



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those people for their generous individual contributions and support during the City of Medicine Hat Downtown Redevelopment Plan process to make Downtown Medicine Hat the Downtown of choice. We look forward to your active participation in implementing this Plan.

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And Alderman Ted Clugston, Robert Dumanowski, Julie Friesen, John Hamill, Graham Kelly, Ty Schneider, Jeremy Thompson and Jamie White.

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BRINGING BACK THE MAGIC TO THE DOWNTOWN



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

BRINGING BACK THE MAGIC TO OUR DOWNTOWN

This Plan is about strengthening our Downtown over the short and longer term. While the efforts will be primarily market driven, under the direction of the City, businesses and residents will also play an active role. Our Downtown once was a thriving centre for the community – day and night. Our Downtown's rich history, civic presence, specialty shopping, entertainment, and spectacular location on the South Saskatchewan River combine to make a sound foundation for our future success.

This Plan was developed in close liaison with City of Medicine Hat staff through technical meetings, a community ideas workshop and a Downtown design charrette. The Plan also responds to input provided by community members through open houses, and individual letter submissions. The Plan highlights a long-term vision but also creates a framework of practical steps to start the job right away even with short-term slow redevelopment projections.

The work has just begun. The City will take a leadership role with the City Centre Development Agency in facilitating the further improvement of the Downtown. The next steps include working closely with the development community, businesses, and residents as well as initiating a series of pilot projects to jump-start the redevelopment process.

Although we are proud of our heritage, I am excited about being part of creating an outstanding Downtown where people live, work, play, and learn in a thriving, safe, and diverse environment. Let us seize this opportunity, work together, and further develop our unique Downtown that will inspire all of us! Downtown Medicine Hat is and will be the heart of our community. Let's bring back the magic together!

Normand Boucher, Mayor
City of Medicine Hat



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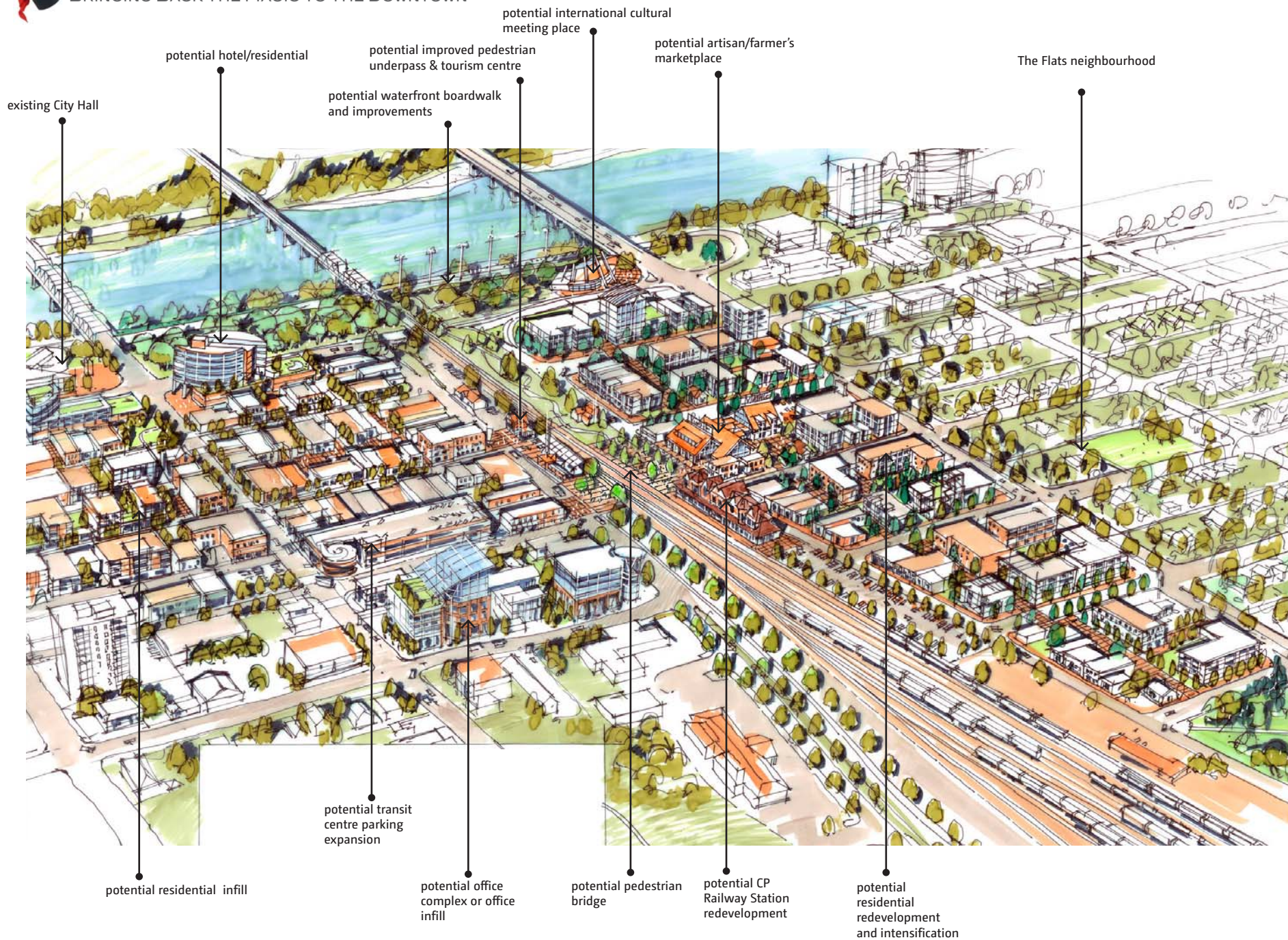


Fig. 1: A Vision of *The Hat* potential Downtown Redevelopment Plan



*“Make no small plans” -
Daniel Barnham, The Chicago Plan, 1909*

1.1 VISION 2040: THE MAGIC IS BACK!

The future is now! Imagine an exciting, fun, and thriving Downtown core during the day and evening. Redevelopment has surprised everyone with numerous new projects and exciting activities that make the Downtown the place to live, work, and play.

The Hat is hopping! Downtown Medicine Hat's core shopping street- 3rd Street has become a compact, exciting, and thriving mixed use area of specialty retail supported by residential uses above. A mixed use entertainment district along 2nd Street is anchored on the west by the Esplanade Theatre and the revitalized Monarch Theatre and on the east with a mix of restaurants and pubs in between. Along South Railway the new Medicine Hat tourism centre is overwhelmed with tour group demands for tours of the Historic Downtown and the Historic Clay District. The civic centre district along 1st Street has been further enhanced by improved pedestrian connections to the riverfront and an outstanding new hotel across from City Hall. A new International Cultural Centre meeting place on the eastern side of the railway tracks has become an award-winning centre for community gatherings, cultural festivals, and education. On the south side of Downtown is a thriving office district that builds on the attractive location and cultural amenities on its doorstep. The west side of Downtown has remained residential but has been revitalized by a variety of more compact housing choices that cater to wide variety of residents from singles to seniors and even young families. The convenience of having all the necessary conveniences within a five minute walk has made Downtown a walking and bike-first place.

The “Railway District” neighbourhood on the east side of the railway tracks has gone through a renaissance too. A permanent artisan/farmer's market has been developed along with a new IGA Market Place as the anchors of a new residential community with the retention of valuable historical buildings along North Railway Street. The Railway Station has also seen a dramatic make-over as high speed rail service has been resumed to Calgary and Regina with a connection to local transit outside its front door as well as Greyhound Bus service. Its marshalling yards have also been relocated out of town making way for a high technology park on the former lands adjoining the office district. The high technology business park – “Hat Tech” has become a national symbol of soil contamination cleanup and the rise of small cities as the new small business economic engine in Canada. Thriving businesses have grown from 200 to 400 in the Downtown area.

Medicine Hat has become a popular destination City with a vibrant, vital and fun Downtown. The City has retained its small town feel as a unique community outside of the major centres yet capitalizing on its energy, accessibility and relatively low cost of living. Downtown is now a beehive of activity and a new engine of prosperity. Residents and businesses are healthier, safer, and friendlier by the increase of activity throughout the day.

Who would have thought that this vision was possible! A coordinated effort, courage, and determination by Council, City Staff, the City Centre Development Agency, businesses, and residents have made it all possible. Medicine Hat again knows where the heart of the community beats strongest! The magic is back in the Hat's Downtown!

1.2 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS— HOW DO WE GET THERE FROM HERE?

- Start with a Practical and Achievable Action Plan: This Plan outlines specific short-term practical steps to build momentum and achieve early successes.
- Reinforce Downtown Redevelopment Potential: A Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan has been developed to protect and enhance the existing character areas of the Downtown.
- Create a Pedestrian First Downtown: A series of short-term pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular improvements are recommended to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety, access, emphasis, and activity in the Downtown.
- Reconnect with the Waterfront: As part of the pedestrian-first initiative, the Downtown should improve connections to and along the waterfront by considering a boardwalk and a potential rebirth of the HMS Medicine Hat paddle wheeler as a tourist element of getting people back on the water and connecting to destinations along the river.
- Lead Redevelopment: The City and the Centre City Development Authority (CCDA) should aggressively lead redevelopment by improving policies, creating incentives, and taking specific actions in land acquisition and property maintenance enforcement in liaison with the Downtown businesses and residents.
- Encourage Residential Development Downtown: Residential mixed use development should be emphasized and is important in increasing activity in the Downtown as a place to live, work, and play.
- Expand the CCDA Partnership: The Centre City Development Authority (CCDA) has already shown leadership in the Monarch Theatre redevelopment and is encouraged to continue its leadership role in liaison with the City of Medicine Hat and other partners in Downtown redevelopment.
- Target and Direct Right Growth: Encourage quality development and protect the important features and buildings in the Downtown to create a unique and outstanding place to shop, work, live, and play.



“Reconnecting with the river reconnects the Downtown with the City’s history and most important natural asset.” –
City resident



South Saskatchewan River was once an important transport route between communities



1.3 PLAN SUMMARY

This Redevelopment Plan combines two things:

1. *Practical actions to stimulate and steward redevelopment in the short-term; and*
2. *Illustrates the long-term redevelopment potential for the Downtown.*

This is a 30 year Plan with short, medium, and long-term actions that will provide a coordinated and unified way to affect major changes in the Downtown area. The City will take a leadership role in liaison with the City Centre Development Agency (CCDA). This Plan focuses on practical actions that are achievable in partnership with the community, businesses, and developers and various provincial and federal agencies, especially with respect to the heritage conservation recommendations.

“A vision without action is merely a dream.
Action without vision does not have direction.”
Anonymous

- Medicine Hat is projected to grow from approximately 60,000 to 95,000 people over the next 30 to 50 years. There is the potential to add 3,000 to 4,000 new residents to the Downtown over the long-term, representing approximately 10% of this growth projection.
- The short-term strategy focuses on preparing for growth and positioning Downtown as the place to be if you are considering entertainment, specialty retail, office, innovative multiple family residential, and hotel uses. At the same time, limiting specific office uses and small specialty retail outside the Downtown could help focus growth in the Downtown. Short-term initiatives also include improving 2nd and 3rd Streets as special shopping and entertainment streets focusing on the pedestrian safety and amenities.
- With a limited growth projection in the short-term, the Downtown growth will focus on attracting what it can do best - A concentrated mix of specialty retail, special activity programming, arts and culture, entertainment, and restaurants. A variety of new residences above shops fronting on the streets (maximum of 4 Stories) will be integrated into former parking lots, activating the street with positive safe activities. The 4 story Downtown will retain the pedestrian character while bringing activity throughout the day.
- There is also potential for residential redevelopment on the east side of the railway tracks in the Railway District. The economic and market analysis indicates that this development will take place in the medium to long-term. This means that in the short-term, a low profile development approach (4 stories) will work best and flows with the existing character in the Downtown area. In the medium to long-term, mid-rise (6 – 8 stories) may be considered on specific sites with the development designed sensitively to fit into the surrounding context. In the short-term, heritage conservation projects on North Railway and establishing a bus transit hub at the Railway Station on the east side of the railway tracks makes good sense.
- The Downtown pedestrian-first approach places pedestrians and bicycles first, transit second, service vehicles third, and single occupancy vehicles fourth in the future transportation planning for the Downtown. This Plan also includes better connections to and on the water by considering a tourism boat (e.g., HMS Medicine Hat) and a new boardwalk on the south side of the river.
- An infrastructure (water, sanitary sewer and storm water) assessment needs completion before major redevelopment is permitted. In addition, a parking strategic plan as well as a heritage inventory should be completed to help inform this Plan.

DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN PLAN SUMMARY

- Design Policies in this Plan guide various land uses, form, massing, and landscape enhancement as part of redevelopment, and ensure high quality design and implementation.
- This Plan will be implemented through a “team” effort. The City will facilitate a market-driven redevelopment model to attract and direct new development in the right areas depending on use, density, and character. It is recommended that the City create development amenities to help pay for private improvements as well as contribute to Downtown public improvements. This Plan considers the addition of 300 parking stalls in the Transit Terminal and a potential parkade adjoining the Esplanade Theatre over the longer term. These considerations will be further confirmed through a detailed parking study.
- Pilot projects will help launch implementation in the short, medium, and long-term. Timing will provide opportunity to initiate some pilot projects to create beautiful streets and storefronts. To spearhead this significant Downtown redevelopment effort, it is also suggested that the City of Medicine Hat form a Downtown Implementation Team that coordinates the implementation of the “Action List” that follows in the next section. The Downtown Implementation Team could consist of City staff, members of the City Centre Development Agency (CCDA), and select members of the business community.

“The Downtown has incredible potential.”
Mayor Normand Boucher

The Urban Design Plan (Section 4) is divided into five components:

1. The Urban Design Principles that outline guiding rules for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan;
2. The Urban Design Concept Plan that describes the physical skeleton for the Plan including special design districts, gateways, nodes, corridors, and transition areas;
3. The Downtown Redevelopment and Growth Plan that provides specific opportunities for redevelopment; each reflecting character, potential land uses, and unique development potential. This Plan outlines the design districts, land uses, form, and density directions, in scale with existing patterns and the future capacity for redevelopment;
4. The Heritage Overlay District Plan which identifies the area in which the buildings, landscapes, and culturally important elements should be assessed and potentially conserved; and
5. The Mobility Plan is an important layer to create a pedestrian-oriented community in the longer term. Street traffic flow, tree planting, lighting, activity areas, and improved transit are all part of this initiative. A priority to create green and safe streets is recommended to ignite the importance of this Plan in the redevelopment of the Downtown.



Fig. 2: Downtown Urban Design Plan

TAKING ACTION

PHASE 1: BUILDING BLOCKS FOR REDEVELOPMENT:

(Short-term: 1 to 5 years)

ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNICATION:

(Lead: City of Medicine Hat and the City Centre Development Agency (CCDA))

- Review opportunities to form a Downtown Implementation Team (City, CCDA, and Business members).
- Consider further acquiring key parcels in the Downtown to improve image and help stimulate positive redevelopment (e.g., condemned buildings, vacant sites).
- Ensure that Universal Access to all is included in any Downtown improvement.
- Continue to support the Police Bike Program in the Downtown.
- Create a Downtown marketing package for potential developers.

TRANSPORTATION, PARKING AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

(Lead: City of Medicine Hat)

- Some of the following will be achieved:
 - Examine bicycle lanes as part of a Roadway System Masterplan update;
 - Complete a detail Design Study to convert 2nd and 3rd Streets back to two ways following completion of traffic modeling;
 - Complete a Parking Study to build on the Parking Inventory work;
 - Develop a detailed plan for the redesign and pedestrian underpass improvements across the railway tracks;
 - Complete a feasibility study to potentially relocate the existing Transit Terminal to 5th or 6th Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Streets; and
 - Complete an Infrastructure Assessment Study to determine what upgrades are required to facilitate development based on short, medium and long -term development capacity.

BEAUTIFUL STREETS, PLACES AND STOREFRONTS PILOT PROJECTS:

(Lead: City of Medicine Hat, Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District, and City Centre Development Agency (CCDA) with Province)

- Complete a Heritage Inventory (Statements of Significance) in the Downtown and search sponsors (Municipal, Province, and Federal Funding) to support heritage conservation projects including landscapes and cultural elements.
- Develop a “Historic Trail” loop in the Downtown and The Flats with interpretive signage and appropriate guide materials available on the City’s website, at City Hall, or through guided tours by the Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District.

- Work with the CCDA, and businesses to initiate a streets and storefronts improvement project in the Downtown that can be used on specific streets (e.g., 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Streets).
- Develop Funding Sources: Source Federal and Provincial as well as other potential funding (Rotary Clubs) to focus on greening the streets in the Downtown in liaison with the businesses and development interests.

1.4 AN ACTION PLAN: THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO REDEVELOPMENT

Phase 1: 2nd Street Revitalization (Underway)

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan establishes a vision and the policy framework for Downtown Medicine Hat over the next 20-30 years. The Plan is also intended to be an Action Plan therefore, a Phase 1 Pilot Project for the 600 block of 2nd Street SE is being prepared to stimulate an overall revitalization of the Downtown in terms of economic, social and environmental improvements.

Revitalization success for the Downtown will require the implementation of a variety of redevelopment design ideas, incentives, funding and partnerships. The Phase 1 Pilot Project will include, but is not limited to the following considerations:

- A physical design/concept for streetscape improvements redesigning the mid-block crossings, lighting, street furniture, enhanced pedestrian crossings, street trees, signage and public art;
- Street activity in the way of programming for all seasons and land uses required on the block;
- Heritage preservation of buildings and streetscape character;
- Establishing incentives and partnerships for façade improvements, filling empty storefronts, and developing vacant lands; and
- Determining costing and funding mechanisms.

The Pilot Project will be presented to City Council for their consideration and approval.



The future of the Downtown depends on upgrading heritage resources to meet current standards

POLICY:

(Lead: City of Medicine Hat)

- Complete an Area Redevelopment Plan that will establish regulations, guidelines and new land use districts to facilitate mixed use development.
- Create a Heritage Overlay District that will provide a framework for funding Downtown heritage conservation with the financial and technical support of the Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments.
- Complete a Street Improvements Master Plan for the Downtown that incorporates lighting, tree planting, other street furniture and sidewalk enhancements.
- Refine the Green Links Plan program for the Downtown and connect it to streets and trails associated with new development as it comes on stream.
- Review the Municipal Development Plan and amend to incorporate the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and Area Redevelopment Regulations and Guidelines and Policies.
- Complete a Wayfinding Study for the Downtown that includes information and directional signage and design techniques.

