



Midtown Station

Fairview Park Design Charrette - Report Back Summary

DRAFT

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1 Purpose

The purpose of the Midtown Station Park Charrette was to facilitate an inclusive forum to engage representatives of the Fairview Community Association (CA) and gather input for the vision of the 1.5-ac municipal reserve park, proposed at the centre of the Midtown Station development. The Midtown Station development lies within the Fairview community jurisdiction; therefore, members of the Fairview CA were invited to partake in this focused exercise after broader online engagement with the wider community.

Earlier iterations of the development plans did not include a central public park in this location. The initial plan led to conversations with City of Calgary staff and the local community that prompted a relocation of the proposed park to its current location on the corner of Fisher St. SE and the proposed activity street in order to emphasize the central location of the park as a community gathering space. The central location provides ease of access to both the future Midtown Station residents and to the existing community.

This charrette was a continuation of previous engagement, which included the following:

- Introductory conversations with key stakeholders
- Creation of a project website: www.ibipublicengagement.com/midtown
- An online engagement survey posted on the project website (August 23 Oct 16, 2020); and
- Attendance at the Fairview AGM Sept 14, 2020

Figure 1: Location of MR in Midtown Station



2 Engagement Process

The charrette included two exercises, amenity prioritization, and park design facilitated over two digital platforms.

The digital platforms used included Microsoft Teams and Mural. The charrette was approximately 2 hours in length and followed the agenda below. The introductory presentation is included in **Appendix A**.

1. Introductions	10 mins
2. Project Overview	10 mins
3. Game Rules	10 mins
4. Exercise 1: Amenity Prioritization	30 mins
5. Break	10 min Break
6. Exercise 2: Board Game	45 mins
7. Summary	15 mins
8. Questions & Next Steps	15 mins

