

CAPITAL CITY DOWNTOWN PLAN

sustainable vibrant well designed accessible



Table of Contents

1. A New Plan for Downtown	1
Purpose of the Plan	1
Building on the Successes of the 1997 Plan	3
Planning Process to Date	5
Plan Area	6
Alignment with Other Plans and Legislation	8
Planning Context.....	11
Downtown Development Context	17
Land Use Context	18
Neighbourhoods of Downtown	22
2. A New Vision for Downtown	25
Vision Statement.....	25
Planning Principles	26
The Importance of Downtown	28
Challenges	31
Catalyst Projects.....	34
What Are the Benefits of Taking Action?	49
3. Policy Framework	57
Sustainable Downtown.....	58
Vibrant Downtown.....	63
Well-Designed Downtown	68
Accessible Downtown	69
4. Goals and Policies	71
4.1 SUSTAINABLE DOWNTOWN	71
1. A Healthy Natural Environment	71
2. Energy, Emissions and Air Quality	73
3. Natural and Material Resources	75
4. Economic Development.....	77
5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place	79
4.2 VIBRANT DOWNTOWN	83
6. Downtown Housing	83
7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities	86
8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment.....	91

4.3	WELL DESIGNED DOWNTOWN	95
9.	Downtown Urban Design	95
10.	The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets	99
11.	Parks and Open Space	115
12.	Built Form and Architecture	123
13.	Historic Preservation	128
4.4	ACCESSIBLE DOWNTOWN	133
14.	The Downtown Roadway System	133
15.	Pedestrian Circulation	137
16.	Cycling Downtown	143
17.	Downtown Transit System	147
18.	Parking Downtown	151
5.	Neighbourhood Strategies	155
	CC - Commercial-Cultural Core	157
	WC - Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood	168
	JA - Jasper Avenue	179
	MA - McKay Avenue Neighbourhood	183
	CD - Capital City District	190
6.	Implementing The Plan	197
	Be the Catalyst for Transformation	198
	Catalyst Project Implementation	200
	Downtown Action Program	201
	Downtown Action Program Summary	206
	Downtown Action Program - A Guide	212
7.	Zoning Overview	225
	Future Study	226
	Zoning Summary	227

Appendices (Under Separate Cover)

**Appendix A: Downtown Edmonton Commercial,
Office and Residential Forecasts 2009-2044**

Appendix B: Towards a Sustainable Downtown - Reducing GHG Emissions

List of Figures

	<i>Page No.</i>
Figure 1: Downtown Plan Area	2
Figure 2: Downtown Plan Boundary Map	7
Figure 3: Metropolitan Context Map	12
Figure 4: Downtown and the Central Area Map	16
Figure 5: Downtown Neighbourhoods	23
Figure 6: Massing Model - Baseline (Forecasted Growth) Scenario	52
Figure 7: Massing Model - Alternate (Catalyst Projects) Scenario	53
Figure 8: Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Baseline Scenario	55
Figure 9: Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Alternate Scenario	56
Figure 10: The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets	100
Figure 11: Great Street - Jasper Avenue	103
Figure 12: Grand Avenues	104
Figure 13: Ceremonial Streets	105
Figure 14: Neighbourhood Streets - Residential - McKay Avenue	106
Figure 15: Neighbourhood Streets - Residential - Warehouse Campus	107
Figure 16: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail - McKay Avenue	108
Figure 17a: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail - Warehouse Campus 102 Avenue Between LRT Stations	109
Figure 17b: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail - Warehouse Campus 102 Avenue at LRT Station	110
Figure 18: Neighbourhood Streets - Core Commercial Retail	111
Figure 19: Parks and Open Space Map	117
Figure 20: River Valley Promenades	122
Figure 21: Municipal Historic Resources	131
Figure 22: Roadway Network	136
Figure 23: Pedestrian Network	138
Figure 24: Pedway Network	142
Figure 25: Bicycle Network	146
Figure 26: Edmonton LRT Expansion Proposed Downtown LRT Route	150
Figure 27: Commercial-Cultural Core Development Concept	158
Figure 28: Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Development Concept	169
Figure 29: Jasper Avenue Development Concept	180
Figure 30: McKay Avenue Neighbourhood Development Concept	184
Figure 31: Capital City District Development Concept	191

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accessible sustainable
vibrant
sustainable well designed
vibrant sustainable
CAPITAL CITY DOWNTOWN PLAN
HIGHLIGHTS



CU sustainable vibrant

VISION

Edmonton's Strategic Plan, *The Way Ahead*, outlines a bold vision for the City with important implications for Downtown...

shifting to a more urban centre

becoming a more **livable city**

creating **one of the most special places on earth**



Goals

1. Preserve and Sustain Edmonton's Environment
2. Improve Livability
3. Transform Urban Form
4. Shift Transportation Modes
5. Ensure Financial Stability
6. Diversify Economy

The Way Ahead 2009-2018

Edmonton's new *Capital City Downtown Plan* is built upon the goals of *The Way Ahead* to create **a vision for Edmonton's Downtown that is:**

- Sustainable**
- Vibrant**
- Well Designed**
- Accessible**

To achieve this vision Edmonton's Downtown will need to be embraced and invested in commensurate with its being the heart of Alberta's capital City.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOWNTOWN

Investing in Downtown as a special area is appropriate and required given its importance to Edmonton and the Capital Region. A dynamic downtown is a key ingredient of a great city. Its importance transcends its borders benefiting all citizens.

Downtown Edmonton is:

- An Employer...**Highest concentration of jobs in the City
- A Major Tax Base...**almost 10% of Edmonton's total municipal property tax, less than 1% of its area
- A Connector...**Edmonton's transportation hub
- An Educator...**Home to over 50,000 students annually by 2020
- Source of Inspiration...** Winspear Centre for Music, Art Gallery of Alberta, Citadel Theatre, Stanley Milner Library
- A Capital City...**Seat of municipal and provincial governments
- A Place of Discovery...**A primary destination for visitors
- A Symbol...**Edmonton's image to the world

The importance of Downtown is clear, but so too are the challenges it faces:

- Land Speculation...** 24M sq ft of existing built space, 32M sq ft additional zoned capacity
- Auto-Oriented Development...**Major commitment to suburban road network
- Competition with Suburbs...** 75% of Edmonton's future growth planned for new neighbourhoods
- Emerging 24hr Economy...** Entertainment and social networking
- Social Stress and Crime...** High crime rate
- Competition with other Cities...**National and international benchmarks
- Complexity...**Five diverse neighbourhoods



THE PLAN

The *Capital City Downtown Plan* has four pillars:

- 1) **Policies**
- 2) **Zoning**
- 3) **Implementation Strategies**
- 4) **Catalyst Projects**

1) POLICIES

A comprehensive and aligned set of policies forming a coherent foundation for future initiatives, regulation and investment. They establish a clear structure to achieve a Downtown that is:

Sustainable

- Healthy Natural Environment
- Reduced Energy and Emissions and Improved Air Quality
- Stewardship of Natural and Material Resources
- Healthy Communities
- A Sense of Place

Vibrant

- Additional Downtown Housing
- Commercial, Retail and Educational Activities
- Diverse Arts, Culture and Entertainment

Well-Designed

- Well Designed Built and Urban Forms
- Defined Street Framework
- Additional, Connected Parks and Open Space
- Historic Preservation

Accessible

- Efficient Roadway System
- Enhanced Pedestrian Circulation
- Improved Cycling
- Superior Transit

2) ZONING

The *Capital City Downtown Plan* contains new zoning regulations that provide a framework to guide development toward the vision. These new regulations will improve urban design and built form while generally retaining existing heights and densities established by the 1997 Downtown Plan.



Courtesy HBBH + Cohos Emery



Courtesy Carlyle + Associates



Courtesy Robert Langsam



Courtesy City of Edmonton



Courtesy EBH + Cohos Evamy

3) IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Implementation Strategy provides direction, identifies stakeholders, and proposes responsibility to help organize the City's efforts to deliver the Plan. The proposed approach is phased, flexible, and focused. Key elements in the strategy include:

- Adopting the Plan
- Funding the Plan
- Leveraging our Strengths
- Supporting our Partners
- Focusing our Efforts
- Follow Through, Monitoring and Reporting

Catalyst Projects

Catalyst Projects are proposed to create the necessary momentum to stimulate timely change on the scale required. They have been identified for their ability to:

- Increase the number of people living in the downtown
- Enhance Downtown's unique neighbourhoods
- Link the neighbourhoods together – and to the rest of the city.

Nine Catalyst Projects are proposed to be City led:

- 1. Central Warehouse Housing Incentive**
- 2. Warehouse Campus Central Park**
- 3. Jasper Avenue New Vision**
- 4. River Valley Promenades**
- 5. Integration of at-Grade LRT**
- 6. High Profile Bikeway System**
- 7. Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue**
- 8. Green Building and Development Strategy**
- 9. Green and Walkable Downtown**

Four Catalyst Projects are identified as concurrent. They are led by other agencies or have already been funded by the City but are critical for the success of the Downtown:

- 1. Capital Boulevard Upgrade**
- 2. Legislature Grounds Redevelopment**
- 3. Expansion of Downtown Universities and Colleges**
- 4. Potential New Sports and Entertainment District**

BENEFITS

The *Capital City Downtown Plan* will deliver direct measurable benefits including:

Increased urban densification – 12,200 new residential units over a 35 year period; more than twice the growth projected without the Plan.

Increased Economic Activity - 2.35M sq ft of commercial space and 2.25M sq ft of new office space over a 35 year period; 40-70% more growth than without the Plan.

Increased Tax Revenue – An additional \$200 - 250M in annual property tax revenues above the base scenario without the Plan after 35 years.

Higher Land Values – Resulting from increased amenities, design quality and livability of the Downtown.

Improved Sustainability – Greenhouse Gas reductions of up to 40% per Downtown resident as a result of intensifying development, increasing modal choices and implementing a green building and development strategy.

Clearer Expectations – A predictable framework for investment and development.

Enhanced Transit Viability – Supported by Edmonton's greatest concentration of transit users and complementary uses.

Showcase for Edmonton – A vibrant, well-designed and sustainable Downtown attracting people, investment and opportunity to the City.

MOVING FORWARD

The *Capital City Downtown Plan* has drawn from extensive engagement of the public and key stakeholders to develop integrated policies, zoning regulations, implementation strategies and catalyst projects. Its implementation will launch a vibrant, sustainable, well designed and accessible future for the benefit of the entire City and Capital Region.

View the full plan at www.edmonton.ca/downtownplan

For inquiries contact Duncan Fraser,
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DOWNTOWN EDMONTON 2045

WITHOUT THE PLAN



- 6000 new residential units
- 1.65 M sq ft of Commercial growth
- 1.3 M sq ft of Office growth

WITH THE PLAN



- 12,200 new residential units
- 2.35 M sq ft of Commercial growth
- 2.25 M sq ft of Office growth





View the full plan at www.edmonton.ca/downtownplan

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1. A New Plan for Downtown

Purpose of the Plan

The new Capital City Downtown Plan sets out a number of new policy directions and bold initiatives to meet the ever-changing needs and aspirations of downtown stakeholders. The new Plan will:

Renew the vision for the Downtown:

- Respond to the needs of residents, students, workers, business owners, and many other downtown stakeholders;
- Build on the achievements and momentum provided by the successes of the 1997 Plan;
- Capitalize on other major initiatives underway within the Downtown and area;
- Provide up-to-date policies and competitive strategies for a stronger Downtown, to guide development for the next 10 to 15 years;
- Initiate a comprehensive 10-year Plan implementation program outlining a series of strategic public investments;
- Engage a wide range of partners in Plan-related project implementation; and
- Provide updated zoning with urban design regulations to raise the standard of design and to encourage sustainable development in the Downtown.



Photo courtesy City of Edmonton



Image Courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

Figure 1: Downtown Plan Area



LOOKING SOUTH
LOOKING NORTH



Images Courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

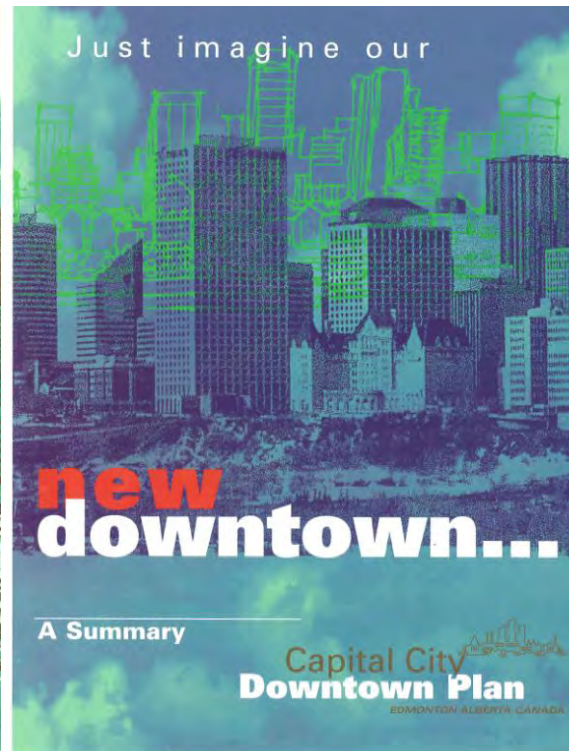
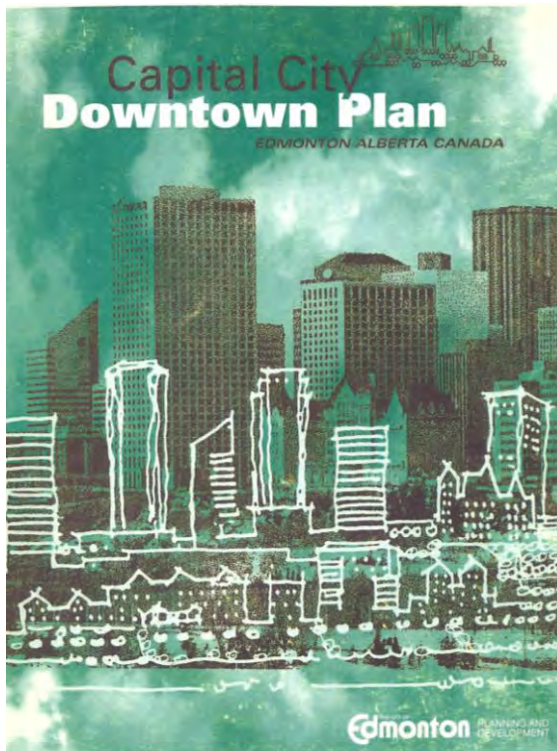
Building on the Successes of the 1997 Plan

In the past 12 years, Edmonton's Downtown has undergone dramatic growth and has matured significantly. Led by the development of a variety of new residential and mixed use projects throughout the Downtown, the Downtown population has doubled. The retail and office sectors have grown, and with the relocation of post-secondary institutions Downtown, the burgeoning student population is helping Downtown become more and more vibrant and livable. This change was supported by a concurrent period of economic growth in the Province of Alberta.

Much of the revitalization of Downtown was guided and supported by the award-winning 1997 Downtown Plan. Some specific achievements resulting from implementing the 1997 Plan include:

- By providing \$4.5 million in grant monies for the first 1,000 units, the Downtown Housing Reinvestment Program sparked a major increase in residential construction, with over 4,000 units being built;
- A Downtown Edmonton Community League was established, with start-up funding and organizational support provided through the plan implementation program;
- Due to major growth in all sectors, the value of downtown real estate grew from \$2.2 billion in 1997 to over \$5 billion in 2009;
- The education sector experienced major expansion, with the Downtown now boasting over 30 education institutions, including a new University of Alberta satellite campus;
- The one way street system was converted to a two way system, providing for an improved pedestrian environment;
- Additional, convenient on-street parking was added within the Commercial Core in conjunction with the implementation of the two way street system;
- A Downtown Design Guidelines Manual was developed to provide specifics on the design requirements contained in the new downtown land use zones;
- 104 Street Promenade was improved, resulting in a very successful mixed-use street and a new home for the Downtown Farmer's Market;
- Edmonton City Centre mall was retrofitted, providing for more active block faces, with several new storefront and café openings;

- Arts Habitat Association (ArtsHab) was established through the Plan Implementation Program, and they opened their first downtown artists' live/work housing project in 1999;
- A series of public art pieces was added to downtown streets through the Art and Design in Public Places program, a public/private sector partnership effort;
- Sir Winston Churchill Square was redeveloped and other major enhancements were made to the Arts District streets and open spaces;
- The development of Louise McKinney Riverfront Park was initiated - a landmark riverside park connecting the Downtown to the river;
- Access improvements for the disabled were made to a number of areas in the Downtown Core Pedway system;
- The vacant rail yards at the west end of the Downtown was converted to a mixed use urban neighbourhood;
- A multi-use corridor between the High Level Bridge and 104 Avenue was developed; and
- The 109 Street/104 Avenue "Rat Hole" underpass was eliminated, providing for an improved intersection at this key location.



Images Courtesy City of Edmonton

Planning Process to Date

Opportunities for public involvement in the development of policy, ideas and vision for the Downtown have been extended to a wide spectrum of interests in the Downtown and to residents across the City.

Approximately 800 people have participated in a range of activities including:

- Downtown stakeholder forum;
- Downtown Edmonton Community League workshop;
- Open public meeting / ideas forum;
- Land use and design workshop with the group *Media Art and Design in Edmonton (MADE)*;
- Ongoing meetings with the Edmonton Design Committee;
- Meetings with the Downtown Business Association, the Downtown Edmonton Community League and other downtown stakeholder groups;
- An Open House on the Preliminary Draft Plan (September 2008);
- An online survey on the Preliminary Draft Plan (September 2008);
- Meetings of the Capital City Downtown Plan Advisory Committee (established in September 2009); and
- An Open House / Public Meeting on the Draft Plan (April 2010).

A project website was maintained throughout the Plan update process serving as a clearing house for project information and providing an ongoing opportunity to comment on the Plan.

The following organizations and interests are represented on the 12-member Capital City Downtown Plan Advisory Committee:

- City Council: Ward Councilors (2)
- Development industry
- Downtown Business Association
- Downtown businesses (2)
- Downtown Edmonton Community League
- Downtown knowledge economy
- Downtown residents
- Downtown social agencies
- Edmonton Arts Council
- Provincial Government (Alberta Infrastructure)

Plan Area

The Downtown Plan boundaries have been established for several decades, with the Downtown area encompassing approximately 160 Ha.

With the adoption of the 2010 Capital City Downtown Plan, the Plan boundary will be amended to include two small additional areas.

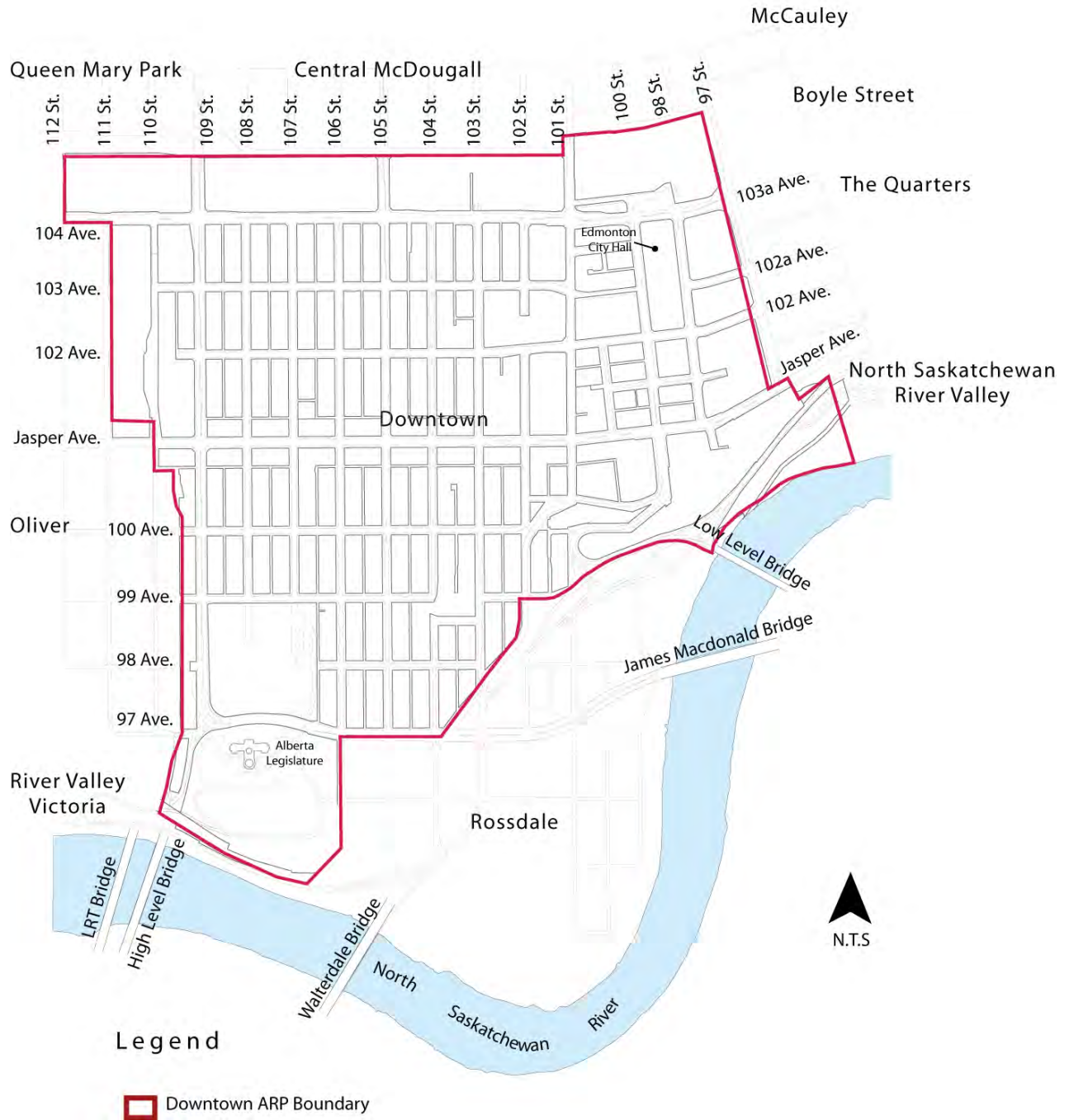
The first boundary amendment is located at the western edge of Downtown. The intent of this change is to include the vacant redevelopment site on the southeast corner of 110 Street and Jasper Avenue.

The second boundary amendment is located at the northwest corner of the downtown. This expansion to encompass an additional block of land, west of 111 Street between 104 and 105 Avenues, is to accommodate future expansion of Grant MacEwan University.



Photo courtesy Edmonton Economic Development Corporation

Figure 2: Downtown Plan Boundary Map



Alignment with Other Plans and Legislation

The Capital City Downtown Plan is in alignment with the guidelines for planning the central area set out in the following legislation, statutory documents, and key City of Edmonton policy initiatives and programs.

Alberta Municipal Government Act (MGA)

The Alberta MGA provides City Council and the Civic Administration with the legislative framework to encourage and facilitate the development and redevelopment of land in a systematic, orderly, economically, and environmentally responsible manner. It sets out the legal basis for the preparation of Area Redevelopment Plans. The Capital City Downtown Plan complies with the Municipal Government Act.

The Capital Region Growth Plan

The Capital Region Growth Plan was created to provide an integrated, strategic and coordinated approach to regional growth and planning. Under the proposed Downtown Plan, a number of Capital Region Land Use Principles and Policies are supported. These include concentrating urban growth within the Downtown thereby minimizing impacts on the natural environment, emphasizing higher density development served by public transit, improvements to civic spaces (e.g. quality, accessibility), and provision of more housing opportunities and choices in support of a complete community.

The Way Ahead, Strategic Plan (2009 - 2018)

Edmonton's Strategic Plan sets out a vision of Edmonton 30 years in the future. City Council identified a series of 10-year strategic goals to focus the City's actions on achieving the vision. These goals were established to direct long-term planning for the City.

Following is a sample of the many goal statements that align directly with the new Downtown Plan:

- Refocus spending on renewing existing infrastructure relative to investment in new infrastructure;
- Improve city's urban architecture and urban form to ensure it meets environmental standards and exemplifies excellence in urban, architectural and landscape design;
- Increase access and proximity to ecological (natural and groomed) systems;
- Increase the supply and range of affordable housing to meet citizens' needs;
- Reduce and prevent crime in our transit, downtown, and communities;
- Preserve, celebrate and support Edmonton's heritage, arts and culture; and
- Improve community engagement and participation.

The Way We Live: Edmonton's People Plan

The Way We Live: Edmonton's People Plan is a 10-year plan that will provide a comprehensive framework to co-ordinate City of Edmonton people services over the next decade. It integrates existing plans that affect people services and clarifies the various roles the city has in the provision of people services.

The Way We Live plan includes the following six goals.

- Edmonton is a vibrant, connected, engaged and welcoming city.
- Edmonton celebrates life!
- Edmonton is a caring, inclusive and affordable city.
- Edmonton is a safe city.
- Edmonton is an attractive city.
- Edmonton is a sustainable city.

The Capital City Downtown Plan is a 10-year plan that addresses the people services and facilities required to maintain and strengthen a healthy, complete downtown community. While policies throughout the Plan speak to people issues, the “Healthy Community and Sense of Place” chapter is the part of the Plan that provides the framework for addressing people issues in a comprehensive manner.

The Way We Grow, Municipal Development Plan, Bylaw #15100

The City of Edmonton Municipal Development Plan (MDP) provides direction on land use, growth, and development for the city as a whole. The Capital City Downtown Plan is in alignment with the MDP, in particular, those policy directions contained in Section 3.0: Managing Growth. This section designates “***Downtown as a primary focus for residential, commercial and office intensification***”, and contains the following Objective statement in Section 3.4: Central Core:

“Create a strong downtown characterized by high density, mixed-use, transit and pedestrian orientation and excellent urban design”.

Some of the key MDP policies relating to the Downtown are:

- 3.1.1.2 Encourage 25 percent of city-wide housing unit growth to locate in the Downtown and mature neighbourhoods and around LRT stations and transit centres where infrastructure capacity supports redevelopment.
- 3.4.1.3 Preserve and strengthen the role of the Downtown as a major regional employment centre.
- 3.4.1.4 Enhance Downtown livability by increasing amenities to support the emergence of a highly desirable urban community.
- 3.4.1.5 Promote the retention and development of major cultural, educational and recreational facilities in the Downtown.

The Way We Move, Transportation Master Plan, Bylaw #15101

The City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) establishes the framework for how the City will address its future transportation needs. The TMP is a provincially legislated requirement under the City Transportation Act. The new Downtown Plan conforms to the TMP, with both documents identifying policies such as the need to move towards a modal shift in the predominant form of transportation, to integrate land-use planning and transportation planning, and to create a more accessible, efficient and compact urban form.

The Way We Green

The City of Edmonton is working on a comprehensive process to update its environmental strategic plan. The new environmental strategy will address issues related to water, air, fossil fuel, minerals and soil, climate, renewable resources, ecosystem services and waste absorption. The Capital City Downtown Plan addresses these environmental issues in the "Sustainable Downtown" section, through the goals and policies in the "A Healthy Natural Environment", "Energy, Emissions and Air Quality" and "Natural and Material Resources" chapters.

The goal of The Way We Green project is to present a bold and innovative environmental strategy to City Council in early 2011.

Smart Choices

The City's Smart Choices Program, approved by City Council in 2004, was inspired by the "smart growth" trend in urban planning. The overall goals of the Smart Choices Program are to develop a more compact, walkable, and transit-oriented City with improved building and site design, and vibrant and engaged communities.

Smart Choices involves eight different initiatives:

- Transit oriented development
- Walkability
- Residential infill
- Neighbourhood re-investment
- Commercial redevelopment
- Planning for growth
- Urban design
- Planning education and consultation

The Capital City Downtown Plan is closely aligned with all of the goals of the Smart Choices Program, as the Plan focuses on developing a compact and multi-faceted, mixed use Downtown, one that is sustainable, vibrant, walkable, transit oriented and well designed.

Great Neighbourhoods

The Mission statement of Great Neighbourhoods is as follows:

“To improve the livability of Edmonton’s neighbourhoods and the lives of the people who live, work, and visit in them”.

The goals of Great Neighbourhoods are:

- To be more efficient and effective in the delivery of projects and services to the neighbourhoods and citizens of Edmonton
- Increase responsiveness for critical, time sensitive City and Neighbourhood issues that are cross departmental in nature
- To find out what neighbourhoods need and target investments back into neighbourhoods that improve livability
- To help citizens better connect to the City and build on the strengths and assets of neighbourhoods
- Targeted investments in distressed neighbourhoods
- Neighbourhoods for revitalization are identified through the Office of Great Neighbourhoods and Council Approved.

The goals of Great Neighbourhoods are achieved through the Office of Great Neighbourhoods staff and a capital budget which are coordinated with other City departments, neighbourhood investment programs and initiatives, to maximize impact.

The new Capital City Downtown Plan outlines a capital works program that closely aligns with the objectives of Great Neighbourhoods.

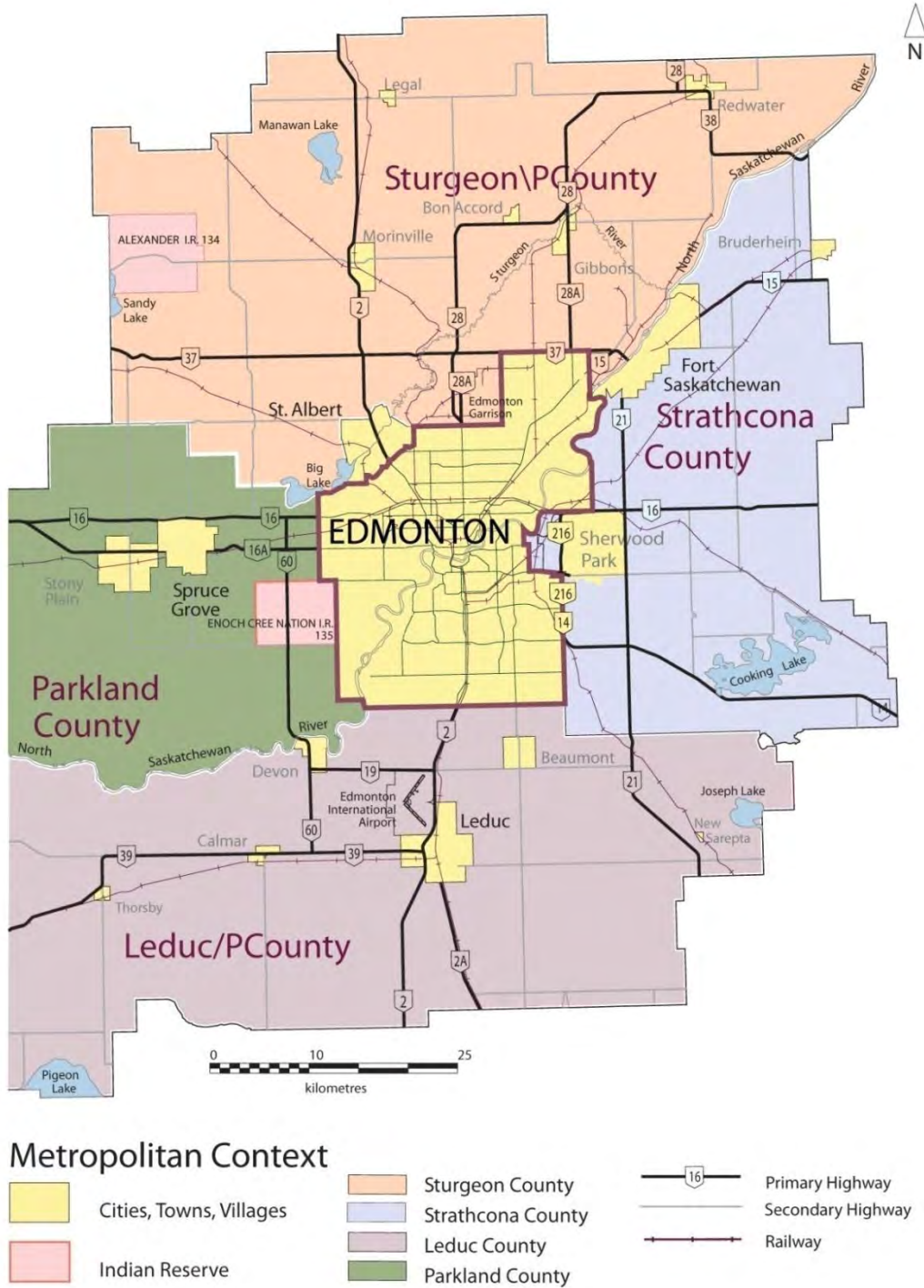
Planning Context

Metropolitan Context

Edmonton is the provincial capital and the financial and administrative centre of the metropolitan Edmonton region. With a metropolitan population of over 1 million, Edmonton ranks as the sixth largest market in Canada (after Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, and Ottawa).

In addition to the metropolitan market within commuting distance of Downtown, Edmonton’s trading area includes resource-rich northern Alberta, portions of northeastern B.C., and the Northwest Territories. Recent investment in the Prince Rupert container terminal in B.C. now provides another direct connection between Edmonton, and Asian markets. This port has the strategic advantage of being closer to Asian markets than any other on the West Coast, and Edmonton is the first trans-shipment location downstream with the potential to become a major transportation hub.

Figure 3: Metropolitan Context Map



Central City Context

Downtown Edmonton is located on the northern bank of the North Saskatchewan River Valley. Its prominent location overlooking Edmonton’s River Valley provides an ideal location connecting the Downtown to Edmonton’s expansive River Valley Park System. As of 2009 approximately 11,000 people live in the Downtown core.

Over 63,000 people live in the 10 neighbourhoods surrounding the Downtown. These population numbers and the characters of the various neighbourhoods have a significant impact on the Downtown. These neighbourhoods provide a major source of housing for downtown employees, and a base of business activity to support downtown growth.

The issues studied in preparing this Plan do not stop at boundary lines. The surrounding neighbourhoods are some of the earliest residential neighbourhoods in Edmonton and all of them have an important connection to the Downtown. For this reason, reference to the Central City area and to surrounding areas such as the River Valley, and the adjacent neighbourhoods, are made throughout the Plan.

A brief overview of the Downtown’s surrounding neighbourhoods and related planning initiatives is provided below:

- **Oliver**, on the Downtown’s western border, is a high-density residential community with over 17,000 residents. Oliver is closely linked to the Downtown - the two communities share Jasper Avenue as their “main street”, 104 Street as an auto-oriented commercial strip, as well as a number of pedestrian and cyclist connections, such as Heritage Trail, the 102 Avenue bicycle route and the shared-use path west of 109 Street. With a large number of downtown employees living in the community, Oliver is often considered to be an unofficial “downtown housing area”. Oliver is one of Edmonton’s oldest neighbourhoods and because of its wide range of amenities and central location, it is one of the City’s more popular and vibrant urban neighbourhoods.



Photo courtesy Darren Kirby



Photo courtesy Carlyle + Associates



Photo courtesy Cohos Evamy

- **The River Valley communities of Riverdale, Rosssdale, and Cloverdale** are neighbourhoods with unique identities and a mixture of single detached housing, row housing and parkland. Cloverdale's Muttart Conservatory is a major tourist attraction within easy walking distance of the Downtown, as is the Telus Field baseball stadium in Rosssdale.
- **"The North Bank", West Rosssdale Urban Design Plan, and the Expo 2017 Bid Complementary Site:**
 - The "North Bank" is a banner used for a series of synchronized initiatives that includes the West Rosssdale Urban Design Plan, the repurposing of the West Rosssdale Power Station and the replacement of the Walterdale Bridge.
 - The West Rosssdale Urban Design Plan focuses on the vision for a diverse and integrated neighbourhood of 2,000 dwelling units with associated retail and public amenity.
 - Expo 2017 Bid: The proposal is to create a legacy of permanent infrastructure for the West Rosssdale Neighbourhood. This would also involve the repurposing of the Rosssdale Power Station, the development of promenades, cultural and recreational amenities along the river bank, and the integration of a new bridge.
- **Garneau, the University of Alberta and Strathcona** together have the flavour of a thriving university town, with Whyte Avenue and its coffee shops, cafes and eclectic retail stores serving as a "main street" for the communities. Garneau and Strathcona neighbourhoods are primarily residential areas, with a broad range of single family and multiple family housing forms. The two historic communities and the University of Alberta, with its student population of 35,000, have strong ties to the Downtown.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates and Cohos Evamy

- **Queen Mary Park, Central McDougall, McCauley and Boyle Street** are some of the most ethnically diverse communities in Edmonton. Both Little Italy and Chinatown are located in these neighbourhoods. Several areas within these neighbourhoods are undergoing rejuvenation, especially those character areas which contain a number of ethnic businesses. These neighbourhoods contain a variety of housing types and provide a significant source of lower priced housing for central city residents.
- **The “North Edge Study Area”** is a large, under-developed “transition area” located immediately north of the Downtown within the Queen Mary Park and Central MacDougall neighbourhoods. The Plan for the area, prepared in 2005, calls for the 18-block area to be transformed into a vibrant high-density, up-scale residential area. 105 Avenue is to be transformed into a pedestrian oriented street featuring a shared use path and increased park space, with a Transit Oriented Development node at 105 Street.
- **The “Quarters”**, on the eastern boundary of Downtown, is a planning initiative that aims to revitalize an 18 block area of the Boyle Street neighbourhood. The Area Redevelopment Plan adopted for the Quarters in 2009 calls for the area to be transformed into a mixed residential/commercial community comprised of five distinct areas, structured around a linear park system. The neighbourhood will be well connected to the downtown core and river valley, and will feature a distinct image identifying it as a unique place in the city.
- **The “Boyle Renaissance” project** is another important initiative to improve a two and a half block area of the Boyle Street neighbourhood. It will create a community with a range of affordable and market housing opportunities. The aim is to meet the housing, social, recreation and service needs of current and new residents, to provide for services such as accredited childcare, cultural opportunities, family services, park space, community gardens and social space.

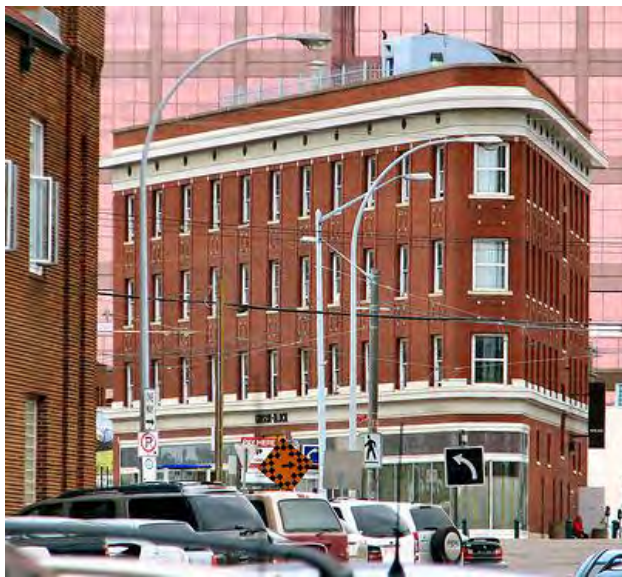


Photo courtesy City of Edmonton

Figure 4: Downtown and the Central Area Map



Downtown Development Context

- **Mixing Land Uses:** There is a trend away from the strict segregation of land uses and towards a more dynamic mix of residential, institutional, and commercial land uses, especially within the confines of the Downtown.
- **Market Demand:** A strong economy in Edmonton and a maturing Downtown environment led to a sharp increase in the level of development activity in the Downtown over the last 10 years. Most indicators point to the continuation of a relatively steady rate of growth and development, although not at the same intensity as the previous 10 years, irrespective of the current global economic downturn.
- **Addressing Climate Change:** The last decade has seen dramatic changes in society's acknowledgement that climate change is a scientific fact. The consequences are far reaching, with cities across the globe making major changes in the way they plan their urban environments. The City of Edmonton has adopted a number of measures to strive for an environmentally sustainable city, with its 10-year Strategic Plan, Smart Choices program and The Way We Green strategies leading the way.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** There is increased appreciation and a greater sense of responsibility in protecting our natural environment. Though our Downtown is perhaps the most intensely developed area of the City there is a growing movement towards building green within dense urban areas.
- **Demographic Shift towards Downtown Living:** Today the typical two-parent family with 2.5 children is the exception to the rule. There is much greater variety in the composition of the household unit and a substantial increase in the demand for alternative urban lifestyles. And, with the aging of the population, more and more households are down-sizing and moving from the suburbs to the older, higher density neighbourhoods in the inner city. As a consequence, there has been a steady growth in demand for Downtown living during this period, and this trend is most likely to continue over the long term.
- **Housing Affordability:** In the last ten years, Edmonton has experienced a real estate boom. At the same time that the cost of housing has increased dramatically over this period, there has been an increasing demand for smaller, more affordable housing units.
- **Council Action:** Over the last several years, City Council has been active in sponsoring a number of downtown improvement initiatives. Council has encouraged the administration to address sustainability and quality of life initiatives as part of rezoning and development applications, and to more thoroughly assess proposed developments in terms of their impact on the built environment.
- **Engaged Downtown Community:** The Downtown community is more active and involved in providing input on Downtown policy and development than it was even ten years ago. The Downtown Edmonton Community League (DECL) plays an active role in promoting and facilitating community involvement and advocacy.

Land Use Context

Successful Downtowns have traditionally played host to a vibrant mix of uses. These uses create a unique and dynamic expression of urban culture. Optimal development of the Downtown depends on an appropriate mix and intensity of land uses.

The combination of a wide range of uses concentrated within a defined area is a source of strength for Downtown and the City. Downtown is centrally located making it a desirable location for businesses and education institutions that draw from across the entire City.

Businesses in close proximity to one another stimulate creativity, innovation and growth in the economy. This mix of residential and commercial developments helps create a sustainable market for retail and service businesses.

A concentration of educational institutions in the Downtown brings an influx of young people, new ideas and energy into the Downtown. This contributes to the concept of the Downtown as a dynamic “learning community”.

The table below presents a statistical breakdown of land uses in the Downtown. As might be expected, the majority of properties in the Downtown are commercial, making up 33.5% of the total land area. Residential land use comprises 15.5% of the total Downtown land use, a 110% increase since 1997.

Table 1: Downtown Land Use - 2007

Downtown Land Use - 2007		
Land Use	Land Area	
	Hectare	%
Residential	24.8	15.5
Commercial	53.6	33.5
Institutional	41.8	26.1
Industrial/Utilities	3.3	2.1
Recreation/Open Space	6.2	3.9
Transportation (Parking)	22.8	14.2
Vacant/Undeveloped	7.6	4.8
Total	160.1	100

Commercial, Office and Institutional Uses

Commercial, office and institutional uses are a major source of strength for the Downtown's identity and an essential element of its role as an employment growth centre.

