



# Town of High River Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

FINAL DRAFT November 2014



02

PLANNING + DESIGN





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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....VII

## 1. INTRODUCTION ..... 1

- 1.1 Purpose and Intent of the Plan 1
- 1.2 Plan Area and Precincts 3
- 1.3 Plan Context 6
- 1.4 Planning Context 9

## 2. VISION, PRINCIPLES, AND OBJECTIVES ..... 15

- 2.1 Vision 15
- 2.2 Principles and Objectives 16

## 3. PUBLIC REALM ..... 17

- 3.1 Public Streets 20
- 3.2 Public Laneways 26
- 3.3 Public Sidewalks + Pathways 30
- 3.4 Open Space 36

## 4. LAND USE + URBAN DESIGN ..... 43

- 4.1 Land Use + Urban Design Concept 44
- 4.2 General Objectives and Policies 45
- 4.3 Historical Downtown Precinct 48
- 4.4 Centre Street Precinct 56
- 4.5 Garden Residential Precinct 66
- 4.6 Industrial Arts Precinct 72
- 4.7 Public Services Precinct 78

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION ..... 81

- 5.1 Authority of the Plan 81
- 5.2 Implementation Schedule 84

## 6. GLOSSARY ..... 89

## A. ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY ..... A-1

## B. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES ..... B-1

<b>C. PARKING STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>C-1</b>
<b>D. CULTURAL PLAN .....</b>	<b>D-1</b>
<b>E. DOWNTOWN LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES ..</b>	<b>E-1</b>
<b>F. RECOMMENDED LAND USE BYLAW AMENDMENTS</b>	<b>F-1</b>
F.1 Definitions	F-1
F.2 Sign Rules	F-2
F.3 Land Use Districts	F-3

**MAPS**

Executive Summary Map 1: Plan Area	ix
Executive Summary Map 2: Planning Precincts	ix
Executive Summary Map 3: Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan	xii
Executive Summary Map 4: Land Use + Urban Design Concept	xiv
Map 1-1: Plan Area	2
Map 1-2: Plan Area and Planning Precincts	4
Map 4-1: Plan Area and Planning Precincts	42
Map 4-2: Land Use and Urban Design Concept (North)	46
Map 4-3: Land Use and Urban Design Concept (South)	47
Map 4-4: Historical Downtown Precinct	49
Map 4-5: Centre Street Precinct	57
Map 4-6: Garden Residential Precinct	67
Map 4-7: Industrial Arts Precinct	73
Map 4-8: Public Services Precinct	79

## FIGURES

Figure 1-1: CPR Station and 1 St SW, looking north, ca. 1920 (Glenbow Archives)	6
Figure 1-2: 1 St SW Hi-Alta Bldg, ca. 1909 (Glenbow Archives)	6
Figure 1-3: Original Town Hall, ca. 1910 (Glenbow Archives)	6
Figure 1-4: Koch Pflughaupt Block in 1910 (Glenbow Archives)	7
Figure 1-5: 4 Ave SW looking west with Hi-Alta bldg on right, ca. 1930 (Glenbow Archives)	7
Figure 1-6: CPR Train and view of 4 Ave SW, ca. 1917 (Glenbow Archives)	7
Figure 1-7: View of 3 Ave SW, looking west, ca. 1920 (Glenbow Archives)	7
Figure 1-8: 3 Ave SW, looking west, ca. 1958 (Glenbow Archives)	9
Figure 1-9: High River Downtown ARP Schedule	13
Figure 3-2 Centre Street Commercial Street Concept	23
Figure 3-3 Centre Street Bridge Widening Concept	23
Figure 3-4 Historic Downtown Woonerf Concept Perspective View	25
Figure 3-5 Historic Downtown Woonerf Concept Plan View	25
Figure 3-6 Pedestrian Mews Concept	29
Figure 3-7 Downtown Enhanced Commercial Sidewalk Type 1 Concept	35
Figure 3-8 George Lane Promenade Concept	35
Figure 4-9 Historical Downtown - Block Face Elevation Example	50
Figure 4-10 Historical Downtown - Elevation - Building and Block Face Rhythm Examples	50
Figure 4-11 Historical Downtown - Street Interface Example	50
Figure 4-12 Historical Downtown - Facade Detail Example	51
Figure 4-13 Historical Downtown - Corner Articulation Illustrative Example	52
Figure 4-14 Historical Downtown - Signage Examples	53
Figure 4-15 Historical Downtown - Material Examples	54
Figure 4-16 Historical Downtown - Example Plan View	55
Figure 4-17 Historical Downtown - Laneway Interface Example	55
Figure 4-18 Centre Street - Block Face Elevation Example	58
Figure 4-19 Centre Street - Street Interface Example	58
Figure 4-20 Centre Street - Example Frontage Detail	59
Figure 4-21 Centre Street - Corner Articulation Illustrative Example	60
Figure 4-23 Centre Street - Interface with existing residential (4.4.3.4.b) example	61
Figure 4-22 Centre Street - Side step-backs as elevated amenity spaces (4.4.3.4.f) example	61
Figure 4-25 Centre Street - Signage Examples	62
Figure 4-24 Centre Street - Materials Examples	62
Figure 4-26 Centre Street - Example Plan View	63
Figure 4-27 Centre Street - Example Garden Parking Mews Interface (4.4.3.2.g)	64
Figure 4-28 Centre Street - Example Lane-Accessed Structured Parking Interface Alternatives (4.4.4.f)	64
Figure 4-29 Garden Residential - Block Face Elevation Example	68
Figure 4-30 Garden Residential - Street Interface Example	68



Figure 4-31 Garden Residential - Materials Example	69
Figure 4-32 Garden Residential - Example Plan View	70
Figure 4-33 Garden Residential - Section - Rear Parking Interface (4.5.4) examples	70
Figure 4-34 Industrial Arts - Block Face Elevation Example	74
Figure 4-35 Industrial Arts - Street Section Interface Example	74
Figure 4-36 Industrial Arts - Material Examples	75
Figure 4-37 Industrial Arts - Section - Street and Parking Interface Example	76
Figure 4-38 Industrial Arts - Plan View - Example Parking Interface Alternatives (4.6.4)	76
Figure E-39 Fortis Alberta Domus Street Light	E-2
Figure E-40 Landscape Forms Neoliviano bench	E-3
Figure E-41 Landscape Forms Flo bike rack	E-3
Figure E-42 Forms+Surfaces Cordia waste receptacle	E-3

## TABLES

Table 1-1 Engagement Summary	11
Table 3-2 Sidewalk Typology Widths	32
Table 4-3 Land Use and Urban Design Concept Development, Population, and Jobs Estimates	44
Table F-4 Recommended Amendments to Part 1: Division 2: Section 13: Definitions	F-1
Table F-5 Recommended Amendments to Part 3: Division 3: Signs	F-2
Table F-6 Recommended Amendments to Part 4	F-3

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) is to create a tangible vision for downtown of the Town of High River (the “Town”) for the next thirty years. ARPs are adopted as bylaw by Council in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA) Section 635.

The intent of this plan is to provide a framework and supporting policies that will guide:

- future public and private investment in the short (within 5 years), medium (5-10 years), and longer term (+10 years), and
- decision makers during the review of Land Use Amendment and Development Permit applications.

## Plan Content

The ARP is broken into 5 chapters, as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction.** The first chapter describes the historic context of development in downtown High River, the policy context of the ARP, and an overview of the planning process that led to the creation of the ARP.
- **Chapter 2: Vision, Objectives, and Principles.** Chapter 2 neatly summarizes the future downtown desired by the citizens of High River, as expressed through a series of public engagement events and consultations throughout the summer.
- **Chapter 3: Public Realm.** Chapter 3 focuses on the policies that support implementation of a cohesive design concept for the system of streets, parks, and other public spaces that together provide the means for mobility, recreation, and social gathering in the downtown.
- **Chapter 4: Land Use + Urban Design.** Chapter 4 contains policies and guidelines for managing the growth, change, and evolution of private and public land development over time. Policies and guidelines are provided for the plan area and for individual precincts, and include direction on land use, building massing, architectural treatments, parking, and signage.
- **Chapter 5: Implementation.** Approval of this plan is the first step in implementation of the ARP. This chapter provides a chronological guide to the actions, entities, and timelines that must be initiated and coordinated to support achievement of desired planning outcomes over the short, medium, and long term as they relate to this ARP.

Following the main body of the ARP are a series of appendices. The appendices include background studies, summaries of public consultation, and technical plan implementation recommendations that were critical to the formulation of the plan, and/or may facilitate plan implementation:

- **Appendix A: What We Heard Report.** The What We Heard Report summarizes public and stakeholder consultation events and activities, and provides complete documentation of input provided by the public.
- **Appendix B: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (“SWOC”).** The SWOC is comprised of a series of thematic mapping and analysis exercises used to identify the key issues likely impacting the downtown. The SWOC analysis was used to frame and inform public

consultation discussions, support decision-making, and prioritize issues to be addressed by the ARP.

- **Appendix C: Parking Study.** The Parking Study provides an analysis of existing parking demand, an evaluation of parking management implications and emerging issues, and recommendations for implementing parking management practices. It also includes recommendations for changing parking ratios.
- **Appendix D: Cultural Plan.** The Cultural Plan provides goals, priorities, and strategies for ensuring that culture and heritage resources in the downtown area are supported, enhanced, and sustained for the benefit of current and future generations.
- **Appendix E: Recommended Land Use Bylaw Amendments.** To support implementation of the plan during the review of Land Use Amendment and Development Permit applications, a series of amendments to the bylaw are recommended to align the bylaw with the ARP.
- **Appendix F: Landscape Design Guidelines.** Additional specifications for the technical design of the components of the public realm are included to support rapid implementation public realm policies.

Input from these sources is manifest in and/or is directly incorporated throughout the content of the chapters that follow.

## Plan Context

The downtown area has been an integral part of High River for well over a century, and continues to be so today. The lands in the area have long been used for gathering and transport, which was a key driver in the site being chosen for some of the first development in the community. The Town of High River's 2009 *Town Plan* (the Town's statutory Municipal Development Plan), which includes a Growth Management Strategy, focused on the importance of the downtown and outlined strategic policies for its future. The Town Plan set the goal to:

*"Encourage the continued growth and intensification of the downtown area as a vibrant mixed use centre that is the focal point for the community and is an attractive place to shop, work, live, and play."*

The *Town Plan* has a range of objectives and policies that relate to the above goal, one of which requires preparation of an ARP for the downtown area. The Growth Management Strategy (GMS), the second part of the *Town Plan* completed in January 2013, provides guidance for the development of the downtown area over the next 30 years. The strategic policies put forward in the GMS anticipate that GMS objectives would be made actionable through this ARP.

The vast amount of damage caused by the June 2013 flood rapidly advanced the need to complete the ARP. The immediate need to respond to flood's aftermath has laid the groundwork for the development of long-term solutions, ensuring that the economic and cultural vitality of High River is not only restored, but improved. Despite the enormous destruction, rebuilding the downtown provides an opportunity to address flood risks while improving the area to make it better than it was before the flood. To these ends, this ARP is consistent with the policy directions contained in the *Town Plan*, and formalizes and organizes recommendations into a statutory planning document.





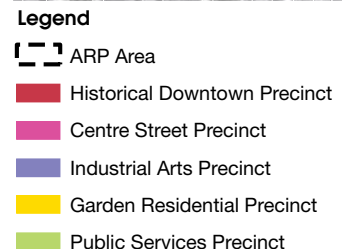
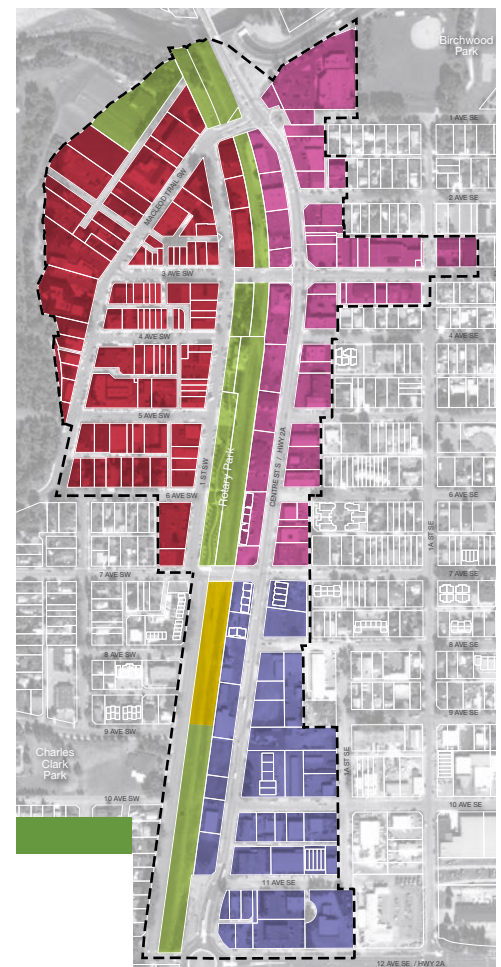
Executive Summary Map 1: Plan Area

## Plan Area

The plan area for the Downtown ARP is delineated on Executive Summary Map 1. It encompasses the land at the heart of the town's original settlement, within the historic downtown and along the former Canadian Pacific Rail and Centre Street corridors. The boundaries coincide with clear transitions in the Town's urban fabric, such as along George Lane Park, streets that bound residential areas, and existing zoning districts found in the Town's Land Use Bylaw. The boundary includes two important gateways to the downtown: the Highwood River bridge to the north and the 12 Ave SW traffic circle at the south.

The plan area is divided into five Planning Precincts (Executive Summary Map 2). The objectives, policies, and guidelines set out in the ARP refer specifically to the geographies of the five precincts:

- **Historical Downtown Precinct.** As both the historical and contemporary centre of commerce and business in the community, this Precinct is characterized by commercial, retail and office development, important cultural facilities in civic buildings, all contained within both heritage and modern buildings.
- **Centre Street Precinct.** Similar to the Historical Downtown Precinct, the Centre Street Precinct has been a central location for commerce and business over High River's history, and continues to see a significant volume of traffic. The area is characterized by a range of commercial, office and retail development contained largely within buildings of a larger footprint and reflecting a more contemporary built form than the historical downtown.
- **Industrial Arts Precinct.** This area has developed over the years as an area for light industrial, small-scale manufacturing, and office uses, while also supporting workshops and studios of local artisans.
- **Garden Residential Precinct.** The Garden Residential Precinct is at present, undeveloped, having previously been part of the Canadian Pacific railroad right-of-way. It is potentially suited for small footprint infill residential development characterized by a linear park-like streetscape and laneway.
- **Public Services Precinct.** The Public Services Precinct includes and is adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor that runs north-south through the plan area. Portions of the precinct contain enhancements including pathway and seating areas, and other amenities such as the Museum of the Highwood. While several parcels are developed with a range of commercial uses, a large portion of the corridor is vacant.



Executive Summary Map 2: Planning Precincts

## Vision, Principles, and Objectives

The Vision, Principles, and Objectives collectively describe a complete, long-term outcome for the downtown at increasing levels of detail and specificity. Planning policy in the following chapters supports achievement of specific objectives, general principles, and the overarching vision described below.

### Vision

*Downtown High River anchors an energized, vibrant community. It is a catalyst for social activity, economic renewal, and forward-thinking innovation. People are connected to this place. A friendly, welcoming atmosphere and lively mix of activities captivate the interests of residents, businesses, and visitors.*

*The charm and warmth of the historic downtown is preserved, and given a modern interpretation as it extends along Centre Street to a thriving business hub. These areas are linked to one another, surrounding neighbourhoods and green spaces by high-quality, well-designed streetscapes, landscapes, and buildings. An enduring cultural spirit is cultivated and given outlets for expression, and economic development contributes to strong businesses in strategic investment sectors. Resilient citizens, a dedicated local government, and adaptive flood mitigation create the capacity for enduring growth and a bright, secure future.*

### Principles and Objectives

#### ***Places are for people.***

- People come downtown to shop, work, meet friends, eat, visit, listen to music, spend time as a family, and attend special events.
- People live downtown in apartments, condos, and townhomes, and in houses in nearby residential areas.
- People spend time downtown because there are comfortable, safe, and inviting places to gather and socialize.
- People stay downtown because it is dynamic; there are things to see and do throughout the day and into the evening on a year-round basis.

#### ***People are connected.***

- People can safely get downtown by the transportation mode of their choice; by walking, cycling, driving, or taking transit.
- The CP rail line and Centre Street are important links, rather than barriers, to movement and access.
- Buildings, roadway infrastructure, and architecture reinforce a people-friendly atmosphere.
- Green streets and pathways lead people to downtown, and into surrounding open spaces.
- Improved interfaces with George Lane Park and the Highwood River connect people to the natural environment.

### ***Community is enriched.***

- Economic development provides a diversity of opportunities for investment and employment in strategic sectors: agricultural services, health and wellness, creative / knowledge economies, and tourism.
- Creative use and reuse of spaces, buildings, and public lands such as the former CP rail line builds social, economic and cultural capacity.
- Flexible, multi-use indoor and outdoor spaces house community activities and are hubs for small-scale enterprise and start-up businesses.
- Spaces for playing, walking, cycling and other types of physical activity are integral to the area.

### ***Development is resilient.***

- Flood mitigation, adaptive infrastructure capacity, and planning and design measures safeguard the community and its economic investments against the impacts of flooding.
- Architectural and landscape design contribute to an outstanding quality of place.
- Heritage architecture is preserved and integrated with new, context-sensitive development.
- Treed streets, an abundance of flowers and native species plantings beautify the Downtown, and provide important ecological infrastructure to keep the air and water healthy.
- Building and paving materials, construction approaches, and plant species selection reduce impacts to the environment.

### ***Culture thrives.***

- The community nurtures a cultural sector that supports creative economic development and enriches quality of life.
- Quality spaces allow cultural practitioners to showcase their work
- The vibrant downtown area is a hub of cultural activity year round.
- Exceptional and well sited public art captures the modern, progressive spirit of the community.
- An inviting and inclusive environment is fostered to value everyone's contribution.

## **Public Realm**

The public realm consists of any publicly owned, exterior space such as streets, sidewalks, parks and open spaces. In High River, the public realm is a critical catalytic component of downtown revitalization. In order for the revitalization to be successful, the public realm must be attractive for all types of users and facilitate a wide variety of events and activities throughout the year.

The Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan (Executive Summary Map 3) illustrates a cohesive vision for the streets, sidewalks, parks and plazas within the Downtown ARP plan area that together comprise the downtown's public realm. The illustrative plan outlines the outcome of the long-term implementation of the ARP's public realm policies and guidelines.





Executive Summary Map 3:  
Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan

The public realm policies and guidelines were created to achieve the following objectives:

- Create safe, vibrant gathering places for community and cultural activities;
- Improve public safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;
- Facilitate pedestrian and cyclist use, all day and all year round;
- Re-vegetate and beautify the downtown by planting street trees, shrubs and annual flowers;
- Reconnect downtown with George Lane Park and the Highwood River, improve public spaces within the downtown, and create new connections into surrounding neighbourhoods that were previously obstructed by the CPR and Highway 2A thoroughfares;
- Use consistent public realm design to create a coherent identity across the downtown ARP area, with slight variations to suit the needs of individual precincts.

A brief overview of the thematic policies intended to facilitate achievement of these objectives follows.

## Public Streets

The existing street network should be reconfigured to accommodate greater levels of mobility for pedestrians and cyclists, while also being adapted to support future urban growth. This will ensure that a satisfactory level of service is maintained for vehicles, while providing straightforward and efficient access to the downtown for residents who choose to cycle or walk. General policies include:

- Pedestrian safety shall be prioritized in all aspects of public realm design and implementation.
- New roundabouts should be considered at Centre Street and Macleod Trail / 1 Avenue SE, and at Macleod Trail and 6 Avenue SW.
- A new vehicular crossing of the former CPR railroad tracks should be considered at 5 Ave SW to increase east-west connections to the historic downtown and George Lane Park
- On-street cycling shall be encouraged within the downtown by providing appropriate on-street cycling infrastructure (e.g., pavement markings, signage) and connections to existing cycling trails.

The policies related to public streets were developed to be consistent with the Parking Study included in Appendix C, which considers the role of on-street parking.

## Public Laneways

Laneways within the downtown serve businesses and residences by providing access to: service entrances of buildings, private parking, and other back of house activities, such as waste and recycling collection. There are additional laneways in downtown that serve as public access to plazas and as pedestrian thoroughfares through the historic downtown. Generally, public realm policies related to laneways focus on ensuring that these important pieces of infrastructure continue to be fully utilized for service and/or pedestrian access, as appropriate.

## Public Sidewalks + Pathways

Public sidewalks refer to paved areas on public lands intended for pedestrian travel alongside roadways. In certain areas where pedestrian mobility is of high importance, public sidewalks may be enhanced through widening, special surface treatments, unique lighting, and the installations of site furnishings. Public pathways run through parks or in public rights of way abutting private properties. It is recommended that pathways are designed for multiple uses, including walking and cycling. General policies include:

- All sidewalks shall be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the American Disabilities Association Guidelines (ADA Guidelines).
- Sidewalks should be a minimum of 2.0 metres in unobstructed width; obstructions including driveway aisles and above-ground utilities, should be minimized.
- Sidewalks shall be adequately illuminated.
- Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the streets.

## Open Spaces

Open spaces are those lands within the ARP boundary that are owned by the Town of High River and intended for public uses such as social gatherings, public events, and active and passive recreation. General policies include:

- Public spaces should have clear legible public access, be flexible in terms of use, and consider solar access and year-round cultural activities in their design.
- Design of public spaces should adhere to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

## Land Use + Urban Design

The ARP's Land Use + Urban Design policies and guidelines enable the evolution of a cohesive development pattern over the next 30 years. They address the range and allocation of land uses, the integration of private development with the adjacent public realm, the massing and architectural articulation of buildings, and the provision of broader amenities and services. They acknowledge the downtown's strong heritage foundations, scale, and range of building types and uses, while recognizing and enabling the downtown's future potential as an active, diverse, and economically sustainable center for the Town.





Executive Summary Map 4:  
Land Use + Urban Design Concept

The Land Use + Urban Design Concept (Executive Summary Map 4) represents a potential built-form outcome for downtown High River. The amount and scale of redevelopment illustrated was informed primarily by population and employment growth projections used in the Town of High River Town Plan. It is not intended to illustrate a preferred development outcome, but rather serves to demonstrate how consistent implementation of the recommended ARP land use and urban design policies might manifest. The ARP does not dramatically rethink what can be built in the downtown, but provides nuanced direction for development across the five planning precincts so that a cohesive outcome is achieved.

The ARP land use and urban design policies and guidelines were created to achieve the following objectives:

- Support intensification and a mix of uses downtown to ensure new utility infrastructure is efficiently utilized.
- Support a diversity of land uses downtown, including residential uses, to facilitate activation of public spaces and the creation of a local market for downtown businesses that can be sustained beyond regular business hours.
- Achieve a high standard of architectural and urban design quality for all new development and redevelopment projects.

A summary of the general and precinct-specific objectives and policies follows.

## Compliance Policies

- At the date of adoption of this plan, existing development will be considered conforming.
- Future development proposals must conform to the intent of the precinct, and may be considered conforming if the intent is deemed to be achieved.
- The Flood Hazard Overlay in the Town of High River Land Use Bylaw takes precedence over land use policies and urban design guidelines provided in this chapter.



## General Land Use and Urban Design Policies

- The conservation and adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings is strongly encouraged.
- A range of housing formats is encouraged, including residential unit sizes and ground-oriented units.
- Auto-oriented uses will only be permitted in the Industrial Arts Precinct, and are prohibited in all other precincts.
- At-grade parking lots (those independent of any other use) are strongly discouraged within the Historical Downtown Precinct and the Centre Street Precinct.
- Any features facilitating accessibility to buildings (e.g., ramps, stairs) should be contained within the property line.

## Historical Downtown Precinct

Policies and guidelines for the Historical Downtown Precinct respect the small-scale business and lot pattern of the area, while tweaking use and massing rules to ensure that new buildings interface appropriately with the public realm. Policies and guidelines generally include:

- A maximum floor area of 1,000 square metres for ground floor commercial, so that new development reflects the rhythm of the heritage development pattern.
- Active commercial uses on the ground floor, with inactive commercial and residential uses preferred for the second floor.
- A reduction of the maximum building height from 18.0 to 16.0 metres (allowing for 4-5 storeys), with a requirement for front step-backs above the second storey to limit overshadowing of the public realm.
- Construction of buildings to the front property line, with no front parking permitted.
- An emphasis on building massing that supports mixed-uses within buildings.
- Use of heritage materials (brick, stone, wood) and heritage-compatible signage.

## Centre Street Precinct

The ARP aims to guide commercial and commercial/residential mixed-use development that contributes to a high-quality pedestrian environment in the Centre Street Precinct. Consistent with existing development patterns, larger floor-plates are supported here, while architectural articulation is used to ensure the larger buildings transition to their context and still provide a pedestrian-friendly experience at street-level. Policies and guidelines emphasize:

- Active commercial uses on the ground floor, with inactive commercial and residential uses preferred for the second floor.
- Retaining the existing height limit of 18.0 metres, with a requirement for front step-backs above the second storey and side and/or rear step-backs adjacent to existing residential areas to limit overshadowing of the public realm and private properties.
- Construction of buildings to the front property line, with no front parking permitted.

- Use of heritage and modern materials (brick, stone, wood, aluminum, steel) and both heritage-compatible and modern signage (but not highway-type signage).
- An allowance for single-use commercial buildings, provided they don't exceed 2,500 square metres; the preference is for mixed use buildings so that the public infrastructure investment is leveraged.

## Garden Residential Precinct

The ARP provides the opportunity for residential development along a portion of the CPR rail corridor in the form of clusters of small-footprint development, characterized by a generous landscape interface with 1 Street SW and the rear garden laneway (as shown in the Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan). Policies and guidelines include:

- Allowing a range of potential housing forms, including semi-detached dwellings, townhomes, or a comprehensively designed ground-oriented multi-family development, as long as they meet the specified massing guidelines.
- Allowing no more than 40 metres of contiguous frontage without a break, in order to maintain access between the street and laneway along the block.
- Limiting heights of the primary and accessory building to 10 metres and 5 metres, respectively, consistent with what is permitted in neighbouring residential areas.
- Prohibiting front-drive access and requiring access from a laneway.

## Industrial Arts Precinct

This area has developed over the years as an area for light industrial, small-scale manufacturing, and office uses, while also supporting workshops and studios of local artisans. The ARP will encourage the area to continue to grow as a manufacturing and arts hub that is better integrated into the surrounding community. It encourages a more concentrated and organized pattern of industrial development—with an emphasis on street orientation and creation of a consistent street wall, and a de-emphasis on the physical separation of buildings—and adds the option for live-work residential development to the existing industrial land use typology. The proposed architectural palette acknowledges the agricultural-industrial heritage of the Town while recognizing its future potential as a modern working precinct characterized by local artisanal workshops. Policies and guidelines emphasize:

- The location of parking, loading, and storage at the rear of the lot.
- Placement of buildings along the street edge with a well-articulated, permeable building façade.
- The allowance of a live/work land use, in order to entice small-scale artisans, craftsman, and other workers to locate in the precinct.

## Public Services Precinct

The Public Services Precinct is a linear corridor that can easily be managed to provide a continuous linkage of park and pedestrian-focused amenities, as well as landmark civic buildings and cultural facilities that serve the broader community, and benefit from the centrality and visibility of this corridor. Policies and guidelines emphasize:

- Maintenance of a north-south pedestrian linkage for the length of the corridor, from 12 Avenue SW to the Highwood River.
- An allowance urban agriculture, in the form of community gardens or urban orchards.
- Locations for important civic infrastructure, such as a museum expansion and town visitor's centre.
- Ensuring civic buildings address and interface appropriately with the public realm.

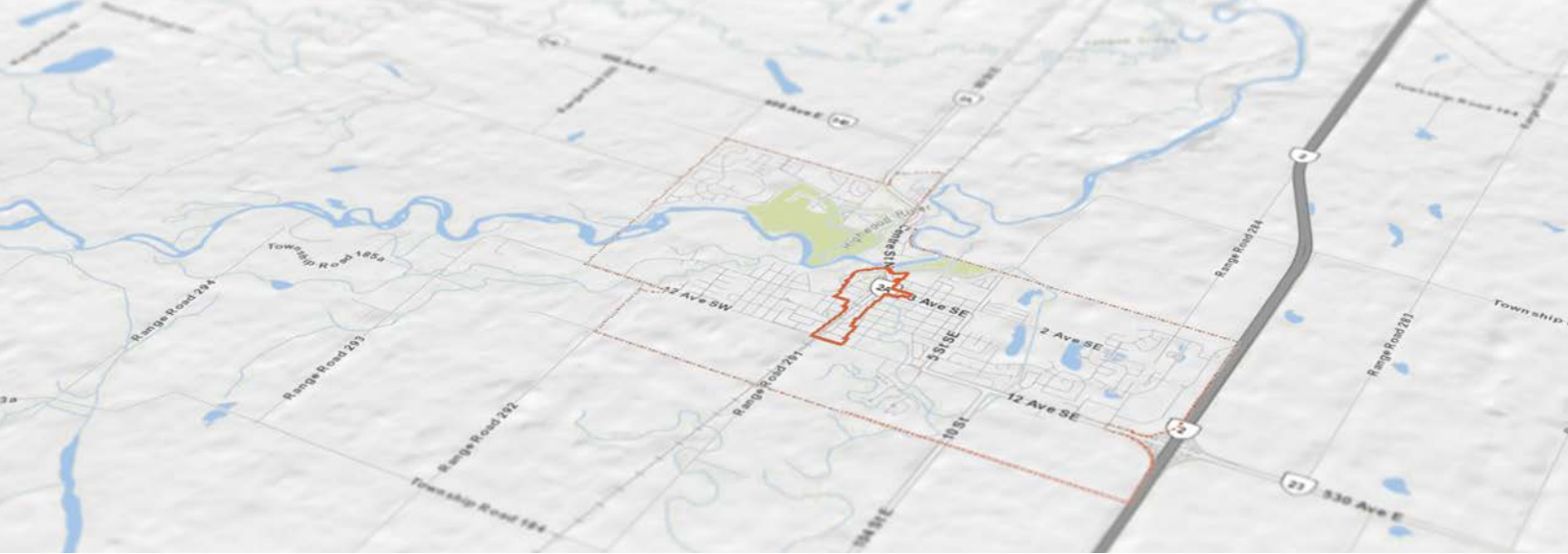
## Implementation

Approval of this plan is the first step in implementation of the ARP. To support achievement of the vision and planning outcomes articulated through the ARP vision, a number of actions, entities, and timelines must be initiated and coordinated over the short, medium, and long term. These encompass:

- The implementation of supplemental legal measures, such as amending the Town's land use bylaw so that it aligns with the ARP.
- The initiation of the programmatic elements plan (that go beyond the management of land use, urban design, and the public realm) that will serve to coordinate the people, businesses, activities, programs, and civic infrastructure that collectively will enable achievement of the ARP's vision for the downtown as a thriving business hub, with enduring cultural spirit and strong businesses in strategic investment sectors.

