Happyplace
Design Studio

Plan 630 Advanced Professional Planning Studio
SADDLE RIDGE AND TARADALE
COMMUNITY DESIGN STRATEGIES

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Happyplace
Design Studio

Happyplace Design Studio is a small planning and urban design firm based out of Calgary, Alberta. The multidisciplinary team provides a wide range of urban planning and design services including analysis, public engagement, and comprehensive community planning. Happyplace Design Studio is rooted in compassion for creating healthier, happier, and more inclusive communities. Happyplace Design Studio strives to reflect the cultures, identities, and meanings of the places we live into the built environment.

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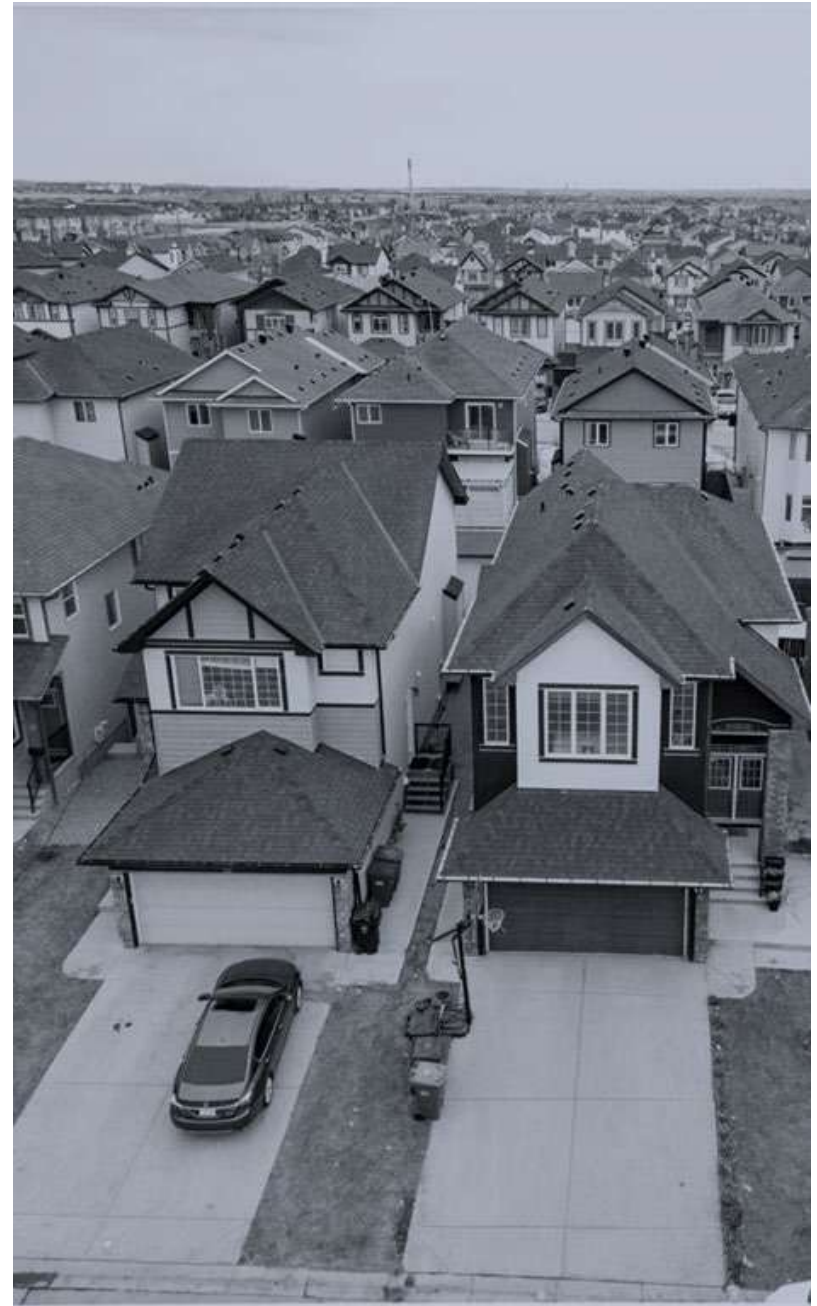SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING + LANDSCAPE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is twofold. The first purpose is to provide our team, as students, with the opportunity to carry out a comprehensive urban planning project for an existing community. The second purpose is to provide the communities of study, Saddle Ridge and Taradale, with a range of tools, strategies, and ideas to use as playbook for proposing and making positive future change in their neighbourhoods. The introduction of this report describes the project itself, the initial aspirations of the community associations, the documents that both inform project decisions and provide the basis for a legal framework to operate within, the project methodology and timeline, and the site's location. During the analysis section of the report, our team identifies the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of the site in terms of context, cultural landscapes (history, demographics, schools, social amenities), the natural environment (open spaces, climate, sun/shadows, natural areas), built form (land uses, zoning, building typologies, laneway considerations), and infrastructure (transit, roads/streets, pathways, incidents). The next section of this report looks at the community engagement process. This first session involved a community workshop where residents could express their concerns, aspirations, and favourite aspects of their neighbourhood. After developing a design concept, an open house session was coordinated to generate feedback and further guide the design process. The next section of the report goes into the final design concept. Based on the previous phases in the methodology, a vision was developed to celebrate and represent the unique identity of the communities and their residents; foster social connections and community participation; bring life and diverse uses/activities to under-utilized spaces; improve pedestrian and cycling safety while also considering the importance of personal vehicles; and to provide greater housing choice for a diverse population while also considering the needs of Calgary as a sustainably growing population. In addressing built form, we recommend a more diverse range of housing and transit-oriented development, small local libraries, and a distributed web of diverse commercial gathering places. In addressing mobility, we recommend a network of bike lanes, a central multi-use pathway, traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures for priority roads and intersections, and multi-lingual wayfinding signage. To address open spaces and the public realm, we recommend linear park programming, multi-generational playgrounds, improvements to stormwater ponds, winter city interventions, and broad public realm features for the entire site. Lastly, to address Saddletowne Circle, we recommend transit-oriented development, commercial areas with pedestrian boulevards, public realm improvements, and a revamped Central Park with recreational amenities and a central gathering/event space. Finally, a list of policy recommendations concludes this report.

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1 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Saddle Ridge and Taradale are relatively new communities on the periphery of the City of Calgary. Initial communication with the community associations revealed a great need for assistance. There is a widespread feeling among residents that their communities are neglected and do not represent the culture and vibrancy that they have to offer. As urban planners, it is our role to engage in a collaborative planning process and actively listen to community feedback in order to respond with innovative solutions that reflect the unique needs and aspirations of a community. Only then can vibrant, sustainable, and equitable communities be fostered. This report illustrates the challenges and aspirations experienced by Saddle Ridge and Taradle and in response, proposes a vision for the future that is rooted in creating a healthier, happier, and more inclusive community. This report begins with a comprehensive analysis of existing site conditions followed by a summary of our public engagement processes. These two phases inform the final section of the report, which is an extensive design concept proposal intended to be used by the community associations for making positive future change.

THE PROJECT

The communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale are seeking to address significant gaps in urban planning and design to enhance the livability of their residents and improve the experience for visitors. The purpose of this project is twofold. The first purpose is to provide students with the opportunity to carry out a comprehensive urban planning project based on an existing community need through analysis, public engagement, synthesis of ideas, and ultimately the formulation of an urban planning and design solution. The second purpose of this project is to provide the community associations of Saddle Ridge and Taradale with a range of tools, strategies, and ideas to use as a playbook for proposing and making positive change in their neighbourhoods. The following aspects will be addressed in this report:

- Developing guidelines for future land use and development

- Developing guidelines for housing redevelopment to foster inclusivity and support a diverse population

- Portraying the character and identity of the people who live in these communities

- Enhancing mobility and providing safe linkages for people of all ages

- Enhancing the community open space system and public realm

- Developing placemaking interventions that respond to the community

The key stakeholders for this project include:

- Saddle Ridge Community Association

- Taradale Community Association

- The City of Calgary

- Residents and the general public
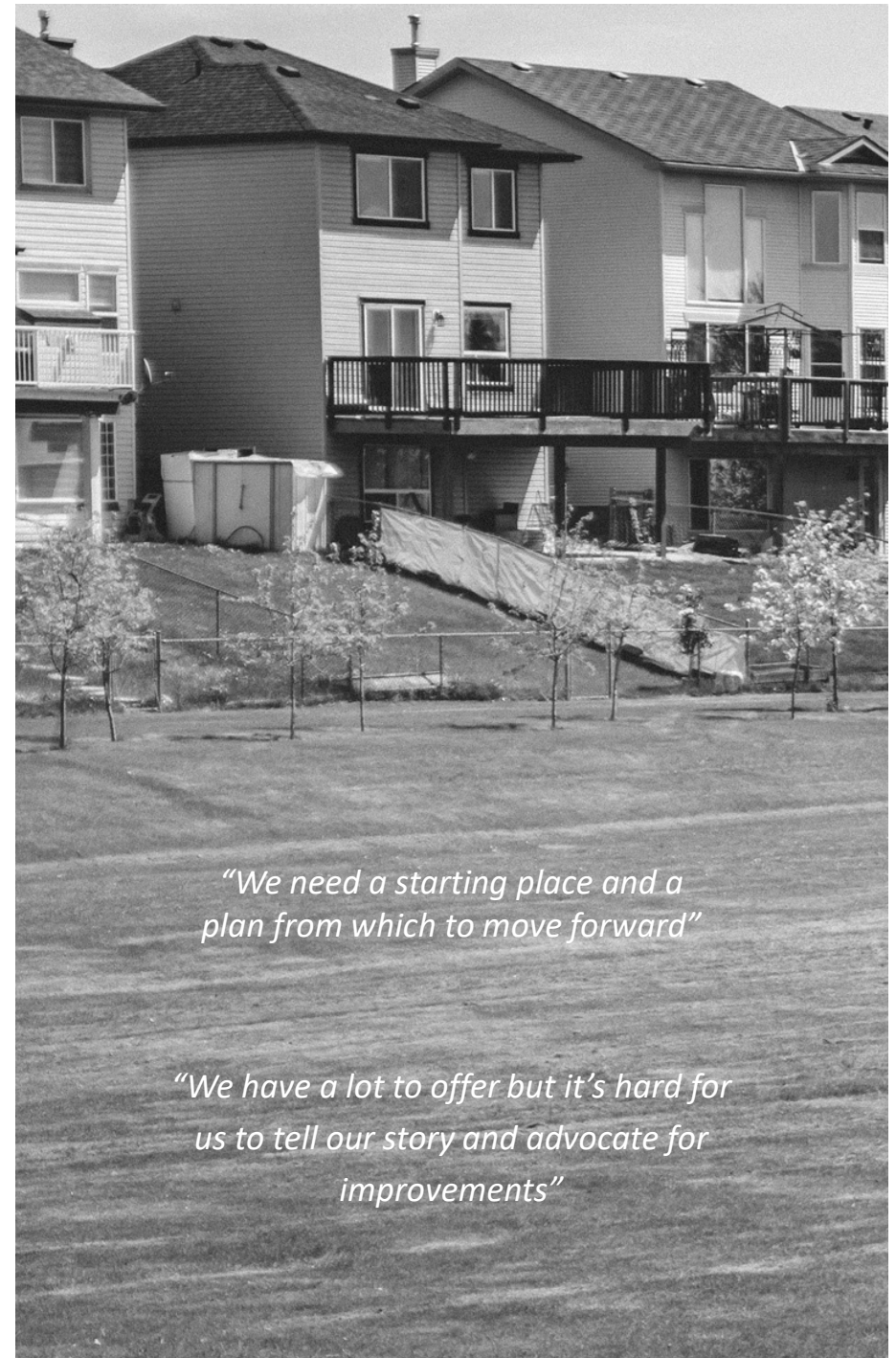
"We need a starting place and a plan from which to move forward"

"We have a lot to offer but it's hard for us to tell our story and advocate for improvements"

INITIAL ASPIRATIONS

The community association representatives from Saddle Ridge and Taradale provided our team with an initial statement of interest to provide some key insights on both the aspirations and the challenges experienced in their communities. These statements created a starting off point to identify the needs of the communities and the scope of this project. Generally, both communities have goals in enhancing the livability of their neighbourhoods for residents while also improving the experience for visitors. The following list summarizes these initial goals and aspirations:

- Create a brand for the communities that promotes a sense of pride

- Explore temporary solutions that could engage residents in the process

- Improve cohesion, integration and create a welcoming environment for all

- Improve wayfinding and mapping to aide with navigation

- Address accessibility and improve pedestrian safety and experience

- Improve the vibrancy of open spaces and the public realm through colour and placemaking

- Improve the inclusivity of open spaces and the public realm through multi-generational uses, multi-cultural representation, and the celebration of diversity

- Create gathering places for people of all ages and cultures to connect, socialize and feel a sense of belonging

- Improve the diversity of uses and activities for community members
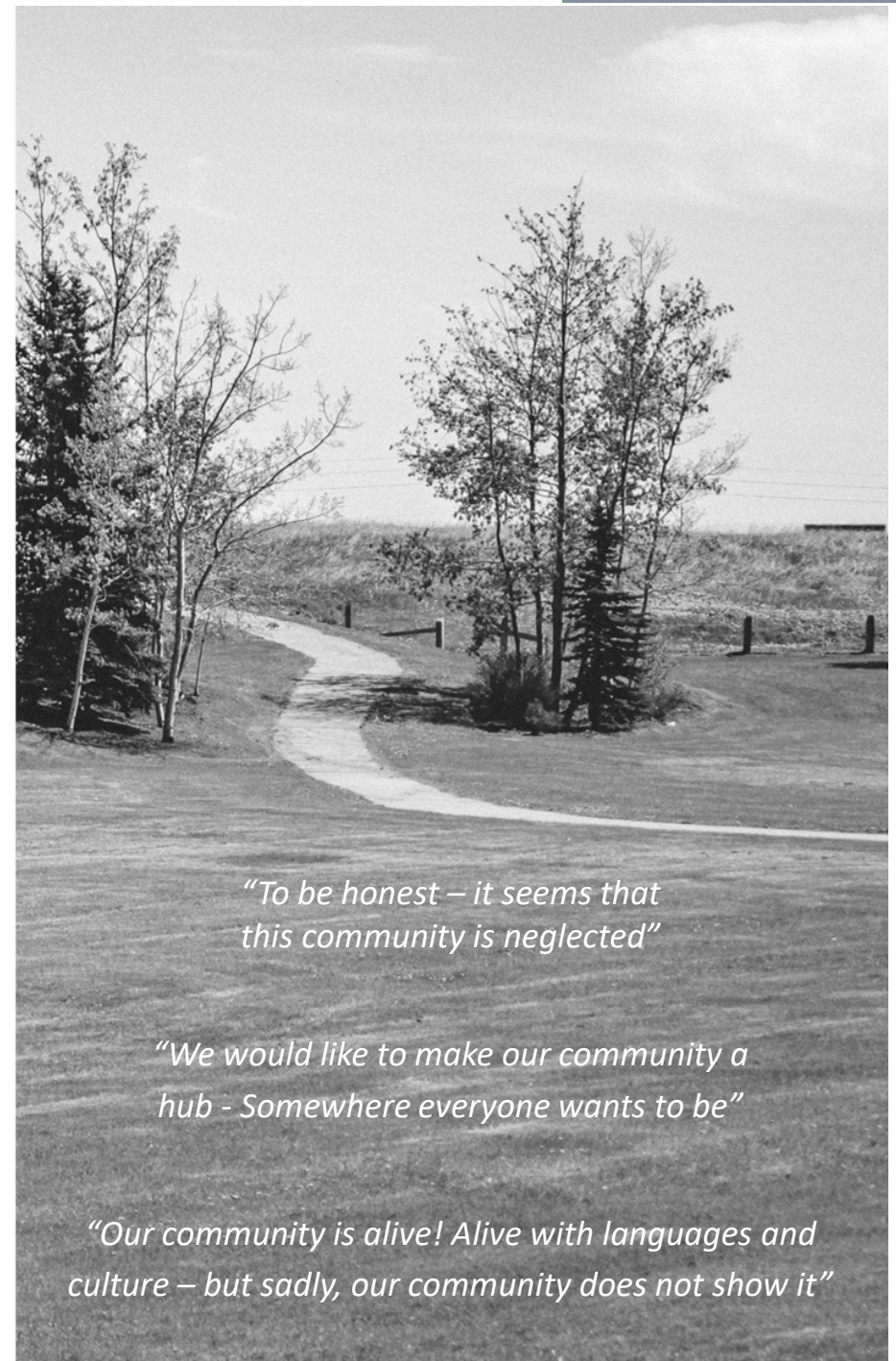
"To be honest – it seems that this community is neglected"

"We would like to make our community a hub - Somewhere everyone wants to be"

"Our community is alive! Alive with languages and culture – but sadly, our community does not show it"

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual plan for Saddle Ridge and Taradale operates under the legal framework of the City of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan (Volumes 1, 2, and 3), the Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan, and the Rocky View County / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan. These documents have also been used to inform and guide decision making processes throughout the completion of the project.

City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 1
The City of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan Volume 1 is a strategic and statutory policy document that guides Calgary's growth and city-building. It contains information on the role and scope of the plan, city-wide policies, typologies for Calgary's urban structure, specific use policies, and a city-wide growth strategy.

City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 2 – Implementation Guidebooks
Volume 2 of the City of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan includes three implementation guidebooks which are the "New Community Planning Guidebook," the "Centre City Guidebook," and the "Developed Areas Guidebook." The purpose of this volume is to standardize and simplify the planning process, land use frameworks and common policies to guide growth and change in established areas.

**City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 3 – Calgary Transportation Plan**
Volume 3 of the City of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan is the Calgary Transportation Plan which is a long-range plan to provides policy direction for how Calgary will deliver transportation options over the next 60 years. The impact of these policies contributes to economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan (ASP)
The Saddle Ridge ASP includes the entirety of the project site within its boundaries whose purpose is to implement the City of Calgary's broad planning objectives and policies of the MDP through logical, compatible, and sustainable development. This plan also guides and directs specific land use, subdivision, and development decisions for the area.

Rocky View County / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)
The Rocky View County / City of Calgary IDP affirms the cooperation between the two municipalities and provides the groundwork for a relationship that is constructive and long-lasting and is built upon respect and open communication. The purpose of this plan is to identify an area of mutual interest, minimize land use conflicts, foster collaboration and communication, and outline processes for conflict resolution within boundary.
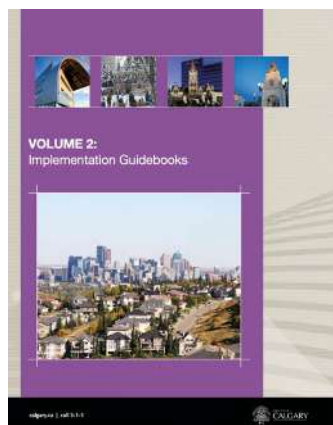
METHODOLOGY

This entirety of this project took four months to complete and can be divided into three major phases (in grey, blue, and orange below). After gaining a better understanding of the project itself, the scope and reviewing relevant policies and documents, our team moved on perform a comprehensive analysis of the site and it's surrounding context. This included aspects of cultural landscapes, the natural environment, built form, and infrastructure. This phase also included a community walking tour and a number of site visits. After presenting the analysis to the steering committee, our team moved on to complete the draft design phase where idea generation took place. This began with a community workshop where data was collected from residents of Saddle Ridge and Taradale. The draft design was created and presented to the steering committee for feedback which was then incorporated into the third phase, the final design. This phase involved formulating urban planning and design solutions which were presented to the public during an open house session. Lastly, this project was formally presented to the steering committee with the final product being this report.

Startup Meeting

Analysis

Community Walking Tour — JAN 24

Community Workshop — FEB 11

Draft Design

Final Design

Open House — APR 8

Report — APR 20

2023 — JANUARY — FEBRUARY — MARCH — APRIL

Steering Committee Presentation FEB 9

Steering Committee Presentation MAR 9

Site Visit #2

Steering Committee Presentation APR 13
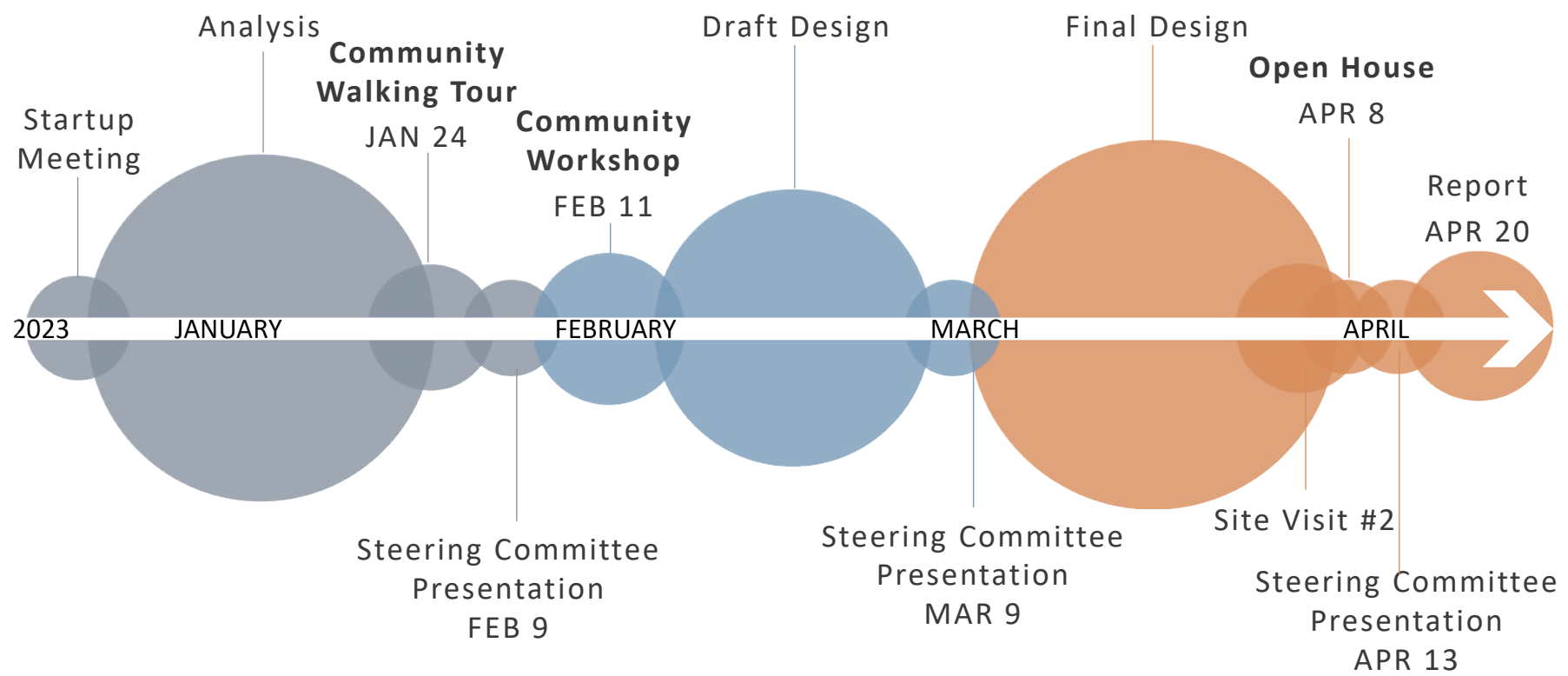
DETAILED PROJECT SCHEDULE

Month:		January			February			March				April			
Week:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Phase 1: Project Understanding, Scope, and Review																
1.1 Confirm project scope, work plan, and timeline	X															
1.2 Review and update base maps	X															
1.3 Conduct initial site background research	X															
1.4 Site visits		X														
1.5 Create an inventory of site photos		X														
1.6 Review relevant statutory documents		X														
1.7 Review relevant non-statutory documents		X														
Phase 2: Analysis																
2.1 Conduct environmental analysis		X	X	X	X	X										
2.2 Analyze existing land uses		X	X	X	X	X										
2.3 Analyze mobility and traffic patterns		X	X	X	X	X										
2.4 Analyze access and connectivity		X	X	X	X	X										
2.5 Analyze historic evolution and growth patterns		X	X	X	X	X										
2.6 Analyze demographics and census data		X	X	X	X	X										
2.7 Analyze building typologies		X	X	X	X	X										
2.8 Identify natural and cultural assets/strengths		X	X	X	X	X										
2.9 Analyze public realm		X	X	X	X	X										
2.10 Public engagement - Analysis Community Workshop						X										
2.11 SWOT Analysis						X										
2.12 Community mapping prioritization						X										
2.13 Model building							X									
Phase 3: Concept Drafts and Idea Development																
3.1 Develop guidelines for future land use and development								X	X	X	X					
3.2 Develop a character/identity								X	X	X	X					
3.3 Enhance mobility and safe linkages								X	X	X	X					
3.4 Enhancing open space system								X	X	X	X					
3.5 Develop guidelines for housing redevelopment								X	X	X	X					
3.6 Plan for new commercial core and LRT								X	X	X	X					
3.7 Incorporate placemaking and public realm improvements								X	X	X	X					
3.8 Draft design review with steering committee											X					
Phase 4: Reviews and Revisions																
4.1 Project revisions												X	X	X	X	
Phase 5: Final Design Solution																
5.1 Final presentation															X	
5.2 Public engagement - Community Open House															X	
5.3 Final comprehensive report																X

N

Deerfoot Trail

Site

Trans Canada Highway

Glenmore Trail

Stoney Trail

PROJECT SITE

The communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale lie in the northeast quadrant of Calgary near the city boundary. The site is bound by Airport Trail to the north, Stoney Trail to the west, 64th Avenue in the south, and Métis Trail to the west. The area of the entire site is around 8.2 km^2 (820 ha). The site includes the entirety of Saddle Ridge and Taradale along with a very small portion of Martindale to the southwest. Saddletowne LRT station and the Genesis Centre recreation facility can be found within the boundaries of the site along with six commercial areas and park spaces among predominantly single-family homes.
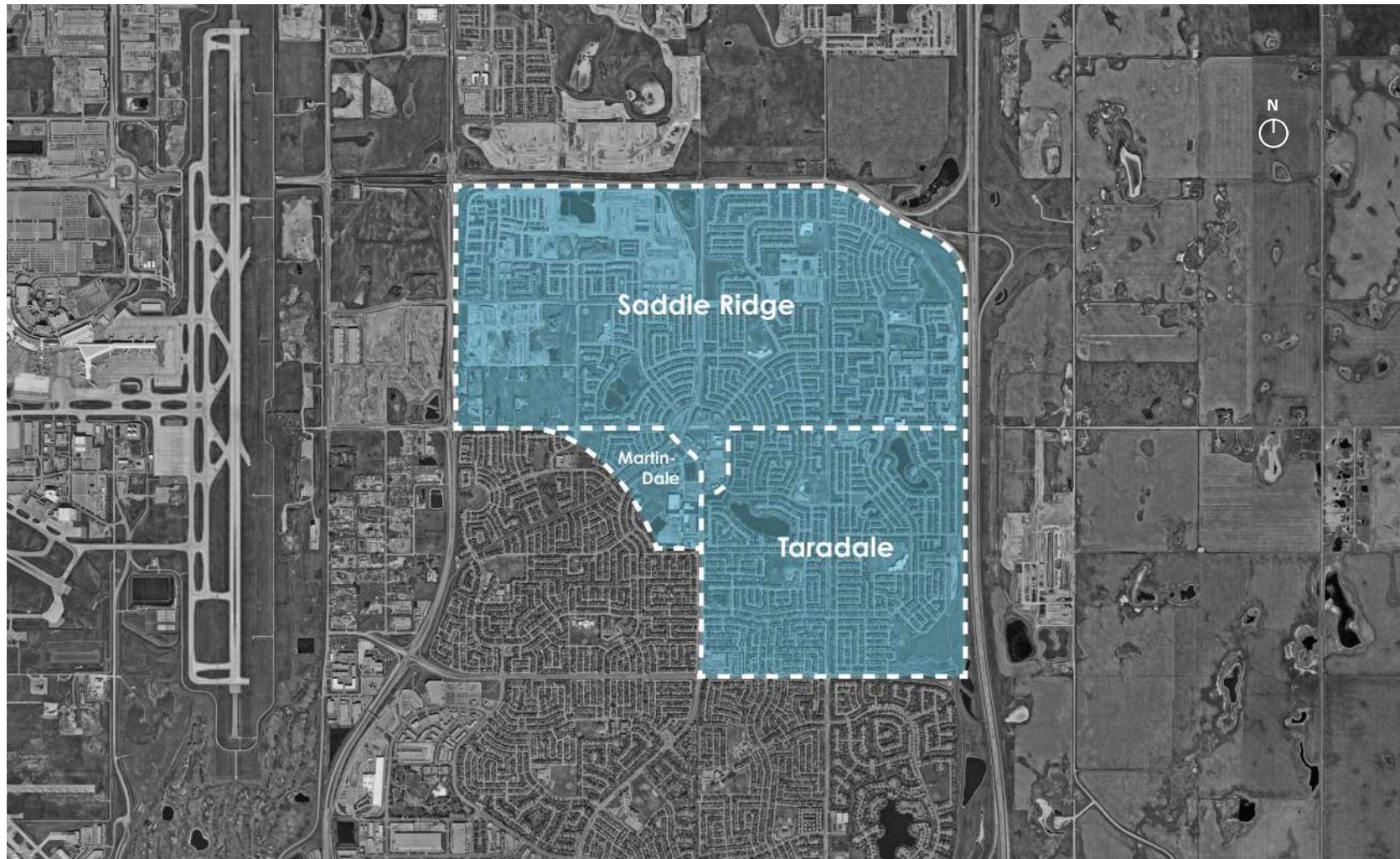
2 ANALYSIS

Beginning with an analysis of the site context, a few strengths became evident. This includes proximity to Meridian/Franklin/Sunridge and Balzac which are major employment areas, proximity to the airport, and the presence of an LRT station which leads to competitive commute times towards downtown and Meridian/Franklin/Sunridge compared to driving. Some weaknesses include a close proximity to the airport which may lead to noise, the site is not close to any major educational institutions, and because of it's peripheral location in the city, the site is still very car-dependant. Transit and vehicle commute times to major destinations range from 15-75 mins and 15-30 mins, respectively.

