



Discovery Ridge Lift Station

Public engagement What We Heard Report

September 25, 2026

Project overview

The Discovery Ridge Sanitary Lift Station was built in 2000 and provides an essential wastewater service for the Discovery Ridge community. The facility is approaching the end of its intended service life, and upgrades are needed to renew aging mechanical, electrical, control, safety and operational components. The project includes replacing the existing aboveground building, upgrading safety features, relocating electrical equipment, and improving site conditions. The lift station is located on the edge of Griffith Woods Park within an environmental reserve land use designation, therefore a land use change is required to allow the needed utility building upgrades to proceed.

Engagement overview

The engagement was intended to provide residents and interested parties with information about the project scope, the need for lift station upgrades, the land use change, the anticipated project timeline, and the proposed exterior design options. Participants were invited to review three design options and share what they liked, what concerned them, and which option they preferred. The feedback gathered will help inform refinements to the exterior appearance of the refurbished building, taking into consideration technical, safety, operational and regulatory requirements that will continue to guide final design decisions.

Community engagement on the project took place from July 23 to August 28, 2026, and we had the following results from our online portal page:

Online engagement:

- Approximately 1500 views from over 1250 unique visitors
- 135 contributions from 73 unique contributors

In person engagement:

- Advertised drop in at the site on August 13
- Door knocking with directly impacted residents

Communications outreach:

Three bold signs were placed in the community during the engagement period from July 27-Aug. 14 for awareness and to draw traffic to the engage page where community members could provide feedback.

A project web page at calgary.ca/DRliftstation went live on June 26 to encourage visits to the engage page and to provide more information. From July 27 to Aug 31, we received 139 page visits, 155 page views and 15 link clicks to the engagement page.



Discovery Ridge Lift Station

Public engagement What We Heard Report

September 25, 2026

Social media posts went out during the engage period, geotargeted to the Discovery Ridge community to also encourage visits to the engage page. We had 136,512 total impressions and 1,278 link clicks to the page.

What we asked

Participants were asked to consider the three exterior design options for the refurbished lift station and provide feedback on the following areas:

- What they liked about each option.
- What concerns they had about each option.
- Which design options do they prefer overall.
- How well each option appeared to fit with the surrounding community, park setting and natural environment.

What we heard

Engagement feedback was gathered from participants who reviewed information about the lift station's refurbishment, the required land use change, and three exterior design options. The input summarized in this report reflects the themes, preferences, and concerns shared through that engagement process.

Feedback showed that visual appearance was the main factor in shaping participant preferences. Across all three options, respondents assessed the designs based on whether the building would look appropriate in the surrounding natural reserve, nearby pathways and Discovery Ridge neighbourhood. Many participants preferred materials, colors and forms that felt warm, natural, and understated. Comments also showed that residents were thinking beyond appearance, raising questions about durability, maintenance, cost, vandalism, wildlife, environmental impacts, building scale and the quality of public engagement.

Overall, participants preferred a design that would feel natural, understated and compatible with Griffith Woods and the surrounding Discovery Ridge neighbourhood. Option 2 was the strongest fit for those priorities because of its warmer materials and natural appearance. Participants also emphasized that design refinements should consider durability, maintenance, vandalism, environmental impacts, and how community input will be reflected in the final decision.

Option 2: Most Preferred



Option 2 received the strongest positive response overall. Participants frequently described it as natural-looking, warm, rustic and well suited to the Griffith Woods setting. The use of wood and natural materials was viewed as helping the building blend into the nearby park, pathway system and the character of the surrounding community. This option generated the highest volume of positive comments related to natural fit and blending.

Concerns about Option 2 focused mainly on long-term durability and maintenance. Some participants questioned how wood materials would age over time and whether they could be affected by weathering, rot, vandalism, graffiti or wildlife interactions. Others raised questions about potential additional costs associated with wood construction and the visual mass of the building.

Option 1: Second Preferred



Option 1 was generally viewed positively and was considered a strong alternative by many participants. Respondents described it as clean, modern, simple, and contemporary. Some participants felt the design could fit with the surrounding neighbourhood and provide a durable, understated appearance.

Concerns about Option 1 focused on its color palette and perceived fit with the natural setting. Some respondents felt the grey tones looked too urban, industrial or disconnected from Griffith Woods. Others questioned whether the design would have enough warmth or visual softness to reduce its impact on surrounding views.

