



Calgary's Neighbourhood Streets: A Streets for All Policy

Prototype



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prototype

Policy Overview

What is a neighbourhood street?

A neighbourhood street is the street you might live on. Or the one near you with local shops and your closest bus stop. There is a lot of activity that belongs on your and others' neighbourhood streets. Some of this activity is very functional, but much of what is taking place forms the foundation of strong neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood streets work well when everyone can move, take care of and linger safely and comfortably and is explained in figure 1.



Move on neighbourhood streets

Walk, bike, wheel, drive, park, take transit, dog walk, commute and exercise.



Take care of neighbourhood streets

Garden, mow, shovel, pave, redesign, light, manage stormwater, shade and sun.



Spend time on neighbourhood streets

Play, meet neighbours, sell lemonade, host block parties, daydream, listen for birds, spot animals and linger.

Figure 1: Activity on Calgary's neighbourhood streets

Why do we need this policy?

This policy describes the roles, toolkits and conditions that lend to Calgary's neighbourhood streets working well. When this policy is achieved, neighbourhoods are more resilient and residents have the opportunities that come with access to safe travel choices and feeling connected.

Vision

The vision for this policy is to empower Administration, communities, and Council to partner to engage in activities that improve real and perceived safety on Calgary's neighbourhood streets. The policy calls on Calgary leaders, designers, residents and decision makers to consider the unique needs of all users, to provide quality transportation choices and public spaces that benefit overall community health.

Policy Owners

Neighbourhood streets are shared by many. Implementing the structures and tools that take care of neighbourhood streets is also shared by many. When the policy owners play these roles, neighbourhoods are stronger.

