



Calgary



Beltline Community Investment Fund (BCIF)

Impact Report

Land Acknowledgment

Calgary's Beltline Community is a short walk from the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers. For millennia, the land surrounding the confluence is where people come together to share resources, ideas, and opportunities. It has always been, and will continue to be, a place where all are welcome to live, connect, and thrive.

Indigenous Peoples have their own names for this area that have been in use long before Scottish settlers named this place Calgary. In the Blackfoot language, they call this place, Mohkinstsis. The Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations refer to the Calgary area as Wicispa Oyade and the people of the Tsuut'ina nation call this area Gutsistsl. The Métis call the Calgary area Otoskwunee.

We appreciate and acknowledge that we live, work and play on the ancestral and traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, Amskaapipiikani and Kainai First Nations; the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Métis Nation Battle River Territory (Nose Hill Métis District 5 and Elbow Métis District 6). We acknowledge all Indigenous Peoples who have made Calgary their home.

Table of Contents

- 04 Our First Impact Report**
- 06 BCIF: Partners Investing in the Beltline**
- 10 The Benefits of BCIF**
- 11 Funded by Density Bonusing**
- 12 Driven by Community**
- 14 BCIF in Action**
- 24 Complete BCIF Investment Summary**
- 26 Looking Forward (Letter from the Chair)**
- 27 BCIF Tomorrow**

Our First Impact Report

Since 2006, the Beltline Community Investment Fund (BCIF) has supported public realm improvement projects in the downtown community of the Beltline. From the creation of new green spaces to the addition of street furniture to improvements in lighting and safety, BCIF has proven to be a valuable tool for The City of Calgary and its development and community partners. Funded by the development community, this unique program builds and strengthens the Beltline's public spaces without using taxpayer dollars.

Building upon BCIF's regular updates to the Infrastructure and Planning Committee, City Council and the community, this is the first community report to share highlights from notable projects and a complete financial overview of this special program. This report shares the history of BCIF, some of its most impactful projects, and a look at the future of investment in the Beltline to benefit all the people who live, work, and visit this community.

To date, BCIF has allocated over \$16 million and supported more than 40 community projects in the Beltline. Parks, public art, safer streetscapes, neighbourhood supports – BCIF plays a major role in the positive evolution of Calgary's densest, and one of the most diverse, communities. The value created by BCIF is a testament to the collaboration between Calgary's development community, non-profit organizations, and The City of Calgary; it is an example of innovation and partnership that is making life better every day for Calgarians.

Future annual BCIF community reports will continue to highlight the positive impacts this program delivers to this fast-growing community in the heart of our city.



“Cultures and climate differs all over the world, but people are the same. They'll gather in public, if you give them a good place to do it.”

