

C I T Y O F N A N A I M O

DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN PLAN AND GUIDELINES

March 10, 2008



produced by D'Ambrosio architecture + urbanism and Citizen Plan in cooperation with the Nanaimo Planning Department

PRECINCTS / URBAN DESIGN PLAN STUDY AREAS

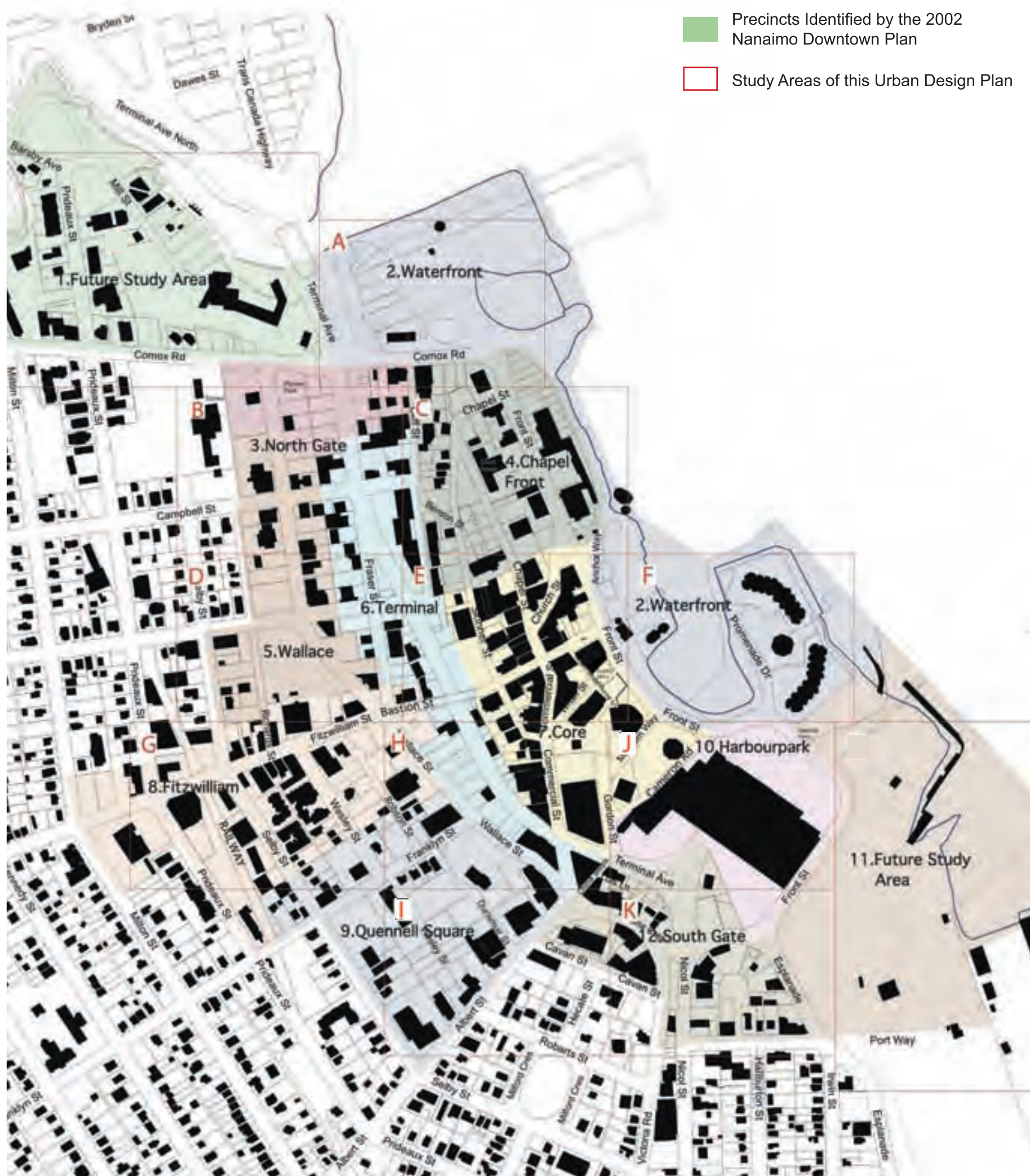


TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD	1
REPORT KEY: HOW TO USE THIS PLAN	3
HISTORY OF NANAIMO'S URBAN FORM	5
HERITAGE REGISTER	7
AERIAL PHOTO	9
URBAN DESIGN: DEFINED, ELEMENTS, OBJECTIVES	11
STREET DESIGN: SHARED, TRAFFIC CALMING & RIGHTS-OF-WAY	13
OPEN SPACE NETWORK	15
URBAN DESIGN PLAN	17
STUDY AREAS	
A. WATERFRONT - NORTH	19
B. NORTH GATE	21
C. CHAPEL FRONT	23
D. WALLACE	25
E. CORE / TERMINAL	27
F. WATERFRONT SOUTH	29
G. FITZWILLIAM	31
H. CITY HALL / CORE	33
I. CITY HALL / QUENNELL SQUARE	35
J. HARBOUR PARK	37
K. SOUTH GATE	39
TERMINAL AVENUE - GREEN STREET	41
VIEW CORRIDORS & LANDMARKS	43
DESIGN GUIDELINES	45
TALL BUILDINGS	49
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN / GREEN BUILDING PRINCIPLES	50
PUBLIC ART	50
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT OR REZONING APPLICATION - EXAMPLES OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	51
APPENDIX: DOWNTOWN NANAIMO URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTE	53

FORWARD

“The urban renaissance will be stimulated by re-establishing the quality of urban design and architecture as part of our everyday urban culture, by establishing a new vision for urban regeneration founded on the principles of design excellence, social well-being and environmental responsibility within a viable economic legislative framework.”

Towards an Urban Renaissance - Urban Task Force of England & Wales

General

This document is intended to provide overall guidance for the high quality future redevelopment of private sites, public lands and urban infrastructure in downtown Nanaimo. It is not intended to be comprehensive with respect to all technical and design aspects of redevelopment. This plan is intended to provide conceptual continuity with existing guideline documents. Specific elements such as transportation networks and heritage buildings that will contribute to the positive redevelopment of Downtown Nanaimo are covered in other planning documents.

Character and Identity

The Urban Design Plan and Guidelines are predicated on the principle that the qualities and character of Nanaimo’s various precincts cannot be expected to be established solely through urban design. Authentic and enduring precincts tend to emerge from the outward expression and the patterns of use of the residents and users of the streets, spaces and buildings. The character of a place can be nurtured by allowing and supporting community initiatives and activities through civic assistance and support.

The role that urban design plays in establishing character areas lies in good detailed design that improves the setting for community activity. Urban design strategies that support a unique sense of place for the downtown, its neighbourhoods, its streets, or the façades of its buildings include the following:

1. The alignment of building front facades with each other along public rights-of-way and public open space.
2. The composition of building heights with consideration given to shadowing, view, landmarking and the location of one building relative to another.
3. The articulation of the ground or street-level of buildings to allow for access, visibility of internal activity, spilling out of activities, and appropriate pedestrian amenities such as weather protection, lighting and seating.
4. The adaptability of the ground floor to varied uses, over time, that are conducive to passive or active public interaction.
5. The provision and spatial definition of adequate types and sizes of public space with distinguished or unique expressions, including well-designed lighting, seating, landscaping and other amenities. Appropriate locations for these expressions include:
 - street intersections;
 - buildings at corners;
 - entrance locations of mid-block walkways and lanes; and
 - unique locations of particularly high or low topography.

Architectural Heritage

It is important to remember that the design of new buildings and spaces in a context of historic buildings and streets should respect but not necessarily imitate the architecture of previous times. The salient features described above (street alignment, corners, relative height, proportion and other architectural aspects) are discussed in the Urban Design Guidelines section of this document.

These guidelines promote the premise that, while giving careful consideration to legitimate historic architectural and urban design context, an original and contemporary expression is both desirable and necessary. Municipal authorities should encourage and support the development of unique regional cultural expression, giving contemporary city builders the same opportunity that allowed the much cherished historic buildings and neighbourhoods to be designed and built during their respective eras.



URBAN CULTURE

Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p152



CHARACTER AND IDENTITY New Development in a Heritage Context



Nanaimo Waterfront



Fitzwilliam Street - Distinct character areas exist in every city. It is not necessarily appropriate for a particular stylistic theme or historical reference to be artificially applied or expanded. The architecture, while significant, is not the primary element that results in the uniqueness of a place. It is how the users of that place choose to interact with, modify and inhabit that place.

A number of documents have been produced by the City of Nanaimo that provide guidance and direction with respect to the restoration and redevelopment of existing heritage buildings, historic streetscapes, signage and numerous other urban elements of heritage value. Heritage buildings are important to Nanaimo's history and character. The Downtown Urban Design Plan supports the Nanaimo Heritage Building Design Guidelines with respect to refurbishing and redeveloping heritage buildings. That document is available through the City of Nanaimo and can be used in conjunction with this Downtown Urban Design Plan when considering heritage building restoration and redevelopment as well as heritage street redevelopment.

Zoning

Existing City of Nanaimo land use zoning includes some building heights, setbacks and other regulations that are different from those illustrated in the Downtown Urban Design Plan. Therefore, this document contains recommendations for possible variances to aspects of a number of existing zoning designations. In these cases consultation with the City's Planning Department will be required and dependent on demonstrating whether zoning variances result in improved architecture and urban design.

Illustrations

Images of possible future architecture and streetscapes are presented throughout this document. They are illustrative of design precedents, concepts and approaches and are not intended to be taken literally by users of this manual. The images are provided as examples of appropriate contemporary interpretations of the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines. Street trees illustrated in this document are generic symbols to suggest generally recommended locations within the street ROW and are not intended to denote tree / plant type or exact location.

Photographs, drawings and other graphic material contained in this document vary in age and will become dated over time. The reader is reminded that field confirmation of these may be required prior to planning and design of projects.

Street Network

Transportation network plans and roadway engineering designs that have been adopted by the City of Nanaimo, or have been approved for implementation, may or may not be in agreement with those illustrated in this urban design plan. In areas where there is discrepancy between a roadway design illustrated in this plan and that of other documentation by the City, resolution must be sought from the appropriate department of the City of Nanaimo. Transit networks will have to be designed to adapt to any changes in the street rights-of-way initiated by this plan.

First Edition

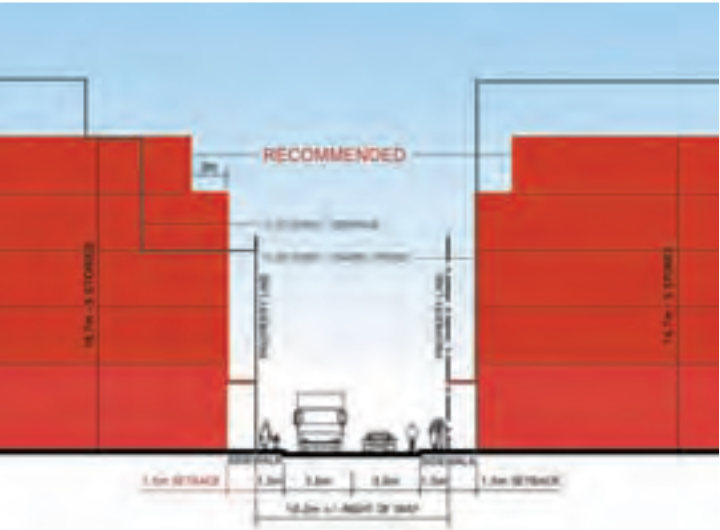
This, the first edition of the Downtown Urban Design Plan, is intended as an adaptable 'living' document. It will be regularly reviewed and updated as downtown Nanaimo evolves and develops and new editions will be released.

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DAKIN BLOCK / COMMERCIAL STREET The pedestrian-oriented scale of this typical downtown building, with small footprint retail uses, sets the precedent for urban design in Nanaimo's downtown.



ILLUSTRATIVE SECTION These drawings show the building profile resulting from existing zoning bylaws (grey line) and that recommended (red) in this Urban Design Plan and Guidelines.



NANAIMO - 1956 The charm of this pioneer town is expressed by the positioning of the buildings right up against the sidewalk. But by the late '50s, the automobile begins to dominate the right-of-way.



NANAIMO - FUTURE Maintaining the street wall of buildings, the right-of-way is reclaimed for an enhanced pedestrian realm and the installation of facilities for all modes of transportation.

REPORT KEY - How to Use this Report

This report consists of an Urban Design Plan and a set of Design Guidelines. The Urban Design Plan builds on the history of Nanaimo's urban form. The urban design principles and objectives in this report are applied to the existing urban fabric (see Aerial Photo) to create the Urban Design Plan. This plan has divided Downtown Nanaimo into eleven study areas, approximating the City's identified precincts that were developed as part of the 2002 Downtown Nanaimo Plan. Two of the precincts have not been included in this plan, as they are identified as 'Future Study Areas'. The urban design for each study area (A through K) is illustrated with a two page spread, a sample of which is shown below with annotations. Terminal Avenue is presented separately as a development concept, due in part to the important role this corridor plays to the overall urban design of the Downtown. This report also includes a number of sub-plans: an Open Space Network; Street Design principles and strategies; and an analysis of downtown's View Corridors. The report concludes with a set of Urban Design Guidelines, Design Guidelines for Tall Buildings, and Examples of Submission Requirements for Development Permit and Rezoning Applications.

Description

Bounding streets of the area, with brief description including dominate characteristics, present state of urban design and current zoning.

Context Plan

A section of downtown, at 1:5000 scale, illustrating study area bounded by the red box. Precinct areas are labeled and in colour.

Urban Design Strategies

Recommended strategies for each area, identified by number on the plan below.

Urban Design Plan

Portion of the comprehensive Urban Design Plan (area of context plan in red box above). Black represents existing buildings, red represents future buildings.

Street Section Location

Photograph Location

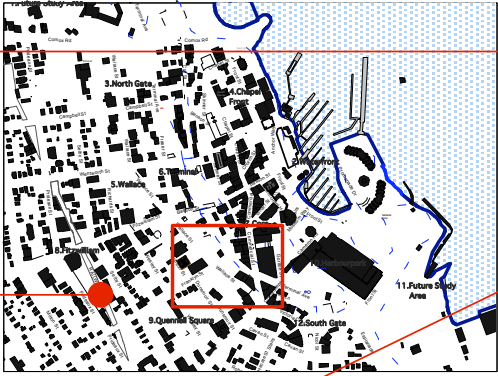
Urban Design Strategy

Important View

Aerial Photo

A portion of the overall aerial photo showing the relevant study area.

H. CITY HALL / CORE



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This study area includes parts of the Quennel Square, Terminal and Core precincts. Surface parking dominates the Quennel Square precinct which includes City Hall. For urban design strategies for Terminal Ave., see development options pages 41 to 44.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Allow 6 storeys at the corner of Franklyn St. and Selby St. Along Wesley St. and Dunsmuir St., setback 4th floor and reduce front setback to 3m, and side setback to 0 metres on one side.

- 1. Redevelop existing parking lots at corner of Franklyn at Selby and Franklyn at Dunsmuir.
- 2. Recommend 1.5m front setback for new developments along Robson St. Appropriate development for Robson St. is ground floor residential. (See Urban Design Guidelines pp 47-50).

3. Develop parking lots behind City Hall along Dunsmuir St. Front of City Hall to form part of greenway along Wallace St. to Victoria Cres./China Steps and to new Harbourpark plaza and waterfront. New municipal building along Wallace St. (see 3a), sunk into hillside with green roof to maintain view from historic City Hall.

4. Develop properties between Wallace St. and Terminal Ave. Create focal point with building or pedestrian thoroughway at end of Franklyn St. (395 Terminal Ave.). If thoroughway is established provide a link to Commercial St., possibly through Hall Block. (See 4a)

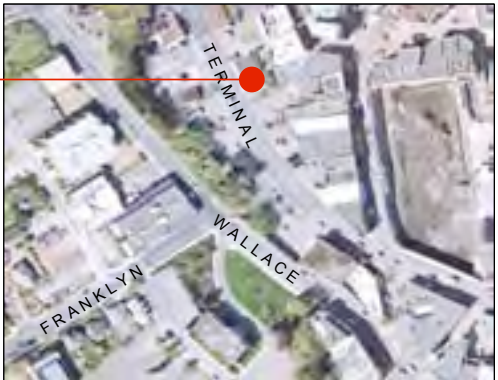
5. Future LRT / street-car route, either linking Terminal Ave. from Harbourpark plaza across Millstone River or Harbourpark plaza up Wallace St., down Fraser St. and along Terminal Ave., crossing Millstone River.

6. Redevelop A&B site to 5 storeys with publicly accessible ground floor retail. (See A)

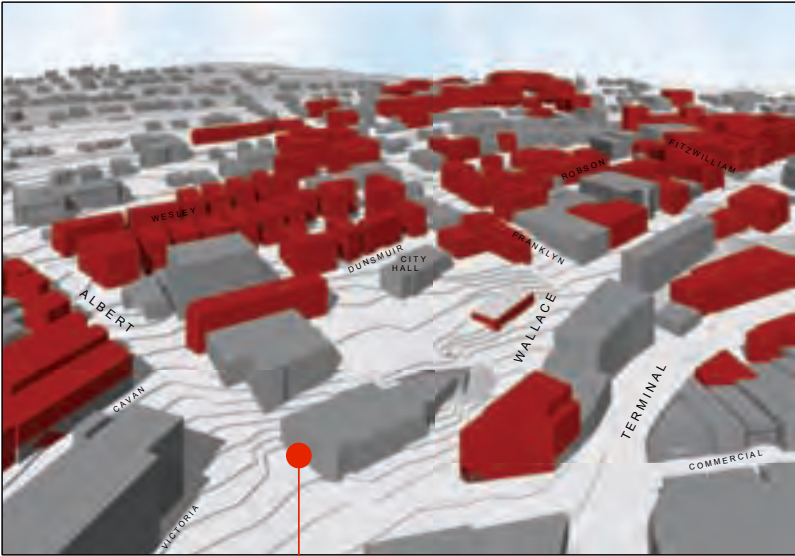


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
- Existing Buildings
- Future Buildings
- Street Trees - proposed
- Street Section Location
- Photo/Rendering Location
- Urban Design Strategy



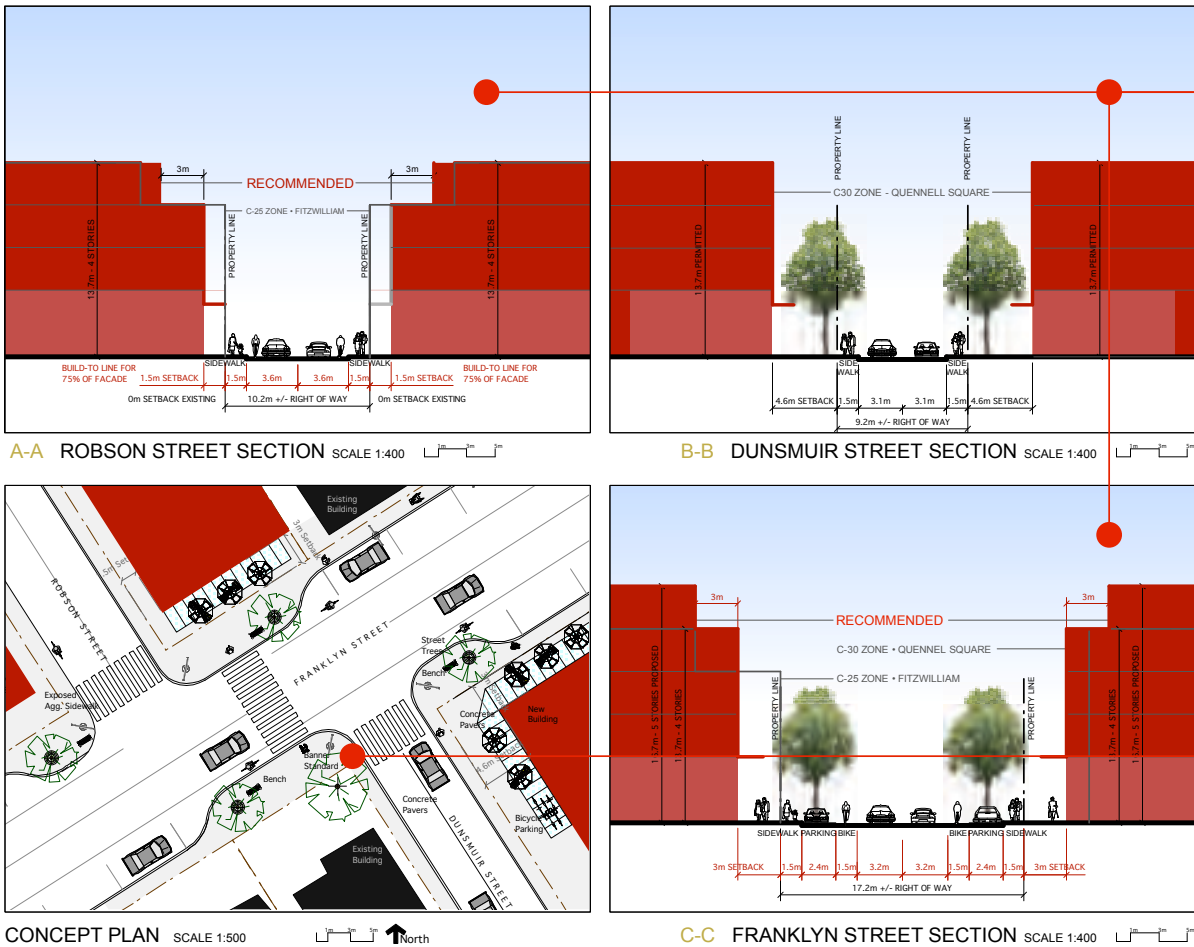
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN

3D Model

An oblique aerial of the Urban Design Plan in three dimensions showing the proposed building massings, contours and rights-of-way.



Street Sections

Key locations, as indicated on the Urban Design Plan, show an illustrated street section for the ROW*, with proposed design of sidewalks, on-street parking, bicycle and drive lanes as well as landscaped areas. Recommended massing (red) and existing zoning envelopes (grey outline) are illustrated. Light red colour indicates semi-private spaces (ie. retail).

*ROW = right-of-way - publicly owned land, width from front property line of one lot to front property of the lot directly across the street.

Detail Design Plan

A section of the Urban Design Plan at 1:500 scale illustrating street furniture, lighting, signage, landscaping and circulation for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The Core area has a unique meandering street pattern with narrow roads and narrow properties and an impressive stock of historic buildings. These buildings form continuous shop fronts and a human-scale street. New buildings should closely align their frontages to those of the existing buildings and even to the line of former historic buildings now demolished.

A key consideration includes architectural integration of awnings and canopies that extend over the public realm (1.5 metres minimum) to provide covered public sidewalks. Awnings should not be installed as a way to provide large format signage, nor should they be installed so high on the building as to have no practical utility. Other design features that reflect the scale and feel of the downtown precinct include the installation of window and door features at small-shop intervals. Commercial uses requiring a large floor plate on the ground floor will detract from the existing scale and should not be located in the historic core area.

The area surrounding the City Hall has significant areas of undeveloped and publicly owned land with a number of heritage buildings. Where the existing buildings have large setbacks, new buildings can also be set back, provided a strong emphasis on street-side landscape. There is an opportunity to significantly green the area through the planting of trees on both sides of the street and on private land in the setback areas. Development in this area should focus on ground level commercial and professional office uses, with the exception of Robson St, which holds excellent potential for residential development.

Four older houses including one heritage building are located on the south side of Franklin St. between Dunsmuir St. and Wesley St. While historically significant this remnant of the historic streetscape exists in isolation with the majority of Franklin St. having been redeveloped at large scales and with varying degrees of attention to the street alignment and other urban design aspects over decades. Therefore, it is not advised that future redevelopment on neighbouring blocks defer to the scale of these houses. However, they represent a unique and distinguished piece of the old city fabric and should be respected. Fortunately they are located on the end of a single block and therefore could be treated as a special anomaly in this precinct and restored and rejuvenated for the future.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines p.45-48.

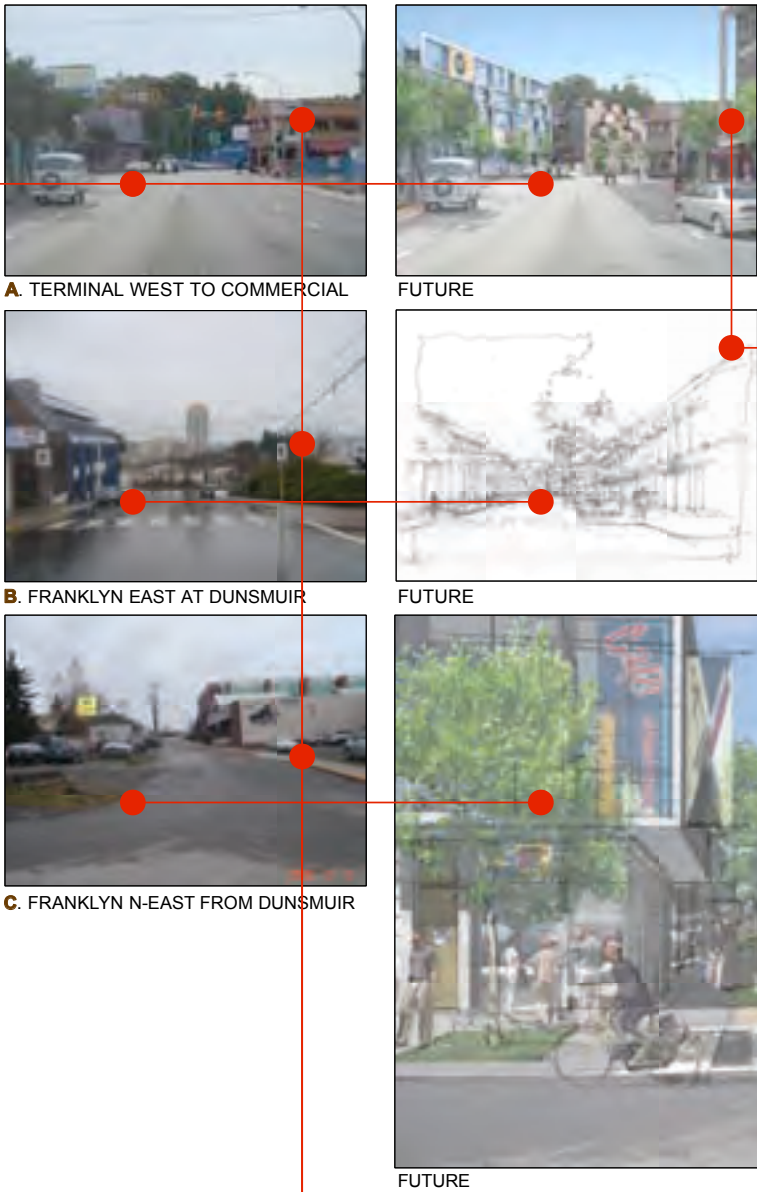
Context & Design Considerations

Description of the unique aspects of this particular study area and the appropriate design considerations for future development.

Drawings

Streetscape character sketches based on Urban Design Plan, proposed street-sections and detail design plan (if applicable). Each sketch has an adjacent photo of existing conditions (eg: A, B or C).

Drawing / rendering / photomontage of proposed streetscape based on Urban Design Plan, street-section and detail design plan (if applicable) from photo location C.



Context Photos

Existing photographs of key areas in the study area. Photograph location is identified by way of a corresponding letter (A,B,C) in the Urban Design Plan.

HISTORY OF NANAIMO’S URBAN FORM



NANAIMO BASTION 1900’s
Photo Credit: Nanaimo Community Archives

Historical Significance of Nanaimo’s Downtown Core

Downtown Nanaimo has a distinct character, based on special heritage values. The Downtown Core and the Fitzwilliam Street corridor hold the city’s most significant concentration of commercial and historic resources. These areas reflect the historical development patterns of the city’s growth and correspond to the earliest settled areas, centred on the harbour and the “Old City Neighbourhood”. More over, these areas reflect the prominent role played by the city’s early merchant community in the economic, political and social growth of both the City of Nanaimo and the emerging Province of British Columbia. The surviving building stock is a wonderful architectural legacy as well as a tangible link to Nanaimo’s early history.



Maps Credit: Nanaimo Community Archives



COMMERCIAL STREET 1940’s
Photo Credit: Nanaimo Community Archives

The Downtown Core is historically significant because it contains the remnants of one of British Columbia’s earliest town plans. Developed in 1862 by the Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company, the plan is based on a series of streets that radiate from a focal point in the Nanaimo Harbour and resembles a European city centre, complete with public squares, broad main streets and narrow side streets that result in a variety of block sizes and shapes. Of the eight green spaces shown on the original plan, five still remain. Although later infill projects, especially in areas previously under water, have altered the original plan configuration, it remains substantially intact.

The Downtown Core contains significant historical streetscapes including Commercial Street, Fitzwilliam Street and Victoria Crescent. These streets are notable for their concentrations of substantially intact early commercial buildings, their distinctive small scale and proportion, and their largely unbroken street faces. Despite some later intrusions, Downtown and the Fitzwilliam Street corridor retain their pedestrian scale.

Heritage Values

The Downtown Core speaks to Nanaimo’s historic role as British Columbia’s first modern industrial city. By the early 1850s, coal was being exported. Increasingly sophisticated transportation systems and mining methods were developed over the next decades. Concomitantly, the town’s population grew to meet the employment needs of the mining industry. By the turn of the 20th Century, Nanaimo was one of the province’s largest cities and its economy was still based almost entirely on coal mining. Although played out by the mid-20th century, Nanaimo’s mining industry left a legacy of technological innovation, labour controversy, and a transformed landscape.



DOWNTOWN 1940s

Photo Credit: Nanaimo Community Archives

The Downtown Core contains the largest concentration of historic buildings. Every historical period and use is represented in the building stock, ranging from the earliest pioneer settlement (e.g. Bastion), to the early and late Victorian eras (e.g. Johnston’s Hardware and the Earl Block respectively), to the Edwardian period (e.g. Hirst Block), to the modern era before and after the Second World War (e.g. Eagle’s Hall and City Hall respectively). Over time, this variety of architectural styles has been shaped into a coherent area of visual interest that, in essence, embodies the city’s history.



1891- Original Plan - Terminal is a tidal ravine.



1928 - Harbour infill & development extends



1997 - Lubbock Square eroded after 1960’s.



FRONT STREET 1930s

Photo Credit: Nanaimo Community Archives



REPRESENTATIVE HERITAGE STYLES

Pioneer (pre-1880)

Bastion - 42
Nanaimo's oldest building, built between 1853-1855, is the only known remaining freestanding tower built by the Hudson's Bay Company. It is a unique example of a defence fortification built by a company that played a major role in Canadian history. The Bastion's unusual octagonal shape and high visibility from both land and sea make it Nanaimo's premier landmark.

Nanaimo Pioneer Bakery/Johnson's Hardware - 49
A very rare surviving example of the predominant form of commercial architecture in Nanaimo until the turn of the 20th century. Carpenter or owner built, these wood framed and clad, false-fronted boomtown buildings appear more substantial and provide a convenient area for signage.



Victorian (pre-1900)

Earl Block - 9
The only surviving example of the many Victorian Italianate style buildings that predominated this downtown intersection by the late 19th century. Built in 1888 this highly detailed brick building speaks to the mood of prosperity and possibility prevalent at the time.

Occidental Hotel - 33
A gateway building located at a prominent intersection, the building marks the western entrance to one of Nanaimo's oldest commercial areas. The angled corner entry mirrors the entry of the building directly across the street and creates a visual funnel, reinforcing the impression of entering a new and distinct space.





For redevelopment of heritage buildings please see the Nanaimo Heritage Building Design Guidelines. Additional information regarding heritage building conservation can be found in the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada" by Parks Canada.

