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November 30, 2022

Banff Town Council
Town of Banff
110 Bear Street
Banff, Alberta, T1L 1H7

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

Soon after the arrival of the COVID-19 Pandemic, many jurisdictions around the globe piloted and implemented measures to reclaim space for people-centric activities, taking advantage of fewer cars moving through and consuming inordinate space in urban places and responding to the public need for space in which to physically distance. These actions created new environments in which to foster human activities: socializing, tending to well-being, participating in local commerce, and moving between destinations.

Since the shift to a relaxed pandemic posture, we observe some jurisdictions moving confidently toward retaining and expanding people-centric environments, fostering well-being, social vibrancy, and economic vitality in local areas. Other jurisdictions are instead eroding these measures and initiatives, imposing again car-centricity and car-dependence onto communities and citizens. The result is higher carbon emissions and more dangerous streets.

Sustainable Calgary and the Calgary Climate Hub commend Town Council and Administration's commitments to sustainable transportation and climate action. These are evident in policies establishing a seasonal pedestrianized zone, the permanent creation of a Woonerf, electric buses as part of the ROAM fleet in-town and inter-jurisdiction transit network, free public transit for residents, a parking program that encourages people to park on the town's periphery and access central amenities by active modes, mid-block pedestrian crossings and pedestrian scrambles, raised or continuous crosswalks, and a town-wide 30-km/h speed limit that meets international best practice wherever private automobiles and pedestrians mix.

We observe in Banff sequential, meticulously integrated initiatives at a scale and form that compel residents and visitors alike to take notice, to anticipate something truly different and transformative. In a beautiful way, these integrated measures working together invite observation and evaluation, foster conversation and a consideration of alternatives, and invite self-reflection on whether the outcomes express themselves in values congruent with the climate imperative.

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*Sustainable Calgary is an organization that promotes, encourages, and supports community-level actions and initiatives that move urban places to a sustainable future. We see sustainability as the process of working toward the long-term health and vitality of our communities and citizens with regard to ecological, social, cultural, and economic systems. While we are Calgary-based and focused, we recognize the important sustainability and climate leadership on display in our neighbouring community of Banff, Alberta.*

*The Calgary Climate Hub is a volunteer-led, non-profit organization that unites a diverse group of Calgarians committed to working together to support meaningful local action on climate change. We represent a variety of communities, industries, cultures, and causes. We believe that a broad and diverse range of Calgarians and organizations need to be engaged on the climate crisis to develop impactful solutions that fit our unique political and economic circumstances.*

We appreciate the challenges associated with implementing transformational change: engaging in open and ongoing community conversations, contending with entrenched attachment to the status quo, assuaging fear of uncertainty, and fostering trust and empowerment among residents. One of the legacy outcomes of your hard work and willingness to be first-movers is that visitors have the opportunity to come to Banff to see, feel, and experience the positive difference and then return to their home communities with clear concepts from which to start their own community-level conversations and spark change. Their task will be made easier because Banff saw the need, understood the benefits, convened the hard conversations, built a powerful plurality, and modelled the leadership needed from every community.

Our colleagues on the Board of Sustainable Calgary and the Calgary Climate Hub join us in expressing our deep appreciation for your work and commitment to sustainable communities. We encourage each of you to reflect on your remarkable expression of national leadership, meeting the moment, and giving other jurisdictions a working prototype from which to sequence and cascade their own sustainability and people-centric initiatives.

We encourage everyone with whom we engage to visit and experience the difference in Banff. It is here where Canada's future is unfolding.

Sincerely,



**Court Ellingson**  
Board Chair  
Sustainable Calgary



**Robert Tremblay**  
Co-Chair  
Climate Hub

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Board Chair

Brett Bergie  
Secretary

Ann Madeline Toohey  
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Robert Tremblay  
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