

Part 4 The Guiding Framework

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction to The Guiding Framework..... 1**
- 2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods 5**
 - 2.1 Central District
 - 2.2 Civic District
 - 2.3 Midtown District
 - 2.4 Scenic District
 - 2.5 Upper East Side District
 - 2.6 Park Place District
 - 2.7 Centre Village District
 - 2.8 Broadview District
 - 2.9 Central Neighbourhoods
- 3.0 Public Realm Framework..... 27**
 - 3.1 Streetscapes
 - 3.2 Open Spaces
 - 3.3 Gateways & Public Art
 - 3.4 Pedestrian & Cycling Connections
 - 3.5 Public Transit
 - 3.6 Public Parking
 - 3.7 Sites for Civic & Cultural Facilities
- 4.0 Built Form Framework..... 67**
 - 4.1 Built Character Framework
 - 4.2 Prominent & Distinct Character Sites

1.0 Introduction to the Guiding Framework

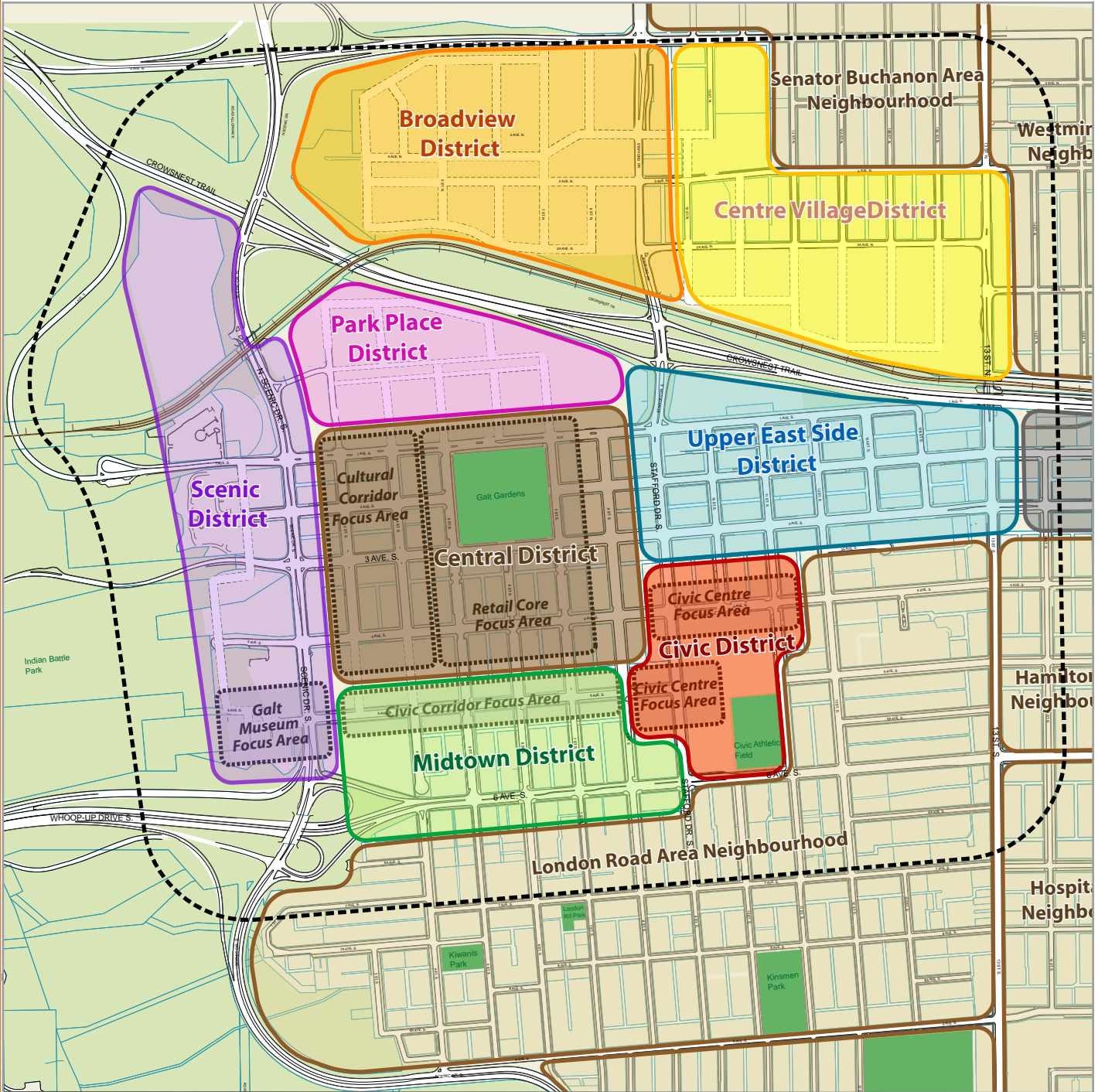
The primary purpose of the Guiding Framework is to provide comprehensive guidance for making planning and investment decisions that are consistent with the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles, and that are coordinated to realize their desired outcome. The Guiding Framework is comprised of a series of physical plans that illustrate the desirable planning and urban design objectives over the long-term – 20, 50 years or more. To do so, the Framework is comprised of the fundamental ‘building blocks’ that will shape the ‘look’ and ‘feel’ of Downtown, in addition to its function and role. The components of the Guiding Framework include: Districts & Neighbourhoods, Public Realm Framework, and the Built Form Framework.

These Plans work in concert to define and direct the policies, tools and strategies for implementation. Specifically, the Guiding Framework informs decisions on land use, circulation, capital improvements, urban design and built form. It also serves to direct other relevant planning studies and initiatives that may have a bearing on Downtown.

In some instances, the Guiding Framework is intentionally conceptual in nature and not meant to be considered rigid or a matter of policy. In general, it defines preferred strategies that can become goals to work towards. More importantly, it makes certain that as implementation takes place incrementally over many years, the sum of all these changes will contribute to a cohesive and coherent Downtown environment. Consequently, while some ideas in the Guiding Framework may appear unrealistic or unattainable in the present-day, it is important to identify them now to ensure that they can at the very least be considered. This is the nature of visioning and long-term planning.

The intent is to secure one Vision, parts of which may not necessarily translate into policy, but rather is a hoped-for outcome that the City will seek to achieve through a variety of resources. This Framework establishes goals that can trigger further studies, align efforts, guide change and generate momentum.





Districts & Neighbourhoods Framework

2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods

Distinct Districts and Neighbourhoods are the fundamental building blocks of great cities. The “sense of place” one derives from well-defined parts of the city is most often found in the unique and authentic experience of Downtown. This Framework helps to understand Downtown Lethbridge as a collection of areas with distinct existing and/or potential identities and built characteristics.

The purpose of this Framework is to guide capital investments and growth in a manner that respects local identity and reinforces the desired future land uses, built qualities and characteristics of the various areas that comprise the Downtown area. These areas vary in scale and generally reflect either existing strong identities or areas that have contiguous common qualities such as land uses, building characteristics and other defining features. Although the objective should be that each area maintain a distinct identity, collectively the Districts and Neighbourhoods are to complement one another. Each plays a specific role within an integrated whole that is the Downtown and its environs.

Districts define existing or potential mixed-use areas that are contiguous to Downtown, where change is underway, desired or anticipated. As indicated in the plan on the facing page, the Downtown area is comprised of eight distinct existing and potential District that will be guided by this plan:

Central District

Civic District

Midtown District

Scenic District

Upper East Side District

Park Place District

Centre Village District

Broadview District

Neighbourhoods generally correspond to the established and stable residential areas that frame and support Downtown. Although significant change with respect to growth and development is not anticipated in these areas, how they interface with Downtown is central to its success. The Master Plan addresses these central neighbourhoods to ensure that adjacent development is sensitively considered and integrated, while reinforcing and enhancing their connectivity to Downtown. The central neighbourhoods directly adjacent to Downtown include::

London Road Neighbourhood

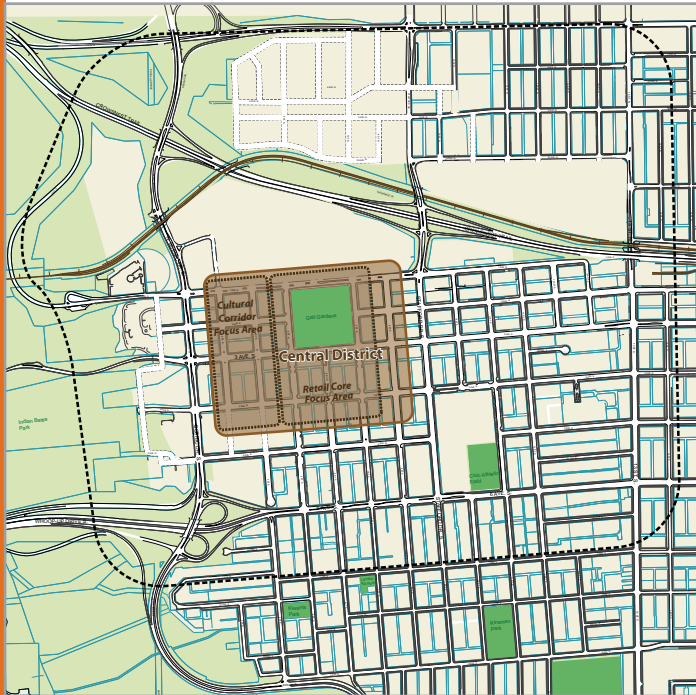
Hamilton Neighbourhood

Westminster Neighbourhood

Senator Buchanan Neighbourhood

The following section describes the desired function and built character for each of the Downtown Districts, as well as the relationship between Downtown and the surrounding Neighbourhoods. To reinforce the distinction of each area, while contributing to the Downtown’s overall vitality and appeal, potential interventions, improvements and developments are described where applicable. This vision for Districts and Neighbourhoods is supported by and given shape in the subsequent Public Realm and Built Form Frameworks.

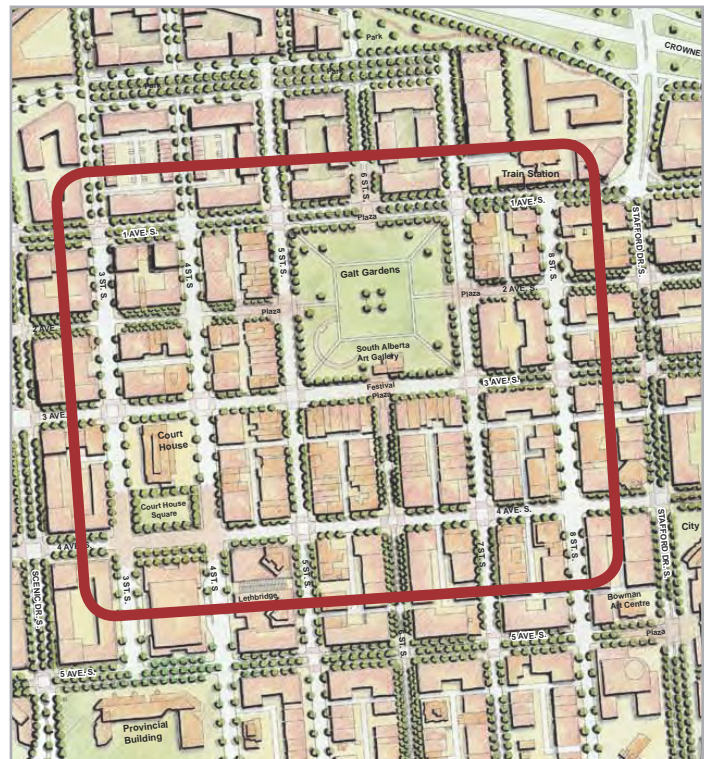
2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods



Key Plan of the Central District

2.1 Central District

The Central District will be the priority focus for immediate change in the Downtown. This District contains the historic core, including the greatest concentration of existing heritage building stock in Lethbridge. The 'Retail Core' focus area is the primary street-oriented retailing area and is centred on Galt Gardens. Public and private investments should reinforce the defining pedestrian scale and character of the area with taller and denser developments directed to the periphery. The transformation of Lethbridge Centre should serve to anchor the 'Cultural Corridor' focus area while reintroducing north-south links aligned to the street grid to link with the Civic Corridor along 5th Avenue.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Central District

Key District Objectives

1. Private investment and confidence encouraged through exceptional and creative policies, incentives and programs that respond to the District’s distinct challenges and opportunities.
2. The protection of significant heritage resources including modernist styles and the strengthening of the ‘Heritage Blocks’ with compatible infill development (see Built Form Framework).
3. A distinct low-rise, pedestrian priority, Retail Core comprised of a concentration of street-oriented specialty stores, boutiques and restaurants and supported by a high quality streetscaping.
4. A Cultural Corridor including a concentration of restaurants, galleries and other arts related uses and anchored by major cultural attractions.
5. A significant residential population introduced in high quality mixed-use developments framing the east side of Galt Gardens.
6. The development of major civic and cultural amenities and attractions, including a Performing Arts centre, First Nations cultural centre, possibly a library and University and College presence.
7. The development of student and artist housing.
8. Major public realm improvements, including new plazas, and the removal of angled parking to enable promenades on 6th St and 2nd Ave and the widening of sidewalks on 5th St and 7th St.
9. The revitalization and reintegration of Lethbridge Centre through renovation, or partial/major redevelopment
10. The redesign of Courthouse Sq including a potential new building to frame and animate its north side
11. The development of well designed municipal parking structures at the east, west and south flanks of the district.



3. A distinct pedestrian-oriented Retail Core



5. High quality mixed-use on Galt Gardens



6. New cultural amenities and attractions



8. New plazas for events and festivals



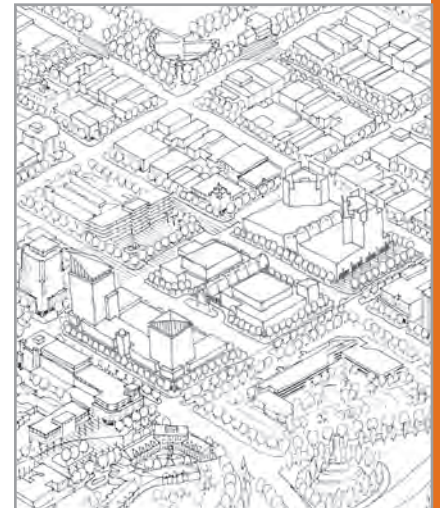
8. Promenades and widened sidewalks



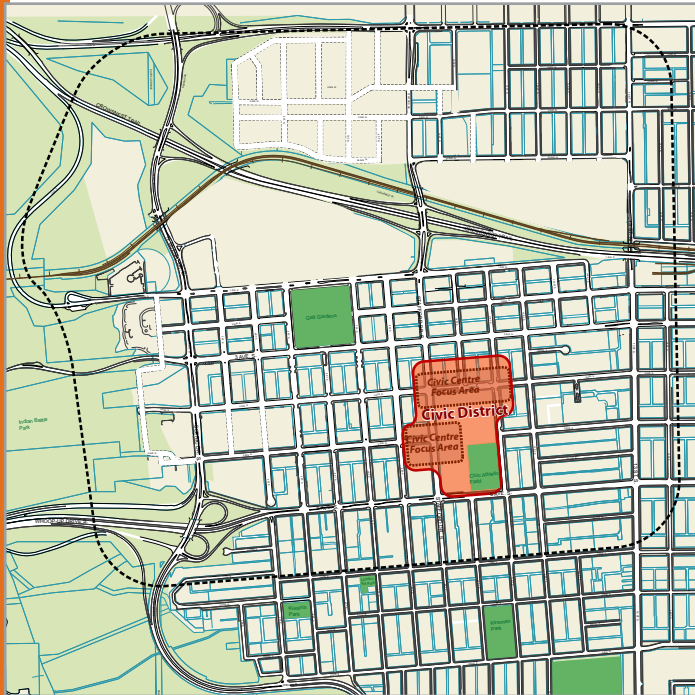
11. Parking structures design to fit in



9. Alternatives for Lethbridge Centre illustrating partial and major transformations



2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods



Key Plan of the Civic District

2.2 Civic District

The Civic District houses the primary concentration of municipal and institutional uses in Lethbridge. The District is currently anchored by City Hall and a variety of recreational, cultural and community facilities. A number of opportunities exist to intensify the area and to reinforce the visual termination of a number of streets. The upgrading and expansion of these civic uses should seek to create a coherently planned area that will include the integration of the Civic Athletic Field, a new plaza at the east terminus of the Civic Corridor (5th Ave), mid-block pedestrian connections, and parking facilities internal to the block.



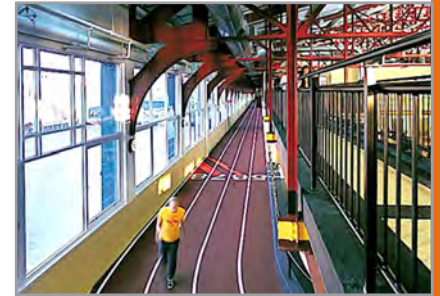
The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Civic District

Key District Planning Objectives

1. Coherently configured and designed civic ‘campus’ through a comprehensively considered plan and vision.
2. Maintain and reinforce the District as the City’s primary civic centre and destination.
3. The retention and expansion of the Bowman Arts Centre.
4. The integration and redevelopment of autonomous recreational functions into one significant state-of-the-art facility to serve Downtown and beyond.
5. The formalization of the Civic Athletic Field as a community park framed by buildings with positive frontages.
6. A civic building of signature design and new plaza at the terminus of 5th Ave.
7. Placement of new buildings that frame and orient to the streets.
8. East-west and north south mid-block pedestrian links as ‘breezeways’ that provide shelter from the elements in the winter months.
9. A significant municipal parking structure internal to the block to service all community functions within the District.
10. The redevelopment of the Library site into an expanded facility or other public function with enhanced street presence.
11. Gateway treatments on 6th Ave, at Stafford Dr and at 11th St.
12. Enhanced streetscaping of Stafford Dr including a boulevard, improved pedestrian and transit amenities and a distinct design to reflect civic importance of the area.
13. All view corridors that terminate at the civic centre - 10th St and 5th Ave - are reinforced with public art, distinct landscaping and/or architectural features.



3. Retain & sensitively expand Bowman Arts



4. Consolidated recreational facility



5. A new park for Downtown & surrounds



6. Icon to anchor the Civic Corridor



8. Glazed operable breezeway linkages

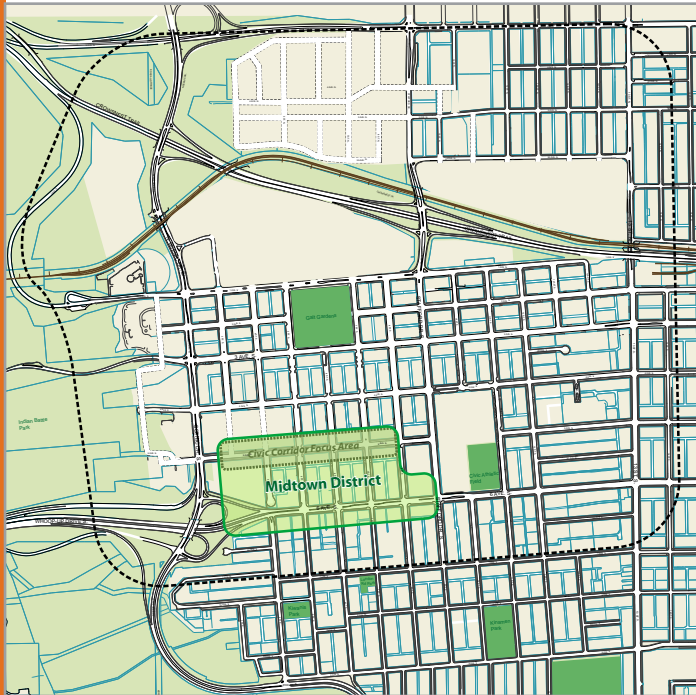


11. Public art can also serve as a gateway



12. The civic importance of Stafford Dr warrants a distinctive approach to streetscaping

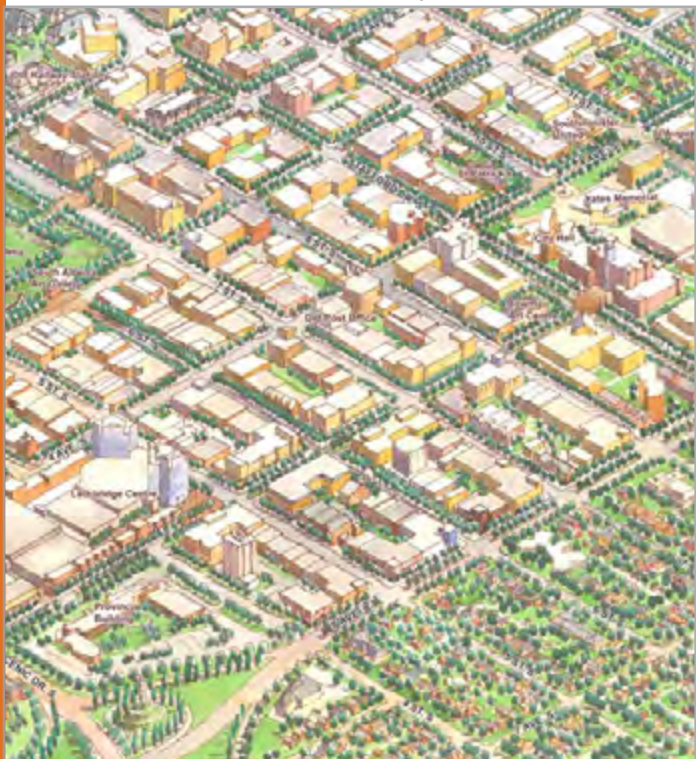
2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods



Key Plan of the Midtown District

2.3 Midtown District

This District serves as the primary south gateway and approach into Downtown with a concentration of primarily office uses centred on 5th Avenue - identified as the 'Civic Corridor' and linking the Civic Centre with the Galt Museum. This District will continue to intensify with a mix of uses that transition in scale and intensity towards the London Road Neighbourhood. New developments should seek to strengthen the civic/office character and quiet charm of the area while repairing the 'gaps' in the streetscapes. Improvements to 6th Ave should seek to balance its vehicular role with necessary improvements to pedestrian north-south connectivity.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Midtown District

Key District Objectives

1. Continue to concentrate offices and services along the Civic Corridor - 5th Ave -within buildings up to 8 storeys.
2. The scale of development and intensity of uses should transition from 5th Ave to 6th Ave so as to provide an appropriate buffer to the London Road neighbourhood. The residential character of this area should continue to intensify with a variety of housing types.
3. The Promenade (6th St) inking to Galt Gardens begins at 6th Ave with a prominent gateway treatment.
4. Other key gateways along 6th Ave include 5th St and 4th St where the new fire department headquarters will be designed to serve as a prominent landmark building at this entry into Downtown.
5. The mix of uses on the south side of 6th Ave will be primarily 'neighbourhood' oriented in function and character.
6. The 6th Ave streetscape will be improved with street oriented buildings and uses, a landscaped centre median and enhanced crosswalks to help calm traffic and strengthen pedestrian connections between Downtown and the neighbourhood.
7. Strengthen the civic importance and visual connections of 5th Ave with a distinctive streetscaping that should include a centre median with low-lying landscaping.
8. To minimize the visual impact of excessive roadway widths, on-street parking areas - either parallel or angled - should be distinguished from travel lanes with special paving treatments.
9. A well designed municipal parking structure with at-grade uses may be located on one or both municipally owned properties on 5th Ave to serve both the Civic Corridor and adjacent Retail Core.