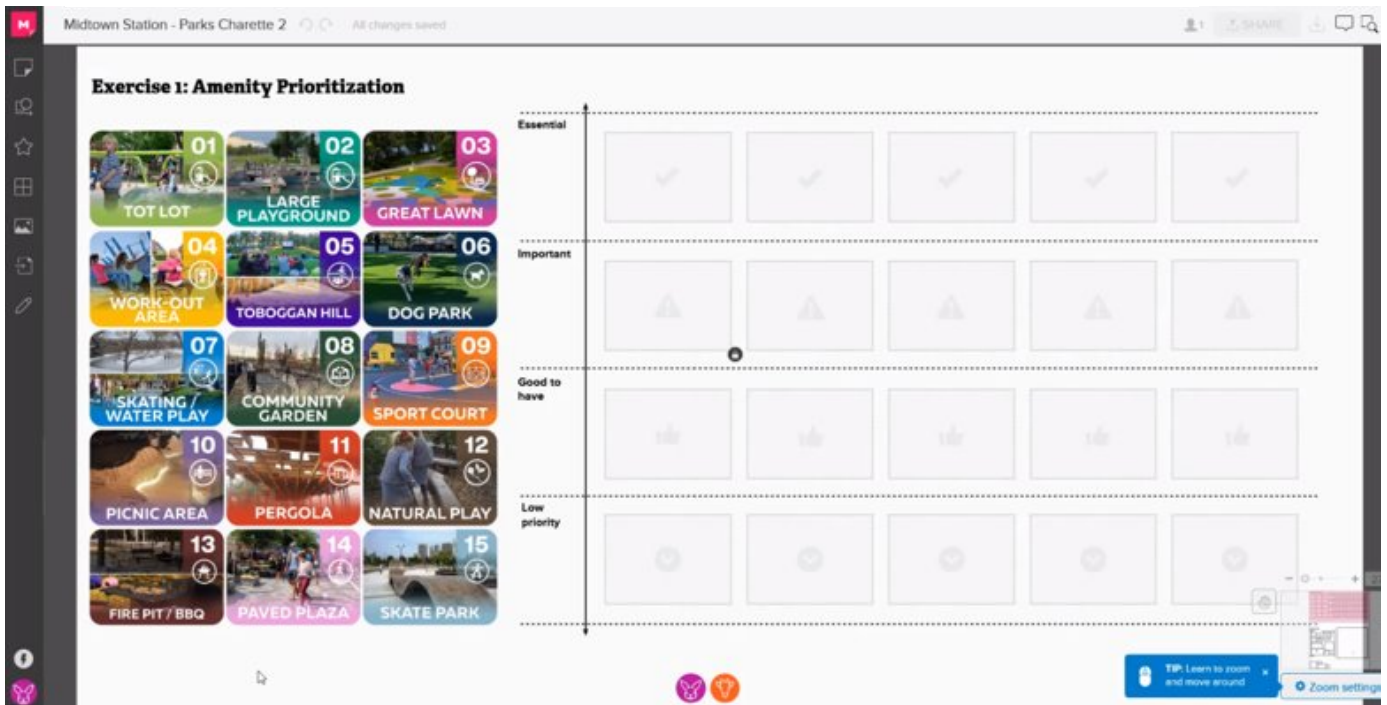
2.1 Amenity Prioritization

The first activity was a prioritization exercise to discuss what amenities the community felt were the most important to include in the park. It involved a collaborative discussion around amenity priorities in which a facilitator described each of the amenities presented as options for the participants and invited the participants to express their preferences orally or in writing using the chat function in Teams. Fifteen amenities were characterized on playing cards, which included a short description and a representative image of each amenity. The engagement team facilitated the group discussion and participants provided their input which led to a ranking of priorities agreed upon by the group.

The amenity cards provided for this exercise included the following:

1. **Tot-Lot:** small playground for young children
2. **Large Playground:** outdoor space designed for older children to play
3. **Great Lawn:** spacious outdoor area available for picnicking, sports, and other gatherings
4. **Work-Out Area:** permanent equipment for facilitating fitness
5. **Toboggan Hill:** hill large enough to sled down in the winter; can also be used as an amphitheatre or gathering place in summer
6. **Dog Park:** a fenced area where dogs are allowed to run off-leash as long as their owners are present
7. **Skating / Water Play:** an area that can be used as a splash park or shallow water play area in summer and skating rink or loop in winter
8. **Community Garden:** piece of land or garden boxes gardened collectively by members of the surrounding community
9. **Sports Court:** depending on the size, sports courts can be used to play basketball, volleyball, hockey, tennis, pickleball, etc.
10. **Picnic Area:** alludes to specialized seating and/or tables conducive to gathering and eating
11. **Pergola:** structures that provide shade and shelter for walkways and sitting areas
12. **Natural Play:** the use of natural elements such as wood and stones to inspire active and creative outdoor play
13. **Fire Pit / BBQ:** fire pits and/or BBQs for gathering and cooking
14. **Paved Plaza:** use of hard materials in a plaza, generally as an entrance or central feature
15. **Skate Park:** a purpose-built area for wheeled sports

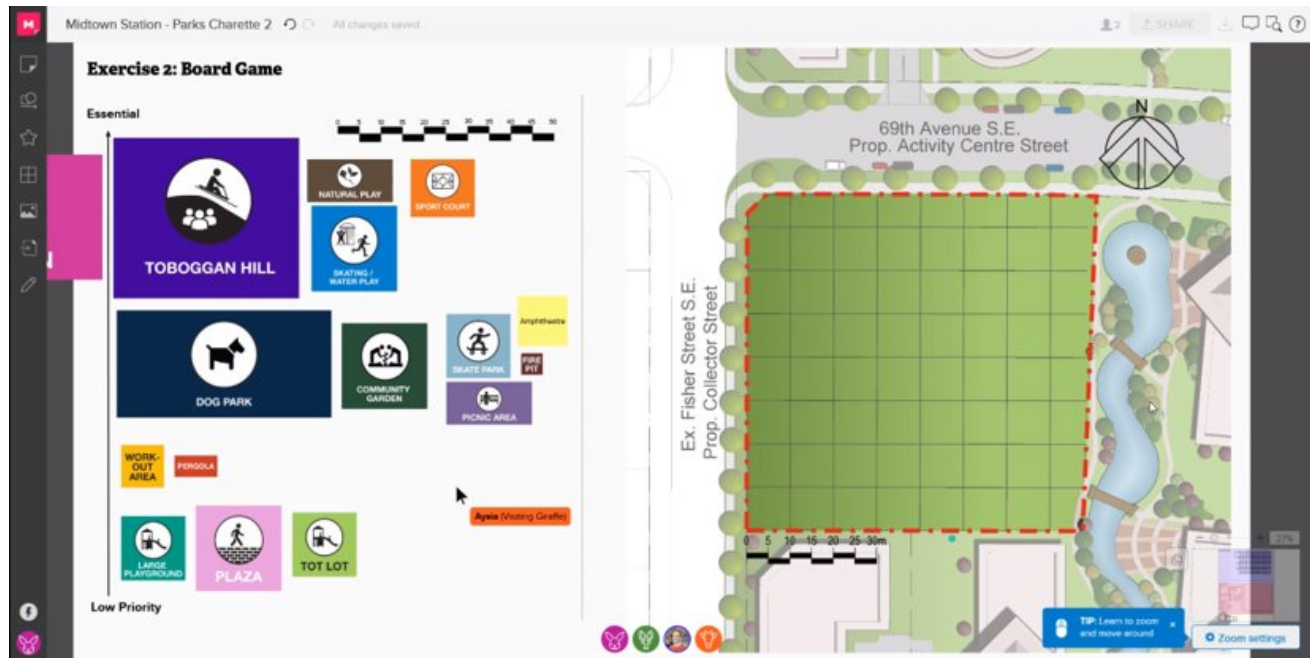
Figure 2: Amenity Prioritization Board Prior to Exercise