PHASE 2: REDEVELOPMENT BEGINS

(Medium-Term: 5 years to 15 years) (Lead: City of Medicine Hat with CCDA)

- Consider a parkade adjoining the Esplanade Theatre if more capacity is required to further support the Downtown Shopping and Entertainment Districts.
- Complete the building of the Civic District with an International Cultural Meeting place on the east side of the railway tracks.
- Consider a pedestrian overpass in cooperation with CP Rail.
- Provide support services and amenity improvements in tandem with redevelopment.
- Direct higher density residential demand to the Railway District and in-fill development in the Downtown Districts west of Railway.

PHASE 3: MAJOR REDEVELOPMENT

(Long-term: 15 to 30 years) (Lead: City of Medicine Hat and CCDA)

- Direct further higher density residential demand to the Railway District and in-fill lower densities in the other areas.
- Provide support services and amenities in tandem with the other improvements.



Aerial Photo of the Downtown looking northwest, circa 1970's; photo # 0360-0002 Courtesy of Esplanade Archives Division, Medicine Hat, AB.



2.0 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE:

The intent of this Downtown Redevelopment Plan is to define a vision and conceptual development framework over the next 20-30 years. This Plan will also function as a foundation for the development of the Area Redevelopment Plan that will provide detailed regulations and guidelines for development.

“We need to develop a vision that includes a rich mix of uses to bring residents Downtown on a regular basis.”
City Alderman

2.1 Plan Study Area and Scope

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan study area is illustrated here; Stretching from the South Saskatchewan River on the north, Maple Avenue on the east, Rotary Park on the South, then across the railway tracks to 6th Avenue, north to 5th Street, and finally west to 3rd Avenue forming the western boundary. The study area covers approximately 170 acres – consisting of 110 acres west of the railway tracks, 20 acres of railway yards, and 40 acres east of the railway tracks. Most of the study area can be crossed on foot in 5-10 minutes as shown by the 400m walking circle below.

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan is intended to set the development strategy and urban design framework for the Downtown over the next 30 years, making every effort to connect to the surrounding neighbourhoods through an efficient pedestrian, bikeway, transit, and vehicular network. At the same time, the Downtown Redevelopment Plan will create appropriate building and landscape transitions to adjoining neighbours and contribute to adding value to the surrounding uses through specific design guidelines. The Downtown Redevelopment Plan further recommends that Districts are implemented to spearhead development and reinforce the unique characteristics of an area. These would require a mix of specific land uses, a range of densities, building form, activity programs and/or amenities. The Downtown Redevelopment Districts would also require special amenity contributions in order to fund growth and the accompanying increase in amenities.

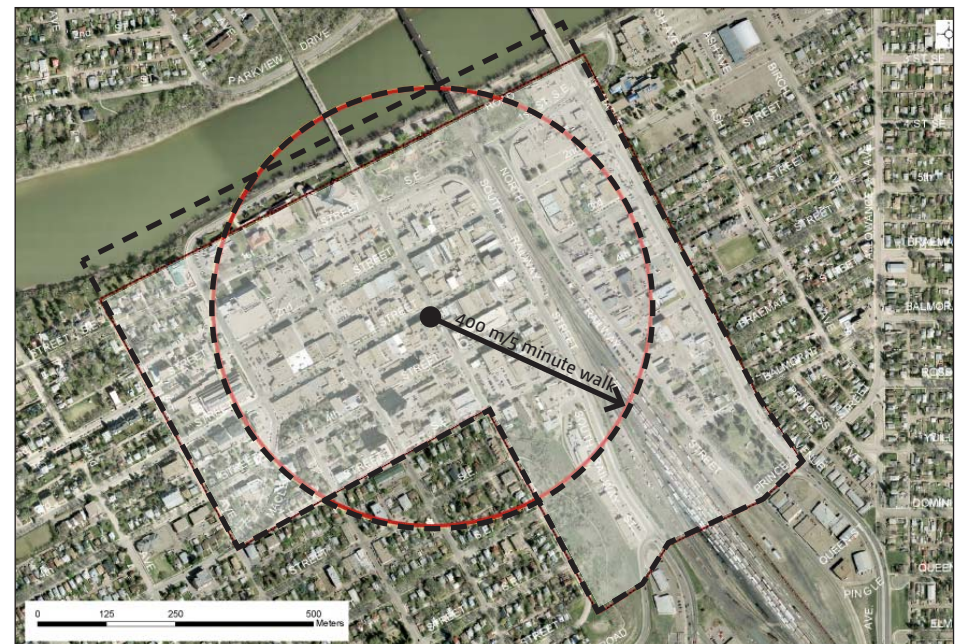


Fig. 3: Downtown Redevelopment Plan study area boundary and 5-10 minute walking circle.

2.2 HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Medicine Hat has a rich history and the name itself has many stories following it. Its strategic location at the junction of the South Saskatchewan River and the CP Railway, with rich natural resources of natural gas, clay, and brick spurred industrial development. The economic boom between 1909-1914 increased the population to over 10,000 people. These years saw Medicine Hat as a prosperous City with first class Hotels and a significant connection to both rail and water transportation.

Following the Second World War the Downtown saw a temporary resurgence in the 1950's as the place to be and shop but as shopping malls and suburban development expanded, Downtown declined again. Revitalization planning efforts in the 1980's tried to rekindle the attraction to Downtown through physical improvements with limited success. A commitment by the City in 1983 to build a new City Hall and Esplanade Performing Arts Centre in 2005 reinforced Downtown as the civic and cultural heart of the City.

The need for a Downtown Redevelopment Plan that serves as a basis to revitalize the Downtown and bring back the magic is paramount. The current land use zoning allows most uses and has no density or height limits. The time is now to create a framework for development so that the Downtown conserves what is best and is recognized as a unique place with significant opportunities.

"This part of the country seems to have all hell for a basement (referring to natural gas), and the only trap door appears to be Medicine Hat. And you don't even think of changing the name of your town. It's all your own and the only hat of its kind on earth."

Rudyard Kipling 1907.



Toronto Street SW; 042.0004; Courtesy of Esplanade Archives Division, Medicine Hat, AB



Main Street Looking South; 0424.0003; Courtesy of Esplanade Archives Division, Medicine Hat, AB.



Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park; Courtesy of Esplanade Archives Division, Medicine Hat, AB.



Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park circa 1907; Courtesy of Esplanade Archives Division, Medicine Hat, AB.



2.3 PLAN GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Ewart Duggan House; Designated Provincial Historic resource is the oldest remaining brick residential structure in Alberta. It is an example of the turn of the century residential architectural style using local brick materials, and houses the offices of The Historic Society of Medicine Hat and District.

Goals

1. Create a smart and sustainable development framework: Anchor the Downtown Redevelopment Plan in principles of sustainability that are practical and achievable in the short, medium and long-term.
2. Build on the previous initiatives: Expand on the Downtown Revitalization and enhancement work that has been completed.
3. Include the community: Engage the community and build consensus for the Plan.
4. Create a clear vision: Define what Downtown is and could be in terms of its local importance and its role within the greater Medicine Hat community and Region.
5. Create the economic basis for future planning: Create a sound market and land economics rationale for the Plan.
6. Inform other initiatives: The Downtown Redevelopment Plan will inform future city-wide planning as part of the Municipal Development Plan policies and other related initiatives.
7. Develop supported and informed strategies: Create a clear and self-evident set of “directions” that set a clear framework for development and programs for implementation in the Downtown.
8. Conserve the sense of place: Develop a Plan that respects and enhances the special Downtown Medicine Hat character, history and elements that make it unique.
9. Think broader and more inclusive: Approach the Downtown as a part of the greater community surrounding Downtown.
10. Ensure that recommendations are timely and economically feasible: Review directions and recommendations so that these are realistic and timely and that they fit with the City’s overall growth strategy.
11. Create a practical and achievable implementation strategy: Deliver a set of actions that combine City resources with community commitment and partnerships in a fair and equitable manner.
12. Provide a foundation for the detailed regulations and guidelines in the Area Redevelopment Plan.

GUIDING SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES

One of the key success indicators for the Downtown is that it can become a pedestrian-oriented place where one can live, work, and play as part of a complete community. The following sustainable guiding principles are reinforced in the Downtown Development Policies section. The Downtown Development Policies section will explain in further detail some of the green and sustainable features encouraged or required in either the implementation of new development or enhancements in the Downtown.

Economic

- Build on the unique aspects of the Downtown
- Increase the housing opportunities in the Downtown
- Expand the specialty shopping and services in the Downtown
- Encourage desirable night time activities and programming

Social

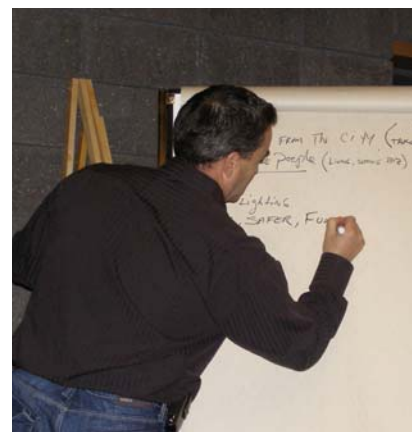
- Expand and reinforce the community focus of the Downtown
- Design any improvements in the Downtown for universal access for all
- Increase the arts and culture aspects of Downtown
- Fit new development with the existing form and character
- Encourage affordability by design and choice
- Increase safety and security
- Program for 4 seasons

Environmental

- Make it sustainable and green by appropriate tree planting, other landscaping, and introducing a LEED (Leadership through Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Standard for civic buildings
- Retain existing buildings where possible and upgrade them to be more resilient to fire and other potential hazards
- Increase the pedestrian, bike and transit orientation
- Build for the environment with materials, waste, and solar orientation in mind

“The Downtown needs more residents to make it safer and more active especially during the evening.”

City Resident



Numerous consultations, open houses, workshops with residents, businesses City Staff, and professional consultants informed the Urban Design Plan and process for implementation.



2.4 PROCESS

As a result of the public process and “Design Charrette”, the following innovative ideas, opportunities, and challenges emerged as a foundation for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

CONSERVATION OF IMPORTANT HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES:

The uniqueness of building architecture, materials, and rich history are part of the foundation blocks to create a unique and enduring place.

LEADERSHIP IN RETAIL AND MIXED USE:

It is important that we continue to enrich and attract new commercial office and retail uses as well as incorporate residential above commercial to generate an even more vibrant, attractive, and prosperous Downtown.

CAPITALIZING ON DEVELOPMENT GAPS:

There are a number of site redevelopment opportunities in the Downtown (special sites) that provide significant opportunity for redevelopment.

CREATE A SOUND FOUNDATION BASED ON CREATIVE BUSINESS SENSE:

Elaborate and expand our retail strategy so that the Downtown improves and builds on past successes.

BEGIN TO PURSUE THE ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE IDEA:

Create an Entertainment and Culture program as part of the driving force behind the urban design plan.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

There is a need for a comprehensive Downtown Redevelopment Plan that incorporates Economics, Culture, Land Development Strategy, and Urban Design.

THE PRACTICAL PHYSICAL VISION:

The City and prospective developers need a physical vision of buildings, landscape, transit, and land use to get excited about and invest in the Downtown’s potential. A physical vision has a better chance of attracting the best developers and incorporating a more sustainable pedestrian, transit, and biking orientation.

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan process started with sessions with Staff and the City Centre Development Agency members and a Council Workshop in July and August 2008. An Ideas Workshop with businesses in the Downtown in the evening of October 6th, 2008 generated a variety of rich ideas, opportunities and constraints through discussions. The Ideas Workshop was part of an intensive 4-day “Design Charrette” from October 6th to 9th, where the consulting team worked closely with Staff and the City Centre Development Agency to develop ideas, options, and alternative development strategies. A public presentation and discussion concluded the Design Charrette during the evening on October 9th. The ideas and overall Redevelopment Plan were well received by the public (see Appendix A for further details).

Over the fall, the consulting team refined the ideas through discussions and further analysis and research. This process evolved an action-oriented Plan with a short and long-term vision. The Plan’s focus is on actions in the short-term including necessary studies, policy development, development incentives, and pilot projects. The revised draft Downtown Redevelopment Plan was presented and discussed with the City Commissioners in December 2008.

The Draft Plan’s key ideas and directions were presented to Council for preliminary review in February 2009 with further refinements and Public Open Houses followed in the spring of 2009. The final Plan was approved in the fall of 2009 by City Council.

Workshop on October 6, 2008 with Downtown business representatives and City Centre Development Agency (CCDA)



3.0 PLAN FRAMEWORK

3.1 Physical and Social Analysis

In this section, Downtown Medicine Hat's physical, social and economic contexts are analyzed to provide a background for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.



Context and Edges

Medicine Hat's Downtown is well defined by the South Saskatchewan River and escarpment. The Downtown is set in the picturesque South Saskatchewan River valley adjacent to the river and surrounded by residential uses excepting the CP Railway and the southeast commercial uses. Retention of street end views and landmark buildings (including the three churches) will be of critical importance to retain and enhance the Downtown.

The CP Railway tracks divide the western part of the Downtown from some of the original Downtown commercial on the east side of the railways tracks in The Flats. The escarpment on the south side of the Downtown forms a natural southern boundary. Views northward as approaching the Downtown and CPR Tracks include the Finlay Bridge and landscape features in the distant frame.



South Saskatchewan River forms the northern boundary



Views from the escarpment towards The Flats. CPR tracks form a physical barrier between the Downtown and The Flats.



View down 6th Avenue from the escarpment northwards towards Finlay Bridge



Heritage Resources

The Downtown has a significant number of heritage buildings, landscapes and cultural elements that should be recognized and protected or enhanced. A comprehensive historic inventory is underway and will inform a strategy for the future management of these important historical and cultural resources as they contribute directly to uniqueness and place. The Downtown historical roots and urban structure has been retained and can easily be distinguished as these provide the framework of the traditional city centre – the street grid, the retail core, civic precinct, railway corridor, office, and entertainment/culture – are all comprehensible and therefore familiar and inviting.



A.



E.



B.



F.



C.



D.



G.

A few examples of the many significant Heritage buildings and landscapes in the Downtown: From top to bottom and left to Right; A) CP Railway Station, B) Medicine Hat Courthouse, C) Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, D) Finlay Bridge, E) St. John's Presbyterian Church, F) North Railway storefronts, G) Canadian Bank of Commerce



Hutchings & Sharp Store

SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES:

1. **CP Railway Station:** Still intact and functional (most communities have lost their original stations or they sit unused) - clearly a major form determinant in the evolution of the Downtown - an historical 'belly button' (Provincial Historic Building Resource Designation in 1991).
2. **Cypress Club:** Speaks directly of the original frontier pioneer days when ranching was #1 (Provincial Historic Resource Designation, 2002).
3. **Medicine Hat Court House:** Law and order, an essential element of democracy and maturity (Provincial Historic Resource Designation, 1978).
4. **Ewart - Duggan House:** Oldest surviving brick residential building in Alberta - clearly speaks to the importance of the clay industries which have played such a significant role in the development of the City (Provincial Historic Resource Designation, 1993).
5. **Cousins Residence:** Historic residence of significance on First Street on the edge of Downtown (Provincial Historic Resource Designation, 1982).
6. **Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce:** Early towns had no stature until there was a bank - statement of confidence in the community (Provincial Historic Resource Designation, 1991);
7. **Hutchings & Sharp Store:** This store was an outfitter and speaks directly to the origins of the Downtown (Heritage Statement of Significance complete).
8. **The Four Churches:** The 5th Avenue Memorial United, St. John's Presbyterian, and St. Barnabas Anglican Churches in the Downtown and the St. Patrick's Catholic Church across the South Saskatchewan River reflect cultural history and also significant brick and masonry work in the buildings and spires. These are cultural and architectural landmarks that help anchor the historical significance of the Downtown as the spiritual centre of the community.
9. **Numerous Storefronts:** There are also significant collections of storefronts in the Downtown creating intact streetscapes. Unfortunately, many of these storefronts have been covered over with aluminum siding or other materials that mask the original brick and woodwork.
10. **Riverside Veterans' Memorial Park:** This park was the first formal park and is considered an invaluable memorial to the war veterans, tree conservation and has a collection of different of historical elements that speak to the railway history of the city.
11. **Finlay Bridge and CP Railway Bridge:** These bridges speak to the industrial importance of the river for river boats and the railway in the formation of the city. The Finlay Bridge narrow roadway is the original structure that crossed the South Saskatchewan River.
12. **There have been two "Main" Streets in Downtown Medicine Hat** - One on the west side of Downtown 3rd Street (2nd Street is also named "Main Street") and one east of the railway tracks on North Railway Street. Both "Main Streets" have remained significantly intact to reflect the character of the original Downtown and should be recognized as significant historic 'blocks'.



Land Use

Medicine Hat's Downtown includes and is surrounded by a diverse mix of land uses, including residential, commercial and industrial. Some of the land within the Downtown is under-utilized, providing redevelopment potential. The Downtown area has few residents and this leads to safety and security issues in the evenings without positive activities to keep the Downtown vibrant. Although parts of the Downtown are successful and are recognized as such by residents, other parts have issues which must be dealt with if the area as a whole is to move forward.

Under-Utilized Land Areas

The accompanying Building Coverage map (below left) illustrates the under-utilized nature of some of the lands outside the Downtown area. Some of this land is consumed by parking. In some cases, these land parcels are under-utilized considering their proximity to Downtown or used for surface parking and could serve more appropriate and highly desirable uses such as residential and/or commercial. The Developable Areas Map (below right) illustrates potential parcels that are either vacant or have redevelopment opportunities.



