

**TUESDAY March 14, 2023**

**F O R  
T H E  
C T Y**

# **Calgary North Central Community Hub: Report to Community**

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# WE ARE ALL TREATY PEOPLE.

For The City recognizes that Treaty 7 is shared with many different Indigenous peoples, and this includes the Blackfoot First Nation tribes of the Siksika, the Pikani, the Kainai, the Stoney Nakoda First Nations tribes of Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney and the Tsuutina First Nation. The city of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

We remain committed to ensuring that our work honours all Treaty people.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to outline the research and findings of For The City (FTC) during its engagement with New Beginnings Church from November 2022 until March 2023 to undergo a needs assessment for the communities within the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan (ASP) and surrounding areas. The intention of this report is not to prescribe the final development of any facility that New Beginnings Church nor their familiars may build, but to report back to the community the engagement and listenings that was completed. Information was collected through an initial digital scan and literature review for information on community hubs and other multi-use spaces in both Canada and the United States.

North Central Calgary is a diverse community that includes over 160k people with a visible minority population of over 50%. When considering the service offering any community members may require, both the existing and projected population growth needs to be taken into consideration. Interviews were conducted with community members from the surrounding neighbourhoods as well as other relevant stakeholders to gather their thoughts and opinions regarding the needs for and potential components of a new community hub in North Central Calgary.

A general definition of a community hub is that of a concept, community plan or urban design for a conveniently located public place that is recognized and valued in the local community as a gathering place for people, and an access point for a wide range of community activities, programs, services and events. A community hub can be general in nature, similar to a neighbourhood or multipurpose centre, or it can include specific public services such as a library, park, school, healthcare and/or social support programs. Although each hub is unique to the surrounding community, three objectives are common: service coordination and delivery, place-making and community building.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The most fully developed examples of community hubs therefore may not always translate from one community to another, but using these anchors helps guide the process of discernment for the relevant components to be brought together. However much our ideal version of a flourishing community hub may be, most models today should be considered “works in progress.” The model multi-purpose community hub is an evolutionary, not revolutionary idea, and discussion of these ideals should be encouraged. This report considers lessons learned from examples within Calgary and the world around us, the context and opportunities for the Calgary North Central community, and questions to consider.

The two-fold purpose of this report is to both research the concept and review models of community hubs, and specify what needs the surrounding communities have that the establishment of a new community hub may be able to meet. The primary output of the report is to present the community hub concept to the New Beginnings Church leadership team alongside a "Report to Community". The second output is to define the potential components that such a community hub would require to create both a social impact on the community, as well as generate revenue to ensure its sustainability.



**“In a strong community, neighbours, businesses, organizations and governments all work together to support each other. We have a healthy network of family, friends and neighbours to lend a hand when we need it. We have an engaged business sector that provides the opportunity for people to have meaningful work and earn the income needed to build assets and thrive. Programs and services support people’s dignity and self-worth and are there for them when needed. In a strong community, together we come to realize that my neighbour’s strength is my strength.”**

**THE CALGARY POVERTY REDUCTION INITIATIVE**



# OUR VISION AND MISSION

We seek to create healthy community through the creation of vibrant communal spaces where every culture, gender, and generation is welcome and feel loved, that draws people together and builds them up.

# APPROACH & ANALYSIS

For The City (FTC) was engaged to help Pastor Allan and Brenda Pole bring to reality their decades-long dream of building a community hub for use by residents of Calgary, to give back to the community in which Allan's father farmed and he grew up. Allan has a family history of land ownership in northern Calgary and currently holds title to 20 acres located on 168 Ave and Centre St. N, within view of the new community of Livingston. This plot of land is at the northern border of the Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan and is easily accessible by several other proximal communities.

From November 2022 - February 2023, FTC engaged in a consultation and research phase to assess the needs of the communities surrounding the projected community hub. FTC connected with over 30 groups and individuals representing a broad spectrum of the area's civic and cultural stakeholders, ranging from the cultural to the civic, creatives to foodies, and each has brought colour and context to the decisions that will need to be made around the design of the space. FTC also engaged relevant governmental institutions and assets, as well as those invested in the growth of North Central Calgary communities. By bringing together these knowledge keepers and enrolling those who could bring energy to the development of this project in the vision of FTC and Allan and Brenda Pole, we sought to ensure the collaborative nature of this facility and its long-term place within North Central Calgary.

FTC also compiled research, including demographic data and projections from multiple sources, and reports that had been created by other organizations with similar community impact goals in the North Calgary region, such as Creating Coventry, Vivo for Healthier Generations, and United Way's Community Hubs Initiative. This part of the process was pivotal in identifying the wants and needs of the region, validating the need for a community space in this area, and enrolling support for the project.



