



Historic Downtown | NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CONCEPT REPORT - DECEMBER 2017

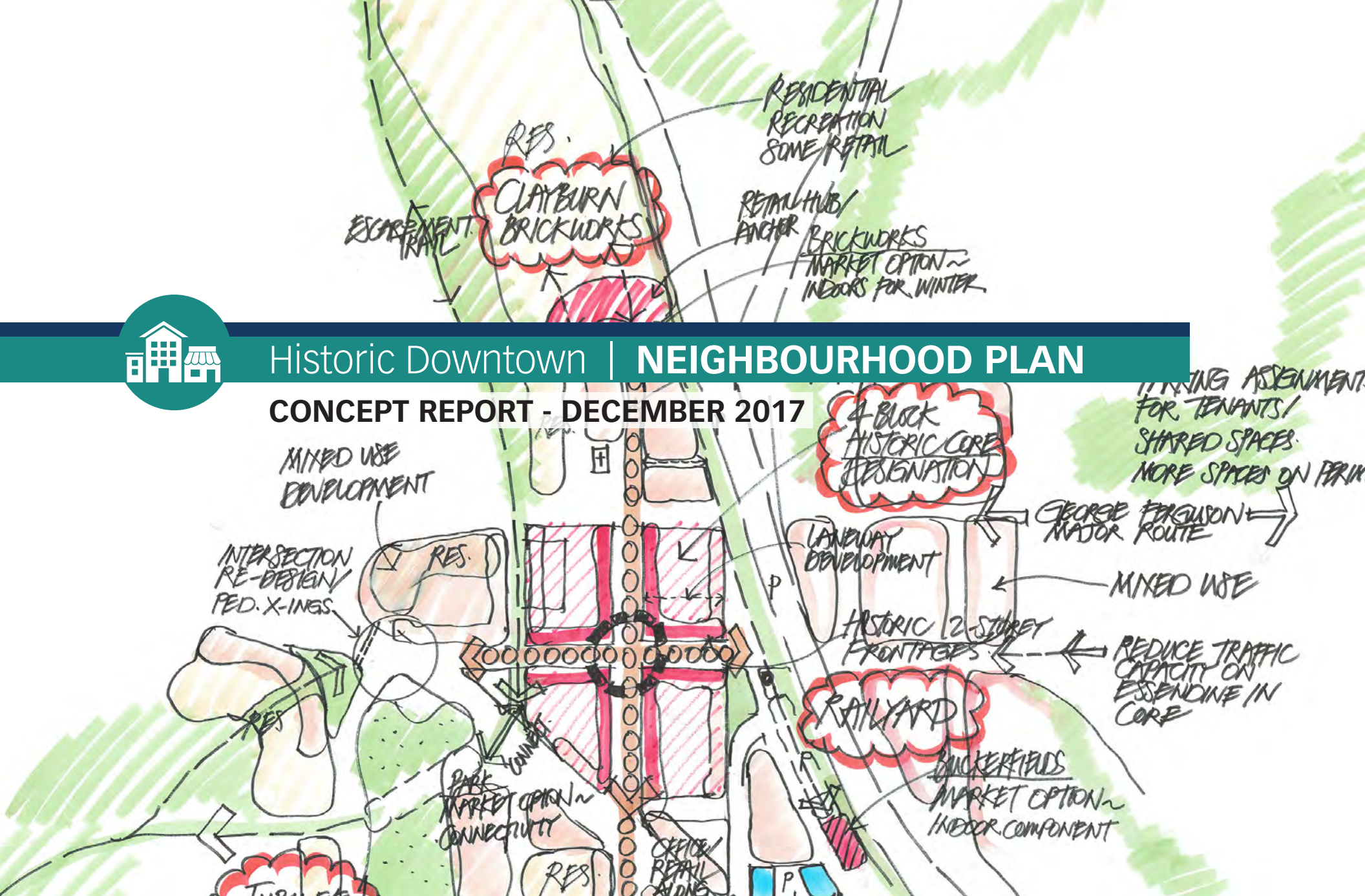




Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	A Historic Neighbourhood	2
1.2	Planning Context	3
1.3	Abbotsford Official Community Plan	3
1.5	Plan 200K	6
1.4	Implementing the OCP	6
1.6	Neighbourhood Plan Process	7
1.7	Defining a Boundary	8
2.0	Engagement Results	12
2.1	Engagement Results	13
2.2	Conversation Boards	14
2.3	Concepts Workshop Outcomes	32
2.4	Public Open House Feedback	38
3.0	Concept.....	39
3.1	Historic Downtown Principles	40
3.2	Land Use	42
3.3	Street Network	46
3.4	Retail Streets and Laneways	48
3.5	Transit Services and Facilities	50
3.6	Active Transportation	52
3.7	Parks, Plazas, and Pedestrian Connections	54
3.8	Places and Special Features	58
3.9	Views	60
3.10	Public Parking	62
3.11	Parking District	64
3.12	Essendene Avenue	66
4.0	Next Steps.....	69
5.0	Appendix.....	71

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan.....	2
Figure 2. OCP - Seven Big Ideas	3
Figure 3. OCP urban structure diagram	4
Figure 4. City of Abbotsford neighbourhood plans.....	6
Figure 5. 1985 OCP Downtown Development Permit Area	8
Figure 6. 1996 OCP Central Business District focus areas	8
Figure 7. 2005 OCP revitalization area	8
Figure 8. 2016 OCP urban structure diagram	9
Figure 9. Historic Downtown zoning.....	9
Figure 10. Parking reduction boundaries from the Zoning Bylaw	9
Figure 11. Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area	10
Figure 12. Preliminary neighbourhood plan boundary	11
Figure 13. Concept A.....	33
Figure 14. Concept B.....	34
Figure 15. Concept C.....	35
Figure 16. Concept D.....	36
Figure 17. Land Use	43
Figure 18. Streets and Connections.....	47
Figure 19. Retail Streets and Laneways	49
Figure 20. Transit Facilities	51
Figure 21. Bicycle Connections	53
Figure 22. Parks, Plazas, and Pedestrian Connections	55
Figure 23. Places and Special Features	59
Figure 24. Views	61
Figure 25. Public Parking.....	63
Figure 26. Parking District	65
Figure 27. Essendene view east (circa 1950).....	66
Figure 28. Essendene view east (circa 1980).....	66
Figure 29. Essendene view east (circa 2010).....	66
Figure 30. Neighbourhood Plan Process.....	70

Executive Summary

Historic Downtown is undergoing a planning process to create a new neighbourhood plan that will shape growth and change in this unique area of the Abbotsford. This process is part of the City of Abbotsford's Plan200K project, which seeks to implement the new Official Community Plan – Abbotsforward – through numerous planning projects. This document marks the completion of two of four planning phases for Historic Downtown with a Concept that lays the groundwork for the new Neighbourhood Plan.

The Concept is based on the Background Research Report from Stage 1 and community engagement that included: interactive conversation boards situated around Historic Downtown; a public open house at Jam in Jubilee; and a workshop attended by Mayor and Council, Abbotsford Downtown Business Association Board Members, City staff and other stakeholders representing local business, residents, developers, and community agencies.

A set of 15 principles form the foundation of the Concept and are essential to the success of Historic Downtown:

TREES AND TRAILS

Plant more trees to increase the tree canopy and provide shade and shelter, particularly along retail streets

Add green landscapes by building streets with innovative stormwater management practices

Use streets and lanes as linear parks to connect other parks and trails

Add multi-used paths to encourage movement within the neighbourhood and connect to outside destinations such as Mill Lake and the City Centre

SHOPPING DISTRICT

Increase sidewalk space so retail and restaurants can spill outdoors on both streets and lanes

Integrate varied seating options throughout the retail area

Require active uses such as shops, services, and restaurants on the ground floor of buildings along certain streets

Highlight buildings with historic character and preserve the historic core, ensuring new buildings complement their design

STREETS AND MOVEMENT

Redesign streets to calm traffic and provide more space for walking, biking, and trees, in particular along Essendene Avenue

Integrate a transit hub that connect the neighbourhood to other areas in the urban core such as the UDistrict and City Centre

Distribute, sign, and manage parking throughout the neighborhood in both off street and on street locations

PEOPLE PLACES

Integrate housing for diverse needs and life stages

Use plazas as gathering places to draw people into and through the neighbourhood

Establish permanent location(s) for markets to be long term retail anchors

Design Jubilee Park as the neighbourhood's primary social gathering space that connects and draws city-wide visitors

The next step in the planning process includes seeking community input on the Concept and testing it against technical constraint, infrastructure costs, and market viability. Outcomes from the engagement and testing will be used to shape the more comprehensive and detailed draft Neighbourhood Plan in summer 2018.



1.0 Introduction

It is an exciting time for Historic Downtown. In a growing city and with a neighbourhood planning process well underway, Historic Downtown is poised for change. This document marks the completion of two of four stages, which will ultimately culminate in the creation of a new Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan that will guide decision-making for growth and development as Abbotsford grows to 200,000 people.

This document presents a proposed Concept that will lay the groundwork for the new neighbourhood plan, which builds on the directions contained in the Official Community Plan, and is being developed through background research, public input, and multi-disciplinary design.

This document is comprised of four sections. Section 1 sets a planning context with background information on the study area and planning process. Section 2 presents the outcomes of the public and stakeholder process. Section 3 presents the elements of the Preferred Concept, and Section 4 identifies next steps.

1.1 A Historic Neighbourhood

OVERVIEW

The Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan (HDNP) is being completed because the 2016 Official Community Plan envisions this area as a complete neighbourhood with diverse uses, destinations, and activities. This section outlines the planning context and study area being explored as a part of the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan process.

Abbotsford’s Historic Downtown is located to the east of the City Centre along South Fraser Way, the CPR rail line, and George Ferguson Way. It was the original town site for the Village of Abbotsford.

The neighbourhood study area is 122 hectares (301 acres) and includes a complex overlay of topography, land uses and networks. At the centre of the study area is a core area of retail streets that comprise a shopping destination for visitors and residents.

THIS DOCUMENT

This document is the second step in the planning process and provides the following as a foundation for the neighbourhood plan:

- public engagement summary
- concept principles and elements
- next steps about how the preferred concept will be used to inform a draft neighbourhood plan

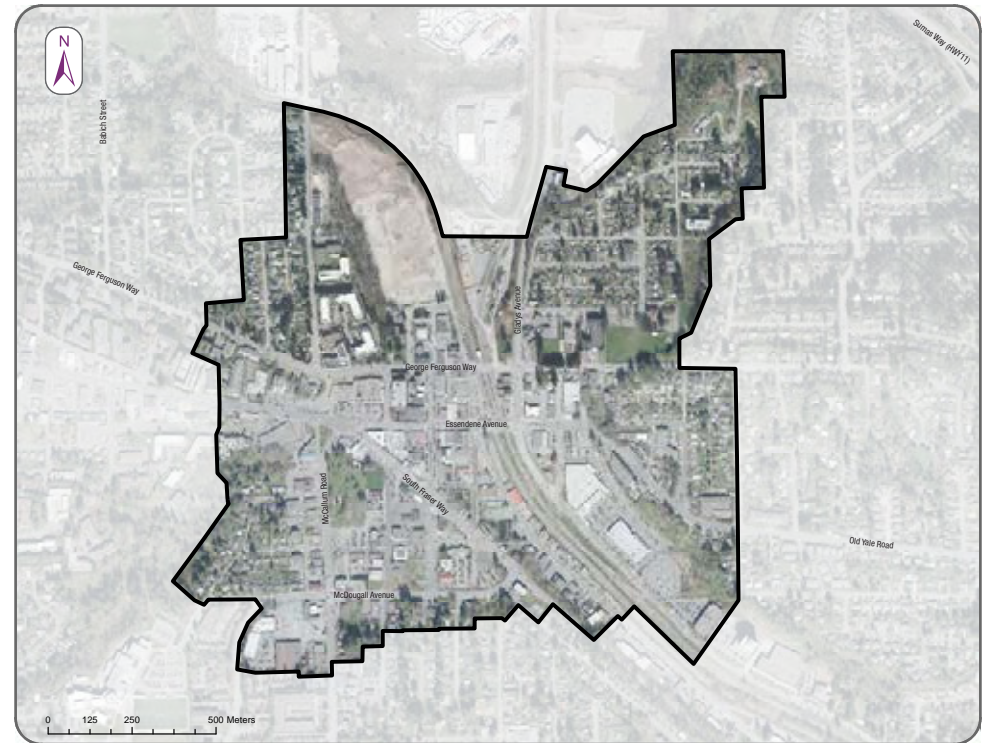


Figure 1. Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan

1.2 Planning Context

OCP HISTORY

Historic Downtown is a special place in the city. It is one of five major centres, and is identified as a future growth and intensification area by the Official Community Plan (OCP). Abbotsford's first OCP was written in 1978, and was subsequently updated in 1985, 1995, 2005, and 2016. The city-wide vision set out in the most recent OCP is:

"Abbotsford is a city of distinct and increasingly complete neighbourhoods rich with public life. Our compact urban area is anchored by a thriving City Centre and surrounded by remarkable natural areas and flourishing agricultural lands. We are diverse, inclusive, and connected. We are green, prosperous, and healthy. We are a vibrant and beautiful community."

The HDNP is meant to build upon the vision set out in the OCP and act as the next step in bringing the OCP to life. The HDNP will provide an urban design vision for Historic Downtown, as well as policy and tools for implementation. This section summarizes the principles, policies and big ideas in the OCP that are most relevant to the HDNP. The sections that follow provide an analysis of Historic Downtown framed within the context of OCP objectives and policies that are relevant to each topic area.

1.3 Abbotsford Official Community Plan

7 BIG IDEAS

The 2016 OCP identifies seven Big Ideas that shape policy and comprise the most essential and transformative directions that aim bring the vision of Abbotsford to life. The seven Big Ideas are:



Figure 2. OCP - Seven Big Ideas

URBAN STRUCTURE

Abbotsford's overall future urban structure is focused on the City Centre and four Urban Centres, which are defined as mixed use centres, anchored by ground-oriented multifamily; low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise housing; and connected by the primary transit corridor that intensifies over time.

Historic Downtown is identified as an Urban Centre within Abbotsford's Urban Core, which is where redevelopment and intensification of uses are focused. More broadly, 75% of new residential growth will be directed to existing built up areas of the City, the majority of which will be in the Urban Core.

Urban Centres like Historic Downtown are secondary to the City Centre in terms of intensity and scale. However, in addition to serving surrounding neighbourhoods, they also have city-wide draw and function. Historic Downtown in particular has distinct character and function as a community gathering place, place of employment, and destination rich with amenities.

Urban Centre land use policies enable a mix of multifamily and commercial uses, and buildings that are typically low-rise and mid-rise and include a mix of retail and/or office space on lower floors and residential on upper floors. Heights are limited to 6 storeys by the OCP, however taller and varied buildings may be possible through this plan.

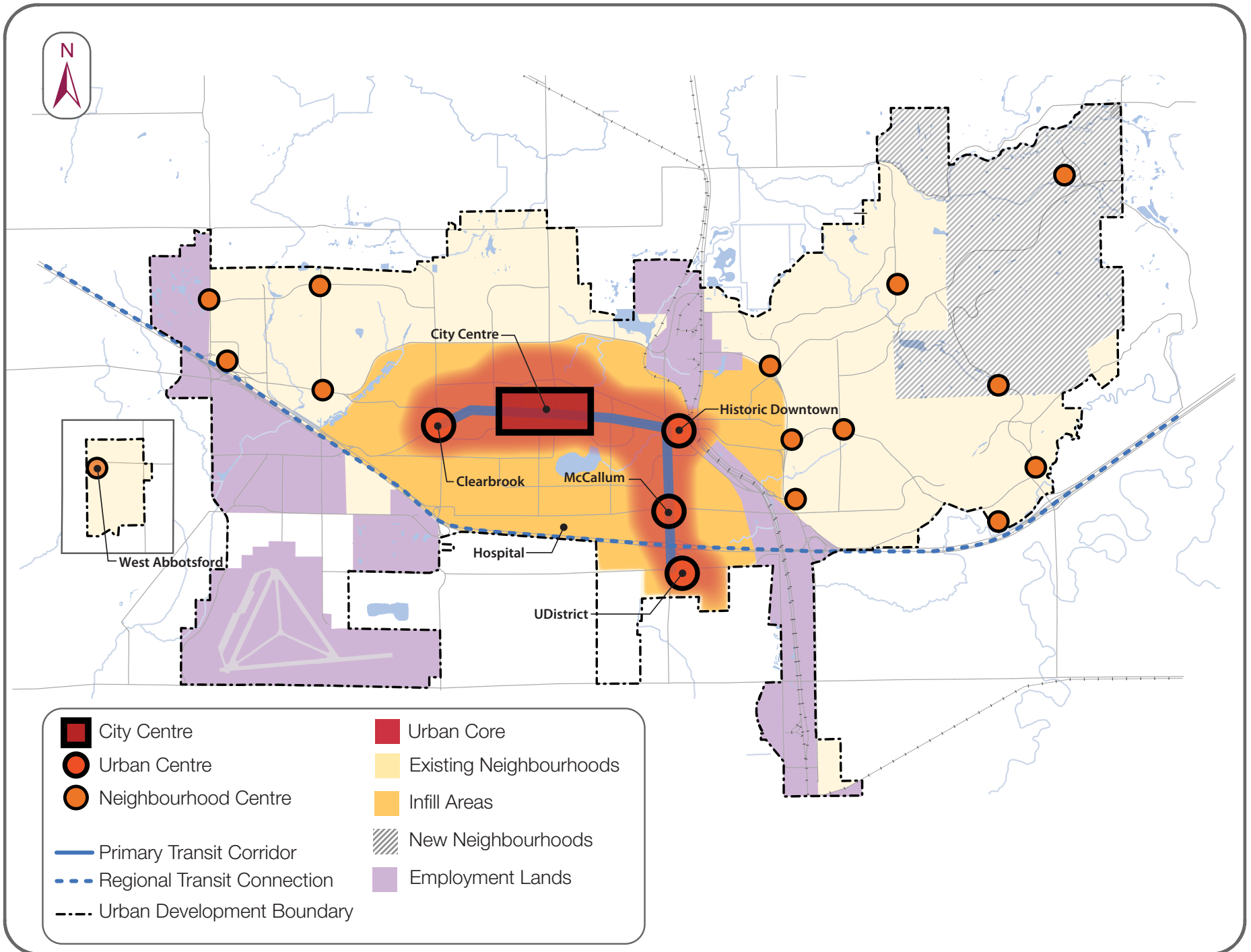


Figure 3. OCP urban structure diagram

OCP POLICIES: HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD

The OCP outlines policies that will specifically guide development in and around Historic Downtown.