Transportation and Mobility

The Downtown offers significant opportunities to become more pedestrian/bicycle focused while still retaining vehicular efficiency around the edges of the Downtown as the City grows (See Mobility Plan 4.7 for detailed Analysis and Recommendations):

1. The one way - 2nd and 3rd Streets offer the opportunity to change them to two way streets.
2. A parking inventory has been completed but parking strategies should be developed to optimize the existing parking efficiency and plan for growth in the Downtown;
3. The existing Transit Terminal could be relocated to the street to offer one hundred more parking spaces to the Downtown and “day light” the transit shelters along 5th or 6th Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Streets (further study required).
4. The pedestrian underpass could be improved to enhance connections between the east and west sides of the CP railway tracks.
5. A pedestrian overpass should be considered in the medium to long-term as part of the redevelopment of the Railway area east of the CP railway tracks (4th or 5th Avenues – further study required).
6. A street enhancement plan should be further developed that will include electrical lighting, renovated mid-block crossings, intersections upgrades and enhancements, street furniture, and a street tree replacement program.
7. An improved pedestrian connections plan should be developed, extending to the surrounding parks and historical and cultural features through improved signage and wayfinding information.



Greyhound regional bus and parcel service is currently located on 2nd street

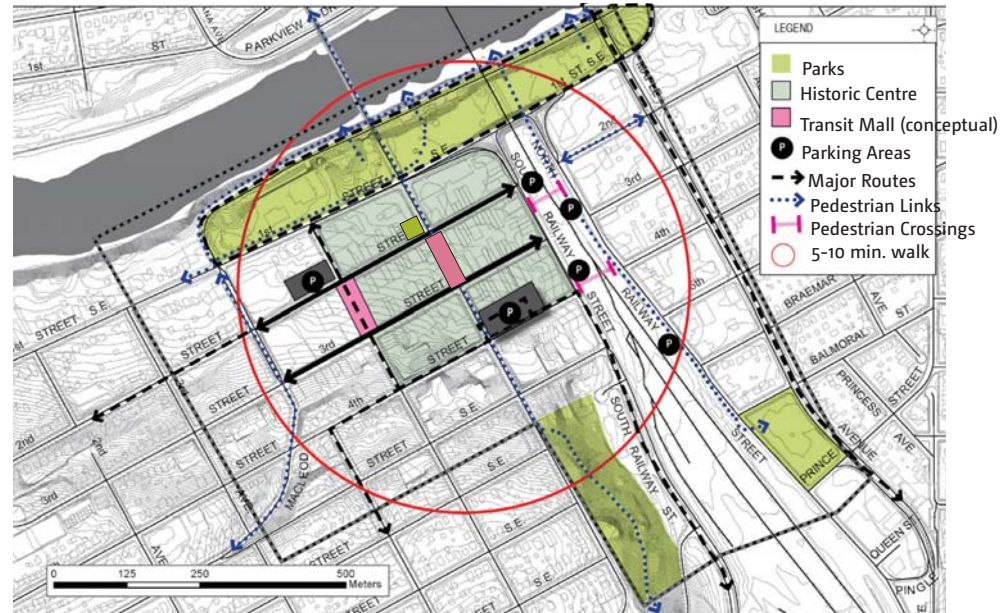


Fig. 7: Mobility Map - Medicine Hat Downtown Study Area



Existing Transit Terminal is perceived as cold, not welcoming and unsafe for transit users.



Existing mid-block crossings perceived as unsafe, reduce visibility for both traffic and crossing pedestrians.



Existing pedestrian underpass perceived as cold, not welcoming and unsafe. This is the primary pedestrian access route to the Downtown for residents living in The Flats neighbourhood.



SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES	
Opportunities	Challenges
Residential Uses: Residential uses in the Downtown as part of redevelopment to increase safety and activity throughout the day and evening.	Limited demand in the Downtown.
Infrastructure: Existing sewer, stormwater and water lines in place.	Condition of existing pipes and capacity for expansion.
Entertainment and Culture: Expanding the entertainment and culture in the Downtown to increase day and night use.	Reopening the Monarch Theatre and expanding the theatre and entertainment base.
River Connection: Creating uses and activity along the South Saskatchewan River.	Floodplain, environmental sensitivity, and safety limitations.
Heritage: Heritage Building conservation program and renewal.	The costs of building conservation versus redevelopment.
Mobility: Traffic calming for pedestrians in the Downtown.	The car traffic and one way streets in the Downtown.
Look: Improving the maintenance of buildings and landscape.	Absentee landlords and enforcement/incentives program.
Railway Barrier: Pedestrian connections over the Railway tracks.	Cost of bridge structure and who pays.
Redevelopment: Vacant development sites in the Downtown.	Creating quality redevelopment with a mix of commercial and residential uses.
Safety: Improve safety and security in the Downtown (lighting and other elements).	Need activity centre for youth and managing less desirable activities.
Housing Choice: Providing more diversity of housing in the Downtown (affordability).	Incentives to create more affordable units without compromising quality.
Parking: Improving parking in the Downtown area.	Cost of parking structures and challenges with redevelopment of parking lots.
Image: Re-branding of Downtown (reinvent uniqueness).	Challenge of developing an authentic image that is enduring.
Mixed Use: Blend and amount of commercial retail and office uses.	Creating a "critical mass" of some uses so people come and stay in the Downtown as the place to be.
Winter City: 4 Season Downtown for activities and events.	Winter climate requires indoor options.
Unlimited Potential: C4 Downtown Zone has no height and density limit.	Need to protect views and building character (form and massing).
Greening Downtown: Tree replanting in the Downtown for right size, colour, and beauty.	Replacing existing trees and associated costs.
Clean up soil contamination in the Downtown.	Cost of cleanup and extent of contamination.
Improve image of the Downtown.	Condition and cleanup of some the buildings in the Downtown.
Economic growth associated with increased activities and mixed uses in the Downtown.	Overall limited growth projected for the Downtown and the overall City of Medicine Hat.

Table 1: Summary of Opportunities and Challenges

3.2 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OVERVIEW



Vacancies and marginal uses on the ground floor affect perceived safety and attractiveness of the Downtown.

A market and economic analysis was completed by Coriolis Consulting Corp. in December 2008 as an input to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan. The objectives of the market and economic analysis were to:

- Estimate the total potential in Medicine Hat for multifamily residential, retail/service, and office development over the next 20 years.
- Evaluate the major factors that will determine the share of total City urban development that could realistically be expected to occur in Downtown.
- Forecast the likely pace of urban development in Downtown over the next 20 years.
- Identify steps the City could take to increase the share of City development that happens Downtown.
- This section of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan summarizes the findings of the market and economic analysis.

CURRENT PATTERNS AND RECENT TRENDS

Residential

- Downtown's share of total City population has been declining, because almost all new residential development has been occurring in suburban locations. Over the last decade only a few new multifamily units have been built in the central part of the City.
- Multifamily unit sales prices in Medicine Hat are not high enough to support high density, concrete development with underground parking. Most new multifamily development is likely to be wood-frame.
- Multifamily residential development is probably only financially viable on vacant or very low density sites in the central area. Sites already improved with commercial space are not likely to be viable redevelopment sites, unless the improvements are in very poor condition and vacant.

Retail/Service

- Downtown's prominence as a retail centre has declined over the last several decades. The central area currently only has about 19% of all retail and service space.
- Almost all new retail development has been occurring in suburban locations, mainly in the form of large format retail stores in the Highway 1 corridor.
- Downtown has an opportunity to focus on restaurant, entertainment, specialty retail, and other smaller commercial uses that do not require large sites, large parking lots, and a location on the highway.
- Retail use (even at low density) supports high land value, compared to multifamily residential or office.



Office

- Downtown is still the City's major office centre, with about 54% of all office space, but this share has been declining.
- Medicine Hat is not a major office centre. Much office space is occupied by uses (e.g. medical/dental, insurance, realty) that tend to locate where residential growth is occurring, so Downtown's share of City office space may continue to decline unless a greater share of residential development locates in the central area.
- Because most civic and government facilities are in Downtown, this helps to attract some kinds of office uses and will allow Downtown to remain a significant office centre.
- Office rents are not high enough to support high density, concrete office buildings with underground parking.

Future Development Prospects for Downtown

The chart on the following page estimates the total amount of urban development activity anticipated in the City of Medicine Hat over the next two decades or so and shows a range of lower and upper bounds on the share of this development that could be expected to occur in Downtown and adjacent areas such as The Flats. These estimates are based on estimated total population growth in Medicine Hat of 25,000 to 35,000 people over the next 20 years.

"The Midnight Madness special event Downtown had 20% more business participation this year. That means new businesses are coming Downtown. Sales were up this year too during the event."

George Webb, Executive Director, City Centre Development Agency



North Railway historic retail/commercial Main Street



The Railway District within The Flats has potential for redevelopment



The Railway District in The Flats has potential for rezoning to mixed use and densification

Land Use	Total City Forecast (20 Years)	Downtown Share (Low Estimate)	Downtown Share (High Estimate)
Apartments	4,500 to 6,400 units	5% (225 to 320 units)	10% (450 to 640 units)
Other residential (townhouse, suites, coach houses, etc)	2,200 to 3,200 units	10% (220 to 320 units)	25% (500 to 800 units)
Total multifamily residential	6,700 to 9,600 units (about 335 to 480 units per year)	445 to 640 units	950 to 1,440 units
Office	200,000 to 300,000 square feet (10,000 to 15,000 square feet per year)	20% (40,000 to 60,000 square feet in total or about 2,000 to 3,000 square feet per year)	50% (100,000 to 150,000 square feet in total, or about 5,000 to 7,500 square feet per year)
Retail	1,500,000 to 2,100,000 square feet (75,000 to 105,000 square feet per year)	1.5% (25,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet in total)	3.5% (50,000 to 70,000 square feet)

Table 2: Development Estimates

Main Implications for Downtown Redevelopment

- The overall pace of urban development in Downtown will be slow.
- Most new development will be low-rise. Residential unit prices and office lease rates do not support high-rise concrete construction costs.
- Some sites should be designated for retail, but some should be designated only for residential and office (with retail at grade).
- Existing surface parking lots in Downtown will likely remain for a long time and, in any case, these are needed to provide off-street parking for older office and retail properties that do not have on-site parking.
- Higher density development and land assembly should be encouraged east of the rail tracks but not in the historic centre.
- The residential area south of Downtown is highly suited to gentle densification, with townhouses, semi-detached, coach houses, and suites.



The Railway District in The Flats has potential for rezoning and residential infill development

Actions that Could Improve Downtown's Development Prospects

- Improve the public realm, to enhance the pedestrian environment and streetscape.
- Continue to concentrate civic and government facilities in the Downtown centre.
- Zone lands in Downtown to allow residential over retail or office over retail, but do not zone many lands to allow only low density retail. Make City-owned properties available on terms that will support new development. Allow low-rise development on these sites.



4.0 URBAN DESIGN PLAN - 4.1 OVERVIEW AND “4C” APPROACH

This Urban Design Plan is divided into five parts:

1. *The first part begins with Urban Design Principles that can be used in the future to guide development decisions;*
2. *The second part explains the Urban Design Concept that includes the major physical framework for the Plan including gateways, districts, nodes, corridors, and landmarks;*
3. *The third part - The Downtown Redevelopment Districts and Growth Plan that provides specific opportunities for redevelopment- each reflecting character, potential land uses, and unique development potential. This Plan outlines the design districts, land uses, form, and density directions, in scale with existing patterns and the future capacity for redevelopment;*
4. *The fourth part is the Heritage Overlay District which defines the important area for building, landscape, and culture conservation; and*
5. *The fifth part outlines the Mobility Plan which identifies how people and bicycles can move around easier and safer with a greater transit emphasis while still respecting vehicle and service requirements.*

Medicine Hat Downtown has significant redevelopment potential over the long-term. At the same time, the goal to retain its uniqueness is paramount. Significant interest in the Downtown is an indication that a well-directed plan that coordinates public and private infrastructure, public realm, and additional community services is needed. This Plan could accelerate even the 30 year redevelopment time table as it represents a coordinated approach to community amenities and services. The challenge will be managing this transformation so that existing uses are supported while new development is encouraged that fits with the character of the Downtown.

The “4 C” Approach

The Downtown Medicine Hat “4 C” approach sets a foundation for the Urban Design Plan that follows:

- 1. Conserve** the historic buildings, landscapes and cultural history of the Downtown:
 - a. *Complete an inventory of the historic buildings and landscapes;*
 - b. *Encourage conservation efforts to restore these buildings and landscapes; and*
 - c. *Create a “Heritage District” that recognizes the importance of the Downtown including a ‘heritage walk’ and signage.*
- 2. Concentrate** office uses, specialty uses, and arts & culture uses in the Downtown area:
 - a. *Make the Downtown the focus for specialty retail in Medicine Hat;*
 - b. *Encourage office to continue to locate in the Downtown core area; and*
 - c. *Expand the arts and culture component in the Downtown.*
- 3. Connect** the Downtown area to the rest of the surrounding community by a comprehensive transit, pedestrian, and bicycle network:
 - a. *Improve the pedestrian environment in and to the Downtown;*
 - b. *Expand the bicycle facilities and bicycle trails to and within the Downtown; and*
 - c. *Introduce a “Transit Street” in the Downtown that improves transit presence, frequency of use, and facilities.*
- 4. Complement** the existing character with appropriate intensification that fits and respects Downtown Medicine Hat’s unique scale:
 - a. *Encourage residential and commercial mixed use redevelopment where it is appropriate;*
 - b. *Expand the residential component in new developments in the Downtown; and*
 - c. *Ensure that new development fits with the historic buildings in scale, massing, and materials.*



4.2 HAT SMART AND SUSTAINABLE REDEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

- **Respect Existing Uses, Landscapes, and Buildings:** Retain heritage buildings, significant trees and associated landscapes, where appropriate.
- **Create a Complete Pedestrian-Oriented Downtown:** Build a compact and efficient Downtown that is connected by foot and bicycle to the surrounding community.
- **Minimize Impacts of Redevelopment:** Respect the adjoining neighbourhoods in sensitive redevelopment that contributes green space and amenities while providing appropriate built form.
- **Improve Mobility:** Encourage a variety of transportation networks with reduced emphasis on the automobile (greenways, walkways, bike routes, and transit) to the adjoining areas.
- **Create Universal Access:** Require access for all in new developments and in any street improvements through innovative design and programming.
- **Integrate Flexibility and Innovation:** Promote a variety of uses, flexibility of phasing and growth that can respond to market demand and a variety of tenants.
- **Maximize Environmental Sensitivity and Soft Touch:** Enhance the connection to the setting in terms of views, and links to the adjacent parts of the City.
- **Provide Safe and Social Public Places:** Encourage the development of linked public places for gathering and interaction between the various uses.
- **Conserve Energy and Reduce Waste:** Use innovative building and site planning methods to conserve energy and reduce waste.
- **Encourage Environmental Stewardship and Healthy Living:** Promote continued environmental responsibility and lifestyles including tree stewardship, transit use, waste reduction, and energy conservation.
- **Create Enduring Value:** Ensure that public and private investment in public infrastructure is well planned to gain maximum value especially for public safety and amenity in the area.



4.3 DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

This Concept Plan outlines the important physical components and Downtown Redevelopment Districts that will shape Downtown Medicine Hat's landscape. The following summarizes each of the key components and are illustrated in the accompanying Plan.

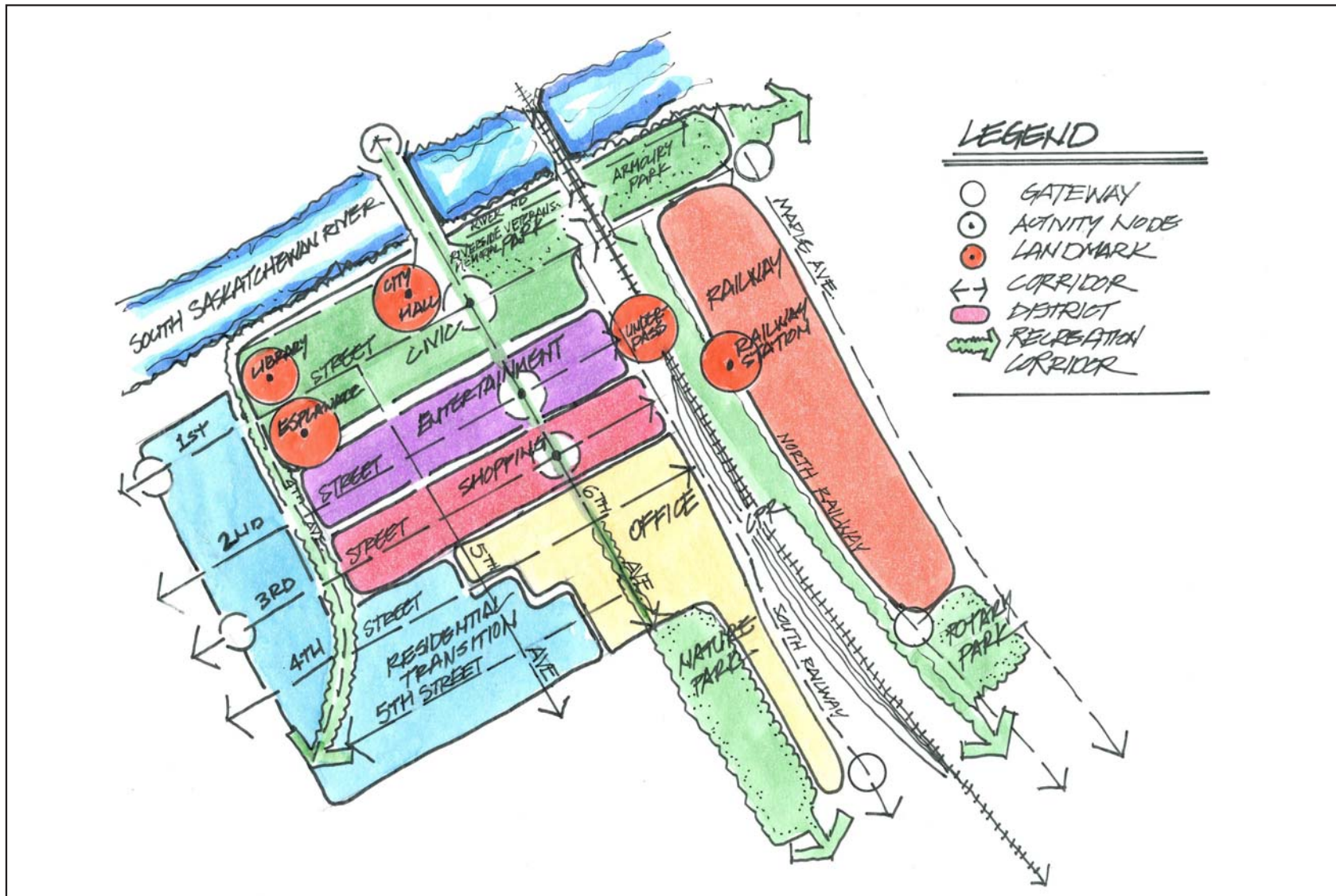


Fig. 8: Downtown Redevelopment Plan Concept

A. Gateways:

There are six primary gateways or entrances to the Downtown.

