

CITY OF LACOMBE **BYLAW 380**

Consolidated to May 26, 2025

**A Bylaw of the City of Lacombe to adopt the Downtown Area
Redevelopment & Urban Design Plan and to repeal Bylaw 257,
the Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan.**

WHEREAS, Notice of the intention of Council to pass a bylaw has been published in the Lacombe Globe on November 29, 2012 and December 6, 2012, in accordance with section 606 of the *Municipal Government Act*, and

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held on December 10th, 2012 to allow the general public to provide input into the proposed Bylaw amendments;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the City of Lacombe, in the Province of Alberta, duly assembled in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, Sections 634 and 635, and amendments thereto, enacts Bylaw 380 as follows:

1. Attachment 'A', Downtown Area Redevelopment & Urban Design Plan, shall form part of this Bylaw.
2. City of Lacombe Bylaw 257 shall be repealed
3. This Bylaw shall come into effect upon final passage thereof.

INTRODUCED AND GIVEN FIRST READING this 13th day of November, 2012.

GIVEN SECOND READING this 14th day of January, 2013.

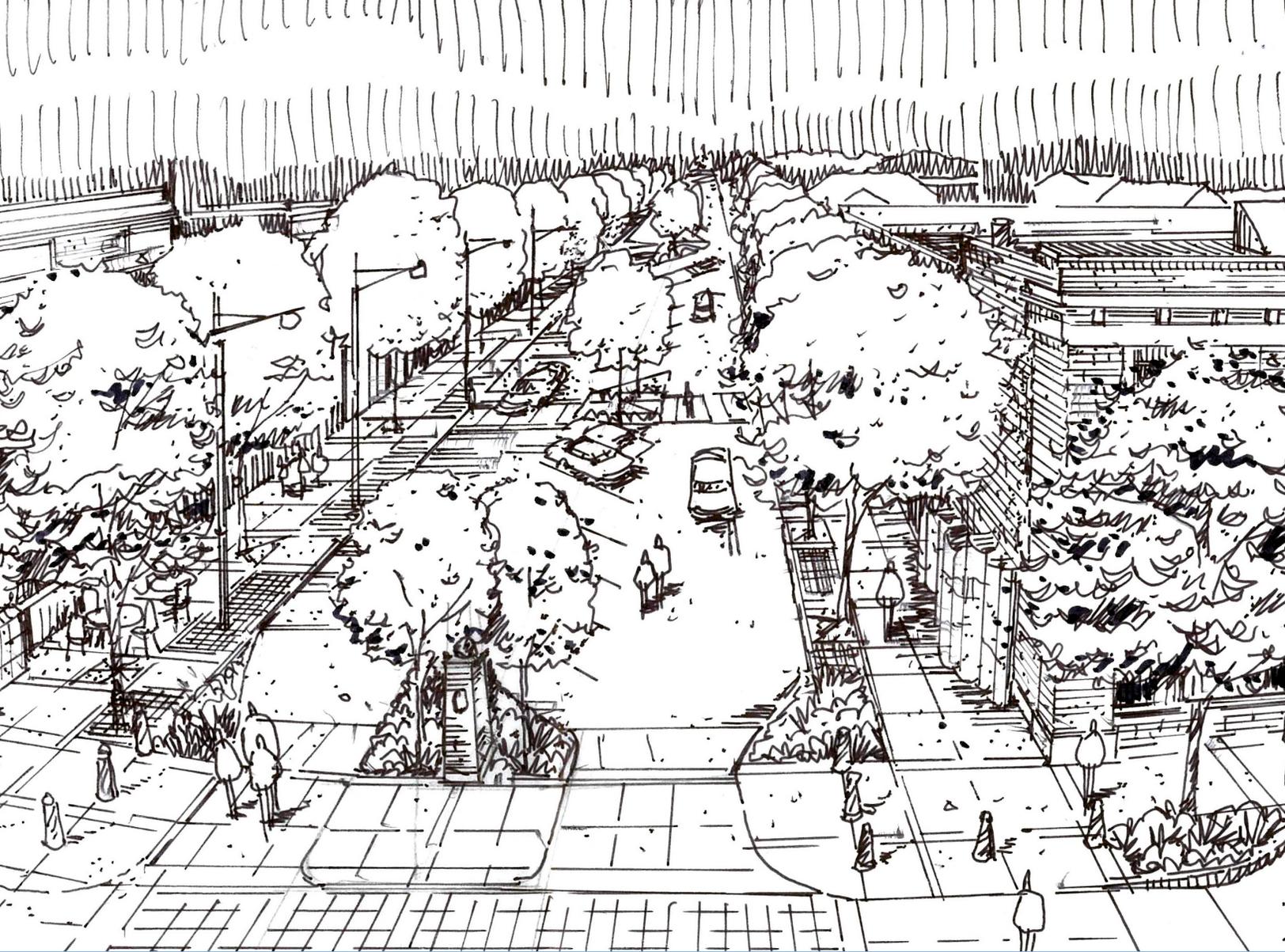
GIVEN THIRD AND FINAL READING this 14th day of January, 2013.

Original Signed

Mayor

Original Signed

Chief Administrative Officer



Downtown Area Redevelopment & Urban Design Plan

Adopted January 14, 2013

Submitted by:



Prepared for the



CITY OF LACOMBE
DOWNTOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT
& URBAN DESIGN PLAN

Prepared for



By



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In association with



January 14, 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following individuals who contributed to this study.

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1.0

OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose

In 2011, the City of Lacombe initiated the preparation of a new Downtown Area Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan, subsequently referred to as 'Downtown Plan', to replace the existing Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan. Since adopting the Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan in 1999, Lacombe has experienced significant population and business growth, due in part to its strategic location along the Highway 2 Corridor. Redevelopment pressures are now being experienced in the downtown core and central neighbourhoods - home to an impressive collection of heritage buildings and Alberta's most intact Edwardian Main Street.

The new Downtown Plan reflects the unique historic character of the downtown. It also addresses the community's vision for future growth and development in the downtown. The functionality of the new Downtown Plan has also been improved to enhance the ease of use and provide clear guidance to City staff and citizens about the requirements for new development and projects in the downtown area.

1.2 Urban Context

Located in one of the fastest growing regions in Alberta, the City of Lacombe is geographically situated along the booming Edmonton - Calgary Highway 2 corridor, within easy commuting distance of the City of Red Deer. Officially becoming a City in 2010, Lacombe is a central destination for the surrounding communities of Ponoka, Bentley, Blackfalds, Clive and Alix. The City also serves as a thriving commercial centre serving the surrounding agricultural community.

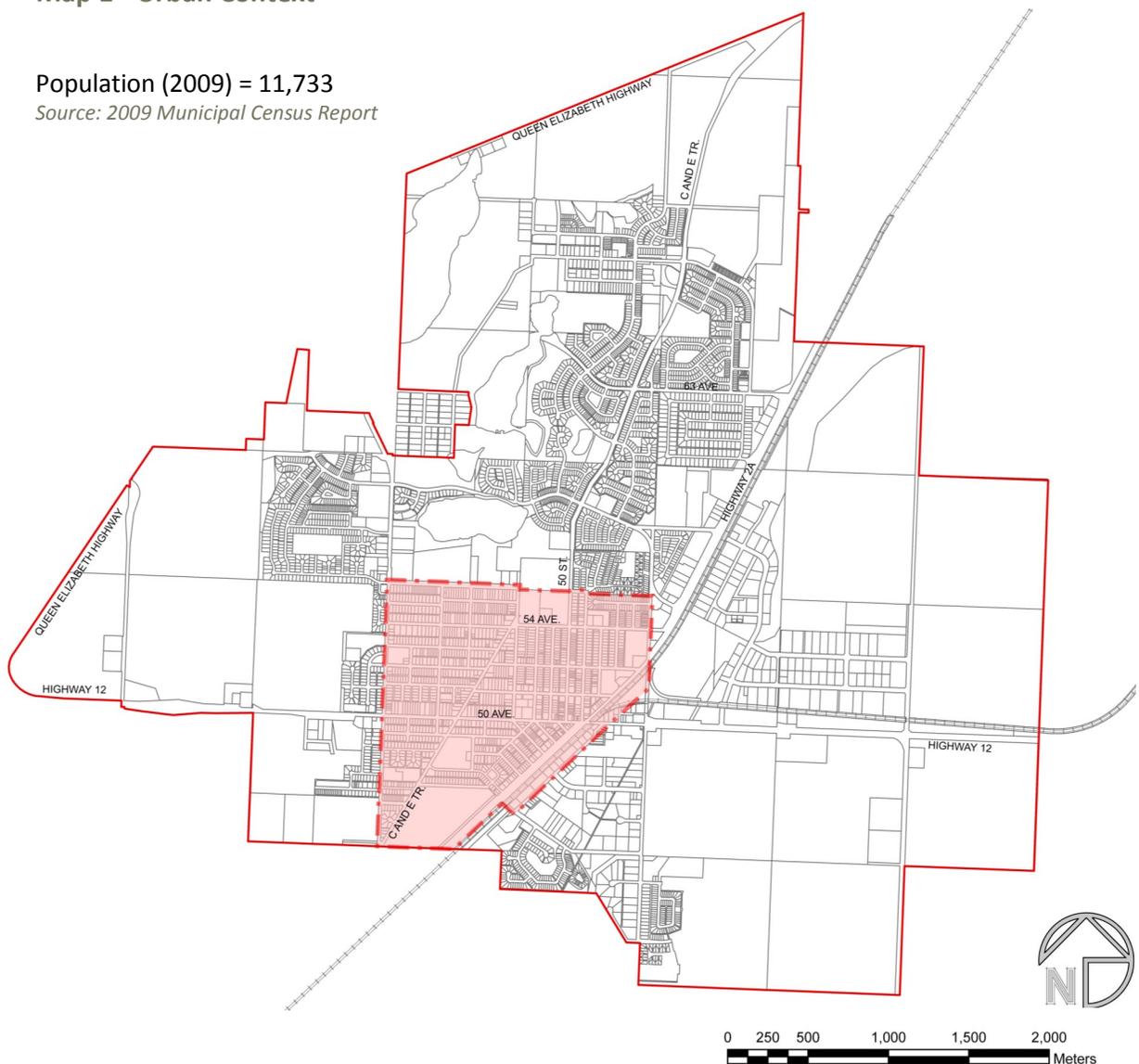
Over the past decade, Lacombe has experienced consistent growth and is experiencing redevelopment pressure within the historic downtown core. In an effort to create a vibrant, mixed use downtown which can serve as a focal point for the community and surrounding region, the City has identified the need to build on its historic past while embracing new opportunities.

The City of Lacombe has now prepared the Downtown ARP to ensure future development within the Plan area achieves an appropriate and compatible mix of land uses, building forms, public amenities, and infrastructure.

Map 1 - Urban Context

Population (2009) = 11,733

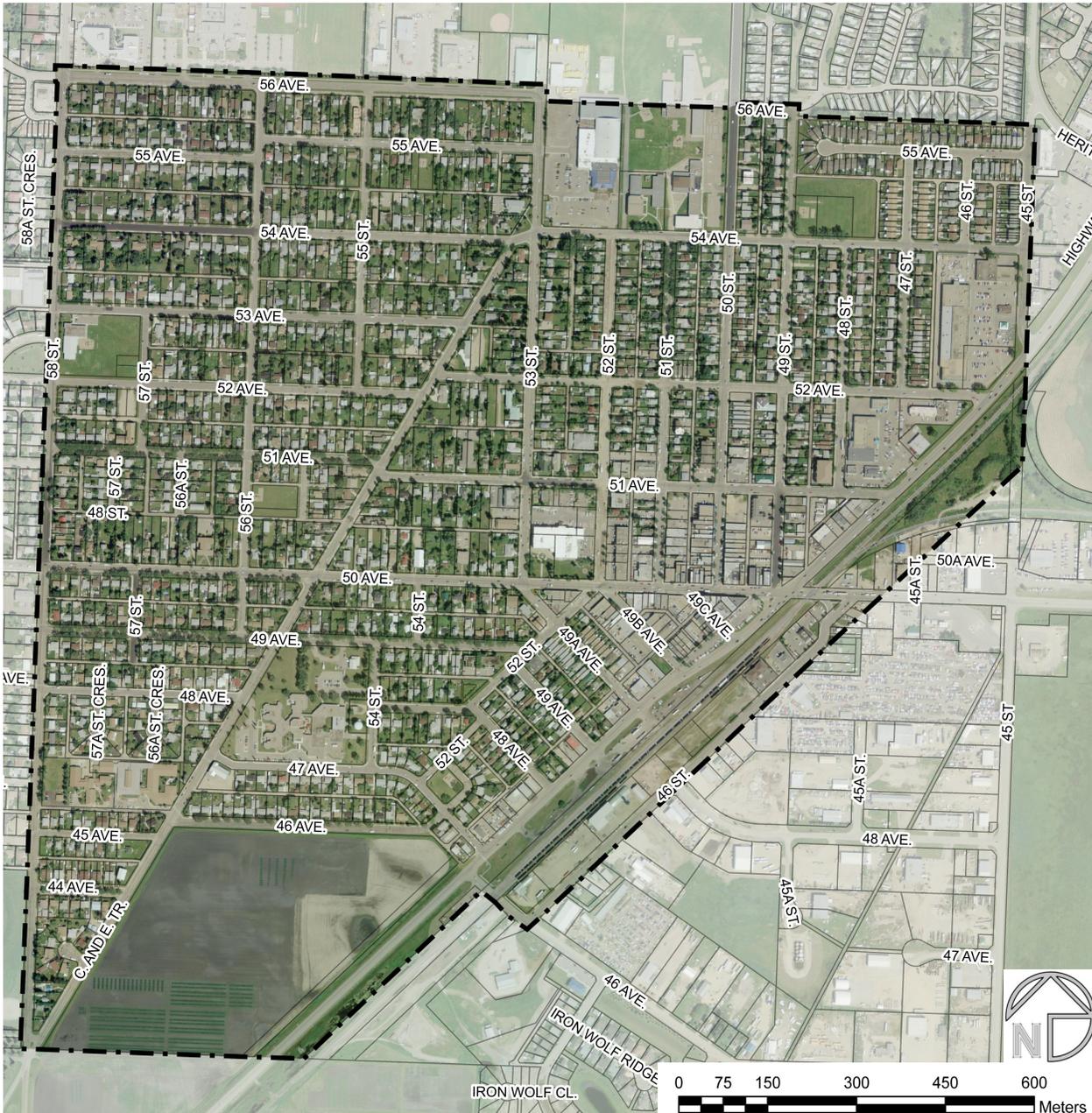
Source: 2009 Municipal Census Report



1.3 Plan Area

Map 2 - Plan Area illustrates the geographic area covered in the Downtown Plan. The Downtown Plan area encompasses approximately 214 ha (529 ac) of land and is bound by 56 Avenue to the north; 45 Street to the east; 46 Street and Highway 2A to the southeast; the Agriculture Canada Research Centre lands to the south; and 58 Street to the west.

Map 2 - Plan Area



Legend

Downtown Plan Area

1.4 Enabling Legislation

The Downtown Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. Section 634 of the Act enables Council to adopt Area Redevelopment Plans to provide a framework for the redevelopment of an area. Section 634 of the *MGA* specifies what an ARP must describe:

- i) the objectives of the Plan and how they are proposed to be achieved,
- ii) the proposed land uses for the redevelopment area,
- iii) if a redevelopment levy is to be imposed, the reasons for imposing it, and
- iv) any proposals for the acquisition of land for any municipal use, school facilities, parks and recreation facilities or any other purposes the council considers necessary.

The *MGA* further specifies, in Section 692, that property owners and the general public, particularly those who might be directly affected by the plan, must be notified and be allowed to make suggestions and representations. Consultation activities with City Council, community members and stakeholders played an important part in the planning process and helped to define a shared vision and strategic priorities for the future of the Plan Area and are summarized in *Section 1.6*.

1.5 Downtown ARP Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee consisting of two members of Lacombe City Council and eight community members who either own and / or operate a downtown commercial establishment or are local residents or property owners within the Downtown Plan area. Members of the Committee served an advisory role to the City of Lacombe and Consulting Team during the preparation of the Downtown Plan and assisted with the following tasks during the planning process:

- Assisted in identifying issues and opportunities that need to be addressed as part of the Downtown Plan.
- Reviewed and validated information gathered and analyzed by the Consultant Team.
- Assisted in community outreach and facilitating participation by downtown stakeholders and the general public during preparation of the Downtown Plan.
- Assisted the City and Consulting Team in reaching consensus on a vision and guiding principles for the new Downtown Plan.
- Evaluated and commented on alternative development concepts for Downtown.
- Reviewed and commented on the draft Downtown Plan.
- Reviewed and provided recommendations to City Council on the final Downtown Plan for Council approval.

1.6 Community and Stakeholder Consultation

City Council placed a high priority on community consultation as part of the planning process. Consultation exercises included meetings with the Downtown ARP Advisory Committee, three Stakeholder Focus Group sessions, two Public Open Houses and a Public Hearing before Council. A more detailed description of the community and stakeholder consultation process which informed preparation of the ARP follows.

1.6.1 Project Backgrounder

A Project Backgrounder was sent out to stakeholders and placed on the City's website in February 2012, providing background information on the project. Information included why the City was undertaking the work; what the Plan will address; the planning process and timelines; and who to contact for additional information. A map identifying the area was also included.

1.6.2 Focus Group Sessions

Three (3) Stakeholder Focus Group sessions were held on February 8, 2012, at the Lacombe Memorial Centre. Participants were invited to view five presentation boards that displayed preliminary site analysis information on the City of Lacombe's Downtown Plan area. In addition, a half-hour presentation was given by the Consulting Team at the beginning of each Focus Group session outlining the background, methodology and key downtown redevelopment considerations. Participants were asked to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; the vision and strategic priorities; and implementation measures for the Plan area. The priorities identified by the participants helped guide the preparation of the Downtown Plan. The major strategic priorities summarized from the Stakeholder Focus Groups are presented below:

- Improve the downtown pedestrian quality by enhancing the continuity of pedestrian sidewalks and street lighting, and by introducing traffic calming measures and additional signalized pedestrian crossings;
- Promote active forms of transportation (e.g. bicycling and walking);
- Relocate civic and provincial buildings downtown;
- Preserve and restore heritage homes and structures;
- Promote a mix of contemporary and historical architecture;
- Ensure new development is sensitive in scale and character and is of higher quality design than it has been previously;
- Provide a bypass route for 50 Avenue (Highway 12) truck traffic;
- Address issues related to parking;
- Improve downtown signage and wayfinding;
- Develop aesthetic gateway entrances to Lacombe;
- Identify and develop a central park downtown;
- Encourage the development of a quality hotel / accommodations; and
- Consider the possibility of introducing a public transit system.

The Stakeholder Focus Group Summary Report is included in its entirety as a separate Technical Appendix.

1.6.3 Public Open House #1

A Public Open House was held on March 7, 2012, at the City of Lacombe City Hall and Council Chambers. Participants were invited to view nine presentation boards that displayed information on the proposed vision, development concept, guiding principles and public realm improvement strategies for the City of Lacombe's Downtown Plan area. Participants were asked to provide comments and feedback on the draft vision, guiding principles, development concept, intent of

each character area (District), and concept framework plan. Project representatives were on hand to answer questions as attendees viewed the presentation materials, as well as to provide assistance with completing the Exit Surveys. The following is a list summarizing the key items that were supported, as well as the issues identified at the Public Open House:

- Participants agreed with the need to upgrade existing parks and provide additional park space within the Downtown Plan area;
- Participants felt strongly that, in order to achieve the vision, downtown traffic issues would have to be resolved. Although only a few formal comments were received, many participants verbalized the need for a bypass route to re-direct heavy truck traffic and reduce the overall volume of vehicular traffic along 50 Avenue (Highway 12), as well as some of the side streets in the Downtown core;
- Participants indicated the desire to incorporate more public art throughout the Downtown, including murals in alleyways and on the sides of buildings;
- Participants agreed with the need to create a more vibrant and pedestrian friendly environment;
- Participants supported the preservation of heritage structures; and
- Participants showed support for commercial and residential infill development at higher densities in strategically planned areas, along with the preservation of lower density housing stock surrounding the Downtown core.

The Public Open House #1 Summary Report is included in its entirety as a separate Technical Appendix.

