

avenue

# BEST NEIGHBOUR HOODS



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ach year since 2010, *Avenue* has worked with Leger, a research and marketing company, to run a survey that gets to the heart of the question: What are Calgary's best neighbourhoods to live in?

Rather than simply voting for their favourite neighbourhood, survey respondents consider various characteristics and tell us which ones are most important when they think about a good neighbourhood. Are parks and pathways preferable to bars and boutiques, for example? Is it more important to have access to major roads than access to schools? Is proximity to a public library preferable to proximity to a movie theatre?

Each year we tweak the survey for clarity and to respond to the previous year's results, eliminating characteristics that were deemed unimportant to most and trying new questions. We also update the quantitative data that Leger uses to compare each neighbourhood once we know how important each characteristic is.

This year, we did a total data overhaul and that caused a few exciting changes in the results.

With the launch of the City of Calgary's Open Data Portal in late 2016, we had access to more detailed and more accurate information than ever before. What changed the most this year was how we counted parks. Previously, we simply counted how many green spaces were in each neighbourhood. Using the City's open data, we could include information on the actual amount of park space — the more hectares a park is, the more points we allocated to it. This change caused some big movements in the rankings. Varsity moved from 47th overall in 2016 to first and Edgemont moved from 70th in 2016 to third.

In many other ways, the results are similar to what we have found in the past. This year, Calgary's top-five most important neighbourhood characteristics were access to parks and pathways, low crime, walkability, access to restaurants, cafés and pubs, and high community engagement. In 2016, parks and pathways, low crime and access to restaurants were also among the top five.

It's important to note that the best neighbourhoods in Calgary, as determined by this survey, aren't necessarily going to be the best for every Calgarian in the city. Different people value — and need — different things. Fortunately, each neighbourhood offers something that makes it the best to someone and there is a neighbourhood that offers the best for each of us. —K.O.



# 2.



The vibrant area south of the downtown core known as the Beltline is chock full of great restaurants, cool cocktail bars, packed pubs, bumpin' nightclubs, boutiques and bookstores, coffeehouses, yoga studios, boxing studios and anything else a connected Calgarian would be tuned into. Tucked into the mix are charming urban parks and green spaces to chill out in, heritage monuments like the Memorial Park Library and Lougheed House to explore and admire, a handful of hip hotels and a variety of options for residents to do their grocery shopping and run drugstore errands. Plus, you can get your bike fixed, get your skis tuned and get yourself a nice bottle of wine, all within a few buzzing blocks.

Sure, living in the heart of the action isn't going to be everyone's cup of tea, but for the many Calgarians seeking a vibrant scene (not to mention an easy walk, bike or skateboard ride to work), the Beltline brings it.

## ROOM TO IMPROVE

It should come as a surprise to no one that a highly populated area with an active nightlife that draws crowds from outside the community will have problems with crime. The Beltline's rate of 439 crimes per capita is this inner-city neighbourhood's Achilles heel, putting it leagues above the 65 crimes per capita of top-ranked Varsity.



2016 population .....	21,958
Crime rate .....	438.66
Walk score .....	90
Transit score.....	76
Commuters who walk or bike ..	41.9%
Engagement score .....	121.38
Average tax assessment value.....	\$306,000
Change in average tax assessment value from 2013.....	9.48%