These gateways will define the major entrances and exits from the Downtown. They symbolize entering the core area of the City and should have special definition that is recognizable. A “Downtown signature” sign on both or one side of the street, highlighted by special lighting and/or planting is recommended and could be part of an extension from the sidewalk into the roadway, similar to a parking or crosswalk bulge. Alternatively, the sign could be in the sidewalk area but this approach limits the definition and emphasis as a true gateway where you pass through from one place into another.

B. Districts, Landmarks, Nodes, and Blocks:

There are six Downtown Redevelopment Districts and one proposed special Railway area for Downtown Medicine Hat (see next section for details). These Districts distinguish land uses and character areas in the Downtown. The Districts will conserve the block pattern and traditional street massing of buildings and storefronts.

The following Landmarks (illustrated on p. 14 and 15) are also Activity Nodes in the Downtown:

Esplanade Theatre/Museum, City Library, and City Hall. Other landmarks include the three churches in the Downtown and other historic buildings such as the Cypress Club, Medicine Hat Courthouse, Bank of Commerce Building and the Ewart-Duggan House. These Landmarks have cultural value and have physical presence in the Downtown. The intersections of 6th Avenue and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Streets are proposed activity nodes – emphasizing 6th Avenue as a major pedestrian corridor. They also highlight the main streets such as the 3rd Street Shopping District or the 2nd Street Entertainment District.

C. Corridors and Connections:

There are eight major street corridors in the Downtown area that should be revitalized over the short to medium-term. Indicated in the accompanying illustration are: River Road, 1st Street, 2nd Street, 3rd Street, 6th Avenue, North Railway Street, South Railway Street, and Maple Avenue. The challenge is that the majority of these streets are classified as “Collector” or “Arterial” routes and therefore currently focus on the efficient movement of vehicles through and around the Downtown. To facilitate a transition to a more pedestrian-orientated Downtown, it is recommended that 2nd and 3rd Streets be converted back to two way streets. At the same time, the sidewalks, tree planting, lighting, and mid-block crossings should be improved or replaced. The other six streets could be improved over time enhancing the sidewalks into “walking boulevards” using the side setbacks and street right-of-way without significantly compromising the vehicular flow. In this way, through road improvements, observation, and experimentation, the Downtown’s eight corridors can be improved for walking and strolling.

Fig. 9: Downtown Gateways



The six gateways are as follows:

1. West Gateway: 1st Street at 4th Avenue; 2. West Gateway 2: 3rd Street at 4th Avenue;
3. North Gateway: North entrance to Finlay Bridge; 4. East Gateway: 1st Street at Maple Avenue; and 5. South Gateways: South Railway by 6th Street and Hill Road; and 6. North Railway by Rotary Park

These corridors should also be part of a Green-Link Network including Riverside Veterans’ Memorial Park, the street trail network up 4th Avenue, the sidewalks north across Finlay Bridge, the sidewalks south up 6th Avenue to the escarpment naturalized area trail system, the sidewalks along the east side of the railway tracks to Armoury Park and Rotary Park, and the trails along the riverfront east to the recreation and parks system in The Flats community.



4.4 DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AND GROWTH PLAN

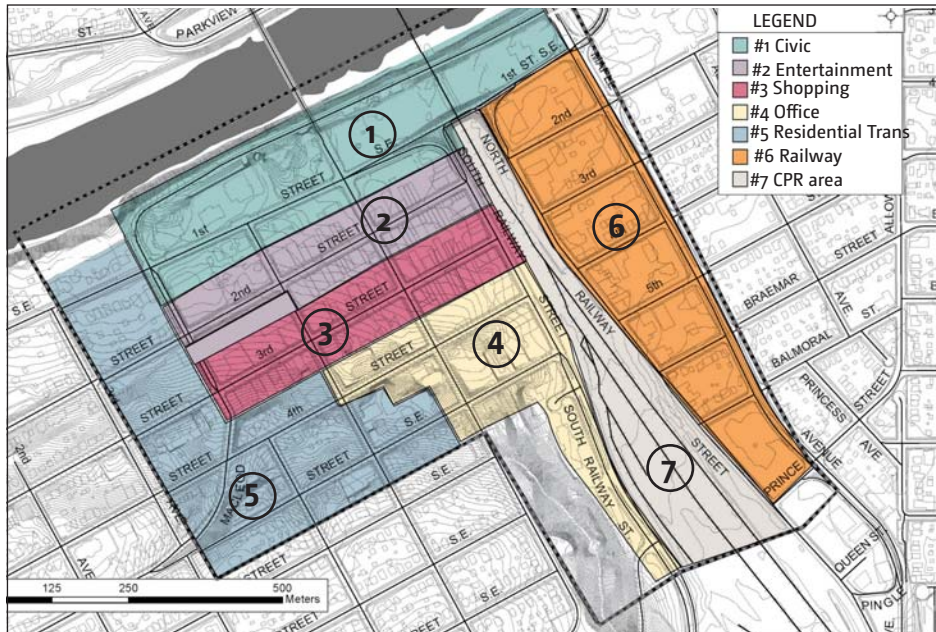


Fig. 10: Six Downtown Redevelopment Districts and one Special Area (CPR) are proposed as shown that will provide the framework for future growth and intensification of land use in the Downtown.

Overview: Downtown Redevelopment Districts and Long-term Growth Potential

Medicine Hat grew to 61,080 in July 2009. The population of Medicine Hat has continued to increase at a positive rate of 2.6% per year between 2005 and 2008 and 1.1% between 2008 and 2009 (City of Medicine Hat Census Final Report, July 2009). It is expected to grow from approximately 60,000 to 95,000 people over the next 30 to 50 years. There is potential to add 3,000 to 4,000 residents to the Downtown over the long-term, representing approximately 10% of this growth projection. Growth in the short to medium-term is predicted to be slow to moderate (See Section 3.2 for further details and complete study for details: *Coriolis Consulting, Urban Development Prospects for Downtown Medicine Hat: Inputs to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, December 2008*).

The growth projection could pick up with the right combination of uses and attractiveness of the Downtown over the longer term. This would include up to 800-900 residential units west of the railway tracks and an estimated 600-700 residential units east of the railway tracks. These estimates reflect growth capacity versus demand for growth which is covered comprehensively in the Coriolis Study of the Downtown and previously referenced in Section 3.2 of this Plan.

Generally, the estimate for redevelopment capacity includes replacing existing buildings or renovating existing buildings while retaining retail uses on the first floor. The form would generally follow the 4 storey existing patterns with up to 6-8 stories in specific areas east of the railway tracks. In addition, up to 12,000 m² of additional office space could be included in the Office District of the Downtown and also some further professional office uses east of the railway tracks. Up to 5,000 m² of specialty retail space east of the railway tracks could be added, primarily in the form of a new "Artisan/Farmer's Marketplace" coordinated with the renovation of the existing IGA. In addition, 100 hotel rooms could be added in a new Hotel in the Downtown. In addition, 1000 m² of International Cultural Centre space could be added but this proposal needs further discussion and study. (See Appendix B for detailed Growth Potential Analysis).

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

1. Civic District:

The area between 1st Street and the South Saskatchewan River, bordered by 4th Avenue on the west and Maple Avenue on the east, forms the Civic District. The Civic District is characterized mainly by civic related uses including the City Library, Medicine Hat Courthouse, City Hall, Riverside Veteran's Memorial Park and Armoury Park east of the railway tracks. These uses front onto 1st Street and back onto River Road and the riverfront parks. This area is essentially a greenbelt for the north side of the Downtown with two historic bridges – Finlay Bridge and the Canadian Pacific Railway Bridge, connecting to the north banks of the river. A third crossing at Maple Avenue provides a major traffic loop around the Downtown.

This District may be enhanced by:

- Improving the pedestrian trail connections to the River;
- Maintaining and reinforcing the civic uses in this District;
- Adding a potential International Cultural Meeting Place at the east end next to Armoury Park;
- Adding a potential 100 room Hotel that addresses local business and tourism needs;
- Creating a boardwalk along the riverfront as part of the International Cultural Centre and Armoury Park redevelopment;
- Considering recreating a riverfront docking facility for a river boat for tourist purposes to reconnect with the river between the park areas such as Police Point;
- Creating more public programming in the public open spaces along 1st Street (e.g., the large existing chess board and seating);
- Improving and update signage and streetscape as appropriate with large trees for a grand civic presence;
- Retaining and expanding annual events (e.g., Spectrum, and Hat River Race as a fund raisers (small hats with numbers); and
- Retaining parking along the street.



Fig. 11: Potential Improvements in the Civic District

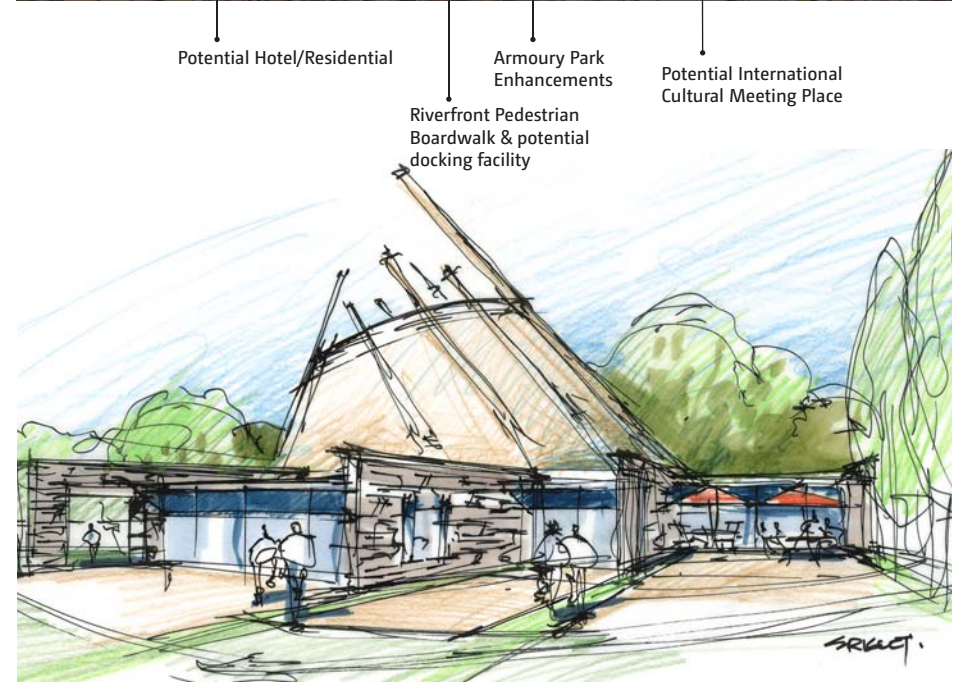


Fig. 12: Illustration of possible design concept for an International Cultural Meeting Place



Fig. 13: Revitalization of the Monarch Movie and Performing Arts Theatre and Streetscape will attract related entertainment venues



Fig. 14: Restaurants, and small entertainment venues along with inviting facades and streetscapes can animate the area both indoors and out

2. Entertainment District:

The Civic District will adjoin a lively Entertainment District to the south aligned along 2nd Street between 4th Avenue and South Railway Street. The Entertainment District will be anchored by the Esplanade Centre on the west side and the Monarch Theatre in the eastern section. The redevelopment of this District is focused on street and building enhancements and may include:

- Revitalization of the Monarch Theatre as a movie theatre and performing arts venue (underway);
- Encouragement of restaurants, small entertainments venues, art galleries, and coffee shops;
- Promotion of 3-4 storey mixed use redevelopment with commercial uses on the first floor and residential uses above;
- Enhancement of the street with special enhanced street lighting over the street, festive street lighting; replacement of gas lighting to enhance positive evening activities and improve safety;
- Incentives to improve storefronts (including canopies and awnings) and reestablish the original façade of the historic buildings through potential provincial funding sources;
- Redesign of the mid-block crossings to improve safety;
- Special corner bulges and paving to enhance the pedestrian orientation and safety;
- New street trees, electric lighting, bicycle racks, and benches as part of an overall Downtown initiative; and
- A public parking structure adjacent to the Esplanade to complement and expand public parking in the Downtown area.



3. Shopping District:

This Specialty Shopping area will be focused along 3rd Street between 4th Avenue to South Railway Street. This District may consist of the following:

- Specialty shopping on the first floor and residential uses or office uses above;
- Non-profit uses limited to floors above the first floor;
- Consider relocating the Transit Terminal to a new "Transit Street" along 5th or 6th Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Avenues to include heated bus shelters, other pedestrian and bicycle amenities as well as a Community Policing Depot;
- Redesign of the pedestrian underpass at the end of 3rd Street and creation of an adjoining tourism centre, along with relocation of the Greyhound Bus Terminal;
- Incentives to improve storefronts and reestablish the original façade of the historic buildings through potential provincial funding sources;
- Redesign of the mid-block crossings to improve safety;
- Special corner bulges and paving to enhance the pedestrian orientation and safety; and
- New street trees, electric lighting, bicycle racks, and benches as part of an overall Downtown initiative.

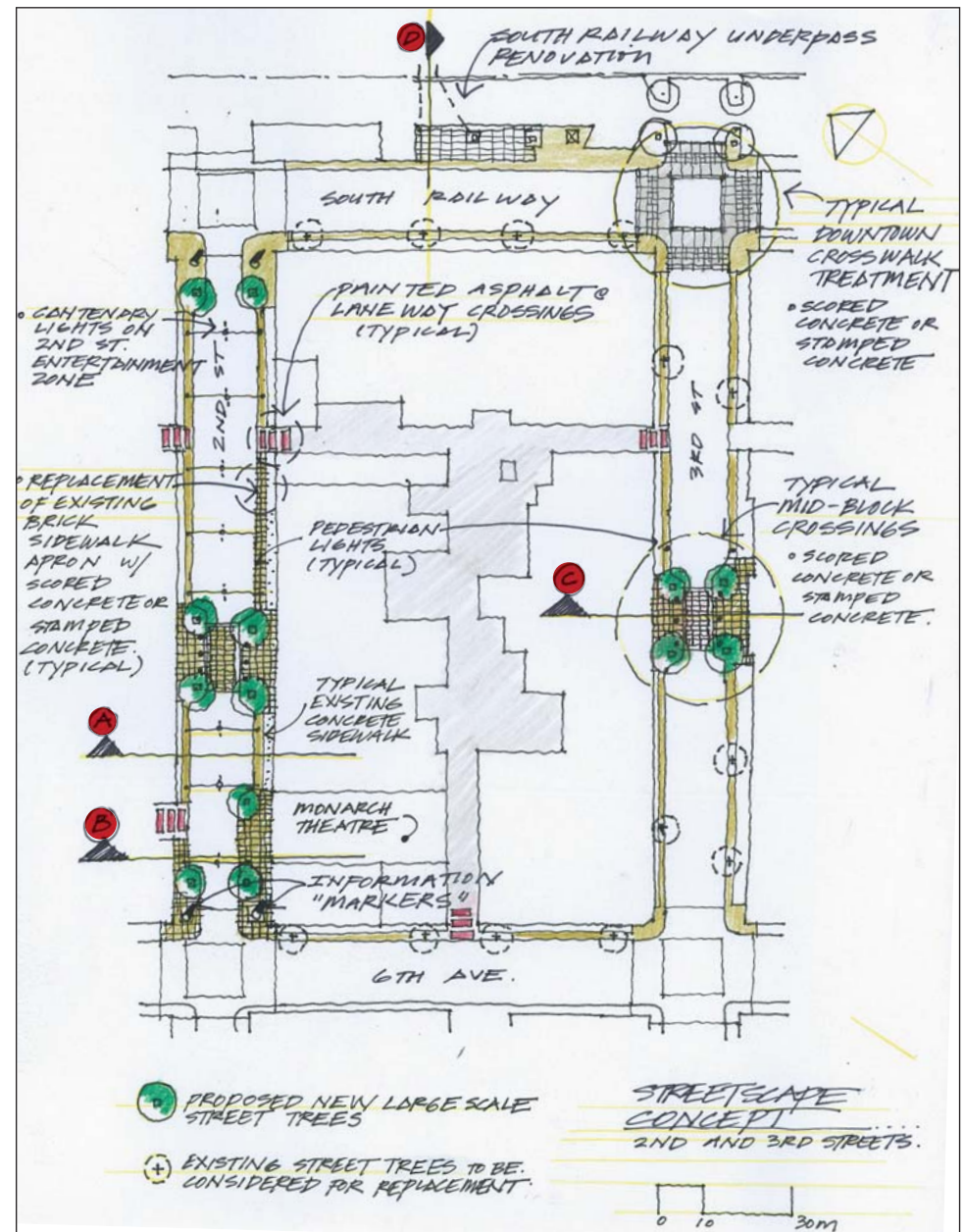
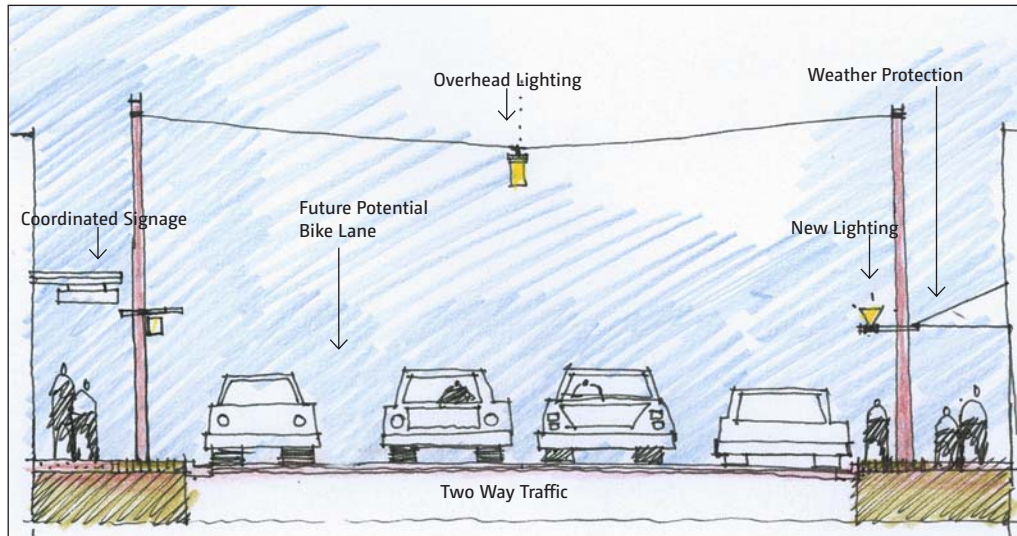
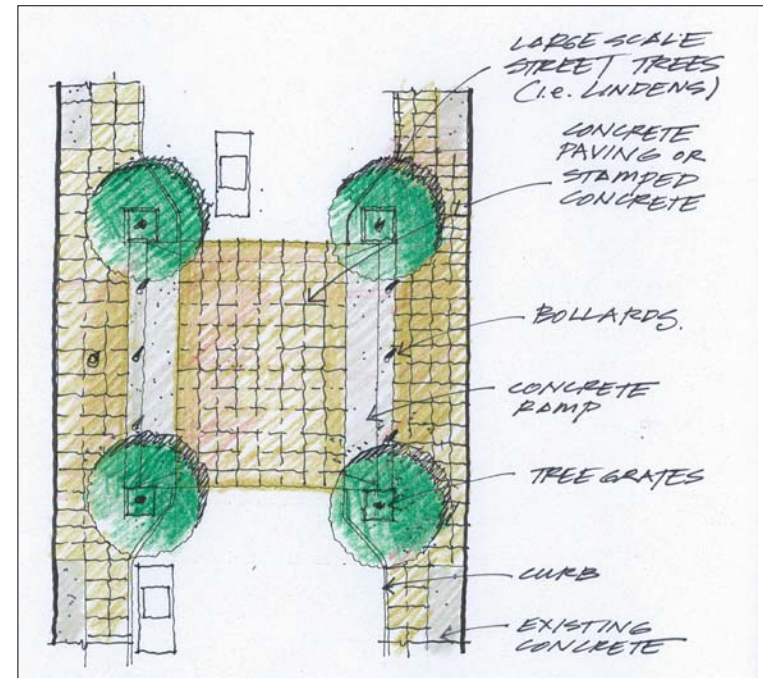