Highlights of the ARP's implementation chapter include:

- Amendments to the Land Use Bylaw as they relate to land use districts: it is recommended that new districts be created that parallel the five precincts described in the ARP.
- Amendments to signage and parking rules in the land use bylaw to support the land use and urban design policies and guidelines in chapter 4 of the ARP.
- Applications of parking management strategies described within the **Appendix C: Parking Study**, such as implementation of a parking time limit along certain streets to make spaces available for business patrons throughout the day.
- Recommendations for updates to the Town's Infrastructure Master Plan so that it incorporates the public realm illustrative concept plan.
- Recommendations for undertaking a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that will help determine the elements of the public realm plan that can be constructed in the mid- to long-term.
- Initiation of a series of programs supporting cultural development, as described in detail in the **Appendix D: Cultural Plan**.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose and Intent of the Plan

The purpose of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) is to create a tangible vision for downtown of the Town of High River (the “Town”) for the next thirty years. The intent is for the plan to provide a framework and supporting policies that will guide:

- future public and private investment in the short (within 5 years), medium (5-10 years) and longer term (+10 years), and
- decision makers during the review of Land Use Amendment and Development Permit applications.

The main elements addressed in the ARP are broken into four chapters, as follows:

### Chapter 2: Vision, Objectives, and Principles

- A thematic summary of the future downtown desired by the citizens of High River.

### Chapter 3: Public Realm

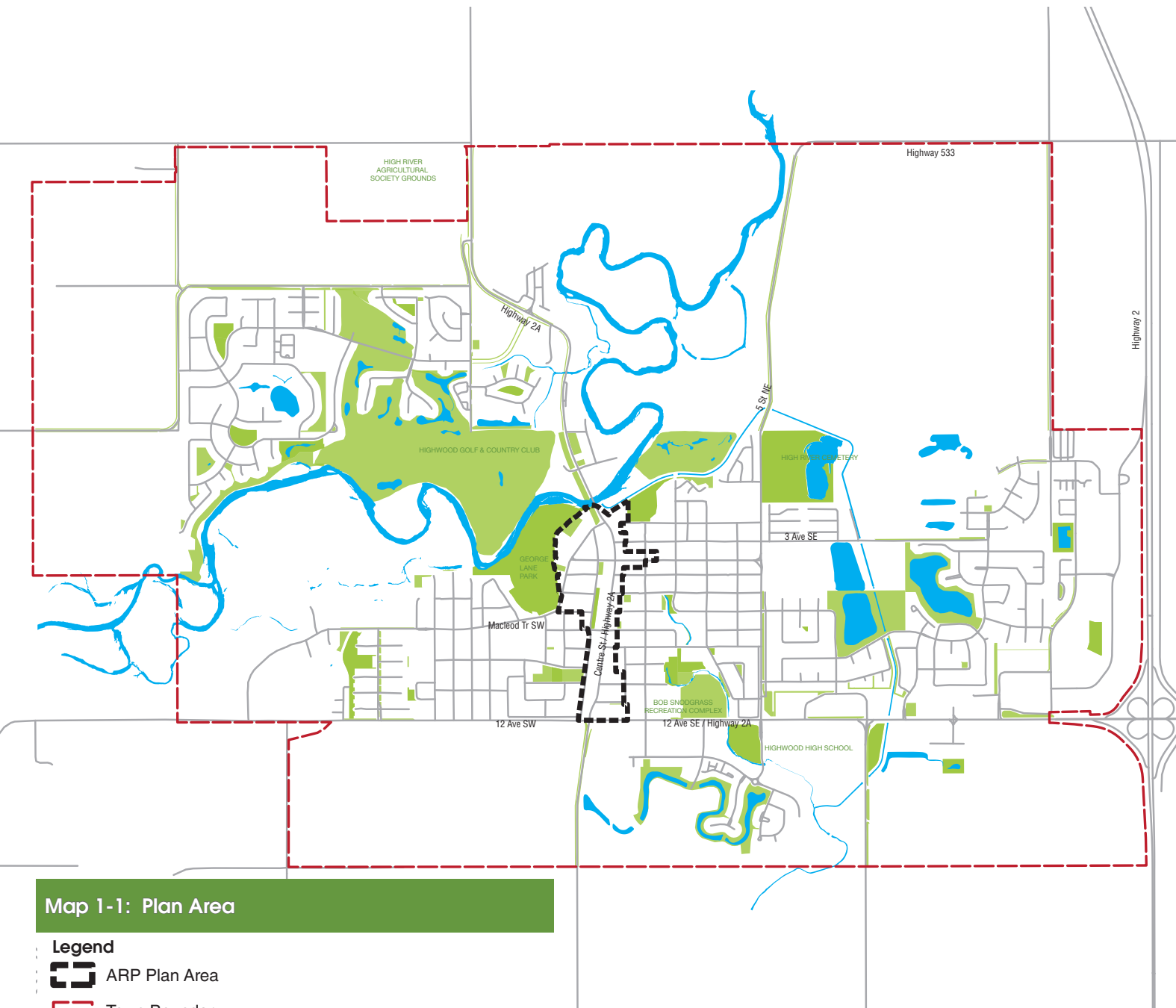
- A cohesive concept for the streets, parks, and other public spaces that together provide the means for mobility, recreation, and social gathering in the downtown.

### Chapter 4: Land Use + Urban Design

- Policies and guidelines for managing the growth, change, and evolution of private and public land development over time.







### Chapter 5: Implementation

- A chronological guide to the actions, entities, and timelines that must be put into play and coordinated to achieve desired planning outcomes over the short, medium, and long term.



Map 1-1: Plan Area

#### Legend

-  ARP Plan Area
-  Town Boundary
-  Parcel
-  Park + Open Space
-  Hydrology
-  Roads





## 1.2 Plan Area and Precincts

### 1.2.1 Plan Area

The plan area for the Downtown ARP is delineated on Map 1-1. It encompasses the land at the heart of the town's original settlement, within the historic downtown and along the former Canadian Pacific Rail and Centre Street corridors. The boundaries coincide with clear transitions in the Town's urban fabric, such as along George Lane Park, streets that bound residential areas, and existing zoning districts found in the Town's Land Use Bylaw, including the Central Business District (CBD) and the Special Commercial/Industrial District (CM). The boundary includes two important gateways to the downtown: the Highwood River bridge to the north and the 12 Ave SW traffic circle at the south.

### 1.2.2 Planning Precincts

The plan area is divided into five Planning Precincts, which were identified from historical development patterns and existing zoning within the downtown. The objectives, policies, and guidelines set out in the ARP refer specifically to the geographies of these five precincts. Precincts are shown on Map 1-2, and include:

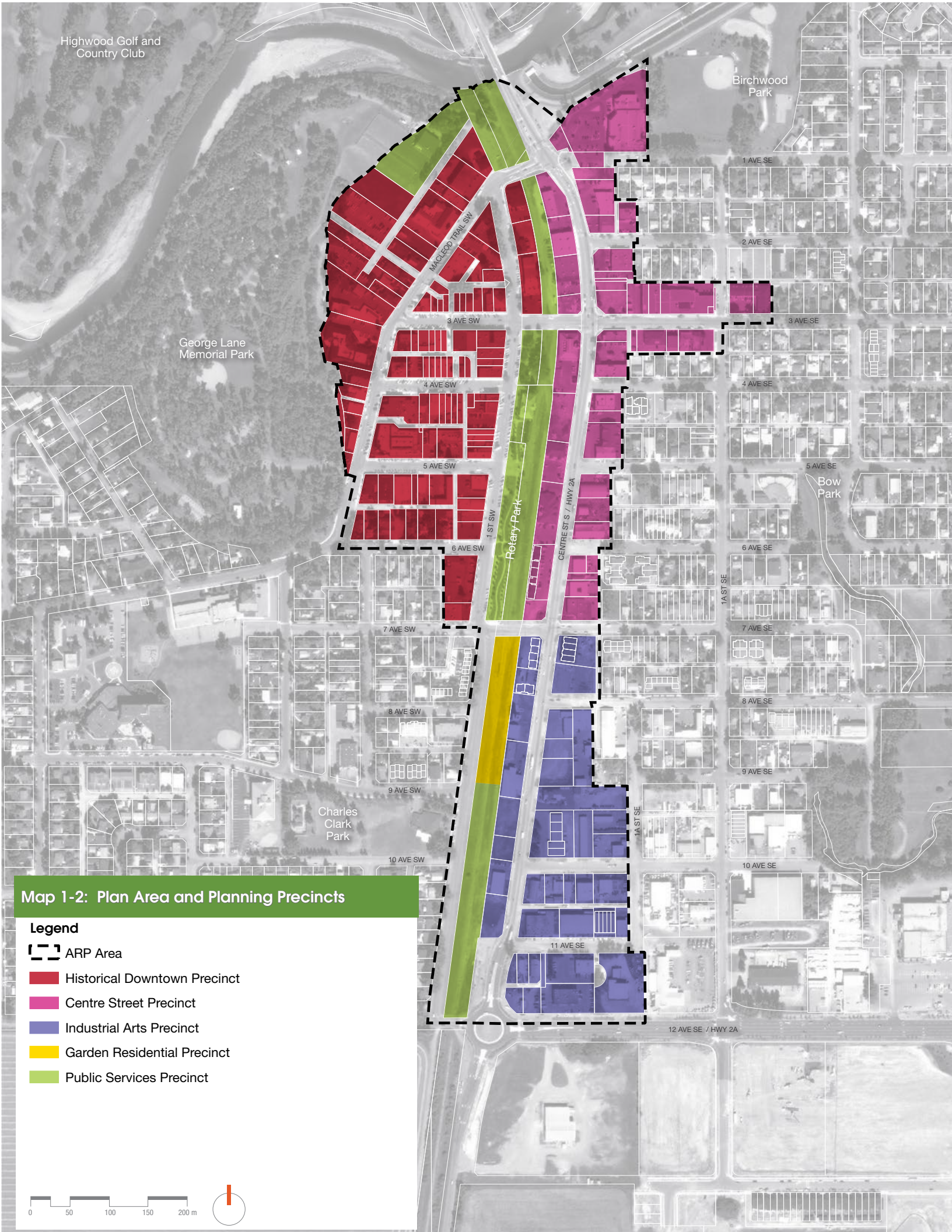
#### HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN PRECINCT

The Historical Downtown Precinct is located primarily along Macleod Trail SW, generally extending east to 1 Street SW, and between 1 Avenue SE to the north and 7 Avenue SW to the south. The George Lane Park area is to the immediate west, with the Highwood River beyond. The Centre Street Precinct is located to the east, and established low-density residential areas are located to the south and southwest of the Historical Downtown.

As both the historical and contemporary centre of commerce and business in the community, this Precinct experiences a high volume of pedestrian and vehicle activity, and is characterized by commercial, retail, and office development contained within both heritage and modern buildings. Many of the Town's heritage and cultural resources are located in this precinct, including built heritage resources, cultural facilities in civic buildings, and commercial venues that support cultural industries.

#### CENTRE STREET PRECINCT

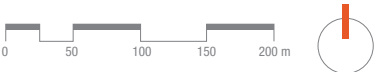
The Centre Street Precinct is located primarily along Centre Street South, following the Highway 2A alignment, which leads north of the Highwood River and into areas of newer development in High River. This corridor also parallels the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor that runs alongside the highway. The Precinct extends from 1 Avenue SE to the north and 7 Avenue SE to the south. The Historical Downtown Precinct is located to the west of this Precinct, and the Industrial Arts Precinct is to the south. Existing low-density residential areas are located to the immediate east.



Map 1-2: Plan Area and Planning Precincts

Legend

- ARP Area
- Historical Downtown Precinct
- Centre Street Precinct
- Industrial Arts Precinct
- Garden Residential Precinct
- Public Services Precinct





Similar to the Historical Downtown Precinct, the Centre Street Precinct has been a central location for commerce and business over High River's history, and continues to see a significant volume of traffic, generally more vehicle-oriented than pedestrian. The area is characterized by a range of commercial, office, and retail development at a lower scale, contained largely within buildings of a more modern nature.

## INDUSTRIAL ARTS PRECINCT

The Industrial Arts Precinct is located along the Centre Street South corridor, bounded by 7 Avenue SE to the north, and 12 Avenue SE to the south, following the Highway 2A alignment and the Canadian Pacific Railway line. The Centre Street Precinct is located to the immediate north. Lands to the immediate east of the area are developed with low-scale light industrial and commercial uses, while lands to the south across 12 Avenue SE are in the process of being developed with residential and associated commercial uses. This area has developed over the years as an area for light industrial, small-scale manufacturing, and office uses, while also supporting workshops and studios of local artisans.

## GARDEN RESIDENTIAL PRECINCT

The Garden Residential Precinct is located on the block face facing 1st St SW, stretching from 7 Avenue SW to 9 Avenue SW. At present this block, which lay in the non-operational Canadian Pacific railroad right-of-way, is undeveloped. It is potentially suited for small footprint infill residential development characterized by a linear park-like streetscape and laneway.

## PUBLIC SERVICES PRECINCT

The Public Services Precinct is adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor that runs parallel to 1 Street SW, and extends from the Highwood River crossing at the north end of the Plan area to 12 Avenue SE at the south end. Portions of the corridor between 3 Avenue SW and 7 Avenue SW have been enhanced to provide a pedestrian pathway and seating areas, and other amenities, such as the Museum of the Highwood. Portions of the corridor north of 3 Avenue SW are developed with a range of commercial uses. The portion of the corridor south of 7 Avenue SW is undeveloped.



Figure 1-1: CPR Station and 1 St SW, looking north, ca. 1920 (Glenbow Archives)

## 1.3 Plan Context

The downtown area has been an integral part of High River for well over a century, and continues to be so today. The lands in the area have long been used for gathering and transport, which was a key driver in the site being chosen for some of the first development in the community. A slow economy in the early 21st century, compounded by the lingering effects of the 2013 flood, radically changed the Town's outlook. The following sections provide the historic context leading up to the development of this ARP.

### 1.3.1 Historic Context

Long before the arrival of the first European settlers, the area was inhabited largely by the Blackfoot First Nation, who called the site Ispitsee (or the "place of high trees along running water"). By 1870, immigration to the Canadian West was beginning in earnest, after the North West Mounted Police had imposed law and order. The Blackfoot had signed Treaty Number 7, and lands in the area began to open to early development.

The general area of what is now downtown High River had been referred to as "Highwood Crossing" - or just "The Crossing" - by white settlers arriving in the area, referencing the nearby Highwood River and the ford used to cross it. This crossing point was popular, as its relatively shallow banks (compared to other locations on the river) provided an accessible location. The Macleod Trail was a well-used connection between Calgary and Fort MacLeod, and early settlers used it from the 1870s onward, bringing people into the community and the future downtown area.

The first settler of High River was a man named Jasper "Buck" Smith, who built a sod-roofed cabin in 1878, about a mile west of the river crossing, near the present-day United Church. The first farmers (John and Katie Quirk) arrived in 1882; their homestead was south of the present-day Church of the Nazarene on 4 Street SE, just east of the downtown area.

The initial community began to emerge in the mid to late 1880s, although growth was slow due to a prolonged drought in the area at that time. Development slowly continued into the 1890s, and was assisted by the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton railroad (later the Canadian Pacific Railway) in 1892, which ran north/south through the young settlement (east of today's 1 Street SW). Responding to the spiritual needs of the young community, Chalmers Presbyterian Church was built in 1891 on Macleod Trail, north of 3 Avenue SW, and a few initial residences were constructed



Figure 1-2: 1 St SW Hi-Alta Bldg, ca. 1909 (Glenbow Archives)



Figure 1-3: Original Town Hall, ca. 1910 (Glenbow Archives)

nearby. The first Methodist Church in the community was built in 1901 at the corner of 1 Street SE and 3 Avenue SE, just east of the railway tracks.

High River became a Village in December 1901, and staff of the community began considering items such as a local dump, fire prevention, street improvements (wood sidewalks and gravelling), drainage, and initial surveying in the downtown area (Blocks 1, 2 and 3). At this time, development in the downtown and immediate area to the east of the tracks consisted of two churches, an opera house, a bank, several general stores, a hardware store, livery barns, a newspaper, warehouses, blacksmith shops, the railway station, and a number of other buildings.

By 1905, the Village population was 625, and discussions began about incorporation as a Town. The Province of Alberta granted High River Town status in February 1906. The following January, in 1906, a fire in the downtown area destroyed several buildings on the main street, while several floods over the next few years caused additional damage. By 1908, utilities in the downtown area were being extended, the original Town Hall had been reconstructed, and other buildings such as banks, hotels, restaurants, grocers, clothing shops, and churches were being added.

The existing railway station at the time had also been moved to a location next to the present-day Museum of the Highwood building (which was rebuilt in 1912 on its present site from a former sandstone station in Calgary to serve as the new Canadian Pacific Railway station), allowing a key east-west crossing of the tracks at 3 Avenue. Despite growth throughout the new community, Macleod Trail, 1 Street SW, 3 Avenue SW, 4 Avenue SW, and 5 Avenue SW saw the main bulk of development in the early years of the downtown.

Much to the relief of residents and business owners, who were tired of dealing with mud and rotting boardwalks, a cement sidewalk program was introduced in 1911 to replace the existing boardwalks throughout the downtown and surrounding areas. A vehicle dealership was established in 1912, and several residents and business owners purchased vehicles, introducing this transportation mode to the community. As early as 1912, the Town also began looking at means to improve the treed area to the west of the downtown as a more formal public park space, with the inclusion of a playground area. Donated by George Lane, an early resident and landowner best known as one of the “Big 4” financiers of the first Calgary Stampede, the park today is now called George Lane Park.

Growth slowed during the years of the First World War, but by 1916 the Town population had reached 1,200. During the interwar years, growth continued, albeit at a limited pace, with the introduction of brick buildings and a number of industrial operations, such as lumber yards. The stock market crash in October 1929 and the subsequent onset of the Great Depression had an impact on the community, similar to that experienced across Canada. By 1931, High River had a population of 1,300, but Town finances were strained, and Town managers and Council had a hard time making ends meet. More of the Town’s budget was being spent on relief to those suffering from the impacts of the Depression, while less was being allocated to infrastructure improvements. Several utility projects and maintenance activities were financed through municipal debentures in order to keep service provisions at a somewhat acceptable level, but there were concerns that the community would not survive the economic crisis.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 provided a boost to the local economy, including the opening of the nearby Empire Flying Training School. By 1941, the Town population had grown to 1,400. The post-war years experienced additional growth in



Figure 1-4: Koch Pflughaupt Block in 1910  
(Glenbow Archives)



Figure 1-6: CPR Train and view of 4 Ave SW,  
ca. 1917 (Glenbow Archives)



Figure 1-7: View of 3 Ave SW, looking west,  
ca. 1920 (Glenbow Archives)



Figure 1-5: 4 Ave SW looking west with Hi-Alta bldg  
on right, ca. 1930 (Glenbow Archives)



## Heritage Structures in the Downtown

The Town of High River has a long and compelling history, and the downtown has always been part of that story. With development occurring in the area for over 130 years, the downtown has been fortunate to retain several key heritage resource assets that help connect people to its past. The buildings and their associations with past community founders, residents, business people and other contributors provide a direct manifestation of the character and history of High River.

In a show of commitment to this vital component of the community's history, the Town commissioned a Heritage Inventory project for the Downtown area, which was completed in September 2012. The study area was bounded by the CPR right-of-way to the east, 8 Avenue SW to the south, Macleod Trail (and properties west of Macleod Trail) to the west, and 1 Avenue SE to the north, overlapping a significant area of the Downtown ARP.

The project involved an assessment of 26 sites that had been identified as part of a Properties of Interest List, with the intent of selecting 20 properties for a detailed heritage evaluation. The historic resources framework established by Alberta Culture utilizes a Statement of Significance as the main evaluative tool. A Statement of Significance evaluates a building by providing a description of the resource, its heritage value, and its character-defining elements. This information is provided within a broader context of three key components for heritage assessment: the eligibility of the resource to be considered historic; the significance of the resource, in terms of the Province's thematic framework; and the integrity of the resource, in terms of its physical condition and ability to convey its historic associations.

Draft Statements of Significance were prepared for 20 properties as part of the study, not all of which fall within the Downtown ARP boundaries. Many of the buildings identified represent the early history of both residential and commercial development in the downtown core and the immediate residential areas to the south, as High River was growing in the beginning of the 20th century. Buildings identified from the Heritage Inventory study that are located within the Downtown ARP boundaries include:

- Wallace Residence (145 Macleod Trail SW): 1906 two and one-half storey residence with Queen Anne style influences; built for prominent early resident Richard Alfred Wallace
- Old Post Office Building (129 – 3 Avenue SW): 1931 two storey brick building, located on prominent intersection; built by Federal Government to serve as postal depot for High River and surrounding area
- Dr. Stanley Residence (149 Macleod Trail SW): circa 1906 two storey residence with Arts and Crafts style influences; built for prominent local physician, Dr. George Douglas Stanley
- Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Building (403 – 1 Street SW): 1910 two-storey brick building with Neo-Classical Revival style influences; originally built as the Canadian Bank of Commerce to service the early needs of the growing community
- Wales Theatre (421 – 1 Street SW): 1927 two-storey brick building; only one of the original three theatres in High River still surviving
- Bradley's Building (123 – 3 Avenue SW): 1900 two-storey commercial building, with boomtown design elements; originally constructed for a leather goods manufacturing and retail business; one of the few remaining very early Downtown buildings
- Miles Residence (120 – 6 Avenue SW): circa 1905 two-storey residence with prominent gambrel roof; built for early residents Graydon Blackadar Miles, his wife Florence E. Miles, and his mother Isabel Irene Miles
- Scout's Hall Log Cabin (331 Macleod Trail SW): 1941 one-storey log cabin; built to provide a hall that would be used by Scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies
- Parrot Block (124 – 4 Avenue SW): circa 1905 two-storey commercial building, representative of the early style of such buildings in the Downtown area
- Wong's Laundry (114 – 4 Avenue SW): circa 1962 one-storey commercial building
- Bedingfield Residence (124 – 6 Avenue SW): 1917 one and one-half storey residence with medium gable roof; built for local dentist Dr. H.E. Bedingfield
- Koch Pflughaupt Building (111 – 3 Avenue SW): two-storey commercial building constructed in two phases – the west portion was built in 1905, while the east portion was completed in 1907; one the earliest and most prominent buildings in the Downtown
- Hi-Alta Building (313 – 1 Street SW): circa 1909 one-storey brick and sandstone commercial building with Edwardian style influences; built by local carpenter Percy Taylor to serve the commercial demands of the growing community

High River, reflecting a similar growth trend experienced by many communities across Canada, causing the town population to surge to over 2,000 by 1947.

High River continued to grow modestly throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and the downtown remained the centre of commerce and community activity. In 1970, a major redevelopment project was undertaken in the downtown, centred around the “triangle” area of Macleod Trail, 1 Street SW, and 3 Avenue SW. The project included a new post office, a restaurant, small stores, offices, and banks, with building openings focused around a central walkway. The project became known as Pioneer Square, and remains a dominant feature of the downtown today. Additional phases of the overall project continued through the 1970s, supplemented by other ongoing development throughout the downtown.

#### SOURCES (section 1.3):

Alberta Culture and Town of High River. A Walking Tour of High River. Edmonton: Alberta Culture.

Knupp, Lillian. Life and Legends: A History of the Town of High River. Calgary: Sandstone Publishing Ltd., 1982.

Community Design Strategies Inc. Town of High River Downtown Heritage Inventory: 2012 Final Report. Calgary, 2012.

## 1.4 Planning Context

The Town of High River previously undertook a strategic planning exercise that laid the foundations for the creation of the ARP: the Town of High River’s *Town Plan* (the Town’s statutory Municipal Development Plan), which includes a *Growth Management Strategy*, outlines strategic policies for the future of the downtown. The *Town Plan* has a goal to:

“Encourage the continued growth and intensification of the downtown area as a vibrant mixed use centre that is the focal point for the community and is an attractive place to shop, work, live, and play.”

The *Town Plan* has a range of objectives and policies that relate to the above goal, one of which requires preparation of an ARP for the downtown area. The *Growth Management Strategy* (GMS), the second part of the *Town Plan* completed in January 2013, provides guidance for the development of the downtown area over the next 30 years. The GMS outlines the potential growth that the downtown could and should sustain. The GMS acknowledges the role of High River’s downtown in the broader region and envisions the downtown as the economic, cultural and civic heart of the community. As such, the downtown plays an important role in determining future land uses and shaping economic growth. The GMS envisions downtown as a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environment with a broad range of opportunities for people to live, work and play, and as a place that leads in the utilization of “green” technology. The strategic policies put forward in the GMS anticipate that GMS objectives would be made actionable through this ARP.

The vast amount of damage caused by the June 2013 flood rapidly advanced the need to complete the ARP. Opportunity has arisen out of tragedy, as the immediate need for new deep servicing infrastructure brought with it the chance to re-imagine the streetscape and other elements of the public realm. It also provided an opportunity for Town residents to have a frank and open discussion about the future at a time when moving beyond the immediate past has been at the forefront of everyone’s mind.



Figure 1-8: 3 Ave SW, looking west, ca. 1958  
(Glenbow Archives)



The immediate need to respond to the flood's aftermath has laid the groundwork for the development of long-term solutions, ensuring that the economic and cultural vitality of High River is not only restored, but improved. Sense of place and quality of life must be restored for all residents, and the Town must be re-invented as a desirable place for business owners to invest in a prosperous and bright future. Despite the enormous destruction, rebuilding the downtown provides an opportunity to address flood risks while improving the area to make it better than it was before the flood. To these ends, this ARP is consistent with the policy directions contained in *Town Plan* and formalizes and organizes recommendations into a statutory planning document.

### 1.4.1 Development of the ARP

Timelines and key dates from the ARP planning process are highlighted in Figure 1-9.

Development of the ARP began in earnest in March 2014. Initial work coincided with the urgent need to replace utility infrastructure that had been critically damaged in the flooding the previous summer. This work entailed the re-design of several downtown streets. Public engagement events, including regular meetings with the High River Planning and Renewal Advisory Committee (PRAC), soon followed, beginning in April and conducted throughout the project duration. The project team undertook and completed extensive background research and analysis, which culminated in the completion of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges ("SWOC") analysis (for a summary of this analysis, see [Appendix B](#)).

Initial engagement and the SWOC formed the basis for the development of a complete public realm design, architectural design guidelines, land use policy, a parking study, and a cultural plan. This material was vetted with the public through a series of 'pop-up' engagement activities and events held in the Town, such as the farmer's market, artisan's market, and air show. The ongoing engagement activities, which extended through July and August of 2014, enabled the project team to test and iteratively refine the plan. A public workshop was held in late August 2014 to present and discuss draft plan concepts.

The project team developed the complete draft ARP document in September and October 2014. A final public open house was held on November 13, with submission of the document to Council in December 2014.

### 1.4.2 Public Participation

Public participation is critical to the success of the Downtown ARP. Involving residents and businesses in planning for the future was a cornerstone of the Downtown ARP project. In total, over 460 people participated in three engagement periods held from April to November 2014. Their input helped identify a shared vision for downtown redevelopment, and set out the long-term strategies needed to rebuild the economic, environmental and cultural vitality of High River.

#### *A Decentralized Approach*

The project used a decentralized approach to engagement that allowed people to participate in the project on their own terms. Multiple opportunities for participation were provided in each engagement period, ranging from the traditional workshop to interactive web-mapping and pop-up open houses.

Engagement activities gave people the choice to participate as much or as little as they wanted, whether it was to learn more about the project, or to share their ideas with the project team and other interested residents. Engagement activities were also designed to make participation easy by going to where people are, allowing the project team to involve as many people as possible. This approach resulted in an innovative process that encouraged town-wide participation

### Engagement Summary

Three distinct engagement periods were held throughout the process, timed to correspond with major project decision-points. All engagement activities, and the engagement periods themselves, were designed to build on each other. The three engagement periods are summarized in Table 1. For additional information on engagement, please see the detailed What We Heard report in Appendix A.

Table 1-1 Engagement Summary

	Phase 1 Community Visioning	Phase 2 Downtown ARP Themes and Solutions	Phase 3 Downtown ARP Themes and Solutions
Timing	April - May 2014	June - September 2014	October - November 2014
Objectives	Identify shared aspirations and goals.  Prepare a 30-year vision and guiding principles for downtown redevelopment.	Confirm the vision.  Review core planning themes.  Select the desired short-, medium-, and long-term strategies.	Review the final plan.  Identify and resolve any outstanding issues.  Receive Council approval for the Downtown ARP.
Activities	2 workshop sessions  1 drop-in open house  Project blog  Webmap tool  Youth engagement – class room discussions PRAC meetings	2 workshop sessions  4 pop-up open houses  Project blog  Online comment tool  PRAC meetings	1 drop-in open house  Online review of draft AR  Council meeting  PRAC meetings
Participation	190 people	215 people	57 people
What We Heard	People agree that downtown's unique and cherished features should be celebrated. People agree that more attractions / destinations are needed to bring people downtown. Some people are concerned that loss of angle-parking will hurt downtown businesses. Others see public realm improvements as benefitting downtown businesses.	People support the vision for downtown. People agree with the overall planning themes recommended for the ARP. People provided more ideas and suggestions to be developed as part of the ARP. A parking strategy was prepared to address concerns about the loss of angle-parking.	People support the draft ARP, and are excited about the potential for redevelopment. Specific questions about the ARP that were answered by project team members.

### 1.4.3 Supporting Studies

Baseline knowledge and recommendations from several sources have been critical to the formation of the ARP. This information has been consolidated into the first four appendices of this ARP for reference. It includes:

#### *What We Heard Report (Appendix A)*

- The What We Heard Report summarizes public and stakeholder consultation events and activities, and provides complete documentation of input provided by the public.

#### *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (“SWOC”) (Appendix B)*

- The SWOC is comprised of a series of thematic mapping and analysis exercises used to identify the current issues impacting the downtown. The SWOC analysis was used to frame and inform public consultation discussions, support decision-making, and prioritize issues to be addressed by the ARP.

#### *Parking Study (Appendix C)*

- The Parking Study provides an analysis of existing parking demand, anticipated demand, an evaluation of parking management implications and emerging issues, and recommendations for implementing parking management. Place-based recommendations are incorporated into Public-Realm (Chapter 3) policies; investment, timing, and coordination-related recommendations are incorporated in Chapter 5: Implementation.

