



City of Grand Forks Heritage Program

15 May 2011



Prepared by:



Heritage Branch



City of Grand Forks Heritage Program Planning Program Development Report

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Executive Summary

This report presents a strategy for developing a values-based heritage conservation planning program for the City of Grand Forks (i.e. "the City"). It is designed specifically to meet the conservation objectives and goals outlined in the City's Official Community Plan.

The City of Grand Forks has identified specific objectives for heritage conservation in its planning documents, and understands that the conservation of historic places is an important means to achieving community revitalization and enhancement. The City currently has a limited capacity for implementing conservation tools available in Part 27 of the *Local Government Act*, so this plan is tailor-made to allow that capacity to grow in manageable and incremental steps.

Following best-practices for the development of a forward-looking heritage conservation program, this report outlines the multiple benefits of conserving historic places, and provides an understanding of what values-based management of historic places is. It includes

- **A heritage context statement for the community**, which clearly articulates heritage values identified by community stakeholders.
- **A set of planning tools** responding to those values.
- **An itemized 10-year planning chart** that clearly identifies how the community can best build its

heritage planning program and increase its capacity for heritage conservation planning.

This report also provides a framework for establishing the planning foundation necessary to effectively integrate tools like design guidelines into existing development permit areas, and increasing investment in historic places in both the public and private realms.

Introduction

This document was developed as a response to a request for design guidelines for the historic downtown core in Grand Forks. The City of Grand Forks has identified a need to stimulate investment and business in the downtown, and believes that encouraging the revitalization of the historic built environment is a positive means for achieving that goal.

The BC Heritage Branch works to encourage and facilitate the protection and conservation of heritage property in British Columbia. Provincial legislation affords local governments with a comprehensive toolkit for recognizing, protecting, and conserving their historic places, and the Heritage Branch strives to build capacity for heritage conservation planning at the local government level. For that reason, this cohesive strategy for developing a heritage conservation planning program for the City has been developed to compliment the design guidelines that have been developed for the downtown.

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Physical conservation of historic places, and downtown revitalization through heritage conservation, cannot happen without effective planning support from the local government. This report is presented to the City of Grand Forks as a recommended plan for the development of a values-based heritage conservation planning program that will support the implementation of design guidelines for the downtown, and ensure that the heritage values of the community are conserved for this generation of citizens and the next.

Planning Context

The City of Grand Forks has identified a number of objectives and policies for heritage conservation in its Official Community Plan. In particular, some key objectives for heritage conservation, as listed in the following OCP sections, are:

15.3.1 To encourage those owning heritage buildings, structures or landscapes to maintain them in a manner which will preserve the historic quality and characteristics of the buildings, structures or landscapes.

15.3.3 Balance and integrate heritage conservation and revitalization with other community improvement and development interests.¹

¹ The Corporation of City of Grand Forks. *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1541, 1998*. Section 15.0 (Heritage).

In addition, council established some key policies in the OCP to support and enable these heritage conservation objectives:

15.4.1 Council will support efforts to protect, preserve and promote heritage resources in the City of Grand Forks.

15.4.5 Integrate heritage resource management into the development and review of all neighbourhood sector and concept development plans.

15.4.6 Consider innovative approaches to economic development which maintain or enhance the viability of heritage buildings, revitalize historic areas and which do not negatively impact the natural environment nor detract from the quality of life currently enjoyed by the residents of Grand Forks.²

This report proposes a manageable plan by which the City can stimulate the revitalization of the historic downtown, and achieve its heritage conservation objectives throughout the community.

What are the benefits of heritage conservation?

Local governments that engage in heritage planning contribute to the social, economic, and environmental health of the community. Heritage conservation planning is not

² The Corporation of City of Grand Forks. *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1541, 1998*. Section 15.0 (Heritage).

about preventing change from occurring. It is intended to guide *how* change happens over time, to ensure that the heritage values and character of a community are respected as the community evolves and grows. Communities that look and feel like anyplace ultimately seem like no place, and heritage planning ensures that sense of place and community identity are the foundation for the development of the community.

Social Benefits

The proactive conservation of historic places has positive social impacts on a community. By conserving and celebrating the authenticity and character of districts or neighbourhoods, the local government can enhance the public's appreciation of community identity and pride. Even the mere presence of historic places in a neighbourhood or downtown contributes to the social benefits of the community, as their existence allows for a common understanding of the community's roots and sense of cultural continuity.³

Economic Benefits

The rehabilitation (adaptive reuse) of historic buildings has been proven to benefit local economies. For example, local government planning programs that encourage the rehabilitation of vacant or underutilized commercial or industrial buildings see significant increases in their tax

revenues.⁴ Furthermore, a US study by the New Jersey Historic Trust shows that every dollar invested in the rehabilitation of existing heritage buildings generates more jobs, income, and GDP revenue than new construction.⁵ And, formally designated historic places generally tend to have higher property values than non-heritage properties.

Environmental Benefits

The impetus to encourage "green" development and environmentally-friendly communities is at the forefront of local government planning initiatives in British Columbia and Canada. The positive environmental impact of reusing and revitalizing historic places is becoming more prevalent in land-use planning decision making. The rehabilitation of buildings keeps waste out of landfills, and avoids the energy consumption required to create and transport materials and construct new buildings. Historic downtowns also often possess the qualities sought in new "green" communities – walkability, close proximity to residential neighbourhoods, and cohesiveness and "human" scale streetscapes.

While the removal and replacement of old buildings with new ones may seem like an easy solution to community development, the cultural impact of historic buildings cannot be replaced or replicated. Historic places are a non-renewable

⁴ Heath, T (University of Nottingham). 2001. *Adaptive Re-Use of Offices for Residential Use*. Cities. 18(3): 173-184.

⁵ Listokin, D. and M.L. Lahr. 1997. *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*. New Jersey: New Jersey Historic Trust. Found at http://www.state.nj.us/dep/njht/download/ec_imp.pdf

³ Throsby, D. 1995. *Culture, Economics, and Sustainability*. Journal of Cultural Economics. 19(3): 199-206.

resource – the destruction of them is not a sustainable act. The unique characteristics and sense of place of Grand Forks are assets that can increase economic development and investment in the community. By identifying the values and character that set the community apart from all others, and by implementing planning processes that recognized and celebrate that community identity, the City of Grand Forks can realize economic development potential in its downtown.



Image 1 *Grand Forks, at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers. BCARS C-01841.*

Values-Based Management and Heritage Conservation Planning

In many communities, heritage conservation has taken place outside of regular land-use planning activities. Typically, this has been the case because the understanding of why historic places matter to a community is not strong; decision makers cannot justify public spending on places that seem beyond repair or don't appear to be "heritage" based on their physical condition.

Heritage conservation methodologies in British Columbia are shifting towards the values-based management of historic resources. That is, decision-making related to the conservation of historic places is guided by heritage values, rather than by the aesthetic or physical attributes of the place alone. The values-based management of historic places follows a basic process that looks like this:



Figure 1 Values-Based Management Process

Heritage values are defined as the historic, aesthetic, spiritual, social, cultural, and scientific significance or importance of a place for past, present, or future generations. In values-based management, the community speaks about what their heritage values are and which places represent those values and should be conserved. This type of management is community-driven, and allows for a range of values to be identified in order for community identity and character to be retained.

The process for developing this report included a community consultation process, whereby Grand Forks citizens were asked to participate in a workshop to identify the heritage values of the community. The process and results of that workshop are described below.

Heritage Values Workshop

The Heritage Values workshop – facilitated by Berdine Jonker, Senior Heritage Planner of the BC Heritage Branch – was held in Grand Forks on February 16, 2011. There were approximately 35 participants representing the local government, downtown business and property owners, and local historical experts in attendance. The participants in the workshop were:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Willi Triveri | Auxiliary |
| 2. Roy Stephenson | Auxiliary |
| 3. Dave Marshall | GF Masonic |
| 4. Mark Grimm | Credit Union |
| 5. Carl Zak | Selkirk College |
| 6. Susan Klarner | Kocomo's |
| 7. Tom Lockwood | Kocomo's |
| 8. Roger Savitskoff | Joga's |
| 9. Donna Savitskoff | Joga's |
| 10. Amber Kirk | 4 Little Monkeys |
| 11. Brian Grey | Boundary Historical Society |
| 12. Erna Gobbett | Arts Council |
| 13. Lawrence Radford | Boundary Museum Society |
| 14. Gina Burroughs | Government Agent |
| 15. David Watts | Library |
| 16. Ralph White | Seniors/Library |
| 17. Yvonne Tedesco | Seniors |
| 18. Sherry McCulloch | The Bargain Shop |
| 19. Calvin McCulloch | The Bargain Shop |
| 20. Dawsha Hunt | Visitor Centre Manager |
| 21. Ted Fogg | Art Gallery |

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 22. Brian Taylor | Mayor |
| 23. Joy Davies | City Councillor |
| 24. Cher Wyers | City Councillor |
| 25. Chris Moslin | City Councillor |
| 26. Lynne Burch | City of Grand Forks CAO |
| 27. Cathy LaBossiere | City Planner |
| 28. Les Johnson | Select Office Supplies |
| 29. Lorraine
Vanboyen | Select Office Supplies |
| 30. Roy Ronaghan | Media |
| 31. Karl Yu | Grand Forks Gazette |
| 32. Tatiana
Robertson | Provincial Government |

The purpose of the workshop was to identify community heritage values, and heritage values and character-defining elements specific to the downtown. Understanding heritage values is important in developing a heritage conservation program for the city. Values-centred management of historic places ensures that planning and decision making are guided by the heritage values of the community, and that the aspects and qualities of the community that embody those values are not lost as development occurs.

A series of activities was conducted during the workshop to allow participants to clearly articulate what is important about the community's heritage and why conservation of those values is important for stimulating downtown revitalization.

The activities of the workshop were:

Activity 1 – Brainstorming On Heritage Themes

This activity had participants identify high-level community heritage values based on a thematic framework for historic places. A thematic framework is a way to organize or define history to identify and place sites, persons and events in context. The thematic framework which guided the identification of Grand Forks' heritage values was developed from the Parks Canada model which was first established in 1981. This thematic analysis of the community as a whole is important for the subsequent evaluation of individual historic places within the city. This thematic framework identifies five specific themes under which all historic places in Canada can be categorized. The definition of each theme is as follows:

Peopling the Land

The land now known as Canada has supported a human population for many thousands of years. The First Nations lived on the land and learned to adapt to its geography. Over time, they were joined by people from all parts of the globe and Canada's cultural mosaic began to take shape. This theme celebrates the imprints and expressions of these people as they shaped Canada. It is made up of four sub-themes:

- Canada's First Inhabitants
- Migration and Immigration
- Settlement
- People and the Natural Environment

Developing Economies

From the earliest hunters and gatherers to today's post-industrial workers, Canadians have worked in a wide variety of ways to sustain themselves. This theme looks at the historical legacies of early subsistence economies; commercial pursuits in fishing, farming, forestry and mining; services industries and manufacturing processes. The sub-themes in this category are:

- Hunting and Gathering
- Extraction and Production
- Trade and Commerce
- Communications and Transportation
- Technology and Engineering
- Labour

Governing Canada

From the origins of Canada's earliest peoples, through colonial government and Confederation, systems of government have evolved in Canada. Included in this theme are:

- Politics and the Political Process
- Government Institutions
- Security and the Law
- Military and Defence
- Canada and the World

Building Social and Community Life

Canadians have established a variety of clubs and organizations to enrich community life and assist those in need. This theme focuses on the great variety of these social constructs - temporary and long-lasting, formal and informal, independent and allied with the government. There are four sub-themes:

- Community Organizations
- Religious Institutions
- Education and Social Well-Being
- Social Movements

Expressing Intellectual and Cultural Life

This theme addresses Canada's intellectual and cultural wealth and includes commemorations of Canadians' intellectual pursuits, artistic expression and athletic achievement. The relevant sub-themes are:

- Learning and the Arts
- Architecture and Design
- Science
- Sports and Leisure
- Philosophy and Spirituality

As a large group, participants were asked to provide information on information to identify events, eras, phenomena, or people related to each theme that have helped to make the community what it is today. This exercise

informed the development of a heritage context statement for the city as a whole (see below), and helped establish a framework of heritage values by which the downtown and other historic places can be evaluated.

Activity 2 – Describing the Historic Place

A key component of the Statement of Significance for any historic place includes a clear and concise description of what is being recognized for its heritage values. The City of Grand Forks presented a map with a proposed outline of the historic downtown on it. In this activity participants used markers to modify the boundaries proposed by the City based on their perspective of the downtown “historic place”. They also wrote descriptive words for the downtown on sticky notes and added them to the map.

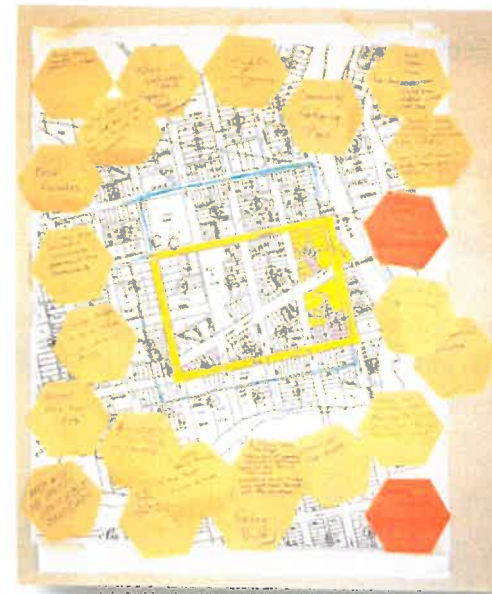


Image 2 Map used to describe the historic place.

Activity 3a – Identifying Heritage Values for Downtown

In this activity participants identified community heritage values specifically for the downtown area of Grand Forks. A series of five questions was presented on white sheets of paper on the walls of the meeting room, and participants (working in small groups) were asked to answer these questions in a way that helps to identify their heritage values for downtown. The five questions were related to each of the five themes mentioned above. The questions were:

Peopling the Land

Why and how is the settlement and historic development of downtown an important part of Grand Forks' heritage?

Developing Economies

What does the downtown reflect or illustrate in terms of the economic development of the city over time?

Governing Canada

What does the downtown tell about the story of Grand Forks' administration and role in terms of governance and law over time?

Building Social and Community Life

How is Grand Forks' social and community life reflected in the downtown?

Expressing Intellectual and Cultural Life

What is significant about Grand Forks' intellectual and cultural life as reflected in the downtown?

This activity informed the development of the heritage values section of the Statement of Significance for the downtown.

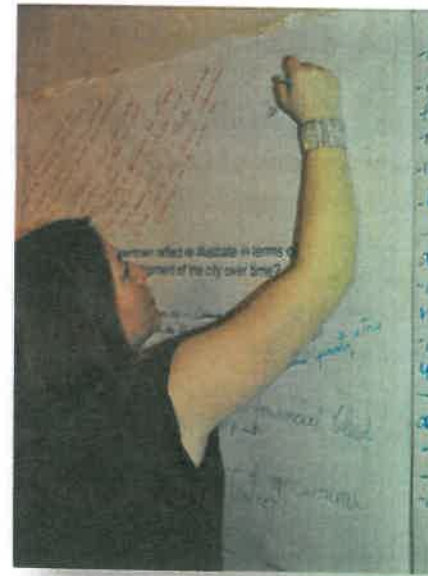


Image 3 Workshop participant responding to values question.

Activity 3b – Prioritizing Heritage Values for Downtown

During this activity, participants identified which community heritage values best characterize the downtown. Participants were asked to “vote” on which contributions to each question best represent the heritage values of downtown. The purpose of this activity was to ensure that the values that the community feels most strongly about are articulated most clearly in the Statement of Significance.

Again, working in small groups, participants moved from question to question, reading the contributions of all the participants. They were given five red “dot” stickers per theme, and were asked to put their dots beside the statements that they felt most strongly about. They were allowed to distribute their dots evenly among different statements, or put more than one dot on one statement.

Activity 4 – Identifying Character-Defining Elements

Character-defining elements comprise the third part of the Statement of Significance. The character-defining elements of a historic place are the physical (and sometime intangible) elements of the place that embody heritage values, and must be conserved. Character-defining elements can include:

- Spatial configurations of streets – layout, patterns, orientation.
- Relationship between buildings and streets, sidewalks, and other buildings.
- Open spaces.
- Uses or associations to place.
- Vegetation – types and patterns.
- Significant historic places such as buildings, groups of buildings, areas, etc.
- Cultural landscapes.
- Building materials.
- Technology – style of construction, how buildings are made, etc.

As a large group, workshop participants created a list of character-defining elements that embody the heritage values that they identified in activities 1 and 3. This exercise contributed to a developed sense of understanding of the layers of physical heritage present in the city. By listing the places and characteristics that represent community heritage values in the downtown, a clear set of values-based design guidelines were able to be developed.

Heritage Context Statement for Grand Forks

A heritage context statement paints a picture of why Grand Forks' evolution over time – and all significant associated events, people, eras, etc. – are important parts of the community's heritage. This understanding of the overarching historical context of the community is important for guiding how the Statement of Significance for the downtown, and statements for any other historic places in the city, will be written. It also creates a foundation of heritage values upon which a planning program can be built.

The City of Grand Forks attributes its heritage values to its natural, social, administrative and industrial history.

Geography

Physically, the geographic area in which Grand Forks is located is an important contributing factor that helped shaped the community's history and heritage values. The valley once known as "La Grande Prairie" has supported, sustained, and developed human use and settlement of this area, and contributed to the evolution of the city as it exists today. The fact that the valley has an east-west orientation is important, as it allows for an abundance of sunshine and the ideal growing conditions for Grand Forks to be an agriculture centre for fruit, vegetables, grains, and seed production. The location of the city at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers is also significant, as these waterways have supported the nourishment, economies, and social health of local

populations throughout history. The mountains surrounding the valley helped to shape Grand Forks heritage as well, as they provided prosperity in the form of ore and lumber, and materials such as dolomite used in the construction of many of the buildings and structures in town.

GRAND FORKS' DESTINY

A Distributing Centre for Very
Rich Mineral and Agricultural District.

Splendid Location, Beautiful Climate and Many Busy
Camps Tributary.

Image 4 Victoria Colonist Headline, December 13, 1898.

Place of Opportunity

The predominant theme in Grand Forks' heritage values lies in that this is a place of opportunity for all people in all times over history. People were historically, and still are, attracted to this valley because it provides the resources and conditions necessary to sustain communities. Whether used historically by the Kettle Indians as a primary food gathering area, or currently by new residents seeking a less hectic way of life away from the Lower Mainland, the common attraction of this

place is that it is seen as providing people with the things they need to improve their way of life. The concept of Grand Forks being a place where people go seek better lives or to simply “get back to real life” is part of the community’s heritage. The desire for “something better” is a value that has relevance to various waves of newcomers to the area over the years – including industrialists in the 1890s, the Doukhobors in the early 1900s, European immigrants in the 1940s and ‘50s, the draft-dodgers and hippie “counter-culture” in the 1960s and ‘70s, and retirees and “urban refugees” in recent decades.

Cultural Diversity



Image 5 *Farm Labourers and Members of the Burrell Family, Grand Forks. 1907 BCARS B-06052.*

The

arrival over time of these groups of people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, skills and talents has influenced the social development of Grand Forks since the earliest days of the city. In the 1940s there were at least 29 different ethnic groups living together in the Kettle Valley. The arrival in 1909 of the Doukhobor people – who were fleeing persecution for their beliefs – had arguably the greatest impact on the character of the community. Still largely identified as a “Russian” community, Grand Forks continues to coalesce around and embrace elements of that culture – such as food, language, historic places, farming practices and cooperative business principles – even though the original cohesive Doukhobor community no longer exists in its original form. While the presence of the Doukhobors had a significant effect on community identity in Grand Forks, many other groups influenced the community over the years. The impact of groups such as European immigrants can be seen in the craftsmanship of buildings and structures in the town. The ideals and counter-culture influences of groups like the draft-dodgers and hippies that arrived in the town in the 1960s and 1970s are embodied in local approaches to alternative housing and lifestyles. Even more recent arrivals to the city have brought skills and knowledge that are helping to shape the social life of the city today and into the future.

