

A person in silhouette is shown in profile on the left side of the image, looking towards a city skyline across a body of water. The sun is low in the sky, creating a bright lens flare effect. The city skyline includes several tall buildings, and the water in the foreground has some small boats. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The overall scene is bright and clear.

# Our Sustainable Future City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan

Bylaw No. 12/003 February 2012

## List of Acknowledgements

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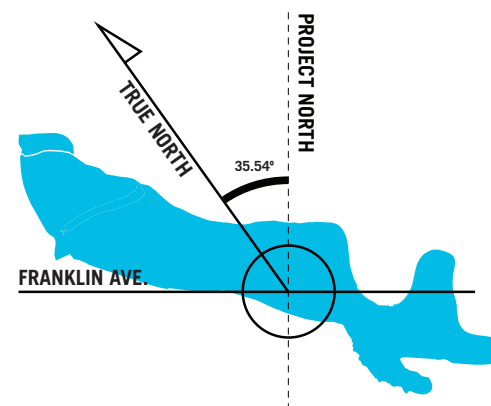
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### Geographic Terminology

The City Centre is a rectangular area with its long axis at approximately a 35-degree angle to true north, which leads to some confusion when referring to directions in the City Centre. The majority of residents and past studies refer to Franklin Avenue as running in an east-west direction, and this is the relative geographic orientation that has been adopted for this Plan. In technical terms, this is what is referred to as “Project North,” which is different from “True North” or “Magnetic North.” For ease of referencing in this Plan, Franklin Avenue will be considered as running east-west and the long shore of the Clearwater River, behind the large retail store area, will be considered the north side of the City Centre, with Highway 63 running along the boundary on the south side.

## Outline of the Plan

This document is structured as a continuous flow of ideas that recognizes the current framework for the planning of City Centre, where it is today, what it can become, and our approach to realize the vision our community shares for it.

1.0 FOUNDATION	2.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS	3.0 VISION	4.0 OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES	5.0 THE PLAN	6.0 IMPLEMENTATION
<p>Changes influencing a new City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Municipal Development Plan</li> <li>• A confirmation of the commitment to Sustainability</li> <li>• Role of the City Centre to accommodate growth</li> <li>• New boundary</li> <li>• Local context (history, environment and culture)</li> </ul>	<p>An analysis of the trends, challenges and opportunities regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy</li> <li>• Population growth and projected trends</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Electronic connectivity</li> </ul>	<p>A statement of what the City Centre will be in the future.</p>	<p>Identifies eight objectives that have emerged as priorities for our City Centre and strategies that define our approach to each.</p>	<p>Sets out policies the Municipality will adopt to govern the future development of the City Centre and a series of actions to facilitate implementation of the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and Actions that are based on broader principles such as sustainability, transportation, and connectivity</li> <li>• Policies and Actions that apply to specific zones and districts within the City Centre</li> </ul>	<p>A framework for the implementation of the plan.</p>



# Preface

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Fort McMurray is the primary urban centre of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. It has long been the Municipality’s objective to attract development, commerce and residents to Fort McMurray’s City Centre in order to create a quality urban environment that is a vital and dynamic place to work, play and live. This Plan is an important step to achieve that goal.

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The purpose of the City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan (“CCARP” or “the Plan”) is to guide and facilitate the realization of that objective. The Plan outlines initiatives to attract investment and stimulate economic growth in the City Centre, encourage sustainable development and support its cultural and recreational revitalization.

The Plan provides a regulatory framework that is flexible enough to evolve as the City Centre evolves over the next twenty years. To ensure its ongoing relevance, the Plan will be reviewed at least every five years to ensure that the vision, objectives and policies effectively support the needs of the City Centre.

This Plan and the Land Use Bylaw that accompanies it will be used by the Municipality to respectively guide and regulate development in the City Centre. The CCARP will be used as the basis for planning and implementing new infrastructure, community facility and service projects or upgrading existing facilities and services in coordination with private development. The Plan replaces the 2009 Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan (LTS-ARP; Bylaw No. 09/016) and the 1986 Waterways Area Redevelopment Plan (Bylaw No. 86/09) as the key policy documents for the development of the City Centre area.

As an evolving document, the Plan builds on previous reports, processes and plans, including the Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw No. 11/027), the LTS-ARP, the Riverfront Master Plan (draft), the Waterways Area Redevelopment Plan (draft) and the MacDonald Island Plan. It recognizes the critical role that the City Centre can play to accommodate immediate growth in light of

updates to growth forecasts for Fort McMurray and the region and revises previously identified district boundaries. The City Centre area boundaries have expanded to include Waterways, a community that holds historical significance in the development of Fort McMurray.

The Plan reinforces the importance of strongly held values such as sustainability, culture and community spirit. The policies and implementation strategies promote development that reduces the need to travel, especially by private automobiles, emphasizing public transit, walking and cycling. The compact, high-density form of the proposed development allows for the most efficient provision and operation of municipal infrastructure. Coupled with a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail opportunities, these policies will contribute to the transformation of the City Centre and significantly reduce its carbon footprint.



Aerial view of the City Centre, looking south from MacDonald Island

# 1.0 Foundation



## 1.0 Foundation

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This section identifies the changes influencing a new City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan and describes the local context with regards to its location, our culture and our surrounding environment.

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### 1.1 The Municipal Development Plan (MDP)– A Strategic Foundation for Growth

The Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw No. 11/027; “The MDP”) provides a guiding framework for the redevelopment of the City Centre. As such, it is an important strategic foundation for the City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan.

Fort McMurray is rapidly becoming Alberta’s third-largest city. A key strategy of the MDP is to establish the City Centre as a focal point in the region. It will be the location of choice and a regional centre for commercial and institutional development. It will also be the hub for arts, entertainment and culture that will inspire a vital and vibrant urban centre.

Through opportunities for redevelopment and intensification, the City Centre will have the highest densities within the urban area. The transformed City Centre will become the heart of Fort McMurray and an icon of Wood Buffalo’s identity.

The MDP outlines key strategies for the urban area that have been incorporated in this Plan:

- Protect and enhance established neighbourhoods, making them more livable and complete.
- Promote integration of urban transportation systems with a strong focus on transit.
- Develop an interconnected and accessible green network.
- Promote recreational development around the Clearwater River and the Snye.

The MDP’s vision of “a balanced future with opportunity for all” commits the Municipality to work towards a sustainable future. This vision ensures the opportunities enjoyed today are preserved for future generations, and that the path forward is inclusive of the region’s diverse population.

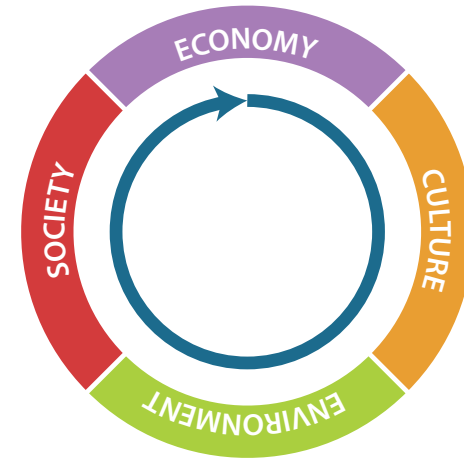


## 1.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is an overarching aspiration of our regional community and a key commitment in the governance of the municipality. Initially advanced through the 2010 Envision Wood Buffalo (EWB) Plan and confirmed as the underlying platform for the MDP, sustainability is a Municipal priority and provides a guide for sustainable development – achieving the balance between economic, cultural and social growth and environmental protection and values. The EWB Plan articulates the following statement of sustainability:

“We value living in a region that is safe, healthy, inclusive of all residents and provides local opportunities. We have a strong economy, a healthy environment, a rich culture and an abundance of social capital that together form the pillars of sustainability and contribute to quality of life and well-being. We strive to find balance in our economic, environmental, cultural and social systems and to live within their natural limits. We make decisions that reflect an understanding of the interdependence of these systems and consider residents’ long-term needs to ensure the resources of today are sustainable into the future.”

- The priorities and goals to ensure a sustainable future are outlined in the MDP as a path forward based on these principles of sustainability:
  - Encouraging responsible growth;
  - Practicing environmental stewardship by respecting and sustaining the natural environment, reducing energy consumption and waste and contributing to the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
  - Developing a resilient economy through diversification, supporting local businesses and promoting a culture of innovation, education and training;
  - Building attractive and livable communities that offer an excellent quality of life, foster a sense of home and belonging and encourage residents to settle in the region for the long term;
  - Supporting and promoting a vibrant culture that reflects the First Nations and Métis heritage and the diversity of the region’s growing population. This will be achieved by designing buildings and amenities that provide opportunities to celebrate and showcase these regional attributes; and
  - Working together to achieve coordinated service delivery and effective communication.



Four Pillars of Sustainability



Located in a forest at the confluence of two rivers

### 1.3 Regional Context

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (“the Municipality”) is one of the largest municipalities by area (63,000 square kilometres) in North America, extending from north central Alberta to the borders of Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

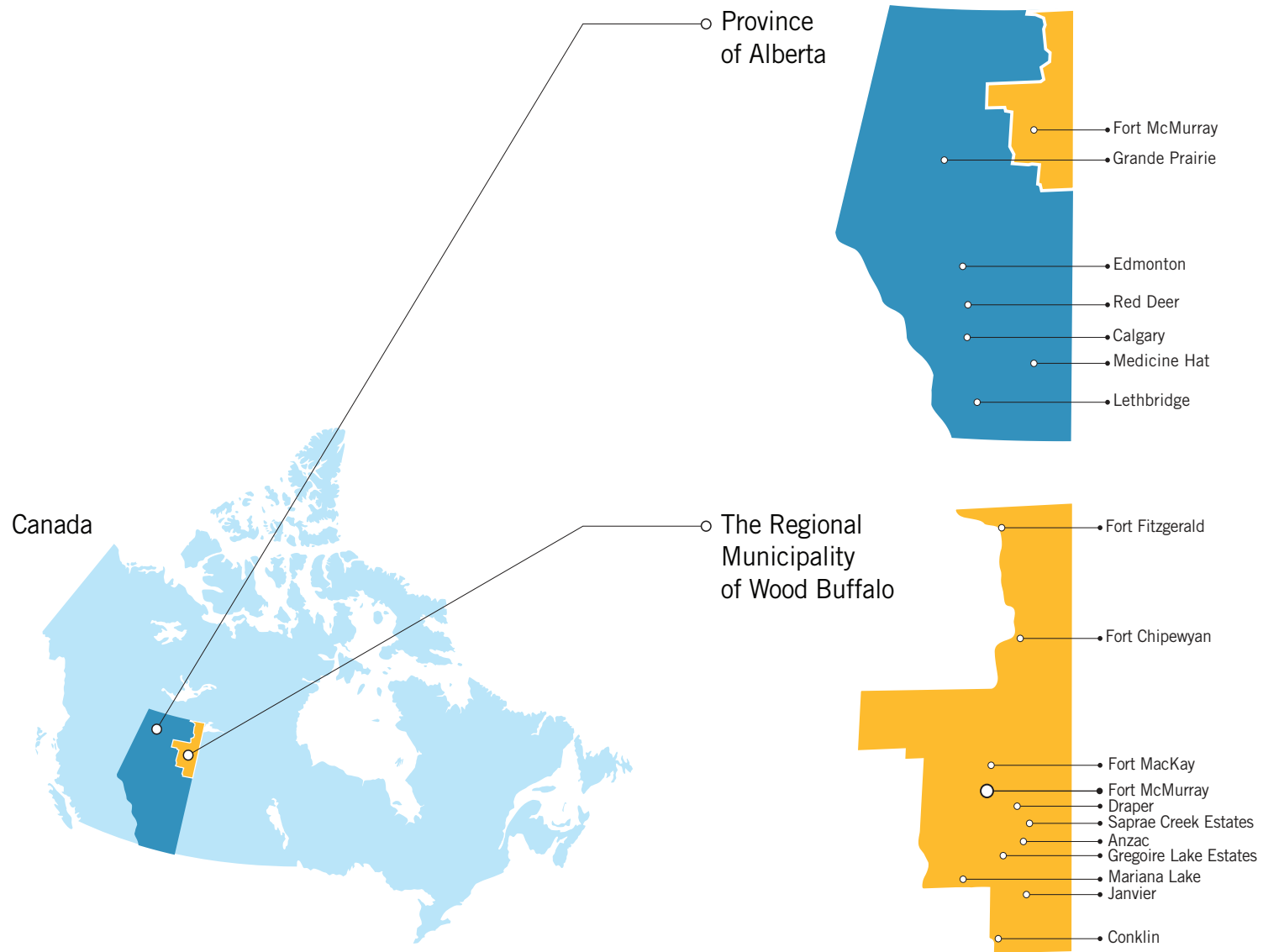
As the centre of one of the largest oil sands deposits in the world, the region is experiencing tremendous growth in the oil production sector, and this growth is expected to continue. The rapid expansion of the oil production sector has created corresponding economic and population growth in the region.

