR CA survey results, four key themes were identified to respond to the findings and create a complete development plan that not only addresses key issues and needs, but also provides the critical elements for a healthy, multi-generational, and vibrant community.
The WSDP is guided by the following four themes, which are reinforced consistently throughout the design to create a community that is both vibrant and serene:

connectivity

open spaces

residential

community nodes

3.0 Concept Land Use Plan

"Some cohesive development plans with more green space and connected pathways are needed."

- community resident

3.0 Concept Land Use Plan

The conceptual land use masterplan is a comprehensive plan that addresses the key issues identified throughout the analysis process. Connectivity is at the forefront of this plan; ensuring vehicular as well as pedestrian connectivity is provided for both commuting purposes as well as recreation via the greenway. Land use color identify density intensities and proposed building configurations provide insight as to how the new development will integrate with the existing neighbourhoods.

Conceptual Master Plan

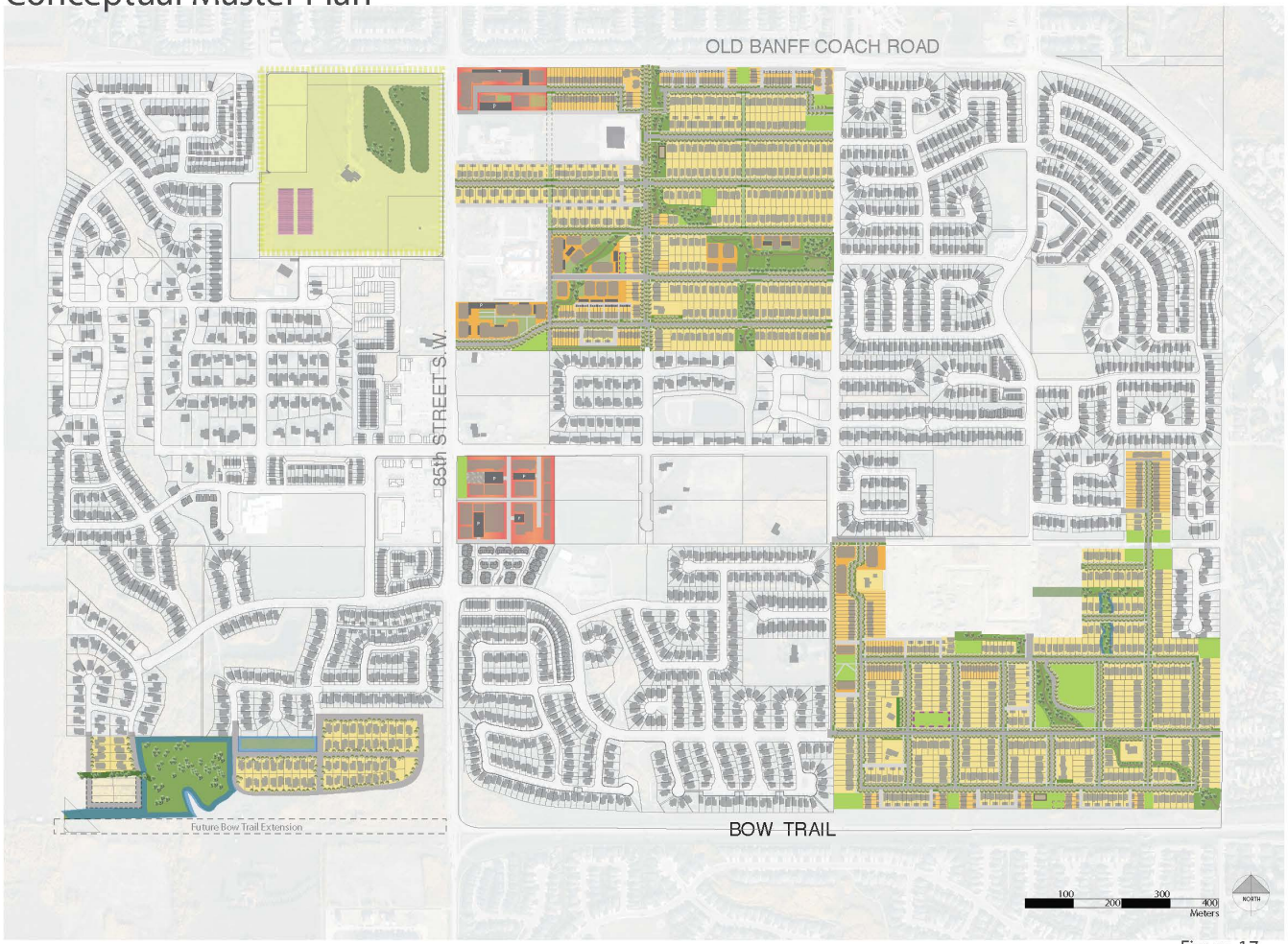
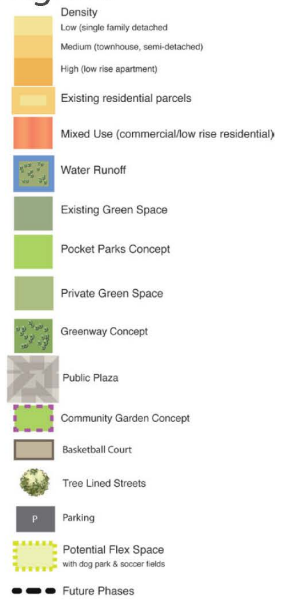


Figure 17

Legend



	Size	
West Springs Outline Plan Statistics	Hectares	Acres
West Springs Community (Developed and Undeveloped) Gross Area	386.9	955.5
West Springs Outline Plan Gross Area	95.1	235
Municipal Reserve (10%)	9.5	23.5
PARKS	4.9	12
GREENWAY	4.6	11.5
Environmental Reserve	3.9	9.7
West Springs Total Developable Land Area	85.6	211.5
Total Roads Area	18.2	45
Total Laneways Area	2.1	5.2

Total Residential Developable Area	61.3	**151.6**

Figure 18

3.0 Concept Land Use Plan

The WSDP contains three distinct areas of development. The first is the area to the north, that runs along Old Banff Coach Rd (figure 19). This is a unique district, as it contains three prominent religious institutions. It also contains a 5-acre parcel zoned for commercial use, and is the closest in distance to the main commercial node at 85th St & 9th Ave. Because the land use in this area is so mixed, the WSDP has complimented this with a range of densities, housing types, and park space. This district will also provide a senior's housing complex located East of St. Michael's Catholic Church. The WSDP has intentionally designed this area to reflect a more urban neighbourhood and support a vibrant sense of place.

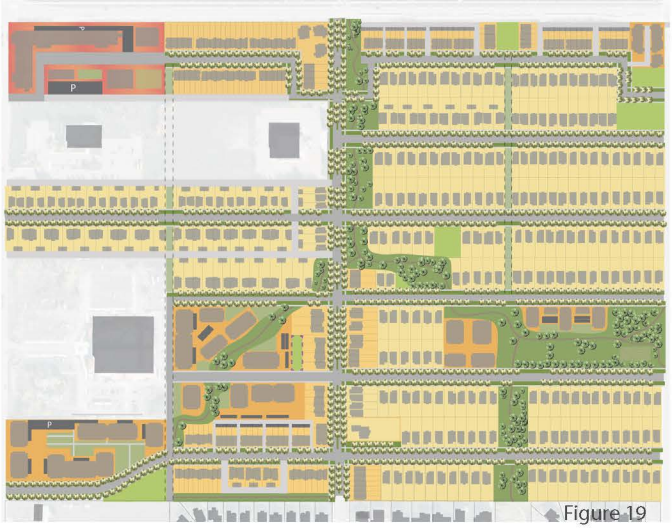


Figure 19

The area in the SE corner of West Springs is designed to create a quieter neighbourhood, with slowed streets, various laneways, and many pocket parks (figure 20). With only residential and municipal reserve land use, this district aims to support a tight-knit community-feel, where dwelling units face one another and/or park space. The design along the most southern edge of this area is especially aimed to foster community, with small blocks, shared green space, and community gardens.