# APPROACH & ANALYSIS

Our research included a survey of existing community spaces infrastructure. In 2020, Brookfield Development opened the Livingston Hub, a Homeowners Association facility intended to serve the residents of Livingston. While this facility includes many of the services and amenities that a resident may value, it is restricted to residents of Livingston and while offering a broad suite of amenities, cannot serve all community needs. The intent of FTC is not to duplicate the services provided by the Livingston Hub, however, there may be overlap at some point due to the expanded audience that this new facility is intended to serve.

FTC also drew inspiration from existing community spaces such as Stackt Market, 105 Gibson Centre, Jardins Gamelin, Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, and many others. Interviews with these groups also helped frame the strengths and weaknesses of the varying approaches and funding models that they leveraged for community engagement alongside sustainability.

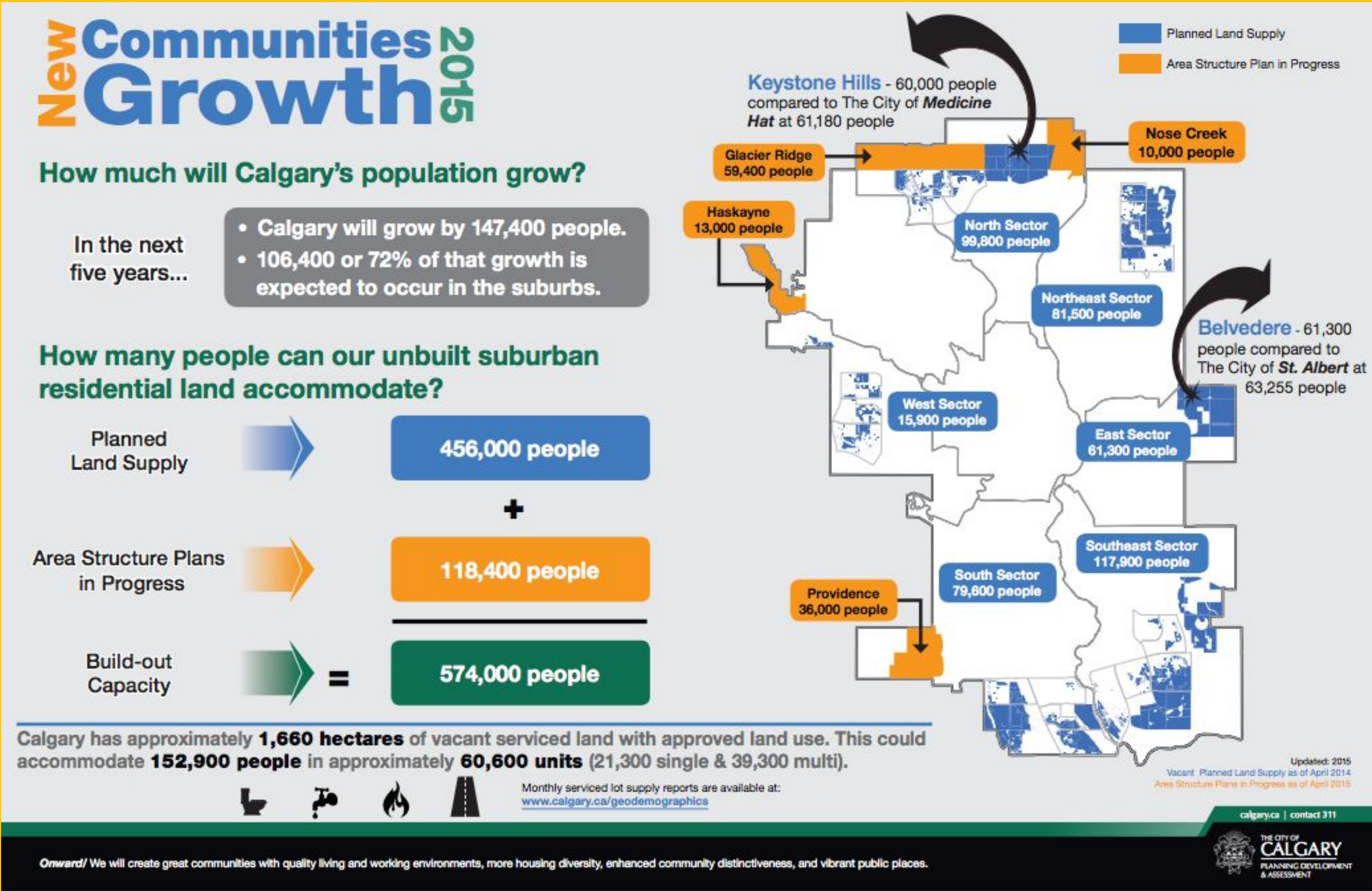
As the community hub is to be designed physically and programmatically based on the needs of the surrounding communities, there is an understanding that intentional activation is a strong requirement, and emphasizes partnerships with other organizations in other parts of the city to be a thriving hub.