Jan Gehl, Architect and Urban Designer

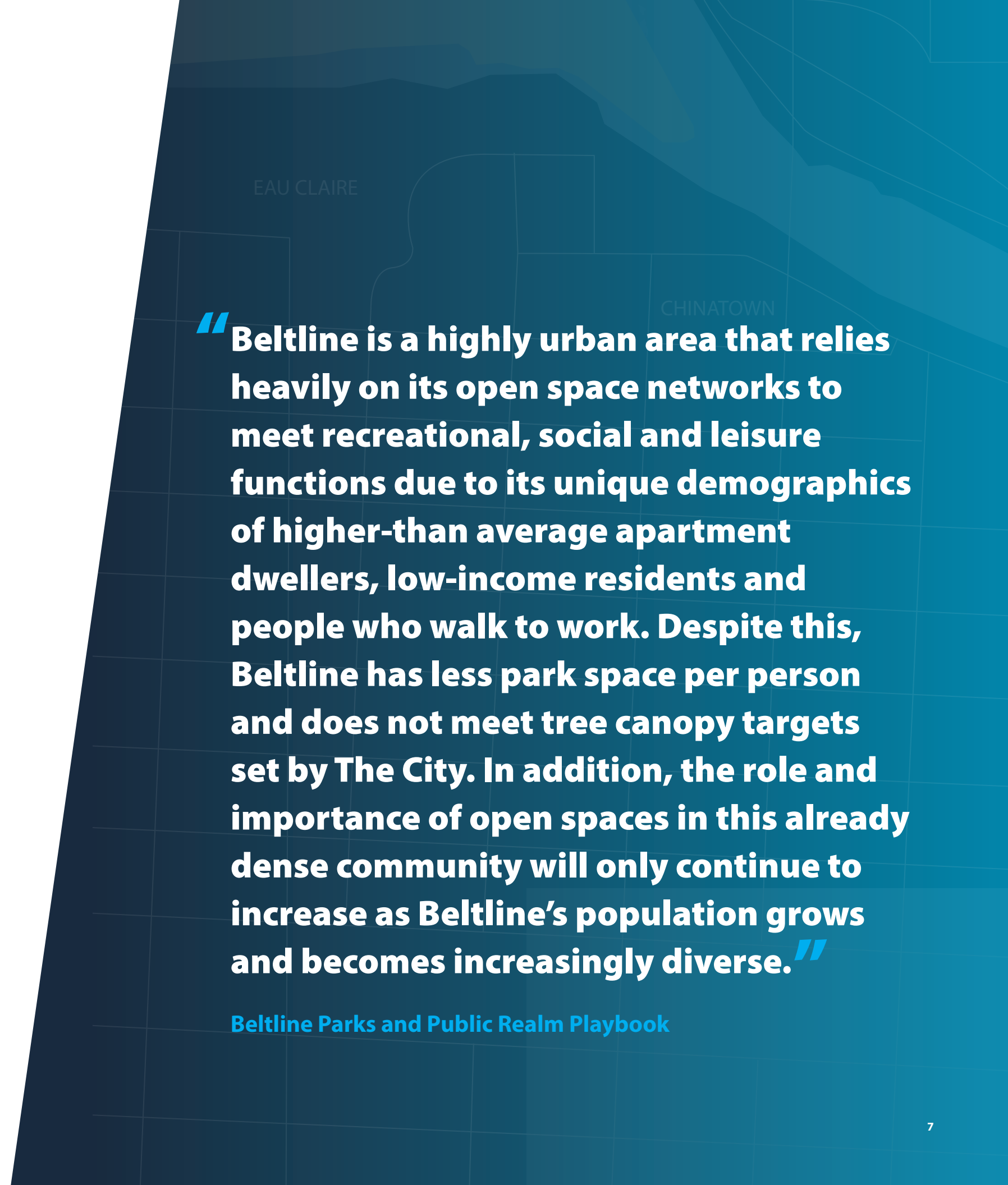
BCIF: Partners Investing in the Beltline

The Beltline Community Investment Fund (BCIF) was created in 2006 to accept financial contributions from developers to facilitate public realm improvements. The fund allows developers to build greater density within the Beltline and gives The City and other organizations the financial capacity to improve public spaces without using tax dollars.

While this is in addition to the public realm projects normally undertaken by The City of Calgary in an established neighbourhood, it is needed for a fast-growing and densifying community. In the Beltline, 98% of the population lives in apartments with only 0.588 hectares of open space/1,000 residents (compared to the Municipal Development Plan target of 2.0 hectares/1,000 residents).

With oversight from the BCIF Committee, the fund allocates grants to both City- and community-initiated public realm improvement projects. Funds can be used for initiatives like:

- Improved sidewalks and lighting
- Park and open space redevelopment and improvements
- Street trees
- Street furniture (benches, bike racks, garbage/recycling containers)
- Public art
- Purchasing land for the development of new parks and green spaces



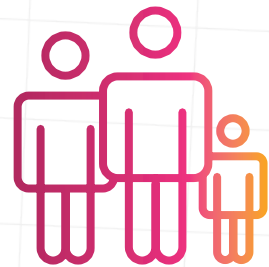
“Beltline is a highly urban area that relies heavily on its open space networks to meet recreational, social and leisure functions due to its unique demographics of higher-than average apartment dwellers, low-income residents and people who walk to work. Despite this, Beltline has less park space per person and does not meet tree canopy targets set by The City. In addition, the role and importance of open spaces in this already dense community will only continue to increase as Beltline’s population grows and becomes increasingly diverse.”

