



Historic Downtown | NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

BACKGROUND RESEARCH REPORT - MAY 2017



TEA HOUSE

Abbotsford will be a city where neighbourhoods and smaller districts will be as complete and mixed use as possible, while also having their own distinct character and sense of place. Residents can work, and enjoy amenities and services such as cafés, shops, schools, and parks nearby, often within walking distance of home.

Official Community Plan, Vision for Establish Distinct + Complete Neighbourhoods

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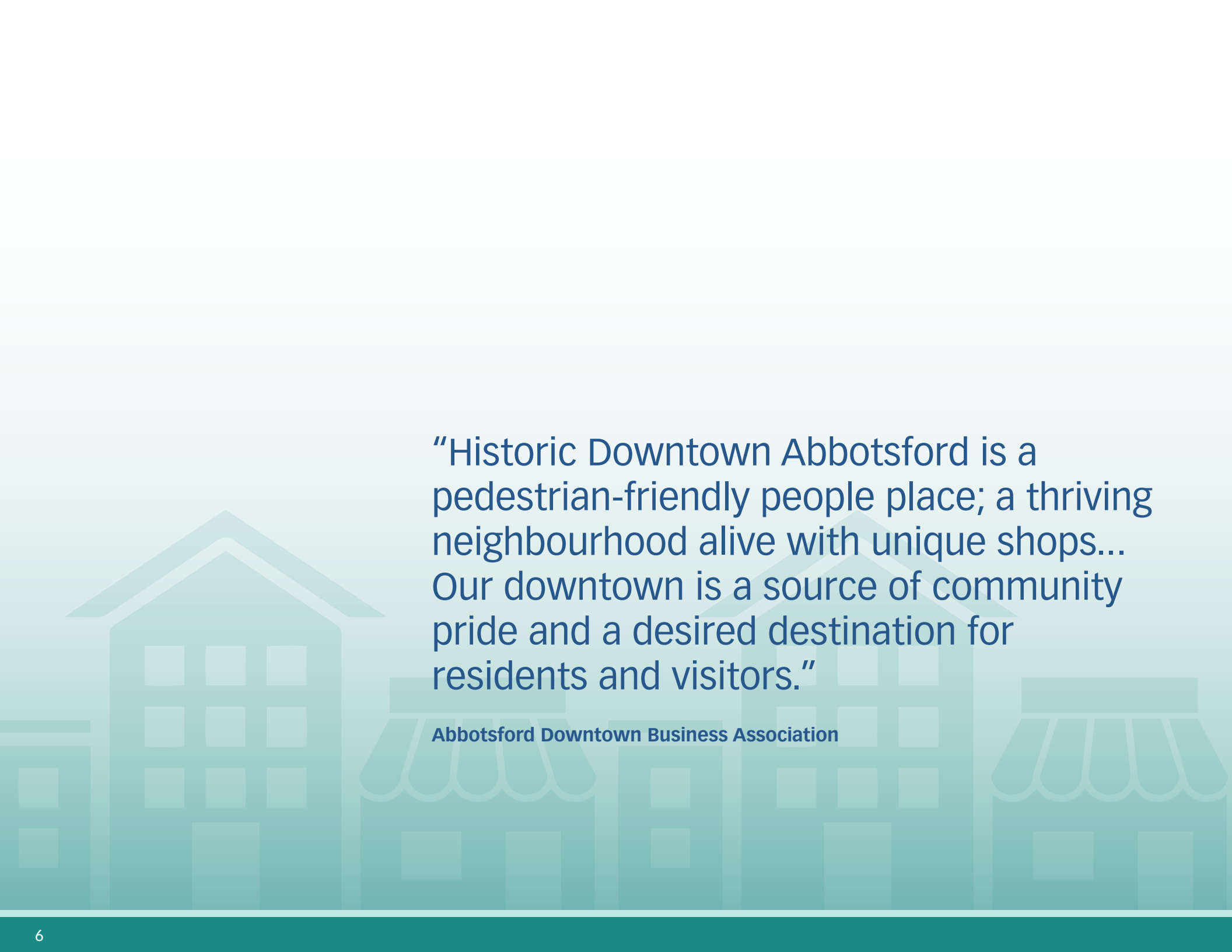
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ACRONYMS

ADBA	Abbotsford Downtown Business Association
HDNP	Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan
DP	Development Permit
FVRD	Fraser Valley Regional District
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
LGA	Local Government Act
OCP	Official Community Plan
UDB	Urban Development Boundary
UFV	University of the Fraser Valley
ROW	Rights-of-Way



“Historic Downtown Abbotsford is a pedestrian-friendly people place; a thriving neighbourhood alive with unique shops... Our downtown is a source of community pride and a desired destination for residents and visitors.”

Abbotsford Downtown Business Association



1.0 Introduction

It is an exciting time for Abbotsford's Historic Downtown. A neighbourhood undergoing revitalization, the Historic Downtown is being rediscovered due to its commercial distinctiveness, walkable streets, attractive built form, and unique character. It is a place where people gather to celebrate a community that's set apart from other places – one that is embracing change while seeking to preserve the qualities it cherishes.

To build on this momentum and to help implement the newly adopted Official Community Plan, the City is working with the community to develop a vision for the future of this neighbourhood, and a plan that will help bring this vision to life.



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 high streets that comprise a destination for visitors and residents.

THIS DOCUMENT

This document is one of the first steps in the planning process and provides the following as a foundation for future stages of work:

- a comprehensive overview of the current state of the neighbourhood in regards to demographics, land use, employment, infrastructure, parks and public spaces
- a baseline and important point of reference for the planning and design process
- precedents that are intended to inspire and generate ideas
- a public engagement strategy that has been designed to gather meaningful input from the community

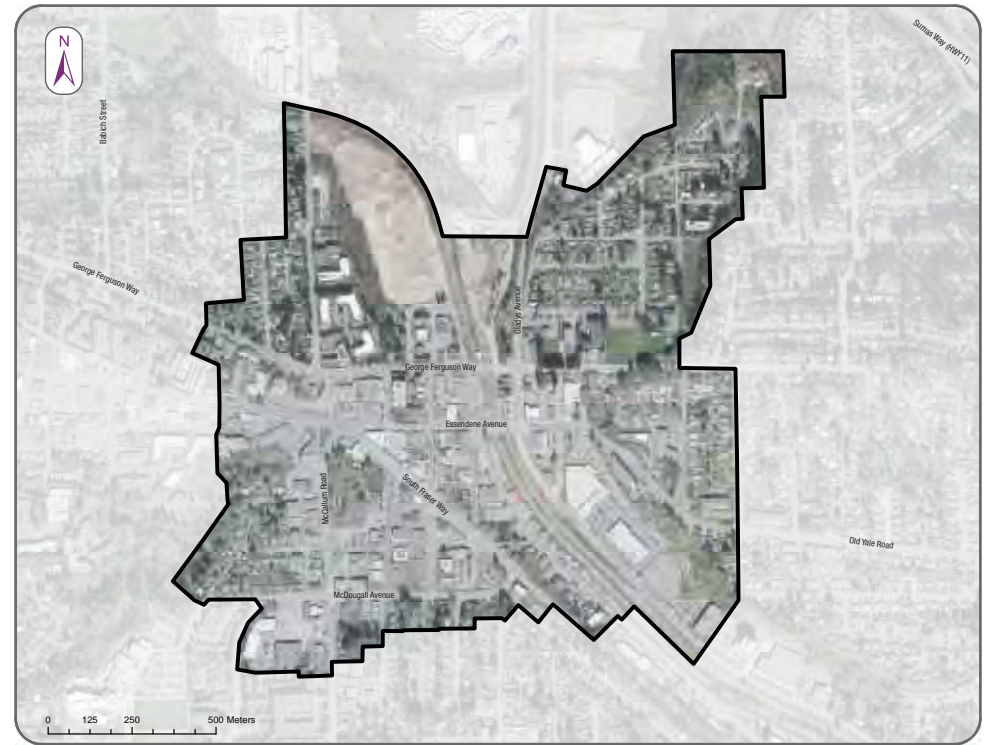


Figure 1. Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan

1.2 Planning Context

OCP HISTORY

The 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 the 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 the 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:

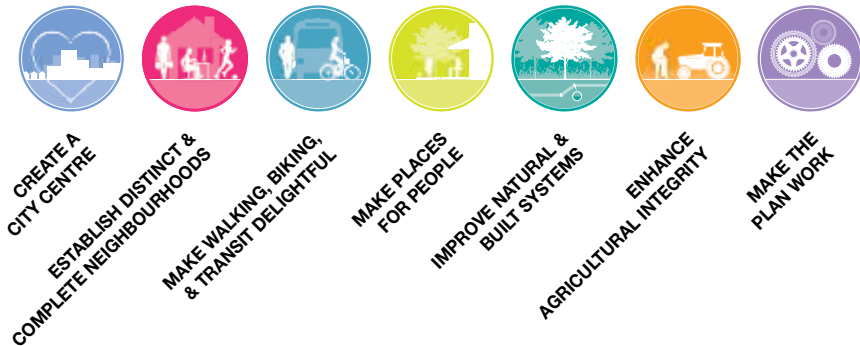


Figure 2. OCP - Seven Big Ideas

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.

The 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 the 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. The 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.

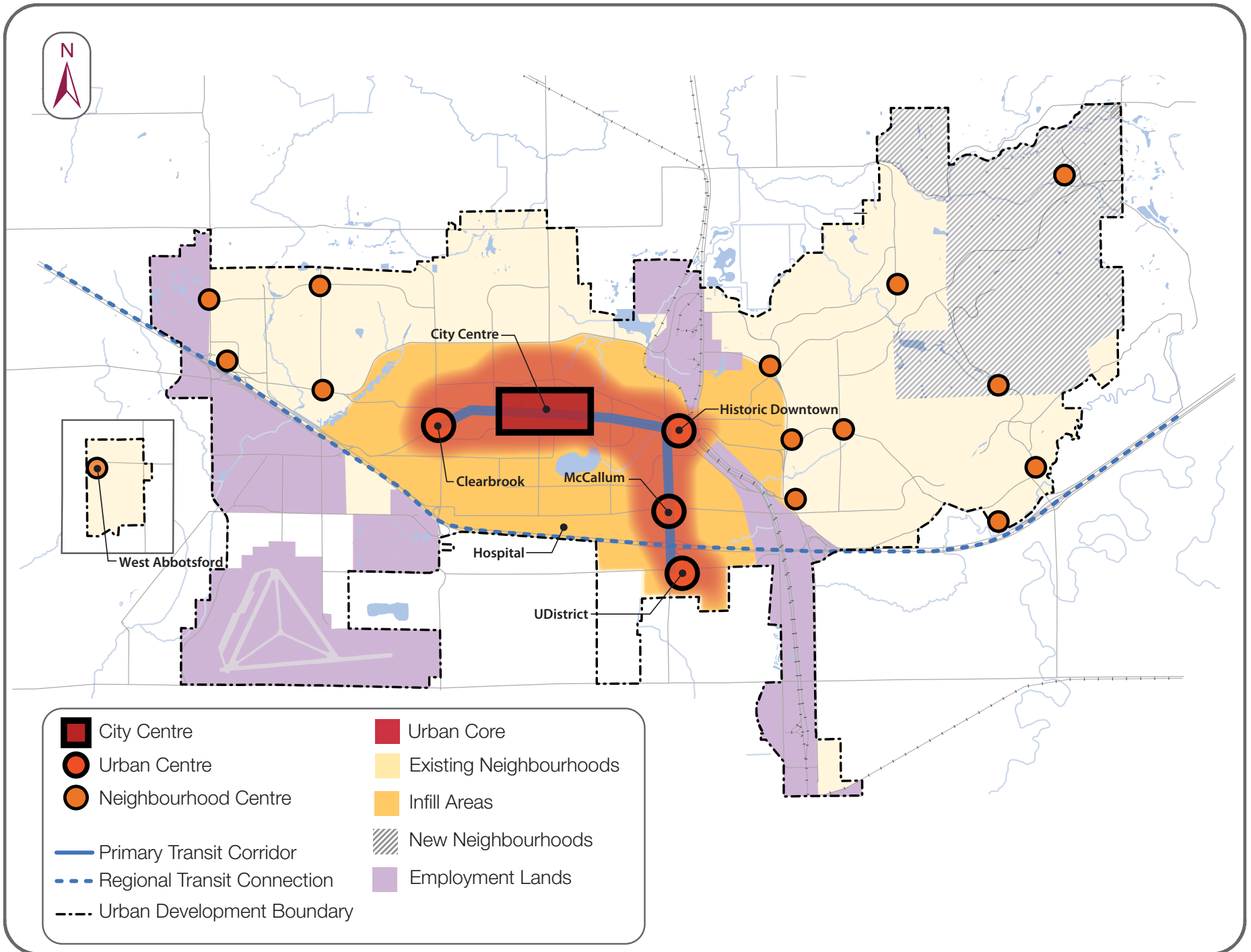


Figure 3. OCP urban structure diagram

OCP POLICIES: HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD

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

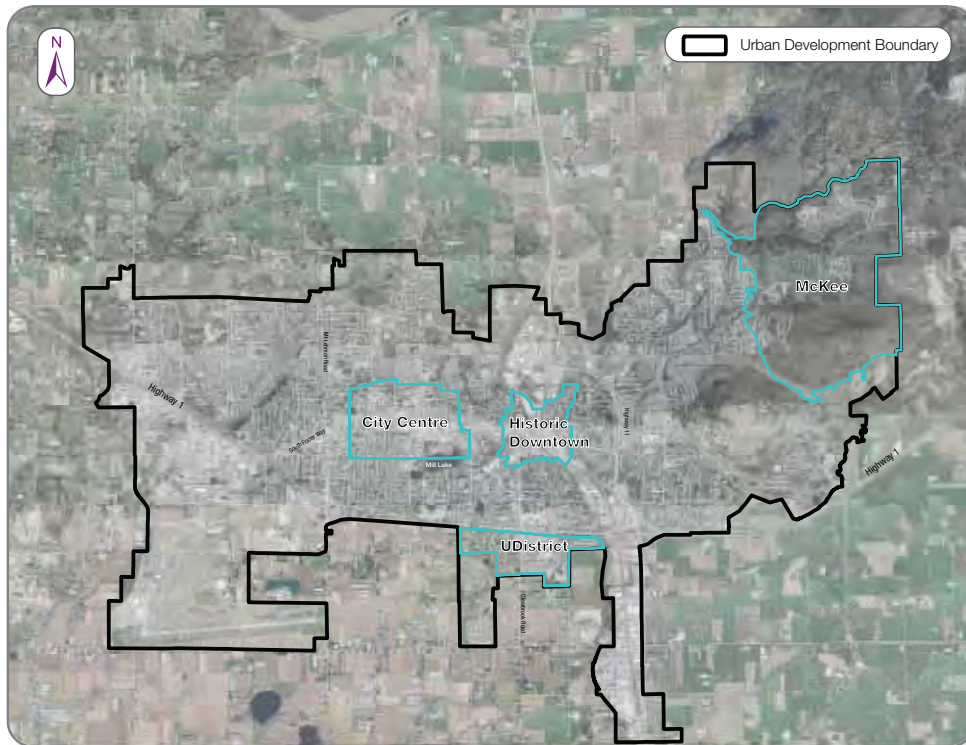


Figure 4. City of Abbotsford neighbourhood plans

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:



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 the Historic Downtown a vibrant and complete neighbourhood.



Stage 2 will focus on exploring options and preparing a preferred 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 and market feasibility of development.



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 the 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.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLANS

1985 (District of Abbotsford)

The 1985 OCP for the District of Abbotsford 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, and after reviewing other boundaries it appears to be the same as the present day “Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area” (described on page 18).



Figure 5. 1985 OCP Downtown Development Permit Area

1996 (City of Abbotsford)

Shortly after the amalgamation of the District of Abbotsford and the District of Matsqui into the City of Abbotsford, the 1996 OCP for the unified city identified a Central Business District with several focus areas. One focus area was the Abbotsford Downtown that retained a few specific references to unique policy and planning items for the area. However, it seems that much of the work from the District of Abbotsford’s 1985 OCP was not retained in this new OCP, and the large Central Business District area overshadowed the specific distinction of Historic Downtown.

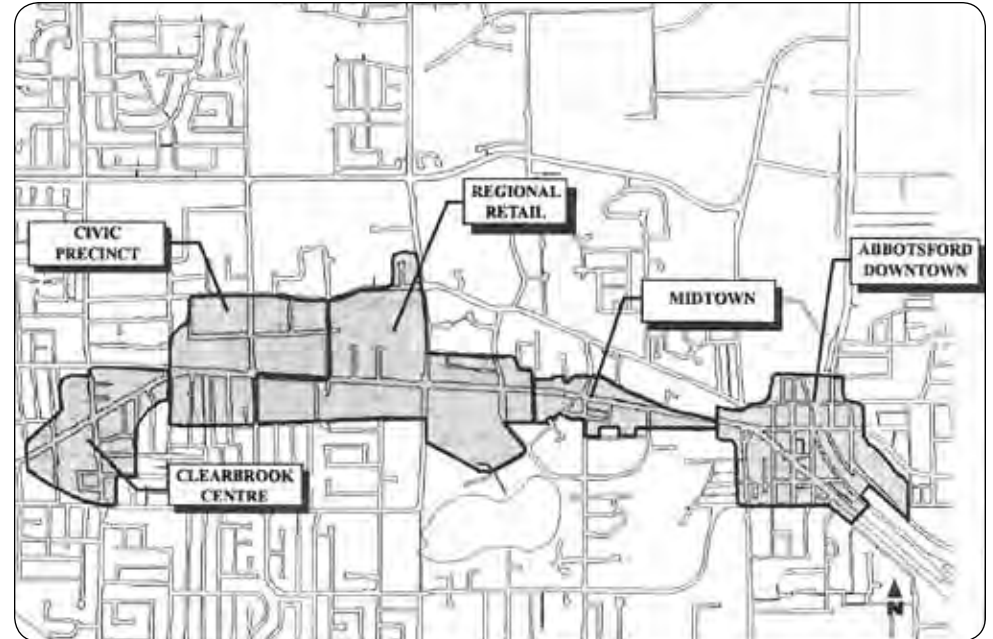


Figure 6. 2005 OCP Central Business District focus areas

2005 (City of Abbotsford)

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. In addition, it retained a specific reference and map for the area for revitalization but did not contain much in the way of specific development guidelines or policies. Similar to the 1996 OCP, the specific distinction of the Historic Downtown from 1985 was not re-established.

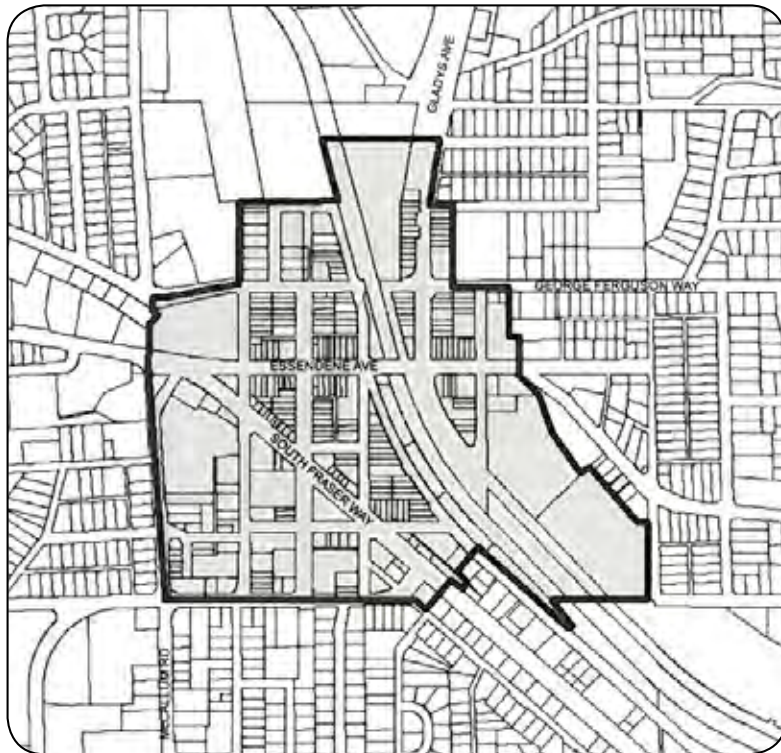


Figure 7. 2005 OCP revitalization area

2016 (City of Abbotsford)

The most recent OCP, completed through a process called “Abbotsforward”, was a rethink in the way Abbotsford will grow in the future. It 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, and there was not a specific map to identify the exact boundary of Historic Downtown. An urban structure diagram notes where Historic Downtown is in relation to the City Centre. In addition, the 2016 OCP contained a chapter about implementation that identified the need to do more detailed neighbourhood plan work in certain areas, including Historic Downtown.

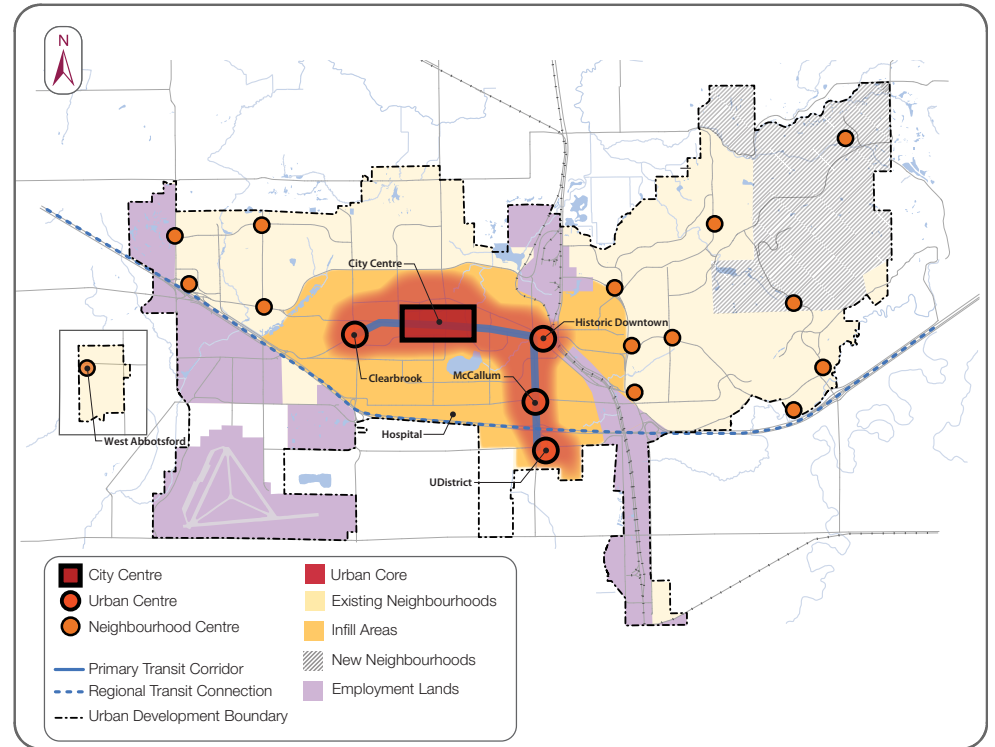


Figure 8. 2016 OCP urban structure diagram

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 18) were, or are, zoned C7.

Parking requirement reductions

The City of Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw (No. 2400-2014) contains off-street parking and loading regulations to determine how much space a development should allocate to providing a minimum amount of parking. In Historic Downtown there are reduced minimum parking requirements, and the ability for providing a cash-in-lieu contribution to the City of Abbotsford for up to 10 required parking stalls. In addition, a core area of four blocks is exempt from providing any off-street parking for certain uses such as retail and restaurants. A similar discrepancy as described above (C7 zoning not matching the “Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area”) exists between the Zoning Bylaw parking reductions and the “Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area” (described on page 18). As the Zoning Bylaw is frequently amended over time, it is difficult to determine when these boundaries became incongruent.

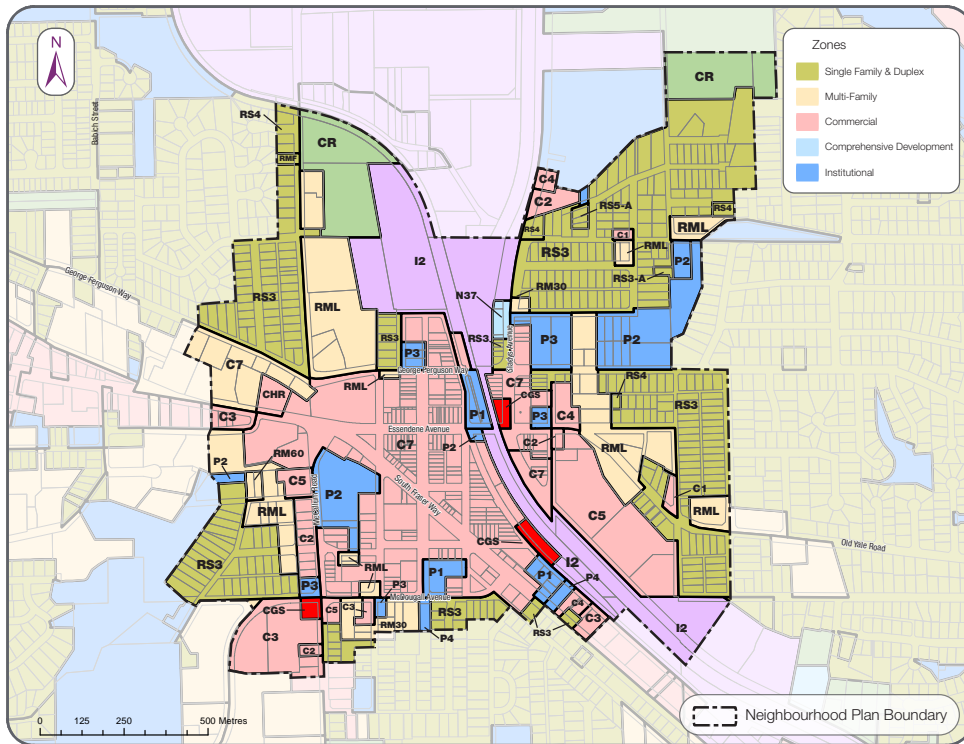


Figure 9. Historic Downtown zoning

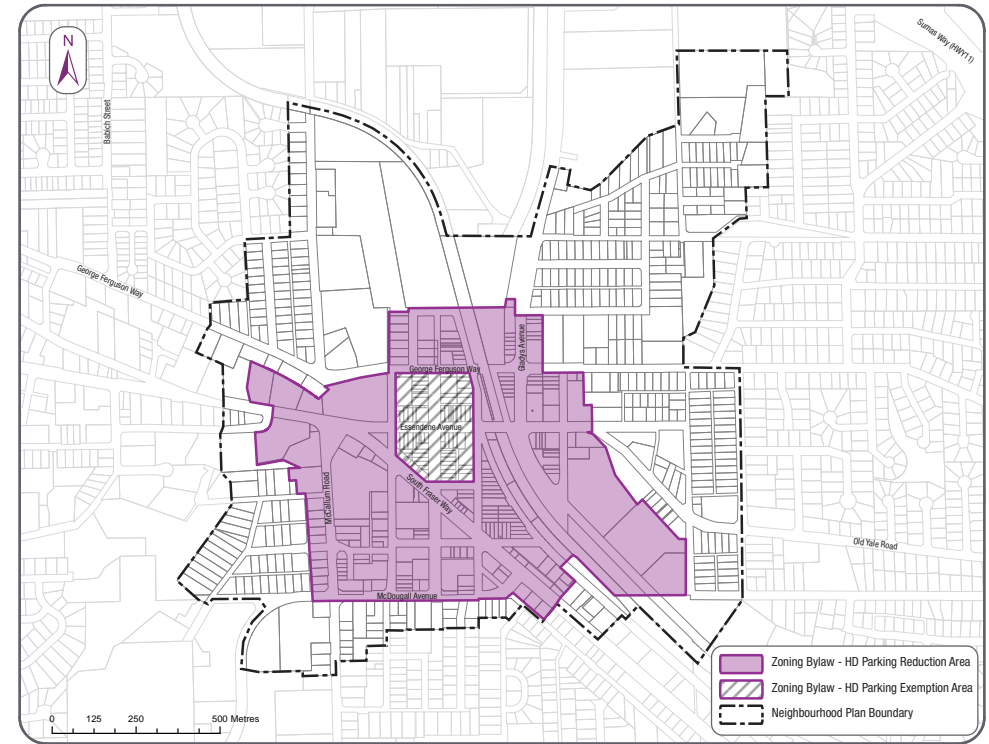


Figure 10. Parking reduction boundaries from the Zoning Bylaw

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).

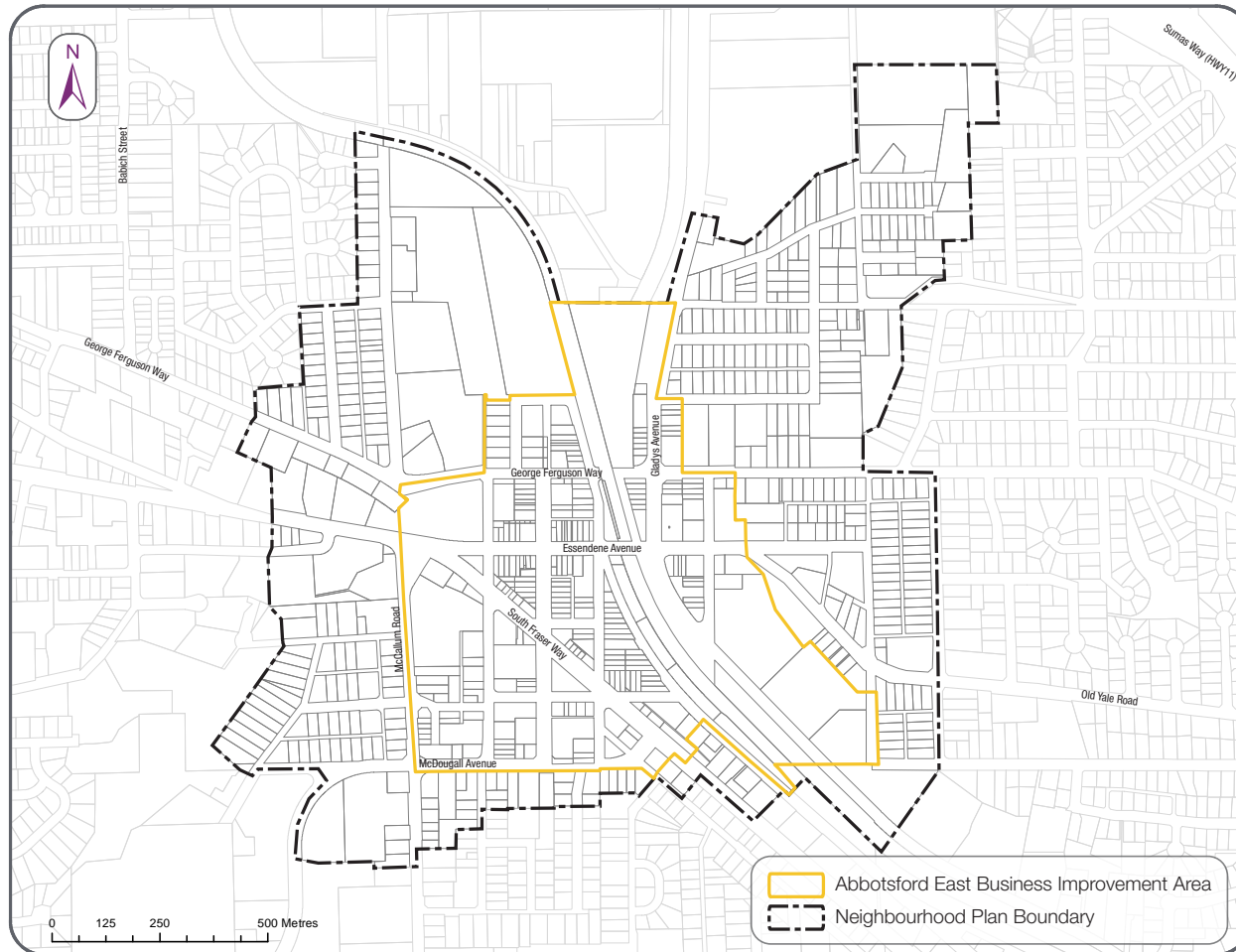


Figure 11. Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area

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 the 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 A Historic Neighbourhood

Historic Downtown is set apart from other neighbourhoods in Abbotsford by its relics of the past, ranging from historic buildings to streetscapes that were designed before the advent of vehicles. The history of this place both tells a story about Abbotsford's past, and offers a unique foundation for its future.

2.1 Historic Downtown Through the Years

FIRST NATIONS // BEFORE 1850

Long before Abbotsford existed as a community and Canada as a country, the Stó:lo (people of the river) occupied the land called S'ólh Téméxw in the Fraser Valley. They lived in this large geographic area from Yale to Vancouver and spoke Halq'eméylem, also known as the upriver dialect. The Fraser River, its tributaries and fertile lands were essential to the Stó:lo way of life.

THE EARLY YEARS // 1850 TO 1924

Historic Downtown's early years involved several signature events that influenced the evolution of the area and present day railways and streets.

Old Yale Road was built by the Royal Engineers in the 1870s as part of the early discovery of gold and European settlement of the Fraser River Valley. In 1889, a former engineer by the name of John Cunningham Maclure received a Crown grant for 160 acres of land. He quickly transferred title to his son, John Charles Maclure, who in turn sold title to Robert Ward. It was Mr. Ward who filed a subdivision plan for the town site in 1891, under the name "Abbotsford". The town site was named for a Maclure family friend, Harry Abbott, who was a Western Superintendent of the Canada Pacific Railway (CPR).

In 1892 CPR was granted right of way through the 65 ha (160 acre) town site on the condition that they build a station there in an effort to ensure the town site would grow. The CPR subsequently constructed the line connecting Huntingdon at the United States border through to Mission on the north shore of the Fraser River. The following years saw many new buildings being constructed, but unfortunately the area also suffered many fires that destroyed the earliest buildings in the town site. Examples include Lee's Grocery & Bakery, the Gazeley Block, the Abbotsford Hotel, the Royal Bank, and Pioneer Store. However, there were several buildings that survived, most notably the Copping Block on Essendene built in 1909, and Goslings first built in 1922.



Figure 13. Abbotsford CPR depot (1910 to 1914)
(Source: Northern British Columbia Archives, Geoffrey R. Weller Library, University of Northern British Columbia)

A view looking west along what is now Essendene Avenue. This was what the Abbotsford town site looked like in 1905. In 1920, a photograph was taken from a similar location. This photograph is presented on the following spread.



Figure 14. Historic town site (circa 1905)
(Source: Vancouver Archives, created by Major James Skitt Matthews [1878-1970])

In these 1920 panorama photographs, the train station, the Abbotsford Hotel and many new buildings are visible and can be compared with the 1905 image. There is also a rail line in the background showing the alignment of the future South Fraser Way.



Figure 15. Historic town site (circa 1920)
(Source: Vancouver Archives, created by Stuart Thomson [1891-1960])



VILLAGE OF ABBOTSFORD // 1924 TO 1972

On February 22, 1924, the Village of Abbotsford was incorporated, and shortly thereafter the Village reached several milestones. Jubilee Park was constructed for Canada's Diamond Jubilee in 1927 and two blocks of streets were paved in 1928: Essendene from Gladys to Montrose, and one block of Gladys. Additional buildings were also constructed, including the Atangard Hotel in 1927, CIBC in 1929, and Safeway in the rebuilt Gazeley Block in 1929.

In the 1930s the Great Northern Railway track was removed and turned into a roadbed that would eventually become South Fraser Way. Further development and expansion of the Village continued, including Hansen's Barber Shop, Trinity Memorial Church, a bowling alley, Royal Canadian Legion, and Goslings expansion. South Fraser Way was constructed as a bypass in 1949.



Figure 16. Copping and Gazeley Blocks (circa 1920)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 17. View west along Essendene Avenue (circa 1920)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 18. View west along Essendene Avenue (circa 1930)
 (Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 19. View east along Essendene Avenue (circa 1930)
 (Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 20. View east along Essendene Avenue (circa 1940)
 (Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 21. View west along Essendene Avenue (circa 1940)
 (Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)

The 1950s and 60s were a period when many buildings constructed can still be seen today in Historic Downtown. The Courthouse (present day Abbotsford Community Services) at Montrose and Laurel, the Post Office (present day Cobblestone Kitchen, Zeeba, Countdown Escape Room) at Montrose and George Ferguson Way, Hub Motors garage at Essendene and Gladys, the Royal Bank renovation, the Bank of Montreal (present day U&I Thai), and Saan (present day Dollarama) to name a few. The Village may have felt the pressure to accommodate this influx of development and increased business vibrancy as they installed 209 parking meters, several hundred feet of sidewalk, beautified Five Corners, planted the Christmas Tree, built a Jubilee Park band shell, and opened the MSA Centennial Library during this period.

However, the decades that followed this period of growth in the 1950s and 60s saw major shifts in the development pattern of the central Fraser Valley area.



Figure 22. Aerial view over Historic Downtown (circa 1950)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 23. Snow in front of the Atangard Hotel (circa 1950)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)

DISTRICT OF ABBOTSFORD // 1972 TO 1995

In 1972, three communities amalgamated to create the now much larger District of Abbotsford: the Village of Abbotsford, District of Sumas, and the unorganized territory of Huntingdon. Development within this expanded area began to take prominence away from the original Village area, although several projects did get completed, including the Abbotsford Centre Mall on the land between South Fraser Way, Pauline Street, and George Ferguson Way.

