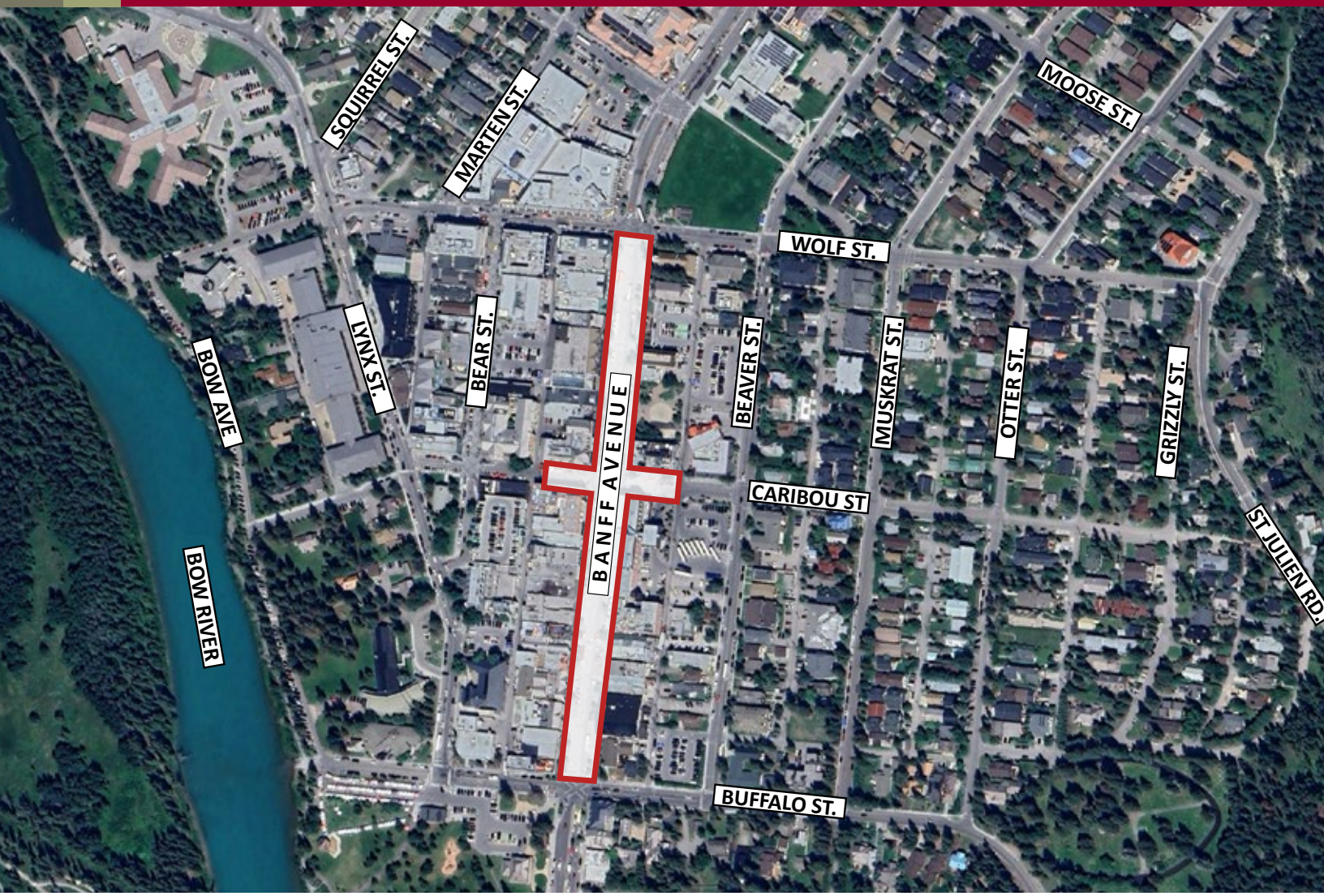



# What's next for Banff Avenue Pedestrian Zone?

Each summer since 2020, the Town of Banff has created a pedestrian zone by temporarily closing to vehicles two blocks of Banff Avenue, first as a pandemic safety measure, then as an economic recovery attraction and improved pedestrian experience for residents and visitors.

**Share your thoughts!** The Town is seeking input from residents to help inform Council's decisions on **December 18.** Public workshops, meetings, and online engagement gathers community perspectives on their experiences with the Pedestrian Zone and what they want for the future.

# Our Goals for Today

**Listen** and **confirm** what we have heard so far.

Provide **information** about some of the emerging feedback themes.

Share **concepts** of what the Banff Avenue Pedestrian Zone could look like.

Collect your **feedback** to share with Council and the community.

# Public Engagement Process

The following timeline outlines completed efforts and next steps. In addition to receiving feedback from public engagement processes, Council will also be provided with data on traffic impacts, public safety, and other relevant information.