The municipality’s population is distributed in Fort McMurray (73% of the total population is in the existing Urban Service Area), nine rural communities and numerous project accommodation sites spread throughout the region. Although the City Centre is centrally located in Fort McMurray, the majority of the population resides in surrounding areas such as Timberlea and Thickwood.

#### **City Centre Area (Location)**

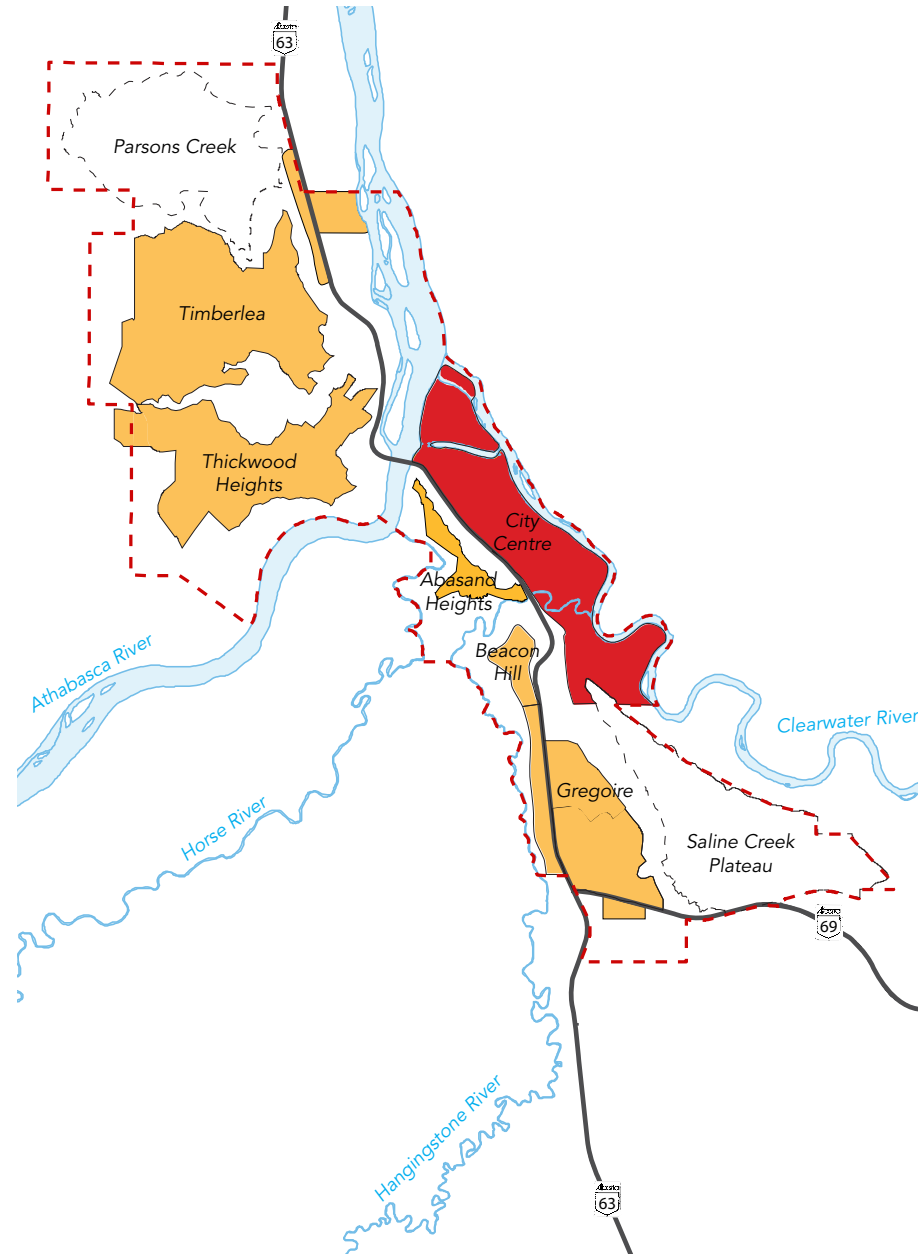
The area referred to as the City Centre extends approximately four kilometres from MacDonald Island in the north to Waterways in the south. The City Centre includes three areas commonly known as: the Lower Townsite, Waterways and MacDonald Island. Water is an important feature of the City Centre area, which is bounded by two rivers. The Athabasca lies to the west and the Clearwater, a heritage river, to the north. An arm of the Clearwater River, known as the Snye, divides the main developed area of the City Centre from MacDonald Island. The Hangingstone River to the southeast separates the Lower Townsite from Waterways.

### Location of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo in Canada





Fort McMurray – Urban Service Area Boundary



### City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan Boundary



### 1.4 Natural Landscape

The Athabasca, Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers along with the Snye, dominate the natural landscape of the City Centre. The City Centre is located in a low-lying valley surrounded by steep slopes and forestlands. Remnants of relatively undisturbed Boreal landscape remain in areas along the rivers, mostly in the eastern portion end of the City Centre, surrounding Waterways and near the mouth of the Snye.

The Clearwater River is designated as a Canadian Heritage River for its importance to the fur trade and the construction of railway and roads that opened the Canadian West. The Snye is a major feature in the City Centre and was originally an open water connection between the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers. With the construction of the causeway to MacDonald Island, the Snye became an enclosed body of water, open only to the Clearwater River. The removal of the natural water flow through the Snye had resulted in siltation and accumulation of aquatic vegetation. However, this has also resulted in the Snye being a springtime spawning area for northern pike, a protected species, by the Department of Fisheries. Both the Snye and the Hangingstone River are considered important fish spawning areas.

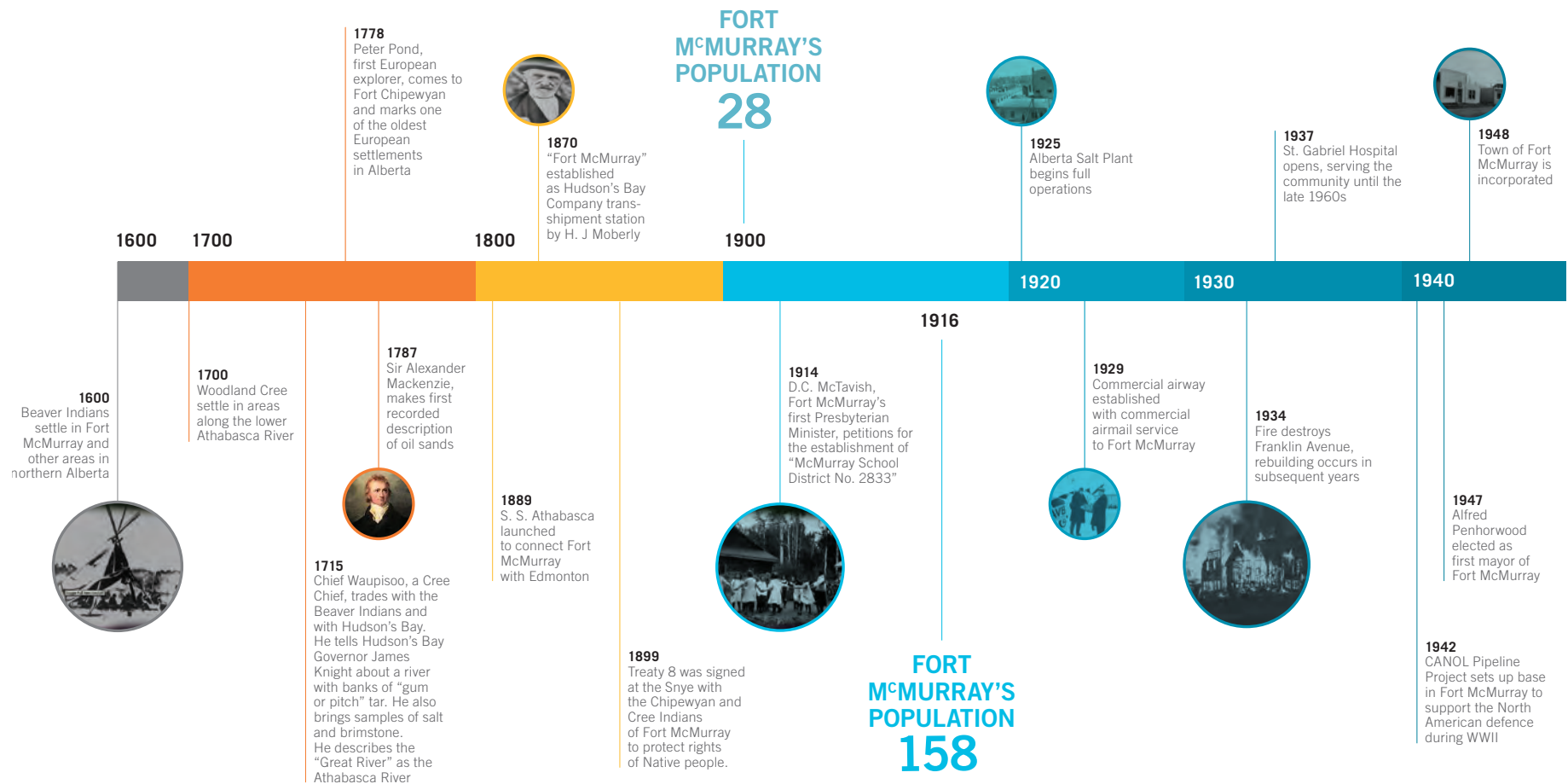
With its boundaries defined by major rivers, the City Centre area is vulnerable to flooding during the spring breakup as ice jams in the Athabasca River back up into the Clearwater River. Adequate flood protection and abatement measures will be necessary as the City Centre develops.