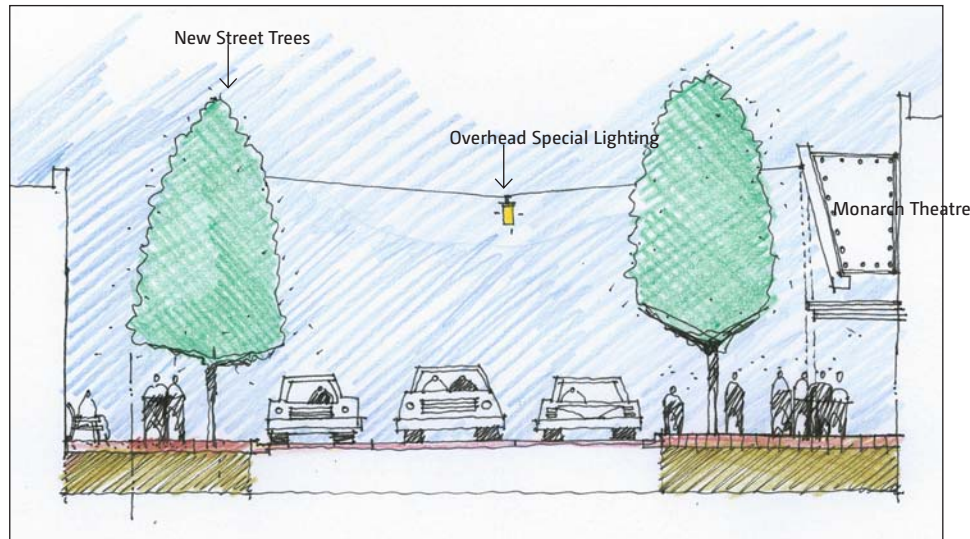
Fig. 15: Overall 2nd & 3rd Street Redevelopment Concepts



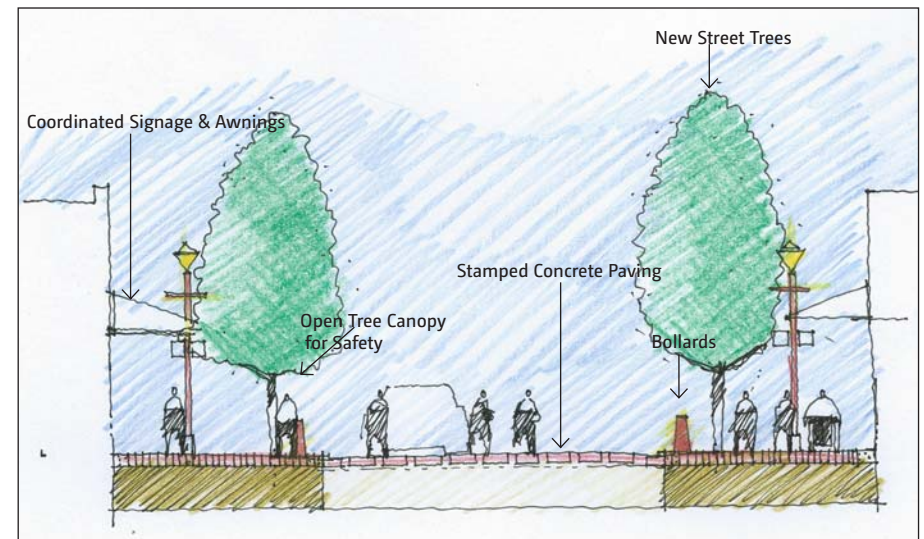
A Fig. 16: Cross Section "A" above illustrating typical street section on 2nd Street



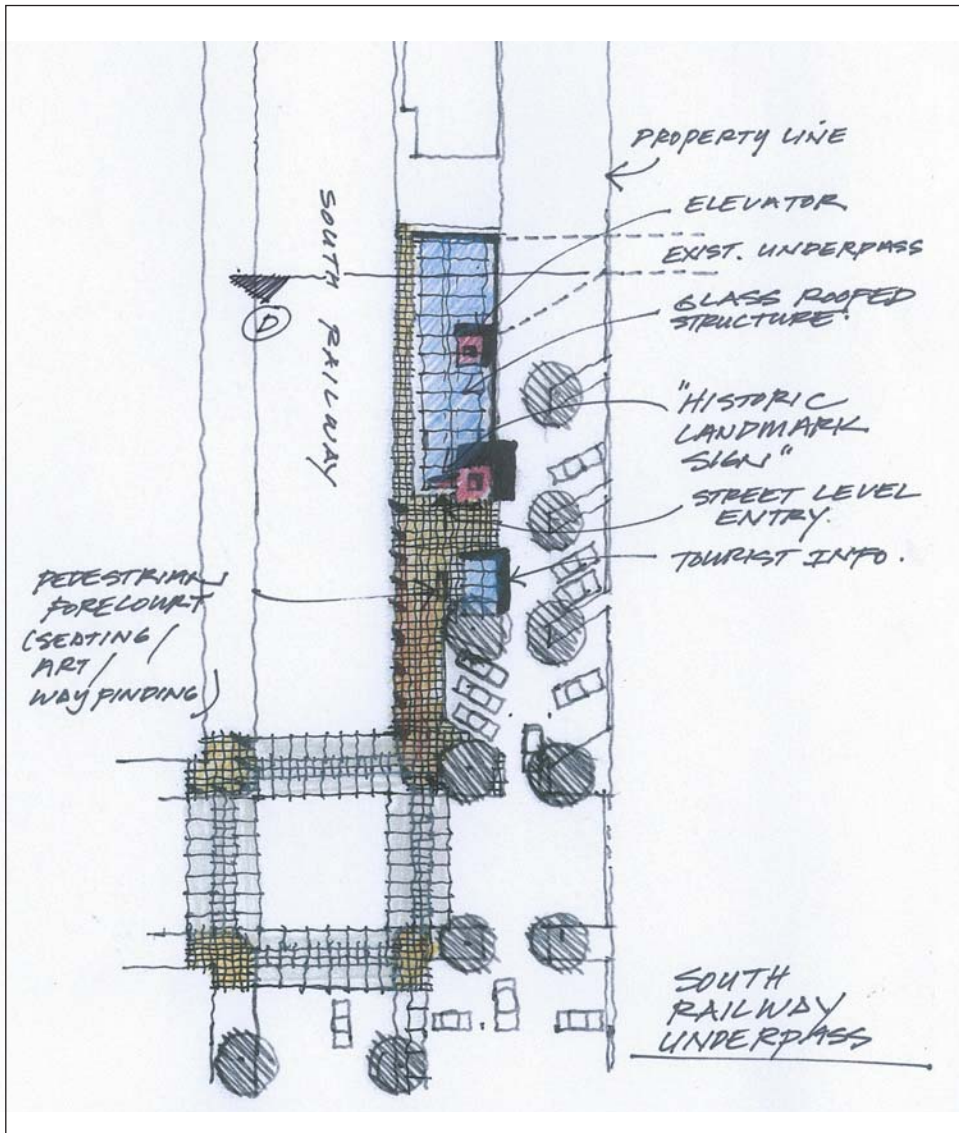
C Fig. 18: Detailed Plan Illustrating Typical Mid-Block Crossing Concept



B Fig. 17: Cross Section "B" above illustrating typical street crossing at the Monarch Theatre location



C Fig. 19: Cross Section "C" above illustrating typical Mid-Block Crossing on 2nd and 3rd streets



D Fig.20: Plan Illustration showing street entry improvements on South Railway at the underpass across the tracks to The Flats & Railway District.

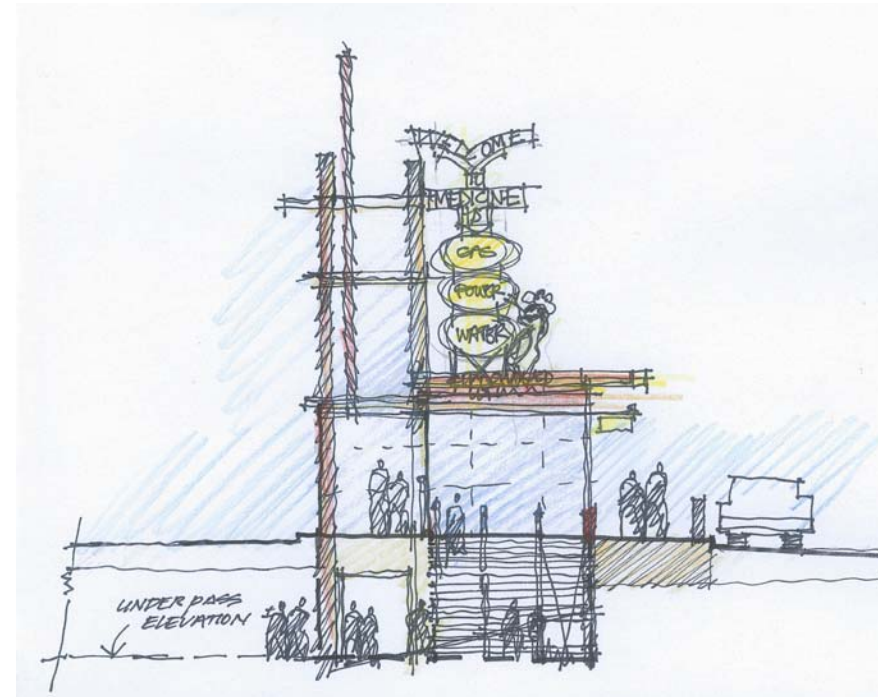


Fig. 21: Cross Section "D" Illustrations showing street entry improvements on South Railway at the underpass across the tracks to The Flats & Railway District.

Before Improvements



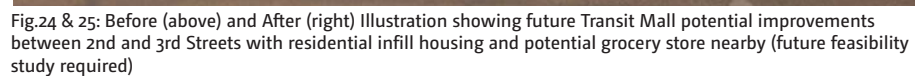
After Improvements



Fig. 22 & 23: Before and After photo and Illustration showing potential pedestrian underpass improvements on South Railway across the tracks to The Flats & Railway District.



The tourism kiosk and pedestrian underpass on South Railway, connecting The Flats with the Downtown could potentially be marked with a sign replica of the Historic Welcome sign of the City.



STREET TREE SCREEN

TYPICAL INFILL MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL OVER COMMERCIAL

NEW CANOPY & TRANSIT SHELTER

TRANSIT BUS

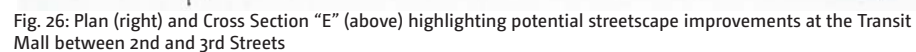
COMMUNITY CORNER (STREET)

TRANSIT SHELTERS WITH SEATING / WINDSCREENS AND GPS HEATERS

COMMUNITY CORNER FIRE PIT & SEATING

ENHANCED STREET CROSSINGS

J. B. 2000



4. Office District:

The Office District will be bordered by 5th and 6th Avenues on the west, 4th Street on the north, and South Railway Street on the east, extending to the southern boundary of the Downtown Redevelopment Area along South Railway Street. This Office District reinforces the existing uses and should expand these uses in redevelopment opportunities over the medium to long-term.

This District could include:

- A major concentration and extension of office space up to 6 stories in select locations but generally 3 to 4 stories;
- The retention of the natural park area and associated trail system in the southwest corner of the District;
- The retention of the historic buildings, especially the church in the District;
- The enhancement of 6th Avenue as a major pedestrian corridor and viewing area to and through the Downtown;
- Addition of 300 potential parking spaces in the existing Transit Terminal to support business in the area; and
- A potential future pedestrian overpass to provide a better connection between residences in The Flats and employment opportunities in the Office District.



Views from the Natural Escarpment towards The Flats and along 6th Avenue pedestrian corridor

Potential redevelopment: infill office buildings

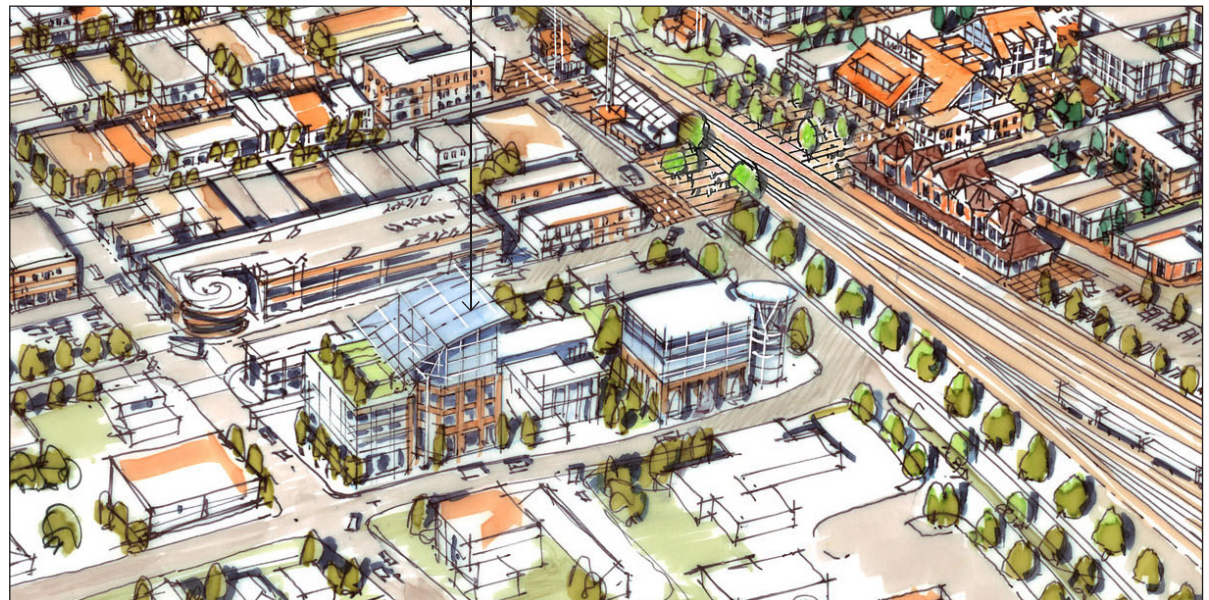


Fig. 27: Illustration showing Infill office space with modern, attractive 'green' buildings

5. Residential Transition District:

The Residential Transition District will form the western border of the Downtown between 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue on the west and wrap towards 4th, 5th, and 6th Streets. As an appropriate transition area, this District will include a diversity of progressive low to medium density residential uses.

The Residential Transition District may include:

- 4 storey street fronting residential development;
- Live/work permitted along the street fronts;
- Townhouses and coach housing to encourage intensification yet retain the traditional residential patterns; and
- An intimate mews-type compact development and tightly knit community.



