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Beltline residents receptive to facelift

SORCHA MCGINNIS
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Calgary's Beltline is in the first phase of a major facelift that could see landscaped boulevards, paved alleys and buried utilities.

City planners and community representatives met with residents at an open house recently to discuss ways to improve the appearance of streets and lanes in the area bounded by 12th Avenue south, 17th Avenue S.W. and 1st Street S.E.

"The Beltline has an exciting urban character we want to enhance by promoting variety and high quality development," said Bob van Wegan, chair of the Connaught/West Victoria Community Planning Committee.

"We want to see some standards set for new development and the improvement of public spaces."

Van Wegan said the more than 50 people who attended the meeting at Memorial Park Library are receptive to the proposed development.

"They're very excited by this vision of a busy, dense community with lots of variety," said van Wegan, adding the area is attractive to a mix of ages.

Don Schultz, a planner for the City of Calgary, said the open house is part of a \$50,000 study that will look at how buildings and sites should be designed, the kinds of land uses that should be encouraged, the minimum standards development should achieve and how historic buildings should be treated.

A second open house will take place today from noon to 5 p.m. at the Carl Safran Centre (Rundle College), at 1221 2nd St. S.W. Presentations will be made at 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.