

Haskayne Legacy Park

Project Description

Located along the Bow River near Rocky View County, Haskayne Legacy Park shares its northwestern boundary with the recently created Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, which protects some 1,300 hectares of wetlands, native grasslands, rolling hills, wooded areas, trails and breathtaking mountain and river views. Together, these parks create a continuous and integrated greenway from the Bearspaw Reservoir north to the Town of Cochrane, while incorporating key connections to the Regional Pathway and the Trans Canada Trail.

At 186-hectares, the park builds upon a long-standing vision of a continuous river valley park system that has continued to inspire the City of Calgary and its citizens. The key principle of the park's design was to create a place where nature, culture, and history intersect. This is achieved through two, intersecting transects across the landscape. One interprets the site's natural character—escarpments coulees, grasslands, seeps, and springs. A second moves across the cultural landscape of the site to reflect on the human imprint—the nomadic Blackfoot Nation, Hudson Bay fur traders, pioneering railroad workers, and the legendary cattle ranchers and farmers.

As the Natural and Cultural Transects of the park converge, a 1,064 sf Pavilion Building situated at the centre of this intersection is designed to provide users with an opportunity to enhance their social, educational and event experiences through direct connections to the Bow River Valley landscape. The intent of the design is to provide a focal point for the park, highlighting the convergence of the Cultural and Natural transects and provide visitors with a heightened experience of the site through visual transparency and physical openness of the space. Using a simple palette of wood, weathering steel and concrete creates a natural, durable, timeless and low maintenance composition. The pavilion on the eastern half of the transect is enclosed by a perimeter of operable window walls that blur the line between the interior and exterior and allow the space to transform itself in response to a desired function and climate. The western canopy is open below providing delicate shadow patterns across the exterior terrace below. To achieve a net zero energy performance, the pavilion includes the city's first ground source heat pump HVAC system with much of the electricity required for the building is produced onsite by the adjacent solar photovoltaic system.

The design of the park's natural landscape of coulee, grassland, and woodland cultivates a significant relationship between park visitors and Calgary's natural heritage. Elements of the park are designed to be in harmony with the site's existing natural framework through enhanced stormwater systems, protection of Calgary's drinking water and nurturing of important ecologies and habitat. Featured along the southwestern section of the park is a rare assembly of native fescue grasslands, representing unique opportunities for education and stewardship of a native landscape of which only 16% remains in Alberta. Site amenities such as trails, interpretive stations, lookouts over long valley views, and shelterbelts offer ensuring the Park's future as an ecological, cultural, and recreational landscape for generations to come.