Possible residential transition housing types in the Downtown



6. Railway District (East of CPR tracks):

The Railway District is a part of the original town centre site for Medicine Hat that is anchored around the historic and grand CP Railway Station. This District extends from the Railway yards on the west to Maple Avenue on the east, from 1st Street on the north to Rotary Park on the south. This District has the most redevelopment potential; primarily for residential development between South Railway Street and Maple Avenue. At the same time, there is a valuable stock of historic buildings that should be retained – especially along North Railway Street. The redevelopment program may include:

- The revitalization of North Railway Street as east “Main Street” of specialty shops and services;
- The introduction of a year-round market, along with the revitalization of the current IGA; and
- Significant infill of residential, to include building up to 6 to 8 stories in specific locations, with an average of 4 storey residential clusters with green centre courts.
- Enhanced pedestrian connections through public realm improvements to sidewalks, boulevards and crossings; and

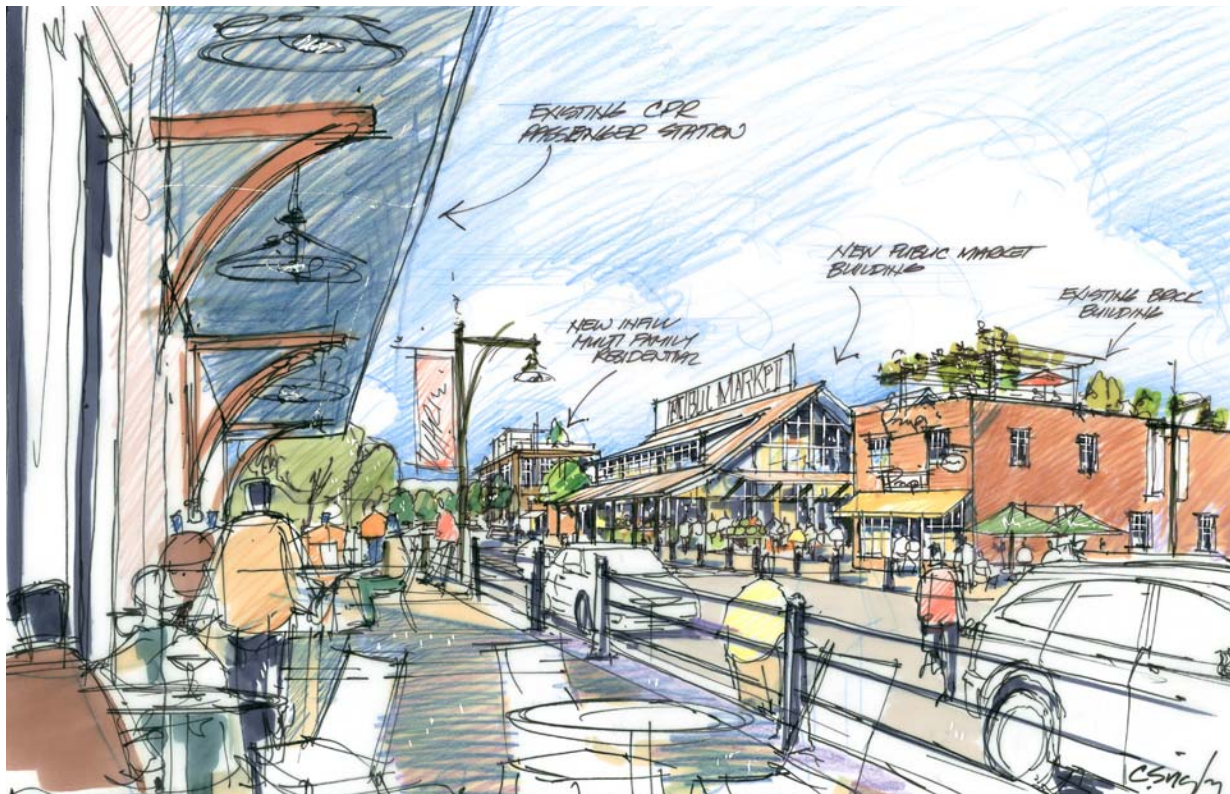


Fig. 28: The Revitalization of North Railway St. as a artisan/studio shopping street with Public Market attraction, improved streetscape and renovation of the CPR Station



Possible 3-4 storey residential housing types in The Flats neighbourhood

7. CPR Area:

This area currently supports rail transportation and related uses. The land is owned by Canadian Pacific Railway. The following could be part of a redevelopment program in cooperation with CP Rail:

- The enhancement of the Railway Station as a transit hub and future rapid rail hub;
- Consider relocating the CP Railway marshalling yards outside of the city and reclaim these lands for a High Technology Business Park – “Hat Tech”;
- The landscape (original garden reclamation) enhancements on the east side of the railway tracks to connect to the Armoury Park and the proposed International Cultural meeting place and waterfront boardwalk; and
- Consider a pedestrian overpass over the CP Railway tracks in the longer term, extending from either 4th or 5th Street depending on CP lease arrangements. This overpass could be part of the Railway area redevelopment initiative assuming partial funding could come from redevelopment initiatives on the east side of the railway tracks.



Site photos of existing Railway Park that could be enhanced to form a major pedestrian connection along the CP tracks and station on North Railway St. towards Armoury Park, to eventually connect with a potential Riverfront boardwalk and steamboat dock.

Enhancements along the riverfront could include customized site furnishings (above), lighting and boardwalk treatment.

4.5 HERITAGE OVERLAY DISTRICT

The accompanying Heritage Overlay District is intended to protect the important buildings, landscapes, and cultural elements in the Downtown. The Heritage Overlay District does not exclude buildings, landscapes and cultural elements outside its boundaries from being included in the heritage inventory or heritage conservation efforts. However, the Overlay District provides a focus for heritage inventory resources, and concentrates efforts to achieve heritage designations with potential provincial and federal funding and guidelines for appropriate renovations. The current Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District and the Arts and Heritage Board and future Heritage Advisory Board should continue to play a significant role in these heritage conservation efforts.



Fig. 29: Heritage Overlay District map



Heritage Overlay District considers important buildings, landscapes and cultural elements concentrated in this area. Photos demonstrate cultural elements and landscapes that may not typically be thought of as heritage resources

**4.6 FEATURES OF THE PLAN**

Fig. 30: Downtown Urban Design Plan



4.7 Mobility Plan – Pedestrian And Bicycle First Strategy

The Mobility Plan for the Downtown creates a framework that reflects the following priorities for design: 1. Pedestrian, 2. Bicycle, 3. Transit, 4. Vehicle, and 5. Service and Truck Access. These priorities are not intended to compromise any efficiencies in traffic flow yet will improve pedestrian and bicycle flow and safety in the Downtown. The Circle in the illustration below represents a five minute walk from the corner of 6th Avenue and 3rd Street. As illustrated, a 10 minute walk could take you almost across the entire Downtown - either east to west and north to south.

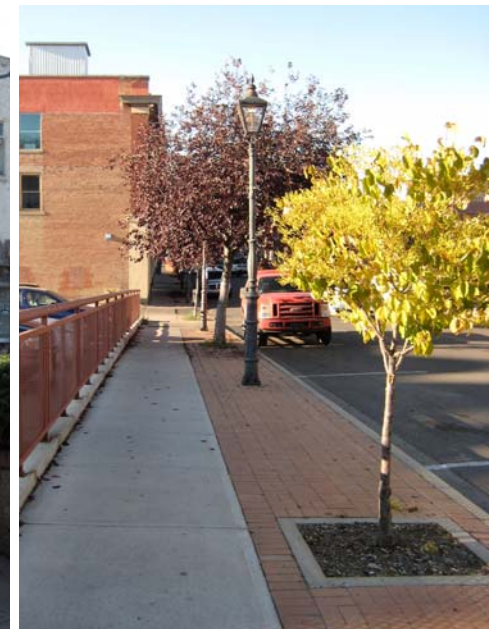
The Mobility Plan includes the following features:

- Convert 2nd Street and 3rd Street S.E. from one way streets to two way streets;
- Install electric street lights while maintaining the heritage of the existing gas lamps;
- Enhance the safety, security and visual appeal of the existing pedestrian walkway that crosses under the CP Railway tracks;
- New 5th and 6th Avenue Transit Mall between 2nd Street and 3rd Street;
- Provide new and/or improved pedestrian connections throughout the Downtown as shown on the Mobility Plan;
- Provide more off street parking;
- Enhanced special streets in the Downtown (trees, furnishings, improved mid-block crossings & signage); and
- Potential Future Pedestrian Overpass (4th or 5th St. depending on feasibility).

The impacts that the Mobility Plan and land use changes will have on the transportation system have been assessed quantitatively in terms of travel demand and qualitatively in terms of travel mode, parking, pedestrian and transit impacts. 3rd Street is designated an arterial street and has up to 6,000 vehicles per day on the sections through the Downtown. 2nd Street is designated a local street and has up to 4,000 vehicles per day on the sections through the Downtown. Both streets currently have two driving lanes and traffic signals at South Railway Street, 6th Avenue, 5th Avenue, and 4th Avenue. Both streets are one way streets and are truck routes between South Railway and 4th Avenue. The primary function of these streets is to serve Downtown traffic. The conversion from one way streets to two way streets would benefit traffic destined for the Downtown for way finding and for circulation. Motorists would be able to reach their destination without having to circle around the block. Total capacity of the system doesn't change, it is redistributed. The work required to convert to two-way streets includes moving signals poles and changing the signal timing at eight intersections as well as sign changes on all streets in the Downtown.



Improve safety at mid-block pedestrian crossings



Enhance 6th Avenue as a major north/south pedestrian link through the Downtown

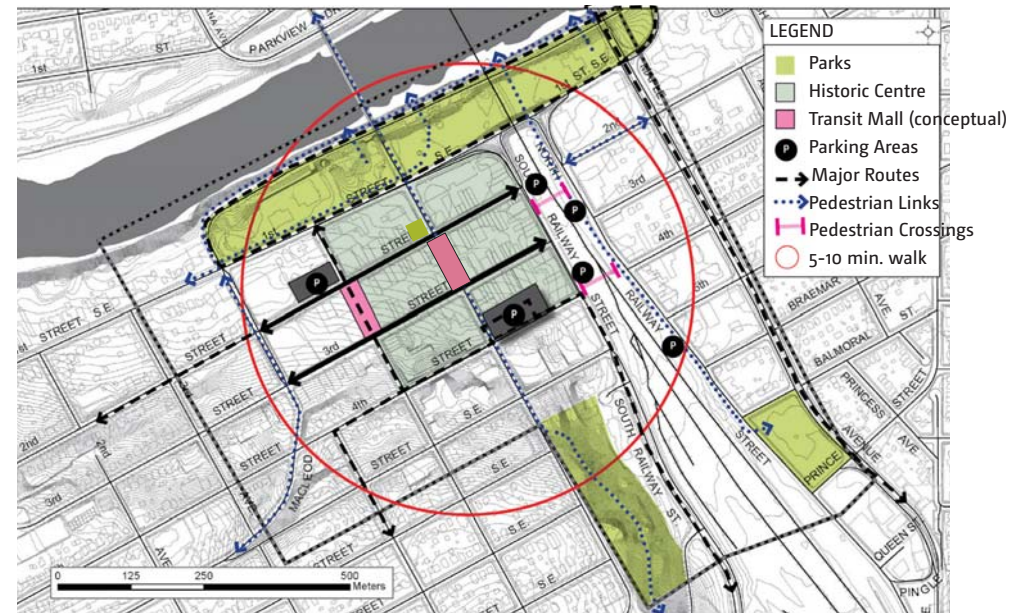


Fig. 31: Downtown Mobility Plan

Future Trips by Travel Mode			
Travel Mode	Total trips for 95K Horizon	Total trips with Downtown plan added to 95K Horizon	Percent Change in Trips
walk	2,472	2,541	2.8%
transit	1,397	1,485	6.3%
auto driver	40,056	40,902	2.1%
auto passenger	1,997	1,982	-0.8%
TOTAL TRIPS	45,922	46,910	2.2%

Table 2: Trip/Travel Analysis



Stampede Parade 2008

The City's travel demand model was used to determine the impact of converting 2nd Street and 3rd Street from one way streets to two way streets. The model is a macro level forecasting tool used to make broad comparisons between transportation networks. The analysis indicates that travel patterns will primarily change on 2nd Street and 3rd Street and improve access to local businesses. Some of the through traffic may shift to 1st Street via Division Avenue or 4th Avenue. The transportation system will continue to have few intersections operating with capacity constraints regardless of the configuration on these two streets. As the city grows some intersections in the Downtown will be operating near capacity, however, the two way streets have little impact on the capacity of these intersections.

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

Downtown redevelopment is expected to occur over a thirty to fifty year time period, which is within the same time period as the City's 95,000 population horizon that anticipates a regional population of 130,000 in forty years. A comparison of travel demand between the current Plan and a Plan that includes the proposed Downtown growth indicates that transit and walk trips will increase by a greater proportion than auto driver trips. Table 1 lists the number of p.m. peak hour trips for the region by travel mode for the forecast travel demand, with and without the Downtown development.

The increase in trips is dispersed throughout the Downtown, mainly on North Railway Street, River Road, 4th Avenue, 2nd Street, and 3rd Street. Some of the intersections along 1st Street and 6th Avenue will be operating near capacity while still at a level that would be acceptable within a Downtown environment. In the case of North Railway Street the traffic increase is a restoration of traffic flow on a roadway that is currently being under-utilized.

The increase in traffic outside the Downtown is relatively minor and will not trigger any major roadway expansion requirements. This analysis is based on a macro level travel demand model that is used to identify major transportation system requirements at a broad level. As planning for the Downtown progresses a more detailed traffic impact assessment will be required to identify minor roadway improvements at individual intersections.

"We need to make the Downtown more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Residents should bike or walk to shopping or special events."
City Resident



Overhead electric street lights:

The overhead street lights combined with pedestrian lights will improve safety and security for all transportation modes along Downtown streets. During the design, consideration will need to be made to ensure the clearance on the lights is sufficient for commercial vehicle traffic and emergency response on all streets. It will be most cost effective to design and implement the changes to the traffic signals for converting the streets to two way streets and the new street lights at the same time since they will both require electrical work in the same areas.

Enhance the safety, security and visual appeal of the existing pedestrian walkway that crosses under the CP Railway tracks:

A pedestrian walkway under the railway tracks near 2nd Avenue provides a connection between The Flats area and the Downtown core. The walkway is very clean and in excellent condition. The local sentiment is that it is used occasionally during the day and considered to be unsafe for use at night. The proposed enhancements will further increase the viability of walking as a travel mode and will improve the overall mobility within the Downtown. An enhanced link could result in a further 1% increase in walking in conjunction with the proposed land development for the Downtown.

New 5th or 6th Avenue Transit Mall Between 2nd and 3rd Streets:

The existing transit terminal is located on 4th Street between 6th Avenue and South Railway Street. Stakeholders identified a concern that the transit terminal is not centrally located nor is it safe and comfortable for transit users. A more central location that would also be suitable from a roadway operations and land use perspective is on 5th or 6th Avenue S.E. between 2nd Street and 3rd Street.

The existing building that houses the transit terminal provides public washrooms, heated bus shelter, and transit information services. The transit administration and a parkade are also in the same building. Concerns with the current location include poor lighting, pigeons and both the transit terminal and transit administration are operating at capacity with no room for growth. Any new transit terminal would need to provide the same amenities as the existing terminal at a minimum.

5th and 6th Avenues are local Downtown streets with approximately 5,000 vehicles per day. Either of these locations would be viable as a transit terminal if the street was closed to automobiles. Doing so would result in traffic shifting equally to 4th, 5th and 6th Avenue or South Railway Street. Some of the intersections along 6th Avenue will be operating near capacity while still at a level that would be acceptable within a Downtown environment. Further study of the impact on the transportation system, as well as transit impacts are required in a more detailed feasibility study before proceeding on providing a Transit Mall on 5th or 6th Avenue.



Fig 32 : Illustration showing street entry improvements on South Railway as viewed from 3rd street towards the underpass across the tracks to The Flats & Railway District.



Fig. 33: Illustration showing street improvements along a Transit Mall



Fig.34: Illustration showing potential pedestrian overpass to North Railway District

New and/or improved pedestrian connections throughout the Downtown

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan proposes to enhance the amenities and connectivity for pedestrians while continuing to provide the same level of service for motor vehicle traffic. An important component of the improvements includes modification of the existing mid-block pedestrian crossings to ensure pedestrians and vehicles have the sight distance to see each other. The proposed improvements are in line with the best practice for any sustainable community which is to provide more pedestrian connections and improve walkability by ensuring safety standards, way finding and suitable amenities. Special streets can be enhanced in the Downtown with paving materials, trees, furnishings, better lighting and signage.

More off street parking

The City of Medicine Hat's Land Use Bylaw has requirements for a minimum number of off-street parking spaces for new developments. When a development permit for a proposed use of an existing building in the Downtown is made the existing off-street parking spaces on the site is deemed to comply with the parking requirements of the Bylaw. For new buildings the City's requirements for detailed use applies. The Land Use Bylaw also has a cash-in-lieu mechanism.

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan proposes adding 300 more parking spaces to the Transit Terminal and a potential of up to 200 spaces to the Esplanade parking lot. The City has an opportunity to use it's cash-in-lieu mechanism to fund these spaces through redevelopment and densification projects to help make future development more viable.

The City of Medicine Hat has a good inventory of existing parking spaces, however, it has not studied utilization to get an indication of whether there is a sufficient supply or over-supply of parking in the Downtown. Stakeholders indicate there is a shortage of parking in the vicinity of retail businesses. A parking study is needed to ensure there is an appropriate amount of parking in the Downtown, to provide guidance for the cash-in-lieu program, and to allow for variances based on shared parking for complementary uses.

Potential Future Pedestrian Overpass (4th or 5th St. depending on feasibility)

There is limited connectivity between Downtown Medicine Hat and The Flats neighbourhood because of the railway yards. An additional pedestrian overpass would reduce the amount of backtracking and encourage greater inter-relationships between the two areas. The overall benefit would be increased and enhanced pedestrian connectivity between the Downtown and The Flats. Further study is required to determine the feasibility of constructing the overpass in the long-term.



5.0 Downtown Development Policies

Policies

- Create a safer pedestrian environment by enhancing the landscaping along the major streets and bordering streets and avenues, with the specialty retail concentrated in the Shopping District and Entertainment District, ensuring that all new trees have adequate tree wells to maintain a healthy root ball that will support a healthy tree.
- Create diversity through a mix of uses and housing types above commercial uses along the streets with a specific street orientation, emphasizing entrances along the street, porches, and overlooks.
- Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques to improve the public safety including: Enforcing standards of maintenance on properties that aren't keeping their sites clean and free from graffiti; Increasing "eyes on the street" by requiring street entrances and orientation of residential and commercial units; Upgrading of sidewalks in the area and considering a "street gardening" program that improves the sense of ownership in the area; Hardening up the existing buildings and new buildings against crime by reducing places of concealment including improved landscaping, security, and fencing off specific areas; Improve the lighting in the area including pedestrian lighting and security lighting, especially in those highly traveled areas.
- Design with human scale in mind by using a variety of materials, refined edge materials, transparency along the street by a variety of windows or openings, limiting building size, creating minimum distances between buildings, and generally limiting building heights to 3 to 4 stories along the street and step back any stories above the 4th storey.
- Use building forms to define public space (courtyards, pocket parks, plazas), and create a variety of building forms, roof pitches, and materials that interpret the City's history in contemporary interpretations.
- Reinforce the gateways, lanes, major intersections, and lookout points with landscaping, street furniture, activated pedestrian signals, and traffic-calming to emphasize the pedestrian orientation of these important nodes in the community.
- Promote building forms and heights that enhance public views and minimize intrusion on adjacent views.
- Retain and enhance public views (e.g., Street end views).
- Create a rich streetscape theme and emphasize the use of a coordinated public art program (e.g., building on the previous revitalization efforts in the Downtown) with banners, coordinated lighting, special sidewalk treatments, benches, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks unified by a strong street tree and landscaping program.