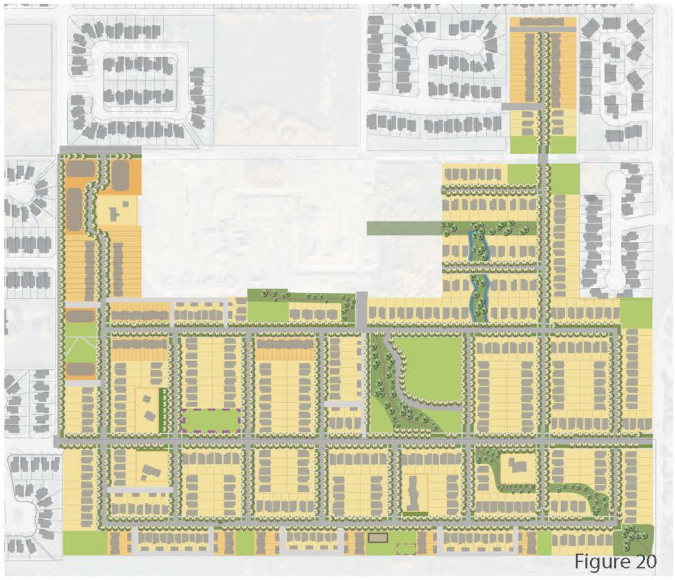


Figure 20

Finally, the small area in the SW is distinct in itself. This area is currently surrounded by estate-style housing, large lot sizes, and a densely treed landscape. The WSDP allocates this area to remain an estate home location, with only resident traffic, and a great deal of preserved vegeataion. The set back from Bow Trail will maintain the serenity in this residential pocket.

Figure 21

4.0 Conscious Connectivity

"Walking paths should connect to other existing city pathways to integrate our community into the greater pathway system."

- community resident

4.0 Conscious Connectivity

From the analysis, we uncovered a number of issues with existing connectivity in the community, and residents expressed a great desire for pathway systems and connections, both internal and external to West Springs.

The theme of ***conscious connectivity*** aims to create an interconnected, easily navigable community that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists. This is achieved through four elements of connectivity:

1) Grid Pattern Street Network
2) Complete Pedestrian Pathway System
3) Overpass Bridge Connection
4) Greenway & Open Space Network

Through these four main components, we have developed a cohesive and well-integrated development plan for the West Springs community.

Many connections to existing infrastructure have been made, including major road connections, pathway connections, and green space connections. These components work together to create a complete, and consistent network.

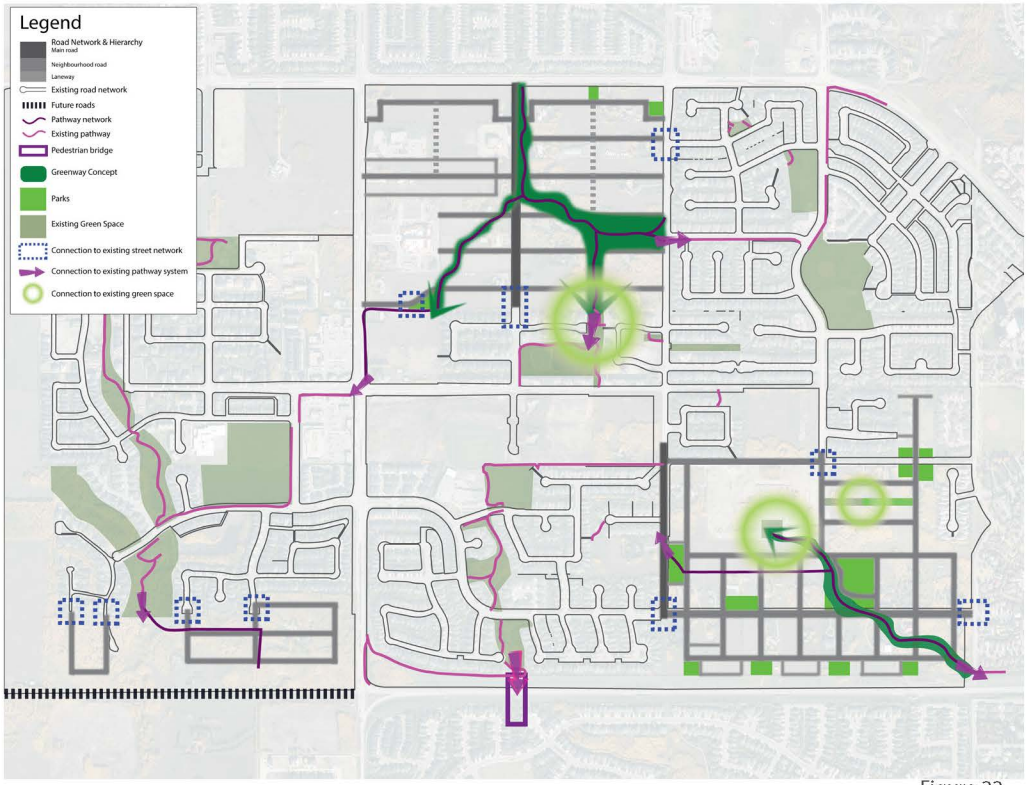


Figure 22

4.0 Connectivity

4.1 Street Network

According to the City of Calgary's Complete Street Guide, complete streets do not consist of curvilinear street patterns and cul-de-sacs, instead, complete street networks, which consist of various forms of grid network, improve traffic safety, reducing volume speed and collisions (Complete Streets Guide p. 12). Furthermore, complete street networks promote alternative modes of transportation, increasing walkability and cycling throughout the community and reducing the number of miles traveled by car.

The existing street network in West Springs is not easily naviagble, with many cul-de-sacs and some dead-ends. The new community plan proposes a grid-pattern street network, providing intuitive and efficient movement through the site (see figure 22). With clear and straight directional lines, traveling through the new development sites will be uncomplicated for both residents and visitors alike.

A hierarchy of streets is included in the WSDP, to influence both traffic speeds as well as sense of place. Three main street types are included in the plan:

1. Boulevard Streets
2. Neighbourhood Streets
3. Laneways

1. The Boulevard is designed to support higher traffic of both auto and bicycle, while providing a safe and pleasant environment for pedestrians (see figure 23). Bike lanes, on-street parking, landscaped traffic medians, and enhanced pedestrian crossings are key elements of the Boulevard. Precedents for this type of street come from Charleswood Drive Calgary, AB. According to the City of Calgary Design Guidelines for Subdivision and Servicing, the proposed neighbourhood boulevard along 81st Street shall be classified as a Residential Entrance Street, 23.5 meters wide with an added separate cycling lane between the driving lane and the parking lanes.

The WSDP recommends that the Boulevard street design be implemented along existing 85th St. as well.

Charleswood Dr., Calgary AB

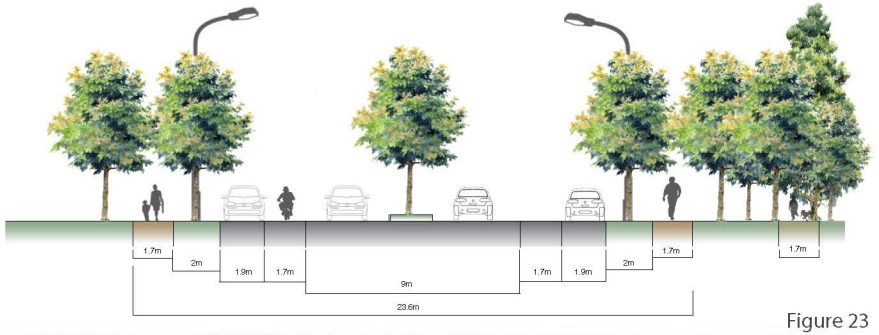


Figure 23

81st Street Boulevard

4.0 Connectivity

4.1 Street Network

2. Neighbourhood streets are the most prominent in the community plan, and support light traffic and slowed speeds (see figure 24). The Neighbourhood streets are intended for quiet residential areas, and contribute to enhanced safety for children and seniors.

