

Part 2 Background Report

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1.0 Introduction to the Background Report

The Background Report provides documentation of the analysis and process that is the basis of the Master Plan. This document provides a summary of the outcomes of the research, analysis and consultation that supports the vision contained in the Master Plan and the potential strategies to bring it to fruition.

The Background Report will be useful to trace how decisions were made and how the stakeholders and public were engaged in that decision-making. While this assembles the outcomes of the various background studies and the public process into one document, it is not organized to be read sequentially. Rather, the Background Report is intended to be used for reference purposes on specific topics or for specific interests.

2.0 Historical Overview

The urban form of Downtown and the greater City of Lethbridge has strong historic roots. Downtown in particular holds important significance as the historic, symbolic, and perhaps most importantly, the functional core of Lethbridge. While suburban expansion of the City to the south, north and west and several whole-block redevelopments of large sections of Downtown have changed the City centre markedly, Downtown retains many of the characteristics that made it an important regional centre for commerce, tourism, transportation and living over the last century.

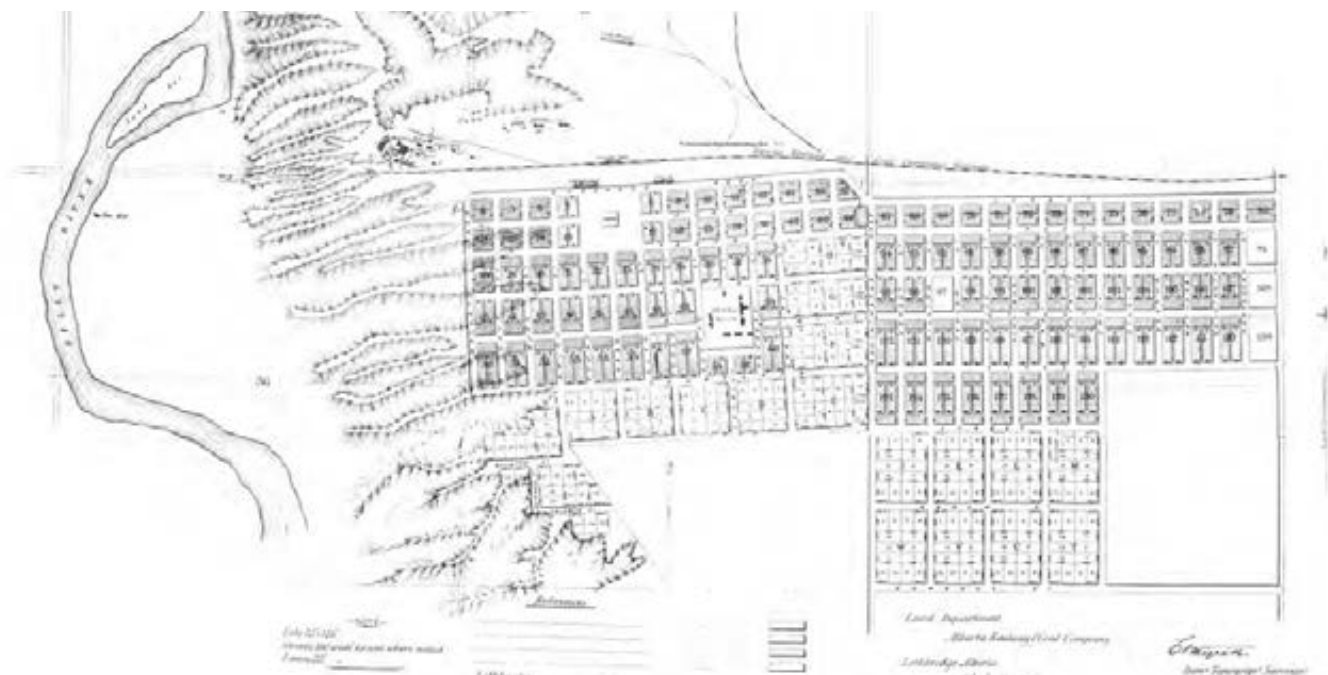
The bulk of Lethbridge's history has unfolded along the Oldman River and the Canadian Pacific rail line, links to which endure in the Downtown's historic street grid as well as its railroad and river frontages. These connections and others to Lethbridge's rich history form the structural links that reinforce the identity of

Downtown, and can serve as an attraction, an economic engine, and a guide to high-quality design.

Although many historic buildings and structures in Downtown were removed or demolished in the second half of the 20th century, significant pre-war historic built form remains. Perhaps as importantly, Lethbridge has an important legacy of modernist architecture that includes a number of landmark buildings, providing a rich and varied urban morphology that is unique to the region.

Native People & the Coming of European Traders

The Lethbridge region formed part of the homeland of the Blackfoot Confederacy, who resisted European penetration of their territory until the 1860s. The



1890 Survey, Courtesy of Lethbridge Historical Place Names

2.0 Historical Overview



1885 Survey, Courtesy of Lethbridge Historical Place Names



Wilks and Cranston ca. 1945



Corner of 3rd Avenue & Fifth Street (1930)

Blackfoot Confederacy comprised three nations: Siksika or Blackfoot, Kainai or Many Chiefs and now call the Bloods, and Piikuni or Scabby Robes and now called the Piegan. Collectively, they were known a Siksika or Prairie People. European fur traders along the North Saskatchewan River first came into contact with the Blackfoot, and applied their name to the entire Confederacy (Greg Ellis, Galt Museum Archivist).

Lethbridge's Confederate Ties

Lethbridge developed from drift mines opened by Nicholas Sheran in 1874 and expanded by the North Western Coal and Navigation Company (NWC&NC). This took place largely under the direction of Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt, a father of Confederation and Canada's High Commissioner to Great Britain, and his son, Elliot Tilloch Galt, Assistant Indian Commissioner. The town's namesake was William Lethbridge, a Briton and the president of the NWC&NC, which began operations in 1882 across from the original Sheran Coal Mine and original town site in the Oldman River Valley.

Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt had a key role in the birth of Canada, as the author of the original motion to federate British North America, which he brought before the Kingston Parliament of the Province of Canada in 1858. He described a picture of a new nation, unifying Rupert's Land (owned by the London-based Hudson Bay Company), the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia into a federation of the Province of Canada (including Canada East and West) and the Maritime Provinces.

Elliott Galt, sixteen years old and his father's assistant, was present at the London Conference of 1866 when the Fathers of Confederation and their British advisors named the Dominion of Canada and put the final touches on the British North America Act, creating the first sovereign nation within the British Empire.

While 2006 marked the 100th Anniversary of Lethbridge's transition in status from a town in the North West Territories to a city in the Province of Alberta, Downtown Lethbridge dates back to 1885 and the original river bottom site dates to 1883. Rupert's Land (which includes present day Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) was included in the original agreements at the London Conference in 1866 even though the transition of the Hudson's Bay Company territory was not formalized until 1870. South West Alberta did join confederation in 1905. It matured in its relationship within Canada. And that maturity was part of the original design for Canada.

Jane Harris Zsovan, 2007

The handiwork of the Galts can still be seen throughout our city and region. The downtown is one of the most obvious testaments to the City's association with the Fathers of Confederation and the Galts' colonization efforts.

A more detailed description of the Confederate ties is provided below in *Our Own Confederation Story*.

The Railway & Land Concessions

The NWC&NC built a narrow gauge (3'0") railway from Dunmore to Lethbridge, adding an extension to Fort McLeod (1884-85). The work required the protection of Canadian soldiers, as the region felt the impact of the 1885 Riel Rebellion. The NWC&NC also obtained a charter for the Alberta Railway and Coal Company (AR&CC) to assume the obligations of the NWC&NC and build a narrow gauge railway from Lethbridge to the Canada-United States border. For the provision of coal to the CPR and the construction of the rail lines, the NWC&NC was granted a total of 1,114,368 acres of land in alternate townships for settlement. The NWC&NC subsequently enlarged their coal market by extending the narrow gauge line from Coutts (on the US border) to Great Falls, Montana. The NWC&NC section of the Medicine Hat line was purchased outright in 1897 by CPR and incorporated into the Crow's Nest Pass branch railway extending into British Columbia.

Settlers & Irrigation

Before settlement the area where Lethbridge was located was known as the Arid Region, until geological surveyors revealed an abundance of coal and named it the Belly River Coal District. To develop the granted land and attract settlement (and counter the Arid Region image), Elliott Galt sought the assistance Charles Ora Card, founder of Cardston, a well-known Mormon and pioneer in farming by irrigation in arid areas. The Mormon community in Cardston struck an agreement with Galt whereby they would lease 700,000 acres of



McFarland Building, corner of 6th Street & 4th Avenue (1948)



Fifth Street (1912)



Lethbridge Exhibition Parade(1935)

2.0 Historical Overview



Looking east across Galt Gardens towards 7th Street South (1911)



5th Street South Between 3rd & 4th Avenues (1930)



Baalim Motors ca. 1920s

land, bring in settlers, and provide labour for building the canal system. Galt and the Mormon community work brought in miners of eastern European descent from the Pennsylvania coal fields.

The Early Downtown

From the beginning Lethbridge was a 'planned community.' Sir Alexander Galt favoured the wide streets of Guelph and Sherbrooke. He incorporated that design in Lethbridge's 100 foot wide streets that he insisted would radiate in three directions from a central point -- The Square. This was the same design used by his father John Galt at the founding of Guelph in 1826.

The streets of Lethbridge's oldest neighbourhoods, such as London Road were laid out and named by Sir Alexander. Often he chose the names of the benefactors who supported the town's survival in its earliest days and did not withdraw their support or see any profit during the Depression.

It is important to note that the founding of the Town of Lethbridge was as much about nation-building as it was about creating a mining service centre. The central point Sir Alexander Galt chose for Lethbridge was 'The Square.' Today we call this square Galt Gardens. In the early days, the area was used as a turning ground for bull trains during the work day. During the leisure hours, it also was the playing field for cricket and baseball games. It was a gathering place for town celebrations and visits by notables including several Governor Generals of Canada.

From the beginning, the square was designed to be an open space, the centre of the city, and to facilitate movement through the city and region. The 'Turkey Trail' was built just north of the square.

When irrigation finally flowed through the city streets in 1900, city residents began planting trees and gardens in earnest. But even prior to that, residents had begun experimenting with growing Cottonwoods (from the

Sources:

Atlas of Alberta Railways, University of Alberta Press, 2005. <http://railways-atlas.tapor.ualberta.ca>

Johnston, A. and Peat, B.R. 1987. *Lethbridge Place names and Points of Interest*. Occasional Paper No. 14, Historical Society of Alberta.

Letter to the Alderman Joanne Weadick, 4 January 2007, from Jane Harris Zsovan, Journalist and Author (*Stars Appearing: The Galts' Vision of Canada*)

Lethbridge Modern: Aspects of Architectural Modernism from 1945-1970, Volume 1, Southern Alberta Art Gallery

river bottom) and Cherry Trees (from pits of eaten fruit).

In the early days, the downtown had many permanent residents in the Lethbridge Hotel and shopkeepers such as the McCleay sisters lived in the office blocks they built in the downtown. Churches were placed in the Downtown as well. As a result, there was activity 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the Downtown.

Most of the Downtown core was in place prior to the depression. Garish electric lights and signs, profuse in their shapes, colors and guy wires, brightened the Downtown at night.

The Red Light District

In the 1890's, as economic depression was felt, Lethbridge became a single resource town - a miners town. This provided the right conditions for the unofficial establishment of a red light district called "The Point". The Point, a segregated district located on a promontory on the Valley edge surrounded on three sides by Coulees, was occupied solely by brothels, and its success varied with the local economy. At its peak, near the turn of the century, up to 40 prostitutes worked in the brothels. Over the years the district would change locations, but a separate area for prostitution would remain in Lethbridge until 1944.

Chinese Community

One of the first ethnic groups to arrive in Lethbridge was the Chinese community. Many came as labourers in 1881 to work on the CPR railway. When the railway was finished in 1885, some Chinese workers left to look for new jobs in Lethbridge. By 1890 there were three Chinese laundry businesses in the city, and by the turn of the century, a 'Chinatown' neighbourhood had established itself between First and Third Avenue. Chinese immigrants in Lethbridge usually owned their own businesses, operating laundries, grocery stores, and restaurants. Many of the Chinese in Lethbridge also owned produce gardens south of the city where



Agricultural roots (painting by Irene McCaugherty)



Aerial view south of Lethbridge (1981)



Aerial view of Galt Gardens and the Downtown Area (1950)

2.0 Historical Overview



5th St and 3rd Ave (late 1800s or early 1900s)



Lethbridge Modern: Yates Memorial Centre (1964)



Lethbridge Exhibition Parade (1935)

they would grow vegetables for sale. In 1902, as many as 300 Chinese people used these market gardens to make a living.

A Living Downtown

By 1935, Lethbridge was 50 years old. It had retained much of its small town atmosphere and continued to value its slow-paced lifestyle. Saturday nights were firmly established for the traditional shopping expedition – everyone from the city and surrounding area flocked to the Downtown stores, more to meet and mingle than to shop. Fifth Street south, the main shopping street, was crowded with people surging between the main stores, Kresge's and the Metropolitan. The Salvation Army played on the Alexandra Hotel corner, while the ladies used their tambourines to collect offerings – an appropriate omen for the quiet Sunday to come.

Lethbridge Modern

Despite the city's relative isolation and small scale, an impressive collection of buildings of modern architecture are evident throughout Downtown. These designs compare architecturally to that found in much larger urban centres across North America.

In Lethbridge, the legacy of modern architecture can be traced from the architectural office of Meech, Mitchell and Meech (1950) to the internationally prominent University of Lethbridge by Arthur Erickson (1967). As a booming, wealthy city, Lethbridge's isolated location, its warm climate, its dramatic prairie and river valley landscapes, and its economic and religious diversity have provided a rich environment in which modern architecture has thrived. Community leaders have aspired to build appropriately with the sparse landscape and to employ the creative talents of artists and architects to define the city.

A Cultural Centre

In 1976, the former library became the Southern Alberta Art Gallery after a petition started by cultural groups garnered 2,203 signatures in less than a week. Marilyn Smith, current gallery director, says the petition significantly influenced

what the gallery is today. “Things happen because people make the effort to make them happen and that’s how this gallery started...because of the effort of a few people that grew into the efforts of many.”

End of an Era

In 1970, Marathon Realty announced that the CPR intended to remove its track and marshalling yards by the end of decade. The federal government introduced legislation to help cover the cost of moving the rail lines. Lethbridge became the first small city to apply for these funds in May 1974. The removal of the rail yards and historic roundhouse marked a fundamental change in the 100 year relationship between the railway and Lethbridge. The railway is no longer the centre of the city’s economy and development, but Lethbridge remains on an active CPR mainline, with trackage east, west, north and south - to Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, and the US.



Barber Shop (late 1800s)



The Trolley and Banners (early 1900s)



5th Street (late 1800s or early 1900s)

Our Own Confederation Story by Jane Harris Zsovan

Lethbridge's downtown is not only the heart of this city, it is the heart of a region that was very close to the heart of the Fathers of Confederation -- including Sir Charles Tupper, Sir John A. Macdonald and our city's co-founder, Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt.

Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt brought the original motion to federate British North America before the Kingston Parliament of the Province of Canada in 1858. That motion included a description of what the new nation could become if the Rupert's Land (owned by the London based Hudson Bay Company) and the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia joined a federation of the Province of Canada (including Canada East and West) and the Maritime Provinces.

Even before his country was born, this visionary Canadian had dreams for British North America that spanned far beyond his own riding of Sherbrooke, Quebec. He was determined to build strong provinces in Rupert's Land (renamed the Northwest Territories in 1870) and to create a place for Canada as a leading nation in the world by reforming the British Empire into sovereign but interdependent Dominions. He saw beyond the 19th Empire to something akin to the Commonwealth of the 21st Century. He is also our nation's first diplomat, first finance minister, and the creator of the Canadian dollar. Twice, he turned down the Office of Prime Minister.

His son Elliott Torrance Galt, who co-founded Lethbridge with his father, was party to that vision and, while he never stood for public office, he believed Canada was destined for a great future. It would have been difficult for him to believe anything else as he grew up in the company of his father's friends including Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir George Etienne Cartier, and Sir Casimir Gzowski.

As his father's assistant, sixteen year old Elliott was in the room when the Father's of Confederation and their British advisors put the final touches on the British North America Act. It was at that meeting, The London Conference of 1866, where they named the Dominion of Canada -- and the colonies most pundits in Britain and the United States assumed would be sacrificed to buy improved relations with the American republic became the first sovereign nation within the British Empire. French and English-speaking British North American became masters of their own destiny without firing a shot or severing their ties with the Crown and their fellow British Subjects.

The BNA Act set a new course not only for Canadians, but also for subjects throughout the British Empire and led to the creation of many nations modelled upon the Canadian experiment -- Australia, New Zealand, The Bahamas, and Bermuda, are a few examples. (In his later years, Sir Alexander Galt and other leading thinkers including Governor General Lord Lorne wrote and spoke extensively on the Imperial Federation that eventually led to sovereignty for the colonies throughout the Empire.)

Elliott Galt shared his Father's belief that Canada was destined to be a great nation with influence in the world at large and that Lethbridge would be a thriving city in a prosperous province.

The belief became firm conviction when he was hired by Sir John A. Macdonald's government as a secretary/clerk for the Indian Commissioner, Sir Edgar Dewdney in 1879. For the next four years, he crisscrossed the prairies meeting with and dispensing government aid to the First Nations Peoples. He found the job frustrating and futile even as his superiors commended him and eventually promoted him to the post of Assistant Indian Commissioner.

His frustration was ameliorated somewhat by a meeting he had with a ferryman/coalminer named Nicholas Sheran during his first summer on the Prairie. Sensing

Lethbridge is not just another prairie city. Our understanding of its history and design can shape our view of Alberta, Canada and our role in the world at large. We are the centre of the Confederation story. We live in a unique place where colonists and cowboys; governor generals and politicians alike became convinced that it was possible for peace order and good government to co-exist with freedom.

Jane Harris Zsovan, 2007

Sheran's one man mining operation was a mere shadow of the industry that it could be, he took rock samples and wrote his father about the coal seams that he had seen at Coal Banks.

Sir Alexander was impressed. When he went to London as Canada's High Commissioner to London a few months later, he had a hard time focusing on his government assignments. In fact, he had much more success in convincing his new acquaintances Lord Coutts, William Lethbridge, and a publisher named Smith that they could populate the west by opening mines in the newly named District of Alberta. He wrote the Prime Minister that he would rather open his own colonization/ mining enterprise than convince others to open industries and trade with Canada.

In 1881, Sir John A. Macdonald agreed to let Sir Alexander return to Canada to stake out mining opportunities in the District of Alberta on the condition that Galt would return to his duties in London that fall. Sir Alexander and Elliott then toured the SW portion of the NWT and chose five potential mining sites in the District of Alberta.

As Macdonald's government set about securing the land leases for Sir Alexander, The High Commissioner returned to London to put financing in place for his mining operations. He also hired a mining engineer Captain Nicholas Bryant to travel to the District of Alberta the following summer to assess the five land leases. Bryant in turn hired William Stafford, an Ayrshire Scot engaged in mining in Nova Scotia, to assist him.

When Elliott and Sir Alexander met with their employees the next summer, Stafford and Bryant were just completing their tour of the mine leases. Together, the four men agreed that the Coal Banks was the best place to begin mining. Sir Alexander and Elliott told their employees to begin operations immediately. While Alexander returned to London to finalize the investment he needed for his company and to complete

a speaking tour of Scotland, during which he called for a reformation of the British Empire into a federation of interdependent Dominions with equal status to Britain, Elliott returned to Ottawa to report to his superiors.

Within a few weeks thirteen miners arrived from Nova Scotia to begin mining. And by February, Elliott took up residence in the new town as Managing Director of the North Western Coal and Navigation Company.

It seems clear that as early as 1883, Sir Alexander intended to call the settlement Lethbridge, but the Post Office rejected the name until October 1885, after the town had been moved up to prairie level to accommodate the Galt's 'turkey trail' railway.

The railway was built with the protection of Canadian soldiers as the region reeled from the shock of 1885 Riel Rebellion. That spring, cowboys, ranchers and shop-keepers joined the militias and headed to Batoche to quell that rebellion. They were also joined by other Canadian regiments including the French speaking Quebec Rifles who arrived to defend the residents of the territory. The Galt barges and steamers became part of the military effort during that rebellion transporting wounded soldiers and supplies.

A few months later, Sir Alexander and Elliott stood proudly beside Governor General Lord Landsdowne as he opened the railway. That afternoon, the Governor General of Canada stepped down from his podium to shake hands with an American born cowpoke who had ridden miles to see 'the governor.' The next day the party headed to the Blood Reserve to meet with the First Nations people.

This seemed to be a place where old enemies could make new arrangements and where peace, order and good government could finally coexist with the ideas of freedom and individual liberty. It appeared that the ideological war that gave rise to the Magna Carta, spurred the Civil war between Cromwell and King Charles, and reached its apex in the American Revolution could be reconciled in the District of

2.0 Historical Overview

Alberta.

Despite the optimistic beginning, trouble soon set in. A few weeks later the settlement narrowly escaped destruction when residents fought off a prairie fire.

Between 1885 and 1895 a depression descended over the Canadian Prairie and it appeared the mines were money losers. Macdonald's government was soon answering questions in Parliament regarding its association with Sir Alexander's money-losing adventure in the District of Alberta. Not surprisingly, the situation deterred the Dominion government from putting money into irrigation in Alberta. Without government endorsement, private investors would not support irrigation and the semi-desert Galt land holdings did not attract many buyers.

The only substantial land deal the Galts made during the depression was with a group of settlers led by Charles Ora Card who settled at Lees Creek in 1886. Card and his associates first arrived in Lethbridge in 1885 on a land buying expedition. When Elliott sold them land at Lee's Creek, it was the first step in a series of land sales and co-operative colonization efforts that led to the establishment of most towns in this district.

Sir Alexander never saw the success of his companies. He died in 1893. It was not until 1897, that Canada's Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, agreed to refund survey dues to the Galt Companies. That decision made irrigation financially viable and stopped the shut down of all the Galts' Alberta companies.

With Sifton's support, the London investors agreed to fund the scheme and Elliott was able to complete a deal with the Mormon settlers which gave birth to the towns of Stirling and Magrath.

In this and subsequent colonization projects, the Mormon settlers were paid in land and in cash for their work on the Company's irrigation projects -- a pattern Elliott's grandfather had used at the founding of Guelph, Ontario and which his father had used to

turn the struggling Eastern Townships of Canada East into a prosperous agricultural and manufacturing centre for the Province of Quebec.

During the lean years, Elliott saw potential in a young surveyor, Charles Magrath, who arrived in Lethbridge in 1885. Originally, Elliott thought he would need a full-time surveyor to handle company land sales and he hired Magrath to work for the company. Magrath soon earned Elliott's trust. So Elliott kept him on staff even when there were not enough land sales to justify Magrath's salary. Magrath, became Elliott's assistant as well his confident and perhaps his only friend -- possibly due to the fact that both Elliott and Magrath had spent several years as civil servants and Magrath, who started his working life on Parliament Hill was well acquainted with vision of the Fathers of Confederation. Eventually, Magrath married Mabel Galt and became Elliott's brother-in-law.

Even before he joined the family, Charles Magrath was privy to the financial woes the mines and land company were facing. But he did not voice his doubts to his fellow citizens. As Lethbridge's first mayor and our riding's MLA to the territorial legislature, he told voters Lethbridge was sure to have a great future. He said this while Sir Alexander was dying and doubting the wisdom of risking his fortune of the Alberta companies.

When Sir Alexander died in September 1893, the town's future was bleak. So were the Galt family's finances. Elliott determined to keep his mother and sisters from poverty and the Town of Lethbridge afloat. Meanwhile, most residents of the town were blissfully unaware that their town was on verge of financial disaster.

When Elliott finally turned the tide that was against him, he was proclaimed a 'financial genius' by the Canadian and British financial establishment. But his health was destroyed. At that point he divested himself of his Alberta companies and, over a five year period, paid back his investors, sold his remaining assets to the CPR, and turned over the Galt Hospital and a

substantial endowment to the City of Lethbridge. He soon got in the habit of giving donations to his nation. During WWI he donated \$30,000 to the Canadian Government to care for war wounded.