These policies provide more substantial direction to specific aspects of the Downtown Redevelopment Districts in the context of other supportive policies within the Municipal Development Plan:

1. Urban Design

Public and private open spaces, as well as the buildings that shape them, define the character and identity of Downtown Medicine Hat. The design framework for the Downtown is important in establishing reference points that build on the strengths and "sense of place" of each Downtown Redevelopment District.

- *Objective: Improve the overall safety, identity, and attractiveness of the area by revitalizing the streetscape, increasing pedestrian orientation, and introducing compatible building forms that reinforce the special sense of place in Downtown Medicine Hat.*



Good Urban Design includes an active streetscape and special public spaces

2. Heritage Conservation

The soul of a neighborhood is found in the historical references that hark back to its roots and beginnings. Downtown Medicine Hat has a significant stock of heritage buildings. A heritage theme and historic “trail” (with interpretive signage) in the Downtown will create a basis for continuity in the area, while areas outside the Downtown could take on a more contemporary character.

- *Objective: Encourage the conservation of important heritage buildings, cultural elements, and landscapes of interest as community and building resources are to be revitalized and reused.*



Re-create or reuse heritage signage consistently throughout the Downtown, especially on heritage buildings and to bring a unique sense of place to the Downtown. Create a heritage interpretive program throughout the Downtown.

Policies

- *Identify and complete a heritage inventory (statements of significance) of important heritage buildings and landscapes of interest in the Downtown.*
- *Encourage the redevelopment and designation of heritage buildings by dialoguing with the landowner on the value of heritage preservation as a key part of the Downtown's revitalization including funding options and incentive programs.*
- *Support municipal heritage designations and capitalize on provincial and federal heritage funding programs.*
- *Encourage new developments to redevelop sites in keeping with the history of the area, reflecting traditional materials (e.g., brick material, colours, forms and signage).*
- *Continue to encourage the use of historical names (individuals and buildings) in the naming of public open spaces and new developments.*
- *Incorporate historical references in a special wayfinding and public art or interpretive program that builds on its historical roots (e.g. Riverside Veteran's Memorial Park.).*
- *Encourage the usage of the historic 'red brick' on all new developments in the Downtown as a means to redevelopment of a true and marketable Historic Downtown.*
- *Re-establish the Main Street Program.*



Existing heritage markers within the Downtown and Flats area



Policies

- *Direct residential densities in accordance with the Downtown Redevelopment Districts and Growth Plan (see section) .*
- *Promote a diversity of residential development that respects and supports adjacent residential and commercial uses and forms, especially during the transformation of the Downtown, from commercial uses to residential mixed use areas.*
- *Encourage a variety of housing units that cater to the life-cycle from singles, young families, empty nesters, and seniors.*
- *Encourage home businesses in transition areas to the Downtown.*
- *Promote the inclusion of affordable housing, including smaller units and units that are flexible for use and design defined by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as costing occupants not more than 30% of their income.*
- *Encourage a provision of a percentage of housing for people with special needs (e.g., 5% of units should meet design standards that are higher to that being required by code for accessibility).*
- *Create medium density housing in the Downtown that is street-oriented with entrances directly facing the street with porches, overlooks, windows and other design features that highly articulate the facades and bring a friendly neighbourhood scale and comfort to the street face.*
- *Ensure that housing is scaled to the street with a maximum height of 3 to 4 stories at the street edge, and step back higher levels.*
- *Discourage long blocks of housing without courtyards or some break in the block pattern that creates sterility and long block faces.*
- *Use classic and timeless colours that are earth-tone based with simple highlights and brick as a basic building material.*
- *Encourage the provision of private, semi-private, and public open space as components of residential developments that provide recreation and amenity on site.*
- *Promote and expand local lanes and “mews” as part of public access and open space systems through some of the character areas to break up the block and provide necessary pedestrian access through the blocks (e.g., back lanes).*
- *Promote usable “green roofs” or balconies to bring green and colour to the Downtown.*

3. Housing and Redevelopment Strategies

The Downtown is targeted for residential growth to bring more vitality, safety, and prosperity to the area. Variety, diversity, flexibility, of affordable new housing will be encouraged as part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

- *Objective: Encourage a wide variety of housing forms and tenure that maximizes quality, flexibility, and is affordable.*



Ensure lengthy blocks are 'broken up' with interesting and accessible pedestrian throughways

4. Parks, Green Links, Bikeways, and Connections

The redevelopment of the Downtown offers the opportunity to extend the existing parks and open space system into the Downtown over the longer term through a comprehensive green-links (pedestrian way) and bikeways program. The amount, type, location, financing or dedication, and ongoing maintenance of park and open space will be a challenge for the area as it transforms with a diverse set of community needs.

- *Objective: Create a parks, bikeway, pedestrian way and open space system over time that reinforces the pedestrian-first orientation in the Downtown with a rich green aspect to the program for all ages.*



Policies (see also Mobility Plan)

- *Develop and refine the proposed parks, bikeway and pedestrian way program in association with the current trail, bikeway, bridge, and loop trail initiatives.*
- *Develop a street tree master plan that identifies the tree species, spacing, and requirements on the major pedestrian oriented streets.*
- *Encourage the provision of additional publicly accessible open space and parks along the street (e.g., courtyards, plazas).*
- *Encourage the development of green roofs and gardening on balconies, both public and private, to maximize amenity space and interest for adjoining residences and to assist in cooling the building.*
- *Orient the park and open spaces to a sunny south orientation to create inviting spots for sitting, strolling and other recreation activity, while providing options for shade and weather protection.*
- *Ensure that the public and private open spaces are programmed and designed for activity that is appropriate for the location, size, and maintenance program.*
- *Improve the existing pedestrian underpass under the tracks, by renovating the entrances – making them inviting, open, and well-lit and improving visibility to the opposite entrance from the inside.*
- *Consider an overpass over the railway tracks in the longer term that is a feature and tourist attraction connecting to the railway station area.*
- *Improve Armoury Park east of the railway tracks (consider the development of an International Cultural Meeting Place) and connect it south to the railway station via a linear park connection.*
- *Provide bicycle lanes through the Downtown area on specific streets/avenues (to be determined) to encourage bicycling through and to the Downtown as a destination.*
- *Require bicycle racks and seating with each new development. In addition, install bicycle racks at important locations in the Downtown, especially in the primary shopping areas and the Transit Mall area.*



Policies (See Mobility Plan section)

- *Examine the traffic circulation and street design improvements required for the projected new development as part of a comprehensive specific Downtown traffic analysis.*
- *Complete new street designs for 2nd and 3rd Streets and other potential pilot street beautification projects that could include: Changing the streets from one way to two ways; redesign of mid-block crossing to improve safety (removal of walls/planters and addition of lighting) ; Traffic calming (bulges at corners) and pedestrian activated signals; and gateway entrance designs at entrance areas; (these streets may include special bulges with appropriate landscaping, public art, and signage).*
- *Develop a Downtown parking structures plan as part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan (See Urban Design Concept Plan) and that are landscaped and designed to mimic a normal building façade.*
- *Upgrade the sewer, water, and drainage systems in association with new development (as determined by the necessary Infrastructure Study).*
- *Examine the feasibility of introducing a local bus system that completes a Downtown area loop (See Mobility Plan).*
- *Encourage Power Smart (Energy Smart) development and associated conservation measures for new development in the area.*
- *Provide the necessary fiber optic utility servicing to the area to support home based businesses that require state of the art internet support services.*
- *Separate local residential and truck traffic as much as possible.*

5. Servicing, Streets, Parking and Traffic Circulation

Servicing requirements to accommodate the projected growth include sewer, roads, water, and drainage. Further servicing capacity studies for sewer, water, and drainage are required to determine potential improvements associated with growth in the Downtown.

- *Objective: Improve the infrastructure services, pedestrian safety, and traffic function within the Downtown by upgrading infrastructure where necessary and improving street design, parking, vehicular access, and pedestrian crossings.*



Consider laneways as part of the street servicing, parking and circulation plan for the Downtown

6. Environment and Greening Downtown

The Downtown area redevelopment provides an opportunity to bring nature Downtown and “green” the streets, as well as clean up incidences of soil contamination due to past commercial and industrial activity.

- *Objective: Create soil contamination cleanup requirements that are as practical as possible for redevelopment yet protect the public interests in the long-term.*



Naturalized landscapes using native plant materials will require less maintenance and be more adapted to local growing conditions

Policies

- *Ensure that the proper environment site assessment and associated studies are completed.*
- *Encourage the creation of low maintenance naturalized landscapes that use native plants that require less watering, other maintenance and provide habitat for birds (discourage rocks and desert plants as landscape treatment).*
- *Encourage the retention of existing trees and other vegetation during redevelopment.*
- *Maximize green planting areas in the public and private realm that increases natural drainage and groundwater recharge.*



Drought resistant landscapes and permeable pavers make parking areas more attractive and reflect environmental best practices



Policies

- Reinforce the existing Shopping District by limiting specialty retail uses to that area.
- Limit major office commercial development and other development above the main floors and in the Office District.
- Review and consider upgrading special streetscape treatments including special street paving, signalized crosswalks, and traffic calming measures where necessary to promote a unique identity within the Downtown.
- Encourage commercial and residential mixed use redevelopment in the Downtown area (maximum 4 stories).
- Limit non-profit uses to areas above the first floor with the provision of elevator access.
- Require commercial redevelopment to incorporate decorative sidewalks, appropriate street furniture and street trees. Planting plans for trees and other landscaping should be required.
- Support the inclusion of work/live units in combination with street-oriented development.
- Require a traffic impact study for each major development application to determine appropriate measures for turning, pedestrian crosswalks, signalization, access, servicing, and parking.
- Restrict off-street parking between the front street and the building with any off-street parking required in underground parking, structured parking (or cash-in-lieu contribution), or surface parking behind the building that is unobtrusive and screened from public view.
- Entertain the provision for shared parking if the applicant demonstrates justification by conducting a traffic study by a qualified engineer.
- Servicing areas for commercial uses will be limited to lanes or areas out of public view or buffered by screens or landscaping.
- Respect the existing commercial and industrial activity in the area while integrating new commercial development.
- Encourage commercial development that has multiple storefronts and that is transparent and inviting to pedestrian traffic.
- Encourage outdoor cafes and other similar uses that create pedestrian activity on the sidewalk and adjoining courtyard areas.
- Support a safety and security awareness program to improve security for commercial properties.

7. Commercial Downtown Focus

Specialty retail, entertainment, pedestrian-oriented restaurants, and civic uses should be focused in the Shopping, Entertainment, Office and Civic Districts.

- Objective: To concentrate specialty retail and complementary entertainment, restaurant, office and civic uses in a pedestrian friendly Downtown.



Pedestrian friendly and comfortable shopping streets create more activity and are safer for pedestrians



8. Social Amenities and Community Facilities

The Downtown is intended to add 3,000 - 4,000 new residents over the next 30 years.

- *Objective: To provide adequate community facilities and associated social amenities in association with the residential development needs of the Downtown.*



Residential spaces can be distinguished from public spaces through landscape treatment

Policies:

- *Investigate the capacity and potential for increased enrollment from this area in the local schools in the longer term as residential redevelopment occurs.*
- *Review the cumulative effects of clustering non-profit or social agencies in one area.*
- *Encourage the development of other cultural facilities in the Downtown (e.g., International Cultural Meeting Place).*
- *Improve pedestrian and transit linkages to the surrounding areas to take advantage of other local facilities.*



Policies

- Create a “Good Neighbour” program that promotes clear communications between the residential groups in the Downtown and Canadian Pacific Railway to minimize nuisances associated with their business (e.g. noise, frequency, hours of rail work yards).
- Encourage cleanup and enhancement of existing railway properties in association with new development and the general beautification of the area, including the screening of parking and loading areas, enhancing the historic garden on the east side of the railway tracks, and general landscaping.
- Promote the idea of Canadian Pacific Rail contributing to the “Green and Safe Streets” theme in contributing naturalized landscapes and features on their properties.
- Improve the underpass across the tracks.
- Review the feasibility of an overpass across the tracks in the longer term.
- Consider the relocation of the marshalling yards out of the City in association with Canadian Pacific Railway.
- Commit to reestablishing passenger rail service at the Railway Station as well as link it to local bus and Greyhound service.
- Support a safety and security awareness program to improve security for Canadian Pacific Railway properties.

9. Railway Activity, Linkage, and Good Neighbour Program

Railway uses has been a tradition in the Downtown. Special attention should be given to the existing and potential nuisances and associated residence complaints that could increase with residential redevelopment.

- *Objective: To minimize potential conflicts between existing railway uses and new residential redevelopment in the area, with the vision of possibly moving the marshalling yards out of the City and reestablishing passenger rail service in the longer term.*



The Historic Canadian Pacific Railway Station may one day become a hub for passenger rail service

6.0 ORGANIZATION, INCENTIVES, FUNDING, AND IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Overall Structure

The overall structure and organization for implementation will be important for jump-starting the new Downtown redevelopment process. It is recommended that the City of Medicine Hat form a Downtown Implementation Team (DIT) considering this significant undertaking to coordinate the Plan's implementation. The Downtown Implementation Team could consist of the City Centre Development Agency (CCDA), senior City staff, and other business representatives. The already existing City of Medicine Hat Land and Properties staff should provide land acquisition leadership when necessary combined with efficient redirection of existing and other resources.

The development community will be a very important component of this redevelopment strategy, especially when significant resources, expertise and commitment will be required for the larger projects in the Downtown. Once the organization and policy structure is in place, specific developers can be invited to participate.

6.2 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP: DIT & CCDA

The Downtown Implementation Team (DIT) could combine with the City Centre Development Agency to:

- Explore the idea of “Community Stewardship” of streets through a recommended beautiful streets and storefronts program;
- Explore a “Tree Trust” program and obtain sponsorship (e.g., Tree Canada and other local businesses) to plant street trees in the Downtown in coordination with the City of Medicine Hat;
- Coordinate submissions to the “Communities in Bloom” annual awards program that recognizes outstanding community beautification programs across Canada; and
- Encourage broad community participation in funding, organization and implementation (e.g. festivals, public art and programming).

At the same time, the CCDA can work closely with the Downtown Implementation Team (DIT) to combine a larger resource pool. Further work needs to be done to define the DIT support, source of funding, and specific mandate.



Consultation with business owners will be key in successful implementation



6.3 FUNDING PILOT PROJECTS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC AMENITIES

Although slow growth is predicted in the short-term, the long-term redevelopment capacity in the Downtown will have a major impact on municipal services and infrastructure in the area. The existing water, drainage, and sewer system needs further study to define what specific upgrades of infrastructure will be required. The projected streetscape and improvements will be a cost that will have to be planned for in association with new development and existing development. Although not yet determined to be feasible on the appropriate funding mechanisms, the following are options for future review and consideration:

Off-Site Development Levies: Development Levies are a means to assist local governments in paying the capital costs of installing certain off-site municipal services, the installation of which is directly or indirectly affected by the development of lands and/or the alteration/extension of buildings. A detailed redevelopment review would be required to establish the infrastructure upgrades and associated costs which could determine the exact Downtown off-site levy.

Development Levy Credit: A Development Levy credit to the developer can reduce costs in situations where the required improvements are already provided on-site or are provided in a form that reduces off-site requirements. It should be noted that a credit is only used if a developer funds a project. Any off-site costs directly related to the development should be borne by the developer.

General Tax Revenue: Tax Revenue generally pays for service improvements such as fire and police associated with the additional service coverage in the area.

Tax Abatement: A Tax Exemption Bylaw may be an incentive for redevelopment. Such a Bylaw could allow for an incremental increase to the full assessment value over a 5 to 10 year period. The challenge of equity arises if other similar residents outside the area pay more and therefore creates unfair advantage. This incentive is especially beneficial in achieving the preservation of heritage buildings.

Cash-in-Lieu of Parking and Parking Structure Development: The developer, instead of providing parking or park space on site, provides cash, especially where reduced parking is required for seniors or structured parking is provided to replace existing parking loss. The money is collected and pooled for upgrading, acquiring, or developing other land or in this case, a possible Downtown Parking Structure Fund.

Heritage Preservation and Revitalization: Several Federal, Provincial and Municipal Heritage Preservation, cost-sharing opportunities (e.g. Main Street Program) exist to achieve a Preservation designation and revitalization of Downtowns such as Medicine Hat.

Amenity Bylaw: A Community Amenity Bylaw lists specific requirements as part of redevelopment that the City may require including: non-market housing, street greening/greenways, cultural and/or art facilities, and other community amenities that are part of a “shared” provision of community services as the City of Medicine Hat grows. For example, the City of Vancouver uses a special Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) to fund future community amenity requirements associated with residential and other growth. A specific contribution is based on a per square meter allocation depending on use. A specific value (e.g., City of White Rock \$20.00 per square meter) of total gross floor area is determined and eligible amenity costs include hard costs and soft costs as well as land costs (by a third party appraiser) where land containing the amenity is to be transferred to the City or other agency. An ongoing “Maintenance” budget reserve is calculated as part of this amenity contribution. If looked at, the following amenities eligible for consideration in an application for a Downtown area could include:

- Structured or underground publicly accessible parking;
- Outdoor Public Art;
- The provision or improvement of publicly accessible open space and/or pedestrian routes, either through dedications, easements or covenants;
- Off street landscaping, including improvements to lanes or mews that are publicly accessible and improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the Downtown (Green Links Program);
- Road or lane dedications;
- Community meeting or convention space;
- Public observation deck;
- Transportation or transit support (free shuttle/car share program); and
- “Special Needs” and/or “Affordable” housing.