Our focus will be placed on creating a long-term financial stability plan through the generation of multiple funding streams to get up and running, and generating income for lasting sustainability. The plan will focus on developing synergy and sustainability between businesses and organizations inhabiting the space, and creating a vibrant atmosphere.

One of the core philosophies of For The City is to create belonging and develop a cultural shift toward more communal living through physical anchor points. This community impact project will be a strong example of that in the North Central Calgary region.

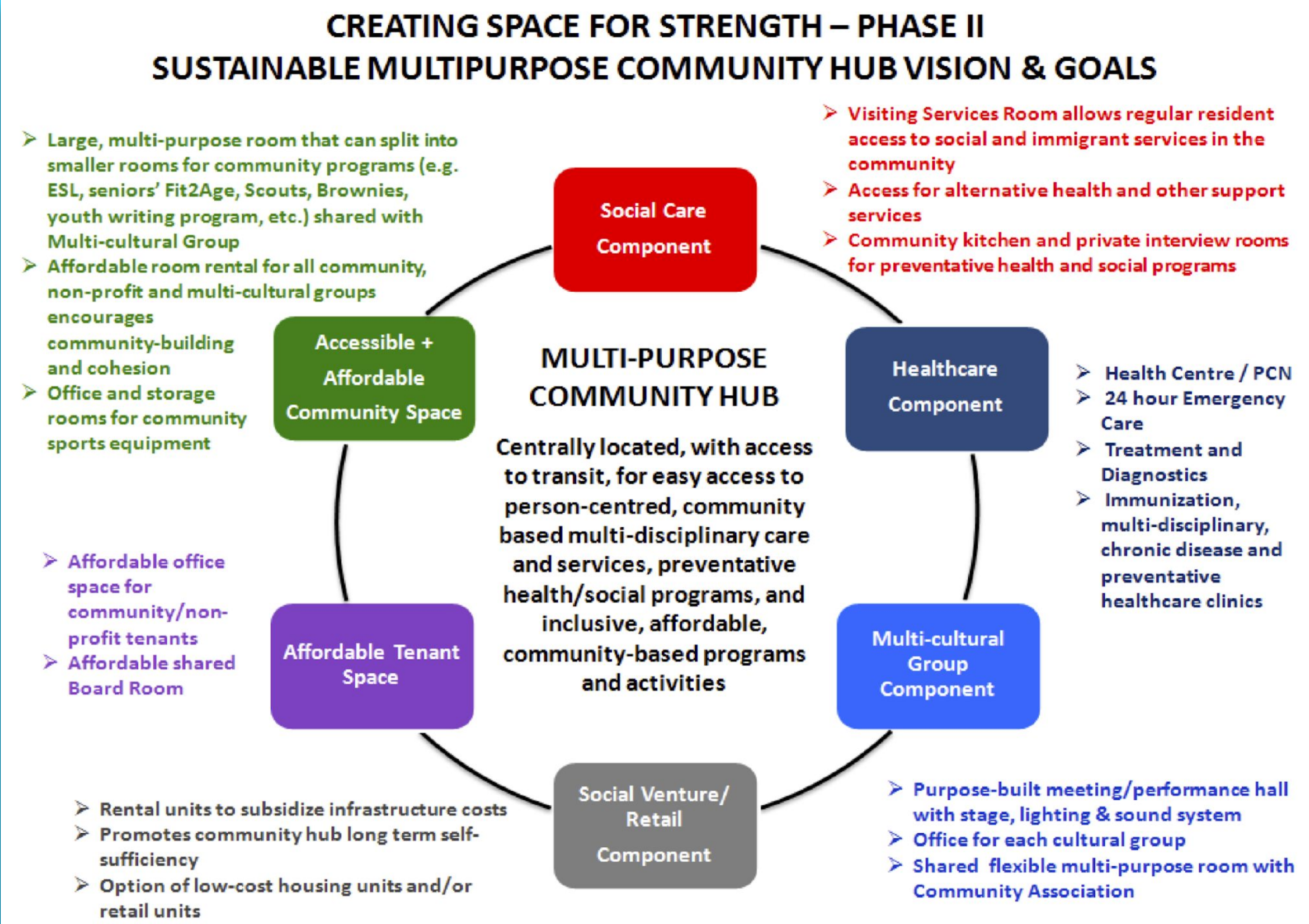


In 2015, the City of Calgary projected that +60,000 residents are expected to live within the Keystone Hills ASP with over 6,500 residential units in Livingston alone; and with such growth, a need for new services is also required. According to Brookfield Developments, the future Livingston town centre will boast more than one million square feet of offices, services and retail space – employing close to 7,000 people. Although Livingston currently has no traditional bus service, it is the end of the proposed C-Train “Green line” which greatly increases the accessibility for both residents and those travelling to North Central Calgary.





