

# SUCCESS FACTORS FOR GREAT SMALL DOWNTOWNS

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But we have to chat about where we have come from and why before we can begin to define a new path to better solutions

# COURTENAY'S DOWNTOWN

## a need for a clear VISION

- A “made in Courtenay” solution
- Different from the rest
- A dynamic Comox Valley approach
- Family-oriented and complete community
- Resilient, self-sufficient, can-do!
- urban/rural compatible

What does all this mean on the GROUND!

# CHALLENGES:

## 3 Types of Small Downtowns

1. **Bypass Town:** Get rid of business
2. **Tourist Town:** Focus on Tourism
3. **Smart Town:** Local first with tourism

# THE BUSINESS CASE FOR COMPLETE DOWNTOWNS

- Live, work, play, learn in downtown
- Be where the action is
- Infrastructure is in place
- Walk and Bike to health (young and old)
- Competitive edge: Unique downtown centre (right centre that fits place)
- Increasing responsible demand: buy locally, take transit and be where you work

**CREATE A  
COMPLETE  
DOWNTOWN**

**A Spirit of  
Unique Place**

**A Place to Shop and linger**

**Place to Live, Work and  
Learn**

**Place to Have Fun and  
Play**

How do we create the next great small downtown in Courtenay? (Take it from good to great)



# 6 Key Success Factors

1. **Be Small But Be Big:** Don't lose the PLACE
2. **Connect to Context:** Pedestrian first
3. **Be Special:** Be the best at what you do best
4. **Build Diversity:** Expand your mix and retain existing
5. **Infill Housing:** Add residential all around and inside
6. **Lead with Action:** Be part of the winning team



# 1. Be Small But Be Big

- Retaining the small town feel in a rural context
- Enhancing the welcome and orientation
- Creating an even friendlier place where residents and visitors feel safe and comfortable
- Enhancing Downtown as the place to be and where people connect

