

# **Greater Forest Lawn Communities Local Area Plan – Revised Draft Chapter 1**

This Draft Local Area Plan (LAP) Chapter 1 has been created for discussion purposes.

Draft – January 2023

[calgary.ca/GFLplan](https://calgary.ca/GFLplan)

## **Land Acknowledgment**

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The Nations of the Treaty 7 region are: the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations, who, altogether, form the Siksikaitsitapi (Blackfoot Confederacy). The Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations, who, altogether form the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi Stoney Nakoda First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. We acknowledge all urban Indigenous Calgarians who have made Calgary their home.

Guided by the White Goose Flying Report, The City's response to the findings and calls to actions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Indigenous Policy, a Council-approved policy which outlines meaningful ways forward and policy opportunities to grow from and build common ground, we are beginning to explore how to better understand and act on our shared foundations with Indigenous peoples within the traditional territories that Calgary situates within. While discussions continue regarding our own actions and efforts as a department, we are committed to beginning to actively explore ways to redefine our understandings, our assumptions, our relationships, and our abilities to build a more inclusive and equitable city based on our shared foundations.

## Chapter 1 – Visualizing Growth

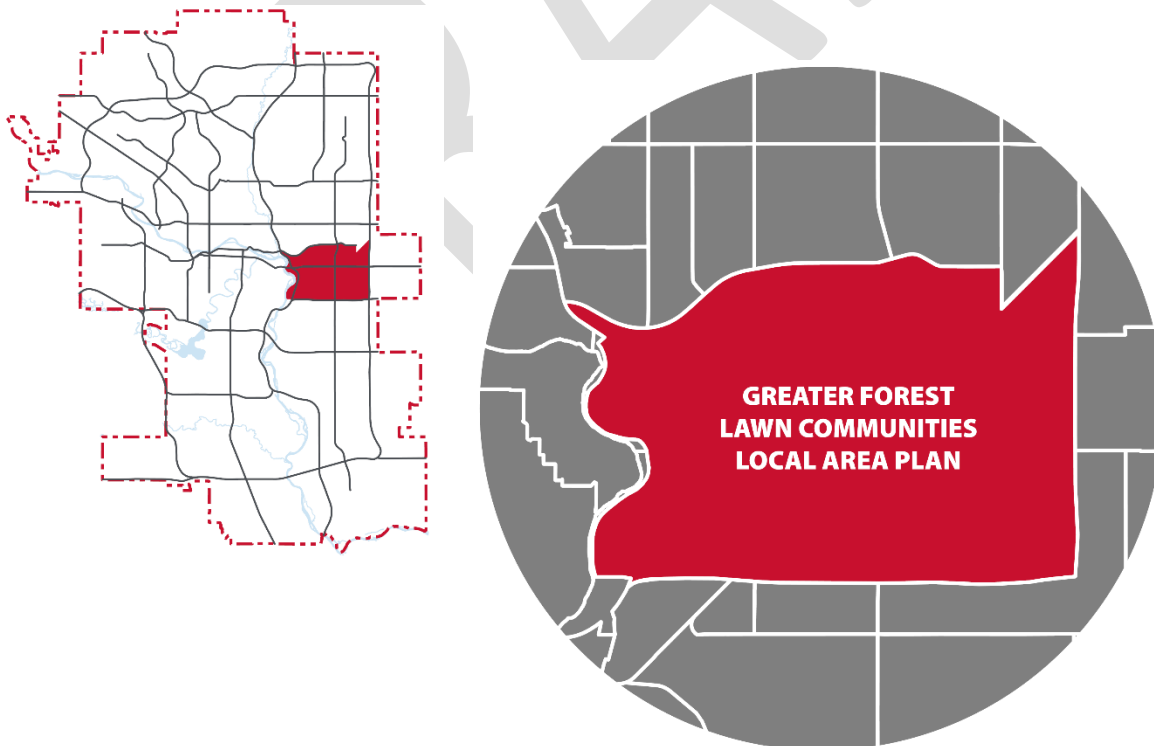
### 1.1 Introduction

The Greater Forest Lawn Communities Local Area Plan (Plan) is a statutory policy document that provides a framework for long-term vision and guides local growth and change in the plan area. The Plan takes a multi-community approach and includes a mixture of residential and industrial communities with Memorial Drive E to the north, Pegan Trail SE to the south, Stoney Trail SE to the east and Bow River to the west (**Figure 1: Plan Context**). The Plan recognizes and builds upon the history and uniqueness of each community through shared assets, amenities, public parks and open spaces, transit station areas, and the International Avenue Main Street that naturally bring people and communities together.