3. Laneways offer good opportunity for placemaking, allowing for proper housing frontages facing the street, with garages tucked in the back (see figure 25). There are also opportunities for secondary suites and active corridors. Laneways should be designed with lighting and landscaping, to create a welcoming environment.

Due to phasing restrictions, long 400 m blocks are created in certain areas. In these areas, the WSDP proposes that at each 200 m distance a temporary break in residential subdivision be maintained for future access north and south. This will create additional intersections in order to slow traffic driving through neighbourhood streets, as well as increase connectivity for motorists and pedestrians. Until formal access is created, temporary green space and pathway connections are recommended within these breaks.

Throughout the street network, traffic calming measures will include speed tables and speed bumps, especially where un-intersected, local neighbourhood roads span more than 150-200 meters in length.

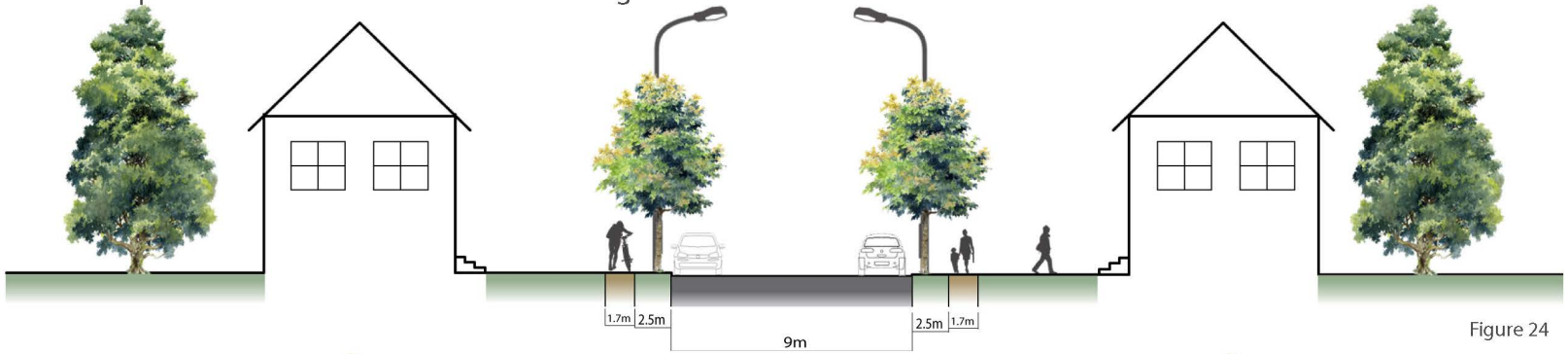


Figure 24

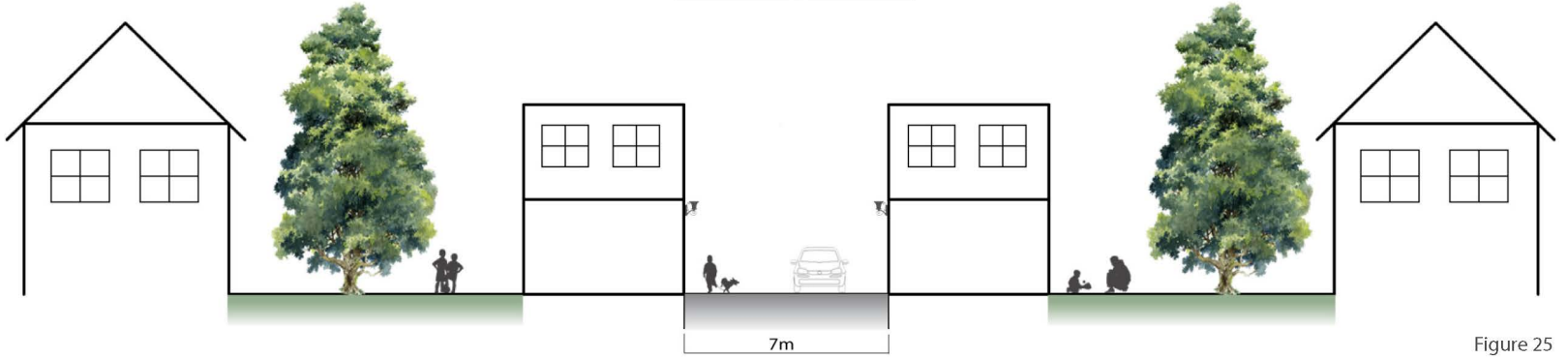


Figure 25

4.0 Connectivity
4.2 Pathway System

The City of Calgary's Open Space Plan states that pathways are an importnat component of the city's open space system because of their *"appeal to a very braod range of users, regardless of age, culture, income or physical ability"*. Pathways are a key element in a community that is supportive of all ages and abilities.

The existing pathway system in West Springs is fragmented and poorly connected to surrounding communities. The new development plan proposes that a complete pathway system be implemented, to connect to both existing and external networks. The City's Open Space Plan policy states that *local pathways should connect with a regional pathway, and/or other key destinations within the community, such as local parks, schools, community centres and commercial areas.*

The new pathway system runs through the major open space network of the proposed greenway, and connects to the various parks and activity spaces within it. The new pathway system will also connect to various residential pockets, the commerical nodes and schools sites. Connections are also made to existing paths where possible, both internal and external. Finally, the new pathway system will connect to the proposed overpass bridge at Bow Trail (see section 4.3). In accordance with City policy, pathways will be designed to accommodate multiple users and a range of activities, and will be properly lit for useability and safety.

4.0 Connectivity

4.3 Overpass connection

The regional pathway connecting West Springs to Aspen Woods is not direct or efficient. The path diverts west to the intersection of 85 St and Bow Trail. However, it is clear by the worn grass that cyclists and pedestrians have been informally crossing the busy Bow Trail where the communities have entry points aligned on the north and south side.

The better connected West Springs' paths are to its surrounding amenities, the more appealing sustainable modes of transportation become.

Pedestrian overpasses have recently opened in the City of Calgary. The bridges over McKnight Boulevard at 44 Street NE and Metis Trail at the Westwinds LRT are aesthetically pleasing and affordable, having required investments of $4.1 million and $5.8 million respectively.

Recommendations

4.2.1 The West Springs and Aspen Woods residents' associations should partner together to engage their public and prepare a letter for the city, asking that a bridge be considered over Bow Trail emphasizing the value of a more complete and user-friendly regional pathway system.

Regional bike path diverts west

Path entries exist on both sides of Bow Trail

44 St NE/McKnight Blvd overpass

Metis Trail/Westwinds LRT overpass

5.0 Active Open Spaces

"We need more green spaces, especially lots of trees as they have been cut with the development."

- community resident

5.0 Active Open Spaces

5.1 Vegetation

The existing vegetation in West Springs greatly influenced the design of the open space plan (see figure 28). The natural landscape is a major asset of the area, and has intrinsic value to the residents. Preservation and enhancement of the existing landscape are central to the WSDP, resulting in high quality open space that is reflective of the community needs and the natural environment.

Figure 28

5.2 Greenway

The Greenway design follows the natural path of existing trees and vegetation, allowing for a high degree of preservation within development sites (see figure 28).

