



The Cochrane Corridors Plan:

The Future of Four Key Corridors
in Cochrane

..... June 2021 | Draft V2



PREPARED FOR:

Town of Cochrane
101 RancheHouse Road
Cochrane, AB T4C 2K8

October 2020 - V1

PREPARED BY:

Urban Systems Ltd.
101 – 134 11th Avenue SE
Calgary, AB T2G 0X5

File: 1728.0404.01

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....1
CORRIDOR PLANNING APPROACH.....2
FUNCTION OF CORRIDORS.....4
ELEMENTS OF VIBRANCY.....5
CONTEXT.....6

Fifth Avenue

What we Observed.....8
What we Heard.....12
What we Learned14
What we can Achieve Together16
Fifth Avenue: Existing19
Fifth Avenue: Future.....21

Railway Street

What we Observed.....22
What we Heard.....26
What we Learned.....28
What we can Achieve Together30
Railway Street: Existing33
Railway Street: Future.....35

River Avenue

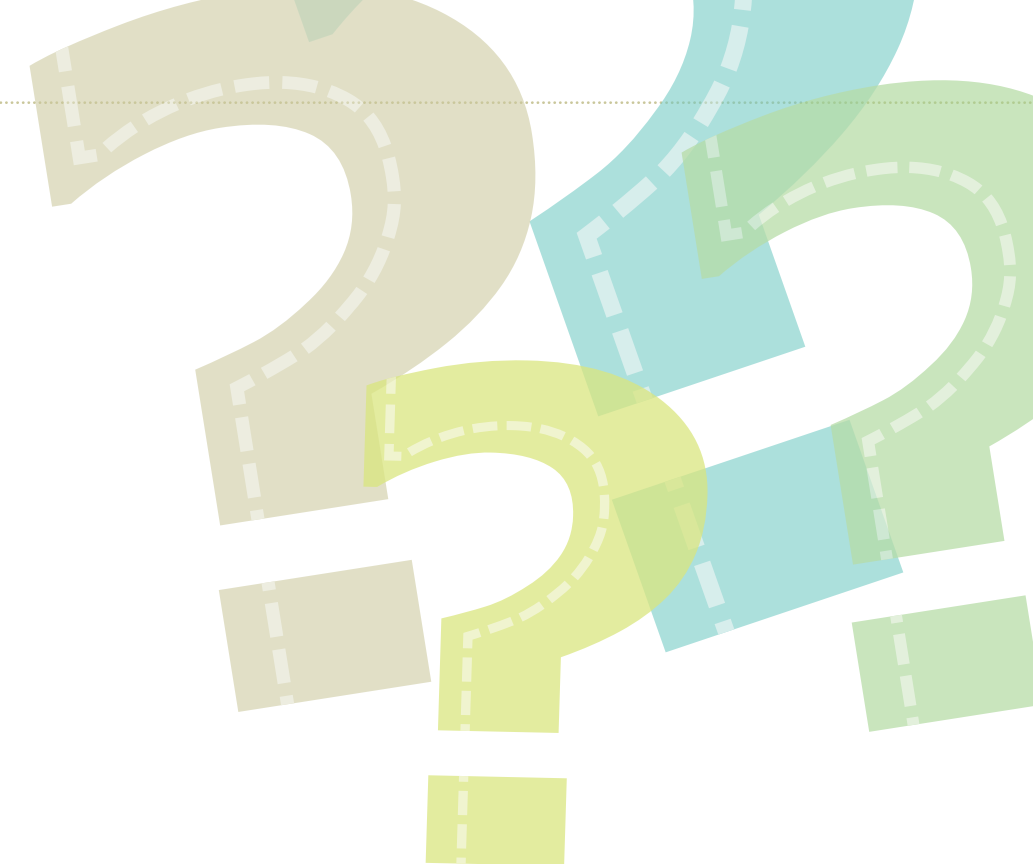
What we Observed.....36
What we Heard.....40
What we Learned42
What we can Achieve Together(N)44
What we can Achieve Together(S)46
River Avenue (N): Existing49
River Avenue (N): Future.....51
River Avenue (S): Existing.....53
River Avenue (S): Future.....55

Griffin Road

What we Observed.....56
What we Heard.....60
What we Learned62
What we can Achieve Together64
Griffin Road: Existing67
Griffin Road: Future.....69

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE.....70





PURPOSE

Corridors (streets) play a critical role in our community. They connect us to key destinations that we visit and reside, and they provide space for public events and recreation.

The Town of Cochrane is in a unique position to imagine how these four corridors can function for people, bikes, and cars in the future and ensure these corridors continue to contribute to the character of Cochrane's Downtown.

This Corridor Planning report is intended to provide direction to future planning, redevelopment and decision making along these corridors.

Corridor Planning APPROACH...



JULY - AUGUST 2019 PROJECT KICKOFF

We spent the summer walking the corridors, researching best practices and preparing project materials.



SEPTEMBER 2019 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

We hosted a day of pop-up spaces and encouraged public participation online via Let's Talk Cochrane.



ONLINE 478 Responses

- Questions:**
- How and why do people travel together on each corridor?
 - Does the corridor function like a link or a place?
 - Potential Improvements?



- POP-UP ENGAGEMENT**
- 1 Day - September 12, 2019
 - 10+ Hours
 - 4 Corridors
 - 5 Locations:
 - » Cochrane Public Library
 - » The Garden on River Avenue
 - » Cochrane Safeway
 - » Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sport Centre
 - » Night Market
 - 100+ People Participated
 - "Go to Them" Approach



- COUNCIL WORKSHOP**
- Strategic Workshop with Council
 - » Walked and/or drove each of the 4 corridors and gathered observations and insights



OCTOBER 2019 - MARCH 2020 DRAFT CORRIDOR VISIONS

Prepared a draft vision and principles for each corridor to guide future planning, development and decision making along the corridors.



MAY - JULY 2021 FINALIZE CORRIDOR VISIONS & REPORT BACK

We will report back to the community and share the finalized vision and guiding principles for each corridor.

Function of CORRIDORS...

Street corridors are some of the most important public spaces in our community and play a number of critical roles that contribute to the health, success and strength of our community. In general street corridors function on a spectrum providing Links Between Places on one end and People Places on the other.

Within that spectrum, street corridors play a number of specific roles including:

- Allow the efficient distribution of goods across our community and beyond;
- Enable people of all ages and abilities to move throughout the community in various ways to meet their daily needs;
- Support local business and economic development by providing efficient access to local business and industry;
- Facilitate an active and healthy community by providing accessible recreation corridors where people can walk, jog and bike; and
- Provide social spaces where people can meet, interact and ultimately build a stronger community.

Our street corridors are public spaces that we share and take responsibility for as a community. Defining our long term aspirations for each corridor is the focus of this exercise.



Links Between Places

Corridors that are links between places are often familiar, key routes. They are places that people use to move efficiently between destinations.



People Places

Streets that are people places can be destinations unto themselves. They can be places where people get together and enjoy spending their time.

Elements of VIBRANCY



ACTIVE INTERFACE

Are street frontages where there is an active visual engagement between individuals on the street and those on the ground floor inside the building. This relationship is especially strong when the building and its main entrance is oriented to the street and there is significant building transparency and outdoor seating and display space to engage pedestrians.



ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure the physical environment is intuitive to navigate, free of obstacles, simple to use and comfortably accommodates everyone, regardless of age or ability. This element includes appropriate wayfinding, detectable colours and material types, and modest grade changes.



ACCOMMODATES MULTIPLE MODES

Encourages residents and visitors alike to access, experience and enjoy the corridor while walking, riding a bike, on transit, or in a car.



SAFETY

Users feel welcome and able to use the space. Facilities are well designed and maintained, highly visible both day and night, can be visually secured by adjacent activities, and encourage interaction with others.



MULTIPLE REASONS TO BE THERE

The corridor supports a wide variety of activities, events and land uses throughout the day and evening that contribute to the energy, experience and safety of the place and in turn reinforce the social and economic structure of the community



COMFORT

Spaces are welcoming, enjoyable and easy to use, where pedestrians are protected from the elements, are free to move at their own pace and can stop to rest along the way.

CONTEXT...



In alignment with Cochrane's Community Vision, the Town is focused on continuing to build a dynamic Downtown that is highly connected, livable and a thriving employment hub. Railway Street, Fifth Avenue, Griffin Road and River Avenue are key corridors within the Downtown and are currently experiencing development pressures from extensive neighbourhood development to site specific intensification. The Town is also investing significantly in the Downtown to improve connectivity, support economic development and resiliency and to continue to provide a high level of service for residents and businesses. As redevelopment and Town investments occur within the Downtown, it is critical that the relationship between future land uses, built forms and adjacent corridors are considered and that these improvements support the achieve of the Town's long-term Vision.

MARKET ANALYSIS

In support of corridor planning a corridor-focused market analysis was conducted to review land use trends and assess the development potential along the four corridors to better understand what is possible in terms of land-use, character, and form over the short-, medium-, and long-terms.



RESIDENTIAL

The residential market has seen price reductions and some developments struggle with absorption. The price reductions have specifically hurt the market for multi-family developments, as the price differential between single family and new multi-family homes has narrowed. The reduced demand for multi-family condominium homes will impact mixed-use development in the short term, but there is optimism that the residential market will begin to correct within a year. While the market for apartment condominiums is not strong, there does appear to be some potential for new rental residential units, though the development community sees this as a relatively untried product type in the study area corridor locations.



RETAIL

The retail market is seen to be quite healthy, with relatively low vacancy rates and only a small drop in retail lease rates seen as a result of the economic slowdown in Alberta. The strength of the retail market in Cochrane results from several factors, including the popularity of Cochrane amongst visitors and the strong employment and local resident market. Interviews with brokers and developers indicated continued demand for small to mid-box retail space, with some businesses not able to find the retail space they desire due to immediate-term supply limitations. Given the popularity of Cochrane for regional visitors, it is important that the Town continue to strengthen its pedestrian realm to retain and improve its attractive Downtown.



SERVICE COMMERCIAL / LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

The light industrial and service commercial market in Cochrane is strong, with a range of related businesses showing interest in having a local presence, which in turn has resulted in steady increases in light industrial land values. Much of the demand is reportedly coming from smaller local and regional-serving businesses. Congestion and circulation / parking challenges along River Street are in part a signal of Cochrane's industrial market vitality. There are sites along both Railway and Griffin, east of the Quarry retail and office development, that will likely be developed with intensified light industrial / service commercial and office uses over the short to medium term.