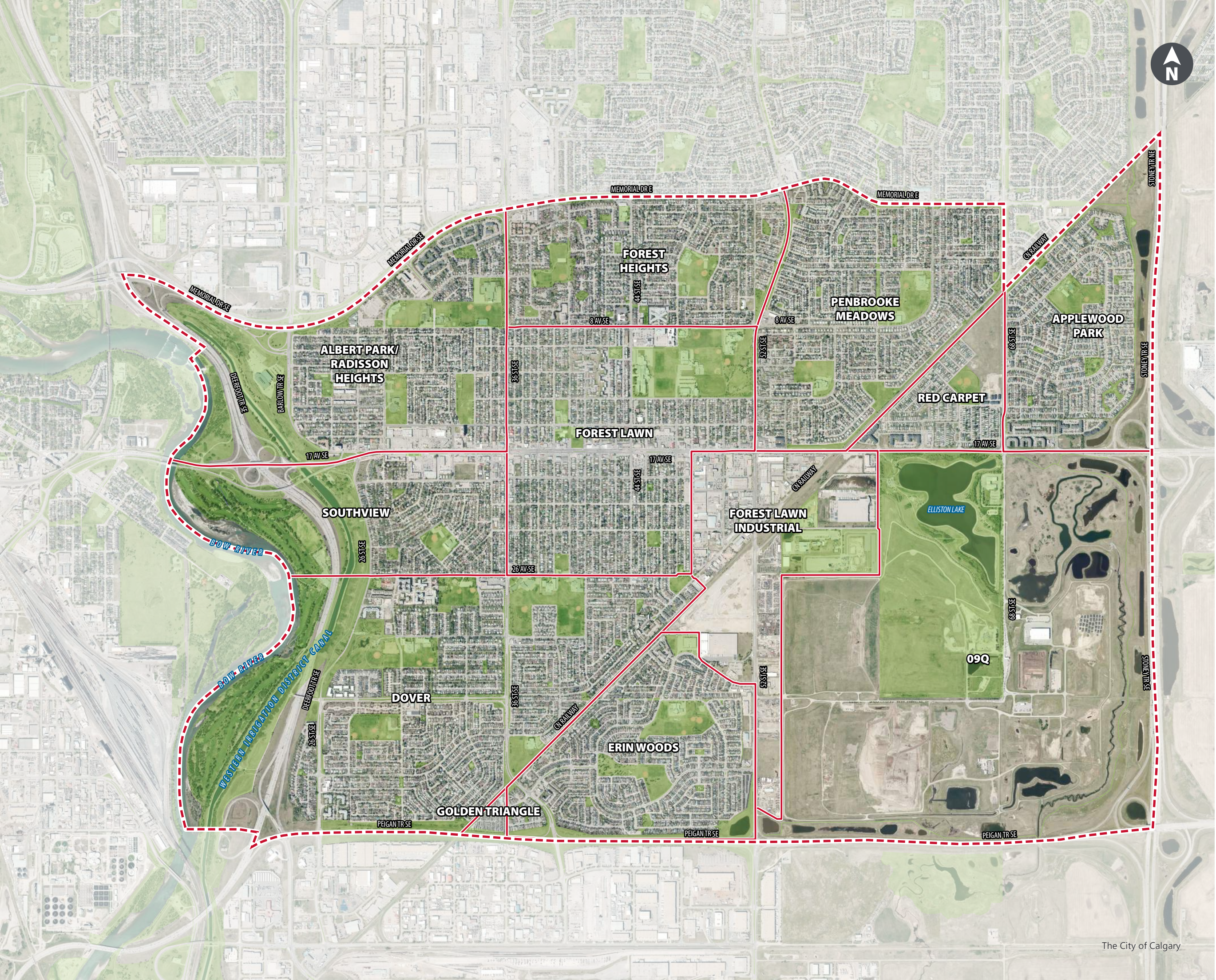
The plan area consists of Albert Park/Radisson Heights, Applewood Park, Dover, Erin Woods, Forest Heights, Forest Lawn, Forest Lawn Industrial, Penbrooke Meadows, Red Carpet, Southview, 09Q, and a portion of Golden Triangle (**Map 1: Community Context**).

The Plan will guide development, and identifies amenities and infrastructure needed to support growth in the Greater Forest Lawn communities. The Plan is meant to be updated periodically as development and change occur.

**Figure 1: Plan Context**







Map 1:  
Community Context

- Legend**
- Plan Area Boundary
  - Community Boundary



## **1.2 Draft Vision and Core Values**

### **Draft Vision**

The Greater Forest Lawn Communities will continue to value the cultural diversity and inclusiveness found throughout the plan area and continue to evolve into thriving, welcoming, and safe neighbourhoods by providing well-connected mobility choices, inclusive open spaces, various housing options and business opportunities for people in and beyond the communities.