Perhaps even more importantly, the District of Abbotsford was a neighbour to the District of Matsqui, and the new development style in the 1970s was characterized by automobile oriented strip malls and enclosed shopping malls. Matsqui had large areas of relatively flat uplands available for this type of development that were not in the Agricultural Land Reserve. Expansion along South Fraser Way to the west of Historic Downtown included the West Oaks Mall and Sevenoaks Shopping Centre.

This expansion of shopping and retail amenities continued into the 1980s with several expansions of Sevenoaks Shopping Centre, plus the new development of Clearbrook Town Square and smaller strip malls along South Fraser Way. Although Abbotsford had planning documents 'on the books' to support Historic Downtown, these large external forces led to a decline in the vibrancy and vitality of the historic area. Many programs and policies introduced to counteract this decline are described in later sections of this chapter. It is likely that the parking meters installed by the Village of Abbotsford in the 1950s were no longer needed due to the decline in the business vibrancy of the area.

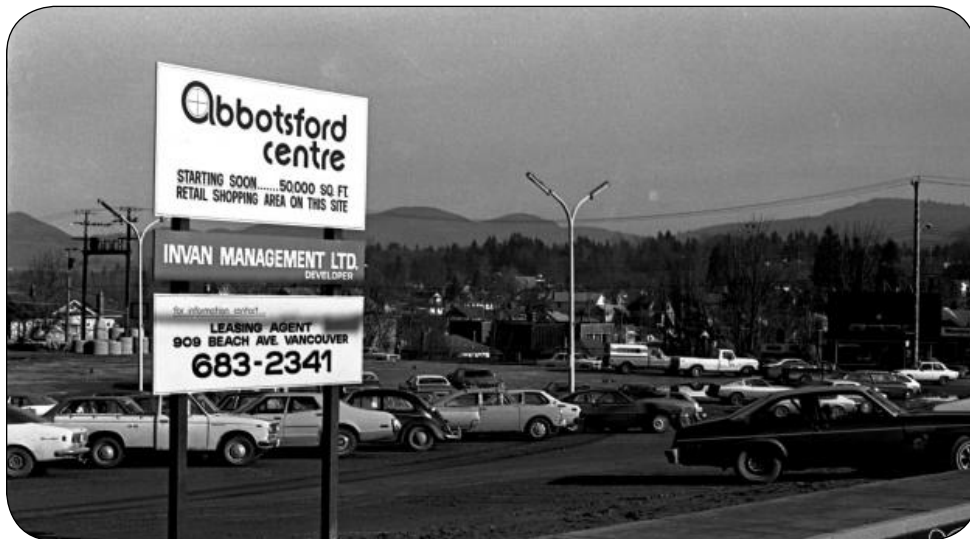


Figure 25. Abbotsford Centre Mall (circa 1970)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 24. The Mc & Mc Store (McLennan, McFeely, & Prior)
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)



Figure 26. The Saans Store, which replaced Mc & Mc
(Source: The Reach Gallery Museum photo archives)

CITY OF ABBOTSFORD // 1995 TO TODAY

One final shift in the civic landscape occurred in 1995 when the District of Abbotsford and District of Matsqui amalgamated to become the City of Abbotsford. This new municipality, the largest city in British Columbia by land area, presented new challenges with Historic Downtown becoming part of a new 'central business district' that stretched 4km from east to west, and covered an area approximately half the size of Vancouver's downtown peninsula.

During this time there were investments made in Historic Downtown, including sidewalk improvements along Montrose Avenue in the late 1990s. The programs and policies introduced to counteract the general decline in the preceding decades began to spur positive changes. In the early 2000s, improvements to building facades and new development began to take hold and activity remained steady into the 2010s.

Today, there are many active and interested groups opening new businesses, proposing new developments, and participating in the resurgence of the area. This renewed enthusiasm in the area comes along with the challenge of aligning goals and objectives for what the next chapter is in Historic Downtown's story of being a cherished and vibrant neighbourhood in Abbotsford. This neighbourhood plan is an opportunity for residents, businesses, visitors, and government to come together and set the path for the future.



Figure 28. Sidewalk on Montrose Avenue (2016)



Figure 27. Building façade on South Fraser Way (2016)
(Source: Algra Bros. Developments)

2.2 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. A 1996 City of Abbotsford staff report described the ADDBA as a “voluntary self-help program for local business communities, which facilitates the pooling of funds for area promotion, marketing, and management. Merchants and property owners fund, structure, and manage the BIA with the support of City Council”.

The ADDBA 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).

The ADDBA constitution lists the following as the purposes of the society:

- To establish and maintain programs dedicated to the promotion and development of business activity within the Abbotsford Improvement Business Area;
- To promote public awareness and recognition of commercial and business opportunities in the Abbotsford Improvement Business Area;
- To promote the business and commercial interests of businesses within the Abbotsford Business Improvement Area amongst business organizations, individual members of the community, and members of Municipal, Provincial, and Federal governments who may be able to assist in attaining the purposes of the society; and
- To assist business and professional people in the Abbotsford Business Improvement Area in coordinating plans for the improvement of the Abbotsford Business Improvement Area.

The ADDBA is also actively involved in City signage and development approval processes for applications within the Historic Downtown. Its role is to provide input to the City on applications in relation to their design guidelines and policies.



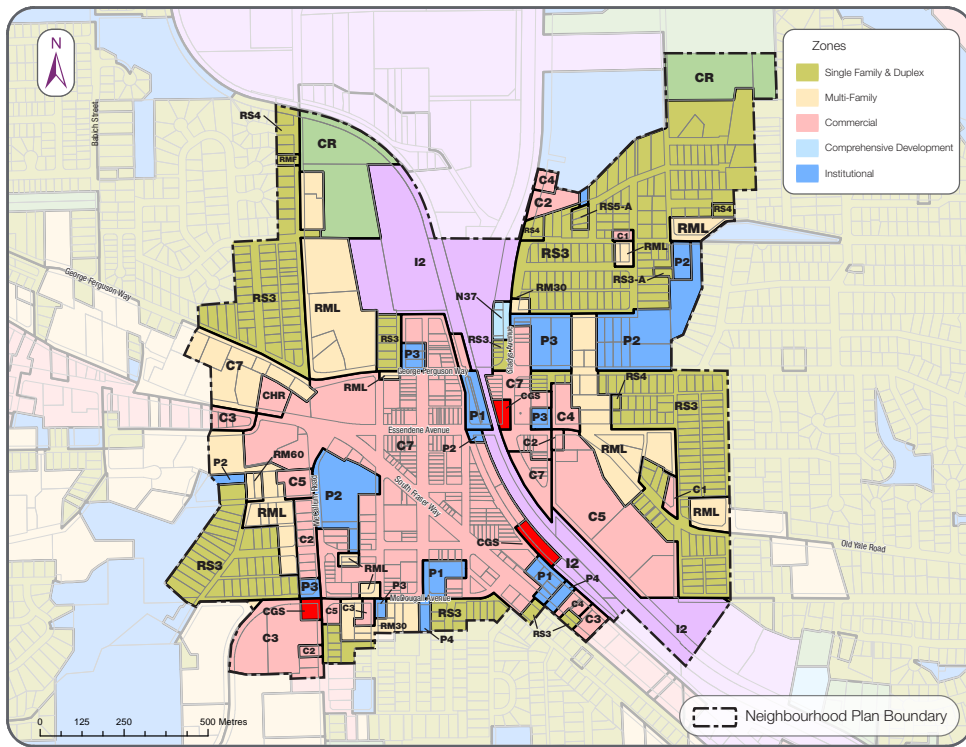


Figure 29. Zoning in the Historic Downtown

SIGNAGE AND FACADE GUIDELINES

The ADBA plays a supporting role in overseeing the design aesthetic of the Historic Downtown through their signage and façade guideline document. Although the specific power of development permit approvals lie with the City of Abbotsford, the City requires a letter of support from the ADBA prior to reviewing a development permit.

While there is anecdotal evidence that this has improved the urban design of recent developments in the Historic Downtown, there are also challenges with this approach. The ADBA does not have the authority to issue or deny development permits, and supporting a particular project, which implies “approval”, can put the ADBA under pressure to support projects they do not believe enhance Historic Downtown. Only the City has the authority to approve a development permit regardless of the ADBA’s position.

This neighbourhood plan provides an opportunity to review and update the role of the ADBA in the review process for development permits. A specific set of development guidelines could be created for the Historic Downtown through the neighbourhood planning process. These new guidelines could be co-created with the ADBA and area businesses, and adopted through the neighbourhood plan. This would formalize the ADBA’s perspective and include it in what is ultimately a City of Abbotsford development approval responsibility.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

In 2016, the ADBA created a planning committee to conduct meetings and survey their membership, with the objective of identifying and prioritizing a list of initiatives for the Historic Downtown. In the fall of 2016 this list was presented to the ADBA board of directors and consisted of three prioritized partnership initiatives: 1) street and sidewalk redesign, 2) parking solutions, and 3) Jubilee Park rejuvenation. Additional initiatives included traffic, events, beautification, art, and parks and landscape. All of these initiatives align with the objectives of the neighbourhood plan and will be considered in the planning process.



Figure 30. ADBA Planning Committee priorities (2016)

2.3 Bylaws and Policies

The following section provides an overview of existing bylaws and policies applicable within the HDNP area related to business improvement areas, revitalization, parking, and outdoor patios.

ABBOTSFORD EAST DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

The improvement area was created in 1994 by the District of Abbotsford. The current bylaw identifies the activities that the levy may be used for in the improvement area:

- preparing studies and reports
- improvement, beautification, or maintenance of streets, sidewalks, or City-owned land, buildings or structures
- removing graffiti from buildings and other structures
- conserving heritage property
- encouraging businesses

The improvement area bylaw provided the ADBA with an initial \$100,000 grant that increased by 3% per year for a 5 year period, with the grant amount being recovered through a levy assessment on Class 5 and 6 properties within the bylaw area. Subsequent renewals of the bylaw for 5 year periods resulted in the same 3% annual increase until 2007 when the bylaw was changed to be based on a percentage (0.2%) of assessed property value instead of a fixed amount. The bylaw that established this new approach is in effect for 20 years, ending in 2028. There is also a cap of \$300,000 annually in the current bylaw that, if reached, increases by 3% per year in subsequent years.

The levy amount collected since the current 2007 bylaw was adopted has increased from \$140,000 in 2007 to \$290,000 in 2016, for an annual increase of just over 8%. The total levy in those 10 years is just over \$2.2 million, for an average annual levy of approximately \$220,000. With a historical rate of growth of 8% per year, the \$300,000 annual levy cap will be reached in 2017, at which point the annual increase will be limited to 3% until the bylaw expires in 2028.

The bylaw requires that the ADBA submit an annual budget for Abbotsford City Council to approve, account for all the money received, and have a specified amount of insurance. There are records of financial reporting completed for the society to receive permissive tax exemptions on its property. However, it is unclear whether annual budgets have also been submitted to City Council for approval as a part of this specific bylaw requirement. It is also unclear how much of the levy collected has been spent, and what projects or initiatives have been supported as specified in the bylaw.

**\$2.2 million levied
in Historic Downtown**

ABBOTSFORD DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION TAX EXEMPTION BYLAW

The revitalization area was created in 2005 by the City of Abbotsford as a way to encourage development activity in the area. The current bylaw identifies the eligibility criteria as follows:

- constructing new improvements, or altering existing buildings, with an aggregate construction value of \$100,000
- the property contains a commercial use that comprises a minimum of 50% of the improvement (either total floor area or BC Assessment property value)
- the building permit is issued on or after February 7, 2005

The tax exemption lasts for a period of five years with the increased assessed value fully exempt from municipal property taxes in year one, down to 20% in year five, and not exempt in year six and beyond.

A total of 12 projects have taken advantage of the tax exemption since it came into effect for the year 2006 through to 2017. These 12 approved projects had a combined total property tax exemption value of \$500,000, at an average annual cost to the City of approximately \$42,000 in foregone property tax revenue. The greatest single exemption was from 2014 for \$161,000, while the smallest exemption was from 2006 for \$500.

Year Projects

2006	2
2007	2
2008	0
2009	4
2010	1
2011	0
2012	0
2013	1
2014	1
2015	0
2016	0
2017	1
2018	1*

* under application and not included in the 12 approved exemptions

\$500
thousand
in property
tax exemptions



Figure 31. Montrose Avenue development (2009)



Figure 32. Aldergrove Credit Union (2014)
(Source: Quantum Properties)

ZONING BYLAW PARKING REQUIREMENTS

The Zoning Bylaw contains off-street parking and loading regulations to determine how much space a development should allocate to provide a minimum amount of parking. The Historic Downtown area is identified as being eligible for a reduction of up to 10 required parking stalls when providing a cash-in-lieu payment of \$3,000 per stall to the City of Abbotsford (the cash-in-lieu amount has varied in the past).

According to available financial records, a total of 1 project has used this cash-in-lieu parking reduction and paid \$27,000 to the City for a credit of 9 parking stalls. The revenue collected has not yet been used.



Figure 33. Harvest Grill 'n' Greens patio



Figure 34. Mitch Miller's patio

OUTDOOR PATIO POLICY

In 2012 the City created a policy for “Outdoor Patios for Cafés and Restaurants within in the Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area.” This policy was intended to facilitate outdoor dining in public right of ways (i.e. sidewalks) in Historic Downtown. Included with the policy are draft guidelines for design principles, siting, operations and maintenance, and enforcement.

Although not many businesses have adequate public right of way space in front of their storefronts due to limited sidewalk space, several food and beverage establishments do use these provisions. Encouraging and supporting outdoor patio spaces could be further encouraged through improved sidewalk space allocation along certain streets, and will be explored further in the neighbourhood plan process.





3.0 Historic Downtown Today

Historic Downtown is a unique and evolving neighbourhood that reflects a diverse community of residents living in the heart of Abbotsford. This section provides a snapshot of the community. The information is used as a baseline for understanding the existing conditions within the study area, and is organized around the following six sections:

- Population and Households
- Land Use and Buildings
- Jobs and Businesses
- Streets and Movement
- Physical Features, Pipes, and Services
- Community Places and Public Spaces

INTRODUCTION

The analysis in this section is largely based on the 2011 Census and 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) information as they are the most recent and comprehensive datasets available. The analysis occasionally draws from the 2001 and 2006 Census to establish historical trends, and the 2016 Census for population data, which was released in time to be included in this report. Where necessary, data and information was augmented with BC Stats and other sources such as the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board (FVREB).

It is important to note that the majority of the data analyzed in this section covers a larger area than the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan area. This enables a broader representation of the neighbourhood catchment area.

This chapter also includes key findings from a Commercial Market Study jointly completed for the Historic Downtown and City Centre Neighbourhood Plans. It provides an overview of retail, office, and tourist accommodation market trends and study area inventories. The primary focus of the study is the HDNP area, but it also draws from the broader Historic Downtown neighbourhood for population and spending data.

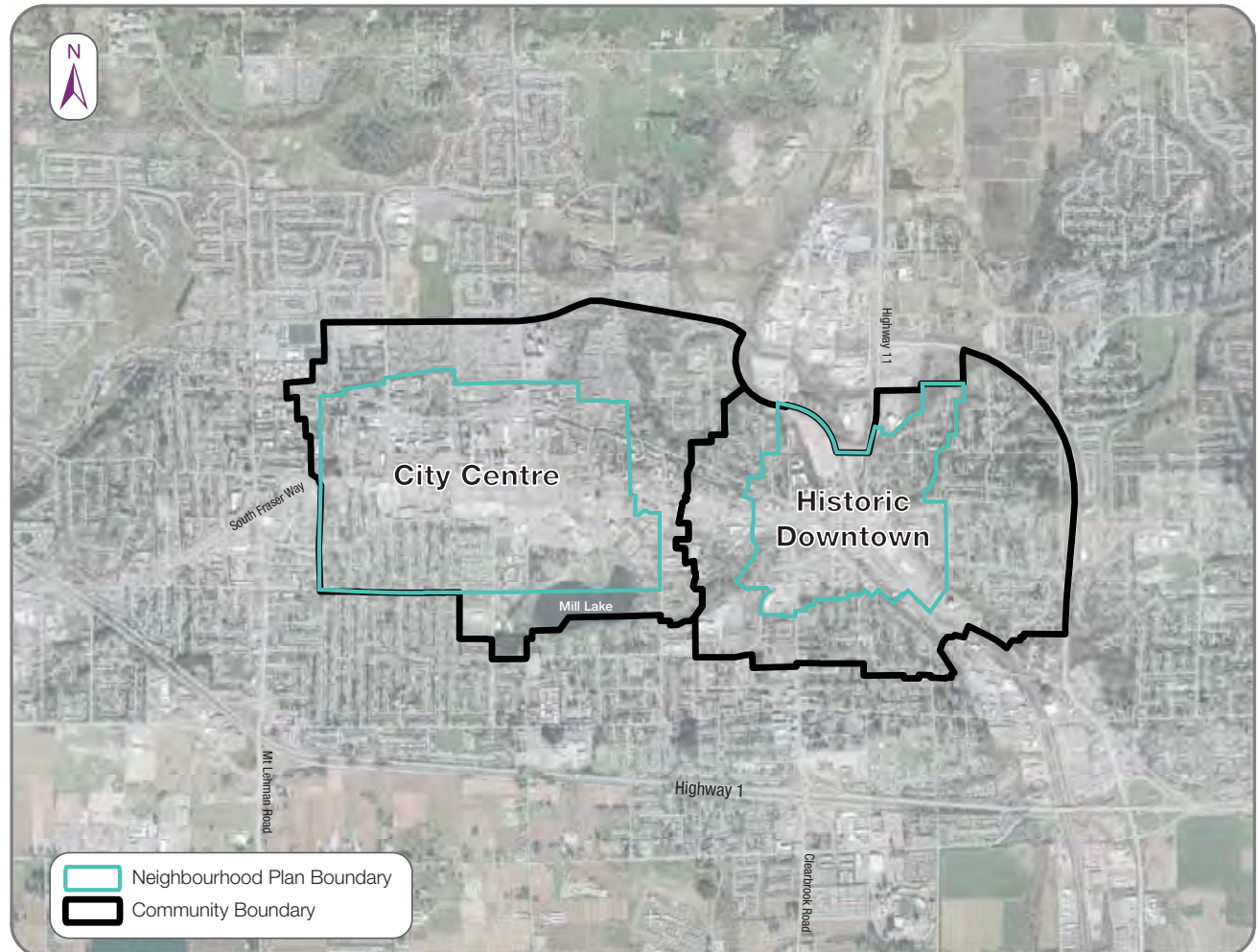


Figure 35. Neighbourhood Plan and community area boundaries

3.1 People and Households

This section highlights key demographic characteristics of the residents living in Historic Downtown, including age, immigration, language, and household composition. The selected characteristics provide context to inform planning policies and design interventions to reflect a diverse population.

POPULATION ANALYSIS

Population Growth

Abbotsford’s population has grown quickly over the last four decades, from approximately 30,000 in 1970 to just over 141,000 at the time of the 2016 Census. Over the last ten years, Abbotsford’s population increased by approximately 9%, and the city should continue to experience steady growth in the coming years. The newly adopted OCP paints a powerful picture of what Abbotsford could look like at 200,000 residents, and directs much of this growth into Urban Centres such as the Historic Downtown.

Historic Downtown has also been experiencing population growth in recent years, and is growing at a faster pace than the city overall. Between 2006 and 2016, the neighbourhood grew by approximately 11%, and currently has just over 11,000 residents. This growth can largely be attributed to new multi-family housing developments such as Yale Crossing (Pauline Street), Gallantree (Pine Street), Abacus Uptown (Campbell Avenue) and seniors housing operated by the Lynnhaven Society (Braun Avenue).

Figure 36. Population growth

	2006	2011	2016	Change
Historic Downtown	10,155	10,915	11,300	+11.3%
City of Abbotsford	129,455	136,950	141,400	+9.2%

2016 **11,300** 2041 **21,900**

By 2041, Historic Downtown is anticipated to have a population of approximately 21,900. This means that the population would almost double in the next 25 years. This figure is based on the population model developed for the OCP which considers typical land use population densities, average people per housing unit, and parcels with development potential.

Population Density

Historic Downtown has a total land area of approximately 4 km², which translates to a population density of roughly 28 people per hectare. Approximately 32 people per hectare is the bare minimum needed to begin seeing minor shifts in transportation choices away from predominant vehicle use.

The highest population densities (>125 people per hectare) can be found around the intersection of George Ferguson Way and McCallum Road, along South Fraser Way directly west of Five Corners, and along Old Yale Road between Cyril Street and Park Drive. It is important to note that the majority of residential density occurs around the edges of the HDNP area, with virtually no people living in the commercial core other than a handful of properties supporting multifamily housing.

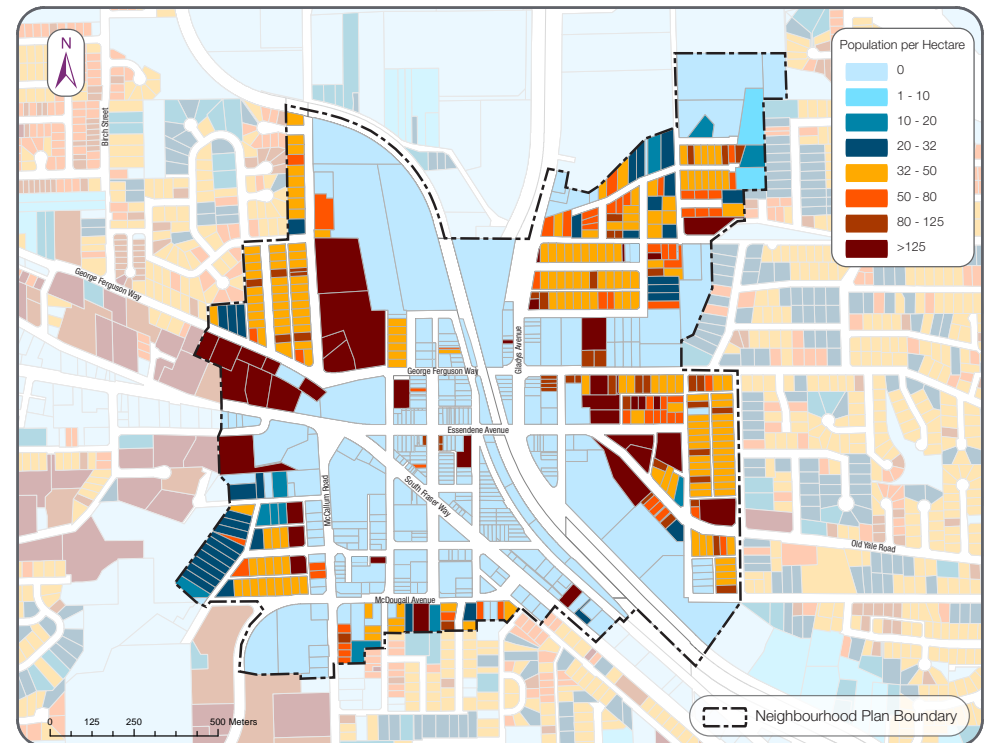


Figure 37. Population density (people per hectare)

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Age

Historic Downtown has a relatively balanced population representing a mix of different ages within the neighbourhood. The most dominant age group is the 20-29 year category, which represents approximately 17% of the total population. Although this finding is also the case city wide, the percentage is slightly lower (14%), which suggests this demographic group is slightly more represented in Historic Downtown relative to the rest of the city.

The median age in the neighbourhood is 38.6 years, which is similar to 37.9 years for the city overall. There are fewer children under the age of 15 in the neighbourhood when compared to the city overall (16.1% versus 18.9%), but generally the same number of seniors as a proportion of the total population (14.6% and 14.7% respectively).

Immigration

In Abbotsford, 27% of residents are immigrants. In Historic Downtown, this number is only 15%. This shows the neighbourhood generally has a lower proportion of immigrants relative to its total population compared to the city overall.

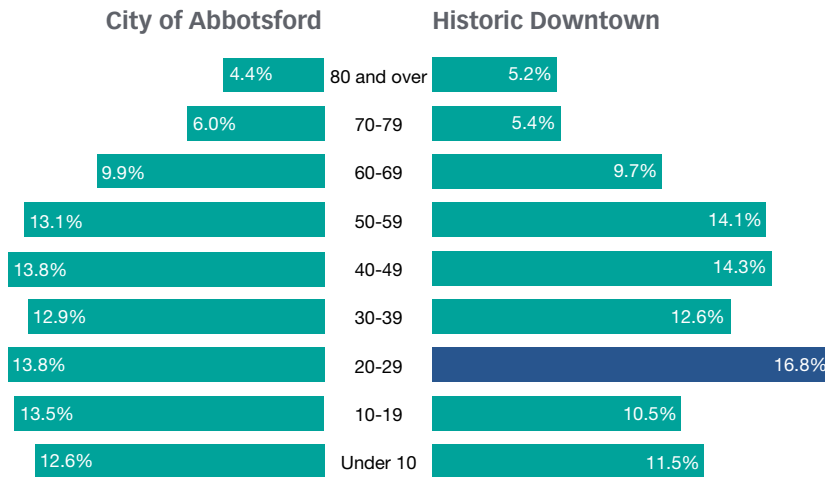


Figure 38. Age composition

Of the residents who are immigrants, the largest number are from South Korea (23.4%) followed by the United Kingdom (19.9%), India (11.3%), and the United States (10.6%). A small proportion of immigrants were born in Romania (5.0%), Ukraine (4.3%), the Philippines (3.5%) and China (1.4%). The remaining one-fifth of immigrant residents were born in various other countries.

Of the non-immigrant residents, approximately 70% were born in British Columbia, and the remaining 30% were born outside of the province.

Language

Approximately 82.3% of the residents speak Canada's official languages (English and/or French) in their home. Of the non-official languages spoken at home, German is the highest, followed by Korean, Punjabi, Spanish, Japanese and Dutch.

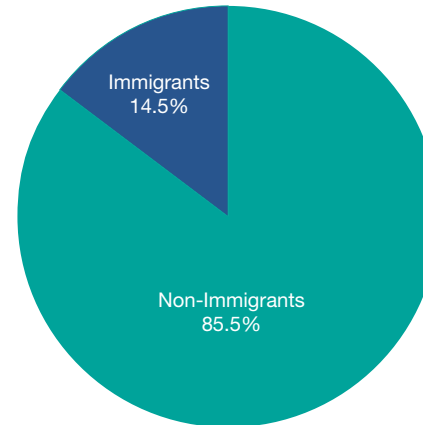


Figure 39. Residents who are Immigrants

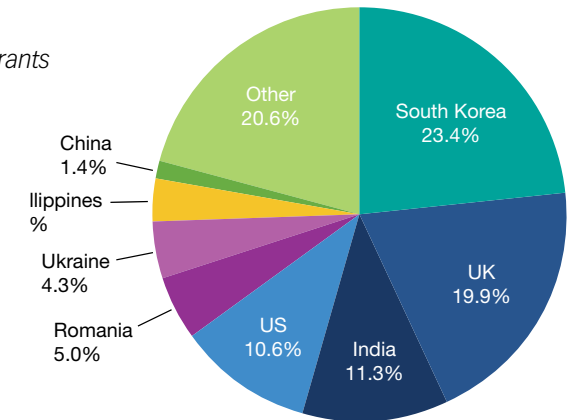


Figure 40. Immigrants by place of birth

HOUSEHOLD ANALYSIS

Historic Downtown can largely be characterized by small households with few children, with an average of 2.4 person per household.

70% of neighbourhood residents live in 1-2 person households. This supports the finding that a large number of residents are between the ages of 20 and 29 years who likely have not yet started families. It also reflects the large number of seniors who reside in the neighbourhood in complexes such as the Lynnhaven Society buildings on Braun Avenue.

The majority of larger households are located on the edges of Historic Downtown in areas primarily made up of single detached homes, which are frequently occupied by families with children

2.4
persons/household

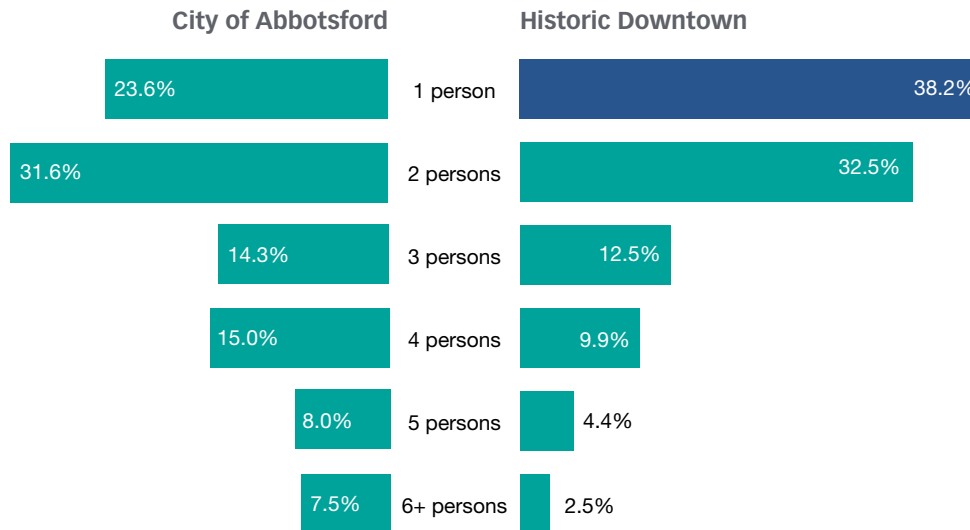


Figure 41. Household size

3.2 Land Use and Buildings

Historic Downtown is a one of the oldest and most unique neighbourhoods in Abbotsford. Supported by a walkable and connected street network, the existing neighbourhood reflects an urban form that pre-dates car-oriented, suburban style developments. Street-fronting buildings with historic character and on-street parking support small-scale retail in close proximity to surrounding residential uses.

The existing development pattern is a direct reflection of past land use and zoning policies, which allowed a flexible approach to urban development. The result is an eclectic and haphazard mix of uses within the neighbourhood. Although renewed interest in the area in recent years has led to a wave of new development, the area still largely consists of an older housing stock that supports a predominantly commercial core.

LAND USE ANALYSIS

OCP Land Uses

In 2016, Council adopted a new OCP which includes a new land use plan. The intent of the new land use designations is to provide greater clarity around permitted uses, building types, and densities throughout the city. The new framework supports an overarching vision and aspirations for a thriving community at 200,000 residents.

The dominant designation in the HDNP area is Urban Centre, which reflects the city's urban structure and identifies Historic Downtown as one of four mixed use Urban Centres. Although secondary to the City Centre in terms of scale and intensity of use, Urban Centres are intended to offer city wide appeal in addition to serving their surrounding neighbourhoods. The edges of the area include a range of residential and commercial designations, which are supported by smaller areas of institutional and open space land uses. The Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan will further refine the OCP land use plan to support the creation of a distinct and vibrant community.

The land use designations occurring within the Historic Downtown are summarized on the following page.

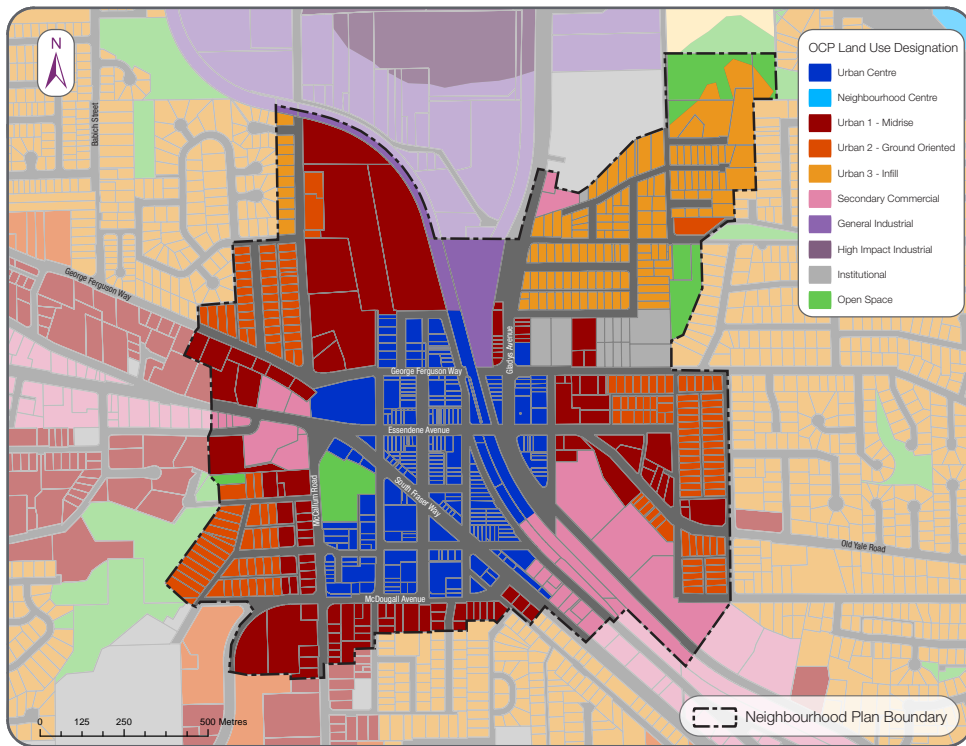


Figure 42. OCP land use designations

- **Urban Centre**
 - Enables a mix of multifamily and commercial uses to strengthen existing hubs that serve a city-wide function
 - Buildings typically include a mix of retail and/or office space on lower floors and residential units on upper floors, but can be fully multi family or commercial
 - Heights are limited to 6 storeys with densities between 1.0 and 2.0 FSR
- **Urban 1 – Mid-rise**
 - Enables multifamily housing to strengthen and support the Mixed Use Centres and Primary Transit Corridor
 - Multi storey buildings include low and mid rises
 - Heights are limited to 6 storeys with densities between 1.0 and 2.0 FSR

- **Urban 2 – Ground Oriented**
 - Enables multifamily housing to support Mixed Use Centres and/or to serve as transition areas near single detached neighbourhoods
 - Ground-oriented duplex, row or townhouses
 - Heights are limited to 3 storeys with densities between 0.5 and 1.5 FSR
- **Urban 3 – Infill**
 - Enables infill residential with density increases near the Urban Centres
 - Single detached dwellings with some ground oriented duplexes
 - Buildings must follow OCP Infill Guidelines which address minimum lot area, accessory units and maximum densities
- **Secondary Commercial**
 - Serves a neighbourhood or city-wide area
 - Small and medium format retail centres
 - 1 to 2 storey buildings (4 storeys for tourist accommodations) with densities up to 0.5 FSR (up to 1.0 FSR on existing properties below 1,000m²)
- **General Industrial**
 - Large lots and large buildings oriented around on-site circulation, surface parking and storage
 - Heights generally 1 to 2 storeys with variable densities
- **Institutional**
 - Buildings with institutional uses and open spaces
 - Heights are limited to 3 storeys with a density up to 0.7 FSR
- **Open Space**
 - Active and passive parks, trails, fields, recreation facilities
 - Recreation and facilities and out buildings are permitted with variable densities

Existing Zoning

Some of the existing zoning in the area does not match the underlying land use designations and future intent for the area. As the neighbourhood undergoes transition, zoning will likely change to more closely align with the OCP. The map shows there is a mix of commercial, residential, industrial and institutional zones throughout the area, with commercial zoning making up most of the core area.

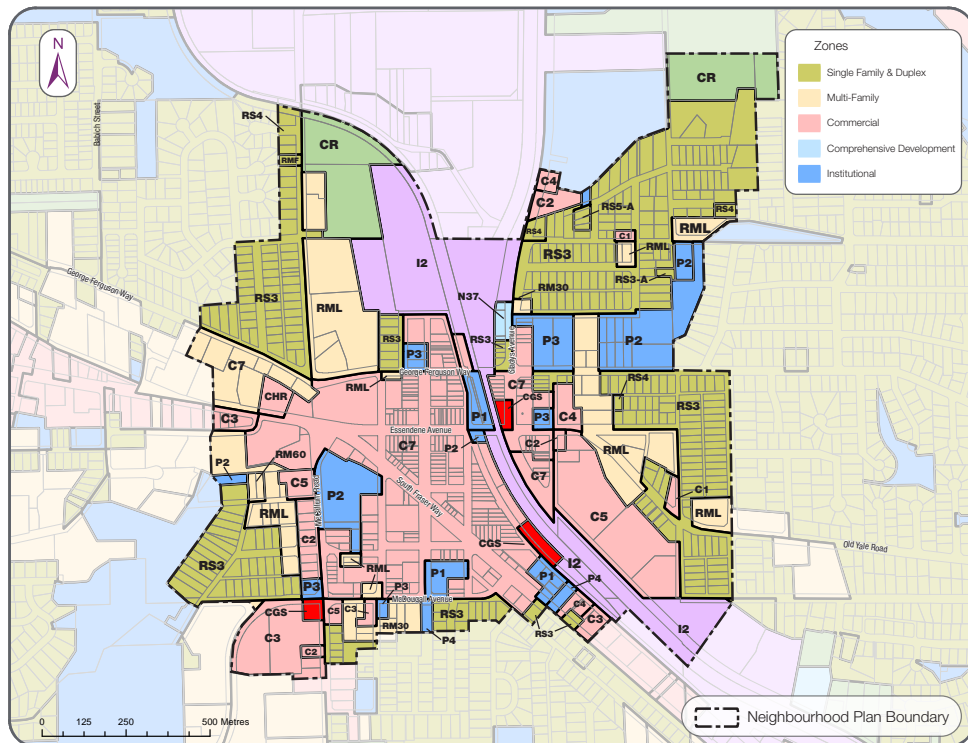


Figure 43. Existing zoning

The Historic Downtown Commercial Zone (C7) zone is the dominant zone within the HDNP area. It allows 23 different uses including Apartments, Civic Uses, Health Care Offices, Offices, Restaurants and Retail, up to a maximum height of four storeys. Based on the existing development regulations, the C7 zone could present two main challenges to neighbourhood growth and development:

1. The C7 zone requires ground floor retail for all buildings. Based on the findings of the Commercial Market Study, the area does not require as much retail floor area as the C7 enables today, which could result in underperforming lease rates.
2. There is a direct link between the maximum permitted density and redevelopment potential. The low maximum FSR makes development challenging on historically small parcels in the area. Although density bonusing is possible when underground parking is provided, this is not feasible on many small lots (there is a cash in lieu parking reduction option available that may help mitigate this).