Social Heritage

Since its earliest days as a mining boom town, Grand Forks has been known as a place with a rich social life. Music, theatre, and performances played a role in the life of the community in the 1890s, and continue to be important today. As new people

arrived in the city they brought with them cultural traditions and practices that now contribute to Grand Forks' sense of community identity. For example, Doukhobor choirs are seen as an important connector between the Doukhobor and non-Doukhobor (the so-called "English") populations in the city. Also, the city benefits from new arrivals to the city who bring skills and knowledge to provide new cultural activities (music, performances, theatre etc.) for people to take part in. The community recognizes the importance of the arrival of new people to the city as part of their heritage – the strength of the community's ability to remain consistent over time is strongly attributed to the fact that the city has had to change and adapt to meet new challenges since even before its incorporation in 1897.

Economic Resilience

A continuum of activities including First Nations' hunting and gathering, cattle ranching, farming, mining, and logging reflects the bounty that this fertile and prosperous valley has provided to all people who have lived in this place. Economically, Grand Forks has a strong heritage of being a city that epitomizes the need to change and evolve in order to ride out the "boom and bust" cycle so common to communities of its vintage. While historically Grand Forks was seen as a place of financial opportunity, the means by which people coming to this area realized that opportunity have changed frequently over the years.



Image 6 Grand Forks Board of Trade Exhibit, Calgary Fair, 1913. BCARS B-068080

Agricultural Heritage

The area has strong agricultural heritage, with cattle ranching and over-wintering of horses taking place in the valley in the mid-nineteenth century. Late nineteenth and early-twentieth century promotional materials advertising the city claim that the valley had fruit-bearing potential unrivalled in North America. Oats and hay were also highlighted to be cash crops for those settling in Grand Forks. The fertile valley was ideal to support the Doukhobors' self-subsistent lifestyle, and in the 1940s seeds production for international distribution was a major industry in the Kettle Valley. This agricultural optimism carried through subsequent decades of the city's development and remains relevant today. Fruit production is an incentive for travellers passing through town to stop and spend their

dollars in Grand Forks. Agriculture remains a constant element of community identity, and is a heritage value relevant to all people, places and times in local history.

Mining

As is true for many communities in British Columbia, mining was the impetus for the initial economic “boom” that resulted in the development of City of Grand Forks. This productive valley provided the conditions to make the city a “model among mining centres of its age”⁶. The mountains surrounding the valley held numerous mines that were highly productive between the years 1890 and 1920. Again, it is the ideal physical geography of the valley that gave Grand Forks the momentum to become one of the key mining centres of early twentieth-century British Columbia. The revenue from local mines was enough to warrant the construction of the largest non-ferrous smelter in the British Empire in 1900, the development of three rail lines for industrial, freight and passenger uses, and the evolution of the city into a centre of heavy industry. The impressive economic promise of the early decades of Grand Forks history elevated the status of the community to become the administrative centre of the region in the early twentieth century. The mining boom in Grand Forks’ early years also led to the strong relationship that the city has with the United States; being a “border town” is an important aspect of the community’s identity, and this continued connection to communities in Washington State and beyond was initially fostered during the mining heyday.

⁶ Grand Forks, A Coming City (1899, April 30) Victoria Daily Colonist. p. 9.

While active mining no longer plays a role in the local economy, the mining history of the community remains physically evident in the enormous slag heaps to the north of city, near the former Granby Smelter site. The recent use of this slag as a material to make insulation is an indicator of the propensity of the community to adapt and overcome the challenges associated with a natural-resource dependent economy.



Image 7 Slag heaps remain as a reminder of the once-booming mining industry that gave the city its beginnings.

Logging

When the mining industry began to decline in this area, the surrounding mountains continued to provide another form of revenue that supported the local economy for decades. Until very recently, the lumber industry has been a significant aspect of the livelihood of the residents in Grand Forks. In 1899 there were already two mills functioning to “utmost

capacity”⁷ in the city. Forestry contributed to the export business of the community for decades, the saw- and pulp-mill industries provided generations of families with an income, and generally provided a steady economy for many years. The forest industry benefitted from the City’s close proximity to natural waterways and excellent transportation opportunities. Although a number of major sawmills and forest-related businesses closed in the last few years, the city of Grand Forks maintains a strong sense of identity around its heritage of forest-related industry over the last century. Despite the recent closing of some facilities, mills and logging activities continue to provide a livelihood for many Grand Forks residents.



Image 8 Although challenged in recent years, the logging industry remains an important aspect of Grand Forks heritage.

⁷Grand Forks’ Destiny (1898, December 13) *Victoria Daily Colonist*. p. 8.

Tourism

The community’s tradition of resilience and its ability to transform itself to meet changing economic circumstances continues today. The community of Grand Forks is now looking towards economic opportunities associated with tourism to ensure that it maintains its consistency and enhances quality of life. The city has traditionally promoted itself as a friendly, sunny, and welcoming place that is unlike any other place in the province. Its natural setting amongst lakes and rivers provides opportunities for outdoor recreation. Its history of agriculture and industry provides unique tourism experiences. Furthermore, cultural tourism in the area is bolstered by the rich diversity of the Grand Forks community since its earliest days. Tourism is an important aspect of local heritage, and is an indicator of the entrepreneurial and pioneering spirit that made the city what it is today.

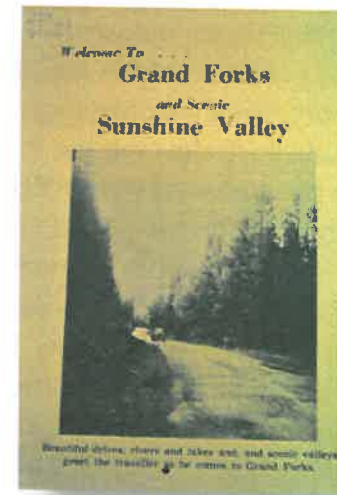


Image 9 Grand Forks and District Board of Trade tourism pamphlet, c 1950-61. BC Archives Library Collection.

“Statement of Significance” for Downtown

The workshop process outlined above was also used to develop a plan for the economic development for the historic downtown in Grand Forks – a key goal for heritage conservation in the city. The workshop allowed community members to identify the boundaries, articulate the heritage values, and to list the character-defining elements (physical attributes which embody heritage values) of the historic downtown. Through this public consultation process, the following “Statement of Significance” was developed for downtown:

Description of Historic Place

The historic downtown of Grand Forks is an urban commercial area comprising approximately four square city blocks. This historic place includes buildings and green spaces on both sides of the four key streets that define the downtown – Highway 3 to the north, Riverside Drive to the east, 72nd Avenue to the South, and 5th Street to the west. The historic downtown also includes Market Street, the “main street” of Grand Forks, which runs diagonally from southwest to northeast through the core, and the streetscapes on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets between Highway 3 and 72nd Avenue. The historic downtown includes tree-lined streetscapes with buildings of various styles and eras ranging from one to three storeys, narrow walkways between many buildings, and mid-block service alleys. A number of landmark buildings such as city hall and the museum are also included in this area.

Heritage Values of Historic Place

The downtown area of Grand Forks is valued by the community as a symbol of the prosperity, opportunity and diversity of the economic innovation that gave the city its earliest beginnings. Situated at a geographic location that allowed Grand Forks to be a transportation hub for road and rail, the scale and stature of the downtown reflect the importance of the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers in supporting industries such as mining, logging, and agriculture in the area.

The nature of the buildings in the downtown reflects a sense of permanence and demonstrates the importance of the community within the region in its formative years and decades. The presence of substantial landmarks, interspersed with other buildings of varying ages, profiles, statures and uses illustrates the ongoing and evolving role of the downtown as an economic and social hub. The historic buildings downtown represent a desire for orderliness, cleanliness, and credibility, reinforcing the idea that Grand Forks’ affluence and optimism made a positive contribution to the future of the Boundary region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many physical qualities of the buildings in the downtown are important reflections of the community’s heritage. In particular, the presence of locally-produced brick and indigenous stone reinforce the fact that this region was considered an ideal settlement location – the area either naturally produced materials necessary for permanent habitation, or contained the ideal conditions for creating products needed for a prosperous community.

While the downtown is valued for its substantial collection of historic buildings that speak to the city's earliest development as an economic "boom" town, it is also valued for its enduring role as the social core of the community. The relationship of the downtown to surrounding residential communities is important, as it shows the intention of residents being able to access the businesses and services they needed in a convenient manner. The pedestrian-friendly nature of the downtown is an important aspect of its heritage, as it allows current residents to experience and access the commercial core in the convenient manner it was originally intended. Historically, the downtown was used as a vibrant place for social activities such as dances, theatre, community meals, and parades - the continued use of the downtown for activities such as the farmers' market and outdoor recreation maintains this aspect of its heritage.

Character-Defining Elements

- Location of downtown at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers
- Relationship between industrial heritage sites such as mills, old smelter site and slag heap, railways, and rail yards.
- Views – panoramas of Observation Mountain etc.
- Market Avenue's diagonal axis
- Back alleys
- Mid-block walkways between buildings
- Landmark buildings such as City Hall (Old Post Office), Museum (Old Courthouse)

- Building height ranging from one to three storeys
- Eclectic Streetscape made up of a variety of buildings of different eras and architectural styles
- Historic storefronts and shop windows at street level
- Recessed doorways
- Evidence of corner entrances facing intersections
- Surviving false fronts on some buildings
- Materials such as red brick and dolomite
- Awnings on some buildings
- Signs advertising businesses and institutions
- Lighting on individual buildings and in public spaces

Planning Tools

While the revitalization of the downtown is a primary concern for the City of Grand Forks, a heritage conservation planning program for the whole community should be developed. The BC Heritage Branch has developed a set of interim tools – design guidelines and a proposal for a Business Improvement Area – to jump-start downtown revitalization in Grand Forks, along with further recommendations to allow the City to recognize and protect individual historic places in all other areas of the community.

British Columbia has one of the most comprehensive pieces of legislation for heritage conservation in Canada. Part 27 of the *Local Government Act* provides local governments with an extensive “tool kit” of planning solutions to encourage the recognition, protection, and conservation of historic places. Based on the current planning environment and capacity in Grand Forks, not all of these tools have relevance to the development of the City’s heritage planning program. In particular, the tools with the greatest potential usefulness are:

- **Community Involvement** – *Community Heritage Commission*
- **Identification** – *Understanding Values & Listing potential historic places*
- **Research and documentation** – *Developing Planning Resources*
- **Formal Recognition** – *Community Heritage Register*
- **Legal Protection** – *Designation & Heritage Revitalization Agreement*

- **Incentives for Heritage Conservation** – *Tax incentives and grants*
- **Encouraging Physical Conservation** - *Minimum Maintenance Bylaw*

These values-based heritage conservation tools are described in greater detail below.

Community Involvement

Heritage conservation planning is about ensuring that community heritage values are effectively retained for present and future generations. In values-based management the community articulates its values and the places that embody them. As such, it is important for members of the public to have an opportunity to contribute to decision making related to the identification, recognition, protection and conservation of historic places.

Create a Community Heritage Commission

A Community Heritage Commission (CHC) is a body created or authorized by a local government, under Part 27 of the *Local Government Act*, to assist a council with the management and implementation of community heritage conservation planning and activities. A commission has the ability to undertake support activities and/or to take on other non-regulatory activities delegated to it by a council.

A heritage commission may:

- Advise local government on matters included in the commission's terms of reference.
- Advise local government on matters referred to it by local government.
- Undertake or support heritage activities authorized by the local government.

To establish a Community Heritage Register, the local government must:

1. Adopt a bylaw, including:
 - a. The name of the commission,
 - b. Terms of reference,
 - c. Composition and appointment procedure, and
 - d. Operating procedures.
2. Appoint a council representative and staff liaison to the commission.
3. Ensure that the commission plans its activities, including the preparation of a budget for council consideration.
4. Facilitate the commission's undertaking of business activities and reporting to the council according to its terms of reference.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Community Heritage Commissions:

- The City of Grand Forks should establish a Community Heritage Commission to create an official entity to support the implementation of the planning activities listed in this report.
- Once a bylaw is passed to establish a commission, the City should identify a process for selecting community members as commission representatives. Terms of reference for the commission should also be established. Information on this process is available through researching other BC communities that have recently established a commission (i.e. City of William's Lake established a commission in 2010/11). BC Heritage Branch staff are also available to provide information and advice on developing the CHC.
- Once the commission is established and appointed, the City should consider working with the BC Heritage Branch to receive training for this new advisory group.

Identification

The heritage context statement in this report (see pages 14-18) provides a starting point for further investigation about which places best represent the community's identified heritage values. Once heritage values are understood, the next step in developing a heritage planning program is to

identify places that should be either formally recognized or legally protected as part of the city's land use planning initiatives.

Understand Community Heritage Values & Context

While the heritage context statement in this report provides a good background on general community heritage values, the City of Grand Forks may choose to build a greater understanding of community heritage by undertaking a Heritage Context Study. Such a study involves the hiring of heritage consultants to deliver further heritage values workshops with community members.

Develop a List of Potential Historic Places

To identify a list of historic places for conservation, it is recommended the community undertake an exercise to locate places that embody the heritage values identified in the heritage context statement or context study process. This may be a mapping exercise which includes members of the public, or may be something like an initiative to have people submit photos of places they feel embody community heritage values as articulated in the heritage context statement.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Identification:

- Members of the City of Grand Forks staff, advisory committees, and other stakeholders can begin to identify a list of places included that embody

community heritage values and prioritize them according to which may be formally recognized, legally protected, or simply interpreted through signs or other media.

- Historic places are not always Victorian-era buildings. Historic places may be a structure, building, a group of buildings, district, landscape, archaeological site or other place that possesses heritage values. They may be of any age or description – they key factor is that they embody community heritage values.
- The identification process may also include photographic recording of those places, as well as historical research to begin to create record files for places that may be included on the Community Heritage Register, or subject to a designation bylaw.

Research/Documentation

Research and documentation of historic places is an important part of effective heritage conservation planning. The City of Grand Forks can undertake research on the historic places identified during the identification and prioritizing process. Some useful actions to facilitate the research and documentation process are:

Create a Historic Place File/Record Keeping System

- Create a file for each historic place that will be formally recognized or legally protected. These files should be

held in the local government planning department when formal recognition or protection takes places to enable monitoring and regulation of those places.

- Files for historic places should include historic research materials, photographs; a complete community historic place record and a Statement of Significance.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Research and Documentation:

- The local government can utilize existing resources to create historic place files. Extensive research exists in places like the community museum and library. Community volunteers and members of the Heritage Commission may be willing to undertake research for historic places on the short list.
- There may be opportunities for local students to undertake research on historic places that can be used to populate historic place files. This type of partnership approach with schools (of all levels) can work to build support for and appreciation of community heritage values and historic places.

Recognizing and protecting historic places

Community Heritage Register

A good starting step for building capacity for heritage conservation planning is to *formally recognize* historic places.

The most common form of formal recognition is to list places on a community heritage register (CHR). A community heritage register is an official listing of properties identified by a local government as having heritage value or heritage character. Inclusion on a community heritage register *does not constitute heritage designation* (see page 27) or any other form of permanent heritage protection. It is, however, a useful tool for many reasons:

A community heritage register is intended to:

- officially list the heritage resources in the community;
- give notice to property owners, and potential buyers, of heritage factors (historical, architectural, aesthetic, etc.) which may affect development options for a listed property; and
- enable monitoring of proposed changes to properties through the local government licensing and permit application processes. Inclusion of a property on a community heritage register does not in itself constitute permanent heritage protection and does not create any financial liability for the local government. The register may, however, be used to "flag" properties for possible future protection.

Properties on a community heritage register are eligible for special provisions in the B.C. Building Code Heritage Building Supplement.

If council has delegated authority to staff to do so, inclusion of a property on a community heritage register enables a local government to:

- withhold an approval
- withhold a demolition permit
- require an impact assessment

The process for adding (or removing) places from the CHR is as follows:

1. Local government consults with property owners and anticipates the continuing need to provide information and to raise awareness, by such means as:

- preparing clear and simple information packages (communities may wish to explain that registry status is not the same as designation status);
- preparing a map to place individual heritage property in the context of the street, neighbourhood, or area;
- assembling available information (such as before and after restoration photos, maps, archival material, inventories, etc.);
- holding review meetings or workshops;

- explaining eligibility criteria for financial assistance for conservation; and/or
- offering technical assistance (e.g., design advice or rehabilitation standards).

2. Local government reviews, and, if necessary, revises the proposed community heritage register.
3. By resolution, a council creates a community heritage register that lists selected properties. The CHR must include register records (including Statements of Significance) to the Standards of the BC Register of Historic Places to explain why a property is considered to have heritage value or heritage character.
4. Within 30 days of a property being added to, or deleted from, a register, local government must notify the property owner and the minister responsible for the *Heritage Conservation Act*.
5. Properties may be added to, or deleted from, the community heritage register by resolution of the council.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to the Community Heritage Register:

- The City of Grand Forks should establish a Community Heritage Register through council resolution. A CHR can be established without any listings at first, or, it

can be established with an initial set of historic places included for recognition.

- The City can start to identify individual historic places within the downtown area. The best practice for this activity is to use the Statement of Significance to guide the selection of places for inclusion on the register. Historic places that best represent the heritage values identified in the Statement of Significance for downtown should be added to the register.
- A comprehensive analysis of historic places throughout the whole city should also be undertaken as a next step. Using the general context statement for the city, or following a more in-depth context study process, historic places should be identified based on how they represent the heritage values identified therein.
- All places that are added to the community heritage register must have a Statement of Significance and a register record completed to the standards of the BC Register of Historic Places. Information and training on preparing Statements of Significance and register records can be obtained through the BC Heritage Branch.

Presentation & Interpretation

Interpretive wraps on utility cabinets and other public facilities

In addition to reducing incidents of graffiti and the costs of maintenance, utility cabinet wraps provide a community amenity and improve the civic landscape through the display of photography and art work. Utility cabinets are transformed into community canvases. The City can partner with local schools and organizations to display distinctive community-based installations, which foster civic identity and community pride.

Walking tours

Information identified in the research and documentation process for historic places in the community can be used to develop interpretive material for heritage walking tours. In particular, a historic place's Statement of Significance provides details about heritage values and character defining elements which can be used to inform tours and interpretive signs.

Content on website

Many communities choose to post their community heritage register online as an easily accessed resource that can be updated and changed with minimal cost and effort.

Publications

Compilations of archived photographs, maps, journal entries and other records about historic places or areas become marketable resources that help to document a community's development and paint a picture of its broader identity. Such compilations are appealing to local heritage advocates, new residents and the cultural tourism sector and become a source of local pride and engagement.

Legal Protection

Local Government Heritage Designation

Heritage designation is a form of local government land use regulation that protects private heritage property. Designation is intended to give long-term protection to heritage property. It is the only form of long-term local government regulation that can prohibit demolition. A designation bylaw may prohibit one or more of the following:

- exterior alterations;
- structural changes;
- moving of a structure;
- actions which would damage a specified interior feature;
- actions which would damage a specified heritage landscape feature; and/or
- alteration, excavation, or construction on protected land.

Unless permitted in the designation bylaw, no changes may be made to a heritage designated property without a heritage alteration permit. Heritage designation is applied to property when long-term protection of the property is desired, and it is determined that heritage designation is the most suitable of the long term protection tools to use in a particular situation. Heritage designation may be enacted with or without the consent of the property owner. Real property (land, with or without improvements so affixed to the land as to make them in fact and law a part of it) may be designated if the property has heritage value or heritage character, or if the designation is necessary to protect a nearby heritage property.

