



## **PART 3 POLICIES**

**A Historic Place**

**Diverse Experiences and Destinations**

**People-Centred Streets**

**Transportation Choices**

**A Green Neighbourhood**





## A HISTORIC PLACE



The historic buildings and public realm of Historic Downtown are the backbone of its unique character, contributing to the unique, human-scaled streetscapes and setting the neighbourhood apart from other areas in Abbotsford. By preserving the existing character and reinforcing it through new development, the neighbourhood can continue to be a historic destination.

### 3.1 Character Reinforcing Treatments

Use treatments and materials that reflect the authentic historic character of the Historic Downtown (refer to the Development Permit Guidelines in Part 4 and the Public Realm Guidelines in Part 5).

### 3.2 Historic and Expressive Installations

Integrate art, expressive installations, and local and historic artifacts into the public realm, including at Gateways and along Commercial Streets (Map 4).

### 3.3 Historic Buildings

Preserve buildings with historic qualities that have generally maintained their original materials and appearance, and were constructed around the 1950s or earlier (refer to the Development Permit Guidelines in Part 4).

### 3.4 New Buildings

Require that new development respect traditional lot patterns and be compatible with the scale, massing, orientation, limited setbacks, materials, and colours of neighbouring historic buildings.



Figure 4 – Character Reinforcing Treatments



Figure 5 – New Buildings



### 3.5 C.P. Rail Station

Relocate and restore the C.P. Rail Station to, or near, its original location south of Essendene Avenue and east of West Railway Street. If possible, integrate it with the West Railway Plaza and explore possibilities for indoor programming.

### 3.6 Demolition and Salvage

Use salvaged building materials where demolition occurs for landscaping, public art, and/or new building construction.



Figure 6 – C.P. Rail Station



## DIVERSE EXPERIENCES AND DESTINATIONS



Historic Downtown is a city-wide destination, and a cultural and social heart within Abbotsford. The entrepreneurial spirit and niche retail of the neighbourhood is the foundation of success by creating jobs; meeting residents' daily needs; and contributing to the area's vibrant and neighbourly quality. Building on this strong base of diverse uses, amenities, and celebrations will further establish Historic Downtown as a complete community with diverse experiences and destinations.

### 3.7 Views

Protect views from public open spaces to the mountains to the north and to Mount Baker to the southeast, as well as visual links to the City Centre, which is a 20 minute walk away. Update the Development Bylaw Streetscape Contribution Levy with additional target streets in Historic Downtown in order to reduce cluttered views along streets and from important vantage points by putting utility lines underground.

### 3.8 Gateways

Establish unique gateway treatments to create a strong sense of arrival to Historic Downtown at either end of Essendene and Montrose Avenues ("Neighbourhood Plazas" on Map 5). These gateways should indicate to travelers they are entering a unique place through the use of features that create visual interest – such as significant trees, public art, or plaza spaces – and a perceived street narrowing to slow vehicle traffic. Views into the Historic Centre should be reinforced in order to emphasize these gateway experiences.



Figure 7 – Views: Southeast towards Mt. Baker from George Ferguson Way



Figure 8 – Gateways





Map 5 – Parks, Plazas and Street Trees

### 3.9 Niche Retail and Complete Community

Support, maintain, and update as needed the policies and design guidelines in this Plan to further develop a specialized small-scale boutique and artisan niche retail market that capitalizes on the historic setting, while also providing commercial services that are necessary for a complete and affordable community, such as a grocery store.

### 3.10 Markets and Food Destination

Celebrate and support a local food culture that includes opportunities for farmers markets, and establish a year-round, weather protected market space that can be used for all types of markets, including farmers, crafts, artisans, and more.



Figure 9 – Niche Retail



### 3.11 Employment Lands

Foster a mix of employment opportunities by preserving the commercial land base.

### 3.12 Partnerships

Continue supporting ongoing dialogue and working relationships between the City of Abbotsford, the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association, and other neighbourhood partners to improve and promote retail and amenity areas. Work with local businesses to explore ways to encourage an expanded business sector, including retail and office uses, through initiatives such as branding, incentives, and “buy local” or similar campaigns.



Figure 10 – Markets: Abbotsford Farm and Country Market



Figure 11 – Festivals and Events: Jam in Jubilee

### 3.13 Festivals and Events

Continue encouraging festivals and events through public realm enhancements and programming, including the Abbotsford Farm and Country Market, annual Christmas Tree Lighting / Winter Jubilee celebration, Jam in Jubilee, and Berryfest.