2.2 Board Game

The second exercise focused on the design of the park with the use of a digital board game. This exercise was designed to encourage dialog around trade-offs. For example, not all amenities chosen as “essential” could physically fit within the 1.5-ac park. In this exercise participants were given direct access to the Mural platform. They were instructed on how to move the game pieces around and encouraged to collaborate and find a place for the representative amenities in the 1.5-ac park with the guidance of the engagement team. The end result was a concept plan prepared by the community through consensus, the results of which will be used as input into the park design.

Figure 3: Board Game Prior to Playing Game



2.3 Summary

The design charrette sought to gather community preferences and priorities about a mix of programming amenities that could inform the conceptual design of the central park, to be prepared by the applicant's consultant team separately.

3 Summary of Results

The park charrette was held on Thursday, November 26th at 4:30 pm via Microsoft Teams. Seven participants joined the park charrette. This included 7 Fairview Community Association members composed of the president, vice president and 5 board members.

Below is a summary of the charette.

3.1 Amenity Prioritization

The first exercise involved a collaborative discussion around the amenity priorities. Participants were first asked if there were any amenities missing that should be added. No additional amenities were requested, however throughout the process, some of the amenity cards were combined and expanded in detail. For example, amphitheatre was added to the fire pit / BBQ amenity card and climbing wall / climbing rocks / climbing boulders were added to the natural play amenity card. Pickleball was also mentioned in the chat but was not added to the amenity cards. This use could have been added to the "sports court" amenity card.

The priority categories, from highest to lowest priority, included "essential," "important," "good to have," and "low priority." The process began by asking participants to select their top and lowest priorities through the Teams "chat" function and then the discussion was opened "verbally" to discuss the middle priorities and to confirm the placement of the amenity cards.

Most of the amenity prioritization was agreed upon as a group, however there were a few amenities up for debate such as the skate park, dog park, and community garden. There was a divide between those that thought these amenities should be “essential” vs. “good to have” or “low priority.” In the end, these amenities were placed in the “important” category. Below is some of the discussion around these amenities.

Skate Park Debate:

“A skate park may be needed given the demographics that might live in Midtown.”

“Skate parks are high cost but low maintenance.”

“130th Ave has an amazing skatepark outdoor.”

“The city has not built a fraction of the skate parks that they said they would over the last decade that are needed!”

Dog Park Debate:

“For high density living, the park should have a community garden, access to dog park, open area, picnic tables/fire pit.”

“Dog park could be lower because Flint Dog park is so close.”

Community Garden Debate:

“For high density living, the park should have a community garden.”