Small Scale Retail

Protect and support small scale retail and compatible uses along vibrant and engaging walking streets within the Historic Downtown core.

Residential Intensification

Encourage residential intensification of ground oriented and mid-rise buildings surrounding the Historic Downtown core area to support its retail and other uses, and to establish a complete, complex neighbourhood.

Historic Buildings

Conserve and enhance historic buildings and streetscapes of the Historic Downtown core.

Consistent Character

Establish specific building and public space design guidelines for new development to ensure consistency in scale and sensitivity to the character of existing historic buildings.

Public Space Investments:

Focus investment in the following:

- Amenities such as public art and seating (while also encouraging sidewalk cafés)
- Pedestrian infrastructure such as lighting and special pavement treatments
- Public plazas and parks
- Historic references

Back Alleys:

Take advantage of back alleys through beautification and by adding a mix of uses, while maintaining space for commercial vehicle access, loading, and delivery.

BIG PICTURE POLICIES

In addition to providing an integrated land use plan and vision that supports the policies for Historic Downtown, the neighbourhood plan will need to support other big picture policies such as:

Infrastructure: Building sustainable infrastructure and maintaining it is essential to city building. Comprehensive management and financing of water, stormwater and wastewater pipes will be key to the success of this neighbourhood plan. (Policies 5.13-5.18)

Nature: Strengthening nature in Historic Downtown is not limited to streetscapes and parks within the Historic Downtown boundary; it also means enhancing ecological connections with the ravine to the west, and the wetlands to the north. Opportunities exist to increase the tree canopy, protect existing slopes and sensitive areas, and protect views to significant surrounding mountains and landscapes. (Policies 5.1-5.6)

Streets: While the focus of this plan will be the retail streets that form the central retail area of Historic Downtown, special consideration will also be given to how South Fraser Way is treated and fits into the broader context as a street with an urban boulevard in the City Centre that also has a significant presence in Historic Downtown. The OCP's transportation mode hierarchy prioritizes designing streets for people. As such, the HDNP will work to make walking, biking and transit delightful. (Policies 3.1-3.5)

People Places: Encouraging places for people to gather and socialize is an important part of a vibrant Historic Downtown. The OCP speaks to many elements of this from parks and recreation elements to arts, heritage and cultural expression. Specific ways to support and improve the assets in the neighbourhood today such as Jubilee Park and numerous gathering events will be explored. (Policies 4.1-4.14)

1.4 Implementing the OCP

Neighbourhood Plans are intended to be catalysts in the transformation of urban areas, spurring development in a way where each project helps achieve a common vision. They provide a more detailed urban design vision and help coordinate the financing and servicing of important infrastructure pieces like pipes for water and sanitary, and streets for transportation. By establishing consistent and fair requirements for development, Neighbourhood Plans help remove risk from investments by connecting a vision with implementation.

Currently, planning processes for 4 different areas are ongoing within the City of Abbotsford: U District, City Centre, Historic Downtown, and McKee. In Historic Downtown the purpose is to help transform the area into a vibrant neighbourhood and complete community where people live, work, shop and play.

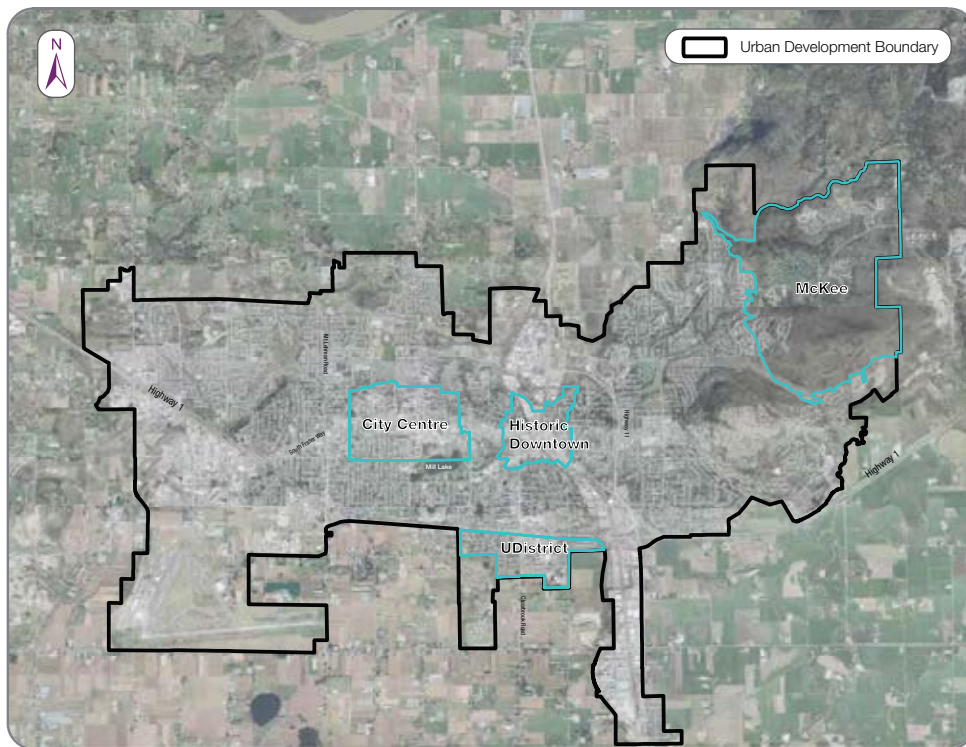


Figure 4. City of Abbotsford neighbourhood plans

1.5 Plan 200K

The creation of these new Neighbourhood Plans is part of broader City initiative called Plan 200K. The initiative intends to coordinate the various City departments as they update master plans and strategies to reflect the vision and objectives the OCP.

In this sense, the HDNP and other Neighbourhood Plans have an opportunity to work alongside and contribute to the development of nearly 20 other plans. The alignment between departments will ensure implementation is focused, planned, and smooth. Master plans and strategies that have a direct impact on the HDNP include:



plan **FOR**
200K
BUILDING THE HUB
OF THE FRASER VALLEY

1.6 Neighbourhood Plan Process

The Neighbourhood Plan will be completed through a four stage process, as follows:



Stage 1 will analyze current conditions and better understand the necessary tools and priorities to make Historic Downtown a vibrant and complete neighbourhood.



Stage 2 will focus on exploring options and preparing a Concept that is the structure of the HDNP. This will be done through an engagement process framed by concept options created from the planning issues identified in Stage 1.



Stage 3 will focus on preparing the first draft of the new HDNP using the findings from Stage 1 and 2. It will also include a technical analysis of infrastructure needs.



Stage 4 will focus on refining the new HDNP and having it adopted as a bylaw by Council.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been established to guide the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan over its 4 stage process:

- Undertake a targeted & inclusive community engagement process
- Understand current housing, retail & office land use supply & future trends
- Integrate the Neighbourhood Plan with servicing capacity & strategies
- Add detail to the OCP's land uses to support diverse housing options in Historic Downtown
- Understand current transit, cycling and vehicular needs and illustrate a strategy to enhance transportation options and prioritize pedestrians
- Develop design standards & guidelines that contribute to an attractive & unique character
- Provide a parking strategy that focuses on intensifying underused & vacant properties
- Illustrate potential locations to enhance the civic role and function of public spaces, including streets, parks and City owned sites
- Align the various existing administrative and policy boundaries in Historic Downtown

1.7 Defining a Boundary

With a long history of development, business investment, and civic improvements, Historic Downtown has a complex administrative context. What follows is a summary of various administrative tools in planning, bylaw, and business development that set the stage for creating the preliminary HDNP boundary.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN IN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLANS

- Abbotsford's 1985 OCP was amended in 1988 to include Schedule J, a specific plan for Historic Downtown. This is the earliest documented version of a formal boundary for the neighbourhood.
- The 1996 OCP identified a Central Business District with several focus areas. The large Central Business District area overshadowed the specific distinction of Historic Downtown.
- The 2005 OCP for the City of Abbotsford amended the 1996 Central Business District into a City Centre that covered three areas, one of which was the Historic Downtown.
- The most recent OCP, completed in 2016, condensed the three City Centre areas from 2005 into one City Centre with the highest density and several Urban Centres with reduced density. The Historic Downtown was identified as an Urban Centre. An urban structure diagram notes where Historic Downtown is in relation to the City Centre.



Figure 5. 1985 OCP Downtown Development Permit Area

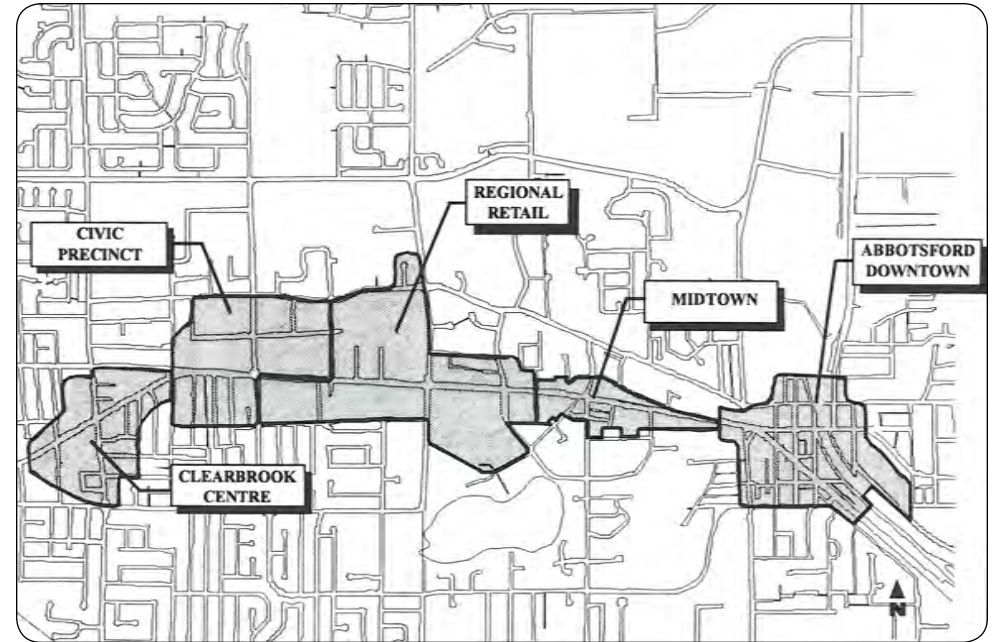


Figure 6. 1996 OCP Central Business District focus areas



Figure 7. 2005 OCP revitalization area

ZONING BYLAW

C7 zone

The C7 zone was created in 2002 (Bylaw No. 1150-2002) to both encourage and discourage specific businesses in the downtown area. Through the development of the C7 zone, various properties were determined to be included or excluded. A review of the original and current properties zoned C7 reveals that not all commercial properties within the present day “Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area” (described on page 10) were, or are, zoned C7.

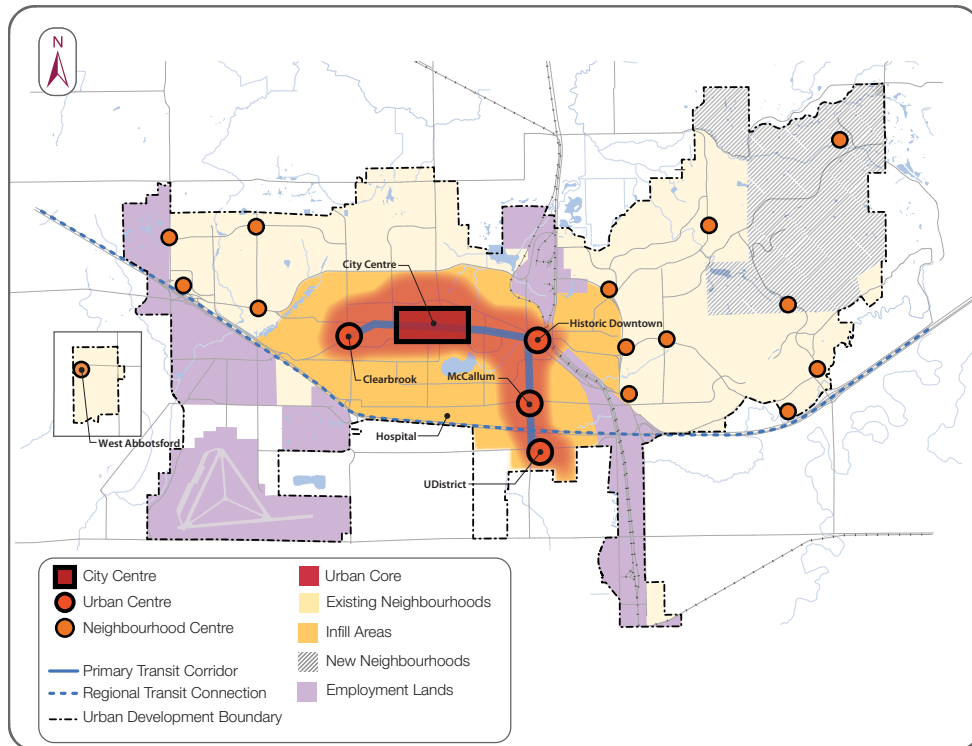


Figure 8. 2016 OCP urban structure diagram

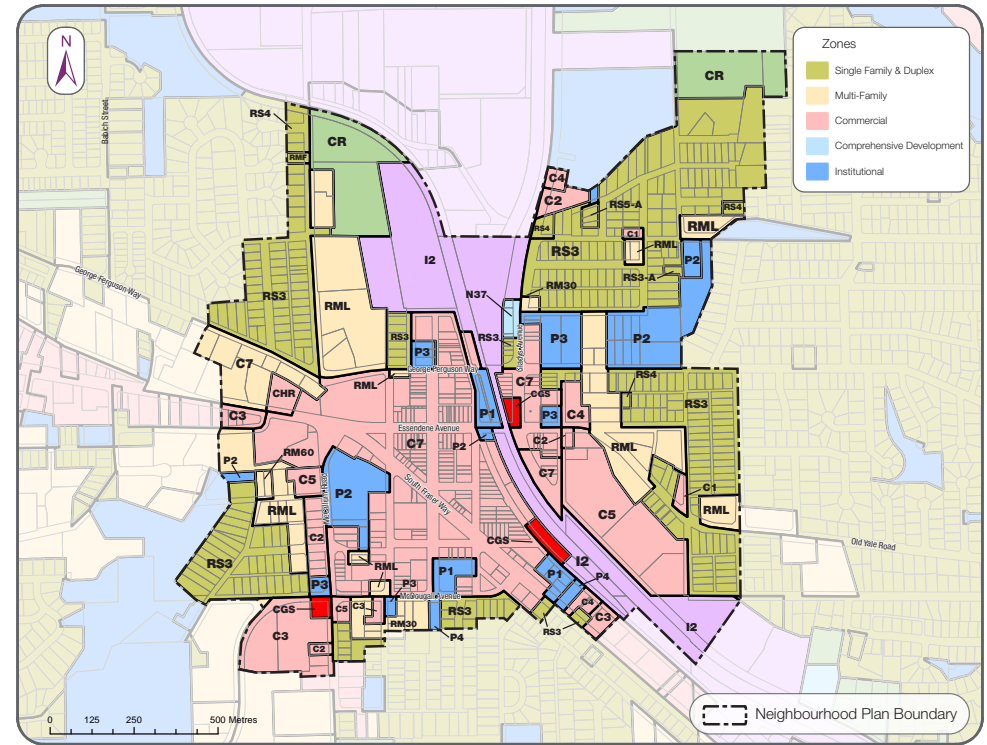


Figure 9. Historic Downtown zoning

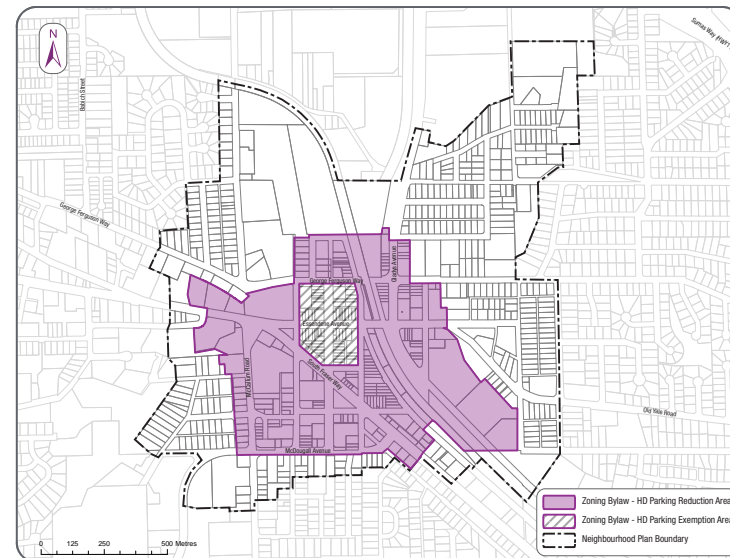


Figure 10. Parking reduction boundaries from the Zoning Bylaw

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Abbotsford Downtown Business Association

The Abbotsford Downtown Business Association (ADBA) was formally created and registered as a society in 1989, although it existed before this date in various informal forms.