Downtown is a major regional employment centre - home to more than 65% of the commercial office space in the City, with a large percentage of this space being occupied by city, provincial and federal government offices. In addition to the Downtown being a significant hub for the government sector, it is also a major hub for the education sector with over 40 different education service providers, including the University of Alberta, Grant MacEwan University, and NorQuest College.

There are two major commercial office nodes within the Downtown, connected by Jasper Avenue. The first is the Commercial Core, with its centre roughly at the intersection of 101 Street and 102 Avenue. This concentration of offices covers a four-block radius and encompasses a wide range of public and private sector activities. The second node is located between 106 and 109 Streets south of Jasper Avenue and north of the Provincial Legislature. This node is built on a concentration of government offices, but also includes major institutions and private sector commercial operations.



Photo courtesy Grant MacEwan University

Residential Uses

Residential development in the Downtown has proved an important ingredient in creating a sustainable local economy. A strong residential population stimulates and makes viable retail and services that would otherwise depend mostly on “9 to 5” business activity in the Downtown.

Today, residential uses are focused in the McKay Avenue and Warehouse Campus Neighbourhoods. Residential development is designated as the primary land use for the southern part of the McKay Avenue Neighbourhood and is also a permitted use (in combination with commercial use) in that part of McKay Avenue which is predominantly a commercial area.

The Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood is a mixed-use area that has experienced considerable residential growth over the last 10 years, with most of this growth being focused in the western and eastern portions of the neighbourhood, the Railtown and Heritage Area sub areas, respectively. The Neighbourhood currently reflects a diverse urban mix, comprised of new high-density residential complexes and former warehouses which have been converted to residential, commercial, and other uses. Within the central portion of the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood, a large number of vacant properties and surface parking lots together represent a tremendous potential for development.



Image courtesy HBBH

Recreation, Parks and Open Space

The amount of land devoted to parks and recreation use in the Downtown has for the most part, remained unchanged over the last 10 - 15 years. The only additions to park space over this period has been the construction of the linear park within the Railtown Area on the western edge of the Downtown and the landscaped and plaza areas of Grant MacEwan University along 104 Avenue.

There remains a significant deficiency in park space in the Downtown, especially given the tremendous residential growth that has occurred in areas such as the Warehouse Campus and McKay Avenue Neighbourhoods.

The amount of land categorized as Open Space has declined substantially since 1997, as a consequence of redevelopment of the Railtown and MacEwan areas.



Photo courtesy Carlyle + Associates



Photo courtesy Robert Lemermeyer

Neighbourhoods of Downtown

- **The Commercial Cultural Core** is a concentration of high-density commercial uses combined with cultural facilities. It is home to City Hall, the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Winspear Centre, Citadel Theatre, Provincial Law Courts, and the City's main Library. All but one of Downtown's major office towers (25 storeys or greater) are located here.
- **The Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood** is an urban mix, made up of old warehouses converted to commercial, residential and other uses and a large number of vacant properties ripe for development. This area is less dense, with buildings ranging from one to thirty-five storeys high, while most buildings are one to three storeys.
- **Jasper Avenue** is Edmonton's Main Street. It contains a variety of retail and other commercial uses interspersed with several high-rise office towers. Recent initiatives have focused on reinvigorating underused buildings through the Façade and Storefront Improvement Program, and the redesign of the public realm and roadway configuration through the Jasper Avenue New Vision project.
- **McKay Avenue Neighbourhood** contains an established residential community with single detached housing as well as walk-up and high-rise residential units. The area has seen significant development over the last three years, with the addition of several new high-rise development projects. The area is a well-established neighbourhood featuring mature tree lined streets, characterized by steep sloping topography, dramatic views of the River Valley, and a cluster of significant heritage structures.
- **The Capital City District** is home to the Alberta Legislature building and grounds and several high quality mid rise offices towers and associated commercial uses, along with notable heritage buildings.



Photo courtesy EEDC

Figure 5: Downtown Neighbourhoods

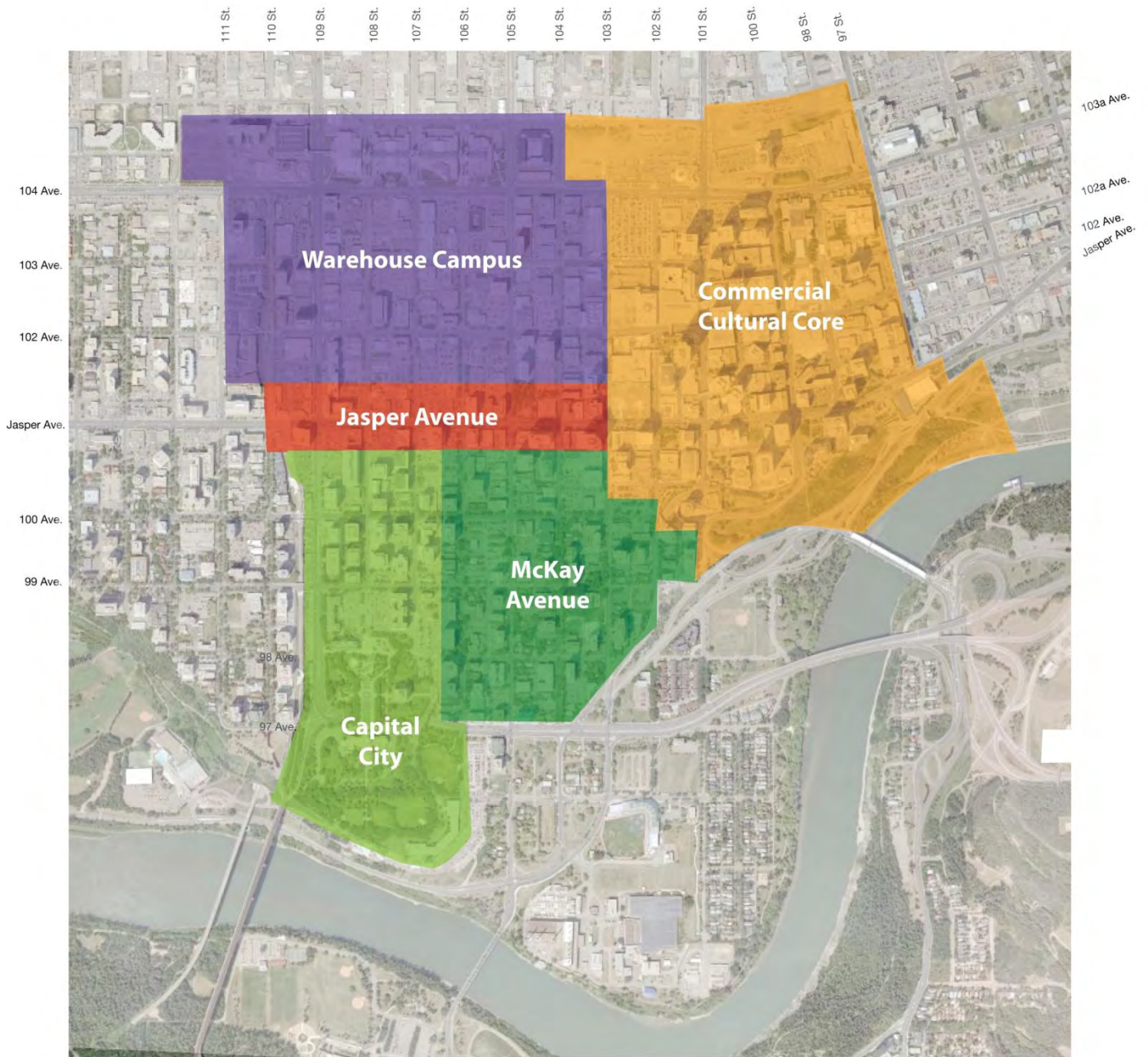




Photo courtesy Carlyle + Associates

2. A New Vision for Downtown

Vision Statement

In 15 years, Downtown Edmonton will be...

Sustainable

- Environmentally sustainable and a regional hub for green innovation
- Known for its distinct neighbourhoods and the strong sense of community, diversity, social interaction and engagement that they offer

Vibrant

- The economic driver for the region and provide a range of housing options for all Edmontonians
- A regional, national, and international centre for arts, culture, festivals, and entertainment

Well-designed

- Well-designed in all areas of the public and private realm and include a comprehensive network of public places, parks, and open space
- Celebrated in its role as the Capital City of Alberta and as a winter city

Accessible

- Pedestrian-oriented and will provide transportation options that are multi-modal and accessible to all



Photo courtesy EEDC



Photo courtesy City of Edmonton

Planning Principles

The development Downtown Plan has been driven by the principles that the Plan should be the best plan possible, should be based on implementable solutions, and should address the needs and desires of all Edmontonians. In other words, the Plan should be bold, doable and for people.

Bold

- Downtown is for all Edmontonians.
- Urban design standards will be second-to-none.
- Downtown is Edmonton's first destination for commerce, services, tourism, industry, and government.
- An urban mix and new residences with “eyes on the street” improves safety and security in the Downtown.

Doable

- Focus on actions that will do most to advance the long-term vision for the Downtown - the catalyst projects.
- Leverage the Downtown's status as a regional and national centre for creative arts, entertainment, festivals, and culture.
- Seize opportunities to enhance the Downtown as a centre for education and personal development.
- Celebrate the history, climate, and spirit of Edmonton.



Photo courtesy HBBH

For People

- Integrate a diversity of uses, people, and activities and plan the Downtown as a destination for all Edmontonians.
- Enhance Edmonton's Downtown as a source of pride and identity for its citizens as the Provincial Capital.
- A livable Downtown needs a high-quality public realm, a range of housing, daily-needs services, and social amenities.
- Provide walkable streets, safe bicycle facilities and convenient transit to get people out of their cars and reduce the demand for parking Downtown.
- Connect people, places, and activities throughout the neighbourhoods of Downtown.
- Downtown will be inclusive of all aspects of live, work, and play within close proximity to each other.



The Importance of Downtown

Downtowns such as Edmonton's contain the greatest mix of uses, concentration of people and activity, sense of identity and character and are the primary conveyors of a city's image. Successful Downtowns accelerate business activity and cultural creativity, enhance a variety of lifestyles and users, incubate new products and business ventures, provide efficient municipal services and use infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

Downtowns are crucial elements of great cities. The success of a downtown transcends its borders and benefits the entire city, and this holds true for Edmonton. As we well know, Downtown Edmonton is much more than just another city neighbourhood.

Downtown Edmonton is:

Employment

Highest Concentration of Jobs in the City



Housing

A Mix of Vibrant Urban Residential Neighbourhoods

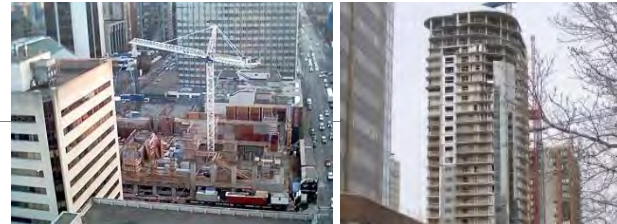
Photos courtesy City of Edmonton



Tax Base

\$97.9 Million in tax revenues to City (2009),
about 10% of the overall City tax base

Photos courtesy City of Edmonton



Transportation

Regional Transportation Hub

Photos courtesy City of Edmonton



Education

Grant MacEwan University, NorQuest College,
U of A Enterprise Square and others

Photo 1 courtesy Cohos Evamy / Photo 2 courtesy Grant MacEwan University



Arts & Culture

Galleries, Theatres, Playhouses, and more

1 - courtesy Robert Lemermeyer/ 2 - courtesy Cohos Evamy



Government

Seat of the Provincial and City Government



Hospitality and Tourism

Primary Destination for Visitors

Photos courtesy City of Edmonton



Social Services

Gathering Place and Network for Community Supports



For All of Edmonton

The Image of Edmonton – for Residents and the World

Photos courtesy Carlyle + Associates



Challenges

The specific challenges facing Downtown Edmonton must be addressed in order to achieve the vision of a Downtown that is sustainable, vibrant, well-designed and accessible.

Auto-Oriented Development

A great downtown cannot be auto-dominated. Edmonton is moving in the right direction, but more needs to be done. Centrally located surface parking is abundant; there is a lack of continuous, well marked bicycle routes; the pedestrian realm is dominated by wide roadways and vacant land, especially in the Warehouse Campus neighbourhood.

This Plan addresses the issue of downtown auto-dependency through plans for a new public realm plan, accommodation for bicycles, and strategies for developing the Warehouse Campus neighbourhood.

Competition with the Suburbs

For both commercial and residential development, the Downtown competes with suburban markets. In these markets, residential and commercial properties are usually less expensive than comparative properties in the Downtown.

The strategy promoted by this Plan is to enhance the value of downtown property through excellent urban design and a high quality public realm.



Land Speculation

Several potential development sites have been lying vacant, or used as graveled surface parking lots for up to 30 years, since the first of Alberta's economic downturns in the early 1980's. Many of these sites have been used as "holding properties", with owners holding onto expectations, or speculating that they will eventually be able to build a major high-rise project.

Since the 1980's, the City has tried to stimulate development through maintaining very high densities throughout the Downtown and minimizing barriers to development. In the late 1990's, the City sponsored a housing incentive program and this helped stimulate a surge in residential growth in all areas of the Downtown.

Despite very high-density zoning, or perhaps because of this favourable zoning, surface parking lots are the dominant presence in large portions of the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood. The abundance of these lots breaks up the urban fabric and seriously detracts from the vibrancy of this western portion of the Downtown.

This Plan suggests a number of initiatives that will make development more attractive to property owners than land speculation.

Complexity

Downtown Edmonton is a large and complex planning area. It encompasses five distinct neighbourhoods, each at different stages of development and maturity. A Plan for an area of this size must look to capitalize on key opportunities and prioritize its actions.

The Plan recommends the City prioritize a number of catalyst projects which have been selected as representing the best opportunities for the Downtown.



Photo courtesy Google Earth

Social Stress and Crime

Crime and safety Downtown have been identified as important concerns for many citizens. The existence and perception of a crime problem can cause a vicious cycle - residents move from Downtown, lowering the desirability of area, making it a more attractive locale for criminal or socially undesirable behavior.

Part of the solution is to ensure more people come and stay Downtown. Crime rates will tend to decrease with more street life and 24 hour activity.

Competition With Other Cities

People, capital, and knowledge are the life blood of cities. Attracting these in sufficient volume and quality are crucial to a city's future. However they must now be considered mobile assets due to their ability to flow between cities or around the globe with ease. In a globalized environment Edmonton must compete with cities across the world as well as in Alberta. People, and the knowledge and capital they bring, are increasingly attracted by bustling city centres, walkable neighbourhoods, diverse opportunities, and vibrant cultural scenes. Vitality, sustainability, social stability, and learning opportunities are now key ingredients in people's calculations on where to locate and where to raise families. Simply being the cheapest place to live or the city with the most jobs is no longer an adequate long-term strategy for building a great city. With so many choices of where to live, invest, and learn people will look carefully at quality of life factors such as how much time they're going to spend in traffic commuting, whether they can readily access a park, and whether the city's downtown stays awake after 5:00 pm.

The Plan provides key strategies and catalysts to create a more vibrant Downtown.



Catalyst Projects

The Plan sets out a number of strategic public investment projects that are key to the transformation of the Downtown over the next 10 years. These Catalyst Projects will focus investment where it will do the most good in supporting private investment and enhancing the vibrancy and economic wellbeing of the Downtown.

Past experience with the Downtown Housing Reinvestment Program, initiated through the previous Capital City Downtown Plan, demonstrated that \$11 of private investment was generated for every \$1 of public investment in the Downtown. This gives us confidence that these Catalyst Projects will result in a favourable return on investment for the City.

The nine (9) Catalyst projects are strategically located to build on opportunities in each of the Downtown's neighbourhoods. These key projects, together with four (4) concurrent downtown projects, will result in a strengthening of all neighbourhoods in the Downtown. They are key to realizing the vision to create a more sustainable, vibrant, well designed and accessible Downtown.

More People Living, Working and Playing Downtown

This is a key opportunity to make the Downtown **sustainable** and **vibrant**.

With large areas of undeveloped land Downtown, especially in the Warehouse Campus neighbourhood, the potential for residential infill is a key opportunity for downtown. Attracting more people to move - and *stay* - downtown will also make Downtown a more attractive place to work, shop and learn.

Enhance the Neighbourhoods of Downtown

This is a key opportunity to make the Downtown **well-designed**.

Each downtown neighbourhood offers unique opportunities to help achieve the overall new vision for Downtown. Many of the catalyst projects will leverage the strengths of the individual neighbourhoods to the benefit of the entire Downtown.

Strengthen the Linkages Downtown

This is a key opportunity to make the Downtown **accessible**.

Linking the neighbourhoods of Downtown to each other, as well as to the adjacent neighbourhoods and the rest of the city, is key to making the Downtown a more sustainable and livable place. Catalyst projects have been selected to capitalize on the many opportunities to improve pedestrian, bicycle and LRT connections within downtown neighbourhoods and destinations and the rest of the city.

Definition of Catalyst Projects

City-Led Catalyst Projects are defined as:

- City led strategic projects introduced through new policies in this Plan.

Concurrent Catalyst Projects are defined as:

- projects initiated and funded prior to the development of this Plan (e.g. Capital Boulevard),
- projects being led by another order of government (e.g. Legislature Grounds Redevelopment), by major institutions (e.g. University/College Expansions), or by the private sector (e.g. the proposed Sports and Entertainment District).

The 9 City-led Catalyst Projects are:

1. **Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program**
2. **Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Central Park**
3. **Jasper Avenue New Vision**
4. **River Valley Promenades**
5. **Integration of At-grade LRT**
6. **High Profile Bikeway System**
7. **Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue**
8. **Green Building and Development Strategy**
9. **Green and Walkable Downtown**

The 4 Concurrent Catalyst Projects are:

- A. **Capital Boulevard - Ceremonial Street**
- B. **Legislature Grounds Redevelopment**
- C. **Expansion of Downtown Universities and Colleges**
- D. **Proposed Sports and Entertainment Precinct**

CITY-LED CATALYST PROJECTS

1. Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program

A catalyst for redevelopment of the Central Warehouse Area with its vast tracts of under-developed and vacant land.

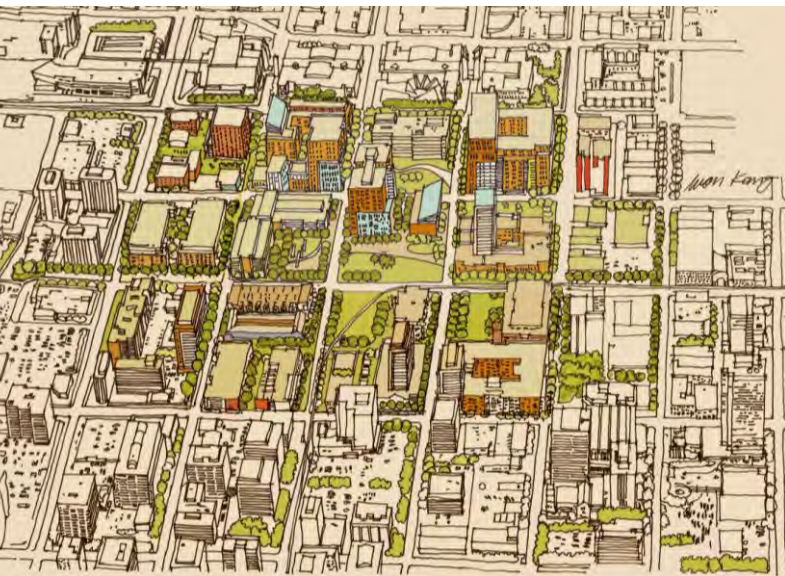
Key Policy Reference: 6.3 Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program

Provide a \$10,000/unit grant for the first 1,000 new housing units built in the Central Warehouse Area - for projects that:

- are built to high quality design standards, and
- include 10% of project units as family-oriented units (more than two bedrooms).

Develop administrative procedures to implement the Housing Incentive Program.

Operate the program for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of a two-year extension.



2. Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Central Park

Proactive, strategic intervention in the downtown area with the most need for improvement, the most opportunity for change.

Key Policy Reference: 11.11 A Central Park in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood

Acquire land in the Central Warehouse Area to create a major public amenity for residents and businesses and to serve as a catalyst for redevelopment.

Support a range of shops, cafes, leisure, recreation and other facilities fronting and addressing the park to increase activity levels and a sense of belonging to neighbourhood residents.

Incorporate low impact development stormwater features into park design.

Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan, develop and program the park.



Photo courtesy HBBH



Image courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

3. Jasper Avenue New Vision

Phased improvements; narrowed roadway / wider sidewalks, high quality public realm, refined streetscape elements, increased design standards for private development, adjacent neighbourhoods taking ownership of their “Main Street”.

Key Policy Reference: 10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets

Implement the new vision for Jasper Avenue, including:

- narrowed roadway, wider sidewalks and tree planting,
- high quality public realm improvements and landscaping,
- refined streetscape elements, and
- increased design standards for private development,

Make Jasper Avenue the Main Street for the neighbourhoods adjacent to it - encourage residents in these neighbourhoods to take ownership of the Avenue.

Apply design guidelines for Jasper Avenue that require:

- continuous street-level retail stores and service uses.
- smaller individual retail frontages to reflect the fine grain development pattern of the Avenue.
- buildings featuring street walls that create a human-scale public realm.



Images courtesy Urban Strategies

4. River Valley Promenades

Improve pedestrian connections between the top-of-bank Heritage Trail system in the Downtown and the riverbank, including the River Valley Trail System.

Review and update the Heritage Trail Promenade concept; develop and complete throughout the Downtown, including connections east, west and south of the Downtown.

Key Policy Reference: 11.15 River Valley Promenades

Expand and enhance those pedestrian systems that celebrate the unique position of Downtown overlooking the valley:

- develop contiguous promenade with integrated lookouts, belvederes and walks along the full length of the escarpment throughout the Downtown.
- replace utilitarian stair connections into the valley at selected locations with stair and ramp systems that are elegant and graceful.
- develop innovative access to the river valley flats and river edge at selected locations including the top-of-bank at 104 Street and Louise McKinney Riverfront Park. Investigate mechanized options to achieve universal access.
- develop a continuous, identifiable, and single urban public amenity extending from the 104 Street Promenade to West Rosssdale and the riverfront.
- develop concepts for a central city riverfront promenade extending from Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to the Royal Alberta Museum.



Photos courtesy Carlyle + Associates

5. Integration of At-grade LRT

Ensure the LRT line positively impacts Downtown development objectives.

Land uses and densities at stations and along the LRT corridor should support the creation of mixed-use activity, high levels of day and night pedestrian activity and generate high levels of transit use.

Key Policy Reference: 17.4 Integrate Low Floor LRT within the Downtown Fabric

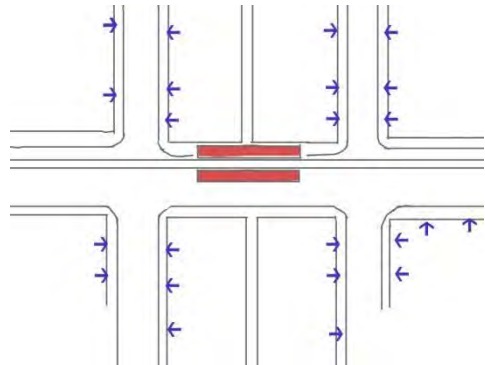
Develop the Downtown portion of the low floor LRT system in a manner that fully integrates its form and function with land uses, building forms, streets, other modes of transportation, and public realm improvements in the Downtown.

Pedestrian oriented active uses should be located at-grade adjacent to station areas and platforms. Buildings should not "turn their back" to the LRT corridor street.

LRT stations and platforms should incorporate landscape, buildings, public art, and other public realm elements to create a sense of identity at each station area and along the corridor as a whole.



THIS: high quality pedestrian linkages to stations with street frontage



NOT THIS: Frontage oriented to side streets creating back or side conditions to LRT street



6. High Profile Bikeway System

Highly visible and shared cycling routes, end-of-trip facilities for bicycle commuters in commercial buildings; City to show leadership.

Key Policy Reference: 16.3 Continuous and Highly Visible Bicycle Routes

Complete a Downtown Bicycle Master Plan to significantly improve the extent, quality and visibility of Downtown cycling routes. Construct within 1-2 years:

- one or more Main Bicycle Arteries (East-West and North-South)
- a complete system of convenient and continuous routes,
- highly visible route markings and way-finding signage,
- improved, cyclist-oriented intersection treatments, and
- secure weather-protected storage, as well as change and shower facilities in public and private buildings.



7. Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue

Acquisition of land and creative development of a central neighbourhood gathering place; consider using a design competition for the project.

Key Policy Reference: 11.12 Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue

Establish a central gathering place, a community main street in McKay Avenue - an area with active street fronts and a variety of commercial, cultural, recreational and entertainment uses.

Work with community residents and stakeholders to plan the project.

Purchase land and/or facilities as necessary to implement the concept.



Photo courtesy HBBH

8. Green Building and Development Strategy

Establish a Green Building and Development Strategy for private development in Downtown as part of the preparation of a city-wide strategy, to promote healthier indoor environments, energy efficient buildings, and more sustainable development.

Key Policy Reference: 2.3 Green Building and Development Strategy

Fund the creation of Green Building and Development Strategy for Edmonton that will focus in particular on identifying opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of high-density commercial and residential buildings - in other words, the predominant downtown building form.

Work with City staff, and especially building inspectors, as well as the development industry to identify existing barriers to green building and develop an approach to developing policy and regulatory interventions, market transformation tools, the capacity building programs.

The Green Building and Development Strategy would be informed by existing programs such as LEED®, Built Green and BOMA Best. The City will also encourage major developments to strive for high standards of sustainability through its Urban Design Awards Program, and by setting the example with Public Buildings.



Photo courtesy Cohos Evamy

9. Green and Walkable Downtown

Phased, coordinated program - a highly interconnected pedestrian network, with street trees and landscaping on all downtown streets, well designed pedestrian-scaled lighting, quality street furnishings and a high profile bike route network.

Key Policy Reference: 10.4 Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets

Develop a highly interconnected public network of downtown streets and parks:

- Target an overall 20% increase in the canopy coverage within the Downtown in the next 10 years.
- Allow adequate space for comfortable pedestrian movement on downtown sidewalks and specialized uses such as sidewalk sales and seasonal patio areas.
- Provide coordinated tree planting, landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting and quality street furnishings and, where appropriate, decorative paving on all downtown streets.
- Ensure that every person living and working Downtown has access to a publicly accessible park or open space within a three block walking distance.
- Design and implement Public Realm Plans for selected major streets: 97 Avenue, 99 Avenue, 102 Avenue, 104 Avenue, 97 Street, 105 Street and 109 Street.
- Incorporate features such as green roofs, rain gardens, bioretention areas, and streetscape tree trenches into the urban design framework to ensure that rainfall is harvested, and stormwater runoff from streets is used to sustain the urban forest canopy with proper sub-surface drainage for plant health.
- Consider, where appropriate, alternative pedestrian-oriented uses for selected downtown alleys.



CONCURRENT CATALYST PROJECTS

A. Capital Boulevard - Ceremonial Street

Major public realm improvements, redevelopment of Centennial Plaza and Federal Building - a showcase of grand scale urban design.

Key Policy References: 10.4 Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets; 10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets; CD 1.3 Capital Boulevard - A Ceremonial Street.

Work with property owners to develop Capital Boulevard as one of the Downtown's premier Ceremonial Streets.

The street is to be characterized by:

- broad tree-lined sidewalks with amenities, public art and monuments,
- a sense of procession, which enables commemorative events and celebrations, and
- a focus on provincial, cultural and educational uses, public agencies and institutions.

Support the realization of a restored Federal Building and new Centennial Plaza to create a welcoming entrance to the Legislature Grounds.



Photo courtesy Grant MacEwan University

B. Legislature Grounds Redevelopment

Alberta Legislature Grounds and river valley edge redevelopment; improved linkages to McKay Avenue neighbourhood; development of family-friendly amenities/recreation facilities for McKay Avenue and other downtown area residents.

Key Policy Reference: 11.14 Improvements to Riverfront and Valley Edge Parks

Support the development of the “Alberta Legislature Centre Redevelopment Master Plan”. Encourage improvements such as:

- the removal of physical and visual barriers on the northern, western and eastern edges,
- a continuous pathway/boardwalk along the riverbank and top-of-valley edge, with viewpoints and grand pedestrian connections to the river,
- improved pedestrian connections to McKay Avenue,
- family-friendly amenities/recreation facilities for McKay Ave and other downtown area residents, and
- a major cultural facility as well as small scale tourism facilities.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

C. Expansion of Downtown Universities and Colleges

Key Policy Reference: 7.11 Promote the Growth of Knowledge Economy

Encourage the growth of the downtown knowledge economy by encouraging and supporting the growth of existing educational institutions and other training facilities and by attracting new learning institutions to locate downtown. Key educational institutions currently Downtown include:

- University of Alberta - Enterprise Square
- Grant MacEwan University - City Centre Campus
- NorQuest College - Downtown Campus

All of these institutions have recently expanded or are contemplating significant expansions in/consolidation to Edmonton's Downtown. They are to be encouraged and facilitated.



Photo courtesy Grant MacEwan University



Image courtesy Cohos Evamy

D. Proposed Sports and Entertainment District

Undertake a coordinated, transparent planning process with extensive public engagement to ensure the best fit of a potential Sports and Entertainment District into the Downtown environment.

Key Policy Reference: 8.10 Edmonton's Premiere Arts, Culture, Sports and Entertainment Centre; CC 3.5 Potential for a Sports and Entertainment District

Support the Station Lands Area as a potential location for the development of a Sports and Entertainment District in the Downtown. Work with applicants to ensure the overall impact of a large facility is positive to the public realm.

Apply a set of planning and urban design principles in the review and approval process for a proposed Sports and Entertainment District, the principles to address the following: Design; Open Space; Pedestrian Routes; Design for Edmonton's Climate; Parking and Loading; Retail and Restaurants; Major Streets; Streetscape; Scale; and, Sustainable Design.



Photo courtesy NBBJ



Image courtesy HBBH

What Are the Benefits of Taking Action?

Implementation of the Capital City Downtown Plan will deliver direct and measurable benefits, including:

- **Increased urban densification** - 12,200 new residential units projected over a 35 year period; twice the growth than without the Plan.
- **Increased economic activity** - 2.35 million sq ft of commercial space and 2.25 million sq ft of new office space and over a 35-year period; 40-70% more growth than without the Plan.
- **Increased tax revenue** - An additional \$200-250 million in property tax revenues, above the base scenario without the Plan, accumulated over 35 years.
- **Higher land values** - Increasing the livability, amenities and design quality of the Downtown will in turn increase land values.
- **Improved sustainability** - Greenhouse gas reductions up to 40% per downtown resident will occur as a result of intensifying downtown development, increasing modal choices, and implementing a green building and development strategy.
- **Clearer expectations** - a predictable framework for investment and development, with higher design quality standards.
- **Enhanced Transit Viability** - Edmonton's greatest concentration of transit supportive uses and users.
- **Showcase for Edmonton** - a revitalized Downtown to attract people, investment and opportunity to the City.



Photos 1 and 3 courtesy HBBH

Analysis of 'Baseline' vs. 'Alternate' (Catalyst Projects) Scenario

As part of the process of preparing this Plan, two studies were undertaken to compare a 'Baseline' growth scenario with an 'Alternate' growth scenario. The studies examined these subjects:

- Development and Tax Revenue
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The 'Baseline' scenario assumed a 'status quo' or 'business as usual' scenario and the 'Alternate' scenario assumed that the vision laid out in the Plan for the Downtown would be implemented. The implementation of the Plan's Catalyst Projects was assumed to be very important to the realization of the 'Alternate' scenario.

Development and Tax Revenue Analysis: Comparing a 'Baseline' vs. an 'Alternate' Growth Scenario

The "Downtown Edmonton Commercial, Office and Residential Forecasts 2009 - 2044" study (see Appendix A) examined the potential for growth of residential units, retail and service commercial, and office space in the Downtown, assuming both a 'Baseline' and 'Alternate' scenario. A brief summary of the implications of the two different growth scenarios is presented below.

Comparison of Residential, Office and Retail/Service Growth to 2044: Baseline and Alternate Scenarios

Additional Square Footage By 2044		
	Baseline	Alternate
Residential	6,432,961	12,357,374
Office	1,289,922	2,254,363
Retail/Service	1,645,992	2,352,122
TOTAL	9,368,875	16,963,860

Baseline Scenario - Residential, Retail and Office Growth

Under a Baseline scenario, the Downtown can expect to receive an additional 6.4 million sq. ft. of residential space (6,000 residential units) and 1.65 million square feet of commercial (retail and service) by 2044. In terms of employment and office space, under this baseline scenario, the Downtown is expected to see 1.3 million square feet of additional office space over the next 35 years.

Alternate Scenario - Residential, Retail and Office Growth

If the Plan and its catalyst projects are implemented, under the 'Alternate' scenario, the Downtown can expect an additional 12,200 residential units and 2.35 million square feet of commercial/retail space over the period 2009 - 2044. In the same time frame, the Downtown is projected to have an additional 2.25 million square feet of additional office space, under a scenario assuming implementation of the Capital City Downtown Plan.

Massing Model diagrams depicting the different amounts of growth resulting from the two different growth scenarios are provided on the following pages.

Tax Revenue Analysis: Comparing a 'Baseline' vs. an 'Alternate' Growth Scenario

A summary of the property tax revenue from this growth in retail, office and residential space under the Baseline and Alternate scenarios is presented in the table below.

Comparison of Total Tax Revenue Generated to 2044: Baseline and Alternate Scenarios

Total Tax Revenue (Current \$)			
	Baseline	Alternate	
Years 1-10	\$ 104,150,377	\$ 81,256,583	\$ 22,893,793
Years 11-20	\$ 2,618,009	\$ 100,826,893	\$ 98,208,885
Years 21-30	\$ 38,753,486	\$ 102,378,465	\$ 63,624,978
Years 31-35	\$ 24,048,869	\$ 91,499,525	\$ 67,450,655
35 Years	\$169,570,741	\$375,961,466	\$206,390,725

As shown in this table, the Alternate (or Catalyst) scenario would result in approximately 7.6 million more square feet of development in the Downtown when compared to the Baseline scenario, over a 35 year period. This has significant implications for property tax revenue to the City of Edmonton.

Under the Baseline scenario, total new property tax generated from additional retail, office and residential space Downtown from 2009 to 2044 is projected at nearly \$169.6 million. However, under the Alternate growth scenario, the incremental tax increase is projected to jump to nearly \$376 million. Over 35 years, the difference between Baseline and Alternate scenarios is nearly \$206.4 million in property tax revenues.

Figure 6: Massing Model - Baseline (Forecasted Growth) Scenario

Note: Theoretical projections only



Image courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

Figure 7: Massing Model - Alternate (Catalyst Projects) Scenario

Note: Theoretical projections only



Image courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

Environmental Analysis: Comparing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Under a ‘Baseline’ vs. an ‘Alternate’ Growth Scenario

The “*Towards a Sustainable Downtown: Reducing GHG Emissions*” study (see Appendix B) was undertaken as part of the process of preparing this Plan. Its findings, which are summarized below, underline the benefits of applying more sustainable approaches to land use, transportation patterns and urban built form.

On a household basis, annual Greenhouse (GHG) emissions are much lower Downtown than in many other areas of Edmonton. People who live Downtown tend to drive less and travel shorter distances per year than their suburban counterparts. Because downtown is a mixed use area, more people live close to where they work, go to school, shop, and meet their other daily and special needs. People who live Downtown occupy relatively smaller residential units, and thereby consume less energy heating their homes. These and other factors contribute to lower GHG levels Downtown compared to other areas of the city.

By stimulating residential development Downtown and increasing the downtown population through advancing the Alternate scenario, the City can reduce downtown GHG emission levels even further. Several of the Catalyst Projects are aimed at fostering new housing downtown. Improving building energy performance - part of another Catalyst Project - would further reduce downtown per-household GHG emissions.

The diagrams below help explain the environmental benefits accruing from the implementation of the Catalyst Projects.

Figure 8: Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Baseline Scenario

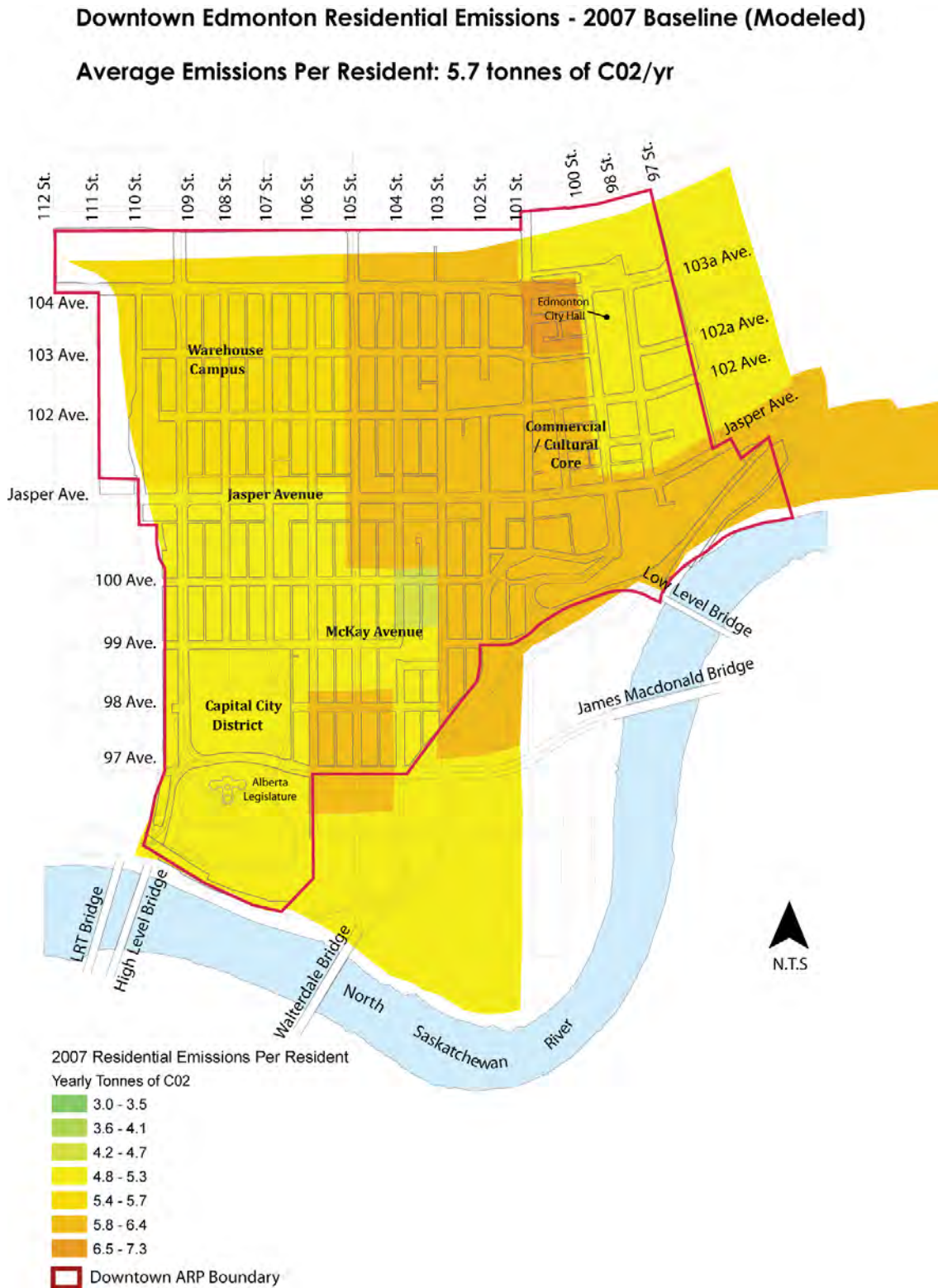
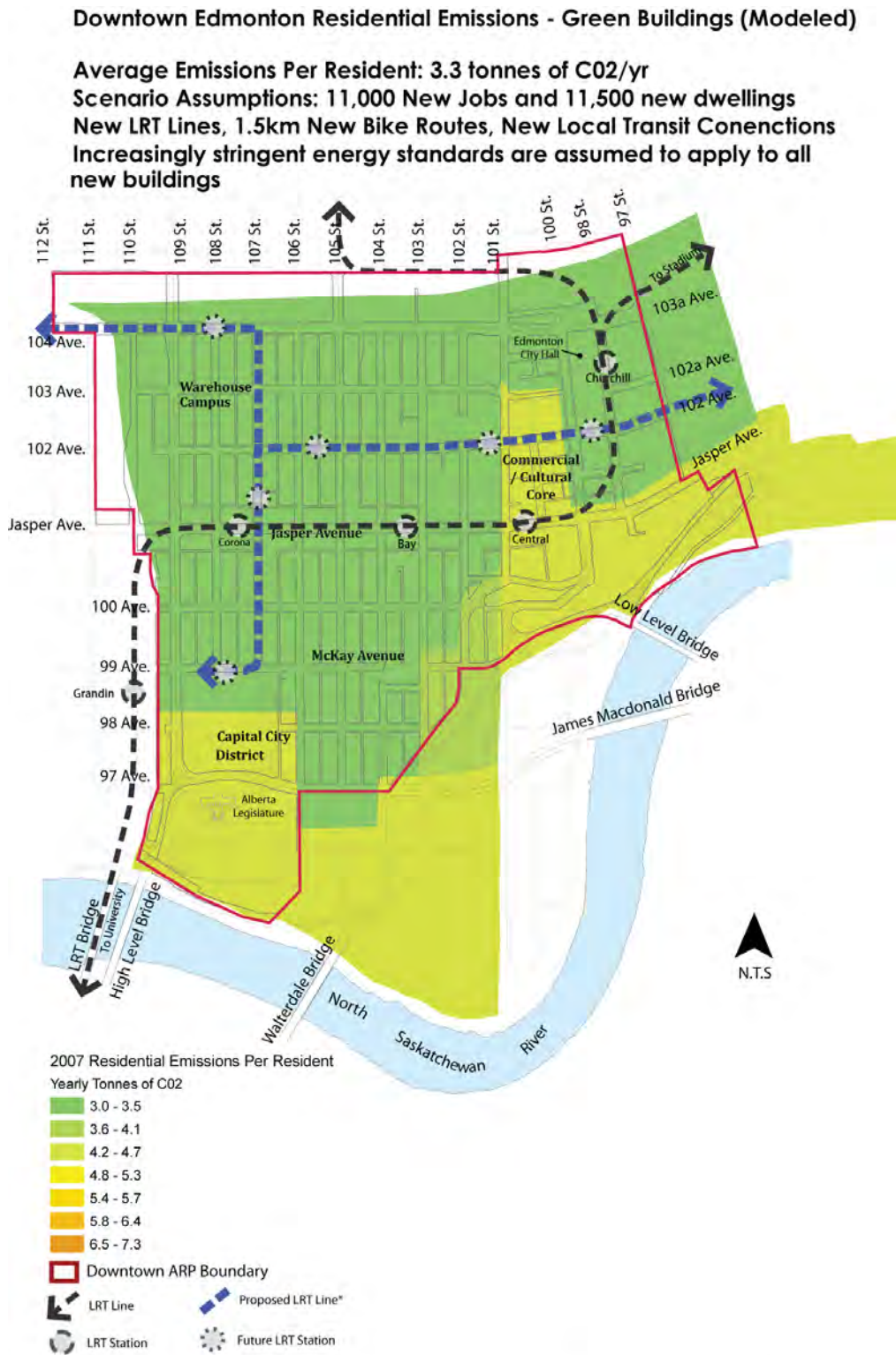


Figure 9: Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Alternate Scenario



*Note: City of Edmonton will work with Province to examine options for a multi modal (Light Rail Transit/High Speed Rail) facility in the vicinity of 109th Street and best route across river.