#### *Cultural Plan (Appendix D)*

- The Cultural Plan provides recommended goals, priorities, and strategies for ensuring that cultural and heritage resources in the downtown area are supported, enhanced, and sustained for the benefit of current and future generations. Place-based recommendations are incorporated into Public Realm (Chapter 3) and Land Use + Urban Design (Chapter 4) policies; recommendations related to investments, timing, coordination, and further studies are incorporated into Chapter 5: Implementation.

Input from these sources is manifest in and/or is directly incorporated throughout the content of the chapters that follow.



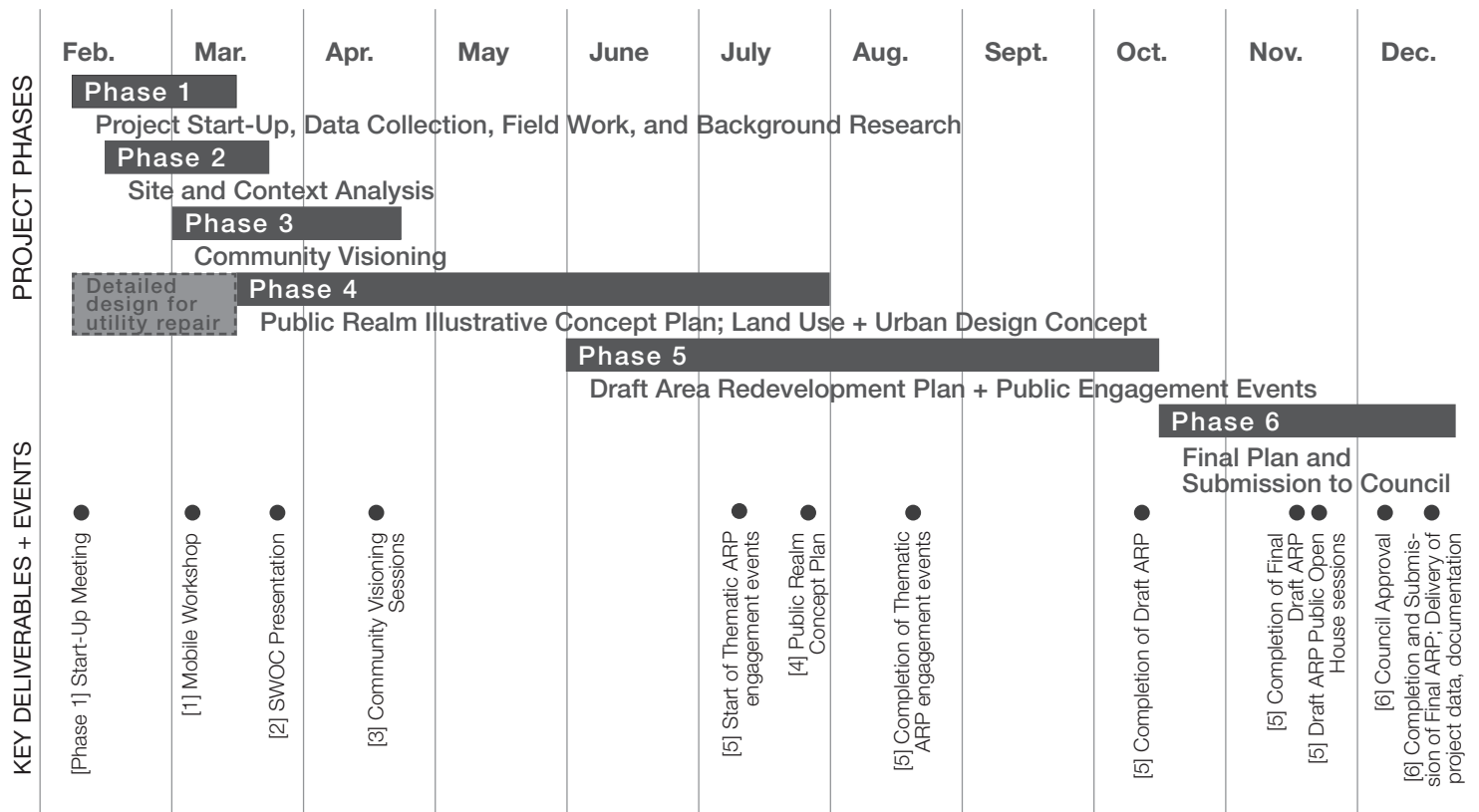


Figure 1-9: High River Downtown ARP Schedule





Public Engagement and Consultation Events





## 2.2 Principles and Objectives

### Places are for people.

- People come downtown to shop, work, meet friends, eat, visit, listen to music, spend time as a family, and attend special events.
- People live downtown in apartments, condos, and townhomes, and in houses in nearby residential areas.
- People spend time downtown because there are comfortable, safe and inviting places to gather and socialize.
- People stay downtown because it is dynamic; there are things to see and do throughout the day and into the evening on a year-round basis.

### People are connected.

- People can safely get downtown by the transportation mode of their choice; by walking, cycling, driving or taking transit.
- The CP rail line landscape and Centre Street are important links, rather than barriers, to movement and access.
- Buildings, roadway infrastructure, architecture, and landscape architecture reinforce a people-friendly atmosphere.
- Green streets and pathways lead people to downtown, and into surrounding open spaces.
- Improved interfaces with George Lane Park and the Highwood River connect people to the natural environment.

### Community is enriched.

- Economic development provides a diversity of opportunities for investment and employment in strategic sectors: agricultural services, health and wellness, creative / knowledge economies, and tourism.
- Creative use and reuse of spaces, buildings, and public lands such as the former CP rail line builds social, economic and cultural capacity.
- Flexible, multi-use indoor and outdoor spaces house community activities and are hubs for small-scale enterprise and start-up businesses.
- Spaces for playing, walking, cycling and other types of physical activity are integral to the area.

### Development is resilient.

- Flood mitigation, adaptive infrastructure capacity, and planning and design measures safeguard the community and its economic investments against the impacts of flooding.
- Architectural and landscape design contribute to an outstanding quality of place.
- Heritage architecture is preserved and integrated with new, context-sensitive development.
- Treed streets, an abundance of flowers, and native species plantings beautify the Downtown, and provide important ecological infrastructure to keep the air and water healthy.
- Building and paving materials, construction approaches, and plant species selection reduce impacts to the environment.

### Culture thrives.

- The community nurtures a cultural sector that supports creative economic development and enriches quality of life.
- Quality spaces allow cultural practitioners to showcase their work
- The vibrant downtown area is a hub of cultural activity year round.
- Exceptional and well sited public art captures the modern, progressive spirit of the community.
- An inviting and inclusive environment is fostered to value everyone's contribution.





### 3. PUBLIC REALM

The public realm plays a critical role in shaping a community's sense of place. The public realm creates a vibrant commercial core by attracting pedestrians and cyclists to spend time downtown and, in turn, actively supports local businesses. In High River, the public realm is a critical catalytic component of downtown revitalization. In order for the revitalization to be successful, the public realm must be attractive for all types of users and facilitate a wide variety of events and activities throughout the year.

The public realm consists of any publicly owned exterior spaces such as streets, sidewalks, parks, and open spaces. Because it is publicly owned, the future development and design of the public realm can be dictated by the town in consultation with the community.

#### Objectives

The public realm guidelines for the Downtown ARP have been created with the following objectives in mind:

- a. Create safe, vibrant gathering places for community and cultural activities;
- b. Improve public safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;
- c. Facilitate pedestrian and cyclist use, all day and all year round;
- d. Re-vegetate and beautify the downtown by planting street trees, shrubs, and annual flowers;
- e. Reconnect downtown with George Lane Park and the Highwood River, improve public spaces within the downtown, and create new connections into surrounding neighbourhoods that were previously obstructed by the CPR and Highway 2A thoroughfares; and
- f. Use consistent public realm design to create a coherent identity across the downtown ARP area, with slight variations to suit the needs of individual precincts.



## Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan

The Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan [Map 3-1: Public Realm Illustrative Plan (North) Map 3-2: Public Realm Illustrative Plan (South)] illustrates a cohesive vision for the streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas within the Downtown ARP plan area, that together comprise the downtown's public realm. Initial portions of the plan were developed out of an immediate need to replace underground utility infrastructure damaged by the 2013 flood, which required reconstruction of the several streets in the historical downtown. The remainder of the concept was developed over the course of the ARP planning process, through engagement with stakeholders and the public, in which objectives for the public realm were identified and design concepts vetted and refined.

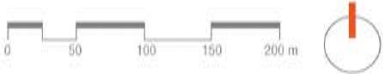
The illustrative plan reflects a long-term implementation of the policies included in this chapter of the ARP, supported by application of the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines included in Appendix E.





North Side South Side

Map 3-2: Public Realm Illustrative Concept Plan (South)





## 3.1 PUBLIC STREETS

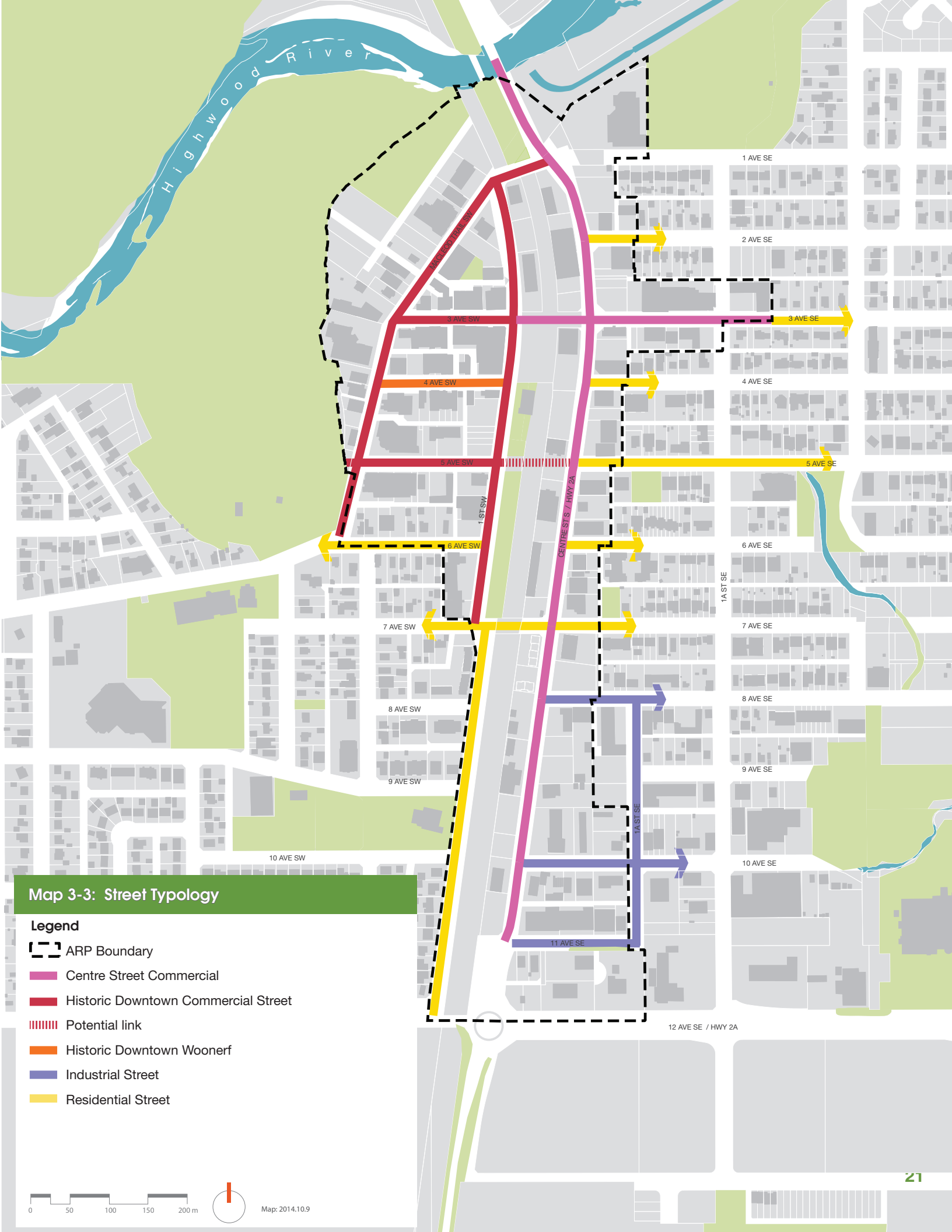
The existing street network should be reconfigured to accommodate greater levels of mobility for pedestrians and cyclists, while also being adapted to support future urban growth. This will ensure that a satisfactory level of service is maintained for vehicles, while providing straightforward and efficient access to the downtown for residents who choose to cycle or walk. The general policies provided in this section were developed to be consistent with the Parking Study included in Appendix C.

### 3.1.1 General Policies

- a. Pedestrian safety shall be prioritized in all aspects of public realm design and implementation.
- b. Traffic-calming measures shall be employed to improve pedestrian safety.
- c. New roundabouts at the following locations should be considered to improve traffic flow, address dangerous safety conditions, and demarcate entrances into Downtown:
  - Centre Street and Macleod Trail / 1 Avenue SE
  - Macleod Trail and 6 Avenue SW
- d. A new vehicular crossing of the former CPR railroad tracks should be considered at 5 Ave SW to increase east-west connections to the historic downtown and George Lane Park, and to reduce future traffic congestion at existing crossings.
- e. To improve connectivity to downtown east of Centre Street, the cul-de-sacs on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be removed and both Avenues connected directly to Centre Street.
- f. On street cycling shall be encouraged within the downtown by:
  - Installing adequate signage and/or pavement markings to promote sharing the road, and improve safety and awareness for cyclists and motorists, and;
  - *Providing a dedicated on-street bike lane on 5 Avenue between Macleod Trail and 2nd Street SE to connect Happy Trails in George Lane Park to the Happy Trails in Little Bow Park.*

### 3.1.2 Street Typology

The following section provides a breakdown of the street typology proposed for the ARP plan area. Refer to Map 3-3: Street Typology for recommended locations, as well as the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines for recommended landscape standards.



Map 3-3: Street Typology

Legend

- ARP Boundary
- Centre Street Commercial
- Historic Downtown Commercial Street
- Potential link
- Historic Downtown Woonerf
- Industrial Street
- Residential Street



Map: 2014.10.9



### *3.1.2.1 Centre Street Commercial*

The current condition of Centre Street provides unrestricted movement of vehicles from the bridge over the Highwood River to the traffic circle at 12 Avenue S. On-street parking is not allowed, and a wide drive aisle results in motorists regularly exceeding the speed limit. As the primary connection between downtown and the rest of High River, it is strongly recommended to reconfigure Centre Street to become more pedestrian and retail oriented (Figure 3-2).

It is important to note that the widening of Centre Street, the installation of new sidewalks, and landscaping along certain portions of the existing right-of-way will require additional land area. Land will need to be acquired for these purposes.

#### *Policies:*

- a. During Off-Peak Hours: provide a single travel lane in each direction and allow on-street parallel parking in the remaining travel lanes.
- b. During On-Peak hours: provide two travel lanes in each direction.
- c. To reduce traffic congestion and improve public safety, limit the number of driveways accessing Centre Street by requiring all new developments to access parking lots from laneways where possible.

### *3.1.2.2 Centre Street Bridge Widening*

To improve traffic circulation, the existing bridge spanning High Country Drive with Centre Street over the Highwood River be widened to accommodate traffic flow (Figure 3-3). This measure is currently under consideration. The alignment and location of the bridge must be given careful consideration in order to:

- Minimize negative impacts to vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist mobility, and place high importance on public safety.
- Minimize negative impacts to open space and parks adjacent to the bridge.
- Allow for seamless integration with other components shown in the public realm illustrative plan (Map 3-1).

#### *Policies:*

- a. The bridge alignment should accommodate the proposed roundabout at Centre Street and Macleod Trail.
- b. The bridge alignment should maintain sufficient green space to connect downtown to the Highwood River and George Lane Park to the west of the bridge.
- c. The bridge alignment should not interfere with the irrigation canal headworks east of the bridge.
- d. The bridge alignment shall provide for sufficient space to construct a pedestrian and cyclist bridge over Centre Street, as described in section 3.3.2.4.
- a. The bridge design should incorporate a strong, distinctive architectural character to highlight its role as a gateway into downtown.

### *3.1.2.3 Historic Downtown Commercial*

Within the historic downtown, unique street types have been developed to address the architectural character of the area, to promote retail development, and to create a vibrant public realm that is attractive to pedestrians.

#### *Policies:*

- a. In order to simplify traffic circulation and provide local businesses with more visibility, one-way streets on 3 Avenue SW and 4 Avenue SW between Macleod Trail and 1 Street SW should be converted to two-way streets.
- b. To improve public safety and minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts, angle parking shall be eliminated where feasible and replaced with parallel parking; and the remaining right-of-way should be dedicated to sidewalk in accordance with the policies identified in 3.3 Public Sidewalks + Pathways.
- c. To improve pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout the downtown, traffic calming devices such as bulb outs should be installed at intersections, at mid-block pedestrian crosswalks, and where laneways and busy parking lots exit onto streets.
- d. To reduce traffic speeds, drive aisle widths should be reduced to 3.5 metres.



Figure 3-2 Centre Street Commercial Street Concept



Figure 3-3 Centre Street Bridge Widening Concept

### 3.1.2.4 Historic Downtown Woonerf

To compliment the historic character of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Macleod Trail and 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW and to provide a suitable location for special events, it is recommended that the existing street be reconfigured into a **woonerf** that is shared equally by pedestrians, cyclists and motorists (Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5 ). The following policies apply to the creation and management of the woonerf:

#### *Policies:*

- a. Eliminate one way traffic flow and replace it with two way traffic flow, with a drive aisle width of 3.0 metres.
- b. To encourage pedestrian movement between the sidewalk and roadway, install a unique and uniform paving material throughout the sidewalk and roadway; install a low-profile rolled curb and gutter along the woonerf; post maximum traffic speeds to “Shared Street - 10 km/h”.
- c. Eliminate angle parking and replace with short-term parallel parking.
- d. Incorporate a chicane into the road geometry to reduce traffic speeds.
- e. Allow the woonerf to be closed to vehicular traffic for special events, as indicated in section 3.3.2.3. This includes seasonal or daily closures as deemed appropriate by the relevant authorities. Closures must allow access for emergency vehicles.

### 3.1.2.5 Industrial Street

Within the Industrial Arts Precinct, streets are designed primarily for vehicular traffic, including a higher proportion of large vehicles.

#### *Policies:*

- a. On-street parallel parking is strongly encouraged.
- b. For existing developments, existing driveway accesses are permitted.
- c. New developments should have a single access point to the facing street. Two access points may be permitted if a single point of access is deemed unfeasible by the development authority.
- d. For new developments, maximum driveway width shall not exceed 12 metres.

### 3.1.2.6 Residential Street

Residential streets are primarily local roads with low traffic volumes. Due to higher population densities, on-street parking is desirable, as are sidewalks on both sides of the road to allow for safe movement of pedestrians.

#### *Policies:*

- a. On-street parallel parking is strongly encouraged.
- b. Where sidewalks do not exist, reduce drive aisle widths to allow for installation of a 1.5 metre sidewalk, provided that the remaining drive aisles are no less than 3.5 metres wide.





Figure 3-4 Historic Downtown Woonerf Concept Perspective View

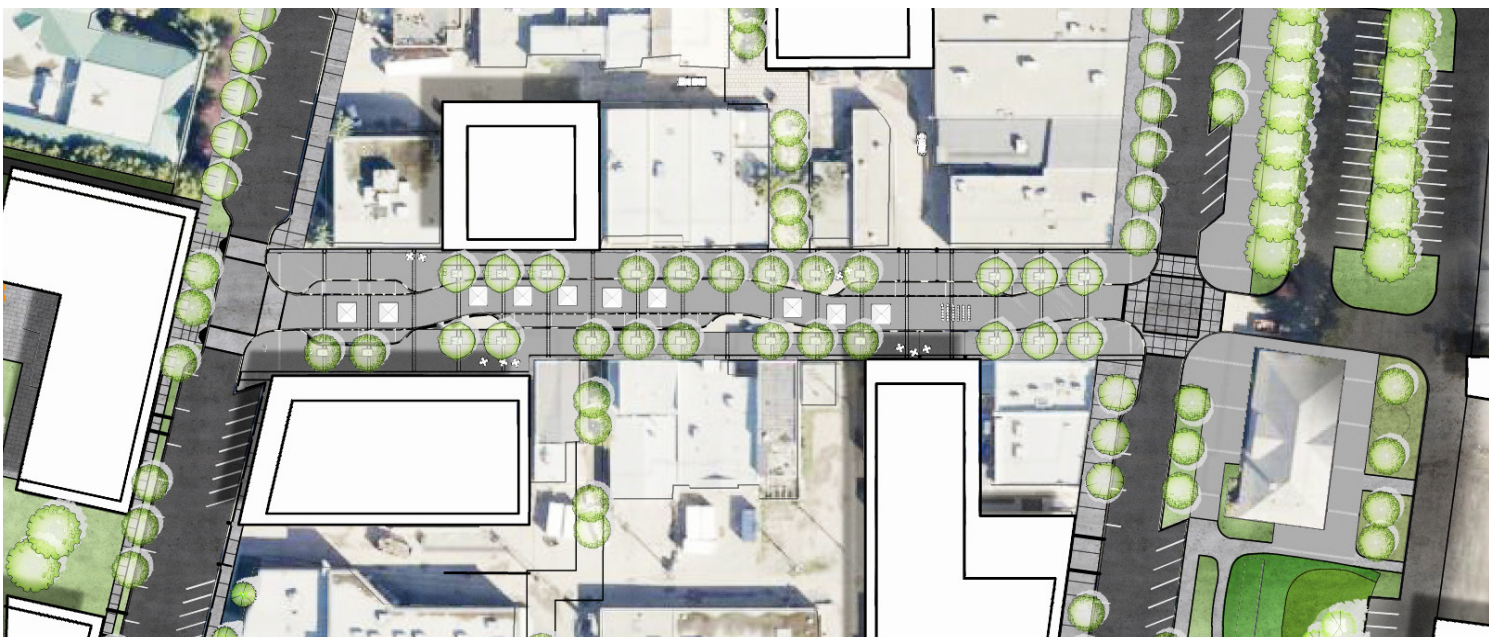


Figure 3-5 Historic Downtown Woonerf Concept Plan View





## 3.2 PUBLIC LANEWAYS

In the conventional sense, laneways within the downtown serve businesses and residences by providing access to: service entrances of buildings, private parking, and other back of house activities, such as waste and recycling collection. Within High River's downtown, however, there are additional laneways that serve as public access to plazas and as pedestrian thoroughfares through the historic downtown.

### 3.2.1 LANEWAY TYPOLOGY

The following section provides a breakdown of laneway typology within the downtown ARP boundary. Refer to Map 3-4: Laneway Typology for recommended locations, as well as the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines for recommended landscape standards.

#### *3.2.1.1 Conventional Laneway*

Conventional Laneways refer to those laneways that are primarily used for access to back of house activities for residences and businesses.



Map 3-4: Laneway Typology

Legend

- ARP Boundary
- Conventional Laneway (Historic Downtown)
- Conventional Laneway (Centre Street Mixed Use)
- Conventional Laneway (Industrial)
- Garden Parking Laneway
- Mews

0 50 100 150 200 m



Map: 2014.10.9

*Policies:*

- a. Where feasible, new developments shall access parking lots by means of adjacent laneways.
- b. Private waste and recycling storage facilities located within laneway rights-of-ways are prohibited.
- c. Private parking within laneway rights-of-ways is prohibited.

### 3.2.1.2 Pedestrian Mews

**Mews** are the pedestrian laneways that thread between and behind buildings, and are one of the unique characteristics of High River's Downtown (Figure 3-6). They improve pedestrian connectivity and serve as public spaces, providing opportunities for pedestrian access points into adjacent buildings and activities.

*Policies:*

- a. Existing mews shall be preserved as pedestrian oriented laneways.
- b. Mews shall have clear legible public access from streets and provide sufficient lighting throughout.
- c. The development of a mews is recommended in the block between 4 and 5 Avenue as indicated on the location shown on Map 3-4: Laneway Typology.
- d. The surface treatment within mews should integrate with the sidewalks to which the mews are connected, providing clear legibility for pedestrians.
- e. Planting of trees, shrubs and other vegetation within the mews system, in accordance with the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines, is strongly encouraged.
- f. Where a mews intersects a conventional laneway, the presence of the pedestrian mews shall be clearly articulated to ensure safe pedestrian passage across the conventional laneway.

- g. New developments should incorporate active frontage and building entrances onto all facades abutting pedestrian mews.
- h. Where compatible uses exist, spill-out activities between at-grade retail and hospitality services abutting mews is encouraged.

### 3.2.1.3 Garden Laneway

Within the existing CPR lands between Macleod Trail and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue S, a new laneway type is proposed that serves the following purposes:

- A new laneway will act as a service lane to parcels along Centre Street for the purposes of parking access, loading, and waste and recycling collection;
- New public parking spaces within the downtown will be incorporated into the Garden Laneway to offset parking decreases associated with the removal of angle parking within the historic downtown; and
- The laneway shall be designed to accommodate vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist circulation.

*Policies:*

- a. The design of the laneway shall facilitate multiple transportation modes by providing an equal balance between vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist circulation.
- b. The landscape of the laneway shall be designed in accordance with the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines to ensure that the laneway is seamlessly incorporated with the surrounding open space abutting the laneway.



Figure 3-6 Pedestrian Mews Concept





### 3.3 PUBLIC SIDEWALKS + PATHWAYS

Public sidewalks refer to paved areas on public lands intended for pedestrian travel alongside roadways. In certain areas where pedestrian mobility is of high importance, public sidewalks may be enhanced through widening, special surface treatments, unique lighting, and the installation of site furnishings. It is recommended that sidewalks are designed primarily for pedestrian circulation, but may accommodate cycling for children.

Public pathways differ from sidewalks in that they are generally not located immediately adjacent to roadways, but rather through parks or in public rights of way abutting private properties. It is recommended that pathways are designed for multiple uses, including walking and cycling.

#### 3.3.1 General Policies

- a. All sidewalks shall be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the American Disabilities Association Guidelines (ADA Guidelines), including wheelchair letdowns at all pedestrian crossings.
- b. Where feasible, sidewalks should be a minimum of 2.0 metres in unobstructed width.
- c. Sidewalks shall be adequately illuminated to ensure a high level of pedestrian safety and comfort.
- d. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the streets throughout the ARP boundary.
- e. Obstructions to sidewalks, including driveway aisles and above-ground utilities should be minimized to maximize pedestrian safety.
- f. New developments should design public sidewalks as per this ARP.

#### 3.3.2 Sidewalk + Pathway Typology

The following section provides a breakdown of sidewalk and pathway typology within the downtown ARP boundary. Refer to Map 3-5: Sidewalk + Pathway Typology for recommended locations, as well as the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines for recommended landscape standards. Each typology varies according to the width of the frontage zone, pedestrian zone, and greenscape / furnishing zone.



Map 3-5: Sidewalk + Pathway Typology


Legend

- ARP Boundary
- New Conventional Sidewalk
- Enhanced Downtown Commercial Sidewalk Type 1
- Enhanced Downtown Commercial Sidewalk Type 2
- Historic Downtown Woonerf
- Existing Happy Trails Pathways
- Proposed Happy Trails Pathways
- George Lane Promenade
- Proposed On-Street Bike Route



Map: 2014.09.22

Table 3-2 Sidewalk Typology Widths



Sidewalk Zone	Frontage Zone	Pedestrian Zone	Greenscape / Furnishing Zone
	<p>Applies to locations with buildings adjacent to sidewalk.</p> <p>Permitted uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patio seating</li> <li>• Non-permanent signage</li> <li>• Retail display</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> </ul>	<p>Reserved only for pedestrian travel.</p> <p>Permitted uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian Travel only</li> </ul>	<p>Area between top of curb and border of pedestrian zone.</p> <p>Permitted uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Site Furnishings</li> <li>• Transit stops</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Non-permanent patio (under special circumstances, such as within bulb-outs)</li> </ul>
Sidewalk Typology	Preferred Minimum Zone Widths		
Conventional	N/A	1.8m	N/A, unless sidewalk is separated from curb with a boulevard.
Enhanced Downtown Commercial Type 1	1.2m	1.8m	1.5m
Enhanced Downtown Commercial Type 1	1.0m	1.8m	0.6m
Historic Downtown Woonerf	1.5m	2.25m	1.5m
<p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended widths are minimum guidelines. Actual widths may vary on a street-by-street basis.</li> <li>• Under special circumstances, and reviewed for approval on a case-by-case basis, businesses may apply for use of the furnishing zone for sidewalk café / patio, if sufficient width of other zones can be demonstrated.</li> <li>• All private uses must be approved through an established protocol (See Chapter 5: Implementation, “High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program”)</li> </ul>			

## 3.3.2.1 Conventional Sidewalk

Conventional sidewalks refer to all areas within the ARP boundary where enhanced sidewalk typology are not designated. Refer to the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines for relevant design guidelines and details.

### *Policies:*

- a. Refer to Table 3-1 Sidewalk Typology Widths for widths of each sidewalk zone.

## 3.3.2.2 Enhanced Downtown Commercial Type 1 + Type 2

Throughout those areas of downtown that are intended to support at-grade retail business, sidewalk enhancement is recommended to meet the following objectives:

- Create a unique sense of identity for the area through the consistent application of quality surface materials, planting, lighting, and furnishings.
- Increase pedestrian comfort and to enhance the overall character of the street.
- Provide ample sidewalk width to allow a comfortable flow of pedestrians within the pedestrian zone.
- Improve the quality of pedestrian experience by widening existing sidewalks to allow for a furnishing zone that contains public seating, waste receptacles, bike racks, newsstands, and other public amenities.
- Make the downtown more attractive for business by allowing commercial use of the sidewalk within the frontage zone for retail displays, non-permanent signage, patio seating, or other non-permanent uses. This will, in turn, improve the experience of consumers and provide additional value to the retailer.
- Allow for commercial use of sidewalks for non-permanent patios within the furnishing zone.

### *Policies:*

- a. Where deemed acceptable by the Town of High River, private utilization of public sidewalks within the frontage zone is allowed for temporary patio, retail, display, or other non-permanent uses. All private uses must be submitted for approval through an established protocol (see Chapter 5: Implementation, High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program.)
- b. Refer to Table 3-1 Sidewalk Typology Widths for widths of each sidewalk zone.