Lethbridge was the centre of the Galt holdings and remains the centre of the district. Sites linked to the Confederation Story include:

- Indian Battle Park,
- The Original Site of the Coaldale house (Elliott's Home)
- The Galt Museum remnants of the 1891 hospital built by Sir Alexander Galt
- The Galt Museum 1910 addition (dedicated by Sir Wilfred Laurier)
- Original site of the North Western Coal and Navigation Company Offices (on the river bottom)
- NWC & N Co. (Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company Offices currently on IGA site)
- Galt Gardens
- NWMP Customs Camp on the river bottom (present in 1883)
- Stafford graves
- Site of the Lees Creek land purchase agreement by Charles Ora Card
- The Bowman
- Post Office
- The Original Street Names for the Older Sections of the City
- The Railway Tracks (including the Turkey Trail)
- The Train Station
- High Level Bridge (built by the CPR after their

purchase)

- Wide Streets and the similarity to Sherbrooke and Quelp street plan
- London Road Neighbourhood
- Links to other old central city neighbourhoods such as Little Wigger, Stafford, & Westminster that were not originally part of the town.
- Stafford Farm Site
- Original Mines Sites for the 1883 mines and site of the Galt Sawmill
- City of Lethbridge Archives
- The site of the Spite Ditch near Milk River



Eaton's ca. 1948

2.0 Historical Overview



Hotel Lethbridge



Hardware, an essential service provided in Downtown



Inauguration of Streetcars in Lethbridge 1912

Historic Downtown Timeline

- 1870** American traders establish Fort Whoop-up, to become the most notorious of 44 American whiskey trading posts in the 1870s, until North West Mounted Police put an end to the whiskey trade in 1874.
- 1874** American adventurer and businessman Nicholas Sheran establishes Belly (now the Oldman) River Ferry service and opens first commercial coal mine near town site.
- 1882** North Western Coal and Navigation Company formed by Alexander Galt, William Lethbridge and others, ships first coal overland to Fort Macleod by bull train, establishing the future location of the City of Lethbridge.
- 1890** Town of Lethbridge incorporated by Board of Trade and Civic Committee, led by C.A. Magrath.
- 1901** Oliver's Hall, first movie house, opens Downtown. Others follow – the Colonial and Phoenix Theaters (1908), the Majestic (featuring live shows in 1910 and the Empress (1931).
- 1905** Lethbridge becomes divisional point on CPR line: Union Station and extensive rail yards built; town becomes a railway, service and mining centre.
- 1906** Lethbridge incorporated as a City, with a population of 2,313 Downtown; Coal Miners' Strike in Galt Square (later Galt Gardens) leads, in 1907, to Alberta's first Worker's Compensation Act
- 1907** Work started on the construction of the High Level Bridge, Canada's longest viaduct; beginning of boom mentality as 25,000 Club formed to promote civic patriotism & attract capital and residents; Downtown wooden sidewalks replaced with eight-foot cement sidewalks.
- 1908** Galt Square bequeathed to the City; first major land rush as 1000 people swarm county office in land rush; many Downtown business blocks constructed – including ten Downtown banks.
- 1909** High Level Bridge completed; railway system in southern Alberta complete.
- 1910** Prospect of mail delivery prompts Council to change streets to numbered system.

Dry Farming Congress establishes Lethbridge as a regional farming & supply center; \$1.35 M spent on civic improvements as first 17 km of streetcar track opened Downtown.

1912

First Chautauqua held in Lethbridge – traveling tent shows bring opera singers, magicians and actors to prairies.

1917

The segregated ‘red light’ district - one of the main tourist attractions of the City – moved from the Point Area to become a key feature of the Downtown, to much controversy.

1920

Opulent Capitol Theatre opened – with gold and silver trim, satin curtains and loge seats.

1928

City hires Meech & Meech to build Civic Centre – including a City Hall, war memorial and library-museum-art gallery fronting on 4th Avenue South.

1944

Bluebird Motel and Auto Court first motel Downtown: 3rd avenue south; downtown streets improved for auto traffic.

1946

New Kresge Department store built downtown; Safeway constructs modern supermarket at 3rd avenue and 13th street; Dominion Block demolished for new Eaton’s store.

1950

Bequeathment of funds from Deane Yates for a cultural centre begins cultural renaissance Downtown – City Builds Yates Centre in 1966.

1957

University of Lethbridge opens in West Lethbridge: Erickson and Massey’s modern building completed 1971, following in the footsteps Lethbridge Community College.

1967

Lethbridge Hosts 1975 Canada winter games to regional and national publicity; Lethbridge Centre Mall built Downtown as part of Downtown Redevelopment scheme.

1975

Southern Alberta Art Gallery Takes over Public Library in Galt Gardens; Provincial Government Complex Built Downtown.

1976

Two business blocks built – Southland Terrace and Chancery Court; railway relocation begins: rail marshalling yards removed and Crowsnest Trail construction begins in 1984; to be replaced by Park Place Mall.

1980s



Early Downtown residential



Downtown shopping 1946



Lethbridge has a strong and visible shopping heritage

3.0 Precedent Study

As part of the background review and analysis phase, the Consultant Team completed a Precedent Study of Downtown revitalization successes among comparable mid-sized North American cities. As a survey of best practices, the study provided valuable ‘lessons-learned’ from revitalization efforts and, more importantly, the long term outcomes of such traditional interventions as pedestrian street closures, historic preservation efforts, commercial stimulation models, parking structures and other targeted public investments, as well as other efforts. These case studies served to dispel many myths about Downtown revitalization by providing concrete examples of successes and failures.

The study included (a) a literature review of best practices and indicators in Downtown revitalization; (b) compilation of a list of 20 great cities based on researched indicators; (c) the selection and study of 7 detailed cases as Downtown precedents; and (d) a tour of best practices examples in southern Ontario downtowns. The purpose of this approach was to develop a diversity of cases to explore the widest possible range of precedents, in particular to:

- develop a picture of natural (geographical) characteristics, heritage assets and significant traffic generators in the downtown;
- understand the context (planning, governance, private sector) in which revitalization was to take place; and
- identify the specific attributes that have contributed to the successes of the city and that can be considered downtown planning precedents.

The outcomes of the Precedent Study were compiled into a separate report that was submitted early in the Master Planning process. An overview of the 7 comparable North American examples is provided on the following pages.

Key Lessons Learned

10 key lessons learned from other successful Downtowns included:

1. Downtown revitalization should be a community-driven process - involving citizens, the City, the private sector, non-profits, and the university.
2. A Downtown task force or revitalization authority needs to have a clear mandate. It also needs to take responsibility for Downtown. These elements succeed by providing leadership to refocus investment and living downtown.
3. A University presence in the Downtown and linkages with the greater community often act as incubators and catalysts to revitalization.
4. Regional branding is essential to establish Downtown as a destination – for university, nightlife, restaurants, civic offices and facilities – but also attractions such as historic character, distinctive architecture, green space, civic events and tourist activities.
5. The first project is often the hardest: resist doing what is “easy” and keep the long-term vision in view.
6. Pioneering projects encountered resistance or false starts. Expect and be prepared to work through it.
7. Flexibility in approach and periodic redirection are necessary to achieve long-term solutions as cities are in constant flux.
8. Successful, revitalized downtowns have champions: leaders in governments, the private sector and in the community.
9. Maintaining key infrastructure and civic facilities downtown signals a commitment to Downtown and attracts investor confidence.
10. Downtown retail often thrives by building synergy with other traffic generators - an adjacent mall, an entertainment district, a waterfront, a university.

3.0 Precedent Study

Ann Arbor, MI	Asheville, NC	Boulder, CO	Burlington, VT
 	 	 	 
<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 114,024 - University of Michigan (51,000 students) - Regional seat of Washtenaw County (45 mi W. of Detroit) - Large Downtown - four distinct areas - 67 blocks – 2804 residents – 1997 businesses <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development authority (DDA) took responsibility for downtown in 1982; City-appointed 12 member council and staff - Committees include Operations and Finance; Partnerships; Capital Improvements; and Research and Opportunities. - Strong leadership key to DDA success - Four downtown commercial Area Associations implement public realm initiatives <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downtown and Central Area Plans (1988,1992) employed as 'elements' of City Master Plan (2005) - Zoning overlay and design guidelines (2003) - Tax Increment Financing used for streetscape improvements, housing grants, and area studies - Parking revenues have helped upgrade or replace all seven city-owned parking structures - Historic districts and design guidelines - Planned Unit Development rezoning to negotiate benefits - Federal and State housing and community development grants helped finance affordable housing Downtown <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State Street restoration of two-way traffic and streetscape revitalized retail - Long-term approach to parking structures improved public realm: design and investment - Streetscape improvement projects - Major mixed-use developments: One North Main, Tally Hall/Liberty Square, and the Ashley Mews - \$1 million in financing to affordable housing - Go!Passes to 4300 downtown employees to reduce parking demand and traffic congestion - Sponsored events created thriving arts scene key to downtown - DDA has participated in more than 100 projects, with approximately \$50 million reinvested downtown - Successful regional branding of downtown through public realm 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 70,400 - UNC Asheville (3500 students) - Regional centre for western NC - River confluence in Appalachians - Approx. 70 block Downtown – 1351 residents <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downtown historical preservation movement originated in 1960s - Mayoral Task force created city-led Revitalization Commission in 1977 - Private sector leadership galvanized investment momentum & built catalytic projects - Strong community activism redirected nature of redevelopment in 1980s - City continues to offer key facilities and public realm commitment <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy to maintain of key civic facilities downtown - Limited public investment in streetscapes, parking structures - Designation of heritage subdistricts with design review - Pilot program to ease rehabilitation code and stimulate investment - State and Federal historic tax credits employed to create design guidelines and restore buildings - City provides leasing incentives to businesses - Master plan completed 2002 - Corridor study to improve university links with Downtown <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revitalization commission refocused investment and living downtown in 1977, created Downtown Plan - Public referendum defeats large PUD, galvanizes citizens, non-profits and BIA (1981) - Urban Design Action Forum (1986) - Wall Street pedestrian mall renovation (1987); Pack Plaza Renaissance (1990); Haywood Street Streetscape and Rankin Parking Deck (1991) - PIP investments rehabilitates numerous downtown buildings, including Grove Arcade (1990s) - Pritchard Park renovation: premier downtown park and event space (2002) - Key facilities and public realm commitment by City throughout (streetscapes & parking) - Heritage restoration now complete 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 94,673 - University of Boulder (36,000 students) - Regional municipality near Denver (36 mi NW) - Major employment centre / Flatiron Mountains - 49 block Downtown – 283 businesses <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive Plan (1970) implements growth management and City-run Central Area General Improvement District (CAGID) - Downtown Pedestrian Mall strongly managed by CAGID and later Downtown Commission - Downtown Boulder Inc important non-profit - Downtown Alliance (1996) highly successful steering group redirects redevelopment strategy Downtown - Downtown Boulder BID (1999) formed to combat regional competition, tax-supported <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (1970) implements growth management - Central Area General Improvement District (CAGID) managed Downtown (tax district; parking revenues) - City funds Downtown Commission - Downtown capital improvements privately funded (BIA) - Historic Preservation Ordinance (1974) instrumental in preserving and rehabilitation of historic buildings and districts. - Downtown / University Hill Area Plans (1998) implement slow-growth - Downtown Urban design Guidelines (1986-99) - Downtown subdistricts to reinforce local identity – new zoning overlays <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAGID tax district (1970) - Pearl Street Mall (1976), renovated 2001 - Historic Preservation Ordinance (1974) - Residential Growth Management Ordinance (1976) avoids clearance - Downtown Management Commission (1988) oversees Mall and Downtown - Downtown Alliance a catalyst for community re-engagement (1997) - Downtown Boulder Inc – non-profit member organization focused on promotion and political advocacy (1984) - Downtown Boulder BID (1999) formed to combat regional competition, tax-supported - Mall management through tax levy - Transit Village Area Plan to guide regional transit facilities and mall development 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 38,889 (metro 132,000) - University of Vermont (9000 students) - Regional centre, largest city in Vermont - Lake Champlain Waterfront - Approx. 44 block Downtown – 100+ Marketplace Businesses <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downtown Partnership formed in 1970s to manage Church Street Marketplace; city council-appointed commission of staff and district property owners - City has played a key role in directing higher-level government funding, investing in public-private partnerships and services - 1991 Burlington Municipal Development Plan - 1999-2000 Burlington Legacy Project visioning process a key roadmap for change - The Downtown Partnership BID <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1960s urban renewal clearance a key factor in downtown form - State and Federal funding for original Marketplace streetscape - Downtown Improvement District: property tax levy on Marketplace landowners to cover 2 hr free parking - Strong heritage regulations (12 districts) - City-wide design review & guidelines throughout city (1978) - Wider Downtown District re-designated to apply State & Federal funding - Reinvestment Tax Credit Program; Vermont Downtown Program (district preservation) - Acclaimed Brownfield Redevelopment Pilot - Residential density bonusing encouraged <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Church Street Marketplace kept downtown Burlington retail centre of the region - Burlington Town Centre renovated to create retail synergy with Church Street - Downtown Parking facilities designed to bring Marketplace visitors through enclosed mall - City maintained downtown as sole entertainment district, none on campus - Emphasis on civic sense of place through design review - Restored art deco Flynn Theater into Performing Arts Center - Main Street Landing Brownfields Pilot - Integrated waterfront hotel & condo development with Marketplace through corridors

San Luis Obispo, CA	Savannah, GA	Wilmington, NC	Lethbridge, AB
 	 	 	 
<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 44,174 - California Polytechnic University (32,000) - Regional Hub of Central California Coast - 550 businesses <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City initiated 1973 comprehensive Downtown planning process around environmental issues; formed a strong basis for community governance - Downtown Association (DA) of merchants, established in 1975 (Parking, Promotions, Design, Economic Activities and Thursday Night Promotions Committees) – City funded - Strong internal advocates in City helped open up government and planning process to constituents <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive Plan focused on slow-growth and ecological sustainability - Downtown Sales Tax District (1975) to fund DA - Thursday Farmers Market closes Higuera Street to create temporary pedestrian mall (1983) - Downtown historic district & design guidelines (1983) sparked streetscape work - Regular referendums uphold community goals, review large proposals - Downtown Strategic Business Plan (Main Streets- 2001) - Community Design Guidelines (2002), including architectural review - Seismic retrofit ordinance (2004) helped renew downtown buildings <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mission Plaza project (1968) restored 18th century Mission San Luis Obispo - Downtown Centre created piazza-style setting with diverse retail (1980s) - Community's farmers market on Thursdays catalyzed Downtown (1983) - weekly attendance of 15,000 - Performing Arts Centre (partnership between the University, the City and the Centre Foundation (1996) - Renovated Carnegie Library Building Downtown for County Historical Museum (1955) - SLO Arts Center (private foundation) - SLO Children's Museum (1987) rebuilt Downtown in 2002, with City incentives. 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 131,510 - Savannah College of Arts & Design (7300) - Georgia Tech (17,100 students) - Regional Municipality (Chatham) - MLK corridor only: 27 blocks – 85 Businesses – 350 residents <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historic Savannah Foundation (1955) instrumental in listing Historic District & capital interventions - First City-led urban renewal plan 1986 - SDRA (1993) formed by City to revitalize Savannah; independent public agency with City-appointed directors - Regional metro government responsible for Downtown budget - Partnership-driven projects (Ellis Square, Savannah College) a key strategy of SDRA <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1986 Broughton Street Urban Renewal Plan employed eminent domain; special zoning and property improvement loans - MLK and Montgomery corridor plans (2000): comprehensive streetscape plan; special incentives; focused federal funding - Became Certified Local Government (RM) to extend federal and state preservation partnerships to the local level (1996) - Façade improvement grants to owners (1994); Sprinkler cost assistance loans to encourage upper story loft redevelopment (1996); Downtown Business Resource Center & Library (1986); Neighbourhood Corner Store Program (2005); Graffiti removal program (2000); Guide to Doing Business in Greater Downtown Savannah & Website (1990s); - Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) to support streetscape improvements (2003); Master Plan Funding (2004); Lane Lighting Program (2005) <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historic Savannah Foundation (1955) buys & restores numerous Downtown properties - Comprehensive parking improvements: State Street Garage (1980s); Bryan Street Garage (1990s); West Liberty Street facility (2005). - City Market and Art Center (1985); Lucas Theater renovation (2005); 150-year old Marshall House Hotel restoration; Savannah College of Art and Design expansion throughout Downtown (1980s); Battlefield Heritage Park (2003); Ellis Square (2005) 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 75,838 - UNC Wilmington (11,500 students) - Commercial Centre and seat of New Hanover County - 50 block Downtown - 190 downtown retail businesses – 490 residents <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architectural Review Board instrumental in Historic Preservation Downtown (1960s) - Downtown Area Revitalization Effort (DARE), a public-private partnership formed by City (1977) – now Downtown Wilmington; receives funding / staff support from city <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision 2020 Plan (1997, 2005) - CBD Zoning Overlays and Sub-Areas - Historic Districts with mandatory design review & guidelines (1970s, 1999) - Architectural Review Board (1960s) active in private preservation - Downtown revolving loan fund from federal seed money; rehabilitation and operating loans; owner technical assistance; building & leasehold improvements - Significant lending and spending - Minimum size and increased density zoning to reduce seasonal / absentee owners - Federal Urban Development Action Grant to rebuild waterfront <p>big moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cotton Exchange and Chandlers Wharf restorations as shopping areas (1976) - Riverfront Park and Market / Water Shopping Streets rebuilt with Federal grant (1970s) - County renovated vacant department store as public library's new home (1970s) - County police and courts built Downtown (1970s) - Four parking decks constructed in the downtown three since (1990s) 	<p>vital stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population 81,692 - University of Lethbridge (8,000 students) - Regional Seat of Lethbridge County - Large Downtown - 34 block Downtown – 1500 residents – 500 businesses <p>governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downtown Advisory Committee created by City 1988 made up of stakeholder, the public, Council and City staff - Active business community formed BRZ, applied main streets program & higher level government funding - Steering Committee formed in 2000 to revitalize Downtown <p>incentives & programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downtown urban renewal 1965-1979 upgraded downtown services, created Lethbridge Centre mall - Railway relocation freed CPR marshalling yards Downtown (1983) - Sub-area zoning overlays Downtown helped encourage Downtown residential - Centresite area redevelopment and urban design plan (1988): led to Park Place Downtown enclosed mall - Individual property historic designations - Alberta Main Streets program employed for façade and streetscapes

4.0 Market Analysis Overview

4.1 Introduction

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This section provides a report of the preliminary findings of the assessment prepared by urbanMetrics on the functions of downtown Lethbridge and the markets which it serves. The purpose of this report was to provide guidance early in the Heart of Our City Master Planning process, involving stakeholder engagement.

This report summarizes the results of a commercial inventory of downtown Lethbridge; a demographic analysis; and a review of relevant documents provided by City staff.

This provides an overview of downtown from several perspectives, which urbanMetrics has found useful in analyzing various downtown's across Canada, including a:

- Functional assessment
- District assessment
- Market assessment



Downtown Lethbridge Market Study Area

4.0 Market Analysis

4.2 Functional Assessment

Of all urban nodes, downtowns typically serve the broadest range of functions, the most common of which are:

- Place to Shop
- Place to Work
- Place to Live
- Place for Tourists
- Place to Play
- Play to Learn
- A Government Centre
- A Cultural Centre

While the success of a downtown does not necessarily require it to perform all of these functions, the synergies created through multi-functionalism are a key to its ability to remain vibrant and competitive within the overall urban region. Furthermore, by understanding how well a downtown is able to perform each of these functions, opportunities can be more clearly identified. The following paragraphs provide an overview of how well downtown contributes to each of these roles.

Place to Shop

- Unlike many downtowns, one of downtown Lethbridge’s core strengths is as a place to shop.
- Overall, downtown contains approximately 1.5 million square feet of retail and services space (See chart on opposite page) making it the largest single commercial node in the city.

- Downtown has two of the City’s four department stores, including the only full-line Sears and The Bay Stores in the surrounding region.
- Its central location and highway accessibility will likely enable the downtown area to maintain its strength as a retail centre.
- There is, however, a significant difference in terms of quality and composition of retailing between the north and south sides of First Avenue. Park Place Shopping Centre and Lethbridge Town Square between the Crowsnest Highway and First Avenue, have very low vacancies and strong chain representation. The traditional pedestrian sections of downtown have vacancy rates of about 10% to 15% with a mix of both innovative and marginal retailers.
- Although Downtown (excluding Park Place and Lethbridge Town Square) has a very high proportion of services within its mix, it still has a very strong retail concentration. The amount of retail space in the “traditional downtown” is still nearly equal to that at Park Place and neighbouring Lethbridge Town Square. Furthermore, in our experience, many older downtowns have service components that exceed the size of their retail sector due to their inability to compete with suburban shopping centres.
- One key to the success of downtown Lethbridge will be to enhance cross visitation between the traditional downtown area and Park Place. – i.e. spread the success more evenly throughout the core.

Place to work

- Downtown Lethbridge is a major employment node for the City providing jobs for approximately 8,400 persons. Approximately 1 in four jobs available in the City are found in the downtown core.

- With major government uses, such as City Hall, the Provincial Courthouse, an Alberta Government building, a Federal Government building, the County offices and the RCMP building, over half of the jobs in downtown Lethbridge are generated by the office sector. Retail and service activities account for about 40% of downtown jobs, while the remaining employment is generated by hotels and institutional uses.

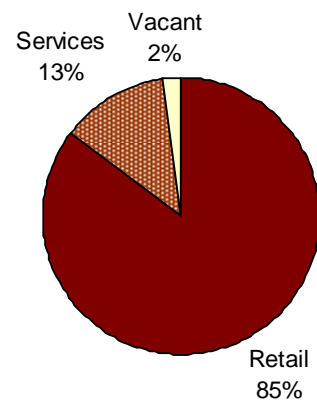
Place to live

- Downtown Lethbridge only has a very small residential base. Based on the 2001 Canadian Census, only about 1,500 persons live within the downtown core. – the vast majority of these are seniors. The average age of the downtown population is over 65. The average household income in downtown Lethbridge is about 54% that of the average Lethbridge resident and less than half of the Provincial average.
- The lack of a sizeable residential base in downtown Lethbridge is a weakness as well as an opportunity. Strategic planning for downtown should focus on attracting residential projects.

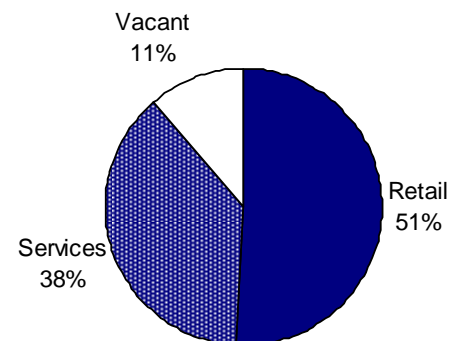
Place for Tourists

- Lethbridge's tourism industry is largely centred around events, sports and regional conventions/meetings. The principal local attractions include: the Galt Museum, the Fort Whoop Up Interpretive Centre; and the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden. At the same time, Lethbridge is central to a number of significant attractions in the region, including:
 - Head Smashed-In Buffalo Jump – a UNESCO Heritage Site;
 - Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park;

Park Place/Lethbridge TS



Rest of Downtown



4.0 Market Analysis

- The Remington Carriage Museum; and,
- Frank Slide Interpretive Centre and the Crowsnest Pass.

As a result, Lethbridge has the opportunity to function as a central location for visitors to Southern Alberta.

- Downtown Lethbridge is limited to four hotels with 416 rooms. The lack of room supply limits the ability of downtown to act as a major tourist centre or to host major events.
- The role of downtown Lethbridge as a tourist centre should be explored as part of a broader tourism strategy for the City and the region.

Place to Play

- Downtown Lethbridge has a number of regional recreation facilities, such as Galt Gardens, which hosts civic events throughout the year, a YMCA, Civic Arena and the Lethbridge Curling Club. In addition, there is a multiple screen cinema downtown, and a number of small galleries. The recreational trail system along the river adjacent to downtown represents a unique and valuable recreation asset for local residents. The ENMAX Centre, home of the Lethbridge Hurricanes WHL team and the largest indoor entertainment venue in the City, is, however, outside of the core.

Place to learn

- In recent years, the downtowns of mid-sized cities, such as Cambridge, Brantford, Kitchener and Burlington have benefited from the recent opening of university and college satellite campuses. Neither the University of Lethbridge nor Lethbridge Community College have a downtown presence. Compared to its other roles, education does not

appear to be a major function for the downtown area.

Civic Centre

- Downtown Lethbridge clearly functions as a major civic centre.
- Government functions and services located downtown include City Hall, the Lethbridge RCMP detachment, the Lethbridge Public Library, and the County of Lethbridge offices.
- The Southern Alberta Art Gallery in Galt Gardens, the Galt Museum, and the Yates and Sterndale Theatres provide a variety of cultural venues in the downtown core. These are augmented by a variety of private galleries and night clubs.

Cultural Centre

- The Southern Alberta Art Gallery in Galt Gardens, the Galt Museum, and the Yates and Sterndale Theatres provide a variety of cultural venues in the downtown core. These are augmented by a variety of private galleries and night clubs.

In summary, downtown Lethbridge is multi-functional. It is very strong in a number of areas, including as a place to work, as a place to shop, and as a government centre.

4.3 District Assessment

Although not formally recognized, downtown comprises five fairly distinct functional districts as illustrated in the accompanying map on the following page. These districts are intended to illustrate the geographical differences within downtown and should be viewed with some flexibility. They are also similar to the sub-areas defined in the 1988 Downtown Area.

