



**City of
Grande Prairie**

Downtown Enhancement Plan



Montrose site



City Hall



*Jubilee Park
sculpture*



Bylaw C-1130
September 20, 2004
Amended September 6, 2011

CITY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE

OFFICE CONSOLIDATION

BYLAW C-1130

**A Bylaw to Adopt the Downtown Enhancement
Area Redevelopment Plan**

(As Amended by Bylaw C-1130A and C-1130B)

**THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE, IN THE
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, DULY ASSEMBLED, ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. This Bylaw shall be cited as the “Downtown Enhancement Area Redevelopment Plan” bylaw.
2. The Downtown Enhancement Area Redevelopment Plan attached as “Appendix A” is hereby adopted pursuant to Section 634 of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26.
3. This Bylaw shall take effect on the date it is passed.

READ a first time this 26th day of July, 2004.

“W. Ayling” (signed)
MAYOR

“J. Ferguson” (signed)
CITY CLERK

READ a second time this 20th day of September, 2004.

READ a third time and finally passed this 20th day of September, 2004.

“W. Ayling” (signed)
MAYOR

“J. Ferguson” (signed)
CITY CLERK

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Downtown Enhancement Plan

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1.0 Introduction

The City of Grande Prairie is a growing community, and is experiencing significant change as a result. This has contributed to a need to evaluate its strategy for land use and development in the downtown core. This Plan is intended to offer new policies and guidelines to channel growth in a manner that maintains the vitality of the downtown in the context of changing trends. Development of this Downtown Enhancement Plan was initiated by the City working with an appointed Downtown Area Enhancement Working Group. This Steering Committee operated in collaboration with city staff to advise the planning and design consultants of the firm UMA which was retained to complete the project.

1.1 Purpose

The Downtown Enhancement Plan (DEP) functions as the overall City policy guide for land use and development activity in the downtown core. The DEP includes comprehensive land use concepts for the downtown as a whole as well as several sub-areas which have their own characteristics and functions. Future land use and investment decisions are to be guided by this document, which upon its adoption functions as a formal City Council policy document. It is adopted under the provisions of an Area Redevelopment Plan of the provincial Municipal Government Act. While many of the policies and suggestions included in this document fall under the auspices of the City, its implementation with respect to private investment is a matter that the City can guide but requires cooperation of other government departments such as Alberta Infrastructure and similar agencies, as well as the many property owners in the downtown and actions by other investors.

1.2 Planning Process

The project team benefited from extensive consultation with a stakeholder committee (Downtown Area Enhancement Working Group), meetings with the Downtown Association, and input from staff and City Council. During the planning process, a survey was also completed by stakeholder groups, and a variety of informal meetings were held with interested citizens and provincial agencies. For the Montrose site in particular, discussions were held with proponents of the new library, as well as the Prairie Art Gallery/Grande Prairie Live Theatre, and with the architects for the RCMP building. Meetings and written comments provided valuable input to the planning process which was further aided by a number of other publications provided by staff.

Downtown Enhancement Plan

Field work was undertaken as part of the process. This included a general evaluation of building quality, site development opportunities, and pedestrian linkages and safety. Parking and traffic movement was examined, as was the nature and physical character of the principal downtown streets. Results provided the project team an indication of successes, as well as areas needing improvement. The background work, combined with input from meetings, surveys, and a Public Open House in March 2004 created the foundation for proposals and policies in this document.

1.3 Downtown Plan Context

There are several documents with direct relevance to preparation of the DEP. These documents include the overall Municipal Development Plan, the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan and most recently the Downtown Strategic Action Plan.

The oldest of the pertinent documents is the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan which was prepared and adopted by Council in 1988 and rescinded in 1997. It provides background information, reviews planning issues, and suggests a long term strategy. While a number of components in this Plan were never implemented (e.g. a proposal for a pedestrian mall along 99th Street), other aspects were. In particular this included an emphasis of connecting new development to 100th Avenue as well as upgrading of this road, recognition that downtown is comprised of a number of distinct character areas which should be built on, the emphasis on green space downtown (including concerns about park inadequacies which still remain), and proposals for several surface parking areas.

Also considered was the heritage report “Proud of Our Canadian Heritage” (December 1990). This report offers some broad based principles and goals focussing on heritage themes. It provided useful background context.

The Municipal Development Plan establishes the long range goals for the City. It mirrors land use policies that were developed in the earlier plan for the downtown, but focuses in a more limited way on Commercial policies for the downtown. It proposes several land use classifications for the downtown area but offers only limited definition as to the type of uses that should either be encouraged or limited. The MDP was adopted in August 1995, and is being updated. The DEP will provide the basis for the new MDP’s future downtown policy direction.

The most recent initiative has been preparation of the Downtown Strategic Action Plan which was approved in February 1996. It was also reviewed by the Downtown Association in 2001, which culminated in a number of recommendations for change. These recommendations are being given

additional consideration in this Downtown Enhancement Plan. The focus of the Strategic Action Plan is on development of a vision for the downtown, including definition of the role of downtown in relation to the city. The Strategic Action Plan also provides comments with regards to economic development, the public's perception of the downtown, traffic circulation, and considerations related to the physical character of the area. Valuable components of each of these previous studies have been embodied in the DEP. Many of the initiatives from previous Plans have been implemented and are working successfully including the installation of banners, hanging baskets, and street furniture as well as the use of coordinated colour schemes.

2.0 Downtown Strategic Goals

Grande Prairie's downtown for purposes of this project has been defined by 102nd/104th Avenue to the north, the Railnet rail line/Resources Road to the east, the lane between 97th Avenue and 96th Avenue to the south, and the Bear Creek area to the west. The Downtown Area Enhancement Working Group developed a vision statement to serve as a guide for the downtown. This vision statement proposes:

"The Downtown Area Redevelopment /Enhancement Plan have been created through a shared vision of establishing a uniquely diverse neighbourhood within the City of Grande Prairie in which residents and visitors alike come to work, live, do business and play on a year round basis. The Plan recognizes the key role that the Downtown plays in defining the City's character and that the Downtown is the centerpiece for reflecting the cultural diversity of this active all-seasons community. It also accentuates the importance of a commitment to a sustainable, safe and healthy environment, and creates a framework for further enhancing the visually distinct and functionally integrated neighbourhood."

Key thoughts that are represented in this vision are:

- ☐ Downtown is a multi-purpose activity centre
- ☐ Downtown is a fundamental element of the city and defines its character
- ☐ Downtown must be able to function as an all-season environment

A strategy for the downtown must recognize that changes occur and that the City must be willing to meet the new challenges that are reflective of trends in retailing. The vision for the Downtown is one of vitality and inclusiveness, but an acknowledgment of retail trends should generate a repositioning of the downtown that allows it to meet the expectations of the community and reinforces Downtown as the 'heart of the city.'

3.0 The Downtown Concept

3.1 Introduction to Concept for Downtown

The suggested focus is to capitalize on those aspects where the downtown will continue to be strong and specialized. This includes its importance as the main civic centre of the city, its significant role as a meeting and recreation/sports venue (e.g. Crystal Centre), and the opportunities that are generated by small, primarily locally based businesses. A vibrant downtown is further enhanced by ensuring that people activity is fostered. This means a re-emphasis on residential and mixed land use in the city centre. This generates new activity and creates a convenient market for businesses and services located in the city centre. It echoes a recommendation in the Downtown Strategic Plan for promoting the downtown (or Central Business District as it is also referred to) as a multi-purpose area. Amenities such as Jubilee Park and potential open and civic spaces on the Montrose site enhance the downtown not only as a business district but as a good location for residential use. At the same time readily accessible office, service and similar businesses currently concentrated along 97th Avenue and other locations near the city centre will continue to create activity and employment. These features all are supportive of the vision that is noted in the Downtown Strategic Action Plan which suggests:

...that the Downtown continues to develop as a focal point for cultural, entertainment, administrative and business activity in the City of Grande Prairie.

The Strategic Plan envisages the city as the hub of north-western Alberta.

The DEP supports the vision and objectives noted above, but also recognizes that the downtown cannot be considered an entirely homogeneous area. It includes several sub-sectors each with their own individual personality based on local access and land use activities. For example the principal retail area continues to be focused on 100th Avenue. Redevelopment of the former Montrose school site and adjacent Aberdeen area creates its own sub area, and the businesses clustered around the location known as the Railway Lands (adjacent to Railnet rail line) constitutes another sub area. Thus while this Plan deals with some components of the downtown in a broader context, other sections provide policies that are specific to the various sub-areas, in recognition that they may have features or attributes that deserve policies tailored for those areas.

3.2 Business Trends






The downtown retail environment has been undergoing significant change over the past decade. While much of the City has been experiencing dramatic growth, expanding from a 1996 population of 31,353 to a 2003 census population of 40,226 (a growth of 29%), retail has also expanded but most of this has not occurred downtown. The traditional downtown shopping area is essentially 100th Avenue from the high rise tower '214 Place' at 102nd Street extending east to 98th Street. Over the past few years major retail chains have relocated or developed in other commercial areas in the City reducing the traditional department store presence downtown. There is little to suggest that this trend, which favours large retail outlets on major highways with extensive surface parking, will change in the foreseeable future. A few mainly locally based large format retailers remain downtown, but those with a national presence are generally situated away from the city centre. Even financial institutions which have traditionally been a significant downtown anchor are relocating (with some exceptions), away from the downtown to major traffic routes within or adjacent to the Gateway Power Centre, which emphasize drive through capabilities. Some stores however are attracted to the downtown largely due to relatively lower rents which facilitate mid-sized retailing (mainly furniture and appliance outlets).

Downtown continues to support a number of specialty retailers including one large and modern food store. A modern renovated movie theatre, Grande Prairie Live Theatre, and the Crystal Centre continue to be critical anchors that supports surrounding businesses as well as a hotel. The relatively recent introduction of new multiple family housing in the form of apartments also suggests a land use activity that has economic viability.

An area where the downtown of Grande Prairie continues to function very well is in its role as the key public service and administrative sector of the community. City Hall is centrally located downtown at a site east of the Montrose property. The library with its new facility is committed to the downtown and serves as a major activity generator. The same is true for other public facilities and the Crystal Centre. Several key park sites are downtown, including Jubilee Park, and potential open space associated with the redevelopment of the former Montrose school site. Alberta government buildings are situated on 104th Avenue downtown, and in the vicinity are several major business office buildings, the Canadian Legion, the hospital and associated care and medical centres. Everything points to the strengthening of those facilities in the city centre.

3.3 The Opportunities Downtown

Downtown can not be all things to all people but like other sectors of the City should focus on its strengths. These strengths do change over time, and based on the analysis carried out as part of this project, some functional specialization for downtown is appropriate. The focus for the Downtown is suggested to be anchored around the following:

-  Specialty retail, largely small to medium sized locally owned businesses.
-  Continue as the city's main office centre incorporating larger administrative facilities and specialty and small business offices.
-  Development as a residential community that links to nearby retail, entertainment and park/community (hospital) facilities.
-  Continue its focus as the key civic and cultural complex of Grande Prairie.
-  Build on the advantages of current and proposed green spaces such as Jubilee Park and the east-west greenway promenade between City Hall and Muskoseepi Park.

By ensuring supportive and flexible land use policies and by encouraging investment in the sectors noted above there is every reason for the downtown to be repositioned as a vital part of the city and an important community and economic driving force.

A critical contributor to a healthy downtown is a pedestrian friendly environment. The current downtown has been in a period of transition, and new traffic initiatives, while focused largely on automobile traffic must not ignore the important role of pedestrian movement. A tremendous opportunity is represented by the traditional shopping street 100th Avenue. Future initiatives must capitalize on the potential for redevelopment along the principal blocks of 100th Avenue, resulting in a welcoming environment for pedestrian traffic, while allowing convenient access to automobile traffic including provision of adequate parking. Historically 100th Avenue was known as Richmond Avenue, and use of this name in conjunction with its current grid road title of 100th Avenue can provide a creative link that connects the city's heritage with its future. Similarly, 100th Street was known traditionally as Clairmont Road.

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The need for a quality environment is echoed by the Strategic Plan which notes:

“Cultivating a positive image of the Downtown in the minds of both residents and visitors is of immeasurable importance. A positive impression of the Downtown may mean more return visits to the City or an increase in the number of residents who frequent the Downtown to conduct their daily business. People are attracted to places they perceive to be interesting, lively, safe, accessible and attractive.”