## 3.3.2.3 Historic Downtown Woonerf

As discussed in Section 3.1.2.4, in the 4 Avenue right-of-way between Macleod Trail and 1 Street SW, it is recommended that a **woonerf** street be constructed to create a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians across the entire right of way, while maintaining vehicular traffic at reduced speeds. As a pedestrian-oriented area, the Historic Downtown Woonerf is well-suited for special events and is an ideal location for hosting cultural activities year round.

### *Policies:*

- a. Seasonal or daily closure of the Historic Downtown Woonerf for special events is strongly encouraged.
- b. Closures should be coordinated through an established protocol (see Chapter 5: Implementation, High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program).
- c. Where possible, install appropriate event support facilities such as electrical outlets, WiFi/LiFi, and speakers.



### 3.3.2.4 Happy Trails Pathway

Happy Trails is the primary multi-modal regional pathway network throughout the Town of High River. Within the ARP boundary, there are opportunities for enhancement along the Happy Trails network by linking disconnected portions of the Happy Trails Pathways, creating linkages to the downtown, and improving public safety where the pathway network interfaces with roadways.

#### *Policies*

- a. To improve public safety and reduce vehicular congestion, it is recommended that a pedestrian and cyclist bridge be constructed over Centre Street along the Highwood River. If feasible, the bridge abutments should form part of the flood protection berm along the Highwood River, and incorporate design elements that serve to educate the public about flooding and flood mitigation along the Highwood River.
- b. As part of future bridge widening, Happy Trails sections should be provided on both sides of the future Highwood River Bridge.
- c. Where dedicated pathways cannot be accommodated, on-street and laneway bike routes are recommended to interconnect trail networks.
- d. The Happy Trails Pathways should be incorporated into the George Lane Promenade.

### 3.3.2.5 George Lane Promenade

The George Lane Promenade is a proposed extension of the Happy Trails Pathway network, and borders the eastern boundary of George Lane Park (Figure 3-8). The objectives of the promenade are:

- To provide direct connections between the Historic Downtown Business District and George Lane Park.
- To encourage business owners to participate in the public enjoyment of George Lane Park by offering the public opportunities for outdoor dining and entertainment in a picturesque setting.

#### *Policies:*

- a. A public promenade be constructed along the eastern edge of George Lane Park.
- b. The promenade should extend from the 5th Avenue park entrance to the public parking lot adjacent to City Hall, and terminate at the existing Happy Trails Pathway. The proposed alignment is shown on Map 3-5: Sidewalk + Pathway Typology.
- c. If feasible, establish public rights-of-ways to construct pathways through existing privately owned parcels between the boundary of George Lane Park and Macleod Trail.
- d. Encourage new developments along the promenade through the construction of active building frontage, outdoor terraces and patios, building entrances, and gardens.

# PUBLIC SIDEWALKS + PATHWAYS



Figure 3-7 Downtown Enhanced Commercial Sidewalk Type 1 Concept



Figure 3-8 George Lane Promenade Concept



## 3.4 OPEN SPACE

Open spaces are those lands within the ARP boundary that are owned by the Town of High River and intended for public uses such as social gatherings, public events, and active and passive recreation. Open space typology include parks and plazas as illustrated on Map 3-6: Open Space.

### 3.4.1 General Policies

- a. Public spaces should have clear legible public access, be flexible in terms of use, and consider solar access and year-round cultural activities in their design.
- b. Design of public spaces should adhere to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.





Map 3-6: Open Space

- ARP Boundary
- Existing Open Space Outside ARP Boundary
- Existing Open Space Inside ARP Boundary
- Proposed Open Space
- Existing Plazas
- Proposed Plazas

0 50 100 150 200 m



Map: 2014.09.22

## 3.4.2 Existing + New Public Parks

Public parks refer to areas of land that are landscaped in a largely natural state for the enjoyment of the public. They may have facilities for recreation, and are generally programmed with enough flexibility to allow for a wide variety of year-round uses.

### 3.4.2.1 George Lane Park

While located outside the ARP study area, George Lane Park is an important feature of downtown High River. There are significant opportunities to connect the historic downtown with George Lane Park through the establishment of the George Lane Promenade discussed in Section 3.3.2.5. A connection to an expanded park space at the north end of downtown, west of the Centre Street bridge, would be visible to pedestrians and motorists travelling southbound across the Highwood River, and would help create a distinctive gateway to the plan area and the park at the north end of downtown.

#### *Policies*

- a. Enhance the existing George Lane Park entrance at 5 Avenue SW by establishing a prominent gateway feature to invite the public to enter the park from Downtown.
- b. Create the George Lane promenade described in Section 3.3.2.5 along the eastern boundary of the park, so that new development on the western edge of the plan area can present pedestrian-oriented frontage to the park.
- c. Explore year-round programming opportunities for recreation and cultural activities within George Lane Park that complement and expand the existing program of events and festivals that take place downtown, as recommended in **Appendix D, Cultural Plan.**
- d. Create a gateway park space at the north end of downtown, west of the Centre Street bridge. The space should include the Happy Trails cyclist and pedestrian bridge recommended in Section 3.1.2.2 and serve as a connection point between George Lane Park, the downtown, and the Public Service Precinct that runs north-south through the plan area. The park space may be a suitable location for the construction of public art installations that memorialize the 2013 flood and educate the public about flooding in High River.

### 3.4.2.2 Rotary Park

Rotary Park is the largest open space within High River's downtown. It is a linear park that borders the former CPR right of way along its eastern boundary where the Garden Laneway is recommended.

#### *Policies*

- a. Maintain Rotary Park in its current condition as a linear park.
- b. Explore year-round programming opportunities for recreation and cultural activities within Rotary Park that complement and expand the existing program of events and festivals that take place downtown.
- c. When the Garden Laneway is constructed, Rotary Park should be expanded eastward and interfaced with the laneway and public parking stalls; planting should be used to screen parking stalls from the park.
- d. If 5 Avenue SW is extended through Rotary Park between 1 Street SW and Centre Street (as shown in Map 3-1), the park should be modified to ensure safe pedestrian flow, and 5 Avenue SW will require pedestrian calming measures to ensure safe vehicular speeds. The existing sculpture within the proposed road alignment should remain in its current location by splitting the roadway around the sculpture.

### 3.4.2.3 *New Park at 1st Street and 9th Avenue SW*

There is an opportunity to create a new public park across 1 Street SW from the existing Charles Clark Park and the public library. Within the public realm concept plan, this is a strategic location for a park as it would demarcate the presence of the adjacent civic institutions cluster (the public library, Culture Centre, and Charles Clark Health Centre).

#### *Policies*

- a. Creation of a new park east of 1st Street SW between 9th Avenue and 10th Avenue SW is recommended.
- b. A pedestrian crossing signal across 1 St SW adjacent to the library is recommended to facilitate easy and safe crossing for pedestrians.
- c. To create an environment suitable for a new public park, traffic calming features, including pedestrian bulb-outs and narrowed drive aisles, are recommended to reduce vehicular speeds along 1st Street SW.

### 3.4.2.4 *New Urban Agriculture Park at 1st Street between 9th - 12th Avenue*

The lands between 1st Street SW and Centre Street SW, between 9 Avenue and 12th Avenue SW, and within the CPR right of way, are envisioned for use by non-profit groups, community-oriented urban agriculture, community gardens, and/or public orchards. These uses reinforce the agricultural identity of the Town and region, and will act as a catalyst to help the community build strong internal relationships, as well as partnerships with local charities.

#### *Policies*

- a. The Town shall ensure that the land is available for urban agricultural uses, provided that the community forms a non-profit organization that is solely responsible for the fund-raising, development and maintenance of the proposed uses for the entire duration of the land use agreement.
- b. To facilitate the urban agricultural use, the Town of High River should provide water for irrigation at limited or no cost to the non-profit group responsible for care of the lands.

- c. The urban agriculture park should accommodate the a north/south Happy Trails connection.
- d. Food-sharing agreements with local charities are strongly encouraged.

### 3.4.3 Existing + New Public Plazas

Public plazas refer to areas of land that are largely landscaped with hard surface materials, and generally oriented for public gathering rather than active recreation. They are typically programmed with enough flexibility to allow for a wide variety of events.

#### 3.4.3.1 *Pioneer Square*

Pioneer Square is the largest existing public plaza in the downtown, and is used for a wide variety of public events. The creation of active pedestrian frontages on developments abutting Pioneer Square is strongly encouraged to ensure that the land is fully utilized as a public amenity.

#### *Policies*

- a. Encourage active frontage, building entrances, and temporary spill-out activities, including café seating, patios, retail displays, and non-permanent signage in the square. Private use of the plaza will be subject to approval through an established protocol (see Chapter 5: Implementation, High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program).
- b. Renovations to the existing plaza are recommended to facilitate a wider range of activities than the area currently allows.
- c. If turfgrass is installed, turf reinforcement should also be installed to minimize compaction and maximize turf health.
- d. If possible, appropriate event support facilities such as electrical outlets, WiFi/LiFi, and speakers should be installed.



### *3.4.3.2 Museum of the Highwood Plaza*

The Museum of the Highwood is one of the largest cultural attractions in the downtown, and is strategically located nearby Rotary Park and the proposed Garden Laneway. There is currently a small plaza paved with concrete unit pavers north of the museum along 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

#### *Policies*

- a. Maintain the existing use of the land at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue as a plaza.
- b. Use of the plaza for any private function shall be subject to approval through an established protocol (see Chapter 5: Implementation, High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program.)
- c. Expand the existing plaza to include new pedestrian areas constructed as part of traffic calming measures along 1<sup>st</sup> St SW.
- d. When the Garden Laneway is constructed, it is recommended to expand the plaza to include the lands adjacent to the laneway surrounding the Museum of the Highwood.
- e. Work with the Museum of the Highwood to construct educational and/or public art installations that coincide with the programming of the museum, as well as to use the plaza for special events and outdoor programming on a year round basis.



Highwood Golf and Country Club

Birchwood Park

George Lane Memorial Park

Bow Park

Charles Clark Park


## Map 4-1: Plan Area and Planning Precincts

### Legend

 ARP Area

 Historical Downtown Precinct

 Centre Street Precinct

 Industrial Arts Precinct

 Garden Residential Precinct

 Public Services Precinct

0 50 100 150 200 m







## 4. LAND USE + URBAN DESIGN

To support the overall vision and objectives of the Downtown ARP, this section contains policies and guidelines that enable the evolution of a cohesive development pattern over the next 30 years. These policies and guidelines address the range and allocation of land uses, the integration of private development with the adjacent public realm, the massing and architectural articulation of buildings, and the provision of broader amenities and services. They acknowledge the downtown's strong heritage foundations, scale, and range of building types and uses, while recognizing and enabling the downtown's future potential as an active, diverse, and economically sustainable centre for the Town.

This chapter is organized into seven sections:

- A **Land Use + Urban Design Concept**, which illustrates a potential built form outcome for the downtown.
- A section on **General Objectives and Policies** that applies to the entire Downtown ARP area.
- Five sections containing specific objectives and policies for the **Planning Precincts** within the Downtown ARP area described in Chapter 1 and shown on Map 4-1: Plan Area and Planning Precincts.

## 4.1 Land Use + Urban Design Concept

The Land Use + Urban Design Concept (Map 4-2 and Map 4-3) represents a potential built-form outcome for downtown High River. It was developed with careful consideration of the plan context (Chapter 1); the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges identified for the study area (in Appendix B); the vision articulated by town residents, business, PRAC, and Council, (Chapter 2 and Appendix A); and the interface with the public realm concept (Chapter 3).

The concept illustrates an overall design vision for the downtown that supports the opportunities provided by the area's unique history, its long-standing retail and commercial presence, its desire for an expanded cultural sector, its proximity to the Highwood River and associated park space, and its central location in the community adjacent to established residential neighbourhoods.

Importantly, the concept reflects one of many possible outcomes for the downtown. It is not intended to illustrate a preferred solution, but rather demonstrate how consistent implementation of the recommended ARP land use and

urban design policies (described in the sections that follow) might manifest. It is critical to note that the existing land use districts generally support implementation of this concept without any up-zoning (with the exception of some reduced setback requirements). The ARP does not dramatically rethink what can be built in the downtown, but provides nuanced direction for development across the five planning precincts so that a cohesive outcome is achieved.

The amount and scale of redevelopment illustrated in the concept was informed primarily by a Coriolis Study, which projected population and employment growth in the area and was used to support the Town of High River's *Town Plan*. A summary of the concept's development program is provided in Table 4-2; please note that this table is provided for reference to the land use and urban design concept only and does not represent the results of a market study, or otherwise suggest an amount of growth supported by demand for land by use.

Table 4-2 shows that the capacity provided by the existing building stock in the plan area equates to approximately 76,000 square metres of gross floor area, of which the vast majority (71,800 metres) is for non-residential uses.

Table 4-3 Land Use and Urban Design Concept Development, Population, and Jobs Estimates

	Existing Conditions*	Development Concept	Change
Development (Gross Floor Area, square meters)	<b>Existing Development</b> 76,000	<b>Pre-Existing Development**</b> 39,000	<b>-37,000</b>
	Residential 4,200	Residential 2,400	-1,800
	Business/Civic*** 71,800	Business/Civic*** 36,600	-35,200
		<b>Proposed Development</b> 208,400	<b>208,400</b>
		Residential 86,000	86,000
		Office 44,600	44,600
		Retail 51,200	51,200
		Industrial 14,900	14,900
		Government/Civic 7,300	7,300
		Hotel 4,400	4,400
<b>Total Development (Gross Floor Area, square meters)</b>	76,000	247,400	171,400
<b>Population</b>	80	1,500	1,420
<b>Employment</b>	1,720	3,900	2,180
*does not reflect current occupancy but rather an estimated amount potentially supported by existing buildings			
** pre-existing development includes those existing buildings that remain after conceptual redevelopment			
***an aggregate of retail, office, industrial, government, and civic use floor areas was only available for the existing conditions			

This potentially supports an estimated 1,720 employees, but only approximately 80 residents.

In the conceptual partial redevelopment scenario, historic buildings were largely retained; conceptual redevelopment followed the policies and guidelines contained in this ARP. The scenario illustrates an additional 86,000 square metres of residential gross floor area, contributing to a net increase of approximately 171,400 square metres of conceptual redevelopment. This potentially supports an estimated 3,900 employees and 1,500 residents (an increase of 2,180 and 1,420 persons, respectively). While such a large scale increase in development may not be realized within the short or long term, this Chapter of the ARP provides the policy tools and guidelines needed to manage development in the downtown. The ratio of residents to employees at 1:2.6, is closer to being balanced than at the existing condition, and would suggest, no matter the scale or intensity of growth pressure.

Preferred locations for civic buildings, including the visitor centre, library, museum, and other buildings supporting cultural facilities described in **Appendix D: Cultural Plan**, are shown on Map 4-2, along with indications for some of the locations of new types of land uses, such as garden residential townhomes (from 4.5 Garden Residential Precinct) and live/work townhomes (from 4.6 Industrial Arts Precinct).

## 4.2 General Objectives and Policies

General objectives and policies for urban design and development are applicable to the entire downtown ARP area.

### 4.2.1 Objectives

- a. Support intensification and a mix of uses downtown to ensure new utility infrastructure is efficiently utilized.
- b. Support a diversity of land uses downtown, including residential uses, to facilitate activation of public spaces and the creation of a local market for downtown businesses that can be sustained beyond regular business hours.
- c. Achieve a high standard of architectural and urban design quality for all new development and redevelopment projects.

### 4.2.2 Compliance Policies

- a. At the date of adoption of this plan, existing development will be considered conforming.
- b. The land use and urban design of future development proposals must conform to the intent of the precinct, as stated in the objectives provided for each precinct in the sections that follow, in which the proposal is located. Development proposals may be considered conforming if the intent is deemed to be achieved.
- c. Future land use re-designations must conform to the intent of each precinct as stated in the objectives for each precinct.
- d. Rules in part 4, division 5, section 102 (Flood Hazard Overlay) of the Town of High River Land Use Bylaw take precedence over land use policies and urban design guidelines provided in this chapter.
- e. Signage rules provided in part 3, division 3 of the Town of High River Land Use Bylaw take precedence over signage design guidelines provided for each precinct in this chapter

### 4.2.3 Land Use and Urban Design Policies

- a. The conservation and adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings is strongly encouraged to assist in retaining the character of the downtown.
- b. For stand-alone residential developments, or mixed-use projects including residential space, a range of housing formats is encouraged to accommodate different income levels, age groups, households, and lifestyles.
- c. Where appropriate, the provision of larger residential unit sizes and ground-oriented units for families and senior citizens is encouraged.
- d. Auto-oriented uses such as automobile service centres, drive-through businesses, and service stations will only be permitted in the Industrial Arts Precinct; they are prohibited in all other precincts.
- e. At-grade parking lots (those independent of any other use) are strongly discouraged within the Historical Downtown Precinct and the Centre Street Precinct.
- f. Any features facilitating accessibility to buildings (e.g., ramps, stairs) should be contained within the property line.





Map 4-2: Land Use and Urban Design Concept (North)

North Side | South Side

Multi-Cultural Centre (Performing Arts, Theatre, and Gallery)

Library

Hotel

Civic / Government

Visitor Centre



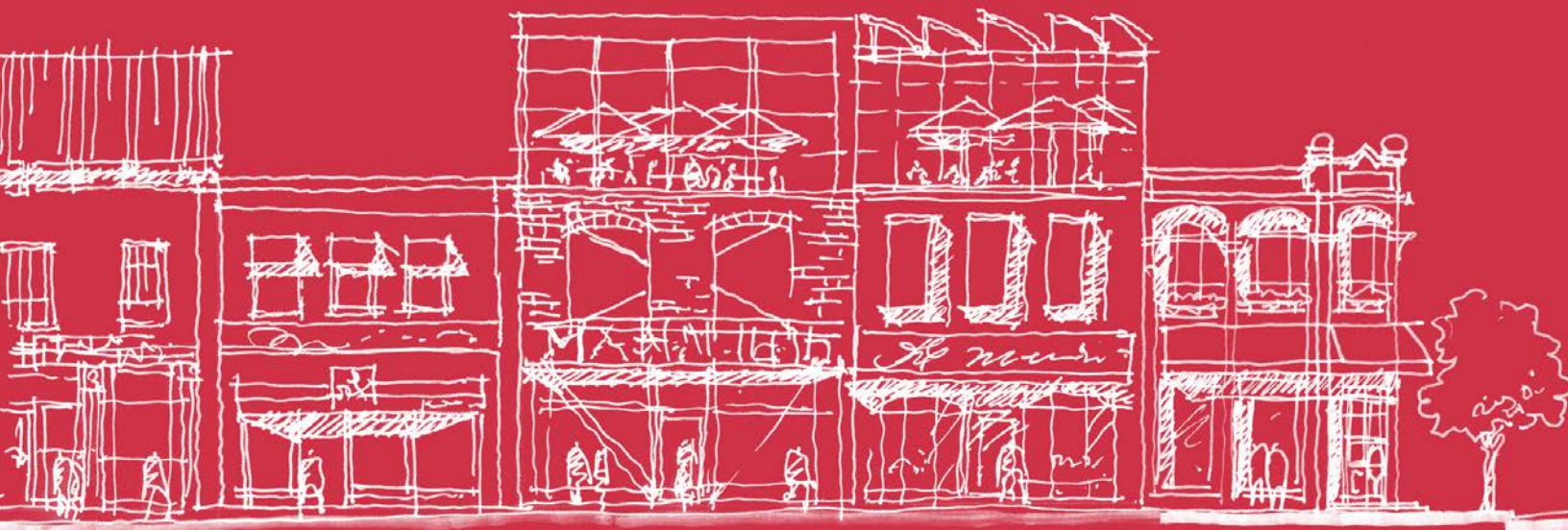


Map 4-3: Land Use and Urban Design Concept (South)

North Side South Side

Garden Residential Townhomes

Live/Work Townhomes



## 4.3 HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN PRECINCT

The Historical Downtown Precinct (Map 4-4) is located primarily along Macleod Trail SW, extending east to 1 Street SW, and between 1 Avenue SE to the north and 7 Avenue SW to the south. The George Lane Park area is to the immediate west, with the Highwood River beyond. The Centre Street Precinct is located to the east, and established low-density residential areas are located to the south and southwest of the historical Downtown.

As both the historical and contemporary centre of commerce and business in the community, this Precinct experiences a high volume of pedestrian and vehicle activity, and is characterized by commercial, retail, and office development, contained within both heritage and modern buildings. Many of the Town's heritage and cultural resources are located in this precinct, including built heritage resources, cultural facilities in civic buildings, and commercial venues that support cultural industries. Redevelopment will respect the small-scale business and lot pattern, while ensuring it remains the cultural, commercial, and pedestrian focus of High River.

### 4.3.1 Objectives

- a. To retain the area as the commercial and cultural centre of High River.
- b. To respect the historical lot pattern and building frontage character of the area.
- c. To maintain the existing inventory of and to provide opportunities for small-scale, locally-owned businesses and services.
- d. To retain the compact, diverse, low-scale, and small-shop front character of the historic downtown.
- e. To ensure development contributes to a high-quality public realm and pedestrian environment.
- f. To provide opportunities for mixed-use commercial or commercial/residential development, while ensuring retail and commercial uses are maintained at street level.
- g. To accommodate complementary public amenities, cultural facilities, civic buildings, and services in a location central to the Town.
- h. To ensure an appropriate transition in development and built form to the low-density residential area to the southwest.



# HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN PRECINCT

## 4.3.2 Land Use

- a. New development should incorporate a mix of uses into individual buildings, versus a mix of uses spread throughout the area in general. Retail or commercial uses should be provided on the ground floor of any new development, and encouraged for existing buildings.
- b. In keeping with the traditional pattern and scale of development, small-scale retail/commercial uses should be the predominant form at the ground level of buildings in the area.
- c. The adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings (as identified in the Town of High River Downtown Heritage Inventory report) is strongly encouraged.
- d. A diversity of street-oriented retail and commercial uses should be encouraged to enhance the pedestrian environment in this Precinct.
- e. Commercial establishments with a restaurant or food service focus are encouraged to provide informal cultural venues, such as performance spaces.
- f. Residential uses may be included on the upper floors of buildings in the area, however, retail or commercial uses must be provided on the ground level of buildings with residential uses.
- g. Live-work units are encouraged as part of mixed-use developments.
- h. New stand-alone, single-use retail buildings are prohibited for the area.
- i. The maximum floor area per ground floor use is limited to 1,000 square metres to maintain the historical small-scale development pattern.
- j. Residential uses provided as part of a mixed-use building shall be limited to a maximum density of 75 units per net hectare.



Map 4-4: Historical Downtown Precinct



Figure 4-9 Historical Downtown - Block Face Elevation Example



Figure 4-10 Historical Downtown - Elevation - Building and Block Face Rhythm Examples

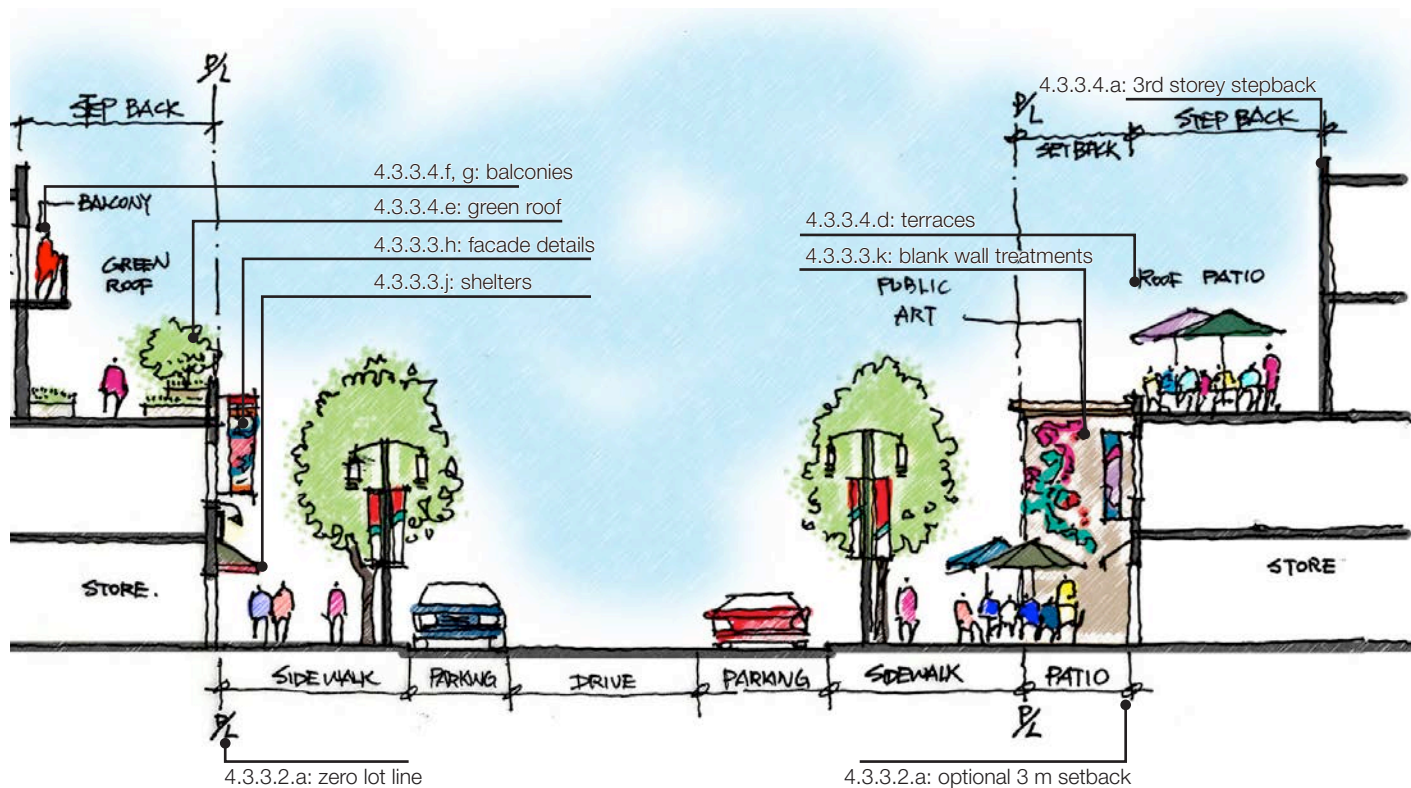


Figure 4-11 Historical Downtown - Street Interface Example



## 4.3.3 Built Form

### 4.3.3.1 Height

- a. Development shall be limited to a minimum of two storeys and a maximum height of five storeys (not to exceed 16 metres) throughout the Precinct.
- b. Building design elements, including step-backs of upper floors, should be utilized for buildings immediately adjacent to low-density residential uses to ensure an appropriate transition in built form.

### 4.3.3.2 Frontage

- a. Buildings should be built to the front property line, in order to maintain an active interface for pedestrians. Front setbacks up to three metres may be considered to provide outdoor amenity space (e.g. patios, plazas) or to accommodate accessibility features (e.g., ramps).
- b. Entrances to buildings should be provided facing the adjacent street, and should be clearly visible to create an identity and sense of arrival. Entrances should be universally-accessible, and utilize elements such as detailing, paving materials, lighting, signage and canopies to be welcoming and provide weather protection.
- c. Buildings on corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection, and feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations and create opportunities for landmarks and corner entrance features.
- d. Buildings with frontage exceeding 15 metres in length should be avoided, where possible, to maintain a pedestrian scale of building rhythm, in keeping with the traditional pattern and scale of development. Where buildings with frontage exceeding 15 metres are unavoidable, the façade should be vertically articulated to offer visual interest to pedestrians and reduce the aesthetic impact to the adjacent street.
- e. Opportunities for public art installations along building frontages should be considered, as a means of providing interest, civic identity and community pride.
- f. New development adjacent to the existing mews system shall provide an active pedestrian entrance from the mews; likewise, new development adjacent to or backing onto George Lane Park shall provide active frontage onto the

park and the proposed pedestrian promenade (see Chapter 3: Public Realm).

- g. Frontages of ground floor retail or commercial space should be limited in terms of width to maintain the historical small-scale development pattern.
- h. Commercial uses that do not generate significant pedestrian activity may locate on the ground floor of buildings provided that store frontages do not exceed 15 metres.
- i. Lobbies for residential or office components of mixed-use buildings may be accommodated at the ground floor, provided their street frontage does not exceed 10 metres.

### 4.3.3.3 Articulation

- a. The character of the Downtown should be defined as a high quality environment that is distinguished by its organized, but varied facades with superior detailing and signage.
- b. Building façades along streets that are mainly commercial and/or retail in nature should be highly transparent and articulated at street level to actively engage pedestrians and create amenity and visual interest.