Types of property which may be given heritage designation include:

- a single property,
- part of a property,
- more than one property owned by one or more owners,
- affixed interior features or features identified in the bylaw, and
- landscape features.

Heritage designation is implemented through the following process:

1. Through a process of planning and research, a local government identifies heritage property considered to be worthy of long-term protection.
2. Alternative long-term protection tools are considered.
3. Consultation takes place with the property owner.
4. Local government considers the possible ramifications of designating the property, including the potential requirement to provide compensation to the property owner for any reduction in market value of the property directly attributable to the designation.
5. Local government prepares a report on the property and makes it available to the public. The report must include information regarding:
 - A Statement of Significance outlining the heritage value or heritage character of the property;
 - compatibility of conservation with the official community plan;
 - compatibility of conservation with the lawful use of the property and adjoining lands;

- the condition and economic viability of the property; and
 - the need for financial support.
6. A proposed heritage designation bylaw is prepared, usually by the city clerk or planning department.
 7. A public hearing must be held prior to the adoption of a heritage designation bylaw. Notice of the public hearing must be:
 - a. published in a local newspaper, and,
 - b. sent to all owners of, owners with an interest in, and occupiers of property proposed to be designated.
 8. Within 30 days of approval or defeat of the bylaw, property owners and occupiers must be notified of the outcome.
 9. Following adoption of a designation bylaw, notification must be sent to the Land Title Office and the minister responsible for the *Heritage Conservation Act*.
 10. A property owner may apply for compensation within one year of the designation coming into effect. The amount of compensation may be determined by agreement of the owner and the local government, or, if they are unable to agree, by binding arbitration

under the *Commercial Arbitration Act*. If a property owner waives the right to compensation, the local government prepares a waiver form and has it signed by the property owner and local government officials.

11. Heritage designation may be rescinded by bylaw.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Designation:

- Heritage designations are intended to be a regulatory tool to protect heritage values of historic places, and should be implemented in conjunction with a heritage incentives program. Designations make property owners eligible to receive incentives for conservation such as tax freezes or grants that the community may offer.
- The City of Grand Forks already has a number of historic places protected through heritage designation. City staff should build its capacity for regulating changes to these places (i.e. issuing Heritage Alteration Permits and using the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*) by working with BC Heritage Branch staff to receive information on values-based conservation and planning processes.
- New designations on historic places should be carefully considered, as designations require regulation and planning capacity for values-based management within local government staff and community advisory bodies. If the goal of a designation is recognition of

heritage values rather than regulation of physical changes to the property, registration should be considered as an alternate planning tool.

- If new designations are desired, the City should encourage “friendly” designations rather than imposing designations on properties (unless a historic place is under threat of damage or destruction). Citizens who would like to have their places legally protected can be encouraged to lead by example in order to build awareness of how heritage conservation planning works to preserve community heritage values.

The City can choose to designate publicly owned historic places as a starting point for beginning to implement the regulatory tools associated with legal heritage protection.

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Some criteria to consider when deciding between registration and designation:

For registration:

- *Is the place an important touchstone for the community, and under little risk of being altered, damaged, or destroyed?*
- *Is the place a good candidate for being honoured for its heritage values, but doesn't require any regulation by the local government?*

For designation:

- *Is the place under threat of damage or loss? Would community heritage values be lost if this place is allowed to deteriorate or be destroyed?*
- *Is the place unique within the community? Is it the only place of its type, and must be retained as a touchstone to a certain aspect of the community's development or history?*
- *Would the heritage value or character of the greater area, or community be lost if this place were lost? This may relate to physical characteristics, or its associative characteristics. (That is: how does the community relate to or perceive this place?)*

- Designation bylaws should include schedules of activities that may take place without a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) in order to make the administration and regulation of designated places simpler. These schedules are lists of activities that property owners can do (such as basic repairs and maintenance, or replacing "like with like" building materials) without having to apply to the local planning department for a permit. Including this type of schedule also removes some of the fear that property owners may feel when considering designation.
- Existing designation bylaws should be reviewed and amended to include these lists.
- The City must be prepared to implement a planning process for the review of applications for changes to legally-protected historic places, and the issuing of Heritage Alteration Permits. The HAP process can be integrated with existing building or development permit area application processes.

Heritage Revitalization Agreement

A Heritage Revitalization Agreement is a formal voluntary written agreement negotiated by a local government and an owner of heritage property. A heritage revitalization agreement outlines the duties, obligations, and benefits negotiated by both parties to the agreement. A heritage revitalization agreement may:

- detail the timing of the agreement terms;
- vary or supplement the provisions of a rural land use bylaw including use, density, siting, and lot size;
- vary or supplement the provisions of a bylaw which concern land use designation, development cost recovery, subdivision and development requirements;
- vary or supplement a management development permit
- vary or supplement a bylaw or heritage alteration permit
- include other terms agreed to by the local government and the property owner.

Heritage revitalization agreements are intended to provide a powerful and flexible tool that enables agreements to be specifically written to suit unique properties and situations. They may be used to set out the conditions which apply to a particular property. The terms of the agreement replace local government zoning regulations, and may vary use, density, and siting regulations.

A heritage revitalization agreement is suited to unique conservation situations that demand creative solutions, such as complex and unique sites requiring exceptions and relaxations to zoning regulations. An HRA is developed in the following way:

1. Local government identifies the need for the use of a heritage revitalization agreement. The need may arise from the unusual siting of a building, a unique lot configuration or other unique circumstances.
2. Local government and the property owner negotiate the terms of the heritage revitalization agreement, including the obligations, duties, and benefits of the agreement.
3. Local government seeks legal advice and drafts the heritage revitalization agreement bylaw.
4. If the use or density of the property are proposed to be changed, a public hearing must be held.
5. Council adopts the bylaw.
6. Within 30 days of adoption of the bylaw, local government files a notice in the Land Title Office to register the heritage revitalization agreement on the property title. Local government must also notify the minister responsible for the *Heritage Conservation Act*.
7. A heritage revitalization agreement may only be altered with the consent of the property owner and local government. Local government must adopt a bylaw to amend a heritage revitalization agreement.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Heritage Revitalization Agreements:

- Heritage revitalization agreements work best when the heritage values and character-defining elements of a historic place are understood. Formally recognized and protected places will have this information included in their community heritage register record, or in the designation bylaw.
- Heritage revitalization agreements are a good starting point for building awareness of historic place conservation within the community because they foster partnerships between developers and the local government.
- If an opportunity presents itself to enter into a heritage revitalization agreement that allows a development project to coincide successfully with the conservation of a protected historic place, the City of Grand Forks should consider using this tool sooner rather than later in order to set a precedent for how successful historic place planning can work.

Incentives for heritage conservation

In addition to tax incentives, local government may provide financial and non-monetary support to owners of heritage

properties⁸. Direct financial support may be given in the form of monetary grants to property owners. Non-monetary support may be provided in the form of regulatory relaxations, additional density, and support services such as: program coordination, assistance to a non-profit society, technical advice, public works projects, commemoration, and/or priority routing of heritage applications.

Grants and non-monetary incentives are intended to enable a local government to:

- encourage property owners to restore or to rehabilitate their heritage properties, and
- enable communities to provide assistance other than monetary grants to owners of heritage properties.

Direct financial assistance in the form of monetary grants may be used by a community that:

⁸ Sections 181, 183.1 and 185 of the *Local Government Act* state that local governments can provide assistance in the form of a grants, benefits, advantages, tax, fee or charge exemptions, disposing of land or improvements, lending money, guaranteeing repayment of borrowing or providing security for borrowing, or assistance under a partnering agreement. Assistance can be provided to businesses in order to acquire, conserve or develop heritage property, or increase knowledge of the community's history or heritage. Heritage property refers to property that:

(a) in the opinion of a body or person authorized to exercise a power under the *Local Government Act* or the *Community Charter* in relation to the property, has sufficient heritage value or heritage character to justify its conservation, or

(b) is protected heritage property (designated, subject to an HRA, or a heritage covenant)

- a) has the financial resources, and,
- b) believes that direct financial assistance is the most effective incentive it could use to facilitate the conservation of specific resources.

Indirect non-monetary support may be used by a community that:

- a) lacks the financial resources to provide direct financial incentives, and/or,
- b) believes indirect support will be a more effective incentive than direct financial support.

Financial and non-monetary incentives can be implemented through the following process:

1. A community recognizes the benefits of support to owners of heritage properties.
2. The needs of heritage property owners are identified.
3. Alternative support mechanisms are explored and the most appropriate methods are selected.
4. The support program is designed, including eligibility criteria, program management, staff coordination and budgeting. The incentive program may include a

variety of components which provide both financial and nonmonetary support.

5. If financial incentives are proposed, local government must pass a 2/3 vote of council to adopt a motion regarding the provision of financial aid.
6. The incentive program is implemented, monitored, and modified periodically to respect the changing needs of property owners and the community.

Tax incentives

Tax incentives are a mechanism that allows a council to give owners of eligible heritage property⁹ a partial or total exemption, or deferment, of their property taxes for approved heritage purposes, if a property is:

- designated,
- included on a heritage conservation area schedule,
- subject to a heritage revitalization agreement,
- subject to a heritage conservation covenant, or
- an archaeological or other site protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

⁹ **Protected heritage property** refers to property that is designated under section 967 of the *Local Government Act*, or is subject to a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, or subject to a heritage covenant.

A bylaw adopted by 2/3 of the members of the council enables an exemption for the following calendar year. For a period greater than 1 year, but not exceeding 10 years, special approval procedures apply.

Tax incentives are intended to enable local government to provide financial support to private property owners to conserve their heritage properties.

Tax incentives are an appropriate tool to use in cases where a local government wishes to provide financial support to a property owner to encourage conservation of a heritage property. For example, tax exemption can be used to mitigate increases in property taxes which may result from the conservation of a property.

Tax incentives may be used in one of two ways: for areas or classes of buildings, or for a single building. It may be used in an area for properties which meet established eligibility criteria. Alternatively, tax exemption may be used on a site-by-site basis with criteria and terms designed to suit each unique property.

The process for implementing tax incentives is:

1. Through a process of planning, research, and consultation, a community identifies tax relief as the most appropriate way to assist in the conservation of heritage property in the community.

Taxes can be frozen for a period of time in order to offset the cost of conservation of character-defining elements of historic places. In this way the City does not lose tax revenues, and provides an incentive for property owners to improve their buildings.

2. Local government designs criteria for tax exemption eligibility, including the application procedure, expected improvements, conditions of tax exemption, legal protection of heritage property, rate and term of exemption, and repayment provisions.
3. Local government prepares and adopts, by a 2/3 vote of its members, a bylaw to enable the tax exemption on or before October 31. If the tax exemption is to apply for more than one year, local government must publish a notice regarding the proposed tax exemption in at least two issues of a local newspaper at least 30 days prior to adopting the bylaw. The bylaw may not be adopted if more than 5% of the voters petition against it.
4. Within 30 days of the adoption of the bylaw, the local government notifies the minister responsible for the *Heritage Conservation Act*.
5. Local government monitors tax exempted properties to ensure compliance with the terms of the heritage protection and any requirements for maintenance, rehabilitation, or restoration.

6. In the event of non-compliance, the local government may require repayment of exempted taxes. A bylaw to require repayment of exempted taxes must be adopted by a 2/3 vote of council members.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to Incentives:

- In order to encourage conservation, the City could consider waiving permit application fees for protected heritage property owners.
- The City of Grand Forks should consider implementing a program of tax freezes for legally protected heritage properties. Improvements to buildings result in increased taxes, and may be a disincentive to the proper maintenance or rehabilitation of a historic place.

Facilitate Physical Conservation

Adoption of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*

Planning is an essential predecessor of any interventions to a historic place. According to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*:

“planning is the mechanism that links a comprehensive understanding of a historic place with interventions that respect that places’ specific heritage value. In planning, it is important to maintain a firm sense of the longer term and the larger picture, and to not place

emphasis on particular character-defining elements at the expense of others. Planning should include consideration of all factors affecting the future of a historic place, including the owner’s need, resources and external constraints.”¹⁰

Many communities in British Columbia have formally adopted the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as an overarching guide to best practises for heritage conservation. The document provides sound, practical guidance to achieve good conservation practice, from individual projects up to community-wide development. The intent of the document is not to replace the role of conservation practitioners or provide detailed technical specifications appropriate to every situation. It does, however, offer results-oriented guidance for sound decision making when planning for, intervening and using a historic place.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to the Adoption of the *Standards and Guidelines*:

- By adopting the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, the local government can have a point of reference for assessing proposed conservation interventions.
- As well, the adoption of the *Standards and Guidelines* opens eligibility for projects consistent with the

¹⁰ Parks Canada. (2011). *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. p.3.

recommendations to apply for federal financial incentives.

- City staff must be familiar with the use of Statements of Significance to identify character-defining elements that must be properly conserved according to the *Standards and Guidelines*.

Design Guidelines for the Historic Downtown

The City of Grand Forks Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies a number of key goals and principles related to downtown heritage revitalization. The following section of the OCP commits the City to:

- 2.1 Reinforce the City Centre as the historic focus of the commercial and institutional activity, and the premier town centre for the region.

The OCP identifies a large area of the downtown as a Commercial Development Permit Area, which requires property owners to apply for a special permit to allow significant changes or additions to properties within that district. The following two sections of the OCP state that two objectives of the Commercial Development Permit Area are to:

- 19.1 Revitalize an area in which a commercial use is permitted.

- 19.1 Establish definitive objectives and treat the form and character of commercial... development.

The City also identifies a specific objective in section 15 of its OCP related to the maintenance and conservation of historic resources:

- 15.3.1 To encourage those owning heritage buildings, structures or landscapes to maintain them in a manner which will preserve the historic quality and characteristics of the buildings, structures or landscapes.

As part of the objectives for the economic revitalization of the historic downtown within the Commercial Development Permit Area, the City of Grand Forks has identified the need for design guidelines for improvements to and conservation of historic places within that area. As such, design guidelines have been developed by the BC Heritage Branch, and are presented for consideration of adoption to city council. Two sets of guidelines have been developed, one set for planning related to the public realm, and one set to provide design guidance for private property owners.

Design guidelines allow designers and decision makers to create buildings, amenities, and public spaces that are responsive to the heritage values of the community, yet reflect the continued evolution of the place over time.

2. Local government drafts heritage site maintenance standards.
3. Local government adopts, by bylaw, heritage site maintenance standards, and communicates maintenance expectations to property owners.
4. Local government monitors properties subject to the maintenance standards and, if necessary, enforces the standards. A heritage inspection may be ordered to verify that the maintenance standards are being met.
5. If maintenance is not undertaken by the property owner, the local government may carry out the necessary work and accrue the costs to the property owner's taxes.
6. For further delinquency related to minimum maintenance infringements, enforcement provisions may include application by the local government to the Supreme Court to order the property be brought up to the required standards.

Business Improvement Area (BIA)

A local government council can designate a portion of the community a "Business Improvement Area" (BIA) in order to finance marketing, promotional or revitalization programs for that area. Among other things, the BIA can be the focus point for business improvement schemes such as improving and beautifying streets, and for conserving heritage property. The

BIA provides an organized structure and is a source of funding to allow businesses to improve their commercial viability. A complimentary document outlining the process for establishing a BIA in the historic downtown of Grand Forks has been submitted with this plan (see Appendix D).

Public Realm Design Guidelines

Many of the values identified as character-defining elements in the downtown exist in the public realm. In other words, they are on land owned by the municipality. These urban design guidelines provide policy on maintenance and improvement of the hard and soft landscape and streetscape. Paving, street furniture, colour and texture, and landscaping can all be used to amplify and enhance the distinctiveness of a place. They can also be used to bring out a characteristic that is valued but has faded, as part of an urban revitalization.

Private Realm Design Guidelines

The design guidelines for historic resources in downtown Grand Forks are intended to provide inspiration for how the city can develop the commercial core in a way that reinforces the heritage values that make Grand Forks unique. They also provide somewhat more prescriptive guidance on how particular elements of the downtown – such as signs, awnings, and facades – should be revitalized.

Minimum Maintenance Bylaw/ Heritage Site Maintenance Standards

Heritage site maintenance standards establish minimum requirements for the care and maintenance of real property, both land and improvements, that are designated or located within a heritage conservation area. Different maintenance standards may be established for different types of protected properties within a community.

Heritage site maintenance standards are intended to:

- communicate to property owners the minimum expectations of local government regarding the maintenance of properties,
- ensure that properties are not allowed to deteriorate through neglect, and
- enable local government to apply to the court for a maintenance order.

Heritage maintenance standards may be used to require owners to maintain their buildings to an acceptable level or condition as determined by local government.

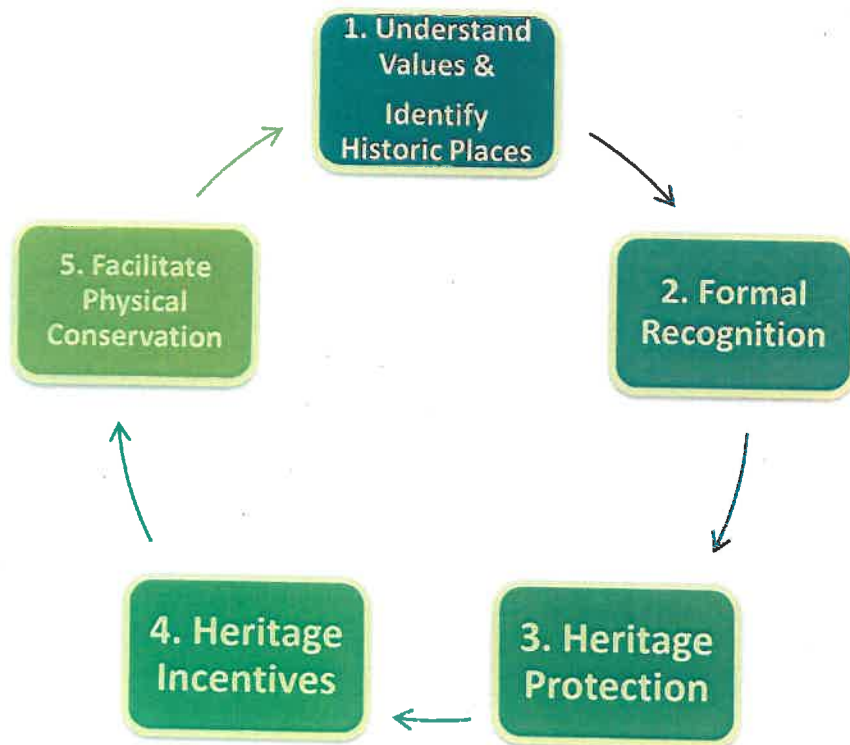
Maintenance standards may also be used in cases where property owners receive significant financial assistance for the conservation of their property. In this case, maintenance of a conserved property would be a condition of receipt of a grant. Except as noted, maintenance standards *may not* be used to require a property owner to improve a building. The process for establishing a minimum maintenance bylaw is:

1. Local government establishes criteria to identify those classes of properties subject to heritage site maintenance standards. Only properties that are designated or are within a heritage conservation area may be subject to heritage maintenance standards.

Recommended Value-Based Planning Process

The following process is recommended for the City of Grand Forks to develop a values-based heritage conservation program. Using the basic tools and resources listed above, the best series of activities should follow this path:

An ideal timeline of activities for developing the heritage planning program is found below. This timeline presents each action in the process, with an indication of when it should happen – in the short term (1-2 years), medium term (3-5 years) or long term (5-10 years). Some activities are intended to be ongoing, and are identified as taking place in all time periods.