**OCTOBER 10, 2023**

The 2023 summer Pedestrian Zone was decommissioned and reopened to vehicle traffic on October 12. The summer of 2023 was the final year of the latest 2-year commitment of the temporary pedestrian zone on Banff Avenue.

**OCTOBER 10, 2023**

Public engagement starts with online survey, pop-up tents and meetings with interested groups.

**WE ARE HERE**

**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 2023**

Public Workshop on the pedestrian zone and focus group meetings to collect opinions on the future of Banff Avenue.

**EARLY DECEMBER 2023**

Summary of feedback will be prepared to capture the comments heard through engagement. The summary will be shared with Council and the Community.

**DECEMBER 18, 2023**

Banff Town Council discussion on the future of the Pedestrian Zone at annual Budget and Service Review meetings.

# Banff Avenue is **Evolving**

Banff Avenue has evolved over the decades, changing with different needs, uses and opportunities.

1900

1915

1935

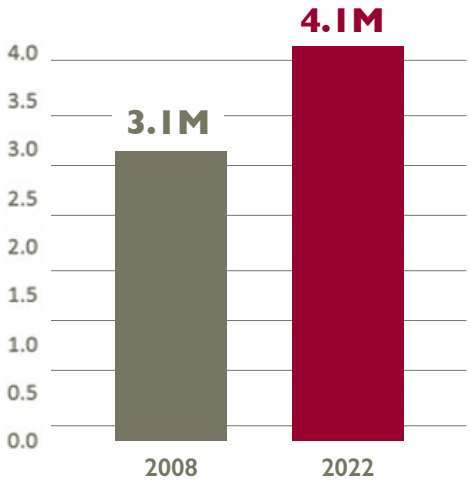
1955

2006

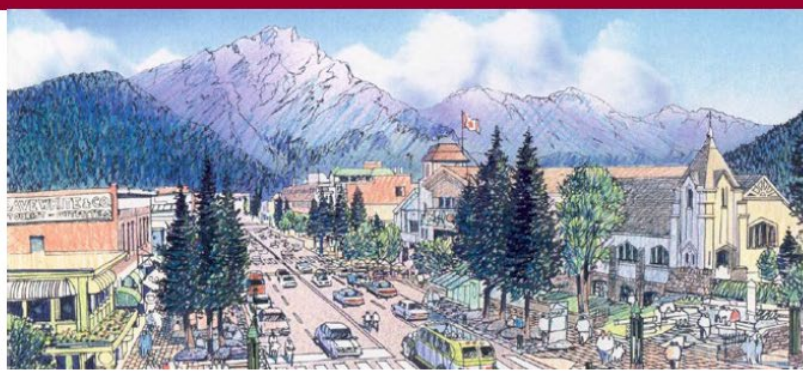
2020

Since Banff Refreshing was completed in 2008, a **33% increase** in visitation has occurred. With the provincial population expected to surpass 7M in the next 30 years, we should expect to accommodate a growing visitor base

**Person visits to Banff National Park**



# Banff **Refreshing**



### 2007

**In 2007, a reconstruction project called "Banff Refreshing" was completed. The project focused on the following along Banff Avenue:**

- Replacement the deep utilities.
- Streetscape improvements to enhance the pedestrian experience (i.e., widened sidewalks, beautification, etc.).