### **Draft Core Values**

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

#### **Housing Options**

Support quality housing development that is diverse and accessible for people from all income levels throughout the Plan area, particularly near transit station areas, International Avenue S.E., commercial areas, major roadways, and community amenities areas, to meet the evolving needs of people in all stages of life.

#### **Mobility Choices**

Provide safe, efficient, well-maintained, connected, and accessible year-round mobility choices through a network of transit, pathways, walking and wheeling infrastructure, and roadways, to locations including International Avenue S.E., Barlow / Max Bell LRT station, Franklin LRT station, Max Purple BRT transit station areas, and surrounding commercial and residential areas.

#### **Parks, Recreation and Communities Facilities**

Protect and invest in parks, open spaces, and recreational and community facilities for people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities to promote overall community wellness and quality of life. Create a safe, accessible and connected open-space system that links neighbourhoods, parks, natural areas, and community amenities, such as the escarpment park, community hubs, Elliston Park and Max Bell Centre.

#### **Climate Resilience**

Strengthen resilience to climate change and extreme weather conditions by reimagining the reusing and repurposing of existing buildings and infrastructure and prioritizing innovative energy-and resource-efficient building designs for existing and new development.

#### **Vibrant and Diverse Culture, Arts and Business**

Attract and support a variety of arts and culture initiatives, employment opportunities, businesses and services along International Avenue S.E. and commercial and industrial areas that enhance and promote the communities' vibrancy and cultural diversity by revitalizing the area into a creative and cultural destination hub enjoyed by community members and all Calgarians.

## **1.3 Community Context**

### **History**

The Greater Forest Lawn area occupies a plain east of the city centre between the Bow River and Stony Trail SE. Most of the planning area lay outside of Calgary's city limits before 1961. The Dominion Land Survey divided this area in the 1880s, along with the broader region, into 640-acre sections, townships comprising up to 36 sections, and ranges made up of townships. Sections of land could be further divided into quarter-sections and offered to agricultural settlers as homesteads, reserved for government or educational purposes, or granted to corporate interests, chiefly the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and the Hudson's Bay Company.

All of this was a colonial superimposition on land that had been the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (made up of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Îlethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations (comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. This area was also part of the homeland of the historic Northwest Métis, a post-contact Indigenous people who emerged out of the interactions and intermarriages between fur traders and local First Nations in the northern plains and boreal forests of what is now western Canada.

Two years after Confederation in 1867, Canada asserted its sovereignty over the prairies, and it dispatched the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) west in 1874. The following year, the force's F Troop arrived at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers and established the Bow Fort, which was renamed Fort Calgary in 1876. It was built on unceded land two years before Treaty 7 was signed at Blackfoot Crossing in 1877. An Indigenous trail that connected Blackfoot Crossing to the east with the Morley mission to the west passed through the future Greater Forest Lawn area. In the years following the treaty, signatory nations were made to settle on designated land reserves as a step toward non-Indigenous settlement on their traditional lands.

A small western portion of the planning area (now part of Albert Park/Radisson Heights, Southview, and Dover) lies within Township 24, Range 1 West of the Fifth Meridian (in sections 1, 12, and 13). In 1907 and 1910, these sections were annexed incrementally to Calgary, which had been incorporated as a town in 1884 (following the arrival of the CPR the previous year) and as a city in 1894. The rest of the planning area lies further east in Township 24, Range 29 West of the Fourth Meridian (within sections 1–4 and 9–16). This area lay outside of Calgary before 1961 when The City annexed the Town of Forest Lawn and its surrounding district. Additional annexations in 1974, 1979, 1981, and 1989 brought the entire planning area within city limits.

Farmers acquired land in the planning area from the government as homesteads or by purchase from the CPR, which received land grants in this area as it did across the prairies as a government incentive to build the transcontinental railway. Beginning in 1896, Ottawa expedited agricultural settlement in western Canada, largely through immigration from Great Britain, Europe, and the United States. Many other settlers came from central and eastern Canada. This large population influx contributed to Calgary's rapid growth early in the 20th century and to a real estate boom that prompted land speculation. Additional local factors included the creation of Chestermere Lake through irrigation activity and the promotion of Chestermere as a resort destination. The CPR's Western Irrigation District canal, built in 1903–06, frames the western edge of the area as it carries water from the Bow River to the Chestermere Lake reservoir.

In 1911, the Chestermere Calgary Suburban Railway Co. proposed building an inter-urban railway line through the planning area. The project advanced as far as placement of poles and stockpiling of railway ties, but the line was never built. This evidently informed the myth that promoters of the planning area had tricked investors by placing railway ties and claiming, falsely, that a streetcar line would soon connect their developments with Calgary.