Option 3: Least Preferred



Option 3 received the lowest level of support. While a smaller number of participants appreciated its durability, functionality, simplicity, and modern architectural features, most feedback was negative. Respondents often described the design as industrial, outdated, stark or poorly matched to the natural environment.

Concerns about Option 3 included the weathered steel appearance, perforated panel treatment and the extent to which the design would stand out rather than blend into the Griffith Woods and Discovery Ridge context. Some participants felt the design introduced a harder, more utilitarian character than was appropriate for the site.

- For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.

Summary of Input received

1. Visual appearance was the strongest driver of feedback

Participants consistently focused on how the upgraded lift station would look from nearby homes, pathways, and park spaces. Appearance and design generated the highest level of discussion across all three options,



Discovery Ridge Lift Station

Public engagement What We Heard Report

September 25, 2026

with participants evaluating whether each design would complement the surrounding community and natural reserve.

2. Natural integration was highly valued

Many participants preferred a building design that would blend into the landscape rather than draw attention to itself. Natural colors, wood finishes, rustic character and softer visual elements were seen as more compatible with Griffith Woods, the pathway network, and the surrounding residential area.

3. Material selection raised both support and questions

Wood and natural-looking materials were generally supported because they were seen as warmer, more welcoming and better aligned with the site context. At the same time, participants raised questions about how these materials would perform over time, including durability, weathering, rot, maintenance needs, graffiti, and potential interactions with wildlife.

4. Participants raised broader project concerns

Beyond design preferences, participants raised broader questions and concerns about project cost, long-term maintenance, environmental impacts near the river and wildlife corridor, building size and height, views from nearby homes, vandalism, graffiti and how public input would be used. These comments suggest that residents are interested in both the appearance of the upgraded facility and the overall way the project is planned, communicated, and delivered.

Next steps

This project will modernize the lift station and support reliable wastewater service for Discovery Ridge for years to come. The upgrades will improve system reliability, replace aging infrastructure, and help protect the surrounding environment. These investments will ensure the facility continues to meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

A decision on the exterior was made and the design is proceeding with option #2. The decision on the land use amendment has not made. The proposal will be considered by City Council in spring 2027. Subject to approval, construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2027.

The next update is expected in May 2027 - once the City Council reviews the land use amendment proposal and makes decision on it. The public will be officially informed on the decision.

Verbatim Comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

What do you like about option 1?

- Looks good, blends in
- Has a clean modern feel.
- Neutral colour, wood framing fits with the character of the natural area
- Fits in better
- Nothing
- Appearance
- The shape of the building
- Absolutely nothing
- I like that the design is not too busy and it doesn't take away from the nature beauty of the area!
- I like the look and overall design. It has character yet still enjoy the simplistic look.
- the design
- Clean lines, fits nicely into neighborhood
- Fits the environment nicely
- Clean and functional lines, very minimalistic looking.
- The contrast in colour gives it better eye appeal than the other 2 options. It doesn't look like a farm building or like a barn like the other designs do. barn building.

- Modern
- I like the triangles made from what looks to be wood
- This is the best option. Light and natural looking.
- The color combination and the fact that it matches the neighborhood contemporary vibe
- Wooden posts
- Neutral and blends.
- It looks like it will last longer
- This is the best looking design
- The vertical beams stand out nicely against the painting walls
- Not a very attractive building
- Architecture and blending with discovery aesthtic
- Hard to tell since we can't see what materials are used. Also,here does it drain? what chemicals are used for that?
- I like how it looks and it matches everything that is surrounding.
- Great design. Very nice.
- Neutral design, fits with being beside a residential area.
- It would fit with the area it is constructed in well.
- modern looking and colours are good - not too dark

What concerns do you have about option 1?

