

Planning Building and  
Development Services

# River Flats

## Area Redevelopment Plan

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**Many thanks,  
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# Executive Summary



It is anticipated that the River Flats community will provide a significant role in managing sustainable growth within the city of Medicine Hat over the next 20 to 30 years. It is with this understanding that the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP or “Plan”) seeks to contribute a vision, principles and policy direction that is representative of the uniqueness of the community and the many assets and qualities it has to offer to citizens of the city.

The *River Flats ARP* presents a new vision for an established community. A vision of a livable and vital community that understands its responsibility in growing as an economical, environmental and socially-sustainable community. It is therefore, important that users of the *Plan* understand that the policies are interconnected and mutually-supportive and should be used in that manner to best achieve and shape the vision for the community.

The *Plan* addresses economic, environmental and social considerations that support a vision for a unique, complete and integrated community. The *Plan* presents a vision and policy direction that highlights the following:

- Creating a “*sense of place*” through unique and distinct neighbourhoods within the larger community;
- Reinforcement of the heritage value within the community;
- Sensitive intensification of land uses to support an enhanced public realm and community amenities;
- A focus on enhancing pedestrian connections, cycling and transit modes of transportation;
- Support for high-quality redevelopment in built-forms and the public realm; and
- Preservation of the diversity and inclusiveness of the community.

The *Plan* addresses the following areas:

- The Community’s Vision and Principles: How does the community envision its future?
- A Neighbourhood Urban Structure: Three neighbourhood planning areas referred to as the Old Town, Parks and Historic Clay neighbourhoods and their unique characteristics.
- Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design: Considerations include how best to

support intensification of uses and population while preserving the valued heritage of the community.

- Open Space and Pedestrian Connections: What are the assets and what is missing to better integrate the community?
- Movement Systems: How can the foundation of a grid-pattern support a “*walkable*” and more sustainable community?
- Infrastructure: What is needed in infrastructure to support intensification of the community?
- Environmental Management: How can the community better support the city’s environmental stewardship policies?
- Community and Social Development: What should be included to enhance the social aspects of the community and make it a more livable and vital community?
- Implementation: What is needed to make the vision a reality?

The *Plan* focuses on policy directions and implementation thinking that answers these questions and creates a “*sense of place*” for the community by



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Plan Boundary

The River Flats community is an established and mature neighbourhood located east of Downtown Medicine Hat. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) tracks provide a western edge and the city limit and escarpment provide an eastern boundary. The community is bounded on the north by the South Saskatchewan River and the CPR tracks on the south. The *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP or “Plan”)* takes into account the CPR tracks and the South Saskatchewan River in order to consider connectivity and integration with the Downtown and surrounding communities. *See Map 1: Boundary and Natural Features.*

The community is unique and special for its many natural assets and historical qualities. The River Flats is ideally located in a beautiful river valley that has the benefit of an open space, trail system and views of the surrounding escarpments. The River Flats is known for its key historical features of the establishment of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the “Historic Clay District”. The “Historic Clay District” has been home to a number of diverse clay manufacturing industries, starting with the B.C. McCord & Company in 1886 (on

the site of the present day I-XL Ltd.) and including other clay brick, sewer pipe, insulator and pottery manufacturing.

Although the foundation of the community has been a sizeable amount of residential development, related to the nearby industrial factories the community has diverse land uses from primarily single-dwelling residential, a mix of commercial types, industrial uses and a vast open space system along the winding South Saskatchewan River that runs along the northern edge of the community. *See Map 2: Aerial Photo of Boundary Area (2006).*





# 1.0 Introduction

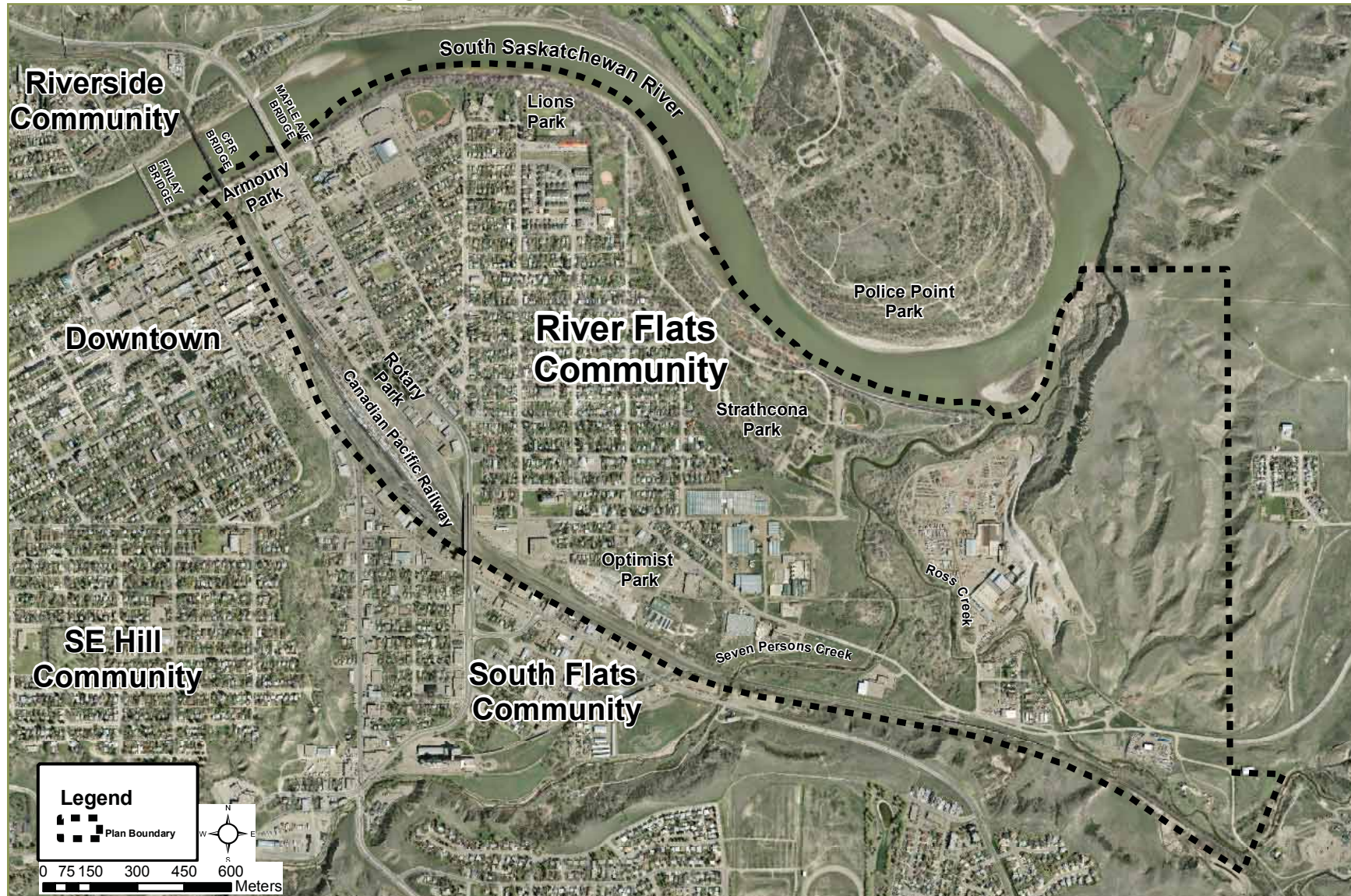
Map 1: Boundary and Natural Features





# 1.0 Introduction

**Map 2:** Aerial Photo of Boundary Area (2006)





# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.2 Purpose of the *Plan*

Over the last several years, the city of Medicine Hat has been experiencing significant growth and an increased desire to be more sustainable as a city. The redevelopment of established communities is therefore desired which has created development pressures for established communities such as the River Flats. In an effort to address redevelopment pressures from city growth, it was determined that a new *Area Redevelopment Plan* (see *Glossary for Area Redevelopment Plan definition*) for the community is required. The intent is to encourage sustainable development by creating a long-term vision for the community. A vision that builds on the community's many assets, appropriately increases the population, and guides future development.

Some of the results of the community's development pressures include: fragmented land use amendments, a lack of quality redevelopment, attention to the public realm in redevelopments, and appropriate buffers between uses such as residential and light industrial or commercial and vehicular movement systems. The purpose of the *ARP* is to address these concerns by establishing a vision, principles and policy direction

that will protect and enhance the unique character of the River Flats community.

Where a context statement accompanies a policy, it is provided for information only to enhance the understanding of the policy. Should an inconsistency arise between a context statement and a policy, the policy will take precedence. See Appendix C: *Glossary, Area Redevelopment Plan Implementation Definitions* for policy interpretation of "shall" and "should" statements.

The policies within the *Plan* are supplemented with two-dimensional maps and concepts and three-dimensional concepts, illustrations and photos. For this *Plan*, a map is a factual two-dimensional drawing. The concept is a two-dimensional or three-dimensional drawing that generally represents the intent of the policies that make up the vision for the River Flats community. It is intended that the images will provide the reader with a visual picture and better understanding of the ideas in the *Plan*. A common understanding of the *Plan* will result in more effective and timely implementation. All images shall be viewed in the context of the written policy text to further explain what is

visually being represented.

## 1.3 History

*"It can be said to have many 'births'. Established as an unincorporated Town on May 31, 1894, it was incorporated as a Town on October 31, 1898 and received a City Charter on May 9, 1906. However, Medicine Hat was really 'born' with the arrival of the CPR in 1883 . . ." from "All Hell For a Basement", by Ed Gould, 1981.*

Prior to the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the area that was to become Medicine Hat was little more than a valley oasis on the vast prairie. Although several First Nations tribes - most notably, the Blackfoot, Cree and Assiniboine - hunted in the region, the closest trading post was in the Cypress Hills and the banks of the South Saskatchewan were of little interest to all but a few trappers and homesteaders.

As news of the CPR's intended route spread, settlers began to arrive. The bridge construction necessary to cross the South Saskatchewan River, brought with it a tent and shack community which grew into a town within the next year.

# 1.0 Introduction



When railway construction raced through Seven Persons Coulee to the South Saskatchewan River trestle in June of 1883, track was being laid at a record-breaking two miles a day. It was an effort that would place an indelible mark on the prairie landscape - it would join the north and south banks of the river, but it would also divide the town site on the south bank in two.

The first railway station was built on the west side of the tracks, which led to the development of a significant up-scale business district on that side. From there, the land west of the “downtown” and especially along the river became highly prized as prime residential property.

The property on the other side of the tracks gave rise to the working class district and would become known as “the Flats” or more specifically, the “North Flats”. It would slowly fill with smaller businesses, labourers homes and - along the tracks to the east - a variety of industries. The area also had its share of substantial houses.

The Flats is bounded by the South Saskatchewan River to the north, the coulee hillside and clay cliffs on the east and the railway tracks, which scoop along its west and south side. As the track

approaches Medicine Hat from the east, railway sidings and spur lines veer away from the main line, evidence that the Flats was once home to the manufacture of numerous products including: brick and tile, sewer pipe, pottery and stoneware, glassware, crayons manufacturing, tent and canvas products, and tractors. Other industries, such as pump and brass casting, planing mills and greenhouses, filled the area. By mid-1914, Medicine Hat had an annual payroll of \$2.5 million and generated more than sixty products, many of which were produced by those who lived and worked in the Flats.

But the onset of World War I brought about the end of many of the manufacturing plants, as raw materials were shipped east to be fabricated into products for the war effort. Nevertheless, the clay industries survived that temporary downturn in the economy and continued to play an important role in the history of the Flats neighbourhood.

These two particular industries - the manufacture of brick and tile and the production of stoneware and pottery - are the oldest factory sites in Medicine Hat and are significant representations of early industrialization in Alberta.

Today, I-XL Ltd (originally the Medicine

Hat Brick and Tile Company) stands on the site where Ben McCord and David Corbin first began manufacturing bricks in 1886. The bricks from that first kiln fired by B.C. McCord & Co. were used to build Medicine Hat's Ewart Duggan House, which remains the oldest brick residence in Alberta. After several subsequent ownerships, the McCord site was purchased by Herbert Sissons in 1928, whose grandchildren still operate the plant today. The I-XL site has the distinction of being the oldest operating industrial site in Alberta and has been manufacturing bricks almost continuously since 1886.

The neighbouring Medalta Potteries factory complex is the centrepiece of the Medicine Hat Clay Industries National Historic District (known as the “Historic Clay District”). Built in 1912 as the Medicine Hat Pottery Co. Ltd, Medalta Potteries Ltd. and its predecessor, Medalta Stoneware Ltd., became the leading Canadian supplier of crocks, jugs, teapots, bowls and other ceramic items.

The Medalta brand is best known for stoneware (crocks, churns, jugs, bottles, and water coolers), artware (lamps, vases, cookie jars and other decorated ware) and hotel china. In 1921, Medalta shipped thirty carloads of product to



# 1.0 Introduction



Eastern Canada, making it the first Western company to send quality finished goods east of the Lakehead. Medalta's wares changed with the times and later supplied restaurant ware to the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways and to the Canadian Armed Forces. A changing economy and aging infrastructure brought about the end of the Medalta Potteries in 1954.

Today, National Historic Site designation has been conferred on both the Medalta Potteries site and the "Historic Clay District" - which covers 150 acres of the River Flats, including Medalta Potteries, Hycroft China, the National Porcelain Ltd site, the former Alberta Clay Products site, I-XL Ltd, the clay cliffs and the adjoining neighbourhood. In addition, the Hycroft China and Medalta Potteries sites are protected by Provincial Heritage Resource designations.

Under the auspices of the Friends of Medalta Society, the "Historic Clay District" is being restored as one of Canada's most intriguing museums and a world class economic tourism draw for Medicine Hat and the Canadian Badlands.

Throughout the Flats area, there are stories to tell that link the community to

the early history of Medicine Hat.

- Just west of Strathcona Island Park lies the site of the first ferry which linked the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) barracks on the north side of the river above Police Point to the Medicine Hat town site. The story of the arrival of the NWMP in 1883 is integral to the growth of law and order in the West and the changing cultural dynamics existence by the First Nations people.
- In the late 1880's a small shipyard existed to the east of the railway bridge, near the site of the present YMCA. Paddlewheel boats and flat bottom barges were built here until the early 1900s. Among the Paddlewheelers constructed were several for Captain Horatio Hamilton Ross, whose attempts to exploit the South Saskatchewan River as a western trading route is worth recounting.
- The temporary 1883 wood railway trestle was replaced in 1884 by a four span steel railway bridge. The south span turned on a central pivot to allow boats to pass along the South Saskatchewan River. By 1905, the pivot was no longer in use, but evidence of its existence remained well into the 1980's.
- The first hospital in the Northwest Territories (prior to 1905) was built on the site where the Police Station now stands. In 1889, it was the only hospital between Winnipeg and Vancouver and was an important cornerstone in the growth of the young community.
- The current brick railway station which stands on the east side of the tracks was built in 1905 and is one of only two or three "chateau-esque" hotel stations built. Although the Medicine Hat station was never used as a hotel, its counterpart in McAdam, New Brunswick operated as a combined station, restaurant and hotel; both are designated as Heritage Railway Stations by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.
- The Flats area gave rise to a booming greenhouse industry in the mid-1900s. Although many of Medicine Hat's greenhouses have moved to the outer-reaches of the City, there is still a significant greenhouse presence in the industrial area of the neighbourhood.
- The CPR railway station boasted a nationally famous garden to delight train passengers during stop-overs. For several years, a young grizzly bear

# 1.0 Introduction

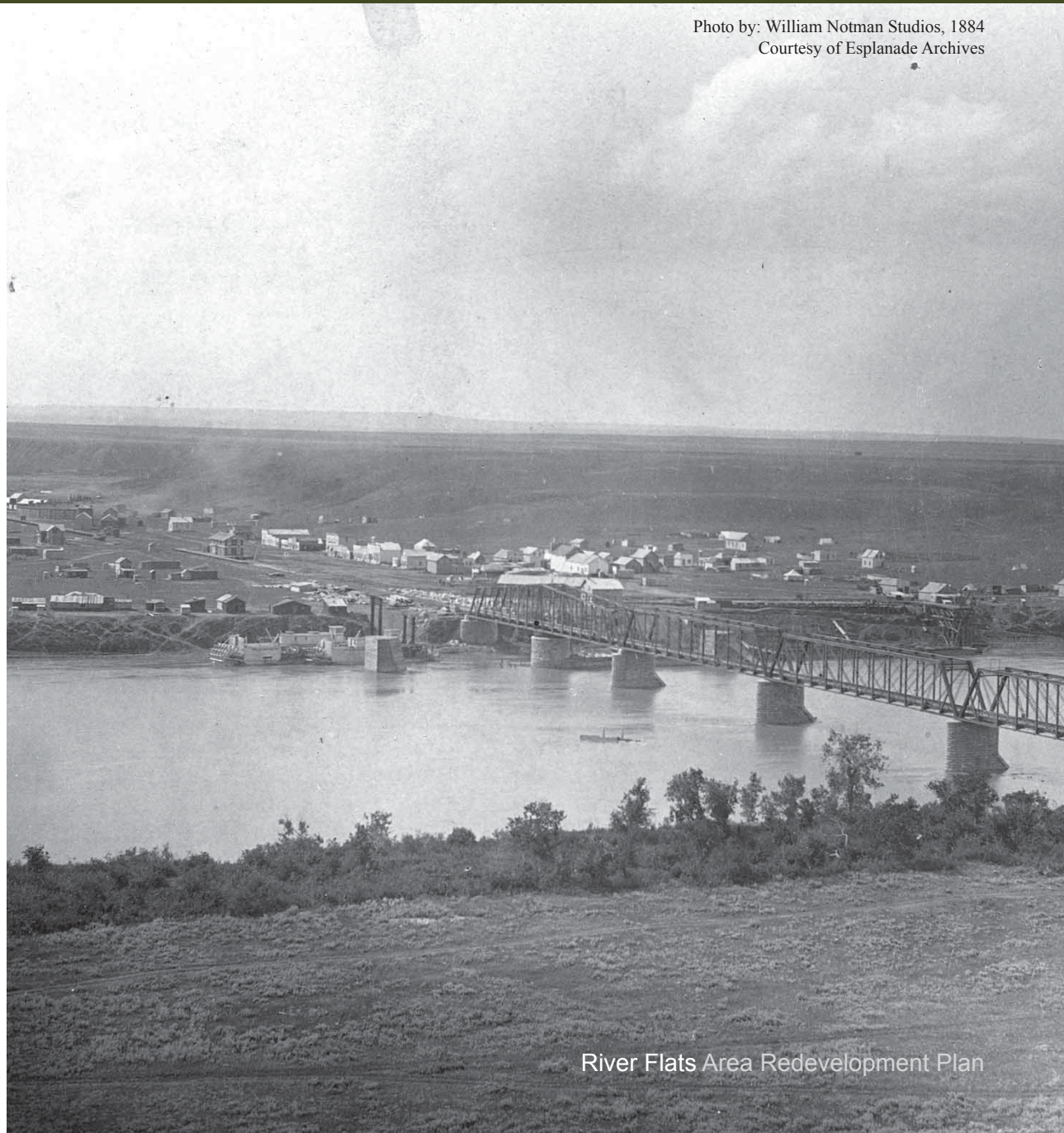
named Nancy was housed in the garden as a fundraising attraction for the Hospital.

- Medalta Potteries features four beehive-style downdraft kilns. Only one beehive kiln remains on the former Alberta Clay Products site where there once stood a five storey factory and eighteen outdoor kilns. The kilns once operated seven days a week.
- In 1908, a Phantom Train was twice seen by trainmen along the most eastern leg of the railway track in the Flats and foretold of the pending tragic head-on crash of Lethbridge Passenger Train #514 and an engine coming out of Medicine Hat. The story remains a mystery.

The Flats community offers a direct link to the working history of Medicine Hat. It was a community, where people toiled and lived from the very beginning of the city's existence. Their houses - many of them small, one or two-room dwellings - are still scattered through the community and give tangible evidence of an earlier way of life. Many of these homes were sadly neglected over the years and not maintained.

In recent times, however, families young and old have begun to rediscover the possibilities of the Flats community and are expending considerable effort to reclaim this once proud community. They are also beginning to make a connection between the community and its history.

Photo by: William Notman Studios, 1884  
Courtesy of Esplanade Archives





# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.4 Demographics

As of the 2009 Census, the River Flats has a population of 3,187. With the city's population of 61,097 the River Flats supports 5.2% of the city's total population. Although the River Flats population has increased in the last 10 years from 2,821 and the city's total population from 50,152, the percentage that the River Flats supports remains consistent of the overall city's population.

The *River Flats ARP* does not provide a formal population forecast within a specific date or timeframe. It does provide policies that would target the River Flats accommodating a larger portion of the overall city's population growth in order to ensure the community is sustainable over time and is able to provide the quality of amenities that a healthy community would choose to have.

It is the objective of the *Plan* to:

- Provide sustainable policies for the community that would achieve and accommodate a community population of 6,000 - 7,500 people; and
- Encourage population growth that further establishes and sustains a high-quality community with all the

necessary amenities, both public and private, which serve a growing residential and employment base.

## 1.5 Smart Growth

"Smart Growth" refers to land use, development practices and the efficient use of tax dollars to enhance the quality of life, preservation of the natural environment, saving money over time by limiting costly urban sprawl, and creating more livable, vibrant neighbourhoods.

In July 2007, Council approved a Smart Growth Strategy with the objective of building communities:

- That use less energy;
- Reduce the use of automobiles;
- Consume less land and other natural resources;
- Create a "walkable" environment; and
- Provide a more vibrant place to live and work.

An established community like the River Flats has a good planning foundation for achieving Council's objectives given its natural "walkability" from a grid-street pattern and potential for infill development that can support established and new

amenities. It is with this foundation that the *River Flats ARP* has established objectives that would reinforce and enhance Smart Growth principles. The following represent the Smart Growth objectives of the *Plan*:

- Foster a unique neighbourhood identity;
- Create diverse housing options;
- Preserve open space, natural beauty and environmentally sensitive areas;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Utilize smarter infrastructure systems and green buildings; and
- Nurture engaged citizens – and engage more.

It is the goal of the *Plan* to establish implementable policies that will enhance and further define the city's Smart Growth Strategy and sustainable goals of revitalizing the community.

## 2.1 *Vision*

The River Flats will be an **authentic, livable and diverse community** for its residents, employees and tourists. This will be achieved by enhancing the value of its natural features, historical qualities, diverse population and an openness to creatively promoting sustainable and quality redevelopment to support an enhanced public realm.

The community's vision and guiding principles were prepared based upon the initial public input, a Steering Committee Visioning Workshop (that assisted in producing images that visually expressed ideas and a vision for the future of the community) and a Smart Growth Questionnaire.



## 2.2 Principles

In achieving the vision for the River Flats community, the following seven principles will be implemented over time:

1. Respect the Unique Character and Heritage of the River Flats:
  - Protect the heritage buildings and landscapes;
  - Foster and support the residential components of the community; and
  - Support the “Historic Clay District” vision.
2. Reinforce a complete, integrated, diverse, and socially and environmentally-sensitive community:
  - Focus on reinforcing the character of the community by establishing three unique neighbourhood planning areas and identifying missing components within them;
  - Ensure the schools that exist in the community are protected and enhanced;
  - Support new community amenities as the community evolves that meet the needs of a diverse population; and
  - Implement sustainable design, land use and transportation models.
3. Encourage redevelopment/growth that enhances the community's diversity and amenities:
  - Intensify by integrating new and diverse residential housing types;
  - Encourage sensitively-designed commercial and intensification;
  - Support mixed-use built-forms to meet the community's needs;
  - Improve interface conditions between land uses; and
  - Minimize the impacts of redevelopment by ensuring new developments are of a quality representative of the community's vision.
4. Ensure sustainable and quality community design features:
  - Provide a framework for new development within the community that respects quality design in the built-form and public realm features.
5. Enhance the Public Realm (“the Green Infrastructure”):
  - Prioritize “walkability” of the community by protecting and enhancing the public infrastructure;
  - Celebrate the River Flats uniqueness by “inviting and contextual” gateway and entrance features;
  - Implement a wayfaring framework for the community;
  - Reinforce the value of the boulevards and street trees that exist throughout the community;
  - Enhance the parks and trail system to meet the needs of the community; and
  - Celebrate the riverfront by connecting the community to it.
6. Improve the Variety of Movement Systems:
  - Encourage population and amenity intensification to support new and alternative movement systems;
  - Prioritize the enhancement of pedestrian and cyclist connectivity;
  - Expand the transit system throughout the community; and
  - Enhance the major vehicular streetscapes to be more pedestrian-friendly.
7. Promote creative and sustainable initiatives towards the *Plan*'s Implementation:
  - Support a Community Association;
  - Support new land use districts that reflect the uniqueness of the community;
  - Establish heritage policies that prioritize re-adapting existing buildings;
  - Support infill “built green” incentives;
  - Protect and enhance city land ownership within the community to ensure implementation of the vision; and
  - Provide the opportunity for creative and innovative ideas in the implementation of the *Plan*.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure



### 3.1 Context

The River Flats is a physically large community with a mix of fragmented land uses and a diversity of physical, economic and social characteristics. It is with consideration of the history and unique characteristics within the community that the vision of three distinct yet comprehensive neighbourhoods is recognized for the River Flats community. The three neighbourhoods are the:

- Old Town neighbourhood located between the Downtown/CPR tracks and Allowance Avenue SE;
- Parks neighbourhood located between Allowance Avenue SE and the South Saskatchewan River to the east; and
- Historic Clay neighbourhood bound by the Allowance Avenue Overpass to the west and the city's eastern city limit/escarpment. The neighbourhood has a northern boundary on the lane between Dominion and Queen Street SE and on the south by the CPR tracks.

The *Plan* recognizes these three neighbourhoods as “neighbourhood planning areas” with boundaries that both overlap and connect the three neighbourhoods to enhance the qualities

each has to offer to the community. The boundaries establish areas that ensure walking distances to neighbourhood amenities/services and are able to provide residential and employment growth to support the neighbourhood amenities. *See Map 3: River Flats Neighbourhoods.*

The *Plan* also recognizes two “Districts” which are the “Railway District” within the Old Town neighbourhood and the “Historic Clay District” within the Historic Clay neighbourhood. Through the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* work, the distinguishing feature of the CPR station and railway heritage evolved a vision for the “Railway District” that overlaps and is supported with policy in the *River Flats ARP*. Similarly, the “Historic Clay District” evolved with a focus on the distinguishing feature of the clay industries and its unique heritage features. Each of these “Districts” provide an opportunity to create added vitality (i.e. commercial and tourism opportunities) to the livable vision of each neighbourhood.

The objective of each neighbourhood is to:

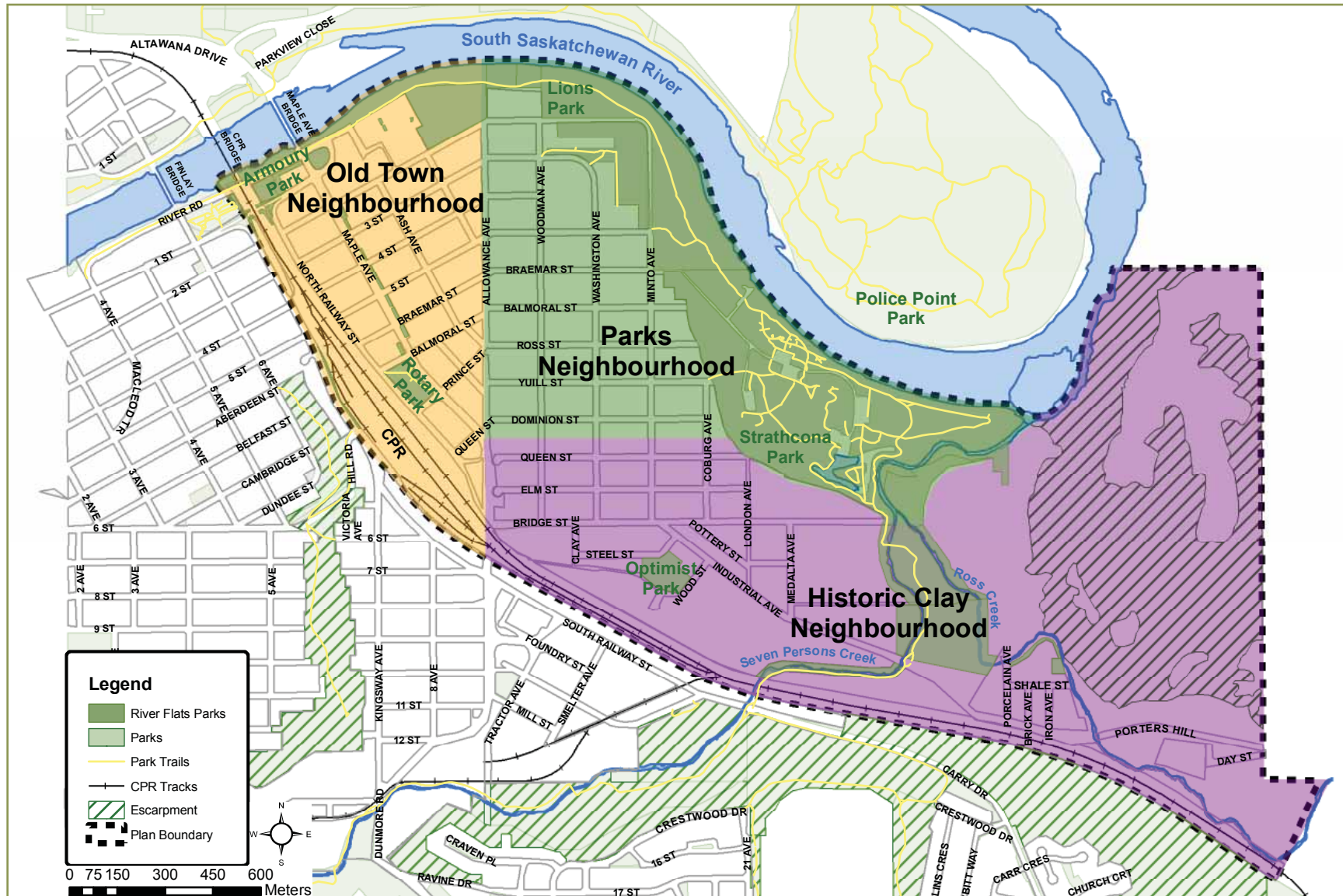
- Establish a “*sense of place*” that reinforces the unique characteristics and history of that neighbourhood

while providing the amenities/services that will support a sustainable, livable and vibrant neighbourhood and community as a whole; and

- Achieve implementable policies in the *ARP* that support the vision and principles, address the current redevelopment pressures, and reinforce the existing characteristics and history of the community.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

**Map 3:** The River Flats Neighbourhoods





## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



### 3.2 Land Use

The Land Use Concept for the River Flats community is shown on *Map 4: Land Use Concept*. The concept consists of land uses that support redevelopment while reinforce the vision for the community.

The objective of the Land Use Concept is to:

- Provide the opportunity for population and land use intensification for the community while preserving and enhancing the character of the community;
- Establish a foundation of land uses that support the needs of each neighbourhood;
- Allow for innovative new land uses to enhance each neighbourhood and better respond to redevelopment opportunities;
- Ensure that the Land Use Concept supports improved pedestrian connectivity;
- Ensure that essential community amenities such as schools, churches, daycare and retail are protected and enhanced; and
- Amend the heavy and light industrial

uses to uses that reinforce a livable and vibrant community.

The Land Use section of the *Plan* contains policies that apply to specific land use areas shown on the Land Use Concept Map. *See also Sections 3.4.4, 3.5.3 and 3.6.4* for a summary of land uses within each neighbourhood. The remaining sections of the *Plan* also contain policies that support the Land Use Concept such as neighbourhood development; community preservation, redevelopment and design; movement systems; pedestrian connections and open space; infrastructure; community and social development; and implementation. The policies in these sections are to be applied within the River Flats community to further support the Land Use Concept.

#### 3.2.1 General Land Use Policies

1. As a part of the Land Use Concept, the *Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines* shall apply to all new residential development including additions and accessory buildings.
2. A Land Use Amendment process is required to support and implement the *Plan's* Land Use Concept and associated policies. This process

will engage the public to ensure the Plan's vision is achieved in the Land Use Amendments. *See Section 11.0 Implementation* for details on the review of applications prior to the completion of the Land Use Amendment process.

3. As a part of the community engagement, the community expressed concern of nightclubs. To address this, for the River Flats community the Land Use Bylaw review should differentiate between restaurants, pubs, nightclubs in regards to use and scale (i.e. maximum size of use) in mixed-use and commercial areas. The community made it clear that nightclubs would not be supported.

#### 3.2.2 Primarily Single-Dwelling Area

The intent of the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area is to provide a residential foundation for the community while supporting sensitively-integrated residential intensification through the usage of the Residential Infill Design Guidelines. The Primarily Single-Dwelling Area objectives are to:

- Reinforce the development of quality single-dwelling units as the



## Map 4: Land Use Concept



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

foundational residential built-form in the community;

- Support coach houses, legal suites, semi-detached, tri-plexes and quad-plexes based on criteria established in the Residential Infill Design Guidelines for quality, quantity and location of these built-forms; and
- Enhance the land use area through public realm and other neighbourhood-oriented policies in the *Plan*.

### Policies

1. One and two-dwelling residential uses (single-dwelling, legal suites, coach houses and semi-detached) shall be the predominant use of land in the Primarily Single-Dwelling area.
2. Not more than one tri-plex or quad-plex shall be allowed on one side of a specific City block and shall not be directly across from each other. Where proposed in the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area, a tri-plex or quad-plex will require a Land Use Amendment that is tied to the Development Permit.
3. Schools, parks and community amenities including but not limited to, churches, daycares and community centres, should be maintained and enhanced throughout the Primarily

Single-Dwelling Area to meet the social and active and passive recreational needs of residents and contribute to the overall neighbourhood environment.

4. To preserve the character of this established community, all on-site parking and garages shall be located and accessed from the rear lane. Where there is no lane, front-drive garages are allowed as per the criteria established in *Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines, Section 3.2.3, Garages*.
5. Infill development shall be compatible with the traditional character of the streetscape in built-form, massing, materials and site design.
6. Pedestrian connections to parks and transit stops shall be visually and physically enhanced through preservation of the existing streetscape character. This includes but is not limited to, maintaining or rehabilitating soft landscaped boulevards, maintaining street trees, and providing appropriate visual spacing between new and existing infill (i.e. sufficient side yard setbacks to provide relief between buildings which supports sensitive infill development in the area).