The ADBA supports an area that is covered by both the Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area Bylaw (No. 1699-2007) and the Abbotsford Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw (No. 1494-2005).

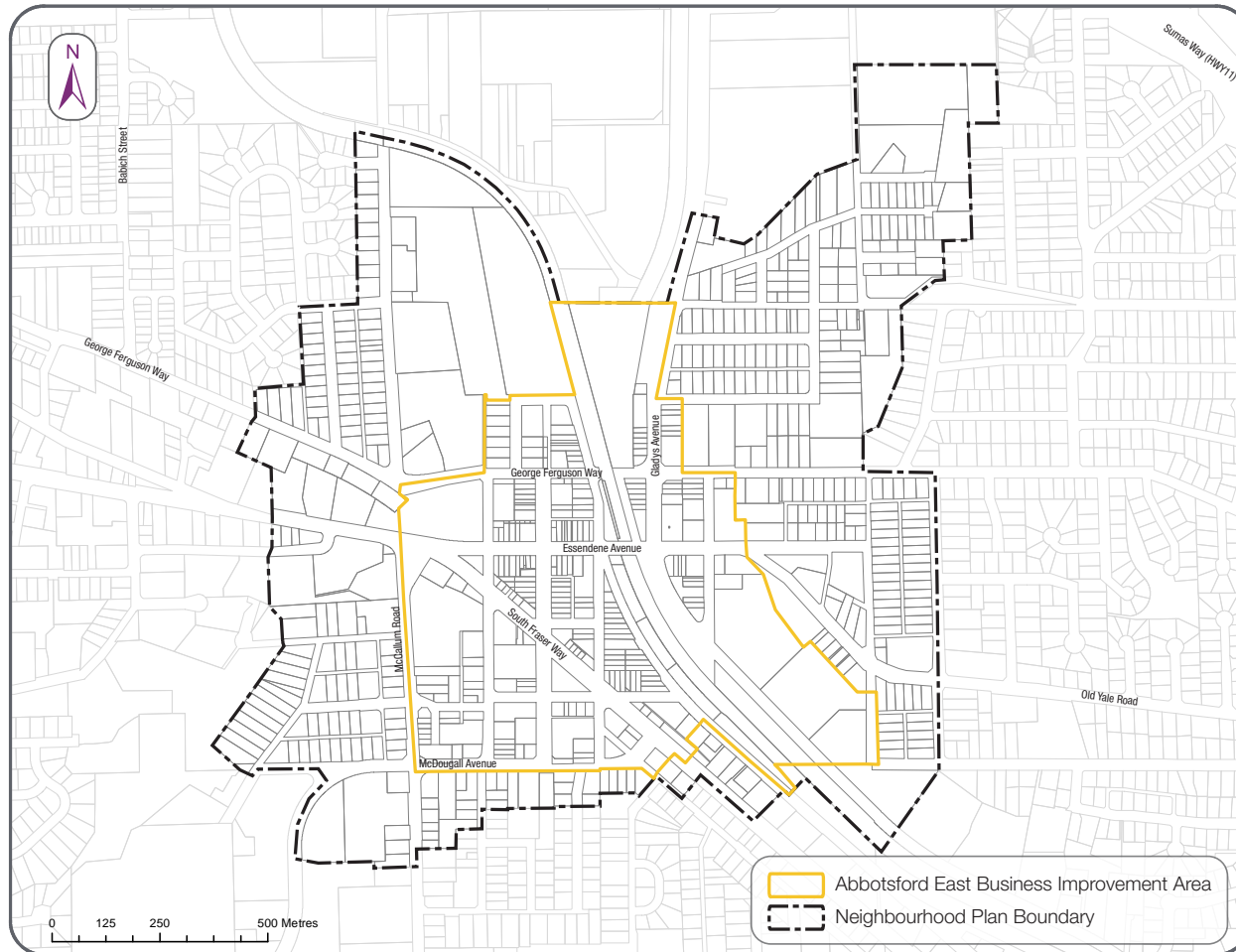


Figure 11. Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area

Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area Bylaw

The improvement area was created in 1994 by the District of Abbotsford. It began with a \$100,000 grant that increased by 3% per year for an initial 5 year period. Over time there have been adjustments made to the list of eligible project activities and how the levy was collected and remitted by the City of Abbotsford to the ADBA.

Abbotsford Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw

The tax exemption area was created in 2005 by the City of Abbotsford as a way to encourage development activity in the area. The boundary for the exemption is the same as the improvement area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BOUNDARY

The neighbourhood plan boundary includes all of the various administrative boundaries described above in their entirety. One reason for this was to be able to document the different boundaries currently used in Historic Downtown, and resolve as many of the discrepancies and differences as possible through the development of a neighbourhood plan. The new neighbourhood plan should improve the clarity and relationship between these overlapping and incongruent administrative boundaries.

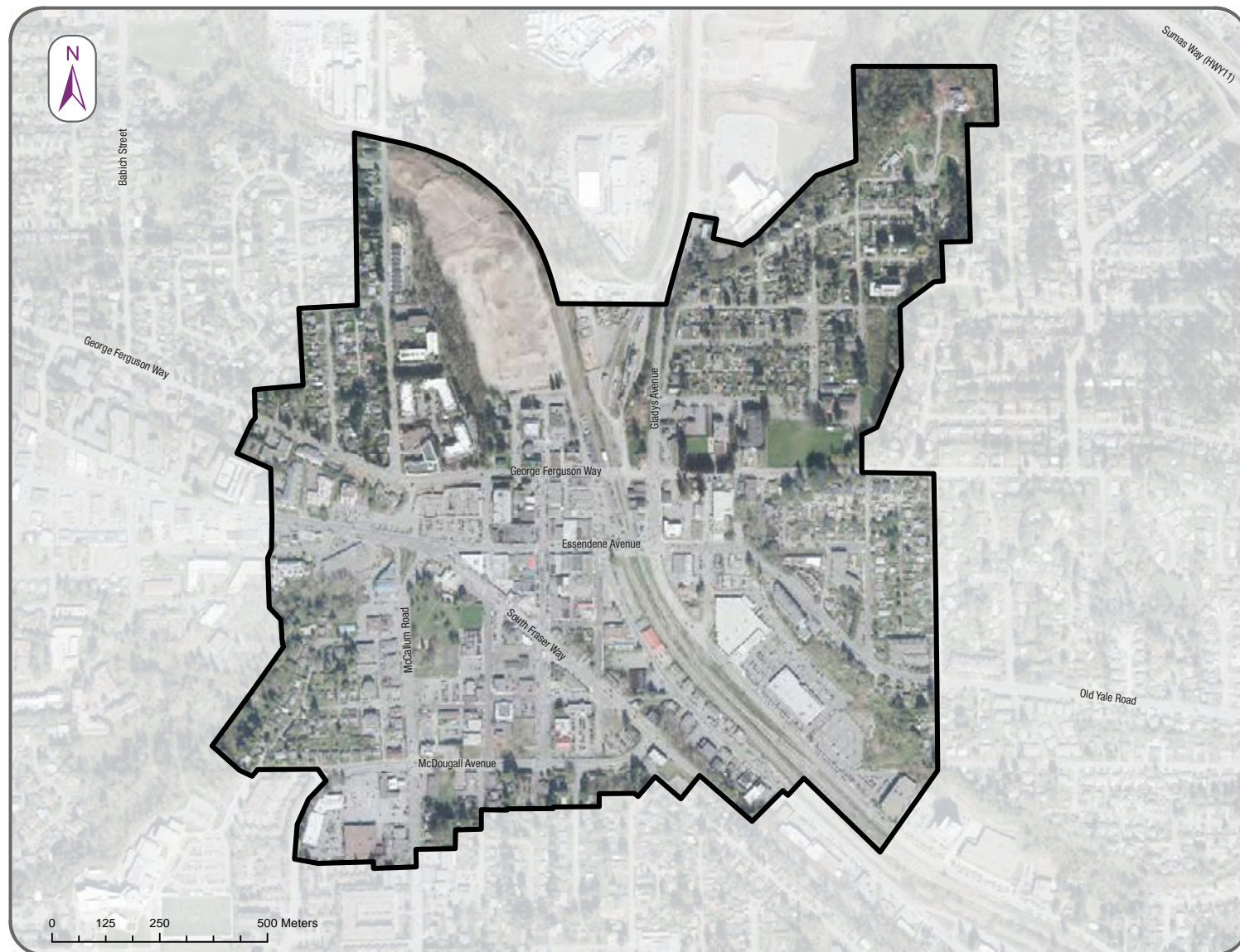


Figure 12. Preliminary neighbourhood plan boundary



2.0 Engagement Results

This section provides an overview of engagement activities and outcomes of Stage 2 of the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan process. Stage 2 was focused on exploring themes and options to structure the neighbourhood plan, and on establishing a draft Preferred Concept.

Input that was received during engagement activities was directly used to shape the development of the draft preferred neighbourhood concept presented in Section 3.0.

2.1 Engagement Results

ACTIVITIES

Engagement activities included: Conversation Boards, a Concepts Workshop, and a Public Open House.

Conversation Boards were hosted in businesses throughout Historic Downtown over a two week period, and were also used to engage at cultural events, such as the Berry Festival and Farmer's Market. Each of the eight Conversation Boards was focused on a specific topic area over which the neighbourhood plan will have influence. Overall, each board received comments from an average of 230 participants.

The Concepts Workshop and Public Open House were held on July 13, 2017 and allowed for broad participation from stakeholders, Councillors, City Staff, and the general public before creating a draft plan.

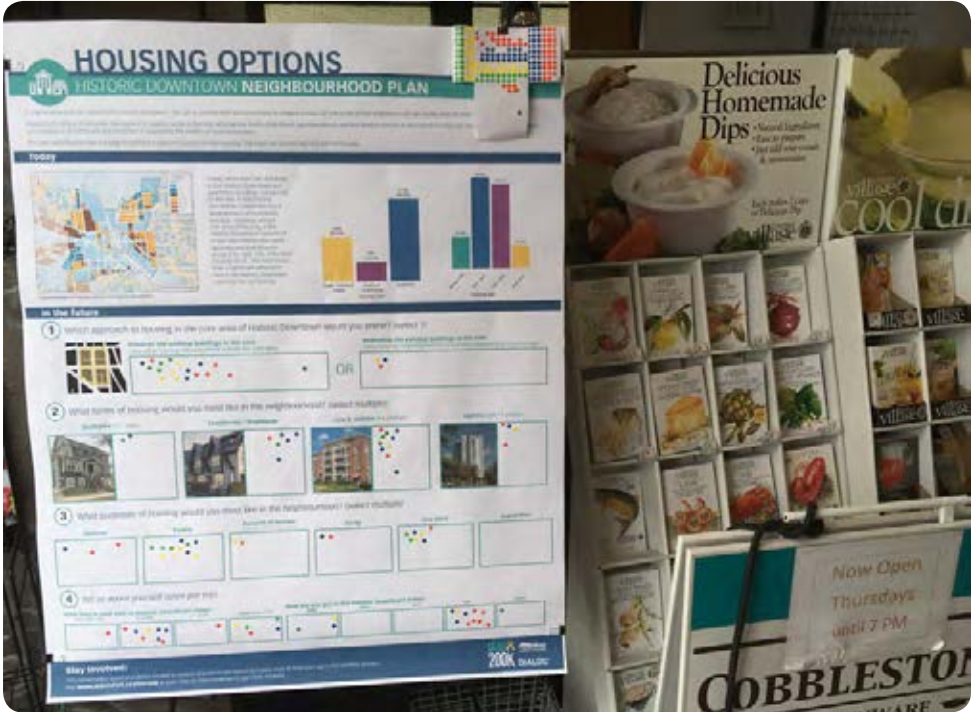
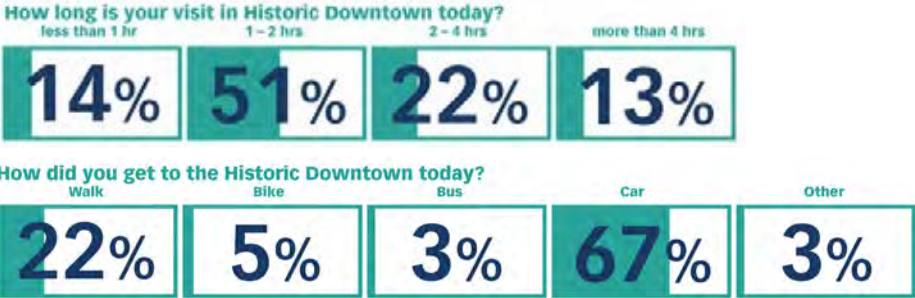


2.2 Conversation Boards

The Conversations Boards are represented in full in the following pages, with a tally of participant input overlaid on top. For legibility in this document, each display board is represented across a two page spread.

Who took part?

The majority of those who participated were visiting Historic Downtown were there for a one or two hour visit, and arrived by car. In addition, approximately 33% of participants arrived by walking, biking, or transit, which exceeds the approximate 7% share these modes average in Abbotsford overall.



IN A STOREFRONT



AT THE SATURDAY FARMERS MARKET



AT THE BERRY FEST



HOUSING OPTIONS

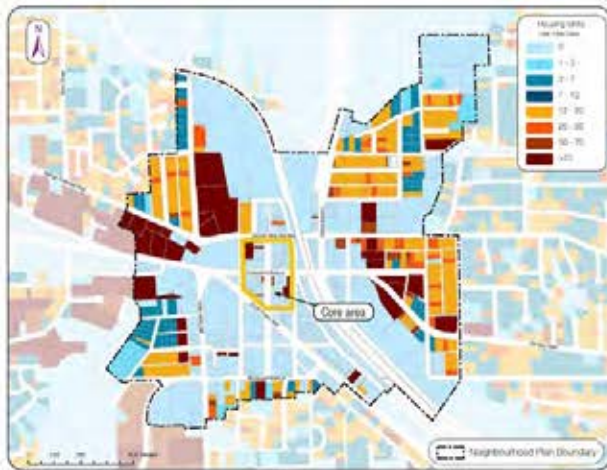
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to support housing diversity, affordability, family-friendliness, age-friendliness, and non-market options. A diversity of housing can meet these needs. Also, higher concentrations of homes are also important in supporting the viability of local businesses.

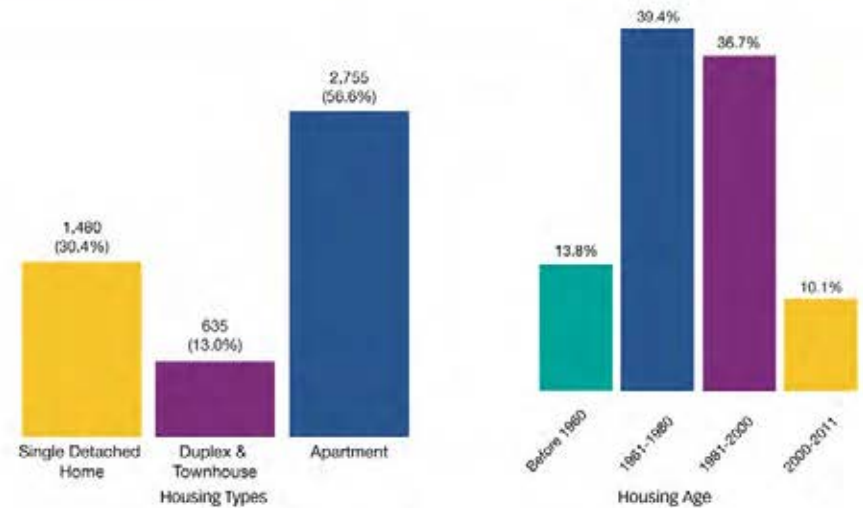
This plan will influence new housing, including the type and location of new housing. The input you provide will help inform the plan.