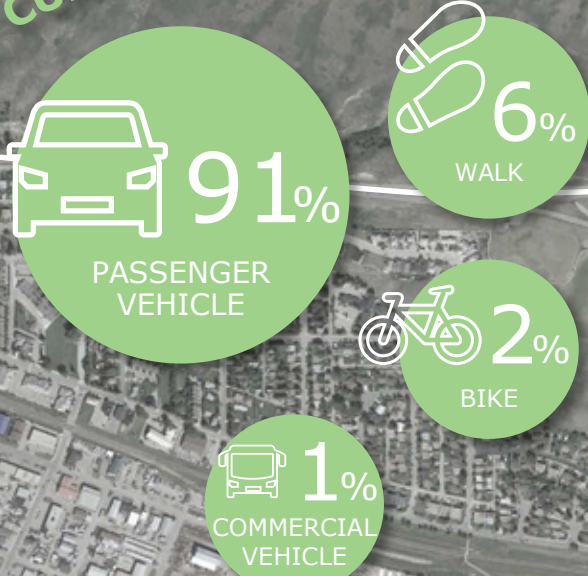
What we
OBSERVED...

Fifth Avenue

Fifth Avenue is a main north-south corridor on the westside of downtown and connects Highway 1A to Griffin Road. The corridor currently consists of two drive lanes, intermittent turning lanes to accommodate left-hand vehicular movements and sidewalks, the majority of which are directly adjacent to the roadway. Pedestrian facilities (benches, etc.) are limited on the corridor and cycling facilities are not provided.



CURRENT MODAL SPLIT



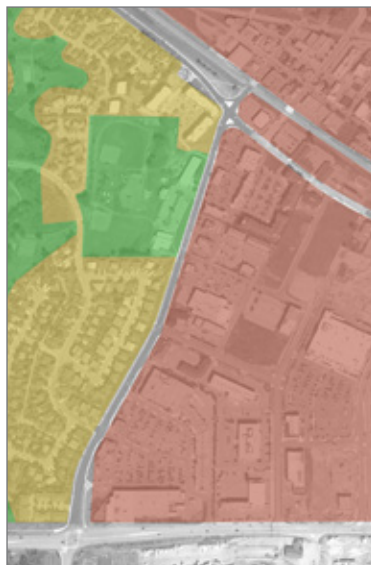
1,146m
Road Length

2,040m
Length of
Sidewalks

6ac
Approximate
Total Area

20.1m
Average Corridor
Width

6,100-12,900
Current Estimated
Vehicles Per Day



LAND USE

Land uses along Fifth Avenue are vehicular-oriented. The corridor primarily consists of large format commercial uses, specifically south of Railway Street along on the east side of the corridor. The neighbourhood of Glenbow interfaces with the west side of the corridor south of Railway Street. Community uses along the corridor include the Lion's Event Centre and Rodeo Grounds, and future Cochrane Central Park location.



EXAMPLES OF CURRENT LAND USE



FIGURE GROUND

Parcels adjacent to the east side of Fifth Avenue accommodate a significant amount of surface parking, while a substantial portion of the west side of the corridor interfaces with a concrete noise wall. Both of these interface conditions do not offer active edges.



EXAMPLES OF FIGURE GROUND/LAND MASSING



ACCESS

From Highway 1A to Griffin Road, Fifth Avenue consists of seven intersections and sixteen access points. Fifth Avenue represents one of three corridors that cross the rail line. Pedestrian crossings south of Railway Street are fairly limited and are located approximately 300m from major intersection crossings.



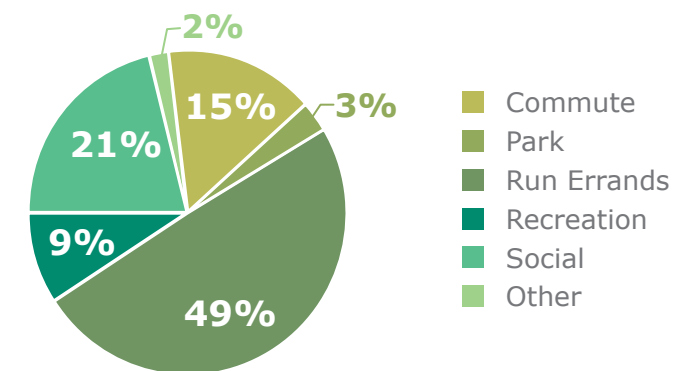
EXAMPLES OF ACCESS POINTS ON FIFTH AVENUE

What we HEARD...



FIFTH AVENUE ONLINE SURVEY FEEDBACK

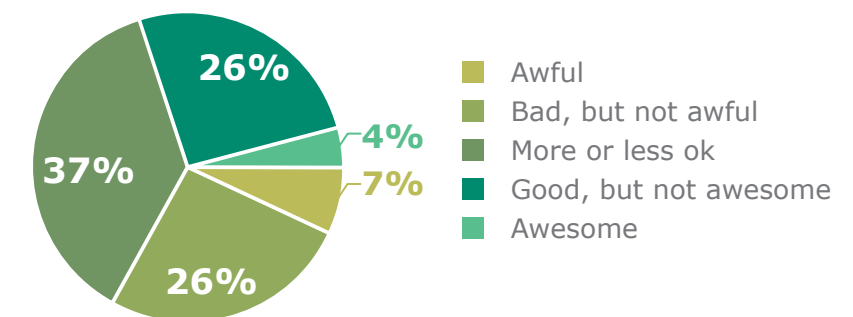
What is your primary reason for travelling along or visiting FIFTH AVE?



How do you feel Fifth Avenue performs as an EFFICIENT LINK between places?



How do you feel Fifth Avenue performs as a people place?



What we LEARNED...



Fifth Avenue functions as an important north-south vehicular LINK connecting Griffin Road to Highway 1A and ultimately through to Cochrane Heights in the near future. Fifth Avenue is one of only three railway crossings in Downtown Cochrane. The corridor provides direct access to numerous commercial businesses as well as the future Cochrane Central Park which will accommodate a variety of recreational and community activities throughout the year. Fifth Avenue currently includes one travel lane in each direction with a number of dedicated left-turn bays for southbound vehicles wanting to access the commercial area. The corridor does not currently accommodate any on-street parking.

The east side of the corridor is characterized by numerous business access points and inconsistent building forms that largely back onto the corridor. The west side of the corridor varies in character with a similar building form and relationship north of the railway tracks. The landscape opens up offering dramatic mountain views between the multi-family units at Railway Street and the single family/duplex units south of the former pool site. The balance of the west side of the corridor includes a sound wall and informal landscaping adjacent to the backyards of the single family/duplex residential units.



Redevelopment of retail-commercial frontage along Fifth Avenue (east side) is not anticipated over the short-term. Over a longer timeframe redevelopment of commercial properties into mixed-use developments is expected. As redevelopment of any form occurs improvement of the pedestrian realm and walkability along Fifth Avenue should be encouraged.

On the west side of Fifth Avenue, the Town-owned lands (Lions Club and Rodeo Grounds) offers the most immediate and significant redevelopment opportunity to improve connections across Fifth Avenue to the east side retail-commercial, improve the pedestrian infrastructure and introduce a variety of residential and institutional uses along the corridor.

*Move from a LINK to a PLACE
on the spectrum by enhancing the
pedestrian character and quality
of the corridor.*

There is a strong desire to maintain the functionality of Fifth Avenue for vehicles while improving the pedestrian environment. Consideration should be given to:

- Maintaining vehicular function along the corridor.
- Improving the relationship between building form and the corridor itself.
- Widening sidewalks to accommodate multiple users.
- Creating more active spaces along the corridor to improve utilization and vibrancy.



What we can Achieve TOGETHER...

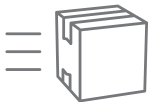
Fifth Avenue provides an important link between north and south downtown, delivers access to many Cochrane businesses and connects a number of residential neighbourhoods. This corridor has the potential to be one of Cochrane's great streets by creating a physical environment that is vibrant, active and comfortable, offers dramatic mountain and valley views and provides people with direct access to Cochrane's future Central Park and Community Centre. All while maintaining important traffic flows and connections.



MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Create a more positive, comfortable and interesting experience for pedestrians and cyclists and transit riders by:

- Widening the sidewalks to accommodate multiple users and to allow individuals to walk/wheel side by side.
- Separating the sidewalks from the roadway to improve safety.
- Planting street trees to emphasize the importance of the corridor and to create a more consistent and visually appealing space.
- Creating additional crosswalks to improve the connectivity from one side of the corridor to the other.
- Ensuring pedestrian facilities are built based on universal design principles so that everyone, regardless of ability, can safely utilize the corridor.
- Ensuring the streetscape is designed to accommodate a "clear path" free of obstructions for those with vision loss and reduced mobility.
- Ensuring land use policy along the corridor encourages future redevelopment and intensification that is multi-storey, active (i.e. ground level retail, outdoor seating and patios) and oriented toward the street to support pedestrian interest and safety and enhance community vibrancy along the corridor.



MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Ensure the ongoing efficient movement of goods by:

- Consolidating business access points.
- Continuing to prohibit on-street parking.



SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create a physical environment that supports local business and economic development by:

- Making it easier for people to walk to local services and amenities.
- Directing residential density to areas adjacent to the corridor increasing the local market within close proximity to corridor services and amenities.
- Encouraging outdoor patios and seating spaces along the corridor to capitalize on the dramatic mountain and park views.
- Ensuring future (re)development faces the corridor itself.



RECREATION

Encourage active community living by:

- Establishing a multi-purpose trail on the west side of the corridor to support a wide range of people-powered mobility devices (i.e. bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc.).
- Creating multiple connections to surrounding neighbourhoods to make walking for daily services more realistic and comfortable.



