



PART 6 IMPLEMENTATION

Financial Strategy

Zoning Bylaw

Business Improvement Area

Parking Study

Sign Bylaw

Outdoor Patios and Encroachment

Development Bylaw



FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Historic Downtown financial strategy is intended to assist in the orderly, predictable, and equitable development of the neighbourhood and is based on the principle that those creating additional demand and burden to the infrastructure pay for it. Generally, development is required to provide and pay for the infrastructure needed to support their development, and the City does not finance, nor provide infrastructure required for development. As such, the Transportation and Utilities sections in Part 5 identifies general infrastructure needed to support the entire Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan area.

Developer Responsibility

As individual properties are developed in Historic Downtown, the developer is responsible to provide the infrastructure needed to support their individual development proposal. This may include frontage infrastructure works (with potentially enhanced finish and furnishings) as well as applicable offsite infrastructure works. In other words, the developer constructs and pays for the infrastructure needed to support their development proposal.

Applicable latecomer agreements may be an option if “excess” or “extended” infrastructure is required that benefits other developable properties along the upgraded infrastructure. This provides the developer a tool to collect from future benefitting developments for a maximum period of up to 15 years.

Capital Programs

The City may decide to upgrade some of the infrastructure within or around Historic Downtown if there is a benefit to the broad community. For example, the City may decide to fund a specific transportation project such as building a parkade on City-owned land or upgrading the public realm of a target street in the neighbourhood. The infrastructure that may be funded through the capital program is unknown at this time.

Grants

Senior government grant programs are constantly changing and there may be future opportunities for some infrastructure to be funded through these programs. Generally, these programs do not fund growth related projects but are available for more broad and strategic initiatives such as green infrastructure to reduce the community impact on the environment, or affordable housing partnership projects. The City may determine the need for a project in Historic Downtown aligns with an available grant program at any time during the life of this plan, and proceed with applying for and implementing that project.

Development Cost Charges

The City has a Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw to set fees that are collected from developers to offset some of the infrastructure costs incurred as a result of new development. The rates of fees are updated from time to time based on the need for projects to meet the demands of growth across the City.

If any of the infrastructure works identified in the Historic Downtown servicing study are included in a future DCC Bylaw, there may be opportunities for rebates and/or credits to be applied to the specific infrastructure works. The infrastructure that may be included in future DCC Bylaws is unknown at this time.



ZONING BYLAW CHANGES

The City of Abbotsford's *Zoning Bylaw* has several regulations specific to Historic Downtown that should be reviewed in the context of this neighbourhood plan. Each regulation is listed below, along with preliminary new directions that could be refined into new regulations to present to City Council for implementing this plan.

C7 – Historic Downtown Commercial zone

Context

The C7 zone was created in 2002 to both encourage and discourage specific property uses in Historic Downtown. At the time it was developed the neighbourhood had seen a period of decline and disinterest, along with the influx of 'undesirable' uses. While the zone has had a positive impact on the neighbourhood over the past 15 years, there are particular regulations, uses, or conditions inhibiting more creative and flexible use of buildings.

In addition, the permitted development density of the zone is 1.75 FSR with an additional 1.0 FSR bonus based on providing the required off-street parking underground. While this density can be achieved on larger sites where underground parking is feasible, it is challenging to achieve it on the historically small and narrow properties nearer the historic core.

Proposed Direction

The feedback received through the neighbourhood plan process indicated a desire to update or replace the C7 zone so it is ready for new and future uses, and to align the density and development regulations with the neighbourhood plan direction. This could include the following:

- Additional permitted uses in either primary or accessory roles to support more diverse business opportunities and flexible use of buildings
- Refined existing uses
- Height limits to match the neighbourhood plan land use designations
- Ground floor retail requirements to match the neighbourhood plan Commercial Streets
- Maximum and minimum setbacks in order to provide modest flexibility during redevelopment to increase public space along building facades



Off-Street Parking Reductions

Context

The Zoning Bylaw regulates the amount of off-street parking that is required for different uses. In Historic Downtown there are reductions in the amount of parking required that apply based on the property location and use. In addition, certain conditions allow a property to pay a cash-in-lieu fee of \$3,000 per parking stall for up to 10 required parking stalls.