- It has no character and does not blend into the community. Who provided the drawings a 5 year old.
- The color- it does not look natural to the setting it will occupy
- Like most citizens, I have no trust in this government. City Hall is so secretive and dishonest there's no way to know if this is actually needed.
- The artsy fartsy beams or whatever your designer calls it is just a place where birds are going to want to nest and then the city of Calgary will intern want to get rid of the birds so that's a nonstarter
- None
- This is not meaningful engagement.
- Changing the land use designation is gross.
- the colour scheme - the grey seems out of place for a natural setting
- None
- None

- If meant to be discreet, this is definitely the one.
- None
- No cost estimate is provided
- Too modern. I'm not a fan of monochrome colour ways. The city needs more personality
- Very industrial looking not suitable
- Boring
- Graffiti. Considering the sides are cement, some may be tempted to vandalize it
- Lack of character with the grey exterior
- Is it as durable as the brick? Will it look ragged, sooner?
- How it imposes any views from residential homes.
- None
- None
- color is too light, looks nice by itself but does not mix with surrounding nature well
- Stark and does not fit the surroundings it's going in
- Price over runs
- Materials used could generate excess heat near a river and ecological zone. That is detrimental to environmental health. Please provide the environmental impact report to residents.
- It will be increasing 8 meters to the west.
- None.
- That the fencing around it is attractive as well.
- None

What do you like about option 2?

- The is the best option. Colour and architecture which fits in will with the natural environment
- It's a hit more natural than the other 2...not much more but it will look better even though design is same.
- Natural looking materials
- This is the best option that represents a quality building adjacent to the park natural area and the public pathway.



Discovery Ridge Lift Station

Public engagement What We Heard Report

September 25, 2026

- Nice blend with the surrounding environment.
- It looks the most natural and would likely blend into the surrounding area the best
- The more natural look it has
- The color is most natural and appealing given the natural surroundings of the park
- Absolutely nothing
- More natural to blend in with the surrounding area.
- I like option 2 better as the wood paneling blends in with nature.
- Natural design, fitting with Griffith Wood, integrates well with First Nations land
- the design and the colour scheme - this is my preferred option
- Looks beautiful. Would fit in nicely.
- Nothing! It's terrible looking!
- More natural wood coloring and in keeping with nature
- All good fits the vibe of discovery ridge
- Rustic
- It fits in with The Griffith Woods Park
- Like the color. It seems to fit into its surroundings better.
- I love the use of wood for the siding. Gives it more personality
- Natural and rustic looking - blends into the surrounding area
- It's more natural looking than the other two. The material looks better than the others
- More visually appealing and not as imposing. Looks less high.
- This is the best option visually and would seem to match in to the environment the best.
- Fits the environment
- It blends into the nature
- Rustic type of colour / exterior
- I like it looks more natural then the other 2 options
- Natural colors, modern design, doesn't look out of place for discovery ridge
- More natural looking to fit into the nature surrounding it.
- Best option. Blends the most into woods.
- It looks more natural

- This is my second choice
- Looks like a cabin and like it belongs in nature
- overall design, color and structure seems contemporary and mixes nicely with nature
- I like the natural look of the structure.
- The colors !!
- Natural for the surroundings to fit in.
- Style and color is appealing.
- Nothing
- The best option, esthetic.
- It's more visually appealing, and fits with the feel of the area. Hard to tell what materials are used.
- Looks the most natural of all the options.
- We live right beside this lift station [address redacted] so we have a vested interest in the final design. Option 2 is the best design and it integrates well with the environmental reserve, forest, and surrounding community.
- It's okay as a second choice after 1.

What concerns do you have about option 2?

- Looks like a derelict shack waiting to be torn or fall down.
- It looks very big especially as there are no trees near or around it. Maybe use some trees to make it seem like it's part of the natural area.
- Least ugly of the 3
- With the beavers so close by, they may try to eat the logs
- None
- To me, the colour of the vertical members makes them appear flimsy and like temporary like scaffolding. A darker brown closer to the roof colour would help it feel like one cohesive structure
- Costs of this design is likely higher with all the wood, as well as the maintenance of the wood long term.
- Longevity of the outer facade