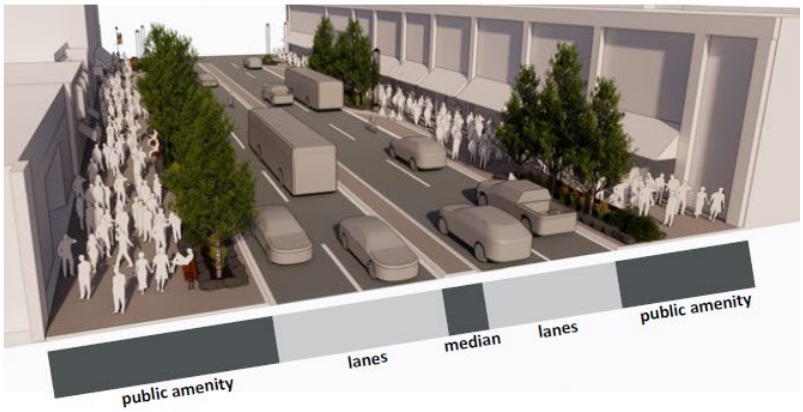
### 2020-2021

**Banff Avenue Pedestrian Zone was opened to accommodate pandemic distancing.**

### 2022-2023

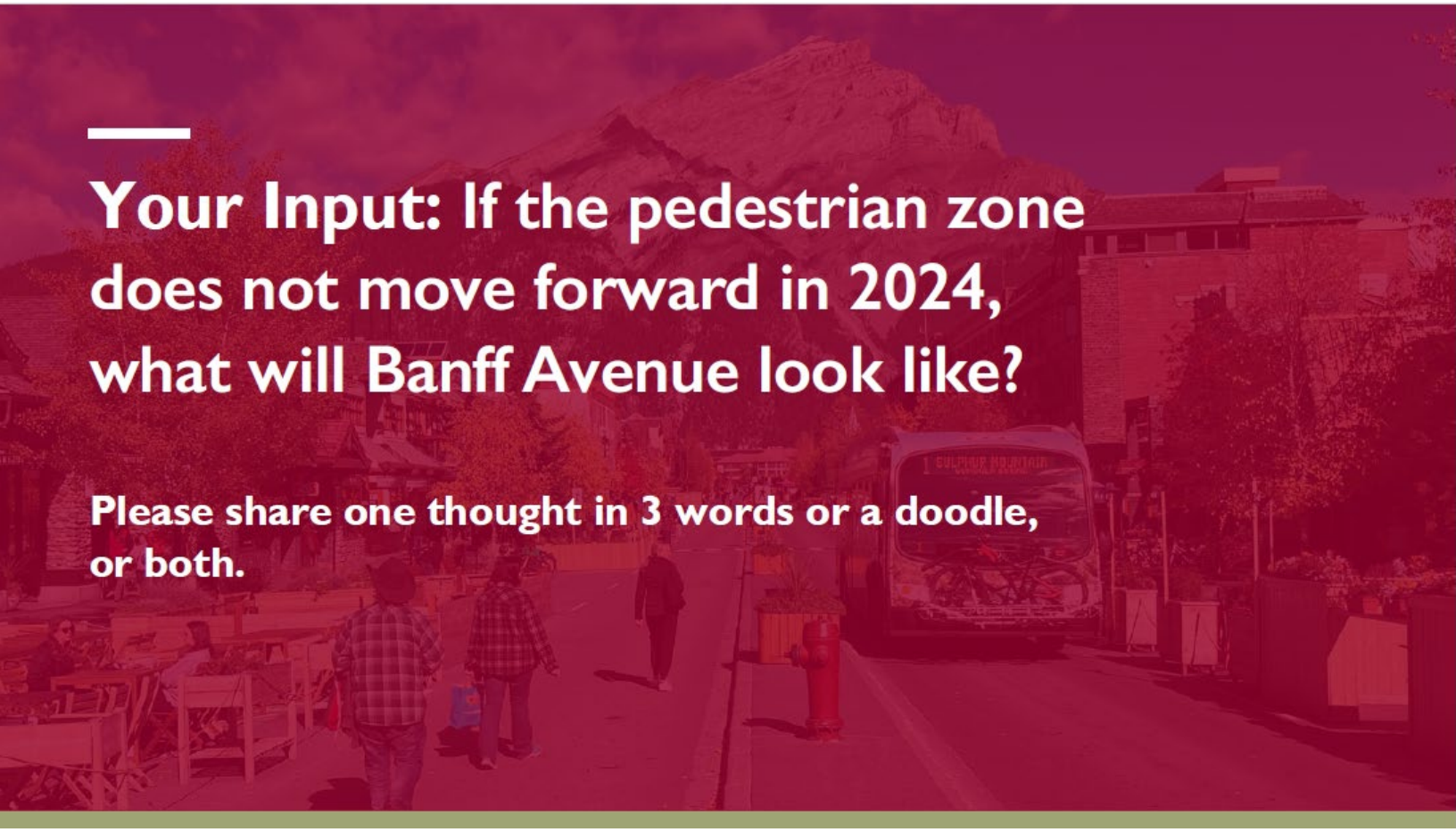
**Pedestrian Zone continued in the summer seasons until October 2023.**

Existing Conditions




# **Banff Avenue:** Recent Context

- As Alberta's population grows, Banff is only getting busier.
- Approximately 50% of Banff's visitation comes from Calgary region, one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada. the proportion of day visitors is expected to grow.
- With up to 40,000 pedestrians per day on the 2 blocks downtown, the pedestrian infrastructure has already been reached or exceeded.



# Your Input: If the pedestrian zone does not move forward in 2024, what will Banff Avenue look like?

**Please share one thought in 3 words or a doodle, or both.**

# What We Have Heard So Far

**We have received valuable feedback from residents on the Pedestrian Zone since 2020.**

- Launched formal survey, October 18 until November 27, 2023.
- Received over 1,300 responses to date, close to **900 responses** from Town residents.

## Active Transportation **Sentiment**

**92% agree** that the Town of Banff should continue its efforts to reduce reliance on visitor vehicles in town.

**91% support** the Town of Banff's goal to promote and support walking, cycling and taking transit.

## Bear Street **Sentiment**

- Many respondents appreciate the pedestrian-friendly design.
- Some respondents advocate for a complete ban on vehicles, while others express difficulties navigating due to the mixed-use nature.
- Some suggested improvements include better signage, reducing or eliminating cars, and optimizing street layout for safety and efficiency.