SOCIAL INTERACTION + COMMUNITY BUILDING

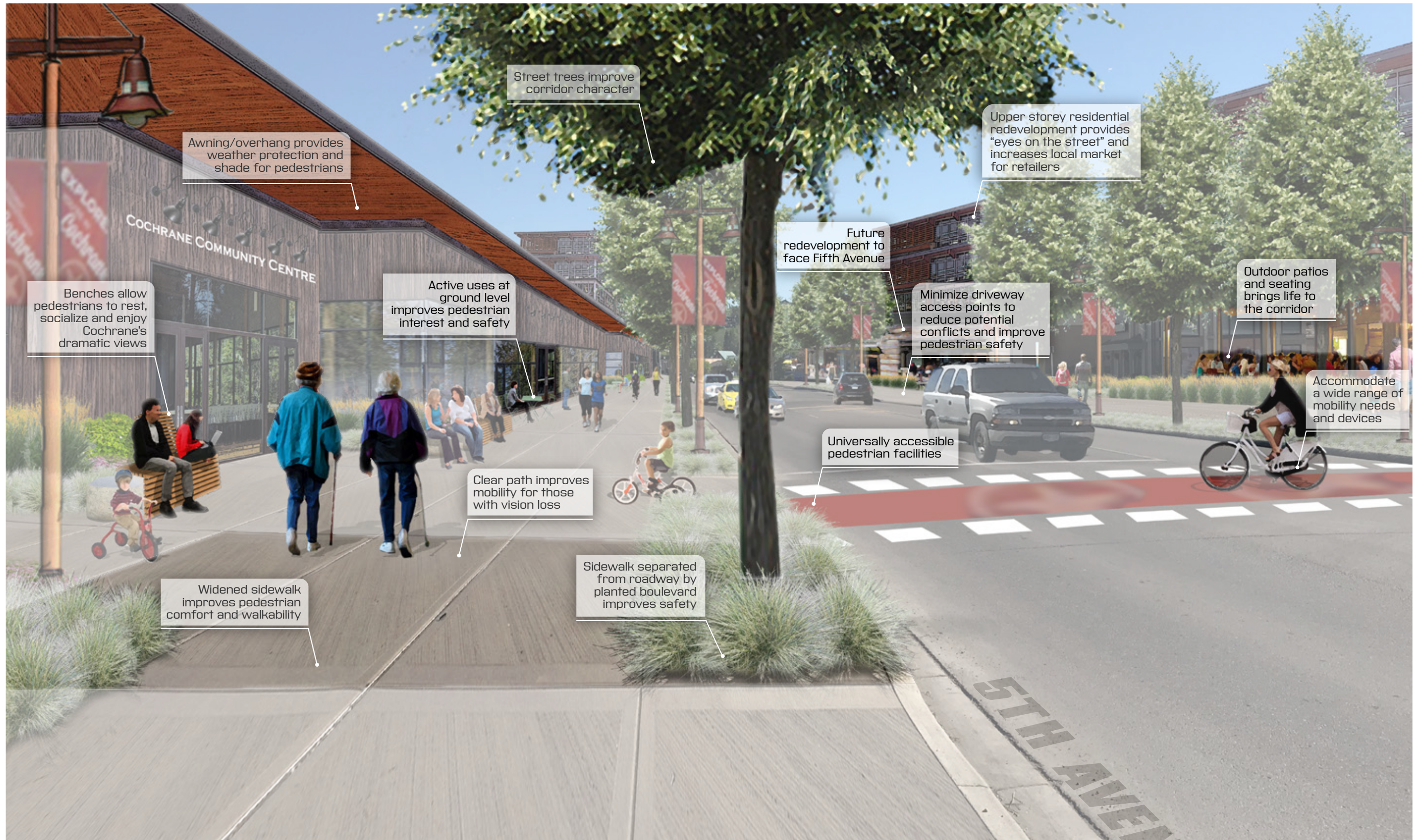
Create a variety of opportunities for people to meet and socialize along the corridor by:

- Providing benches to allow users to rest, socialize and enjoy the dramatic mountain views.
- Integrating the future design and development of Cochrane Central Park with the activities along the corridor.





Fifth Avenue: Existing



Fifth Avenue: Future

What we
OBSERVED...

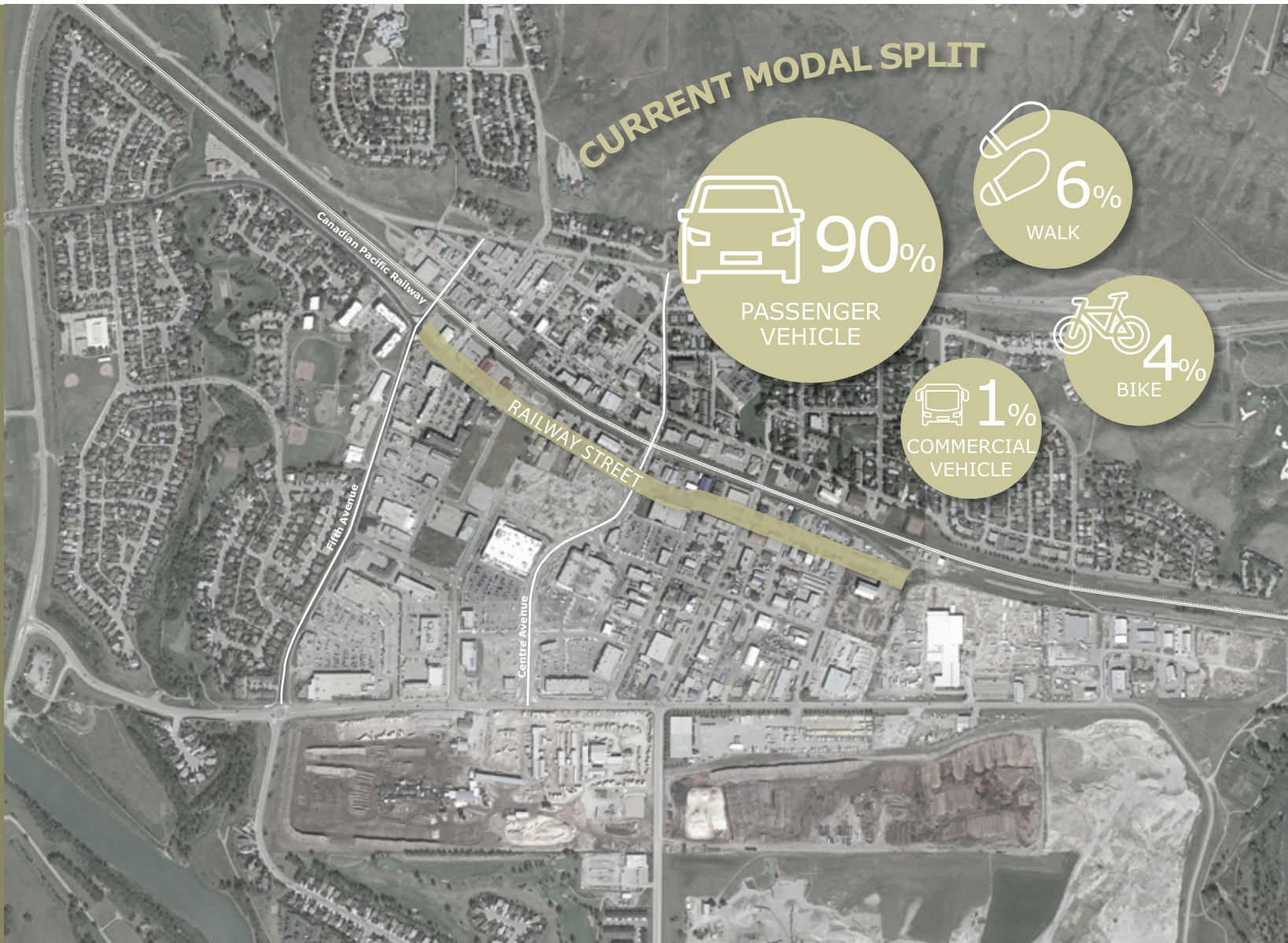
Railway Street



Railway Street is a key east-west corridor on the south side of downtown. Through Connecting Cochrane, Railway Street was identified as a key connector for all modes of transportation (pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles) as it intersects with Fifth Avenue, Centre Avenue and River Avenue, which provide access across the rail tracks within Downtown.

Railway Street currently consists of two drive lanes, intermittent turning lanes to accommodate left-hand vehicular movements at key intersections and street parking along both the north and south side of the corridor. Only a portion of the corridor is serviced with sidewalks and shared bike lanes (sharrows) are marked along segments of the corridor.

The Town is currently advancing key investments in the area, including the development of the Transit and Innovation Hub, a pedestrian rail track crossing and exploration of an Arts and Cultural Hub. The Transit and Innovation Hub will function as a space to access local and regional transit, other municipal services and office space.



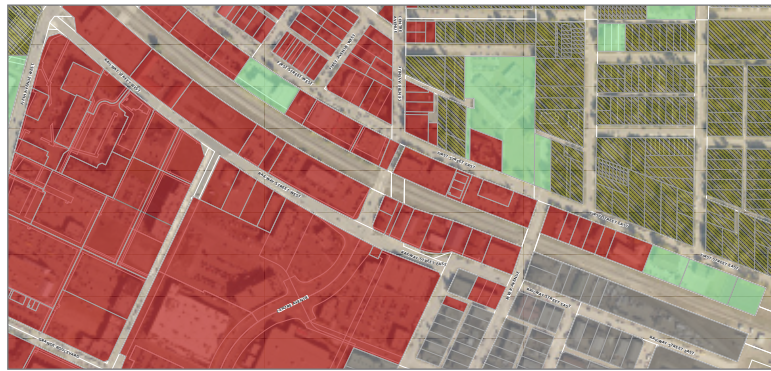
1,208m
Road Length

630m
Length of
Sidewalks

6ac
Approximate
Total Area

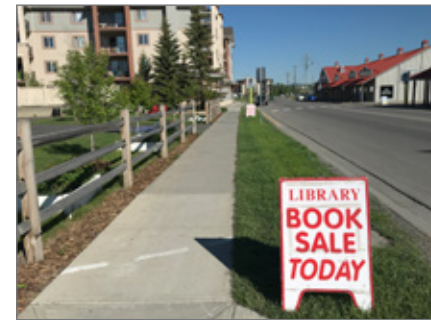
15m-23m
Average Corridor
Width

7,500
Current Estimated
Vehicles Per Day



LAND USE

Commercial and industrial land uses are currently designated along Railway Street. This has facilitated a variety of existing uses, ranging from mixed-use multi-family to vehicular-oriented commercial and industrial uses. The corridor is also experiencing significant transition, reflected through new development, primarily on the south side of the corridor along with several vacated lots.



EXAMPLES OF CURRENT LAND USE

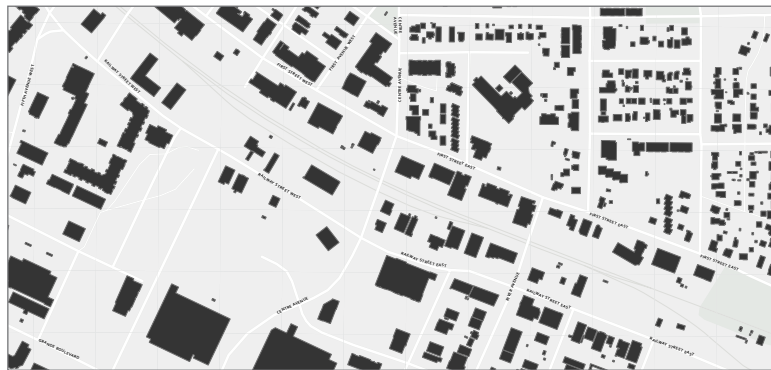


FIGURE GROUND

The character and interface along the corridor changes greatly as you travel from west to east and/or from the north to the south side of the street. Portions of the corridor provide active commercial uses, adjacent to the edge of the corridor, while other uses are setback with parking lots adjacent to the street. Vacant lots, specifically west of Centre Avenue create substantial, unoccupied breaks along the corridor.



EXAMPLES OF FIGURE GROUND/LAND MASSING



ACCESS

As Railway Street is adjacent to the railway tracks, access from the north is limited to only three locations across the 1.2km stretch. Access from the south to Railway Street is more frequent east of Centre Avenue as large format retail limits intersection spacing on the west side. Lot access along the corridor is primarily provided via Railway Street, resulting in close to 40 individual access points.