3.4 Downtown Sub-Areas

While a number of policies and actions for the downtown will be applicable to the entire area, the City has recognized that portions of the downtown deserve specific attention. Specifically the City is in the process of finalizing development plans for the former Montrose School site which is under consideration for several potential developments. As part of the downtown process the Montrose area was the subject of more detailed analysis. This is reflected in a section in this DEP which includes expanded information related to both the Montrose site and the adjacent Aberdeen area, including the new City Hall. A second area involves the Railway Lands at 97th Avenue. This area is largely developed for service commercial and support businesses and again is worthy of some specific policies. The third area is 100th Avenue (Richmond Avenue) and immediately surrounding properties where traffic changes and land use transition suggest policies that need to be specific to this area. The Plan thus includes several sections that have more direct policies related to:

- Montrose/Aberdeen
- 100th Avenue (Richmond Avenue)
- Railway Lands

3.5 Land Use Principles

The land use plan for the downtown should reflect a series of important land use principles that will guide both policies and public and private sector investment. These principles are:

Principles

- ✓ *The City will maintain a flexible approach to downtown land use allowing for a variety of activities an urban form, to create interest and serendipity. Innovation and excitement will be welcomed.*
- ✓ *Efforts will be directed to creation of a clear pedestrian precinct within the downtown, by emphasizing 100th Avenue (Richmond Avenue) as a pedestrian*

oriented retail district, with primarily smaller retail and service outlets, supported by residential and general retail and office use nearby. This shall be fostered by maintaining buildings along front property lines, encouraging frequent building entry points, and minimizing large uninterrupted walls.

- ✓ *The City will place its highest priority on the development of expanded or new major public and administrative facilities within the downtown, rather than in other parts of the community.*
- ✓ *Downtown will be supported by an attractive and pleasant open space system, convenient transportation and transit access and appropriate parking with recognition that public spaces should be welcoming in all-seasons.*
- ✓ *Provision will be made for land assembly in order to accommodate larger site/building initiatives, and minimize the need to deal with fractured ownership.*

These principles form the foundation for subsequent planning policies and design recommendations.

4.0 General Downtown Policies

This section includes all of the policies pertaining to the overall downtown area. The policies focus on land use, followed by general design recommendations for the downtown.

4.1 Policies

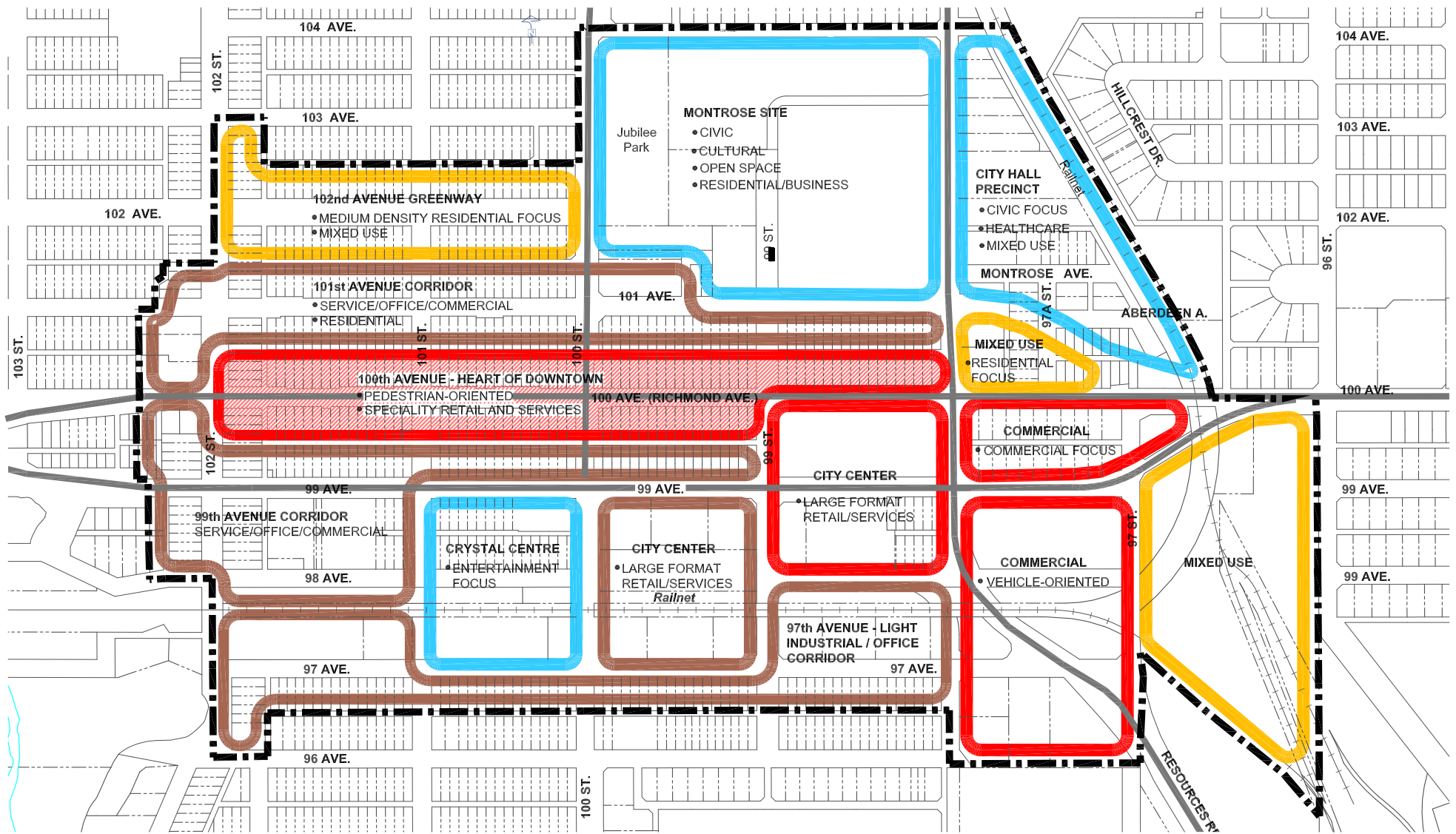
Policy 4.1.1 The following land use and activity nodes are to comprise the principal thematic areas of the downtown, and are to be fostered through appropriate capital expenditures, private investment, and regulatory tools. The principal activity nodes (refer to Map 1) and their intended character includes:

- ☐ 100th Avenue (Richmond Avenue) corridor is to continue its focus and be promoted as the pedestrian heart of the city.
- ☐ Montrose Square and Crystal Centre are to be the prime civic, recreational and cultural spaces and land uses shall reflect this.
- ☐ The 101st Avenue Corridor and 99th Avenue Corridor will be maintained as the downtown service and office areas.
- ☐ The area defined on the Land Use Concept map as the City Centre node and adjacent blocks may be developed for general and larger format retail businesses.
- ☐ Within the downtown, 97th Avenue shall function and be supported as a primary service commercial business and office corridor.
- ☐ The City Hall precinct is to function as a civic focus, and may include city administrative as well as general health care facilities and mixed use development.

Principal land uses are also defined on Map 1.

Policy 4.1.2 In order to introduce vitality and people to the downtown, Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for medium density residential land use within retail areas, except on 100th Avenue where ground floor commercial/office use is required. Preferably any new buildings should contain a mix of both retail and residential.

Policy 4.1.3 Development of four storey apartment buildings in and around the perimeter of the core, as defined by the Land Use designations on the Land Use Concept Map (Map 1) is encouraged.



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| | RETAIL COMMERCIAL | | MIXED USE |
| | GENERAL COMMERCIAL | | SERVICE COMMERCIAL & LIGHT INDUSTRIAL |
| | CIVIC USE | | |

Downtown Enhancement Plan LAND USE CONCEPT

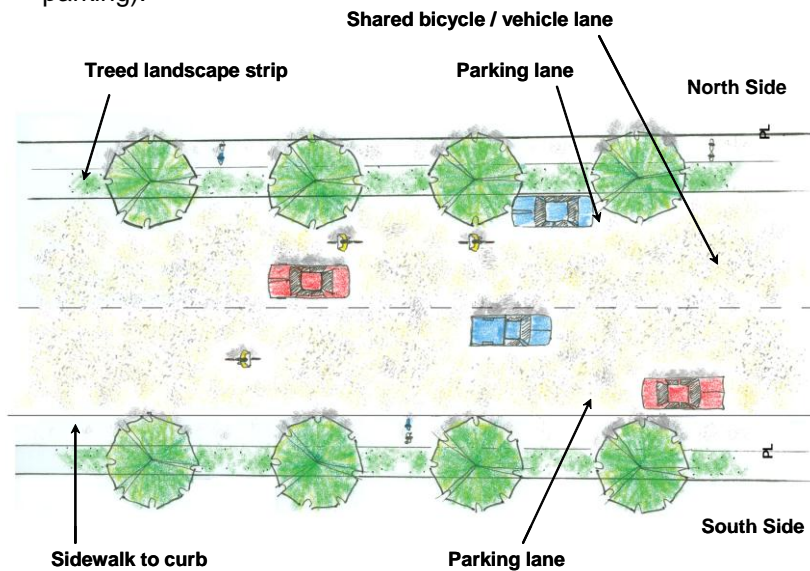
Bylaw C-1130-B
September 6, 2011

Map 1

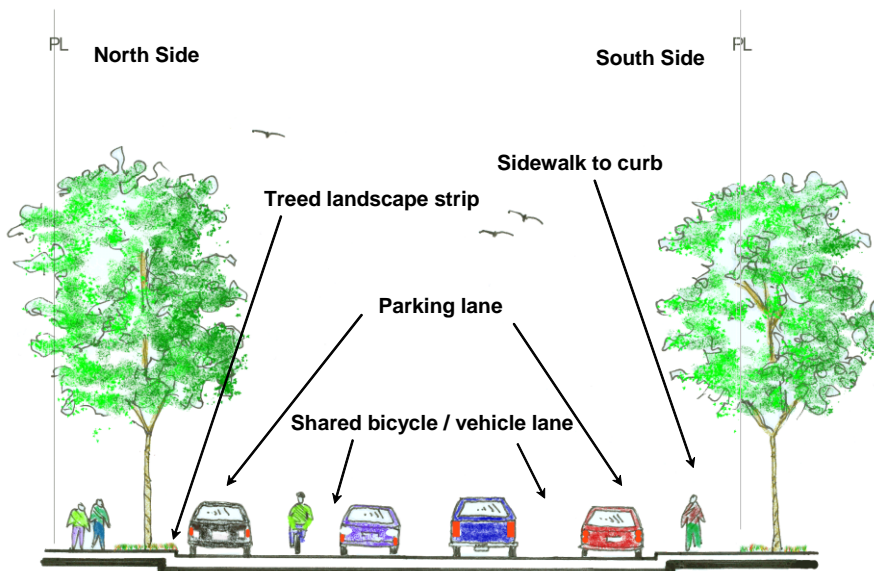
Downtown Enhancement Plan

Policy 4.1.4 Adaptation of retail commercial buildings downtown to complementary uses including that of small business incubators, or similar support services such as education/training uses will receive favourable consideration.

Policy 4.1.5 The City will encourage public and private investment that will result in the upgrading of 102nd Avenue from Jubilee Park west to Bear Creek as a landscaped boulevard and will further support this by permitting adjacent parcels to be redeveloped to medium density residential housing (at a density of approximately 110 units/ha; higher for underground parking).



Typical 102 Avenue Plan



Typical 102 Avenue Section

Policy 4.1.6 The City will support initiatives leading to upgraded design and landscaping to foster an appealing work and living environment. Strategies and ideas with respect to design initiatives are summarized in Section 4.3.

Policy 4.1.7 Jubilee Park is one of the major 'green assets' to the downtown core, and offers an attractive vista from 100th Street. The City will undertake detailed design, and budget capital funds for the redevelopment of Jubilee Park in conjunction with a new RCMP building south of the Courthouse. The enhancement of Jubilee Park as an integral component to downtown activity and land use is to be given serious consideration.



Policy 4.1.8 The City and Downtown Association will be supportive of activities that add vibrancy to the downtown business fabric. Initiatives such as the farmers market, street festivals, winter celebrations, and similar uses and events will be actively encouraged, and will be directed to locations that offer the best continuity with other downtown businesses.

Policy 4.1.9 In considering design and redevelopment of the downtown, opportunities should be reviewed for heritage interpretation including signage, monuments and special displays.

Policy 4.1.10 The City supports the future extension of a community energy system into the downtown by requiring all new civic facilities, existing civic facilities as appropriate and facilities on the Montrose Site to incorporate these systems at the detailed design stage, and by encouraging the private sector to consider this type of heating system in the design of new buildings.

4.2 Design Recommendations

Previous plans have noted the importance of upgrading and maintaining good design in the downtown core. Improved design that supports the land use policies will encourage revitalization. However, design improvements will not on their own serve as a good substitute for positive business investment and business improvement decisions. Clearly, new businesses need to be attracted downtown, and existing businesses need to ensure a quality retail environment. The City as well, needs to maintain a supportive environment for the downtown. If retail, public buildings, and medical facilities are encouraged away from the downtown, this will detrimentally affect the downtown, and such actions can not be compensated for by streetscape or façade cosmetic improvements.

Downtown Enhancement Plan

Approach to Design Program

The proposed design program is intended to enhance the experience and quality of a six block section of the downtown. The focus is to build on existing opportunities in a context sensitive manner taking into consideration issues related to climate and urban fabric. The design program will enhance the physical and visual comfort of the pedestrians and is intended to characterize the area as a distinctive district through the strategic use of design features.