Therefore, it seems likely that a new zone may be needed as part of the HDNP to address these challenges and ensure the long-term viability of a thriving downtown community.

HOUSING INVENTORY

Housing Costs, Vacancy and Tenure

Home ownership in Abbotsford has grown from 70% in 2001 to 72% in 2011. In recent years, the cost of owning a home has increased drastically as a direct result of rising home prices in the Lower Mainland. Abbotsford has been significantly affected by this trend being located close to Metro Vancouver.

The Fraser Valley Real Estate Board (FVREB) reports that the benchmark price of a single detached home in Abbotsford was \$670,700 in January 2017. This is a 32% increase over the same period in 2016, when the benchmark home price was \$509,100. The benchmark price has increased by 66% over the last ten years. Looking at townhouses and apartments, the benchmark prices have also increased by 29% and 40% respectively between 2016 and 2017. According to the 2011 NHS, average mortgage payments in Abbotsford were \$1,057, although it is likely this value has increased in recent years.

As home prices increase, it becomes more difficult to afford home ownership. People may choose to delay purchasing their home and rent instead. In Abbotsford, 74% of people own their own home and 26% rent, while Historic Downtown has a ratio of 58% to 42% respectively.

According to CMHC's 2016 Rental Market Report, increased demand for rental housing led to higher rents and a lower vacancy rate. The overall rental vacancy rate for Abbotsford is 0.5%, with 0% vacancy for bachelor units and three or more bedroom units. Demand for newer rental accommodation also remains high, with vacancy rates for apartments constructed after 1990 at 0.1% for the Abbotsford-Mission Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). The strong demand and limited rental supply are the major reason for the increase in rental rates. Purpose built rental apartment units in the CMA increased by a net total of four units in 2016. Average monthly rent is \$838, compared to \$1,324 in Vancouver and \$1,099 in the province overall.

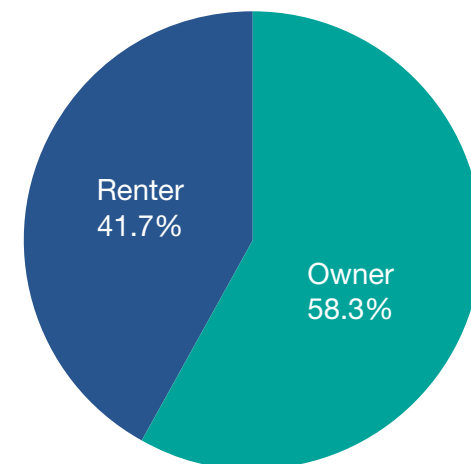


Figure 44. Housing Tenure

Through the HDNP, it will be important to develop policies that address affordable housing to support the demand for rental housing, and to provide housing choice in the neighbourhood to meet the needs for a wide range of households.

Housing Type

More than half of homes in Historic Downtown are apartment buildings. Over 93% of those apartment units are in buildings less than five storeys tall. However, in Abbotsford overall, apartment units make up only one-quarter of the housing stock. This indicates Historic Downtown has a large amount of multifamily housing compared to the rest of Abbotsford.

Almost one third of housing in Historic Downtown consists of single detached homes. Duplexes and townhouses account for only 13% of the total housing stock.

The largest concentration of housing units with more than 70 units per hectare are outside of, but within walking distance of the core blocks of Essendene and Montrose Avenues. The core area, which largely corresponds to the C7 zone, has few residential units, with most of them contained in Yale Crossing on Pauline Street, Atangard Society in the former Fraser Valley Inn building on Essendene Avenue, and a few smaller buildings scattered around the area.

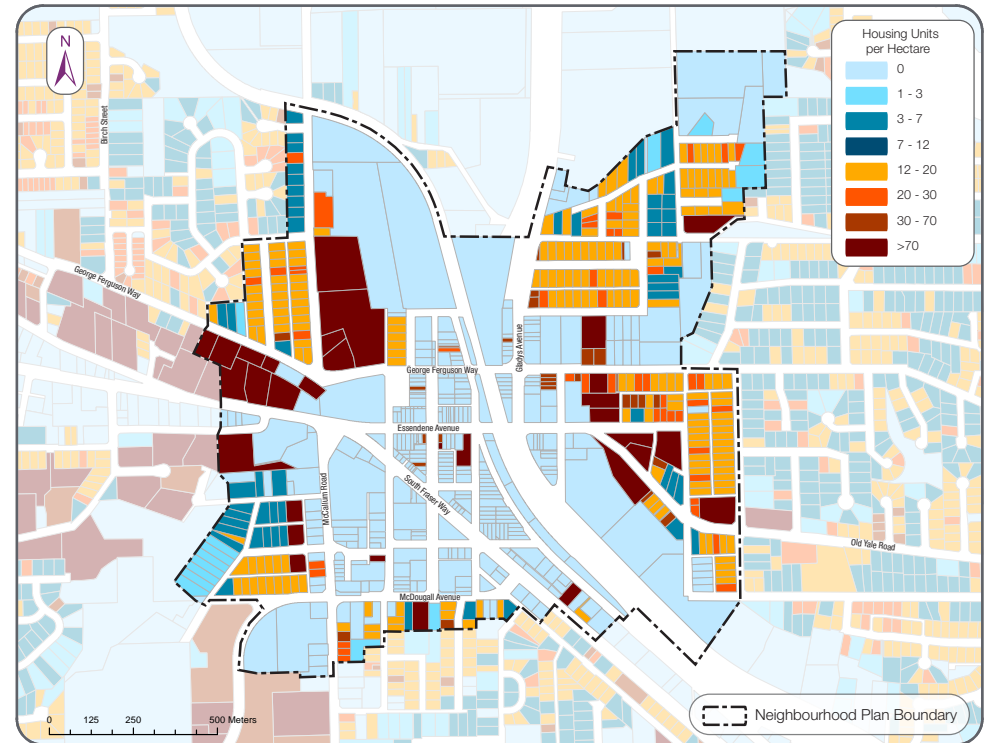


Figure 45. Housing density (units per hectare)

\$1,057
avg monthly mortgage

\$838
avg monthly rent

Figure 46. Average monthly housing costs

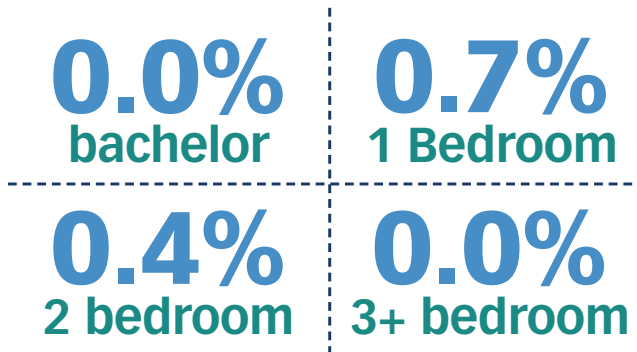


Figure 47. Abbotsford rental vacancy (Source: CMHC, 2016)

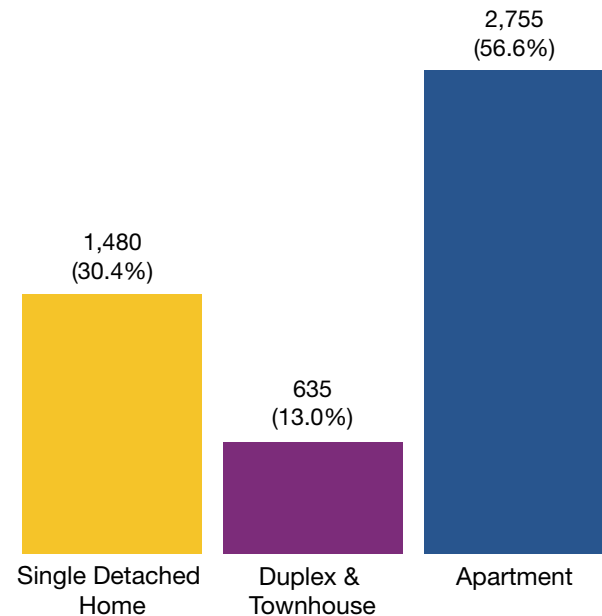


Figure 48. Housing type



Housing Stock

There has been limited residential development in the Historic Downtown in recent years. The largest proportion of existing housing stock (39%) was constructed between 1961 and 1980, and 14% of the housing stock was built prior to 1960. Although roughly half of the housing stock is more than 35 years old, most of it only requires regular maintenance versus major repairs. Of the residents living in apartment buildings, 61% live in non-condo apartments, which tend to be older apartment buildings or purpose built rental housing.

As indicated in the 2016 CMHC Rental Market Report, vacancy rates are very low and there is significant demand for newer and higher quality apartments. The neighbourhood plan provides an opportunity to encourage more multifamily housing in the Historic Downtown to meet the needs of a growing population.

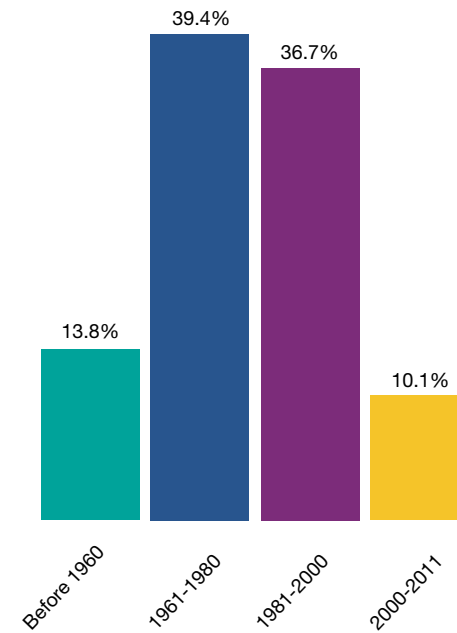


Figure 49. Age of housing

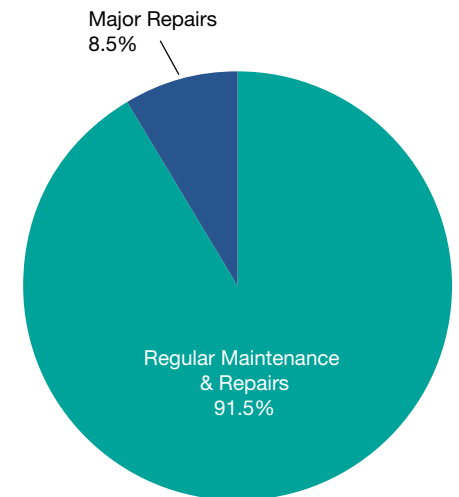


Figure 50. Housing maintenance

BUILDING ARCHITECTURAL AND DESIGN ANALYSIS

This section provides photo montages of buildings along core retail streets in the Historic Downtown, including architectural and public realm analysis. This section also presents stories behind select historic buildings and sites.

Historic narratives are drawn from the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association (ADBA) blog article "Historic You Say" as well as the Historic Downtown Abbotsford Walking Tour guide prepared by students from W.A. Fraser Middle School.

George Ferguson Way - South Side



Figure 51. Photo Montage: George Ferguson Way South Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

The continuous façade, or street-wall, is interrupted. However, these alleys can be beneficial for loading and parking.



Montrose Avenue



George Ferguson Way - South Side



Figure 52. Photo Montage: George Ferguson Way South Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Pauline Avenue

Slopes can be difficult to integrate into building design. This building does this well by incorporating windows and doors along all heights and stepping down with the slope. The landscape adjacent to the building does not include any living materials, or materials that add character.

There is a lack of space within the right-of-way dedicated to landscaping



Essendene Avenue - North Side

Building History

Hub Sports, 33719 Essendene Avenue

Built in 1959. Originally half of it was owned by the Royal Bank of Canada and the other half was owned by Peter Crocker, who used it as a real estate office. Other than minor renovations, and removal of the dividing wall that separated the original businesses, not much has changed.

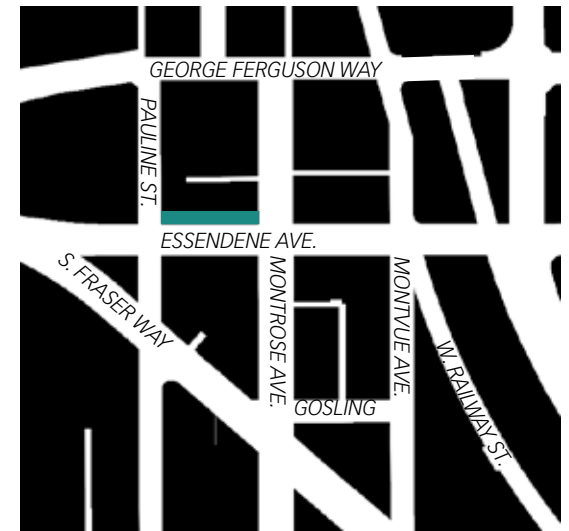
Pauline Street

Lack of retail transparency due to small windows (left) and window coverings (right).

Good example of lighting, signage and awning that complement the architecture.



Figure 53. Photo Montage: Essendene Avenue North Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Post-modern architecture does not fit with historic character.

Montrose Avenue



Essendene Avenue - North Side

Building History

CRIST Building, 33765 Essendene Avenue

Built in 1930 by Norman Roy Crist. Originally occupied by Weir's Pharmacy on one side and the Government Liquor Store on the other. An impressive feature of the original building was the brick façade using material from the old Clayburn brick factory, as was the case with several buildings in the Historic Downtown.

Building History

The Andrews Building, 33775 Essendene Avenue

Built in the 1920's by Albert Lee, this building initially housed a grocery store, a restaurant/confectionery store and a bakery. A fire in the 1950s resulted in the building being renovated and occupied by single tenants until the building was once again divided in half in 1997.

Ground floor offices do not contribute to vibrant street activity.

Montrose Avenue

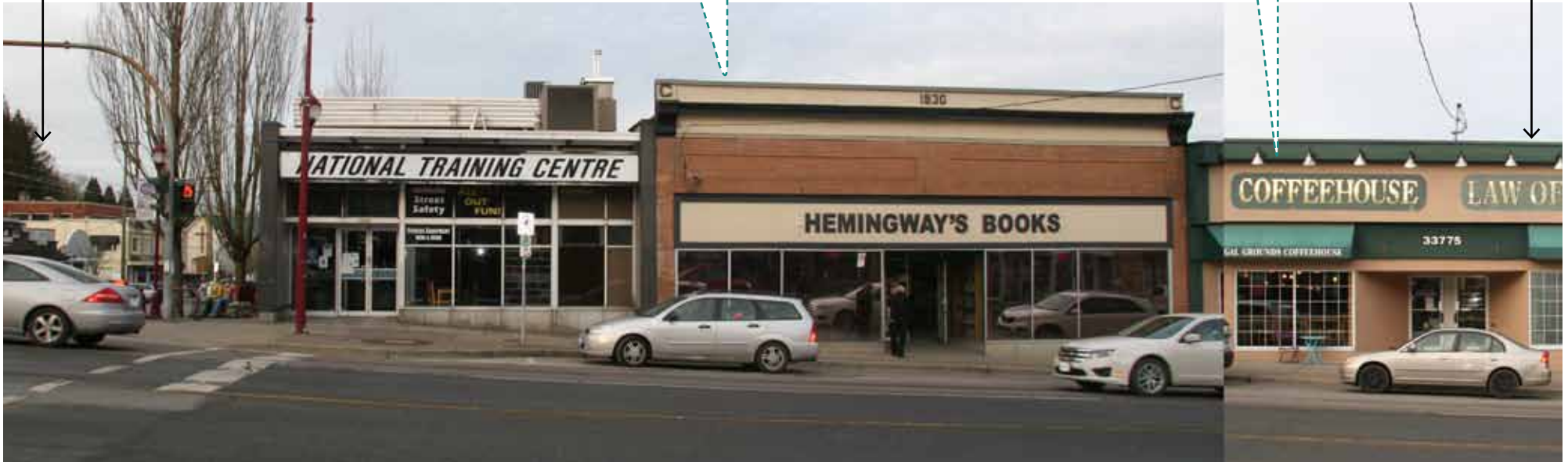
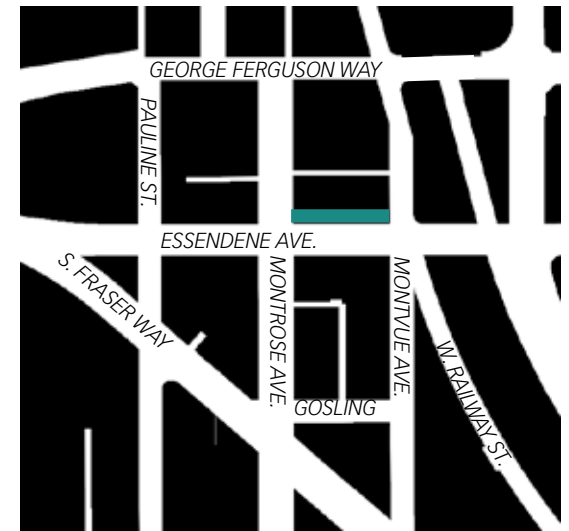


Figure 54. Photo Montage: Essendene Avenue North Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Building History

The Gilmour Dry Goods Building, 33779 Essendene Avenue

Built in 1933 by Joseph Gilmour as the new home of "Whitlow Dry Goods", which had operated east of the railway since 1924. In the late 1970s the store was closed and the building sold and opened as a dance school and children's book store. Restored in 2003.

A great example of signage and use of materials that complement the streetscape.

This canopy is over-scaled and contains too much store advertising.

West Railway



Essendene Avenue - South Side

Building History

The Fraser Valley Inn, 33790 Essendene Avenue

The Commercial Hotel was built in 1910 and burned down in 1922. The Atangard Hotel was then constructed in its place in 1927. It took approximately 120,000 bricks to build. It was considered to be the most modern hotel in the Fraser Valley. It cost \$3.50 a day to stay in a well-equipped room.

Montvue Avenue

Heritage character is compromised by the new ground floor brick that does not match the original brick.



Figure 55. Photo Montage: Essendene Avenue South Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Building History

James Fraser TV, 33772 Essendene Avenue
Before James Fraser and Radio moved to this building, the Overwaitea grocery store was located here. From January 1945 to January 1950 the Teddy Bear Café was situated here.

Building History

Original Post Office Site, 33758 Essendene Avenue

This building was constructed in 1936. When built, the second storey had two residential suites, each with its own private entrance from the west side of the building. In 1951 the Post Office moved locations. A series of retail and service businesses have operated in this building ever since.

Glass does not extend to street level, reducing connection between the retail and the street.

Recently renovated signage scaled to the pedestrian and a good example of character lighting.

Montrose Avenue



Essendene Avenue - South Side

Building History

Hansen's Barbershop, 33726 Essendene
The land for this building was purchased in 1934 for \$75 by Harold & Elsie Hansen. The barbershop was built and opened for business in 1935. Hansen's Barbershop is the oldest continuously operated business in Historic Downtown today.

Materials and design that is well suited to the streetscape.

Vacant properties reduce street vitality.

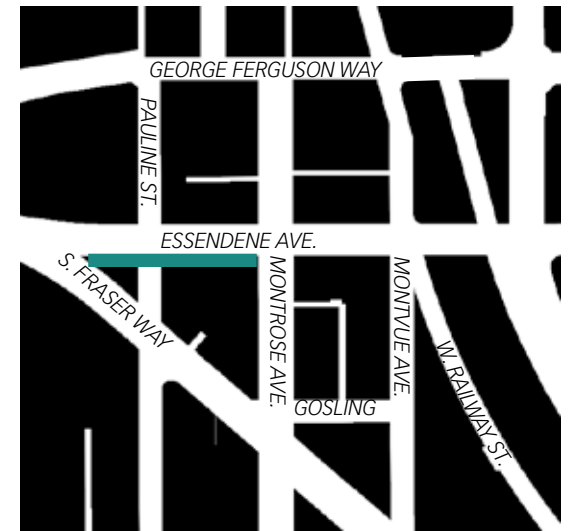
Lack of transparency due to excessive window signage.

Montrose Avenue

Vacant properties reduce street vitality.



Figure 56. Photo Montage: Essendene Avenue South Side



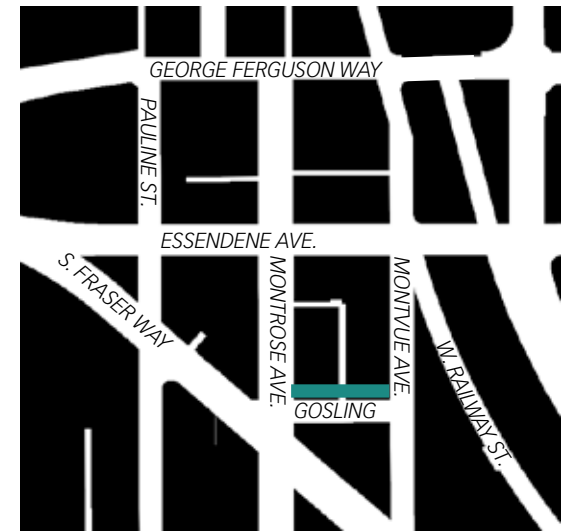
Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise



Gosling Way - North Side



Figure 57. Photo Montage: Gosling Way North Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Angled parking helps to reduce wide rights-of-way, buffer pedestrians from moving vehicles, and creates more spaces than parallel parking.

This building does not provide windows along all frontages.

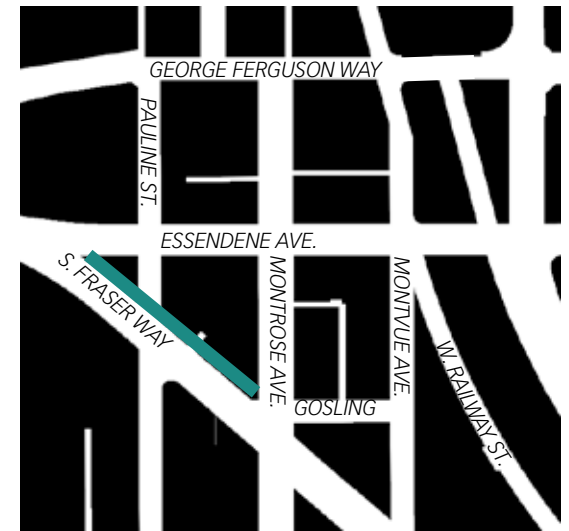
Montvue Avenue



South Fraser Way - North Side



Figure 58. Photo Montage: South Fraser Way North Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Recently renovated buildings include good examples of character lighting and signage.

Windows appear to be reflective and lack transparency.

A new 2 storey building at South Fraser Way and the corner of Montrose Avenue will help to define the corner and street edge.

Montrose Avenue



South Fraser Way - North Side

Montrose Avenue

"Missing teeth" (empty lots) and one-two storey buildings that are too small scale contribute to a lack of street edge definition along this wide arterial road.



Figure 59. Photo Montage: South Fraser Way North Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Building History

The Delair Café, 33787 South Fraser Way

The Delair Café was originally located approximately half a mile east of its present location. It was moved to its current location in 1951.

In general, South Fraser Way lacks street trees and other elements that contribute to a comfortable pedestrian experience. The trees that are visible in these photographs are planted on private property and streets that are out of view.

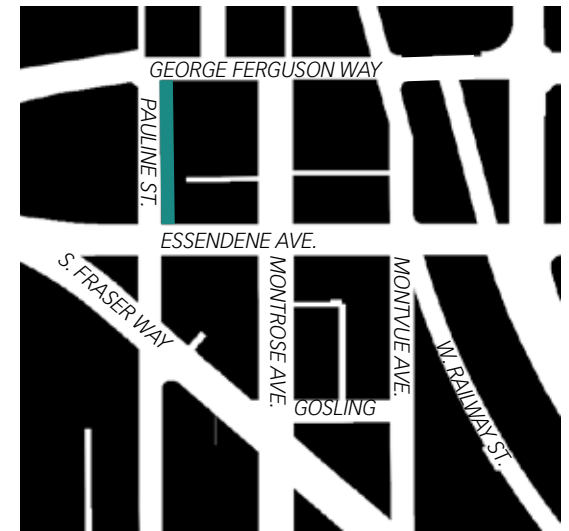


Montvue Avenue

Pauline Street - East Side



Figure 60. Photo Montage: Pauline Street East Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Good example of how awnings can be coordinated within a single development while still providing a clear identity to small scale retailers.

Good example of character lighting and signage, transparency, and awning.

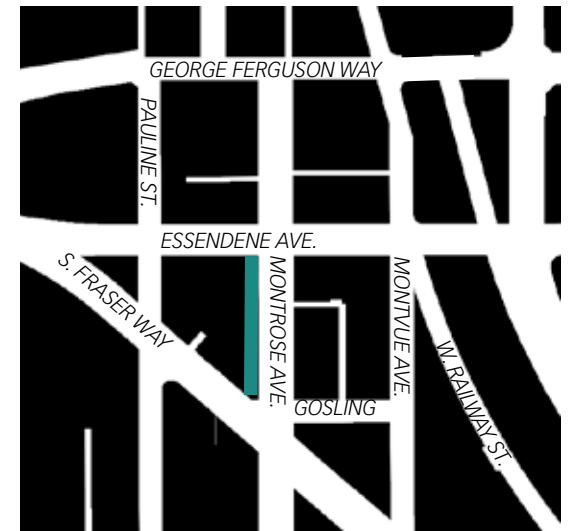
Essendene Avenue



Montrose Avenue - West Side



Figure 61. Photo Montage: Montrose Avenue West Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Plenty of storefront glazing creates vitality on the street.



Essendene Avenue

There are very few windows along this storefront to create visibility from the sidewalk.



Montrose Avenue - West Side



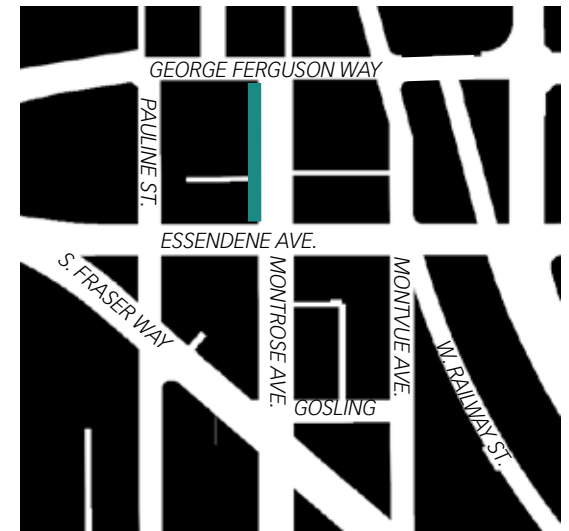
Figure 62. Photo Montage: Montrose Avenue West Side

Building History

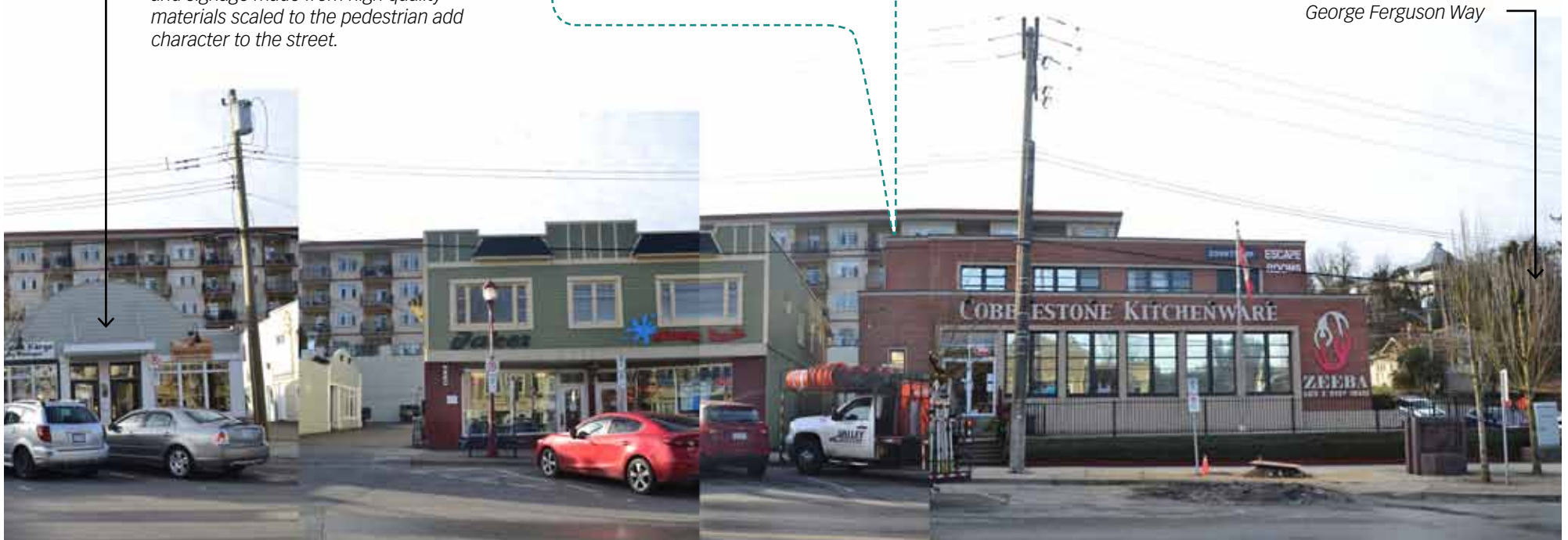
Canada Post Office Building, 2645 Montrose Avenue

The post office began construction in 1950 and opened its doors for the first time on March 12, 1951. The bricks used in its construction were supplied by Clayburn Industries. The second storey was to provide living quarters for the caretakers, as well as house the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other federal agencies. This building has remained untouched by remodelling. The post office operated for more than 50 years, however this building no longer serves this function.

Architectural details such as the canopy, window mullions and frames, and signage made from high quality materials scaled to the pedestrian add character to the street.



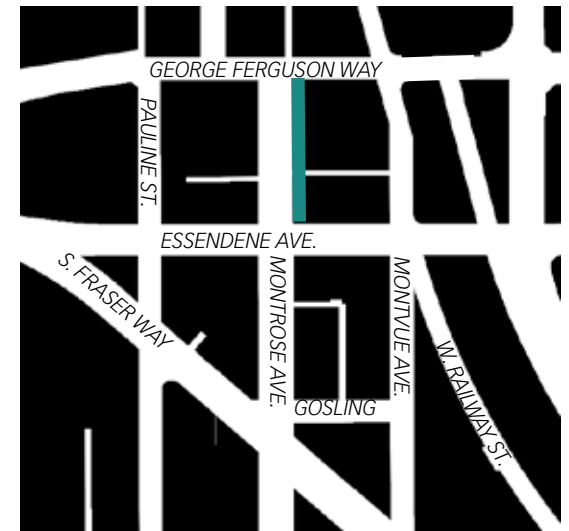
Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise



Montrose Avenue - East Side



Figure 63. Photo Montage: Montrose Avenue East Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

This "modern" building is too long and lacks streetfront presence due to high windows, large scale single use, and no pedestrian entrances. However, it is an appropriate height for the context.

Essendene Avenue

Mature street trees add to the character of the street.

Excellent example of historic building façade.



Montrose Avenue - West Side

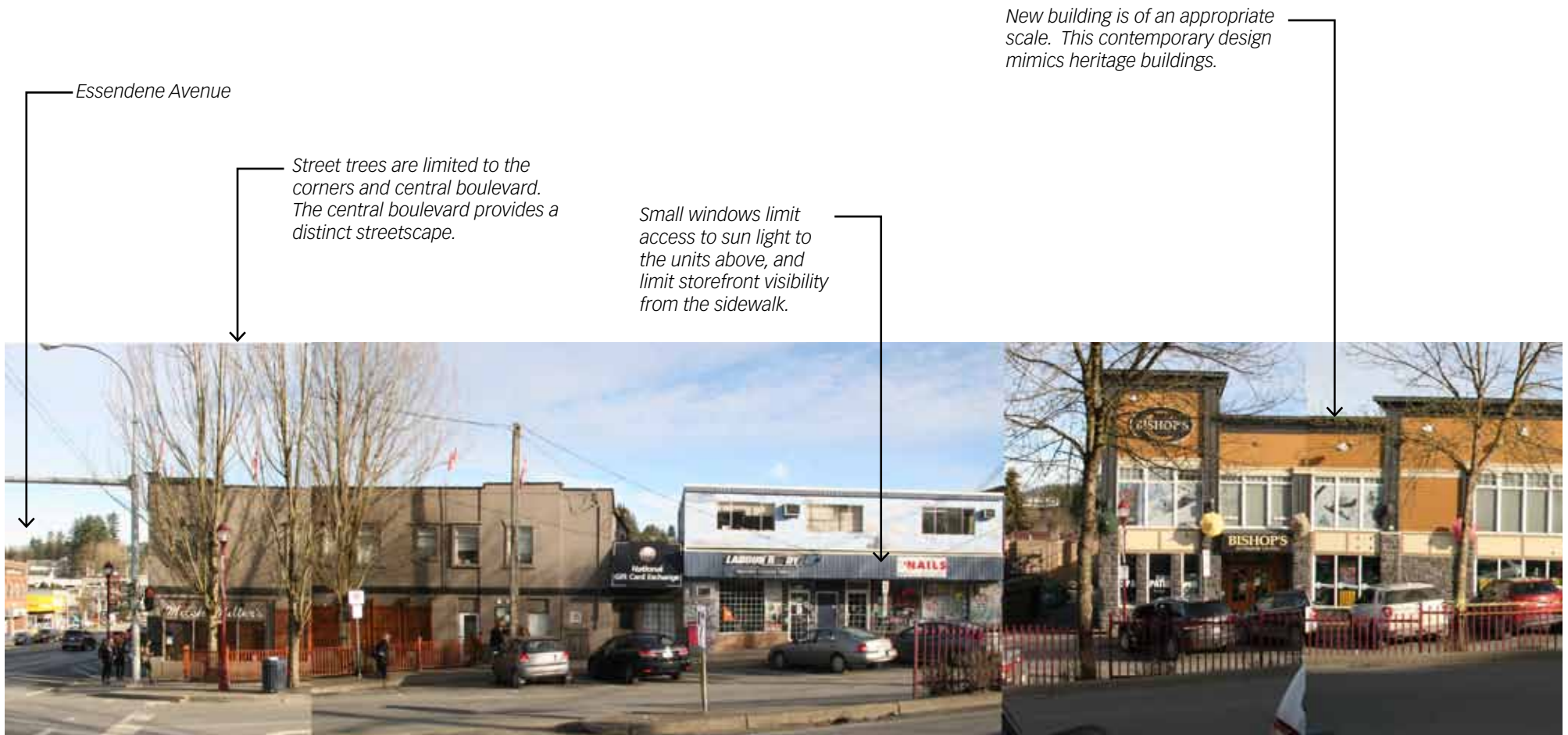
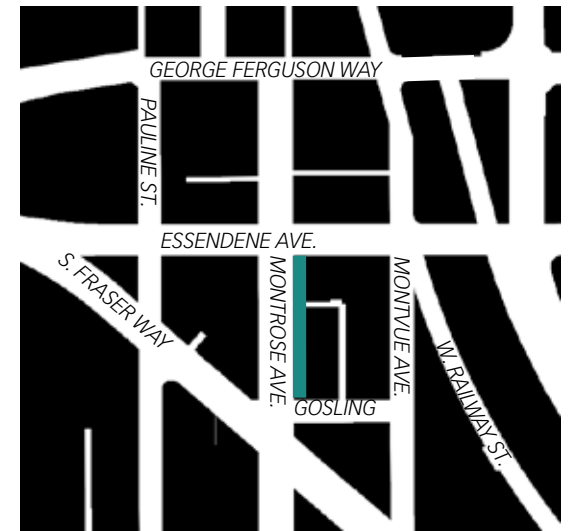


Figure 64. Photo Montage: Montrose Avenue East Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Small and high windows reduce street level storefront presence.

Corner bulb-outs provide patio space for adjacent retailers and places for people to linger.