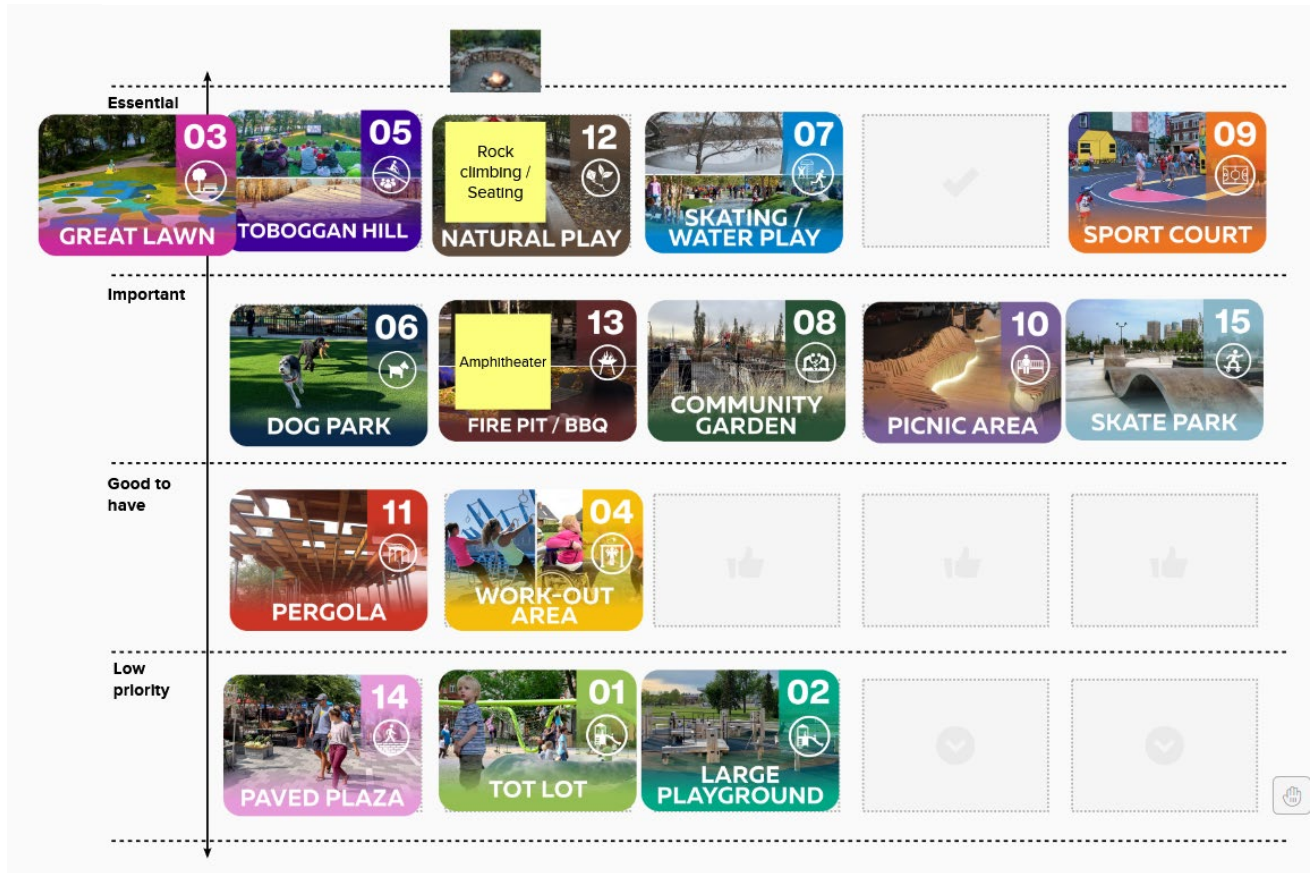
“There is a larger demographic in this condensed space, therefore a community garden would be welcome.”

“Very risky, especially without knowing if they will be maintained.”

The discussion among participants led to a general acceptance that these amenities should be considered as important given the anticipated demographics likely to be in Midtown Station as proposed. Construction and maintenance, though points of concern, were in the end considered manageable by the community association to serve various interests in the community as it evolves. This discussion will be considered by the design team as the conceptual design is prepared to explore the possible combination of these amenities.

The top priorities included great lawn/toboggan hill, natural play, skating/water play and sports court. Great lawn and toboggan hill were originally two separate amenity cards, however, through the discussion it became apparent the two amenities could be combined and located within the same space. The lowest priorities included “paved plaza,” “tot-lot” and “large playground”. Below is a screen shot of the results of this exercise. The top priorities were then used as inputs to the next exercise.