### 3.2.3 Multi-Dwelling Area

The intent of the Multi-Dwelling Area is to support residential intensification in the community through quality multi-dwelling residential development at the edges of the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area. The Multi-Dwelling Area objectives are to:

- Support street-oriented townhouses, courtyard townhouses, courtyard row houses, and apartments; and
- Ensure high-quality multi-dwelling developments that integrate into the community by prioritizing how the built-form and site design interfaces with the public realm.

### Policies

1. A mix of multi-dwelling building forms shall be provided per block that support a variety of unit sizes, affordability, and site/building design and streetscape character considerations.
2. Multi-dwelling developments shall be integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood through quality site/building design, building massing, materials, pedestrian connectivity and landscaping.
3. Should the Arena/Curling Rink lands be redeveloped in the future



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



for residential then buildings up to 12-storey's are allowed in this location to maximize pedestrian connectivity to the river trail system and support intensification of a comprehensive development for residential and associated community amenities.

4. Multi-dwelling developments should achieve the following site and building design criteria:

- a) Each development should provide individuality and a unique identity;
- b) Multi-dwelling developments should be oriented towards the street in order to enhance the pedestrian experience, maintain safety by providing “eyes on the street”, and to help facilitate social interaction;
- c) Building setbacks from the street should be compatible with the setback pattern established for any adjacent residential development. Where a *Land Use Bylaw* minimum setback is not compatible with the adjacent residential development (i.e. the minimum setback is too close to the street for adjacent residential that is set back further), an increased minimum setback will be required to integrate the new development and preserve the character of the street;

- d) Where fronting onto a public street, ground floor dwelling units should have the appearance of individual dwelling units;
- e) After the second or third-storey, the building footprint should be setback to reduce the visibility of upper storey's on the street;
- f) Landscaped front yards should include low fences, hedges, and landscape terracing (*See Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines 3.2.2*) to create an appropriate street edge between the public, semi-public and private realms (*See Appendix C: Glossary*);
- g) The height of an exposed retaining wall or other building wall located within a front yard shall not exceed 1 metre;
- h) Private and/or common outdoor amenity spaces in the form of patios, balconies, courtyards or green roofs should be provided;
- i) Secure and easily accessible on-site bicycle storage should be provided as a part of the multi-dwelling development;
- j) On-site parking should be located and accessed from the rear lane and visually buffered with

landscaping. Where rear access is not solely achievable, creative solutions should be provided that do not impact “walkability”, the pedestrian-realm and streetscape character. This policy applies to comprehensive multi-dwelling developments in the Mixed-Use/Primarily Residential and Mixed-Use/Primarily Commercial Areas;

- k) For multi-dwelling development that is higher than four-storeys, all parking should be provided underground or provided as sensitively-designed rear-accessed surface parking areas. Any proposed surface parking areas should include landscaped buffers and islands designed as a part of the parking area to minimize large spans of asphalt;
- l) Above-grade parking, on the second storey or higher, shall not be allowed as it does not provide active uses for “eyes on the street”; and
- m) Waste and recycling facilities shall be integrated into the site as a part of the site design/multi-dwelling development.



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### 3.2.4 Mixed-Use/Primarily Residential Area

The intent of the Mixed-use/Primarily Residential Area is to allow for a range and mix of uses, both within buildings and the local context, to help provide vibrant and livable streets. This area is located in the “Railway District” whereby North Railway Street SE serves to provide commercial vitality and the streets adjacent to it provide high-quality multi-dwelling residential development that may or may not have integrated commercial uses at-grade. The Mixed-Use/Primarily Residential Area objectives are to:

- Focus new development on achieving a significant amount of residential intensification through three to four-storey residential developments with the opportunity for six to eight storey’s on the block between 1 and 2 Street SE;
- Reinforce regional and local commercial uses such as an artisan/ farmer’s marketplace, restaurants, personal services and community amenities (i.e. bookstores, coffee shops) that support a vibrant and active North Railway streetscape; and
- Support small-scale office or residential opportunities on upper floors of commercial buildings along

North Railway Street SE.

#### Policies

1. Where possible, lands should be consolidated by the public and private sectors to provide for a mix of comprehensively-designed multi-dwelling residential developments.
2. North Railway Street SE shall function as primarily as a commercial street and the side streets (i.e. 2, 3, 4 Street SE) shall function as primarily residential.
3. Residential developments should provide for a range of multi-dwelling built-forms, with a variety of unit sizes (from bachelor suites to two and three-bedroom units), and be affordable to meet the needs of a diverse urban population.
4. Apartment built-forms should mainly be three to four-storeys in the Railway District however, up to eight stories are allowed on the block between 1 and 2 Street SE to maximize intensification opportunities given the ease of pedestrian connectivity to the river and Downtown amenities.
5. Encourage and accommodate an innovative mix of uses in both new and existing buildings.
6. Accommodate for and encourage “live-work” units (*See Appendix C: Glossary*) that support commercial (retail and/or office) uses at-grade and residential uses above.
7. Encourage creative and adaptive re-use of existing buildings. This can be achieved by the retention and productive use of commercial structures or supporting the conversion of commercial buildings for residential uses above (i.e. North Railway Street SE) and/or converting larger existing commercial buildings to residential (i.e. the warehouses, old hotels).
8. Create vibrant pedestrian streetscapes that provide activity throughout the daytime and evening hours including activity and natural surveillance in rear lanes and pedestrian connections through a block (*See Section 4.4.2 Streetscape*).
9. A commercial use at-grade of a residential development is supported however, the size and use may be restricted to ensure residential livability is not impacted. For example, a small bistro or coffee shop at the base of a three to four-storey apartment is more suitable than a brew pub restaurant given the typical scale and capacity of these uses.



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### 3.2.5 Mixed-Use/Primarily Commercial Area

The intent of the Mixed-use/Primarily Commercial Area is to allow for a range and mix of uses, both within buildings and the local context, to help provide vibrant and livable streets. This area is focused within the “Historic Clay District” to provide commercial vitality and a high-quality “live-work” environment to support the tourism and interpretive components of the “Historic Clay District”. The Mixed-use/Primarily Commercial Area objectives are to:

- Focus new development on achieving primarily commercial developments that support innovative residential developments, “live-work” units (*See Appendix C: Glossary*) and tourism-supported opportunities (i.e. hotel, restaurants); and
- Reinforce regional and local commercial uses such as a hotel, restaurants, offices, educational facilities, personal services and community amenities (i.e. bookstores, coffee shops) that support vibrant and active streetscapes.

#### Policies

1. Commercial uses including but not

limited to, hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, entertainment and education facilities, and other tourist-related uses (i.e. gift shops, artist incubators/co-ops) shall be the predominant land uses on sites identified in the Mixed-Use/Primarily Commercial Area (i.e. lands surrounding Medalta Potteries and Hycroft China).

2. “Live-work” units (*See Appendix C: Glossary*) that blend residential and commercial in an innovative built-form to support the arts, heritage and cultural vision for the Historic Clay neighbourhood shall be encouraged and allowed within the area.
3. The unique double-sided lots along Industrial Avenue SE and Pottery Street SE should be developed as “live-work” developments (*See Appendix C: Glossary*) that provide an enhanced public realm through landscaping and individual site design considerations.

### 3.2.6 Neighbourhood Commercial Area

The intent of the Neighbourhood Commercial Area is to provide a gathering place for the surrounding Primarily Single-Dwelling and Multi-Dwelling residential areas. The

Neighbourhood Commercial Area is planned to support neighbourhood-scale commercial uses while providing ease for pedestrian connectivity to the area. The Neighbourhood Commercial Area objectives are to:

- Enhance the public realm in the identified local Neighbourhood Commercial Node to stimulate commercial and gathering place opportunities; and
- Ensure developments are designed to achieve a unique character for the area.

#### Policies

1. The Neighbourhood Commercial Node shall provide for:
  - a) A transit stop;
  - b) A variety of small-scale retail/restaurant commercial developments, designed at-grade with residential uses allowed above; and
  - c) An open space plaza or park space.
2. Uses allowed in the Neighbourhood Commercial Node may include a corner store, a dry cleaner, a day-care centre, a restaurant, coffee shops, community/senior centre, small

## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

local offices, and personal service businesses.

3. The size of business or type of use proposed may be restricted to limit potential negative impacts on surrounding residential areas.
4. “Live-work” units (*See Appendix C: Glossary*) may be allowed if the Neighbourhood Commercial Node has primarily achieved a vibrant retail commercial environment at-grade.
5. The Neighbourhood Commercial Node should be designed to:
  - a) Complement the surrounding neighbourhood through its uses and traditional design while maintaining a distinct and identifiable commercial character;
  - b) Achieve a strong relationship between the built-form, landscaping and other public spaces to ensure an active and safe public realm; and
  - c) Provide surface parking at the rear of buildings and off the lane.
6. Buildings shall be designed:
  - a) At a pedestrian-scale;
  - b) Close to the sidewalk;
  - c) With active uses at-grade;

- d) So they are visually interesting, permeable and transparent;
- e) With a fine-grain building character (*See Appendix C: Glossary*); and
- f) With outdoor patio opportunities, where possible.

### 3.2.7 Public Service Area

The intent of the Public Service Area is to provide for the development of civic uses and schools that serve to be a focus of the community for education, recreation or other community activities. The Public Service Area objectives are to:

- Protect and enhance the current civic and school land uses;
- Establish additional community-focused uses and facilities by providing future developable sites; and
- Anchor the “Civic District” (*See Map 6: Downtown Redevelopment Plan Districts*) with regional uses such as tourist, cultural or recreational facilities.

### Policies

1. The predominant use of land within this area shall be for public education and recreational uses including but not limited to public and separate schools, sports fields, parks, playgrounds,

arenas and civic facilities (i.e. community centres, sports facilities, fire and police services, museums and educational facilities).

2. Existing educational and recreational uses should be maintained and enhanced as a foundation to meeting the needs of the community and providing for residential intensification.
3. New school buildings should be designed to accommodate a variety of uses and services that would benefit the community and reinforce the role of the school as a social gathering place and activity centre for the community.

### 3.2.8 Public Service/Tourism Area

The intent of the Public Service/Tourism Area is to support the “Historic Clay District’s” vision for tourism, interpretation and education of the unique qualities of this heritage area. The Public Service/Tourism Area objectives are to:

- Reinforce the Master Plan for the Medalta Potteries and Hycroft China sites; and
- Establish a vision for the Alberta Clay Products, Plainsman Clay and surrounding sites by way of a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise*.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



### Policies

1. Land uses, site and building design shall support heritage conservation.
2. The City should encourage and facilitate the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.
3. The enhancement of the public realm and individual sites shall be a priority for the City to support the vision and Master Plans for the “Historic Clay District”.
4. The land uses, site and building designs within the area should be creative and innovative to support the “Historic Clay District” as a designated National Historic Site.
5. A *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* for the lands south of Industrial Avenue including but not limited to Hycroft China, Alberta Clay Products, Plainsman Clay and other surrounding uses should be prepared. The planning exercise should include the vision and policy directions within the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan*. The exercise is intended to address specific uses, streetscape and roadway enhancements, and identify any buffers that may be required between incompatible uses.

### 3.2.9 General Mixed-Use Area

The intent of the General Mixed-Use Area is to establish this area as a “Special Study Area”. Currently the area has a fragmented mix of residential, commercial/office, light and heavy industrial and all of these uses under the umbrella of light and heavy industrial uses. Light and heavy industrial uses are not necessarily reflective of a large portion of the land uses that have been developed in the area and that are envisioned for the future of the Historic Clay neighbourhood. The General Mixed-Use Area objectives are to:

- Not allow residential uses in the General Mixed-Use Area and manage the existing light and heavy industrial uses until the Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise determines a long-term vision for the area. It is intended that the *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* is undertaken in conjunction with a similar exercise identified for the Public Service/Tourism Area; and
- Ensure that all proposed light and heavy industrial uses adhere to *Section 4.3 Community Design and Section 4.4 Public Realm* policies. This includes providing

and enhancing landscaped buffers between incompatible uses and providing landscaped yards on all new developments.

### Policies

1. City administration should pursue a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* with landowners in this area to establish a long-term vision. The planning exercise should include the vision and policy directions within the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* and include the Public Service/Tourism Area. It is intended to address, but not limited to, specific land uses and their integration with each other to support a neighbourhood vision.
2. Until such a time that the current land uses are studied and amended the existing light and heavy industrial land uses and redevelopment of them are considered “grandfathered” and are therefore, supported.
3. Upon approval of the *Plan* and until Land Use Amendments have taken place, the following land use criteria shall be implemented:
  - a) Any redevelopment of light and heavy industrial sites shall adhere to the site and building design



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



policies within the *Plan* (For an example, *see Section 4.3.2 and 4.2.2*) that support elements such as enhancing streetscape interfaces and providing landscaped buffers on new and redeveloped land uses; and

- b) Any new Land Use Amendments shall be reviewed in context of the following policies:
  - i) No new heavy industrial development sites shall be allowed;
  - ii) A limit of light industrial uses to ones that would support a future mixed-use area for both residential, commercial and redefined light industrial uses; and
  - iii) Any proposed light industrial uses shall include the following criteria:
    - 1. The operation must be fully-enclosed within a building with no outdoor storage of materials or product;
    - 2. The development must provide landscaping and buffers that interface and support an enhanced public realm and pedestrian connectivity in the area; and

- 3. The use must ensure that noise, odour, vibration, heat, high illumination levels or waste that is caused by the use is not disruptive to adjacent land uses.

### 3.2.10 Park and Recreation Area

The intent of the Park and Recreation Area is to provide for the development of public parks that serve to be a focus of the community for open space, recreation and other community activities. See also discussion of the function of specific parks in the *Sections 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 Neighbourhoods and Section 5.0 Open Space and Pedestrian Connections*. The Park and Recreation Area objectives are to:

- Protect and enhance the current park and recreational land uses;
- Establish more community-focused uses within the parks; and
- Enhance the pedestrian connection system to the parks and trail system including accessibility considerations both visually and physically.

### Policies

- 1. The predominant land uses for the area shall be parks, natural amenity areas, sports and recreational facilities, and cultural facilities.
- 2. Prioritize the development or enhancement of pathways and pedestrian connections between parks and recreational facilities.
- 3. As a part of future parks planning, ensure the needs of the community are being met by quantity, function and design of parks including uses such as community gardens.
- 4. Delineate the Environmental Reserve areas through the Land Use Amendment process and ensure that clarity of the function within these areas is provided.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

### 3.3 Density

Although the *Plan* does not specifically set density targets, it does provide an understanding of anticipated densities that might be achieved (based on the [Map 4: Land Use Concept](#)) and envisioned in character and built-form for the various areas and blocks within the community. For the purposes of determining the appropriate built-form and infrastructure needs, the following table and [Map 5: Density Intensification Areas](#) represents assumptions that would support the desire to intensify the community and achieve a total population of 6,000 – 7,500 people over time. Currently, the community has a population of 3,187.

It is assumed that the majority of residential intensification will evolve in

the form of new multi-dwelling units in the “Railway District”, Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node, and on the edges of the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area. The majority of the multi-dwelling units will be in a three or four-storey scale with slightly higher built-forms on the most northerly blocks of the “Railway District” and along the river on the Arena/Curling Rink lands. The multi-dwelling units in these two areas may range from six to twelve-stories. [See Section 3.2 Land Use](#). Although a smaller portion, it is assumed that the opportunity exists for infill development in the Primarily Single-Dwelling Areas. This development would be in the form of semi-detached, tri-plex, and four-plexes and will vary throughout the blocks in these areas based on policy in [Section 3.2 Land Use](#).

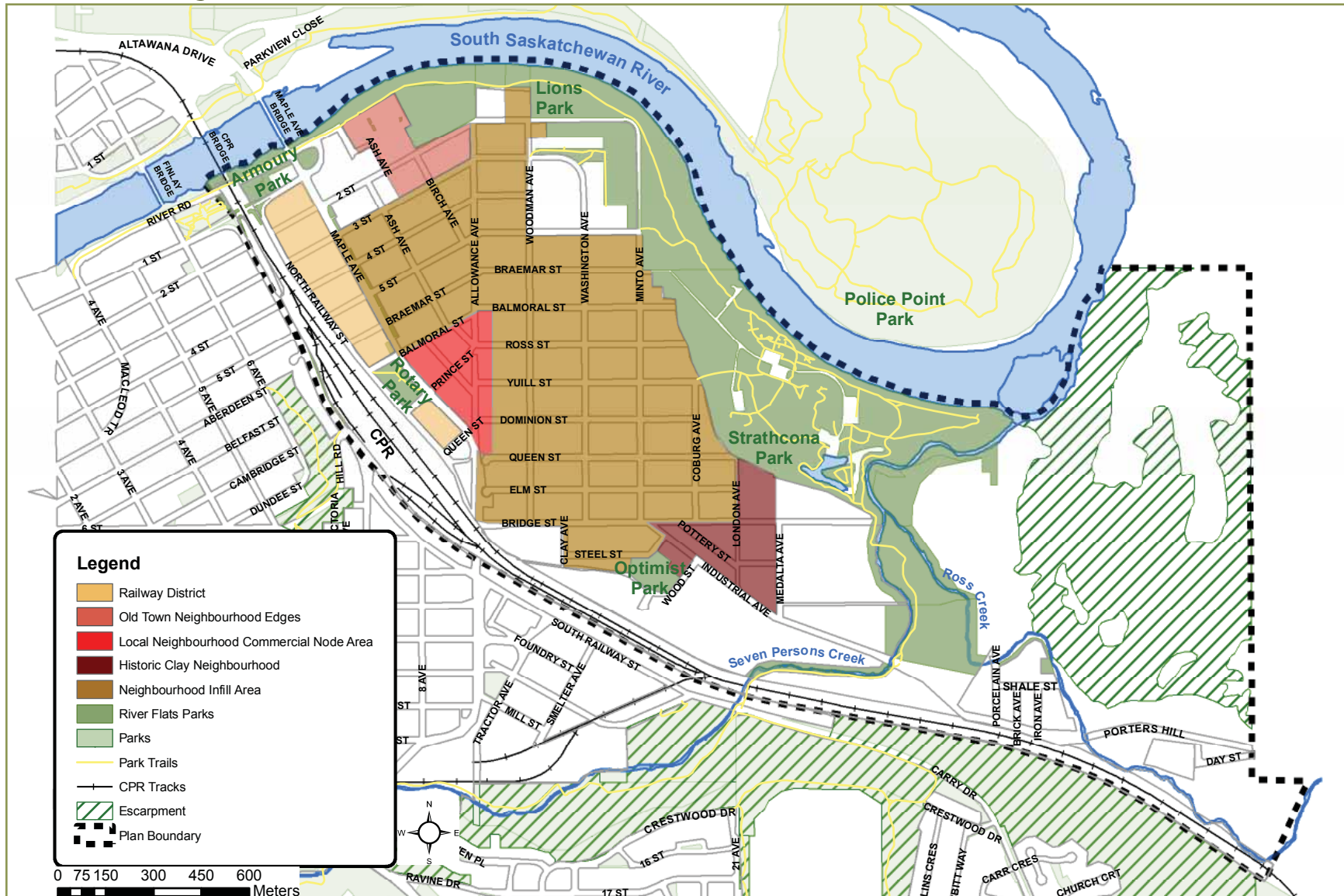
Commercial intensification is anticipated

to evolve as support to the “Railway District” residential, Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node and around the Medalta Potteries area. It is anticipated approximately 2787 m. sq. (30,000 sq. ft.) could be accommodated in the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node in the form of small-scale retail, personal services, and coffee shops, etc. It is anticipated that approximately 5574 m. sq. (60,000 sq. ft.) could be developed in the Historic Clay neighbourhood in the form of office, tourism-supported retail and restaurants, etc. The “Railway District” has the potential to accommodate a significant amount of commercial along North Railway Street SE however, it is anticipated that the focus of redevelopment in this area would be for residential with commercial support along North Railway SE and Maple Avenue SE.

Neighbourhood/District	Existing Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Unit/Density	Person/Unit	Population
“Railway District”	Primarily Commercial	Mixed-Use (Residential/Commercial)	640 units	2.5	1,600
Old Town Neighbourhood Edges	Public Service and Residential	Multi-dwelling Residential	440 units	2.5	1,100
Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node	Residential and Commercial	Multi-dwelling and Commercial Infill	150 units	2.5	375
Historic Clay Neighbourhood	Light and Heavy Industrial	Multi-dwelling, Commercial and Tourism	200 units	2.5	500
All Neighbourhoods Infill Development	Primarily Single-dwelling	Primarily Single-dwelling with Infill	Varies	2.5	100
<b>Totals of New Development</b>			<b>1,430 (approx.)</b>		<b>3,675</b>

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

**Map 5:** Density Intensification Areas





## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure



### 3.4 Old Town Neighbourhood

#### Context

The Old Town neighbourhood is the original neighbourhood area within the River Flats given its association with the CPR from the late 1800's. The area is located between the CPR tracks to the west and Allowance Avenue SE to the east. It is bound by the South Saskatchewan River to the north and comes to a point at the Allowance Avenue Overpass to the south.

The portion of this neighbourhood between the CPR tracks and Maple Avenue SE is also a part of the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan*. Known as the "Railway District" in the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* and as a part of this *Plan*, the area envisions a vibrant mixed-residential/commercial area similar to what was experienced in earlier years. In those years, North Railway Street SE served a vibrant role as a part of the Downtown and the opportunity exists to create a "Railway District" within the Old Town neighbourhood that is an anchor for the Downtown and the River Flats community. It is this area that would accommodate the majority of multi-

dwelling intensification for the River Flats while providing a vibrant gathering place for the community as a whole. *See Map 6: Downtown Redevelopment Plan Districts.*

In conjunction with the historical value of the CPR train station and work done on heritage buildings along North Railway Street SE through the Main Street Program, the Old Town neighbourhood also has the features of; a continuation of the "Civic District" (as identified in the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan*) along 1 Street SE with the Police Station and Remand Centre; the riverfront; recreational facilities such as the YMCA, Arena, and curling rink; and a strong single-dwelling residential neighbourhood. *See Concept 1: Old Town Neighbourhood Plan.*

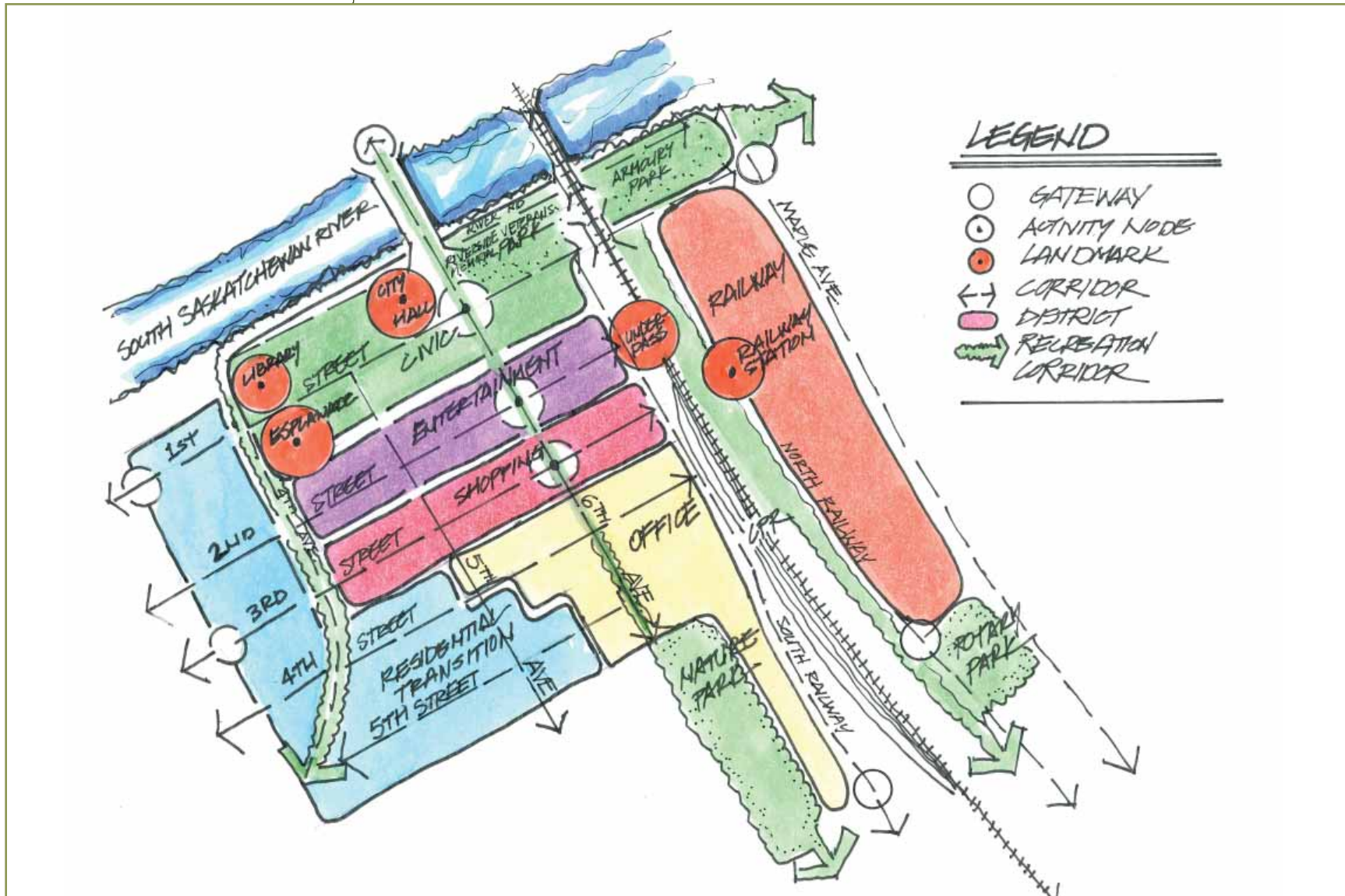
The objective of the Old Town neighbourhood is to:

- Establish a unique "*sense of place*" for the neighbourhood that is reflective of the arts and business;
- Establish a vibrant multi-dwelling and commercial area connected to the role of the CPR and Downtown;

- Enhance the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area east of Maple Avenue SE by providing better pedestrian connectivity through Maple Avenue SE; and
- Encourage development of a Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node at the south end of Allowance Ave SE.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

**Map 6:** Downtown Redevelopment Plan Districts



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### Policies

1. Collaborate with CPR to reinforce the historical value of the Canadian Pacific Railway for the neighbourhood as follows:
  - a) Re-establish usage of the CPR station for passenger rail through Medicine Hat. The opportunity exists for passenger rail to revitalize the neighbourhood, provide a sustainable mode of transportation and enhance tourism for the “Historic Clay District”, Downtown and the city.
  - b) Establish a transit hub in conjunction with the CPR station;
  - c) Redesign the pedestrian underpass and provide a future pedestrian overpass at the south end of the CPR station that celebrates the CPR;
  - d) Re-establish the formal gardens to the north of the CPR station; and
  - e) Implement a Heritage District overlay along North Railway Street SE.
2. Establish the area between South Railway Street SE/CPR tracks and

Maple Avenue SE as a vibrant mixed-residential and commercial area (known as the “Railway District” within the Old Town neighbourhood) with the following components:

- a) A livable multi-dwelling residential area for approximately 650 units. The area should achieve the highest intensification of population for the River Flats;
- b) Commercial amenities in the form of an artisan/farmers market place, enhanced grocery store, local neighbourhood retail, restaurants, etc. *See Concept 2: “Railway District”: Public Market.*
- c) Establish a plaza/gathering place around the artisan/farmers market place and CPR station along North Railway Street SE;
- d) Establish a north/south pedestrian street in the commercial lane, behind North Railway Street SE, that connects Rotary Park through to the river. The pedestrian street should create niches of gathering places for the multi-dwelling residential and commercial developments;
- e) Re-establish the Alberta Main

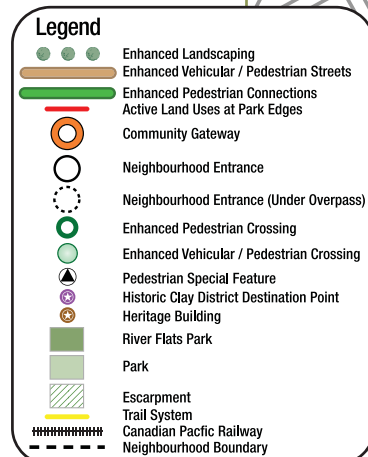
Street Program along North Railway Street SE. The Main Street Program began in 1987 and has helped revitalize historic commercial areas in partnership with the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit and the Heritage Canada Foundation. The program was implemented on North Railway Street SE however, it did not continue beyond restoring a few buildings. The opportunity exists for the Program to contribute significantly to vitality along North Railway Street SE by revitalizing this historic area, improving community pride and attracting new residents and tourists. *See Appendix C: Glossary for additional details of the Program;*

- f) Encourage redevelopment of the warehouse buildings and new infill development south of Rotary Park as loft-style residential development with the opportunity for a restaurant row;
- g) Develop surplus CPR lands south of the CPR station for uses that support an arts and business “sense of place”. Such uses



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## Concept 1: Old Town Neighbourhood Plan



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may include office (i.e. “high-tech” business), commercial and warehouse-type business;

- h) Improve North Railway Street SE and Maple Avenue SE streetscapes to include enhanced pedestrian crossings, sidewalk improvements, street trees (where appropriate) and pedestrian scale lighting. *See also Concept 15: Maple Avenue Cross Section*; and
  - i) Encourage a Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ) for the “Railway District” similar to or as part of the Downtown Business Revitalization Zone. The intent of the BRZ is to support commercial vitality and better integrate the “Railway District” with the Downtown.
- 3. Reinforce the sustainability of the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area east of Maple Avenue SE by providing pedestrian crossings to the “Railway District” and streetscape enhancements of major east/west pedestrian connections.
  - 4. Land Uses that are appropriate in the Old Town neighbourhood include, but are not limited to:

- a) Single-dwelling, “coach houses”, semi-detached, tri-plex and quad-plex residential dwellings in the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area east of Maple Avenue SE;
- b) Street-oriented townhouse, courtyard townhouse, courtyard row house and three to four-storey apartments (up to 12-storey along the river) in the Multi-Dwelling Areas;
- c) Community Association facilities, cultural facilities, community services, restaurants, and retail and personal services in the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node and “Railway District”; and
- d) Schools; recreational facilities; and parks/trails/open space throughout the neighbourhood.

*See Map 4: Land Use Concept for locations of appropriate land uses.*

- 5. Ensure that development supports the “sense of place” for the neighbourhood by providing sensitive integration of land uses and high-quality intensification. *See Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines.*

- 6. Support comprehensive multi-dwelling residential and community amenity development along the river (current Arena and Curling Rink area), along 2 Street SE between Maple Avenue SE and Allowance Avenue SE, and within the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node. *See Concept 3: Arena/Curling Rink Area Axonometric.*
- 7. Continue the “Civic District” (from *Map 6: Downtown Redevelopment Plan Districts*) along 1 Street SE by planning for a cultural and/or civic use at the corner of 1 Street SE and Maple Avenue SE and/or at 2 Street SE and Maple Avenue SE. Celebrate these sites and open space connections with anchor buildings and uses for the “Civic District”. Connect these sites to the river with a formally designed pedestrian-priority walkway known as a promenade (*See Appendix C: Glossary*).
- 8. Establish a strong Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node for the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area with a mix of street-oriented townhouse units and residential - above commercial/retail uses to meet the needs of the community.
- 9. Enhance Rotary Park as an open space amenity for future new

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multi-dwelling development and that connects to the “pedestrian walkway” between the park and the river. Achieve “eyes on the park” by requiring commercial or active uses at the base of buildings surrounding the park. *See Concept 1: Old Town Neighbourhood Plan.*

10. The City will explore opportunities with the School Board to retain the existing St. Louis School (formerly Montreal Street School) to meet the educational and “walkable” needs of the neighbourhood and preserve the heritage and architectural merit of St. Louis School.

11. Enhance pedestrian connections for the neighbourhood as follows:

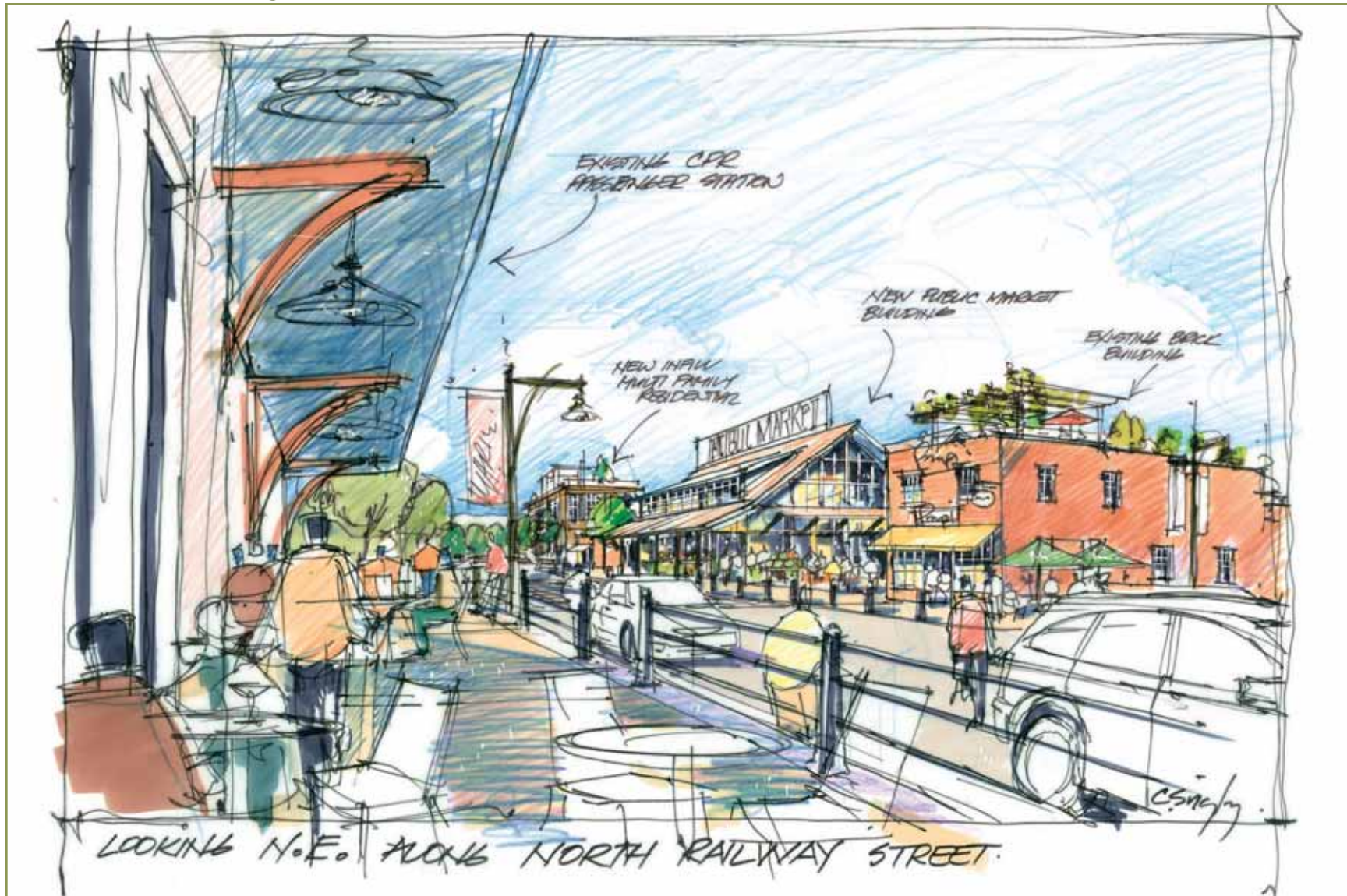
- a) Provide pedestrian connections with lighted-crossings at Maple Avenue SE where needed to improve “walkability”;
- b) Support a north/south pedestrian walkway behind the east side of North Railway Street SE (in the lane) that connects Rotary Park with the river by providing a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of North Railway Street SE and 1 Street SE;

- c) Enhance the Prince Street SE streetscape for pedestrians both going east and west. Enhance the Prince Street SE and Maple Avenue SE intersection as an entranceway to the neighbourhood; and
- d) Maintain the recreational areas of the YMCA and Athletic Park as important community amenities and pedestrian destinations.



## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

### Concept 2: "Railway District": Public Market





## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

### Concept 3: Arena/Curling Rink Area Axonometric



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

### 3.5 Parks Neighbourhood

#### Context

The Parks neighbourhood is situated between Allowance Avenue SE and the Lion's and Strathcona Island Park open space system. It is bound on the north by the South Saskatchewan River and on the south by the lane between Dominion and Queen Street SE. This neighbourhood has primarily single-dwelling residential units and is special for its adjacency to a substantial open space system that provides a vast recreational and aesthetic value for the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood has a history of former greenhouses that provided a horticulture contribution to the City. *See Concept 4: Parks Neighbourhood Plan.*

The objective of the Parks neighbourhood is to:

- Establish a unique “*sense of place*” for the neighbourhood that is reflective of recreation, sports and community open space amenities.
- Support the single-dwelling livability of the neighbourhood by ensuring sensitive intensification/

infill development of the residential population to support neighbourhood amenities;

- Support the residential population with local neighbourhood commercial and recreational activities; and
- Improve pedestrian connectivity to local amenities.

#### Policies

1. Facilitate the vision of the Parks neighbourhood as a Primarily Single-Dwelling Area that is supported with a Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node and open space amenities.
2. Establish a vibrant Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node along the southern portion of Allowance Avenue SE. The Node should provide a mix of convenience retail, enhanced pedestrian streets linking to and through the Node, and enhanced public realm amenities to create a “*sense of place*”. The Node should include an urban public plaza space for seating and gathering. *See Concept 5: Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node Axonometric.*

3. Land Uses that are appropriate in the Parks neighbourhood include, but are not limited to:

- a) Single-dwelling, “coach houses”, semi-detached, tri-plex and quad-plex residential dwellings;
- b) Street-oriented townhouses, courtyard townhouse, courtyard row house and three to four-storey apartments on the site adjacent to Lions Park;
- c) Community Association facilities, cultural facilities, community services, Street-oriented townhouses, restaurants, and retail and personal services in the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node; and
- d) Schools; recreational facilities; and parks/trails/open space.

*See Map 4: Land Use Concept for locations of appropriate land uses.*

4. Ensure that development supports the “*sense of place*” for the neighbourhood by providing sensitive integration of land uses and high-quality intensification. *See Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines.*



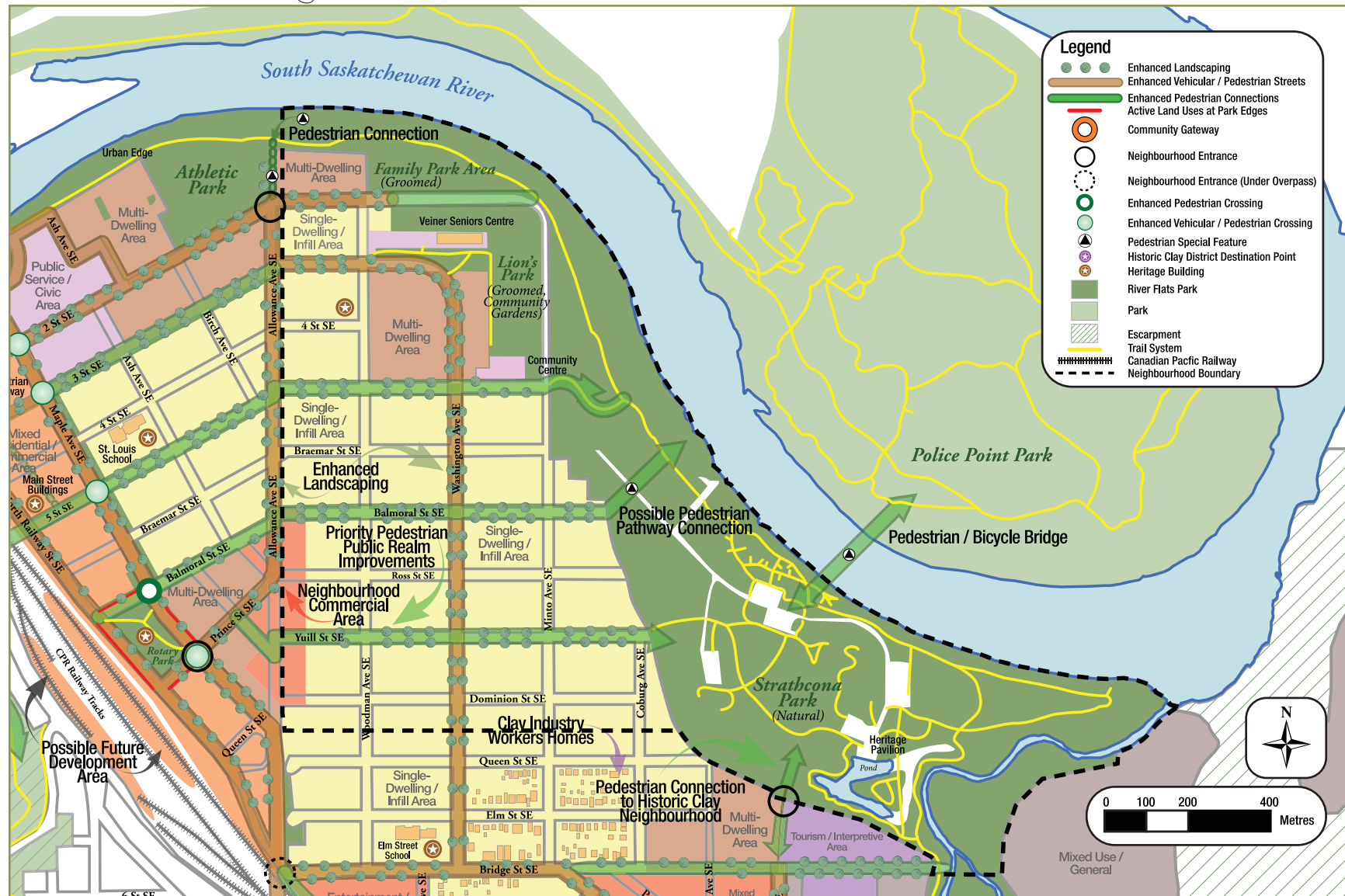
## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



5. Support quality multi-dwelling units on the site adjacent to the west side of Lions Park and in a street-oriented townhouse or residential-above-commercial built-form in the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node along Allowance Avenue SE.
6. The Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node uses should include convenience commercial and personal services retail at a scale that serves the needs of the community.
7. Enhance the open space system for a mix of activity uses as follows:
  - a) Enhance Lions Park as a local neighbourhood park for families with a mix of groomed open grass play and relax areas, a tot lot, and picnic shelters;
  - b) Explore the opportunity for a pedestrian connection from Balmoral Street SE to Strathcona Island Park;
  - c) Enhance the trail system by connecting Strathcona Island Park to the area south around Medalta Avenue SE. The purpose is to create a pedestrian connection that would further enhance usage and enjoyment of the park system while better connecting the Parks and Historic Clay neighbourhoods on the eastern edge for tourism and community vitality. *See Map 11: Open Space and Pedestrian Connections.*
8. As a part of the City's on-going street rehabilitation program, consideration shall be given to enhance the pedestrian streetscapes as follows:
  - a) Enhanced landscaping (boulevards/trees) on all the north/south streets beginning with Allowance Avenue SE and Washington Avenue Street SE;
  - b) Enhanced landscaping on all east/west streets beginning with 2 Street SE, 3 Street SE, 5 Street SE, Balmoral Street SE and Yuill Street SE; and
  - c) Physically and visually connect Allowance Avenue SE to the river for pedestrians/cyclists only. Where the pedestrian connection meets the riverfront trail system, provide a gathering/celebration point that would connect people south to the residential portions of the River Flats neighbourhoods.
9. Encourage revitalizing the horticulture history of this area (i.e. former greenhouse site) and providing this amenity for the neighbourhood by way of locating a community garden(s). Such a location should be considered in Lions Park, Strathcona Island Park and/or acquisition of non-park lands for this purpose.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

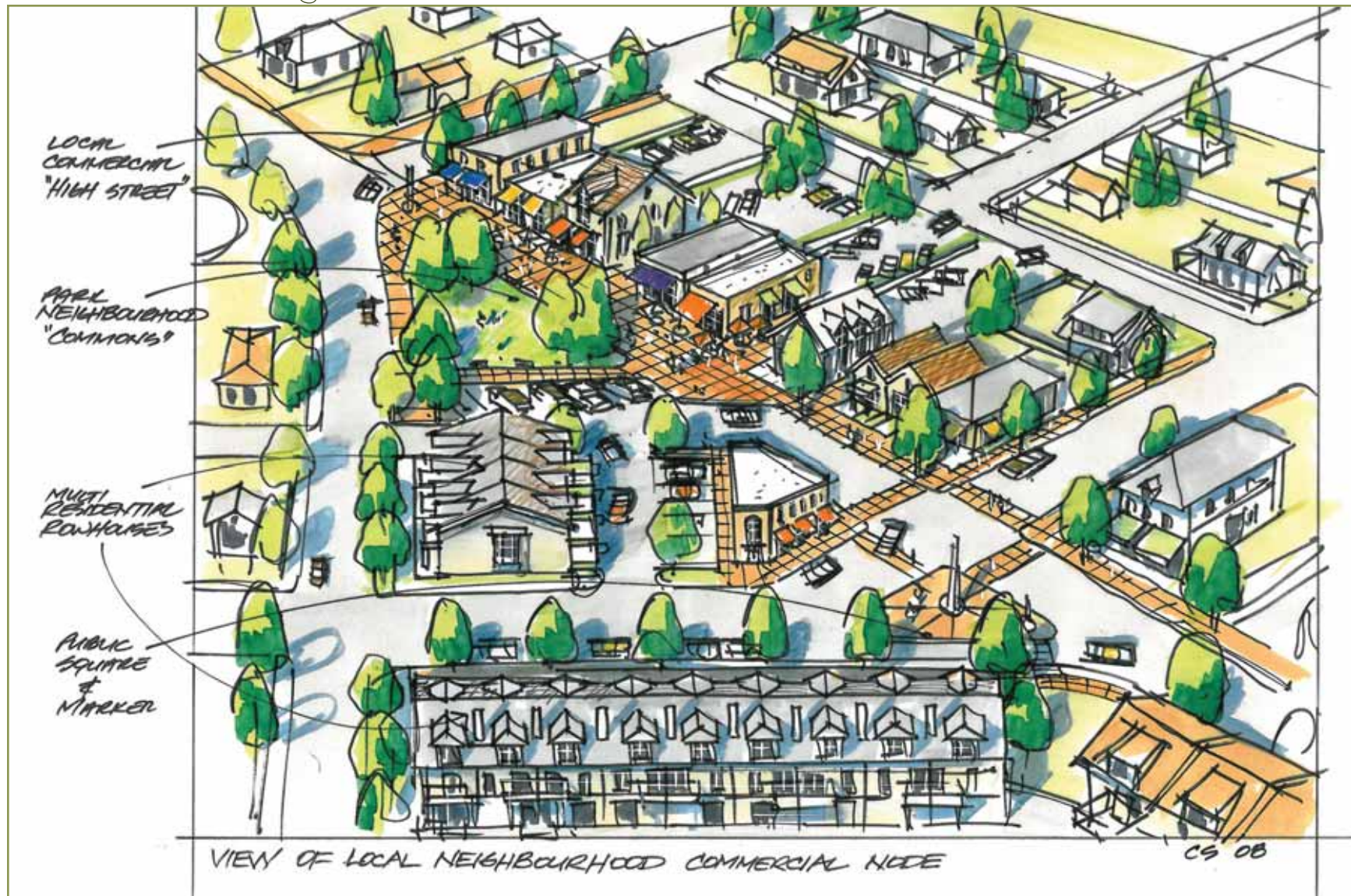
### Concept 4: Parks Neighbourhood Plan





## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

### Concept 5: Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node Axonometric





## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

### 3.6 Historic Clay Neighbourhood

#### Context

The Historic Clay neighbourhood is located between the Allowance Avenue Overpass on the west and the city limits and escarpment to the east. The neighbourhood is bound on the north by the lane between Dominion and Queen Streets SE and the CPR tracks to the south. *See Concept 6: Historic Clay Neighbourhood Plan.*

This area is referred to in the *Plan* as the Historic Clay neighbourhood to provide a complete and integrated neighbourhood. The policies equally support the vision of the area as a National Historic Site of Canada which refers to the area as the “Historic Clay District” for its many distinguishing heritage and cultural features. This section therefore, provides objectives and policies to support both the “neighbourhood” (livable) and “district” (vital) qualities of this unique area within the community.

The neighbourhood is rich in history from the established residential that had been connected to the working industries over the years. Although time has shifted

the direct connection of workers homes and the clay industries, the essence of a livable and vital neighbourhood can be found in the National recognition of the area as a “Historic Clay District”.

After many years of making Medalta Potteries National Historic Site a tourist, museum, and educational destination, the vision is for this site to achieve 70,000 visitors per year by 2012. Industries such as I-XL and the greenhouses support the heritage of the area and provide an economic foundation for the neighbourhood. The opportunity exists to strengthen the role of such industries in this neighbourhood by way of better integrating these uses physically through public realm improvements. There is significant potential in this neighbourhood to create a unique complete neighbourhood that is sustainable as well as a special destination.

The objective of the Historic Clay neighbourhood is to:

- Establish a unique “*sense of place*” that is reflective of tourism, culture and heritage.
- Support the recognition of the area as a National Historic Site of Canada and as an attractor within

the Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Strategy. *See Appendix C: Glossary for details.*

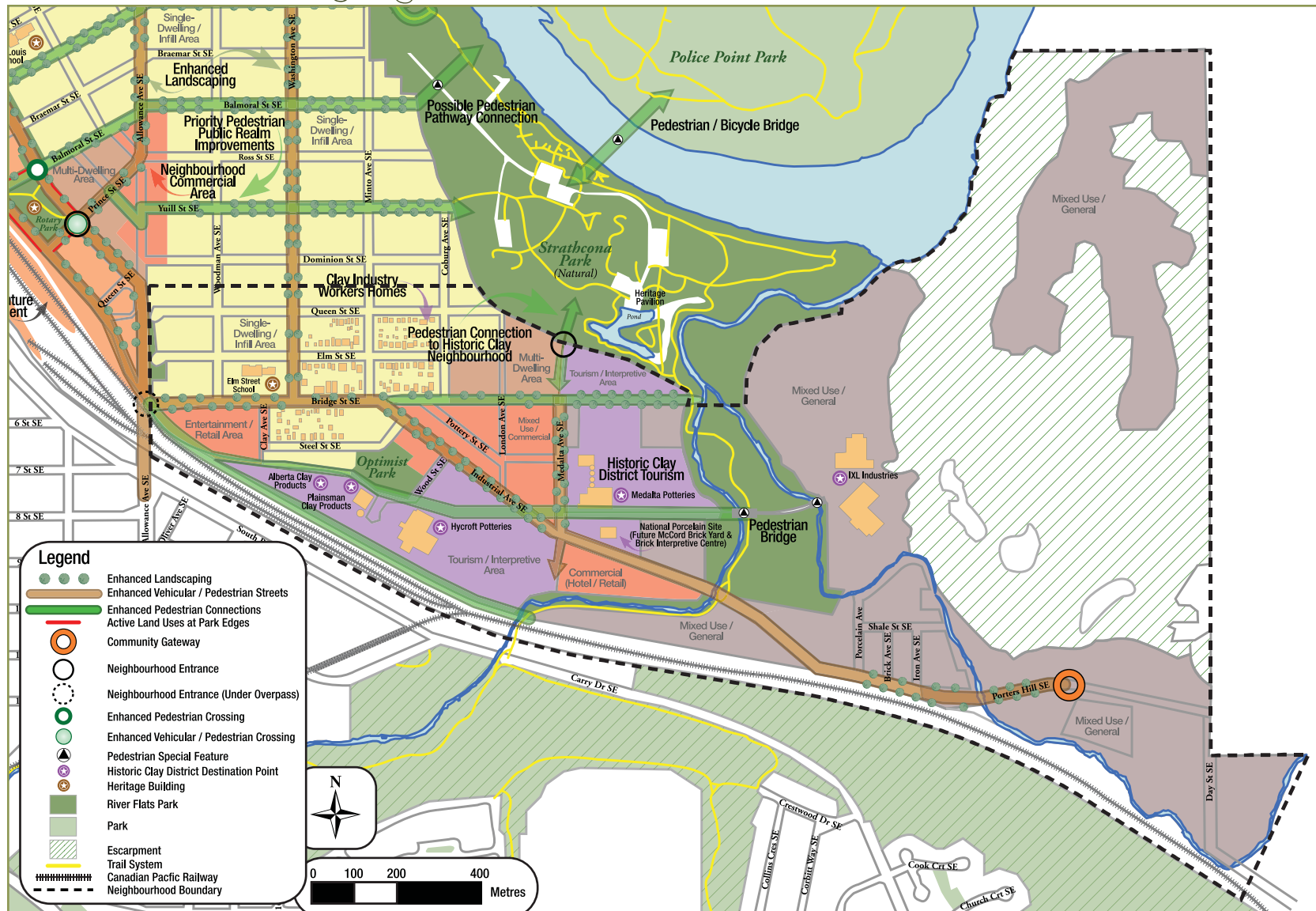
- Reinforce a complete neighbourhood by supporting intensification of high-quality residential development, new commercial, and tourism/ interpretive uses; and
- Support a complete neighbourhood vision through enhancements to the public realm, better pedestrian connectivity and vehicular access to the neighbourhood.

#### Policies

1. Facilitate the vision of the Historic Clay neighbourhood as a complete and integrated neighbourhood while respecting and contributing to the National Historic Site designation.
2. Reinforce and support the “Historic Clay District’s” vision as a tourist destination with the following components:
  - a) Support for the “Historic Clay District” Master Plan, which includes Medalta Potteries, Hycroft China, and the National

# 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

## Concept 6: Historic Clay Neighbourhood Plan



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*



- Porcelain sites and provide a future Master Plan for Alberta Clay Products and Plainsman Clay areas;
- b) Support for the *Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Strategy* vision of Medicine Hat as a heritage, arts and cultural hub within Southern Alberta;
  - c) Establish a Brick Manufacturing Interpretive Centre at the National Porcelain site adjacent to Medalta Potteries;
  - d) Explore the opportunity of establishing a Tourism Centre in the vicinity of Medalta Potteries;
  - e) Consider the possibility of integrating and re-establishing the usage of the railway spur from the westerly CPR tracks to I-XL by rebuilding a bridge across Ross Creek for sustainable commercial rail use by IX-L and other pottery sites;
  - f) Establish the opportunity for “live-work” opportunities in the neighbourhood. Appropriate locations are adjacent and surrounding the pottery sites; and

- g) Establish the opportunity for commercial uses such as office and restaurants that support tourism and local neighbourhood needs. *See Concept 7: “Historic Clay District” Axonometric.*
- 3. Incorporate the unique historical, educational and tourism opportunities into a complete and integrated residential neighbourhood.
  - 4. Land Uses that are appropriate in the Historic Clay neighbourhood include, but are not limited to:
    - a) Single-dwelling, “live-work”, and multi-dwelling residential units;
    - b) Community Association facilities, cultural and tourism facilities, community services, restaurants; schools; recreational facilities;
    - c) Parks/trails/open space; and
    - d) All new development and/or redevelopment in the General Mixed-Use area should adhere to all the vision and policies identified in the *Plan* that apply to this subject area. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Land Use Concept, Historic Clay neighbourhood, Community

Design, Public Realm, Pedestrian Connections and Movement Systems.

*See Map 4: Land Use Concept for locations of appropriate land uses.*

- 5. The following Land Use criteria shall be implemented:
  - a) Identify and recommend for designation the best examples of the heritage clay workers single-dwelling residences;
  - b) Support comprehensive multi-dwelling development on the lands north of Bridge Street SE and west of Medalta Ave. SE;
  - c) The I-XL and surrounding lands should be included in a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* to provide future development opportunities for these lands should they no longer function as heavy industrial. Such considerations should include preservation of I-XL’s historic contribution to the city, neighbourhood residential opportunities both on top of and below the escarpment area and other community amenities/



## 3.0 Neighbourhood *Urban Structure*

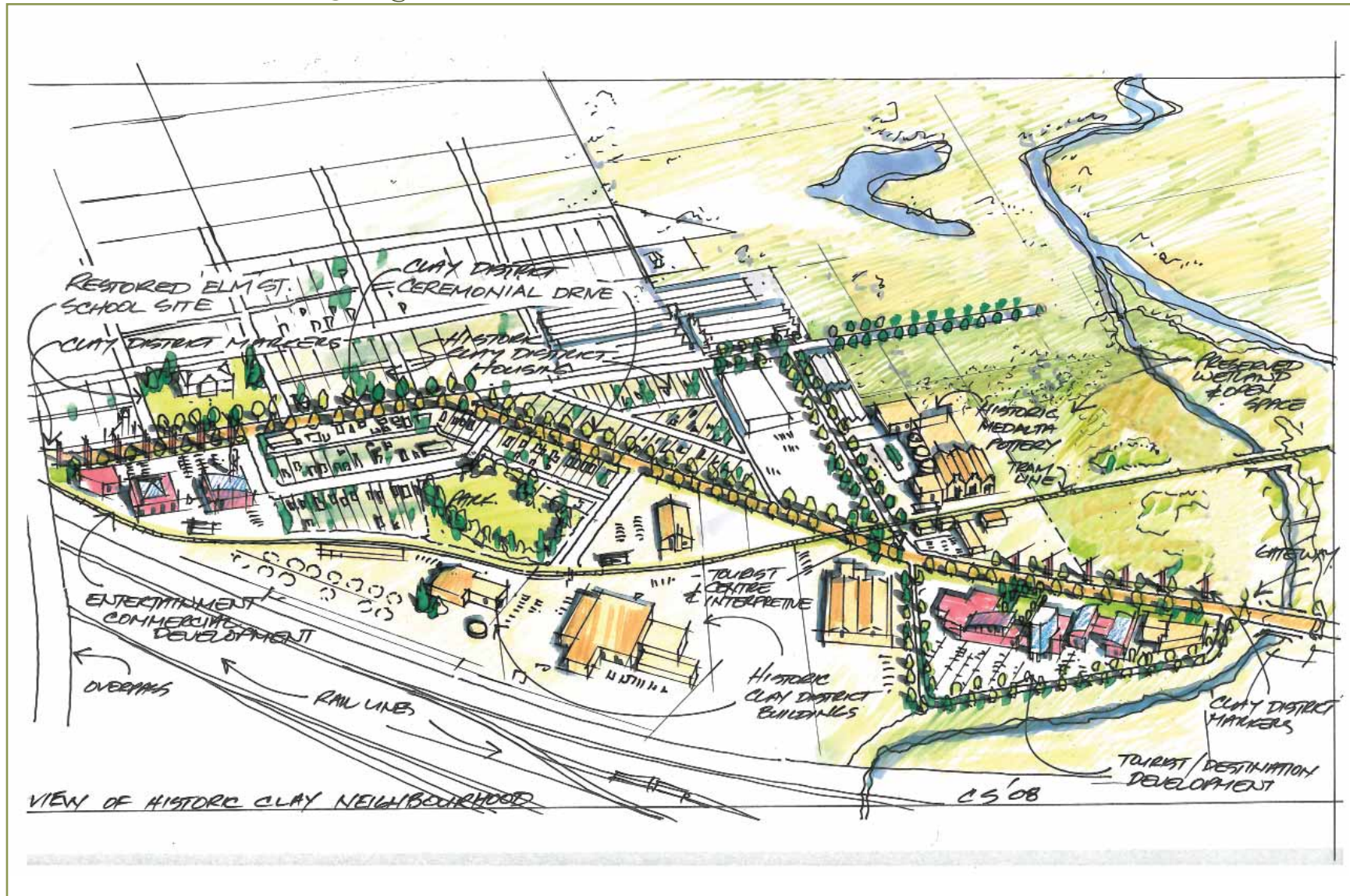


services that would evolve this entranceway to the city in a livable and vital manner; and

- d) Remove the heavy and light industrial land use designations from the neighbourhood and replace with the General Mixed-Use noted in [Map 4: Land Use Concept](#) to better reflect the future vision and neighbourhood planning work to be done.
6. Ensure that development supports the “*sense of place*” for the neighbourhood by providing sensitive integration of land uses and high-quality intensification.
7. Identify and protect existing residential, commercial and industrial buildings of historical significance.
8. The City will explore opportunities with the School Board to retain and invest in Elm Street School as an elementary school that would accommodate local students and programs.
9. Enhance pedestrian connections through the neighbourhood as follows:
  - Prioritize streetscape enhancement of Bridge and Industrial Avenue SE. All new development shall require pedestrian sidewalks, boulevards and appropriate landscaping and buffers for the use proposed on either side of the street; and
- Expand pedestrian connections to connect with and move through the “Historic Clay District” sites by providing a pedestrian/cycling trail along the north side of the CPR tracks from North Railway Street SE to the trails at Seven Persons and Ross Creeks. Also provide a pedestrian/cycling trail alongside the railway spur line through Alberta Clay Products to I-XL.
10. Explore the opportunity to establish a tourism-related historic conveyance on the spur line from the Hycroft China Site to the Medalta Potteries Site, in keeping with the “Historic Clay District” development plan.
11. Establish gateways at the Highway 41 entrance to the city and a significant neighbourhood entranceway on North Railway Street SE as it turns into Bridge Street SE under the Allowance Avenue Overpass. Provide public art as a part of the entranceway.
12. Explore opportunities for Eco-tourism within the neighbourhood. Eco-tourism should promote responsible travel to the community’s natural areas while conserving the environment, educating tourists on the natural assets and respecting and celebrating the local history and culture.

## 3.0 Neighbourhood Urban Structure

### Concept 7: Historic Clay Neighbourhood Axonometric





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### 4.1 Community Preservation

#### Context

The River Flats is rich in historical land uses and built-forms. The character of the community is defined by the legacy of this history that in many cases still remains. As presented in the *History section*, the depths of the stories and history in the River Flats has yet to be fully explored, reinforced and enhanced. The potential for heritage to be the foundation of this established community and evolve it to a really exciting place is yet to be discovered.

It is the intent of the *Plan* to ensure that such exploration takes place towards reinforcing and capitalizing on such a valuable asset. The opportunity exists to revitalize the River Flats by the very history that has supported its unique and sustainable qualities. The following policies will help to identify, protect and enhance the heritage resources while evolve the vision of a high-quality livable and vital community. *See Map 7: Heritage Resources.*

**Note:** The Heritage Resources Map provides an initial identification of known and/or potential heritage resources. It is not intended to be comprehensive or

exclude rather provide a foundation for further heritage resources work.

The objective of community preservation is to:

- Reinforce the value of heritage in the community;
- Ensure that the heritage is preserved by means of designation or other development incentive opportunities; and
- Increase public awareness and promote the value of heritage for the community's "*sense of place*" or identity.

#### Policies

1. Support implementation of the City of Medicine Hat Heritage Resources Policy.
2. Establish criteria for historical qualities that should be preserved in the built-form in all three neighbourhoods.
3. New development shall respect the scale and massing of the existing residential heritage qualities.
4. Re-establish the Alberta Main Street Program (*See Appendix C: Glossary*)

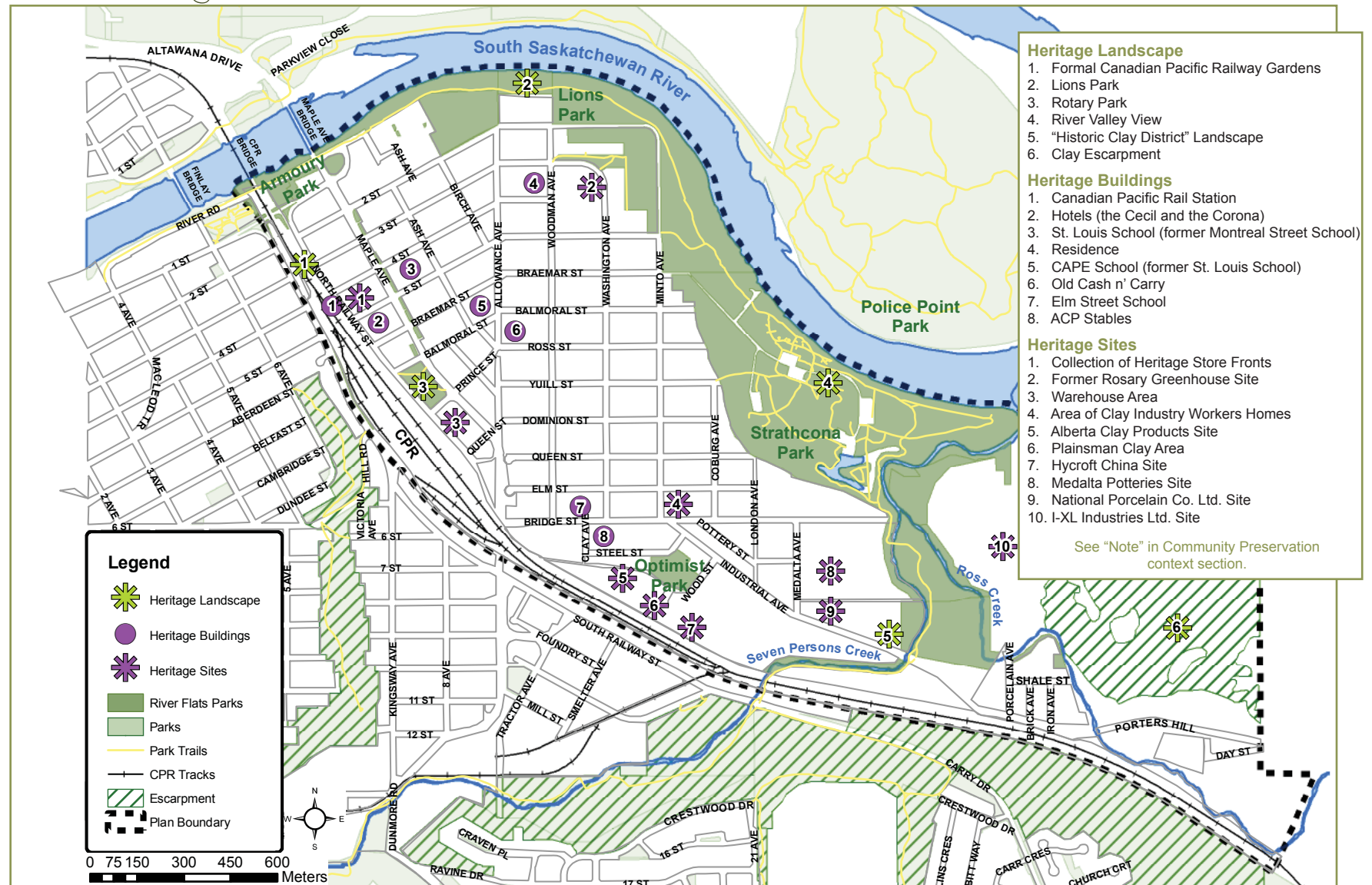
along North Railway Street SE as a means of economically revitalizing this historic street.

5. The Heritage Resources Committee should place a priority on the identification, protection and management of historic resources within the River Flats community and work with the community to complete a heritage survey and inventory (Statements of Significance) project to identify and evaluate sites for designation.
6. Encourage municipal designation of significant heritage buildings, sites and landscapes. The City and Heritage Resources Committee will work with property owners in securing the designation of significant historic resources, both at the Municipal and Provincial levels.
7. Establish a Heritage Walking Tour that links heritage buildings, sites, streetscapes and landscapes.
8. Expand the history of the clay industries and the recognized "Historic Clay District" to include the historic McCord Brick Plant site and surrounding sites to the east of the city.



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

Map 7: Heritage Resources



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

9. Seek partnerships with other agencies for the funding of heritage initiatives and the promotion and awareness of such initiatives.
10. Encourage the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings such as the warehouses along the south end of North Railway Street SE.
11. Until such a time that the Heritage Resource Committee has established an Inventory of Heritage Resources, all Demolition Permits in the River Flats community will require an initial review for heritage potential prior to approval of the Demolition Permit.