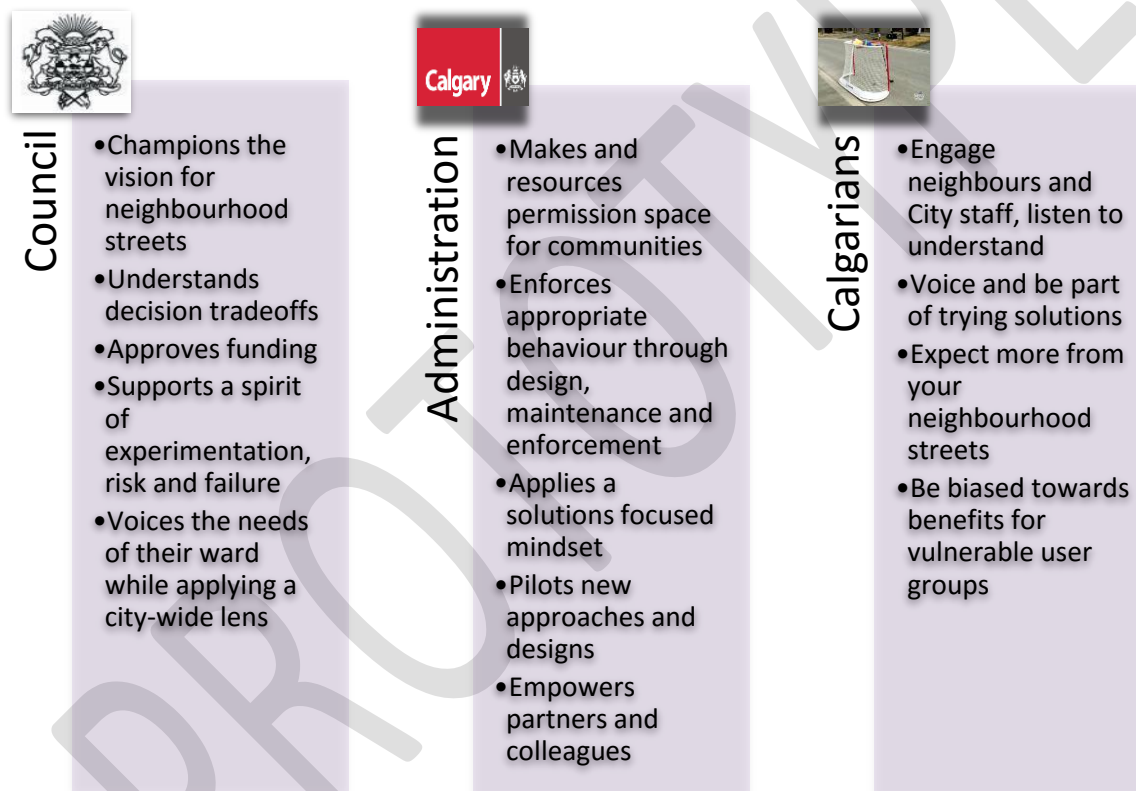


Figure 3: Roles for Council, City Administration and Calgarians

Neighbourhood Streets Policy Statement

The City of Calgary is committed to building, improving and operating neighbourhood streets so that they are liveable. A liveable street is defined in this policy as a street that is safe, welcoming to all ages, comfortable for a variety of travel choices, supportive of fun and healthy lifestyles, and enhancing for local destinations through appropriate public amenities.

- By **safe** we mean: streets where real and perceived safety concerns are both valid though differently addressed; where the risk of tripping and slipping is low; where the design of the street encourages safe and appropriate travel behaviour from all users; and, where the design discourages crime and social isolation.
- By **welcoming to all ages** we mean: streets that acknowledge that visitors and residents will have different travel needs and capabilities throughout their lives by accommodating a range of physical and mental capabilities in the designs.
- By **offering comfortable travel choices** we mean streets where the physical design results in vehicle speeds that are slow enough that all existing and emerging modes can mix comfortably
- By **supporting great destinations** we mean: streets that add to the vibrancy of the places they border.
- By **healthy** we mean: streets that encourage individuals to live actively and neighbours to connect.
- By **fun** we mean: streets where the design (including art, green infrastructure and architecture) encourages play, and where citizens are empowered to enjoy and repurpose streets for special events of local or cultural significance.

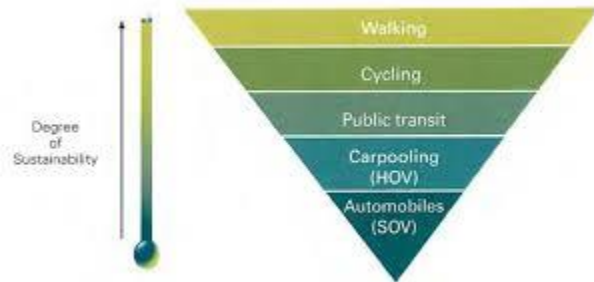
Definitions & Guiding Principles

- Neighbourhood streets are those that give high priority to pedestrians and the focus of this policy. Generally, neighbourhood streets are streets which directly serve residential development and those that support local amenities and businesses inside residential areas. In the City's transportation hierarchy they can be a variety of classifications including Residential Street, Collector, Activity Centre Street, and Neighbourhood Boulevard. Arterial and Skeletal Roads, which pass between communities and have other priorities, are not subject to this policy.
- Inclusive engagement means finding ways to hear all voices, finding the right solutions by learning through experiments, and finding ways to share decision making
- Community capacity is the ability for community members to come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. . It is not a measure of the financial capacity of a community or its members.
- Equity means being fair in terms of allocating resources according to ability, need and in a ways that are sensitive and productive.
- Evaluation represents the overall approach of the policy and is critical to pass along learnings, to prioritize efforts and understand the conditions under which neighbourhood streets do and do not thrive. Efforts to enhance neighbourhood streets will be measured against outcomes and shown through:
 - Qualitative and quantitative evidence that vulnerable users are better off
 - Big data like trends and small data such as personal experiences inform design standards, map the progress of meeting the policy, and give insight into users groups' needs

Application

Relevance

This policy is relevant to streets that give a high priority to pedestrians according to the Calgary Transportation Plan sustainability triangle. This policy goes beyond The City's past Traffic Calming policy and is intended to both curb inappropriate driving behaviour while attracting sustainable modes and representing a fuller set of toolkits that is currently being used in Calgary.