Figure 4: Amenity Prioritization Results



3.2 Board Game

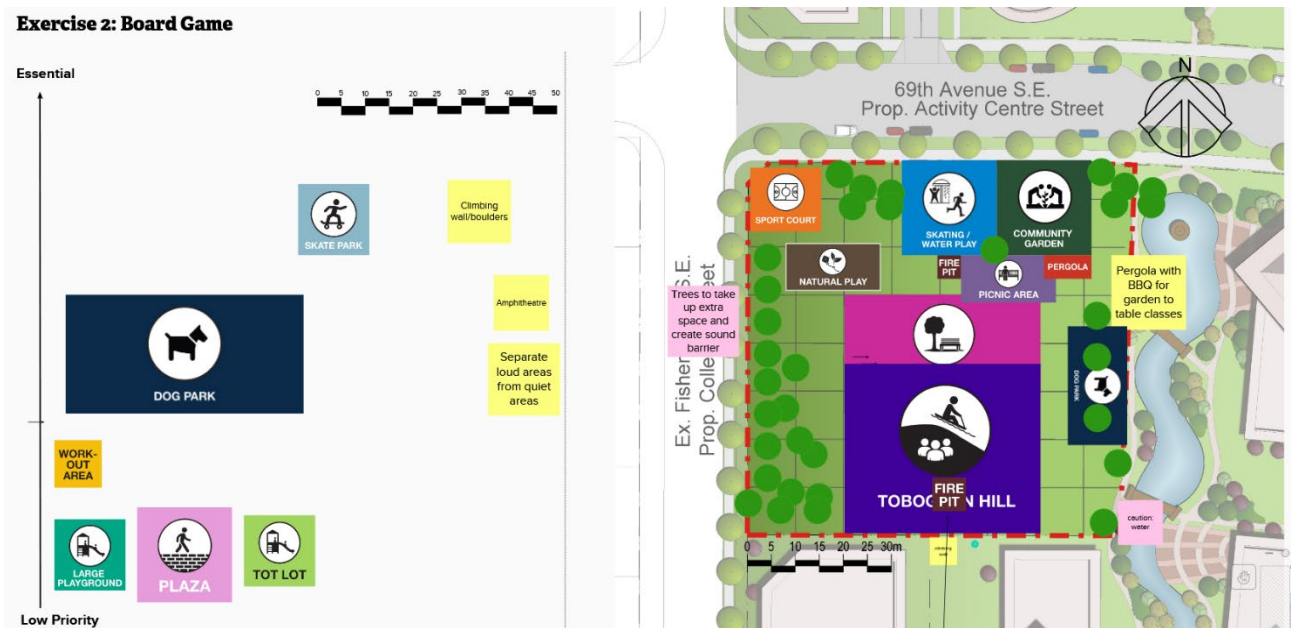
The second exercise involved the use of a board game to graphically represent the location and size of the top prioritized amenities on a map of the park.

Each amenity card had a corresponding game piece that was scaled to the “actual size” of that amenity. The game pieces could be stacked or duplicated to create alternative designs. For example, the great lawn is a large open space that allows for other amenities to be integrated within. Furthermore, the sports court was sized to a half-court, so the game piece could be duplicated to create a full-court. Game pieces could also be rotated.

Originally, IBI staff were going to manage the Mural platform and placement of the game pieces to avoid confusion of having too many participants moving pieces and not discussing prior to moving the pieces. However, since the group was rather small, it was decided in the moment to allow all participants to move their own game pieces. There was some confusion at the beginning, but once the platform was described in more detail, the process ran rather smoothly.

Figure 5, below, represents the results of the board game exercise.

Figure 5: Park Amenity Results



The Community Association’s vision for the park included a “great lawn” at the centre with additional key amenities around the perimeter. The “great lawn” was paired with a toboggan hill for winter use and a fire pit. St. Patrick’s Island and the Elgin Sledding Hill were mentioned as good examples.

An amphitheatre was suggested to be integrated into either the great lawn, seating area or natural play. The amphitheatre could be made of rocks or logs placed at different elevations in a U-shape and used for seating or educational gatherings. Furthermore, the amphitheatre could be used for a concert area or Christmas tree square.

The north perimeter of the park included the more active uses such as a sports court, skating / water play and community garden. Furthermore, a climbing wall was proposed to the far south side of the site.

Natural play was located more internal to the site to keep kids way from the street and away from the potential water feature to the east. There was a concern with kids drowning in the water feature. I was noted by IBI Group that the water feature was part of the high-level vision and was not necessarily going to be built.

The quieter contemplative amenities were located internal to the site and included a picnic / seating area, pergola, and fire pit. The seating area was seen as complementary to the community garden and it was recommended that these amenities be located near to each other. The pergola and seating were also seen as complementary to the BBQ / fire pit.

A small dog park was located to the east of the site closer to the future buildings and intended for adjacent residents rather than the existing community. It was noted that there are other dog parks nearby for the existing residents such as Fletch park.