Planning Timeline

Action	Optional within 5 years	Short Term (1-2 Years)	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	Long Term (5-10 Years)
Community Involvement				
Establish a Community Heritage Commission.		•		
Identification				
Undertake heritage context study to build further understanding of community heritage values.	•			
Identify historic places that embody heritage values based on heritage context statement and Statement of Significance for downtown.		•	•	•
Research/Documentation				
Create a research/documentation file for each identified historic place. Include research information, articles, photographs, etc.		•	•	•
Formal Recognition				
Pass a council resolution to create a community heritage register.		•		
Identify historic places for inclusion on CHR. Prepare documentation for each place according to the standards of the BC Register of Historic Places – including a Statement of Significance for each place.		•	•	•
Present documentation for community heritage register listings to council, and add historic places to CHR through council resolution.		•	•	•
Presentation & Interpretation				

Action	Optional within 5 years	Short Term (1-2 Years)	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	Long Term (5-10 Years)
Using information from historic research, install interpretive wraps on utility cabinets and other public facilities.			•	•
Develop and deliver walking tours, incorporating information from heritage values research and community heritage register.		•	•	•
Include historic place and heritage values content on website.		•		
Develop publications on historic places and heritage values.			•	•
Legal Protection				
Local Government Heritage Designation – review existing designations to ensure that bylaws are effective and efficient.		•		
Designate further historic places only as necessary for regulating change or protecting character-defining elements.		•	•	•
Heritage Revitalization Agreement – enter into Heritage Revitalization Agreements with willing property owners.			•	•
Incentives				
Develop a grant program to provide direct monetary support to owners of legally protected historic places in their conservation efforts.			•	
Develop a program of non-monetary support for owners of legally protected historic places.			•	
Develop a tax incentives program to offset the				•

Action	Optional within 5 years	Short Term (1-2 Years)	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	Long Term (5-10 Years)
expenses of conservation for owners of legally protected historic places.				
Facilitate Physical Conservation				
Adopt the <i>Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada</i> as the guiding policy for historic place conservation in the local government's planning program.		●		
Design guidelines for historic downtown within DPA.				
Develop and implement a heritage site minimum maintenance bylaw.			●	

Appendix A: Historic Timeline of Grand Forks

A historic timeline of the city will help to paint a picture of the major events and transforming impulses that have shaped the city. The timeline is intended to be a general overview of key points in history which contributed to shaping the heritage values identified in the general values section of this report.

	Kettle Indians used the valley for hunting, fishing, and gathering
1825	Hudson's Bay Company workers came to valley David Thompson came to the forks of the Kettle River
1858	Rock Creek gold rush brought people through valley
1864	Wildhorse Creek gold rush brings the Dewdney Trail through valley
1884	First customs office appointed Earliest preemptions started Valley was excellent cattle ranchland
1892	First school in valley opened Hospital established around this time
1893	Townsite Surveyed First church opened First saw mill built
1894	First store opened
1895	Lumber mill established by Ernest Spraggett Prospectors in large numbers came to the valley

1896	Post office opened Population 200
1897	City incorporated under Speedy Incorporation Act (John Manly, first mayor) Mining Recorder's Office and government agency opened.
1898	City had its own water and electrical systems Board of Trade opened.
1899	CPR built first railway into the area (CPR station is oldest one in BC). Was originally located in the City of Columbia. Population 1000
1900	Smelter began operations. Major building boom started.
1903	Cities of Columbia and Grand Forks amalgamated.
1908	Major fire – over half of the business district was destroyed
1905	Three railroads running daily passenger and ore trains to the city
1909	Doukhobors arrive in Grand Forks
1911	Major fire #2 Brick Courthouse built
1913	Modern brick post office built Concrete reservoir constructed
1914	Clock tower erected on post office
1919	Granby smelter closed.
1932	Installation of power plant at Smelter Lake.
1940	Economy turned to agriculture primarily. Seed production was a major industry.
1946	Regular library services started
1981	Council has designated the downtown area of the

	city for a revitalization project, the first step for initiating improvements under the provincial assistance program for Downtown Revitalization

Appendix B: Workshop Responses

Description of Historic Place

- Hodge-podge of design and color
- Original false-front buildings
- 4 blocks of tree-lined businesses
- Area with no specific identifiable boundary
- Compact
- Pedestrian-friendly
- River front
- Business oriented
- 2 storey brick buildings
- 4 block area of commercial businesses and apartments
- Begins at the fork of two rivers
- Mountains on all 4 sides
- Large aged trees thought the downtown
- Friendly welcome feeling
- Bricks and wood
- Forks of the river
- Trees on Central Avenue
- Building Materials
- Distinctive building architecture
- Walking distance
- Charming, friendly
- Commercial centre
- Commercial downtown
- Traffic-free area
- Brick facades
- 102 storey brick construction

- Commercial and government core
- Restaurants
- “market funnel” place
- From the days of the horse to the auto to the pedestrian
- Market street and adjoining streets
- Where pathways and trails replace roads and highways
- Heritage homes downtown
- Granby River to 9th street
- Community gathering place
- Brick
- Stone
- Trees
- Two storey
- Angled main street – market street
- Park land
- Beautiful brick buildings covered with many years’ worth of dirt and graffiti
- Two adjoining rivers
- Artist environment
- Lovely to walk around and window shop and grab a coffee

Building Social and Community Life

General

- Lots of performers and performances 🎭 (2)
- Recreation – outdoor activities 🏞️ (1)
- Doukhobor way of life – influenced food (borscht)

- Known for culture of Doukhobor traditions
- Identification as a “Russian” community
- Doukhobor choirs – connection
- Two foreign languages – French & Russian
- Community coalesces around the Doukhobor sites and heritage
- Major financial institution (credit union) founded on cooperative principles.
- People with strengths to provide cultural activities to take part in

Downtown

- Farmer’s Market ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (18)
- Boutique stores/shops ●●●●●●●●●● (9)
- Free parking with no bylaw enforcement ●●●●●● (6)
- Lack of residential ●●●●● (5)
- Historically gathering place for entertainment ●●●●● (5)
 - Davis Block Dance Hall
 - Theatres
 - Hotels
 - Masonic Lodge
- Development of gathering places – Gyro Park, City Park, Johnny’s Plaza (?) ●●●●● (5)
- RV Park, Farmer’s Market at Gyro park because locals and tourists can see it ●●●●● (4)
- Gallery 2 (wine tasting, scotch tasting, art gallery) ●●● (3)
- Closes at 4pm on Saturday! ●●● (3)

- Daytime focus ●● (2)
- Parades! ●● (2)
- Library draws people, social places ● (1)
- Availability of internet and connectivity ● (1)
- Lots of parking... walk a bit!
- BMX track, seniors’ centre at the park, Slavonic centre, Selkirk College, river walk!
- High school and elementary school and fields are highly utilized
- Used to be vibrant, now a bit slower
- Limited activities after stores close (except theatre)
- Proximity of parking “drives” consumer choice
- Not much at night except Theatre, Music in the Park, library, legion, Grand Forks Hotel, Winnie Pub, Clyde’s Long Horn

Expressing Intellectual and Cultural Life

General

- Counter culture development of alternative housing
- Performers and performances
- Newcomers introduce arts and culture offerings that don’t yet exist in community
- Building materials were here to construct city (brick and stone)
- Substantial buildings show sense of permanence
- Doukhobor houses decorated with architect designs (gingerbread)
- Sporting events – baseball, arena, etc.

Downtown

- Old court house, old post office, etc. – permanence of the buildings allows for repurposing of buildings for current uses ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (19)
- Coffee shops with free WIFI ●●●●●●●●●● (8)
- Highlights local artisans, artists, musicians, theatre ●●●●●●●●●● (8)
- Farmer's Market ●●●●●●●●●● (10)
- Sidewalk tables and chairs ●●●●●●●● (6)
- Signage and Advertising on billboards ●●●●●●●● (6)
- Both Gyro Park and City Park have performances ●●●●●●●● (5)
 - Music in the Park ●● (2)
 - New Stage area in City Park
- 12th BC Arts & Culture Week ●●●● (3)
- Library, arts, history (museum) significant, as they warranted their own buildings ●● (2)
- Created around food – lifestyle of healthy food ●● (2)
- Davis block ●● (2)
- 11st Kids Theatre ●● (2)
- Selkirk College (was Zak's auto) ●● (2)
- Specialty/niche shops ● (1)
- Sporting events
 - BMX ● (1)
 - Volleyball
 - Tubing on the Kettle
 - Rugby
 - Chess
 - Beach

- Campground
- Trans Canada Trail
- Fishing Drift on Kettle
- Old Masonic Lodge
- Dance Floor
- Brown Bag Theatre (lunch time theatre)

Developing Economies

General

- Organic farming – Doukhobor roots ●●●●● (4)
- Adapt and change economy over time to stay vibrant ●● (2)
- Trans-Canada trail ●● (2)
- Transportation – railways, Dewdney Trail, highway 3, business development ● (1)
- Relationship to border – ease of bringing materials from US, but poses a challenge because people cross the border to shop
- Railroad
- Mining
- Smelting
- Saw mill
- Industry
- Farming/ranching
- Power generation
- Seed farming
- Dam
- Brick factory

- Nurseries
- Insulation plant
- 2 railroads arrived at the same time
- Politics still based on dichotomy of industry and agriculture
- Consistent and stable economy until sawmills closed three years ago.
- CPR Railway – railway town
- Airport

Downtown

- City core remained constant – residents lived in proximity to the downtown core ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (15)
- Board of Trade (1897) discussed the business of the city. i.e. determined Wednesday closing ! ●●●●●●●●●●●● (11)
- Substantial number of brick buildings ●●●●●●●● (8)
- Number of banks, over time exemplifies confidence ●●● (3)
- Permanence created by wealth created by mining industry 🌐● (2)
- Ability to recycle buildings 🏠🏠 (2)
- Buildings reflect a variety of styles and times ● (1)
- Slag pile and consequent fund has continued to have an impact on growth and maintenance of standard
- Repurposing of buildings to “survive” different economies – city hall was a post office; art gallery was a courthouse, etc.

Peopling the Land

General

- Farming – people came here for good agricultural conditions 🌱🌱🌱 (3)
- People came because of industry 🏭🏭🏭 (3)
- People come to raise families here 🏡🏡🏡 (3)
- Arrival of Doukhobor people – escaping persecution 🌍 (1)
- “get back to real life”
- City refugees
- Immigration of people from other countries
- Relationship to east-west valley (First Nations)
- Italian people – stonemasonry
- Climate
- 1960s- arrival of draft-dodgers, counter-culture, hippies
- Retirees
- WWII – Japanese people
- Division between Doukhobor and non-Doukhobor (English) communities
- People come here for a better way of life
- Opportunity
- Relationship to border

Downtown

- [illegible]

Governing the Region

General.

- Region has suffered because it's between two larger regional districts ●
- "working man" community
- Didn't have members of the legislature that were part of the governing party
- Government agents here for 150 years – shows importance of early mining community – government presence provides connection to government and services
- Administrative centre of the region in the early 1900s
- Regional RCMP office
- Federal government presence – post office

Downtown

- Grand Forks was recognized as the area (Paulson summit/Anarchist Summit) (Needles to Border) hub due to geography, industry, proximity to the US border pass, fertile land ● etc, therefore the downtown core was the natural congregation for these services
●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (15)
- Downtown has been constant since its inception
●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (10)
- Downtown buildings are here to stay ●●●●●●●●●●●●●● (9)
- All amenities within walking distance ●●●●●●●● (5)
- Three levels of government have permanent buildings located in the downtown core ●●●●●●●● (4)

- Court house (stone) ●●● (3)
- RCMP/BC police ●● (2)
- Downtown buildings reflect desire to be law abiding, official, mirroring our affluence, optimism for future prosperity ●● (2)
- Post office (federal) ● (1)
- Government Agents ● (1)
- City Hall (municipal)
- Rural and remote location
- Historically government buildings in downtown core and they are still there.

Character-Defining Elements

- Trees on Central Avenue – middle of street
- Trees on Market Avenue
- Materials in old Post Office (City Hall) and Court House – red brick and dolomite (or granite?) stone
- Stone wall around Court house
- Old walkways between buildings
- Grand Forks Hotel
- Pedestrian amenities – benches, bike racks, flower containers

- Green space at Gyro Park
- Fourth Street Mall
- Building height ranging from one to three storeys
- Market Avenue's diagonal axis
- Surviving false fronts on some buildings
- Clock tower on City Hall
- Buildings with individual character
- Buildings from different eras
- Evidence of corner entrances on buildings in intersections
- Recessed doorways
- Awnings
- Glass block on Gazette building on 2nd street
- Court House
- New City Hall (old post office)
- Winnipeg Hotel
- Ford Dealership
- Back alleys
- Views – panorama of Observation Mountain etc
- Shop windows at street level

Appendix C: Bylaw Examples

Appendix D: Business Improvement Area Proposal

Reference Materials

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City of Grand Forks Heritage Program

Design Guidelines for the Historic Downtown



Prepared by:



Heritage Branch

4 May 2011

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Introduction

Downtown Grand Forks is a cohesive historic place unto itself – a cultural landscape containing multiple character-defining elements that embody and contribute to the unique heritage character of the place. Approaches to conservation should be undertaken accordingly.

Downtown Grand Forks does not have a homogeneous appearance, and design guidelines should avoid recommending aesthetic solutions to revitalization that give it one cohesive “style”. Each building should be seen as an example of its time, and should be treated in a way that respects its individual architectural style and character. However, care should be taken to ensure that changes to individual buildings add to the form and character of the street as a whole.

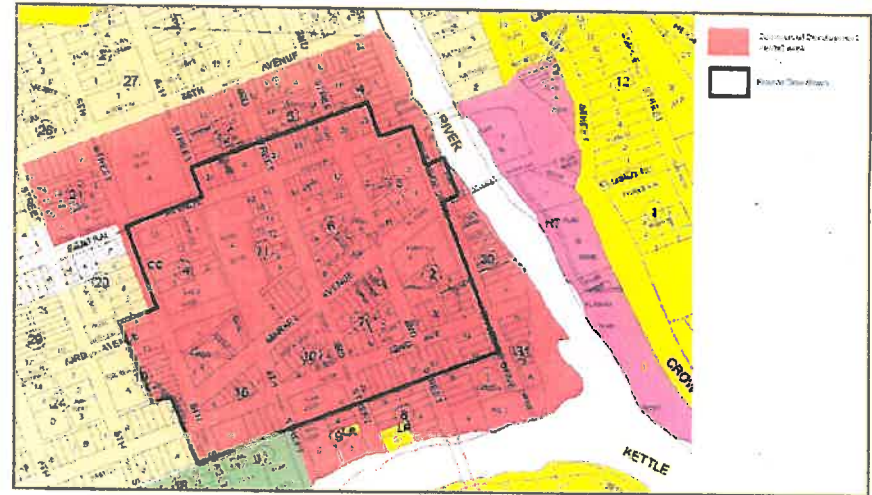
Purpose of these design guidelines

These design guidelines are intended to meet and support the planning objectives of the Commercial Development Permit Area, and the objectives for heritage conservation as identified in the OCP. Once incorporated into the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP), they are intended to provide the City’s planning staff, community advisory groups, property owners, architects and designers with a framework for decision making related to changes to historic buildings (both publicly and privately owned) within the identified heritage downtown.

Heritage design guidelines are not intended to re-create the past; they should not promote the creation of new “old” buildings. Instead, they are intended to guide design so that new buildings, and changes to existing buildings, in the downtown core are in keeping with the heritage values and characteristics identified as important by the community.

Focus Area

The area subject to these design guidelines is identified as the historic downtown. This area lies within the Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA), and is defined as follows:



These guidelines provide information necessary for integrating heritage conservation standards and considerations into the Development Permit application process for the historic downtown within the Commercial DPA. Development Permit applications for buildings located within the historic downtown area must follow these design guidelines as part of their review and approval process.

Strengths in the Downtown

The community of Grand Forks feels strongly about a number of positive qualities of the downtown that should be retained, and upheld as development occurs. People like the fact that the downtown is walkable, and that parking is free. These aspects of the downtown experience are seen as having a positive influence on people’s likelihood of shopping and doing business in the historic

commercial core.

Although the downtown is experiencing a decline in business, it is still seen as a key venue for social events such as the Farmer's Market, community events and gatherings, and performances. The parks within the downtown area are also an important aspect of the social livelihood of Grand Forks, and provide locations for events and activities – such as markets, sporting events, and music performances – that draw people into the downtown.

Issues in the Downtown

The downtown in Grand Forks is experiencing economic and social issues. The community feels strongly that the numerous empty buildings in the commercial core have a negative impact on the attractiveness of the area. What was once a vibrant downtown has become a bit “slower” – many stores close at 4pm on Saturday. Some people feel that the downtown is currently not a welcoming place and has a somewhat “dingy” appearance. Some feel that the local government has not valued or protected the downtown sufficiently to maintain a desired level of upkeep to ensure that the commercial core remains an attractive place to do business.

A number of factors are contributing to the current deterioration of the downtown core. In particular, the recent closures of major employers and businesses in town have resulted in an economic downturn. Furthermore, the city faces a major challenge related to its close proximity to the US border. Many citizens choose to shop “across the border” because it is often more affordable to do so. This “financial bleed” has a major impact on the economic stability of the community, and results in fewer businesses (and buildings) being owned and operated downtown. The community feels strongly about maintaining the downtown as the commercial core of the city.

While the downtown of Grand Forks has good “bones” in terms of building infrastructure, scale, and green spaces, there are deterrents to these qualities being used to their maximum potential. The community values the use of the downtown for social activities, but there is currently a lack of options for interesting and diverse cultural experiences after the stores close in the evenings. The downtown is walkable, and within close proximity to residential neighbourhoods, but amenities such as bike racks and benches are few, creating a disincentive for people to find alternative forms of transportation into the commercial core.

Statement of Significance

The conservation and revitalization of the downtown should be guided by the heritage values of the place. This Statement of Significance describes the place, articulates community heritage values for the downtown, and lists the character-defining elements (characteristics that must be conserved in order to retain values). The design guidelines respond directly to this Statement of Significance.

Description of Historic Place

The historic downtown of Grand Forks is an urban commercial area comprising approximately four square city blocks. This historic place includes buildings and green spaces on both sides of the four key streets that define the downtown – Highway 3 to the north, Riverside Drive to the east, 72nd Avenue to the South, and 5th Street to the west. The historic downtown also includes Market Street, the “main street” of Grand Forks, which runs diagonally from southwest to northeast through the core, and the streetscapes on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets between Highway 3 and 72nd Avenue. The historic downtown includes tree-lined streetscapes with buildings of various styles and eras ranging from one to three storeys, narrow walkways between many buildings, and mid-block service alleys. A number of landmark buildings such as city hall and the museum are also included in this area.

Heritage Values of Historic Place

The downtown area of Grand Forks is valued by the community as a symbol of the prosperity, opportunity and diversity of the economic innovation that gave the city its earliest beginnings. Situated at a geographic location that allowed Grand Forks to be a transportation hub for road and rail, the scale and stature of the downtown reflect

the importance of the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers in supporting industries such as mining, logging, and agriculture in the area.

The nature of the buildings in the downtown reflects a sense of permanence and demonstrates the importance of the community within the region in its formative years and decades. The presence of substantial landmarks, interspersed with other buildings of varying ages, profiles, statures and uses illustrates the ongoing and evolving role of the downtown as an economic and social hub. The historic buildings downtown reflect a desire for permanence, orderliness, cleanliness, and credibility, reinforcing the idea that Grand Forks represented affluence and optimism for the future in the Boundary region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many physical qualities of the buildings in the downtown are important reflections of the community’s heritage. In particular, the presence of locally-produced brick and indigenous stone reinforce the fact that this region was considered an ideal settlement location – the area either naturally produced materials necessary for permanent habitation, or contained the ideal conditions for creating products needed for a prosperous community.