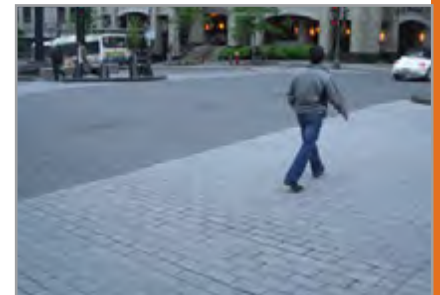
2. High densities in low-rise forms



2. Low-rise mixed-use as a transition on 6th Ave



4. New civic buildings are landmark opportunities



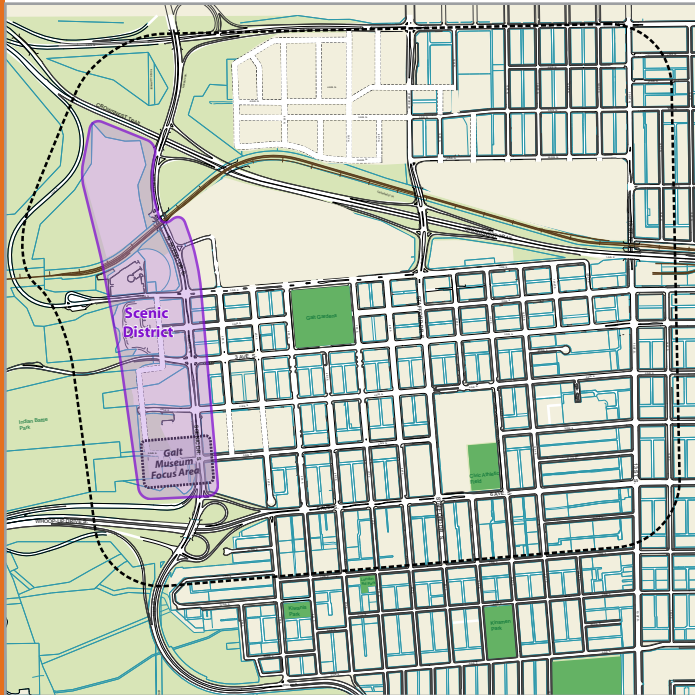
6. Enhanced sidewalk treatments



7. Maintain yet reinforce important view corridors with low landscaping in the boulevard



8. Special paving for on-street parking lanes to visually minimize width of roadway



Key Plan of the Scenic District



2.4 Scenic District

The Scenic District currently includes pockets of residential areas with automotive-oriented commercial uses centred on Scenic Drive. This is a major north-south transportation corridor that also serves as the ‘front door’ to Downtown. The transformation of the Scenic Drive streetscape will reconnect Downtown with the river valley while creating an ‘urban avenue’. The creation of a new north-south boulevard extending from the Galt Museum will establish a Downtown ‘face’ on the valley. The scale of lots combined with great access will enable larger format commercial uses to better integrate in more ‘urban’ built forms that are combined with significant residential intensification.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Scenic District

Key District Objectives

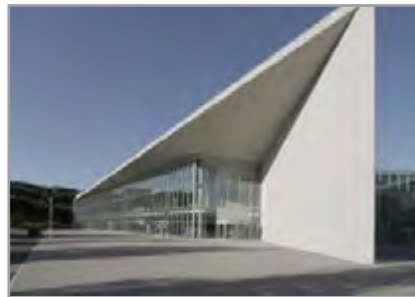
1. Transform the corridor from a commercial strip to a livable urban avenue that can accommodate high volumes of traffic in a visually appealing and pedestrian-friendly way.
2. Require building setbacks to transform Scenic Dr. into a 'Parkway' with a broad centre median to add amenity and visual appeal to the streetscape and to make it more inviting to walk.
3. Reinforce visual and physical links between Downtown and the valley with streetscaping, as well as plaza treatments and public art at street termini.
4. The construction of a new north-south boulevard along the valley ridge line between 5th Ave and 3rd Ave.
5. The development of a convention centre and high-end hotel overlooking the valley.
6. Formalize a natural amphitheater built into the valley directly north of Galt Museum.
7. A new plaza in front of the Galt Museum as the west anchor to the Civic Corridor and to serve as a gateway to the river valley 'promenade'.
8. Large format retail integrated into mixed-use developments that are oriented to Scenic Dr with parking and servicing hidden from view.
9. The tallest buildings Downtown are directed to intersection of Scenic Dr and 4th Ave and away from existing neighbourhoods and the historic low-rise core.
10. Significant high density residential development in street-oriented forms will encourage walking which will in turn enhance the vitality of the Downtown economy and culture.
11. Major iconic gateway features to be located at the Whoop-up Dr and Crowsnest Trail interchanges.



1. From commercial strip to urban avenue



2. Landscaped boulevard for greenery & amenity



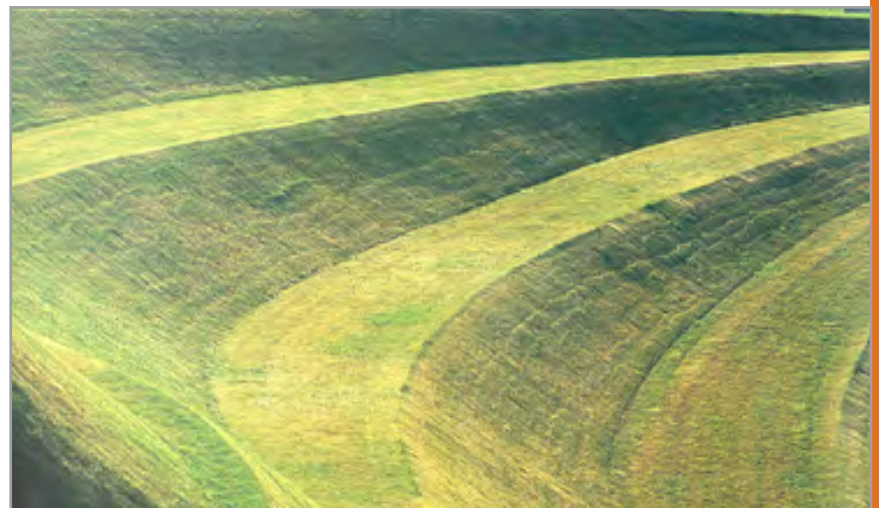
5. A new conference facility is an opportunity to create a landmark building that also affords great views



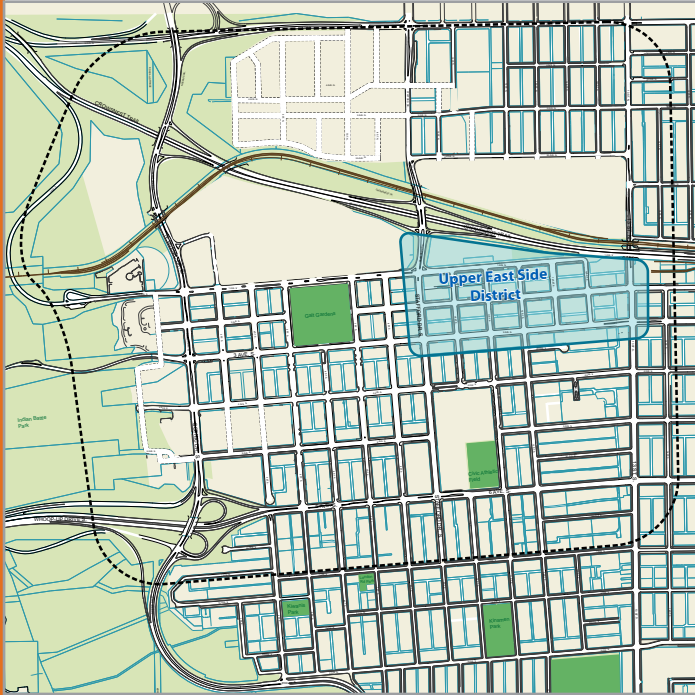
8. Large format retail in mixed-use form



10. Downtown benefits from pedestrianism



11. A compelling gateway achieved with 'earth works' within the traffic interchange

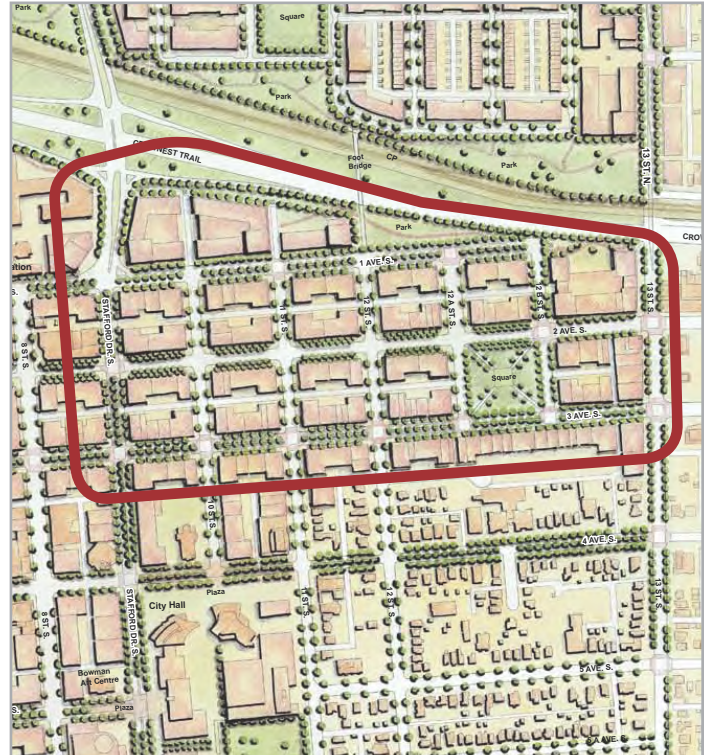


Key Plan of the Upper East Side District



2.5 Upper East Side District

This District serves as the east gateway and approach into Downtown, with a focus on the mixed uses along 3rd Avenue and Stafford Drive. The District also serves as an important transition area for the neighbourhood to the south. The balance of the District can continue to include warehousing, office commercial, and light industrial uses housing small-scale and innovative industries. Live-work opportunities can be encouraged with the introduction of open space and community amenities. The development of a new public Square can serve this objective while providing the District with a focus for retail, civic and potentially academic uses.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Upper East Side District

Key District Objectives

1. Creating a unique district that permits a non-traditional mix of light industrial with residential uses so as to cultivate creative industries and small scale start-ups in the new economy.
2. Generate investment interest and good urbanism with the creation of a new public Square to anchor the eastern reaches of the Downtown area, to address the area's deficiency of open spaces, to attract cleaner businesses and to draw a residential population.
3. Encourage a major employer or academic institution to locate in the vicinity of the square to ensure a critical mass of people and to establish a local identity and culture.
4. Extend the promenade streetscape on 2nd Ave to link the new square to Galt Gardens.
5. Limit heights along 3rd Ave to generally 4 storeys to ensure an appropriate transition to the adjacent London Road neighbourhood.
6. Create an additional continuous green open spaces along the Crowsnest Trail to enable the development of a linked trail network.
7. Encourage walking and enhance accessibility to Downtown by providing a footbridge over the Crowsnest Trail as a convenient mid-block pedestrian link to the Centre Village District.
8. Direct greater densities and heights away from the neighbourhoods and historic core and towards Stafford Dr. and along the Crowsnest Trail.
9. To enhance the approach to the Central District from the east and to provide for amenity, introduce a centre boulevard on 3rd Ave between Stafford and 13th St.
10. Gateway treatments at the Stafford Dr and Crowsnest interchange, and the 3rd Ave and 13th St intersection.



4. The Promenade links key open spaces



5. Limit height on 3rd Ave to ensure transition



6. Linear park opportunities along highways



7. Footbridges to enhance Downtown access



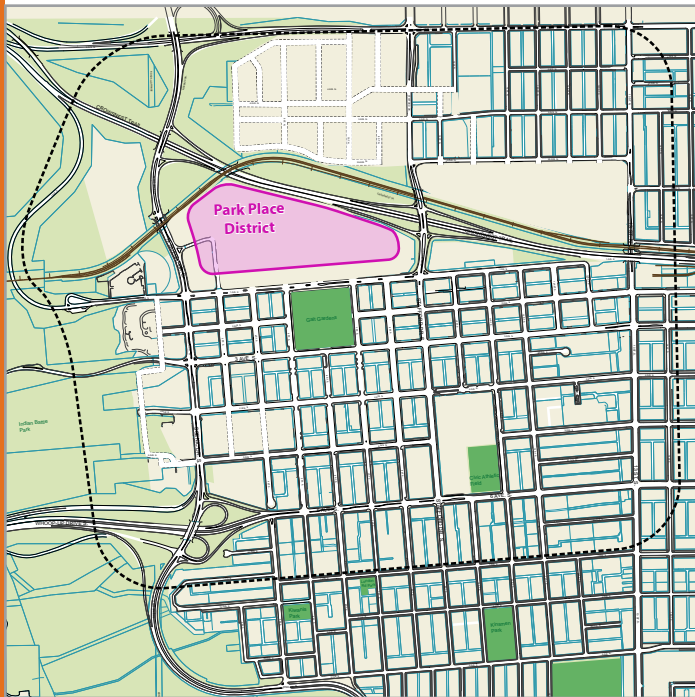
9. Introducing a landscaped boulevard



10. Gateway & plaza lend to local identity



2. In Quebec City, a new high quality Square was the catalyst for attracted high tech industries & educational institutions which have resulted in the area's revitalization

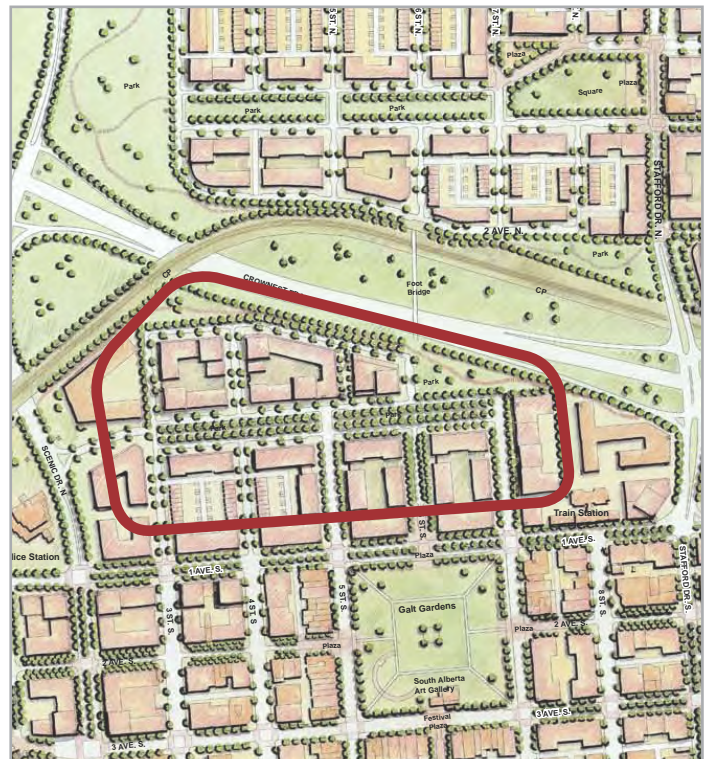


Key Plan of the Park Place District



2.6 Park Place District

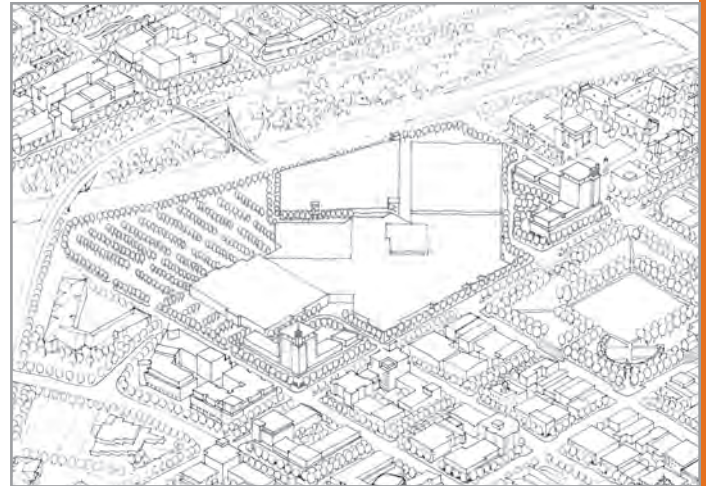
Currently Park Place Mall, this area will continue to serve as the City's pre-eminent shopping destination for many years. If and when the mall in its current form is reconsidered, this District's potential to be intensified and reintegrated with Downtown can be realized. The transformation of the area should result in a further intensification of commercial functions while introducing a mix of other uses and attractions, including significant residential densities. This will afford an opportunity to integrate the District with the rest of Downtown through a number of potential interventions, including the extension of the street grid, the introduction of street related uses, structured parking concealed within new blocks, and completing the 'enclosure' of Galt Gardens.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Park Place District

Key District Objectives

1. To ensure the continued success and vitality of the City’s most significant shopping destination and attraction.
2. To realize untapped potential synergies between the mall and the Retail Core by strategically harnessing any future contemplated changes by Park Place in a way that will be mutually beneficial.
3. When and if fortunes change, to encourage the intensification of uses and the integration of Park Place with the Downtown through a variety of possible strategies depending on the magnitude of change necessary for retaining the vitality of the retail function. The following strategies can be considered independently or as a sequence of phases that culminate in a complete transformation over many years:
 - a) Modest renovation to the street frontages to permit customers to access retailers directly from the street.
 - b) In concert with the development of structured parking, the expansion of the mall by infilling the surface parking lots fronting 1st Ave and incorporating street-oriented retail frontages.
 - c) Mixed-use intensification by infilling the surface parking lots fronting 1st Ave.
 - d) Partial demolition and redevelopment that permits the street and block pattern to encroach partially into the site to create a ‘main street’ character.
 - e) Significant redevelopment that extends the street grid entirely into the site and reintroduces the same or more retail space organized in a more urban fashion that includes open spaces, civic or cultural attractions, structured parking internal to the blocks and office and residential uses above retail levels.
4. Ultimately, if the Park Place District is realized, it would serve a number of important Downtown objectives, including: the enclosure of the north face of Galt Gardens and the revitalization of the north end of the Central District; the construction of a footbridge over the Crownsnest Trail to link Downtown to the future Broadview District and beyond; and, to housing a significant residential population within a complete neighbourhood that is within steps of the heart of Downtown.



c) Mixed-use infill of lots fronting 1st Ave in concert with new parking structures



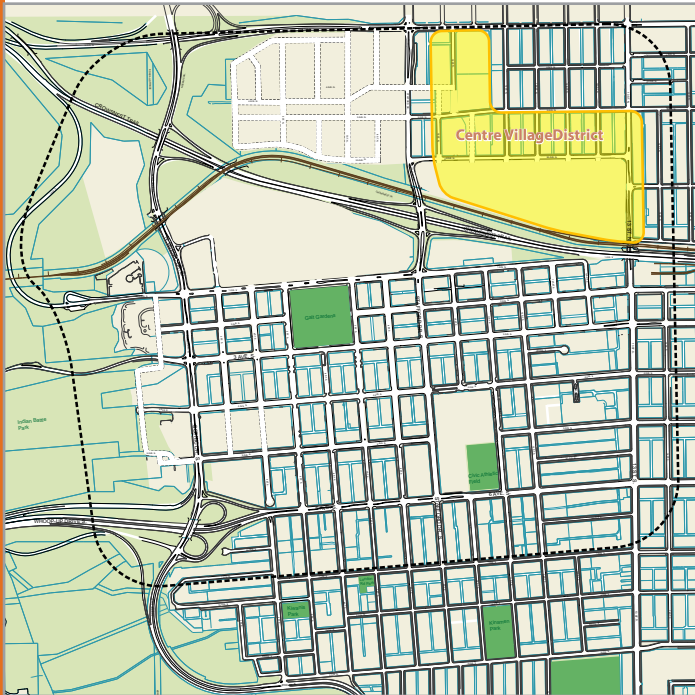
e) Mall redevelopment into ‘main street’ mixed-uses: Crocker Park, OH



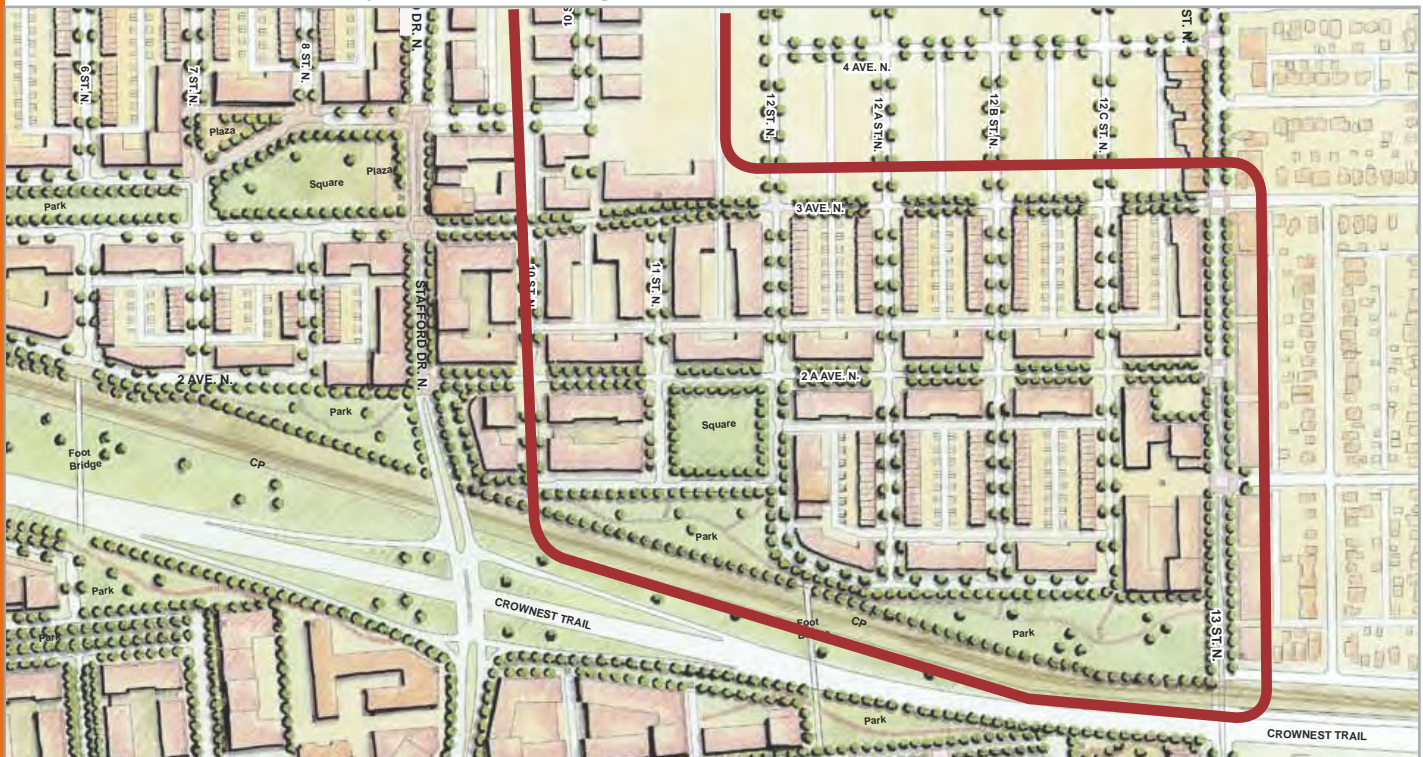
e) Mall redevelopment into ‘main street’ mixed-uses: Birkdale, NC

2.7 Centre Village District

Similar to Park Place Mall, the Centre Village Mall can anticipate a reconsideration in the long-term that will intensify and integrate the site to create a new and exciting mixed-use destination and community. This District will be centred on the 2nd Avenue North corridor and anchored by a new plaza at 13th Street to the east and a significant new public Square to the west. New development will provide for a transition to existing neighbourhoods to the north and east, and compatible industrial uses will continue to thrive. Pedestrian connections to Downtown will be enhanced with a pedestrian bridge over the Crowsnest Trail linking to the Upper East Side District.