1.6.4 Public Open House #2

A second Public Open House was held on September 28, 2012 at the Lacombe Farmers' Market in Michener Park. Participants were invited to view thirteen (13) presentation boards that displayed information on the proposed Vision, Development Concept, Land Use, Streetscape Redevelopment, and Implementation Program based on feedback received from the previous Stakeholder Focus Group Session, Steering Committee meetings, and the first Public Open House. Participants were asked to provide verbal and written feedback to each particular element of the Plan in a relaxed, informal market setting. Similar to the first Public Open House, project representatives were on hand to answer the attendees' questions as well as to provide assistance with completing a Comment Sheet. The following list summarizes the key items that were supported as well as issues identified at the second Public Open House:

- Participants felt strongly that, in order to achieve the vision, downtown traffic issues would have to be resolved. Although only a few formal comments were received, many participants verbalized the need for a bypass route to re-direct heavy truck traffic and reduce the overall volume of vehicular traffic along 50 Avenue (Highway 12), as well as some of the side streets in the Downtown core;
- Participants expressed the need to increase pedestrian safety through traffic calming measures, particularly along busier streets in the Downtown core;
- Participants agreed with the need to create a more vibrant and pedestrian friendly environment;

- Participants supported the preservation of heritage structures; and
- Participants continued to showed support for commercial and residential infill development at higher densities in strategically planned areas; along with the preservation of lower density housing stock surrounding the Downtown core.

The Public Open House #2 Summary Report is included in its entirety as a separate Technical Appendix.

1.6.5 Public Hearing

The Public Hearing was held on December 10, 2012, at the City of Lacombe City Hall and Council Chambers. Overall, the feedback on the Plan was positive and there were no issues with the Development Concept or Implementation Strategies. There was some concern from residents regarding the transition from the Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan to the Downtown Area Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan. The final reading of the Plan was postponed to January 14, 2013 to allow Administration adequate time to address these concerns.

1.7 Relevant Plans and Policies

This section provides a summary of the relevant statutory and non-statutory planning policies that provided direction in formulating the Downtown Plan.

1.7.1 Town of Lacombe Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 320

Adopted in 2004 and last amended in 2009, the Town of Lacombe *Municipal Development Plan* guides future growth and development to ensure that it is sustainable, orderly, appropriate, complementary, efficient, and that it enhances the quality of life for the citizens of Lacombe. Notable relevant policies include:

Section 5.0 - Growth Management and Financing of Urban Growth

Policy 6 - *Infill development and intensification within existing built areas shall be encouraged to take advantage of existing municipal utilities and roads.*

Section 6.0 - Agriculture

Policy 1 - *The agricultural research station lands shown on the Future Land Use Concept (Map 2) shall be protected from potential conflicts with neighbouring land uses to avoid potential limitations on the use and value of the station grounds for research purposes. Urban development of these lands shall not be encouraged.*

Section 7.0 - Residential Development

Policy 2 - *The Town shall encourage the provision of a variety of housing forms in terms of lot size, dwelling type, appearance, and affordability.*

Policy 4 - *The Town shall encourage the integration of differing forms of housing on a street-by-street basis using medium density housing forms such as semidetached dwellings and row housing to transition from low density housing to multi-family housing wherever possible.*

Section 8.0 Commercial Development

Policy 3 - *The Town shall encourage compact commercial development through mixed use buildings, including residential uses, where there is minimal possibility of conflict between uses and development of second floor space in commercial areas.*

Policy 5 - *Where uses existing on a parcel within the commercial areas along 46 Street between 46 Avenue and Highway 12 and south of 46 Avenue, as identified on the Future Land Use Concept and Major Roadways (Map 2), do not conform with the allowable uses under a commercial Land Use Bylaw designation, the Town shall safeguard these existing uses from the limitations of non-conforming use status by listing the existing use on that particular parcel as a discretionary use within the applicable commercial Land Use Bylaw district.*

Section 9.0 Downtown

Policy 1 - *The Town shall strive for the development of a compact downtown commercial area and encourage development and redevelopment to maximum allowable densities.*

Policy 2 - *The Town shall encourage mixed use development in the downtown area that includes complementary land uses such as community, cultural, recreational, entertainment, public uses and residential. In acting on this policy, the Town shall recognize that residential uses in the downtown area will be subjected to more noise and traffic than is typically considered acceptable in a predominantly residential area and accept this as one of the trade-offs associated with creating residential opportunities in the downtown.*

Policy 3 - *New development and redevelopment in the downtown area shall be encouraged to use pedestrian oriented building and site design (building entrance close to or directly accessible from the public sidewalk) rather than vehicle oriented designs (parking lot separating building from public sidewalk) wherever possible.*

Policy 4 - *The Town shall support initiatives to maintain and enhance the downtown commercial area as a viable multi-use focal point of the community that includes shopping opportunities, personal and business services, public institutions, restaurants and entertainment, and office commercial.*

Section 10.0 Industrial Development

Policy 3 - *Where industrial development occurs or exists adjacent to non-industrial land uses, the Town shall require the provision of sufficient screening and/or buffering to minimize potential impacts on the non-industrial areas. This may include the provision of landscaping, fences, and/or berms.*

Section 11.0 Economic Development

Policy 2 - *Where compatible with residential land uses, the development of home-based businesses shall be facilitated.*

Policy 4 - *The Town shall acknowledge the economic significance of the agricultural research stations and avoid land use decisions that would jeopardize the future operation of these lands for research purposes.*

Section 12.0 Heritage Preservation

Policy 1 - *Historical resources and features of the community (e.g. Michener House) shall be promoted, preserved, restored and presented to the greatest extent and wherever possible.*

Policy 2 - Local and Provincial historical resources designated under the Historical Resources Act shall be protected from surrounding land uses and developments which would detract from the significance of these historical resources to the community.

Section 14.0 Community Services and Public Uses

Policy 6 - Uses and development near and adjacent the hospital shall be managed to avoid the creation of any conflicts with the hospital or place any limitations on future operations and expansion on the existing hospital site.

Section 15.0 Transportation

Policy 4 - The Town shall include bicycle and pedestrian routes as integral components of the transportation and open space systems. Future major trail routes, primarily focusing on linking parks, recreation, community and education facilities, shall be developed based on the conceptual alignments shown on the Pedestrian Network Concept (Map 3). Wherever possible, trail corridors shall be used rather than the sidewalk system. The Town should plan for and participate in the development of a regional trail system connecting Lacombe to nearby communities and points of interest.

Policy 6 - The Town shall establish suitable truck and dangerous goods routes in cooperation with Lacombe County and Alberta Transportation.

Section 16.0 Utility Services and Drainage

Policy 4 - The Town shall prepare master plans to guide future improvements to the overall water, waste water, and drainage systems. These development plans shall:

- Identify existing capacities and desired levels of service;
- Project future upgrades and improvements in response to increased demand and growth;
- Establish priorities for short, medium and long term improvements; and
- Establish standards and specifications for the future development of infrastructure including required right-of-way, methods of construction, and alignments.

Periodic review and update of the master plans shall be undertaken at least every five years or more frequently as major changes and rates of development require.

Policy 7 - The Town shall work to ensure that existing and future utility and drainage system development in Lacombe is cost effective, complements the Town’s overall servicing concepts and contributes to attractive streetscapes.

Table 1 - Items Implemented from the 1999 Heart of Town ARP

Section / Policy	Implementation Status
Section 5.4.3 - “As applicable to each residential street, the retention or creation of mature landscaped streetscapes is encouraged, whether through the maintenance of existing landscaped boulevards, tree planting programs for public lands and parcel landscaping by landowners.”	Completed as part of a Land Use Bylaw amendment.
Section 5.4.8 - “An integrated signage program should be pursued to portray the significance of the Heart of Town area, especially key buildings, features and streetscapes in the core area, as well as also serving as a walking tour guide for visitors.”	Downtown wayfinding signage program is being implemented.

Section / Policy	Implementation Status
<p>Section 6.4.4 - <i>“To assist the retention of the predominance of single detached homes, portions of the Heart of Town area should continue to be designated to primarily accommodate this form of housing. These locations are shown on Map 5.”</i></p>	
<p>Section 6.4.5 - <i>“Redevelopment of appropriate properties for larger detached homes is consistent with the desire to accommodate a variety of housing forms, as well as to encourage the retention of school age children in the area. While any new detached home should respect the scale and appearance of nearby housing and positively contribute to the attributes of the streetscape, the treatment of larger homes (such as volume, facades, roof lines) should especially be scrutinized</i></p>	<p>The Residential Architectural Theme Overlay provides guidance and design information but it lacks a complete/detailed Design Guide-line.</p>
<p>Section 6.4.6 - <i>“Infill housing in the form of duplexes and single detached homes on narrow lots is suitable in appropriate locations as shown in Map 5, but the creation of narrow lots must be consistent with the requirements of the narrow lot district in the Land Use Bylaw. Guidelines for the design and appearance of duplexes and narrow lot homes should be applied.”</i></p>	
<p>Section 6.4.17 - <i>“To enhance community and neighbourhood character, the redevelopment guidelines contained in Section 11 should be applied to the residential areas shown in Map 6. For the Residential Architectural Theme Overlay area in Map 6, architectural styles for new home construction and exterior renovations of a main building shall be Queen Anne, Victorian, Craftsman and National Styles. The architectural style applied to a residential structure shall be approved by the Town’s development authority and shall be in keeping with the design or designs of housing along the street. The existing Main Street Overlay and 50th Avenue overlays should be reviewed and amended, where necessary, and a new overlay district added to the Land Use Bylaw to implement this policy.”</i></p>	<p>Basic guidelines have been prepared and are included in the Land Use Bylaw as “Residential Architectural Theme Overlay”.</p>
<p>Section 7.4.12 - <i>“As part of a community enhancement and tourism program, more concerted attention to the provision and maintenance of a walking tour should be considered. Enhancement could include signage, a promenade system developed over time to defined standards, associated ‘rest places’ and a dedicated walking tour brochure. Provisions for cyclists should also be considered.”</i></p>	<p>The City of Lacombe’s Historical Society currently operates a walking tour.</p>
<p>Section 8.4.2 - <i>“In order to promote safety, a community safety audit should be undertaken to identify safety concerns and possible solutions to address any concerns that may be identified. Private and public property should be involved, including both built and open space areas, related to factors such as lighting, clear sight lines and unobstructed access. For public open spaces, cleanliness and equipment safety should also be a part of the audit.”</i></p>	<p>Traffic studies previously completed with a new study slated for 2013. While a Complete Safety Audit was not done, several other projects were completed that have the same general goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Management Plan (2004) - Pavement Management Study
<p>Section 8.4.11 - <i>“The Town recognizes the need for assisted housing to accommodate people with special needs and should cooperate with organizations and agencies when opportunities are presented to facilitate assisted housing in appropriate locations.”</i></p>	<p>Lacombe Foundation (affordable housing) and Secondary Suite initiative (for low rental costs).</p>
<p>Section 8.4.12 - <i>“Because a very important component of the culture of Lacombe is its heritage and heritage buildings, the inventory of heritage buildings in the Town’s commercial core should be expanded to include an inventory of heritage structures and landscape components throughout the community, especially the Heart of town area. A program should be established to encourage the maintenance of heritage resources, whether designated or not as historic resources.”</i></p>	<p>A Heritage Preservation Program is being implemented by the City.</p>
<p>Section 9.4.5 - <i>“The Town may consider the redesignation of the land on the west side of 53 Street south of the Cozy Corner to commercial if the development would contain facilities or services that are generally oriented to seniors or would importantly broaden access to goods and services desired by seniors.”</i></p>	<p>Zones C1-C5 allow for commercial with residential uses (used instead of direct control).</p>

Section / Policy	Implementation Status
<p>Section 9.4.8 - <i>“Along 50th Avenue (Highway 12) between 53 Street and the C & E Trail, as a means to retain an endangered significant heritage detached residential dwelling the conversion of the dwelling to a specialty shop or office may be approved by Council through redesignation of the property to Direct Control District. As part of the site regulations the appearance of the building is to be substantially maintained or enhanced, as the case may be, and adequate off-street parking is available from the rear with minimum impact on residential uses in the area.”</i></p>	<p>Zones C1-C5 allow for commercial with residential uses (used instead of direct control).</p>
<p>Section 10.4.3 - <i>“The Town should continue to explore opportunities to reduce through traffic, especially truck traffic, along 50th Avenue (Highway 12), including the provision of alternate routes around the community.”</i></p>	<p>A new transportation study is scheduled for 2013.</p>
<p>Section 11.4.1 - <i>“The Town will review the Municipal Development Plan and make the necessary amendments, as determined by council, to achieve conformity between that plan and the Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan.”</i></p>	<p>This has been completed in some form, although with the age of the old Heart of Town ARP, more recent documents may not be 100% consistent.</p>
<p>Section 11.4.2 - <i>“The Town will review and amend, as determined by council, the Land Use Bylaw in view of the policies contained in sections 6 through 10, the residential guidelines in section 11 and the appended list of potential actions. In order to apply the residential policies in this plan amendments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) <i>will include major revisions and additions to the residential districts in the Land Use Bylaw,</i> (b) <i>will include revisions, where appropriate, to the Main Street and 50th Avenue overlay districts,</i> (c) <i>may include a new architectural theme overlay or schedule, and</i> (d) <i>may include a residential guideline overlay or schedule.”</i> 	<p>This has been completed in some form, although with the age of the old Heart of Town ARP, more recent documents may not be 100% consistent.</p>
<p>Section 11.4.3 - <i>“The Town will review other major community studies and plans, including but not restricted to the Transportation Plan, Open Space Plan and Recreation Master Plan, with respect to the applicable policies and actions listed in the Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan.”</i></p>	<p>This has been completed in some form, although with the age of the Heart of Town ARP, more recent documents may not be 100% consistent.</p>
<p>Section 11.4.5 - <i>“In order to improve pedestrian safety, the Town should examine a long-range bikeway and sidewalk development and rehabilitation plan for the Heart of Town area.”</i></p>	<p>The Recreation Board is updating the Trails and Recreation Master Plan.</p>
<p>Section 11.4.6 - <i>“Council will consider implementing an inventory of heritage buildings and landscapes in Lacombe, to supplement the Main Street inventory, as well as a program to promote the conservation of the resources identified as having heritage qualities.”</i></p>	<p>A Heritage Preservation Program is being implemented by the City.</p>

Section 17.0 Public Participation

Policy 1 - *As part of the process of community growth and change, the Town shall facilitate public input on matters of general or specific planning interest wherever possible.*

Policy 2 - *The Town should guide and work with citizens, community groups and the private sector on matters of planning importance to the community and in these undertakings the Town should pursue the goals and policies of this Plan wherever possible.*

Section 19.0 Implementation

Policy 3 - *The goals and policies of the MDP shall be further refined and implemented through the development, adoption, and day to day application of statutory plans (area structure plans and area redevelopment plans), non-statutory plans (outline plans, design schemes, etc.), and the Land Use Bylaw.*

Policy 5 - *All statutory and non-statutory plans shall be consistent with the Municipal Development Plan.*

1.7.2 Town of Lacombe Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan, 1999

In response to increased development pressures in the downtown area, the *Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan* was adopted in 1999 to guide growth and redevelopment in downtown Lacombe while encouraging the preservation of the Town's historic character. The Plan focused on retaining Lacombe's mature, small town qualities while addressing housing needs and identifying the important role that downtown plays as the community's commercial and social centre.

Goals and policies relating to community character, housing, leisure spaces, social and culture, economic development, transportation, and implementation were identified. The following is a table of the items that have been implemented since the Plan's adoption in 1999:

1.7.3 Lacombe Downtown Streetscape Development Plan, 2005

Adopted by Council in November 2005, the amended *Downtown Streetscape Development Plan* was prepared to conceptualize the streetscape improvements which would set out the design components and standards for enhancing the appearance and function of sidewalks, boulevards and other public areas within the Downtown core.

The plan proposes an upgraded and unified streetscape system that will offer pedestrian access throughout the downtown core, revitalize heritage period streets, and effectively connect intersecting regional highways with local downtown streets. The Plan identifies following short-range and long-range objectives as part of the streetscape program:

- *Identify a distinct character to complement what is envisioned as the downtown's evolving commercial environment and develop the design concepts to enhance and promote the downtown heritage qualities.*
- *Identify and develop the opportunities for hard and soft landscape features within the pedestrian environment that will provide a memorable downtown experience.*
- *Identify and develop those opportunities to create places of visual interest by providing decorative elements and other special features including sculptural installations.*
- *Identify and develop measures and opportunities to improve public safety including street and pedestrian lighting, accessibility ramps, and clearly defined, shortened pedestrian crosswalks.*
- *Identify and develop opportunities to expand on the streetscape program to include spaces between and behind existing buildings and the art and history connections between existing museums and murals.*

Some of the proposed streetscape improvements have been implemented, including upgrades along 52 Street (between 50 Avenue and 53 Avenue) and along 53 Street (between 50 Avenue and 51 Avenue).

1.7.4 Town of Lacombe Downtown Parking Study

In 2005 a *Downtown Parking Study* was prepared to identify existing parking issues within Lacombe’s Downtown core and examine practical solutions to remedy them. The Study provides short term (within 1 year), medium term (1-5 years), and long term (+5 years) recommendations to improve the overall downtown parking situation.

Short term recommendations include development of a parking map; educating business owners, employees, and members of the public; installation of directional and lot signage; provision for towing; and the need for snow removal.

Medium term recommendations include temporary parking lot development. Several vacant lots were identified in the study as being suitable for potential parking lot development.

Long term recommendations include the purchase and development of fringe lots to provide parking stalls for downtown employees, as the Town’s existing lots are strategically placed to serve the downtown business customers. It is also recommended that new and existing lots be developed to a higher standard including asphalt, concrete curbs, landscaping, lighting, and signage.

The Study also provides implementation strategies identifying how these recommendations can be achieved.

1.7.5 Land Use Bylaw 300

Adopted in 2003, the City of Lacombe *Land Use Bylaw* regulates development of all lands within Lacombe. Several lots located within Downtown Plan area were previously rezoned to reflect the ARP Land Use Concept in the original *Heart of Town Area Redevelopment Plan*. In order to implement the General Urban Design Guidelines included within this ARP, zoning amendments may be required to ensure that future development aligns with the intent of each individual district.

1.8 Plan Organization

Section 1.0 - Overview identifies the purpose of the Downtown Plan, defines the Downtown Plan area and urban context, describes the enabling legislation for preparing the Plan, summarizes the community and stakeholder consultation process which informed the Plan and provides a summary of relevant statutory and non-statutory plan and policy documents.

Section 2.0 - Existing Conditions and Trends profiles the community’s current population and general market characteristics, and describes existing conditions within the Downtown Plan area related to land use, zoning, land ownership, parks and open space, and transportation and parking.

Section 3.0 - Vision and Guiding Principles presents the community-generated vision as well as planning principles that guided the development of the Downtown Plan.

Section 4.0 – General Urban Design Guidelines provides guidelines to ensure a high quality of future design and development for the overall Downtown Plan area.

Section 5.0 – Public Realm Plan recommends public space improvements and associated design elements that can be applied to enhance the quality and sense of place unique to Downtown Lacombe.

Section 6.0 – Development Concept identifies the intent, proposals and objectives, and built form of specific character areas identified within the Downtown Plan area.

Section 7.0 – Implementation summarizes the steps necessary to implement the Plan including Land Use Bylaw amendments, strategic priorities and action plans.



2.0

EXISTING CONDITIONS
AND TRENDS

2.1 Historical Development

In 1873, John Morley established a trail that connected Fort Edmonton to Fort Calgary. This important early transportation route would lead to the establishment of Lacombe. Although First Nation people had used the area for thousands of years, Lacombe's first permanent European settler arrived in 1883 - Ed Barnett. On land located along the Calgary-Edmonton Trail, which would later become part of the townsite of Lacombe, Barnett built a log barn and house which served as a stopping house for travelers along the Trail.

In 1891 the Canadian Pacific Railway completed a rail line, which passed by Barnett's land, to connect Edmonton and Calgary. With access greatly improved, settlers rushed to the Lacombe area to develop homesteads. The railroad siding for this area – Siding No. 12 - was unofficially known as 'Barnett's Siding'. Railway officials later changed the name to Lacombe in honour of peacemaker missionary Father Albert Lacombe, whose intercession with First Nation people made the building of the railway possible.

By 1893, Lacombe's downtown blocks and lots were surveyed and the first log school was started. Village status was granted in 1896 followed by town status in 1902. By 1905 the town's population had reached 900 and Lacombe was on its way to becoming a commercial and community hub. It was seen as a vital link to Central Alberta's growing farming community. The Merchants Bank of



Source: City of Lacombe Municipal Heritage Inventory

Canada, located on the flatiron block, was completed in 1904, and in 1907 the Dominion Government chose Lacombe as the site for an Agricultural Research Station.