- None
- What better way to say I don't give a fu\$k what citizens want than deciding behind closed doors what will be built and then asking citizens what colour paint to put on the building. City Hall is gross.
- Same issue in regards to the beams but you just put them on an uglier looking building
- Too busy and wood looking for out in the open.
- No concerns
- Changing the land use designation is gross.
- All options appear to be a very large structure, with no visible barriers, what will prevent vandalism. Will the wood be weathered and in disrepair within a short time
- the wooden poles look thin and frail in the photos, I have no structural concerns but visually the thicker poles in the rendering are more appealing
- Wood would get too weathered and probably not look good in 5 years
- Looks like it belongs on a farm
- No concerns
- Wood rot?
- None
- No cost estimate is provided
- Zero
- I'm concerned the end result will be too flat with straight brown.
- none
- Posts at front are not that attractive
- The beam extending over the tall door. Is it functional? Concern about vandalism or creative unwanted art on both the beam and the posts.
- Only concern is a possible fire hazard with wood
- No concerns
- Will there be any shrubs/trees planted near it?
- Want homeowners backing on to have a priority preference.
- How long it will last and whether critters will make it home
-
- Vertical beams don't contrast with background wooden walls, looks like a sauna, not modern looking
- would like to see rendering with fence and nearby path and houses

- Size
- Concerns about columns - almost encourage people to play on them.
- It's ugly a blight on the landscape
- Toxic construction materials near a river, a wildlife corridor and reserve as well as an important ecological site. Please provide the environmental impact report to residents.
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- How tall is the new lift station, does it inhibit our current view of the eastern mountains and elbow river.
- Looks likes it's already old.
- too busy looking - to many different brown wood colouring

What do you like about option 3?

- Clean appearance.
- Nothing it is disgusting.
- Sleek design
- It flows w our area
- Nothing
- Everything
- Don't really like this option
- Nothing it's terrible!
- Modern and interesting texture, an eye catching design
- I like to look at this building better than the other two options. The other two options look more like shacks to me then buildings.
- Innovative
- Nothing. It's ugly and outdated
- Color is ok
- The inspiration used for the project and its colour, which seems to blend well with the environment.
- Nothing
- Nothing. Looks out of place
- Looks modern.
- Nothing

- Seems very durable. Long lasting.
- Looks strong.
- Super dated looking. I'm not a fan
- Sturdy construction and less damage would be incurred if a fire was to break out in the area. Also blends into the surrounding vegetation
- I prefer this one as I don't like all the wood posts on the outside structure of 1 & 2
- Holes and material used, the concept of the river image
- Nothing
- Nothing. It's very ugly.
- Not my favourite.
- Not a good fit. Too industrial.

What concerns do you have about option 3?

- The weathered steel contrasts with the natural environment. It brings urban characteristics into a natural area
- Again who drew this a 5 year old were they given a budget of 5 bucks.
- None
- There will be bird nests forming and bats but easy to deter
- The facade does not blend in and is inappropriate for the park space
- It's straightforward. It's functional. It's a utility building. It's not someplace that people are going to want to take a selfie in front of. Keep it simple and keep the cost down.
- No character at all in the design.
- poor people are dying on our streets while you waste public funds on self serving unneeded crap like this
- Changing the land use designation is gross.
- the perforated panels look cool but I worry they would accumulate natural debris and wildlife behind them
- Nothing. Just don't like it
- It's like an old 80's brick building
- None
- Not modern natural enough like the wood options
- Eyesore
- No cost estimate is provided
- As per the pictures, it might look "too rusty" instead of modern/interesting.
- It looks like a dump. Sheet metal siding with holes like that and the colour is depressing



Discovery Ridge Lift Station

Public engagement What We Heard Report

September 25, 2026

- It's an eye sore doesn't fit in the community landscape
- Not
- It looks just plain ugly, is some architect having a laugh?
- Birds and small critters making nests in the holes
- Everything, looks old and rusty and would ruin the discovery ridge aesthetic
- Doesn't look as good as the other 2 options.
- I do not like the brick option. Too similar to what it there currently which is visually unappealing.
- Just the look of it. Too stark against the landscape
- Already looks like it was built in the 1970s.
- I have no concerns
- There doesn't look like there is any eaves troughs so with Calgary's weather the rain & snow could definitely be a problem
- Dislike the colour, not beautiful/appealing, looks industrial and cold
- seems like a very old building
- Not cute
- Does not fit the surroundings it's going in.
- That's about the ugliest of all and why would you put rusted metal in a natural location. I suggest you think the project through again. None are acceptable
- Toxic construction materials near a river, a wildlife corridor and reserve as well as an important ecological site. Please provide the environmental impact report to residents.
- It doesn't look as organic as the other options.
- Looks like a shed that was abandoned.
- Color, size etc.
- to brick looking and far too dark - shows up more