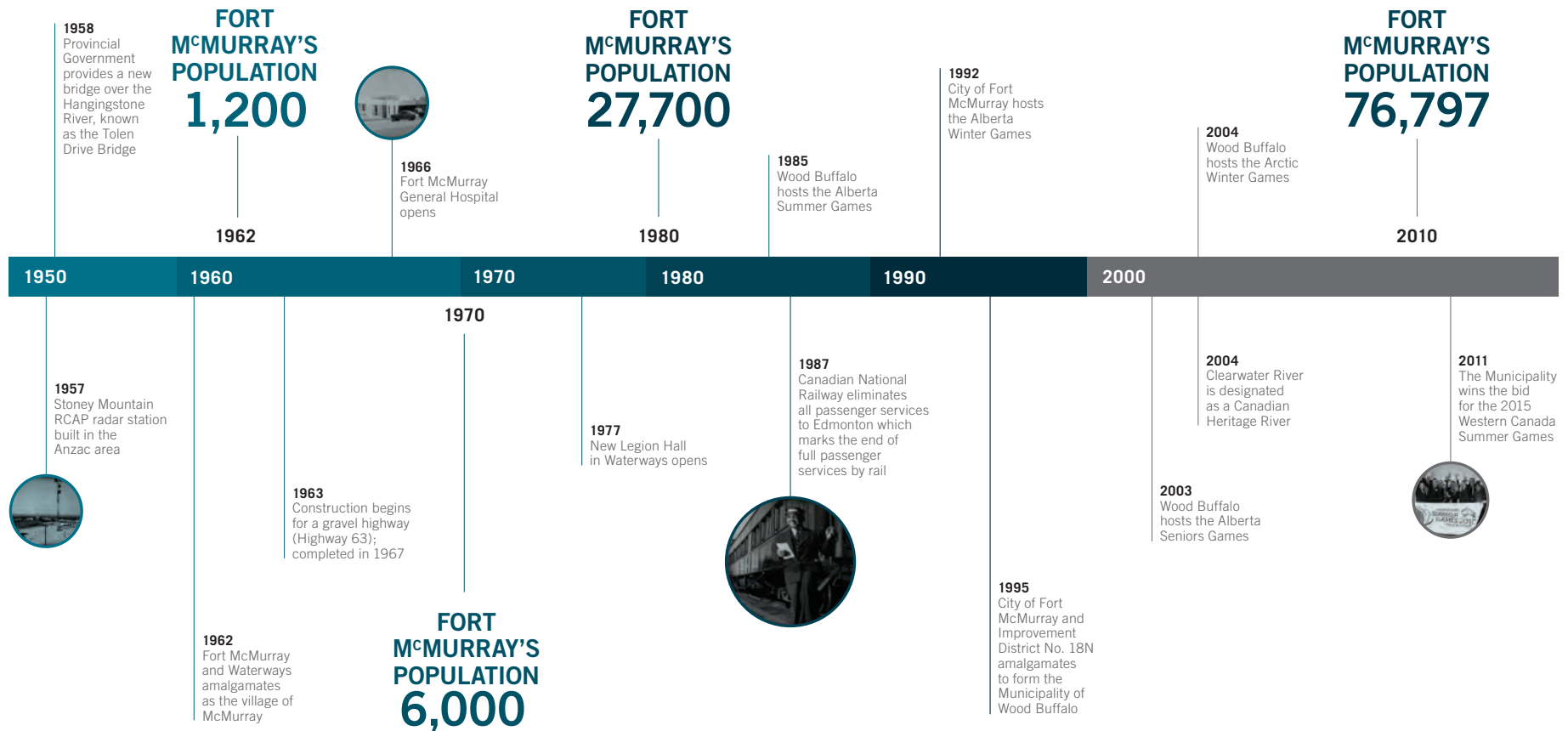


Aerial view of the city in the fall

## 1.5 History

Fort McMurray is home to a rich and vibrant history, from the first settlers to the fur-trading industry to the modern day centre. Most of the historical activity listed in the timeline below occurred in City Centre area.





### 1.6 Cultural Heritage

Wood Buffalo and Fort McMurray in particular are culturally diverse. The rich history of First Nations and Métis peoples is complemented by diverse and dynamic cultural traditions inspired by people from across Canada and around the world who have settled in the region.

First Nations and Métis are the first peoples of Fort McMurray. Their cultures embrace a strong sense of family and community that are celebrated through prayer, dance, music, games and traditional dress. It is important that the culture and traditions of the First Nations and Métis people are respected and embraced as a key part of the City Centre's cultural identity.

Supporting the region's cultural development will enhance quality of life for all, provide opportunities for the economy and help attract and retain newcomers to this region. There are a number of organizations from many cultures in this region, demonstrating that Wood Buffalo is indeed a very diverse and supportive community.



First Nations Family Circle



### 1.7 Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The City Centre is reasonably well provided with open spaces and parks. There are a number of public and private recreational spaces and facilities including Borealis Park, Syncrude Sport and Wellness Centre, Heritage Park, Lion's Park and MacDonald Island facilities and golf course. Additionally, there are baseball diamonds; tennis courts; a football field; a soccer pitch; boating activities of all types during the summer and snowmobiling in the winter. There are also numerous trails used for walking and cycling in the summer and cross-country skiing in the winter.

Within some neighbourhoods, there are pocket parks and green spaces that create a good basis for a connected green corridor system. In Waterways, in particular, there is an abundance of recreational spaces and facilities. However some of the existing spaces and facilities are underutilized or inaccessible to pedestrians.

Along the riverfront areas such as the Snye, Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers, there is an abundance of recreational opportunities but significant improvements are needed to make these areas safe, attractive and accessible.



Rowing on the Snye



## 2.0 Situation Analysis





## 2.0 Situation Analysis

This section reviews key region-wide factors that influence the development of the City Centre. It also highlights some of the opportunities and challenges that the Plan will address in the subsequent sections that recommend policies and actions. These factors are economy, population, infrastructure, transportation and connectivity.

### 2.1 Economy

The economy of Fort McMurray and the region is dominated by the natural resource sector: namely, the oil sands and oil sands related activities. Both directly and indirectly, this sector provides more than 67% of all job opportunities. Employment in the oil sands and related industries is concentrated in the following industry sectors:

- Resource-based industries and agriculture sector (including mining and gas);
- Construction (including industrial, commercial and residential construction); and
- Manufacturing and support services.

The increasing demand for labour and materials in the oil sands sector, and the resulting demand for additional accommodations and services for oil sands workers, puts tremendous pressure on the overall economy. This has resulted in increasing construction costs, occupancy costs and wages. At the same time, there has been a decrease in labour availability and materials supply.

The City Centre has been home to the Central Business District (CBD) of Fort McMurray since the early 1900s. It has long been the Municipality's objective to attract investment and development to Fort McMurray's City Centre and initiatives have been advanced to provide a progressive and business friendly environment in which to invest and operate a business.

However, a significant ongoing concern is the limited supply of office, commercial, retail and residential space in Fort McMurray in general and the City Centre in particular. High operating costs, lack of alternative locations and labour shortages also constrain the successful operation of businesses. Furthermore, there is an artificial shortage of land for residential, commercial and industrial expansion in Fort McMurray due to provincial control of surrounding lands. As indicated in the 2011 Municipal Development Plan, in excess of 40,600 acres of additional land will be required by 2030 to meet the anticipated growth in the region.



Aerial view of an oil sands operation

The lack of new small businesses and the loss of existing businesses is of particular concern to our community. Fort McMurray is already under-supplied with commercial and retail businesses, and the resulting lack of goods and services for residents is impacting quality of life and consequently undermining the region's ability to attract skilled workers and particularly new permanent residents.

A quality urban environment provides residents with the opportunity to carry out all their daily activities in reasonable proximity to their homes. With a planned balance of work and living opportunities, the City Centre has the potential to provide such an environment. If a variety of housing types are available, coupled with a wide range of retail services and other amenities, more people will take advantage of the live-work opportunities the City Centre could offer in the future.

The region's MDP recognizes and supports continued development of the City Centre as the business, entertainment and commercial centre of Fort McMurray. It also recognizes the need to enhance the appearance and viability of the commercial core by undertaking revitalization strategies.

## 2.2 Population Growth and Projected Trends

### Population Growth

Fort McMurray is the largest community in the region, with an estimated resident population of 76,800 (2010), but the proportion of the region's population residing in Fort McMurray has been declining.

The population of Fort McMurray's City Centre area was over 13,000 in 2010. While the population of this area has increased in absolute terms since 1999, its proportion of Fort McMurray's and the region's total population has declined steadily, falling from highs of 25% and 20% in 2002, to approximately 16% and 12%, respectively, by 2010.

Strong population growth in the City Centre and the region as a whole can be attributed to the rapid development of the oil sands industry and the strong job market it has created. Oil production is projected to increase from 1.6 million barrels per day to as much as 6.9 million barrels per day in the next two decades and stimulate a corresponding population boom and demand for employment. The Municipality forecasts that, with significant growth in the oil sands, this pattern of rapid growth will continue into the foreseeable future.

This increased oil production is forecast to generate more than 50,000 permanent oil sands jobs in the region and spur a population increase of more than 125,000 people. Such population growth will spawn increased demand for support and institutional services, and drive demand for increased levels of retail and other employment opportunities within the region.

The Municipality anticipates that 85% of its population, or 196,400 residents, will live in Fort McMurray by 2030. A significant portion of this population will reside and work in the City Centre.

### Projected Trends

The MDP projects the region's population to increase from an estimated 104,300 people in 2010 to more than 231,000 by 2030, with Fort McMurray increasing its proportion of the region's population from an estimated 74% in 2010 (76,800 people) to 85% by 2030 (196,400 people).

A recent study of population trends in the city can be summarized as follows:

- If Fort McMurray could grow its population to comprise 85% of the municipality's total population by 2030, then the City Centre area could similarly regrow its portion of Fort McMurray and the region's population.
- If this occurs, a population of up to 48,100 could be accommodated in the City Centre by 2030.
- Through a combination of diversification of local employment, coupled with the development and implementation of this Plan, total employment in the region could approach 88,300 jobs in 2015 and 162,200 by 2030.

- The number of non-oil sands related jobs could increase from approximately 25,400 in 2010 (approximately 40% of total employment) to 35,600 in 2015 and to almost 80,000 by 2030 (almost 50% of total employment).

A similar study on employment projection for the City Centre shows significant increase in the incremental potential from 2010-2030. This study assumes that while total employment will continue to be dominated by the oil and gas sector, the proportion of employment in other industries, including health care and social services, wholesale trade, retail trade, finance and real estate, and business services could increase as the local economy expands and diversifies. Specific employment opportunities associated with such a broadening of the local economy will include finance, real estate, legal, consulting, office services, professional services and health care. The City Centre is ready to immediately accommodate growth, given the recently installed infrastructure and the availability of services.

A portion of this projected increase in total employment would be attracted into the City Centre, resulting in a significant demand for office space. Conservative projections of the total amount of space required in the City Centre indicate a potential demand for new office space, summarized as follows:

- 1 million sq ft (housing 4,400 new workers) by 2015
- 5.3 million sq ft (housing 23,300 new workers) by 2030

More aggressive projections produce a demand for:

- 2.0 million sq ft (housing 8,800 additional office jobs) by 2015
- 10.7 million sq ft (housing 46,600 office jobs) by 2030

As the city is redeveloped, a number of market segments will be attracted to downtown living, including:

- younger individuals and couples with jobs located in or near the downtown core
- individuals and couples, including empty nesters, who are attracted to downtown amenities
- people working in a post-secondary setting and in the arts/culture community

Based on conservative assumptions, the projected demand for multi-family residential units in the City Centre could be between 6,000 and 10,000 additional units. However, under the less conservative scenario quoted above, the number of additional units required could increase up to 27,000. The total population residing in the City Centre could then approach a high of 67,600 people by 2030.