1. An automobile oriented retail district north of First Avenue;
2. The Scenic Avenue arterial commercial corridor;
3. The traditional retail core;
4. An employment district; and,
5. Galt Gardens.

The statistical composition of each of these areas is illustrated in Downtown Lethbridge Inventory on the following pages.

Area 1: Automobile Oriented Retail District

The dominant uses in this area are Park Place Shopping Centre and the adjacent Lethbridge Town Square plaza. The only other uses in this area are the Garden View Lodge seniors centre and the Lethbridge Health Unit. This area contains the largest concentration of retail and services space in downtown with about 36% of the total downtown gross leasable area.

This is the most successful retail area in the downtown core with very low levels of vacancy and the largest concentration of regional and national chains. The two shopping centres have low site coverage ratios with extensive parking.

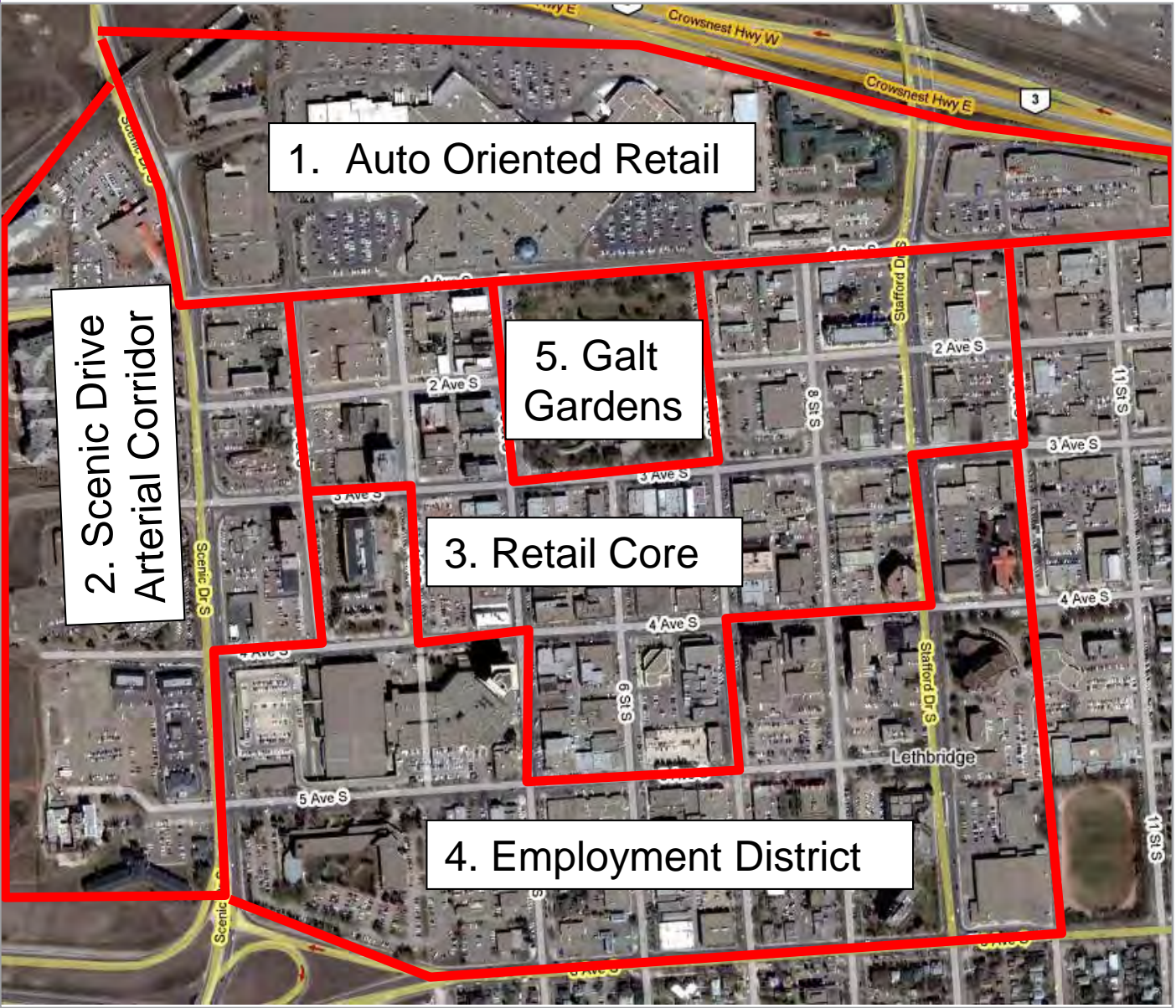
Park Place is one of the dominant anchors for the downtown core and the ability to encourage and facilitate cross shopping between the shopping centre and the traditional retail core should be a goal of any downtown strategy.

Area 2: Scenic Drive Arterial District

Scenic Drive contains most of the hotel/motel room supply in the downtown core as well as a variety of fast food and other automobile oriented uses. It also contains other visitor services such as the Alberta Motor Association offices and the Galt Museum. A number of residential buildings are also found on the edge of the coulee west of Scenic Drive to take advantage of the views.

Area 3: Traditional Retail Core

This is the historic pedestrian oriented retail area containing some 564,000 square feet of retail and service space together with 282,000 square feet in predominantly small scale office buildings. The retail vacancy rate in this area is just over 10%, which is not unusual for a downtown core, but a level that might be improved. It is also the oldest part of the core with signs of physical obsolescence on some individual buildings and blocks. There is a wide diversity of commercial outlets in this area, although over half the space comprises services, particularly banks and restaurants. This area includes more concentrated pedestrian retailing along 5th and 6th Streets, “Chinatown” Row on 2nd Avenue, a number of underutilized sites with intensification and redevelopment opportunities towards the western fringe of the district and more auto related retailing towards the eastern fringe. The traditional retail core represents the area that would benefit most from a master plan, owing to its historical significance, intensification opportunities, high vacancies and need for renewal in areas.



Downtown Lethbridge Districts

Area 4: Employment District

This district comprises the southern eastern and western flanks of the downtown area and contains the bulk of major office and government buildings. Some 865,000 square feet of net rentable office space is found in this area or about 68% of the downtown total. This area also includes Lethbridge Centre, which although originally designed as a retail centre with an office tower, now functions predominantly as an office project with limited retail space, other than The Bay department store. The high retail vacancy levels in this area are the result of unoccupied space in Lethbridge Centre. This area has the highest densities in the downtown core and also includes a number of high rise residential projects towards the south end. The buildings in this

area generally lack historical significance and are distinct from those found in the traditional retail core.

Area 5: Galt Gardens

Galt Gardens is a unique green space feature connecting Park Place to the traditional retail core. It is the principal public event space in the downtown and the location of the Southern Alberta Art Gallery.

Category	Zone					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Auto Oriented Retail	Scenic Drive Arterial	Retail Core	Employment District	Galt Gardens	
	(Square Feet Gross Leasable Area)					
RETAIL						
Food	1,400		31,800			33,200
Beverage		4,600	4,600	1,500		10,700
Drugs and Personal Care	41,900		22,200	4,300		68,400
Sub-total Convenience	43,300	4,600	58,600	5,800	-	112,300
Department Store	101,200			125,800		227,000
General Merchandise	15,700		10,500	3,300		29,500
Fashion	127,700		49,100	29,200		206,000
Furniture	34,000	12,000	27,500	9,500		83,000
Miscellaneous Retail	160,500		88,400	29,400		278,300
Sub-total Comparison	439,100	12,000	175,500	197,200	-	823,800
Automotive		2,000	13,400	14,400		29,800
TOTAL RETAIL	482,400	18,600	247,500	217,400	-	965,900
SERVICES						
Restaurant/FF	25,200	21,400	95,000	10,100		151,700
Entertainment	41,500		21,700	21,700		84,900
Financial Services		9,100	98,900	27,800		135,800
Personal Care Services	3,500	900	28,100	9,500		42,000
Other Services	800		13,200	2,500		16,500
Hotel		-				-
TOTAL SERVICES	71,000	31,400	256,900	71,600	-	430,900
TOTAL RETAIL AND SERVICES	553,400	50,000	504,400	289,000	-	1,396,800
Vacant Space	12,700	-	60,000	47,300		120,000
TOTAL RETAIL AND SERVICE SPACE	566,100	50,000	564,400	336,300	-	1,516,800
Vacancy Rate	2.2%	0.0%	10.6%	14.1%		7.9%
OTHER						
Office Space (Net Rentable Area)	7,100	109,300	282,200	865,200		1,263,800
Hotel Rooms		314	102			416

Source: urbanMetrics inc.

Downtown Lethbridge Inventory

4.0 Market Analysis

4.4 Market Assessment

There are four main markets attracted to downtown cores:

- Downtown Residents;
- Downtown Employees;
- The Regional Population Base; and,
- Tourists.

Each of these markets provides support for downtown businesses during different times of the day and week. The ability to attract these markets helps to keep downtowns active after hours, on week-ends and during the winter months which can be weak shopping periods for downtown merchants.

Downtown Residents

As illustrated in the Demographic Profile on the facing page, there was only a very small downtown residential population, as of the 2001 Census. While some new residential population has likely been added since 2001, Downtown Lethbridge is still lacking a residential base compared to many other Canadian downtowns of a similar size.

Downtown residents would help to support convenience retailing, such as food stores, restaurants and services and entertainment activities. A permanent resident base would support downtown businesses during traditionally weak retail periods (i.e. evenings and weekends). An increase in residential activity would also assist in addressing safety concerns.

As indicated in the Demographic Profile, downtown residents tend to be older (average age over 65), with low household income levels. On a per capita basis, however, downtown incomes are slightly above the City average. Almost all downtown housing is apartment

based. Downtown residents are much less likely to drive to work than the average Lethbridge or Alberta resident.

Downtown Employees

As noted previously about 8,400 persons work in downtown Lethbridge, the largest share of whom work in the office sector. In general, downtown Lethbridge is functioning well in terms of attracting a strong employment base.

Although downtown employees tend to be limited in the time they spend downtown, recent survey data from the International Council of Shopping Centres, suggests that they spend a significant volume on both retail items and services. The majority of downtown employees purchase their lunch downtown, which supports restaurants, fast food facilities and food stores.

Regional Population Base

Although additional research needs to be conducted in terms of identifying downtown's trade area and its ability to draw from the surrounding region, it is likely that it has a very wide draw throughout Southern Alberta, but that the vast majority of visitors are from within the City. Statistics Canada "Place of Work" data indicates that approximately 85% of persons working in Lethbridge live in the City.

With a few exceptions, Lethbridge population characteristics echo those of the Province. Household incomes are about 20% lower than the Provincial average and Lethbridge residents have a greater propensity to drive to work than the average Alberta resident.

In terms of consumer attitudes, a 2005 survey conducted by Ipsos Reid indicated that 90% of Lethbridge residents viewed the downtown as "important to the community as a whole". This is a key finding in that downtown revitalization requires strong community support.

	Downtown Lethbridge	City of Lethbridge	Alberta
Total Population	1,487	69,142	3,047,688
0 to 19 years	3%	26%	28%
20 to 64 years	37%	60%	60%
65 years and over	60%	14%	12%
Average age of population	65.2	37.2	34.7
Persons per household	1.3	2.4	2.6
Children per family	0.1	1.0	1.2
Average 2000 household income	\$30,096	\$52,841	\$64,199
Housing Tenure - Owned	48%	70%	70%
Housing Tenure - Rental	52%	30%	30%
Housing Type - Single Detached	1%	67%	65%
Housing Type - Semi/Row/Duplex	2%	17%	14%
Housing Type - Apartment	97%	14%	18%
Housing Type - Other	0%	2%	3%
Non-movers (same address five years ago)	39%	49%	51%
Usual Transportation Mode - Drive	54%	84%	76%
Usual Transportation Mode - Private Vehicle Passenger	3%	6%	7%
Usual Transportation Mode - Public Transit	1%	2%	8%
Usual Transportation Mode - Walk	24%	5%	6%
Other	18%	3%	1%

Source: urbanMetrics inc. based on 2001 Census of Canada

Note: Population figures include the following estimates for net undercoverage: Lethbridge +2.63%
Alberta +2.45%.

Downtown and City Demographic Profile

Lethbridge residents generally feel the downtown area offers a range of entertainment options (77% agree “there are a range of arts, culture, and entertainment opportunities in the downtown area”). At the same time, however, residents are less inclined to feel the downtown area is vibrant (54% agree “the downtown area is vibrant and active”) or appealing to businesses (48% agree “the downtown area is attractive to businesses”).

Safety also appears to be an issue with only 45% agreeing that “the downtown area is safe”. The population chart on the following page summarizes

future population estimates for Lethbridge based on projections prepared by Urban Futures and the more recent results of the Lethbridge Census.

The Lethbridge population is expected to achieve a healthy level of growth over the next 20 years, increasing by approximately 16,500 persons. Growth at this level will provide the City with new development opportunities, some of which can be directed to the core. For example, this population can support between 500,000 and 600,000 square feet of new retail and services space. While much of

4.0 Market Analysis

this space will be oriented to suburban growth areas, a portion can be anticipated in the downtown to assist in reducing vacancy levels in the traditional retail core.

To some extent the degree to which new population and employment can be attracted to the core will dictate the amount new commercial space that can be added to Downtown Lethbridge.

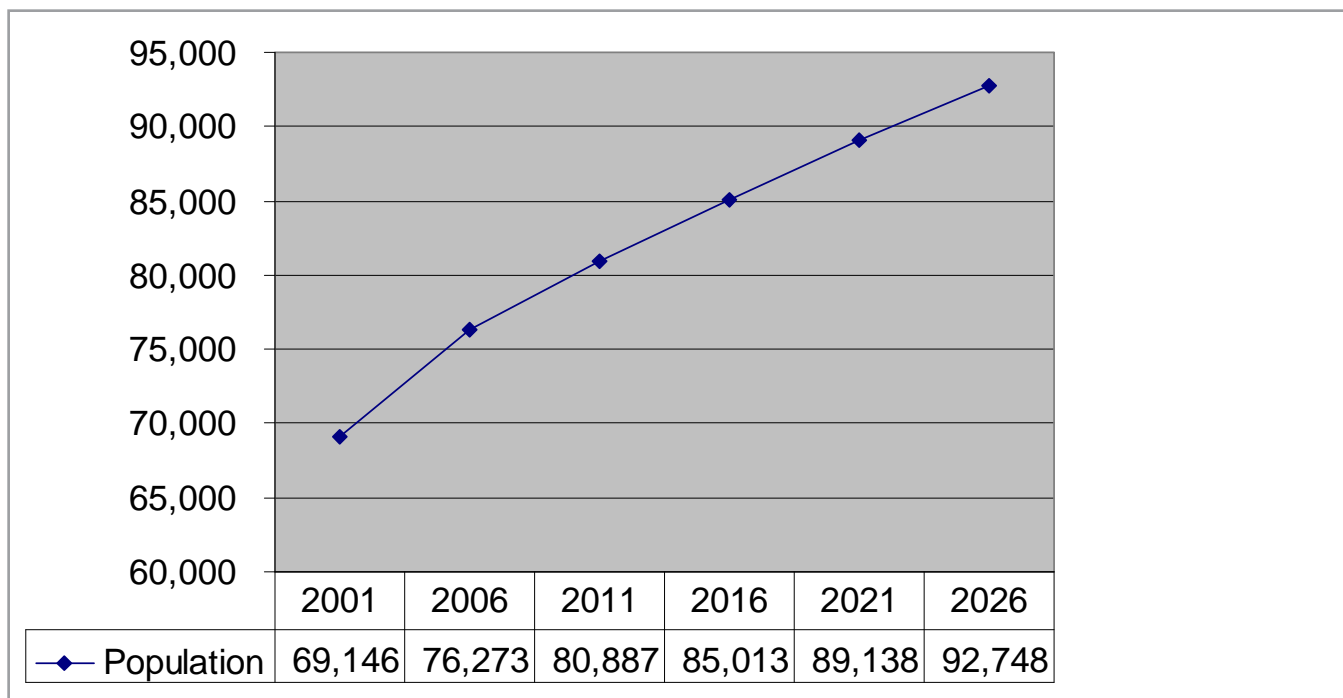
Tourists

Specific data on tourists to Lethbridge is not available, however, Travel Alberta does track tourists to the Alberta South Travel District, which includes a wide region, including Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Drumheller, the Crowsnest Pass area and Waterton Lakes National

Park. Unfortunately this data is also current only to 2002. However, some general conclusions can be drawn. As noted previously, Lethbridge itself is not a major tourist destination, but has the opportunity to be a base to many of the attractions in Alberta South.

In 2002, Alberta South attracted some 3.12 million visitors, of which two-thirds originated from within Alberta. Other Canadian Provinces generated about 20% of trips to the region. About 12% of visitors to Alberta South were from the US and about 2% were from other countries.

About half of all trips to the region involved an overnight stay. By far the two dominant trip purposes are visiting friends and relatives and pleasure. In 2002,



Source: urbanMetrics inc. based on projections by Urban Futures and the 2006 Lethbridge Census. Population figures include an estimate for undercoverage of 2.63%.

there was a significant spike in the visiting friends and relatives market compared to past years.

Apart from visiting friends and relatives, the top activities participated in by visitors to Alberta South in order of rank are: shopping, sightseeing, participation in outdoor activities, and visiting national and provincial parks.

From the perspective of Downtown Lethbridge, the high percentage of intra-province visitors and persons visiting friends and relatives, suggests that a tourism strategy should be embraced by the local population. In other words, if Downtown Lethbridge is a place where City residents want to visit, they will also take their friends and relatives. The volatility of US tourism to Canada also suggests that a focusing a strategy on Alberta residents and visitors already in the region would be appropriate.

Given the importance of shopping as a tourist activity in the region suggests that opportunities should be created to attract tourist related retail facilities to the downtown as part of an overall strategy.

Arts and culture are already well represented in Downtown Lethbridge. This sector certainly has potential to anchor a downtown tourism strategy. This would also be consistent with the City's recently prepared Arts and Cultural Policy, which recognizes that the arts will play an important leadership role in the future of Lethbridge. The further development of a vibrant arts and cultural atmosphere in the downtown core will also enhance its attractiveness for meetings and conventions, which is one of the goals set out in the 2006-2008 Economic Development Lethbridge Business Plan.

Another tourism goal by Economic Development Lethbridge is the attraction of major international events/festival. Certainly there is a role for downtown as an event venue.

4.5 Summary

In summary, Lethbridge functions well in a number of areas, particularly as an arterial retail destination and as an employment and government centre. There is a need to bolster its attractiveness as a residential neighbourhood and as a tourist destination.

There is also a significant difference how the various parts of downtown function. A primary focus for revitalization should be on the historic retail core, which occupies a central location within the core. The ability to encourage cross visitation between Park Place and the historic core and to enhance connectivity throughout the downtown area would have positive implications on the future of the historic retail district.

Downtown also contains a number of key cultural venues. The ability to build on the strength of the downtown arts and cultural community will generate broader economic benefits for the downtown and the City as a whole.

5.0 Existing Conditions Mapping

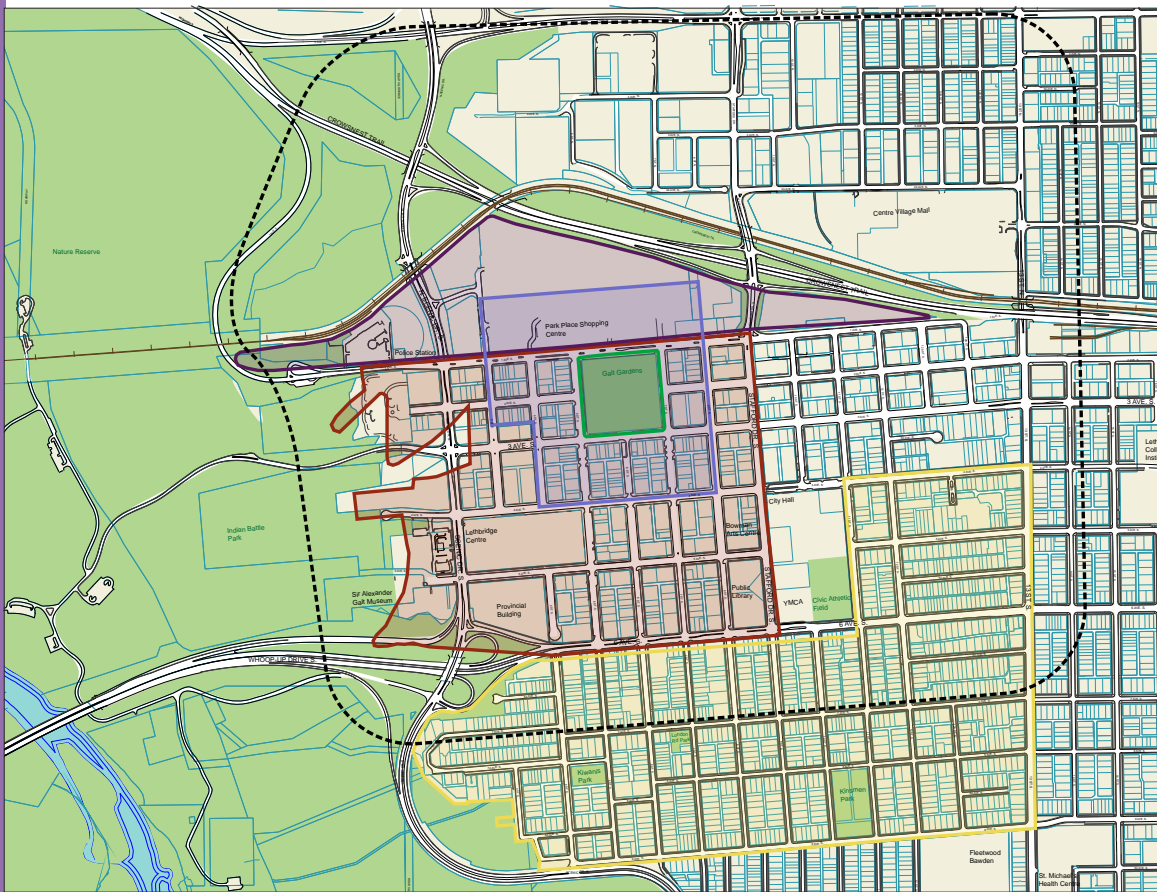
Downtown Lethbridge possesses a number of characteristics that help define it as a unique place within the City. The pattern of built form, circulation, land uses and open spaces work in concert to define the character and quality of the Downtown and how it is experienced. The following pages provides the comprehensive mapping that was undertaken to better understand these patterns, and which served as the planning and physical context to begin the Heart of Our City study process.