SIGNIFICANT DOWNTOWN HERITAGE BUILDINGS

1. B.C. Telephone Exchange (70-76 Bastion Street)
2. Commercial Hotel (121 Bastion Street)
3. Eagle's Hall (133-141 Bastion Street)
4. Rowbottom Residence/Miner's Cottage (100 Cameron Road)
5. Provincial Liquor Store (25 Cavan Street)
6. Christian Science Society Building (20 Chapel Street)
7. Shaw Residence (41 Chapel Street)
8. St. Paul's Anglican Church and Hall (100 Chapel Street)
9. Earl Block/Grassick's (2-4 Church Street)
10. Great National Land Building (5-17 Church Street)
11. Jean Burns Building (6-10 Commercial Street)
12. Nanaimo-Duncan Utilities/B.C. Hydro Building (13 Commercial St)
13. Nash Hardware (19 Commercial Street)
14. Caldwell Block (35 Commercial Street)
15. Hall Block (37-45 Commercial Street)
16. Rogers Block (83-87 Commercial Street)
17. Hirst/Dakin Blockc (93-99 Commercial Street)
18. Ashlar Lodge/Masonic Temple (101 Commercial Street)
19. Gusola Block (120 Commercial Street)
20. Parkin Block (143-155 Commercial Street)
21. A.R. Johnston & Co. Grocers (172-174 Commercial Street)
22. Halse Block (200-206 Commercial Street)
23. Modern Café (221 Commercial Street)
24. Free Press Building (223 Commercial Street)
25. Ranger's Shoes (306-314 Fitzwilliam Street)
26. St. Andrew's United Church (315 Fitzwilliam Street)
27. S&W Apartments (403-409 Fitzwilliam Street)
28. Mitchell's Market (411 Fitzwilliam Street)
29. T&B Apartments (413-417 Fitzwilliam Street)
30. Zorkin Building/Adirim's Junk Store (418 Fitzwilliam Street)
31. Angell's Trading (426 Fitzwilliam Street)
32. Central Dairy (428 Fitzwilliam Street)
33. Occidental Hotel (432 Fitzwilliam Street)
34. Rawlinson & Glaholm Grocers (437 Fitzwilliam Street)
35. Vancouver Island Regional Library (580 Fitzwilliam Street)
36. Harris Residence (375 Franklyn Street)
37. Franklyn Street Gymnasium (421 Franklyn Street)
38. Globe Hotel (25 Front Street)
39. Tom Brown's Auto Body (28 Front Street)
40. Nanaimo Court House (31-35 Front Street)
41. Nanaimo Post Office (54-66 Front Street)
42. Bastion (98 Front Street)
43. Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 (34 Nicol Street)
44. Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway Station (321 Selby Street)
45. Reid Residence (151 Skinner Street)
46. Palace Hotel (Skinner Street)
47. Commercial Building (33-35 Victoria Crescent)
48. Davidson Block/Queens Hotel (34 Victoria Crescent)
49. Pioneer Bakery/Johnson's Hardware (39-45 Victoria Crescent)
50. Eagle/Terminal Hotel (63 Victoria Crescent)
51. Willard Service Station (291-299 Wallace Street)
52. City Hall (455 Wallace Street)
53. Brumpton Block (481-489 Wallace Street)
54. Merchant's Bank of Canada (499 Wallace Street)

Edwardian (1900s-1920s)

Bank of Commerce/Great National Land Building - 10
Rehabilitated in 1997, this is Nanaimo's premier example of Classical Period Revival architecture. Built in 1914 during the 1912-1914 coal miners' strike, the building's classical conservatism represented tradition, stability and prosperity during a fractious and volatile period.

Hirst/Dakin Block - 17
Significant for its connection to the Hirsts, who were part of Nanaimo's early commercial elite and played prominent roles in the City's economic, social and political life. The building is the northern cap of a continuous line of substantially intact buildings located on the west side of Commercial Street.



Modern (1920s-1950s)

Nanaimo City Hall - 52

The purpose-built City Hall represents the maturation and modernization of the municipal government and, by extension, the City as a whole. Built in 1951, City Hall is an excellent example of Nanaimo's first venture into the International style. The gardens at the side and front of City Hall were designed at the same time as the building and are integral parts of the site's value.

Eagle's Hall - 3
Built as a lodge and dance hall with rentable commercial space for the Fraternal Order of Eagles in 1934, the Hall is Nanaimo's earliest and one of the most striking examples of Art Deco style architecture.









PLACE KLEBER, STRASBOURG
Example of a ‘shared’ right-of-way (Woonerf)
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p42

Urban design can be defined as the conscious and intentional composition of the main physical elements that make up a city including buildings, open spaces and circulation spaces. These elements serve the functions of habitation, recreation, industry, commerce and the myriad of activities that occur in human settlement. The quality of urban life is directly affected by urban design. The formal tools of urban design include the manipulation of five essential components: the edge, the pathway, the district, the landmark and the node. All towns and cities in the western world can be described using these components.

District/ Precinct

A district / precinct is an area of a town or city that can be located and defined by its particular traits, location, character or activity. For example, many North American cities have a Chinatown district, a warehouse district and a financial district. The 2002 Downtown Nanaimo Plan identifies 12 precincts (see illustration on the inside front cover). However, the boundaries of a particular district (or precinct) in the context of urban design, should never have an edge in the middle of a street as illustrated in the 2002 plan. Good urban design calls for consistency and complementary form on both sides of a right-of-way. Therefore, for the purposes of this plan, study areas have been created which generally reflect the previously identified precincts but do not adhere to any rigid boundaries. In Nanaimo, the reinforcing of the form and character of unique areas can occur in increments, over time, through private development and through public improvement initiatives.



LYON, FRANCE A compact, mixed-use urban fabric designed around a water’s edge and well defined networks of public circulation and open space.
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, pg35

Edge

An urban edge can be a subtle or an explicit boundary between precincts within a city. As re-development occurs, opportunities will arise to reinforce existing and establish new edges, to define the function and enhance the character of various districts.

Pathway

This includes street rights-of-way, trails, sidewalks, boardwalks and all kinds of circulation networks. It recognizes all transportation modes from automobiles and trains to bicycles and pedestrians. Pathways can be formal, informal or some of both. In downtown Nanaimo, years of planning mainly for vehicle circulation has dominated the urban form. Only a systematic rebalancing of the use of street rights-of-way for all modes of transportation, as well as public places, will repair the damage and encourage a return to downtown by the public.

Node

A node is a place where human activity converges. Most typically, a node is an intersection between two or more pathways. A node is a place where things come together – activities, people, goods and materials, particular geographic features and the numerous combinations possible among these. Downtown Nanaimo streets are laid out as a hub with spokes. The principal node of both activity and form is the central waterfront boat basin. The views of the water and the intersections of the converging streets are the main nodes of downtown. As empty sites are developed, nodes should be established and reinforced.

Landmark

Typically, a landmark is a three-dimensional object, sometimes man-made like a statue, monument or fountain or sometimes natural like a significant tree, a mountain or the mouth of a river or creek. Although often found at a node, a landmark can exist separately. More unusually, a landmark can be a particular view that is seen from a particular place. For example, the glimpse one gets of a distant mountain peak on one’s daily commute, can be considered a landmark. It is something that is defined or named and referred to and that will help establish a location relative to the rest of the city. Downtown Nanaimo has a wealth of potential landmarks, including unique street views of the ocean and islands, steeples and high points of land. See View Corridors and Landmarks for a hierarchy of landmarks that give order and interest to downtown.



CLOUD GARDENS, TORONTO Example of the creation of a ‘node’ established through new development.
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p221



BUILD-TO LINES *A continuous street wall formed by many buildings and entrances. No “missing teeth”.*

Image Credit: Allan B. Jacobs, Great Streets, p184.



PIONEER COURTHOUSE SQUARE
The City of Portland, now known for its excellent urban design, has become one of the most livable cities in North America.
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p235



SANKT HANS TORV, COPENHAGEN
“Outdoor rooms” draw people, encourage use.
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p21



TRANSIT, CURITIBA, BRAZIL
World innovators in improving transit design and service, affordably.
Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p66

URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR DOWNTOWN NANAIMO

- 1. Connections among and within precincts and urban villages**
 - Integrated streets and paths make new links with, or complete existing networks, and thereby encourage good transition, continuity and ease of access from existing neighbourhoods to new or refurbished areas.
 - A pattern of small blocks formed by interconnected streets, open spaces and public paths increases the number of connections between places, provides choices for pedestrians and encourages walking to shops and other amenities.
 - An accessible public open space network that is designed, programmed and integrated with adjacent private open space, benefits the broader community.
- 2. An appropriate mix of uses and housing types and sizes**
 - Mixed land use permits a diversity of services and amenities to be located close together and encourage walking and transit use by reducing the need for automobile trips and parking allotment.
 - A variety of housing types and sizes can serve a diverse population and facilitate positive social concepts such as “aging in place”.
- 3. Defined and beautiful public spaces for year-round use by everyone**
 - Open spaces, including street rights-of-way, that are formed by thoughtful placement of buildings are less like sprawling, cluttered and ugly leftover spaces and more like secure and comfortable outdoor rooms that can encourage use.
 - Building and landscape design should mediate between public and private realms to provide residents and users the opportunity to choose levels of privacy and a variety of types and sizes of settings for activities.
 - Building heights and widths, if they are well proportioned and composed with surrounding architecture and street widths, can help make positive public space.
 - An integrated design of hard and soft landscape, trees and outdoor furniture elements, including building exterior canopies and other aspects at the public interface, will enhance the fit and performance of parks and other public space.
- 4. Open, interesting and accessible building fronts to the street**
 - An almost continuous street wall formed by many buildings and entrances and almost no “missing teeth” helps define a street right-of-way. A street wall facilitates visual interest, diversity of activity and contributes to successful commercial business downtown.
 - Active uses located in front spaces, with doors and windows close to the sidewalk, make them visually interesting and help connect activities within buildings to the people on the street. This also contributes to public safety concepts such as “eyes on the street”.
- 5. Convenient, comfortable and safe streetscapes**
 - Regularly spaced street trees, special pavement treatments, banners and public art all help beautify, shade and define the public realm.
 - Street lighting, sidewalk seating, and weather protection at the fronts of buildings create both comfort and safety for pedestrians.
 - Distinctive bus shelters or deep canopies at building facades provide comfort and safety for transit riders and encourages activity.
 - Integrated use or shared streets (in Holland, known as Woonerf) are effective on smaller commercial and residential streets.
 - Wherever possible, access to off-street parking should be shared between properties. Loading should be from behind buildings.
- 6. Protection and restoration of the urban ecology**
 - A city that is planned according to principles of sustainability, and whose architecture is designed and redeveloped using progressive green building techniques and standards, will contribute to the quality of life of its residents.
 - Building orientation, site planning, massing, scale and materiality are all aspects of architecture that are important to consider in light of their ecological impact and effect on urban design.
 - Response to climate change issues, energy efficiency and other green building considerations are critically important to making a better urban environment, and downtown redevelopment should lead in this direction.



FIGURE GROUND - Urban design tool to study built versus unbuilt urban areas.



MATRIX APPROACH - Shared rights-of-way

Shared Streets

As a principle, street design for downtown Nanaimo will accommodate all modes equally. Street design should reinforce the fundamental premise that, as required by law, drivers will be expected to respect the right of cyclists and pedestrians to use the street. Although the vulnerable modes will be segregated from vehicular traffic where appropriate, this critical urban design principle reinforces the use of street right-of-way as a public space for drivers and non-drivers.

Vancouver’s Granville Island and Victoria’s Selkirk Waterfront environments are good examples of this approach. Appropriate techniques slow driver speed and thereby increase driver awareness and care. The overriding intention is to make the street a safer, less threatening, and more enjoyable place for all who wish to use it, without necessarily reducing traffic capacity.

Sidewalks could be surfaced with exposed aggregate concrete or concrete unit pavers in the same way as the parking / landscape boulevard and curbs could be mountable. Where appropriate this subtle definition will increase driver caution and thereby discourage speeding. Separation of driving or parking lanes from pedestrians can be achieved through the use of bollards and landscaped bulges.



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK Another compact waterfront, mixed-use urban fabric designed around well-defined networks of public circulation and open space.

Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p53



SINGLE LANE TRAFFIC CIRCLE - MOUNTABLE CURB

Traffic Calming

The reduction of traffic speeds in urban areas improves quality of life in the downtown by way of safer, quieter and more usable streets.

The following traffic calming measures contribute to good urban design while encouraging slower driving speeds:

- Traffic islands and landscaped medians;
- Visual signals and messages;
- Raised intersections and speed control signs; and
- Textured pavement to transmit sensory signals to drivers.

Traffic Islands and Landscaped Medians

Circular traffic islands in street intersections, and driving lanes separated by landscaped medians, are key elements in reducing vehicle speed. The circular islands with a mountable curb around the perimeter will allow emergency vehicles to negotiate the intersection at higher speeds. Traffic islands should be engineered to allow all sizes and wheel–bases of vehicles to negotiate all movements, while at the same time compelling them, through vibrations and a visually perceived narrowness, to proceed slowly.



TEXTURED PAVEMENT - VISUAL MESSAGES



EFFECTIVE URBAN STREETScape

Visual Signals and Messages

Effective traffic management requires clear communication with drivers to solicit an accurate response to conditions. Signs alone can not be depended upon to communicate the intended shared–streets concept. Indeed, sign pollution and visual clutter can result in dangerous non-compliance. Other useful methods combine visual and tactile indicators. Raised profile paving physically reminds the driver to slow down. Subtle changes in paving texture cause vibration and sound which alerts drivers to conditions ahead. Colour changes and combinations of paving material can indicate special areas. In addition to adding beauty to the neighbourhood, landscape plantings can limit the perceived scale of the street, mark entrances, or indicate other special features along the right–of–way.

Raised Intersections and Speed Control

This is a technique of raising the vertical elevation of the driving lanes to match that of the adjacent pedestrian sidewalks. By increasing driver awareness as they approach intersections, drivers are alerted to crossing pedestrians, and as a result, the dominance of the automobile is diminished. The design consists of a slightly sloped surface on the approach to the intersection with an elevated flat surface for the entire intersection followed by a sloped surface back down to the regular driving lane.

Textured Pavement

Textured surfaces add interest to an area and serve to send both visual and vibrational cues to the driver. Types of effective surfaces include poured–in–place concrete with various finishes, patterned concrete and sand–set unit pavers in various colours and shapes, and paving using mortared stone with a rugged surface.

Street Rights-of-Way

Street rights-of-way are publicly owned land, the area from the front property lines of lots on one side of the street to the front property lines of the lots on the opposite side of the street. With increasing traffic pressures, demands for more lanes and turning bays will arise. In some cases, the street right-of-way may be expanded; therefore it is imperative, from an urban design perspective, that the quality of the pedestrian domain, and not the convenience of the automobile driver, be the principal form–determinant. In addition to appropriate ROW widths, it is important to maintain realistic dimensions for street travel ways. A typical maximum pavement width should be sufficient for two travel lanes and two on–street parking lanes. Near building entrances and at intersections, where a larger pedestrian area is required, a raised landscaped area (landscape bulge) takes the place of parking. This will reduce perceived street widths and crossing distances.

EXISTING ROW

24.3m +/-	Terminal Avenue
23.3m +/-	Fitzwilliam Street
21.3m +/-	Front Street
20.3m +/-	Albert, Nicol, Cavan, Wallace, Selby, Campbell and Wentworth Streets, Comox Road and Esplanade
18.8m +/-	Fraser and Bastion Streets
17.2m +/-	Franklyn Street
16.4m +/-	Prideaux Street
12.3m +/-	Chapel Street (one way)
10.2m +/-	Cliff, Richards, Robson and Skinner Streets
9.2m +/-	Dunsmuir Street



BOLLARDS



TRAFFIC CALMING



SHARED STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY



SUCCESSFUL SHARED STREET

OPEN SPACE NETWORK



E & N STATION

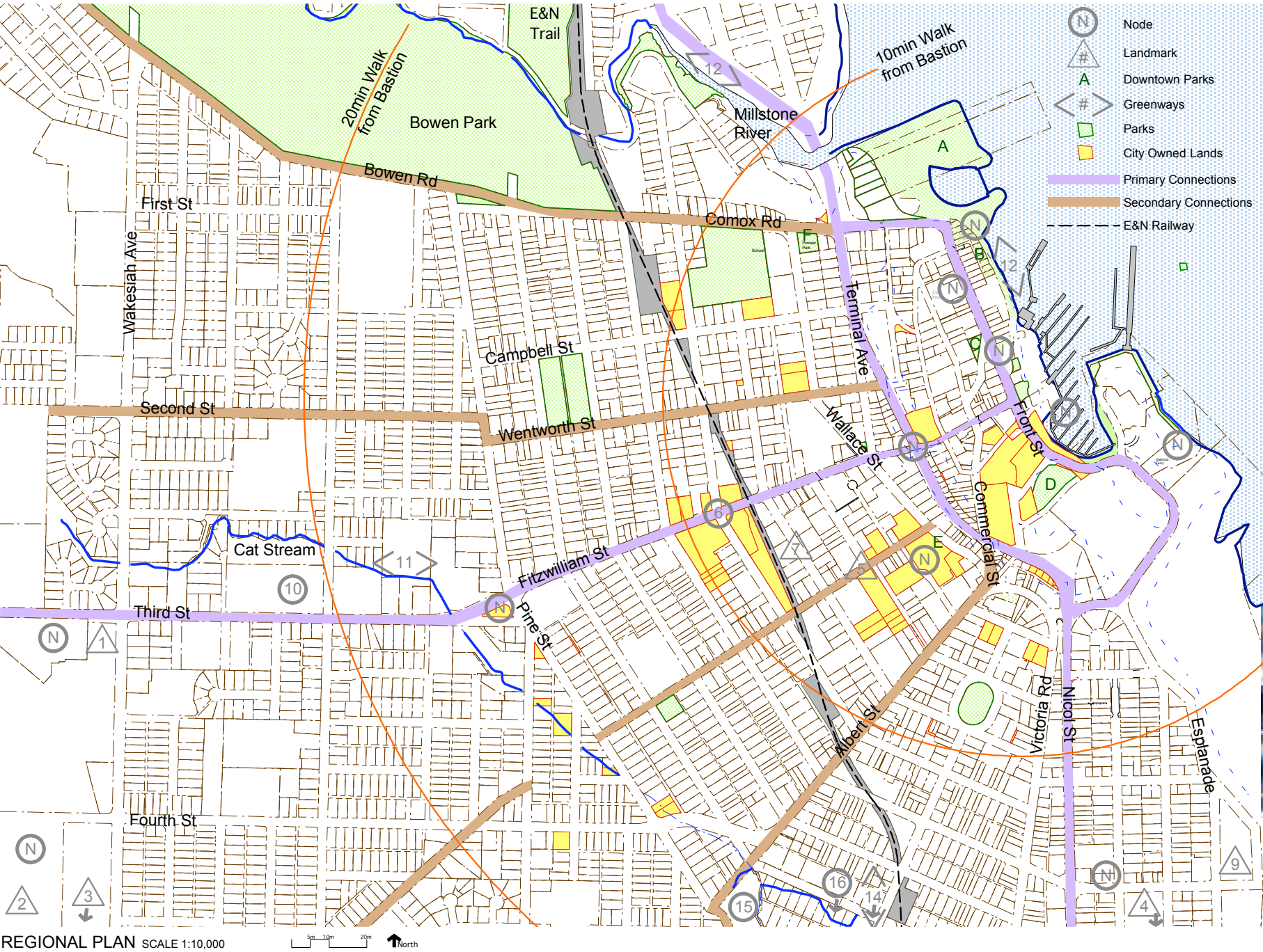
Downtown Nanaimo is defined by its landscape context. The city is backed by Mt. Benson to the west, sloping towards the harbour to the east, with views across the harbour to Coast Mountains and Gulf Islands, the Millstone River to the North, the Cat Stream system just west of town, and the Chase River at the south end. The relationship of these natural edges to the urban design elements, the natural connections between the rivers and the oceanfront harbour, and the restoration of these natural systems, are the overriding guiding principles in planning an open space network.

Parks and Open Space Strategies

At the regional level, there is significant open space, but access and connections need improvement. The key connections recommended for improvements are the Fitzwilliam / Third Street Corridor, the 'Five Acre' Farm at Third Street and Howard, the completion of the Cat Stream / Chase River Corridor, and improved access to the waterfront. Nanaimo's regional open space system consists of parks, institutional lands, roadway boulevards, the railway corridor, remnant forests, and cultural landscapes. Trails and greenways are the means to complete the connections between these open spaces. They provide alternative transportation routes for people travelling to and from downtown, and form urban ecological corridors to preserve and foster biodiversity.

Connections

Primary routes such as Third Street/Fitzwilliam, Nicol or Victoria Street, Terminal Avenue and Front Street and secondary routes like Bowen/Comox, Second/Wentworth, Harewood/Franklyn and Bruce/Albert, to downtown should be enhanced to support multi-modal (pedestrian, bicycle and transit) activities by the redevelopment of adjacent private sites. Special attention should be paid to the pedestrian domain including sidewalk widths (minimum 2.0 m if possible), pedestrian crossings (including mid-block connections), bike lanes, landscape and/or parking buffers between moving vehicles and sidewalks (including street trees), street furniture and public art.



FRANKLYN STREET GYM

NODES & LANDMARKS - Institutional and Civic Owned Lands

- 1. Recreation and Education Complex** including Nanaimo District Secondary School, Nanaimo Aquatic Centre and the Nanaimo Ice Centre.
- 2. Malaspina University-College.**
- 3. Department of National Defence (DND)**
- 4. Princess Royal Elementary School** has potential opportunities to support community use and open space initiatives.
- 5. Franklyn Street Gym** is a focal area for recreational and fitness activities. Building on the tradition of the existing Franklyn Street gym, there is potential to include expanded recreation facilities and perhaps associated short-term affordable accommodation, e.g. YMCA/YWCA model.
- 6. Lubbock Square** area spans Fitzwilliam Street, a short block on each side, from the E&N railway to west of Milton Street. Its current use includes RCMP, Fire, Ambulance and Community Services, transit and parking facilities. See Fitzwilliam study area for urban design recommendation for Lubbock Circle, a new landmark civic space and traffic calming roundabout.
- 7. E&N Station** is a prominent heritage building and transportation link. There is opportunity to enhance pedestrian environments, connections, street and railway relationships, and link to the historic location of Lubbock Square.

Strategies

- Complete and improve the Cat Stream trail system, with connections to the Trans-Canada Trail and Buttertubs Marsh. As well, provide links to Malaspina University-College with a focus for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit transportation.
- Link nodes and elements to the Cat Stream, Fitzwilliam/Third Street corridor, and waterfront. Key destinations along the corridor are the Nanaimo Ice Centre, NDSS & Aquatic Centre, Malaspina, Department of National Defence, and Lubbock Square. Provide facilities to support non-vehicular transportation (for example, bike racks, seating, access to showers and change rooms, and inviting transportation shelters with route posting). Use the corridor to demonstrate and support private development.
- Maintain and enhance existing resources to provide a broader range of civic uses. For example, Franklyn Gym and Pipers Park are ideally located to support civic uses.
- Pursue opportunities to support and complete the open space system by developing decommissioned institutional properties (for example schools, DND lands, and Princess Anne School).



TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION



TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION SCALE 1:150

NODES & LANDMARKS - Cultural Lands

- 8. Prominent Heritage Buildings and Landmarks**, denoted by symbol. For greater detail, see Heritage Register, and View Corridor & Landmark analysis.
- 9. Robins' Garden**, located on Fry Street at Milton Street, is a prominent heritage landscape that includes heritage trees planted from seedlings brought to mine manager Sam Robins by ships' captains from around the world. The site is across from Nanaimo No.1. Esplanade Shaft.
- 10. "Five Acre" Farm**, located at Third Street and Howard Avenue. Early mine workers were offered five acre parcels on a rent-to-own basis, providing land to build a home and a means of supplementing income during the frequent mining layoffs. This is the last remaining undeveloped parcel of its kind in the City, located on the major vehicular route into Downtown and abutting the Cat Stream.

Strategies

- Through development, protect and conserve Nanaimo's historical landscapes and industrial heritage.
- Reintroduce a street pattern to give prominence to Lubbock Square. Reinstate the space as a gateway to Nanaimo's Old City Quarter and downtown Nanaimo.
- Through development protect and conserve Robins' Gardens, particularly its significant features.

GREENWAYS

- 11. Cat Stream Greenway**
- 12. Millstone River Greenway**
- 13. Waterfront Greenway**
- 14. Chase River Park and Estuary** is at the confluence of the Cat Stream, the Chase River corridor, and the waterfront. Enhance walkway and bikeway that build on habitat values and views.

Strategies

- Continue to acquire missing connections to restore habitat and preserve water quality. Greenways need to promote and be an integral part of the non-vehicular mobility system.
- Reinforce connections between open space, trails, recreational amenities to connect Cat Stream Corridor, Buttertubs Marsh, Bowen Park and the Millstone.
- 15. Albert Street at Pine Street** is situated on Cat Stream corridor. Explore opportunities to improve this open space with stream enhancement and trail corridor improvements.
- 16. At Park Avenue and E&N Railway** (Duke Street / Sixth Street / Bing Kee Street), make use of undeveloped open space to connect the Cat Stream, Chase River and E&N corridors. Improvements to include pedestrian links between Park Avenue and E&N corridor, and Cat Stream. There is also potential for stream enhancements.

DOWNTOWN PARKS

This downtown plan anticipates further research and design work towards the development of an open space and pathway network throughout the downtown. Existing city owned lands and rights-of-way, combined with private property redevelopment, provide the opportunity for a coordinated park, pathway and open space plan to be incrementally established over time.

With the redevelopment of numerous sites at or adjacent to the downtown waterfront, a number of park sites along the waters' edge walkway and adjacent to Front Street will require redesign. The increased number of residents, as well as a greater number of people attracted to the area in the future, will cause more intensive use and greater demand on walkways and other park amenities. This means that paving, lighting, seating and other features will have to be developed in concert with the building redevelopments neighbouring these parks, paths and public open spaces.

Redesign and redevelopment should be considered for Georgia Park and Dallas Square. Georgia Park requires attention to good public visibility and safe access across Front Street.

These pages based on information provided by GEMELLA design and ARCHADIA landscape architecture ltd.



PIPER PARK



PIONEER PARK



DALLAS SQUARE



GEORGIA PARK

DOWNTOWN PARKS / OPEN SPACE

- A. Maffeo Sutton Park
- B. Georgia Park (requires redevelopment)
- C. Dallas Square (requires redevelopment)
- D. Piper Park
- E. City Hall
- F. Pioneer Park



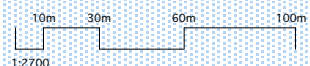
GEORGIA PARK / MAFFEO SUTTON PARK



LEGEND

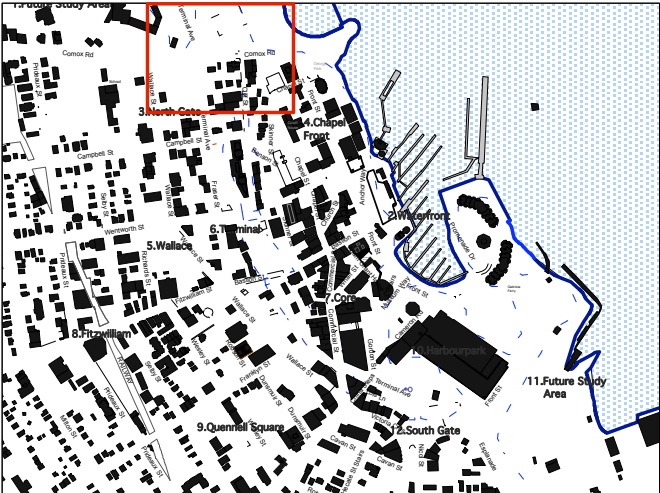
Existing Buildings

Street Trees - proposed



NANAIMO DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN PLAN AND GUIDELINES

A. WATERFRONT - NORTH



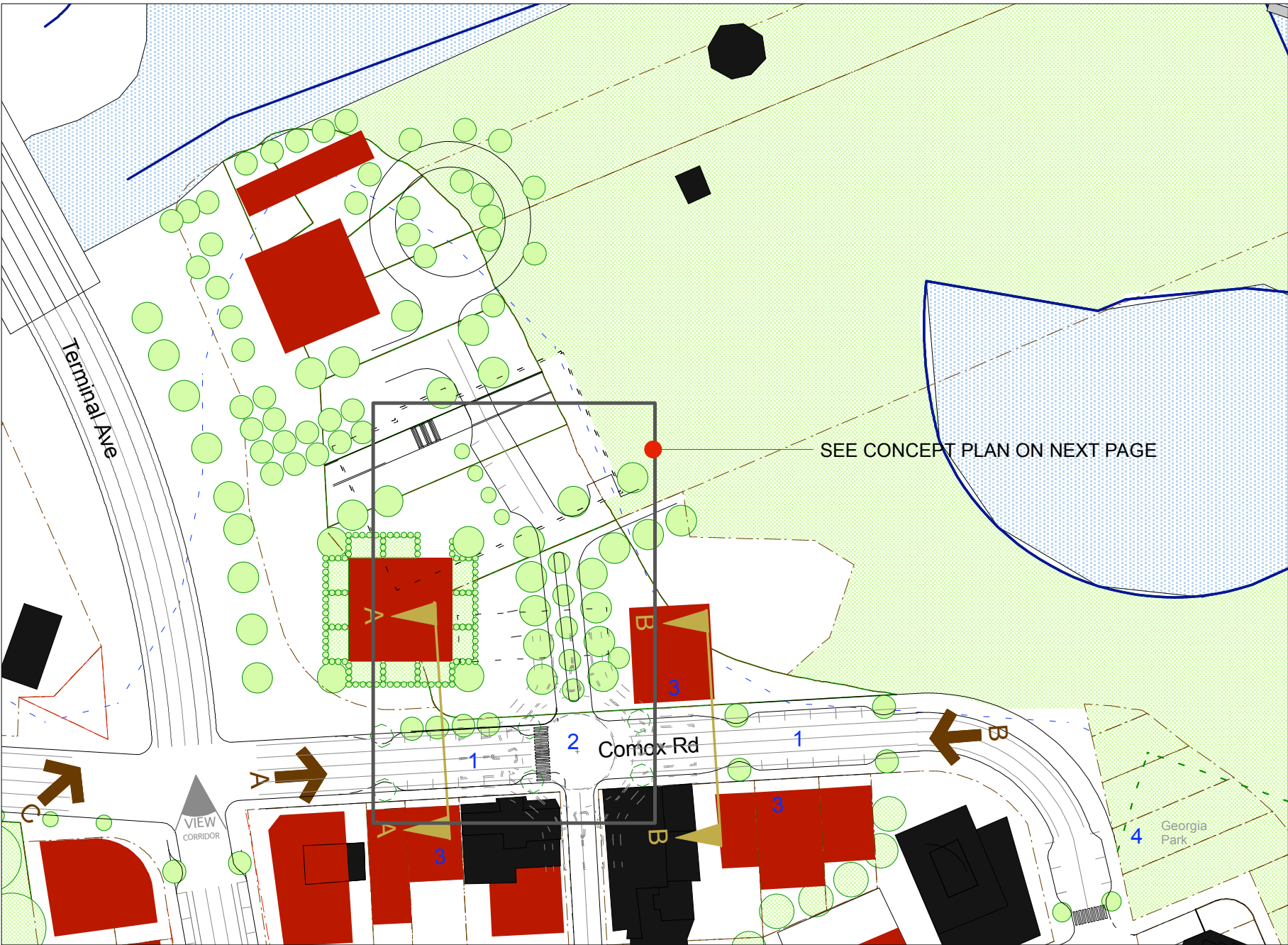
CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This area borders the northern gateway to Downtown and forms the northern part of the Waterfront precinct. It is well developed with public amenities and access to the waterfront. Along Terminal Avenue and Comox Street, the property has been zoned as Comprehensive Development District 4, allowing two residential towers.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

1. On-street parking is recommended for Comox Street in order to support ground floor commercial. Right-of-way to include parallel parking lanes with traffic calming tree bulges between every 3 to 4 stalls and at Cliff Street intersection. This option is not currently feasible between Terminal Avenue and east of Cliff Street due to present road improvements. However, this recommendation could be implemented in the future if traffic volumes on Terminal Avenue are reduced (shown with dotted lines).

