

Connecting Calgary

Calgary's natural and mobility systems are essential parts of healthy and attractive communities. This chapter is about protecting the city's ecological network and enhancing the presence of nature throughout the city. It also provides direction for Calgary's diverse mobility networks—including walking, wheeling, transit, driving, and goods movement.

Connecting Calgary policies matter because they:

- Integrate more nature into our park system, both within the ecological network and throughout the city, to support access to nature for every Calgarian
- Support a healthy river and creek system
- Encourage naturalization and natural connections through development
- Protect water quality, conserve water and ensure long-term water security
- Grow the urban forest, improve drought resilience, protect important landscape features
- Connect Calgary's ecological network to regional ecological networks
- Prioritize access to essential services
- Create a fast, frequent and reliable transit network that is safe and convenient to use
- Offer several travel options year-round, with high quality, safe, interconnected mobility systems
- Prioritize safe walking and wheeling networks to provide healthier and equitable travel options
- Allow the use of streets as public, community spaces

Natural systems:

An interconnected network of physical and biological components. In an urban setting, natural systems are often a blend of human altered nature and buildings, mobility and utility networks, including natural, enhanced and engineered elements.

Ecological network:

A network of ecological components (natural habitats, corridors and buffer zones) intended to provide the physical conditions necessary for ecosystems and species populations to survive in a human-dominated landscape.

Primary transit network:

A permanent network of high-frequency transit services, of any vehicle type, that operates every 10 minutes or better, 15 hours a day, seven days a week.



We heard Calgarians care about...

Access to the outdoors as a reason they have chosen to live in Calgary.

Highly valuing the city's rivers, natural areas, parks and recreation.

Emphasize preserving natural areas and enhancing parks.

Providing neighbourhoods with ample parks and natural areas.

Connecting nature within residential areas.

Protecting the health and functioning of wetlands.

Feeling safe and comfortable on transit and in public spaces year-round.

Affordable and reliable transit outside standard work hours.




Infrastructure to support multi-modal trips in and around the city.


A well-connected transportation network, particularly in linking suburban neighbourhoods and individuals to amenities.










Using sustainable materials, surface permeability and designs that mitigate flooding and heat islands.