### 4.2 Community Redevelopment

In order to provide redevelopment opportunities and sensitive integration with the existing River Flats community, the opportunity exists to identify conceptual redevelopment areas that could more readily achieve the vision for an enhanced and revitalized community than individual redevelopment opportunities would. Such areas are the “Railway District”, the “Historic Clay District”, the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node, and the Arena/Curling Rink Area. *See Map 8: River Flats Redevelopment Concepts.*

These conceptual redevelopment areas are ones in which a more comprehensive *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* may be required to achieve the economics, environmental and social objectives of the *Plan*. Such an exercise provides the opportunity to reinforce the unique characteristics and heritage value of areas within the community while allowing new development to genuinely be integrated and enhance the community’s assets.

Although the opportunity exists to focus new development in these areas as a means to stimulate redevelopment, other opportunities exist to sensitively-integrate new development in Primarily Single-Dwelling Areas or other comprehensive areas not yet envisioned. It should be noted that any redevelopment be it in the conceptual areas or other areas of the River Flats, will be expected to support the vision and policies in the *Plan*.

The objective of community redevelopment is to:

- Support redevelopment in the River Flats in a comprehensive and quality manner;
- Provide certainty of redevelopment by way of comprehensive opportunities; and

- Focus redevelopment so as to not impact the established and historical components of the community.

### Policies for all Redevelopment Areas

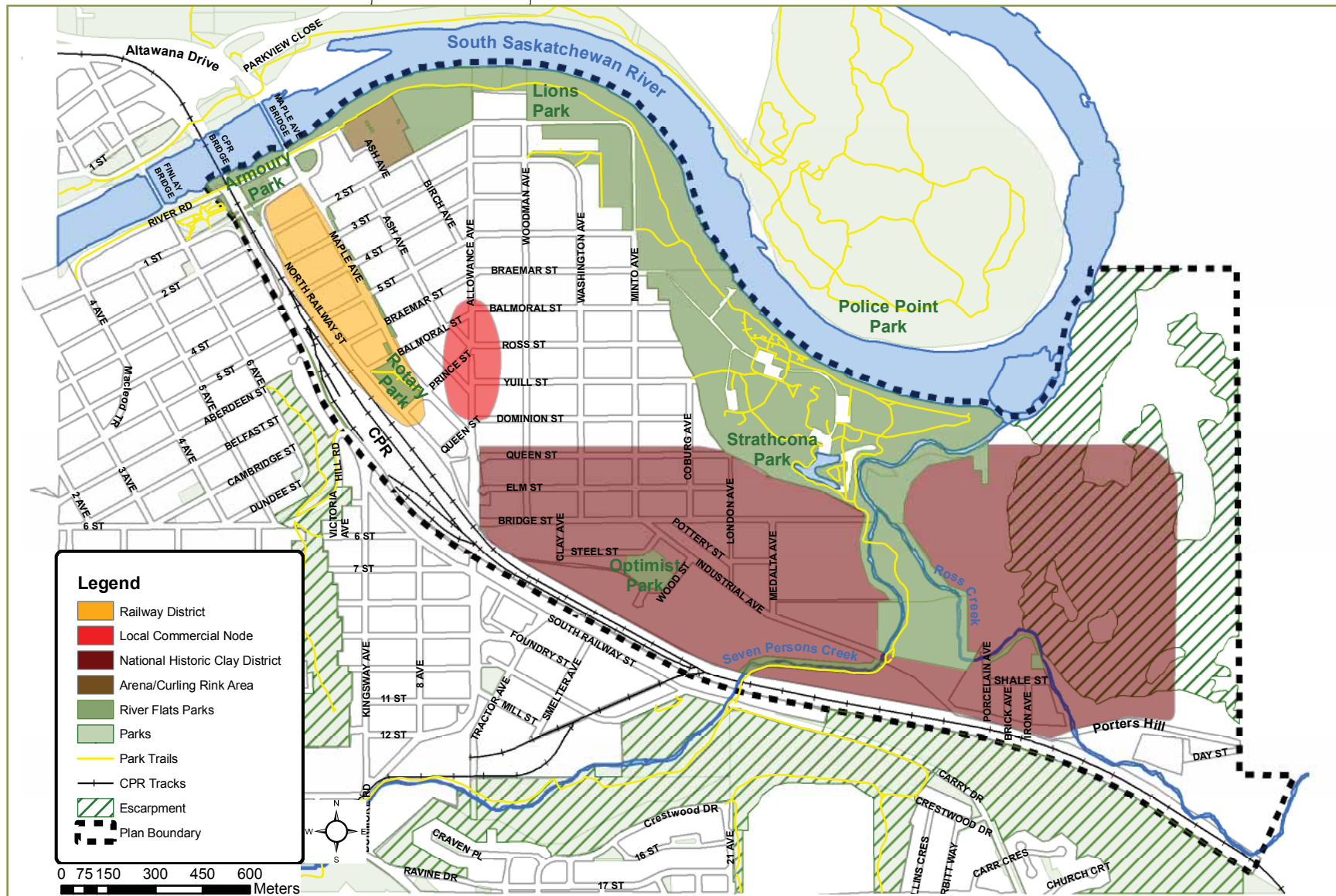
1. Ensure that the conceptual areas of redevelopment implement policies throughout the *Plan* that are applicable to these areas.
2. Focus development opportunities in these areas as a priority to preserve, stimulate and enhance the livability and vitality of the River Flats.
3. If need be, undertake a comprehensive *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* on the conceptual areas to stimulate development in these areas. Engagement would include: City Departments, citizens of the community and other agencies/ organizations.

#### 4.2.1 “Railway District”

The “Railway District” affords the community the greatest opportunity for redevelopment given the potential for a mix of uses and the opportunity to consolidate lands to achieve the broader vision of intensifying multi-dwelling and commercial opportunities. The area

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

Map 8: River Flats Redevelopment Concepts





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design



has the potential to achieve a good mix of livability and vitality and an exciting destination for citizens of the city given a vision that includes: passenger rail to revitalize the CPR Station area, a transit hub, an artisan/farmers marketplace, pedestrian connection north/south to the river promenade area and east/west over the CPR tracks, new three to eight-storey quality multi-dwelling units, and loft-style residential in heritage warehouses, etc. Additional opportunities exist for development of future surplus lands along North Railway Street SE and the CPR tracks.

The “Railway District” forms a part of the original town site that is anchored around the historic and grand CPR station. There is a valuable stock of heritage buildings in this area that hosts many interesting stories of a time when it was an active living and shopping area. It is anticipated that the revitalization of heritage buildings/sites (i.e. Main Street commercial ones along North Railway Street SE, Rotary Park and the CPR station) along with new multi-dwelling residential would establish a high-quality livable and vital “District” within the Old Town neighbourhood. It will be important to encourage and support the consolidation of lands for such

uses as artisan/farmers marketplace, sites for quality three to eight-storey multi-dwellings, and public realm and pedestrian connection improvements. Planning for the “Railway District” should include the visionary ideas and policy direction in both the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* and the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan*. See *Concept 8: “Railway District”: Multi-dwellings and the Downtown Redevelopment Plan for additional conceptual images*.

### 4.2.2 “Historic Clay District”

Although the “Historic Clay District” has gained recognition and the Medalta Potteries, Hycroft China and National Porcelain sites have prepared a vision for redevelopment, the opportunity exists to further envision the entire “District” by way of a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* to address how the area would choose to evolve as both a sustainable neighbourhood and a significant tourist destination.

The “Historic Clay District” has also been highlighted as a part of the *Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Strategy* (See *Section 10.0 Tourism and Appendix C: Glossary*). The *Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Strategy* supports

Medicine Hat as a heritage, arts and cultural hub within Southern Alberta. Having such support founded on the “Historic Clay District” provides a unique opportunity to further envision the “District” as a tourism, interpretive and educational designation.

The boundaries of the “Historic Clay District” were designated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in December 2002. On July 8, 2005, under the authority of the Government of Canada, a plaque was placed at the Medalta Potteries site to commemorate the area as a place of national historic significance and clearly delineate the boundaries of the Historic site.

The *Plan* provides policy direction to both support it as a recognized “District” but equally important as a “neighbourhood”. The Historic Clay neighbourhood has a strong residential component, Optimist Park and adjacent parks, a trail and creek system, and a mix of industry and tourism uses. In amongst the historical recognition, strengthening the uses and physical environment of the “District” provides a unique opportunity to create a complete and integrated neighbourhood. Of all three neighbourhoods, this neighbourhood will require a broader

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 8: "Railway District", Multi-dwelling Residential and Pedestrian Walkway





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design



vision to support the tourism aspect and the components of a complete neighbourhood. To support the “District” as a complete neighbourhood, a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* is required for this area.

Although the Medalta Potteries, Hycroft China and National Porcelain sites have a Master Plan for redevelopment, the Alberta Clay Products and Plainsman Clay area have yet to realize their vision as a tourist and/or other use/destination. Equally, an understanding of the potential of the lands that have been identified as General Mixed-Use (I-XL Industries Ltd., surrounding lands along Highway 41, and the greenhouse lands) will be required to better integrate the neighbourhood land uses.

Policies to enhance the neighbourhood through streetscapes, connections and land uses have been provided in the *Plan* along with a conceptual idea of what might better integrate it as a neighbourhood. The *Plan* provides some conceptual ideas that can support achieving a complete neighbourhood for this area from land uses, streetscapes, programming, and heritage connections. It is however, recommended that the policies in the *Plan* be further evolved through the *Land Use and Urban Design*

*Planning Exercise. See Concept 9: Historic Clay Neighbourhood.*

### 4.2.3 Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node

The Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node is an exciting opportunity to reinforce all the neighbourhoods for the residents. This area has the largest potential to reinforce a “sense of place” for the residents that live in the community. It provides an opportunity to meet local needs and create some special gathering places while being a focal and entrance point to the community.

The potential exists for this to be a trendy neighbourhood location for residents to go for coffee, shop, stroll through, and meet neighbours. Simple public realm features such as an urban gathering place, new landscaping, roadway changes, pedestrian connections and wayfaring support livability and vitality of the node. *See Concept 10: Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node.*

### 4.2.4 Arena/Curling Rink Area

The concepts provided for this area are visionary in that they provide a viable direction for parcels of land that may be

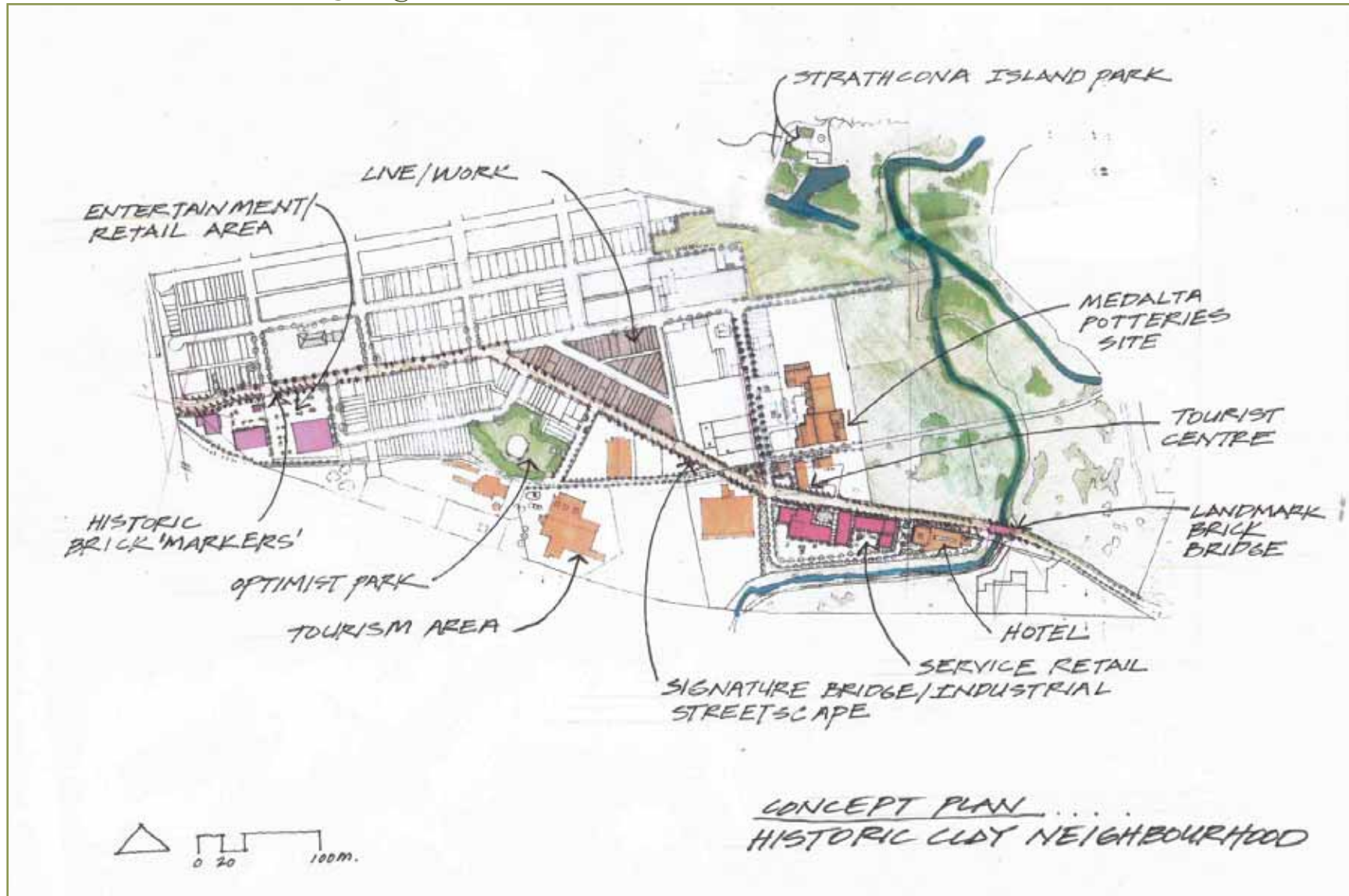
available for future redevelopment. The area is an anchor to the “Civic District” within the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* and should meet the objective of intensifying residential at the community’s edges. This would increase population in support of existing and new civic and community amenities. The comprehensive redevelopment of these lands should include a *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercise* that includes consideration of multi-dwelling units, affordable housing units, community facilities and/or amenities, strong pedestrian connections and urban gathering spaces for the residents of the community to enjoy alongside the river.

It is unknown at this time if this area may better serve a future civic use that has not yet been identified however, should that use not be required on these lands the opportunity exists to support it for a quality urban residential, mixed-use redevelopment. *See Concept 11: Arena/Curling Rink Area.*



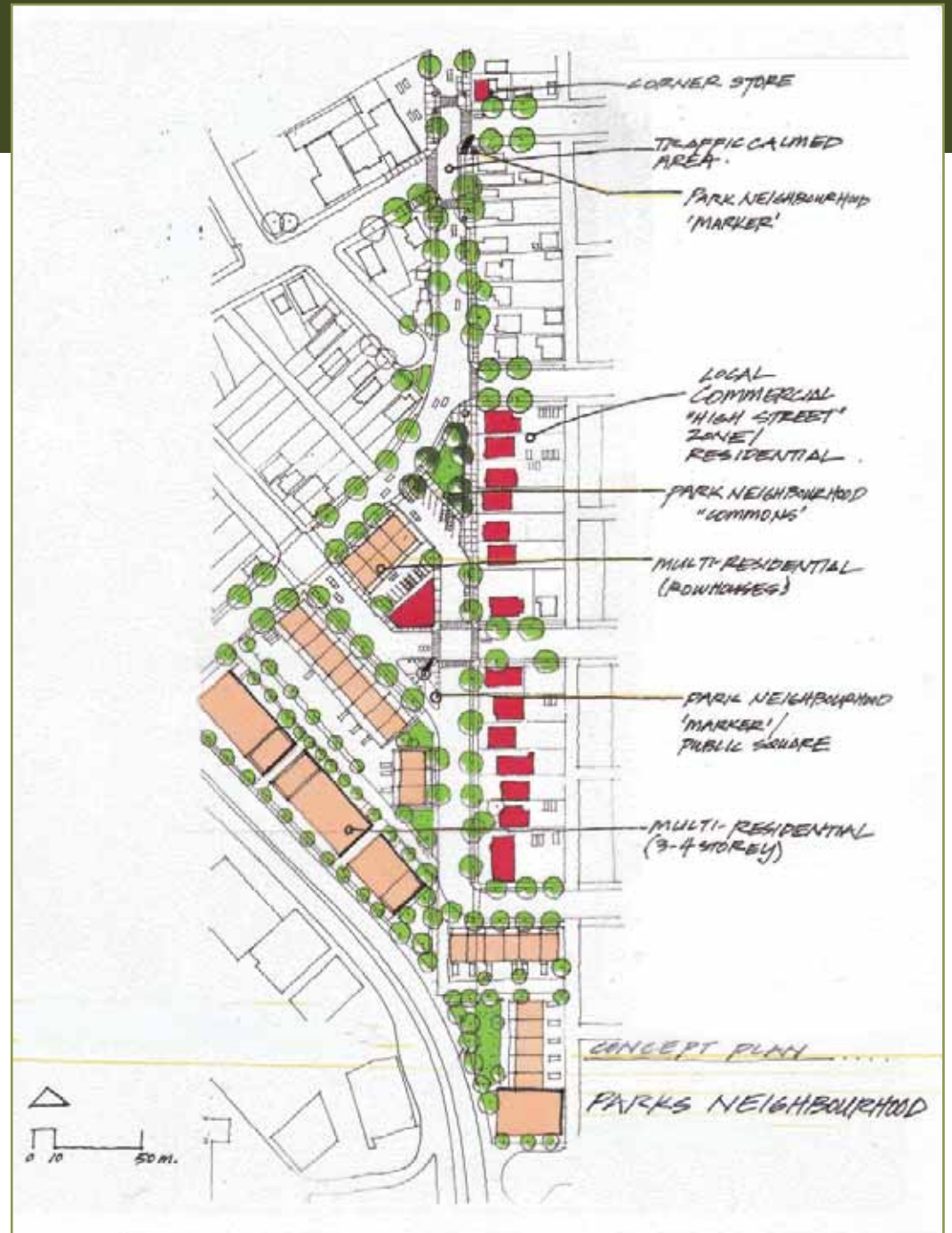
## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 9: Historic Clay Neighbourhood



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 10: Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 11: Arena/Curling Rink Area





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### 4.3 Community Design

#### Context

The design of buildings and structures directly impacts the quality of the public realm. Guidance for site and architectural design is therefore essential to preserve and enhance the public realm which is a key element in contributing to a community's "sense of pride" and attractiveness. In combination with *Section 4.4, Public Realm* the Community Design policies and guidelines will support an image for the community that enhances its heritage built-forms, uses and unique design characteristics.

One of the more significant challenges for the River Flats community has been that of raising the quality of the design within the community such that new development is respectful of the community's historical character. Given a strong heritage foundation and good urban design principles, the opportunity exists to provide guidance for a higher-quality of development while maintaining affordability and other sustainable objectives. Good site and building design does not have to be unaffordable rather it is supportive of a community's "sense of place" such that the citizens (current and new) are proud of redevelopment projects

within the community. It is with this intent that the *Plan* looks to build on the positive design characteristics that come from its heritage and provide guidelines to direct the planning and architectural built-form of new development.

The objective of community design is to:

- Ensure that new development is contributing to the community and of a higher-quality by adherence to the policy and guidelines noted in *Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines*;
- Evolve a "sense of place" by enhancing the historical and unique design characteristics that are evident in the community;
- Provide variety in the urban design and built-form that is representative of the traditional and the new;
- Provide the Development Authority direction in reviewing land use amendment and development and building permit applications; and
- Provide the citizens, landowners and developers the comfort of certainty when choosing to live or work in the community.

#### 4.3.1 New Development Policies

All new development should:

1. Respect and support implementation of the vision and principles within the *River Flats ARP*;
2. Adhere to *Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines*. See *Concept 12: Residential Infill Design Guidelines Example*;
3. Reinforce the heritage character in the community by harmoniously transitioning new buildings with older ones. Sensitively-blending new design elements within the historical context should respect the scale, massing and materials of the surrounding area while not imitating them.
4. Provide a streetscape elevation of surrounding buildings on all new development applications;
5. Provide a fine-grain building character. See *Appendix C: Glossary*;
6. Be visually attractive such that it adds richness and variety to the community;
7. Be designed for longevity such that the integration of use, design and

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

materials are sustainable;

8. Provide on-site parking and garages from the lane where a lane exists. No front car drives or garages shall be supported unless existing or deemed conforming at the time of approval of this *ARP*;
9. Provide a sun shadow impact analysis, if over two stories;
10. On multi-dwelling sites, provide well-designed and integrated amenity space, soft landscaping in yards, green roofs, and be designed with individual doors to the street;
11. Contribute to the public realm by way of site development considerations such as continuous street walls, canopies, landscaping, boulevard and sidewalk design;
12. Create a continuous, active street wall in mixed-use and commercial areas and along key pedestrian connections; and
13. Provide a building mass that enhances existing views of heritage buildings, sites, streetscapes and/or landscapes.

### 4.3.2 Land Use/Landscaping Buffer Policies

All new development shall:

1. Provide soft landscaping on all yard setbacks and provide enhanced buffer landscaping where it interfaces with a use that differs from the development; and
2. Ensure that the boulevards (between sidewalk and roadway) are soft landscaped and that conforming driveway accesses are minimized and designed to integrate with the streetscape design. *See Section 4.4 Public Realm.*

### 4.3.3 Lanes

Given the traditional grid-pattern that exists in the community and the vision of creating a more “walkable” community, the intent of the *Plan* is to re-establish the usage of lanes within the community by supporting the efficient integration of the service facilities such as loading and delivery, and vehicular and pedestrian access into existing and new developments. To support the function of the lane, the lane should be designed and upgraded for safety and aesthetics.

### Policies

1. All lanes in the River Flats community shall be retained and improved. Improvements should be addressed at the time of redevelopment and through a city-initiated improvement program or with the upgrading/replacement of utilities and services. Such improvements may include paving of the lanes that are supporting new or additional multi-dwelling development.
2. All new development shall utilize the rear lane for access to on-site parking, underground parkades and/or service functions such as loading and garbage collection.
3. No encroachments or variances that would impact a clear public right-of-way should be granted. All new development shall be designed to respect the public right-of-way by ensuring that garbage storage, on-site parking/garages and landscaping is designed on the property to enhance the movement of vehicles and garbage collection along the public right-of-way.

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

4. Lane closures should only be considered where the closure can assist in the achievement of other urban design objectives of the *Plan* and whereby a comprehensive approach to the design of an entire block is considered (i.e. the pedestrian walkway behind North Railway Street SE). All lane closures should consider the impacts on circulation, access and service functions of properties in the vicinity and the vision of a “walkable” community that preserves the front sidewalk and boulevards for enhanced pedestrian connections.

### 4.3.4 Floodway and Flood Fringe Design Policies

A large portion of the eastern area of the River Flats is susceptible to floodway and flood fringe considerations. As the community intensifies and population capacities grow infrastructure should be upgraded such that there will be improved conditions in the floodway and flood fringe as well as areas outside of the defined floodway and flood fringe. See *Map 9: Floodway*.

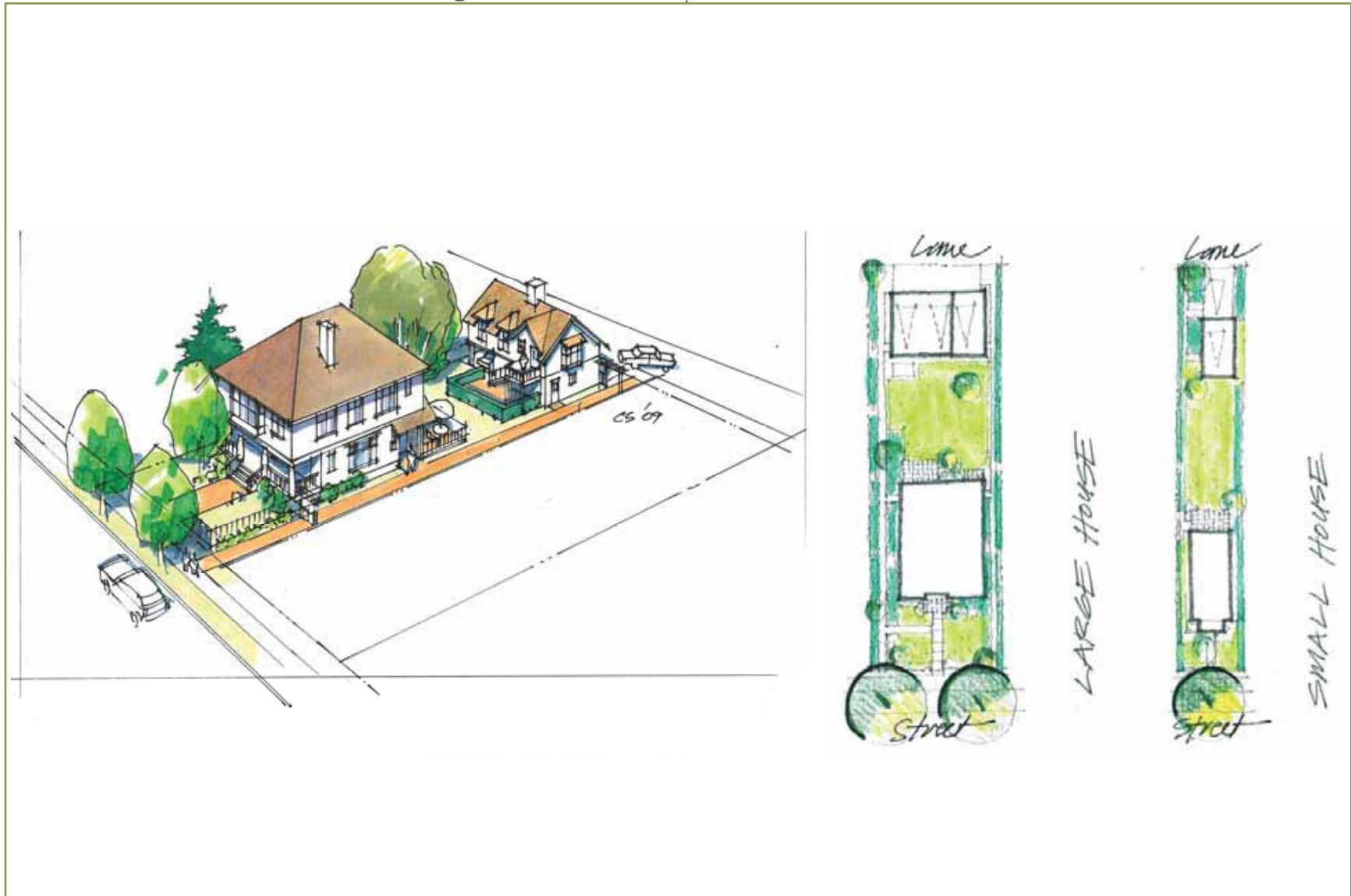
The following policies apply:

1. All new development in flood fringe areas shall address appropriate design considerations identified in the *Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines, Section 3.2.2*.
2. Berms as a design solution for floodway/flood fringe areas should only be considered where there are no other acceptable options, and this option is able to enhance the public realm.
3. Servicing upgrades should be reviewed in support of an improved floodway/flood fringe condition.
4. Develop and implement a Flood Mitigation Plan to support future development of Brownfield sites in areas surrounding the Seven Persons and Ross Creeks.
5. Amend the *River Flats ARP* maps and/or policy statements should any new information in regards to Floodway and Flood Fringe be received from Alberta Environment. In addition, further review of the Floodway and Flood Fringe should be undertaken.



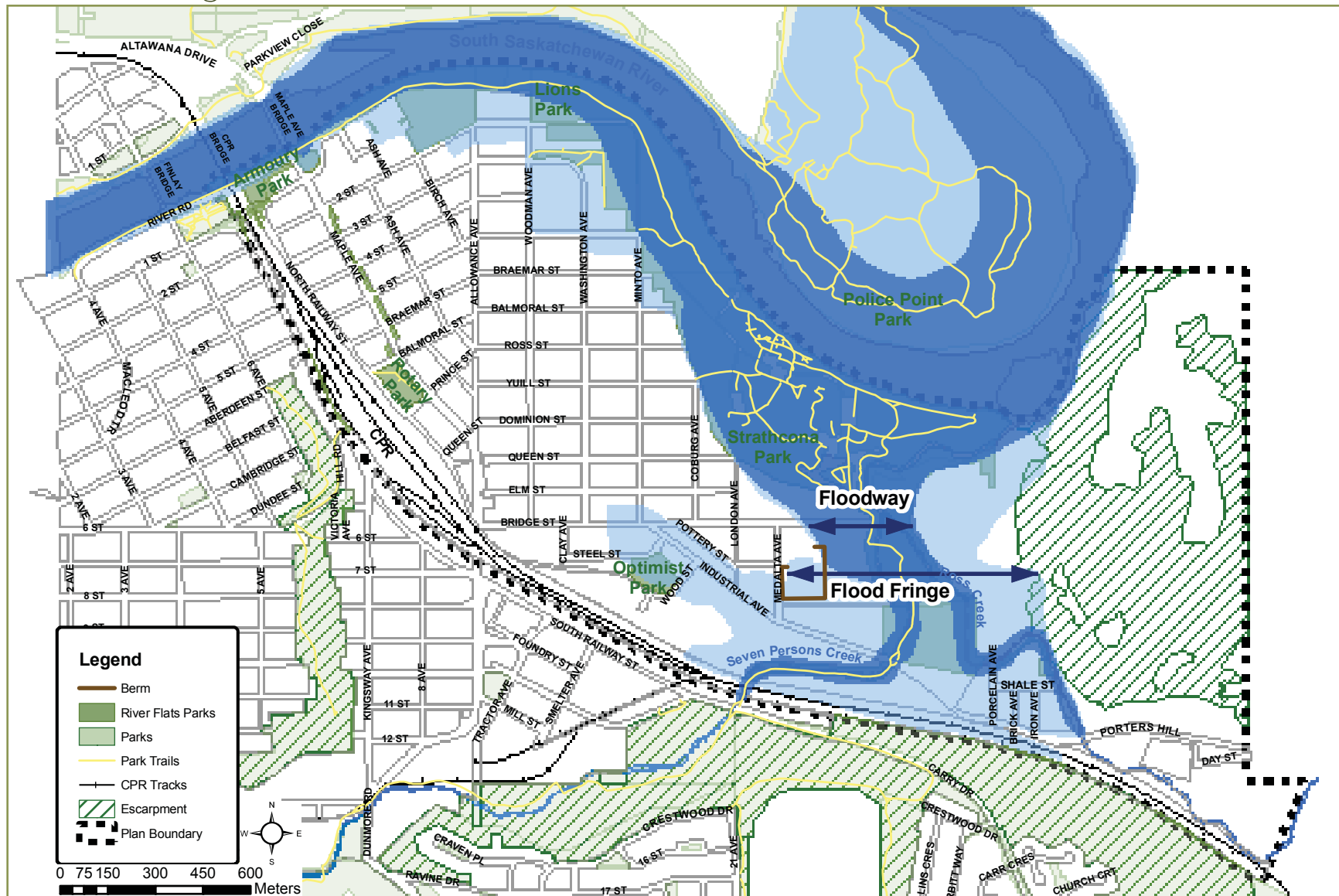
## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 12: Residential Infill Design Guidelines Example



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

Map 9: Floodway



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design



### 4.4 Public Realm

#### Context

The image of an established community is defined by the quality of its public realm – its streets, boulevards, urban spaces, parks, riverfronts and public art. The quality of the public realm is what establishes the identity of a community. The River Flats community has valuable assets within its public realm beginning with the parks open space system and the wealth of mature tree-lined streetscapes. The quality and investment in the streetscapes is what will enhance the experience for the pedestrian and ultimately, forms the quality and scale of the community.

The River Flats community has a strong foundation of a grid-street layout which combined with sidewalks and boulevards provide a legible framework for encouraging “walkability” within the community. However, the positive qualities of this foundation have been eroded over the years and there is a need to re-invest in the public realm to enhance the streetscapes to support the community’s identity, livability and vitality.

It is envisioned that each neighborhood will contribute a unique “*sense of place*” by implementation of the policies and development direction within each neighbourhood. It is important that the community as a whole invest in the public realm to create that “*sense of place*”, gathering places and nodes that reinforce the values of the community and make it a place that people enjoy living, working and visiting.

The key components of the River Flats public realm that form the “*sense of place*” are the community gateways, neighbourhood entrances, the streetscapes which encompass the boulevards and street trees, community wayfaring and public art. The following public realm policies in conjunction with valuing the preservation of sun on the parks and streets will reinforce the community’s uniqueness, identity and “*sense of place*”. *See Map 10: Public Realm Features.*

The objective for the public realm is to:

- Reinforce and enhance the existing public realm features within the community (i.e. soft landscaped boulevards, mature street trees, etc.);

- Create a stronger “*sense of place*” within the three neighbourhoods and for the community as a whole;
- Provide stronger legibility for the community through gateways, entrance features and wayfaring; and
- Reinforce the value of sunlight on the parks and streets.

#### 4.4.1 Gateway, Entrances and Community Wayfaring

The River Flats community has a great deal of vehicular traffic moving through it rather than accessing the community as a destination. Given this, it is important that the community reinforce its “*sense of place*” by welcoming people to the community through a celebration of the unique aspects of each neighbourhood.