In 2013, the first “Creating Space for Strength” report was released, documenting the needs and opportunities for some form of shared community hub or “Family Care Centre” within Northern Hills. The Steering Committee reconvened and in 2014, the “Creating Space for Strength: Phase II” report was released. Building on the initial findings, their emphasis on the need for a “Multi-Purpose Community Hub” was clear. However, in the years since, there has been limited movement and the feasibility study that it recommended was not started in 2015 and the project has not moved forward. Despite these setbacks, the work done by Dr. Moraig McCabe, David Hartwick, and the team at Northern Hills Community Association was instrumental in our research here.







The Community we see is a place...

Where people gather and know that they belong...

Where people share what they have with each other...

Where nature flourishes alongside humanity...

Where beauty is expressed through art and culture...

Where people are challenged to grow and are supported on that journey...

Where the community can flourish and thrive together for the long term...





**It takes a community to  
build community.**



“Abundant community is based on the belief that every individual in a neighbourhood has a contribution to make, and uncovering, sharing and the harnessing of those contributions creates neighbourliness, and also addresses issues as diverse as social isolation, crime, and physical and mental health. The notion is at the same time ridiculously commonsensical and ridiculously powerful.”



Mary Sturgeon, Project Manager, Make Something Edmonton



“Any investment in community infrastructure will have multiple benefits to each of the neighbourhoods and will free up services and reduce traffic in those areas that the residents are travelling to access services. It will also benefit the nature of daily life for residents. This is particularly true for children, seniors and people with disabilities for whom the neighbourhood is usually their main point of reference. The range of facilities that comprise community infrastructure provides the channels for enhancing civic participation in groups such as school councils, residents’ associations, amateur sports, service clubs and local voluntary associations. Community infrastructure also fosters social inclusion through activities including neighbourhood-based recreation and cultural activities. Both of these goals are critical if the surrounding communities are to embrace and fully integrate immigrants and refugees and if host communities are to live and work respectfully with newcomers. The foundational community services provide a community anchor or focal point that anticipates, monitors and responds to community needs over time including changing economic, social and cultural realities.”







# TRANSFORMATIVE

# PLACEMAKING



**WHAT DO YOU  
DREAM OF FOR  
YOUR CITY?**



# ASSUMPTIONS

Who is this for?

What is needed?

How can we serve?





# WHO

## COMMUNITY PROFILE & DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics of the North Central region are some of the most diverse in Calgary, creating a community representative of many different parts of the world, including many new Canadian individuals and families.









# WHO POPULATION ANALYSIS

## **Cultural Diversity Index: High**

- More than 40% of residents are immigrants, and the rest are typically second-generation Canadians. They have high racial fusion since they accept ethnic diversity in their communities.

## **Cultural Sampling: High**

- **Believe other cultures have a lot to teach us.**

**Suburbia:** North Central Calgary is comprised of **suburban communities** that offer many similar amenities as other suburban neighbourhoods do.

- **It is unlikely that people from South Calgary will regularly visit North Central Calgary.**

**The Goal:** Target people who are located in **Northern Calgary**, and that are within proximity to the region.



# WHO POPULATION ANALYSIS

## **Geographics:**

- People who are in close proximity of the community, live in North Central Calgary.
- Primarily people who live in single detached homes who are a part of suburban communities.

## **Demographics:**

- Middle-aged Asian and South Asian households, often parents to children under 17 years of age.
- Average household incomes range between \$137,614- \$157,740.

## **Motivations:**

- Teaching children to embrace cultural diversity.
- Providing families with opportunities to gain new experiences.

## **Behaviouristics:**

- Often engage in multicultural activities.
- Attend family-friendly events.
- Mobile phones are integrated into all aspects of their lives.

## **Psychographics:**

- Family oriented.
- They accept ethnic diversity in their communities as well as their families.
- Believe other cultures have lots to teach us.