The Existing Conditions Mapping is organized according to the following themes:

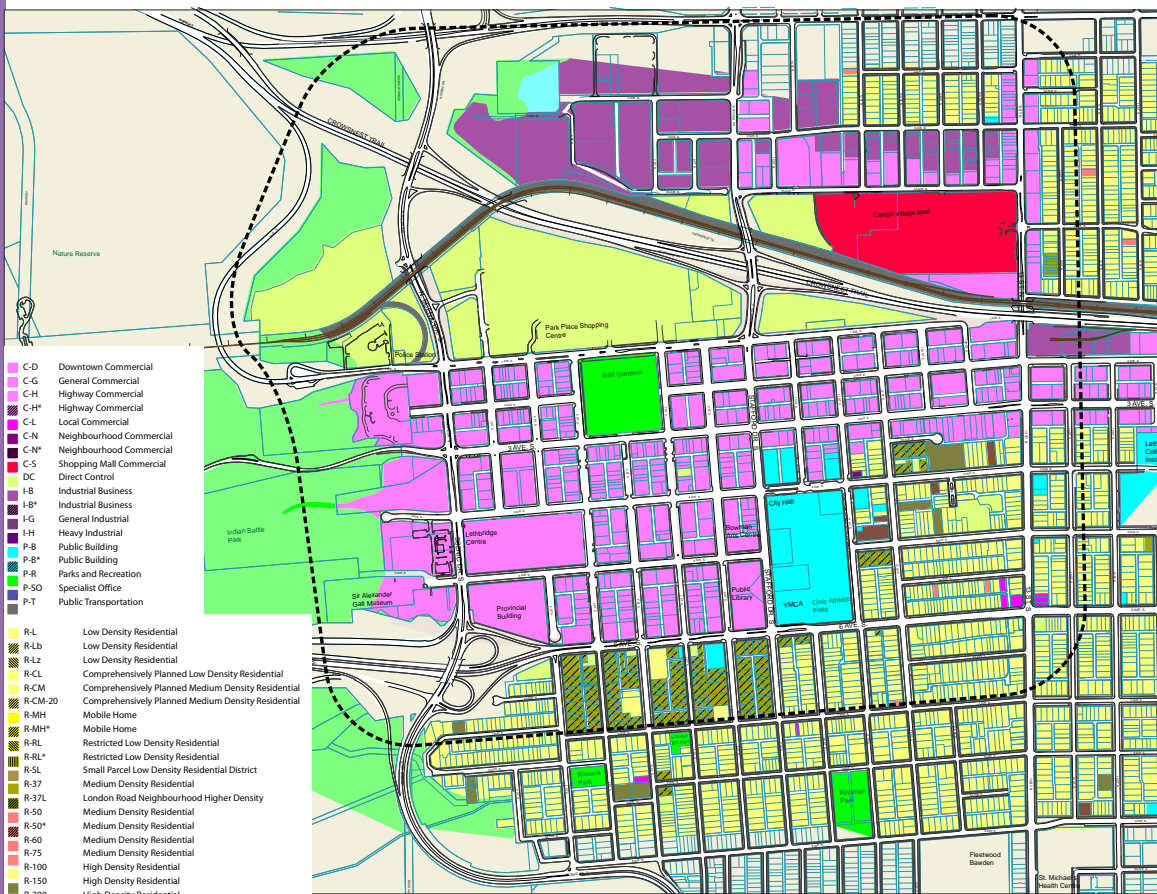
- Planning Context
- Built Conditions
- Circulation

5.0 Existing Conditions Mapping

Planning Context



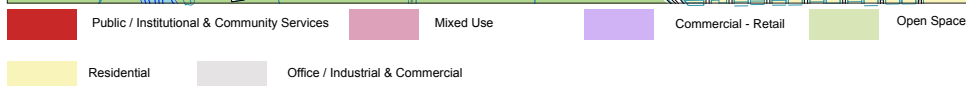
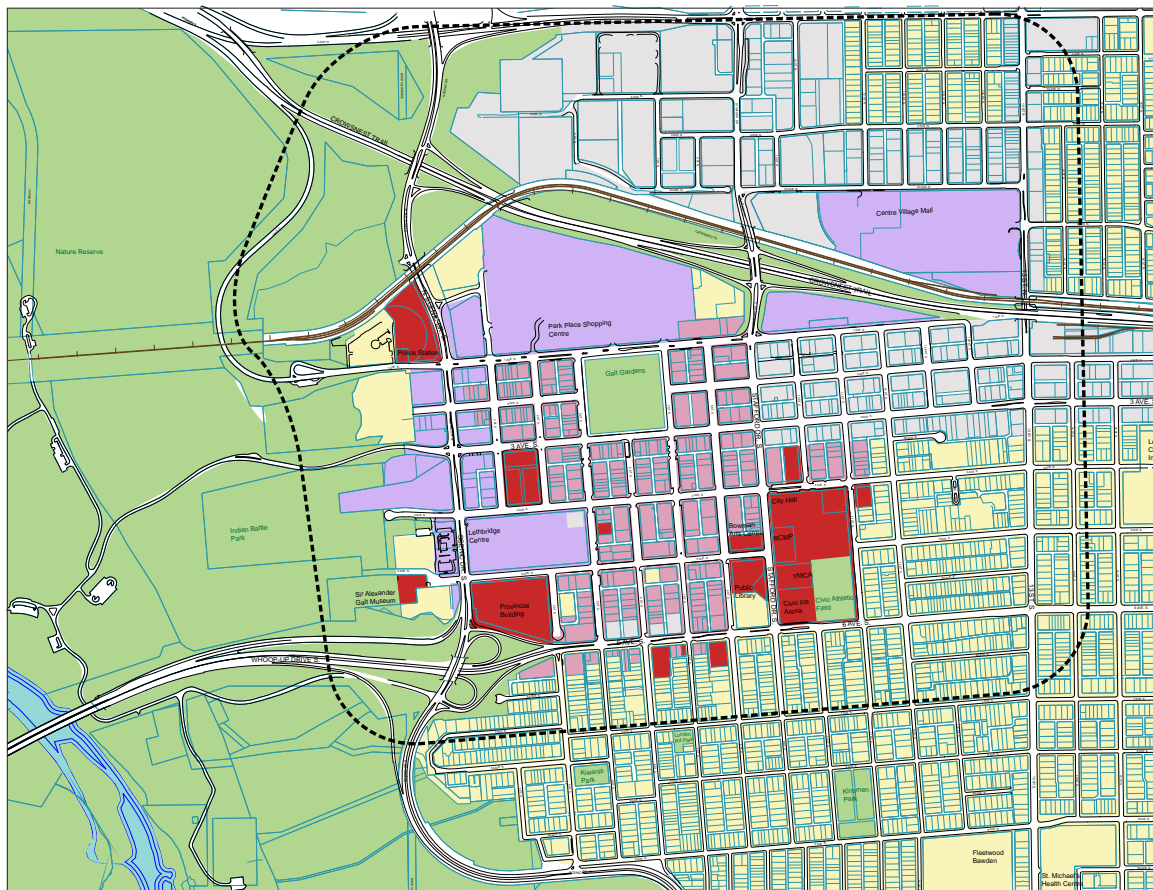
Previous Studies



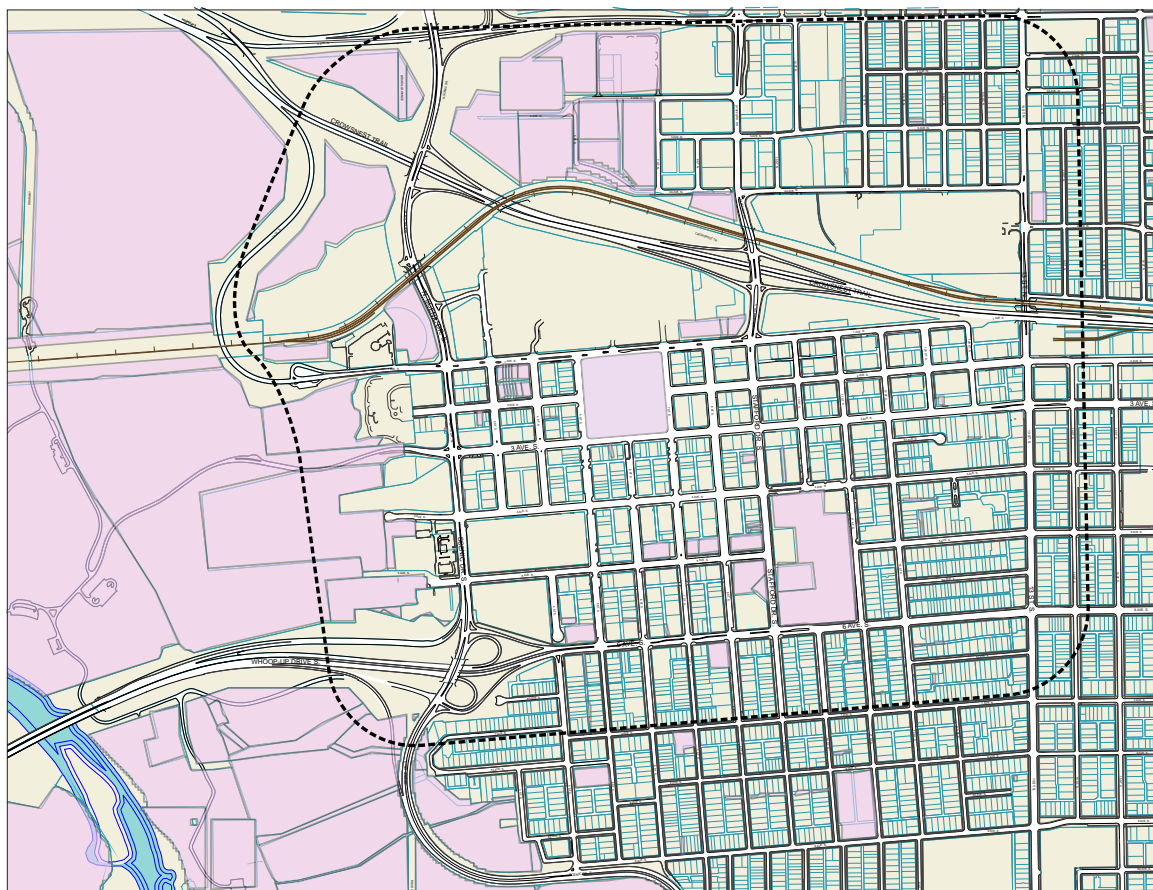
- C-D Downtown Commercial
- C-G General Commercial
- C-H Highway Commercial
- C-H* Highway Commercial
- C-L Local Commercial
- C-N Neighbourhood Commercial
- C-N* Neighbourhood Commercial
- C-S Shopping Mall Commercial
- DC Direct Control
- I-B Industrial Business
- I-B* Industrial Business
- I-G General Industrial
- I-H Heavy Industrial
- P-B Public Building
- P-B* Public Building
- P-R Parks and Recreation
- P-SO Specialist Office
- P-T Public Transportation
- R-L Low Density Residential
- R-Lb Low Density Residential
- R-Lz Low Density Residential
- R-CL Comprehensively Planned Low Density Residential
- R-CM Comprehensively Planned Medium Density Residential
- R-CM-20 Comprehensively Planned Medium Density Residential
- R-MH Mobile Home
- R-MH* Mobile Home
- R-RL Restricted Low Density Residential
- R-RL* Restricted Low Density Residential
- R-SL Small Parcel Low Density Residential District
- R-37 Medium Density Residential
- R-37L London Road Neighbourhood Higher Density
- R-50 Medium Density Residential
- R-50* Medium Density Residential
- R-60 Medium Density Residential
- R-75 Medium Density Residential
- R-100 High Density Residential
- R-150 High Density Residential
- R-200 High Density Residential
- HR Human Resources

Existing Zoning

Planning Context



General Land Uses



City Owned Lands

5.0 Existing Conditions Mapping

Planning Context

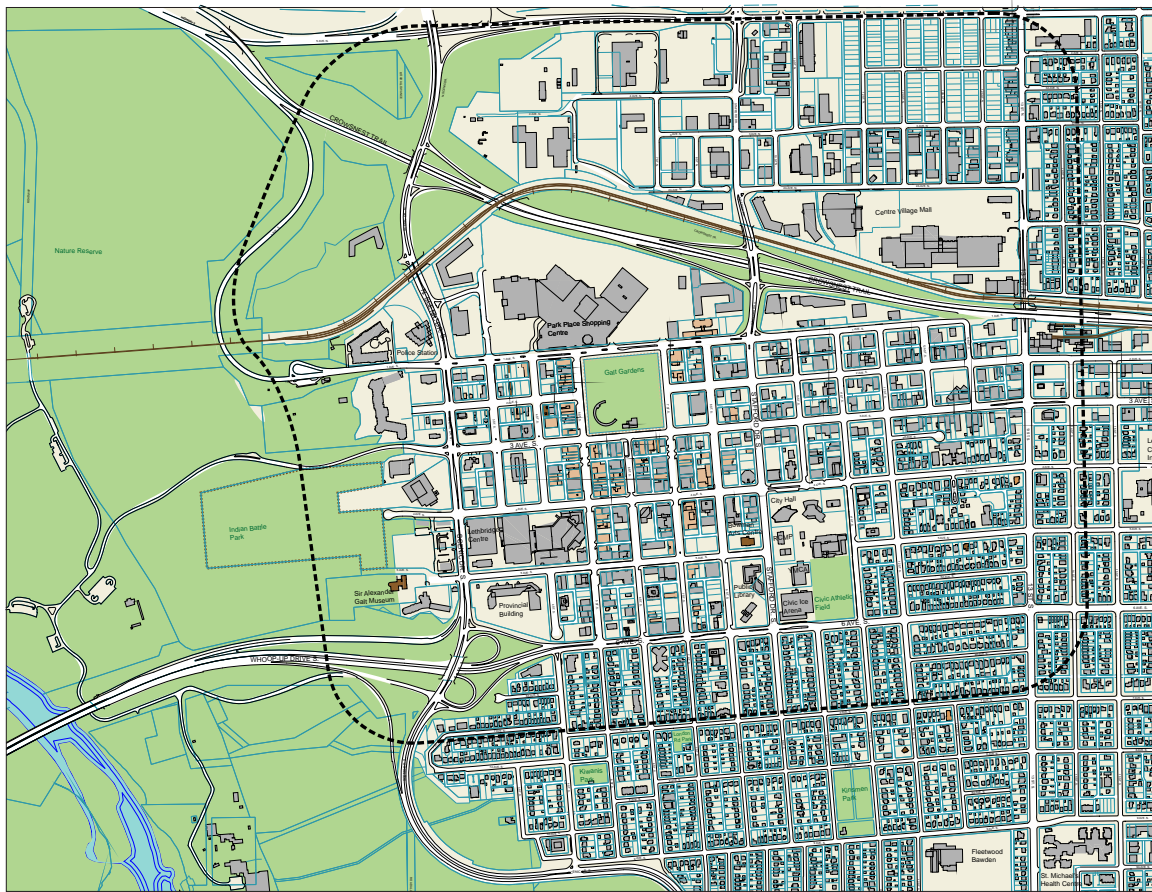


Block Pattern



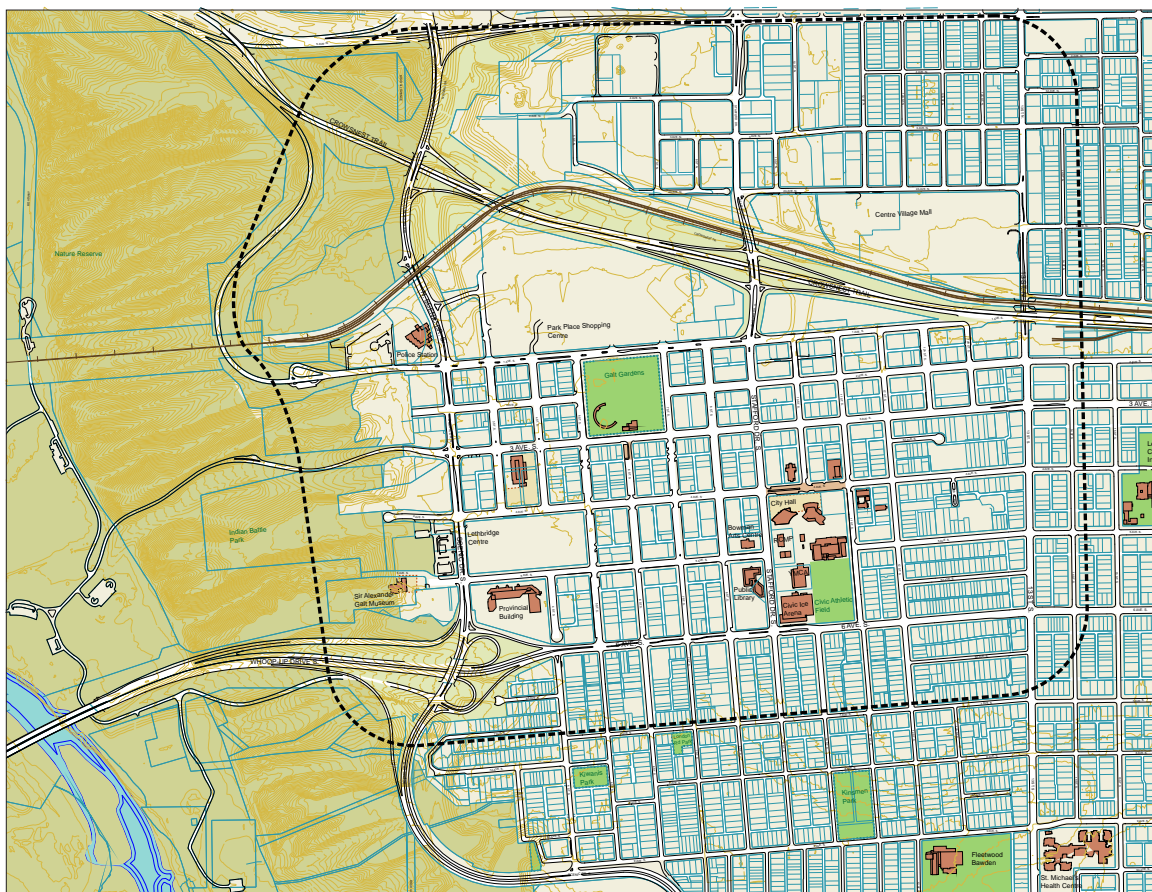
Building Footprint Pattern

Built Condition



Provincial Historic Resources
 Registered Historic Resources
 Historically Significant Resources (Constructed Between 1885-1949)
 Historically Significant Site
 Provincial Historic Site

Heritage Resources

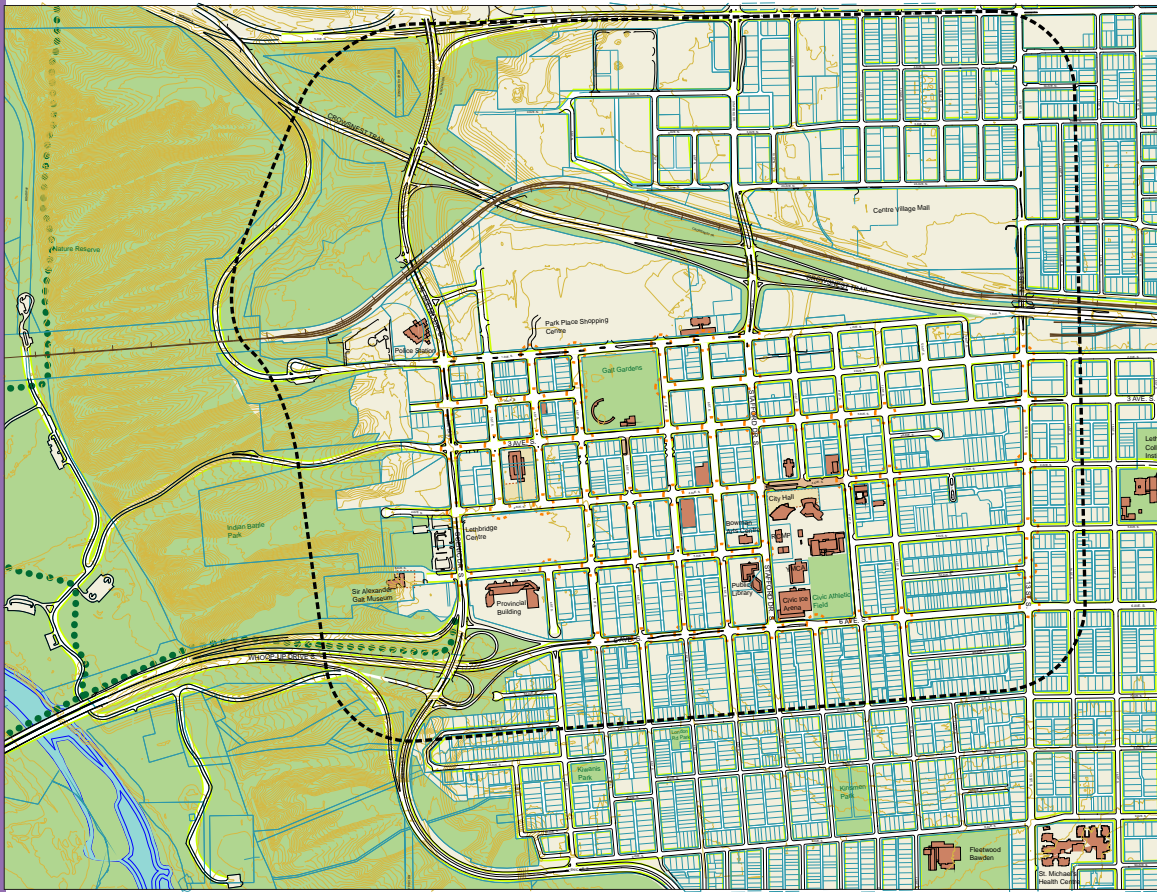


Natural Parks
 Active Parks
 Civic Parks
 Green Buffers
 Civic Spaces
 Civic / Public Buildings