[Beltline Parks and Public Realm Playbook](#)

BCIF: Partners Investing in the Beltline



The Benefits of BCIF



For Beltline Residents

The public realm is their backyard; it is shared space that makes living in a densely-populated community desirable and comfortable. The public realm improvements supported by BCIF create playgrounds for families; safer sidewalks for people walking to work or shopping; spaces for events, recreation and relaxation; and beautification that everyone can enjoy. A strong public realm draws people to live, work and play in the Beltline.



For Beltline Developers

The public realm represents amenities that add value and attraction to the community they help build. BCIF-supported projects make the Beltline a community where people choose to live and visit—a community where the latest residential projects are quickly filled by people who want to be there.



For Beltline Business Owners

The public realm is the conduit connecting shops and offices to customers and employees. Investments through BCIF make it easier, safer, and more pleasant for residents and visitors to participate in the local economy. Public realm improvements create a community that's a magnet for the people who will ensure Beltline businesses thrive.

Funded by Density Bonusing

BELTLINE

The exclusive funding source for BCIF is The Downtown Density Bonusing Offset Program. Since 2006, our developer partners have contributed \$16,801,740 in funds.

Density bonusing lets developers build extra floors in exchange for giving back to the community. In the Beltline, this is done through BCIF. This offsets the usual bonusing costs for eligible projects and encourages new high-density residential projects in the community.

The City of Calgary program supports downtown revitalization and increases economic activity, safety, and vibrancy by:

- Building new homes faster and increasing the number of people living downtown
- Keeping community benefits like affordable housing and improved public spaces when building more density
- Encouraging different types of buildings and businesses downtown
- Supporting property values and taxes
- Making the ground level more lively with active spaces

Many Thanks

The BCIF committee would like to share a special thanks to developers supporting the fund. Developers' contributions are an integral piece and we deeply appreciate their help sponsoring BCIF funded projects. Without the ongoing support from dedicated developers, BCIF projects would cease to exist. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this fund to help continue to beautify our Beltline spaces.