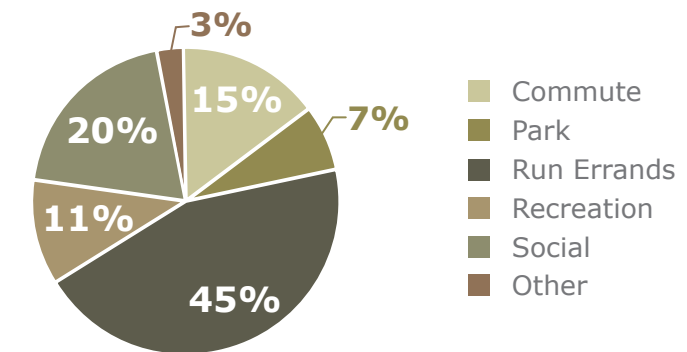
EXAMPLES OF ACCESS POINTS ON RAILWAY STREET

What we HEARD...



RAILWAY STREET ONLINE SURVEY FEEDBACK

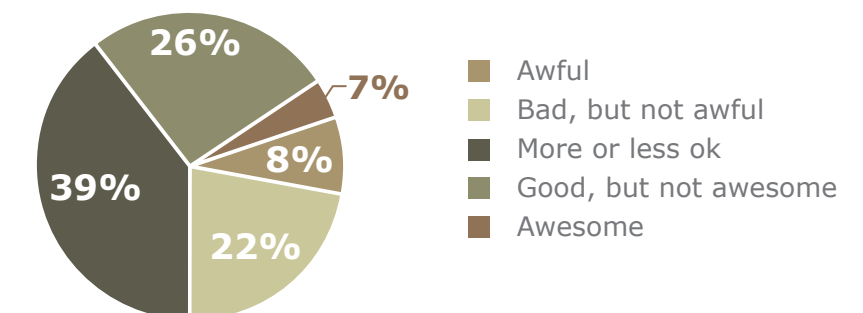
What is your primary reason for travelling along or visiting RAILWAY STREET?



How do you feel Railway Street performs as an EFFICIENT LINK between places?



How do you feel Railway Street performs as a people place?



What we
LEARNED...



Railway Street offers significant redevelopment potential, as it lies within easy walking distance of downtown employment providers and both neighbourhood and regional-serving retail amenities and includes several sites that are either vacant or significantly under-developed. Improvements along Centre Avenue and the introduction of transit will offer increased accessibility to the Railway Street.

Redevelopment sites along Railway Street (e.g. two Town-owned sites, the Dodge site, and the Ford site) should serve as catalysts for future redevelopment and improved public realm treatments, which will better support its role as a pedestrian and public transit route. Requiring better building siting, landscaping and pedestrian circulation should be made a priority for all future Railway Street redevelopment. The Town-owned sites represent an opportunity for the Town of Cochrane to make a clear statement about Railway Street's optimal role as a more pedestrian-friendly route and location for future mixed-use development. Plans for the sites should therefore include strong pedestrian realm treatments along the site edges.



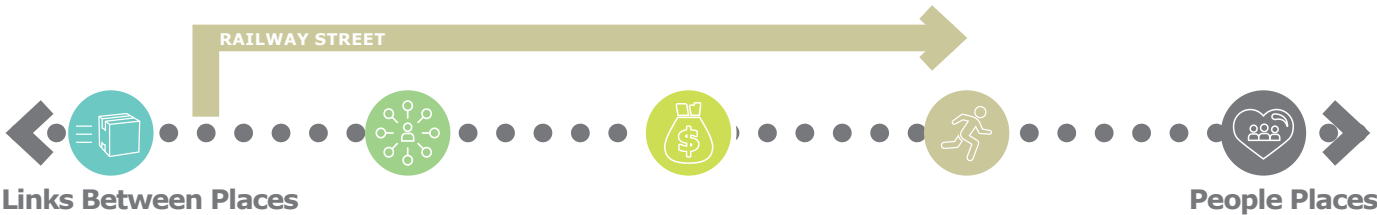
East of Centre Avenue, Railway Street will continue to be focused on employment uses, including both light industrial and service-commercial businesses. Increased access to this area of Town will be beneficial.

As development along the corridor occurs, the pedestrian at-grade connection to the Historic Downtown is built and transit (regional and local) is introduced at the Transit and Innovation Hub, it is critical all modes of transportation can move across the corridor.

Move from a LINK to a PLACE on the spectrum by enhancing the pedestrian character and quality of the corridor.

Over the short to medium-term, as redevelopment along both the northern and southern portions of Railway Street occurs, consideration should be given to:

- Maintaining vehicular function along the corridor, while shifting the prioritization towards other modes through the installation of continuous sidewalks along the corridor, introduction of bike lanes and traffic calming measures.
- Improving the relationship between building form and the corridor itself.
- Encouraging active edges from spaces along the corridor to improve utilization and vibrancy.



What we can Achieve TOGETHER...

Railway Street functions as an important east-west corridor connecting the established neighbourhood of Glenbow through downtown to Cochrane's industrial employment area. With significant investments being made in the Transit and Innovation Hub, Railway Street is poised to become a special street that accommodates all modes of transportation, provides an active and engaging street front and is a catalyst for future mixed-use redevelopment and intensification to support local business along the corridor.



MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Create a more positive, comfortable and interesting experience for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders by:

- Establishing a continuous, widened sidewalk on both sides of the street to improve pedestrian comfort, accommodate multiple users, and allow individuals to walk/wheel side by side.
- Separating the sidewalk from the roadway to improve pedestrian safety.
- Planting consistent street trees to emphasize the importance of the corridor and to create a more visually appealing space.
- Establishing a direct, highly visible and inviting connection to the at-grade pedestrian railway crossing linking north and south downtown.
- Creating an active and vibrant central gathering space that connects the library/theatre to the Transit and Innovation Hub and pedestrian railway crossing.
- Establishing regular crosswalks to improve the connectivity from one side of the corridor to the other.
- Ensuring pedestrian facilities are built based on universal design principles so that everyone, regardless of ability, can safely utilize the corridor.
- Ensuring the streetscape is designed to accommodate a "clear path" free of obstructions for those with vision loss and reduced mobility.
- Relocating visually intrusive overhead powerlines underground freeing up additional space for public realm improvements.
- Establishing consistent on-street cycling facilities to encourage healthy modes of travel.
- Requiring highly visible and easily accessible bicycle parking in front of businesses along the corridor.
- Creating a positive and safe physical environment that supports the efficient circulation of Town transit vehicles.

- Ensuring land use policy along the corridor requires future redevelopment and intensification that is multi-storey, active (i.e. ground level retail, outdoor seating and patios) and oriented toward the street, to support pedestrian interest and safety and enhance community vibrancy along the corridor.



MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Ensure the ongoing efficient movement of goods by:

- Creating an easy to understand corridor with good site lines, lighting, intuitive on-street parking and public transit layby's.
- Consolidating business access points to reduce potential vehicle-pedestrian conflict.



SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create a physical environment that supports local business and economic development by:

- Making it easier for people to walk, cycle or take transit to and from local services and amenities in Downtown Cochrane.
- Providing on-street parking, where the right-of-way is wide enough, to support street facing (re)development activity.
- Directing residential density to areas adjacent to the corridor increasing the local market within close proximity to corridor services and amenities.
- Encouraging outdoor patios and seating spaces along the corridor to support retail activity, generate interest and activate the street, especially on the north side of the corridor which benefits from southern exposure to the sun.
- Ensuring future (re)development faces the corridor itself.



RECREATION

Encourage active community living by:

- Establishing continuous sidewalks and bike lanes that enable people of all ages to safely walk or bike from Cochrane's western neighbourhoods to the services, amenities and employment opportunities in Downtown Cochrane.
- Creating multiple connections to adjacent neighbourhoods to make walking, cycling and transit for daily services more realistic and comfortable.



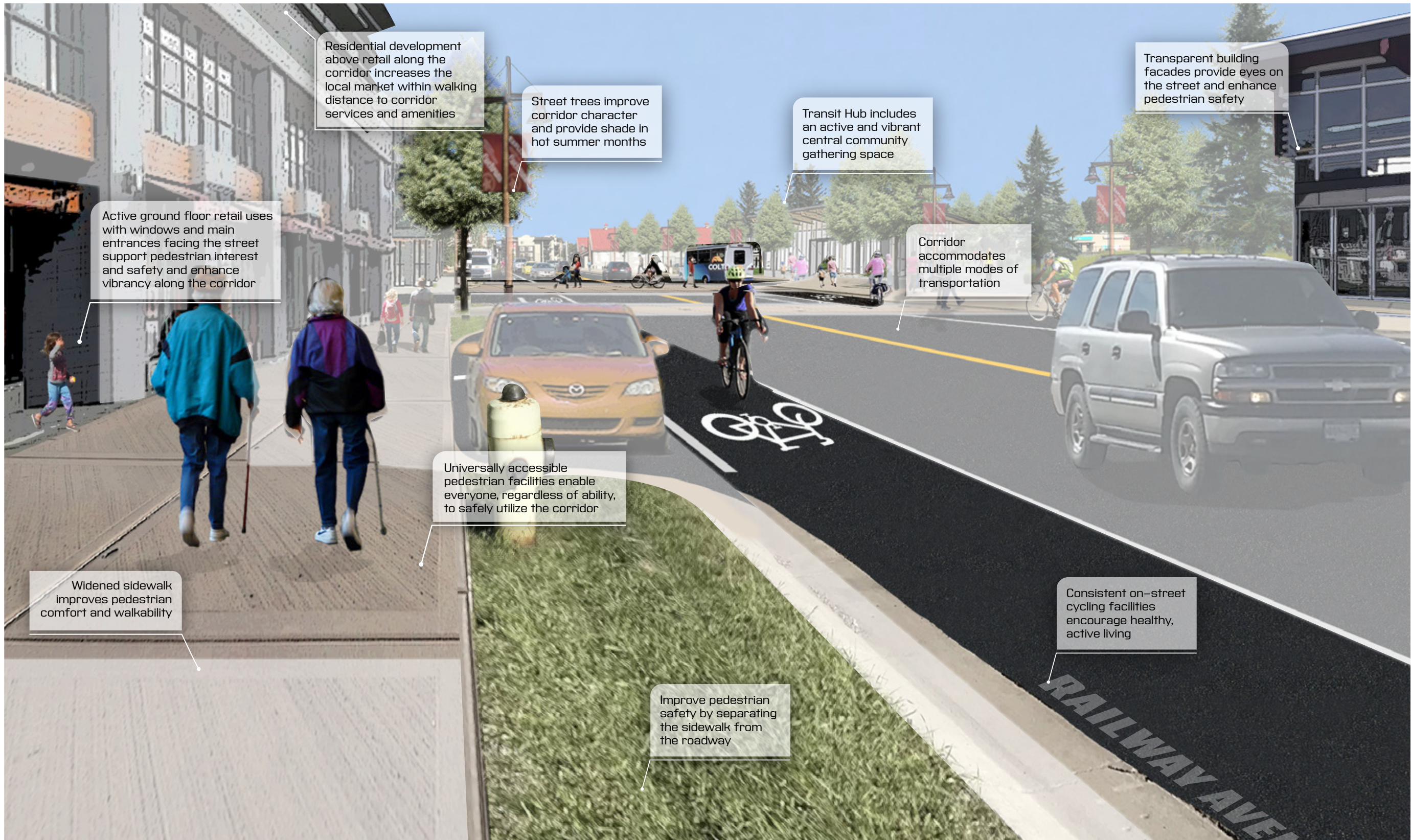
SOCIAL INTERACTION + COMMUNITY BUILDING

Create a variety of opportunities for people to meet and socialize along the corridor by:

- Allowing users to maintain conversations by providing wide enough sidewalks to walk/wheel side by side.
- Providing regular seating areas to allow users to rest, socialize and enjoy Cochrane's dramatic scenery.
- Developing a central plaza as part of the Transit and Innovation Hub that is a place for Cochrane residents and tourists to gather for various community events and functions as the link between north and south downtown.