Another local factor was the expected routing of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTP) line into Calgary through Hubalta, as the proposed railway townsite in the future Forest Lawn Industrial district was named in 1910. The GTP line was completed in 1914, and passenger and freight service to Hubalta and Calgary stations began that year. The GTP was later merged with the Canadian Northern Railway to form Canadian National Railways (CNR), and the tracks remain as the boundary between Dover and Erin Woods, Dover and Golden Triangle, and Penbrooke Meadows and Red Carpet. The tracks bisect Forest Lawn Industrial and form a boundary for Applewood Park.

Early in the twentieth century, Calgary experienced an economic and population boom that transformed it into a regional wholesale and distribution centre. Outside of the city limits, speculators—and, in some cases, local farmers—began registering subdivision plans for new business, industrial, and residential developments on land that was expected to become part of Calgary or its metropolitan area. Many of these subdivisions were registered in the area between 1906 and 1912. There, prospective developers included, among others, outside investors like Calgarians C.T. Gilbert (who subdivided Forest Lawn) and A.J. Smyth (Albert Park) and local farmers Thomas Beveridge (Hazeldean in present-day Dover) and David D. Oughton (Oughton Estates in what is now Radisson Heights). Others created subdivisions with names like Golden Rose Park, Hubalta Park, Louise Park, Mountain View, and Victoria Square.

A few, including Albert Park, Forest Lawn, and Hubalta were actually developed; others remained on paper only. Victoria Square emerged as intended as an industrial area. All of this development was located within Local Improvement District No. 220, which was established in 1912 and was redesignated as a municipal district in 1918. It was eventually renamed Municipal District of Shepard No. 220.

Calgary's real estate boom ended in 1913, and the subdivisions evolved as the unincorporated hamlets of Albert Park, Forest Lawn, and Hubalta, all located within and administered by the municipal district. They were situated between Calgary's eastern limit and the CNR tracks to the east. Low taxation and living costs attracted residents, although the hamlets lacked most municipal infrastructure. By the early years of the Great Depression, a substantial portion of the municipality's population, and most of its relief recipients, lived in the hamlets. Residents could avail themselves of Ernie Lock's horse-and-buggy transportation link to Calgary in 1921–22, followed by Ben Boswell's motorized service in 1924.

In 1934, in an apparent effort to ease the municipality's relief burden, the province withdrew the hamlets and reorganized them into two villages, Albert Park and Forest Lawn. A single appointed official administered both. The villages were reorganized in 1935 as a singular entity, the Village of Forest Lawn. An elected three-member council replaced the official administrator in 1946, and in 1952, Forest Lawn was re-incorporated as a town. Around the same time, Forest Lawn's counterpart suburbs northwest of Calgary were also incorporated. Bowness, along with its namesake park and streetcar link to the city, originated before the First World War; it became a village in 1948 and a town in 1951. Montgomery began in 1946 as a Second World War veterans' housing project, and it was incorporated in 1958, first as a village and soon after as a

town. Midnapore, a 19th-century settlement south of Calgary, remained an unincorporated hamlet.

To a certain extent, the incorporated border communities developed as commuter or dormitory suburbs where people who worked in Calgary could afford lower-cost housing than the city offered. Within a few years of the Leduc oil discovery in 1947, Calgary looked to annexation of neighbouring lands to accommodate future growth. The border communities served as physical impediments to the east and northwest, and they contributed to decentralized, uneven urban development. Edmonton faced a similar situation with its fringe communities. In response, the provincial government appointed the McNally Royal Commission on the Metropolitan Development of Calgary and Edmonton in 1954. The commission's 1956 report recommended that Calgary establish a single municipal authority by annexing its satellite communities. That year, Forest Lawn adjusted its street numbers to align with Calgary's, and addresses along the town's avenues were consequently re-numbered.

Annexation was an expensive prospect requiring regulatory approval by the Public Utilities Board, and it did not occur immediately. Meanwhile, Forest Lawn maintained an independent identity, and its town council even contemplated city status. The community had its own newspaper (the *Weekly Capital*, with the Town paying for a subscription for every household) and bus service to Calgary (the privately-owned Forest Lawn Bus Service, which used three surplus Ford buses purchased from the Calgary Transit System). Forest Lawn applied successfully for its own land annexations in 1950 and 1952, and in the late 1950s it competed with Calgary over the right to annex potential industrial land that lay between the two municipalities. In 1961, the Board approved Calgary's application and ordered that Calgary also annex Forest Lawn, as the town had no future without the industrial zone. Mayor Chris Akkerman and his council opposed Calgary's takeover of Forest Lawn, and the entire council resigned in protest just days before the annexation, which took effect December 31, 1961. Not everyone was displeased; in a series of plebiscites held between 1958 and 1961, a majority of the town's approximately 10,000 residents expressed a desire to join Calgary.