An amenity Bylaw is an example of an initiative used in another jurisdiction that could only be implemented in Medicine Hat to the extent consistent within Alberta legislation. As with other potential funding options, legal review will be required to determine feasibility in the Medicine Hat context.

6.4 Plan Priorities and Implementation

The recommended Plan priorities are based on perceived ease, support, cost, and biggest impact for the investment. Each of these public and private projects requires further analysis before implementation is considered (See Section 1.4 for further details on short, medium, and long-term Action Plan items).

6.5 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation: The Annual Report Card

- Review actions list periodically through a specific annual report card.
- Refine development policies based on development performance.
- Seek Council's advice on applications that do not conform to development policies.

7.0 Conclusions

This Downtown Redevelopment Plan creates the basis for inspiring progressive and action oriented planning in the Downtown. It provides a framework for further detailed regulations and guidelines in the statutory Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan. Together these documents will help Downtown Redevelopment over the next 20-30 years.

IMMEDIATE PUBLIC PILOT PROJECTS OPPORTUNITIES

Phase 1: 2nd Street Revitalization (Underway)

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan establishes a vision and the policy framework for Downtown Medicine Hat over the next 20-30 years. The Plan is also intended to be an Action Plan therefore, a Phase 1 Pilot Project for the 600 block of 2nd Street SE is being prepared to stimulate an overall revitalization of the Downtown in terms of economic, social and environmental improvements.

Revitalization success for the Downtown will require the implementation of a variety of redevelopment design ideas, incentives, funding and partnerships. The Phase 1 Pilot Project will include, but is not limited to the following considerations:

- A physical design/concept for streetscape improvements redesigning the mid-block crossings, lighting, street furniture, enhanced pedestrian crossings, street trees, signage and public art;
- Street activity in the way of programming for all seasons and land uses required on the block;
- Heritage preservation of buildings and streetscape character;
- Establishing incentives and partnerships for façade improvements, filling empty storefronts, and developing vacant lands; and
- Determining costing and funding mechanisms.

The Pilot Project will be presented to City Council for their consideration and approval.



APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PROCESS SUMMARY OF IDEAS AND COMMENTS

Medicine Hat Council Workshop

August 18, 2008

1. What is most SPECIAL about your Downtown? What makes it unique?

- Views
- Used to be THE meeting place for community, entertainment, shopping, services.
- The character of 1st Street - +++
- Red Brick - Character of Historic buildings and building material (Historic Clay Brick District)
- Historic Buildings - Number of buildings, details such as Gas Lights, Manhole Covers etc.
- The integration of OLD and NEW - (Juxtaposition of Glass/Brick, Historic western/ Modern glass)
- The Historic CORE - (Preserve, Restore, Re-Invent or Redevelop)
- Clean, well cared for - Taking ownership of streets by being Proactive, Partnership with CCDA and Businesses.

2. What are the GOALS of this revitalization plan? - What are your expectations?

- Get people to stop and stay in the Downtown
- Maintain a High Quality of Life and Livability
- Make it exciting, safe, animated - Celebrate the Community and make it a DESTINATION - special
- Establish a formal Downtown BOUNDARY
- Set Realistic Goals and Measure performance - Accountability
- Make it practical and implementable***
- Include residential ***
- Include Culture/Arts Component
- Include Heritage - Plan to preserve integrity
- Include Recreation
- Include Commerce - Vibrancy
- Identify potential City Sites to purchase - Take Leadership in Development
- Identify options for redevelopment for City Sites/Problem Areas.
- Establish a Downtown TASK FORCE for monitoring and coordination (safety, review, enforcement, guidelines)
- Create connection to The Flats over CPR Tracks - Create alternate solution to existing pedestrian tunnel
- Create an atmosphere (strategy) to promote development (being pro-development)
- Ensure adequate parking is available - Flexibility, perception, strategy

3. What is Missing in Downtown?

- 2nd and 3rd Streets are lacking the character of 1st street
- Businesses need to be proactive and included

- Missing a place of Celebration
- Missing the Life' and activity Downtown before the time of (big box, suburbs and cars)
- Absentee Landlords
- Need Extended uses Downtown - Vibrancy into the evening hours.
- Need a new Hotel
- Need to develop a spirit of cooperation and trust - Take leadership and be proactive - CCDA and City Partners

Summary of Public Ideas, Opportunities, and Challenges: Workshop

October 6th, 2008

1. What makes a great Downtown?

Social

- A place where the community gathers to celebrate festivals, events, and trade shows etc.
- People, especially business people living, eating, working, socializing and shopping in the Downtown
- A variety of activities during all seasons of the year for families and people of all ages (choices). I.e. Restore skating on the river in the winter
- Have activities in the Downtown occur all day and have it be lively from 8pm to midnight
- Consistent hours of operation for all shops, businesses etc. that are located in the Downtown
- Networking, services and communication
- Financial support for community activities
- Political support
- 200 fresh ideas of WMAGT (would like to see)?

Aesthetics and Safety

- It's Presentation: must "sell" ideas, services and products
- Order
- Bright, clean, inviting and safe
- Downtown areas including green areas are well cared for by the city and its citizens

Arts and Culture

- A vibrant culture including the arts
- A cultural mix and diversity
- Character and history including unique heritage features

Land Uses

- Senior and adult living condominiums
- Unique retail/restaurants with outdoor eating venues - cafes
- Fresh markets/grocery store
- Hotels
- Night life
- Events centre



- No vacant buildings
- Tall buildings
- A diverse range of businesses/retail that attract people of all ages and cultures
- We could have intimacy, unique shops with intimacy?
- Good transportation – buses, bikes and cars

2. What is missing in Downtown Medicine Hat?

Social

- People, especially business people living, working, eating, shopping and socializing in the Downtown
- Fun activities including skating in the winter
- Communication between sectors
- Consistent hours of operation for all shops, businesses etc. that are located in the Downtown
- Coordination between businesses and entertainment industry. There are no “dark times”
- We need a story to tell
- We need to fall in love with the Downtown again

Aesthetics and Safety

- Community policing to ensure safety especially in the parkade
- Visibility on crosswalks making it difficult to see pedestrians trying to cross
- Better lighting sources – natural gas lamps not bright enough
- Cleanliness, maintenance
- City by-laws to enforce deadbeat landlords from loitering
- Stephen Avenue like concepts (pedestrian malls)
- Snow removal on sidewalks
- Better tree species in the Downtown – remove berry tree species and replace
- Maintaining and beautifying the entire Downtown area
- A heritage look that is consistent
- Nicer looking store front – appealing to customers
- Sticker vacancy rules
- Trendiness and having themes

Land Uses

- Services such as retail, restaurants, a grocery store and a farmers market
- Anchor businesses – book such as a Chapters
- Events centre
- Bed and breakfasts
- A great hotel
- Nightlife
- More residents living in the Downtown and doing business
- Residents living in apartments and condominiums
- We need to work on the condo-minded
- Enough parking
- An overpass to connect the Downtown to The Flats area located on the other side of the railway tracks as the railway divides the Downtown from this area

Tourism

- Visitor accommodation including businesses that can provide for visitor needs, conference centre
- Tourist programming - i.e. a bus tour of Downtown

Transportation

- A decent public transportation system
- Coordination of needs for Greyhound passengers

Economic

- Financial incentive from the City (taxes)

3. What will the Downtown be like in 15 years from now? (Provide a newspaper headline and a short story)

“Wow Downtown Medicine Hat Alberta rocks! For the 2nd year in a row it has been voted the best place to live. The Monarch theatre welcomes its millionth customer. The City funds one more youth multicultural centre. The 25th condominium builder has begun construction in the Downtown. The Downtown receives the National Award for the best executed 15 year plan containing Smart Growth principles and sustainable living. The award has been accepted by Michael von Hausen and his team along with proud City councilors. The 2023 census of the Downtown now exceeds a population of 20, 000 – which is growth comparable to D.L.s, a real success!”

“So much development has occurred that there is now a bidding war for the last available commercial space in the Downtown area of Medicine Hat.”

“Downtown Medicine Hat is overflowing in retail and living capacity.”

“Medicine Hat Mall?” “What is that?” “Where is that?”

“Downtown Medicine Hat, it’s where it’s at in the Hat.”

“Busy days, long festive night’s, Downtown Medicine Hat”

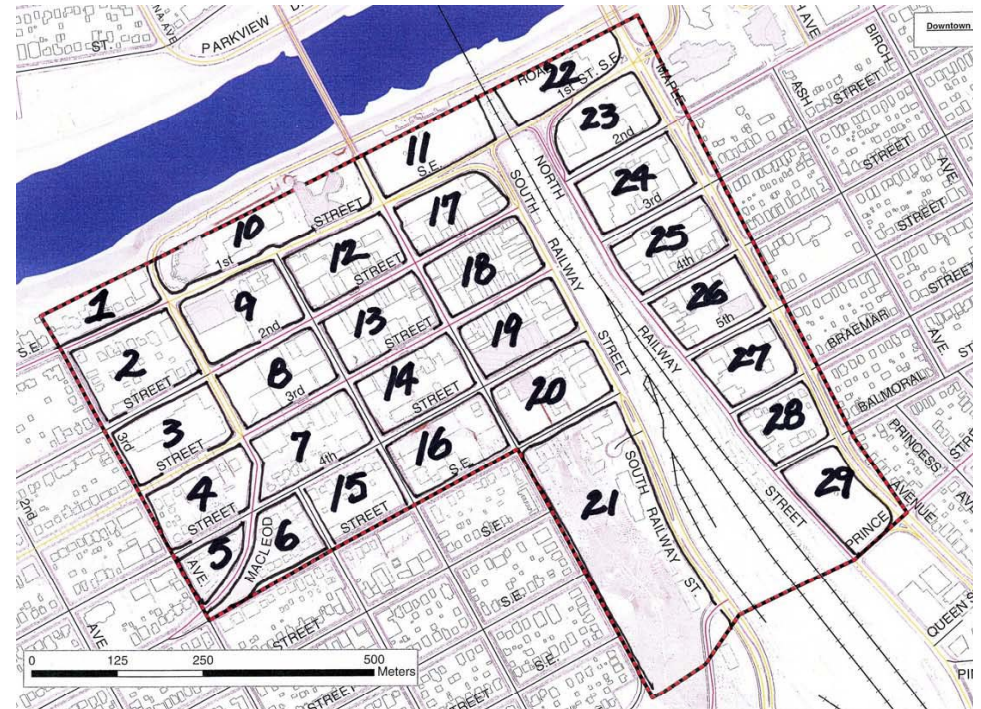
Another Successful Downtown Anniversary

“10th anniversary of the Medicine Hat Tipton Hotel sparked celebrations which drew merchants and residents to a street festival. Restaurants served ethnic food, local artists entertained in several venues. Families found laughter and balloons on street corners. CCDA offered its appreciation to businesses for their encouragement to the new neighbours”.





APPENDIX B: DETAILED DOWNTOWN GROWTH POTENTIAL ASSUMPTIONS



BLOCKS — Growth Capacity Analysis

Downtown Medicine Hat GROWTH CAPACITY ANALAYSIS

DOWNTOWN WEST					
Block # /District	Existing Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Units/Density	Persons/Unit	Population
1. Residential	Heritage Single Family	Residential	Conservation	2.5	0
2. Residential	Res/Single Family	Residential	4 lane homes + 3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	10 + 60 = 70
3. Civic	Provincial	Civic	N/A	N/A	Government
4. Residential	Res/Mixed MF	Residential	2-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	120
5. Residential	Res/Mixed MF	Residential	1-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	60
6. Residential	Res/Mixed MF	Residential	2-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	120
7. Shopping	Commercial/Res	Mixed Res/Comm	2-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	120
8. Shopping	Commercial/Res	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
9. Entertainment	Commercial/Inst	Comm/Inst	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
10. Civic	Courts/City Hall	Civic/Institutional	N/A	N/A	Government
11. Civic	Riverside Park	Civic		2.5	No residents/Park
12. Entertainment	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
13. Shopping	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
14. Shopping	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
15. Residential	Res/Mixed MF	Mixed Res/Comm	3-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	180
16. Residential	Res/Mixed MF	Mixed Res/Comm	3-3 storey 24 unit Apt	2.5	180
17. Entertainment	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100 100 room hotel
18. Shopping	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
19. Shopping	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
20. Office	Mixed Use	Office 2 – 6 Storey buildings	N/A	N/A	No new residents 12,000 m² of new office development
21. Office	Park/Office/Res	Office	N/A	N/A	No new residents and new development
Subtotal WEST			660 units	2.5	1,650
Additional infill*			200 units	2.5	500
Subtotal West			860 units	2.5	2,150



DOWNTOWN EAST (Railway District)					
Block # /District	Existing Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Units/Density	Persons/Unit	Population
22. Railway District	Armoury Park	Civic	N/A	N/A	No residents 1,000m² of potential International Cultural Meeting Place
23. Railway District	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	6-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	700
24. Railway District	Commercial/Res	Mixed Res/Comm	4-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	400
25. Railway District	Commercial/Res	Mixed Res/Comm	2-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	200
26. Railway District	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100 5,000 m² of market and retail uses
27. Railway District	Commercial	Mixed Res/Comm	1-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	100
28. Railway District	Commercial/Res	Mixed Res/Comm	2-4 storey 40 unit Apt	2.5	200
29. Railway District	Rotary Park	Civic	N/A	N/A	No residents Park
Subtotal EAST			640 units	2.5	1,600
TOTAL Downtown WEST and EAST			1500 units	2.5	3,750 persons

Legend

***INFILL = Assume 25% of 8 blocks in Downtown West infills 2 floors of residential uses in existing or additional space to yield say 200 units**

Comm = Commercial (Primarily commercial uses which could vary from retail to office and some minor residential uses)

Res = Residential (Primarily single dwelling unit but some other uses could be on the edges including commercial and institutional)

MF = Multiple Dwelling Unit (3 to 4 storey street-oriented apartments)

Mixed = Commercial and Residential (normally commercial on ground floor and residential 2 to 3 floors above)

Railway Area owned by CPR and assumes redevelopment of CP Railway Station for approximately 1,000 m² of space for commercial uses



Conclusions

The projected growth potential in the Downtown is in the range of **3,000 to 4,000 people**. The existing population is 397 on the west side and 103 on the east side for a total of 500. These growth capacity projections could mean that the Downtown grows by 6 to 8 times the current population over the next 30 years. The City's population over the next 30 to 50 years is projected to grow from 60,000 to 95,000 or 35,000 people. This means that the projected growth in the Downtown still only represents approximately 10% of the City's projected growth. In addition, 12,000 m² to 17,000 m² of commercial space (office and retail) and 100 hotel rooms could be added to the Downtown. In addition, approximately 1,000 m² of an International Cultural Meeting Place could be added to Amoury Park east of the CP railway tracks near the River.



APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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 Flats ARP, 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 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. The Flats ARP is also referred to as the "Plan" within the document.

Built-form: Consists of buildings and structures.

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 Flats ARP, community refers to the entire area that is within the defined The Flats boundary for this ARP.

Connections: The linkages within The 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 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.

Direct Control: For The Flats ARP, Direct Control refers to a land use area that requires additional consideration and sensitivity to the future use and development of land or buildings within this area. Given the area as a gateway to the city and the need for a masterplan of the National Historic Clay District the Direct Control area shall be refined through a masterplan process that supports the vision, principles and policies within The Flats ARP.

District: An area identified by a distinguishing feature such as land use, heritage, cultural and/or any other significant characteristic.

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

Entrance way: An urban design feature or area that provides visual access, direction and/or celebration of a neighbourhood for those entering. Within The Flats ARP, there are defined areas to provide visual access to each neighbourhood.

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 Flats ARP, 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 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 Flats.

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

Live/Work Units: These mixed use units typically have commercial or light industrial work space such as artist studio, business office, showroom etc. on the ground level with residential on the upper floors. Each unit is planned with internal access between the living and working spaces.

Mews Type Compact Development: This type of development can have residential, commercial or mixed uses. This development will have a street oriented design along with small, internal lanes that provide access to the properties on the inside of the block.

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.

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 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 Community Design section and Appendix A:

Infill Guidelines. Where policy directs, multi-dwelling residential may be designed in conjunction with other uses such as commercial.

Neighbourhood: An area within The Flats community that is primarily residential and/or primarily residential/mixed-use. The Flats has three 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 socioeconomic level. Open space in The Flats ARP refers to the public realm (streets/sidewalks, etc.), parks, urban plaza’s, etc.

Pedestrian Mews: Typically a rear or side yard lane designed to be pedestrian friendly. It is distinguished from typical vehicle traffic lanes by materials such as special paving, pedestrian scale lighting, seating benches, planting and bollards, but may be used as an access lane for fire and emergency vehicles if necessary. Mews provide pedestrian connections to rear or side access to businesses and residences and provide wide walking routes from front to back, or between street blocks or through a building complex.

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 two distinctive but related 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 facade 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 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 carriage way within a road right-of-way.

Single-dwelling residential: Refers to the primarily single-dwelling areas of The 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 Community Design section and Appendix A: Infill 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 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 humps.

Trails: The term used to represent the City's pathways or pedestrian network. The City of Medicine Hat's leisure trail system is defined as the infrastructure that provides for the use of trails for leisure and recreational pursuits (ie. running, walking, rollerblading and leisure cycling).

Transit: Refers to all components (i.e. type of transit, routes, schedules, etc.) of providing transit service 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 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.

Wayfinding: Used as an architectural term, refers to the user experience of orientation and choosing a path within the built environment. It also refers to the set of



architectural or design elements and techniques that aid orientation by providing sensory cues from the external environment. These include graphic signs, tactile, auditory and spatial cues.

Xeri-scaping: Refers to environmental design of residential and park land using various methods for minimizing the need for water use such as using native plants and drought tolerant plant species. See Parks and Recreation's xeri-scaping materials for an understanding and guidance of the expectations of xeri-scaping for such environmental design in Medicine Hat.

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



The Hat Downtown Redevelopment Plan

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