Design Program

A two by three block section of the downtown (roughly the area identified as the ‘heart of downtown’ on Map 1) is recommended as the focus for streetscape enhancement. It reflects what is considered to be a favourable size shopping/cultural district, well located anchor features, pedestrian orientation, and established linkages/connectivity. The existing street pattern and block size is very conducive to a pedestrian oriented district. The urban design program is intended to build on this and other opportunities such as the Montrose site at one end, the Crystal Centre at the other end and the sprinkling of existing and proposed cultural offerings in between such as the live theatre and movie theatre - a “pearls on a necklace” scenario. This type of connective framework can provide the opportunity for this section of downtown to evolve into a destination district; a vibrant urban place with specialty shops, restaurants, coffee houses, cultural facilities, festivals bustling with activity. The proposed urban design program provides the structural framework that can complement such an evolution.

Pedestrian traffic is an essential ingredient in making an urban place seem active, lively and interesting which in turn attracts more pedestrian traffic. The vitality of downtown becomes a draw, a place to see and be seen. In order to generate pedestrian traffic the public space must be safe, comfortable, and interesting. The proposed design program helps facilitate these objectives by:

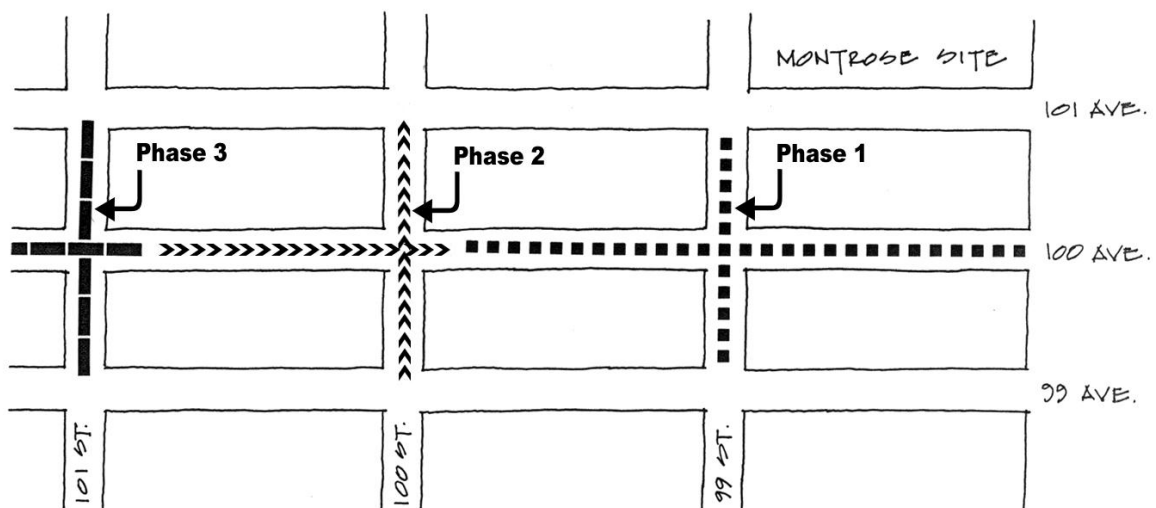
- creating a sidewalk environment that is appropriately scaled and detailed.
- that is visually and psychologically stimulating.
- that offers appropriately designed and placed street furniture to enhance physical comfort and ease.
- that manages vehicular speed to increase the actual and perceived safety of the pedestrian particularly at street crossing points.

Managing vehicular speed is a particularly important element. Our senses are designed to process details and impressions of the surrounding environment at a rate ranging from stationary to running

or in other words 0-15 km/h. The scale dimensions and detailing of the urban space are based on the speed at which people tend to move through the space - the faster the speed, the coarser the grain of detail (e.g. simplicity of “highway architecture”). The elements that convey a legitimate character of place are best processed at pedestrian speeds rather than vehicular rates of 50-60 km/h. A number of benefits are achieved by reducing vehicular speeds: the pedestrian is physically safer; there is a reduction in negative background traffic noise; and the driver has a much better opportunity to survey the streetscape thus connecting with the environment - recognize faces on the street, survey shop fronts, etc. Furthermore, the street becomes more of a shared contiguous public space.

Phasing of Design

The suggested design program is structured as a three phase process. Phase 1 would create the basic form for the enhancement area by establishing the 100th Avenue and 99th Street intersection as a key intersection and by extending one block in each direction on 100th Avenue. It forms a hub linking 100th Avenue one block east and west, and north on 99th Street to the Montrose site/facilities. This establishes a focal point in the downtown core and takes advantage of natural pedestrian linkages. Phase 2 would extend the enhancement area one block further west, establish 100th Avenue and 100th Street as a second key intersection, and extend one block north and south along 100th Street. This extension increases the internal mass of the enhancement area to a point where a distinctive and coherent downtown pedestrian district is evident. Phase 3 can complete the program by creating well defined edges to the enhanced district giving it proper form and legibility and communicating it to those on the periphery. It will have the necessary visual cues to make it an identifiable place. The sketch below provides an illustration of suggested phasing.



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The design program is structured to provide different levels of detailing based on the significance of the location. For instance, the key intersections of 100th Avenue and 99th Street and of 100th Avenue and 100th Street are proposed to receive a substantially higher degree of fit and finish than peripheral intersections. The street sections identified in phases one and two would receive the highest degree of design detailing and those areas identified in phase three would receive more modest design treatment.

The general concept for downtown design treatment including some of the principal recommendations for physical improvements, and landscape recommendations is illustrated by Map 2 - Design Elements.

The policy initiatives and recommendations that the City and Downtown Association may consider for design are noted in this section, and are illustrated as appropriate.

4.3 Downtown Design Elements

The proposed design initiatives can support the role of downtown as the heart of the city. A fundamental element of the downtown is the concept of gateway entry features to denote major entry points into the downtown, and to provide a sense of arrival. For these sites it is beneficial to offer a sense of arrival through design by creating features to distinguish the downtown core from other sectors of the community.

Principal downtown design recommendations as identified on Map 2 - Design Elements include:

Policy 4.3.1 a) Creation of gateway or entrance features (this could be a combination of signage, special landscaping, public art, lighting, banners, a 'feature' structure, etc.) will be considered for the following locations:

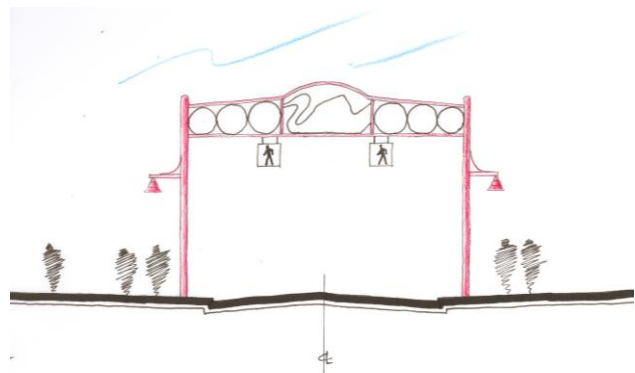
The principal 'entry' gateways are recommended at:

- ☐ Eastern Gateway at a location near the rail track crossing.
- ☐ Western Gateway, near the Bear Creek crossing.

Secondary gateway features may be considered at:

- ☐ The Civic Gateway around 98th Street and 104th Avenue.

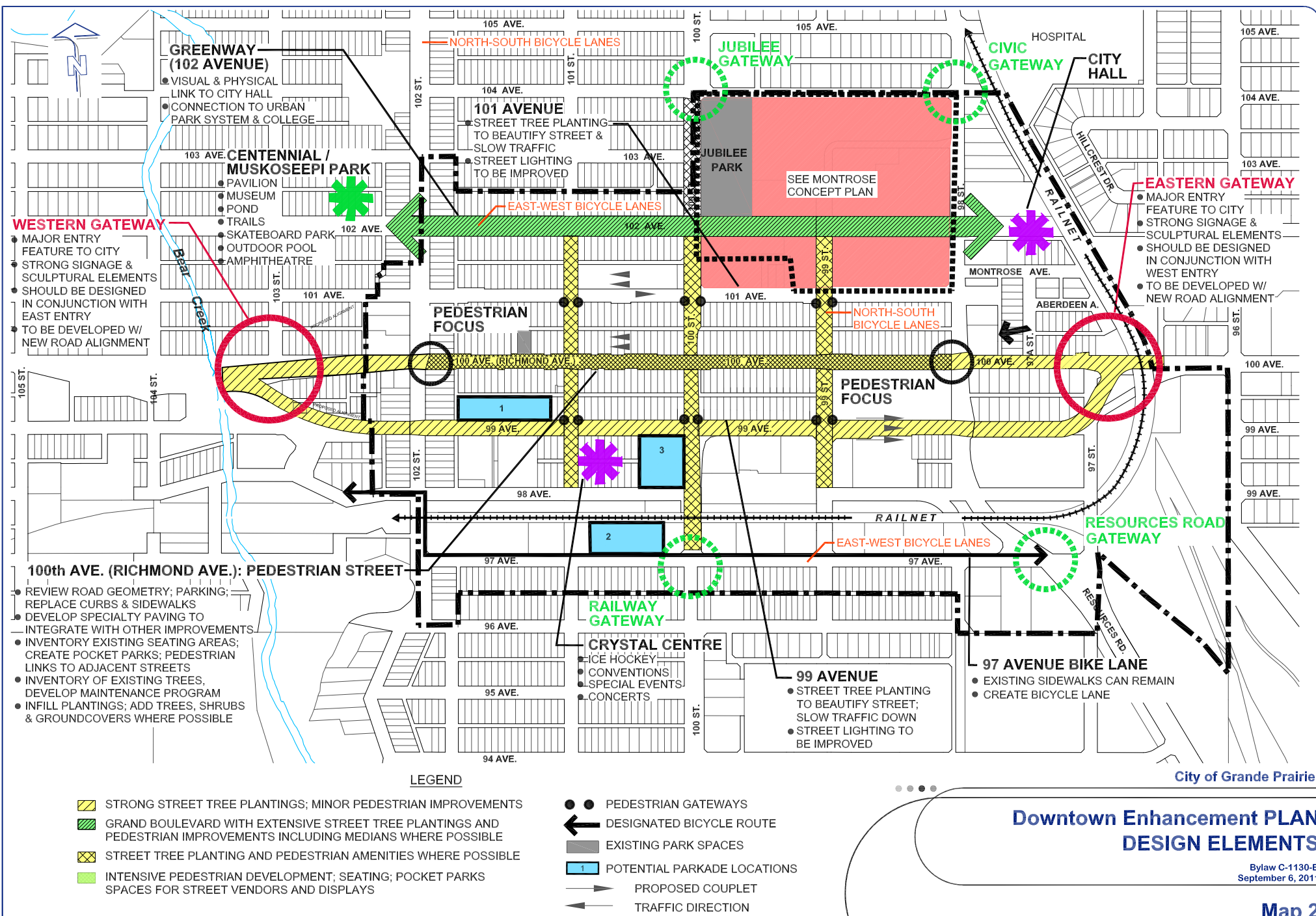
Downlight Gateway Crossing



- ☐ The Resources Road Gateway at 97th Avenue and Resources Road.
- ☐ The Railway Gateway at 100th Street and 97th Avenue.
- ☐ The Jubilee Gateway at 104th Avenue and 100th Street.

Detailed design for the primary Gateways in particular and inclusion in the City Capital Plan and Downtown Association budgets should be given priority consideration.

- b)** Council is supportive of creation of a potential Gateway feature that might be used within the key downtown blocks. An example is depicted in the accompanying sketch illustrating an actual road arch with pedestrian lighting. Other options, particularly at the start of the 100th Avenue pedestrian corridor, could be special sidewalk, signage and street furniture features.