The Greenway design is illustrated in Figure 26 (north strip) and Figure 27 (south strip). The idea of the Greenway is to provide an activity and pedestrian transportation network that connects the community north to south. Along the Greenway, various activities and uses shall be provided, creating a vibrant and interesting green corridor.

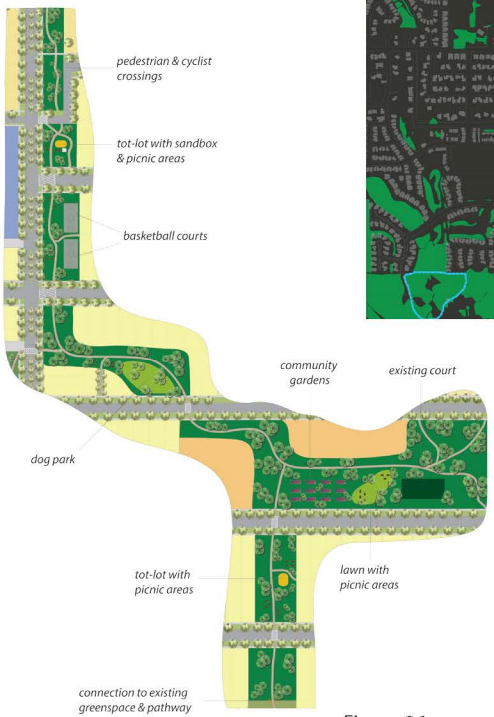


Figure 26

Structured uses may include dog parks, basketball courts, tot-lots, and community gardens. Sports courts should be strongly encouraged along the Greenway, as the community has a need for more sports facilities. Unstructured, or informal uses may include open fields, both landscaped and unlandscaped, and picnic areas.

Pedestrian and cyclist crossings shall be provided across every street, with pedestrians and cyclists having the right-of-way. The Greenway shall be well-lit along the entire pathway network, for enhanced safety and night-time useability.

The concept of the Greenway is not only to provide a complete connectivity network, but also to create place and enhance the character of West Springs by promoting its natural environment.

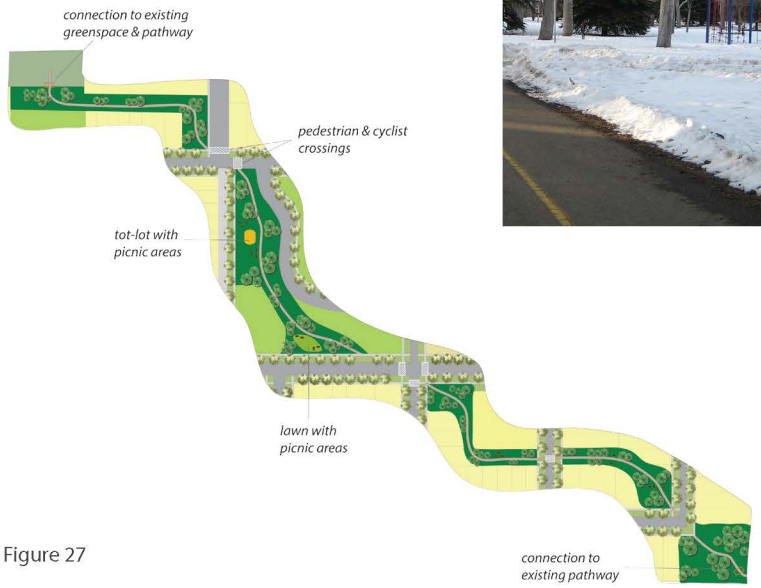


Figure 27

5.0 Active Open Spaces

5.3 Recreation

Public recreation is a vital element to complete communities. The City of Calgary's Recreation Master Plan states that recreation adds to a community's vibrancy and sense of place, and leads to healthier communities.

From the survey results, West Springs' residents indicated a need for additional recreation facilities, primarily sports courts. The WSDP includes a variety of new recreation amenities for the community, including bike paths, basketball courts, soccer fields, activity tot-lots, and community gardens. This wide range of active uses supports a diverse population, in both age and interest, contributing to a multi-generational community.

5.4 Pocket parks

Throughout the WSDP, pocket parks are strategically placed to provide all residents with green space within walking distance (400m) of the their homes. Pocket parks may include tot-lots, community gardens, picnic areas, or simply open fields. A variety of sizes, uses, and tree-coverage are included in the design.

The SE development site offers an excellent opportunity to use pocket parks as an attractive and uesful tactic to break the long stretch of road that runs east-west (see figure 29). In this unique location, housing frontages are directed towards the pocket park, creating a small-scale community node (see figure 30).

This integrated design of residential and park space creates an attractive section in the neighbourhood, which could otherwise become undesirable due to the proximity of Bow Trail to the south.

Community Garden

Bike Paths

Neighbourhood Basketball Courts

Figure 29

Figure 30

5.0 Active Open Spaces

5.5 Environmental Reserve

West Springs currently has a great deal of ER, primarily in the southwest quadrant of the community. The WSDP allocates an additional 9.7 acres of ER in this region (see figure 31).

This region is heavily treed, with sloping topography, and natural drainage features. It is not a viable development location. The areas highlighted in green in figure 31 should remain largely unaltered, and act primarily as a wildlife corridor. Informal walking trails may be appropriate for this area.

Figure 31

5.6 Flex Space Site

The existing service site holds a CBC radio tower and small building facility. The full site is approximately 24 acres in size, and has a large amount of unused space. The site presents opportunity for flexible, temporary recreation uses. Potential uses for this parcel may include community garden plots, fenced dog parks, and open sports fields for soccer and football.

Property owners of this site should be contacted to discuss the possibility of using some of this land for public purposes. Safety and legal concerns should be addressed prior to allowing activity on site.

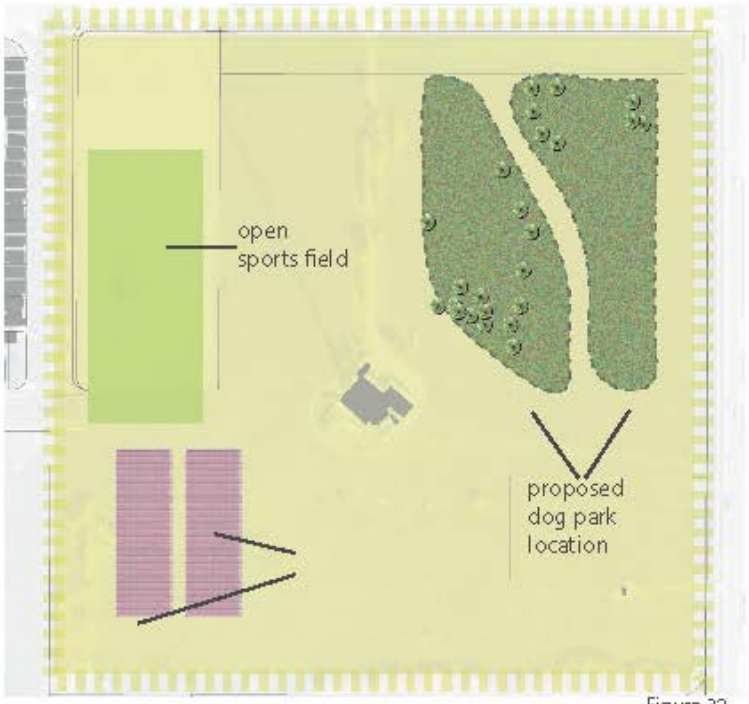


Figure 32

6.0 Diverse Residential

"Developers should maintain the aesthetics of this neighbourhood while providing housing options."

- community resident

6.0 Diverse Residential

6.1 Density

The existing average density in West Springs is quite low, with ranch lots supporting 0.5 persons per acre, and single-detached areas supporting approximately 12 persons per acre.

The WSDP adds higher densities to the community while maintaining various pockets of lower density to integrate with the existing community strucutre.