3. Policy Framework

This section outlines the organizational framework for the strategies, goals, policies and concept maps that are the core of the Capital City Downtown Plan.

In support of the vision, principles and bold directions of the Plan, the Plan's policies have been organized into four major Theme Areas:

- **Sustainable.** Environmentally, economically and socially.
- **Vibrant.** Working, living, playing and learning.
- **Well-designed.** Design excellence, building on the past, for the future.
- **Accessible.** Modal choice - within, to and from Downtown.

For each of the above framework elements, this section discusses key moves and directions for Downtown Edmonton. Specific references to the appropriate sections in the Plan are provided as a means to link directions to policy initiatives.



Photo courtesy Carlyle + Associates



Photo courtesy HBBH



Sustainable Downtown

“Sustainable development” emerged from the United Nations Brundtland Report in 1987, in recognition that societies need to create prosperous economies and communities, but not irreversibly damage the planet in the process. The report concluded that to sustain economic growth, the approach to economic development that would lead to long term prosperity must be transformed from one that generally ignores the environmental and social impacts on the planet, to one that integrated those concerns into everyday business and political decisions and activities. Since the concept was developed, interpretations and frameworks have evolved to facilitate the implementation of sustainability objectives in all aspects of community planning and development. Today, sustainability is viewed as a framework for thinking about development that enables social, cultural, environmental and economic concerns to be addressed proactively so that synergistic solutions can be implemented.



Photos courtesy HBBH

As the region's core, the City is committed to develop a sustainable downtown that the community will be proud to pass on to the next generation. The building blocks that define our downtown, such as buildings, sewers, landscaping, streets, parks, and the processes that support it, such as transit, jobs, and cultural activities, will be planned and designed to maximize social and cultural well-being, the economic vibrancy and environmental health of our downtown. The policies throughout this Plan will commit the City of Edmonton, developers and other stakeholders to keep sustainability at the forefront when developing public and private land and initiating projects and programs.

This Plan provides a framework for us to achieve a more sustainable downtown. A three-point strategy to achieve this goal includes:

- Enhance social and cultural well-being
- Enhance economic vibrancy
- Enhance viable and healthy life sustaining natural systems

Enhance Social and Cultural Well-being

Social and cultural aspects of a community are multifaceted and often complex; they have a direct impact on the quality of life of residents and are often impacted by multiple players, governments and agencies. Despite this complexity, focusing efforts to ensure individuals have the opportunity to meet their basic needs and enjoy ample opportunities to reach their full capacity and contribute to their community makes it feasible for most, if not all, social and cultural objectives to be addressed. Considering these objectives also enables the leveraging of greater benefit from existing social and cultural assets and services.



Downtown Edmonton will:**Allow for Community Members to Meet Basic Needs**

Provide individuals with access to appropriate and affordable housing, healthy and nutritious food, and clean air and water.

Reference Sections:

- 6. Downtown Housing
- 2. Energy, Emissions and Air Quality

Allow for Individuals to Reach Full Capacity

Assist individuals to excel in life by providing access to: education and skills development resources; health services; employment options and, opportunities for cultural and artistic expression and enjoyment. Improve the health of individuals by re-introducing activity such as walking and cycling into daily routines and providing recreation opportunities. Ensure the ongoing support of Community Policing and crime prevention programs and that the design of the built environment emphasizes the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

Reference Sections:

- 5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place
- 4. Economic Development
 - 7. Commercial and Institutional Activities
 - 8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment
- 15. Pedestrian Circulation
- 16. Cycling Downtown

Allow for Individuals to Contribute to their Community

Provide a continued commitment to transparency in the planning process and a commitment to the evolution of public involvement initiatives. Enable 'community' responses to challenges by maintaining Community Leagues that support coordinated action and stewardship. Ensure community "identity" is reflective of diversity. Support physical improvements and other initiatives that enhance social interaction, community participation and collaboration, social inclusion, safety and a child friendly environment. Create "Village Squares" or major central gathering places in each downtown neighbourhood to increase the sense of community and ownership amongst downtown residents.

Reference Sections:

- 5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place
 - 7. Commercial and Institutional Activities
 - 8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment

Enhance Economic Vibrancy and Diversity

Local economies support job creation through the retention and growth of local (existing) businesses and attraction of new businesses. Business creates a solid tax base and supports local service delivery. Local economies must also be resilient over the long term. Ensuring a diversity of business sizes and sectors contribute to greater long term health. Lastly, because so much of a community’s energy and resources are generated or consumed by local economic activity, partnerships with business to adopt sustainable practices, such as energy efficient logistics, green buildings and community stewardship initiatives are also important for overall community sustainability.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Foster Sustainable Economic Development and Expand the Knowledge-based Economy

Support the emergence of the Downtown as a centre for green business and environmental practices. Position the Downtown as the home of Edmonton’s knowledge-based economy by providing ongoing support for the growth and development of learning institutions in the Downtown and supporting partnerships between employers and knowledge providers

Reference Sections:

- 4. Economic Development
- 7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities

Support Business Diversity and Employment Growth

Support the growth of small and large business and promote greater sector diversity. Strengthen the downtown employment base and increase the worker population in both the public and private sector, by taking advantage of the Downtown’s many unique characteristics as a concentrated, diverse, urbane office-retail centre. Build on convention, tourism and entertainment success through promotion, marketing and facility expansions and renovations.

Reference Sections:

- 4. Economic Development
- 7. Commercial and Institutional Activities



Enhance Viable and Healthy Life-Sustaining Natural Systems

Global climate change, strained ecosystems, accelerating consumption of natural resources, and the negative health impacts from pollution are only a few challenges that are causing community concern, increased costs to government and business and regulatory change. Sustainable cities depend on the integrity of key natural systems, such as water, air, vegetation, trees, and the earth's soil, to bring ecological, economic, and community benefits to the community and region.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Sustain a Healthy Natural Environment

Increase the number of street trees and promote other forms of vegetation to soften the urban landscape and reduce the Downtown heat island effect. Expand the street tree canopy and create improved natural linkages throughout Downtown and to the river valley by adding more connected parks and landscaped open spaces, community gardens, indoor atriums and winter gardens are priorities.

Reference Sections:

1. A Healthy Natural Environment
11. Parks and Open Space

Reduce Energy, Emissions and Improve Air Quality

Establish development requirements and promote incentives to encourage energy efficient and green building design; develop initiatives to generate renewable energy in the Downtown and promote the creation of highly efficient and centralized distributed and/or neighbourhood energy systems.

Reference Sections:

1. A Healthy Natural Environment
2. Energy, Emissions and Air Quality
11. Parks and Open Space

Maintain Healthy Natural Environment and Minimize the Consumption of Material Resources

Conserve water and reducing stormwater run-off by using permeable paving and rain gardens to capture and filter runoff and reduce storm water flow. Minimize waste production and increase materials recycling by expanding convenient reuse and recycling opportunities. Introduce sustainable and green infrastructure downtown through low impact design and construction practices.

Reference Sections:

3. Natural and Material Resources
-

Vibrant Downtown

A vibrant Downtown is one that is livable, dynamic and diverse. To achieve vibrancy, the Downtown maintains and strengthens its live, work, and play focus. Today, Downtown's retail, restaurant and entertainment sectors are diversifying and maturing thanks to an expanding residential population base. New gallery space has opened with more planned for the future to showcase the contributions of Alberta's arts community. The Downtown Arts community continues to flourish as the centre for entertainment in the Capital Region, with world-class venues and facilities attracting local and global talent on a year-round basis. Some work remains, however, the Downtown features some of the lowest office vacancy rates and lowest unemployment rates in the country.

In terms of the most important educational sector, the Downtown is on the verge of experiencing significant growth in its post secondary student population. This growth is being spurred on by events such as the opening of the University of Alberta's Enterprise Square and recent announcements regarding the major expansion plans of Grant MacEwan University and NorQuest College.

This Plan commits us to maintaining our focus to increasing the amount of full time residents who call Downtown home, strengthening our core economic, entertainment and cultural activities and building on our world-class Downtown assets to promote a reputation of excellence. A four-point strategy to achieve this goal includes:

- Significantly increase housing in the Downtown core
- Create dynamic and focused precincts
- Create life-long learning environment
- Create a vibrant arts and entertainment scene.



Photos courtesy City of Edmonton

Significantly Increase Housing Diversity in the Downtown Core

Since the last Downtown Plan was completed in 1997, the residential population of the Downtown has more than doubled, growing from 5,130 people in 1996 to over 11,000 people in 2009. This Plan carries on the momentum established in 1997 by working to grow and enhance the Downtown community, celebrating its diversity and ensuring the Downtown remains a welcoming home to citizens of Edmonton and newcomers to our City. Downtown Edmonton has emerged over the last 10 years as a cultural capital for the arts, destination entertainment, communications, finance and commerce stimulated by steady job growth, wealth creation and a growing downtown population.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Establish a Residential Growth Target

Promote a twenty-year residential growth target, with the objective of achieving a Downtown residential population of 24,000 by 2030.

Reference Sections:

6. Downtown Housing

Support Housing Diversity and Affordability

Encourage a variety of housing forms in the Downtown to provide for a broad range of housing types, tenure types and price ranges. Include housing for families, seniors (including aging-in-place housing), students, persons with special needs and persons with disabilities. Support the City's programs to provide affordable housing units.

Reference Sections:

6. Downtown Housing



Photos courtesy HBBH

Create Dynamic and Focused Work Precincts

Continuing efforts to strategically leverage the benefits of locating a wide variety of businesses in the Downtown area remains a commitment of the City. Focusing the location of business will increase the dynamic nature of the Downtown area as will focusing efforts to create viable and vibrant ‘main street’ shopping experiences.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Designate Employment Focus Areas

Attract more employers by designating the Commercial-Cultural Core, and Capital City Districts as employment growth areas, providing a range of initiatives and incentives to encourage employment oriented projects. Support the development of high quality services, facilities and amenities geared towards employee needs in these neighbourhoods.

Reference Sections:

- 4. Economic Development
- 7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities

Support Retail Revitalization and Vibrant Shopping Streets

Strategically increase retail opportunities; attract a diversity of retail and services to meet the needs of a growing residential community and market Downtown as the primary prestige, design-oriented, and the only truly urban retail destination within the metropolitan region. Focus on building outstanding street-oriented retail neighbourhoods and completing the necessary initiatives to attract exciting new businesses along special pedestrian-oriented shopping streets, including Jasper Avenue, 101 Street, 104 Street and Rice Howard Way, and support the emergence of complementary local shopping streets.

Reference Sections:

- 4. Economic Development
- 7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities
- 10. The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets



Photos courtesy City of Edmonton

Create a Life-long Learning Environment

A vibrant downtown provides a rich variety of opportunities for learning. This promotes the growth of the knowledge economy and enhances the quality of life. A life-long learning environment includes formal education facilities such as public schools, post-secondary institutions and training facilities, but also includes continuing education programs, public interpretive signage, and neighbourhood capacity building partnerships.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Promote Life-Long Learning

Encourage and support the growth of existing educational institutions and other training facilities and attract new learning institutions downtown.

Encourage downtown services, programs and facilities that support life-long learning. Identify and support partnerships between educational institutions and the broader community. Encourage the development of student-oriented facilities, housing and amenities in close proximity to downtown educational institutions.

Reference Sections:

- 5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place
- 7. Commercial, Educational, and Institutional Activities



Create a Vibrant Arts and Entertainment Scene

A vibrant Downtown is one that is socially vibrant, offering a wealth of opportunities for residents, students and workers alike to enjoy art, culture and entertainment.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Increase Cultural and Entertainment Opportunities

Concentrate cultural and entertainment opportunities in the Downtown to ensure that it remains the primary destination for world-class cultural and entertainment venues and events. Recognize and plan for the resulting transition of the Downtown to a 24-hour environment.

Reference Sections:

- 8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment
- 7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities
- 5.2 Healthy Community and Sense of Place

Sustain and Grow the Downtown Arts Community

Encourage all forms of artistic endeavors in the Downtown, providing new studio and exhibit spaces, festivals and special events that celebrate the arts, the artists and their presence in the Downtown.

Reference Sections:

- 8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment



Photo courtesy Citadel Theatre



Photo courtesy Robert Lernermeier



Photo courtesy Cohos Evamy

Well-Designed Downtown

The citizens of Edmonton place considerable importance on having a well designed downtown. As Alberta's Capital City, it is important that the Downtown project a sense of vitality, beauty, warmth, dynamism and design excellence. The impression that the Downtown experience leaves with each of us is created not only through the level of activity on its streets, but also through the character of its streets, the quality of its open spaces, and the expressiveness of its built environment. Good urban design helps to create community identity as it focuses on the creation of vibrant streets, quality public and private spaces and building environments designed for the comfort of people.

Urban design is concerned with not only how places look, but also with how they function. When applied consistently, the principles of urban design ensure that buildings and public spaces fit harmoniously with their surroundings and contribute to the creation of a distinct sense of place. The Plan commits us to creating a well designed Downtown through deliberate design choices and specific actions.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Encourage Design Excellence

Beautify the Downtown by reinforcing the special identity of each Downtown character area by preparing public realm plans for important Downtown streets and special places. Encourage excellence in the design of Downtown buildings and streetscapes by adopting comprehensive building massing and design controls to ensure buildings are built to a human scale and fit harmoniously within their surroundings.

Reference Sections:

- 9. Downtown Urban Design
- 10. The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets
- 11. Parks and Open Space
- 12. Built Form and Architecture

Create Well-Defined Public Realm for a Winter City

Provide a diversity of open spaces, plazas, squares and community facilities to serve as community gathering places to support growth of the residential, student and worker population. Create pedestrian-friendly streets that are safe, well-designed, and contain identifiable pathways and linkages to adjacent neighbourhoods, the river valley and special public spaces. An "Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets" defines the role of each Downtown street and determines appropriate building and design parameters to ensure context-appropriate design. Design and landscape public spaces, facilities and buildings to embrace and celebrate our winter climate.

Reference Sections:

- 9. Downtown Urban Design
- 10. The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets
- 11. Parks and Open Space
- 12. Built Form and Architecture

Celebrate Heritage Resources

Protect, renovate and integrate heritage buildings and resources with new developments that enhance the unique character of the Downtown. Facilitate the rehabilitation of historic buildings through various incentives and reduced development requirements.

Reference Sections:

- 13. Historic Preservation
-

Accessible Downtown

The Downtown Transportation System serves to connect the Downtown with other parts of Edmonton and the Capital Region, as well as to connect the Downtown neighbourhoods with each other. The transportation system that includes roads, pedestrian and cycling circulation systems, transit and parking, all have a role to play in facilitating these important connections. The policy foundation for the Downtown Transportation System is defined in the City of Edmonton’s recently approved Transportation Master Plan, “The Way We Move”. The Downtown Transportation Strategy sets out a long-term approach for making improvements to the downtown transportation system.

Downtown Edmonton will:

Maintain and Optimize the Use of the Roadway System To Downtown

Optimize the efficiency of the existing roadway system using traffic management and transportation supply measures. The Plan will reinforce the Downtown as a major destination in the Region’s transportation system. Reduce single occupant vehicle use through comprehensive Transportation Demand Management programs.

Reference Sections:

14. The Downtown Roadway System

Enhance the Viability of Alternate Modes of Transportation

Create a more walkable downtown and pedestrian-friendly circulation system and environment. Create a cycle-friendly city. Maintain the Downtown as the major hub in the region’s transit system to strengthen the Downtown as a high-density residential, employment, education and entertainment centre. Pursue expansion of the LRT to all sectors of the city with a goal to increase ridership and spur the development of compact, urban communities. Develop an efficient, effective, accessible bus and LRT network to serve Edmonton with connections to the Region.

Reference Sections:

15. Pedestrian Circulation
16. Cycling Downtown
17. Downtown Transit System

Manage Parking

Investigate alternate parking management organizational structures to administer on and off street parking in the Downtown. Work with private sector organizations to manage downtown parking facilities and address issues related to parking supply and demand, and the design and convenience of parking facilities. Parking management will combine Bylaws and Policies to ensure the livability and economic vitality of the city while promoting appropriate land use and public transit initiatives.

Reference Sections:

18. Parking Downtown



4. Goals and Policies

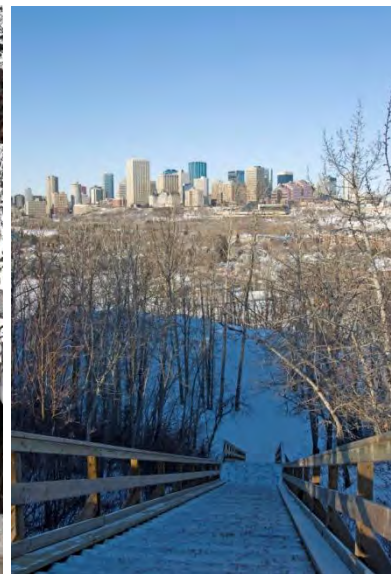
4.1 SUSTAINABLE DOWNTOWN

A sustainable downtown is high performing in its outward appearance but most importantly in the underlying effectiveness and regeneration of its natural systems, the health and well-being of its inhabitants and users, and the vibrancy and diversity of its economy.

This section primarily addresses environmental and economic aspects of sustainability impacting the Downtown. This section is intended to complement the City's anticipated new environmental strategy, The Way We Green. Please view the Policy Framework discussion for how social and cultural aspects are addressed. Primary considerations driving the following sustainability policies include:

1. A Healthy Natural Environment

The North Saskatchewan River Valley provides a vital natural habitat corridor on the southern edge of the Downtown. While the Downtown benefits from this proximity, there is very little natural habitat remaining within the Downtown itself. To truly enhance the habitat for urban songbirds and other wildlife appropriate for a downtown, it will be necessary to improve the natural linkages to the river valley, as well as provide for substantially more trees, landscaping and open spaces Downtown. Proximity to the North Saskatchewan River requires the Downtown to take greater responsibility to address the issue of urban run-off to minimize degradation of this special river.



The Downtown could be a showcase for integrated stormwater management by encouraging the use of low impact development standards. By committing to reduce stormwater run-off and reduce potable water use, the City can demonstrate a vision of modern urban design that integrates green infrastructure into the urban core. Water resource management for conservation, rainwater harvesting, and stormwater capture, treatment, and re-use are fundamental components of sustainable community design.

Urban forests are important to the maintenance of a healthy downtown. Trees filter the air that we breath, protect our eyes and skin from harmful sun damage, and absorb carbon dioxide while providing oxygen. Trees and other landscape features foster pedestrian friendly streets, provide recreation opportunities, calm traffic on busy streets, and generally contribute to beautifying the urban landscape. One of the most important roles of an urban forest is to reduce the heat island effect that results from urban development; shading paved areas, green roofs, absorbing sunlight are critical for mitigating excessive heat reflection and storage. Trees also provide opportunities for songbird habitat.

GOAL - A HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Provide an urban environment that is healthy and ecologically sensitive, establishing the Downtown as a focal point for innovative context-appropriate habitat protection and creation.

POLICIES

1.1 “Sustainability Street” Pilot Project

Establish a Sustainable Street Pilot Project in the Warehouse Campus or McKay Avenue Neighbourhood to showcase and test sustainable initiatives such as, but not limited to, a range of low impact development features such as permeable surfaces, bioswales and rain gardens, renewable energy / efficient street lighting, interpretive signage, etc. that aim to highlight the connections between ecosystems, infrastructure, and the urban environment.

1.2 Urban Forest

Expand the quality and quantity of the urban forest in both the public realm and on private property over the next 10 years to achieve an overall 20% increase in the canopy coverage.

Plant native and hardy tree and plant species, and ensure that installations incorporate best practices in soil systems, aeration systems, irrigation, and drainage to support the healthy maturation of the urban forest in a period of climate change.

1.3 Light Pollution

Encourage use of fixtures that minimize excessive light pollution and work with private building and lot owners to minimize or eliminate light usage when not in use. Investigate the benefits of a Dark Sky policy for the Downtown.

2. Energy, Emissions and Air Quality

The ability of a city to conserve energy, reduce emissions and transition to renewable energy are prime determinants of whether or not it moves towards greater sustainability performance. Energy generation and the amount of energy consumed influence local and regional air quality and carbon dioxide generation that contribute to global climate change. Poor air quality has a dramatic effect on quality of life in the Downtown and can negatively affect plant, animal and aquatic habitats. Air quality is directly linked to the choices we make in developing land and in managing our transportation system. We can improve the downtown air quality by such means as increasing our use of alternative forms of mobility, exploring the use of alternative fuel and power sources and limiting activities that have a negative impact on air quality.

GOAL - ENERGY, EMISSIONS AND AIR QUALITY

Mitigate climate change impacts by promoting greater energy conservation for buildings, transportation and infrastructure. Transition energy sources towards renewables.



POLICIES

2.1 Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy

Explore financial and/or development incentives to encourage the development of high-performance (e.g., net-zero emission) projects that demonstrate innovative methods for energy efficiency, building design and the on-site energy generation (thermal and/or electrical). Develop mechanisms to enable renewable energy, created through private and public development projects, to be reintroduced to the power grid.

2.2 Neighbourhood Energy

Investigate the potential for a distributed or neighbourhood energy system to provide thermal energy for building heating and / or cooling in the Downtown core as a means to reduce energy consumption from buildings and provide local jobs. Areas where significant development is anticipated to occur and/or areas where there are known boiler systems used for building heating are prime opportunities for developing efficient neighbourhood systems.

2.3 Green Building and Development Strategy

Establish a Green Building and Development Strategy for private development in Downtown as part of the preparation of a City-wide strategy, to promote healthier indoor environments, energy efficient buildings, and more sustainable development.

The Green Building and Development Strategy would be informed by existing programs such as LEED[®], Built Green and BOMA Best. The City will encourage developments to strive for high standards of sustainability through its Urban Design Awards Program, and by setting the example with public buildings.

2.4 Sustainable Transportation

Encourage reduced dependence on drive-alone vehicles. Key strategies will integrate the provision of new infrastructure (for transit, pedestrians, and bicycles) and transportation demand management measures (e.g., reduced parking requirements, unbundled parking, subsidized transit passes, vehicle sharing, and developer-sponsored transit). Key policies that implement this policy are located in the Accessible Downtown section.

2.5 Air Quality

Encourage public support for sustainable policies by emphasizing the link between air quality and energy use. Make the Air Quality Index (Alberta Environment) widely available as a key element of public information. Educate the public about the negative health effects of air pollution and measures to reduce their GHG emissions and other pollutants.

3. Natural and Material Resources

Humans, by definition, are consumers. We require resources to sustain our daily activities and lives. Material resources that are used to generate consumer goods produce waste (directly and/or indirectly, e.g. the use of packaging) which in turn contribute to the pollution of air, water, and land. First impressions of our Downtown are affected by the amount of visible litter found on our streets. In order to reduce waste production, a variety of initiatives could be adopted in the Downtown to encourage the re-use, repair, reduction and recycling of waste materials.

Water resources are increasingly scarce and the health of local and global water systems is at risk of being compromised due to over consumption, mismanagement and contamination. The design of buildings and our urban environments impacts the quality of water as well as the quantity consumed.

Finally, our food system consumes a tremendous amount of resources and produces waste. Localized and sustainable food systems optimize resource consumption and waste management while also enabling social interaction and food celebration.

GOAL - NATURAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

Manage water resources to minimize environmental impacts and reduce the generation of waste and the consumption of material goods.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

POLICIES

3.1 Water Conservation and Reuse

Encourage new buildings and major renovations to conserve water. Explore the use of captured rainwater and harvested, treated greywater for public and private realm landscaping irrigation. Areas where new significant development is envisioned, such as the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood, are ideal for considering community greywater treatment and reuse systems. Greywater can be used for irrigation, toilet flushing and even washing (such as car washes) and for industrial processes such as concrete production.

3.2 Storm Water Management

Reduce the volume and rate of stormwater runoff from buildings using on-lot control storage and low impact development features such as green roofs, permeable surfacing, and bioswales to appropriately infiltrate into absorbent landscapes and retain rainfall and storm water run-off on-site.

3.3 Solid Waste Management

Reduce the amount of solid waste generated in the Downtown by promoting the recycling of waste materials, and encourage more environmentally responsible consumer behaviors such as limiting the use of disposable and high-waste products. Strategies include: Increase Downtown drop-off locations for recyclables including e-waste, hazardous waste, white goods, and organic waste; providing recycling containers on all downtown blocks; and, require recycling and/or salvage of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris.

3.4 Downtown Food System

Support initiatives that promote growing, processing, and distributing food Downtown. As residential density increases, support the development and ongoing management of community gardens to foster local food production and to contribute to the health and wellbeing of Downtown citizens.

3.5 Water and Drainage Infrastructure Upgrades

Where water and drainage infrastructure need to be upgraded in order to support developments within the Downtown Plan boundary, these upgrades will need to be done in accordance with City policy, and in the case of water infrastructure, they will also be required to comply with EPCOR policies. Water upgrades may include the installation or relocation of fire hydrants, the installation of water distribution mains, and the abandonment or installation of services.

The City and other appropriate agencies should be contacted at the planning stages of each proposed development to determine what improvements will be required.

4. Economic Development

One of the overall objectives of this Plan is to increase the amenity value and promote the strategic advantages of locating new offices, institutions and retail uses in the Downtown.

In a competitive employment environment, employers attract the best and brightest employees by offering work environments that are attractive, close to a range of amenities, close to high quality transportation links, and feature access to green spaces and a range of retail and personal services. Since the Downtown offers all of these features it is the logical location to build increased value to attract increased economic investment.

There is significant value in a healthy office market to residents of the entire City - for example: a new office building Downtown adds considerable tax assessment to the City tax base, but brings little new costs to the City since it makes use of existing infrastructure. This is only one reason why it is important to re-focus on growing the Downtown employment base.



GOAL - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Maintain and enhance the Downtown's key role as a dynamic, growing business centre and foster an economic environment worthy of Edmonton's role as the Provincial Capital.

POLICIES

4.1 High Priority to Downtown Improvements

Place a high priority on the funding and implementation of the Capital City Downtown Plan commensurate with the Downtown's role as the City's key economic driver. As the primary hub of economic and social activity, seat of civic and provincial governments and a showcase to the world, it is critically important to maintain a high quality Downtown environment.

4.2 Targeted Reinvestment in the Downtown

Support strategic public and private investment in the Downtown to enhance the quality of the downtown environment and further strengthen the Downtown tax base. Develop incentive programs and use other financial mechanisms aimed at resolving long standing problem areas or issues.

4.3 Office and Retail Growth in the Downtown

Strengthen the role of the Downtown as the premier employment centre in the Capital Region. Actively promote and support office and retail growth in the Downtown, taking advantage of its many unique characteristics as a concentrated, diverse, urban office-retail centre.

4.4 Employment Growth Areas

Support employment growth in the Commercial-Cultural Core and Capital City District through the development of high quality services, facilities and amenities geared towards employee needs in these Neighbourhoods.

4.5 Downtown as a High Quality Tourist Destination

Undertake initiatives to strengthen the unique advantages of the Downtown and the central river valley as a tourist destination. Prepare a Downtown Tourism Plan to provide a program for the development of new and upgraded tourism services and facilities.

4.6 Economic Development Partnerships

Encourage and facilitate strategic partnerships and networking amongst non-profit organizations and economic development organizations to further this Plan.

5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place

Having opportunities for meaningful social interaction is an important contributor to a strong community. Because a sense of community can only emerge from the residents themselves, this Plan recommends an approach focusing on the expertise, services, programs and facilities currently available in the Downtown.

The development of parks, open spaces, child-friendly facilities, schools and other supports for residents has lagged behind the growth in the residential sector since the late 1990's. This has been recognized widely as a key issue that needs to be resolved through the new Downtown Plan.

The Downtown Edmonton Community League (DECL) was established in 2003 and is active in representing the downtown residents in a number of ways. (e.g. sponsoring programs and special events, maintaining an interactive website, reviewing development applications and major downtown projects, operating the Urban Eden Community Garden, commenting on city-wide initiatives, etc).

Establishing a Healthy Community framework for the Downtown will help ensure that the wide diversity of downtown residents and employees feel safe and secure, and that their opinions are valued, understood and included in downtown decision making. The framework should ensure that all members of the Downtown community have access to the necessary goods and services to meet their basic health, shelter and recreation needs. In turn this growth will foster greater residential growth leading to additional office and retail development.



Highlighting the importance of a child friendly, senior friendly and healthy Downtown Community will lead to greater attention being paid to such issues as the availability of childcare services, methods of reducing living costs, equitable access to employment and education, and the need for attractive public spaces for social interaction and participation.

GOAL - HEALTHY COMMUNITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

Develop a strong sense of community in the Downtown through the creation and reinforcement of complete neighbourhoods and a wide range of housing choices for a growing resident population. Embrace diversity and promote social interaction, citizen engagement and an atmosphere of caring and tolerance for all people.

POLICIES

5.1 Central Gathering Places for the Warehouse Campus and McKay Avenue Neighbourhoods

Foster a sense of community and identity by developing central public gathering places such as parks or village squares within the Warehouse Campus and McKay Avenue neighbourhoods. Support a range of shopping, leisure, educational and other services and facilities within or near these village-like centres to increase activity levels, convenience and a sense of belonging to neighbourhood residents.

5.2 Unifying Characteristics within Downtown Neighbourhoods

Foster a sense of pride and cohesion amongst residents within the downtown neighbourhoods by emphasizing unifying characteristics, such as heritage features, special streetscapes, signage, landscaping and other recognizable features.

5.3 Social Interaction Throughout the Downtown

Support the development of public places located throughout the Downtown including large and small parks, a farmers' market, spiritual centres, community gardens, plazas, LRT Stations and the River Valley parks facilities to encourage social interaction and enhance well-being; also support the provision of amenity rooms, common roof decks, play areas, and other activity spaces within buildings, as well as semi-private space developed to facilitate casual interaction. Identify and plan for appropriate public spaces to support 24-hour uses.

5.4 Child Friendly Downtown Improvements

Explore a number of initiatives that would make Downtown Edmonton a more child friendly place that reflects the needs of children and young people and their families. Implement improvements and adopt development requirements to ensure all areas and buildings in the Downtown are welcoming to children and families.

5.5 Schools for Downtown Children

Assist the Downtown Edmonton Community League in working collaboratively with adjacent communities and the Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic Schools to develop a strategy for an improved central area school system to serve Downtown and central area communities' school-aged children.

5.6 Senior Friendly Downtown Environment

Support all efforts to create a senior friendly downtown environment. Promote active living for seniors in the Downtown through the provision of a range of accessible services, fitness and recreational programs, facilities (e.g. seniors' drop-in centres), amenities and opportunities for participation. New buildings and public spaces are to be designed in accordance with universal design guidelines.

5.7 Downtown Edmonton Community League

Support and enhance the role of the Downtown Edmonton Community League (DECL) to increase their capacity to engage residents in the neighbourhood, downtown and central area issues; provide such assistance as helping them secure larger, accessible, and visible office and programming space.

5.8 Involvement in the Delivery of Social Services

Involve the Downtown Edmonton Community League, area residents and business owners in the planning and delivery of social services in the Downtown area, using a variety of processes, in conjunction with existing social service departments and agencies.

5.9 Healthy Community Action Plan

Involve downtown residents, businesses and other stakeholder groups in developing a set of healthy community indicators for the Downtown; monitor these on a continuous basis and initiate actions to promote community participation and collaboration, social inclusion and interaction, safety and security, and adaptability to respond to change.

5.10 Services and Facilities for Downtown Workers

Conduct a survey of downtown employee and resident needs for services and facilities, making this information publicly available; develop programs and implement improvements based on this needs assessment.

5.11 Special Events and Attractions

Actively encourage a variety of events and activities to increase the vibrancy of the Downtown; encourage activities such as the Farmer's Market, parades, programmed festivities and the seasonal use of street vendors, buskers and other entertainers.

5.12 Lifelong Learning and Participation

Provide a robust range of programs to enable older adults to contribute to the cultural life of the community including intergenerational learning programs aimed at increasing interaction between older adults and children/youth; support learning institutions and other organizations that encourage lifelong learning and community participation.

5.13 Safety and Security

Promote safety and security in the Downtown throughout a 24-hour cycle. Support Community Policing and crime prevention programs such as Neighbourhood Foot Patrols, Neighbourhood/Apartment Watch and the Security Network Program.

5.14 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles to help deter crime in all public and private spaces in the Downtown; support the design of buildings that put ‘eyes-on-the-street’ to achieve a safer neighbourhood.

5.15 Recreation and Preventative Social Services

Facilitate the provision of recreation programming and preventative social services to residents; develop a Youth Engagement Program for the Downtown to strengthen youth participation in the Downtown Community, promote diversity and equality of opportunity between youth and adults and help children and youth achieve their potential.

5.16 Neighbour Appreciation Day

Support efforts to encourage a mid-winter celebration for the residents of the Downtown; develop other initiatives that highlight the contributions individual residents have made towards enhancing the Downtown community.

5.17 Community Involvement in Design and Improvement Projects

Facilitate community involvement in design-related issues and initiatives in the Downtown; encourage and assist in the creation of partnership programs that enhance the quality of the downtown environment.

4.2 VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

6. Downtown Housing

Edmontonians recognize that the Downtown can accommodate higher intensities of development and a wider range of land uses than other areas of the City. Citizens want to see continued residential development across the Downtown, including housing for people from different income levels, for people who either want to rent or own their residence, and housing for a variety of household types.

Diversity in housing is encouraged and facilitated through the zoning system. All zones in the Downtown provide for a range of housing forms and tenure types. The growing residential community in the Downtown is key to achieving more active streets, growing business activity both in terms of trade in retail goods and services, and making Downtown a desirable amenity-rich location for major employers and learning institutions.



Photos courtesy HBBH



GOAL - DOWNTOWN HOUSING

Establish a growth target of 24,000 Downtown residents by 2030. Achieve this growth target through providing a wide variety of housing options, including housing for families, seniors, students, persons with special needs and persons with disabilities, as well as artists' work/live housing.

POLICIES

6.1 Residential Growth Target

Promote a twenty-year growth target of up to 12,000 additional downtown residents, to achieve a population of 24,000 by 2030. Maintain high overall land use densities in the Downtown to use land efficiently and to permit housing targets to be met.

6.2 Central Warehouse Area Community Plan

Complete a detailed Community Plan for the Central Warehouse Area (sub area within the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood) to provide a cohesive and exciting vision for redevelopment. Include a strong urban design component in the Plan.

6.3 Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program

Establish a financial incentive program for medium density housing projects built in the Central Warehouse Area. Provide \$10,000 per unit, for a three year time period, dependant upon project meeting high quality design standards.

6.4 Diversity in Housing Choice

Promote a wide range of housing choices in terms of housing type, price range, tenure and design in all areas of the Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods.

6.5 Housing for Families with Children

Promote the construction of a supply of housing units suitable for families with children; provide incentives for this type of housing through the Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program. Investigate further opportunities that would encourage family oriented developments.

6.6 Affordable Housing

Increase the number of affordable housing units in the Downtown through facilitating non-profit and for-profit organizations in taking advantage of the capital grant programs and other incentives available under the City's Cornerstones Program or any government capital incentive program with monies available for affordable housing.

6.7 Student Housing

Collaborate with post-secondary institutions and student associations to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable student housing, including designated student housing projects, in close proximity to downtown educational institutions; support public-private partnerships where market and student housing units are combined.

6.8 Artists' Live-Work Housing

Encourage the reinvigoration of the Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton (ArtsHab), to enable them to continue developing more artists' live-work studio projects in the Downtown. Support efforts to establish a long-term supply of affordable artist live-work studio space within the Downtown; encourage and assist artists, arts and cultural groups and related professionals in finding live-work space in the Downtown.

6.9 Seniors and Special Needs Housing

Encourage seniors housing designed to accommodate persons with special needs and persons with disabilities. Collaborate with seniors' housing associations and non-profit and for-profit housing organizations.

6.10 Aging-In-Place for Seniors

Encourage seniors housing that provides for "aging-in-place" (e.g. residential developments that provide a range of services and 'universal design' so units can be readily modified in terms of door widths, safety features, etc.). Collaborate with seniors' housing associations and non-profit and for-profit housing organizations.

6.11 Universal Access Guidelines for Housing for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Encourage Universal Design in new construction. Develop Universal Access guidelines that list elements that must be included in 10% of the units in all multiple family developments to ensure Universal Access to housing for seniors and persons with disabilities.

7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities

Edmonton's Downtown is home to approximately 65% of the City's commercial office space. Over the last ten years the Downtown has enjoyed retail growth stimulated by increased jobs, wealth, and a growing downtown population. With the recent increase in commercial activity, and the emergence of one of the City's youngest residential populations, Downtown is moving in the right direction in terms of its evolution as an area with a vibrant, urban, youth-oriented culture.

In addition to commercial office and retail expansion over the last decade, Downtown Edmonton has seen significant expansion of major learning institutions. Downtown Edmonton is firmly anchored by Grant MacEwan University, NorQuest College and the University of Alberta. The increased number of students and support staff has positioned the Downtown as a focal point in Edmonton's expanding knowledge-based economy and has positioned the Downtown as a dynamic centre of creativity and ingenuity.

Not to be overlooked are the important contributions made by the Downtown's faith-based institutions and community support organizations. These institutions play a key role in delivering a broad range of services and support to an increasingly diverse downtown community.



GOAL - COMMERCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Cultivate an economically thriving Downtown, consisting of strong commercial office and retail sectors, a vibrant educational sector, and faith based and community service organizations that are well positioned to respond to an evolving Downtown community.

Retail and Office Development

This Plan builds on the momentum obtained during the last ten years in supporting retail and office expansion efforts. New development will contribute to a more livable, amenity rich downtown, where high quality retail and commercial developments contribute to the Downtown's wealth of private and public spaces.

A new Retail Growth Strategy for Downtown will identify areas for development of greater retail identity, focus and differentiation. All types of retail should be encouraged throughout Downtown. However, in order to foster clusters of healthy retail and commercial services, different areas may take on distinct retail identities.

An increasing residential population will stimulate further retail development, providing essential services to residents, students and workers. Our streets will be active, animated and connect people within the Downtown to a wide variety of services and destinations.

POLICIES

7.1 Employment Growth Target

Support employment growth in the core through a series of initiatives designed to make Downtown the most attractive destination for business. Facilitate office growth in the Downtown through a wide range of programs and actions, including market research, business recruitment, economic incentives, marketing, public realm improvements, networking and partnership initiatives.

7.2 Expansion and Consolidation of Government Offices in the Downtown

Encourage the continued consolidation of government offices in the Downtown. Work with the provincial and federal governments to retain existing offices and to relocate other offices to the Downtown. Encourage the redevelopment of surplus or redundant government buildings.

7.3 Retail Growth Strategy for the Downtown

Collaborate with the Downtown Business Association and the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation to undertake market research and adopt a Retail Growth Strategy for the Downtown to achieve increased overall retail growth, to identify areas for greater retail identity and focus, and to foster clusters of retail businesses. Encourage all types of retail to locate throughout Downtown, in order to help create complete communities in all five downtown neighbourhoods.

7.4 Marketing Downtown as a Retail Destination

Partner with existing and emerging organizations to aggressively market Downtown Edmonton to residents and visitors as a shopping destination. Promote the Downtown to quality-oriented potential retailers as the first location they should consider.

7.5 Support for Retail Businesses

Support the enhancement of existing retail businesses and the development of new retail opportunities in the Downtown. Actively support initiatives that will improve the Downtown's position as one of the City's prime locations for specialized retail trade.

7.6 Support for Business and Property Owner Improvements

Support efforts by property owners and businesses to make improvements to their commercial buildings and the public realm, through a variety of initiatives, including programs such as the City-sponsored Façade Improvement Program.

7.7 Key Shopping Streets

Plan and implement, in consultation with key stakeholders, improvements to the public realm in commercial areas to attract private sector reinvestment in those areas. Encourage improvement initiatives along special pedestrian-oriented shopping streets, including Jasper Avenue, 102 Avenue, 101 Street, 104 Street and Rice Howard Way.

7.8 A Collaborative Approach to a Vital Entertainment Environment

Adopt a mix of strategies around responsible hospitality to ensure the night time entertainment environment in the Downtown is safe and conducive to enjoyment and positive social interaction; Develop a blend of regulation, enforcement, education and incentives through a collaborative approach involving the Jasper Avenue Entertainment Working Group, the Downtown and Oliver communities, those responsible for selling and serving alcohol, and those enforcing alcohol-related regulations.

7.9 Concentrations of Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs

Bars, neighbourhood pubs and nightclubs are encouraged in the Downtown but consider limiting concentrations to prevent overcrowding and public disturbances from concentrating in any one area.

7.10 Managing the Location of Bars, Pubs and Nightclubs

In order to protect downtown residential areas from the impacts of bars, neighbourhood pubs and nightclubs, these uses will be controlled through zoning regulations that stipulate location and maximum size.

Knowledge Economy

A major strength of the Downtown is the approximate 50,000 full and part time students who attend Grant MacEwan University, NorQuest College, the University of Alberta downtown campus and a wide range of programs offered through a number of other colleges and private learning schools. The presence of students has encouraged a more extensive and dynamic arts and cultural downtown community, helping to fuel Edmonton's creative economy.