# FUN Orientation



**Family fun at the Eco-Centre**

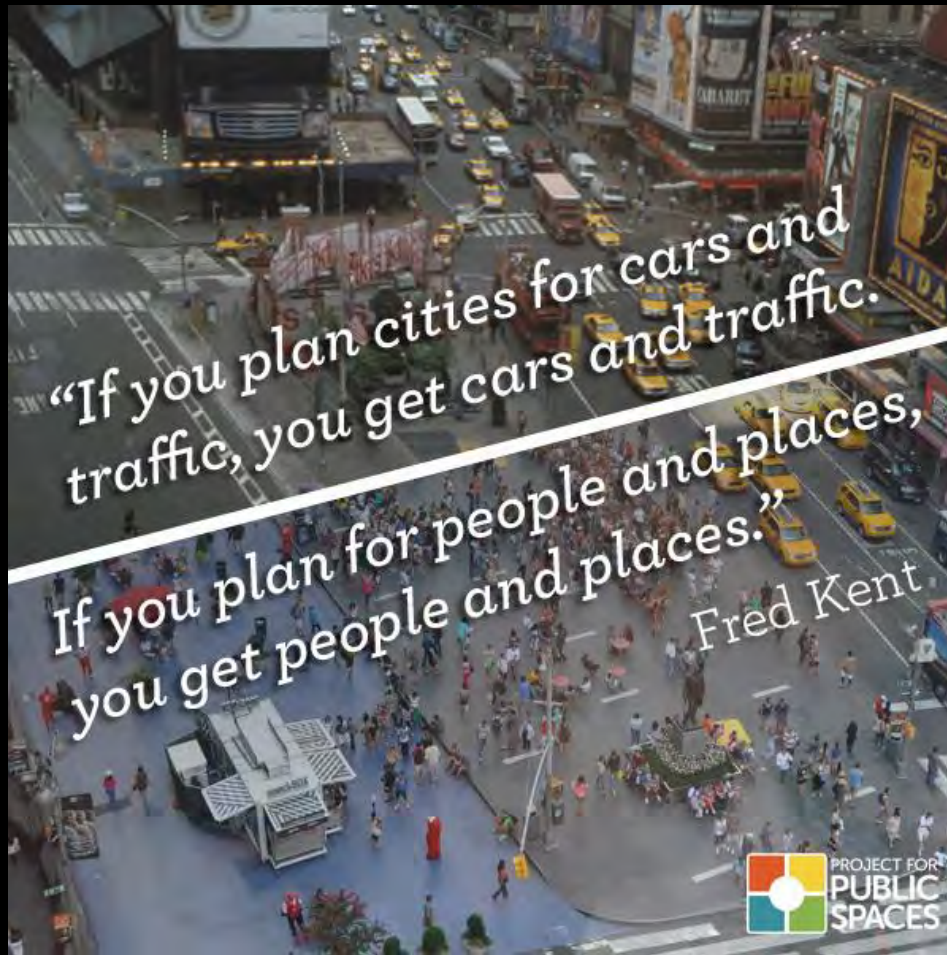


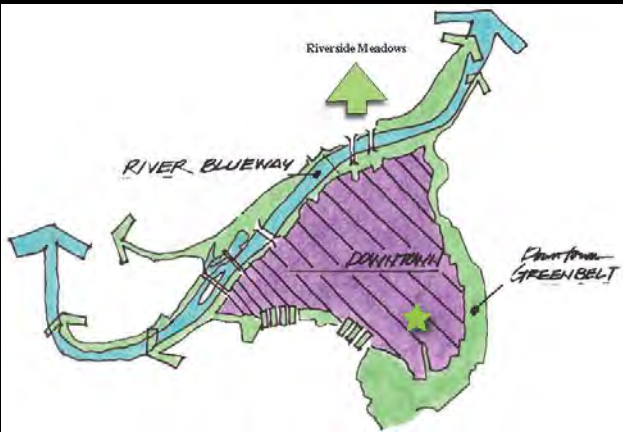
**Extension of activities into sidewalk**

## 2. Connecting to Context

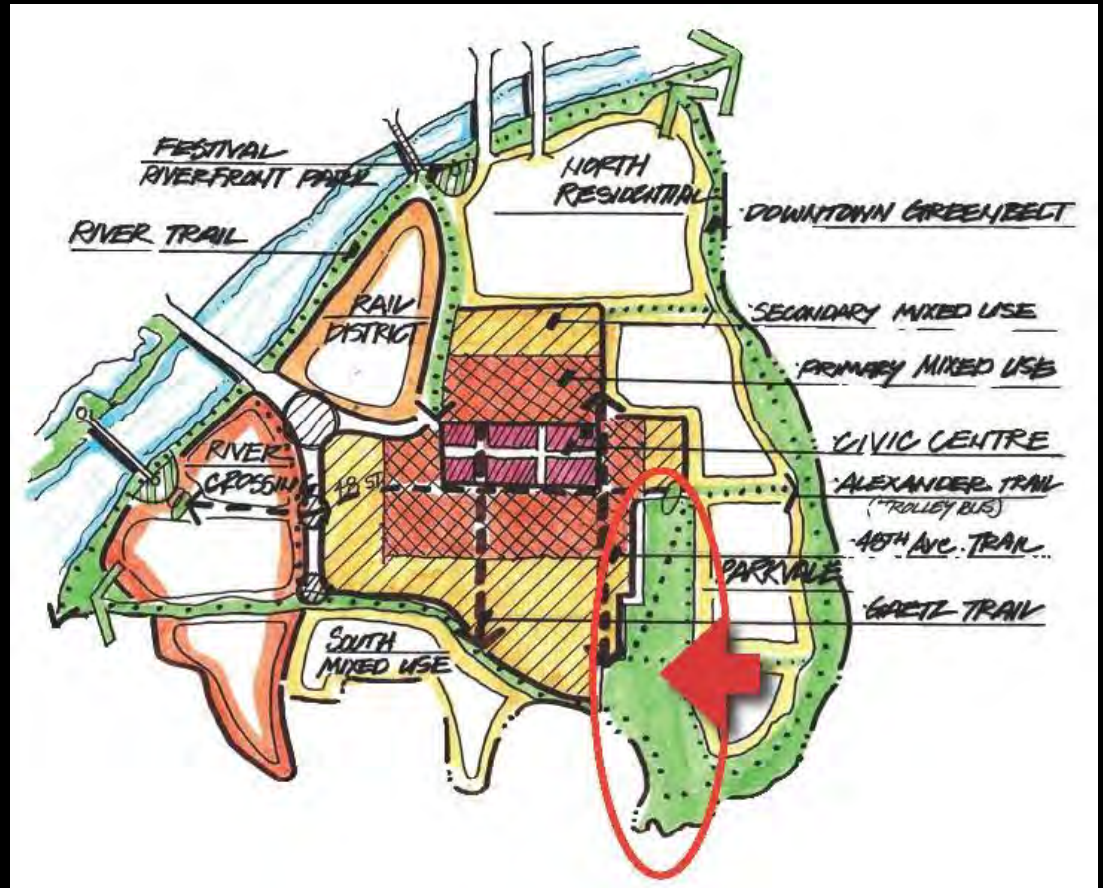
- Creating an improved pedestrian environment
- Connecting to the Courtenay River
- Connecting to the City and Comox Valley
- Creating a transit hub and priority schedule (safe, convenient, affordable)

# BALANCING CARS AND PEOPLE





How does Courtenay's Downtown relate to the rest of the CITY and the COMOX VALLEY?



