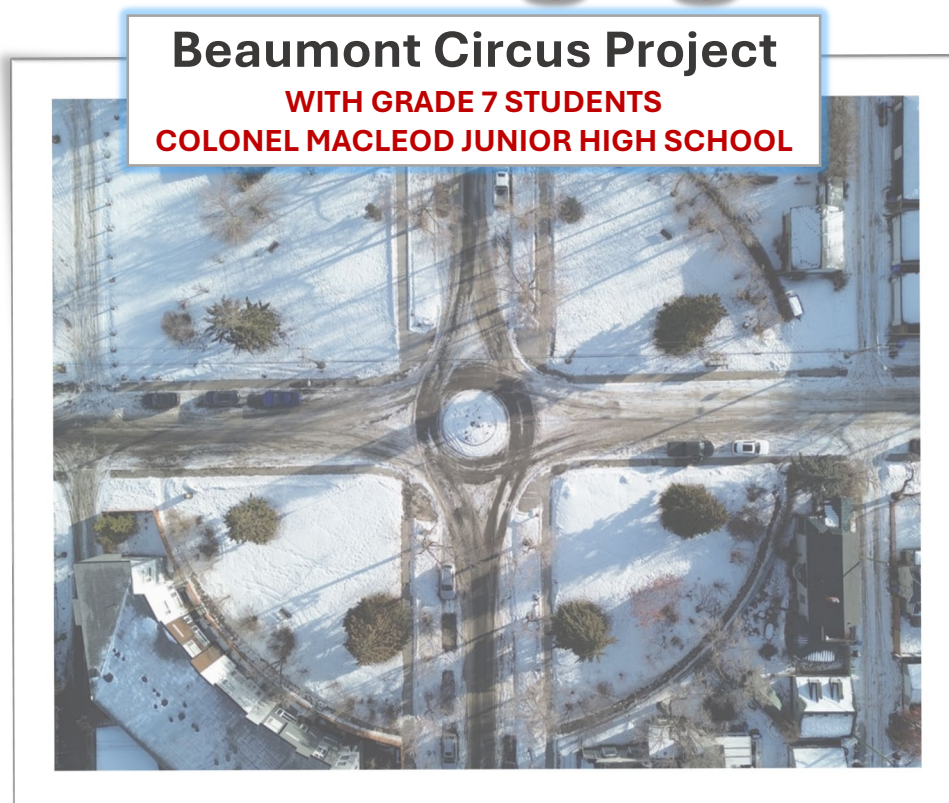




Student Engagement



Student Engagement Overview

On February 5 and 6, 2025 The Beaumont Circus Project team engaged with three Grade 7 classes with 20-25 students per class at Colonel Macleod Junior High School. The purpose of Student Engagement for the project are to:

- **Amplify Youth Voices:** Gather insights and perspectives directly from the students.
- **Collaborative Input:** Engage students in activities to shape the vision for the space.
- **Inform Design Process:** Contribute to Stage 1 of the engagement process, providing valuable input to help narrow down to two potential designs to be presented to the public.
- **Educate on Beaumont Circus History:** Provide students with knowledge about the historical significance of Beaumont Circus, part of the City Beautiful Movement.
- **Learn Design Methods:** Introduce students to various design methodologies, such as design thinking and participatory design.

Recognizing the importance of including youth voices, we partnered with Colonel Macleod Junior High, which is conveniently located just a 2-minute walk from the space. The proximity made it easy for the students to participate actively in the engagement activities. The Grade 7 students were also members of the Renfrew Community or in the neighbouring communities of Bridgeland, Renfrew or Vista Heights.



Presentation Overview

An interactive presentation on The City's engagement process was delivered to the students, explaining how decisions are made and highlighting the importance of youth voices and perspectives, particularly for this project.



The students were educated on the historical context of Beaumont Circus, sharing the City Beautiful Movement, Beaumont Circus through the years, design inspirations, and how design principles are used.

Activity Overview

Image credit: O2 Design

The project team engaged with the students through the following Beaumont Circus **Design Pro** activities (prepared by O2 Design):

About Activity #1

On January 30, the students went outdoors for an **empathy walk and site visit** to the Beaumont Circus site and explored the park as a public space. Students were asked to think about:

- Who lives in the nearby houses and what type of activities they might want or not want

- What are the needs of the community and how the park can serve these needs

Students were assigned various roles (such as a wheelchair user, retiree, or young parent) and were asked to identify needs the individuals they were role-playing might encounter with the existing infrastructure.