### 3.14 Arts, Culture, and Community Facilities

Continue encouraging facilities and spaces that foster arts, culture, and community in and near Historic Downtown. Support for these facilities can include pedestrian and public realm improvements adjacent to them.

### 3.15 Public Art and Creative Expression

Build on existing strengths in public art and creative expression by maintaining and creating new sculptures, artistic street benches, and murals that celebrate Abbotsford’s history, culture, and setting.



Figure 12 – Public Art



### 3.16 Cultural Inclusivity

Recognize that some cultural and ethnic groups, including indigenous people and immigrants, are under-represented in Historic Downtown and establish spaces and ways of cultural representation that are inclusive of these groups' unique histories, perspectives, and experiences.

### 3.17 Social Services

Ensure that through redevelopment and investment in Historic Downtown social service needs are considered. Continue supporting social services and infrastructure that address vulnerable and higher-need groups.

### 3.18 Rental and Shared Housing

Support diverse housing types for a variety of households including purpose built rental and shared housing such as cooperative or communal living.

### 3.19 Multifamily Accessory Units

Support mixed affordable housing options such as allowing mortgage helper lock-off accessory units in multifamily developments.

### 3.20 Childcare

Support the needs of households with children in multifamily developments by allowing accessory childcare facilities in multifamily zoning in the neighbourhood.

### 3.21 Schools

Ensure the long term need for school facilities is met as the neighbourhood grows. In Historic Downtown this could be through repurposing and renovating existing facilities in and around the neighbourhood, and/or adjusting catchment areas for schools across the city to meet changing demands.

### 3.22 Fire Hall No. 6

Replace the current Fire Hall No. 6 (2427 West Railway Avenue) building from a functional, life cycle, and seismic perspective, as described in the Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service Master Plan. If the most appropriate new location to meet fire service objectives is determined to be within Historic Downtown, consider the vision of this Plan, and in particular the unique design and intent for Commercial Streets, to help mitigate impacts on the neighbourhood.

### 3.23 Rail

Buildings should consider the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Rail Proximity Guidelines and target minimum setbacks of 30m for residential and institutional uses, and 15m for commercial and other uses. Where this is not feasible, buildings shall be oriented to minimize the length of the building face along the rail corridor.



Figure 13 – Cultural Inclusivity





## PEOPLE-CENTRED STREETS



If buildings are the backdrop to public life, then the sidewalks and streetscapes – including the plazas and open spaces – are the stage. In Historic Downtown, these public spaces are fundamental to creating a vibrant street life, which in turn improves business prosperity, social wellbeing, and makes walking and cycling realistic transportation choices for all ages and abilities.

### 3.24 Spill Out Activities

Encourage spill out activities from businesses into the public realm, such as sidewalk patios, provided they maintain enough width for the pedestrian movement zone (refer to Part 5).

### 3.25 Plazas

Establish four neighbourhood plazas (Map 5) that provide opportunity for public life, enjoyment of views, and create anchors on important Commercial Streets. These plazas should primarily be intimate spaces but large enough to accommodate temporary, seasonal, or long term programming. Frequent access points from abutting sidewalks to the edges of these plazas and other open spaces should be provided. Additional size and design considerations can be found in the Street and Public Realm Guidelines in Part 5.



Figure 14 – Plazas



Figure 15 – Spill Out Activities





Figure 16 – Concept Rendering: West Railway Plaza

### 3.26 Accessibility

Require that all streetscapes and public building entrances be accessible. While improving accessibility of existing historic buildings, innovative design solutions should be considered that also retain prominent architectural features. Building ramps should not encroach onto the sidewalk.

### 3.27 Sidewalk Seating

Provide pedestrian seating on sidewalks and in parks and plazas. Prioritize areas with views, and along sloping streets in order to create opportunities for rest.



### 3.28 Commercial Street Improvements

Expand sidewalks and support high quality improvements to all pedestrian facilities along Commercial Streets (Map 4). These improvements should include street trees and landscaping, and sidewalk furnishings.

### 3.29 Restricted Access

Limit driveway access along Commercial Street frontages by requiring rear lane or shared access points to reduce vehicle interruptions in the public realm.



Figure 17 – Commercial Street Improvements



Figure 18 – Concept Rendering: Commercial Street Improvements



**3.30 Laneway Connections and Activation**

Ensure laneway and public right of ways provide opportunities for people to gather or travel between blocks (Map 13). Where laneways and right of ways are provided, support activating the space through public art, pedestrian lighting, temporary or permanent programming, spill-out activities from adjacent businesses, and more. These activities should be designed for compatibility with rear-building access, loading, delivery, and emergency services.