Key Plan of the Centre Village District



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Centre Village District

Key District Objectives

The objectives for Centre Village and potential strategy for the realization of the District is similar to the outline provided for Park Place on the previous pages. Additional objectives specific to this district, include:

1. Providing appropriate transitions in scale and land use intensity to the adjacent Westminster and Senator Buchanan neighbourhoods.
2. ‘Completing’ the south extent of the Senator Buchanan neighbourhood with residential infill of the existing blocks currently in transition from commercial/industrial uses (12th St. N. to 12 C St. N.).
3. Clearly defining, protecting and enhancing the remaining industrial area.
4. Transforming 2nd Ave N into the ‘main street’ of the district as shaped by mixed-use development placed close to the street with retail at-grade and residential use above.
5. Secure a new Square to serve as green amenity to existing residents and to attract more future residents to the area.
6. Provide a modest plaza at 2nd Ave N & 13th St to serve as a gathering and meeting point as well as a gateway feature for the District and Downtown.
7. Create additional continuous green open spaces along the Crowsnest Trail to enable the development of a linked trail network.
8. Encourage walking and enhance accessibility to Downtown by providing a footbridge over the Crowsnest Trail as a convenient mid-block pedestrian link to the Upper East Side District and the rest of Downtown.



Mall redevelopment into ‘main street’ mixed-uses: Mashpee Commons, MA & Belmar, CO



2. Completing neighbourhoods with infill



4. 2nd Ave will look much like 3rd Ave today



5. A new square to focus the district

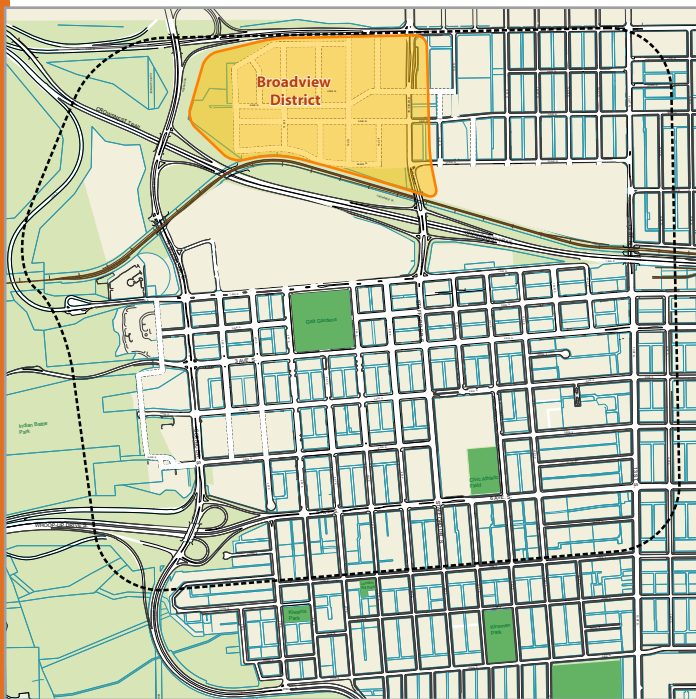


7. Linear green network along a highway



6. A modestly scaled plaza to serve as a gathering place and meeting point as well as a gateway feature

2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods



Key Plan of the Scenic District



2.8 Broadview District

Currently this area is primarily comprised of transitioning industrial and commercial uses, along with municipal maintenance related functions. Most of the land is in city ownership. The natural setting and proximity to Downtown make Broadview well positioned to become an appealing District that can provide for all the charms of neighbourhood living within minutes of the hustle and bustle of Downtown. While a mix of uses can focus along Stafford Drive, the balance of the District can serve as a 'complete' neighbourhood afforded with an abundance of open space and recreational amenity, in addition to appealing views of the river valley. A pedestrian bridge over the Crownsnest Trail would place most future residents within a 5 minute walk of Park Place District.



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for the Scenic District

Key District Objectives

As with the Park Place and Centre Village districts, Broadview may not be realized until well into the long term. When and if this district is ever contemplated, the following objectives ought to be considered:

1. The district should accommodate a significant population housed in a wide spectrum of mostly medium to high density residential types. A fine grain mix of row-housing, stacked towns, and low, mid and high rises may be included.
2. The district should draw its design from the desirable qualities of Downtown and its central neighbourhoods, generally characterized by a grid pattern of streets and blocks of a modest scale to encourage pedestrianism. As with Galt Gardens, the primary organizing element ought to be a central open space gesture that links the river valley deep into the community.
3. As with the other districts a focus should be provided around a public square as centrally located as possible. In addition to a mix of uses and shops, public services would ideally locate here and may include day care, a community centre and depending on the demographics possible even a school.
4. As much as possible walking and transit use should be encouraged through the provision of convenient, safe and appealing pedestrian infrastructure, including a footbridge over the Crowsnest Trail, mid-block connections, and amenities such as benches, trails, bicycle storage and well design and located bus shelters.



1. A high density vibrant urban neighbourhood is achieved with a fine grained mix of housing choices



2. The traditional gridiron street and block pattern in Lethbridge is designed for walking

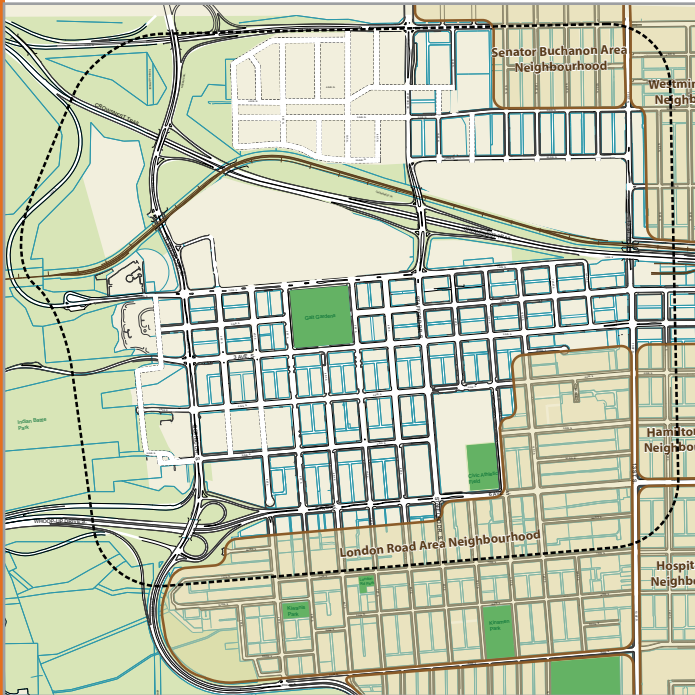


3. Create a public square to provide a central focus and identity for the District

2.0 Districts & Neighbourhoods

2.9 The Central Neighbourhoods

The surrounding London Road, Hamilton, Westminster, and Senator Buchanan Neighbourhoods are the lifeblood of Downtown. Until a critical mass of people live Downtown, these central neighbourhoods provide the only established population base within close proximity for Downtown activities and businesses. This will be further facilitated through significant improvements to pedestrian connections and through the development of uses and facilities that directly serve the needs and desires of these residents. In turn, the character and function of these areas will be protected and maintained by adjacent future Downtown developments that ensure appropriate transitions in scale and land use intensity.



Key Plan of the Central Neighbourhoods



The Demonstration Concept Plan's Vision for interfacing and integrating with the London Road Neighbourhood

Key Neighbourhood Objectives

1. The health and stability of adjacent neighbourhoods is a shared concern for Downtown. Accordingly, planning for Downtown needs to be proactive and anticipate that as it revitalizes and begins to experience growth pressures, so too will the surrounding neighbourhoods.
2. Clarity about development with respect to land uses and the scale and height will ensure that development outcomes are as intended.
3. Development will not occur uniformly across Downtown, rather it will respond to structured order and hierarchy as defined by a variety of factors such as existing urban conditions, access to services and transportation. Proximity to neighbourhoods is a key factor that will require the scale and intensity of new development to step down to adjacent low-rise established neighbourhoods. The Built Form Framework defines a rational hierarchy which generally guides a transition in uses and scale between urban character categories - from the most urban to the least.
4. In addition to scale and uses, adjacent developments will also need to consider other impacts such as shadow and traffic. Because traffic can be anticipated to 'worsen' with the success of Downtown, a central objective is encourage less car use and more active transportation choices to get about. Enhancing pedestrian linkages, promoting mixed use and ensuring that transit is an easy and convenient choice are but a few proactive strategies that the Master Plan proposes.



3. Stepping down heights to low-rise areas according to a sun angle



4. Traffic infiltration can be mitigated through a variety of traffic calming measures



4. Providing viable alternative choices to driving is essential to Downtown planning

Open Spaces

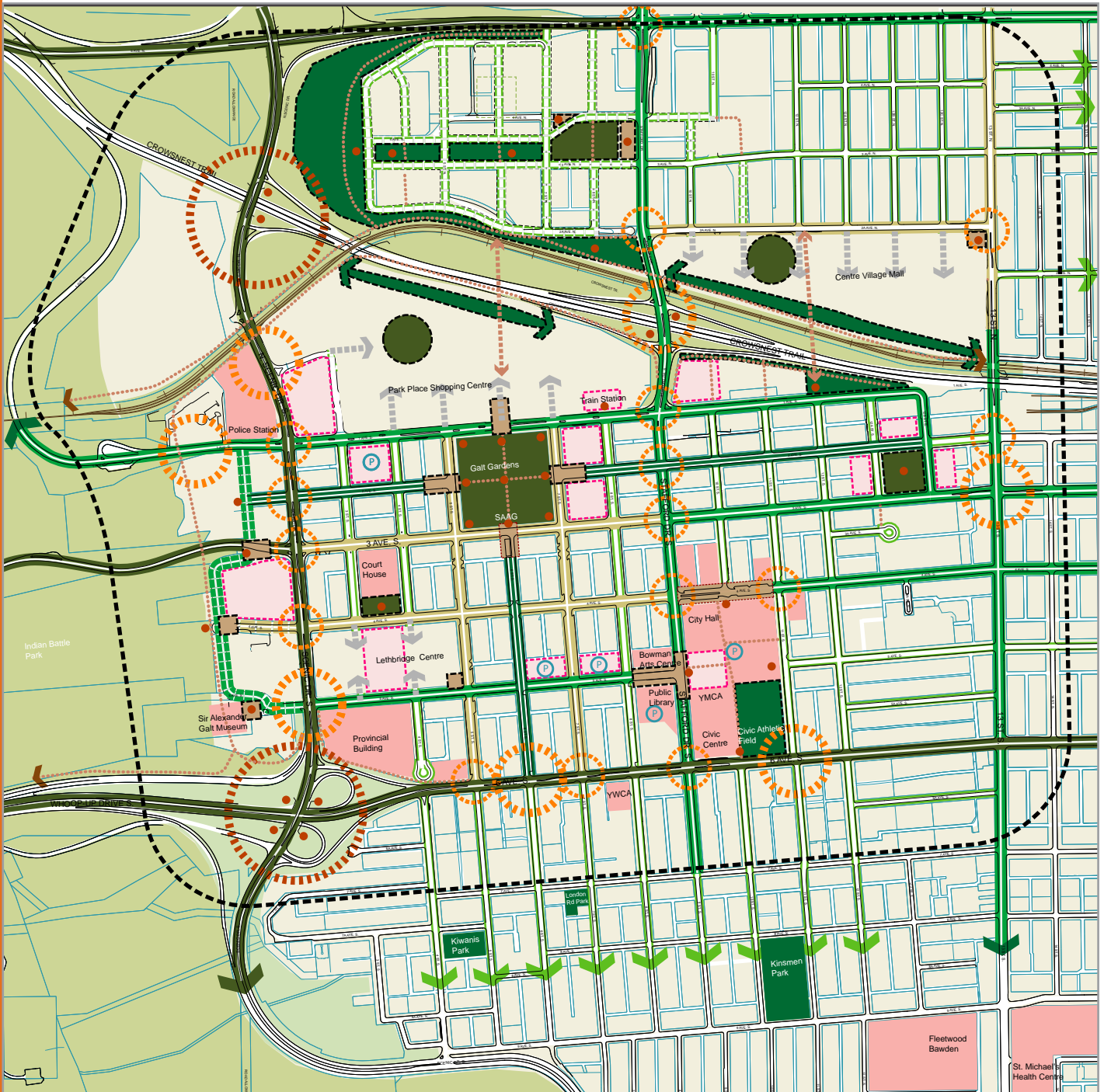
- River Valley
- Park
- Square
- Plaza
- Utility Corridor
- Potential Park/Square/Plaza

- Existing Civic/Cultural Site
- Potential Civic/Cultural Site

Streetscape Character

- Parkway
- Boulevard
- Promenade
- Main Street
- District Street

- City-Wide Gateway
- Downtown Gateway
- District Gateway
- Potential Public Art Site
- Pedestrian & Cycling Connection
- Potential Public Parking Structure



3.0 Public Realm Framework

The Public Realm Framework is the general plan that defines and guides the implementation of the Heart of Our City Vision with respect to the existing and potential elements of Downtown that are primarily in public ownership. This includes public uses, all public open spaces and streetscapes. This plan is central to the Guiding Framework as it shapes the most prominent and visible aspects of the urban environment and therefore makes the greatest impact on the image and impression that the Downtown presents.

Consistent with the Vision, the purpose of this Framework is to ensure that the quality and character of the public realm and how it is experienced will enhance Downtown's livability, economic vitality, aesthetic quality and pedestrian environment. The key objective of the Public Realm Framework is to cultivate and nurture a legible, coherent and appealing physical

environment by identifying and coordinating aspects of public realm for improvement and strengthening.

By articulating the objectives for the public realm that are necessary for bringing the long-term vision to fruition, this Framework serves as the primary guidance for informing and making decisions with respect to capital improvements and strategies. The components that comprise the Public Realm Framework are:

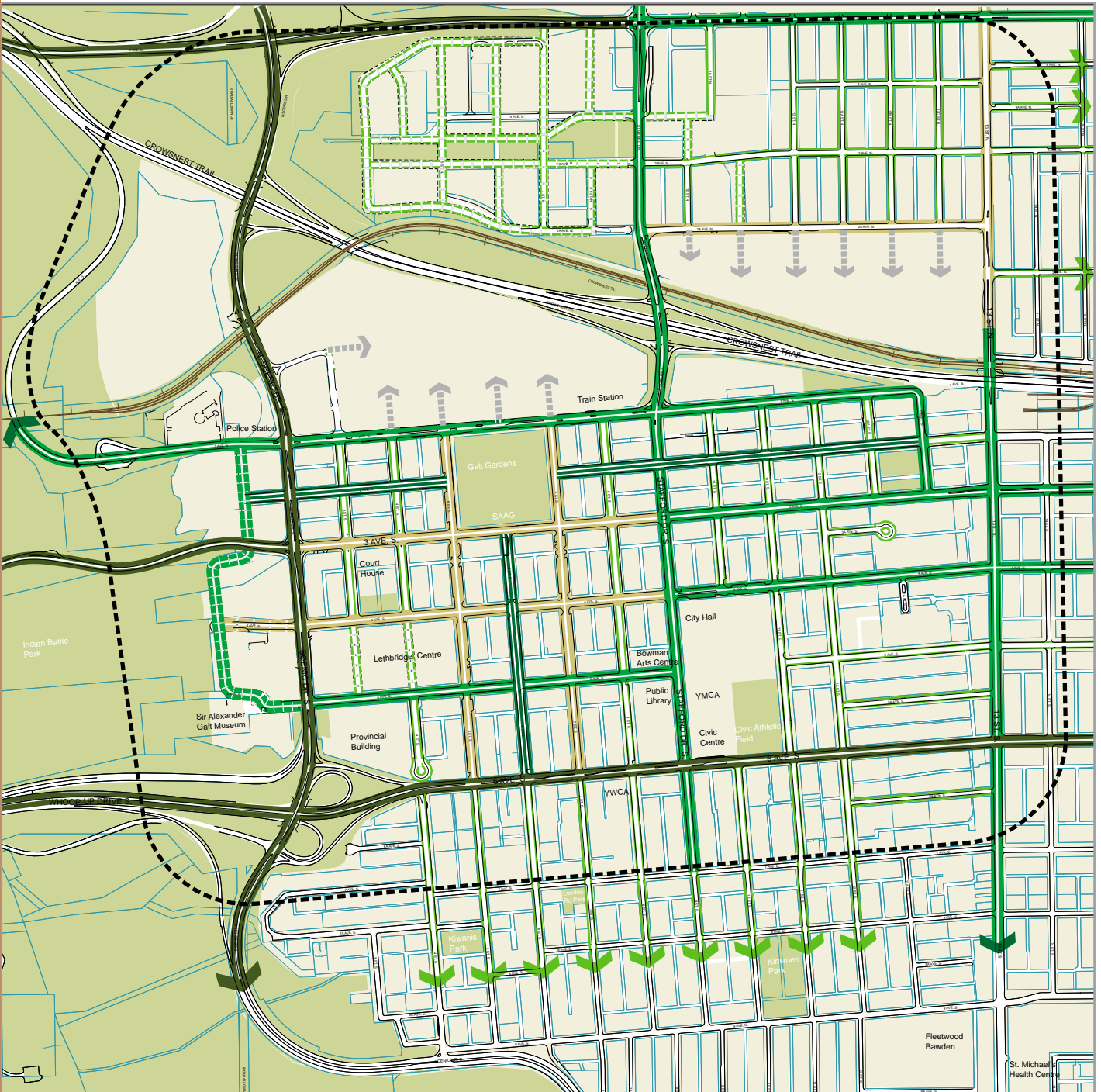
- *Streetscapes*
- *Open Spaces*
- *Gateways & Public Art*
- *Pedestrian & Cycling Connections*
- *Public Transit*
- *Public Parking*
- *Civic & Cultural Sites*



3.0 Public Realm Framework

Streetscape Character

-  Parkway
-  Boulevard
-  Promenade
-  Main Street
-  District Street



Streetscape Character

3.1 Streetscapes

Central to any downtown plan is the streetscape strategy, which can most profoundly define the quality and character of the built environment. As streets comprise the most significant land area in public ownership and because they are the primary means by which we move about, they shape how we experience a given place. More than just a 'roadway', a 'streetscape' defines and considers all the elements that in concert create the quality and character of the 'room' that contains the street, including: sidewalks, trees and landscaping, lighting and furnishing, signage and especially the character and quality of the buildings that define the 'street wall'.

Given that a culture of walking is so fundamental to achieving a successful downtown, streetscapes ought to be designed to balance their pedestrian, transit, land use and civic functions, in addition to their vehicular function. Accordingly, a shift in conventional thinking about road design must take place which considers their 'character' as important as their 'capacity' for traffic. Fortunately for Downtown Lethbridge, its 100 foot public right-of-ways (ROW) enable extraordinary opportunities that are rare to most traditional downtowns.

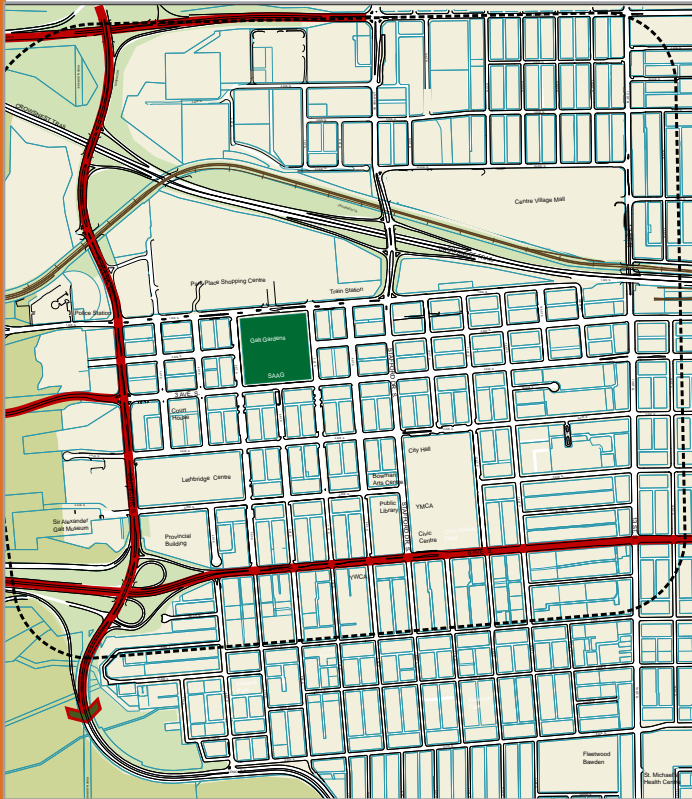
The 'Streetscape Character Framework identifies the hierarchy and design objectives for Downtown streets, which in essence form the armature of the open space network and lay the foundation for the Built Form Framework. This Framework will assist in guiding the quality of the pedestrian environment (sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping) and the appropriate relationship of the buildings to the street to reinforce the intended land uses and streetscape character. The proposed categories of Downtown streetscapes as illustrated in the plan on the facing page, include: *Parkways*; *Boulevards*; *Main Streets*; *Promenades*; and, *District Streets*.

On the following pages, these streetscapes are further described and accompanied by prototypical cross-sections to illustrate the general intended character and design options where applicable. These plans and sections are intended to serve as a guide for informing design development undertakings when a given street is considered for improvement and/or reconstruction.

General objectives applicable to all streetscapes include:

- All streets should be lined with trees in increments no more than 9.0 metres to enhance visual quality and providing shade, but most importantly to serve as effective wind breaks.
- Wherever possible, sidewalks should 'bump-out' at intersections to define on-street parking areas, lessen pedestrian crossing distances, and to provide ample sidewalk widths at intersections for features such as public art, patios, concessions stands and bus stops.
- Both parallel and angular parking should be distinguished in its paving from the roadway to perceptively extend the pedestrian realm and mitigate the width of the roadway.
- Pedestrian convenience and amenities should be of paramount consideration with respect to ensuring adequate sidewalk widths for the desired volume of use and in the siting, design and quality of furnishings, lighting, bus stops and shelters.
- Patios are highly encouraged, particularly on north-south streets and along streets identified as Promenades.
- Visual clutter and unnecessary obstructions on sidewalks should be avoided and streetscape improvements should integrate lighting, furnishings, newspaper boxes, trash bins, signage etc. within a unified design vocabulary.