While the downtown is valued for its substantial collection of historic buildings that speak to the city’s earliest development as an economic “boom” town, it is also valued for its enduring role as social core of the community. The relationship of the downtown to surrounding residential communities is important, as it shows the intention of residents being able to access the businesses and services they needed in a convenient manner. The pedestrian-friendly nature of the downtown is an important aspect of its heritage, as it allows current residents to experience and access the commercial core in the convenient manner it was originally intended. Historically, the downtown was used as a vibrant place for social activities

such as dances, theatre, community meals, and parades - the continued use of the downtown for activities such as the farmers' market and outdoor recreation maintains this aspect of its heritage.

Character-Defining Elements

- Location of downtown at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers
- Relationship between industrial heritage sites such as mills, old smelter site and slag heap, railways, and rail yards.
- Views – panoramas of Observation Mountain etc.
- Market Avenue's diagonal axis
- Back alleys
- Mid-block walkways between buildings
- Landmark buildings such as City Hall (Old Post Office), Museum (Old Courthouse)
- Building height ranging from one to three storeys
- Eclectic Streetscape made up of a variety of buildings of different eras and architectural styles
- Historic storefronts and shop windows at street level
- Recessed doorways
- Evidence of corner entrances facing intersections
- Surviving false fronts on some buildings
- Materials such as red brick and dolomite
- Awnings on some buildings
- Signs advertising businesses and institutions
- Lighting on individual buildings and in public spaces

How to Use these Guidelines

1. Understand Heritage Value and Character

Read the heritage context statement for the City, and the Statement of Significance for the historic downtown. Become familiar with community heritage values and character-defining elements. If one exists, refer to the Statement of Significance for your property to guide how your physical intervention will happen. If no Statement of Significance exists, explore the possibility of having one developed in partnership with the City. **Always ensure that design decisions respond to community heritage values and character-defining elements of the historic downtown.**

2. Consider the values and characteristics of neighbouring properties

No historic place exists in a vacuum. Each historic place has a relationship with its neighbours, and each contributes to the cohesiveness and heritage characters of the downtown as a whole. Use these guidelines to understand how to approach interventions to your building, and how changes to your building will affect the heritage values and character of neighbouring buildings.

3. Develop your intervention plan

Consider the appropriate level of intervention for your buildings. Are you planning to undertake a rehabilitation of the building, or will this intervention simply involve maintenance to revitalize a facade? If you share a storefront with other businesses or property owners, work collaboratively to develop a plan for improvements that respects the cohesiveness of the whole historic place. Consider how your changes will affect your neighbours (both positively and negatively). Work with City staff to develop a strategy for manage-

able intervention.

4. Review process

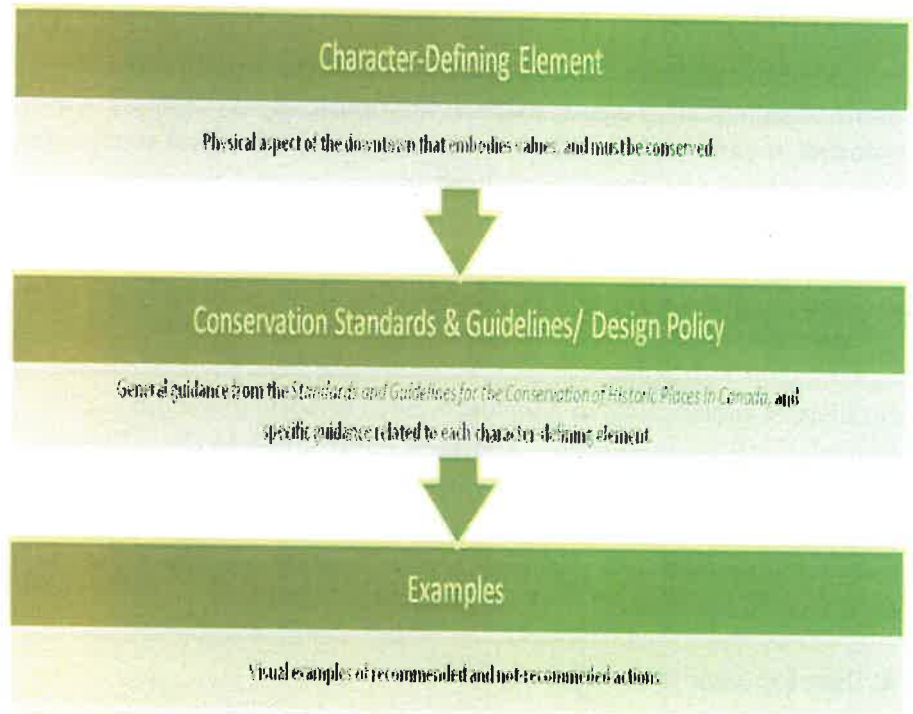
City staff will review your Development Permit application and provide a recommendation to Council for approval. Staff support will depend on the proposed design illustrating an effective implementation of these design guidelines, and respect for the heritage values and character of the downtown.

Design Guidelines

Historic area design guidelines are intended to provide direction to professionals (such as designers, architects, and trades people) and decision makers (such as council, planners, and advisory committees) to create buildings, amenities, and public spaces that are responsive to the heritage values of the community, yet reflect the continued evolution of the place over time. The design guidelines for downtown Grand Forks are intended to provide inspiration for how the city can develop the commercial core in a way that reinforces the heritage values that make Grand Forks unique. They also provide somewhat more prescriptive guidance on how particular elements of the downtown – such as signs, awnings, and facades – should be revitalized.

These design guidelines are descriptive, rather than prescriptive. Rather than provide guidance based on set architectural styles and formulas, the policies provided in the guidelines below respond directly to the heritage values and character-defining elements identified by community members. They also take into consideration the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* – the best practices document for guiding how conservation work happens to historic places.

The development of these design guidelines followed this logic model:



Character-Defining Element: Building Height

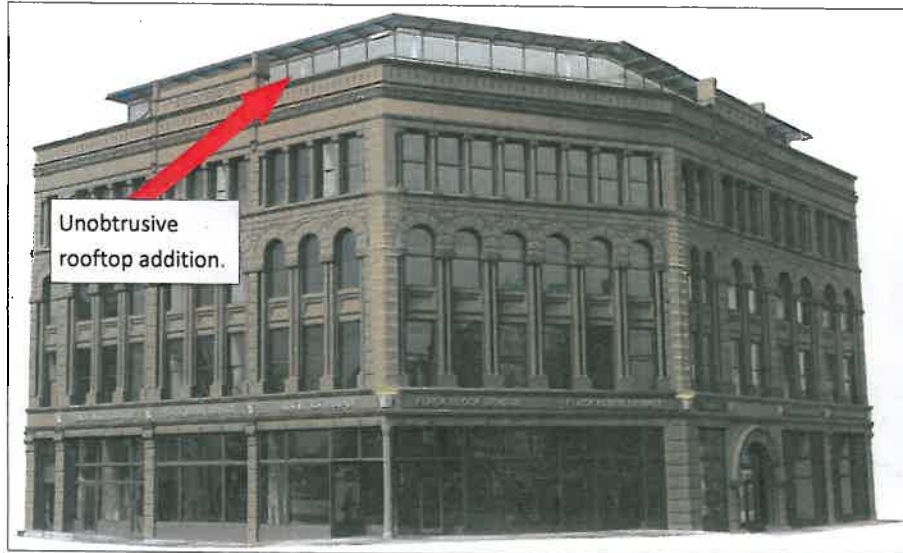
Heritage Value: The varying building heights – ranging from one to three storeys – reflect the different eras of development of the town. The varying scale of these buildings is reflective of the “boom and bust” cycles of a town of this vintage – some time periods and business ventures allowed people to build to a larger scale, and some periods are represented by restraint and simplicity in terms of scale and mass of construction.



1.0 Building Height

Guideline 1.1 Heights of existing buildings should be respected when additions are considered. In particular, the physical appearance of the height of buildings within the historic district as seen from the street should be maintained. Creative solutions to rooftop additions should be sought in order to maintain the visual appearance of buildings ranging from one- to three-storeys in height.

Recommended



New additions on historic buildings can be designed in a way that allows for increased density, without detracting from the heritage form and character of a historic district. In this example, a rooftop addition is set back from the front facade, so barely visible from the street. Also, materials and colours compliment the existing building.

Not Recommended



Additions to historic that attempt to be “seamless” can detract from the cohesiveness of the original building design. In the example above, the top storey addition is not compatible in scale, design, or colour with the earlier design of the lower stories.

1.0 Building Height

- 1.2 New buildings within the historic downtown should be constructed to respect the character-defining heights of surrounding buildings. Care should be taken to ensure that the height of a new building does not overpower its neighbours.

Recommended



New construction in a historic area should be compatible in form and scale with surrounding buildings.

Not Recommended



Constructing large buildings in an historic area can detract from the form and character of the historic place. Historic buildings can be both physically and symbolically diminished by new construction that overpowers the streetscape.

Character-Defining Element: Eclectic Streetscape

Heritage Value: The community values the fact that the historic buildings in the downtown are not homogeneous in style. They are from a diverse range of eras, and constructed in a variety of architectural styles. This is an important part of the heritage of the city, because it shows the economic tenacity that allowed the city to “adapt and overcome” economic challenges and to sustain growth and development over many decades. It also reflects the continuity of the city as it survived catastrophes such as two major fires and flooding in the early twentieth century.



2.0 Eclectic Streetscape

2.1 Each building speaks to its period of construction. Interventions to existing buildings should be undertaken in a way that ensures that the character-defining elements of that building and the downtown are conserved. Work to existing buildings must be visually and physically compatible with the character-defining elements of the building.

Recommended



Modernization of this 1950s building in Prince George is compatible with its era, style, and design. Character-defining elements such as the large overhanging eaves, storefront configuration, and rooftop sign have not been compromised by the addition of modern design elements. Furthermore, the use of wood speaks to the community's heritage values related to its logging industry.

Not Recommended



An inappropriate upgrade to a building facade with a goal of “modernizing” its appearance can detract from the overall heritage value and character of the historic downtown. In this example, an ‘adobe’ style intervention modernizes a traditional building, but does not respond to community heritage values nor the character of downtown.

2.0 Eclectic Streetscape

2.2 New buildings in the downtown should reflect current construction technology and design aesthetics, while respecting the form, scale, character and materials of surrounding buildings. They should not imitate styles of the past, but strive to achieve compatibility with the old by reflecting surrounding characteristics of scale, rhythm, facade articulation, window-to-wall ratios and by maintaining the intact streetscape.

Recommended



This new building fits well within its historic surroundings. It is clearly identifiable as a modern building—its design does not try to make it a “heritage” style in order to fit within the historic downtown. Attention to materials, massing, and fenestration patterns of surrounding buildings influenced its design and allow it to fit in harmoniously.

Not Recommended

Character-Defining Element: Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

Heritage Value: The presence of storefronts and shop windows at street level is integral to the heritage character of the downtown. Historically, Grand Forks was identified as a place for business and industry in the region – a centre for commerce in the area. This area was intended to be the centre of commercial and institutional activity in the city and region, and the presence of storefronts at street level supports the continuity of the downtown.



3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

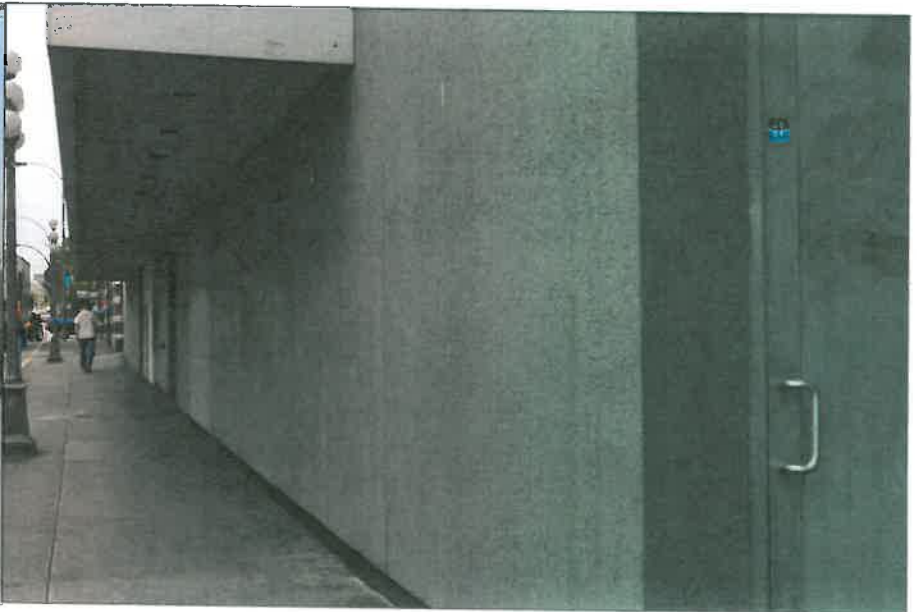
3.1 Building walls facing public streets and walkways should provide visual interest to pedestrians. Long blank walls should be avoided.

Recommended



A variety of storefront styles and sizes, with articulation of entrances and windows, contributes to the positive impact that the streetscape makes on the heritage character of the downtown.

Not Recommended



Long blank walls detract from the visual interest and safety qualities of the streetscape.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.2 Storefronts should be treated in a way that maintains their contribution to the continuity of the streetscape. Non-character-defining materials and treatments should be removed.

Recommended



Exposing, reinstating, or reconstructing character-defining features of a storefront facade should be integrated into rehabilitation projects. Care should be taken to base new features on documentary evidence, or to make them compatible with the character-defining size, scale, materials and colours of the building.

Not Recommended



Building facades should be assessed to determine if “modernizations” that have occurred over time have become character-defining elements. Changes to the building’s facade that detract from its heritage values, or negatively impact the heritage values and character of the streetscape (as above) should be removed.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.3 Individual buildings should be treated as a consistent whole. Buildings with multiple store fronts or primary and secondary facades should avoid visual clutter associated with conflicting or uncomplimentary treatments on each storefront.

Recommended



This building has three storefronts, and all three have received generally the same treatment in terms of tiling, paint colour, awnings, and it has a continuous cornice. This type of treatment allows the building to be “read” as one entity. Signage distinguishes each business from its neighbour.

Not Recommended



A building such as this, with multiple storefronts, should be treated cohesively. The three storefronts in the building above each have a different colour, and different cladding (stucco, tile and wood, respectively), contributing to visual “clutter”. A more cohesive treatment of the building would be more suitable.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.4 Store windows should not be obscured or blocked by signs, blinds, or draperies. They should add to the visual interest of the streetscape by containing product displays, or by displaying services or activities offered inside (professional office space or restaurant seating, for example). Historic transom windows should be revealed when possible.

Recommended



Attractive window displays such as this should be encouraged to add to the visual interest of the streetscape. This inspires passersby to stop and look, potentially enter the store, and also adds visual interest to the street at night.

Not Recommended



The windows in this building are partially blocked by venetian blinds, eliminating the ability for passers-by to see in. Ideally, commercial and service activities should be visible to the street during the day.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.4 *cont'd* Store windows should not be obscured or blocked by signs, blinds, or draperies. They should add to the visual interest of the streetscape by containing product displays, or by displaying services or activities offered inside (professional office space or restaurant seating, for example). Historic transom windows should be revealed when possible.

Recommended



Transom windows over the storefront are revealed to add interest to the facade and help illuminate the interior. The retractable awning allows the transom window to be exposed when the awning is not needed.

Not Recommended

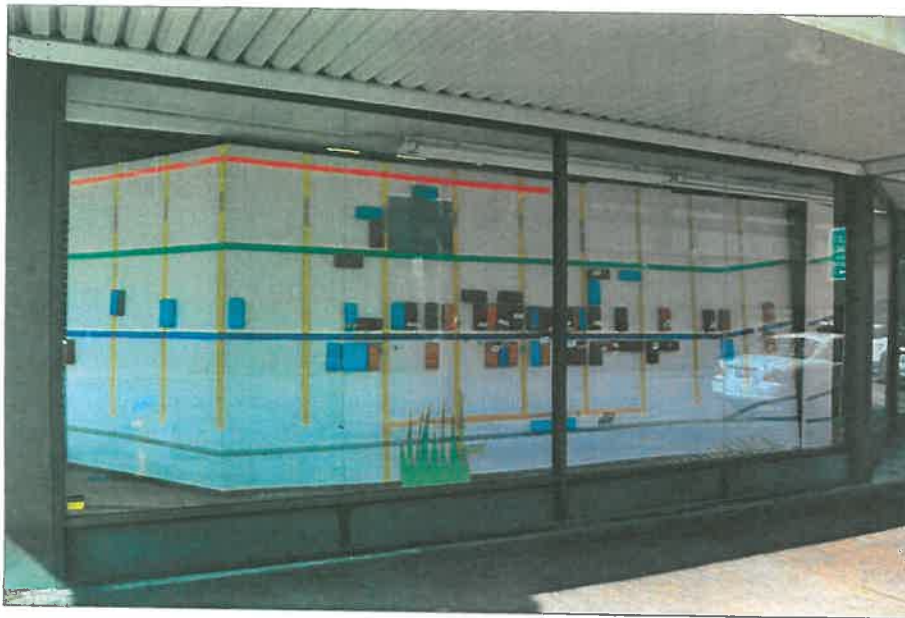


Transom windows on the storefronts of the Davis Building have been covered by stucco. Consideration should be given to whether this later addition to the facade is a character-defining element. If not, the transoms could be re-exposed to add visual interest to the store front and to enhance the general characteristics of the block.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.5 In order to add to the visual interest of the streetscape, and to avoid negative impacts, empty storefronts should be illuminated and occupied with displays.

Recommended



Window displays such as this 3D map of an historic downtown can provide visual interest to empty storefronts, and provide attractive information to shoppers and visitors. Empty store fronts can also be used as advertising space for other businesses or shops downtown, or for local artists' works, or museum displays.

Not Recommended



Empty and boarded-up storefronts detract from the streetscape, and encourage vandalism and apathy in the historic downtown. Broken windows and glass doors should be repaired promptly to avoid a perpetuation of neglect and damage to private and public property.

3.0 Historic Storefronts and Shop Windows at Street Level

3.6 Wherever possible, and unless a character-defining element of the building, blocked-in windows should be re-opened to allow for visual punctuation of facades and add to the aesthetic interest and character of the streetscape.

Recommended



Formerly blocked-in windows can be re-exposed to reveal interesting storefronts.

Not Recommended



An example of a window that has been partially blocked-in with an uncomplimentary material. Consideration should be given to whether the original window openings are character-defining, or whether this alteration to the building's facade has become a character-defining element. Recommendations should be given accordingly that allow for the either the retrieval of the historic window openings, or a more sympathetic treatment for the maintenance of the blocked openings.

Character-Defining Element: Recessed Doorways

Heritage Value: Recessed doorways on commercial buildings are an important aspect of the heritage values of the downtown. The community feels that these doorways contribute to the heritage character of the historic downtown, and add to the sense of eclecticism found in the collection of buildings of different eras and styles.



4.0 Recessed Doorways

4.1 Recessed doorways should be retained or revealed to add visual interest to the streetscape.

Recommended



Recessed entrance treated in a way to add visual interest to the streetscape.

Not Recommended

4.0 Recessed Doorways

4.2 The floor of a recessed doorway should be differentiated from the adjoining sidewalk through contrasting stone, brick or tile paving that does not extend beyond the property line. Existing historic entrance flooring that is covered by paving or other material should be exposed and retained through repair.

Recommended



This doorway shows historic tiling that has been maintained, delineating the private space of the recessed entrance.

Not Recommended



This example shows no differentiation between the public space (sidewalk) and private space (recessed doorway).

4.0 Recessed Doorways

4.2 When no historic or character-defining materials remain within a recessed doorway, new materials should be used to differentiate the entranceway from the sidewalk. Modern materials should be compatible with the style and era of the building, but should not be applied in a way that attempts to recreate a historic style that never existed in that building. If historic evidence or documentation exists, a historic doorway treatment may be recreated if found to be a character-defining element of the place.

