



**West Campus Development Trust**

## **Design Statement**

The vision for West Campus is to create a complete, vibrant, and sustainable community that instills a sense of place with residents, enhances the University experience, and harmonizes with surrounding communities.

### **Interface:**

The West Campus development has been carefully designed to integrate with the surrounding communities. While pathways have been incorporated throughout the development to connect to the neighboring communities of Varsity, University Heights and into the University of Calgary campus itself, the development type, form and scale adjacent to these communities have also been designed to complement and integrate with the adjacent communities. These components are described in the Outline Plan in 4.2 Land Use Descriptions.

As a step further in ensuring integration with the existing communities and the achievement of a high quality design, Architectural Design Guidelines will be developed to provide for development that will occur in line with to the vision for West Campus. The Architectural Design Guidelines will determine architectural details relating to building form, design and material choice, landscape design and signage design. The utilization of these guidelines will ensure the implementation of a high quality design of buildings and sites overall. Requirements pertaining to Green Building Design will also be included.

### **Uses:**

West Campus will be a mixed-use community. Future commercial and retail uses are to be community supportive uses, allowing residents the ability to look within their community to meet many of their needs.

### **Scale:**

The scale of buildings has been carefully considered to ensure that they relate to the street and minimize shadowing. Buildings range from two (2) storey to sixteen (16) storey. Buildings with a greater height along the street frontage are generally located north of West Campus Way where views from existing, surrounding neighborhoods will not be impacted. A one to three-storey building base element is encouraged to create an appropriate scale along streets. Within this base, two-storey homes are encouraged with their primary entrance from the street. Front yard setbacks will ensure a strong street wall and pedestrian environment. Setbacks requirements can be found within each site's applicable land use.

## **Layout, Access & Connectivity:**

### *Built Form:*

Terraced buildings are encouraged given the topographic nature of the site with its slopes to the west. Ground floor slabs should also terrace along sloping site frontages to ensure a better grade-oriented relationship of the building to the street, and to avoid high walls in the landscape. Buildings should generally align with the orthogonal grid of the West Campus streets. Every effort should be made for buildings to orient in an east-west alignment to improve on sustainable design, reducing energy requirements for lighting, heating and cooling, and ventilation. Building orientation will take into consideration the maximization of views from as many units as possible.

### *Streets:*

Streets form the “glue” that binds a diverse community together, supporting the day-to-day activities that make for an active and vibrant community. The streets within West Campus are designed in a grid-based pattern, creating numerous connections which allow for all modes of transportation the ability to move easily throughout the neighborhood. The provision of multiple accesses into the community also ensures visitors and residents can enter and leave the community with ease. The following accesses into the community are provided:

- West: Via Shaganappi Trail NW to West Campus Way NW
- South: 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW to West Campus Boulevard NW
- East: 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW or west on West Campus Way
- North: 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW to West Campus Gate

### *Public Spaces:*

Public spaces have been designed and arranged to provide accessibility to all residents to quality public open space. Pathways and trails link the open space within the community, allowing visitors and residents the ability to move within and between the parks easily by bicycle or on foot. The large park (adjacent to the retail uses on West Campus Way and at the southern terminus of West Campus Gate) will support the function of the retail high street. It is anticipated to have a flexible field and play space, and an adjacent plaza fronted by retail, create a dynamic centre or “heart” for the community. The park and adjacent plaza are highly accessible, linked to the north and south neighborhoods, the hospital and office precinct west, and the University east, by a series of pedestrian connections and trails. These is the opportunity for the location of public art in this space either as a landmark feature at the entrance to the open space or a functional/interactive piece located within the park.

## **Community Design Elements:**

### *A Porch Culture:*

The concept of a porch culture on the street is derived from the notion that all ground level dwelling units have direct access from the fronting streets. It is also critical from a street security standpoint to have eyes and ears on the street. This means:

- Ground level units should be addressed from the fronting street;
- Buildings should have windows and doorways facing the street;
- Individual entrances should be illuminated; and
- Private terraces/porches should be elevated above grade.

### A Public Ground Floor:

Public oriented uses will be located on the ground floor of buildings to increase the social experience of a community and animate the streets, providing direct access and visibility to residents and visitors. A broad mix of community-oriented retail shops and services is envisioned along West Campus Way, the high street, to maximize pedestrian activity along the street.