Although the off-street parking reductions have been used by some developments in Historic Downtown, they do not take into consideration all of the property constraints, the new uses and development direction of the neighbourhood plan, or the market value of constructing underground or structured parking.

Proposed Direction

The feedback received through the neighbourhood plan process indicated a desire to update these off-street parking reduction provisions in anticipation of future uses and new development opportunities. These updates will also consider the results of the Parking Study (policy 3.48) and could include the following:

- Align the parking reductions with the business improvement area or neighbourhood plan land uses
- Additional parking reductions on historically small and narrow properties
- Market based prices for purchasing off-street parking stalls that will be used for providing additional parking in the future, possibly through the construction of an above ground parking structure.
- Ability to pay for more than 10 required off-street parking stalls

The parking reduction areas could align with other administrative tools in Historic Downtown such as the Business Improvement Area, Revitalization Tax Exemption, and potential Parking District to ensure a coordinated approach to implementation.



BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Historic Downtown has several existing and potential new implementation tools to help encourage and support the growth of the neighbourhood. Existing tools should be updated to align with the physical boundaries and policy directions of the neighbourhood plan, and new tools could be introduced to further support the neighbourhood plan vision.

Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area

Context

The *Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area Bylaw* was created in 1994 by the District of Abbotsford as a way to levy revenue for business improvement activities. These activities include general beautification and encouraging business activity in the area. In the most recent decade of the levy it has generated \$2.5 million in revenue for reinvesting in downtown activities.

Proposed Direction

With the neighbourhood plan creating a clear vision for the neighbourhood, aligning existing bylaws and other implementation tools should be completed. In this case, the improvement area map should be aligned with the Historic Centre and Urban Centre Mixed land uses of the neighbourhood plan. This change would include all existing C7 zoned properties, in addition to other properties along the edges of the neighbourhood where the neighbourhood plan land use supports a change from current zoning into the downtown C7 zone (e.g. the redevelopment of the former Clayburn Brick lands). It would also result in some properties being removed from the improvement area, most notable along Gladys Avenue south of Old Yale Road.

In addition, the bylaw revenue limit could be removed in its entirety (it was recently increased from \$300,000 to \$600,000 with Bylaw No. 2818-2018). This revenue limit removal would mean that as the downtown area sees growth and success, so the business association would be provided with more resources to continue improving the area, creating a self-supporting positive feedback mechanism that provides long-term funding.

Finally, a name change for this bylaw would help clarify the area where it applies. As it is currently titled, the reference to “east” could be confusing as the neighbourhood is in the central urban area, whereas a reference to “downtown” would bring it into alignment with the Tax Exemption Bylaw (see below).

The Business Improvement Area could align with other administrative tools in Historic Downtown such as the Off Street Parking Reductions, Revitalization Tax Exemption, and potential Parking District to ensure a coordinated approach to implementation.



Abbotsford Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption

Context

The *Abbotsford Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw* was created in 2005 as a way to stimulate the renovation and improvement of buildings in Historic Downtown through a 5 year deferred property tax program for commercial construction projects with an aggregate cost of at least \$100,000. Since its inception it has resulted in numerous projects that have contributed to a positive trend in the improvements of old buildings or construction of new buildings.

Proposed Direction

With the neighbourhood plan creating a clear vision for the neighbourhood, aligning existing bylaws and other implementation tools should be completed. In this case, the revitalization area map should be aligned with the Historic Centre and Urban Centre Mixed land uses of the neighbourhood plan. This change would include all existing C7 zoned properties, in addition to other properties along the edges of the neighbourhood where the neighbourhood plan land use supports a change from current zoning into the downtown C7 zone (e.g. the redevelopment of the former Clayburn Brick lands). It would also result in some properties being removed from the improvement area, most notable along Gladys Avenue south of Old Yale Road, which do not have a direct link to the core Historic Downtown area.