New densities in single-detached areas will reach approximately 15 persons per acre; 28 persons per acre in medium density areas (townhomes, duplex, triplex); and 50 persons per acre in high density areas (low-rise apartment) (see figure 33). Low densities will remain in the SW area, with estate housing and large lot sizes.

While higher overall densities will be achieved, lot sizes will remain comparable to existing lot dimensions (see figure 34).

Garrison Woods is an excellent example of an affluent community with higher densities than a typical suburb. With average densities of approximately 25 uph, Garrison Woods offers a framework for impementing higher densities while avoiding over-crowding. The WSDP includes various housing types to achieve a mix of density, however, row-housing as found in Garrison Woods (figure 35) will be quite prevalent throughout the site.

The proposed housing and densities in the WSDP will accommodate more than the projected population growth of 10,688 for West Springs, with an ability to support approximately 11,500 residents.

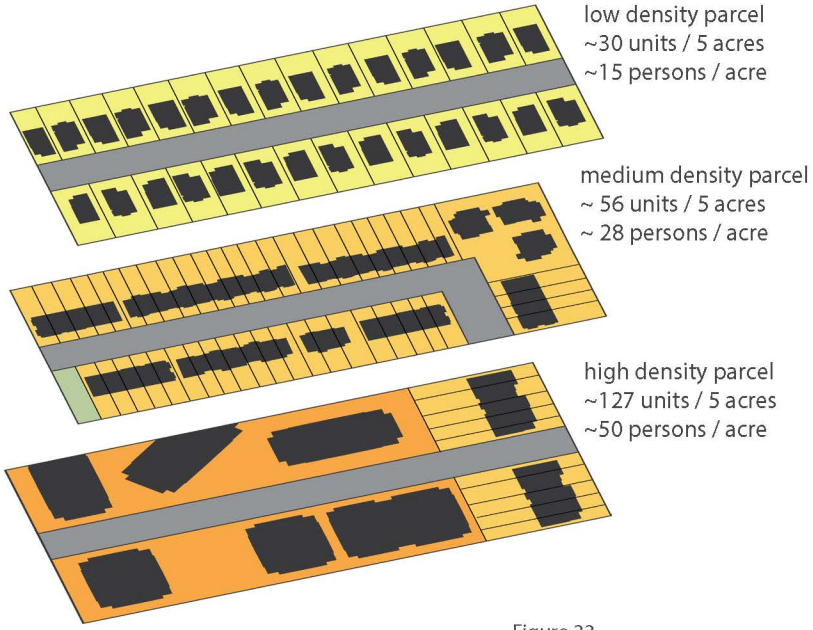


Figure 33

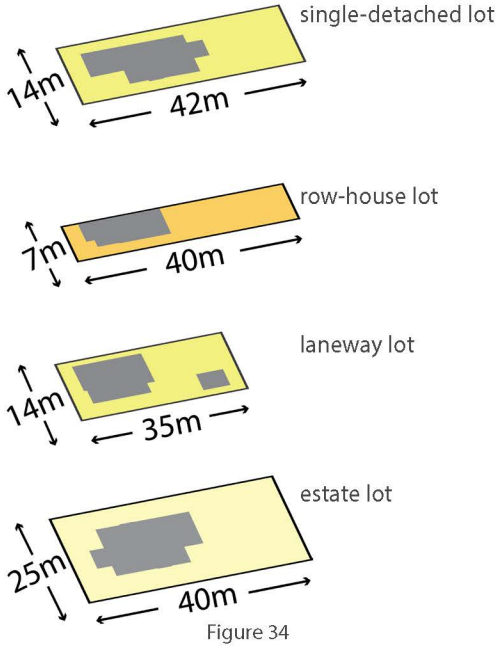


Figure 34

Figure 35

6.0 Diverse Residential

6.2 Diversity

The need for housing diversity in West Springs is two-fold:
1) to support a diverse population, with a mix of income and family-structure
2) to support multi-generational living within the community

Housing diversity doesn't only support a range of newcomers to the community, but also supports existing residents of a changing demographic.
The WSDP supports a variety of housing, and provides an additional 672 single-detached units, 320 attached units, and over 700 apartment and condo units.

6.3 Single Detached

Single-detached units will remain a prominent housing type in West Springs. The existing community is largely designed for families with children. This framework has been included in the WSDP to compliment the existing community and support a family-oriented neighbourhood.
The SW region will contain only single-detached units, and will offer estate-style lots and housing. This will integrate well with the existing housing type in the area, and the larger lot sizes will compliment the largely untouched natural environment.

Estate Homes

Single Detached

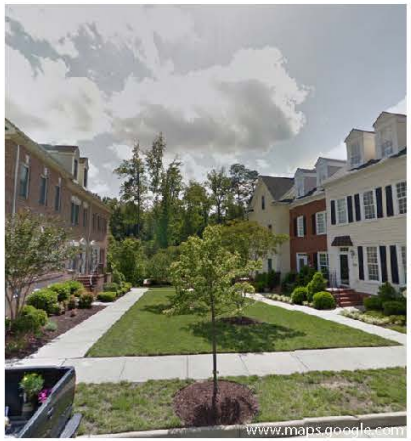
6.0 Diverse Residential

6.4 Semi-Detached

Semi detached housing shall be well integrated within the single-family detached landscape offering the community increased diversity, and avoiding a homogenous streetscape. Either the garage or the side of the house may attach to other units. Promoting high- end as well as lower-end, semi-detached units is desirable, and offers residents more housing options.

6.5 Rowhousing

Rowhousing should also be well integrated within the single-family detached landscape to promote residential diversity. Lot sizes shall be between 6 and 10 meters wide, and garages, if any, shall be located either at the back and accessed through laneways, or at the front flush to the building. If garages are located in the front and accessed via the neighbourhood street, they must be attached or located side-by-side to the neighbouring garage in order to diminish the impact of interrupted sidewalk access.



6.0 Diverse Residential

6.6 Low-Rise Apartment

West Springs currently lacks multi-family apartment building, with only 4% of housing stock comprised of apartment and condo units. Apartment-style dwellings increase density, and offer affordable housing options with low maintenance responsibility. The Manor on Kensington Road in Calgary has 26 units and underground parking, and is an appropriate scale for the West Springs neighbourhood.

Multi-family buildings should be low-rise apartments, with no more than four storeys. The number of units offered should be kept low in order to foster a small community feel. Underground parking shall be installed in order to leave room for private open space.

6.7 Laneways

Laneway housing is a great way to increase density and is one solution that promotes the idea of a multigenerational community. Above each garage is the opportunity to build living space of a maximum of 1,000 sqf per floor. These housing options can be considered as secondary suites which are rented out, or seperate lots available for purchase. Laneways must therefore be paved and must be of higher grade building quality.

Lanway housing may be two floors only if the main floor is not used as a garage or the garage is shared with the main floor of the suite. Maximum heights for such structures must not exceed 10 meters including where there are integrated garage uses.