An architectural rendering of downtown Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, showing a river flowing through the city. The rendering depicts a mix of modern high-rise buildings and traditional residential structures. A bridge crosses the river, and various green spaces and parks are integrated into the urban layout. The scene is viewed from an elevated perspective, highlighting the river's path and the surrounding urban development.

# How do we better connect the DOWNTOWN WITH THE **COURTENAY RIVER**?

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CITY OF RED DEER DOWNTOWN

# Riverway Potential



# Pedestrian Challenged?





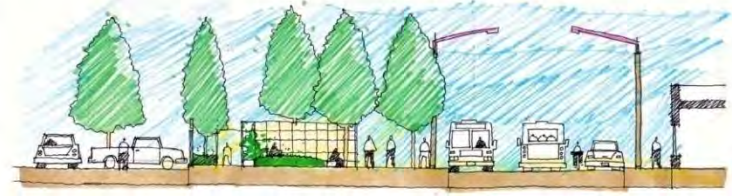
## 49 Street Promenade

49 Street is a direct north/south pedestrian route potentially connecting Alexandra Park and the Civic Centre to the City Centre Mall with wide street trees, public places, Civic uses and transit connections along the way that will activate this street throughout the day.

The 49 Street Promenade intersects with several important pedestrian connections. The south end could be anchored by a Civic building such as library facility with parking. Nearby at 50th Street is a bus stop for the transit commuter C-Line route. At the 49th Avenue crossing, which will also be a multiway route for the Trans Canada Trail, is a transit stop for local transit service surrounded by an enhanced green landscape or 'parkette' with seating, lighting, wayfinding information and trees around the existing covered area. Further north, the Promenade meets a new public gathering space, market area or special events plaza, surrounded by coffee shops, restaurants and local businesses or a potential Civic building. Over time, the route could be extended to connect with the City Centre Mall.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Potential Civic Anchor
  - 2 C-Line Transit Stop
  - 3 Parkette & Transit Stop
  - 4 Pioneer Square
- ◆◆◆◆◆ Trans Canada Trail - multiway



# 49 Street Promenade LEDUC DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

# TRANSIT STREET on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue



## Telford Park

The West End of Telford Park should become "Telford Waterfront Festival Park". The enhanced west end of the park could be a staging area for special festivals, outdoor concerts and movies. Reorganizing the parking to maximize the gathering area and introduce potential commercial uses (a restaurant and information centre and viewing tower) that complement recreational uses in the park. Telford Park could also be an alternative location for the Civic Anchor, although the preferred location is in the Downtown Core area framing the proposed Pioneer Square at Main Street and 49 Street.



**TELFORD PARK ENTRANCE OPTION #1**  
Retaining Existing and Adding A New Commercial Building



**TELFORD PARK ENTRANCE OPTION #2**  
Potential Civic Anchor and Other Facilities To Be Combined In One Location



Key Plan



**MVH**  
Urban Planning & Design Inc.

# Telford Park LEDUC DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Leduc, AB  
June 22, 2011



# 3. Be Special

- Create the best chocolate, pies and ice cream this side of Cochrane, Alberta (Mckay's)
- Create events and multiple sticky places (multiple destinations to linger and meet)
- Transform your streets
- Stand out on the Island!

