13 Avenue Heritage Greenway
ACT Canada Sustainable Mobility 2013 Summit

Project Summary

Tour guides
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Tour Map

Will be made available at the registration desk
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway Project sets a framework for the shaping of a unique and vibrant public realm along a residential street within four existing contiguous inner city neighbourhoods. It has been designed to comfortably accommodate multiple transportation modes, including pedestrians, cyclists, and personal motorized vehicles. This greenway also commemorates historical resources and enhances the natural environment while developing strong pedestrian/bicycle connectivity with existing pathway systems. 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway is a perfect example of a street retrofitting to create a beautiful public place within the existing right-of-way.
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway combines a rich collection of historic buildings with a mix of heritage homes, high-rise apartments and condominiums, parks, institutions and commercial districts. The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway runs from MacLeod Trail SE to 17 Street SW passing through four distinct character districts. The overall theme of the 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway is that renewal is an essential part of life in the city. The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway concepts create an Emerald Necklace to downtown Calgary by closing the pedestrian loop between the Bow River and the Elbow River and provide a truly complete street within a Centre City neighbourhood.
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway Project is designed as a “made in Calgary” solution – using the best of the existing and historical landscape and public realm qualities that make Calgary’s Centre City distinctive. It illustrates an overall design scenario to be refined and customized to ensure a distinct response to each specific neighbourhood’s character. The ultimate concept of “place-making” is at the core of this heritage greenway corridor, reflecting the three key attributes of the “Beltline” area, authenticity, quality, and liveability.
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The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway encompasses twenty full blocks and involves the reduction of automobile lanes and street parking to provide for a separated pedestrian and multiuse pathway. The design is punctuated by “nodes” providing opportunities for interpretive features and seating. Despite block by block individual differences in the application of the plan, the lush landscape concept will visually tie the route together with a rich palette of hardy street trees and historically inspired under plantings.
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway gives pedestrians the highest priority along the corridor, followed by cyclists, and motor vehicles. Extensive consideration was made throughout the study to ensure this principle was followed. Safety and functionality for active modes were key components in arriving at the final design. The first five blocks of The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway will be completed in 2012, with the remaining blocks to be completed sequentially as funding becomes available.
Site Investigation & Site Analysis
The first step in the design process was to conduct a thorough investigation of the current situation and evaluate the current conditions by examining a set of criteria for each character area. These criteria included:

- Road Right-of-way
- Sidewalks
- Trees and vegetation
- Building setbacks
- Street Furniture and Signage
- Parking
- Vehicular movement / intersections
- Buildings (orientation, massing, material) type (condominium, renting units)
- Heritage Resources
- Current Development
- Future Development
- Existing uses
- Land Use Districts
- Utilities (Shallow & Deep)
- Cross-section of the existing streetscape.
The evaluation process included site photos, video, GIS mapping and sketches. There was an ongoing discussion with other business units within the corporation throughout the examination process. As a result, the site analysis defined the assets and the challenges of the avenue.

The overall assets are:

- Historical Resources
- Low traffic volume
- New mixed use development (Victoria Crossing Area)
- Intersecting streets are defined green streets (Centre Street South “Volunteer Way”, 16th Street SW “greenway”)
- Existing mature trees west of 4th Street SW
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**Challenges:**
- Overhead Power line (Victoria Crossing area)
- Shallow Utilities
- Existing trees
- Limited Right-of-way (19.9m – 20.3m)
- Drive way access
- On street parallel parking

The site analysis led to development of a set of guiding principles through a workshop.

**The following were the guiding principles:**
- Pedestrian first
- Continuity of pathway
- Recreational bike way
- Discontinuity of car movement
- Slow car movement
- A place for story telling about the historical resources
- Sustainable elements such as (permeable surfaces, re-use of storm water run-off)
- Water and trees
- Unique connected public places
- Limited parking on street
- Identifying key points of Public Art
- Creating a unique identity of the street

- Special street naming that reflect heritage aspect of the avenue
- High quality and unique design of the street furniture and street lighting
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway is a creative place filled with peace and comfort that portrays the ceremonial play of heritage with a soft rhythm of nature that whispers an enchanting mystical poem through the weaving of the trees.
The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway is a multi-departmental partnership to provide users with information that will enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the area. The 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway combines a rich collection of historic buildings with a mix of heritage homes, high-rise apartments and condominiums, parks, institutions and commercial districts. Interpretation must encompass the significance of the many heritage buildings along the Beltline, as well as the social, physical and environmental benefits of the 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway. The overall theme of the 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway can be summarized as:

“Renewal is an essential part of life in the city”

This theme can be broken down into four Sub-themes, which are:
1. Renewing our built environment
2. Renewing our natural environment
3. Renewing our communities
4. Renewing ourselves

The theme of renewal can be used to develop amenities to provide a sense of unity to the 13 Avenue Heritage Greenway while reinforcing the identity of the four communities.