Student input from the empathy walk (shared by the teachers):

Role	Ideas 💡
Sam - Wheelchair User	• Sidewalks through each area • Ramps • Pathway leading to benches • Swing for kids with special needs • Picnic table that is accessible for a wheelchair
Taylor - Young parent with toddler	• Picnic tables • Kids area/playground
Jordan - Senior	• Painted crosswalks and stop signs • More benches • Paved paths • Flowers
Casey – Junior High Student	• Sports equipment: basketball, volleyball, soccer, four square, skating, skate park • Swings/Playground • Control traffic noises • Picnic tables
Morgan - Business Owner	• Important events sign/community events • Chairs and tables
Riley - New Immigrant	• Community things • Benches/picnic tables • Playground to meet new people • Words in different languages • Signs that show the community history

About Activity #2

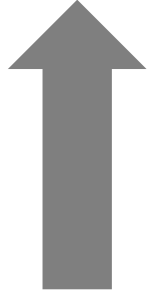
On February 4 (the first day of student engagement), the students were asked to **think like an urban designer**, develop design goals for the park and set the stage for public space design. They were also asked to rank and evaluate the design goals in order of importance for the park and why.

The four design goals the students were asked to focus on are:

- All community members feel welcome and excited to use the space.
- Nature is integrated into the park experience.
- Good access and circulation patterns for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Heritage and community identity are celebrated.

As a result of this activity, the students ranked the following design principles in order of importance and shared some ideas for each category:

Most Important



- 1) **Welcoming:** (playground with diverse equipment, picnic tables, fun seating, spaces for community gathering, shade structure, water fountain, splash pad, multilingual signs, lights for nighttime,)
- 2) **Nature:** (bee friendly plants, crab apple, fish pond, fire pit, acorn trees, no fences, natural play, reduce concrete)
- 3) **Good Access and Circulation:** (wide, curved, and straight paths, separate pedestrians and cyclists, close the road and open for pedestrians, ramps, more benches, no steep hills, handrail,)
- 4) **Cultural and History:** (adding a statue, different cultures with pictures, informational signage, showing old photos and writing its history)

Least Important

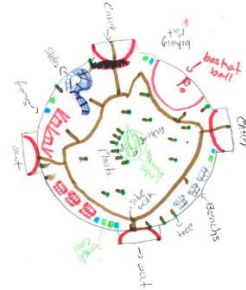
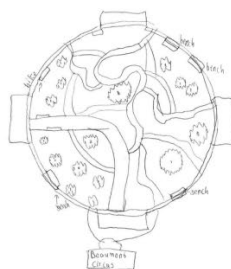
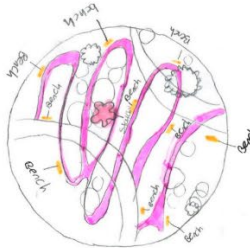
About Activity #3

On February 5 (second and final day of student engagement) In this final design activity, the students **refined the design** by evaluating possible options against the goals. Some students also creatively sketched their refinements, highlighting nature and activity-focused ideas.



Nature focused

Activity focused

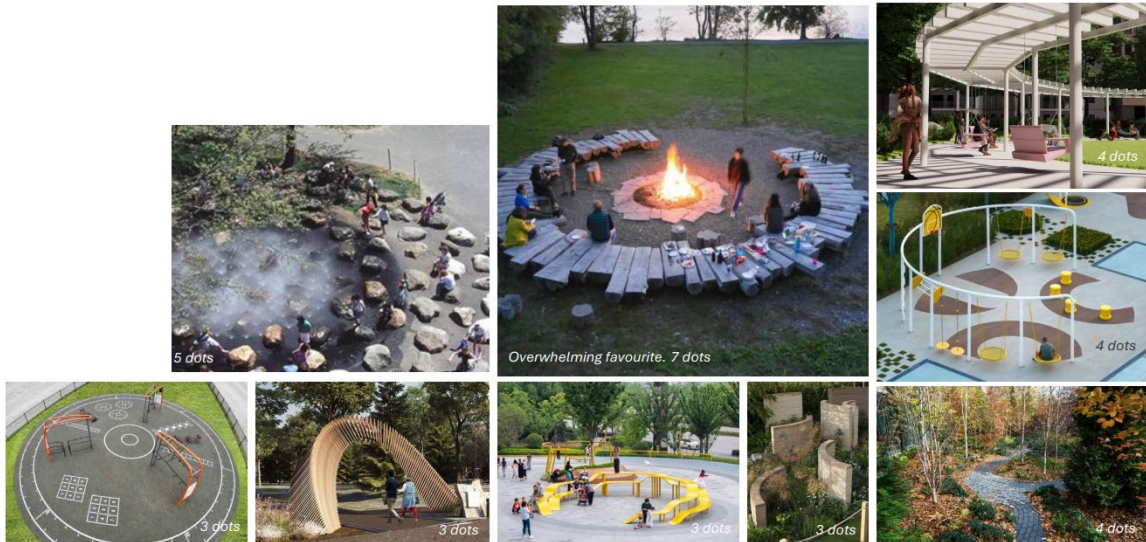


O2

Image credit: O2 Design

The students also participated in a **dotmocracy exercise**, where they were given six dots to place on example activity images to indicate their favourites for the park.