## We asked what did you **like** about the summer Pedestrian Zone?

718 people responded, 107 skipped

1. Room to move for pedestrians (652 responses).
2. Atmosphere/ambiance without vehicles (570 responses).
3. Outdoor dining spaces (563 responses).
4. No vehicles except transit (551 responses).
5. Enjoyable for strolling or meeting up (537 responses).

## We asked what did you **not like** about the summer Pedestrian Zone?

595 people responded, 277 skipped

1. Traffic impacts elsewhere (443 responses).
2. Detour of vehicle traffic to adjacent streets to/from southside destinations (363 responses).
3. No vehicle access/should allow vehicles (177 responses).
4. Presence of people on bicycles/scooters/skateboards (152 responses).
5. Inconvenient access to destination (142 responses).

## Your Input:

# What are the primary **challenges** of the pedestrian zone?

# What are the primary **benefits**?

# Table Discussion

What are the primary challenges and the primary benefits about the pedestrian zone?

| Concerns | Benefits |
|---|---|
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |

# Moving Forward

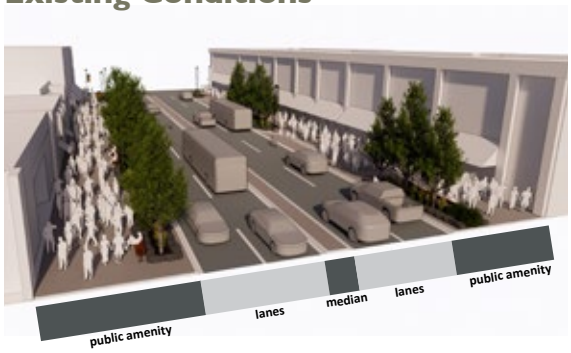
Banff Town Council also asked for concept designs to be developed to provide an idea of what a permanent zone could look like and to highlight features for community discussions.

Scatliff +Miller + Murray Inc. have created concepts based on guiding principles, policy, and initial public feedback.

## Guiding principles:

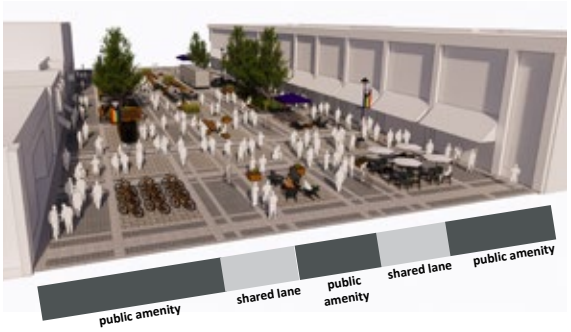
- **Protect and amplify views to the Cascade Mountain.**
- **Provide a balance of private and public space.**
- **Improve accessibility and permeability.**
- **Preserve and build upon existing character streetscape elements.**
- **Provide seasonal flexibility.**

### Existing Conditions



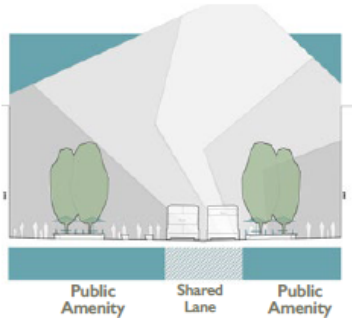

### Design Concept 1: **Asymmetrical**

### Design Concept 2: **Symmetrical**

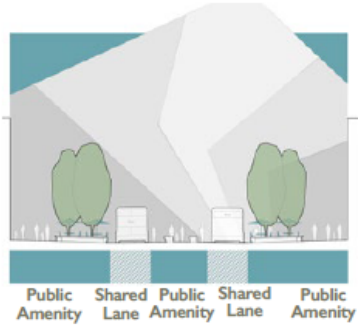


# Moving Forward

## Design Concept 1: **Asymmetrical Option**



## Design Concept 1: **Symmetrical Option**



# Seasonal Flexibility

Summer

Winter

**There are strategies to support year-round activation, enhance pedestrian comfort, and facilitate winter maintenance and operations.**

**These strategies can be applied to both design options.**

# Table Discussion

Based on the early design concepts, what does your future Banff Avenue look like?

Are there features from the concepts you think we should consider?
Are there other infrastructure changes to the street, sidewalks, intersections or adjacent streets to make it better for pedestrians or drivers?
What are short-term and long-term needs?

# Thank you for participating!

The feedback shared with Town representatives, through the online survey, at the public workshop and focus groups will be summarized and shared back with the community on the project web page. The summary will be shared with Council to help inform discussion on the future of the Banff Avenue Pedestrian Zone this December.

Learn more, visit **banffviewpoints.ca/banffave**