Today



Concentration of housing units in the Historic Downtown

Today, more than half of homes in the Historic Downtown are apartment buildings. Compared to the rest of Abbotsford, the Historic Downtown has a large amount of multifamily housing. However, almost one-third of housing in the Historic Downtown consists of single detached homes, while duplexes and townhouses account for only 13% of the total housing stock. The map shows how a significant amount of land in the Historic Downtown currently has no housing.



SUMMARY

(See tally of responses on facing page)

Participants were generally divided on housing approach in the core area, some preferring the preservation of existing buildings and scale and others preferring the redevelopment of existing buildings. Multiplexes were the preferred building typology, followed by townhouses, and low to mid-rises, with high rises as the least preferred. Family housing, live-work and seniors housing were expressed as the highest priority.

In the future

1 Which approach to housing in the core area of Historic Downtown would you prefer? (select 1)



Preserve the existing buildings in the core
(only allow housing redevelopment outside the core area)

54%

OR

Redevelop the existing buildings in the core
(allow housing redevelopment to add to the commercial in the core area)

46%

2 What forms of housing would you most like in the neighbourhood? (select multiple)

Multiplex (4-6 units)



1

Townhouse / Rowhouse



2

Low & midrise (4-6 storeys)



3

Highrise (over 6 storeys)



4

3 What purposes of housing would you most like in the neighbourhood? (select multiple)

Seniors

3

Family

1

Percent of income
(housing costs are 30% or less)

4

Co-op

5

Live-Work

2

Supportive

6



SHOPPING STREETS

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life. Abbotsford's Official Community Plan rethinks the role of shopping streets. The OCP focuses on people by turning shopping streets into destinations for gathering, shopping, and lingering. This plan will influence shopping streets through design guidelines that will affect the look of new developments. The input you provide today will help inform the plan and guidelines.

Today

Montrose Avenue
(view north)

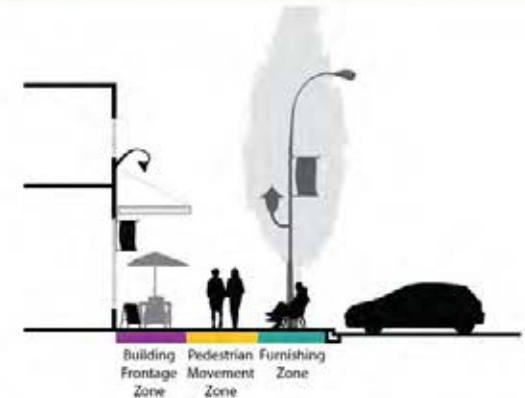


South Fraser Way
(view east)



The character of shopping streets is influenced by the space allocation for different users – pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicle drivers – as well as the amenities and features of buildings, sidewalks, and other public spaces.

The photographs show Montrose Avenue and South Fraser Way - two shopping streets in Abbotsford that offer very different character and experiences. The illustration shows the different zones that are present in the sidewalks of shopping streets.



SUMMARY

Participants thought historic references were important to the character of shopping streets. Patios, character, small scale retail were rated as the most important elements for Historic Downtown.

In the future

1 Should historic references be important to the overall character of shopping streets? (select 1)



2 What elements would you like to see most along Historic Downtown shopping streets? (select up to 4 items)





PARKING

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to make efficient use of existing parking in order to support economic activity and local businesses. At the same time, there is direction to manage demand for parking, which means supporting the need for less parking (particularly surface parking) over time by creating more transportation choices for residents and visitors.

This plan will influence parking through the types of parking management that will be considered. The input you provide today will help inform the plan.

Today

Saturday afternoon parking occupancy in the Historic Downtown



The map on the left illustrates parking inventory and occupancy during peak demand on Saturday afternoons. Overall, the parking survey completed for the background research found that:

in the core area, Saturday afternoon was occupied **over 85%**

the average occupancy for total parking spaces on all days and times was between **50-55%**

unused supply was available in the neighbourhood on all days and times

Saturday had areas with both the highest and lowest demand out of any day of the week

1 What is your experience with parking in Historic Downtown today? (select 1)

Parking does not work.

10%

It depends on the time or day.

75%

Parking works well.

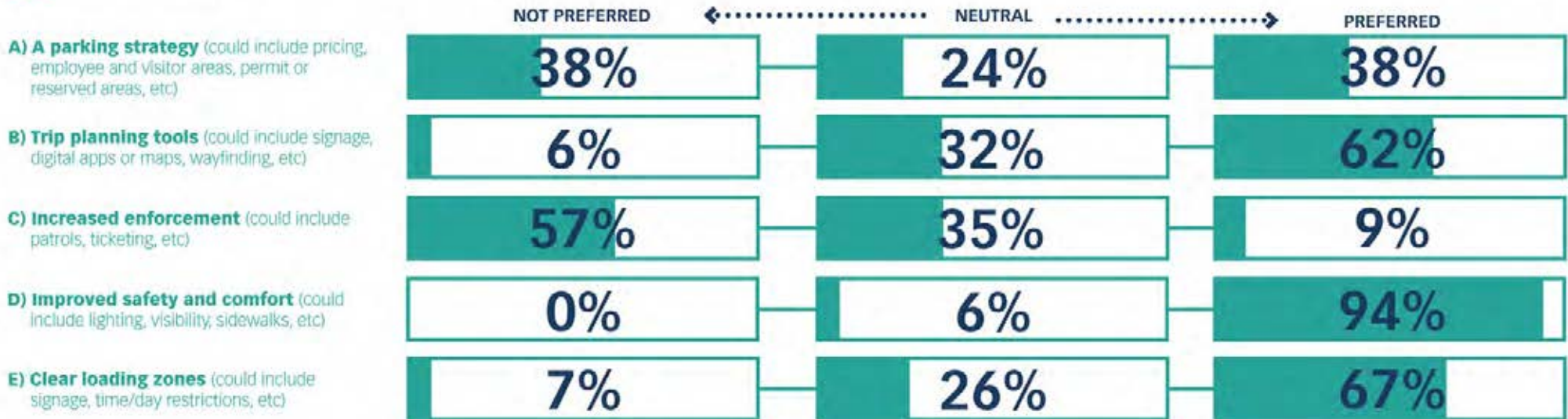
15%

SUMMARY

The large majority of participants (90%) said they would be willing to walk three to five blocks to their destination after parking. Most participants have varied experiences with parking today, and said that whether or not parking works for them depends on the time and day. To help manage parking, the highest rated strategy was improved safety and comfort, followed by clear loading zones and trip planning tools.

In the future

2 What would you prefer be done to help manage parking in Historic Downtown? (select 1 per approach)



3 How far would you be willing to walk to your destination after parking? (select 1)





TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to make walking, biking, and transit both realistic and delightful options for residents.

This plan will influence transportation through changes to how streets and sidewalks are designed. The input you provide today will help inform the plan.

Today

Today, the Historic Downtown is well served by bus transit, and is well-connected for pedestrians, with nearly all shopping areas being within a convenient, 5 minute walk of one another. However, there are very few biking amenities.



Pedestrian amenities and 5 minute walking distance from the core



Bus routes through historic downtown



Bike routes

SUMMARY

Most participants could see themselves walking more in the future, followed by cycling. Pedestrian amenities, street design, and bike amenities were rated as the most important elements to improve transportation choice.

In the future

1 Which types of transportation could you see yourself using more in Historic Downtown? *(select multiple)*



2 What elements do you think would most improve transportation choice in Historic Downtown? *(select up to 3)*





HISTORIC CHARACTER

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to conserve and enhance historic buildings and streetscapes, and to ensure that future development is complementary to the established character in the Historic Downtown.

This plan will include design guidelines for scale, height and architectural elements, and may also have ideas for protecting old buildings. The input you provide today will help inform the plan and guidelines.

Today

Today, the Historic Downtown has a mixture of old and new buildings.



SUMMARY

97% of participants feel that historic buildings should be protected, and 96% felt that new development should complement historic buildings. The preferred architectural approach to Historic Downtown is use of traditional materials, followed by renovation of existing housing; and, contemporary materials that complement historic buildings was rated as third.

In the future

1 Should historic buildings be protected? *(select 1)*



2 How should new development relate to historic buildings? *(select 1)*



3 What architecture types would be appropriate in Historic Downtown? *(select multiple)*

Replicate historic buildings with traditional materials



1

Introduce modern materials such as glass, glazing, and steel



5

Complement while using contemporary materials



3

Renovate existing buildings and houses



2

Juxtapose contemporary form and materials



4



NATURAL FEATURES + CONNECTIONS

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to protect ecosystems, habitat corridors, and environmental health.

This plan will influence natural features and green connections through guidelines that will shape form and character of new streets and sustainability aspects of new multifamily housing. The input you provide today will help inform the plan and guidelines.

Today



Environmental Development Permit Areas



Watercourses



View southeast from George Ferguson Way of Mount Baker.



View northeast from crosswalk along South Fraser Way at Pauline Street.

Today, the Historic Downtown enjoys spectacular views to distant mountains and is part of a broader ecological network, connecting important environmental areas such as wetlands and salmon bearing streams.

SUMMARY

Most participants felt that views should be a part of Historic Downtown. Greenways and trails were the most preferred natural and green elements, followed by street trees, and raingardens.

In the future

1 Should views be a part of Historic Downtown? (select 1)

No, not necessary

6%

Neutral

7%

Somewhat

42%

Yes, absolutely

45%

2 What natural and green elements would you most like to see in Historic Downtown? (select up to 3)

Renewable Energy



4

Green Roofs



5

Permeable Landscape



6

Rain Gardens



3

Greenways + Trails



1

Street Trees



2



AMENITIES + EVENTS

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to establish public spaces that support cultural inclusiveness, artistic and cultural expression, and recognition of history.

This plan will influence amenities and events by shaping public spaces where events take place, and by providing direction for future public art and community initiatives. The input you provide today will help inform the plan.

Today



Amenities in Historic Downtown

Today, the Historic Downtown provides a diversity of community activities ranging from market and music festivals, to social services and places of worship. Historic Downtown is also home to public art including sculptures, art benches, and murals.



Image: pascocomus.com



Image: Catherine Porter



Image: Jam in Justice Facebook



Image: www.100yearsforhistory.ca

SUMMARY

Participants said that the most desired events and programming in Historic Downtown were outdoor events, followed by seasonal activities and community gardens.

In the future

1 What types of events and programming would you most like to see in Historic Downtown in the future? (select up to 3)

Outdoor Events



1

Seasonal Activities



2

Pavilion



5

Arts Space



6

Public Art



4

Community Gardens



3



PARKS + PLAZAS

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. The City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring the vision to life.

Abbotsford's Official Community Plan aspires to support a diverse and dynamic system of parks, trails, urban places and people-friendly streets that bring people together, enable recreation and play, support creative and cultural expression, and more.

This plan will influence parks and plazas including their potential form, character, programming and location. The input you provide today will help inform the plan.

Today



Parks and trails in historic downtown.

Today, the historic downtown is home to a number of parks with a variety of programming. Jubilee Park is a key park and hosts active and passive recreation, as well as festivals and events. A number of businesses have sidewalk patios, however plaza spaces are limited.



SUMMARY

Participants most prefer green park spaces, followed by plazas, and water features.

In the future

1 Which additional ideas for park and plazas you would like to see in the Historic Downtown? *(select up to 3)*

Recreation	Green	Play	Plaza	Water	Pets
					
5	1	4	2	3	6



2.3 Concepts Workshop Outcomes

THE CONCEPT WORKSHOP

On July 13, 2017 a concept workshop was held to develop concepts for Historic Downtown. The event ran from 1 to 5pm at Trinity Memorial United Church, located in Historic Downtown, and included:

- Mayor and City Councillors
- City of Abbotsford Staff
- ADBA Board Members
- Stakeholders representing local businesses and community agencies
- The consulting team from DIALOG and Toderian Urban Works.

The day included introductory presentations to summarize the engagement findings to date, as well as a presentation on 'Successful Downtowns'.

Participants then broke out into small groups and worked with a graphic facilitator and urban designer to explore different approaches to land use, transportation, programming and public realm, built form and policy.

The following drawings reflect the outcomes of the conversations.

At the end of the drawing session, participants shared their top three priorities for the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan. These are also summarized on the following pages.

CONCEPT A

This concept identified five 'sub-areas' within Historic Downtown: Clayburn Brickworks, Historic Core, Railyard, Jubilee, and New Town.

The core remains 2-storey while mixed used development including housing supports the core with additional density and housing options.

The plan also identifies: a location for a new Transit Hub on Montrose Avenue; trail connections between parks and along the rail way (a "rail trail"); and, Montrose and Essendene as key public realm high streets.

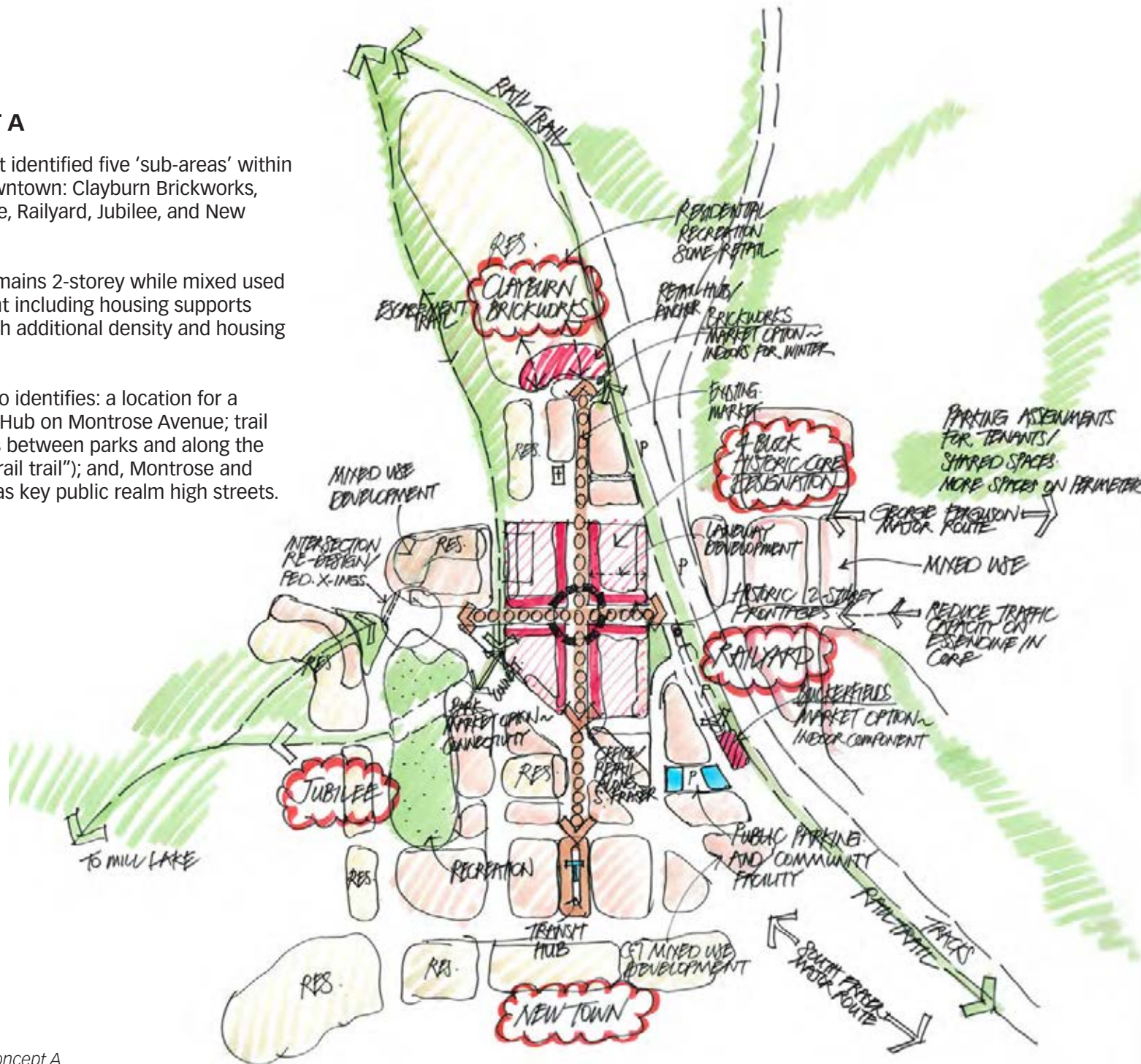


Figure 13. Concept A

CONCEPT C

This concept transitions new housing density from the central historic core where, which remains as 2 storey development, outward. Mixed uses hug the core.

Pedestrian connections are made to residential areas and between parks and open spaces to improve walkability.

The Farmer's Market is located in a new plaza, adjacent to the rail corridor; and a visitor centre located near the Christmas Tree plaza creates a destination for visitors.