## **Attitudes:**

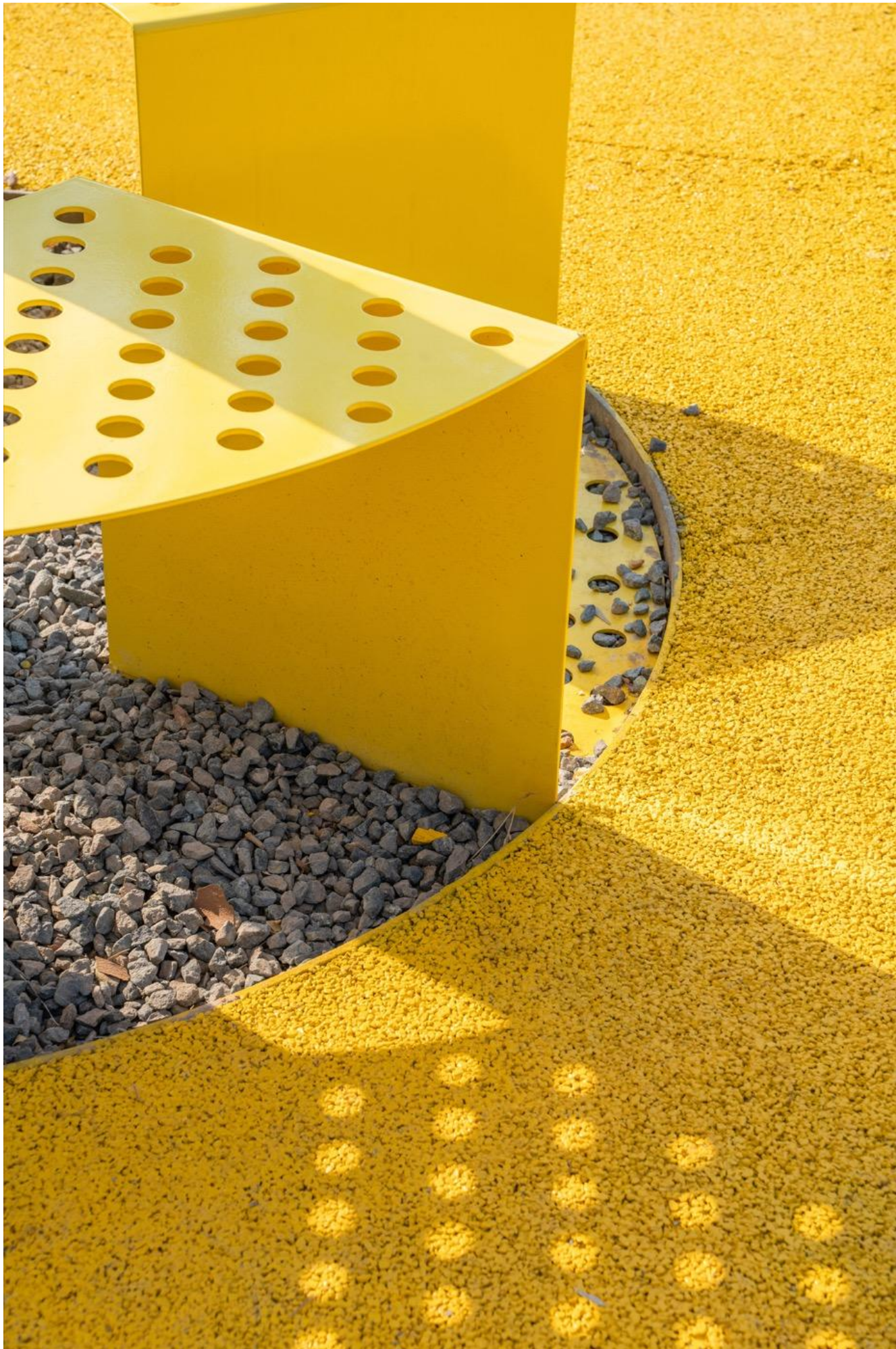
- Staying connected via social media is highly important.
- Attends many multicultural events to embrace diversity.



acre panorama sustainable within provision indoor place facilities building residents project church provide income sector park village hub future government valley city vital green surrounding capital health purpose build program multi groups access nhca public around business facility showing space neighbourhood association meeting current centre cultural collaboration com development open location growth needss people available youth report strength add care community outdoor already framework based family spaces social land creating innovative currently seniors livingston airdrie data phase school infrastructure home service population prototype plan new area living associations built work support lack needs new area living homes leisure recreation planning



# WHO WHAT WAS SAID



“Northern Hills is highly diverse as over 50% of the population is a visible minority. Residents are concerned that they *“can’t experience arts or culture”* in Northern Hills as the community is currently not mobilizing its diversity. Art and culture are essential in promoting a sense of community.”

- culture in calgary

“People value culture & art experiences, as consumers are becoming more community-minded; however, some residents stated that *“the community feels less like a community today than when we moved here 12 years ago.”* Fewer opportunities for social interaction within the suburbs have decreased neighbourhood satisfaction. Creating a reason for the community to come together can promote a sense of community.”

- life in calgary



# WHO WHAT WAS SAID

“Residents desire nightlife & entertainment. The food options should represent the diversity within the community. Residents have expressed that *“for entertainment, we have to leave our community.”* Since 58% of Canadians value experiences, this trend can be leveraged to offer engaging cultural experiences.”

“There is a mental health decline due to Covid-19; feeling a part of a community increases positive mental health. Northern Hills can promote a sense of community to residents and visitors.”





# WHO WHAT WAS SAID

"We love it up here but usually have to go to Kensington, 4th Street, or Inglewood for entertainment."