3.0 Public Realm Framework



A Parkway with a broad centre boulevard with a double row of trees

Parkways

Intended Downtown Role and Function

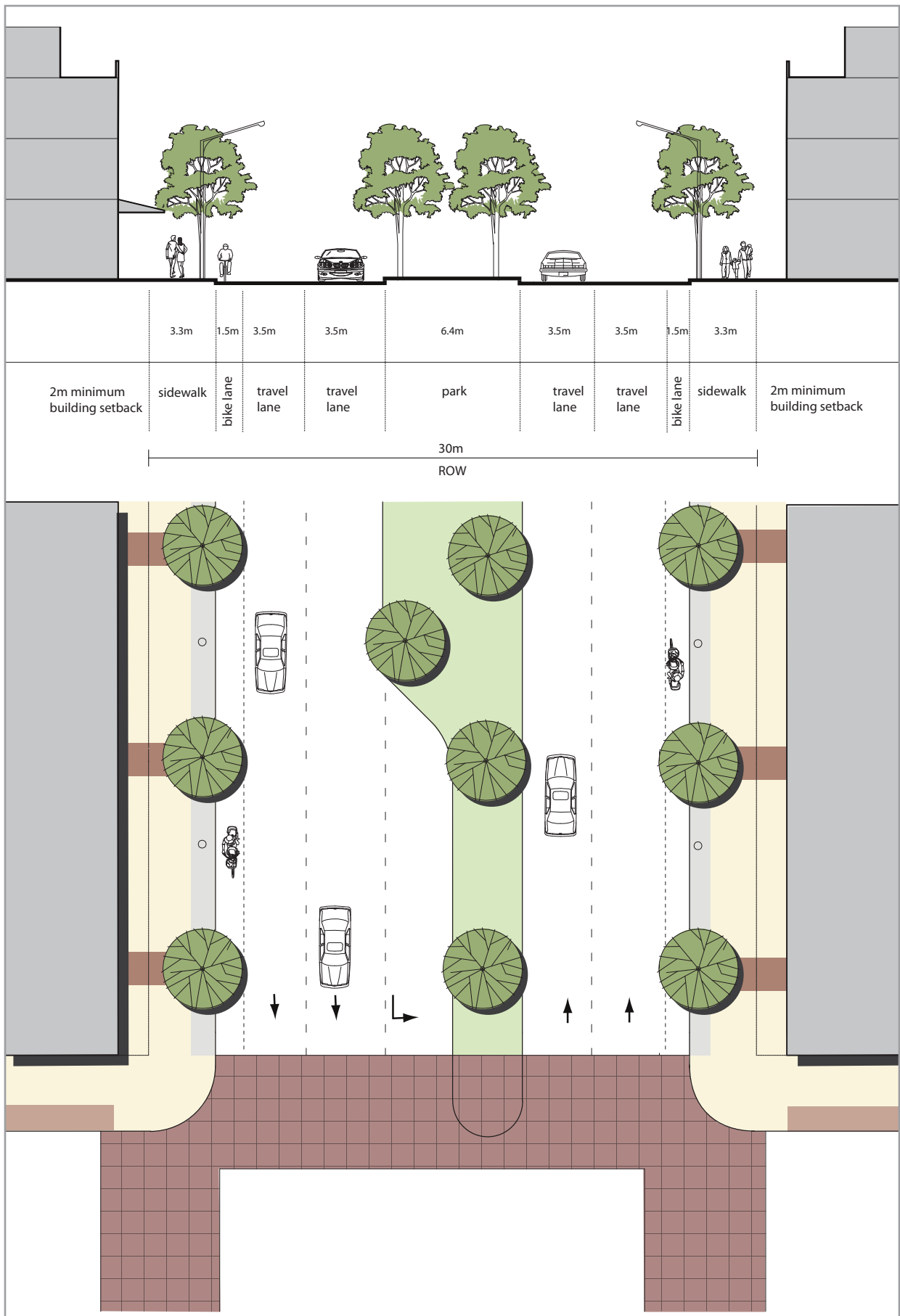
- Important vehicular, cycling and transit routes into and through Downtown
- Traffic typically moves at higher speeds than on other streets
- Important 'gateway' streets for all modes of movement, including pedestrians, for accessing a variety of cross streets into the core from surrounding areas
- Alignment with or crisscrossing the river valley affords scenic qualities
- Will accommodate a variety of land uses ranging from street-oriented retail, to large-format car-oriented commercial to high density residential

Defining Design Characteristics

- Four travel lanes with as broad a centre median as possible
- Tree-line along the side and centre boulevards
- Sidewalk widths and setbacks will vary with uses and pedestrian volumes but generally no less than 3.0 metres in width
- Typically no on-street parking
- Accommodates some form of on-street cycling
- Clearly articulated crosswalks at signalized intersections including where possible well designed pedestrian 'refuge' areas in the centre boulevard
- Appropriately place bus stops for optimum pedestrian convenience and safety
- Buildings consistently placed at the street edge or setback where necessary and possible to enable an optimum centre boulevard width

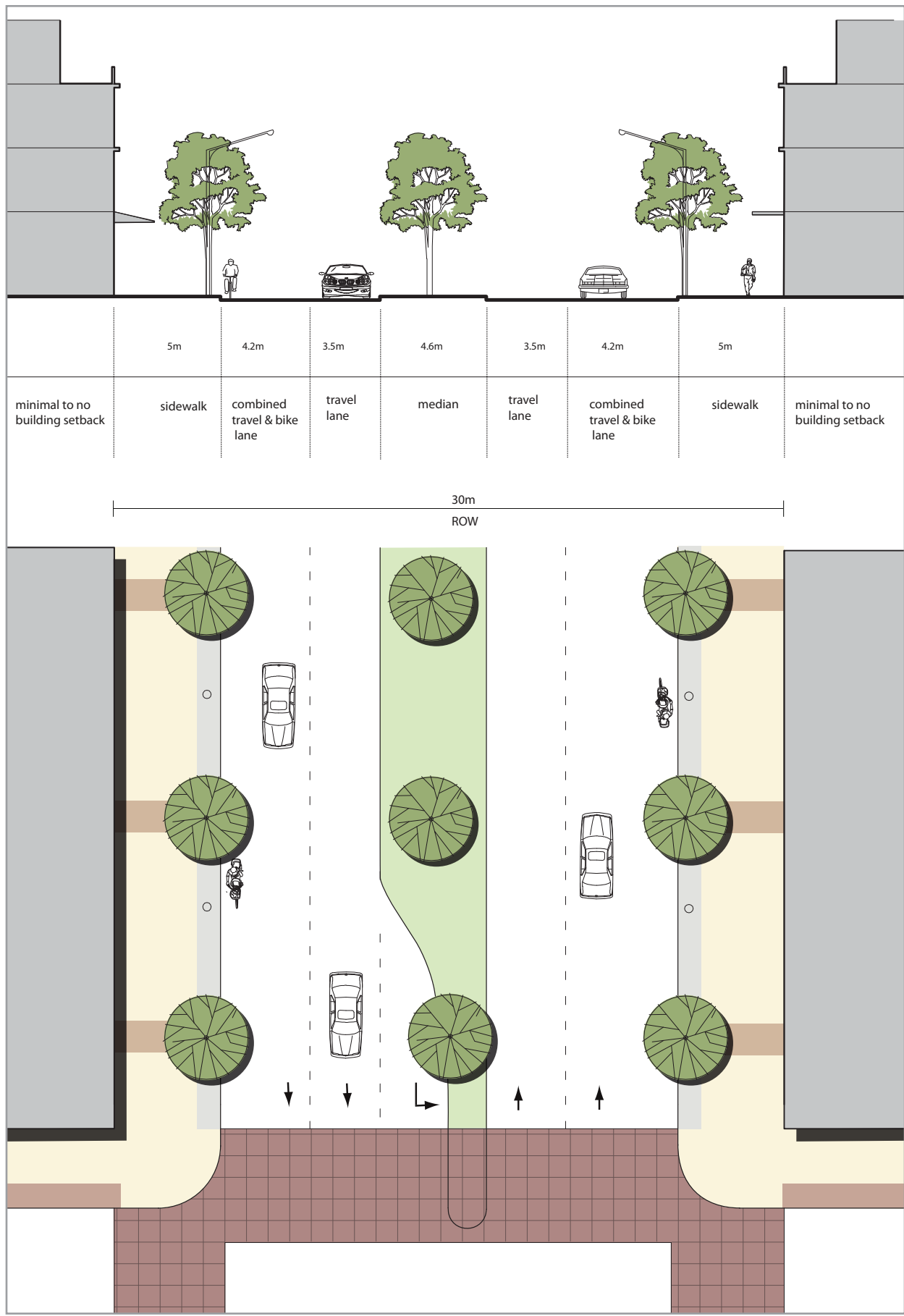
Parkway Prototypes

- **Option 1:** where requiring adequate building setbacks is possible (such as Scenic Drive), a broad landscaped centre median with a double row of trees can be achieved, in addition to a dedicated bike lane
- **Option 2:** without building setbacks (such as 6th Avenue), the centre median is narrower and cycling traffic is combined within a wider than typical travel lane



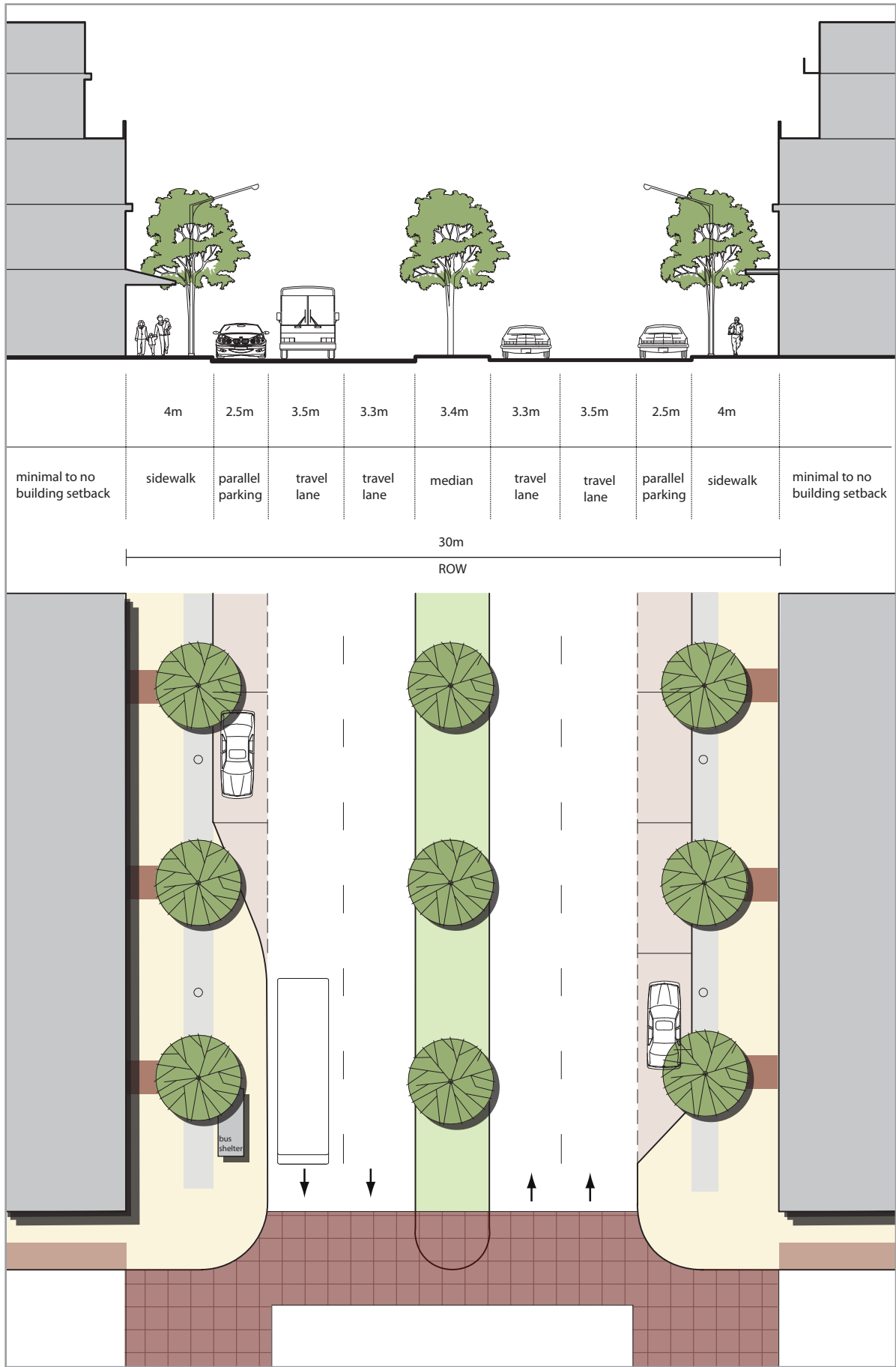
Parkway Prototype Option 1

3.0 Public Realm Framework

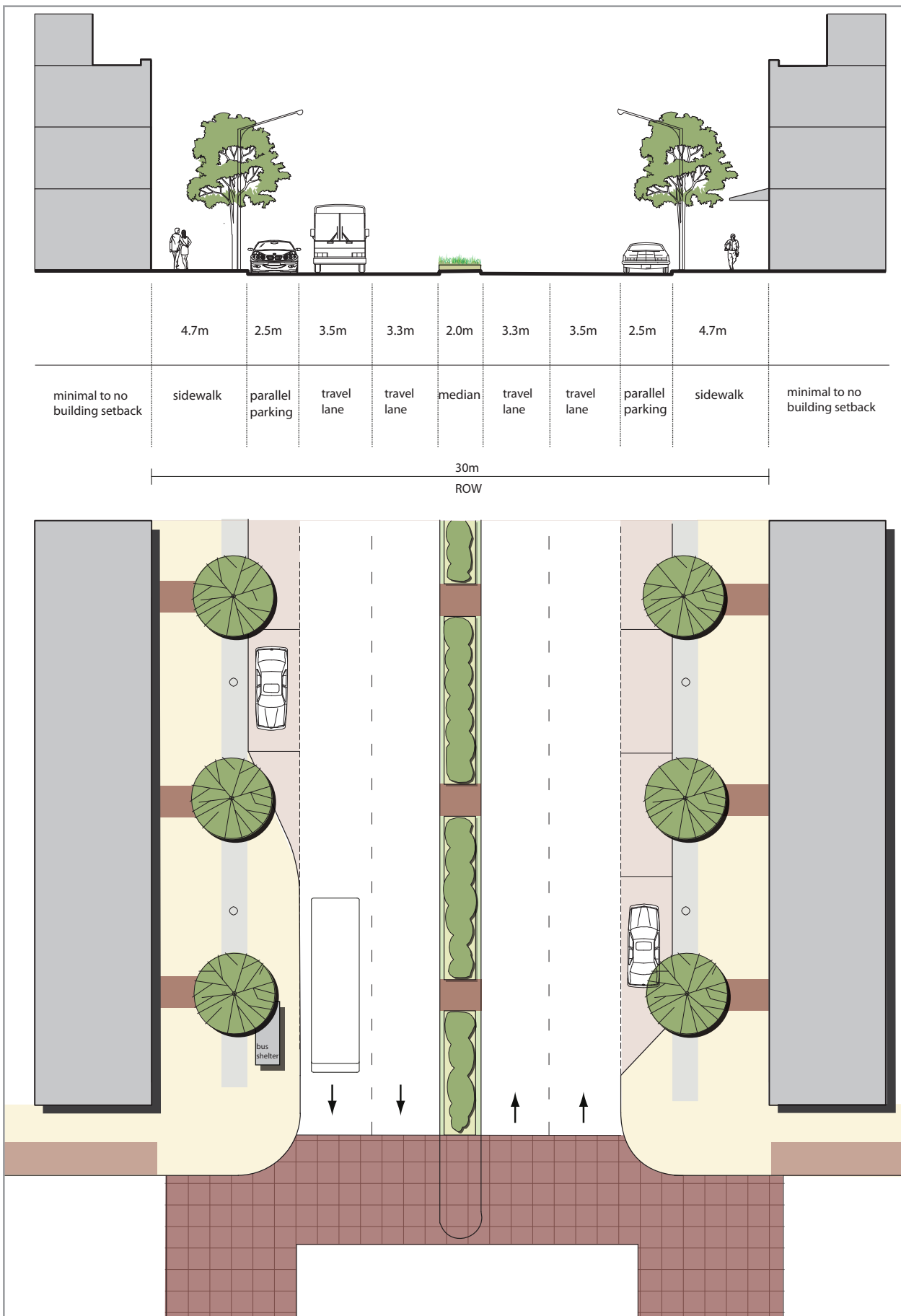


Parkway Prototype Option 2

3.0 Public Realm Framework

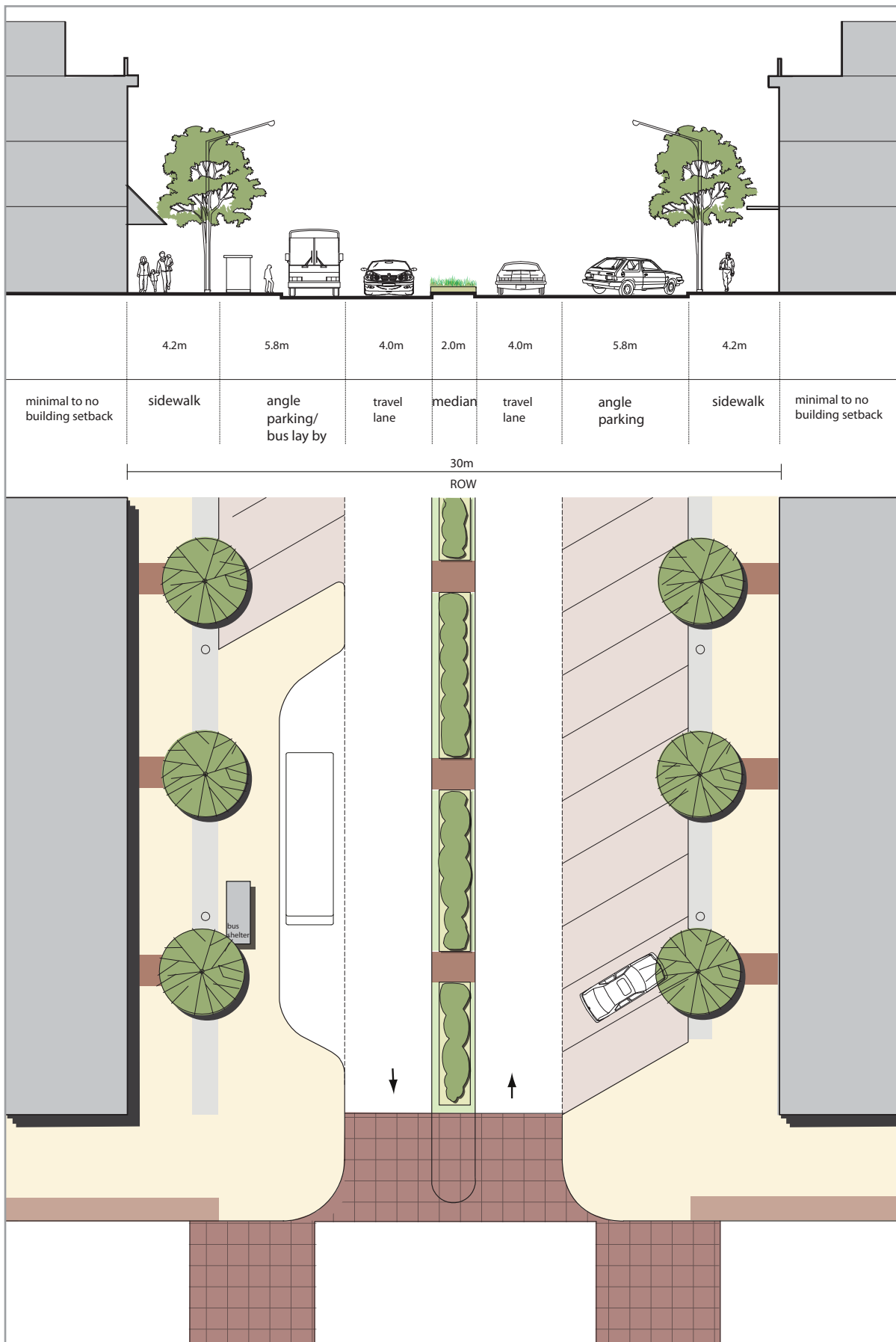


Boulevard Prototype Option 1



Boulevard Prototype Option 2

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Boulevard Prototype Option 3

Main Streets

Intended Downtown Role and Function

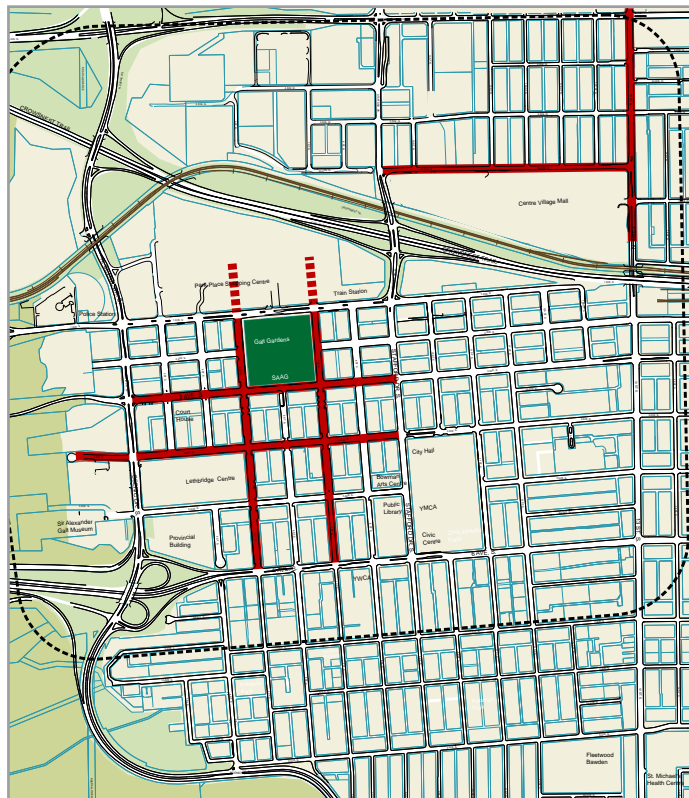
- Serves as street-oriented retail corridors with high pedestrian traffic
- Typically important vehicular cross streets accessing the Downtown core with east-west routes also serving as major through routes
- Important transit rider source and destination
- Mixed use with continuous retail at grade and office or residential above grade

Defining Design Characteristics

- 4 travel lanes
- A tree-lined side boulevards enhanced with planting beds and/or hung flower baskets to reinforce appeal to pedestrian traffic
- Maximum possible sidewalk widths for high pedestrian volumes (no less than 4.0 metres in width) and includes abundant pedestrian oriented furnishings
- Parallel on-street parking only to ensure adequate sidewalk widths - otherwise to be reduced by one or two lanes where angled parking remains
- Appropriately place bus stops for optimum pedestrian convenience and safety
- Buildings with shop fronts consistently placed at the street edge providing awnings and other pedestrian amenities
- Sidewalks accommodate spill-out commercial activity such as patios

