

## **MUDA - Khalsa School Calgary - City Edge Development**

Located on the east outskirts of Calgary, the Khalsa Sikh School project was originally built in 2007 and began a substantial expansion in 2020. The original school serves as a learning centre community type school for the Calgary Sikh population. The expansion will allow for more children of this ethnic background to attend their learning facility up to Grade 10.

This facility allows for a seamless city expansion while creating this cultural and educational hub in the city N-E.

This addition required 24 extra classrooms to allow for over 100 more students. As the school undergoes its facility extension, a comprehensive masterplan was developed to help create a concept where new modular additions reimagine the Khalsa Community School in an innovative and unconventional way. Prefabricated modular construction gives the opportunity to undertake this large-scale project in a shorter span of time, allowing the client to complete construction during the off-academic season. The new extension also becomes an opportunity to create a unique sense of place and celebrate the Sikh way of life in the context of education here in Calgary.

To avoid teaching and learning interruption, the construction phasing is occurring in subsequent stages. The first phase of the school expansion, comprised of 8 modules, is expected to be completed by the beginning of Fall 2022. The second phase will add another 16 modules and is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

The proposed new phases mirror the existing architectural massing of the school to create an enclosed courtyard within the building complex. This allows for a contained and safe outdoor space where younger children can play while being supervised and shielded from the prevailing N-W winds.

Informed by the nature of the project and the construction methodology, the architecture introduces a shifting pattern of volumes and colours creating an element of playfulness across the exterior and interior façades of the new additions. The shifting of the modules is accentuated with traditional Sikh colours: blue, which is the color of the warrior and orange representing knowledge and wisdom. Simultaneously, two messages communicate the totality of the architecture. First, on a more overt level, the energetic façade connotes play; while on a deeper level, the colours speak the Sikh way of life.

At the main entrance of the second phase five apertures further emphasize the Sikh spirituality and way of life. These five roof apertures bring in natural light but also serve as a symbol of the traditional five K's – articles of faith in the Sikh practice. On the interior of the building, the sunlight is filtered through 5 metal mesh fixtures, reminiscent of Sikh warrior armor and providing a light effect to animate the large gathering area. Crowning the main entrance and adjacent to the main gathering area, these five apertures serve as a physical and figurative landmark for the Khalsa school and the Sikh religion.