Figure 15. Concept C

PARTICIPANT PRIORITIES

Participants were asked to identify their top three priorities for Historic Downtown, based on the discussion at the tables. The 7 themes and priorities that emerged were:

Destinations, Outdoor Spaces, & People Places

- An entertainment/arts/event district
- More patios, both small and large
- A night market
- Multi-purpose gathering places
- Rooftop gardens and green spaces
- Lane activation
- An “Entrance” to Jubilee Park from Downtown off of Pauline

Walkability and Transit-Friendliness

- Walkability and wider sidewalks
- Pedestrian and biking connections
- Support for all modes of travel
- Transit exchange at corner of McCallum / SFW

Farmers Market

- Ideas for more permanent locations:
 - The old flooring building
 - Jubilee Park
 - At Clayburn Brickyard Site
 - At Christmas Tree park
- That it be year round

Trails and Green Connections

- Walking and cycling trails within the neighbourhood and connected to adjacent context. More specifically:
 - Mill Lake to Montrose Trail
 - Ravine Park to Jubilee
 - Along Railway and bluffs
 - Throughout downtown – trails, lanes, wider sidewalks
 - Mill Lake with Discovery Trail
 - Green alley
 - Jubilee Park to Core; and,
- Ravine Park improved trails

Essendene Traffic Changes

- Flow reduction or diversion
- Traffic calming
- Bike lanes
- Lane reduction
- Pedestrian focus / friendly
- Reduced to 2 lanes
- 5 corners roundabout

Heritage Character

- Maintain 2 storey scale and existing character of core
- Move back the old train station to its original site for historic / pub use
- Character should remain historic
- Brick theme
- Designate and protect the historic core
- Keep the historic buildings and redevelop buildings that are not that old

Other

- Land Use
 - More residential density (except for 4 core historic blocks)
 - More housing in general
 - Mixed use
 - Office space in close proximity to downtown
- Identity
 - Identifiable transition nodes
 - Sub-area themes
 - Marketing plan
- Policy
 - City as key player with new vision for infrastructure
 - Supporting policy development – examples: inclusionary housing/DB Amenity Contribution; high performance building criteria; active design principles; day and night uses
- Parkades

2.4 Public Open House Feedback

JAM IN JUBILEE, AT JUBILEE PARK

The drawings that were prepared during the Concept Workshop were presented at the Jam in Jubilee Park from 6 to 9 pm, immediately following the afternoon workshop.

Twenty written comments were received, and the following themes emerged during this engagement:

Cycling & Transit

Support for more cycling facilities and transit frequency

People Places

Support for improved public realm, with more focus on people and less focus on cars

Affordable Housing

Support for more affordable rental housing

Arts & Culture

Support for more arts and cultural activities, including: more small, local businesses; pubs; music venues; and, incentives for arts organizations.



3.0 Concept

Extending from the background research, public input, and stakeholder workshop, a Concept has taken shape. This section presents the concept for the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan by first introducing overarching principles, and then specific elements of the concept, including land use, retail streets, transit, parking, parks and plazas, and more.

3.1 Historic Downtown Principles

These principles are the foundation of the Concept and are essential to the success of Historic Downtown. The individual elements on the following pages are one way to illustrate and 'land' these principles on the ground. As the neighbourhood plan process continues, and the Concept is tested through more community engagement and infrastructure assessments, the principles remain foundational while the individual elements can adapt and change.



Flickr: Smithsonian Gardens

1. TREES AND TRAILS

- 1.1 PLANT MORE TREES TO INCREASE THE TREE CANOPY AND PROVIDE SHADE AND SHELTER, PARTICULARLY ALONG RETAIL STREETS
- 1.2 ADD GREEN LANDSCAPES BY BUILDING STREETS WITH INNOVATIVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT APPROACHES.
- 1.3 USE STREETS AND LANES AS LINEAR CONNECTIONS TO OTHER PARKS AND TRAILS
- 1.4 ADD MULTIUSE PATHS TO ENCOURAGE MOVEMENT WITHIN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND CONNECT TO OUTSIDE DESTINATIONS SUCH AS MILL LAKE AND THE CITY CENTRE



Flickr: La Citta Vita

2. SHOPPING DISTRICT

- 2.1 INCREASE SIDEWALK SPACE SO RETAIL AND RESTAURANTS CAN SPILL OUTDOORS ON BOTH STREETS AND LANES
- 2.2 INTEGRATE VARIED SEATING OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THE RETAIL AREA
- 2.3 REQUIRE ACTIVE USES SUCH AS SHOPS, SERVICES, AND RESTAURANTS ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF BUILDINGS ALONG CERTAIN STREETS
- 2.4 HIGHLIGHT BUILDINGS WITH HISTORIC CHARACTER AND PRESERVE THE HISTORIC CORE, ENSURING NEW BUILDINGS COMPLEMENT THEIR DESIGN



3. STREETS AND MOVEMENT

- 3.1 REDESIGN STREETS TO CALM TRAFFIC AND PROVIDE MORE SPACE FOR WALKING, BIKING, AND TREES, IN PARTICULAR ALONG ESSENDENE AVENUE**
- 3.2 INTEGRATE A TRANSIT HUB THAT CONNECTS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD TO OTHER AREAS IN THE URBAN CORE SUCH AS THE UDISTRICT AND CITY CENTRE**
- 3.3 DISTRIBUTE, SIGN, AND MANAGE PARKING THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD IN BOTH OFF STREET AND ON STREET LOCATIONS**



4. PEOPLE PLACES

- 4.1 INTEGRATE HOUSING FOR DIVERSE NEEDS AND LIFE STAGES**
- 4.2 USE PLAZAS AS GATHERING PLACES TO DRAW PEOPLE INTO AND THROUGH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD**
- 4.3 ESTABLISH PERMANENT LOCATION(S) FOR MARKETS (FARMERS, NIGHT, ARTISAN, ETC) TO BE LONG TERM RETAIL ANCHORS**
- 4.4 DESIGN JUBILEE PARK AS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD'S PRIMARY SOCIAL GATHERING SPACE THAT CONNECTS AND DRAWS CITY-WIDE VISITORS**

3.2 Land Use

Land use is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of the City of Abbotsford in realizing community goals in Historic Downtown. The proposed land uses in this Concept build on the directions in the OCP, providing more nuanced direction by splitting the Urban Centre land use designation into 4 separate land uses: Historic Centre, Urban Centre Mixed, Urban Centre Residential, and Urban Centre Employment.

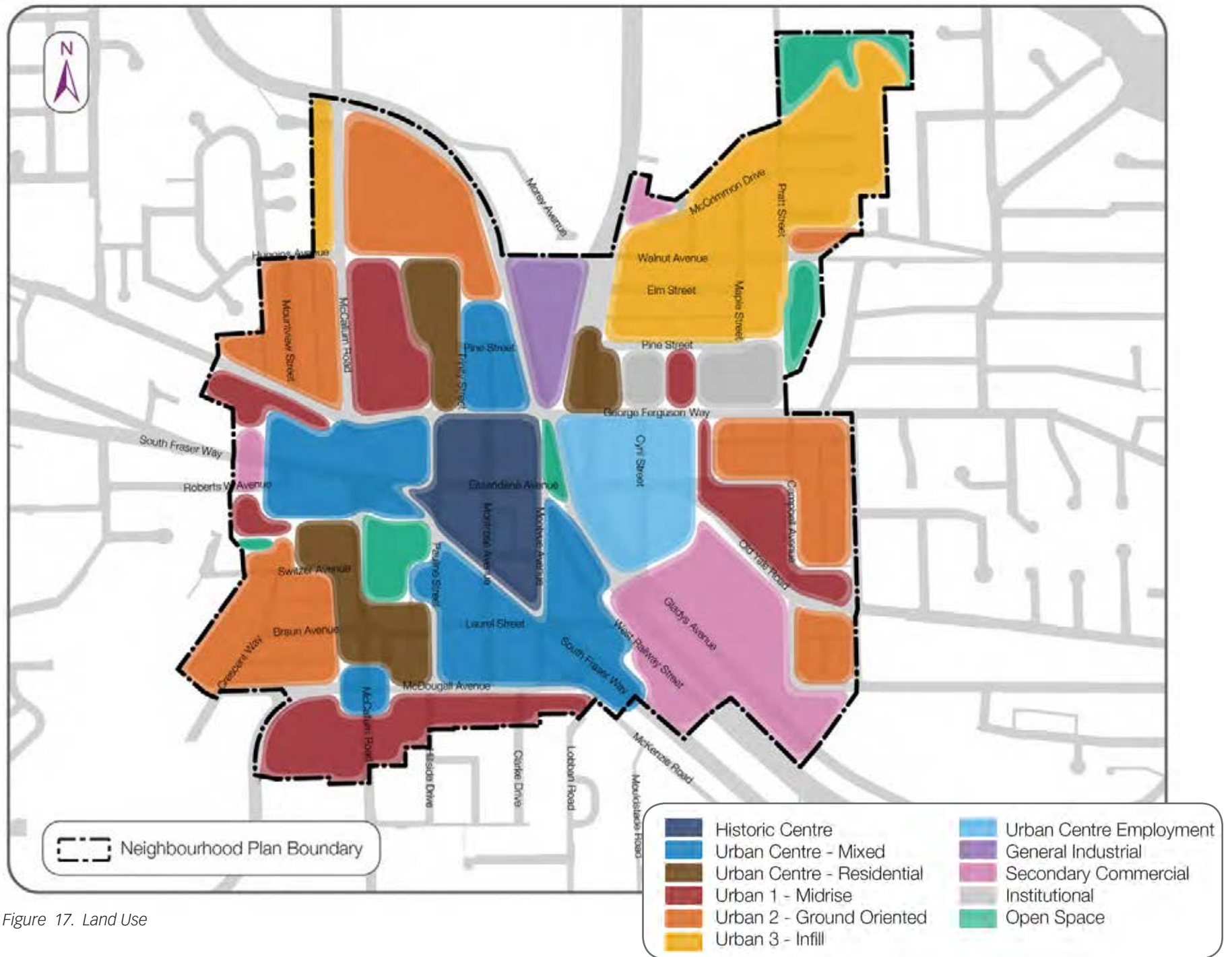


Figure 17. Land Use

HISTORIC CENTRE



Photo Credit: City of Abbotsford

Preserve the main street historic character of small scale retail, and enables a mix of commercial uses. This creates a strong hub of activity in the core of Historic Downtown. Heights may be limited to 2 to 3 storeys in order to reinforce the historic main street design.

URBAN CENTRE MIXED



Photo Credit: Hudson Home Team

Enable supporting mixed use, including commercial and residential, with higher densities than the Historic Centre. This creates an area of higher residential density to add more people near the Historic Centre, and transitions commercial uses out from the Historic Centre. Retail streets further focus retail and service commercial ground floor uses on certain streets more than others. Heights may be 4 to 6 storeys.

URBAN CENTRE RESIDENTIAL



Photo Credit: Diverse Properties

Enable higher density multifamily housing to strengthen and support the Historic Centre. This creates an area of multi storey residential buildings including low and mid rises. Heights may be 4 to 6 storeys, with potential density provisions greater than Urban 1 - Midrise.

URBAN CENTRE EMPLOYMENT



Photo Credit: Killian Pacific

Enable employment areas with lower densities than the Historic Centre and uses such as artisan industry, live-work spaces, offices, and indoor industrial. Residential uses would be accessory to the industry and commercial uses. This creates an area of supporting employment to complement the Historic Centre and nearby residential areas. Heights would be up to 4 storeys.

URBAN 1 - MIDRISE



Photo Credit: David Baker Architects
These are areas where the OCP's Urban 1 - Midrise land use designation would be retained.

URBAN 2 - GROUND ORIENTED



Photo Credit: condoinvancouver.ca
These are areas where the OCP's Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation would be retained.

URBAN 3 - INFILL



Photo Credit: The Globe and Mail
These are areas where the OCP's Urban 3 - Infill land use designation would be retained.

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL



Photo Credit: Google Streetview
These are areas where the OCP's General Industrial land use designation would be retained.

SECONDARY COMMERCIAL



Photo Credit: Google Streetview
These are areas where the OCP's Secondary Commercial land use designation would be retained.

INSTITUTIONAL



Photo Credit: Sterling Education
These are areas where the OCP's Institutional land use designation would be retained.

OPEN SPACE



Photo Credit: Boulevard Group
These are areas where the OCP's Open Space land use designation would be retained.

3.3 Street Network

Many Historic Downtown streets will increasingly serve local travel to, from, and within the area by walking, biking, transit, and driving. Through the overall development of Historic Downtown, adding to the existing grid network of streets will ultimately support mobility for all modes of travel.

This Concept proposes adding several new streets and connections. Despite having a fine grain street grid relative to other areas of Abbotsford, and in comparison to other cities (refer to the Background Research Report), there are several opportunities for improvement in Historic Downtown.

A new local street connection is proposed to extend Montrose Avenue from Pine Street north to McCallum Road at McCallum Place. This new street would form a spine through the former Clayburn Brick Plant site as it redevelops into future residential land.

New lane connections are also proposed to support rear lot access to small properties in the historic core, and add potential pedestrian connections to activate laneways with additional public space.

In addition to these new connections, South Fraser Way and Essendene Avenue will be reimagined to be important retail streets. South Fraser Way is envisioned to redevelop into a Signature Corridor with high quality place-making, all ages and abilities cycling facilities, and rapid transit to serve travel across the City. Essendene Avenue is envisioned to increasingly act as a destination retail street to serve local area travel and include a more attractive walking and cycling environment.

These aspirations for Historic Downtown and changes to South Fraser Way and Essendene Avenue heightens the need for improvements to other east-west streets at the edges of and beyond Historic Downtown. The Transportation Master Plan will provide further details about what improvements could be considered on corridors like George Ferguson Way, Maclure Road, and McKee Road to provide redundancy for east-west travel across the city.

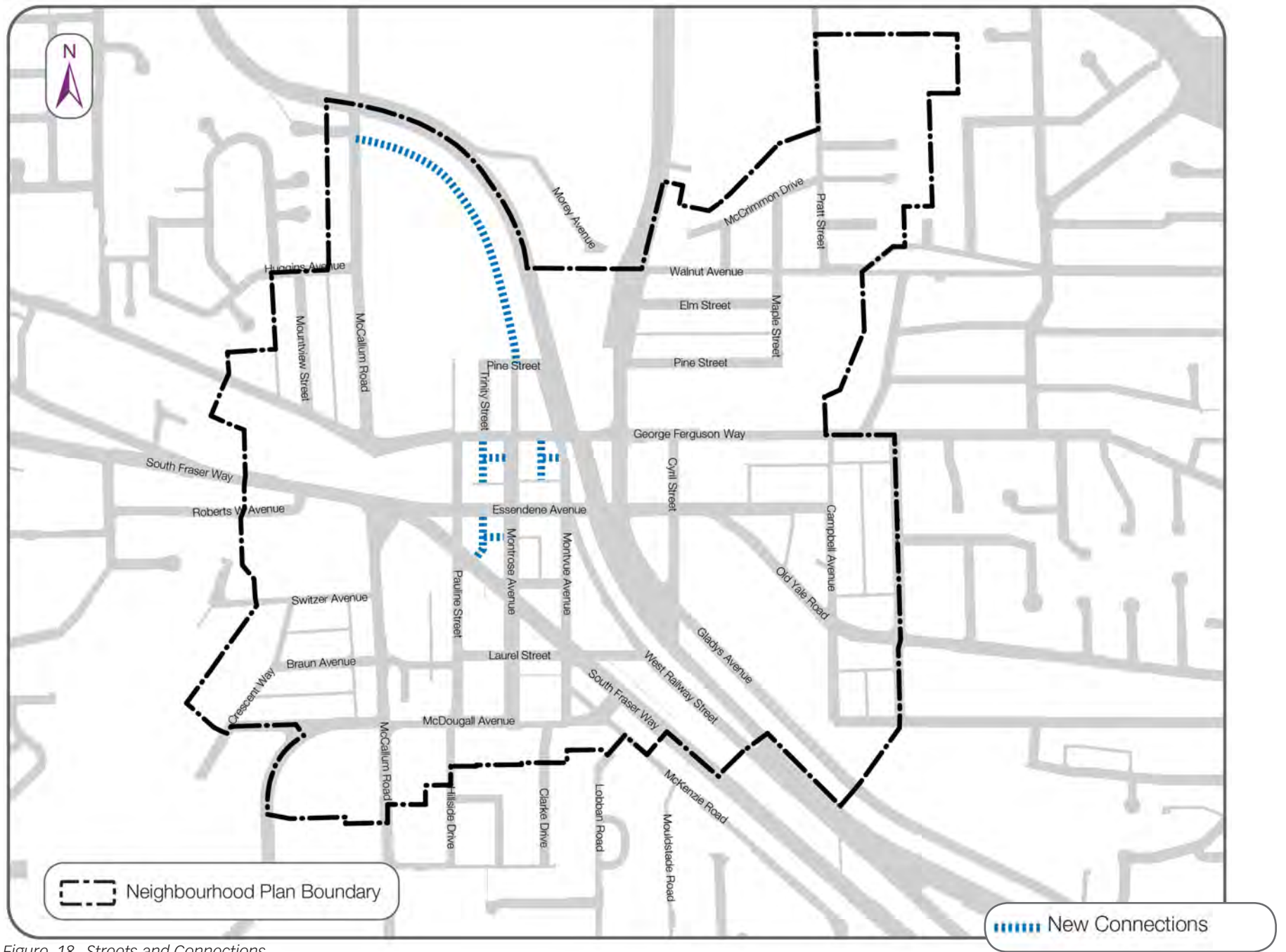


Figure 18. Streets and Connections

3.4 Retail Streets and Laneways

This Concept recognizes the unique and important role played by retail streets and laneways in place-making.