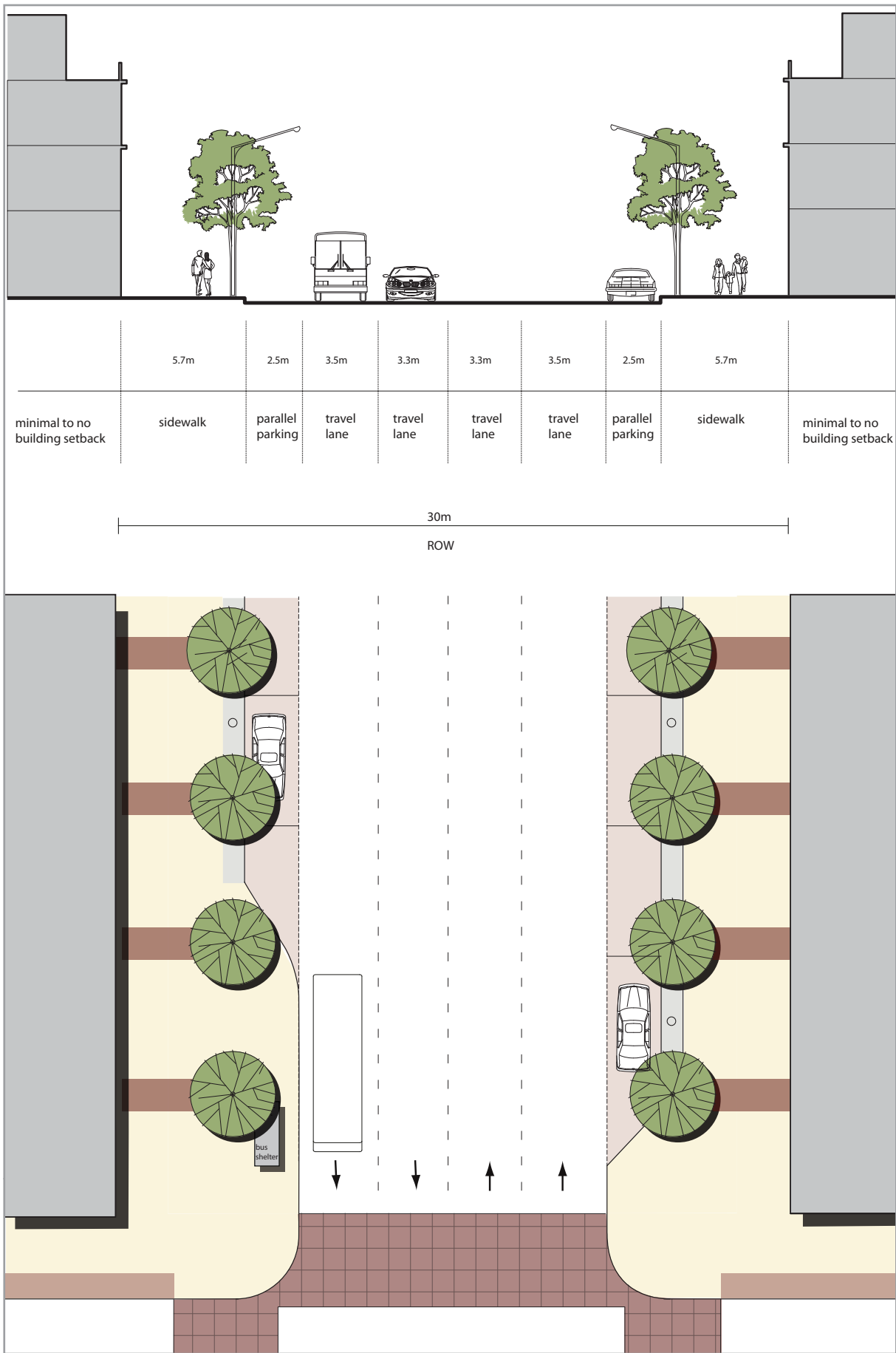
Main Street Prototype

- **Option 1:** typical cross-section as currently exists on 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue



Typical Main Street condition on 4th Avenue

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Main Street Prototype

Promenades

Intended Downtown Role and Function

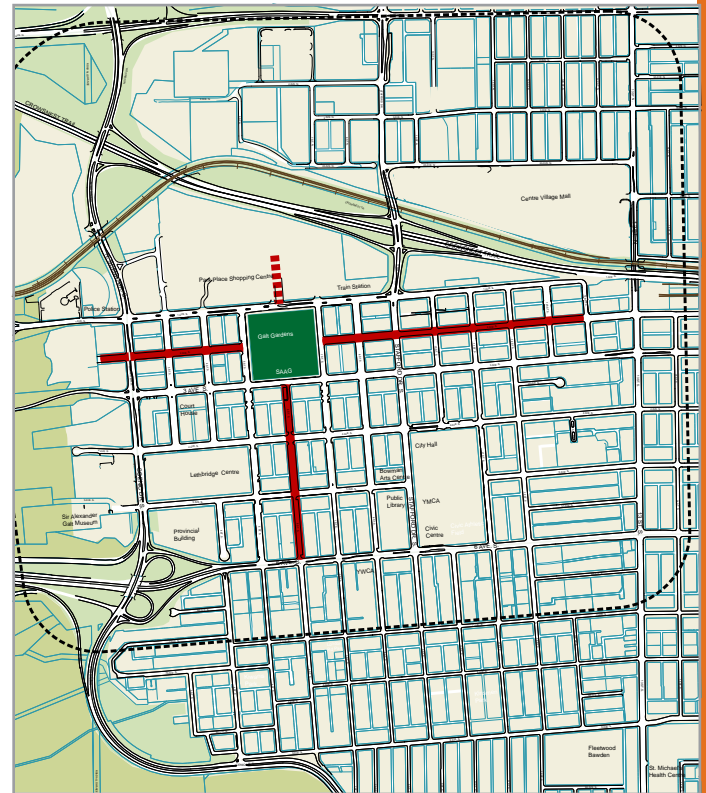
- Serves as a grand ‘green’ corridor that visually and physically links Galt Gardens to the rest of Downtown in all directions
- Anchored by plazas at Galt Gardens
- A primarily pedestrian-oriented connection and destination for passive and active interests
- Typically vehicular traffic will be local oriented
- Transit accessed on adjacent street or at cross-streets
- Uses will vary with location - mixed with retail in the core and more residential or other uses further away

Defining Design Characteristics

- 2 travel lanes
- Double row of trees on either side of the street
- Plaza defined by featured paving extending into the roadway which can be partially or entirely closed off for events
- Maximum possible sidewalk widths in the core for high pedestrian volumes (no less than 9.0 metres in width) and accommodates an abundance of pedestrian oriented amenities and spill-out commercial activities
- Angled on-street parking may be accommodated if alternating to maintain the consistent double tree line
- Buildings consistently placed at the street edge within the core but may vary otherwise

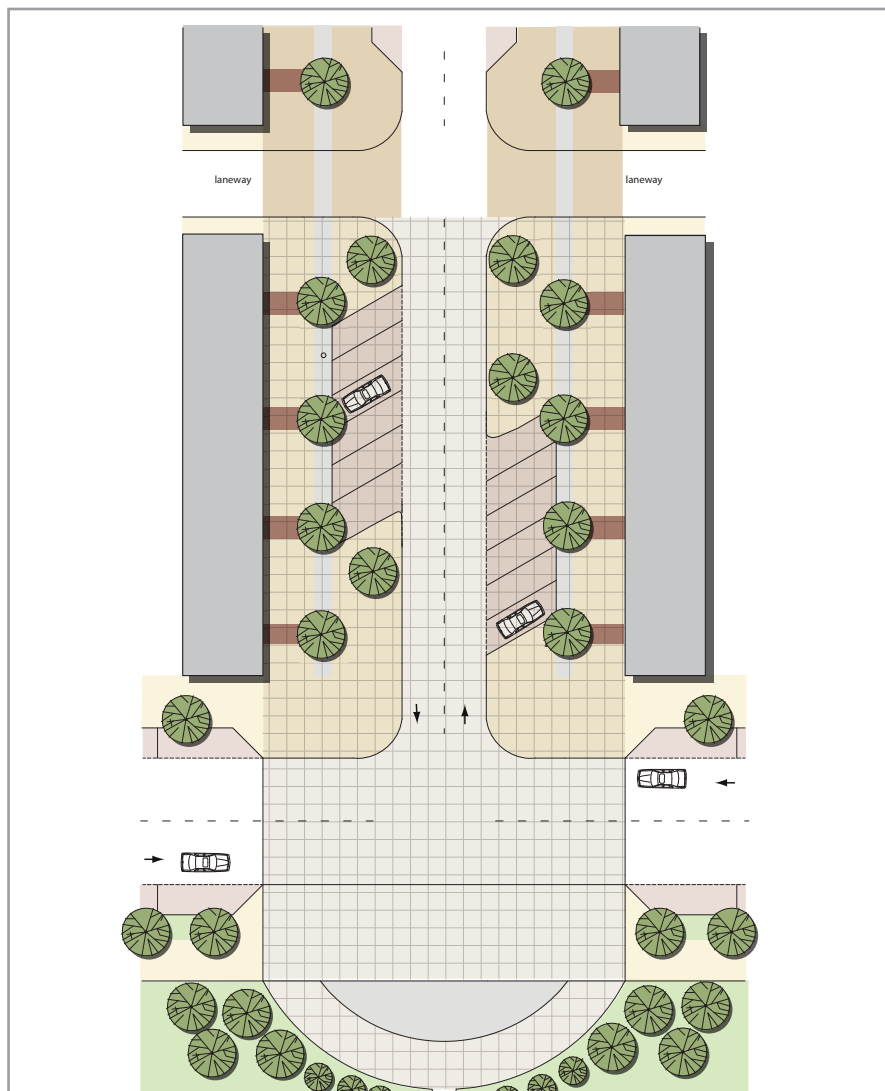
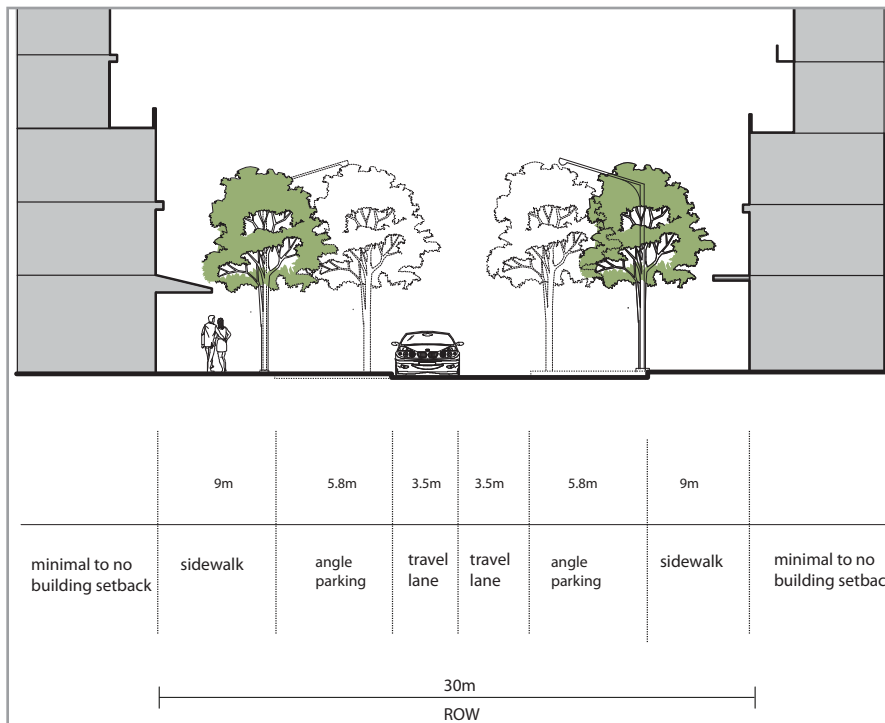
Promenade Prototypes

- **Option 1:** angled parking alternating and plaza treatment extending from Galt Gardens
- **Option 2:** parallel parking alternative to Option 1
- **Option 3:** demonstration of residential area where multi-storey buildings setback to permit modest front yards and access points for at-grade access units that front onto the Promenade

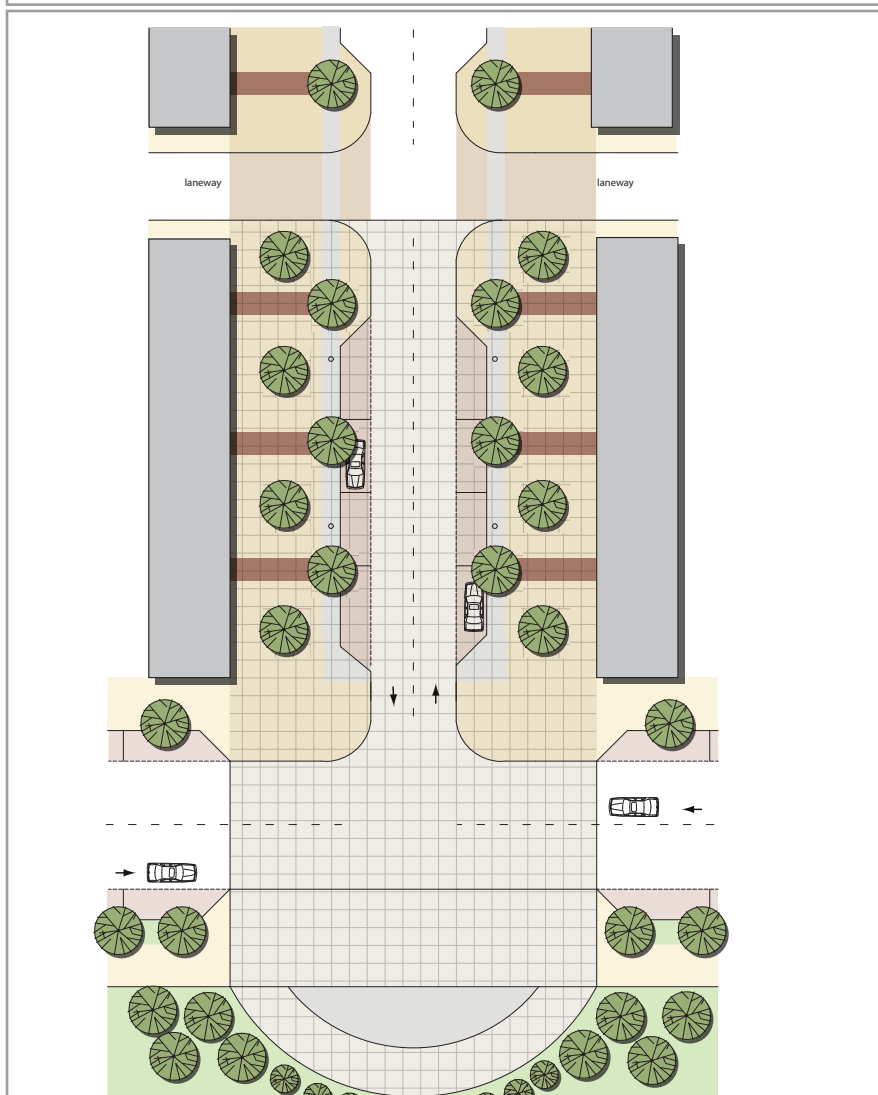
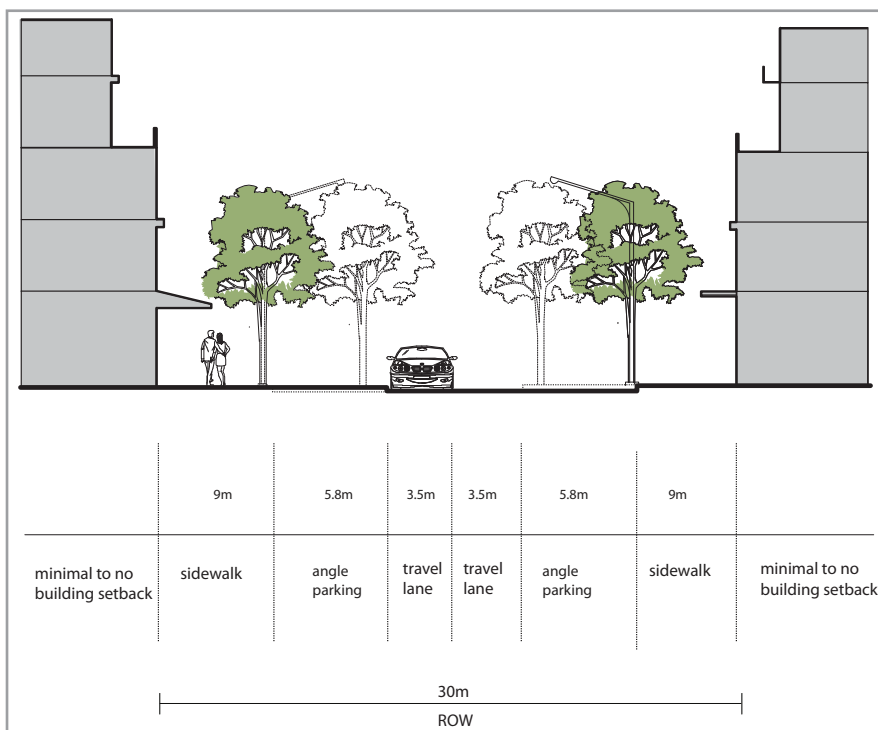


Sidewalk character in the Retail Core versus non-retail area

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Promenade Prototype Option 1



Promenade Prototype Option 2

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Promenade Prototype Option 3

District Streets

Intended Downtown Role and Function

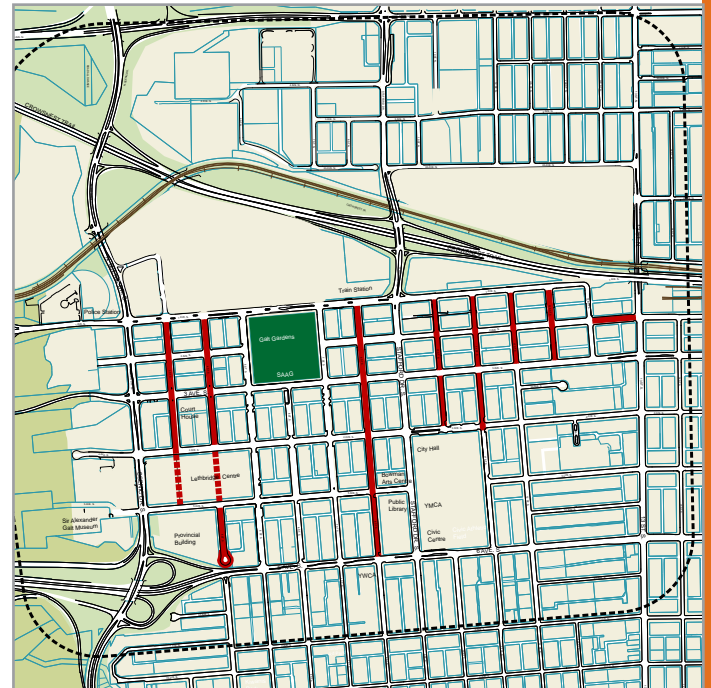
- Serves as the network of local street connections for the Districts and surrounding neighbourhoods
- Provide important utility and support for the functioning of the Retail Core, providing alternate routes for vehicular access and delivery, as well as on-street parking
- Typically slow speeds and less vehicular traffic in predominantly residential areas
- May provide for a less congested alternate route for transit in the core
- Will accommodate a variety of land uses ranging from street-oriented retail, to office/commercial to a variety of residential types

Defining Design Characteristics

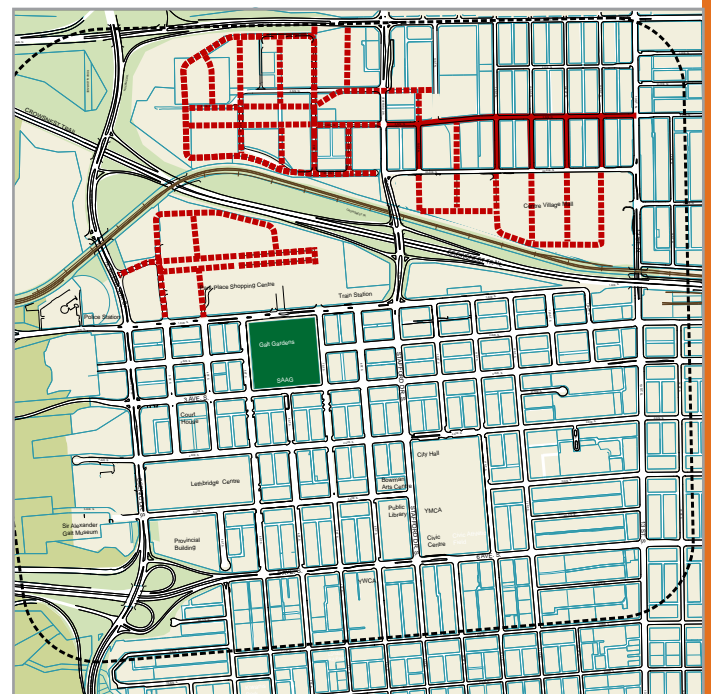
- Typically 2 travel lanes in either 20.0m (66') or 30.0m (100') right-of-ways
- Tree-lined with sidewalks and setbacks that vary with use and location
- Parallel parking for 20.0m ROWs and angled for 30.0m ROWs
- Despite local function, quality of streetscaping of equal calibre to all other streets

District Street Prototypes

- **Option 1:** typical 30.0m ROW on either a commercial or residential street with angled parking for both
- **Option 2a:** typical 20.0m ROW on either a commercial or residential street
- **Option 2b:** alternate for a 20.0m ROW residential street with the sidewalk place at the curb