In addition, reviewing and determining whether new construction continues to be part of the exemption bylaw should be completed. The current bylaw enables the exemption for both new construction and renovations or alterations to existing buildings. As the neighbourhood matures it may be necessary to continue supporting renovation exemptions, while allowing new construction to be viable based solely on market conditions with out tax exemptions.

Finally, a figure should be added to show the “revitalization area” where the tax exemption applies, as currently only text is used to reference a map in the Official Community Plan (OCP) that was removed when the OCP was updated in 2016. This removal was intentional in anticipation of completing more detailed neighbourhood plan work that would potentially refine the boundary.

The Revitalization Area could align with other administrative tools in Historic Downtown such as the Off Street Parking Reductions, Business Improvement Area, and potential Parking District to ensure a coordinated approach to implementation.



PARKING STUDY

Context

Historic Downtown is beginning to face parking pressures on select streets in the core retail area on specific days of the week and at specific times of day. As there area continues to grow and attract more businesses, customers, and visitors, the parking pressure will not diminish. The neighbourhood plan contains policy direction about the different functions of on-street and off-street parking, and to conduct a comprehensive parking study.

Proposed Direction

Based on the estimates and research conducted in the neighbourhood plan process, Historic Downtown overall has sufficient parking supply today that is not effectively managed. The plan also contains policy direction about conducting a parking study that would include many different aspects of on-street and off-street parking function, such as:

- Parking management practices (block specific time limits, permits, meters, etc)
- Parking occupancy and duration best practices
- Zoning Bylaw exemptions and cash-in-lieu options
- Above ground parking structure feasibility

The City currently owns land that has been identified as suitable for providing additional parking with an above ground parking structure between Montvue and West Railway Avenues, just north of South Fraser Way. Due to the elevation changes and two street frontages, it is possible to build a multi-level parkade in the future. This type of facility, used in conjunction with a comprehensive parking management strategy for the neighbourhood, could be a significant asset for long term parking needs in the neighbourhood.

The City also currently collects a nominal fee for relaxing parking requirements set in the Zoning Bylaw, with a total of \$27,000 collected to-date. The fee rate and applicable area are proposed to be updated (see Zoning Bylaw Changes described in previous pages) and this fee should be placed into a restricted revenue account.

The results of the parking study, and any implementation recommendations, should consider alignment with other administrative tools in Historic Downtown such as the Off Street Parking Reductions, Business Improvement Area, and Revitalization Tax Exemption to ensure a coordinated approach.



SIGN BYLAW

Context

The City's *Sign Bylaw* regulates the use of signs in the city. In Historic Downtown, several recent development applications have proposed using signs that do not comply with the Sign Bylaw, in particular by using signs that project from a building face into public right of ways (Figure 68).

Proposed Direction

Projecting signs are encouraged in historic districts as it is a style that aligns with historic streetscapes and is more proportionate to pedestrians and street level activity. It also alleviates the excessive use of sandwich board signs, which take up public sidewalk space that is necessary for through traffic or could be used for other amenities such as seating and wayfinding.



Figure 68 – Projecting sign

The Sign Bylaw could include updated text to add definitions for new types of signs that will be common in Historic Downtown, and permit these signs where the Historic Downtown Development Permit applies. This could be done by having the Sign Bylaw defer to the Historic Downtown Development Permit regulations, or by updating the Sign Bylaw based on the provisions in Part 4 of this plan.

In addition, encroachment into public right of ways for these signs will be required where a building is constructed at the front property line along the street. This form of development will be common along Commercial Streets (Map 4) in the neighbourhood.