	Region	Fort McMurray	City Centre Base	City Centre Potential
2010	104,338	76,797	12,797	N/A
2015	144,800	110,500	18,800	23,000
2020	174,000	139,200	26,400	36,500
2025	191,500	158,900	35,800	49,800
2030	231,000	196,400	48,100	67,600

#### Resident Population Projection 2010-2030

	Region Base	Fort McMurray Base	City Centre Incremental Base	City Centre Incremental Potential
2010	64,100	26,500	5,600*	5,600
2015	88,300	41,100	10,000	14,400
2020	111,900	61,600	16,300	27,000
2025	129,000	79,000	21,200	36,800
2030	162,200	103,200	29,000	52,400

#### Employment Projection 2010-2030

(\*assumes no net change in jobs between 2000 and 2010)

### 2.3 Infrastructure

Municipal infrastructure such as the water and waste water treatment system, stormwater management and solid waste disposal systems are being upgraded in anticipation of a population increase within Fort McMurray. These improvements include the introduction of new, more environmentally friendly technologies as well as ongoing system enhancements.

#### **Water Supply System**

The current water supply system has been upgraded to provide a capacity for a population of 106,000, including an allocation of 48,000 people to the City Centre. The introduction of newer technology will support a significantly larger population than the existing water supply system.

#### **Sanitary Sewer System**

The waste water treatment system has been upgraded to support a population of 133,000 in the urban area, including the City Centre. Additional capacities can be supported with the use of newer and more advanced technologies.

#### **Storm Water Management System**

A program of upgrades is being introduced to the city's existing storm water standards, and a Stormwater Management Plan for the City Centre Area is being developed. New development will be required to adhere to principles of low impact development to reduce stormwater runoff.

#### **Solid Waste**

There is an active solid waste management program in the City Centre. This constitutes weekly pick up that is later delivered to the regional landfill located south of Fort McMurray. Recycling is also available at recycling depots.

#### **Electricity**

Electricity is currently provided from industrial plants and has a moderate carbon emission rate due to the combined heat and power generation at the industrial plants. Existing capacity is already installed and networks can accommodate higher densities in the City Centre now.

#### **Natural Gas**

Natural gas is readily available to meet current and future development needs. Alberta does not have an energy code so there is a wide range of energy use in existing buildings.



## 2.4 Transportation

Fort McMurray is accessible by air, road and rail. Several direct flight and bus services are available to Edmonton, Calgary and beyond on a daily basis. Rail transportation is provided as a freight corridor to southern Alberta. Vehicular traffic, including heavy-load vehicles, is accommodated primarily through Highway 63.

### **Air**

The Fort McMurray Airport, located 13 kilometres southeast of the City Centre, is the 17th busiest airport in Canada by passenger volume. The annual passenger movement through the airport has increased from 223,000 in 2004 to 714,000 in 2010. Direct flights are offered to Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto.

Construction to expand the airport facilities and services is currently underway as the existing terminal facilities are not adequate for the volume of passengers. Travel to the airport is by privately owned vehicles, rental cars and taxis. Express public transit service between the City Centre and the airport is scheduled to begin in 2012.

### **Rail**

The current rail freight terminal is located south of the City Centre's Lower Townsite area. Canadian National Railway upgraded the line that, although remote from the oil sands developments, is used for shipments of construction materials and machinery and provides an alternative to Highway 63 for transporting heavy goods.

With the adoption of the Municipal Development Plan, alternative transportation options are encouraged, including the preservation of existing rail rights-of-ways and possible extensions of rail service through Fort McMurray, including City Centre.

### Highway 63

Highway 63 is a north-south highway in northern Alberta and is the only connection through to Fort McMurray and other northern parts of the region. Starting approximately 70 kilometres northeast of Edmonton, Highway 63 passes through Boyle, Fort McMurray and Fort MacKay. It is primarily a two-lane undivided highway except within Fort McMurray. It is the only all-weather road leading out of Fort McMurray, which makes it a critical link to the growing Urban Service Area. Highway 63 is a four lane divided cross-section within Fort McMurray; it is the only continuous north-south road through the region, leaving the region vulnerable to any disruptions to traffic.

As the only access road to Fort McMurray, trucks, oversized/heavy loads and movement of hazardous goods are sharing Highway 63 with other traffic. Highway 63 is also vulnerable to natural disasters like forest fires, common in the region. These factors affect the movement of goods and people to Fort McMurray. Additionally, the lack of access points from Highway 63 causes congestion at highway exits. The Municipality supports the recent Provincial proposal to reconstruct the highway to correct the situation, the access points identified within the City Centre are King Street, Hospital Street, Hardin Street and the west end of Franklin Avenue.

Alberta Transportation is reconstructing Highway 63 from a two-lane unpartitioned highway to a four-lane divided highway. Highway 63 will be twinned from the junction of Highway 55 near Grasslands to Fort McMurray, increasing the capacity of the roadway. With provincial support, a new bridge across the Athabasca River to the northwest of the City Centre has recently opened while the older bridges undergo maintenance and renovation. To help the flow of commuter traffic into the City Centre and to the oil sands further north, a new continued flow interchange has recently opened at Thickwood Boulevard. Another similar interchange at Confederation Way is currently under construction.



Highway 63



Surface parking lots are part of the existing transportation system

## Streets

### East-West Streets

Franklin Avenue is the only continuous east-west street connecting the majority of districts in the City Centre. Under the provincial plan for the reconstruction of Highway 63, the system of new bridges over the Athabasca River will be connected directly to the west end of Franklin Avenue. Traffic to and from the north will have the option to be routed directly onto Franklin Avenue.

The City Centre street grid is discontinuous with Franklin Avenue as the single continuous east-west street. Traffic is expected to increase in the City Centre area when the connection of Highway 63 is made to Franklin Avenue through the new bridge system.

East-west streets deserve higher priority to help reduce the traffic impact on Franklin Avenue. There are limited access points to the riverfront and the discontinuous east-west street grid minimizes the connectivity between neighbourhoods and districts.

### North-South Streets

There are five major streets that run north-south in the City Centre, all of which have access to Highway 63. These are Morrison Street, Hardin Street, Hospital Street, King Street and Prairie Loop Boulevard. The functions of north-south streets have to be reinforced to ensure movement of people and goods to the City Centre, particularly to the riverfront area.

## Public and Private Transit

Public and private transit is available to transport commuters between the City Centre and different parts of Fort McMurray and the Region. The Municipality operates a public transit system with more than 40 buses. In addition, over 500 buses, privately owned and operated, are used by oil sands organizations to carry employees who live in Fort McMurray to the mine sites located primarily in the north.

Until recently, there has been a lack of priority given to public and private transit. Current transit operations are unreliable and offer limited convenience for passengers. Modifications to the design and operation of the transit system are already underway to improve the quality of the service, and make it more competitive with the private automobile as a means of travelling to and within the city.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Pedestrian and bicycle access to and within the City Centre currently exists along sidewalks and streets, with trails in some sections along the Clearwater River shore. Pedestrians and cyclists can also access different parts of the City Centre via walkways and trails.

There is, however, a lack of continuity in the walkways and trails throughout the City Centre. Sidewalk connections and trails are often discontinuous, which makes walking and cycling difficult and unsafe. Through the Municipality's Community Placemaking Initiative, sidewalks and trails are to be improved to enhance the pedestrian experience on streets.



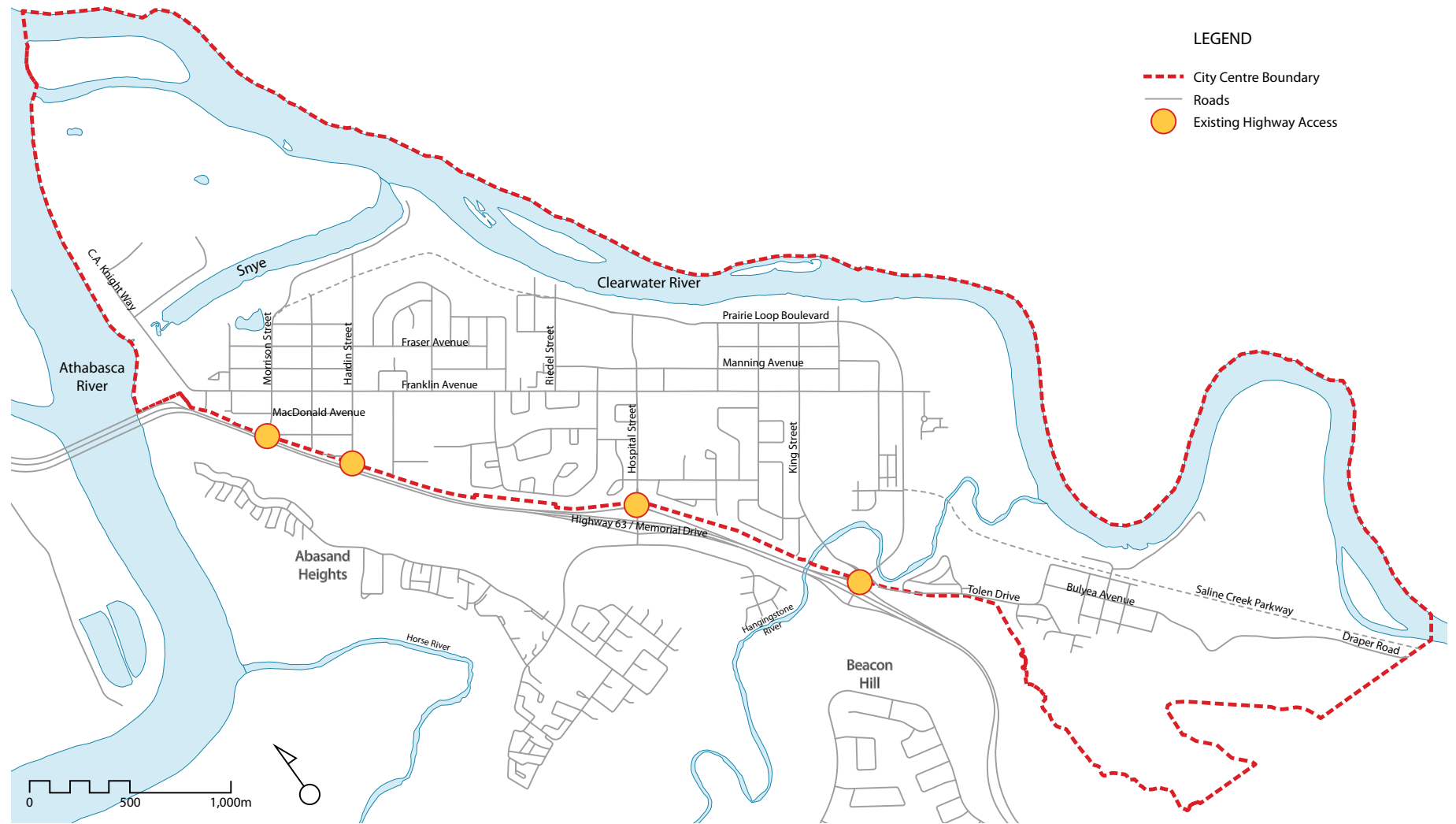
Aerial view of the City Centre, showing the discontinuous street grid



Existing RMWB Transit bus



Existing Highway Access (2011)



## 2.5 Electronic Connectivity Networks

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, through innovative community initiatives such as Shared Information Technology Services and the incorporation of advanced network facilities, is positioning the community as a global leader in the next generation Intelligent Community.