CORE RETAIL

These are streets that place high emphasis on active uses that support gathering, lingering, and shopping, with vibrant retail destinations and customer activity all day and all week long. They are streets designed to the highest standard where people visit, rather than pass through.

They are characterized by dynamic street life, with retail uses within continuous facades at street level, and are also locations where streetscape improvements – such as landscaping, sidewalk furnishings, public art, and other pedestrian amenities – will be prioritized.



SUPPORTING RETAIL

Like Core Retail Streets, Supporting Retail Streets are characterized by retail uses with continuous facades at street level, and a street design that supports retail uses.



LANEWAYS

These alleys provide opportunities for rear-building access and delivery of goods and services. They also provide opportunities for public space activation, through public art and temporary programming, as was demonstrated by University of Fraser Valley students as part of a “laneway activation” project.

In the future and space permitting, there may be opportunities to design lanes as connections between destinations, and explore more formalized programming and uses such as restaurants.

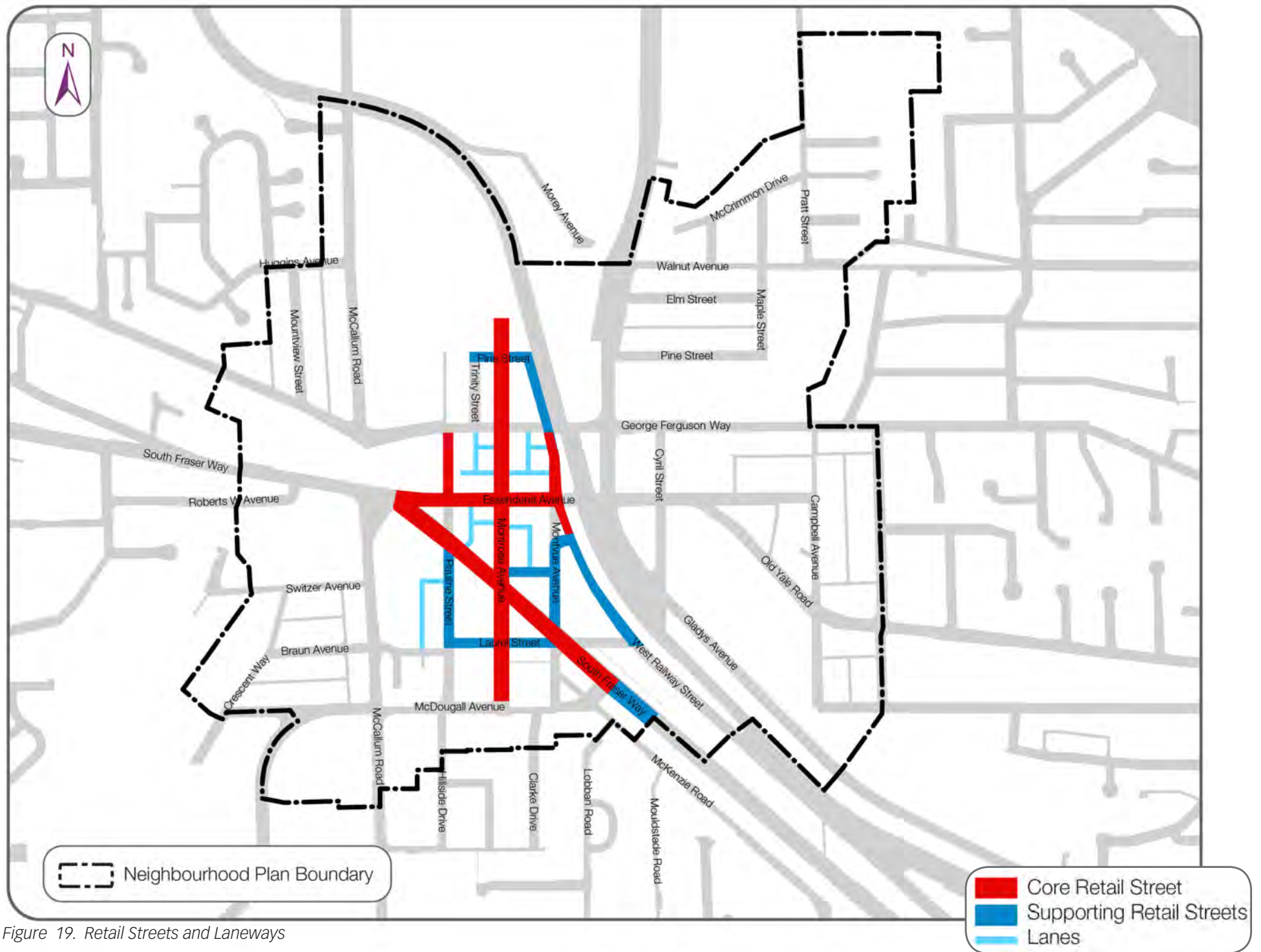


Figure 19. Retail Streets and Laneways

3.5 Transit Services and Facilities

The OCP highlights the importance of transit connections between centres, including Historic Downtown and other urban centres and neighbourhood centres. Currently, Historic Downtown is well served by transit, with four frequent and five minor bus routes at the on-street exchange on Montrose Avenue. There are also network constraints that limit full north-south movements in the neighbourhood to Montrose Avenue.

The OCP and BC Transit Future Plan include future rapid transit along South Fraser Way and McCallum Road, identified as a Primary Transit Corridor. The proposed transit network highlights two options for this corridor identified in the urban structure of the OCP. The transit exchange is currently located along Montrose Avenue, and is shown at this location in the Concept.

Beyond the Primary Transit Corridor, the frequency of transit services would increase to ensure that all areas in Historic Downtown are within 400m of frequent service and transit stops.

The location of the transit exchange in Historic Downtown will be reviewed and discussed by the City, BC Transit, and the ADBA in the context of the ongoing Transportation Master Plan and Transit Plan updates. The final exchange location may be adjusted as those planning processes are completed.



Example of a shared transit street in Kitchener, ON.



Example of a hybrid transit exchange/street in Kelowna, BC.



Example of a transit exchange in Maple Ridge, BC.

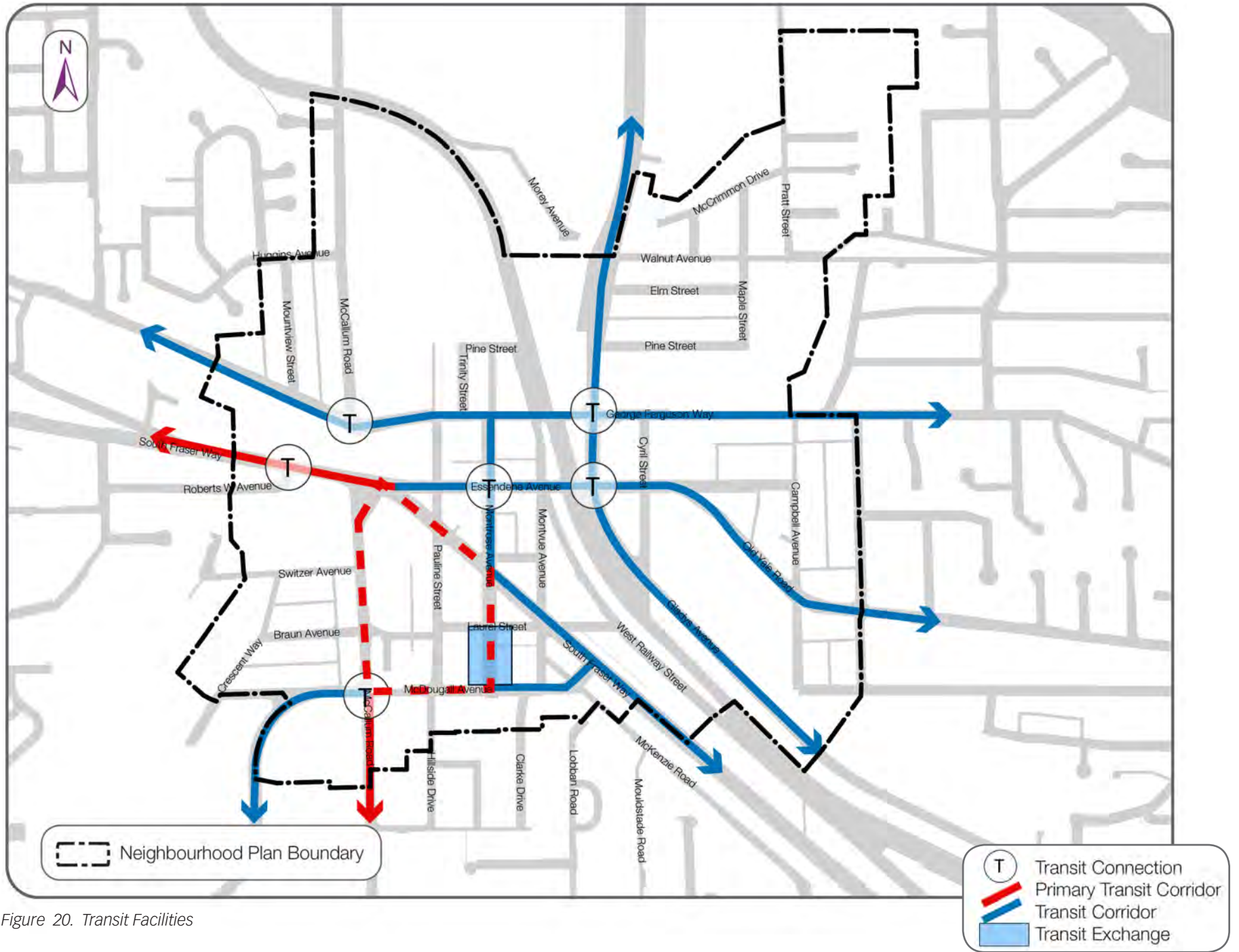


Figure 20. Transit Facilities

3.6 Active Transportation

A priority in the OCP is to make cycling (along with walking and transit) delightful. Currently, the only designated biking facilities in Historic Downtown are in its eastern and southern edges.

The Concept proposes three types of active transportation facilities. South Fraser Way is envisioned as a Signature Corridor that would connect Historic Downtown to other urban centres like the City Centre and Clearbrook. This Signature Corridor would include a special design standard for all ages and abilities, with a unique character and identity.

Beyond the Signature Corridor, a network of bicycle facilities is proposed for Historic Downtown that would establish a grid that connects all major destinations. The grid would be made up of all ages and abilities facilities (AAA) and supporting facilities. AAA facilities are high quality and comfortable for everyone, including off-street paths, protected bicycle lanes on busy streets, and local street bikeways on quiet streets. Supporting facilities are intended to extend the bicycle network and would generally consist of painted bicycle lanes.

The following images provide examples of the different types of facilities that may be considered.



Flickr: Paul Krueger



Flickr: La Citta Vita



Flickr: Eric Fischer



Photo Credit: PD Group Landscape Architecture



Flickr: Paul Krueger

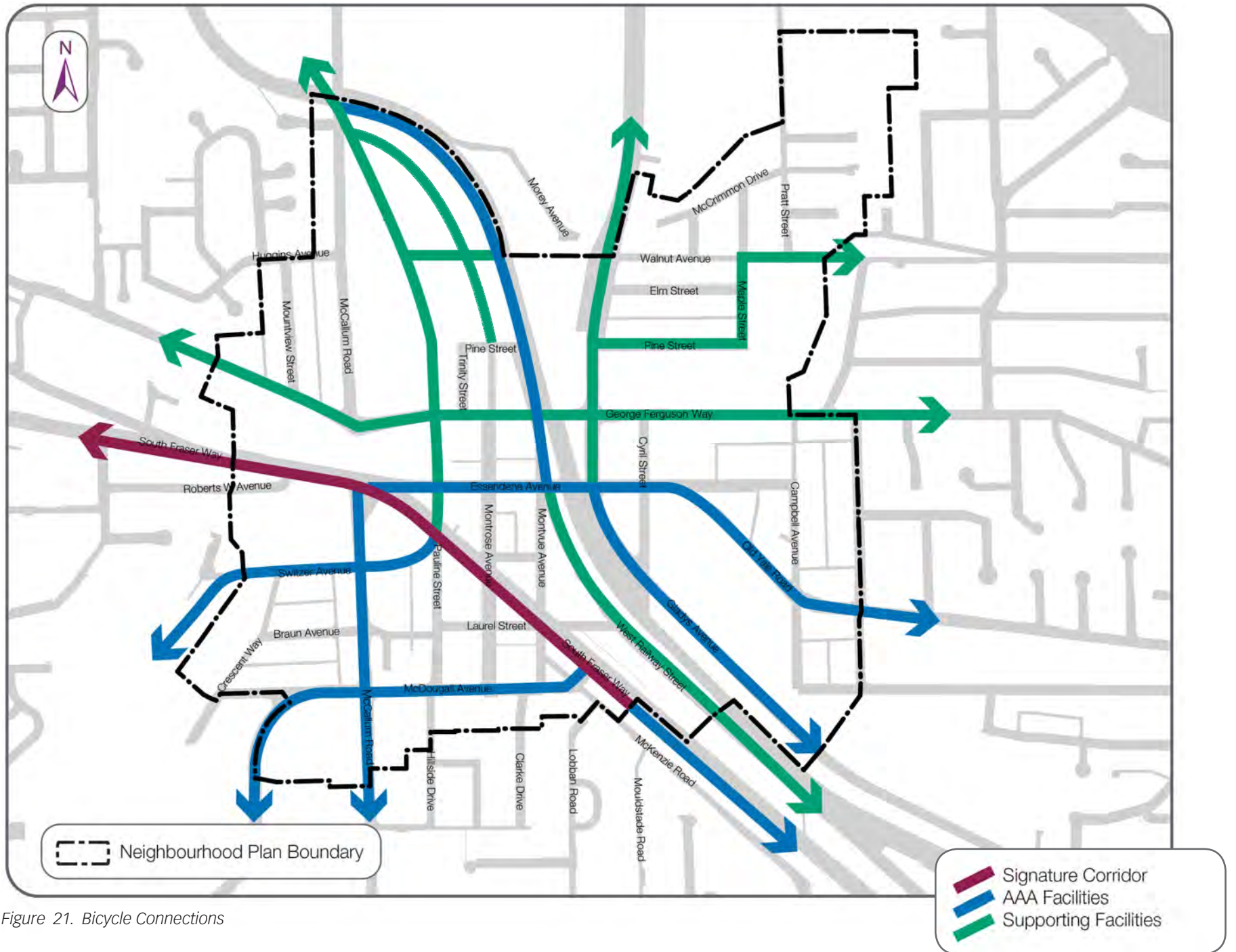


Figure 21. Bicycle Connections

3.7 Parks, Plazas, and Pedestrian Connections

One of the seven Big Ideas in the OCP is to “Make Places for People”. The open space network, made up of parks, trails, and plazas, contribute to the establishment of a diverse, vibrant, and inclusive public realm.

The Concept proposes a range of parks and plazas, from urban to natural, all connected through a trail system, presented on the following page.



GATEWAY

Unique treatments are envisioned for the two gateways to Historic Downtown. These indicate to travellers on South Fraser Way and Essendene that they are entering a special place. Gateway features create visual interest through a combination of natural elements, such as significant trees or public art, and create a perceived street narrowing to slow traffic. Views into Historic Downtown from the east and west will also be reinforced, in order to emphasize these gateway experiences.

IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

All streets in Historic Downtown will provide sidewalks for pedestrian connectivity. In addition, the Concept illustrates new connections for pedestrians, such as sidewalks or trails, where streets are not currently present.

TREE CANOPY

Enhancing environmental quality within the city is a priority of the OCP. All streets within Historic Downtown would include street trees to increase the urban forest. The Concept indicates the importance of incorporating significant tree canopy in street upgrades as they occur in retail areas.



LARGE PLAZAS

Plazas are more urban in nature than parks, and provide opportunity for a variety of both long term and seasonal or temporary programming. This Concept anchors Historic Downtown with five new plazas. These provide opportunity for:

- the celebration of views;
- establishment of pedestrian and cycling connections;
- places to linger and gather near transit; and
- places to have outdoor seating supported by restaurants, cafes, or food trucks.



SMALL PLAZAS

The Concept proposes to expand upon the existing park network by introducing a series of small plazas. These small plazas contribute to:

- walkability, by providing pedestrians with resting places along the way, particularly where steep topography makes walking more challenging; and
- opportunities for building social connections within the community.