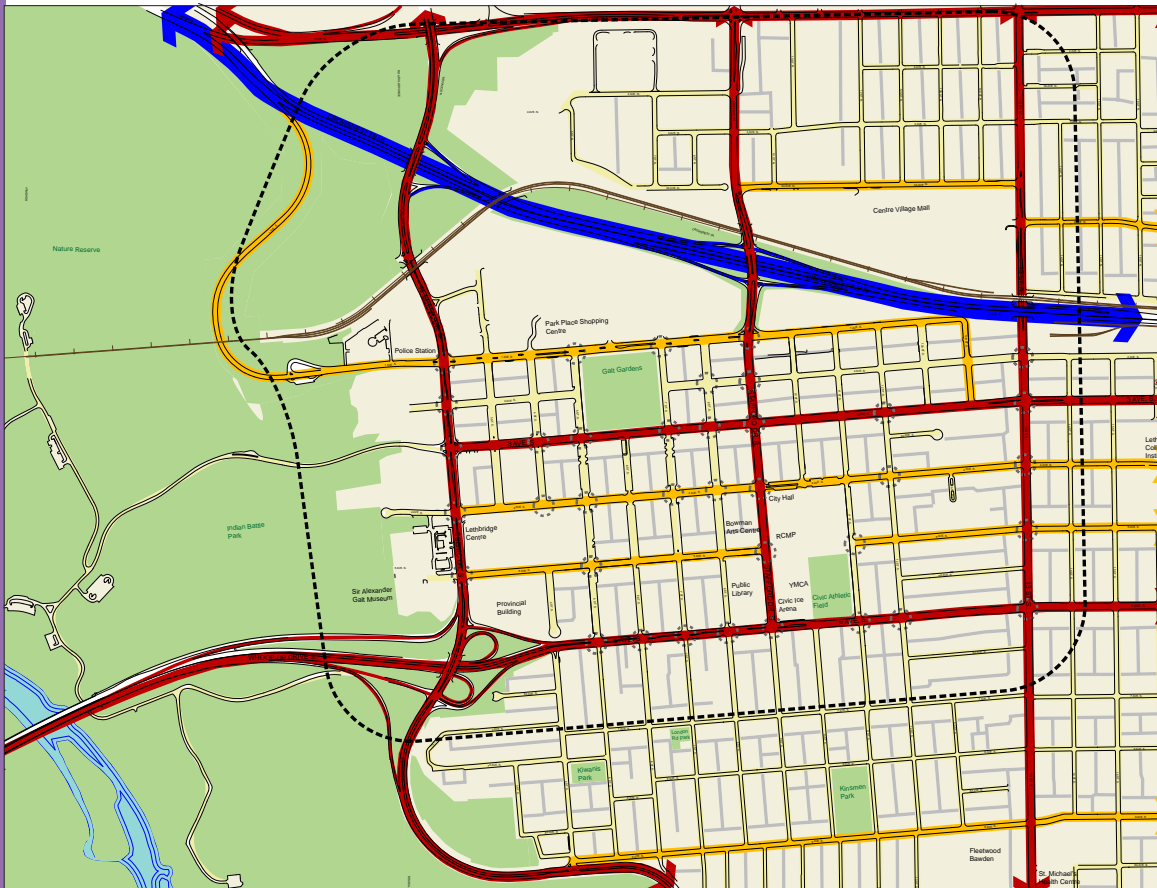
Open Space

5.0 Existing Conditions Mapping

Circulation



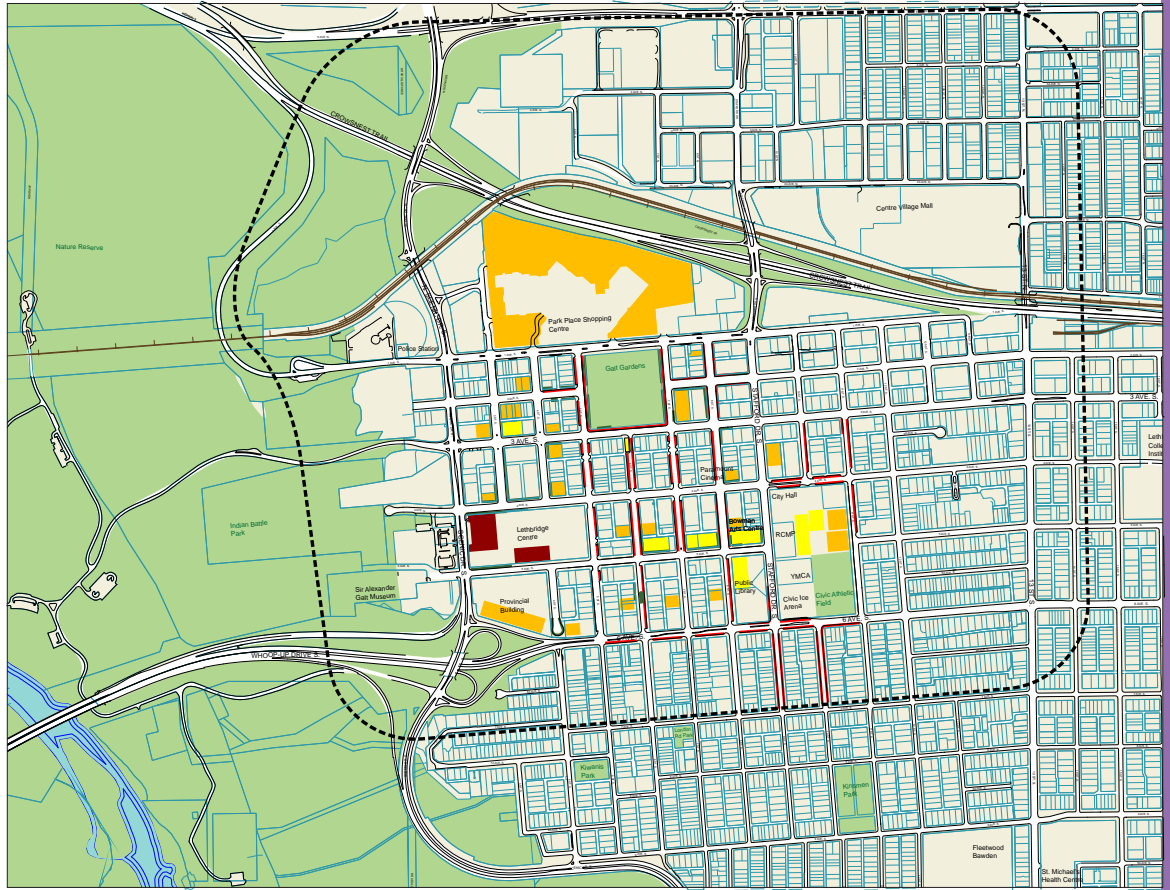
Pedestrian Context



Street Hierarchy



Circulation



Parking



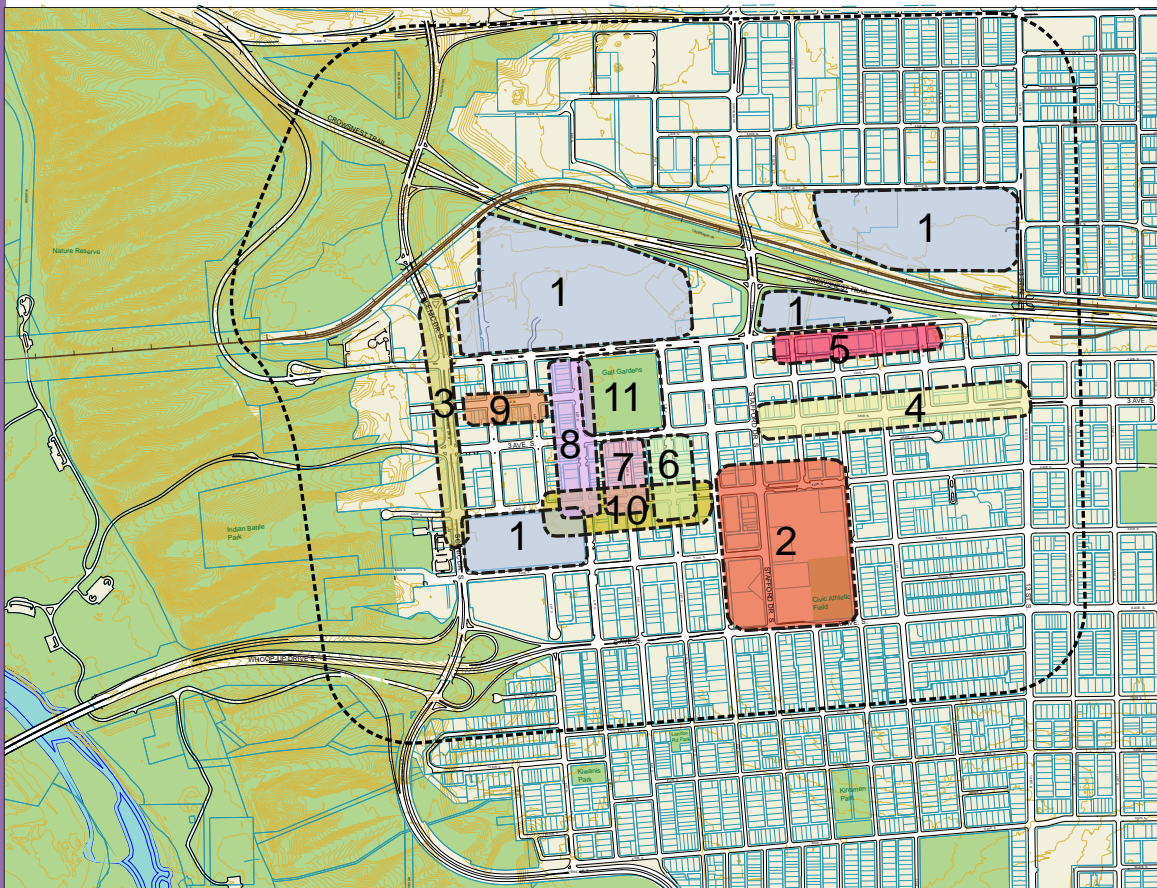
Public Transit & Rail

Transit

6.0 Opportunities & Constraints Mapping

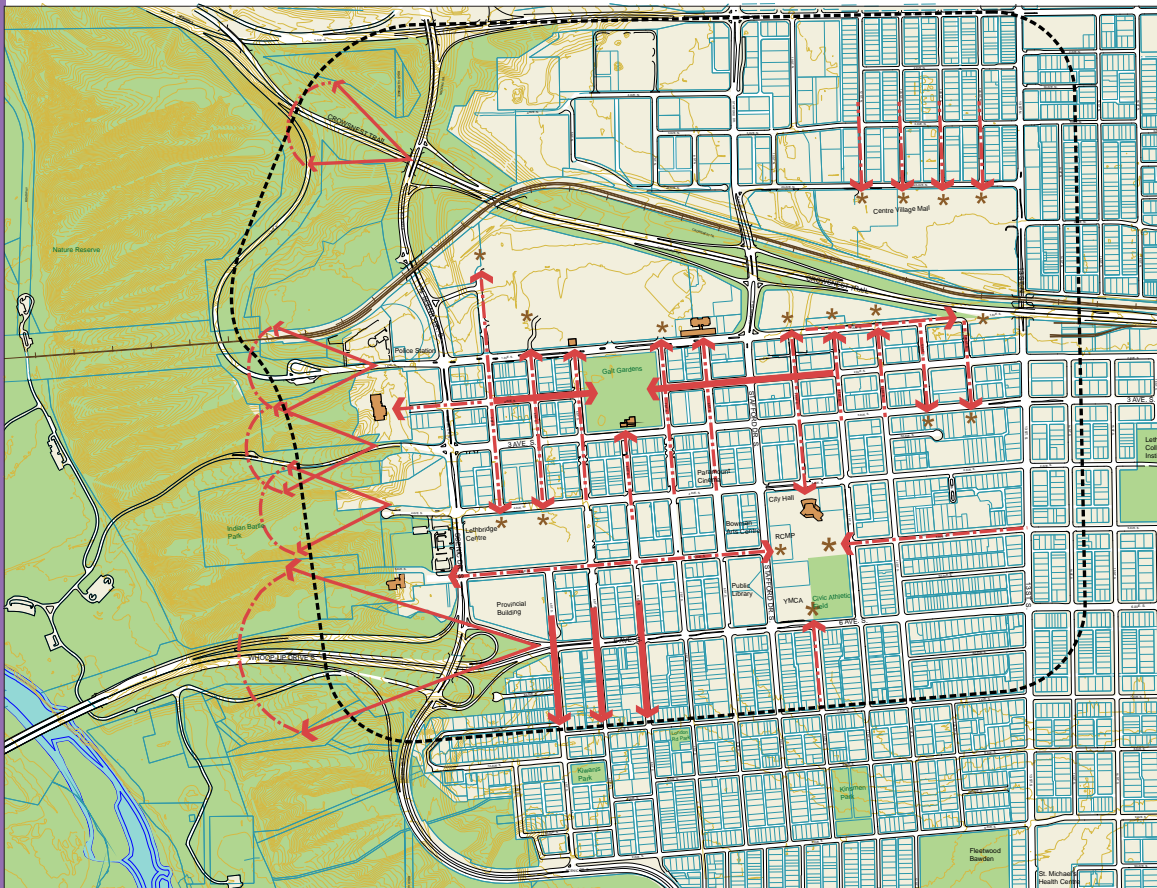
Derived from the analysis of existing conditions and feedback from the stakeholder interviews, a series of opportunities and constraints were identified. The opportunities and constraints helped to provide direction and a framework for the visioning workshops and were fundamental for shaping the Master Plan approach.

6.0 Opportunities & Constraints Mapping



Existing Areas with Identity

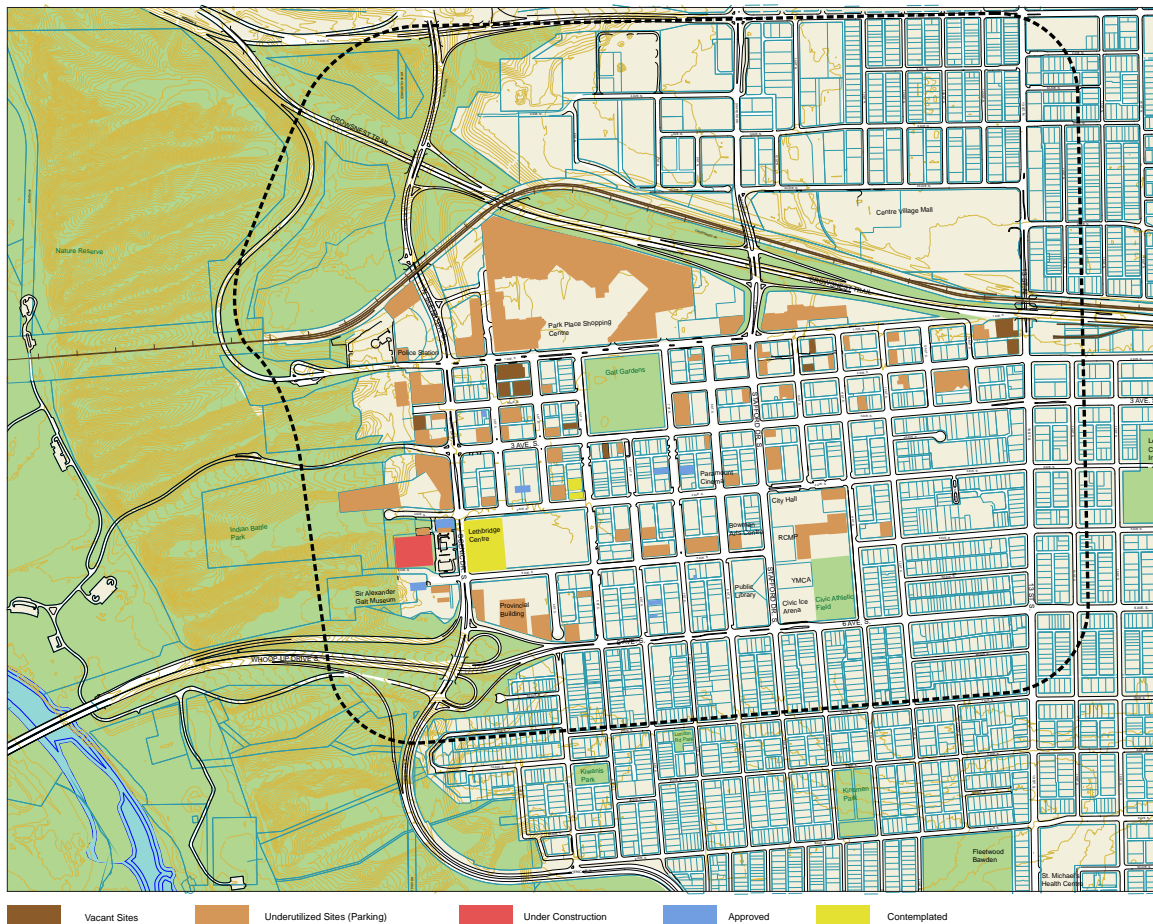
- 1. Large Retail / Downtown Mall
- 2. Civic Precinct
- 3. Scenic Drive
- 4. 3rd Avenue
- 5. Club District
- 6. 7th Street
- 7. Festival Square
- 8. "Round" Street Strip
- 9. China Town
- 10. 4th Avenue
- 11. Galt Gardens



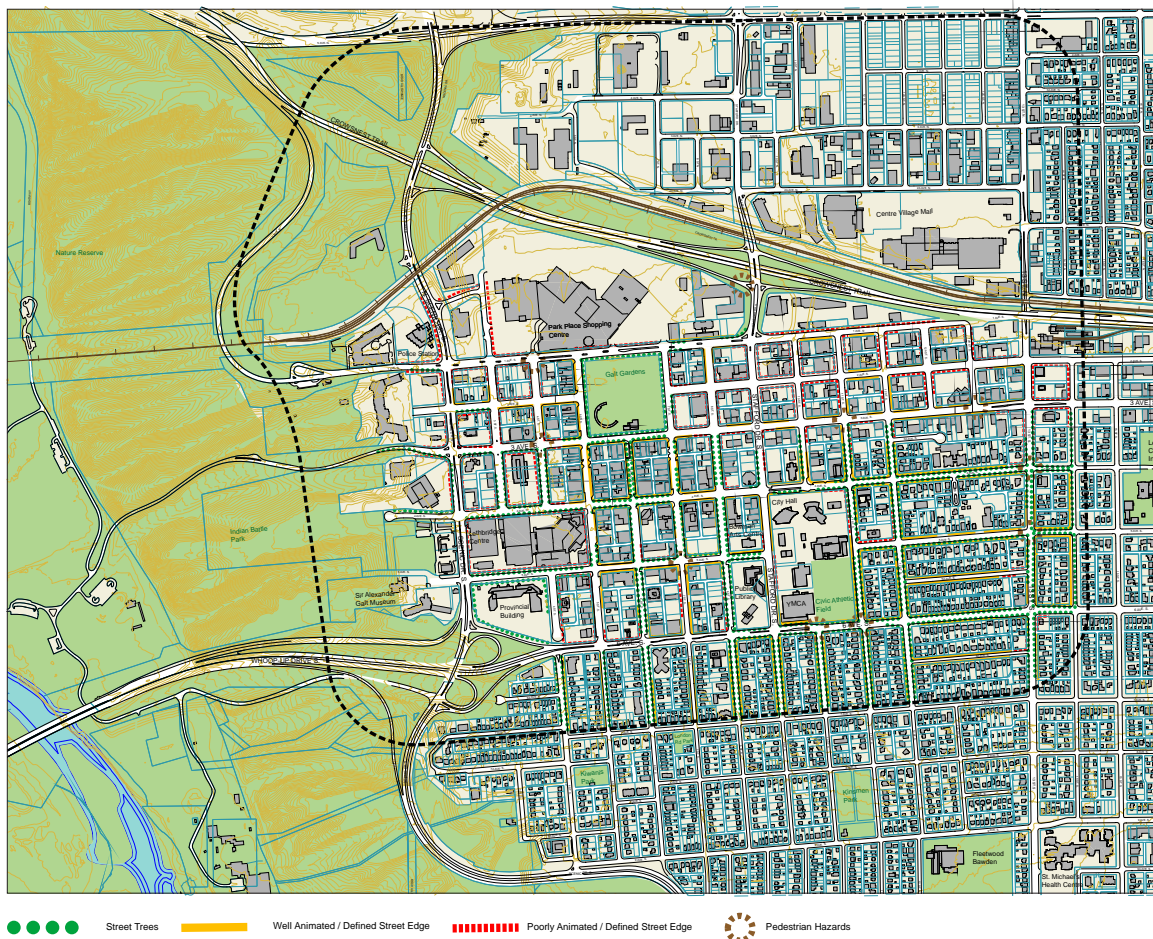
Existing & Potential Views & Key Sites

- Panoramic Landscape
- Axial View
- Window View
- Landmark
- Key Landmark Sites

Development Activity & Potential



Streetscape Quality



7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes

7.1 The Master Plan Kick-Off

.....

The Master Plan Kick-Off was held August 21-24, 2006 to introduce the project to Council, stakeholders and interested members of the public, as well as to provide the Consultant Team with an understanding of issues, opportunities, perspectives and opinions related to Downtown and its environs.

As part of the Background Review and Analysis stage of the Master Plan, the Consultant Team held a series of intensive focus groups and stakeholder interviews to identify important Downtown issues from a wide range of stakeholders. The outcomes of these meeting provided important inputs into Master Plan vision and process that began to take form at Forum One.

The Kick-Off was the major public event for the Background Review and Analysis Stage, the first of four Master Plan phases. In this phase, the Consultant Team reviewed background materials, undertook an analysis of the existing conditions of the Downtown, and developed the opportunities and constraints analysis in preparation for the next phase of the study process.

A key part of this phase was the Kick-Off event, held August 21-24, 2006. A public presentation introducing the study and meetings with the Public and Technical Advisory Committees and stakeholder interviews were undertaken during this event to provide the consultants with an invaluable understanding of perspectives, issues, opportunities and opinions related to the Downtown and its surroundings.



Master Plan Kick-Off Press Conference



Master Plan Kick-Off Opening Symposium



Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

7.2 Stakeholder Consultation Outcomes

Stakeholder Focus Groups

Stakeholders that were interviewed included:

- Retailers, Banks and Offices
- Broader City Economic Development Interests
- Local Development Interests
- Significant Landowners
- University of Lethbridge
- Arts and Culture Groups
- Aboriginal Representatives
- Park Place Mall
- Users of Galt Gardens

Summary of Key Stakeholder Issues

1. There is a trend toward and acceptance of Downtown living – yet many challenges and issues remain
2. A Downtown market is emerging
3. Downtown residential development is constrained by several factors
4. There is a long-held belief that Downtown will be catalyzed by one large development
5. The University envisions a Downtown presence, but past initiatives have not yet come to fruition
6. Downtown businesses report issues with staff and client parking
7. Downtown employees are uneasy about negative users of downtown

8. Downtown tourism needs unified leadership

9. Downtown business promotion issues act as constraints to revitalization

10. The future role of the mall in Downtown creates some uneasiness

11. Other traffic generators have untapped potential

12. Downtown social issues improving, but still some significant perception issues

Detail of Key Stakeholder Issues

There is a trend toward & acceptance of Downtown living...

- Downtown forms the centre of a great community, currently in the process of restoration
- A sense of buy-in exists, people are currently investing in Downtown
- Buyers are increasingly aware and accepting of alternative housing forms, such as townhousing, condominiums and loft housing as attractive urban housing forms, given a minimum level of community amenity (parks, view, parking, services)
- The milder southern Alberta climate is an added attraction
- Adjacent residential neighbourhoods have beautiful parks and greenspace and excellent walkability
- Residents noted that *“it has become easier to live Downtown”*

...yet many challenges and issues remain

- Many vacant lots and ‘white elephants’ still abound in Downtown (Alec Arms Hotel, Bridge Hotel Block, Atrium Development)
- Strong perceived need attract a younger, more affluent demographic to Downtown

- Widespread preferences for the single family home is a barrier to market entry for Downtown
 - Residential parking options are lacking in Downtown - these need not be on-site (monthly garage parking is an option)
 - Perceived Downtown safety and security issues persist, although this is amplified by lack of everyday, all hours pedestrian traffic
 - Buyer residency is a significant problem. Few owner-occupiers live Downtown; large proportion of absentee property owners have resulted in a Downtown population of renters. Many residents believe policy incentives encourage this vacancy
 - Downtown still does not feel appropriate for families and small children – few public washrooms, child-oriented spaces, family activities
 - Significant barriers exist for Downtown artists. Often the leaders of neighbourhood revitalization, artists are required to get both business and development permissions to set up studio space. This can be onerous, depending on the scale of the undertaking. *“Artists love Downtown – but Downtown lacks studios”*
 - Downtown lacks useable, accessible public space. Few small urban parks exist, resulting in a strong need for defined spaces that are attractive for public gathering and everyday activities. Galt Gardens is not as great an amenity as it has the potential to be, and as it should be.
 - Downtown is not “open for business”. Many Downtown businesses close at 5:00 pm on weekdays and remain closed on Sundays - this contributes to a sense of emptiness, lack of activity
- A Downtown market is emerging***
- The development climate has made Downtown attractive to developers – “Downtown development now needs to be done”
 - A large emerging niche exists in couples in their 30s – who prefer reduced home maintenance & value their weekend excursions.
 - Downtown age-restricted development (40+, 50+) have had some success
 - Recent development on Downtown edge has had success with newer housing types
 - Values are up as a positive image has been established – result of Main Street precedents (United Cigar, Mongoli Grill)
 - Many properties are currently being sold as owners retire
 - There is emerging investor interest from out-of-province, especially the west coast
- Key residential development constraints remain***
- Parking provision requirements are a disincentive to developers: many infill and redevelopment sites lack parking space; the feasibility for underground parking still untested (pricing needs to be \$18-20/ft²); and, development policies perceived as being unclear
 - City Policies act as development disincentives:
 - Few incentives or City support exist for larger scale development
 - Current tax abatement programs cap out too quickly - these are more appropriate to ‘Main Streets’ mixed retail-loft revitalization, but not infill housing; the high risk of investing in Downtown residential requires abatement approaches oriented to larger scale projects
 - A comprehensive approach is needed to stimulate investment: ideas, financial incentives, planning and promotion support, and waiving of planning and development fees, as well as appropriate tax incentives

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes

- City support need not be financial – *“The spirit of support as important as financial support”*
- A design-wise approach to reorient suburban living toward Downtown will aid revitalization, and aid both developers and market development
- Lack of available land for sale in Downtown
- Downtown needs a comprehensive approach, applicable to all scales of development, not just one ‘silver bullet’

There is a long-held belief that Downtown will be catalyzed by one large development

- The City has been extensively involved in the comprehensive development of Downtown for several decades
- An industry culture of large scale development has traditionally been mobilized to reduce risk
- Current large scale, mixed use developments such as the Bridge Inn site are presently delayed by discrepancies between *the market* and *what is desired* for the block
- Downtown needs more adaptive re-use and infill residential development guidance

The University envisions a Downtown presence

- University considering expansion into the Capitol Furniture Building Downtown
- A clear picture of the vision for the evolution of Downtown is needed to coordinate the University’s overall strategic planning (relating to university programming, housing, student safety, transit links, parking and facilities)
- Some concerns exist regarding the impact of integrating University-related retail and services into the Downtown retail environment (i.e. a bookstore)
- A lack of public incentives is considered to be a significant obstacle to a Downtown presence

Downtown Businesses report issues with Staff and Client Parking

- Employee parking is a significant issue in Downtown - many employees seek relatively distant free or less expensive parking despite abundance of surface parking
- Many Downtown clients are seniors who are accustomed to convenient short-term metered parking while conducting Downtown business
- In many cases target clientele live outside of Downtown and visit businesses by automobile – these clients often expect low-cost or free parking

Downtown Employees are uneasy about negative users of Downtown

- The lack of activity Downtown after 6 p.m. amplifies the presence of negative users of Downtown and creates a sense of isolation and fear among employees during the evening commute (walk) to their cars

Downtown Tourism Needs Unified Leadership

- Stakeholders agreed that there is a clear need for someone to take responsibility for developing, promoting and celebrating the Downtown Lethbridge experience
- Jurisdictional issues exist between promoting Downtown at the local, city-wide and regional level. Yet in the region, people feel ownership of Downtown
- These issues include developing extended and/or regular hours of operation, weekend events, a safe and clean environment, its historic elements and distinction, and as a networked cluster of smaller attractions
- Branding Lethbridge as a regional centre in Southern Alberta remains challenging, despite being regionally recognized. This requires further discussion with neighbouring municipalities to achieve regional alignment

- Downtown marketing and promotional initiatives don't show up on the regional tourism radar (i.e. the "life is here" tagline)
- Belief that developing a 'themed' experience may solve tourist vacuum
- Recent global safety and security issues have helped drive the rise of local rediscovery and revitalization movements and nostalgia-driven tourism, as people are traveling less

Downtown Business Promotion Issues

- Downtown is currently 'initiative-weary' – having tried too many things without sticking to them
- An issue considered by some to be onerous is the permitting process in Downtown; a 'business package' or 'map' to help newcomers negotiate the 'red tape' process is needed
- Developing local and regional attractions will help promote Downtown: Farmers Market, A Taste of Downtown, street vendors, performance art, street and café life
- The University is considered as a potential incubator of Downtown businesses - IUNCTIS a successful precedent of research and development leading to business incubation – considered a means of retaining graduates in Lethbridge
- Current investment interests are directed to suburban business parks and existing buildings; they need 30-40,000 ft² minimum and are unable to build locally at present due to labour shortages

The Role of the Mall in Downtown

- Three malls exist within the Downtown area
- A strong desire to (re)connect these malls with Downtown was voiced
- There are concerns with retail saturation and competition
- Lethbridge Centre, the oldest mall in Downtown, has

recently begun attracting conference, employment and educational uses to replace lost retailing

- The new uses have created some parking conflicts related to visitor duration and volume
- The mall is no stranger to redevelopment proposals

Other Traffic Generators

- Some dispersal of civic uses out of Downtown has occurred in the Provincial and County government sectors
- Lethbridge has historically had an arts presence: there is a large audience for the arts in Lethbridge, however events still need promotion
- 75% of tickets sold for shows at University and Yates Theatre
- 75% of Lethbridge residents don't know where the Southern Alberta Art Gallery (SAAG) is located

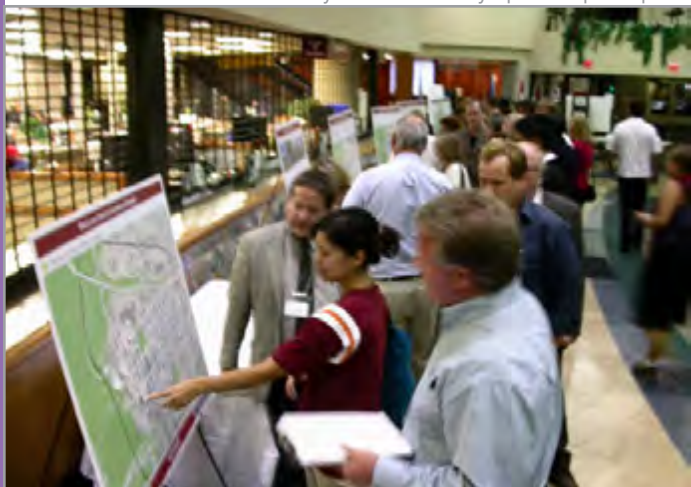
Downtown Social Issues

- Difficulty with the image of First Nations Downtown – need to brainstorm ways to overcome social stigma (this is a long-rooted issue)
- Particular Challenges:
 - Finding employment is often difficult due to stigma, despite credentials & experience
 - Experience disrespect from store owners and police
 - Police targeting and arrest without charges reinforces negative feelings
 - Affordable housing is an issue for Downtown students – Red Crow College

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Mayor addresses Symposium participants



Interactive workshop, Opening Symposium



Walk and Talk Tour

7.3 Public Forum One

Forum One Overview

The Heart of Our City Master Plan Public Forum One, held from September 25-27 at the Lethbridge Centre and City Hall, marked an important milestone in the master planning process for Downtown Lethbridge. Attended by over 100 people, the Forum provided the community opportunities to identify challenges, define guiding principles and vision about the long-term transformation of Downtown.