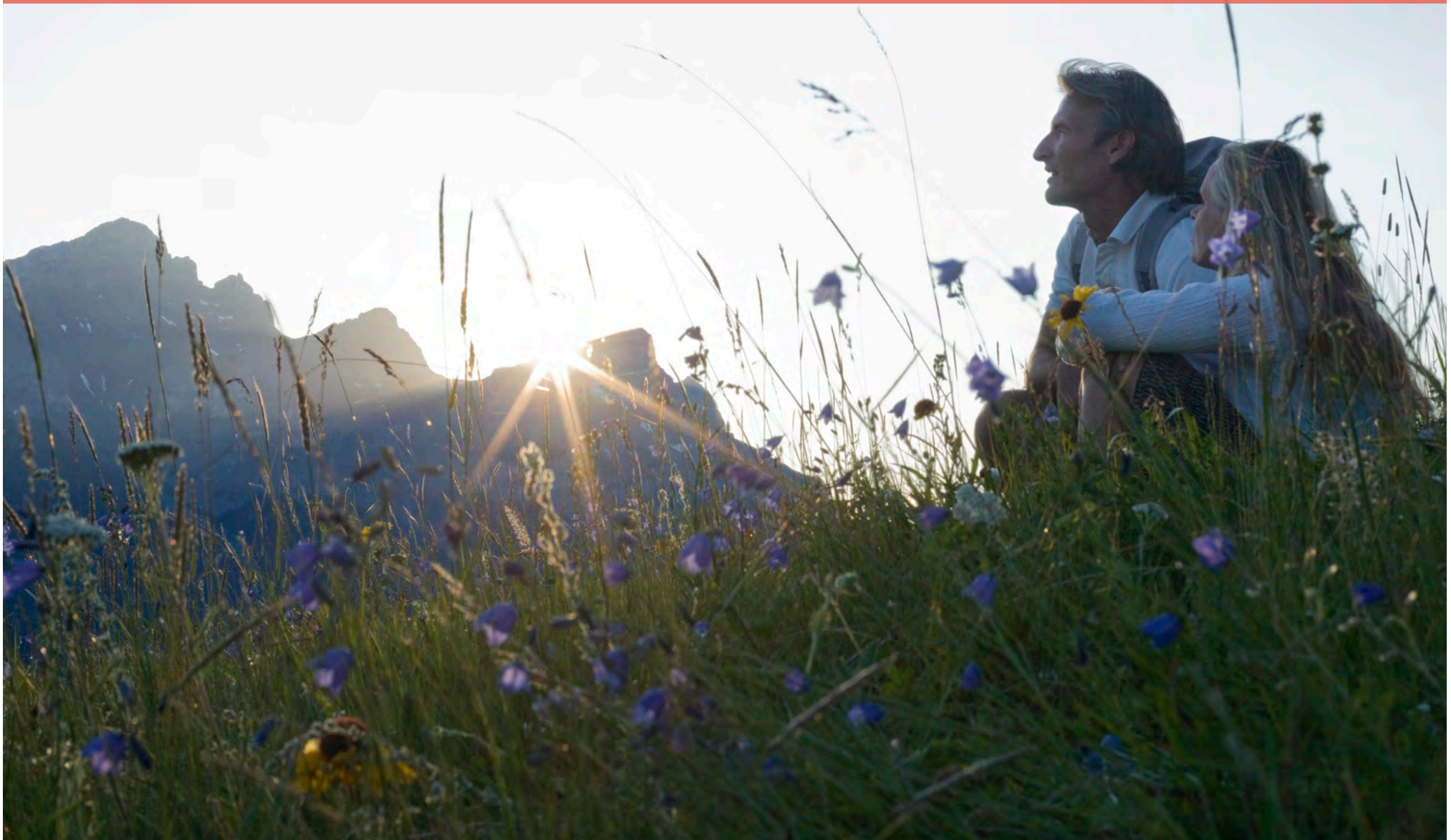
The key components of an Intelligent Community are ubiquitous high-speed network bandwidth; innovative applications of information and communications technology; and strong collaboration among local government, education, business and community-based organizations.

Connectivity is delivered by an ensemble of technologies, such as cellular, cable, telephony (DSL), WiFi and others. While each of these technologies continues to develop quickly, the networks they create are stand-alone and coverage areas a patchwork. With differences in performance and reliability, the technology user is required to maintain multiple devices with multiple configurations resulting in increased complexity and fragmentation for the user.

As an Intelligent Community, Wood Buffalo should proceed to develop a high-density terrestrial (copper and fibre) network infrastructure within the downtown core, complemented by a municipality-wide wireless network based on MESH technology.

Although traditional technologies will remain present, the new unified network will provide continuous, reliable connectivity to the municipal backbone and the Internet regardless of location. With all members of the community connected to a single network, the cost and complexity drops dramatically as secure virtual networks between partners, local and worldwide, can be configured more easily, allowing teams of collaborators to be assembled rapidly in response to new opportunities.

## 3.0 Vision Statement





## 3.0 Vision Statement

“We will build City Centre on the foundations of our cultural heritage and natural beauty as a model of an intelligent, sustainable and a vital 21st century community – an active, vibrant and quality urban place that provides opportunities for all the people in our community to work, live, learn, and play” City Centre Vision Statement – 2030

Our vision for Fort McMurray and Wood Buffalo is bold. It is the product of our pioneering spirit, our passion for innovation and our commitment to a sustainable quality of life for the people of our city.

A diversity of uses supported by effective and efficient transportation and infrastructure will provide an active and vibrant quality of urban life for residents and visitors to work, live, learn, and play.

### A City for Working

With a transformed economy and the strong presence of international businesses, our City Centre will be globally competitive, with an enviable international reputation as a centre of innovation and excellence.

### A City for Living

A diverse blend of commercial, residential and recreational uses will form the core of our City Centre. Our surrounding natural features will be preserved and enhanced. Together, they will offer the people of Fort McMurray the very best quality of urban life. The City Centre will display our regional identity.

### A City for Learning

Excellent educational facilities that develop and nurture knowledge, skills and talent at all stages of life, will be one of the reasons our residents choose to make Fort McMurray their home, and will maintain our community at the cutting edge of knowledge, achievement and prosperity. The City Centre will lead the way.

### A City for Playing

Arts, cultural and recreational facilities will be accessible to all. We will foster the city's cultural development, encourage the expanded use of our unique natural recreational areas and celebrate our community spirit. City Centre will be the premier cultural and recreational destination in Fort McMurray and Wood Buffalo.



Our City. Our Vision. Our Future. This is our plan to make it a reality

## 4.0 Objectives and Strategies

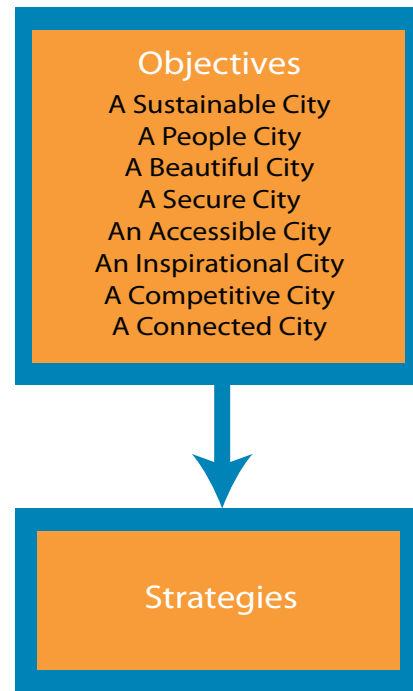


## 4.0 Objectives and Strategies

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With a clear focus on our vision of the city that Fort McMurray will become, we've set out eight objectives that will inform our planning and guide our actions to make that vision a reality. Our objectives reflect the main themes that emerged from an intensive process of public discussion about the future of the city. Each objective is followed by a list of the strategies that form the basis of our action plans.

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## 4.1 A Sustainable City

Our city will be a global model for sustainability. We will be a vibrant community, where people have options to walk, not drive, to the places they work and play. A dense urban environment will grow while respecting and supporting our precious natural setting. Energy and waste systems will be developed to significantly reduce our carbon footprint. Our economic development will be diverse, and will create a robust and resilient local economy. Our social and cultural networks will be strengthened through engaged social and cultural exchanges, and our cultural heritage will be protected, enhanced and celebrated through vibrant artistic and cultural expression.

### Strategies:

- Deliver a high level of sustainability with respect to the provision and use of energy, the disposal of waste and water, the development of buildings, and the enhancement of the natural environment and cultural heritage.
- Encourage further intensification in the City Centre through increased densities in selected areas and plan for expansion of the municipal infrastructure to facilitate that growth.
- Encourage a mix of uses throughout the City Centre to provide convenience and reduce the need to travel.
- Focus new job opportunities within a compact concentration of high density office buildings, with excellent access to public transit.
- Within walking distance of these office buildings, encourage the intensive development of a range of residential, shopping, dining, cultural and entertainment opportunities.

- Develop specific programs for green innovations in municipal services as a means of reducing loads on municipal systems and minimizing the need for further expansion of these systems.
- Formulate a green building strategy for introducing green building technologies in the municipality.
- Ensure the provision of a comfortable, convenient and attractive environment for pedestrians, featuring opportunities for social interaction and access to nature.
- Develop a comprehensive parking strategy for the City Centre, in particular the Central Business District that will reduce the amount of surface parking lots.



False Creek, Vancouver

## 4.2 A People City

Fort McMurray is for people. Those who live and retire here, work here and visit here. Our people city recognizes the voices of our residents in decision-making, and focuses on enhancing the quality of life for everyone. Our city recognizes the needs and aspirations of our residents and puts our people first in everything we do. As a liveable and healthy environment, the City Centre will offer a desirable lifestyle with a range of land uses and activities in close proximity to each other and enhanced opportunities for social interaction. Neighbourhoods will be walkable with convenient and universal access to transit and with improved access and comfort during all seasons. A wide range of housing will be available that is affordable for various demographic groups.

### Strategies:

- Ensure open and transparent decision-making processes for all stakeholders.
- Ensure stakeholders have access to information about their decisions and opinions and proper channels to provide inputs and initiate dialogue regarding future development in the City Centre.
- Ensure accountability on decisions, actions and fiscal implications for future development in the City Centre.
- Encourage a diverse range of housing for different income, age and family groups.
- Encourage a mix of uses throughout the City Centre to provide a high level of convenience and amenity.
- Promote innovation in housing design with sensitivity to climate and environment.
- Support the expansion of affordable housing.
- Create opportunities for increased social interaction.
- Promote development of major new facilities to encourage social, cultural, art and sporting activities.



Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto



### 4.3 A Beautiful City

Our city will evolve to become a memorable place that inspires the best in urban life against the backdrop of an extraordinary natural setting. Dramatic intensification will occur in the new downtown section of the City Centre, embodying excellent architecture in a setting of great urban places and spaces. At the same time, connections and relationships with the riverfront will be strengthened and enhanced. Our city will feature many distinct neighbourhoods, some of them brand new, others maintaining their historical roots. All will be designed to be complete communities that support a variety of lifestyle choices, provide access to services and amenities, and options for mobility, housing, local employment, recreation and culture.