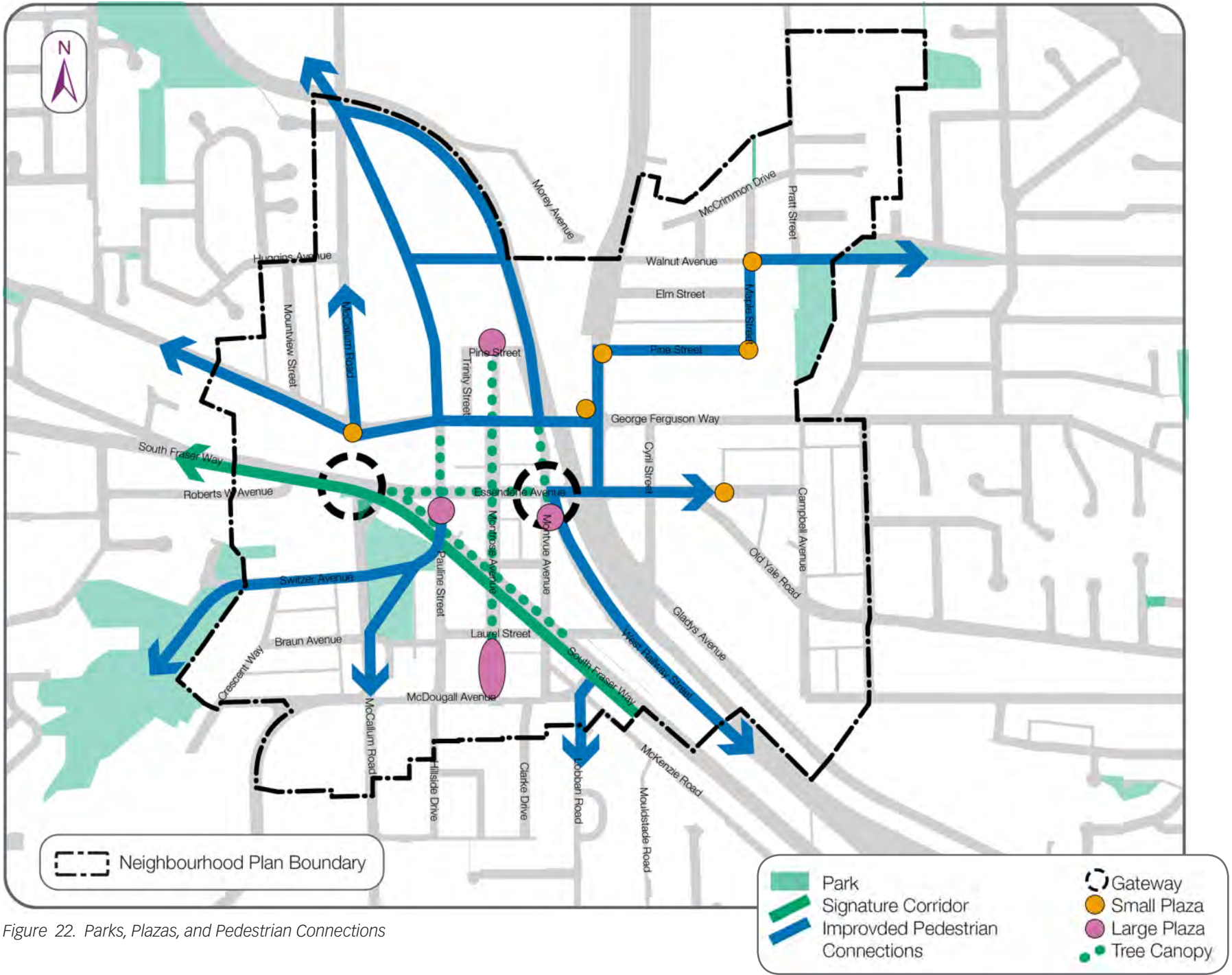


Figure 22. Parks, Plazas, and Pedestrian Connections

EXAMPLES PREFERRED IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:



Flickr | Smithsonian Gardens



Cloudinary.com



landscapeVoice.com

OTHER EXAMPLES THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED:



DIALOG



DIALOG



DIALOG



DIALOG



DIALOG

3.8 Places and Special Features

Downtowns and other neighbourhoods that enjoy a strong sense of place often leverage their natural and unique attributes, which makes these places both distinct and authentic.

MARKET SPACES

A key destination in Historic Downtown is the weekly Abbotsford Farm and Country Market, which strengthens relationships between city dwellers and local farmers, and celebrates the local agricultural economy. The market is currently situated in the Montrose Avenue right-of-way north of George Ferguson Way on Saturday mornings, from May to October.

This Concept envisions three potential future locations for temporary or permanent market spaces, which could be used for all types of markets including farmers, night or artisan. One is just north of its current location where it could occupy a more formal plaza, a second is next to the Christmas Tree park and railway tracks south of Essedene Avenue, and a third is in Jubilee Park. All of these sites would open the possibility of a permanent, covered, year-round space that may also include infrastructure such as washrooms and electricity connection.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic buildings and streetscapes are the backbone of Abbotsford's Historic Downtown, giving it a unique character that sets it apart from other places. Most of the buildings constructed before the mid-1950s are situated in the proposed land use plan's "Historic Centre", which seeks to preserve the main street historic character of small-scale retail.

This Concept proposes to relocate the CP Rail Station, pictured here, to its former location.

MARSHES, FLOODPLAINS, AND STREAMS

Historic Downtown's natural context includes marshes and floodplains, as well as watercourses such as Willband Creek, which drains much of the central Abbotsford uplands and Mill Lake. Beginning at the eastern edge of Ravine Park, this creek is culverted and routed under Essedene and Montrose Avenues before emerging north of Historic Downtown and flowing to Willband Creek Park in Matsqui Prairie, and eventually the Fraser River. Where this stream is piped, it can be celebrated through educational signage or other gestures which help to restore ecological links between natural areas, such as raingardens. These elements offer a reminder of the neighbourhood's bioregional context.



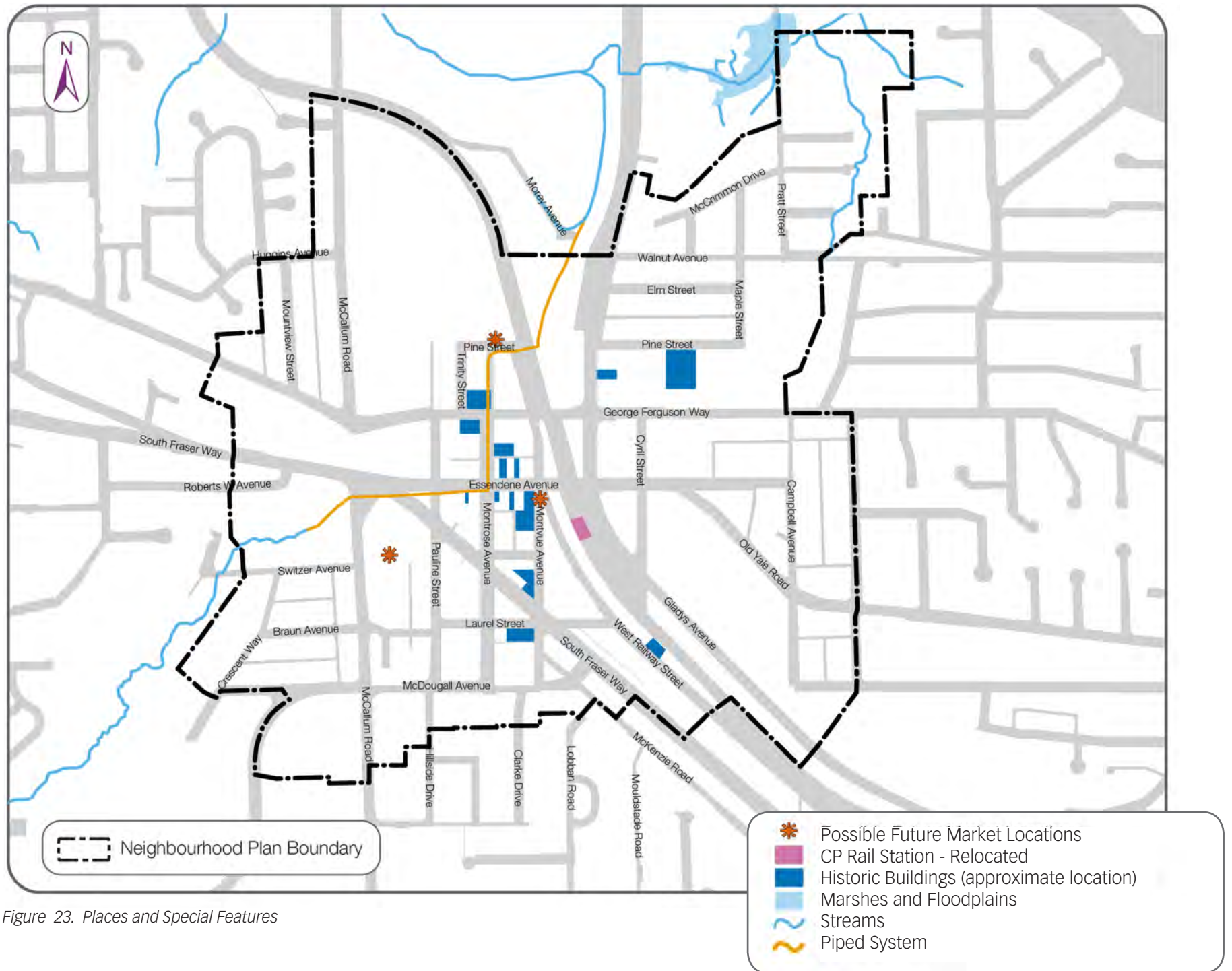


Figure 23. Places and Special Features

3.9 Views

Historic Downtown's location in a natural bowl-shaped depression has resulted in unique topographical qualities, such as steep slopes, that provide spectacular views to distant mountains to the north and southeast. These views are an important part of the experience of being in Historic Downtown, offering a unique sense of place and beauty.

The Concept begins to lay the groundwork for a land use and design framework that respects and celebrates these views from streets and other important public places. The full HNBP will provide further direction and detail around how these views will be optimized.

At the same time, there are also important urban views that will be considered. These include views toward the City Centre from both George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue, which provide an important visual link and reinforces a physical connection between these two important urban centres, which are just 15 minutes apart by foot.

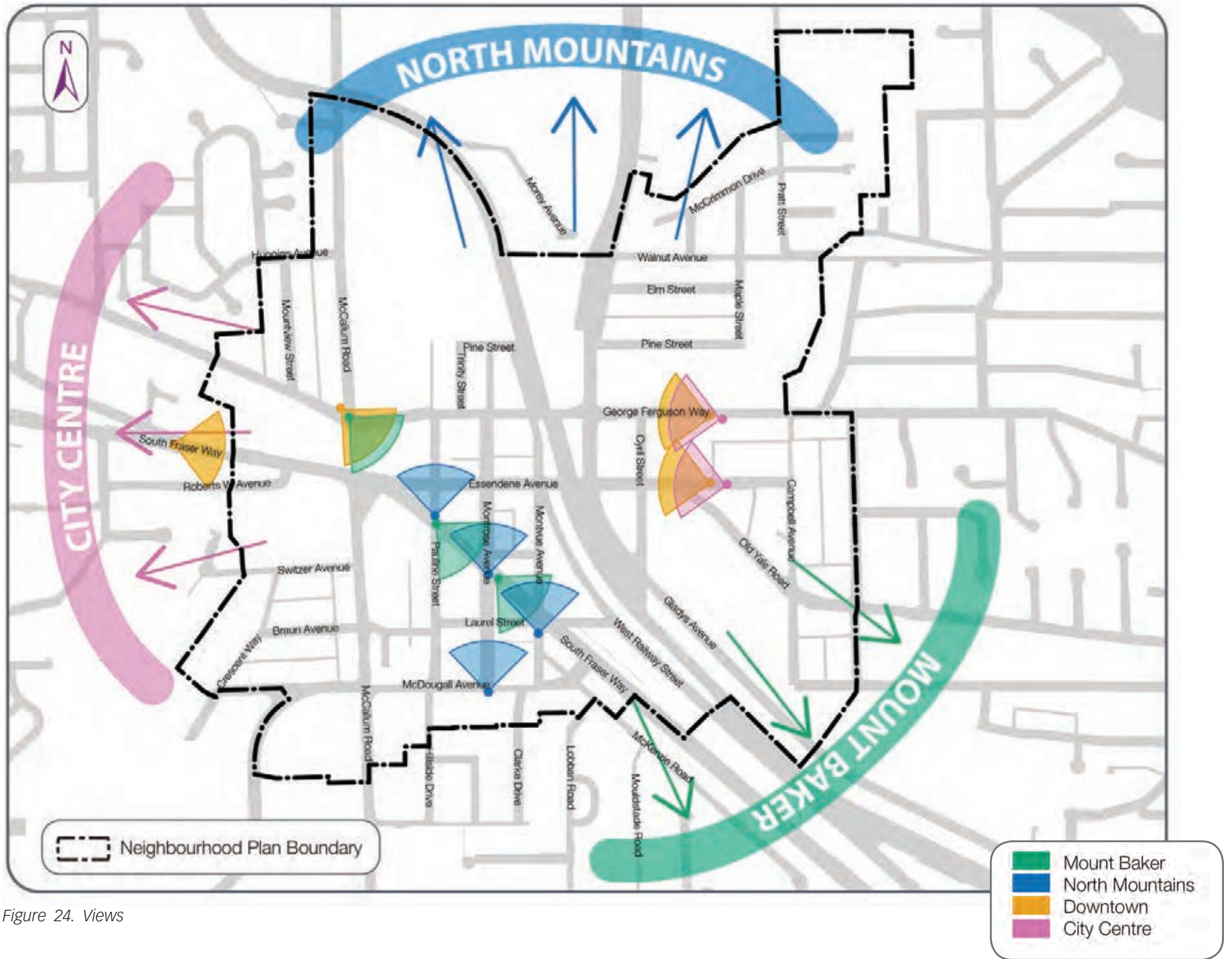


Figure 24. Views

3.10 Public Parking

Providing public parking is important to Historic Downtown retail, and today the neighbourhood has approximately 1,000 surface public parking stalls, not including smaller business-specific private parking lots. This Concept identifies locations for a variety of public parking facilities throughout the neighbourhood that help maintain access to businesses and other services, while also prioritizing a high quality pedestrian realm.



OFF-STREET PARKING

These are public parking lots, which allow workers and visitors to park medium and long term. They could be made up of a combination of surface, underground, or structure lots, depending on specific site constraints or future demand.



ON-STREET PARKING

These are streets in which short term, on-street, parking is geared toward visitors making short trips to shops and services. In the future, some streets may incorporate a more unique design to accommodate as many parking spots as possible. Depending on the street, parking can be either parallel or angle.

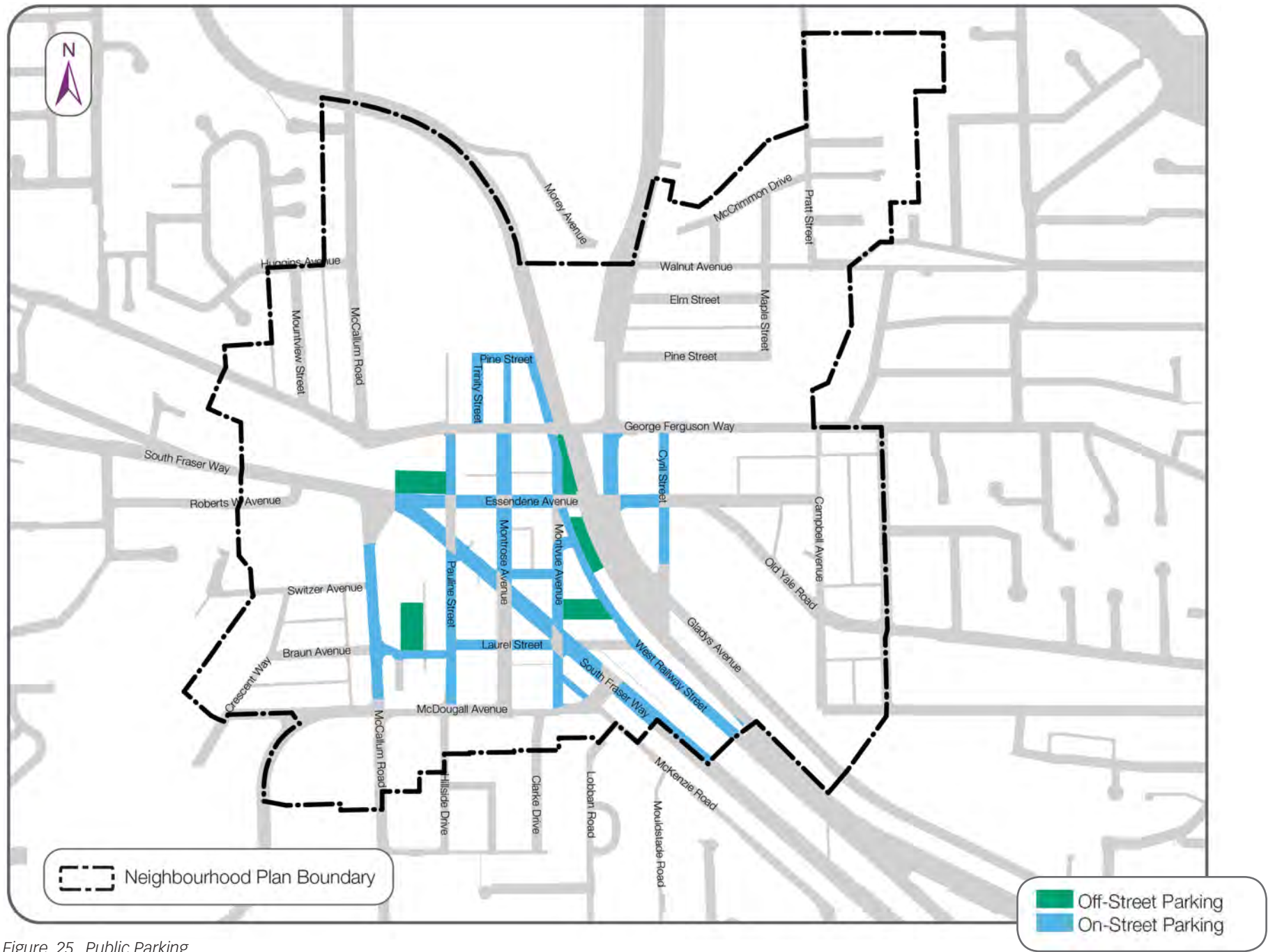


Figure 25. Public Parking

3.11 Parking District

The Concept identifies an area surrounding Historic Downtown as a Parking District. This would establish an area where public parking is managed to meet clear neighbourhood goals. Existing programs and policies, such as the cash-in-lieu contributions in the Zoning Bylaw and the parking management by the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association, would be aligned to meet the neighbourhood plan vision.

