



Neighbourhood Streets North Hill Area

What We Heard – November/December 2020

The purpose of this report is to share a summary of the engagement process. This report includes the project goals, project overview, engagement overview and an analysis of emergent themes from the input. Verbatim (word-for-word) input from the engagement activities are also included, as well as a brief summary of next steps. This report does not offer detail on decisions made as a result of this input.

Project Goals

- Ensure that as more people choose to live and work along the North Hill Main Streets (4 Street NW, Centre Street N, and Edmonton Trail NE), the nearby residential streets remain pleasant and quiet routes where neighbours connect and have safe options for all ages and abilities to travel throughout the area.
- Discourage vehicle shortcutting along 1 Street N.E., 2 Street N.W., 24 Avenue N, while still giving vehicle access to local residents by ensuring routes are intuitive and align with local destinations
- Complete pathway and sidewalk network connections.
- Enhance the residential street environment and create community amenities and green spaces
- Maintain local vehicle parking and access where possible.
- Collect feedback on the effectiveness of the temporary traffic calming measures in meeting the project goals for the community and users.
- Collect feedback on the park expansion for Balmoral Circus by finding an appropriate balance between creating a quiet space for passive recreation adjacent to homes and creating an attractive and meaningful community destination.

Project Overview

As part of the Neighbourhood Streets Program, the North Hill Area Project there was placement of temporary traffic calming measures and park improvements along 1 Street N.E., 2 Street N.W. to support travel choice and safety. This project has been informed by engagement held over the last six years for Green Line, The City's local growth planning program's work in North Hill Communities and Main Streets, which all identified a desire to see reduced vehicle volumes and speeds along residential streets parallel to Centre Street N and to provide safe and comfortable walking and cycling routes. This project continues to work in coordination with other area projects such as the North Central Mobility Study.

This project included:

- Installation of temporary traffic calming measures this summer/fall 2020. The City will then engage with the community about the locations and preferred traffic movements before permanent traffic calming is installed in 2021.
- Park expansion at Balmoral Circus, transforming the paved intersection at 2 Street and 19 Avenue N.W. into park space and limiting vehicle access with temporary materials. The project team will engage with the community to find an appropriate balance between creating a quiet space for passive recreation adjacent to homes and creating an attractive and meaningful community destination before permanent landscaping in 2021.
- Completing pathway connections and improving crossings at high volume intersections with permanent materials in 2021.