### Community Meeting Places:

The street corners along West Campus Way are important places as it is the intersection of streets which are a high point of interaction amongst people. Focus will be around activating these corners and allowing for these interactions. Methods to facilitate this relationship include locating main building entrances and lobbies at these corners and providing public plazas where appropriate.

### Mid-block Connections:

A variety of public parks and small plazas have been envisioned as well as a series of mid-block pedestrian connections. This finer grain network of shortcuts traverse through or between the residential parcels offering alternate routes with a variety of scales and experiential qualities.

### Building Setbacks:

#### Residential:

Landscaped setbacks should be provided between public sidewalks and private developments. For residential units at street level, options for setbacks could include low ground planting or mowed grass; low wall, combined with layering planting rows and/or hedges to enhance the streetscape experience and define the private outdoor areas; or planting could to screen private patios and outdoor spaces from each other.

#### Retail:

Landscaped setbacks should be provided between public sidewalks and proposed retail units. The adjacent streetscape character should be considered when selecting the hard and soft materials within the setback. Increased pedestrian flow will likely result in focused planning areas, with planting considering CPTED principles.

### Privacy:

Privacy for grade level units should be enhanced through low walls, hedges and changes in elevation. Buildings should be separated by a layering of landscaping elements. Each dwelling unit should generally have direct access to a private outdoor space in the form of a balcony, patio or roof deck with a minimum depth of 1.5 m and a minimum area of 4 m<sup>2</sup>. Adjoining balconies should be separated with a privacy screen.

### Retail:

The individuality of retail stores may be expressed through many stores on narrow frontages, with high quality storefront displays rather than wide, uninviting storefronts. Solid walls are to be minimized and the utilization of high-quality signage and illumination along the street frontage will result in a more active and inviting streetscape. Storefronts should generally be built to the frontage property line, except where small plazas or courtyards are included to add diversity and activity space to the streetscape, or where a setback is required to satisfy the sidewalk widths.

### Quality Materials:

There is a preference for the use of wall cladding materials with sustainable properties. Exterior materials should be finished in a manner that retains their color and quality over time. Materials will be specified based on product type (wood frame and concrete construction) through the Architectural Design Guidelines.

### Windows & Lighting:

Emphasis will be placed on the use of glass to maximize natural illumination within buildings while taking advantage of the views from this setting. Windows should maximize natural ventilation. Windows located in side yards should take into account overlook problems between units. Although street lighting will be defined for the site, it can be augmented with atmospheric lighting in public spaces by including pedestrian-scaled lighting in public open spaces, carefully placing exterior lighting on building facades, particularly to highlight entrances.

### Architectural Expression:

The architectural facades of buildings less than four storey should make use of design elements that contribute to the human scale of street spaces. Buildings greater than four storey should focus on the use of horizontal lines above the fourth storey as a contrast to lower floors. Where towers are combined with a baseplane podium building a portion of the tower should extend down to grade rather than sitting atop the podium. The ground floor units of all buildings should be designed to express the individuality of units through architectural expression and the inclusion of entrance doors and windows addressing the street.

### Rooftops:

Roofs and terraces should be used, where practical, for private and communal outdoor patios, decks, and roof gardens. Green roofs are encouraged as a means of retaining storm water from smaller storm events and to add visual interest.

### Safety & Security:

Residential developments and unit designs should be safe and secure from on-street access. Public and semi-private outdoor spaces should have some degree of overlook from residential units and good visibility from the street. Landscaping should be illuminated to enhance security. CPTED principles should be incorporated into building and site design. Parking garages should also be well illuminated, painted, have good view lines throughout and make use of glazing in lobbies, stairwells and at entrances to provide a sense of security and comfort.

### Accessibility & Adaptability:

Housing units should be designed to be adaptable to the future needs of residents as they age. Access to all residential common spaces and primary external circulation routes should be designed to be accessible to those persons impaired by vision, hearing, or mobility. Street-oriented units elevated above the sidewalk grade may be excepted from this requirement, but should provide opportunity for adaptability for accessibility requirements to not preclude again in place and future users of these units.

Landscaping: The landscape character through West Campus should fit with the overall native character of the Alberta prairie by maximizing native plant species, providing a mix of deciduous and coniferous species and creating natural, informal groupings of plants. In addition to public open space, landscaping elements will be utilized within building setbacks, to preserve privacy for units and create visual buffers of private outdoor spaces