**3.31 Human Scale Design**

Create a street wall rhythm that corresponds to pedestrian scale and space in all commercial, mixed-use, and residential areas of the Historic Downtown (refer to Part 4).

**3.32 Welcoming Pedestrians**

Define and animate the base of all buildings to welcome pedestrians to enjoy their features and, in the case of commercial and mixed-use buildings, to come inside. Achieve this through transparency (i.e. ample glazing), windows that open, spill-out activities, and frequent entries accentuated through height, width, recesses, canopies, and/or landscaping. Avoid blank walls and articulate existing walls without windows and doors with features such as vertical gardens and murals.

**3.33 Weather and Light Protection**

Maximize possible access to light and solar gain, and provide protection from wind and inclement weather through building form, building alignment, surface articulation, overhangs and canopies, and materials and features that disrupt strong winds and provide shelter.

**3.34 Integration with Topography**

Optimize interest for pedestrians on active street walls on slopes by integrating uses and access points into the topography, stepping frontages up or down the slope and avoiding ground floor levels that are sunken below grade.



Figure 19 – Laneway Activation



Figure 20 – Laneway Activation



Figure 21 – Integration with Topography



### 3.35 Private Parking Structures

Encourage active ground-floor uses in above-ground private parking structures to reduce the negative impact of long, blank, inactive facades common to parking structures (refer to the Development Permit Guidelines in Part 4).

### 3.36 Vacant Storefronts

During business turnover, vacancy, or renovation, avoid boarding up of storefronts and instead use creative methods of “dressing up” storefronts such as temporary display space or public art. At a minimum, use clean, bright, professional materials, and avoid unkempt materials such as brown kraft paper.



Figure 22 – Vacant Storefronts

### 3.37 Underground Utilities

Work with developers and private utilities to transition overhead service connections into underground connections over time, particularly along Commercial Streets. This includes ensuring utility boxes are located underground as much as possible, or locating them away from sidewalk and plaza spaces, wrapped with attractive displays of art, landscaping, and/or cladding.



### 3.38 Street Animation

Encourage street-oriented activity along building edges to support a lively downtown by using the public right-of-way for outdoor activities such as patios for adjacent restaurants while maintaining width for the pedestrian movement zone (see Part 5). These could be provided in place of some curbside parking through seasonal or permanent installations.



Figure 23 – Concept Rendering: Street Animation BEFORE



Figure 24 – Concept Rendering: Street Animation AFTER



## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES



The success of Historic Downtown depends on the ability of people to travel safely, comfortably, and delightfully on foot. Pedestrians support street life, business prosperity, and social wellbeing – even people arriving by car ultimately become pedestrians. The neighbourhood’s small blocks, frequent street and pedestrian intersections, and buildings close to sidewalks mean people come to Historic Downtown to stroll and discover, a unique opportunity not available anywhere else in the city.

### 3.39 Integration with City Network

Integrate the neighbourhood with planned street improvements and strengthen connections into Historic Downtown, including with South Fraser Way, Essendene Avenue, and George Ferguson Way. Add redundancies to east-west vehicular travel outside the neighbourhood to improve cross-city travel and support local street changes such as slowing traffic in Historic Downtown. South Fraser Way is intended to provide multi-modal connections between Historic Downtown and City Centre, Clearbrook, and other centres and destinations.

### 3.40 Local Street Network

Further enhance the fine-grained street network to improve connectivity for all modes, including new connections through the former Clayburn Brick site, new lane connections in the Historic Centre, and potential surplus street and lane closures (Map 13).

### 3.41 Street Design

Design streets in Historic Downtown primarily as destinations and places for people to gather, and manage vehicle uses and speeds accordingly. Focus particularly on the Historic Centre (Map 3) and Commercial Streets (Map 4).

### 3.42 Rail Crossings

Design rail crossings in Historic Downtown to meet the needs of pedestrians and people on wheels (bicycles, wheel chairs, strollers, etc) with targeted improvements to achieve smooth, level, and safe crossings that meet Transport Canada regulations.



Figure 25 – Street Design



### 3.43 Pedestrian Network

Complete the pedestrian network by filling in sidewalk gaps, ensuring frequent, safe crossings are available to pedestrians throughout the neighbourhood as warranted (Map 6). Prioritize pedestrians in the crossing design, including curb extensions, automatic walk signals, and responsive signal changes. Integrate these connections with the laneways and public right of ways (Map 13).