Gosling Way



Montvue Avenue - West Side

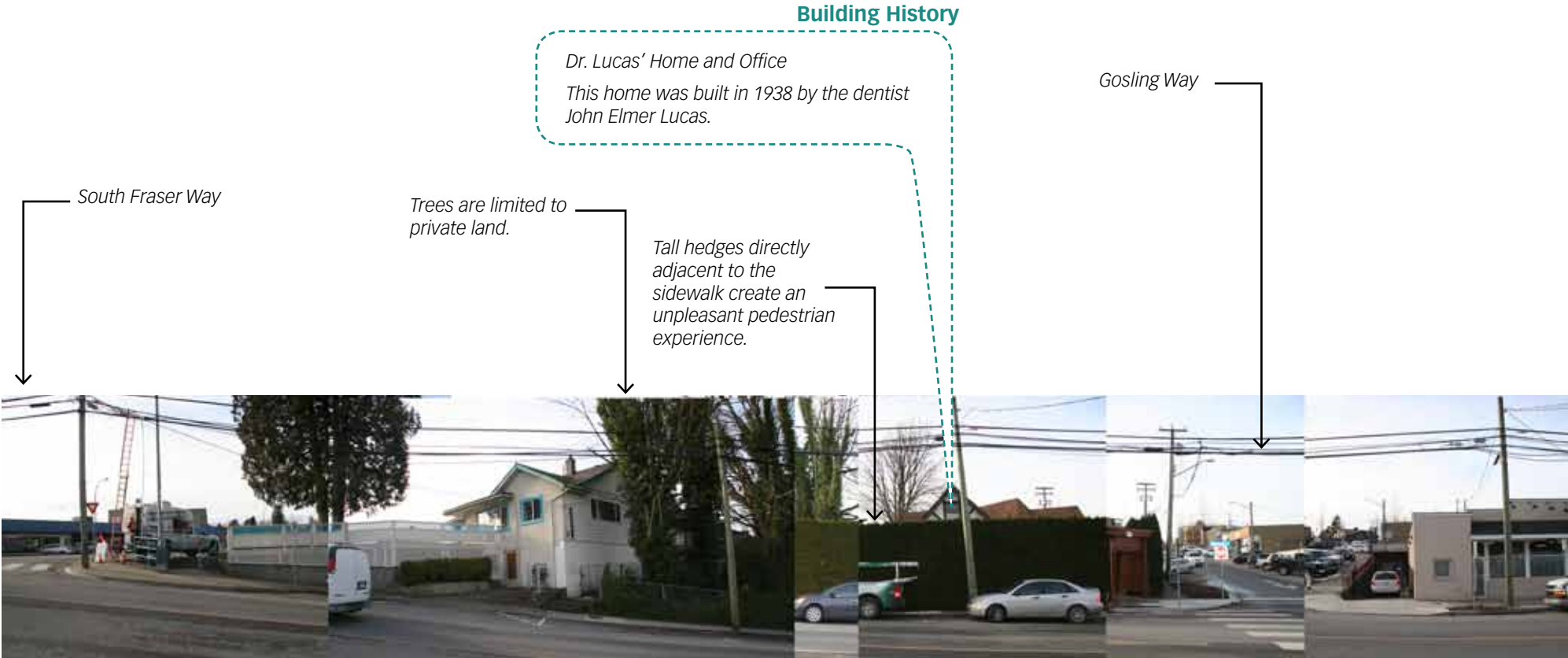
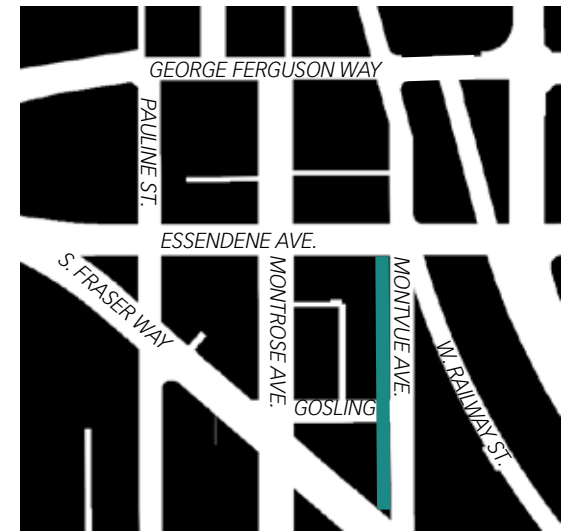


Figure 65. Photo Montage: Montvue Avenue West Side



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise



Good integration of signage with building design.

This façade has very few ground floor windows.

This map is the only wayfinding map in the Historic Downtown. The stylized cartoon design is not practical as a tool for orientation.

Essendene Avenue

West Railway Street - West Side



Figure 66. Photo Montage: Railway Street



Key Map: Image location indicated in turquoise

Extensive wall graphics 'cheapen' the look of the façade.

Alleys and lanes provide loading, garbage and parking for commercial buildings.

George Ferguson Way



Summary

The one to two-storey heights of buildings and the urban design aspects of the core area contribute to the distinct character of Historic Downtown. Small scale retail with frequent shop entrances and diverse storefronts add to the draw of Historic Downtown as a destination for shopping by foot. The presence of local businesses and historic buildings create distinct, interesting moments along the streetscape.

The attempt to retain the character of Historic Downtown in newer developments has had mixed success. New façade treatments that mimic historic character or western style buildings risk cheapening the overall look of the Historic Downtown. For example, buildings that are authentically historic can be confused for new buildings, and no longer stand out as special or unique elements of the streetscape.

Guidelines will need to ensure that buildings meet a high standard of design, with quality materials and an appropriate scale, while not being so prescriptive as to result in a uniform appearance that undermines the rich diversity in the neighbourhood today.

SIGNAGE AND RETAIL LIGHTING

Goose-neck lighting is the most common retail lighting in the core area. This contributes to a pleasing look and feel, within a historic context.

In the core retail area, signs are generally designed to the scale of the pedestrian and contribute to the historic identity and character. Along arterials, signage is generally back-lit and designed to accommodate auto travelling speeds. Projecting signs are currently not permitted under the Sign Bylaw (No. 1022-2001), which prevents more pedestrian-scaled signage options from being used to promote businesses to people walking by.



Figure 67. Sign variety in Historic Downtown

3.3 Jobs and Businesses

Characterized by a mix of old and new, the neighbourhood is sparking a renewed wave of interest within the development community after years of modest growth. With an emerging group of developers and small business owners spearheading the next phase of renovation and reclamation of Historic Downtown, the neighbourhood is continuing to transition into a city-wide specialty shopping and dining destination, which is bringing spending back into the area.

Historic Downtown displays a large diversity of income and education levels among residents, with many low-income individuals on one end and also a large proportion of high earners on the other. This shows that the neighbourhood provides both affordable and diverse housing options in close proximity to existing jobs and services.

LABOUR FORCE AND EDUCATION

Labour Force by Sector

In 2011, roughly 70,000 residents comprised Abbotsford’s labour force. Abbotsford is a relatively self-sufficient community, with approximately 65% of residents both living and working in the city. Most workers are employed in the Retail Trade, Construction, Health Care and Manufacturing industries. The unemployment rate for the Abbotsford-Mission CMA stood at 6.6% in January 2017, down from approximately 8.5% reported in the 2011 NHS.

In 2011, 5,900 residents comprised the Historic Downtown labour force. The largest number of residents are employed in the Construction and Health Care sectors (both 16%), followed by Manufacturing (12%) and Retail Trade (10%).

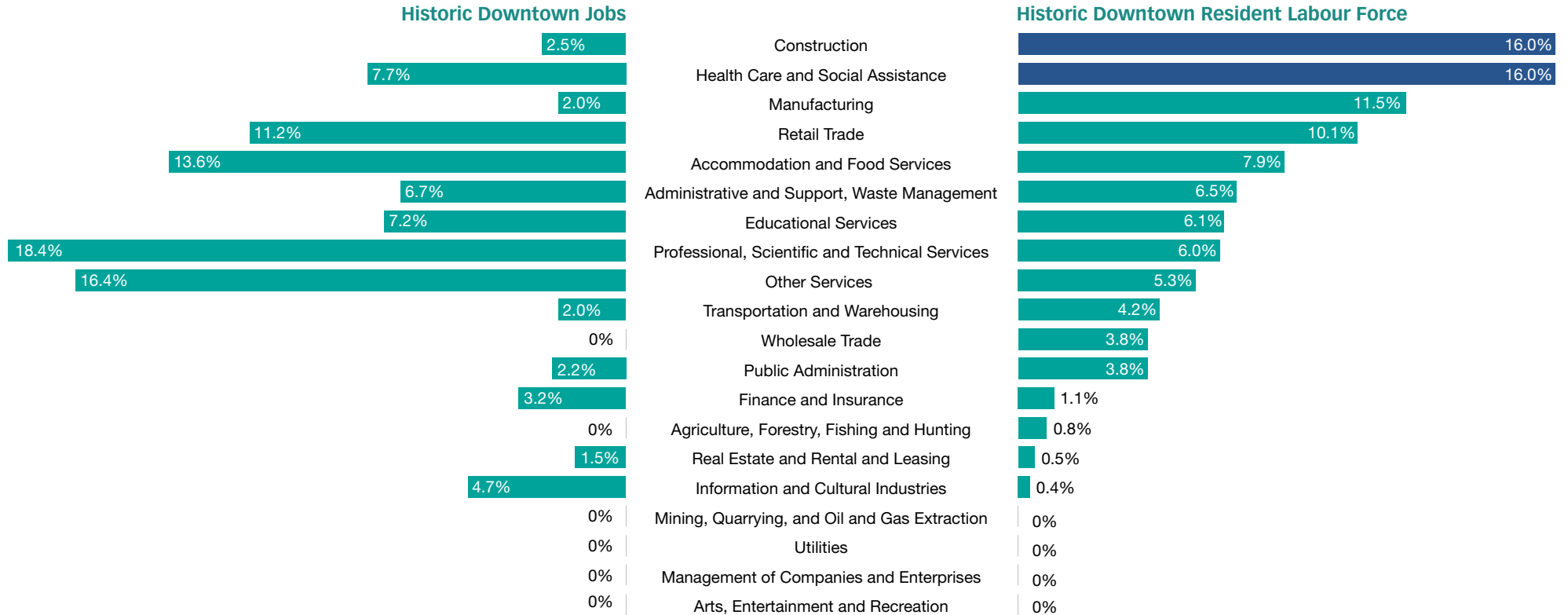


Figure 68. Jobs vs labour force by sector

Based on this data there may be a disconnect between the labour sectors residents are employed in, and the actual jobs that are available in the neighbourhood. This is particularly pronounced in the case of Construction and Manufacturing jobs, Professional and Other Services, Information and Cultural Industries, and Accommodation and Food Services, and shows that many residents have to commute to work outside of the neighbourhood. On the other hand, Retail Trade, Administrative Support, and Educational Services are more closely aligned. Although this does not necessarily mean residents in those sectors live and work in the same neighbourhood, it does show there are suitable employment options for some residents.

Education and Income

The majority of residents in Historic Downtown only have a high school diploma or lower, and 12% have completed an apprenticeship or trade school. While this may seem low, it is almost identical to the city-wide breakdown of highest education levels achieved, and the number of people who completed college is higher in Historic Downtown. These findings support the high proportion of people employed in the Construction, Health and Manufacturing sectors, as many of those jobs require technical certificates or diplomas.

The average individual income in Historic Downtown is \$32,006, compared to \$35,671 city-wide. Almost half of all residents have an annual income below \$20,000, which is slightly more than Abbotsford overall. Statistics Canada uses a Low-Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) to set low income measure thresholds based on household size. For a 1 person household, the low income threshold is \$19,460, which means that a large number of people in Historic Downtown are considered to be low income individuals. Only 11% of people make over \$60,000, compared to 21% in Abbotsford overall. 62% of residents also fall into the bottom half of Canadian income distribution.

The average household income is \$65,529 for the neighbourhood, which is lower than the city average of \$76,973. This may be a result of several factors, including the large proportion of young people (aged 20-29) and seniors living in the neighbourhood, the lower average people per household than the city, and a larger proportion of residents potentially working in lower paying jobs such as Retail, Food Services and Administrative Support.

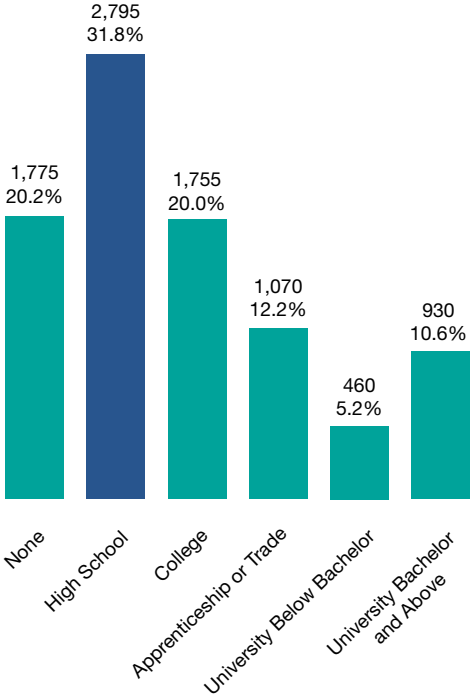


Figure 69. Education levels

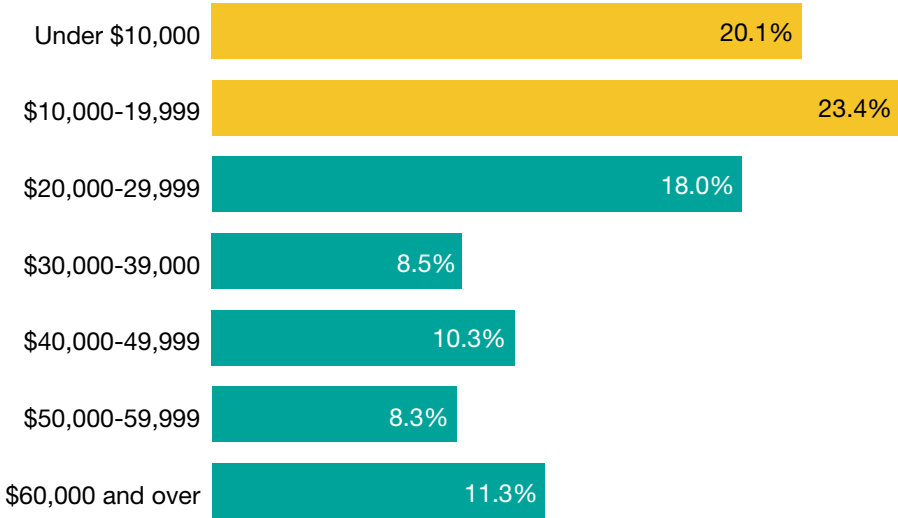


Figure 70. Income levels

COMMERCIAL INVENTORY AND FUTURE DEMAND

The City of Abbotsford hired GP Rollo and Associates (GPRA) to complete a joint Commercial Market Study for the City Centre and Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plans. The report identifies trends and factors that govern the market for commercial space in the two areas. The analysis considers existing retail, office, and tourist accommodation inventories, and provides demand projections for future floor space requirements to support anticipated population growth.

Current Inventory

Historic Downtown is one of the key commercial nodes in Abbotsford. It is both central and accessible to the city as a whole, making it an attractive shopping destination. The commercial area is centered on four dense urban blocks of specialty retail and offices, which act as the neighbourhood's commercial and cultural core (bounded to the north by George Ferguson Way, east by West Railway Street and Montvue Avenue, south by Gosling Way and South Fraser Way, and west by Pauline Street). This area provides streets with restaurants, cafés, book and home décor stores, spas, dance studios and other businesses.

Although Historic Downtown achieves relatively low market capture from much of Abbotsford, it has a unique identity, strong branding, and appealing venues that bring a unique and dedicated set of tenants and customers to the neighbourhood.

The Historic Downtown contains 9% of existing retail and service commercial space in the City, and the distribution is relatively balanced between convenience, comparison, and restaurant and entertainment categories. The largest proportion of retail space (181,800 ft²) falls under the convenience category and includes grocery and convenience stores (e.g. SKT Market, 7/11, Karl's Meats), liquor stores and services such as spas and beauty salons. Compared to the City Centre, Historic Downtown has a higher percentage of its floor space in the restaurant and entertainment category, with 22% compared to 12% (e.g. Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club).

GPRA also surveyed all of Abbotsford in order to identify buildings with office space. There is a total of 1,610,400 ft² of office space in Abbotsford. Historic Downtown has 18% of that floor space (284,500 ft²), which represents 32% of the total commercial floor space in the HDNP area (880,100 ft²). Office tenants generally tend to be smaller, locally owned businesses such as medical offices and accounting or design firms.

Predominant Retail Category (SF)	City Centre	%	Historic Downtown	%	Non Study Area	Abbotsford Total	%	
Convenience Retail	632,200	32%	181,800	31%	1,018,300	27%	1,832,300	100%
Grocery & Supermarkets	316,400	16%	35,800	6%	461,000	12%	813,200	100%
Pharmacy	30,700	2%	3,200	1%	51,100	1%	85,000	100%
Alcohol	16,400	1%	11,700	2%	33,100	1%	61,200	100%
Services	110,000	6%	91,000	15%	253,400	7%	454,400	100%
Financial Services	99,500	5%	14,800	2%	139,200	4%	253,500	100%
Healthcare Services	59,200	3%	25,300	4%	80,400	2%	164,900	100%
Comparison Retail	873,300	44%	153,900	26%	1,221,800	32%	2,249,000	100%
Apparel	241,000	12%	34,600	6%	233,000	6%	508,600	100%
Cosmetics, Health, Bath & Beauty	69,400	3%	3,000	1%	44,600	1%	117,000	100%
Electronics & Appliances	156,600	8%	6,900	1%	101,200	3%	264,700	100%
Footwear & Accessories	29,800	1%	2,700	0%	27,500	1%	60,000	100%
Home Furnishings	168,500	8%	42,300	7%	244,500	6%	455,300	100%
Home Improvement	50,000	3%	2,600	0%	325,800	9%	378,400	100%
Jewellery & Watches	9,000	0%	2,200	0%	-	0%	11,200	100%
Multimedia, Books & Music	29,800	1%	7,800	1%	5,900	0%	43,500	100%
Sports & Recreational Goods	41,500	2%	14,600	2%	133,700	4%	189,800	100%
Pet Goods, Toys, Hobbies	77,700	4%	37,200	6%	105,700	3%	220,600	100%
Restaurants & Entertainment	241,000	12%	134,000	22%	707,800	19%	1,082,800	100%
F&B	138,100	7%	95,400	16%	401,400	11%	634,900	100%
Entertainment	-	0%	21,500	4%	197,600	5%	219,100	100%
Leisure	102,900	5%	17,100	3%	108,800	3%	228,800	100%
Auto Related	140,800	7%	24,600	4%	619,700	16%	785,100	100%
Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers	56,900	3%	2,200	0%	305,300	8%	364,400	100%
Auto Service	77,300	4%	21,400	4%	175,100	5%	273,800	100%
Gas Station	6,500	0%	1,000	0%	139,200	4%	146,700	100%
Vacant	104,900	5%	101,300	17%	232,300	6%	438,500	100%
Total Retail	1,992,200	100%	595,600	100%	3,799,800	100%	6,387,600	100%

Figure 71. Retail inventory

Projected Demand

GPRA used the current inventory as a base for projecting future demand for commercial land uses over the next 25-30 years. Key findings by sector are summarized below:

Retail: In Historic Downtown, about 12,500 ft² of restaurant and entertainment space is called for in the next four years. After this gap is met, about 10,000 ft² of space will be needed in the 2021 – 2025 period to accommodate a mix of retail types. This number is expected to rise to about 38,500 ft² in the 2026 – 2030 period, and will continue rising over the following ten years as Abbotsford grows.

Office: Historic Downtown is expected to require between 34,000 and 44,400 ft² of new office space by 2030. By 2040, there is a projected demand for an additional 53,000 ft². Office tenants that seek out space in Historic Downtown tend to be smaller, locally owned businesses. This is particularly the case with medical offices, as well as accounting, technology, and design firms that value Historic Downtown for its walkability and urban character. Larger offices tend not to locate here due to small leasable commercial unit sizes and a lack of convenient parking. However, smaller office spaces are once again increasing in popularity, and the Historic Downtown is an ideal setting to accommodate this changing preference.

Tourist Accommodation: GPRA project the need for one new hotel of about 100 rooms in both Historic Downtown and the City Centre by 2025 and 2040 respectively.

	2017 – 2020	2021 – 2025	2026 – 2030	2031 – 2035	2036 - 2040
Retail Total	12,500 ft²	9,700 ft²	38,500 ft²	49,400 ft²	55,500 ft²
Convenience Retail	0 ft ²	1,100 ft ²	15,000 ft ²	17,900 ft ²	21,600 ft ²
Comparison Retail	0 ft ²	0 ft ²	7,700 ft ²	12,700 ft ²	11,300 ft ²
Restaurants & Entertainment	12,500 ft ²	8,600 ft ²	13,800 ft ²	16,400 ft ²	19,800 ft ²
Auto-Related	0 ft ²	0 ft ²	2,000 ft ²	2,400 ft ²	2,800 ft ²
Office Total¹²	0 ft ²	34,000 – 44,400 ft ²		51,600 – 53,200 ft ²	
Accommodation Total	0 rooms	100 rooms	0 rooms	0 rooms	0 rooms

Figure 72. Commercial floor space projections

3.4 Streets and Movement

OCP CONTEXT

The OCP presents a mobility vision in which residents choose to travel by foot, bike and transit as they become more convenient and accessible. To achieve this, trip distances should gradually shorten, with a variety of destinations within walking distance from one another. The goal is to have longer trips made by transit or biking, with both of these options seamlessly integrated into the lifestyles and abilities of residents.

Some of the key policies that relate to Historic Downtown require appropriate transportation investment and decisions by prioritizing walking, biking, and transit over the immediate convenience of single-occupant vehicle trips. The OCP aims to see an increase from 7% to 25% of all trips being conducted by walking, biking or transit use. Some key policies to realize this target include the following:

Walking

- 3.4** Using a comprehensive direction system that is easy to understand and navigate, with signage and mapping located at regular intervals. This can be facilitated through public art and urban design.
- 3.6** Creating shorter distances between destinations by permitting denser urban land uses, creating more direct connections to destinations, and adding mid-block crossings where necessary
- 3.7** Increasing the safety, accessibility, and comfort of sidewalks and pedestrian pathways by enhancing the design of new streets and retrofitting existing ones
- 3.8** Providing public seating, pedestrian signal priority, and frequent crossing areas

Biking

- 3.10** Creating a continuous and complete urban network with safe, direct, and suitable routes for commuting, school and, other daily trips
- 3.11** Applying best practice to the design of urban bikeways and separated routes for cyclists
- 3.12** Highlighting potential conflict zones with pavement markings and signage
- 3.13** Providing bike parking facilities and end of trip facilities including showers, change rooms, and locker/storage spaces in new developments

Transit

- 3.15** Applying a frequent transit network that includes primary transit corridors connecting the Urban Centres and key Neighbourhood Centres
- 3.16** Prioritizing safety and comfort in the design of transit stops in order to provide convenience and encourage use
- 3.17** Working with BC Transit to develop a strategy for achieving all day frequent transit services

MODE OF TRAVEL

The Historic Downtown is a highly car dependent neighbourhood, with nearly 97% of residents commuting to work by car (either as drivers or passengers). In comparison, approximately 93% of Abbotsford residents overall travel to work by car. Less than 3% of people walk to work, and even fewer take public transit. No residents reported cycling to work. Since the Historic Downtown's structure is conducive to walking, it is likely that many residents are employed in other parts of the city, which may be inconvenient to reach by foot or on transit. As such, these choices are likely also a reflection of mobility challenges in Abbotsford generally.

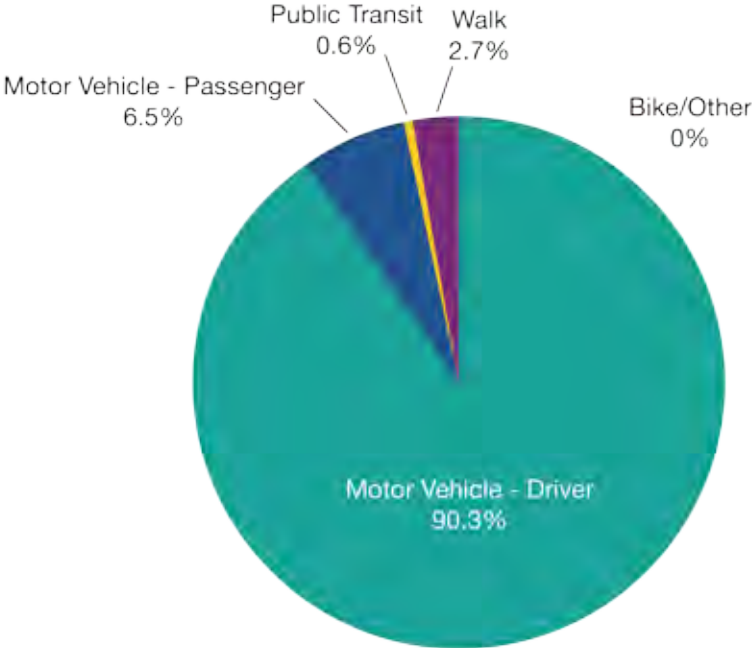


Figure 73. Mode of travel to work

HISTORY OF URBAN FABRIC

Transportation networks that were established in the 19th century onwards gave rise to Abbotsford's Historic Downtown and are evident in the existing urban form. Old Yale Road, which dates from the first road surveying in the area by the Royal Engineers in 1858 is now a key east-west corridor called Essendene Avenue.

The Canadian Pacific Railway lines establish another defining feature of today's urban form. The active rail line dissects the study area north-south.

The blocks that make up the core of Historic Downtown are small and laid out on a grid, a structure that is characteristic of pre-war planning, before the rise of the automobile. Moving outward, the evolution of blocks reflect later development by becoming larger and – in the north-west corner just outside of the boundary – incorporating cul-de-sacs.

The diagonals cutting through the site are made up of South Fraser Way, and the rail lines, which follow topography and valley bottoms.

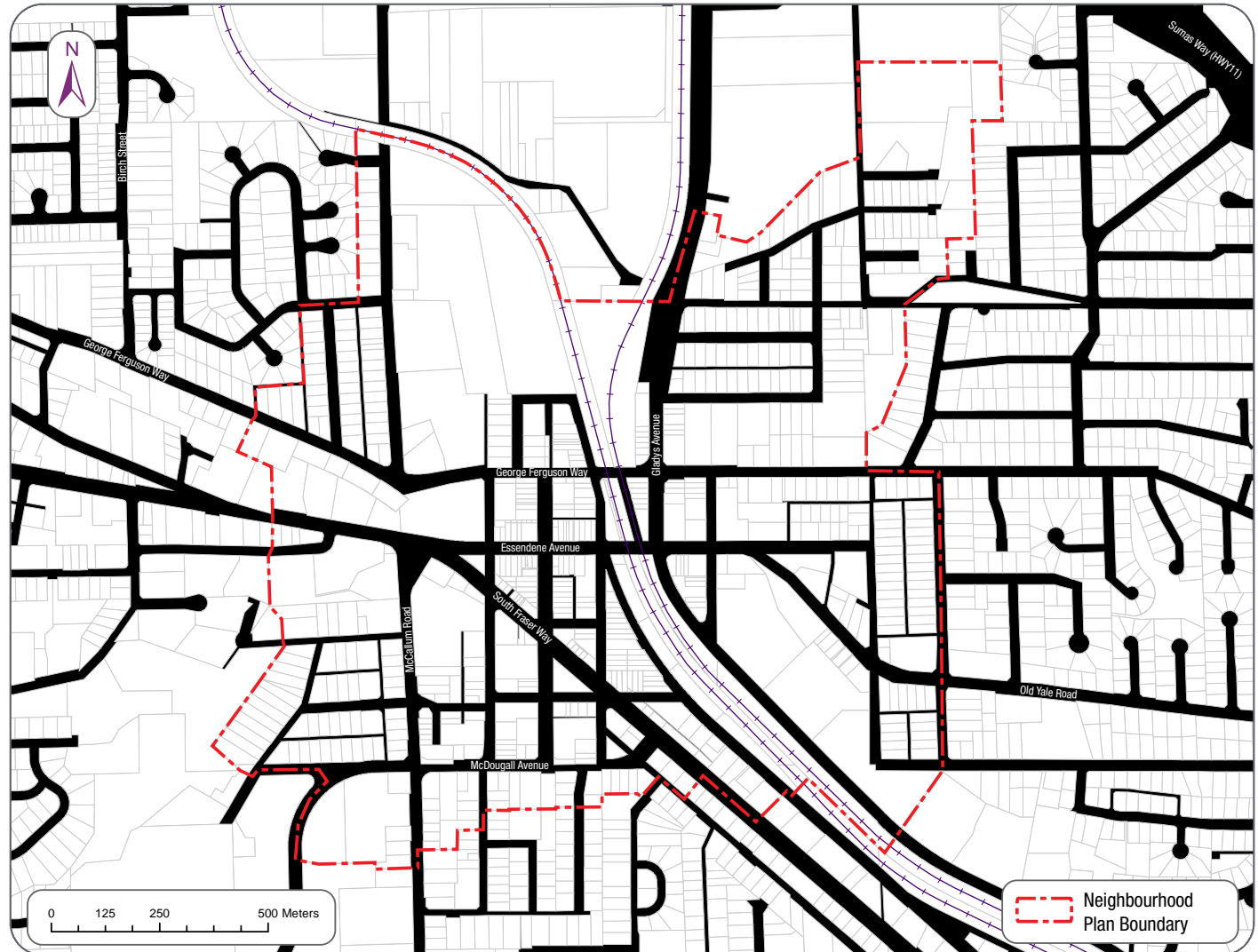


Figure 74. Street network

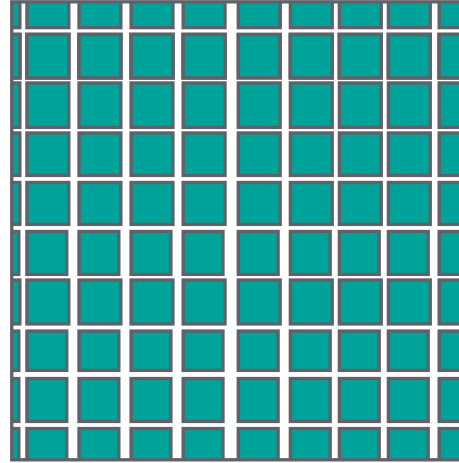
STREET DESIGN

Block Structure

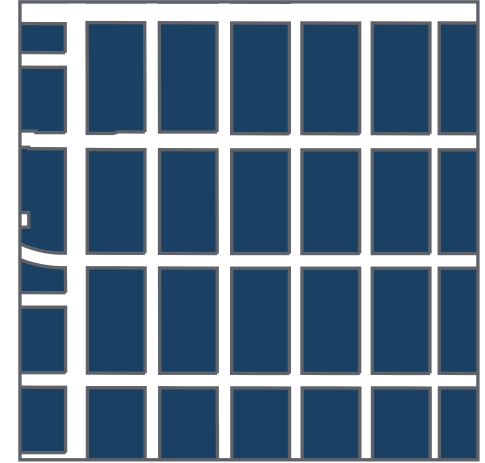
The block structure in the retail core and adjacent areas of the Historic Downtown is fine-grained and well suited to pedestrian connectivity. Beyond this core area, industrial lands to the north and large residential blocks reduce directness and permeability, increasing real travel distances and creating a challenging pedestrian environment overall.

Similarly, west of the core area, north-south connections between George Ferguson Way and South Fraser Way also become limited. The rail line and steep topography will require creative consideration in establishing good street and pedestrian connectivity as a part of this neighbourhood plan.

Portland, OR



Vancouver, BC



Historic Downtown, Abbotsford



City Centre, Abbotsford

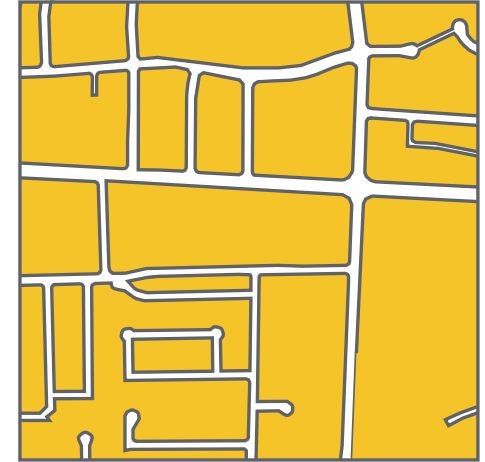


Figure 75. Block structure comparison (to scale)

GEORGE FERGUSON WAY

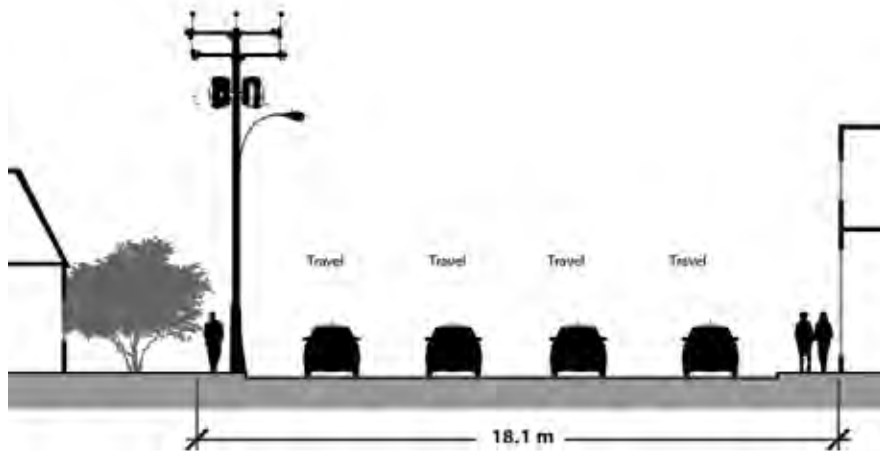


Figure 76. George Ferguson Way (1)



View East.

The ROW on George Ferguson Way between Pauline Street and Montrose Avenue is 18.1 metres wide and contains four travel lanes, as well as two narrow sidewalks on either side. There are very few pedestrian amenities such as benches, and trees are limited to private property. Without the presence of a tree strip, street furniture, and on-street parking, there is little to buffer the pedestrian from traffic.

ESSENDENE AVENUE

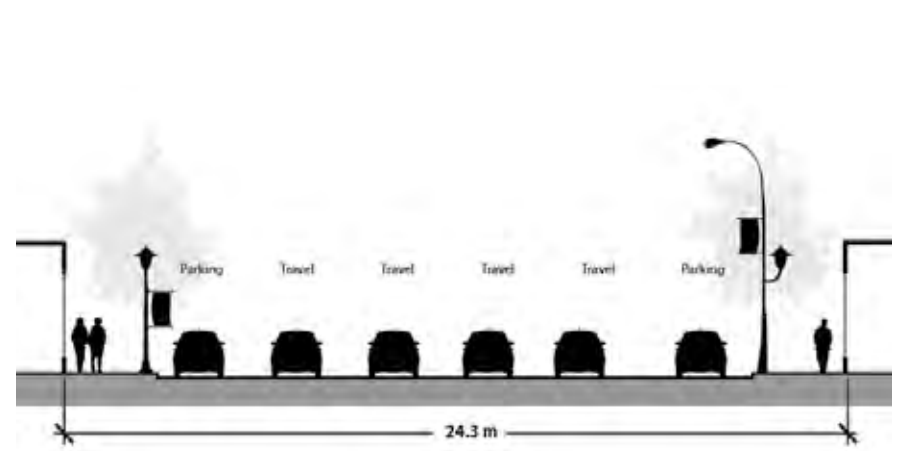


Figure 77. Essendene Avenue (2)



View East.



Corner and paving treatment.

Along Essendene Avenue in the core, crosswalks are well-defined with stamped-asphalt, and a red paver edge along the sidewalk speaks to the historic identity of the downtown. Street trees are limited to the corners, where corner-bulbs provide traffic calming and add to the street's character.

While these elements add to the historic character of Essendene, the ROW is mostly dedicated to vehicles. It is 24.3 metres wide and contains four travel lanes, as well as two parking lanes and sidewalks on either side. Buildings are predominantly 1-2 storeys tall, and provide transparency and canopies for pedestrian comfort.

SOUTH FRASER WAY

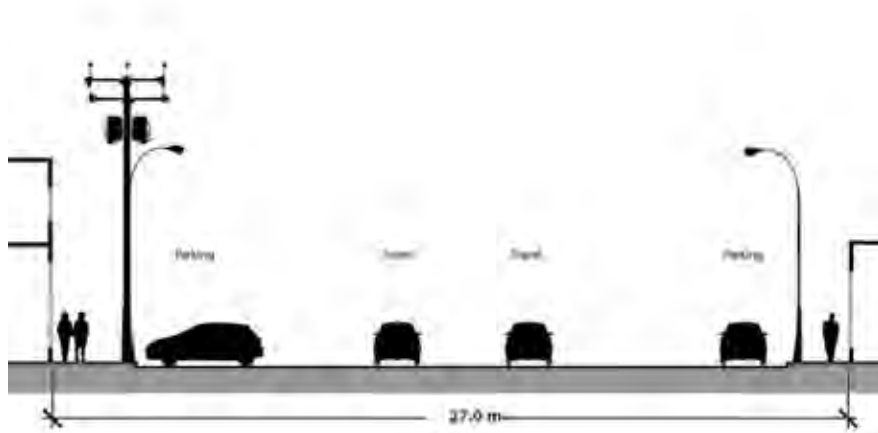


Figure 78. South Fraser Way (3)

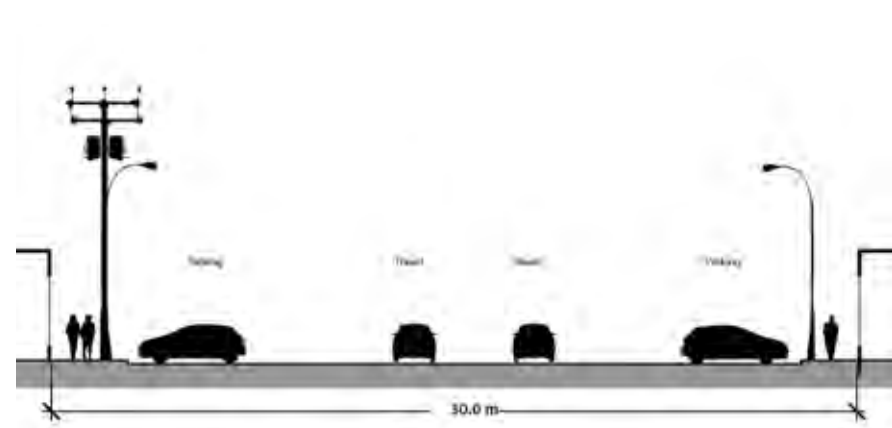


Figure 79. South Fraser Way (4)



View East.