#### Strategies:

- Create more pedestrian-friendly retail streets that will offer a variety of pleasurable shopping opportunities.
- Promote the transformation of existing suburban style large-format retail areas into a more urban form, including greater pedestrian orientation and mix of uses.
- Revitalize existing commercial areas and streets to be more pedestrian-oriented.
- Position MacDonald Island and waterfront areas such as the Snye and Clearwater River as focal points in the City Centre and promote development that offers interesting and attractive recreational and leisure opportunities.
- Establish distinguished public realm, including distinct character streets, memorable parks, squares and gateways, and upgrade existing parks within the City Centre to make them more usable and attractive.
- Provide for a transition of densities to prevent high density development from occurring immediately adjacent to retained existing low density neighbourhoods.
- Maintain where feasible and appropriate existing residential neighbourhoods, while allowing for compatible intensification.

- Establish regulations and incentives to ensure that new development contributes to:
  - high level of sustainability;
  - high-quality architectural design;
  - appropriate provision of access, parking and loading facilities;
  - Creating a high quality public realm and is complementary to the adjacent public realm, including where appropriate, the provision of additional public circulation and gathering;
  - public art; and
  - social services, day care and assisted housing.



Pioneer Square, Portland, Oregon

## 4.4 An Accessible City

Our city will be accessible to everyone. For those outside the City Centre, getting here will be easier through upgraded transit, roadway, and pedestrian and cycling links from outlying areas. Once here, people will walk, cycle and use public transit. Our public places will be designed with the needs of those with mobility, physical or cognitive impairments in mind. The use of our unique natural environment will be enhanced through better access.

### Strategies:

- Provide a high level of universal accessibility with a choice of many modes of travel, including active transportation to and within the City Centre.
- Provide for safe and efficient improvements to the roadway network to improve circulation and help alleviate traffic congestion.
- Improve public transit to and within the City Centre.
- Provide safe, convenient and adequate off-street parking solutions.
- Provide a network of green corridors, parks and recreation spaces that will create a system of pedestrian and bike connections throughout the City Centre.
- Create character streets to support the culture of walking.
- Ensure the provision of a comfortable, convenient and attractive environment for pedestrians featuring memorable urban spaces and walkways, opportunities for social interaction and access to nature.



Wide sidewalks make a city accessible for all users

## 4.5 A Secure City

Our city will be safe, secure and comfortable. The design of our streets and buildings and a diverse mix of commercial and residential properties will make the City Centre of Fort McMurray a place to work and live safely and comfortably amidst co-workers, neighbours and friends. The provision of a safe, flood-protected infrastructure, active safe places, rapid and coordinated emergency services, and visible security presence is necessary to ensure safety, comfort and security in all seasons and all hours in the day.

### Strategies:

- Ensure that plans for expansion of housing and employment are accompanied with corresponding expansion of the health, education and social services systems in locations that are accessible by a variety of transportation modes including public transit, biking and walking.
- Provide for expansion of police and emergency services in conjunction with the housing and employment growth in the City Centre.
- Ensure that flood protection measures are a part of City Centre infrastructure improvements.
- Ensure protection of natural areas and risk-prone lands along the riverfront are a part of the riverfront development.
- Allow for proper environmental protection and for the continuation of the riverwalk system.
- Examine an alternate highway route for the transportation of dangerous goods that is removed from the populated areas of Fort McMurray.
- Promote design guidelines to ensure safety in the public realm.



A city where children can safely play in public spaces

## 4.6 An Inspirational City

Our city will be a place that inspires and delights the people who live and retire, work and visit here. Inspiration will come through the celebration of cultural heritage and extraordinary interactions with nature, with places and with other people, all made possible by the quality of our unique natural setting and built environment. The diversity of our people and the wide range of cultural, educational and leisure choices will make the City Centre of Fort McMurray a vibrant urban community.

### Strategies:

- Celebrate cultural diversity.
- Conserve areas of cultural and heritage significance.
- Support the ongoing development of arts and cultural programs, services and facilities.
- Reinforce community pride with the placement of public art, monuments, landmarks and civic or cultural facilities.
- Encourage public arts initiatives.
- Develop a memorable public realm including public spaces and streets that invite community interaction and celebration.
- Establish high standards of neighbourhood and community design.



Fireworks on the Rideau Canal, Ottawa

## 4.7 A Competitive City

With a transformed economy and the strong presence of international businesses, our City Centre will be globally competitive, with an enviable international reputation as a centre of innovation and excellence. The city's competitiveness will be sustained by the improved quality of life offered to residents and visitors, featuring world-class urban amenities and services and a quality natural environment.

### Strategies:

- Develop and sustain the City Centre of Fort McMurray's reputation as a desirable location for business, investment and industry.
- Create a wide range of opportunities for workspaces for businesses.
- Facilitate business and investment.
- Promote the development of local businesses.
- Encourage the development of local skills.
- Support local labour force development.
- Enable a culture of innovation.
- Ensure the availability of a wide and affordable range of housing options.
- Ensure the development of urban amenities to support sophisticated lifestyles.



Fort McMurray will be a city supporting international business



## 4.8 A Connected City

Our city will be connected – across town and around the world. As the core of a connected and intelligent city, Fort McMurray's City Centre will become the hub for business interaction and technological innovation. Advanced information and communication technology will improve information sharing, and facilitate intelligent collaboration between business, government, centres of education and community organizations and underpin our sustainable economic prosperity.

### Strategies:

- Provide state-of-the-art communications capabilities for businesses and residents throughout the City Centre.
- Support and enhance the City Centre to become the hub for business interaction and technology innovations in research and development.
- Facilitate access to municipal information in a way that is convenient and relevant to residents and visitors.



Using technology to connect globally

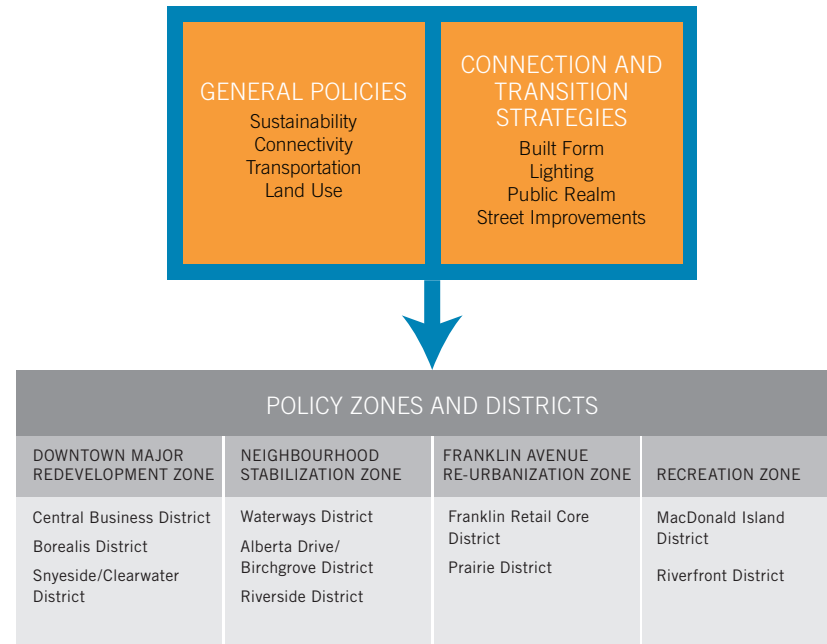
## 5.0 The Plan





## 5.0 The City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan (“The Plan”)

Our Plan starts by setting out policies and actions for three critical issues that will not only affect the City Centre but also our entire region and will guide future development: sustainable land use and infrastructure, electronic connectivity and transportation.





## 5.1 The Sustainability Plan (Land Use and Infrastructure)

To achieve our vision to become a global model for sustainable living in the north, the Municipality must simultaneously move forward on a number of fronts within the City Centre:

- reduce its carbon footprint.
- develop and use alternative sources of energy.
- approach net zero waste to landfill.
- increase water use efficiency.
- decrease dependence on the private automobile.
- increase the use of public transit and active transportation.
- create a dense, compact, mixed-use downtown core.
- implement green development standards based on international best practices.

The major contributors to the carbon footprint of the City Centre are transportation, heating and electrical power consumption. Currently, the low density distribution of activities within the City Centre, including the separation of commercial uses, exacerbates the need for travel and sustains dependency on the automobile.

However, the significant growth projected in the next 15 years presents an opportunity to dramatically reshape these patterns and to sustainably develop the power generation and waste distribution infrastructure needed to support that growth.

Furthermore, the increased number of new buildings to be developed allows the opportunity to meaningfully improve the City's average level of green building compliance and its efficiency from a sustainability standpoint.

Finally, the abundance of river flow and wind flow offer opportunities to offset the need for fossil-based energy.

The Plan proposes the development of a District Energy System as the most effective way to achieve energy efficiency in the City Centre without requiring major power from the south of the province. The proposed system would be a waste-to-energy system using municipal solid waste as fuel. It could provide both electricity and heating to the City Centre. Waste from surrounding communities and from industry could provide sufficient waste volumes for the system. A pilot plant prototype is recommended to begin this initiative. In addition, energy use guidelines for buildings should be developed to reduce energy consumption and limit the size of the energy infrastructure needed.

The electrical utility is reviewing run-of-river power generation on the Athabasca River. If additional power is required as growth occurs, a wind farm could provide the needed power as the location is ideal for this type of power. While a connection to the southern power grid would be needed to ensure stable delivery, a sustainable City Centre with the power generation options suggested, should provide all of Fort McMurray's power needs.

In addition to the waste-to-energy system, there are plans to establish local recycling and remanufacturing companies as part of efforts to build a diversified economy in the region. Organic materials could be pretreated for the wastewater treatment anaerobic digesters to produce biogas for uses such as fuel for transit vehicles. These initiatives would help us approach net zero waste to the landfill.

To postpone water treatment plant upgrades and reduce water use, the clean, reclaimed water from the wastewater treatment plant could be distributed to City Centre for toilet flushing and irrigation.



### 5.1.1 Sustainability Policies and Actions

To move forward on achieving our sustainability objectives, the Municipality will:

- 5.1.1.1 Promote a substantial reduction in dependence on private vehicles as a means of getting around the city.
  - Implement major improvements to public transportation facilities in the municipality, with a focus on the City Centre and the urban area.
  - Facilitate increased use of active transportation as a means of getting around the City Centre.
- 5.1.1.2 Plan for the development of a dense, compact, mixed-use downtown core emphasizing access by public transportation.
  - Facilitate in appropriate areas of the City Centre the development of new multi-family housing, office space, retail and entertainment facilities, civic and cultural institutions.
- 5.1.1.3 Establish and implement standards for green buildings.
  - Establish a green building energy code.
  - Develop an energy code or green building guidelines to regulate new construction in the City Centre.
  - Develop energy use guidelines for renovations to existing buildings.
- 5.1.1.4 Enhance waste reduction and recycling.
  - Establish a zero waste program that includes waste-to-energy initiatives.
  - Eliminate waste to the landfill.
  - Recycle all metals, paper and plastics.
  - Compost or generate biogas from waste food and organic materials.
  - Convert the remaining waste to electrical energy and heating energy for the district heating system.
- 5.1.1.5 Explore and develop alternate energy sources.
  - Develop partnerships for green electrical power generation.
  - Discuss opportunities to develop run-of-river power generation in the Athabasca River with the electrical utility.
  - Discuss opportunities to develop a nearby wind farm to produce power with wind power developers.
  - Discuss opportunities to develop a waste-to-energy and district heating system for the City Centre with waste-to-energy system developers.
  - Negotiate power purchase agreements with green power development partners to provide the City Centre with significant amounts of local green power.
- 5.1.1.6 Develop opportunities for green utilities (including district heating and water recycling).
  - Create a district heating system for the City Centre.
  - Develop a water heating system for new developments in the City Centre and expand it to provide heating to all of the City Centre.
  - Install underground heating distribution system for all new construction – temporary heating plants can provide heat until the main heating supply plant is constructed.
  - Distribute reclaimed water in the City Centre.
  - Distribute a portion of the high-quality water produced by the waste water treatment plant as reclaimed water to the City Centre for non-potable purposes such as irrigation and toilet flushing; treat food and organic waste in the anaerobic digesters to produce biogas.
  - Investigate the potential to use the existing anaerobic digesters at the waste water treatment plant for treating waste food and organic waste to produce additional biogas.
  - Scrub the biogas generated and distribute in the natural gas lines for transit vehicle fuel or other uses for green fuel.