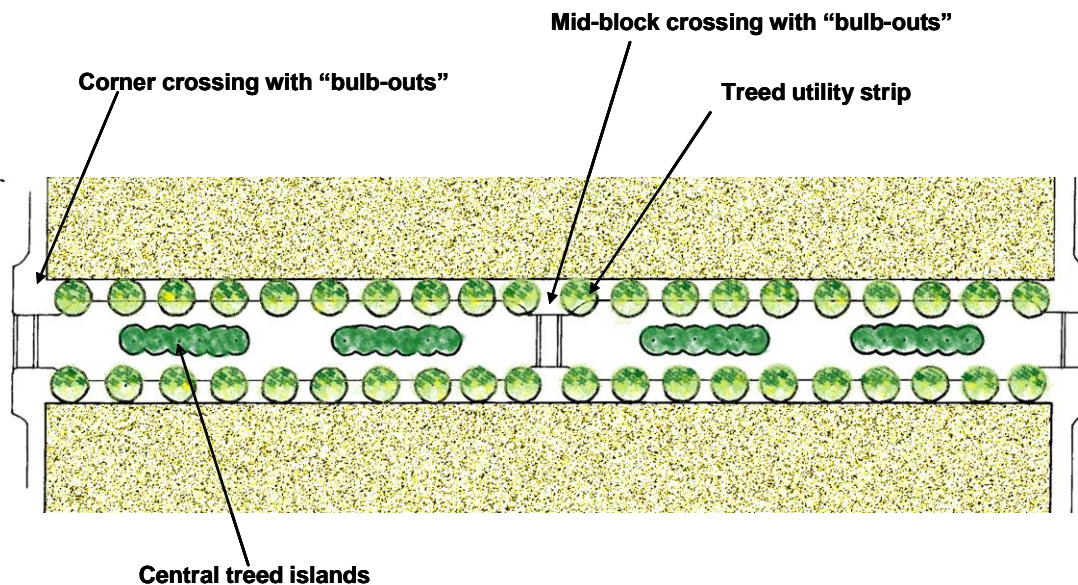


- Policy 4.3.2** Special treatment should be provided at the east and west entries into the downtown which bracket the pedestrian core of Richmond Avenue. These entry features should share common design elements and be situated at key intersections where enhanced bulb out features and solar trap structures are incorporated.
(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)



- Policy 4.3.3** Given the importance of the Jubilee Park site as a contemplative ornamental park, its proximity to downtown, and its relationship to the Montrose site, it is proposed that the landscape concept be reviewed to ensure that it meets the overall downtown goals, and to ensure compatibility with the east-west greenway and surrounding civic and residential land uses.

- Policy 4.3.4** A street tree planting program is important for both 99th Avenue and 101st Avenue as these represent critical traffic corridors within the downtown area. In some instances selected central boulevard islands may be used to create small but effective tree clusters. In other cases, limiting street trees to sidewalk boulevards is more appropriate.



Typical Traffic Calmed Street Plan



Typical Traffic Calmed Street Section

5.0 100th Avenue Concept and Design

5.1 100th Avenue (Richmond Avenue) Policies

100th Avenue is the heart of the downtown, and a source of civic pride. It is our traditional main retail commercial business street with a variety of commercial and related services. The following policies are intended to enhance this key area:

Policy 5.1.1 100th Avenue should serve as the paramount pedestrian precinct in the City, with vehicular traffic movement a secondary consideration. This can be manifested in design, façade, and street crossing improvements which enhance the pedestrian experience. **(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)**

Policy 5.1.2 Enhancement of the overall streetscape as well as buildings on Richmond Avenue should be considered the highest priority in investing in physical upgrades to the downtown. The City and Downtown Association will develop a façade improvement program which may incorporate consideration for grants and property tax forgiveness. This program should be available to all BRZ property owners or tenants.



100th Avenue at 100th Street

Policy 5.1.3 The City and Downtown Association will review whether existing Land Use Bylaw parking exemption for buildings constructed prior to December 2001 should be amended to include new construction or renovations for commercial retail uses.

Policy 5.1.4 In order to introduce a festive special event atmosphere to retailing on 100th Avenue, Council will continue to favourably consider, in conjunction with consultation with local merchants the closure of 100th Avenue and/or nearby streets several times a year for street festivals.

Policy 5.1.5 Land use on 100th Avenue should continue to concentrate on 'at grade' retail and small offices. However if any substantive redevelopment opportunities arise, the City will favourably consider a mixed use development which includes retail at the main floor (including food and beverage service) and residential use above. Office use (except small businesses) on 100th Avenue between 99th Street and 101st Street should be discouraged as it inhibits window shopping and pedestrian traffic.

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Policy 5.1.6 Multi-family housing in the downtown is preferably encouraged only for consolidated parcels of 1850 m² or larger to ensure sufficiently large developments and to reduce the potential for retention of 'locked-in' lots. Where housing is provided, required parking shall be provided on site.

5.2 100th Avenue Design Considerations

The long term upgrading of 100th Avenue with streetscape improvements is a vital component of this plan. Key design initiatives and policies include the following:

Policy 5.2.1 Business and property owners are encouraged to work in collaboration with the Downtown Association and the City in the establishment of design guidelines for building façades.

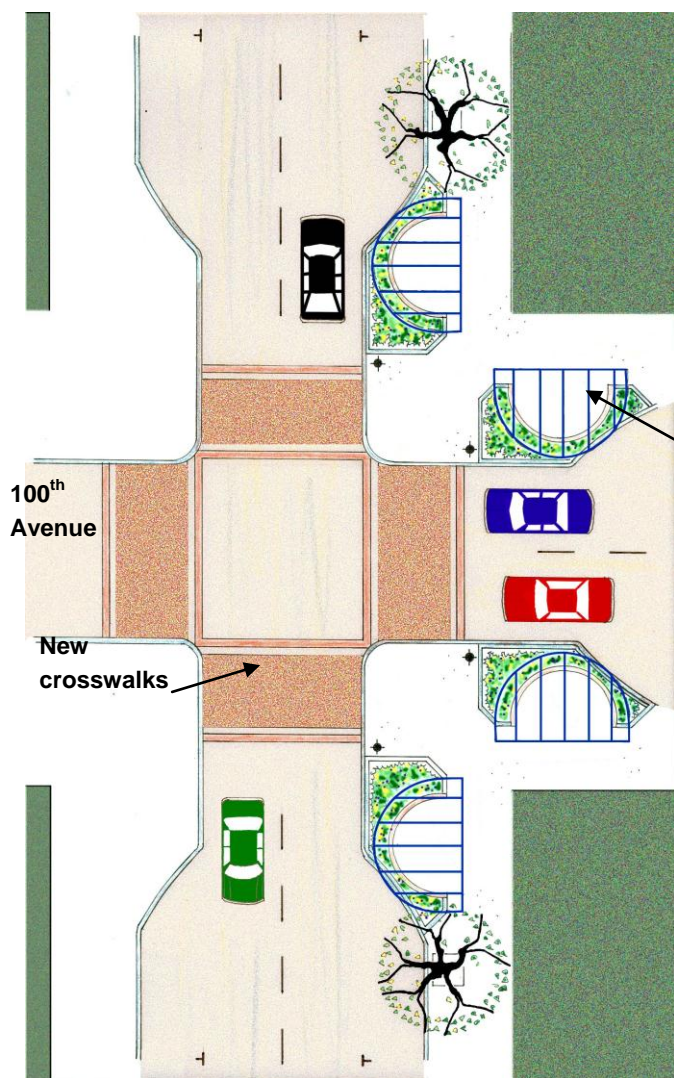
Policy 5.2.2 In considering future façade enhancement along Richmond Avenue, the following points shall be considered:

- ☐ Façades should generally be at least two (2) storeys in height.
- ☐ New design and building improvements shall promote a vertical emphasis of the façade (fenestration, façade shape, architectural detailing) that guide the eye upward versus a horizontal emphasis guiding the eye laterally along the ground.
- ☐ Every effort will be made to ensure a relatively consistent setback line with shop entrances at grade.
- ☐ To provide improved visual interest façade articulation should include recessing the shop entrance from the main building.
- ☐ Awnings overhanging the sidewalk should cover all but one meter of the sidewalk (to allow for shed snow). Awnings should be engineered or retractable to accommodate snow loads.
- ☐ Relief detailing creates a lively and interesting surface pattern for pedestrian and should be encouraged.
- ☐ Colour should be incorporated to consider low light and winter weather conditions.
- ☐ The use of brick material for building façades or feature treatment, mirroring the use of brick in other downtown buildings is strongly advocated.

Policy 5.2.3 Building heights for structures fronting 100th Avenue should generally be limited to a height of two (2) storeys, and not exceed four (4) storeys, as a means of reducing building shadows, and creating a more pedestrian friendly street scape. To achieve the maximum height limit, changes may be required to the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5.2.4 Provide for sidewalk rehabilitation that places special emphasis on pedestrian safety and convenience. The principal initiatives for intersection treatment should be:

- ☐ 100th Avenue and 99th Street (with a good visual connection to the Montrose site), and
- ☐ 100th Avenue and 100th Street



The sketch provides a concept for suitable intersection treatment. Provision is made for clearly defined pedestrian crosswalks with 1:24 slope from sidewalk to street pavement, enhanced lighting, creation of a pedestrian shelter that offers excellent access to natural light, serving both as a solar heat trap and wind break, and including a bulb out with tree planting and raised flower beds (which may provide additional informal seating).

Pedestrian seating area; solar trap structure (number and locations to be determined on a site specific basis)

Plan View: Enhanced Corner Bulb Outs with Pedestrian Solar Traps/Wind Breaks. This example would be suitable for 100th Avenue and 99th Street.

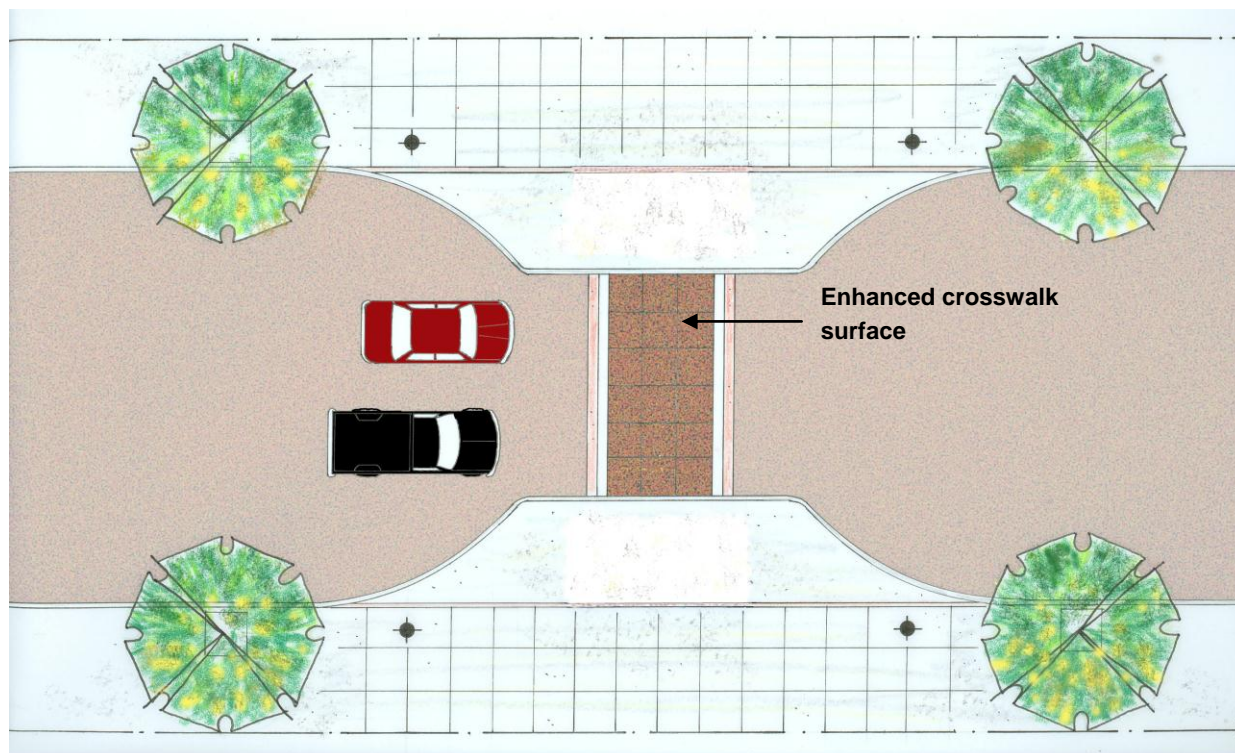
Policy 5.2.5 Support will be provided for the creation of attractive pedestrian links from 100th Avenue to surrounding streets. In particular, this may take the form of adding deciduous street trees and development of 'bulb out' (widening of the sidewalk at the crossing to reduce the cross road walking distance) pedestrian crossings. The corner and mid-block bulb outs can influence a reduction in vehicular traffic to a speed suitable to a downtown shopping precinct (30 km/h), and reduce the physical crossing distance. It is recommended that the curb return radii be kept at about 10.0m to reduce the speed of turning vehicles thus enhancing pedestrian safety.

Policy 5.2.6 The City will investigate redevelopment of several mid-block crossings, with crossings to be well lit and signed to improve motorist awareness and pedestrian safety. It may include overhead lighting to make pedestrians clearly visible to automobile drivers. Priority areas for mid-block connections include 100th Avenue between 101st Street and

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99th Street. An example for a mid-block pedestrian connection is shown in the accompanying sketches.

Policy 5.2.7 To enhance pedestrian and shopper convenience, pedestrian lanes between buildings, or through interior building corridors is encouraged.



Plan View: Typical Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossing with "Bulb - Outs"

Policy 5.2.8 Establish wide crosswalks to reinforce the presence of the pedestrian to the vehicle and to maximize the sense of safety for both. Crosswalks can include the use of "flashing-in-road-way crossing" signals (perhaps incorporated as part of a street overhead gateway) to further define the crosswalk when activated by the pedestrian. Crosswalks may include special surface treatment.