View East.

The South Fraser Way ROW varies from approximately 27.0 to 30.0 metres wide. Where the ROW is 27.0 metres between Pauline Street and Montrose Avenue, it contains travel lanes, angled parking and parallel parking, as well as sidewalks on either side. There are very few pedestrian amenities such as benches or street trees; however, some commercial buildings provide canopies and awnings.

Where the ROW is 30.0 metres between Montrose and Montvue Avenues, angled parking is provided on either side. Angled parking creates more spaces than parallel parking, and helps to reduce the excessively wide ROW.

WEST RAILWAY STREET

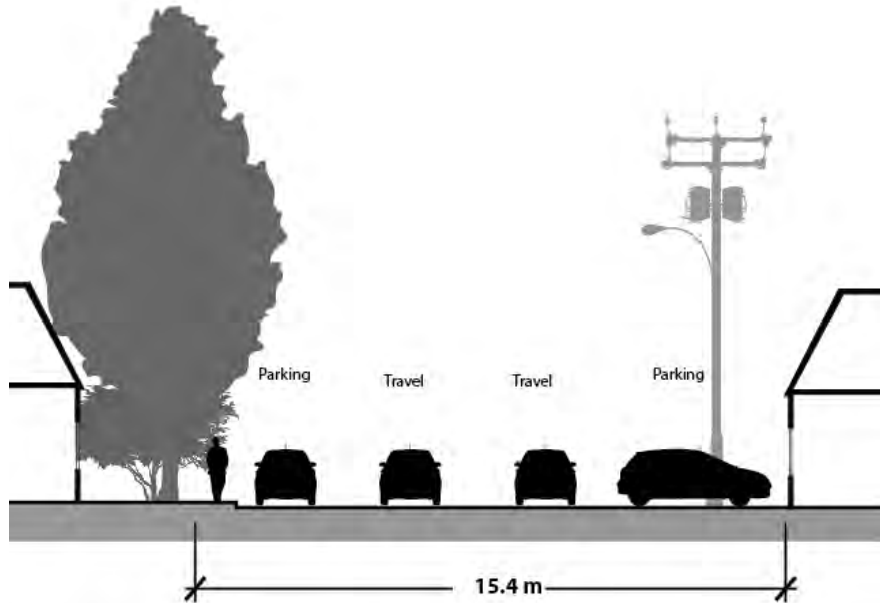


Figure 80. West Railway Street (5)

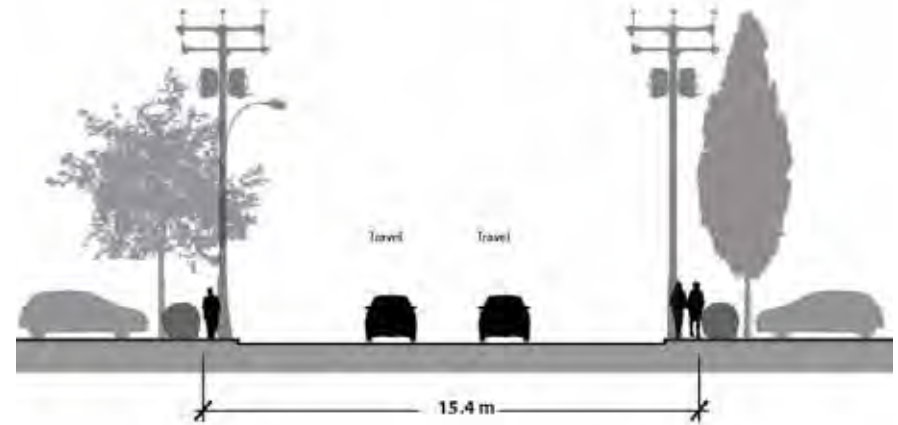


Figure 81. West Railway Street (10)



View North.



View North.

North of George Ferguson Way, West Railway Street has on-street parking, although the east side has an unclear divide between public and private land. It also does not have sidewalks, curbs and gutters along the entire extent, and does not meet a minimum urban standard.

The ROW south of Essendene Avenue varies from 15.4 to 18.3 metres. There is no on-street parking in this area. Sidewalks are narrow, with power poles further obstructing the space for walking. Trees are limited to private property.

PAULINE STREET

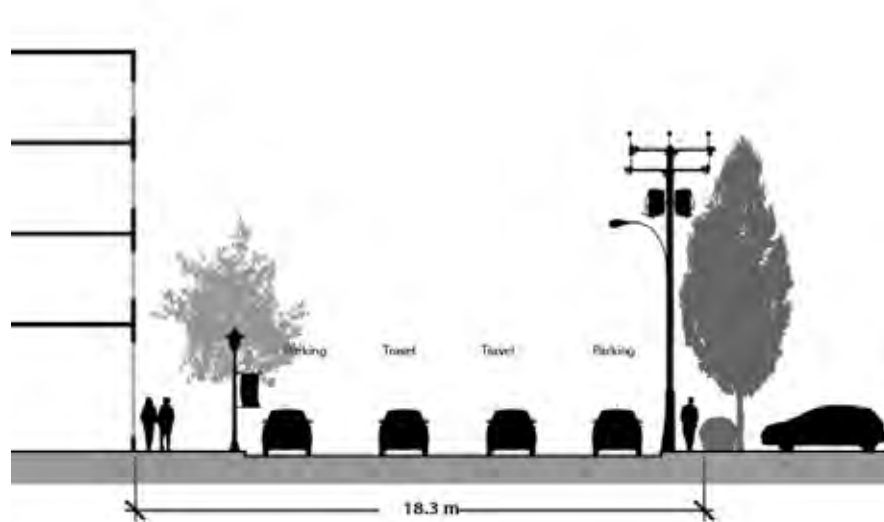


Figure 82. Pauline Street (6)

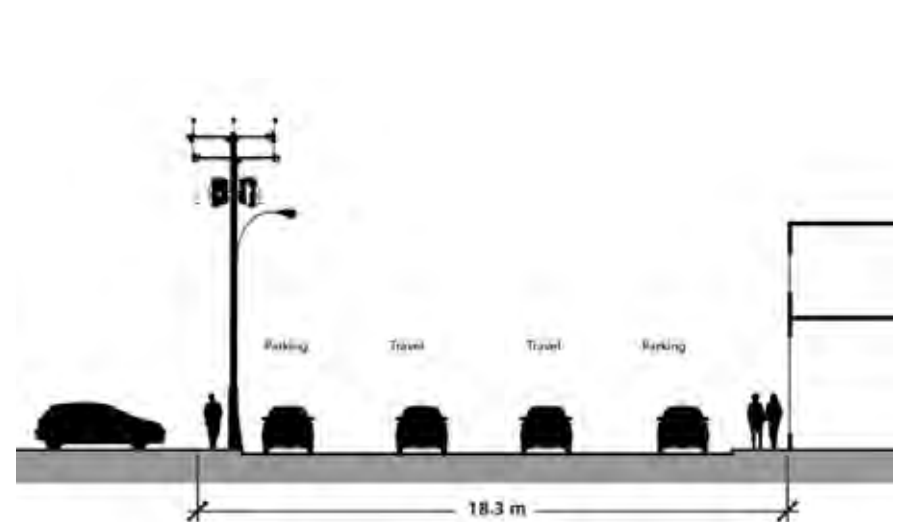


Figure 83. Pauline Street (9)



View South.



Corner of Pauline and Laurel.



View South.

The ROW on Pauline Street between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue is 18.3 metres wide and contains two travel lanes, as well as two parking lanes and sidewalks on either side. More recent development has established generous sidewalks and a strip of street trees and furnishings along the east side of the street.

The ROW between South Fraser Way and Laurel Street is 18.3 metres wide and contains two travel lanes, as well as two parking lanes and sidewalks on either side. There are very few amenities such as street trees and furnishings, however newer developments are beginning to establish a furnishing strip adjacent to the sidewalk, as shown in the photograph on the left.

MONTROSE AVENUE

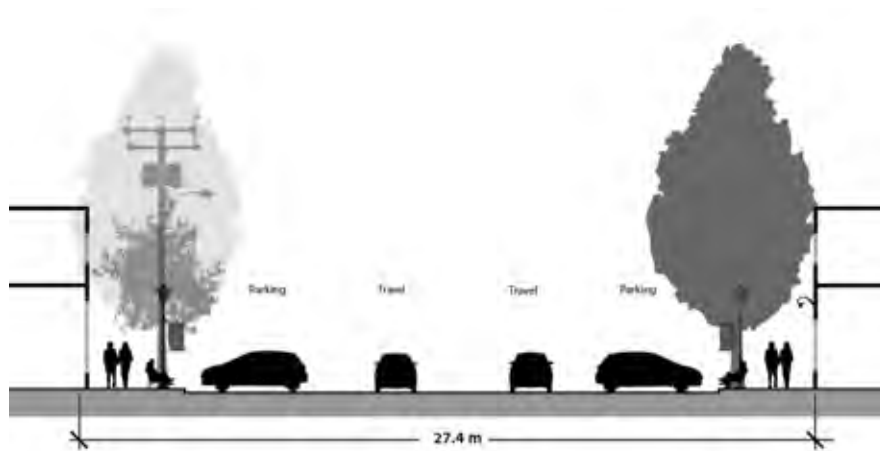


Figure 85. Montrose Avenue (7)

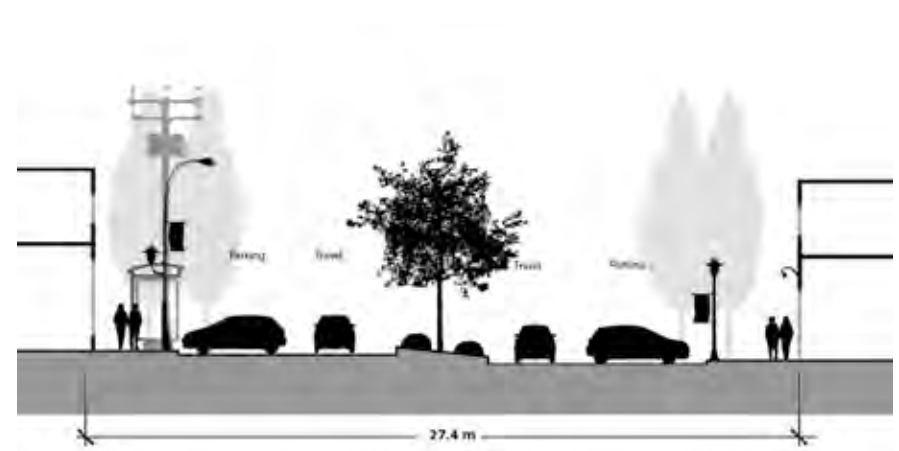


Figure 84. Montrose Avenue (8)



View North.

The ROW on Montrose Avenue between Essendene Avenue and George Ferguson Way is 27.4 metres wide and provides angled parking, street trees, and sidewalks on either side of the street. Street trees along the east side are generally more mature than the street trees along the west side.



View North.

Montrose Avenue between Essendene Avenue and South Fraser Way contains a planted central boulevard that is fenced to prevent pedestrian crossings, angled parking, and sidewalks on either side of the street. Street trees are limited to corners and the central boulevard.

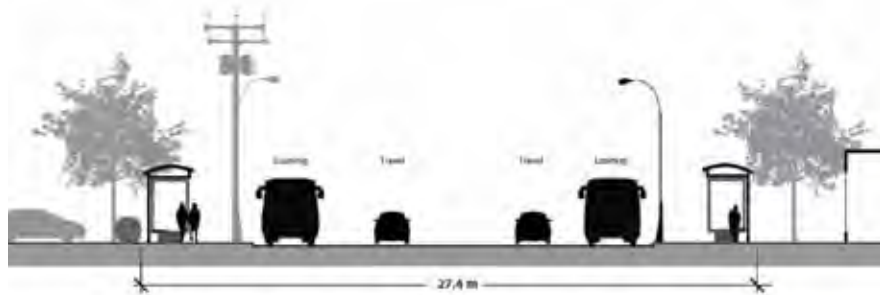


Figure 86. Montrose Avenue (12)



View North.

South of the core retail area, Montrose Avenue between Laurel Street and McDougall Avenue has bus stops, providing broader transportation connections. In this area, on-street parking is replaced with bus loading areas.

MONTVUE AVENUE

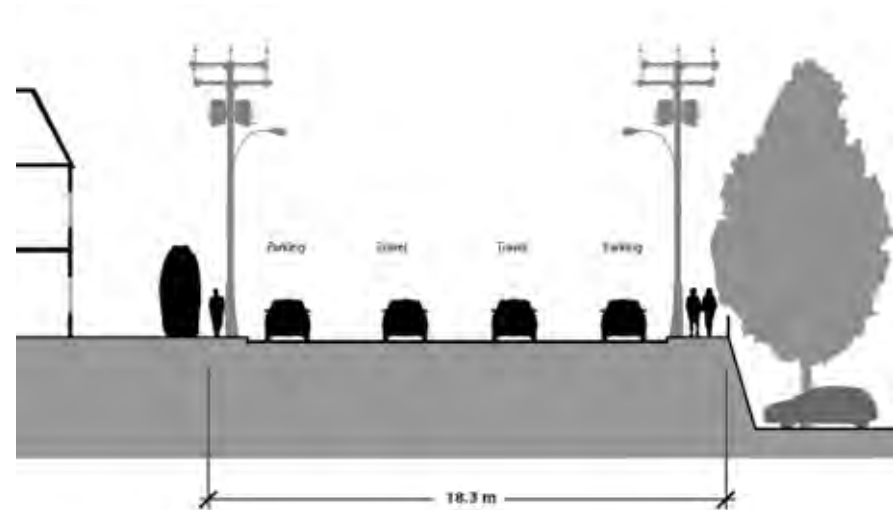


Figure 87. Montvue Avenue (11)



View North.

The ROW on Montvue Avenue between South Fraser Way and West Railway Street is 18.3 metres. Along some stretches there is a significant grade change between the properties on the east side of Montvue and properties on the west side, as illustrated above. The ROW contains two travel lanes, as well as two parking lanes and a sidewalk on either side of the street. There are few pedestrian amenities such as furnishings or street trees.

TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL STREETS

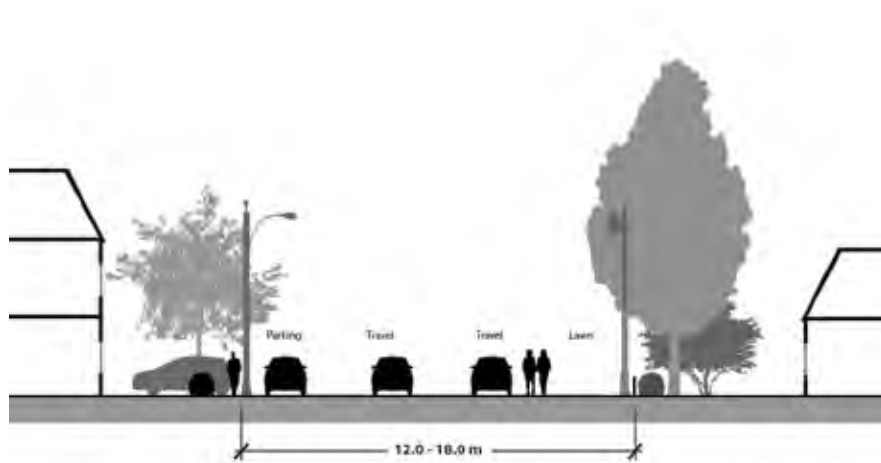


Figure 88. Typical residential street



Braun Avenue, looking west.

Residential street ROWs vary from 12.3 to 18.3 metres. The example shown above is a common streetscape. The ROW contains two travel lanes. Adjacent to the paved area, treatment varies between gravel parking areas and lawn, and there is no curb and gutter. Some residential streets also include sidewalks.

Summary

Overall, right-of-ways in the Historic Downtown have generous widths with limited or single-use programming.

Rights-of-way make up a significant land area and greatly impact the character and experience of the Historic Downtown. Since they are comprised of public infrastructure, it could be argued the design of streets in Historic Downtown has the greatest potential to influence its future character.

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Streetscape Design

Streets are among a city's most vital public spaces. While they play an important function as movement corridors, they are also places for public life. The design of the physical elements that make up these important public spaces are one of the ways that a community expresses its identity and values.

Streets contain elements that highlight heritage and history, give space for artistic and cultural expression, and show residents and visitors how to find their way around. In turn, these spaces shape quality of life, transportation choice, sense of place, business vitality, and more.

Materials and furnishings comprise one important physical element of streetscapes. The collection of images on the following pages provides a snapshot of the wide variety of materials and furnishings in Historic Downtown today.

PEDESTRIAN AND STREET LIGHTS

Light standards range from red ornamental lamps with neighbourhood flags in the core, to more conventional street posts along arterials and in residential neighbourhoods. Along major streets such as South Fraser Way, highway light standards such as cobras are used.



Figure 89. Lighting on Montrose and Essendene Avenues

SEATING

There are a variety of types and styles of civic benches in Historic Downtown. They range from metal in three colours, to wood and some include advertising space. Selecting a consistent colour and style for standard benches would help to create a coherent character in the area.

In addition, there are many unique public art benches in Historic Downtown that allow for artistic expression at signature locations. Although it has added character the area, the program has not been formalized and benches are mainly in City owned street right of ways.

Long term maintenance of all of these benches (civic and public art) is likely shared among a variety of organizations such as government bodies (City, BC Transit), advertising companies, and/or businesses. A coordinated approach to maintaining the variety of benches would help improve the overall appearance and consistency of seating in the area.



Figure 90. Bench style variety in Historic Downtown



Figure 91. Public art benches in Historic Downtown

Walking Distance

A 400 metre walk is considered to be a good measure for walkability. It takes the average pedestrian approximately five minutes to walk this distance, and research has shown that people will choose to walk rather than drive if they are within a five minute walk of their destination.

The five minute walking distances from the intersection where Essendene and Montrose Avenues intersect demonstrate that the downtown core has good connectivity, with nearly all retail areas being within convenient walking distance of one another. This intersection was chosen because it is generally located in the centre of the Historic Downtown's retail streets, and is presented as an example to illustrate the high level of connectivity.

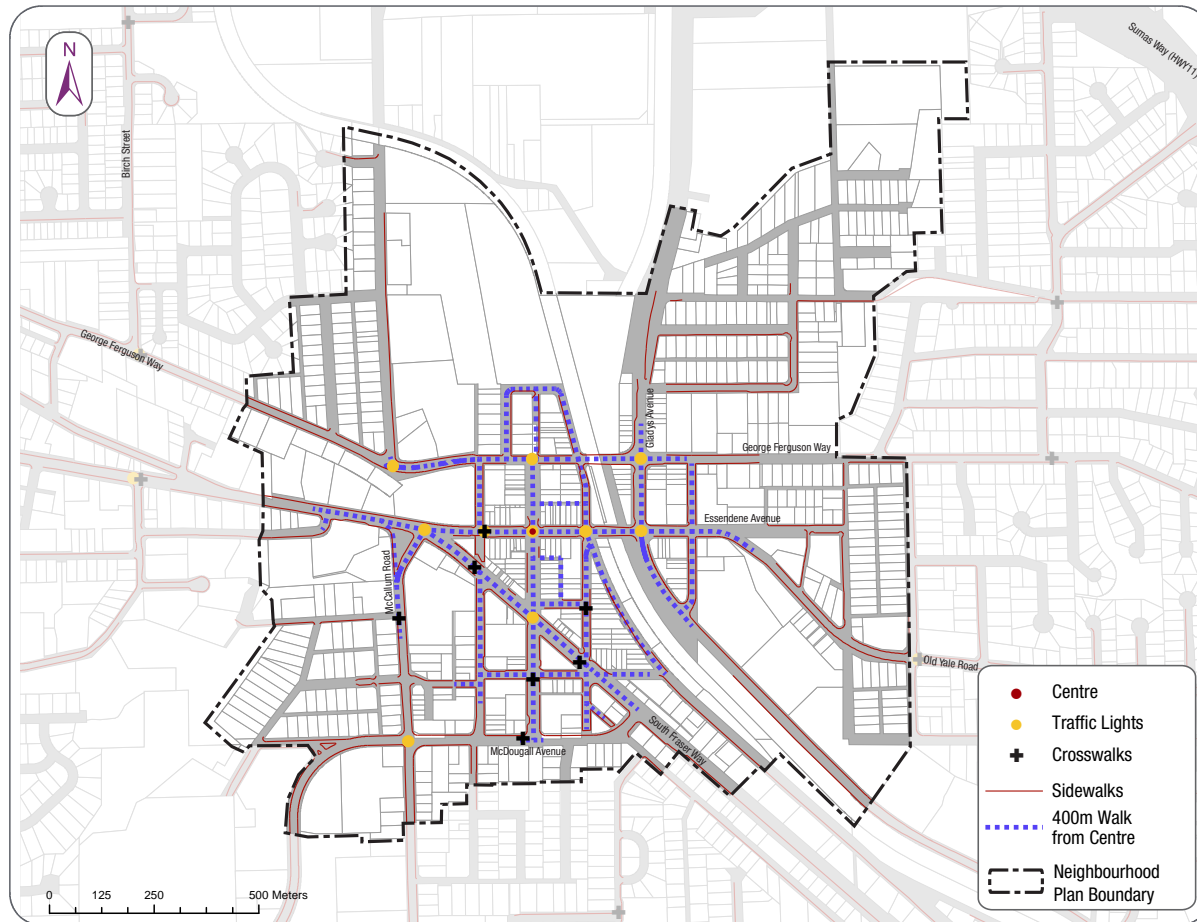


Figure 92. Pedestrian network

BIKING

Biking Network

The existing cycling network is limited to the northeast and south edges of Historic Downtown. At present, the only marked bicycle lanes exist on McDougall Ave/South Fraser Way (southeast of McDougall Avenue) and George Ferguson Way (east of Gladys Avenue).

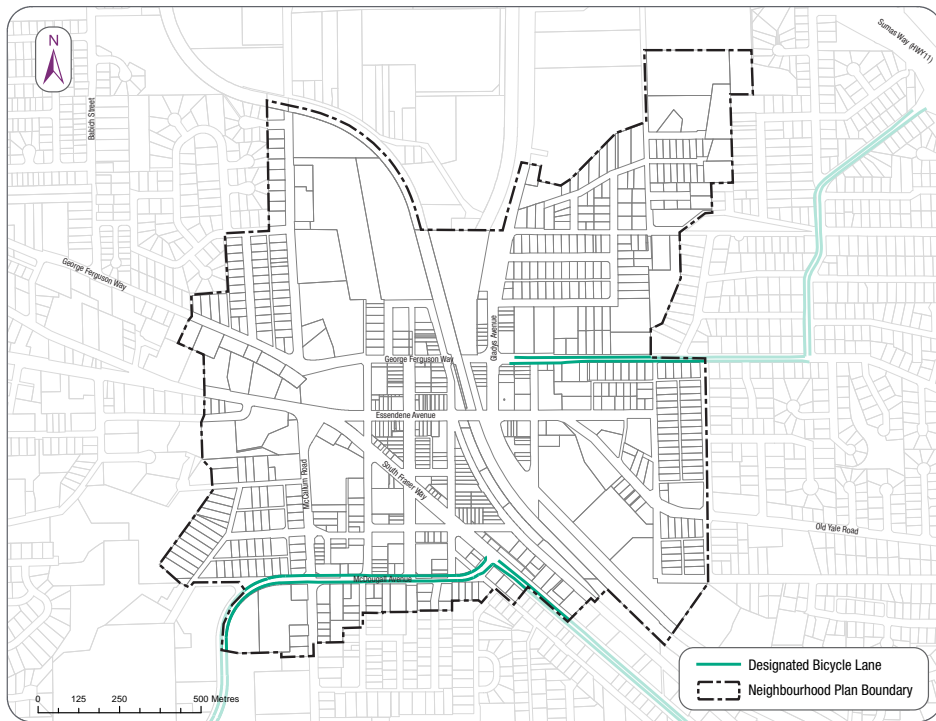


Figure 93. Biking Network



Figure 94. McDougall Avenue bike lanes

Markings are worn and less visible.



Figure 95. George Ferguson Way bike lanes

Markings are visible, but there is a poor transition out of the westbound lane toward the intersection of George Ferguson Way and Gladys Avenue.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

The Historic Downtown is well served by bus transit with four major and five minor bus routes connecting through the study area. The following section summarizes the existing infrastructure including the network, routes, stops, and exchange facilities.

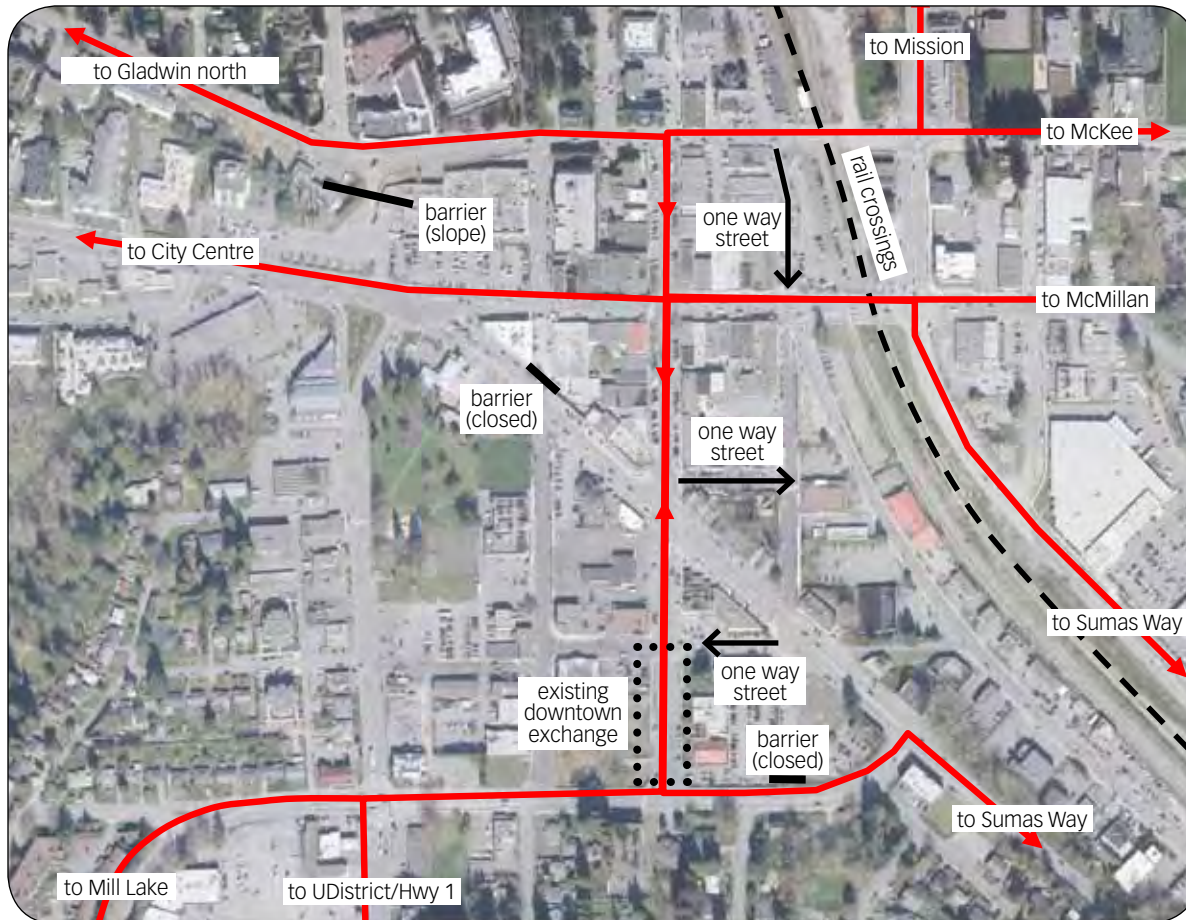


Figure 96. Existing transit network barrier analysis

Network

In general, the transit network in Historic Downtown has limited routing options. The north-south movement is limited to Montrose Avenue due to several barriers that prevent other north-south streets from being viable options. In addition, although east-west route options are more numerous, the rail line to the east and Ravine Park to the west further restrict full network access. Despite these limitations, there appears to be enough clearance time on downtown streets so there are minimal delays on routes travelling through the area.

Routes

The network constraints are apparent when reviewing the existing route alignments. In general, routes travel north and east using the stops on the east curb of Montrose Avenue, and travel south and west using the stops along the west curb of Montrose Avenue.

All four of Abbotsford's high frequency routes (#1, 2, 3, & 31) travel through Historic Downtown. In addition, there are several local and commuter service routes that also start and end in Historic Downtown.

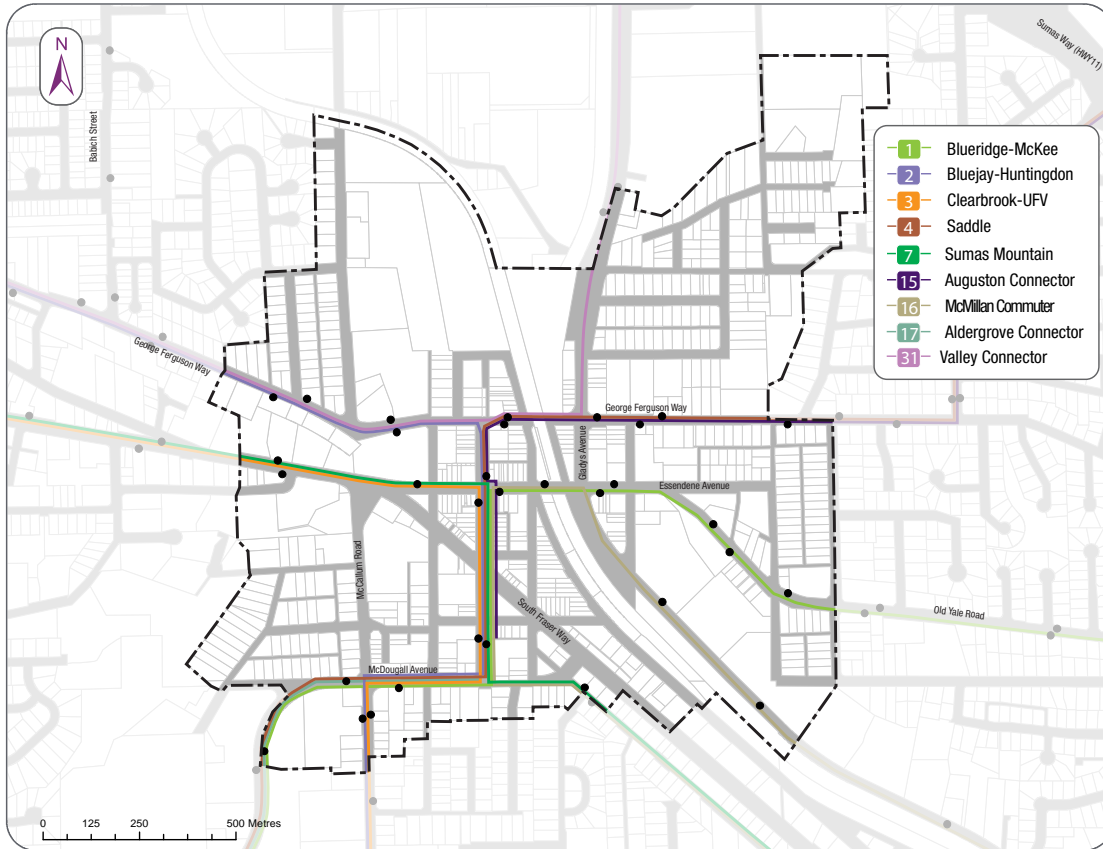


Figure 97. Bus routes

Route	Destination/Origin	Peak Weekday Frequency
1	McKee - Blueridge GoLine	15 min
2	Bluejay - Huntingdon GoLine	15 min
3	Clearbrook - UFV GoLine	15 min
31	Abbotsford - Mission Connector	15 min
4	Saddle	30 min
7	Sumas Mountain	30 min
16	McMillan Connector	30 min
17	Townline Industrial	30 min
15	Auguston Connector	60 min

Figure 98. Bus route frequency

Bus Stops

In general, far side bus stops are provided in the Historic Downtown, which are considered best practice by BC Transit and TransLink.

However, the quality of bus stops varies significantly, as illustrated in the images. As well as providing basic shelter and seating, bus stops should be made 'delightful' to encourage use and signal that transit users are valued. BC Transit's Bus Infrastructure Design Guidelines contain core principles for bus stop design. These include bus stop visibility, passenger access, passenger amenities, and universal access.



Passenger/wheelchair landing pad, shelter, seating, and lighting are missing.

The sidewalk is 1.3m, which is narrow.

Figure 99. McDougall Avenue and Hillside Drive



This is a well designed bus stop, with covered seating, bicycle storage, and a 3.6m pad.

Figure 100. Montrose Avenue and Essendene Avenue



There is recessed seating along a 1.7m sidewalk. There is no weather protection or landing pad.

Figure 101. Essendene Avenue and Pauline Street



There is recessed seating along a 1.7m sidewalk. There is no weather protection or landing pad.

Figure 102. George Ferguson Way and Gladys Avenue



Figure 103. Essendene Avenue at Montrose Avenue

Passenger/wheelchair landing pad, shelter, seating, and lighting are missing.



Figure 104. Essendene Avenue at West Railway Street

This is a well designed bus stop, with recessed covered seating and bicycle storage/street lighting in close proximity.

Exchange

Historic Downtown currently has an on-street transit exchange located on one block of Montrose Avenue between Laurel Street and McDougall Avenue. Although it is not officially designated as an exchange on BC Transit's website, its central location, proximity to more established retail and employment land uses, and historical context have long identified it as an exchange to transit users. Each side of Montrose Avenue at this exchange serve 9 to 10 routes, and have enough curb space (35m) to accommodate up to two buses simultaneously.

In various analysis completed in the past, there have been options for providing an off street exchange instead of the current on street one in order to accommodate future transit service expansion needs. As the HDNP continues into the next stages of work, the role of transit in the neighbourhood in terms of the network and route alignment, bus stop facilities, and exchange location should be addressed. It will be important to connect this HDNP work with the Transit Master Plan process being completed by BC Transit.



Figure 105. Montrose Avenue northbound at Essendene Avenue

There is recessed seating, street lighting, and bicycle storage, but a weather-protected bus shelter is missing.

Road Hierarchy

The existing road network and land development in Abbotsford is composed mainly of east-west major roads and several commercial and mixed use centres. Historic Downtown is located at the east end of one of these corridors, South Fraser Way.

The core area is bisected by George Ferguson Way ('Urban Arterial' / 'Urban Collector') and South Fraser Way/ Essendene Avenue ('Urban Arterial'). In addition, Gladys Avenue ('Urban Arterial'/'Urban Collector') provides the only continuous north-south connection.