Surrey, BC

Scenic Acres, Calgary AB

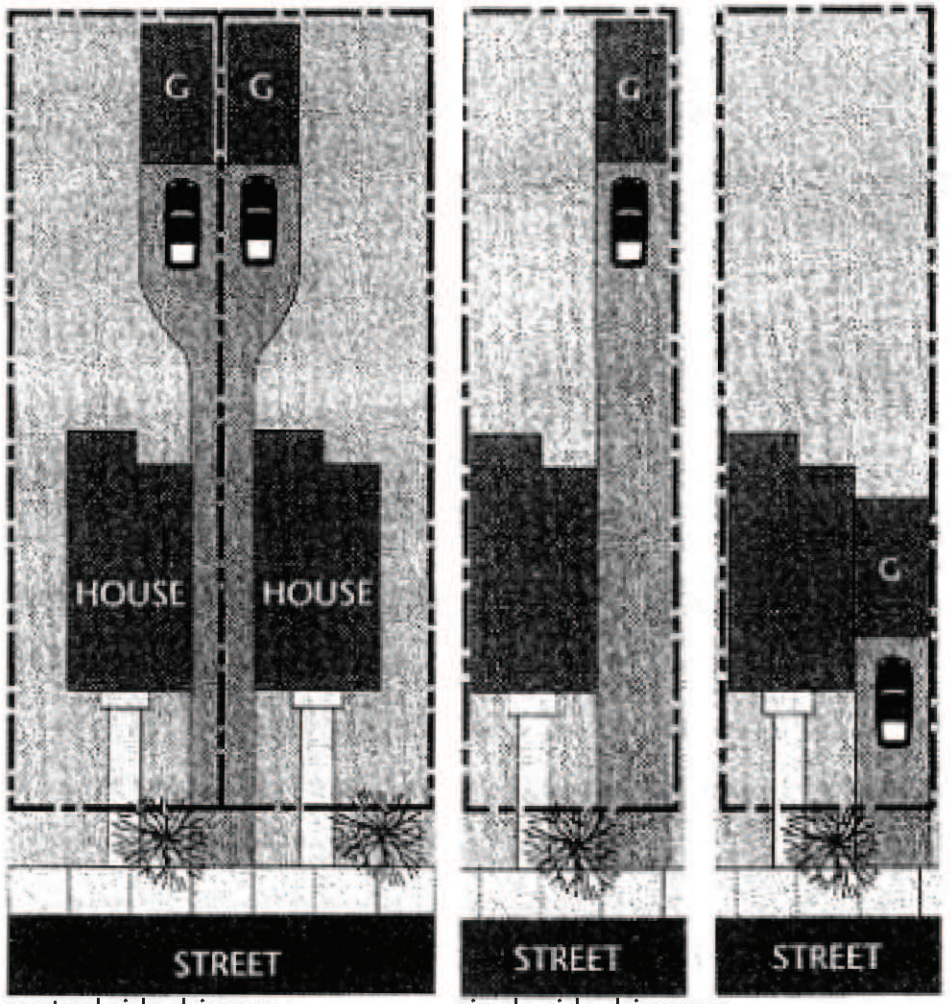
Toronto, ON

6.0 Diverse Residential

6.8 Garages, Driveways & Parking

Single and mutual side driveways shall be provided where possible. Where driveways leading to a side yard or rear yard, parking and mutual driveways are shared by two adjoining properties. These parking solutions accommodate front driveway vehicular access without compromising the streetscape. This also permits houses to have shorter setbacks and takes the garage to the back instead of the front. Mutual side driveways also create longer sidewalks that are un-interrupted by driveways.

Where driveways do not exist, on-street parking shall be allowed in addition to laneway access to garages and backyard parking.



mutual side driveway

single side driveway

http://www.michaelwalker.ca/files/staffreports/PreserveNeighbourStreetscapes-May96.pdf

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

"I feel our area lacks retail development. It would be nice to shop closer to home."
"We need more family centred services and restaurants."

- community residents

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

7.1 Public Spaces

There are three parcels in West Springs slated for commercial mixed-use. Two parcels are associated with the community core on the southeast corner of 85 St SW and 9 Ave SW. These have been designated direct control, multi-residential and low-density residential. A proposal has already been submitted by the developer. They are allowed to increase density if they provide additional uses such as a public plaza and park space.

7.1.1 Plaza

Creating vibrant community nodes requires a combination of various active uses present. From public parks and plazas to commercial and residential units.

7.1.2 Linear park

The linear park is located along 85th Street and benefits from long sun exposure both in the winter and the summer seasons.

7.1.3 Temporary parking closure

Both the plaza and the parking lot on the main commercial node may be temporarily closed for various events and community gatherings, from festivals to weekend farmer's markets.

main commercial node

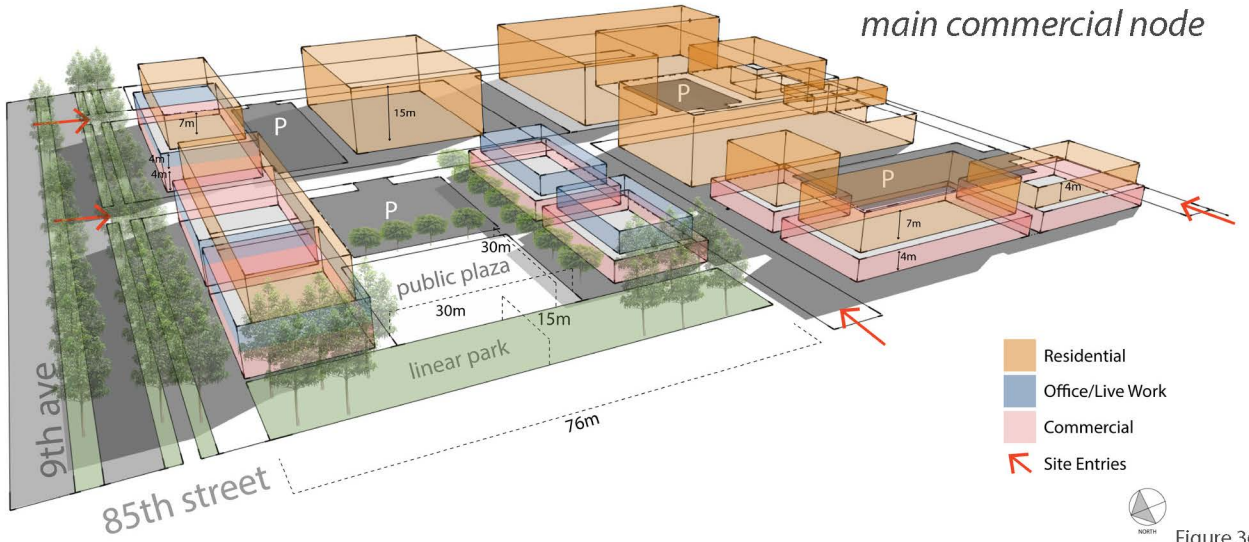


Figure 36

upper commercial node

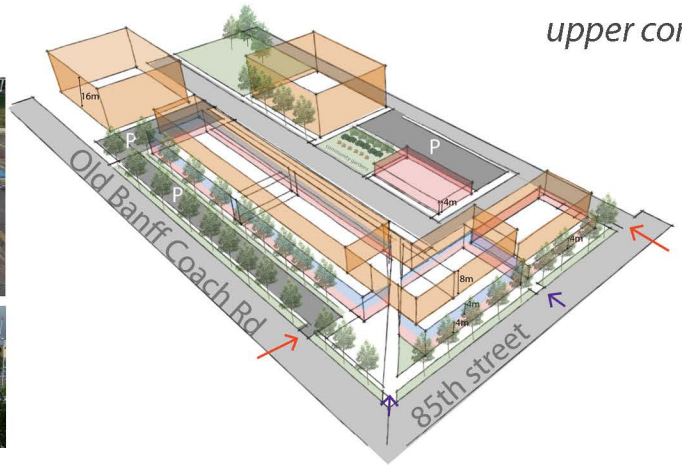


Figure 37

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

7.2 Public Realm

The existing community core was developed not for the people but for the car. New mixed-use developments need to move away from auto-centricity to create an attractive and safe activity node.

Landscaping

Street trees must be installed within the setbacks from streets in each mixed-use parcel. Elm trees and low shrubs may be selected to maintain visibility.

Local aspen trees transplanted from development sites should be used in accent gardens, natural barriers and stormwater bioretention areas in the mixed-use parcels.