LEGEND & TRAVEL TIMES TO MAJOR DESTINATIONS

A University of Calgary
- 53 mins
- 30 mins

B Mount Royal University
- 60 mins
- 40 mins

C Downtown Calgary
- 30 mins
- 30 mins

D Manchester/Alyth
- 50 mins
- 30 mins

E Calgary Airport
- 40 mins
- 15 mins

F Balzac
- 75 mins
- 15 mins

G Meridian/Franklin/Sunridge
- 15 mins
- 10 mins

H Foothills / East Shepard
- 55 mins
- 25 mins

I South Health Campus
- 75 mins
- 30 mins
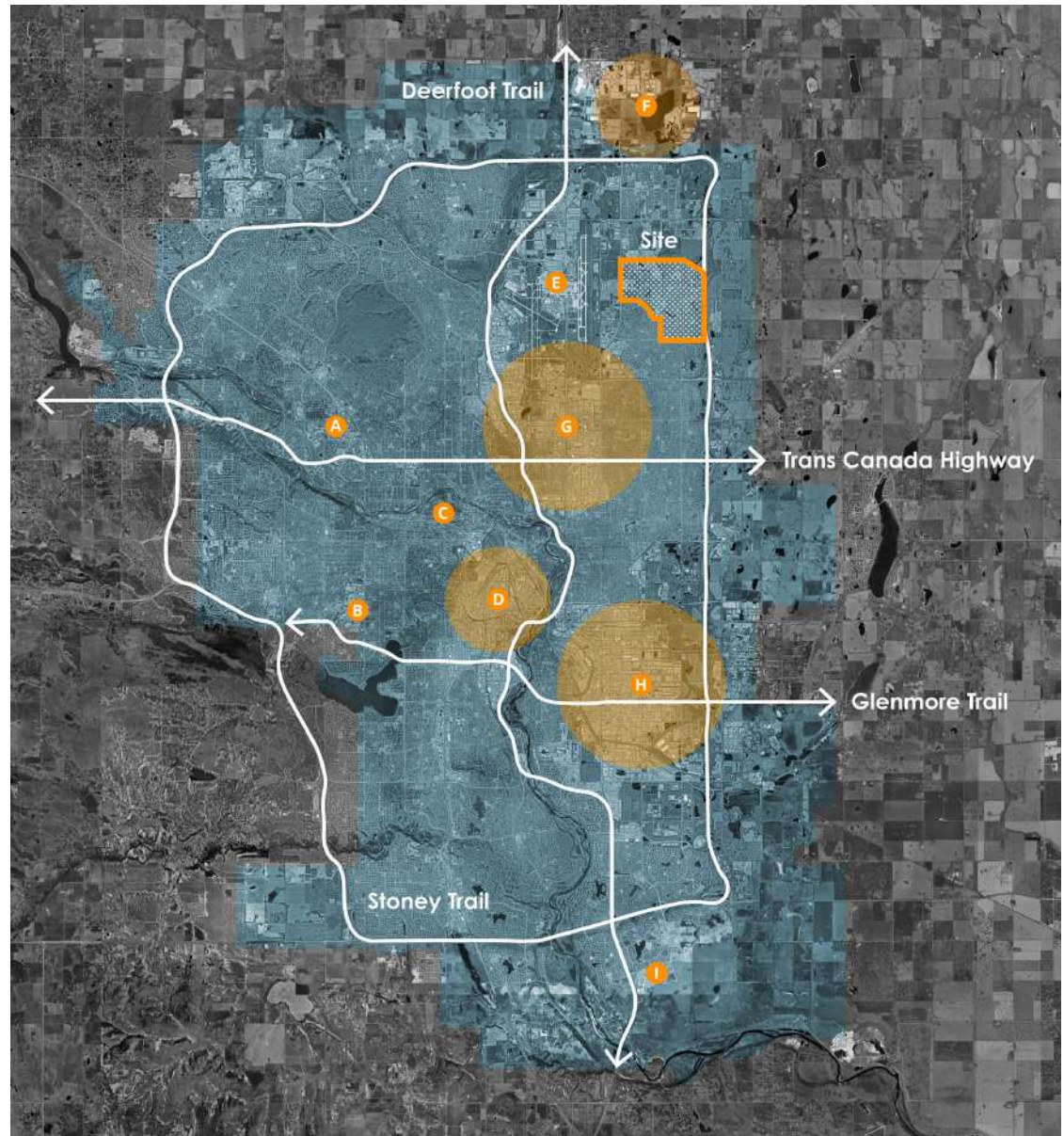
2.2
CULTURAL
LANDSCAPES

Through the first section of our analysis, we explored the historic evolution of Saddle Ridge and Taradale. Looking through the development of urban morphology, we examined demographics and cultural landscapes of the built environment. It was important to note differences between the City of Calgary average and these communities to help inform a better decision for design recommendations.

HISTORIC TIMELINE

Land was divided into pieces of 5 and 10 acres, sold for $250 per acre. Land was used mostly for agricultural purposes.

First rural community hall was opened and Saddle Ridge community established. Approximately, by the late 1960's, 100 homes were built.

1877   **1912-1923**   **1950**   **1960-1970**

Treaty 7 was signed by five First Nations: the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney-Nakoda, and the Tsuut'ina (Sarcee)

Acreage style homes started getting built by families seeking idyllic country life. This was the early foundations of Saddle Ridge.

Single family houses started being built, as well as construction of the Saddletowne LRT Station commenced.

1990

2010

2012

Development phases started to begin and many of the original residents moved elsewhere.

Construction of the Saddletowne LRT Station finished and the station officially opened. Once the construction of the construction was completed, the Community association moved to the Genesis Centre.

URBAN MORPHOLOGY

Urban morphology forms the study of the physical form and layout of cities and towns. The study helps us understand how the character of Saddle Ridge and Taradale has shaped over the years. We can analyse how the spatial arrangement and development of buildings, street networks, and open spaces evolved and contributed to the current character of the communities. It also helps us to understand the historical aspect of the site and to discern the identity of the communities. In our site, Saddle Ridge and Taradale are two newer communities that have a strong farming and agricultural identity. Saddle Ridge is named after a ridge that was approximately 100 feet high situated within the boundaries of the community and saddle which came from the fact that there was at least one saddle in each household.

Majority of the land was used for agricultural purposes and the families that lived there were seeking idyllic, quiet, country life. This all changed when developers started to buy the land and began to develop it into single family homes which is majority of what you see today in the two neighborhoods. While a few of the acreages remain, majority of the land has been developed.

1948

1962

1984
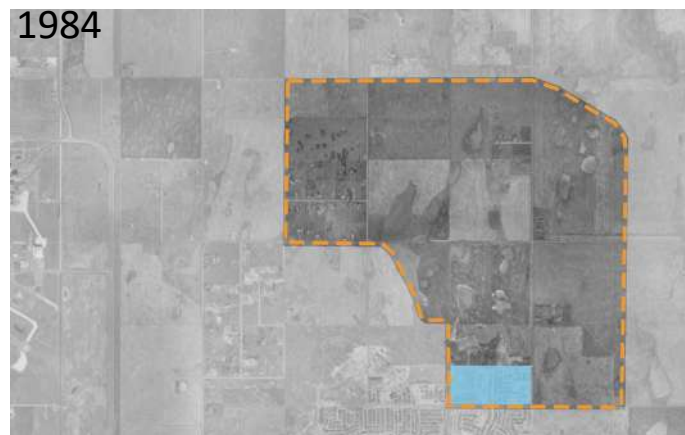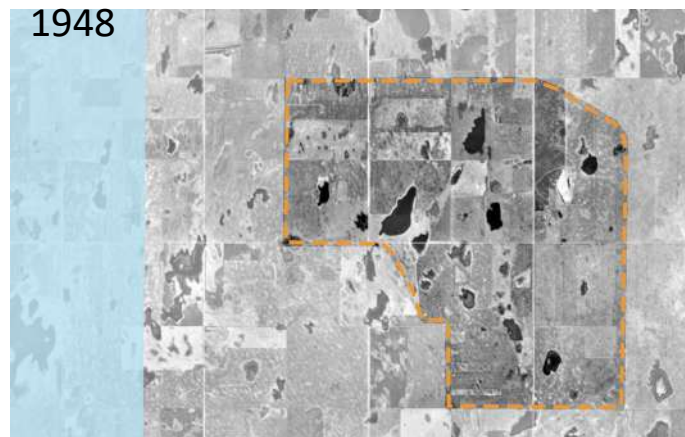
The Calgary airport site was first developed in 1938. This is also the time we start to see a few acreage homes near around Martindale.

More and more acreage homes started getting developed on the study area. However, they were still mainly far off and scattered from each other.

Start of phase A or Martindale of the ASP was starting to be developed. Early signs of development of Taradale visible by single family housing.

2001

Starting of phase C of development which is early Saddle Ridge.

2021

Presently, Phase D & E continues being developed. The rest of the neighborhoods have completed development.
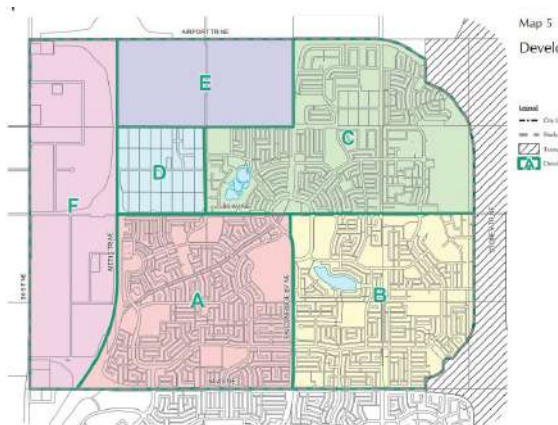
Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan – Development cells

COMMUNITY PROFILE

POPULATION IN 2019

Taradale

19,026

Saddle Ridge

22,321

Calgary

1,513,000

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Saddle Ridge & Taradale

4.1

Calgary

2.6

POPULATION PROJECTION

Saddle Ridge Taradale Calgary
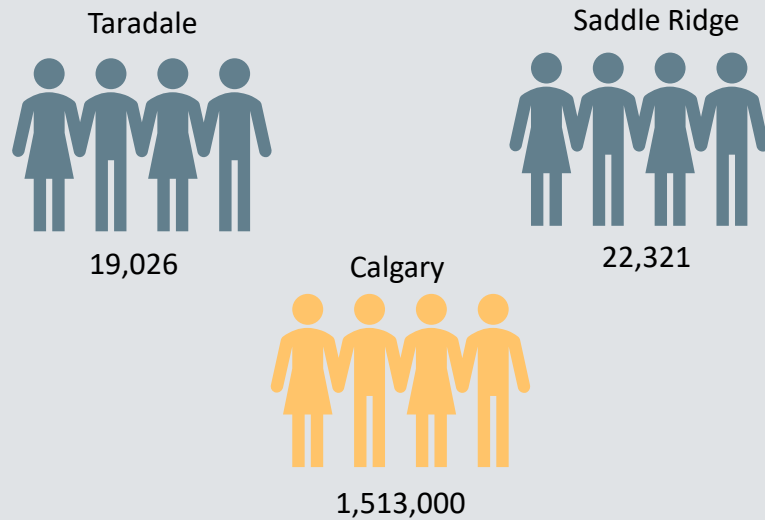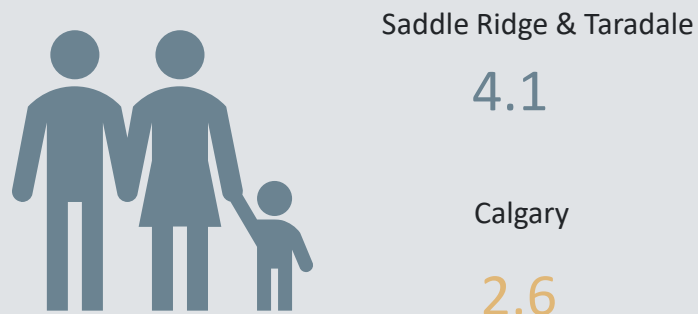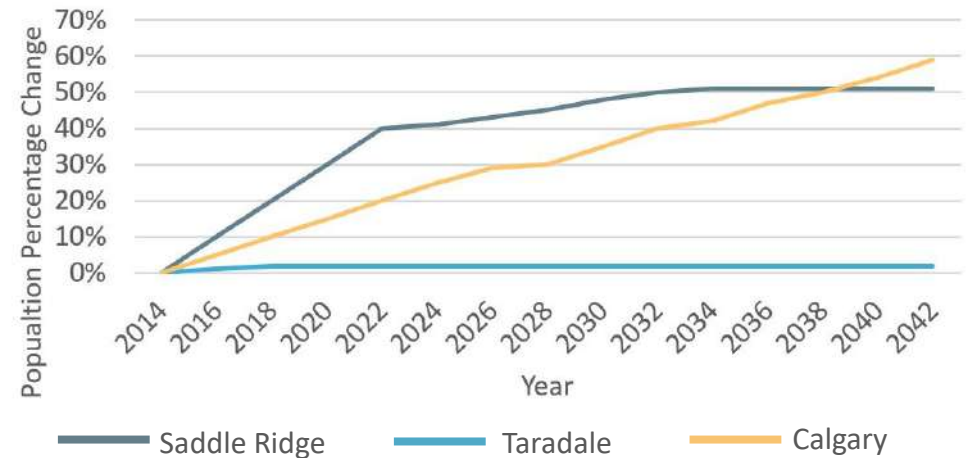
POPULATION PYRAMID

Male Female

IMMIGRANT POPULATION

63%

Calgary
31%
Percent of
Immigrants

FAMILY STATUS

64%

Calgary
48%
Percentage of
Families with
Children

MOTHER TONGUE SPOKEN

57%

18%

13%

4%

3%

5%

- Punjabi
- Urdu
- Tagalog
- Hindi
- Gujarati
- Spanish

HOUSING OWNERSHIPS

80%

Calgary
71%
Homeowners

18
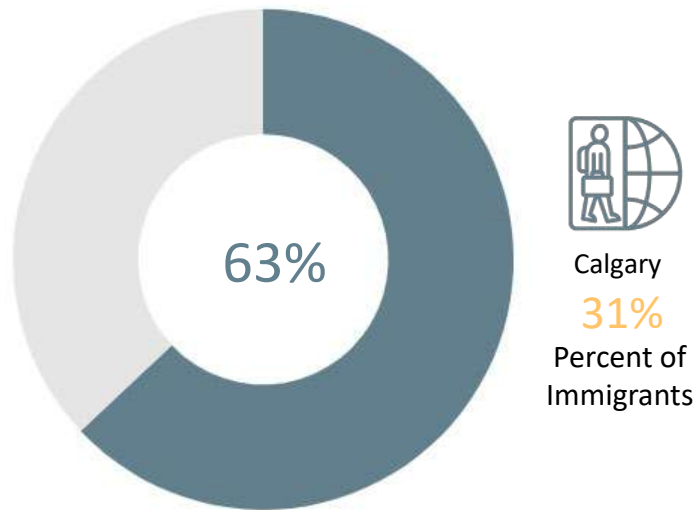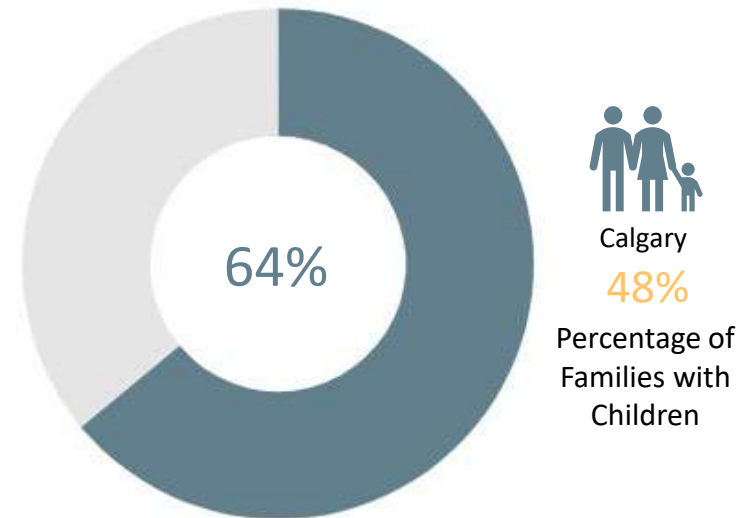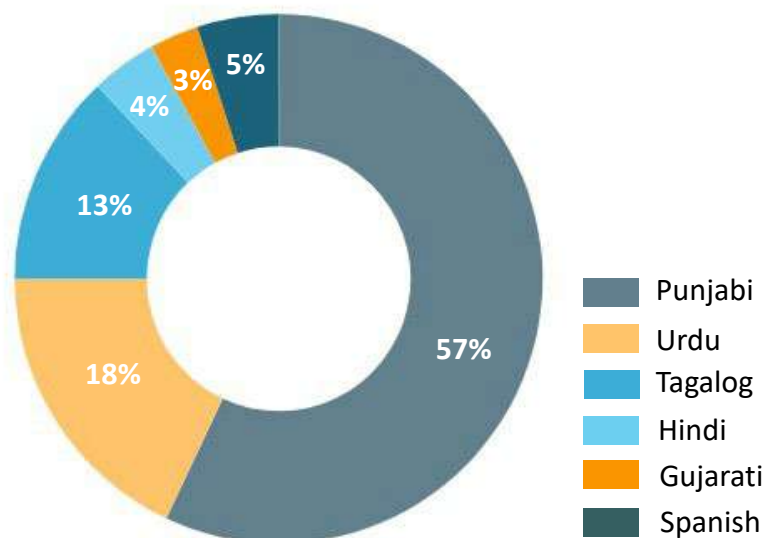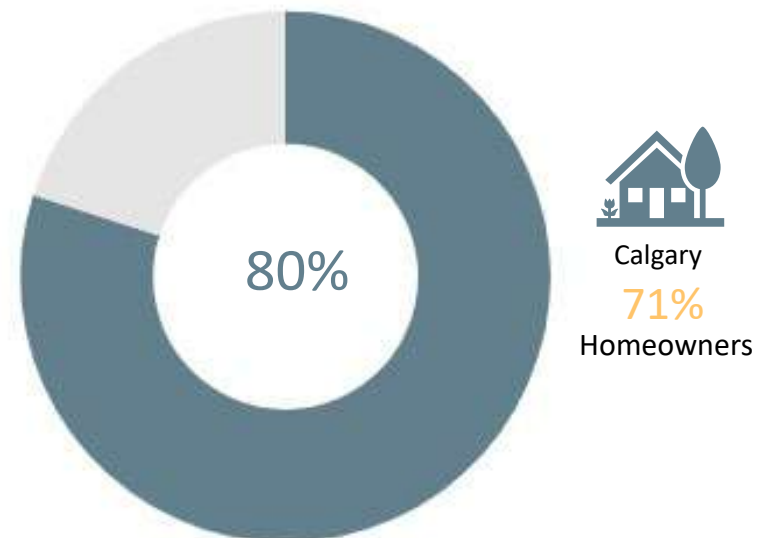
COMMUNITY PROFILE

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Saddle Ridge   Calgary

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

1%   1%

20%

7%

71%

Driver
Passenger
Public Transit
Walk
Other Methods

HOUSING SUITABILITY

83   95

17   5

Suitable   Not suitable

Saddle Ridge   Calgary

COMMUTING DURATION

Less than 15 mins

15 to 29 mins

30 to 44 mins

45 to 59 mins

60 min and over

Minutes

0   10   20   30   40

Percentage
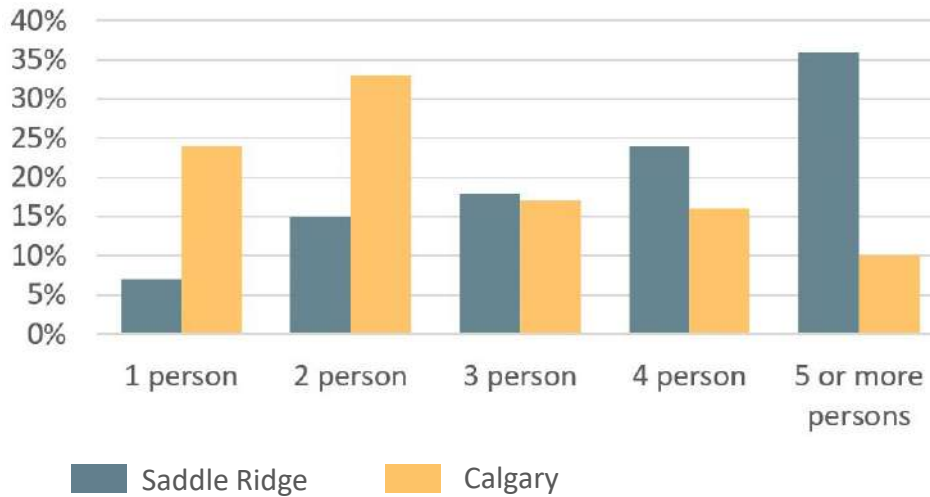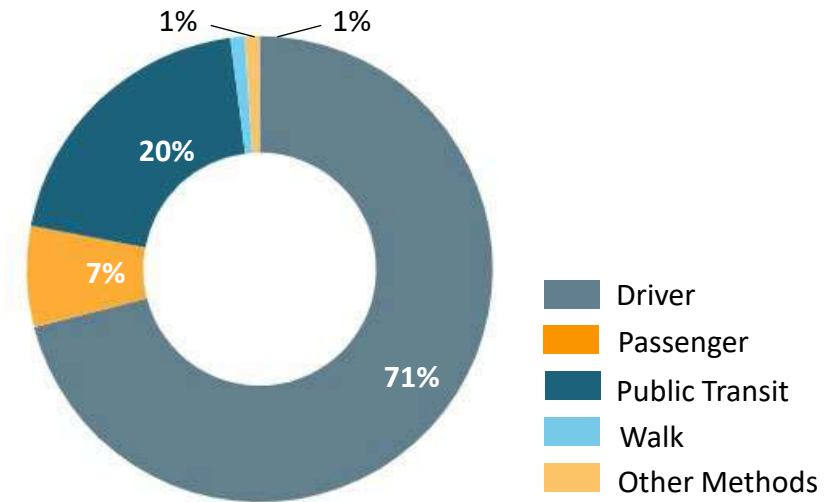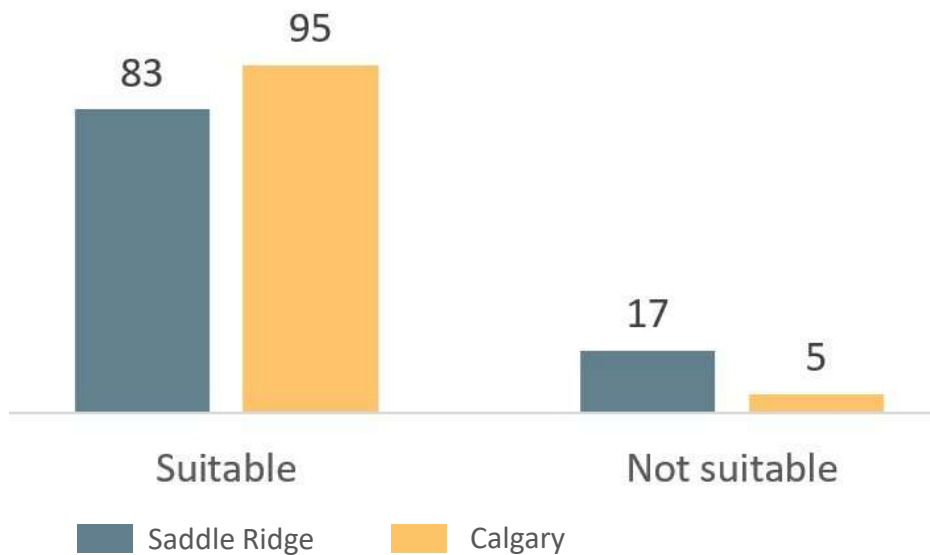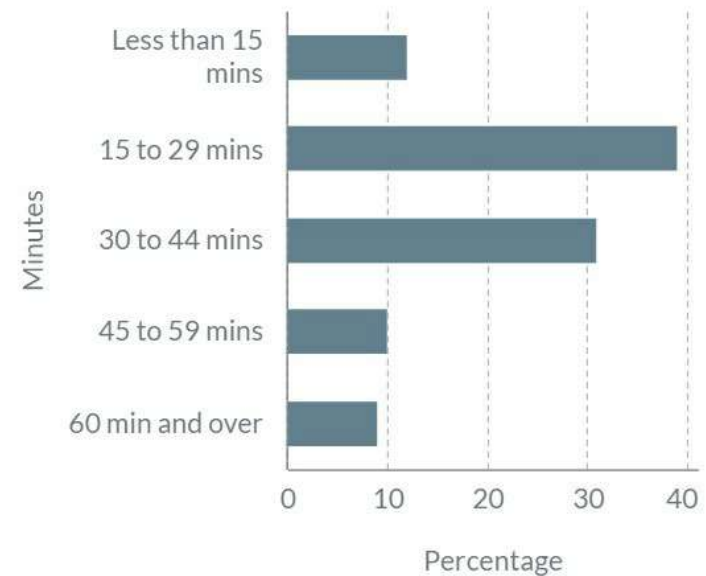
AVERAGE HOUSING PRICE IN CALGARY

Saddle Ridge
$590,896

Taradale
$418,743

Calgary
$511,944

AFFORDABILITY ANALYSIS

Saddle Ridge
30%

Taradale
31%

Calgary
22%

Spend more than 30% on shelter cost

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
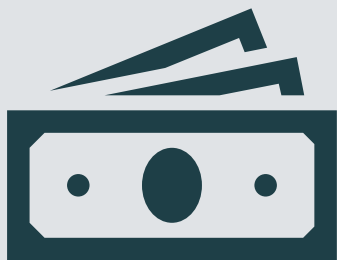
Saddle Ridge
$98,153

Taradale
$88,074

Calgary
$97,329

DWELLING STRUCTURE TYPE

10%

7%

17%

66%

- Single-detached
- Semi-detached
- Row Houses
- Apartment

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Al- Hedaya Islamic Centre

Peter Lougheed School

Saddle Ridge School

Hugh A. Bennett School

Light of Christ School

Al- Madinah Calgary Islamic Assembly

Manmeet Singh Bullar School

Nelson Mandela High School

Taradale School

Hazrat Bilal Islamic Center

Ted Harrison School

Crossing Park School

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

The Genesis Centre

O.S. Geiger School

Dashmesh Culture Centre

Our Lady of Fatima School

Places of Worship

Schools

Major Community Node

0 100   200   400m

Other than schools, gathering spaces are quite limited and scattered. The Genesis Centre is the main gathering space. The parks and ponds offer no gathering spaces during the colder months and seating is quite limited. There is opportunity in creating more community gathering spaces, especially ones with no programming, a place where residents can meet with their neighbors and friends and sit to chat.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

School enrolment is over capacity with a significant demographic of elementary and high school children in the communities. As a result, there is a requirement for the addition of new schools to adjust for this, or alternatively existing schools to expand.