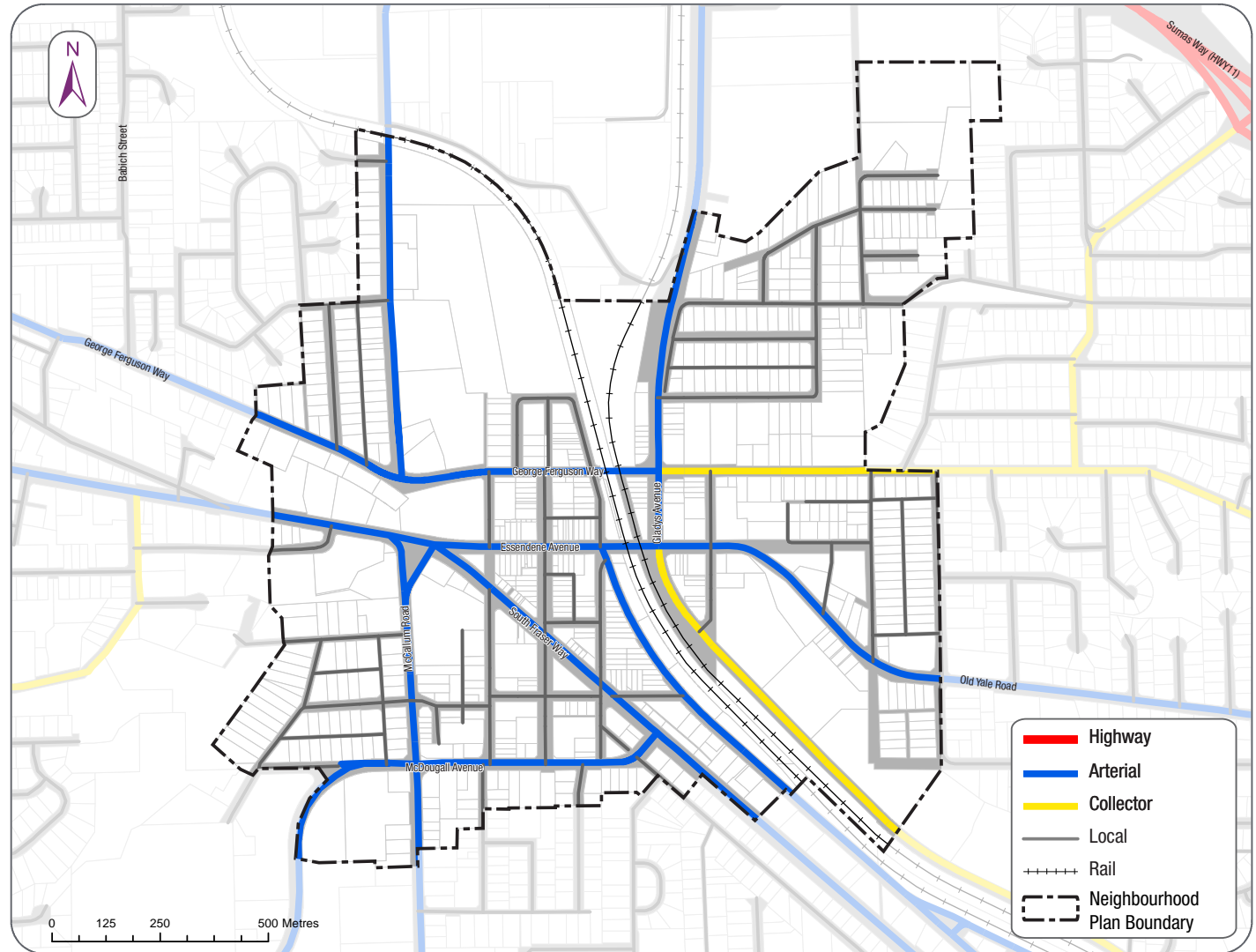


Figure 106. Road hierarchy

Average Daily Traffic Volume Trends

The average daily traffic (ADT) volume trends for Historic Downtown were examined between 2016- 2006 for some locations, and between 2012-2001 for others (depending on data availability).

The highest volumes recorded in the area are on George Ferguson Way, where there has been a recent reduction in volume (2006-2016). The recorded volumes for this street range from 10,000-19,000 vehicles per day. This volume fits within the acceptable range, according to the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) for Major Arterial streets, which carry volumes ranging from 10,000 to 30,000 vehicles per day.

During this time period other volumes within the area have also decreased on major east-west arterial routes up to 25%. In 2012, Essendene Avenue and McDougall Avenue were recorded to carry approximately 14,000 vehicles per day.

The largest increase in volume was observed on Gladys Avenue, from 3,900 to 5,600 vehicles per day in 2016. As collector road however, this is well within its operational capacity of 6,000 to 8,000 vehicles per day.

Later stages of work in the HDNP process will include a comprehensive traffic impact analysis to review the traffic data and forecasts in more detail.

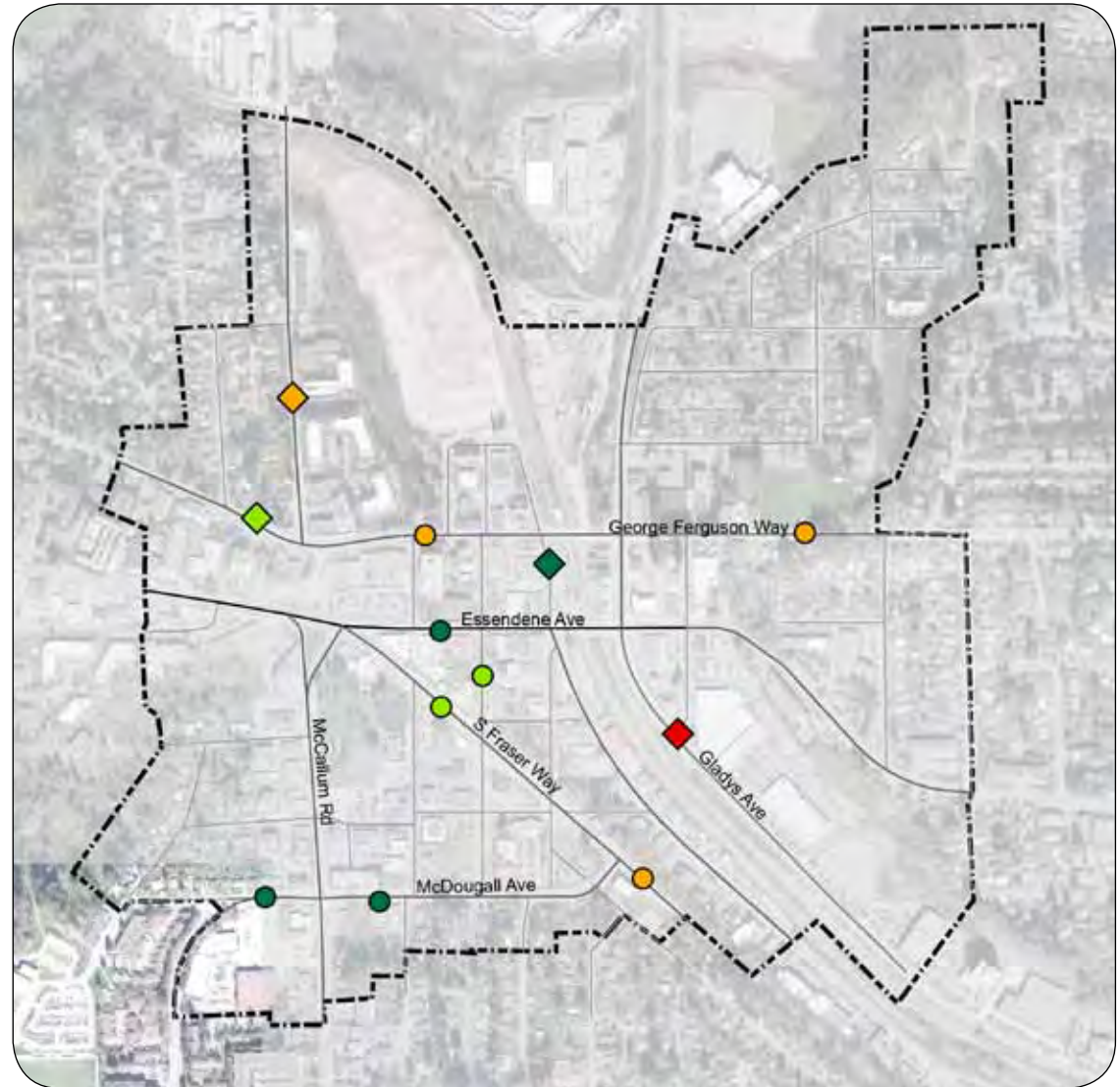


Figure 107. Annual daily traffic volumes



PARKING

Overview

From October 2016 to January 2017 City staff conducted an on-street and off-street parking occupancy and supply inventory survey for Historic Downtown. The survey data was collected directly in front of individual tenant locations to represent peak conditions during a typical weekday and weekend, specifically:

- AM Weekday: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- PM Weekday: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- Saturday and Sunday: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

The on-street and off-street parking supply within the Historic Downtown neighbourhood core is summarised as following:

- On-street parking supply: 615 stalls (18 are accessible)
- Public parking lots (off-street) supply: 173 stalls (4 are accessible)
- Private parking lots (off-street) supply: 220 standard stalls

Overall, the survey indicates existing parking supply accommodates parking demand throughout the whole of Historic Downtown. However, parking demand is unevenly distributed and concentrated in the north-central portion of the study area where some on-street parking capacity is met or exceeded on weekday morning and weekend afternoon peaks.

Saturday afternoon showed the highest parking demand. This peak demand is concentrated within the core blocks of Historic Downtown, which is bounded by George Ferguson Way to the north, West Railway Street and Montvue Avenue to the east, Gosling Way to the south, and Pauline Street to the west.

In this area most of the on-street parking is restricted to 2 hours, with a few small sections of 15 minute parking. The survey data did not include duration of parked time or cross-referenced plate data. Therefore it is unknown how or if new demand is affected by the current 2-hour on-street restrictions.

The following sections summarise the findings of the survey based on a snapshot in time for a portion of a year. Therefore, the results are a general indication of parking use and occupancy. A more complete analysis may be needed to understand the full complexity of parking in Historic Downtown.

Occupancy benchmark

When considering on-street retail parking, the amount of unoccupied (open) parking spaces is seen to be sufficient when the amount of occupied parking spaces is at a maximum of 85% of the total available parking spaces. This target

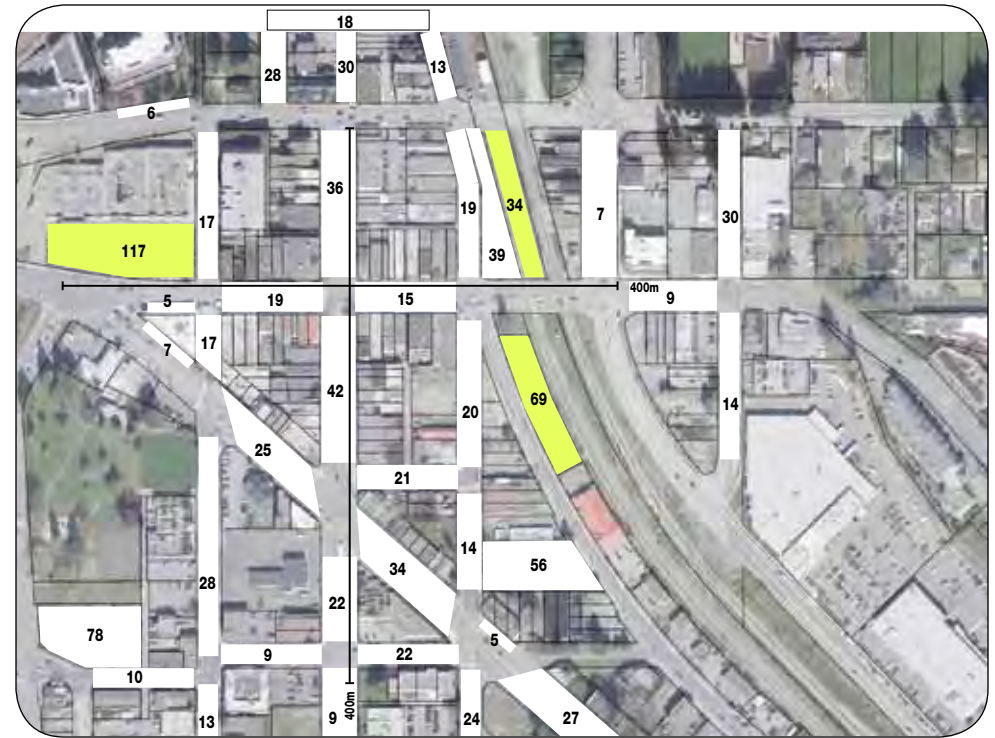


Figure 108. Parking inventory map
(highlighted parking lots are private/permit only, but were included to understand their use compared to fully public spaces)

means that for every 7 occupied spaces, there will be 1 open space. On a typical block of parallel parking (e.g. Essendene Avenue between Montrose Avenue and West Railway Street), this equals one open space on each side of the street.

When occupancy rises above 85%, visitors can begin to have a difficult time finding parking on the block where they are trying to park, resulting in cruising around the block to find an open space. Visitors can become frustrated by not being able to find parking, and also contribute to traffic congestion in the area.

The analysis that follows uses an 85% occupancy rate to present the data collected in the study.

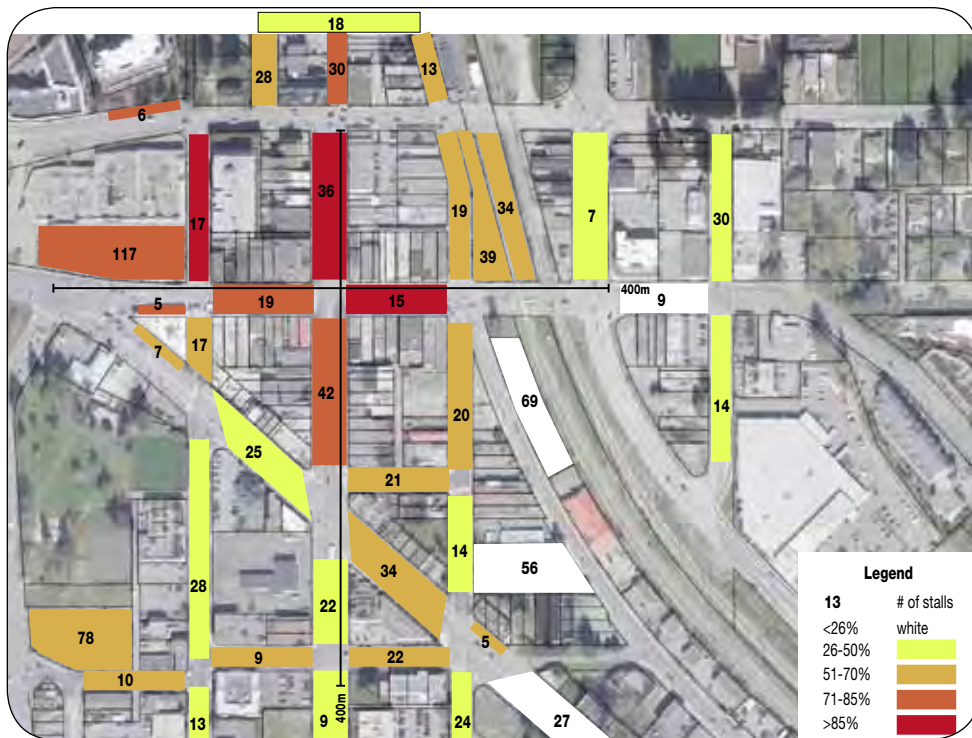


Figure 109. Morning parking occupancy (seven day average, excluding Sundays)

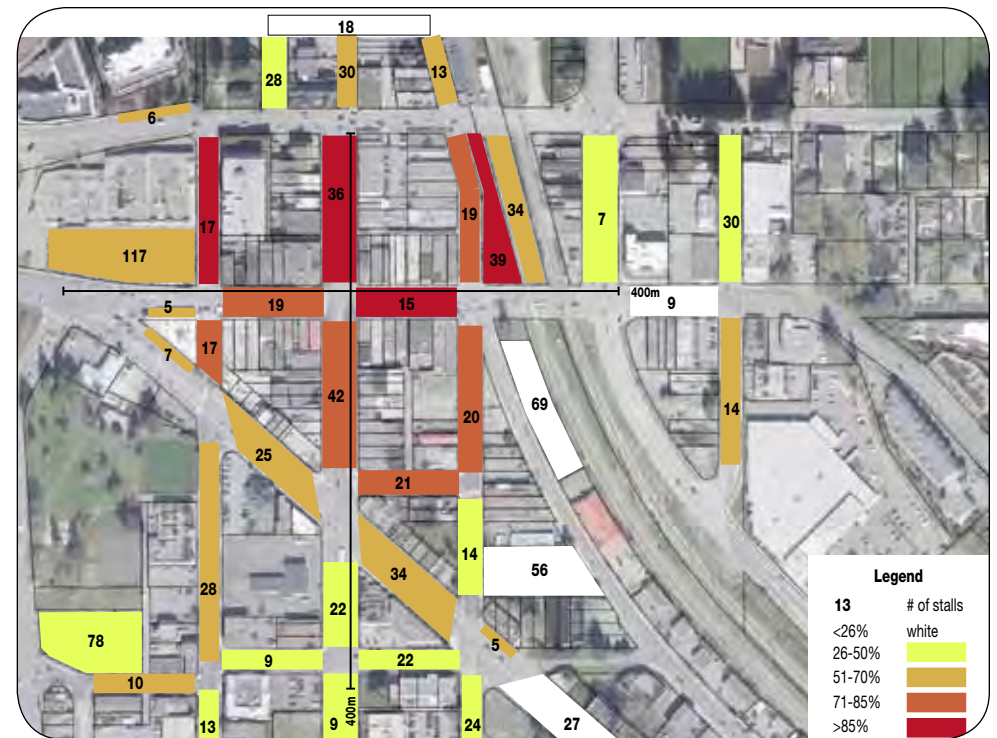


Figure 110. Afternoon parking occupancy (seven day average, excluding Sundays)

Mornings

During weekday mornings, the occupancy rate is below 85% at all but three of 35 locations surveyed:

- Montrose Avenue between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue
- Pauline Street between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue
- Essendene Avenue between Montrose Avenue and West Railway Street

These three block fronts are relatively central to all land uses within Historic Downtown and provide near-continuous building faces with no associated off-street parking lots. It is reasonable that these sections would experience the highest on-street demand.

Weekday morning parking otherwise averaged about 56% occupancy and in many instances was below 30%. Overall, the morning weekday average parking occupancy for all parking type is 56%, or 565 stalls out of the total 1,008 available parking supply.

Sprott Shaw College is also a large generator of parking demand within the area, as the campus resides on the northwest corner of Essendene Avenue and Pauline Street. This parking lot also has a Dollar Tree and an average occupancy of 76%.

The total Saturday morning occupancy is 36% of all stalls (363 out of 1,008 stalls).

Afternoons

Weekday afternoon parking patterns do not significantly differ from weekday morning patterns. Montrose Avenue, Essendene Avenue, and Pauline Street continue to show the highest occupancy rates, along with increases in the West Railway Avenue area. The Sprott Shaw College/Dollar Tree parking lot also has a high parking occupancy of roughly 69% on average, excluding Sundays.

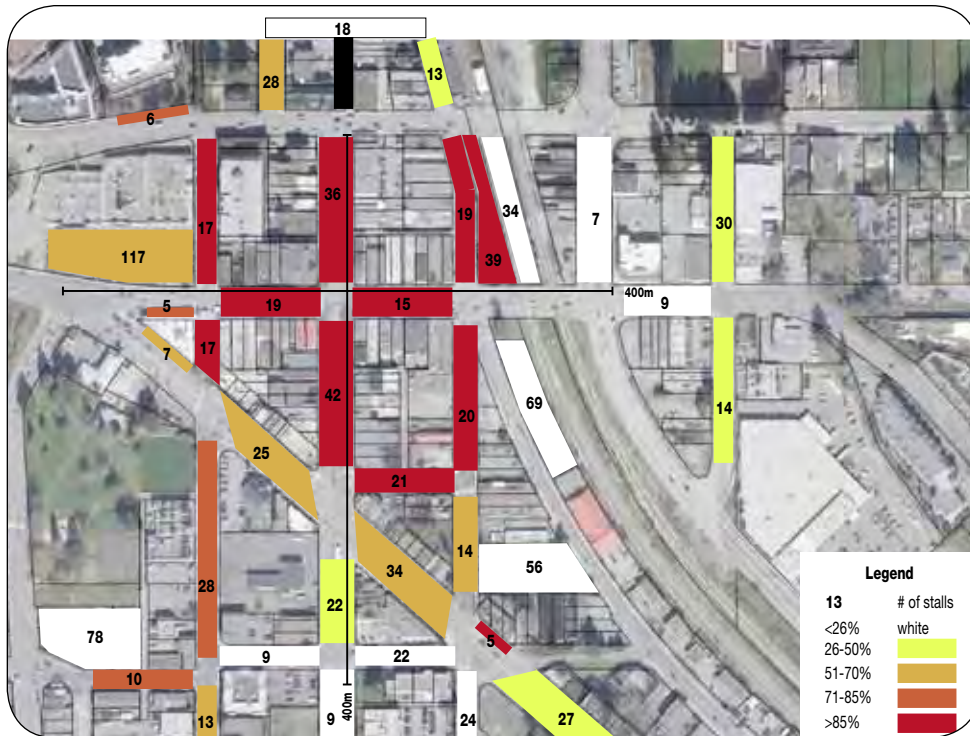


Figure 111. Saturday afternoon parking occupancy (two day average)

Similar to the morning period, the remainder of the study area had a parking occupancy between less than 25% to 70%, as the land use is less dense, and generates less parking demand.

The overall afternoon weekday average parking occupancy for all parking types is slightly less than in the morning, at 52%, or 525 stalls out of the total 1008 available parking supply.

Saturday afternoon shows the highest parking demand of the week with 10 of 35 locations surveyed having an occupancy rate greater than 85%:

- Montrose Avenue between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue
- Montrose Avenue between Essendene Avenue and South Fraser Way
- Pauline Street between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue
- Pauline Street parking lot accessed off of Essendene Avenue
- Essendene Avenue between Montrose Avenue and West Railway Street
- Essendene Avenue between Pauline Street and Montrose Avenue

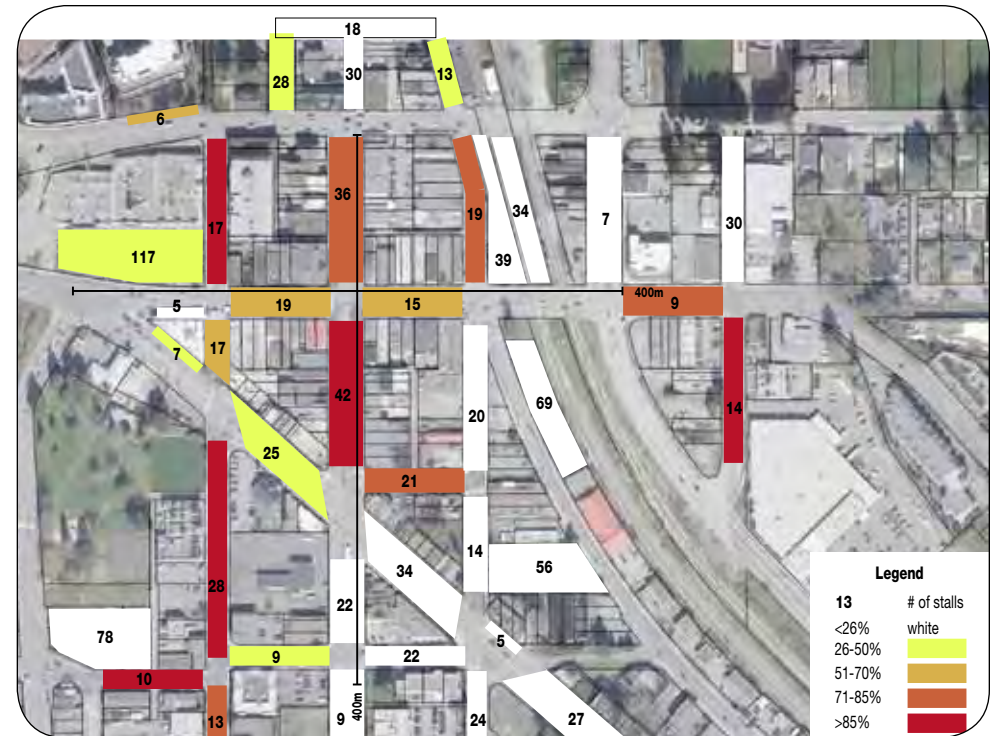


Figure 112. Sunday afternoon parking occupancy (one day count)

- Gosling Way between Montrose Avenue and Montvue Avenue
- West Railway Street between George Ferguson Way and Essendene Avenue
- West Railway parking lot accessed off of West Railway Street
- Montvue Avenue between Essendene Avenue and Gosling Way

Again, however, outside of this area the parking demand was far less and within supply constraints. During this time, on average, the total on-street parking occupancy is 60% and the off-street public and private is 29% and 44% respectively.

The overall parking occupancy for all parking types on Sunday is 34% (343 out of 1008 stalls) between 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM, which may be correlated to restaurant and café use. This lower demand throughout the Historic Downtown core may be attributed to other businesses closed during Sundays.

Parking Study

The full significance of this snapshot survey cannot be determined at this time. Although on-street restrictions exist, actual parking behaviour and patterns cannot be conclusively established to gauge the impact of those restrictions on on-street use. Until total time occupancy recordings can be taken, it is unknown how much demand and use is driven by customer turnover compared to business employees and/or owners moving their cars once or twice per day in order to be able to park nearer to work.

A comprehensive area-wide study would better inform who uses Historic Downtown, when, and why. More refined data would better establish actual (vs. perceived) parking patterns and accommodate a plan that responds to business and employee needs. This type of study will be explored in future stages of the HDNP.

Summary

Based on the available data from the survey for this background report, it is likely that actual parking demand meets or exceeds supply in a few clustered portions of Historic Downtown at a few peak times of the week. The on-street blocks of Montrose Avenue, West Railway Street/Montvue Avenue, Essendene Avenue, and Pauline Avenue were all surveyed as being above 85% average occupancy during several critical peak periods (with several occurrences of 100% occupancy).

The core area has the highest parking demand with occupancy averaging over 85%, peaking on Saturday afternoon. At an occupancy level of 85%, there are enough available spaces that a parking spot can be conveniently found, and drivers are not required to cruise the area for parking spaces, thereby adding traffic congestion to the area. Using 85% occupancy benchmark in this initial survey should be confirmed through a more detailed study in later stages of the HDNP process.

Using a demand-based approach to parking supply also encourages increased turnover in desirable parking spaces, which further enhances convenience for visitors and increases the number of visitors that a single parking space can serve. This potentially increases the number of customer visits to stores without off-street parking nearby.



Figure 113. Mixed parking on Pauline Street



Figure 114. On-street parking and loading on West Railway Street

3.5 Physical Features, Pipes and Services

NATURAL FEATURES

Historic Downtown is located in a natural bowl shaped depression between the central Abbotsford uplands and the eastern slopes up to McKee Peak and Sumas Mountain. Through this bowl is a relatively narrow gap that was used in the early years to route several railways from the eastern Fraser Valley to the Strait of Georgia harbours to the west.

The result of this topography are numerous steep slope, watercourses and flood plains in and around the area. One watercourse of particular importance is Willband Creek, which drains much of the central Abbotsford uplands and Mill Lake. At the eastern end of Ravine Park it is culverted and routed under Essendene and Montrose Avenues before emerging north of Historic Downtown and flowing to Willband Creek Park in Matsqui Prairie, and eventually the Fraser River.

The natural bowl landscape also creates interesting views and topography changes that are described on following pages. These features could be enhanced and highlighted in the final neighbourhood plan.

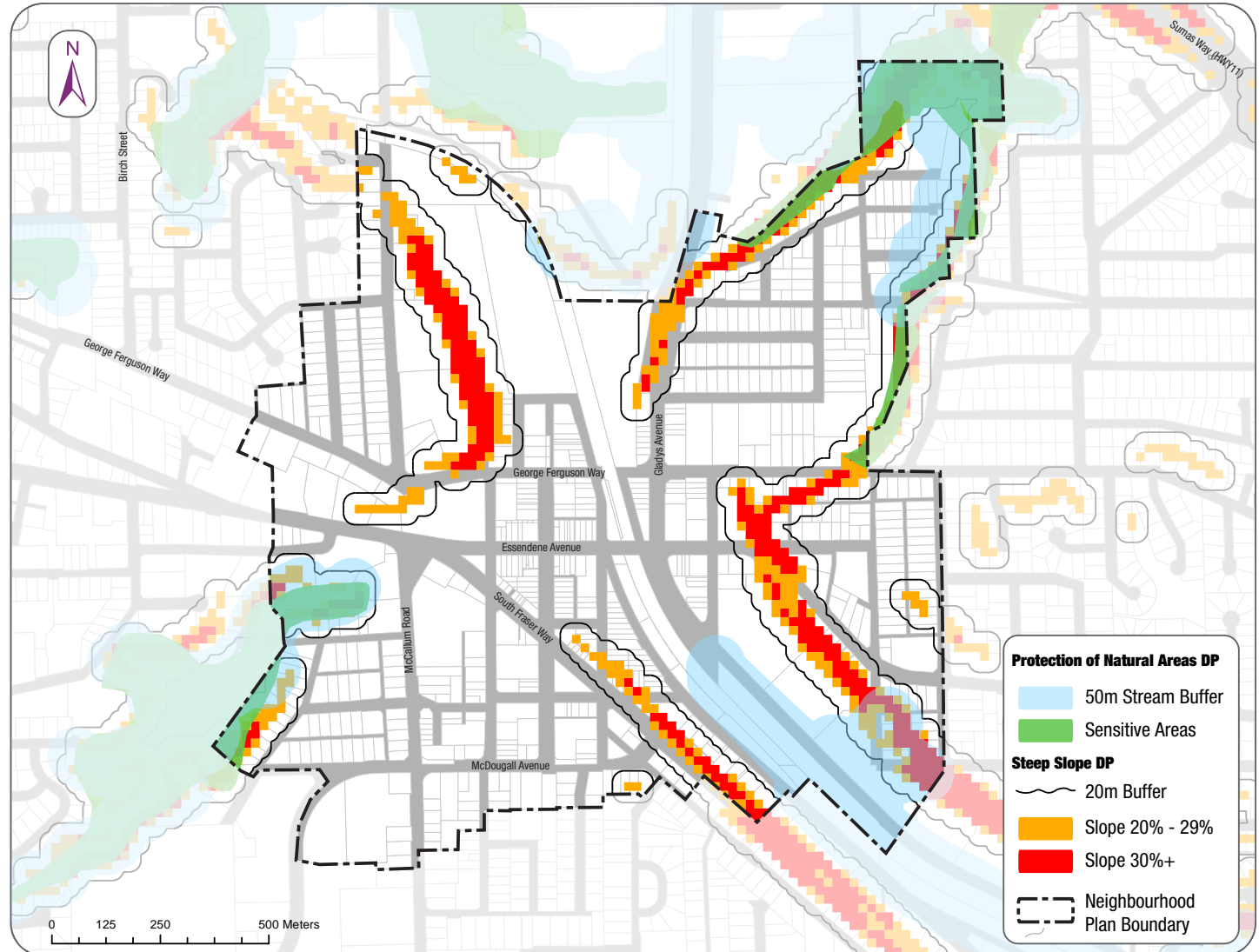


Figure 115. Environmental context

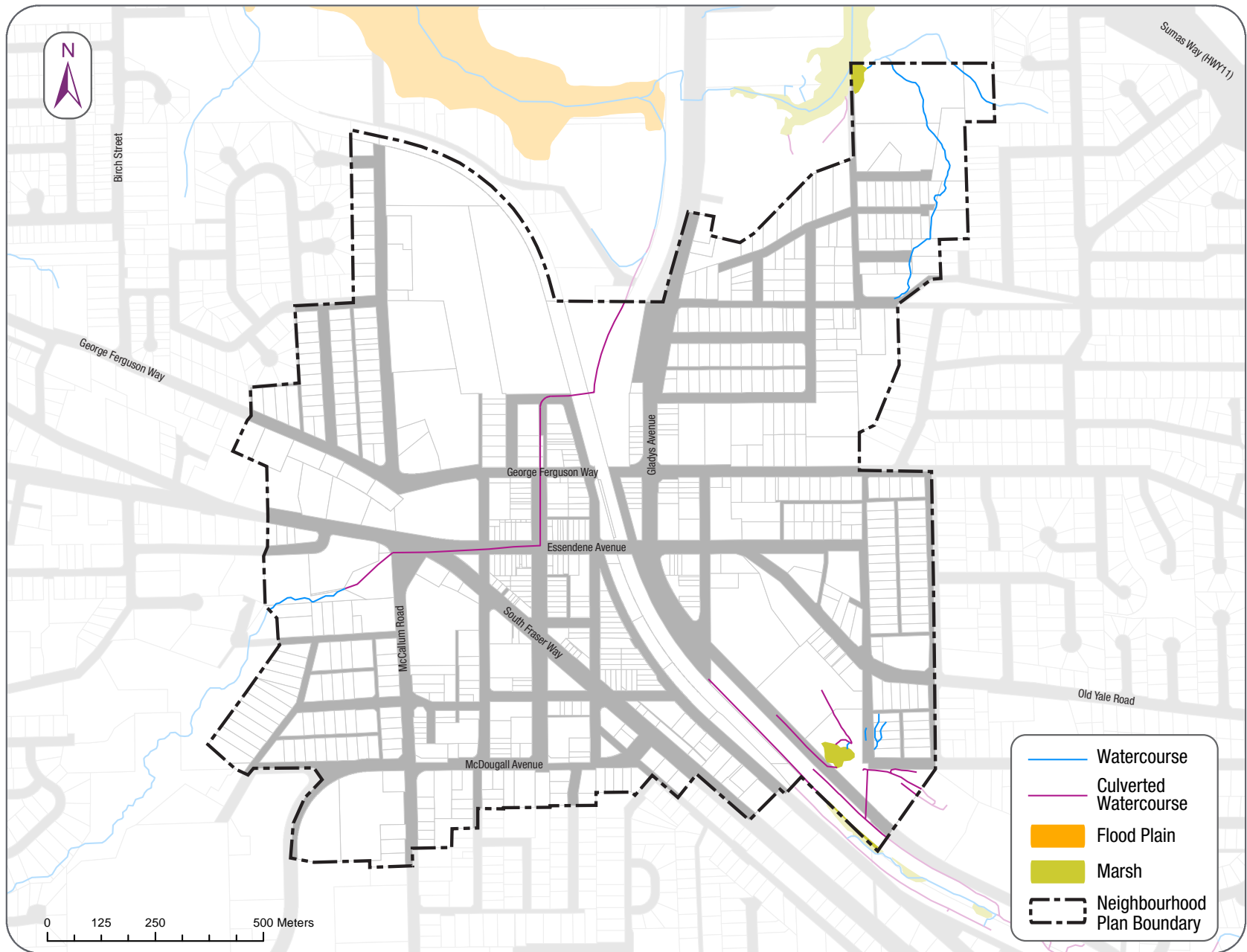


Figure 116. Water features in the Historic Downtown

VIEWS

The Historic Downtown enjoys spectacular views to distant mountains to the north and south east. Considering if and how these views should be maintained will be an important part of this planning and design process.

In addition, many areas of Historic Downtown have above ground utility wires that clutter the views from some vantage points. Updating the Overhead Utility Conversion policy (No. C011-05) with additional target streets in Historic Downtown would help clean up the cluttered views in the area.

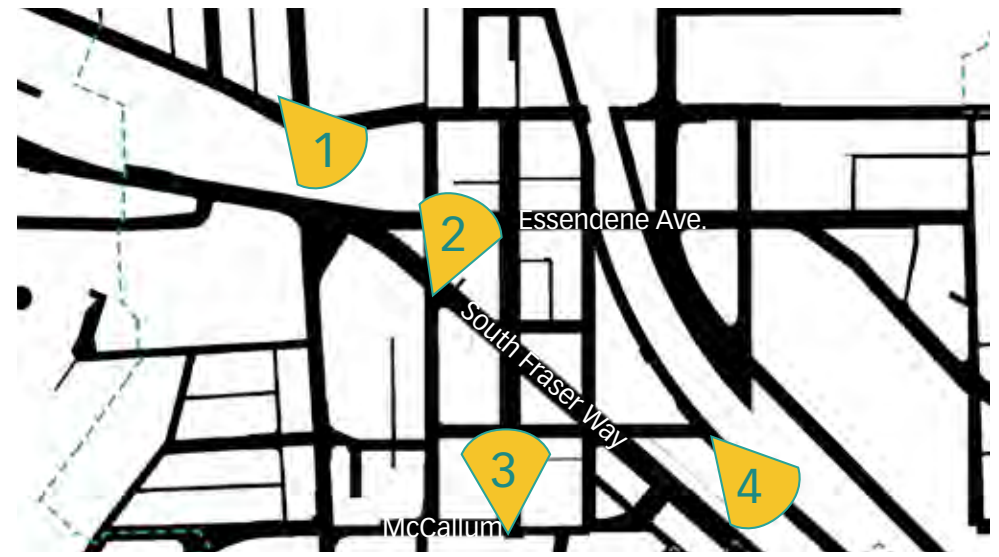


Figure 117. Views in Historic Downtown



View 1: Southeast from George Ferguson Way of Mount Baker.



View 2: Northeast from crosswalk along South Fraser Way at Pauline Avenue.



View 3: North along Montrose of mountains to the north.



View 4: Southeast from West Railway Avenue of Mount Baker.

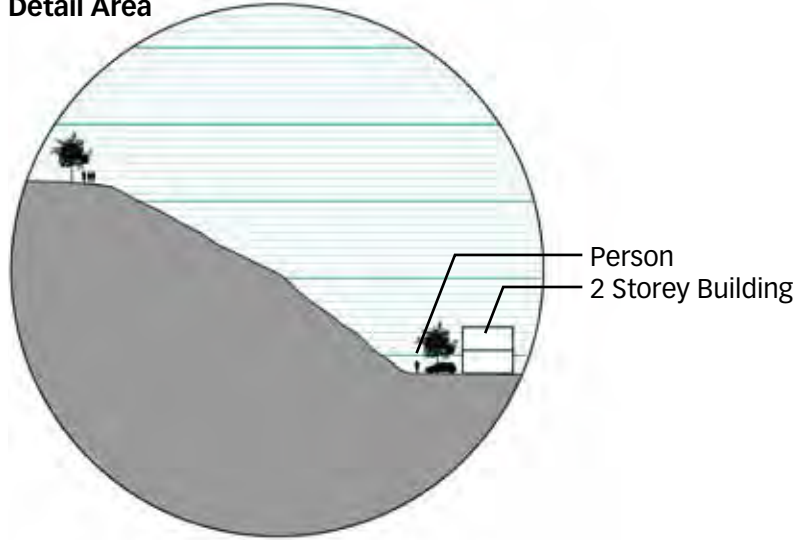
TOPOGRAPHY

The following sections illustrate the overall topography of the site.