"Our community feels less like a community today than when we moved here 12 years ago."

"I don't like how the developers chose to put large attached garages in most houses. This really negatively impacts neighbourliness."







# WHO WHAT WAS SAID

"There is not great walkability, it's a driving neighbourhood for sure."

"For entertainment, we have to leave our community."

"I can't experience arts or culture here."



# WHO INTERVIEWS

## OVER 30 INTERVIEWS

- City of Calgary Staff & Councillors

- City of Airdrie Staff

- Brookfield Development

- Community Associations

- Fund Development Specialists

- Arts/Culture Groups

- Local Community Activists

- Faith Communities

- Social Service Organizations

- Aligned Businesses



# WHO PERSONAS

## **North Central Calgary Community Members...**

- **Feel youthful, diverse, and community-minded**
- **Visit other communities to find entertainment that is lacking locally**
- **Search for creativity and experience, and want to support local businesses**
- **Drive to other destinations because they feel North Central Calgary lacks accessibility or services they need/desire**







# WHAT COMMON SPACES

Multipurpose spaces that can be used by diverse groups of people at varying times are core to a flourishing community hub. In researching community wants and needs, FTC also drew inspiration from existing community spaces such as Stackt Market, 105 Gibson Centre, Jardins Gamelin, Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, and many others. Interviews with these groups also helped frame the strengths and weaknesses of the varying approaches and funding models that they leveraged for community engagement.













# WHAT COMMON SPACES

The ideal space would include:

- A Food Hall/Market with shared seating
- A Gymnasium with full-court basketball, pickleball, and other relevant sports lines
- Various meeting and multi-purpose rooms
- Multiple diverse seating options throughout the facility
  - Tables/chairs alongside lounge seating (couches and chairs)
  - Fireplaces
  - A significant amount of natural lighting
  - Indoor/outdoor seating with large overhead doors for multi-season use









# WHAT COMMON SPACES

- Theatre space for both music and performance art



- Outdoor parkland
  - Trails
  - Seating throughout
  - Water features including creek and pond
  - Winter activists on frozen water features
  - Gazebos for gatherings
- Outdoor Performance stage
  - Open grassland for free play sports, farmers market
  - Non-traditional playground