This Plan will continue to promote and explore creative opportunities for expanding student programming and instructional space. Promoting partnerships between learning institutions and the Downtown business community, and improving the quality of student space and amenities will position the Downtown to capitalize on the creative and economic energy of the education sector.

POLICIES

7.11 Promote the Growth of Knowledge Economy

Encourage the growth of the Downtown knowledge economy by supporting the growth of existing educational institutions and other training facilities and by attracting new learning institutions to locate Downtown.

7.12 Programs and Partnerships to Support Education Institutions

Encourage downtown services, programs and facilities that support the downtown knowledge economy. Identify and support partnerships between educational institutions and the broader community to maximize the use of educational institutions and other training facilities.

7.13 Student Oriented Facilities

Encourage the development of student-oriented facilities, housing and amenities in close proximity to Downtown educational institutions.

7.14 Business and Education Partnerships

Promote partnerships between educational institutions, downtown businesses and others to develop educational, apprenticeship and job placement programs with downtown employers.

7.15 Promoting Downtown as a World Knowledge Centre

Support a collaborative process between education institutions and the business sector in order to promote Downtown Edmonton as a world knowledge centre.

Faith-based and Community Service Organizations

In addition to commercial and educational activities, the downtown's faith based institutions and community service organizations play a crucial role in providing a range of services to a diverse population. These institutions have proven their importance in responding quickly to community needs.

This Plan will continue to support agencies that work to improve the social conditions for all residents by providing financial assistance and helping improve the sharing of information between faith-based and community organizations and downtown residents.

POLICIES

7.16 Faith-Based and Community Service Organizations

Support faith-based and community service organizations located in the Downtown and facilitate communication between these organizations and downtown employees, residents and visitors.

7.17 Support Non-Profit Sector Organizations

Continue to support non-profit organizations in the Downtown by providing full or partial municipal property tax exemptions or accommodation at less than market rates to organizations performing vital community services.



Photo courtesy Darren Kirby



8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment

The citizens of Edmonton are aware of the significant and far-reaching economic and social benefits of a strong downtown arts, culture, and entertainment industry. The Arts District in particular, boasts several world-class arts and cultural venues and continues to evolve as the primary destination for cultural and entertainment events in the Capital Region.

There is a long tradition of public and private support for the arts downtown, with ongoing assistance provided through a combination of public-private partnerships, grants and programming. A large number of downtown arts and cultural facilities, organizations and events have benefited from this support.

The 1997 Downtown Plan, capitalized on this tradition and sponsored a number of initiatives to further the arts. This Plan builds on the solid foundation that has been established for the arts over the years and provides the framework to continue to support the creative advantage of the Downtown.

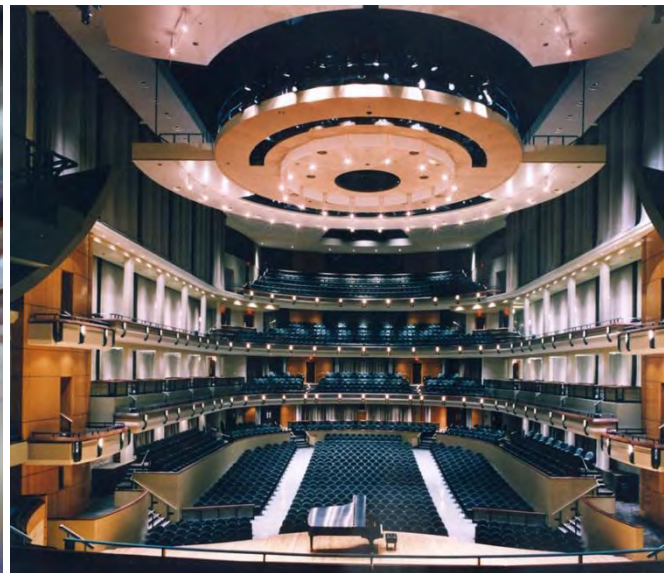


Photo courtesy Cohos Evamy

GOAL - ARTS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

To promote and support all forms of artistic endeavour in the Downtown and reinforce the Downtown's role as a regional, national, and international centre for the development and enjoyment of the arts, culture, and entertainment.

Art and Creativity Downtown

Art in the public realm provides for a means of expression in the physical environment and a way to enhance and create special places. Murals, sculptures, public art, iconic architecture and grand landscapes help create a more interesting Downtown. This Plan will continue to promote, celebrate, and explore new opportunities for public art of all types in both public and private spaces throughout the Downtown.

In order to sustain and grow the downtown arts community it is necessary to continue to support the development of artists live-work housing, new studio and exhibit spaces, festivals and special events which celebrate the arts, the artists and their presence in the Downtown.

POLICIES

8.1 Downtown Public Art Initiatives

Expand the current Downtown Public Art Program and Percent for Art Policy to promote and administer the acquisition of public art and its display in public spaces Downtown. Expand the Public Art Program by establishing a renewed private sector sponsorship initiative and by establishing a public art requirement for non-civic funded projects in the Downtown.

8.2 Downtown Public Art Database

Develop and maintain a comprehensive database for downtown public art projects that is up-to-date, accessible to the public, and promoted at the civic level. It should also identify and prioritize opportunity sites for displaying future public art projects within the downtown.

8.3 Arts District Enhancement

Continue to support the Arts District and the work by key stakeholders in carrying out coordinated programming activities, promotional strategies and physical improvement initiatives.

8.4 Downtown Public Art Programs

Establish and encourage the following programs for public art in the downtown:

- **Downtown Wall Mural and Art Program**
Establish a Downtown Wall Mural and Art program and identify sites where wall murals could be used to help promote the unique character of each of the five downtown neighbourhoods.
- **Interactive Public Art Projects**
Explore opportunities for interactive public art projects within the Downtown such as designated graffiti walls or using construction hoarding as art surfaces with an emphasis geared towards engaging youth in art projects.
- **Display of Public Art during Construction**
Support the display of public art in all phases of construction of redevelopment projects.
- **Public Art at Downtown Gateways**
Place public art at key intersections acting as Gateways into the Downtown.

8.5 Financial Support for Arts and Cultural Activities

Maintain public sector support to arts and cultural activities in the Downtown through grants, tax exemptions and other forms of financial support or sponsorship.

8.6 Financial Support for Downtown Festivals

Maintain financial support to established and emerging Downtown festivals through the Community Investment Program.

8.7 Joint Marketing and Promotions

Continue private/public sector partnerships to promote downtown festivals, and arts, cultural and community events as part of the Downtown Edmonton experience.

8.8 Support for Downtown Artists

Recognize artists as an important, distinct community within the Downtown. Support and promote downtown artists and arts organizations in a number of endeavours, through start-up funding and access to administrative support. Providing further support through funding and organizational assistance for artists' live-work housing (*Policy 6.8 - Artists' Live-Work Housing*).

Culture, Festivals and Entertainment

A varied and well-run selection of cultural venues is required to support a diversity of performing arts programming in the Downtown. The range of uses and activities is reflected in the inventory of downtown cultural facilities which includes small, medium, and large theatres, outdoor performance plazas and theatres, gallery spaces, exhibit halls, dance studios, educational spaces and administrative offices.

While major facilities such as the Art Gallery of Alberta, Winspear Centre and Citadel Theatre need continued support, encouraging the development of new cultural and entertainment facilities will ensure the Downtown remains a major centre of culture and entertainment. Support for smaller art and entertainment venues as part of mixed-use development projects is a key component of this Plan. More small to medium sized performance spaces are needed within the Downtown to support independent and emerging performers.

POLICIES

8.9 Venues for Arts, Cultural and Festival Events

Provide suitable venues for arts, culture and festival activities and events throughout the five neighbourhoods in the Downtown.

8.10 Edmonton's Premier Arts, Culture, Sports and Entertainment Centre

Encourage and embrace new arts, culture, sports and entertainment concepts and activities planned for the Downtown in order to enhance the Downtown's role as the major entertainment centre in Edmonton.

8.11 Space for a Variety of Arts and Cultural Facility Types

Support the development of smaller arts, culture and entertainment venues as part of mixed-use development projects to ensure a wide variety of performance space is available within the Downtown.

8.12 Downtown Multi-Use Arts Centre/Market

Foster the development of a multi-use Arts Centre or Public Arts Market, designed as a major downtown attraction. This facility would serve as a centre for the downtown arts community and provide a number of functions and services, including community-based arts programming, artwork sales, meeting and venue space for not-for-profit and community groups, and living and working space for artists.

8.13 Jasper Avenue Parade Route

Facilitate continued use of Jasper Avenue for parades and encourage use of the Avenue to host major events.

8.14 Neon Sign Museum

Establish an outdoor display area in the Downtown that focuses on collecting, preserving, studying, and exhibiting neon signs and associated artifacts from Edmonton and abroad to inspire educational and cultural enrichment.

4.3 WELL DESIGNED DOWNTOWN

9. Downtown Urban Design

The Urban Design Strategy for the Downtown sets out a comprehensive approach for the improvement of design in the Downtown. It provides broad parameters regarding the public realm and associated built form design objectives for development.

The public realm consists of the spaces between buildings. It includes streets, building frontages, sidewalks, front yard landscaping and plantings, as well as larger open spaces such as parks and publicly accessible courtyards or pathways between buildings.

Streets, parks and open space are where people experience the Downtown. They should be seen as 'urban rooms' with floors, walls, ceilings or canopies, and furnishings. The quality of this space relies heavily on the attention given to the design, materials and finishes applied to the area that is closest to the pedestrian.

This chapter establishes direction for the development of the public streets, parks and adjoining private open spaces, including the following:

- Conceptual characteristics for the various types of streets;
- Relationship between the public open spaces and the private open spaces; and
- Relationship to adjacent neighbourhoods and the public space linkages.

The key building blocks for Downtown are its public places. The intent of the Downtown Plan is twofold: to reinforce the identity of these places, and to enhance their quality.



Photo courtesy Aryn Machell



Photo courtesy Kasian Architecture, Interior Design & Planning Inc.

At the largest scale, these places are identified as the Downtown's five Neighbourhoods: the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood, McKay Avenue, the Capital City District, the Commercial/Cultural Core, and Jasper Avenue. At a finer scale, each is comprised of a multitude of places, primarily streets and parks, of varying function and character. The urban design strategy for the Downtown is focused on "place making" at both scales.

A wide cross section of meaningful public places, consisting of streets, parks and open spaces, is a necessity if Downtown Edmonton is to grow and evolve as a desirable urban community. An appropriate distribution of public spaces, amenities and focal points across the Downtown will provide easily accessible places to rest, recreate and socialize.

A well-designed street network that stitches together the Downtown's parks and open spaces will put open spaces and activity centres within easy walking distance of residents, workers and visitors and will activate their use throughout the day. A way finding system is an important part of the network as it helps pedestrians, transit users, cyclists and drivers locate all the special attractions and amenities the Downtown has to offer.

Several additional policies relating to the desired qualities of the Downtown's open spaces and pedestrian network are provided in *Chapter 11 - Parks and Open Space*, and *Chapter 15 - Pedestrian Circulation*.

Further details on design requirements for private and public development are provided in the Downtown Special Area Zoning Regulations as well as the *Design Guidelines Manual Downtown Edmonton*. These documents elaborate on the specific public realm design elements and materials to be used in the ongoing renewal and development of the buildings, streets and open spaces in the Downtown.

GOAL - DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN

Strive for excellence in the quality of public places in the Downtown; encourage the development of distinctive character areas, diverse and exciting urban spaces, human scale architecture and a pedestrian-oriented street, park and open space environment.

POLICIES

9.1 An Integrated Public Realm

Develop Downtown's Streets, Parks and Open Spaces to create an integrated public realm that is a high quality, well designed and livable environment for people living in and passing through the neighbourhoods of Downtown Edmonton.

9.2 High Quality Streets and Parks

Develop the streets and parks of Downtown as a network of pedestrian-friendly routes and destinations to support and encourage walking as a primary mode of circulation in the Downtown. The network will link the Downtown's neighbourhoods, major activity centres, landmarks and open spaces together.

9.3 Excellence in Street, Park and Open Space Design

Require design excellence in the quality of Downtown streets, open spaces, parks, plazas and recreational facilities. Develop public realm plans for Grand Avenues, neighbourhood streets and parks to establish direction for public improvements as development and municipal project opportunities arise.

9.4 Urban Design Awards Program

Enhance the City's commitment to excellence in urban design by increasing the profile and prestige of Edmonton's Urban Design Awards Program. Develop a separate category for Downtown projects and align the award criteria with that of this Plan.

9.5 A Community of Neighbourhoods

Promote the idea of the Downtown as a community of distinct Neighbourhoods, each with its own special sense of place and character. The five major Neighbourhoods consist of the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood, McKay Avenue Neighbourhood, Capital City District, the Commercial/Cultural Core, and Jasper Avenue.

9.6 Local Engagement in Neighbourhood Planning

Continue to provide staff support to the Downtown Edmonton Community League's Development Committee in its work in representing residents in matters of planning, development, community engagement and general civic interest.

Explore with DECL the idea of establishing Development Advisory Councils (as an extension of their Development Committee) for each of the Downtown Neighbourhoods, consisting of local residents and business owners. They would encourage the engagement of people in the growth of their Neighbourhood, reinforcing the unique character of each neighbourhood over time.

9.7 Neighbourhood Identity

Develop a set of character goals for each of Downtown's Neighbourhoods, clarifying their unique identity for the purpose of informing the design of projects within them.

Reinforce the special identity of each Downtown Neighbourhood through distinctive designs of streetscape elements, such as lighting, street furniture and landscaping. Extend this approach to special places within the Neighbourhoods recognizing that these will have their own unique character within their Neighbourhood.

9.8 Improving Special Places

Continue to enhance the major features, landmarks and special places in the Downtown through implementing new design concepts, programming and public realm improvement programs.

9.9 Major Community Focal Points for Residential Neighbourhoods

Create major community focal points or destinations, in the form of streets, parks, urban squares, plazas or other form of significant gathering place, in the McKay Avenue and Warehouse Campus neighbourhoods. Engage local residents, through the Downtown Edmonton Community League, in their conception, programming, and design with the intent of creating a sense of “ownership” by neighbourhood residents.

10. The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets

The best streets are supportive settings for a wide range of social and recreational activities - places for sidewalk games, cycling, strolling, walking the dog, porch sitting, people watching, window shopping and unplanned social encounters, and conversation. Residents will often use their place on the street as a means of personal expression and a display of their horticultural prowess. Merchants use displays to inform and entice potential customers; restaurateurs expand their seating capacity in the summer months with outdoor café seating. The necessary support for these kinds of activities requires careful design coordination.

It is proposed all streets adopt the "great street principles" as identified by the Urbanist Allan B. Jacobs, which focus on:

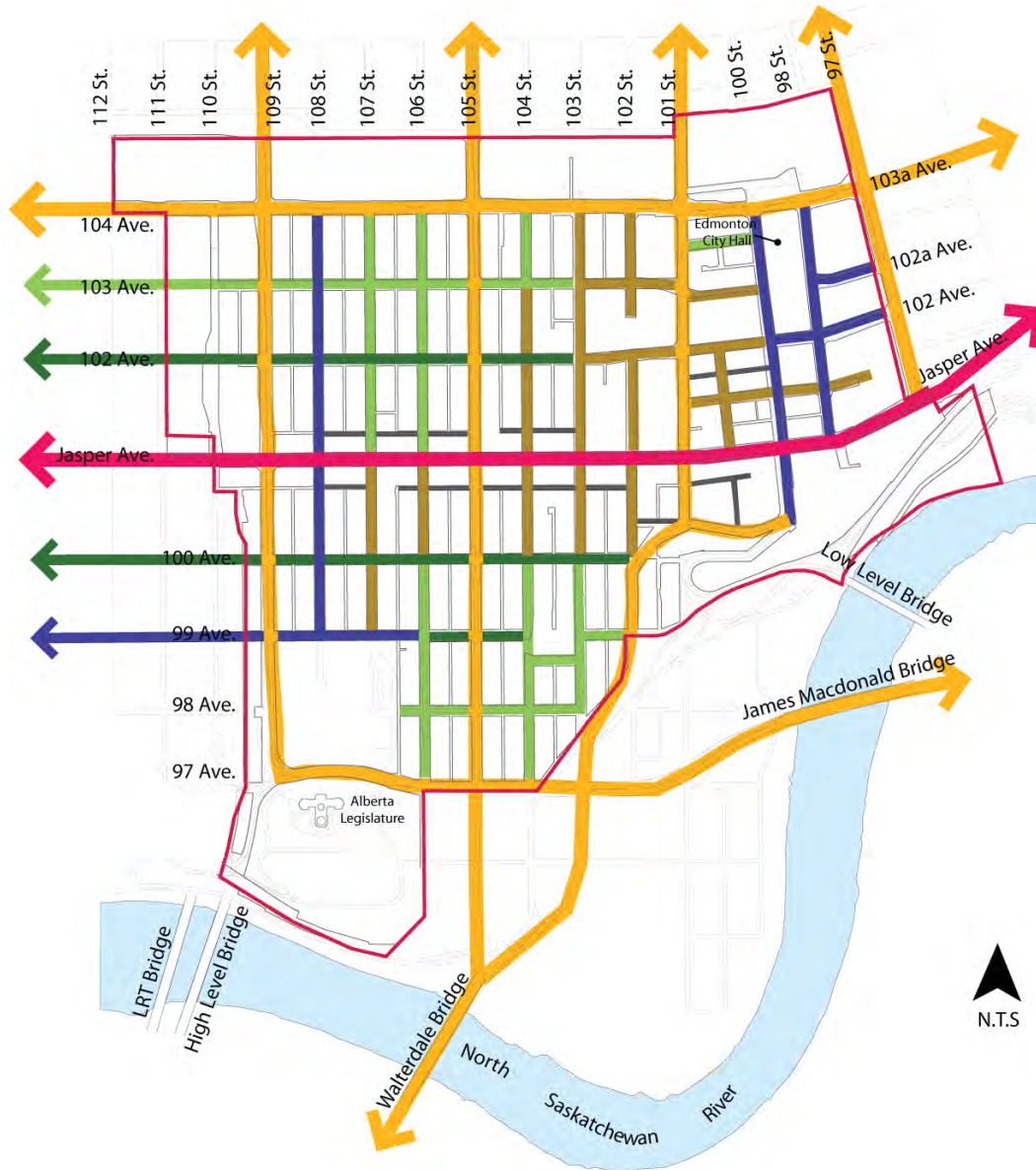
- Places to walk with some leisure
- Physical comfort
- Definition
- Qualities that engage the eye
- Transparency
- Complementarities
- Maintenance
- Quality of construction and design

This section introduces a major new thrust of the Plan. An "Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets" will be established for the streets of Downtown, whereby a clear role, and associated design character, is defined for various types of streets, to provide for a coordinated approach to private and public development along each street.

While this section provides policies on improving the qualitative aspects of the downtown pedestrian environment, several additional policies relating to improving the functional and operational aspects of the pedestrian network are provided in Chapter 15 - Pedestrian Circulation.

The *Design Guidelines Manual Downtown Edmonton* provides additional guidance and should be used as a companion to the policies and the Special Area Downtown Zoning Regulations.

Figure 10: The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets



- █ Great Street - Jasper Avenue
- █ Grand Avenues
- █ Ceremonial Streets
- █ Commercial Streets
- █ Neighbourhood Street - Commercial Emphasis
- █ Neighbourhood Street - Residential Emphasis
- █ Special Conditions - Including Identified Alleys

GOAL - THE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR DOWNTOWN STREETS

Encourage excellence in the design of Downtown streets, parks and open space. Create pedestrian-friendly streets by adopting a comprehensive set of policies and design parameters and by implementing design initiatives and public improvement programs.

POLICIES

10.1 Streets and Parks

The public network of streets and parks is to be enhanced, through adding walkways and pedestrian connections, to develop a finer grid of local streets and parks within the downtown street grid. The network is to result in a highly permeable, interconnected pedestrian downtown that offers a greater choice of routes and an increase in development frontage.

10.2 Street Designs

All streets in the Downtown are to be designed as public spaces that have a strong sense of spatial enclosure and support a wide range of social activities.

10.3 Sidewalks and Boulevards

Sidewalks and boulevards will be designed to provide safe, attractive, interesting and comfortable spaces for pedestrians by:

- providing well designed and coordinated tree planting and landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting and quality street furnishings and, where appropriate, decorative paving as part of street improvements; and
- locating and designing utilities, within streets, within buildings or underground, in a manner that will minimize negative impacts on the natural, pedestrian and visual environment and enable the planting and growth of trees to maturity.

10.4 Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets

Foster a coordinated approach to development in the Downtown by establishing an “Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets”, covering all streets in the Downtown. Under this framework, all private and public development will be required to adhere to a set of building and design parameters defined for each street type. The general requirements of each of the street types are described below, while more specific requirements are provided in the Edmonton Zoning Bylaw.

The downtown streets are divided into six different types, representing the patterns of activities and land uses that define their role within the overall structure of the Downtown street network. The six street types are:

- Great Street: Jasper Avenue
- Grand Avenues
- Ceremonial Streets
- Neighbourhood Streets - Residential
- Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail
- Special Streets and Alleys

Together they have the potential to create a great ensemble of social opportunities and experiences.

Great Street: Jasper Avenue

This street is characterized by:

- Continuous street-level retail stores and service uses.
- Smaller individual retail frontages reflecting the fine grain development pattern of Jasper Avenue.
- Buildings featuring street walls that create a human-scale public realm.
- Streetscape improvements enabling wider sidewalks and tree planting.
- High quality street furniture, transit shelters, landscaping, sidewalk paving treatment, information kiosks to contribute to an dignified pedestrian environment.

Figure 11: Great Street - Jasper Avenue

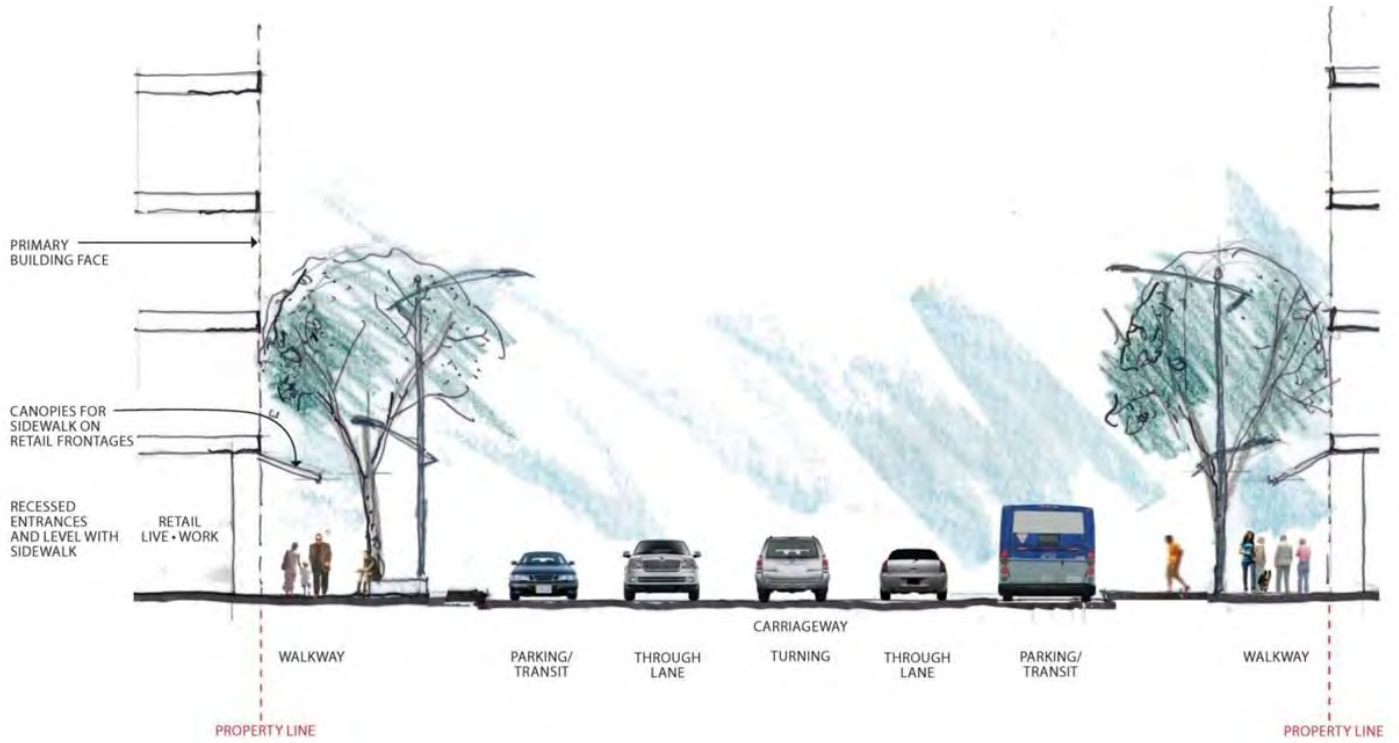


Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Grand Avenues: 104 Avenue, 97 Avenue, 109 Street, 105 Street, and 97 Street

These streets are to be characterized by:

- Extending and connecting with surrounding and outlining communities.
- Where feasible, broad tree-lined boulevards associated with sidewalks and amenities.
- Clear buffers or transitions between pedestrian and vehicle zones
- Multi modal circulation potential.
- Buildings that address the street with formal entrances and support activities that provide animation.

Figure 12: Grand Avenues

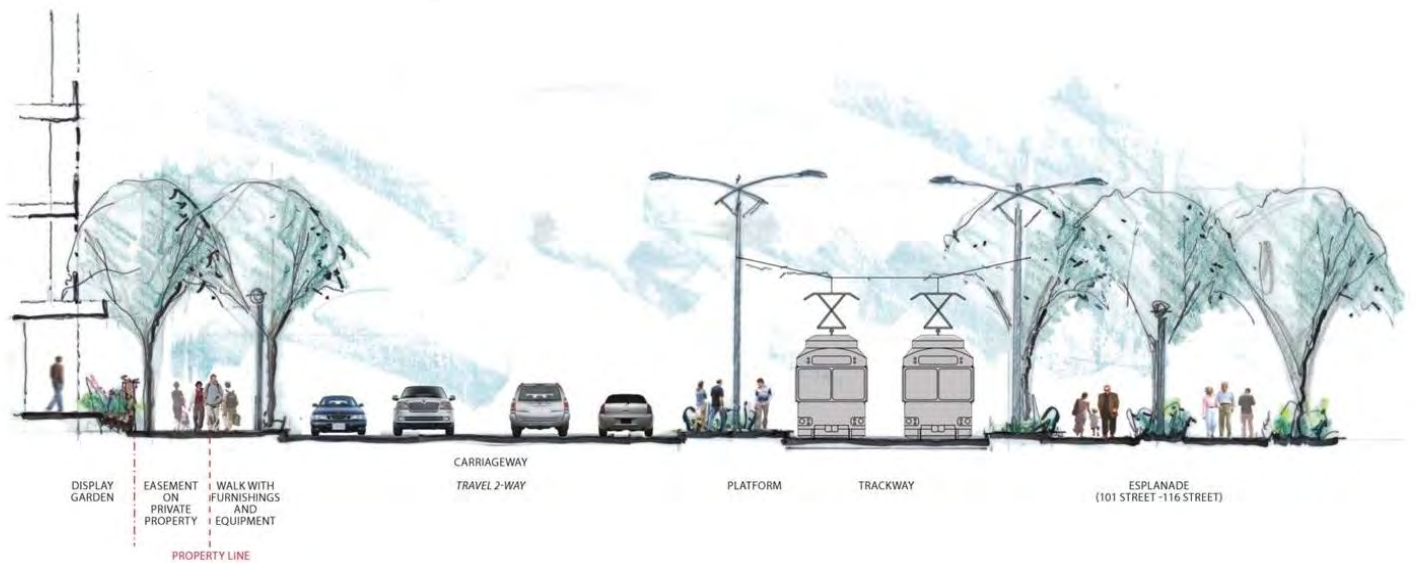


Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Ceremonial Streets: Capital Boulevard (108 Street), 100 Street, and 99 Street

These streets are to be characterized by:

- Broad tree-lined sidewalks with amenities.
- Opportunities for the integration and public art and monuments.
- A sense of procession, which enables commemorative events and celebrations.
- Focus on civic, provincial, cultural or educational uses; public agencies and institutions.
- Cafes, dining and entertainment opportunities at-grade.
- Prominent building entrances.
- Innovative low impact development stormwater features incorporated into streetscape design.

Figure 13: Ceremonial Streets



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Neighbourhood Streets - Residential

These streets are characterized by:

- Ground floors consisting of Individual grade oriented dwelling units that are oriented to the street to promote social activity and natural surveillance.
- Display gardens, stoops and porches offering places to address and interact with the street and offer a sense of separation.
- Tree lined boulevards and generous sidewalks to promote walking as the prominent means of circulation, taking advantage of the slower pace of traffic.

Figure 14: Neighbourhood Streets - Residential - McKay Avenue

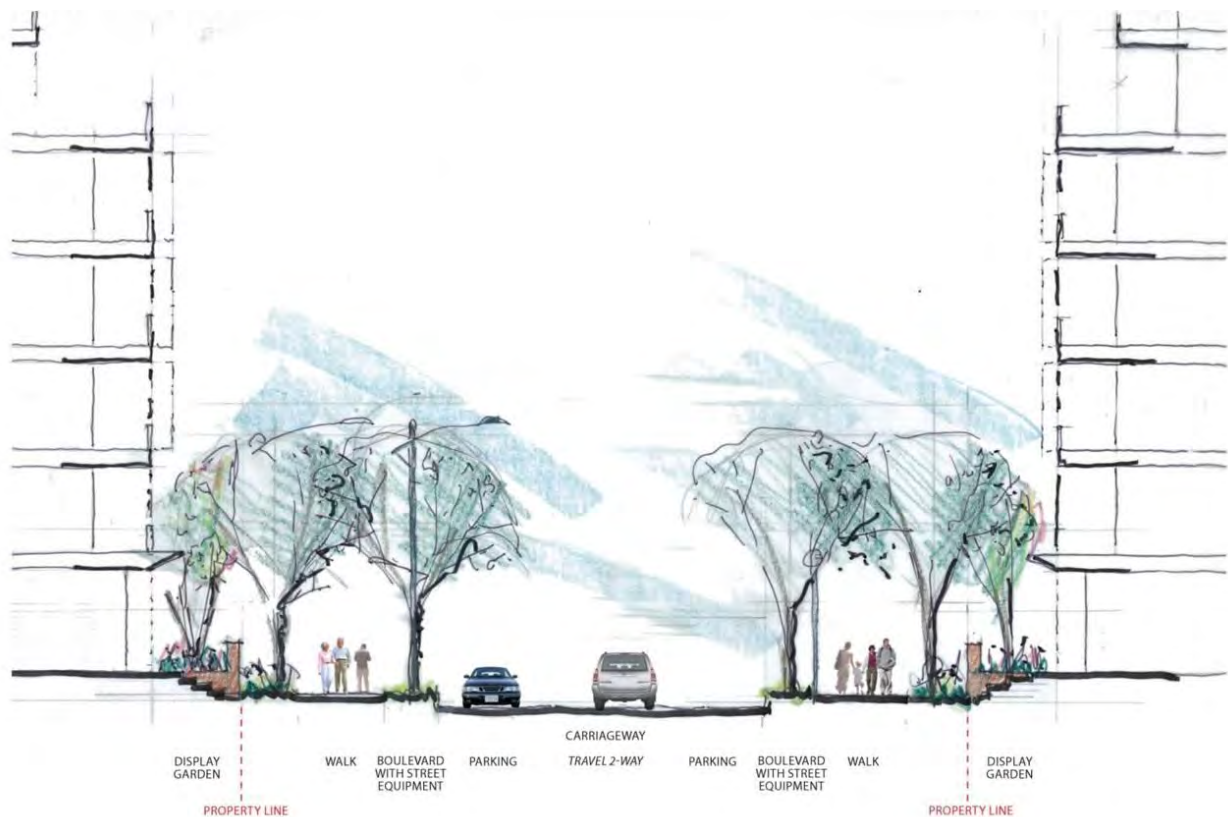


Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Figure 15: Neighbourhood Streets - Residential - Warehouse Campus

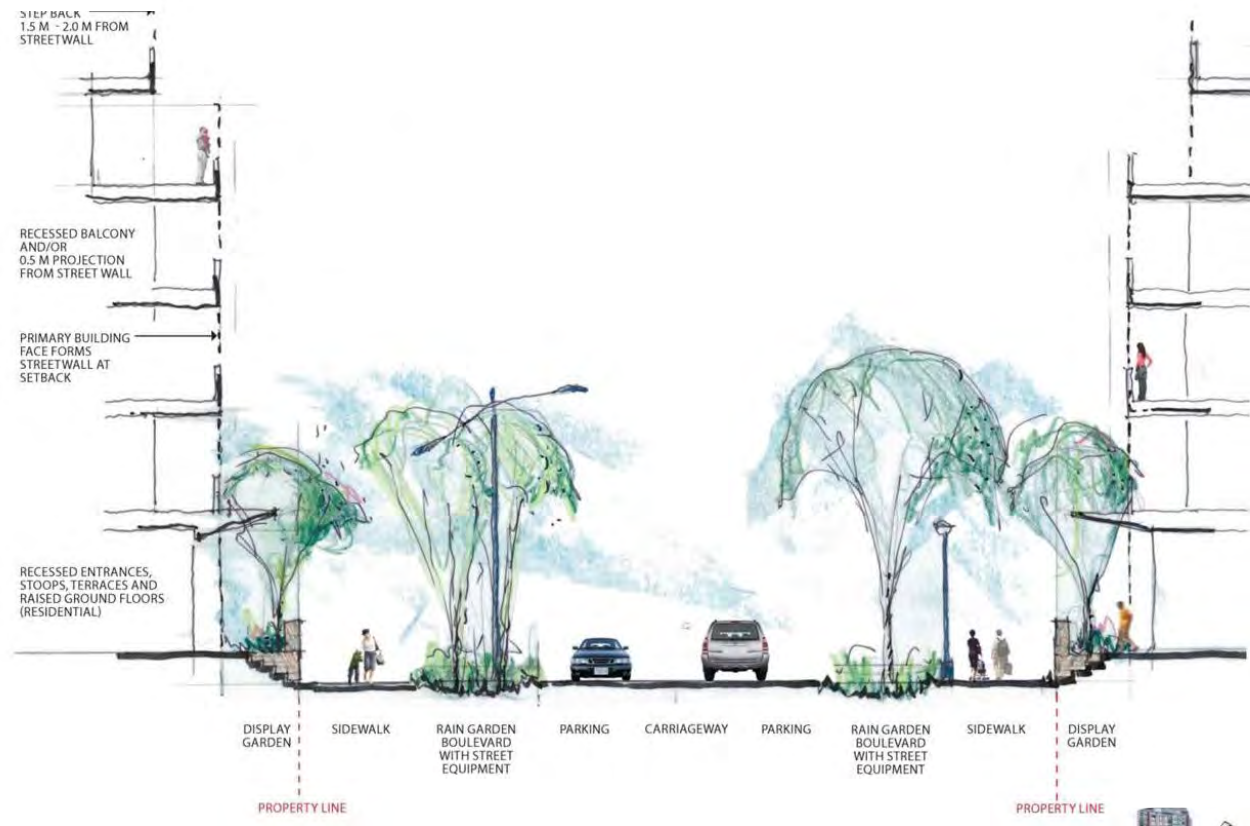


Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail

These streets are characterized by:

- Mixed-use buildings, with tall, transparent, ground-floor live/work and commercial spaces.
- A common setback or build-to line (with occasional interruptions).
- Generous tree-lined sidewalks.
- Good public transportation.
- Buildings that frame the street, without overpowering the space or depriving it of access to natural light.

Figure 16: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail - McKay Avenue



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

**Figure 17a: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail -
Warehouse Campus - 102 Avenue Between LRT Stations**



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Figure 17b: Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail - Warehouse Campus - 102 Avenue at LRT Station



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Figure 18: Neighbourhood Streets - Core Commercial Retail

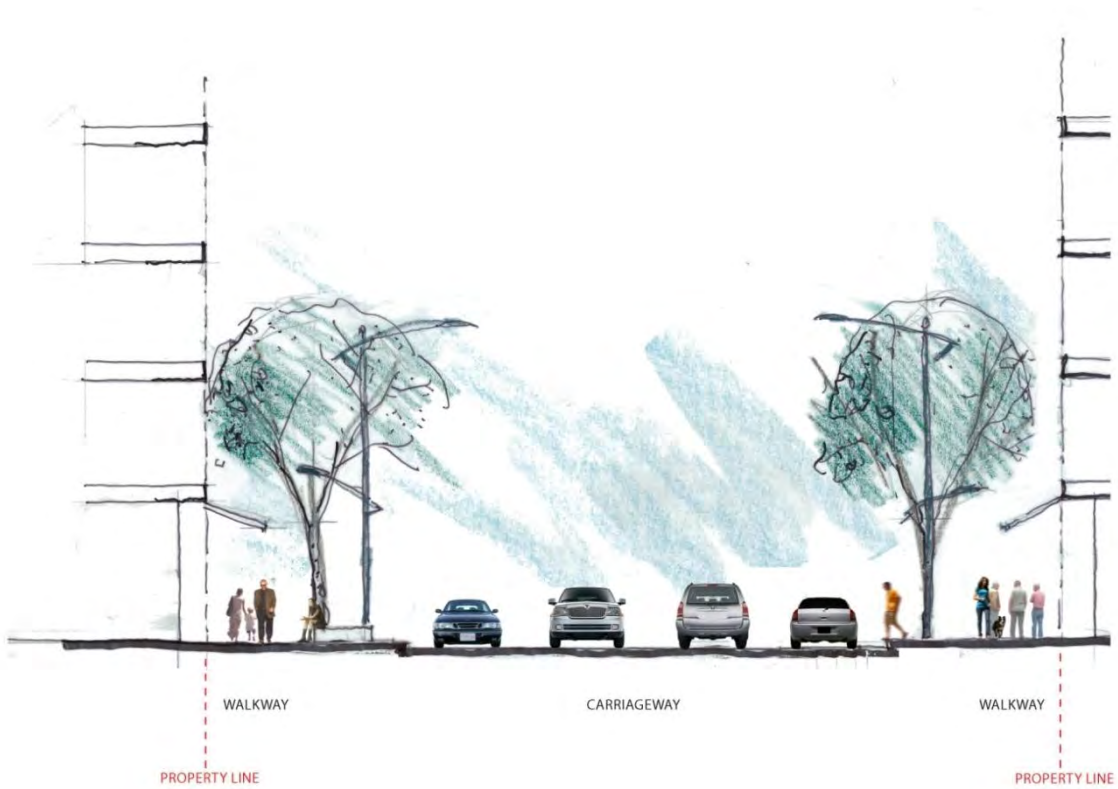


Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Special Streets and Alleys

These streets are characterized by:

- Pedestrian emphasis with bicycle potential.
- Alternate commercial/retail with live/work.
- Mix of pedestrians and vehicles

10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets

Complete Public Realm Plans for Jasper Avenue and Capital Boulevard (108 Street). Develop Public Realm Plans for selected major streets in the Downtown: 97 Avenue, 99 Avenue, 102 Avenue, 104 Avenue, 97 Street, 105 Street and 109 Street. Prepare detailed concepts for streetscape upgrading and construction, street trees, lighting, landscaping, street furniture and public art; implement the Plans through the capital budgeting and development processes.

10.6 Public Realm Plan for Rice Howard Way

Prepare a Public Realm Plan for Rice Howard Way, for revitalizing this unique destination; develop year round programming and flexible use concepts for the streets, Scotia Place pedestrian plaza and Molson Plaza areas (e.g. seasonal use of the area for arts, culture and entertainment activities, an Art Walk program, open air markets, exhibits, recreational use, etc.).

Explore designs to upgrade the southern extension of Rice Howard Way from 101A Avenue to the river valley top-of-bank.

10.7 Alternative Uses for Downtown Alleys

Consider alternatives for access and circulation and pedestrian oriented uses/development frontage for selected downtown alleys.

10.8 Grand Avenues

Reinforce the role that major streets play as entrances and corridors through the Downtown, by developing design standards and implementing improvements along their extent in the Downtown. These major streets will be designed for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicycles, private vehicles and transit.

10.9 Downtown Gateway Program

Review the guidelines contained in the “Downtown Gateway Program” report when evaluating both public and private development proposals adjacent to gateway locations.

10.10 Wide, Generous Sidewalks and Boulevards

Determine the adequate space on Downtown sidewalks to allow comfortable pedestrian movement in both directions and facilitate specialized uses such as sidewalk sales and seasonal patio areas.

10.11 Design for Public Safety

Incorporate design measures to enhance public safety in Downtown; ensure a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) analysis is an integral component of all public and private projects, including street improvements and building development.

10.12 Public Spaces Designed for Winter Use

Consider winter conditions in the design of publicly accessible spaces; ensure that the spaces can be adapted to winter use, including access and heating considerations and, that snow clearing operations and winter walking conditions are addressed.

Incorporate a variety of elements that create rich winter landscapes into development and landscaping plans in order to provide for visual interest throughout the winter. Elements can include a wide range of lighting, winter greenery, and colourful sculptural arrangements.

10.13 Universal Access Design Guidelines for Downtown

Adopt universal access design guidelines for the Downtown that address issues of accessibility for persons with disabilities; these guidelines would apply to the design of buildings, parks, services, amenities and transportation systems and facilities in the Downtown.

10.14 Streetscape Maintenance

Ensure the ongoing maintenance requirements of streetscape elements and allocate a sustainable source of funds for ongoing materials replacement and parts inventory, as well as promoting public assistance in the reporting of broken elements.

10.15 Cleanliness and Bylaw Enforcement

Provide ongoing, prompt and frequent cleaning of waste receptacles, sidewalks, transit shelters, curbs and gutters, parks, plazas and other public spaces and regular removal of illegal signage in the Downtown. Ensure that there is a high degree of coordination between all parties involved, including City bylaw enforcement and maintenance personnel, the DBA, property owners and so forth.

10.16 Coordinated Street Furniture Program

Street furniture amenities, including transit shelters, benches, recycling bins, publications boxes, information and way finding signs, contribute to the way Downtown streets look and feel. When these elements are mismatched, poorly designed and awkwardly placed, they detract from the city's image.

Develop a Coordinated Street Furniture Program to change how Downtown streets and parks look, function and meet the needs of residents and visitors. The goal of the program is to harmonize the design, form, scale, materials and placement of street furniture, so that it contributes to the accessibility, safety and beauty of public spaces.