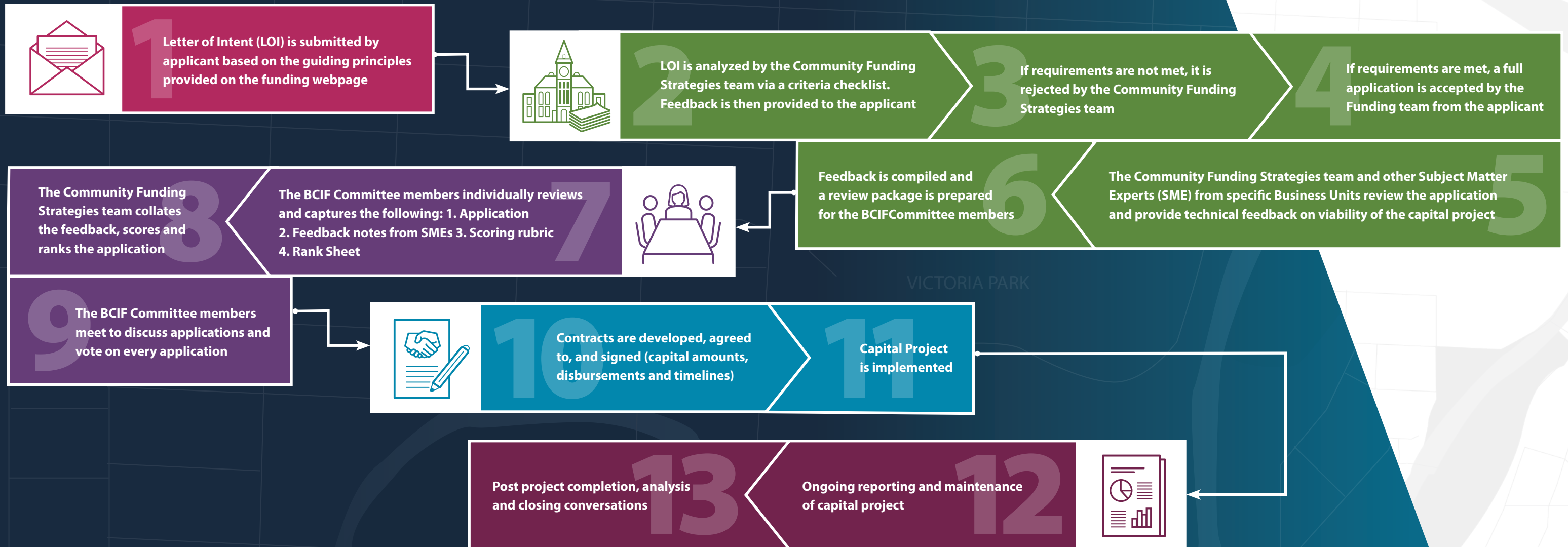
CLIFF BUNGALOW

Driven by Community

BCIF is overseen by a City Council-appointed committee of 8-12 members that include:

- Member of Council who represents Ward 8
- Up to ten additional public members
- One public member candidate nominated by the Beltline Neighbourhoods Association
- One member of Administration from Community Services or a related area will be appointed by Council to be a non-voting member of the Committee

This committee ensures that the distribution of BCIF grants meets community needs as the Beltline quickly grows and evolves. From funding to project completion, the BCIF projects includes:



BCIF in Action

Central Memorial Park (2008)

Investment: \$3,045,000

Central Memorial Park is Calgary's oldest park and is located in the heart of the Beltline. Over two years (2008-2010), a complex rehabilitation added fountains, festival infrastructure, extensive lighting, a café space, a Calgary Parks staff office space, and a public washroom. The project also revitalized the historic significance of the park including restoring the geometric oval and park symmetry.

This cultural landscape park has played a key role in the revitalization of the neighbourhood. Formerly an aging and underutilized site, this park now hosts year-round use and has added to the walkability, beauty, and comfort of the area.

The BCIF investment was part of an overall \$12 million investment from The City of Calgary and the Enmax Legacy Parks Program.



BCIF in Action

Beltline Urban Murals Project (BUMP Festival) (2017-2025)

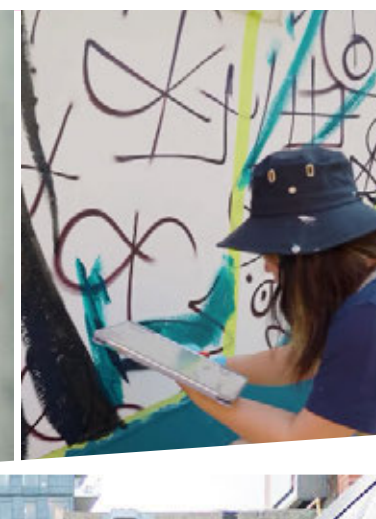
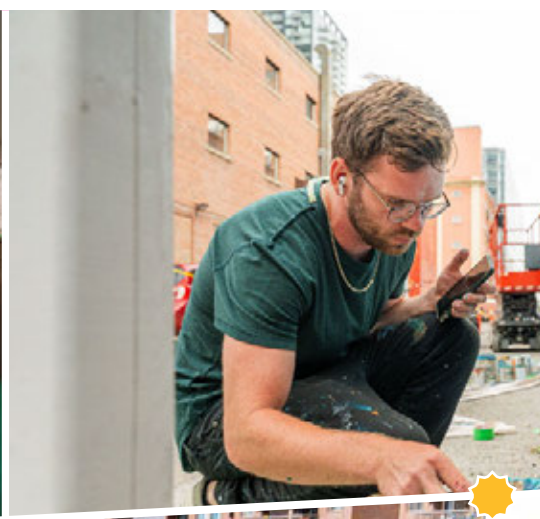
Investment \$1,442,948

Launched in 2017 as the Beltline Urban Murals Project, BUMP Festival has evolved into Calgary's most expansive public art initiative, reshaping neighbourhoods with art installations and community programming. Artist-led and community-powered, BUMP pioneers a new vision for Calgary's urban spaces, positioning public art as a catalyst for cultural transformation and collective imagination. Murals found throughout the Beltline – from towering building walls to "secret" alleyways – beautify public spaces, draw tourists to the community, and create a sense of discovery for residents and visitors alike.