Map 6 – Pedestrian Facilities



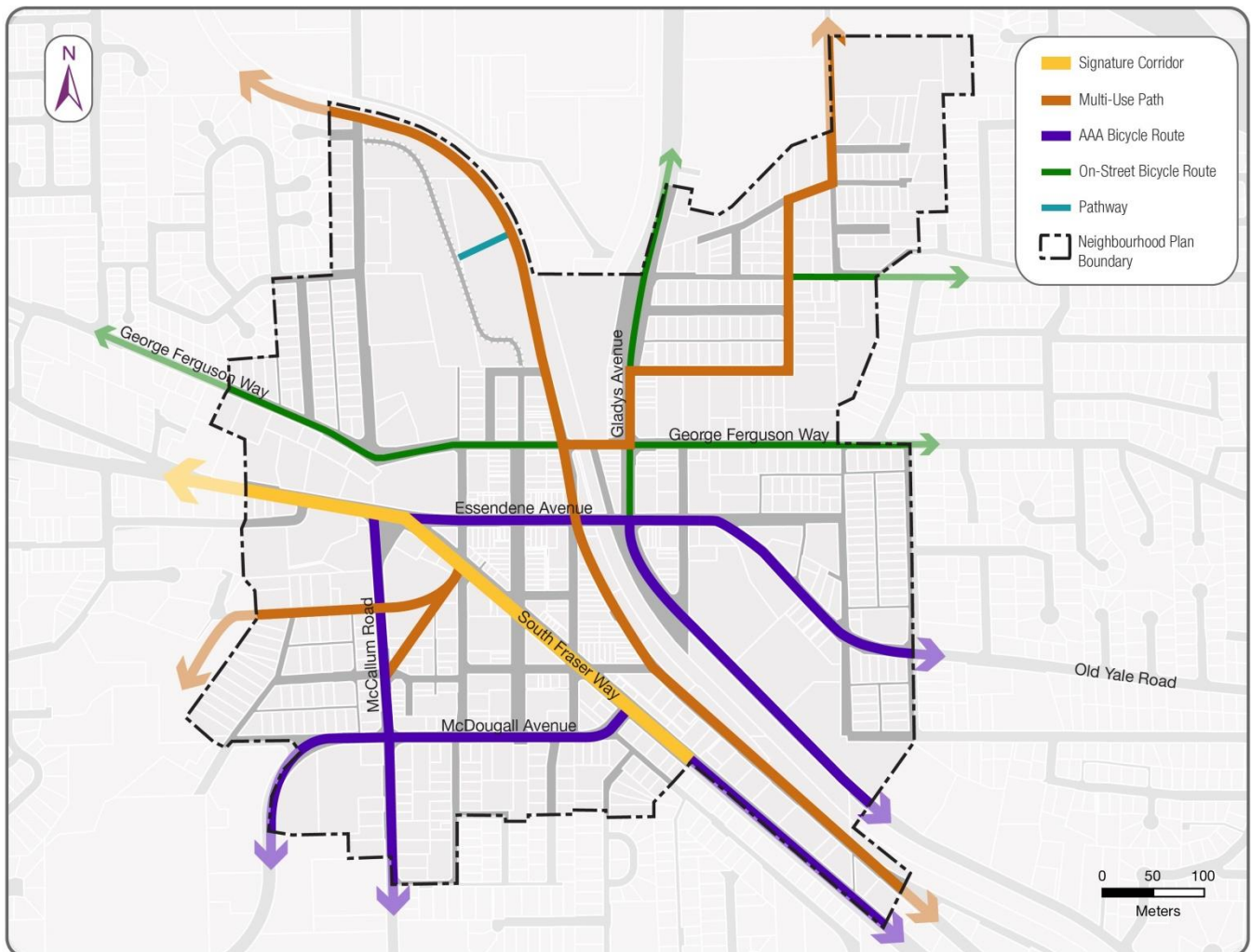


### 3.44 Bicycle Network

Establish a network of well-connected all-ages-and-abilities (AAA) bicycle facilities, including off-street paths, protected bicycle lanes on higher-traffic streets, and local street bikeways on lower-traffic residential streets (Map 7). To supplement AAA bicycle facilities, establish supporting facilities to expand the bicycle network in all areas of Historic Downtown. All facilities should be constructed with a uniform, smooth surface material such as asphalt.



