

General

We want to make improvements to 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street S.W. and 14 Street S.W. to provide a safe street for everyone including those walking, wheeling, driving and taking transit.

- In Summer 2021, The City of Calgary asked for input on 26 Avenue SW between Sarcee Trail and 14 Street S.W.
- In 2022, as part of Phase 1, three intersections were updated between Sarcee Trail and 37 Street S.W. to improve pedestrian and traffic safety.
- The focus of Phase 2 of the project is between 37 Street S.W. and 14 Street S.W.

26 Avenue S.W. is an important corridor that connects multiple established communities in the southwest. It is also one of the few routes that provides continuity over Crowchild Trail in the southwest quadrant north of Glenmore Trail S.W. It is important that we optimize it for all users including those who walk, wheel, take transit and drive. This is according to the [Calgary Transportation Plan](#) (CTP) and City transportation policies, including 5A (Always Available for All Ages and Abilities) principles.

For background about the project, visit calgary.ca/26Ave.

Project Scope

What has happened to date on this project?

The City engaged interested parties and the public to collect feedback on both 26 Avenue S.W. and Buckmaster Park over Summer 2021. Due to COVID-19, most engagement efforts were virtual, resulting in 3,921 citizen visits to our Engage website and a total of 350 contributions. From this feedback, we compiled a [What We Heard Report](#).

The main concerns that are relevant to the Phase 2 area include:

- Cycling safety
- Visibility at crossings on 26 Avenue S.W. and side streets (due to density of parked cars)
- Road condition and speed

How has previous feedback been used so far?

In 2022, three intersections were updated along 26 Avenue S.W. between Sarcee Trail and 37 Street S.W. These intersections were identified through community feedback, traffic volumes, historical data and more. Intersection upgrades include concrete curb extensions and upgraded wheelchair ramps to increase comfort and connectivity.

What work is happening this year?

During Phase 2, we are looking to obtain feedback on the safety and mobility improvements being considered for Phase 2 between 37 Street S.W. and 14 Street S.W. We are sharing the three options for the corridor with various benefits and trade-offs.

We are asking for your feedback on the safety and mobility improvements being considered to provide a safe street for everyone including those walking, wheeling, driving and taking transit.

Our goals are to:

- Improve safety for people walking, wheeling, driving, and taking transit
- Increase travel choices for Calgarians
- Enhance the experience of using the street.

From June 1 to 22, share your feedback online at engage.calgary.ca/26AveSW.

Three Options

What options is The City considering for 26 Avenue S.W.?

Following the Phase 1 What We Heard Report, the project team retained ISL Engineering to create three options for 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street to 14 Street S.W.

The combination of the project goals, City policies, engagement feedback and technical information guided the development of the three proposed options:

- **Option 1 Multi-use pathway:** This option replaces the current painted wheeling lanes west of 22 Street S.W. and shared driving/wheeling lane east of 22 Street S.W. with a new multi-use pathway along the north side of 26 Avenue S.W. A separate sidewalk from the multi-use pathway is provided west of 22 Street S.W.
- **Option 2 On-street wheeling lanes:** This option replaces the existing painted bike lanes (west of 22 Street S.W.) and the shared wheeling / driving lanes (east of 22 Street S.W.) with one way wheeling lanes either side of 26 Avenue S.W.
- **Option 3 On-street wheeling lanes and multi-use pathway:** This option is a blend of option 1 and 2 with protected on-street wheeling lanes on either side of the road west of 22 Street S.W., followed by a multi-use pathway on the north side east of 22 Street S.W.

Each option has different trade-offs for different users, and we hope to learn more about how the public feels about each option considering the project goals and previous engagement feedback.

How were these options created?

The options were created based on the guidance in the Calgary Transportation Plan for a collector road, transportation policies (including 5A principles), previous engagement feedback and technical information.

Technical studies completed include:

- Accessibility Review
- Access Management Review

- Utility Plan Review
- Video Conflict Analysis on 26 Avenue at Richmond Road and 22 Street S.W.
- Parking Study

What is the 5A Network?

The 5A Network will be a city-wide mobility network consisting of off-street pathways and on-street bikeways. The 5A Pathway and Bikeway Network was approved by Council on February 8, 2021 as part of the Calgary Transportation Plan bylaw.

The 5A Network Guiding Principles Report was approved by Council on January 13, 2020. It is a companion document that outlines how to upgrade, build, and maintain pathways and bikeways to provide safe, accessible, affordable, year-round options for transportation and recreation for all Calgarians.

The Guiding Principles for building and maintaining the 5A Network are:

1. Separate people by their speed
2. Improve visibility
3. Make it reliable
4. Be accessible for everyone
5. Make it easy to use

These Guiding Principles helped to develop the three options for 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street and 14 Street S.W.

Impacts

How will the options affect parking along 26 Avenue S.W.?