Policy 5.2.9 It is proposed that sidewalks be not less than 3.7m in width to permit ease of pedestrian movement, an increased sense of pedestrian space, and a "utility strip" to accommodate hydrants, bicycle racks, street lights, street trees, litter receptacles, etc. Surfacing for sidewalks would consist of concrete or brick pavers.

Policy 5.2.10 Establish a street tree planting program including deciduous street trees arranged at not more than 9m on center in order to enhance visual containment of the pedestrian realm, provide texture and colour, seasonal change, and rhythm, pattern, and unity to the overall streetscape.

Policy 5.2.11 As part of 100th Avenue design upgrades, redesign of Germaine Park is to be considered. Germaine Park is under used and may be negatively affected by its location. This redesign could be considered for the current location, or should be reflected in a new location and design if the current property is redeveloped to an alternative use. The wall fronting the park (along the sidewalk) although visually interesting, constitutes both a physical and psychological barrier to entry to all those that are other than determined to gain entry to the park. Some of the identified issues include:

- ☐ The elevation above grade acts as a significant barrier to entry, again both physically and psychologically.
- ☐ The park is designed as low-maintenance which in the urban context can connote abandonment of space (e.g. a large static garden) to the pedestrian which does not promote usage.
- ☐ The design does not inform the pedestrian of internal circulation; rather, it is ambiguous so that the user will have to know before entering the site where they want to go. Many urban park visits are impulsive and the park space must be inherently informative about how to use it.
- ☐ Some suggestions in the park sketch below illustrate some of the points and elements that can substantially change how the park is viewed in the neighbourhood and is used as a result.
- ☐ Remove the fronting wall and replace it with a smaller wall of a maximum height of about 40cm. The top of the wall should be flat and capped to allow informal seating opportunities. Many urban park users tend to congregate at the periphery of parks in order to survey street activity.
- ☐ Punctuate the wall with two substantial at grade entrances to convey welcome. A good entrance draws people in out of impulse. Ideally pathways should be kept close to grade.
- ☐ The circulation system through the site should be easily seen and understood upon entry. It should be interesting in its routing and should not leave a large component of the site inaccessible.
- ☐ Incorporate a formal seating area close enough to the sidewalk to allow visual interaction between park users and the street environment. This, together with an open circulation system and proper internal lighting promotes natural surveillance which discourages inappropriate activity.
- ☐ Provide good internal, vandal resistant lighting to extend use time and to provide a message of safety to people passing the site at any time of day or night.
- ☐ Include annual planting beds for seasonal colour at the site edges and in strategic internal locations. This medium also informs the park user that the park receives an elevated level of attention which conveys the message that it is not a vegetated back-eddy.



Policy 5.2.12 In order to ensure an on-going quality environment the City will work collaboratively with the Downtown Association in a regular tree maintenance program for street trees, shrubs and ground covers within the downtown area, as well as in the utilization of festive banners.

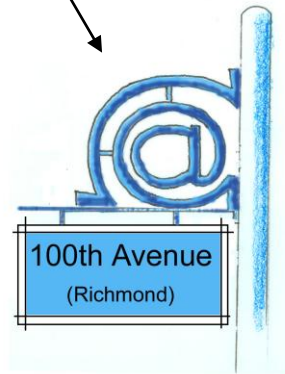
Policy 5.2.13 The City encourages and supports the continued provision of seasonal flower baskets in key pedestrian areas of the downtown, with an emphasis on 100th Avenue. Irrigation for new trees and flower baskets must be an integral component of an implementation plan.

Policy 5.2.14 As part of an on-going street improvement program the City will support development of permanent raised planter boxes for placement at the principal downtown pedestrian nodes, as illustrated in the accompanying sketch. These planters may be combined with all weather shelters/ benches.

Policy 5.2.15 The City in collaboration with the Downtown Association will explore alternatives to tree grate styles to facilitate easier clean up, and provide for underground watering systems for any permanent planters and trees.

Policy 5.2.16 To further enhance the special attributes and distinctive environment proposed at 100th Avenue, the City will explore the creation of decorative street signage to create an appropriate character for the main business streets downtown. The accompanying illustration uses a contemporary @ symbol, as currently endorsed by the Downtown Association.

Powder coated bar stock bent to
shape and fastened to pole



Decorative Street Signage

6.0 Montrose/City Hall Precinct Concept

The following section contains policies relevant to the Montrose and Aberdeen/City Hall precincts located in the northwest corner of downtown Grande Prairie (refer to Map 1). This chapter first addresses the Montrose precinct in its entirety then the South Montrose Concept follows with specific policies addressing the development of the south portion of the Montrose site. The chapter then concludes with policies that concern the City Hall Precinct (Aberdeen area) centred on City Hall.

Montrose Precinct

The Montrose precinct provides Grande Prairie with an opportunity to create a major new focal point within the City's downtown. The Montrose area contains major civic and provincial facilities such as the courthouse, provincial building, Prairie Art Gallery, public school board, The RCMP Building, the Montrose Cultural Centre and the Centre for Creative Arts (see Map 3A). Within the Montrose precinct is the former Montrose School site that is approximately 3.7 hectares. The northern portion of the site contains the Montrose Cultural Centre and the public school board offices, and the southern portion of the site is addressed later in this chapter.

6.1 Policies Pertaining to the Montrose Site

Policy 6.1.1 The dominant land uses on the Montrose site shall be civic, administrative, cultural, performance, institutional, festival and large scale market uses.

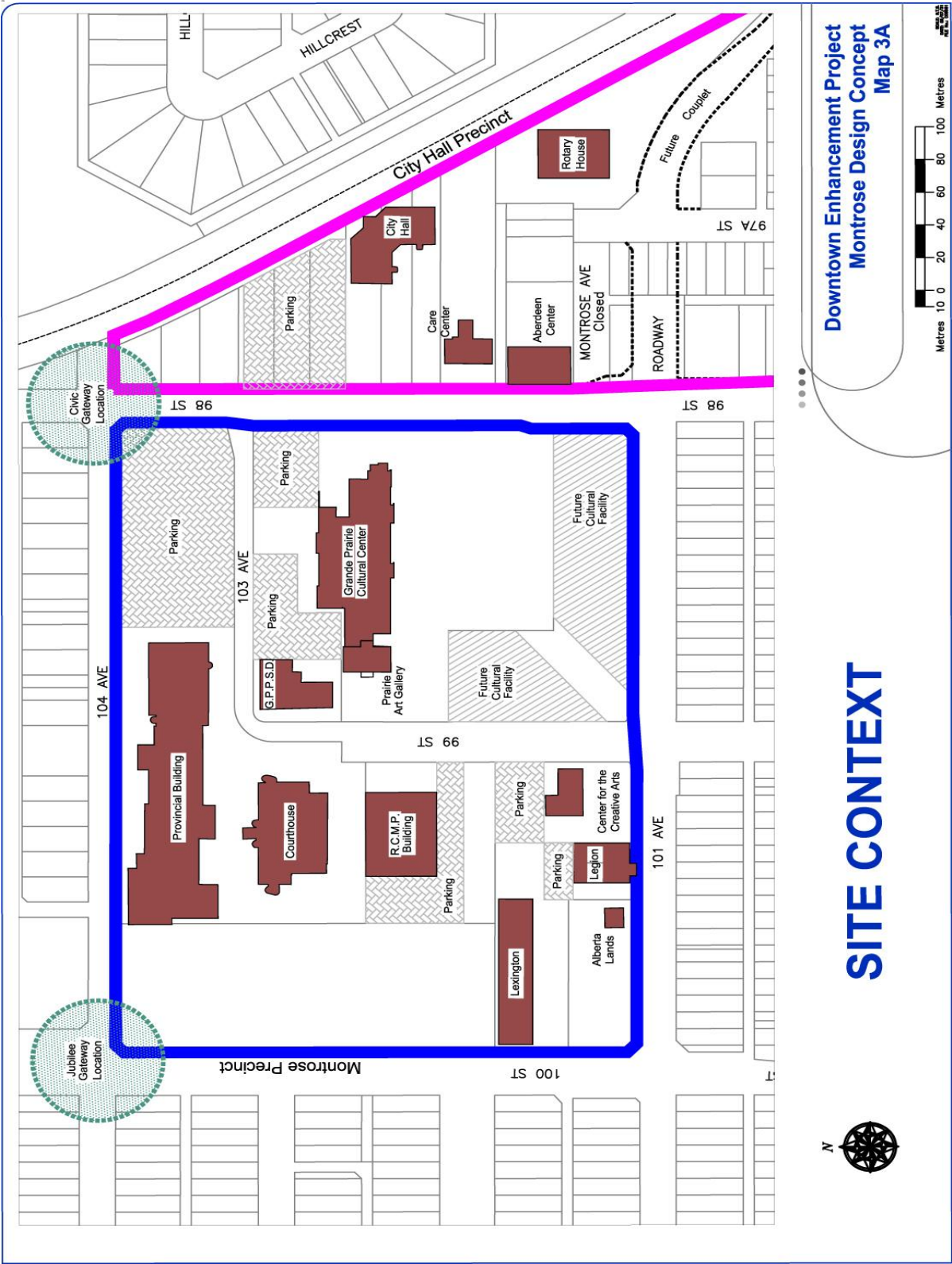
Policy 6.1.2 Any new development in the Montrose area shall incorporate a tree planting program to define property or development boundaries and promote the creation of adequate green space. Landscaping of parking areas in particular deserve a high priority.

Policy 6.1.3 Within the Montrose site proper, provision is to be made for:

- ☐ Pedestrian linkages between buildings.
- ☐ Lighting for evening hours.
- ☐ All weather canopies.
- ☐ A substantial space for a public square and a greenway for relaxation and opportunities for special events. Such a town square can also perform an important role for any winter festivals such as snow sculptures and seasonal special event displays.
- ☐ Tree lighting through decorative lights must comprise an integral aspect of the overall Montrose design.

Policy 6.1.4 An east west greenway promenade shall be planned as part of the Montrose site in conjunction with the redesign of Jubilee park. The width may be variable, but must be sufficient to provide for comfortable pedestrian movement.

Policy 6.1.5 Reconstruction of 99th Street (into the Montrose precinct north of 101st Avenue), with a strong emphasis on slowing vehicular traffic and promoting pedestrian traffic, is to be a major element of the Montrose concept. Pavement realignment of 99th Street to enhance parking opportunities and to reduce traffic speed may be considered. Partial or full closure of the roadway for special events (subject to adequate provision for emergency traffic) is encouraged.



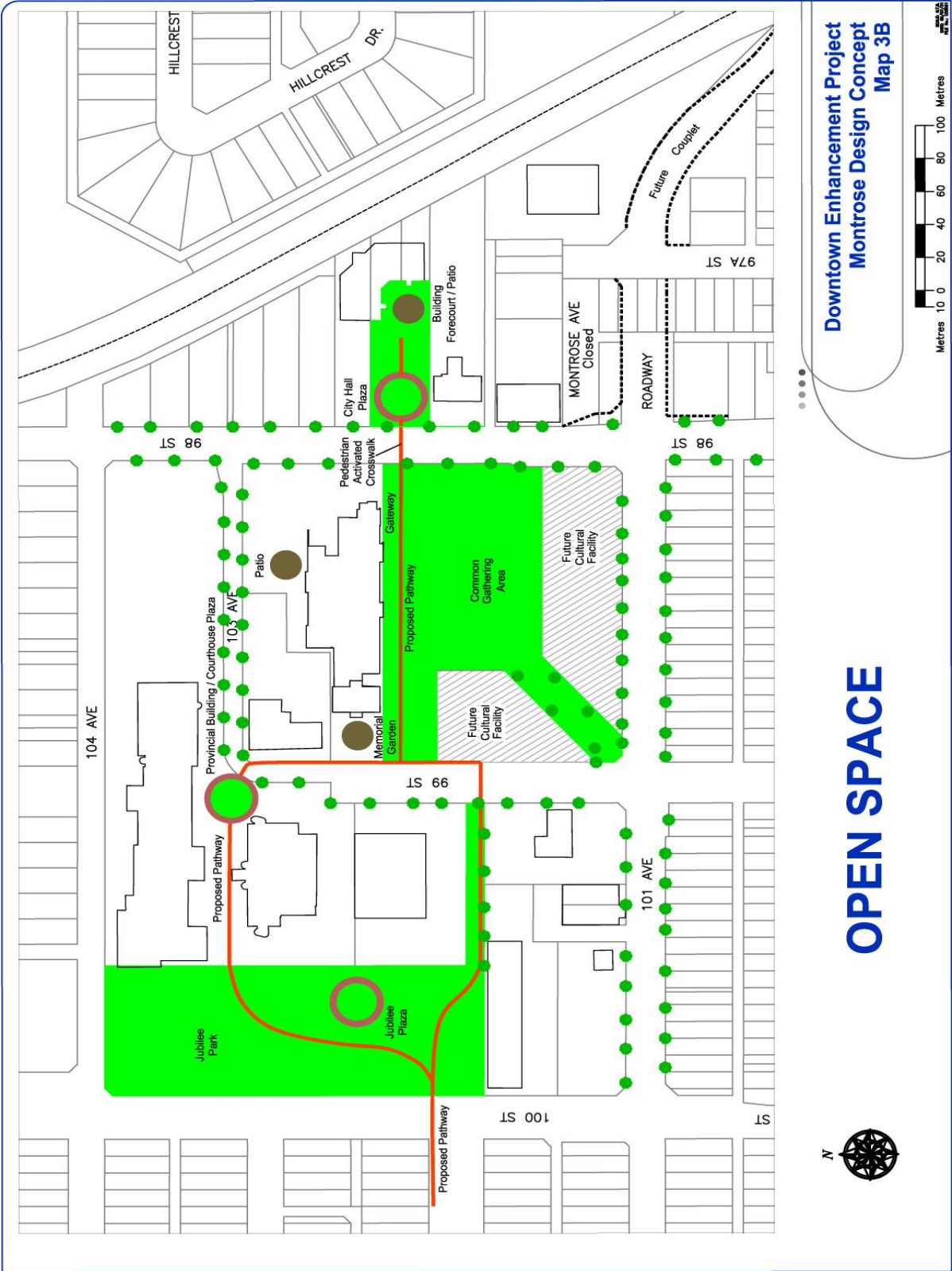
South Montrose Site Concept

Introduction

The Montrose site, located across from City Hall, provides an opportunity to create a civic asset that can emerge as a source of pride for the citizens of Grande Prairie. The Montrose precinct is already the public service hub of the City and with the inclusion of the Montrose Cultural Centre in addition to the Centre for Creative Arts the area is quickly becoming the cultural hub as well.