BCIF funding has supported the creation of 162 murals and more than 360 art installations that weave narratives of place, identity, and possibility into Calgary's public realm.

“I think what BUMP actually does to the city is it gives it an alternative – sort of a different noise compared to generally the corporate backdrop of Calgary. You have art that’s booming everywhere, you have activations happening in the city, makes the city feel alive with a different energy.”

Priya Ramesh, BUMP Festival Creative Director



BCIF in Action

2023 - Beltline Community Neighbourhood Fridge

Investment \$9,640

The Beltline Fridge and Pantry is a community-driven project to support Calgarians facing food insecurity. This volunteer-supported project on City of Calgary land includes a fully functional fridge nestled next to a pantry where donated food is available for anyone. The idea was sparked by community members who recognized a growing need for more food resources in the area. With no monitoring or registration, people are welcome to come by at any time to take what they need, no matter their situation. This colourful project both supports local residents in need while engaging local businesses and residents to donate food and pantry items.

BCIF funding supported the building of the project and the required utility connections to the adjacent City facility.

“What this project has revealed is that there is food insecurity in our neighbourhood. It’s not just food insecurity alone, like the lack of food, it’s a bigger issue. However, this project, what it comes down to is the power of community. It’s about how we’ve come together to address some of the immediate needs and mobilizing to get neighbours to help neighbours.”

Silvia Ross, Community Social Worker



2021, 2024 - Better Bike Racks

Investment \$116,026

The Better Bike Racks project designs, fabricates, and installs artistic, functional, and locally inspired bicycle parking at businesses throughout the Beltline. Each set of racks are designed to be a placemaking conversation starter while also encouraging people to travel to Beltline businesses. Beyond being beautiful, these bike racks are safe, secure, and visible. These public realm improvements encourage active transportation while also drawing residents and visitors to participate in the local economy.

BCIF funding supported the creation and installation of two rounds of bike rack installations at various Beltline businesses in 2021 and 2024.

“We design bike racks with the goal of bringing people together. Vibrant communities bring in good business too, with greater opportunities for tourism, local businesses and events.”

Better Bike Racks team



2023-2025 - Connaught Open Street

Investment: \$200,000

The Connaught Open Street is a collaborative, community-led project that provides a safer way for kids to get to school while also creating a new public space for community members. This half block of 10 Street between 12th Ave and 13th Ave SW (located next to Connaught School) was a place kids previously described as busy, noisy, and dangerous. Ever Active Schools and Sustainable Calgary worked with kids at Connaught School to create an initial design for the Open Street that was piloted with community engagement from 2022-2025. In 2025, City Council approved making the project a permanent park space to create an innovative, pedestrian-friendly greenspace for all ages.

BCIF funding supported the installation of semi-permanent street furniture during the pilot phase and a portion of the permanent project to be constructed in 2026.

“The open street gives a safe crossing for kids and families while walking to school. After school, I see people talking and enjoying the space. I know that classes go to learn in the Open Street when it is nice outside. In the winter and summer, I played in the open street with my friends.”

Roslin, Grade 4 student

BCIF in Action

**2024 - Beltline Business Improvement Area
Street Beautification project**

Investment: \$90,000

BLOX, the Beltline Business Improvement Area, implemented a street beautification project that included initiatives like seasonal planters, flags, and murals to enhance the Beltline's vibrancy and public spaces. Funded in part by BCIF, the project improves the community's welcoming atmosphere by adding art, green spaces, and functional amenities such as artistically painted planters and strategically placed cigarette disposal bins.

“Our Beltline businesses thrive when the public spaces that surround and connect them are safe, attractive, and accessible. The BLOX beautification project paid off serious dividends for our members and the customers they serve.”