School Enrolment Since 2013

Legend:
- Nelson Mandela High School
- Manmeet Singh Bhullar School
- Taradale School
- Light of Christ Catholic School
- Crossing Park School
- Peter Lougheed School
- Ted Harrison School
- Hugh A. Bennett School
- Saddle Ridge School
- Our Lady of Fatima

A — Saddle Ridge School
B — Peter Lougheed School
C — Light of Christ School
D — Hugh A. Bennett School
E — Nelson Mandela High School
F — Taradale School
G — Our Lady of Fatima School
H — Ted Harrison School

400m (5 minutes) walkshed
800m (10 minutes) walkshed

0 100 200 400m

For most of Saddle Ridge and Taradale, schools can be accessed within about a 10-minute walk. However, children in the northwest corner do not have an easy walking access to schools compared to the rest of the two communities. There is a new mixed-use building with a school and a place of religion proposed on the south-west portion of Saddle Ridge. This will help reduce the gap in the lack of schools in that portion of the study area.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

Commercial Nodes

Community Node
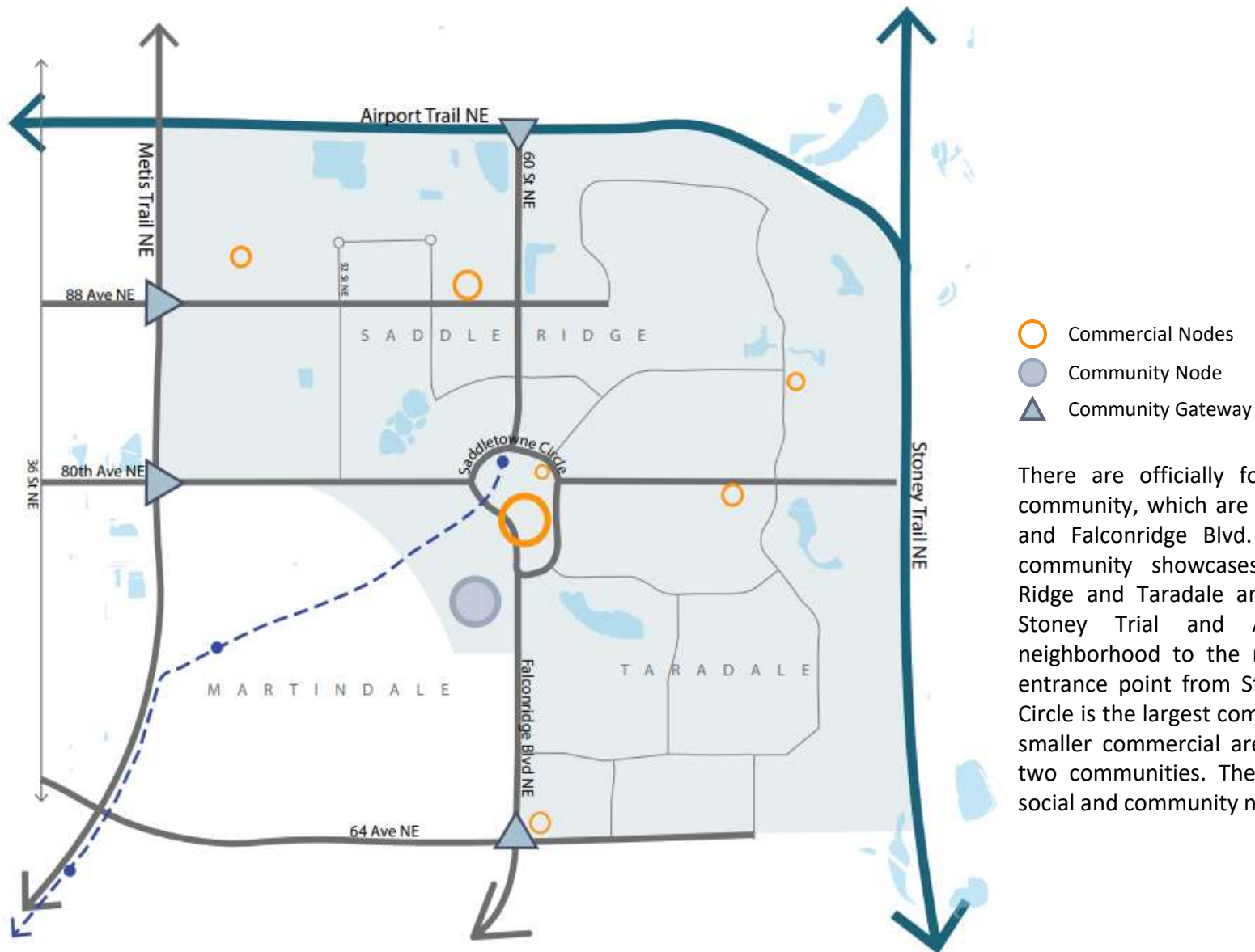
Community Gateway

There are officially four main gateways into the community, which are at 60th St, 88 Ave, 80th Ave, and Falconridge Blvd. The four entrances to the community showcases how disconnected Saddle Ridge and Taradale are from the rest of the city. Stoney Trial and Airport Trial enclose the neighborhood to the north and east side with no entrance point from Stoney Trial. The Saddletowne Circle is the largest commercial node followed by five smaller commercial areas scattered throughout the two communities. The Genesis Centre is the main social and community node.

2.3
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment examines all the natural features and systems located on site in the north-east quadrant of Calgary. Looking at the existing open and park spaces, along with topography and other climatic considerations forms the highlight under this particular analysis section.
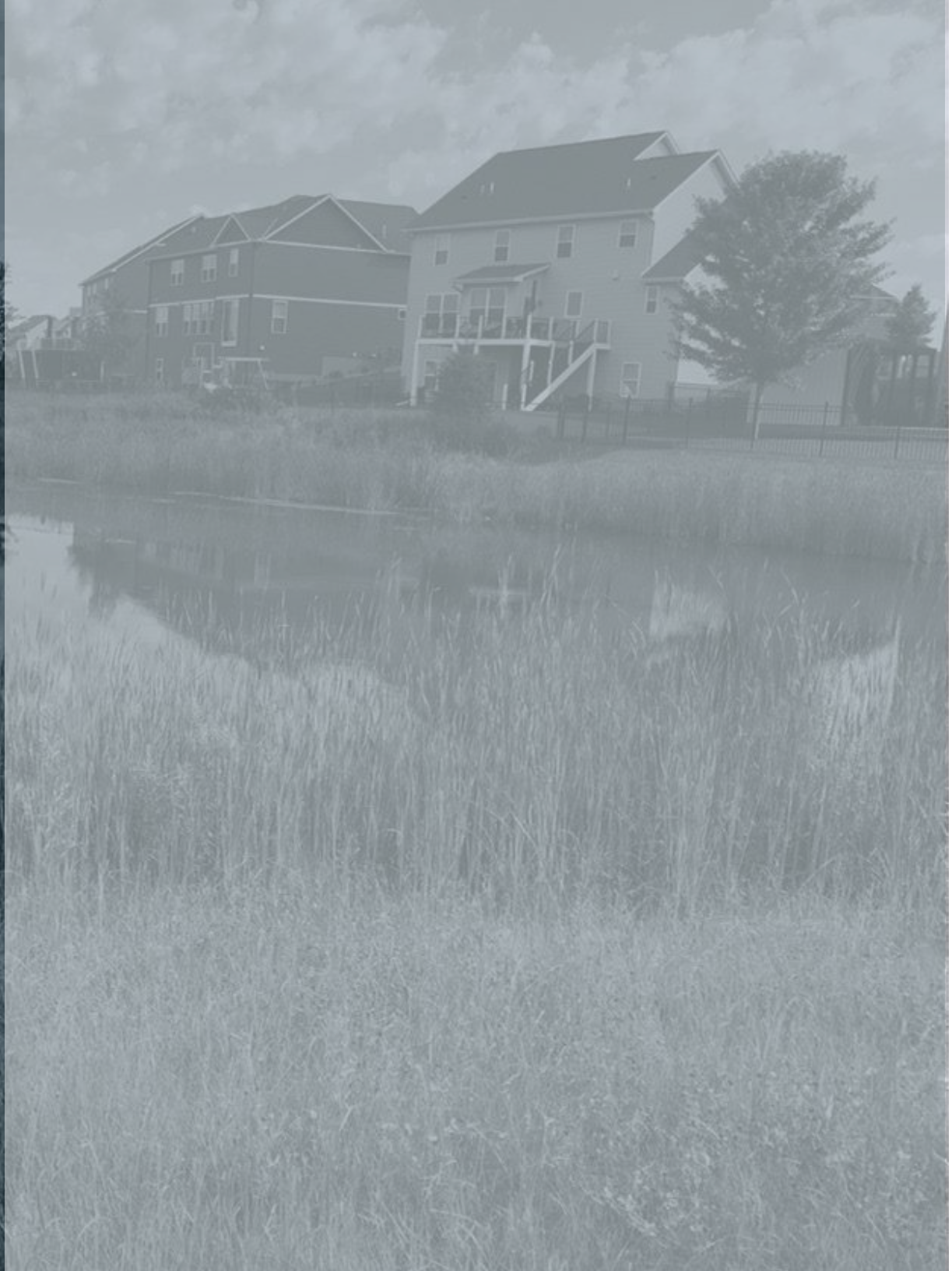
PLAYGROUND: Playground equipment like swings, slides, climbers, merry-go-rounds, spring riders.

NATURAL SPACE: Aspen Forests dominating the natural space that provide ecological value to the site.

COMMUNITY PARKS: Spaces for informal play, physical activity and social interaction.

COMMUNITY HUB: The Genesis Centre forms the primary community node in the site with a skatepark, soccer fields and an outdoor amphitheater.

STORMWATER PONDS: Multiple ponds and adjacent parks are dispersed through the site.

TARADALE OFF-LEASH PARK: Only existing off-leash dog park within the study area that is also temporary.

SCHOOL GROUNDS: Typical school grounds with sports fields and related infrastructure.

GREEN BELT: Existing Gas pipeline running across the site creates a huge potential for a green belt and public realm space.

The wide range of open spaces and parks within the community pose a huge opportunity for the community to create distinct and interesting spaces that would be better utilized by the public and community members.

OPEN SPACE CHARACTERISTICS

Saddle Ridge and Taradale contain a variety of distinct open and green spaces dispersed throughout the communities. The communities'' green spaces lack interesting features and programming in the present condition. There is also a utility right-of-way running along a North-South corridor through the entire stretch of the site, which forms a huge opportunity for developing a community identity.

The parks and open spaces also lack more natural areas with mature trees and seating that create a sense of enclosure, hence feeling safer and more welcoming. The lack of mature trees is speculated to be due to the poor soil conditions throughout the stud area- these ultimately lead to stunted and underdeveloped trees.

● Kid's Playground
  Community Hub
  School Grounds

  Natural Space
  Stormwater Ponds
  ▪▪▪ Green Belt

  Community park
Ⓐ Taradale off leash Dog park

0 100   200   400m

WINTER CITY CONSIDERATIONS

Calgary is a winter city; however, it is also Canada's sunniest city. Winter in the city lasts from anywhere around 4-8 months. It is also common to experience the effects of Chinook winds, which are warm, dry and typically powerful winds that flow eastward from the Canadian Rockies onto the prairies.

With a prolonged winter period that has a few days of respite provided by the Chinook, it is essential to design keeping winter city considerations in mind. Capturing the sun's warmth, providing protection from the wind, and making the community more accessible, safe and enjoyable year-round would create a more celebrated space for Saddle Ridge and Taradale.

Missing covered bus exchange

Missing colour and vibrancy

Missing lighting

Missing shaded seating area

Adding colour to offset darkness and provide visual interest, using design strategies and evergreen trees to block off wind, and maximizing exposure to sunshine through orientation and design are some of the aspects that could be considered while designing for a winter city.

Calgary - Average High and Low Temperatures (°C)

Calgary - Average Precipitation (mm)

Calgary - Average Daylight Hours (H)
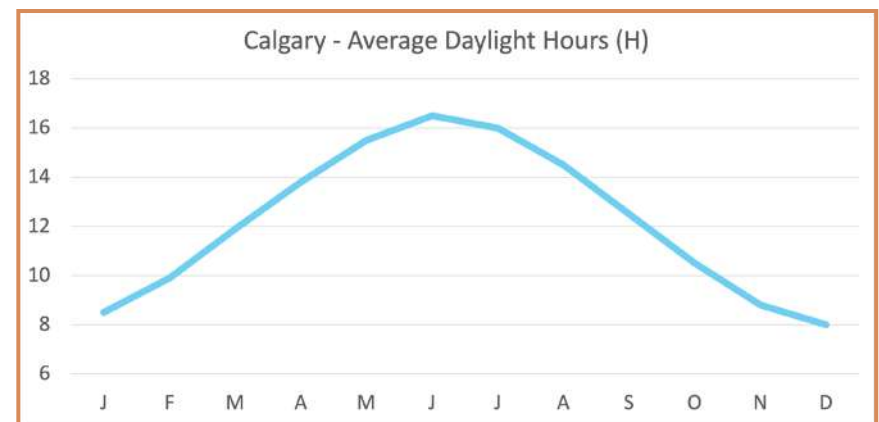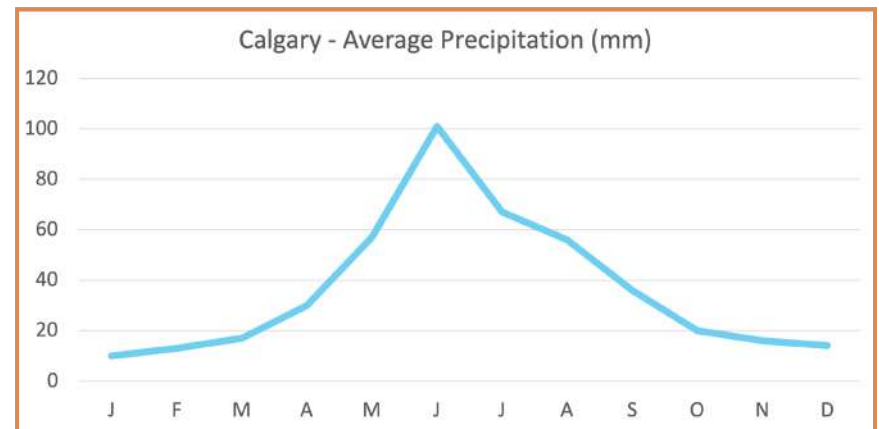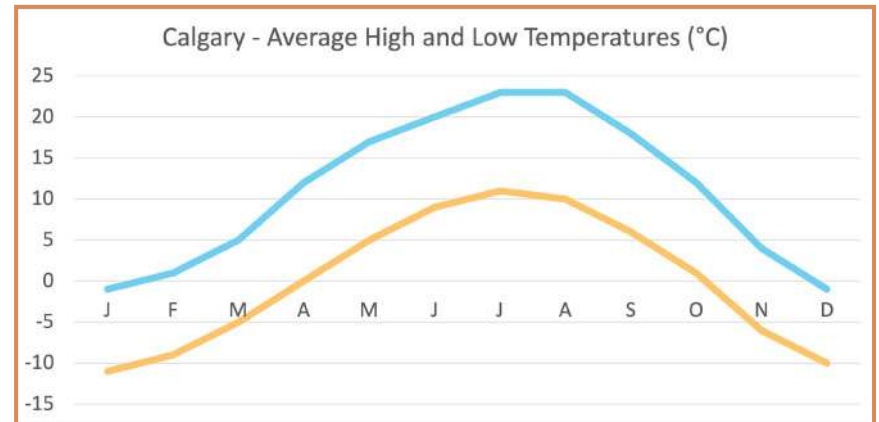
SOLAR CONSIDERATIONS

It is crucial to conduct a solar study to help maximize the exposure to sunshine through building orientation and design. The study area at the intersection of 46th Street NE and Savanna Boulevard demonstrates the shadowing impacts during the summer and winter solstice as well as the equinox.

We established that areas facing east of the buildings receive the maximum sun exposure and would form an ideal location for both outdoor commercial patios and public seating.

9am Shadow
12pm Shadow
3pm Shadow
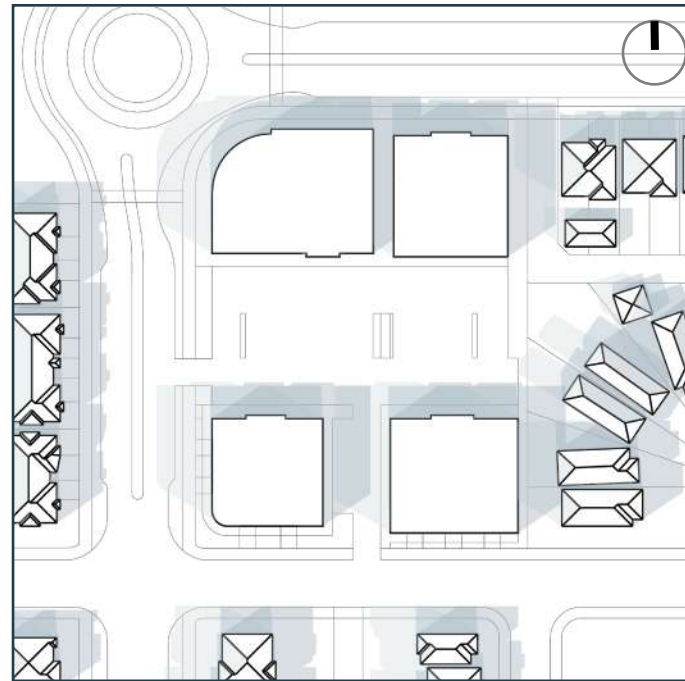
SEPTEMBER 21 / MARCH 21
Daylight hours: 12h 30min
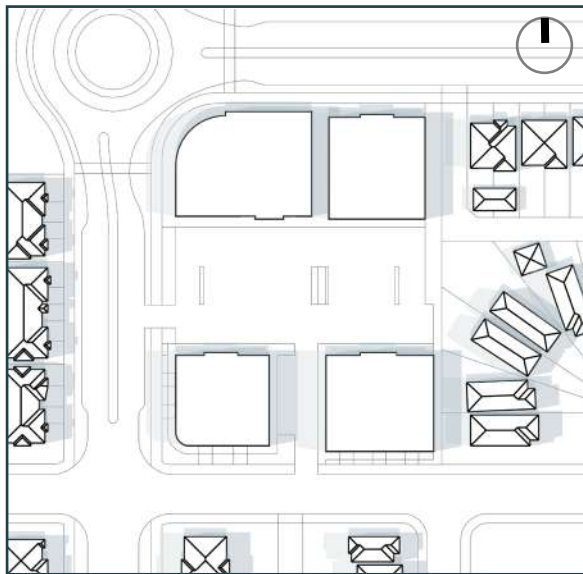
JUNE 21
Daylight hours: 16h 30min
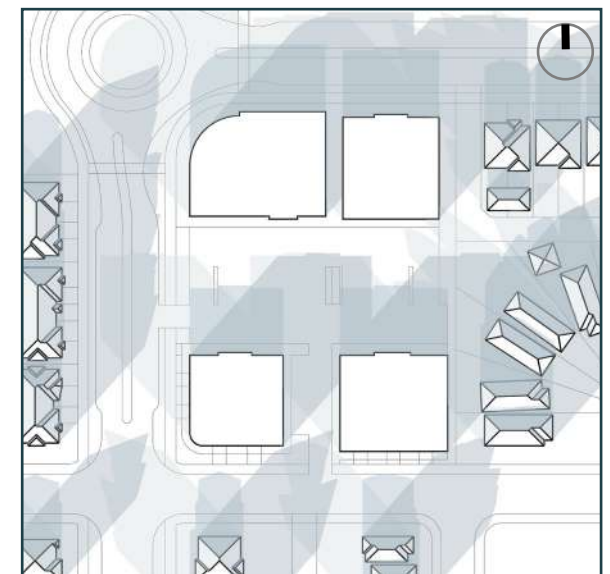
DECEMBER 21
Daylight hours: 7h 53min

TOPOGRAPHY

NATURAL SYSTEMS & TREES

Natural and green spaces have several environmental benefits including improving air quality, providing shaded areas, reducing outdoor air temperatures, and decreasing the likelihood of flooding.

Along with this, natural green areas can also have an impact on a person's mental health.
Studies prove that green spaces can lower levels of stress and reduce rates of depression and anxiety, improving overall well-being.

1,111m

1,081m

0 100   200   400m

Zooming into the natural environment of the communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale, we observed that the land remains relatively flat with the average slope around the site limited to about 30m. The slope is nominal for a site this large and creates an opportunity for construction throughout the study area.

Through examining the natural systems across the site, we studied that the communities have a huge lack of biodiversity and mature trees. The scarcity of mature trees combined with the absence of a rich, dense habitat give the community an unwelcoming feel.

Wetland Open Water   Disturbed
Wetland Emergent Vegetation   Aspen Forest   0 100   200   400m
Grassland

2.4
BUILT FORM

Our next key area for analysis was built form. We analyzed the urban fabric of the communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale, focusing on the building typologies. We studied the parcel types and sizes to better understand how our design could reflect corresponding redevelopment opportunities. Land use zoning and the missing building typologies within the study area were also examined.
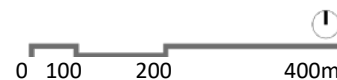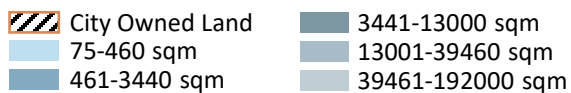
PARCEL SIZE AND OWNERSHIP

The communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale do not have a grid structure and are predominantly composed of curves and random patterns for their block design.

While studying the parcel sizes and ownership, we discovered that all large school parcels, the Genesis Center, as well as the LRT infrastructure were government owned. The larger parcels consisting of the stormwater ponds, open green spaces, commercial hubs and the Saddletowne Circle are all privately owned.

The area encompassed by Saddletowne circle is broken down into smaller parcel sizes and owned by various private landowners. Any design or policy recommendation for this specific area would require an immense amount of stakeholder engagement to ensure consensus on a decision.

Legend:
- City Owned Land
- 75-460 sqm
- 461-3440 sqm
- 3441-13000 sqm
- 13001-39460 sqm
- 39461-192000 sqm

0 100   200   400m

LANEWAY STUDY

Saddle Ridge and Taradale comprising predominantly of single-family homes, we conducted a study to analyze the presence of service laneways for the parcels on site.

Grouping parcels with service laneway establishes the opportunity for further housing development in these laneways for backyard or secondary suites. This would respond to the existing housing unsuitability of the community.

Dwelling without a
service laneway

Dwelling with a
service laneway

Opportunity for secondary suites

0 100   200   400m

Parcels w/o service laneways (front garages)
Parcels with service laneways (back garages)

32
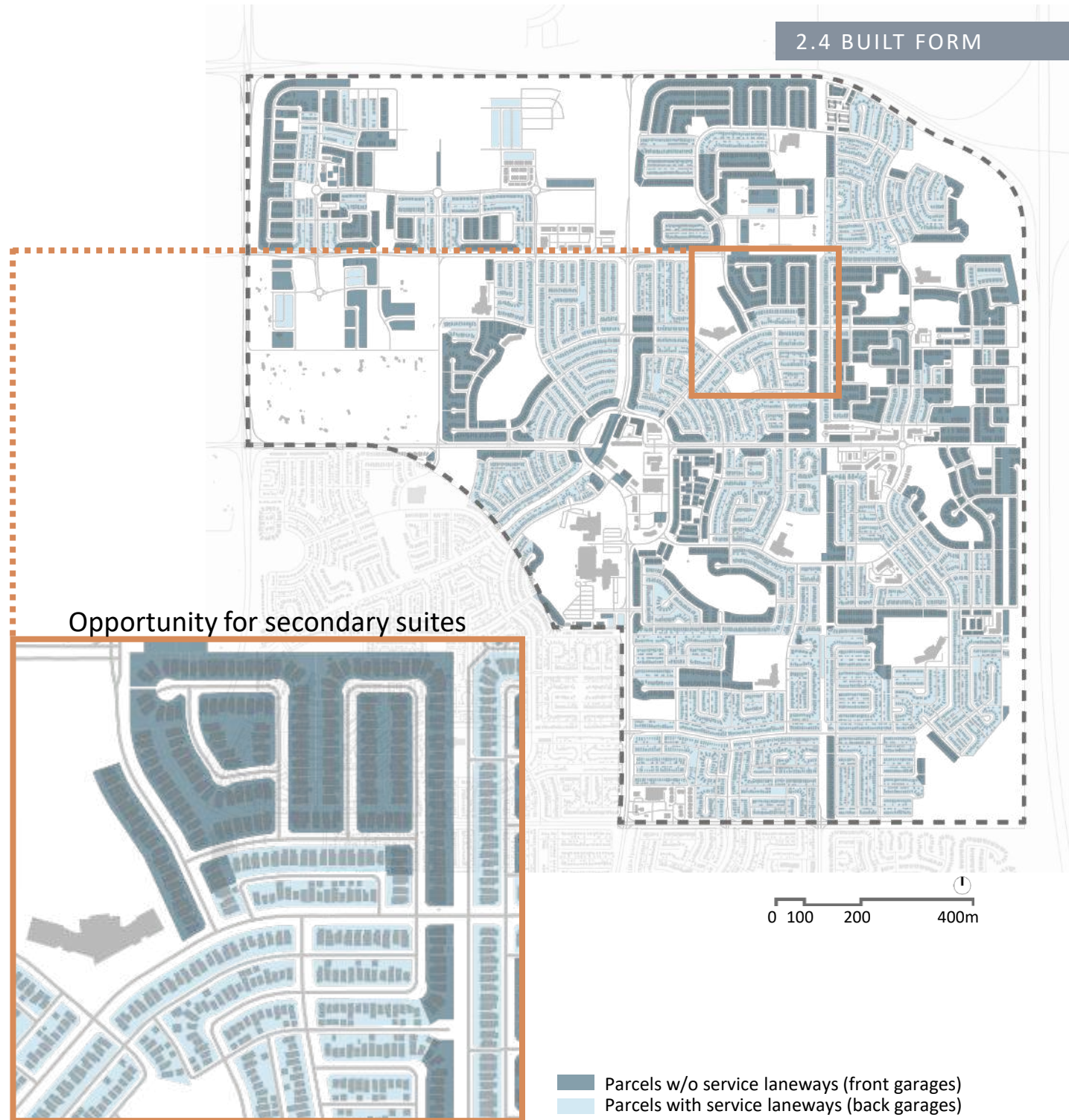
SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING
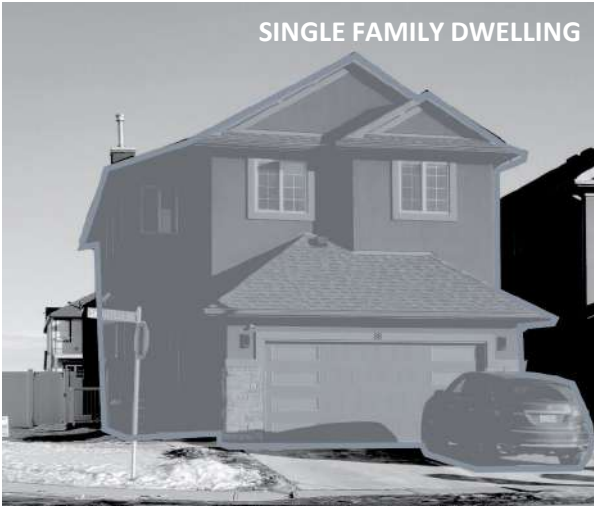
SEMI-DETACHED
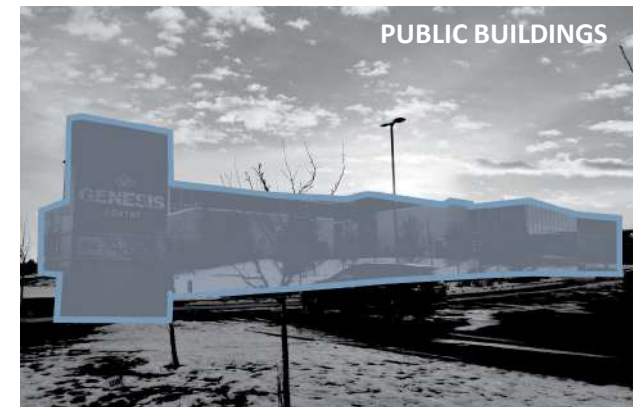
PUBLIC BUILDINGS

BUILDING TYPOLOGY

ROWHOUSES

APARTMENTS

The communities are not completely devoid of housing diversity; however, they are primarily dominated by single-family homes which are unsuitable for the demographics residing in this area. There are four main types of housing typologies seen in the study area, including single-family homes, semi-detached, rowhouses and apartments. For commercial land use, the buildings are mainly restricted to a strip mall design. All public buildings, including the Genesis Center and schools are also limited to a single-storey building.

The communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale are confined to a low-rise and low-density structure. The Saddletowne LRT station does not capitalize on the infrastructure and the are lacks transit-oriented development.

COMMERCIAL STRIP MALLS

CURRENT LAND USE

Saddle Ridge and Taradale form a primarily residential community, with most of housing being limited to single-detached homes. The heart of the study area forms a commercial and community hub with amenities including grocery stores, restaurants, a pharmacy, a community center, banks and more. There is no mixed-use buildings within the communities. There are numerous schools, public parks as well as stormwater ponds to be utilized by the community members.

DWELLIGS BY STRUCTURE TYPE

- Single Family — 66%
- Semi-detached — 17%
- Rowhouses — 7%
- Apartments — 10%

Legend:
- Single family dwelling
- Semi-detached
- Rowhouses
- Apartments
- Public Buildings
- Commercial

0 100 200 400m
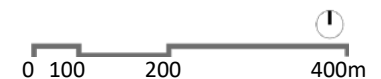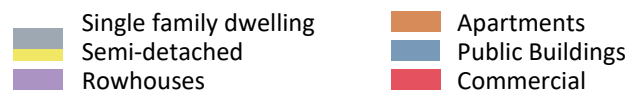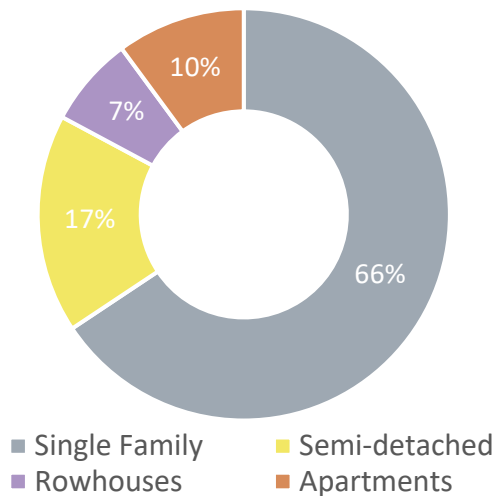
LAND-USE ZONING

Saddle Ridge and Taradale form a dominant residential community with more than half of the land area dedicated to housing. The community consists of very limited and specific key nodes of commercial, and community services.
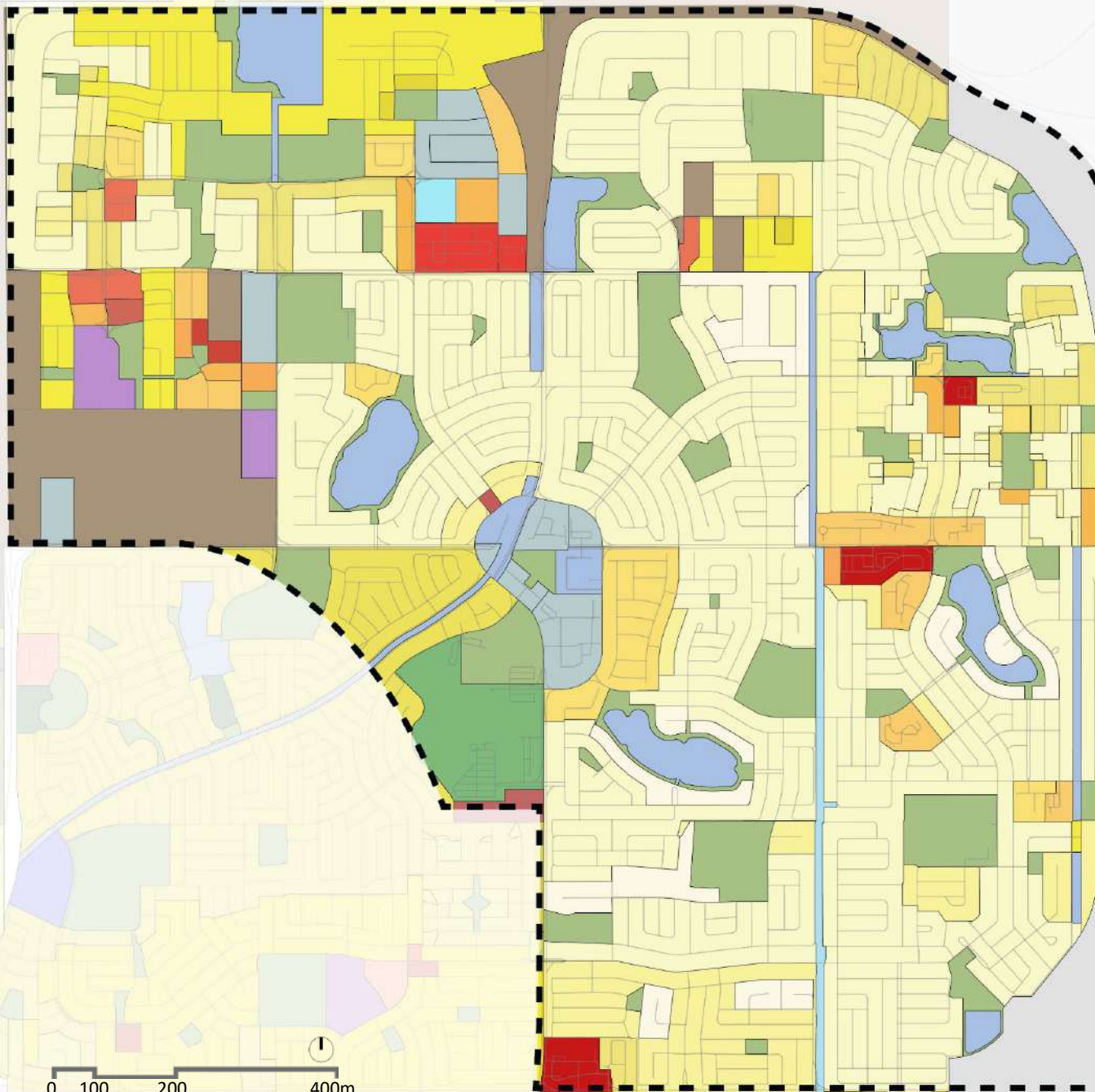
R-1 Residential - One Dwelling
R-1S Residential - One Dwelling - Provision for Secondary Suite
R-2 Residential - One/Two Dwelling
R-2M Residential - Low Density Multiple Dwellings
R-G Residential - Low Density Mixed Housing
R-Gm Residential - Low Density Mixed Housing - Attached Housing Only
M-1 Multi-Residential - Low Profile
M-2 Multi-Residential - Medium Profile
M-G Multi-Residential - At Grade Housing
M-X1 Multi-Residential - Low Profile, Support Commercial
M-X2 Multi-Residential - Medium Profile Support Commercial
M-H1 Multi-Residential - High Density, Low Rise
M-H2 Multi-Residential - High Density, Medium Rise
MU-1 Mixed Use - General
C-N1 Commercial - Neighborhood 1
C-N2 Commercial - Neighborhood 2
C-COR1 Commercial - Corridor 1
C-COR2 Commercial - Corridor 2
C-C1 Commercial - Community 1
S-UN Urban Nature
S-SPR School, Park, and Community Reserve
S-R Recreation
DC Direct Control
S-CS Community Service
S-CRI Special Purpose - City and Regional Infrastructure
S-CI Special Purpose - Community Institution
S-FUD Future Urban Development
S-TUC Special Purpose - Transportation and Utility Corridor

0   100   200   400m

MISSING LAND USE TYPOLOGIES

The community would benefit from an increased diversity of land uses. Laneway housing, mixed-use transit-oriented development, and smaller commercial and gathering places would greatly benefit the residents of the community. It would also encourage active mobility networks and reduce car usage.

ROWHOUSES

SCHOOLS

GAS STATION

APARTMENTS

COMMUNITY CENTER

CONVENIENCE STORE

SINGLE FAMILY

SEMI-DETACHED HOMES

PLACE OF WORSHIP

CORNER STORE

SECONDARY SUITES

MIXED USE

SMALL LIBRARIES
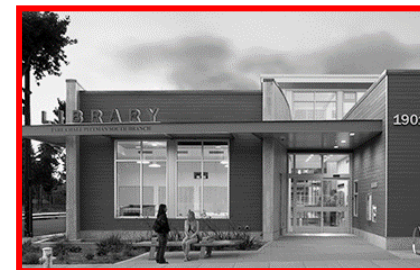
STRIP MALLS

RESIDENTIAL

COMMUNITY SERVICES

COMMERCIAL
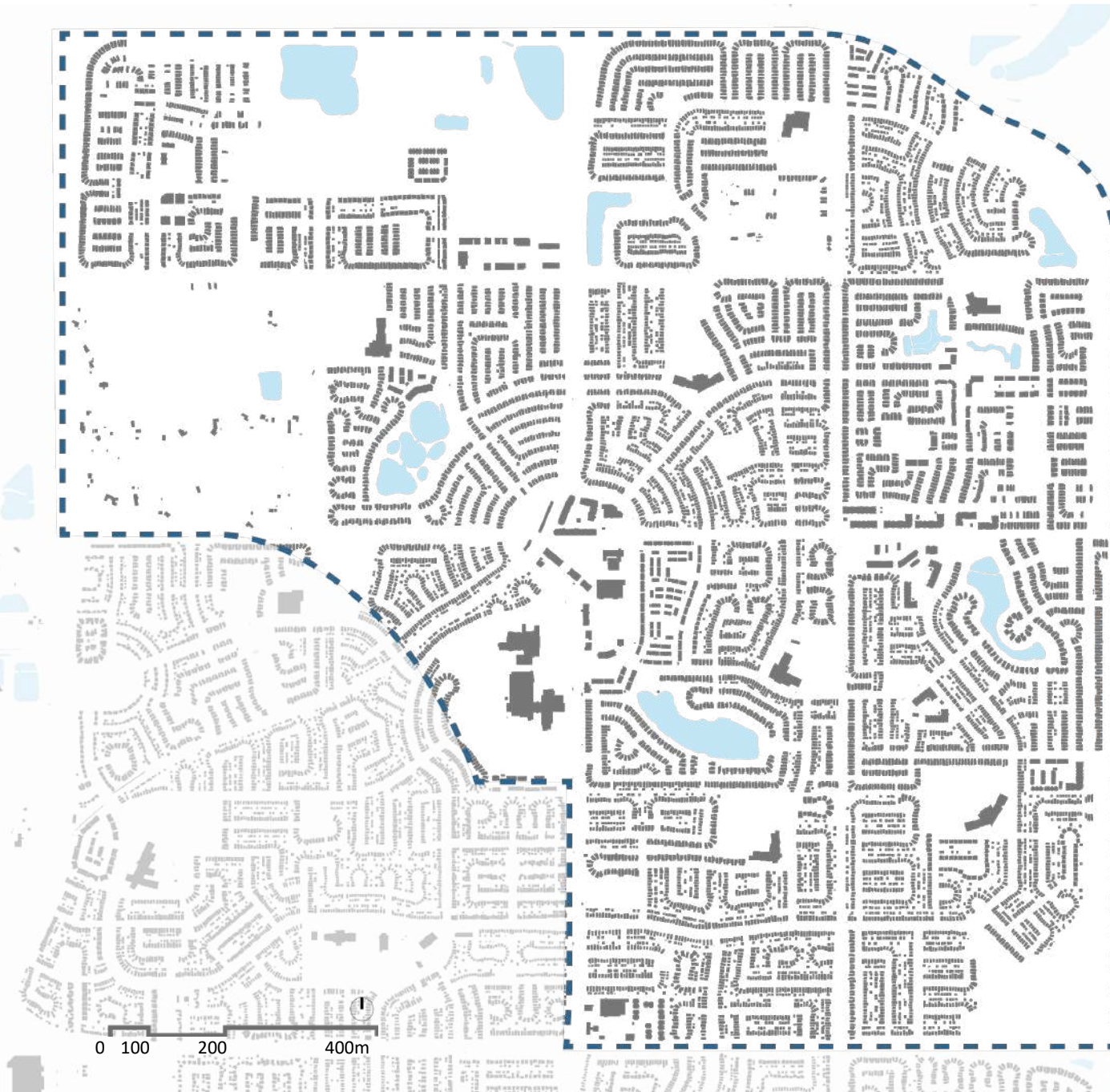
FIGURE GROUND

The figure ground diagram helps us illustrate the relationship between built and unbuilt spaces within our community. It helps us understand the curved and coiled nature of the built form which is radiating outwards from the Saddletowne circle.

Saddle Ridge and Taradale have an insufficient amount of open space that is also discontinuous. We also examined that the parking space in commercial strip malls formed a significantly high amount of impermeable surface.

0 100   200   400m

SCOPE FOR INTERVENTIONS
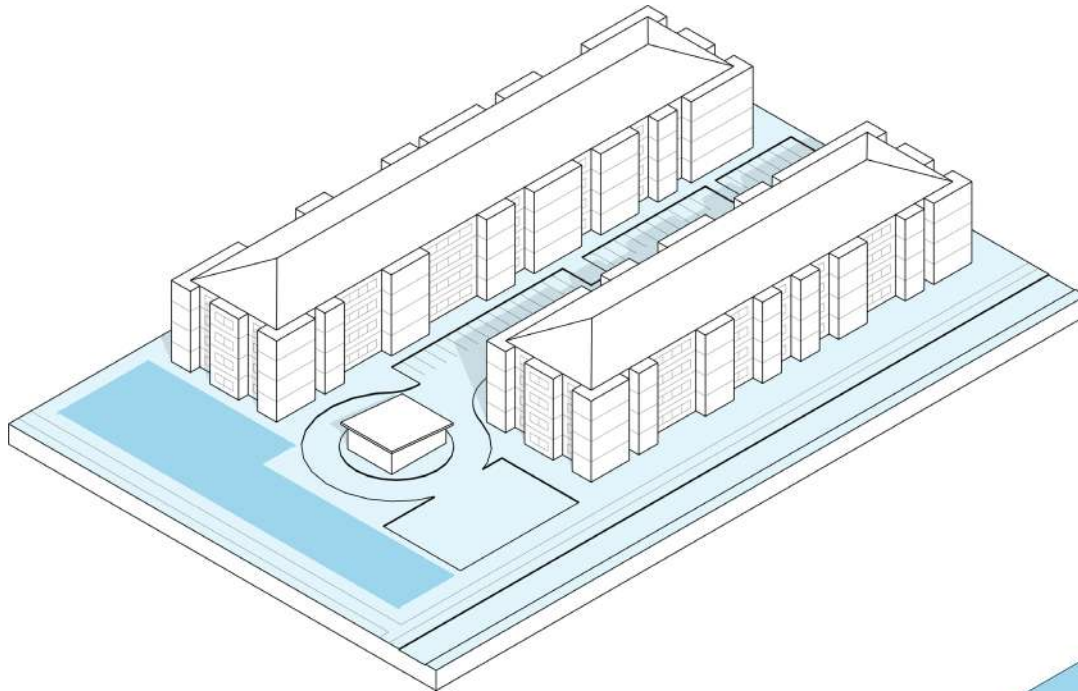
The area shaded darker blue forms the utility right-of-way and is facing the arterial road of 80th Avenue. It creates an opportunity to design a better utilized space taking advantage of the traffic flowing through 80th Ave and the pedestrian traffic of surrounding apartments.
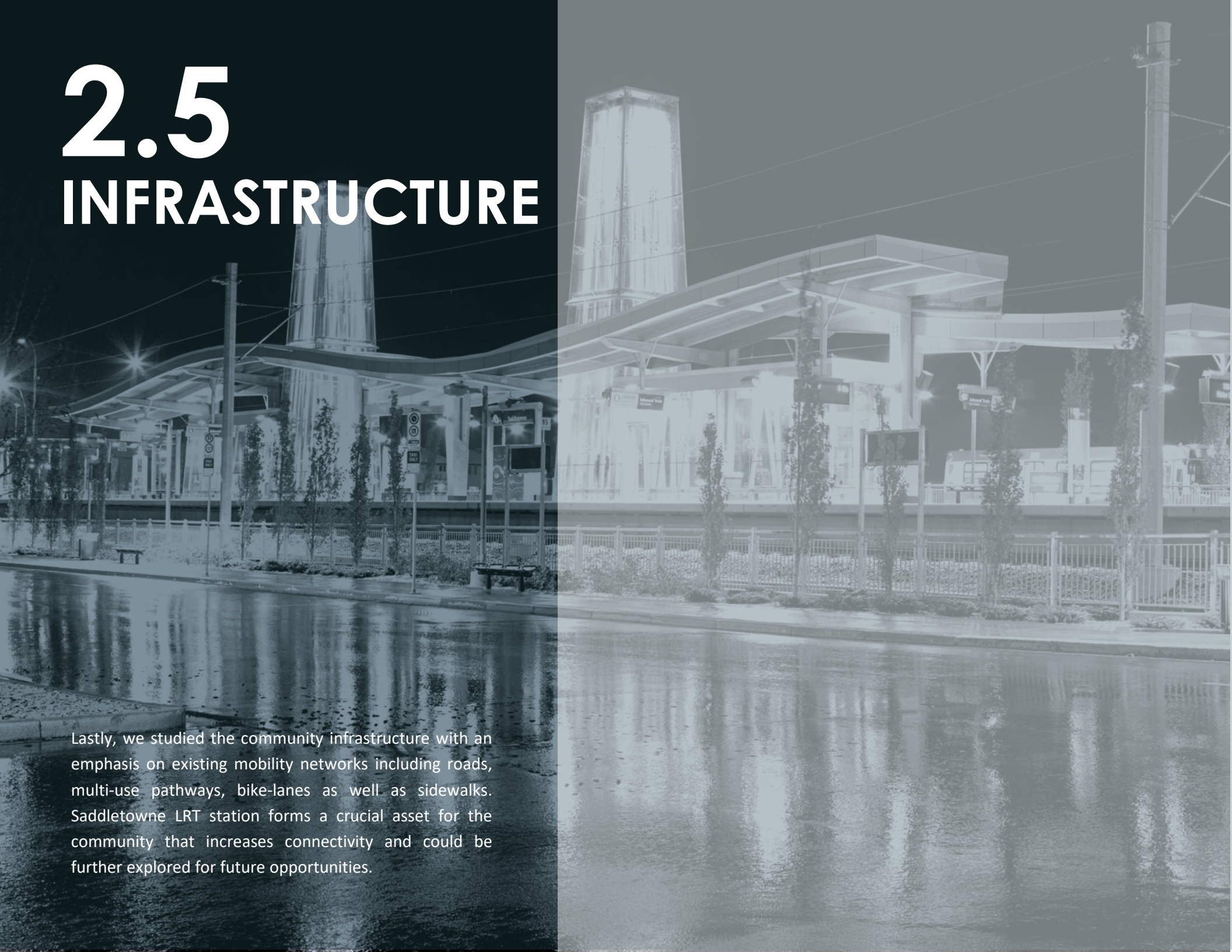
The commercial node at the intersection of Saddlestone Drive and Saddlemont Boulevard could be adapted to transform the parking area to a temporary pop-up store. Additionally, the surrounding dwellings could also incorporate backyard suites to help with improving housing diversity.
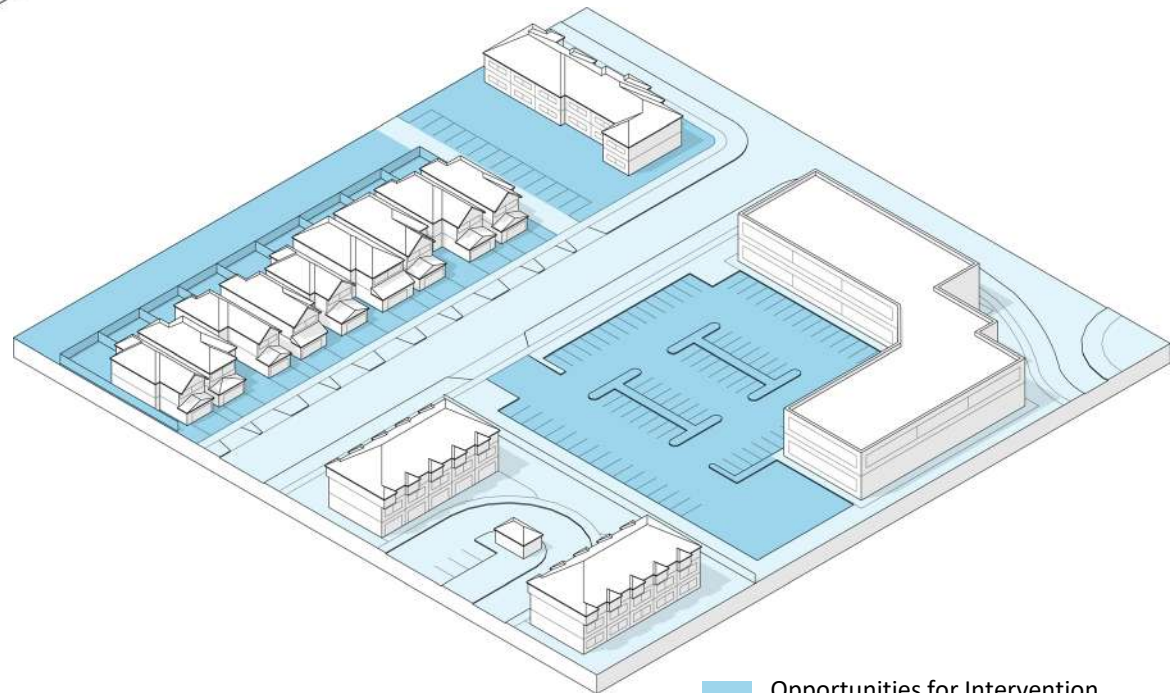
Opportunities for Intervention

2.5
INFRASTRUCTURE

Lastly, we studied the community infrastructure with an emphasis on existing mobility networks including roads, multi-use pathways, bike-lanes as well as sidewalks. Saddletowne LRT station forms a crucial asset for the community that increases connectivity and could be further explored for future opportunities.

TRANSIT NETWORK

The transit frequency and coverage is quite extensive of the neighborhoods, however there are a few un-serviced areas by transit, especially the northwestern portion of Saddle Ridge. This would mean longer walks to transit areas and an issues for those who rely on public transit.

Transit Stations

LRT Stations

Routes 23, 68, 119, 138, 157
Operational on weekdays

Routes 798
Single Departure- Weekday only

Routes 145
5 minutes

Routes 159
11 minutes

MAX Orange BRT
12-18 minutes

Routes 59, 71, 85
23-25 minutes

Routes 60, 61
30 minutes

Blue LRT Line
4 minutes

Saddle Towne Bus Loop

0 100   200   400m
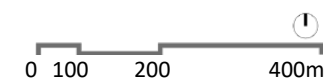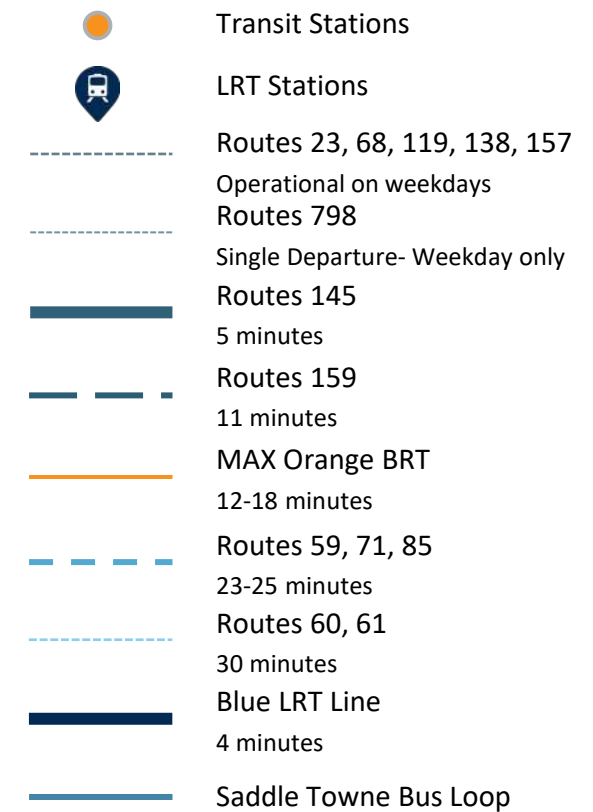
SIDEWALK NETWORK

The communities have a few streets where there are only one sidewalk in the streets. The collector roads throughout the neighborhood have sidewalks on both side of the street. There is a pattern where the newer built areas and currently developing areas of Saddle Ridge have sidewalks on both sides of the street, whereas, the older sections of Taradale and Saddle Ridge, only have one sidewalk on the streets.

Saddlemont Blvd, an arterial road that has sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Saddlemont Crescent, a residential street that only has one sidewalk.

Sidewalks on both sides of the street

Sidewalks on one side of the street

0 100   200   400m

ROAD TYPOLOGIES

DD

CC

AA

BB

Skeletal Roads
Arterial Roads
Collector Roads
Residential Roads

0 100   200   400m
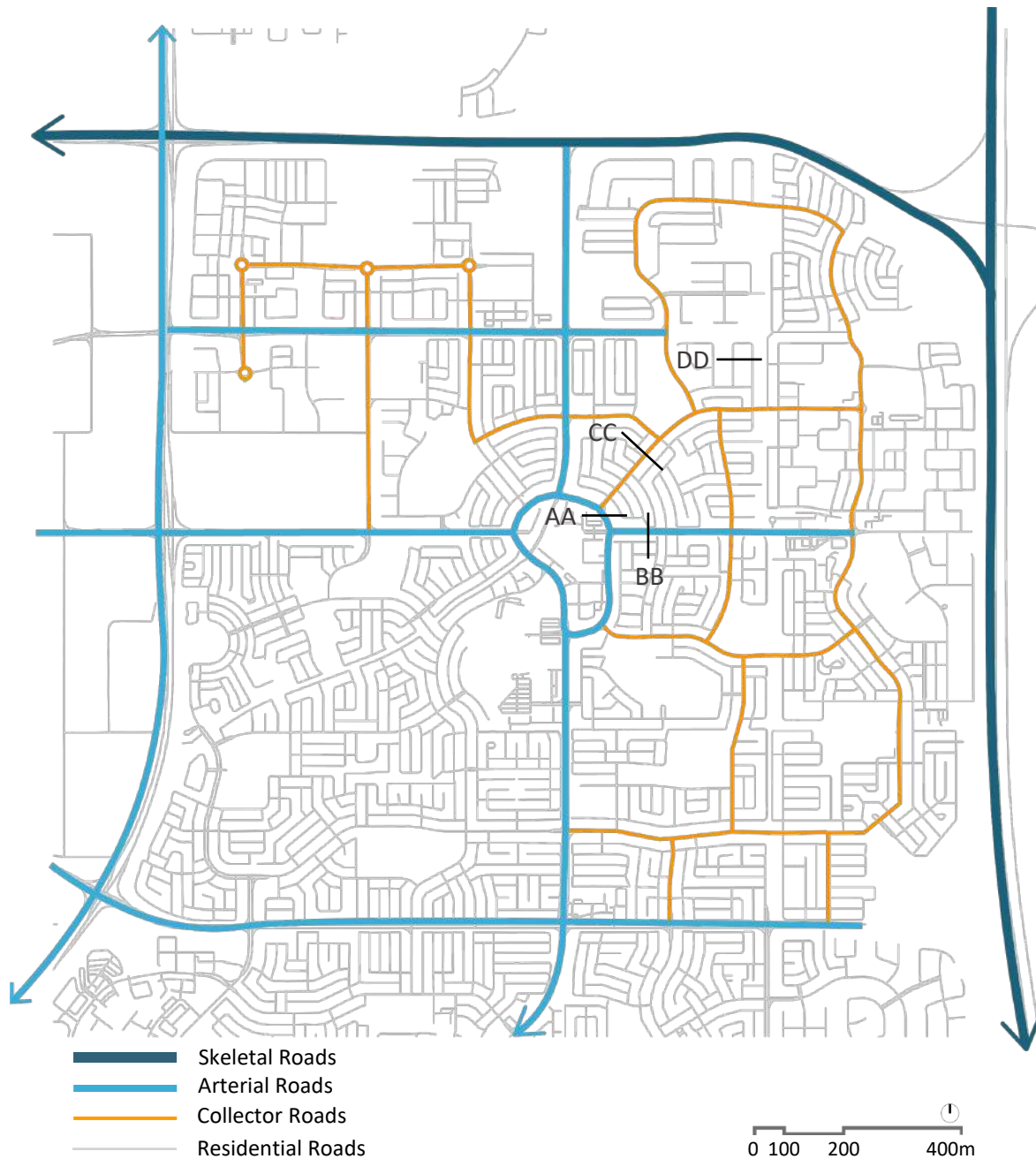
Majority of the streets in Saddle Ridge and Taradale have a speed limit of 50-60 km/ hour. Out of the four arterial roads that connect to the Saddle Towne Circle, 80th avenue has the lowest traffic, while Falcon Ridge Blvd has the highest.

Arterial Road: 80th Avenue

Collector road: Taradale Drive

STREET SECTIONS

SECTION AA
Arterial Road

PL

PL

1.5m   8m   8m   1.5m

27m

SECTION BB
Arterial Road

PL

PL

1.3m   12.8m   2.6m

30m
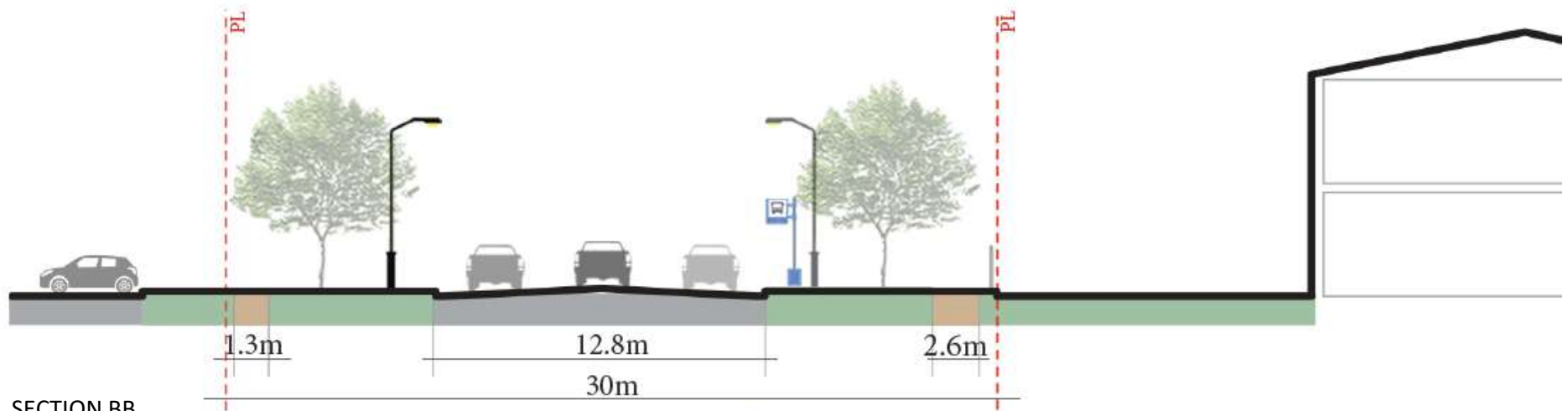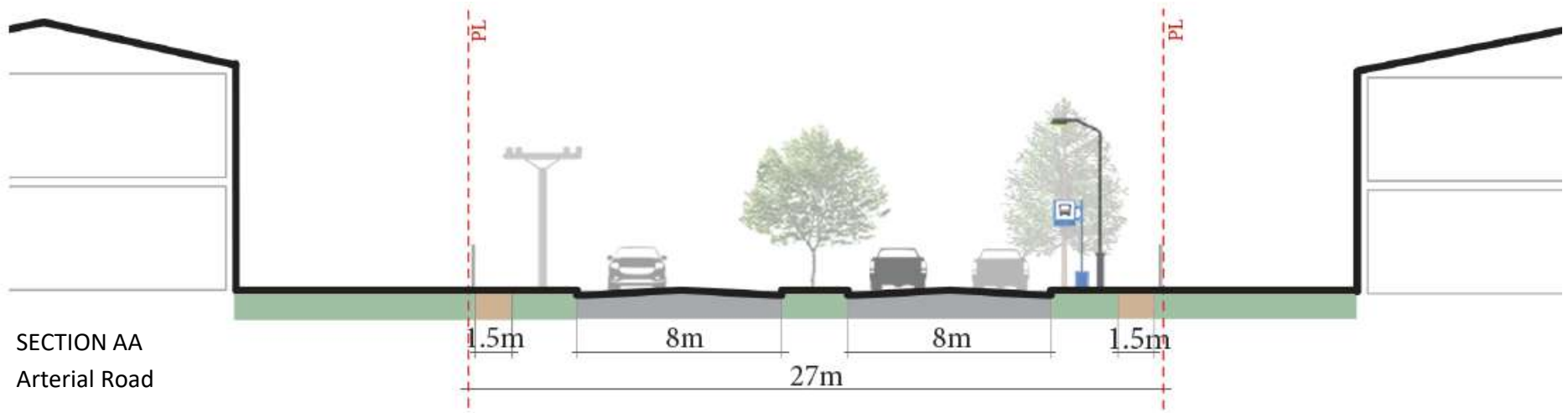
While the streets actually show decent separation between vehicles and pedestrians, the public realm is quite lacking. There is no sense of an enclosure nor protection from inclement weather. From the street sections, it is quite evident that the roads are wide which make pedestrian crossings dangerous.

Light of Christ School

| 2m | Parking | | 2.5m | 12.5m | 1.3m |

21.5m

SECTION CC
Collector Road

| 0.8m | 10m |

15m

SECTION DD
Residential Road
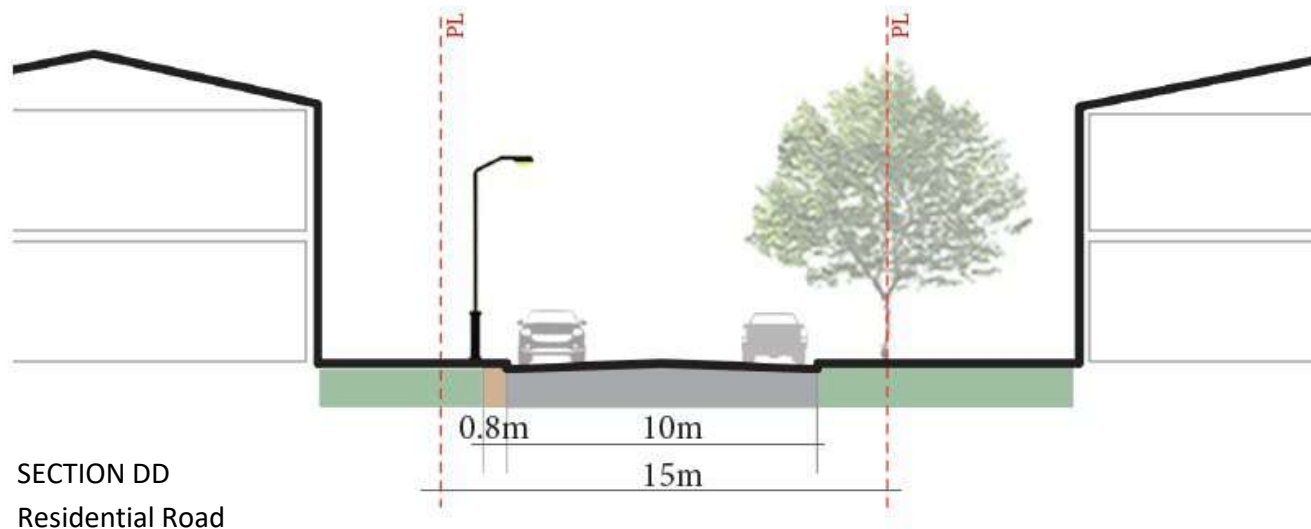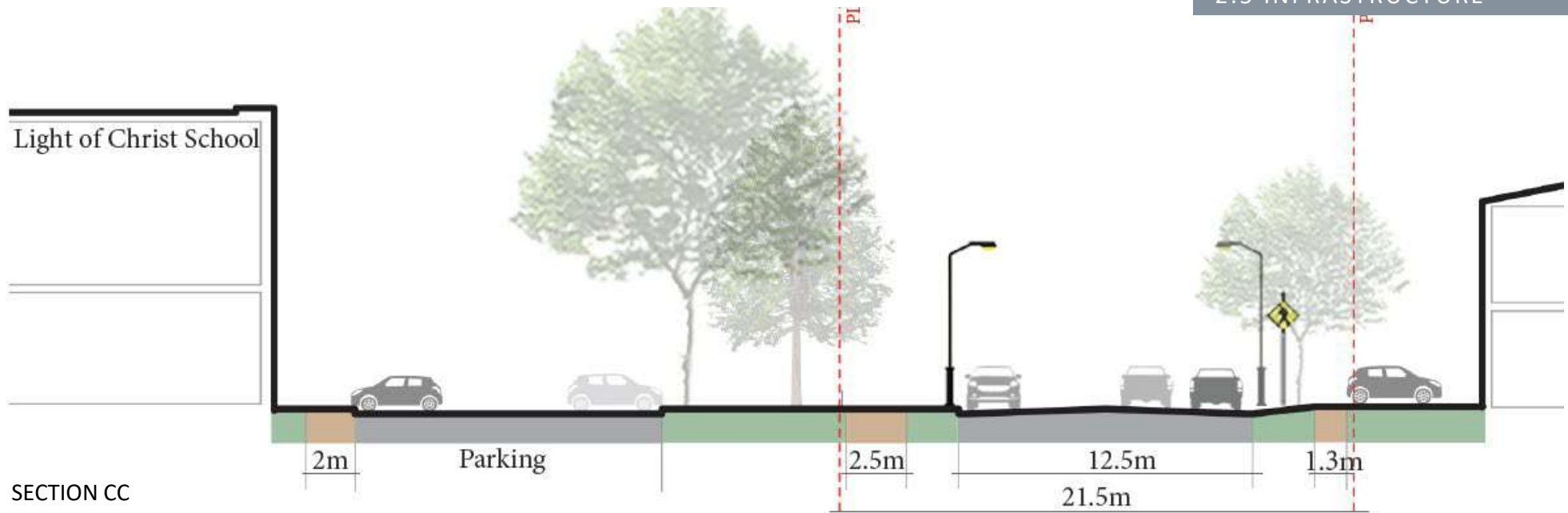
The sidewalks are quite narrow and raises accessibility questions. The current existing sidewalk is only 1.3 meters wide, which is smaller than the average sidewalks with a width of 1.5m which contribute to the lack of public realm.

MULTI-USE PATHWAY NETWORK

There are a number of multi-use pathways including connection to the Rotary Mattamy Greenway. There are gaps however, in the multi-use pathway network, which makes the network quite disconnected. The area could benefit from a structured connected multi-use pathway system.

Existing multi-use pathway

—— Multi-use Pathway

0 100   200   400m
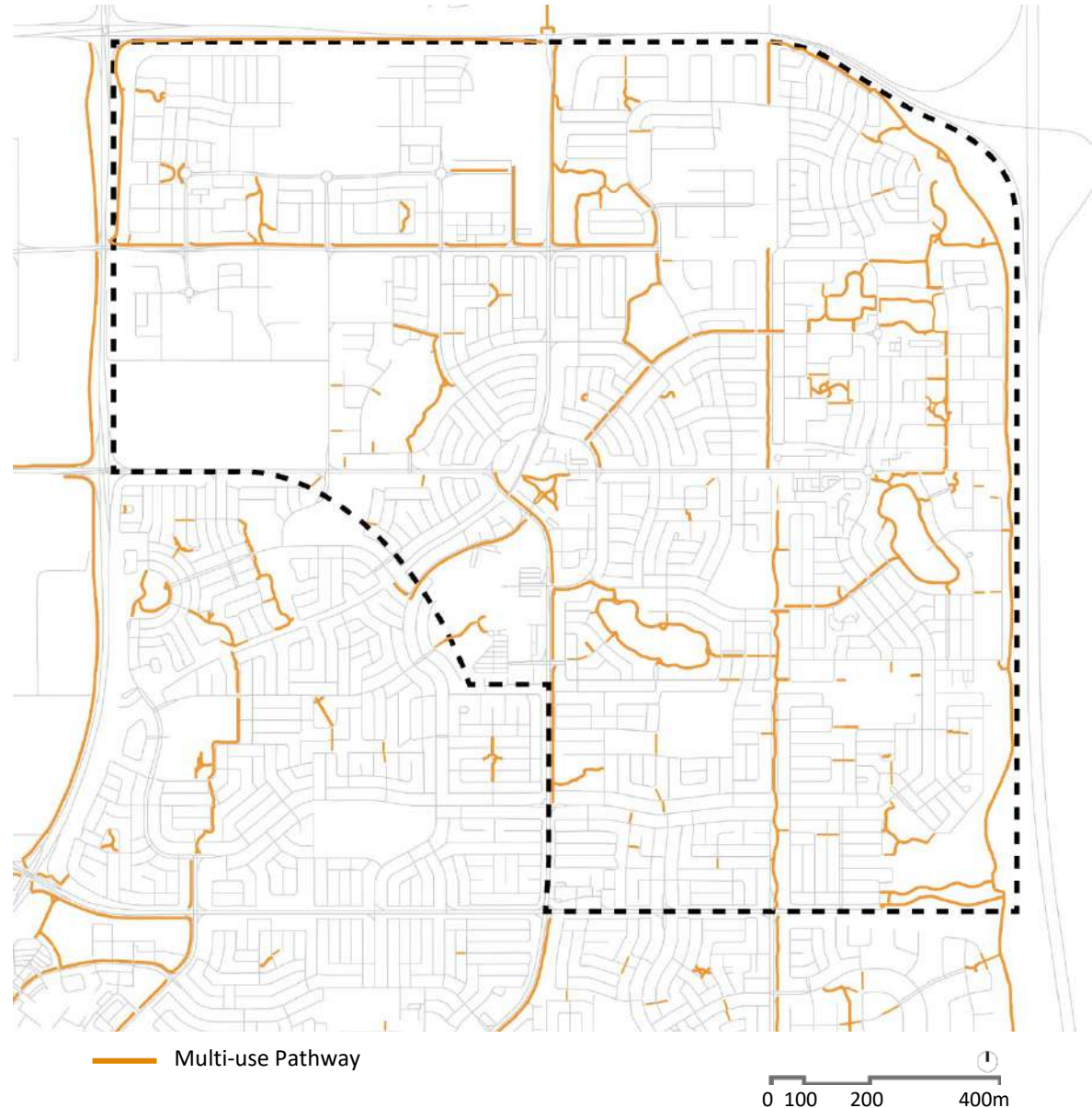
BIKE NETWORK

The biking network in the two neighborhoods is majorly lacking. From the map below, there is potential to further connect the existing on-street bikeway network into the rest of Taradale and Saddle Ridge. However, this network also needs some improvement as the current bikeway network is on-street bikeway path and not a separated bicycle lane. On-street bikeway paths are quite dangerous as there is no separation between the vehicles and bikers and cause some serious accidents and injuries. To ensure a safer bike network, we recommend separated bike lanes.

——— Bike network

0 100   200   400m

——— On-Street Bikeway
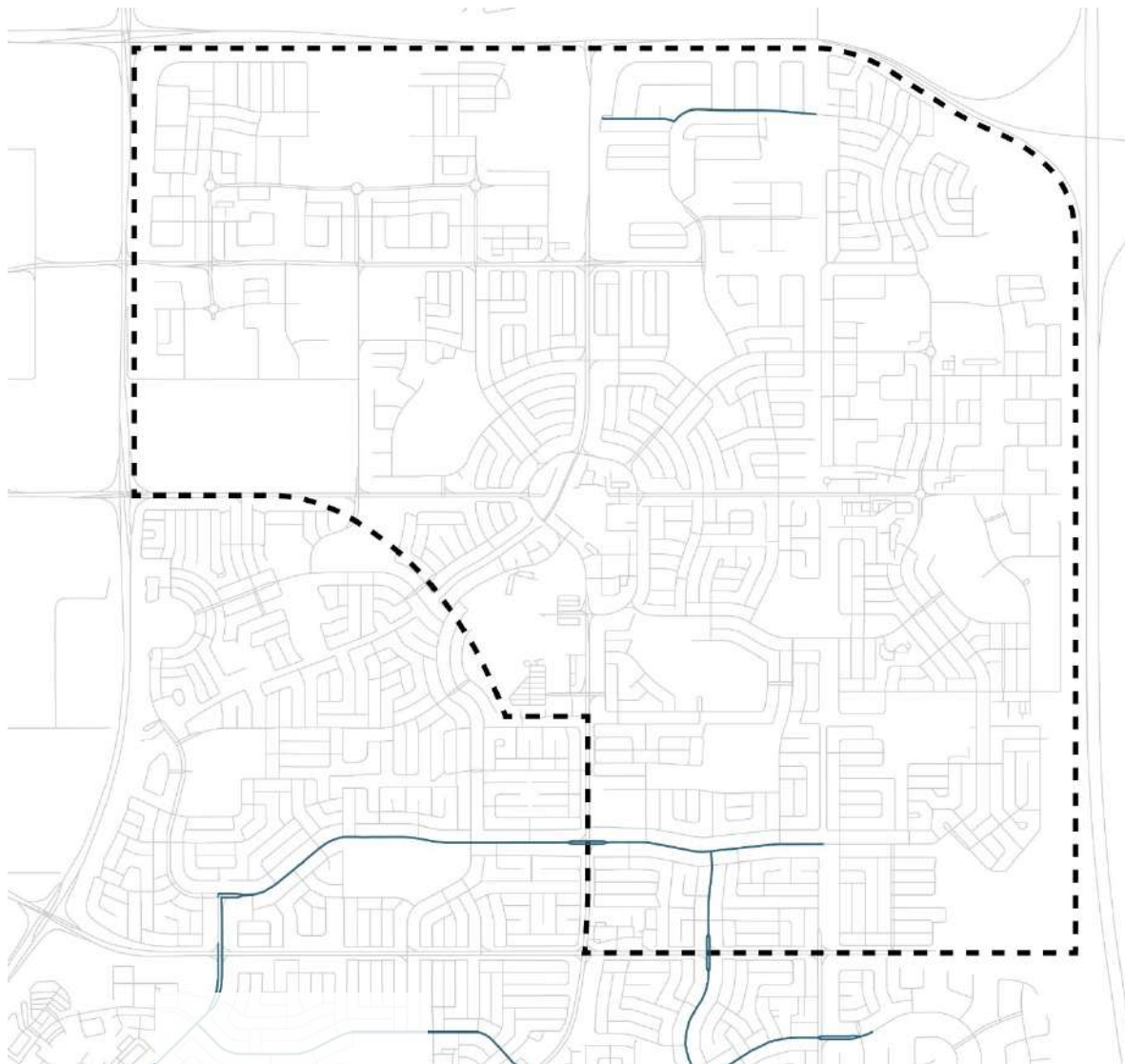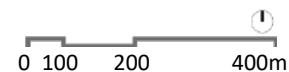
INTERSECTION DATA

Vehicle-Vehicle incidents since 2016

No pedestrian crossing.
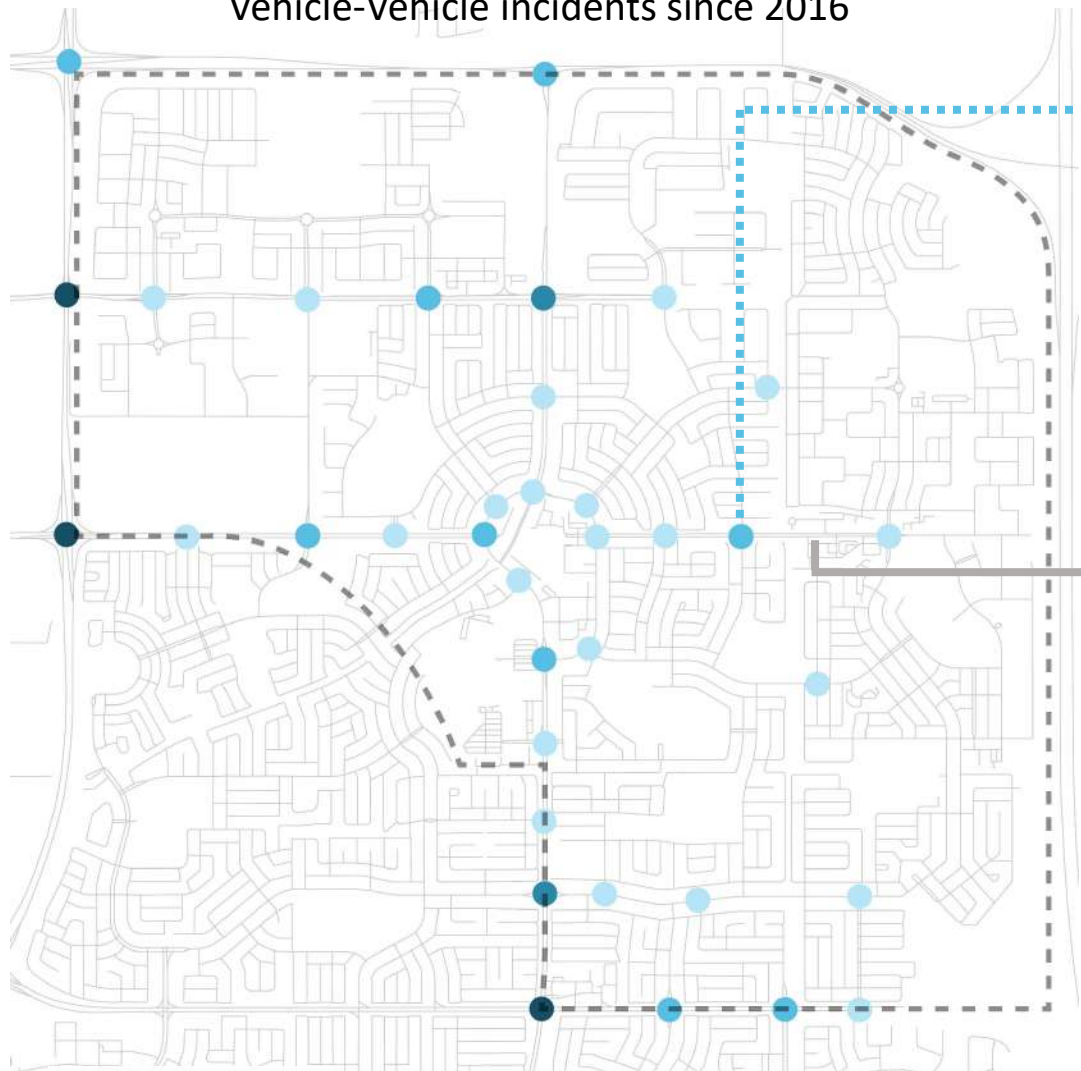
Legend:
- 1-10 Incidents
- 11-30 Incidents
- 31-60 Incidents
- 60+ Incidents

0 100 200 400m

The vehicle infrastructure is quite unsafe which is evident in the many vehicle-vehicle incidents. There are a lot of opportunities in traffic calming measures to prevent both vehicle-vehicle incidents and vehicle-pedestrian incidents.

Vehicle-Pedestrian incidents since 2016

● 1 Incident

● 2 Incident

0 100 200   400m

A strength of the neighborhood in terms of intersection analysis is that vehicle-pedestrian incidents are quite low with majority of them concentrated around Saddle Towne circle and areas where there are no pedestrian crossings. Both of these maps guide our understanding and opportunities for improvement in the area for mobility infrastructure.

UTILITIES & DESIGN CONSTRAINTS

We did have some restrictions on the site in terms of design interventions. Due to the proximity to the airport, the community of Saddle Ridge does have some restrictions in the west section of the community. Height and noise are the main restrictions in the Airport Vicinity Protection Area. Certain residential developments are prohibited in the NEF 30+ zones per AVPA restrictions such as, existing residential properties cannot be subdivided to create new residential lots and the number of residential units cannot be increased.

The high-pressure gas line that runs through the linear park makes it difficult for trees to grow, thus, there are limitations to our design proposals in terms of recommending more trees to be planted. As well, trees can also damage the pipelines and are usually planted a few meters away depending on the height of the tree.

.... Existing High Pressure Gas Line

.... Proposed 138Kv Overhead Line

———— Catchment Area

———— Abandoned Sour Gas Pipelines

● Abandoned Sour Gas Wells

▦ Airport Vicinity Protection Area

0 100   200   400m

PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE
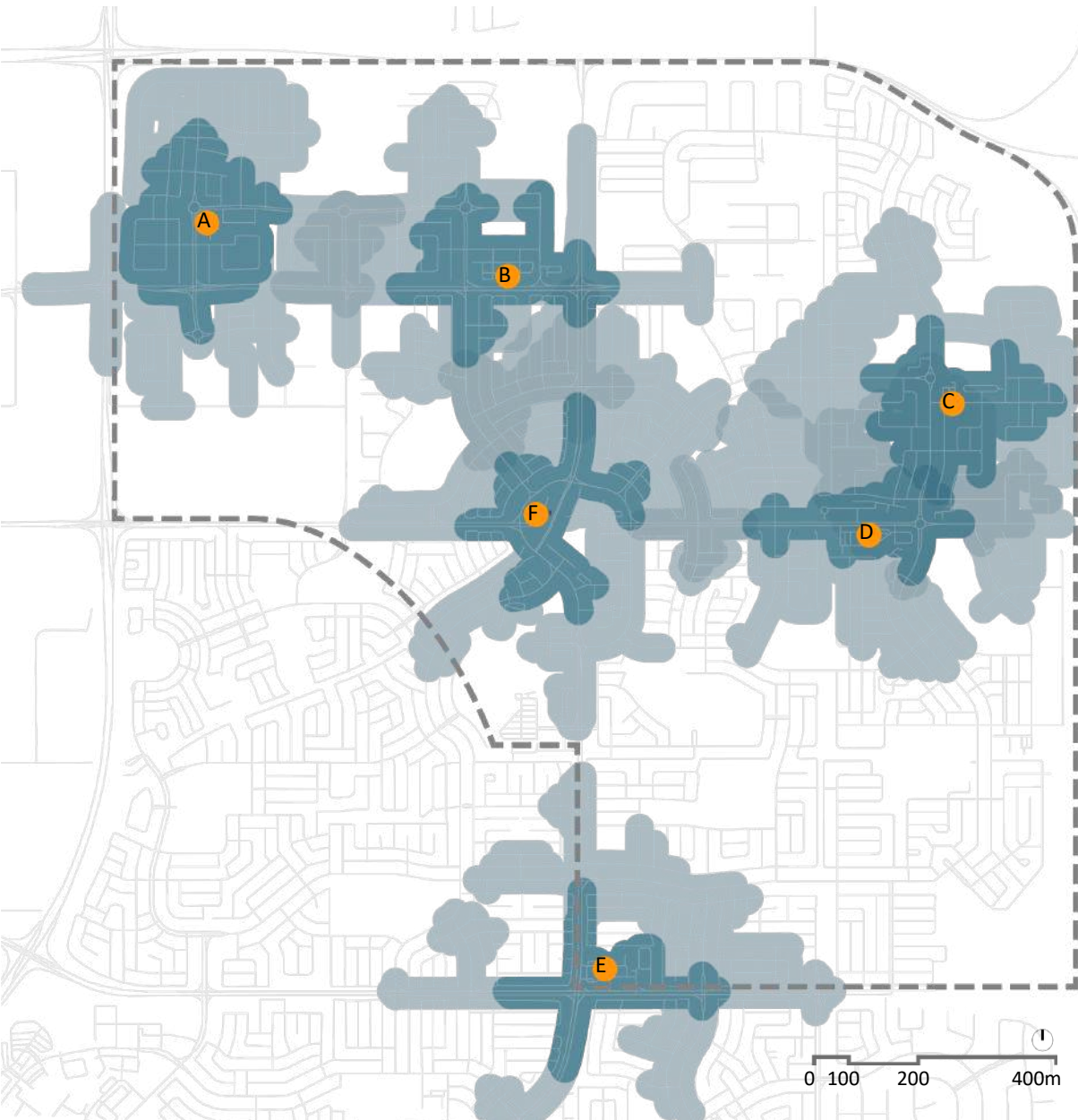
While some everyday needs can be satisfied nearby, not all commercial nodes are easily accessible on foot. Many locals still require a car in order to reach CHALO FreshCo or Shopper's Drug Mart for groceries or the local clinic for healthcare or the Genesis Centre. There are more opportunities to increase commercial nodes in the neighborhoods, specifically Taradale.

This figure helps illustrate how accessibility of the existing commercial nodes is extremely restricted, with a complete lack of any amenities present on the southeast portion of the study area.

A Commercial Node 1

B Commercial Node 2

C Commercial Node 3

D Commercial Node 4

E Commercial Node 5

F Saddle Towne Station

400m (5 minutes) walkshed

800m (10 minutes) walkshed

0 100   200   400m

2.6 SYNTHESIS

After looking at the four categories of cultural landscapes, natural environment, built form and infrastructure; we synthesized the opportunities and constraints. The communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale have an immense scope of improvement by incorporating both small-scale and large-scale, long-term interventions into their neighborhood. Capitalizing on their strengths and remodeling their weaknesses would ensure that the community transforms into a more vibrant, inclusive and enjoyable space to reside in.

ANALYSIS SYNTHESIS

	STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
CONTEXT	• Proximity to airport • LRT station that leads to • Proximity to employment centers • Access to Stoney Trail	• Car-dependent • Transit and driving times are very long (15-75 minutes) • Building height restrictions from airport proximity
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES	• Very culturally diverse demographic • Most schools accessed by a 10-minute walk	• Poor school walkability for children in NW corner • Unsuitable housing & over-enrolled schools • Very few community gathering places
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	• Well distributed open and park spaces • Relatively flat site	• Very little biodiversity in natural areas • Lack of mature trees and programming • Shadows on north sides of buildings almost year-round • Very cold winters with inclement and fluctuating weather • Disproportionately affected by hailstorms
BUILT FORM	• Not completely devoid of housing diversity • Proposed infill development will improve connectivity	• Disconnected areas (including NW areas) • Majority of single-family-homes • A lot of surface area used for off-street parking • Very few and disconnected commercial areas
INFRASTRUCTURE	• Decent transit frequency and coverage • Extensive multi-use pathway network • Fewer vehicle-pedestrian incidents on neighbourhoods' streets • Some streets have a segregation between vehicles and pedestrians • Consists many stormwater ponds • Proximity to major roads	• A few un-serviced areas by transit • Many vehicle-vehicle incidents • Many vehicle-pedestrian incidents • Wide streets lacking sense of enclosure and protection from weather • Wide streets create long and dangerous crossings

OPPORTUNITIES

With our synthesis of analysis, we focused on five main opportunities for the study area that we wanted to capitalize on which would help benefit the community:

1. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

The community would benefit from high density and mixed-use built form concentrated in proximity to the Saddletowne LRT Station.

2. DIVERSE GATHERING SPACES

Creating more diverse and a better web of inclusive commercial and gathering places would provide the residents with further options and alternatives.

3. LINEAR PARK PROGRAMMING

This under-utilized utility right-of-way could create an identity for the community with better programming.

4. HOUSING DIVERSITY

The dominant land use type of the site currently consists of single-family homes. Overcrowding and housing unsuitability could be addressed by creating more diverse housing options.

5. IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY

Natural park and open spaces would be better utilized with more biodiversity and an improved public realm quality.

0 100 200 400m

Transit oriented development
Adding and diversifying gathering spaces
Linear park programming
Single-family homes
Existing park spaces
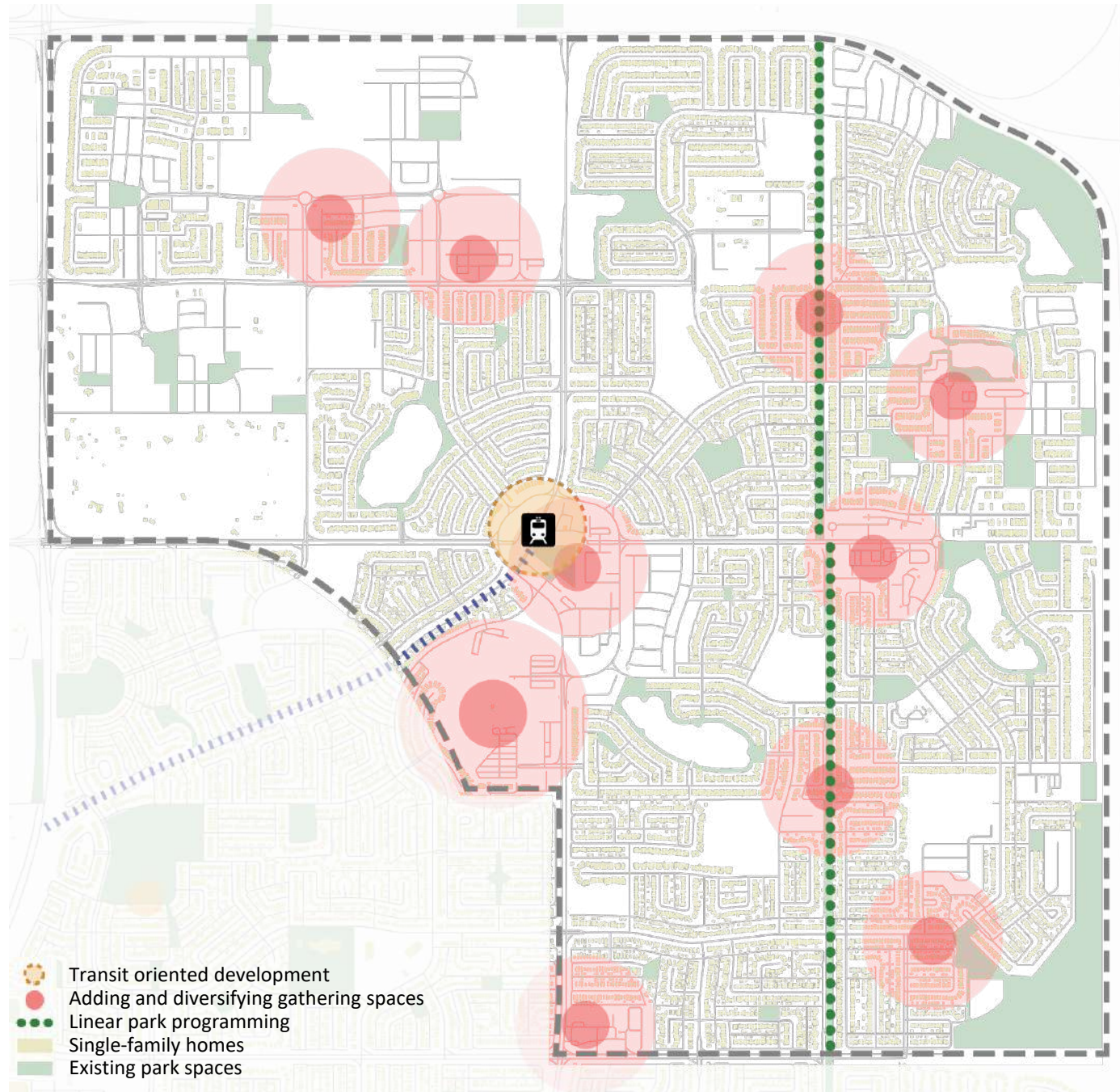
3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Our first community engagement session was held in the Genesis Center on Saturday, February 11th from 11:00-1:00pm. Through a workshop, we invited Saddle Ridge and Taradale community members to share their aspirations, concerns and challenges.

During the workshop, participants were divided into six groups where they were prompted to answer certain questions. Community members were also welcome to share their ideas on future possibilities for their communities.

"Lighting is a huge issue"

"My parents would like to walk further but they are scared to cross big roads and there aren't enough benches for them to sit"

"We need more colour and vibrancy"

"We have a lot of beloved parks that feel neglected over the past few years"

"There is no distinction between my neighbourhood and the surrounding neighbourhoods"

"Saddletowne Circle is a nightmare"

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Key themes that emerged from the public consultation were regarding housing unsuitability, overcrowding, the need for beautification and an urgent need for lighting within the communities.

Some of the other concerns that were raised by the participants had a lot of overlaps. Major ones included the following:

- Lack of choice in commercial areas
- Lack of places to gather
- Generally unsafe environment for walking and cycling
- Lack of wayfinding and no obvious direction to landmarks
- Some parks are being mistreated, are under-utilized and lack interesting features
- Lack of benches and lighting features
- Lack of colour and vibrancy
- Lack of unique identity

MÉTIS TRAIL CUT THROUGH CREATING CONGESTION

ILLEGAL DRIVING ON UTILITY RIGHT OF WAY

NO PROGRAM

BEST BAKERY

SQUATTERS

DEAD END ROAD

ILLEGAL STREET RACING

FUTURE MIXED USE AND RELIGIOUS HUB PROPOSED

USERS PREFER PARKS

USERS PREFER WALKING ROUTES

ILLEGAL GARBAGE

DEAD END ROAD

VANDALISM/ SAFETY CONCERNS/ SHOP LIFTING

NO LIGHTING OR TREES

METI TRAIL CUT THROUGH CREATING CONGESTION

PUBLIC PATHWAY BEING USED PRIVATELY

Constraints and Issues
Assets

0   100   200   400m

OPEN HOUSE

For the Open House session, we were back at the Genesis Center on Saturday, April 8th from 2-4pm. Happyplace Design Studio prepared five posters highlighting the main themes and design interventions for the public to observe. Additionally, all students created a physical model to allow members to visualize their community's existing built form. Each group also presented their virtual reality 360 angle visuals to help the residents better understand proposed changes and interventions.

The session was a roaring success with heavy footfall approximating to about 100 people observing our work and providing critical feedback. Many of the Steering Committee members were also present at the Open House.

Feedback and comments from the participants was included in our presentation to the Steering Committee.

OPEN HOUSE

Each team selected 3 crucial areas to demonstrate their design interventions. A 360 panoramic view was designed as per our strategies to help visualise the differences post implementation.

Our three locations were:

1. Walking from the LRT station into the Central Plaza.
2. The Taralake Park Pond located by 80th Avenue.
3. Intersection of Saddletowne Circle and 80th Avenue

OUTCOMES

The two engagement opportunities saw a lot of participation and enthusiasm from the community residents. They helped us to guide our design principles while also increasing the accountability and transparency of our research. Public participation helped us in building trust with the members that was reinforced by the open house session where we introduced the design interventions based on their concerns and feedback.

4 DESIGN CONCEPT

VISION & DESIGN DRIVERS

Based on our analysis, the goals of the Saddle Ridge and Taradale community associations, and what we heard from the public, we developed a set of five key design drivers to act as out vision and guide our process. These design drivers help to ensure that our discussions, idea generation and final design concept fit the context and needs of the communities.

Celebrate and represent the unique identity of the communities and their residents

Foster social connections and community participation
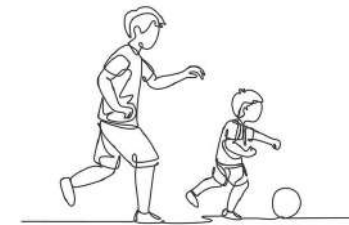
Bring life and diverse uses/activities to under-utilized spaces
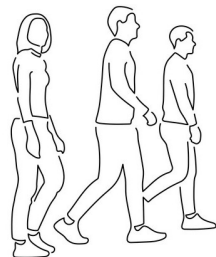
Improve pedestrian and cycling safety while also considering the importance of personal vehicles

Provide greater housing choice for a diverse population while considering the needs of Calgary as a sustainably growing population

KEY THEMES

Based on the previous phases of our methodology, it became clear that our design concept could be divided into four major themes or categories. These include built form and land use, mobility, open spaces and public realm, and Saddletowne Circle as a special site requiring greater attention to detail. These categories cover the basis of the community's needs and the aspirations of the community associations.

1. BUILT FORM AND LAND USE

2. MOBILITY

3. OPEN SPACES AND PUBLIC REALM

4. SADDLETOWNE CIRCLE

4.1 BUILT FORM & LAND USE

Based on our analysis and engagement, we determined a number of issues relating to built form and land use. For one thing, there is a significant lack of transit-oriented development surrounding the Saddletowne LRT station with very few apartment buildings capitalizing on this asset. While we learned that single-family homes are appreciated for privacy and family gatherings, there is also a desire for more housing choice but a lack of housing diversity to support this. Saddletowne Library is a very well-loved amenity, but it can be very busy and noisy at times. We also heard of a lack of new-immigrant support services and locations to take ESL classes. Lastly, we heard of a lack of choice in commercial services, not enough places to gather, and a desire to support smaller, local businesses. Our analysis confirmed that commercial areas are not well-distributed to allow for informal interactions and gatherings.

ANALYSIS & ENGAGEMENT

Lack of T.O.D.

Lack of Housing Diversity

Busy / Noisy Library

Lack of Small & Informal Commercial Areas

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Introduce a more diverse range of housing types and create density around both Saddletowne LRT Station and major commercial areas.*

2. *Incorporate small local libraries distributed throughout the communities which can alleviate the burden on Saddletowne Library (can also offer new immigrant services and ESL classes)*

3. *In addition to the existing, larger commercial areas, create a new and diverse web of commercial gathering places within communities*

RECOMMENDATION 1

Introduce a more diverse range of housing types and create density around both Saddletowne LRT Station and major commercial areas.

Residents of Saddle Ridge and Taradale have much higher rates of housing unsuitability compared to the City of Calgary's average. We have also heard an interest in different housing options as well as fears of greater crowding. What we propose for the future of housing forms in this site helps to strike a balance between these desires while also acknowledging the importance of sustainable growth for Calgary and the desirability of these communities into the future.

This includes increases in density around the Saddletowne LRT station to promote transit oriented development which gradually fades into the community. Increased density is also recommended around existing major commercial areas to promote greater walkability and usage of commercial/employment areas.

Backyard Suites (1-2 Fl.)

Townhomes (2-3 Fl.)

High Density Apartment Buildings (5-6 Fl.)

Mixed-Use Apartment Buildings (4-5 Fl.)

0 100   200   400m
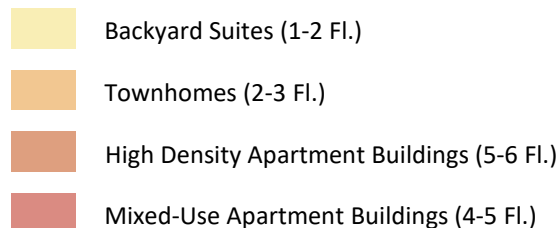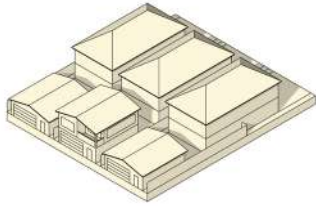
Typology:	**Backyard Suites**	**Townhomes**	**High Density Apartment Buildings**	**Mixed-Use Apartment Buildings**
Use:	Residential	Residential	Residential	Residential and Commercial
Floors:	1-2	2-3	5-6	4-5
Possible Land Use Zone:	Backyard Suites are Discretionary on Existing Plots (must apply and review)	R-2M, R-CG, R-Gm, M-1, M-C1, M-C2, M-CG, M-G	M-2, M-C2, M-H1, M-H2	M-X1, M-X2, C-COR1, C-COR2,
Location:	Within a 10-minute walk (800m) of LRT Station	Surrounding major commercial areas and bridging transition out from LRT Station	Directly around LRT Station to support transit-oriented development	On existing major commercial areas
Precedent Example:	*Backyard Suite, (Calgary, Alberta)*	*Westline Village, (Denver, Colorado)*	*Webber House, (Vancouver, BC)*	*Orenco Station Town Center, (Hillsboro,*
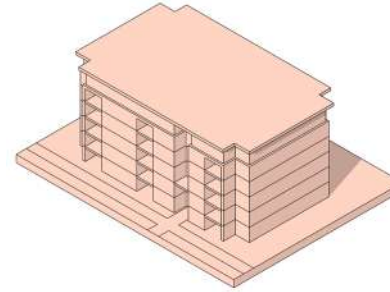
This graphic shows in greater detail how the housing typologies from the previous page would look surrounding the Saddletowne LRT Station. As mentioned, the building densities are concentrated around the LRT Station and gradually decrease into the community where no changes are recommended in white. Transit-oriented development, such as this, promotes transit use (over car dependency), economic growth, and improves public health.

It should be noted that there are many other feasible locations for backyard suites within the communities, however, keeping in mind both worries about vehicle congestion and a desire for greater housing choice/flexibility, backyard suites within a 10-minute walkshed (800 metres) would be the most impactful in encouraging transit use while reducing vehicle congestion.

Backyard Suites (1-2 Fl.)

Townhomes (2-3 Fl.)

High Density Apartment Buildings (5-6 Fl.)

Mixed-Use Apartment Buildings (4-5 Fl.)

RECOMMENDATION 2

Incorporate small local libraries distributed throughout the communities which can alleviate the burden on Saddletowne Library (can also offer new immigrant services and ESL classes)

Temporary micro libraries are located in the parking lots of commercial areas to be tested for feasibility and use. Optional locations for more permanent local libraries are located in open "Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve" and "Joint Use Sites" as identified by the Saddle Ridge ARP.

LESS PERMANENT

Microlibrary MoKa, (Bandung, Indonesia)

MORE PERMANENT

Athol Public Library, (Athol, Massachusetts)

Map of local libraries

Potential permanent local libraries

Potential temporary micro libraries

Saddletowne Library

0 100 200 400m

RECOMMENDATION 3

In addition to the existing, larger commercial areas, create a new and diverse web of commercial gathering places within communities

Small commercial areas are based on a desire for more informal gathering places and support for smaller, local businesses and corner stores. Long term, these would benefit from being located along bus routes, but could also be trialled as a less permanent option through food trucks or kiosks in parks.

LESS PERMANENT

Urban Coffee Farm & Brew Bar by Hassell, (Melbourne, AUS)

MORE PERMANENT

General Block, (Calgary, Alberta)

Map of Commercial Gathering Places

- ■ Existing Commercial
- ■ Proposed Commercial
- ● Transit Stops

0   100   200   400m
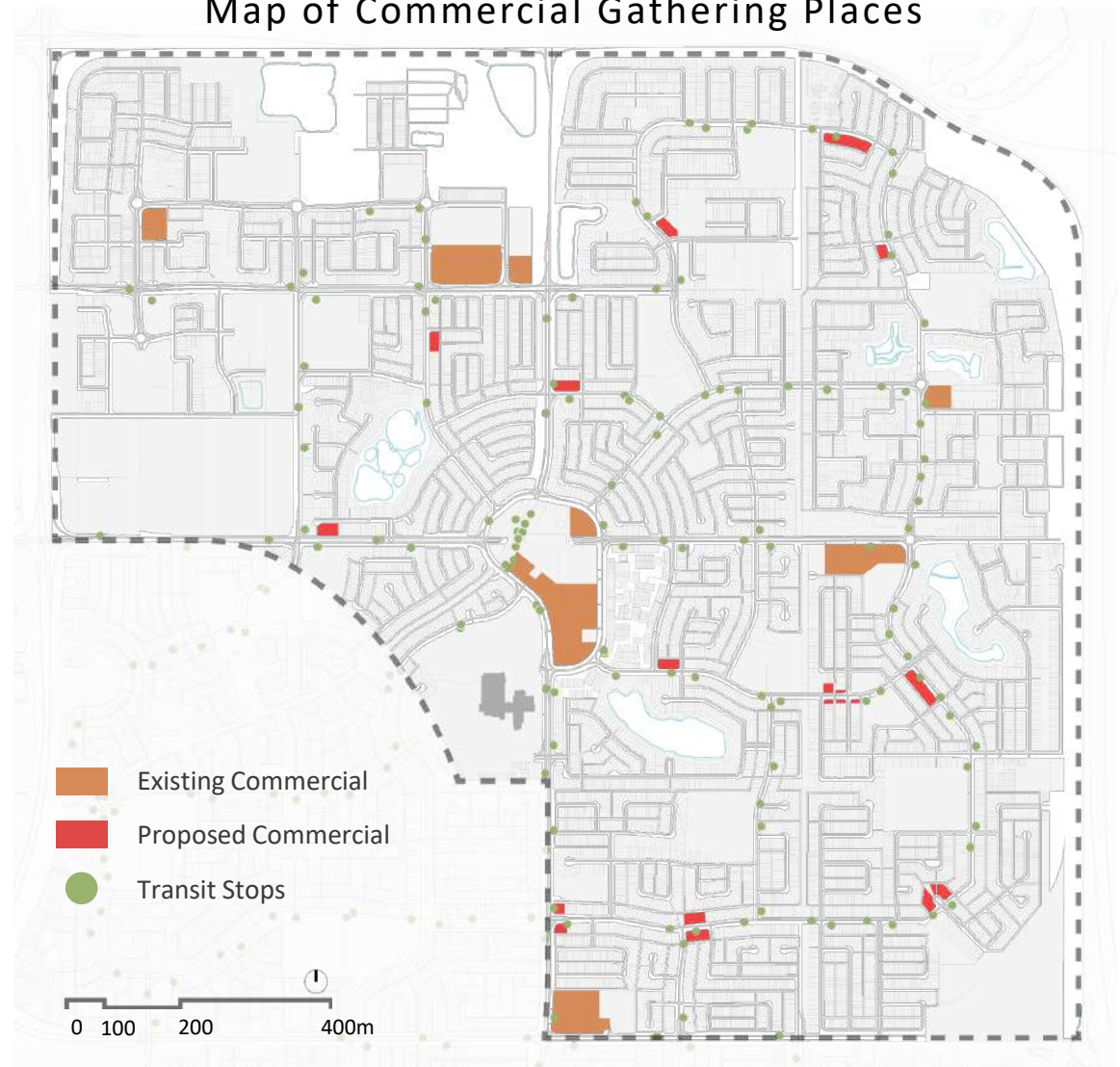
4.2 MOBILITY

Through our analysis and engagement, we know that the communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale have unsafe walking environments, lack of crosswalks, dangerous intersections, and street racing occurring down specific streets. There have been many vehicle and pedestrian incidents especially around Saddle Towne Circle and at major intersections. The streets are very wide creating long and more dangerous crossings. Based on what we heard and what we identified through our analysis from incidents, we found that there is a strong desire to make walking conditions safer.

The community also expressed that they would like to have more cycle lanes as many are eager to cycle but cannot due to the lack of separated cycle lanes. There is a lack of wayfinding signage and no obvious direction to landmarks.

Our design interventions will help create a safe walking environment while also encouraging other forms of transportation. These measures will also add to the overall public realm as some of these interventions can build and promote community bonds, such as fence painting, where the community can come together and start this initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Connected bike lanes and multi-use pathway infrastructure around the SaddleTowne Circle.*

2. *Traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures such as painted and/or raised crosswalks, raised intersections, speed bumps and chicanes to be included within the community.*

3. *Multi-lingual wayfinding signage to help people navigate within the community.*

ANALYSIS & ENGAGEMENT

Lack of Bike Lanes

Street Racing

Unsafe Pedestrian Crossings

Lack of wayfinding Signage

RECOMMENDATION 1

Connected bike lanes and multi-use pathway infrastructure around the SaddleTowne Circle.

DD

CC

AA

BB

Multi – Use Pathway (Saddletowne Loop)

Bike Lane

0 100   200   400m

Sidewalks play a vital role in neighborhoods. As public spaces, sidewalks are the front steps to the city which help activate streets. Our multi-use pathway, called the Saddletowne Loop, goes around Saddletowne circle, and is illustrated by section AA. The multi-use pathway is to be 4 meters wide to enhance connectivity and promote walking/cycling.

The community had expressed to us that they would like to bike more if there was adequate biking infrastructure. This was one of our priorities when we analysed the mobility network. According to design guideline of 2020 for Calgary, bike lanes are to be proposed on collector streets. The minimum bike lane width permitted is 1.5m, however 1.2m is permitted in retrofitting projects which is the case here.

We also included 80th Avenue into our biking network, even though it is an arterial road, we determined that it would complete the network and help with the traffic calming safety measures we propose in recommendation 2.

SECTION- ARTERIAL ROAD

PL

PL

4m

12.8m

2.6m

30m
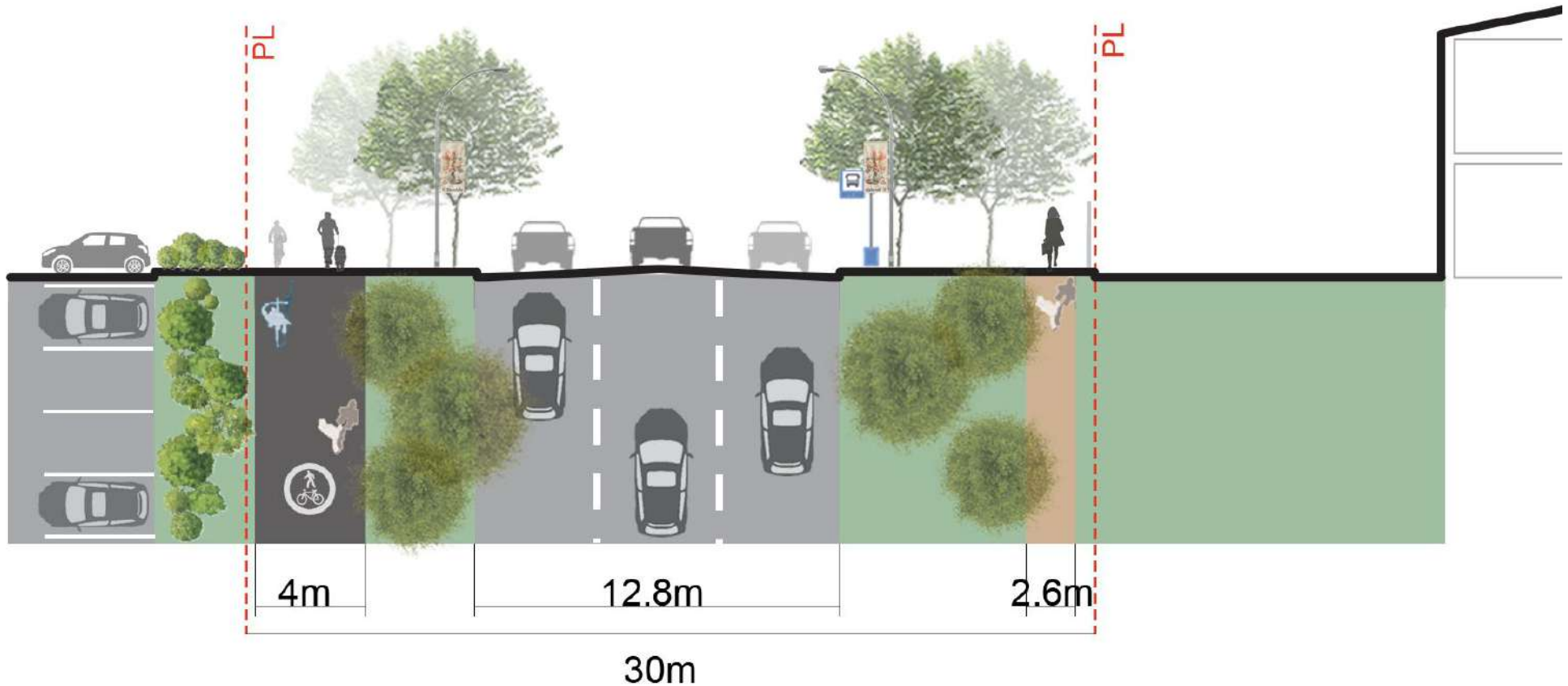
Section AA- Saddletowne Circle

Multi-use pathways help activate the street and store frontages creating great public realm. This is our intention with the Saddletown Loop that we proposed. The multi-use pathway creates a balanced harmony of the different sustainable forms of transportation.

SECTION- ARTERIAL ROAD

4.1m	8m	8m	1.5m
	27m		
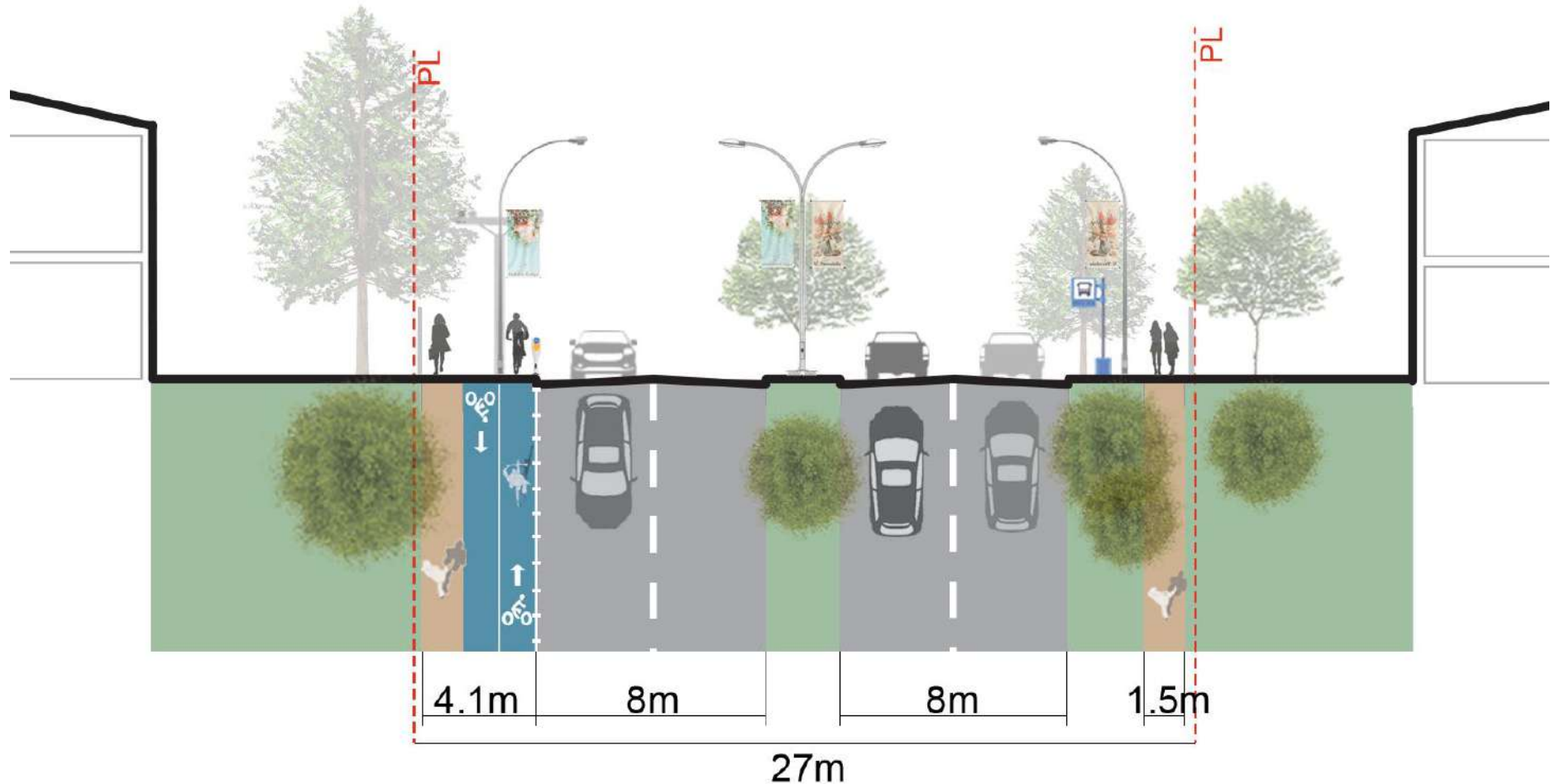
Section BB- 80th Avenue

From the existing sidewalk network in the neighbourhood, we are proposing bike lanes in streets where there are sidewalks on both sides of the street (majority of them being collector streets), as there is enough space to accommodate them. Section BB and CC shows how the bike lanes will be incorporated into the neighborhoods. The prominent colored bike lanes helps with visibility.

BEFORE - 80th Avenue (Section BB)

The before and after photo help visualize what the potential of 80th avenue is with the bike lanes. It can help activate the streets and create safer sidewalks. By encouraging other forms of transportation, especially greener forms of transportation, we help create more environmentally sustainable communities. Some other benefits of bike lanes include less traffic, fewer road conflicts and help boost commercial retail sales.

AFTER – 80th Avenue (Section BB)

SECTION-COLLECTOR ROAD

Light of Christ School

PL

PL

| 2m | Parking | 2.5m | 3.1m | 9.4m | 1.3m |

21.5m

Section CC- Saddlemont Blvd

By removing a driving lane, there was enough room to propose biking lanes. Bike lanes can be 1.5m wide, a two-way bike lane would need at least 3m, which is the case here. By having the sidewalk and bike lanes separated with a green median, it allows for safety of both the bikers and the pedestrians. Majority of the schools are located in collector streets, which helped with proposing biking lanes as they ensure safer sidewalks and reduction of vehicular speed.

SECTION- RESIDENTIAL ROAD

0.8m   10m

15m
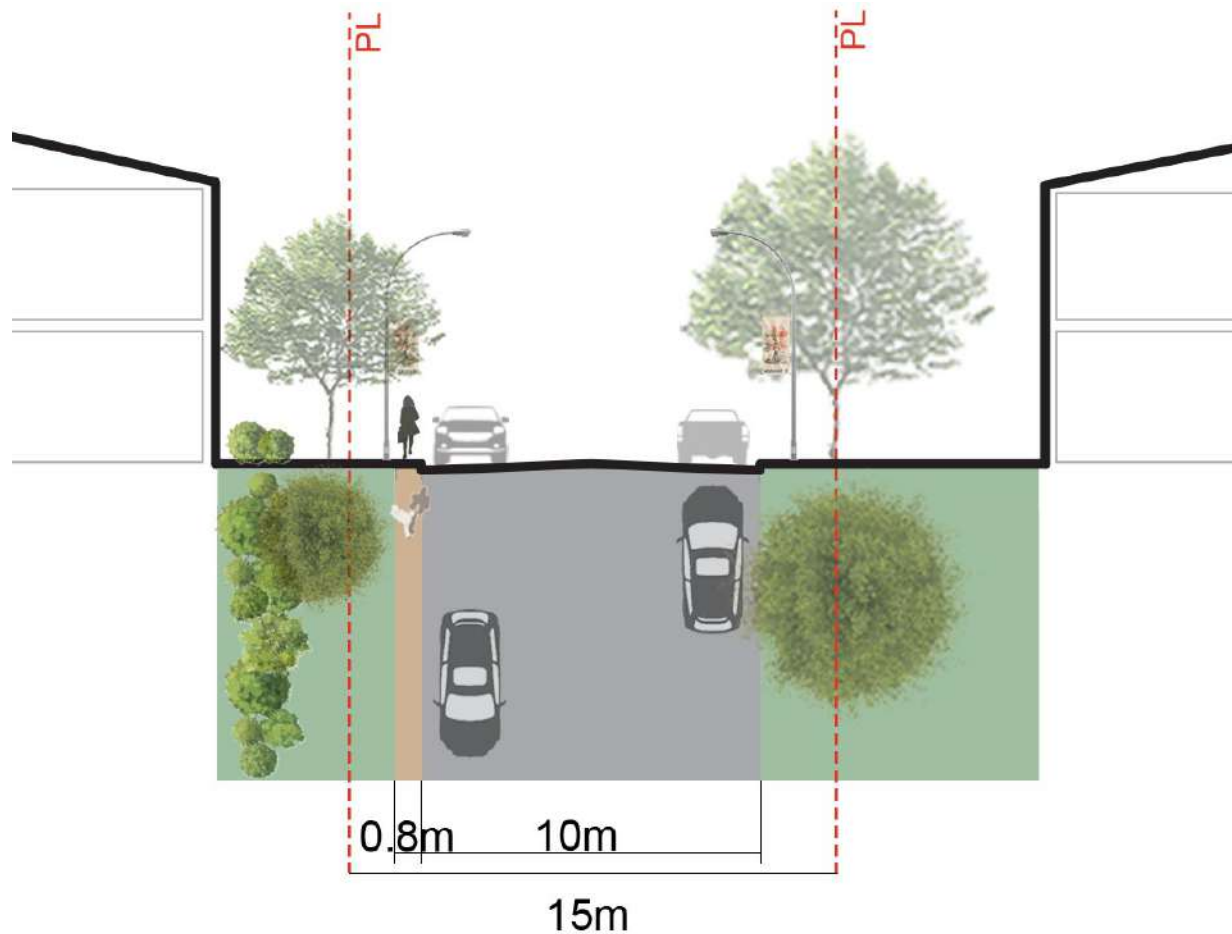
Section DD- Saddleland Crescent

The residential streets will remain as is due to constraints regarding width. No bike lanes were proposed for residential streets as many of the residential streets only have sidewalks on one side, limiting the space.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures such as painted and/or raised crosswalks, raised intersections, speed bumps and chicanes to be included within the community.

We mapped out areas where traffic calming safety measures can happen, such as around schools and commercial areas. This map is a result of our analysis and what we heard through our public engagement session.

We found that there is a strong desire for making walking safer, and therefore we are recommending the following effective traffic measures: painted and concrete curb extensions, painted crosswalks, speed bumps, chicanes, raised crosswalks and intersections. We categorized them into what would be the least and most permanent solutions as you can see. The temporary safety measures can be starting points for the community, they are often inexpensive and easy to begin.

Some of these traffic calming and safety measures add to the public realm and are great place making designs.

Roads

Intersection

0 100   200   400m

Existing (unfinished) painted sidewalks at Saddle Towne Circle

Painted Curb Extensions

Bridgeland Polka Dot Intersection (Calgary, Alberta)

Raised Crosswalks

E 5th Street & Fort Hamilton Parkway (Brooklyn, NY)

Raised Intersections

City Hall (St. John's, Newfoundland)

Chicanes

Chicane (Austin, Texas)

Speed Bumps / Cushions

Traficop Speed Cushions, (UK)

Textured Crosswalks

Richard Drdul, Flickr

Painted Crosswalks

A
Better Bankside Colourful Crossing (London, UK)

Concrete Curb Extensions

B
Curb Extension (British Columbia, Canada)

Centre Median Crosswalks

C
La Jolla boulevard (San Diego, California)

LESS PERMANENT ───────────────────────────────→ **MORE PERMANENT**

INTERSECTION PLAN

The plan illustrates the traffic calming safety measures we have proposed. We chose one of the prominent intersections of Saddlemont BLvd and Saddlehorn Drive just south of Light of Christ School. This was originally a very wide intersection with dangerous and long crossings, specially for the children who cross it daily to get to their school. The plan helps to visualize the safety measures such as painted crosswalks, concrete curb extensions and the centre median crosswalk which help to limit the extent of intersection that pedestrians have to cross.

To make for a safer walking environment, simple design elements such as painted crosswalks or fence painting or wayfinding signage help brighten the community and give it a sense of place and identity.

Fewer and less serious collisions result from slower and more cautious driving. When residents aren't concerned about speeding cars, especially families with young children, they feel more at ease strolling or cycling through their neighborhood.

BEFORE- 80th Ave and Saddletowne Circle

AFTER- 80th Ave and Saddletowne Circle

MULTI-LINGUAL WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

RECOMMENDATION 3

Multi-lingual wayfinding signage to help people navigate within the community.

Detailed Map

Central Park ਸੈਂਟਰਲ ਪਾਰਕ کراپ لرٹنیس *Central Park*

Species Description

Illustration
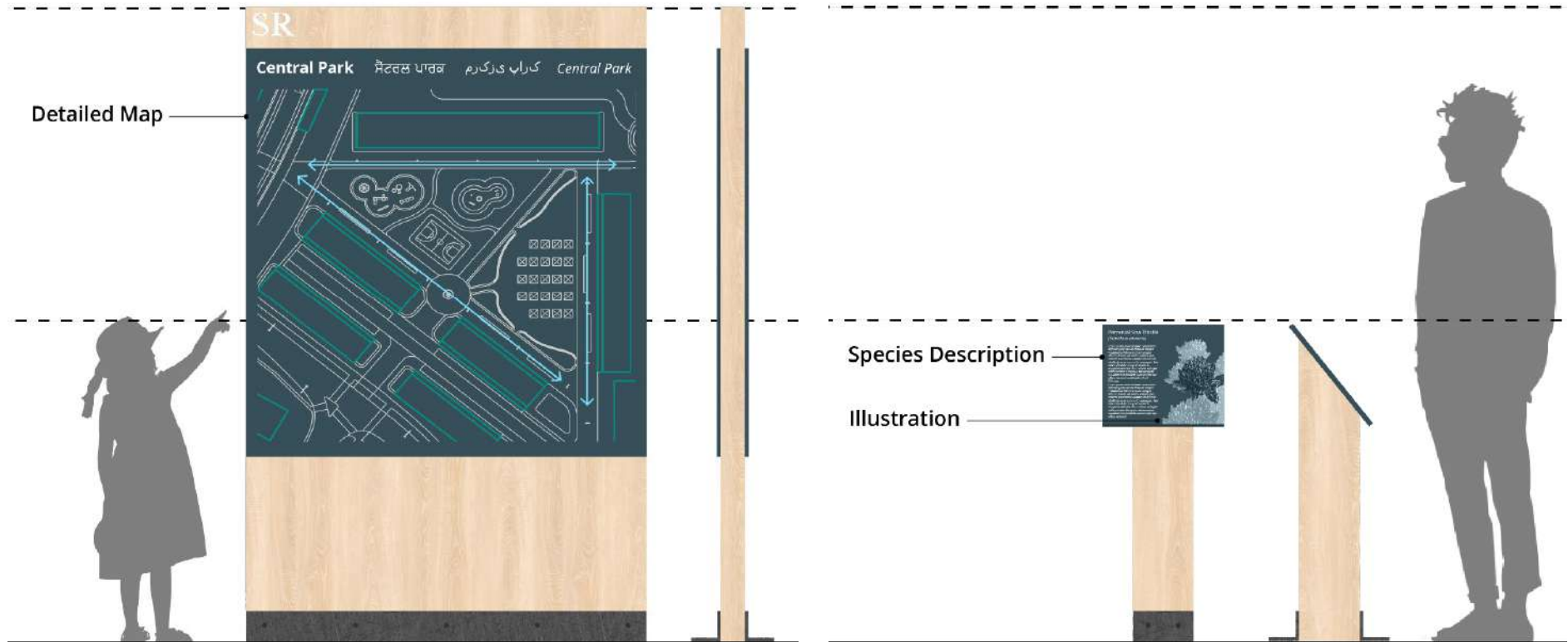
Site-Specific Maps

Site-specific maps can used at larger destinations like parks and the Saddletowne LRT station which showcases a map of the community and helps you understand where you are.

Interpretive Signs

The interpretive signs contain information about plants and wildlife throughout the community to better understand the history and identity of the neighborhoods.
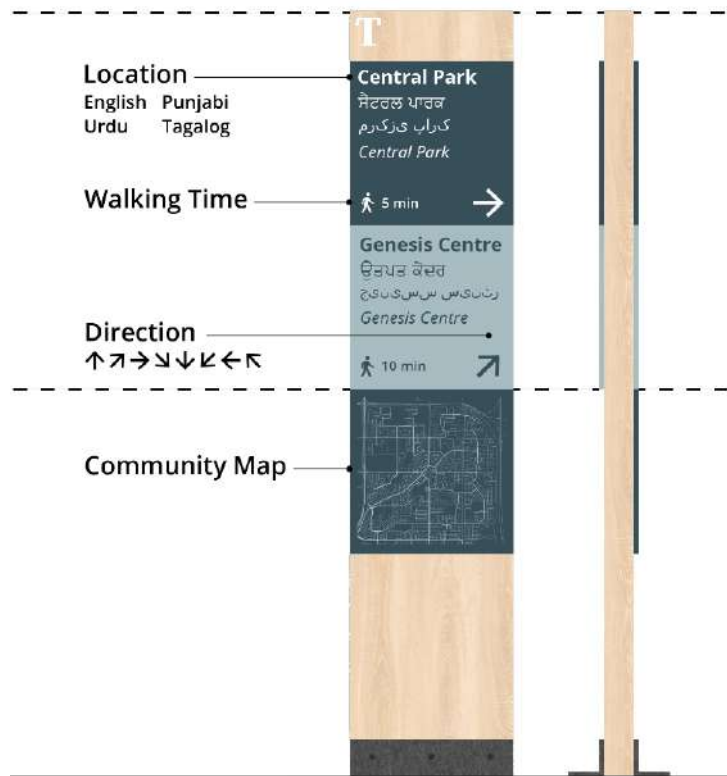
Permanent Wayfinding Signs

Temporary Wayfinding Signs

The permanent and temporary wayfinding signs with major landmark locations are multi-lingual with the four most dominant languages in the neighborhoods, English, Punjabi, Urdu and Tagalog listed on the signs. This is very important to us to make sure the community feels included and to respond to their unique identity. The permanent wayfinding signs also show walking time to destinations as well as directions and a community map. The temporary signage is a solution that the community can start out with.

4.3 OPEN SPACES & PUBLIC REALM

Through our analysis and engagement, we know that the communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale have a severe lack of biodiversity in their natural environment. Due to poor soil conditions, there are more stunted than mature trees. Through residents, a lack of maintenance of these public places has been emphasized, specially around stormwater ponds during the summer months.

We are also aware that all open spaces and parks look and feel the same, with an absence of programming or incorporation of interactive elements.

To tackle these, we recommend design principles that would help resolve these challenges and add to the public realm and quality of open park spaces within the community. Our aim with this theme of intervention is to help residents enjoy their community, while also taking pride in its unique identity. We want to provide amenities for people of all ages, ensuring they are inclusive and accessible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Creating a range of programming along the linear recreational trail.*

2. *Multi-generational Programming in existing school playgrounds and stormwater ponds, along with public realm improvements around ponds.*

3. *Incorporating winter city interventions to create more vibrancy and colour.*

4. *Broad public realm elements introduced along the entire community.*

ANALYSIS & ENGAGEMENT

Lack of Biodiversity

Poor Soil Conditions

Lack of Maintenance

Missing Programming

Multi – generational Playgrounds
Stormwater Pond improvements
Linear Park

0   100   200   400m

RECOMMENDATION 1

Creating a range of programming along the linear recreational trail.

We are proposing different programs along the linear park. This utility right-of-way stretching across the entire site forms an enormous potential to serve several amenities as well as to form a distinct identity for the communities of Saddle Ridge and Taradale. The idea is to activate nodes along the trail to create distinct gathering spaces with specific characteristics.

The first program is a skatepark which would be in proximity to schools. It could be a basic linear park that kids could engage in after school hours and during weekends. Second, we have community gardens that are proposed along 80th Avenue as this would form a main street and utilize the traffic flowing through as well as pedestrian traffic of surrounding apartments.

1. SKATEPARK

2. COMMUNITY GARDENS
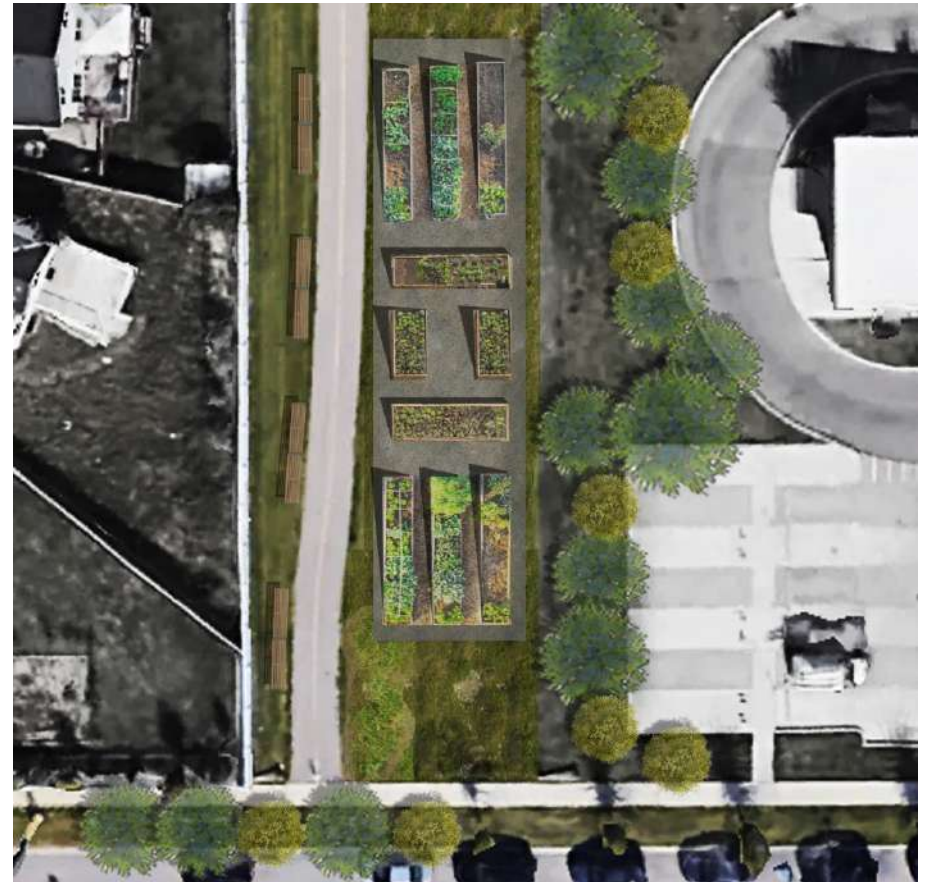
WestBlaak skatepark, (Rotterdam, Netherlands)

Community Garden, (East Village ,Calgary)

RECOMMENDATION 1

Creating a range of programming along the linear recreational trail.

3. PUBLIC PLAZAS

80th Ave 80 Ave NE

A

Mixed- Use

B

C

D

Multi-storey

Residential

E

Mixed- Use
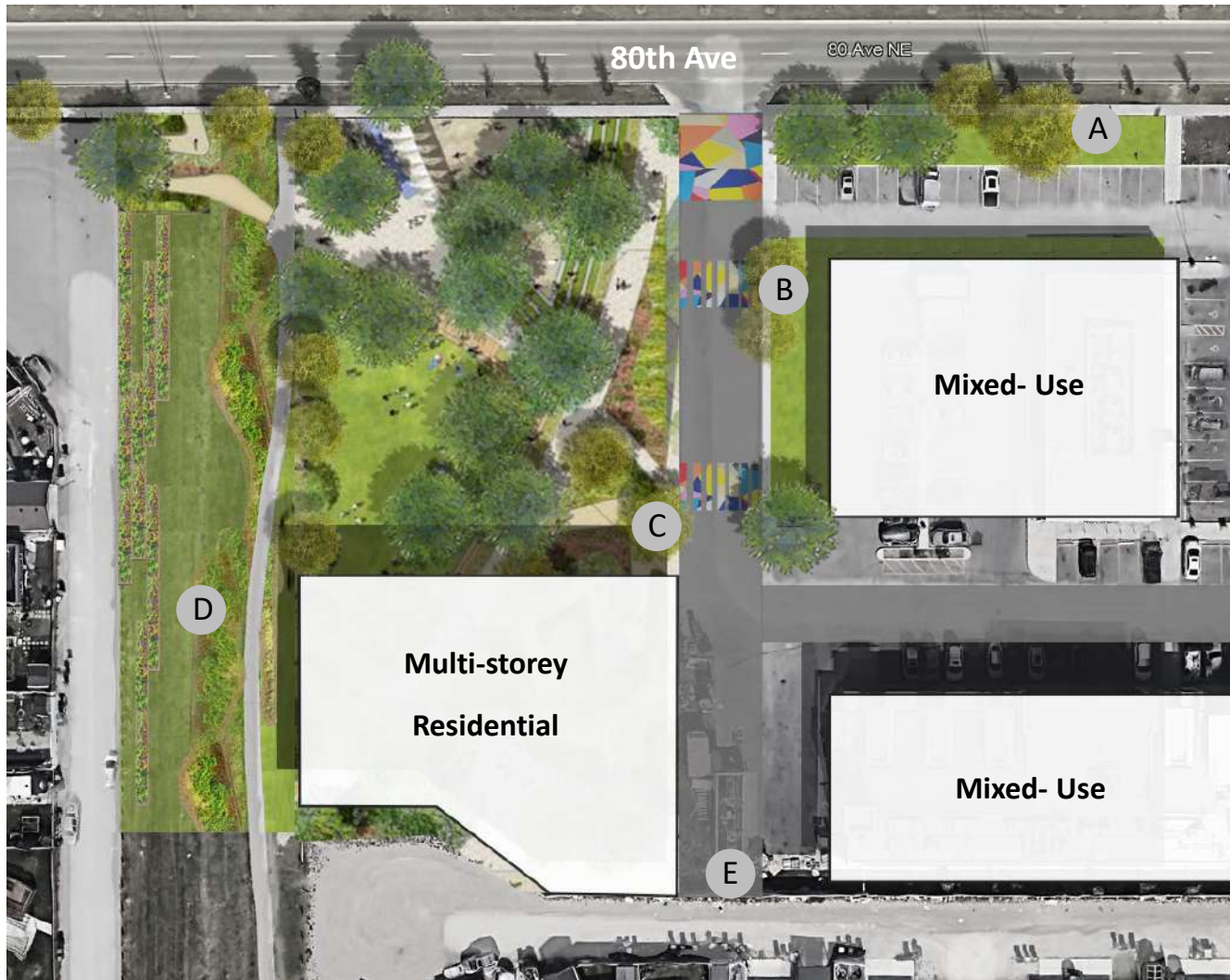
Our next program along the linear recreational trail is a public plaza. We are proposing one right along 80th Avenue, opposite to the community gardens. A plaza would encourage more social gatherings and provide people a space for exercise and recreation. Being located right next to a commercial node, it could also be utilized for activities such as farmers' market, street vendors and outdoor cafes.

Cultural events, such as live performances and art exhibits could also be displayed along this public plaza. It would form an integral hub of the community with multiple amenities and various housing types in proximity.

3

Songzhuang Micro Community Park, (China)

A Tree lined Boulevard   B Patio space   C Painted crosswalks   D Multi-use pathway   E Service laneway

BEFORE

4. DOG PARKS

There is no designated dog park in the entire community and one of our most important program along the linear recreational trail, is a dog park. These could be very easily incorporated into the trail and we have demonstrated how, along with fence painting adding more color and vibrancy to the space.

We have proposed two dog parks, one on the north and the other on the south but more could be added based on the success and demand for these off-leash dog parks. The utility right-of-way forms the perfect spot for our furry friends!

AFTER

RECOMMENDATION 2

Multi-generational Programming in existing school playgrounds and stormwater ponds, along with public realm improvements around ponds.

80th Ave

Taralake Park Pond

Creating more multi-generational spaces along the school playgrounds and stormwater ponds would help create more utilized and engaging park spaces. We have picked the Taralake Park Pond as an example, but this could just as easily be included along any other park space or a stormwater pond. Adding gazebos to create shaded seating areas, having a multi-use pathway and a multi-generational playground, incorporating wayfinding and interpretive signages as well as adding decks for seating and viewpoints will create an active and thriving space.

An example of a multi-generational playground is Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Los Angeles which combines a rope climbing adventure for children surrounded by outdoor fitness equipment for adults.

A Public Washroom

B Multigenerational Playgrounds

C Decks

D Multi-use pathway

E Gazebo

Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park, (Los Angeles, California)

Tianjin Qiaoyuan Wetland Park (Tianjin City, China)

McNair Park Gazebo, (Missouri, USA)

Multi – generational Playgrounds
Stormwater Pond improvements
Linear Park

0   100   200   400m
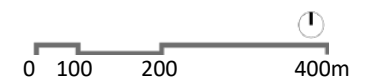
BEFORE: Taralake Park Pond

Adding elements like a gazebo, wayfinding and interpretive signages, a wide multi-use pathway, a deck for seating and viewpoints instantly transforms the Taralake Stormwater pond to create a more active and utilized space that could be enjoyed by the residents.

AFTER: Taralake Park Pond

RECOMMENDATION 3

Incorporating winter city interventions to create more vibrancy and colour.

It is crucial to note that Calgary is a winter city, and our design guidelines must support the use of spaces during the cold winter period, which lasts from anywhere between 4-8 months.

Studies prove that using light and adding bright and warm colors to our surroundings can help combat the negative effects of winter on our mental health and improve our overall well-being.

Using interactive and illuminated art installations, shaded outdoor seating options, colorful lights, public art, ice sculptures, games and special events to encourage more people to get outside during the winter months forms a pivotal role in creating a vibrant community.

World of Winter Festival, (Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Light installation, (München, Germany)

World of Winter Festival, (Grand Rapids, Michigan)

RECOMMENDATION 4

Broad public realm elements introduced along the entire community

Public realm refers to the physical and social spaces that are accessible to and shared by members of the public. It includes all publicly owned or controlled spaces that form an essential component of the built environment.

In a well-designed public realm, a safe, accessible and inviting environment encourages people to come together, engage and participate in public life. In the case of Saddle Ridge and Taradale, this is absent. To cater to this and create a healthy social environment within the study area, we want to incorporate general public realm elements throughout the entirety of the site. These would include seating options, lighting, planter boxes, garbage bins, wayfinding signage, as well as community banners. All these elements will come together to create a sense of belonging for the residents and encourage them to get more involved with their community.

Due to poor soil conditions present on site, we recommend growing micro- prairies and shrubs as an alternative to trees. This would ensure a cover of foliage and help with enhancing biodiversity.

COMMUNITY SIGNAGE

SEATING	LIGHTING
WAYFINDING	TRASH CANS
TREES AND SHRUBS	COMMUNITY SIGNAGE
PLANTER BOXES	MICRO-PRAIRIES

Adapted from LandLAB- South Frame Public Realm

4.4 SADDLETOWNE CIRCLE

Based on our analysis and engagement, we determined a number of major issues with Saddletowne Circle. As previously mentioned, this area is lacking in the densities and built form to capitalize upon transit-oriented development. There are also many large and under-utilized surface parking areas. From residents, we heard that the area within Saddletowne Circle feels unsafe and even hostile. There is a severe lack of lighting near the LRT Station and people tend to rush through this space rather than stop and linger. Lastly, Saddletowne Circle feels unwelcoming. Despite being labelled as the "Town Centre" we heard that there is a significant lack of amenities in this area including elements like basketball courts, a splash pad, and public washrooms. Lastly, one of the biggest missed opportunities that we identified which was reinforced by the public is the lack of a central vibrant gathering space.

ANALYSIS & ENGAGEMENT

Lack of Amenities

Unwelcoming

Feels Unsafe

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Develop a vision for Saddletowne Circle including transit-oriented development, a central park and major gathering space, commercial areas with pedestrian boulevards, and public realm improvements*

2. *A Central Park to act as a major gathering place for both residents and visitors to shop, play, and foster community connections*

Green Space

The proposed design for Saddletowne Circle can be broken down into the following elements. For one thing, a significant amount of green space is to be retained/created including the planting of trees. We are also proposing a 4-metre wide multi-use pathway that encircles the entirety of Saddletowne Circle called "The Saddletowne Loop." It has a very wide buffer between road vehicles and would also create connections into proposed bike lanes and existing pathways. A large area is dedicated for the pedestrian realm, most of which is faced by commercial storefronts. A significant amount of surface parking is to be retained and parkade structures are proposed where space has been allocated for new buildings, most notably at the existing "Park and Ride." This site would feature the High Density Apartment and Mixed-Use Apartment building typologies
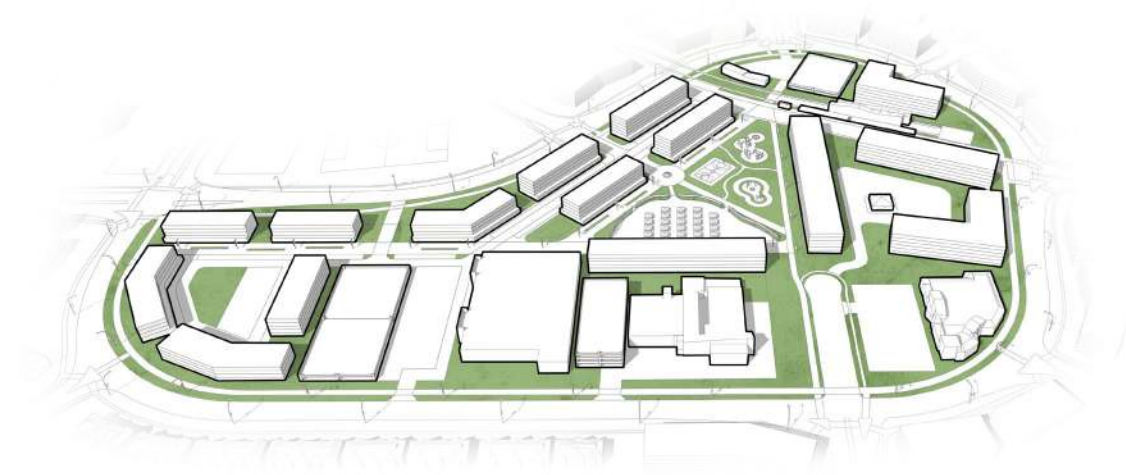
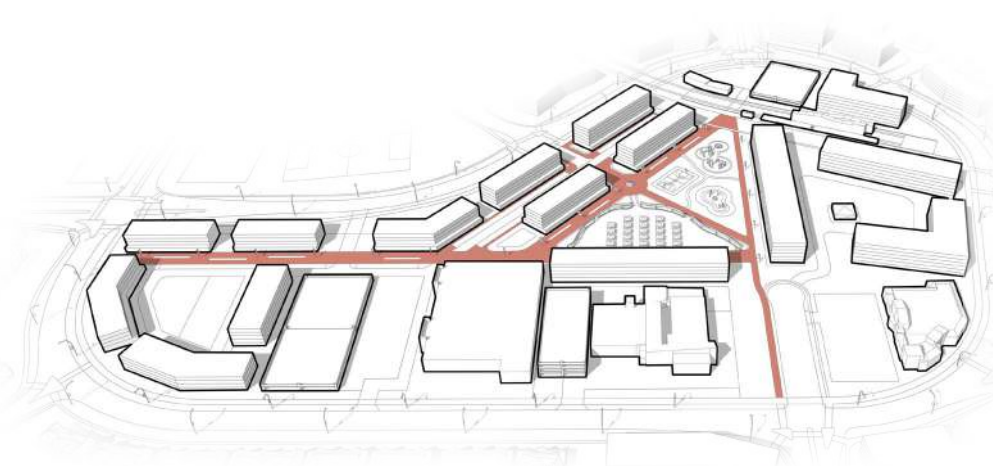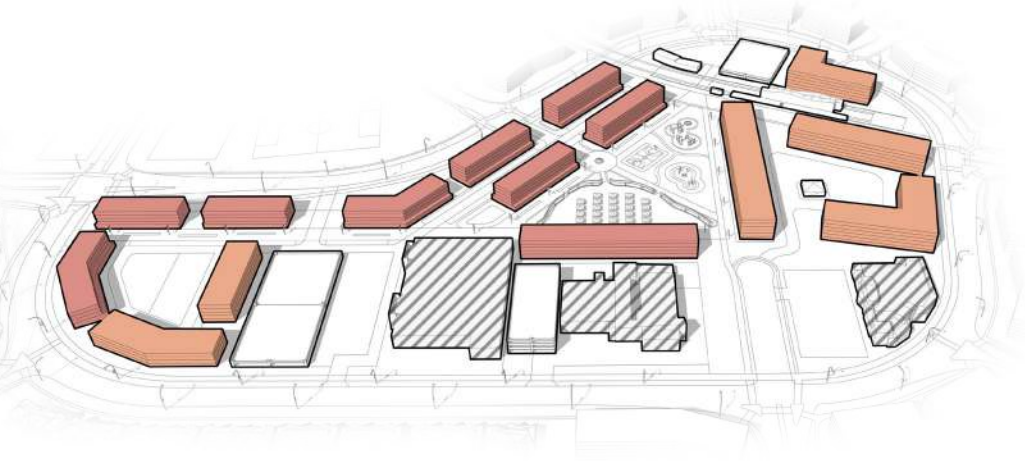*The "Saddletowne Loop"*
Multi-Use Pathway
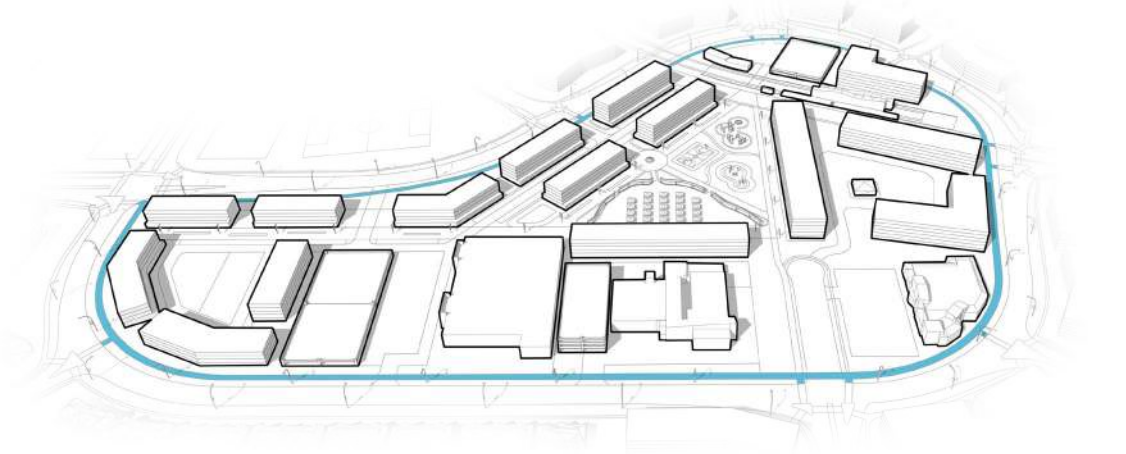
Pedestrian Realm

Built Form

Parking

High Density Apartment Buildings

Mixed-Use Apartment Buildings

Retained (Chalo FreshCo, Fire/Police Station, Shopper's Drug Mart)
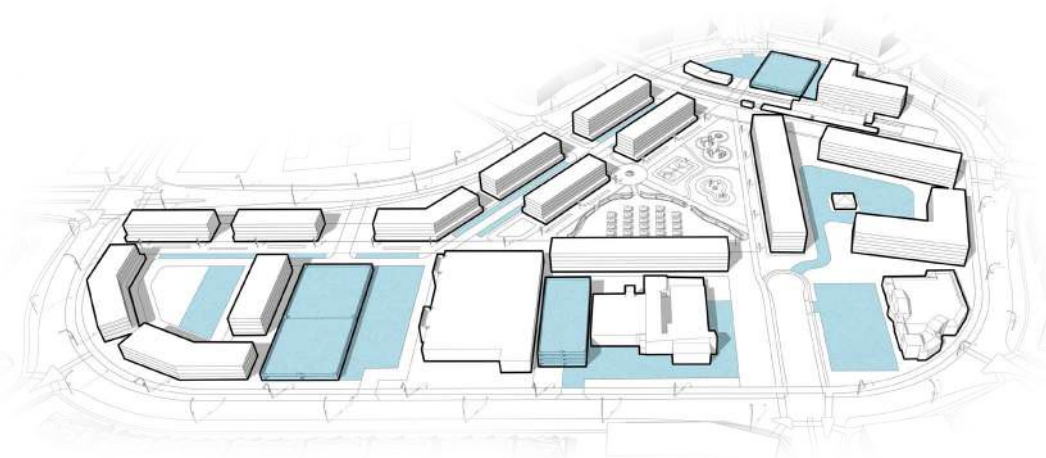
Parkade

Surface Parking

Community Banners & Lights | Pedestrian Realm | Central Park | Public Washroom | Saddletowne LRT Station

The "Saddletowne Loop" | Parking | CHALO FreshCo | Fire and Police Station | Shopper's Drug Mart
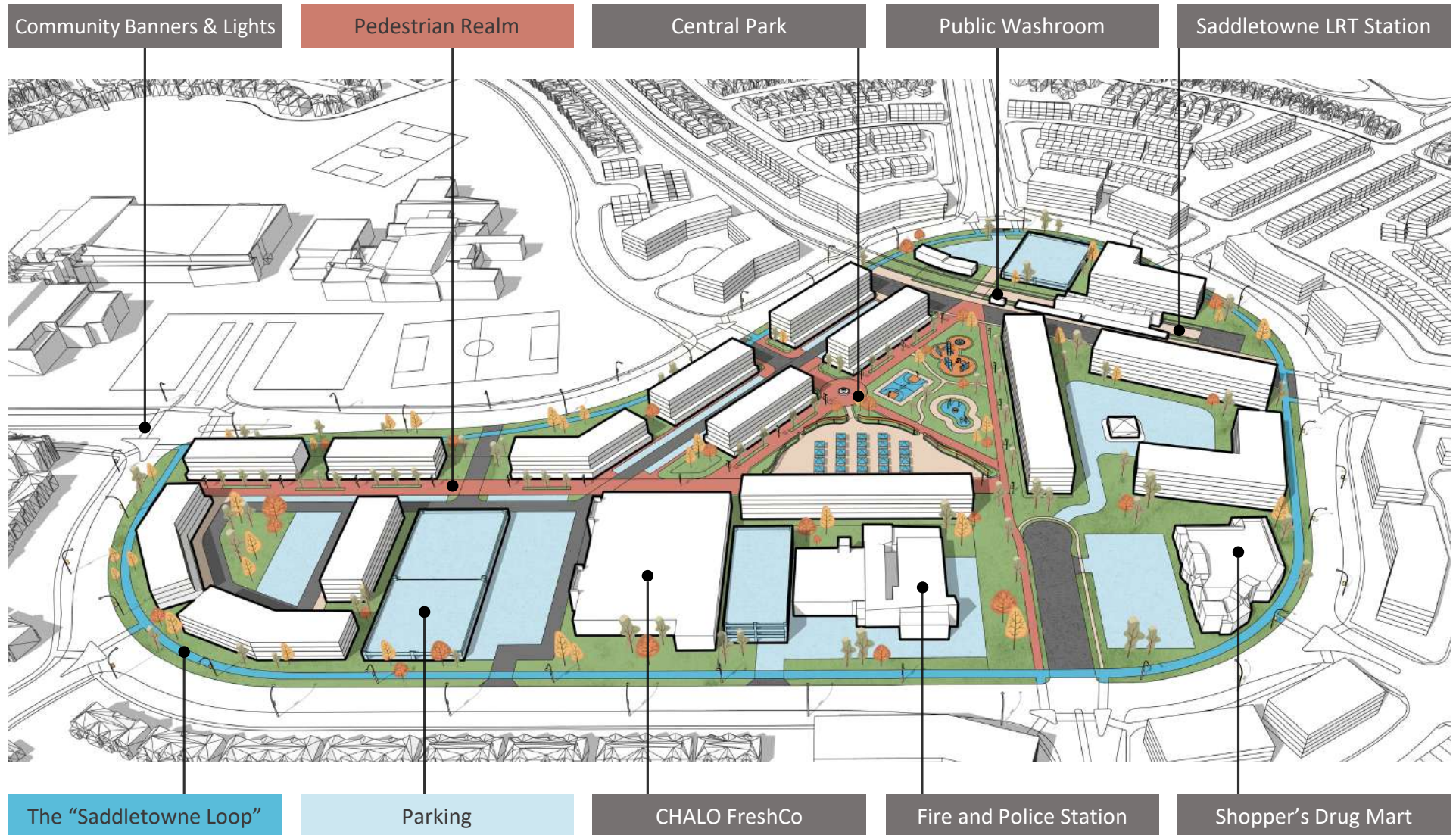
In this view, all of the previously mentioned aspects come together. The vision for Saddletowne Circle also incorporates the community banners and lighting alongside the road and the "Saddletowne Loop" as this is a major node for the two communities. The Central Park is shown next to the Saddletowne LRT station alongside a public washroom which is a strong desire from the community. The before/after rendering on the following page shows how the existing commercial areas can become well-enclosed locations where both pedestrians and vehicles can co-exist.

Before – 216 Saddletowne Circle NE

Precedent: Community Banners and Lights
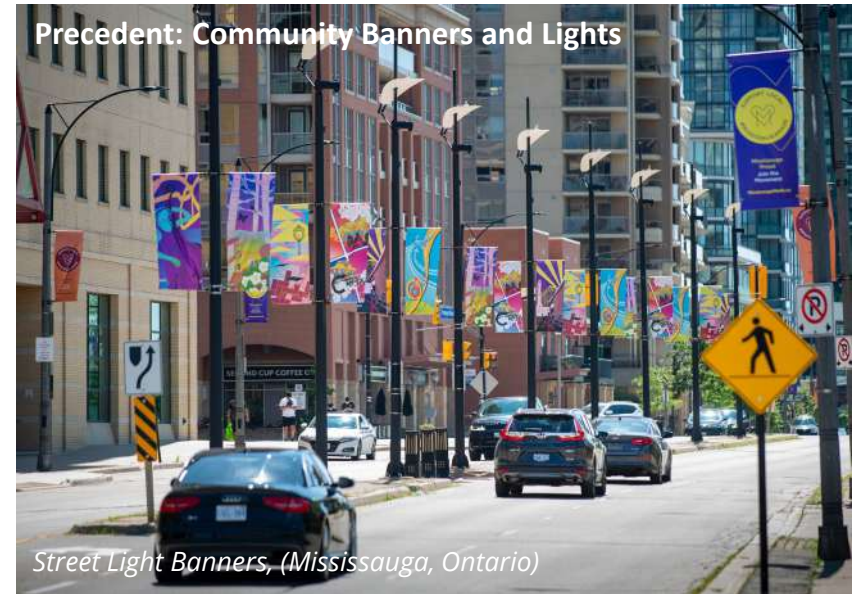
Street Light Banners, (Mississauga, Ontario)

After – 216 Saddletowne Circle NE

Precedent: Multi-Use Pathway

The 606 (Chicago, Illinois)

RECOMMENDATION 2

A Central Park to act as a major gathering place for both residents and visitors to shop, play, and foster community connections

Before – Central Park

After – Central Park

Legend

1. "Welcome to the Community" Mural
2. Saddletowne LRT Station
3. Covered Bus Exchange
4. Public Washroom
5. Painted Crosswalk
6. Multi-Generational Playground
7. Splash Park (Summer) and Skating Loop (Winter)
8. Basketball Court
9. "Central Park Plaza" – Market and Gathering Space
10. Pedestrian Boulevard with Lighting and Banners
11. "Fountain Plaza"
12. Vehicle Access and Parking
13. "Saddletowne Loop" Multi-Use Pathway
14. Residential Building
15. Mixed-Use Building with Commercial Store Fronts

The vision for the Central Park is to become a major gathering place for both residents and visitors to shop, play, and foster community connections. When arriving by train, you are greeted by a proposed "Welcome to the Community" mural (which could be accomplished by a local artist or class from a nearby school). At the LRT station, we are proposing a covered structure for the bus exchange as well as a potential location for a public washroom. The whole central park is enclosed by both residential and mixed-use buildings. The mixed-use buildings have commercial storefronts which spill out onto the tree-lined pedestrian boulevards that feature community banners and a significant amount of lighting. The Central Park also features a multi-generational playground, a splash pad (summer), skating loop (winter), a basketball court and a plaza to act as a market and gathering space. The Central Park space can be transformed into a much more vibrant, welcoming, and safe space that better portrays the identity of residents and becomes a destination.

Stadt-Natur-Park Flingern (Düsseldorf, Germany)

Logie Park, (Lindsay, Ontario)

The Park of Sakonyama Housing Complexes (Yokohama, JP)

Myyrmäki Sports Park, (Vantaa, Finland)

Julia Reserve Youth Park (Oran Park, Australia)

Queensway Bus Exchange (Kelowna, BC)

BUILT FORM & LAND USE

All future redevelopments shall introduce a greater diversity in housing options in line with the Municipal Development Plan's policies in increasing the mix of housing types and choice.

Higher building heights and densities shall be focussed directly around Saddletowne LRT Station and gradually transition outwards to encourage transit usage in line with the Municipal Development Plan's transit-supportive land use framework.

Backyard suites shall be encouraged with an expedited application process for plots that meet the City of Calgary's backyard suite requirements that are located within an 800-metre walkshed of Saddletowne LRT Station.

A minimum of two temporary libraries shall be trialled in library-deficient locations using existing regulations on "Pop-up and Interim Uses."

A minimum of two temporary commercial spaces or kiosks shall be trialled in commercial-deficient locations using existing regulations on "Pop-up and Interim Uses."

Permanent local libraries should be encouraged located in open "Special Purpose – School, Park and Community Reserve" and "Joint Use Sites" as identified by the Saddle Ridge ARP.

A greater mix of permanent local commercial spaces should be encouraged in future redevelopment as per the MDP's general policies for developed residential areas.

MOBILITY

Separated bike lanes shall be incorporated into all collector roads as well as 80th Avenue west of Saddletowne Circle in line with the Calgary Transportation Plan's policies in improving transportation choice and emphasizing sustainable modes of transportation.

A four-metre wide multi-use pathway should be implemented following around Saddletowne Circle per the Calgary Transportation Plan's policies in transportation choice and walking and wheeling.

Traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures shall be implemented on roads and intersections identified as "high-priority areas."

Wayfinding signage that includes multi-lingual place names, directions to major destinations, and walk times in an easily-identifiable format shall be present throughout the open spaces network, at key intersections, and at major destinations such as the Saddletowne LRT Station and the Central Park.

AMENDATIONS

OPEN SPACES & PUBLIC REALM

The north-south linear park shall be designated as a recreational trail that incorporates social and recreational programming including at least one skatepark, community garden, public plaza, and dog park.

At least 50% of existing playgrounds shall be adapted to incorporate multi-generational features in line with the MDP's policies in providing for recreational needs that are appropriate for all age groups and abilities.

Parks and stormwater ponds should incorporate multi-generational playground features and placemaking elements such as decks and gazebos.

All open spaces shall include elements of winter city design and programming which can include art installations, light installations, public art, recreational opportunities and events.

Public realm improvements including community identity signage, lighting, seating, garbage bins, and wayfinding signage shall be present throughout the open spaces network, all collector roads, and appropriate arterial roads in line with the MDP's policies on enhancing the public realm and the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

SADDLETOWNE CIRCLE

Future housing redevelopment within Saddletowne Circle shall incorporate high density apartment buildings up to 6 stories in height in line with the MDP's transit-supportive land use framework.

Future commercial redevelopment within Saddletowne Circle shall incorporate high density mixed-use apartment buildings up to 5 stores in height in line with the MDP's policies in creating vibrant and transit-supportive mixed-use activity centres.

Parking within Saddletowne Circle should include underground parking for residential buildings, surface parking for visitors, and parkades for areas of significant parking re-allocation such as the existing park and ride.

At least 50% of new commercial redevelopments shall be fronted by a minimum 10-metre wide pedestrian boulevard in line with the MDP's policies in enhancing the public realm.

Saddletowne LRT Station shall incorporate a covered bus exchange structure and a public washroom.

The Central Park space adjacent to Saddletwone LRT Station shall incorporate recreational activity spaces including a basketball court, multi-generational playground, skating loop, and splash pad as well is a public plaza gathering space in line with the MDP's policies in encouraging high-quality parks near high-density residential buildings for amenities and community gathering.

INTRODUCTION

General Document resources:

Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 1
 Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 2
Calgary Municipal Development Plan Volume 3
Saddle Ridge Area Structure Plan (ASP)
Rocky View County / City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)
Calgary Transportation Plan
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DESIGN CONCEPT

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Happyplace

Design Studio