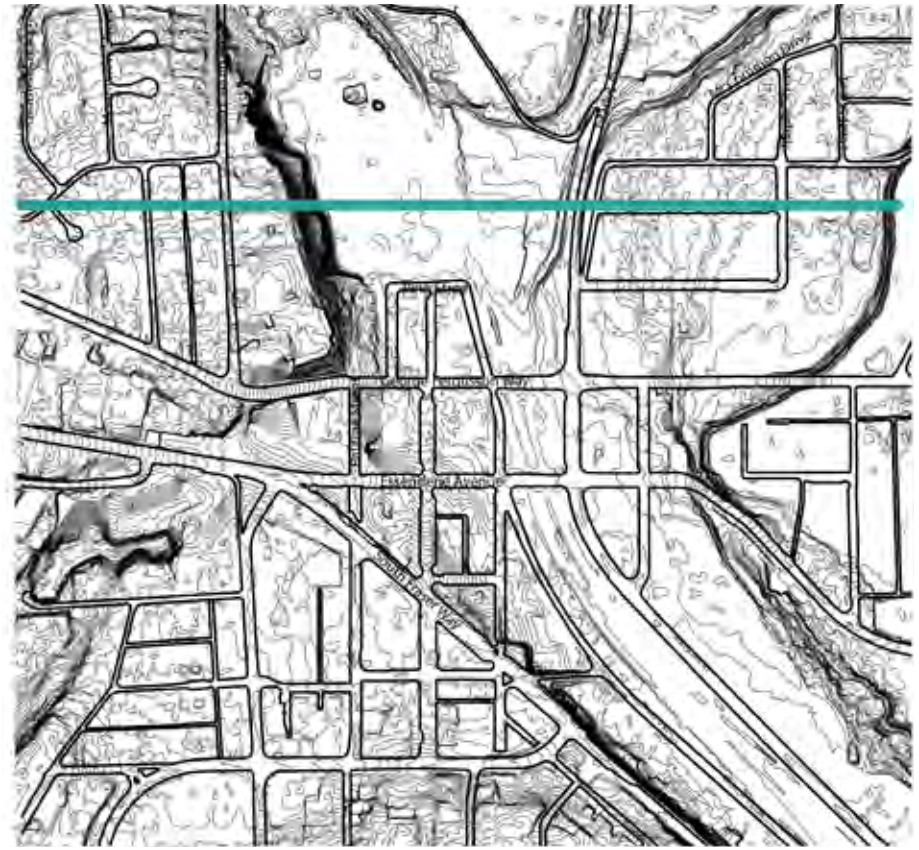
East-West Section (north)

Just north of the retail core, on the site where the brick factory once operated, the Historic Downtown neighbourhood is situated in a bowl-like depression between steep slopes. The blown-up detail area below includes a person and two storey building for scale.

Detail Area



Section
Cut Line



Laurnell Crescent

Mountview Street

McCallum Road

Detail Area

10 M Intervals

Gladys Avenue

McCrimmon Drive

Maple Street

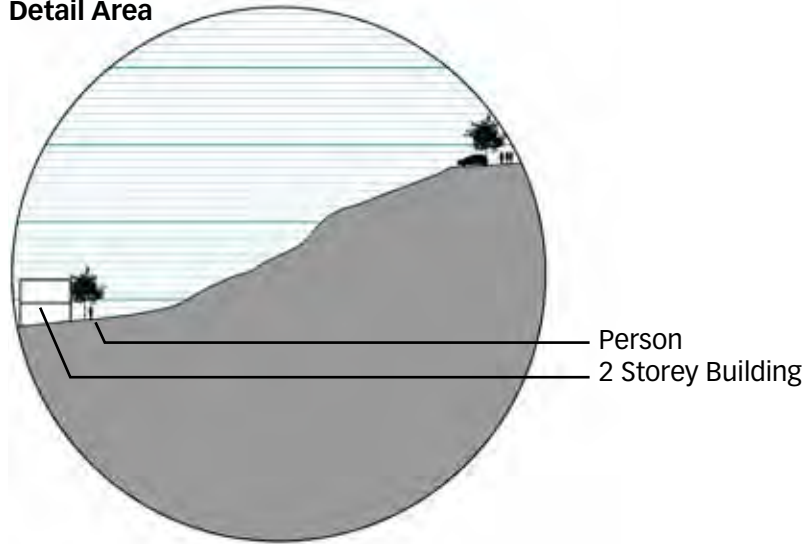
Pratt Street

Figure 118. East-west section (north)

East-West Section (central)

The heart of the retail core gradually slopes down from the west to the east along Essendene Avenue. East of Cyril Street, the land rises steeply again along Old Yale Road and George Ferguson Way. The historic photos from 1905 and 1920 featured in the introduction of this background report were likely taken from atop this steep bluff.

Detail Area



Section Cut Line

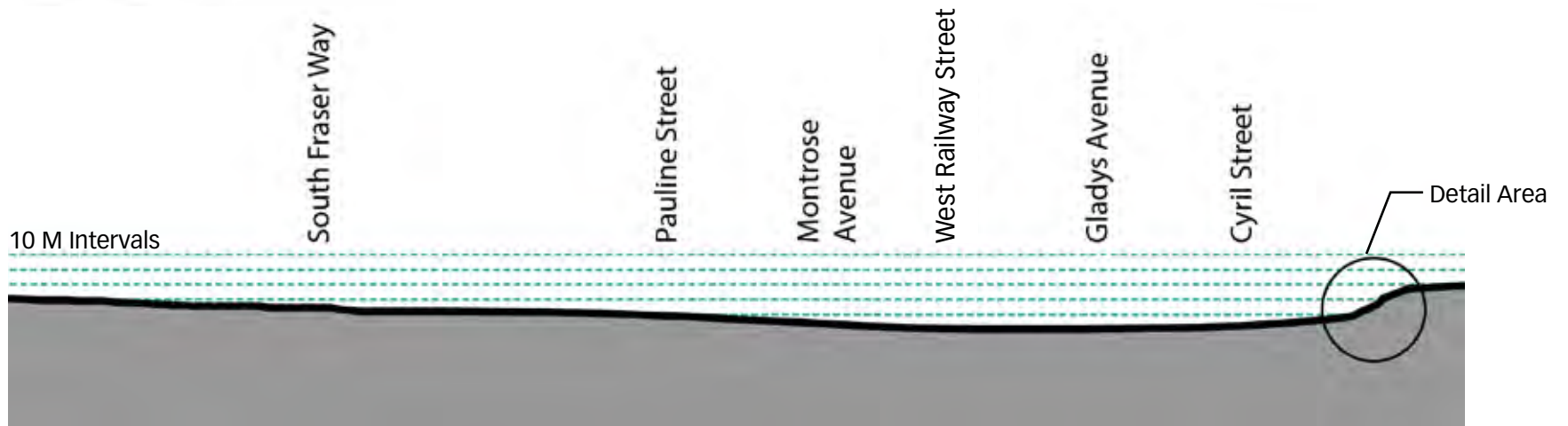
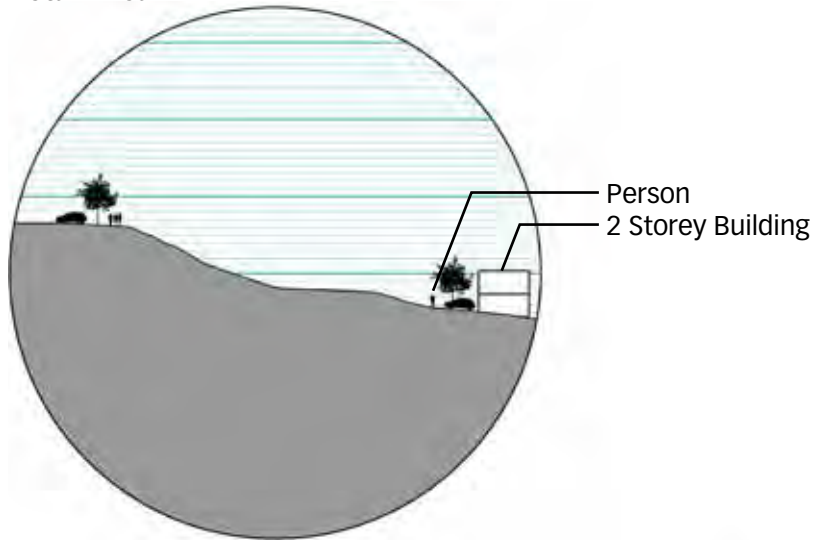


Figure 119. East-west section (central)

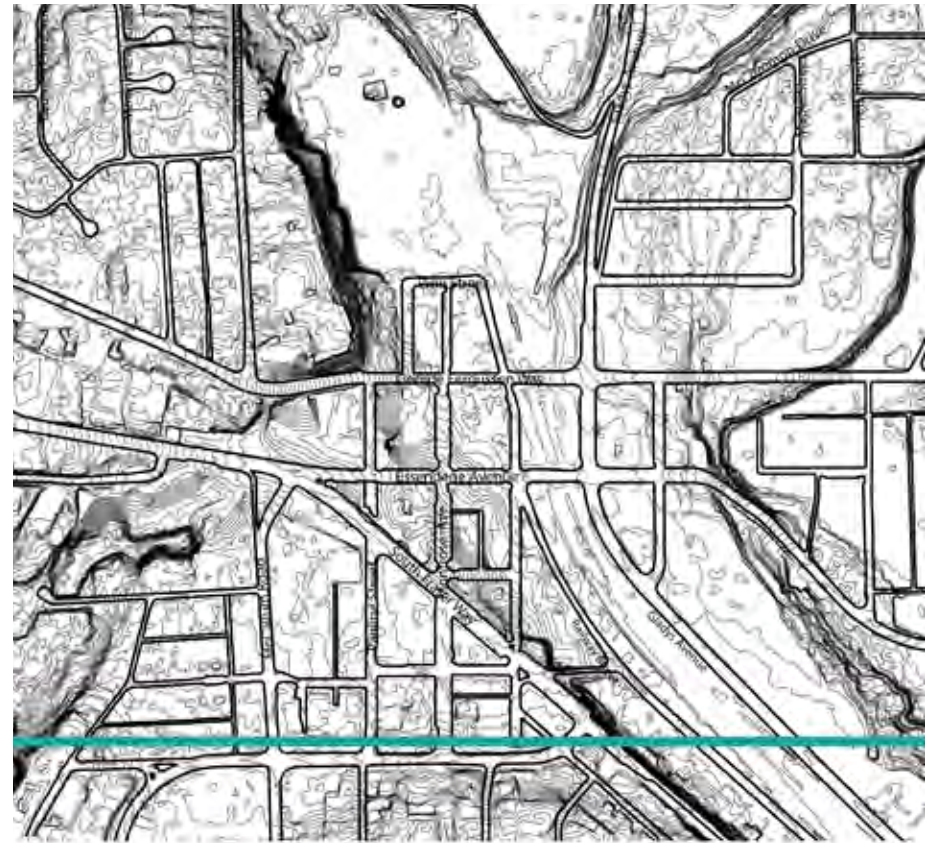
East-West Section (south)

The south end of the historic neighbourhood is located atop a plateau that gently slopes down from the west towards the east until it reaches West Railway Street. Here the topography quickly drops in elevation.

Detail Area



Section Cut Line



Crescent Way

McCallum Road

Pauline Street

Montrose Avenue

South Fraser Way

Detail Area

West Railway Street

Glady Avenue

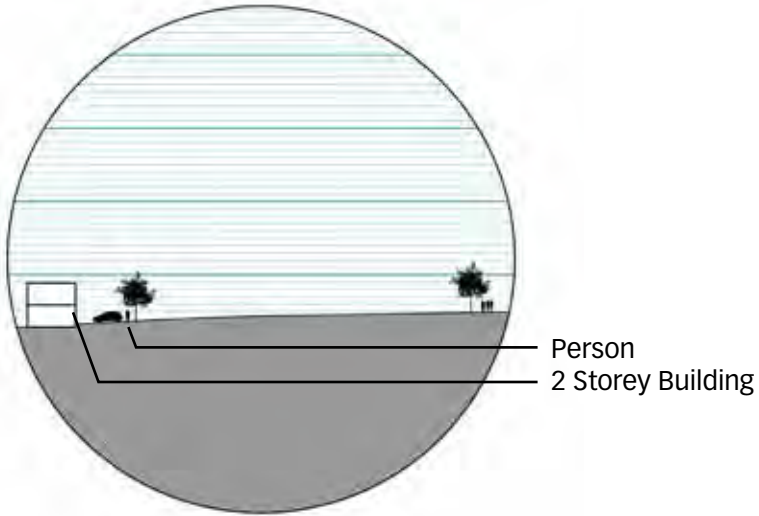
10 M Intervals

Figure 120. East-west section (south)

North-South Section (central)

The Historic Downtown gradually slopes down from south to north. Rainwater therefore generally drains northward, and feeds into the wetlands illustrated previously in this section.

Detail Area



Section Cut Line

Morey Avenue

Pine Street

George Fergusson Way

Essendene Avenue

Detail Area

Gosling Way

South Fraser Way

McDougall Avenue



10 M Intervals

Figure 121. North-south section (central)

WATER NETWORK

The majority of the HDNP is within the 103m HGL pressure zone, with a small area near South Fraser Way and McCallum Road that will be switched to the higher 123 HGL pressure zone in 2017-2018. Both of the pressure zones are sourced from the Maclure Reservoir to the west and the McMillan Reservoir to the east. This supply is augmented with regional wells on Industrial and Riverside Road to the north, and a regional pressure reducing valve connection at Sandon Drive to the east.

Generally, the water mains in HDNP are in good condition and almost all of the old infrastructure has been replaced. There are small pockets of Asbestos/Concrete (AC) water mains primarily along George Ferguson Way, Pine Street, and Trinity Street.

Several areas of pipes do not meet City bylaw standards, in particular the area around George Ferguson Way, which may become one of the upgraded supply lines to provide water for new growth in the area. The water main at the George Ferguson Way railway crossing needs to be upgraded.

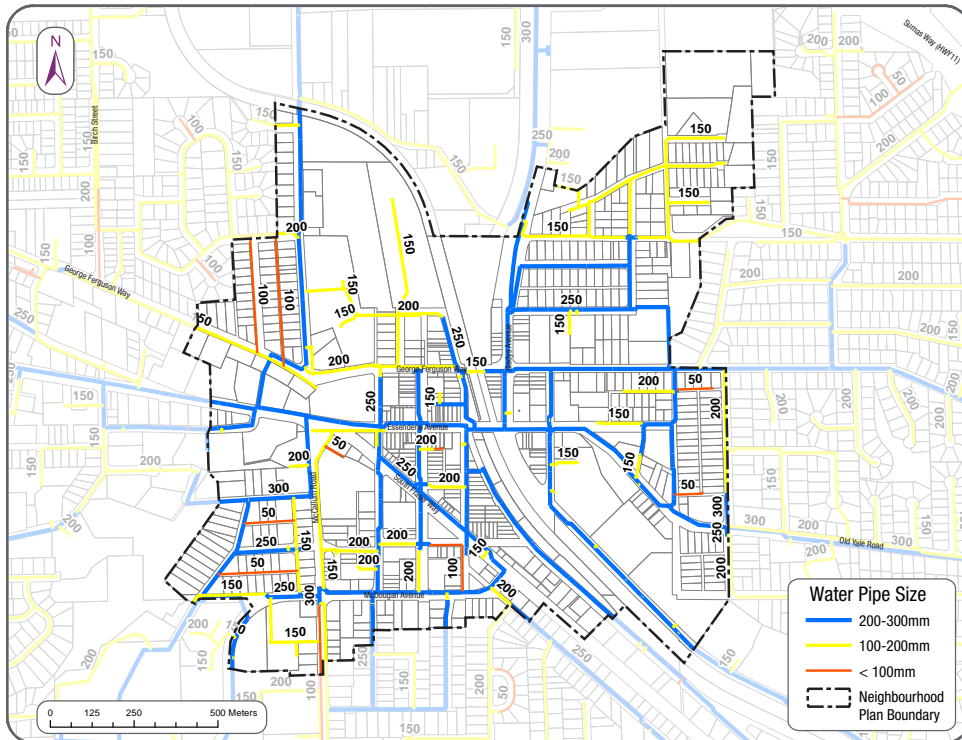


Figure 122. Water network

As the HDNP water mains are generally in good condition, the challenge that needs to be addressed in the HDNP is how to get water from the reservoirs to the area through transmission line infrastructure. This includes an extension of the Urban Core Transmission main from George Ferguson Way and Cruickshank Street to South Fraser Way and Bourquin Crescent in the City Centre, continuing on to George Ferguson Way and Pauline Street in Historic Downtown.

SANITARY NETWORK

Sewer mains in the HDNP are older compared to many other areas of the City. Video inspection completed in 1996 enabled many repairs to be completed, and a re-inspection is due in a few years, which will help determine appropriate and continued repair and replacement.

Two trunk sanitary mains serve the area, one 450mm and another 750mm, and these have sufficient capacity for supporting growth in the area. However, the local network within the area is undersized in some places, with mains that are 150mm or 200mm and located on private property. Repairing or replacing these privately located mains could be a challenge.

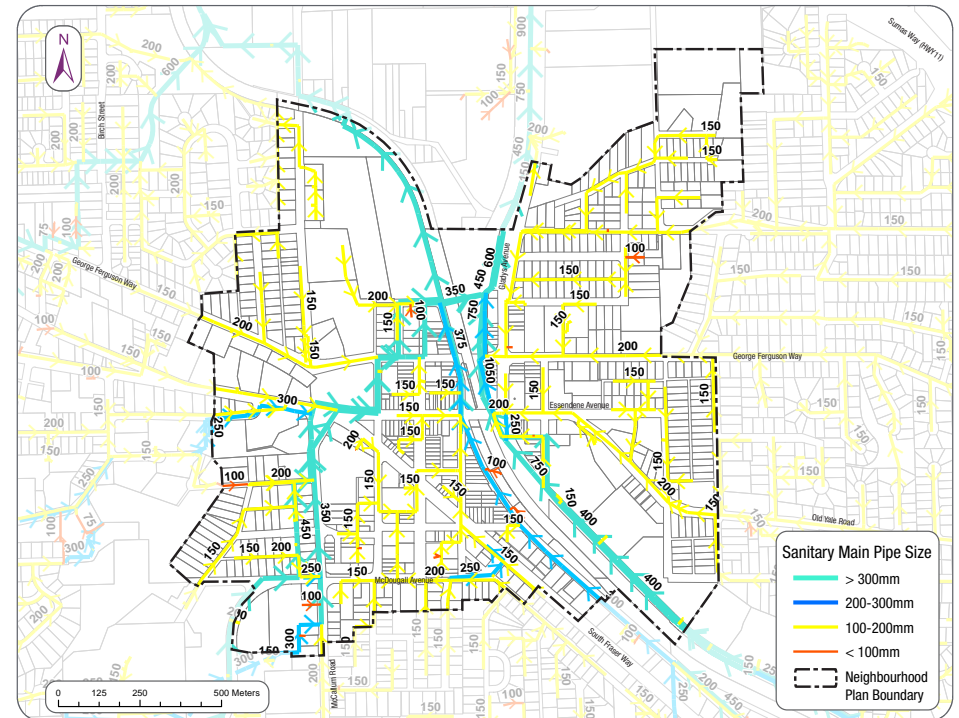


Figure 123. Sanitary network

The typical City bylaw standard minimum main size is 200mm, so some areas are currently under served. Additional modeling of future growth and development in later stages of work will be required to see whether the existing 150mm mains will need to be upgraded.

DRAINAGE NETWORK

The HDNP has some of the oldest drainage system infrastructure in the City, with some built in the 1960s. This includes an 1800mm trunk main under Essendene and Montrose Avenues that drains areas from as far away as Mill Lake and the City Centre area along portions of South Fraser Way (Willband Creek, which flows north to the Fraser River). Some newer infrastructure has been installed as areas have redeveloped through the 1980s and 1990s.

Overall, the drainage system is still working and HDNP area has good soil conditions that permit infiltration systems to be installed as new development occurs. However, with minimal building setbacks from property lines and high site coverage, there can be challenges with accommodating infiltration systems on individual properties (this is typically done under surface parking lots, and as redevelopment leads to more underground parking, it can lead to reduced

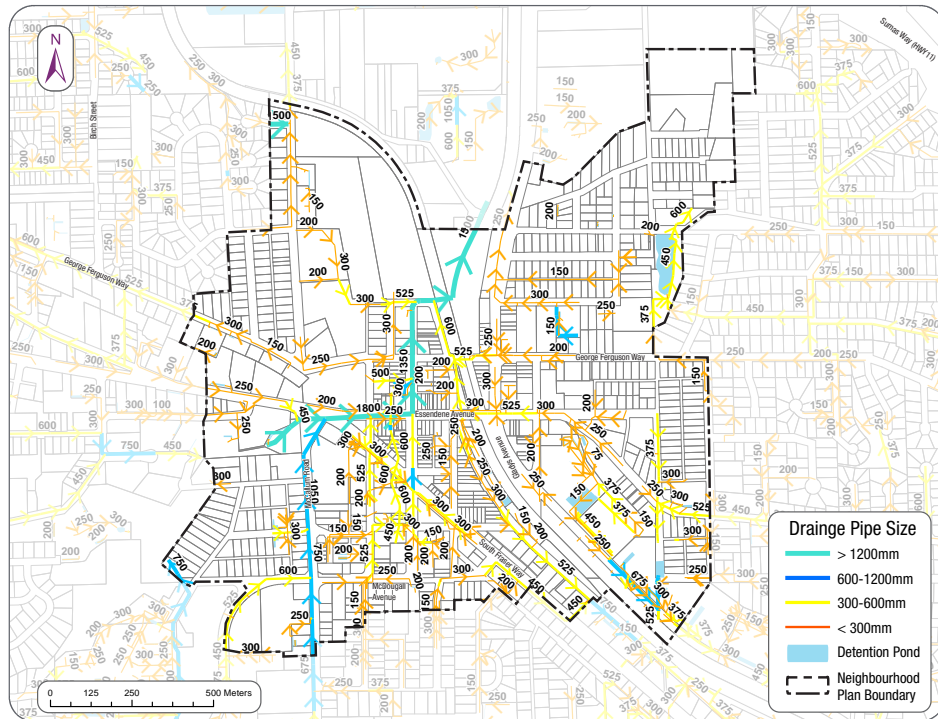


Figure 124. Drainage network

infiltration capacity). The next steps of preparing the HDNP should consider how to achieve improved drainage through redevelopment where on-site infiltration is a challenge. This could include alternative consolidated off-site detention and infiltration facilities.

Finally, the HDNP area is within the Willband Creek Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP) area. Drainage modeling for the HDNP should be coordinated with the Willband Creek ISMP and City Centre Neighbourhood Plan.

FIBRE OPTIC NETWORK

The newly installed fibre optic network that crosses the border at Sumas, Washington, has a spur that connects north to the HDNP area along West Railway Street and Riverside Road from the University of the Fraser Valley campus in the UDistrict. This high capacity line could serve as an incentive to encourage office, technology, and other digitally focused industries in the area.

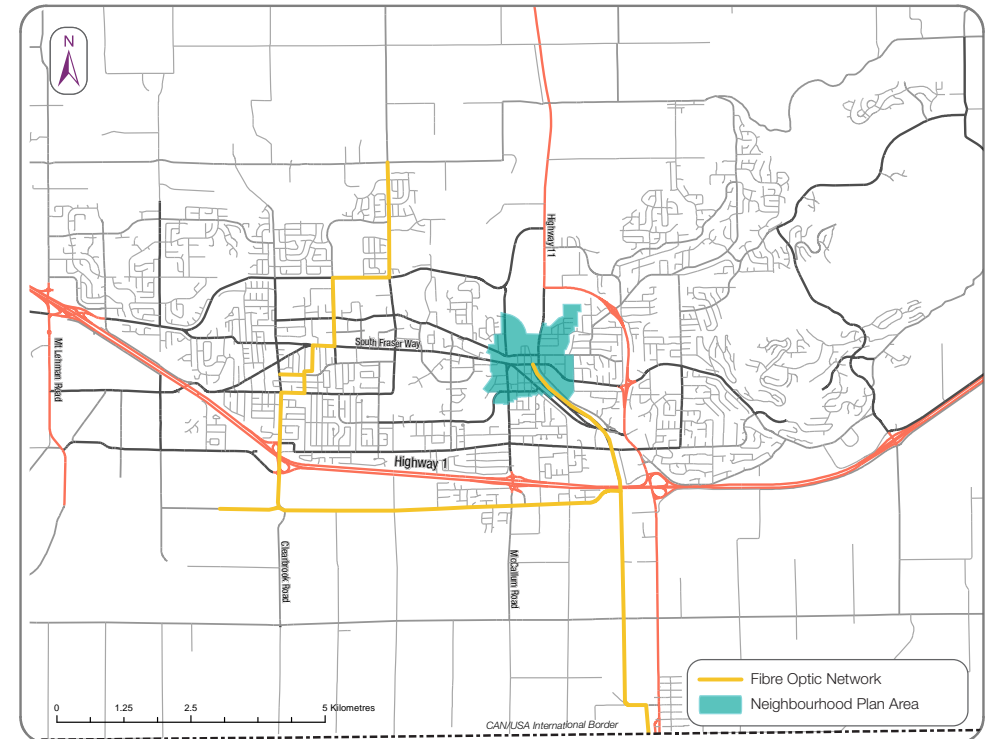


Figure 125. Fibre optic network

3.6 Community Places and Public Spaces

PARKS AND TRAILS

The City uses four categories to help distinguish the various functions a park serves: City-wide, Community, Neighbourhood, and Open Space. The HDNP area has several Open Space parks and one Neighbourhood park, but no Community or City-wide parks.

Just outside the HDNP area to the west is Ravine Park with trails that connect to Mill Lake Park through Farrant Crescent. Although the distance between Jubilee Park and Mill Lake Park through Ravine Park is relatively short (~1,000m), the connections, signage, and route alignment do not exist today. There have been efforts in the past to plan for establishing this 'green' connection, and it is a significant opportunity that can be explored further in the HDNP, and also through the concurrent Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan update.

A connection from Jubilee Park to the north is an additional opportunity that can be explored in the HDNP. The same creek (Willband) that flows through Ravine Park is culverted underground below Essendene and Montrose Avenues through the historic core as it flows north to the Fraser River. This could function as a general 'green' connection from Jubilee Park north to the undeveloped land at the former Clayburn Brick factory site along Pine Street.

Finally, an overall approach to street and sidewalk design in the HDNP that requires more street trees, plantings, and 'green' features can create urban trail connections. This will be explored more through the HDNP.

Jubilee Park

Jubilee Park (a Neighbourhood Park) is the one park space in the area with facility improvements such as pickleball courts and a playground. It is located just outside the historic core and along the McCallum Road corridor, and is surrounded by the rear accesses and blank walls of surrounding buildings. Within the parks space is the old Centennial Library, which is currently under renovation.

Jubilee Park has a long and rich history, beginning on the Diamond Jubilee in 1927. Over the following years many changes have take place, including the addition and removal of sports fields and a bandstand, the construction and demolition of the Abbotsford Curling Club, the construction and renovation of the Centennial Library building, and establishment of the Jubilee Lawn Bowling Club.

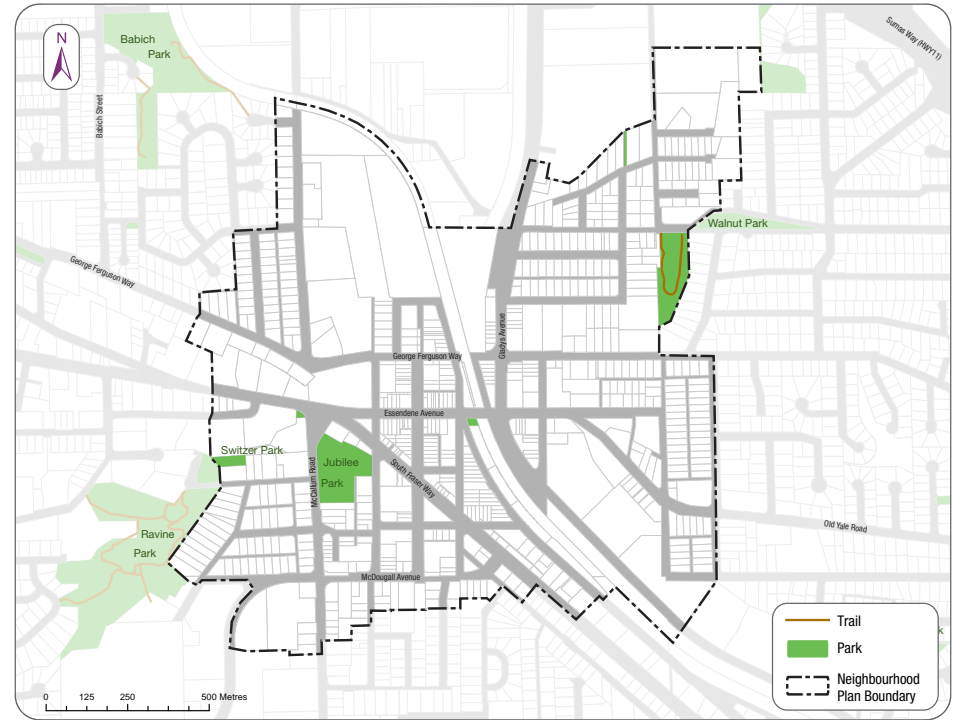


Figure 126. Parks and trails



Figure 127. Conceptual trail connections, 2011

In addition to these facility changes, the grounds have been incrementally modified as trees and landscaping age or succumb to disease. Historically, there has been mention of some trees being planted in memory, however the MSA Museum Society has not been able to verify who or when these plantings may have occurred. Today, there continues to be proactive hazard mitigation and revitalization of trees in the park, including new plantings to replace trees that have been removed.

Jubilee Park has also been the focus of various designs and concepts that highlight the many opportunities there are in continuing to improve and enhance the park as a significant neighbourhood asset, as shown below. The most recent announcement was for improvement money for Jubilee Park from both the Provincial and City governments, along with potential partnership contributions from the local business community. This money will continue to help support park renovations, reinforcing Jubilee Park as an asset to a the HDNP area that will likely see redevelopment in the future.

A	Vine maple	<i>Acer circinatum</i>
B	Silk tree	<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>
C	'Summer gold' dogwood	<i>Cornus kousa</i> 'Summer gold'
D	Mountain ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
E	Purple beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Atropurpurea'
F	Golden chain tree	<i>Laburnum anagyroides</i>
G	Dawn redwood	<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>
H	Japanese white pine	<i>Pinus parviflora</i>
I	Weeping sequoia	<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i> 'Pendula'
J	Stewartia	<i>Stewartia pseudocamellia</i>
K	Hinoki cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i>
L	Cascara	<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>
M	Chitalpa	<i>Chitalpa x tashkenensis</i>
N	Chinese fir	<i>Cunninghamia lanceolata</i>
O	Empress tree	<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>
P	Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Q	Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>

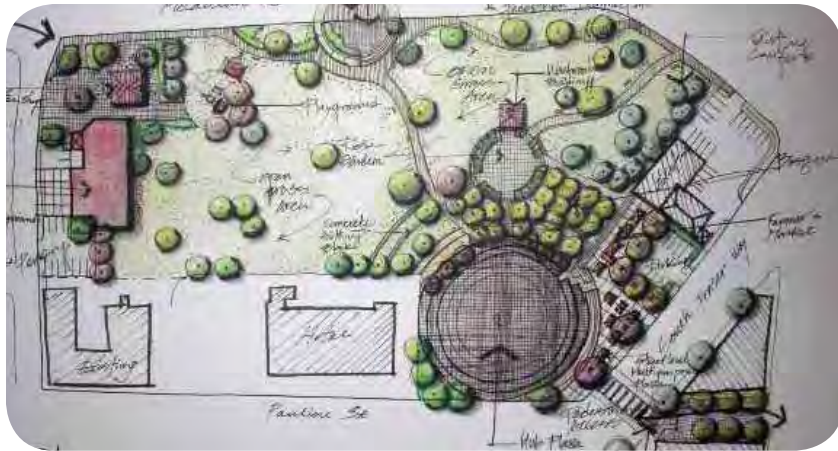


Figure 128. Jubilee Park design concepts (2007 [above] and 2017 [right])



Figure 129. Tree planting plan, 2016

COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND AMENITIES

In order to support the OCP's objectives relating to community, culture and amenities, the HDNP will consider how public spaces can support:

- cultural inclusiveness, cultural expression, and art
- recognition of historic structures, spaces, and streetscapes
- gathering and social connections

Today, the Historic Downtown provides a diversity of amenities, services and cultural activities ranging from social and religious services to arts and environmental attributes.

Farmers Market

A key cultural destination in Historic Downtown is the weekly Abbotsford Farm and Country Market (AFCM), which is a street market that occupies the Montrose Avenue right-of-way north of George Ferguson Way on Saturday mornings from May to October. It has been operating since 2004.

In 2010, a study was completed to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a permanent public market in Abbotsford. This preliminary assessment concluded that a public market could have the potential to make a positive contribution to the community and region, and additional analysis was recommended to identify a potential location; to conduct a cost vs. benefit analysis; and to identify potential sources of start-up funding. The analysis noted there is little room for growth in the AFCM's current location, and that the market is dependent on its relationship with the adjacent United Church for washroom and electrical facilities.

In March 2016, a research team from the Agriurban Research Centre at the University of the Fraser Valley conducted market structure case studies and a literature review to explore options for a permanent market structure for the AFCM. The research team recommended that the AFCM partner with other groups or small businesses to develop a market structure, ideally as a covered pavilion with electrical outlets, washrooms, and kitchenette.

The brownfield lands north of the market are identified in the OCP as Urban 1 - Midrise, which would allow for multi-storey buildings up to 6 storeys. The potential for additional residential north-south travel demands along Montrose Avenue during Saturday markets should be considered in long term planning for the AFCM location.



Figure 130. Abbotsford Farm and Country Market
(Source: Christopher Poter)



Figure 131. Mural



Figure 132. Christmas tree
(annual lighting first documented in 1947)



Figure 133. Public art bench
(program initiated by the ADBA in 1999)

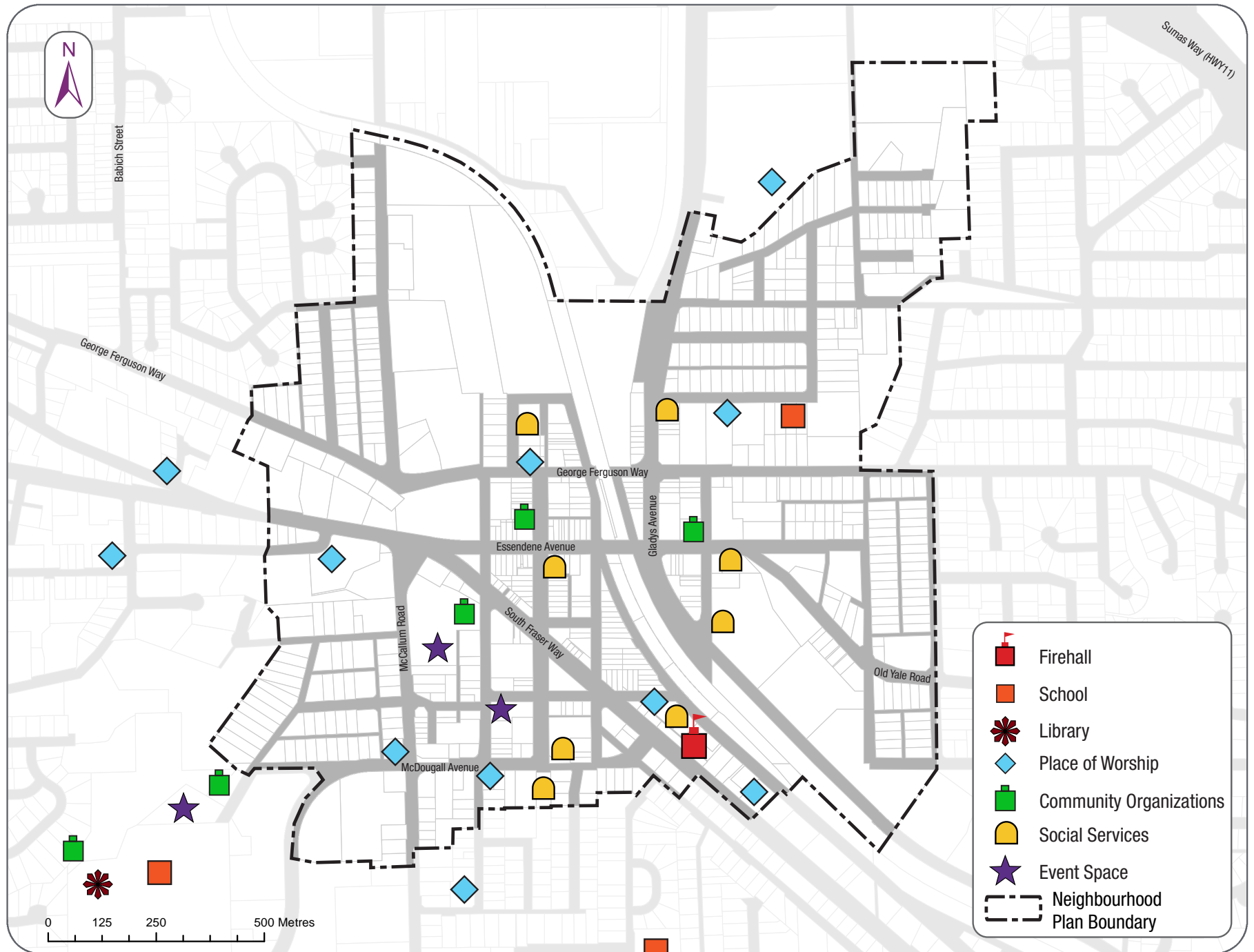


Figure 134. Community facilities and amenities

Festivals, Arts and Culture

Historic Downtown is a magnet for people and events. It is home to a number of significant events, including the Abbotsford Farm and Country Market, annual Christmas Tree Lighting celebration, Jam in Jubilee, Berry Beat, and Classic Car Show. Public art throughout the downtown, including sculptures, artistic street benches and murals, celebrates Abbotsford's history, culture and setting.