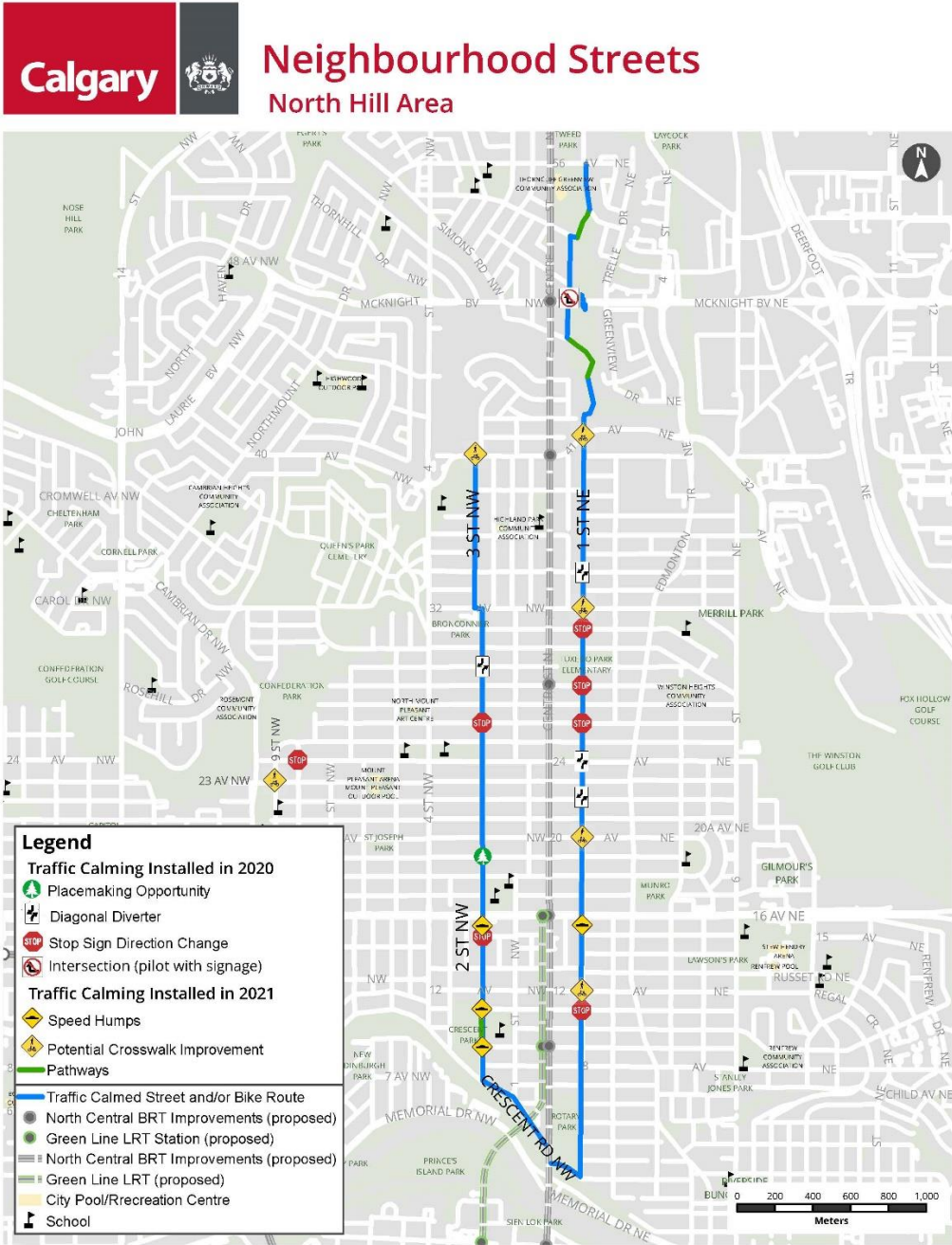


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In spring 2021, the project team will use feedback from the first phase of engagement to help inform any changes to the design and locations of the traffic calming measures. There will be additional engagement on Balmoral Circus in spring 2021.

Map below shows location overview of traffic calming measures:





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Engagement Overview

Following the installation of temporary traffic calming noted on map above a portal page was created at <https://engage.calgary.ca/northhillarea> to receive input on the impacts and effectiveness of the measures with regards to travel in and through the area. The portal page was open from Nov.2 – Dec.15, 2020 was set up to gather responses in five categories to provide feedback on those specific aspects. The page was designed with corresponding tabs consisting of: **Overall feel about the changes, Diagonal Diverters, Balmoral Circus, Comfort Level, Neighbourhood Streets – The Big Picture**. We received 1,655 contributions from 503 contributors in this time period. The engagement was promoted through various methods utilizing web and social media channels, QR codes and signage, a sounding board located in Balmoral Circus, and working with the Community Association and Councillor's office to share through their channels. The engagement also helps give baseline information of community sentiment and is intended to reveal changes that may need to be made to the design of the traffic calming measures.

What did we ask? – each tab had series of questions specific to that topic area

How do you feel about the changes we are piloting at these locations? Based on the project goals stated above and your direct experience with these temporary/pilot measures we would like to hear your feedback to the following questions.

- 1) Have you noticed changes to vehicle traffic on these streets? Please explain/describe.
- 2) Have you noticed changes to pedestrian travel and street crossings? Please explain/describe.
- 3) Have you noticed changes in bike (or other wheeled) travel? Please explain/describe.
- 4) Please provide any additional comments to support your above answer.
- 5) What is your overall impression of the noted changes in terms of making for safer and more comfortable routes?
- 6) Based on the noted goals and your experience what would you suggest for other possible options?
- 7) Are there other locations in your neighbourhood where these measure may prove effective?

Diagonal diverters are raised medians, bollards (posts) or planters, or another type of treatment placed diagonally in the middle of a four-way intersection to allow traffic circulation while reducing vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic.

- 1) What is your overall impression of the changes in terms of making travel routes safer and more comfortable?
- 2) What is your overall impression of the changes in terms of reducing cut through traffic?
- 3) Based on the noted goals and your experience do you think locations chosen for these improvements are appropriate? If no, where do you think these changes would be more effective?
- 4) Do these changes impact how you move around your community when driving?
- 5) Do these changes impact how you move around your community when wheeling?
- 6) Do these changes impact how you move around your community when walking?



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Balmoral Circus - Park expansion at Balmoral Circus will transform the intersection at 2 Street and 19 Avenue N.W. by changing roadways into park space within the circle and preventing vehicle access with temporary materials.