Katie Thies, Executive Director of the Beltline BIA

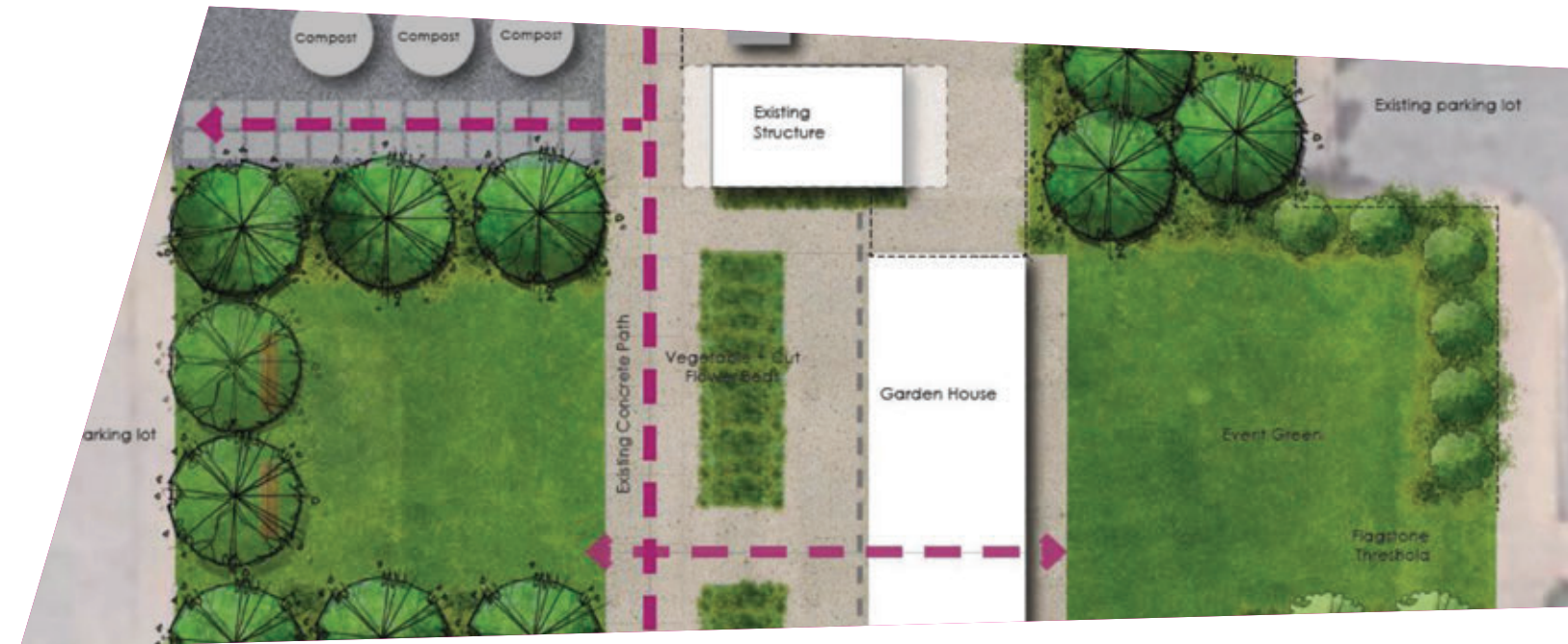


**2024 / 2025 - Lougheed House Beaulieu Public Gardens
& Community Placemaking Hub**

Investment \$200,000

The Lougheed House Beaulieu Public Gardens and Community Placemaking Hub project is revitalizing one of the Beltline's most historic public greenspaces by enhancing its accessibility, safety, and potential as an activated public realm.

Co-designed with the community, the project is transforming the gardens into a more welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant space for relaxation, recreation, and social connection. In addition to creating a space to draw increased local foot traffic and tourism, the project includes elements of climate resilience such as tree planting and landscaping to help mitigate urban heat.



“We are very grateful for this investment, it's been incredibly important for our ability to maintain and enhance a treasured public space in the Beltline.”