10.17 Construction Hoarding Standards

Ensure that construction hoarding in the Downtown features a minimum functional clearance of 2.15 metres continuous linear electrical illumination and public art if in place for over 1 year, to provide a safe, clean and professional appearance.

11. Parks and Open Space

Along with streets, parks and open spaces are an inherent part of the public realm: they are integral with one another.

Parks and open spaces are key to building a more environmentally and socially sustainable downtown. Greenery provided through parks helps to soften the hard edges of the urban downtown environment. Vegetation helps to remove airborne pollutants resulting in a cleaner Downtown. Most importantly, parks and plazas provide a venue for social interaction. They represent venue space for festivals and markets, special areas to enjoy physical activity, to catch up with friends and neighbours, to walk your dog, or simply to rest in quiet contemplation, all of which is especially important for Downtown residents that typically have little or no outdoor space of their own.

This section introduces a major new thrust of the Plan - the preparation of a long term Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan. As a first step, a needs assessment is required to determine where and how much extra space is needed to serve the diverse needs of the downtown community.

The City's Urban Parks Management Plan (2006) sets out a number of directions for assembling a network of parks spaces in the Downtown, including:

“The City will acquire parks and greenways based on the approved Area Redevelopment Plan.”

“When appropriate and cost effective, the City will utilize proactive land acquisition programs to acquire downtown parkland based on the approved Area Redevelopment Plan.”



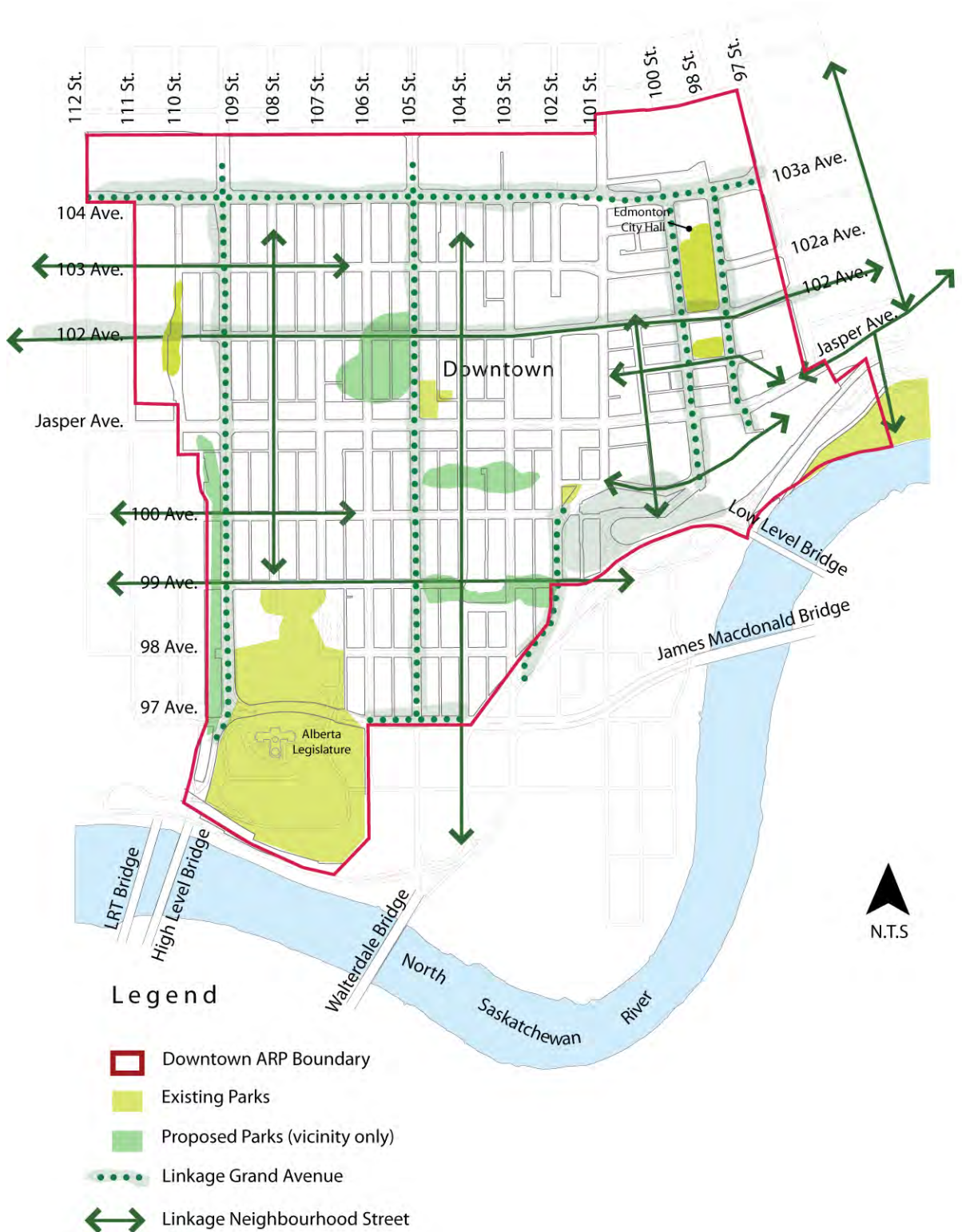
A Downtown Parks Master Plan, which would be implemented over a 10-year period, would involve the definition of the overall parks system, conceptual designs of parks, a phased land acquisition program, and a parks development and maintenance strategy.

If the Downtown is to thrive as a vibrant and active centre, it will be necessary to provide a wide range of parks and open spaces for its steadily growing population. This Plan envisions a Downtown where every resident, worker, and visitor is never more than a three minute walk from a neighbourhood oriented, welcoming, sunlit, open space.

Downtown parks and open spaces should be connected primarily by streets, and where feasible, through a series of green-links, or pathways, designed in accordance with low impact development standards.

Figure 19: Parks and Open Space Map

Proposed parks shown are for conceptual purposes only and are not locationally-specific.



GOAL - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Develop a comprehensive system of parks and open space integrated with street improvements, in the Downtown to serve the varied social, leisure and recreational needs of the downtown community. Acquire additional parkland in those areas of Downtown not adequately served.

POLICIES

11.1 Increasing Parks and Open Space Downtown

Provide diversity in the form and function of parks and open space to meet the needs of existing and future resident and worker populations. Ensure that every person living and working Downtown has access to a publicly accessible park or open space within a convenient walking distance, not greater than three (3) blocks. These open spaces could include spaces provided by private developments as long as they are fully publicly accessible.

Consider strategically developing a range of new neighbourhood specific parks, in association with pedestrian and transit-oriented street improvements, to enhance their overall amenity, and attract more residents and development.

11.2 Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan

Complete a detailed Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan to define a long-term plan for the development of parks and open space in the Downtown. As part of this Master Plan process, prepare a phased, 10-year implementation program and budget. Work closely with Downtown stakeholders and include the following in the plan preparation process:

- an assessment of existing parks and open spaces and future needs in terms of location, size, function, population served, etc.;
- a conceptual framework describing the overall parks system, the interrelationships and pedestrian connections between parks, the population served, programming recommendations, etc;
- proposed use/function and general concept for all future parks and open spaces;
- a phased land acquisition program;
- a parks development and maintenance strategy; and
- undertake and integrate the Master Plan with the Public Realm Plans for streets.

11.3 Adopt a Neighbourhood Park Space Standard for Downtown

Adopt a “neighbourhood park space” standard for the Downtown and acquire parkland in accordance with this standard; adopt a ratio of required park space per population, similar to that used in other North American cities (e.g. the City of Vancouver’s proposed 1.1 hectare of park per 1,000 residents). Create a wide diversity of innovative park types, from small parks to medium and large size parks and open spaces, in accordance with the findings of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

11.4 Fund the Acquisition and Development of Parks

Use a variety of downtown-specific measures, including a proactive land acquisition program, regulatory mechanisms, financial incentives and partnership programs to acquire, develop and maintain urban parks and amenity spaces throughout the Downtown. Continue purchasing parkland in areas identified through the Parks and Open Space Master Plan as being deficient in park space.

11.5 Active Recreation Space, Facilities and Sportsfields

Consider developing active outdoor recreation facilities, spaces and sportsfields to accommodate activities such as tennis, skateboarding, volleyball, basketball, skating, soccer and other similar recreation activities.

11.6 An Integrated Park and Street System

Create parks and public open spaces in the Downtown that are integrated with one another and the street network to link to surrounding neighbourhoods and form a connected public realm.

11.7 Animating Parks and Open Space

Within active areas incorporate opportunities in open spaces for active components such as open-air markets, street vendors, sidewalk cafes and exhibits on public and private land in the Downtown. Promote the animation of parks and open spaces by providing public art, festivals, special events and recreational programming throughout the year. Collaborate with downtown stakeholder groups in these activities.

11.8 Parks Safety through CPTED Guidelines

Ensure that plans for new parks and for the redevelopment of existing parks follow design guidelines for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

11.9 Parks for all Seasons

Develop parks and open spaces that support activities and park use throughout the year; use a variety of built form, lighting, and plant materials to provide colour throughout the year and incorporate other design strategies that recognize northern winter city characteristics such as micro-climates, recycled waste heat, and durable coloured materials.

11.10 Parks on Privately Owned Lands

Adopt requirements and/or incentives for large, major private development projects, requiring these projects to incorporate privately owned, fully publicly accessible open space or amenity areas (via easement) to augment and complement the public parks system in the Downtown.

11.11 A Central Park in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood

Acquire land for the development of a major new park in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood - a Central Park to serve existing and future downtown residents and employees. This high quality park is to serve as a catalyst for residential development in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood.

Integrate low impact development stormwater features into the park design, considering features such as a district-wide retention facility and a wet/dry pond with architectural elements such as channels and cascading fountains.

Support a range of shops, cafes, leisure, recreation and other facilities fronting and addressing the park to increase activity levels and a sense of belonging to neighbourhood residents. Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan, develop and program this park.

11.12 Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue

Investigate developing a program to establish a central gathering place, a pedestrian-oriented community main street, to serve as a community focal point for the McKay Avenue Neighbourhood.

Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan and develop the central gathering place concept. Purchase land and/or facilities as necessary for implementing the concept. The village-like centre is envisioned to be a street or an open space area with active street fronts surrounding the space, with a variety of commercial, cultural, recreational and entertainment uses and other private uses providing for a lively, energetic, local focus in the community.

11.13 Neighbourhood-Level Park Space in McKay Avenue

Acquire land and develop neighbourhood-level parks and open space in the McKay Avenue Neighbourhood if found necessary through the findings of the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan. Give consideration to residents living above and below the river valley escarpment in locating parks and open space. Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan and develop parks and open space in the community.

11.14 Improvements to Riverfront and Valley Edge Parks

Continue to implement the Louise McKinney Riverfront Park vision that includes the design and construction of improved park accesses, completing the River Promenade, Riverfront Plaza (including its additional buildings), and the “green room” for the Shumka Stage.

Support the development and implementation of the “Alberta Legislature Centre Redevelopment Master Plan”, including improvements to the river valley edge at the south end of the Legislature Grounds. Coordinate with the Provincial Government in developing a continuous pathway/boardwalk along the riverbank and top-of-valley edge, with viewpoints and improved connections to the river.

11.15 River Valley Promenades

Improve pedestrian connections between the top-of-bank Heritage Trail system in the Downtown and the riverbank, including the River Valley Trail System.

Review and update the Heritage Trail Promenade concept; develop and complete throughout the Downtown, including connections east, west and south of the Downtown.

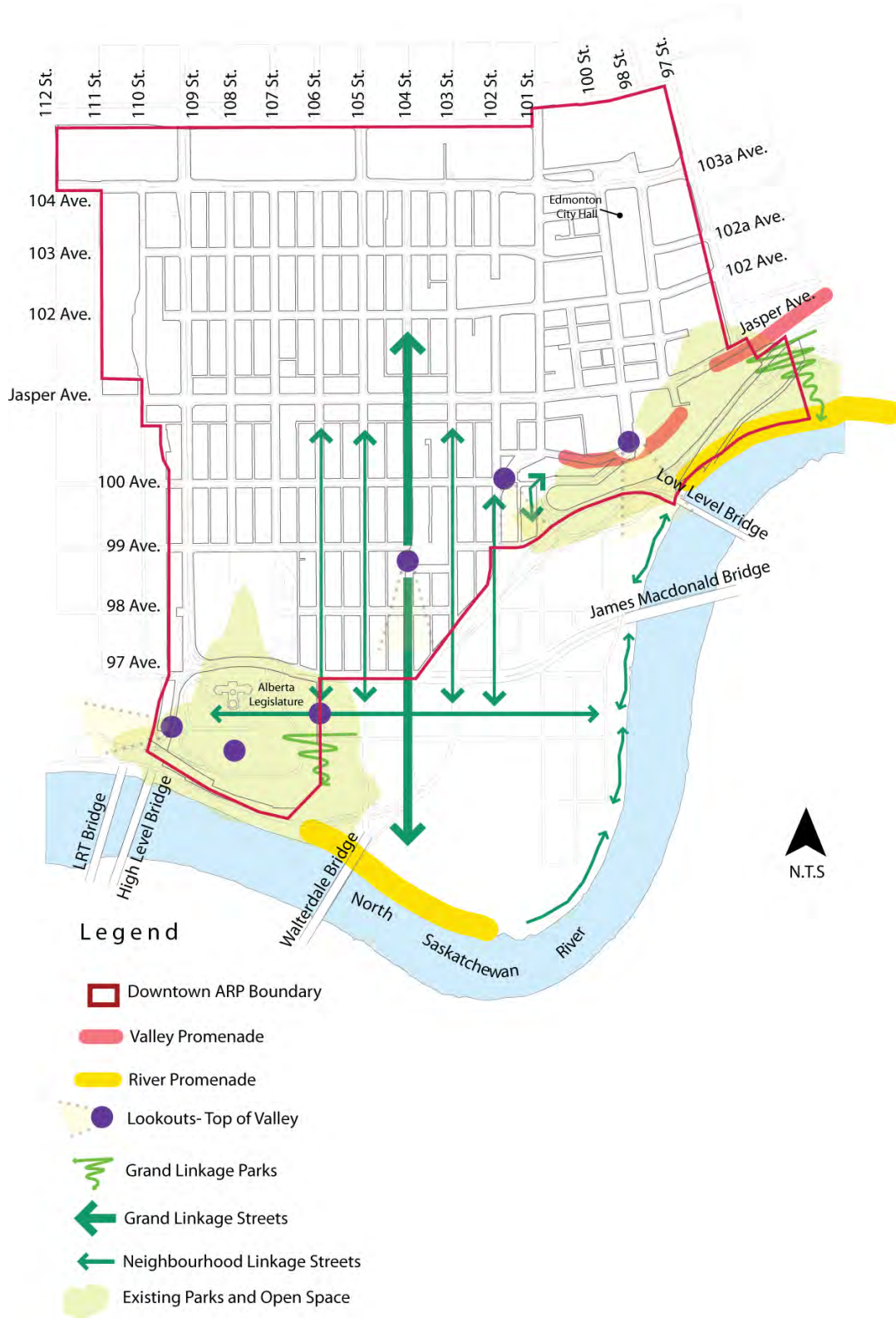
Expand and enhance those pedestrian systems that celebrate the unique position of Downtown overlooking the valley:

- develop lookouts, promenades, belvederes and walks.
- replace utilitarian stair connections into the valley at selected locations with stair and ramp systems that are elegant and graceful.
- investigate and develop innovative mechanized access in association with stair and ramp systems at selected locations including the top-of-bank at 104 Street and Louise McKinney Riverfront Park.
- provide access to River Valley Viewpoints to persons with mobility restrictions at select locations.

Develop a continuous, identifiable, and single urban public amenity extending from the 104 Street Promenade to West Rosedale and the riverfront.

Develop concepts for a central city riverfront promenade extending from Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to the Royal Alberta Museum.

Figure 20: River Valley Promenades



12. Built Form and Architecture

The relationship between Built Form and Urban Design is never stronger than it is in a downtown context where the public realm is significantly defined by the character of surrounding buildings. Great Urban Design requires Great Built Form at every scale, from streetscapes to skylines. Built Form can contribute to the public realm as contextual building fabric or as high profile landmark buildings; both are required for a vibrant downtown.

Landmark buildings punctuate the urban fabric. They break the sameness of the urban fabric with beauty, scale, quality, sprit, engagement, or cultural significance while serving important functions of way finding, orientation and anchoring of public spaces. Landmark buildings can become potent symbols of our City and legacies for future generations.

Urban fabric buildings constitute the majority of built form and play an important role in defining the general character and quality of the public realm across the downtown. These buildings need to work harmoniously with their context and provide continuity of defining features such as street walls and frontage, cornice heights, and protective canopies.

In both landmark and urban fabric type buildings it is possible and desirable for their built form to have a well designed, thoughtful, and positive relationship to their surrounding public realms. For fabric buildings this may be the street in front or abutting properties. For landmark buildings this may extend across entire blocks impacted by shadows or wind, or even to the entire downtown and beyond if the building forms part of the skyline.

Design regulations governing built form are provided for each Downtown zone in the *Edmonton Zoning Bylaw*. Additional direction is provided in the *Design Guidelines Manual Downtown Edmonton*.



Photo courtesy City of Edmonton



Photo courtesy Robert Lemermeyer

GOAL - BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

Ensure that building designs are integrated with the public realm are sensitive to their surroundings and contribute in a positive manner to the overall appeal and livability of the Downtown.

POLICIES

12.1 Excellence in Built Form Design

Require design excellence in the architecture of downtown buildings, and excellence in how buildings interface with adjacent streets, parks and open spaces. The relationship between buildings, streets and parks is of critical importance in achieving public environments that are welcoming to their users. This relationship will largely determine if these places are interactive, inviting, and memorable.

12.2 Edmonton as a Leader in Design Excellence

Ensure the City of Edmonton leads by example, and strives for design excellence when implementing municipal projects in the Downtown.

12.3 Edmonton as a Design Community

Encourage Edmonton's development as a community that supports, appreciates, and creates design excellence locally. Promote the Downtown as a focus of both production and application of design excellence.

Pilot the use of open (blind) design competitions on key municipal projects as means of encouraging design excellence and the growth of a local design community.

12.4 Building Placement and Orientation

Generally, locate buildings parallel to the street or along the edge of a park or open space with a consistent front yard setback.

12.5 Active Block Faces / Finer Grain Development

Develop built form along the ground floor of buildings that facilitates activity, social interaction and commerce on Downtown streets. Buildings should provide multiple points of interaction in the form of doorways, operable windows, large display windows and other pedestrian oriented features that promote activity and visual transparency.

12.6 Transition in Scale

New development will be massed to fit harmoniously into its existing planned context. It will limit its impacts on neighbouring streets, parks, buildings and open space by creating appropriate transitions in scale to neighbouring existing and planned buildings.

12.7 Site Servicing and Parking

New development will locate and organize vehicle parking, vehicular access, service areas and utilities to minimize their impact on the property and on surrounding properties and to improve the safety and attractiveness of adjacent streets, parks and open spaces.

12.8 Streetscape and Landscape

New development will provide amenity for adjacent streets and open spaces to make these areas attractive, interesting, comfortable and functional for pedestrians through:

- Improvements to adjacent boulevards and sidewalks including new sidewalks, boulevards, street trees, lighting and other street furniture;
- Coordinated landscape improvements in setbacks to create attractive transition from private to public realm; and
- Landscaped open space within the development site.

12.9 Blank Walls

Ensure that where a building fronts onto a street, it is designed to minimize blank walls or other flat surfaces that lack windows or sculptural relief. Where blank walls are unavoidable, there should be architectural or landscaping treatment to animate the wall.

Encourage the further upgrading of the major shopping complexes in the Commercial Core, and strongly encourage the 'blank walls' and inward-looking sections of these retail malls to be converted to exteriors wrapped with storefronts oriented exclusively to the street.

12.10 Parkade Screening or Greening

Design parkades to include screening mechanisms. These may include but are not limited to the use of living materials, green roof technology or energy production features, public art, or other high quality screening devices that conceals the parking. Ensure these design features contribute to an improved visual interest. Notwithstanding these strategies, parkades should not extend to the street level. Street levels should be maintained for uses that animate the street such as retail and services.

12.11 Overhead Weather Protection

Require the provision of properly designed overhead weather protection on key pedestrian shopping streets in the form of canopies, awnings, sunshade overhangs and colonnades to improve the year-round sidewalk shopping conditions and ensure pedestrians are protected from falling snow and ice.

12.12 Winter Lighting and Building Illumination

Recognize the special role that lighting effects can have in our dark Northern climate by providing unique illumination effects on landmark structures and buildings and or on special architectural features. Use energy efficient strategies for feature illumination. Respect policy 1.3 Light Pollution for the majority of Downtown buildings.

12.13 Tall Building Design

In order to mitigate the impacts of tall buildings on the surrounding area (issues such as privacy, views, sunlight penetration, or wind), ensure the design, massing and separation distance between these buildings complies with the design regulations for tall buildings as set out in the Downtown Special Area Zoning Regulations.

The design of tall buildings will be designed to consist of three parts, carefully integrated into a single whole:

- **Base of building** - provide definition and support at an appropriate scale for adjacent streets, parks and open spaces, integrate with adjacent buildings, minimize the impact of parking and servicing uses;
- **Middle (shaft)** - design the floor plate size and shape with appropriate dimensions for the site, locate and orient it on the site and in relationship to the base building in a manner that satisfies the provisions of this section; and
- **Top** - design the top of tall buildings to contribute to the skyline character and integrate roof top mechanical systems into their design so they are concealed from view.

12.14 Tower Arrangement and Spatial Arrangement

New development will be massed to fit harmoniously into its existing and/or planned context, and will limit its impacts on neighbouring streets, parks, open spaces and properties by:

- Providing for adequate light and privacy;
- Adequately limiting any resulting shadowing of, and uncomfortable wind conditions on, neighbouring streets, properties and open spaces, having regard for the varied nature of such areas; and
- Minimizing any additional shadowing and uncomfortable wind conditions on neighbouring parks as necessary to preserve their utility.

New development will be massed to define the edges of streets, parks and open spaces at good proportions. Taller buildings will be located to ensure adequate access to sky view for the proposed and future use of these areas.

12.15 Wind Prevention Framework

Establish a Wind Prevention Framework to guide the design of buildings over 6 stories in height and to evaluate their impact on the surroundings, with a view to minimizing wind effects in the Downtown environment.

12.16 Skyline Composition Framework

Enhance the drama of our skyline through the development of a Skyline Development Framework, which outlines project evaluation criteria for new tall buildings and identifies areas available for increased skyline development.

12.17 Landmark Architecture

Recognize the important role that landmark buildings play in the Downtown, in providing for a memorable impression of the Downtown, in contributing to neighbourhood identity and in improving navigability within the Downtown.

12.18 View Corridors and View Preservation

Develop and maintain zoning regulations and policies that protect and create views:

- **River Valley View Preservation and Enhancement**
Protect public views of the River Valley by establishing view corridors and corresponding development heights and built-form standards to preserve views at strategic locations along the escarpment and hillside.
- **Historic and Iconic Building View Corridors**
Protect views of historic and iconic buildings by establishing view corridors and corresponding built-form standards to preserve views towards the identified terminating vistas.
- **Massing Studies to Ensure View Preservation**
Positioning and massing studies of proposed major developments should be submitted where proposed buildings are adjacent to or within identified view planes and view corridors to maintain or improve existing primary views, vistas and visual corridors, or where the possibility of opening up public access to new ones exist.

12.19 Improvements to Existing Buildings to Enhance Views

Encourage property owners to complete renovations and other improvements that enhance views within the Downtown to contribute to a memorable impression of the Downtown.

12.20 Street Corner Prominence

On corner sites development should be located along both adjacent street frontages and give prominence to the corner. If located at a site that ends a street corridor, development should acknowledge the prominence of that site.

13. Historic Preservation

Edmonton has a rich cultural heritage that is worth preserving and celebrating. The preservation of the Downtown's historic resources is administered through the use of the Register of Heritage Resources in Edmonton and through the City's 'Policy to Encourage the Designation and Rehabilitation of Municipal Historic Resources in Edmonton'. The Plan emphasizes the need to enrich our landscape through the preservation and integration of historic buildings, art, sites of cultural relevance and significant views to make a memorable impact on visitors and residents alike.

Incorporating historic resources into redevelopment provides a unique Downtown experience and allows for the retention of buildings and sites for the benefit of future generations. However, retention and integration of historic resources and elements can be a costly and time intensive exercise. In recognition of the challenges involved in this endeavour, incentives in the form of density bonuses, parking relaxation and financial consideration may be offered.



Photos courtesy Darren Kirk

GOAL - HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Enhance the unique character and cultural continuity of Downtown through the continued preservation, integration and enhancement of historic resources from a variety of periods. Honour the diverse stories of the many people who have made a home in Edmonton by finding new ways of telling their stories through the design of buildings and places.

POLICIES

13.1 Active Approach to Preservation

Prioritize the preservation of those buildings, areas and structures, including monuments, bridges, built landscapes and cultural artifacts within the Downtown that are of historical or architectural significance, quality, and/or value. Preservation of buildings from any generation will be considered. Ensure that these resources are protected, incorporated and enhanced in accordance with the proposals in this Plan and existing City policies.

13.2 Contribution to the Urban Context

The importance of buildings, areas and structures based on historical or architectural value as noted in Policy 13.1 may differ from their importance based on their ability to contribute to the urban context. Heritage resources can play a variety of different roles in the urban context of Downtown. Some may be modest structures that function best as background enriching the quality of the urban fabric. Others may have iconic status and be worthy of monumental roles within the Downtown, helping to anchor great places. The preservation of heritage resources should give consideration to both perspectives.

13.3 Adaptive Re-use for Economic Purposes

Promote the re-use of historic properties by providing advice, incentives, exemptions and appropriate regulatory relaxations that enable adaptive reuse and continued preservation, including, but not limited to financial incentives and parking relaxations.

13.4 Authentic Adaptive Re-use

Encourage authentic re-use of heritage resources. The best re-use is that which engages these resources in a meaningful and respectful manner. Re-use should challenge the historic building, structure, or place, giving it renewed purpose and meaning thereby connecting it to our ongoing cultural narrative.

13.5 Redevelopment of Heritage Resources

Preserve historic buildings through zoning regulations that require the retention and integration of Character Defining Elements while allowing redevelopment opportunities.

13.6 Development Adjacent to Heritage Resources

Require that proponents of development being proposed adjacent to heritage buildings in the Downtown consult with the City Heritage Officer and provide a design which respects the character of the adjacent heritage building and other heritage buildings in the vicinity. Respect should be manifest in authentic design responses that meet the objectives of design excellence outlined in Chapter 9 - Downtown Urban Design. Simplistic architectural mimicry or banal pastiche that does not further the design richness and vibrancy of the Downtown should be discouraged.

Where the numbers of heritage resources in a neighbourhood or unique place are significant, they should form a key element of any plans or improvement projects to develop neighbourhood identity.

13.7 Tell Stories with Design

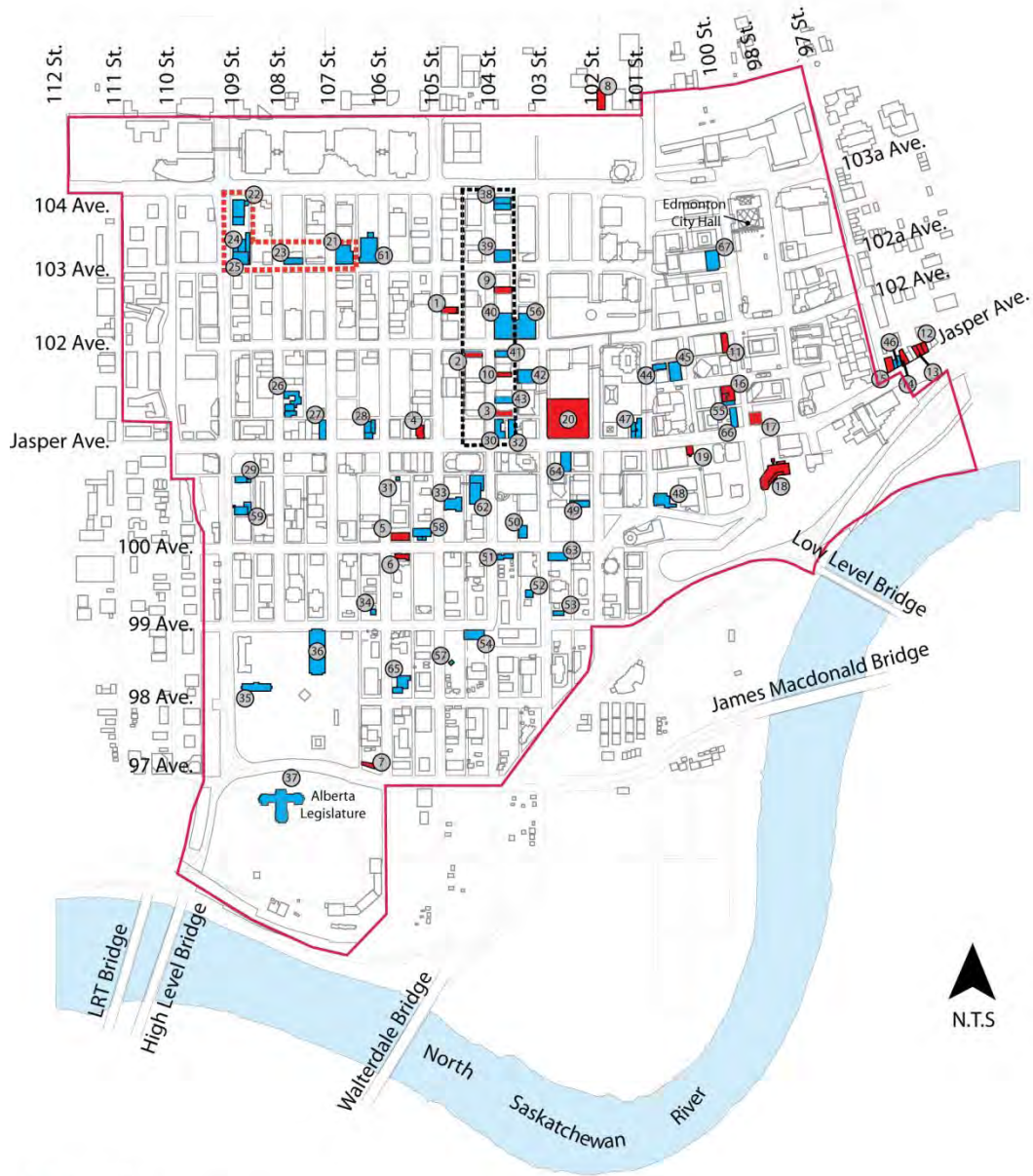
Promote the illustration of stories from a range of cultural backgrounds into modern day design to create meaning and identity in the Downtown landscape.

Improve public understanding of historic resources through the use of interpretive strategies such as displays that tell the story of the resource in a meaningful and engaging manner. Work with the City Heritage Officer to determine an appropriate strategy for each resource as it is developed.

13.8 Interpretive Monuments

Improve public understanding of lesser-known cultural groups by incorporating interpretive and artistic elements into building and public space designs, and public art commissions.

Figure 21: Municipal Historic Resources



- Legend**
- Downtown ARP Boundary
 - Designated Municipal Historic Resources
 - Historic Resources on the Inventory
 - (PHR) Provincial Historic Resource
 - Existing Heritage Preservation
 - Opportunities for Heritage Preservation

Refer to list on next page for complete list of Historic Resources

Figure 21: Municipal Historic Resources (continued)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. H.V. Shaw Building | 28. Balmoral Block* | 58. Baker Clinic |
| 2. Metals Building | 29. Howard & McBride Funeral Parlour | 59. First Baptist Church |
| 3. Armstrong Building (PHR) | 30. Birks Building | 60. Land Title Building |
| 4. Jasper Block | 31. Pomerleau Residence | 61. Massey Ferguson Building |
| 5. Arlington Apartments* (PHR) | 32. Looby Block | 62. Northwest Utilities Building |
| 6. Land Registration Office (PHR) | 33. First Presbyterian Church | 63. Oliver Building |
| 7. Parkview Apartments & Foote Residence | 34. John W. Ross Residence | 64. Paramount |
| 8. A. MacDonald Building | 35. Administration Building | 65. The Edmonton Separate School Board |
| 9. Canadian Consolidated Rubber Company | 36. Federal Public Building | 66. Toronto Dominion Bank |
| 10. Phillips Building | 37. Alberta Legislature Building | 67. Land Title Building |
| 11. Churchill Wire Centre | 38. Mercer Warehouse | |
| 12. Lodge Hotel | 39. Horne & Pitfield Building | * Denotes Demolished |
| 13. Brighton Block | 40. Revillon Building & Annex | |
| 14. Gem Theatre* | 41. McKenney Building | |
| 15. Goodridge Building | 42. HBC Warehouse (Beaver House) | |
| 16. McLeod Building (PHR) | 43. Great West Saddlery Building | |
| 17. Imperial Bank of Canada | 44. Moser & Ryder Block | |
| 18. MacDonald Hotel | 45. Kelley Ramsey Block | |
| 19. Union Bank of Canada | 46. Hub Hotel | |
| 20. Hudson's Bay Building | 47. Canadian Bank of Commerce | |
| 21. John Deere Co. Ltd. | 48. McDougall Methodist Church | |
| 22. International Harvester Co. / Dorchester | 49. Salvation Army Citadel | |
| 23. Western Suppliers Ltd. | 50. Masonic Temple | |
| 24. International Harvester Building | 51. Gariepy Mansion & Rosary Hall | |
| 25. MacCosham Building | 52. J.C. McDougall Residence | |
| 26. El Mirador Apartments | 53. John Stocks Residence | |
| 27. MacLean Block | 54. McKay Avenue Public School (PHR) | |
| | 55. Canada Permanent Building (PHR) | |
| | 56. Ross Block (The Boardwalk) | |
| | 57. Edmonton (1881) School (PHR) | |

4.4 ACCESSIBLE DOWNTOWN

14. The Downtown Roadway System

The Downtown's roadway system must accommodate a wide range of needs relating to pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists, delivery vehicles, and so forth. Roadways define the structure of the Downtown: they provide access for automobiles, buses and bicycles; they delineate the network of sidewalks; they provide room for parking and access to parking facilities.

This Plan emphasizes the importance of maintaining a high quality roadway network that serves a diverse set of needs. The Plan policies in this section are concerned with managing congestion, maintaining flow and allowing different travel modes to operate in harmony with each other. The policies focus on the operation of the Downtown roadway network and related issues.

GOAL - THE DOWNTOWN ROADWAY SYSTEM

Develop the Downtown Roadway System in a manner that manages demand by promoting alternative modes such as transit, cycling and walking, and by constraining the availability of long term parking.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

POLICIES

14.1 Downtown Roadway Hierarchy

Recognize, respect and update the following functional roadway classification:

- **Downtown Arterial Roadways**
Arterial roadways are main thoroughfares whose function is to convey high volumes of traffic from one part of the city to another. Arterial roads are typically fairly wide and carry traffic at speeds between 50-60 km/hr. Examples of such roads include 109 Street, 104 Avenue, 105 Street, 101 Street, 100 Street, 97 Street, and Jasper Avenue. As compared to other Downtown streets, arterial roads will continue to be judged over time to a greater degree on their operational performance and carrying capacity.
- **Downtown Collector and Local Roadways**
Collector and Local roads are minor roadways intended to “collect” and “distribute” traffic to the arterial roadway system. Collector and local roads are typically much narrower than arterial roads and they carry traffic that moves at lower speeds than arterial roads. In the Downtown, all roads not specifically defined as arterials are by default collectors or locals.
- **Street-Type Framework**
In addition to the functional hierarchy described above, the street-type framework (set out in Chapter 10 - Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets), establishes the building and design parameters for each street type that should be recognized and respected. Broadly speaking, the following correspondence exists between the Street-Type Framework and the Functional Hierarchy

Arterial: Great Street (Jasper Avenue)
 Grand Avenue (e.g. 104 Avenue)

Collector/Local: Ceremonial Streets
 Neighbourhood Streets - Residential
 Neighbourhood Streets - Commercial/Retail
 Special Streets and Alleys

14.2 Support for Alternative Modes of Commuter Travel

Support Transportation Master Plan policies that encourage use of alternative travel modes to connect the Downtown to other parts of the city. Support current and future application of Transportation Demand Management measures by the public and private sectors to foster reduced use of the automobile and greater reliance on public transit, cycling and walking. Adopt incentives and pilot programs that encourage car pools, low emissions vehicles, and bicycle use.

14.3 Two-Way Streets

Endeavour to maintain two-way streets in the Downtown in order to provide a high level of accessibility.

14.4 Appropriate Access for Emergency and Protective Service Vehicles

Ensure that all development, redevelopment, roadway construction activities and parking facilities in the Downtown make adequate provision for access by emergency and protective service vehicles. Emergency access issues should be taken into consideration not only at the planning stages, but also in the development and operational stages of development.

14.5 Rear Alleys for Parkade Access and Efficient Service Delivery

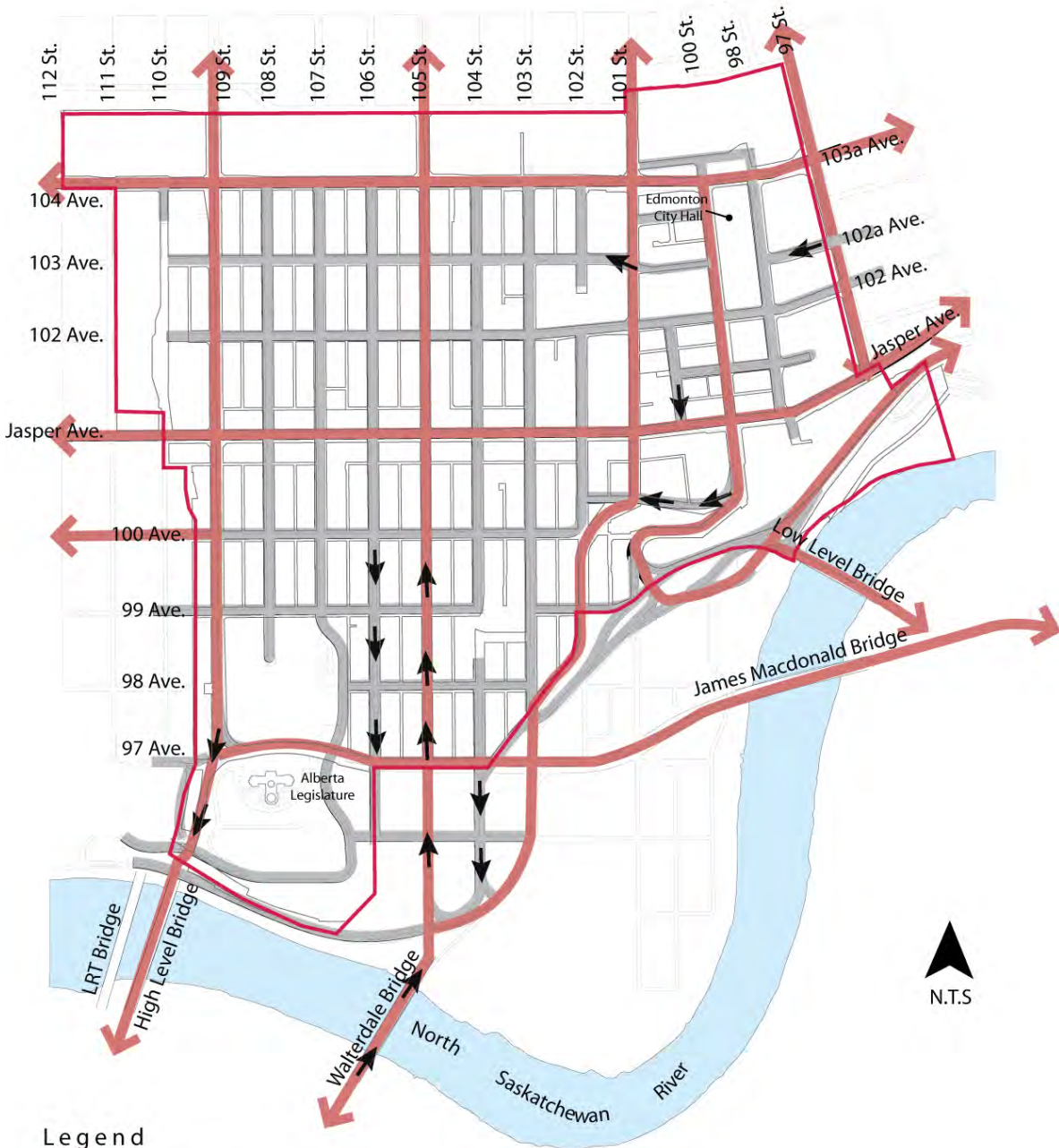
In order to ensure orderly and safe access to parking and service areas, access should be provided from the rear alleys, where available. Establish design standards for loading areas and waste storage and pickup facilities in the Downtown. Implement designs for these downtown alleys to carefully integrate pedestrian-oriented functions with vehicle functions.

14.6 Design and Operation of the Truck Route Network





Provide a safe, cost effective and efficient truck route system that facilitates the movement of goods and services to, from and within the Downtown and through the region.

Figure 22: Roadway Network

Map shown is accurate but format is to be altered to be consistent with other maps for final draft.



Legend

-  Downtown ARP Boundary
-  Street Network
-  Arterial Roads
-  One-Way Direction

15. Pedestrian Circulation

One of the primary objectives of this Plan is to lay the foundation for phased improvements to the pedestrian realm. Citizens of Edmonton want improved pedestrian amenities in their Downtown. They desire sidewalks treated as public spaces that are inviting places to walk, window shop, meet neighbours, stop for a beverage, or get some basic exercise. Improvements will create an attractive environment necessary to support increased resident, worker and student populations.