Examples of sidewalks with room for restaurant patios, seating, & landscaping

Sidewalks

Generous sidewalks of 3 metres wide should be provided to allow for pedestrians with strollers, dogs, and mobility devices to share the path. There should be room for friends to run into one another and stop to chat on the sidewalk, or for kids to draw with chalk.

Active Frontages

Retail frontages shall be oriented towards the street and will animate the public realm with the use of patios, parklets, and mixed material surfaces. Entrances should be spaced by no more than 8 meters interval. Sidewalks shall be wide enough for pedestrian access, as well as for patios and outdoor seating, where appropriate.

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

7.3 Parking

The commercial centre of West Springs is auto-centric and dominated by surface parking. This discourages foot traffic and does not provide a reason to remain in the community centre.

The undelevoped parcels currently slated for commercial mixed-use must be designed differently. The desigation governing the upper commercial area demands that a parking lot not come between any street and building, or building and park. The Community Association has written a letter supporting the developer's intention of underground parking.

Tenant parking must be located underground. Where units are limited to the upper level of retail, the apartments must be connected by a +15 or shared lobby with a common underground parking facility.

Independent apartments must have underground parking.

Street parking must be allowed on internal streets accesing the mixed-use developments.

Surface parking lots must be designed with sufficient visibility and lighting in order to foster community programming events on occasion. This may include farmer's markets, chalk festivals, car shows, or dances on a rotating basis.

Surface parking shall be designed using best practices from Calgary's Stormwater Design Manual.

Small scale angled parking at Britannia Plaza, Calgary AB

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

7.4 Rooftops

Due to the inevitable change in perviousness of these parcels as they develop, rooftops should be designed to accommodate a rooftop garden and green space to capture rain water and replace some of the air filtering capacity of prior vegetation Rooftops in these community nodes will receive an enormous amount of sunlight as a result of height restrictions. Stand alone residential building design should consider private patio and play space on the rooftop for the common use of their tenants.

Wherever impervious pavement is to be employed, design of the adjacent building shall integrate a green roof.

Developers should be encouraged to incorporate private space into the building footprint, and allow public access to spaces at grade for better permeability of community nodes.

Residential rooftop patio on Kensington Rd, Calgary

Long term care facility, Farmington Hills, MI

Silverwood on the Park, Bowness, Calgary

7.0 Vibrant Community Nodes

7.5 Access

Paved laneways provide added connectivity and keep vehicles off the neighbourhood streets to provide pedestrians with safer sidewalks, un-interrupted by driveways.

While vehicle entries should be limited, pedestrian connections shall be available from at least three sides of each mixed-use parcel.

Loading docks and service access points should be shared by adjacent uses.

While vehicle entries should be limited, pedestrian connections shall be available from at least three sides of each mixed-use parcel.

Loading docks and service access points should be shared by adjacent uses.

8.0 Implementation

"Some cohesive development plans [are needed] with more green space and connected pathways."

- community resident

8.0 Implementation

8.1 Phasing

Due to the uncertainty of how development will unfold, east-west roads will provide the best access to most parcels.

To improve connectivity once land has been developed, a north-south right of way should be preserved between parcels for future connections and for visual relief from linear development.

Pocket parks shall be created where future linkages are likely to occur. This can be seen in the southwest portion of West Springs.

This pattern should be replicated in the southeast, where connections to Bow Trail or Coach Hill may be possible in the future.

The public spaces and parks included in the plan are intended to serve existing residents as well as newcomers.

These facilities and services should be a priority and the City should pursue an agreement with landowners to host temporary uses on vacant land until build-out is completed.

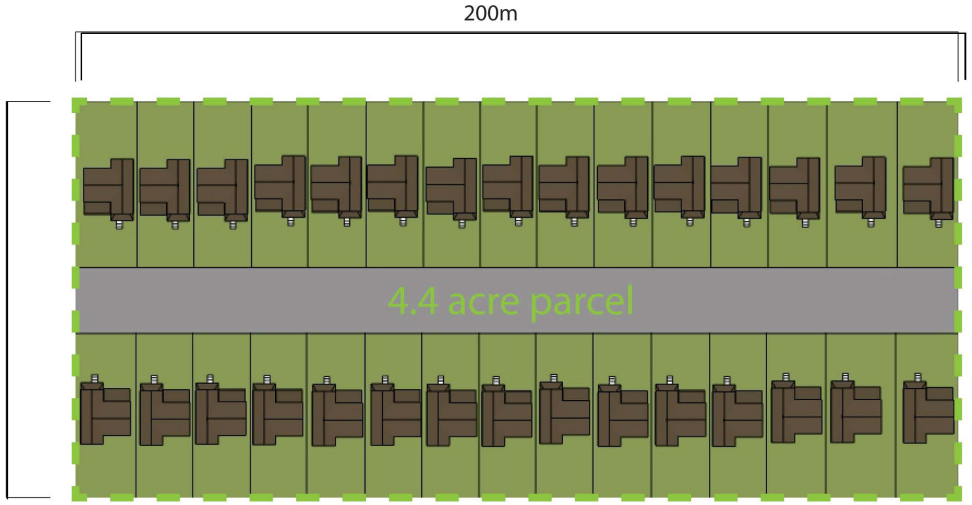


Figure 38

8.0 Implementation

8.2 Street and Parking Revitalization

Residential

81st and 85th Street shall be upgraded to accommodate street parking, pedestrians, and bikes, while calming the traffic. These streets will be enhanced with medians and street trees, and are to be clearly divided and marked.

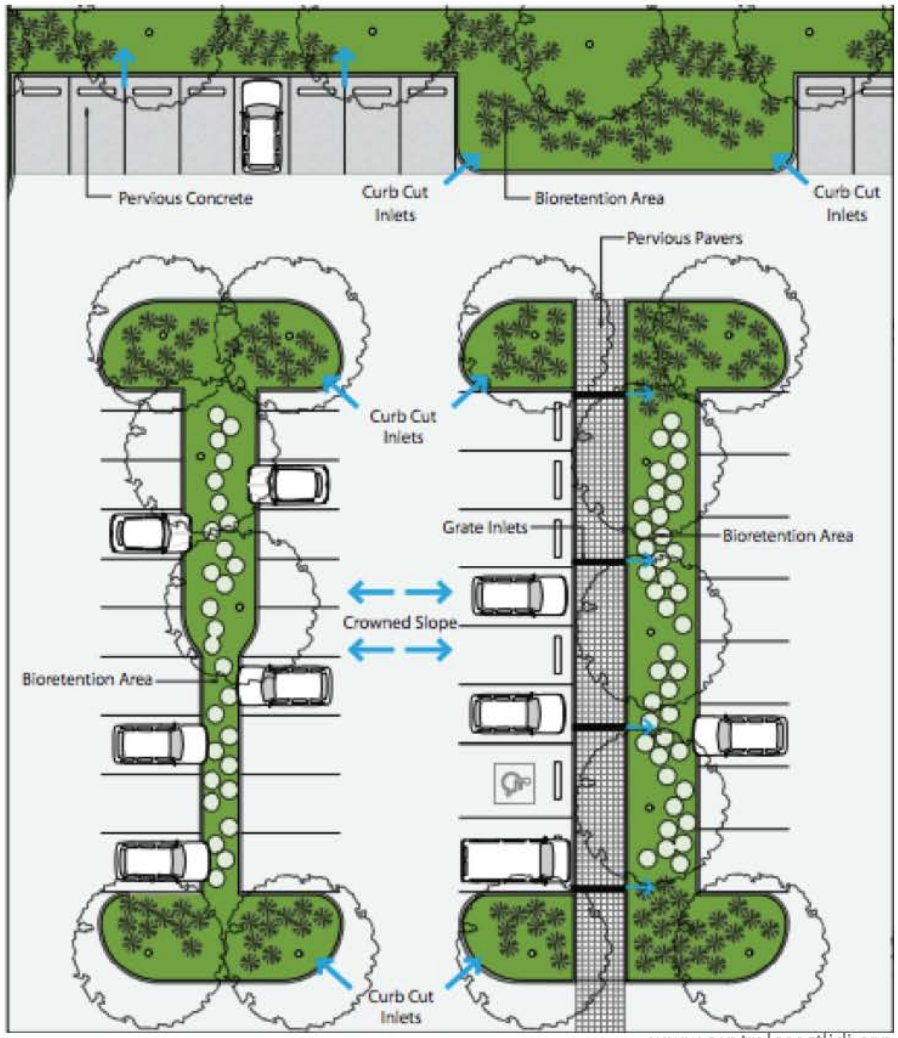
Commercial

In order to avoid auto-centric commercial development it is important to discourage large surface parking lots fronting the street edges and intersections. Instead, providing smaller pockets of parking lots behind buildings and separate from the public pedestrian realm. Current surface parking should be part of a rotating schedule of temporary community programming space.