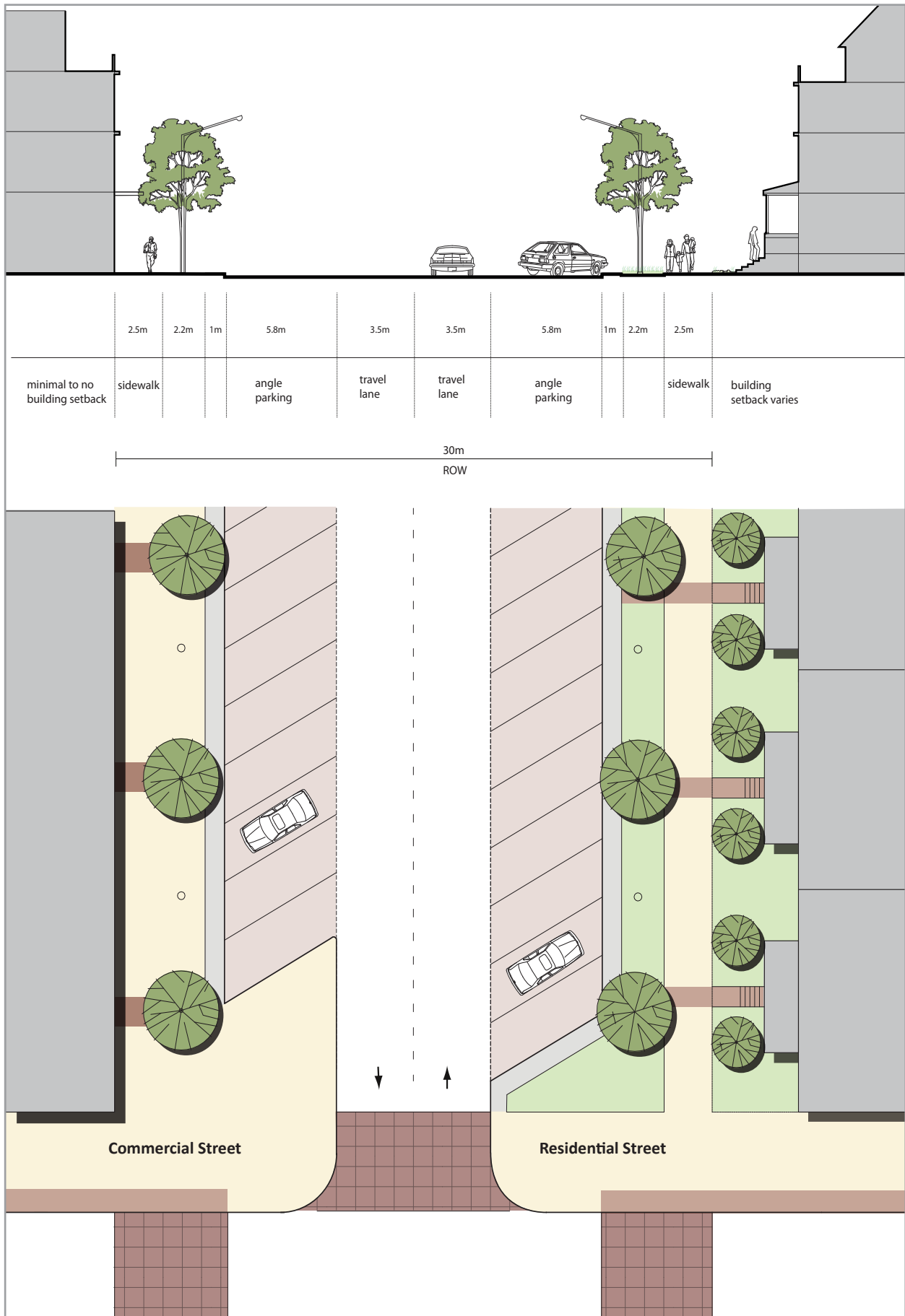


District Street Prototype Option1 (30m ROW)



District Street Prototype Option2 (20m ROW)

3.0 Public Realm Framework



District Street Prototype Option1 (30m ROW)

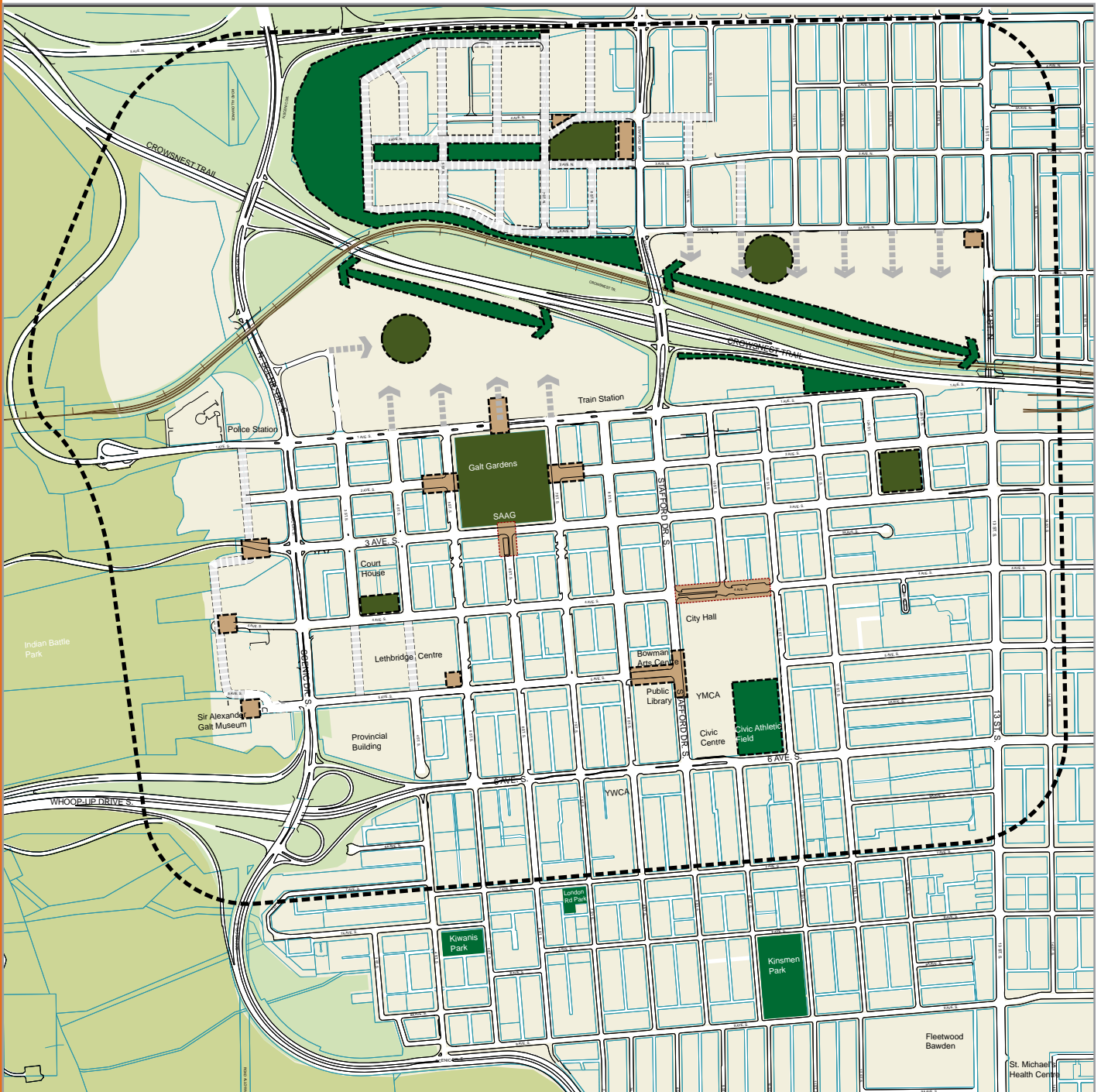


District Street Prototype Option 2a & 2b (20m ROW)

3.0 Public Realm Framework

Open Spaces

- River Valley
- Park
- Square
- Plaza
- Utility Corridor
- Potential Park/Square/Plaza



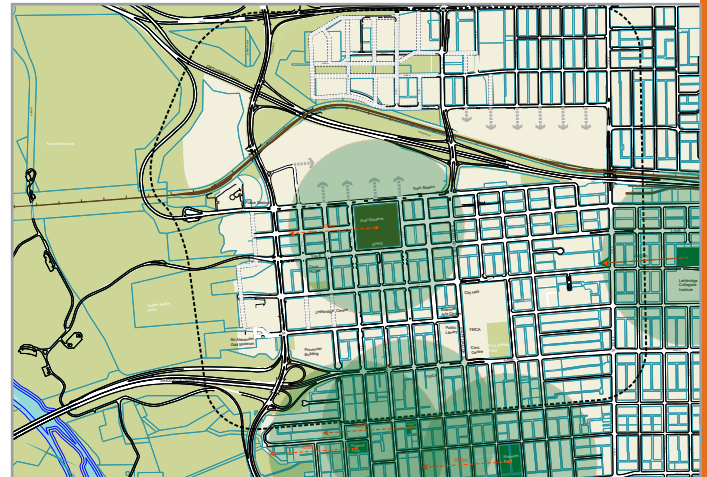
Open Spaces

3.2 Open Spaces

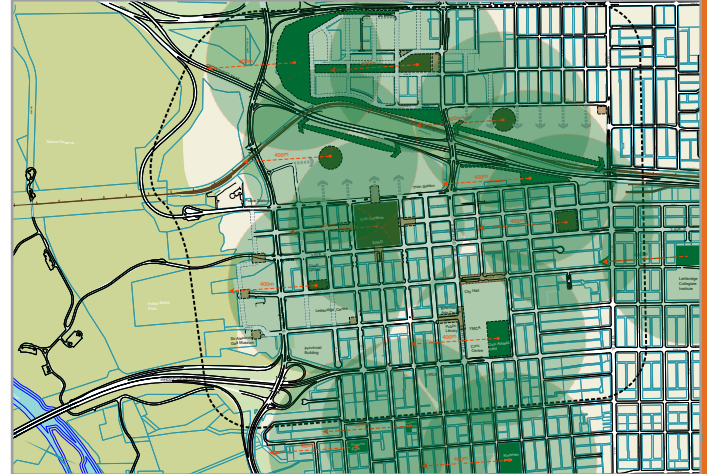
Open spaces that are successful can have a tremendous influence on the image, appeal and economic development of an area. They are also fundamental to attracting and retaining a Downtown residential population. As shown on the facing page, the Heart of Our City Master Plan identifies a variety of existing and potential open spaces that collectively can provide residents and visitors with a variety of choices within easy walking distances.

Supported by the other plans in the Guiding Framework, Downtown Open Space is improved and expanded upon through a series of strategies:

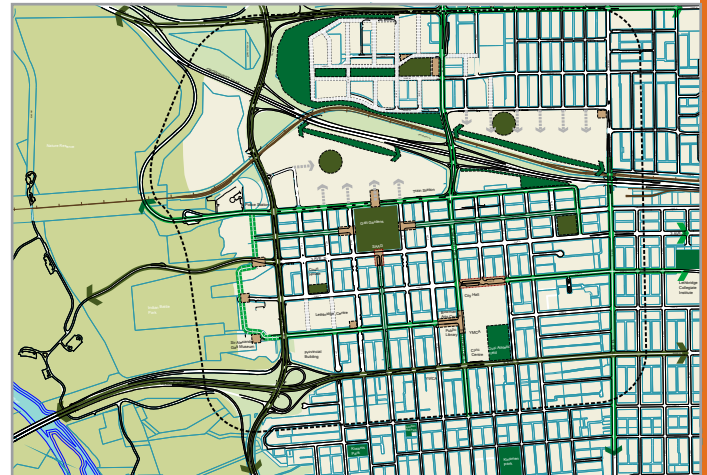
- Improve and better utilize existing open spaces through land use decisions which encourage the critical mass of people living where such amenities currently exist but are underutilized - such as Galt Gardens
- Identify new and strategic open space opportunities that can serve as catalysts for revitalization and address areas deficient in open spaces
- Ensure open spaces that will appeal to the broadest demographic including active and passive, soft and hard, formal and informal spaces
- Enhance visual and physical connectivity to existing and potential open spaces, including the river valley, through streetscapes, pedestrian connections and orienting features such as public art
- Ensure adequate private amenity spaces and encourage publicly accessible spaces within new significant developments
- Utilizing broad Downtown streets to provide tremendous potential open space amenity through high quality streetscaping



Currently most of Downtown is not within a 5 minute walk of a park



The Plan for open spaces services the entire extent of Downtown



Parks are linked by a web of 'green' Parkways, Boulevards & Promenades

3.0 Public Realm Framework



What waterfronts are to other cities, the river valley is to Downtown Lethbridge



The valley's trail system makes Downtown highly accessible to the rest of the city



The quality of the views back to the city are as important as the views to the valley

River Valley

Despite its proximity, the river valley and Downtown are perceptively disconnected. With limited public frontage that is ever increasingly walled off by impenetrable residential developments and compounded by Scenic Drive's inhospitable pedestrian environment, reconnecting the two seems inconceivable. The river valley is an extraordinary natural and heritage asset that truly distinguishes the Downtown. What waterfronts are to revitalizing downtowns elsewhere, the river valley has the potential to be for Lethbridge.

Reconnecting to the potency of the river valley is a central theme of the Plan and the strategy for its integration with the Downtown includes:

- The securing of the remaining undeveloped frontage through a new north south boulevard to ensure unfettered public access.
- To enhance this interface by encouraging the appropriate uses and creating compelling new public destinations such as a convention centre and hotel, a promenade along the new road access, a potential amphitheater embedded in the valley, and a sequence of new plazas and public art sites that visually and physically connect to Downtown.
- Several new recreational trails that directly link the river valley to Downtown.
- Streetscape improvement to Scenic Drive that seek to ensure it no longer performs as a barrier to pedestrian movements.

Parks

Parks typically serve the broad community’s passive and active recreational interests and come in a variety of scales and configurations. Generally, Parks include both naturalized and formal areas and can contain a variety of activities ranging from playgrounds to athletic fields where slopes permits and the room is available.

The Master Plan identifies a number of potential Parks to serve Downtown, including:

- Potential linear Parks that correspond to the perimeter of utility corridors such as the freeway and rail line. Generous setbacks, lack of infrastructure and poor accessibility provide an opportunity to transform these areas and to thread them together to create a linked open space network supported by continuous trails.
- The Civic Athletic Field is proposed to be formalized as a public Park that can serve the adjacent recreational facilities in addition to Downtown and London Road residents.
- The most significant Park opportunity is with the future potential development of the Broadview District. In addition to a central linear Park that serves as an organizing feature of the District, a large Park site is proposed at its western end that may also potentially accommodate play fields.



In addition to shade & wind mitigation, wooded parks can provide for an occasional ‘escape’



Where possible, parks should include play fields in addition to passive amenities



Residual lands or setbacks adjacent to highways can become linear parks

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Animated with cafes and places to eat



Shady areas for strolling and talking



Paved areas for events and gatherings



Often associated with civic or institutional uses



Open areas for sunbathing or throwing ball



Formal gardens, fountains and public art



Always framed by fronting buildings and often defined by streets on at least three sides

Squares

Squares are more formal spaces than parks. Although currently Galt Gardens is sorely underutilized, due in most part to the lack of a critical density of activity and people, it has tremendous potential to function as a Square ought to. As demonstrated by Squares in other cities, they are most suitable in downtowns and in denser neighbourhoods because in the simplicity of their design and the adjacent uses they leverage, they can appeal to a broad spectrum of interests simultaneously.

In sum, the Square is characterized as a landscaped space usually square in shape, bordered by streets, and often containing gardens, pavilions, memorials, fountains, and modest concessions. They are especially popular and successful when framed by dense residential uses, civic functions, stores, cafes and restaurants.

The Master Plan seeks to encourage the conditions that will ensure a successful Galt Gardens, including making adjacent mixed use developments a top priority and enhancing its visual and physical connectivity.

As a long-term strategy, the Plan has also identified a series of other potential and more modestly scaled Squares, generally corresponding to each of the Districts. Not only will these Squares provide the green space necessary to attract a residential population, they will also serve as a focus for attracting and concentrating civic uses, retail and other local amenities. It is by encouraging such a convergence of uses and activities that Squares can best perform as catalysts for urbanism and revitalization.

Plazas

A Plaza is a paved space often associated with civic or commercial function, such as Festival Square. They vary in shape but compared to Squares, they are generally smaller and more intimate in scale.

As with Festival Square, some Plazas function as public pedestrian spaces only on occasion. Otherwise when they are not active, they are traversed by streets or used as parking lots. When needed large events can be accommodated through the occasional closure of the street or lot.

Where the Plaza is more modest in scale (less than 100' in any dimension) or where there is a critical mass of people and activity, Plazas can also function year round as gathering places. Year-round Plazas function best when they are framed by animated uses such as restaurants, bars and cafes.

The Master Plan identifies a number of opportunities for new Plazas to reinforce the prominence of certain civic/commercial locations and uses as well as for potential occasional event sites. They include:

- Three new plazas similar to Festival Square are proposed where the Promenades link to Galt Gardens
- At the terminus of either end of 5th Ave - the Galt Museum and Civic Centre
- Where 3rd Ave and 4th Ave terminate at the river valley and intersect with the proposed north-south road.
- Other potential locations are associated with changes to Downtown Malls and the potential Broadview District



Animated by commercial uses that spill out



Extends into streets that may close for festivals/events



May include fixed seating and water features



Often linked to retail areas and outdoor markets



As the most prominent and expansive element, paving becomes the primary design expression



Strong historical and cultural references either in design, function or public art



Strong historical and cultural references either in design, function or public art

3.0 Public Realm Framework



The 'green' CN rail corridor



Semi-private shared amenity within developments



Small spaces featured in the streetscape



'Pocket-Parks' or 'Forecourts' to civic/cultural uses



Intimate 'Courtyards' within city blocks



Feature at 'Gateways' or key intersections



'Roof Gardens' to increase public & private amenity space while enhancing sustainability

Utility Corridors & Other Open Spaces

The Master Plan acknowledges the significant amounts of green open space within the rail or highway corridors and generally not accessible to the public. However, these areas frame and contribute to Downtown's 'green' setting. As a number of prominent Gateway sites are located within highway interchanges, the Plan encourages the utilization of otherwise isolated open spaces for landmark public art opportunities.

In addition to the significant public spaces identified in the Open Space Framework, there are numerous other potential opportunities to expand on Downtown's open space infrastructure. On public lands or associated with private development, the Master Plan encourages the ongoing efforts to secure other open space opportunities that may include:

- **Courtyards** within one or more development that can be public or private;
- **Forecourts** where modest and appropriate;
- **Pocket Parks** on small or awkward sites that may be unsuitable in scale or configuration for development; and
- **Roof Gardens** on new developments and on existing ones where possible.

Creating Successful Open Spaces

How these spaces are designed, programmed and interface with surrounding streets and land uses is crucial to their capacity to attract and delight a broad spectrum of users and to ensuring that they are places where people feel safe and comfortable. Accordingly, principles that build on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are to be applied to all public open spaces in the Downtown.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a pro-active crime prevention strategy utilized by planners, architects, police services, security professionals and everyday users of space. CPTED is a strategy used around the world and in essence operates on common sense. CPTED advocates the proper design and effective use of the built environment to lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and in the overall improvement to the quality of life.

Utilizing and building upon CPTED, the Master Plan adheres to the following key principles for Open Space design:

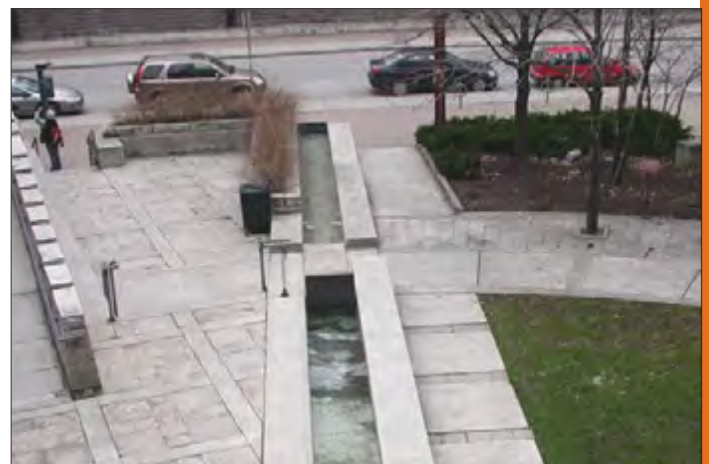
- Ensure clear views of surrounding areas and of the open space
- Incorporate adequate lighting
- Active building frontages on the open space, including entries and windows, are critical for “eyes” on the space which enhances the sense of safety and discourages inappropriate behaviour
- Design the space to enable ease of access and egress and avoid the creation of entrapment spots that are not highly visible and well used
- Use legible signs and orienting devices such as landmarks and pathways
- Include a variety of activities and a mix of surrounding uses to facilitate constant public use and/or surveillance of the space in all hours and seasons



Highly visible and accessible public space surrounded by a mix of uses









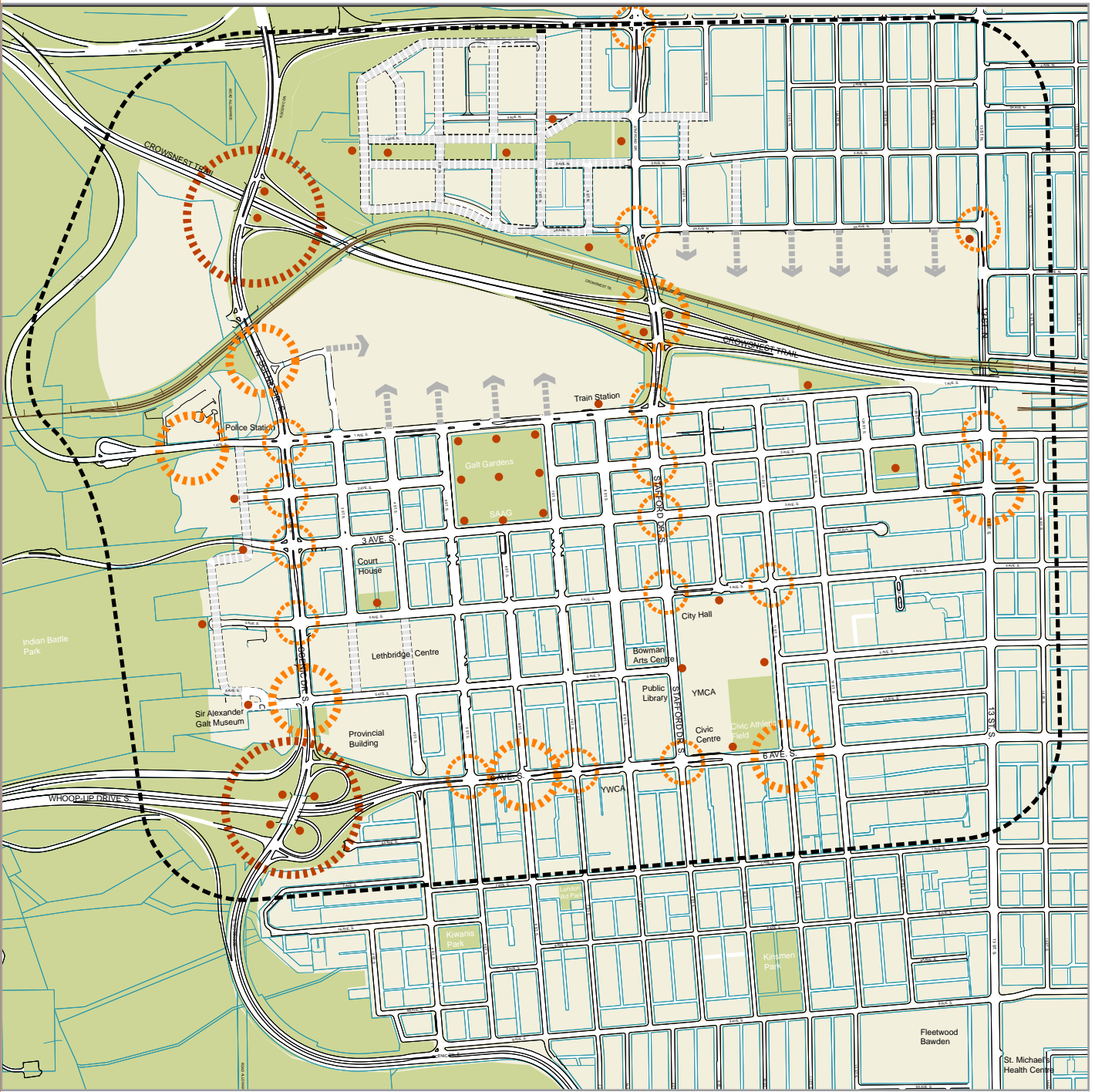
Public space that can appeal to a variety of interests including youth



Pathways, seating, water features and landscaping provide for variety, visual appeal and help to orient pedestrian movement

3.0 Public Realm Framework

-  City-Wide Gateway
-  Downtown Gateway
-  District Gateway
-  Potential Public Art Site
-  Pedestrian & Cycling Connection
-  Potential Public Parking Structure



Gateways & Public Art Sites

3.3 Gateways & Public Art

Gateways

As shown in the plan on the facing page, the Master Plan identifies potential Gateways for Downtown. These are areas or sites that signal key points of entry that are either of City-wide, Downtown or District importance. Clearly defining these areas as Gateways helps to enhance orientation, lends to a ‘sense of place’ and can generate civic pride.