Recommended



Modern materials can be used to differentiate a recessed entrance. In this example, tiling that is complimentary to the sidewalk material is used to subtly accentuate the doorway. This adds to the visual interest of the streetscape in a simple way.

Not Recommended

4.0 Recessed Doorways

4.3 Doors should be compatible with the era and architecture of the building.

Recommended

Not Recommended



Example of a residential-style door that is inappropriate for commercial use.

Character-Defining Element: Evidence of Corner Entrances

Heritage Value: Many of the buildings facing intersections in the downtown have bevelled corners with entrances. This character-defining element is important because it helps to illustrate which intersections were intended to be primary commercial hubs. In particular, the intersection at Market Street and 2nd Avenue highlights these corner entrances and bevelled corners on buildings.



5.0 Evidence of Corner Entrances

5.1 Reinstating, or continuing to use character-defining corner entrances.

Recommended



The continued use of an historic corner entrance adds visual interest to the streetscape at the intersection. It also contributes to a sense of continuity in how the building was intended to function.

Not Recommended



The addition of a doorway in a position other than the bevelled corner that was originally intended for an entrance can give a building the appearance of having no clear entrance at all.

5.0 Evidence of Corner Entrances

5.2 Where evidence of former corner entrances exists, efforts should be made to reinstate doorways at these locations. Or, evidence of former entrances should be accentuated in building treatments. When buildings are altered, efforts should be made to utilize corner entrances rather than blocking them in, or putting entrances in different locations.

Recommended



Evidence of a former corner entrance was discovered during rehabilitation work on this heritage building. Reinstating the entrance was not feasible, but the design for the building ensured that a display window highlighted the character-defining elements of the former entrance.

Not Recommended

5.0 Evidence of Corner Entrances

5.3 New buildings at intersections should be designed with corner entrances.

Recommended



The addition of a doorway in a position other than the bevelled corner that was originally intended for an entrance can give a building the appearance of having no clear entrance at all.

Not Recommended

Character-Defining Element: Surviving False Fronts

Heritage Value: Some buildings with original false front survived the two devastating fires that ravaged the downtown in the early twentieth century. These buildings are highly valued by the community, as they are surviving evidence of the fact that Grand Forks started as a frontier boom town.



6.0 Surviving false fronts

6.1 Existing false front buildings should be conserved to highlight their facades. Historic false-front buildings that have been obscured by awnings or other coverings should be exposed to reveal these historic facades. An artificial sense of history should not be encouraged in the design of new buildings. New construction shall not incorporate false-front facades.

Recommended



Historic false-front buildings such as this make a significant contribution to the heritage value and integrity of the commercial streetscape. The character-defining form and character of this building have been respected over time.

Not Recommended



The construction of reproduction false-front buildings can blur the line between the authentic and the fictional. This type of approach can convert the city into a wild-west “theme park”, and detract from the multiple layers and eras of history that contribute to making the city what it is today.

Character-Defining Element: Materials

Heritage Value: Grand Forks holds a strong connection to its heritage as a natural resource-based economy, and to the fact that generations of people have made their livelihood through the use of local materials and skills. Dolomite is a locally-found stone, and its use in downtown buildings is evidence of the fact that this area truly had everything necessary to establish and develop a substantial city in the early twentieth century. Red brick is a character-defining element of Grand Forks as it reflects the industry of the Doukhobors, who built a brick factory to sustain their self-sufficient way of life. Wooden buildings are also found in the downtown, and reflect the earliest development of the city.



7.0 Building Materials

7.1 In new construction, building materials and colours should respect the historic architecture and character of the historic district and the surrounding streetscape, as seen in the colours, textures, and modulation of existing materials..

Recommended

Not Recommended

7.0 Building Materials

7.2 Slip-covering or obscuring of authentic materials with manufactured or synthetic materials inappropriate to the architecture and design of the building are not appropriate. Consideration should be given to whether or not existing coverings added in recent decades have become character-defining elements of the building or streetscape before removal is considered.

Recommended



Historic and authentic materials such as brick and stone should be conserved and effectively maintained to uphold their contribution to the heritage form and character of the downtown.

Not Recommended



The covering of this storefront with stone and the upper storey with cedar shingles reflects a modernization scheme that was popular in the 1970s and 1980s. Consideration should be given to whether this type of modernization has become a character-defining element of the place. If yes, these materials should be maintained. If no, these later additions should be removed to expose character-defining materials of the building's facade.

Character-Defining Element: Awnings

Heritage Value: Awnings are a character-defining element of the downtown, as they reflect the commercial nature of the area. Awnings are features that have been present on many downtown buildings through all eras. They are also important because they reflect the fact that business people have worked to provide patrons with a pleasant shopping experience in all climactic conditions.



8.0 Awnings

8.1 Awnings should respect the character of the era in which the building was constructed. Where feasible, historic research should be done to facilitate the rehabilitation or restoration of historic awnings of individual buildings, keeping in mind that many buildings may not have had awnings at all.

Recommended



Traditionally, awnings on the Grand Forks Hotel were positioned over window openings. In the image above, not all windows have awnings. Research should be done to assess different awning schemes that existed for the building over time, and determine which configuration best supports the heritage values of the place. New awnings may be chosen to reproduce historic, character-defining ones.

Not Recommended



Today, awnings on the building function more as signs than as protection from the elements. Care should be taken to consider whether these newer awnings are a character-defining element of the building, as they may have acquired heritage value of their own as part of the story of the place. If an earlier awning configuration better supports the heritage values of the building, that configuration is preferred.

8.0 Awnings

8.2 Awnings should be installed within masonry openings so that they do not obscure details in the masonry or distort the proportions of architectural features.

Recommended



Example of awning positioned within masonry or window openings.

Not Recommended



Example of a metal awning that is incompatible with the design features and scale of the underlying building.

8.0 Awnings

8.3 Awning and building colours should be compatible. The awning should fit with the colour scheme of the building to which it is attached, and should be respectful of the colours of buildings and awnings on adjacent buildings.

Recommended



Example of a historic building with an awning in a compatible colour.

Not Recommended



While eye-catching, the colour of this awning is not compatible to the surrounding buildings and streetscape.

8.0 Awnings

8.4 For some buildings retractable awnings may be more appropriate than fixed awnings.

Recommended



Retractable awning on a building of suitable vintage. The tree outside may provide sufficient coverage at certain times of year to allow the awning to remain retracted.

Not Recommended

8.0 Awnings

8.5 Back-lit awnings are not appropriate.

Recommended

Not Recommended



Back lit awnings take on the appearance of being a sign. Awnings must only be applied, when necessary, to screen the building and patrons from the elements.

8.0 Awnings

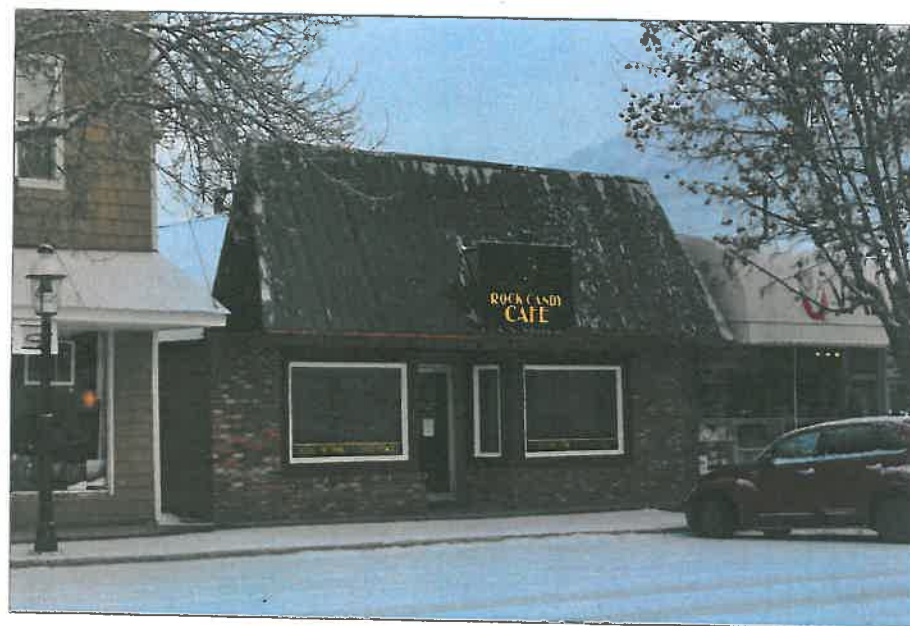
8.6 Metal awnings are not appropriate.

Recommended



When awnings are necessary, canvas or fabric are appropriate. This example illustrates an awning that has an appropriate style, positioning, scale, and material for the era of the building.

Not Recommended



Example of metal awning obscuring building facade. This type of awning takes on the appearance of a roof structure, and changes the form and character of the building.

8.0 Awnings

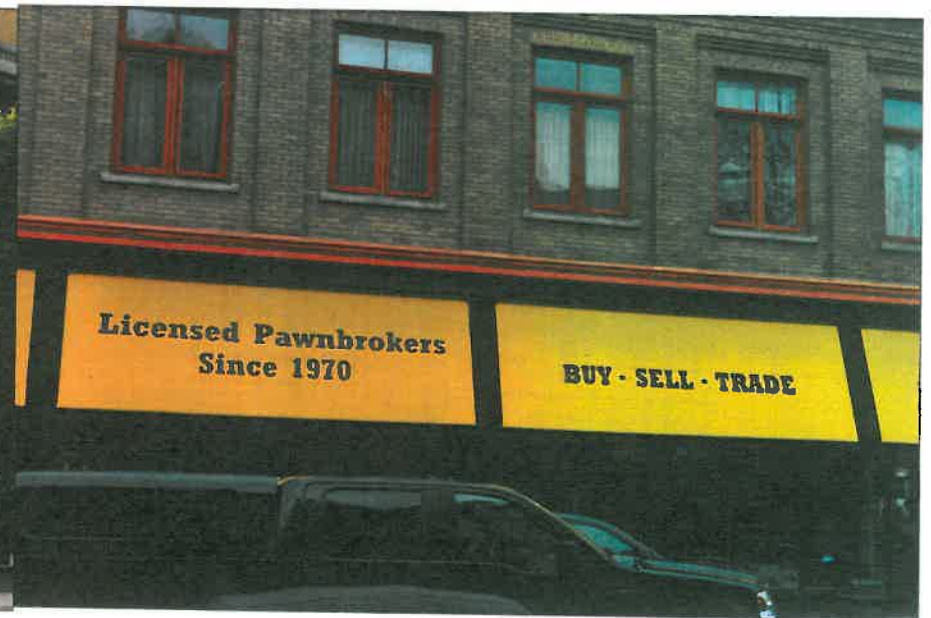
8.7 Awnings that function solely as signage for a building are not appropriate.

Recommended



Awnings may include some signage, such as the name or type of business, as seen on the edges of the retractable awnings above. Lettering on awnings should not overpower size and scale of the awning.

Not Recommended



A shallow awning with a primary use as signage is not appropriate.

8.0 Awning

8.8 Awnings may not be necessary on some buildings. If new awnings are proposed on an existing building, investigation of the building facade should be done to determine if and how awnings have been placed on the building in the past. If no evidence of previous awning exists, consideration should be given to whether the addition of a new awning will negatively impact character-defining elements, or diminish the heritage values of the building or streetscape.

Recommended

Not Recommended



Consideration should be given to whether awnings are necessary. Obsolete or impractical awnings should be removed. Infrastructure such as frames or boxes for missing awnings should be considered for removal if they detract from the heritage values of the place.

8.0 Awnings

8.9 Awnings should be well-maintained and cleaned to avoid staining, mildew, tearing, and discolouration.

Recommended



This example shows an awning that is well-made and well maintained. It is clean and in good repair, with no fading or discolouration.

Not Recommended



Awnings should be cleaned regularly to avoid the build-up of organic materials which can accelerated deterioration and which contribute to the unkempt appearance of the streetscape.

Character-Defining Element: Signs

Heritage Value: Signs are an important part of the heritage character of the downtown. The City has a strong connection to its economic heritage – it was founded on the promise of prosperity and plenty provided by the earth and climate. Industry and business are the foundations on which the city was built, and from the earliest days of development of the city the advertising of essential and unique businesses and services has been a characteristic of the downtown.



9.0 Signs

9.1 Historic signs should be maintained if found to be a character-defining element of the place. Historic signs that are uncovered during conservation or renovation projects should be properly conserved if determined to be a character-defining element of the building.

Recommended



An historic sign uncovered during a rehabilitation project was integrated into the modern design plans for this building.

Not Recommended

9.0 Signs

9.1 *cont'd* Historic signs should be maintained if found to be a character-defining element of the place. Historic signs that are uncovered during conservation or renovation projects should be properly conserved if determined to be a character-defining element of the building.

Recommended



Signs such as this, identifying the building's use, should be maintained if they contribute to the heritage values of the place. Numbers and lettering that identify historic information such as year of construction should also be maintained if determined to be character-defining elements.

Not Recommended

9.0 Signs

9.2 No sign should be constructed or situated so that it disfigures or conceals any significant architectural feature of the building.

Recommended



A sign may simply be lettering attached to the facade of the building. Care should be taken to position all signs in a way that does not obscure the building's architecture. In the example above, the lettering is placed above the storefront, in between rows of decorative brickwork.

Not Recommended



This back-lit letter board sign may be obscuring a character-defining feature of the corner entrance of this building. This sign may also be a character-defining element of this historic place, so consideration should be given to finding another placement for it. For example, the sign may be relocated into the redundant sign frame situated on the roof, if that sign is also determined to be a character-defining element.

9.0 Signs

9.3 Signs should clearly identify the business or service in the building, and avoid a cluttered or messy appearance.

Recommended



A sign such as this is suitable for advertising a business in an historic area.

Not Recommended

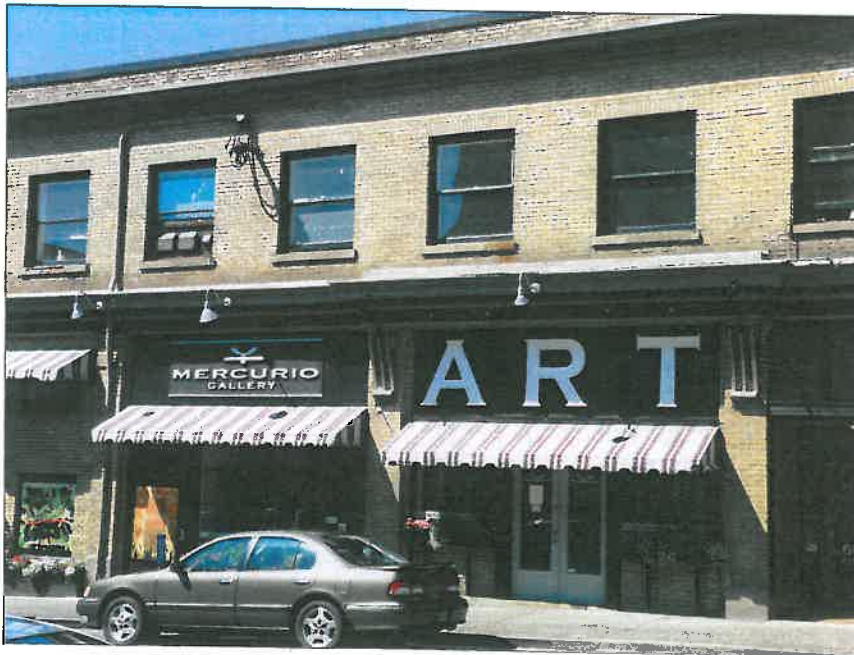


An option such as this is not acceptable for advertising a business or service. The size and positioning of these signs in the store window detract from the historic facade, and eliminate the ability for sight lines into and out of the building.

9.0 Signs

9.3 *cont'd* Signs should clearly identify the business or service in the building, and avoid a cluttered or messy appearance.

Recommended



Simple and clear signage that respects the architecture and design of the storefront and building is desirable in a historic district.

Not Recommended



Too many signs on one building can overpower a facade. In this case, there is too much advertising, too many colours, and too many different types of signs for the scale of building. Signs should also not block store front windows.

9.0 Signs

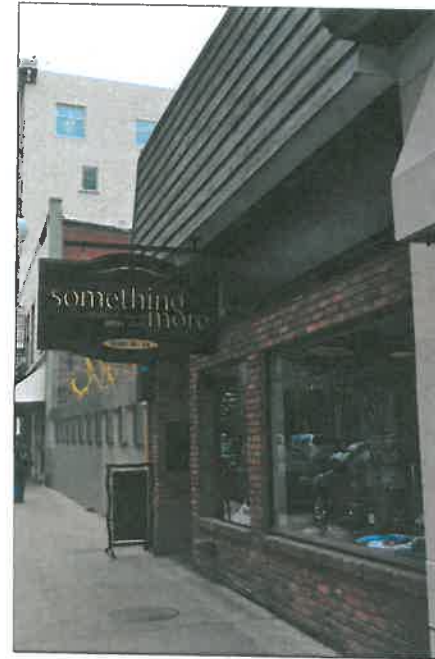
9.4 The overall design of a sign, including its size, shape, materials, texture, colour and method of lighting should be compatible with and respond to the era and architecture of the building.

Recommended



A modern sign on a modern building in an historic district can be designed in a way to respect the form and character of the surrounding area, without giving a false sense of history.

Not Recommended



While the materials and design of this sign are suitable to the historic area, its size is too large for the scale of the building and storefront. Care should be taken to ensure that a sign doesn't overpower the storefront.

9.0 Signs

9.5 Signs made of natural materials such as wood, metal, glass, stone, etc. are acceptable. Plastic and back-lit signs are less desirable, unless these signs correspond to the architecture or era of the building or are a character-defining element of the building. Neon signs are permitted on buildings of an era and design suited to that type of signage. The colours and textures of signs and buildings should be compatible.

Recommended



A metal sign such as this can provide simple information about the nature of a business.

Not Recommended

9.0 Signs

9.8 Signs should be well maintained to avoid damage, peeling, or fading. Unless a character-defining element of a building, obsolete signs should be removed promptly.

Recommended

Not Recommended



Consideration should be given to whether signs like these are necessary for the functioning of the building, and whether they have become character-defining elements of the building. If so, they should be repaired and allowed to function properly. If not, they should be removed.

Character-Defining Element: Building Colours

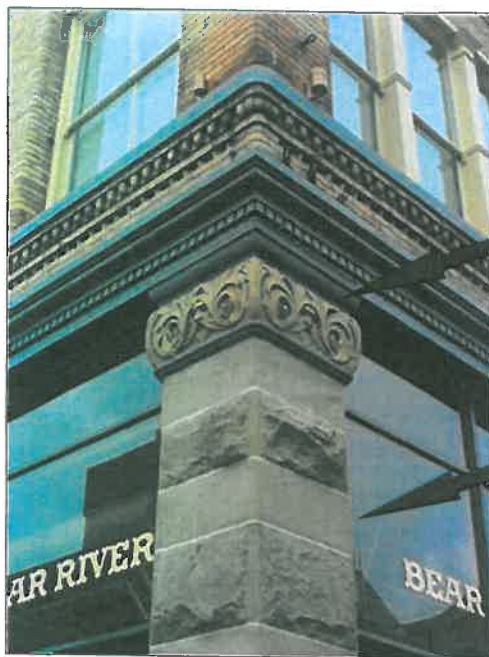
Heritage Value: While specific building colours in the downtown have not yet been identified as character-defining elements, the colour treatment of buildings is important in supporting the overall heritage character of the area.