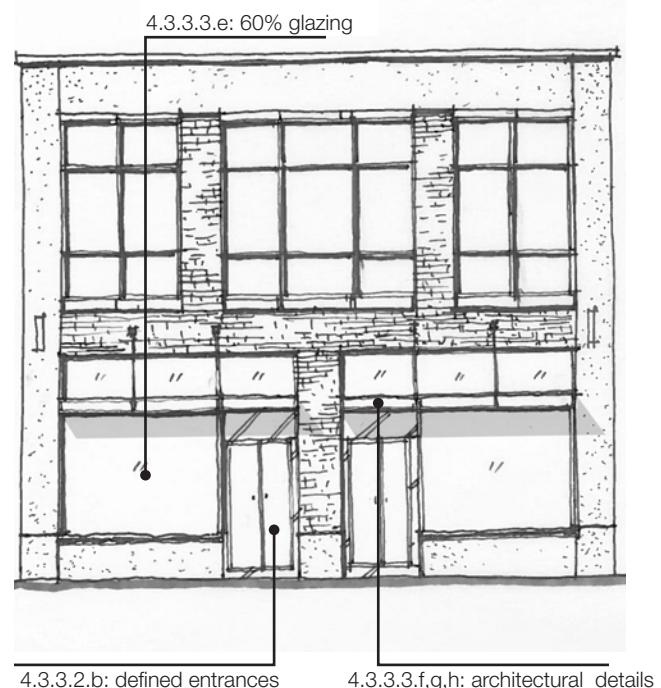
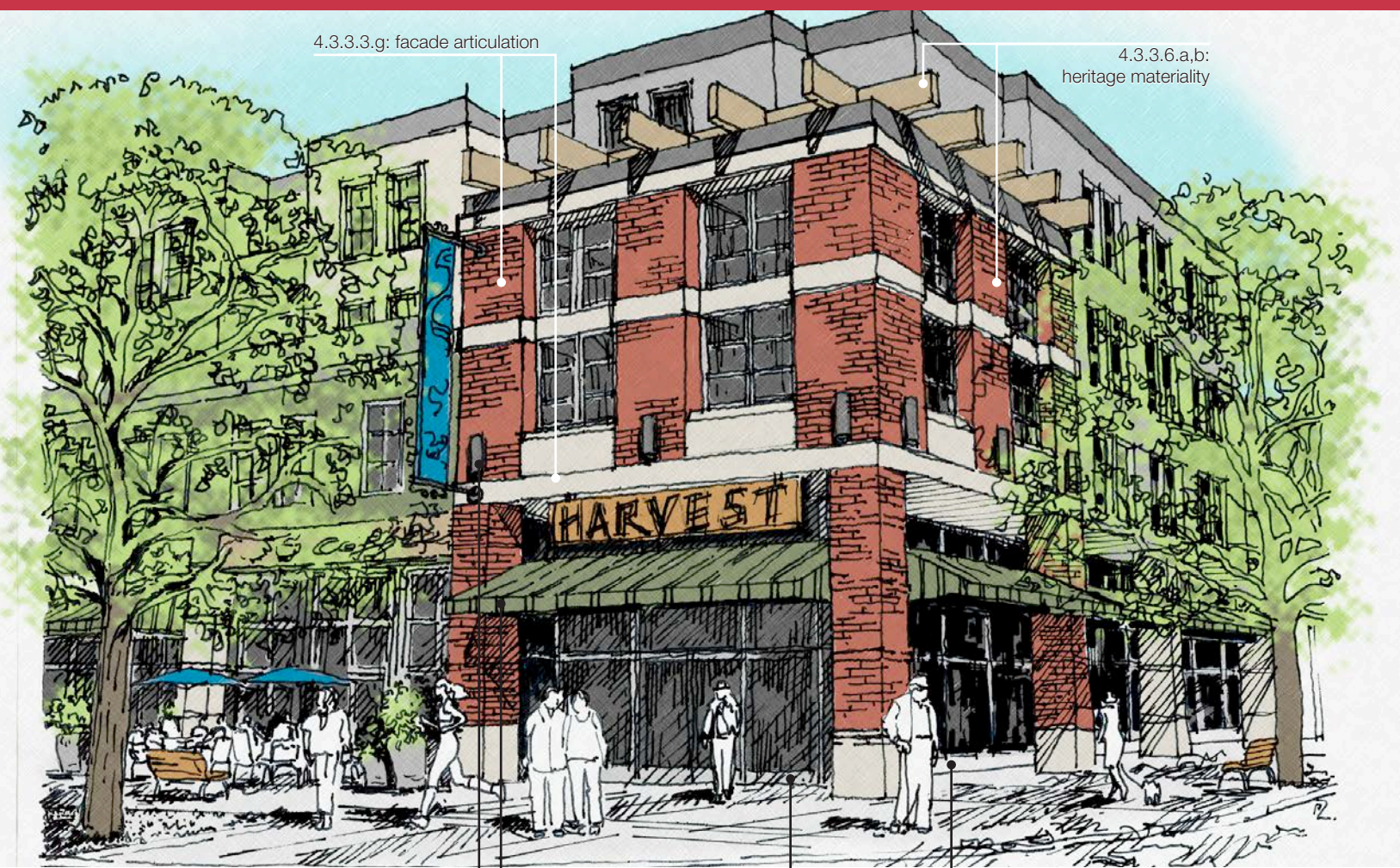


Figure 4-12 Historical Downtown - Facade Detail Example





4.3.3.3.h:  
architectural details

4.3.3.2.c:  
corner frontages

Figure 4-13 Historical Downtown - Corner  
Articulation Illustrative Example

- c. Architectural components shall be used to differentiate one face of a building from another. The design of structures should be architecturally compatible with other structures through the use of similar and complementary forms, materials and scale.
- d. The façades of multi-tenant buildings shall be organized to provide a strong and consistent rhythm to the streetscape. Flat, undifferentiated building faces should be avoided.
- e. A minimum of 60% glazing at grade should be used to facilitate interaction with pedestrians and promote safety.
- f. All visible building façades should feature architectural detailing to create a unified exterior.
- g. Building design should include modern forms of architectural detailing or features that complement the historic character of the area, including elements such as cornices, parapets, pilasters, window fenestration, window features, and entrances.
- h. Architectural details such as recesses, overhangs, signage, lighting, planters, banners, friezes, and canopies can also be utilized to create articulation and visual interest on building façades.
- i. Individual tenancies should be defined clearly with articulated entrances and consistent sign treatment.
- j. Overhead elements may be provided on building façades over portions of the adjacent sidewalk for weather protection for pedestrians. These should be individualized for specific developments.
- k. All blank walls (e.g. those walls without fenestration) are to be treated, either with cladding that is complementary to the cladding of the building and adds interest to the look and texture of the wall and building, or with a painted mural or other artwork approved by the development authority.

# HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN PRECINCT

## 4.3.3.4 Step-backs and Projections

- a. Buildings shall provide step-backs of upper storeys on the building face adjacent to the front property line above the 2nd storey in order to enhance sunlight penetration to street level. The step-back distance for buildings shall be determined as follows:
  1. Where a building overshadows a public street (e.g., a building located on the south side of a street), the step-back distance shall be set such that the building will not overshadow the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, during the days between the Spring and Fall equinoxes;
  2. In all other instances the minimum step-back distance shall be 2 meters.
- b. For all buildings adjacent to existing low density residential development, floors above the 2nd storey shall be stepped back a minimum of 2 meters to ensure an appropriate transition in height and massing, and to limit overshadowing.
- c. In all cases, step-backs should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.
- d. Step-backs may be utilized for private outdoor terraces to serve building tenants.
- e. Step-backs may be utilized for green roof areas to aid in sustainable development practices.
- f. Mixed-use buildings with a residential component should provide balconies for all residential units. In all cases, balconies should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.
- g. Balcony projections should not project beyond the front property line, and should not project more than 1 metre from the façade.

## 4.3.3.5 Signage

- a. Signage shall be pedestrian-oriented, using framing/structural materials consistent with the associated building and/or with the adjacent public realm streetscape elements (e.g. light standards or street furnishings).
- b. Consideration should be made to signage that is consistent with the heritage character of the area, and historical sign installation methods (e.g. façade-mounted signs, projection signs, overhang signs, or awning signs).
- c. Buildings on corner lots should have signs that address both of the adjacent streets.
- d. Building walls shall not be treated as billboards.
- e. Building and tenant identification signs should be organized as distinct architectural elements, reinforcing rhythm and character of the building façades.
- f. Building signage should be limited in scale and integrated with the design of the building façades. For single tenant buildings, one corporate I.D. sign will be permitted per building or view plane.
- g. Building signage should reflect the character of the building function to assist in orientation and character.
- h. Overhead stand-alone pylon or highway-type signage is not permitted.
- i. Roof-mounted signs are not permitted.

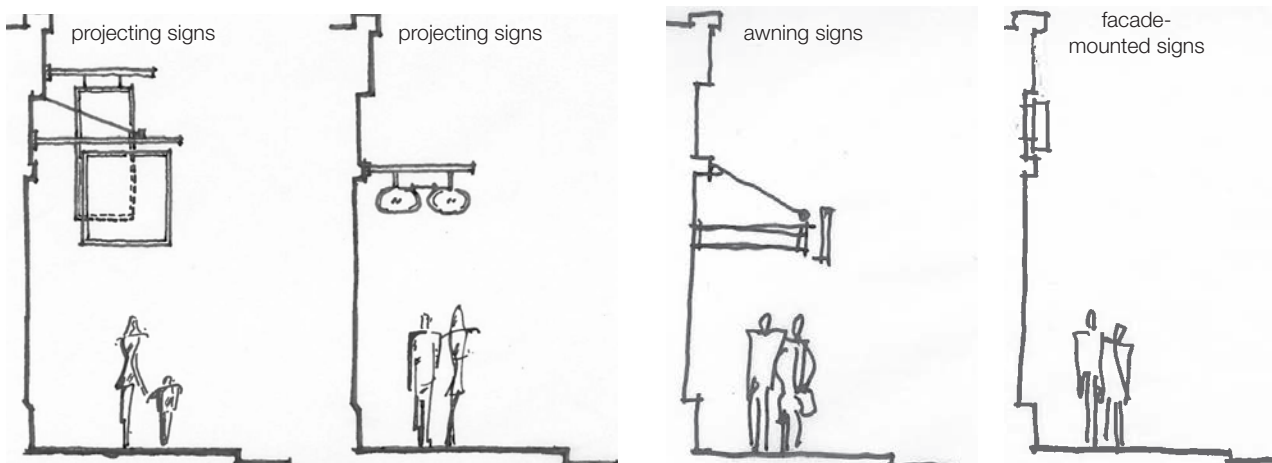


Figure 4-14 Historical Downtown - Signage Examples



#### 4.3.3.6 Materiality

- a. The heritage materiality found in brick, wood, and stone architectural elements in the Downtown can be used in concert with modern materials, such as aluminum, zinc, and steel.
- b. Building design should utilize a variety of superior materials and finishes used in combination to articulate the building components and create high-quality elevations.
- c. Richer materials, such as brick, glass, stone and steel should be predominantly used on the lower level of buildings, particularly at street level.
- d. Vinyl siding is not acceptable cladding material.
- e. Building materials and colour schemes should be compatible with their context, including adjacent structures and the surrounding landscape. Materials that might unnecessarily date the overall development, or materials used in a non-contextual novelty fashion will be discouraged.
- f. Building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colours, including primary colours.
- g. Accent colours should identify public entrances to buildings.
- h. Exterior building materials should not include smooth faced concrete block (triple score acceptable), smooth-faced tilt up concrete panels, or smooth concrete.
- i. Exposed concrete (except for normal foundation projection above grade) should be heavily ribbed, textured, coloured, or bush hammered.

brick



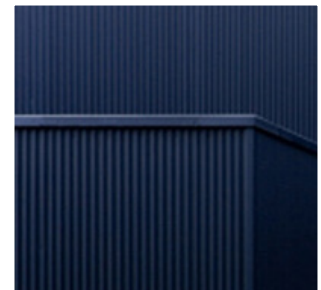
stone



cement fibre board



corrugated aluminum,  
zinc, or steel



textured concrete



#### 4.3.4 On-Site Parking and Servicing Interface

- a. Relaxations to vehicle parking requirements should be considered to encourage the redevelopment of small or underutilized sites.
- b. Front-yard parking is prohibited.
- c. Surface parking areas are only permitted at the rear of buildings.
- d. Vehicular access to individual sites shall be taken from the rear wherever possible, in order to maintain a continuous pedestrian environment along storefronts.
- e. Vehicle access points to underground or above-ground parking structures shall be taken from the rear of sites wherever possible.
- f. Where vehicular access to a site is only possible from the adjacent street, the access point must be integrated into the building in a manner that minimizes its impact on the adjacent pedestrian environment.

Figure 4-15 Historical Downtown - Material Examples



# HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN PRECINCT

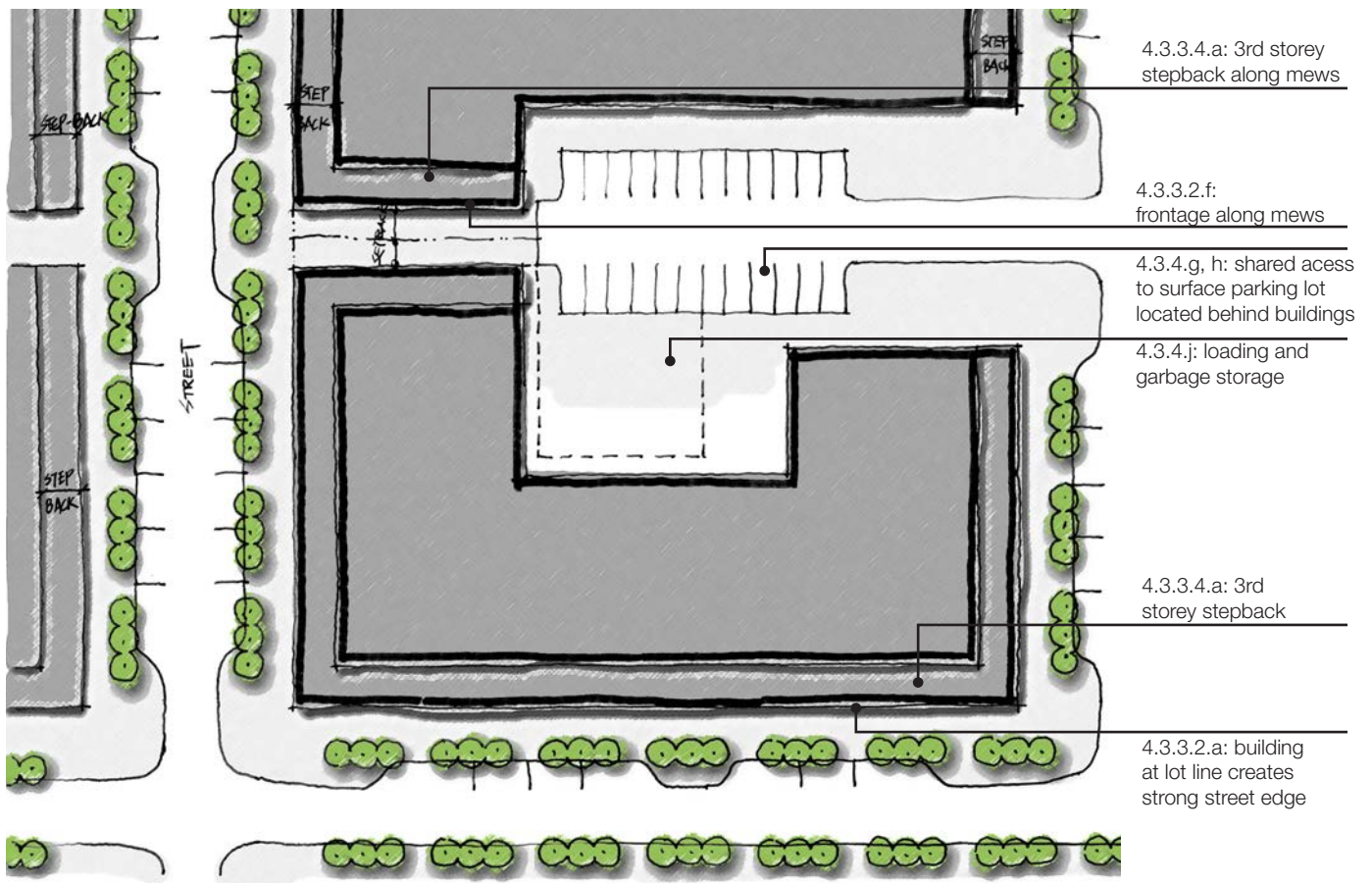


Figure 4-16 Historical Downtown - Example Plan View

- g. Where possible, vehicular access points shall be consolidated to serve multiple buildings within a block, in order to reduce interruptions to the pedestrian environment along the adjacent street.
- h. In all instances, surface parking areas shall be screened from view of adjacent pedestrian areas.
- i. Vehicle access points to underground or above-ground parking structures should feature design elements such as screening, high-quality materials, lighting, enclosure and landscaping to reduce visual impact.
- j. Loading and waste storage areas should be located at the rear of buildings, and should be screened from view from adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.

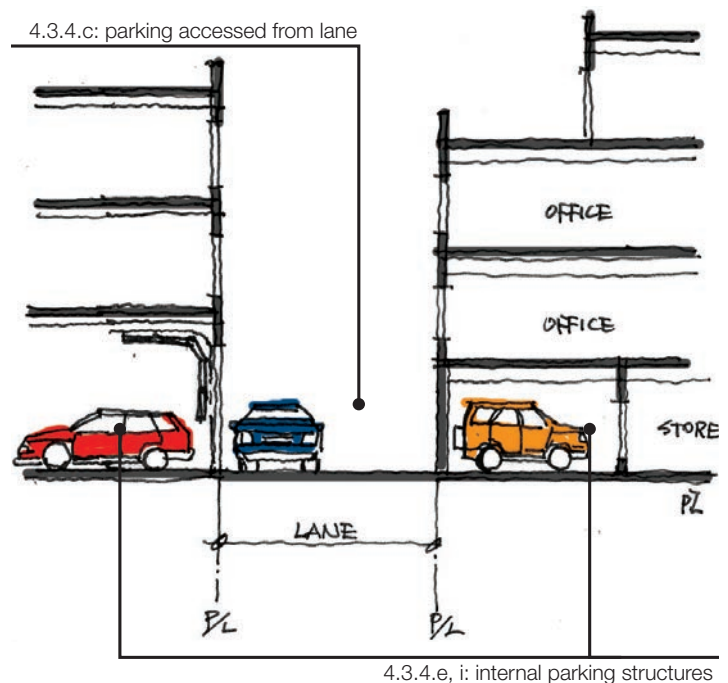


Figure 4-17 Historical Downtown - Laneway Interface Example



## 4.4 CENTRE STREET PRECINCT

The Centre Street Precinct (Map 4-5) is located primarily along Centre Street South, following the Highway 2A alignment, which leads north of the Highwood River and into areas of newer development in High River. This corridor also parallels the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor that runs alongside the highway. The Precinct extends from 1 Avenue SE to the north and 7 Avenue SE to the south. The Historical Downtown Precinct is located to the west of this Precinct, and the Industrial Arts Precinct is to the south. Existing low-density residential areas are located to the immediate east.

Similar to the Historical Downtown area, the Centre Street Precinct has been a central location for commerce and business over High River's history, and continues to see a significant volume of traffic, although it is generally more vehicle-oriented than pedestrian. The area is characterized by a range of commercial, office and retail development at a lower scale, contained largely within buildings of a more modern nature.

The ARP accommodates additional commercial/residential mixed-use development in a high-quality pedestrian environment throughout this Precinct. While providing for a mix of uses similar to the Historical Downtown area, the Centre Street Precinct supports buildings with larger floor plates, with parking provided at the rear or sides of buildings. Architectural articulation is used to ensure larger buildings transition to their context (e.g., the Historical Downtown precinct to the west and the existing residential areas to the east) and provide a pedestrian-friendly experience at street-level.

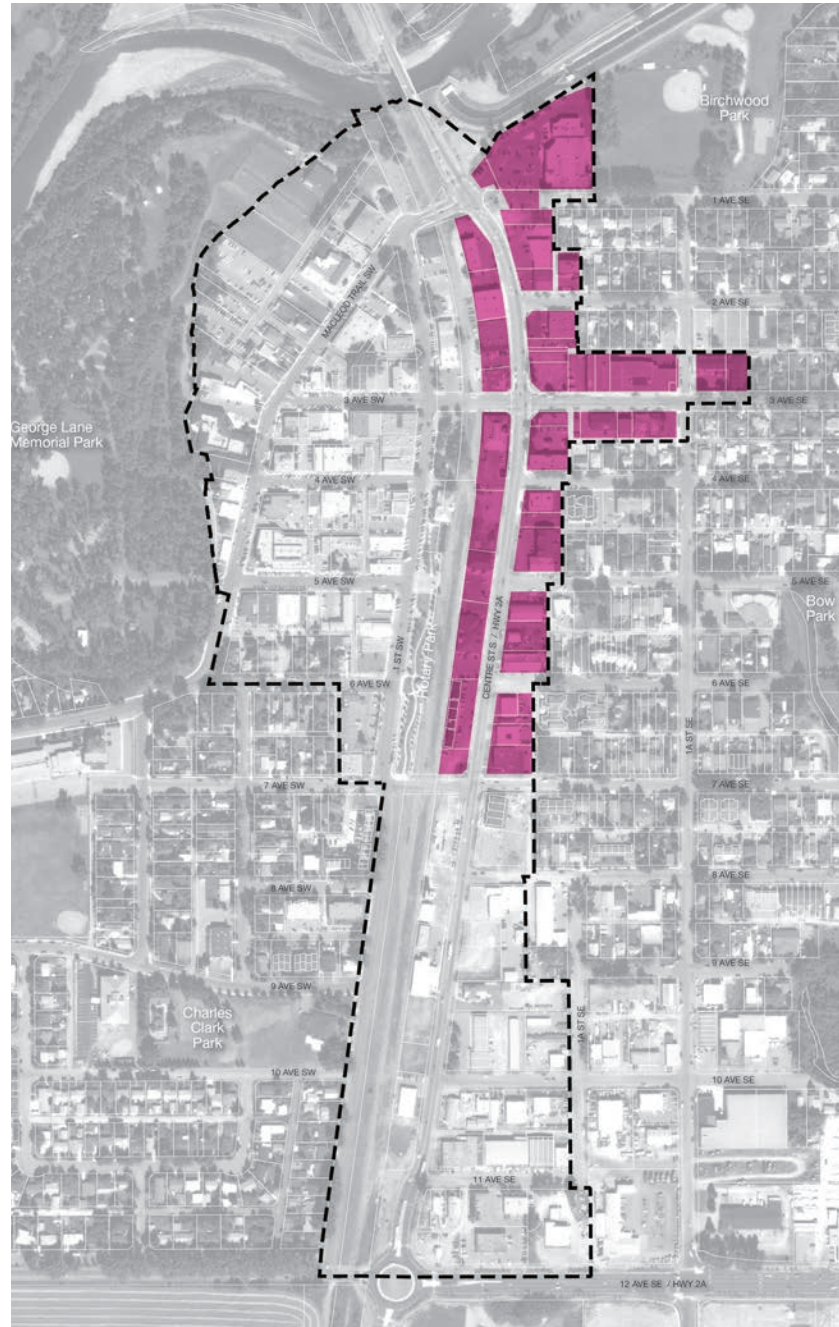
### 4.4.1 Objectives

- a. To maintain and enhance opportunities for commercial and retail development, including those with larger floor plates.
- b. To provide opportunities for mixed-use commercial or commercial/residential development, while ensuring retail and commercial uses are maintained at street level.
- c. To maintain development opportunities of a medium scale to ensure an appropriate built form transition to low-density residential areas to the east.
- d. To ensure the massing and architectural articulation of development contributes to a high-quality public realm and appropriately transitions to adjacent low density residential districts.



## 4.4.2 Land Use

- a. New development should incorporate a mix of uses into individual buildings, versus a mix of uses spread throughout the area in general. Retail or commercial uses should be provided on the ground floor of any new development, and encouraged for existing buildings.
- b. Residential uses may be included on the upper floors of buildings in the area; however, retail or commercial uses must be provided on the ground level of buildings with residential uses.
- c. A diversity of street-oriented retail and commercial uses should be encouraged to enhance the pedestrian environment in this Precinct.
- d. New stand-alone, single-use retail/commercial buildings are permitted, provided they do not exceed 2,500 square metres in floor area.
- e. Residential uses provided as part of a mixed-use building shall be limited to a maximum density of 75 units per net hectare.



Map 4-5: Centre Street Precinct



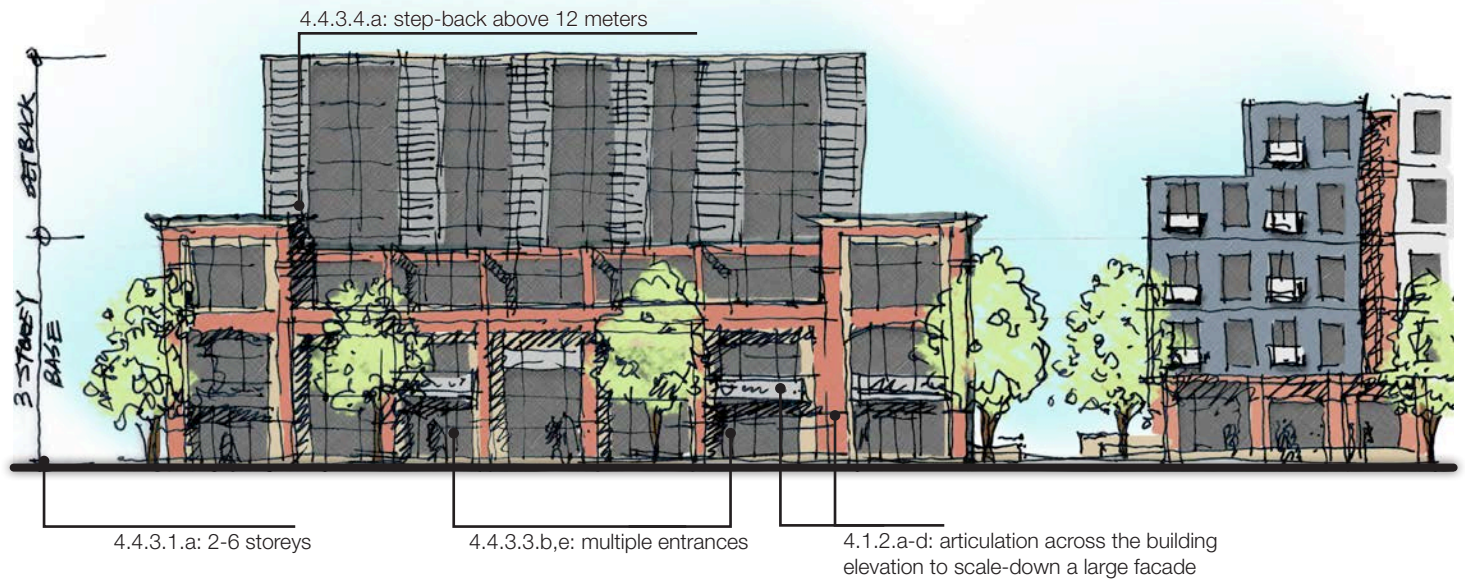


Figure 4-18 Centre Street - Block Face Elevation Example

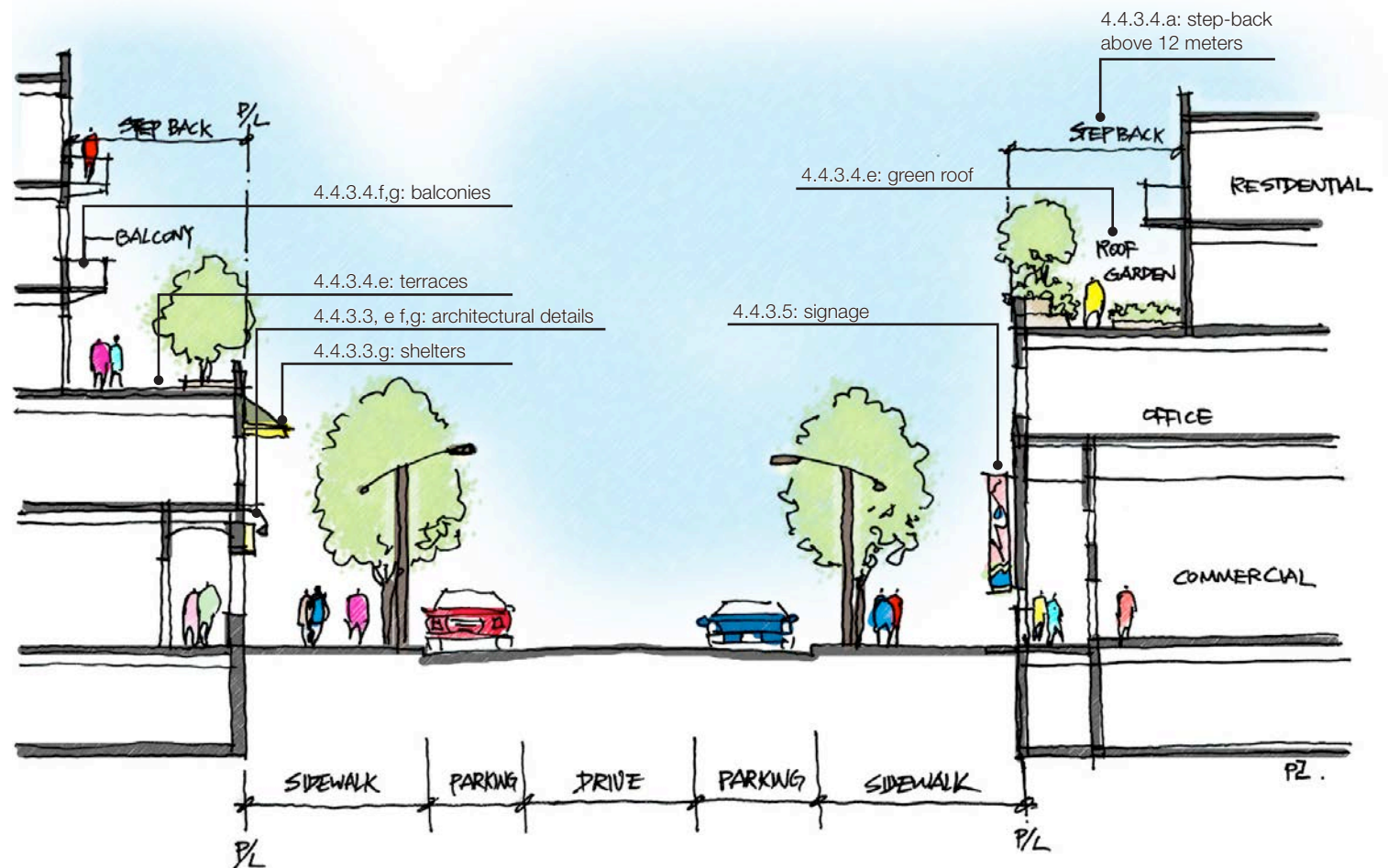


Figure 4-19 Centre Street - Street Interface Example

## 4.4.3 Built Form

### 4.4.3.1 Height

- a. Development shall be limited to a minimum height of 2 storeys and maximum height of 6 storeys (not to exceed 18 metres) throughout the Precinct.
- b. Building design elements, including step-backs of upper floors, shall be utilized for buildings immediately adjacent to low-density residential uses to ensure an appropriate transition in built form.

### 4.4.3.2 Frontage

- a. Buildings should be constructed to the ultimate front property line; setbacks from the front property line may be permitted up to 4 metres to provide outdoor amenity space (e.g. patios, plazas).
- b. Entrances to buildings should be provided facing the adjacent street, and should be clearly visible to create an identity and sense of arrival. Main floor entrances should be universally-accessible and utilize elements such as detailing, paving materials, lighting, signage and canopies to be welcoming and provide weather protection.
- c. Buildings on corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection, feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations, and create opportunities for landmarks and corner entrance features.
- d. Individual business frontages that are greater than 30 metres in width should provide for multiple entrances at the street level.
- e. Commercial uses that do not generate significant pedestrian activity may locate on the ground floor of buildings provided that store frontages do not exceed 15 metres.
- f. Lobbies for residential or office components of mixed-use buildings may be accommodated at the ground floor, provided their street frontage does not exceed 10 metres.
- g. New buildings immediately adjacent to the **Garden Laneway** (see Chapter 3: Public Realm) shall provide an active pedestrian entrance onto the mews; secondary frontages on the mews, replete with glazing and outdoor amenity space, are encouraged.