Railway Street: Existing



Railway Street: Future

What we
OBSERVED...

River Avenue



River Avenue is the most easterly corridor that crosses the railway tracks within Cochrane. River Avenue extends from the East End neighbourhood to the Bow River. The character and function of River Avenue changes drastically between its north and south segments. Between the railway tracks and Griffin Road, River Avenue supports a bustling employment area, while on the south side of Griffin Road, the character of River Avenue is largely defined by large tracks of industrial and vacant lands.

River Avenue currently consists of two drive lanes and parking on the east and west sides of the corridor. Only a portion of the corridor is currently served by sidewalks and/or pathways.

The interface along the southern portion of River Avenue is currently in transition. Redevelopment along the eastern portion just south of Griffin Road is currently underway, which will provide an improved pathway connection south to the River. The future community of Greystone will interface with a significant portion of River Avenue south of Griffin Road.

2,039m
Road Length

577m
Length of
Sidewalks

10ac
Approximate
Total Area

20m
Average Corridor
Width

2,000-5,000
Current Estimated
Vehicles Per Day



LAND USE

Outside of a few parcels, lands adjacent to River Avenue along the northern portion are zoned industrial. The southern portion includes a mix of land uses ranging from industrial and employment to residential and open space, reflecting the currently transition of land uses currently happening along this portion of the corridor.



EXAMPLES OF CURRENT LAND USE

FIGURE GROUND

Along the north portion of River Avenue buildings are setback with parking areas lining the street. Most of the sites adjacent to River Avenue are heavily utilized with building footprints, storage and parking areas.

The southern portion of River Avenue includes a mix of industrial, vacant, residential and recreational uses. Much of the east side of River Avenue is currently vacant lands a part of the Greystone redevelopment area. The west side of the corridor interfaces with Spray Lakes Sawmill just south of Griffin Road and then transitions into the backside of residential properties further south.



EXAMPLES OF FIGURE GROUND/LAND MASSING

ACCESS

River Avenue provides access to north and south Downtown. Access to River Avenue is primarily from Griffin Road, Railway Street and First Street East in the East End neighbourhood. The northern portion of River Avenue includes many access points to individual parcels. The quantity and placement of access points coupled with the extent of on street parking along the corridor results in poor site lines for motorists and a number conflict points for all modes of transportation utilizing River Avenue.

Access to the southern portion of River Avenue is primarily via Griffin Road. Access points to the corridor are limited with the current uses. River Avenue crosses the Bow River but access across the River is restricted to local traffic and does not connect to the larger road network in south Cochrane.



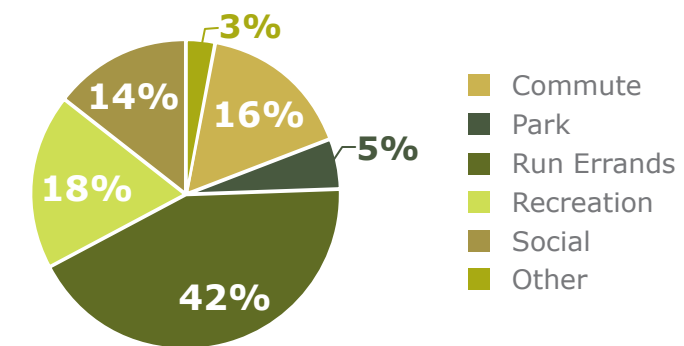
EXAMPLES OF ACCESS POINTS ON RIVER AVENUE

What we HEARD...



RIVER AVENUE ONLINE SURVEY FEEDBACK

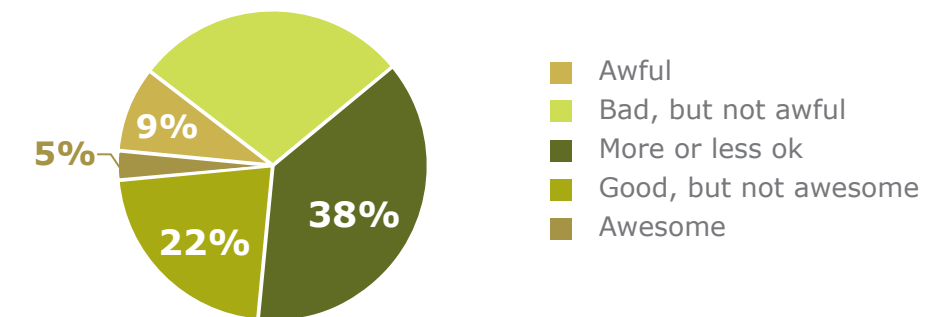
What is your primary reason for travelling along or visiting RIVER AVENUE?



How do you feel River Avenue performs as an **EFFICIENT LINK** between places?



How do you feel River Avenue performs as a **people place**?



What we LEARNED...



North of Griffin Road, River Avenue is dominated by single-storey light industrial and automotive uses, with a handful of two-storey buildings featuring second floor office space. Businesses along this corridor are quite active.

Given the mix of automotive-oriented uses, the configuration of this corridor is quite constrained, particularly from a broader redevelopment perspective. Future development along this portion of the corridor will likely take the form of smaller scale infill redevelopment over the medium to longer-term, due to the small lot sizes. It is anticipated that the single-storey buildings will likely be replaced by two-storey service commercial and light industrial businesses at-grade with upper floor office uses.

River Avenue south of Griffin Road will see most of its development potential materialize along the east side of the road, including the current construction at Griffin Road and River Avenue and the future planned Greystone lands.

The west side of this portion of Griffin Road includes a recent townhome development, the Spray Lakes Sawmill, a public park and the Riverview residential community. Redevelopment on any of these properties is unlikely to occur over the medium to long term.



Over the short-term opportunities to improve sightlines along the northern portion of River Avenue should be explored. This will include a detailed assessment of access conditions and placement of on street parking. Potential sightline improvements could also benefit pedestrian and cycling use of the corridor in the short term. In the short term, opportunities south of Griffin Road to improve access to the Bow River pathway network should be considered.

Move from a LINK to a PLACE on the spectrum by enhancing the pedestrian character and quality of the corridor.

Over the medium- to long-term, as redevelopment along both the northern and southern portions of River Avenue occurs, consideration should be given to:

- Improving the pedestrian experience along the corridor through the installation of continuous sidewalks or pathways on both sides of the corridor;
- Improving the relationship between the building form and the corridor;
- Encouraging active edges from spaces along the corridor to improve utilization and vibrancy.



What we can Achieve TOGETHER(N)...

River Avenue provides essential access to Cochrane's commercial and industrial sector and is a vital link between the East End neighbourhood and the Bow River recreation corridor. This corridor will continue to support the economic growth and development of adjacent business while providing improved pedestrian and cycling safety, comfort and connectivity.

RIVER AVENUE NORTH OF GRIFFIN ROAD



MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Create a more positive, comfortable and interesting experience for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders by:

- Improving the walkability and safety of the corridor by reducing the number of driveways crossing the sidewalk.
- Partnering with local businesses to enhance existing "grassed" areas with additional landscaping and street tree planting to create a "green" corridor across the railway tracks to the river.
- Accommodate consistent bike lanes to provide important linkage from East Cochrane to the Bow River along River Avenue.
- Consider developing a centrally located Town-owned parking lot to reduce onsite and on-street parking pressures.
- Creating a gateway treatment at River Avenue and Griffin Road and Railway Street to reinforce the significance of this area for employment and business incubation and development.
- Establishing regular crosswalks to improve the connectivity from one side of the corridor to the other and to adjacent commercial areas including the Quarry.
- Ensuring pedestrian facilities are built based on universal design principles so that everyone, regardless of ability, can safely utilize the corridor.
- Ensuring the streetscape is designed to accommodate a "clear path" free of obstructions for those with vision loss and reduced mobility.
- Encouraging redevelopment that fronts the corridor and is located closer to the street.



MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Ensure the ongoing efficient movement of goods by:

- Reducing potential vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-vehicle conflict by consolidating business access points where possible.
- Discouraging direct access to onsite parking that requires vehicles to back out onto the corridor to exit.



SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create a physical environment that supports local business and economic development by:

- Creating more continuous and consistent on-street parking isles as a result of consolidating driveway access points.
- Considering the potential to develop a centrally located Town-owned parking lot to reduce onsite and on-street parking pressures.
- Working with adjacent landowners to explore how to maximize onsite parking.
- Continuing to provide land use, building form and siting flexibility to accommodate a wide variety of business and industry.
- Encouraging redevelopment that capitalizes on underutilized land resources and replaces onsite parking with useable building form where possible to support business development and expansion.



RECREATION

Encourage active community living by:

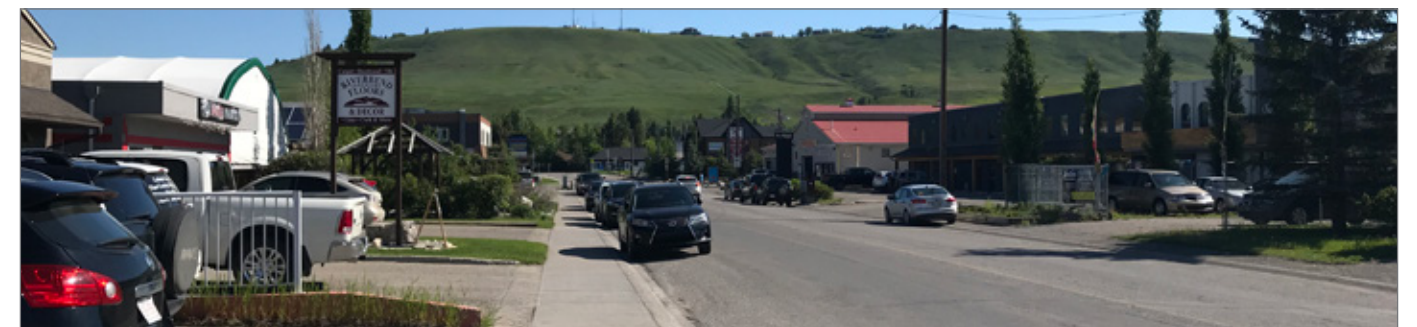
- Maintaining a continuous sidewalk on both sides of the corridor to provide important pedestrian linkages from the Bow River to the East End and Downtown neighbourhoods.