Figure 26 – Protected Bike Lane

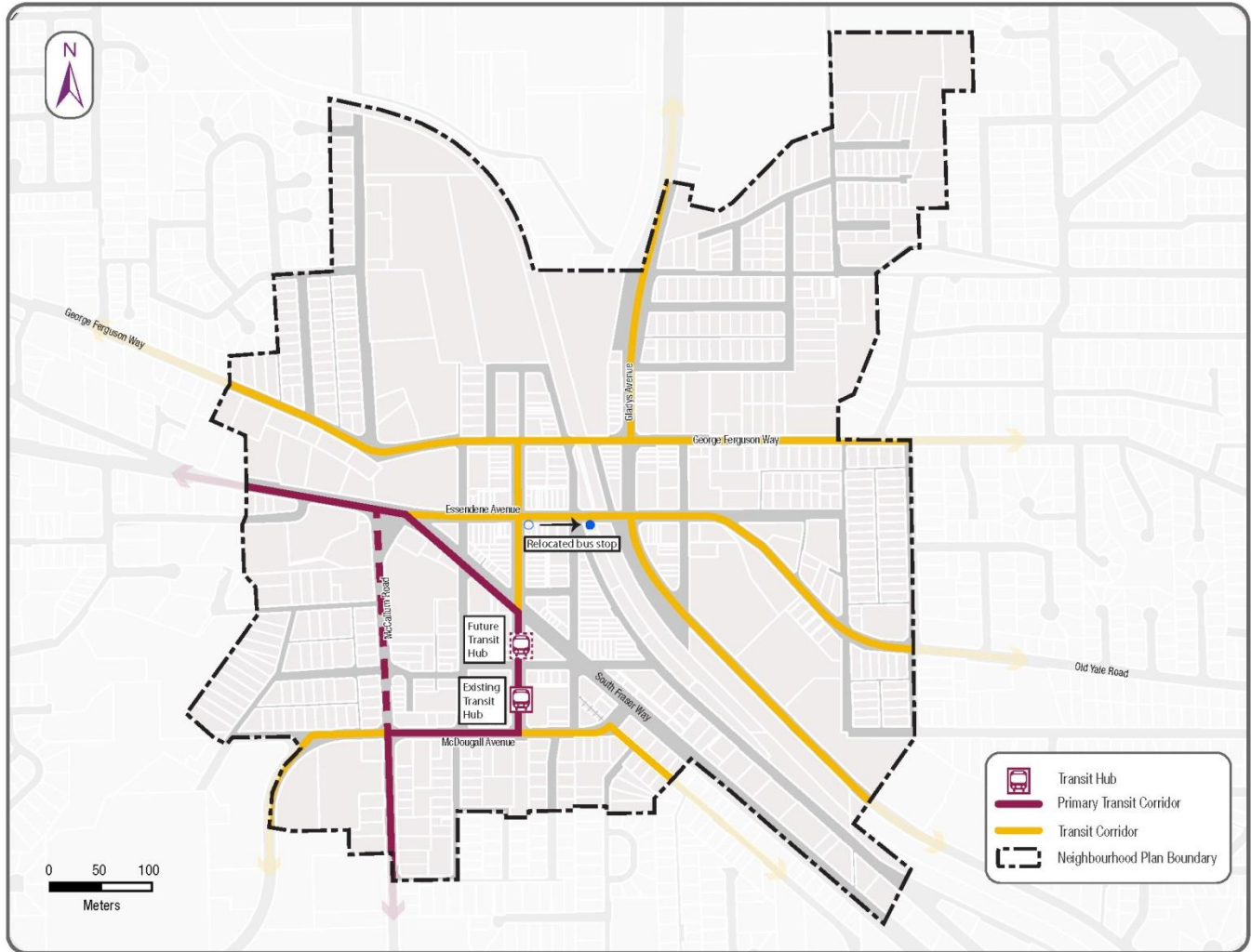


Map 7 – Pathways and Bicycle Facilities



### 3.45 Transit Network

Strengthen direct public transit connections from Historic Downtown to other areas of the city with the Primary Transit Corridor and supporting Transit Corridors (Map 8). In addition, relocate the transit stop on the southeast corner of Essendene and Montrose to the southeast corner of Essendene and West Railway. Other stops may be relocated as determined in the future.