- h. The rear façade of a building shall use materials of a standard similar to the front façade of the building.

### 4.4.3.3 Articulation

- a. The façades of multi-tenant buildings shall be organized to provide a strong and consistent rhythm to the streetscape. Flat, undifferentiated building faces should be avoided.
- b. Long buildings, generally those over 40 metres in length, shall break up the visual impact of their mass using vertical recesses or other architectural articulation and/or changes in material.
- c. A minimum of 60% glazing at grade should be used to facilitate visual permeability, interaction with pedestrians, and to promote safety ("eyes on the street").
- d. All visible building façades should feature architectural detailing to create a unified exterior.

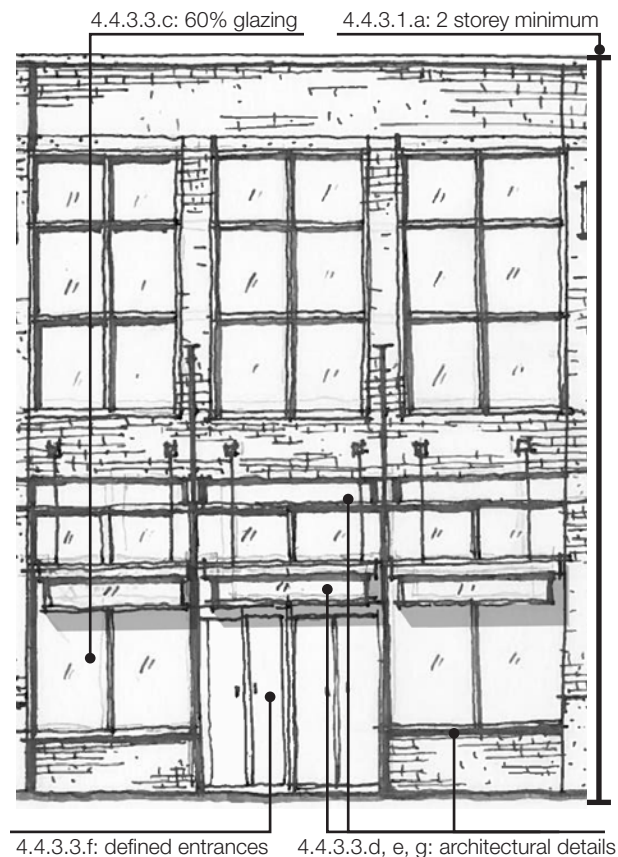


Figure 4-20 Centre Street - Example Frontage Detail





Figure 4-21 Centre Street - Corner Articulation Illustrative Example

- e. Architectural details such as recesses, overhangs, signage, lighting, planters, banners, friezes, and canopies can be utilized to create articulation and visual interest on building façades.
- f. Individual tenancies should be defined clearly with articulated entrances and consistent sign treatment.
- g. Overhead elements should be provided on building façades over portions of the adjacent sidewalk for weather protection for pedestrians. These should be individualized for specific developments.
- h. All blank walls (e.g. those walls without fenestration) are to be treated, either with cladding that is complementary to the cladding of the building and adds interest to the look and

texture of the wall and building, or with a painted mural or other artwork approved by Council.

#### 4.4.3.4 Step-backs and Projections

- a. Buildings shall provide step-backs of upper storeys on the building face adjacent to the front above the 3rd storey in order to enhance sunlight penetration to street level. The step-back distance for buildings shall be determined as follows:
  - 1. Where a building overshadows a public street (e.g., a building located on the south side of a street), the step-back distance shall be set such that the building will not over-shadow of the



- sidewalk on the opposite side of the street between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, on days falling between the Spring and Fall equinoxes;
2. In all other instances the minimum step-back distance shall be two metres.
- b. Where a new development shares a rear lane, rear property line, or side property line with an existing low-density residential district, the building shall step-back at a maximum height of 10 metres a distance that will minimize overshadowing and allow for a transition in building elevation, as follows:
1. a minimum of 4.5 metres along the building face adjacent to a rear property line or laneway, except where it is necessary to increase the step-back distance in order to avoid overshadowing the yard and primary building on the adjacent parcel between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, on days falling between the Spring and Fall equinoxes.
  2. a minimum of 4.5 meters along the building face adjacent to the side property line.
- c. Rear and side step-backs are only required for new development adjacent to existing low-density residential zoning districts.
- d. In all cases, step-backs should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.

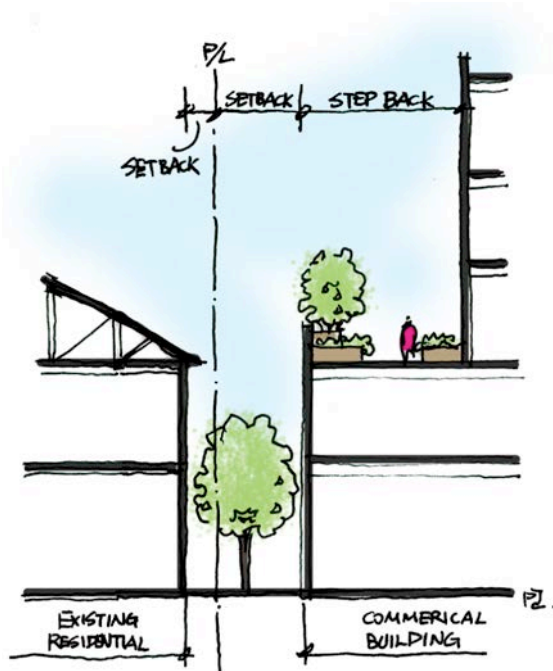


Figure 4-23 Centre Street - Interface with existing residential (4.4.3.4.b) example

- e. Step-backs may be utilized for private outdoor terraces to serve building tenants or green roof areas to aid in sustainable development practices.
- f. Mixed-use buildings with a residential component should provide outdoor amenity space for all residential units, either in the form of balconies or terraces on building step-backs. In all cases, balconies should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.
- g. Balconies should not project beyond the front property line, and should not project more than two metres from the façade.

## 4.4.3.5 Signage

- a. Signage shall be pedestrian-oriented, using framing/structural materials consistent with the associated building and/or with the adjacent public realm streetscape elements (e.g. light standards or street furnishings).
- b. Building and tenant identification signs shall be organized as distinct architectural elements that reflect the character of a building's function, reinforcing rhythm and character of the building façades and also assisting in orientation.
- c. Building signage should be limited in scale and integrated with the design of the building façades. For single tenant buildings, one

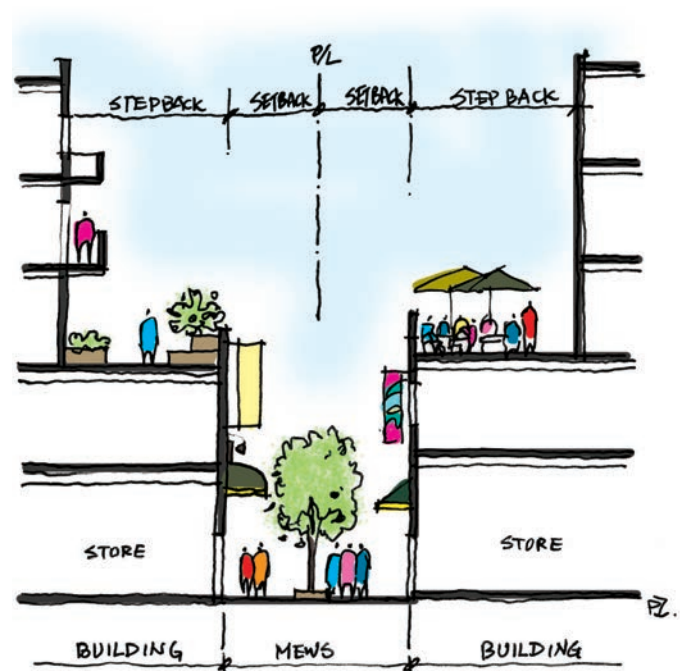


Figure 4-22 Centre Street - Side step-backs as elevated amenity spaces (4.4.3.4.f) example

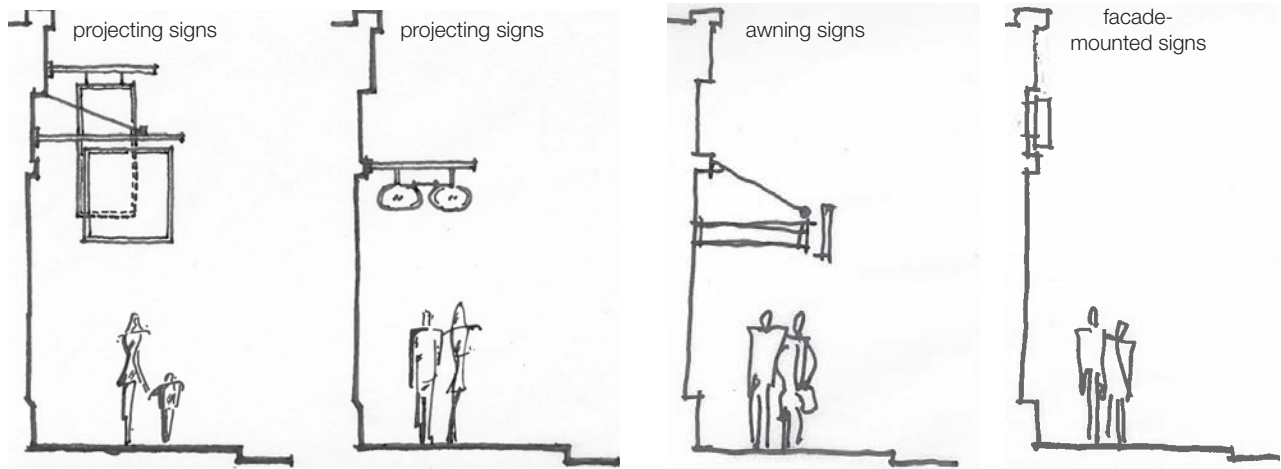


Figure 4-25 Centre Street - Signage Examples

corporate I.D. sign will be permitted per building or view plane.

- d. Buildings on corner lots should have signs that address both of the adjacent streets.
- e. Only signage for building tenants is permitted.
- f. The use of internally illuminated fluorescent box signage is prohibited.
- g. Roof-mounted signs are prohibited.
- h. Building walls shall not be treated as billboards.
- i. Signage that is designed for high visibility to traffic on Centre Street may be employed, provided it follows other signage guidelines; however, overhead stand-alone pylon or highway-type signage is not permitted.

#### 4.4.3.6 Materiality

- a. The materiality of brick, wood and stone architectural elements can be used in concert with modern materials, such as aluminum, zinc, steel, glass, and concrete.
- b. Building design should utilize a variety of superior materials and finishes used in combination to articulate the building components and create high-quality elevations.
- c. Glazing on the ground floor should avoid large expanses of reflective, tinted, or mirrored glass that inhibits the visual permeability of the façade.
- d. Vinyl siding is not acceptable cladding material.
- e. Building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colours, including primary colours.
- f. Accent colours should identify public entrances to buildings.

brick



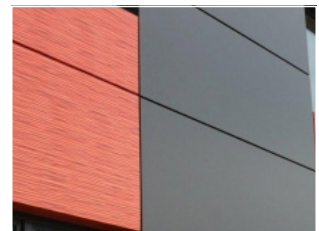
stone



aluminum panels



aluminum panels



concrete



Figure 4-24 Centre Street - Materials Examples

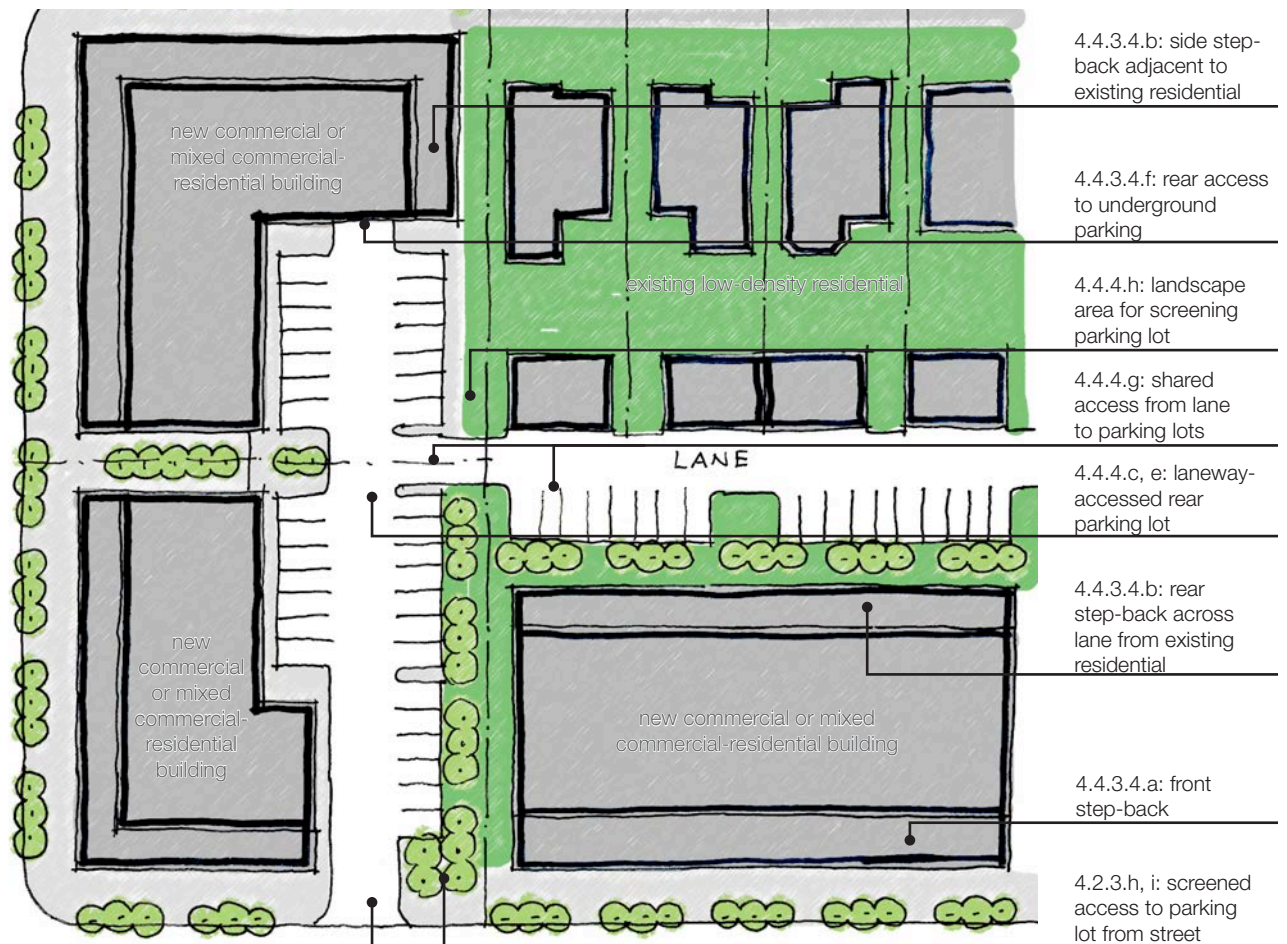


Figure 4-26 Centre Street - Example Plan View

## 4.4.4 On-Site Parking and Servicing Interface

- a. Relaxations to vehicle parking requirements should be considered in this Precinct to leverage new on-street parking planned for **Centre Street** and the **Garden Laneway** (see Chapter 3: Public Realm).
- b. Front-yard parking is prohibited in this precinct.
- c. Parking (either surface or structured) is permitted at either the rear or side of buildings, and/or may be internalized.
- d. Parking shall not be located in the front of buildings adjacent to streets or major intersections.
- e. Vehicular access to individual sites should be taken from the rear wherever possible: where a laneway is present, parking shall be accessed from the laneway; access from the street is permitted otherwise.
- f. Vehicle access points to internal parking structures (underground or above-ground parking structures) should be taken from the rear of sites where possible. If a site does not have access to the rear, access points to structured vehicle parking should be focused on streets that have less pedestrian activity, in order to reduce potential conflicts. Access points to internal parking must be integrated into the building in a manner that minimizes its impact on the adjacent pedestrian environment, featuring design elements such as screening, high-quality materials, lighting, enclosure, and landscaping to reduce visual impact.
- g. Where possible, vehicular access points may be consolidated to serve multiple buildings within a block, in order to reduce interruptions to the pedestrian environment along the adjacent street.
- h. Surface parking areas should be screened from view of adjacent pedestrian areas. Large parking lots shall be enhanced with landscaping on edges and within medians.



# CENTRE STREET PRECINCT

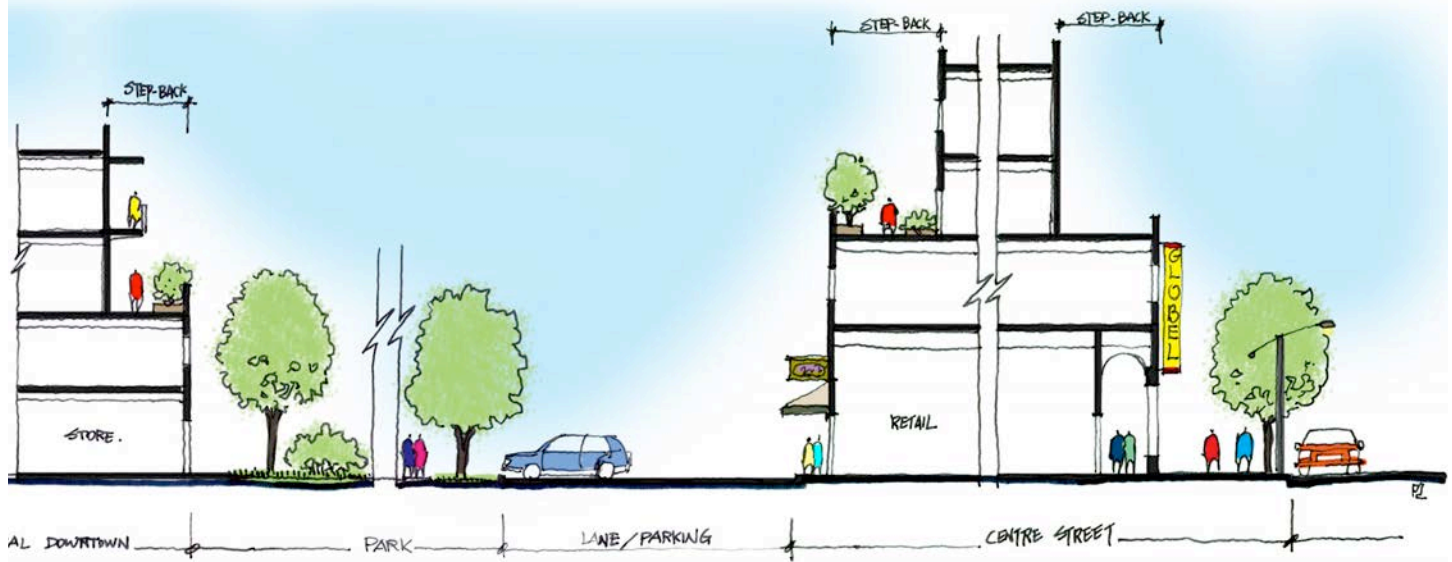


Figure 4-27 Centre Street - Example Garden Parking Mews Interface (4.4.3.2.g)

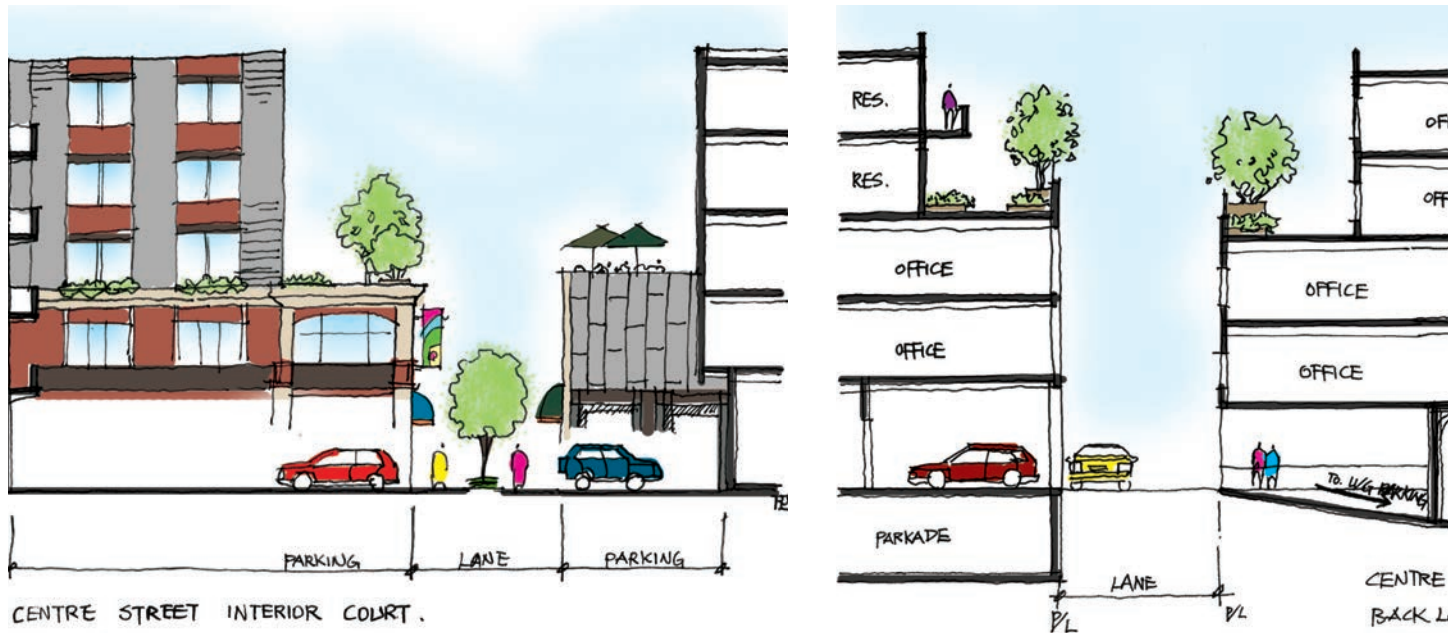


Figure 4-28 Centre Street - Example Lane-Accessed Structured Parking Interface Alternatives (4.4.4.f)

- i. Street entrances to surface parking lots shall be designed to minimize visual impact using landscape screening and surface treatments consistent with elements in the adjacent pedestrian public realm.
- j. Low-impact development features (e.g., permeable curbs, rain gardens, bio-infiltration trenches) are strongly encouraged to help manage rain water pooling and runoff from impervious parking surfaces.
- k. Garbage, loading, and other servicing functions shall be located at the rear or side of buildings and completed from the laneway where available.
- l. Loading and waste storage areas shall be screened from view from adjacent properties and pedestrian areas; screening shall utilize high-quality components such as landscape berms, brick masonry walls, wood fencing, and plantings.





## 4.5 GARDEN RESIDENTIAL PRECINCT

The Garden Residential Precinct (Map 4-6) is located on the block face facing 1 Street SW, from 7 Avenue SW to 9 Avenue SW. At present this block is undeveloped, having been previously used for the Canadian Pacific rail line.

The ARP provides the opportunity for limited single-family attached residential development along this block face, at a scale that maintains compatibility with residential uses to the west and the north-south pathway connection through the Downtown ARP area through the Public Services Precinct. The ARP envisions clusters of small-footprint multi-residential development characterized by a generous landscape interface with 1 Street SW. Residential development clusters may be implemented using one of several building types, including townhomes or semi-detached homes.

### 4.5.1 Objectives

- a. To provide opportunities for single-family attached residential development to support downtown intensification and a higher diversity of housing choices.
- b. To ensure new development is of a scale and density that provides a positive transition to lower-density residential areas to the west of 1 Street SW.
- c. To ensure strong north-south pedestrian connectivity and a linear 'park-like' landscape condition is maintained along 1 Street SW.



## 4.5.2 Land Use

- a. Redevelopment opportunities in this Precinct will accommodate a range of potential housing forms, including semi-detached dwellings, townhomes, or a comprehensively designed ground-oriented multi-family development.
- b. Residential density shall be limited to a maximum of 75 units per net hectare.



Map 4-6: Garden Residential Precinct

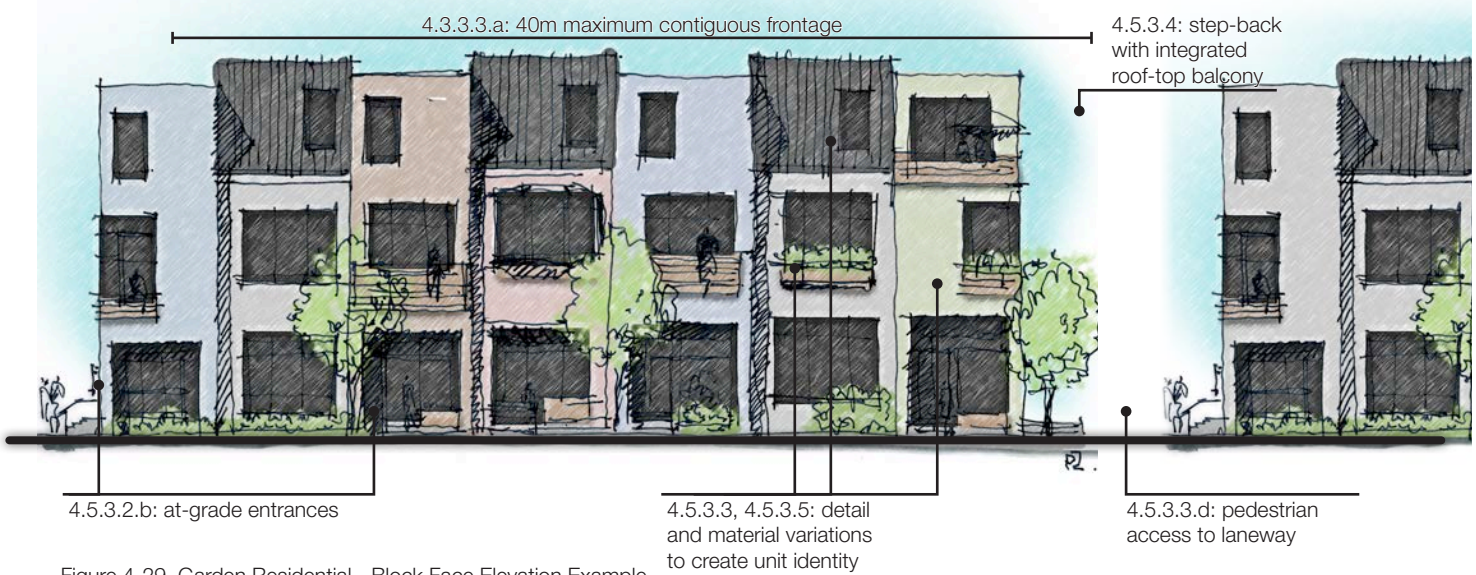


Figure 4-29 Garden Residential - Block Face Elevation Example

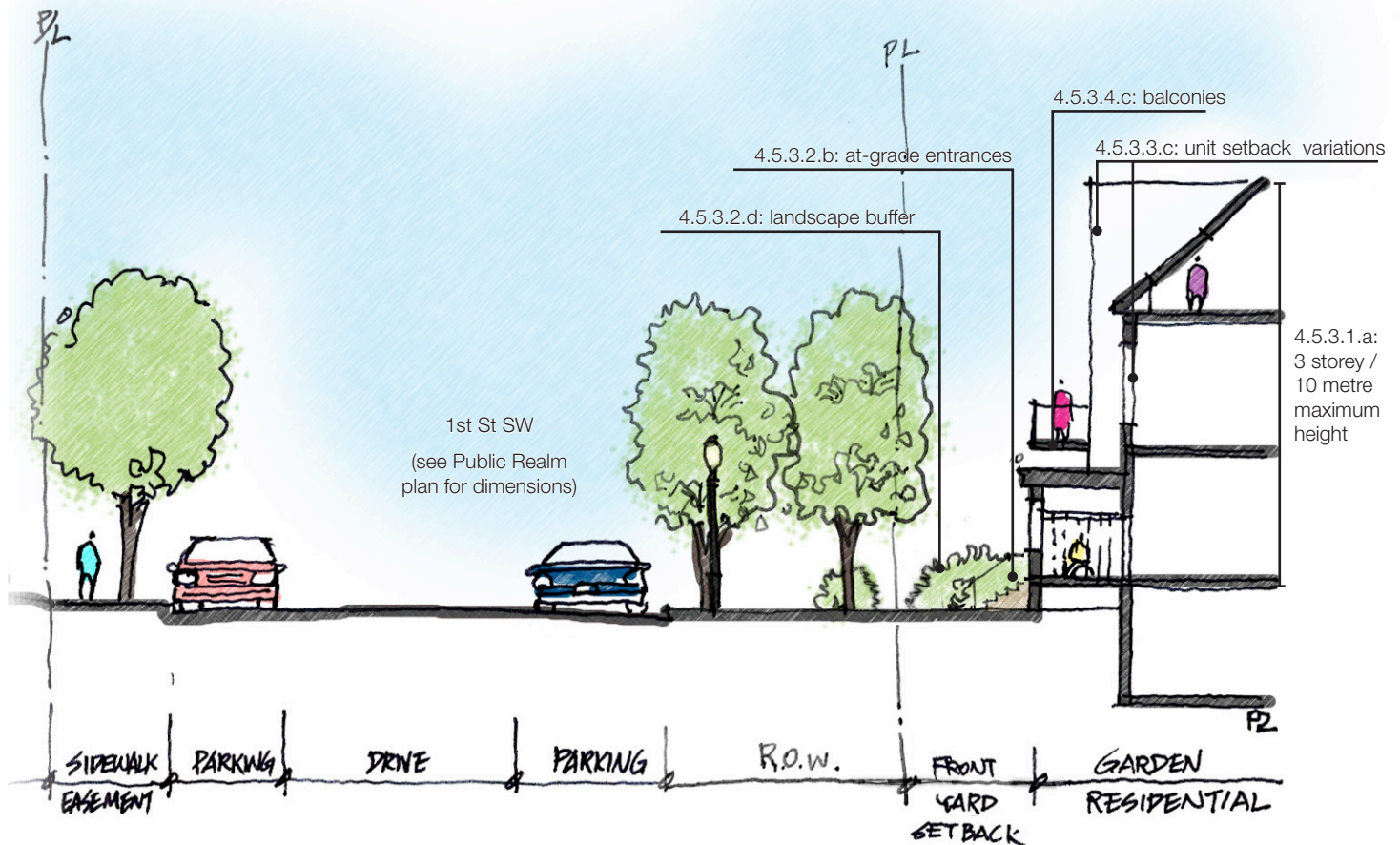


Figure 4-30 Garden Residential - Street Interface Example



## 4.5.3 Built Form

### 4.5.3.1 Height

- a. Primary buildings shall be limited to a maximum height of 3 storeys, not to exceed 10 metres.
- b. Detached accessory structures (e.g., garages) shall be limited to a maximum height of 1 storey, not to exceed 5 meters.