OUTDOOR PATIOS / ENCROACHMENT

Context

Historic Downtown has a policy supporting outdoor patios within the Abbotsford East Downtown Business Improvement Area. The policy intent was to facilitate outdoor dining in public right of ways (i.e. sidewalks) while maintaining sufficient space for pedestrian through movement. Included with the policy were guidelines for the design, siting and maintenance of the patio spaces. Not many businesses use this policy in a formal way.

Proposed Direction

The neighbourhood plan is proposing changes to the design of many streets in Historic Downtown that currently provide most space to vehicles and little space to people walking, biking, or gathering and socializing. The proposed changes include reallocating streets to increase the public space in front of buildings, supporting an area where businesses can spill outdoors. Much of this space would be on public right of ways where a building is constructed at the front property line along a street, which an updated outdoor patio or encroachment policy could provide more clarity for supporting.



Figure 69 – Outdoor Patio

In addition, maintaining a 1.5m clear width for the pedestrian movement zone, which the policy currently references, is generally not sufficient to allow people passing along a sidewalk, particularly when universal access is considered.

The patio policy could be updated into a more broad encroachment policy to not only address patios, but also other building frontage features such as awnings and signs. It could also allow encroachment across the movement zone and into the furnishing zone, or consider applications for temporary/seasonal patios that occur in the street or parking spaces.

In addition, the policy should align with Commercial Streets (Map 4) where particular attention is placed on the relationship between pedestrian movement, retail storefronts, and historic building design.



DEVELOPMENT BYLAW

The City of Abbotsford’s *Development Bylaw* has several regulations specific to Historic Downtown that should be reviewed in the context of this neighbourhood plan. Each regulation is listed below, along with preliminary new directions that could be refined into new regulations to present to City Council for implementing this plan.

Streetscape Contribution Levy

Context

The Streetscape Contribution Levy is a reference to Schedules D “Streetscape Contribution Levy” and E “Target Street Light” of the Development Bylaw. These Schedules set the development fees charged and list the streets where the City has prioritized the undergrounding of utilities. The purpose of the program is to beautify the streetscape and remove above ground obstructions that can negatively impact pedestrians, street trees, and views. When enough fees have been collected, combined with supportive grant applications and utility provider partnerships, the City can improve the streetscape of a full block or more with the pooled financial resources.

SCHEDULE “E”			
TARGET STREET LIGHT			
Street Component	Name	From	To
1	Mount Lehman	Automall Drive	Sandpiper Drive
2	Old Yale Road	Clearbrook Road	Parkview Street
3	South Fraser Way	Countess Street	James Street
4	Trethewey Street	South Fraser Way	George Ferguson Way
5	South Fraser Way	Garden Street	McCallum Road
6	Allwood Street	End	South Fraser Way
7	Emerson Street	Simon Avenue	South Fraser Way
8	Gladwin Road	Garibaldi Drive	Hillcrest Avenue
9	Essendene Avenue	McCallum Road	Cyril Street
10	South Fraser Way	Essendene Avenue	Laurel Street
11	Marshall Road	Gladwin Road	McCallum Road
12	McCallum Road	King Road	McDougall Avenue
13	Sumas Way	Lonzo Road	Marshall Road

Figure 70 – Development Bylaw: Schedule E

Proposed Direction

The levy has been successful in beautifying several streets, including Trethewey Street between South Fraser Way and George Ferguson Way most recently. With the creation of this neighbourhood plan, and the emphasis on improved public realm design in Historic Downtown, new streets should be added to the target street list to ensure more streets in the area can be improved over time.

Schedule E “Target Street Light” could be updated to ensure all Commercial Streets (Map 4) are included as many are not in the current program. Most notably, both Montrose and West Railway Avenues are not identified in the current program.



Development Standards

Context

Within the Development Bylaw are standards that establish how city infrastructure is built. This includes everything from street design (travel lane width, sidewalk width, size of tree soil pits, tree boulevard width, street lights, etc) to service pipe sizes. The purpose of this bylaw is to ensure the safe delivery of service and movement of people in the community.