Many of the toolkits that support the delivery of this policy may be appropriate on other classifications of roadways; certainly Canadian engineering guidelines have designed traffic calming toolkits to apply broadly to streets that experience speeding and safety collisions. In these cases, counter measures should be designed and implemented using temporary and / or permanent materials. This policy is designed to link community activities with engineering to curb bad driving behaviour while cultivating strong communities and the freedom of travel choices through comfort, real and perceived safety.

It's important to remember also that the context and stories of streets change over time. Many industrial streets, such as those near Blue Line LRT stations are now becoming increasingly needed by pedestrian traffic. This policy may apply in these cases.

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Toolkits

Traffic calming will remain an important solution to enhance neighbourhood streets. Increasingly, however, community groups and City Business Units are investing in the liveability of neighbourhood streets in new ways using new toolkits. These toolkits vary in terms of their intended outcome and the ways residents are engaged but all belong under the umbrella of the Neighbourhood Streets policy. The neighbourhood streets toolkits are described here.



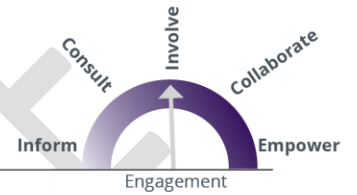
Speeding causes collisions and discourages community enjoyment.

Traffic Calming

Alter streets to slow vehicles and to correct past designs that influenced unsafe driver cues.

Guidance:

- + Engineering manuals
- + Speed studies
- + Traffic counts



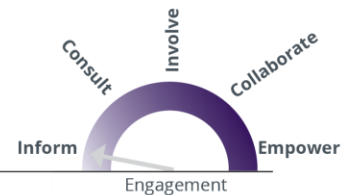
The City of Calgary has a duty of care to all users.

Safety and Spot Fixes

Correct known safety issues and localized problems.

Guidance:

- + Engineering manuals
- + Safety reviews



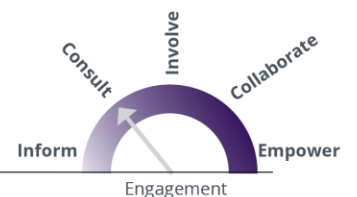
The desire for safe travel choices has increased.

Corridor studies

Retrofit streets to support new or emerging travel needs.

Guidance:

- + Engineering manuals
- + Safety reviews



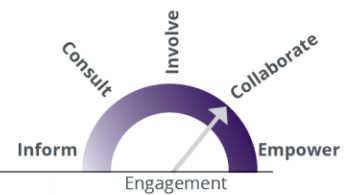
Prototype changes in public space.

Tactical Urbanism

Fear of change can be a barrier to making improvements.

Guidance:

- + Engineering manuals
- + Experience
- + Best Practice





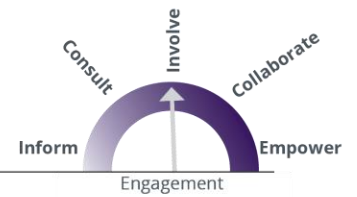
Single barriers along a route may make travel choices impossible for certain or all users.

Missing Links

Close gaps in Calgary’s walking and rolling networks: on pathways, on streets and travelling in between.

Guidance:

- + Policies and Plans (Pathway Bikeway Plan)



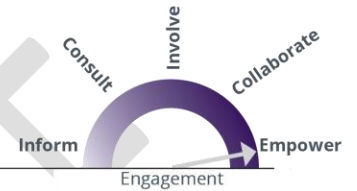
There is a real appetite for volunteerism in Calgary, which leads to resilient neighbourhoods.

Microgrants & Permissions

Invite residents to lead enhancements in their community.