The Abbotsford Arts Centre is located south-west of Historic Downtown. This large scale facility provides seating for 700+ people and a space for performances and worship, banquet and celebration space. Other festival and cultural spaces located within the Historic Downtown include: the Abbotsford Social Activity Association and Abbotsford Seniors Association, which are located just east of the rail line near the retail core; Christmas Tree Park at the corner of West Railway and Essendene Avenues; Jubilee Park located along McCallum Road; and the Farmers Market, which takes place in the street right-of-way of Montrose Avenue north of George Ferguson Way.

Community Amenities

Historic Downtown also provides diverse facilities and amenities to support community needs, from education, to religion, health and social support.

There are three schools located within 400 metres (5-minute walk) of the southern edge of the HDNP boundary. These include Alexander Elementary School, Abbotsford Middle School, and Abbotsford Senior Secondary School. The latter two are clustered along with the Abbotsford Community Library, Sweeney Neighbourhood Centre, and the Abbotsford Arts Centre. The Ravine Park Enhancement Society is also located in this cluster as well. The Abbotsford Banquet and Conference Centre on Laurel Street is a popular venue for weddings and special events.

Religious Institutions

There are numerous churches in Historic Downtown, including Trinity Memorial United Church, the River Community Church, Transform Central, and New Life Pentecostal Church.

Social Services

There are many social services in the Historic Downtown such as Abbotsford Community Services (ACS) and Community Residential Emergency Short Stay and Treatment (CRESST). ACS offers a full range of community services and CRESST is a 10-bed community-based program that provides support and treatment to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.



Figure 135. Jam in Jubilee concert series
(Source: Boulevard Group)



Figure 136. Berry Beat Festival
(Source: brickville.ca)





A black and white photograph of a city street at night. The scene is illuminated by streetlights and storefront lights. In the foreground, a wooden bench is visible on the left. A person is walking away from the camera in the center. To the right, a car is partially visible. The background shows more buildings and trees. The overall atmosphere is that of a vibrant, active urban environment.

4.0 Elements of Vibrant Historic Downtowns

The OCP provides clear direction on creating great public spaces, community amenities, streets, mobility choices, and housing choices. This section summarizes key city-wide objectives from the OCP, which provide a starting point for this planning process, as well as precedent images to assist in generating ideas about potential design solutions.



4.1 People Places

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP objectives will guide the planning and design process related to people places.

- 1 Support a diverse and dynamic system of parks, recreational facilities, and trails, as well as urban plazas, streets, and other places and features.
- 2 Support creative and cultural expression in public spaces and throughout the city, and celebrate local heritage. Embrace a sense of experimentation in the activation of people places.
- 3 Foster inclusivity in Abbotsford through diverse and accessible buildings and public spaces, and amenities that meet a variety of cultural priorities.

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Community amenities contribute to the richness of daily life taking place in Historic Downtown, signalling it is a place to engage with and enjoy. Today, Historic Downtown provides a diversity of community amenities, community services and cultural activities. The Plan will consider what additional amenities could be located in Historic Downtown.

Considerations for this Planning Process

- *Is there a desire for a permanent year round farmers market? If so, where would be the best location?*
- *How can trails and movement systems also act as routes for cultural events and places to celebrate history and natural systems?*





The Indianapolis Cultural Trail incorporates public art and seasonal events, like an Easter Egg Hunt, along the multi-use trail. Images: top cycle905.blogspot.ca; and, bottom Indianapolis Cultural Trail.



This pavilion in Stavanger, Norway marries contemporary materials with the massing and form of historic buildings. It acts as a meeting point, market shelter, and space for informal music concerts. Projects such as this have helped to elevate the perception of Stavanger as a cultural capital. Image: Atelier Oslo



The farmers market in Historic Downtown is an anchor in the community. As a part of this neighbourhood plan, market identity and conceptual design for the market should be considered. This image shows Pemberton's farmers market. Image: <http://www.pembertonfarmersmarket.com/>

PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES

Public gathering spaces are the stage where people meet and engage outside of home and work life. Vibrant public spaces encourage lingering and informal socializing. They expand social networks and build community; they can be coffee shops and pubs, streets and parks, or plazas and festivals. Plazas and parks in the retail core of Historic Downtown offer the greatest opportunity for creating vibrant people places.

Considerations

- *How can plazas be designed so they are destinations with a diverse range of activities for all ages and all seasons?*



Figure 137. Basic ingredients for plazas
(these important "outdoor rooms" foster social gathering and public life)



Bellingham, Washington's outdoor cinema and stage at the Village Green in Fairhaven is a hub of activity every Saturday evening during summers. Image: Katie Atkins



This park in Dallas, Texas provides free outdoor concerts, free weekly classes, and arts events. It also provides a destination and public gathering place and helped to stimulate four major real estate developments. Image: SmithGroupJJR



Diverse public spaces provide opportunities to linger in downtown throughout the seasons. This plaza provides a shaded public space in downtown Boston, Massachusetts. Images: Charles Mayer Photography



This plaza outside of City Hall in Guelph, Ontario acts as a skating rink in winter and a splash pad in summer. Images: Left gowlyd.ca; right Adam Donaldson



A park-like plaza with lush softscape elements, natural stage and central seating area.

STICKY STREETS

Sticky streets encourage people to stop and linger. Like public gathering spaces, sticky streets provide a setting where residents meet and engage with people outside of home and work life, expand social networks, and build community. The streets in the retail core of the Historic Downtown offer the greatest opportunity for creating vibrant people places.

Considerations

- *How can patios and seating be integrated into streets?*
- *How can traffic calming and other measures add to pedestrian comfort to encourage lingering?*
- *How can streets and laneways provide more activities other than only travel or goods delivery, and rather become places for more social life?*
- *Are temporary street closures for festivals appropriate for any streets? If so, where? What are the implications for design?*



In Denver, Colorado, this area acts as a street with on-street parking for most of the year; however, for planned events, the street can become a plaza in which it is closed off to traffic using retractable bollards at both ends. Image: Jamie Fogle/Design Workshop, Inc.



There is something about a city's laneways that captures creative imaginations. In some cities, there are entire festivals dedicated to occupying laneways. This example shows a permanent installation in a downtown Vancouver laneway. The role of laneways as public space should be considered as a part of this plan. Image: HCMA



Bellingham's Arts District uses the right-of-way to create seating edges that enable people watching, create patios, and calm traffic. Image: Ellen Sollod

4.2 Retail Streets

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP objectives will guide the planning and design process related to retail streets.

- 1 Rethink streets to focus on people by turning them into destinations for gathering, shopping, and lingering.
- 2 Create the conditions for efficient use of existing parking while managing demand. Support the need for less parking over time, and in particular less surface parking in Mixed Use Centres.
- 3 Establish appropriate building setbacks, both maximums and minimums, to create sufficient space for amenities and 'spill-over' from retail stores into the streetscape.

STREETSCAPE ZONES

Retail Street Edges are made up of 3 zones:

Building Frontage Zone

This zone typically occupies the space between the building and the property line. However, it can also be located adjacent to the property line and within a right-of-way. The width of this zone is variable depending on the building setback and provides space for storefronts to spill out into the public realm with signage and seating. It also provides a clear area for doors to open without interfering with pedestrian movement.

Pedestrian Movement Zone

This zone is dedicated to pedestrian circulation. This zone is essential for providing clear and unobstructed universal access for all ages and abilities.

Furnishing Zone

The Furnishing Zone is located between the roadway and the Pedestrian Movement Zone. This is the area where a variety of amenities are located, such as benches, lighting, bicycle parking, street trees, and waste receptacles. This area also provides a buffer between the pedestrian and the roadway, and can be used for integrating stormwater infrastructure, such as raingardens.

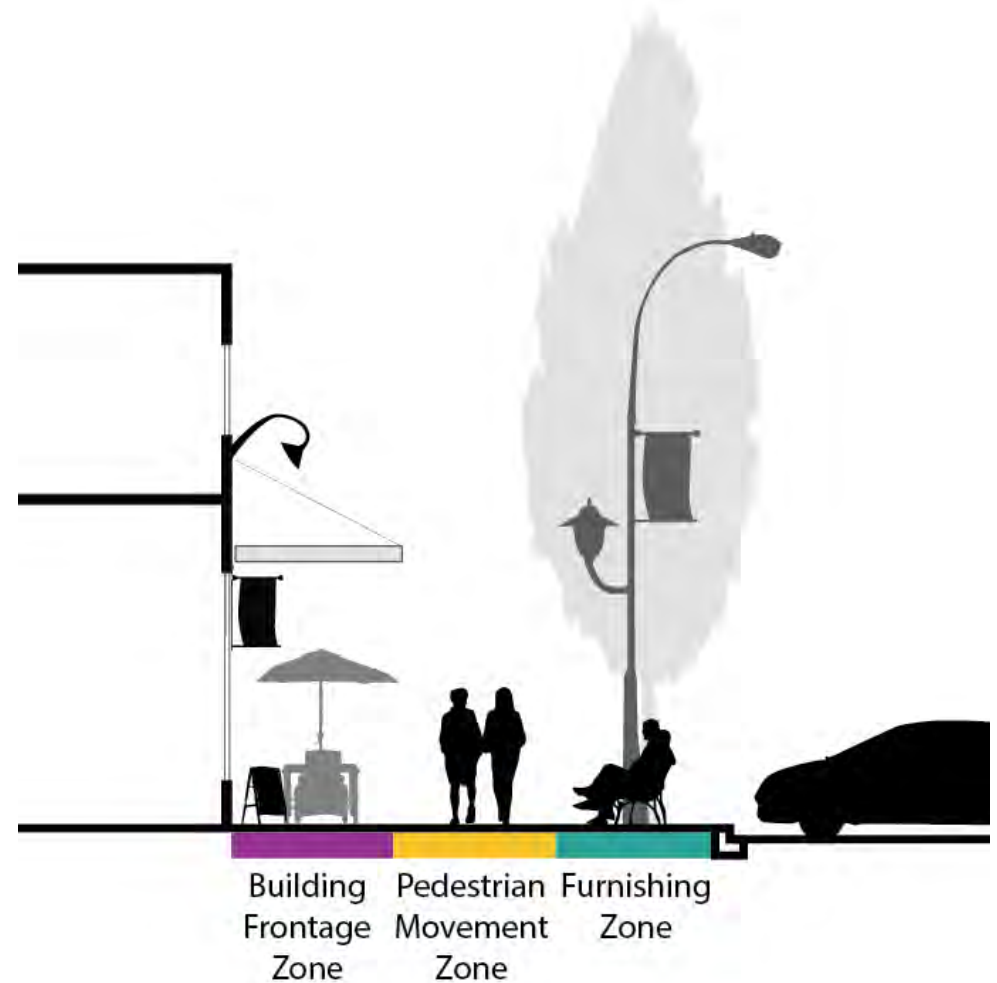


Figure 138. Streetscape zones

Considerations

- What types of paving are most appropriate for the pedestrian zone? Should paving in this zone be distinct or consistent with adjacent zones?
- What amenities should be provided in the furnishing zone? How could the elements in this zone help to achieve the desired streetscape character? What colour and style would be appropriate?
- Should the width of the building frontage zone be consistent or variable? How should this area be defined? Should weather protection be provided?
- How are patios and storefront displays integrated into the streetscape?

BUILDING MASSING AND SITING

Building siting and massing defines the edge of the street. Good siting and massing creates comfortable, human scaled streetscapes that have interesting destinations for walking and lingering. In Historic Downtown today, Montrose and Essendene Avenues have good scale. Buildings are generally located at the property line with no setback, and the perceived width of the right-of-way is reduced through on-street parking and other streetscape elements such as trees and furnishings.

Siting and massing of new buildings will be an important consideration in developing design guidelines for this area. South Fraser Way, for example, is not well defined by buildings. Buildings are generally set back away from the property line, which contributes to the sense of the street being overly expansive.

Considerations:

- *How should set-backs be managed to create comfortable pedestrian experience as well as a diverse experience along the streetfront?*
- *How does the relationship of the height of the building to the width of the road influence the experience of the street, and what is the appropriate scale for the character of Historic Downtown? Are some streets different from others?*



These three examples show:

- (top) a pedestrian shopping mews where variation in the set-back is used to create a quiet, internal shopping area for pedestrians only
- (bottom left) how zero set-back from the property line can create a welcoming streetfront for pedestrians, and an engaging walk for window shopping and people watching
- (bottom right) how a large set-back can be reduced using a landscape edge.

Images: Tripadvisor.ca

RETAIL FORMAT AND TRANSPARENCY

Small scale retail shops provide regular entrances along the streetscape and transparency that contributes to a vibrant pedestrian experience. Windows that are unobstructed and provide clear views into and out from businesses provide opportunity for people watching from inside, or to be drawn in from the outside.

At the same time, requiring regular shop entrances at too small of an interval can result in many “Please Use Other Door” signs if the layout of a retail space does not suit the businesses there and glazing can take up valuable wall space for interior displays. In the case of the latter, windows often end up being covered up by posters or other materials. Expansive glazing on north walls can also create excess heat loss in winter, and reduce the sustainability of a building.

Considerations:

- *What is the appropriate scale of retail? Are different scales appropriate along different streets? How can the plan allow for flexibility?*
- *Should retail unit sizes be regulated?*
- *How much glazing should be required?*



Façade articulation and shop entrances at regular intervals can be used to create visual rhythm and support a vibrant pedestrian experience.



Transparency can be used to create visual interest along the street. Image: Brew Books

GOODS DELIVERY AND LANEWAY ACCESS

Three of the four core blocks in Historic Downtown have laneways or private rear loading areas for goods delivery. Laneways can help to keep goods delivery off of the street, reduce the need for loading bays on the street, and – in residential areas – limit the need for driveways and front garages.

Considerations

- *If redevelopment occurs, how should goods delivery be accommodated on retail blocks that currently have no laneway?*
- *If redevelopment occurs, how should private rear loading areas be managed?*
- *How should vehicle access be provided to residential blocks with no laneway?*



Blocks with laneways.



In Port Townsend, WA, deliveries are made from the street, with trucks stopping in the centre lane.
Image: Michael McKee www.myporttownsend.com

4.3 Natural Systems

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP objectives will guide the planning and design process related to natural systems.

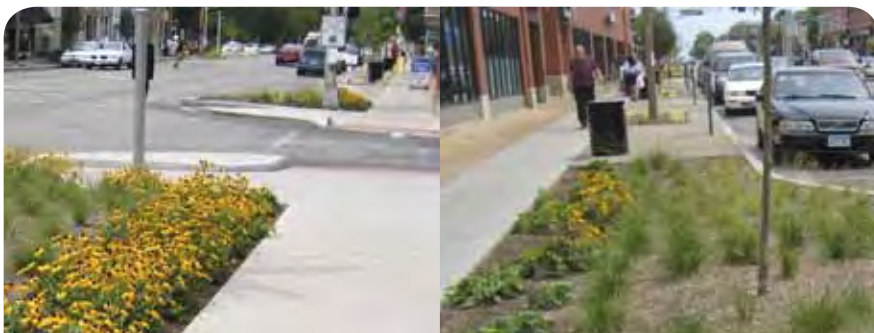
- 1 Enhance and restore ecological links between existing natural areas and public open spaces, increasing connections between isolated habitats.
- 2 Support an integrated stormwater management approach for the comprehensive management of surface water, stormwater, and ground water resources that promotes health aquatic ecosystems, resilience to climate change and the maintenance of water systems.
- 3 Continue using Integrated Stormwater Management Plans for watersheds and designing stormwater features to form part of the broader open space network.

OPEN SPACE NETWORKS

Mobility corridors, including streets, greenways and rail lines, provide opportunities for building connections between natural areas and public open spaces or plazas, thereby connecting isolated habitats. Streets can also be used to integrate stormwater management and support the watershed and wetlands located north of Historic Downtown.

Considerations

- *How can residential or retail streets integrate stormwater management?*
- *How could the railway or greenway corridors provide the opportunity to connect habitats or increase biodiversity?*
- *What opportunities are there to incorporate stormwater management on multi-family residential sites?*



This project in St. Louis, Missouri adapts the main street to widen sidewalks and gain public space. It also incorporates curb-bulges that calm traffic and shorten pedestrian crossing distances, intercept rain water, and provide the opportunity for planting with seasonal interest. Images: Design Workshop Inc.



A rain garden and tree canopy are incorporated adjacent to this railway corridor. Image: Centre for Neighbourhood Technology



There are many ways to incorporate raingardens into streets. Adjacent land use, aesthetic and character, and context needs to be considered. Images: (middle) Centre for Neighbourhood Technology, (bottom) waterbucket.ca



These are examples of how residents can use stormwater management as an amenity. Images: (top three) La Citta Vita, (bottom left) Centre for Neighbourhood Technology, (bottom right) Watershed Protection Inc.



Situating raingardens adjacent to surface parking is a simple way to reduce the impact of large paved surfaces. Image: Montgomery County Planning Commission.

4.4 Mobility Choices

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP objectives will guide the planning and design process related to mobility choices.

- 1 Ensure decisions, investments, and policies embrace the synergy and overlapping relationship between land use decisions and transportation, recognizing that the most important element of achieving a shift to walking, biking and transit is supportive land uses.
- 2 Make people the most important consideration when planning and designing new streets (or retrofitting existing streets), creating places for safe, enjoyable walking and cycling, as well as for lingering, meeting, and people watching.
- 3 Increase transportation choice by making walking, biking, and transit the most attractive options for most trips in the Urban Core and Neighbourhood Centres, and viable options everywhere.



Figure 139. OCP Urban Centre retail street section

PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, TRANSIT AND PRIVATE VEHICLES

Street design needs to balance the many users of these shared spaces in safe, comfortable and delightful ways.

Considerations

- How and where should cycling lanes be incorporated, and how should they be defined? What other cycling amenities should be considered?
- How can walking be encouraged and how can streets create comfortable micro-climates for people to enjoy?
- How can accessible designs be integrated as standard practice to meet the needs of strollers, scooters, wheelchairs, etc?
- How can buses be better integrated into daily trips?
- How can wide, undefined right-of-ways be redesigned to better support walking, lingering, and cycling?



The Indianapolis Cultural Trail reduces conflicts between buses and cyclists, two user groups that can be difficult to balance. Image: cleveland.com



These before and after images of Taylor Avenue in Seattle, Washington show how excess street width can be transformed into public space, with pedestrian, cyclist and transit facilities. An approach like this might be useful along South Fraser Way, or other streets where the right-of-way is oversized. Images: Mithun.



This Vancouver street aligns with the OCP mode emphasis objectives, and incorporates wayfinding signage that delineates space for different users. Image: Flickr user Paul Krueger



Rosemead Boulevard in Temple City, California retrofits an arterial with strip malls by adding pedestrian and cycling facilities. Image: Streetsblog L.A.



Tools for en-route bicycle tune-ups can be provided along a multi-use trail. Image: Shawn cycle905.blogspot.ca

BEFORE



AFTER



These before and after images of Park Avenue in South Lake Tahoe, California show how strip-malls can incorporate design elements to transform them into comfortable pedestrian spaces.
Images: Design Workshop Inc.



(Top) A bike path along a street with no on-street parking can be defined by raingardens and landscape edges. (Bottom) When on-street parking is present, a change in paving materials can be used to define the edge between parking and pedestrians and the cycling path.
Images: (top) travelingmom.com, (bottom) theclio.com

4.5 Managed Parking

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP Objectives will guide the planning and design process related to managed parking.

- 1** Create the conditions for efficient use of existing parking while managing demand. Support the need for less parking over time, and in particular less surface parking in Mixed Use Centres.
- 2** **Retail Streets:** On site surface parking located at the rear of buildings.
- 3** **On Street Parking:** Permit on street parking where strategically effective to minimize the need for off street surface parking. Balance this relative to other street design and public space goals such as separating pedestrians and moving traffic and enabling delivery vehicle access that supports Retail Streets.
- 4** **Off Street Parking:** Minimize off street surface parking, requiring residential and commercial parking to be situated underground or within buildings along Retail Streets.
- 5** **Parking Management:** Consider public parking strategies that promote a high turnover of stalls through time limits or parking fees. This helps promote economic activity and manage demand.

RETHINK PARKING

There are many ways to effectively manage parking and ensure that it is providing the most value. The plan should consider what tools would best facilitate parking management. Available tools range from parking meters and time limits, to apps that help drivers locate parking tailored to the length of their visit in real time.

Considerations

- *How can drivers better find parking opportunities in the Historic Downtown?*
- *Are some parking spots better reserved for short term visits with high turn-over rate to promote economic activity and manage demand?*
- *What is the best way to manage turn-over? Maximum time limits? Metered parking?*
- *How can underused surface parking located near the retail core be more efficiently used?*
- *Are there opportunities to incorporate public structured parking within the retail core and where?*
- *How should event parking be managed?*



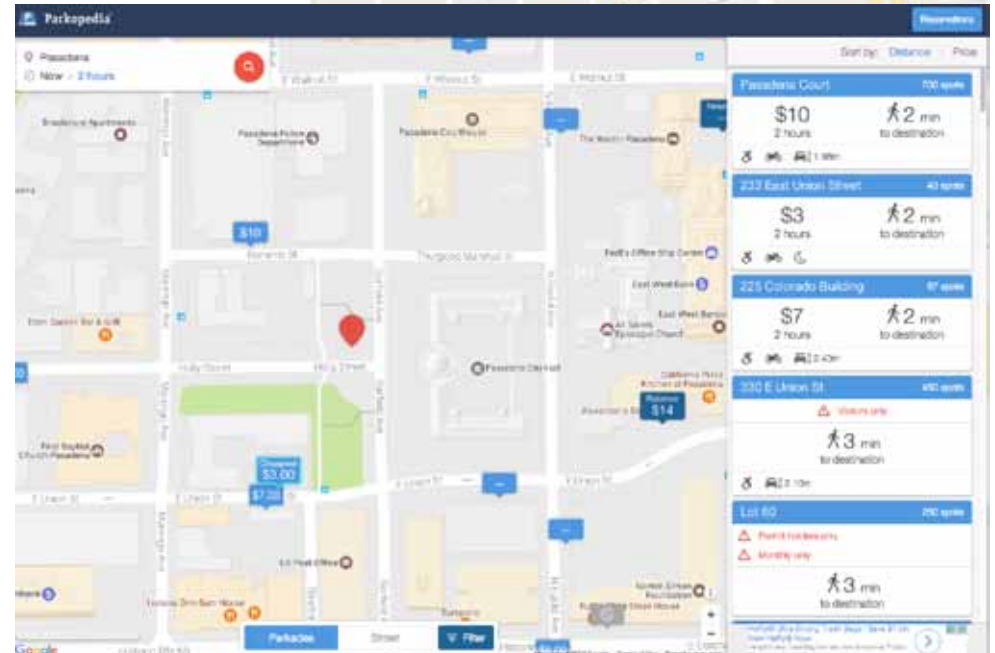
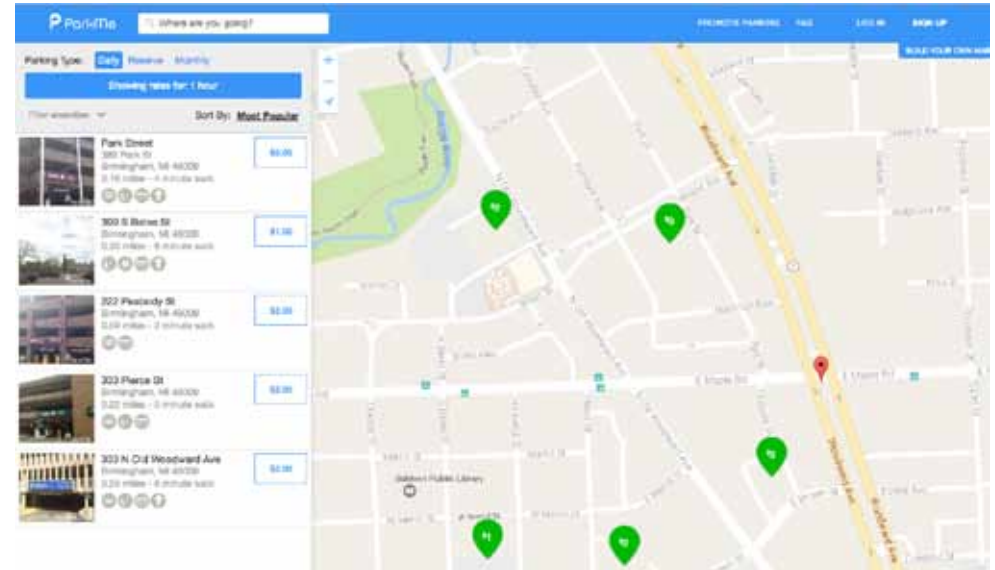
Metered parking can increase chances of finding parking directly next to shops for quick trips, with long term parking alternatives provided nearby. Image: Mack Male.

Case Study: Old Pasadena, California

In Old Pasadena, California, parking meter revenue had been dedicated to financing public improvements in the area and is credited with playing a major part in the revival of the downtown. Before 1993, visitors had a difficult time finding on street parking spaces, making shopping difficult. Parking was not metered, but was regulated by a two hour time limit. After much debate, the City and property owners agreed to install metered parking, with the revenue being invested directly into the public realm along streets with parking meters. Old Pasadena, which had been in a state of decline, has since out performed the rest of Pasadena in terms of retail sales-tax revenue.*

Additional approaches to parking have more recently been introduced in Old Pasadena, such as the use of parking apps. Parking apps allow drivers to locate parking, to see capacity in real time, and to reserve spaces. Filters allow drivers to tailor their parking search based on distance to their destination, length of stay, and cost.

*Source: "Turning Small Change into Big Changes", Douglas Kolozsvari and Donald Shoup, Access Number 23, Fall 2003.



In Old Pasadena, California (bottom) and Birmingham, Michigan (top) parking apps allows drivers to locate parking in real time and to reserve spaces. This provides a full comparison of cost and distance from a destination.

4.6 Housing Mix

OCP OBJECTIVES

The following OCP objectives will guide the planning and design process related to housing mix.

- 1 Establish diverse housing types, increasing the range of options in terms of affordability, tenure, size, and type that support flexible housing options, including multi-generational living and aging in place.
- 2 Encourage the construction of well-designed, attractive and liveable residential streets. New multi-family residential and mixed-use development should seek to enhance the public realm, contribute to neighbourhoods where residents of all ages feel safe and provide ample opportunities for residents and visitors alike to gather and socialize.
- 3 Support the needs of households with children in new multifamily residential development by establishing minimum requirements for number of 2 and 3 bedroom units, and outdoor amenity space.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the OCP process, consideration was also given to the location of housing in the Historic Downtown. While mixed-use, higher-intensity development is envisioned for the other urban centres, past engagement has indicated that there is likely a desire to maintain the unique, small-scale, historic, and retail-focused character of this neighbourhood. This direction will shape how housing is approached in the planning process.

HOUSING DIVERSITY AND VARIETY



Single-detached house with two secondary suites.



Duplex



Side-by-side townhouses



Stacked townhouses



Low-rise apartment building



High-rise apartment building

The images above represent a full spectrum of housing options, from secondary suites in single-detached homes and duplexes, through to mid-rises. This diversity is needed throughout Abbotsford for the City to achieve its OCP objectives related to housing. As a part of this neighbourhood planning process, the role of housing mix in Historic Downtown will need to be determined.

Considerations:

- *What types of housing does the Historic Downtown need to offer in order to support OCP objectives for housing? What types of housing are appropriate and what do the edges between Historic Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods look like?*
- *What opportunities exist for sustainable design?*
- *What opportunities exist for providing non-market housing? How can housing support families?*
- *Is the OCP limit of 6 storeys appropriate, or should this plan allow for additional height?*

4.7 Historic Downtowns

The following precedents demonstrate how other successful downtowns support street life and express heritage, arts, and culture. These images are meant to inspire early ideas and frame themes that could be considered in the design process.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN: FORT LANGLEY, BC



Activity in day and night.



Flexible spaces for festivals and events.



Well maintained historic buildings.



Weather protected seating adjacent to shops.



Connections to open space trails and healthy natural ecosystems.



Activity in day and night.

**HISTORIC
DOWNTOWN:
NELSON, BC**



Colourful seasonal planting.



Well maintained historic buildings.



Small seating areas along the high street.



Places where local farmers can sell their produce along the high street.



Signage that is consistent with the architectural language of the building, and is made from high quality materials.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN: NANAIMO, BC



Places to linger in public and to people watch.



Street furnishings, signage, and architecture that contribute to the historic character.



Places for seasonal events and connecting to local agriculture.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN: VICTORIA, BC



A high quality pedestrian environment, including: shopfronts that provide transparency and regular entrances; paving and furnishings that contribute to the overall character; architecture that incorporates quality materials and colourful accents; and unique street trees that define the street.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN: NIAGARA ON THE LAKE



High quality paving materials are used consistently throughout the main street. This treatment continues into laneways between buildings. Buildings also provide windows and doors on laneways and perennials.



Corner bulbs provide character furnishings that are all coordinated to match, including bicycle racks.



This laneway is used as a patio space, creating a distinct setting for gathering and socializing. In the summer, the streets are lush with colourful perennials and street trees.



Parking is provided on-street as well as to the rear, as shown above. The rear of the building provides windows, doors and high-quality treatment of materials and finishing on all façades. Trees in parking lots help to reduce summer heat, and beautify these spaces.



Public art is made of high quality materials and finish, and celebrate important people of the past.



A boulevard with a feature such as a cenotaph can create a sense of entry and help to slow traffic by creating "friction" in the right-of-way.



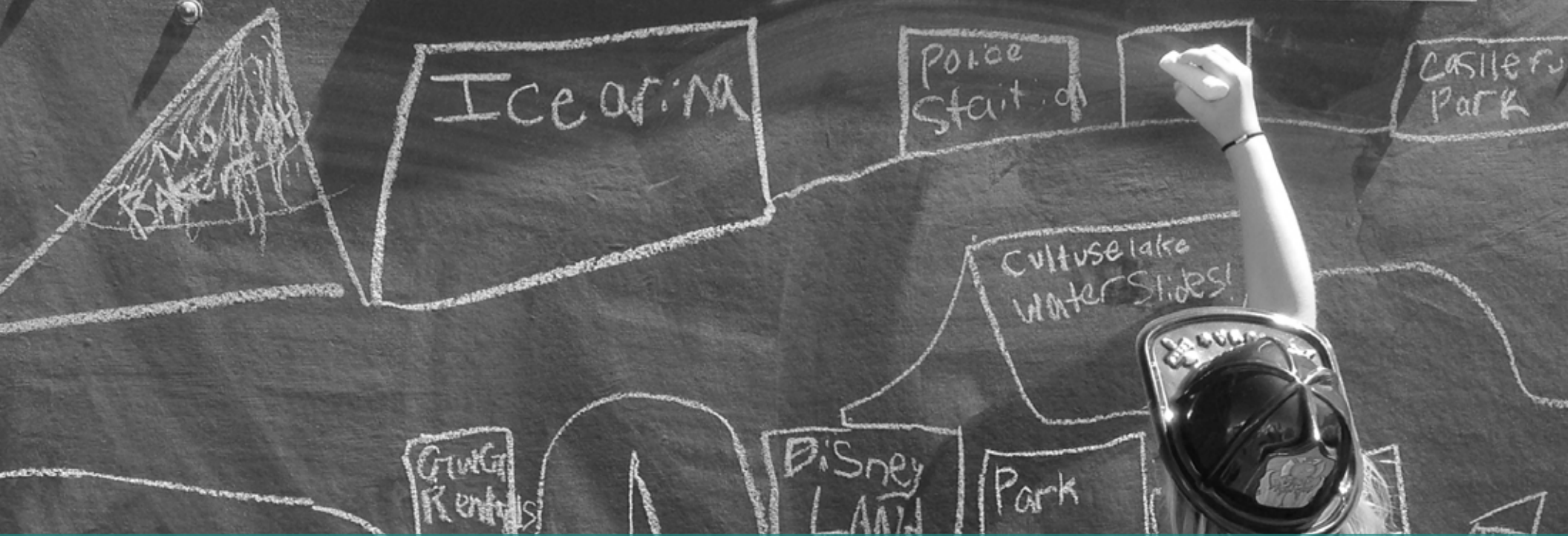
Street furnishings are coordinated and speak to the historic setting, and there are a variety of shop sizes.



Architectural elements provide each building with a distinct identity and character.



The Abbotsford of my dreams looks like...



5.0 Public Engagement Strategy

Pursuant to Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*, any amendment or update to an Official Community Plan must include consideration of consultation with specific groups.

The purpose of this section is to outline the participation strategies, tasks, and activities that the City of Abbotsford will undertake to engage these groups and others. It is the City's intent to enable meaningful and timely discussions that will help create the HDNP. The engagement activities will be targeted, inclusive and innovative, and incorporate various methods to reach out to identified groups and the community. Particular attention will be paid to using different types of engagement tailored to each Stage of the process. A more detailed engagement plan will be included in each stage's staff report for the subsequent stage.

The HDNP forms a part of a broader city wide initiative entitled 'Plan 200K' and engagement activities will be coordinated to complement other ongoing projects within the Plan 200K umbrella.

5.1 Who Will We Engage?

The following is a preliminary list of stakeholders who may have interest in the development of Historic Downtown. The list will serve as a starting point to help inform the creation and delivery of engagement activities. This will be reviewed and supplemented throughout the process.

General Public

- City of Abbotsford residents (targeting those who live in the Historic Downtown area)
- Historic Downtown property and business owners
- Historic Downtown visitors, employees, and retail customers

City of Abbotsford

- City Council
- Senior Management Team
- Interdepartmental staff representatives
- Development Advisory Committee (DAC)
- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Parks, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Committee (PRCAC)

Key Organizations

- Abbotsford Downtown Business Association (ADBA)
- Tourism Abbotsford
- Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
- Urban Development Institute - Fraser Valley (UDI)

Governments and Government Agencies

- First Nations (Matsqui, Sumas, Leq'á:mel)
- School District 34
- University of the Fraser Valley
- BC Transit
- Fraser Health
- Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and Southern Railway of BC (SRY)



5.2 How and When Will We Engage?

The following are the engagement activities for the process. Logistical and other details will be determined as the engagement is rolled out. DIALOG will be responsible for collecting, synthesizing, and summarizing all participant input, and will produce two engagement summary reports, one for Stage 2 and one for Stage 3.

Throughout the project the Plan 200K website and social media accounts will be used to inform and engage the public.

Stage 1: Project Launch and Background Research

In this stage engagement will focus on informing stakeholders about the HDNP planning process, and to let them know what opportunities there will be for taking part and shaping the plan. (March – May 2017)

Activities Included:

- Plan 200k Project Launch
- Abbotsford Downtown Business Association Meetings

Stage 2: Building on the Vision

This stage sets the foundation for concept development and involves a great deal of stakeholder and community engagement. It is focused on identifying the vision, values, aspirations, concerns, and ideas for the future of Historic Downtown. This stage will be informed by precedents and the background report and include many tools of engagement in order to reach broad involvement and diverse perspectives. (June – September 2017)

Activities May Include:

- News Release
- Conversation Boards
- Farmers Market
- Our Downtown, Our History, Our Stories (video)
- Speaker Event
- Historic Downtown Design Workshop

Stage 3: Creating and Reviewing the Plan

The engagement in Stage 3 will be focused on gathering feedback on land use concept and urban design frameworks for open space, movement character and more. Stage 3 also involves reporting out on the engagement outcomes of Stage 2 and 3. (October – February 2017)

Activities May Include:

- News Release
- Stakeholder Workshop
- Online Survey

Stage 4: Final Plan Review

In this stage, the draft preferred plan will be shared with stakeholders for review and final comment. Stage 4 also involves reporting out on the engagement outcomes. (March – July 2018)

Activities May Include:

- News Release
- BIA and Other Stakeholder Workshop
- Plan Public Review of the Plan
- Public Hearing





Montrose
Dental
Centre
General Dentistry
Dr. Chris Barlow

duft&co

CGA J. Astorino & Associates, Inc.
Certified General Accountant

STONE REFORMS

6.0 Next Steps



NEXT STEPS

The receipt of the Background Research Report by Abbotsford City Council marks the completion of Stage 1 of the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan process. The research completed will directly inform Stage 2 work, which will focus on preparing a preferred land use concept. This will be achieved through a focused engagement process with the public and stakeholders framed by land use options created from the planning issues identified in Stage 1.

Based on the outcomes of this analysis and input from the community, the preferred land use concept will be developed and tested to confirm the market feasibility and infrastructure viability. When combined with the building and street design guidelines, this work will collectively lead to the creation of the final neighbourhood plan to guide future growth and development in the Historic Downtown.

This Plan is expected to be ready for the bylaw adoption process in Summer 2018.





Historic Downtown | NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



plan FOR
200K

DIALOG®