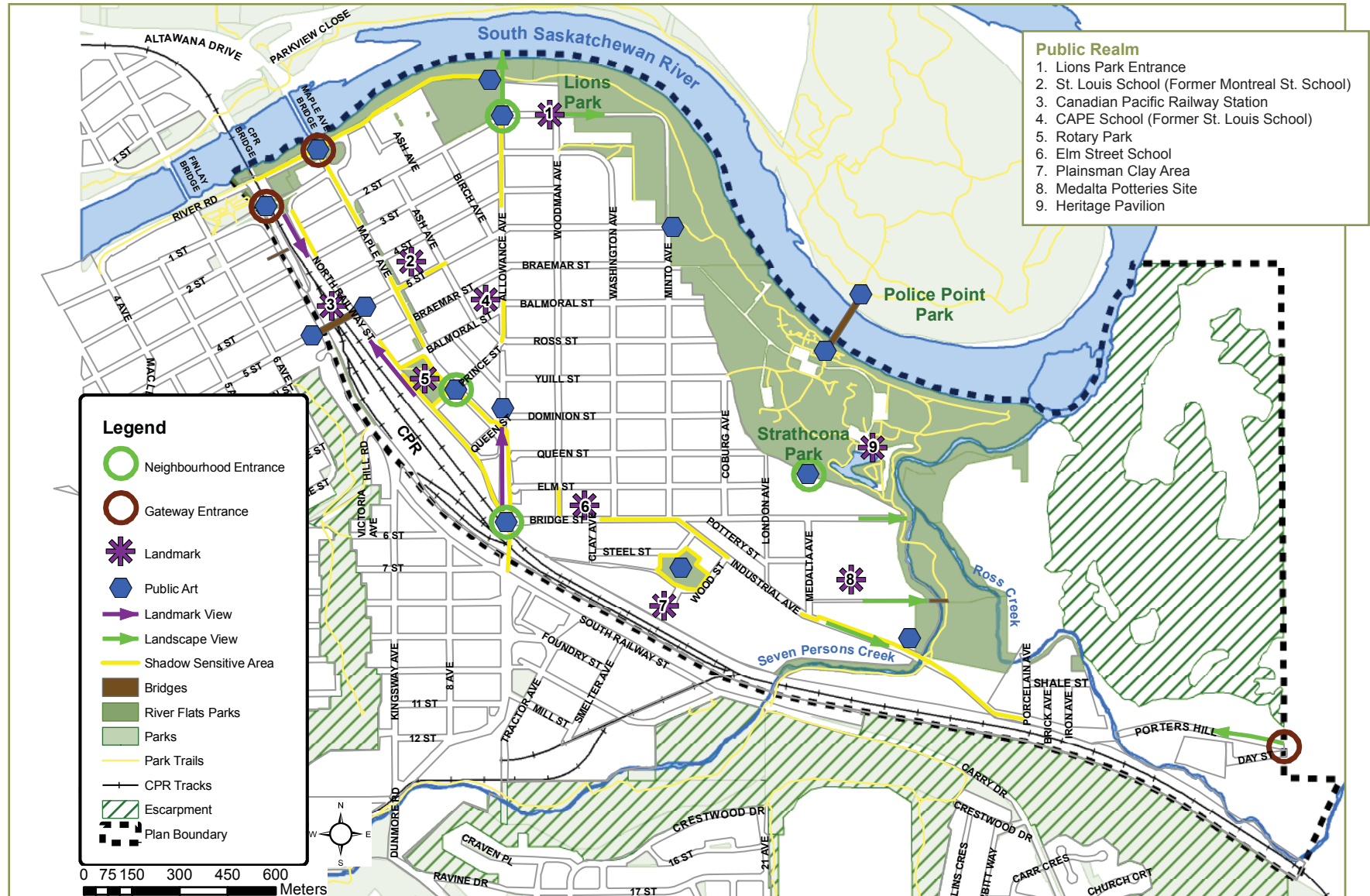
There are three main gateways to the River Flats which are:

- The 1 Street SE underpass from the west;
- Highway 41 from the east; and
- Maple Avenue Bridge from the north.



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

Map 10: Public Realm Features



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

The Allowance Avenue Overpass from the south might be considered a fourth gateway but by the time pedestrian and vehicular traffic has arrived off the overpass they are well into the community at Prince Street SE and Maple Avenue SE. Therefore, this would better be represented as a neighbourhood entrance. Given the community is structured as neighbourhoods, the opportunity exists to provide neighbourhood entrances at key locations throughout the community. For example, the intersection of Prince Street SE and Maple Avenue SE whereby to the east is the Parks neighbourhood and to the west and north is the Old Town neighbourhood. Equally, a significant neighbourhood entrance opportunity exists under the Allowance Avenue Overpass as an entrance to the Historic Clay neighbourhood.

Gateways and entrances are the beginning of establishing legibility for the resident, worker or tourist to the community. Given the significant heritage and tourism aspects of the community, it is important that a clear Wayfaring Plan be established for both the pedestrian/cyclist and vehicular user. Wayfaring to such locations as the “Railway District”, Parks system, Historic Clay tourism area and other natural features within the

community is important to encourage people to come and stay within the community rather than pass through it.

### Policies

1. Create a community and neighbourhood “*sense of place*” through high-quality, well-designed gateway and entrance features that represent the respective character of each neighbourhood. Such features should include high-quality materials, be sustainable and engage the community’s input. An opportunity exists for the features to be designed as public art while providing character and wayfaring for the locals and tourists visiting the community.
2. Prepare a Wayfaring Plan to include a combination of streetscape design features (“markers”), key locations of signage, content of such signage, design of signage, lighting, etc. The Wayfaring Plan should include materials and unique urban design features representative of the community and its history.

### 4.4.2 Streetscape

The design of the public and private portions of the public realm are a community’s strongest asset for

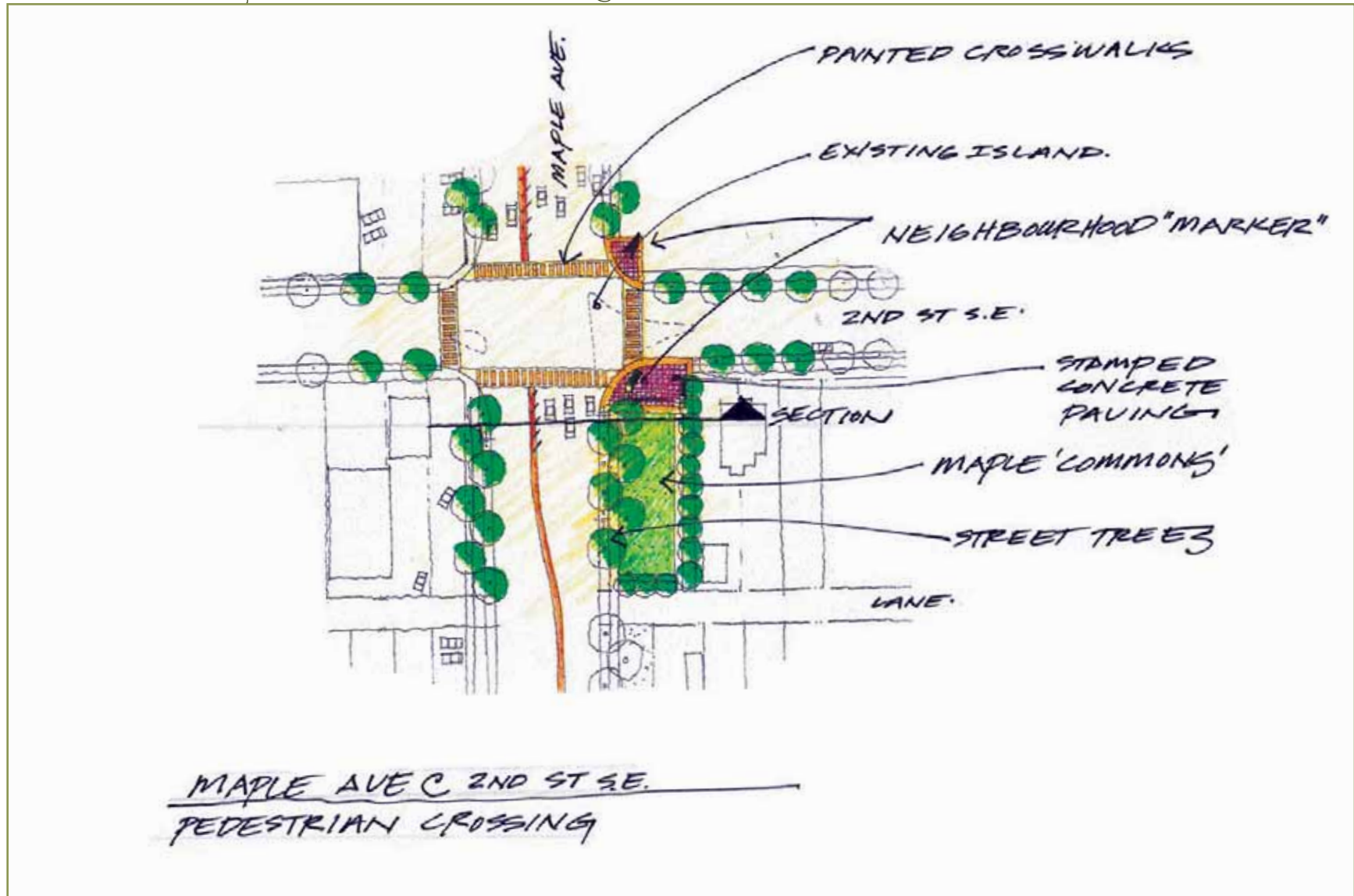
“walkability” and for establishing a “*sense of place*” within a community. The River Flat’s grid-street pattern, lanes, and boulevards are all strong physical assets however; these have been eroded over the years due to suburban development patterns (garages off the street, parking, etc.), a lack of quality development that integrates with the public realm, and inappropriate implementation of xeriscaping principles on boulevards and yards. This combined with less investment in maintaining and enhancing the public realm components such as sidewalks, boulevards, curbs, driveways, etc. has created an opportunity to reinforce a vision for the streetscape and therefore, a “walkable” and vibrant established community. *See Concepts 13 – 17: Maple Avenue SE, Allowance Avenue SE and Bridge Street/Industrial Avenue SE Concepts and Cross-sections.*

The objective of the streetscapes is to:

- Reinforce the grid-street pattern by function of the street and lanes;
- Enhance the established sidewalk and boulevard street pattern;
- Prioritize the street for the pedestrian; and
- Reinforce the value of reinvesting in the public and private realms.

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 13: Maple Avenue Pedestrian Crossing





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design



### Policies

1. Retain and promote the street-grid as the primary community redevelopment pattern.
2. Clear delineation of the public, semi-private and private domains within the streetscape should be achieved. *See Appendix C: Glossary.* The private domain should support the street through active uses at-grade and transparent glazing.
3. Encourage the comprehensive design and implementation of streetscapes based on the scale, character and use of a street.
4. Prepare streetscape design standards based on the Concepts and Cross-sections provided and ensure proper widths of boulevards to maintain the health of trees.
5. New development should implement the elements in the streetscape design standards.
6. Prioritize major vehicular/pedestrian and pedestrian connections in the implementation of new streetscape design standards. *See Section 5.0 Open Spaces and Pedestrian*

### Connections policy.

7. Maintain all boulevards as soft landscaping (i.e. grass and/or properly implemented xeriscaping principles).
8. Preserve and maintain all existing street trees. Enhance a street by planting trees where they are missing on a block.
9. Enhance all major vehicular and pedestrian corridors with appropriate street trees, landscaped medians, lighting, etc.
10. Consider significant views in designing the public realm/streetscape features.

### 4.4.3 Public Art

Public art has increasingly become recognized as a means to achieving a “sense of community” as it has the ability to impact the aesthetic, social, economic and cultural quality of life for a community. The opportunity exists for the River Flats community to celebrate its many heritage, cultural and unique physical characteristics through public art. Public art has the ability to connect community groups, reinforce achieving a quality

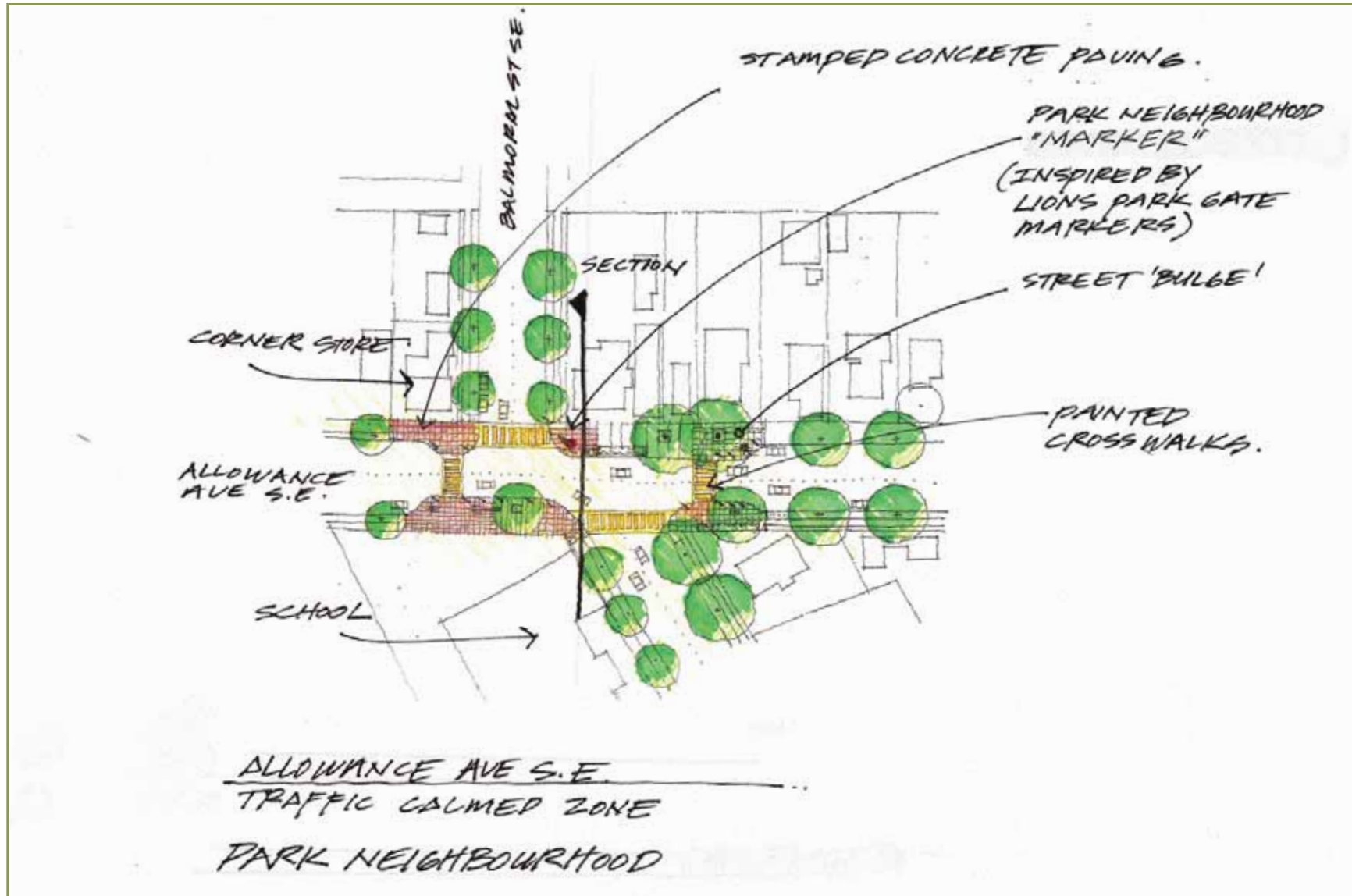
public realm and enhance the “sense of place” that the community appreciates and desires.

### Policies

1. Capitalize on the opportunities for strategic and thoughtful public art projects and initiatives that celebrate the community's unique characteristics, mixed-use neighbourhoods, heritage, and urban and natural environment. As identified on *Map 10: Public Features*, such locations may include gateways/entranceway designs, and along pedestrian connections and the trail system.
2. Encourage collaborative projects between The City and the private sector.
3. Adhere to the principles and standards outlined in The City's *Public Art Policy (2005)*.
4. Continue to research and refine the priority areas identified on the *Map 10: Public Features*.

## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 14: Allowance Avenue Traffic-Calmed Zone



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### 4.4.4 Sun Preservation

To create a “*sense of place*”, the *Plan* has placed importance on “*walkability*” by providing enhanced pedestrian connections, a quality public realm and quality redevelopment. To support achieving these components, sensitivity to the value of sun preservation is pertinent. The public realm whether it be the parks, trails, sidewalks or urban spaces requires redevelopment to be sensitively-designed to not impact the comfort and enjoyment of the public realm.

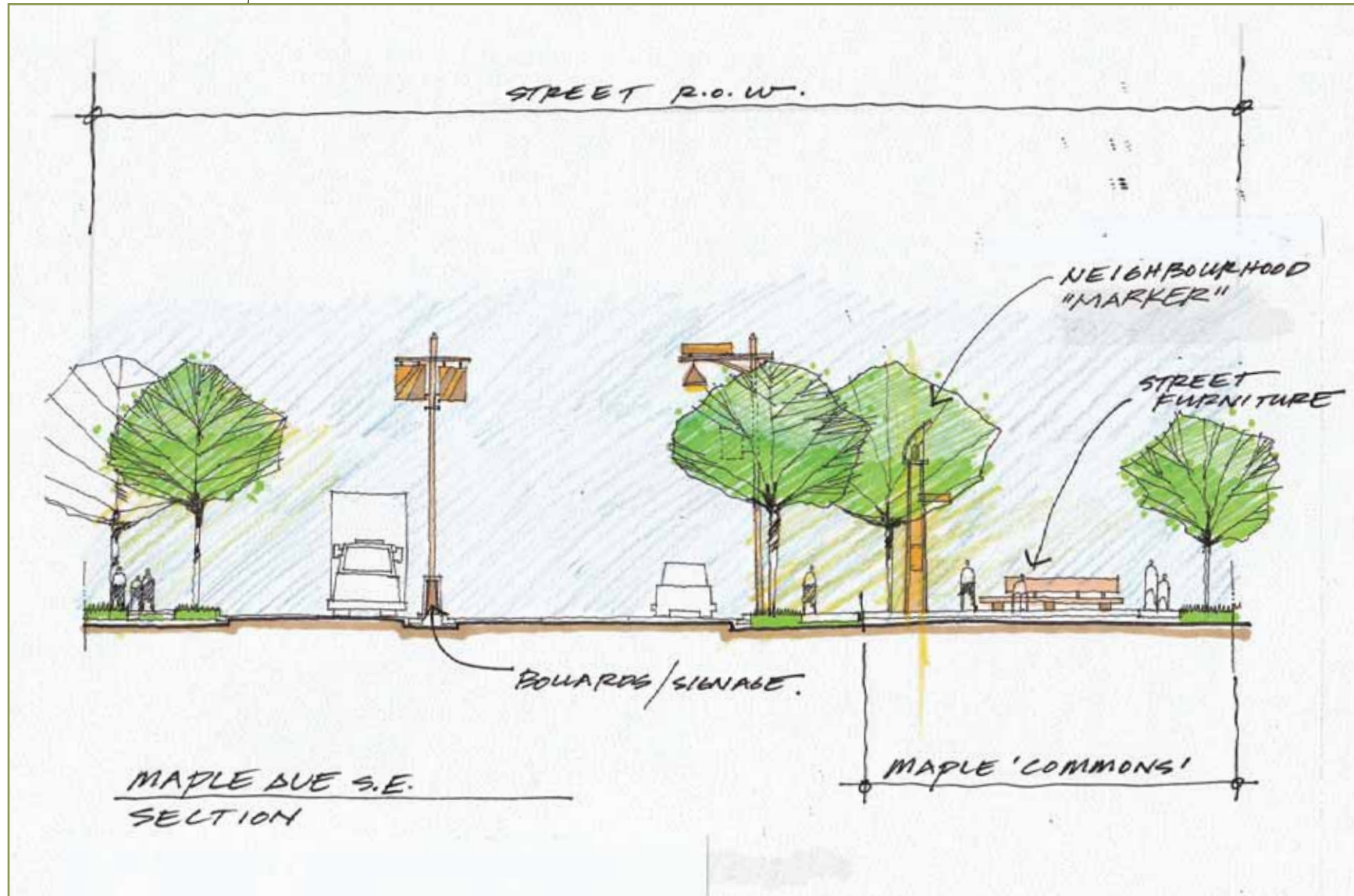
#### Policies

1. All new development permit applications for buildings over two-stories in height are required to submit a shadow impact assessment for the proposed building(s) highlighting shadows between March 21 and September 21 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time.
2. All identified key streets on *Map 9: Public Features* should provide sunlight preservation on the north and/or east sidewalk between March 21 and September 21 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time.
3. A review of sunlight preservation along the riverfront and associated trails should be undertaken.
4. The impact of shadows on historic landscapes or architecture that depend on sunlight for their significance such as natural features/vegetation or stained glass windows shall be considered and evaluated through the development permit application process.
5. In the review of development applications, special consideration should be given to ensuring sunlight access to rooftop gardens, common amenity spaces in a development, community gardens and “green roofs”.



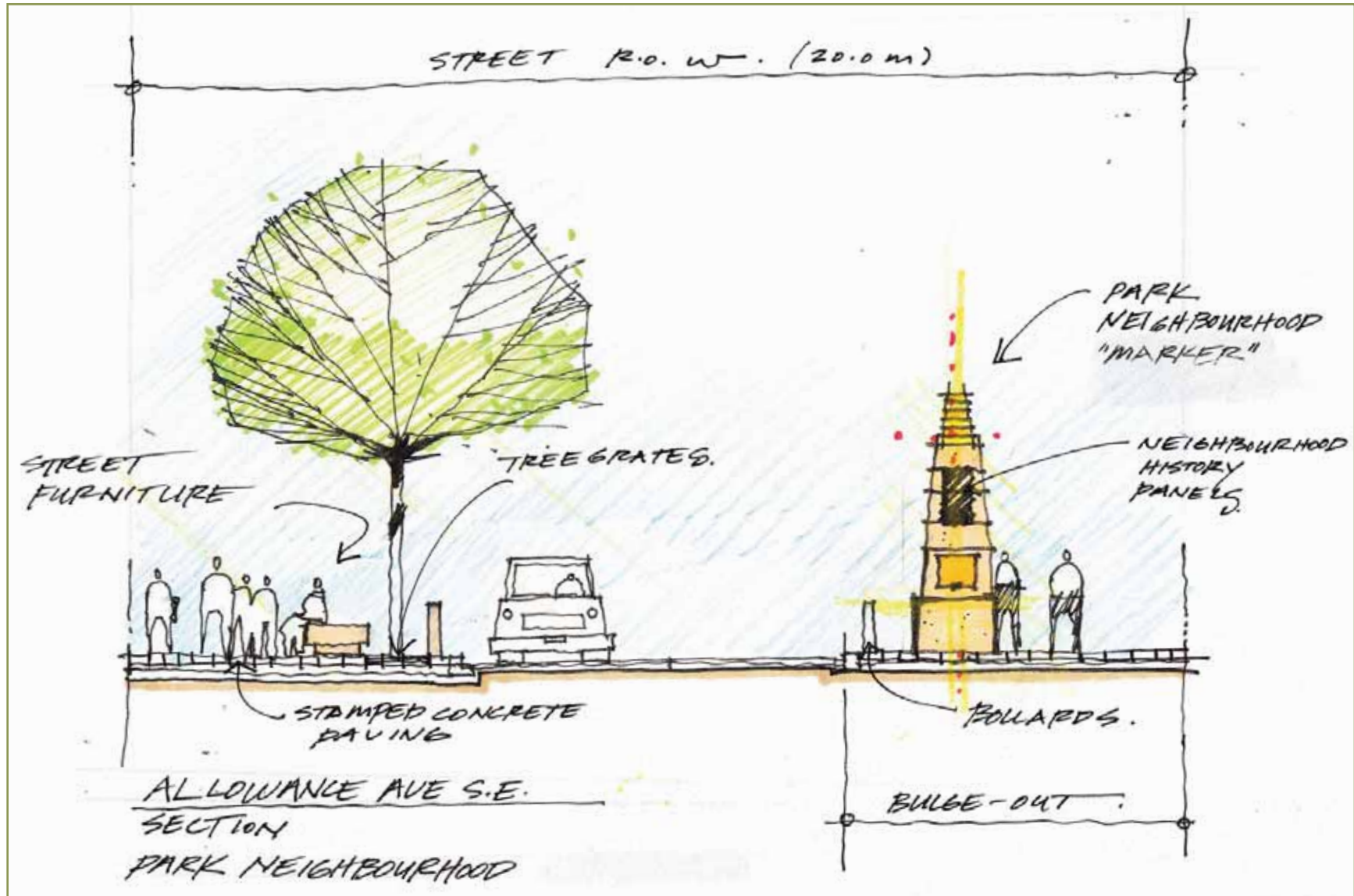
## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 15: Maple Avenue Cross-Section



## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

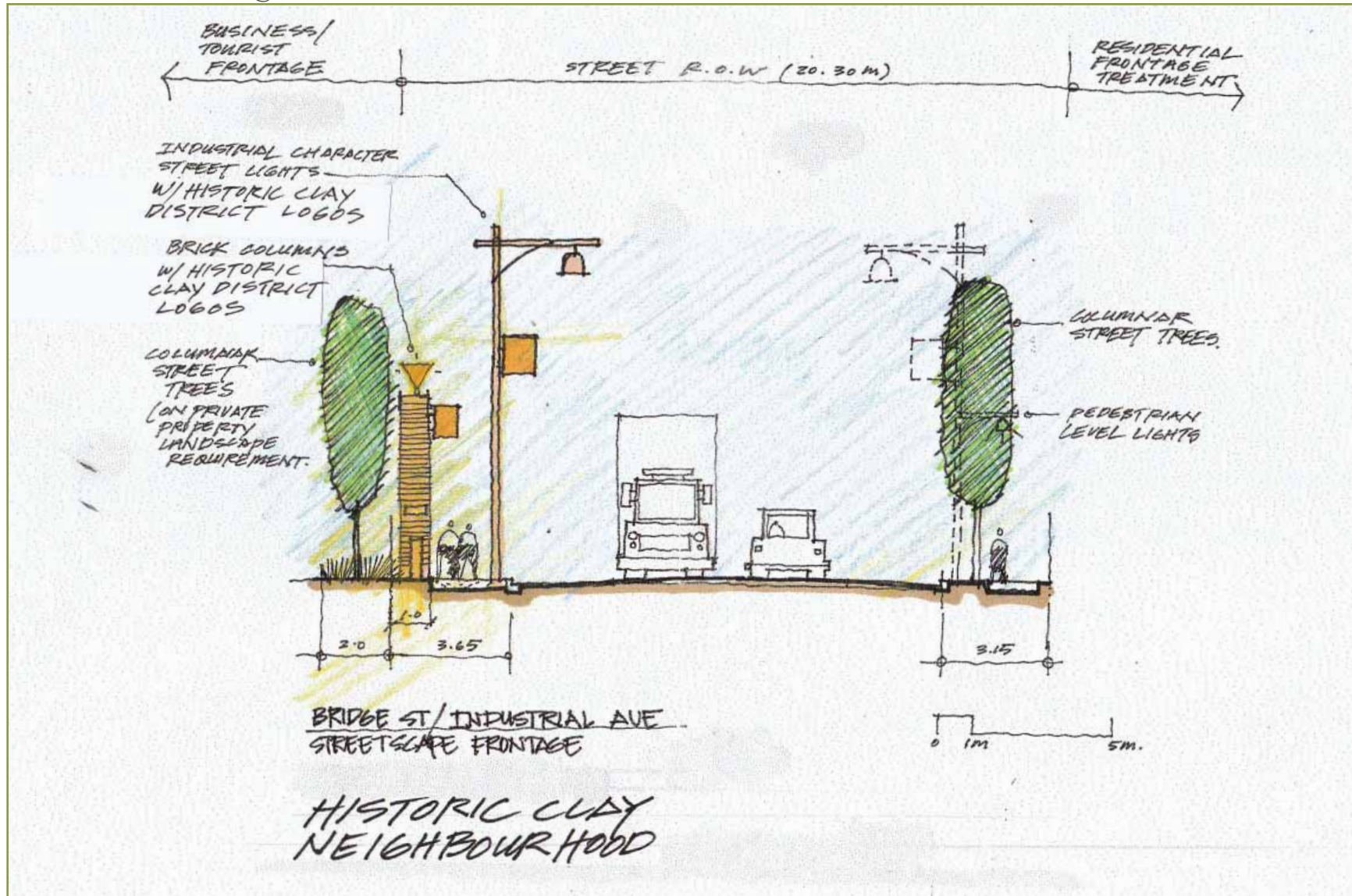
### Concept 16: Allowance Avenue Cross-Section





## 4.0 Community Preservation, Redevelopment and Design

### Concept 17: Bridge Street Industrial Avenue Cross Section





## 5.0 Open Space and Pedestrian Connections



### Context

The River Flats open space system is one of the communities' highest assets for its residents and provides a framework to achieve a sustainable and high-quality environment for the community. The natural feature of the South Saskatchewan River and surrounding escarpments provide the community with unique visual connections to the city and surrounding context.

Given the River Flats is a mature and established community, the foundation for a “walkable” community exists however, the sustainability and ability to manage an increase in population and amenities will require that the open space system be protected and enhanced to continue to meet the needs of the community. *See Map 11: Open Space and Pedestrian Connections.*

The objective of the open space and pedestrian connections is to:

- Create a sustainable, well-connected open space system that incorporates future outdoor recreation opportunities and preserves boulevard trees and natural areas; and
- Improve the pedestrian connections and public realm throughout the community to create a more “walkable” community for residents,

workers and tourists.

### Policies

1. Strengthen the value that “quality” open spaces and pedestrian connections add to the sustainability, livability and vitality of the community by investing in a new and enhanced public realm and redeveloped/enhanced parks, outdoor recreation opportunities and trail system.
2. Ensure that the community is comprehensively connected via the trail system, sidewalks, open spaces and recreational destinations.
3. Reinforce pedestrian connectivity of the River Flats community with surrounding communities by:
  - a) Enhancing the pedestrian underpass between the community and Downtown;
  - b) Explore the feasibility of a new pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the CPR tracks. Ideally the pedestrian bridge should be located at the south end of the CPR station. This location would connect the enhanced pedestrian connection along 5 Street SE in the River Flats and the trails system along the SE Hill escarpment. This location would also serve to
4. Enhance the riverfront by providing urban viewing, gathering spaces, and active uses (i.e. restaurants) along the trail system.
5. Reinforce the value of existing parks as follows:
  - a) Revisit the site design and features of Lions Park to better meet the needs of families and future usage of the park as a vital destination. Such considerations should include groomed areas for play, upgraded tot lot, picnic shelters, comfortable seating areas, and opportunities for festivals (music) and other celebrations;
- c) Explore the feasibility of establishing a pedestrian/cyclist bridge between Strathcona Island Park and Police Point Park in order to link the residential communities. Such a pedestrian/cyclist connection will enhance connectivity and continuity of the trail system.

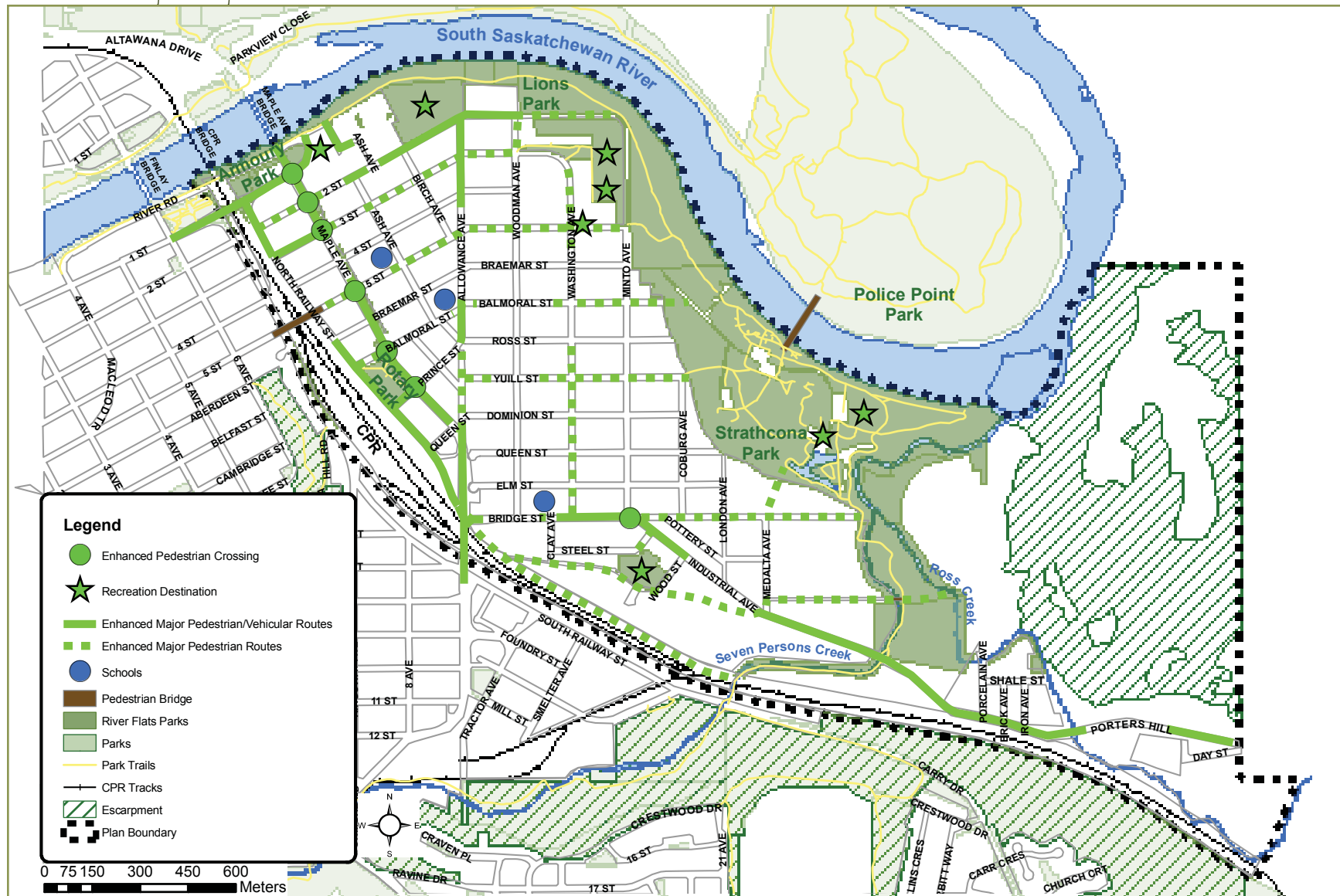
## 5.0 Open Space and *Pedestrian Connections*



- b) Preserve the natural areas within Strathcona Island Park while enhancing pedestrian connections to the park. Explore the feasibility of a pedestrian connection at the end of Balmoral Street SE into the park;
  - c) Maintain the water playground and traditional playground in Strathcona Island Park as a regional recreational destination;
  - d) Establish Heritage Pavilion as an outdoor recreation facility for residents and tourists to the park and park system. Explore opportunities for active uses on the pond;
  - e) Explore opportunities for community gardens within the Lions Park, Strathcona Island Park or other non-park private lands within the Parks neighbourhood;
  - f) New developments should be encouraged to establish and develop active land uses such as “live-work”, residential above commercial or community amenities surrounding Rotary Park to provide “eyes on the park” and enhance Rotary Park’s vitality;
  - g) Reinforce the value of Optimist Park by ensuring development around the park provides active uses and pedestrian connectivity;
  - h) Maintain Athletic Park for the purpose of baseball and/or other active regional uses. Enhance the surrounding context of the park by ensuring there is good pedestrian connectivity, streetscapes and interfaces; and
  - i) Explore opportunities to view the river from the parks and trail system (i.e. Lion’s Park).
6. Enhance the following pedestrian connection streets by improving the quality of sidewalks, soft landscaped boulevards with trees, and appropriate landscaped setbacks on private lands:
- a) Major and Secondary Streets: Industrial Avenue SE, Bridge Street SE, Maple Avenue SE, North Railway Street SE, and Allowance Avenue SE;
  - b) West/East streets: 1 Street SE, 2 Street SE, 3 Street SE, 5 Street SE, Balmoral Street SE, Prince Street SE, Yuill Street SE; and
  - c) North/South streets: Washington Avenue SE.
7. Establish new pedestrian trails:
- a) To connect Allowance Avenue SE with the river and trail system. The area designed for this trail connection should be expansive to provide seating and landscaping. A gathering place should be designed where the two trails intersect at the river’s edge. The gathering place should be designed as a focal point along the trail and connection to the multi-dwellings in the area;
  - b) Adjacent to the north edge of the CPR tracks between the south end of North Railway Street SE and the Seven Person’s Creek trail;
  - c) As a continuation of Bridge Street SE to the Seven Person’s Creek trail;
  - d) On the west side of the lagoon and connecting to Medalta Avenue SE; and
  - e) Adjacent to the old railway spur line between the CPR tracks and Seven Person’s Creek trail.
8. Maintain and enhance the Strathcona Community Centre, Veiner Centre and YMCA as recreational destinations.
9. Ensure that schools and recreation destinations are enhanced and well-connected for pedestrians.
10. Explore opportunities for public art at entrances to parks and the trail system along the river and creeks.