Map 8 – Transit Facilities



### 3.46 Transit Hub

Create a high quality Transit Hub on the two southernmost blocks of Montrose Avenue, considering the following elements:

- A public plaza at the northwest corner of McDougall and Montrose Avenues
- High-quality pedestrian crossings at all intersections.
- Safe, well-lit, comfortable, and weather-protected seating and waiting areas.
- A publicly accessible washroom facility integrated into an adjacent building or amenity.
- Reduced bus layover to mitigate air quality and noise impacts.

### 3.47 Frequent Transit Access

Work with BC Transit to support increased frequency of transit service so that all areas of Historic Downtown are within a 5-minute walk (400m of street network distance) of frequent transit stops.



Figure 27 – Concept Rendering: Transit Hub on Montrose Avenue  
(view north from McDougall Avenue)



### 3.48 Redesign Essendene Avenue

Redesign Essendene Avenue as an important destination street that prioritizes shopping, walking, and biking by expanding and improving pedestrian facilities and establishing all-ages-and-abilities cycling facilities. Reallocate the existing four mixed-movement vehicle lanes into two through lanes and a centre left turn to separate turning traffic from through traffic. Keep existing on-street parallel parking. Use the resulting right-of-way space to increase and enhance sidewalks, provide space for spill-out activities, and add bicycle facilities. Consider adding street tree pockets within the parking lane.