- 2. Comox Street and Cliff Street could include a single lane roundabout (shown with dotted lines). Easements on properties at each corner would be required.
- 3. West of Cliff Street, allow six storeys and zero front setback. East of Cliff Street, allow six storeys with 1.5 m front setback. Cliff Street should have minimum 3 m front setback with 75% of frontage at setback build-to line, six storeys with possible 2 m top floor setback.
- 4. Redevelopment of Georgia Park, with a primary focus on improving pedestrian access from Front Street.



URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

- LEGEND

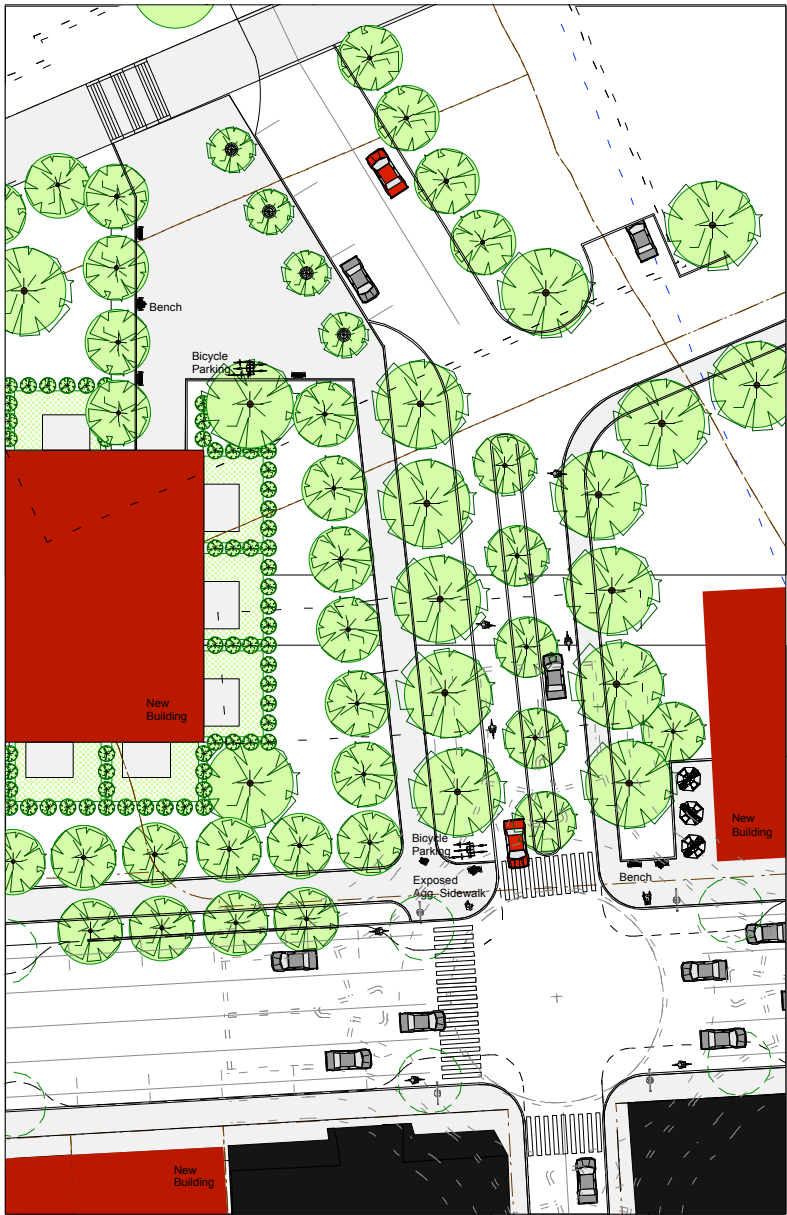
 - Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
- Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



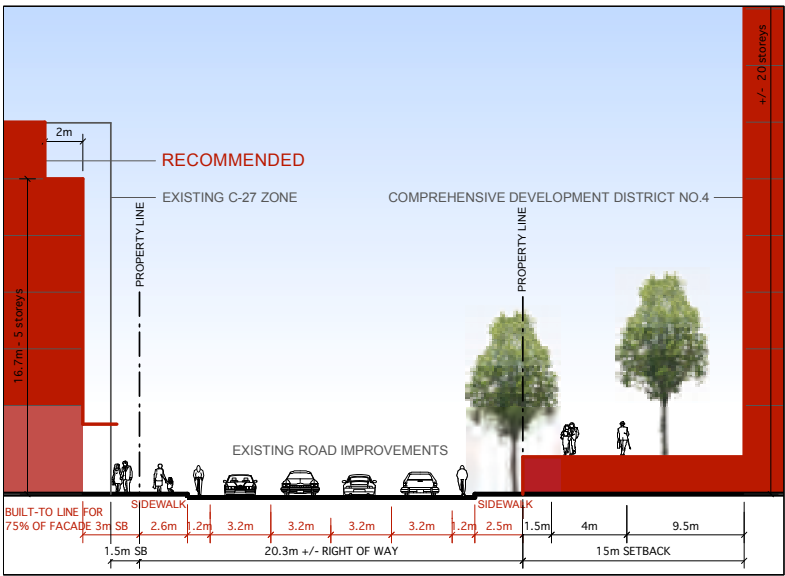
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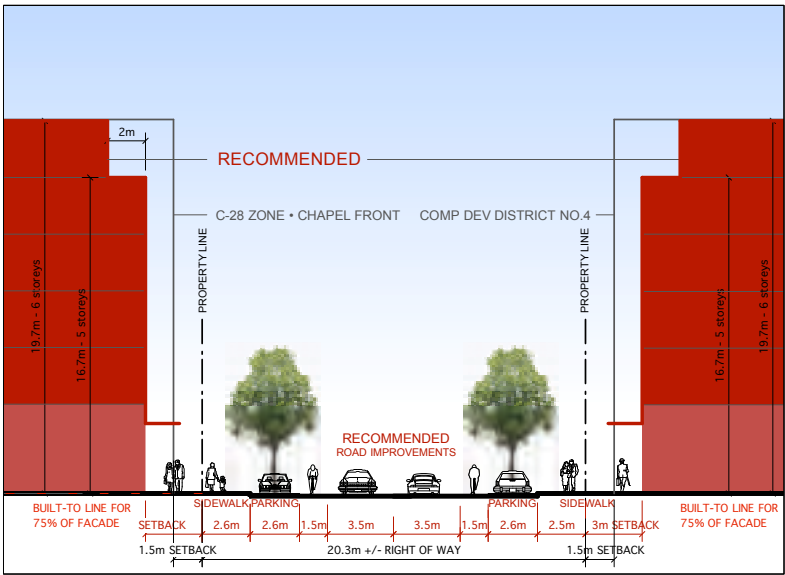
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



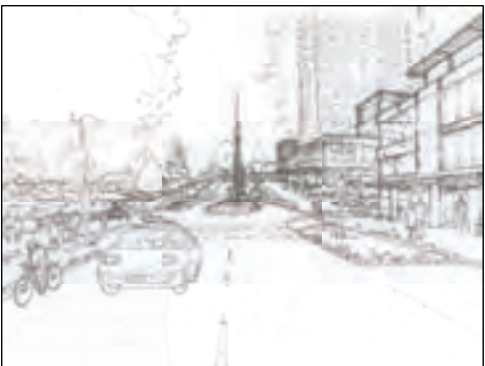
A-A COMOX ROAD SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B COMOX ROAD SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. EAST UP COMOX FROM TERMINAL



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

North Waterfront - Maffeo Sutton Park and Georgia Park: As both regional and local amenities, these parks lend a waterfront character to the area including the adjacent waters' edge pathway network. The parks help connect this district to the rest of the harbour waterfront and its upland areas. With the construction of high-density residential buildings, these parks will become more intensely used and will contribute to the urban waterfront character and vibrancy of the precinct.

Development in this area should pay close attention to the waterfront views and how buildings facilitate access to the harbourfront. This district requires ground oriented retail and residential uses as well as a significant infusion of usable landscaped areas so that people can fully enjoy and engage with the waterfront. Site design and building orientation should balance public access and waterfront views from private residences. Better public access to the water will, by extension, benefit the residents of the area.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.



B. WEST DOWN COMOX FROM FRONT

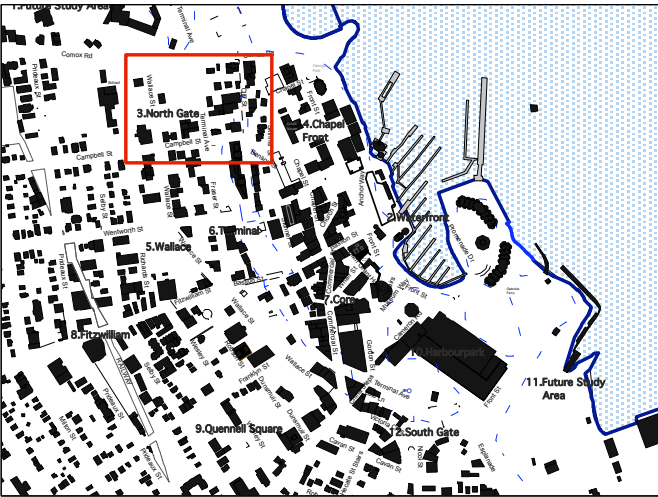


C. N-EAST FROM COMOX AT TERMINAL



FUTURE

B. NORTH GATE



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

*** Terminal Avenue**
While a 3m front setback along Terminal Avenue is recommended, the 4.5m front setback, as required by zoning, is acceptable provided 1.5m is designated by covenant for public use (ie. expansion of the sidewalk).

This area forms the northern gateway to Downtown. It is presently dominated by suburban-style developments (parking fronting the street, building at the back). A significant grade change occurs between Terminal Avenue and Wallace Street (see Terminal Avenue study area). The Ministry of Transportation has jurisdiction over Terminal Avenue, and will require consultation regarding any proposed changes to the road design or streetscape.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

- 1. Develop infill buildings on existing surface parking lots with parking beneath or behind buildings. Maximum front yard setback 3 m for 75% of building frontage.
- 2. Along east side of Wallace Street, future buildings should have access from sidewalk level at Wallace Street. Access at lower level (Terminal Avenue) could also be provided.
- 3. Wallace Street streetscape improvement with tree bulges between every 4 on-street parking stalls. Eliminate free right turn from Comox Road to Wallace Street. Improve pedestrian crossing of Wallace Street to Pioneer Park with traffic bulges, light control and textured paving. Provide mid-block pedestrian crossing at traffic bulge.

- 4. Buildings at the south-east and southwest corners of Terminal Avenue and Comox Street to architecturally express this location as a gateway to downtown. Heights up to 12 storeys (40 m) tall should be considered.
- 5. Terminal Avenue recommended with a 3 m* front setback, parallel parking, bicycle lanes and 3 or 4 drive lanes (see street sections). Parking and services behind or beneath new buildings. Six storeys, with top floor setback 2 m.
- 6. Consider allowing 7 to 8 storeys at the corner of Terminal Avenue and Campbell Street, with 3 m front setback. Setback top two floors 2 m.
- 7. Along Cliff Street, consider 1.5 m front setback and 5 storey height (addresses narrow right-of-way). Allow shared driveways to encourage parking behind buildings.
- 8. Due to its scale, Cliff Street is suited to a pedestrian-oriented design with special treatment and design of light standards, paving and other pedestrian amenities.

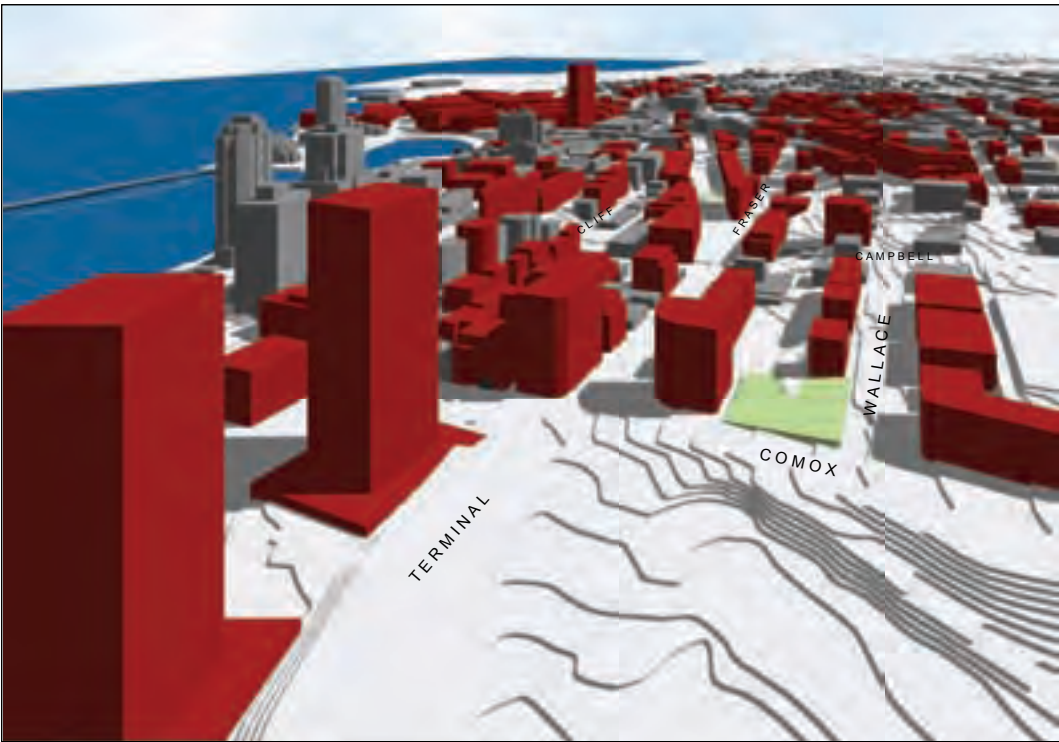


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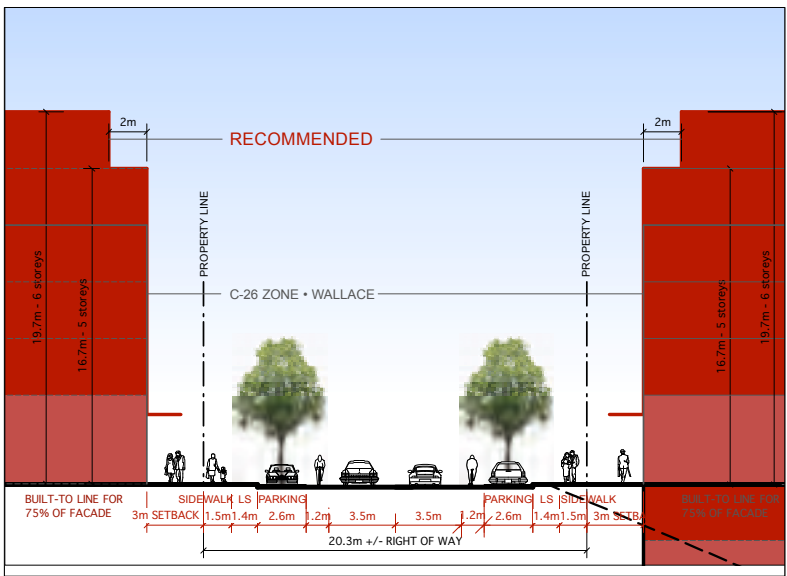
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 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



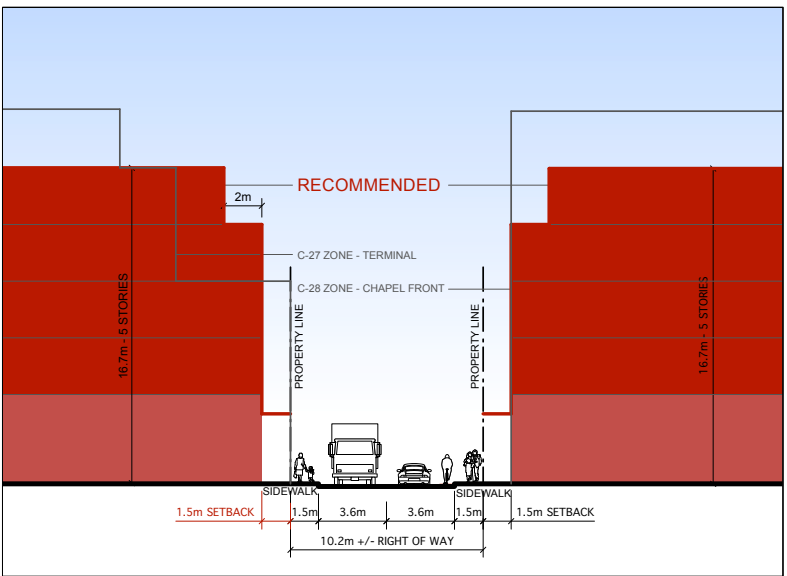
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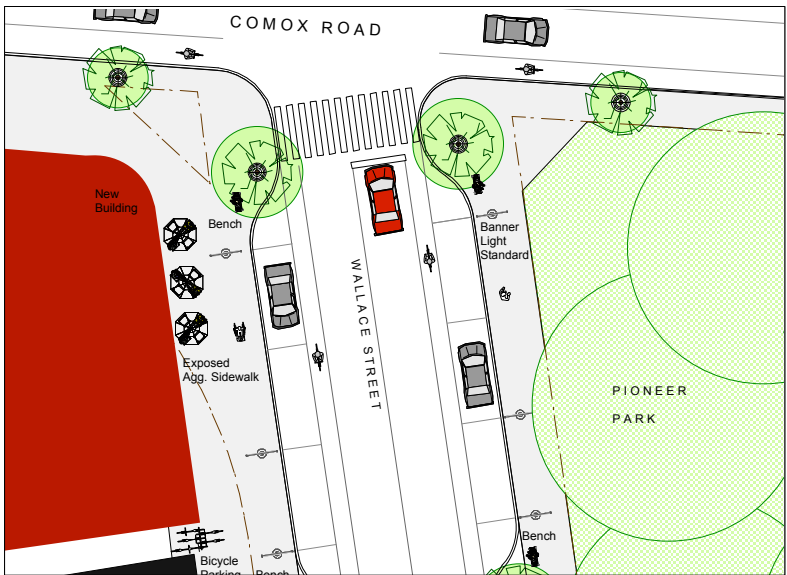
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



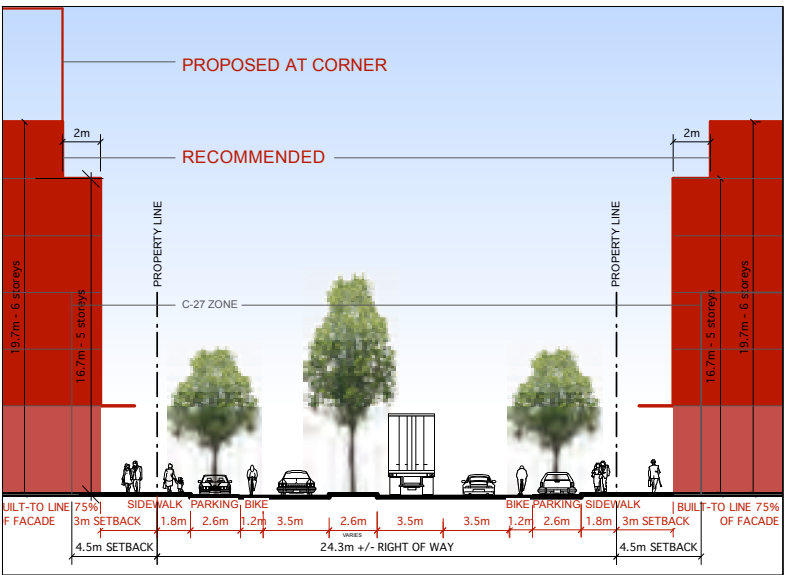
A-A WALLACE STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B CLIFF STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



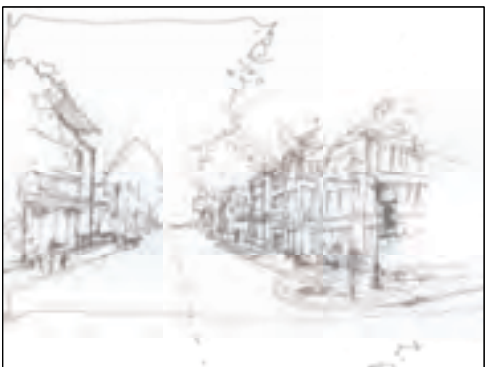
CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C TERMINAL AVENUE SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. WEST UP CAMPBELL FROM TERMINAL



FUTURE



B. SOUTH DOWN CLIFF FROM COMOX



FUTURE



C. SOUTH DOWN TERMINAL TO COMOX



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

Although now a mainly auto-oriented entrance to Downtown Nanaimo, the potential exists in this major transportation corridor to create a more universal and significant landmark/gateway from the north. The Pearson bridge and Millstone River that it crosses, are significant features as is the Pioneer Park which functions as public open space. New residential development near Maffeo Sutton Park should include extensive walkways, bike paths and water's edge walkway augmentation and extension to and through the area. Some smaller scale creek-front housing should be included to balance with the taller buildings and to take advantage of the significant land form and elevation changes between Wallace Street and Terminal Avenue rights-of-way.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

TALL BUILDINGS

Higher density in the form of tall buildings may be appropriate in portions of the North Gate area. The following tall building criteria was supported in the 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan for this character area.

Minimum Lot Area: 1300 square metres (14,000 square feet)

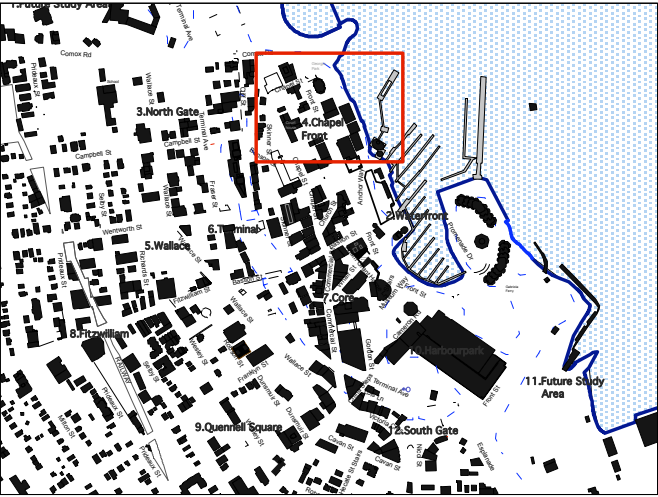
Setbacks: 7.5 metres (24.6 feet) for all yards

Separation Between Towers: 30.5 metres (100 feet)

Maximum Floor Plate: 595 square metres (6400 square feet) for those floors six storeys or above, with a maximum depth and width of 24.4 metres (80 feet).

In addition, please see the Guidelines for Tall Buildings section of this plan.

C. CHAPEL FRONT NORTH



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This area forms the northern section of the Chapel Front precinct. Distinguishing characteristics include the waterfront along the east edge and the well-treed, abrupt grade change west adjacent to Cliff Street. The dominant form in the area is the 20-plus storey residential tower at the corner of Comox Road and Front Street. The area also has numerous parking lots at grade.

Redevelopment of sites adjacent or proximate to the heritage buildings along Front Street should carefully consider their building position and architectural expression (see the Urban Design Guidelines).

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Recommend a 3 m front setback and build-to line for 75% of frontage, to allow pedestrian area and street trees. Consider reducing allowable building height along Skinner and Chapel streets to reflect narrow right-of-way, except for landmark buildings (see item 2). Setback main floor and top floor 3 m from build-to line. Underground parking is recommended.

- 1. Infill parking lots at 10, 65, 77 and 100 Chapel Street, and 1 and 45 Front Street. Consider increased density for buildings with underground parking.
- 2. Landmark buildings at 10 Chapel Street and 65 Chapel Street should be a minimum 6 storeys.
- 3. Infill vacant sites at 55 & 65 Comox Road and 45 Skinner Street. See recommended height and setbacks.
- 4. Properties fronting Georgia Park to be developed to provide public amenity from park side.
- 5. Respect character of escarpment along ravine edge running between Comox Road and Benson Street. 85 Benson Street could be developed to provide public amenity. Encourage connection from Benson Street through the Law Courts to Georgia Park at the head of Front Street.
- 6. Redevelop 45 Front Street as the south frame of the Law Courts. Design to allow diagonal view to Law Courts as with existing 25 Front Street.



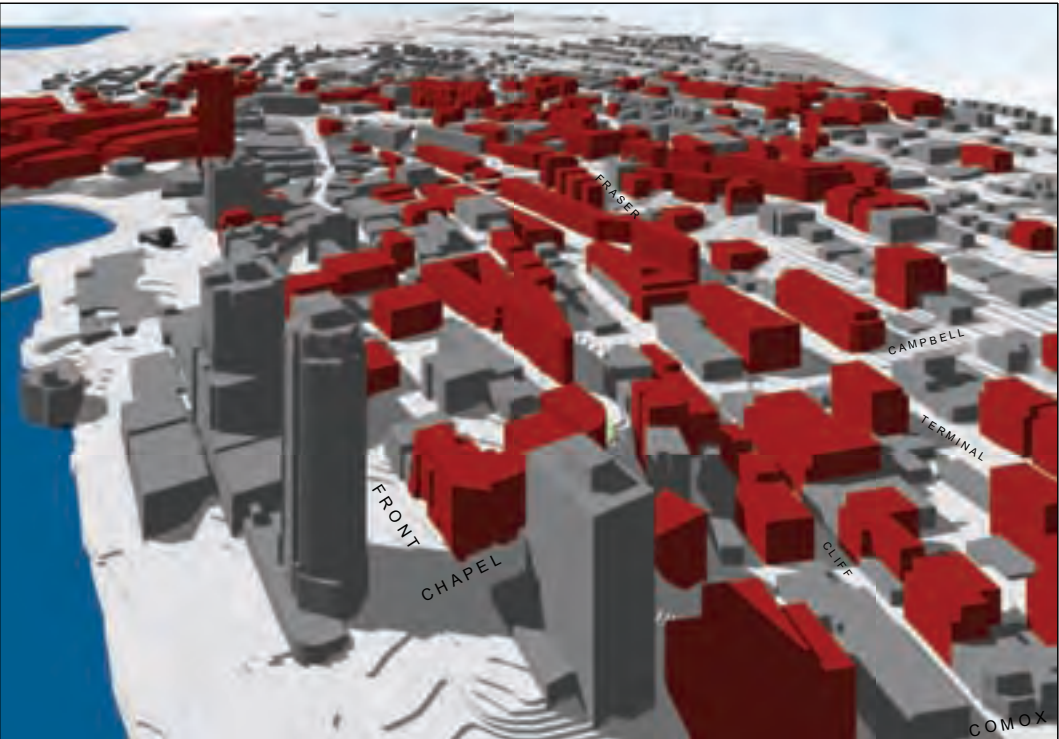
URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

see page 26 for Concept Plan

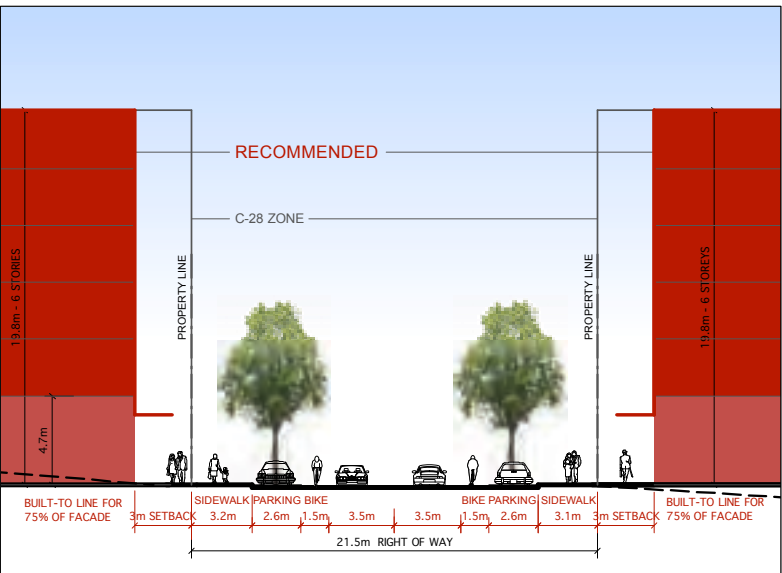
- LEGEND
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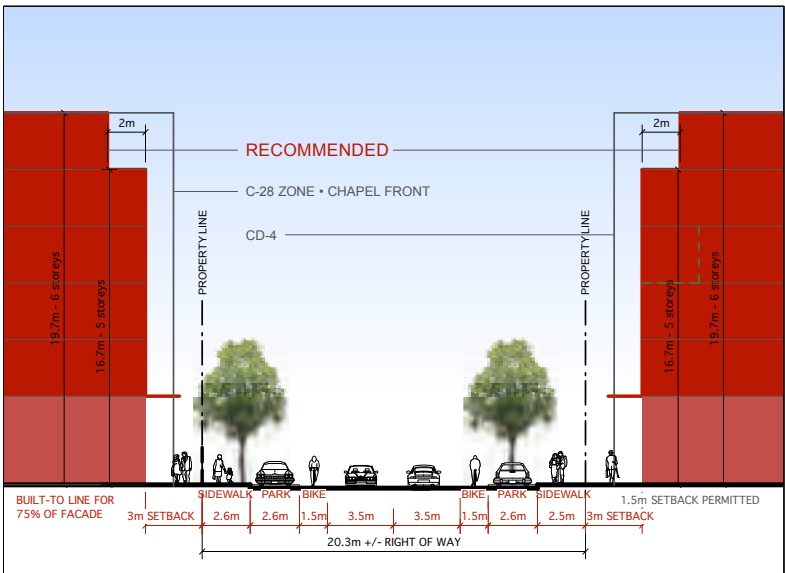
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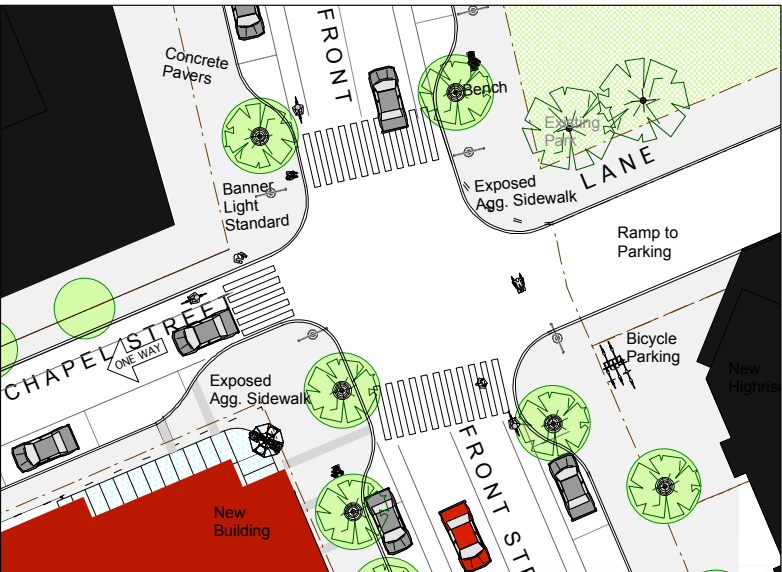
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



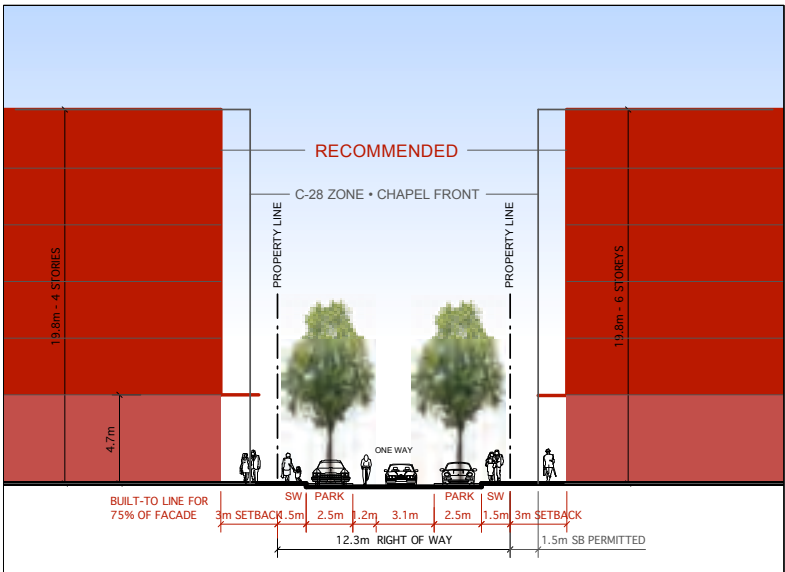
A-A FRONT STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B COMOX ROAD SECTION SCALE 1:400



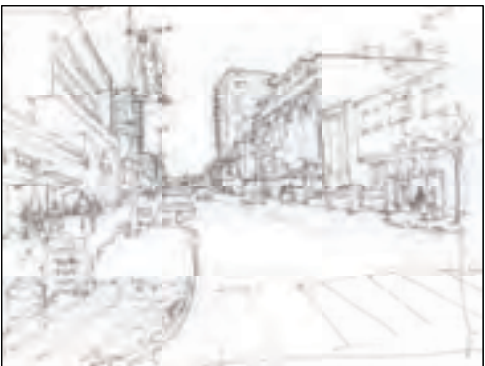
CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C CHAPEL STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. NORTH UP FRONT



FUTURE



B. SOUTHWEST AT CHAPEL & FRONT



FUTURE



C. SOUTH ALONG CHAPEL TO SKINNER



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

Chapel Front is an emerging mixed-use neighbourhood with a large number of residences and street-level commercial spaces being built. Significant landmarks include the Globe Hotel and the Courthouse. This plan includes guidelines toward densification in a classic urban sense with significant street trees, widened sidewalks buffered by boulevards, and on-street parking. The public realm should be defined here by continuous building street wall that should be approximately 5 storeys in height. Residential towers can achieve the same continuous street-edge with a base or podium of this height.