## 5.0 Open Space and Pedestrian Connections

Map 11: Open Space and Pedestrian Connections





## 6.0 Movement Systems

### Context

The movement system for the River Flats includes all modes from the pedestrian, cyclist, transit, and vehicular. It is upon a review of the current movement system that a policy direction has been established to reinforce the long-term modeling for the city and to support the increased capacities and new land uses within the River Flats community.

An increase in population and amenities provides an opportunity to increase the demand for and usage of enhanced trails, pedestrian and cycling connections, and transit. These are all modes of transportation that will collectively enhance the public realm, accessibility to and from the community, and achieve strong pedestrian connections to the existing trail system, amenities, destinations and schools. It is the foundation of a strong pedestrian connection system that establishes the appropriate enhancement and/or evolution to more sustainable movement modes be it for a pedestrian, cyclist, transit or vehicular user. *See Map 11: Movement Systems.*

Given the riverfront, escarpment to the east and the CPR on the west and south edges of the community, the River Flats (despite its central city location)

is limited in its vehicular connectivity such that there is not an ease of access to destinations within the community. Limited access and through traffic are not ideal when encouraging people to experience the River Flats as a destination or when trying to unify such a large community's land base. However, the opportunity exists to enhance the pedestrian, cycling and transit modes of transportation as sustainable means of unifying and connecting the community with the rest of the city.

The objective of movement systems is to:

- Improve the “walkability” of the River Flats community and how it connects to surrounding communities;
- Enhance the public realm for the pedestrian and cyclists including sidewalks, boulevards and roadways;
- Increase transit ridership and usage for residents, workers and tourists to the “Historic Clay District”;
- Support improved vehicular movement patterns within and through the community;

- Reflect sustainable movement systems in response to addressing parking needs; and
- Encourage alternate modes of transportation for a more sustainable community.

### 6.1 Pedestrian Movement

As noted in *Section 4.4 Public Realm*, the River Flats grid-pattern provides the ability to establish a strong and high-quality public realm. This in return supports more sustainable movement systems of people within and through the community. The foundation of livability and vitality for a community is having people on the streets both enjoying destinations such as the local parks and/or walking to work, commercial or tourist destinations.

In order to best provide a healthy walking environment, it is important to prioritize enhancement and maintenance of those connections that will best move people with ease and comfort. The River Flats has the foundation of providing a strong pedestrian connection system by physical enhancements along key pedestrian connections and improving pedestrian movement through the several significant vehicular

## 6.0 Movement Systems



thoroughfares such as Maple Avenue SE, Bridge Street SE, and Allowance Avenue SE.

### Policies

1. Provide for pedestrian connections, as shown on *Map 11: Open Spaces and Pedestrian Connections*, that are unobstructed, interconnected and provide urban design interest and accessibility between the neighbourhoods and community amenities, destinations, the Downtown, and surrounding communities.
2. Integrate pedestrian connections with the open space and trail system as shown on *Map 11: Open Space and Pedestrian Connections*.
3. Establish high-quality and consistent design elements on pedestrian connection streets. Elements to be considered are: wider sidewalks, enhanced boulevard landscaping and trees, curb extensions, wheelchair ramps, an Urban Braille system (*See Glossary Appendix C:*), landscaped medians on major roadways, pedestrian crossings across major roadways such as Maple Avenue SE, Bridge Street SE and Industrial Avenue SE, and urban design elements such as wayfaring

“markers”, street furniture and lighting.

4. Establish strong east/west and north/south pedestrian connections to improve pedestrian movement and safety throughout the community.
5. Establish enhanced or new pedestrian bridges (under and overpasses) to better connect with the Downtown and surrounding communities.
6. Explore operational improvements between pedestrian connection streets and major roadway intersections.
7. Improve wayfaring, signage, and lighting for the pedestrian.

### 6.2 Cycling

Next to walking, cycling provides the next best sustainable movement system for people. By providing well-designed, connected and logical cycling routes the opportunity exists to move residents, workers and tourists to their destination while providing an active and healthy recreational option.

The River Flats community is ideally situated along the river, and parks and trail system to provide an ease of

connectivity to other parts of the city.

Given the limited vehicular access to the various neighbourhood communities, the opportunity exists to align cycling with pedestrian connections and enhance vehicular/pedestrian streets that connect the various neighbourhoods and the Downtown.

### Policies

1. Consideration should be given to the *Cycling Master Plan* when developing cycling/pedestrian corridors. *See Map 12: Movement Systems and Map 11: Open Spaces and Pedestrian Connections*.
2. Design trail and street connections to accommodate both the pedestrian and cyclist in a manner that meets the space needs of each mode of movement and limits conflict between the different needs of each.
3. The City should provide bicycle parking at key destinations such as transit hubs, park facilities, community centres and as a part of commercial destinations such as the Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node or the “Railway District” artisan/farmers marketplace.

## 6.0 Movement *Systems*



4. In new developments, focus on residents walking, cycling and using transit versus designing buildings for parking spaces. This should include considerations for bicycle parking, storage, and maximum vehicular parking stalls.
5. Encourage cycling tours within the River Flats community that allow recreational users to enjoy the park system, “Historic Clay District” and other significant destinations within the community.
6. Support a program that increases the acceptance and usage of cycling as a sustainable mode of transportation through education, the design of the cycling routes, bike racks on buses, and enforcement of requirements in new development.

### 6.3 Transit

The close proximity of the River Flats to the Downtown provides an opportunity to expand and enhance transit connections to the community. Although close in proximity, the River Flats land base is expansive and an expanded route with more regular service will enhance this choice of movement for residents as well as for tourists and workers to the “Historic Clay District” and “Railway District”. An

opportunity exists to establish a second transit hub in conjunction with the CPR station to move future CPR passengers throughout the city as well as provide a more easily accessible transit hub for the residents to get to other parts of the city.

#### Policies

1. Support the City’s Long Range Transit Study for managing populations and transit movements around the city.
2. Increase ridership by ensuring that routes, service times, and ease and comfort of access are provided at transit stops. A review of the transit needs specific to the River Flats should be undertaken to ensure that routes and service times are meeting the needs of the residents, workers and tourists.
3. Continue to support special transit to meet the needs of the demographics and special needs within the River Flats community.
4. Establish a transit hub in conjunction with the CPR station.
5. Enhance the transit system within the River Flats by expanding service to the “Historic Clay District” sites and relocating the service on Washington Avenue SE to Minto Avenue SE

in order to capture more of the population by dispersing the transit stops for pedestrians. *See Map 12: Movement Systems.*

6. Promote transit service by providing enhanced transit stops at key destination sites which should include uniquely-designed shelters (perhaps based on the beehive kiln or gas-metre house shapes), lighting and wayfaring.

### 6.4 Vehicular Movement

The vehicular road system is currently planned and modeled to meet the needs of a city population of 75,000 and 95,000 people. Although such modeling will be reviewed as needed, the River Flats community has established vehicular routes that have been designed to handle an increased population and therefore can be assumed to be appropriate for future development and population increases in the River Flats.

The *Plan* explored the opportunity to enhance vehicular access and connectivity with a connection south of Medalta Avenue SE across the CPR tracks and intersecting with South Railway Street SE. Upon review of such a connection point, it was determined



## 6.0 Movement *Systems*



that the feasibility for such a connection would not be warranted for capacity and the economics of achieving it in the timeframe of this *Plan*.

The south roadway connection from Industrial Avenue SE through to South Railway Street SE would cost between \$20 to \$25 million dollars dependent on final alignment, negotiations with the CPR and classification (the cross-section detail). The roadway beyond 95,000 population would realize approximately 2000 vehicles per day based on current traffic modeling. This correlates to a busier local roadway at best. Given that the current infrastructure backlog is in excess of \$150 million and this roadway is not needed to alleviate any traffic congestion the south connection should be considered as a possible enhancement that could be brought forward should infrastructure dollars become available and not allocated to the current infrastructure log.

Given the understanding of the vehicular road system being what it is, there remains several areas within it that will require enhancement and maintenance to ensure the policies within the *Plan* are achieved in relationship to providing a safe and efficient pedestrian, cycling and

transit movement system while creating an attractive “*sense of place*” through the public realm.

### Policies

1. Support the vehicular road system as currently planned and review accordingly.
2. Enhance the following major and secondary streets by improving the quality of sidewalks, soft landscaped boulevards with trees, and appropriate landscaped setbacks on private lands:
  - a) Major and Secondary Streets: Industrial Avenue SE, Bridge Street SE, Maple Avenue SE, North Railway Street SE, and Allowance Avenue SE;
  - b) West/East streets: 1 Street SE, 2 Street SE, 3 Street SE, 5 Street SE, Balmoral Street SE, Prince Street SE, Yuill Street SE; and
  - c) North/South streets: Washington Avenue SE.
3. Provide pedestrian crossing and accessibility solutions where the above noted streets (**Policy #2**) intersect with Maple Avenue SE, Bridge Street SE and Industrial Avenue SE.
4. Maintain Prince Street SE between North Railway Street SE and Maple Avenue SE as a primary highway connector while exploring options of purchasing property on either side of the roadway and widening the roadway for current and future truck movements while also supporting pedestrian movements and enhancements.
5. Establish future transportation and vehicular policies in support of pedestrian-oriented communities.
6. Incorporate community gateway, entranceway and wayfaring features as part of road right-of-way or infrastructure improvements. Where possible such features may be incorporated as public art. Ensure that “community features” maintain City standards for maintenance and repair or alternative sources of funding are secured (i.e. through a Community Association or other partnership opportunities).

## 6.0 Movement *Systems*



### 6.5 Parking

The River Flats is an established neighbourhood that is considered to be in an urban environment and should therefore respond accordingly to a more sustainable walking, cycling and transit movement system. Currently parking is not considered a concern within the community outside of events in the recreational area around the Arena and Athletic Park. However, parking will need to be addressed to balance an increase in population and new development in mixed-use, commercial, multi-dwelling and infill development areas while ensuring that the prioritized sustainable movement systems of walking, cycling and transit are reinforced and enhanced.

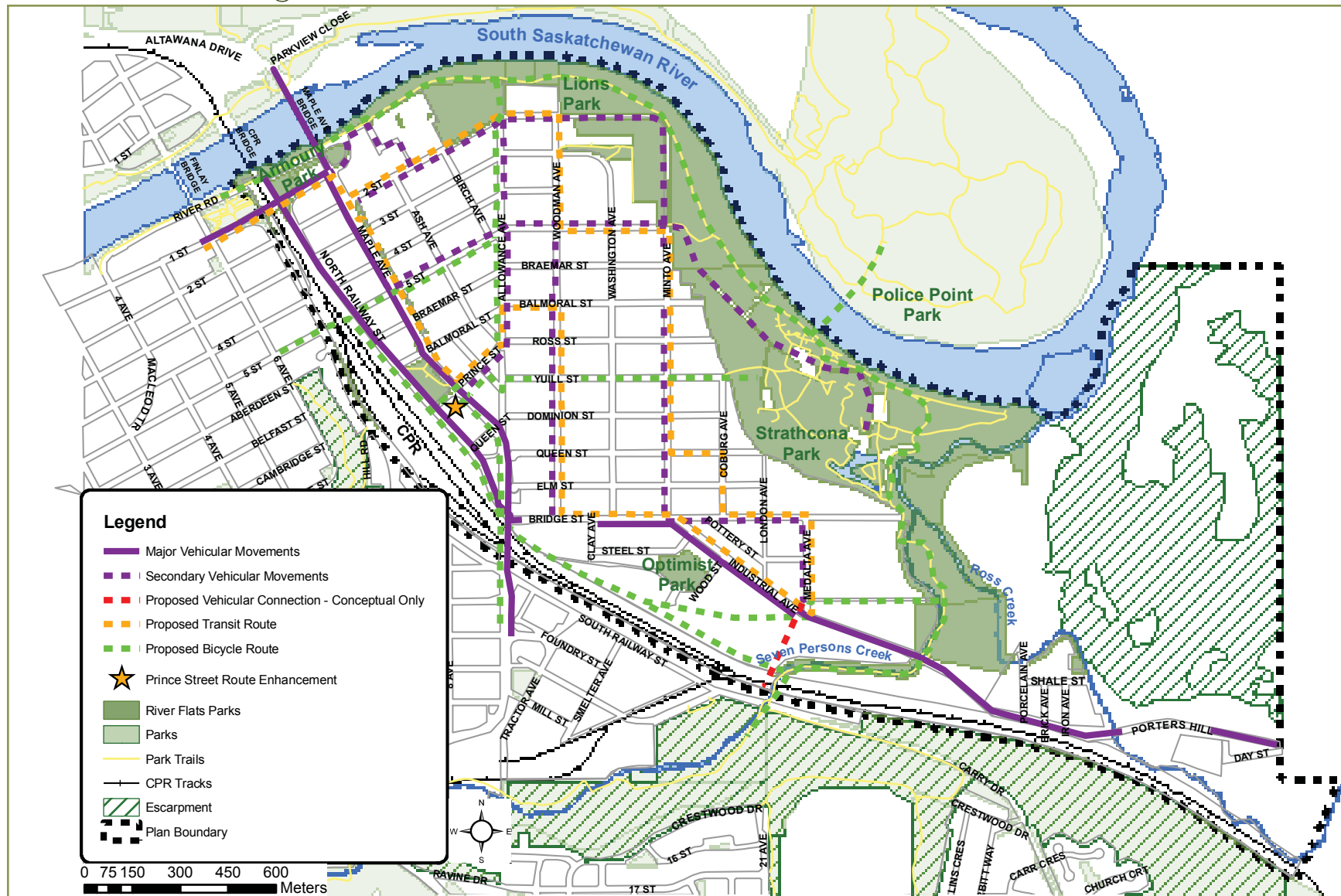
a maximum parking requirement for multi-dwelling versus a minimum, establishing centralized parking areas in mixed-use and commercial areas such as the artisan/farmers marketplace and Historic Clay destinations.

### Policies

1. When appropriate, the City should prepare a parking strategy to accommodate the “Railway District”, Arena/Curling Rink Area, Local Neighbourhood Commercial Node, multi-dwelling and infill areas increased residential and commercial populations.
2. Establish a parking ratio that balances urban development with sustainable policies within the *Plan*. Such examples might be establishing

## 6.0 Movement Systems

Map 12: Movement Systems





## 7.0 Infrastructure

### Context

In order for the vision of redevelopment in the River Flats to be realized, the water distribution and sanitary sewage collection systems must have adequate capacity to support the increases in water use and sewage generation that will result from additional population in the area. The infrastructure in the River Flats is tied to and affected by development in other areas of the City. The sanitary trunk lines in particular need to be evaluated for capacity to support the increases in population envisioned by both the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* and *Downtown Redevelopment Plan*. Furthermore, the Balmoral sewage lift station, which is the terminal lift station for a significant portion of the City on the south side of the Saskatchewan River is nearing the end of its service life and will need to be upgraded and likely expanded within five to ten years.

The condition of infrastructure in the River Flats and throughout the City must also be considered along with the capacity of this infrastructure to support development. Most of the infrastructure in the River Flats area has been in the ground for over 50 years; some of the water mains were installed in the early

1900's. Asset management is an ongoing program of the Environmental Utilities (EU) Department, and infrastructure is replaced or rehabilitated as capacity or condition warrant. In some cases it may be possible to combine a replacement for condition with an upgrade in pipe size to support additional development.

Based on the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* and *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* and the anticipated population densities provided in these Plans, Environmental Utilities (EU) has done some preliminary assessment to identify infrastructure components that may require upgrading in order to support the vision of redevelopment in both the River Flats and Downtown Medicine Hat. As these *Plans* are adopted, a program of infrastructure upgrades will be developed by EU. This program will move from identification of the upgrades required through to detailed design and tender of the required construction projects. It is essential that the infrastructure upgrades be in place prior to the development and redevelopment they are intended to support.

A key driver of infrastructure capacity requirements is population density. The *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan*

and the *Downtown Redevelopment Plan* both envision increases in population for their respective areas through development of mixed-use and medium to high-density residential built-forms. It is crucial that the maximum population densities envisioned in the *Plans* be identified as caps. The Environmental Utilities Department can then proceed with infrastructure assessment, detailed design and tendering of upgrades with a high degree of confidence that these upgrades will be sustainable. Without clear and appropriate caps on population density, the City runs the risk of having future development occur at higher densities than can be supported by the installed infrastructure. The end result would then be premature replacement of infrastructure with the associated costs and public inconvenience.

Protection of the existing and future infrastructure is as important as ensuring adequate capacity for future development. Utility companies, including the Environmental Utilities Department, must have sufficient space to effectively maintain and repair infrastructure while minimizing the potential for damage to private property. Development must not be permitted to encroach on road or utility rights-of-way. Built-forms and hard

## 7.0 Infrastructure

landscaping such as retaining walls and concrete access ramps, whether in the public or private realm, should remain outside of the zone that is required by the utilities to safely construct, maintain and repair lines. To do otherwise would both hamper the ability of the utilities to repair their infrastructure and increase the risk of property damage that could result from proximity to a broken water or sanitary sewer line.

The objective of the water distribution system is to provide a safe, reliable supply of potable water, at adequate volumes and pressures, to support the vision of redevelopment in the River Flats. The objective of the sanitary sewage collection system is to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate sanitary loads anticipated from the vision of redevelopment of the River Flats.

### Policies

1. Establish appropriate population density caps for each land use in the River Flats, particularly for land uses that have a high residential component.
2. Require that built-forms and hard landscaping, whether in the public or private realm, maintain adequate set-back distances from existing infrastructure and road and utility rights-of-way. Site developers for multi-family or mixed use developments need especially be aware of the impact of building footprint and footing location on infrastructure.
3. Support sustainability of infrastructure by adopting planning principles that encourage wise use of resources and development processes that allow for appropriate planning and design of infrastructure upgrades.
4. In the River Flats area, storm water infrastructure for the most part, has realized its functional life and does not meet current design standards. Until such a time that complete planning and network studies are done, on-site storage may be required. Pre/post development impacts shall be considered when making this assessment.

## 8.0 Environmental Management

### Context

Environmental management is important in achieving a sustainable community and it is with this understanding that the *River Flats ARP* seeks to achieve the targets identified in the City of Medicine Hat's *Community Environmental Roadmap (2008)*. The policies within the *ARP* support and enhance environmental stewardship through the implementation of sustainable planning principles. The purpose of the *ARP* is to guide future development and in that provide policy direction in relationship to the planning and development of physical lands by way of land use, transportation and design considerations.

Although the *Plan* includes policy direction on all the environmental priorities within the Roadmap, the *ARP* focuses on achieving the Land/Surface Environmental Priority of wise residential and commercial planning by respecting and sensitively considering the significant biodiversity within the River Flats community. The significant natural features within the community such as the native grasslands, river valley, coulees, and escarpments provide wildlife corridors and native plantings that play a significant role in the sustainability of the community.

The policies throughout the *Plan* seek to achieve a balance between the natural

biodiversity and redevelopment that can further environmental stewardship through quality intensification which in return makes better use of existing amenities and infrastructure. The maturity of the River Flats as a community provides a foundation for achieving a better use of its lands by way of infill that can then support the sustainable transportation modes of walking, cycling and transit.

Another significant consideration of environmental management for the community is that of Brownfield development. Given the maturity and diversity of the community, there are a significant number of Brownfield sites that have significant potential for redevelopment. The City will need to understand the specifics of such sites and explore the economic, social and environmental opportunities for development of such sites.

The objectives of environmental management are to:

- Support the City's Environmental Stewardship goals;
- Seek to achieve the targets within the *Community Environmental Roadmap (2008)* while setting additional environmental targets specific to the River Flats; and

- Establish an understanding and policy direction for Brownfield redevelopment.

### Policies

1. Implement the River Flats policies in the context of achieving the targets identified within the City of Medicine Hat's *Community Environmental Roadmap (2008)*.
2. Appropriately address the environmentally sensitive areas next to Strathcona Island Park and the floodway, as well as the CPR allowance and parklands, consistent with Provincial and Municipal Environmental Policies.
3. Performance measures and targets for how the River Flats will achieve the City's targets should be established.
4. When appropriate, the City will identify key areas and prepare a Brownfield Strategy for development of such lands in the River Flats. Until such a time that a Brownfield Strategy has been prepared, all applicants in the River Flats should contact Planning Services prior to submitting an application to determine if there are additional environmental considerations (i.e. Phase 1 Environmental Significant Assessment).



## 9.0 Community and Social Development



### Context

A genuinely sustainable and supportive community is one where the residents, workers and tourists feel safe, secure, included, valued and inspired by their environment. It is one where the amenities and services are easily accessible to meet the basic health and shelter needs of those living and using the community and one that individuals are proud to be a part of.

To achieve a socially-supportive community, support in areas such as accessibility, affordable housing, public safety, inclusive community programs and facilities are required. The River Flats community has long been a diverse and inclusive community however, a lack of a clear vision of how the community desires to evolve and function has resulted in a perception that the community provides a lesser quality of life than in other communities in the city. This is simply not the case given the significant natural features, heritage value, diverse land uses and population, and community pride that are a part of the community. It is anticipated that the vision and supporting policies for redevelopment and investment in the community will reinforce and enhance the many unique components the River Flats has to offer

to its residents, workers, other citizens in the city and tourists to the community.

The *Plan* does not seek to solve social issues rather to support the social components of the community by way of policy directions that improve the physical environment, support appropriate land uses, redevelopment and programs that enhance the livability of the community.

The objectives of community and social development are to:

- Reinforce the many high-quality social, economic and physical components the community has to offer to the city;
- Ensure accessibility for all citizens living and using facilities, services and the public realm components of the River Flats;
- Encourage a diversity of housing types and options to meet the needs of a diverse population, scenarios and lifestyles;
- Encourage the development of facilities and services that are missing, meet the needs of residents, and are available to a diverse population;

- Ensure a high-quality of development to support a “*sense of pride*” for residents; and
- Support land uses, programs and design elements that provide a sense of public safety and comfort for the community.

### Policies

1. The City will liaise with a Community Association within existing means.
2. Continue to implement and support the social components identified in the City of Medicine Hat's *Social Policy (2004)* while establishing and/or evaluating the performance measures of the policy as applied to the River Flats community.
3. Support the community's diverse population by ensuring a balance of affordable housing, facilities and programs.
4. The City should maintain or increase existing affordable housing in the community by partnering with associations to implement affordable housing initiatives that are supportive of the vision for a high-quality and inclusive community. This will require a re-evaluation of the City of Medicine

## 9.0 Community and Social Development



Hat's *Affordable Housing Policy* and how it applies to established communities and delivery models that address the needs of the community.

5. Although understood to provide economies of scale and improved delivery models, the clustering of social service agencies and providers has the potential to create unintended negative impacts that prevent residents and business from feeling safe and certain in choosing the River Flats to live or work. All new or expansion of existing social service agencies shall be thoroughly reviewed by the Development Authority as to its potential cumulative impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood. Considerations should include the nature of the services, scale of the operation and its proximity to existing social service agencies and other land uses.
6. The *Municipal Affairs, Barrier-Free Design Guide (2008)* should be used in the review of development permit applications, and revised or new streetscape standards. Review of public and private developments shall include Community Development, Planning, Building and Development and Municipal Works and any other

relevant city departments.

7. Explore an Urban Braille ([See Appendix C: Glossary](#)) system for the community along key pedestrian connections and in locations of high pedestrian usage such as mixed-use, commercial and open space uses and/or destinations.
8. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) shall be implemented as a part of the Development Permit application review process on private developments and on all open/public spaces.
9. Improve the social infrastructure through a strong network of community services and facilities that meet the needs of children and youth. The community has a diverse and significant child and youth population that should be supported with facilities and programs. A review of child and youth facilities and programs should be undertaken to determine what is required to enhance livability for families including the retention and enhancement of schools.
10. Continue to support the value of the City of Medicine Hat's Community

Worker Program, which encourages supporting community-driven programs and community organizers.

11. Continue to support meeting the needs of seniors through the Veiner Centre, Strathcona Centre, community programs and enhanced transit.

# 10.0 Tourism

## Context

The River Flats community is a major destination for visitors to the Medicine Hat and Canadian Badlands region. Accordingly plans, design initiatives and actions in the *Plan* should incorporate and support the needs of visitors.

## Policies

1. Ensure a commitment to the *Canadian Badlands Tourism Strategy* is achieved for the benefit it provides in establishing the River Flats community as an arts, culture and heritage hub for the Medicine Hat region.
2. The Medicine Hat Clay Industries and Medalta Potteries National Historic Sites and and Hycroft China Master Plans and future *Land Use and Urban Design Planning Exercises* should all be a priority.
3. A new tourist centre should be incorporated as a part of the “Historic Clay District”’s vision.
4. As an anchor to the “Civic District” (within the *Map 6: Downtown Redevelopment Plan District*) and “Railway District”, retain the lands adjacent to Armoury Park and at the intersection of 1 Street SE and Maple

Avenue SE, for a unique and special tourism, educational and/or civic use destination.

5. Explore with the Tourism Industry the potential for ecotourism and cultural tourism destinations to expand the historical tourism opportunities.
6. Establish high-quality walking tours with various partners throughout the River Flat’s community.
7. A high-quality public realm is recognized as a major factor in the tourist’s experience. Therefore, investment in the public realm, entranceways and gateways all be seen as a priority and an investment to reinforce the tourism vision for the “Railway District” and “Historic Clay District” destinations.
8. Ensure efficient and direct movement systems (vehicular, transit, cycling and pedestrian) to the River Flats community and as the community connects to other tourist destinations in the city.
9. Encourage transit opportunities that directly link the destination areas in the River Flats to each other, the Downtown and other destinations within the city.
10. A new system of wayfaring and information systems should be developed to direct visitors and inform them about key destinations and attractions within the River Flats community.



# 11.0 Implementation

## 11.1 Authority of the *Plan*

The intent of the *Plan* is to establish the City's vision for the River Flats, guide development in the area, and recommend improvements to the public realm (streets, parks, community facilities).

To fully implement certain aspects of the *Plan*, it is acknowledged that amendments to the *Land Use Bylaw* will be required. The use of the word "shall" (or other words indicating a mandatory requirement) in the *Plan* is not meant to indicate a mandatory requirement in a situation where a *Land Use Bylaw* amendment is required, until such time as the *Land Use Bylaw* has been amended to implement those requirements. Although not binding on development authorities, the contents of the *Plan* should be considered when processing development permits for discretionary uses.

To further guide recommended public realm improvements and move forward with implementation of the *River Flats ARP*, City staff will undertake a Fiscal Impact Plan based on public realm enhancements as recommended in the *ARP*. The Fiscal Impact Plan will be submitted to Council for approval, in due course, through the Administrative Committee in conjunction with the budget

approval process.

## 11.2 General Implementation Considerations

The *River Flats ARP* recommends policies that support the vision for the community. Implementation of many of the policies do not necessarily require economic funding rather a change in process, and a desire to change approaches to development. Implementation of the *Plan* may require changes in review and application processes, changes to the *Land Use Bylaw* and/or amendments to other policies. It is assumed that the City of Medicine Hat, citizens, landowners, developers and organizations all play a role in implementation of the *Plan*. This is best done by understanding the vision, principles and policies and a desire to contribute to the *Plan's* implementation.

Implementation of the *Plan* will require attention to the enforcement of the policies in the *Plan* and the *Land Use Bylaw*. Each policy statement requires implementation in order to ensure that the vision of the *Plan* is achieved. However, it is understood that the policies may have different timeframes of achievement based on the work yet to do in exploring the feasibility of a policy or the economics/ market of constructing physical

components such as the public realm or new development projects.

Given this understanding, the *Plan* should strive to achieve those components that have a broader ability to achieve a sustainable policy as soon as possible. This section identifies those areas that would best achieve the community's concerns of becoming more sustainable and the City's ability to implement the *Plan* and policies. Equally, this section outlines the components of the *Plan* and priorities recommended to best achieve the vision and principles for the community in the short-term.

## 11.3 Process Considerations

1. A process to prepare new Land Use Districts as a part of the *Land Use Bylaw* should be initiated to reflect the policies in the *Plan*. The legislative process for rezoning the lands should be undertaken after approval of the *Plan*.
2. Land Use Amendment, Development Permit, Demolition Permit and Building Permit processes, enforcement and education are processes that should be assessed through established City policies and procedures such as the Land Use Bylaw.

# 11.0 Implementation

## 11.4 Review of Development Applications

Subject to Section 11.1, development applications within the River Flats community must be considered in relation to the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan*. There will be a period of time between the approval of the *River Flats ARP* and when new Land Use Districts are prepared and approved by Council. During this time, development applications that seek to implement the *River Flats ARP* policies and guidelines may require *Land Use Bylaw* relaxations and in some cases land use amendments in order to comply with the *ARP*. In the case of a Land Use Amendment, a new Land Use District may have to be created. It is intended that these new Land Use Districts will use the policies of the *River Flats ARP* as a guide and may later require redesignation to reflect the new Land Use Bylaw Districts.

All Development Permit applications (including commercial and other uses) will be reviewed in relation to *Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines, Section 3.3.1 Development Permit Requirements for Residential Infill Development in the River Flats Community*.

The *Plan's* policies and design guidelines pertaining to land use and development approval will require, in many cases, further interpretation and elaboration. City staff will undertake this work and modify *Section Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines, Section 2.1 Recommended Development Standards* as needed and/or propose amendments to the *Plan* to better achieve certainty and consistency of implementation.

## 11.5 Off-site Levies

The current Off-site Levy Bylaw shall apply to development within the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* boundary. The *ARP* recommends that off-site levy criteria and associated fees be further reviewed and established for infill communities once a *Roadway Systems Master Plan* and the *Municipal Development Plan* have been completed and approved by Council.

## 11.6 Redevelopment Related

1. The City will encourage redevelopment in the community by providing certainty of the vision through appropriate and consistent implementation of the principles and policies within the *Plan*.
2. When appropriate, and in accordance

with an approved Fiscal Impact Plan, the City will consider:

- a) Prioritizing new streetscape standards (i.e. a Public Realm Plan) for the River Flats. This should be done by initiating a review of the existing conditions and what would be required to achieve the *Plan's* vision. The process should include all public realm elements such as streets, boulevards, trees, pedestrian crossings, wayfaring, signage, lighting, transit stops, etc. The streetscape standards should prioritize the identified pedestrian-oriented streets in the *Plan*;
- b) Consolidation of lands for such uses as a public artisan/farmer marketplace;
- c) Reviewing the policy directions in the *Plan* and implement as a part of their future budget and resource considerations. Although not the sole focus of implementation, feasibility studies may be needed in some cases to confirm the policy direction and understand the next steps in the *Plan's* implementation;
- d) Expediting implementation of



the Heritage Resources Policy - Action Plan especially pertaining to the heritage initiatives for achieving designation of heritage resources;

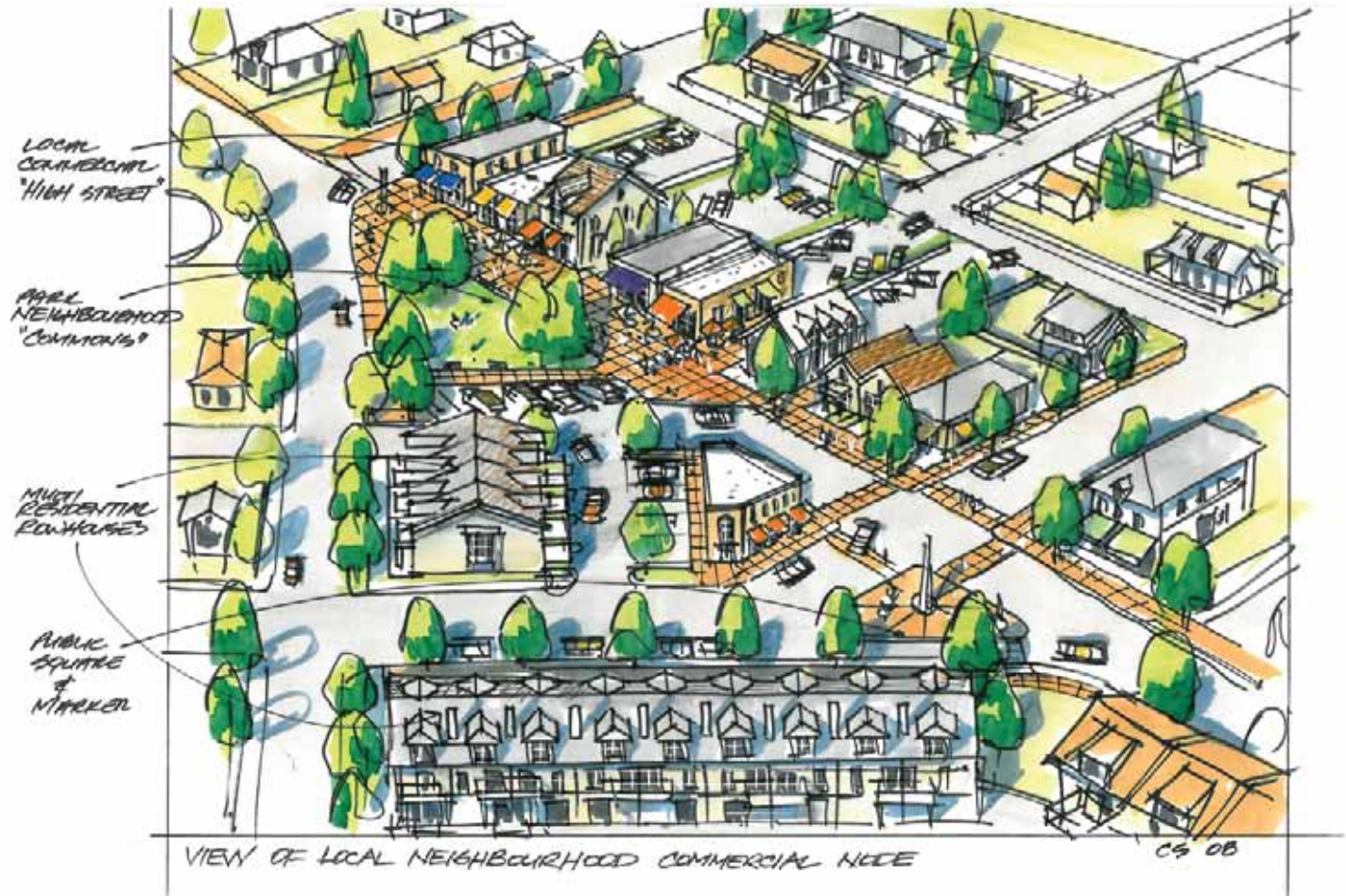
- e) Re-establishing a connection and opportunity with the Alberta Main Street Program along North Railway Street SE. See Appendix C: Glossary;
- f) Retaining ownership of the lands on the northwest corner of Maple Avenue SE and 1 Street SE;
- g) Engaging the Canadian Pacific Railway in discussions of their railyard lands; and
- h) Establishing a Master Plan process for the Historic Clay neighbourhood, possibly in conjunction with the Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Strategy.