Proposed Direction

While the details of what development standards are in the Development Bylaw may not be written in plain language, they are critically important to how City infrastructure is built. Plans often create inspiring visions but do not result in a different approach to building the city in the future (Figure 71).



Figure 71 – Existing vs Future Standard

As Historic Downtown has a unique identity in the city, it is important to update these development standards to match the vision and avoid missing the mark on implementation. Sidewalk space, bike facilities, parking configurations, tree soil volumes, stormwater infiltration, crosswalks, corner radius and curb letdowns, among many other things, should all be reviewed in the context of this plan.

The Development Bylaw standards should reflect the new direction for public realm design in Historic Downtown. This includes the possible creation of a specific schedule for the area that modifies a city-wide standard to the neighbourhood context. Preliminary, guiding direction is provided below for a variety of Development Bylaw elements.

Street Furnishings

Street furnishings provide an important component to the public realm in any successful urban setting. Within Abbotsford as a whole Historic Downtown provides good street furnishings, including the historic-styled pedestrian-scaled light standards. However, over time these furnishings have been diluted with a random mix of additional advertising benches and other furnishings. The area should be refreshed with new furnishings over time that are sympathetic to the existing elements and maintain a historic feel. Exact replication of older 'traditional' styles and designs should be avoided. Rather, new elements should blend historic influences with contemporary architectural design and construction, and current urban design best practices, to create a classic and timeless street scene that complements historic buildings.

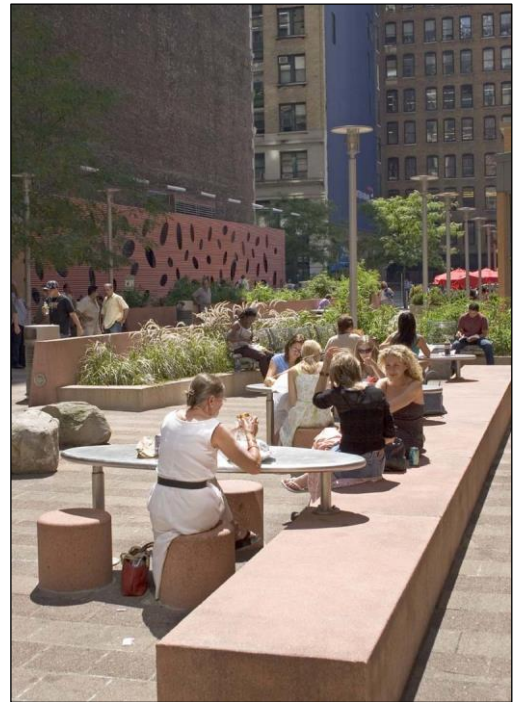


Figure 72 – Diverse Seating Options



Seating

- Establish a standard seating style that may be 'off the shelf', but explore potential custom designed seating options at feature locations.
- Provide diverse seating opportunities, including various sizes of benches, both fixed and movable, arranged linearly along the streetscape and in groupings at important areas.
- Place and orient seating to take advantage of views, sun, and shelter from wind and rain.
- Ensure a portion of seating accommodates elderly people, through measures such as higher bench seat elevation.
- Ensure the different seating components belong to a family of consistent forms, colours and materials.

Tables

- In feature public plazas and park spaces provide table surfaces to complement seating.

Bollards

- Establish a high-quality, powder-coated and/or black steel bollard standard to be applied throughout the Historic Downtown.
- Use lit bollards to augment and complement the existing historic light standards.
- Ensure both removable and permanent bollards are visually consistent and within the same family.
- Use bollards sparingly and only as necessary to prevent vehicle/pedestrian conflicts.