The 1961 annexation included extensive rural lands beyond the Town of Forest Lawn's municipal boundaries, and it comprised most of the planning area. It even brought Midnapore into the city limits. Montgomery was annexed in 1963, followed by Bowness in 1964. Calgary thus effected the uni-city approach that the McNally Commission had recommended. It established a singular municipal authority within the metropolitan area, allowing for a unified approach to planning and provision of services while preventing duplication and incompatibility.

In time, private developers, in concert with The City, established new residential districts in the annexed planning area, including Radisson Heights (within the existing Albert Park district, 1964), Penbrooke Meadows (1969), Dover (circa 1970), Red Carpet (circa 1970), and Erin Woods (circa 1980). Southview and Forest Heights had been subdivided in 1950 and 1960 respectively before the annexation. Applewood Park (1982) was developed east of the 1961 annexation area in land annexed in 1979 and 1981.

Greater Forest Lawn has always attracted new Canadians, but the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of its population have changed drastically over time. Early settlers were Canadian-born or had come from the United Kingdom, the United States, or northern Europe. Canadian immigration policies varied over time, and by the 1920s they involved a graduated scheme that gave preference to northern Europeans and Americans, secondary preference to central and eastern Europeans, and limited entry of certain other groups. In time, the Forest Lawn area attracted newcomers from a variety of European backgrounds, many of them Polish or



Ukrainian. But racial bias and other forms of discrimination informed Canadian immigration policy for decades and contributed to maintaining a largely white, Christian nation. There were exceptions. A family from India settled in Forest Lawn in 1930, and a Black man named Frieman, who lived south of the Forest Lawn Store, owned a wagon and team of mules and operated a contracting business. In 1960, Calgary's first mosque opened in the former St. Luke's Anglican Church (3027–17 Avenue SE).

Canada eased immigration restrictions after the Second World War and abolished the 1923 Chinese Exclusion Act in 1947. However, racial discrimination remained part of immigration policy until 1962. Later in the 1960s, Canada signed a United Nations convention on refugees and adopted a points system for evaluating prospective immigrants. A new immigration policy in 1978 emphasized diversity, non-discrimination, and family reunification. These policy changes dramatically altered the nature of immigration to Canada, and, consequently, to Calgary. Low-cost, social, and subsidized housing contributed to the Greater Forest Lawn area's attractiveness to immigrants and refugees who were now coming from countries around the world.

By the 1986 census year, Greater Forest Lawn was distinctive within Calgary for its first-generation immigrant population (24.5% compared with a city-wide figure of 21.2%) and for those with a first language other than English (20.7% in Greater Forest Lawn, 15.3% city-wide), including Arabic, Chinese, German, Spanish, and Vietnamese. By 2016, area residents included Amharic, Cantonese, Dinka, Ilocano, Portugese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, and Tagalog speakers. That year, while 36% of Calgarians identified themselves as visible minorities, that figure ranged in the Greater Forest Lawn area from 20% in Southview to 71% in Applewood Park. Indigenous people and Métis in the area make up a greater percentage of the population than in the city at large.

Changing demographics led businesses and services in the area to manifest a wider cultural diversity, and 17 Avenue SE fostered a new identity as International Avenue. This informed the name of the International Avenue Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ), which was established in 1993. Along with its advocacy for the business district, the BRZ has contributed to liveability, vitality, and safety through special events (such as "Around the World in 35 Blocks" food tours), procurement and installation of design elements (including cultural murals, public art, site amenities, and trees), and engagement and advocacy on planning and transportation issues. It contributed to the establishment of the International Avenue Arts and Culture Centre in 2001 and to the creation of GlobalFest, an annual fireworks and cultural festival at Elliston Park, in 2003.

"Greater Forest Lawn Heritage," a public mural created by artist Eldon Walls, is one of many works of public art commissioned by the BRZ. Installed in 2001 and prominently displayed outside a strip mall in Southview (at 3111–17 Avenue SE, adjacent to Unity Park), "Greater Forest Lawn Heritage" depicts key personalities and places from the planning area's early history, with particular reference to 17 Avenue SE and its surroundings. Extensive public engagement with area seniors informed the mural's contents.

Nearby, the privately-funded Journey to Freedom Park (1907–17 Avenue SE), also in Southview, opened in 2022 to honour the thousands of Vietnamese refugees who came to Canada in the 1970s and the Canadians who welcomed and helped them. The Calgary Vietnamese Canada Association raised over one million dollars to build the park and the monument at its centre.