Due to the limited space on 26 Avenue S.W. between 14 Street S.W. and 37 Street S.W., parking would be affected along this section to make improvements. Below are the ways that each option will affect parking:

- **Option 1 Multi-use pathway:** On-street parking is removed on 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street S.W. and 22 Street S.W. East of 22 Street S.W., parking is removed on the north side and preserved on the south side of the avenue.
- **Option 2 On-street wheeling lanes:** All on-street parking on 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street and 14 Street S.W. is removed.
- **Option 3 On-street wheeling lanes and multi-use pathway:** On-street parking is removed on 26 Avenue S.W. between 37 Street S.W. and 22 Street S.W. East of 22 Street S.W., parking is removed on the north side and preserved on the south side of the avenue.

Parking loss is a trade-off in the proposed options to help meet project goals that are guided by the City Transportation Plan and transportation policies.

How will accessible on-street parking and delivery service vehicles be accommodated?

Once the preferred design option is identified, we will explore accommodating accessible parking spots and delivery service vehicles on side streets.

How will trees and other vegetation be affected by the three options?

We know the important role trees play in a community, and removing a tree is always a last resort. Once the preferred design option is identified, we will look at the detailed design to limit the impact to existing trees wherever possible.

Funding

How will this project be funded?

This project is part of the Established Area Growth and Change Strategy (EAGCS). This program provides funding to support short-term (1-3 years) public space improvement projects in established communities where growth and change are happening.

The Strategy connects planning, financial and investment decisions to provide the assistance that established communities need to support growth that is currently taking place.

Next Steps

What will the next steps be?

The feedback collected regarding the three options presented in this phase of engagement will help inform the preferred option.

We are committed to maintaining open engagement throughout this project as we progress through the design process. The results of this engagement will be available on engage.calgary.ca/26AveSW in Fall 2023.

What are the construction timelines for improvements along 26 Avenue S.W.?

Once the final design is chosen for 26 Avenue S.W., we will move into detailed design and refinement. Construction for improvements is scheduled to start in 2024. We will reconnect with the public and interested parties to share the high-level construction schedule when it is ready.

The following sections have been added based on questions received during our June 6 and June 15 online information sessions:

Parking

Where are the people who live on 26 Avenue S.W. going to park?

For options that remove parking from 26 Avenue S.W., residents would need to park on-site at their properties, or on side streets nearby. We recognize that this is a tradeoff and an impact that differs between the three options, and welcome community feedback on this topic.

From a parking study completed in October 2022, The City found that on-street parking on the west side of the project area (37 Street to Crowchild Trail S.W.) is lightly used today as most of the properties along 26 Avenue S.W. face side streets. On the east side of the project area (Crowchild Trail to 18 Street S.W.) parking was moderately used, with 50% of parking spots occupied. From 18 Street to 14 Street S.W., parking is most heavily used.

Along 26 Avenue S.W. and the side streets, single-family homes are being developed into multi-family housing, which could reduce parking availability on the side streets. How will this be addressed?

Calgary is a growing city and as we densify some areas, we will have tradeoffs that impact parking convenience.

Of the three options, Option 1 and Option 3 retain some on-street parking on the south side of the avenue between 22 Street and 14 Street S.W. Only Option 2 would fully remove on-street parking.

Will permit parking be introduced on the side streets?

Permit parking is not within the scope of this project. Generally, permit parking is considered beneficial if there are external parking pressures, such as an LRT station or post-secondary institution, which increases parking demand in an area by non-residents. In the case of 26 Avenue S.W., the shifted parking demand would still consist primarily of community residents, and therefore would not be affected by permit parking. [Click here](#) for more details about permit parking program.

Traffic and Speed

Will there be speed limit reductions as part of this project?

We will explore assigning 26 Avenue S.W. as a 40 km/h roadway as per [Council direction](#). The design features for all three options (e.g., narrower driving lanes) are intended to help address speed concerns and align with this speed limit recommendation.

Can the options handle the traffic flow along 26 Avenue S.W.?

Traffic capacity on 26 Avenue S.W. will not be affected by these options. Currently, there is one lane of vehicle travel in each direction and that will remain in all options. Travel speeds and sight lines will be modified to improve safety of all road users on 26 Avenue S.W.

Could the traffic on 26 Avenue S.W. become more congested?

This project will not affect traffic volumes or travel demand on 26 Avenue S.W. The current volumes on 26 Avenue S.W. are well within the range for what is expected for a collector road (2000 – 8000 vehicles per day, per City guidelines). Any expected increase to traffic from redevelopment is reviewed by The City through a Transportation Impact Assessment for that development. In general, the function of 26 Avenue S.W. is primarily for internal travel within and between area communities, and it notably different than 33 Avenue S.W. which connects to Crowchild Trail and has major City-wide attraction to the Marda Loop Main Street.

Design Details

What are the plans for pedestrian lights at crosswalks across 26 Avenue S.W. in conjunction with the improvement options?

Existing pedestrian crossing lights will be maintained as part of the project. Additional crossing lights will be evaluated at other locations and is one of the components that we will be confirmed at the detailed design stage. Shorter crosswalks, improved signs and crosswalk markings are also important considerations that we are looking at along the entire corridor.