Bicycle Racks

- Establish a high-quality, powder-coated and/or black steel bicycle rack standard to be applied throughout the Historic Downtown.
- Ensure bicycle racks are designed or specified to maximize ease of parking, secure locking and efficiency of space, including two points of contact with bicycles.
- Locate racks at prominent locations near doors, entries and public realm focal points, but ensure they are not the primary visual feature.



Figure 73 – Bollards With Lighting

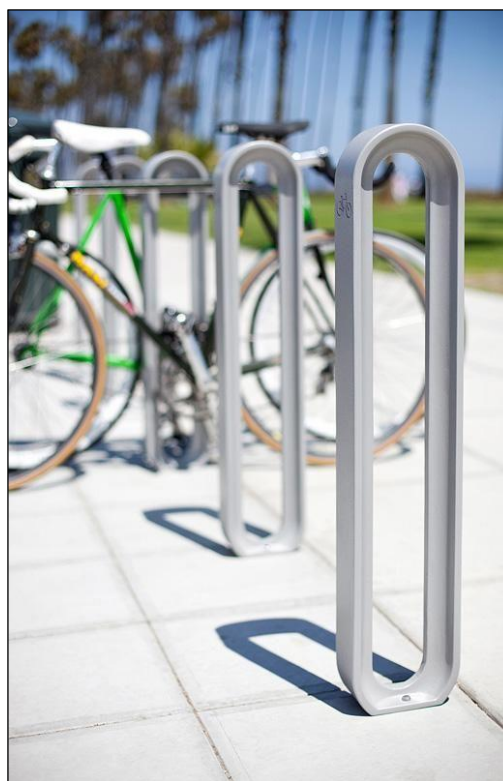


Figure 74 – Bicycle Racks



Trash and Recycling Receptacles

- Establish a high-quality, powder-coated and/or black steel receptacle standard for trash and recycling to be applied throughout Historic Downtown.

Drainage Grates

- Use weathered steel, with a consistent visual and aesthetic appearance for trench drains, catch basin covers, gutter drains, manhole covers and miscellaneous utility covers.

Tree Grates

- Use weathered steel with a consistent visual and aesthetic appearance for tree gates.
- Accommodate both standard, off-the-shelf designs and custom designs for feature locations.
- Incorporate public art into tree grate designs in feature locations

Lighting

- Establish a standard for luminaire light colour and design, pole design and height, and overall spacing compatible with the current historic standard luminaires as they are either phased out over time with new development or refurbished with the latest technology (e.g. LED).
- Ensure all new fixtures have full cutoff design and to direct light downward and avoid skyward glare in support of dark sky principles.
- Visually coordinate light standards with traffic and street lighting infrastructure as much as possible.
- Complement pedestrian light standards with bollard, step and/or in-ground lighting at special locations such as gathering points, intersections and entrances to important buildings or public areas.

Planters

- Ensure that planters are appropriately scaled to their surroundings.
- Use durable, permanent materials such as stone, smooth-finished concrete and metal. Avoid the use of ceramic, plastic, wood and exposed aggregate concrete planters



Figure 75 – Decorative Tree Grates



Figure 76 – Plantings in Soil Volumes and Interpretive Signage



Soft Landscapes

The current landscaping in Historic Downtown can be enhanced by adding and integrating more soft landscapes with changes to street and sidewalk designs.

Plant Material

- Concentrate new planted areas in boulevards on each side of a street, close to pedestrian areas, where they can offer environmental benefits such as shade, wind protection, and visual appeal.
- Provide a balance of deciduous and evergreen plant material to give overall year-round appeal.
- Use feature plant material native to the Pacific Northwest.
- Avoid the use of hanging baskets unless their care and maintenance is specifically identified (e.g. individual store owners, business association, or City).
- Use native, near-native or adaptive plants for low maintenance, long plant life, and enhanced habitat.

Trees

- Establish soil volume standards that allow trees to be longer lived and healthier, and prevent sidewalk heaving from tree roots. Implement best practices for street tree plantings, including continuous tree trenches in boulevards, soil cells, and/or structural soil.
- Provide high-efficiency automatic irrigation for all planted areas to ensure long-term viability of plant health and to minimize maintenance.