By the beginning of the World War I, the town had a population of over 2,000 people. This was partly spurred by land speculation resulting from Canadian National Railway's plans to establish Lacombe as a major terminus for coal distribution. The plan never materialized and by 1915 1,000 lots were forfeited to the Town in lieu of taxes. By 1921 the population had declined to just over 1,100.

Centered in a productive agricultural region only 18 km north of Red Deer, Lacombe continued to grow over the years. Little growth occurred between 1914 and 1945 due to world political and economic events. Lacombe's growth accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s with Alberta's oil boom. The region experienced new industrial development with major petrochemical plants developed southeast of town. Growth resulted in a series of annexations during the 1970s, which more than doubled the town's footprint. Lacombe grew from 640 acres in 1954 to 2,715 acres in 1981.

Much of the downtown area was subdivided and developed prior to World War II. Residential expansion occurred in the southwest and northwest portions of the downtown area during the 1960s and 1970s, with the most recent housing development occurring in the northeast portion in the 1990s.

The key factors contributing to downtown Lacombe's unique layout, appearance and building design are summarized in the City of Lacombe's 2011 *Municipal Heritage Inventory* report.

"The initial layout of the city blocks and streets has resulted in unique buildings designed to accommodate irregular lots. This was a result of combining the village survey with land owned by the railway. The distinctive triangular main block of downtown results from these two separate grids that do not intersect at right angles. The most prominent of these irregular lots is the location of the landmark Flat Iron Building, which in turn influenced downtown's distinctive architecture, with many buildings having more than one primary façade or else unusual corner elements."

"Several damaging fires in Lacombe's early years dictated the future streetscape of Lacombe. Wooden buildings were seen as a hazard to any surrounding buildings, and after

a fire that destroyed most of the central block in 1906, the town passed a by-law demanding that any future buildings in the core of town be made of brick and any standing wooden buildings be faced with brick. Lacombe's current downtown – the most consistently Edwardian-era downtown in Alberta – was a direct result of this early threat of fire."

"From its initial establishment as a link between two major commercial centres, Lacombe developed its own grand and distinct appearance. Due to the prevalence of brickyards in the community and the bylaw requiring downtown buildings to be constructed of brick, many of the downtown commercial buildings today are the original brick buildings that were constructed in the early 1900s. This coupled with the unique downtown triangular lots, some with facades facing two streets, and the superb preservation of early 20th century architecture, brings attention to Lacombe as one the most well-preserved historic streetscapes in Alberta."

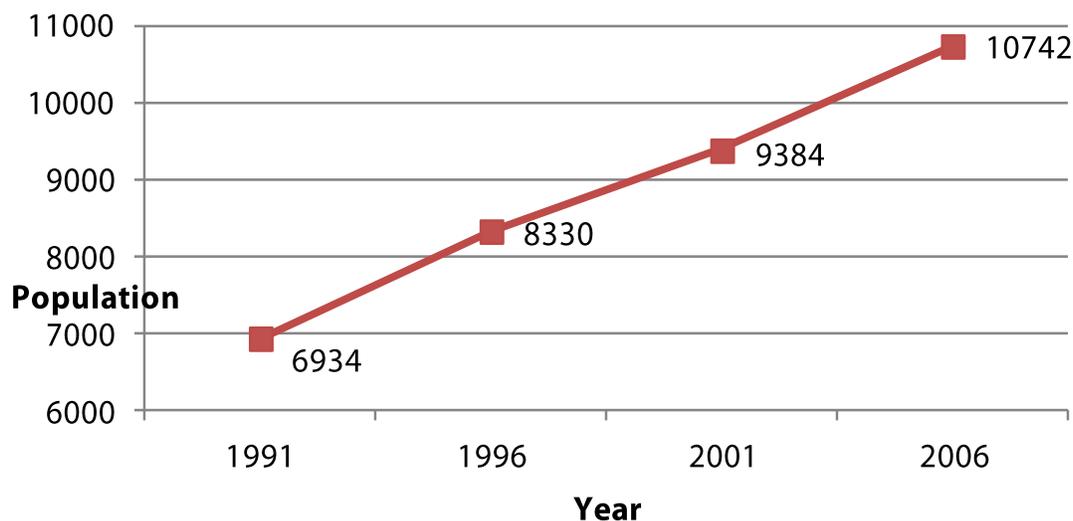
With the aid of the Province, in 1988 Lacombe adopted the Alberta Main Street Program. This Program restored and rehabilitated the historic character of much of downtown, capitalizing on its intact stock of Edwardian-era buildings unique to Alberta. Between 1987 and 1993, 31 historic buildings were rehabilitated, new streetlights were installed, trees were planted and downtown landscaping was initiated.

2.2 Population Growth and Characteristics

Between 1991 and 2006, the population of Lacombe experienced an average annual growth rate of 3% (see *Figure 1 below*). In comparison to the rest of the County, the City of Lacombe is growing at a faster rate, increasing its share of the County population from 33% to 37% from 1991 to 2006. *Table 2* on the following page profiles the City's population in 2006 by age group and sex.

Although Lacombe has recently experienced significant growth, some other communities in the area, such as Blackfalds and Sylvan Lake, experienced even faster growth rates due to their emergence as bedroom communities for Red Deer.

Figure 1 - City of Lacombe Historical Population Growth, 1991-2006



Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

Table 2 - City of Lacombe Population Profile by Age and Sex, 2006

Age Range	Female	Male	Total		Alberta Total	
0-4 Years	360	365	720	6.70%	202595	6.16%
5-9 Years	380	375	755	7.02%	204110	6.20%
10-14 Years	415	450	865	8.05%	224805	6.83%
15-19 Years	425	455	875	8.14%	237900	7.23%
20-24 Years	330	330	665	6.19%	251380	7.64%
25-29 Years	340	305	645	6.00%	240525	7.31%
30-34 Years	330	325	650	6.05%	234305	7.12%
35-39 Years	380	330	715	6.65%	237850	7.23%
40-44 Years	450	405	855	7.95%	268290	8.15%
45-49 Years	405	385	790	7.35%	274735	8.35%
50-54 Years	340	340	680	6.33%	237465	7.22%
55-59 Years	265	255	525	4.88%	189265	5.75%
60-64 Years	225	200	425	3.95%	133705	4.06%
65-69 Years	155	150	305	2.84%	102410	3.11%
70-74 Years	170	130	305	2.84%	86915	2.64%
75-79 Years	190	145	335	3.12%	71475	2.17%
80-84 Years	170	130	300	2.79%	50320	1.53%
85 Years & Over	235	105	340	3.16%	42290	1.29%
				100.00		
Total	5565	5180	10750	%	3290350	100.00%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

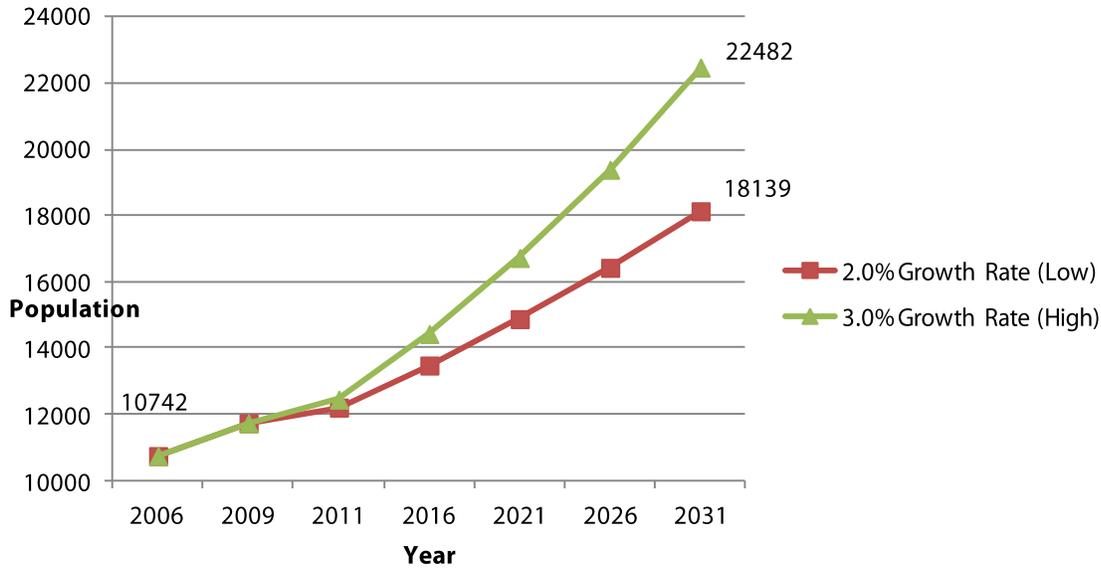
Between 2000 to 2009, most of Lacombe’s population growth occurred in the northern and western areas of the City, with very little population growth in the downtown core. From 2000 to 2009, downtown Lacombe grew by 1.7% in comparison to the 46.7% growth and the 13.8% growth experienced by the northern and western areas respectively.

Using 2001 Canada Census data, Lacombe’s 2009 Municipal Development Plan projects an annual population growth of 3% until the year 2026.

Although the MDP projection expects 3.0% annual population growth, common to many communities in Alberta, the City’s growth in 2007 to 2009 has been slower, and the average annual growth rate between 2001 to 2006 was 2.7% . Due to changing circumstances, 3.0% is now considered the upper bound annual growth rate, with 2.0% being established as a reasonable lower bound.

Figure 2 on the following page illustrates the City’s high and low population projections from 2006 to 2031.

Figure 2 - City of Lacombe Population Projections 2006 to 2031



Source: Coriolis Consulting Corp., 2010

2.3 Existing Land Use

Map 3 — Generalized Existing Land Use illustrates the existing land uses within the Downtown Plan Area.

The downtown core, centered around 50 Avenue, contains a large concentration of commercial uses including restaurants, retail, and office space. Lacombe’s downtown core is also home to a number of heritage structures, with the majority of its historical inventory located along 50 Street (Nanton Street), 50 Avenue, and the blocks directly east of C & E Trail. The Flatiron Building- a major landmark for the city - is located at the triangular intersection of 50 Avenue and 49C Avenue (Formerly Barnett Avenue). The Lacombe Memorial Centre is located on 50 Avenue, directly west of the downtown commercial core. The facility offers multiple programming opportunities including banquet rooms, meeting and gathering facilities, and the Lacombe Public Library.

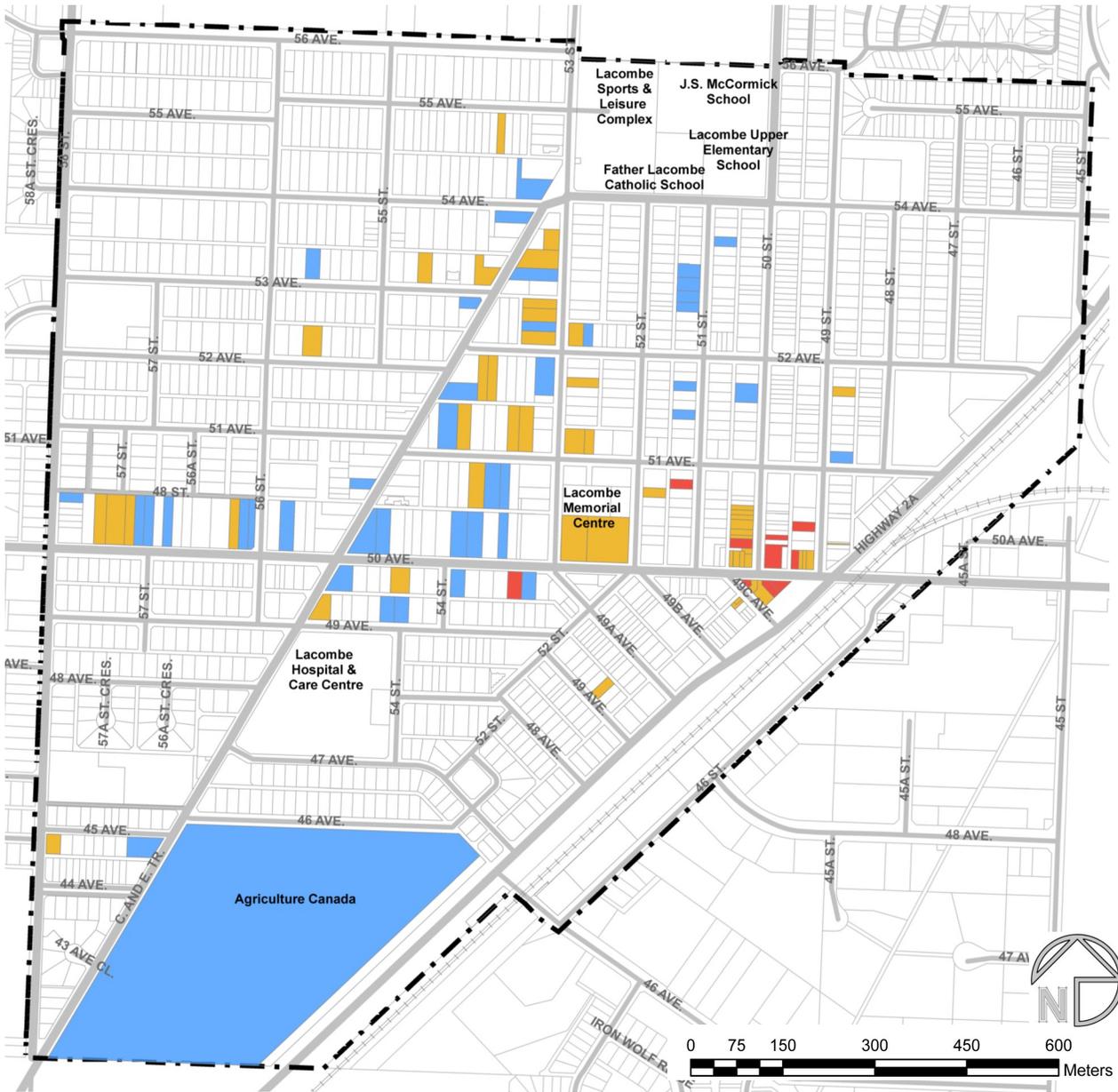
Areas located north and south of the downtown core, along the western edge of Highway 2A, are generally characterized by auto-oriented commercial development.

Areas surrounding the downtown core to the north, south and west are generally characterized by lower density residential uses with a mix of housing forms ranging from single family residential to higher density forms such as duplex / semi-detached, row housing, and apartments. Bounded by the C & E Trail, 50 Avenue, and 53 Street is the City’s largest concentration of residential heritage structures.

The Agriculture Canada Research Centre encompasses a large area within the southern portion of the Downtown Plan area. The Lacombe Hospital and Care Centre is also located in the southern portion of the Plan area, surrounded by mostly low and medium density residential uses.

Civic uses including the Nelson School and Upper Elementary School are located north of 54 Avenue, which includes Lacombe’s Sports & Leisure Complex and the Kinsmen Aquatic Centre. A large public park lines the street of 54 Avenue separating public schools from the residential area.

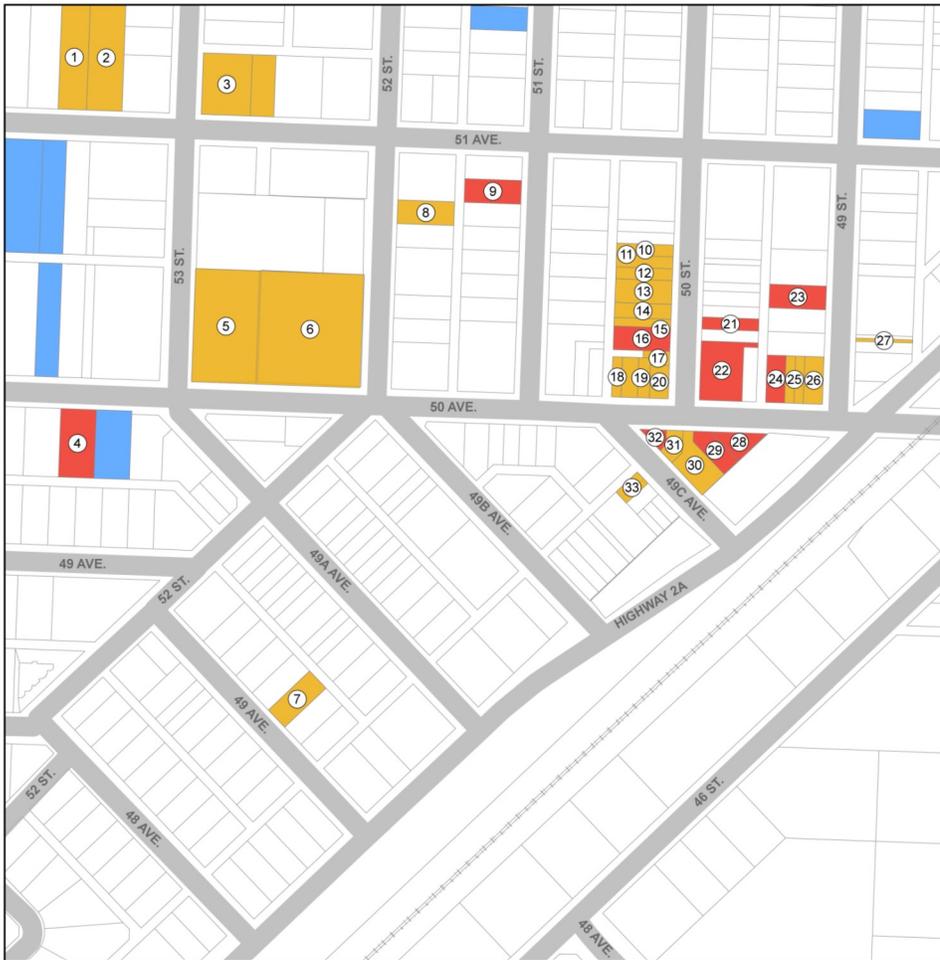
Map 4 - Historic Inventory



Legend

- Provincial Historic Resource Integrity Statements
- Statements of Significance
- Places of Interest
- Downtown Plan Area
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Canadian Pacific Railway

Map 5 - Historic Inventory (Downtown Core Detail)



Building Name

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Hay Residence | 27. Lacombe Appliances and Hardware Store |
| 2. Dr. Stewart Residence | 28. Corner Business Block |
| 3. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church | 29. Urquhart Block |
| 4. Dr. Sharpe Residence | 30. Lacombe Hotel |
| 5. Lacombe Cenotaph, Lest We Forget Park | 31. Union Bank of Canada |
| 6. Nelson School Bell Cairn | 32. Merchant's Bank of Canada |
| 7. Robert McNaughton Residence | 33. Fraser-MacDonald Agency |
| 8. Johnson Dairy Residence | |
| 9. Michener House | |
| 10. Saunders Service Garage | |
| 11. SM Murray General Store | |
| 12. Lacombe Globe Building | |
| 13. Hotson Block | |
| 14. Lacombe Safeway | |
| 15. Lacombe Photo Studio | |
| 16. Puffer Chung Block | |
| 17. Follis Drug Store/Sweet's Pharmacy | |
| 18. Denike Block | |
| 19. McLear Block and McLear Annex | |
| 20. Royal Bank of Canada | |
| 21. Lacombe Billiards | |
| 22. The Campbell Block | |
| 23. Lacombe Blacksmith Shop | |
| 24. M & J Hardware | |
| 25. Post Office Building | |
| 26. The Day Block | |

Legend

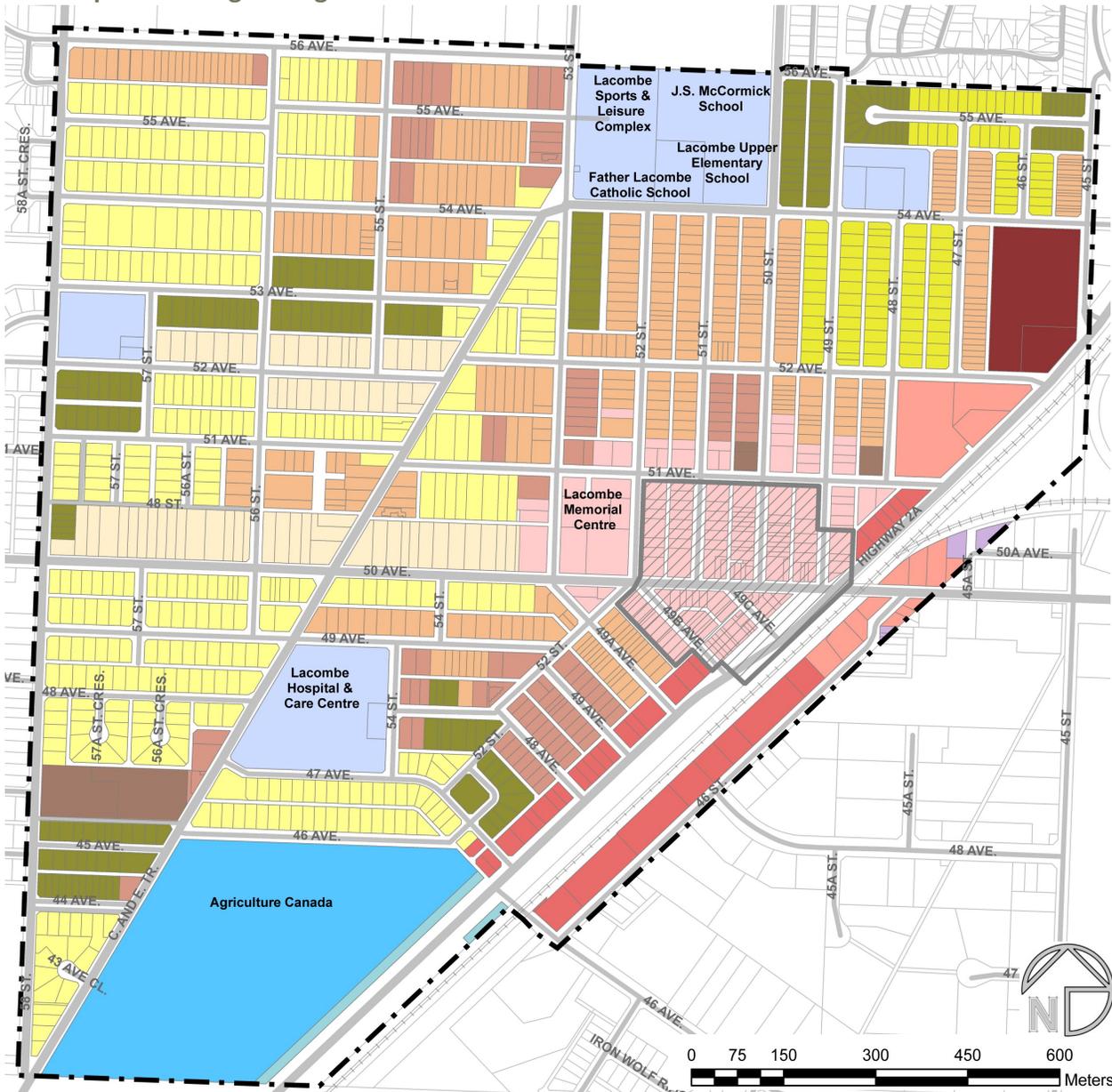
- Provincial Historic Resource Integrity Statements
- Statements of Significance
- Places of Interest
- Canadian Pacific Railway

2.4 Existing Zoning

Map 6 — Existing Zoning illustrates the current zoning within the Downtown Plan area, in accordance with the *City of Lacombe Land Use Bylaw No. 300*.