### 4.5.3.2 Frontage

- a. Development shall be oriented towards and provide frontage onto 1 Street SW.
- b. At-grade residential units that front a public sidewalk or publicly accessible private sidewalk should have individual, primary entrances (e.g., front doors) providing direct access.
- c. All at-grade residential units should be able to provide visual privacy from any public or internal sidewalks without the need for high or non-transparent privacy fences or walls that detract from the active street edge.
- d. Buildings should be sited with a minimum 3 metre setback from the front property line to create a buffer from the multi-use pathway along 1 Street SW. This setback space must be maintained as private landscaped outdoor amenity space.

### 4.5.3.3 Articulation

- a. Attached homes arranged in clusters shall generally not extend more than 40 metres of contiguous frontage.
- b. Variations in architectural detailing (e.g., materials, colours) should be used to create individual unit identity while maintaining a design consistency in the overall development.
- c. Variations in the setback of individual units up to 2 metres may be employed to emphasize individual unit identity.
- d. Breaks in frontage shall accommodate sidewalk connections to ensure block permeability and accessibility between the street and laneway.

### 4.5.3.4 Step-backs and Projections

- a. Step-backs are not required in this precinct.
- b. Step-backs may be used for private amenity space or as green roof areas to aid in sustainable development practices.

- c. Balconies should be integral to the overall form and design of the development, and should not project beyond the front property line.
- d. Roof-top balconies are encouraged; portions of the structure projecting above the roof-top that provide roof-top access (e.g., internal stairwells) shall be integrated in a manner consistent with the overall architectural design of the building.

### 4.5.3.5 Materiality

- a. Building design should utilize a variety of superior materials and finishes used in combination to articulate the building components and create high-quality elevations.
- b. The heritage materiality found in wood and brick architectural elements in surrounding residential neighbourhoods can be used in concert with modern materials, such as aluminum, zinc, and steel.
- c. Vinyl siding is not an acceptable cladding material.
- d. Building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colours, including primary colours.

cement fibre board



cement fibre board shingles



wood plank



corrugated aluminum, zinc, or steel

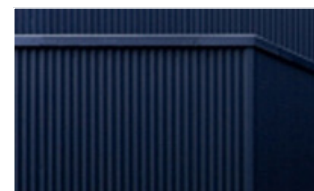


Figure 4-31 Garden Residential - Materials Example



# GARDEN RESIDENTIAL PRECINCT

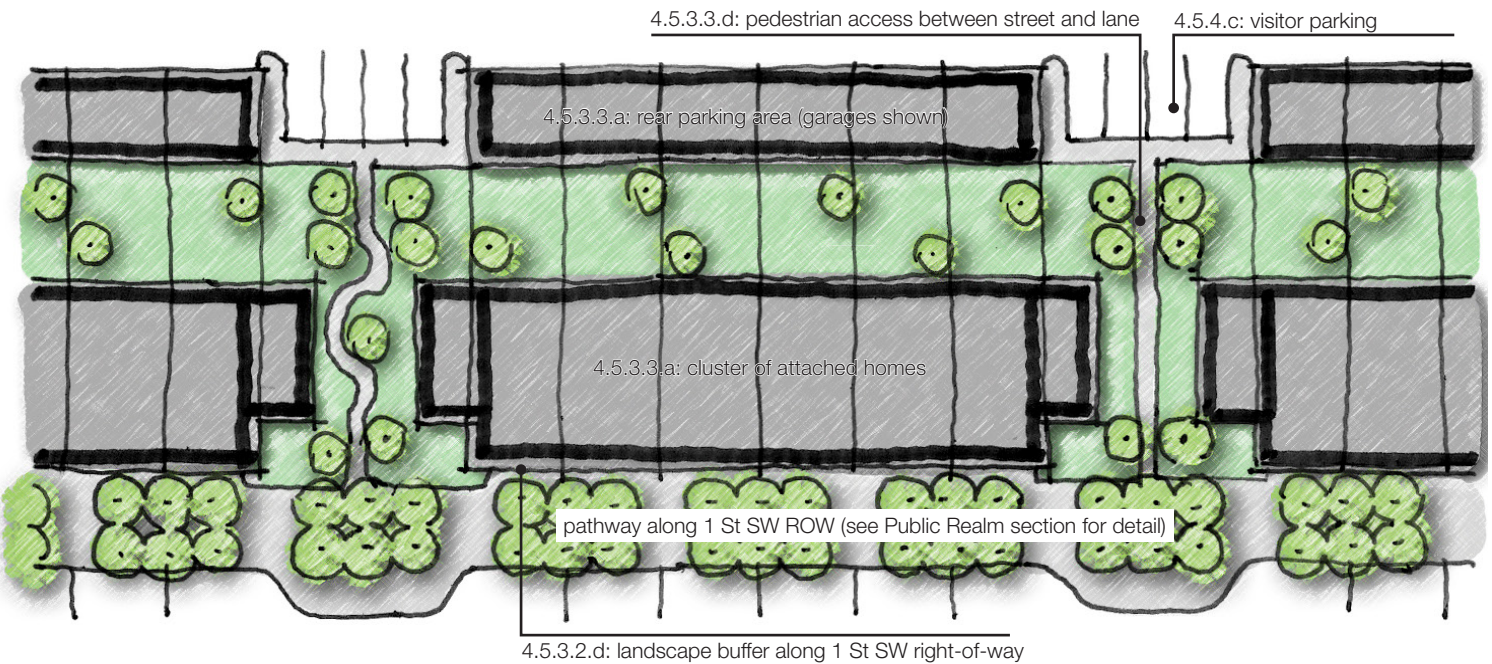
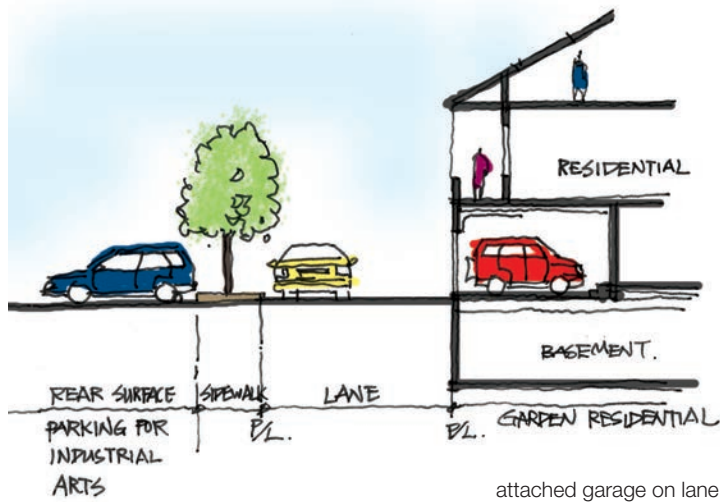
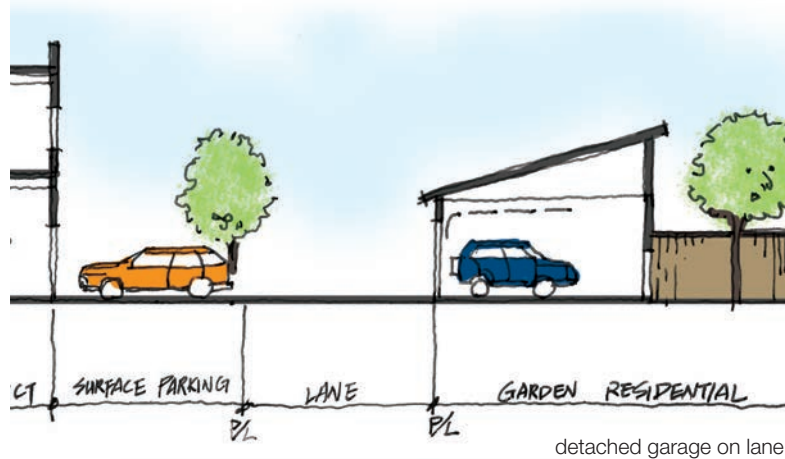


Figure 4-32 Garden Residential - Example Plan View

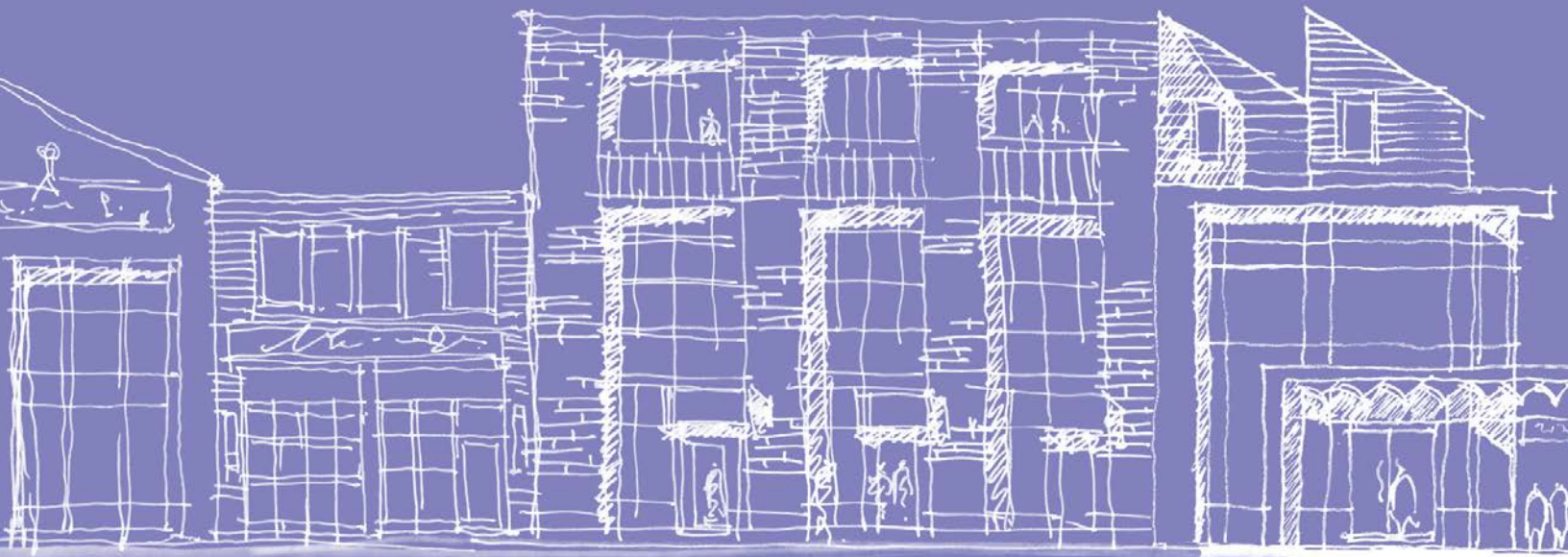


## 4.5.4 On-Site Parking and Access

- Vehicular access to individual sites should be taken from the rear, in order to maintain a continuous pedestrian environment along 1 Street SW.
- Detached or attached garages, or surface parking areas, should be located at the rear of buildings only, and accessed by car only from a lane.
- Visitor parking may be accommodated with surface stalls accessed from the lane.

Figure 4-33 Garden Residential - Section - Rear Parking Interface (4.5.4) examples





## 4.6 INDUSTRIAL ARTS PRECINCT

The Industrial Arts Precinct (Map 4-7) is located along the Centre Street South corridor, bounded by 7 Avenue SE to the north, and 12 Avenue SE to the south, following the Highway 2A alignment and the Canadian Pacific Railway line. The Centre Street Precinct is located to the immediate north. Lands to the immediate east of the area are developed with low-scale light industrial and commercial uses, while lands to the south across 12 Avenue SE are in the process of being developed with residential and associated commercial uses.

This area has developed over the years as an area for light industrial, small-scale manufacturing and office uses, while also supporting workshops and studios of local artisans. The ARP will encourage the area to continue to grow as a manufacturing and arts hub that is better integrated into the surrounding community. It encourages a more concentrated and organized pattern of industrial development—with an emphasis on street orientation and creation of a consistent street wall, and a de-emphasis on the physical separation of buildings—and adds the option for live-work residential development to the existing industrial land use typology. The proposed architectural palette acknowledges the agricultural-industrial heritage of the Town while recognizing its future potential as a modern working precinct characterized by local artisanal workshops.

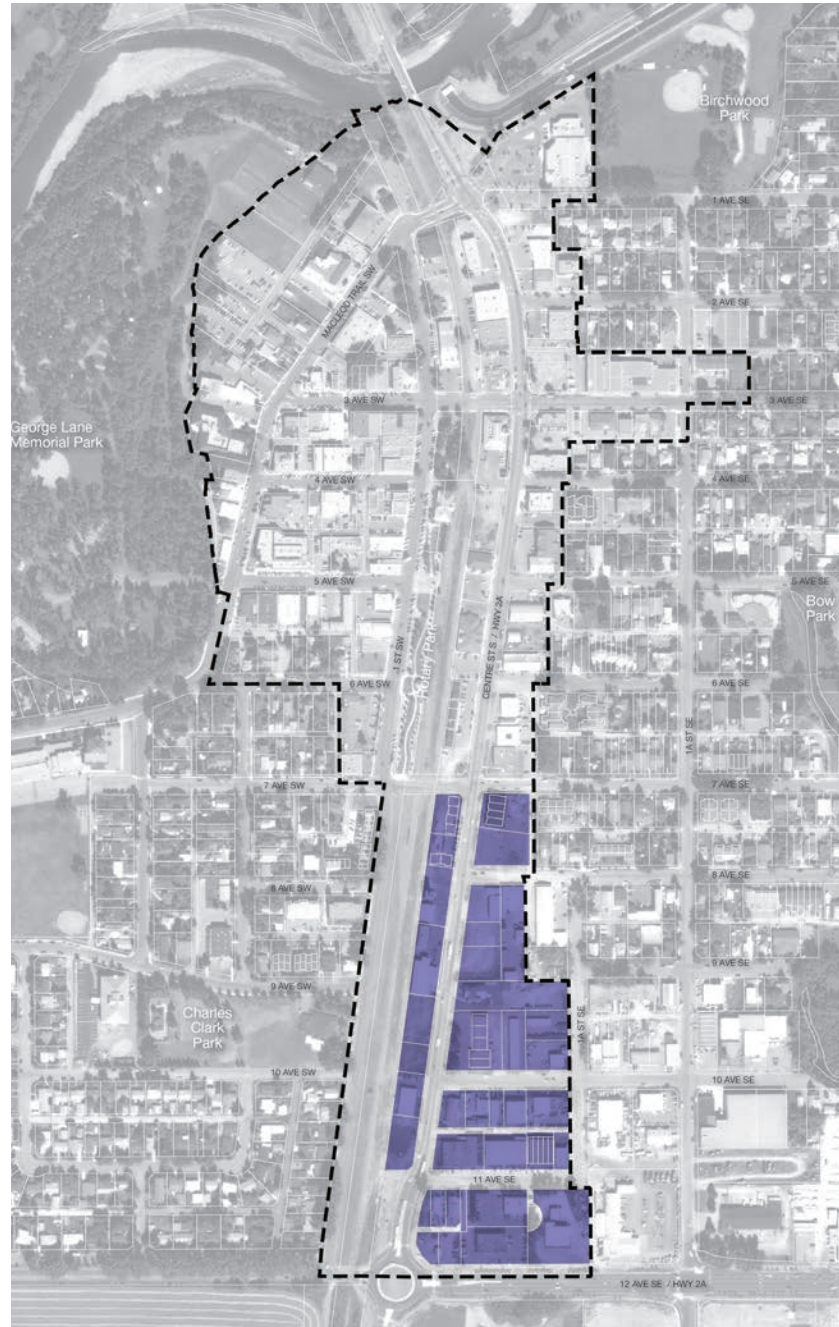
### 4.6.1 Objectives

- a. To maintain the area as a key employment centre for the community, including light industrial, small-scale manufacturing, and office uses.
- b. To encourage local artisans to locate in the area in a live/work environment.
- c. To ensure the configuration, orientation, and design of new development contributes to a high-quality public realm and pedestrian environment.



## 4.6.2 Land Use

- a. Live-work arrangements shall be the only residential uses considered within the Precinct. Where a live-work arrangement is provided, the residential component of the building must be provided above the ground floor. Stand-alone residential projects shall not be permitted.
- b. Public art galleries or studios are encouraged to develop in this area to create a hub of shared uses and services.
- c. Small-scale light manufacturing and other light industrial operations are encouraged to develop in this area to help strengthen the community's economic diversity.



Map 4-7: Industrial Arts Precinct

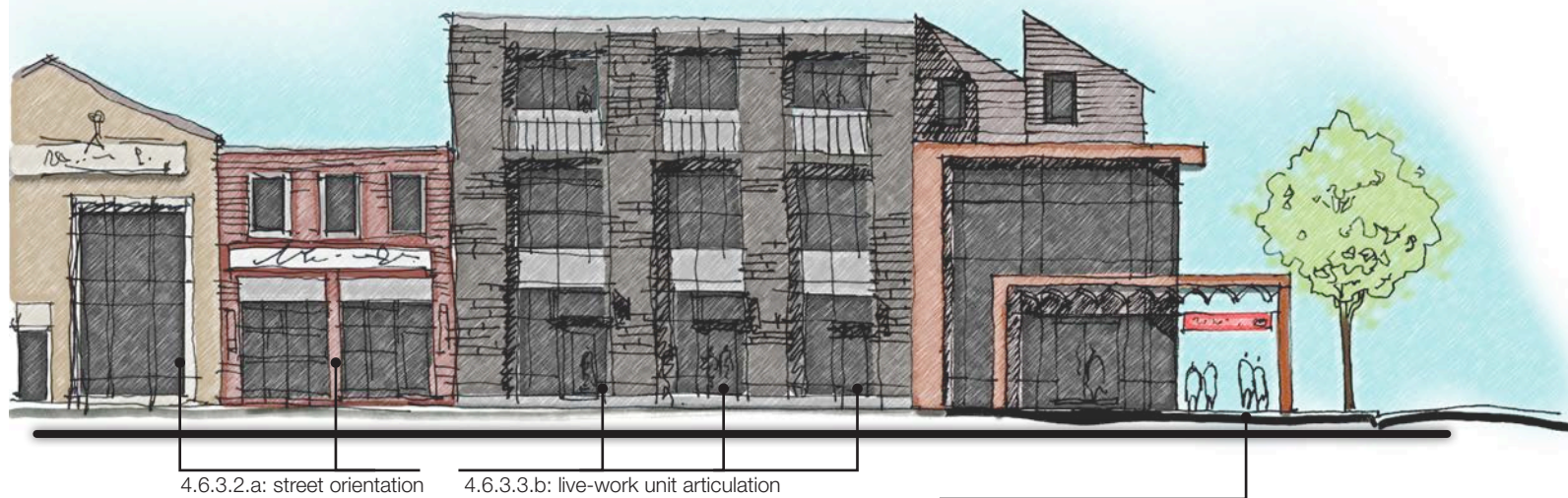


Figure 4-34 Industrial Arts - Block Face Elevation Example

4.6.3.2.c,d: active frontage located at corner, facilitating view of industry/art in action

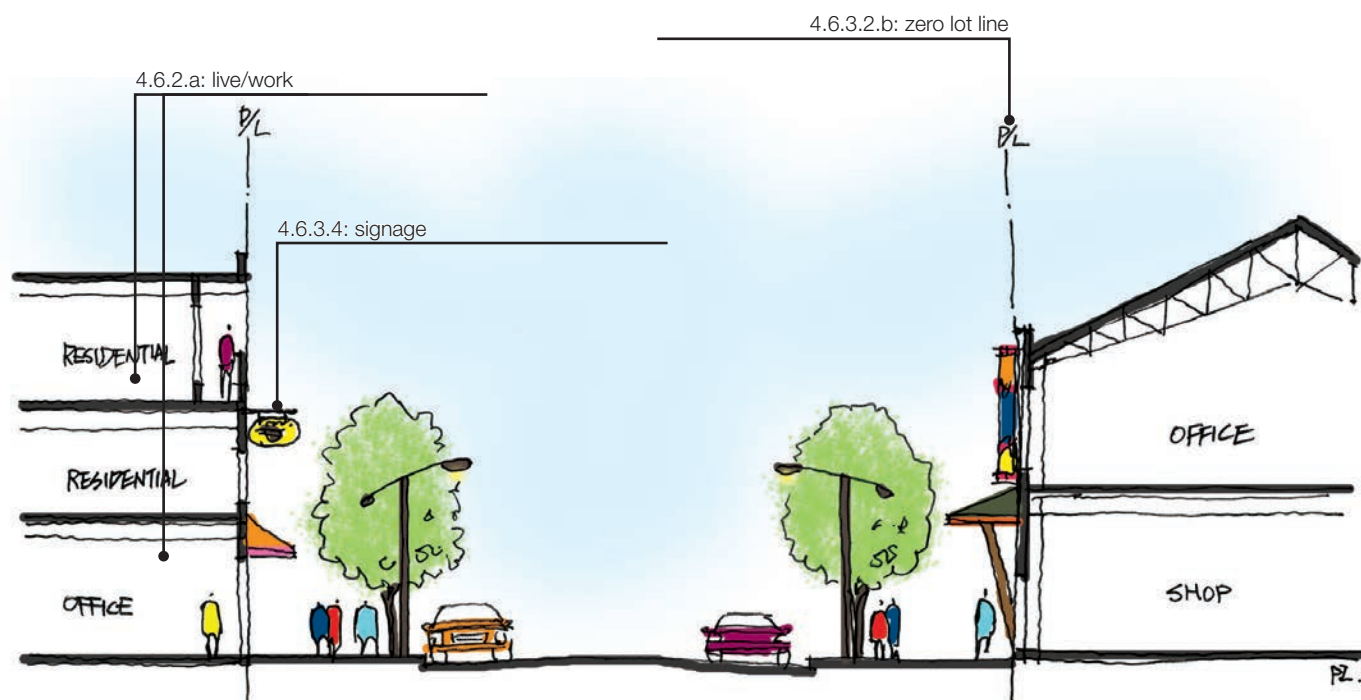


Figure 4-35 Industrial Arts - Street Section Interface Example

## 4.6.3 Built Form

### 4.6.3.1 Height

- a. Development shall be limited to a maximum height of 3 storeys, not to exceed 12 metres, throughout the Precinct.

### 4.6.3.2 Frontage

- a. Buildings shall be oriented towards and have their main entrance on a street.
- b. Buildings should be built to the front property line, in order to support creation of an active street edge.
- c. Active commercial uses associated within industrial buildings should be located at prominent positions in the building relative to the block face, such as at corners or adjacent to commercial frontages in neighbouring buildings.
- d. Buildings or corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection, and feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations.

### 4.6.3.3 Articulation

- a. For portions of industrial buildings with inactive frontages or blank facades, articulation through subtle façade offsets and material changes should be applied to create visual interest and a pedestrian-scaled rhythm.
- b. Live-work units should be clearly differentiated from one another using vertical architectural elements and material differentiation.

### 4.6.3.4 Signage and Lighting

- a. Exterior neon signs may be permitted on industrial and commercial buildings in selected areas of high visibility.
- b. The use of internally illuminated fluorescent box signage is prohibited.
- c. Outdoor lighting should be designed to prevent light intrusion beyond the site; e.g., by applying down-lighting, selecting lighting locations that contain light within the site and/or employing lamp fixtures that do not allow direct-beam illumination to leave the site.

### 4.6.3.5 Materiality

- a. Use of materials reflecting the Town's agricultural heritage aesthetic – brick, wood plank, stone, corrugated zinc – is encouraged.
- b. Building design should utilize a variety of superior materials and finishes used in combination to articulate the building components and create high-quality elevations – this is particularly important for large floor-plate light industrial buildings, where subtle articulation emphasized with material changes can break-up long, inactive frontages.
- c. Vinyl siding is not an acceptable cladding material.

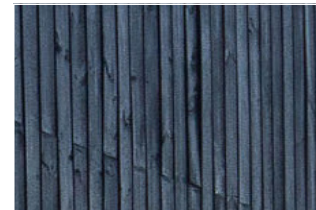
aluminum panel



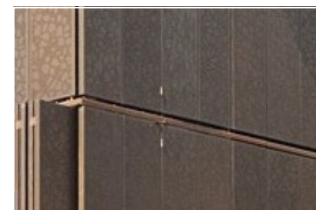
brick



wood plank



corten steel



corrugated aluminum, zinc, or steel

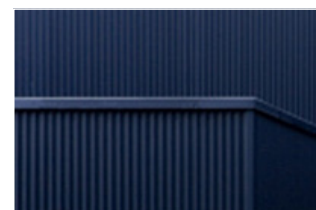


Figure 4-36 Industrial Arts - Material Examples



# INDUSTRIAL ARTS PRECINCT

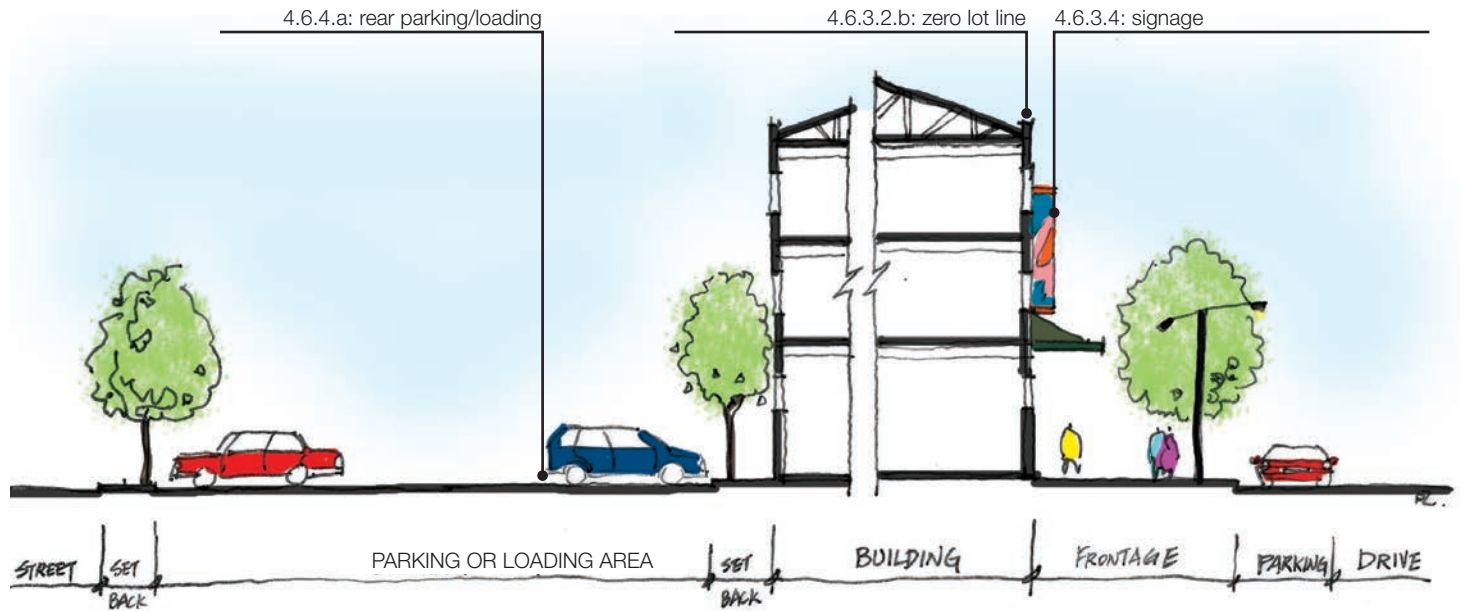
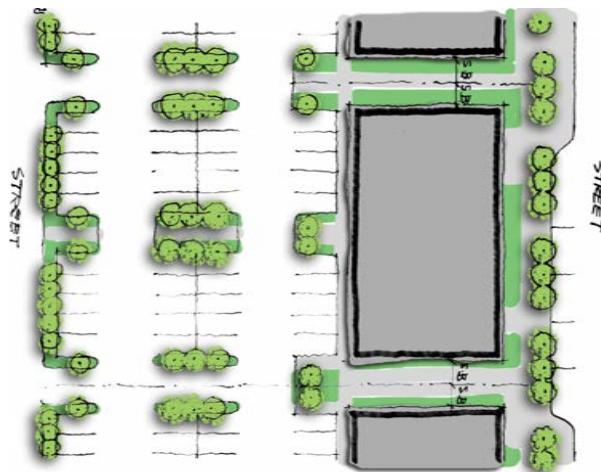
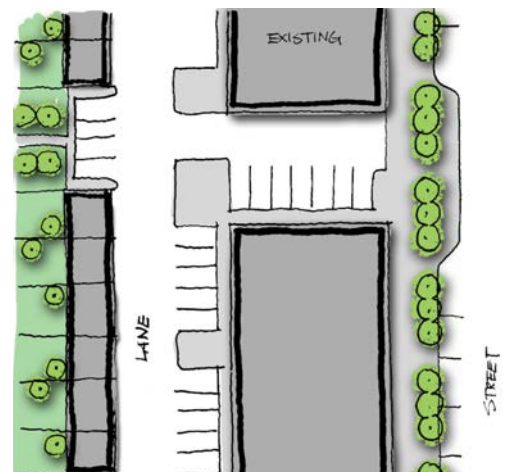


Figure 4-37 Industrial Arts - Section - Street and Parking Interface Example



full block, rear parking (or loading) area, accessed from the lane



half block rear and side parking areas, accessed from the lane, adjacent to Garden Residential Precinct

Figure 4-38 Industrial Arts - Plan View - Example Parking Interface Alternatives (4.6.4)

## 4.6.4 On-Site Parking

- Outdoor parking, loading, and storage are encouraged to be located on the side or back of the lot, accessed via a laneway or side street.
- If a site does not have rear lane access, surface parking areas may be provided at the side of buildings adjacent to the street.
- Where laneways are not present or laneway access is restricted, front access and loading will be permitted. Landscape screening of these areas is required.





## 4.7 PUBLIC SERVICES PRECINCT

The Public Services Precinct (Map 4-8) is adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor that runs parallel to 1 Street SW, and extends from the Highwood River crossing at the north end of the Plan area to 12 Avenue SE at the south end. Portions of the corridor between 3 Avenue SW and 7 Avenue SW have been enhanced to provide a pedestrian pathway and seating areas, and other amenities, such as the Museum of the Highwood. Portions of the corridor north of 3 Avenue SW are developed with a range of commercial uses. The portion of the corridor south of 7 Avenue SW is undeveloped.