Continuous ground-level street frontages with a variety of offices, stores, live/work studios and townhouses characterize this area. Mid-block mews, courtyard and greenways should also be incorporated into new developments. The key natural feature in this area is the escarpment. Designs should take advantage of the dramatic landscape by incorporating the rock wall as a visual feature or orienting courtyards towards the wall, rather than the busy street.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

TALL BUILDINGS

Higher density in the form of tall buildings may be appropriate in portions of the Chapel Front area. The following tall building criteria was supported in the 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan for this character area.

Minimum Lot Area: 2787 square metres (30,000 square feet)

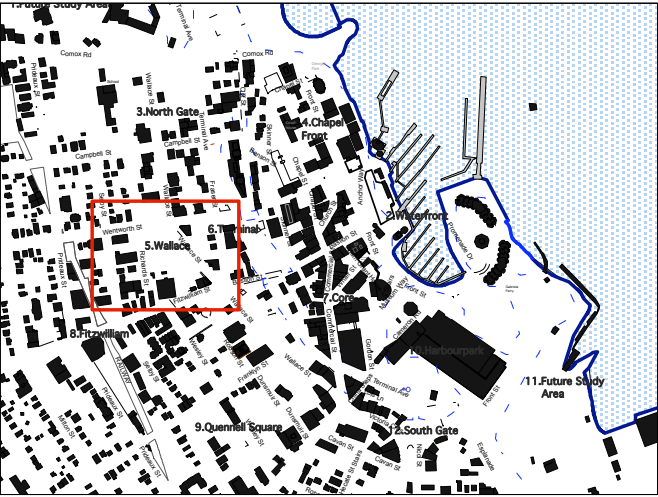
Setbacks: 4.6 metres (15 feet) for all yards

Separation Between Towers: 30.5 metres (100 feet)

Maximum Floor Plate: 595 square metres (6400 square feet) for those floors six storeys or above, with a maximum depth and width of 24.4 metres (80 feet).

In addition, please see the Guidelines for Tall Buildings section of this plan.

D. WALLACE



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

The Wallace precinct is distinguished by a unique urban geometry generated by Fraser Street and the skew of Wallace Street. The grade change between Wallace Street and Terminal Avenue is also noteworthy. The urban fabric is quite undeveloped, with large expanses of surface parking. The intersection of Wallace, Fitzwilliam, Fraser and Bastion Streets, is a major node.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Recommended 5 storeys, with underground parking, along Wallace Street and Wentworth Street and 6 storey buildings at the corners of this intersection. Require setback of 4th floor along Richards Street.

- 1. Re-develop City-owned parking lot at Wentworth Street and Wallace Street. 75% frontage to 3 m build-to line. Could have central courtyard.
- 2. Re-develop parking area along Wallace Street, between Wentworth Street and Fitzwilliam Street. Maximize frontage at 3 m build-to line. Mid-block pedestrian/cycling pathway with underground parking, or allow surface parking.

- 3. Develop Wentworth Greenway, linking Terminal Avenue to Wallace Street and Fitzwilliam Street through existing treed areas.
- 4. Develop Richards Street as a pedestrian/cycling area with one way vehicle traffic and parallel parking, calmed by sharing the bike lanes in two directions. 3 m build-to line, adding street trees and mid-block links through courtyards. Appropriate for ground floor residential. (See Urban Design Guidelines.)
- 5. Infill vacant lots. Incorporate underground parking.
- 6. Develop landmark building at intersection of Fraser Street and Terminal Avenue (see Terminal Avenue study area).
- 7. Green Wallace Street with street trees, pedestrian amenities and bicycle lanes.
- 8. Re-develop Wallace Street and Wentworth Street rights-of-way, including parallel parking each side with landscaped traffic bulges, bike lanes and 2.5 m wide sidewalks.

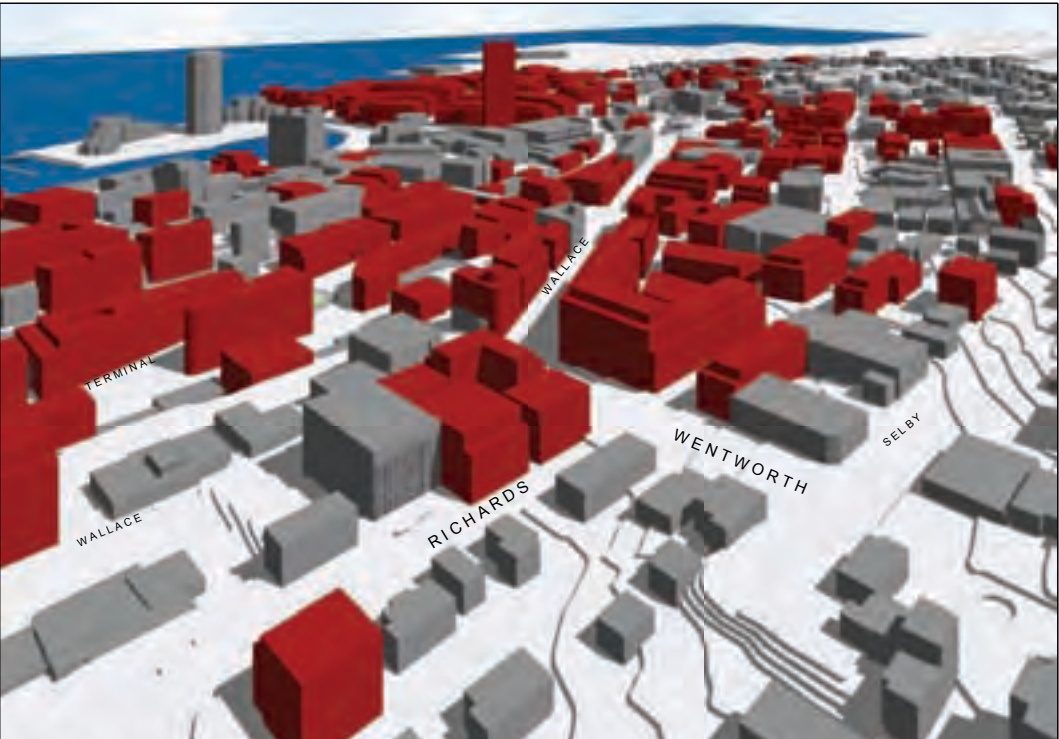


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

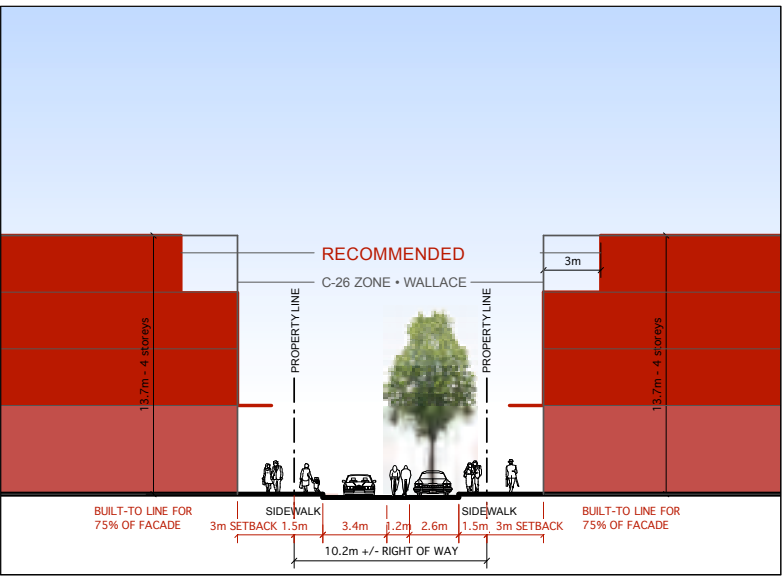
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



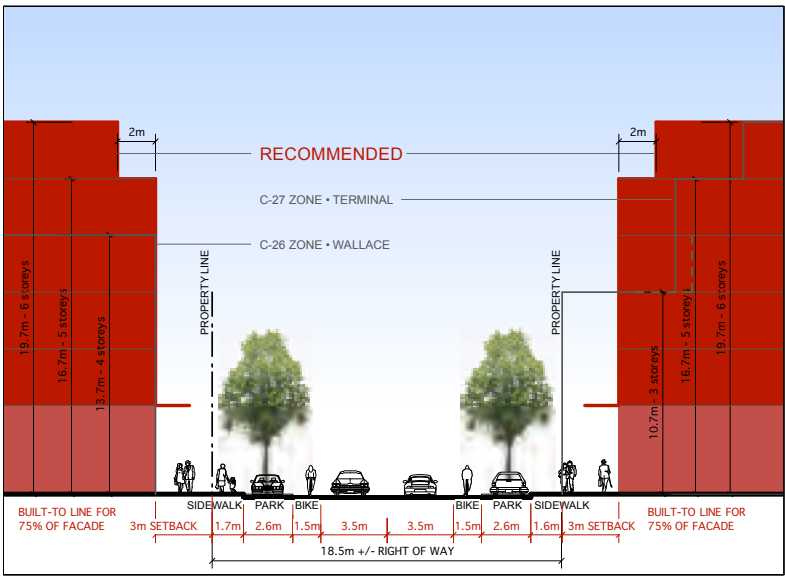
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



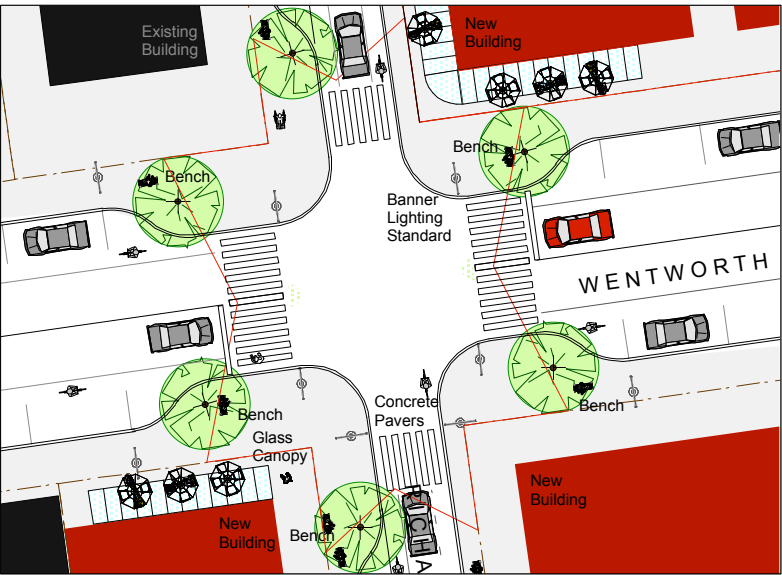
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



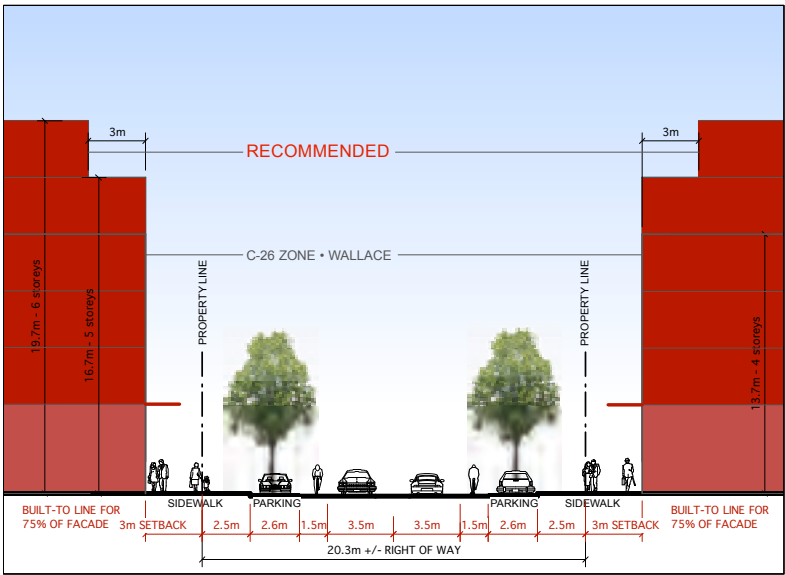
A-A RICHARDS STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B FRASER STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



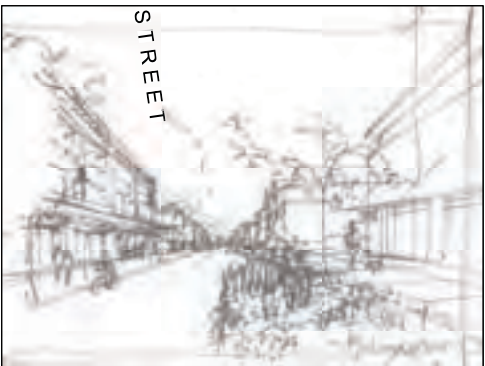
CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C WENTWORTH STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



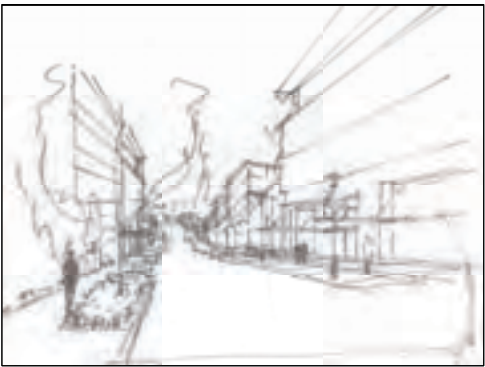
A. RICHARDS SOUTH TO FITZWILLIAM



FUTURE



B. FRASER NORTH TO TERMINAL



FUTURE



C. WALLACE NORTH TO WENTWORTH



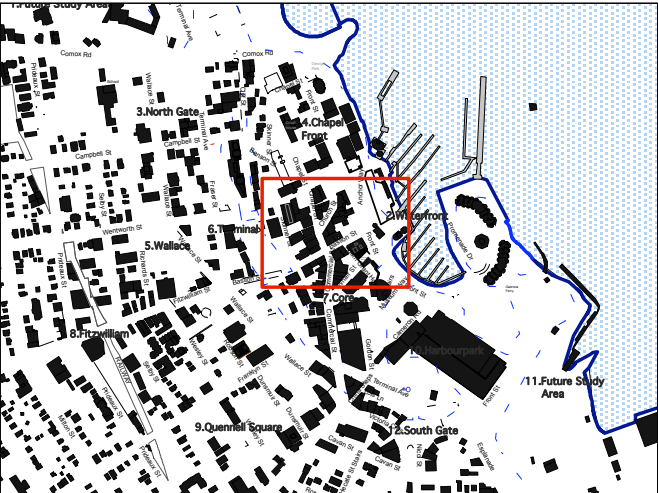
FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

This area borders on the historic downtown neighbourhood. It is distinguished by a significant grade change between Wallace Street and Terminal Avenue and the distinctive geometry of Wallace Street. The 1960's small professional office buildings (for example the Madrone Bldg.) are exemplary for their relationship to the street with the integration of internal courtyards and extensive landscaping. Infill buildings will inevitably be larger but should work to match the street-front scale and feel of these modest buildings, especially by paying attention to landscaping and integration of public and private space with courtyards and gardens. Where possible, new development should preserve the distant water views for the public domain.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

E. CORE / TERMINAL



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

*** Terminal Avenue**
While a 3m front setback along Terminal is recommended, the 4.5m front setback, as required by zoning and Ministry of Transportation, is acceptable provided 1.5m is designated by covenant for public use (ie. expansion of the sidewalk).

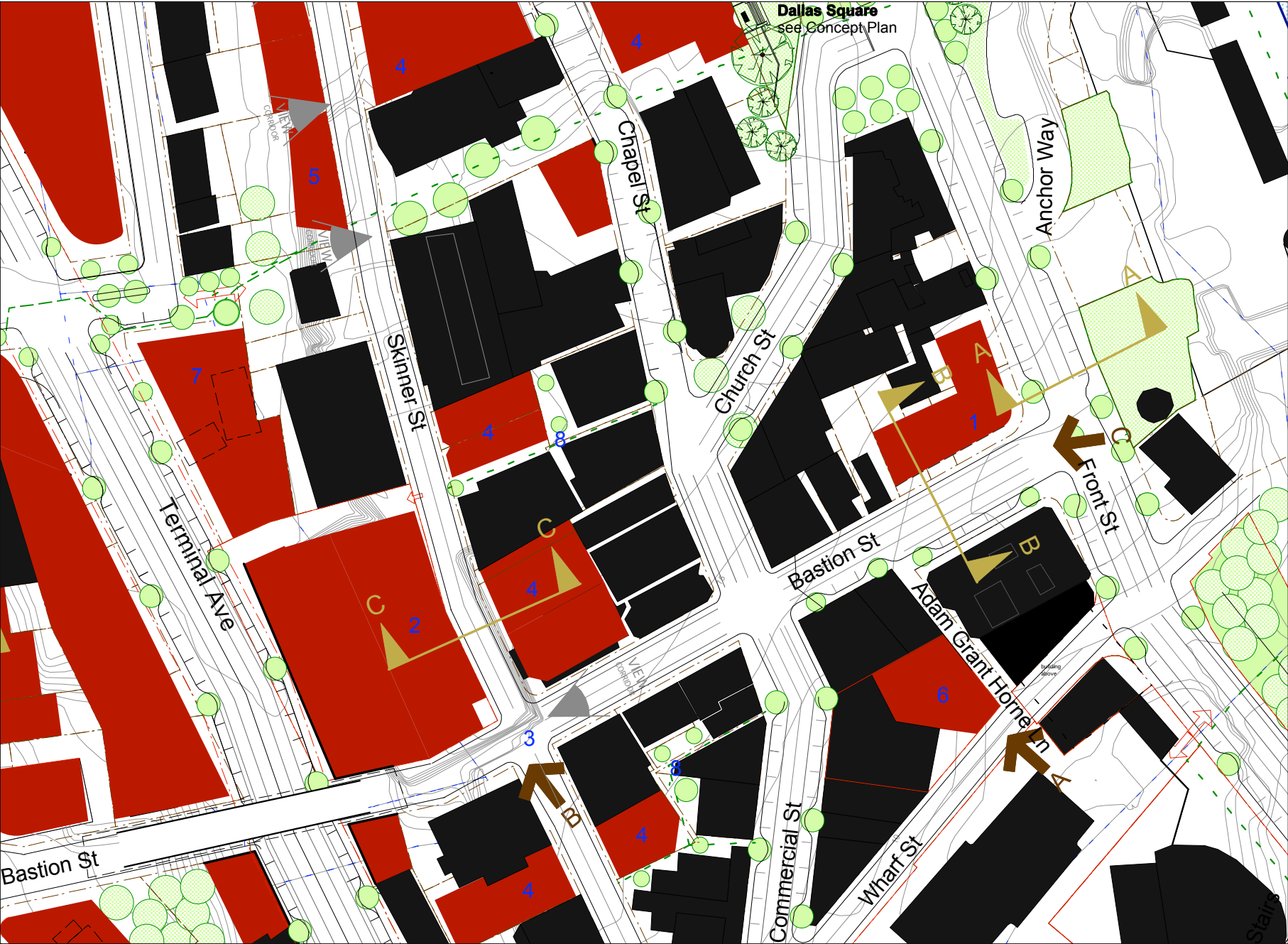
This study area makes up most of the Chapel Front precinct and the northern section of the Core precinct. It is distinguished by an abrupt grade change to the west, adjacent to Cliff Street. The existing urban fabric is well developed. The 20-storey Coast Bastion hotel tower dominates the area.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Recommended that front setbacks match adjacent existing buildings and build-to line for 75% of frontage. Building height at the corner of Bastion Street and Front Street could be 6 storeys (see 1). Setback main floor and top floor 3 m from build-to line to allow pedestrian areas and street trees.

1. Landmark building at corner of Bastion Street and Front Street to be six storeys with 3m ground floor setback and 3m top floor setback (see photo C and associated rendering).
2. Redevelop Bastion Street Parkade to provide at-grade commercial space on Skinner Street and Terminal Avenue. Improve pedestrian connection from Terminal Avenue to Bastion Street.

3. Upgrade pedestrian facilities at the corner of Bastion Street and Skinner Street. Create pedestrian space at parkade corner. Redevelop RBC site to minimum 4 storeys with pedestrian space at corner.
4. Infill parking lots at 146, 148, 152, 238 and 239 Skinner Street. Consider increased density for underground parking.
5. Develop buildings along ravine edge with view corridors and pedestrian viewing decks between. Could allow commercial activities on decks.
6. Plaza above 121 Front Street to be connected to Front Street. Infill building on parking lot at Wharf Street and Adam Grant Home Lane (see photo A and associated rendering).
7. New development along Terminal Avenue, 3 m* build-to line, minimum 4 storeys, sidewalk and boulevard trees (See Terminal Avenue study area).
8. Develop walkways/courtyards between Bastion, Commercial and Skinner Streets. Enhance walkway between 150 Skinner Street and 115 Chapel Street.

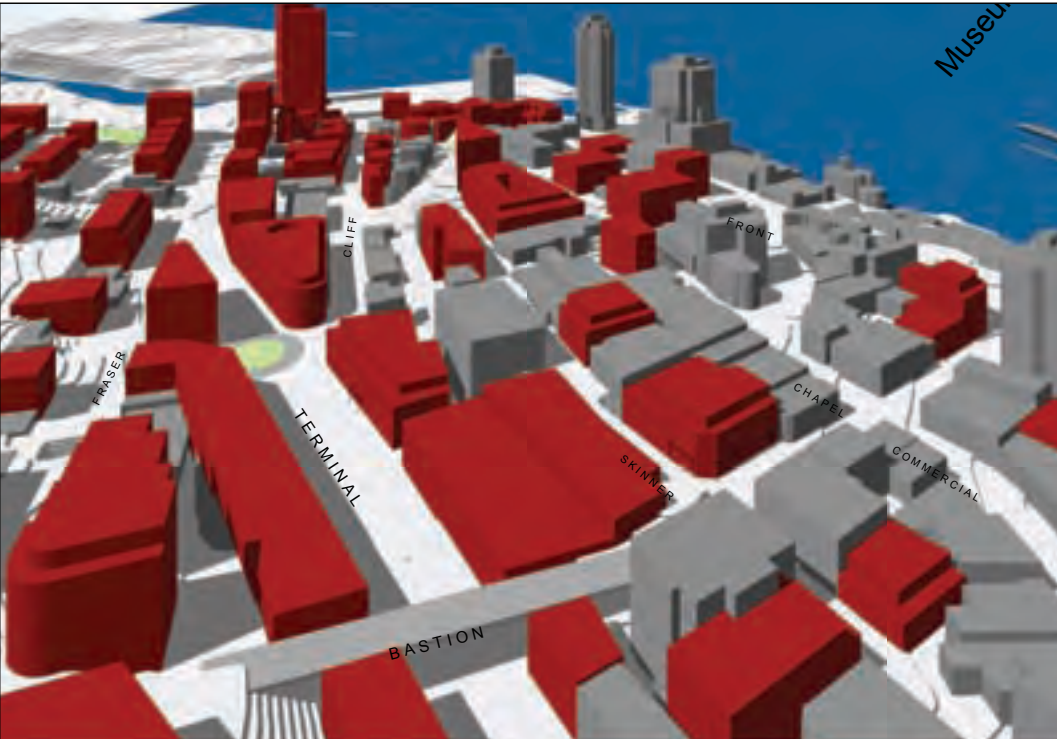


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

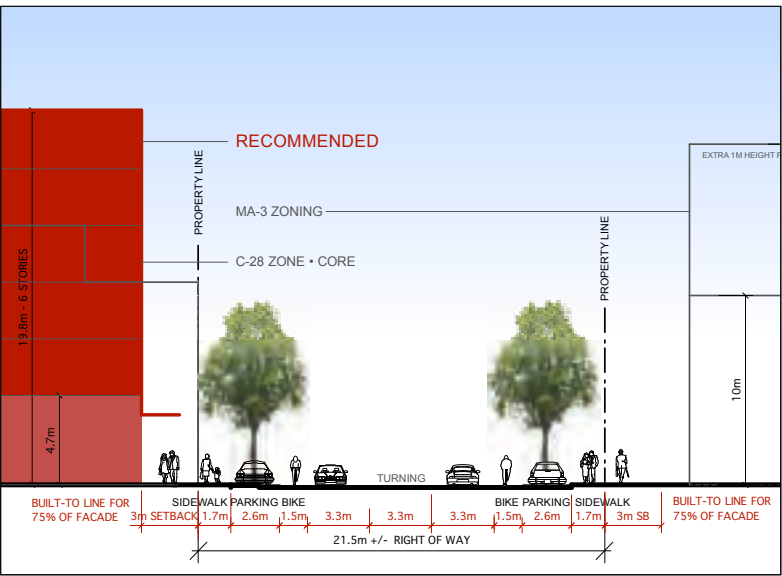
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



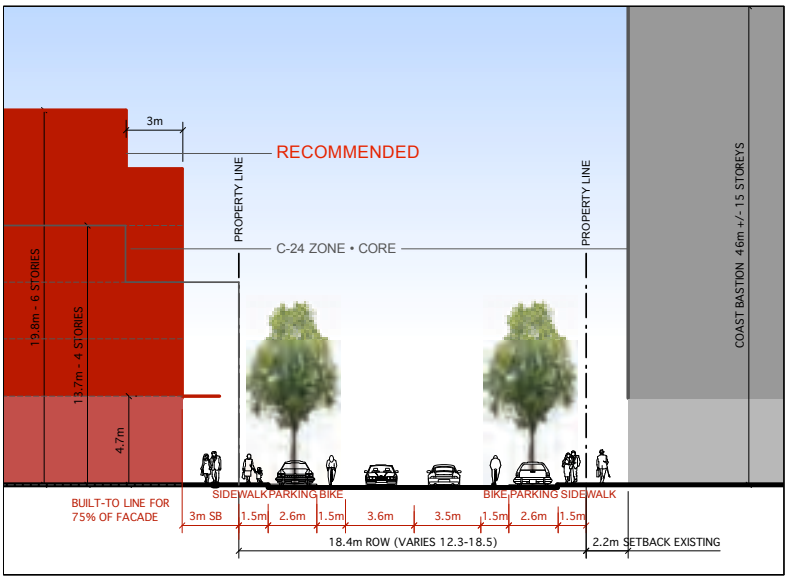
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



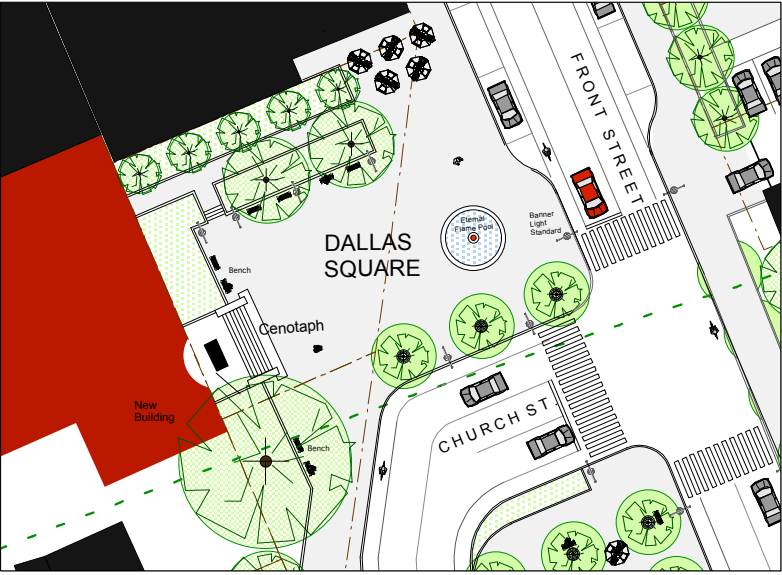
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



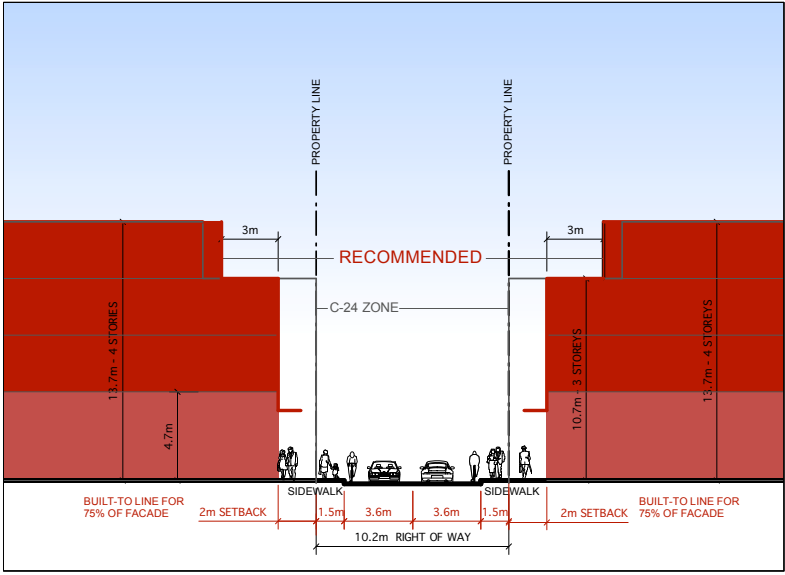
A-A FRONT STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B BASTION STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C SKINNER STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



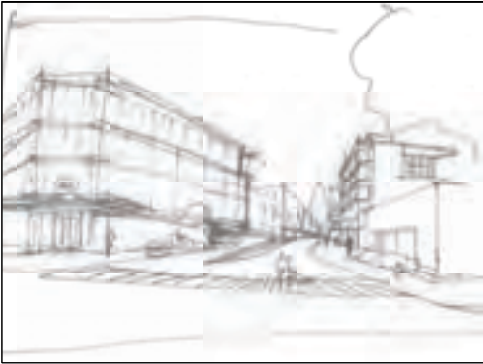
A. NORTH ADAM GRANT HORNE WAY



FUTURE



B. SKINNER NORTH FROM BASTION



FUTURE



C. WEST UP BASTION AT FRONT



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The Core area has a unique meandering and narrow street pattern with narrow properties and an impressive stock of historic buildings. There is a strong building rhythm where the buildings form a continuous 2 storey street edge with side by side shop fronts, making it an eminently human-scaled (pedestrian-friendly) street. The escarpment between Skinner Street and Terminal Avenue is also noteworthy. New buildings should closely align their frontages to those of the existing buildings and even to the line of former historic buildings now demolished.