- 1) Since the changes, can you tell us about how you or others use this space?
- 2) Since the changes, please tell us what you like about this space?
- 3) Since the changes, please tell us what issues or concerns you may have with this current space?
- 4) Thinking about the current pilot changes indicate what type of options you would support in this space.
- 5) Please feel free to add comments to support your choice(s) above.
- 6) Specific to Balmoral Circus, what is your overall impression of the changes in terms of making travel routes safer and more comfortable routes?
- 7) Specific to Balmoral Circus, what is your overall impression of the changes in terms of reducing cut through traffic?

What is your comfort level? We would like to get a sense of your comfort level with your travels throughout your community.

- 1) In general, when walking, using a wheelchair, pushing a stroller, inline-skating, skateboarding (and while crossing streets) in my community, I feel:
- 2) In general, when cycling on roads in my community, I feel:
- 3) In general, when driving on the roads in my community, I feel:
- 4) If I felt more comfortable I would walk more often.
- 5) If I felt more comfortable I would wheel more often.

Think about your favourite neighbourhood street. What makes it so great? We have a list of values and their definitions. Tell us how important these should be for Calgary?

- 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.
- 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.
- Supporting great destinations: we mean streets that add to the vibrancy of the places they border.
- Healthy: we mean streets that encourage individuals to live actively and neighbours to connect.
- 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.



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What did we hear?

Each tab has been categorized into overarching themes based on responses to the series of questions that were asked. The process of collecting and theming responses is designed to reflect a generalization of comments received in each of the respective categories. These results will show comments that are supportive of changes as well as those that do not support the changes. Results are not intended as a voting process but rather to give evaluative overview of the temporary measures in meeting the project goals for the community and users and help inform potential changes prior to installation of permanent measures.

Full verbatim and results to each question is available in a separate section at the end of this document.

How do you feel about the changes we are piloting at these locations?

Themes representative of responses that measures are achieving desired results:

- Noted reduction in traffic volumes and speeds for residents on 2 Street and 19 Avenue N.W.
- Sense of increased safety for cycling (children) within the neighbourhood.

Themes representative of temporary measures are not achieving desired results:

- Created a shift in “cut through” traffic flow to other streets in neighbourhood – noting that traffic is bypassing measure by going around them or utilizing other roads or back alleys to get to their destination.
- Disruption to local traffic flow – residents in the neighborhood expressing concern re not being able to access local destinations or enter/exit community without additional travel time and distance by being forced onto congested main thoroughfares.
- Problem never existed and not sure of need for measures.
- Timing of trial in winter and during COVID not appropriate to assess travel routes/changes.

Themes representative of suggested other solutions:

- Measures such as traffic circles, speed bumps and 4 way stops that reduce unwanted traffic behaviors rather than block routes.
- Maintenance issues with snow clearing and placement of barriers at these locations altered effectiveness – created alternate bad driving behaviours rather than desired changes.

Diagonal Diverters: What is your overall impression of the changes in terms of making travel routes safer and more comfortable routes?

Themes representative of responses supporting measures being implemented:

- Residents on streets where measures are currently placed noted general improvements in traffic volumes and speed.
- Comments around increased sense of community feel and safety without cut through traffic.



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Themes representative of responses not in favour of measures being implemented:

- Not achieving the desired effect creating confusion and frustration.
- Creating cut around traffic avoiding barriers.
- Blocking access for local residents – longer drive routes adding to main streets congestion.
- Effectiveness is offset by pushing problems to other local streets.
- Safety of egress onto main streets not ideal (turning issues across lanes).
- Question the need for these measures as traffic calming was not deemed to be a significant prior to placement of temporary measures.

Themes representative of need review and changes (these comments were not as definitive in opinion for or against and noted suggested changes):

- Current placement of temporary barriers allowed for vehicles to cut around them creating safety and damage concerns.
- Timing of placement of these measures in COVID times and during winter months does not give ability to fully assess.
- Maintenance (snow and ice) created alternate concerns that affected their ability to evaluate.
- Ability or space for vehicles to change routes once they encountered measurers (no room for vehicle to turn around at barrier).

General Summation:

Placement of the temporary barriers seem to have created a desired effect with commuter cut through traffic and improved residential feel but also created many concerns for community residents to access homes and localized travel within neighborhood and to local businesses.

Balmoral Circus: a portion of this project was to explore the park expansion at the intersection of 2 street and 19 avenue –road closure to create park space. This section was designed to get a sense of general reaction to this change along with current and future use opportunities.