In addition to the game pieces, participants included trees throughout the site and along the perimeters to provide privacy and a buffer from the main roads. The space in between the game pieces and trees was left open to allow for circulation and pathways. Participants were concerned with not overcrowding the park as well as the maintenance of the amenities if too many amenities were included.

4 Questions & Comments

The conversation during the design charrette was interactive and fluid, thus allowing attention to other items of interest for the participants. Some of the items commented by attendees included:

Questions:

- What is the proposed phasing and timing of the LRT construction?
- What is the timing of the pedestrian bridge?
- When will the amenities be built? Before or after housing / business development.
- Who will the the Community Association be? Who would look after the park? Will Midtown lie in the jurisdiction of the Fairview Community Association?
- What similar amenities are nearby?
- Is the funding available for all these amenities?
- Is this the only 'green space' that the city was requiring in all of midtown?

Comments:

- The Fairview Community Association has confirmed that they will be taking over the proposed parks maintenance under their responsibility.
- Would like to see a visual of what the development would look like from the surrounding community.
- This is a great tool.

5 Next Steps

- A final report with all engagement results will be shared with both The City of Calgary and will be posted on the project website for the community to see.
- The results of this engagement process will be used to inform the park concept.
- The results of this engagement process, along with all previous engagement, will be used to inform revisions to Midtown Station Land Use & Outline Plan.
- Once complete, the revised plans will be submitted to the City of Calgary for further review and feedback prior to gaining formal approval through a public hearing of Council.
- Conversations with Canada Post, CP Rail, ENMAX and other stakeholders are ongoing.

Appendix A – Charrette Introductory Presentation

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MIDTOWN STATION PARKS CHARRETTE