A key consideration includes architectural integration of awnings and canopies that extend over the public realm (1.5 metres minimum) to provide covered public sidewalks. Awnings should not be installed as a way to provide large format signage, nor should they be installed so high on the building as to have no practical utility. Other design features that reflect the scale and feel of the downtown precinct include the installation of window and door features at small-shop intervals. Commercial uses requiring a large floor plate on the ground floor will detract from the existing scale and should not be located in the historic core area.

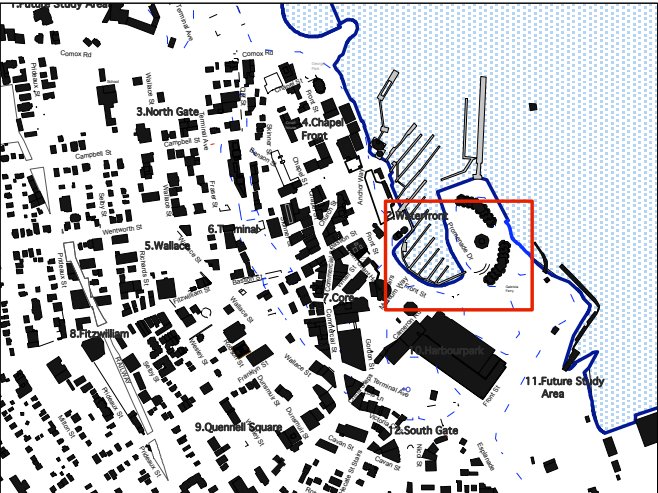
Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

Church and Commercial Streets

The architectural fabric of both Church Street and Commercial Street is largely intact despite the redevelopment of numerous buildings over time. Key urban design elements such as the definition of the streets, the heights of the buildings and the expressive qualities of storefronts, have all been maintained. It is important that the history, form and character of this street continue to be respected.

This does not necessarily mean that future redevelopment is precluded; rather, if existing buildings are required to be redeveloped, the design should follow the Nanaimo Heritage Building Design Guidelines. For new infill buildings or renovation of non-heritage buildings, follow the Urban Design Guidelines in this document.

F. WATERFRONT SOUTH



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This area forms the southern section of the Waterfront precinct. The interface with the harbour is its most distinguishing natural characteristic. The urban fabric, pedestrian amenities and landscaping are well developed. The housing complex on Cameron Island (along Promenade Drive) visually dominates the area.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

In general the Nanaimo Port Authority and the City of Nanaimo have been successful in creating an accessible and well-appointed public water's edge.

Future extension, both north and south from the completed waterfront development, should be coordinated with upland land uses, public rights-of-way and open space networks. Pedestrian linkages and connections to other amenities should be a priority, along with facilitating access to and enjoyment of the water's edge.

- 1. Redevelopment of the Gabriola Island Ferry Terminal. Along Front Street, develop a facility at the build-to line, with through access to loading vehicles at grade. Along the south-east property line, develop buildings along the pedestrian link to the waterfront walkway.
- 2. Provide future pedestrian connection down rock face of Piper Park.

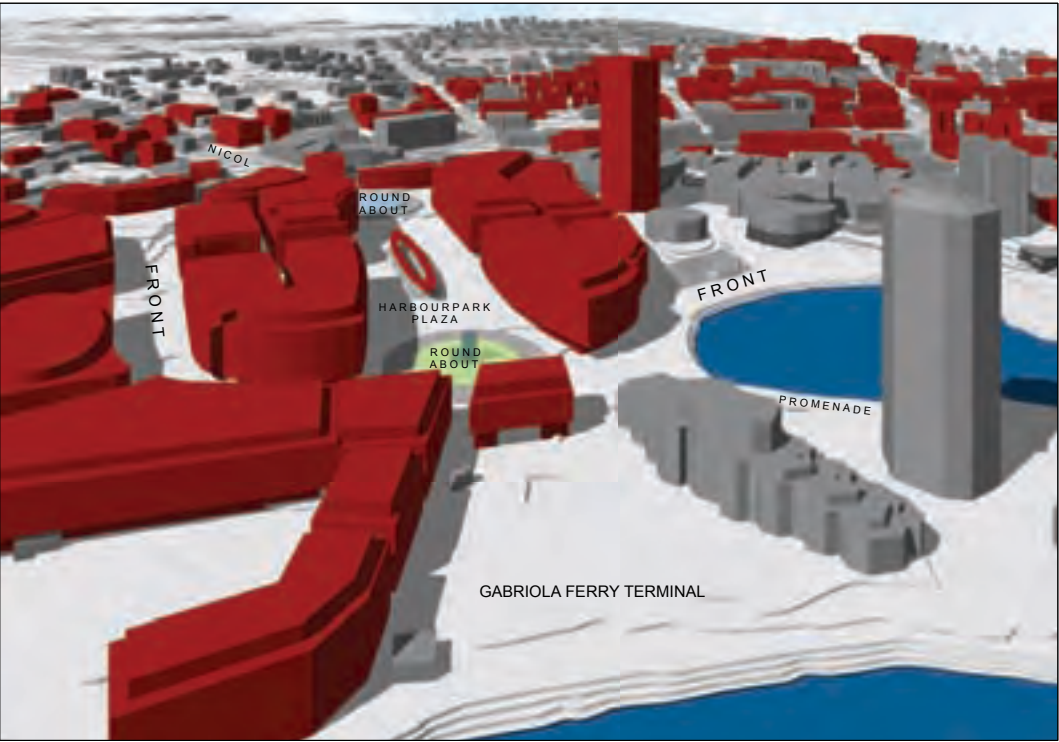


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

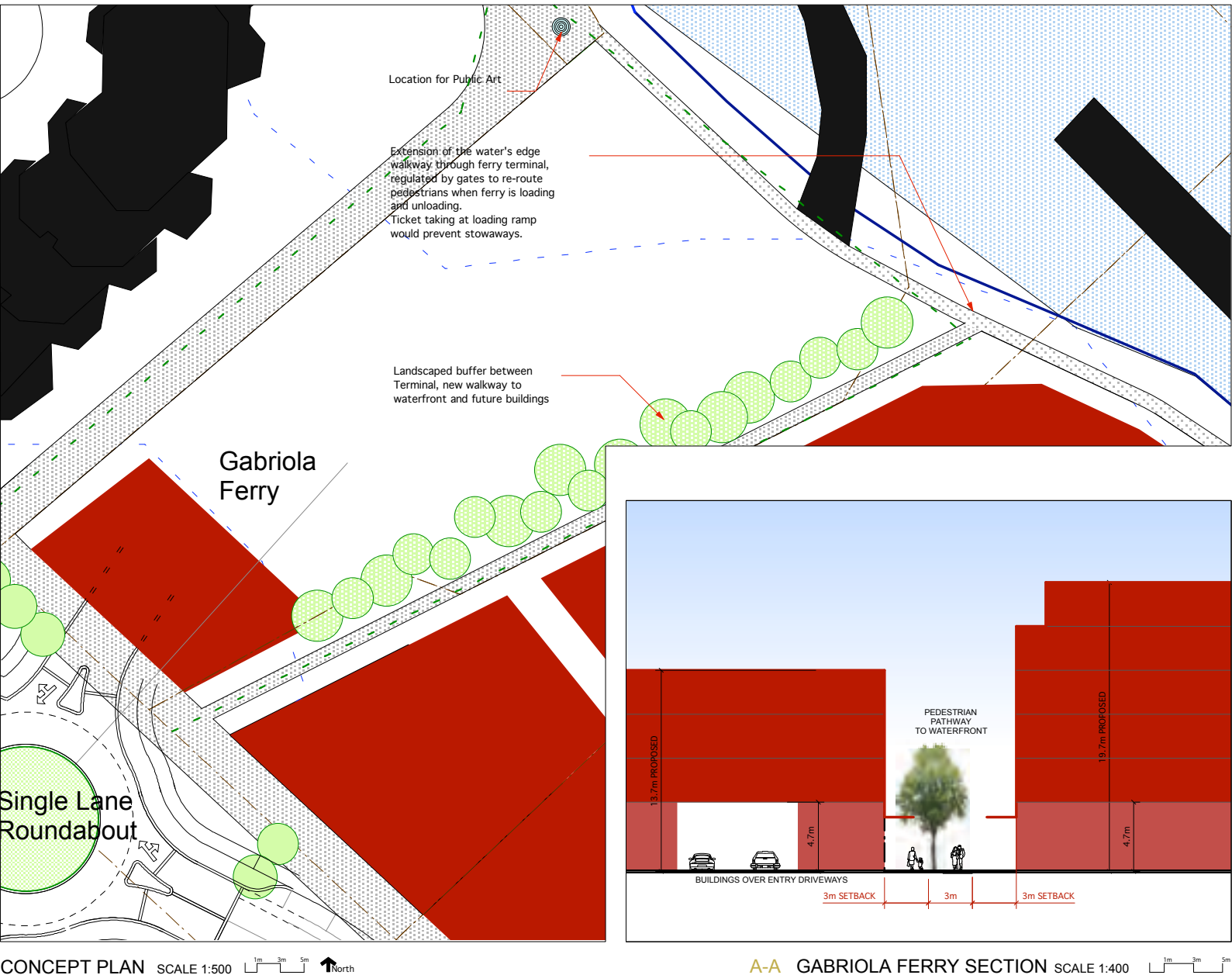
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



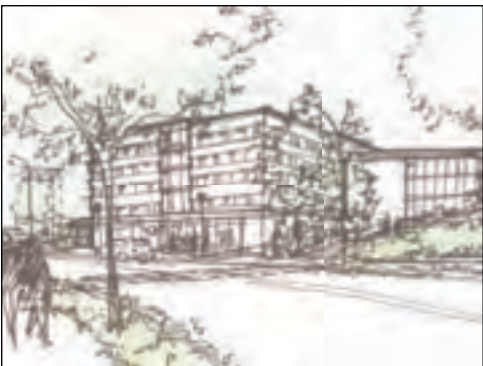
A. FRONT EAST TO MALL



B. FRONT STREET AT GABRIOLA FERRY



C. FRONT SOUTH AT HARBOURPARK



FUTURE



FUTURE



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

This is the Downtown Waterfront and as such will be the front door to the city from the water. As a regional transportation hub and working commercial harbour, ships, fishing boats, recreational vessels, float planes and various land-based transportation services that serve them (for example: taxis, coachlines and transit) all bring activity and amenity to Downtown. These areas should be carefully considered and developed not only for tourist visitors but also for downtown residents. The waterfront and harbour should be the focus for a mix of cultural and commercial uses and activities. The architecture and site design for this district should reflect this and enhance this potential.

Development in this area should pay close attention to how buildings facilitate access to the harbourfront and its walkway. This precinct requires ground oriented retail and residential uses as well as a significant infusion of usable landscaped areas so that people can fully enjoy and engage with the waterfront. Site design and building orientation should balance public access and waterfront views from private residences. Better public access to the water will, by extension, benefit the residents of the area. New development should also consider how it can offer connections to the city's key cultural amenities such as the performing arts complex, the Conference Centre, and the Legislative Chamber.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

G. FITZWILLIAM



Sloping up from Wallace Street, this study area is well developed between Selby Street and Wesley Street with a tight urban fabric and good pedestrian scale. However, surface parking dominates between Wesley Street and Robson Street. Lubbock Square, a unique feature of the original 1891 plan, has all but been lost. The rail line, between Selby Street and Prideaux Street is a significant urban design feature.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

For both sides of Prideaux Street, an increase of the front setbacks to 3 m is recommended, including a 75% build-to requirement. Reduce top floor setback to 3 m. Allow 6 storeys at the corner of Prideaux Street and Fitzwilliam Street.

- 1. Re-instate Lubbock Square as a public space. Redevelop corners at Fitzwilliam Street and Prideaux Street to allow an oversized roundabout with 55m+ centre park and parallel parking along outer edge.
- 2. Strengthen edges of Fitzwilliam Street and Selby Street with 4 storey developments on vacant corners. Consider no setback on upper floor at the corner.
- 3. Define train station with adjacent buildings to minimum front setback. Install distinctive paving on Selby Street and provide new landscaping and trees around existing station.
- 4. Redevelop rights-of-way on Fitzwilliam Street, Prideaux Street and Selby Street with on-street parallel parking, a landscape/tree bulge on each side, and bicycle and drive lane in each direction.
- 5. Two-way traffic on Robson Street, calmed with bicycle lanes in two directions and new development with 3m build-to line. Robson Street to provide pedestrian / cycling link to Fitzwilliam Street.
- 6. Generally replace surface parking with new buildings. Increased on-street parking will partially offset loss of parking stalls from surface lots.
- 7. Create landmark building at Fitzwilliam Street and Wallace Street (see photo B and associated rendering).
- 8. Ground floor residential is appropriate for Richards Street, between Wentworth Street and Fitzwilliam Street. (see Urban Design Guidelines.)



URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

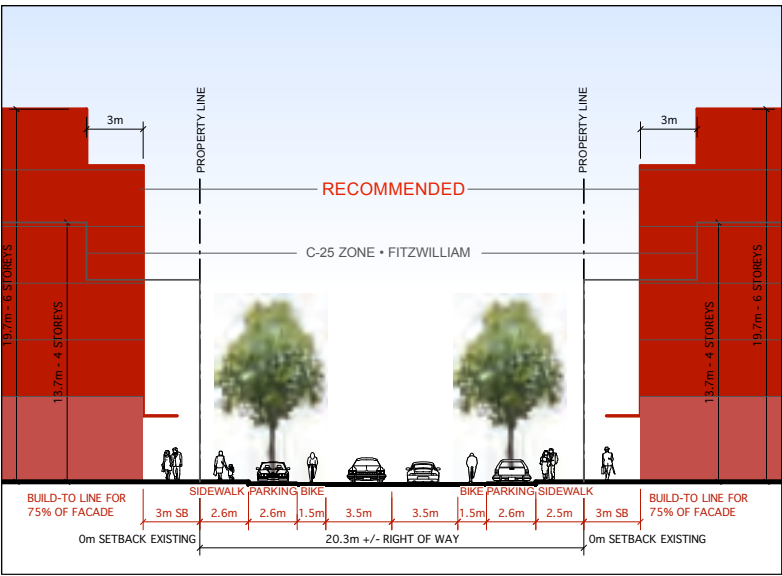
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



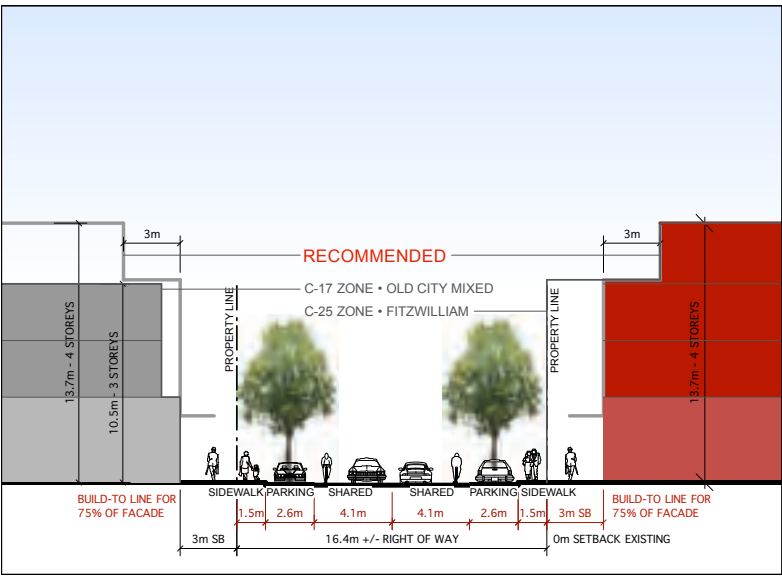
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



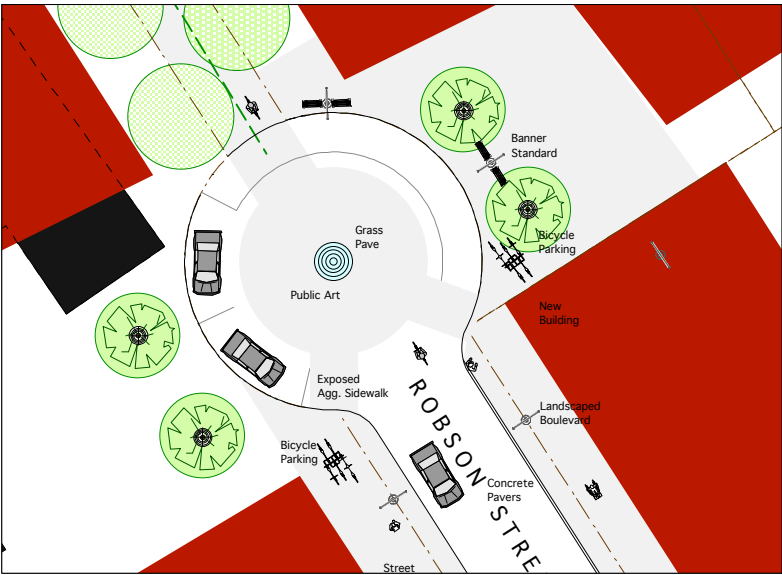
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



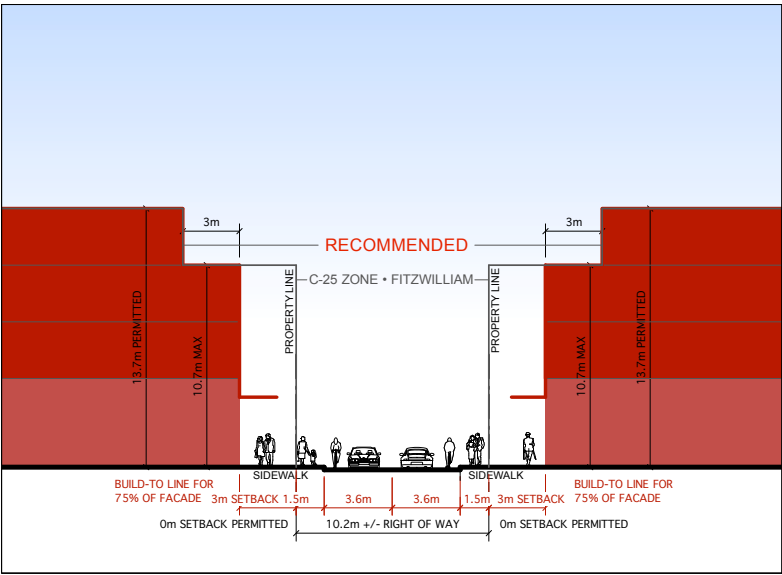
A-A FITZWILLIAM STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B PRIDEAUX STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C ROBSON STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. ROBSON SOUTH AT FITZWILLIAM



FUTURE



B. FITZWILLIAM ACROSS WALLACE



FUTURE



C. FITZWILLIAM EAST AT LUBBOCK CIRCLE



FUTURE

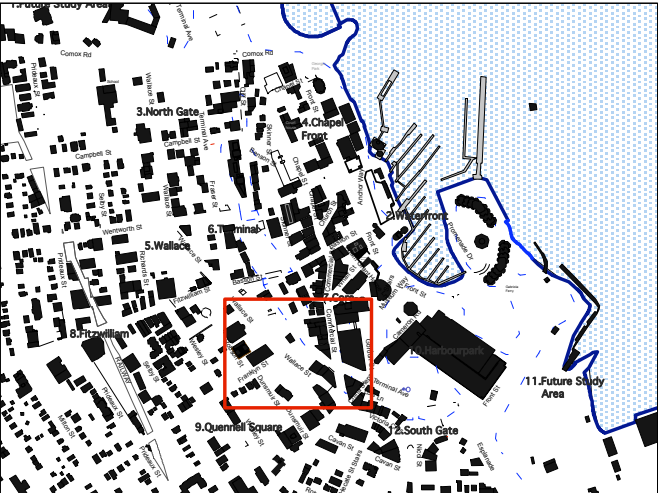
URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The Old City Quarter of Downtown Nanaimo is an example of historic commercial scale development. It is characterized by its historic building stock including the Occidental Hotel, a number of board & batten early settlement-period storefronts, and the E&N railway station rail right-of-way. It also borders on a historic residential neighbourhood.

Significant grade changes, narrow property fronts, historic Lubbock Square (now a node for municipal government services) and its position as the western approach to downtown, also distinguish this precinct. The slope in this area calls for buildings with small floor plates and narrow shop fronts, allowing for sidewalk level entrances. Complementary development in this area will be ground-floor retail and street-access residential, which will reflect the layout and grid pattern of the road network.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

H. CITY HALL / CORE



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This study area includes parts of the Quennell Square, Terminal and Core precincts. Surface parking dominates the Quennell Square precinct, which includes City Hall. Also see urban design strategies for Terminal Avenue.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Allow 6 storeys at the corner of Franklyn Street and Selby Street. Along Wesley Street and Dunsmuir Street, setback 4th floor and reduce front setback to 3 m, and side setback to 0 metres on one side.

- 1. Redevelop existing parking lots at corner of Franklyn Street at Selby Street and Franklyn Street at Dunsmuir Street.
- 2. Recommend 1.5m front setback for new developments along Robson Street. Appropriate development for Robson Street is ground floor residential (see Urban Design Guidelines).

- 3. Redevelop existing parking lots behind City Hall along Dunsmuir Street. Front of City Hall to form part of greenway along Wallace Street to Victoria Crescent / China Steps and to new Harbour Park and waterfront. New municipal building along Wallace Street (see 3a), to be sunk into hillside, with green roof to maintain view from historic City Hall.
- 4. Develop properties between Wallace Street and Terminal Avenue. Create focal point with building or pedestrian thoroughway at end of Franklyn Street (395 Terminal Avenue). If a thoroughway is established, provide a link to Commercial Street, possibly through Hall Block (see 4a).
- 5. Future LRT / street-car route, either linking Terminal Avenue from Harbour Park across Millstone River, or Harbour Park up Wallace Street, down Fraser Street and along Terminal Avenue, crossing Millstone River.
- 6. Redevelop A&B site to 5 storeys with publicly accessible ground floor retail (see photo A and associated rendering).

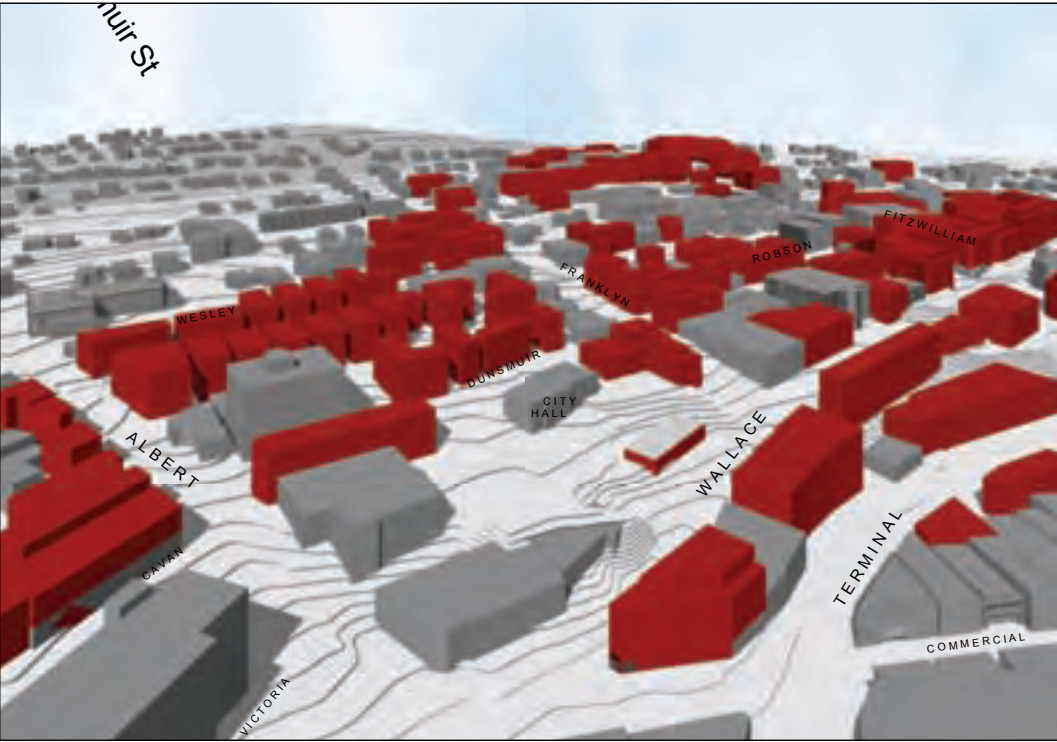


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

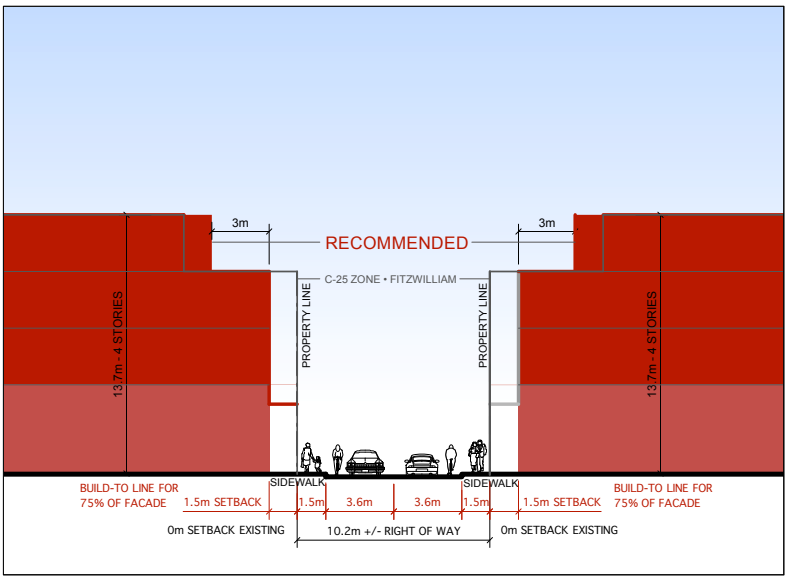
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



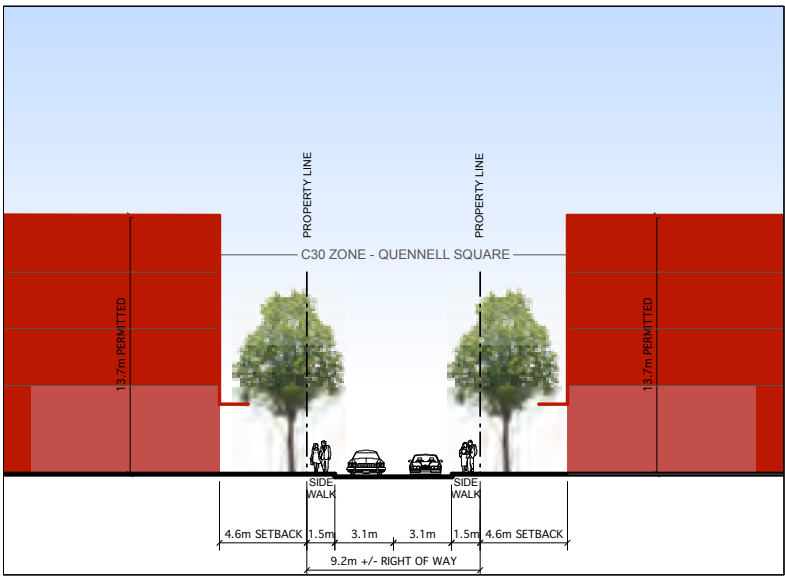
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



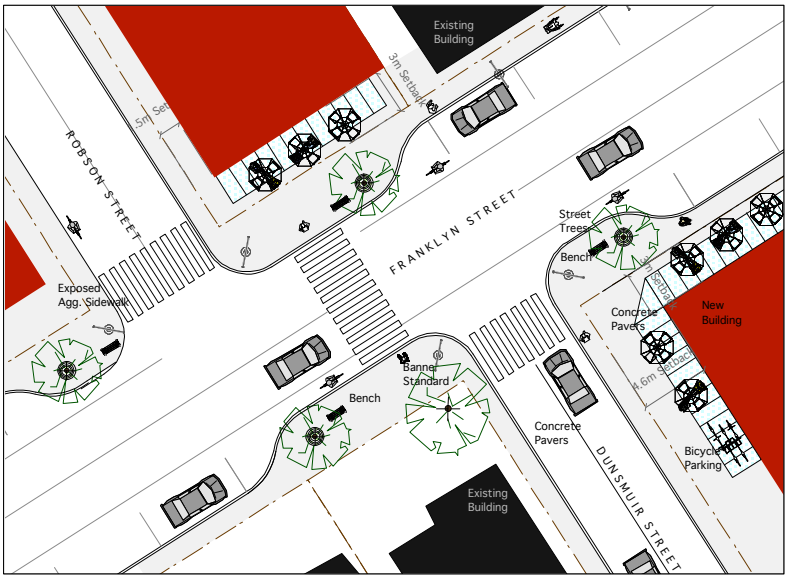
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



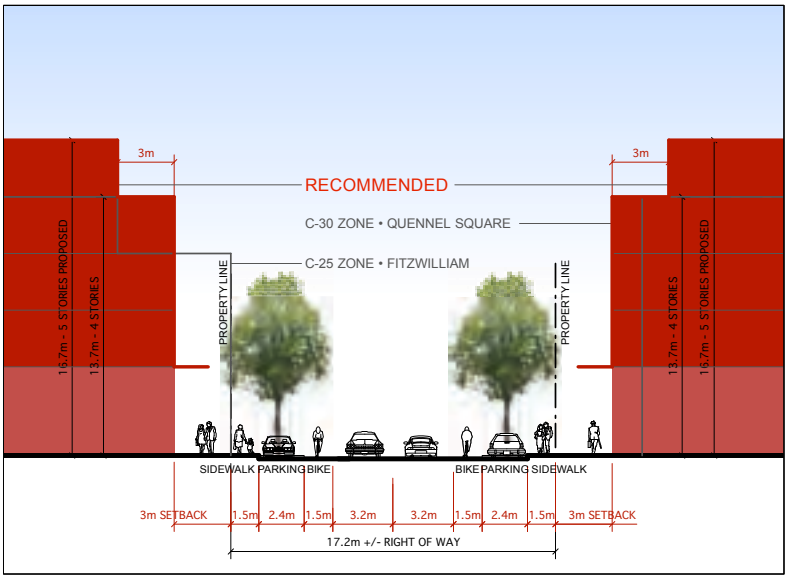
A-A ROBSON STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B DUNSMUIR STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



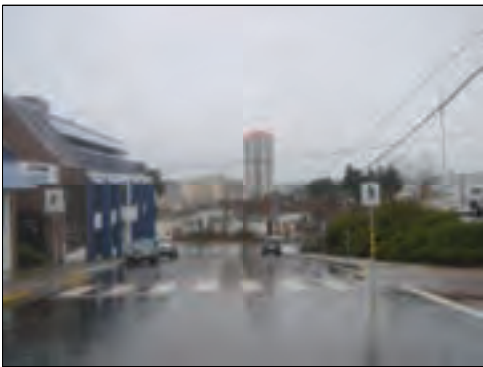
C-C FRANKLYN STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



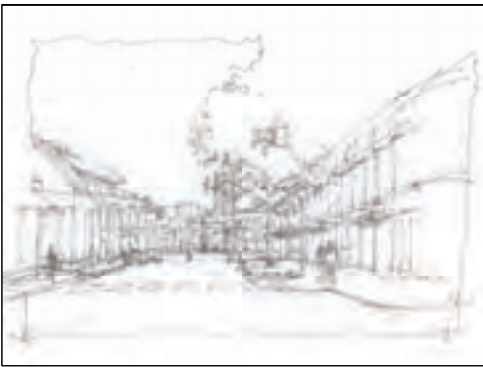
A. TERMINAL NORTH TO COMMERCIAL



FUTURE



B. FRANKLYN EAST AT DUNSMUIR



FUTURE



C. ROBSON NORTH FROM FRANKLYN



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The Core area has a unique meandering street pattern, with narrow roads and narrow properties, and an impressive stock of historic buildings. These buildings form continuous shop fronts and a human-scale street. New buildings should closely align their frontages to those of the existing buildings, and even to the line of former historic buildings now demolished.