Table 3 - Existing Land Use Districts summarizes the regulations for each district related to parcel size, building size, building height, and allowable parcel coverage.

Map 6 - Existing Zoning



Legend

- | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| C1 | Central Commercial | R1A | Residential Large Lot Single Detached Dwellings | | Main Street Historic Area Overlay |
| C2 | Highway Commercial | R1B | Residential Medium Lot Single Detached Dwellings | | Downtown Plan Area |
| C3 | Transitional Highway Commercial | R1C | Residential Smaller Lot Single Detached Dwellings | | Major Road |
| C5 | District Shopping Centre | R2 | General Residential | | Minor Road |
| P | Public and Institutional Use | R4 | Medium Density Residential | | Canadian Pacific Railway |
| SU | Special Use | R5 | High Density Residential | | |
| FD | Future Designation | R6 | Maximum Density Multi-Unit Residential | | |
| I1 | Light Industrial | | | | |

Table 3 - Existing Land Use Districts

District	Designation	Min. Parcel Area	Max. Height	Max. Parcel Coverage
C1	Central Commercial District	N / A	Heights shall not exceed 7.6 m or two storeys generally within 100 m of the triangular block bound by 50 Avenue, Highway 2A and 49C Avenue, where buildings shall not exceed the height of the "flatiron" building. Building heights shall not exceed 11 m or three storeys outside this 100 m zone, and shall not exceed the height of the "flatiron" building.	100%
C2	Highway Commercial District	Hotels & Motels - 0.25 Ha Service Stations - 0.14 Ha All others - 0.10 Ha	Hotels & Motels - 12 m All others - 9.5 m	40%
C3	Transitional Highway Commercial District	N / A	10 m	60%
C5	District Shopping Centre	2.0 Ha	3 Storeys or 11.5 m	Max. Floor Area - 35% of total site area
P	Public and Institutional Use District	N / A	12 m (Steeple Height exempt)	80%
SU	Special Use District	N / A	N / A	N / A
FD	Future Designation District	All the land contained in the existing Certificate of Title, unless otherwise approved by the Municipal Planning Commission, having regard to the future use of the parcel and the form of future subdivision and development.	N / A	N / A
I1	Light Industrial District	N / A	N / A	80%
R1A	Residential Large Lot Single Detached Dwelling	Interior Parcels - 740 m ² Corner Parcels - 835 m ²	10 m	principal dwelling: 33% accessory buildings: 10%
R1B	Residential Medium Lot Single Detached Dwelling	Interior Parcels - 565 m ² Corner Parcels - 600 m ²	10 m	principal dwelling: 33% accessory buildings: 10%
R1C	Residential Smaller Lot Single Detached Dwelling	Interior Parcels - 465 m ² Corner Parcels - 510 m ²	9 m	principal dwelling: 40% accessory buildings: 15%

District	Designation	Min. Parcel Area	Max. Height	Max. Parcel Coverage
R2	General Residential	<p><u>Detached Dwellings, manufactured homes and adult care residences:</u> Interior Parcels - 465 m² Corner Parcels - 510 m²</p> <p><u>Semi-Detached Dwellings:</u> Interior Parcels - 310 m² Corner Parcels - 345 m²</p> <p><u>Duplexes:</u> Interior Parcels - 200 m² Corner Parcels - 250 m²</p>	9 m	<p><u>Detached Dwellings</u> principal dwelling: 40% accessory buildings: 15%</p> <p><u>Semi-Detached Dwellings and Duplexes</u> principal dwelling: 45% accessory buildings: 15%</p>
R4	Medium Density Residential	<p><u>Duplexes and Semi-detached:</u> Interior Parcels - 255 m² Corner Parcels - 280 m²</p> <p><u>Rowhouses:</u> Interior Parcels - 200 m² Corner Parcels - 275 m²</p> <p><u>Tri-plexes, Four-plexes and stacked row-houses:</u> Interior Parcels - 200 m² Corner Parcels - 225 m²</p> <p><u>Multiple housing developments:</u> The ground area of non-recreational buildings, of the parking facilities and driveways and the minimum amenity area shall be totalled.</p>	9 m, or as indicated in an approved Plan.	<p><u>Detached dwellings, manufactured housing, duplexes and semi-detached dwellings, rowhouses, stacked rowhouses, tri-plexes and four-plexes, boarding and rooming houses and student dormitories</u> principal dwelling: 35% accessory buildings: 12%</p> <p><u>Multiple housing development:</u> Determined by subtracting the total amenity area required from the parcel area.</p>
R5	High Density Residential	<p><u>Apartments:</u> 1.3 times building's floor area</p> <p><u>Rowhouses and stacked rowhouses:</u> Interior Parcels: 200 m² Corner Parcels: 275 m²</p> <p><u>Multiple housing developments:</u> The ground area of non-recreational buildings, of the parking facilities and driveways and the minimum amenity area shall be totalled.</p>	The lesser of 4 storeys or 15.25 m	<p>75%</p> <p><u>Multiple housing development:</u> Determined by subtracting the minimum amenity area from the parcel area.</p>
R6	Maximum Density Multi-Unit Residential	<p>1.3 times the building's total floor area, unless the development provides more than 2/3 of the required parking stalls below grade, then a ratio of 0.8 times the building's total floor area is used to determine minimum parcel area.</p> <p><u>Multiple housing developments:</u> The ground area of non-recreational buildings, of the parking facilities and driveways and the minimum amenity area shall be totalled.</p>	The lesser of 4 storeys or 17 m	N / A

2.5 Property Ownership

As shown on *Map 7 – Property Ownership*, the majority of land within the Downtown Plan area is privately owned.

The City of Lacombe owns several parcels within the Downtown Plan area, including:

- The entire block of land occupied by the Lacombe Memorial Centre;
- Five (5) small parking lots located in the downtown core;
- Seven parcels of park space located throughout the Downtown Plan area; and
- The parcel of land north of 54 Avenue and east of 53 Street occupied by the Lacombe Sports and Leisure Complex.

Crown owned land (Federal/Provincial) in the Downtown Plan area includes:

- Ten (10) small parcels of land located in proximity to the intersection of 51 Avenue and 51 Street; and
- Lands located south of 46 Avenue occupied by Agriculture Canada.

2.6 Market Characteristics

The following is a summary of the current market characteristics and trends that were considered during the preparation of the Downtown Plan.

2.6.1 Residential

As housing data is not available specific to the Downtown Plan area, housing information and trends for the entire City of Lacombe have been used. Since 2005, the average growth rate of residential development in the City has averaged approximately 100 units per year, based on building permit data. Based on the City's MDP, the City's population is estimated to grow by between 6,400 and 10,800 people over the next 22 years. Assuming an average household size of 2.7 people per unit, total residential development over this period will be between 2,400 to 4,000 units, or an average of approximately 110 to 180 units per year. Based on the predicated growth rate of single family housing development, Lacombe currently has more than 10 years of capacity identified in existing development plans.

Within the City of Lacombe, the majority of housing development is composed of single family homes. In Lacombe, 65% of residents own a single detached home with only 10% living in an apartment and 8 % living in a duplex style unit. Semi-detached units (eg. duplex) have only been experiencing a growth rate of less than 5 units per year with multifamily (e.g. townhouse, apartment) units averaging about 11 new units per year. Based on the anticipated pace of duplex, townhouse and apartment development, the City currently has decades worth of multifamily sites identified within approved plans.

Due to the community's small geographic scale and short travel time, few households choose higher density homes in central locations as a means of reducing commute time. Lacombe's ample land supply and affordable house prices also suggest that it is unlikely that the multifamily share of new housing will increase significantly in the near future.

Map 7 - Property Ownership



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

2.0

2.6.2 Retail and Service Commercial

The majority of Lacombe’s retail and service space is located Downtown and within the northern and eastern portion of the City. Downtown Lacombe contains 48% of the City’s retail and service development while having only 17% of the City’s population. The northern and eastern portions of the City includes much of the auto-oriented commercial and most of Lacombe’s supermarket and commercial food store space.

Between 1996 and 2005, the pace of new retail and service development averaged approximately 30,000 square feet per year. The pace of retail development has since slowed. With limited demand and lease rates averaging less than \$10 per square foot, it is difficult to justify new commercial construction.

Over the next 20 years, there is a potential for a maximum of 450,000 square feet of additional commercial space, including one or two new anchor supermarkets and potential neighbourhood commercial centres within the City's new residential areas. Most future retail development is anticipated along major roadways or in residential growth areas, particularly in the north. At most 10% of the future commercial growth is anticipated to happen downtown.

Recognizing Lacombe's close proximity to Red Deer and its geographic location between Edmonton and Calgary, it is unlikely for Lacombe to capture any significant regional-oriented spending. Although many of Lacombe's residents travel to neighbouring communities to shop, during consultation for the current Plan most indicated that they would prefer to do all of their shopping in town if the option was available.

2.6.3 Office Development

As of 2006, the City of Lacombe had approximately 5,300 jobs, half relating to servicing the community and the other half in sectors that include agriculture, oil and gas, finance, professional and scientific, tourism and public administration. Some major employers include the Agriculture Canada Research Centre, Alberta Field Crop Development Centre, Dow, Nova, Alberta Financial Services Corporation and Canadian University College.

Based on the City's 2010 Commercial Tax Roll, Lacombe has a total of 140,500 square feet of office space, with approximately 110,000 of that space located downtown. Based on recent population scenarios, future office growth is likely to be in the range of 50,000 to 100,000 square feet by 2031 (averaging 3,000 to 5,000 square feet annually), not including government space.

In order to strengthen the downtown core, new office development should be required to locate downtown and, if possible, any new civic or government offices should also be located there.

2.6.4 Tourism

Tourism prospects are modest in Lacombe as the City does not have many significant destination attractions. Tourism mainly consists of business travel and independent travelers (versus group tours) along Highway 2A or making stops off of Highway 2. Lacombe has a current inventory of approximately 175 rooms in six overnight accommodation properties. Limited available information suggests that average annual occupancy is low, likely at most an average of 60% across all properties.

There have been some recent tourism initiatives planned by the City in an attempt to attract more visitors. Such initiatives include the modernization of the Lacombe Memorial Centre conference facility and the development of Alberta Downs Horse Racing and Entertainment Centre. Based on an assumed tourism volume growth rate of 3% per year and an assumed average occupancy rate of 70%, the total tourism demand in 2031 is projected to be 73,434 room nights, an increase in demand of 112 rooms, suggesting a possible opportunity for a hotel or motel development over the next 10 to 20 years.

2.7 Parks and Open Space

Map 8 – Parks, Open Space and Pedestrian Connections illustrates the lands located within the Downtown Plan area devoted to park and open spaces. Existing parks within the Downtown Plan area include Popow's Kinsmen Park, Don Hay Kinsmen Park, "Lest We Forget" Park and Wilson Park. Four (4) schools are also located within the Downtown Plan area, including J.S. McCormick School,

Father Lacombe Catholic School and Lacombe Upper Elementary School, located at the intersection of 54 Avenue and 50 Street, along with Lacombe Christian School, located at the intersection of 52 Avenue and 57 Street.

The 2004 Town of Lacombe *Municipal Development Plan* identified the need to preserve significant natural areas and to facilitate the provision of integrated, accessible and well-planned open spaces that support a broad range of leisure and recreation opportunities catering to all age groups, income levels and skill levels.

The *Municipal Development Plan* identifies the follow objectives:

- To conserve and sensitively incorporate natural features as an integral part of the community's open space system.
- To provide open spaces that are functional and effective in satisfying the needs of residents and visitors to the community.

Map 8 - Parks, Open Space and Pedestrian Connections



- *To ensure a system of pathways linking parks, open space and natural areas will develop as the community grows.*
- *To encourage the sharing and optimal use of open space between multiple uses.*

2.8 Transportation and Parking

Map 9 – Transportation Network and Parking shows the location and classification of existing roadways servicing the Downtown Plan area, as well as the location of existing public parking lots.

2.8.1 Roadways

The existing arterial roadway network includes Highway 2A, 50 Avenue (Highway 12) and 58 Street.

During the Plan preparation process, there was considerable discussion regarding the need to re-route truck traffic away from the Downtown Plan area. High traffic speed and volume, especially along 50 Avenue, has been identified as a major area of concern. The need for improvement has been suggested for the intersection of Highway 2A and 50 Avenue.

The major collector roadway network within the Downtown Plan area includes C&E Trail, 50 Street, 54 Avenue and 56 Avenue. A grid of local roadways serves the rest of the Downtown Plan area.

The Town of Lacombe *2007 Transportation Master Plan Update* prepared by Bunt & Associates Engineering (Alberta) Ltd. Identifies the following findings and recommendations within the Downtown Plan area:

- *Volumes along Woodland Drive, 50th Street/C & E Trail (north of 54th Avenue), 58th Street (north of Highway 12), and Highway 12 itself have increased significantly; by an average of approximately 50%. This is a significant rate of growth and is reflective of on-going development in the northern sections of the Town;*
- *Volumes along C&E Trail (south of 54th Avenue), 54th Avenue, 58th Street south of Highway 12, and Highway 2A south of Highway 12 (as noted above) have not increased significantly since 2002. In fact, these volumes have remained static;*
- *The widening of Highway 12 to four core lanes is not required at this time, but the functional planning for the conversion to four lanes should be undertaken in the short term as the increase to four core lanes is likely to be required within five years;*
- *Regarding traffic signal prioritization, mitigation is required at the C & E/Highway 12 location in the short term to address capacity issues;*
- *Regarding the 58th Street access to Highway 2, based on 20,000 population horizon forecast traffic volumes, it will not be imperative to maintain this connection for access to/from the Town as adequate capacity will exist at the Highway 2A and Highway 12 access location; and*
- *One way couplet does not need to be implemented in the foreseeable future (to the 20,000 population horizon) and should be deleted from the proposed long term road network.*

2.8.2 Parking

Within the Downtown Plan area, parking is accommodated through both on-street parking, smaller parking lots located throughout the area and one larger parking lot located adjacent to the Lacombe Memorial Centre.

The 2005 *Town of Lacombe Downtown Parking Study* prepared by Bunt & Associates Engineering (Alberta) Ltd. estimates there to be approximately 1376 existing parking spaces within the Downtown area. Comparing that to the 1481 stall requirement based on parking regulations in Lacombe's *Land Use Bylaw*, there is a shortage of 149 parking spaces.

Map 9 - Transportation Network and Parking



Short, medium and long-term recommendations are identified to resolve issues related to parking. These recommendations include:

- *Develop a parking map for the Downtown area and provide additional direction signage;*
- *Request that business owners encourage staff to park on the perimeter and leave curb stalls for customers;*
- *Enhance towing regulations;*
- *Create temporary parking lot developments by leasing currently vacant lots within the Downtown area (e.g. Weidner Site, Empress Hotel lots and etc);*
- *Purchase and develop periphery lots; and*
- *Develop new lots and redesign existing lots with higher standards including asphalt, concrete, curbs, landscaping, lighting and signage.*



3.0

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.1 Vision

“By the year 2032, Downtown Lacombe will emerge as the symbolic “Heart of Lacombe”, celebrating its rich historic roots while embracing complementary contemporary architecture. With its progressive and dynamic central core, surrounded by beautiful, safe, and highly livable residential neighbourhoods, Downtown Lacombe will be celebrated as a vibrant year round destination for all to enjoy.”

3.2 Guiding Principles

Key planning principles for the City of Lacombe Downtown Plan are as follows:



Create an attractive, safe and comfortable pedestrian environment

People will gather and interact with each other in places where they feel comfortable, welcome and safe. A high quality pedestrian environment where priority is given to people rather than automobiles will help to attract people, activity and investment to the downtown core. The City should encourage attractive and high quality streetscape treatments along with universal access design. Additionally, all public spaces should be designed to maximize safety and visibility. Street frontages, public spaces and parking lots should be designed to provide unobstructed views and should be well lit.



Develop and promote a strong, unified visual identity

The quality of the downtown's physical appearance - its streets, buildings, and public spaces - plays a critical role in creating a positive identity for the marketing of downtown. Existing qualities, such as a mixture of land uses, public art and a significant inventory of heritage structures, should be built upon and reinforced. Attracting businesses to the area, encouraging high quality urban design and investing in the area's physical appearance can play a critical role in promoting a strong identity for the Downtown Plan area.



Provide a central park space/plaza which can serve as a community gathering point throughout the year

Establishing a formal central gathering space within the downtown core is essential to drawing more residents and tourists to downtown Lacombe. Central parks and plazas provide backdrops for community programming including arts events, festivals and farmers' markets. These public gathering spaces also provide for an important mix of activities that can effectively shape downtown as a year-round destination.



Preserve, celebrate and adaptively reuse heritage structures

Historic and architecturally significant buildings are assets that play an important role in downtown revitalization. Heritage structures should be celebrated and enhanced in adaptive reuse projects that respect and preserve the building's heritage significance while bringing new life to the structure. Preserving these important assets helps strengthen the downtown's identity while providing value for the future.



Establish 50 Avenue as Lacombe's signature Main Street

50 Avenue will become a symbol representing the City of Lacombe. The City should promote continuous, complementary development along 50 Avenue in order to achieve a unified main street identity. Well preserved heritage houses along 50 Avenue, west of 53 Street, will create a gateway to the downtown core from the west. East of 53 Street, unique, locally owned businesses with attractive street-oriented frontages that reflect the City's historical roots will allow pedestrians to be visually engaged, creating a memorable experience as they walk along the street.



Ensure that commercial and residential infill development is sensitive to the surrounding developments

Future commercial and residential development within the Downtown Plan area should be developed to a high architectural quality and be complementary in terms of character and scale to existing surrounding uses. Well designed infill projects can integrate harmoniously into the local landscape, improve and enrich a community, and enhance the value of the surrounding developments.