SOCIAL INTERACTION + COMMUNITY BUILDING

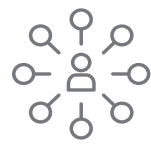
Create a variety of opportunities for people to meet and socialize along the corridor by:

- Exploring opportunities to create seating areas at intersections to allow users to rest and socialize with others.



What we can Achieve TOGETHER(S)...

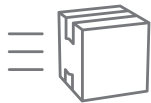
RIVER AVENUE SOUTH OF GRIFFIN ROAD



MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Create a more positive, comfortable and interesting experience for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders by:

- Maintaining a continuous sidewalk on the west side of the corridor and creating a separated regional pathway on east side of the corridor to allow direct and intuitive access to Riverview, Greystone, and the Bow River; to accommodate multiple users; and to allow individuals to walk/wheel side by side.
- Separating the regional pathway from the roadway to improve pedestrian safety.
- Establishing consistent on-street cycling facilities to encourage healthy modes of travel and to provide a direct connection to the Bow River pathway.
- Planting street trees on both sides of the corridor to emphasize the importance of the corridor as a key connection to the Bow River.
- Establishing regular crosswalks at key intersections to improve the connectivity from one side of the corridor to the other.
- Ensuring pedestrian facilities are built based on universal design principles so that everyone, regardless of ability, can safely utilize the corridor.
- Ensuring the streetscape is designed to accommodate a “clear path” free of obstructions for those with vision loss and reduced mobility.
- Relocating visually intrusive overhead powerlines underground freeing up additional space for public realm improvements.
- Improving the walkability and safety of the corridor by ensuring adjacent development fronts the corridor with main entrances facing the street.



MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Ensure the ongoing efficient movement of goods by:

- Creating an easy to understand corridor with good site lines, lighting, intuitive on-street parking and public transit stops.
- Prohibiting direct vehicular access from the corridor to individual development parcels to reduce potential vehicle-pedestrian conflict.



SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create a physical environment that supports local business and economic development by:

- Establishing a direct and intuitive pedestrian, cycling connection to downtown Cochrane and existing and future business/industry in the area.



RECREATION

Encourage active community living by:

- Providing a safe, comfortable and intuitive pedestrian and cycling connection to the Bow River pathway and park system.



SOCIAL INTERACTION + COMMUNITY BUILDING

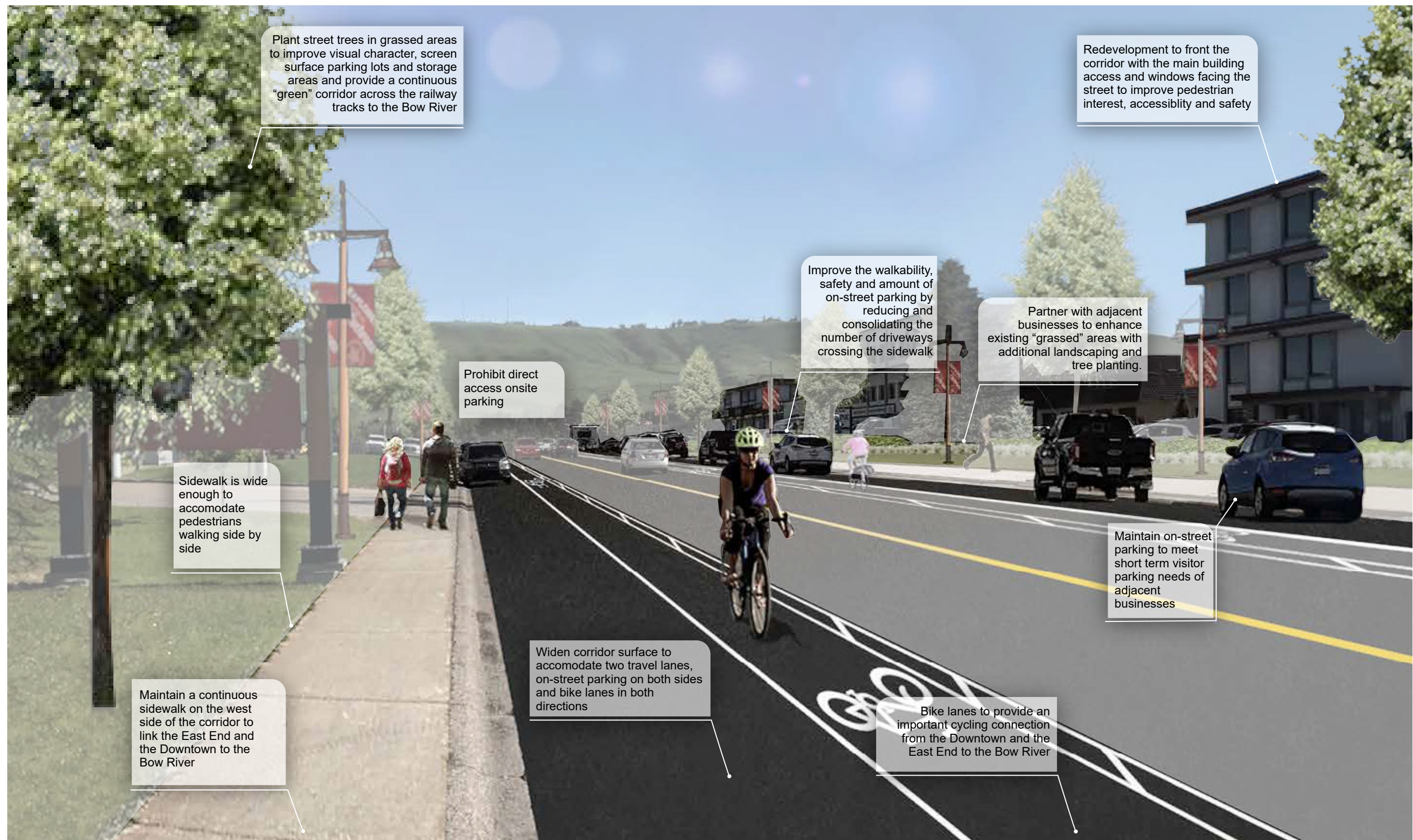
Create a variety of opportunities for people to meet and socialize along the corridor by:

- Exploring opportunities to create seating areas at key locations, including intersections, to allow users to rest and socialize with others.
- Allowing users to maintain conversations by providing wide enough sidewalks and a regional pathway to walk/wheel side by side.





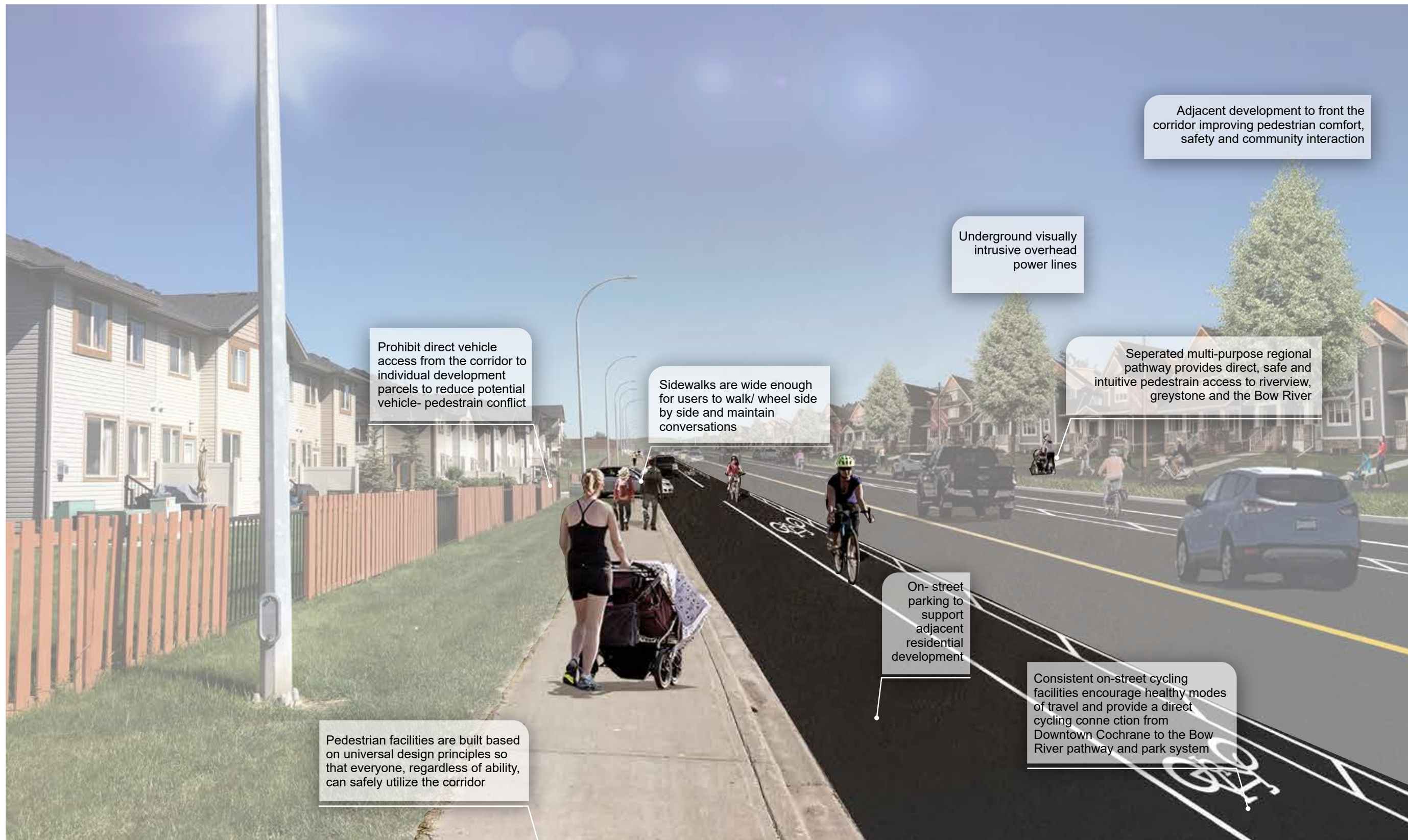
River Avenue (N): Existing



River Avenue (N): Future



River Avenue (S) : Existing



River Avenue (S) : Future

What we
OBSERVED...