## 5.2 The Connectivity Plan – Our Goal: Ubiquitous High-Speed Connectivity

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, through innovative community initiatives such as Shared Information Technology (IT) services and the incorporation of advanced network and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), is positioning the City Centre of Fort McMurray as a global leader in the creation of a next generation Intelligent Community.

Commencing in the City Centre, the Municipality will implement a dense terrestrial and wireless infrastructure, fully integrated into a single seamless network, ultimately shared by everyone in the community. Maintaining leading-edge connectivity and bandwidth will be a single investment, leveraged by the entire community, resulting in higher value with lower overall cost than the patchwork of networks found in most locales.

### 5.2.1 Connectivity Policies and Actions

To ensure the proper implementation and sustainability of an Intelligent Community within the City Centre, the Municipality will:

#### 5.2.1.1 Accommodate construction of required infrastructure to support connectivity.

- Modify construction standards to maximize the installation of advanced fibre and copper infrastructure into all new and renovation construction – municipal and commercial.
- Ensure a robust network of high capacity conduit is in place in all municipal infrastructure, such as roads, bridges to ensure that all locations can be easily provisioned with fibre optics, or other next generation technology.

#### 5.2.1.2 Develop partnerships for education, innovation and service delivery.

- Establish partnerships with leading vendors in networking, smart building, ICT applications, control systems, and telephony systems to provide expertise, technology and lower cost of implementation to the community. The partnership will provide a showcase of leading technologies to demonstrate to potential investors in the region, as well as the partner's customers, further positioning the region as a world leader in ICT, networks and collaboration.
- Establish an oversight function to monitor any municipal owned assets and ensure capacity is in place to meet requirements. This function will also oversee partnerships with vendors and provisioning of value added services to community partners.
- Establish partnerships between local educational institutions and vendor and development partners to provide knowledge transfer and training to a new generation of network and ICT experts, based in the City Centre of Fort McMurray.
- Develop and leverage long-term collaborations, such as shared IT services, to provide stewardship for the infrastructure and capabilities underpinning the Intelligent Community. Long-term collaboration among community, educational, corporate and vendor partners is central to the sustainability of City Centre's status as a leading edge Intelligent Community.
- Provide facilitation to existing and potential community organizations to ensure that maximum opportunity and benefit of the new network is realized by all.



## 5.3 The Transportation Plan

A balanced and sustainable transportation network is a major factor in our ability to achieve many of the objectives in our Plan.

Fort McMurray's City Centre will be a regional hub with a concentrated mix of uses and activities. It will be accessible by a variety of transportation modes, including public transit, cycling, walking and private automobiles. Public transit and active transportation will be prominent features in the daily life of our City Centre.

An effective transit system will facilitate travel both to and from as well as within the City Centre without the delays normally associated with road congestion from private vehicles. Consistent with transit-oriented development principles, higher density development will be focused around transit stops. Walking distance to transit will be reduced for many people. Reducing our dependence on private automobiles will cut greenhouse gas emissions and, consequently, lower the city's carbon footprint.

### 5.3.1 Transportation Policies and Actions

To increase the focus on the needs of pedestrians and facilitate greater use and accessibility of public transit to and from the City Centre, the Municipality will pursue a number of policies and actions focused on various transportation issues:

#### 5.3.1.1 Promote active transportation within the City Centre.

- Upgrade pedestrian routes in the City Centre by re-examining Engineering Service Standards and the Land Use Bylaw to include sidewalks on all streets in the City Centre and encourage mid-block pedestrian routes.
- Create continuous pedestrian and bicycle routes along the Clearwater River and the Snye.
- Create continuous bicycle routes throughout the City Centre, particularly in the east-west direction.
- Create pedestrian and bicycle connections to the City Centre from other parts of Fort McMurray.

#### 5.3.1.2 Substantially improve public transit service.

- Connect various transit routes through the City Centre so that passengers do not have to transfer, thus reducing the chance of missed connections.
- Create new transit routes to neighbourhoods with high-density development.
- Locate transit stops at activity nodes of retail, civic and employment centres.
- Introduce technology to provide real time information on the progress of buses.
- Encourage high frequency bus services along Franklin Avenue on reserved bus lanes.
- Work with the province to designate priority bus lanes on Highway 63 to connect transit from the City Centre and other Fort McMurray areas to the mine sites.
- Create main public transit routes on Franklin Avenue and other arterial roads, such as Saline Creek Parkway.

#### 5.3.1.3 Accommodate necessary parking within an urban built form.

- Limit duration of on-street parking in business/commercial areas.
- Re-examine the parking requirements in the Land Use Bylaw with respect to the number of stalls required for different uses.
- Encourage the development of off-street loading facilities for large scale developments.
- Facilitate construction of multi-level and/or underground parking facilities to limit the amount of land area devoted to surface parking.
- Re-examine the shared parking provisions in the Land Use Bylaw to increase the use of existing parking facilities to take into account differences in parking demand between land uses and activities at different times of day.

#### 5.3.1.4 Establish greater connectivity in the road network.

- Collaborate with the Government of Alberta to reconstruct Highway 63 with its frontage roads.
- Explore the opportunities to extend east-west streets, such as Fraser Avenue, Biggs Avenue, MacDonald Avenue and Manning Avenue.
- Create new crossings on the Snye to provide additional access to MacDonald Island.

The street grid that serves the City Centre area is characterized by a primary, often broken grid of major “corridors” and a secondary grid of more local streets accessed by means of the primary grid. Typically, the corridors cross the boundaries of planning zones and districts. Their principal function is to move vehicular traffic across and within urbanized areas. When combined with the form of the buildings and pedestrian activities that line them, corridors define the character of various parts of the city. Because of their scale and the access they provide, corridors are usually lined with higher density buildings, often with retail and service uses. The point where two corridors intersect are called “nodes.” Because of the increased accessibility, higher density commercial and retail development can be supported at nodes.

A proactive approach is put forward in this Plan, whereby selected corridors are proposed to be designed and developed, in terms of relative sizing of roadways and sidewalks, landscaping, lighting,



A transit right-of-way improves traffic movement

and designation of abutting land-use and density, to evolve in a particular way. For example, certain ones will emphasize retail or civic uses while others will be well-treed green corridors.

#### 5.3.2 Corridor Policies and Actions

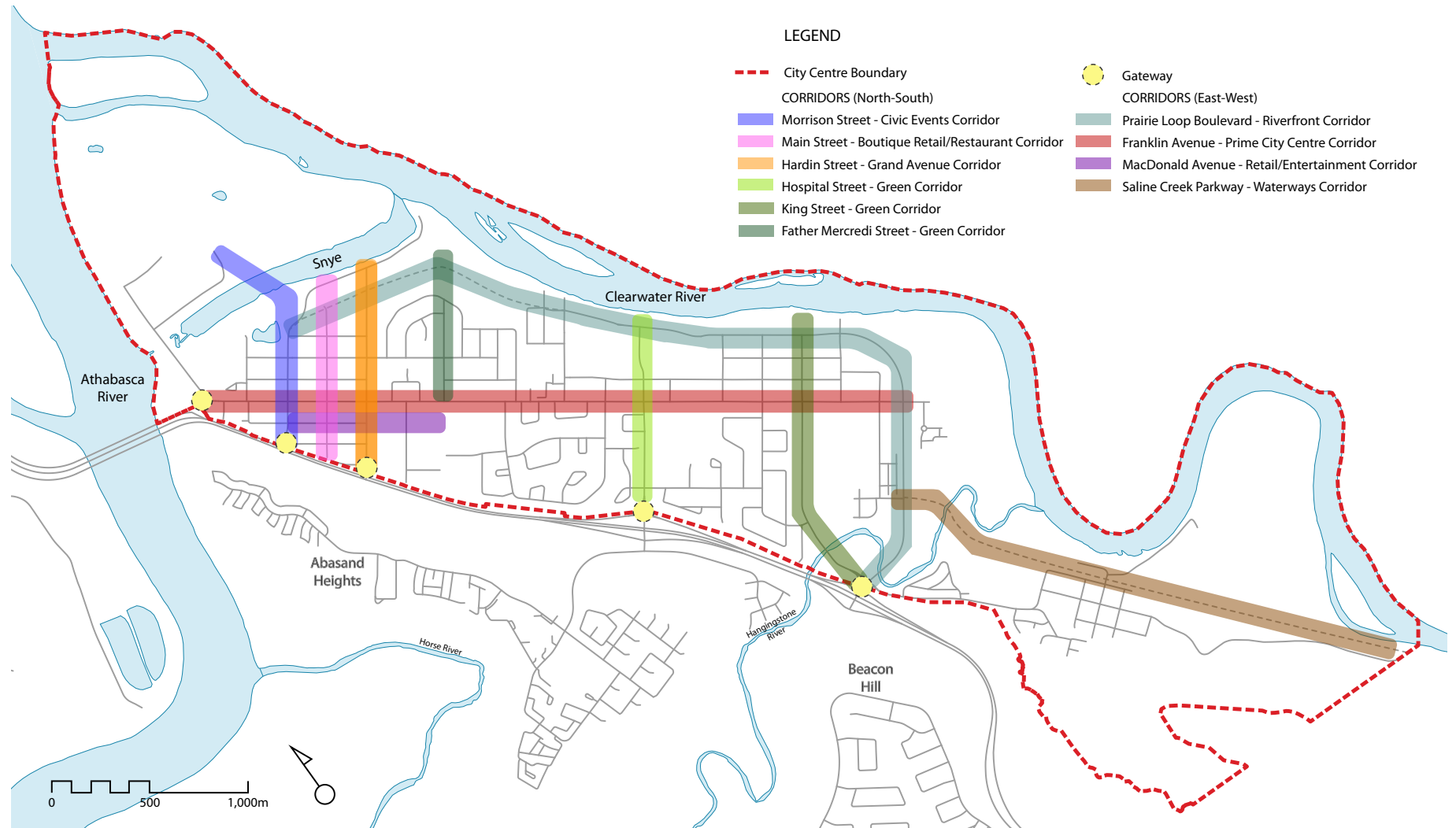
The following are policies and actions that have been developed for main corridors in the City Centre:

- ##### 5.3.2.1 Establish Franklin Avenue as a transit corridor accommodating all modes of transportation.
- Designate bus lanes on Franklin Avenue to increase the transit priority and improve access to, from and within the City Centre.
  - Replace angle parking with parallel parking on Franklin Avenue to calm traffic, ensure safety and provide better environment for pedestrians.
  - Restrict direct access to parking facilities from Franklin Avenue to reduce impacts on pedestrian and vehicular movements.
  - Support bus transfer points along Franklin Avenue to replace the existing bus terminal.
  - Encourage retail activities or mixes of commercial and residential uses at bus transfer points along Franklin Avenue.
  - Focus development around transit nodes to allow more people to have comfortable and convenient access to transit.
- ##### 5.3.2.2 Develop Prairie Loop Boulevard as a pedestrian-friendly corridor along the northern edge of the City Centre including:
- Two vehicular lanes in both directions with the flexibility to be both for travel or to have on-street parking.
  - Wide sidewalks are planned on both sides of the street with trees along the curbsides.
  - Along the south side, a building setback that is treated as an extension of the sidewalk is proposed along development sites to add a further width to the sidewalks within the right-of-way.