Allow for greater housing choices to accommodate a range of lifestyles, ages and incomes

Housing options within a community should appeal to a broad demographic. A mix of housing types and densities has been planned to accommodate a range of lifestyles, ages and incomes. Allowing for a greater mix of housing types also offers options for both ownership and rental units.



Maintain and locate civic and provincial agencies within the downtown core

As Lacombe continues to grow, there will be an increased demand for spaces to support additional civic and provincial agencies. By strategically situating future civic and provincial agencies within the downtown core, these uses can serve to support existing assets or act as catalysts in transforming and revitalizing surrounding areas.



Utilize the visual and performing arts as a catalyst for downtown revitalization

The most dynamic and vibrant urban destinations have a strong arts and culture focus. Lacombe should reinforce the vitality of its downtown by utilizing the visual and performing arts as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. These attractions can enhance a city's identity, assist in retaining young, creative and talented community members, and serve as the foundation for increased tourism and economic development.



Improve tourism infrastructure and marketing to spur economic development

The key to drawing and retaining more visitors from out of town is the ability to provide sufficient options for accommodations and amenities. The City must improve its tourism infrastructure by identifying and marketing a hotel site central to the community. Encouraging visitors to stay and play in Lacombe, rather than in surrounding communities, will spur further economic development within the city.



4.0

GENERAL URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of the General Urban Design Guidelines is to guide both public and private interests engaged in new development projects within the Downtown Plan area to achieve high quality and functional design. The guidelines are informed by and reinforce the Vision and Guiding Principles as well as the Development Concept for the Downtown Plan. Some flexibility is provided by the guidelines to support the revitalization of Downtown into a distinct area of the City of Lacombe, while accommodating creativity and variety in designs within the Plan area.

The General Urban Design Guidelines are general in nature and meant to apply to developments located throughout the Plan area. The general guidelines are categorized into broad thematic categories and will create the foundation for further detailed design work. It is recommended that the City of Lacombe also develop more detailed, district specific Urban Design Guidelines to aid in refining the distinct attributes and character of each District in order to achieve its development potential.

The adoption and implementation of Urban Design Guidelines to ensure a high standard of urban design and development has important benefits to the Downtown Plan area and the City of Lacombe. Ensuring an attractive setting is key to positioning Downtown as a desirable location to live as well as a destination for shopping, entertainment, tourism and recreation. This will aid economic development and investment efforts and is especially important in attracting new investment.

4.1 Theming and Placemaking

Lacombe's rich history provides excellent opportunities to develop theming and streetscape elements that celebrate the community's specific identity and pride.

- It is recommended that the City introduce site furnishings, especially within the Old Town Main Street District, to reinforce the community's heritage theme (i.e. historic light fixtures, banners, street signage, benches, bike racks, receptacles and tree grates, etc).
- Streetscape elements implemented within the downtown core should be extended throughout the entire central residential area, creating a pedestrian friendly environment throughout the Downtown Plan area.



4.2 Placement, Height, and Massing of Buildings

New development within the Downtown Plan area should be oriented to create a pedestrian friendly environment. Articulation of building elevations, appropriate building massing and activating the frontages of buildings are important urban design objectives.

- Buildings should be located on the site to maximize solar penetration and avoid adverse microclimatic effects related to wind and shadowing on and off the site.
- In mixed-use areas, building frontages should be designed to suggest a pattern of individually owned shops with narrow frontages and individual entrances.
- Permitted maximum heights shall be in accordance with provisions in the City of Lacombe Land Use Bylaw.



4.3 Building Relationship to the Street

- To provide an active and inviting streetscape at ground level, buildings incorporating ground floor commercial uses should be built to the property line, with individual entrances to the street for shop fronts as well as weather protection features such as awnings, canopies and arcades.
- Where ground floor commercial uses could include cafés and restaurants, building setbacks and mid-block mews should be encouraged to accommodate outdoor seating areas.
- Higher density residential development should feature individual private entries for ground floor units and incorporate porches and windows at ground level.
- Blank walls should be avoided by wrapping active retail or residential uses around any above-grade parking structures to maintain an active and attractive streetscape.
- Buildings on corner sites must provide attractive façades on both the street and



avenue, and address adjacent buildings as well as those on opposing corners. Buildings should acknowledge this special site condition by creating visual focal points at the corner such as a circular bay window, clock tower, etc.

4.4 Pedestrian Environment

One of the important design considerations within the Downtown Plan area is to promote walkability by creating a pedestrian friendly environment. The following criteria should be considered to enhance the pedestrian environment within the Plan area:

- Pedestrian linkages throughout the Downtown core should be strengthened.
- The interface between Highway 2A and adjacent pedestrian connections should be enhanced with landscaping and street edge treatments to improve pedestrian safety.
- The construction of barrier free sidewalks of an appropriate width should be encouraged within the Downtown Plan area.
- Lighting and other street furniture should be at a human scale to enhance the character of the pedestrian realm in the Downtown Plan area.
- Pedestrian areas within the Plan area should be designed in consideration of the following:
 - ♦ Streetscape hard surfaces should be assessed for their life cycle and sustainable characteristics. Specific hard surface details include permeable concrete, subsurface integrated tree and storm water systems, tree grates and trench drains.
 - ♦ Additional thickening on sidewalk edges, open curb cuts and trench drainage is recommended in any areas that incorporate rain gardens.
 - ♦ Decorative paving is recommended in node and crossing areas to provide additional highlight and contrast.
- It is recommended that these components be integrated to conform to existing and future new utility alignments, including the underground alignment of current overhead power lines.



4.5 Heritage Preservation

It has been mentioned that heritage preservation can aid greatly in achieving a unique ‘sense of place.’ The following are some design guidelines that should be considered in the rehabilitation of historic structures and compatible design of new construction on nearby infill sites:

- The rehabilitation of older buildings should ensure design compatibility with the historic character of the area. Consideration should be given to incorporating the architectural features of historic buildings.
- New buildings should be similar in scale and form to the existing historical structures and be compatible with these buildings in overall quality and appearance.



- The architectural design of new development does not have to mimic historical buildings in the area. Contemporary exterior materials and architectural styles may be used provided the overall site development, including landscaping treatment, is of high visual quality and responsive to the general urban character of the area.

4.6 Sustainability

Sustainable development is growth that supports the economic, social and environmental viability of a community over the long term. Providing multiple transportation options, housing choices, accessible public spaces, employment opportunities, public services, businesses that serve the daily needs of residents and densities that ensure the efficient use of public infrastructure will support sustainable growth within the Downtown Plan area and the City of Lacombe. Streetscape design elements which conserve water use and support walkability are specifically supported by the Urban Design Guidelines for the Downtown Plan.

The City of Lacombe supports the implementation of sustainable development principles and practices as part of the design of public and private developments, including:

- Where possible, buildings which are designed to include on-site alternative energy sources such as solar heat, solar electricity and solar energy.
- The incorporation of features such as daylighting, recycling, reuse of water, low-water landscaping, energy efficient lighting and other devices should be considered in the building and site designs to reduce the consumption of energy and materials.
- On-site infiltration of stormwater as a consideration in the design of open spaces and site development.
- Design features that encourage walking, bicycling (i.e. bicycle parking), and integrate the potential for future transit service need to be incorporated within the Downtown Plan area.
- Sustainable approaches for greenway, parks, trail and open space preservation, development, management and operations.
- Green Street components can be used in conjunction with sustainable building development to introduce natural filtration systems that manage and cleanse water on-site before reaching off-site collection areas and to:
 - ◆ improve storm water treatment (sedimentation and pollutants);
 - ◆ support ground water recharge;
 - ◆ prevent flooding and provide erosion and sediment control;
 - ◆ mitigate soil compaction and soil particle reduction; and
 - ◆ promote carbon storage, organic matter, pollination, and soil health.



4.7 Gateways and Wayfinding (Signage)

A system of wayfinding elements including signs, gateway features, kiosks and graphics should be designed for the Downtown Plan area and installed to help orient motorists and pedestrians and should include:

- A graphics standards manual for gateway features and signage to ensure a comprehensive and unified approach that uses a consistent colour scheme and identity.
- Public art on both public and private property to serve as reference points.
- Gateway features should be designed and constructed at strategic locations as identified on *Map 10 - Urban Design Framework Plan*.
- Signage design should be coordinated with the design of buildings and sites in terms of locations, scale, materials, finishes and colours to develop a cohesive urban design for the Plan area.
- Signage should be kept to a minimum size and number needed to inform and direct visitors and residents.
- Lighting of all signs should be maximized and indirect front-lit signs are encouraged wherever possible.



4.8 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

To enhance public safety within the Downtown Plan area, it is recommended that Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles be applied during the review of development proposals. CPTED principles are based on the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts. Research and actual application of CPTED strategies have revealed that decisions related to criminal behavior can be influenced by the perceived risk of being caught or seen. Through proper design and effective use of the built environment, crime and the fear of crime can be reduced, and quality of life improved and enhanced. Physical CPTED principles to be applied in the Plan area include:



- Natural Surveillance, provided through:
 - ♦ providing clear sight-lines to the street and public spaces from within buildings, through their design;
 - ♦ avoiding the creation of areas hidden from view and isolated spaces through the design and placement of buildings and public spaces; and

- ♦ providing a variety of uses and well designed public spaces which promote day-long and year-round use.
- Access Control, through:
 - ♦ designing public spaces and buildings which provide a “hierarchy of space” ranging from public (i.e. sidewalks), to semi-public (i.e. café patios), to semi-private (i.e. front porches, shops and stores) to private (i.e. residential units) which supports their legitimate use.
- Territorial Reinforcement, through:
 - ♦ locating and designing entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting to subtly define spaces and to distinguish the appropriate type and time of use of spaces and supporting the definition of a “hierarchy of space”.
- Target Hardening, through:
 - ♦ utilizing a variety of hard and soft landscaping features (i.e. fencing and hedges) as appropriate to restrict illegitimate uses at inappropriate times of day or year;
 - ♦ providing spaces and structures of high-quality, durable, materials that resist vandalism and are easily maintained.

4.9 Parking, Access and Loading

In order to accommodate the required parking and loading for commercial, mixed-use and higher density residential land uses planned within the Downtown Plan area, while supporting the desire to promote an active streetscape, the following design guidelines should be considered:

- Opportunities for shared parking facilities should be encouraged.
- All parking for residential uses must be accommodated on site.
- Wherever possible, structured parking should be provided, preferably accessible from lanes.
- Parking and loading should be oriented to the rear of buildings and should utilize lane access where applicable.
- On-street parking should be designed to accommodate fewer vehicles. This will encourage surface parking to be orientated at the rear of the buildings while promoting active street-level uses.
- When designing surface parking lots, several small parking lots spread throughout the site are preferable over large expansive parking lots.
- Large parking lots (over 15 stalls) should be broken up with landscaped islands and pedestrian walkways.
- Surface parking lots should be properly screened, landscaped, drained and lit.



4.10 Designing for a Winter Climate

Recognizing that Lacombe is a northern city, the following are important winter design principles that should be considered:

- Encourage the use of functional and decorative lighting to enhance the appearance of the area during the darker winter months.
- Provide pedestrian weather protection through the use of awnings, canopies, arcades, readily accessible heated indoor spaces and galleries.
- Exterior building materials and colours should be designed to be attractive year-round.
- Private developments and public spaces should be designed to accommodate snow removal and storage.
- Planting deciduous trees, where possible, to provide shade in the summer and allow sunlight in the winter.
- Streetscape plantings, other than trees, should be selected to provide colour throughout the year.
- Consideration should be given to appropriate programming of public spaces during the winter months.
- New developments should recognize prevailing winds and avoid creating adverse, uncomfortable wind conditions. They should also use landscape architecture and design that enhances the microclimate of a given area. Design should permit maximum sun penetration to both outdoor and indoor open spaces.



4.11 Architectural Design

New development within the Downtown Plan area should be of high quality and provide a positive contribution to the sense of place of the Plan area and the City of Lacombe. The following guidelines should be considered in the review of development applications within the Downtown Plan area:

- New development should contribute to the City's existing architectural styles while respecting the site context.
- Functional and aesthetic building materials should be utilized with exterior finishes of high-quality, sustainable and easily maintained materials.
- Varied application of building materials should be considered, with the aim of providing a unified building image.
- Building materials should be true to their nature as opposed to mimicking other materials.



- Materials used for the front façade should be used for the sides of buildings where side facades are visible.
- The use of stucco as a finishing material should not be permitted on the ground floor of any commercial or mixed-use development. The use of stucco on the upper portions of any development should be limited to 20% of the exterior surface area.
- Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, darkly tinted and / or mirrored glass and metal siding using exposed fasteners is discouraged.
- New buildings should respect the established pattern of façade design of neighbouring buildings of similar use and density by ensuring horizontal and vertical alignment of façade elements of neighbouring buildings.
- New buildings should have entries at similar intervals and display windows continuous with the established pattern of neighbouring buildings of similar use and density.





5.0

PUBLIC REALM PLAN

Public realm improvements can dramatically influence the overall character of an urban environment. A municipality’s public realm typically includes exterior spaces or elements that are publicly accessible including, but not limited to, streets, pathways, parks and open spaces, and design elements such as streetlights, plantings and signage. The enhancement of the downtown’s public spaces and associated design elements will play a pivotal role in creating a positive environment and a unified image for Downtown Lacombe.

5.1 Urban Design Framework Plan

An Urban Design Framework Plan (See Map 10) and was prepared to conceptually identify future public realm improvements which have been devised to seamlessly knit Downtown Lacombe into an integrated, safe and diverse urban core. The following design elements have been identified:

5.1.1 Gateways and Nodes

Gateways and nodes are defined as areas where public pedestrian and vehicular paths intersect with a high concentration of activity and / or a high degree of importance with respect to:

- Providing a strong sense of place and arrival that celebrates entry into the Downtown;
- Orienting and enhancing way-finding within the Downtown;

Map 10 - Urban Design Framework Plan



Legend

- Downtown Plan Area
- Canadian Pacific Railway

Major Streetscape Improvements

- (A) Barnett Avenue
- (B) Memorial Trail
- (C) C & E Trail
- (D) Heart of Downtown Revitalization Zone
- (E) 58 Street (50 Avenue / Hwy 12)
- (F) 53 Street
- (G) 56 Avenue
- (H) 54 Avenue
- (I) Highway 2A (46 Street)

Downtown Parks and Plazas

- 1. 47 Avenue Kinsmen Playground Park
- 2. Lest We Forget Memorial Plaza
- 3-5. Existing Park Enhancements
- 6. Hospital Grounds Park
- 7. Nanton Plaza
- 8. Black Smith Plaza
- 9. Flat Iron Plaza

Gateways and Nodes

- Downtown Gateways (Primary Nodes)
- Secondary Nodes
- Tertiary Nodes (Neighbourhoods streets with Complete Street Redevelopment - Intersection locations)

Neighbourhood (Residential) Complete Street Improvement Program

- Promoting social interaction and local / regional interpretation; and
- Supporting a strong and positive aesthetic quality.

Gateways and Nodes can be categorized into the following classifications:

Downtown Gateways (Primary Nodes)

Introduce Downtown Gateway development within the public right-of-way at 50 Avenue and 58 Street; C and E Trail and 58 Street; 56 Avenue and 58 Street; 54 Avenue and 50 Street; and along Highway 2A at 50 Avenue and at the northern and southern boundary of the Downtown Plan area.

Secondary Nodes

Introduce Secondary Nodes at the intersection of Primary Roadway intersections to include pedestrian gathering / seating, way-finding, local / regional interpretation (historic / cultural), public art, and lighting feature opportunities.

Tertiary Nodes

Introduce Tertiary Node development as part of the 'Complete Street' Neighbourhood Improvement Program at the intersection of roads and in mid-block areas. Tertiary Node development should include pedestrian gathering / seating, way-finding, local / regional interpretation (historic / cultural), public art and lighting feature opportunities.

5.1.2 Downtown Parks and Plazas

Several existing and proposed downtown park and plaza sites have been identified in the Urban Design Framework Plan. These sites do not include the various existing school sites within the Downtown Plan area. Proposed 'Complete Street' Primary and Neighbourhood Roadway Improvements will provide the opportunity of linking existing and proposed park and plaza sites within the Downtown Plan area, as well as to other surrounding trails and park sites within the City of Lacombe. Existing park sites requiring improvements include:

- **Existing 47 Avenue (Kinsmen Playground) Park** - it is recommended that this park be enhanced with new play equipment, shelter and landscape improvements to support year-round use and a variety of age groups.
- **Existing Lest We Forget Memorial Park** - it is recommended that a more transparent and seamless transition be developed between this park and 50 Avenue and that the park be enhanced to support the opportunity for more year-round use, public gatherings and celebrations.
- **Existing Park (56 Street - between 50 and 51 Avenue)** - it is recommended that this park be enhanced with shelters and landscape improvements to support year-round use and a variety of age groups.
- **Existing Park (55 Avenue - between 53 and 54 Street)** - it is recommended that this park be enhanced with shelters and landscape improvements to support year-round use and a variety of age groups.
- **Existing Popow's Kinsmen Park (54 Avenue - between 49 and 50 Street)** - it is recommended that this park be enhanced with new play equipment, shelter, picnic sites and landscape improvements to support year-round use and a variety of age groups.

With an anticipated increase in residential densities and commercial development in Downtown Lacombe, there will also be a need for additional park facilities. Some potential locations that the City may wish to consider are as follows:

- **Black Smith in Plaza (49 Street and 50 Avenue)** - as presented in the *Lacombe Downtown - Streetscape Development Plan (2005)*, it is recommended that 49 Street (at the intersection of 50 Avenue) be closed and converted into a plaza area (Blacksmith in Plaza) to support public gathering, historic/ cultural interpretation, and downtown gateway development.
- **Flat Iron Plaza (50 Avenue - along Highway 2A south)** - as presented in the *Lacombe Downtown - Streetscape Development Plan (2005)*, it is recommended that the existing service lane and parking area between 50 Avenue and 49C Avenue be converted into a plaza area (Flat Iron Plaza) to support existing daily storefront access and public parking and opportunities for roadway/parking closure for special events. Key enhancements would include: hotel and storefront improvements; wider sidewalk/ streetscape (i.e., tree planting, site furnishings, etc) development; roadway decorative paving of the existing service lane and parking area; one-way road development along 49C Avenue, complete with storefront and streetscape improvements; enhanced edge development along Highway 2A (i.e., decorative fence/column and planting additions); public gathering space for special functions (i.e., outdoor market); historic/ cultural interpretation, and downtown gateway development. A character sketch detailing the enhancements described above is illustrated in *Figure 3 - Flat Iron Plaza (Pedestrian Oriented Downtown Gateway District)*.
- **Nanton Plaza (50 Street and 51 Avenue)** - it is recommended that the existing vacant lot (former Weidner Motor lot) be converted into a plaza area (Nanton Plaza) to support the downtown and provide a major destination and activity space for all ages to enjoy. This space could include components such as: a band shell/stage; lawn bowling; open lawn areas; walkways and seating; water features; a spray park/ playground, complete with change room/ washroom facilities; a winter skating/ ice sculpture area; tree and shrub beds; historic/ cultural interpretation; and public art.

5.1.3 Major Streetscape Improvements

Proposed major streetscape improvements can establish various important downtown redevelopment qualities, including: an improved pedestrian-oriented environment that promotes walkability, accessibility, safety and security; a more visually attractive and unified identity for the downtown; an opportunity to establish a continuous link between the various commercial, residential, institutional and open space areas within the downtown; opportunities to incorporate more sustainable municipal practices with respect to roadway and infrastructure through the incorporation of Complete Street and low impact development; opportunities to enhance the character of the various commercial and residential districts within the downtown with Complete Street development; and the ability to promote and celebrate historic and cultural aspect of Downtown Lacombe. The following provides an overview of the proposed streetscape improvements within the downtown area:

- Establish Barnett Avenue (50 Avenue), from 58 Street to Highway 2A, as a linear gateway corridor within the Downtown, including 'Complete Street' modifications that support multi-use trail, gateway, secondary and pedestrian node development; and historic/interpretive walk opportunities. It is important to note that these enhancements are based on future potential Highway 12 conversion.