10.0 Building Colours

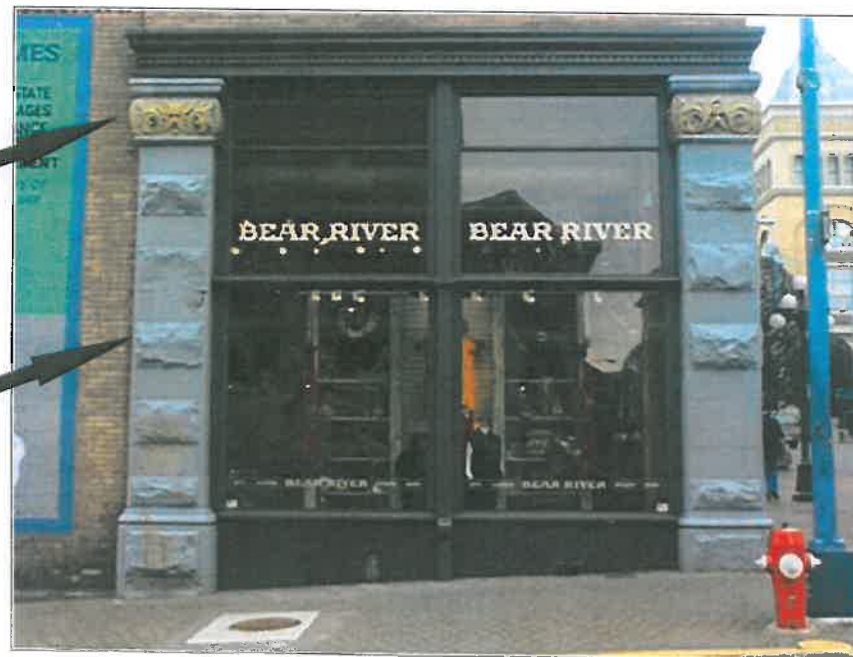
10.1 Careful consideration should be given to whether the colour of surfaces are a character-defining element of the place, or whether the exposure of raw building materials possesses heritage value. Not all buildings were intended to be painted, and paint should be removed from facades if it is not determined to be character-defining. Similarly, paint should not be applied to facades if the exposure of historic materials is a character-defining element of that building.

Recommended



Removing paint from surfaces that were not intended to be painted should be a part of facade upgrades or building rehabilitation projects. Decisions about paint removal (or application) should be based on documentary research or existing physical evidence on the building. Reintroducing character-defining colour schemes to features such as the column capital and window surrounds should also take place.

Not Recommended

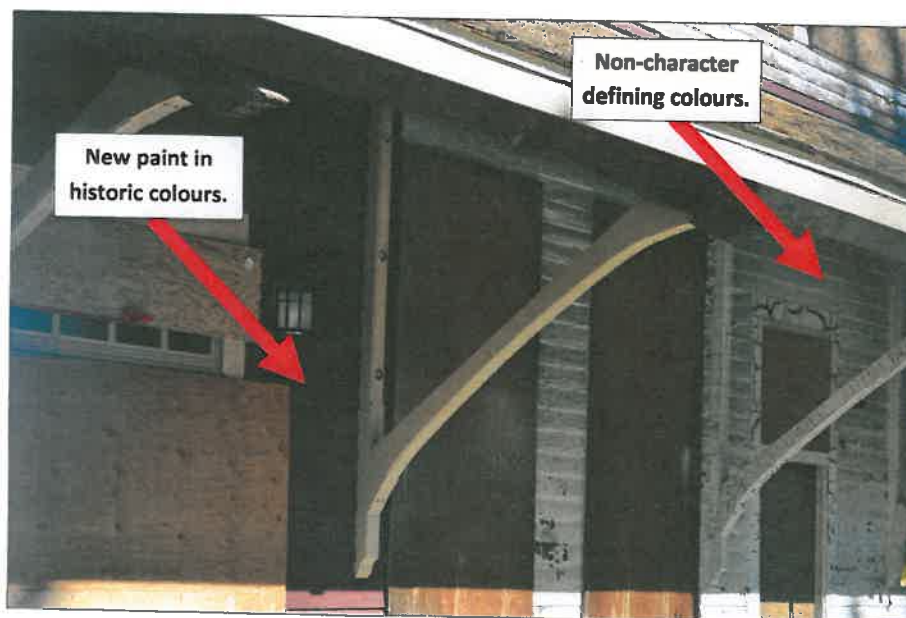


The columns identified above (and left) are constructed of sandstone, a material that is not intended to be painted. Painting of such material can shorten its life, but compromising its ability to “breathe”. Also, the natural colour of the stone was intended to provide a compatible contrast to the exposed brickwork of the building.

10.0 Building Colours

10.2 Where a historic paint colour scheme is identified as a character-defining element, new paint should be matched to the historic colours.

Recommended



The CPR station in Nelson undergoing conservation, including returning it to an earlier paint scheme. The decision was made to paint it in historic signature colours of the CPR at the time of the building's construction—burgundy and cream. Evaluation of the building determined that heritage values lie in the building's association with the CPR.

Not Recommended



At some point in its history the building was painted white and black. Assessment of the building's heritage values determined that these colours were not character-defining, as more heritage value rests in the building's association with the CPR.

10.0 Building Colours

10.3 Where paint colours are not a character-defining element, paint colours should be appropriate to the architectural style and era of the building, and be compatible with other nearby colour schemes.

Recommended



Building or paint colours should be chosen to ensure compatibility with the surrounding streetscape and character-defining colours and materials of adjacent buildings. The colour of this building was “toned down” after the initial paint colour (see above right) was determined to be in appropriate for the historic area.

Not Recommended



Corporate branding for this business within the historic area called for bright signature colours. Garish or bright colour schemes are generally not suitable in a historic district.

Character-Defining Element: Lighting of Signs and Buildings

Heritage Value: The lighting of buildings and signs is an important supporting characteristic of the heritage of the downtown. Because the city has such strong roots in the development of economic prosperity through business and commercial ventures, it is important that businesses highlight their offerings to locals and visitors in order to celebrate their place in this historic continuum. Lighting of buildings and signs is important to the vibrancy of a historic downtown, and adds to the attraction of the place. It allows for more activities to take place in the evening, and expands the economic potential of the historic area.



Photos to be inserted.



11.0 Lighting of Signs and Buildings

11.1 Lighting should be permanent and should respect the heritage values and character-defining elements of the building. Harsh, un-screened, flashing, blinking and garish lights and entry lights on motion sensors are not appropriate. Temporary lighting such as Christmas lights is not permitted.

Recommended



Find the lighting that is best suited to the function, while respecting the heritage values of the building and surrounding area. Modern lighting can be used effectively on historic buildings. Lighting solutions should be compatible with the character of the building, and do not necessarily have to be a “heritage” style.

Not Recommended



Avoid selecting lighting simply because it appears to have a “heritage” style. Carefully consider the heritage values and character-defining elements of the building when selecting accessories such as lights.

11.0 Lighting of Signs and Buildings

11.2 Lighting that highlights the architecture of the building is encouraged, but that avoids light pollution into the sky.

Recommended



Many cities encourage facade lighting programs to highlight building architecture and provide visual interest for night-time activities downtown.

Photo: http://uvilab.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/flickr_1y09-29.jpg

Not Recommended



City of Grand Forks Heritage Program

Design Guidelines for the Public Realm in the Historic Downtown

15 May 2011



Prepared by:



Heritage Branch

Table of Contents

Introduction

Downtown Grand Forks is a cohesive historic place unto itself – a cultural landscape containing multiple character-defining elements that embody and contribute to the unique heritage character of the place. Approaches to conservation should be undertaken accordingly.

The City of Grand Forks can encourage the revitalization of the historic downtown through the introduction of amenities and features that respond to the heritage values and character-defining elements of the area.

Purpose of these design guidelines

These design guidelines are intended to meet and support the planning objectives of the Commercial Development Permit Area, and the objectives for heritage conservation as identified in the OCP. Once incorporated into the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP), they are intended to provide the City's planning staff, community advisory groups, property owners, architects and designers with a framework for decision making related to changes to the public realm within the identified heritage downtown.

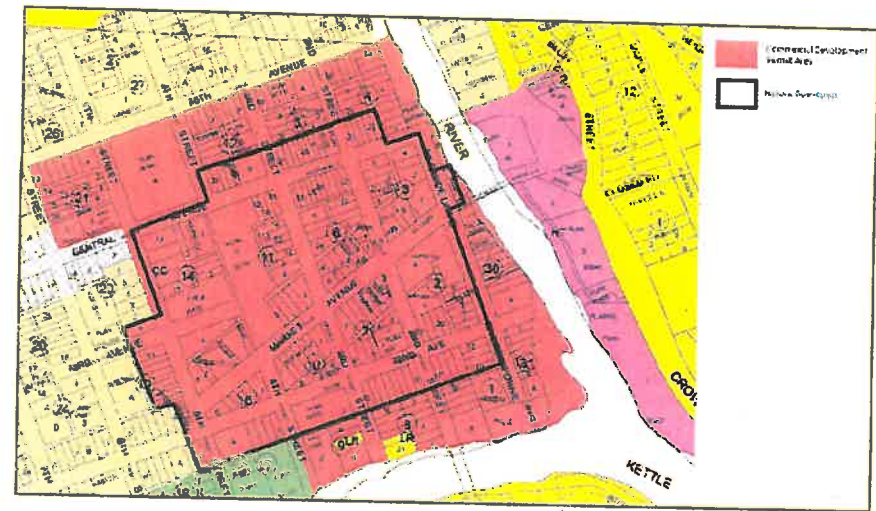
Focus Area

The area subject to these design guidelines is identified as the historic downtown. This area lies within the Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA), and is defined as follows:

These guidelines provide information necessary for integrating heritage conservation standards and considerations into the Development Permit application process for the historic downtown within the Commercial DPA. Development Permit applications for build-

ings located within the historic downtown area must follow these design guidelines as part of their review and approval process.

Strengths in the Downtown



The community of Grand Forks feels strongly about a number of positive qualities of the downtown that should be retained, and upheld as development occurs. People like the fact that the downtown is walkable, and that parking is free (with no bylaw enforcement). These aspects of the downtown experience are seen as having a positive influence on people's likelihood of shopping and doing business in the historic commercial core.

Although the downtown is experiencing a decline in business, it is still seen as a key venue for social events such as the Farmer's Market, community events and gatherings, and performances. The parks within the downtown area are also an important aspect of the social livelihood of Grand Forks, and provide locations for events and activities – such as markets, sporting events, and music

performances – that draw people into the downtown.

Issues in the Downtown

The downtown in Grand Forks is experiencing economic and social issues. The community feels strongly that the numerous empty buildings in the commercial core have a negative impact on the attractiveness of the area. What was once a vibrant downtown has become a bit “slower” – many stores close at 4pm on Saturday. Some people feel that the downtown is currently not a welcoming place and has a somewhat “dingy” appearance. Some feel that the local government has not valued or protected the downtown sufficiently to maintain a desired level of upkeep to ensure that the commercial core remains an attractive place to do business.

A number of factors are contributing to the current deterioration of the downtown core. In particular, the recent closures of major employers and businesses in town have resulted in an economic downturn. Furthermore, the city faces a major challenge related to its close proximity to the US border. Many citizens choose to shop “across the border” because it is often more affordable to do so. This “financial bleed” has a major impact on the economic stability of the community, and results in fewer businesses (and buildings) being owned and operated downtown. The community feels strongly about maintaining the downtown as the commercial core of the city.

While the downtown of Grand Forks has good “bones” in terms of building infrastructure, scale, and green spaces, there are deterrents to these qualities being used to their maximum potential. The community values the use of the downtown for social activities, but there is currently a lack of options for interesting and diverse cultural experiences after the stores close in the evenings. The downtown is walkable, and within close proximity to residential

neighbourhoods, but amenities such as bike racks and benches are few, creating a disincentive for people to find alternative forms of transportation into the commercial core.

Statement of Significance

The conservation and revitalization of the downtown should be guided by the heritage values of the place. This Statement of Significance describes the place, articulates community heritage values for the downtown, and lists the character-defining elements (characteristics that must be conserved in order to retain values). The design guidelines respond directly to this Statement of Significance.

Description of Historic Place

The historic downtown of Grand Forks is an urban commercial area comprising approximately four square city blocks. This historic place includes buildings and green spaces on both sides of the four key streets that define the downtown – Highway 3 to the north, Riverside Drive to the east, 72nd Avenue to the South, and 5th Street to the west. The historic downtown also includes Market Street, the “main street” of Grand Forks, which runs diagonally from southwest to northeast through the core, and the streetscapes on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets between Highway 3 and 72nd Avenue. The historic downtown includes tree-lined streetscapes with buildings of various styles and eras ranging from one to three storeys, narrow walkways between many buildings, and mid-block service alleys. A number of landmark buildings such as city hall and the museum are also included in this area.

Heritage Values of Historic Place

The downtown area of Grand Forks is valued by the community as a symbol of the prosperity, opportunity and diversity of the economic innovation that gave the city its earliest beginnings. Situated at a geographic location that allowed Grand Forks to be a transportation hub for road and rail, the scale and stature of the downtown reflect

the importance of the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers in supporting industries such as mining, logging, and agriculture in the area.

The nature of the buildings in the downtown reflects a sense of permanence and demonstrates the importance of the community within the region in its formative years and decades. The presence of substantial landmarks, interspersed with other buildings of varying ages, profiles, statures and uses illustrates the ongoing and evolving role of the downtown as an economic and social hub. The historic buildings downtown reflect a desire for permanence, orderliness, cleanliness, and credibility, reinforcing the idea that Grand Forks represented affluence and optimism for the future in the Boundary region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many physical qualities of the buildings in the downtown are important reflections of the community’s heritage. In particular, the presence of locally-produced brick and indigenous stone reinforce the fact that this region was considered an ideal settlement location – the area either naturally produced materials necessary for permanent habitation, or contained the ideal conditions for creating products needed for a prosperous community.

While the downtown is valued for its substantial collection of historic buildings that speak to the city’s earliest development as an economic “boom” town, it is also valued for its enduring role as social core of the community. The relationship of the downtown to surrounding residential communities is important, as it shows the intention of residents being able to access the businesses and services they needed in a convenient manner. The pedestrian-friendly nature of the downtown is an important aspect of its heritage, as it allows current residents to experience and access the commercial core in the convenient manner it was originally intended. Historically, the downtown was used as a vibrant place for social activities

such as dances, theatre, community meals, and parades - the continued use of the downtown for activities such as the farmers' market and outdoor recreation maintains this aspect of its heritage.

Character-Defining Elements

- Location of downtown at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers
- Relationship between industrial heritage sites such as mills, old smelter site and slag heap, railways, and rail yards.
- Views – panoramas of Observation Mountain etc.
- Market Avenue's diagonal axis
- Back alleys
- Mid-block walkways between buildings
- Landmark buildings such as City Hall (Old Post Office), Museum (Old Courthouse)
- Building height ranging from one to three storeys
- Eclectic Streetscape made up of a variety of buildings of different eras and architectural styles
- Historic storefronts and shop windows at street level
- Recessed doorways
- Evidence of corner entrances facing intersections
- Surviving false fronts on some buildings
- Materials such as red brick and dolomite
- Awnings on some buildings
- Signs advertising businesses and institutions
- Lighting on individual buildings and in public spaces

How to Use these Guidelines

1. Understand heritage value and character

City staff should be familiar with the heritage context statement for the City, and the Statement of Significance for the historic downtown. They should be familiar with community heritage values and character-defining elements. **Always ensure that design decisions respond to community heritage values and character-defining elements of the historic downtown.**

2. Think of the downtown as a cohesive historic place

The public realm within the downtown historic area is the framework that pulls the whole area together. The design treatments for elements of the public realm—street furniture, lighting, vegetation, etc.—can help to define the historic downtown. These design guidelines are intended to help define the historic downtown as a special area of the city through the cohesive treatment of public spaces and amenities.

3. Develop the intervention plan

Consider the appropriate level of intervention for the public element being designed. For example, is new lighting required for the whole downtown area, or could the lighting on one street be renewed to encourage the rehabilitation of private property in that area? Consider how your changes will affect property and business owners in the downtown (both positively and negatively). Consult with property and business owners for projects that will interfere with business operations.

4. Apply design guidelines

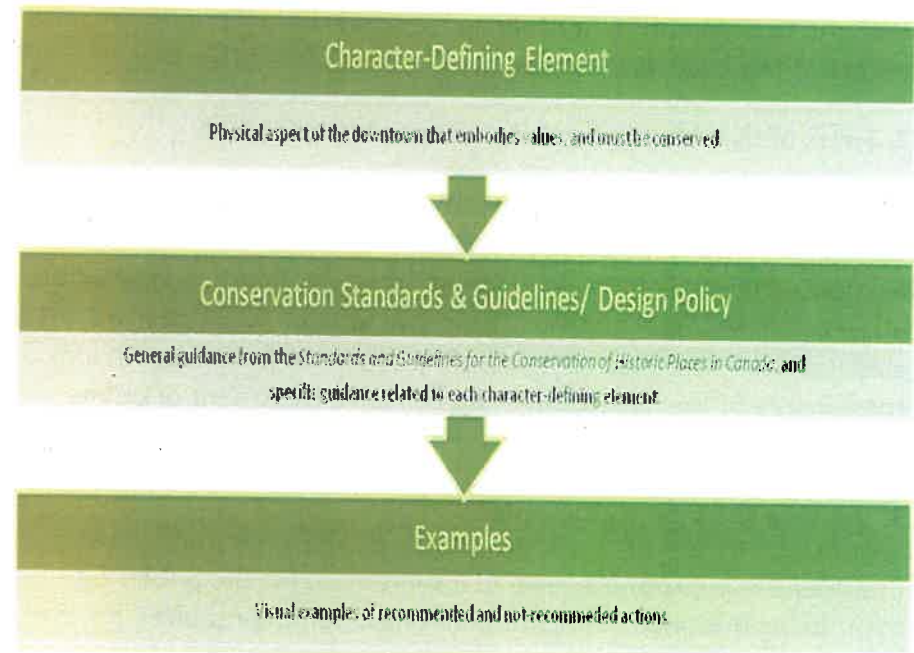
Select the design guidelines that apply to the project that has been chosen for the downtown. Work with planners, designers, or landscape architects to develop a project plan that follows both these design guidelines and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

Design Guidelines

Historic area design guidelines are intended to provide direction to professionals (such as designers, architects, and trades people) and decision makers (such as council, planners, and advisory committees) to create buildings, amenities, and public spaces that are responsive to the heritage values of the community, yet reflect the continued evolution of the place over time. The design guidelines for downtown Grand Forks are intended to provide inspiration for how the city can develop the commercial core in a way that reinforces the heritage values that make Grand Forks unique. They also provide somewhat more prescriptive guidance on how particular elements of the downtown – such as signs, awnings, and facades – should be revitalized.

These design guidelines are descriptive, rather than prescriptive. Rather than provide guidance based on set architectural styles and formulas, the policies provided in the guidelines below respond directly to the heritage values and character-defining elements identified by community members. They also take into consideration the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* – the best practices document for guiding how conservation work happens to historic places.

The development of these design guidelines followed this logic model:



General Character-Defining Elements of the Historic Downtown Public Realm:

The following character-defining elements of the historic downtown were used to guide the development of these design guidelines.

Character-Defining Element: Geography, Landscape and Setting

Heritage Value: The physical situation of downtown Grand Forks is an important aspect of its heritage values. The situation of the heart of the City in the Kettle Valley speaks to the ideal environmental conditions that warranted the development of a centre of business and industry in the late nineteenth century. The location of the commercial core at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers is a significant reflection of the need to maximize on the transportation and power advantages of these waterways. The relationship between the downtown and industrial heritage sites such as mills, the former smelter site, railways, and rail yards is important because it provides the historical context that shows the City's roots in the natural resource economy. There are a number of character-defining elements that speak to the heritage of geography, landscape, and setting in the downtown:

Character-Defining Element: Urban Planning and Land Patterns

Heritage Value: The layout of streets and building lots in the downtown is an important reflection of the city's physical development over time. The orientation of the commercial streets, and the size, shape, and relationships of lots within the grid illustrate the industrial and commercial roots that gave the city its early boom. The relationship between buildings and streets, alleys, and walkways is also important, and it is a reminder of the sense of continuity that has persisted through all of the boom and bust periods of the city's history.