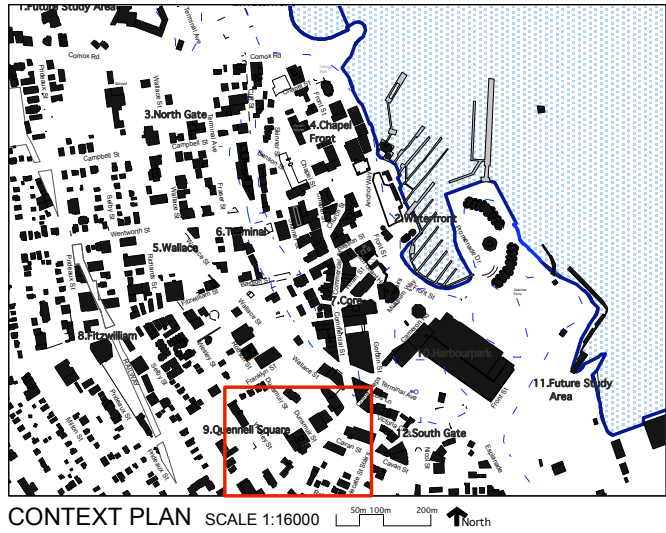
A key consideration includes architectural integration of awnings and canopies that extend over the public realm (1.5 metres minimum) to provide covered public sidewalks. Awnings should not be installed as a way to provide large format signage, nor should they be installed so high on the building as to have no practical utility. Other design features that reflect the scale and feel of the downtown precinct include the installation of window and door features at small-shop intervals. Commercial uses requiring a large floor plate on the ground floor will detract from the existing scale and should not be located in the historic core area.

The area surrounding City Hall and its grounds has significant undeveloped and publicly owned land with a number of heritage buildings. Where the existing buildings have large setbacks, new buildings can also be set back, provided there is a strong emphasis on street-side landscape. There is an opportunity to significantly green the area through the planting of trees on both sides of the street and on private land in the setback areas. Development in this area should focus on ground level commercial and professional office uses, with the exception of Robson Street, which holds excellent potential for residential development. Distant views of the ocean should be maintained for the public to enjoy.

Four older houses, including one heritage building, are located on the south side of Franklyn Street, between Dunsmuir Street and Wesley Street. While historically significant, this remnant of the historic streetscape exists in isolation with the majority of Franklyn Street having been redeveloped at large scales and with varying degrees of attention to the street alignment and other urban design aspects over decades. Therefore, it is not advised that future redevelopment on neighbouring blocks defer to the scale of these houses. However, they do represent a unique and distinguished piece of the old city fabric and should be respected. Fortunately they are located on the end of a single block and therefore could be treated as a special anomaly in this precinct and restored and rejuvenated for the future.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

I. CITY HALL / QUENNEL SQUARE



This area includes portions of the Quennell Square and the South Gate precincts. Surface parking dominates the Quennell Square precinct which includes City Hall. South Gate precinct is well built up but in poor repair.

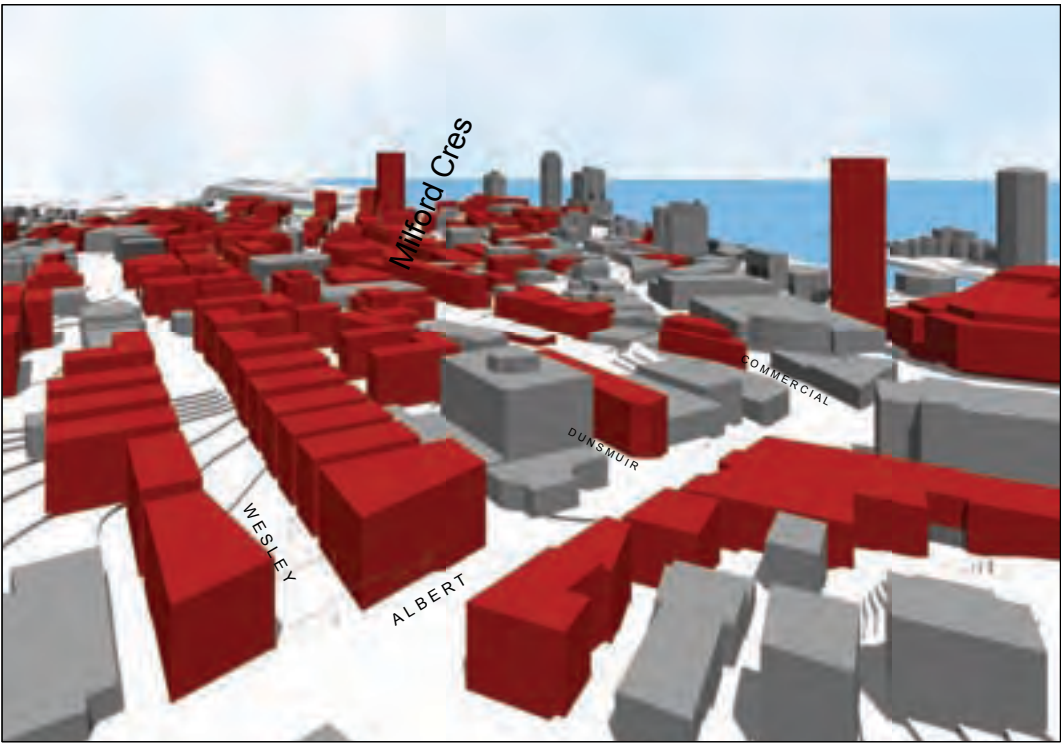
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

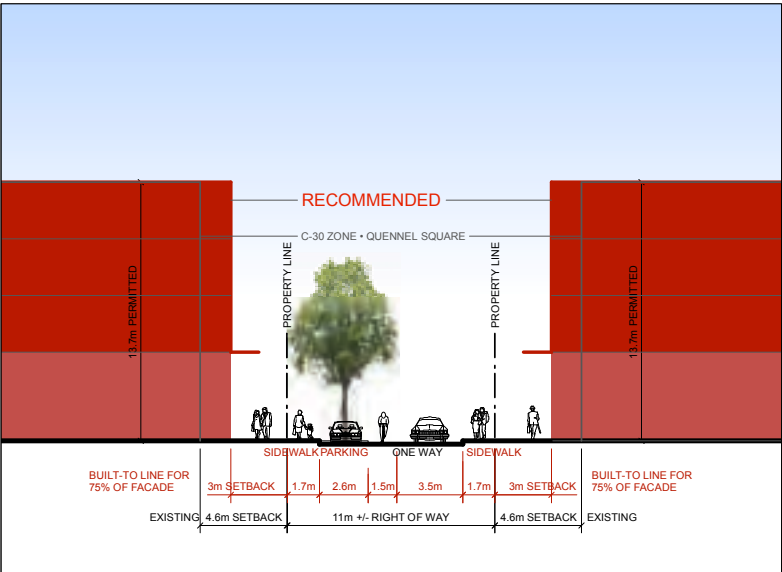
Recommend 5 to 6 storeys at corners of Albert Street at Dunsmuir Street, and Albert Street at Wesley Street. Along Wesley Street and Dunsmuir Street, require a setback of the 4th floor and consider reducing the front setback to 3 m.

1. Location good potential for urban square, subject to programming and public use study.
2. Encourage development of 350 Albert Street to allow Wesley Street right-of-way to extend to Albert Street, with pedestrian amenities and bicycle lanes.
3. Re-develop property with surface parking lots behind City Hall along Dunsmuir Street. The front of City Hall to form part of greenway along Wallace Street to Victoria Crescent / China Steps, and on to Harbour Park and the waterfront.
4. Develop streetscape along Albert Street, with single vehicle lane and bicycle lane, on-street parking and street trees in each direction (see section BB).
5. Provide parking bulges every 3 to 4 stalls and bike lanes along Roberts Street.
6. New development at 351 Albert Street to terminate axis of Dunsmuir Street.
7. Ground floor residential is appropriate for Wesley Street between Franklyn Street and Albert Street (see Urban Design Guidelines).

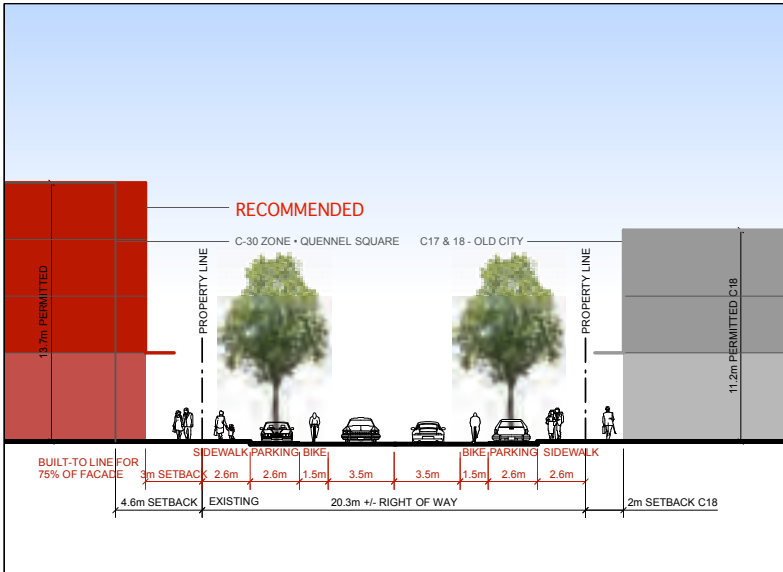


- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy

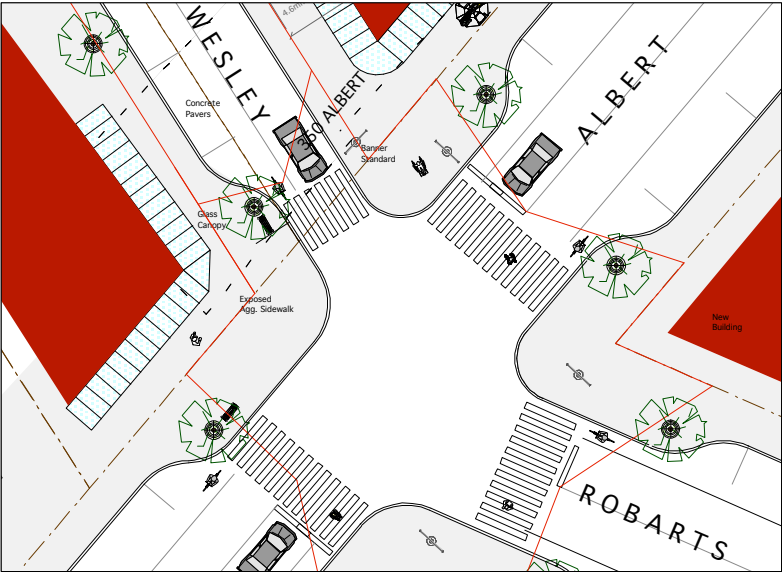




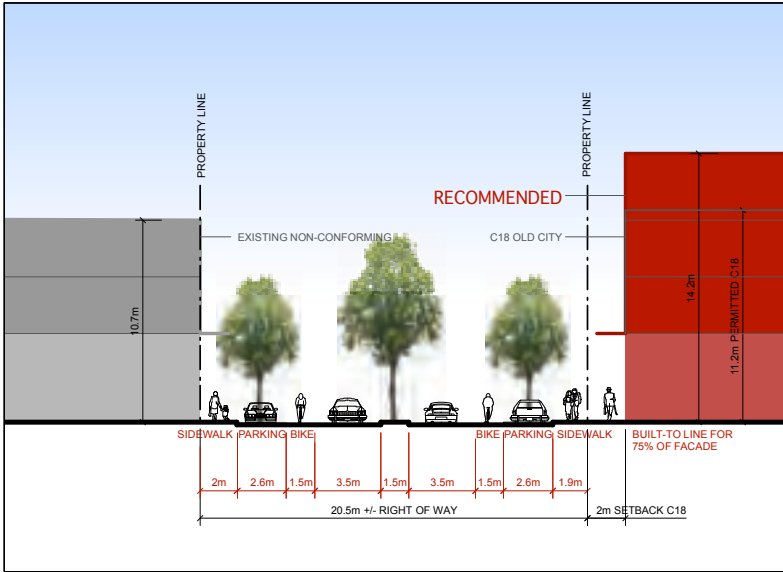
A-A WESLEY STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B ALBERT STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



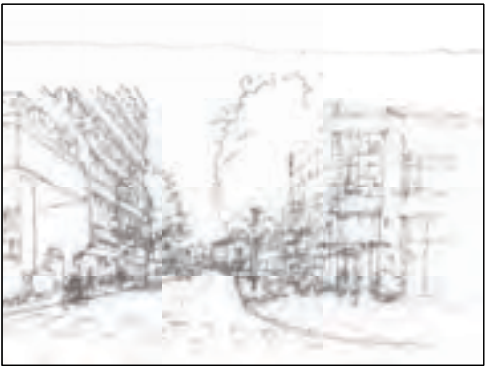
CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



C-C CAVAN STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. DUNSMUIR NORTH FROM ALBERT



FUTURE



B. DUNSMUIR SOUTH FROM FRANKLYN



FUTURE



C. ALBERT NORTHEAST NEAR ROBERTS



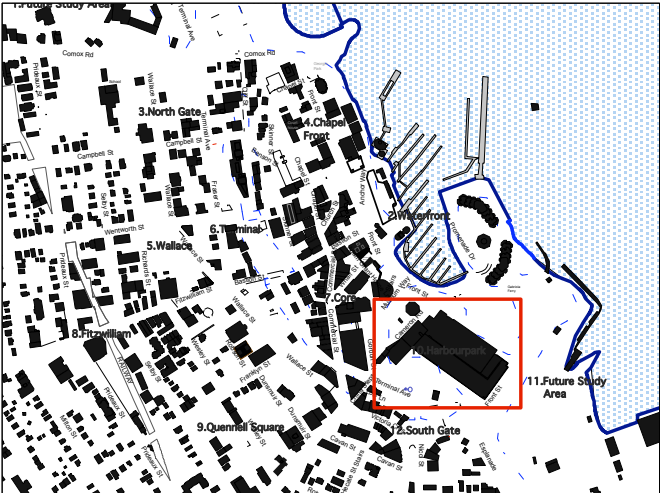
FUTURE (EXTENSION OF WESLEY TO ALBERT)

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The precinct surrounding City Hall and its grounds has significant areas of undeveloped and publicly owned land, and a number of heritage buildings. Where the existing buildings have large setbacks, new buildings can also be set back, provided a strong emphasis is given to street-side landscaping. There is an opportunity to significantly green the area through the planting of trees on both sides of the street and on private land in the setback areas. Development in this area should focus on ground level commercial and professional office uses, with the exception of Wesley Street, which holds excellent potential for residential development. Distant views of the ocean should be maintained for all residents and visitors to enjoy.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

J. HARBOUR PARK



CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

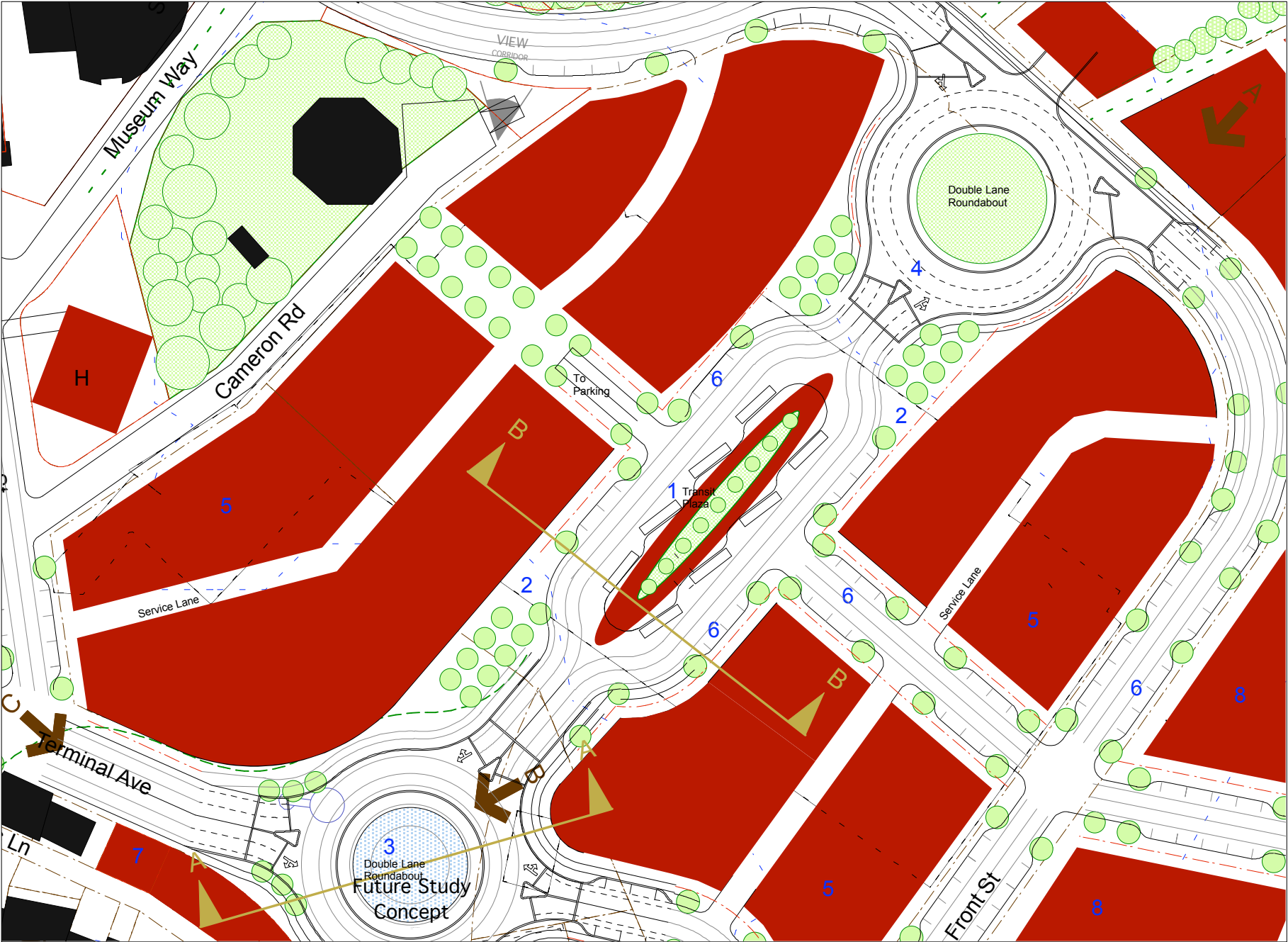
This study area makes up most of the Harbour Park precinct and forms the south gateway to downtown. It is close to the waterfront and both the Protection and Gabriola Island ferries. Higher density development, including tall buildings, is appropriate in this area.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Recommend 3 m front setback / build-to line. Allow 8 storeys for projects (or tall buildings as permitted) with underground parking at key landmark locations (see Design Guidelines for Tall Buildings). Roundabout feasibility and design will require Ministry of Transportation input.

- 1. Create transit exchange at the centre of the development. This is an opportunity to create an excellent shared roadway (see Urban Design section).
- 2. Create pedestrian plaza oriented toward waterfront. Improve linkages to waterfront walkway system, ferries, and the Commercial Street area.

- 3. Create dramatic gateway view from Nicol Street with single lane or double lane roundabout at Terminal Avenue with water feature or other sculpture incorporated into the design.
- 4. Create single lane or double lane roundabout at Front Street as landmark northeast of the development.
- 5. Mixed-use development with ground floor retail and residential or offices above. Six to eight storeys with service lanes between buildings. Buildings define street edge and create landmark for South Gate down Nicol Street.
- 6. On-site surface parking eliminated. Off-site parallel parking incorporated into streetscape. Potential underground parking, access mid-block towards Cameron Road.
- 7. New development along Lois Lane and Terminal Avenue to complete street edge definition and frame South Gate.
- 8. Port Way comprehensive development. Ground floor commercial with residential above. Define edge of Front Street and create axis into the new central plaza.

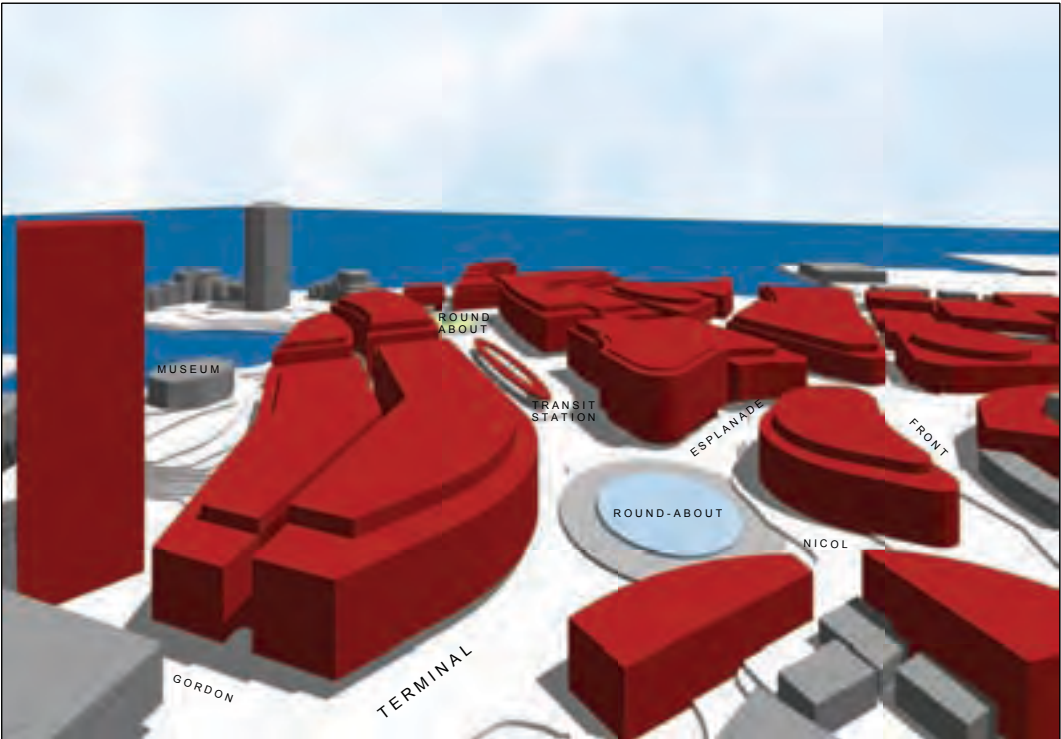


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

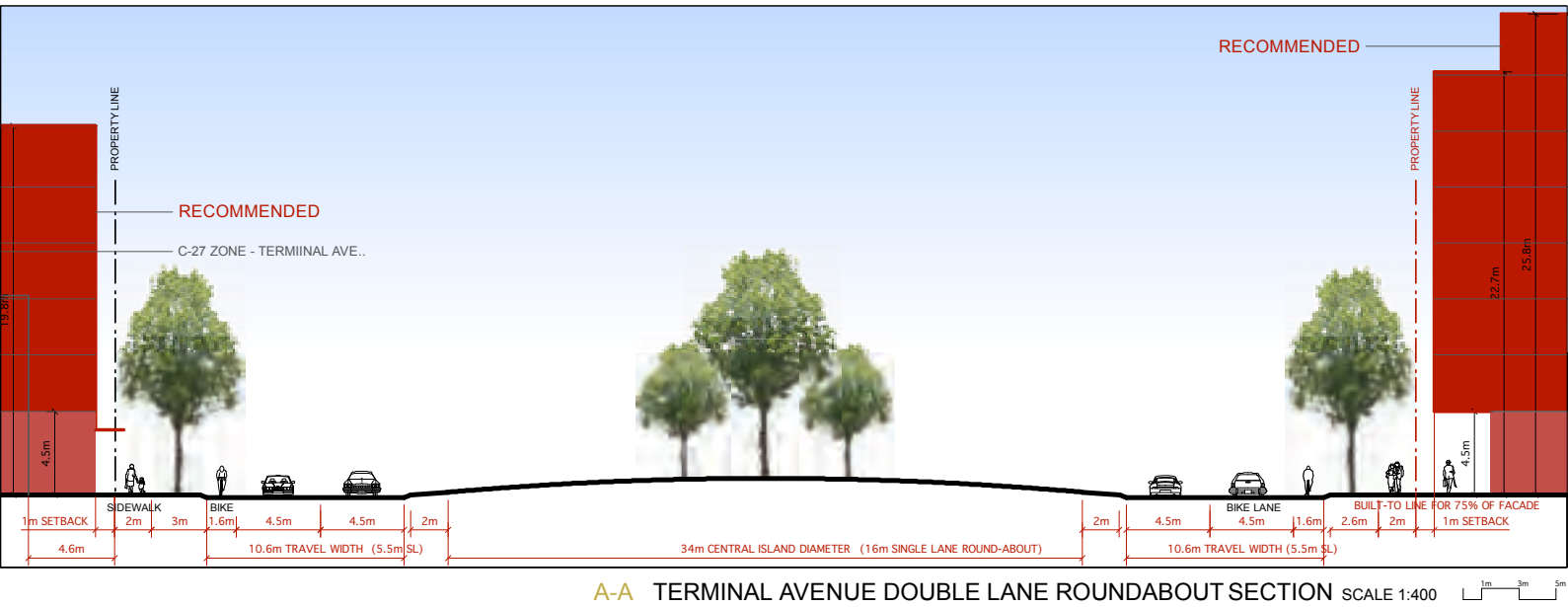
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



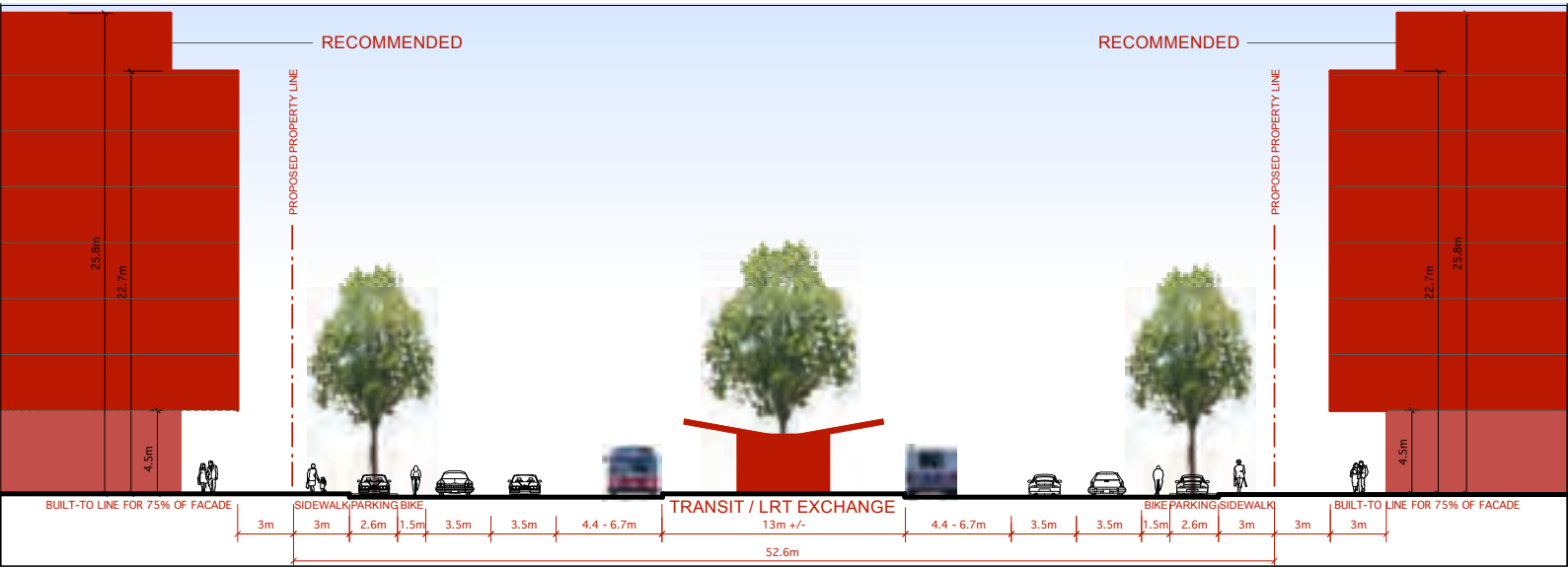
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



A-A TERMINAL AVENUE DOUBLE LANE ROUNDABOUT SECTION SCALE 1:400



B-B TRANSIT / LRT EXCHANGE SECTION SCALE 1:400



A. GABRIOLA FERRY TERMINAL



FUTURE



B. SOUTH GATE ROUNDABOUT



FUTURE



C. TERMINAL SOUTHEAST TO MALL



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The redevelopment in this important area presents opportunities to repair and recapture the hub plan of Nanaimo. The distinctive knoll of Piper Park could again become a landmark. New buildings and redirection of adjacent streets and paths could reintegrate the Park with downtown. The reconfiguration of the shopping mall property could be the anchor development of a restructuring of this entire area as a major transportation and commercial hub. With the street network, ferry terminal, inter-city bus and local transit coming together here, this could be a significant link between the historic Commercial Street, the downtown waterfront and a major gateway village.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

TALL BUILDINGS

Higher density in the form of tall buildings may be appropriate in portions of the Harbour Park area. The following tall building criteria was supported in 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan for this character area.

Minimum Lot Area: 4180 square metres (45,000 square feet)

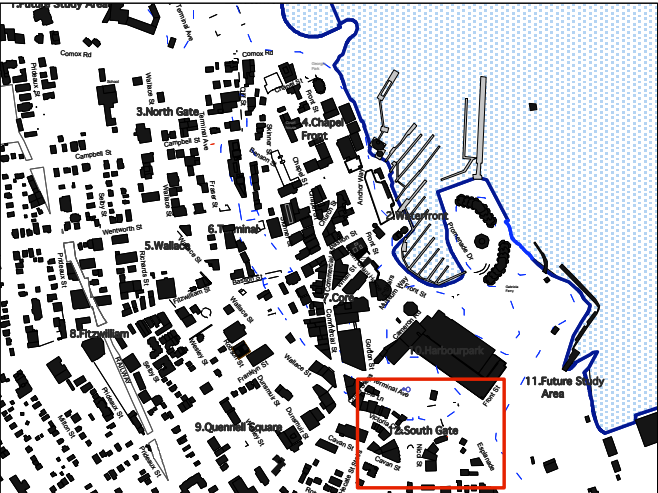
Setbacks: 23 metres (75 feet) for all yards

Separation Between Towers: 45.7 metres (150 feet)

Maximum Floor Plate: 595 square metres (6400 square feet) for those floors six storeys or above, with a maximum depth and width of 24.4 metres (80 feet).