### 11.7 Monitoring the *Plan*

In order to ensure the *Plan* is meeting the vision and principles, the *Plan* should be regularly monitored to assess its strengths and weaknesses and prepare amendments to Council, from time to time, as deemed appropriate.



## Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines



# The RIVER FLATS

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## RESIDENTIAL INFILL DESIGN GUIDELINES



# **The River Flats**

## **Residential Infill Design Guidelines**

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*River Flats ARP* Steering Committee

## *Preface*

The City of Medicine Hat is committed to working with the local development industry and the community to create a built environment that continues to enhance the quality of life and values of local residents.

With this goal in mind, these Residential Infill Design Guidelines have been prepared to assist the development industry, the community, City staff, design consultants, and Medicine Hat City Council in planning, designing, and evaluating appropriate residential infill development in the River Flats community of Medicine Hat.





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## 1.0 RESIDENTIAL INFILL DESIGN GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of these guidelines is to present alternative forms of housing in the River Flats community of Medicine Hat. Every effort was made to create appropriate housing alternatives that fit with the existing neighbourhood character and the local market demands. The goal is to provide a diversity of housing choice to broaden affordability and type, yet increase density and enhance quality of place in the existing neighbourhoods where services and utilities are already in place to support redevelopment.

These guidelines provide direction and illustration for residential infill development in the River Flats that is up to 4 stories and including accessory buildings and additions, however the guidelines will also apply to other built-forms of infill development that are above 4 stories and not identified in these guidelines. **It should be noted that based on the Land Use Concept in the River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan that only single-dwelling, legal suites, coach house, semi-detached, tri-plexes and quad-plexes will be allowed as residential infill built-forms in the Primarily Single-dwelling land use area.** Three-dimensional concepts are intended to illustrate building massing, form and site layout rather than building design details. (See *Building Guidelines Section* for design requirements).



*Redevelopment does not happen in isolation of itself. Built-form establishes important relationships with many components of a place including neighbouring streets, houses, open space, and the overall character of the area.*

*The degree of success of these relationships will directly affect the neighbourhood quality of life, sense of being in Medicine Hat and the specific place.*

*These guidelines were developed to inspire creativity, and adaptability to a number of specific situations. The development standards and guidelines are intended to enhance current character while providing for a wonderful diversity of housing forms that further enhance community richness.*

## 2.0 RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

### 2.1 Recommended Development Standards Summary for Proposed Dwelling Types

Proposed Housing Types	Min. Lot Width (m)	Max. Height (m)	Max. FAR	Front Yard Setback (m)	Side Yard Setback (m)	Rear Yard Setback (m)	Parking (# stalls per unit)	Amenity Space (per unit)	Coverage (%)
Large House	15.2	10.5	N/A	3.5	1.5/ 3.0 - Corner site	7.5	2	25 SQ Meters	45%
Small House	7.6	10.5	N/A	3.5	1.2	7.5	1	25 SQ Meters	45%
Coach House (with Large House)	15.2	7.5 or height of the principal building, whichever is less	N/A	3.5	1.5/ 3.0 - Corner site	2.5 from lane; 5.0 between house and coach house	1	25 SQ Meters	45%
Semi Detached (2 units)	15.2	10.5	N/A	3.5	1.5/ 3.0 - Corner site	7.5	2	25 SQ Meters	45%
Tri-Plex (3 units)	21.0 6.1(internal)/ 7.6 (external)/ 9.1 (corner)	10.5	N/A	3.5	1.5/ 3.0 - Corner site		1.25	25 SQ Meters	50%
Quad-Plex (4 units)	18.0	10.5	N/A	3.5	1.5/ 3.0 - Corner site	7.5	1.25	25 SQ Meters	50%
Street-Oriented Town Homes	27.0 (total) 6.1(internal)/ 7.6 (external)/ 9.1 (corner)	10.5	1.0	3.5	2.0	7.5	1.25	25 SQ Meters	50%
Courtyard Town Homes	30.5	10.5	1.25	3.5	1.5/ 3.0- Corner site	2.0	1	25 SQ Meters	50%
Courtyard Row Houses	42.6 (6 units)/ 56.0 (8 units)	12	1.5	3.5	3.0	3.5 from lane; 10.0 between buildings	1	25 SQ Meters	50%
3 - 4 Storey Apartment	43.0	15	2.0	6.0	5.0	7.5	1	25 SQ Meters	50%

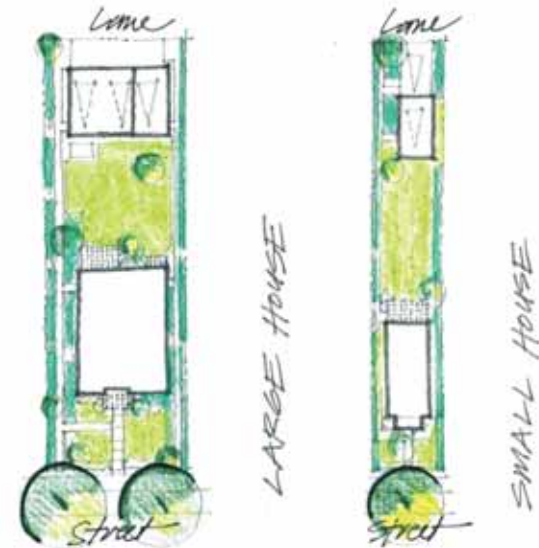


## 2.2 Large Single-Dwelling, Small Single-Dwelling, Legal Suites, and Coach Houses

1. **Large Single-Dwelling Definition:** Located on large lots (i.e. 15.2 meters and greater) and may include Legal Suites or Coach Houses with on-site parking accessed from the rear lane only.
2. **Small Single-Dwelling Definition:** Located on minimum 7.6 meters lots (as illustrated on right side below) with on-site parking from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- Height limit of 10.5 meters.
- Minimum 1.5 meter side yard or 3.0 meters on corner sites for large dwellings. Minimum 1.2 meter side yard for small dwellings.
- Dwellings should be in proportion with existing homes within the neighbourhood and incorporate traditional design elements found within the neighbourhood.
- Quality building materials that are similar or complimentary to those found within the neighbourhood should be used.
- Any renovations required to the exterior of an existing building should retain the character of a single detached residence.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.



## 2.3 Legal Suites, and Coach Houses

3. **Legal Suite Definition:** A self-contained unit in a single-dwelling that has a separate entrance and on-site parking accessed from the rear lane only.
4. **Coach House Definition:** A self-contained dwelling unit located by the back lane normally above a garage or carport and not to exceed 60 m<sup>2</sup>. Required on-site parking for a Coach House is from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- A large single-dwelling can have a legal suite in the dwelling or a coach house along the rear lane but not both units.
- Legal suites and coach houses should have separate entrances from the principal dwelling.
- All additional dwelling units should have access to outdoor amenity space on-site, which may be used as common amenity space with the principal dwelling. Each unit should have a minimum of 25 square meters of amenity space.
- On-site parking must provide two parking spaces for the principal residence and one parking space from the rear lane for the legal suite or coach house.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.

### Specific Coach House Standards

- Height limit of 7.5 meters or the height of the principal dwelling, whichever is less for a coach house.
- Minimum 1.5 meter side yard or 3.0 meters on corner sites.
- The maximum site coverage for a garage containing a coach house shall be 15 percent.
- Coach houses shall be setback from the lane a minimum of 2.5 meters and 5.0 meters from principal dwelling.
- Coach houses should be consistent with the materials and proportions of the principal dwelling.
- Windows and balconies on coach houses should be placed to minimize overlooking of neighbouring properties, with at least one facing the lane.
- The location of external staircases and balconies must take adjacent properties privacy into consideration, extra landscaping may be necessary.
- Coach houses shall not be located on a lot which has any other multi-dwelling unit.

## 2.4 Semi-Detached Dwelling Units

**Semi-Detached Definition:** 2 dwelling units side by side with a party wall and on-site parking accessed from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- Height limit of 10.5 meters and should be in scale with existing buildings in the neighbourhood and have a visual transition with nearby single-dwelling homes.
- Minimum 1.5 meter side yard or 3.0 meters on corner sites.
- Each unit should have 2 parking stalls or a shared 4-car garage off the rear lane.
- The character of semi-detached buildings shall be designed with the scale of a single-dwelling home, each unit having individual front access to the street and designed so that each unit has different features (rooflines, front entrances, windows, and design details) that distinguish it from the other.
- Rear yards should be divided into two separate open spaces by landscaping and fencing.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.





## 2.5 Quad-Plex

**Quad-Plex Definition:** 4 dwelling units back-to-back with rear lane parking. Note: A tri-plex development would adhere to the same Development Standards as a townhouse but only with three-units.

### Development Standards

- Height limit of 10.5 meters and should be in scale with existing buildings in the neighbourhood and have a visual transition to nearby single-dwelling homes.
- Minimum side yards of 1.5 meters or 3.0 meters on corner sites.
- The character of quad-plexes should be designed as a large estate home with private entrances for the units on the front only for front facing units and the sides or rear for rear units. Landscaping, lighting and articulated roofs should emphasize private entrance ways.
- The front and rear yards should be divided into two by landscaping and fencing to provide a minimum of 25 square meters of private open space for each unit.
- On-site parking or garages for vehicles shall be from the rear lane only and landscaped amenity space to buffer the parking area from the building shall be provided.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.

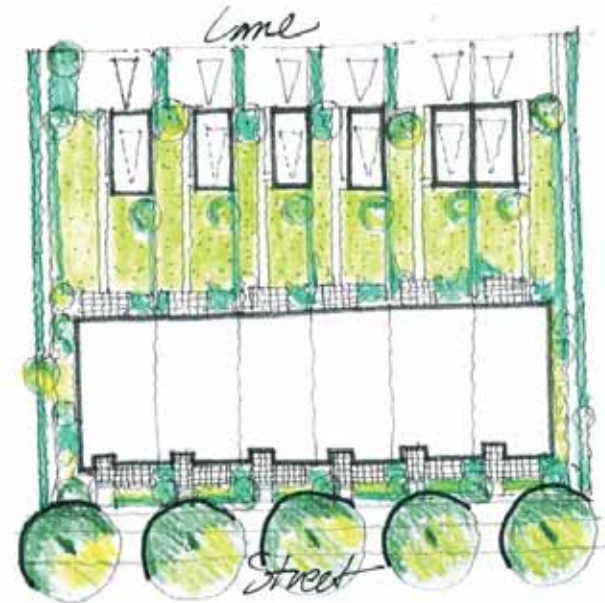


## 2.6 Townhouses

**Townhouses Definition:** Street-oriented attached dwelling units with separate entrances and on-site parking accessed from the rear lane only. The units are separated on the sides by a party wall and no dwelling may be placed over another. Note: A tri-plex development would adhere to the same Development Standards as a townhouse but only with three-units.

### Development Standards

- Maximum 6 to 8 units in a row (up to 50 meters).
- Individual doors to the street from each unit.
- Create a minimum of 25 square meters of outdoor amenity space for each ground floor unit.
- Height limit of 12 meters.
- Minimum side yard of 2.0 meters.
- Parking or garages for vehicles shall be from the rear lane only and landscaped amenity space to buffer the parking area from the building shall be provided.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.

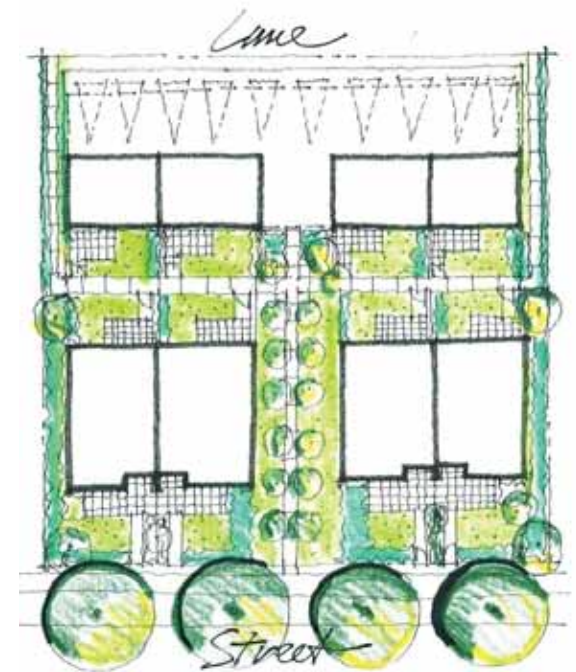


## 2.7 Courtyard Townhouses

**Courtyard Townhouses Definition:** Street-oriented and courtyard-oriented attached dwelling units with separate entrances and on-site parking accessed from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- Height limit of 10.5 meters.
- Minimum side yard of 1.5 meters or 3.0 meters on corner sites.
- 10.0 meters between front and rear buildings.
- The character of courtyard townhouses shall be designed as a cluster of large estate homes with private entrances for the units. Landscaping, lighting and articulated roofs should emphasize private entrance ways.
- Wrap units around corner of building to create use of side yards and minimize blank walls.
- Outdoor amenity spaces shall be created for each unit.
- On-site parking shall be provided off the rear lane in a carport underneath units or other options that would meet the on-site parking requirement for this built-form.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.



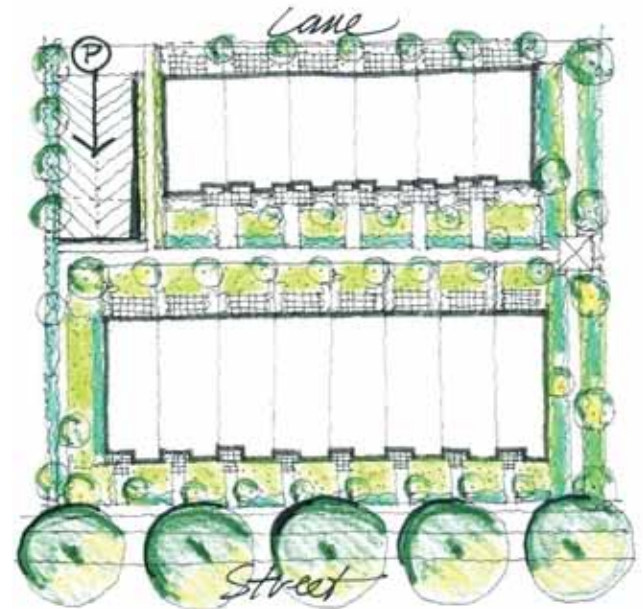


## 2.8 Courtyard Row Houses

**Courtyard Row Houses Definition:** Street-oriented attached dwelling units with separate entrances and interior courtyard units with underground parking accessed from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- Maximum 6 to 8 units in a row up to 50 meters.
- Height limit of 12 meters.
- Minimum 3.0 meter side yard.
- 10.0 meters between front and rear buildings.
- Individual units should be defined using features such as the design of roof lines, entrances, and building materials.
- Wrap units around corner of the building to create use of side yards and minimize blank walls.
- A minimum of 25 square meters of outdoor amenity space shall be created for each unit.
- Screen the rear lane access entry to underground parking with planting or wood screening.
- Plant narrow pyramidal trees in side yards to buffer adjoining uses.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.

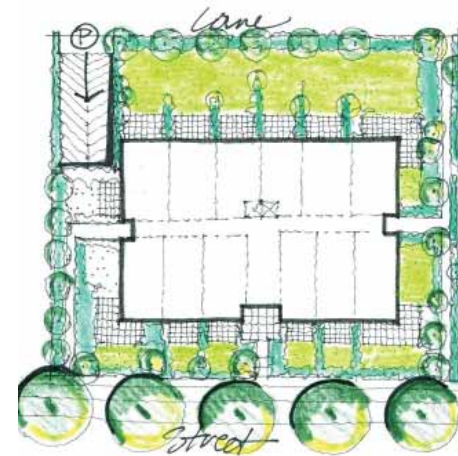


## 2.9 3 or 4-Storey Apartments

**3 or 4-Storey Apartment Definition:** Three to four-storey apartments with underground parking access from the rear lane only.

### Development Standards

- Maximum 50 meter building length.
- Height limit of 15 meters.
- Minimum side yard of 5.0 meters.
- Ground level units should have separate entrances that front the street. All other units will share a front entrance that faces the street.
- Outdoor amenity spaces shall be created for each ground floor unit. Develop common outside amenity area for upper apartment units.
- Building facades should be modulated in plan and elevation and articulated to reduce the appearance of building bulk and to create visual interest.
- Wrap units around corner of building to create use of side yards and minimize blank walls.
- Underground parking should be provided and accessed from the rear lane. Where rear access is not solely achievable, creative solutions should be provided that does not impact “walkability”, the pedestrian-realm and streetscape.
- Screen underground parking entry with planting or wood screen.
- Plant narrow pyramidal trees in side yards to buffer adjoining uses.
- Street trees shall be retained and planted along the street at 7.6 meter intervals where they need to be replaced.
- See Section 2.1 for other Recommended Development Standards and Sections 3.1 and 3.2 for Detailed Design Guidelines.



## 3.0 RESIDENTIAL INFILL DESIGN GUIDELINES

*These guidelines are divided into general and specific guidelines. The general guidelines affect the entire area while the specific area guidelines apply to specific areas or sites within the River Flats.*

The purpose of these guidelines is:

- To support the community vision, the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* policies and provide certainty of higher quality residential infill development.
- To assist developers in achieving higher quality contextual site and building development; and
- To assist the City of Medicine Hat in the review and approval of specific site development as well as the development of comprehensive site improvement strategies including streets, lanes, and infill sites.

### 3.1 General Infill Design Guidelines

The objective is to integrate “green” and environmentally sensitive features into site and building design. These features should be considered in the design review and encouraged in implementation.

#### Site Protection and Enhancement Strategies

- Minimize construction disturbance by protecting areas (tree retention areas) with red snow fencing setback at the edge of the branches before any site clearing or disturbance.
- Retain topsoil on site during construction and reuse it in landscaping and site development.
- Encourage light coloured, high reflective roof materials to minimize “heat island” effect.

#### Stormwater Runoff and Groundwater Protection

- Encourage the use of permeable pavers or gravel surface in parking areas to increase groundwater recharge and reduce peak flow runoff.
- Use grassed swales with additional natural planting for natural drainage where appropriate to reduce runoff and reduce underground infrastructure requirements.

- Post development stormwater flows should not exceed pre-development stormwater flows.
- Ensure site planning and building design for floodproofing where applicable (floodway/“flood fringe” areas). See 3.2.2 Building Design Guidelines.

#### Water

- Choose drought resistant native plantings for landscaping to reduce water use.
- Mulch planting beds to a depth of 100 mm to reduce water loss.
- Use recycled water/rainwater for irrigation (i.e., rain barrel program).
- Limit the area of grass within a landscaped area to a maximum of 50% with the balance being plants to reduce maintenance and water use (“desert” treatment with only rocks and no plants is not acceptable).
- Incorporate water use reduction features in buildings and on-site (e.g., install low-flow fixtures etc.).

#### Energy

- Maximize natural lighting of buildings.



- Improve energy efficiency through design and building solar orientation in winter, while providing trees and landscaping to reduce cooling costs during the hotter summer months.
- Include energy efficient fixtures in buildings.
- Utilize programmable thermostats in individual living or commercial units.
- Use energy efficient lighting for internal and external lighting.
- Use renewable energy features such as solar and geothermal energy where feasible.

#### **Material and Waste Reduction**

- Use construction materials with recycled content where possible.
- Ensure construction waste is recycled where feasible.
- A comprehensive waste reduction program is encouraged among landowners that can provide recycling and reuse in close proximity of industrial and commercial owners and/or tenants.

#### **Healthy Buildings, Landscapes and Practices**

- Improve air quality by using materials that produce fewer off-gases for such elements as flooring and paint.
- Design windows so they can be opened for fresh air circulation.
- Install clarifiers or water/oil separators on each drain.
- Provide landscaping that includes wildlife habitat.
- Provide flexibility in design and universal accessibility of units so that occupancy can change over time (i.e. live/work units, physically challenged);
- Include a provision for a community garden in the residential site planning where possible.

#### **Trees and Vegetation**

- Significant existing trees and vegetation should be retained and incorporated into site planning to screen storage, loading and parking areas.
- Groups of trees should be retained to protect against potential isolated tree hazard situations. Associated vegetation at the base of trees should be retained to minimize disturbance of existing soil conditions.
- Tree relocation and replacement shall be required in situations where trees can not be retained.
- A variety of drought resistant and Chinook tolerant trees and vegetation (refer to Parks & Outdoor Recreation's Planting List) should be incorporated into the planting plan to minimize maintenance and integrate planting design into the natural patterns and planting of the landscape.
- Existing planting patterns and connections to adjoining properties should be reinforced and extended.

#### **Transportation and Land Use**

- Walking and biking should be encouraged by linking development to adjacent sidewalks, and trails.
- Convenient, safe, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections should be provided to the bus stops in the area and the comprehensive trail system should be linked to greenways and bike routes within the community.
- Bicycle storage (1 storage space/unit) should be provided for each multi-dwelling building.

## 3.2 Specific Infill Design Guidelines

### 3.2.1 Site Planning Guidelines

#### Site Disturbance

No site disturbance (grading, excavation, tree removal etc.) of any kind shall be undertaken until issuance of the Development Permit. Only those required site disturbances associated with geotechnical, arborist, or site servicing evaluations will be accepted. Nearby trees and undergrowth on public and private land shall be protected from damage. Protective fencing will be used to protect trees on adjoining properties and delineate construction zones when necessary.

#### Site Grading

Existing terrain and drainage patterns should be maintained by adapting the access roads and housing forms and main floor levels to suit the natural contours. Site grading should be minimized to protect existing vegetation and drainage patterns. In addition, soils should be retained on site especially topsoil for final grading and planting areas. Soil retention on site should balance cut and fill, therefore minimizing related costs of bringing in soil to the property.

#### Storm Water Management Plan

The River Flats storm water system is aged. Most of the system was designed without guidelines or at best for a 1:2 year event. In addition, cross connects exist and the inventory of the network is not complete. Therefore, for larger-scale developments, a Storm Water Management Plan will be required and may involve off-site construction to meet current standards and best practices. These plans will be assessed on a case by case basis to determine if the City will contribute to any rehabilitation or upgrade off-site.

Storm water should be managed on-site through overland flow and existing stormwater pipes. In certain cases, depending on the size and scale of the development, the City may require a professional civil engineer to complete this plan in conformity with local standards, or in absence of specific standards, accepted professional engineering standards.

#### Lot Consolidation and Subdivision

Two or more lots may be consolidated, or consolidated and re-subdivided, if the new lots meet the Development Standards for a lot. The applicant must provide a site plan and elevation of building(s) as part of the subdivision application. While not required, the applicant may choose to submit the applications for subdivision and a development permit at the same time. Multi-dwelling unit designs should enable stratification under the regulations of the Condominium Property Act of Alberta, in terms of fire, building code regulations, access and other requirements.

#### Public, Semi-Private and Private Amenity Spaces for Triplexes, Quad-plexes, Townhouses, Row Houses & Apartments

Defining and designing outdoor space in infill developments can add significant value to units. It is very important to clearly define what is public space, semi-public space, and private space for function, safety, and security, especially with respect to multiple dwelling developments. Clearly articulated entrances, visual access, and individual street entrances and building transparency (windows) all contribute to a functional and safe building. These collectively define where the public are permitted and where the residents are permitted.

Building facades are encouraged to step back from the primary street edge where it is possible to create outdoor courtyards (front and back). Building articulation at the ground level can reinforce inviting pedestrian spaces by introducing different materials (paving and building), colours, canopies, trim, accents, and building articulation.

On-site people places, outdoor spaces and amenity areas (i.e. walking paths, courtyards, plazas, rest areas, gardens, upper level common decks, rooftop gardens) need to be usable, easily accessible, highly visible, and secured by surrounding development. Long narrow strips of grass separating ground floor residential units from the side property line will be discouraged.

Development will be encouraged to step back beyond the required side yard setback distance, at irregular intervals along the length of the building, to create more usable and interesting outdoor spaces. See Appendix C: Glossary for fine-grain building character definition. Design of these areas should consider sun angles, prevailing winds in designing decks and balconies, and garden spaces so their use is maximized throughout the year. Rooftops and patio decks are an opportunity to bring more green to the site landscape above the level of the streetscape.



**4-storey infill apartments illustrating well-defined sidewalk and grass boulevard with street trees (public area) as well as well-defined semi-public and private space in front of the apartments.**



### 3.2.2 Landscape Guidelines

The review criteria for landscaping shall include, but not be limited to, the following considerations:

- Retain existing native vegetation where possible;
- Protect against potential flooding (in “flood fringe” areas);
- Enhance the existing landscape with additional planting;
- Improve and respect the natural drainage;
- Minimize use of irrigation through xeriscaping principles using drought resistant and Chinook tolerant plantings; and
- Enhance the wildlife potential on the site within the context of adjoining parcels.



**Protect and enhance the Boulevard Street Vision**

#### The Public Realm and Landscape Details

- All infill applications will be required to submit a Landscape Plan that illustrates existing and proposed tree, shrub, groundcover planting as well as amenity areas, grassed areas, play equipment (if applicable), boulevard treatments, and parking paving treatment, laneways, and screening.
- The Landscape Plan is to retain and enhance the existing trees and natural setting as much as possible with minimum disturbance to the natural areas, especially the existing large and mature trees along the City Streets. Landscaping of boulevards shall meet the boulevard development and maintenance standards, such that the boulevards shall be soft landscaped with existing trees retained or new trees planted where approved.
- The applicant is required to illustrate replanting areas where trees and undergrowth have been disturbed. These replanting areas associated with housing and conservation areas should specify tree or shrub location, quantity, type, and planting requirements.
- Landscaping, varying parking surface treatments, screening fencing, and arbours should contribute to create well-defined pedestrian and vehicular circulation and parking zones.
- All landscape plant materials for multi-dwelling unit (townhouse, row houses, and apartment) applications shall adhere to the development agreement for ensuring the installation of landscaping in a timely manner.

- Terraced landscaping on front yards shall be required on flood proofed building designs and any other situations where the grades require the built-form to be higher than the sidewalk (i.e. sloped yards).



**Terraced Front Yard Landscaping**

#### **Plants**

- Drought tolerant and Chinook resistant plant species should be maximized. Any supplemental planting should be compatible in variety and size. Minimize cultivated, decorative, and non-indigenous plants and lawns.
- The design of naturalized landscapes (without just rocks and a few sparse plants) should be the general approach to reduce maintenance, enhance wildlife, and water use. For example, the usage of xeriscape principles.

- Tall tree species should be located to minimize impact on views from neighbouring properties and enhance privacy for amenity spaces.

#### **Grading**

- All final site grading must match adjoining, undisturbed natural grades and should be integrated with the Storm Water Management Plan. Retaining walls shall be minimized.

#### **Fences**

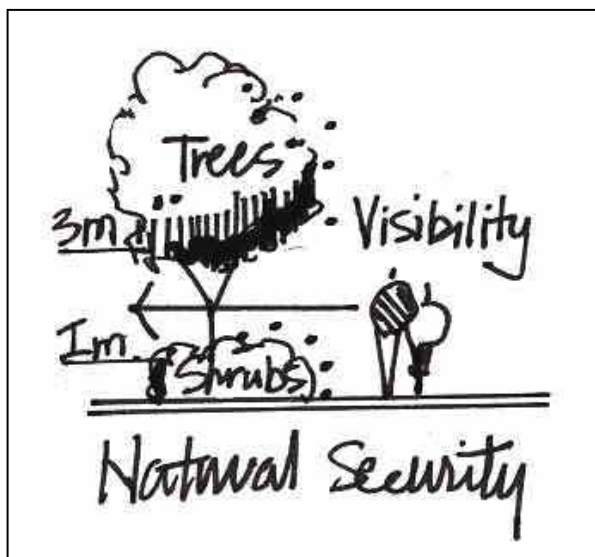
- Fences on individual properties shall be combined with planting where possible to enhance the natural integration of the overall site plan.
- A 1.8 m fence is the maximum height in the rear and side yard (up to the front of the house). The material for the fence shall be wood or a similar product (not concrete). A chain link fence is only permitted with black or green covering combined with an evergreen hedge planting material.
- Front yard fences are generally discouraged in single-dwelling infill projects but may be considered to a maximum height of 1.0 meters along the property lines (i.e. white picket fences). Front yard fences are permitted in multiple-dwelling infill projects up to 1.0 meters to delineate public and semi-private space along the property lines.

#### **Lighting**

- Lighting should be low key including down-lighting or non-glare type lamination for functional purposes only.

## Security

- Planting should afford clear views between the house and the access roadway; use of low shrubs and high canopy trees near the house is recommended. Principles of CPTED are encouraged in all landscaping designs.



## Parking

- Parking areas must be located where they can be visually secured at all hours of the day.
- Parking will not be permitted in the front yard setback and shall be directed to the back yard (with rear lanes) or underneath (structured underground parking) for 3 to 4-storey multiple dwelling buildings.
- Where flood levels (in “flood fringe” areas) do not allow the full height of the parking structure to be placed underground, development will be encouraged to conceal parking by carrying the upper face of the building down to

ground level so that it appears and functions as an integral part of the building.

- Large expanse of contiguous parking in the case of townhouses, row houses, or apartments will not be permitted (in favour of underground parking).
- Any larger parking areas shall be divided into smaller “parking courts” complemented by tree planting (1 per 6 parking spaces) and landscaped islands with shrub planting. The edges of these parking areas should also be screened by low planting or appropriate fencing 1.0 meter (with the exception of chain-link fencing) while still permitting visual access for safety and security purposes.



### 3.2.3 Building Guidelines

The review criteria for infill building development shall include, but not be limited to, the following considerations:

- High-quality, sustainable building designs that integrate into the traditional history and character of the community;
- Buildings that fit into the existing character of the community through appropriate building form, massing, and variety;
- Building heights and character that are blended and transition with adjoining property buildings and the streetscape;
- All accessory buildings and building additions;
- Infill multi-dwelling buildings that are articulated along the street wall to break up the mass and reflect the predominantly single-dwelling scale along the street; and
- Energy conservation through passive solar orientation of buildings.

#### Diversity of Building Types on Neighbourhood Blocks

- All development permit applications within the Primarily Single-dwelling Area (See Map 4: Land Use Concept) shall provide a streetscape elevation with the application. The streetscape elevation should illustrate the existing surrounding built-forms and the proposed infill development.

- In the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area (See Map 4: Land Use Concept), only single detached dwellings; with a legal suite or coach house where appropriate, semi-detached, tri-plexes and quad-plexes shall be permitted as redevelopment built-forms.
- Not more than one tri-plex or quad-plex shall be permitted on one side of a specific City block. A tri-plex and quad-plex shall not be directly across from each other. Where proposed in the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area, a tri-plex or quad-plex will require a Land Use Amendment that is tied to the Development Permit.
- A variety of building types and designs shall be required of new developments on a block. For example, if there are several semi-detached infill on one side of City block then the designs shall be significantly different to add diversity to the streetscape. Applications will be reviewed based on the submitted streetscape elevation. In each case, the applicant shall provide different designs or building types that show change in colour, materials, building form, type, and massing.



## Building Siting and Entrances

- Infill buildings shall respect the traditional patterns and features of the community by orientation towards the street (individual front entrances) with backyards for amenity space and garages/parking.
- Entrances should be highly visible and attractive. Where in context to adjacent buildings on a street, a new development should locate close to and parallel the street edge (street wall) to reinforce the public realm, and a sense of safety through “eyes on the street.”
- Building orientation and form should maximize solar heating benefits as well as protect against the prevailing winds, protect against overshadowing of adjacent properties and facilitate natural ventilation.