The students had a clear preference for cozy and natural gathering spots. The fireplace example seems to be a big hit with seven dots, and the stone seat and pond area also received a lot of interest with five dots. (see image below)



Student Engagement Evaluation

On the final day of student engagement, at the end of each session, the students were asked to provide two stars and one wish about the project and activities.

★ ★ Two-Stars Feedback

Summary of what the students liked about **the project**:

- **Nature and Trees:** Many students appreciated the presence of trees, nature, and the overall natural environment.
- **Park Features:** Specific features like the campfire, water puddle, benches, and pathways were highlighted.
- **Space and Cleanliness:** The spaciousness and cleanliness of the park were positively noted.
- **Community and Creativity:** Students enjoyed contributing to something important for Calgary and liked the creative ideas related to heritage, welcoming, and nature.
- **Play Areas:** The playground and playing area ideas for kids were well-received.
- **Event-Specific Features:** The idea of having food trucks only for events was mentioned.

I liked how we get to put things everyone in the community will like

Overall, the students appreciated the blend of nature, community involvement, and creative features in the project.

Summary of what the students liked about the **presentation and activities**:

- **Group Work and Collaboration:** Many students enjoyed working in groups, collaborating with friends, and sharing ideas.
- **Walking and Outdoor Activities:** The walk to the park and being outside were frequently mentioned as enjoyable aspects.
- **Idea Contribution:** Students appreciated that their ideas were considered and valued, and they liked giving helpful suggestions.
- **Designing and Creativity:** The opportunity to design the park and create drawings was a highlight for many.
- **Learning and Engagement:** Students liked learning new things, discussing nature and park structures, and seeing what the City does.
- **Presentations and Feedback:** They enjoyed the presentations and the chance to voice their opinions and receive feedback.
- **Fun and Enjoyment:** Overall, the activity was seen as fun and engaging, with students enjoying the creative and collaborative aspects.



Overall, it sounded like the students had a great time working together and contributing to the project!

One-Wish Feedback

Summary of what the students wished for about the **project**:



- **Enhanced Features:** Students wished for a really big entrance, a fountain, a zipline, and more benches and sidewalks.
- **Sports and Recreation:** They wanted a sports area, a basketball court, a soccer pitch, and a playground.
- **Nature and Accessibility:** More nature, a pond, and better accessibility were common wishes.
- **Community and Connectivity:** Students hoped for features that would enhance community connection and interaction.
- **Food Options:** There were wishes for an ice cream car and a hotdog car.
- **Improved Pathways:** Better pathways and the removal of a road in the middle were mentioned.
- **Completion and Realization:** Some students expressed a desire for the project to be completed quickly and for their ideas to become reality.

Overall, the students had a variety of wishes to make the park more enjoyable, accessible, and community focused.

Summary of what the students wished for about the **process/activity**:

- **Snacks and Fun:** Some students wished for snacks like Hot Cheetos and generally more fun activities.
- **More Park Visits:** They wanted more opportunities to visit the park and experience it in real life.
- **Faster Project Completion:** There was a desire for the park to be built faster so they could enjoy it sooner.
- **Extended Time:** Students wished for more time to work on the project and think about their ideas.
- **Less Writing:** A few students mentioned they would have preferred less writing.
- **More Walking and Exploration:** They enjoyed the walking and wished for more opportunities to explore.
- **Seeing More:** Some students wanted to see more aspects of the project and the park.

I wish that maybe the build can be done faster so I can hang out with my friends at the park

Overall, the students had a few wishes to make the process even more enjoyable and engaging



An Inclusive Student Engagement Story

This student engagement initiative was attentive to language barriers and individual needs, ensuring that all students could participate fully and feel included. A particularly heartwarming story involved a Ukrainian City staff member who provided translation services to a group of Ukrainian students who spoke little English. This support not only enabled the students to participate and feel included in the activities but also helped them connect personally with the Ukrainian City staff member. Additionally, the initiative catered to individual preferences by allowing students to express their ideas through writing or drawing, depending on what they were most comfortable with.

Next Steps

We hope to see the students and their families at the upcoming public engagement events, and we are looking forward to sharing the final design with the students.

***It was lovely
having you at
the school,
working with
our kiddos!
-Miss M***

***I would absolutely
love to have you
come back and
present the final
design to them
-Ms. K***

***I love it when we
can take the
learning into "real
world" situations.
-Ms. K***

Grade 7 Teacher's Feedback