## **Community Characteristics and Attributes**

The Plan Area and surrounding land contain characteristics and attributes that are considered part of the Plan's development. Key features are shown on **Map 2: Community Characteristics and Attributes**. These characteristics should be considered throughout all subsequent phases of planning and development.

### **Topography**

The Greater Forest Lawn Communities are characterized by generally high elevation east of the Bow River. A steep escarpment forms a portion of the southwestern edge of the area, sloping down to the west towards Deerfoot Trail and to the Bow River. The intensity of the ridge reduces towards Memorial Drive E. The elevation across the plan area from west to east is relatively constant, with a gentle slope upward towards the northern boundary in the northwestern part of the plan.

### **Natural Features and Open Space**

The Plan Area is part of the Bow River Watershed, and it is east of the Bow River. 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 strength resiliency and minimize development impact on the river while supporting intended growth.

The Great Forest Lawn Communities plan also includes a range of regional pathways and open spaces, such as Bow River Pathway, Elliston Park and Valleyview Park. The Western Irrigation District Canal, a CPR irrigation project begun in 1906, parallels Deerfoot Trail SE along the start of its route eastward to Chestermere Lake.

### **Urban Forest**

The Greater Forest Lawn communities have a mature tree canopy that consists of trees on public and private lands. Healthy tree canopies are critical to climate change mitigation and enhance community wellbeing. As part of the Plan, policies have been provided to help maintain, improve and expand the existing tree canopies across the communities and contribute to broader City climate resiliency objectives.

### **17 Avenue SE Main Street**

The 17 Avenue SE, known as International Avenue, is identified as an Urban Main Street in the Municipal Development Plan (MDP). It is serviced by the Max Purple Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that runs along 17 Avenue SE. The MDP includes general policies and development intensity targets for Urban Main Streets.