In addition, please see the Guidelines for Tall Buildings section of this plan.

K. SOUTH GATE



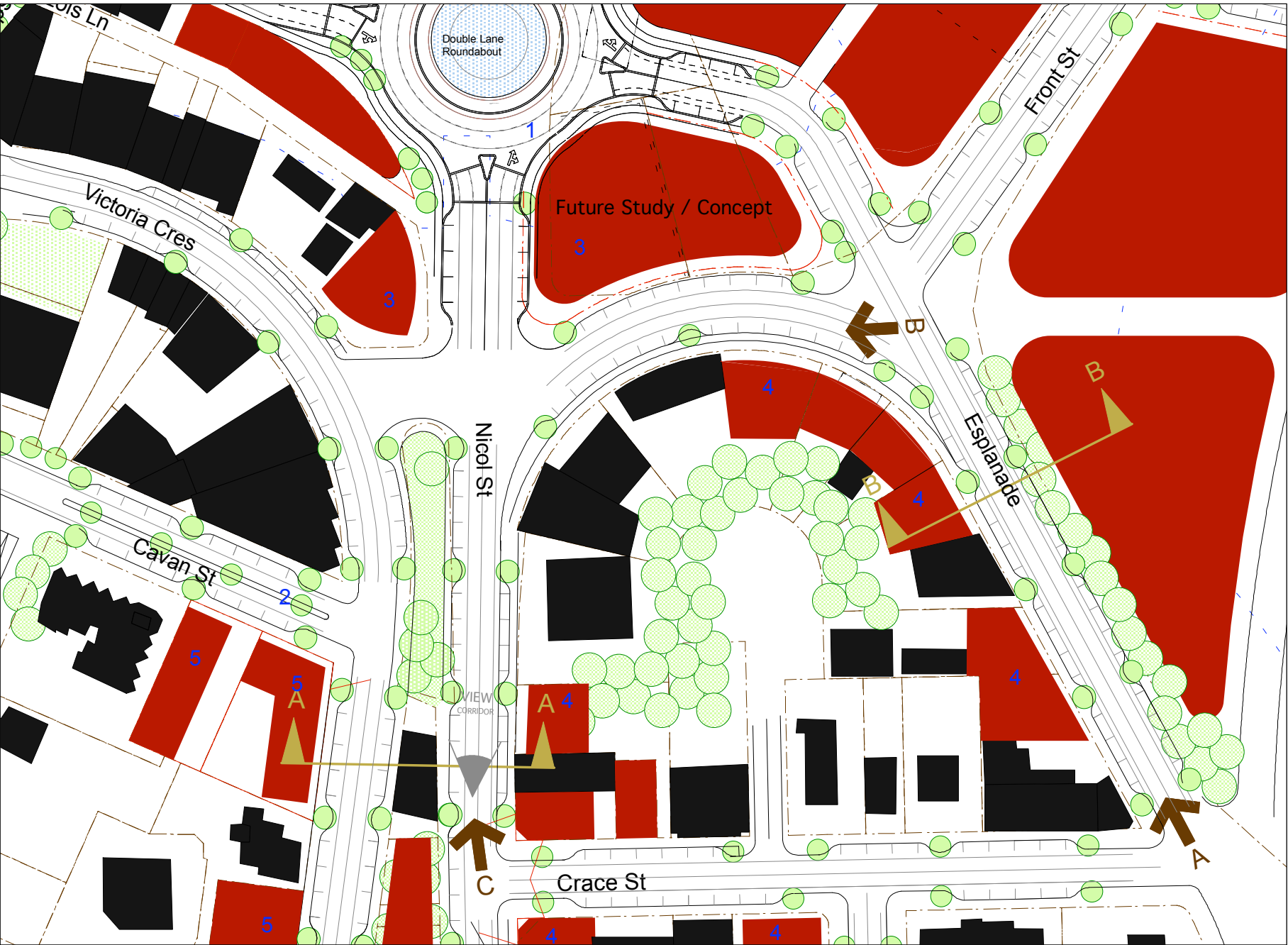
CONTEXT PLAN SCALE 1:16000

This study area makes up the east portion of the South Gate precinct. The intersection of Nicol Street, Victoria Crescent, Esplanade and Terminal Avenue, is poorly defined. Cavan Street is dominated by surface parking.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Allow 3 m front setback along Nicol Street, Esplanade and Crace Street with a height of 4 storeys. Parking to be underground.

- 1. Single lane or double lane (shown) roundabout at Terminal Avenue, Nicol Street and Harbour Park Plaza. (Further study required, including input from Ministry of Transportation.) New connection with Esplanade.
- 2. New streetscape along Cavan Street with centre landscaped boulevard, parallel parking with pedestrian/tree bulges at corners and mid-block, and single drive lane with bike lane in each direction (see concept plan).
- 3. Redevelop corners of Victoria Crescent at Nicol Street and Esplanade at Nicol Street with gateway / landmark buildings to form a foreground focal point of South Gate.
- 4. Infill along Esplanade, recommend an increase in allowable height to 4 storeys (13.7 m) and a 3 m front setback to prevent on-site parking in front of buildings.
- 5. Infill along Victoria Crescent with a recommended increase in allowable height to 4 storeys. This will allow better harmonization with the 6 storeys permitted on Cavan Street and the opposite side of Victoria Crescent.

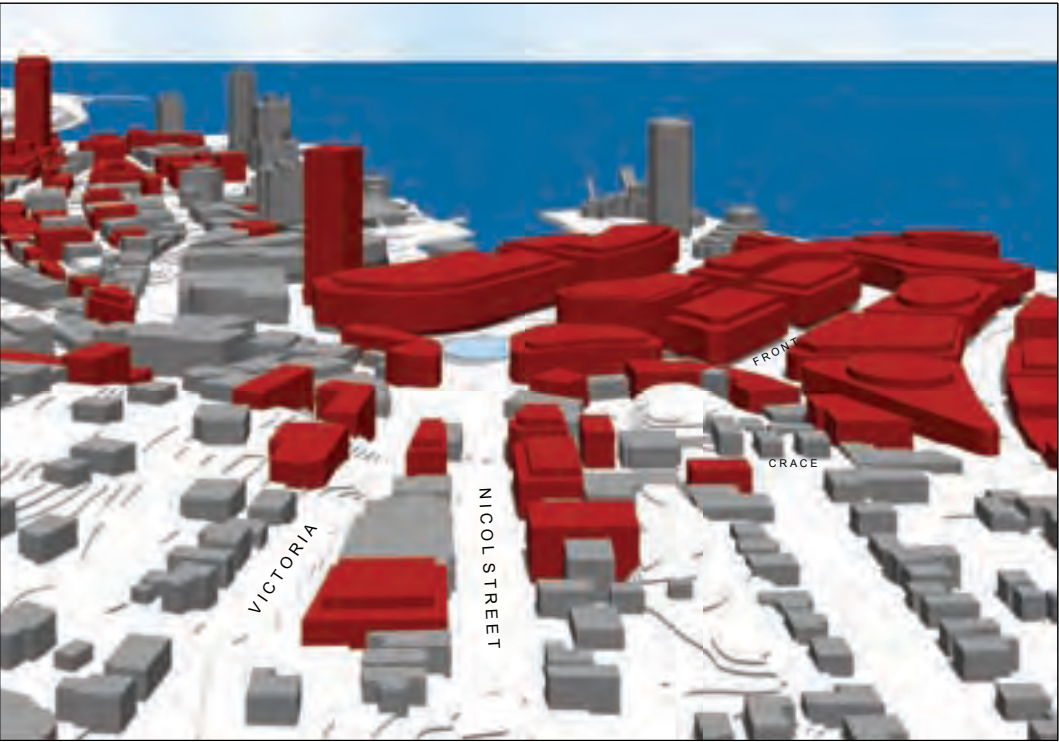


URBAN DESIGN PLAN SCALE 1:1400

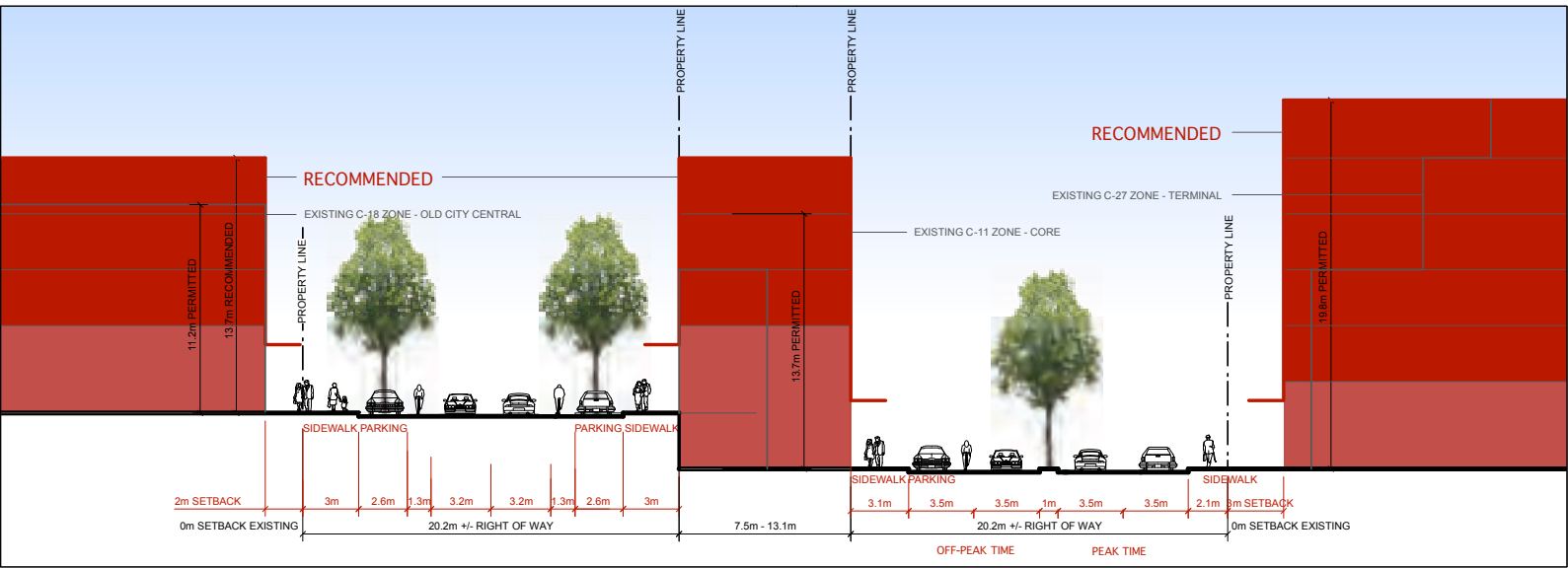
- LEGEND
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy



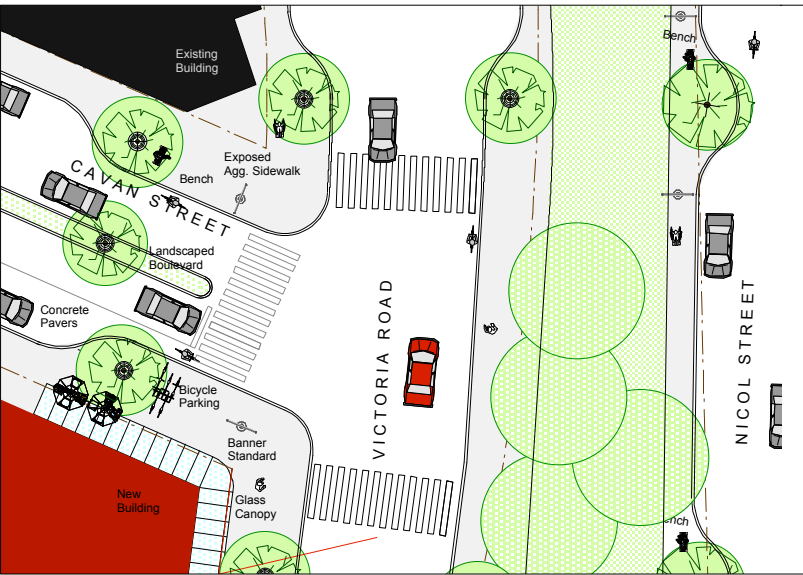
AERIAL PHOTO SCALE 1:3500



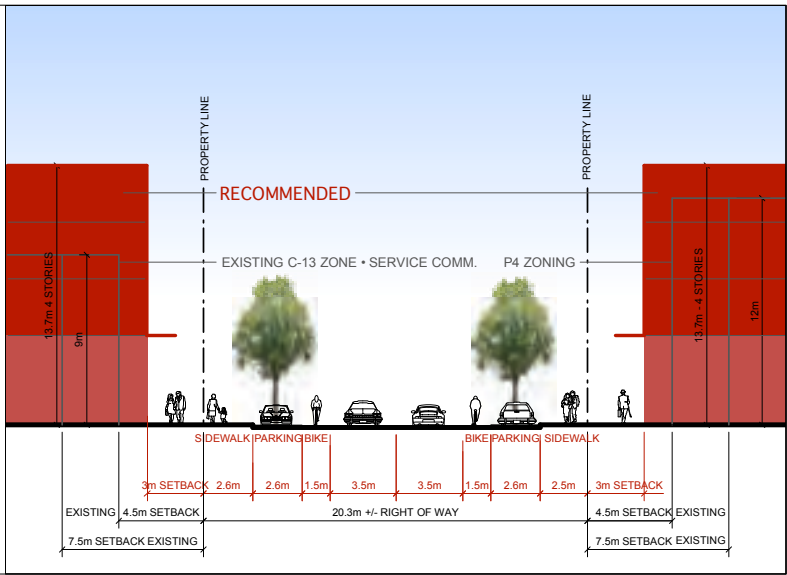
URBAN DESIGN 3D PLAN



A-A VICTORIA & NICOL STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:500



B-B ESPLANADE STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



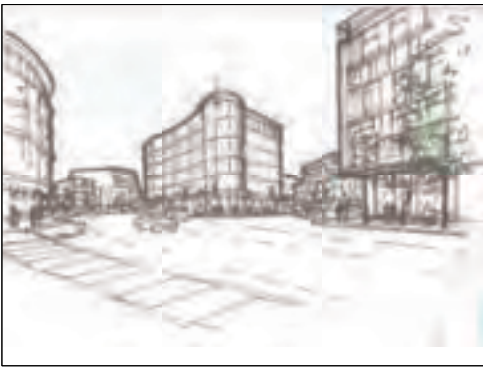
A. ESPLANADE NORTH FROM CRACE



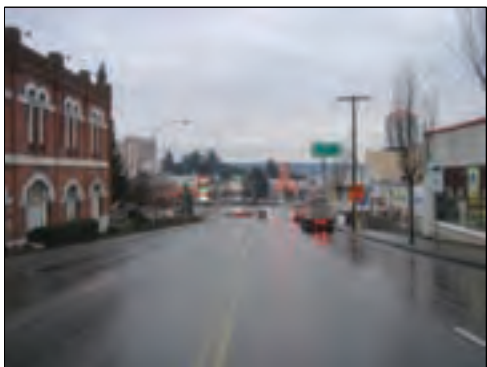
FUTURE



B. ESPLANADE WEST TO NICOL



FUTURE



C. NICOL NORTH TO TERMINAL



FUTURE

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY AREA

The Old Island Highway meets the downtown curvilinear street-grid here. The semi-circular shaped blocks, with their narrow lanes and scattering of small heritage buildings, creates a human-scaled fabric. It is important that future infill development be designed to maintain the street-defining building alignment. This will repair the 'missing teeth' along the streets and contribute to the restoration of the 19th century-scaled formal character of this southern approach to Downtown. There are significant rock bluffs east of Nicol Street that represent a visible connection to Nanaimo's mining history. Densification with a variety of unit types is encouraged, as well as making strong links between the future re-development of the south waterfront and downtown.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

TERMINAL AVENUE - GREEN STREET



Originally a tidal ravine along its southern extent, Terminal Avenue became the main route through downtown Nanaimo and part of the Trans Canada Highway in the 1960s. With the construction of the Nanaimo Parkway, the role of Terminal Avenue is changing.

The design of Terminal Avenue with its unique curving geometry, continues to act as a barrier that disconnects the Old City from the downtown core and the waterfront. However, any proposed design changes to the streetscape will require extensive consultation with the road's current authority, the Ministry of Transportation.

CONTEXT AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Future land use in this district will most likely be commercial on the ground level and at the corners, and residential uses in mid-block locations. As a result, the most important design consideration for this area is at the base of the buildings where considerable effort is required to de-emphasize the isolating impact of traffic by expanding and improving the pedestrian realm.

Mechanisms such as landscaped buffers, short cuts and pathways through properties to connect streets and buildings, as well as street-level activity such as outdoor café spaces and covered retail displays, will draw people, animate the street and revitalize the precinct. If the transportation network is remediated and traffic is calmed, this area could emerge as a new and vibrant part of downtown Nanaimo.

Also see general Urban Design Guidelines.

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

Terminal Avenue is a major gateway to downtown Nanaimo, both from the north and south approaches. As such, development should provide a positive impression to the travelling public.

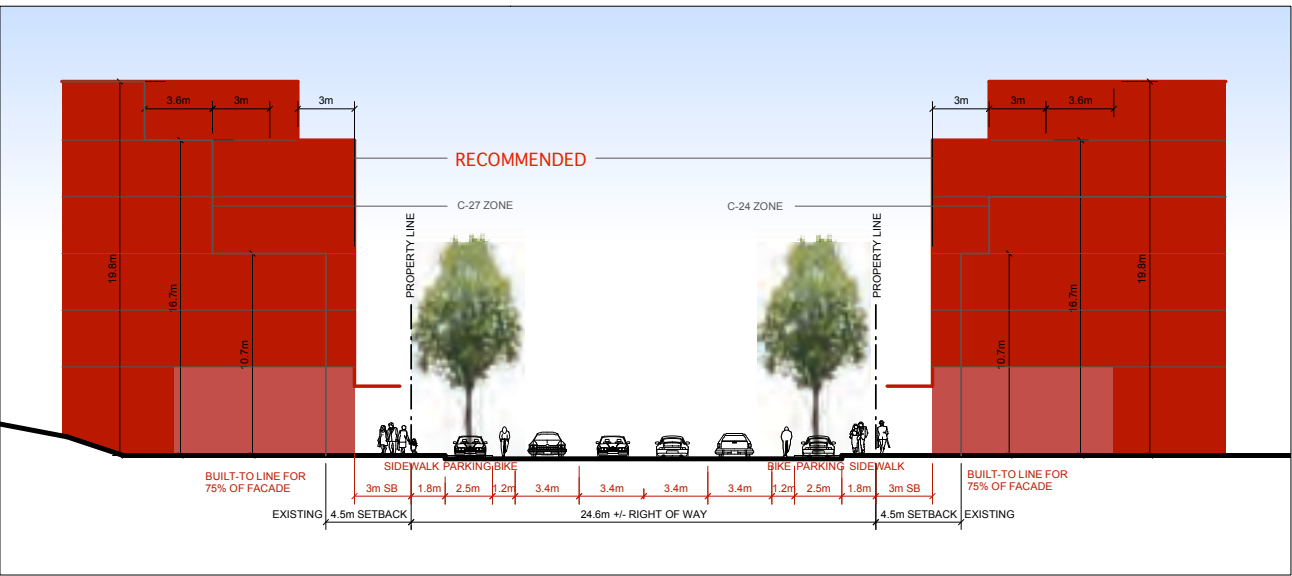
Emphasize on-street parking, which is required to ensure viability of ground-floor commercial.

Recommend traffic-calming road design for 50 km/hr.

This recommendation to revitalize Terminal Avenue entails a street section that includes parallel parking and cycling lanes in each direction while maintaining two lanes of vehicle traffic in each direction. Street trees are to be located between every 4 on-street parking stalls. Sidewalks should be increased to 1.8 m width. Traffic patterns would be maintained but calmed by the proximity of trees and buildings at the setback/build-to line. Traffic bulges at intersections would be employed to reduce crossing length and further calm traffic. (A treed boulevard in the centre of the right-of-way would preclude on-street parking.)

A double lane roundabout is designed for the intersection of Terminal Avenue and Nicol Street at the entrance to the proposed Port Place Plaza. Nicol Street would retain two lanes of traffic in each direction. In principle, this concept appears to support current traffic volumes but confirmation by a transportation study and consultation with the Ministry of Transportation is required. A roundabout at the Wentworth Street, Cliff Street and Terminal Avenue intersection may be a viable future option.





A-A TERMINAL AVENUE STREET SECTION SCALE 1:400



CONCEPT PLAN SCALE 1:700



TRAFFIC CALMING TECHNIQUES



MODERN ROUND ABOUT



A. TERMINAL SOUTH AT FRASER



B. TERMINAL NORTH AT BASTION



FUTURE

- LEGEND**
- Parks - City Owned
 - Existing Buildings
 - Future Buildings
 - Street Trees - proposed
 - Street Section Location
 - Photo/Rendering Location
 - Urban Design Strategy

VIEW CORRIDORS & LANDMARKS



A. FITZWILLIAM - note tall buildings



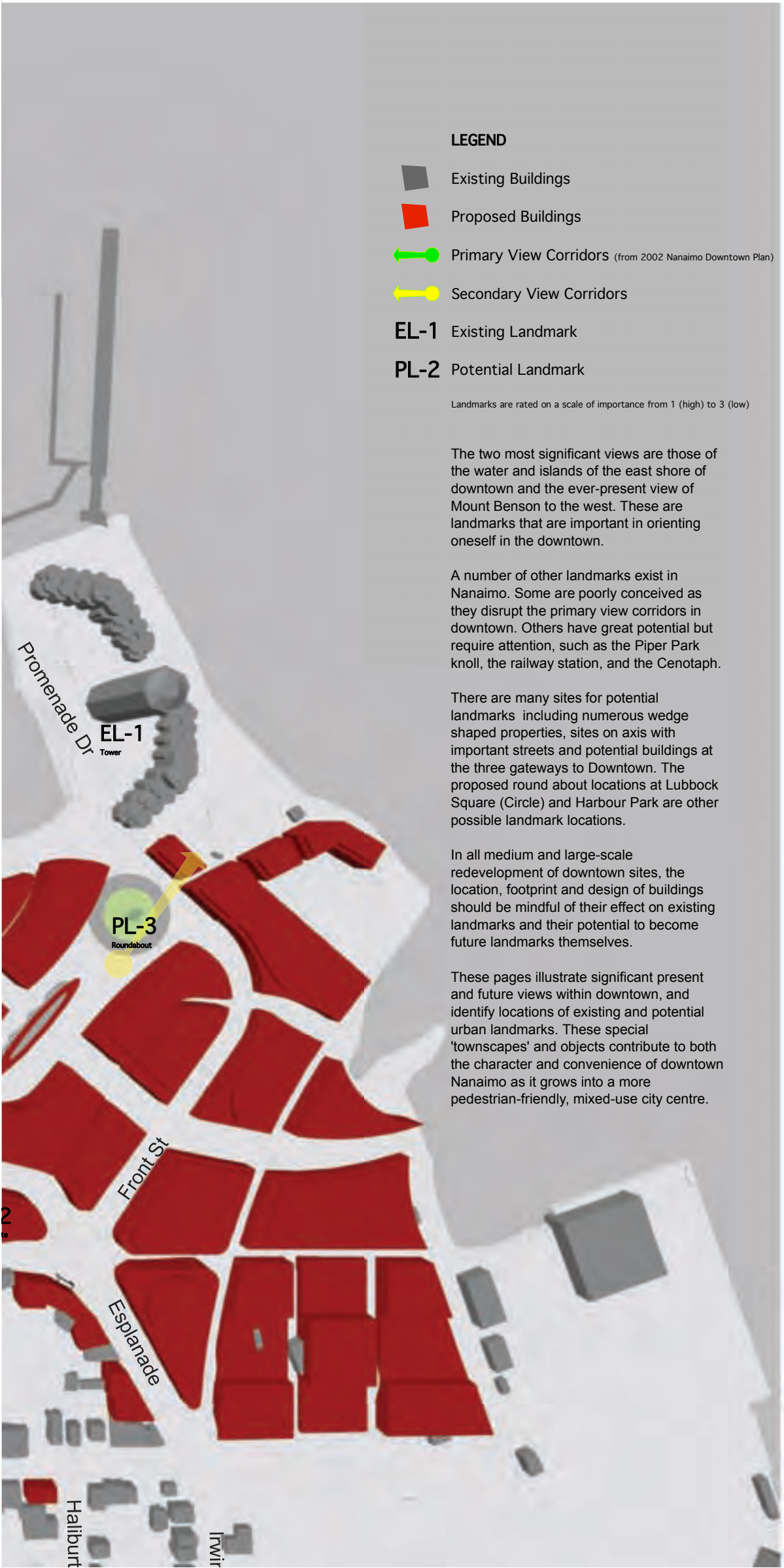
B. CAMPBELL view across Terminal to Mt. Benson



C. TERMINAL SOUTH from BASTION BRIDGE



D. TERMINAL NORTH - possible concept



As more of Nanaimo's downtown waterfront is developed, there will be an increasing desire to maintain visual contact with it. Orientation is also important to the comfort and pleasure of living, working, or visiting in the city. Views of both natural and man-made landmarks help us find our way around. When they become familiar to us, we know where we are and we can easily direct others. The views to and from the Nanaimo downtown are many and varied, and are a significant part of the character of the place.



K. FRANKLYN
There are unique perspectives of downtown Nanaimo when looking toward the waterfront from the upper edge of 'the bowl', from Comox, Campbell, Wentworth, Fitzwilliam, Franklyn, Albert and Nicol Streets.



J. ESCARPMENT above TERMINAL
Also interesting are the views from the escarpment above Terminal Avenue ravine looking back up the bowl towards the mountains.



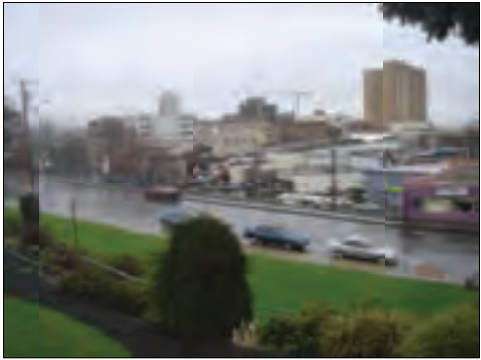
I. COURTHOUSE across FRONT
Close, as well as distant, views are important in the design of individual buildings and landscape elements. Views can be composed along streets, intersections and through public open spaces.



H. ALBERT
Tall buildings can impact the public view corridor. Some of the existing tall buildings downtown have not made a positive contribution to the viewscape.



E. NICOL - note tall buildings



F. CITY HALL across WALLACE



G. FRASER AT TERMINAL - landmark site



G. FRASER AT TERMINAL - possible concept

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

HERITAGE BUILDINGS

For restoring or redeveloping heritage buildings, please refer to the Nanaimo Heritage Building Design Guidelines available through the City of Nanaimo. Additional information regarding heritage building conservation can be found in the Parks Canada “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada”.

NEW BUILDINGS and NON-HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT

The following guidelines apply to new construction and non-heritage re-development.

The inherent challenge in establishing a set of design guidelines is that it is difficult to prescribe good design. Both the prescription of some elements and the prohibition of other ones present problems in terms of encouraging creative architectural concepts and appropriate responses to site planning issues.

These guidelines are supplemented by a broader municipal design evaluation, where all development proposals will undergo a rigorous review by the Design Advisory Panel and / or a peer review by a qualified professional architect, as approved by the City.

Building Alignment and Street Front ‘Build-to’ Lines

Horizontal alignment of building facades along the setback from the public street right-of-way or build-to line, is the most important device for the definition of positive public space. It is recommended that 75% of building facades be placed at the minimum setback line. Only where a wider sidewalk space is considered and intended should this rule be varied. Streetfront elevations that do not maintain the continuity of the space because they are overly closed or setback in plan, are discouraged. It is important however, that each project be considered in its context and that the form of each street be carefully studied to determine an appropriate response.

Building Height

Building height is dictated by the zoning bylaw; however, in appropriate locations as illustrated in this plan and subject to urban design considerations, additional height may be negotiated in favour of contribution and improvement of public space or other amenity.

Consider the proportional relationship between street width and building height so that the height of a building is not excessive relative to the width of the street it faces. While an ideal proportion is a somewhat subjective notion, generally a height to width (right-of-way plus front setbacks) ratio of 0.75:1 for the main mass of the building, exclusive of upper floor setbacks, is appropriate for Nanaimo.

Shading and Views

Consider the effect of building height and mass on views to natural features and existing landmark buildings, as well as shading effects on public and private open space at different times during the day and throughout the year.

Windows

To contribute to a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, generous use of windows is recommended at ground level. This “transparency” of the building makes the streetscape more visually interesting, allowing merchandising and reducing the need for signage. Windows are to be transparent (i.e. no mirrored or opaque glazing). A minimum of 75% of ground floor frontage on each street frontage should be windows and / or entry ways.

Windows should be placed to allow overlook of streets, lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian passages, children’s play areas, public open spaces, parking areas and the water’s edge, and to increase personal security through ‘eyes on the street’ as well as contribute visual activity from within the buildings to the street.

Entrances

- Entrances should be clearly visible from the principal frontage street. If this is not possible, an architectural element such as a gateway may be used to indicate the entrance location.
- Maintain a storefront and entry on the ground level, regardless of the type of business (eg. office or hotel use).
 - Provide separate and distinct entrances for residential uses from that of ground floor retail.
 - Incorporate CPTED* principles in the design of entrances and exits.
 - In mixed use buildings, residential access should be sited away from the corner and generally located towards mid-block.

* Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design - see www.designcentreforcpted.org

Exits

- Exits from emergency stairs and parking garages require careful consideration from a personal and traffic safety perspective.
- Attention to sightlines, lighting and maintenance issues should be integrated into the design.
 - Avoid the creation of dark recesses; consider design for both day and night.
 - Parking garage entries should be composed with the architecture and be considered as gateways.
 - Finishes should return into these openings.



The horizontal alignment of building facades is the most important device for the definition of positive public space.



Build-to lines provide street definition, especially important in Nanaimo’s context, to emphasize the unique curvilinear street network.



Ideal building height to width ratio is 0.75:1.



Transparency at ground floor adds vitality to the street.

Canopies

- Canopies, awnings and overhangs are encouraged to provide shade and weather protection, usable outdoor areas, and to reduce glare and reflections on storefront glass.
- Design of canopies and awnings must be an integral part of the architecture and should highlight the building entrance.
 - Canopies should extend over the public realm (minimum 1.5 metres) to sufficiently provide covered walkways.
 - Backlit canopies are not recommended, nor are canopies providing large format signage.

Residential

Ground floor units should have direct front door access. Porches should be raised one metre above the street level to provide separation from the street and a transition from the public street to the private interior. With designated build-to limits, and set 4 m from property line, facades will define a human-scaled street. The space between the property line and the build-to line will permit a small display garden.

Roofs

- Wherever possible, roofs should be considered as usable outdoor space and be accessible.
- Choice of roof materials should consider overlook from adjacent buildings.
 - Roof forms should be appropriate for the height of the building. Flat roofs are most appropriate for buildings over 3 storeys. Mansards can be used on buildings between 4 and 6 storeys if the space behind is habitable. Residential roof forms such as gables, hips and dormers are not appropriate for buildings over 3 storeys.
 - 'Green' roofs are strongly encouraged. If green roofs are not used, light coloured roofs are required in order to reduce unwanted solar heat gain and the urban heat-sink effect.

Exterior Wall Cladding

- Consider the visibility of all building facades, not just the 'front'.
- High quality, authentic materials that weather gracefully are preferred over imitations.
- Brick, concrete, stone, cement stucco, fibre cement board, glass and metal are all recommended cladding options.
- Wood siding can also be used but should be detailed to avoid a heavily textured or rustic appearance.
- Artificial materials (those that are made to appear as something they are not) are not permitted (i.e. fibre cement board with a wood grain texture).