The district is an area where parking is understood to be an integral part of a vibrant commercial shopping area. Details about specific policies, occupancy level, cost, operation, management, and revenue of the district have not been established in this Concept. However, four main elements should be considered:

- **Coordinated management** could include establishing an occupancy benchmark, conducting regular inventory and occupancy studies, and enforcement.
- **Development incentives** could include parking reductions or cash-in-lieu programs within concentric areas of Historic Downtown.
- **Streetscape improvements** could include wayfinding, sidewalk projects, and lighting upgrades.
- **Long term facilities** could include planning for construction of a parking structure, or adding public parking to underground parkade development.

The Parking District would be a place where all revenue generated is reinvested in the area to achieve the vision and objectives of the neighbourhood.

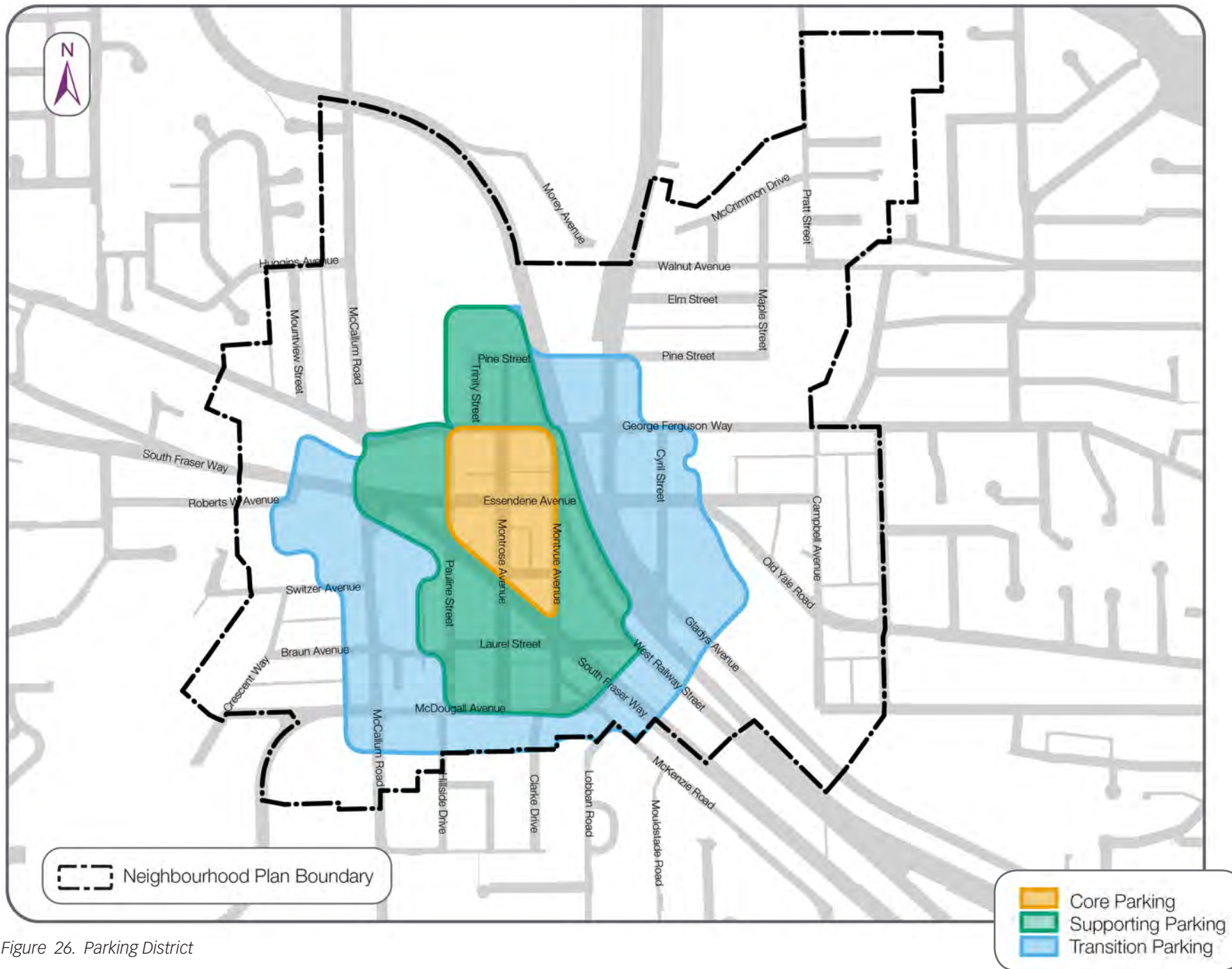


Figure 26. Parking District

3.12 Essendene Avenue

Over Historic Downtown's history, Essendene Avenue has gone through several evolutions. This Concept sets a vision for Essendene Avenue's next evolution as a re-energized and re-designed shopping destination in Historic Downtown.

Vibrant Village Heart (1940s to 60s)

As the centre of attention, Essendene during this time was the vibrant heart of the area that saw new buildings constructed, streetscape beautification, and angle parking.

Declining City Node (1970s to 90s)

With the relocation of Highway 1 and large strip mall commercial development along South Fraser Way to the west, Essendene saw businesses decline and a street that emphasized moving vehicles through the neighbourhood to the shopping malls on South Fraser Way.

Resurgent Historic Centre (2000s to 10s)

Numerous program, policy and capital projects were introduced during this time to help counteract the preceding period of decline, leading to renewed interest and investment in the area.

The Future (2020s and beyond)

The next evolution of Historic Downtown in this Concept is a vibrant retail district where core streets, including Essendene Avenue, are destinations for shopping and gathering, and not primarily for vehicles passing through the neighbourhood.

The result is a redesign of Essendene Avenue to meet the vision and principles described in this report. This includes reducing the number of driving lanes from 4 to 3, and increasing the amount of space for sidewalks, street trees, bicycle facilities, and outdoor retail and patios.



Figure 27. Essendene view east (circa 1950)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 28. Essendene view east (circa 1980)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 29. Essendene view east (circa 2010)

EXISTING CROSS SECTION

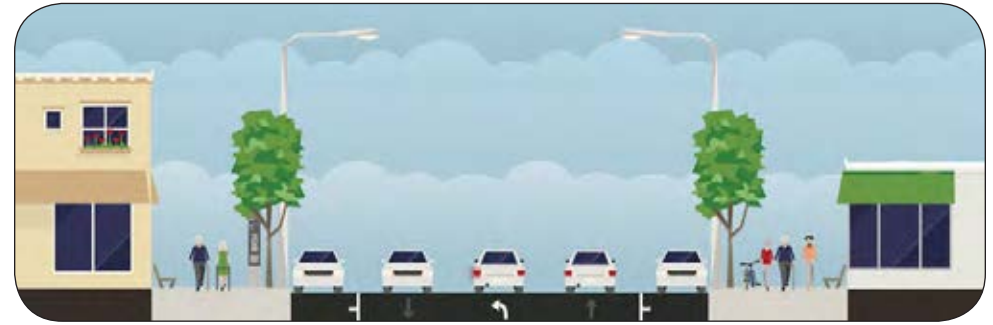
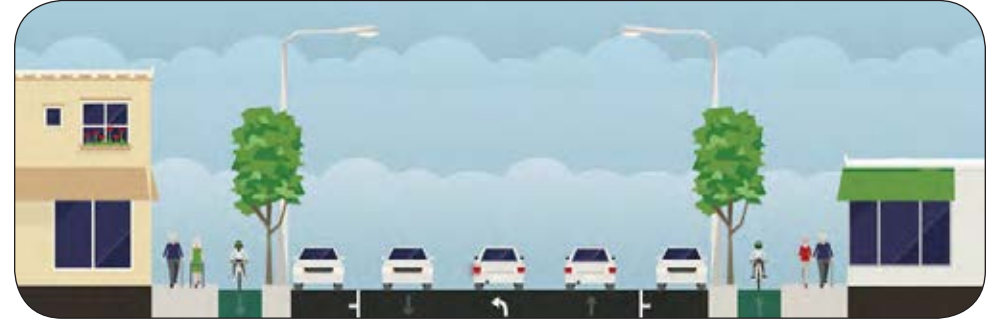


Essendene Avenue today is 24m wide from building face to building face. Of this width, approximately 18.5m is for vehicles, which includes a total of 4 driving lanes plus parallel parking on each side. The remaining 5.5m is split between sidewalks on each side.

Average daily traffic volumes from 1990 to 2000 were 16,000 vehicles per day, while volumes from 2000 to 2010 were 15,500 vehicles per day. The most recent daily count data is from 2012 with 14,000 vehicles per day, approximately 12% less than the 1990-2000 average and 10% less than the 2000-2010 average.

Surrounding east-west streets in the area have generally had stable daily traffic volumes over the past 20 to 25 years. This includes George Ferguson Way (~17,000), South Fraser Way (~9,000), and McDougall Avenue (~10,000).

REDESIGN CROSS SECTION EXAMPLES



There are many options for redesigning Essendene Avenue to both maintain existing daily vehicle capacity between 14,000 to 15,000 and increase the space for retail, pedestrians, and cyclists.

In the two examples above, the 4 existing vehicle lanes are reduced to 2 lanes, with left turn lanes at intersections to separate turning traffic from through traffic. This prevents left turning vehicles from blocking a travel lane, improving through vehicle capacity. This approach has been tested in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) work and functions in a preliminary way. However, it may impact other streets in and around the neighbourhood such as George Ferguson Way and South Fraser Way, and further analysis of the modifications will be included in the TMP.

The additional 3 to 4 metres of sidewalk space provides opportunity for retail to spill outdoors, trees to be planted, and bicycle facilities to be considered, along with other amenities such as wayfinding signs, bike racks, patios, lighting, and benches. All of these changes improve the shopping street experience and help Essendene become a vibrant retail street integrated into the Historic Core.





4.0 Next Steps

In early 2018 the Concept presented in this report will be shared with stakeholders and the broader community for input. At the same time, this Concept will be tested for feasibility with respect to technical constraints and infrastructure costs.

Outcomes from the testing and public engagement will be used to shape the more comprehensive and detailed draft Neighbourhood Plan in summer 2018.

4.1 Neighbourhood Plan Process

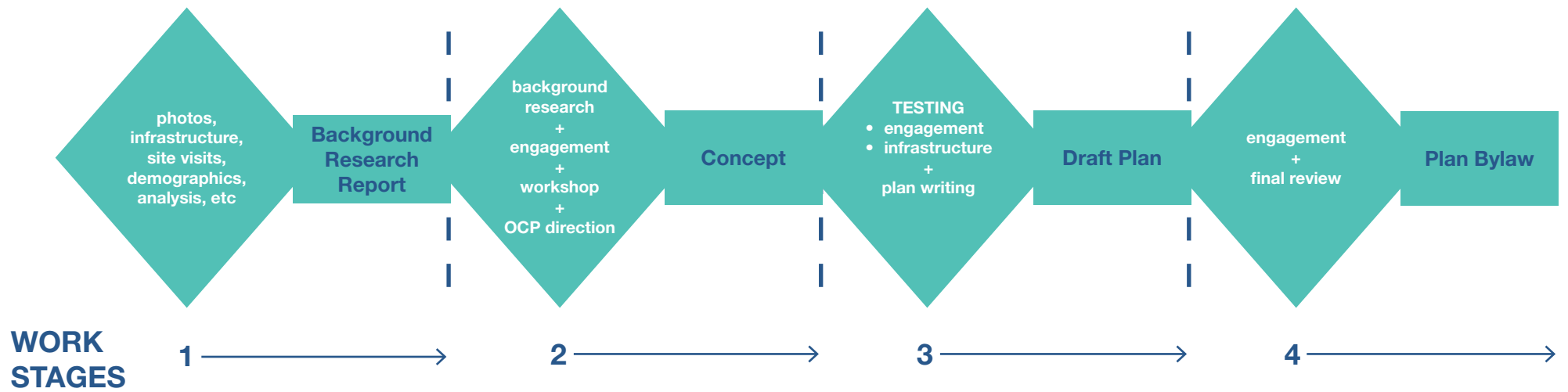


Figure 30. Neighbourhood Plan Process



5.0 Appendix

5.1 Appendix

VERBATIM COMMENTS FROM ENGAGEMENT

CONCEPT WORKSHOP: TOP 3 PRIORITIES

Destinations, Outdoor and People Places

- An entertainment district to add vibrancy
- An entertainment district
- More patios
- A night market would be a great feature in the downtown encouraging tourism locally
- People gathering places that can be multi-purpose
- Gardens on roofs of all new buildings
- Rooftop green spaces
- Include smaller plazas and public spaces
- Lane development
- Develop the laneways in the core
- Animated green alleys
- Entertainment, arts
- Event/activity areas
- "Entrance" to Jubilee Park from Downtown (Pauline)
- Strategically placed public realms
- Central hub for events

Modes of Travel / Active Modes

- Walkability
- Pedestrian and biking connections
- All modes of transportation catered for
- Wider sidewalks
- Transit exchange at corner of McCallum / SFW
- Parkades

Farmers Market

- Relocate farmers market to old flooring building
- Permanent location for the farmers market
- Move farmers market to Jubilee Park
- Plaza/Farmer's Market at Brickyard
- Large Farmer's Market near Christmas Tree park
- Viable location for Farmer's Market

- Viable location for the Farmer's Market
- Year round farmer's market
- Farmer's market

Trails and Green Connections

- Mill Lake to Montrose Trail
- Green trail connectivity
- Pedestrian and bike friendly pathways
- Trails
- Connected trail system – Ravine Park to Jubilee
- Ravine Park connection and improved trails
- Trails along Railway and bluffs
- Connectivity throughout downtown – trails, lanes, wider sidewalks
- Pedestrian corridors (within and to other areas)
- Connectivity through trails
- Connecting Mill Lake with Discovery Trail
- Connect Jubilee / Ravine Park / Mill Lake
- Walking / Hiking / Biking trails
- Green alley
- Connect Jubilee Park to Core
- Improve greenway connections
- Walk / bike links and routes

Essendene Traffic Calming

- Essendene traffic flow reduction
- Essendene traffic calmed
- Diverted Traffic flow
- Add bike lanes to Essendene
- Essendene lane reduction
- Essendene Traffic calming
- Essendene more ped. Friendly
- Pedestrian focus on Essendene
- Traffic calming on Essendene
- Essendene traffic calming
- Calming traffic on Essendene
- Reduce Essendene to 2 lanes
- 5 corners roundabout

Heritage character

- Bring back railroad station
- Maintain scale and character of central 4 blocks
- Brick theme
- 2 storey commercial core
- railway station – historic / pub use
- Heritage feel
- designate and protect the historic core
- keep the historic buildings and redevelop buildings that are not that old
- Railway area with old train station
- Old downtown as it
- Maintain heritage character
- Core blocks built-form preservation
- 2 storeys only in core 4 blocks

Uncategorized

- Residential density (except for 4 blocks)
- More housing
- Increased residential
- Mixed use development
- Mixed use
- Office space in close proximity to downtown
- Multi-use noisy night time w/ daytime offices
- Connecting people and places
- Identifiable transition nodes – interpretation, information
- Sub-area themes
- Land use plan – marketing plan... work beyond boundaries
- City to be key player with new vision for infrastructure
- Supporting policy development – examples: inclusionary housing/DB Amenity Contribution; high performance building criteria; active design principles.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

It should be noted that many people provided comments on Historic Downtown Today, before reviewing the Concepts.

What do you like about the concepts?

- New trendy shops – local small business
- Bike lanes by the tracks!

What do you think could be improved?

- More small pubs
- Music venues!
- More arts and culture
- Ice cream
- Bring back air care / ban diesel
- Affordable housing for renters
- Improved transit schedule
- Bike lanes in business districts to encourage cycle commuting
- Biking in the core is unsafe; traffic is extra impatient; street parking backs into traffic; no bike lanes
- Less cars, more people (x2)
- Traffic cops
- Clean the bike lanes we have, please!
- Make places prettier / safer

Other comments or ideas:

- More childcare such as need (central abby)
- Grants to bring in arts organizations
- Montvue Ave. back to two-way traffic
- Close off cars from Montrose
- Road work and housing for low income
- Housing needed – more people / density needed to support businesses