Stormwater

- Implement best practices for streets, curb and gutter design to integrate stormwater management into the boulevard design.
- Use curb cuts to capture and convey on-street rain water into planted swales or ‘rain gardens’ that could be incorporated into existing street/boulevard planted areas.
- Add stormwater detention/infiltration capacity by incorporating soil cells under newly paved areas, such as sidewalk improvements or resurfaced angled parking areas, and in combination with permeable paving drainage system.

Social Sustainability

- Design all building entrances and public realm areas to encourage interaction, seating, small scale gathering and ease of pedestrian access and circulation. Consider temporary or seasonal seating installations such as “pop up parks”.



Figure 77 – Bioswale Stormwater Infrastructure





Figure 78 – Concept Rendering: Streetscape Animation

Signage and Wayfinding

Signage identifies features and facilities, and provides wayfinding at strategic locations in a well-planned public realm.

- Establish a brand of wayfinding signage that is of consistent size, form, colour and height that maintains coherence within Historic Downtown. Apply this standard to all forms of wayfinding signage, including destinations, features, parking, and more.
- Establish a street sign standard that is unique in the city.

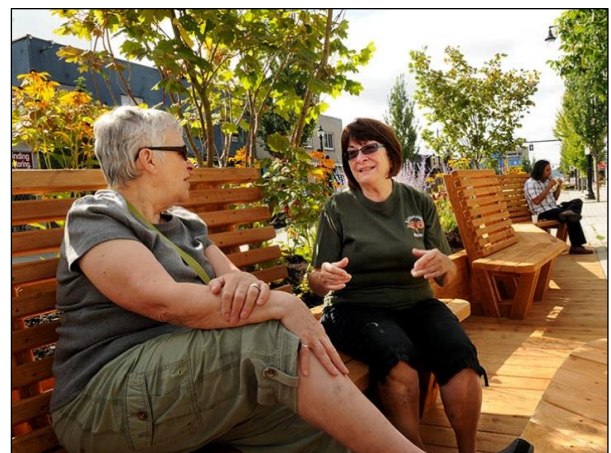


Figure 79 – Pop-up Park



Public Art

Public art provides an extra dimension of appeal, distinction and narrative to the public realm. Public art procurement and placement will be decided by the City of Abbotsford. However, certain requirements are identified here for public art both in the private and public realm of Historic Downtown.

- Celebrate the unique cultural and natural features of the Historic Downtown as well as the larger agricultural and historical – including indigenous – contexts.
- Consider incorporation of public art into the design of gateway treatments and elements.
- Design art with durability, longevity, safety, interaction and whimsy in mind.
- In Terms of Reference documents for public art, stress the importance of integration with streetscape, buildings and public realm, as opposed to a “plop art” approach that is detached from its context.

Vehicles and Parking

Effectively incorporating vehicles into the urban public realm is important to maintaining the human scaled character of Historic Downtown. Although large vehicles are required to deliver goods and services, the design of streets should not cater to these infrequent uses, but rather accommodate their movement through design interventions that place a primary emphasis on public realm quality.

Vehicles

- Ensure driving lanes are no larger than the minimum width required for through traffic and street parking access, so more space within the street rights-of-way is available for non-vehicle public realm uses.
- Ensure buildings, street furnishings and plantings are designed to accommodate necessary sight lines for drivers, but do not sacrifice all furnishings for the sake of moving vehicles quickly.
- Design all road improvements, particularly at intersections, with a priority placed on pedestrians and cyclists

Parking

- Consider extending unit paving or other unique paving treatment into on-street parking lanes to reduce the perceived width of the roadway. This includes the potential to maintain the sidewalk level and be adapted to accommodate temporary uses such as vendor or merchant kiosks or seasonal seating.



Figure 80 – Wayfinding Signage





HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN