

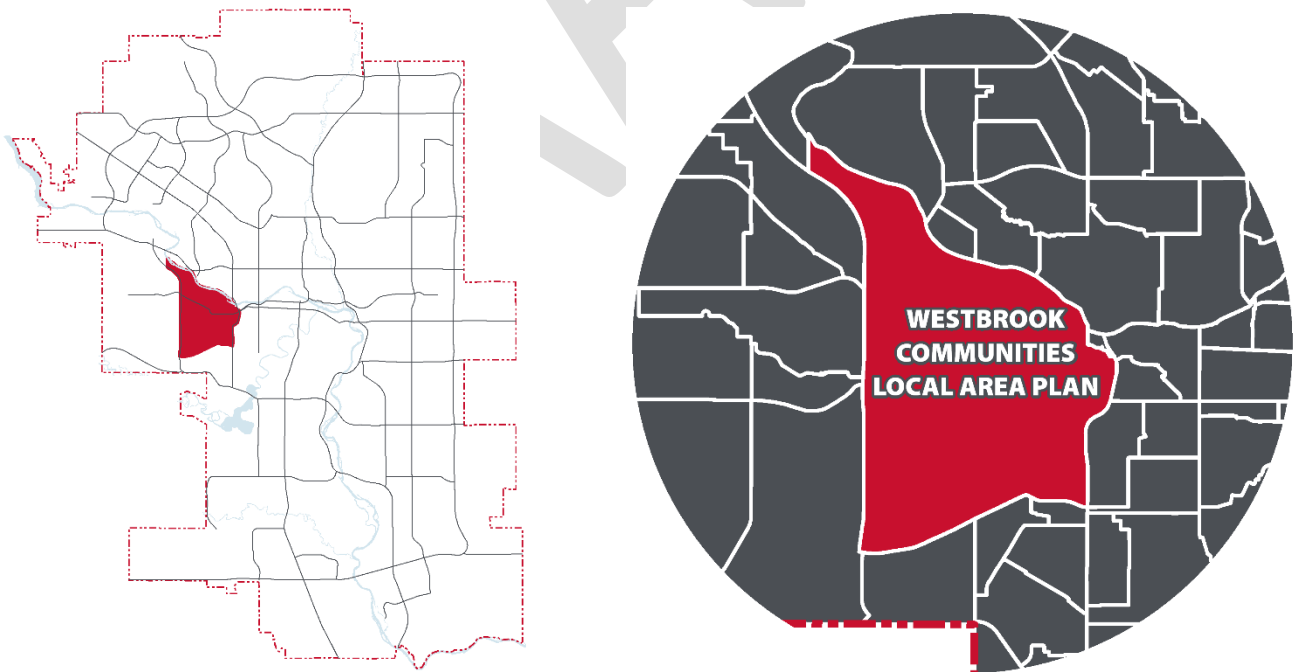
Chapter 1 – Visualizing Growth

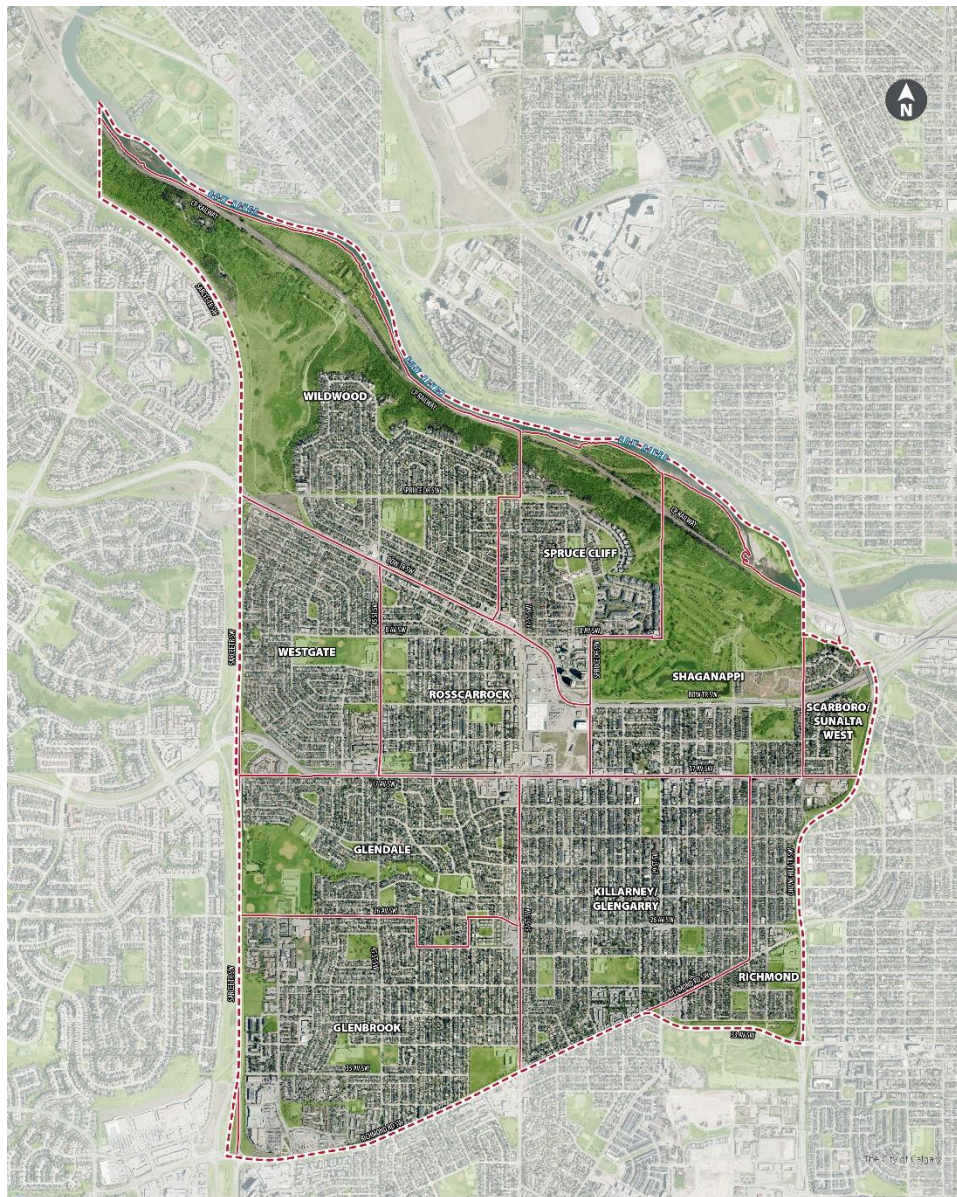
1.1 Introduction

The Westbrook Communities Local Area Plan (Plan) is a statutory area redevelopment plan that guides growth and change in the communities of Glenbrook, Glendale, Killarney/Glengarry, Rosscarrock, Shaganappi, Spruce Cliff, Scarboro/Sunalta West, Westgate, Wildwood and portions of Richmond/Knob Hill (Map 1: Community Context). Located just south of the Bow River and west of Downtown, these communities are collectively known as the Westbrook Communities (Figure 1: Plan Context). The Plan takes a multi-community approach that recognizes and builds upon the shared assets and features that connect these inner-city and established communities including infrastructure, recreational amenities, cultural spaces, public parks and open spaces, Main Streets, corridors, transit station areas and Activity Centres. These ten communities have their own unique history and evolution which is detailed in Section 1.3.

Realizing the Plan's vision will depend on several factors such as population growth, economic considerations and development trends. The Plan is meant to be updated periodically as development and context changes occur.

Figure 1: Plan Context





MAP 1

Community Context

Legend
--- Plan Area Boundary
— Community Boundary

1.2 Westbrook Communities Vision and Core Values

Vision

The Westbrook Communities will continue to thrive and grow into a walkable, bikeable, mixed-use area with high-quality public and open spaces that residents in and beyond the Westbrook Communities can enjoy, supported by the redevelopment of Westbrook Mall as a focal point for the Westbrook Communities.

Core Values

The following core values, developed through the engagement process for the Westbrook Communities Local Area Plan, support the Plan's vision. The core values shaped the policy and guidance in Chapters 2 and 3 of the Plan.

- Recognize and build upon the role of the Westbrook LRT station area as a focal point and a mobility hub for the communities in the Plan area by supporting public and private development around the Westbrook LRT station.
- Support the development of high quality and diverse housing types throughout the Plan area to meet equitable socio-economic and demographic needs close to key services and amenities.
- Provide safe, comfortable, connected and accessible year-round mobility options including improved pathways, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the Plan area, particularly within Main Streets, Activity Centres and transit station areas.
- Invest in parks, open spaces, recreational, cultural, art and community spaces and services to serve a diversity of activities for all ages, abilities and seasons.
- Protect open spaces and historic natural resources such as Edworthy Park, the Douglas Fir Trail and the Shaganappi Golf Course.
- Promote a greater diversity of commercial amenities and support local businesses, particularly within Main Streets, Activity Centres and transit station areas.
- Achieve a strong sense of community identity in safe and inclusive communities by building upon the unique characteristics of individual communities and highlighting the culture and history of the area.
- Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change and reduce vulnerability to climate-related hazards such as extreme heat or cold and drought or localized flooding to protect residents.

1.3 Community Context

History

Calgary is located on the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 7. This includes: the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations; the Îlethka Nakoda Wicastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

Calgary was originally centered at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers, which was an important site for Indigenous peoples for more than 11,000 years. With its sheltering river flats, plentiful wood and water, and warm Chinook winds in the winter, the confluence area was a preferred seasonal campsite.

The Shaganappi escarpment to the west along the Bow River, which lies within the planning area, had the added advantages of a strategic viewpoint and proximity to an excellent campsite in what is now the Upper Plateau of Edworthy Park. There is a widespread belief that steep slopes were used for bison hunting. The term *shaganappi* is understood to be a Cree word meaning “rawhide.”

Physical evidence of Indigenous life is often disturbed in urban areas, mostly through agricultural use and subdivision development that preceded the passage of the Alberta Historical Resources Act in 1972. However, this is not the case in the Shaganappi escarpment or on the Upper Plateau (where only ten acres of land were ploughed). There are nine recorded archaeological sites in the planning area, and there are unrecorded archaeological sites and potential for further discoveries. Artifacts such as fire-broken rock, and other artifacts provide evidence of pre-contact Indigenous life, as long as 7000 years ago in the case of one site.

All but one of the recorded sites are within Edworthy Park, and six the recorded sites are Indigenous in origin. The recorded Indigenous sites include scatterings of artifacts (such as fire-broken rock and butchered bone), a number of bones (including a bison skull) uncovered by trenching for a sewer main, and a large stone circle that differs from tipi rings in size and character and is more likely associated with use for a specialized event.

As a permanently settled place, Calgary began in 1875 as a North-West Mounted Police post two years before the signing of Treaty 7. By the time the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) arrived in 1883, Calgary had developed as an unincorporated settlement on the future site of the Inglewood neighbourhood. The CPR laid out a new townsite on its own property in what is now downtown, and the settlement moved west at the beginning of 1884. Calgary was incorporated as a town later that year, and in 1894 it became a city.

Before a series of annexations added considerably to Calgary's footprint, the site of the future Westbrook Communities lay outside the municipal boundaries. The area comprises an approximately twenty-block length along the south bank of the Bow River between Crowchild and Sarcee trails and the uplands south to Richmond Road.

The river valley functioned as a transit corridor, both for Indigenous people and, later, non-Indigenous settlers. The historic South Morley Trail or Lower Springbank Road, (which Richmond Road now follows) led to Morleyville. The historic Banff Coach Road, or Upper

Springbank Trail (now Bow Trail) led to Banff. The CPR's transcontinental line, built along the south bank of the Bow west of Calgary in 1883, traverses Scarboro/Sunalta West, Shaganappi, Spruce Cliff, and Wildwood.

There was a small Métis winter settlement at Shaganappi Point in the 1870s. Beginning in the 1880s, the area was settled by farmers who obtained their lands as squatters, as homesteaders through the Dominion Lands Act, or both. Early farmers included Thomas Edworthy in Wildwood, brothers Charles Jackson and Thomas Edgar Jackson in Shaganappi and Killarney/Glengarry, John Lawrey in Spruce Cliff, and Allan Poyntz Patrick in Glenbrook. The homes of all but Lawrey remain extant, and the open space of Edworthy Park is a remnant of that agricultural period. Two Métis farmers, Frederick Rowland and Thomas Whitford, homesteaded in the area in 1887. There is also record of an early unnamed Métis *hivernant*, or winterer. The CPR received land grants in this area, as it did across the prairie west, as part of an incentive from Ottawa to build the transcontinental railway. This area was organized in 1912 as a small Improvement District and as the Municipal District of Springbank No. 221 in 1918. In 1945, it was renamed the Municipal District of Springbank No. 45, and, in 1955, it was merged into the Municipal District of Calgary 1944 (an entity that was later renamed Rocky View County).

Between the 1880s and the First World War, Paskapoo sandstone was quarried extensively in the Calgary area, and a vast number of buildings were built of sandstone or included the material in their construction. Many quarries operated on the Shaganappi escarpment, including those associated with Thomas Edworthy, Charlie and Thomas Jackson, John Goodwin Watson, the CPR, and the Government of Canada, which reserved four quarry lots for its own purposes and later sold them. Ottawa licensed many quarry operations on the Shaganappi escarpment. A trail first noted on an 1885 survey became a road used by settler John Lawrey, and it developed into the path now known as Quarry Road Trail. It was used to access some of the quarries and to transport stone, shale, and other goods. Quarry Road Trail was added to The City's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources in 2014 as a City Wide Historic Resource. Sandstone quarries, concentrated in but not limited to the Shaganappi escarpment, manifest the story of industrial development in the planning area. Other examples include an old lime kiln and a brick-making plant in the Shaganappi area. The concrete base of the brick kiln can still be seen. Two of the recorded archaeological sites of non-Indigenous origin in the planning area are sandstone quarries; the third is the remains of a 1920s summer house that belonged to the family of the late Thomas Edworthy.

Early in the twentieth century, Calgary experienced an economic and population boom that transformed it into a regional wholesale and distribution centre. Speculators began purchasing farmland outside the city limits and registering subdivision plans. The first in this area was Glengarry, which was situated between present-day Crowchild Trail and 29 Street SW from 17 Avenue to Richmond Road. It now lies within Richmond and Killarney.

Calgary's area expanded considerably in 1907 through a single land annexation. Among other changes, it shifted the western city limit from 14 Street to 24 Street SW (now Crowchild Trail) and the southern limit from 17 Avenue to 34 Avenue SW. This brought the earliest portions of the Westbrook Communities into the city limits—Scarboro/Sunalta West and the eastern part of Richmond. These areas, separated by 17 Avenue SW, were characterized by a north-south gully; a sandstone quarry operated early in the 20th century. The development of Crowchild Trail in the 1960s destroyed the gully and the quarry's remnants, and it bisected the Scarboro neighbourhood, which the CPR had developed before the First World War. The portion of Scarboro west of the freeway became Scarboro/Sunalta West.

In 1909, local businessman D'arcy Boulton Niblock (1875–1947) subdivided land in Killarney, which lay west of Glengarry. The following year, another large annexation shifted Calgary's boundaries again, west to 37 Street SW and south to 50 Avenue SW. This added area included Killarney and Glengarry, the balance of Richmond and Shaganappi, most of Spruce Cliff, and the eastern edge of Rosscarrock. Some of these areas were developed while others remained lightly-settled or speculative.

The city's pre-First World War boom ended in 1913, and Calgary grew modestly in the decades that followed. Its built area contracted in the 1920s through a City program that subsidized the cost of house-moving and encouraged property owners in outlying areas to swap their land for inner-city lots. In this period, an unusual, temporary operation took place in either the future Rosscarrock or Westgate areas. From 1928 to 1929, the newly-formed Calgary Aero Club operated a temporary airfield here, known as the Banff Coach Road airfield, while the Calgary Municipal Airport was being developed in the Renfrew district in the city's northeast.

After the Second World War, Calgary experienced significant urban growth supported by returning veterans, European immigration, government incentives, and the late-1940s oil boom. This resulted in new residential development both in established neighbourhoods and new subdivisions.

In 1954, the western city limit shifted to 45 Street SW, which included the rest of Rosscarrock and Spruce Cliff and the eastern portions of Glenbrook, Glendale, and Wildwood. As The City had hoped, the McNally Royal Commission on Metropolitan Development recommended in 1956 that Calgary annex surrounding areas for future growth. A 1956 annexation brought the rest of the area, including Westgate and the balance of Glenbrook, Glendale, and Wildwood, into the city limits.

The City established a Planning Department in 1951 and adopted the "neighbourhood unit" concept that comprised quiet residential streets (curvilinear in many cases), schools, houses of worship, convenience stores and social services, and parks and playgrounds, all enclosed by busier collector streets that featured commercial zoning (including gas stations and neighbourhood shopping malls) at major intersections.

Up to the 1950s, The City had acted as developer, building infrastructure and utilities itself and selling individual lots to builders. Now, private developers could buy land to build entire subdivisions, and The City offloaded construction and cost of utilities and infrastructure to the developers. It was more efficient to provide infrastructure to undeveloped areas than to established parts of the city. Local builders joined forces to create new development firms like Carma Developers and Kelwood Corporation.

The Calgary Municipal Railway, which had been inaugurated in 1909, was a key factor that accelerated and shaped early growth. Homebuilders gravitated toward areas close to streetcar routes, and streetcars made commercial uses feasible beyond the city centre. Early subdivisions clustered around the streetcar lines and shared similar features including grid street networks fronted with boulevard trees and landscaped yards.

Within months of its inauguration in 1909, the streetcar system extended along 17 Avenue as far west as 14 Street SW. In 1912, the line was extended west to 24 Street SW, where it ended at the Killarney Loop and returned eastward along 17 Avenue. A 17 Avenue business district developed quickly.

The street railway was renamed the Calgary Transit System (CTS) in 1946, and its operation was converted to buses and electric trolley coaches by 1950. Like buses, electric trolley were trackless rubber-wheeled vehicles, but their routes necessarily followed the overhead lines that powered them through trolley poles that projected upward from the vehicle's roof. Streetcar service on 17 Avenue SW ended in 1948, and it was replaced by a trolley coach line along 17 Avenue to 29 Street (and later extended to George Street, west of 45 Street, in 1960). The original trolley coach line also extended south from 17 Avenue along 24 Street and then west on 26 Avenue to 29 Street (and further extended to 38 Street SW by 1955 and to 49 Street SW in 1960). As trolley coach lines were extended, each successive terminus required a new end-of-line turnaround loop for the overhead electric trolley wire. In 1957, CTS supplemented its trolley coach trunk lines and local bus routes with new express bus routes, each with a distinct name. The Green Pennant Express provided direct service between downtown and Wildwood, and the Red Pennant Express provided the same for Killarney and Mount Royal. CTS was renamed Calgary Transit in 1970, and trolley coach service ended in 1975. Bus routes continue to serve the area as they did during the trolley coach era.

In 1981, Calgary Transit re-introduced rail service with the C-Train, which began operating between downtown and points south in 1981. In 2012, the original Blue line was extended west from downtown to the Westbrook Communities, where it stops at the Shaganappi Point, Westbrook and 45 Street SW stations.

Community Characteristics

The Plan Area and surrounding land contain characteristics that were considered as part of the development of the Plan. Key characteristics are shown on Map 2: Community Characteristics. These characteristics must be considered throughout all subsequent phases of planning and development.