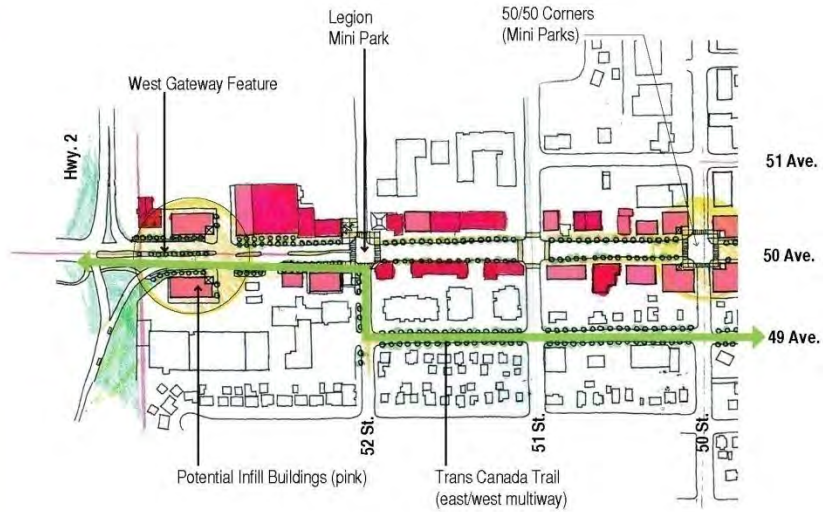
## West Gateway Into The Downtown

The western Downtown entry along 50 Ave., between Highway 2 and 50 Street has much potential for intensification. Currently defined by auto-oriented commercial properties with parking at the front or sides of the building, it is not welcoming or comfortable for pedestrians. It is also a connection point to surrounding neighbourhoods further north and west of Highway 2, as well as Fred Johns Park adjoining the Leduc Reservoir on the west side of Highway 2. Herb Reynar Park and Willow Park located to the north. This Character area may be enhanced by:

- Creating an entry feature in the centre median along with feature lighting and improved large narrow tree planting both on the centre median and along the street edges;
- Improving the multiway under Highway 2 and the associated Trans Canada Trail along Main Street (50 Avenue);
- Improving Way-finding and updating signage that identifies and distinguishes this area of the Downtown;
- Showcasing the airplane in front of the Legion building on the corner of 52 Street in a small pocket park setting;
- Infilling parking areas along the street with buildings and relocating parking behind;



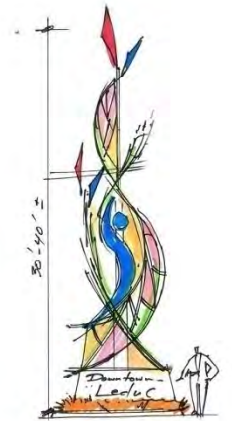
Cross Section Through 50 Ave. (Main St.) at West Gateway



Key Plan



Artist's Illustration of West Gateway Entry Feature & Streetscape



Provide an Art Competition to Design the Entry Feature

# West Gateway LEDUC DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

# Main Street Focus



**Diverse buildings**



**Pedestrians First**

**Rich streetscape in a contained space with angled parking and narrowed street**



Pioneer Square Destination Point along the 49 Street Promenade



Cross Section Through Pioneer Square - Daily Use Condition

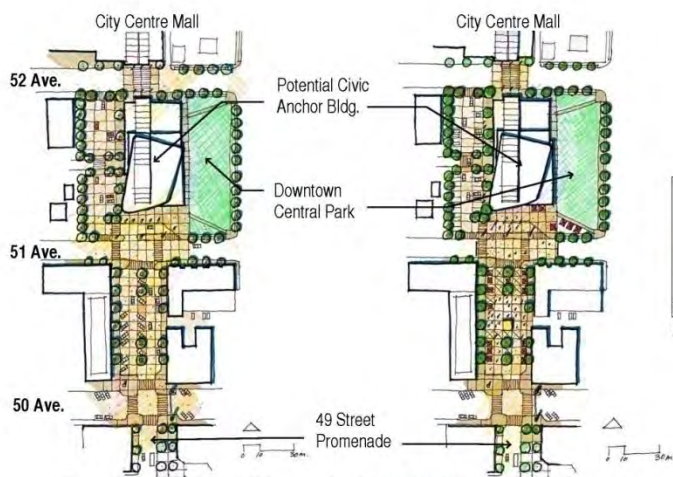


Cross Section Through Pioneer Square - Special Event Condition

### The Heart of the Downtown

A destination gathering space for public activities, facilities and services such as Library, Chamber of Commerce, Art Gallery, Cultural Centre, Community Development or government uses would create a hub of activity within the heart of the Historic Downtown. Pioneer Square could become the focal point along the 49 Street Promenade (between 50 Ave and 52 Ave.) where special events or festivals take place.

Special overhead entry features, special paving, and lighting within a flexible parking and plaza space would support daily activities as well as events, farmer's markets, outdoor cafe's and community gatherings!