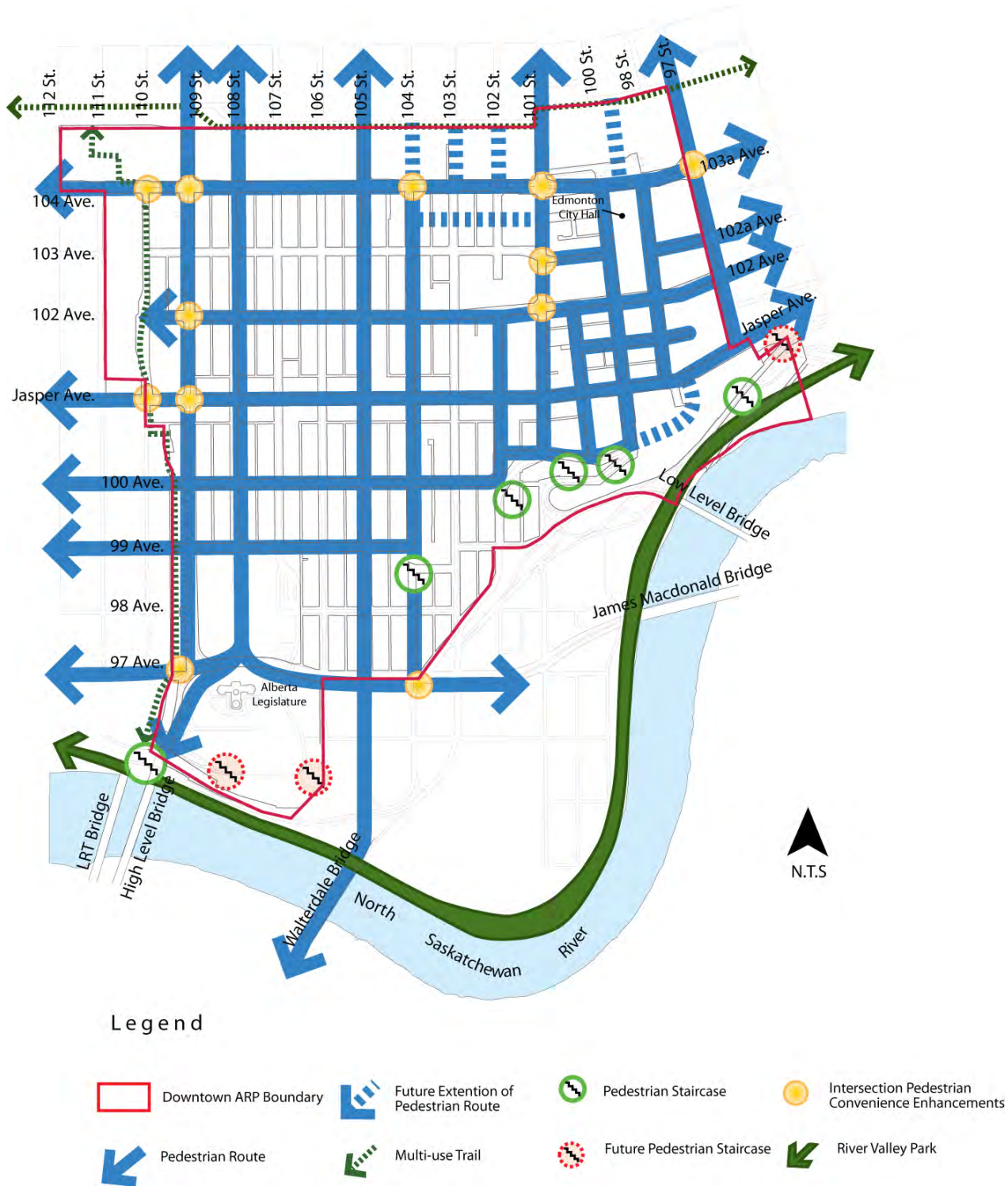
Pedestrians move at a pace that allows them to observe and feel the smallest of details including the quality of building materials, and more fundamentally, sidewalk conditions. The quality of sidewalks, buildings and public spaces needs to be thoughtful, interesting and of a high calibre. Sidewalks should promote a sense of activity, visibility, safety, a sense of place and leave a positive impression of the Downtown as a high quality public space.

Continuity and connectivity of sidewalks and pathways is as important to the pedestrian as smooth roadways are to motorists. The established street grid with sidewalk connections throughout makes a fundamentally walkable place, allowing a pedestrian to get from one place to the next quickly and easily. Improvements to the pedestrian network should focus on reducing barriers such as wide arterial roadways, and resolving breaks in the continuity of pedestrian travel.

This section provides policies on improving the functional and operational aspects of the pedestrian network and provides direction on how to implement improvements to the public realm in the Downtown. *Chapter 10 - Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets* may be referenced for specific, detailed policies on the more qualitative aspects of the Downtown pedestrian environment.



Figure 23: Pedestrian Network



GOAL - PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Ensure that improvement of the pedestrian environment is a high priority in the review of development applications, modifying roadways, improving the connections to adjacent neighbourhoods and analyzing traffic operations in the Downtown.

POLICIES

15.1 Improvement of the Pedestrian Realm

The pedestrian realm in the Downtown should be improved through a variety of approaches, including:

- improvements through the development and redevelopment process,
- improvements as an integral part of roadway upgrading projects,
- inclusion of high quality pedestrian amenities as a standard component of roadway upgrading
- targeted Capital expenditures, and
- sponsorship of local improvement initiatives.

15.2 Context for Articulation of the Pedestrian Realm

Improvements to the pedestrian realm should be guided and informed by the street framework established in *Chapter 10 - The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets*.

15.3 High Quality Pedestrian Amenities with Roadway Improvements

Pedestrian amenities such as pedestrian-level lighting, street trees, landscaping, benches, trash receptacles and cigarette receptacles and other street furniture, should be included as a standard component in completing major roadway improvements. All plans involving changes to the pedestrian and public realm in the Downtown, regardless of the initiating City Department, shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Department, Transportation Department, and the Edmonton Design Committee for review and comment.

15.4 Reducing Barriers to Safe and Convenient Pedestrian Movement

Consistent with a “Pedestrian First” approach, continually strive to improve the pedestrian environment by removing or reducing barriers to movement through a variety of approaches that may include:

- wider sidewalks
- narrower street crossings
- shorter traffic signal cycles
- fewer traffic signal phases
- completion of missing sidewalk links

- provision of pedestrian scale lighting
- better placement of street furniture, utility boxes, and light poles
- consideration of more mid-block crossings
- placement of building entrances in close proximity to pedestrian crosswalks
- use of climate appropriate and trip resistant sidewalk materials

15.5 River Valley Connections

Embrace the North Saskatchewan River Valley as the defining natural space of our City, by enhancing stairway and pathway connections between the Downtown and the river valley; consider such options as re-introducing a funicular railway or providing a weather protected escalator as an attractive, inventive people mover.

15.6 Pedestrians and Bicycles on Bridges

Consider shared-use paths on both sides of bridges into the Downtown, where possible, in conjunction with long-term bridge replacement planning activities and bridge retrofitting projects.

15.7 Funding of Local Improvements

In recognition of the mutual benefit that public realm improvements have for the City and downtown property owners, explore new financing options and cost sharing formulas that would create a more flexible and adaptable funding framework.

Pedway Network

The Pedway is Edmonton's system of internal covered pathways that link various downtown buildings to major shopping centres, civic buildings, office towers, LRT stations, and major tourist and cultural facilities. The Pedway Network pathways are located above ground in overhead walkways, underground in tunnels and at street level through building atriums and lobbies. While providing a comfortable climate controlled environment and avoiding busy street crossings, the Pedway Network has reduced on-street pedestrian activity in the Downtown and contributed to an inward-oriented retail environment.

POLICIES

15.8 Pedway Design and Development

Ensure that the pedways are well designed, safe, secure, attractive, comfortable, accessible to all parties and maintained at a high standard. The design, development and operation of the Pedway Network shall be in accordance with City policy.

15.9 Pedway Consolidation and Transit System Integration

Support those Pedway Network expansions that consolidate the network and those that are well integrated with downtown LRT stations and the overall transit network. Discourage proposals to expand the Pedway Network where the expansion would unduly reduce street-level pedestrian activity in the vicinity.

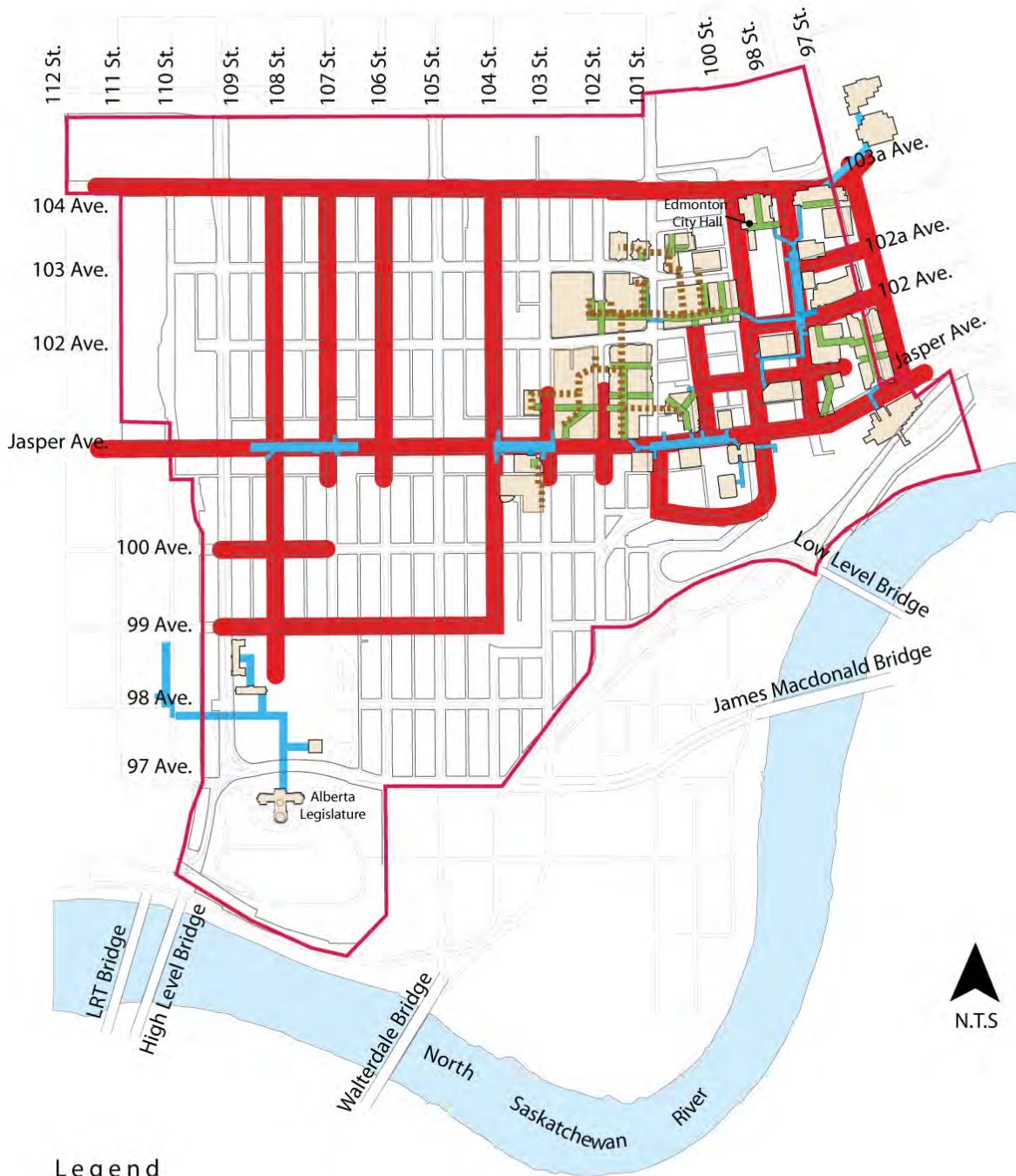
15.10 Above-Ground Pedway Restriction Area

The development of above-ground pedways should be limited in those locations shown on the Pedway Network Map in order to preserve views of Downtown landmarks and major open spaces, and to protect vistas along prominent streets. If a pedway is constructed across a designated Grand Avenue, it should be designed so that its width and scale do not create negative wind and shade conditions on the street below and its height is sufficient to frame rather than obscure the vista down the street.

15.11 Pedway Signage and Mapping Review

Conduct periodic assessments of Pedway signage and mapping to confirm wayfinding components are up to date and in good repair.

Figure 24: Pedway Network



Legend

- Downtown ARP Boundary
- Pedway Above Street
- Above Ground Pedway Restriction Area
- Pedway Below Street
- Pedway Street Level
- + Building Connected to Pedway System



16. Cycling Downtown

Providing the necessary infrastructure to support increased bicycle commuting and use in the Downtown is important to create an environment that encourages as many individuals as possible to choose cycling as a safe, healthy and efficient way to travel. When the bicycle is an easy option, more people are likely to cycle.

The City of Edmonton's 2005 Household Travel Survey showed a 150% increase in the number of cycling trips taken in Edmonton between 1994 and 2005. Cycling now accounts for 1% of the modal share of the total number of trips taken by Edmontonians. While this is an admirable change, cities across Canada still lag far behind countries in Western Europe, where on average 5-10% of trips are by bicycle. In some cities, like Copenhagen or Amsterdam, over 35% of downtown commuter trips are by bicycle.

With an appropriate strategic direction for integrating bicycles into downtown development practices, the City will be moving towards creating a more sustainable urban environment. A Downtown that has a system of cycling routes that are well integrated with the citywide cycling network will encourage an increase in commuter and recreational cycling activities.

Three areas of emphasis have emerged as priorities to improve the Downtown cycling environment:

- Improved Downtown cycling routes
- Close integration of the Downtown cycle routes with the citywide cycling network.
- Providing the necessary public and private end-of-trip amenities to support growth in cycle commuting.



GOAL - CYCLING DOWNTOWN

Provide a highly visible and functional bicycle network through the Downtown and provide the necessary public and private end-of-trip amenities to support growth in cycle commuting.

POLICIES

16.1 Downtown Bicycle Master Plan

The City will complete, and update at five-year intervals, a Downtown Bicycle Master Plan (DBMP) that builds upon the approved city-wide Bicycle Transportation Plan. The Plan should identify specific strategies, projects and innovations aimed at improving the Downtown cycling environment. This includes, but is not limited to, convenient and continuous route designations, highly visible route demarcation, physical route improvements, intersection treatments, indications of shared or dedicated rights of way, as well as types and locations of bicycle storage facilities in public and private places. Explore the possibility of undertaking a “bicycle station pilot project” as part of the Master Plan process. Improvements should be implemented on a staged basis.

16.2 Commitment to Downtown Cycling Improvements

The cycling environment to, from and within Downtown will be significantly improved through commitments to make cycling a more viable and visible mode of travel for a larger portion of Downtown commuters and residents. Commitments shall be consistent with strategies and projects defined in the Downtown Bicycle Master Plan and coordinated with other capital projects within the Downtown.

16.3 Continuous and Highly Visible Bicycle Routes

The extent, quality and visibility of Downtown cycling routes will be significantly improved through the provision of one or more continuous bicycle routes through the Downtown which connect logically and conveniently with bicycle routes outside the Downtown.

16.4 End of Trip Facilities through Development and Redevelopment

Development or redevelopment in the Downtown shall include improved end-of-trip facilities such as secure weather-protected storage, as well as change and shower facilities in public and private buildings.

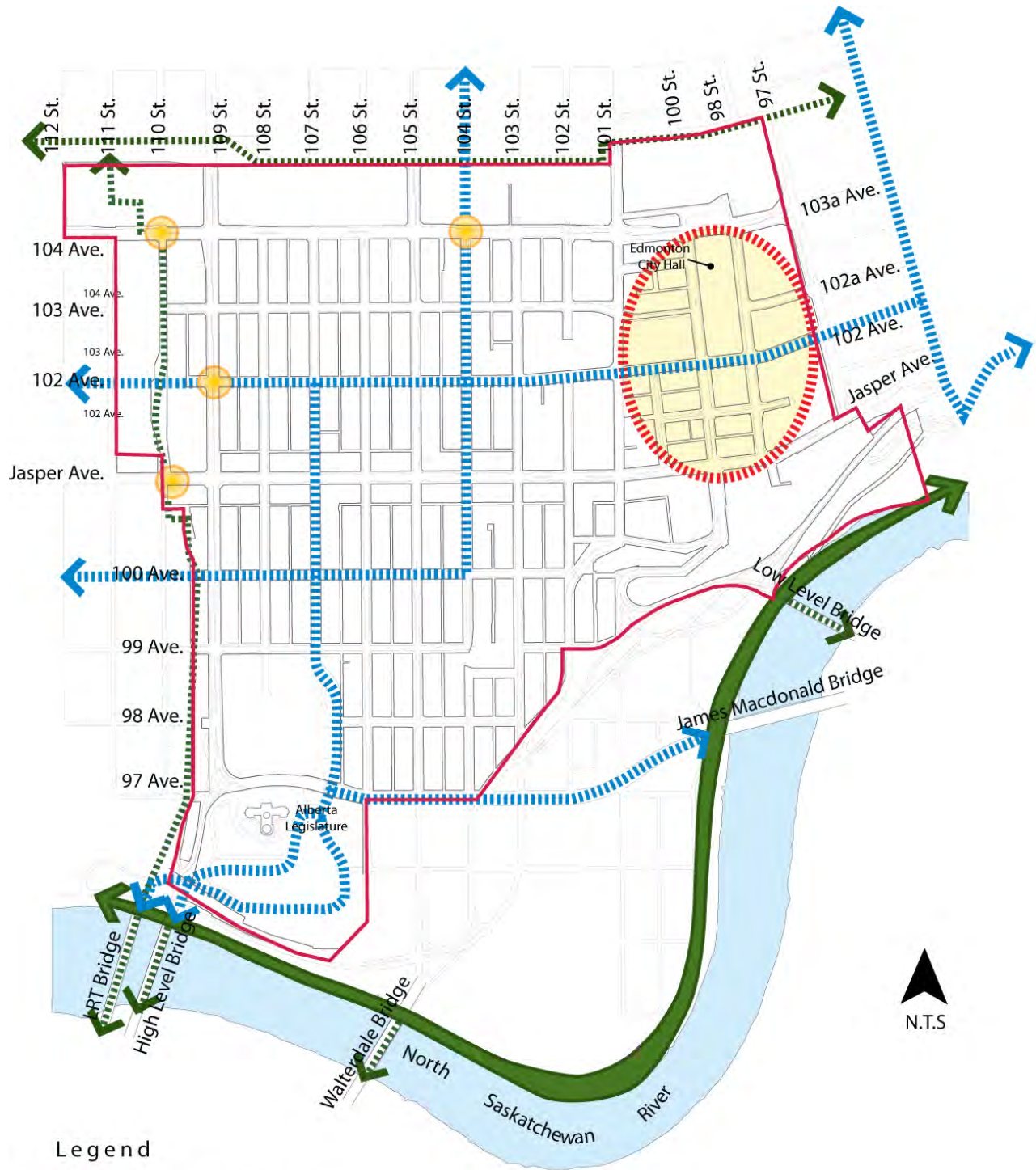
16.5 Integration of Cycling with Transit Facilities and Public Open Spaces

Major transit facilities and public open spaces (e.g. parks, squares etc.) shall include safe, secure, and convenient bicycle storage facilities.

16.6 Bicycle Parking on Surface Parking Lots

All surface parking lots in the Downtown should include secure weather-protected bicycle storage on their site, with the bicycle parking amount to be determined through the Downtown Bicycle Master Plan, and requirements incorporated into the Zoning Bylaw. Such bicycle storage is to be located in a highly visible and highly accessible location close to an adjoining street.

Figure 25: Bicycle Network



Legend

- Downtown ARP Boundary
- Multi-use Trail
- River Valley Park
- Bicycle Route
- Proposed Intersection Crossing Enhancements
- Proposed Bicycle Station Area

17. Downtown Transit System

This Plan emphasizes the ongoing enhancement of transit services as an important factor in addressing sustainability and reducing the dependence on personal automobiles for commuter travel into the Downtown. A high quality transit system is necessary for the development of a compact city and a strong Downtown. Improved transit services and facilities support high residential densities and office development in the Downtown.

Edmonton has a long history of providing dependable transit services into the Downtown. Transit ridership into the Downtown is strong and has been increasing over the past several years. Recent surveys indicate that almost 40% of people making the morning commute into the Downtown do so by transit.

Edmonton was the first city in North America with a population under one million people to build a light rail transit (LRT) system. Expansion of the system has been relatively slow and intermittent over the last two decades. However, in recent years, the City has made expansion of the LRT system a major priority, with the construction of the South LRT line being the first of several new routes now being planned. Strategic City direction includes the expansion of LRT to all sectors of the City with the Downtown as a focal point and a central area circulator system that connects the Downtown, University of Alberta and Old Strathcona. New LRT lines within the Downtown are recommended to be planned as urban-style, street-running LRT with smaller scale stations and close integration with adjacent land uses.



GOAL - DOWNTOWN TRANSIT SYSTEM

Maintain the Downtown as a major hub in the region's transit system and continuously improve transit service and facilities to strengthen the ability of the Downtown to function as a high-density residential, employment, education and entertainment centre for the region.

POLICIES

17.1 Increasing Transit's Modal Share of Commuter Traffic into the Downtown

Pursue a variety of strategies and actions aimed at increasing transit's share of trips to and from the Downtown, particularly during peak hours. These measures may include:

- transit supportive roadway improvements
- transit facility and service enhancements
- transportation demand management measures
- parking supply management

17.2 Transit Supportive Land Uses

Encourage and support development and redevelopment both within and outside the Downtown that will support and complement transit use and discourage reliance on the automobile for trips to/from the Downtown.

17.3 Expand the City's LRT Network

Pursue expansion of the city-wide LRT network to provide high quality transit access between the Downtown and all sectors of the City and to sustain the Downtown as the City's pre-eminent centre of business, culture, entertainment, education and government. Assess the development of a central area circulator concept to connect the Downtown, University of Alberta, Old Strathcona and the Southeast LRT extension. Determination of the North Saskatchewan River Crossing in the vicinity of 109 Street to be done in consultation and collaboration with the Province of Alberta.

17.4 Integrate Low Floor LRT within the Downtown Fabric

Develop the Downtown portion of the City's expanded low floor LRT system, in a manner that fully integrates its form and function with land uses, building forms, streets and public realm improvements in the Downtown. Ensure the LRT line positively impacts Downtown development objectives, and adheres to the following land use and design principles:

- Land uses and densities at stations and along the LRT corridor should support the creation of a mixed-use activity and amenity corridor along the LRT route through the downtown to support high levels of day and night pedestrian activity and generate high levels of transit use.

- Pedestrian oriented active uses should be located at grade adjacent to station areas and platforms. Buildings should not "turn their back" to LRT street. Rather, presentational front of buildings, including entrances and glazing, should address the LRT corridor street.
- LRT stations and platforms should be designed and incorporated with landscape, buildings, public art, and other public realm elements to create/enhance a sense of identity at each station area and along the corridor as a whole. A unique identity can be created for each station by:
 - emphasizing a special use focus for each area;
 - incorporating public art that references the natural and human history of the station area and the special use focus; and
 - the use of special streetscape elements for each station area such as paving details, street trees, shelters.

17.5 Transit Corridors and Services Linking Downtown with the Region

Cooperate with regional municipalities to promote a high level of transit service from surrounding regional municipalities to the Downtown. Where appropriate, consider the provision of Transit Priority measures on regional approach corridors to sustain the Downtown as a high-density residential, employment, education and entertainment centre.

17.6 Intercity Rail Service to the South

Collaborate with the Province of Alberta to plan and protect for the future development of a high-speed inter-city rail (HSR) and LRT alignments in the vicinity of 109 Street, including options for a multi-modal(LRT/HSR) terminal.

17.7 Improving the Central City Transit Network

Conduct an evaluation of transit services within the Downtown and its adjacent neighbourhoods. Consider improvements to the central city transit network and increase the appeal of transit for day-to-day trips within these areas.

17.8 Improving Downtown Transit Facilities

Consider amenity improvements to the Downtown's bus stops, shelters and LRT stations to increase the attractiveness of transit in the Downtown, with particular attention to high use corridors such as Jasper Avenue, 102 Avenue, 100 Street and 101 Street.

17.9 Pedestrian Flow around Transit Waiting Areas

Explore design improvements to the Downtown's major bus stops and LRT entrances to improve pedestrian flow through and around these areas.

17.10 Accessible and Integrated Transit

Provide a Downtown transit system that is accessible to all user groups with connections between all transportation modes. Appropriately integrate transit stations and waiting areas with new developments.

17.11 Transit Safety and Security

Provide both active and passive security measures throughout the Downtown transit system, especially at major waiting areas and transfer points, to ensure a safe and secure transit system for all users.

17.12 Maximizing Transit Use Within the Downtown

Consider the re-introduction of free weekday LRT service within the Downtown as well as other options to maximize use of the existing downtown transit system.

Figure 26: Edmonton LRT Expansion Proposed Downtown LRT Route

NOTE: Proposed LRT alignment has not been approved by Council and is subject to change.

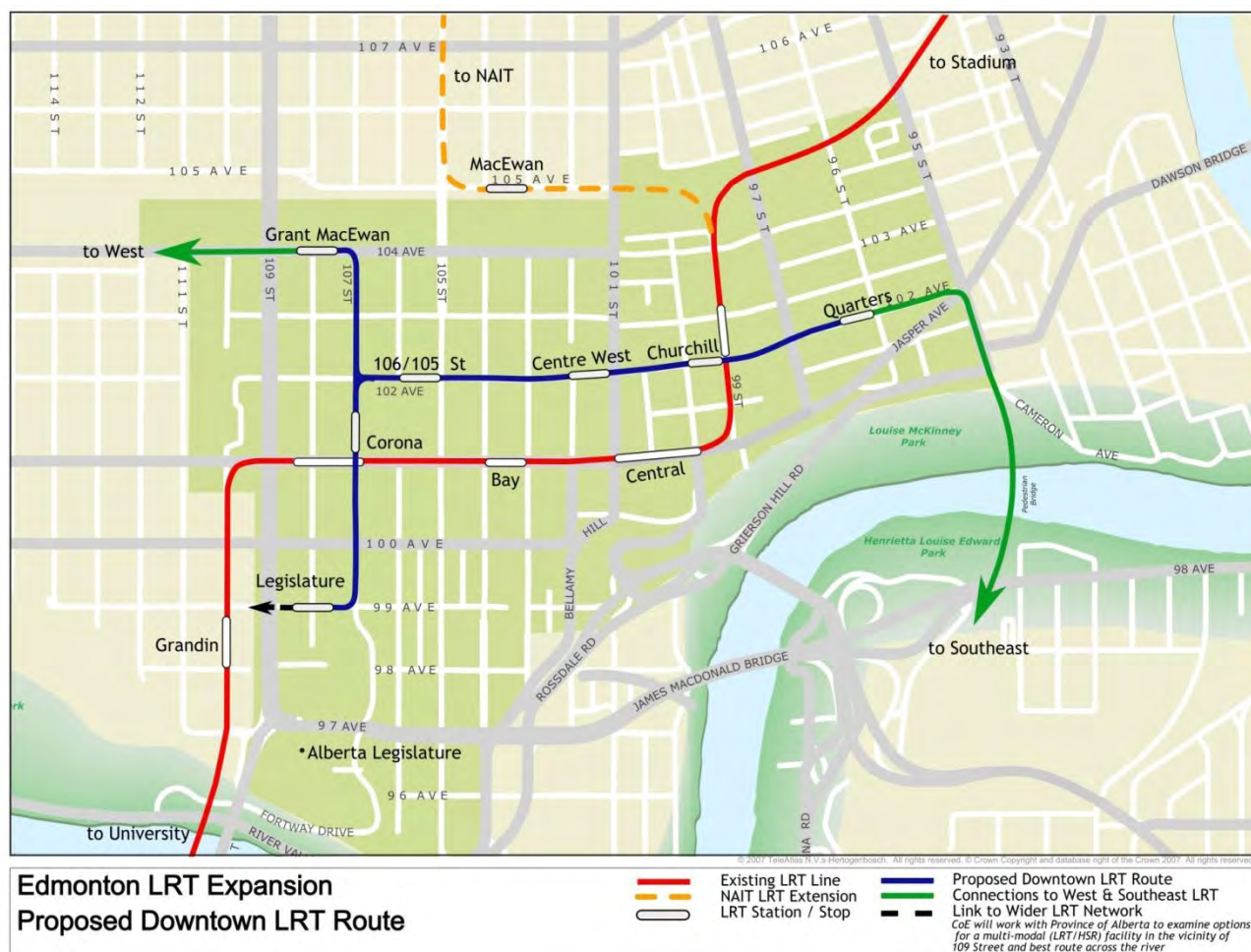


Image courtesy Steer Davies Gleave

18. Parking Downtown

This section addresses the challenge of modifying and adjusting current parking policies and practices such that they enhance the land use planning principles advanced in other sections of this plan.

Certain areas of the Downtown, such as the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood has an overabundance of long-term surface parking lots, providing relatively inexpensive long-term parking for downtown employees. While Downtown retailers do not generally rely on long-term parking, the supply of convenient, short-term, visible on-street parking is critical to them and to a flourishing commercial retail environment.

To confirm that downtown parking continues to serve cultural, business and entertainment activity, a review of the short-term parking supply and rate structure should be undertaken from time to time. The intent of this type of review is to identify parking supply and demand issues and propose solutions to these issues, while recognizing that initiatives to manage parking can help reduce dependence on single occupant vehicle use.



GOAL - PARKING DOWNTOWN

Manage the supply of parking in the Downtown to anticipate and respond to projected parking supply issues, to provide convenient business access, to improve customer convenience and promote sustainable travel choices.

POLICIES

18.1 New Strategies for Parking Management

Adopt a strategic approach to anticipating and responding to projected parking supply constraints or surpluses. This may include a review of alternate parking organizational frameworks to determine if there might be any advantage in a change to the current management structure of administering on and off-street parking.

18.2 New Parking Technologies

Research, test and implement new revenue collection systems and hardware which maximize revenue opportunities and improve the user experience, providing a wide variety of options for payment, and improve sidewalk functionality and aesthetics.

18.3 Reduced Parking Provisions and Maximum Parking Limits

Enhance the livability of the Downtown and the viability of alternative travel modes by reducing the supply of off-street parking spaces required by the Zoning Bylaw for both residential and commercial developments, and by setting maximum limits on the supply of parking spaces. Additionally, ensure that Zoning Bylaw required parking provisions are a mixture of long-term (up to all-day) and short-term (two hour) parking.

18.4 Innovative Options to Supply Parking

Establish a broader, more innovative range of options for satisfying downtown parking supply requirements for new developments, including but not limited to shared parking arrangements, off site parking, transportation demand management programs, cash-in- lieu of parking programs, elimination of parking minimum requirements, and other options that provide increased flexibility in addressing the provision of Downtown parking.

18.5 Monitoring and Management of Parking Resources

Develop and maintain a comprehensive database of on- and off-street parking spaces and develop data monitoring and reporting systems that facilitate the dissemination of public information on parking stall availability in real-time.

18.6 Parking Facility Design Standards

Establish design specifications that will provide for:

- high quality, pedestrian-scale street wall facades of new parking structures,
- more uniform easier-to-understand signage for parking facilities,
- improved lighting and landscaping, pedestrian pathways, and secure, enclosed bicycle parking in parkades, and
- the improved overall integration of parkades into the Downtown pedestrian environment.

18.7 City Leadership Pilots

Consider using City-owned parking facilities to test market and adopt pilot programs that encourage car pools, low emissions vehicle use and enhanced bicycle parking options. Conduct these types of activities prior to introducing regulatory modes.

18.8 Cash in Lieu of Parking Programs

Explore ways that cost savings associated with reduced parking construction could be used to fund sustainable transportation initiatives, and introduce this mechanism into the zoning regulations for the Downtown.

18.9 Review of Reduced Weekend Parking Meter Rates

Consider the reduction of weekend parking meter rates to support retail, cultural and entertainment activities in the Downtown. Involve the Downtown Business Association and retail businesses, cultural and entertainment enterprises in this review process.

18.10 Study of Variable Tax Rate for Non-Accessory Parking Lots

Undertake a study to examine the possibility of establishing a variable tax rate for non-accessory parking lots in the Downtown as a means of providing landowners with a strong incentive to develop their land to its maximum economic use.



5. Neighbourhood Strategies

While the Downtown is generally seen as a commercial centre, it is actually an area of great diversity, with several very distinct character areas or neighbourhoods.

Given the Downtown's rich history of settlement and redevelopment, it is blessed with a number of special places, buildings, landmarks and natural features that define the individual identities of the various character areas. Each of the Downtown's neighbourhoods is in a different stage of evolution, some very mature and stable, others have been recently converted, and yet others are in transition, with untapped potential.

The Neighbourhoods and Their Sub Areas

Four of the five Downtown neighbourhoods contain distinct Sub Areas, and therefore the strategies are, for the most part, provided at the Sub Area level. The five Downtown neighbourhoods and their Sub Areas are as follows:

Commercial-Cultural Core

- Commercial Core (Sub Area 1)
- Arts District (Sub Area 2)
- Station Lands Area (Sub Area 3)
- River's Edge Area (Sub Area 4)



Image courtesy HBBH

The Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood

- Central Warehouse Area (Sub Area 1)
- Heritage Area (Sub Area 2)
- Railtown Area (Sub Area 3)
- MacEwan Area (Sub Area 4)

Jasper Avenue

McKay Avenue Neighbourhood

- McKay Avenue Residential Area (Sub Area 1)
- Victoria McKay Avenue Mixed Use Area (Sub Area 2)

Capital City District

- Capital Boulevard Area (Sub Area 1)
- Legislature Grounds (Sub Area 2)

Neighbourhood Strategies: Key Actions and Development Policies

Neighbourhood Strategies are designed to take advantage of each of the Neighbourhoods' differences to respond to the special potential of each area. The Neighbourhood Strategies consist of:

- Development Concept Maps that identify key features of each Neighbourhood including proposed Grand Avenues, Ceremonial Streets, pedestrian linkages, at-grade LRT corridors, LRT stations, future park locations, etc.
- Key Actions for each area are identified in a list following the map indicating priority initiatives, Public Realm projects, and long-term improvement programs. The detailed implementation direction for the Key Actions is outlined in the various policy chapters in Section 6 - *Implementing the Plan*.
- A Development Intent statement providing a summary the land use development for each Sub Area.
- Land Use and Development Policies that provide specific direction on the recommended land-use mix and design qualities for each of the Sub Areas.

CC - Commercial-Cultural Core

The Commercial-Cultural Core is comprised of four distinct Sub Areas reflecting historical development, similarity of urban character, land use and built form. These Sub Areas include:

- Commercial Core,
- Arts District,
- Station Lands Area, and
- River's Edge Area.



Image courtesy Google Earth

Figure 27: Commercial-Cultural Core Development Concept



Legend

Sub Areas

- Commercial Core Sub Area 1
- Arts District Sub Area 2
- Station Lands Sub Area 3
- River's Edge Sub Area 4

- Great Street - Jasper Ave.
- Grand Avenues
- Ceremonial Streets
- Existing + Proposed Heritage Trail Promenade

- Pedestrian Linkages
- Existing Parks / Open Space
- Existing LRT line + Station
- Proposed LRT line + Station
- River Valley Multi Use Trail

Key Plan



Vision for the Commercial-Cultural Core

- Phase in high quality public realm improvements throughout area
- Enhance use of Sir Winston Churchill Square
- Upgrade, animate Rice Howard Way and Molson Plaza
- Implement Jasper Avenue New Vision
- Convert blank walls of major retail malls to vibrant storefronts
- Integrate cafes, specialty stores into the Arts District
- Ensure quality mixed use redevelopment in Station Lands area
- Integrate potential development of a Sports and Entertainment District
- Extend Heritage Trail and develop further viewpoints and interpretive sites
- Replace utilitarian stair connections into the valley at selected locations with stair and ramp systems that are elegant and graceful
- Develop innovative mechanized access at selected locations; explore innovative connectors.
- Implement Louise McKinney Riverfront Parks Vision

Commercial-Cultural Core - Land Use and Development Policies

The Land Use and Development Policies for the four Commercial-Cultural Core Sub Areas are presented below.

COMMERCIAL CORE (SUB AREA 1)

Development Intent

The Commercial Core is to be developed with a high standard of commercial office and retail development, supported by a range of service, institutional, residential, arts and entertainment uses and a high quality public realm. The intent is to provide a diversified shopping environment with continuous retail at-grade and pedestrian friendly streets, parks and open spaces.

Land Use and Development Policies

CC 1.1 High Density Mixed-Use

Support the continuation of high-density mixed-use office, commercial, financial, institutional, entertainment and other urban uses.

CC 1.2 A Diversity of Commercial Uses

Encourage a diversity of commercial uses to locate in the Commercial Core, from large shopping centres and mixed-use entertainment complexes to small unique retail units.

CC 1.3 Diversified Shopping Environment

Strengthen and expand the traditional retail core and enhance Jasper Avenue as the focus of the Downtown's main shopping district. Prepare a Public Realm Plan for Rice Howard Way, detailing plans for upgrading and animating this successful pedestrian area. Implement high quality public realm improvements in these areas.

CC 1.4 Retail Continuity At-grade

Create retail continuity along pedestrian shopping streets in the Commercial Core by encouraging retail use along street frontage within the block.

CC 1.5 Design and Architecture

Implement land use controls and design regulations that require pedestrian friendly design, human scale, high quality, sustainable architecture and highly accessible gathering spaces. Strongly encourage the 'blank walls' and inward-looking sections of major shopping complexes to be converted to exteriors wrapped with storefronts oriented exclusively to the street.

CC 1.6 Destination Entertainment Uses

Encourage growth in the number and variety of destination entertainment venues in appropriate locations in the Commercial Core, to complement the Arts District and contribute to the vibrancy and nightlife in the Core.

ARTS DISTRICT (SUB AREA 2)*Development Intent*

The Arts District is the focal point for culture and entertainment on a citywide scale. It has the capacity to accommodate all kinds of public gatherings and major festivals. New developments will enhance the diversity and quality of civic, cultural, entertainment and parks facilities within the District. Developments in the area will contribute to a high quality, pedestrian-friendly environment, featuring cafes, specialty stores and entertainment uses.



Image courtesy Robert Lemermeyer



Photo courtesy Cohos Evamy

Land Use and Development Policies

CC 2.1 Concentration of Arts, Institutional and Parks Uses

Support the enhancement of arts, culture, institutional and parks uses in the area to strengthen the Arts District's role as the City's major civic / cultural precinct.

CC 2.2 Active Streets on Sir Winston Churchill Square

Strongly encourage the civic, cultural and commercial buildings surrounding Sir Winston Churchill Square to convert 'blank wall' areas to cafes, specialty stores and retail shops, to create active street fronts on all sides of the Square. Integrate transit facilities to engaging frontages where possible.

CC 2.3 Enhancing the Use of Sir Winston Churchill Square

Support efforts to enhance the recreational use, roles, functions, and overall aesthetic quality of Sir Winston Churchill Square and nearby properties.

CC 2.4 Feasibility of Road Closures Adjacent to Sir Winston Churchill Square

Maintain the flexibility of the Arts District to accommodate large public festivals through physical improvements, temporary road closures and other traffic calming measures.

CC 2.5 High Quality Design of the Public Realm

Require that developments in the Arts District adjacent to Sir Winston Churchill Square allow for a public gathering area and stipulate that the public realm around the building must be of unique and aesthetic design.

CC 2.6 Compatibility with The Quarters Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

Develop both sides of 97 Street as a Grand Avenue, with connections to The Quarters area at Jasper and 102 Avenues.

STATION LANDS AREA (SUB AREA 3)

Development Intent

The Station Lands Area is to be developed as a neighbourhood with mixed-use, high-density commercial, residential, institutional and major potential sports and entertainment neighbourhood uses. Redevelopment will be compatible with development in adjacent neighbourhoods, contribute to a high quality public environment and be supportive of existing and future transit developments.

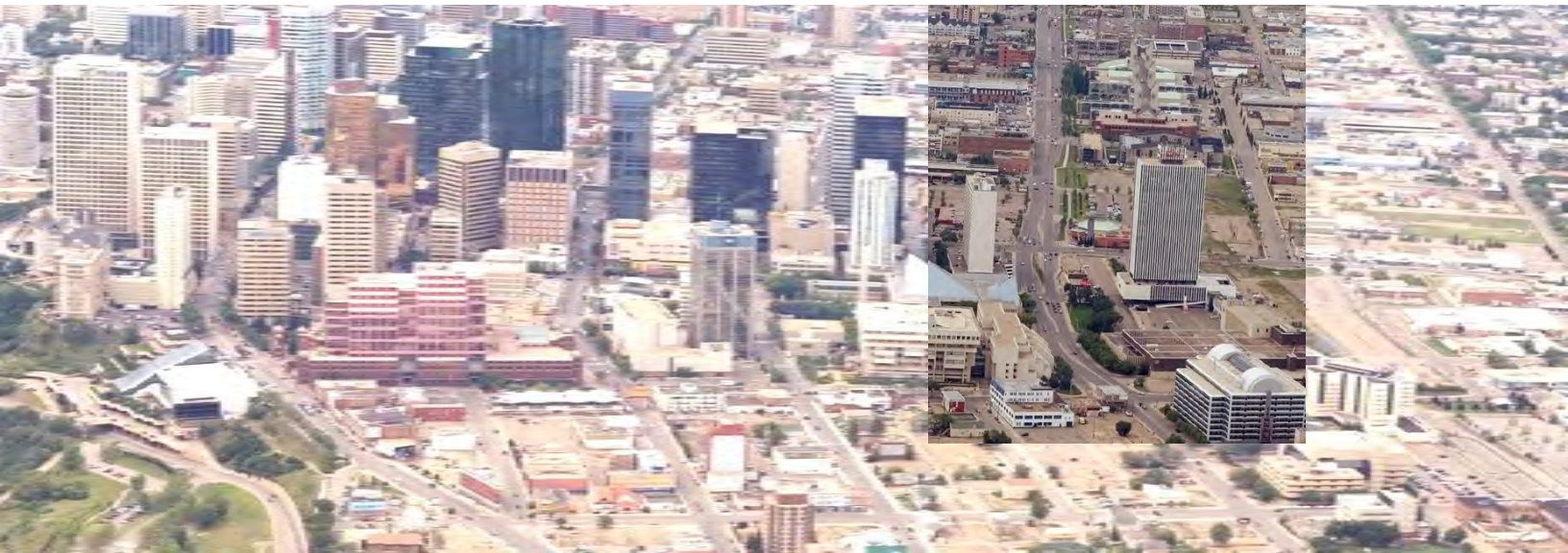


Photo courtesy EEDC

Land Use and Development Policies

CC 3.1 Intensification of Land Uses in the Station Lands

Encourage the intensification of land uses in the Station Lands Area in the form of mixed-use developments. The primary focus of development will be on commercial office space and entertainment uses supported by street level retail and services.

CC 3.2 Mixed-use High Density Uses (Area 'A')

Encourage the redevelopment of Station Lands "Area A" to focus on quality high density mixed-use development, comprised primarily of high intensity office, major entertainment, cultural and institutional uses and pedestrian-oriented commercial uses along abutting arterials.

CC 3.3 Transit Supportive, Medium to High Density uses (Area 'B')

Encourage and support transit supportive developments reflecting a mix of medium to high density commercial, institutional and residential uses in Station Lands "Area B". Provide for a transition of development from high to medium density.