Heart of Our City Public Forum One Forum events included:

- Walk and Talk Tour of Downtown
- Opening Symposium
- 2-day Design Workshop
- Public Open House
- Closing Ceremony

The Forum kicked off with a presentation to City Council and an afternoon interactive public walking tour of Downtown. The day's events culminated in an opening symposium and interactive community workshop in the Foyer of City Hall.

On the second day, participants in the Forum workshops converged at the Lethbridge Centre to begin an intensive two-day session to generate a vision to guide the Master Plan. In the morning, guiding principles were defined and in the afternoon groups generated plans that identified potential "big moves" for Downtown.

On the final day, working groups explored and developed more detailed plans and concepts for various aspects of Downtown that emerged in the previous day. The Forum wrapped up with a closing ceremony in which the consultant team presented the the community with outcomes of the three days of work.

The best way to predict the future is to invent It - Alan Kay

Day One: Opening Symposium

Workshop Participants and members of the community gathered for the Opening Symposium at City Hall. The consultant team presented work to date, fresh eyes perspectives and the role of urban design in city building. Everyone was then led through a series of interactive stations to solicit feedback and suggestions.

Participants were asked:

How do you experience Downtown and greater Lethbridge?

- Where do you live?
- Where do you play, shop and/or eat outside of the Downtown?
- Where do you work?

What do you think about the public spaces and streets in Downtown?

- Which public spaces and streets do you treasure?
- Which public spaces and streets do you dislike?
- Which public spaces and streets should be improved?
- Which streets are your favourite to walk?

What do you think about the buildings in Downtown?

- Which buildings do you treasure?
- Which buildings do you dislike?
- Which buildings should be improved?

What is your Vision for Downtown Lethbridge?

- What ideas do you have for Downtown Lethbridge?
- What recommendations would you make to achieve the essential attributes for a successful Downtown (Sense of Place, Livability, Connectivity, Vitality, Beauty)?



Interactive workshop, Forum One

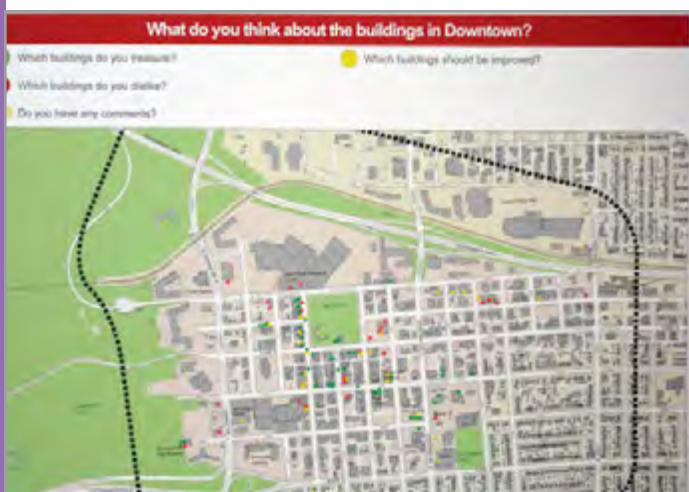
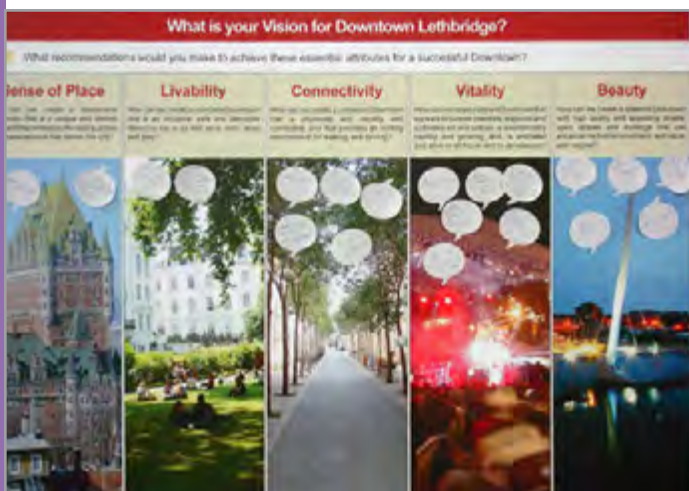


The start of the Walk and Talk Tour



Facilitators presented back workshop feedback

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Interactive panels

What Do You Like Most About the following Cities

- Which city have you visited?
- If given the choice, which city would you live in?
- Which do you feel provides the best Downtown experience?
- Which city is your overall favourite?
- Tell us why

The following is a summary of some of the key responses:

Things that are treasured

- Both Downtown and City green spaces are an important recreational amenity to Lethbridge citizens
- Participants indicated that Downtown malls, parks, pedestrian shopping streets and Civic Centre are frequently used parts of Downtown
- Treasured areas of Downtown include Galt Gardens, the main pedestrian shopping streets, Civic Centre and other civic services
- Treasured buildings Downtown include heritage stock in the pedestrian core around Galt Gardens, the Bowman Arts, Post Office, and City Hall Buildings, as well as the new Chapters on 1st Avenue.

Areas Suggested for Improvement

- Parking lots, vacant lots, auto-related uses around Scenic Drive, the character of 3rd Avenue east of 8th Street and the west side of 5th Street were areas identified by attendees as those which could be improved.
- A number of public buildings and spaces as well as private sector areas should be improved.

Opportunities in Downtown

- Winter city activities - reasons to be Downtown in the winter
- Improved walking and cycling connections with the West Lethbridge

- Position Downtown in City-wide plans
- Improved links between coulee and other 'natural' parts of Downtown
- Plant trees on boulevards
- Public art on every block
- A new cultural centre
- Residential condominiums
- Open up Galt Gardens to more uses
- Special green spaces with benches, skylights, art, and incentives to stay, perhaps read, draw, and enjoy the atmosphere
- Anchor malls and create better walkways
- Children's playgrounds, roof top gardens, more loft apartments
- An artisan mall
- More grocery stores (replaced by call centre)
- Open alleys to retail
- Cheaper business licenses
- Boutiques, restaurants with patios, pedestrian focus, greenery, flowers.
- A centrally located main library that acts as an anchor to Downtown
- Cafes that spill out onto the street
- Apartment above shops
- Reduced development permits costs for second story apartments
- Bicycle lanes
- More Downtown festivals
- Better bus service and trams Downtown

Suggestions for Downtown

- Protect Heritage assets
- Become a leading community for sustainability - incorporate wind power and solar power in new developments
- Greater residential mix Downtown – not just seniors' complexes

- Keep wide streets and open character of Downtown
- Diverse living accommodation
- A clean and safe Downtown

Characteristics of Great Cities

- Pedestrian-friendly. Close to the natural environment. Buskers. Unique restaurants and shops. Streetscapes and water
- New Orleans: a great vibrant and interesting Downtown with rich culture, great architecture, arts and culture, great dining and amazing music



Feedback about Downtown from Forum participants

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Developing the Visioning Principles



Character areas workshop



Present-back of Downtown concepts

Day Two: Vision, Principles & The 'Big Moves'

The consultant team, public and technical advisory committee members assembled in groups to prepare a long-term Vision by describing the intended future role and character of the Downtown, as well as Guiding Principles to achieve this Vision.

These principles were consolidated, refined and presented to the public at the closing presentations.

Visioning Principles

Movement

- Downtown should provide transportation options that are safe, integrated and that prioritize walking and cycling.
- Downtown should be pedestrian-oriented with buildings, uses and streets that are human-scaled.
- Parking should be integrated with intensified development.

Green

- should be green - sustainable and beautifully landscaped.
- Public space should be protected and enhanced, and the creation of new public space should be made a priority.
- Microclimate conditions and the unique character of the bioregion should be considered and respected when planning and designing the public realm.

Complete Neighbourhoods

- Downtown should be comprised of appealing neighbourhoods that provide the necessary support services and amenities for living within walking distance.

- Downtown should provide a mix and variety of housing types that reinforces and supports a critical mass of activity and diversity.

Animated & Vibrant

- Downtown should be active at all hours of the day and night and during all seasons.
- Downtown should be a dynamic, diversified centre that includes artistic expression, cultural experience, and should be a fun and welcoming place for employees, visitors and the community.

Entrepreneurial & Supportive

- Downtown should be an attractive and sustainable place to invest.
- Downtown should have a vibrant and diversified economic base.
- Downtown should promote, facilitate and enable small, local entrepreneurial and creative businesses.

A Quality Public Realm

- Downtown should recognize that streets are a key component of the urban open and green space experience, and should be planned with this in mind.
- Downtown should reinforce and build upon the distinct qualities and characters that already exist.

Inclusive

- Downtown should be a vibrant, safe and welcoming environment to live, work and play.
- Downtown should include a diversity of uses, users and cultures, and be a place that people from around the world want to visit.
- Downtown should accommodate housing that appeals to a broad demographic, and offers a variety of tenures (ownership and rental).



Workshop participants

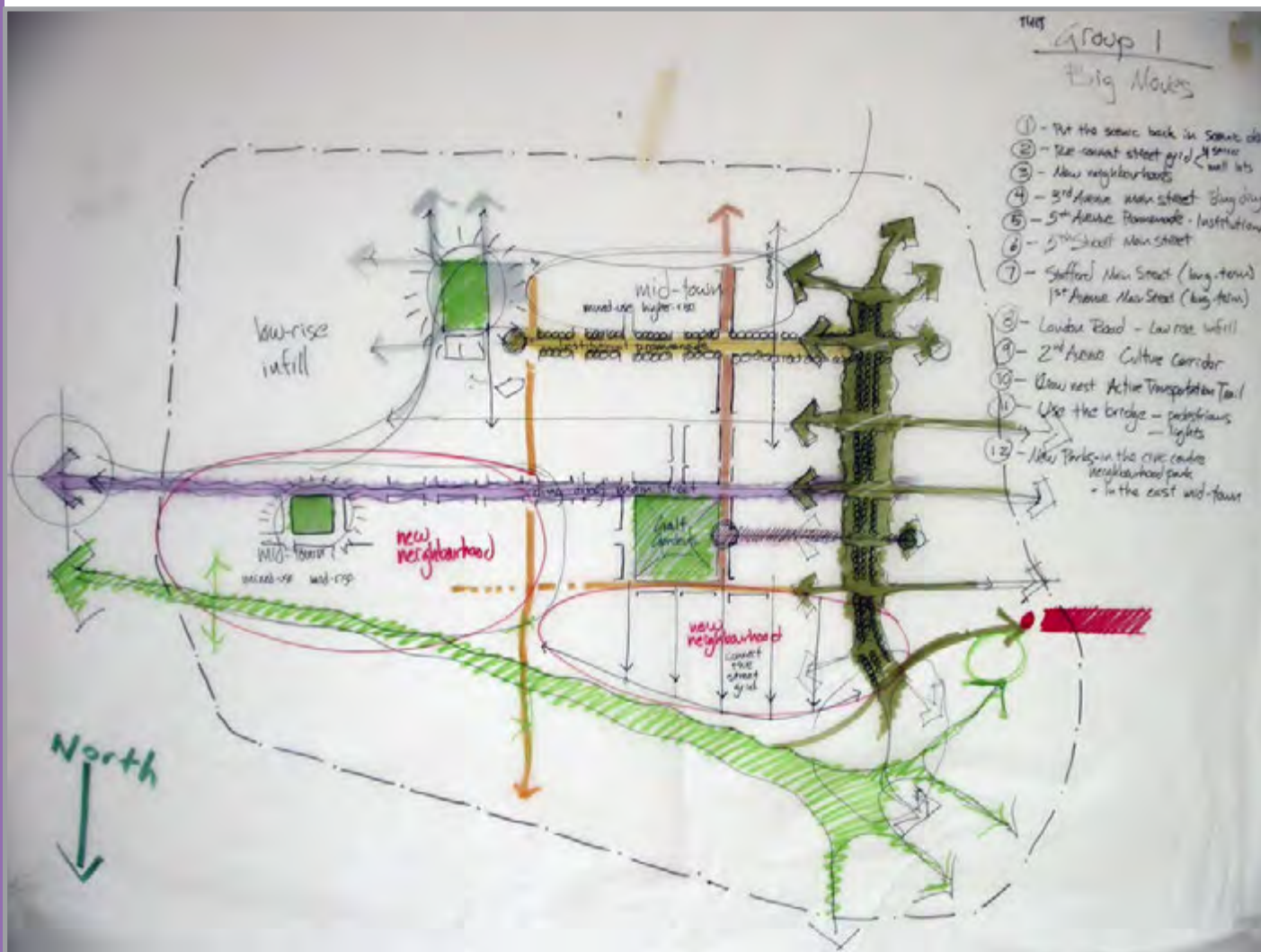


Streetscapes and open space working group



Interview by the press

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Group One 'Big Moves'

Integrated

- New development should be compatible with the scale, rhythm, height, setback and material quality of the historic Downtown character.
- New built forms should also be compatible with areas adjacent to Downtown, and serve a variety of life styles.

Heritage, Culture, Creativity and Education

- Downtown should celebrate and use heritage resources; built, landscape, arts and cultural. Specifically, it should reinforce and embrace the diversity of cultures in Lethbridge and their contribution to the city and region.

Quality Matters

- Downtown should be a source of pride and community meaning; as such it should be designed with an emphasis on craftsmanship, quality and permanence.

Downtown = Lethbridge = Region

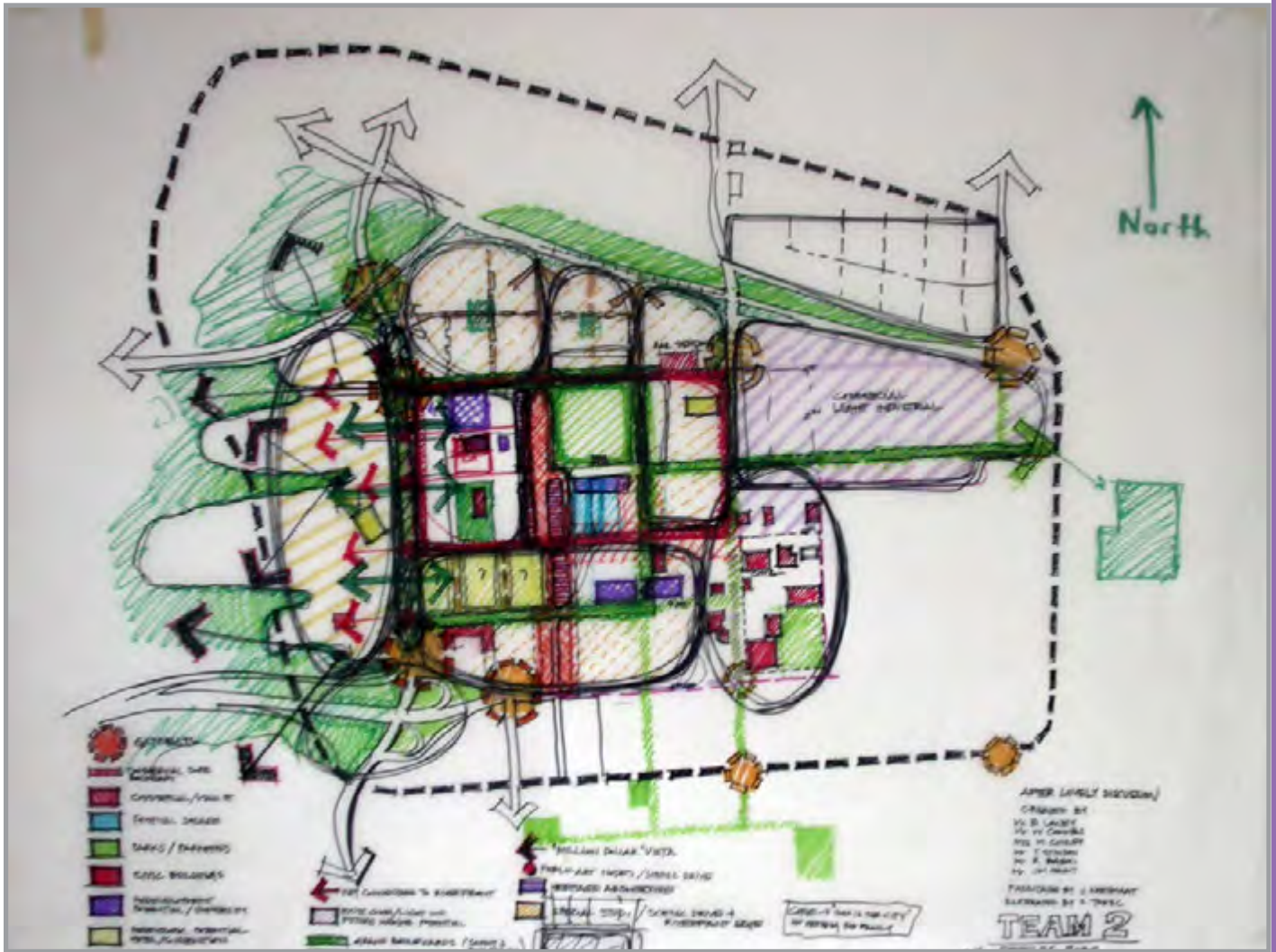
- Downtown should be integral and integrated with the city, and should continue to enhance its role as the primary commercial and service centre for the region.
- More than just a neighbourhood within the city, Downtown should serve as the primary social gathering place for all of Lethbridge.

Process Matters

- The planning of Downtown should continue in a manner that values the input of stakeholders – residents, landowners, businesses – that have an interest in the outcome.

In the afternoon, groups reassembled to outline the broad strokes and big moves to inform the guiding framework for land uses, circulation, built form and urban design.

The team hosted an open house that evening to display first day workshop outcomes to the community and receive comments and feedback.



Group Two 'Big Moves'

Big Moves

Precinct Character / Functions

- Each new (and existing) neighbourhood should be centred on a neighbourhood park
- New neighbourhoods should be mixed use with mostly residential, some commercial
- Specific locations for larger floor plates: North half of “city block”; north side of 1st Avenue (rail buffer); IGA block; Lethbridge Centre (east & centre 1/3); Provincial court plaza

Street hierarchy

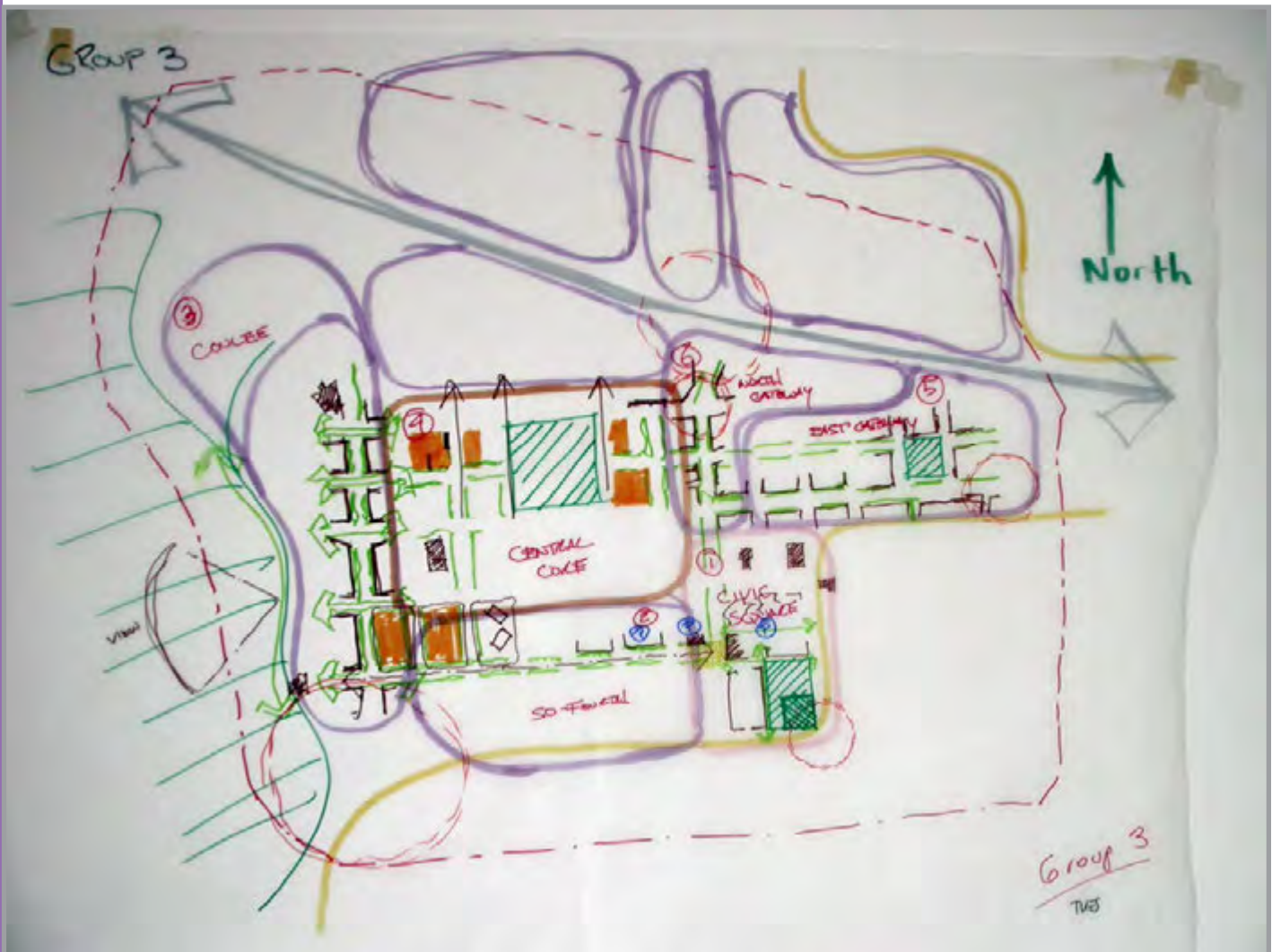
- The pedestrian core should be framed with a series of grand boulevards: “super green” streets that have a special design standard: 5th Avenue, Scenic Drive, 1st Avenue and Stafford Drive
- This special character extends out into the rest of the city along 3rd Avenue, from the Oldman River Valley to 13th Street South.