## Building Forms and Design

- Buildings should strive to provide visual interest in shape and character for residents and visitors to the community. Large expanses of blank walls should be broken up with building articulation, different material types, colour variations, and landscaping. Relief in building elevations and staggering, where appropriate, should be considered in the building design and how it relates to adjacent built-forms. [See Appendix C: Glossary for fine-grain building character definition.](#)

- The usage of traditional design features such as front porches should be considered and designed as a part of the built-form and not attached separately.
- Upper storey windows shall not dominate the built-form as this does not provide appropriate massing in support of a human or streetscape-scale built-form. Windows towards side yards shall be off-set to provide privacy. Windows should provide articulation and shadow lines (i.e. set windows back from the wall face).
- In the cases of 3 and 4-storey infill apartment proposals, a combination of side yards, building corner treatment and height transitions should be sensitive to the adjoining single-dwelling character to fit into the community.
- New multi-dwelling developments should not appear as a single unit but be broken up vertically and horizontally (materials, articulation, and colours) to reflect a more human-scale along the street and the predominantly single-dwelling character of the area. [See Appendix C: Glossary for fine-grain building character definition.](#)



### Special Design Consideration for Corner Lots

- On corner lots, both building elevations facing the street shall be given equal treatment. Elements such as corner and side windows, wrap-around verandas or decks, roof elements, landscaping and lighting should be incorporated into the design to contribute to the security and neighbourliness of the street.

### Roofs

- The roof on buildings will be an important feature in the overall massing of the buildings. Emphasis shall be given to the overall roof form using peaked and shed roof styles that reflect the Medicine Hat traditional style. Roofs should be articulated and provide breaks to provide greater detail to the building elevations. Gables and dormers are encouraged as a part of the built-form. Designing roofs as functional space should be considered as this provides for additional living and/or storage space in the case of flood proofing built-forms.
- Flat roofs will not be supported in the Primarily Single-Dwelling Area as they do not fit with the traditional character of lower density residential. Flat roofs on multi-dwelling and commercial buildings will be supported.
- Weather protection features such as extended overhangs should be included in the built-form design to add further definition to the building and emphasis of a horizontal “prairie style” of building architecture.

### Building Materials

- Infill building types shall be designed with traditional materials of the community which are brick, stucco and wood siding (i.e. “Hardy Board”). Building materials should be used authentically and not in a façade manner. The usage of materials should be proportionately designed based on their qualities and weight. For example, brick should not be designed above wood siding on an elevation or inappropriately proportioned on the building. The weight of the building material should be true to its qualities.
- Vinyl siding is not traditional and characteristic of the community and will not supported on elevations that front onto the street(s).
- Accents in wood are recommended.
- Exposed concrete should be sandblasted, clad in split faced granite, or as parging. Coloured concrete, if used, shall be muted earth/rock tones.





## Colours

- The usage of colours shall focus on what is traditional to the River Flats community (i.e. white clapboard, red brick and grey pebble).
- Clear, muted colours or earth tone coloured materials are encouraged; bold accent colours should only be permitted on minor building elements.
- Complementary colours/tone variation should be used to induce a sense of richness and liveliness into the area.
- Muted colours in asphalt shingles, fibreglass shingles, and ribbed metal roofing are permitted. Earth tone colours are recommended to integrate the roof structure with the surrounding landscape colours.

## Garages

- All garages shall be located off the rear lane.
- Where there is no lane, garages are allowed with front access and integrated into the building design or designed in the rear yard. Front-loaded garages should be setback from the main house to create less emphasis on the garage in the streetscape. Impervious paving patterns and a shared driveway between units is encouraged on front access situations.
- Collective parking for multi-dwelling units is required, to reduce paving and site impacts and must incorporate landscaping as a buffer and screening.
- Underground garage entrances should be screened but entry drives should be clearly defined and visible.

## Driveways (on sites that have no back lane access)

- Driveways to individual lots should not exceed 6% slope, with an average grade in the 2% range. The access roads should include smooth transition sections. The paving material should be asphalt or a pervious material as specified and accepted.
- Driveways should be designed to minimize grade changes and aligned with other access driveways to reduce ecological impact (significant trees etc.). Driveways to individual residences shall not exceed 6 meters in width and be shared to reduce paved surfaces on a street. Shared driveways should use materials that minimize impermeable surfaces.



## Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas

- Mechanical equipment, garbage containers, utility connections and air vents shall be screened from internal, street, and neighbouring properties and noise abatement may be required (for fans, compressors etc.).

## General

- Any redevelopment that requires hardship considerations, due to fire, will be reviewed based on the merits of the redevelopment at that time.

## "Flood Fringe" Building Design Guidelines

Flood proofing techniques are measures taken to permanently protect individual buildings or other developments from flood damage in the flood risk area. The flood risk area is the area that would be affected by the design flood. In Alberta, the adopted design flood is the 100-year flood, which is the peak or flood flow with one chance in one hundred of occurring in any given year. The flood risk area is subdivided into two zones: **floodway** and **flood fringe**.

The floodway is the portion where the floodwaters are the deepest, fastest and most destructive. New development in the floodway is not recommended. Exceptions may be land uses of non-obstructing nature such as some parks and recreational facilities, agricultural land uses, flood control works and municipal infrastructure. New development shall be setback from the floodway and in no instance shall new buildings or structures be permitted within 10 metres of the floodway. The development setback is intended to provide a buffer and margin of safety between development and the floodway.

The flood fringe is the outer portion of the flood risk area adjacent to the floodway. The flood water in the fringe is generally shallower and flows more slowly than in the floodway. Conditions are generally less hazardous than in the floodway. Development in this area is possible provided adequate flood proofing is undertaken using one of the five following techniques:

1. Using fill to raise the elevation of the site/building above the design flood level;
2. Raising the building on posts, piles or piers above the design flood level;
3. Building a berm or floodwall, the top of which is above the design flood level, around a building(s);
4. Building a water tight basement (dry flood proofing); and
5. Allowing the foundation and basement to be flooded (wet flood proofing).

The design flood level in the flood fringe shall be a minimum of 0.3 metres above the 1:100 year flood level to provide an extra margin of safety.

By using earth fill, individual homes or whole subdivisions can be raised above the design flood level. Proposed buildings would require any special design modifications. Due to carrying capacity concerns, fill in the flood fringe requires the approval of Alberta Environment and the Development Authority.

The use of posts, piles, or piers to elevate the structure may be used to raise the building above the design flood level. This method requires careful design to prevent damage to the supports from floating debris. This measure will only be supported on developments that are able to address the public realm (buildings relationship to the street) and integration with the surrounding built-forms. The design of the posts, piles, or piers must meet the requirements of the Alberta Building Code.

The construction of berms or floodwalls is intended to keep a structure dry without any modifications to the building. If this measure requires a considerable amount of land, it may only be supported on larger comprehensive developments that also address the public realm (buildings relationship with the street). Consideration of these solutions will be based on the merits of each case.

"Dry" flood proofing is generally referred to as techniques that prevent water from entering the building. For a basement to be water tight, it is necessary to construct all windows, doors and other openings above the design flood level. The main floor of the building shall also be above the design flood level. The foundation walls must be strong enough to withstand the lateral and uplift pressures of the water without cracking therefore; the applicant for any new development shall provide verification from a qualified professional engineer indicating that the structure has been designed accordingly. Sewer backup prevention valves must be

installed with a one-way valve to prevent the sewer from backing up into the basement. Sump pumps must be installed below the basement floor level such that minor seepage inflow could be pumped out.

The concept of "wet" flood proofing accepts that water will enter the basement therefore; no habitable space in the basement will be permitted. Wet flood proofing equalizes the water pressure on the interior and exterior walls and floors. This method should not be undertaken without consulting the *CMHC Problem Lands Building in Flood-risk Area Adapted for Use in Medicine Hat* guidelines and seeking professional advice.

In the case where the proposed development is an addition to the existing building, only the addition is required to be flood proofed. However, reasonable measures to reduce the risk of flood damage to the existing building may be required.

## **Flood proofing your Home – Where to Start?**

- 1. Learn as much as you can about flooding in your neighbourhood.**

If your site is located in one of the areas mapped under the Map 9: Floodway, you can receive detailed information on flood levels from Planning Services.

- 2. Learn more about flood proofing techniques.**

Information can be obtained from public libraries, or from agencies such as the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Local contractors, as well as engineering and architectural firms, can also provide useful information regarding water resistant materials and construction practices.

- 3. Select an appropriate method of flood proofing.**

The Flood Fringe Building Design Guidelines list five acceptable methods for flood proofing in the flood fringe. In selecting a method of flood proofing, consider the following:

- the characteristics of the flood hazard;
- the physical conditions at the site;
- the building's function, operation and use; and
- the type and condition of the building.

Always seek expert advice because improper flood proofing can cause serious structural damage.

- 4. Evaluate the benefits and costs of flood proofing.**

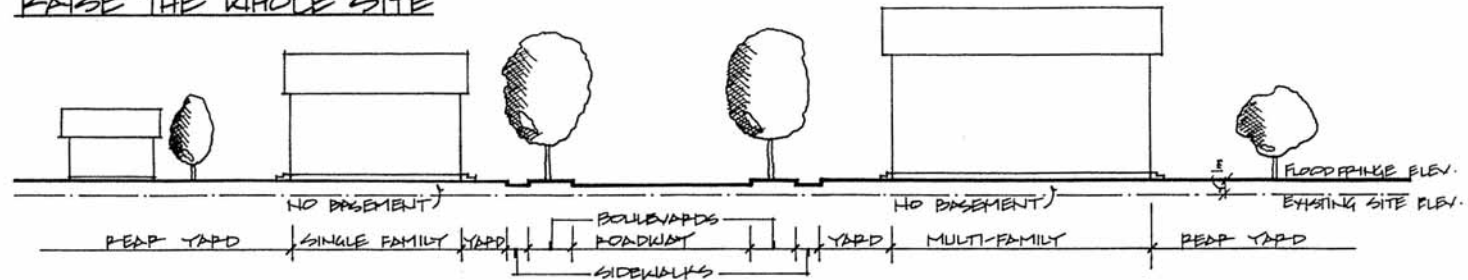
Determine the cost of flood proofing your property and weigh it against the cost of future flood damages. You should also consider the personal danger and hardship you and your family may face if you do not flood proof.

- 5. Plan your flood proofing project, and hire qualified people to do the work.**

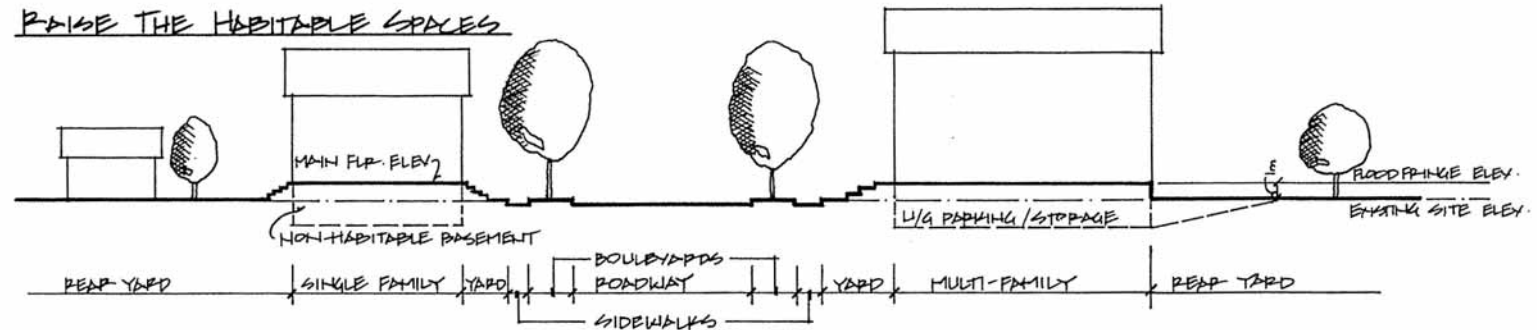
- 6. Know the extent of any remaining flood risk because you can never eliminate it entirely.**



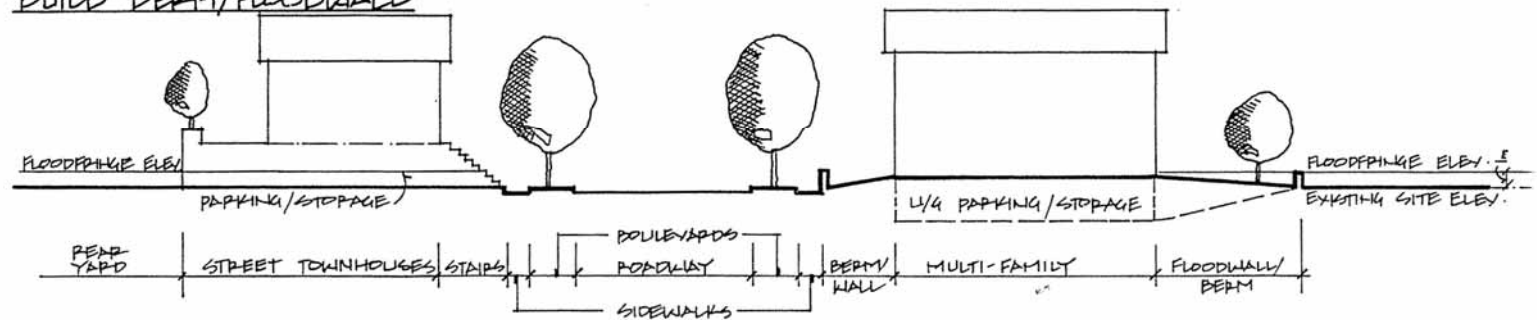
### RAISE THE WHOLE SITE



### RAISE THE HABITABLE SPACES



### BUILD BERM/FLOODWALL



Flood proofing Options for Site and Building Design

## 3.3 Residential Infill Design Guidelines Implementation

### 3.3.1 Development Permit Requirements for Residential Infill Development in the River Flats Community

- All residential development within the *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* shall adhere to the Residential Infill Design Guidelines by way of a Development Permit that will be reviewed against the requirements of these guidelines.
- Prior to applying for a Development Permit, applicants should familiarize themselves with all documents that pertain to the River Flats community in which they wish to develop and discuss the project with adjacent neighbours. This will provide all parties with the opportunity to identify, address and resolve potential conflicts, and helps to ensure the development will be compatible with the neighbourhood character. The intent is to expedite the Development Permit process; reduce the potential for conflict, and the delay and expense of project revisions.
- Prior to applying for a Development Permit applicants should familiarize themselves with the following:
  - *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan*;
  - *River Flats Residential Infill Design Guidelines*;
  - City of Medicine Hat *Heritage Resources Policy*;
  - City of Medicine Hat *Land Use Bylaw*; and
  - Applicable other planning policies affecting the site (i.e. environmental, social, parks, etc.).
- Prior to applying for a Development Permit, applicants are encouraged to consult with their adjacent neighbours. This serves to introduce the neighbours to the development and its merits per the *River Flats ARP*.
- All applicants for residential development are advised to set up a pre-application meeting (prior to designing their residential infill development) with the City's Planning Services Department to ensure accurate interpretation of applicable planning policies and guidelines. Until a Brownfield Strategy has been prepared for the River Flats, all applicants in the River Flats should contact Planning Services prior to submitting an application to determine if there are environmental considerations (i.e. Phase 1 Environmentally Significant Assessment).
- All Development Permit applications shall be:
  - Complete as per the requirements of the Residential Infill Design Guidelines and the City of Medicine Hat's associated Residential Development checklists.
- Development Permit applications should be:
  - Circulated to the River Flats Community Association for comments prior to a decision being made; and
  - Notice posted on the subject site for two weeks so that residents have an opportunity to submit written comments prior to a decision being made.
- Additional information may be required of the applicant through the review process to address any concerns that are identified.
- Applicants should provide a design rationale with each application, which explains how the spirit and intent of the *River Flats ARP* is achieved and specific requirements are met. In cases where a waiver is proposed, the applicant must provide rationale for the waiver and may be required to provide higher-quality design features to mitigate site or building design concerns.

## Appendix B: River Flats Steering Committee & Public Process



### The River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan Public Process

The *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* work began with a Public Open House to introduce the project in June 2007 and has since evolved with work between the City's Planning team and the River Flats Steering Committee.

### What has been the role of the River Flats Steering Committee?

A request for interested citizens of the River Flats community to sit on a Steering Committee was initiated at the Public Open House in June 2007. A Steering Committee was formulated based on representation of residents, business owners, neighbourhood and community groups, and the "Historic Clay District".

A River Flats Steering Committee was established to advise and work with the City Planning team on:

- Creating a community vision and guiding principles;
- Reviewing land use concepts,

transportation challenges, open space, community preservation, redevelopment and design, community and social development;

- Striking an appropriate balance between city-wide and community objectives; and
- Drafting planning recommendations, policies, and guidelines.

Since summer 2007, the Steering Committee has spent time working with Planning, Community Development, Municipal Works, Parks and Recreations, Transit and Environmental Management on a better understanding of the issues/ concerns, opportunities, and ideas for the future vision of the River Flats community.

This process involved an Action Strategy Workshop in the summer 2007, a Visioning Workshop in June 2008 and many Steering Committee meetings to regularly analyze the community's strengths and weaknesses, evolve ideas, creatively problem-solve the challenges and contribute respective areas of input to the process. From this public input a *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* (Vision, Guiding Principles and Policy

direction) has been created for the community.

### The Public Engagement Process

In conjunction with the significant commitment of time from the Steering Committee over the past three years, the general public was engaged at the onset of the project in the spring of 2007 and throughout with regular updates on the project status and associated documentation on the City's website.

In June 2009, a significant Public Open House was hosted jointly for the *Draft River Flats ARP* and *Draft Downtown Redevelopment Plan* by Planning Services, the River Flats Steering Committee, Centre City Development Agency and consultants. All these groups played a role in contributing to the *River Flats ARP* and gathering feedback throughout the process and at the Public Open Houses.

At this time the *Draft River Flats ARP* was presented to the general public with story boards, a survey, and a copy of the complete *Draft Plan* on the website. City staff and the Steering Committee members spent time over the course of



## Appendix B: River Flats Steering Committee & Public Process

two days to gather input from the public verbally and in the resulting surveys and emails that followed. The Public Open Houses were hugely successful in that 315 people attended and took a significant amount of time to read the story boards and thoughtfully fill out the 210 surveys that Planning Services received. Overall, the comments were positive and encouraging towards the proposed vision including the feedback on rebranding the community name.

The *River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan* is a result of the engagement process and the work of the Steering Committee and City Departments including Planning Services, Municipal Works, Environmental Utilities, Community Development, Cultural Development, Environmental Management, Fire, and Police. A final review of the *Plan* against the input from the Steering Committee and the general public through the process is consistent with the issues raised and policies and actions proposed. It is the strength of the extensive engagement process that has resulted in a *Plan* that is genuinely the community's vision. As a result, it is believed that implementation of the *Plan* will proceed with collaboration, inspiration and action.



## Appendix C: Glossary

**Affordable Housing:** Affordable housing means housing that is accessible, adequate and available at a cost that does not compromise the attainment and satisfaction of an individual's other basic needs of life. For the *Plan*, it is anticipated that well-designed housing understands the needs of the occupants and how those needs impact physical design. Occupant needs can be cost-effectively met by quality design if identified early in the process. All housing projects, no matter the size, have a responsibility to add and enhance the neighbourhood in which they are developed. It is anticipated that the City of Medicine Hat's affordable housing definition will be reviewed and needs and design criteria incorporated that considers the development of such projects in an established community context such as the River Flats.

**Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP):** An *Area Redevelopment Plan* is a planning document, adopted as a bylaw by City Council that sets out comprehensive land use policies and other proposals that help guide the future of communities or a designated area. An ARP supplements the Land Use Bylaw by giving a local policy context and specific land use and development guidelines on which the Development Authority can base its

judgments when rendering decisions on land use and development applications. An Area Redevelopment Plan anticipates planning for an approximate timeframe of 20 to 30 years. The *River Flats ARP* is also referred to as the "*Plan*" within the document.

**Attractor:** A term used in the Canadian Badlands Tourism Strategy to protect and present the unique natural and cultural heritage of a region. The Medicine Hat Clay Industries National Historic Site and Medalta Potteries represents Medicine Hat as one of eight tourism attractors in the Canadian Badlands Region.

**Brownfield Sites:** Abandoned or underutilized industrial or commercial sites that are available for reuse however, complicated by real or perceived contamination issues. Such sites might be abandoned factories, commercial buildings, dry cleaners, gas stations, etc. The opportunity exists for innovative financial and remediation techniques to economically stimulate new development on such sites.

**Built-form:** Consists of buildings and structures.

### **Canadian Badlands Tourism Strategy:**

A tourism development strategy developed by municipalities in the Canadian Badlands region to direct and prioritize tourism development across the region. The vision for the Canadian Badlands is to become a major iconic destination for Alberta and complement the role played by the Canadian Rockies in encouraging travel to and in the province. Central to the strategy is building community and regional capacity for economic growth and enhancing area quality of life while preserving significant natural and cultural resources. Within the strategy, the Medicine Hat and area (highlighting the "Historic Clay District") is a hub and attractor for art, culture and history.

**Concept:** A general notion or idea.

**Community:** A group of people living in a particular locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage. In the *Plan*, community refers to the entire area that is within the defined River Flats boundary for this *ARP*.

**Comprehensive:** A term referring to achieving something in an "all inclusive manner" or "thought through manner" such as a planning process that has been

## Appendix C: Glossary

established to determine community goals and aspirations by way of identifying issues, establishing goals, collecting and analyzing data, creating a plan and alternative and implementation.

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

**Council:** The Council of the City of Medicine Hat

**CPR:** Refers to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

**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). Density can also be expressed by floor area ratio or FAR. FAR means the quotient of the gross floor area of a building divided by the gross site area. FAR is one of the ways to control the size/density of a building in relation to the size of the parcel of land it occupies. See the FAR examples below. The building may also be regulated by building setbacks (i.e. front yard, side yard and rear yard), building height, site/lot coverage/landscaping, parking and others, depending on different land use districts.

### FAR Examples:

A lot area of 100' by 100' has a gross site area of 10,000 square feet (100'x100').

Development potential based on FAR:

- FAR 1 = 10,000 sq. ft x 1 = 10,000 sq. ft of gross floor area.
- FAR 2 = 10,000 sq. ft x 2 = 20,000 sq. ft of gross floor area.
- FAR 3 = 10,000 sq. ft x 3 = 30,000 sq. ft of gross floor area.

When using FAR for residential development, the number of dwelling units will vary depending on the size of the unit.

### For example:

On a site of 100'x100' = 10,000 sq. ft.

FAR 1 = 10,000 sq. ft may allow up to 10 units, if the unit size is 1,000 sq. ft each; or

FAR 1 = 10,000 sq. ft may allow up to 20 units, if the unit size is 500 sq. ft each.

**Development Authority:** The Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) or the Development Officer or both, as the context provides.

**Development Officer:** An office of the City of Medicine Hat who is charged with the responsibility of administering the Land Use Bylaw and deciding upon applications for Development Permits.

**Development Permit:** A document authorizing a development, issued by a Development Officer pursuant to the Land Use Bylaw, or any previous Bylaw or other legislation authorizing development within the city, and includes the plans and conditions of approval.

**District:** An area identified by a distinguishing feature such as land use, heritage, cultural and/or any other significant characteristic. For the River Flats, there are two "Districts" that are within the Old Town and Historic Clay neighbourhoods.

**Enhancement:** To augment an area, street or open space in quality, value, beauty, or effectiveness.

**Entranceway:** An urban design feature or area that provides visual access, direction and/or celebration of a neighbourhood for those entering. Within the *Plan*, there are defined areas to provide visual access to each neighbourhood.

**Fine-grain Building Character:** A term to describe development that preserves



## Appendix C: Glossary



existing street character by reducing building width and bulk. A fine-grain building character strengthens pedestrian interest by providing frequent shop and building entrances along a street frontage. Historic Main Streets are an example of development that has established a fine-grain building pattern to support pedestrian-scaled streetscapes. Fine-grain development is opposite of buildings that have large expanses of wall that are not divided into smaller parts. Development standards will be established as a part of the Land Use Amendment process and ultimately a part of the Land Use Bylaw.

**Flood Fringe:** This is the outer portion of the Flood Risk Area adjacent to the floodway. The flood water in the fringe is generally more shallow and flows more slowly than in the floodway. Conditions are generally less hazardous than in the floodway. Development in this area is possible provided adequate flood proofing is undertaken.

**Flood proofing:** Measures taken to permanently protect individual buildings or other developments from flood damage. An effective flood proofing measure is to use elevated pads or fill to raise buildings above the design flood level. Flood proofing also includes certain safeguards such as locating electrical

panels and shut-off valves for gas and water lines above the design flood level, and restricting the use of rooms below the flood level.

**Flood Risk Area:** This is the area that would be affected by the design flood. In Alberta, the adopted design flood is the 100-year flood.

**Floodway:** This is the portion of the Flood Risk Area where floodwaters are the deepest, fastest and most destructive. New development in the floodway area is not recommended. Exceptions may be land uses of non-obstructing nature such as some parks and recreational facilities, agricultural land uses, flood control works and municipal infrastructure.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** The quotient of the gross floor area of a building divided by the gross site area. (See also *Density*).

**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 defined areas that provide gateways to the community which are 1 Street SE underpass, Maple Avenue Bridge and Highway 41 at the eastern city boundary.

**Landmark:** A building, structure such as bridges, memorials, public art; and/or

landscapes that have a special historical, architectural or cultural significance.

**Landscaping (soft and hard):** The modification and enhancement of a site through the use of any or all of the following elements:

- Soft Landscaping consisting of vegetation such as trees, shrubs, hedges, grass and ground cover;
- Hard Landscaping consisting of non-vegetative material such as brick, stone, concrete, tile wood an other material; and
- Architectural elements consisting of sculptures and the like.

**Land Use Bylaw:** The Bylaw establishes procedures to process and decide upon Land Use Amendment and Development applications and divides the city into Land Use Districts. It sets out the rules that affect how each piece of land in the city may be used and developed. It also includes the actual zoning maps. For the River Flats this refers to The City of Medicine Hat Land Use Bylaw 3181 until such a time that Council approves a new Land Use Bylaw for the River Flats.

**Land Use District:** An area of the city designated for particular uses contained in the Land Use Bylaw. For example, R1.

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**Live-work:** A use where a business is operated from a dwelling-unit, by the resident of the dwelling unit but does not include a home occupation. For the *River Flats ARP*, the opportunity exists for live-work to be developed in various physical built-forms. Live-work can be designed as one dwelling unit whereby the business use is located at-grade with the residential use located above and/or creatively-designed within renovated commercial lofts/warehouses or as new developments. It is anticipated that one of the common uses of live-work for the River Flats community will be artists studio's to support the "Historic Clay District". The *River Flats ARP* encourages this form of development given its ability to support artistic endeavours that allow the artist or other business owners to live close to their place of employ and add vitality to the community. The development standards of live-work will be defined as a part of the Land Use Amendment process and ultimately a part of the *Land Use Bylaw*.

**Main Street Program:** The Main Street Program began in 1987 and has helped revitalize historic commercial areas in partnership with the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit and the Heritage Canada Foundation. The program has been successful in revitalizing downtown

and heritage commercial streets (i.e. North Railway Street SE) by supporting the restoration of building facades and developing a long-term vision and strategy for marketing and economic development. The program has helped several historic downtown areas become more viable by not only maintaining existing businesses but bringing new business, residents and tourists to live, work and visit these areas. Main Street areas capitalize on their heritage resources to increase local pride, generate business opportunities, and enhance the marketability and economic drivers to help solidify the image of their historic main street area.

**Mixed-Use Development:** The development of land, a building or a structure with two or more different uses in a compact form, such as residential, office, and retail.

**Mixed-Use/General:** For the *Plan*, Mixed-use/General refers to a Special Study Area. The Special Study Area is an area that requires additional consideration and sensitivity to the future use and development of land or buildings. The Mixed-use/General lands in the River Flats community are a gateway to the city and are no longer envisioned as many of the light and heavy industrial land uses currently defined in the Land Use Bylaw. A Land Use and Urban Design

Planning Exercise is required of the Mixed-use/General District to better define appropriate land uses that support the vision, principles and policies within the Plan.

**Mode:** A method of travel. Examples include walking, cycling, transit and vehicular.

**Mass/Massing:** The arrangement of the bulk of a building on a site and its visual impact in relation to adjacent buildings.

**Multi-dwelling residential:** Refers to the multi-dwelling land use areas of the River Flats community. These areas are intended to serve the community by providing intensification of residential at its edges to increase populations which support amenities and transportation modes. Multi-dwelling areas shall be sensitively-integrated and designed at the edges of the community as per the [Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines](#). Where policy directs, multi-dwelling residential may be designed in conjunction with other uses such as commercial.

**Neighbourhood:** An area within the River Flats community that is primarily residential and/or primarily residential/mixed-use. The River Flats has three

## Appendix C: Glossary

defined neighbourhoods which are Old Town, Parks and Historic Clay. Each neighbourhood is planned to be primarily residential with considerations for supporting land uses, movement systems, public realm and design, and amenities that would achieve complete and integrated neighbourhoods.

**Neighbourhood Node:** A place within a neighbourhood at which an activity or complex of activities takes place to meet local needs and foster a “sense of place” or unique identity for the neighbourhood. Components of the neighbourhood node may include the basic needs of open spaces, grocery, health, community association facilities, childcare and seniors amenities, and transit.

**Open Space:** Refers to an area or place that is open and accessible to all citizens, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level. Open space in the *Plan* refers to the public realm (streets/sidewalks, etc.), parks, urban plaza’s, etc.

**Pedestrian-oriented or Pedestrian-friendly:** An environment designed to make movement (on foot or by wheelchair) attractive and comfortable for various ages and abilities (i.e. visual and hearing-impaired, mobility- impaired, developmentally-challenged, situationally-impaired). Considerations include

separation of pedestrian and vehicular circulation, building scale and street walls, street furniture, clear directional and informational signage, safety, visibility, shade, lighting, surface materials, trees, sidewalk width, prevailing wind direction (canopies), intersection treatment, curb cuts, ramps and landscaping.

**Pedestrian-scale/human-scale:** Refers to the scale (height/proportions) and comfort level that the street level and lower stories of a building provide for the pedestrian as they walk alongside a building(s).

**Promenade:** A formally designed pedestrian-priority walkway along the riverfront that includes a walkway, urban features such benches, garbage disposal and pedestrian-scale lighting, etc.

**Public Realm:** The area of space in the urban environment that is between the built-form. The public realm consists of three different domains:

- Public Domain – consists of all publicly-owned streets, sidewalks, rights-of-ways, parks and other publicly-accessible open spaces, and public and civic buildings and facilities;
- Semi-private Domain – consist of the space between a building

façade and a public sidewalk as well as any private spaces that may be accessible to the public such as enclosed atriums/ galleries, etc. Semi-private space ties together the public realm connections (streets, sidewalks, etc.) and built-form in a comprehensive and connected public realm; and

- Private Domain – consists of private space or buildings that are visually incorporated into the public realm and allows for limited or no physical access to the public.

**Quality (High):** Quality refers to character with respect to fineness, or grade of excellence.

**Redevelopment:** Rebuilding of an urban residential, commercial, or other land use area that is in decline or in need of a new vision and policy direction. For the *River Flats ARP*, redevelopment and new development refer to the same thing.

**Riverfront:** Refers to the area along the South Saskatchewan River, Seven Persons and Ross Creeks.

**Setback:** An area measured as a distance from a public right-of-way (ROW) or private lot line restricting building





development.

**Sidewalk:** Principally used for pedestrians and located to the side of a carriageway within a road right-of-way.

**Single-dwelling residential:** Refers to the primarily single-dwelling areas of the River Flats community. These areas are intended to serve the traditional single-family dwelling needs of the community and city while providing an opportunity for sensitively-integrated infill development as per the [Section 4.3 Community Design and Appendix A: Residential Infill Design Guidelines](#). It is the intent of these areas to support intensification for the purposes of enhancing the single-dwelling areas while not impacting the quality of a primarily single-dwelling residential area.

**Smart Growth:** Refers to land use, development practices and the efficient use of tax dollars to enhance the quality of life, preservation of the natural environment, saving money over time by limiting costly urban sprawl, and creating more livable and vibrant neighbourhoods.

**Streetscape:** 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.

**Sustainable development:** Refers to a pattern use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the future. The area of sustainable development consists of: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and social sustainability. Sustainable development for the River Flats focuses on complete and integrated neighbourhoods within the community and redevelopment of an established community that could better achieve sustainable development through intensification of its land uses, prioritizing modes of transportation, better meeting the communities social and economic needs, etc. and the policies that would guide such development.

**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.

**Trails:** The term used to represent the City's pathway or connection system. The City of Medicine Hat's Leisure Trail System is defined as the infrastructure for leisure and recreational pursuits (i.e. walking,

running, roller blading and leisure cycling).

**Transit:** Refers to all components (i.e. type of transit, routes, schedules, etc.) of providing transit to the residents, workers and tourists.

**Urban Braille:** Is a comprehensive, user-driven approach to the planning and design of public spaces. It is a system of tactile information serving the needs of the visually-impaired. By utilizing both colour and texture contrast it provides warning signals and clues related to orientation.

**Urban Design:** Refers to the arrangement, appearance and functionality of towns and cities, and in particular the shaping and uses of urban public space. Urban design deals primarily with the design and management of public space (i.e. the 'public environment', 'public realm' or 'public domain'), and the way public places are experienced and used. 'Urban design' differs from 'urban planning' in its focus on physical improvement of the public environment, whereas the latter tends, in practice, to focus on the management of private development through planning schemes and other statutory development controls.

**Urban Edges:** Refers to areas along the riverfront that have the potential for urban development versus a natural state. Such

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development might be promenades, plazas, commercial uses, etc.

**Wayfaring:** Refers to traveling, especially by foot and the graphic information that provides direction, and orientation and interpretation of place for such a journey.

**Xeriscaping:** Refers to environmental design of residential and park land using various methods for minimizing the need for water use. See Parks and Recreation and Environmental Utilities xeriscaping information for an understanding and guidance of the expectations of xeriscaping for such environmental design in Medicine Hat.

**Yard:** That portion of a site which is not covered by a building.

### Area Redevelopment Plan Implementation Definitions:

**Shall:** Where shall is used in a policy, the policy is considered mandatory, however it is acknowledged that amendments to the *Land Use Bylaw* will be needed to fully implement certain aspects of the Plan. In a situation where a *Land Use Bylaw* amendment is required, until such time as the *Land Use Bylaw* is amended, the use of the word “shall” is not meant to indicate a mandatory requirement, but any such requirement shall be considered as

policy that should be taken into account in discretionary use applications.

**Should:** 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 intent of the policy.





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