CC 3.4 Station Lands Site Planning and Design

To further strengthen the urban character, quality and development concepts for the Station Lands, site planning and design shall ensure that:

- Streetwalls will be highly transparent and articulated at ground level and the 2nd storey to reflect a high level of pedestrian interaction.
- No surface parking or above grade parkades will be allowed to front onto adjacent streets and avenues.
- The north-south view corridors shall be maintained to reflect the Downtown grid street pattern. This may be provided in the form of a street, linear park or pedestrian walkway.
- Development adjacent to 105 Avenue shall complement and be compatible with the design of the Downtown North Edge area.

CC 3.5 Potential for a Sports and Entertainment District

Support the development of a Sports and Entertainment District in the Downtown located on lands within the Station Lands Area (Sub Area 3b), and on part of the Commercial Core (Sub Area 1) north of 103 Avenue and west of 102 Street. Work with applicants to ensure the overall impact of a large facility on the public realm is positive. Apply the following planning and urban design principles in the review and approval process for proposed development within the Sports and Entertainment District:

Planning and Urban Design Principles for a Sports and Entertainment District

1. Design	The design of development within this district should be of outstanding merit, and make a significant contribution to the cityscape as landmark buildings, and could include animated lighting and signage.
2. Open Space	A significant, publicly accessible exterior open space should be provided at grade level as part of the development to provide a vibrant focal point in the precinct.
3. Pedestrian Routes	Development should be designed to maximize pedestrian activity on the streets. Direct and safe pedestrian routes should be provided from buildings to major destinations in surrounding areas, including public transit facilities. Pedestrian connections should be provided at grade across and through development located south of 104 Avenue.
4. Design for Edmonton's Climate	Development should be designed to minimize adverse environmental impacts on open spaces and adjacent streets, create positive exterior microclimates, and provide weather protection.
5. Parking and Loading	The majority of parking should be provided underground. Some parking may be provided in above ground structures if screened at upper levels and wrapped with active space at ground level. Loading areas should be fully screened or enclosed. Building service and vehicular access should be located to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and sized to minimize discontinuity of street walls.
6. Retail and Restaurants	Retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses should be focused along 102 and 103 Streets and should address the street with primary entrances.
7. Major Streets	The design of development should support the existing and planned street network and Public Realm Plan and reinforce the prominence of 101 Street as a major Gateway and 104 Avenue as a Grand Boulevard.
8. Streetscape	Development frontages should have a high level of visual and functional permeability, and a human scale at street level. Massive blank walls are to be avoided.
9. Sustainable Design	Development should strive to achieve a high standard of sustainability as promoted through such programs as LEED®, Built Green, and BOMA Best.

RIVER'S EDGE AREA (SUB AREA 4)*Development Intent*

The River's Edge Area is to feature hospitality-oriented developments such as hotels, convention facilities and restaurants, as well as residential and office development with retail uses at street level. Implementation of the Louise McKinney Riverfront Park Vision is to be completed.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Land Use and Development Policies

CC 4.1 Mixed-Use Pedestrian-oriented Development

Developments along the valley edge are to have an emphasis on hospitality, entertainment or residential uses, with pedestrian oriented, specialty retail supporting the recreation and tourism uses in the vicinity.

CC 4.2 Infill Developments along Jasper Avenue

Developments along Jasper Avenue within this Sub Area are to:

- Take advantage of the panoramic views;
- Introduce ground floor retail uses, plazas and other green spaces and connections to encourage street activity and strengthen the connectivity to the valley edge; and
- Respect view corridors by maintaining streets, alleys and other rights-of-way.

CC 4.3 Contributions to Public Amenities

Developments are to contribute to the construction or provision of public amenities and connections along the River's Edge.

CC 4.4 Improved Pedestrian Connections to the Valley Edge and River Bank

Improve pedestrian connections to the valley edge, Heritage Trail and Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to enhance access to the valley and river.

CC 4.5 Implementing the Louise McKinney Riverfront Parks Vision

Continue to implement the Louise McKinney Riverfront Park vision that includes the design and construction of improved park accesses, completing the River Promenade, Riverfront Plaza (including its additional buildings), and the "green room" for the Shumka Stage.

WC - Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood

The Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood is comprised of four distinct Sub Areas reflecting historical and recent development, built form, land use and development potential of the areas. These Sub Areas are:

- Central Warehouse Area,
- Heritage Area,
- Railtown Area, and
- MacEwan Area.

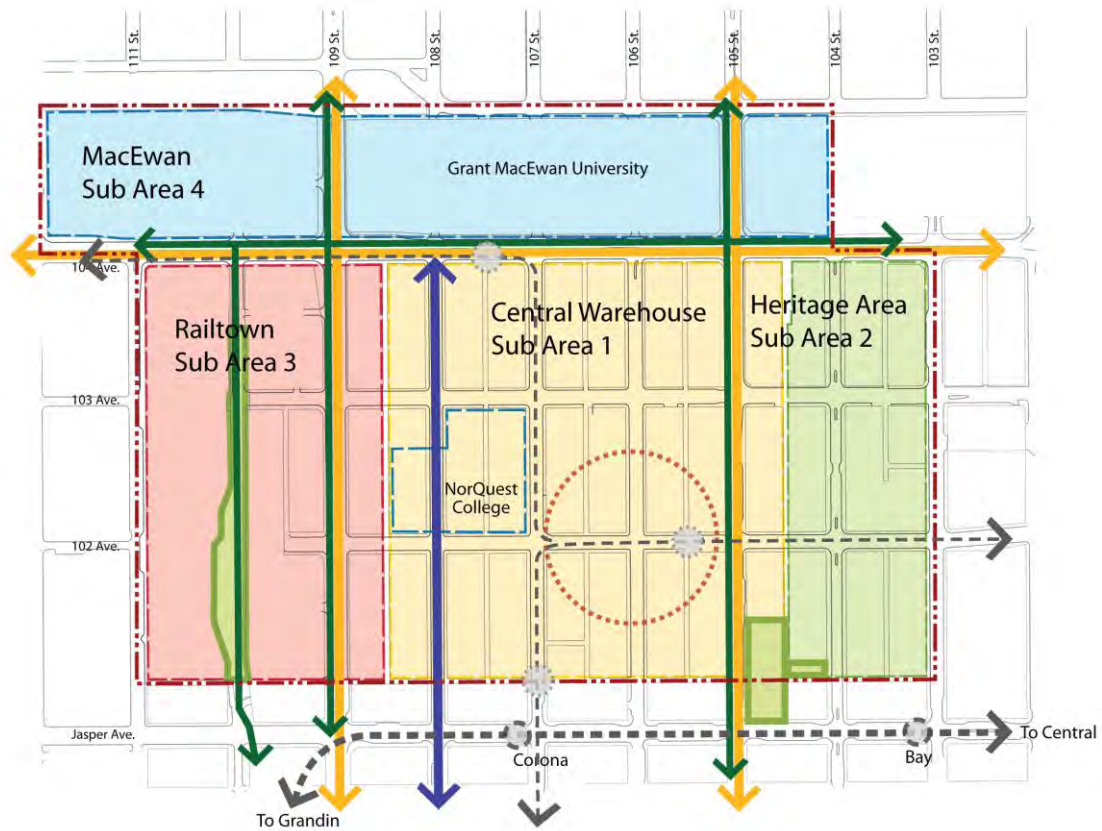


Photo courtesy Grant MacEwan University



Photo courtesy City of Edmonton

Figure 28: Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Development Concept

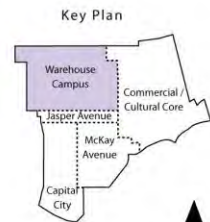


Legend

- Sub Areas
- Central Warehouse Sub Area 1
 - Heritage Area Sub Area 2
 - Railtown Sub Area 3
 - MacEwan Sub Area 4

- Grand Avenues
- Ceremonial Streets
- Proposed Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Park

- Pedestrian Linkages
- Existing Parks / Open Space
- Existing LRT line + Station
- Proposed LRT line + Station



Vision for the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood

- Adopt a Central Warehouse Area Plan and 10 Year Capital Budget
- Acquire land and develop a Major Central Park
- Implement a Housing Incentive Program as a catalyst for development of vacant land
- Acquire land and develop small pocket parks
- Develop linked pedestrian connections between parks and open spaces
- Implement a streetscape improvement plan for 104 Avenue
- Develop Capital Boulevard (108 Street) as a “Great Street”
- Preserve and celebrate the historical character of the neighbourhood
- Implement programs and partnerships to support educational institutions
- Strengthen campus focus and integration into area
- Enhance 104 Street pedestrian zone, Farmer’s Market
- 102 Avenue as a major pedestrian oriented shopping street
- Incorporate new at-grade Light Rail through area
- Complete multi-use pathway connections through Railtown and MacEwan areas
- Upgrade 109 Street with major public realm improvements

Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood - Land Use and Development Policies

The Land Use and Development Policies for the four Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Sub Areas are presented below.

CENTRAL WAREHOUSE AREA (SUB AREA 1)

Development Intent

The development intent for the Central Warehouse Area is to capitalize on its substantial, untapped potential to develop as a dynamic, urban community, by providing for an eclectic mix of medium and high density residential, commercial, educational and institutional uses. The intent is to further support residential growth by increasing the amount of parks and open space, by making a series of public realm and streetscape improvements and by encouraging the development of service-oriented retail uses.



Image courtesy HBBH + Cohos Evamy

Land Use and Development Policies

WC 1.1 Medium to High Density - Variety of Housing Forms

Support residential infill in the Central Warehouse Area at medium to high densities, to increase the housing stock and support growth in the local retail economy. Promote a wide range of housing choice, in terms of housing type, price range, tenure and design.

WC 1.2 Warehouse Preservation and Integration

Protect and integrate the remaining historic warehouse buildings, primarily along 103 Avenue between 106 and 109 Streets, by providing zoning and incentive mechanisms to secure their retention, integration and re-use.

WC 1.3 Development of a Major Warehouse Area Central Park

Acquire land and develop a major new park in the Central Warehouse Area - a central community gathering place and catalyst for residential development in the Area. Acquire land and develop small pocket parks in the area as necessary to serve a growing population. Integrate low impact development stormwater features into park design.

WC 1.4 NorQuest Campus Development

Integrate future campus expansion and redevelopment into the Central Warehouse Area environment and create a physical and social focal point for the Area. Work with the College to establish a partnership to acquire and secure publicly accessible parks and open space. The campus redevelopment should complement the adjacent 108 Street (Capital Boulevard) streetscape.

WC 1.5 Capital Boulevard - A Ceremonial Street

Undertake major streetscape improvements along Capital Boulevard (108 Street) to establish the street as one of the Downtown's "Ceremonial Streets".

WC 1.6 102 Avenue - a Central Pedestrian Spine

Encourage the emergence of continuous retail, entertainment and service uses along 102 Avenue to establish the Avenue as a central pedestrian-oriented shopping street in the Warehouse Neighbourhood. The Avenue will serve as a strong pedestrian link between the Oliver neighbourhood and the Commercial-Cultural Core.

WC 1.7 Commercial Visibility and Interaction:

Commercial uses in residential buildings should feature highly visible, individual entrances, oriented to the street and sidewalk. Sidewalk patios and limited sales activities are encouraged.

WC 1.8 Direct Street Access and Surveillance At-grade

Maintain the walkable nature of the Central Warehouse Area by requiring new commercial units or residential dwellings to feature direct street access and clear windows to provide natural surveillance on the street.

HERITAGE AREA (SUB AREA 2)

Development Intent

104 Street is a special, pedestrian-friendly street that celebrates its architectural heritage through unique public realm features and careful attention to the design of conversion and infill development projects. The street has a concentration of residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings with a unique variety of shops at ground level, creating a destination retail and restaurant precinct. Initiatives such as partial road closures during special events, façade improvements, heritage streetscape elements and recognition of historic street names add to the unique character of the street.



Photos courtesy City of Edmonton

Land Use and Development Policies

WC 2.1 A Special Pedestrian Street

Support medium to high-density conversion and infill development projects that respect the architectural and historic character of 104 Street and enhance the walkable nature of the street.

WC 2.2 Conversion and Infill Development

Support conversions and infill developments that respect the architectural and historic character of the area.

WC 2.3 Active Street Frontage Incentives

Create an incentive program to encourage an active street front along 104 Street. Support the conversion and retrofitting of buildings to improve the retail and food service potential of buildings on 104 Street.

WC 2.4 104 Street Promenade Pedestrian Zone

Continue to support the programming of 104 Street, on a part time basis, to accommodate the Downtown's Farmer's Market and other special events. Provide the amenities necessary to support the Market. Research downtown markets in other cities and adopt successful practices.

WC 2.5 Improvements to Amiskaswitchy Park

Work with area residents to improve the design of the small park (Amiskaswitchy Park) connecting to Beaver Hills Park; explore a public-private partnership to implement the improvements.

WC 2.6 Historic Street Names

Reinforce the unique tourist potential and the heritage character of 104 Street by reinstating the original street names on decorative sign blades.

RAILTOWN AREA (SUB AREA 3)

Development Intent

The intent is for the Railtown Area to continue to develop as a medium to high-density residential area with supporting retail, service, and commercial uses. New development is to reinforce the character of the Warehouse Neighbourhood by providing a pedestrian focused commercial environment. Connections with adjacent areas are to be achieved through improved pedestrian crossings of 104 Avenue and 109 Street.



Photos courtesy City of Edmonton

Land Use and Development Policies

WC 3.1 Continued Residential Development

Continue to develop the western portion of the Railtown Area as a medium to high-density residential area with amenities and compatible local commercial at grade along 111 Street.

WC 3.2 Redevelopment of Underused Commercial Sites

Encourage development and redevelopment of underused commercial sites to create a pedestrian focused mixed-use commercial and service oriented environment within the Railtown Area.

WC 3.3 Commercial Focus along 109 Street and 104 Avenue

Encourage the development of the 109 Street Corridor as a medium intensity commercial area with neighbourhood and local scale retail, with business activity fronting onto 109 Street and 104 Avenue.

WC 3.4 Shared-use Path and Railtown Park

Integrate redevelopment with the adjacent shared-use path and provide building features such as patios, glazing, and doorways designed to engage the pedestrian and provide natural surveillance and visual interest.

WC 3.5 Shared-use Path Connection

Complete the connection in the shared-use path between Railtown and the Downtown North Edge/Central McDougall neighbourhood.

WC 3.6 109 Street Setbacks for Boulevard Improvement

Orient land uses and secure adequate setbacks to facilitate the planned implementation of boulevard/streetscape improvements to overcome the physical and perceived barrier of 109 Street.

MACEWAN AREA (SUB AREA 4)

Development Intent

The MacEwan Area is to provide for institutional and complementary commercial uses that would accommodate the needs of Grant MacEwan University. New developments should be fully integrated with the development of the 105 Avenue streetscape and shared-use path to support the emergence of this pedestrian street. Strong pedestrian connections are to be developed between 105 Avenue and the rest of the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood along existing north-south streets.



Photo courtesy Grant MacEwan University

Land Use and Development Policies

WC 4.1 105 Avenue and Shared-Use Path Integration

New and existing buildings are to be designed or retrofitted to orient towards 105 Avenue to support the planned emergence of the North Edge transit-oriented community and the 105 Avenue Streetscape planned improvements.

WC 4.2 High Quality Design of Institutional Sites

Future campus development is to form a physical and social focal point for the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood. Ensure future development is integrated with the local environment and complements adjacent streetscapes.

WC 4.3 Transparency and Direct At-Grade Access

Promote interaction and natural surveillance by employing transparent glazing, prominent building entrances and storefront type building designs to contribute to the vitality of the neighbourhood.

WC 4.4 Shared-use Path Completion and Walkway Connections

Complete the north-south shared-use path through the Railtown Area, into the MacEwan Area, and east west along 105 Avenue all the way to 97 Street, linking the University with the proposed LRT station at 104 Street. Complete a new pedestrian walkway from the proposed MacEwan LRT station.

JA - Jasper Avenue

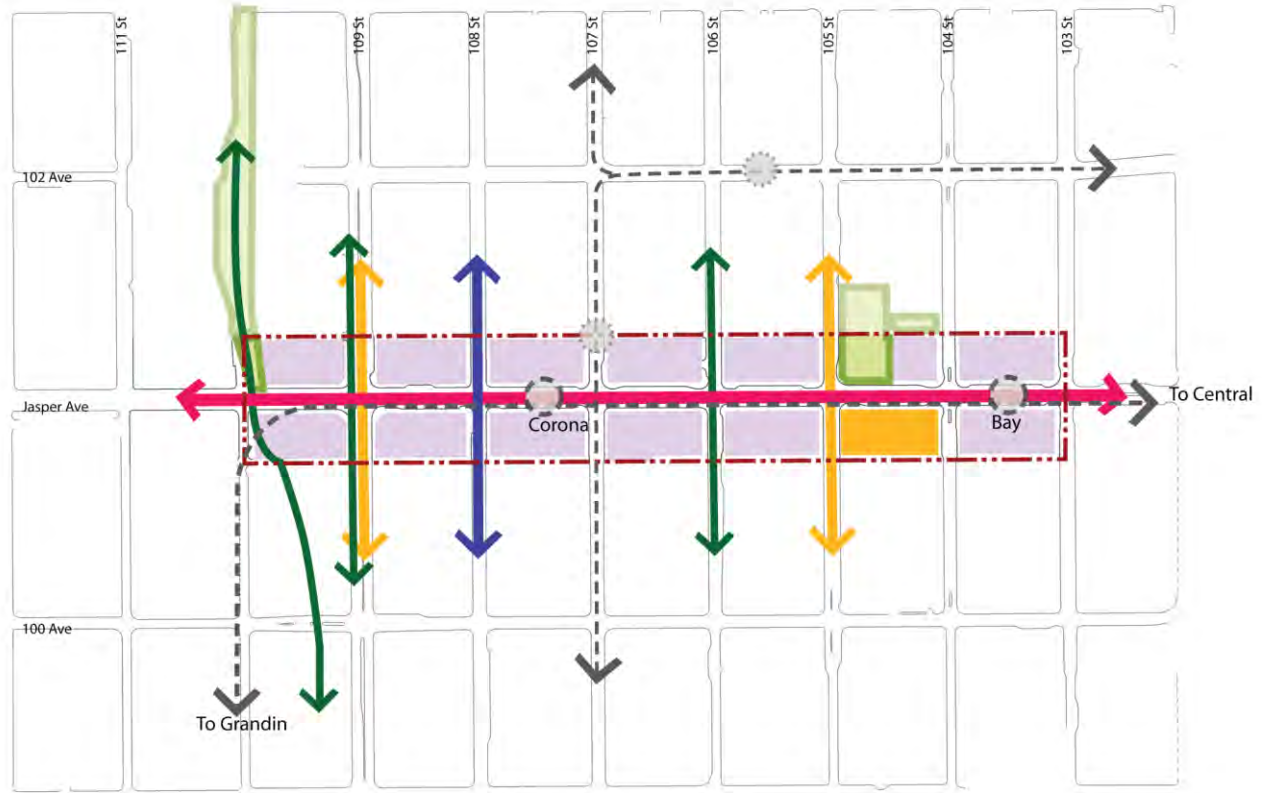
Vision for Jasper Avenue

- Implement Jasper Avenue New Vision - new urban design and public realm vision
- Narrowed roadway; wider sidewalks
- Ensure pedestrian-oriented, human scale architecture and urban design
- Restrict non-retail frontage
- Prohibit surface parking lots
- Coordinated retail attraction effort
- Animate sidewalk activity
- A mix of 'responsible hospitality' strategies to ensure a safe and enjoyable night time entertainment environment



Image courtesy Urban Strategies

Figure 29: Jasper Avenue Development Concept



Legend

- Jasper Avenue
- Great Street
- Pedestrian Linkages
- Grand Avenues
- Ceremonial Streets
- Existing Parks / Open Spaces
- Existing LRT line + Station
- Proposed LRT line + Station

Jasper Avenue - Land Use and Development Policies

The Land Use and Development Policies for Jasper Avenue are presented below.

Development Intent

The Jasper Avenue Neighbourhood is home to the city's signature main street, with a high quality pedestrian environment and continuous, fine-grained, street-level retail frontage. The intent is to make Jasper Avenue the Main Street for the neighbourhoods adjacent to it, to encourage the residents in these neighbourhoods to take ownership of the Avenue. The intent for this 'Great Street' is to encourage medium to high density, mixed-use development above street level retail shops.

Land Use and Development Policies

JA 1.1 Jasper Avenue New Vision

Implement the new urban design and public realm vision for Jasper Avenue, including appropriate reductions to the road carriageway, public realm improvements and urban design guidelines.

JA 1.2 Pedestrian-oriented Architecture

New developments are to incorporate architectural and urban design features sensitive to pedestrians, such as an abundance of front entrances, lighting, pedestrian oriented signage, overhead weather protection and transparent display windows to enhance the image and human-scale characteristics of the pedestrian shopping street.

JA 1.3 Continuous Retail Development

Support the redevelopment of vacant lands and retrofitting of buildings to re-establish Jasper Avenue as a shopping street with continuous ground-level retail and commercial uses using a perceived pattern of small shop frontages no more than 32 m (104 ft - 2 lots) in width at street level.

JA 1.4 Restriction of Non-Retail Use At-grade

Restrict non-retail use frontage on Jasper Avenue to a maximum of 25% of the street frontage within the block to ensure a continuous pedestrian-oriented shopping street.

JA 1.5 Commercial, Residential and Mixed-use Development

Support commercial office development and mixed-use, medium-rise to high-rise apartments, located above or at the rear of retail service uses.

JA 1.6 Surface Parking Prohibited

Prohibit the development of new surface parking lots fronting onto Jasper Avenue to maintain the 'Main Street' retail continuity concept and provide impetus for property owners to redevelop.

JA 1.7 Managing Bars and Nightclubs

Adopt a mix of strategies around responsible hospitality to ensure the night time entertainment environment along Jasper Avenue is safe and conducive to positive social interaction. In order to mitigate the impacts of bars, neighbourhood pubs and nightclubs, these uses will be controlled through zoning regulations that stipulate location, maximum size and operational / safety requirements.

JA 1.8 Retail Attraction and Expansion

Develop and implement an aggressive retail attraction program to focus retail expansion on Jasper Avenue.

JA 1.9 Pocket Parks, Plazas and Urban Resting Spaces

Explore a number of options to create small pocket parks or urban resting spaces along Jasper Avenue.

JA 1.10 Sidewalk Activity, Sidewalk Cafes

Encourage street vending, sidewalk cafes and other non-traditional commercial uses near parks or where the sidewalk can accommodate such uses, to add diversity of uses and excitement to Jasper Avenue.

JA 1.11 Investigate the Development of Back Alleys

Investigate the development of alleys north and south of Jasper Avenue as alternative addresses for a variety of alternate pedestrian scale uses such as creative arts that would offer an alternative lively setting for Jasper Avenue. Incorporate a variety of measures to carefully integrate pedestrian-oriented functions with vehicle functions.

MA - McKay Avenue Neighbourhood

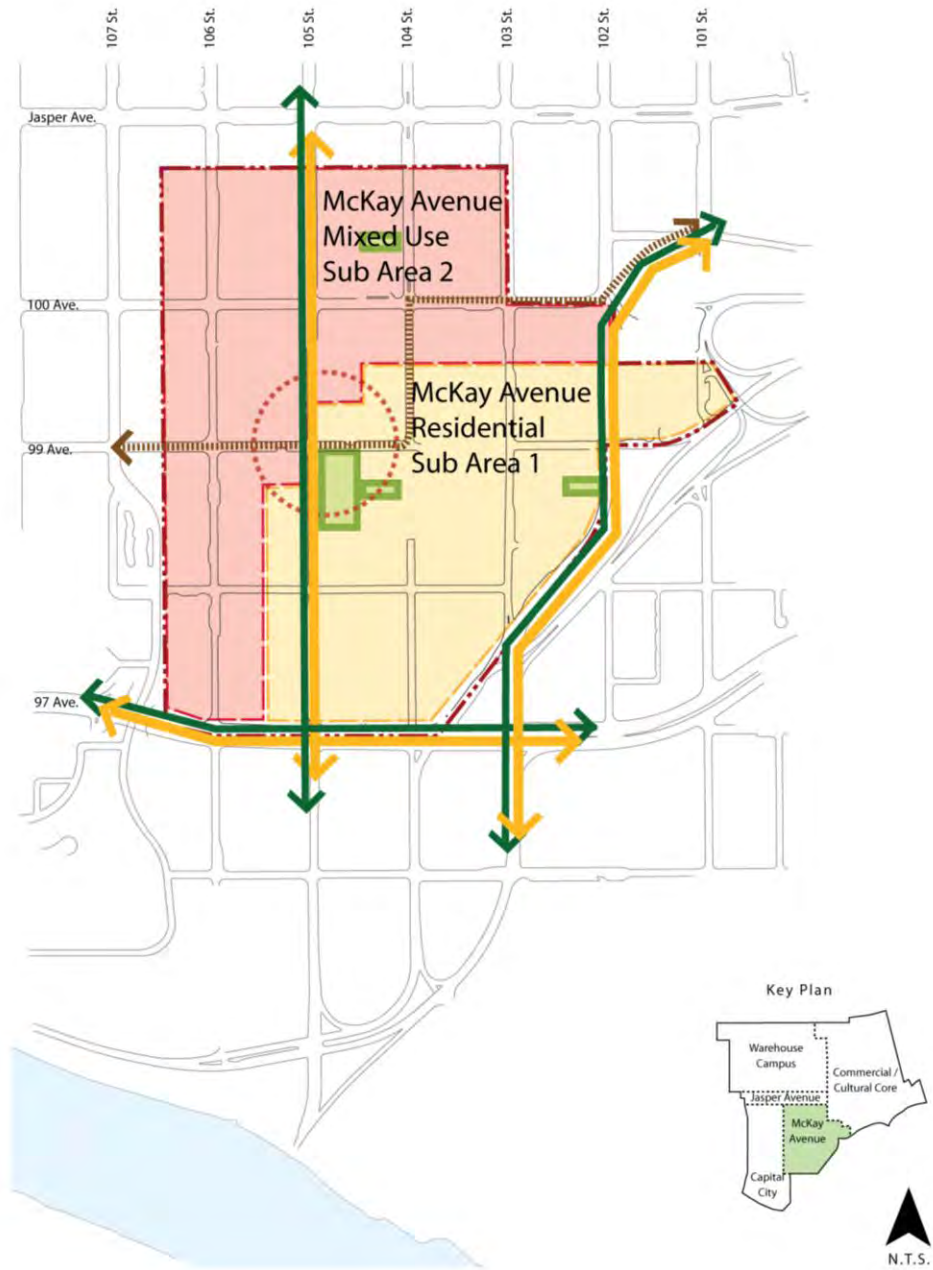
McKay Avenue Neighbourhood is comprised of two distinct Sub Areas reflecting the different land uses and historical development of the areas. These Sub Areas are:

- McKay Avenue Residential Area, and
- McKay Avenue Mixed Use Area.



Photos courtesy Darren Kirk

Figure 30: McKay Avenue Neighbourhood Development Concept



Legend

Sub Areas

- McKay Avenue Residential Sub Area 1
- McKay Avenue Mixed Use Sub Area 2

- Grand Avenues
- Proposed Village Square in McKay Avenue
- Heritage Trail Promenade

- Pedestrian Linkages
- Existing Parks / Open Spaces

Vision for McKay Avenue Neighbourhood

- Encourage high density residential and mixed-use redevelopment
- Support a variety of housing forms and tenures
- Explore developing a central neighbourhood gathering place
- Develop 99 Avenue and 104 Street as community Main Streets
- Promote neighbourhood commercial
- Enhance river valley staircases, pocket parks and vistas
- Review and upgrade Heritage Trail system through area
- Encourage conversions of historic buildings
- Enhance pedestrian connections to Legislature Grounds
- Review park space needs for growing population; acquire land and develop parks as necessary.

McKay Avenue Neighbourhood - Land Use and Development Policies

The Land Use and Development Policies for the two McKay Avenue Sub Areas are presented below.

MCKAY AVENUE RESIDENTIAL AREA (SUB AREA 1)

Development Intent

The McKay Avenue Residential area is to provide a highly desirable, walkable, quiet, yet high-density neighbourhood with local convenience and personal service shops, small-scale restaurants and minor businesses located along the community Main Streets of 104 Street and 99 Avenue. The livability of the area will be enhanced through development integrated with the valley slopes, preserving views of the river valley, and by improving connections to the River Valley Trail System and the Legislature Grounds. In addition, the City will work towards establishing regulations to protect important views of the Legislature Building and Grounds as part of a report entitled Edmonton View Protection Guidelines - Expressing the Urban Environment.

Land Use and Development Policies

MA 1.1 High Density Residential Neighbourhood

Reinforce the sub-area as Downtown's primary high-density residential neighbourhood by allowing predominantly residential uses with limited complementary convenience retail uses.

MA 1.2 Infill Residential Development

Support residential infill redevelopment with a variety of housing types appropriate to the sloping conditions of the valley escarpment at medium-to high-densities to maintain the diversity of the housing stock in the area.

MA 1.3 Amenities for Density

Ensure the necessary support services, community facilities and recreational amenities are provided to meet the needs of residents of the area; encourage proponents of major new developments to provide specific amenities in exchange for increased density or height.

MA 1.4 Acquisition and Development of Park Land

Acquire land for neighbourhood-level parks and open space in the McKay Avenue Residential Area, dependent upon the findings of the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan; Consider developing a central gathering place, a pedestrian-oriented community main street, to serve as a major community focal point and catalyst for residential development in the Area. Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan and develop these park spaces.

MA 1.5 Community Main Streets

Encourage the continuity of retail, entertainment and service uses along both 104 Street and 99 Avenue, to provide for continuous pedestrian-oriented shopping streets linking McKay Avenue to the special historic area in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood to the north and the Capital City District and 109 Street to the west.

MA 1.6 Commercial Uses in Residential Buildings

Commercial uses in residential buildings should feature highly visible, individual entrances, oriented to the street and sidewalk.

MA 1.7 Building Massing, Tower Step-backs

Building massing is to be based on offering a strong sense of street address, protecting and framing views in the context of adjoining properties, and overall appearance from the river valley.

MA 1.8 Tower Floor Plate Controls and Tower Separation

Restrict tower floor plate sizes of buildings and regulate the separation distances between towers in the McKay Avenue Residential Area in order to minimize shadow impacts and maintain the availability of views and sunlight.

MA 1.9 Pleasant Walking Environment

Develop a highly walkable nature of the sub area by requiring detailed landscaping and ensuring residential dwellings provide direct street access at grade, including valley slope conditions.

MA 1.10 Street Level Architecture and Connectivity

Encourage a rhythm of individual apartment, row house, and shop entrances along the street to provide a high level of natural surveillance, architectural interest and social interactions.

MA 1.11 Integration of Heritage Architecture

Support the conversion or rehabilitation of older buildings to retain the character of the area.

MCKAY AVENUE MIXED USE AREA (SUB AREA 2)*Development Intent*

The McKay Avenue Residential area is to provide a highly desirable, walkable, quiet, yet high-density neighbourhood with local convenience and personal service shops, small-scale restaurants and minor businesses located along the community Main Streets of 104 Street and 99 Avenue. The livability of the area will be enhanced through preserving views of the river valley and by improving connections to the River Valley and the Legislature Grounds.



Photo courtesy HBBH

Land Use and Development Policies

MA 2.1 Medium to High Density Development

Support redevelopment that reinforces the existing built form (8 to 15-storey office towers) with street-oriented retail or service use on the main floor.

MA 2.2 Mixed-Use Zone

Maintain and reinforce the mix of high-density residential, specialty offices, commercial, hotel and institutional uses in its present pattern through a residential mixed-use land use zone.

MA 2.3 Intensity of Mixed-Uses

Permit a limited range of commercial, office and service uses that would not otherwise be accommodated in the McKay Avenue Residential sub-area, such as offices and hotels. Accommodate a range of non-residential uses in the sub-area, focused along:

- 105 Street, 104 Street, 103 Street and 102 Street north of 100 Avenue,
- 106 Street north of 99 Avenue, and
- 100 Avenue from 104 Street to the alley west of 106 Street.

MA 2.4 Community Main Streets

Encourage the continuity of retail, entertainment and service uses along both 104 Street north of 100 Avenue and 99 Avenue, to provide for continuous pedestrian-oriented shopping streets linking McKay Avenue to Jasper Avenue, the Warehouse neighbourhood, and the Capital City District.

MA 2.5 Tower Floor Plate Controls and Tower Separation

Restrict tower floor plate sizes of buildings and regulate the separation distances between towers in the McKay Avenue Mixed Use Area in order to minimize shadow impacts and maintain the availability of views and sunlight.

MA 2.6 Tower Step-backs

Towers developed in this area will feature a setback scaled appropriately to the size of the podium development so that the tower features a noticeable base, middle and top; the base of the building will feature a human scale design which complements the existing streetwall along the street.

CD - Capital City District

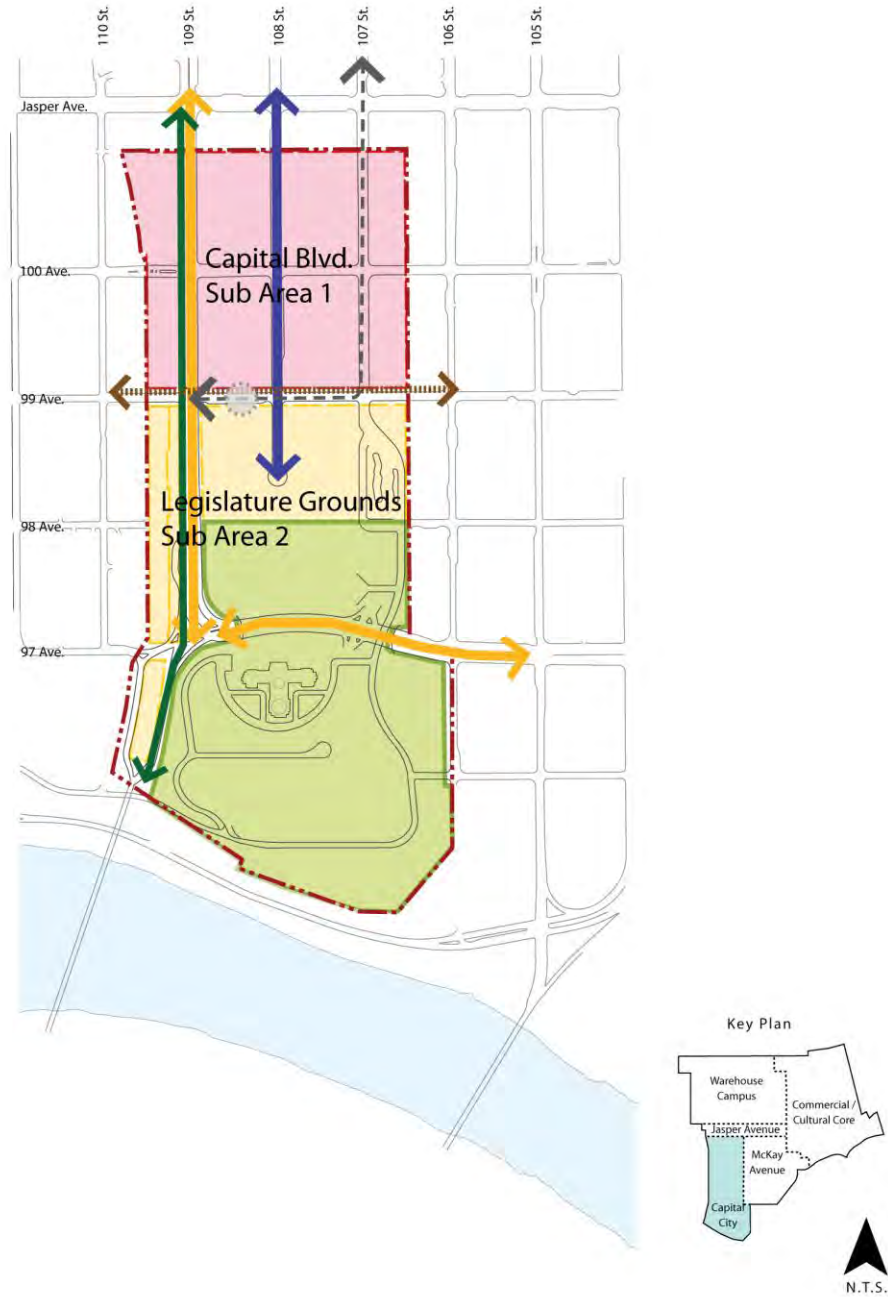
The Capital City District is comprised of two distinct Sub Areas:

- Capital Boulevard Area, and
- Legislature Grounds.



Photo courtesy Carlyle + Associates

Figure 31: Capital City District Development Concept



Legend

- Sub Areas
- Capital Blvd. Sub Area 1
 - Legislature Grounds Sub Area 2

- Grand Avenues
- Pedestrian Linkages
- Ceremonial Streets
- Existing Parks / Open Space
- Heritage Trail Promenade
- Proposed LRT line + Station

Vision for the Capital City District

- Support the development of prestige office district adjacent to Alberta Legislature
- Implement 108 Street (Capital Boulevard) streetscape improvements
- Undertake a major upgrade to 109 Street landscaping, pedestrian environment
- Support major improvements to the Legislature Grounds, remove physical and visual barriers
- Redevelop Federal Building and Centennial Plaza
- Develop small scale recreation facilities to serve the needs of Downtown residents and visitors
- Create a continuous pathway / boardwalk along river valley edge

Capital City District - Land Use and Development Policies

The **Land Use and Development Policies** for the two Capital City District Sub Areas are presented below.



Image courtesy Carlyle + Associates

CAPITAL BOULEVARD AREA (SUB AREA 1)

Development Intent

The Capital Boulevard Area offers a mix of high quality development that accommodates office, retail, service, institutional, and residential uses. The intent is to strengthen this area as a major commercial office sector with development focused along an improved Capital Boulevard. An increase in mixed-use development will be encouraged to add evening and weekend activity into the area.

Land Use and Development Policies

CD 1.1 A Major Downtown Office Precinct

Support the existing mix of high density government and commercial office, hotel, and institutional uses in its present pattern and built form; encourage further office development in the Area, promoting the Area's importance as a major downtown office precinct.

CD 1.2 Residential and Mixed-Use Development

Encourage mixed-use residential development and conversions to residential and residential related uses in the area.

CD 1.3 Capital Boulevard - A Ceremonial Street

Undertake major streetscape improvements along Capital Boulevard to establish the street as one of the Downtown's primary Ceremonial Streets; design the street to be a showcase of grand urban design, highlighting the connections between the public realm, civic landmark buildings, and our shared history.

CD 1.4 Retail Focus and Street Activity

Encourage the provision of retail, entertainment and service uses at-grade along Capital Boulevard to create more active block faces and strengthen retail continuity along the street.

CD 1.5 High Quality Urban Design

Ensure that new developments, renovations and expansions strengthen the urban characteristics of the Area; maintain the setback retention along Capital Boulevard and require the use of high quality, durable exterior building finishes.

CD 1.6 109 Street Commercial Corridor - A Grand Avenue

Develop 109 Street as a 'Grand Avenue' that is in keeping with its adjacency to the Legislature and so develop a strong boulevard character, with a clear visual termination at 97 Avenue.

Continue to investigate potential for improvements to connections between the Legislature Grounds and the Oliver neighbourhood across 109 Street for convenient pedestrian access.

Maintain the existing commercial node along the west side 109 Street and continue to encourage local scale, retail uses at-grade with business, hotel or residential uses above.

CD 1.7 Shared-Use Path and Railtown Park

Further develop the corridor to integrate with the potential boulevard quality of 109 Street. Ensure that redevelopment integrates with the adjacent shared-use path and provides building features such as patios, glazing, door ways, and porte-cocheres designed to engage the pedestrian and provide natural surveillance and visual interest.

LEGISLATURE GROUNDS AREA (SUB AREA 2)

Development Intent

The Legislature Grounds serves as both the setting for the Alberta Legislature and a major open space and special gathering place in the Downtown. A partnership approach between the City of Edmonton and the Province of Alberta should result in major improvements to the integration of the Grounds with the Downtown. A renewed vision for the area should translate into an overall updating of the landscape plan for the Grounds, enhanced people-friendly elements and improved connections and views into the River Valley.



Image courtesy Kasian Architecture, Interior Design & Planning Inc. / Sasaki Associates

Land Use and Development Policies

CD 2.1 Opening Up the Legislature Grounds

Support the development of Alberta Legislature Redevelopment Plan to create a more welcoming, friendly environment; enhance access from the surrounding context including connections to McKay Avenue.

CD 2.2 Federal Building Redevelopment and Centennial Plaza

Support the renovation of the former Federal Building and new Centennial Plaza, to inject increased activity into the Capital City District and create a more welcoming entrance to the Legislature Grounds at the south end of Capital Boulevard.

CD 2.3 Additional Recreation and Tourism Facilities

Encourage the development of small scale recreation and tourism facilities on the Legislature Grounds to serve the needs of Downtown residents and visitors to the Downtown; consider such facilities as a major water feature, a children's playground, a skating rink and a river's edge teahouse.

Support the potential for a major cultural facility in the southeast quadrant of the grounds.

CD 2.4 Valley Edge Development

Support improvements to the river valley edge at the south end of the Legislature Grounds to allow more people to experience nature and the grandeur of the river valley. Support the Provincial Government to develop a continuous pathway/boardwalk along the valley edge, with viewpoints and grand pedestrian connections to the river valley development of promenades along the riverbank.

Investigate the potential for connections from the Legislature Grounds to surrounding neighbourhoods.

6. Implementing The Plan

The Capital City Downtown Plan aims to outline both a vision and an action plan to foster a complete downtown community, to enhance the role of Downtown as the heart of the Capital Region and create an enviable and world class sense of place through good urban design and city planning.

To do this we must take action, but that action must be purposeful and focused. This implementation plan and recommended actions set out the potential projects, programs and policies to move this Plan toward reality. The emphasis of this implementation strategy is on capital stimulus projects that will directly confront the challenges of Downtown, build on existing strengths, and leverage participation from all of those who benefit from the Downtown.

This implementation strategy is intended to guide the City and downtown advocacy groups in focusing support, setting priorities, allocating budgets, and monitoring progress.



Be the Catalyst for Transformation

This implementation plan establishes nine City-led catalyst projects and a wide array of supporting projects that will serve to transform the Downtown. To do this, the City must work in partnership with all stakeholders to bring about the desired change. Key action steps include:

1. Adopt the Plan

Long term direction for a coordinated, consistent and sustained vision is required to bring about the desired change we seek for the Downtown. The adoption of the Capital City Downtown Plan is of paramount importance. It will unite all stakeholders around the New Vision for Downtown and signal a commitment that is both long term and substantive.