The name “Montrose” serves as a link to Grande Prairie’s pioneer past and two citizens that helped to shape the new settlement at the turn of the 20th Century. Alexander and Agnes Forbes moved to Grande Prairie from Scotland and purchased a homestead to construct not only their home but Grande Prairie’s first hospital, a Presbyterian Church and the Montrose School. The historic boundaries of their homestead today still include the hospital and the historic Montrose School (now the Prairie Art Gallery). Alexander Forbes named his homestead “Montrose” as homage to his wife and her hometown in Scotland. Montrose, Scotland is a coastal resort town notable for its wealth of architecture and its picturesque ambience in addition to being the culture and sculpture capital of its region. This provides a fitting namesake for what is destined to become Grande Prairie’s arts epicentre; a cultural and governmental precinct befitting the citizens and visitors of Grande Prairie.

The Montrose precinct, over the years, has been evolving organically into the cultural centre for the City. This is seen in uses located in the area, including the Prairie Art Gallery, the Centre for the Creative Arts and the Grande Prairie Public Library. The following policy directions capitalize on this movement towards a cultural district that will showcase the diversity and scope of Grande Prairie’s cultural activities. The Montrose site will become an active space, enticing people with numerous attractions and activities as diverse as reading a book to partaking in a festival (see Map 3B).



Vision

The Montrose site will become the cultural district in the heart of Grande Prairie that will highlight the artistic soul of the City. At the core of the Montrose site is the town square and greenway brimming with activity throughout the day and night, seven days a week, during the four seasons. The built form surrounding the public arena will facilitate activity while framing the public space and new landmark building: the Montrose Cultural Centre. The Montrose site will function as Grande Prairie's "Living Room", the epicentre of activity, where citizens and visitors alike will meet, socialize, relax and enjoy the diverse and varied cultural offerings of the City of Grande Prairie.

Objectives

- Cultural Relevance: To foster a "living" space for the City of Grande Prairie tailored to the needs and desires of the community and contribute to Grande Prairie's unique identity.
- Accessibility and Safety: To ensure citizens and visitors can comfortably access the site in security.
- Climate Appropriate: To mitigate the climate to allow for outdoor use throughout the day, week and year.
- Environmentally Sustainable: To create an efficient and environmentally respectful design to meet the needs of future generations while meeting the City's needs today.

Montrose Design

The design of the Montrose Site shall be treated holistically as the cultural and event centre of Grande Prairie that blends outdoor space with indoor space in an interesting and elegant manner. The concept for the south Montrose site includes three primary elements: the town square, the greenway and one or two additional cultural facilities.

The outdoor and indoor spaces on the Montrose site shall be flexible to accommodate various events and activities. The town square will serve as the premier event and festival space for the city as well as an informal gathering area. North of the town square is a greenway that bisects the site with a grand promenade to serve as part of the connection between City Hall and Muskoseepi Park. The promenade also links to the south, east and north of the site as well as creating internal links within the site. One of these important internal links is to the new Montrose Cultural Centre. The promenade/greenway connects the Montrose Cultural Centre to future development to the south while serving as an exhibition and event space. Lastly, space is reserved for one or two more

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cultural facilities to help realize the Montrose site as the arts and culture precinct for the City of Grande Prairie.

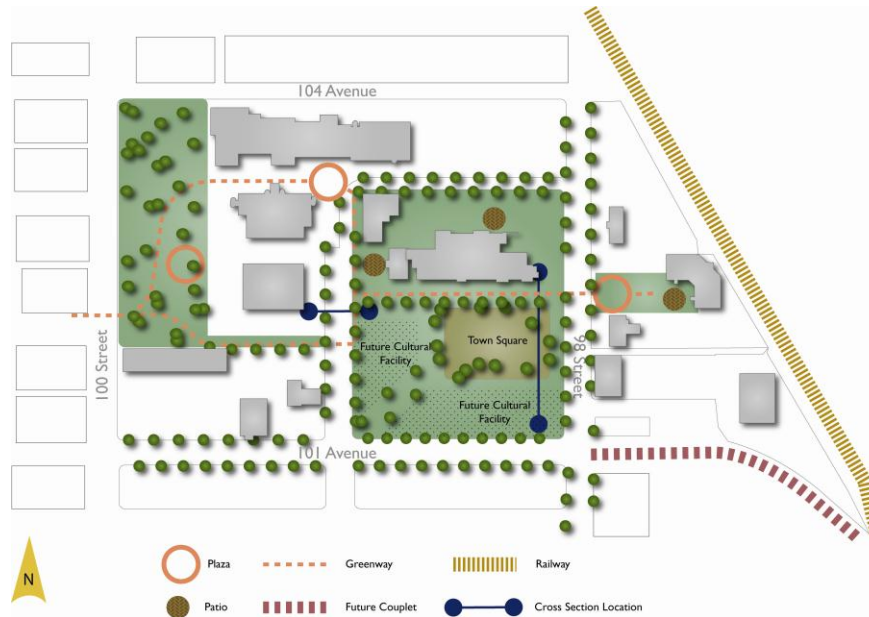


Figure 1 Rendering of the South Montrose Site Plan within the context of the surrounding area

6.2 Town Square/Plaza

Squares as central gathering places are a global phenomena and express the culture of the City that houses them. The classical function of the town square is as a market place and a physical embodiment of power and governance. Historically, squares/plazas were used for military drills, worshipping, trade and more recently cultural events and participatory democracy (protests and demonstrations). Cities use these squares as ever changing museums to showcase unique aspects of their culture and the local human experience. The town square on the Montrose Site will become this cultural and governmental focal point for the City of Grande Prairie.

Like a new building, town squares require a strong concept and a detailed program; this clearly defined purpose is essential to ensure success. The events and facilities accommodated in a plaza contribute to the local identity and act as a source of pride for a city through exhibitions, festivals, open air markets, socializing, and relaxing. A successful plaza requires a diversity of spaces to house a diversity of activities.



Figure 2: Cross Section of the South Montrose Site as indicated in the site plan



Figure 3 Town square with planters, trees, public art and abundant lighting

Linkages

When planning for the site one must consider the context and the site's relationship with its surroundings. The design must reach out to the north, south, east and west to ensure ease of access, visual connection and success.

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Policy 6.2.1 A greenway shall bisect the site to facilitate walking and biking, and shall meet the following criteria:

- ☐ The greenway on the Montrose site comprises a paved pathway and soft landscaping.
- ☐ A link from the greenway shall extend toward the pass-through at the Provincial Building and on to Muskoseepi Park.
- ☐ Additional greenway links shall extend to the hospital, City Hall, the east side of the City, the north side and the Downtown.
- ☐ Pathways bisecting the site shall be lined with trees, vegetation and/or planters.
- ☐ The minimum width for the paved promenade on the South Montrose site is 6m.
- ☐ Information panels to showcase the history of the site shall be located along the greenway.
- ☐ An appropriate lighting scheme shall be implemented as part of the greenway plan



Figure 4 Tree-lined greenway south of the Montrose Cultural Centre

Policy 6.2.2 To accommodate safe and convenient pedestrian access to and from the site, it must have:

- ☐ Wide sidewalks on both sides of streets surrounding the site.
- ☐ Crosswalks located at the surrounding intersections.
- ☐ Mid-block crossings to link the site with City Hall and the RCMP building that incorporate pedestrian lights or other appropriate measures.

Policy 6.2.3 The Montrose site shall be clearly visible from many vantage points to increase the safety of the site.

Policy 6.2.4 Future plans for the site must protect significant view corridors, such as:

- ☐ Views of the Montrose Cultural Centre from the southwest intersection.
- ☐ View of City Hall to and from the site.
- ☐ Views of the plaza from buildings on and around the site.

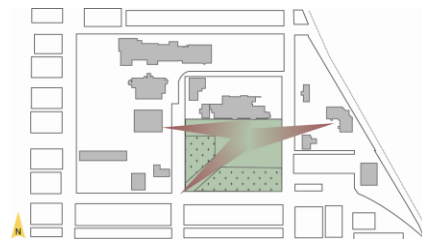


Figure 5 Important views

Policy 6.2.5 The eastern boundary of the Montrose site shall remain open to 98th Street to allow the area to read as a public space and to reinforce the relationship with City Hall.

Policy 6.2.6 The site shall incorporate directional signage and maps for wayfinding.

Policy 6.2.7 The greenway shall extend beyond the site through the implementation of a consistent urban design scheme to visually link the Montrose Site to neighbouring areas. Interventions include:

- ☐ Similar sidewalk width and material.
- ☐ Similar tree planting scheme.
- ☐ Specific style and/or colour of street furniture (e.g. street lamps, bollards etc.).
- ☐ Signage directing people to and from the site as well as to points of interest along the way.

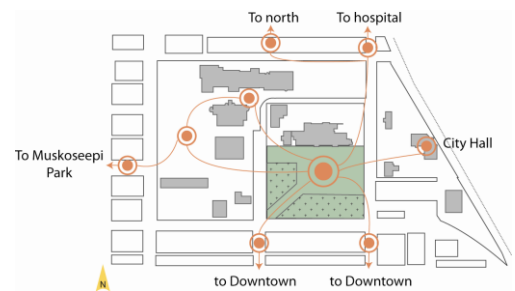


Figure 6 Important connections to and from the Montrose Site

Climate Mitigation

Grande Prairie's northern location provides a challenge to designing successful outdoor public spaces; however, through the use of climate mitigation measures a comfortable outdoor space can be achieved to encourage year-round use.

Policy 6.2.8 Shaded and sun-filled areas shall be created throughout the public space.

Policy 6.2.9 Protection shall be offered from wind through the following measure:

- ☐ Avoidance of large open unprotected areas.
- ☐ Avoidance of wind funnels and narrow openings between buildings.
- ☐ Buffers through the use of plantings, walls and canopies for wind deflection.

Policy 6.2.10 Overhead weather protection shall be employed as part of the design.

Policy 6.2.11 In an effort to calm the prevailing winds from the west, either a wind buffer that allows for some visual permeability or a structure shall be located along the western border.

Policy 6.2.12 Sun access to the plaza shall be preserved by using one or more of the following:

- ☐ Height limits.
- ☐ Step-backs.
- ☐ Spacing between buildings.

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Amenities

To create a flexible space that can serve many functions certain amenities have to be put in place. It is also important to offer variation within the town square by partitioning the public space into “rooms”. Dividing the public space into distinct sections increases interest in the space and the comfort of users who may feel exposed and intimidated by a large expansive plaza. A benefit to creating a visually stimulating space is that it draws people to it and provides a greater assurance of safety.

Policy 6.2.13 Electrical outlets and a water supply shall be provided throughout the public space to allow for small-scale vendors, outdoor festivals and seasonal displays (e.g. Christmas lights).

Policy 6.2.14 A diversity of seating options shall be incorporated throughout the plaza by:

- ☐ Maximizing opportunities for sitting (e.g. walls, steps, planters, lawns, benches, tables, chairs).
- ☐ Providing seating in several locations (e.g. by a street, toward a view, near a building entrance, next to attractions, in the shade, in the sun, etc.).
- ☐ Placing seating specific to groups, couples and individuals.
- ☐ Constructing seating out of wood and recycled materials.
- ☐ Using skateboard deterrents on seating.