These locations provide key opportunities where the coordinating of the design of landscapes, signage, public art and buildings can potentially create a sense of entry and orientation. The expression of a Gateway can take on many forms and will hinge on its relative importance and the circumstance of its site. The Master Plan encourage the installation of Gateways according to the following design objectives:

- To create gateway experiences that reflects the unique culture, history and environment of Lethbridge and/ or Downtown.
- To create a significant sense of scale and identity to gateway experiences that act as both thresholds to and landmarks for Downtown.
- To ensure the gateway experience is well-integrated in its location while marking a sense of entry for visitors.
- To enhance the built form and public realm of the context in which the Gateway is placed.



Gateway signage can create a memorable sense of arrival



A landscaped Gateway that makes a compelling civic gesture



A fountain or spout can also serve as a Gateway

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Public Art that utilizes wind energy



Murals by local artists in Downtown Lethbridge



A sculpture as an interpretive installation for the area's history

Public Art

As indicated in the previous plan on the previous pages, the Master Plan identifies visually strategic locations for art installations including the terminus of view corridors, at Gateways, on prominent corners, or in Parks, Squares and Plazas.

Public Art provides an opportunity to celebrate and showcase local arts and culture; establish a unique identity for a District or development; and, can contribute to enhancing the quality of the public realm in ways that conventional streetscape elements cannot. Objectives for Public Art include:

- Public art may include memorials, sculpture, water features, murals, or individual art installations at visually prominent sites, open spaces, gateways, highway interchanges, along sidewalks and in association with public buildings.
- Because of their visibility, these sites should include installations that serve as accents to the district, as orienting devices for moving about, or as focal points in public open spaces.
- The scale of the installation should correspond to the visual prominence of its site.



Public art that is interactive

3.4 Pedestrian & Cycling Connections

As accessibility and walking are fundamental to the success of retail streets and downtowns in general, the Master Plan recommends a number of ways to encourage walking and cycling as a means of accessing and moving about Downtown:

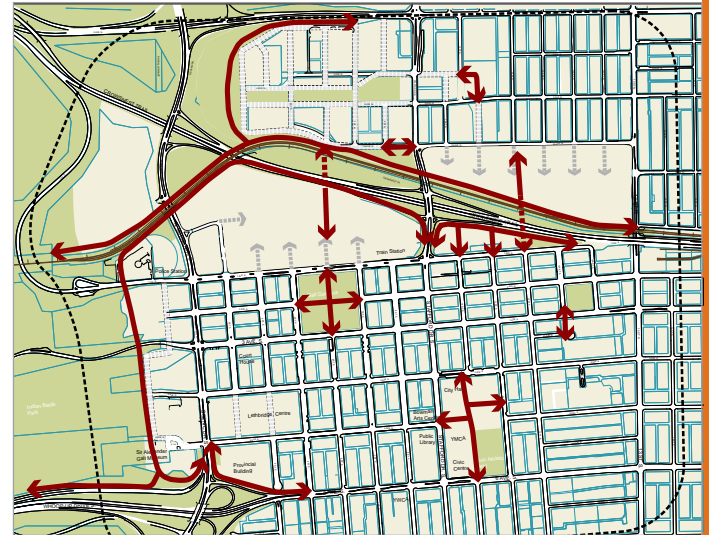
Mid-Block Connections

Mid-Block connections offer the unique opportunity for a finer-grained pedestrian network than the typical block pattern. While Downtown in general has very walkable scaled blocks, the plan on the right identifies some locations where mid-block connections ought to be improved or considered. Where and when the circumstance are appropriate and the pedestrian traffic significant enough, rear lanes can become formalize mid-block connections that may include retail frontages.

A specific opportunity for improvement is within the Civic Centre block where the current paths are poorly designed and pedestrian traffic may warrant a more formal connection that may even offer some enclosure.

Two locations for foot bridges have been identified that would enable convenient access to Downtown from areas north of Crowsnest Trail. These bridges would be essential when and if significant intensification occurs in these areas.

As an important aspect of the pedestrian network, these links should adhere to the same quality and design standards as other public spaces. Adequate lighting, appealing landscaping, clear signage, unobstructed views and uses that front on to these connections are all important objectives.



Pedestrian & Cycling Connections



Rear lanes can be refurbished as mid-block connections



Mid-Block connection between buildings

3.0 Public Realm Framework



Footbridge serves as a convenient access over highway or rail lines



Crosswalks clearly identified with paving treatments



Recreational trails for walking and cycling

Crosswalks

The success of a retail street can hinge on how well it can accommodate and enhance the pedestrian experience. A sense of comfort and safety will be heightened when the speed of traffic is reduced. Crosswalks serve two functions: the clear demarcation of a safe route for a pedestrian to cross; and as a traffic calming measure. Frequent stops will ensure slower traffic speeds and cautious driving. Accordingly, the Downtown Master Plan encourages the following objectives for crosswalks:

- Every key four way intersection along a major pedestrian corridor should have crosswalks
- To enhance their visibility and quality, crosswalks should utilize distinctive feature paving
- Signalized pedestrian crosswalks should be provided at mid-block locations where important civic destinations and/or significant walking traffic exists

Recreational & Cycling Trails

The Master Plan has identified a number of new potential pedestrian and cycling trails that could link to the existing network to enhance the connectivity of Downtown to the surrounding neighbourhoods and city. Key objectives for these trails include:

- Paths should provide for safe bridging over rail lines and street crossings to connect to other open spaces and civic destinations
- Rail lines should be utilized to accommodate routes that can more directly link to the surrounding communities
- Paths should be designed with adequate lighting and furnishings for use in all seasons and hours
- Where possible paths should be design to accommodate cycling

3.5 Public Transit

.....
Downtown serves as the City’s transit hub both as a source and destination for riders. This will become increasingly so as Downtown revitalizes and intensifies with a residential population. Putting in place the service and infrastructure, or at least planning and protecting for it, is an important objective of the Master Plan. Public transit will play a fundamental role in mitigating traffic congestion, enabling reduced parking requirements, facilitating residential intensification, encouraging pedestrianism and in achieving city-wide environmental sustainability objectives.

The Master Plan recommends the following Transit objectives:

- A dispersed transit strategy for Downtown to service the broadest possible area with frequent and seamless transfer points
- Ensure bus stops are located where they are most convenient to pedestrians and that they include effective and appealing shelters
- The location of crosswalks, mid-block connections and other pedestrian routes and amenities should as much as possible correspond to the locations of transit stops
- Ensure that all key open space, civic, commercial and cultural destinations and attractions are easily accessible by transit



Encourage transit use with appealing bus stops that are well located and include shelters, seating and other pedestrian amenities

3.0 Public Realm Framework

3.6 Public Parking

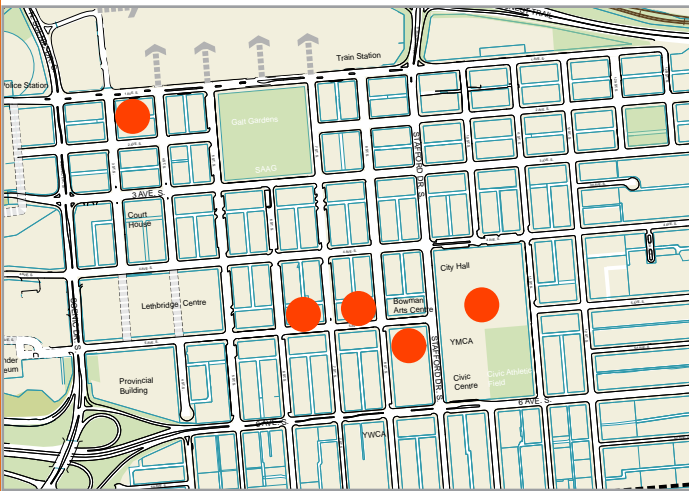
The Master Plan envisions Downtown as a mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented environment that will encourage less driving. Great streetscapes that are animated by shop fronts and lots of pedestrians makes walking not only more pleasurable but also parking one's car further away more bearable. A good measure for the successful of a downtown is the distance people are will to walk to their car.

Because this vibrant environment and culture of walking will take time to take hold, altering parking patterns and behaviours Downtown will need to unfold incrementally and revisited as necessary. There are no easy solutions for parking and indeed all successful downtowns have perceived parking 'problems' that do not go away. Public parking can only be 'managed' and will need to be considered in balance with other Downtown objectives.

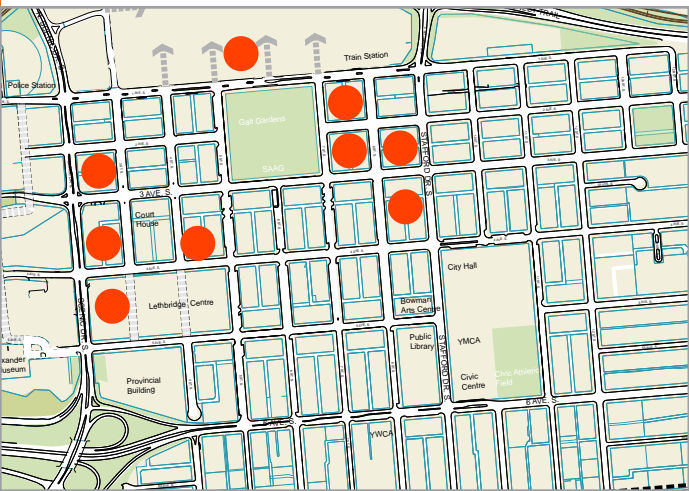
Providing sufficient public parking is vital to the success of any downtown. Increasing the use of Downtown shops and services, enabling streetscape improvements that will reduce on-street parking spaces and encouraging infill development on surface parking lots will rely heavily on providing adequate and convenient public parking facilities.

However, providing for public parking facilities are not only a matter of meeting demands, it can also serve as potential catalysts for development interest and investment. Public parking facilities can enable a loosening of the parking requirements and serve as an incentive for intensification.

On-street parking wherever possible is most desirable because it serves as a traffic calming measure and a buffer between sidewalks and moving traffic. However, on-street parking alone will not meet current demands



City owned land for potential structured public parking facilities



Strategic Downtown blocks for potential structured public parking facilities



Well designed and integrated public parking structures

let alone that anticipated for the future. The City will need to play a more active role in facilitating revitalization and development while meeting parking demands through the construction of integrated, well designed and strategically located multi-level parking structures. In addition to often being catalyst for revitalization, these structures if strategically scaled and located often pay for themselves several times over in the long run.

As indicated on the plan to the left, the Master Plan identifies five municipally owned sites which can accommodate potential public parking structures either in place of current surface lots or as part of redevelopment. The timing of these facilities should correspond to significant public or private developments that either reduce current parking and/or will result in increased public parking demand. They should be carefully scaled to ensure not under or over supplying, tied to immediate and near term replenishment or anticipated increased needs.

Additional strategic Downtown blocks have also been identified for possible sites and shown on the plan to the left. Sites within these blocks are strategic because of their location relative to the Retail Core. When and if the opportunity arises, a public parking facility either independently or in partnership might be considered with redevelopment on these blocks.

Although below-grade will be encouraged wherever possible, the viability of such facilities may take time and is not always possible. However, as is often the case, if not carefully placed and designed, surface parking lots, structures and access routes to parking areas can significantly detract from the visual quality and character of an area and can be hazardous to pedestrian safety. Accordingly, the design of any parking facility should be carefully considered. Design principles include:

Structured Parking

- Structured public parking should be designed to be integrated into the surrounding built form by using similar façade articulation and materials, including small openings that function as windows

- Ground-floors should be used for retail or other active uses such as community services
- Strategically located structures should not be scaled to not over supply but should be designed to accommodate future additional levels if the need for expansion arises
- Stairways, elevators and parking entries and exits are preferably located at mid-block but never at corners of retail streets

Surface Parking

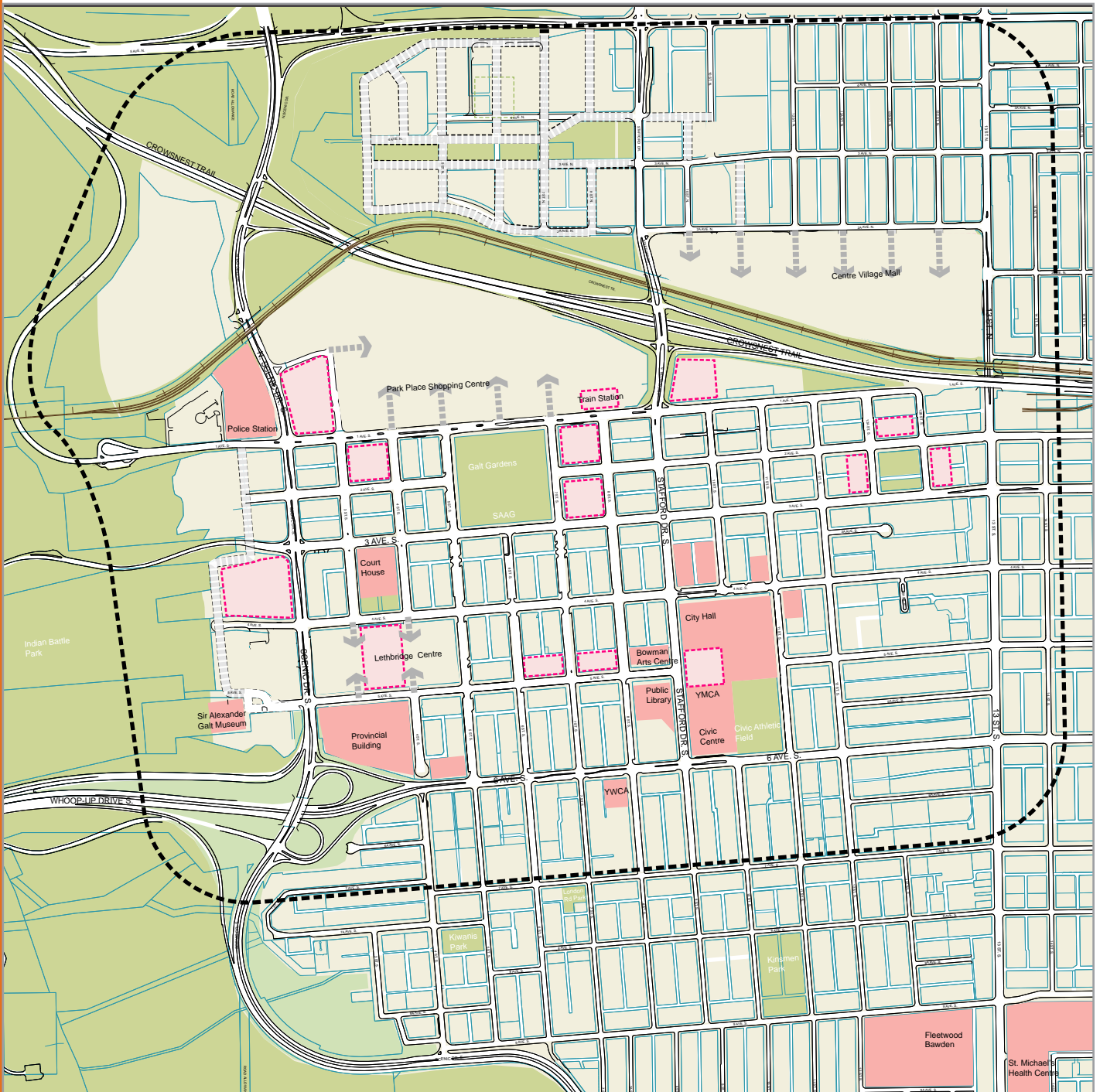
- Wherever possible surface parking areas are to be located internal to the development site with adequate lighting, signage and minimal driveways that are appropriately located
- Where adjacent to a street, surface lots should be designed to mitigate their visual impact in the following ways:
 - Landscaping and/or architectural features along the street edge to conceal parked cars
 - Pedestrian paths and landscaping including trees within the parking lot to visually break the expanse of hard surfaces



Surface parking place to the rear and designed with trees and foot paths

3.0 Public Realm Framework

- Existing Civic/Cultural Site
- Potential Civic/Cultural Site



Potential Sites for Civic and Cultural Facilities

3.7 Sites for Civic & Cultural Facilities

Museums, theatres, galleries, conference centres, places of worship, libraries and other public or private facilities that provide a civic or cultural attraction are valuable components of the Public Realm Framework that can contribute to enhancing Downtown’s distinction and appeal. Many of the other components of the Public Realm, including planned improvements to Streetscapes and Open Spaces correspond to leveraging an adjacent civic or cultural use.

As shown on the plan to the left, in addition to existing civic or cultural related sites, the Master Plan has identified a number of other potential sites throughout Downtown. These have been identified as strategic locations for new civic or cultural attractions that may be contemplated for Downtown. These sites include property in public ownership as well as sites generally associated with existing or potential complementary functions, in highly visible locations and/or adjacent to key pedestrian connections, destinations or linkages.

If in future a significant new facility is contemplated or proposed either by the City a private interest or in partnership, these sites ought to be considered. However, this list should not be considered rigid and the intent is not to dismiss an opportunity that arises tied to a specific site not identified on this plan. When these or alternative sites are contemplated for civic or cultural related uses, the following objectives should be considered with respect to the location and design:

- Leveraging its potential as traffic generator and catalyst for other local improvements with strategic ‘anchoring’ sites and designs that enhance visual and physical connectivity to other areas of Downtown to stimulate pedestrian movement and circulation
- Incorporating other aspects that could contribute to the public realm such as a plaza, public art or parking facility
- Ensuring excellence in architectural and material quality



The profound design of one building alone can change the image of a city



Incorporate public spaces where possible



Even modest attractions can contribute to Downtown quality & character



4.0 Built Form Framework

Built form refers to the function, shape and configuration of buildings as well as their relationship to streets and open spaces. The Built Form Framework defines an overall structure for guiding the order and hierarchy of the future built quality and character of Downtown as shaped by the use, design, massing, scale and type of buildings.

The purpose of the Built Form Framework is to guide the scale and intensity of uses and built form to the appropriate areas to reinforce the desired future Vision, including the Public Realm Framework. This will ensure that new buildings reinforce a coherent, harmonious and appealing urban environment, as well as contribute to the enhancement of the public realm.

The Built Form Framework will inform and be supported by subsequent land use policies, design guidelines,

development standards and incentive programs. The Framework is also the basis of the Development Design Guidelines which provide standards and benchmarks for parts of Downtown as well as for types of buildings.

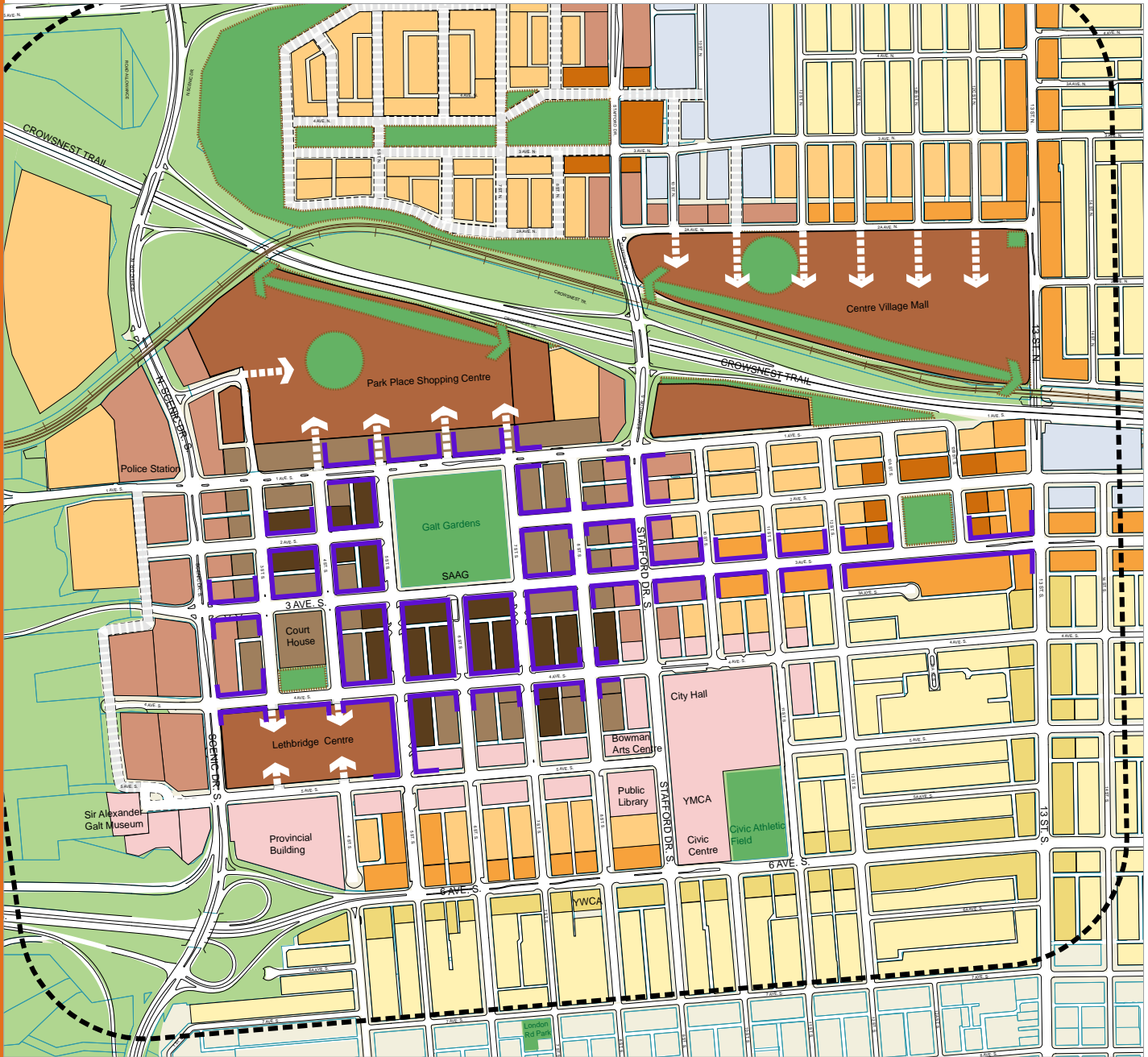
The components that comprise the Built Form Framework include:

Built Character Framework which provide the overarching structure to guide the use and form of development

Prominent & Distinct Character Sites which identifies opportunities for special design consideration for new developments



4.0 Built Form Framework



- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Urban Core: Heritage Blocks | District Centre | Industrial Character | Existing Public Open Space |
| Urban Core | District Corridor | Required Retail Frontage | Potential Public Open Space |
| Urban Centre | District Neighbourhood | | Other Open Space |
| Urban Corridor | Neighbourhood Corridor | | |
| Civic Character | Neighbourhood General | | |

Built Character Framework

4.1 Built Character Framework



Downtown Lethbridge and its environs is comprised of areas that are established and stable; areas that are dynamic and ever-changing; and, areas that are underutilized and in need of revitalization. While directing change and growth to Downtown is a fundamental objective of the Master Plan, development will not occur uniformly in scale or in time across the area. The Built Character Framework serves to provide a level of predictability with respect to where change ought to be directed and in what use, shape and form.