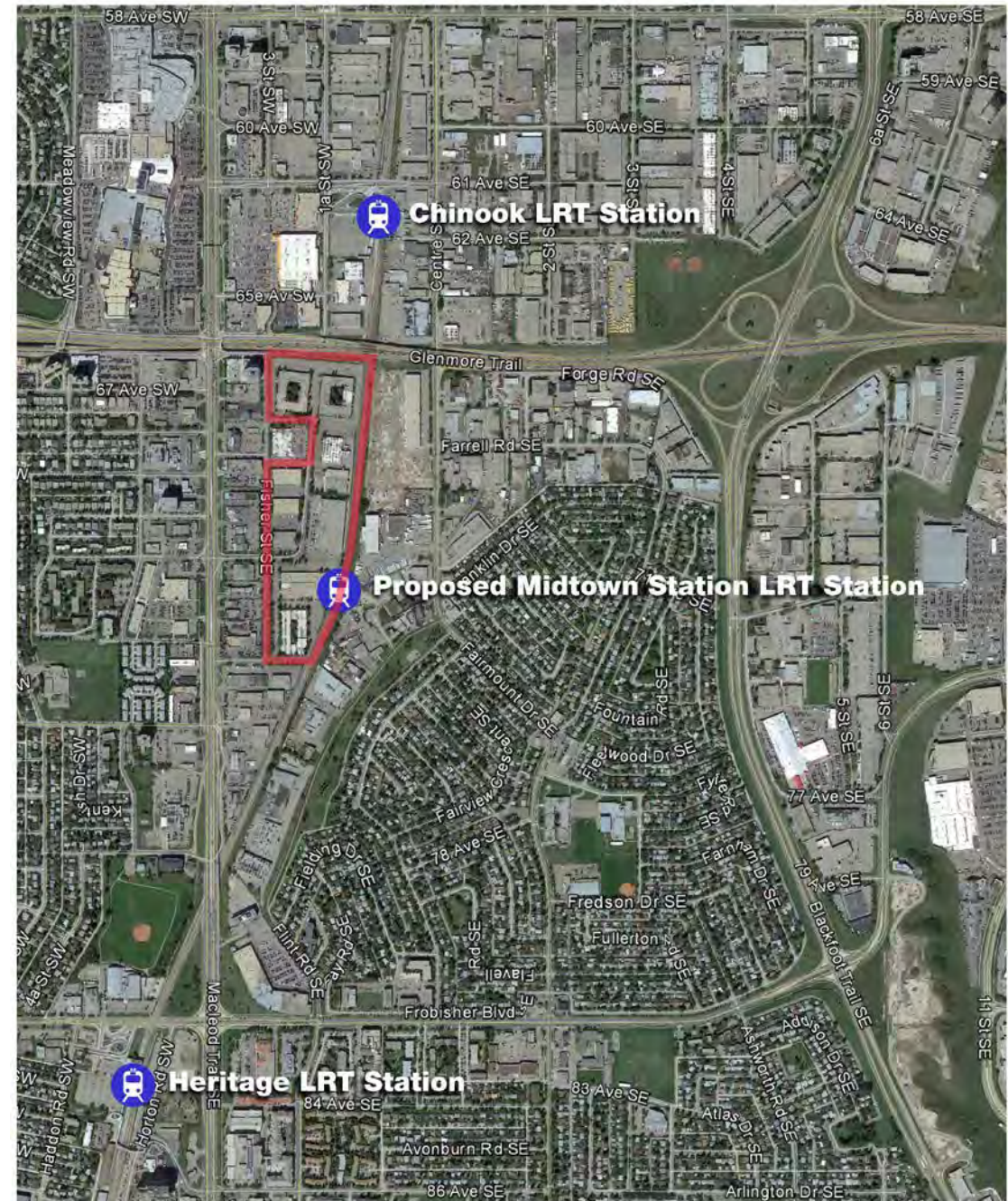
PRESENTED BY AMANDA POLINI
NOV 26, 2020

Agenda

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Introductions | 10 mins |
| 2. Project Overview | 10 mins |
| 3. Game Rules | 10 mins |
| 4. Exercise 1: Amenity Prioritization | 30 mins |
| 5. Break | 10 min Break |
| 6. Exercise 2: Board Game | 45 mins |
| 7. Summary | 15 mins |
| 8. Questions & Next Steps | 15 mins |

Project Overview

- Midtown Station will include transit-oriented high density residential development, office, retail, hotel, community facilities, and public open space, and will include:
 - Residential: 5,977 residential dwelling units;
 - Retail: 16,877m² (181,662 ft²) of retail use;
 - Office: 20,722ft² (223,055 ft²) of office area;
 - Hospitality: 41,978 m² (451,857 ft²) of hotel use;
 - Community Facilities: 2,265 m² (24,383 ft²);
 - Total Gross Floor Area: 52,457 m² (5,646,436 ft²);
 - Built Form: 24 buildings ranging in height from 1 storey to 42 storeys;
 - A new LRT station (named Midtown Station); and
 - Pedestrian connections to surrounding amenities and communities.


















Purpose of Charrette

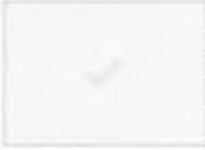
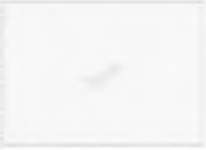
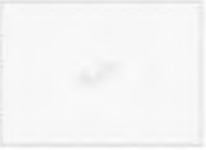
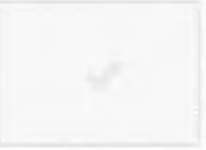
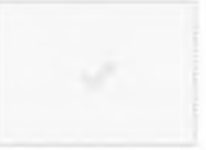
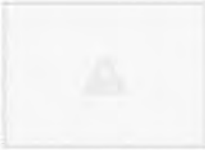
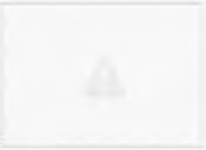
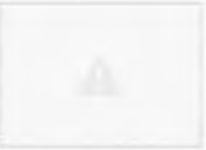
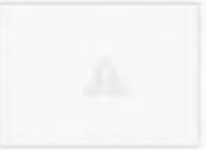
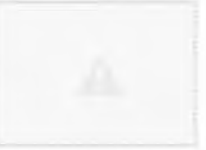
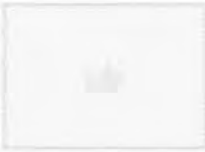
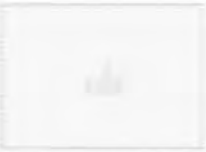

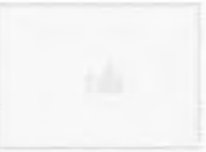
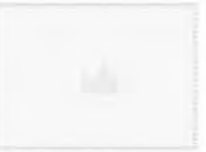
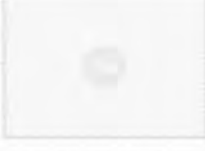
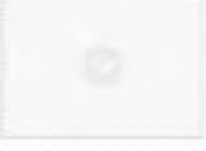
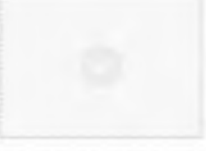