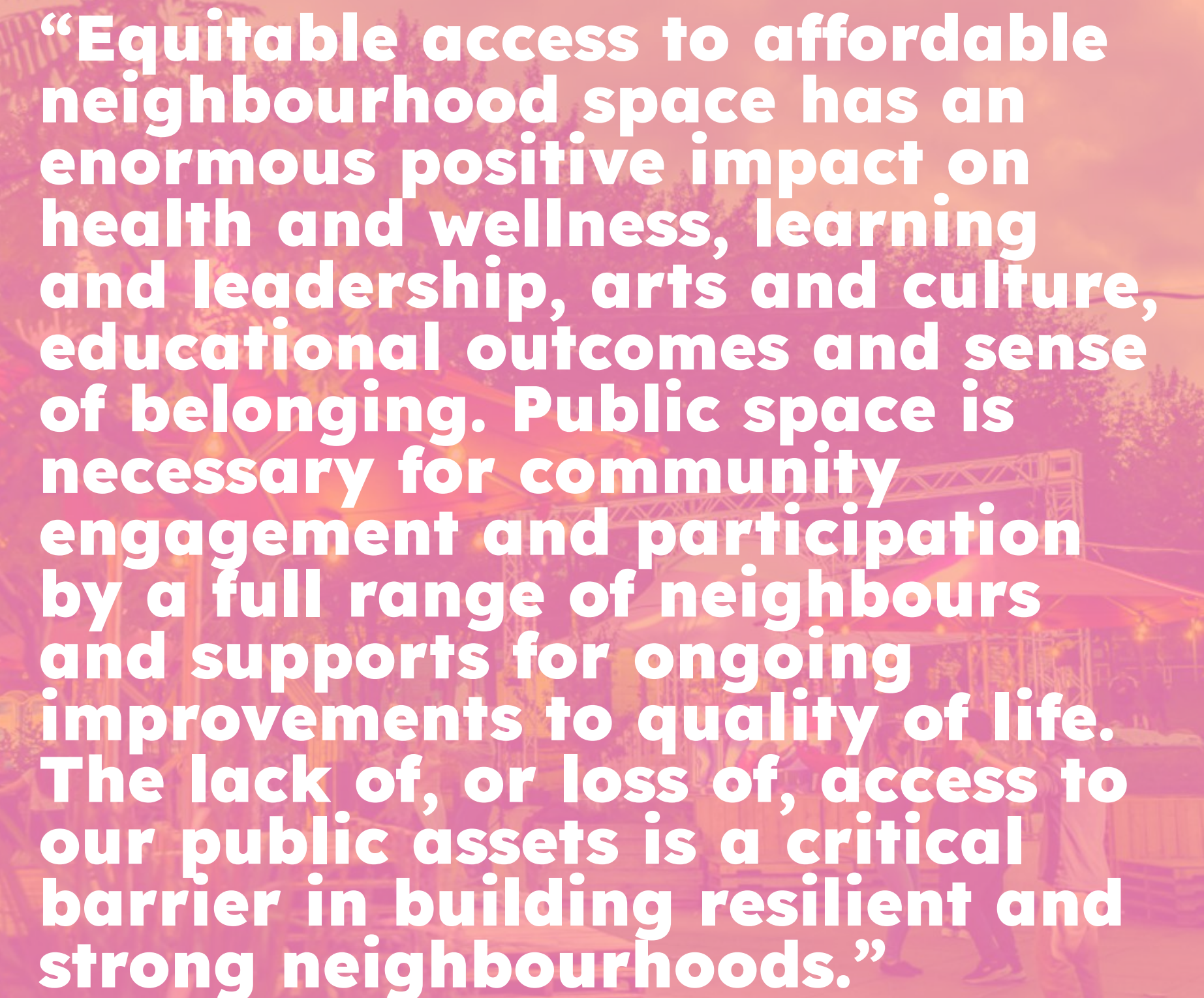






# WHAT COMMON SPACES

- Commercial Kitchen
  - Accessible to onsite events and rentals
  - “Ghost Kitchen”
  - Marketed to local groups and new enterprises
- Commercial leases
  - Childcare (both day and after school)
  - Dedicated office space (seeking tenants that are focused on the local residents is primary)
  - NPO Service offerings (Woods Homes, Trellis, Cultural groups, Community Association, etc.)



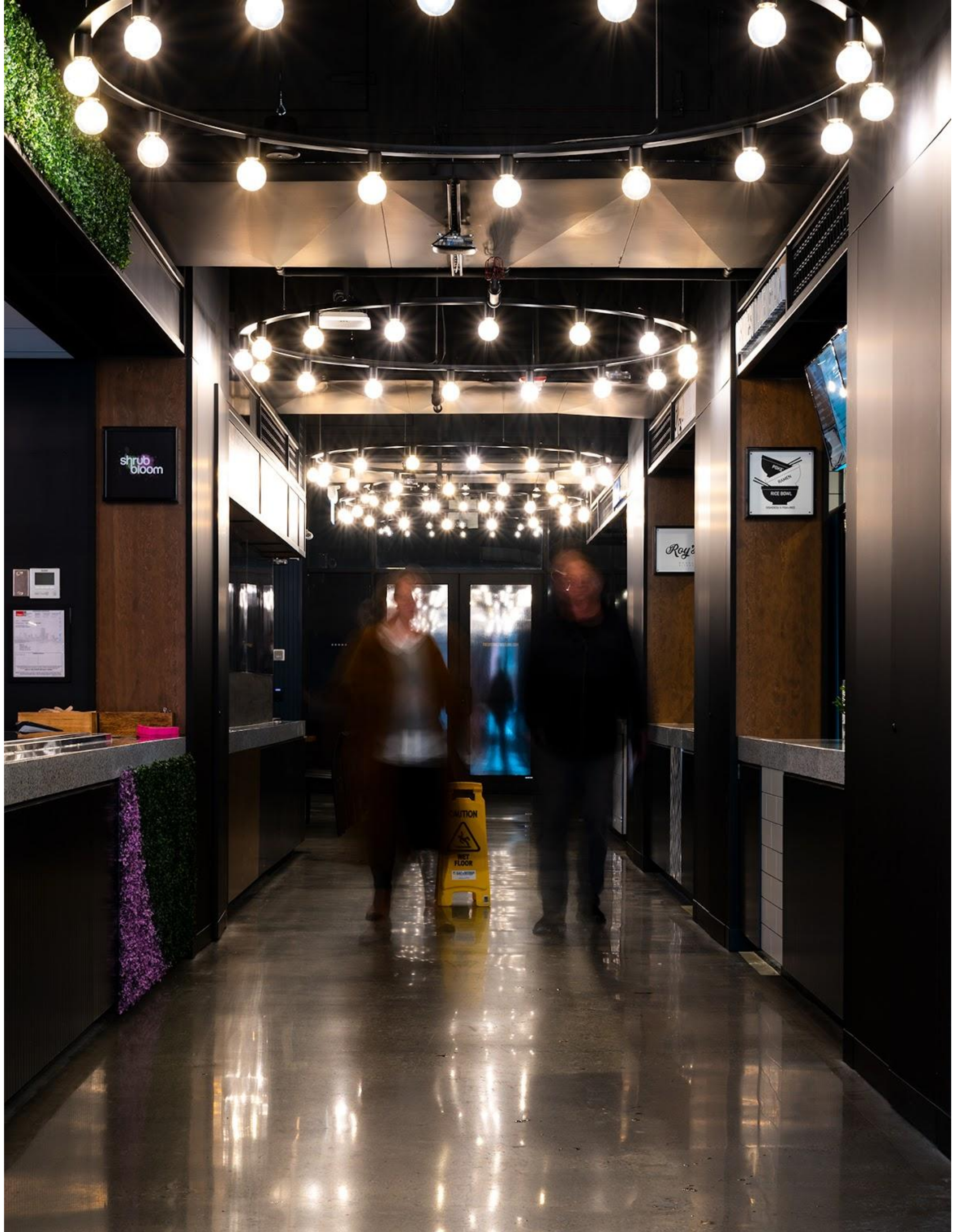
**“Equitable access to affordable neighbourhood space has an enormous positive impact on health and wellness, learning and leadership, arts and culture, educational outcomes and sense of belonging. Public space is necessary for community engagement and participation by a full range of neighbours and supports for ongoing improvements to quality of life. The lack of, or loss of, access to our public assets is a critical barrier in building resilient and strong neighbourhoods.”**