Themes representative of seeing value to the changes:

- Really enjoyed the increased park use activity.
- Appreciated the additional dedicated park space.
- Lends to neighbourhood design options and potential future use.
- Effective to eliminate cut through traffic volumes in neighbourhood.
- Create neighbourhood gathering space.

Themes representative of concerns re the changes:

- Don't like that it cut off traffic flow through/within neighbourhood.
- Diverts cut through traffic to adjacent residential streets.
- No need for the change – functional as is.
- Safety concerns with commuter cyclists and “park” users (activity conflict).



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Themes representative of suggested design changes (missing/flawed elements):

- Loss of street parking due to changes.
- Current design (placement) allowed cut around traffic creating increase safety concerns.
- Maintenance (snow and ice) concerns affected use and purpose.
- Functional space to allow for vehicle egress (no turn around space).

Thinking about the current pilot changes indicate what type of options you would support in this space?

Themes representative of the responses received here:

- Passive space for residents to gather and play or relax and enjoy the green space.
- Space that would allow for activated space for community based events.
- Community ownership/maintained gardens.
- Ability to shift with seasonal activity.
- Leave it as is – return to previous use and function.

General Summation:

The overall response to the changes at Balmoral Circus showed that the immediate reaction created a fairly even split (with edge to overall positive reaction) however, with the follow up questions it would seem to reveal that negative comments were in relation to current design (temporary features) and how they affected current flow in the neighborhood. When asked about options for future use/design there were a number of enthusiastic responses to the possibilities of what changes could occur in the space to add functionality and purpose in the neighbourhood.

*Please note there will be further exploration and engagement taking place in the near future.

Comfort Levels: Questions were designed to gather a sense of comfort for mobility within the community.

Themes representative of the responses:

- Overall comfort levels with all forms of mobility was relatively high.
- Although some noted changes in mobility options in relation to comfort levels – majority of responses indicated that their current/ preferred mode of mobility would not change.

General Summation:

The responses would indicate a fairly high level of comfort as people move through this community. Mobility choices seek to be a matter of function and choice rather than tied to perceived comfort levels. However, there were comments received about increased comfort in allowing for higher use for children and families in the area.



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Values: What makes a neighbourhood street great?

Themes representative of responses given based on definitions are provided below:

- Safe: Important 76.62%, Somewhat Important 16.88%, Not Important 6.49%
- Welcoming to all ages: Important 68.18%, Somewhat Important 25.32%, Not important 6.49%
- Supporting great destinations: Important 50.65%, Somewhat Important 33.12%, Not Important 16.23%
- Healthy: Important 64.71%, Somewhat Important 26.14%, Not Important 9.15%
- Fun: Important 42.86%, Somewhat Important 33.73%, Not Important 23.38%

General Summation:

These results here show which values can elicit a more definitive response, such as “safe”, but also reveal a more mixed reaction to a value like “fun”, showing which values are most definitive to respondents. As it is not an absolute ranking exercise, responses give value in assessing the more mixed results as they will give a sense of the blended use of values into design options and changes to best meet the needs of community and users.

Next Steps:

In February and March 2021 we will share this information with stakeholders. Technical review of we’ve heard and observed as well as development and assessment of potential changes and options is underway and will involve further public engagement.

Verbatim Comments:

Verbatim comments received are provided in linked documents below. All comments are left unaltered for spelling or grammar and in original form received. The # of contributors is indicated for transparency purposes - (Contributors - The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a site using the available participation activities. Contributors is a unique value, and a Contributor who makes more than one Contribution is only counted as a single Contributor).

[NH-Verbatim-Overall-Response.pdf](#) (406 Contributors)

[NH-Verbatim-Diagonal-Diverters.pdf](#) (261 Contributors)

[NH-Verbatim-Balmoral-Circus.pdf](#) (208 Contributors)

[NH-Verbatim-Comfort-Levels.pdf](#) (190 Contributors)

[NH-Verbatim-Values.pdf](#) (154 Contributors)



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Please note in addition to these comments received on the portal page, 110 comments and questions were received through The City's 311 service. Some of these comments expressed dissatisfaction with or support for the pilot measures, identified issues with design or function, provided feedback on how they could be improved, or were requests for additional information.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUT. PLEASE CONTINUE TO CHECK FOR FURTHER UPDATES ON THE PORTAL PAGE <https://engage.calgary.ca/northhillarea>