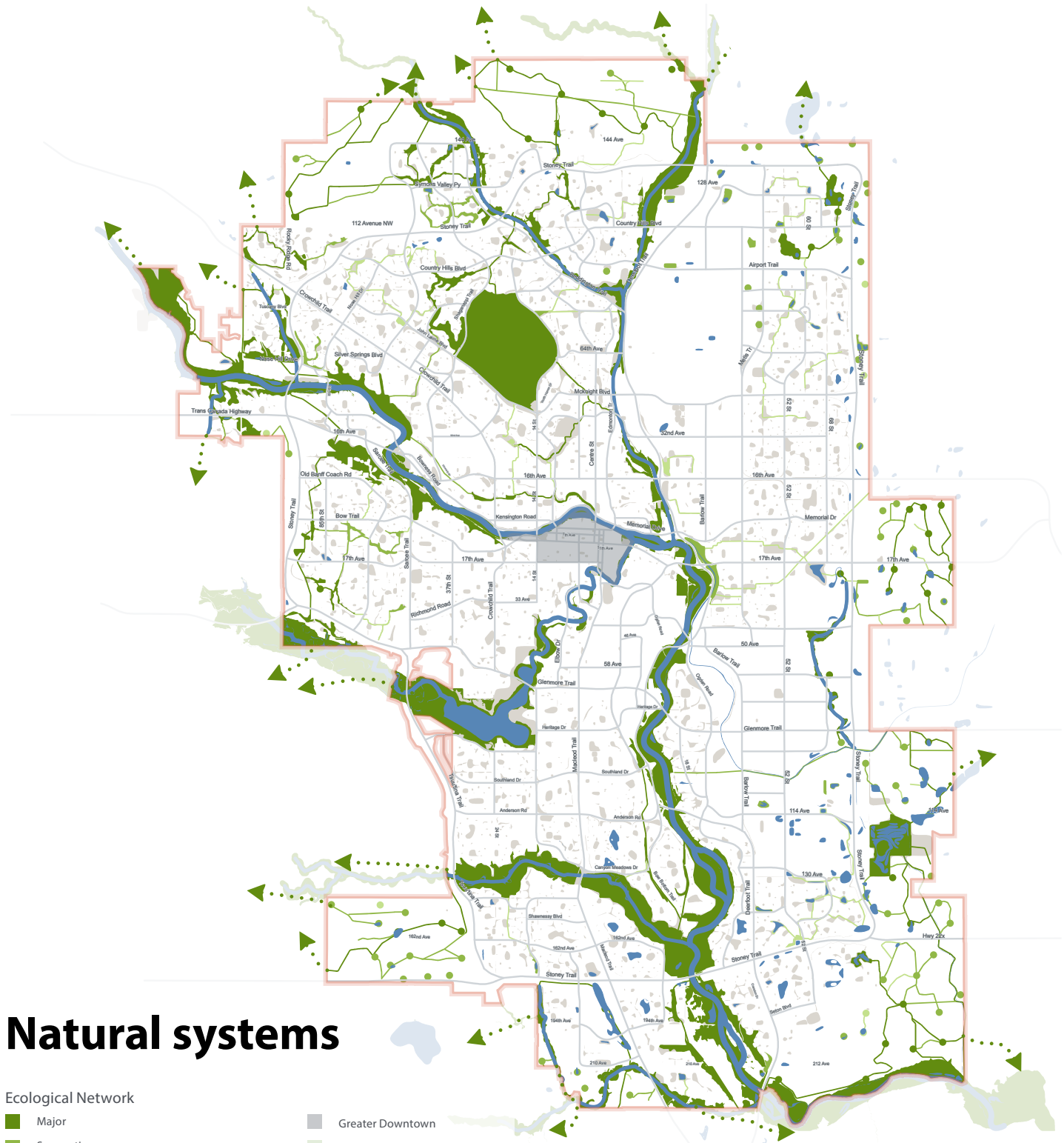
Connecting Calgary Policies

The Calgary Plan merges, streamlines, and updates existing direction from the *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and the *Calgary Transportation Plan* (CTP), and aligns with other City documents such as the *Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan*.