**Space Coalition, Toronto**















# NEXT STEPS

This Report to Community serves as the bookend to Phase I – research, consultation, and validation of findings.

The first step in Phase II includes onboarding a team of architects, engineers, surveyors, and construction managers, to refine build needs and processes into a clear communication plan for project stakeholders, including potential funders and design and construction professionals.

Further steps forward will depend on the results of this work, determining the timeline and barriers we will need to accommodate moving forward. Concurrently, FTC's focus will be to develop a financial model for both the build as well as long-term sustainability, including sourcing funding partners and engaging potential anchor businesses.

FTC will continue creating partnerships around development, enrolling government, community, and the social and business sectors in the vision for this Calgary North Central Community Center.



# EXAMPLES

- 105 Gibson Centre
  - <https://105gibson.com>
  - 105 Gibson Drive, Markham ON L3R 3K
- Stackt Market
  - <https://stacktmarket.com>
  - 28 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M5V 3W3
- Jardins Gamelin
  - <https://jardinsgamelin.com>
  - Place Emilie-Gamelin, 1500 Rue Berri, Montréal, QC H2L 2C4
- Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre
  - <https://www.roundhouse.ca/>
  - 181 Roundhouse Mews Vancouver, BC V6Z 2W3
- cSPACE King Edward
  - <https://cspacekingedward.com>
  - 1721 29 Ave SW, Calgary AB T2T 6T7
- Post Commons
  - <https://www.postcommons.com>
  - 300 Alby Street, Alton, IL, 62002
- Genesis Centre
  - <https://genesis-centre.ca>
  - #10, 7555 Falconridge Blvd. NE, Calgary, AB T3J 0C9
- Vivo for Healthier Generations
  - <http://www.vivo.ca>
  - 11950 Country Village Link NE, Calgary, Alberta T3K 6E3
- Ritchie Market
  - <https://ritchiemarket.ca>
  - 9570 76 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB T6C 0K2
- Kingswell
  - <https://www.kingswell.us>
  - 1124 Central Ave. Middletown, Ohio
- COhatch
  - <https://www.cohatch.com>
  - Multiple locations, USA
- Common Thread
  - <https://hubbham.com/>
  - <https://commonthread.org/>
  - 174 Oxmoor Rd, Birmingham, AL, 35209
- Grand Rapids Center for Community Transformation
  - <https://www.grcct.com/>
  - 1530 Madison Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507
- Magnolia Community Initiative
  - <https://themcinenetwork.org/>
  - 1910 Magnolia Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90007
- Ivywild School
  - 1604 S Cascade Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80905
  - <https://www.ivywildschool.com/>



# APPENDIX

Suburban Growth Report 2021-2025\_for\_web\_posting (2021) Retrieved December 19, 2022, from

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<http://media.northernhills.ab.ca/CS4S-Provision-of-Vital-Services-for-the-Northern-Hills-and-Surrounding-Communities-Phase-II-Framework-Document-DRAFTFINAL-15Dec2014.pdf>

Creating Coventry - A community-driven plan to improve and connect our neighbourhood's parks (2018) Retrieved December 6, 2022, from

[http://www.media.northernhills.ab.ca//2018/01/CCV\\_CCdoc\\_PlanningPhaseReport.pdf](http://www.media.northernhills.ab.ca//2018/01/CCV_CCdoc_PlanningPhaseReport.pdf)

Community Hubs By Design (2017) Retrieved December 21, 2022, from <https://enoughforall.ca/articles/community-hubs-by-design-how-to-build-supportive-spaces-for-fighting-poverty>

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# TOGGLETHER FOR THE CITY.

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