- Public Art should be integrated into, and reinforce, this structure.
- Reintroduce the Downtown street grid where possible - reconnect 4th Avenue across 6th Street and through Lethbridge Centre, initially by improving pedestrian right-of-ways and crossings. Future extension of grid north into Park Place Mall should be a priority
- Laneways are important as service entrances & means to preserve & orient continuous street frontages and facades (through their structure) - preserve existing structure

Character Areas

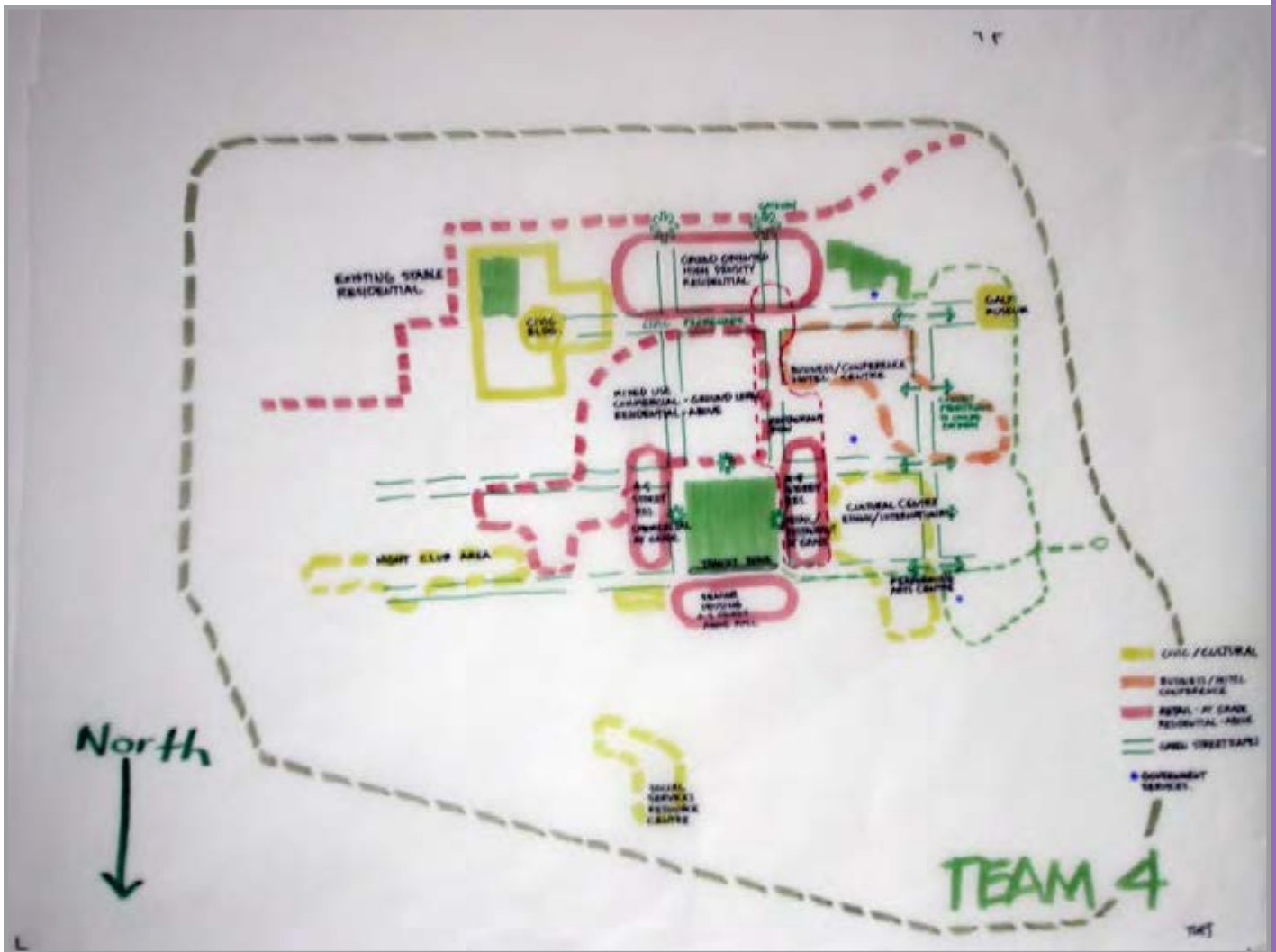
- Residential / mixed use intensification should be encouraged along Stafford Drive (Crowsnest to 3rd Streets) – to reinforce north south grid connections and minimize competition with 5th Street Restaurant / Entertainment Strip
- Establish 5th Avenue South as a Grand Boulevard

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Group Three 'Big Moves'

- from Scenic Drive (The Galt Museum) to Civic Centre – the role of this institutional corridor would be to accommodate professional, business, and some residential uses and to transition density up northwards, and infill empty lots along 5th Avenue
- Recognize Scenic Drive as an important corridor along the valley, and link between the Oldman River Valley and Downtown for all users, that should be revitalized as a grand boulevard that both improves the open space network and facilitates traffic calming and pedestrian crossing. Higher density residential mixed use built form should be permitted and encouraged along corridor to frame corridor and valley views.
 - Higher density residential mixed use should frame and enhance activity around Galt Gardens
 - Park Place Mall should be recognized as a significant opportunity to redevelop a new Downtown neighbourhood that extends and reintegrates the street grid with the City.
 - 3rd Avenue East, between Stafford Drive and 13th Street South, should be recognized as an important corridor that spans Downtown and anchors the Downtown East Side, an area with significant redevelopment potential (currently characterized by commercial, light industrial and entertainment uses).
 - Stafford Drive North is a major north-south corridor and as such should have a strong pedestrian environment and multi-modal connections.
 - Stafford Drive South offers significant redevelopment opportunities for mixed use residential and potentially entertainment uses to balance 5th Street.
 - 5th Street between 1st Avenue South and 5th Avenue is characterized by burgeoning (and historical) restaurant / entertainment uses that have in many cases employed adaptive reuse of Downtown's heritage building stock. This strip also is a major corridor connecting Downtown's two malls. It should be recognized and celebrated by enhancing its historical identity and streetscapes.



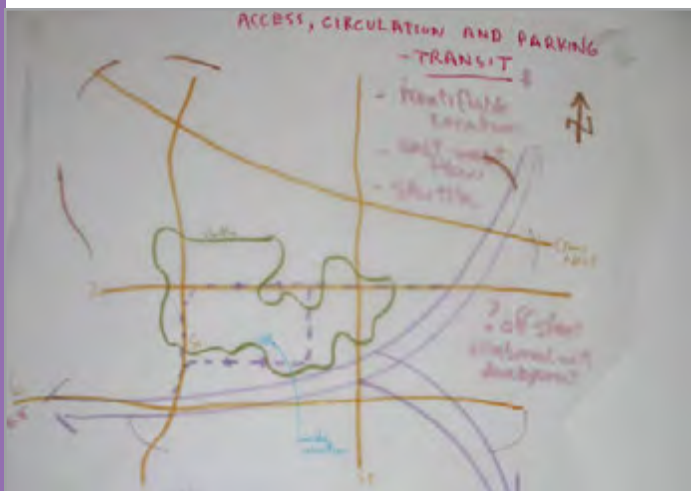
Group Four 'Big Moves'

Districts

- Civic Centre should be maintained as an important and symbolic civic and community centre in Downtown; it should experience minimal intensification, except with regards to: improving parking needs of Civic Centre users; reconfiguring the RCMP property recognizing its importance as a view terminus in a significant civic location
- Encourage a “Midtown” precinct in south Downtown that will be a well-served, higher density transition area between London Road and Downtown – transition to Downtown by the ‘business-banking’ District along 5th Avenue
- The Coulee Edge is the Downtown’s most significant natural open space and ‘front door.’ Both east-west connections across Scenic Drive and north south connections along the frontage should be enhanced and encouraged to frame views and reduce the precinct’s isolation (closed windows & missed opportunities-put the ‘Scenic’ back into Scenic Drive).

- The ‘supercharged’ centre core pedestrian retail area is characterized by its heritage stock, beautiful streetscapes and adaptive reuse. Continued mixed-use intensification is appropriate for this area and should be encouraged
- The East Side of Downtown should be recognized as having significant redevelopment potential as a neighbourhood, potentially mixing educational uses, entertainment uses and mixed-use residential infill. This neighbourhood would be anchored around a significant park located on the former arena site (similar to 17th Avenue in Calgary).
- London Road is a stable residential neighbourhood that has experienced limited intensification. Its proximity to Downtown presents opportunities to integrate row housing infill in a way that reinforces neighbourhood character.
- Cultural corridor along 2nd Avenue (River to Galt Gardens): “Old Lethbridge”

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Parking, Circulation & Transit Concept Plans

Transit / Circulation

- Examine the creation of a transit terminal Downtown. Options include: an on-street transit-priority zone; an off-street terminal or hub; sharing central facilities with regional transit; and finally, a dispersed Downtown transit strategy in lieu of a central hub.
- Crowsnest trail as a multimodal transit corridor - “A green finger coming into the city” – that connects emergent neighbourhoods. The future CANAMEX highway re-routing presents an opportunity to green this corridor
- Development (re-instatement) of a trolley route along Third Avenue, between 13th Street and the River Valley

Urban Design Components

- Promote gateways to Downtown
- Employ the view termini provided by Galt Gardens
- Develop “super-green streets” – but with appropriate species
- More outdoor seating opportunities
- Public art should be seamlessly integrated in Downtown
- Built form should employ courtyard design or other weather protection
- Identify key heritage clusters and define “Old Lethbridge”
- Transportation designs should recognize possible conflicts between boulevard medians, angled parking and bicycle lanes
- Enhance look and feel of seniors’ areas to promote walking, cycling
- Promote sustainable design & development in Downtown design



Participants discuss Downtown at Forum One

Site-Specific Interventions

- Improve link to north Industrial Area Social Services cluster – tie into intensification, affordable housing and university outreach
- Prime sites for transit: North side of Galt Gardens; Parking lots around 5th Avenue and 6th Street
- New civic functions for Downtown: Five Star Hotel; University Outreach; Performing Arts; a Convention Centre
- Lethbridge Centre tower foundation should be developed around a re-integrated street grid
- The high level bridge presents opportunities for alternate transportation (bike or walkway)
- Additional needs identified (from panels) include – (larger) grocery & (smaller) convenience (corner) stores Downtown, a centrally located main library, and an artisan mall adjacent to Festival Square

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Day Three: Downtown Concept Plans & Demonstration Sites

On Day Three groups reconvened to explore and develop concept plans for different components of Downtown. The four groups worked in the following areas:

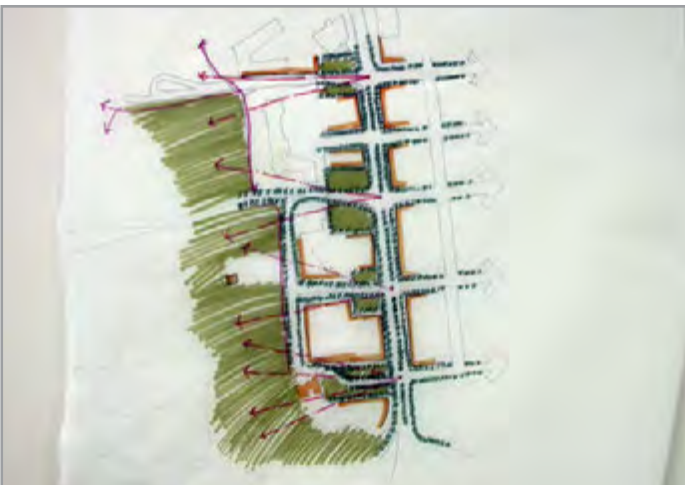
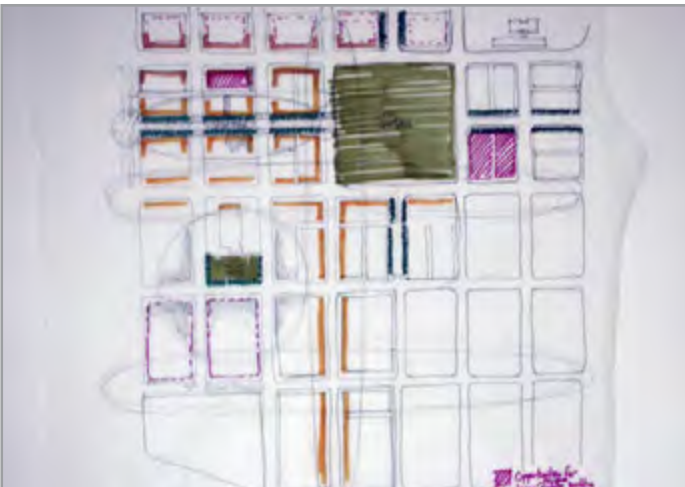
- Downtown Concept Plans & Demonstration Sites
- Streetscapes & Greenspaces
- Parking, Circulation and Transit
- Character Areas

Opportunity Sites

Specific sites for development opportunities were explored to generate ideas to help create value and guidance for private investment and development.

Scenic Drive Boulevard Concept

- Keep potential traffic capacity HIGH – but create a slow zone for traffic
- Improve east west pedestrian connections & overall pedestrian character (such as creating a median to improve pedestrian and driving environment)
- Protect Views - create a frame with buildings for the public realm
- There should be a zone for higher buildings (6-7 storeys) to create activity - commercial active at-grade, residential above
- Implementation: trade densities to create this effect; it is important to communicate Scenic Drive's potential as an opportunity site to developers
- Note particular (gateway) opportunities at Scenic & 1st Avenue South (Toys R Us) and Scenic Drive and Whoop-Up Drive (access to trails)



Opportunity Sites Concept Plans

Chinatown and Bridge Hotel Site

- Cultural district characterized by heritage stock and active retail frontage along 2nd avenue
- Should reinforce this character: 2/3 storey on 2nd avenue, keep Alec Arms Hotel (Bridge?)
- Larger floor plate (5/6 Storey) intensification opportunity along 1st Avenue frontage
- 2nd Avenue can function as a square the way festival square does – potential for transforming the area
- Balance parking & streetscape quality - use angle parking in limited areas (such as along south side of street), widen sidewalks along north side, locate gateways at Scenic Drive and Galt Gardens, built form

IGA Block (East of Galt Gardens)

- Location for larger floor plate

3rd Avenue through East Downtown

- Main street retail presence to support residential mixed use Create a neighbourhood park on Regent Restaurant site
- Create a “Campus Block” as heart of the area - surround with educational use (Red Crow or Downtown outreach college)
- Improve connections across Crowsnest trail to mitigate 1st Avenue dead end - new pedestrian bridges & corridor connections
- Transition to London road to the south: club district & restaurant area north of first Avenue (bring frontage closer to street, allow mixed use), at grade retail along 3rd Avenue, more residential on 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue
- Note east west alleys
- Midtown close to schools district

1st Avenue and Stafford intersection

- Reduce apparent street widths for pedestrians
- Improve 2nd Avenue (east of Galt Gardens) as a pedestrian oriented street
- Create major Downtown gateway
- Resolve traffic issues (heavy)

Lethbridge Lodge Site

- Improve coulee frontage between 6th and Crowsnest trail
- Create ridge trail through Brewery Gardens to create a trail loop west of Downtown
- Key Valley views (create at-grade uses around these views): 1st Avenue; 3rd Avenue; 4th Avenue; 5th Avenue
- Buy frontage site west of new housing development north of the rail corridor for park / frontage uses

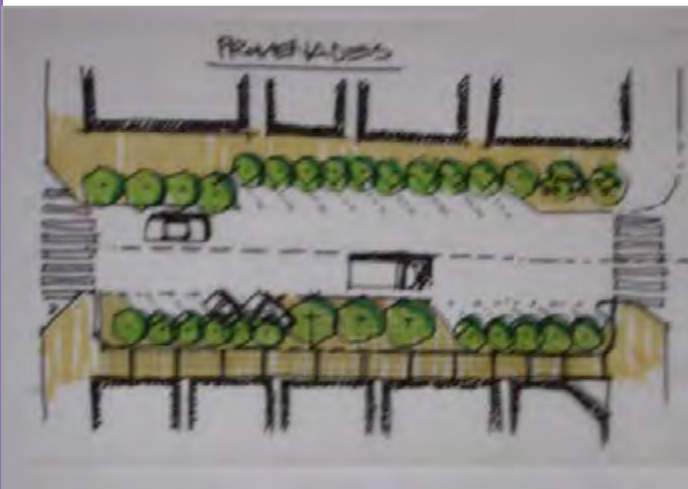
Streetscapes & Greenspaces

Streets and open spaces form the backbone of a Downtown Plan. The concept plan recommends a hierarchy for the character of Downtown streets that includes Grand Boulevards and Promenades. The open space plan reinforces the Downtown structure by identifying potential squares and parks that can serve as key subdistricts anchors.

Street Hierarchy

- Grand Boulevards – include public art, widest sidewalks, bike lanes boulevards that are landscaped (double row trees, medians), sidewalks that are wider on the north or east side of the street, street furniture consistency
- Promenades & Squares - Enhanced pedestrian sidewalks, minimum one row of trees, design

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Streetscapes & Greenspaces Concept Plans and Sections

elements are supportive of the heritage character

- Other Streets - Through Routes (improve design / landscaping on North side of Streets to match south side); local streets
- Laneways - important as service entrances & means to preserve & orient continuous street frontages and facades (through their structure) - preserve existing structure

Cycling Network

- Bike lanes included on all grand boulevards: but all streets should welcome cycling in the Downtown (it should be integrated with slower traffic movement) and all Downtown streets need bike lock up posts

Open Space Network

- Typologies for Open Spaces: Linear; Parkettes; Squares; Neighbourhood Parks; Major Open Spaces; Ecoparks.

Principles for Open Spaces

- There will be a hierarchy of open spaces with clearly defined functions
- Ecological design, and naturalization, will be incorporated into the design of open spaces
- Open spaces should be designed to accommodate a variety of uses and users
- Galt Gardens needs to remain an authentic open space that is respectful of both its historic context and the Galt Gardens art (and Edwardian Design)
- Access to the Coulee needs to be enhanced and protected
- Open space should not be converted to other uses
- Create a Coulee promenade that becomes a focal point and key access to the coulee

Principles for Public Art

- The objective is to build a rationale structure for how public art integrates into the Downtown environment: public art will distinguish the Downtown and identify it as unique
- A variety of types of public art will be encouraged, and the approach to these types will be clearly identified (i.e. what, where)
- Typology: Functional; Interactive; Murals; Light and Sound; Embedded; Sculptural.
- New public buildings should include public art; all public squares will have a designated area for public art

Parking, Circulation and Transit

The parking, circulation and transit plan illustrates ideas about existing and potential patterns of circulation through Downtown. The plan considered pedestrian, cycling and vehicular connections and the potential locations for long-term parking and transit facilities.

Transit terminal

- Location & design
- Operationally sound for buses
- Combined with development
- Identifiable location
- Integrated with the streetscape
- Safe
- Close to major transit destinations
- Great pedestrian access
- Comfortable place to wait
- Synergy between transit and retail for stops
- Information at stops: cultural real-time
- Integration with Greyhound if feasible



Streetscapes & Greenspaces Concept Plans and Sections



Character Areas Concept Plans

Potential Sites

- ½ block needed.
- Off-street: Parking lot at 5th Avenue between 7-8th streets; Parking lot at 3rd street between 1-2nd Avenue
- On street: North side of Galt Gardens (1st Avenue); 6th street, between 4th and 5th Avenue
- Status quo: 4th Avenue.

Character Areas

Downtown Lethbridge is comprised of several distinct and potential character areas. Defining these areas will help to direct the appropriate uses, building character and investments so as to reinforce and enhance the positive aspects of each.

Warehouse & Live-Work District

- Artist live-work
- Terraced units

- Connect to the north / transform the character
- Incorporate a draw to bring people farther east
- Incorporate nightclubs and entertainment
- Subdistricts within the area
- Defining features: Public square; East-west connections (i.e. a trolley service either spanning Downtown or looping around 1st and 3rd avenues); institutional use: an Aboriginal college, to provide a catalyst for supporting uses; 11th / 12th street connection to the north across Crowsnest Trail
- “The 5th street historic heart of the city is now shifting back to wards this area”
- Names: arena park, first nations, warehouse district

Civic Square

- Protect and enhance the park
- Possibly create an underground parking lot
- Modify buildings to face the park
- Possible arena with pool facing the park
- Library expands on existing site



Closing Ceremony

- Reintroduce promenade or ceremonial street along 5th Avenue between Stafford and 8th street
- 2nd Avenue / Chinatown cannot be recreated - create a cultural & restaurant & arts/entertainment precinct and avoid 'disneyfication'.

5th Avenue transition Zone

- Transition zone between uses, built form
- 6th Avenue transforms into a boulevard to make it more pedestrian friendly
- residential in transition north across 6th Avenue
- gateway function to Downtown
- 5th Avenue becomes a grand boulevard linking civic square to Galt museum

The Core

- Extension of public square in cardinal directions from Galt Gardens (like Festival Square)
- Scale and height of buildings around Galt should be appropriate (upper floor residential)
- New connections to the north should recognize possible Park Place mall redevelopment, and 5th, 6th and 7th streets as primary retail streets that require at-grade retail

7.4 Public Forum Two

The Heart of Our City Master Plan Public Forum Two continued to build momentum as the Draft Vision and Planning Framework tested in a series of Workshops to explore development ideas for key Downtown sites. Attended by over 100 people, the Forum included a variety of events at the Lethbridge Centre, City Hall, and the Galt Museum for participants to identify design concepts, challenges and strategies to guide future Downtown revitalization opportunities. Workshop groups developed exciting designs for Park Place Mall, the Civic Precinct, the River Valley frontage, and three potential development blocks around Galt Gardens.

The Heart of Our City Master Plan process reached another important milestone toward a Framework for Action at the Forum. Wide attendance from the public, City staff and Downtown landowners at a series of presentations and stakeholder interviews helped to identify potential issues with the content and implementation of the Plan.

The Master Plan Vision also helped generate excitement for the Heart of Our City Campaign by establishing six key Campaign Pillars for Downtown revitalization (see Part 3 *The Vision*). By expressing the high-level goals or objectives that flow from the Master Plan Vision, the Campaign Pillars provide a clear expression of the Downtown Vision and an important link to the Framework for Action.

Forum Overview

Forum Two marked an important milestone in the Master Plan process and the Heart of Our City Campaign. The three-day Forum offered the first opportunity for the Consultant Team to present the Draft Guiding Framework Plans - the key physical

plans that illustrate long term planning and urban design objectives for Downtown - to the public for feedback.

The Forum featured two days of intensive workshops focused on putting the plan principles into action. Participants worked with facilitators and design professionals to develop detailed design concepts for key Downtown opportunity sites. These demonstration concepts generated much excitement and were met with enthusiastic discussion when presented back to the public at the Galt Museum Closing Ceremony.

Workshops

The Workshop groups began with walking tours of their sites to identify important site-specific considerations and then returned to develop design principles and begin exploring concepts with facilitators and design professionals.

On the second day Workshop participants returned to continue work on their group concepts and develop site-specific design guidelines to provide development directions tailored to the unique conditions of each site.

The Workshop concluded with a reception and public viewing at the Galt Museum. Group presentations of designs and development guidelines for each opportunity site gave workshop participants and the public with an opportunity to hear what ideas were generated and view the work that was produced in each of the working groups during the Forum.

Opportunity Sites

- 1. Civic Precinct**
 The Civic District is the primary concentration of municipal and institutional uses in Lethbridge. It comprises a District unto itself, being bounded by 4th Avenue South, Stafford Drive South, 6th Avenue South and 11th Street South. It also includes the Bowman Arts Centre and the Downtown Library.
- 2. "Coulee Winds Vista"**
 Coulee Winds Vista is Lethbridge's 'front door' to the River Valley, providing views, natural open space and an unparalleled urban and recreational interface opportunity potentially linking River Valley access from Whoop-Up Drive to Crowsnest Trail.
- 3. Downtown Infill Sites**
 Downtown Infill Sites identified three key Downtown blocks in the Historic Core for the purpose of exploring long-term redevelopment opportunities. One block is currently owned by the City at 1st Avenue South and 4th Street South. The other two blocks comprise the east frontage of Galt Gardens between 1st and 3rd Avenues South.
- 4. Park Place Mall**
 Park Place Mall is currently an important and successful component of Downtown that has undergone change in the past. Incremental redevelopment opportunities for the continued integration of the mall into Downtown were explored by workshop participants to take advantage of the site's tremendous location fronting the north side of Galt Gardens and its long-term importance to Downtown. The intent was to demonstrate how the mall ought to transform, should future expansion or redevelopment be considered.

The Opportunity Sites Workshops

Workshop Participants divided into four groups to tackle site-specific issues, development challenges and to prepare design concepts, principles and strategies for important Downtown sites (see site locations on pages 4-5).

Although these design concepts are not intended to illustrate what must happen on these sites, they serve

to demonstrate options that would be consistent with the Downtown Vision, Principles and Framework. The outcome of these concepts assisted in the preparation of site-specific urban design guidelines for these sites.