-  No/minimal new direction
-  Some new direction
-  All new direction

What are the direction highlights?	What's new to the Calgary Plan?
Ecological Network	
Environmentally Significant Areas: Protect environmentally significant areas. Limit fragmentation and restore damaged areas. Provide appropriate public access that does not harm ecological health.	 The ecological network has specific rules to protect important areas and improve connections between them, including that nearby lands should prioritize less intense uses with buffers and smart urban design.
Rivers & Creeks: Prioritize the health of our rivers and creeks. Avoid development that negatively impacts waterbodies. Enable natural processes, such as erosion and river movement, when safe to do so. Provide appropriate public access.	 The plan continues to prioritize the protection of rivers and creeks.  The plan now includes policies supporting the natural flow of waterways (where it is safe).
Public Lands: On publicly-owned land, such as parks, in the ecological network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and restore environmentally significant areas • Naturalize areas • Increase landscaping • Integrate nature within the mobility network 	 This plan builds on the direction in the existing MDP to establish and maintain ecological networks, and provides stronger direction towards this objective. It goes beyond protection of natural spaces, looking to restore damaged areas within Calgary's ecological network.
Private Lands: Encourage private land to support a healthy and connected ecological network with natural landscaping, buffers and other opportunities.	 The plan encourages private lands to support more ecological network enhancement, including tree protection.
Citywide Natural Systems	
Water: Protect our reservoirs. Support healthy riparian areas (natural areas along the river). Work regionally on source water protection and promote water conservation across land uses.	 The plan continues to protect our water sources. It now focuses more on safeguarding areas that provide drinking water, including reservoirs, rivers and creeks. The plan places additional emphasis on water conservation.
Land: Protect natural habitats and landforms outside of the ecological network. Incentivize restoration. Encourage drought-tolerant, native and climate adaptive landscaping. Ensure slope stability.	 The plan continues to recognize the value of natural assets. It is largely consistent with the existing MDP, with simplified and modernized language.
Indigenous Stewardship: Working together with Indigenous people in the protection and management of the natural environment on City-owned lands with traditional Indigenous stewardship practices and City stewardship practices of natural systems.	 This is new direction and provides policy to support working together with Indigenous people through practices that The City is already engaging in. It puts into policy the incorporation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives on stewardship and management of the land.
Wetlands: Protect naturally occurring wetlands. Reduce barriers to wetland restoration. Reconstruct wetlands to help with stormwater management. Avoid the modification of wetlands.	 This plan builds on the existing wetland protection policies in the existing MDP, with a stronger emphasis on protecting naturally occurring wetlands and avoiding modification of wetlands.
Urban Forest: Protect and increase our urban forest. Increase the diversity of tree species. Prioritize tree-planting on City-owned land.	 The plan continues to recognize the value of a healthy urban forest. It is largely consistent with the existing MDP, with simplified and modernized language.
Natural Areas: Invest in restoration on City-owned land, avoid modifying natural areas, and increase access to nature across the city.	 The plan now highlights the importance of public areas in safeguarding natural systems. They work alongside the overarching parks system policies outlined in Chapter 4: Delivering Calgary.

What are the direction highlights?	What's new to the Calgary Plan?
Mobility	
<p>General mobility: Prioritize safety. Support the shift to sustainable travel options. Create an interconnected mobility network for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and transit users that connects between home, employment, parks and other destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan continues to enable different mobility options, through policies with updated and simplified language.  There is now an increased focus on safety.
<p>Walking: Prioritize walking in the Greater Downtown and neighbourhoods with comfortable, well-lit, direct, accessible and connected sidewalks and crossings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan continues to encourage walking connections. It is largely consistent with existing direction, with simplified and modernized language.
<p>Wheeling: Create a primary wheeling network connected to communities that supports safe and convenient movement and has secure parking facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan continues to enable a connected wheeling network using the momentum from the 5A Network Guiding Principles. It is largely consistent with existing direction, with simplified and modernized language.
<p>Transit: Plan and maintain a primary transit network connected to other transit services. Provide a safe, accessible, affordable, and reliable transit experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan continues to advocate for transit connections. It is largely consistent with existing direction from RouteAhead, with simplified and modernized language.
<p>Streets: Optimize street capacity and promote lanes. Minimize driveways on primary pedestrian, wheeling and transit routes. Manage curb space to support deliveries, loading, parking and other activities. Integrate nature and stormwater management into street design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan continues to emphasize safety for all users, and advocate for connected, efficient, and accessible street designs.
<p>Goods Movement: Provide a primary goods movement network connecting to industrial areas, the airport and rail yards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan incorporates policies from the Calgary Transportation Plan and the Goods Movement Strategy, with a stronger emphasis on intermodal and regional connections.
<p>Parking: Recognize curbs and parking lots as public assets that can be used for a variety of purposes. Require applicants to determine off-street parking provision. Manage parking demand through pricing, technology, permitting and time-restrictions. Provide accessible parking and drop-offs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The plan incorporates policies from the Calgary Transportation Plan and Parking Policies.  New electric vehicle parking provision policies and expansion on the various needs for curb space such as local delivery, parking and patios.



Natural systems

Ecological Network

- Major
- Supporting
- Local
- Major regional connections
- Potential future major natural area park
- Potential future supporting natural area park
- Potential future local natural area park

- Greater Downtown
- Parks
- Water

Map 3