Character-Defining Element: Public Amenities (Street Furniture, Landscaping, Lighting, etc.)

Heritage Value: While not specifically identified as character-defining elements of the downtown, street furniture and amenities are important for supporting historic activities and uses for the downtown. The community has identified the walkability and pedestrian-friendly scale of the downtown as being character-defining characteristics of the historic area.

Design Element: 1.0 Views

The community feels a strong sense of connection to the landscape provided by the Kettle Valley. The surrounding mountains are reminders of the mining industry that gave Grand Forks its commercial and community roots. The ability to see land features such as Goat Mountain and Observation Mountain from the downtown is an important character-defining element, because it grounds the commercial core within the landscape that helped to create it.

Design Policy 1.1:

Development should occur in a way that does not obscure sightlines from downtown to Goat Mountain and Observation Mountain.

Recommended



Not Recommended

Views such as this should be maintained as the community changes. Construction that obstructs this type of viewscape should not be encouraged.

Design Element: 2.0 Market Avenue's Diagonal Axis

The fact that Market Avenue runs through the downtown on a diagonal axis is perhaps one of the most significant character-defining elements of Grand Forks. The four blocks of market street are a reminder of the strong roots the community has as a railway town, as this was once a key rail corridor that supported and grew commercial and industrial business in the downtown.

Design Policy 2.1:

Development should occur in a way that highlights and maintains the visual and physical effects that the “skewed” orientation of Market Street has on surrounding blocks, streets and buildings.

Recommended



Development in the downtown should respect the asymmetry that Market Avenue's diagonal axis has on buildings, streets, back alleys and walkways in the downtown.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 3.0 Back Alleys

The back alleys in downtown Grand Forks are an important aspect of its heritage because they reflect community planning designed to be efficient and tidy. Typically used for service activities such as deliveries and waste collection, these back alleys speak to the one-time mixed commercial activities of the downtown, which included retail, institutional, and industrial businesses.

Design Policy 3.1:

Back alleys should be kept clean and free of debris.

Recommended



Back alleys can be utilitarian, providing access for services, and they can be aesthetically appealing spaces.

Not Recommended



Debris and trash found in a back alley reflects a disregard for the downtown, and should be cleaned up as promptly as possible.

Design Element: 3.0 Back Alleys

Design Policy 3.2:

Alleyways should be developed as secondary opportunities for commercial enterprises.

Recommended

Not Recommended



Back alleys such as this one provide excellent potential for commercial development on secondary facades.

Design Element: 4.0 Walkways Between Buildings

Some buildings in the downtown have mid-block walkways between them. This feature of the downtown is a character-defining element because it speaks to the importance of efficiency and access for the thriving commercial activities that were the economic foundation for the development of the city. These walkways are reflective of the urban planning designed to accommodate the railway access on what is now Market Street. The skewed orientation of that street impacted the size and shape of city blocks in the downtown, resulting in many businesses not having access to service alleys. The walkways behind many buildings provides access to services and rear facades for the businesses that do not have access to back alleys. These walkways have the potential to become opportunities for interesting and unexpected commercial experiences, and provide connection routes between streets and alleyways.

Design Policy 4.1:

Alleyways should be developed as secondary opportunities for commercial enterprises.

Recommended



Walkways can provide opportunities for off-street commercial experiences such as shops, dining areas, cafe seating, or patios.

Not Recommended



Walkways and courtyards should be developed for use beyond services and parking. Back alleys provide better opportunities for these activities.

Design Element: 4.0 Walkways Between Buildings

Design Policy 4.2:

Building facades facing onto walkways should be treated in a similar fashion as street front facades in terms of colours, detailing, and materials. However, care should be taken to ensure that walkway facades have less detail to identify them as secondary facades.

Recommended



Buildings situated on the corner of alleyways or walkways should be visually appealing on both their streetfront and secondary facades.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 5.0 Street Furniture and Public Amenities

Street furniture and other public amenities contribute to the sense of place in a historic area. Design decisions for these objects can ensure that they support and communicate the heritage values of the area to the public.

Design Policy 5.1:

Street furniture should be designed in a way to reflect the heritage values of the community.

Recommended



The waterfront in the Steveston area of Richmond has been rehabilitated in recent years. Amenities such as this tree planter made from a fish container reflects the heritage values of this neighbourhood, and its history related to the fishing industry.

Not Recommended

Design Element: Street Furniture and Public Amenities

Design Policy: 5.2

Street furniture should be compatible with the surrounding form and character of the streetscape.

Recommended



Street benches in the North Vancouver waterfront have been designed using materials and styles that reflect the maritime industrial heritage of the area.

Not Recommended



Generic, inadequately sized, and incompatible street furniture tends to detract from a historic area, rather than reinforce community heritage values.

Design Element: 5.0 Street Furniture and Public Amenities

Design Policy 5.3:

Benches and trash receptacles should be carefully situated to avoid congestion and litter problems.

Recommended



Placing trash and recycling receptacles in unobtrusive locations is ideal. They should, however, still be visible in order to avoid disposal of trash in the street.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 5.0 Street Furniture and Public Amenities

Design Policy 5.4:

Amenities that support the overall experience of visitors to the downtown should be encouraged.

Recommended



Bike racks can be simple and need not take up a lot of room on the sidewalk. The presence of amenities such as this can attract more people to the downtown area.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 5.0 Street Furniture and Public Amenities

Design Policy 5.5:

Items such as utility boxes should be treated in a way that enhances the public realm, and highlights the heritage values and sense of place of the historic downtown.

Recommended



Decorative wraps can be applied to utility boxes to help beautify once-unsightly infrastructure. Wraps are reasonably easy to maintain and to change, and can be designed with any type of image. The example above highlights a historic image of a viewscape, and often maps or images of local flora and fauna are used.

Not Recommended



Utility boxes can be targets for vandalism, and can detract from the aesthetics of a city.

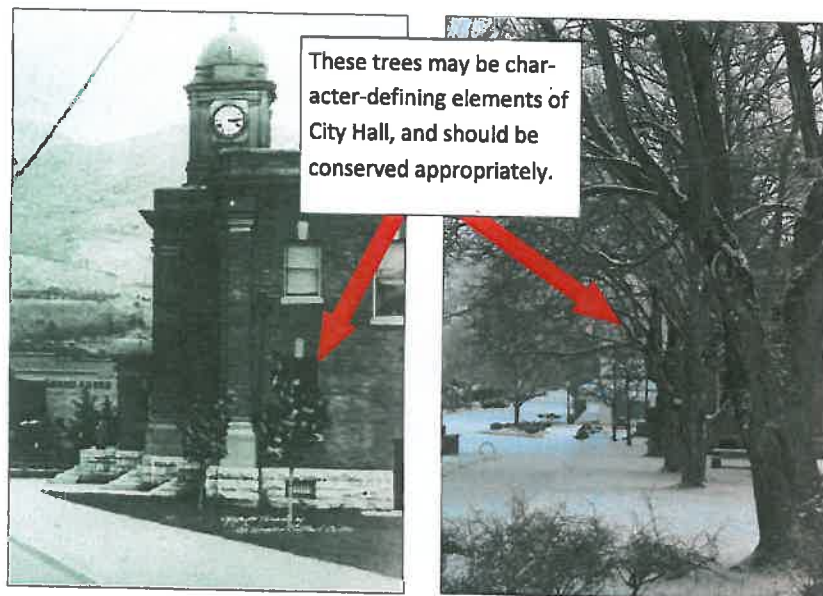
Design Element: 6.0 Trees Along Commercial Streets

The presence of trees in the downtown is an important contributing factor to the heritage character of the area. The trees that line commercial streets such as Market Avenue support the sense of permanence and importance inherent to the original design intent of the urban area.

Design Policy 6.1:

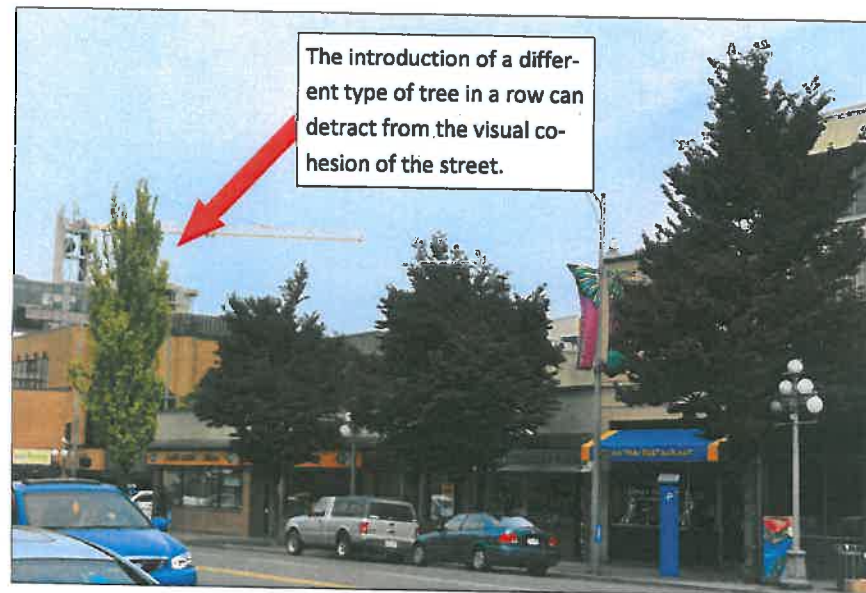
When significant character-defining trees deteriorate beyond the ability to repair them, new trees of the same type should be planted to replace them. Significant trees need to be preserved according to best arboriculture practices.

Recommended



Trees such as those located by City Hall may be considered character-defining elements of that historic place, and contribute to the heritage values of downtown. If one or more of these trees are determined to be sick or dying, they should be replaced with new trees of the same species.

Not Recommended



The introduction of a different species of tree in a row of trees can give a streetscape a lack of visual cohesion. Trees can help to establish a sense of place, and should be consistent with and appropriate to the heritage values of the historic area.

Design Element: 6.0 Trees Along Commercial Streets

The presence of trees in the downtown is an important contributing factor to the heritage character of the area. The trees that line commercial streets such as Market Avenue support the sense of permanence and importance inherent to the original design intent of the urban area.

Design Policy 6.2:

Where species of trees is not a character-defining feature of a streetscape, care should be taken to introduce new trees that respond to community heritage values related to agriculture and forestry.

Recommended

Not Recommended

Design Element: 7.0 Green Space/Landscaping

The presence of green space and gardens in the downtown is important because it is reflective of the rich agricultural heritage of the community and the valley. The community feels a connection to the flora and fauna of the valley, and the translation of this connection with nature resides in the presence of parks and landscaping in the downtown.

Design Policy 7.1:

Landscaping of both hard and soft surfaces can be designed to reflect the heritage values of the community. Landscaping can interpret the history and heritage of the city, and contribute to the sense and understanding of place.

Recommended



Paving and landscaping that follows the path of a now-culverted waterway helps to reflect the historic configuration of this urban area. This treatment interprets the natural history of the place, and allows people to understand a different set of heritage values embodied in the place.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 7.0 Green Space/Landscaping

Design Policy 7.2:

Green space and landscaping should be encouraged in both public and private spaces downtown. Vegetation should be chosen to reflect the heritage values of the community.

Recommended



Choosing a combination of native and historic plant species that are suited to the area can reflect multiple layers of a community's history, and support the heritage values of the downtown.

Not Recommended

Design Element: 8.0 Lighting

Grand Forks has had a variety of lighting schemes and designs throughout its history. While no one particular style of lighting is seen as a character-defining element of the downtown, the presence of effective lighting on buildings and in public spaces is seen as being essential to supporting the commercial heritage of the area. Street lighting can be chosen based on historic documentation, or through assessment of community heritage values.

Design Policy:

Public lighting should be the minimum required for public safety. This ensures that patrons of the downtown have enough light to keep them safe, and avoids “light pollution”.

Recommended



Not Recommended

Assessment of current lighting in the downtown should be undertaken to determine if it is suitable for the needs of downtown business and property owners, and members of the public visiting the area.



City of Grand Forks Heritage Program Business Improvement Area Proposal

15 May 2011



Prepared by:



Heritage Branch

Introduction

A VIBRANT AND THRIVING DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL AREA IS THE BAROMETER OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

A historic downtown is the heart of the community. It is the wellspring from which the community grew, and provides an anchor for commercial and social activities. Without a vibrant and healthy downtown, adjacent neighbourhoods suffer; it's impossible to have healthy "suburbs" when the urban centre is failing. Without a downtown a community loses its sense of identity, and downtown centres that are neglected are hard-pressed to be seen as a source of inspiration and growth, or a place for building community pride and engagement.

The City of Grand Forks realizes that its historic downtown core, and the buildings and landscapes that contribute to it are a valuable resource in the community. The conservation and rehabilitation of the heritage character and buildings of the commercial core is a key factor to the successful revitalization of the downtown and promoting the economic, social, and environmental health of the community. This report proposes a plan by which the City can facilitate economic development through the conservation and revitalization of its historic resources in the downtown.

Why a Business Improvement Area?

The City of Grand Forks has expressed an interest in downtown revitalization through the improvement and conservation of its historic resources. The aesthetic

improvement of buildings and public spaces in the historic downtown is a goal of the local government, business owners, and property owners alike.

Business Improvement Area – revitalization of built environment

Community Charter, Section 215

A local government council can designate a portion of the community a "Business Improvement Area" (BIA) in order to finance marketing, promotional or revitalization programs for that area. Among other things, the BIA can be the focus point for business improvement schemes such as improving and beautifying streets, and for conserving heritage property. The BIA provides an organized structure and is a source of funding to allow businesses to improve their commercial viability.

For business and property owners in downtown Grand Forks, the establishment of a BIA could provide financing for the revitalization of the heritage character of the historic commercial core – funding for activities that may currently not be feasible for businesses working independently. In particular, a BIA in Grand Forks would allow the downtown business community to receive funding and work together to meet the issues listed above. It would create the organization and galvanization needed to improve the aesthetic, social, and heritage characteristics of the downtown.

In order to create the Business Improvement Area, council may grant money to a corporation or other organization that has, as its key focus, the planning and implementation of a business improvement scheme. In this case, the BIA for Grand Forks should ideally focus on conserving heritage property, improving and beautifying streets and sidewalks, and encouraging business in the downtown. Grant money provided to such an organization must be recovered by means of a local service tax.

The basic process for creating a Business Improvement area is:

1. Prepare the BIA bylaw to be reviewed by all business people in the historic downtown. This bylaw should take into consideration the following:
 - a. The name of the BIA – the BIA management group must be a legal entity to allow council to forward the funds for the business improvement scheme. It must also represent the business people; the group should provide accurate representation of the mix of businesses involved in the BIA.
 - b. The BIA area – the boundaries of the BIA should be clearly identified on a map, as all businesses within those boundaries will be paying the levy to fund the BIA.

- c. The term of the BIA – a suitable timeframe that will allow the goals of the business improvement scheme should be set.
- d. Amount of funding to be provided – organizers should inform council on the suitable amount of money needed in the first year. The bylaw should also set conditions and limitations on the receipt and expenditure of the money.
- e. Method of cost-recovery – Cost recovery must be as fair and equitable as possible. Council may choose to collect a fixed amount each year, or a lump sum for the term of the BIA. The money can be raised through a taxation bill by one of these methods:
 - i. A tax on land, improvements, or both.
 - ii. Parcel tax (fixed amount per legal parcel of land)
 - iii. Frontage tax (fixed amount per lineal foot of frontage)
 - iv. Property value tax (\$ per \$1,000 of assessment)
 - v. A tax on another basis (e.g. \$ per square foot)
- f. Business improvement scheme – council can only provide funding for the planning and implementation of one of the following business improvement schemes:

- i. Carrying out studies or making reports respecting the BIA.
 - ii. Improving, beautifying or maintaining streets, sidewalks or municipal-owned land, buildings or other structures in the BIA.
 - iii. The removal of graffiti from buildings or other structures in the BIA.
 - iv. Conserving heritage property¹ in the BIA.
 - v. Encouraging business in the BIA.
2. Once the bylaw is drafted, council must give it three readings.
 3. After the third reading, the bylaw is sent to business and property owners who will be subject to the objectives and conditions active within the BIA. This is to receive their formal approval before the BIA can be officially created. Property owners can indicate their

¹ According to the Local Government Act (LGA), "heritage property" means property that

- a. In the opinion of a body or person authorized to exercise a person under the LGA or the Community Charter in relation to the property, has sufficient heritage value or character to justify its conservation, or
- b. Is protected heritage property.

support (or otherwise) by one of the following mechanisms:

- a. A Petition of Support – at least half of the property owners, representing at least 50% of the assessed value of land and improvements that would be subject to the BIA tax, must sign a petition indicating their support.
 - b. A Council Initiative – council advises property owners it will enact the bylaw unless more than half the landowners, representing at least 50% of the assessed value of the land and improvements that would be subject to the BIA register their dissent.
4. Once the bylaw has been passed and approved, the organizers must agree on:
 - a. Membership – although all commercial and industrial property owners within its boundaries must contribute financially to the BIA, the organization decides who can be a member. Potential members can be property owners and business owners. Voting rules should also be decided.
 - b. Board of Management – member must decide on the composition of the Board and its electoral procedures. Positions can be assigned to represent different groups within the

membership, such as business owners, property owners, or tenants. The formal structure of the board should be decided, as well as powers to create sub-committees to carry out certain tasks or projects, or to guide how work happens within the BIA. The board may not incur debt, own real property, or undertake capital works on private land.

- c. Staff and Consultants – the BIA may achieve its objects by depending entirely on volunteer workers, or by hiring full- or part-time staff. Consultants may also be engaged to achieve these objectives. The BIA may also choose a combination of these resourcing solutions.
- d. Annual budgets – as a legal entity, the BIA is responsible for reporting its annual expenditures to its members. Budgets are approved at annual general meetings, and the budget is presented to council in order for the coming year's tax levy to be collected for planned activities.

Recommendations and Considerations Related to the creation of a Business Improvement Area:

- Business improvement scheme – the ideal business improvement scheme for Grand Forks should focus on conserving heritage property in the downtown. Because the historic commercial core has been identified as having heritage values – and is a historic

place in its own right – the overall revitalization of this area through the conservation of the character-defining elements identified in the Statement of Significance should be the primary focus of the BIA. Supplementary actions such as the beautification of streets and public spaces, and the encouragement of business in this area should also be tied into the planning done by the BIA.

- The name of the BIA – in Grand Forks, the City should work to identify or establish a body suited to operating and managing the BIA.
- The BIA area – the Business Improvement Area should be defined by the boundaries identified in the Statement of Significance for the downtown. Specifically, the BIA should be comprised of the area within, and on both sides of, the four key streets that define the downtown – Highway 3 to the north, Riverside Drive to the east, 72nd Avenue to the South, and 5th Street to the west.
- Amount of funding to be provided – business and property owners within the downtown should be surveyed to understand how much is currently spent on facade improvements and maintenance in the area. Ideally, the BIA levy would be an amount close to or equal to what annual expenditures for the area are. If this allows for a fair annual budget, the BIA will cost no more than in the past, but will allow work in the downtown to be more cohesive and organized.

- Method of cost-recovery – Because this business improvement scheme would focus on facade improvements, a suggested formula for calculating individual contributions to the BIA could be:

$$\frac{\text{Average Annual Expenditure on Facade Maintenance and Improvements within the BIA boundaries (\$)}}{\text{Linear Feet of Street Frontage}}$$

- Term of the BIA – initially, the BIA should be planned for a term of five years, with projects ranging from facade clean-up and removal of non-conforming elements, to paint up initiatives, to full facade rehabilitations scheduled for each year.