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



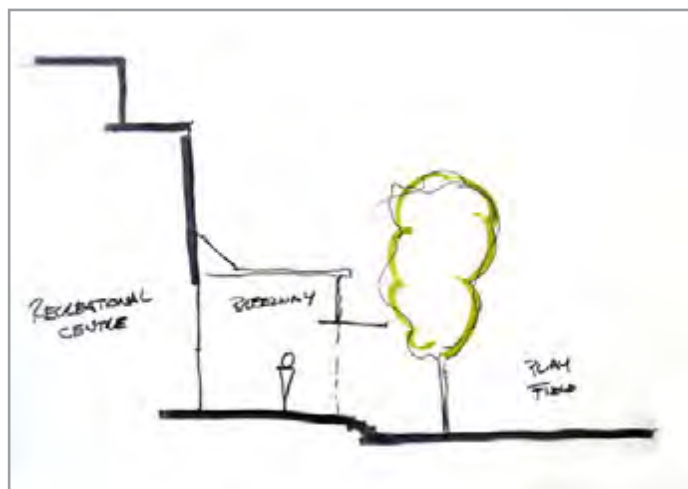
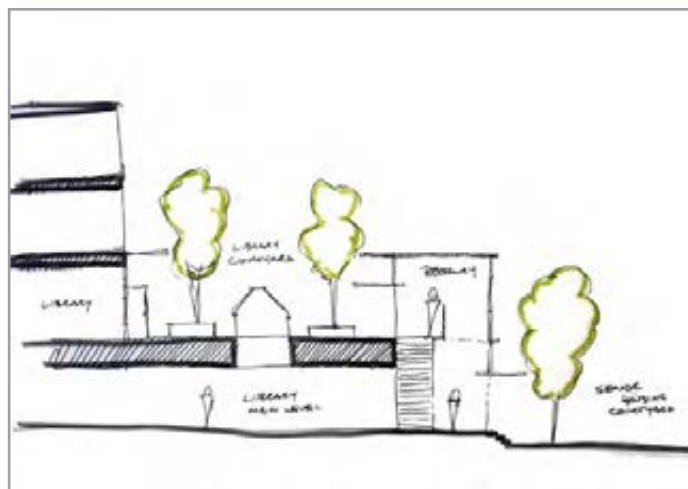
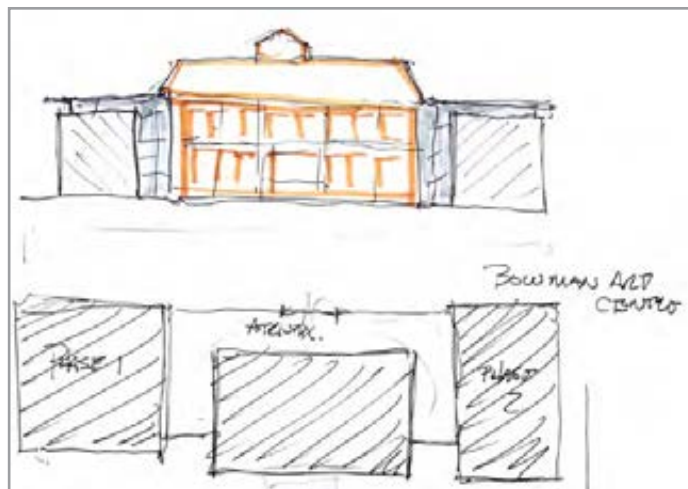
Demonstration Concepts for Civic Precinct

Workshop Outcomes

Group One: Civic Precinct

The Civic District is currently anchored by City Hall and a variety of recreational, cultural and community facilities. Important site considerations identified included: key cultural heritage buildings; a recognized need for increased parking capacity; future demand for recreational and office space; underutilized existing buildings; perceived mid-block safety issues; and, monument clutter in the precinct.

Key development strategies identified in the Workshop included: new and expanded office, recreational and parking facilities; a linked system of courtyards and breezeways; roof gardens; a new central plaza; new housing; and, a better integration of the Athletic Field as a public open space.



Demonstration Concepts for Civic Precinct

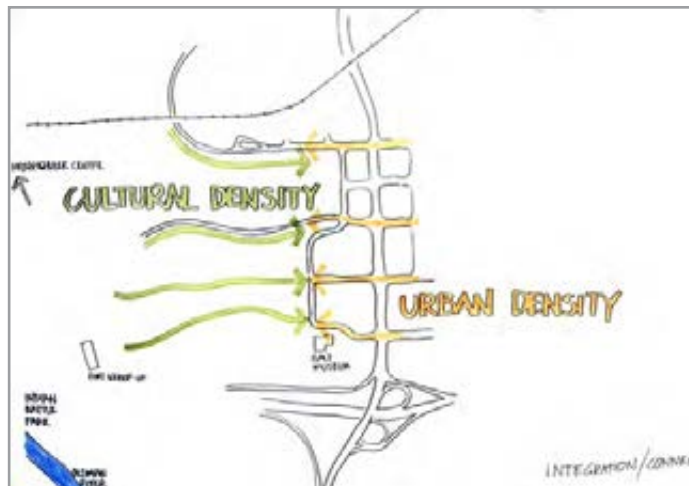
7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Demonstration Concepts for River Valley Frontage

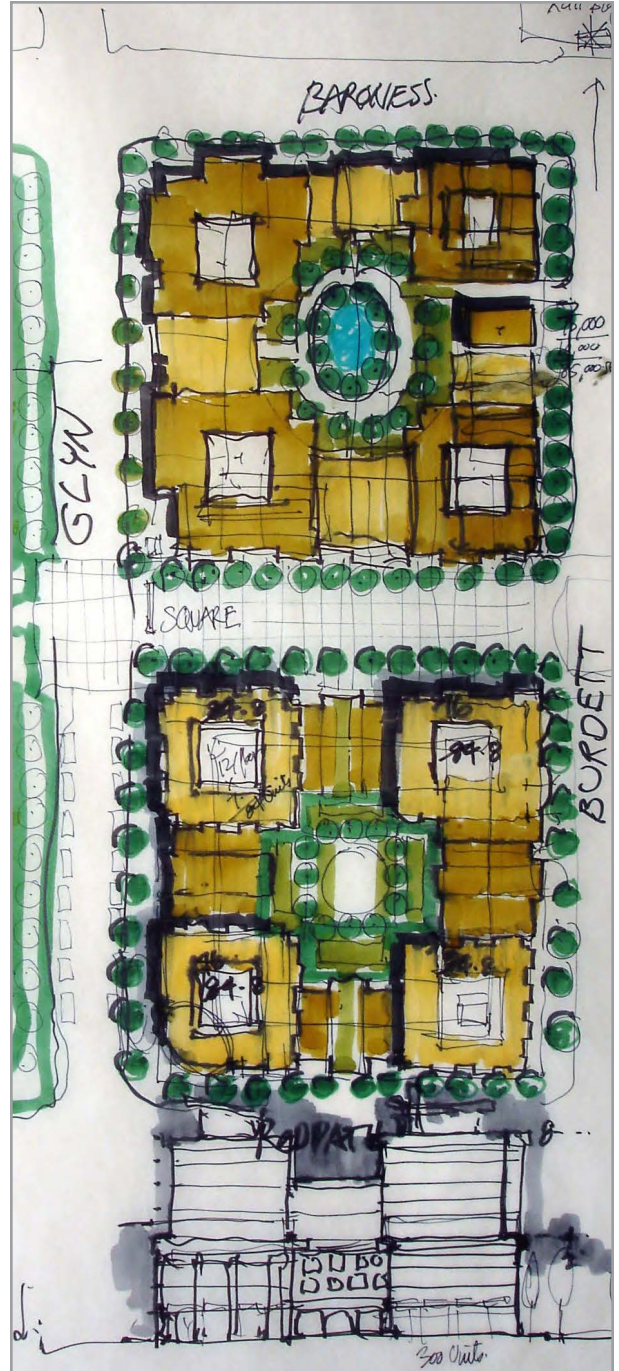
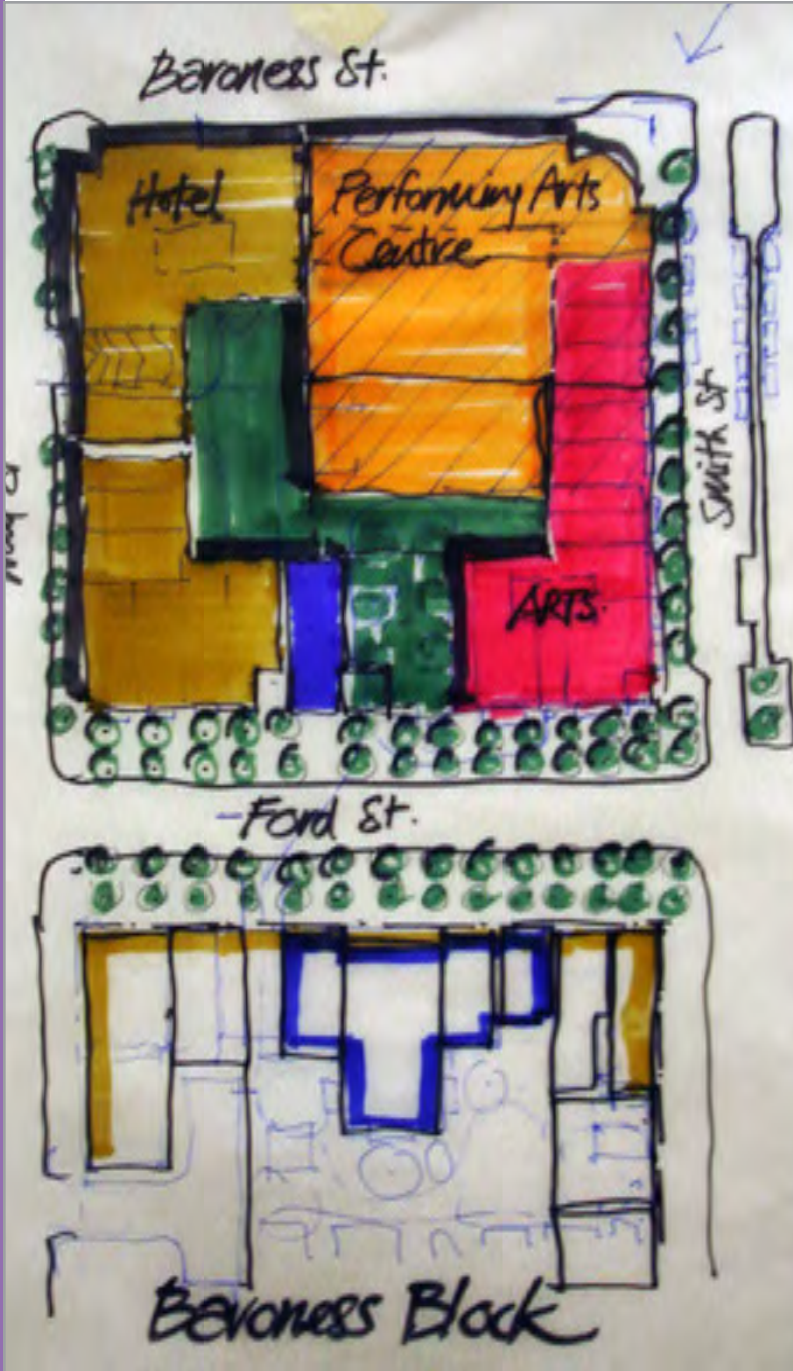
Group Two: Coulee Winds Vista

Workshop Group Two considered opportunities for creating a River Valley Frontage in the Scenic Drive District. Key interventions centred on creating a ‘cultural layer’ connecting the Downtown urban form to the natural environment of the Coulees and River Valley. Design highlights included re-establishing the Coulee Front Way as a public edge, engaging and celebrating the wind, the inclusion of ‘Art and Amphitheatre’ as a key use, and developing connections between urban walkways and River Valley trails.



Wind played a strong role in designs along the Coulee edge

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Demonstration Concepts for Downtown Infill Sites

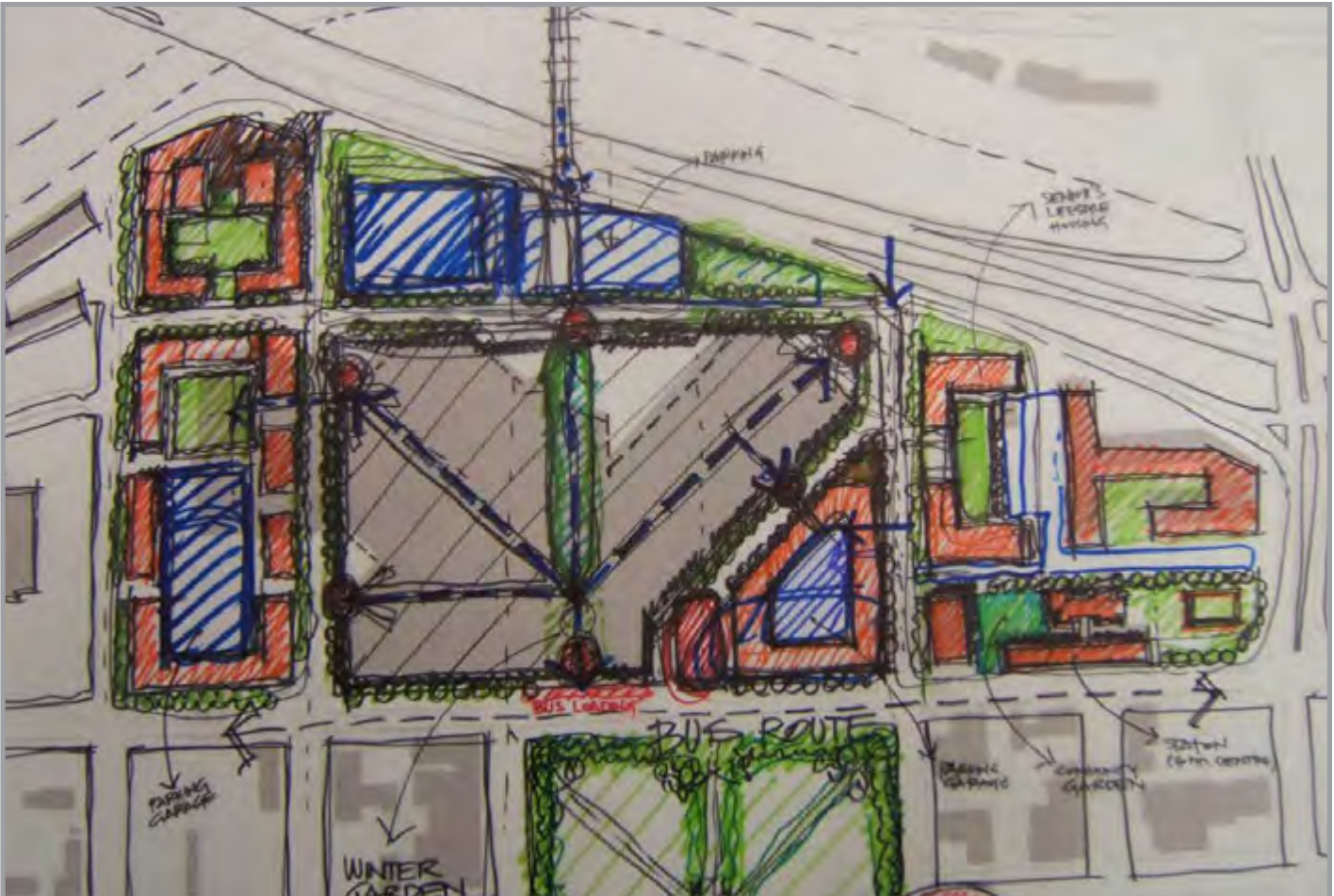
Group Three: Downtown Infill Sites

Group Three focused on both creating a sense of identity and cultural heritage in Downtown while developing ‘beacons’ or attractions on infill blocks to increase residential uses and all-hours activity.

Design concepts included: incorporating historic street names into block developments and public spaces; a performing arts and teaching centre; an integrated Downtown grocery store and parkade; reinforcing and enhancing Lethbridge’s unique urban spaces with appropriate building height, scale, and street orientation; and, mitigating, celebrating and harnessing wind through strategic placement of trees, windbreaks, public art projects and roofscapes.



Infill Sites workshop group



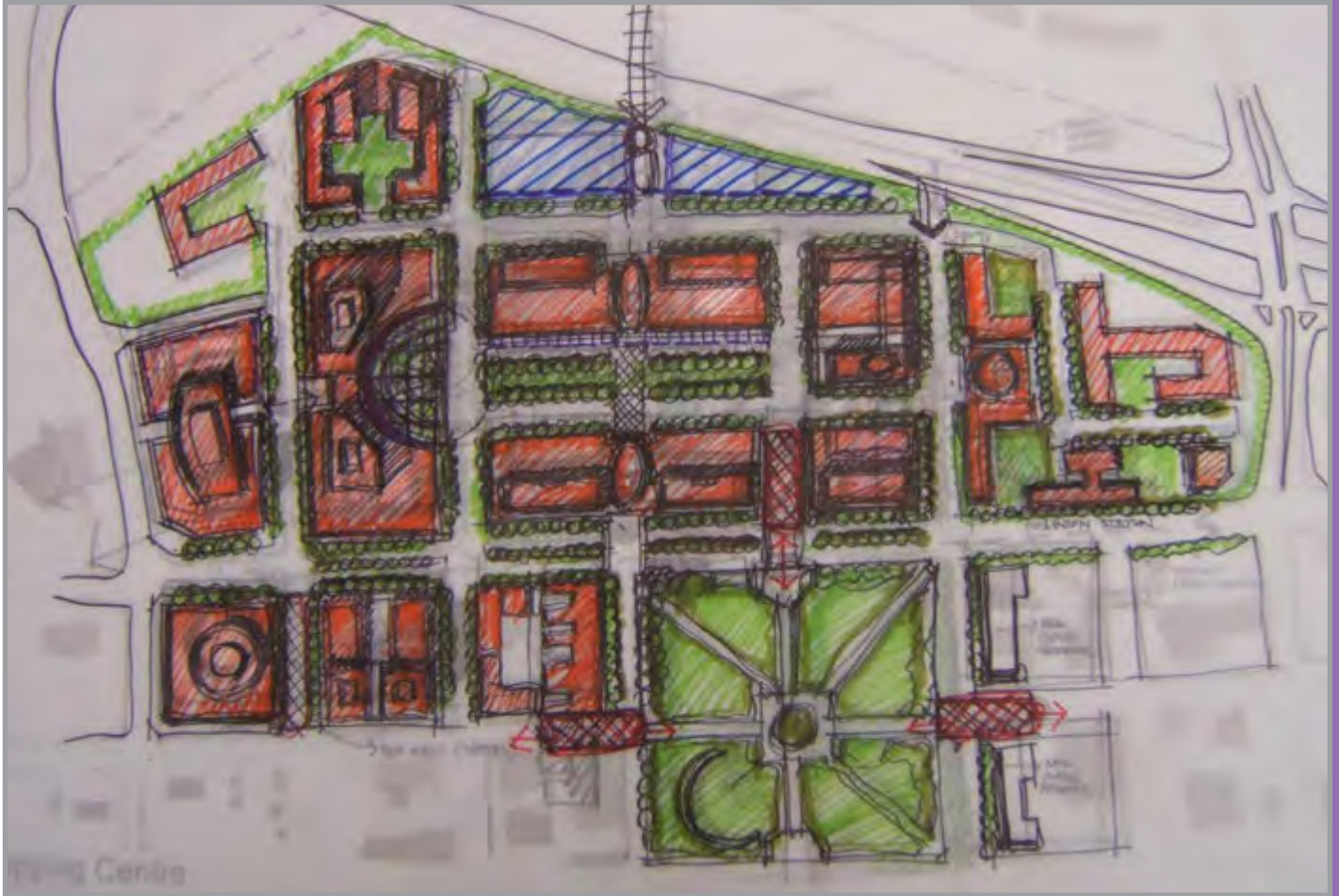
Demonstration Concepts for Park Place District

Group Four: Park Place District

Group Four developed long-term phased design concepts for the intensification and integration of Park Place Mall into the Downtown core. Group designs focused on celebrating heritage through new shopping and living experiences in a new Roundhouse Square, based on the site's historic marshalling yard uses. Key design themes centred on strategies to develop district sustainability and high-quality built form.

Design highlights included promoting sustainability through prioritized public transit, buildings that employ

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) performance standards, green roofs, winter uses, intensified development and use of alternative energy sources. Participants explored the site's potential to contribute to city-building by creating a livable mixed-use neighbourhood, extending the Downtown street grid, creating great internal streets for pedestrians, promoting new residential building typologies and developing and promoting 'Roundhouse Square' as a year-round place for business and living. These concepts sought to ensure Park Place remains as the pre-eminent shopping and retail destination in the City well into the future.



Demonstration Concepts for Park Place District



Park Place District workshop group

7.0 Public Engagement Process & Outcomes



Draft Master Plan presented for feedback and comment

7.5 Public Forum Three

Forum Three Overview

The Heart of Our City Master Plan began to take final form at Public Forum Three, as the Draft Master Plan was presented for comment and feedback at a public Open House, held at Lethbridge Lodge. Attended by over 150 people, the two-day Forum elicited a wide range of questions and constructive feedback and marked an important milestone as Lethbridge residents were presented for the first time with a roadmap and action plan for the revitalization of Downtown.

The Implementation Plan in particular marked an important milestone in the Heart of Our City Campaign, providing the roadmap that will help bring the Vision and Guiding Framework for Downtown into form. The Plan received much attention and discussion during the Open House as the consultants presented the recommended key policies, incentives, capital improvements and political leadership (governance) that will be necessary to move the Master Plan forward to fruition.

The Consultant team also presented the Site and Built Form Guidelines for Downtown, which were developed in part from the outcomes from the Forum Two design workshops. Held in January 2007, these intensive workshops explored potential redevelopment opportunities in Downtown and produced designs and site development principles that helped form the Downtown Site and Built Form Guidelines, an important component of the Master Plan that will help provide a level of outcome certainty to proposed developments in Downtown.

Perhaps most significantly, City Council signalled its

continued support for the Heart of Our City Campaign by providing key resources for the revitalization of Downtown over the next 10 years in the 2008-2017 City Capital Investment Plan. This support has generated tremendous anticipation and excitement in Downtown as development momentum builds.

Public Open House May 14, 2007

Key Feedback on the Draft Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

- 1.** It is important that the Master Plan help to retain the historic role and character of Galt Gardens
- 2.** Political leadership is fundamental to the plan, and getting incoming officials to support the plan will be essential
- 3.** Developing designs for Downtown gateways should be accomplished through design competition. This will be important to develop appropriate criteria (such as desired lighting and materials) and to get the best in thinking and approach
- 4.** Population increases will not be the main driver to the Master Plan, since the Plan is more about sequencing *where and how* growth will take place *when* growth happens.

Stakeholder Meetings

A series of stakeholder meetings was conducted to gain feedback on the Draft Master Plan and Implementation Strategy, with the following groups:

- Public Advisory Committee
- Planning and Development Services Staff
- Galt Museum Board
- City of Lethbridge Business Unit Managers
- Blood Tribe First Nation



Participants view the Draft Master Plan panels

Stakeholder Group Comments and Feedback

- Important to recognize the River Valley as a key wilderness resource, and avoid overbuilding in sensitive areas. The area was not seen as part of downtown in the past.
- Keeping momentum up will be all-important - especially in the market. It will be necessary to implement the plan quickly, and revisit the Implementation Plan yearly
- Careful market analysis and cost benefit analysis will be needed to support the Master Plan
- Regarding the planning of festival square plazas, it will be important to develop alternative markets (such as families and a broader tourism market) and capture the everyday local market (such as café visits, office crowd + street uses) by appropriate business frontages, in addition to providing appropriate programming
- It will be necessary to address competing residential and commercial uses in west, north and south Lethbridge in the Municipal Development Plan to balance growth in Downtown with the periphery
- Unless a high level of real estate development requires it, an 'arm's length' development corporation will not be recommended as an implementation strategy at this time
- Ensure Downtown has a special role but doesn't become a special [i.e. competing] interest: don't implement strategies as projects
- Due to development pressures, the redevelopment of Galt plaza is imminent. The plaza has a number of additional requirements:
 - requires built form to assist and define the 'urban room' character of the plaza
 - it is both a gathering place and a drop off for school groups
 - there is a need to improve visibility of the Galt through signage in Scenic Drive
 - Galt Plaza is an important potential community focus area and open space, around which the cooperation and coordination of a number of people is necessary to develop a reference point for continued discussion
- Circumstances have changed since the inception of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan, resulting in obsolete recommendations
- Certain areas of development activity need stronger controls
- Additional measures and projections of the attraction of value-added investment are needed, if Form-Based Zoning is to be implemented
- Density bonusing has the potential to compromise historic preservation; the Plan will include density transfers to offset height limits and help preserve historic building integrity
- The HOC Advisory Board will continue current levels of public involvement in Plan Implementation
- Local advisory committees are recommended for significant site developments
- A clear timeline will be important for City departmental change and capacity building
- The Plan should ensure inclusivity, diversity and affordability in recommendations for statutory change
- Incentive timing and differential timelines of development will determine Plan implementation (for example parking structure construction)
- Implementation of zoning and approvals changes should be expedited as best as possible to accommodate potential proposals