2. Fund the Plan

The City of Edmonton has taken a pragmatic approach to the development of the Downtown. The City has through past policy documents created a relatively low tax environment and permissive zoning conditions. However, development in parts of the Downtown has not been optimal, relative to some comparable cities.

After 30 years of various strategies, areas such as the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood remain underdeveloped, despite close proximity to key services, the Downtown business core, and nearby amenities such as Grant MacEwan University and the Arts District. Simply providing regulatory incentives such as high densities, a broad mix of allowable uses, and reduced parking requirements has not succeeded in revitalizing the area.

While good regulation is an essential piece of the puzzle, the City will need to take a leadership role and fund key projects in order to spur redevelopment. The 1997 Plan demonstrated that City-led incentives, such as the Downtown Housing Reinvestment Program, can contribute to and even direct redevelopment. This Plan requires appropriate municipal support in order to attract residents and businesses and position the region for a more competitive future

3. Build From Our Strengths

In order to reach our goal this Plan will build upon the existing strengths of the Downtown to enhance what is already here and foster the development of what may be lacking. The future of Edmonton's Downtown is greatly enabled by the active arts and cultural community, a vibrancy of student populations, available serviced land and a competitive development community. However, the Downtown will need to enhance its image and "raise the bar" in terms of requirements for the design of the built environment in order to foster future growth.

The continued stimulation of residential demand is identified as key to the transformation of the Downtown. The creation of more complete and attractive communities will serve as an enticement for future employment growth. Together, new residential and office development will provide the consumer base to support vibrant retail growth and new community services, and in turn enhance the character of the Downtown.

4. Support our Partners

Edmonton is well served by business improvement advocates, including local businesses, the Downtown Business Association, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, Edmonton Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce and the Edmonton Downtown Community League, amongst many others. These groups provide the front line response to the Downtown's daily growth. Ongoing support and functional assistance to these groups is called for as part of this action program, including support for the Capital City Downtown Plan Advisory Committee who will act as Stewards of the Plan.

5. Follow Through

Significant effort and input contributed to the development of the new Capital City Downtown Plan. These contributions emphasized the reality that downtown's are complex in nature and require numerous programs, policies and studies to deliver the kind of downtown Edmonton desires. The Downtown Action Program requires new baselines, metrics and additional studies to fully support the capital programs recommended by this Plan.

6. Focus

Consistent with the Plan's highlighting of Catalyst Projects, the City must reinforce and support the significant, concurrent projects underway in the Downtown, namely: the Capital Boulevard Upgrade, Legislature Grounds Redevelopment, the expansion of universities and colleges, and potential new sports and entertainment projects. The Plan recommends that these projects, along with the Plan's major Catalyst Projects, be moved forward as one comprehensive, integrated, focused program of Downtown renewal.

Catalyst Project Implementation

Catalyst Projects	Key Policy Reference
City-Led	
1. Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program	6.3 Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program
2. Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood Central Park	11.11 A Central Park in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood
3. Jasper Avenue New Vision	10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets
4. River Valley Promenades	11.15 River Valley Promenades
5. Integration of at-grade LRT	17.4 Integrate Low Floor LRT within the Downtown Fabric
6. High Profile Bikeway System	16.3 Continuous and Highly Visible Bicycle Routes
7. Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue	11.12 Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue
8. Green Building and Development Strategy	2.3 Green Building and Development Strategy
9. Green and Walkable Downtown	10.4 Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets
Concurrent	
A. Capital Boulevard - Ceremonial Street	10.4 Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets; 10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets; CD 1.3 Capital Boulevard - A Ceremonial Street.
B. Legislature Grounds Redevelopment	11.14 Improvements to Riverfront and Valley Edge Parks
C. Expansion of Downtown Universities and Colleges	7.11 Promote the Growth of the Knowledge Economy
D. Proposed Sports and Entertainment District	CC 3.5 Potential for a Sports and Entertainment District

Downtown Action Program

The Downtown Action Program sets out a multi-year agenda for improving the Downtown. While the Program is based on a 10-year time horizon, the focus will be on initiating a series of Catalyst Projects within the first three years - projects that will set a new direction and establish the momentum for a long-term revitalization. The key components of the Program are set out below.

The People to Make it Happen

1. CCDP Project Team

The project will be led by a Project Team from the Planning and Development Department. A Project Manager will manage the implementation program, prepare work programs, budgets, schedules, progress reports for City Council and so forth, work closely with the City Administration and the Advisory Committee.

2. CCDP Advisory Committee

The CCDP Advisory Committee established during the plan preparation process features a mix of political, administrative, business, institutional and residential representatives. This committee will be instrumental in implementing the Plan. The Committee will meet on a regular basis and advise on setting the goals, priorities and financial plans for the implementation program. The Committee and each person on the committee will become the champions of the Downtown Action Program.

3. City Technical Advisory Committee

Given the comprehensive and complex nature of the implementation task, a City Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be established, comprised of key contacts from the various departments and agencies involved in the program. The CCDP Project Team would meet with the TAC on a quarterly basis to review progress and address emerging issues.

4. Downtown Stakeholder Groups

Downtown stakeholders will be consulted during the implementation program through a number of avenues, including ongoing communication that will occur through organizations such as the Downtown Community League and the Downtown Business Association. This consultation could also include an annual Open House / Workshop prior to the Project Team and Advisory Committee finalizing their annual budget submission, to receive input on their draft budget submission.

Funding It, Making it Happen

5. 10 Year Budget with Annual Budget Submissions

The Project Team and Advisory Committee will prepare a 10-year budget for submission to City Council upon approval of this Plan. The budget will indicate how funds are to be allocated on an annual basis.

The proposed budget will identify the priority, estimated timeframe, proposed funding source, and action plan details for each of the items shown in the Downtown Action Program Summary (Figure 33). In subsequent years, the Project Team and Advisory Committee will prepare annual budget submissions, accompanied by a status report on the previous year's activities.

6. Projects, Programs, Studies and Regulations

The Downtown Action Program will include a range of:

- **Projects:** Projects will typically require capital program commitments with budget allocations for such components as planning, design, acquisition and construction.
- **Programs:** Programs generally involve multiple actions and do not necessarily entail capital spending at the outset. Programs involve initiatives that are more long term or may be ongoing efforts to implement a strategic objective. Examples of programs include: a green building and development strategy, a downtown public art program, a tourism strategy and the implementation of a 'Healthy Community Action Plan' for Downtown.
- **Studies/Special Area Plans:** Studies involve research, analysis, conceptual design work and other activities required as initial actions before proceeding on a program or project. They may include negotiations, basic research, design plans or other similar activities.
- **Regulations:** Regulations deal with land use, development review and other City policies or procedures that may require modification, implementation or monitoring.

7. Establishing Priorities and Timeframes

The Project Team and CCDP Advisory Committee will use the Action Program Chart as a starting point in terms of establishing the first phase priority projects, including the major catalyst projects. They will review these actions as the process unfolds, making adjustments in accordance with annual monitoring of progress.

The Action Program chart assigns one of the following time frames to each implementation activity:

- Immediate (1-2 years)
- Short term (3-4 years)
- Long term (5 years or more)
- ongoing

Some actions may have a specified time frame to begin with and become ongoing activities. The time frames must be somewhat flexible, in order to ensure that the Action Program is able to adapt to changing political and economic conditions.

8. Action Program Funding

A variety of financing tools are available to implement the projects and initiatives contained in this plan. Most of the projects will be financed through the Capital Priorities Plan process, through the administration of a multi-year capital budget commitment.

Existing City programs such as Great Neighbourhoods Program, the Façade and Storefront Improvement Program and the Heritage Buildings Conservation Program may be used to fund particular components of the Action Program. In addition to City funding, many other financing mechanisms are available for plan implementation, including:

- Provincial Government Program funding (e.g. Community Revitalization Levy, Alberta Main Street Program)
- Federal Government Program funding (e.g. Municipal Sustainability Initiative, and the Infrastructure Canada - Alberta Program)
- Local Improvement
- Public/Private partnerships
- Private Sector sponsorship
- Area Redevelopment Plan Development Levies
- Off-Site charges

The Action Program chart identifies, in general terms, the proposed source of funding for each implementation activity. It indicates whether a project would be funded through a designated Plan Budget (the City's Capital Priorities Plan process) - or whether other funding sources would apply, or no funding would be necessary.

9. Annual Monitoring, Performance Measurement

The implementation program will be monitored and updated on an annual basis in order to keep the program on track. Annual reporting of plan achievements, milestones and emerging issues will serve as an ongoing needs assessment at the same time. A consistent form of progress reporting will apprise citizens, politicians and decision makers of progress towards the stated objectives of the Plan.

Performance measurement includes both the measurement of the condition of the Downtown and, more specifically, how the Plan itself is functioning.

The results of most implementation actions should be measurable. Performance measurement of individual initiatives is most easily applied to construction projects. Other actions such as changing design standards, conducting community development processes or facilitating safety improvements are less easily measured but can still be assessed based on activity over time and the extent to which they show value and positive progress toward plan objectives.

Performance Measures: The following is a list of key performance measures designed to assess the health of Downtown from a variety of perspectives.

10. Amendments to the Capital City Downtown Plan

Any amendment to the CCDPlan will have regard for:

- Procedures outlined in the Municipal Government Act;
- Amendments will be consistent with the vision, planning principles, goals and policies of the Capital City Downtown Plan
- The need of the proposed change;
- The impact of the proposed change on the achievement of the vision, planning principles, goals, and policies of the Capital City Downtown Plan; and
- Any amendment to the Capital City Downtown Plan will be required to submit a formal application along with technical information on how it conforms with the ARP, or why it cannot.

Category	Performance Measures
Business Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new businesses • Type and quality of new businesses, (sq. ft. \$ value) • Changes in business sectors i.e. relative increase or decrease of businesses in different sectors
Residential/Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new dwelling units • Diversity of households and housing forms • Quality of development • Target market • Community cohesiveness
Improvement Projects Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement projects completed • Other projects, programs and studies completed that satisfy Plan direction • Ongoing achievements chart • Stakeholder activity, involvement in implementation
Commercial Office Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lease rates • Vacancy rates • Number of new buildings • Relative rate of downtown to suburban growth in office space
Retail and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New retail concepts • Total number of square feet • Vacancy rate • Lease rates
Demographics - resident and employee populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth rate compared to inner city, suburbs and city as a whole • Rate of growth relative to employee and population projections • Age profile of Downtown residents • Population mix • Economic status of Downtown residents
Student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students: current and projected • Number of institutions
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trips entering the Downtown • Modal split to Downtown • Air quality impact • Parking supply and demand - short and long term

It is important in assessing some sectors of Downtown's performance that no one number will necessarily capture the state of affairs. Rather, a combination of variables needs to be considered to get a rounded sense of overall performance. The above list represents a starting point for monitoring the success of the Plan. These measures will have to be reviewed and adjusted as the implementation efforts proceed.

Downtown Action Program Summary

The following four page Downtown Action Program Summary is to be used as a guide in implementing the priority projects outlined in this Plan.

Edmonton's downtown is faced with many complex and interacting issues. In response to this complexity of users and issues, this Plan calls for over 200 specific policies programs or principles to guide future development. Not all 200 of these policies require short term action or new initiatives. Many of the policies in this plan support on-going programs, continue previous policies, or establish statements of intent, principles and/or objectives. The Key Actions listed in the table below stem from those "actionable" policies that require specific follow up - they are the priority actions involving specific studies (or more focused or detailed area plans), improvement projects, programs or regulations.

The Plan's major Catalyst Projects described and illustrated above in the section *Catalyst Project Implementation*, are also included in the Summary.

The Program Summary Table below indicates whether a Key Action would be funded through a designated Capital City Downtown Plan Budget or through other funding sources. The table also indicates where no funding is required for a Key Action. The Key Actions are assigned a time frame for implementation, either immediate (1-2 years), short term (3-4 years) long term (5+ years) or ongoing.

The suggested funding and time frame for each Key Action is intended to be a starting point for the implementation activity - the implementation of each action will be a dynamic process.



Table 2: Downtown Action Program Summary

Sustainable Downtown

Key Actions	Action Type	Plan Budget	Other Funding	Time Frame			
				Immed	Short	Long	Ongoing
A Healthy, Natural Downtown							
1.1 Sustainability Street Pilot	Project	●	●	●			
1.2 Urban Forest	Program	●	●				●
Energy, Emissions and Air Quality							
2.2 District Energy	Study		●		●		
2.3 Green Building and Development Strategy	Program	●		●			
Natural and Material Resources							
3.1, 3.2, 3.3 Water, Storm & Solid Waste Management	Program		●				●
3.4 Downtown Food System	Program						●
Economic Development							
4.4 Employment Growth Areas	Study	●		●			
4.5 Tourism Improvements	Program		●	●			●
Healthy Community and Sense of Place							
5.4 Child Friendly Downtown	Projects	●		●	●		
5.7 Support Downtown Edmonton Community League	Program	●		●			●
5.9, 5.10 Healthy Community Action Plan, Services	Study/Program	●	●	●			●
5.12 Safety and Security	Program		●				●

1. The actions identified as Plan Budget items will be managed by the Planning and Development Department Project Team. The funding suggestions in this Program Summary are to be used as a guide in developing the 10-year Plan Budget, and in preparing the annual budget submissions to Council.
2. Where there is no funding indicated for an action, the action may either be a regulation or study to be carried out by existing City staff, it may be an ongoing process, or it may be funded by one of the stakeholder organizations.
3. Immed = 1-2 years Short = 3-4 years Long = 5 years or more

Vibrant Downtown

Key Actions	Action Type	Plan Budget	Other Funding	Time Frame			
				Immed	Short	Long	Ongoing
Downtown Housing							
6.1 Housing Growth Target 6.4 Housing Diversity	Study/ Program	●		●		●	●
6.2 Warehouse Central Area Plan	Project	●		●			
6.3 Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program	Program	●		●	●		
6.5. 6.6 + 6.7 Housing for Families, Affordable Housing, Student Housing	Programs/ Regulation	●	●	●	●	●	
6.8 Artists' Live-Work Housing	Project	●	●	●	●		
6.9 Seniors & Special Needs Housing	Program		●	●			●
6.11 Universal Access Guidelines	Regulation			●	●		
Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities							
7.1 Employment Growth Target	Program	●	●	●			●
7.2 Government Offices	Project		●	●	●		
7.3 Retail Growth Strategy	Program	●	●	●			●
7.8, 7.9 + 7.10 Night Time Entertainment	Program/ Regulation		●	●		●	
7.12 Educational Institutions	Program			●		●	
7.16 Faith-based + other Organizations	Program						●
Arts, Culture and Entertainment							
8.1 Public Art Initiatives	Program		●	●		●	
8.2 Public Art Database	Study			●			
8.8 Support for Artists	Program	●	●	●		●	
8.12 Arts Centre / Market	Project	●	●	●	●		

Well Designed Downtown

Key Actions	Action Type	Plan Budget	Other Funding	Time Frame			
				Immed	Short	Long	Ongoing
Downtown Urban Design							
9. Neighbourhood Identity	Program	●		●			●
The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets							
10.4 Urban Design Framework for Streets	Projects	●	●	●	●	●	
10.5 Public Realm - Key Streets	Projects	●	●	●	●	●	
10.6 Plan for Rice Howard Way	Project	●	●	●	●		
10.7 Alternative Uses for Alleys	Projects	●		●	●		
Parks and Open Space							
11.2 Parks Master Plan	Project	●		●	●		
11.3 Park Space Standard	Regulation	●	●	●	●	●	
11.4 Acquire and Develop Parks	/Projects						
11.7 Animate Parks and Spaces	Program		●	●			
11.10 Parks on Private Lands	Regulation			●			
11.11 Park in Warehouse Area	Project	●		●	●		
11.12 Main Street in McKay Ave	Project	●	●	●	●		
11.14 Riverfront + Valley Parks	Projects	●	●	●	●	●	
11.15 River Valley Promenades	Projects	●	●	●	●	●	
Built Form							
12.1 Excellence in Design	Program			●			●
12.3 A Design Community	Program	●	●	●		●	●
12.9 Blank Walls	Project		●	●		●	
12.13 + 12.14 Tall Buildings	Regulation			●			
12.18 View Preservation	Regulation			●	●		●
Historic Preservation							
13.1, 13.2, 13.3 Active Approach to Preservation	Program/Regulation		●				●

Accessible Downtown

Key Actions	Action Type	Plan Budget	Other Funding	Time Frame			
				Immed	Short	Long	Ongoing
Downtown Roadway System							
14.2 Commuter Travel	Program		●	●	●		●
Pedestrian Circulation							
15.1 Pedestrian Realm	Regulation/ Program	●	●	●			●
15.3 Pedestrian Amenities	Regulation						●
15.4 Convenient Pedestrian Movement	Projects		●	●	●		●
Cycling Downtown							
16.1 Downtown Bicycle Master Plan	Study	●		●	●		
16.2 Commitment to Cycling	Projects	●	●	●			●
16.4 End of Trip Facilities	Regulation		●	●			
16.5 Bicycle Storage at Transit Facilities	Projects	●	●	●		●	
16.6 Bike Storage on Parking Lots	Regulation		●	●			
Downtown Transit System							
17.2 Transit Supportive Uses	Regulation						●
17.3 Expand the city-wide LRT	Program		●	●		●	
17.4 Integrate Low Floor LRT	Project		●		●	●	
17.5 Transit Downtown / Region	Program		●	●		●	
17.8 Improve Transit Facilities	Projects	●	●	●	●	●	
17.11 Transit Safety	Program		●	●			●
Parking Downtown							
18.2 New Parking Technologies	Project		●	●	●		
18.3 Reduced Parking Provisions	Regulation	●		●	●		
18.6 Parking Facility Design	Regulation			●			
18.7 City Leadership Pilots	Projects		●	●			●
18.9 Reduced Weekend Rates	Program		●	●	●		●
18.10 Tax Rate for Parking Lots	Study	●		●			

List of Implementing Organizations

City of Edmonton Departments		Downtown, City-Wide and Regional Organizations	
AM&PW	Asset Management and Public Works	AHAB	Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton
CS	Community Services	BOMA	Building Owners and Managers Association
CSD	Corporate Services	DBA	Downtown Business Association
EPS	Edmonton Police Service	DECL	Downtown Edmonton Community League
OCM	Office of the City Manager	EAC	Edmonton Arts Council
ODCM	Office of the Deputy City Manager	ECSB	Edmonton Catholic School Board
P&D	Planning and Development	EDC	Edmonton Design Committee
TD	Transportation	EDUC	Educational Institutions
Other Orders of Government		EEDC	Edmonton Economic Development Corporation
GC	Government of Canada	EFCL	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
GOA	Government of Alberta	EPCOR	EPCOR
		EPSB	Edmonton Public School Board
		ESPC	Edmonton Social Planning Council
		FBC	Faith-Based Communities
		GEHBA	Greater Edmonton Home Builders Association
		SE	SafeEdmonton
		UDI	Urban Development Institute
		WORKS	Art and Design in Public Places (The Works)

Downtown Action Program - A Guide

The following Action Plan charts serve as a guide to implementing the Downtown Action Program. The charts elaborate on the key, action-oriented policies, providing more detailed direction on how they should be implemented, what steps and specific actions must be taken to see the policy realized. The charts also identify those organizations that are considered to be in the best position to lead the process in carrying out the action.

Action Plans for a Sustainable Downtown

1. A Healthy, Natural Downtown

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
1.1 “Sustainability Street” Pilot Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding for a sustainable street pilot project for selected streets that will help catalyze development in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood and McKay Avenue. 	P&D AM&PW
1.2 Urban Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide annual funding for research and planting of trees downtown. 	AM&PW

2. Energy, Emissions and Air Quality

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
2.2 Neighbourhood Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding for downtown neighbourhood energy feasibility study. 	P&D
2.3 Green Building and Development Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct research on ways to promote healthier indoor environments, energy efficient buildings and more sustainable development. Set examples with public buildings. 	P&D UDI

3. Natural and Material Resources

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
3.1, 3.2, 3.3 Water, Storm & Solid Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding for downtown water, storm water, and waste management strategy. 	P&D AM&PW EPCOR
3.4 Downtown Food System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding for downtown food system strategy. 	P&D

4. Economic Development

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
4.4 Employment Growth Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct research on what services and amenities are required to attract additional, premiere offices and businesses to the two office core areas in the Downtown - the Commercial Core and the Capital City Neighbourhoods. Implement improvements, in accordance with the distinct characters of these areas, on a staged basis. 	P&D BOMA
4.5 Downtown as a Tourism Destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a user needs assessment regarding Downtown tourism infrastructure needs. ▪ Prepare a Downtown Tourism Plan; work with the provincial and federal governments to fund and implement new and upgraded tourism services and facilities on a staged basis 	EEDC DBA GOA GC

5. Healthy Community and Sense of Place

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
5.4 Child Friendly Downtown Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct research on child and youth needs in the Downtown; work with DECL, Child Friendly Edmonton office and DBA to implement programs, practices and specific physical improvements for children and youth (e.g. parks, recreation facilities, play areas, day care facilities, etc.) ▪ Develop children’s playgrounds in the Warehouse Campus and McKay Avenue neighbourhoods. 	CS (Child Friendly Edmonton) DECL DBA EPSB ECSB
5.7 Support Downtown Edmonton Community League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain resource staff in Community Services and Planning to provide ongoing assistance, advice and coordination re available programs, funding, potential partnerships and input on civic issues. ▪ Support the creation of a Community League facility/building in the Downtown. ▪ Provide funding support for program initiatives that further CCDP goals. 	CS P&D
5.9 Healthy Community Action Plan 5.10 Services for Downtown Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess social issues in the Downtown and develop a set of Healthy Community indicators, based on the needs of residents, employees and visitors; clarify the roles and responsibilities of the City and other sectors in addressing these issues; initiate actions and monitor improvement on a continuous basis. Provide for an integrated delivery of social services and other services for all downtown communities and interest groups. 	P&D CS DECL ESPC
5.13 Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct community-based safety audits to identify safety concerns and possible mitigation measures. ▪ Initiate a Downtown Safety Coordinating Committee; develop an integrated approach to community policing and crime prevention through ongoing coordination between EPS and all downtown stakeholder groups. ▪ Continue to operate a variety of crime prevention programs such as Neighbourhood Foot Patrols, Neighbourhood/Apartment Watch and the Security Network Program. 	EPS DECL DBA ESPC SE

Action Plans for a Vibrant Downtown

6. Downtown Housing

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
6.1 Residential Growth Target (24,000 by 2030) 6.4 Diversity in Housing Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a detailed residential supply and demand forecasting analysis; develop specific targets, metrics and strategies to promote a wide range of housing choice in the Downtown. Monitor progress and conduct updates on the analysis every two years. ▪ Develop and implement a marketing program to promote residential growth based on the supply/demand analysis; emphasize the improvements and initiatives aimed at creating an exceptional urban living environment downtown. 	P&D DBA DECL
6.2 Central Warehouse Area Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a component of the overall CCDP Budget package, prepare a 10 year capital development budget for the acquisition of key properties and the implementation of a series of physical improvement projects necessary to support a medium to high-density urban residential population. Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders throughout the planning and implementation processes. 	P&D CS AM&PW DECL
6.3 Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop administrative procedures and regulations (including design, density and built form requirements) to implement the Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program: \$10,000 per unit grant to apply to the first 1,000 new medium density housing projects built to high quality design standards. ▪ Operate the program for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of a two year extension; benefit of the program to be reviewed annually; develop promotional materials and promote the program. ▪ Consider having the City participate/lead the development of a demonstration project in the Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood to showcase the type of housing form that is envisioned. 	P&D AM&PW CS DECL EDC DBA GEHBA

6. Downtown Housing (continued)

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
6.5 Housing for Families with Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide incentives for housing units suitable for families through the Central Warehouse Area Housing Incentive Program 	P&D CS GOA
6.6 Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish an Affordable Downtown Housing Working Group - work with non-profit and for-profit housing organizations, affordable housing advocates, education institutions, members of the faith community etc.; develop strategies and actions to provide affordable housing. ▪ Consider adopting regulations whereby up to 10% of units in each new multiple family development must be affordable housing units. ▪ Assist non-profit and for-profit organizations in accessing capital grants and fee rebates under the City's Cornerstones Program (or other government programs) for new housing projects and the conversion of existing housing. ▪ Maintain incentives for the provision of affordable housing units as well as regulatory requirements as a function of development approvals. ▪ Explore with the provincial government the possibility of their donating land for affordable housing through the Legislature Grounds Master Plan process; undertake a joint venture partnership with the private sector. 	ESPC DECL FBC EDUC
6.7 Student Housing		
6.8 Artists' Live-Work Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide ongoing funding and organizational support to ArtsHab. ▪ Research policy mechanisms that could keep artist live/work studios affordable (i.e. Rent control, rent-to-own options, etc). 	P&D EAC AM&PW AHAB DECL
6.9 Seniors & Special Needs Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the federal and provincial governments to assist housing providers and enable the development of low-income and special needs housing. 	P&D GC GOA ESPC
6.11 Universal Access Guidelines for Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Universal Access guidelines for new residential construction; adopt regulations whereby 10% of units in each multiple family development must be built in accordance with Universal Access guidelines. 	P&D

7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
7.1 Employment Growth Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a detailed office supply and demand forecasting analysis; develop specific targets, metrics and strategies to promote employment growth in the Downtown. Monitor progress and conduct updates on the analysis every two years. ▪ Conduct a downtown employees' needs assessment; implement services, facilities and physical improvements to improve conditions for employees. ▪ Develop and implement a marketing and office recruitment program, targeting employers based on the supply/demand analysis and monitoring process. 	OCM EEDC DBA P&D
7.2 Expansion of Government Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify municipal, provincial and federal government departments and agencies that could be relocated to the Downtown, particularly to the Capital City District; identify potential accommodation and negotiate relocation. 	OCM GOA GC
7.3 Retail Growth Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake an inventory of downtown retail businesses, an audit of retail sectors and a retail gap analysis; identify target retailers and restaurants and develop strategies to promote retail growth in the Downtown. Monitor progress and conduct updates on the analysis every two years. ▪ Implement an aggressive retail recruitment strategy; identify potential locations for targeted retailers; identify areas where retail clusters could be created and support initiatives to foster special niche retail clusters. 	DBA EEDC P&D
7.8, 7.9 + 7.10 Collaborative Approach to Night Time Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the Jasper Avenue Entertainment Working Group, the Downtown and Oliver communities and food and entertainment industry to implement a mix of strategies to manage the impact of bars, pubs and nightclubs on downtown neighbourhoods. ▪ Adopt policies and zoning regulations to stipulate location, maximum size and safety requirements for these uses. 	ODCM DBA P&D CSD
7.12 Educational Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Downtown Colleges Coordinating Group (DCCG) in developing a strategic plan to address the service, program and facility needs of students attending downtown colleges; encourage the formation of a downtown-wide student collaborative to serve as a partner in implementation of the strategies. 	P&D EDUC DECL

7. Commercial, Educational and Institutional Activities (continued)

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
7.16 Faith-based and Community Service Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain resource staff in Community Services and Planning to provide ongoing assistance to all downtown faith-based and community service organizations. 	FBC CS P&D

8. Arts, Culture and Entertainment

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
8.1 Downtown Public Art Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review Percent for Art Policy for flexibility in collecting funds and potential for increasing the percentage and to include funding requirements for public art in non-civic funded projects Downtown. ▪ Research options for private sponsorship. 	P&D EAC WORKS
8.2 Downtown Public Art Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a comprehensive database that will locate and provide information on current public art projects; hire consultants, if required, to create the database. 	P&D
8.8 Support for Downtown Artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote downtown artists and arts organizations in a number of endeavours, through start-up funding and access to administrative support. 	CS P&D
8.12 Downtown Multi-use Arts Centre / Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research suitable organizers for a multi-use arts centre or public market. ▪ Study suitable locations - could the city provide the land, public / private partnerships - research funding options for the start-up costs. 	P&D EAC WORKS

Action Plans for a Well-Designed Downtown

9. Downtown Urban Design

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
9.7 Neighbourhood Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement guidelines, policies and improvement projects for each downtown neighbourhood to reinforce and develop each neighbourhood's character. 	P&D AM&PW CS TD

10. The Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
10.4 Urban Design Framework - Downtown Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish "Urban Design Framework for Downtown Streets". Require private and public development to adhere to building and design parameters for each street type. 	P&D TD AM&PW
10.5 Public Realm Plans - Selected Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Public Realm Plans for selected streets including: 97 Street, 105 Street, 109 Street, 97 Avenue, 99 Avenue, 102 Avenue and 104 Avenue. Prepare neighbourhood street plans identifying concepts and outlining alternatives for the Warehouse Campus and McKay Avenue neighbourhoods. Integrate public realm plans for streets with the Master Plan for Parks as a single integrated initiative. Prepare detailed concepts for street improvement, upgrading and construction, street trees, lighting, landscaping, street furniture and public art; Implement the Plans through the capital budgeting and development processes. 	DECL DBA
10.6 Public Realm Plan for Rice Howard Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a Public Realm Plan for Rice Howard Way; consider year round programming and flexible use concepts for the streets, Scotia Place pedestrian plaza and Molson Plaza areas (e.g. seasonal use of the area for arts, culture and entertainment activities, an Art Walk program, open air markets, exhibits, recreational use, etc.) Extend Rice Howard Way south to the river valley top-of-bank. 	P&D TD AM&PW DBA
10.7 Alternative Uses for Alleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and consider developing potential alternate uses for alleys, for alternate access and circulation, potential uses, and development frontage. 	P&D TD AM&PW DECL DBA

11. Parks and Open Space

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
11.2 Parks and Open Space Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare and implement a Parks and Open Space Master Plan to determine best options for location, character, design, programming etc of parks, open spaces and linkages in each neighbourhood; develop staging strategy. ▪ Integrate public realm plans for streets with the Master Plan for Parks as a single integrated initiative. ▪ Identify and assess alternate delivery models for developing park space, in addition to land acquisition by City. ▪ Coordinate Parks Master Plan with parks plans for adjacent central city neighbourhoods to ensure complementary roles and integration. ▪ Research and identify an innovative range of park and open spaces specific for downtown and surrounding neighbourhoods. 	P&D TD CS AM&PW DECL DBA
11.3 Adopt a Neighbourhood Park Space Standard for Downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare program and budget to purchase park land. Acquire park land through a proactive land acquisition program and other means. ▪ Update City's Urban Parks Management Plan - define a "neighbourhood park" standard of park space per person for the Downtown and other inner city urban neighbourhoods. (e.g. Vancouver's 1.1 Ha. of neighbourhood park per 1,000 residents). 	P&D CS AM&PW
11.4 Acquire and Develop Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Downtown and central city neighbourhood specific targets, metrics, and strategies required. ▪ Upgrade park development standards, as current standard by proponents is typically grade seed etc. 	
11.7 Animate Parks and Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific targets, metrics, and strategies required. ▪ Clarify park types that are to be active. 	CS AM&PW
11.10 Parks on Privately Owned Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify specific targets, metrics, and strategies required given underlying larger development parcel assumptions. ▪ Prepare design and management criteria for publicly accessible space on private lands. 	P&D CS AM&PW

11. Parks and Open Space (continued)

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
11.11 Central Park in Warehouse Campus Neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare program and budget to purchase parkland. ▪ Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the impact of this initiative on the short/medium/long term redevelopment of the Downtown and the estimated increase in the Downtown's property tax base. ▪ Proactively acquire parkland to create a major public amenity for residents and businesses and to serve as a catalyst for redevelopment. ▪ Conduct an inclusive public involvement process to guide the development of the park. 	OCM P&D CS AM&PW DECL DBA
11.12 Central Gathering Place for McKay Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a program to establish a central gathering place, a pedestrian-oriented community main street or a village square for the McKay Avenue Neighbourhood. ▪ Work closely with community residents and other stakeholders to plan and develop the central gathering place concept. ▪ Purchase land and/or facilities as necessary to implement the concept. 	P&D CS AM&PW DECL
11.14 Improvements to Riverfront and Valley Edge Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop concepts that promote the development of a central riverfront extending from Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to Government House Park and the Royal Alberta Museum. ▪ Coordinate initiatives and policies with Government of Alberta through the "Edmonton • Alberta's Capital City Integrated Planning Approach and Design Initiative" Working and Steering Committees. ▪ Develop concepts for riverfront promenades, docks, pools and other amenity. 	P&D CS AM&PW GOA
11.15 River Valley Promenades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construct improvements to Heritage Trail and associated pedestrian connections as per the staging program of the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan. ▪ Develop concepts for a network of connections and modes linking the top-of-valley and the riverbank. ▪ Coordinate initiatives and policies among City Depts. ▪ Research private / public funding opportunities to get catalyst and innovative projects underway. ▪ Create a way finding system that will let people know where key riverfront activity nodes are and how to get there. 	P&D CS AM&PW

12. Built Form and Architecture

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
12.1 Excellence in Built Form Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement plans, guidelines, policies and programs for architecture, urban form, streets, and parks that will contribute to achieving design excellence. 	P&D TD EDC
12.3 Edmonton as a Design Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Downtown as a focus of both production and application of design excellence. Pilot the use of open (blind) design competitions on key municipal projects as a means of encouraging design excellence and the growth of the local design community. 	CMO P&D
12.9 Blank Walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review downtown inward facing malls and blank walls and prioritize blank areas that are in need of conversion. Ensure that zoning of these areas reflects the desire for change. For larger sites, create master plans that will achieve the desired change over time. Negotiate with owners of major malls to encourage further storefront openings along street. 	P&D AM&PW
12.13 + 12.14 Tall Building Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy and design criteria for the review of tall buildings, to address mitigation of wind and shadow impacts. 	P&D EDC
12.18 View Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a comprehensive view corridor policy that describes how each view will work and provides a methodology for determining built form parameters. 	P&D EDC

13. Historic Preservation

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
13.1, 13.2, 13.3 Active Approach to Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement policy and zoning regulations, and a variety of incentives to assist heritage resource preservation, including financial incentives, parking relaxation and other planning relaxations - as per the City's Historic Resources Management Plan and Program. Review and update criteria for the prioritization of heritage assets; prioritize heritage assets in the Downtown. 	P&D

Action Plans for an Accessible Downtown

14. The Downtown Roadway System

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
14.2 Support for Alternative Modes of Commuter Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a study related to commuter travel to the Downtown, and develop incentives and pilot programs that encourage car pools, low emissions vehicles, and active transportation. 	TD P&D

15. Pedestrian Circulation

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
15.1 Improvement of Pedestrian Realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend the Zoning Bylaw to require developers to upgrade the pedestrian realm adjoining their site. Establish an annual budget for downtown pedestrian realm improvements and include in annual capital budget submissions 	P&D TD
15.3 Pedestrian Amenities with Roadway Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All plans involving changes to the pedestrian and public realms, regardless of the initiating department, shall be submitted to the Planning Department and Edmonton Design Committee for review and comment. Planning Department to facilitate review of same by EDC 	TD P&D
15.4 Convenient Pedestrian Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a specific budget in the City's capital budget for Downtown pedestrian improvements Carry out pedestrian improvements to improve pedestrian circulation and to reduce barriers 	TD P&D

16. Cycling Downtown

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
16.1 Downtown Bicycle Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a comprehensive study of Bicycle strategies and plans specific to the Downtown. 	TD P&D
16.2 Commitment to Cycling Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the recommendations of the city-wide and Downtown Bicycle Master Plan in conjunction with other capital improvements in the Downtown. 	TD
16.4 Bicycle End of Trip Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the Zoning Bylaw to require end of trip facilities with new developments or redevelopment 	P&D TD
16.5 Bicycle Storage at Transit Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide safe, secure and convenient bicycle storage at major transit hubs and public open spaces in the downtown 	TD
16.6 Bicycle Parking on Surface Parking Lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the Zoning Bylaw to require bicycle parking on surface parking lots 	P&D TD

17. Downtown Transit System

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
17.2 Transit Supportive Land Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the CCDP and rigorously apply Zoning Bylaw regulations to support CCDP policy intentions. 	P&D
17.3 Expand the city-wide LRT Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the city-wide LRT network and its downtown elements Implement Transportation Demand Management measures to support greater reliance and demand for public transit 	TD TD + other City Depts
17.4 Integrate Low Floor LRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate low floor LRT into the Downtown as per the land use and design principles outlined in the CCDP policy. 	TD P+D AM+PW
17.5 Transit Linking Downtown to Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with regional municipalities to facilitate a high level of transit service to Downtown and where appropriate include transit priority measures on Downtown approach corridors to isolate transit service from congested conditions 	OCM TD
17.8 Improve Downtown Transit Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify capital and operating budgets for higher quality facilities and higher level of maintenance of downtown transit facilities such as transit shelters, transfer facilities and LRT stations. 	TD
17.11 Transit Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor and upgrade security measures as needed. 	TD

18. Parking Downtown

Policy	Key Actions	Lead Role
18.2 New Parking Technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study and then deploy new parking technologies that serve the policy intent 	TD AM&PW
18.3 Reduced Parking Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Zoning Bylaw Parking standards 	P&D TD
18.6 Parking Facility Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Zoning Bylaw Parking facility design regulations Inspect and enforce 	P&D TD
18.7 City Leadership Pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new approaches/technologies on a pilot project basis on City-owned facilities 	AM&PW TD
18.9 Reduced Weekend Parking Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine opportunities for changes to parking rates; seek Council approval for changes and implement. 	TD
18.10 Variable Tax Rate for Non-Accessory Parking Lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a study to examine the possibility of establishing a variable tax rate for non-accessory parking lots. 	P&D

7. Zoning Overview

This updated Edmonton Downtown Plan frames a new vision for downtown and sets out a suite of policies and implementation actions to help achieve this vision. One of the most important land use policy implementation tools is zoning, as through this, land use policy becomes regulation.

A primary aspect of the new vision is for the downtown to be well-designed. In order for new development to meet to this vision and produce development outcomes consistent with the Downtown Plan, there is a need for better architectural and urban design controls.

The Edmonton Zoning Bylaw will be amended in conjunction with the adoption of the Downtown Plan and this revised system of zoning will come into effect. The Plan designates the Downtown as a Special Area with its own set of unique land use zones. These zones have been revised to encourage a high quality, urban built environment.

The following key changes have been made to the zoning:

- In addition to standard development regulations, each land use zone provides urban design regulations that outline the desired urban form suitable for the area within its context.
- The regulations within each zone have been reorganized to provide clarity and easier use of the zoning bylaw.
- Zoning, Height, Setbacks, and Floor Area Ratio maps are provided at the end of the zoning sections.
- The existing zoning boundaries and Plan boundary will remain largely unaltered with the exception of minor administrative adjustments.

Future Study

Zoning provides an important tool to encourage development and ensure good urban form. Providing community amenities and funding the facilities that support growth is a significant challenge for all cities - and this issue is especially relevant to managing Downtown Edmonton's growth.

As Edmonton grows, more demands are placed on parks, libraries, public transportation infrastructure, community centers, and other facilities and amenities. A key issue is how to accommodate new growth while improving the level of amenities and services for those who live and work here already, as well as new residents and employees. Currently, the City funds the development and maintenance of downtown amenities through a combination of sources, including established developer contributions.

In some cities, where additional height and density allowance is sought above permitted levels, the city uses a bonus density system where they allow for increased density in exchange for the developer providing amenities in the same neighbourhood as the project. Without this contribution new growth could mean that the level of services in an area could decline for existing residents.

However, in cities such as Edmonton, where the current trigger points for existing FAR and height in downtown zoning is very high, they rarely result in substantive new amenity being provided. Primarily this may be because the total of maximum allowable zoning exceeds market demand by a significant margin.

It is recommended that a review of a potential bonus strategy approaches be undertaken in conjunction with a city wide study in order for this mechanism to be meaningfully used. This would include examining height and FAR provisions, as well as exploring appropriate and transparent systems for funding neighbourhood improvements. The Downtown will be best served if future discussions occur between the City of Edmonton and stakeholders to develop a new bonusing formula. The principles of any new program should be to allow the development industry to commit to a reasonable contribution in exchange for height and FAR increases in a fair and equitable manner.

Zoning Summary

The following is a summary of the purpose of each of the Downtown Zones.

910.5 (CCA) - Core Commercial Arts Zone

The purpose of this Zone is to provide a Zone for a variety of high density and quality development that accommodates office, retail, service, institutional, residential, arts and entertainment Uses and meet the land use objectives for the Commercial Cultural Core. The intent is to further strengthen the Downtown's central area by providing continuous retail at grade, enhancing arts and entertainment activities, accommodating Residential Uses and making the Core more pedestrian friendly.

910.6 (CMU) - Commercial Mixed-Use Zone

The purpose of this Zone is to provide a Zone for medium intensity development that accommodates a mix of predominantly commercial, office, institutional and business Uses as a secondary office commercial area while emphasizing retail activities, entertainment and service Uses at grade. The intent is to accommodate the existing commercial development west of 109 Street; and to allow Conversion to residential and related Uses.

910.7 (HA) - Heritage Area Zone

The purpose of this Zone is to establish a special heritage character Zone, in which the existing concentration of historical resources shall be preserved, rehabilitated and reused, and to ensure new developments are pedestrian friendly and compatible in scale, function, built form and design continuity with the historical, architectural and urban village character of the area.

910.8 (HDR) - High Density Residential Zone

The purpose of this Zone is to accommodate high density housing with minor local commercial uses in a predominantly residential environment and to support the concept of a livable urban village with a strong sense of identity and place, where community activities and amenities are focused on a neighbourhood main street.

910.9 (JAMSC) - Jasper Avenue Main Street Commercial Zone

The purpose of this Zone is to provide a Zone that accommodates at-grade, predominantly retail commercial, office and service Uses suitable for the Downtown's Main Street, Jasper Avenue, and to ensure that infill developments and the retrofitting and preservation of historical and older buildings incorporate human scale design characteristics to enhance a revitalized, dynamic Main Street atmosphere.

910.10 (RMU) - Residential Mixed-Use Zone

The purpose of this zone is to provide for primarily medium to high density residential mixed-use developments, with limited commercial, institutional, office and service Uses distributed on-site in a manner sensitive to the street environment and adjacent residential areas; to support an urban village where amenities are focused on a local main street; and to enhance the institutional and hotel cluster along the north edge of the sub-area.

910.11 (UW) - Urban Warehouse Zone

The purpose of this zone is to develop a unique mixed-use business commercial, educational and residential neighbourhood, accommodating a diversity of uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, light manufacturing and assembly in a safe, walkable, human-scaled built environment that builds on the existing land use pattern and respects the architectural characteristics and functions of the area.