Because conventional land use and zoning approaches to planning are two-dimensional in their scope, they often do not have the intended outcome. Downtowns are complex environments with mixed and intertwined uses. Accordingly, for Downtown to thrive it should be understood as a hierarchal and ordered structure defined less by land use, and more by its built characteristics as defined by the pattern of streets and blocks, the forms of buildings and the interrelationship between all these components. Therefore, this Framework considers land uses with a focus on the character of built aspects to ensure that the outcomes intended are clearly understood.

The Built Character Framework builds on the Vision, Districts & Neighbourhoods and Public Realm Framework to define an inherent order to Downtown which can guide decisions regarding growth and development so as to ensure that changes reinforce the desired function, built quality and character of a given area. This hierarchy also serves to guide appropriate transitions between areas of varying densities, scales and land use intensities.

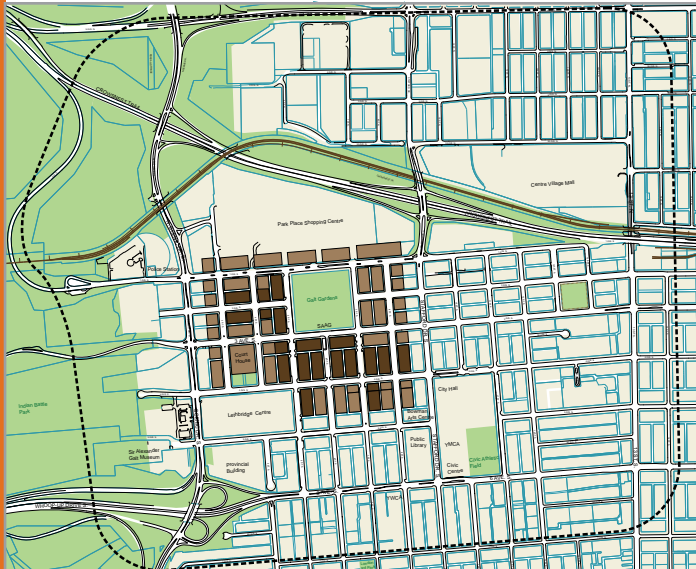
As indicated on the plan on the facing page, the Framework identifies a number of Built Character categorizes. The intended built character for each

category is described on the following pages including descriptions, and the appropriate uses and building types that will reinforce those built qualities. The building types identified correspond to the Building Types Design Guidelines in Part 5.

As the Central Neighbourhoods are not subject to the Downtown Master Plan and not anticipated to change in character into the foreseeable future, the Neighbourhood Corridor and Neighbourhood General categories are excluded.



4.0 Built Form Framework



Mixed-use buildings up to 8 storeys could frame the east side of Galt Gardens

Urban Core & Heritage Blocks

- The Urban Core is the historic retail, service and office core identified most with Downtown.
- It also defines the part of Downtown where the greatest growth and change ought to focus first, including improvements to the streets and open spaces and the location of new civic and cultural attractions.
- The built character should reinforce the existing fine-grained and ‘human-scaled’ form as defined by walkable scaled streets and blocks, mostly low-rise continuous buildings that express narrow frontages and that are placed at or close to the sidewalks.
- New infill development in the Historic Blocks will be sensitive to the quality, scale and character of adjacent heritage buildings.
- Building heights range between 3 and 4 storeys in the Heritage Blocks and 6 storeys elsewhere.
- Subject to conditions, a 2 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate
- Retail uses are predominantly at-grade with studios, offices and residential uses above.
- Restaurants and bars are encouraged within the Heritage Blocks and Cultural Corridor to its west.

Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Public

Appropriate Building Types

- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Mid-Rise Apt
- Small to Medium Format Retail*
- Mid-Rise Office
- Civic
- Parking Structure

* type permitted outside of the Retail Core for an interim period

Urban Centre

- The Urban Centre corresponds to the existing shopping malls adjacent to the Urban Core where development will take place as the market or life cycle of their functions would dictate.
- When the opportunity for development or redevelopment arises, these areas will be intensified and designed to be integrated with Downtown through the introduction of the street grid, public spaces and street oriented uses and buildings.
- Mixed-use developments will be encouraged that may also include large-format commercial floor-plates, sections of malls as well as small-format street-related uses
- The built character intended for Lethbridge Centre is similar in nature to that of the Urban Core but may consist of taller building forms.
- In the other Urban Centres dense and compact residential blocks, open space amenities and public uses can be accommodated and are encouraged.
- Services and parking will be located internal to the blocks.
- Building heights will range between 3 and 8 storeys with taller buildings located away from the Urban Core
- Subject to conditions, a 2 to 20 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate

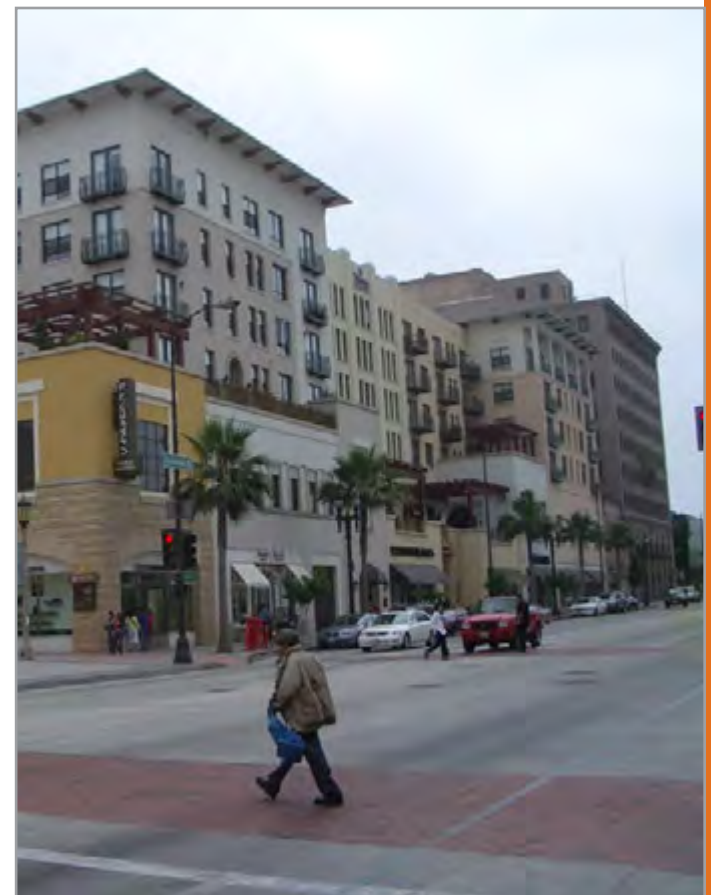
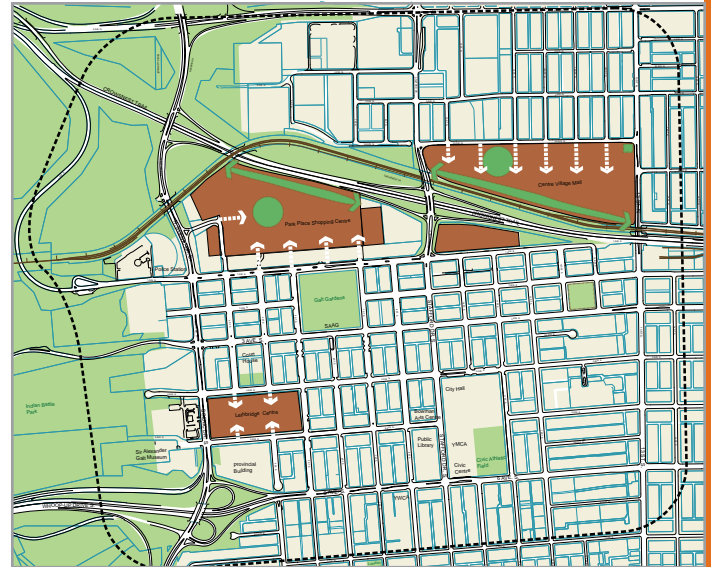
Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Public

Appropriate Building Types

- Continuous House Forms
- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Mid-Rise Apt
- High-Rise Apt
- Small to Medium Format Retail*
- Large Format Retail*
- Mid to High-Rise Office
- Civic
- Parking Structure

* type permitted for an interim period



Malls may be integrated into more downtown-friendly buildings with housing

Civic Character

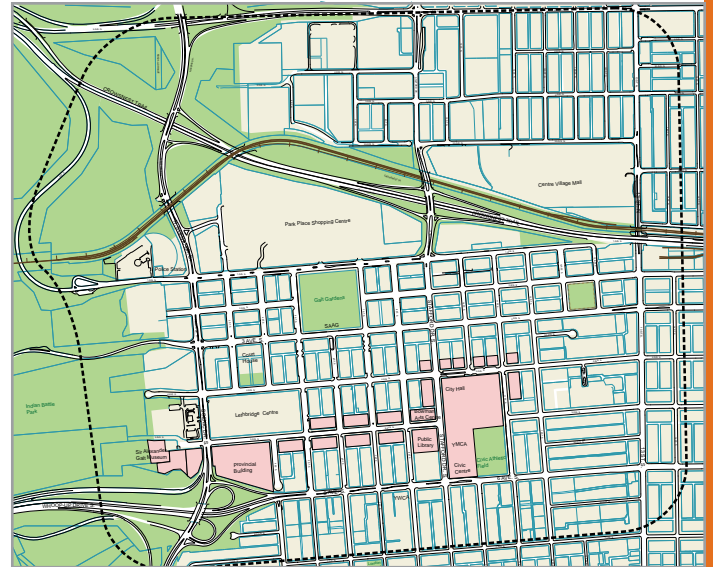
- Civic Character areas correspond to the existing concentration of institutional and office uses south of the Urban Core and including the Civic Centre block.
- Developments with a focus on office related functions and distinctive architectural styles are encouraged to intensify along 5th Avenue to reinforce the Civic Corridor.
- Except for the Civic Centre block where residential uses are discouraged, mixed-use developments will be permitted that have small to medium format commercial floor-plates or other street-related uses.
- Services and parking will be located internal to the blocks.
- Building heights will range between 3 and 8 storeys
- Subject to conditions, a 2 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate with taller buildings encouraged at gateway sites

Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Public

Appropriate Building Types

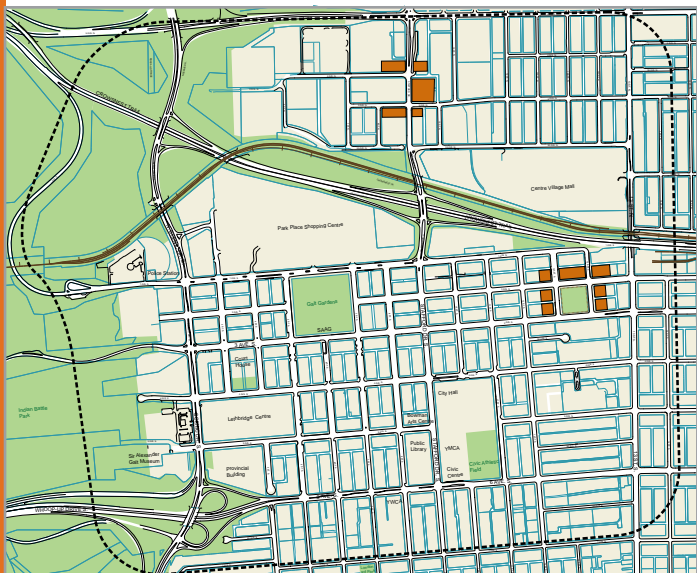
- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Mid-Rise Apt
- Mid-Rise Office
- Civic
- Parking Structure



The Civic Centre block anchors an office/institutional area

* type permitted for an interim period

4.0 Built Form Framework



District Centres will be centred on an open space feature serving the District area

District Centre

- District Centres correspond to potential commercial and/or civic focus areas for the Districts adjacent to the Urban Core and will be developed when appropriate for these areas to transition from their current use and function.
- When the opportunity for development or redevelopment arises, these areas will be intensified and designed to be integrated with Downtown through the introduction street oriented uses and buildings.
- Development of the District Centre will incorporate a significant open space component as well as other possible public related uses that will serve the District.
- Mixed-use developments will be encouraged that have small to medium format commercial floor-plates or other street-related uses
- Services and parking will be located internal to the blocks.
- Building heights will range between 3 and 6 storeys
- Subject to conditions, a 2 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate

Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Public

Appropriate Building Types

- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Mid-Rise Apt
- Small to Medium Format Retail*
- Civic
- Parking Structure

* type permitted for an interim period

District Corridor

- District Corridors corresponds to the existing older commercial strips along major streets and that generally serve adjacent neighbourhoods.
- When the opportunity for development or redevelopment arises, these areas will be intensified and designed to be integrated with Downtown and to serve their respective Districts through the introduction street oriented uses and buildings.
- Mixed-use developments will be encouraged that have small to medium format commercial floor-plates or other street-related uses.
- Services and parking will be located internal to the blocks.
- Building heights will range between 3 and 4 storeys.
- Subject to conditions, a 2 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate and with particular consideration for adjacencies to existing low-rise residential areas.

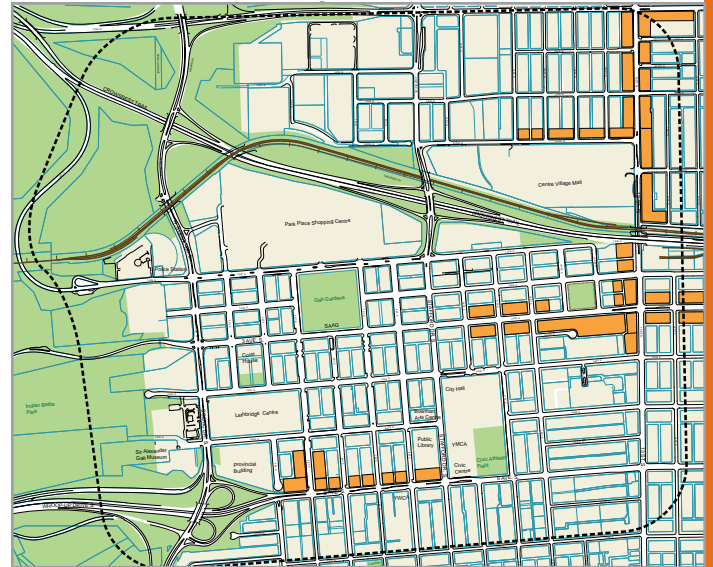
Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Automotive
- Public

Appropriate Building Types

- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Small to Medium Format Retail*
- Civic

* type permitted for an interim period



District Corridors will be sensitive in scale to the adjacent neighbourhood

4.0 Built Form Framework



District Neighbourhood will provide a variety of higher density housing choices

District Neighbourhood

- District Neighbourhood corresponds to the existing and potential areas in Districts adjacent to the Urban Core that can have a residential focus and character.
- When the opportunity for development or redevelopment arises, these areas will be intensified to be integrated with Downtown through the introduction higher density housing in street oriented buildings and of a variety of types.
- Mixed-use developments will also be permitted that are compatible to mainly residential contexts.
- The Upper East Side District will include light industrial such as workshops, and work-live choices will be encouraged and directed to this area.
- Parking will be located internal to the blocks.
- Building heights will range between 2 and 6 storeys
- Subject to conditions, a 2 storey height bonus may be considered where appropriate and with particular consideration for adjacencies to existing low-rise residential areas.

Appropriate Uses

- Retail
- Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Live-Work
- Office
- Automotive*
- Public
- Industrial

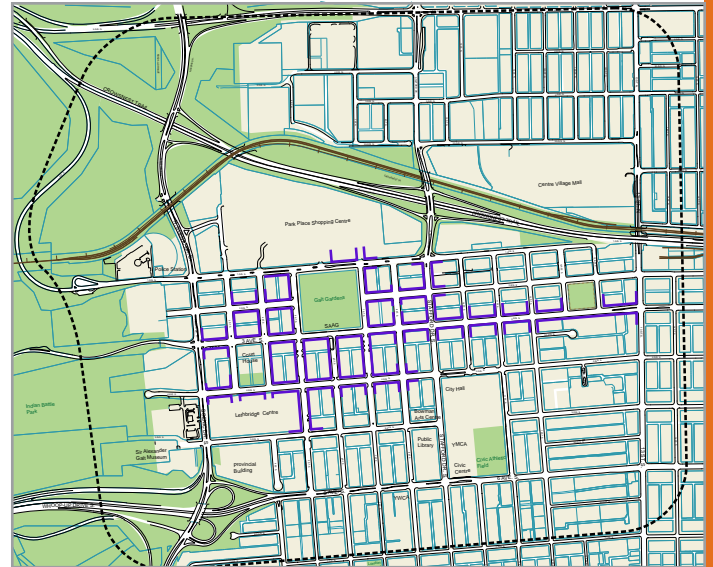
Appropriate Building Types

- Continuous House Forms
- Low-Rise Apt
- Main Street
- Mid-Rise Apt
- Small Format Retail
- Industrial/Storage
- Civic

* type permitted for an interim period

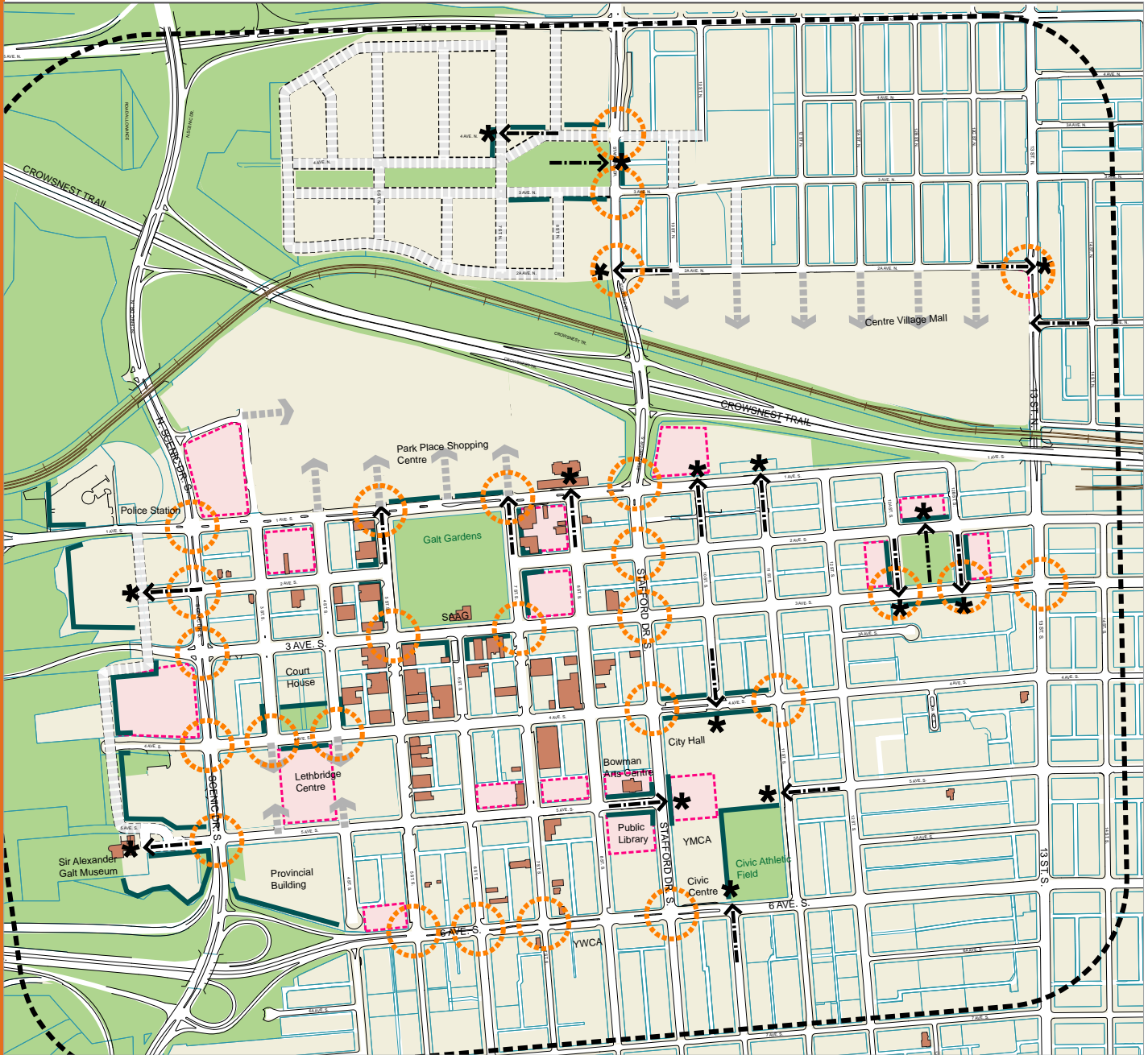
Required Retail Frontages

- Required Retail Frontages corresponds to streets where continuous pedestrian-oriented retail uses exist or are desired.
- These retail frontages will be encouraged to reinforce the ‘main street’ qualities associated with the historic Retail Core, including the articulation of narrow shop fronts, high levels of transparency and frequent entries.
- Protecting pedestrians from the elements such as awnings will be encouraged.
- Patios and other spill-out activity will be permitted and encouraged.
- Where development takes place outside the Retail Core but is subject to a Required Retail Frontage, exceptions for other non-residential uses can be considered where it is demonstrated that retail uses of this nature are not viable at that time.
- Where residential use are proposed at-grade along any major Downtown streets they should be subject to design standards that would enable future grade level conversion to retail or other non-residential uses.



Continuous retail frontages that animate Downtown streets

4.0 Built Form Framework



- Built Heritage
- Prominent View Terminus
- Prominent Corner
- Prominent Frontage
- Potential Civic/Cultural Development

Prominent and Distinct Character Sites

4.2 Prominent & Distinct Character Sites

Prominent and Distinct Character Sites identifies locations with exceptional visibility or opportunity for landmark architectural treatments or features. These sites can enhance the quality of the public areas, reinforce Downtown or District identities, orient pedestrians and strengthen civic pride. They include:

Prominent View Terminus Sites

Existing or potential buildings that terminate an important view corridor and can strengthen visual connectivity across Downtown.

Prominent Corner Sites

Existing or potential buildings that occupy an important intersection of streets and/or identified gateway into Downtown.

Prominent Frontages

Highly visible building sites that front onto important existing or potential public open spaces, including the river valley which afford building with tremendous visibility on approach to Downtown from great distances.

Potential Civic or Cultural Development Site

Potential sites that have been identified for important attractions including sites currently occupied but may be considered for future additions or redevelopment.

The quality of development on all these sites can profoundly shape the image of Downtown and how it is experienced. Accordingly, development here ought to have a greater civic responsibility that oblige consideration for the highest possible architectural design and material quality. The design of these buildings should providing articulation and features that reinforce their visual prominence.

The Design Guidelines (Part 5) provides further guidance for the treatment of prominent building sites.



The Old Post Office tower is a landmark that helps to orient Downtown visitors



The historic Metcalfe Block considers its corner as well as Galt Gardens



Galt Museum is an existing landmark view terminus for 5th Ave