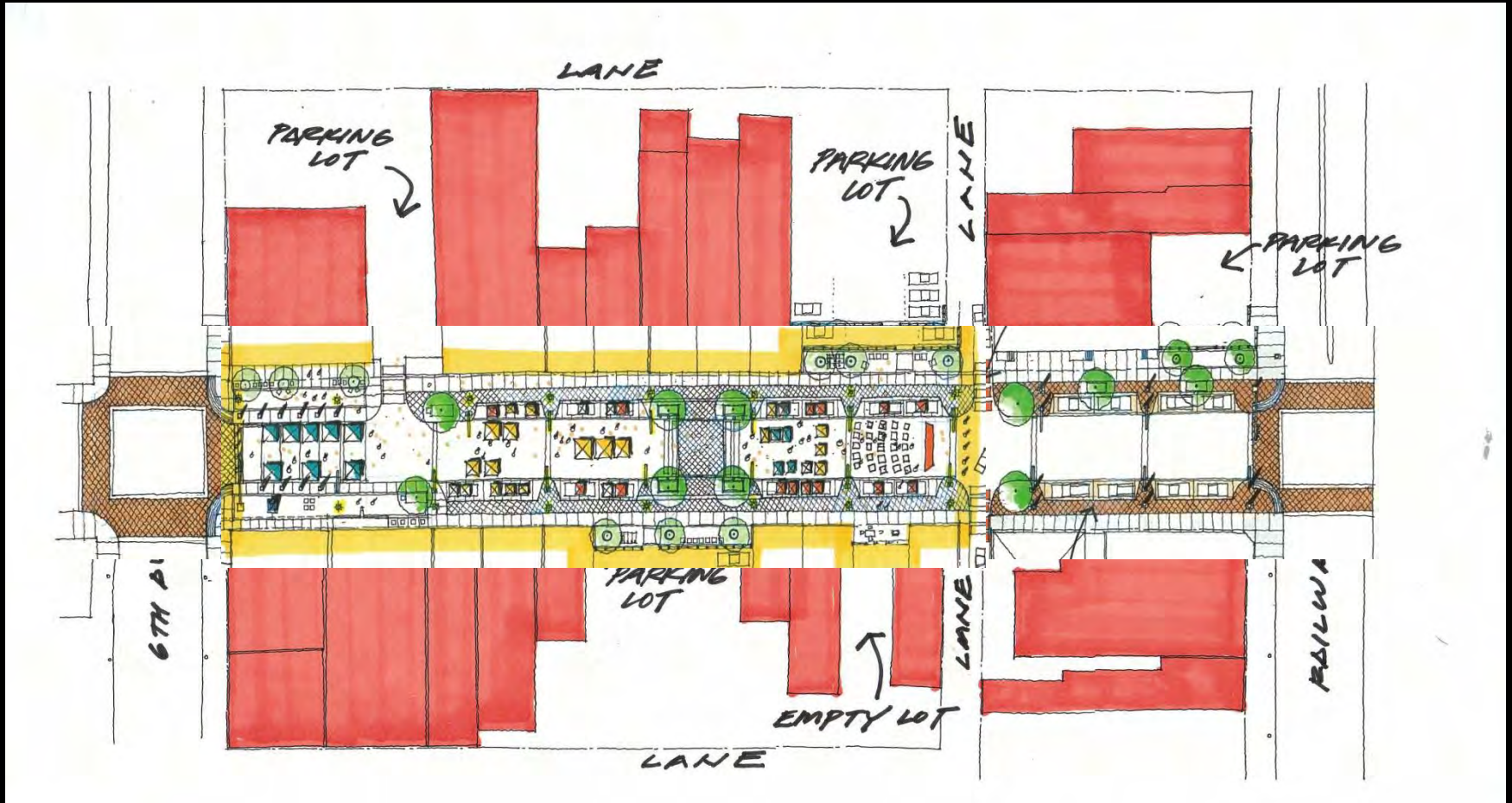
Artists' Illustration of Pioneer Square

# Transformation: ENTERTAINMENT STREET





# PILOT PROJECT Response



## THE EVENTS PLAN

from unique entertainment street to special event street

# Four Season Design



Possible features include fire pits to gather, chat, and warm-up summer nights



Weather protection and refuge



Plaza converts to skating rink in winter

## 4. Build Diversity

- Create a business retention and expansion strategy
- Keep you special retail, office, and institutional Downtown
- Build in “Medium Box” achors
- Complement and do not compete
- No net loss in parking and make it cheap

# Diversity is a Strength



# Medium Box Support



On the Outside Edge



Built in Box

# 5. Infill Housing

- Infill around the edge and inside Downtown
- Create street oriented units at grade
- Make it cool to live Downtown
- Bring seniors as part of the mix



## How Will Downtown Look?

Height guidelines will preserve the historic nature of the downtown yet allow higher residential or commercial mixed use buildings up to 6+ stories where appropriate, surrounding the historic downtown. Heights will be graduated from the historic centre according to market conditions, and will respect surrounding neighbourhoods.