The Public Services Precinct is a critical location for a continuous linkage of park and pedestrian-focused amenities, as well as landmark civic buildings and cultural facilities that serve the broader community and benefit from the centrality and visibility of this corridor. This area may also accommodate public utilities as required.

### 4.7.1 Objectives

- a. To provide an enhanced north-south pedestrian connection through the downtown.
- b. To provide open space and other public amenities through the area to serve the downtown population and those visiting the area.
- c. To provide linkages from other open space and public amenities in the surrounding area into the downtown.
- d. To accommodate public utilities as may be required to support ongoing downtown redevelopment.
- e. To identify preferred potential locations for civic buildings and to accommodate the potential development of new civic buildings that are integrated with the public realm.



#### 4.7.2 Land Use

- a. A variety of parks, open spaces, and other public amenities should be provided throughout this Precinct (and in other areas, as opportunities may arise) to meet the needs of residents, visitors, and those working in the downtown.
- b. Within this Precinct, additional open space amenities should be provided that meet the year-round active and passive recreation needs of those living, visiting, and working in the downtown.
- c. Stand-alone civic buildings are permitted in this district. Commercial uses ancillary to civic uses are permitted.
- d. Cultural facilities described in Appendix D: Cultural Plan and in Chapter 5: Implementation, are highly encouraged to be located in this precinct.
- e. Temporary facilities or installations required to support activities and gatherings may be located in this precinct, including open-air markets, cafés, public art installations, and art exhibits.
- f. Recurring, seasonal, 'tactical' or 'pop-up urbanism', and other temporary installations and events are permitted.
- g. Community gardens, urban agriculture, and urban orchards are permitted.
- h. Where necessary to serve existing and future downtown development, public utility infrastructure should be located within this Precinct, if possible.



### Map 4-8: Public Services Precinct

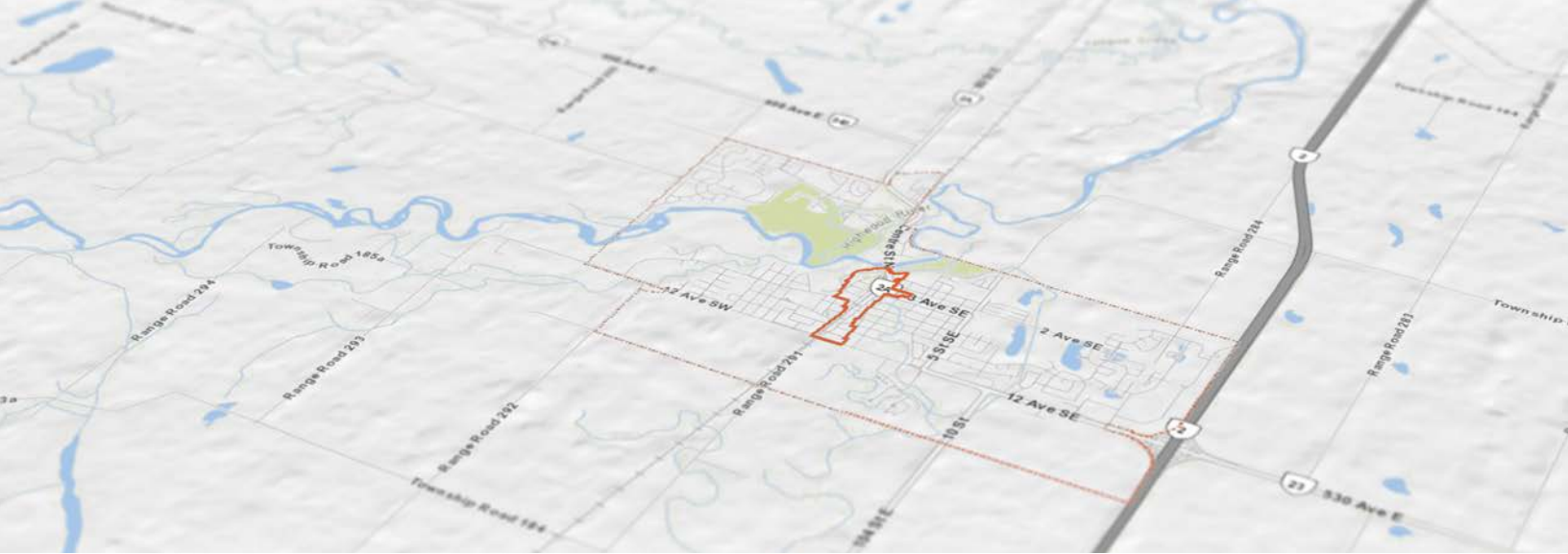
## 4.7.3 Built Form

- a. All new civic buildings should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by an **Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP)**. See Chapter 5: Implementation regarding the establishment of an UDRP.
- b. New civic buildings constructed within the public service district should be designed to integrate into the planned context as described by the policies for neighbouring precincts.
- c. Buildings shall be oriented towards and have their main entrance on a street. Entrances should be clearly visible to create an identity and sense of arrival. Entrances should be universally-accessible and utilize elements such as detailing, paving materials, lighting, signage and canopies to be welcoming and provide weather protection.
- d. Buildings or corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection, and feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations and create opportunities for landmarks and corner entrance features.
- e. New buildings immediately adjacent to the **Garden Laneway** shall provide an active pedestrian entrance onto the mews; secondary frontages on the mews, replete with glazing and outdoor amenity space, are encouraged on the mews.

## 4.7.4 Public Realm

Specific recommendations for the configuration of the public realm in this precinct are contained in Chapter 3: Public Realm Plan.

- a. Any redevelopment of existing open spaces and plans for new open spaces should be undertaken with regard to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- b. The existing pedestrian pathway along the east side of 1 Street SW should be extended to the south to 12 Avenue SW to provide additional connections for those living, visiting and working in the Downtown. Seating and amenity areas should be included as part of the corridor improvements.
- c. Enhanced linkages should be provided to allow pedestrians to connect to open space and other public amenities such as George Lane Park, Charles Clark Park, and the Bob Snodgrass Recreation Complex from the owtown.



# 5. IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.1 Authority of the Plan

ARPs are adopted as bylaw by Council in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Section 635 of the MGA states:

*An area redevelopment plan,*

*a) must describe:*

- 1. the objectives of the plan and how they are proposed to be achieved,*
- 2. the proposed land uses for the redevelopment area,*
- 3. if a redevelopment levy is to be imposed, the reasons for imposing it, and*
- 4. any proposals for the acquisition of land for any municipal use, school facilities, parks and recreation facilities or any other purposes council considers necessary;*

*and*

*b) may contain any other proposals that the council considers necessary*

This section describes the interpretation, approval processes, limitations, amendments, and monitoring requirements that are critical to correct implementation of the ARP as bylaw.

### 5.1.1 Interpretation of the Plan

The following sub-sections provide direction for interpretation of plan language, figures, maps, and non-statutory elements.

#### 5.1.1.1 Policy Interpretation

Where “shall” is used in a policy, the policy is considered mandatory. However, where actual quantities or numerical standards are contained within a mandatory policy (e.g.,



density policies specifying allowable units per hectare), the quantities or standards may be deviated from, provided that the deviation is necessary to address unique circumstances that will otherwise render compliance impractical or impossible, and the intent of the policy is still achieved.

Where “should” is used in a policy, the intent is that the policy is to be complied with. However, the policy may be deviated from in a specific situation where the deviation is necessary to address unique circumstances that will otherwise render compliance impractical or impossible, or to allow an acceptable alternate means to achieve the general intent of the policy to be introduced.

Where a policy requires compliance at the Neighbourhood Outline Plan/Land Use Amendment stage, that requirement may be deferred to the Subdivision Approval or Development Permit stage without requiring an amendment to the Plan.

#### *5.1.1.2 Figure and Map Interpretation*

Unless otherwise specified within the Plan, the boundaries or locations of any symbols or areas shown on a Figure are conceptual only, not absolute, and shall be interpreted as such. They are not intended to define exact locations except where they coincide with clearly recognizable physical features or fixed boundaries such as property lines or road and utility rights-of-way.

Unless otherwise specified within the Plan, where actual quantities or numerical standards are contained within the Figure, these quantities or standards shall be interpreted as conceptual only and will be determined at the detailed design stage.

#### *5.1.1.3 Non-Statutory Components of the Plan*

All contextual information and appendices attached to the Plan are to be used as supporting information only and do not form part of the statutory ARP.

### **5.1.2 Approval Processes**

#### *5.1.2.1 Review of Development Applications*

- a. All development applications within the plan area are subject to the provisions of this ARP.
- b. In reviewing development permits, the Development Authority shall:
  1. Consider the context of the ultimate development concept as identified in the Plan
  2. Have regard to possible impacts on the existing development with respect to its ongoing operation and functioning until such time as it is replaced with new development consistent with the Plan
- c. The evaluation of Development Permit Applications shall consider in particular the policies and guidelines contained within Chapter 4: Urban Design + Development, as well as how the proposed development interfaces and supports policies contained within Chapter 3: Public Realm.
- d. Significant projects (e.g., major civic and cultural facilities, comprehensive redevelopment proposals) should be reviewed by an Urban Design Review Panel.

#### *5.1.2.2 Review of Land Use Amendments*

- a. Land use redesignations shall be in conformance with the ARP. Where feasible, land use districts established in the Land Use Bylaw will be used to implement the policies set out in this plan.
- b. The exact land use district boundaries shall be determined at the land use re-designation stage, using the planning precinct boundaries identified on Map X\* (page X\*).

### **5.1.3 Plan Limitations**

The High River Downtown ARP is a long-term planning document. As such, it promotes a vision for the area and puts in place policies and guidelines that work toward achieving that vision over time.

The policies and guidelines in the ARP are not to be interpreted as an approval for a use on a specific site as the policies do not address the specific situation or condition of each site within the Plan area. In that regard, no representation is made herein that any particular site is suitable for a particular purpose as site conditions or constraints, including flood risk, environmental contamination, and geotechnical suitability, must be assessed on a case-by-case basis as part of an application for Subdivision, Land Use, or Development Permit Approval.

### **5.1.4 Amendment of the Plan**

The nature of managing urban development through statutory plans is that there will likely be concepts for development and public improvements in the future that have not been proposed or anticipated by the plan. Where such new concepts and ideas respond to and meet the intent of the Vision, Objectives, and Principles (Chapter 2), or offer a creative solution to a specific problem, the Town shall make the effort to enable their implementation, including making amendments to this plan as needed. To make any change to the text or maps within the Plan, an amendment to the Plan that includes a Public Hearing of Council, shall be required in accordance with the MGA.

Where an amendment to the Plan is requested, the applicant shall submit a formal request for the proposed amendment, along with technical information on how it conforms with the ARP's vision, guiding principles, and objectives, or why it cannot, and ensure its consistency with the Town of High River Town Plan.

### **5.1.5 Monitoring of the Plan**

The policies within the Plan shall be monitored over time in relation to development in order to ensure they remain current and relevant. Where determined necessary, these policies shall be updated through the plan amendment process either generally or in response to a specific issue.

## 5.2 Implementation Schedule

Approval of this plan is the first step in implementation of the ARP. The policies contained within Chapters 3 and 4, to a broad extent, implement the ARP, as it relates to managing public and private development over the long-term. To support the complete achievement of the vision, principles, and objectives identified in Chapter 2, and to ensure that policies described in Chapters 3 and Chapter 4 are fully supported, a number of additional steps must be taken. The following list describes chronologically and thematically action items related to coordination, programming, future plans, studies, inventories, applications, appraisals, or analyses; and other efforts to be undertaken by the Town departments, partner organizations, or stakeholders to see the established vision through.

### Short-Term (0-5 years)

#### *Land Use + Urban Design*

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##### **Update Land Use Bylaw: Signage Rules**

- Align signage rules in bylaw with those in the ARP, where applicable. Detailed recommendations for bylaw amendments can be found in **Appendix F: Recommended Land Use Bylaw Amendments**.

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##### **Update Land Use Bylaw: Land Use Districts**

- Review and revise land use bylaw to align with the policies and guidelines of the ARP. Detailed recommendations for bylaw amendments can be found in **Appendix F: Recommended Land Use Bylaw Amendments**.

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##### **Establish an Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP)**

- Create an Urban Design Review Panel to assist in the review of new development within the downtown ARP Area.

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#### *Public Realm*

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##### **Implement Public Realm design recommendations**

- Continue to implement recommended public realm improvements as they align with ongoing utility replacement work.
- Update/amend the Infrastructure Master Plan and Transportation Master Plan to study and incorporate design changes detailed in the Downtown ARP Public Realm Plan (e.g., Centre/Macleod roundabout, revised Centre Street cross section).
- Undertake a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to determine cost and phasing for implementing long-term public realm improvements detailed in the Downtown ARP Public Realm Plan (beyond the scope of ongoing utility replacement-driven improvements).

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##### **Identify Public Realm funding sources**

- Explore funding options for construction of proposed public realm improvements (including development charges/levies) and incorporate into a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

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##### **Develop a “High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program”**

- Consider developing and implementing a High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program that specifies rules and procedures for the private utilization of public spaces. This program may address time allowances, clean-up requirements, area limitations, and/or permitting system and fee schedule. It should account for the role of existing bylaws, and should be developed in collaboration with local business owners likely to temporarily utilize public spaces; it should not overly or unnecessarily burden potential users to the degree that the desired active use of these spaces is unintentionally discouraged.

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#### *Statutory Plan Alignment*

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##### **Update High River Town Plan to reflect Downtown ARP**

- Update Map 2 of the High River Town Plan to include the Downtown ARP boundaries.
-



## Parking Study

### Optimize Parking Supply

- Encourage shared-parking between property owners.
- Introduce 2 hour parking limits on certain streets in the Downtown Central Business District (as part of the parking time limit restrictions, by-law enforcement is required to ensure parking limits are heeded, which in turn promotes higher turnover. This will also set the stage for other parking management alternatives such as paid on-street parking).
- Optimize parking supplies that currently exist in lanes and on-site at existing developments.

### Update Land Use Bylaw parking rules

- Consider implementing either a cash-in-lieu fee or a benefit assessment Bylaw fee to be collected monthly for either a finite or indefinite period of time. These could be used for a variety of purposes and not limited to the construction of new off-street stalls.
- Review the Land Use Bylaw minimum parking requirements based on recommendations contained in **Appendix C: Parking Study**, which provides preferred parking ratios.

### Implement traffic management strategies

- Review and develop a traffic management strategy to accommodate the expected land use densities and ensure that the strategy aligns with the IMP.
- Update the Town's Infrastructure Master Plan (IMP) to confirm the ability of the road network, as well as other infrastructure facilities to accommodate the proposed redevelopment concept densities.

## Cultural Plan

(Item numbering corresponds to Cultural Plan; See **Appendix D: Cultural Plan** for complete descriptions of implementation items)

### Cultural Strategy 1A: Develop and expand existing cultural anchors within the downtown area.

1. Investigate expansion, enhancement, management, and programming of existing performance facilities at the Memorial Centre and/or the W.O. Mitchell Theatre at the Centennial Library; review management and programming responsibilities to support facility use.
2. Undertake a facility plan and business planning study to determine spatial requirements, available funding, and the feasibility of expanding the Museum of the Highwood in its existing location.

### Cultural Strategy 1B: Establish new cultural anchors, relocate existing cultural anchors, or partner with existing anchors in within the downtown area to deliver cultural programming

4. Undertake an options appraisal, feasibility study, and funding analysis for establishing a new multidisciplinary cultural centre on the existing land on/around the Centennial Library, or on land adjacent to the Museum of the Highwood.
5. Establish permanent seasonal locations for the Farmer's Market and Artisan Market; utilize the 4th Avenue SW Woonerf during the summer
6. Support pop-up restaurants and food trucks in the downtown area, specifically on the 4 Ave SW Woonerf.
7. Consider relocating the High River Visitor Information Centre to the Museum of the Highwood to ensure a central location and year-round operation.

### Cultural Strategy 1C: Beautify, animate, and connect the public realm with seasonal plantings, improved signage, public art, interpretation, and a variety of year-round cultural activities.

10. Improve way-finding features and beautify the downtown area through flower boxes/planters, gardens, seasonal decorations, etc.
8. Designate outdoor spaces as "preferred" for events, parades, and festivals; create a centralized booking system for use of these spaces; establish pedestrian-only times on the 4 Ave Woonerf; provide event support facilities (e.g., covered areas, electrical points, WiFi/LiFi, lighting, speakers, etc.).
9. Coordinate, develop, and expand the existing program of events and festivals to make the best use of outdoor spaces and provide year-round programming.

### Cultural Strategy 1D: Ensure that artists and creative industries have access to affordable space for creation, display, retail, and performance.

11. Involve local artists in the creation and installation of public art in the downtown area.
12. Explore inclusion of artists' studios, and retail and gallery space within the proposed multidisciplinary cultural centre (Strategy 1B).

- 13. Facilitate collaboration between vacant property owners, artists, and cultural groups to activate empty storefronts with cultural display and event promotion.
- 14. Develop a strategy for reviving the live music scene, in partnership with the High River and District Music Festival Association.

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**Cultural Strategy 2A: High River should continue to celebrate its diverse culture, unique history, and local talent.**

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- 15. Organize new events, festivals, and programming that celebrate High River's: western traditions of ranching, agriculture and related crafts, local creative talent, connections with the river and the railway, and the diverse culture of its residents.
  - 16. Develop and maintain a Heritage and Culture Interpretation Plan for High River to provide direction on how to celebrate and interpret important heritage and cultural sites and events.
  - 17. Develop and update the High River walking tour series with more contemporary interpretation and media.
- 

**Cultural Strategy 2B: High River should promote and invest in the protection and preservation of its built heritage.**

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- 18. Continue to develop and update the High River Heritage Inventory Project; encourage heritage property owners to utilize the Alberta Heritage Act; establish and pursue High River's candidacy for the Alberta Main Street Program.
  - 19. Develop a public education program to engage people and strengthen understanding, literacy, and appreciation for the built and natural environments
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**Cultural Strategy 2C: Promote and invest in the protection and preservation of its natural heritage.**

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- 20. Develop a master plan to formally classify natural areas and provide a strategic management plan for conservation and development.
  - 21. Balance increased year-round cultural and recreational use of George Lane Park with the park's critical ecological functions.
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**Cultural Strategy 2D: Establish and invest in a regular public art and murals program.**

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- 22. Establish a strategy for installing new public art and murals within the downtown area.
  - 23. Establish a conservation strategy, funding, and long -term management and maintenance plan for the repair and restoration of the existing public murals.
  - 24. Reinstall the Medicine Tree in a prominent location within or near the downtown area.
- 

**Cultural Strategy 3A: Expand the strategic cultural vision for the downtown area to provide direction for cultural planning which encompasses the whole Town.**

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- 25. Develop a Town-wide Cultural Plan that builds on the established cultural plan strategies in this ARP.
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**Cultural Strategy 3B: Strengthen existing cultural leadership while developing future leaders.**

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- 26. Expand membership of the Heritage Advisory Board and the Arts and Culture Board; develop an Annual Events Sub-committee to work with the Tourism Office on coordinating programming, marketing and media coverage.
  - 27. Determine gaps in knowledge with a cultural sector skills audit; provide a series of networking and collaborative events, workshops and training courses for both professional and amateur artists; provide workshops on creative entrepreneurship and business management.
  - 28. Establish a Youth Advisory Panel to the Heritage Advisory Board, Arts and Culture Board and Library Board.
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**Cultural Strategy 3C: Actively encourage volunteering.**

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- 29. Establish and actively promote a structured volunteer program and produce a best practice guide for local organizations to follow when recruiting and employing volunteers.
  - 30. Hold a Volunteer Fair to pair willing volunteers with groups that need help or specific skills, and to establish a pool of volunteers that could be called upon to help during annual events and festivals.
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**Cultural Strategy 3D: Develop, position, and market High River as a welcoming and supportive "creative hub" in which to live and work; ensure that cultural facilities and activities spaces are of a high design quality in order to attract the creative industries.**

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- 32. Continue to encourage the film and television industry to use locations throughout High River for filming by providing incentives and developing a Film Location Brochure.
  - 33. Encourage best practice and innovative, quality design for the development of new and existing cultural facilities.
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**Cultural Strategy 4A: Build greater awareness of local artists, programs and events within the Town.**

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- 34. Create and promote a single cultural guide to High River.
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**Cultural Strategy 4B: Champion the diversification of municipal and other cultural programming and ensure that activity is varied, inclusive, and affordable.**

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- 36. Regularly undertake research to determine the level of cultural participation; minimize or remove any barriers to participation.
  - 37. Conduct a regular audit of cultural programming and frequently measure community satisfaction with cultural provision.
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**Cultural Strategy 4C: Expand available facilities and programs to engage more youth aged 12-19 in cultural activities.**

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- 38. Increase youth access to creative training, supplies, and equipment by establishing dedicated creative facilities for youth through the transformation of existing facilities, incorporation of facilities as part of a larger new development, or creation of a standalone facility (Strategy 1B).
  - 39. Establish a suitable outlet for young people to showcase talents; involve schools in the creation, display, and celebration of creativity
  - 40. Establish a creative mentorship program that matches youth with cultural groups and active professional artists (Strategy 3B).
- 

**Cultural Strategy 4D: Leverage the Town's unique cultural selling points to position and brand the Town as a "creative destination" or "art town," and ensure it offers a full day and/or weekend tourist experience.**

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- 41. Produce a Tourism Master Plan that focuses in part on developing the cultural tourism product and positioning High River as a day-trip or weekend destination.
  - 42. Define a strategic brand for High River that communicates the Town's unique approach to arts, culture, and heritage; and develop a "Crafted in High River" logo for locally handcrafted products/services.
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## Long-Term (5-10+ years)

### *Parking Study*

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**Optimize Parking Supply.**

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- Continue to allow shared parking analysis in determining bylaw parking requirement for mixed-use sites.
  - Explore instituting market pricing for the on-street parking supply if redevelopment occurs to the densities envisioned (requires enforcement to ensure turnover occurs and short-stay spaces are available for users).
  - Identify future sites where central, pooled parking facilities could be developed to accommodate up to 260 additional stalls within walking distance of the Downtown Central Business District (a 2-3 level above-grade structure may be required if all 260 additional stalls were provided in single location).
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**Implement Transportation Demand Management.**

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- Continue to implement other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) techniques (such as upgrades to trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, transit, etc.) to encourage the use of alternative modes and to promote a more walkable community within the downtown.
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**Consider Establishment of a Parking Authority.**

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- If, in the future, it makes sense to separate parking enforcement from other bylaw enforcement, consider establishing a parking authority. The authority could be charged with implementing parking strategies, including: the introduction and enforcement of on-street parking time limits; development of additional parking facilities; and potential future introduction and enforcement of on-street market pricing.
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### *Cultural Plan*

*(Item numbering corresponds to Cultural Plan; See **Appendix D: Cultural Plan** for complete descriptions of implementation items)*

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**Cultural Strategy 3D: Develop, position, and market High River as a welcoming and supportive "creative hub" in which to live and work; ensure that cultural facilities and activities spaces are of a high design quality in order to attract the creative industries.**

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- 31. Produce a creative industries sector profile; actively encourage commercial artists and creative industries to relocate to or set up in High River; and co-locate in the same facility and/or cluster in the same area.
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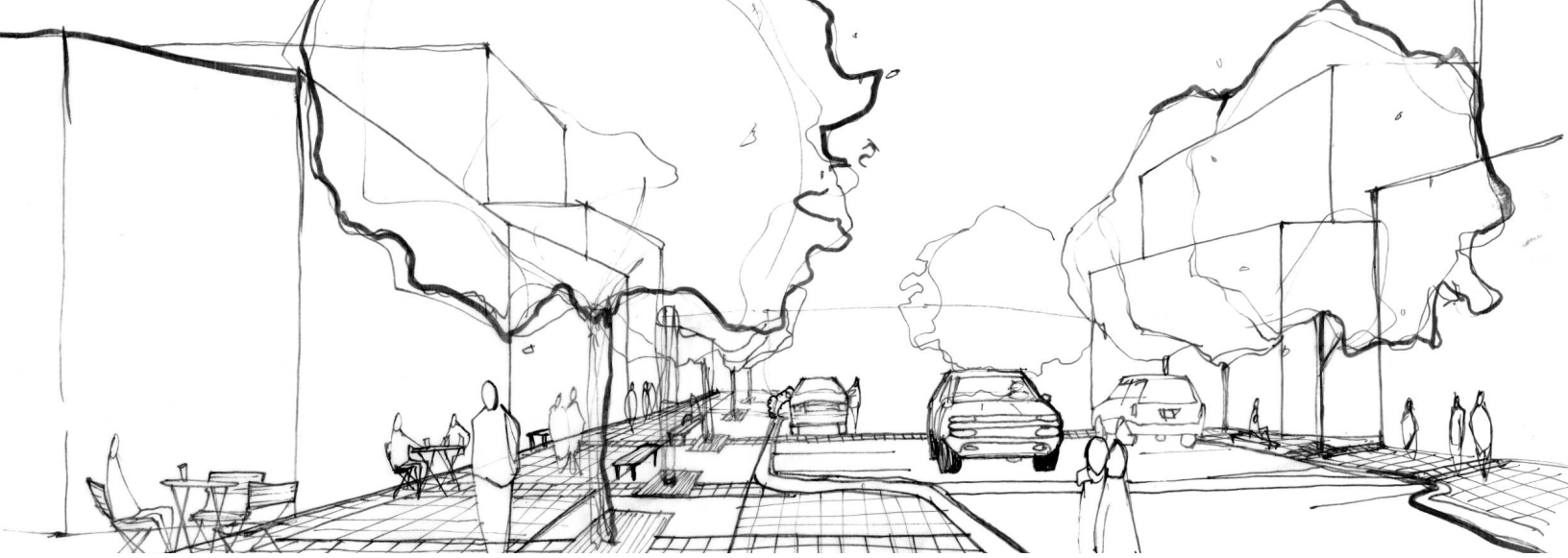
**Cultural Strategy 4A: Build greater awareness of local artists, programs, and events within the Town.**

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- 35. Continue to incorporate culture into all future municipal planning and development strategies for High River.
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## 6. GLOSSARY

**Access:** the accessibility to and within the site for vehicles, cycles, and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes, and how these fit into the surrounding access network.

**ADA Guidelines:** enforceable standards for increasing universal accessibility and reducing discrimination in public spaces, as established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

**Articulation:** the articulation and design of a building façade creates identity for individual units within a larger building and can provide the adjacent public realm with a pedestrian scale.

**Bulb-out:** a curb extension used to extend the sidewalk, thereby reducing the crossing distance for pedestrians, and allowing pedestrians and approaching vehicles to see one another when vehicles parked in a parking lane would otherwise block visibility. Bulb-outs are also used as a traffic calming measure.

**Community Garden:** a single piece of land gardened collectively by a group of people.

**Connection:** the linkages within the community that bring together and move pedestrians, bicycles, vehicles, etc. from one area to another.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):** a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour through environmental design, which relies upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts, mostly within the built environment.

**Density:** the number of dwelling units on a site expressed in dwelling units per acre (u.p.a) or units per hectare (u.p.ha).

**Flood Mitigation:** management and control of flood water movement, such as redirecting run-off through the use of floodwalls, flood gates, or the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques to promote stormwater infiltration.

**Frontage Zone:** building façades, entrances, and windows to create an interface between buildings and the public realm. The design of these elements as they relate to the adjacent sidewalks and streets affects street activity and perceptions of scale, variety, and rhythm. Allowed uses within the frontage zone include sidewalk cafes, non-permanent signage, retail displays, and landscaping.

**Gateway:** an urban design feature or area that provides visual access, direction and/or celebration of the community for those entering. Within the Plan, there are three areas that have been defined as being appropriate for such features, which could include (but is not limited to) architectural detailing, signage, streetscape elements, and public art.

**Greenspace/Furnishing Zone:** the area between the roadway curb face and border of the pedestrian zone. Allowed uses within this zone can include public site furnishings, transit stops, landscaping, sidewalk cafes, and patio.

**Guidelines:** statements of planning intent that are more detailed than policies, but not as strict as rules and regulations.

**Infrastructure:** the services and facilities for which the municipality has capital investment and maintenance responsibilities, including roadways, sidewalks, bridges, street lights and traffic signals, transit buses, solid waste management systems, potable water distribution systems, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, sports fields, playgrounds, arenas, pools, police and emergency response stations, vehicles and equipment, civic buildings, parks, boulevard trees, and computer and telecommunications equipment.

**Land Use Bylaw:** a bylaw of a municipality passed by Council as a Land Use Bylaw pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act and intended to control and regulate the use and development of land and buildings within the municipality.

**Laneway:** A narrow roadway between buildings, hedges, or fences.

**Materiality:** The quality of colours, materials, and finishes convey the character and durability of a building.

**Mews:** Narrow, intimate streets that balance access and service functions of a lane with active building frontages, accessory uses, and a street space shared by cars and pedestrians.

**Multi-modal:** allowing for a range of different modes of travel such as walking, cycling, driving, and public transit.

**Municipal Development Plan (MDP):** the principal statutory land use plan for the entire municipality, adopted by Council, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

**Natural Environment:** self-sustaining areas with native vegetation, water, or natural features.

**Node:** a central or connecting point at which pathways intersect or branch.

**Pathway:** a multi-modal route or way of access, generally through parks or in public rights of way abutting private properties.

**Pedestrian Zone:** an area that has been reserved for pedestrian travel only.

**Precincts:** distinct areas of town that are characterized by a specific land use pattern and character.

**Policy:** an official plan of action adopted by an individual or group, which for land use plans adopted by municipalities in Alberta can be distinguished as either statutory plans



(Municipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans, or Intermunicipal Development Plans) or non-statutory plans.

**Promenade:** a paved or otherwise constructed public walk through a park or open space.

**Public Art:** works of art in any media that has been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

**Public Realm:** the public and semi-public spaces of the city, especially the street spaces of the city from building face to the opposite building face (including the facade, front yard, sidewalk, and streets) and open space such as parks and squares.

**Streetscape:** means all the elements that make up the physical environment of a street and define its character. This includes paving, trees, lighting, building type, style, setbacks, pedestrian amenities, street furniture, etc.

**Traffic Calming:** the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Typical devices include traffic circles, curb extension, diverters, and speed bumps.

**Urban agriculture:** the practice of cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around a village, town, or city.

**Urban orchard:** an area of land within a town or city devoted to the cultivation of fruit or nut trees.

**Utilities:** either (1) municipal and regional utilities such as water and sanitary sewer, or (2) “shallow” utilities such as gas, telephone, and electric.

**Woonerf:** the Dutch term for a shared street in which cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles (that are restricted to low speeds) occupy the same space. The shared nature of the woonerf acts as an effective traffic calming measure.