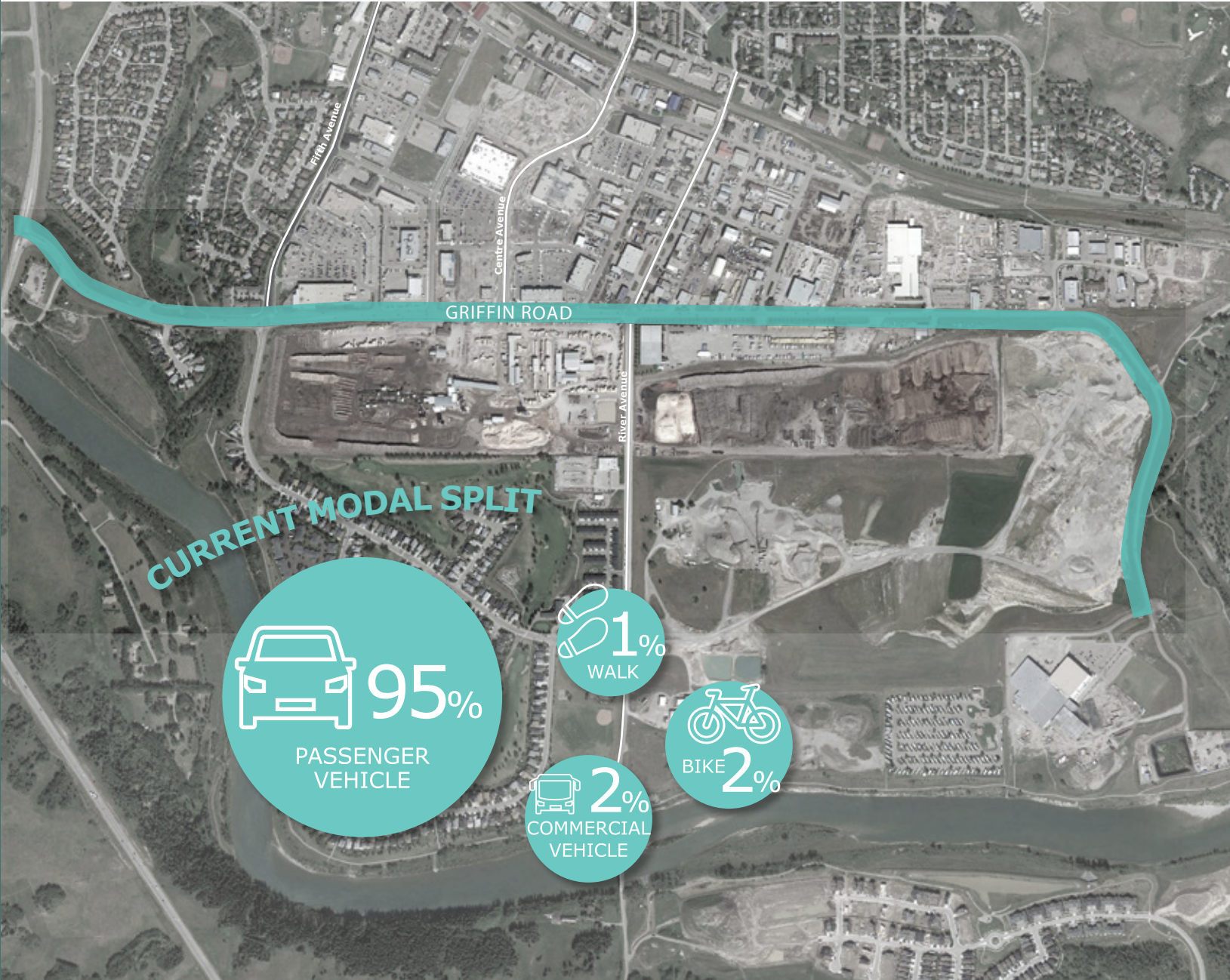
Griffin Road

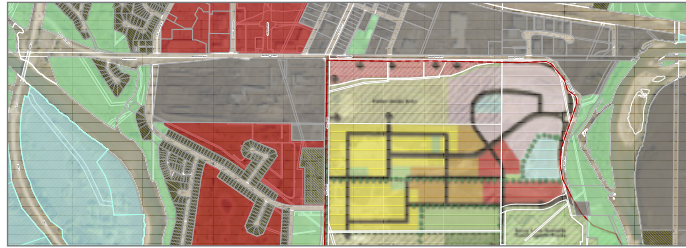
Griffin Road is a major vehicular connector framing the southside of downtown Cochrane. It intersects with Highway 22 north of the Bow River and traverses through significant employment areas and currently terminates at Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre, a key recreational draw for residents and visitors. Construction on the Jack Tennant Memorial Bridge commenced in 2018 and was completed in the fall of 2020. Once complete Griffin Road will span the Bow River and eventually carry through to Highway 22 south of the Bow River, providing alternative access to the downtown.

Griffin Road currently consists of two drive lanes, intermittent turning lanes to accommodate left-hand vehicular movements at key intersections and street parking on a limited portion of the south side of the corridor. Only a portion of the corridor is serviced with sidewalks.

Land uses and the interface along Griffin Road are in transition. Redevelopment of the Quarry lands on the north west side of the corridor resulted in improvements to the pedestrian facilities. Redevelopment is currently occurring east of River Avenue along the north and south sides of the corridor. In 2018, the Town approved the Greystone Area Structure Plan which intends to transform a largely industrial area on the south side of Griffin Road into a mixed-use community that plans to be home to +/-2,800 residents.

3,153m	1,521m	16ac	20m	6,000-11,000
Road Length	Length of Sidewalks	Approximate Total Area	Average Corridor Width	Current Estimated Vehicles Per Day





LAND USE

Historically, land uses along Griffin Road were commercial and industrial. With the approval of the Greystone Area Structure Plan, the land use composition has diversified and will likely provide a variety of employment and commercial service areas for the community along Griffin Road. Through the development of the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre and introduction of passive recreational lands on the east side of Griffin Road, recreational facilities have been introduced along the corridor.



EXAMPLES OF CURRENT LAND USE

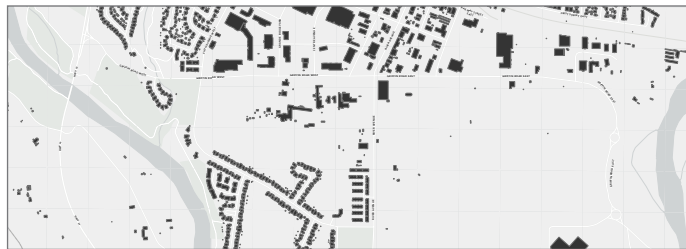
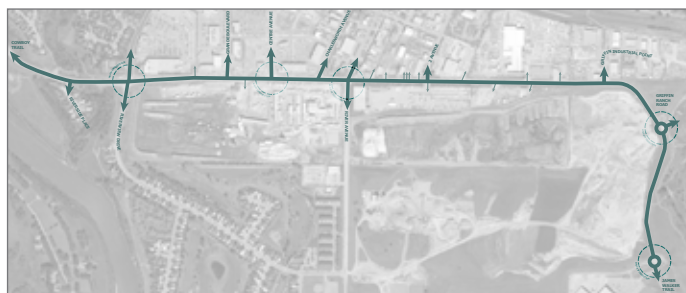


FIGURE GROUND

Portions of the corridor support large format retail, while other portions support industrial uses or underutilized sites awaiting redevelopment. The large format commercial buildings tend to have screened loading areas fronting onto Griffin Road. A variety of industrial users abut the corridor, resulting in a variety of site and building locations. A number of large parcels along the corridor predominately use their sites for material storage and have limited building exposure to the street.



EXAMPLES OF FIGURE GROUND/LAND MASSING



ACCESS

Access to Griffin Road is primarily from Highway 22 or the north side of the corridor. Access from the south is limited due to large tracts of land being occupied and utilized. As the community of Greystone develops and Griffin Road connects across the Bow River, access and utilization of Griffin Road is anticipated to increase.



EXAMPLES OF ACCESS POINTS ON GRIFFIN ROAD

What we HEARD...

Poor
intersection
sightlines.

Fast, noisy
and busy.

Direct and
convenient vehicle
corridor.

Pedestrian and
cyclist unfriendly.

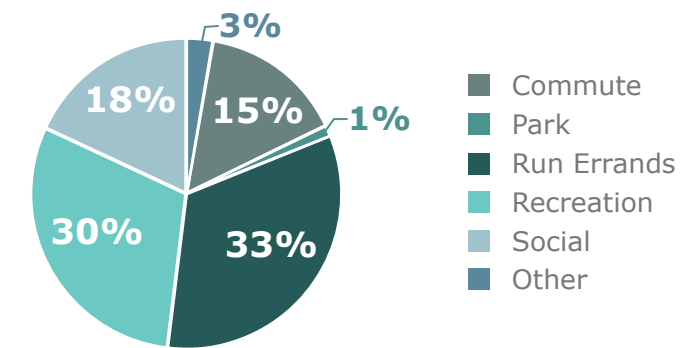
Industrial
character and backs
of businesses.

Feels old –
needs an
update.

Sidewalk on one
side only.

GRIFFIN ROAD ONLINE SURVEY FEEDBACK

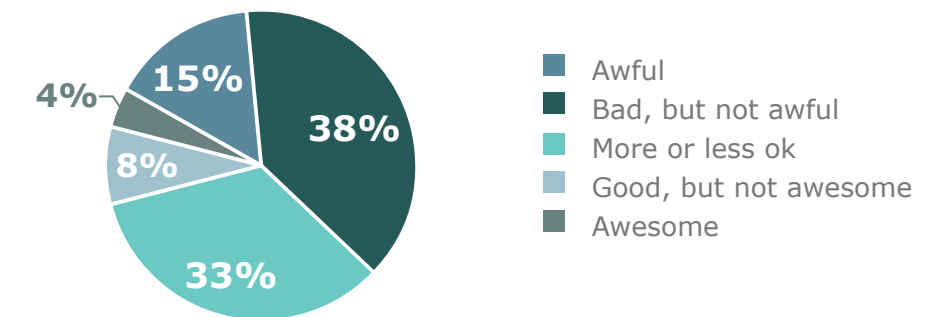
What is your primary reason for travelling along or visiting GRIFFIN ROAD?



How do you feel Griffin Road performs as an **EFFICIENT LINK** between places?



How do you feel Griffin Road performs as a **people place**?



What we LEARNED...



Griffin Road is a substantial east-west corridor within Cochrane. The character and uses along Griffin Road noticeably change along the corridor, and as such, from a market perspective offer different opportunities to continue to support the corridor and/or contribute to the future vision.