Shannon Murray, Executive Director Lougheed House

Complete BCIF Investment Summary

Project/Initiative	Year(s)	Amount (\$)
Central Memorial Park	2008	\$3,045,000
Volunteer way	2012-2016	\$201,823
Centre City Initiatives	2012-2016	\$160,439
1st St SW Underpass Project (Centre City Mobility Program)	2013	\$300,000
McHugh House PUD2014-0708	2014	\$400,000
4 8th ST (P223)	2014	\$640,000
Beltline Community Illuminate Project	2015-2017	\$126,034
17 AV SW MRR	2016	\$4,000,000
Creative Realm	2017-2018	\$124,229
Beltline Mural Project	2017-2019	\$220,087
Humpy Hollow Park Redevelopment	2019	\$1,230,386
Beltline Bike Rack	2019	\$67,225
PFC2019-0476 (5th ST SW)	2019	\$1,000,000
PUD2016-0358 (4th ST SW)	2019	\$1,115,000
Creative Realm	2020	\$6,819
Beltline Mural Project	2020-2022	\$622,861
High Park	2020-2022	\$364,880
BCIF Terms of Reference	2020-2021	\$11,944

Project/Initiative	Year(s)	Amount (\$)
Road Blox	2021-2022	\$230,202
Better Bike Racks	2021	\$116,026
17th Ave Retail & Entertainment district Temp Installation	2021	\$49,265
Calgary Homeless Memorial	2021	\$45,000
Projection Mapping Project	2021	\$179,170
BUMP Festival - Beltline Murals	2023	\$200,000
Connaught Open Streets	2023-2024	\$100,000
Poster Blox	2023	\$90,163
Parklets Phase 2	2023	\$42,000
Victoria Park Projection Mapping Project	2023	\$20,830
Beltline Neighbourhood Fridge	2023	\$9,640
BUMP Festival - Beltline Murals	2024	\$200,000
Street Beautification	2024	\$90,000
Better Bike Racks-Beltline Community Enhancement	2024	\$150,000
Parks Foundation-Haultain Park Living Room	2024	\$200,000
Lougheed House Beaulieu Public Gardens & Community Placemaking	2024	\$100,000
Beltline Public Art Sculptures	2024	\$200,000
	TOTAL	\$14,719,022

Looking Forward

(Letter from the Chair)

Dear readers,

It's impossible to walk through the Beltline and not encounter a BCIF-funded project—each one demonstrating care for residents and visitors. In a neighbourhood where half its residents don't drive to work, scooter corrals and bike racks support micro-mobility while reducing potential hazards for people with visual impairments. A community fridge responds to the immediate needs of unhoused and food-insecure Calgarians. Signage and lighting invite exploration. Workout and play spaces create a “backyard” for the 98% of Beltline residents who live in apartments. Murals adorning hundreds of walls bring daily delight. Delight is serious business: it can improve our health and happiness and make our city more competitive.

I have a hypothesis about programs like BCIF: I think they make us better at living together. In a world that often reduces civic participation to a simple yes or no, projects funded by BCIF invite people to work through complexity together—to listen, collaborate, and co-create. We need that. The BCIF spaces had been imagined by local residents, and it is meeting the needs of those who live, work, and play in Beltline neighbourhood.

As Calgary approaches its two-millionth resident, the Beltline will continue to grow. New housing developments and new neighbours bring both responsibility and opportunity to create warm, welcoming places in which Calgarians can make a life. While we're at it, let's not be boring! Let's ignite creativity and innovation. BCIF has already delivered with internationally precedent-setting work, including spaces designed by children and the world's tallest mural.

This publication is a thank-you card to community and development partners who make this great work happen, and an invitation to keep it coming! We look so forward to what comes next.

Celia Raven Lee, Chair, Beltline Community Investment Fund



BCIF Tomorrow

BCIF continues with newly funded projects underway including Haultain Fitness Park, Connaught Open Street, and the Lougheed House Beaulieu Public Gardens and Community Placemaking Hub.

For more information on BCIF, please email BCIF@calgary.ca or visit calgary.ca/funding.



Shaping a Greater Downtown
Beltline Community Investment Fund (BCIF) **Impact Report**