Low impact development measures may be applied, such as biorentention swales and rain gardens. Not only is this sustainable, but it also provides a break between vehicles and adds attractiveness to the site. Pervious asphalt and pavers also add character in addition to storm water management solutions.
Street parking shall be provided on neighbourhood streets as well as the neighbourhood boulevard.
Parking lots shall be parceled by sidewalks and vegetation to increase pedestrian safety and connections through lots.

Small-scale angled parking may be provided in front of stores so long as they have minimized visual impacts on the streetscape. This can be achieved by adding pedestrian sidewalks and parceled by vegetation.

Clear and protected walkways shall be provided in parking lots for enhanced pedestrian access and increased safety.



www.centralcoastlidi.org
Figure 39

8.0 Implementation

8.2 Street and Parking Revitalization

LID parking lots parceled by sidewalks and vegetation

8.0 Implementation

8.3 Architectural Guidelines

An assessment should be undertaken to evaluate current architecture in West Springs, and public engagement should provide a means of determining the architectural features and character that should continue as parcels are developed.

In order to maintain and enhance the overall character of the community, architectural styles must be sensitive, yet diverse.

Houses shall have various architectural styles and must not be grouped, but rather scattered throughout the development. Grouping will only promote homogenous neighbourhoods that lack character and charm. Houses with front garages are encouraged to be neighbours with houses with side or backyard garages.

Traditional inspired homes shall be built using modern materials. Traditional and modern inspired homes will be welcomed in the new development. Together, side by side, these diverse styles will help to create a neighbourhood that represents each resident's individuality and style.

Houses with front porches and laneway developments are strongly encouraged in order to promote activity towards the neighbourhood streets, both inside and outside. This will prevent deserted streets that otherwise feel unused and unsafe.

Large windows that face the street can significantly increase safety by bringing more "eyes on the streets".

Front garages should not project out towards the street, but should rather be either flush with the building or located in the back. This will create enhanced street activity and allow residents better visibility of the street.

Left: example interior activity spilling out onto the street. Making it more pleasant and safe to walk down the street, particularly at night.

Left: example of a vibrant neighbourhood street, where residents homes are interactive with the street

Example of appropriate front facing garage

Homogenous, un-animated Street

8.0 Implementation
8.3 Architectural Guidelines

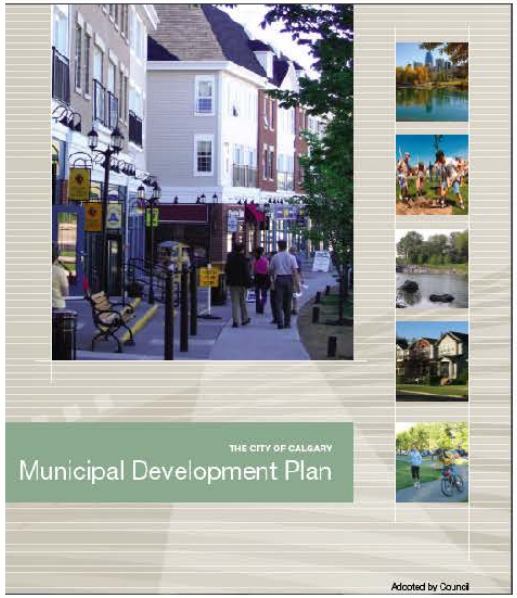
Examples of houses with porches, promoting interactions between the public and private realms.

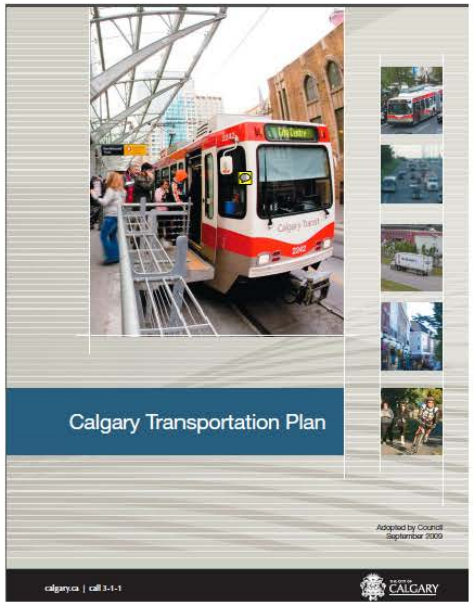
Examples of front facing garages which do not create a divide betwen the private realm and the street.

8.0 Implementation

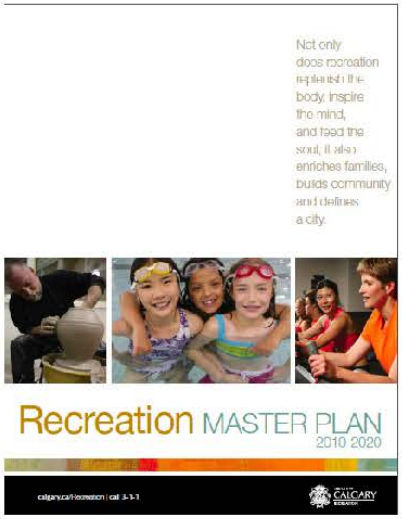
8.4 Recommended Resources

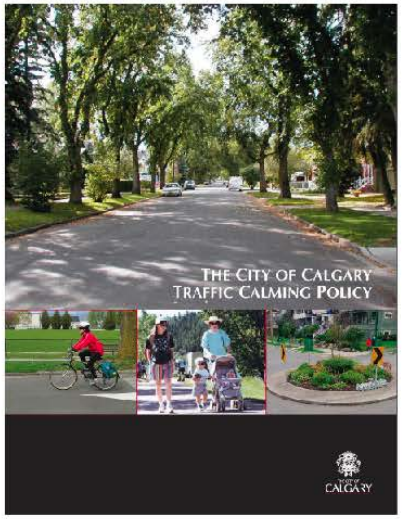
WSCR Community Association must encourage the alignment of statutory documents such as the Municipal Development Plan and the Calgary Transportation Plan.

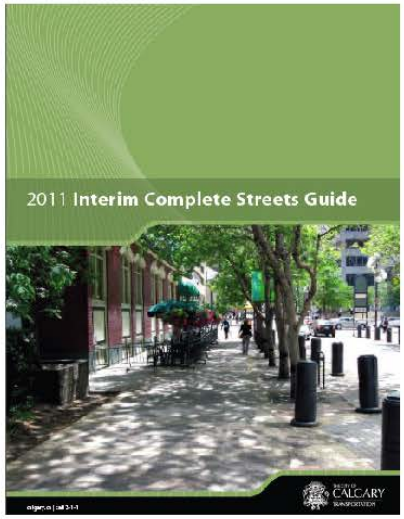




The WSCR Community Association should ensure that each development proposal is contributing to the city-wide goals and needs, as outlined in the documents shown on the right.







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