Figure 28 – Concept Rendering: Essendene Avenue

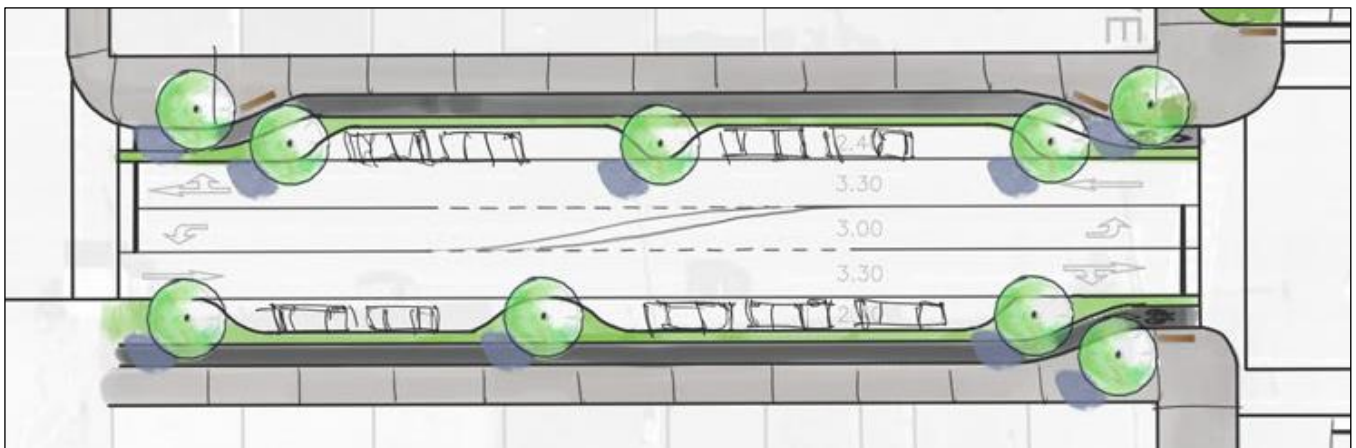


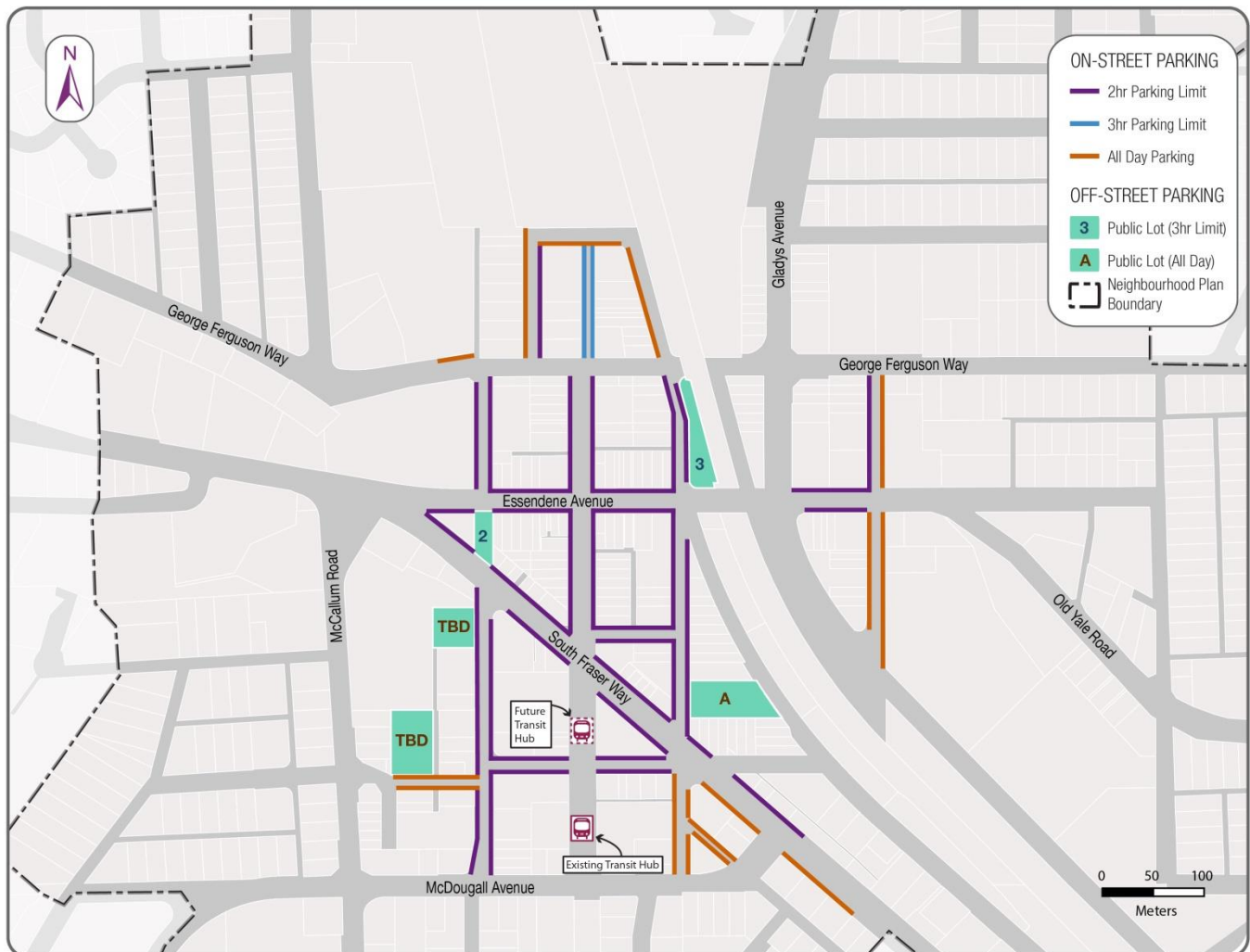
Figure 29 – Corridor Sketch: Essendene Avenue

### 3.48 On-Street Parking

Use on-street parking for customers and short term visitors to Historic Downtown, and manage it accordingly. Particularly consider the needs of Commercial Streets and establish occupancy targets according to best practices to help guide on-street parking management (Map 9).



Figure 30 – On-Street Parking



Map 9 – Existing Parking Facilities



### 3.50 Off-Street Parking

Use off-street parking for employees and long term visitors to Historic Downtown, including underground parking and parking structures with active ground floor uses. For long term parking needs, use the City-owned parking lot between West Railway Street and Montvue Avenue for a future multi-level parkade. Consider proximity to Commercial Streets in helping determine the most appropriate management approach (Map 9).



Figure 31 – Off-Street Parking

### 3.51 Parking Study

Conduct a parking study to understand overall parking supply, occupancy, duration, and turnover. Use the findings to develop a long term strategy for providing parking in the neighbourhood, guided by the policy directions of this plan. It should include the following:

- a. Determine the appropriate neighbourhood parking supply, considering future residential and commercial growth, and transportation shifts to more transit, walking and biking.
- b. Update existing programs and policies, such as the cash-in-lieu contributions in the Zoning Bylaw, parking management approach, occupancy benchmarks, inventory and occupancy studies, enforcement, pricing, permit areas, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) practices, and more.
- c. Create trip planning tools such as wayfinding, digital apps, and signage to provide efficient information about parking availability and location.
- d. Establish a parking district to manage parking demand and coordinate supply and cash-in-lieu contributions that aligns with other downtown administrative tools such as the Business Improvement Area.



## A GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD



Jubilee Park and the numerous steep slopes, watercourses, green spaces, and flood plains in and around Historic Downtown create beauty and form an important part of its character and ecological function. Green spaces and networks also support stormwater management, recreation and social interaction, connection to nature, and retreat from the sights and sounds of busy urban areas.