Topography

The Westbrook Communities are situated west of downtown and south of the Bow River, high above the floodplain. The Plan Area has a combination of level and sloping terrain, and it generally slopes down gently to the east, with steep slopes down into the Bow River valley in its northern extents.

Natural Features and Areas

The Plan area is part of the Bow River Watershed, more specifically, the Bow River and the Elbow River watersheds. Development adjacent to the Bow River may be subject to flooding and is identified as part of the floodway or flood fringe. Chapter 2: Enabling Growth includes policies to strengthen resiliency and minimize development impact on the rivers while supporting intended growth, in addition to regulations in the *Land Use Bylaw* regarding floodway and flood fringe areas.

Natural features in the Plan area include Edworthy Park and Shaganappi Park and creek, as well as several smaller open spaces located throughout area.

Main Streets

Portions of 37 Street SW, 17 Avenue SW and Richmond Road SW are identified as Neighbourhood Main Streets in the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) (Map 2: Community Characteristics). The MDP includes general policies and development intensity targets for Neighbourhood Main Streets.

Activity Centres

The Westbrook LRT transit station area and the Richmond Square shopping area are Community Activity Centres as shown in the MDP. The Plan identifies eight Neighbourhood Activity Centres. Two are located along Richmond Road SW at 29 and 37 Streets SW, four are located along 26 Avenue SW at 29, 33, 37 and 45 Streets SW, one is located at 45 Street and Bow Trail SW and one is located along Spruce Centre SW (Map 2: Community Characteristics). **The MDP includes general policies for Activity Centres.**

Public Transit Infrastructure

The Plan Area includes three Blue Line LRT stations: Shaganappi Point, Westbrook and 45 Street SW stations. MAX Teal BRT runs along 37 Street SW with stations at 26 Avenue SW and Richmond Road SW and connects Westbrook LRT Station and Mount Royal University to south of the Plan Area. MAX Yellow BRT runs along the Plan Area's eastern boundary of Crowchild Trail SW with stations at 17 Avenue SW and Richmond Road/33 Avenue SW, **connecting communities further south to Mount Royal University and the downtown core.** Bus routes also provide connections throughout the area and to citywide destinations such as hospitals and **post-secondary institutions.** Westbrook Station is particularly important as it acts as a transit hub for city destinations and regional destinations such as Banff and British Columbia.

Historic Resources

Some of the communities' heritage resources have been formally recognized on The City of Calgary's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources, while others have heritage value and may merit inclusion on the Inventory. Overall, many heritage resources in the Plan Area are not legally protected from significant alteration or demolition, but they still contribute to the historic character of the community.

There is the potential for undiscovered historic resources which must be considered as redevelopment occurs and may impact development. Sites with a Historic Resource Value are required to obtain Provincial approval in accordance with the *Historical Resources Act*.

Civic Facilities & Open Space

The Plan Area has several civic recreational facilities including Killarney Aquatic and Recreation Centre, Optimist Athletic Park, Optimist and George Blundun Arenas and the Shaganappi Point Golf Course.

Other community amenities include seventeen schools, eight Community Association buildings, the Nicholls Family Library, the Wildflowers Arts Centre as well as several parks, open spaces and public art pieces (Map 2: Community Characteristics). Park spaces in the area include a variety of uses including several dog parks, play fields and courts, playgrounds and open spaces.

Climate Risk

Westbrook Communities are at significant risk from higher average temperatures, extreme heat, severe storms, and short duration high intensity precipitation events. These risks will increase over time as climate change intensifies which can affect Westbrook communities in various ways. Communities should anticipate increased demand for indoor and outdoor public places to cool down and access to water during extreme heat. Park areas and riparian zones in poor ecological health are at risk of damage and erosion caused by heavy precipitation and flooding, which may compromise access to parks and trails. Older stormwater infrastructure (e.g., built before 1988) may not be able to withstand future precipitation intensities and lead to localized flooding in residential areas such as Glenbrook and Killarney/Glengarry.