West of River Avenue, the north side of Griffin is characterized by retail shopping centre edges, a fire hall and some industrial buildings. Given the relatively recent construction of these buildings and civic uses, redevelopment along the northern edge of Griffin Road west of River Avenue is unlikely to occur in the medium to long-term. The south side of this portion of Griffin Road consists of the Spray Lake Sawmills site, which is also unlikely to see any land use change over the medium to long-term.

Griffin Road east of River Avenue includes significant redevelopment opportunities along both sides of the street. The north side currently includes light industrial buildings with multiple automotive oriented service-commercial businesses and a 9.6-acre site listed for sale.

The south side east of River Avenue is experiencing and/or is planned for redevelopment in the near future. A new gas station is under construction at the intersection with River Avenue and planned light industrial space to the east of the gas station. Further east along the corridor, within the future community of Greystone, industrial and business park land uses are envisioned to abut Griffin Road.

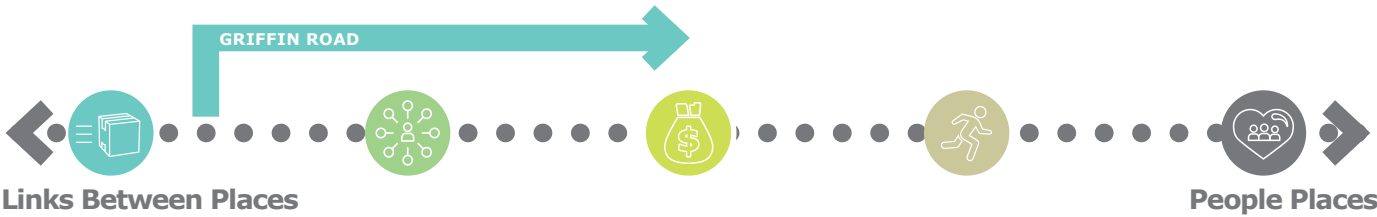


Griffin Road will remain an important east west arterial road on the south side of downtown. As the vehicular network within Cochrane is enhanced through the completion and connection of the Jack Tennant Memorial Bridge, Griffin Road’s importance to the overall connectivity and movement of people and goods within Town will intensify. Griffin Road also connects residents to significant employment lands within the Town and critical recreational spaces, such as the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre and other recreational spaces adjacent to the Bow River. As such, inclusion of facilities for other transportation modes to utilize the corridor should be considered as redevelopment occurs.

Move from a LINK to a PLACE on the spectrum by enhancing the pedestrian character and quality of the corridor.

There is a strong desire to maintain the functionality of Griffin Road for vehicles while improving the pedestrian environment. Consideration should be given to:

- Maintaining vehicular function along the corridor.
- Improving the relationship between building form and the corridor itself.
- Widening sidewalks to accommodate multiple users.
- Creating more active spaces along the corridor to improve utilization and vibrancy.



What we can Achieve TOGETHER...

Griffin Road functions as a primary connector linking multiple neighbourhoods including Downtown Cochrane and the future residential area of Greystone to the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sport Centre, the new bridge and future development on the south side of the Bow River. This corridor will continue to carry significant volumes of traffic while accommodating improved pedestrian and cycling facilities in an enhanced physical environment with street trees, landscaped boulevard and separated sidewalk and wide multi-purpose pathway.



MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Create a more positive, comfortable and interesting experience for pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders by:

- Establishing a continuous, widened sidewalk on the north side of the street and a separated multi-purpose pathway on the south side of the corridor to improve pedestrian comfort, accommodate multiple users, and allow individuals to walk/wheel side by side.
- Providing a direct pedestrian and cycling connection between Downtown Cochrane, Greystone and the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre.
- Planting consistent street trees to emphasize the importance of the corridor as a key connection between community amenities and facilities.
- Establishing regular crosswalks at key intersections to improve the connectivity from one side of the corridor to the other.
- Ensuring pedestrian facilities are built based on universal design principles so that everyone, regardless of ability, can safely utilize the corridor.
- Ensuring the streetscape is designed to accommodate a “clear path” free of obstructions for those with vision loss and reduced mobility.
- Relocating visually intrusive overhead powerlines underground freeing up additional space for public realm improvements.
- Establishing consistent on-street cycling facilities to encourage healthy modes of travel and to provide a safe and direct connection between Downtown Cochrane and the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre.
- Requiring highly visible and easily accessible bicycle parking in front of businesses along the corridor.

- Creating a positive and safe physical environment that supports the efficient circulation of Town transit vehicles.
- Ensuring land use policy along the corridor requires future redevelopment that is active (i.e. ground level retail, outdoor seating and patios) and oriented toward the street at key intersections to support pedestrian interest and safety and enhance community vibrancy along the corridor.



MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Ensure the ongoing efficient movement of goods by:

- Providing a direct vehicular connection between Downtown Cochrane, Greystone and the Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre.
- Prohibiting direct access from individual land parcels to the corridor.
- Prohibiting onstreet parking.



SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create a physical environment that supports local business and economic development by:

- Making it easier for people to walk, cycle or take transit to and from local services and amenities along the corridor.
- Require redevelopment along the corridor to front the corridor at key intersections and to provide active edges (i.e. windows, entrances, patio space, etc.) along the balance of the corridor to maintain visual interest and safety for pedestrians and cyclists travelling along the corridor.
- Creating a corridor that allows the continuous and efficient movement of vehicles of all types.



RECREATION

Encourage active community living by:

- Establishing a continuous sidewalk and bike lane loop that enables people of all ages and abilities to safely walk or bike from Downtown Cochrane and adjacent residential neighbourhoods to Greystone, the Spray Lake Sawmill Family Sports Centre and the Bow River pathway.



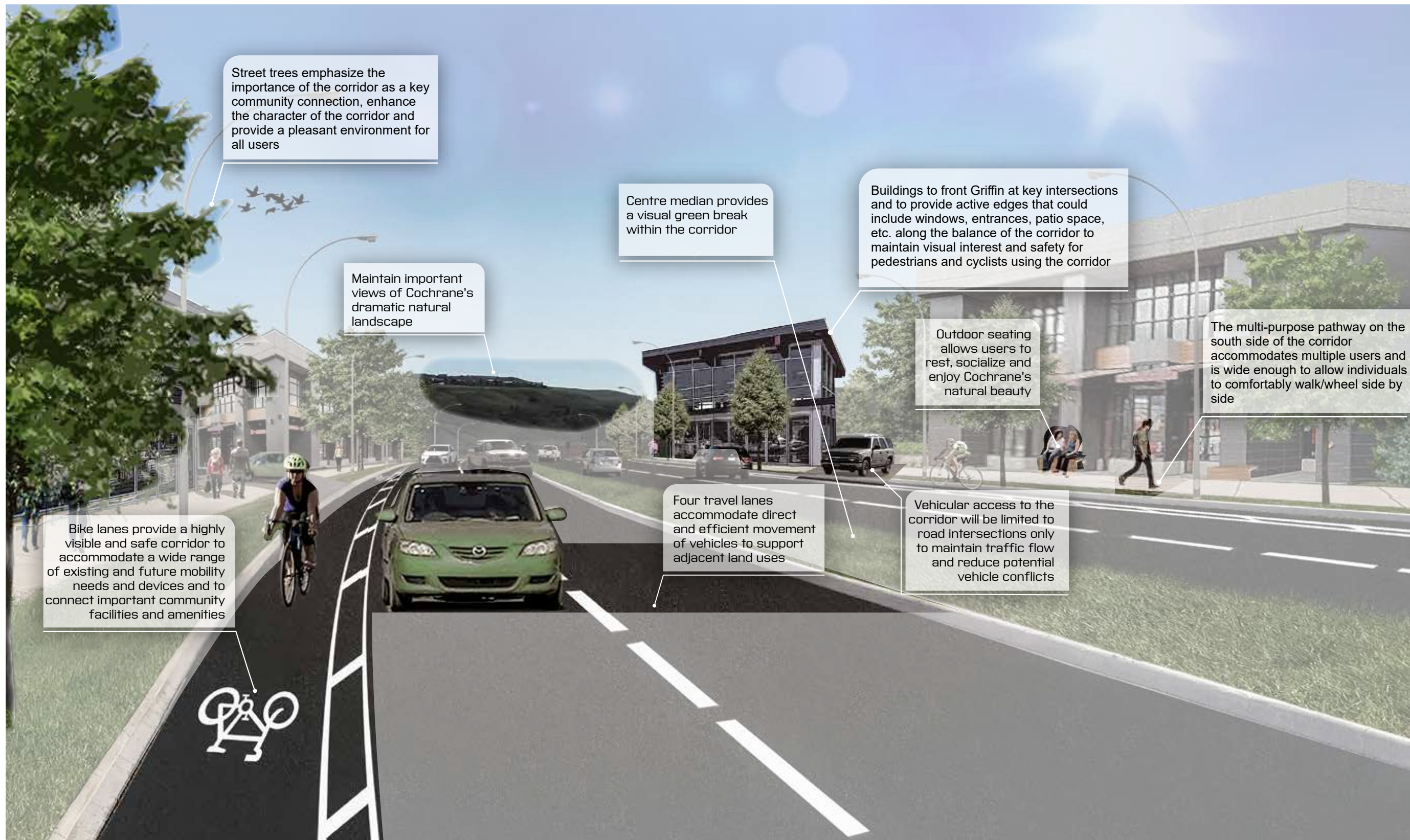
SOCIAL INTERACTION + COMMUNITY BUILDING

Create a variety of opportunities for people to meet and socialize along the corridor by:

- Allowing users to maintain conversations by providing wide enough sidewalks and regional pathways to walk/wheel side by side.
- Providing regular seating areas to allow users to rest, socialize and enjoy Cochrane’s dramatic scenery.



Griffin Road: Existing



Griffin Road: Future



Looking to THE FUTURE

Street corridors are some of the most important public spaces in Cochrane and play a significant role in contributing to the health, success and strength of our community.



Fifth Avenue, Railway Street, River Avenue and Griffin Road are four key corridors in Town that are experiencing redevelopment pressure and are currently carrying significant volumes of traffic. Each corridor has the unique opportunity to transition from a link that primarily moves cars between places to a vibrant, active and connected place for people – a place where people can access various local services and amenities using a variety of transportation modes; where residents and visitors alike can enjoy Cochrane’s unique natural setting; engage in active living and enjoy each other’s company. To this end, the Town is committed to ensuring Cochrane’s key corridors are active, vibrant, multi-modal and safe.

Change, however, will not happen overnight, but will require an ongoing commitment by Town staff, Council and residents to the aspirations outlined in this document. It is imperative that the Town ensure future updates to their regulatory and policy documents (i.e. Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Development Plan, Transportation Master Plan) reinforce the principles and design direction contained in this report and that future development applications clearly demonstrate how future development will be oriented, scaled and located to facilitate active, vibrant and safe streets in Cochrane.