- Enhance 50 Street, from 50 Avenue to 56 Avenue, to celebrate and establish a linear ‘memorial’ trail for the City of Lacombe and their Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans, including ‘Complete Street’ modifications that support formal landscape plantings; multi-use trail, gateway, secondary, and pedestrian node development; and memorial / interpretive column / feature additions. A character sketch detailing the enhancements described above is illustrated in *Figure 4 - Nanton Street Redevelopment (Old Town Main Street District)*.
- Enhance the historic C&E Trail alignment through the downtown with ‘Complete Street’ modifications that support multi-use trail, gateway, secondary and pedestrian node development; sustainable roadway additions (i.e., rain gardens, bio-swales, tree plantings, native grasses, etc) and boulevard plantings.
- Enhance 53 Street, 58 Street, 56 Avenue and 54 Avenue roadway sections in the downtown area with ‘Complete Street’ modifications that support multi-use trail, gateway, secondary and pedestrian node development; sustainable roadway additions (i.e., rain gardens, bio-swales, tree plantings, native grasses, etc) and boulevard plantings.
- Enhance the edge conditions along Highway 2A, between 54 Avenue to south of 45 Avenue, with decorative wall / fence and soft landscape additions; commercial frontage / parking lot landscape improvements; sustainable roadway additions (i.e., rain gardens, bio-swales, native grasses, etc); and potential pedestrian / vehicular plaza (‘Flat Iron’ Plaza) development between 50 Avenue and 49B Avenue.
- Initiate the design development of previously proposed streetscape development concepts for the Heart of Downtown Revitalization Zone (*Lacombe Downtown Streetscape Development Plan, 2005*).

Note: The use of original street names should be re-introduced to the downtown area.

5.1.4 Alleyway Infill

The Downtown Plan also acknowledges the opportunity to convert alley / service lanes within the downtown core, through complete or partial closure, to enhance and establish an active pedestrian environment; provide additional safe and secure pedestrian (multi-use) linkages within the core; provide the opportunity for commercial spill-out (i.e., seating/patio areas); soft landscape, streetscape (decorative surface, site furnishings, etc), and lighting improvements; public art additions; and a further appreciation / interpretation of many of the historical buildings within the downtown core. A character sketch detailing a potential alleyway infill application is illustrated in *Figure 5 - Alleyway Infill (Old Town Main Street District)*.

5.1.5 Neighbourhood (Residential) Complete Street Program

‘Complete Street’ development introduces components that reduce the dominance of the vehicle and establish a safer, healthier and more sustainable pedestrian and community environment. In many ‘Complete Street’ improvement projects there has been a direct correlation between the improvements and establishing more livable and sustainable communities that are:

- economically viable (increased property values, reduced built infrastructure, etc);
- safer (universal accessibility, barrier-free, defined pedestrian/vehicular zones, raised and reduced pedestrian crossing lengths at intersection and mid-block crossings (via bulbing),

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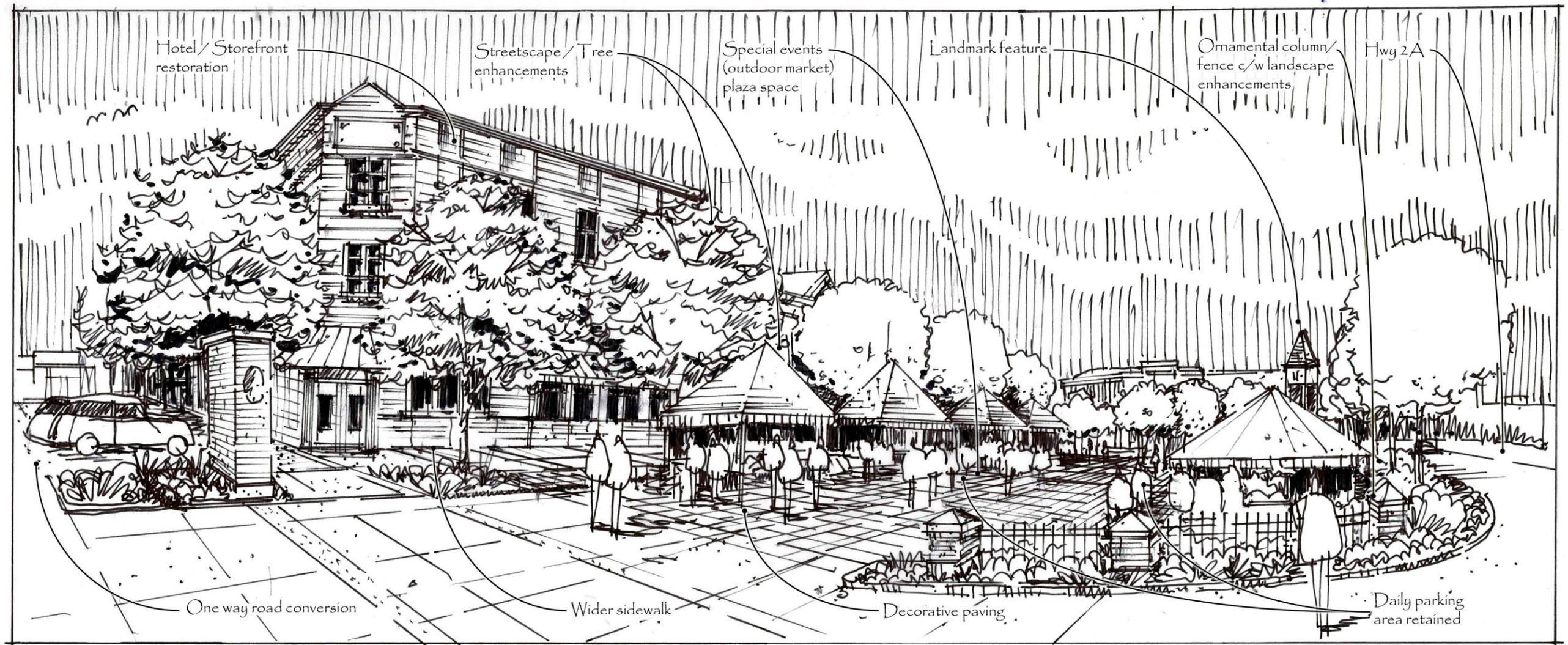


Figure 3 - Flat Iron Plaza (Pedestrian Oriented Downtown Gateway District)

"It is recommended that the existing service lane and parking area between 50 Avenue and 49C Avenue be converted into a plaza area (Flat Iron Plaza) to support existing daily storefront access and public parking and opportunities for roadway/parking closure for special events. Key enhancements would include: hotel and storefront improvements; wider sidewalk / streetscape (i.e., tree planting, site furnishings, etc) development; roadway decorative paving of the existing service lane and parking area; one-way road development along 49C Avenue, complete with storefront and streetscape improvements; enhanced edge development along Highway 2A (i.e., decorative fence/column and planting additions); public gathering space for special functions (i.e., outdoor market); historic/ cultural interpretation, and downtown gateway development."



Figure 3 - Flat Iron Plaza (Pedestrian Oriented Downtown Gateway District)

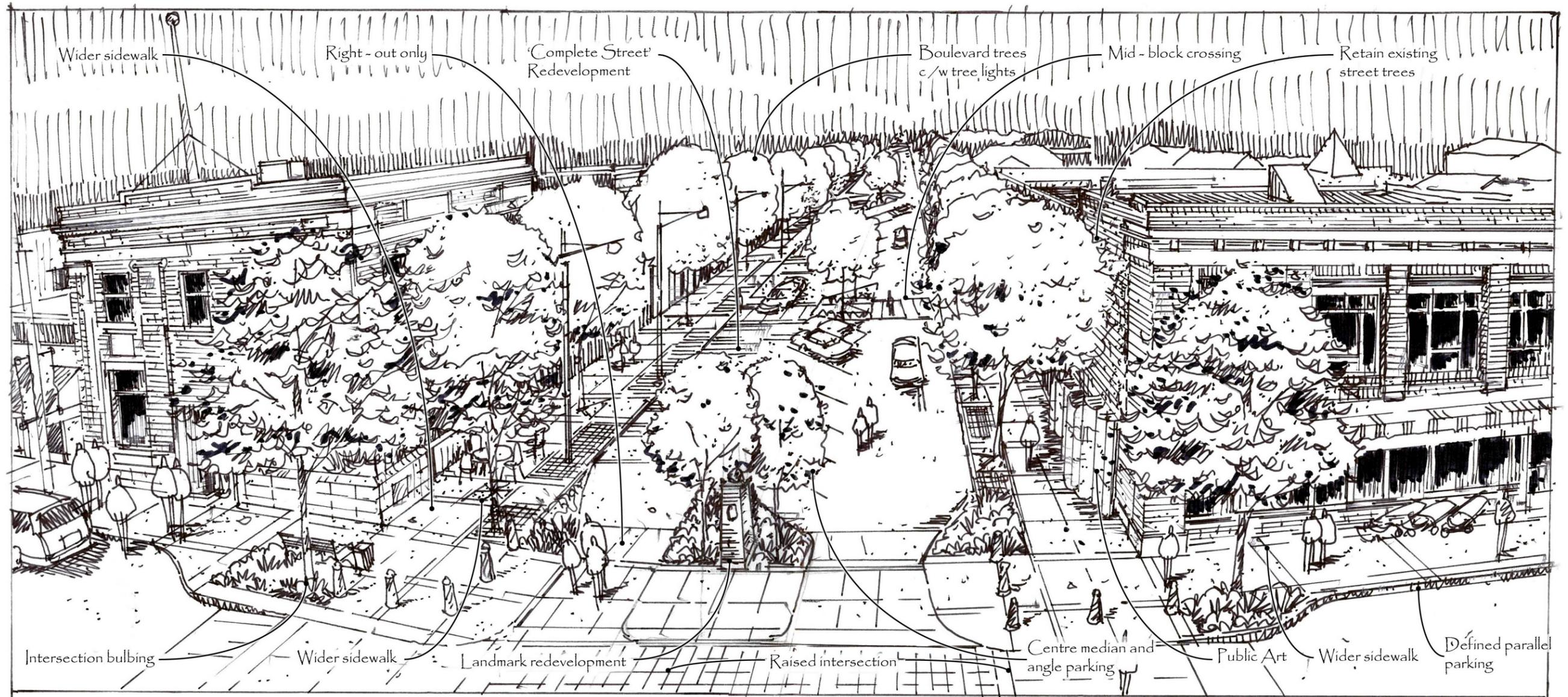


Figure 4 - Nanton (50th) Street Redevelopment (Old Town Main Street District)

“Enhance 50 Street, from 50 Avenue to 56 Avenue, to celebrate and establish a linear ‘memorial’ trail for the City of Lacombe and their Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans, including ‘Complete Street’ modifications that support formal landscape plantings; multi-use trail, gateway, secondary, and pedestrian node development; and memorial / interpretive column / feature additions.”



Figure 4 - Nanton (50th) Street Redevelopment (Old Town Main Street District)

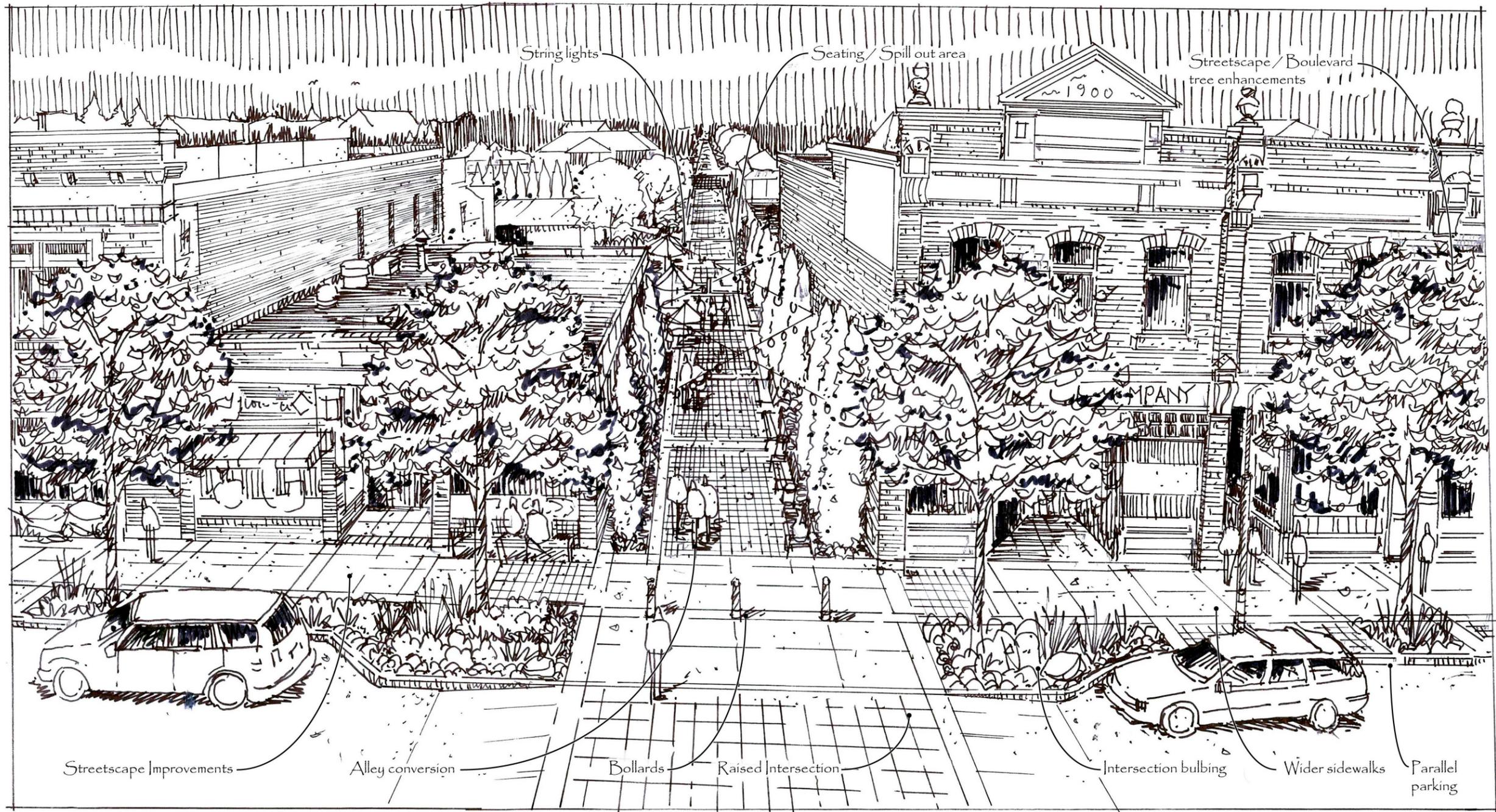


Figure 5 - Alleyway Infill (Old Town Main Street District)

“The Downtown Plan also acknowledges the opportunity to convert alley / service lanes within the downtown core, through complete or partial closure, to enhance and establish an active pedestrian environment; provide additional safe and secure pedestrian (multi-use) linkages within the core; provide the opportunity for commercial spill-out (i.e., seating/patio areas); soft landscape, streetscape (decorative surface, site furnishings, etc), and lighting improvements; public art additions; and a further appreciation / interpretation of many of the historical buildings within the downtown core.”



Figure 5 - Alleyway Infill (Old Town Main Street District)

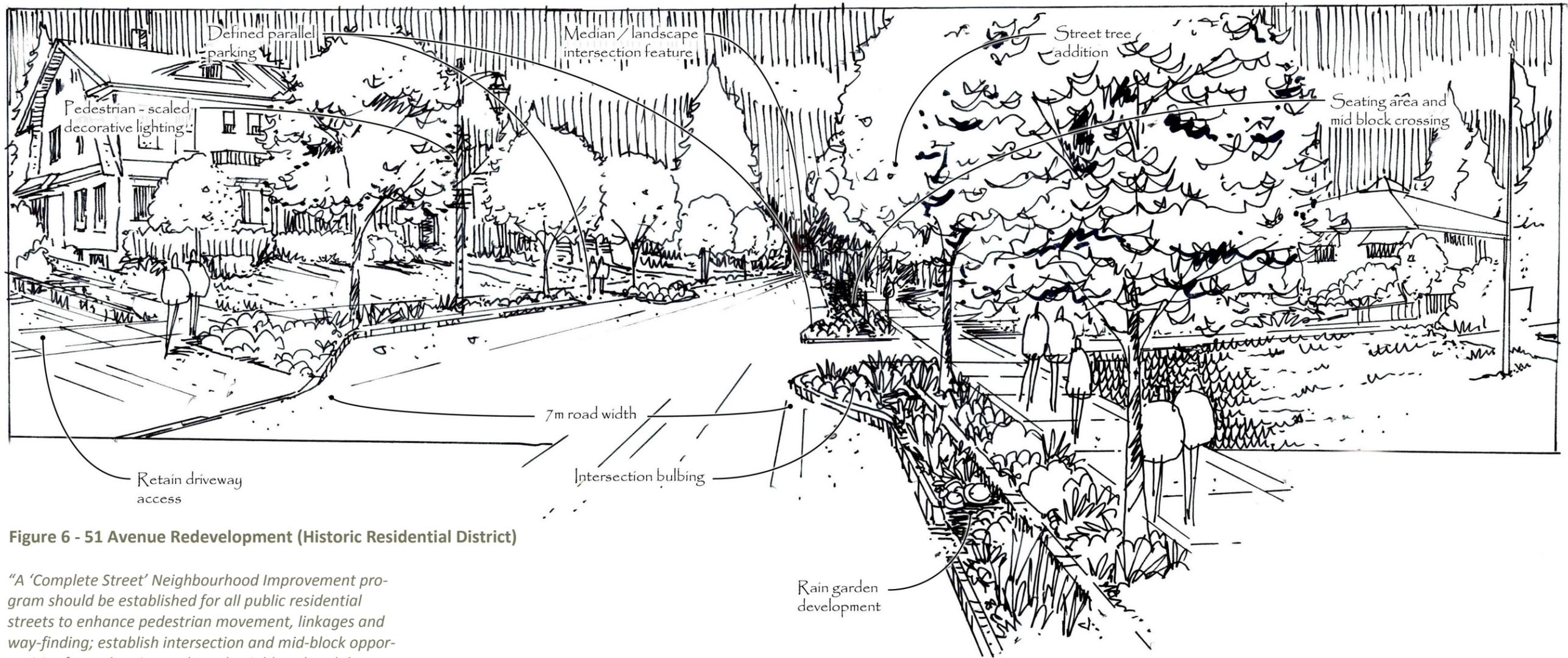


Figure 6 - 51 Avenue Redevelopment (Historic Residential District)

“A ‘Complete Street’ Neighbourhood Improvement program should be established for all public residential streets to enhance pedestrian movement, linkages and way-finding; establish intersection and mid-block opportunities for pedestrian node and neighbourhood demarcation (i.e., entry features); initiate sustainable roadway additions (i.e., rain gardens, bio-swales, tree plantings, native grasses, etc); and provide reduced laneway widths and defined parallel parking and driveway access.”



Figure 6 - 51 Street Redevelopment (Historic Residential District)

dedicated multi-modal paths, reduced vehicular lane widths and speed, defined on-street parking, wider sidewalks, etc);

- environmentally friendly (rain gardens / bioswales, bio-retention, permeable paving, reduced roadway paving, etc); and
- healthier (providing a walkable Downtown and encouraging active transportation opportunities).

A ‘Complete Street’ Neighbourhood Improvement Program should be established for all public residential streets to enhance pedestrian movement, linkages and way-finding; establish intersection and mid-block opportunities for pedestrian node and neighbourhood demarcation (i.e., entry features); initiate sustainable roadway additions (i.e., rain gardens, bio-swales, tree plantings, native grasses, etc); and provide reduced laneway widths and defined parallel parking and driveway access. A character sketch detailing some of the enhancements described above is illustrated in *Figure 6 - 51 Street Redevelopment (Historic Residential District)*.

5.2 Access, Circulation and Parking

5.2.1 Access and Circulation

Through consultation with the Downtown ARP Advisory Committee and the community, issues related to high traffic volumes and heavy truck traffic were identified as major concerns. The City of Lacombe should undertake the improvements and address the issues identified in the *City of Lacombe 2007 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update*. Items specifically applicable to the Downtown Plan area include:

- **Evaluation of 50 Avenue (Highway 12)** - As redevelopment occurs in Downtown Lacombe, the need to transform 50 Avenue (Highway 12) from a vehicle oriented highway to an urban arterial roadway that can accommodate various modes of transportation will become essential. At the time of the *2007 Transportation Master Plan Update* the widening of Highway 12 to a four lane roadway was not required. As noted in the 2007 TMP update, it is recommended that the City continue to monitor this situation through an annual traffic count and observation program to assess the need as volumes grow on this roadway. A Functional Planning Study, which would determine the future roadway configuration and feasibility based on existing right-of-way widths, intersectional improvements, traffic control devices, access issues and pedestrian safety, should be undertaken in the short term as the increase to four core lanes is likely to be required within five years.