Guidance:

- + Partner collaborations that reveal the ways Calgarians wish to be involved as well as the barriers that prevent involvement



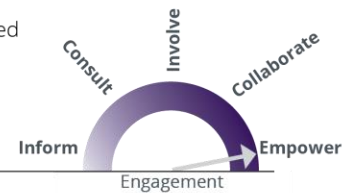
Changing behaviour in favour of sustainable travel choices takes many, repeated nudges.

Activation

Grow activity in neighbourhoods as well as feelings of safety and belonging.

Guidance:

- + Partner collaborations that help Calgarians be active in their communities



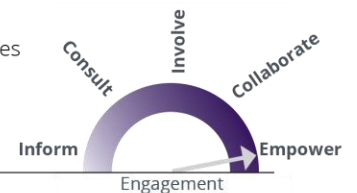
Feeling unsafe prevents Calgarians from using and enjoying their neighbourhood streets.

Education

Promote the importance and elements of good travel behaviour.

Guidance:

- + Needs
- + New Designs
- + New bylaws
- + Changes and behaviour trends



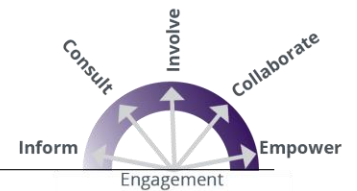
Community investment lends to feelings of pride and belonging .

Placemaking

Add beautification and character like community wayfinding, community art or gardens.

Guidance:

- + Community Leaders
- + Partners



Alignment

This policy serves MDP / CTP and the Pathway Bikeway Plan. Application of this policy will be supported by work across and outside the Corporation in these ways:

To understand and design to user needs...	To understand community context...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Design Standards • Gender equity, diversity and Inclusion strategy • Lighting? • Transit Friendly Design Guidelines • Age Friendly Calgary • Social well-being policy • Play Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Culture Plan • White Goose Flying • Calgary's poverty reduction strategy • Active school travel programs • City Shaping • HealthYYC • Guidelines for Great Communities • Resilient Calgary
To find ways to engage authentically and drive community leadership...	To align City services...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage! policy • Join community events like clean ups, stampede and neighbour day parties • Sponsor Neighbour Day block parties, ActivateYYC Microgrants and • Calgary Transit Event Framework • Street use permit application, boulevards, paint the pavement • Fund raising for traffic calming • Fire Department Community Involvement • Community social work program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste reduction & routes planning • Recreation opportunities and Parks investments • Schedule with investments such as road repairs and stormwater plans
To plan and design strong communities ...	To be forward looking...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed Areas Guidebook • ARPs and multi community plans • Residential Parking Strategy • Urban Forestry • Urban Design Guidelines • Green Infrastructure • City Shaping at LRT stations • HealthYYC initiative • Park policies (utilities & urban forestry approach?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next20 MDP / CTP • Smart cities • School site planning • Centre City plan • Land use bylaw governs building interface with street • Play Streets

Expectations & Service Standards

This policy will be supported through internal collaboration models and intake opportunities for residents to share ideas and issues with Administration. These models form the intake and response process, which together with this policy form the Neighbourhood Streets Program. The intake and response models will have these attributes:

Intake Attributes

Residents will:

- Have varied opportunities to be involved and communicate with The City of Calgary
- Be consulted on priorities for improvements for neighbourhood streets within their community
- See how their request is prioritized against other communities'
- Feel supported through continuous conversation
- Try to understand how vehicle speed impacts community liveability and safe access to travel for users
- Help The City understand their neighbours' share of their concerns

Response Attributes

Administration will:

- Clearly articulate that all solutions will consider all users with a bias towards safety for vulnerable users
- Use pilots and temporary tools to enable continuous design improvement that make it easier in all seasons and for all abilities
- Listen to understand community context and by hosting inclusive engagement
- Prioritize resources in both reactive and proactive ways
- Work to open permission space, using partner relationships to become more nimble
- Work with lawmakers to enable best practices faster
- Adequately scope capital projects to consider impacts to neighbourhood streets

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