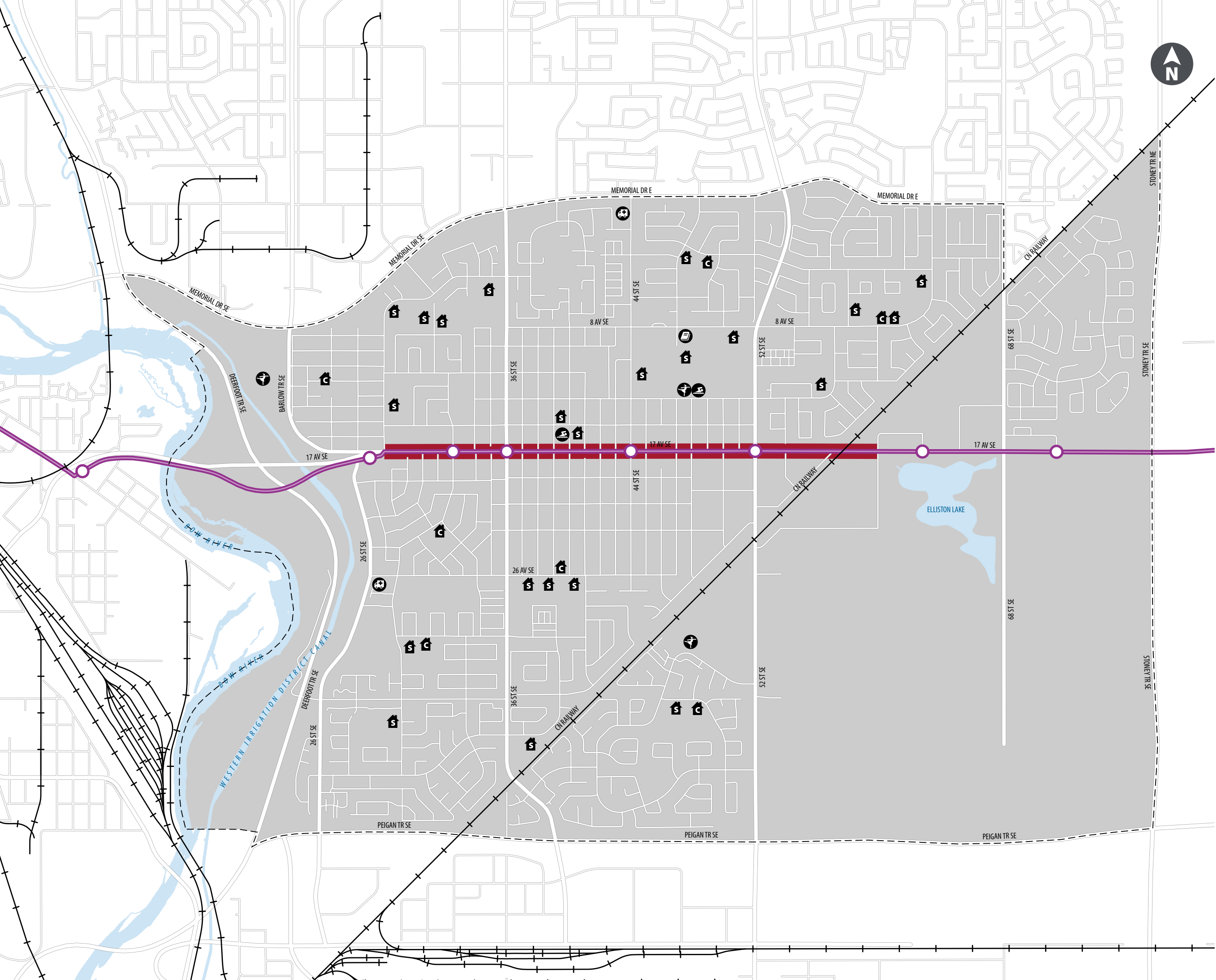
### **Public Transit Infrastructure**

The Greater Forest Lawn Communities are served by a range of transit services, including local bus services, Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The Blue Line LRT runs in part along Memorial Drive E provides services to the city's west and northeast communities.

The Max Purple BRT line has seven bus stations in its dedicated bus lanes along 17 Avenue SE that provide services to downtown and the City of Chestermere. Local bus routes are available and provide connections between communities within the Plan.



Map 2:  
Community Characteristics  
and Attributes



- Legend**
- Aquatic and Recreation Centre
  - Arena
  - Community Centre
  - EMS Station
  - Library
  - School
  - MAX Purple
  - Distance From Station
  - Freight Rail Corridor
  - Urban Main Street
  - Plan Area Boundary

## **Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure**

The plan area includes several pathways and bikeways such as the regional pathways along the Stoney Trail SE, 52 Street SE, and the Bow River. Local pathways provide additional connectivity between communities. Shared on-street bikeways are located along collector and residential streets such as 8 Avenue SE, 12 Avenue SE, 19 Avenue SE, 26 Avenue SE, and Dover Ridge Drive SE.

Despite existing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, connectivity in the plan area is impacted by major roads, the Freight Rail Corridor and communities' urban fabric. There are also areas where the pedestrian infrastructure is missing partially or entirely. Other locations where numerous crossings make it difficult to provide continuous and separated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The mobility policy in this Plan will align with the city-wide Always Available for All Ages and Abilities (5A) Network, providing safe, accessible, affordable, year-round options for transportation and recreation for all Calgarians.

## **Heritage Resources**

The Plan Area does not currently have any recognized heritage resources, but heritage resources and heritage values that are not legally protected may still contribute to the community.

Historic resources are identified on The City of Calgary's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources. The Inventory does not prevent a heritage resource from being altered or demolished, but properties listed on the Inventory that request legal protection may be eligible for development and/or financial incentives through The City and the Province of Alberta.

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

## **Civic Facilities and Community Amenities**

There are several civic facilities in the Greater Forest Lawn Communities, including the Max Bell Centre, Ernie Starr Arena, and Bob Bahan Aquatic & Fitness Centre. Other amenities and facilities include seven Community Association buildings, numerous schools, the East Calgary Twin Arena, and the Forest Lawn Library.

## **Landfill and Waste Management Facilities Setbacks**

The East Calgary Landfill and a Private Hazardous Waste Facility are in the southeast corner of the plan in the community of 09Q. The landfill and hazardous waste facility are between Stoney Trail SE and the Freight Rail Corridor, north of Peigan Trail SE, and south of 17 Avenue SE. Developments within the landfill and waste management facilities setback is subject to Section 12 and 13 of the Subdivision and Development Regulations of the Municipal Government Act.

## **Airport Vicinity Protection Area**

The Airport Vicinity Protection Area (AVPA) regulations outline uses that are prohibited within certain locations in Calgary, identified as Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) areas, due to potential



noise impacts from aircraft flying over communities as they arrive or depart. A portion of Albert Park / Radisson Heights, South View and Dover are located within AVPA. Properties within the AVPA are subject to the Calgary International Airport Vicinity Protection Area Regulations.

### **Freight Rail Corridor**

A freight rail corridor runs diagonally from northeast to southeast through the plan area. Development in proximity to the freight rail corridor is subject to The City of Calgary's Development Next to Freight Rail Corridors Policy and any applicable regulations.