Policy 6.2.15 Ensure that the site is divided into “rooms” to provide interest and comfort. Suggested methods for visually dividing space include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Variations in topography (grade changes, undulating topography, walls).
- ☐ Arrangement of vegetation and landscaping (trees, shrubs, planters etc.).
- ☐ Seating arrangements.
- ☐ A mixture of surface materials.

Policy 6.2.16 The program for the town square must include provisions for winter-related activities. Suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Skating rink with removable boards.
- ☐ Ice sculptures.
- ☐ Outdoor fireplaces.
- ☐ Heated seating area, warming shelters or patio heaters.
- ☐ Snow or ice sculptures.
- ☐ Walls constructed out of snow to mitigate wind.
- ☐ Decorative snow screens.

Policy 6.2.17 The following public amenities shall be included, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Public art.
- ☐ Bike racks.
- ☐ Underground storage system for irrigation.
- ☐ Waste receptacles.
- ☐ Kiosks for information and posters.
- ☐ Water feature (e.g. misters, geysers).

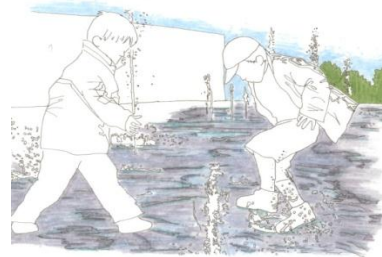


Figure 7 Children splashing in a geyser-style water feature

Policy 6.2.18 The history of the Montrose site shall be incorporated in the design of the space through information panels, signage, urban design or other methods of incorporating historical references.

Policy 6.2.19 The site design shall incorporate principles proposed in the theory of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) which outlines urban design initiatives to reduce the likelihood of crime and increase the perceived safety of a space.

6.3 Outdoor Cultural Centre Space

Extending the space available to the Montrose Cultural Centre into the South Montrose site will increase the exhibit and programming opportunities available to the Grande Prairie Public Library and the Prairie Art Gallery. This buffer between the Cultural Centre and the remainder of the South Montrose Site will allow art and cultural programs to extend beyond the walls of the building into the public arena and help to populate the public space throughout the year.

Policy 6.3.1 To provide an appropriate frame for the landmark architecture of the new Montrose Cultural Centre a 30m landscaped buffer, which includes the 6 meter paved promenade, is required to extend from the south wall of the building. This will allow the Montrose Cultural Centre to extend beyond its walls into the outdoor space. Uses within this 30m buffer shall provide complementary outdoor spaces to the indoor spaces of the library and art gallery. Suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ A flexible outdoor exhibit space that can accommodate outdoor art displays.
- ☐ A small-scale amphitheatre to provide space for performances, lectures or story telling.
- ☐ A patio space to take advantage of the southern exposure.
- ☐ An outdoor reading room.

6.4 Landscaping

The public space on the site shall utilize landscaping as a means to define areas. Careful programming is required of the outdoor space along with a detailed landscape plan. Design and landscape interventions shall be evaluated based on both their functionality and appearance to determine how appropriate they are for the space.

Policy 6.4.1 Vegetation is a critical component of the Montrose site to ensure it is a green oasis in the heart of the city, suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Tree-lined pathways.
- ☐ Planters dispersed throughout the site.
- ☐ Balance between hard and soft (vegetated) surfaces.
- ☐ Hanging baskets.
- ☐ Green roofs and green walls.
- ☐ Coniferous and deciduous species.

Policy 6.4.2 Traffic noise can be mitigated through the use of an alternative masking noise source such as a water feature.

Policy 6.4.3 Drought resistant and indigenous plants should form part of the design.

Policy 6.4.4 Landscaping shall embrace seasonal change, with diverse attractions and looks for each season.

Policy 6.4.5 Walls (that do not form part of a building) and plantings shall not block specifically defined views into the area.

Policy 6.4.6 Sightlines into the plaza shall frame views of features and activities that may entice people to enter (e.g. shade, places to sit, activities, exhibits, etc.).

Policy 6.4.7 All areas of the public space shall be accessible and ramps shall meet the building code.

Policy 6.4.8 Lighting is required throughout the space.

6.5 Additional Cultural Facility(ies)

One or two additional cultural facilities located on the Montrose site can assist in the area's natural movement towards an arts and culture district while cementing the role of the Montrose site as a destination within the City of Grande Prairie. Additional facilities will provide more reasons for people to visit the site and create a truly multi-use space.

- Policy 6.5.1** Areas on the south and west boundary, of the Montrose Site, shall be reserved for a cultural facility and until such a facility is built these areas shall be landscaped to harmonize with the public space.
- Policy 6.5.2** Commercial uses that enhance the cultural nature of the site by providing a draw throughout the day and work within the confines of a future cultural facility (e.g. restaurants, lounges, small shops and cafés) are permitted as long as they are housed within the same built envelope.
- Policy 6.5.3** Cultural facilities located on the site are permitted to utilize the plaza space for performances, exhibitions, and events and the commercial uses located within the cultural facilities are permitted to have outdoor patio space extending into the public space.
- Policy 6.5.4** Uses that fall under the term “cultural facility” include performing arts centre, independent film theatre, farmers/public market, museum or similar uses that can be justified as a cultural/artistic use.
- Policy 6.5.5** Cultural groups are encouraged to partner to create a sustainable multi-use facility that can be used throughout the day, seven (7) days a week, throughout the year.
- Policy 6.5.6** There is potential for incorporating high density residential uses on the site at the discretion of Council:
- ☐ Residential use is limited to the upper stories and not permitted on the ground floor.

6.6 Built form

Future buildings on the site must maintain a high architectural standard due to the prominence of the Montrose site and the Montrose Cultural Centre. A combination of indoor and outdoor cultural spaces shall be integrated to embody the vision for the site as Grande Prairie’s “Living Room”, a place for entertainment, artistic expression and relaxation.

- Policy 6.6.1** All architecture on the site shall maintain a high level of design and is subject to approval by Council.
- Policy 6.6.2** Due to the prominence of the structures from every direction each façade shall be designed as a primary façade.
- Policy 6.6.3** Any building located on the site shall have two (2) emphasized main access points, one (1) off the street and another off the plaza.
- Policy 6.6.4** All walls facing the plaza shall include windows; no windows shall be mirrored.

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- Policy 6.6.5** Space is designated on the south side and/or the west side of site for a future Cultural Facility.
- Policy 6.6.6** A building on the south side of the Montrose site shall minimize the impact of shadows on the public space and be offset from the Cultural Centre to preserve views of the facility.
- Policy 6.6.7** A building on the west side of the Montrose site shall provide enough height to mitigate the wind.
- Policy 6.6.8** Brick shall be utilized as one of the primary building materials in the design of any new buildings on the site.
- Policy 6.6.9** All development on the site must provide exterior lighting to either highlight the architecture or illuminate pathways around the site. When exterior light is provided to light pathways than the light shall be focused down to reduce light pollution.
- Policy 6.6.10** Vendors are encouraged in the plaza area.
- Policy 6.6.11** Safe and appropriate pedestrian drop-off locations shall be provided on the site along with discreet service accesses, loading and unloading areas.

6.7 Parking

Due to the prominence and importance of the Montrose Site, the majority of parking shall be located underground. Surface parking is land intensive and can compromise the future design and use of the site. Underground parking allows for a greater amount of spaces that are out of view while preserving the site for more active and appropriate uses that complement the cultural function of the space.

- Policy 6.7.1** The majority of parking spaces shall be located underground with surface parking kept at a minimum and only permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as accessible parking, drop-offs, loading areas etc.
- Policy 6.7.2** Parking lot sharing schemes shall be encouraged (for example office parking sharing spaces with a performing arts centre due to the different peak use periods).
- Policy 6.7.3** Lands for parking shall be allocated and configured as necessary to meet the City's overall Community Mobility (CM) policies as expressed in the MDP. The CM policies include incentives to reduce on-site parking demand, and accommodate alternative transportation modes such as public transit, walking, car pooling, ride sharing, and bicycling.

Policy 6.7.4 Angled on-street parking along 99th Street of the site is encouraged upon redevelopment.

6.8 Implementation

The following policies provide a framework to facilitate implementation of the ideas outlined in the South Montrose Concept Section.

Policy 6.8.1 The first step in implementing the ideas for this site is to obtain preliminary concepts. Council map hold an international design competition to acquire many designs from which to choose the most appropriate one for the site. The winning design shall meet the parameters outlined in this plan to ensure the chosen design respects the local culture and climate while being sustainable, safe and universally accessible.

Policy 6.8.2 The site will be reserved primarily for future arts and culture uses.

Policy 6.8.3 To ensure synergy, the City is willing to entertain joint-proposals from arts and cultural organizations able to partner in creating a structure to ensure the facility's economic and social sustainability. Uses that draw people at various times of day and week are encouraged to allow for an efficient use of space as well as providing a continuous draw to the site.

Policy 6.8.4 Before development, the site shall be rezoned DC-Direct Control. The DC district shall include provisions regarding the use and design that will be reached through negotiations with the institutions that expressed an interest in locating on site.

Policy 6.8.5 The development authority for future development on this site shall be City Council.

Policy 6.8.6 Should any changes be proposed to the recommendations outlined in this report a committee composed of an Alderman, the City Manager, two representatives from the Downtown Association, two representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, one member from the Grande Prairie Public Library and one member from the Prairie Art Gallery shall be consulted.

Policy 6.8.7 The public shall be consulted during the preliminary design selection and the final design process. This will facilitate buy-in and capture interest in the space.

With careful evaluation of the future design of the site, collaboration between arts and cultural organizations and community buy-in, the vision for the Montrose site as Grande Prairie's "Living Room" will become a reality.

Downtown Enhancement Plan

THE CITY HALL PRECINCT (ABERDEEN AREA)

The following section is comprised of excerpts out of the original Montrose/Aberdeen Concept in the 2004 Downtown Enhancement Plan. This portion of the plan contains only the policies relevant to the City Hall Precinct/Aberdeen area (please refer to Map 3A). These policies will be reviewed at a later date as part of a comprehensive review of the Downtown Enhancement Plan.

The City Hall Precinct, located around City Hall, has significant opportunity for redevelopment. Property acquisition and land consolidation carried out by the City provides considerable opportunities for redevelopment. New uses are suggested to concentrate on support facilities such as additional administrative, medical and office use. Retail is proposed to occur mainly to the west in better proximity to the downtown core. Through land consolidation the City Hall Precinct is suitable for new housing, primarily multiple family rather than single family housing, with an emphasis on community oriented social housing.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

City Hall Precinct Summary

The City Hall Precinct has as its focus on the City Hall building which also comprises the eastern terminus of the greenway link. The area supports a mix of uses, with administrative facilities and medical support buildings predominating. Old residential buildings in the area are either being torn down, or site assembly is occurring for new development, as well as expanded parking. The DEP proposes continuation of such uses with the focus on:

- Government administrative facilities
- Hospital support services, including medical offices, and specialized care facilities
- Multiple family housing

New development has to be oriented to take advantage of exposure to adjacent roadways. Property consolidation is critical to allow more comprehensive building sites, and to facilitate property access. General retail is not proposed for the area as it would have the effect of dissipating the level of activity downtown, by dispersing retailing over too large an area.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

6.9 Policies for the City Hall Precinct

Policy 6.9.1 The City, in order to attract a comprehensive and architecturally unified design to the City Hall Precinct, will continue to foster development nodes that represent a consolidation of already existing smaller parcels. Parcel access, with reference to sightlines, parking areas and access points need to be clearly identified by future development proponents.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

Policy 6.9.2 Any new development in the City Hall Precinct shall incorporate a tree planting program to define property or development boundaries, while promoting creation of adequate green space. Landscaping of parking areas in particular deserve a high priority.

Policy 6.9.3 The City will examine the feasibility of a downtown housing grant program to encourage residential development in such areas as Aberdeen, 102nd Avenue and the CN lands along 96th Street. Consideration may be given to density bonusing for landscaping and inclusion of underground parking.

Policy 6.9.4 Opportunities for social housing and housing developed by community organizations may be appropriate for selected properties in the City Hall Precinct which offer good access to medical and civic amenities.

Note: The layout of building and parking areas as illustrated on Maps 3A and 3B are conceptual in nature. Confirmation of building activities and land uses may contribute to alterations in the concept. The overall principles and ideas as expressed in the foregoing policies shall however not be compromised.

(Bylaw C-1130A - September 8, 2009)

7.0 Railway Lands

The area known as the Railway Lands is comprised of parcels near the Railnet (former CN) right of way between 98th Avenue and the lane situated between 97th and 96th Avenues. It is quite distinct from the balance of the downtown as businesses in this area are focused on service commercial use. It includes a significant component of professional service offices catering to other industries in Grande Prairie. There is very little retail commercial in this area.

The Municipal Development Plan suggests Mixed Use development for the lands south of 97th Avenue, and defines the immediate area to the north as a Redevelopment District. With minor exceptions, much of the Railway Lands is already developed, comprised to a significant extent of a series of buildings housing offices and small service business outlets. These buildings comprise a common architectural theme, are well maintained and each feature on-site parking. This type of use is highly appropriate and should be encouraged to continue. South of 97th Avenue consists of a mix of buildings, many older or with potential for redevelopment. The type of businesses that could be developed here ideally should mirror those to the north. Adequate screening is required to maintain an appropriate interface with the residential uses (south of the lane) that face 96th Avenue.

Perhaps reflecting the Redevelopment designation in the MDP, the area also supports a sizable modern apartment building at the northwest corner of 97th Avenue and 99th Street. While an anomaly, this building is reasonably well accommodated in the area, and given the relatively high quality of the various professional offices in adjacent blocks represents a suitable form of mixed use development. Other opportunities for residential are quite limited. However, long term redevelopment south of 97th Avenue could very well allow for either residential (that blends in with the neighbourhood to the south) or mixed use buildings which may have business accommodation on the main floor, with residential above. Either use, with parking to be provided on-site, will complement other business activities downtown.

The following policies apply:

Policy 7.1.1 The overall land use theme for the Railway Lands area should foster service businesses, with a development quality that complements the downtown. This requires architectural treatment of the building, suitable landscaping, and elimination of blank building walls.

Policy 7.1.2 For the properties south of 97th Avenue to the rear lane, new business uses should be encouraged. Other land use considerations include the following:

- ☐ Mixed use service commercial (largely offices) to be limited to the main floor, with residential use above.
- ☐ All required parking to be provided on-site.
- ☐ Development and retention of a landscaped buffer of at least 1.5m in width planted with evergreen shrubs along the rear property line.
- ☐ In view of adjacent residential use (to south), building heights should be restricted to three storeys, unless the development is part of a larger redevelopment that includes parcels facing both sides of 96th Avenue in which case a higher building height can be considered.

Policy 7.1.3 The Railway Lands area may be considered for a potential new downtown parking structure. In particular consideration is to be given to creation of a multi-storey parking structure east of the 101st Street alignment as part of potential Crystal Centre expansion, with the intent of supporting general downtown business activity. A preferred location for such a structure is the site south of the Crystal Centre between 101st Street and 100th Street.

8.0 Traffic and Parking

8.1 Introduction

The recommendations for the downtown area involve relatively few suggestions for traffic change or improvements. The Plan assumes retention of one (1) way west bound traffic on Richmond Avenue. Bicycle movements are best provided on roads with sufficient paved width for bicycle lanes. Policies acknowledge this. The potential for a transit centre also needs to be provided for, perhaps as part of a redevelopment in the Aberdeen area.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

Applicable policies are:

Policy 8.1.1 The City recognizes that downtown streets each serve specific functions. 100th Avenue to be made as pedestrian friendly as possible. Street surface and sidewalk development, as well as street furniture and lighting elements shall consider these distinctions.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

Policy 8.1.2 Consideration will be given to an examination that will determine whether a reduced number of required parking spaces is feasible for parcels fronting 100th Avenue. This may include the total elimination of parking requirements for certain businesses where the size of the business does not exceed a specific floor area, and for reconstruction of already established businesses that are rebuilt to approximately the same overall floor area. This review may take the form of an adjustment to the City Land Use Bylaw. On-site parking should be retained for residential land uses.

Policy 8.1.3 Expansion of the Crystal Centre arena and exhibit hall will add significantly to the demand for parking in the downtown area. To meet this additional demand and at the same time provide parking for downtown employees, the City may give consideration to providing for the building of a multi level parkade. The preferred locations include (but are not limited to) the following sites:

- ☐ the south or west surface lots adjoining the arena (refer to potential development opportunities on Map 2). Depending upon the location, the ground floor of the parkade could provide a small amount of commercial space to make it more pedestrian friendly. Such a structure is suggested to accommodate about 100 stalls per level on three or four levels.
- ☐ the current surface parking area north of 99th Avenue east of 102nd Street.
- ☐ an area currently used partly for surface parking, and partly for businesses, with the possibility of a smaller parking structure west of 100th Street between 98th and 99th Avenues.

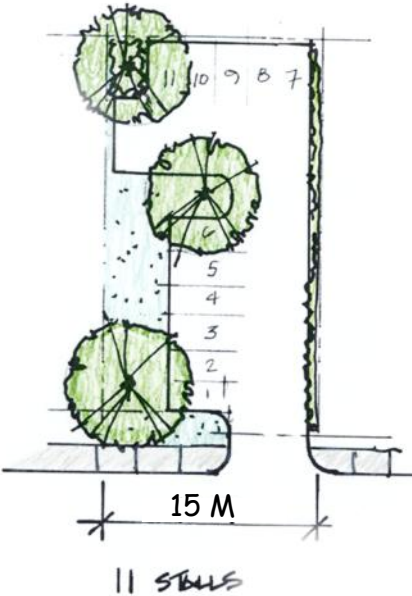
- Policy 8.1.4** Periodic reviews should be undertaken of the 2001 Parking Management Strategy to determine its effectiveness and to make adjustments as necessary.
- Policy 8.1.5** Appropriate bicycle lanes should be developed on 97th and 102nd Avenues, 99th and 102nd Streets and on other streets as well as circumstances warrant in the future.
- Policy 8.1.6** To facilitate both vehicular and bicycle traffic, completion of 102nd Street to 116th Avenue should be a priority consideration.
- Policy 8.1.7** Pedestrian safety and convenience is to be fostered by the provision of sidewalks along all downtown streets.
- Policy 8.1.8** Consideration for an adequately sized transit hub should be given to lands in the Aberdeen area, as part of a larger redevelopment and with attention to convenient access to major roadways.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

- Policy 8.1.9** The City will encourage the utilization, on a permanent or temporary basis, of vacant lots in the downtown for off street parking. The illustrations below provide examples of how this may be implemented, by inclusion of adequate landscaping to better blend parking with nearby commercial establishments.
- Policy 8.1.10** Ideally, new surface parking areas in support of 100th Avenue businesses should be situated on parcels between 99th Avenue and 101st Avenue to eliminate the need to cross through additional intersections.

Downtown Enhancement Plan

Off Street Parking –
Options for Vacant Lots

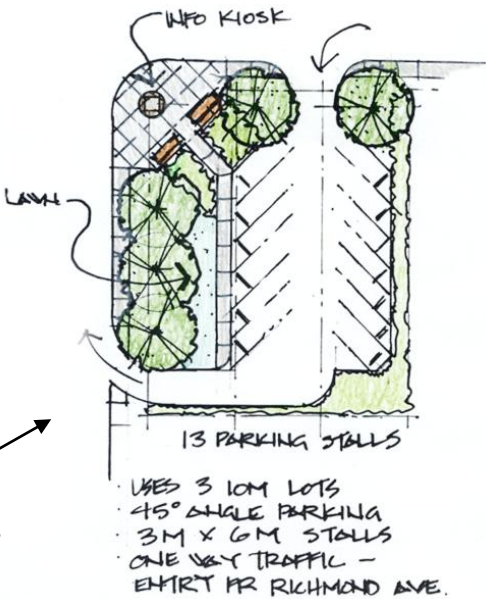


Mid Block Example



- USES 3 10M LOTS
- 90° PARKING
- 3M X 6M STALLS
- TWO WAY TRAFFIC
- ENTRY & EXIT FROM BOTH ADJACENT STREETS

Corner Lot Examples



- USES 3 10M LOTS
- 45° ANGLE PARKING
- 3M X 6M STALLS
- ONE WAY TRAFFIC – ENTRY FR RICHMOND AVE.

9.0 Implementation Actions

In order to implement the various policies and recommendations the following provides the key actions that should be undertaken.

- Formalize the policies and recommendations of this DEP by adopting the document in accord with provisions for an Area Redevelopment Plan under the provincial Municipal Government Act.
- The City will establish a consistent program of capital improvements directed to the downtown area. This should include road resurfacing, sidewalk improvements, curb replacement, planters and street furniture and similar initiatives. Such a program would benefit from advice on priorities by seeking advisory input from the Downtown Association, and should recognize financial contributions already made by downtown property owners.
- It is recommended that a detailed streetscape concept be prepared for 100th Avenue, embodying ideas and principles in this document, with priority actions placed on intersection improvements at Richmond Avenue at 100th Street, and Richmond Avenue and 99th Street. With development of the Montrose site, a streetscape plan for 99th Street leading into the Montrose site is also desirable (this can include finalization of a plan for narrowing the street pavement, improving parking, and enhancing pedestrian links and associated landscaping).
- Proceed with more detailed design, subject to phasing and budget limitations, by:
 - focusing on key areas along 100th Avenue (between 99th Street and 101st Street),
 - by establishing a program for Gateway design features, concentrating initially on the east and west approaches,
 - by redesigning and upgrading Jubilee Park, as an important green space feature in the city, which should complement Montrose site development and adjacent uses, and make provision for the east west greenway promenade,
 - set the design parameters for the east west green way as it extends along 102nd Avenue to Muskoseepi Park. This element requires appropriate consultation with neighbouring property owners and residents.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

Downtown Enhancement Plan

- The City and the Downtown Association in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce should initiate a multi-faceted marketing plan for the area that is supportive of:
 - proper signage at each entry into the downtown core,
 - creation of gateway entrance features (see Map 2 - Design Elements),
 - development of suitable pedestrian sidewalk upgrades along 100th Avenue and along 99th Street from 100th Avenue up to the provincial building on the Montrose site.

(Bylaw C-1130B - September 6, 2011)

- If possible, provision should be made within the downtown core for land assembly of smaller parcels in order to accommodate larger site/building initiatives, and minimize the need for future investors to deal with fractured ownership. This could be spearheaded through a downtown development corporation as a means of allowing businesses to contribute land, with shares to be issued in proportion to the assessed value of property placed in the landbank, and proceeds split on the same basis.

The following Action Chart is intended as the foundation for future long term planning and budgeting. It is provided for information purposes only.

Action Chart

Policy No.	Responsibility	Required Action(s)	Timing	Budget
NA	City Council	Adopt Downtown Enhancement Plan as an area redevelopment plan	Upon acceptance of document	NA
NA	City Council	Establish a Downtown Development Corporation or similar mechanism to permit land assembly in the downtown area in order to facilitate redevelopment of vacant or underused lands	Immediate and ongoing	Staff/Council to determine through stakeholder consultation
NA	City Council	Provide a supportive environment (land assembly, regulatory approvals) to community organizations wishing to develop housing in the Aberdeen area	Ongoing	To be determined
4.1.5	City and property owners	Develop design concept for 102 nd Avenue that integrates landscaped boulevard on north side, linking greenway to Muskoseepi Park	Medium term (5 to 10 years)	Budget to be defined for landscaped boulevard(s)
4.1.7	City Council	Prepare new design concept for Jubilee Park, then detailed design and construction	Within next 2 years	\$30,000 (estimate for concept)
4.1.8	City Council and Downtown Association	Continue promotion of downtown festivals/events; support downtown farmers market	First year, and ongoing	Downtown promotional budget
5.1.5	City Council	Ensure zoning in Land Use Bylaw (CC District) for 100 th Avenue provides for mix of commercial and residential use but limit residential to 2 nd floor of structure and higher. Apartment uses as primary use for lots abutting 100 th Avenue between 98 th Street and 102 nd Street should not be permitted	First year	Internal staff initiative, no special budget needed
5.2.4	City Council and Downtown Association	Enhance street intersections of 100 th Avenue and 99 th Street and 100 th Avenue and 100 th Street (upgraded bulb outs, solar trap seating structures, signage, landscaping)	First 2 years, with initial focus on improving 100 th Ave. and 99 th St. intersection	a) new concrete paved crossings (with score line pattern) \$28,000 b) new corner sidewalk paving (concrete & drop-curb gutter) \$30,000 c) solar trap shelters (4 including planter & irrigation) \$140,000 d) new street signage & poles (fluted, powercoat finish-4) \$6,000 Total: \$204,000

Downtown Enhancement Plan

Policy No.	Responsibility	Required Action(s)	Timing	Budget
5.2.6	City Council and Downtown Association	Establish two mid-block pedestrian crossings on Richmond Avenue (including new crossing, pedestrian lighting).	1 to 3 years	Approximately \$30-40,000 per crossing + design. Also allow \$10,000 for signs and marking and \$80,000 for activated amber flashing signals
5.2.10	City Council and Downtown Association	Encourage and adopt a tree planting program in downtown area	1 to 5 years	To be determined
5.2.16	City Council and Downtown Association	Proceed with actions leading to acceptance of clearly defined road name signage, including design and size standards; as well as adoption of pedestrian oriented street name signage for 100 th Avenue		Staff initiative with stakeholder consultation