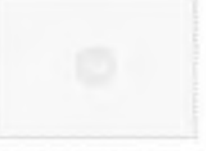
- To discuss the amenities and design for the proposed 1.5-acre municipal reserve park within the proposed Midtown Station development.
- Continuation of the Midtown Station public engagement process.
- Previous engagement included:
 - Introductory conversations with key stakeholders
 - Creation of project website www.ibipublicengagement.com/midtown
 - Online engagement survey through the project website (August 23 – Oct 16, 2020)
 - Attendance at Fairview AGM - Oct 14, 2020



Exercise 1 – Amenity Prioritization

Exercise 1: Amenity Prioritization

Essential					
Important					
Good to have					
Low priority					



Use of Space – 1.5 Acres



East Village Park



Park on Flavelle Road

Exercise 2 – Board Game



Game Rules

- Should discuss as a group and come to a consensus before finalizing any cards or game pieces.
- IBI staff will facilitate the exercises and move game pieces.
- We will use the “raise hand” and “comment” features in Teams.



Lets Get Started!

Next Steps

- The results of this engagement process will be used to inform revisions to the Midtown Station Land Use & Outline Plan and design concepts.
- Finalize the engagement report and review with the City.
- Once complete, the revised plans will be submitted to the CoC for further review and feedback prior gaining formal approval through a public hearing of Council.
- Conversations with Canada Post, CP Rail, ENMAX and other stakeholders are ongoing.



Questions



Thank You!



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KEY CONTACT

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Appendix B – Verbatim Comments

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Verbatim comments from Microsoft Teams chat¹:

- Potentially with minor enhancements could it have amphitheatre/ concert area. Christmas tree square, etc.
- Levels of rocks. in a U and the one rock at bottom in middle for (speaker). Like an amphitheatre made of rocks. Could be used for a variety of things.
- great lawn(would love to see a lot of trees)
- there was some questions about who the community association will be who would be then looking after it. Will midtown lie in "jurisdiction"of FCA
- I agree dog park could be lower because the Flint Dog park is so close
- I love gardening and community gardens but i feel they are very risky to put up especially without know if they will be maintained well
- there is a larger demographic in this condensed space, thats why i thought gardesn would be more welcome
- For high density living - park should have garden, access to dog park, open area, picnic tables/fire pit
- I think Toboggan Hill and Great Lawn both accomplish the same thing, by having a wide open space that can be used in the summer to hang out so we'd only need one (toboggan hill)
- St. Patrick's island has this big toboggan hill with fire pit on top. midtown could have the same thing
- the city has not built a fraction of the skate parks that they said they would over the last decade that are needed!
- Skate park is only a good to me given the demographics that might live there
- 130th Ave has an amazing skatepark outdoor.
- skate parks are high cost but low maintenance
- Is this the only 'green space' that the city was requiring in all of midtown
- Even if it does make sense is the funding available for ALL of these things...
- How much other tobogganing exists in this area?
- Would like to see a visual of what the development would look like from the surrounding community.
- When will the amenities be built? Before or after housing / business development.
- What is the timing of the pedestrian bridge?
- What is the proposed phasing and timing of the LRT construction?
- The Fairview Community Association has confirmed that they will be taking over the proposed parks maintenance under their responsibility.
- I wonder if midtown developers would spend money to enhance the pump track, maybe enhance the pathway between it and midtown/ or add parking and maybe create a complement skate park on their land.

¹ Comments were only included that were relevant to the park design charrette and that made sense as stand-alone comments (for example, "I agree" would not have been included). Names were also removed for privacy.

- When comm. garden came up it sounded like you said midtown would have an association which would become responsible for it. Does this also mean that fairview comm assoc. is not going to see new members as a result of midtown. Our understanding is that they would be integrated.
- Our Bylaws describe Fairview (specified by the City of Calgary) as Macleod Trail as the west boundary.
- I believe the bylaws are approved by the province, not the city.
- With Covid - it must be impossible to imagine using the same timelines. Is there anyway that IBI can generate funds for relief for covid victim families or impoverished groups. When doing a large development, there is always lots of media. Even a food drive...Similarly, healthcare needs the support of the public greatly
- This is a great tool.

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