

## Project Description

The Banff Trail Neighbourhood Study aims to develop a holistic understanding of the current and future needs of the Banff Trail community, establish a clear community vision and identity, and provide a set of design and planning recommendations to guide future development within Banff Trail. This is an academic study conducted as part of the Citizens + Students project at the School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape, in partnership with the Banff Trail Community Association.

Banff Trail is a neighbourhood in the midst of rapid change. Historically, this neighbourhood has consisted primarily of single-family residential development, but in recent years has seen increasing density and a changing urban form. Located in northwest Calgary, this site is adjacent to the University of Calgary, McMahon Stadium, SAIT, and AUArts. The site is well-connected to the downtown core and broader city through two LRT stations and several bus routes, and there is significant potential for community growth.

Through extensive research, analysis and community consultation, we identified key opportunities and challenges within Banff Trail. Existing assets such as the well-used community association hall, transit stations and stops, local commercial establishments, parks and open spaces, and street trees were catalogued and helped to inform our design concepts. Our environmental, infrastructure, and built form analysis also identified key challenges such as disconnected mobility networks, underutilized parks and open spaces, disconnection to motel village and surrounding neighbourhoods due to major thoroughfares, and a significant need for increased density and diversity within this community.

In collaboration with Banff Trail residents through a series of public engagements, we developed a set of urban design and planning recommendations in the areas of mobility, open spaces, land use and built form, special sites, and placemaking. Additionally, this project provides information on tactical interventions, community branding and identity, and social programming. Each recommendation area is supported by an implementation plan, which includes suggested policy frameworks, guidelines for development, and potential funding avenues for community projects.

This project is anchored in urban design elements such as a strong sense of place, human scale, inclusive amenities, legibility, vibrancy, and resilience. The distinctive features, challenges, and opportunities present in the neighborhood were foundational to our analysis and design, leading to design (such as our proposed zip line in Banff Trail Park) that respects and responds to existing topographies and landscapes. Through our community branding kit, we have reinforced this sense of place, while additionally enhancing the legibility and vibrancy of the public realm. Considerations for human scale were paramount in our redevelopment scheme for Motel Village, which features building setbacks and strategically located parks, courtyards, and plazas to increase density while maintaining a pleasant pedestrian experience. The amenities thoughtfully included in our main street plans reflect the current and projected needs of local residents, including a daycare, health services, and retail spaces. Resilience and vibrancy are reflected in the mix use nature of our proposed new and infill development sites, which are adaptable to changing uses and designed to support biodiversity and sustainability strategies.