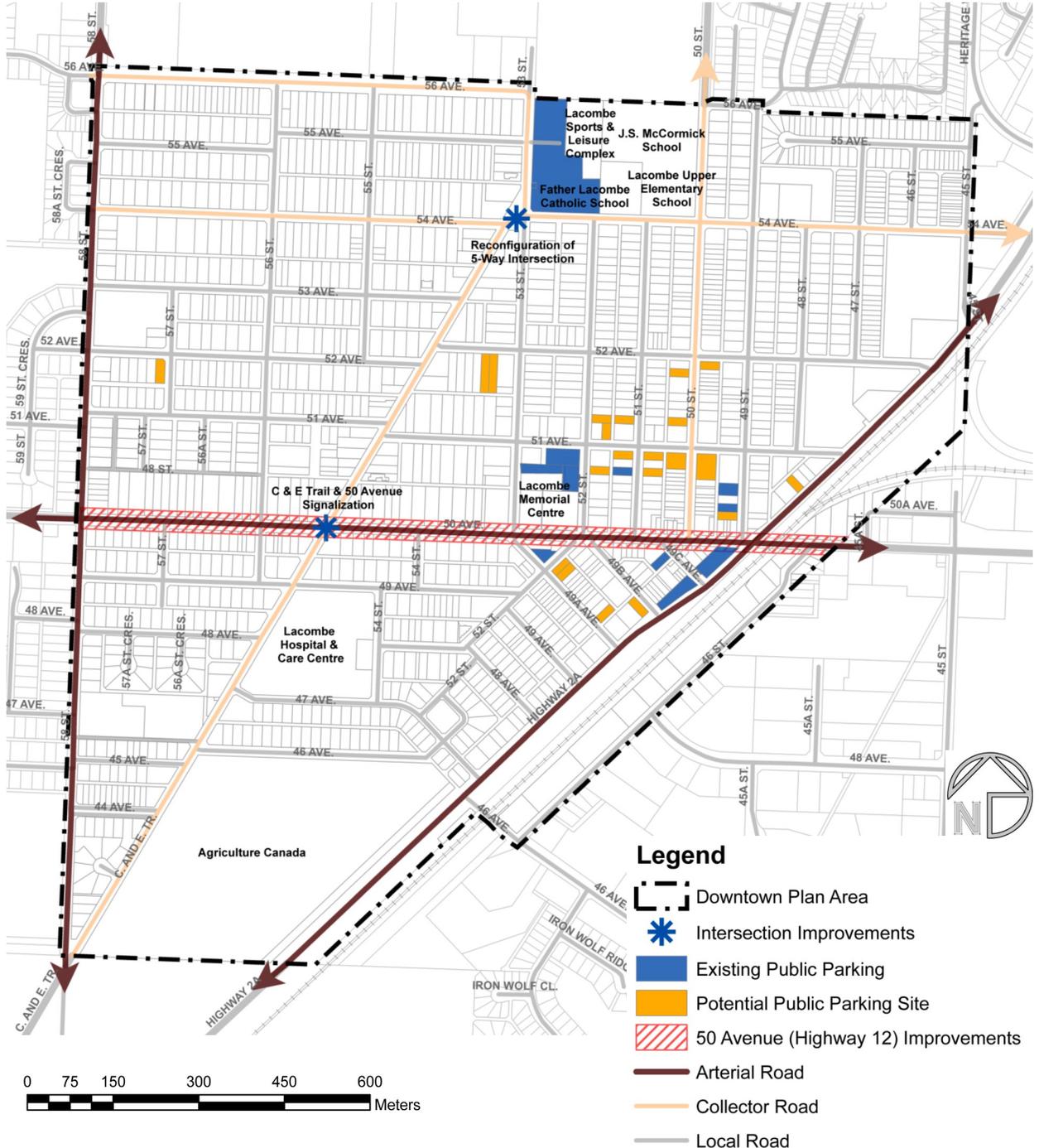
Concurrent with this, the City should review opportunities for provision of a downtown parking facility to offset any loss in parking resulting from the conversion to four lanes. The City should also clearly identify pedestrian corridors along 50 Avenue (Highway 12) prior to increasing it to four lanes so as to provide safe crossing locations for pedestrians.

It should be noted that an increase in traffic volumes may not necessarily occur in both the eastbound and westbound directions, and therefore the need for four lanes may be limited to peak period conditions which would allow for parking at certain times of the day while prohibiting it at other times.

- **Signalization of C&E Trail and 50 Avenue (Highway 12)** - Signalization at the intersection of C&E Trail and 50 Avenue (Highway 12) has been implemented in July 2012.

- Configuration of 5-way intersection at C&E Trail and 54 Avenue** - The present configuration of the 5-way intersection at C&E Trail, 54 Avenue and 53 Street currently operates in a confusing manner and is in need of improvements for reasons of safety and driver clarity. As per the 2007 TMP update, a modified four-way stop design concept is recommended for this intersection. In order to minimize the impact to adjacent properties, a 4-way stop has been recommended. This would see the development of a cul-de-sac on 53 Street south of 54 Avenue to eliminate the 5-way intersection. The remaining four leg intersection should then be modified to improve sight lines.

Map 11 - Access, Circulation, and Parking Plan





6.0

DEVELOPMENT
CONCEPT

The Lacombe Downtown Plan has been divided into eight districts based on unique development opportunities and specific qualities that exist or are envisioned within different parts of the Plan area. Refer to *Map 12 - Development Concept*. Although each District possesses its own unique characteristics, they should all complement one another as each plays a specific role in achieving a dynamic and vibrant downtown.

6.1 Districts

The following is a general description of the location and characteristics of each district:

District A - Old Town Main Street District

50 Avenue is Lacombe's traditional main street, with a number of residential, retail, office, service, and public use facilities located along its corridor and along the side streets within the historic downtown core. This District contains some of the most significant heritage buildings within Lacombe, providing an opportunity to build upon the character of the area by creating a gateway to the downtown core from the west.

District B - Auto-Oriented Downtown Gateway District

This District functions as an auto-oriented commercial area along Highway 2A, just north of the

Downtown core. Although a change in land use is not envisioned for this area, there are opportunities for enhancing the architecture and landscaping.

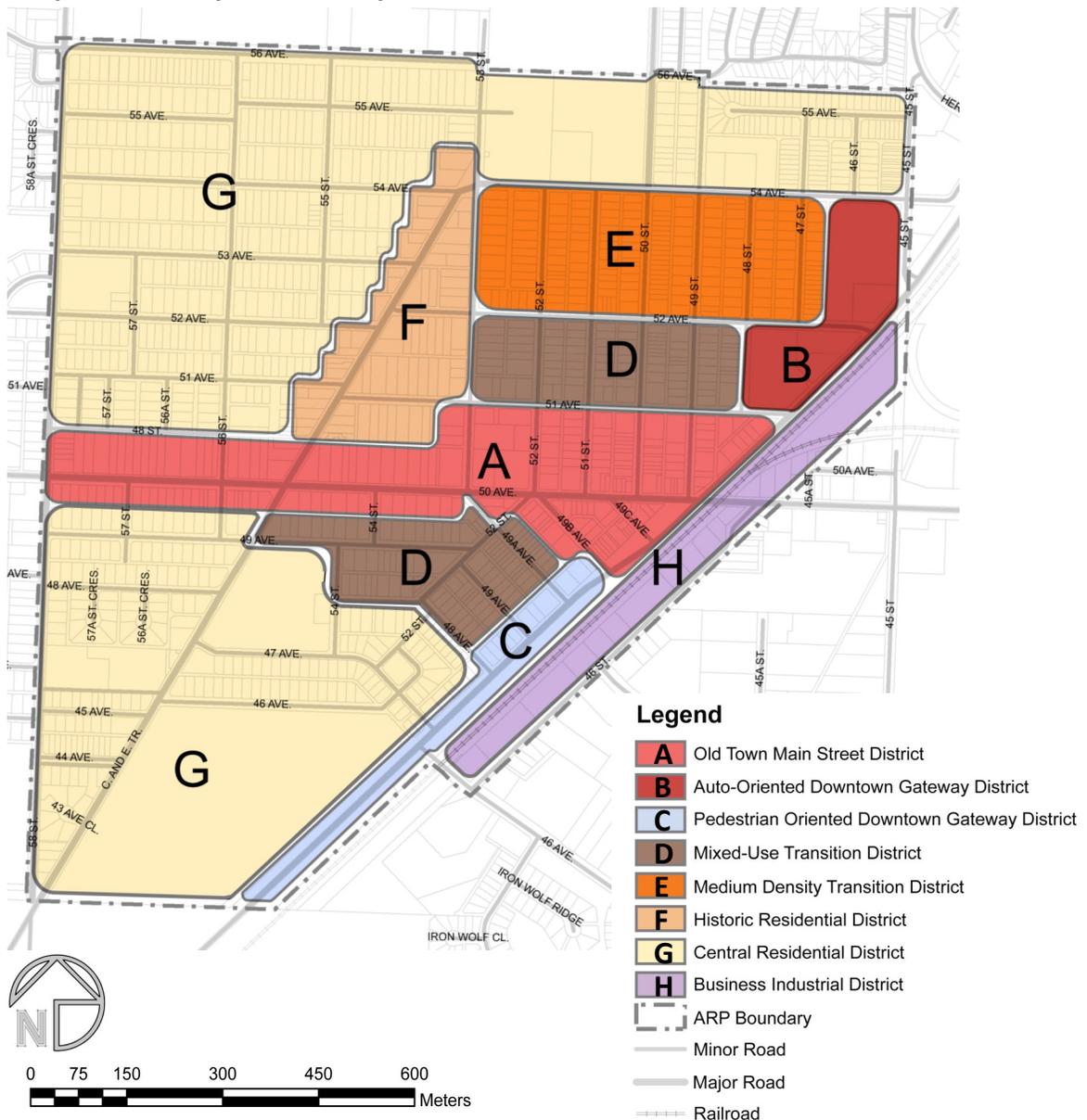
District C - Pedestrian-Oriented Downtown Gateway District

This District serves as an auto-oriented transitional commercial area along Highway 2A, just south of the Downtown core. Although a change in land use is not envisioned for this area, there are opportunities for improvements to the architecture and the pedestrian environment to encourage walkability.

District D - Mixed-Use Transition District

Located adjacent to the Downtown core, this District contains a mix of high, medium and low density residential uses along with commercial uses dispersed throughout. As a transitional area, this District will provide a range of housing options that are compatible with adjacent commercial

Map 12 - Development Concept



and lower density residential uses. Opportunities for higher density street-oriented residential development should be provided, allowing ground floor commercial development in strategic locations (e.g. at corners of major intersections).

District E - Medium Density Transition District

This District consists mostly of low density single family residential land uses with the exception of a half block of medium density units along eastern side of 47 Street and a small consolidation on the northeast corner of 52 Avenue and 51 Street. As development pressures grow, compatible intensification infill such as semi-detached or row housing units should be encouraged at strategic locations (along 52 Avenue and 54 Avenue, on corner sites, along major roadways [50 Street], on the east side of 47 Street). Secondary suites and garage suites should also be permitted on existing single family residential lots.

District F - Historic Residential District

This District primarily consists of low density single family residential land uses with a large concentration of historically significant structures. As such, there is a desire to retain the historic character and low density housing forms existing in this area by regulating the character, height, massing, and lot coverage of infill development. Renovations of existing structures should also be regulated to ensure compatibility in terms of character and architectural quality.

District G - Central Residential District

This District is characterized primarily by low density single family residential land uses with a small mix of medium and higher density residential uses as well as several public / institutional uses. The existing built up area is anticipated to remain as a stable low density neighbourhood with support for single family infill and opportunities for multi-family infill development at strategic locations along major roadways and in proximity to schools and public facilities.

District H - Business Industrial District

This District is characterized by business industrial and auto-oriented commercial uses on the eastern side of Highway 2 and the railway. This District is not anticipated to see any change in land use; however, aesthetic upgrades as well as improvements to the functionality of the Tim Horton's site are required. Additionally, two vacant / underutilized sites provide opportunities for potential surface parking areas to serve the downtown core.

6.2 Land Uses

Overview

The land use pattern identified for the Downtown Plan area has been developed to accommodate a wide range of compatible land uses that will ensure the orderly and economic development of a vibrant, mixed-use centre where people can live, work, shop and play. In order to achieve this balance, future development or redevelopment within the Downtown Plan area shall conform with the intent, proposals, and built form established for each District.

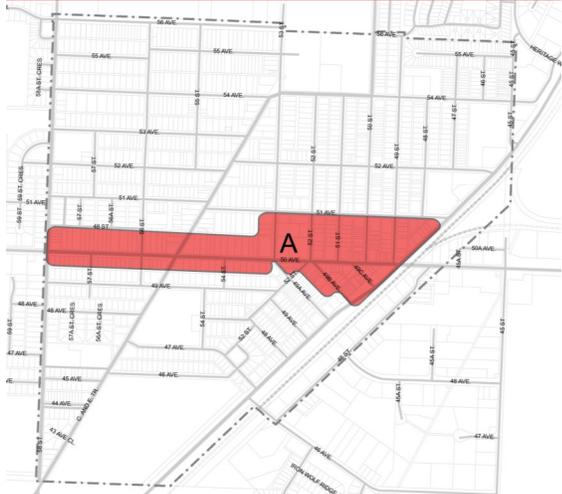
Objectives

- Promote mixed-use development that encourages around-the-clock activity.
- Avoid land use conflicts by providing logical transitions between existing and proposed land uses.
- Encourage land use patterns that encourage compact, cost-efficient and sustainable building forms while celebrating Lacombe's rich history.
- Encourage compatible infill and intensification of development and redevelopment sites.
- Preserve the historic character of the Historic Residential District.
- Preserve the integrity of low density residential neighbourhoods within the Central Residential District while supporting opportunities for multi-family infill development at strategic locations.
- Establish 50 Avenue as Lacombe's signature main street.
- Provide a wide range of housing choices within the Downtown Plan area.



6.2.1 District A

Old Town Main Street District



Intent

To establish a strong gateway to the mixed-use downtown core from Highway 2, while enhancing 50 Avenue to serve as Lacombe’s signature main street.

Proposals

- Establish 50 Avenue and adjacent side streets (east of the Lacombe Memorial Centre) as pedestrian oriented shopping streets with continuous ground floor active commercial frontages.
- Reinforce the historical significance of this area through the preservation or adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Promote entertainment uses such as theatres, restaurants, and pubs that will encourage around the clock activity.
- Identify suitable location for development of a central park / public square.
- Improve the pedestrian environment to encourage walkability.

Built Form

East of 53 Street (Lacombe Memorial Centre)

- Allow for ground floor commercial development including retail and service uses with commercial and / or office uses above the ground floor. Residential uses will also be permitted above the ground floor.
- Building heights shall not exceed 2 storeys within 100 m of the “flatiron” block and shall not exceed 3 storeys outside of this 100 m zone.

West of 53 Street (Lacombe Memorial Centre)

- Allow for lower density residential housing forms including single family detached dwellings, as well as a range of complementary medium density residential housing forms including duplexes, semi-detached, and rowhousing units.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 2.5 storeys.
- Site Specific Exception: Notwithstanding the above, higher density residential housing forms with a height of up to 3 storeys, may be allowed on Lot 31, Plan RN9.

(b. 380.1, 05/26/2025)

6.2.2 District B

Auto-Oriented Downtown Gateway District



Intent

To provide a major gateway to the Downtown from the north and enhance the quality of existing auto-oriented commercial developments which benefit from large volumes of vehicular traffic.

Proposals

- Introduce gateways, landscaping, and wayfinding to direct tourists and local residents into the downtown area.
- Create an improved and more attractive interface between existing commercial and adjacent residential uses.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment through improved surface parking lot and landscape design.
- Improve the architectural quality and landscaping of existing and new commercial development.

Built Form

- Allow for a range of auto-oriented commercial uses including retail, office and service retail uses.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 3 storeys.



6.2.3 Sub-Area C

Pedestrian-Oriented Downtown Gateway District



DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

6.0

Intent

To establish a major gateway to the Downtown from the south and create an attractive commercial street edge with an enhanced pedestrian environment.

Proposals

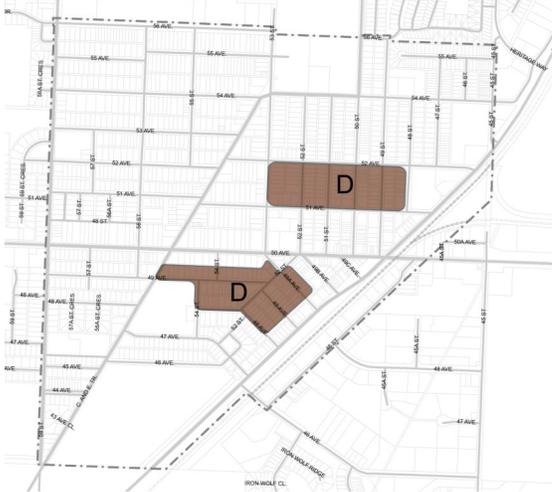
- Introduce gateways, landscaping, and wayfinding to direct tourists and local residents into the downtown area.
- Improve the architectural quality and landscaping of existing and new commercial development.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment by improving the pedestrian interface with Highway 2A.
- Create an improved and more attractive interface between existing commercial and adjacent residential uses.

Built Form

- Allow for a range of commercial uses including retail, office and service retail uses.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 3 storeys.

6.2.4 Sub-Area D

Mixed-Use Transition District



Intent

To become an extension of the “Old Town Main Street” District, accommodating higher density street-oriented residential redevelopment while allowing for ground floor commercial development in strategic locations.

Proposals

- Create an appropriate transition between the downtown commercial core and surrounding lower density residential areas.
- Develop the District as a higher density residential / commercial mixed-use area.
- Increase residential densities to support adjacent downtown commercial development.
- Provide opportunities for ground floor commercial development in strategic locations.
- Maintain an active residential streetscape.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment to encourage walkability.

Built Form

- Allow for a range of higher density housing types including rowhousing, stacked rowhousing and apartments, along with commercial opportunities for retail, office, institutional or service retail uses.
- Ground floor commercial uses shall only be permitted on corner sites while ground floor residential units are permitted throughout the District.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 4 storeys



6.2.5 Sub-Area E

Medium Density Transition District



Intent

To accommodate small-scale residential infill development providing a good transition from higher density to lower density residential development.

Proposals

- Create a transitional area between the “Mixed-Use Transition District” and surrounding lower density residential areas.
- Allow for compatible intensification through infill development of vacant or underutilized sites.
- Maintain an active residential streetscape.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment to promote walkability.

Built Form

- Allow for a range of medium density residential built forms including semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and rowhousing, as well as low density residential housing forms including single family detached dwellings.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 2.5 storeys.

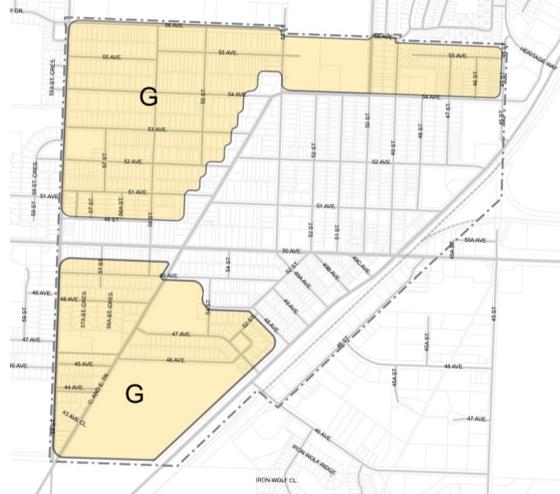
NOTE:

The majority of this area has been zoned R4 - Medium Density Residential District. Potential rezoning, along with infill design guidelines, may be required to achieve the intent of this District.



6.2.7 Sub-Area G

Central Residential District



Intent

To maintain the character of this District as a traditional low-density residential area by regulating the scale and the character of infill development to ensure that it is compatible with the existing character of the area.

Proposals

- Maintain this District as a low density, mostly single family housing area.
- Allow for compatible infill development of vacant or underutilized sites.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment to promote walkability.

Built Form

- Allow for low density residential housing forms including single family detached dwellings.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 2.5 storeys.
- A range of medium density residential built forms including semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, and rowhousing, will be permitted along major roadways and in proximity to school sites and public facilities.

NOTE:

Some lots in this area are zoned R5 - High Density Residential and R6 – Maximum Density Residential, both allowing a maximum of 4 storeys. Most of these high density parcels are located near the hospital site, east of the Nelson School site in the northern portion of the Plan area, or the senior's facility along C & E Trail.