### Original Building 1915

- Brick
- Rusticated Corners
- Arched Entry
- Fully Glazed Frontage
- Retractable Fabric Awning



### Future Potential Building

- Respect Basic Proportion/Composition
- Recall Original Arch Entry
- Glaze 2nd Floor Frontage

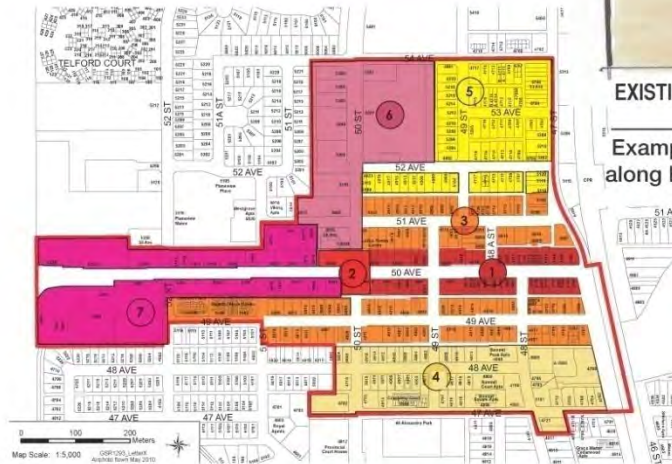
Create Side Entries To Sidewalk Terrace/Outdoor Seating



Key Plan (North Side - West end of 50 Ave.)

### Example of potential Infill development and architectural restoration along Historic Main St.

- 1 Downtown Core - 2 Stories Mixed Use
- 2 50/50 Gateway - Mixed Use
- 3 Downtown Core Transition Areas - Mixed Use, 3-6 Stories with graduated heights
- 4 Southeast Neighbourhood - Residential 4-6+ Stories
- 5 Northeast Neighbourhood - Residential 4-6+ Stories
- 6 North Gateway - Mixed Use with heights that respect surrounding areas
- 7 West Gateway - Mixed Use with heights that respect surrounding areas



The Downtown Precincts identified here will take on different development characteristics according to policies and guidelines identified in the Master Plan

## How will this plan be Implemented?

1. The Plan has comprehensive, yet easy to follow design guidelines that will be used to guide approving officers, developers and citizens through development plans.
2. The intent of the guidelines is to build on what's here and make it better, while respecting the small-town charm and historic qualities along Main Street.
3. The guidelines will have flexibility for contemporary designs apart from historic Main Street.
4. Mixed-Use buildings that contain retail, office or commercial uses on the ground floors with residential apartments above are appropriate and attractive to downtown settings. There will be guidelines for both commercial and residential infill developments.



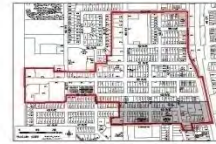


## Residential Infill Neighbourhood

This area is located east of 50 Street, west of 47 Street, south of 50 Avenue and is bordered by Alexandra Park on the south. The area is mix of single dwellings to apartments. This precinct has the potential for further residential infill housing in the form of apartments up to a maximum of 6 stories that will support the local services in Downtown. Having a variety of housing types offers more options for greater affordability and suitability for a mix of people. Having more people living in the Downtown, will provide a greater population base to support local businesses and increase the vibrancy of the neighbourhood. Housing types suitable for this neighbourhood are illustrated below (concept only) and depend on several factors. There can be many solutions including coach housing or carriage housing along lane-ways, semi-detached or duplexes, quadplex and apartments up to 6 stories.

This area could include the following improvements:

- Encouraging residential infill redevelopment generally up to 6 stories;
- Developing 49 Street as the major pedestrian and civic corridor through the neighbourhood;
- Developing the 49 Avenue multiway on the north edge of the Precinct;
- Investigating a second pedestrian/bicycle crossing at 49 Avenue and 47 Street in association with the multiway; and
- Supporting an office transition area on the south edge of the Downtown Core area;



Key Plan



Coach Housing



Semi Detached



Quadplex



up to 6 Storey Apartments

## Southeast Neighbourhood LEDUC DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

## 6. Lead with Action

- Begin with the end in mind
- Commit to action immediately
- Pilots Criteria: Broad support, funds in place, big bang for the buck
- Share the accomplishments