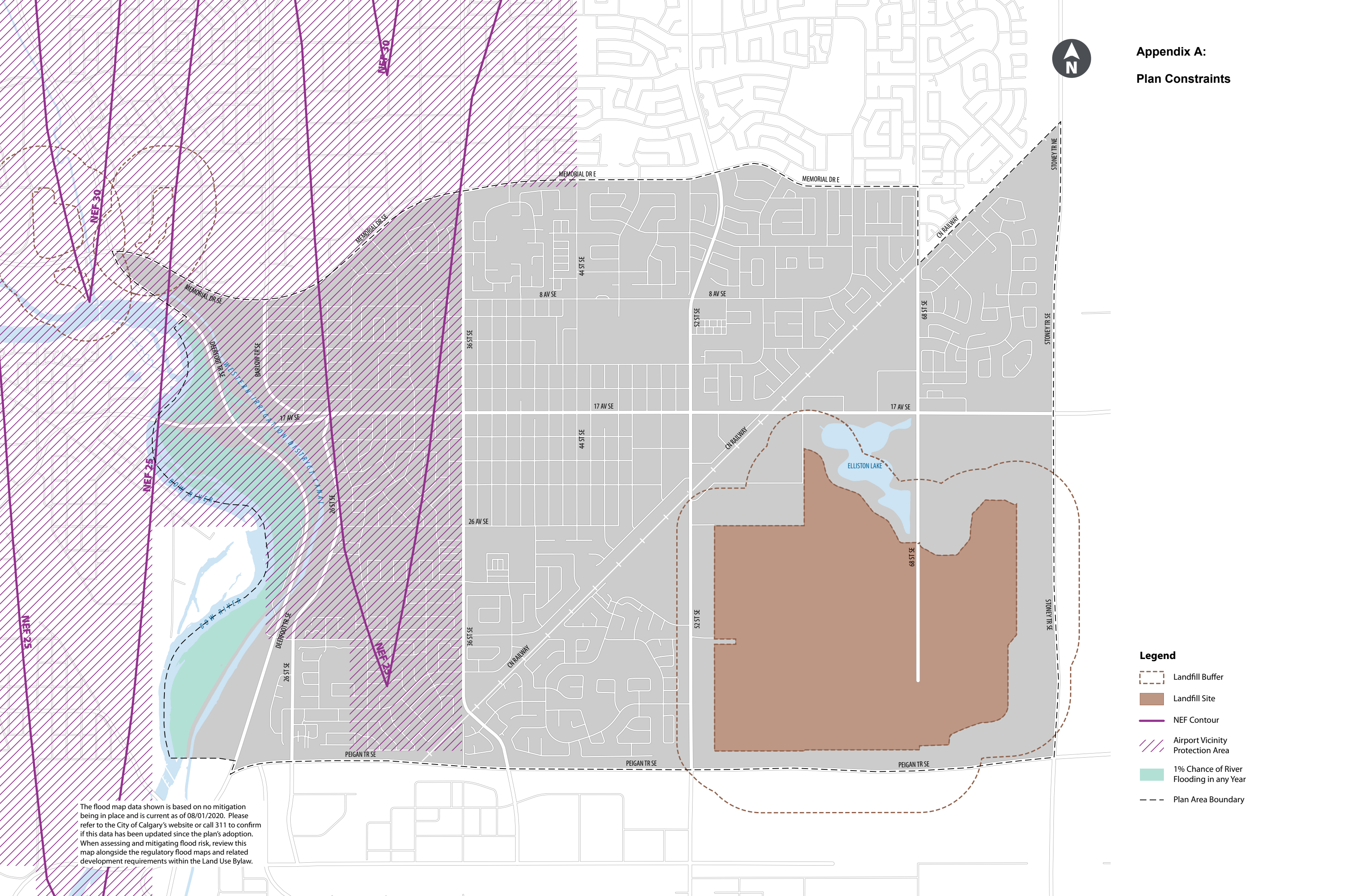
### **Climate Risk**

Greater Forest Lawn Communities are at significant risk from climate change impacts, such as higher average temperatures, extreme heat, heavy rainfalls, and severe storms. These risks will increase over time as climate change intensifies and will affect Greater Forest Lawn communities in many ways, such as harm to community members, damage to buildings and infrastructure, and negative impacts to natural assets and areas. Planning for climate adaptation is critical to reduce the risk to community members. Interventions like improving public areas to provide shade and cooling and enhancing the permeability of the land can reduce climate risks from extreme heat and heavy rainfall respectively.





Appendix A:  
Plan Constraints



- Legend**
- Landfill Buffer
  - Landfill Site
  - NEF Contour
  - Airport Vicinity Protection Area
  - 1% Chance of River Flooding in any Year
  - Plan Area Boundary

The flood map data shown is based on no mitigation being in place and is current as of 08/01/2020. Please refer to the City of Calgary's website or call 311 to confirm if this data has been updated since the plan's adoption. When assessing and mitigating flood risk, review this map alongside the regulatory flood maps and related development requirements within the Land Use Bylaw.