Potential rezoning, along with infill design guidelines, may be required to achieve the intent of this District.

6.2.8 Sub-Area H

Business Industrial District



Intent

To provide for high quality auto-oriented commercial and business or light industrial uses that operate in such a manner that no nuisance is created or apparent outside of an enclosed building.

Proposals

- Maintain this District as a business / light industrial and auto-oriented commercial area.
- Enhance the functionality and screening through improved parking lot and landscape design.
- Improve pedestrian linkages to the downtown core.

Built Form

- Allow for auto-oriented commercial and business industrial uses.
- Building heights within this District shall not exceed 3 storeys.



7.0

IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Importance of an Effective Implementation Strategy

Most plans flounder at the implementation stage because of a resistance to provide adequate resources to implement the plan and lack of an organization or 'point group' to oversee its implementation.

The required public expenditures need to be regarded as strategic investments that are necessary to attract and leverage new private investment. As has been observed in many other cities, this investment of tax dollars will yield the following public benefits:

- Increased sense of community pride and identity.
- Municipal improvements making downtown more attractive to developers and investors.
- A sales tool to promote more economic development and tourism.
- Creation of an entertainment and cultural focus for the region.
- Reduced capital and operating costs associated with continued suburban expansion and cost of extending municipal services.

7.2 Budget

As previously mentioned, without a budget, staff and further consulting resources, the Downtown Plan is likely to stall. Capital expenditures will be required for physical public space improvements, along with funds for program development, marketing and more detailed planning and design work. Outside funding sources need to be vigorously pursued, including government grant programs and private contributions for items such as storefront and streetscape improvements.

This type of downtown revitalization program works best when the City takes the lead. City Council should consider allocating 10% of the municipal return of property taxes for reinvestment into programs and improvements for the revitalization of the Downtown area. Getting financial commitments from the Province of Alberta and Government of Canada is also critical.

7.3 Amendments to the Land Use Bylaw

An important first step in implementing the Downtown Plan is the need to prepare amendments to the City of Lacombe Land Use Bylaw No. 300 to ensure the vision and development objectives for each of the newly created districts are properly reflected and aligned with the Land Use Bylaw.

Review and Update to the Design Guidelines

Preparing updated Design Guidelines to replace the Residential Architectural Theme Overlay and Main Street Historic Overlay in the Land Use Bylaw is also an important first step.

7.4 Strategic Priorities and Action Plans

Strategic Priorities

The following Strategic Priorities were identified for achieving the City and community's vision for Downtown Lacombe and to attract new private investment and customers to the Downtown:

Strategic Priority #1 - Improve downtown pedestrian quality (streetscape program) to attract new shoppers and visitors.

Streetscape improvements are important from an urban design perspective and also in providing an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment. They often include pedestrian lighting, sidewalk improvements, boulevard tree planting, and street furniture. These improvements can focus on a specific theme to enhance the visual identity of an area. Specifications will also need to be determined for a motif that reinforces the themes identified in the Downtown Plan. A streetscape improvement program should be established for the streets identified in *Section 5.1.3 - Major Streetscape Improvements* and *Section 5.1.5 Neighbourhood (Residential) Complete Street Program* can be implemented on a staged basis over time as resources permit.

Action Steps:

- Establish a motif and design specifications for streetscaping.
- Look at the feasibility of moving the farmer's market outdoors downtown, potentially to Nanton (50) Street.
- The highest priority major streetscape improvement project is to prepare design drawings for Nanton (50) Street Redevelopment project and implement the improvements.
- Prepare design drawings to revitalize 50 Avenue as a gateway/signature main street. (NOTE: 50

Avenue enhancements are based on future potential Highway 12 realignment)

- Implement other streetscape improvements on a staged basis.

Strategic Priority #2 - Identify and develop a central park space in downtown that can be used year round for civic events and celebrations.

The need to establish a formal central gathering space as a focal point for the downtown core was identified as an essential step toward drawing more residents and tourists to downtown Lacombe. Programming and staging of public events will play an important role in animating and generating pedestrian traffic year-round.

Action Steps:

- Identify and acquire land in an appropriate location for a future central park / plaza space downtown.
- Prepare design drawings for central park / plaza space.
- Develop central park / plaza space.

Strategic Priority #3 - Maintain and relocate civic and provincial office space downtown.

Retaining and attracting employment opportunities within the downtown will increase the number of people in the downtown core. Strategically situated civic and provincial agencies can serve to support existing assets or act as a catalyst in transforming and revitalizing the areas around them.

Action Steps:

- Identify an appropriate location for civic / provincial office space downtown.

Strategic Priority #4 - Identify ways and means to make development of higher density housing in and near downtown viable.

The goal behind this strategy is to increase the number of people living in or near the downtown core. This increase in downtown’s population will not only increase the customer base but also give new life to vacant land downtown. A need for more seniors and affordable housing options has been identified.

Given the higher costs generally associated with developing housing downtown, a number of cities have used incentives to stimulate the construction of housing. These incentives often take the form of grants, application fee and development charge exemptions, tax relief, low interest loans, zoning incentives, public / private co-development, and public space and infrastructure improvements.

Action Steps:

- Work with private sector developers to identify sites for either renovation or new construction housing projects.
- Develop a residential construction incentives program for new construction or renovation from commercial to residential use (eg. exempting affordable housing units from density calculations).
- Loans for private or non-profit sponsors for affordable housing projects.

- Develop or enhance amenities such as park spaces and streetscape improvements to create more attractive and livable downtown neighbourhoods.

Strategic Priority #5 - Develop a set of Design Guidelines for sensitive infill development in established neighbourhoods.

Detailed Design Guidelines should be developed to ensure that infill development within the Downtown Plan area is of high quality and complementary to the surrounding uses. General Urban Design Guidelines have been prepared as part of this Downtown Plan, however, it is recommended that Detailed Design Guidelines be prepared for each specific District within the Plan area.

Action Steps:

- Prepare any required Land Use Bylaw amendments.
- Develop and implement District specific Detailed Design Guidelines.

Strategic Priority #6 - Identify and market a downtown site for a new hotel.

The City of Lacombe has identified that there is a demand for additional quality hotel rooms central to the community. Attracting a new hotel development in downtown Lacombe will encourage visitors to stay in Lacombe rather than in surrounding communities. Providing opportunities for visitors to stay will also spur further economic development within the City.

Action Steps:

- Prepare an inventory of potential hotel development sites.
- Develop a marketing package which can be directed toward prospective developers and hotel operators.

Strategic Priority #7 - Establish a unifying vision and theme that everyone can buy into.

As part of the Downtown Plan, a vision for the future of Downtown Lacombe has been established. Existing qualities such as Lacombe's rich history, public art and a significant inventory of heritage structures provide excellent opportunities to develop a sense of place and theme for Downtown Lacombe.

Action Steps:

- Develop and implement a placemaking and theming program.

Strategic Priority #8 - Develop an incentive program for the preservation and adaptive reuse of heritage structures.

The City of Lacombe has preserved a significant number of downtown buildings which are of historical and architectural significance. The historic fabric of a community - its buildings, stories, people and environment - can create a unique sense of place that is different from suburban malls, power centres, and highway commercial strips.

Many cities provide financial or technical assistance to encourage owners to restore their heritage buildings. Incentives usually take the form of grants, tax incentives, and technical assistance.

Action Steps:

- Develop and implement a Heritage Preservation Incentives Program using incentives in the form

of tax relief, grants, and technical assistance.

- Develop and implement a Heritage Interpretation Program.
- Sources of funding and other assistance that may be secured to offset building owners renovation costs should be advertised.

Strategic Priority #9 - Pursue a program for visual and performing arts as a catalyst for downtown revitalization.

Other cities and towns have effectively used arts facilities and programming as a catalyst for downtown revitalization (eg. Rosebud, Alberta and Chemainus, BC). In the short term the City could work with local performing and visual arts groups and use existing venues for programming. In the longer term the feasibility of developing a new performing arts facility downtown should be pursued. For example, a simple initiative such as installing a public piano in a publically accessible place can yield positive community benefits.

Action Steps:

- Develop a public art program.
- Identify potential locations for visual and performing arts programming.

Action Plans

Implementing the City of Lacombe Downtown Area Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan will require leadership, support and cooperation between public and private sectors. To practically work with potential resources that may be available, it is recommended that implementation actions be planned over time. Strategies and actions required to implement the Downtown Plan are presented in the following tables as short term (within 1-3 years), mid term (3-5 years), and long term (5 years or more). Potential partners have been identified and include:

C	Consultants
CC	Chamber of Commerce
CL	City of Lacombe
HS	Lacombe Historical Society
PS	Private Sector
LPACF	Lacombe Performing Arts Centre Foundation

7.5 Potential Funding Sources

Table 4 - Implementation Program at a Glance

Short Term (1-3 years)

Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source
1. Amendments to Land Use Bylaw	Regulatory	CL C	• Existing City Budget
2. Detailed Design Guidelines	Regulatory	CL	• Existing City Budget
3. Develop and Implement Placemaking and Theming Program	Project	CL CC C	• Existing City Budget
4. Establish Streetscaping Motif, Design Specifications, and Detailed Design Guidelines	Project	CL CC	• Existing City Budget
5. Develop and Implement Heritage Preservation Program	Regulatory	CL HS	• Existing City Budget
6. Identify Internal and External Funding Sources for Downtown Revitalization Projects	Research / Study	CL	• Existing City Budget
7. Move Farmer's Market Outdoors Downtown	Project (Economic Development)	CL	• Existing City Budget
8. Develop Residential Construction Incentives for Senior's and Affordable Housing.	Research / Regulatory	CL	• Existing City Budget
9. Establish Programs for Visual and Performing Arts (Existing Venue)	Project (Economic Development)	CL CC	• Existing City Budget • Provincial and Federal Grants
10. Identify Potential Alleyway Infill Opportunities	Study	CL C	• Existing City Budget
11. Identify and Market Potential Hotel Sites	Project	CL	• Existing City Budget
12. Identify and Acquire Land for Future Central Park / Plaza	Program	CL	• Existing City Budget
13. Transportation Plan including Functional Planning Study for Highway 12 Bypass	Study	CL	• Provincial Grants
14. Feasibility Study for Performing Art Facility	Project (Economic Development)	LPACF	• Provincial and Federal Grants
15. Detailed Design for Future Central Park / Plaza	Project	CL	• Existing City Budget

Mid Term (3-5 years)

Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source
16. Detailed Design for 50 Avenue	Project	CL C	• Existing City Budget
17. Implement Alleyway Infill Pilot Project	Project	CL PS	• Existing City Budget
18. Implement Other Streetscape Improvements on a Staged Basis	Project	CL PS	• Existing City Budget

Long Term (5+ years)

Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Source
19. Develop Central Park / Plaza	Project	CL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing City Budget
20. Implement Other Streetscape Improvements on a Staged Basis	Project	CL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing City Budget
21. Construction of Highway 12 Bypass	Project	CL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial Grants
22. Improvements to 50 Avenue (Lacombe’s Signature Mainstreet / Gateway)	Project	CL PS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing City Budget
23. Review and Update of Downtown Plan	Study	CL Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing City Budget
24. Encourage the Relocation of Civic and Provincial Buildings Downtown	Project (Economic Development)	CL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial and Federal Grants

The City of Lacombe should explore the following potential funding sources for implementing the Downtown Plan:

Development Agreements

In accordance with Section 650(i) of the MGA “a Council may in a land use bylaw require that, as condition of a development permit’s being issued, the applicant enter into an agreement with a municipality” to pay for such items as the construction of roadways, walkways, public utilities, telecommunication systems, parking facilities, etc.

Redevelopment Levy

Section 647 of the MGA provides for a redevelopment levy to be imposed and collected as part of the adoption of an area redevelopment plan bylaw. Funds are collected to acquire land for parks, school buildings, or recreation facilities. (New or upgraded downtown park spaces may fall into the category of recreation facilities.) The relevant section of the MGA is 647: *Division 6 – Development Levies and Conditions*:

Division 6

Development Levies and Conditions

“Redevelopment levies

647 (1) *If a person applies for a development permit in respect of development in a redevelopment area and the area redevelopment plan contains proposals for residential, commercial or industrial development, a redevelopment levy may be imposed on the applicant in accordance with the bylaw adopting the area redevelopment plan.*

(2) *A redevelopment levy imposed and collected must be used to provide, in respect of the redevelopment area,*

(a) land for a park or land for school buildings designed for the instruction or accommodation of students, or

(b) land for new or expanded recreation facilities, or both.

(3) *On September 1, 1995 a redevelopment levy under the former Act continues as a redevelopment levy under this Part.*

(4) *A redevelopment levy imposed and collected under this Part or the former Act may be*

imposed and collected only once in respect of a development.

- (5)** *A redevelopment levy imposed pursuant to this Part may vary between one class of development and another in a redevelopment area.*
- (6)** *If a redevelopment levy is collected, the municipality must pay that portion of the levy imposed to provide land for school buildings designed for the instruction or accommodation of students to the one or more school boards.”*

If the City of Lacombe chooses to impose a Redevelopment Levy, this intent will have to be identified in the enactment of the ARP Bylaw.

Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ)

Section 50 of the MGA provides the opportunity to create a Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ) as a tool to enhance and promote businesses within a specific area. A BRZ is initiated at the request of the business community and governed by provincial legislation and municipal policies. Funds collected through the BRZ can be used for enhancements to that specific area including streetscape and façade improvements, as well as economic development initiatives. The relevant section of the MGA is 50: *Division 5 – Business Revitalization Zones*:

Division 5

Business Revitalization Zones

“Purpose

50 *A council may by bylaw establish a business revitalization zone for one or more of the following purposes:*

- (a) improving, beautifying and maintaining property in the zone;*
- (b) developing, improving and maintaining public parking;*
- (c) promoting the zone as a business or shopping area.*

Community Revitalization Zone Levy (CRL)

The Province of Alberta recently amended the MGA to introduce provisions for a Community Revitalization Levy. The intent of the proposed levy is very similar to Tax Increment Financing used throughout the United States to finance strategic investment in community infrastructure and repay the cost of improvements through an increase in the incremental assessed value within the community revitalization area as redevelopment occurs. The relevant section of the MGA is 381: *Division 4.1 – Community Revitalization Levy*:

Division 4.1

Community Revitalization Levy

“Definitions

381.1 *In this Division,*

- (a) ‘incremental assessed value’ means the increase in the assessed value of property located in a community revitalization levy area after the date the community revitalization levy bylaw is approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under section 381.2(3);*
- (b) ‘levy’ means a community revitalization levy imposed under section 381.2(2).*

Community revitalization levy bylaw

381.2 (1) *Each council may pass a community revitalization levy bylaw.*

- (2) *A community revitalization levy bylaw authorizes the council to impose a levy in respect of the incremental assessed value of property in a community revitalization levy area to raise revenue to be used toward the payment of infrastructure and other costs associated with the redevelopment of property in the community revitalization levy area.*
- (3) *A community revitalization levy bylaw has no effect unless it is approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.*
- (4) *The Lieutenant Governor in Council may approve a community revitalization levy bylaw in whole or in part or with variations and subject to conditions.”*

Local Improvement Assessment Tax

Section 263 of the MGA enables municipalities to pass a local improvement bylaw to issue a debenture to fund improvements, in whole or part, with the principal and interest repaid by benefiting property owners. The City of Edmonton has successfully used this mechanism to implement streetscape improvements.

Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Programs (2005-2015)

This program is for Core Capital Infrastructure projects such as municipal roads, bridges, public transit vehicles and facilities, water and wastewater systems and facilities, storm drainage systems and facilities, emergency service vehicles and facilities, and infrastructure management system software. It may also include other capital projects such as cultural and recreational facilities, community environmental and energy systems and facilities, solid waste management systems and facilities, municipal buildings and other municipal physical infrastructure.

Federal Gas Tax Funding (2005-2014)

Announced in May 2005, this funding is designed to go to municipalities in support of environmentally sustainable infrastructure projects such as public transit, water and wastewater treatment, community energy systems and handling of solid waste.

Green Municipal Funds

Grants and low interest loans may be available for ‘green’ infrastructure projects from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Program priorities are to cut greenhouse gas emissions, improve local air, water and soil quality and to promote renewable energy. Projects should produce verifiable improvements in energy consumption or environmental effectiveness in one or more of the following areas: energy, air, water, solid waste management, sustainable transportation and sustainable community development.

7.6 Plan Amendments

Amendments to the City of Lacombe Downtown Plan initiated by the City of Lacombe, property owners or their representatives, or other parties, in accordance with procedures outlined within the MGA, will be considered. In all but exceptional circumstances, amendments should be consistent with the vision, goals and objectives of the Downtown Plan. The proponent of an amendment will be required to submit a formal request for an amendment, stating reasons for the proposed amendment, along with technical information on how it conforms with the Plan’s goals and objectives.

7.7 Monitoring and Updating the Plan

A brief “report card” should be prepared and presented to Council and the public annually on how

implementation of the City of Lacombe Downtown Plan is progressing to ensure the Plan is a 'living document' and not a dust collector. A major review and update should be undertaken every five years.



8.0

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Area Redevelopment Plan

means a plan adopted by Council as an area redevelopment plan pursuant to the Municipal Government Act that provides a framework for future development in an already developed area.

Arterial Road

means a road intended to move large volumes of traffic with minimum interruptions, primarily connecting residential and employment areas.

Collector Road

means a road intended to collect traffic from local roadways and carry it to arterial roadways.

Complete Streets

means roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, including, but not limited to motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit and school bus riders, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders.

Council

means the Council of the City of Lacombe.

Density	means the number of dwellings on a site expressed as dwellings per hectare, when used in reference to residential development.
Developer	means an owner, agent, or any person, firm or company required to obtain or who has obtained a development permit by a Municipal Council.
Development Authority	means the Development Authority established under Bylaw # 228.
Development Officer	means the Chief Administrative Officer or delegate.
Downtown	means the historical centre or heart of a town and surrounding region, providing a mixture of retail, office, arts and culture, housing civic and entertainment uses.
Duplex	means a building designed and built to contain two dwelling units, with one dwelling unit placed over the other in whole or in part, each having a separate entrance and not attached to any other residential building.
Fourplex	means a building containing four dwelling units, each unit comprising two floor levels and sharing a common party wall with two other units.
Height	means the vertical distance measured from grade to the peak of a building's roof. This does not include such features as mechanical penthouses, ventilation equipment or any other feature that the Development Authority determines is not essential to the enclosure of the building or load-bearing framework of the building.
Infill Development	means development in mature or built up areas of the city occurring on vacant or underutilized lands, behind or between existing development and which is compatible with the characteristics of surrounding development.
Land Use Bylaw	means Bylaw No. 300, and amendments thereto.
Lane	means a public thoroughfare which provides a secondary means of access to a parcel or parcels and which is registered in a land titles office.
Local Roadways	means roads that provide access to sites and lots and are designated for low volume and slow moving traffic.
Massing	means the spatial relationship of buildings to the street.
Mews	refers to a small landscaped lane or courtyard which promotes a walkable, pedestrian friendly environment.
Municipal Development Plan	means a statutory plan adopted by Council as a municipal development plan pursuant to the Act.

Municipal Reserve	refers to land dedicated as part of the subdivision process, for municipal
Municipal Utilities	means: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Facilities for the collection, treatment, distribution or supply of water2. Facilities for the collection, treatment, movement or disposal of sanitary sewage3. Storm sewer drainage facilities4. Electrical utilities
Municipality	means the City of Lacombe.
Objective	means directional statements that are usually phrased in measurable terms for given time frames.
Parcel Coverage	means the area covered by buildings.
Parking Facility	means a structure or an area providing for the parking of motor vehicles.
Policy	means a statement identifying a specific course of action for achieving outcomes.
Row Housing	means a consecutive group of three (3) or more dwelling units, each unit separated by a common or party wall and having a separate front and rear access to the outside grade.
Setback	means a distance additional to minimum yard requirements which may be required on parcels adjacent to the public roadways or to a natural environmental preservation area.
Storey	means that portion of a building that is situated between the top of any floor and the top of the floor next above it. If there is no floor above, the storey is the portion of the building which is situated between the top of any floor and the ceiling above it.
Sustainable Development	means development that meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This means the community needs to sustain its quality of life and accommodate growth and change by harmonizing long-term economic, environmental and social needs.

Triplex

means a single building comprised of three dwelling units.

Urban Design

means planning and architecture that gives regard to design elements such as building form and style.

Vision

means a positive snapshot of the desired state of a community at a particular point in the future.

Wayfinding

means the ways in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place.



9.0

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