“If we don’t change our  
PROCESS the results will be  
the SAME” - Einstein



# Prioritize Your Moves

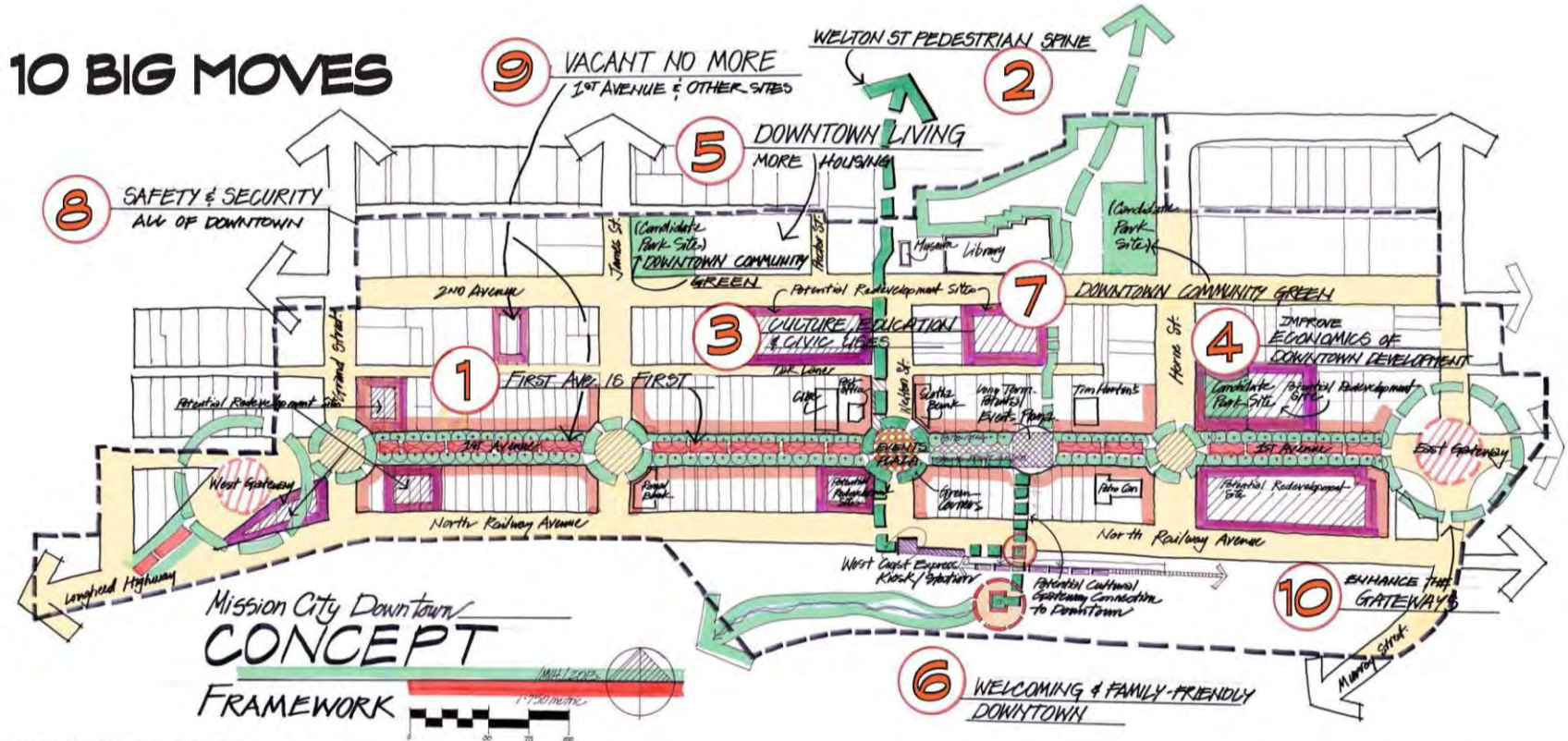


Figure 1. 10 Big Moves Concept Diagram

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> 1st is First – taking back ownership and control of the High Street (1st Avenue), relocating truck traffic and transforming 1st Avenue into a pedestrian-oriented Retail High Street that gracefully accommodates vehicles, deliveries, pedestrians and cyclists;</p> | <p><b>3</b> Bring Cultural, Education and Civic Uses Downtown - attracting a combination of civic, arts, and educational uses to the downtown to support a greater amount and diversity of people and activities;</p> | <p><b>6</b> A Welcoming and Family-Friendly Downtown - bringing a greater amount and diversity of people and activities to the Downtown and minimizing negative behaviour and activities;</p> | <p><b>9</b> Vacant No More - activating vacant sites or storefronts with community gardens, art displays and other interim uses and improvements; and</p>    |
| <p><b>2</b> Welton Street Pedestrian Spine - enhancing the public open space network connecting existing and future key destinations to improve pedestrian comfort, convenience and safety in the downtown;</p>   | <p><b>4</b> Improve the Economics of Downtown Development - introducing development regulations and incentives that improve the overall viability of downtown development and business opportunities;</p>             | <p><b>7</b> Downtown Community Green - creating a public park in the Downtown that provides green amenity space for residents and visitors; and</p>   | <p><b>10</b> Downtown Gateways - emphasizing the sense of arrival in the Downtown through distinctive private development and public realm improvements.</p> |
| <p><b>5</b> Downtown Living - increasing the number and diversity of people living in and adjacent to the downtown;</p>   | <p><b>8</b> Safety and Security - improving actual and perceived safety and security in the downtown.</p>   |   |  |

Project	Description	Priority	Responsibility
<b>SHORT TERM PROJECTS</b>			
1. Downtown Implementation Coordinator	The Coordinator will lead the implementation and event coordination and will be key to organization, partnerships and funding.	Short Term (immediate)	Coordinate the Downtown Improvements and Events with DPA and City
2. Street Tree Master Plan	A Street Tree Master Plan should be developed to infill streets deficient in trees in the downtown in order to add appeal to streetscapes.	Short Term (immediate)	City Parks Department
3. Façade 'Face-Lift' Program	Downtown business façade improvements will be initiated through a City-coordinated initiative that uses the downtown design guidelines and partners with business owners.	Short Term (immediate)	City Downtown Coordinator with Planning and Building Departments
4. Parking Porches Program	This innovative program will extend the existing street curbs to allow temporarily seasonal patios for expanded outdoor uses in the downtown core area. These parking patios will increase activity, provide space for outdoor patios without significant capital costs.	Short Term (immediate)	City Downtown Coordinator with Engineering Department
5. Gateway Features and Public Art	Location of gateway features at West Gateway entrance, 49 St. and 47 Street as illustrated in the Plan to create a sense of entrance, unique identity and as an attractive feature from QE 2 Highway.	Short Term (immediate)	City Planning and Engineering, Parks
6. Wayfinding/Signage Master Plan	Define an identity and program of communicating information, orientation and directions in the downtown area. Can be in the form of strategically located kiosks, colourful signage that conveys upcoming events, history and businesses.	Short Term (immediate)	Consultant in tandem with special DPA sub-committee coordinated with Planning and Engineering
7. Sidewalk Improvement Program	Improvements to sidewalks and intersections at 47 St., 49 St., 50 St. to calm traffic, reinforce pedestrian environment and safety and enhance shopping environment.	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	Detailed design required for sidewalks and intersections and capital allocation (Engineering)
8. Pioneer Square	Create a flexible outdoor event staging area at the end of 49 St. at 50 Ave. (see Plan) that could include weekly farmer's market, extended outdoor cafes, festivals, activity days, live entertainment and a focal point of civic events and activities (while providing a regular parking area otherwise).	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	Partnership with adjoining property owners and City Planning and Engineering
9. Downtown Corridor Upgrades	Increasing pedestrian and bicycle priority and safety in the downtown through the improvements to the following :		
	A.) 49 St. (Promenade) for pedestrian connections to Alexandra Park and Transit enhancement.	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	Complete 49 St. Promenade focus on street tree and sidewalk improvements (Planning and Engineering)
	B.) 49 Ave. (multifway/Trans Canada Trail adaptation) Bicycle access to downtown by diverting 50 Ave. multifway to 49 Ave.	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	Focus on bicycle lane improvements (Planning and Engineering)
	C.) 47 St. realignment for increasing parking capacity, define downtown boundaries and create improved pedestrian connections to Telford Lake.	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	47 St. realignment and parking/street improvements (Planning and Engineering)
10. Historical Building and landscape Inventory	Complete an inventory of buildings and landscapes of historical significance.	Short Term (1-5 yrs.)	Planning to coordinate study
<b>MEDIUM TERM PROJECTS</b>			
11. Telford Park upgrades	Upgrade the west end of Telford Park to increase public uses, accessibility and connectivity to the downtown.	Medium Term (5-10 yrs)	Parks coordination with other departments
12. Parking Expansion	City to acquire or lease land for additional parking to attain a 'no net loss of public parking' in the downtown with improvements and development.	Medium Term (5-10 yrs.)	Real Estate Department to review acquisition and lease opportunities
13. Downtown College Campus	The City should recruit a college campus for the Downtown to increase creativity, vibrancy and activity as well as attract associated businesses and a different customer base.	Medium Term (5-10 yrs.)	Downtown Coordinator with Planning and Economic Development

# First Things First: Raise the Community Market

Give Back NOW!



# COURTENAY Success Factors

## Connect

- Pedestrian First
- City, River and Valley
- To All Users

## Concentrate

- Use Mix and Retention
- Residential Ring
- Destination and Event Central

## Champion

- Civic commitment
- Champions
- Pilot Project Action Plans



# Your Downtown Potential ALIVE!



**THANK YOU**

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**SHAPING THE FUTURE BY DEFINING NEW BOUNDARIES**