Colour

Colours should harmonize and coordinate, and reflect the quality of light in our regional climate (i.e. colours developed for an intensely sunny low latitude climate are not appropriate). Natural and locally inspired tones are preferred for building walls, and pavement and should come from integrally coloured materials such as concrete, metal, ceramic, stone and brick.

Detailing

- Visual beauty that is the result of a well composed arrangement of shapes, forms and materials integral to the architectural elements, are preferred over added artificial decoration and imitation details.
- The construction of purely ornamental structures (columns, arches, pediments, cornices, brackets and dentils) is discouraged.
 - Detailing should reflect the way the building is assembled, highlighting its essential elements.

Lighting

- Over-lighting can create a harsh or washed out environment and should be avoided by installing:
 - low (3-4 metres) pole-mounted, pedestrian-oriented fixtures, spaced closely together;
 - shielded sources which direct the light downwards to avoid light pollution.
- Fixtures should be kept in scale with the adjacent buildings
 - maximum height should be 5 metres (16 feet).
- Fixtures should compliment the design (i.e. no wall packs).
- All light sources should be high-efficiency and low power consumption fixtures.

Open Space / Amenities

Create comfortable, safe, accessible and appropriately located open spaces to draw pedestrian interest and provide comfort and convenience. Connect open spaces to other activity areas where people gather to sit, eat, or watch other people. Develop clearly demarcated areas for public seating versus outdoor dining associated with a restaurant.



Canopies must be part of the architecture, not an afterthought. They should provide weather protection and not be used as an opportunity for large format signage.



Elements of urban design for ground floor residential units include direct access, raised from street, display garden and a human-scaled street.



Cladding options include brick, glass, metal, stone and concrete.



This open space amenity offers public seating areas while clearly demarcating the outdoor dining area associated with the cafe.

Signage

Storefront signs can contribute to the character, appearance and success of the street. Appropriate size and relative scale are very important aspects. Large signs can be so out of scale that people literally do not see them and they ultimately fail to serve their intended purpose. The following guidelines are offered in addition to the mandatory regulations found in the City of Nanaimo Sign Bylaw.

- Maximum dimensions of signs and letters must be specified and their locations must be illustrated on architectural design drawings for review as part of the Development Permit application.
- To avoid visual clutter, each ground floor retail business is limited to one of each type of sign, up to a maximum of three signs:
 - Canopy / Awning
 - Window Sign
 - Fascia
 - Projected Sign (under the canopy)
- In multi-tenant buildings, only the building name and address should be clearly displayed for the benefit of pedestrians and drivers. Each tenant should be identified on one lobby sign, not on the outside of the building.
 - Buildings at street corners are particularly important as they can be landmarks.
- Boxed (canned) back lit signs are prohibited, as are back lit awnings.
- Billboard-type signs (larger than 3 m wide by 1 m tall) are discouraged.
- Neon and LED signs are encouraged in commercial areas.

Siteworks

Driveways and Pavement

- Detailing of driveways and lanes should be complementary to the neighbouring public streets.

Fences and Walls

- The design and materials of fences and walls should be complementary to the building's architecture and landscape.
 - Off-the-shelf wood lattice fencing located adjacent to public space (for example) is discouraged.
 - Hedges and other landscaping elements are acceptable devices for visual screening and physical separation.
 - Careful consideration must be given to any impacts of fences and walls on personal safety. Apply CPTED principles.

Landscaping

Every development is encouraged to plant and maintain substantial areas of small and large shrubbery and trees.

- Plant species should be indigenous or compatible with local climate and soil conditions.
 - Plantings should require minimal seasonal watering or be drought resistant.
- A certified landscape architect is required on every project to encourage appropriate, interesting and sustainable landscaping that complements the architecture, especially in the public realm or challenging areas.
- Apply CPTED principles to determine heights, placement and branching of trees and shrubbery.
- Where possible, consider installing an edible landscape, such as publicly accessible fruit trees and bushes, in support of the community's long-term food provisioning objectives (see City of Nanaimo Official Community Plan).

Street Furniture

- Seating areas should be created in public places, wherever appropriate.
 - Ideal locations are near a building's front doors, next to the street, in sunny locations, and facing interior courtyards and parks.
- Seating should be coupled with amenities (street furniture) such as trash receptacles, public art, water fountains, information kiosks and public phones.
 - Street furniture should be professionally designed for beauty, comfort, interest and durability.

Utilities, Building Services and Service Areas

- Utilities such as wiring and electrical transformers should be underground or hidden from view to help reduce visual clutter in the downtown viewscape.
- Loading, trash, and recycling areas to be located at the rear of property. Services should be screened from view from rear entrances, alleyways and adjacent residential areas.
- Pipes and conduits should not be visible. Consider shared service facilities. Mechanical equipment should be located inside buildings; rooftop equipment should not be visible.
- Ground level equipment should be screened from view with earthen berms, plant material, or opaque screening. Use similar materials applied to the building.
- Blank walls should be treated architecturally or with vegetation, including 'living walls'.

Undeveloped Sites

- Owners of vacant or underutilised downtown sites are encouraged to maintain street-edge definition and visual continuity, and to establish an attractive façade along the street until development can occur.
- Construction boarding and fencing along public boundaries shall be designed for safety and beauty, and allow an area for public viewing of the construction activity behind.



Active public street where autos, bikes and pedestrians share the right-of-way. Appropriate and successful signage will cater to the pedestrian scale.



Integrated Siteworks



Trees and landscaping in an urban landscape consider personal safety (by ensuring open sightlines) and sustainability (with drought resistant species).



Exemplary urban design of the public realm, which offers many opportunities to provide ‘eyes on the street’ with outdoor cafe seating, ample bike parking and apartment balconies overlooking the street.

Movement and Circulation

Streets and Lanes

Downtown’s roadways should be treated as ‘living streets’, which allow for the potential of pedestrians and cyclists to share the same pavement area equally with drivers. The intention is to make the street a safer, less threatening and more enjoyable place for all uses, without necessarily reducing traffic capacity. There are a number of ways developments can support this concept:

- textured pavement to transmit sensory signals to drivers
- landscaped medians, bulges and pedestrian refuge areas
- widened sidewalks
- subtle and seamless separation of traffic from vulnerable modes with the use of bollards, sculpture, street furniture, hard and soft landscaping
- the use of removable bollards to create flexible space (conversion of a parking lot to a commons or marketplace).

For greater detail, refer to the Street Design section.

Walkways and Pathways

Pedestrian circulation is an important consideration throughout the Downtown. The provision for public pathways should be made wherever possible, especially at nodes and landmarks (see Open Space Network and View Corridors / Landmarks).

- Development in the vicinity of these key areas should link and integrate.
- Pathways may be hard surfaced or paved with crushed stone, according to their location and intended use.

Transit

Future growth and densification will put pressures on the circulation patterns caused by the narrow and winding downtown road network. The curvilinear pattern could remain viable and attractive with an integrated transit system:

- Where possible, large developments should include on-site transit facilities
- Where there is an on-street bus stop within one block of the development, improvements to the pedestrian corridor leading to the stop should be made. This includes:
 - ensuring a continuous, barrier-free pathway
 - installation of curb-cuts and ramps
 - adequate lighting
 - seating in a sheltered waiting area
 - incorporating CPTED principles.

Bicycling

All developments should provide both short-term bike parking (for customers and clients) and long-term (commuter) parking.

- All bike parking should be protected from the elements and located in a highly visible area.

Vehicle Parking

Underground parking is preferred. Surface parking, if necessary, should be located at the back of the site. On-site parking in front of a building, is not permitted.

- Shared driveways are encouraged to minimize interruption to the pedestrian realm.
- Parking lots should be visually screened from bike pathways and sidewalks by way of walls, fences or landscaping.
- Surface parking areas should be divided into sections with landscaped dividers between every 4 to 6 spaces. In addition to providing shade, a canopy of trees through the lot will help break down the scale of large surface parking areas and screen them from high level views.
- Above grade parking structures should provide habitable space along the perimeter.
- Locate parking accesses away from pedestrian entries and intersections.

Personal Safety

Consider the impact the design of the building has on the experience of the most vulnerable community members.

- Avoid building recesses, dark alcoves and the creation of hiding spots.
- Do not create isolated areas.
 - Install windows for ‘eyes on the street’.
 - Integrate activity areas, pathways and other facilities that draw people.
 - Ensure all areas of the property are well-maintained to present a cared-for atmosphere.
- Avoid passageways that are ‘movement predictors’ (pathways with no route options or forks).
- Avoid creating walls and sightline obstructions with large shrubbery.
 - Keep shrubbery low and tree branches pruned up to eye level.
- Lighting should be ambient rather than stark and institutional.
 - Lighting can be used strategically to remove shadows and to light up dark areas.
- For more detailed information, refer to the SAFER Downtown Nanaimo Report and CPTED principles.

Accessibility

Design for accessibility and adaptability, in both private and public spaces, to ensure universal access and the development of an ‘age-friendly’ city.



Textured pavement contributes to a more ‘livable street’.



Good urban design integrates transit infrastructure, to allow buses to mix successfully with people, commerce and public spaces.

Photo Credit: Gehl/Gemzoe, New City Spaces, p42



The negative effects of surface parking lots can be mitigated through the installation of a continuous tree canopy (providing urban habitat, shade and visual screening).



Textured pavement engages a driver’s sensory experience, keeping them alert and mindful.

GUIDELINES FOR TALL BUILDINGS

The National Building Code defines tall buildings as “anything from 10 storeys to 100.” Regionally, the accepted nomenclature is:

- low-rise up to 6 storeys;
- mid-rise up to 10 or 14 storeys; and
- high-rise, 15 storeys and above.

In practice, a tall building is any building which is substantially taller than its neighbours and/or which significantly changes the skyline.

The 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan identified general locations and criteria for tall buildings in downtown Nanaimo (see map inset). The purpose of these guidelines is to provide more detailed urban design and architectural coherence to ensure that the tall buildings proposed in these areas respond to the existing built form of downtown, contribute to the beauty and vitality of the city and perform well in their immediate context.

New tall building sites in the downtown will require rezoning. As such, there will be an opportunity for a level of consultation which is more extensive in detail than that of lower and smaller projects. The potential for negative impact and the significant presence of tall buildings makes them worthy of careful and rigorous attention to programming, design, construction and operational performance.

The criteria below are not listed in order of importance. Prioritizing the criteria for each project will depend on the development program and the circumstances of the site. In the case of exceptionally tall buildings, some of the criteria will apply over a wide geographical area, and it will be necessary for the applicant’s own urban design study to address the relevant issues. Applicants seeking permission to establish a tall building must consider the following criteria:

General Principles

Context

Proposals must consider the relationship to their location including local natural topography, scale, height, urban form, streetscape and the implications on the skyline.

Impact

New tall buildings must consider all impacts on the existing environment. Developments must illustrate that the proposal will enhance and not detract from:

- heritage buildings and their settings, including the foregrounds and backdrops to landmark buildings;
- historic parks, gardens, landscapes and their adjacencies;
- public open spaces, their settings and views;
- significant public view corridors (see View Corridor section); and
- the streetscape, especially the pedestrian realm.

The effect of the development on the local environment, including micro climate, over-shadowing, night-time appearance, light pollution issues, vehicle movements, and the security and amenity of people in the vicinity of the building, must be considered.

Infrastructure

Transportation infrastructure, including links to existing public transport and required improvements, must be considered when proposing tall buildings. Transport is important in relation to buildings with a large floor area due to intensity of use by their population density.

Quality

The architecture and quality of the building, including its scale, form, massing, proportion, silhouette, materials and relationship to other structures, must be carefully and creatively considered. Along with the ground level and facades, the design of the top of a tall building will be of importance when considering the effect on the skyline and the potential for distinction.

Contribution

Proposals must contribute to public spaces and facilities in the area including, where appropriate, the provision of a mix of uses on the ground floor which can be included as part of the public realm. The development should interact with, and contribute positively to its surroundings at street level to foster diversity, vitality, social engagement and, a “sense of place”.

Sustainability

All proposals must be sustainable in the broadest sense, taking into account the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts based on whole-life costs and benefits (see Sustainable Design / Green Building Principles). Tall buildings should be inspired directly by the climate in which they are located, responding to the opportunities offered by the elements (sun, wind, rain). In addition to climate, tall buildings should address sustainability in their construction and operation. Approaches include a consideration of adaptive re-use in the building design and material selection.

Urban Form

Within the downtown context, there are more and less desirable forms for tall buildings. With the precedent set in Vancouver, the two or three storey podium with setback point tower has enjoyed some popularity. At the time of this writing however, this building type has come under careful scrutiny and significant criticism. While providing an efficient and dramatic form for increasing the residential population of the urban centre, these buildings have not been successful in creating residential places or neighbourhoods. The low-density (and consequently very expensive) townhouse podium does not foster street-oriented population or uses.

The traditional urban village, with eyes-on-the-street and vital public realm envisioned, has not yet materialized as imagined and intended. The lesson learned here is that when developing in the downtown context, it is important to have as many street-oriented residential units and commercial uses as possible (i.e. residential apartments with a reasonably close view of the public realm (street or open space). As such, tall point towers should have at the base, a number of residential floors that are arranged along the public realm to create a reasonable density with as many entries at street level as possible.



2002 NANAIMO DOWNTOWN PLAN - Areas identified for tall buildings



NANAIMO 2005. Towers are isolated, not part of an urban design strategy, and are blocking key view corridors.



112 LEADENHALL, LONDON. Tall building development sensitive to its specific urban fabric. (Architectural Review, April 2007)

Specific Guidelines

Floor Plates

In general, these guidelines recommend the use of point towers on a three to five storey podium or building base.

- As outlined in this document and based on the 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan, the guidelines for maximum floor plate area, for those floors six storeys and above is generally 595 m² (6,400 ft²) and the maximum depth and width is 24.4 m (80 feet). Some variation to the maximum dimension may be considered in order to achieve a 1:1.618 depth to width ratio.

Base Design

The base design (lower levels) of a tall building is governed by the general guidelines contained in this document.

- All parking must be below grade, or separated from the building perimeter by habitable space such as retail or residential.

Tower Design

The design should create visual interest in a scale appropriate for the size of the project.

- Identical floor plates, and other uninterrupted repetition which may produce a monotonous building, should be avoided.

Roof Design

The top of all tall buildings attracts the eye. The design should be carefully considered, especially from numerous vantage points around the City.

- The roof forms common to low level residential projects such as gables, hips and dormers are not appropriate.
- All roof-top equipment must be integrated into the design and generally screened from view.
- While each building should be aware of its context, unique and distinctive building tops are preferred.
- Habitable penthouse levels should be incorporated into the roof of the tower.

Tower Separation

As outlined in this document and as established in the 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan, tower separation varies within each of the identified tall building areas.

- In general, minimum tower separation should be equal to the average height of the subject towers.

Setbacks

As outlined in this document and as established in the 2002 Nanaimo Downtown Plan, setback of the tower portion of tall structures varies for each of the proposed tall building locations.

- While additional setbacks may be appropriate for the tower, it is important that the base element conforms to the general guidelines and provides for a continuation of the street wall.

Finish

Given the visual prominence of tall buildings, exterior cladding must be of quality materials that age well and are assembled with a high level of attention to detail.

- The use of mirrored or excessive amounts of opaque glazing is strongly discouraged. Glass should have a maximum reflectivity of 8%.
- The use of materials that cause glare at street level or on adjacent sites is discouraged.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN / GREEN BUILDING PRINCIPLES

All proposals must be sustainable in the broadest sense, taking into account the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts based on whole-life costs and benefits. Green building practices will be expected in all phases of the development, from planning and design to deconstruction and construction, and ultimately to the operation of the building.

Where possible, adaptive re-use of buildings s encouraged. Alternative development standards that support lower-impact development, such as on-site rainwater management and stormwater retention, will be supported and encouraged.

More details regarding sustainable design are referenced throughout this document. Please also refer to the Canadian Green Building Council LEED program (www.cagbc.com).

PUBLIC ART - Art in Public Places

Public art is a vital part of shared community spaces. Through public art commissions, artists inform and inspire a community's present day desire for expression through art, as well as reflect the history and qualities of the place.

In a public art process, artists are guided by dialogue with community members and are challenged to inspire, celebrate and engage their collective imaginations, spirit and sense of place. Well conceived and implemented public art projects have the ability to help generate and reinforce a sense of place. Art can define and celebrate what it means to dwell in a particular city, town or neighbourhood. While sometimes intangible, public art can also provide opportunities for adding economic, environmental and social value.

Art in public places can inform and enrich the experience of place, as we live, work and play in our community. For centuries, art in the public realm has helped create community spirit as it inspires dialogue and reflection. Public art can provide a chance to pause, to simply enjoy and delight in an artist's creation.

By Bill Porteous, artist



Example of elegant roof expression and interrupted repetition.



This proposed green office building in Victoria (LEED Silver) which incorporates good urban design principles.



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK. Public art is a vital part of shared community spaces; inspires dialogue and reflection.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT OR REZONING APPLICATION - EXAMPLES OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the application forms required for Rezoning, Development Permit and Development Variance Permit, the following analytical and illustrative graphics should also be submitted by all applicants prior to public and municipal review. These two pages illustrate examples of drawing types, and are intended to guide the applicant and their architects.

DEVELOPMENT DATA

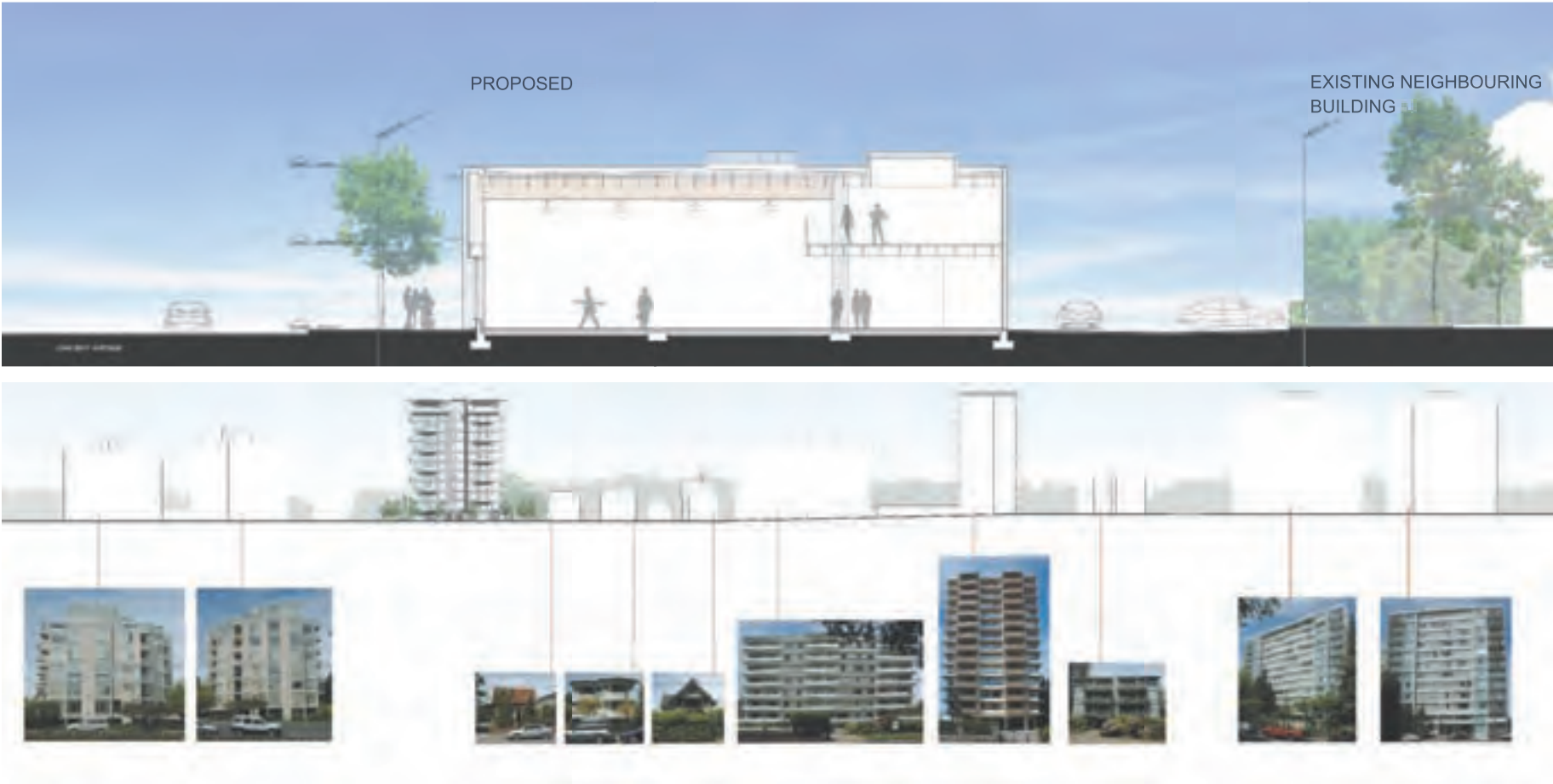
- Include site area, site coverage, number of units, number of storeys, gross and net floor areas, floor area ratio, building height, parking requirements and amenity area requirements. Also include a list of any variances, plus a description and rationale for each.

CONTEXT PLAN

- Minimum scale 1:500
- Show all adjacent right-of-way structures and buildings across rights-of-way in all directions. Aerial photographs are very useful in studying the impact of the proposed project on its context.

CONTEXT SECTIONS

- Minimum scale 1:500
- Illustrate the cross sections through the building and its adjacent streets, lanes or other spaces to help reviewers consider the relationship between the activities of the building with those of the local context.



CONTEXT ELEVATIONS

- Illustrate the street elevations of the buildings neighbouring the proposed project to help reviewers study the scale and position of the context and assess the fit of the new architecture.
- Minimum scale 1:500.

3D MODEL

- Develop massing models (physical or computer generated) to illustrate how the new building's volume (height and footprint) will affect a site, the surrounding buildings and spaces, and its future context.



LANDSCAPE PLAN

- Provide a full rendering, including all streetscape improvements, on-site and off-site landscaping, trees, materials, fencing, site furniture, lighting, parking, site grading and drainage.
- Include planting schedule with species, size and quantity.
- Minimum scale 1:100.





FLOOR PLANS (MAIN / STREET LEVEL WITH SITE PLAN)

- Show the ground-level site plan with the fully rendered landscape design to clearly illustrate the anticipated fit and performance of the development in its context.
- Show main floor plan (accessible from grade) including all streetscape improvements, on-site and off-site landscaping, trees, materials, fencing, site furniture, lighting and parking.
- Minimum scale 1:100.

DETAIL SECTIONS

- Include all streetscape improvements on-site and off-site, landscaping, trees, materials, fencing, site furniture, lighting, parking and special architectural features.
- Minimum scale 1:100.



EXTERIOR MATERIALS BOARD

- Include physical samples of all materials to be used.
- Minimum size 24" x 36".



COLOURED 3D RENDERINGS / PHOTOMONTAGE

- Include views from street level and illustrate all streetscape improvements on-site and off-site, landscaping, trees, materials, fencing, site furniture, lighting, parking and adjacent buildings.
- Minimum size 11"x17".



APPENDIX - DOWNTOWN NANAIMO URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTE



GROUP C - DOWNTOWN CENTRE

Origins of the Study

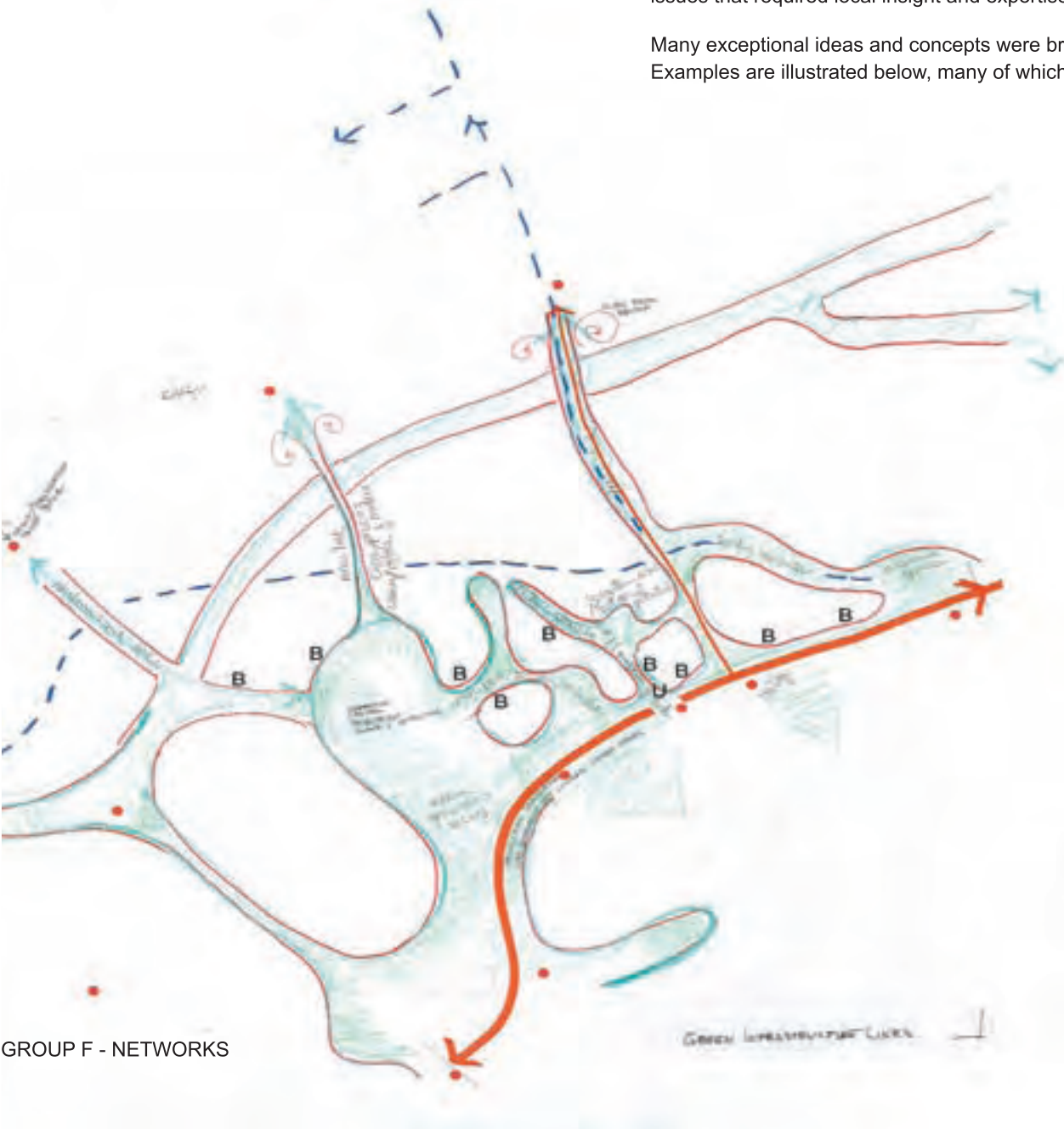
In 1999, the City of Nanaimo began a revitalization initiative for the downtown area. Numerous initiatives have been completed to date, including plan documents and new zoning designations. To further enhance and improve the quality of site and building design in the downtown core, the City commissioned the creation of this comprehensive Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines. The purpose of this plan is to address the unique challenges posed by downtown site development, ensuring that future development integrates successfully with the existing urban fabric and is thoughtfully considered within the context of the area’s architectural style and character.

The Plan Process

The City commissioned D’Ambrosio urbanism + architecture to undertake the study. The City’s Design Advisory Panel (DAP) was assigned the task of providing guidance to the consulting team.

A Design Charrette was held in November 2006 that included a cross-section of skilled and knowledgeable citizens, such as members of Nanaimo’s design community and stakeholders who hold positions on City advisory committees and neighbourhood associations. The purpose of the intensive workshop was to establish a vision for the project and to receive direction in key areas such as open space and pedestrian networks, view corridors, gateways and other site specific issues that required local insight and expertise.

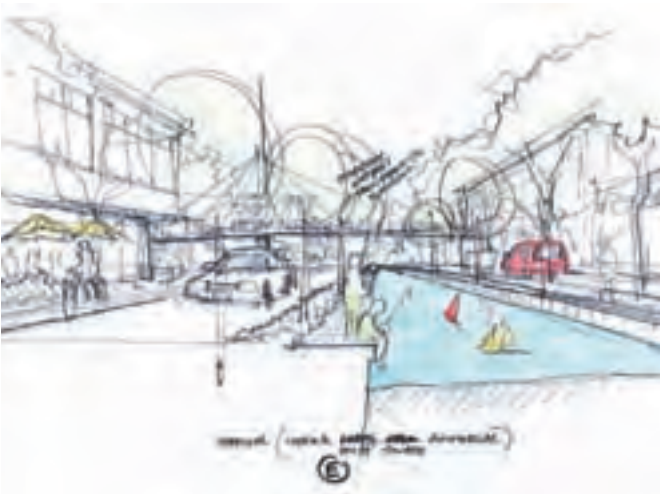
Many exceptional ideas and concepts were brought to, and born out of, the day’s workshop. Examples are illustrated below, many of which have inspired and influenced this plan.



GROUP F - NETWORKS



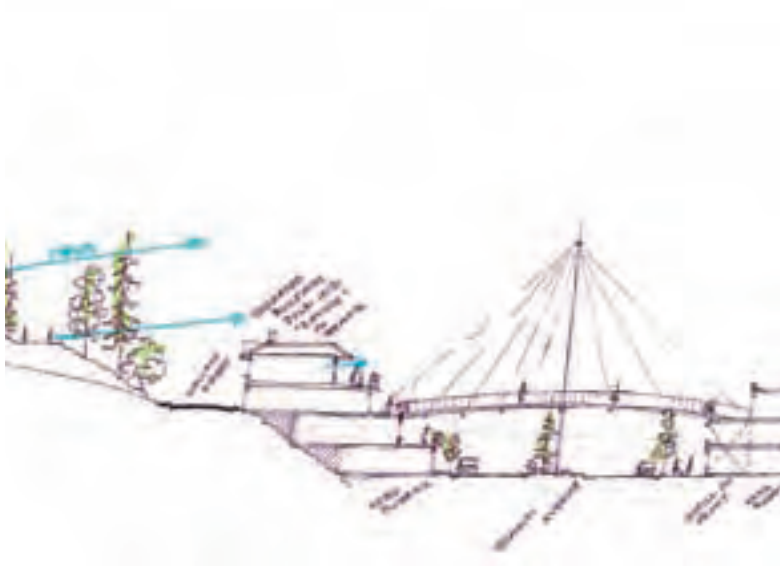
GROUP F



GROUP B - TERMINAL



GROUP A - DOWNTOWN NORTH



GROUP D - DOWNTOWN SOUTH



GROUP E - SOUTHGATE



CHARRETTE



A special thank-you to the Charrette Participants:

Design Advisory Panel

D B McGuffie
Ian Niamath
Jolyon Brown
Kevin Krastel
Jessica Gemella
John Hofman

Design Professionals of Nanaimo

Jerry Ellins
David Poiron
James Taylor
Brenda Grice
Alfred Korpershoek
Robert Boyle

Rezoning Advisory Committee

Ralph Meyerhoff

Nanaimo Old City Association

Rob Humpherville

Southend Community Association

Gordon Fuller

Downtown Nanaimo Partnership

George Hanson
Roger Kemble
Art Crape

Consulting Team Members

Urban Design: D'Ambrosio architecture + urbanism
Franc D'Ambrosio
Terry Kopeck
Chris Foyd
Consultation: CitizenPlan
Sue Hallatt
Transportation: Boulevard Group
Mike Skene
Mitchell Jacobson
Dan Casey

Landscape Architecture: Gemella Design; Archadia



GROUP C - DOWNTOWN CENTRE