### 3.52 Tree Canopy

Enhance and manage the urban tree canopy (Map 10) through tree protection and tree replacement in concert with the growth objectives of this plan.



Map 10 – Existing Tree Canopy



### 3.53 Street Trees

Plant and maintain street trees on all streets, ensuring they are pruned to branch at heights above 3m in order to provide clear sight lines to storefronts and sign bands on building facades. Over time, transition street trees to align with the Signature Corridor and Commercial Streets themes below in the locations shown on Map 5.

#### Signature Corridor

Alternate the use of all trees along the Signature Corridor to create a pattern and sense of rhythm along the street. This could be in ones, twos, or threes as fits the context.



**Tree one:**  
Kentucky coffee tree  
*Gymnocladus dioicus*  
(source: whatgrowsthere.com)



**Tree two:**  
Silver linden  
*Tilia tomentosa* 'sterling silver'  
(source: pnwisa.org)



**Tree three:**  
Ash  
*Fraxinus americana* 'autumn applause'  
(source: urbanforestnursery.com)

#### Commercial Streets

Use the primary tree as the most frequent and predominant tree along Commercial Streets, and use the feature trees in prominent and feature locations.



**Primary tree:**  
Cappadocian maple  
*Acer cappadocium* 'aureum'  
(source: hillier.co.uk)



**Feature tree one:**  
Japanese snowbell  
*Styrax japonica*  
(source: monrovia.com)



**Feature tree two:**  
Persian ironwood  
*Parrotia persica* 'vanessa'  
(source: westonnurseries.com)





### 3.54 Jubilee Park

Continue to support and improve the facilities and programming within Jubilee Park, which is an important neighbourhood amenity that also has a city-wide draw during special events. Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) principles during upgrades, and improve pedestrian connections to and from the park and surrounding areas.

### 3.55 Public Open Space

Meet the public open space needs of the neighbourhood by providing greenways, plazas, trails, parks, treed streets, seating areas, and more. These should be considered collectively when determining the specific park area requirements identified in other master plans.

### 3.56 Natural Area Protection

Consistent with the Natural Area Development Permit Guidelines, protect natural and sensitive areas including steep slopes and streams through development setbacks and managing human access to these places.

### 3.57 Willband Creek

Celebrate natural features such as Willband Creek with design gestures that raise awareness about the area's bioregional context. For example, where Willband Creek is piped, provide educational signage or other design features such as rain gardens that help restore ecological links.

### 3.58 Trail Connections and Greenways

Use existing green networks to establish trail connections and greenways – which are characterized by abundance tree plantings and landscaping, naturalized green spaces and habitat, and integrated stormwater management infrastructure – in the following ways:

- a. Working with neighbouring areas to establish a trail connection or greenway from Mill Lake Park through Farrant Crescent to Ravine Park and Jubilee Park, and that integrates further eastward with the pedestrian network in the Historic Centre that ultimately connects to the trail in Walnut Park; and
- b. Establishing a new multi-modal connection or greenway along West Railway, leveraging the somewhat naturalized character of the railway corridor, and providing a connection between the new development at the former Clayburn Brick factory site and planned West Railway Plaza, and further south



Figure 32 – Street Trees

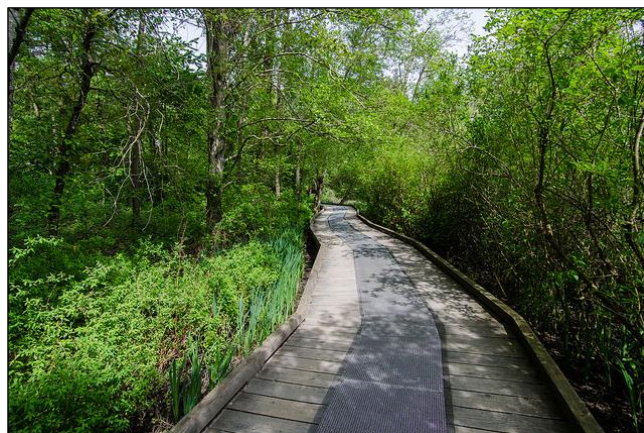


Figure 33 – Trail Connections and Greenways



### 3.59 Rainwater Management

Adopt integrated rainwater management practices on roofs, parks, streets, and parking areas, particularly in the Historic Centre where the traditional block pattern and small-scale lots prevent a significant amount of infiltration on private lots.



Figure 34 – Rainwater Management



Figure 35 – Concept Rendering: Rainwater Infiltration