Will the options improve the safety at the intersection at Richmond Road and 22 Street S.W.? For example, shorter crosswalks, crosswalk lights.

In all options the driving lanes will be narrower, which makes this intersection smaller and the pedestrian crossings shorter. This also helps channel vehicles to where they're supposed to go. Once a concept is selected, design details will be determined such as crosswalk lights and signage.

How is snow and ice control affected by the options?

If the wheeling lanes are on street (Option 2) then The City of Calgary will clear those lanes. If there is a multi-use pathway (Option 1 and Option 3) then snow clearing becomes the responsibility of the adjacent property owner or homeowner under the current snow clearing bylaw. We recognize that can create challenges for some homeowners and we note that The City is currently reviewing the Snow and Ice Control Policy at a city-wide level.

Will trees be planted that could obstruct sight lines in the future?

Due to narrow right-of-way and utility conflicts, there are currently no plans to plant additional street trees along 26 Avenue S.W.

Will the project address uneven sidewalks along 26 Avenue S.W.?

Currently, the proposed options do not include replacement of existing sidewalks. However, local rehabilitation in certain areas may be included in the detailed scope, particularly near street corners if they are upgraded with new wheelchair ramps. The scope of these localized rehabilitations will be determined at the detailed design stage, consistent with the project budget.

Will traffic calming islands be included as part of the improvements?

Traffic calming islands are not specifically part of these options. The narrower driving lanes in all three options help promote traffic calming.

Wheeling Lanes

Was an option considered to install a wheeling facility on a road other than 26 Avenue S.W.?

Yes, The City did consider aligning the wheeling facility along 25 Avenue S.W. east of 20 Street S.W. However, there are very steep hills in this area which are not accessible for users of all abilities. 26 Avenue S.W. is also one of the few roads in the area that is continuous from Sarcee Trail to 14 Street S.W. The directness of 26 Avenue S.W. including the crossing of Crowchild Trail makes it an appealing and convenient route for many users.

Will there be improvements at intersections along 26 Avenue S.W. to increase safety for wheeling users?

The improvements in all options would better protect and separate users in the wheeling lane, with physical separation from the driving lane. This would protect wheeling users from passenger vehicles along 26 Avenue S.W. and at intersections. It would also protect them from buses that currently stop in the painted wheeling lane, as wheeling lanes would be routed behind the bus stops.

Will there be traffic signals that apply to wheeling traffic and to vehicle traffic?

Detailed review of traffic signals will take place later during the design stage. Separate cycling signals may be considered, similar to what is provided on 12 Avenue S.W., but may also retain standard traffic signals only.

Was there a study conducted on the year-round usage of wheeling lanes?

We understand there is less demand and usage of wheeling lanes in the winter months. In this case, a year-round study of wheeling lane usage was not conducted. One of principles of the 5A Network is 'Always Available'. This refers to year-round conditions, meaning that wheeling lanes could be safe to be used and enjoyed all year. The biggest challenge is when wheeling lanes are covered in snow and not safe to use. When wheeling lanes are on street, The City will clear them as part of Priority 1 in the Snow and Ice Control Policy.

Transit

26 Avenue S.W. is important as a link between two BRT routes (MAX Teal on 37 Street S.W. and MAX Yellow on Crowchild Trail). How are connection points at these locations being considered for users to transition between modes of travel?

The project team is in conversation with Calgary Transit about connecting the wheeling facilities with the MAX Teal BRT stops on 37 Street S.W. Details haven't been fully developed but it is on the radar of this project. We often face constraints with property, and we have to make do with what we have available. The plan will also include transitions from the wheeling facility to the connections to/from the MAX Yellow stops on Crowchild Trail, below the overpass bridge.

What are the benefits of the new location of the transit stops?

Transit stops with inset waiting areas are now next to the driving lane. This allows people using transit to board the bus when it arrives without having to cross any wheeling lanes or a multi-use pathway. This also means transit users wouldn't exit the bus directly into the multi-use pathway or wheeling lane. Finally, it ensures that the wheeling lanes will not be blocked by buses at a transit stop.

Project Considerations

Has the project team considered less extensive options (e.g., speed bumps, reduced speed limits) rather than making infrastructure improvements to the entire corridor?

The smaller scale interventions can address some speeding concerns. However, these types of measures would not address the broader need to improve safety and mobility for all users.

How were the three options evaluated to ensure the optimal use of 26 Avenue S.W. as a transportation corridor?

The three options were evaluated based on the project goals, technical information, cost, and engagement feedback from the first phase of 26 Avenue S.W. in summer of 2021. The benefits and tradeoffs of each option are shared on the Engage Portal page and we welcome feedback from all communities members.

There are three options presented, but is there an option to make no changes to 26 Avenue S.W.?

A "do nothing" option is always considered. However, for this project it has not been carried forward as an option because it does not address the goals to improve safety and mobility for all users of the corridor.

It is recognized that all options have benefits and trade-offs, and we welcome community feedback on any aspect of the three options. The recommended improvements will be determined after the public engagement is completed for this project, considering public feedback along with technical and policy considerations.