- On the north side where this sidewalk passes through public open space, the park landscape will be integrated with the character of the streetscape's landscape treatment.
  - Continue Prairie Loop Boulevard along the Clearwater River to feed into Morrison Street.
  - Provide pedestrian crossings along the Prairie Loop Boulevard to enhance access to the riverfront.
  - Implement safety measures along Prairie Loop Boulevard to enable the safe movement of pedestrians from one neighbourhood to another within the City Centre.
- 5.3.2.3 Create a primary access to the Waterways District with the construction of Saline Creek Parkway.
- Provide pedestrian crossings to the riverfront on Saline Creek Parkway in the Waterways District.
  - Provide safe pedestrian and bike access from the Waterways District to the rest of the City Centre.
  - Implement safety measures along Saline Creek Parkway to enable the safe movement of pedestrians from one neighbourhood to another within the City Centre.
  - Construct a berm along the Saline Creek Parkway at appropriate location for flood and noise protection.
- 5.3.2.4 Establish Hospital Street as one of the prime green corridors in the City Centre. Green corridor improvement should include but not be limited to:
- Provision of a continuous sidewalk from Franklin Avenue to the Prairie Loop Boulevard.
  - Additional tree planting in the boulevard strip between the road and sidewalk.
  - Improved lighting from the sidewalk.
  - Designated bike lanes on either side of Hospital Street, from the Highway 63 intersection to the Prairie Loop Boulevard.
  - Undertake streetscape improvement along Hospital Street.
  - Focus development along transit nodes to allow a greater number of people to have easy and convenient access to transit.
- 5.3.2.5 Establish King Street as one of the primary green corridors in the City Centre.
- Create an attractive gateway feature at King Street and Prairie Loop Boulevard access from the Highway 63 interchange. Gateway features should include a strong historical theme that links and draws people to the heritage park and other historical features to be developed along the riverfront.
- 5.3.2.6 Establish Father Mercredi Street as one of the prime green corridors in the City Centre.
- Create an attractive gateway feature at the intersection of Father Mercredi Street and Prairie Loop Boulevard as the entrance to Snye Park.
  - Designate bicycle lanes between Franklin Avenue and Prairie Loop Boulevard.
  - Require a landscaped setback within adjacent properties.
  - Require new buildings to incorporate a pedestrian scaled streetscape profile.
- 5.3.2.7 Develop Hardin Street as a “Grand Avenue” with significant landscaping along a primarily residential corridor.
- Create an attractive gateway feature at the south end of Hardin Street that signifies this as one of the arrival points in the City Centre.
- 5.3.2.8 Develop Main Street as a boutique-retail and restaurant corridor.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape appropriate to the uses that line it.
  - Ensure that buildings are designed to complement the uses and character of the street.
- 5.3.2.9 Develop Morrison Street as a civic events corridor.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape appropriate to the uses that line it.
  - Ensure that buildings are designed to complement the uses and character of the street.
- 5.3.2.10 Develop MacDonald Avenue as a major retail and entertainment corridor.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape appropriate to the uses that line it.
  - Ensure that buildings are designed to complement the uses and character of the street.

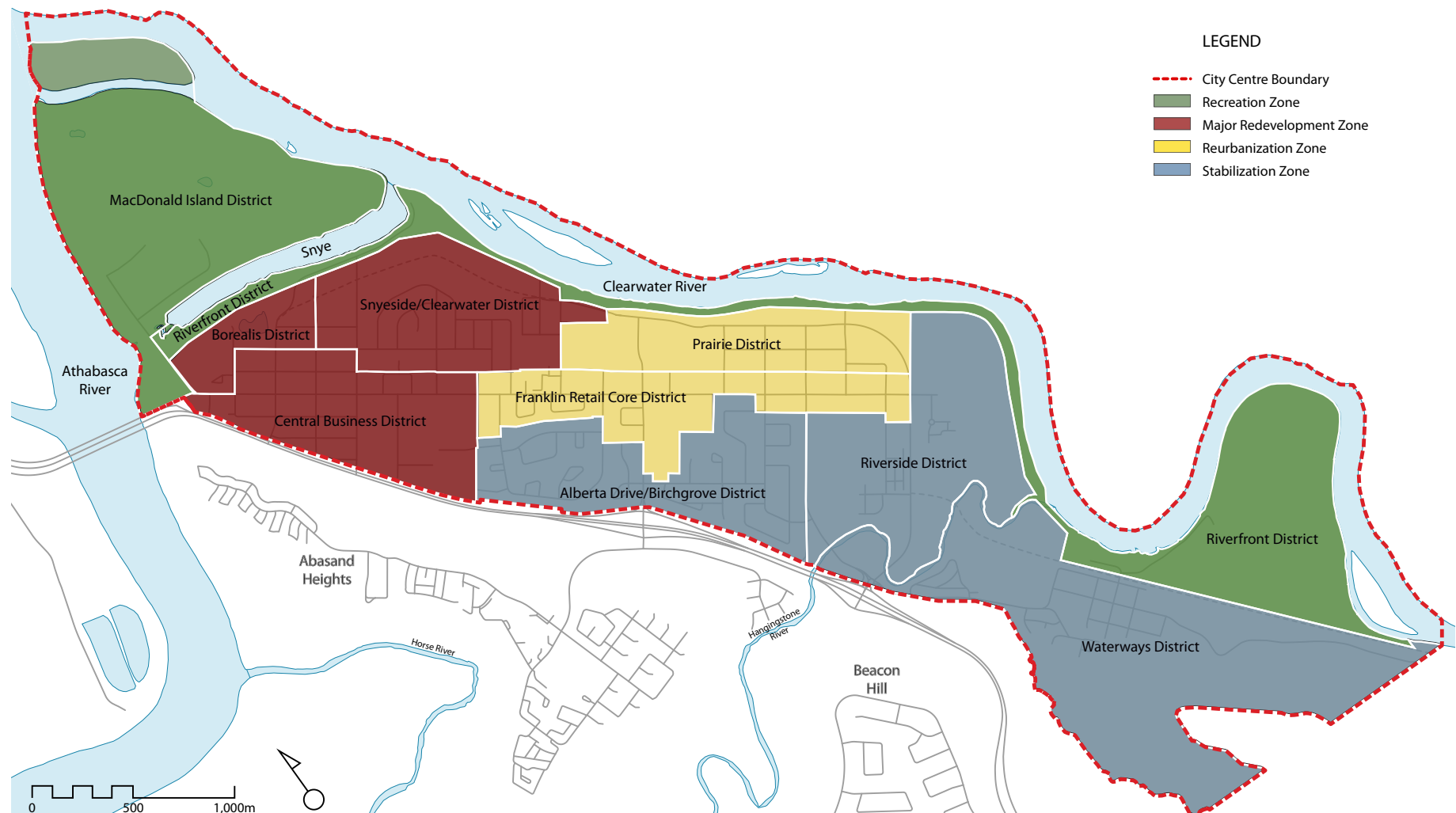
City Centre Corridors



## Land Use Planning Framework – A Four-Zone Approach

Our plan for the future development of the City Centre recognizes existing differences among various sub-areas in the City Centre. These areas require different approaches and planning guidelines. The Plan divides the City Centre into four distinct zones based on their existing characteristics, functions, features and qualities, and the type and degree of change that is projected by the Plan.

General policies and actions outlined in the prior section inform the development of detailed policies and actions for each zone. Specific planning policies and actions are then set out for each of the City Centre's nine planning districts, as enumerated in the 2009 Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan, and a tenth, the Riverfront Parks District, has been added.



### 1. Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone

The existing commercial core of Fort McMurray will see the most significant and dramatic change in terms of character, function and appearance. This is where most new development will occur. Although residents currently think of the whole City Centre as “downtown”, this Zone will increasingly assume that title as its future character emerges.

The main focus is to create a highly concentrated, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use downtown core. It features major office buildings, cultural, entertainment, shopping and dining facilities, hotels and multi-family residential development in a setting that offers a high quality and memorable public realm. The focal point of the downtown will be a dynamic new public square.

The majority of non-oil sands employment growth will be in the downtown. There will also be substantial development of new residential opportunities for all income levels and age groups. Emphasis will be on access by public transportation and creating a comfortable pedestrian friendly environment.

Our riverfront areas will be fully developed to provide more active and passive recreation for both residents and visitors. Areas in and near the Snye and Borealis Park will be transformed. Sensitive and sustainable landscaping will complement and enhance the natural beauty of the Snye and make it more accessible and usable for recreation. An iconic new Civic Centre, including a pedestrian bridge to MacDonald Island, will overlook the Snye and bring a new dimension of urban activity there. Thousands of new residential units with a wide range of affordability and lifestyle options will be developed overlooking the dramatic junction with the Clearwater River.



Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone – Before



Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone – After



## 2. Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone

Areas included in the Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone currently have a suburban character with large format retail and associated large-scale surface parking.

While many of those stores will remain and continue to provide useful goods and services, the Plan calls for much of the existing surface parking to be replaced by multi-storey buildings, including parking garages, new homes, businesses and services. Improvements to the public realm will offer better access and movement of pedestrians.



Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone – Before



Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone – After

### 3. Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone

The Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone includes districts where there will not be significant change to the existing character and functions. Most existing residential neighbourhoods in the City Centre, outside of the Downtown Zone, will be preserved and enhanced with better transit and more neighbourhood shopping and services. Minor intensification and further improvements in services and amenities will be allowed. Better connections to other parts of the City Centre area will also improve these neighbourhoods.



Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone – Before



Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone – After

#### 4. Recreation Zone

This Zone comprises the major recreational areas within the City Centre including MacDonald Island, home to the prime recreational area in Fort McMurray and the region and the open spaces along the Clearwater River. These include Riverfront Parks: Riverside, Clearwater Snye and Horse Pasture Parks.



Recreation Zone – Before



Recreation Zone – After

## Connection and Transition Strategies

While the Plan is based on these four Zones, there will be elements that are common to several if not all of them. Certain major streets, major open spaces and waterways will run through and interconnect them. For this reason the nature of transitions between adjacent zones needs to be carefully coordinated. The section that follows focuses on planning issues that apply to all areas, in particular the Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone and its adjacent areas.

The Built Form Strategy sets out appropriate form and height for downtown buildings and addresses proper transitions to nearby low-rise areas.

The Lighting Strategy focuses on this important design aspect for a northern city.

The Public Realm Strategy outlines the features of public spaces, and includes a public square, main corridors and gateways, as well as street improvements

Various corridor and street character studies and pedestrian and bicycle network studies consider streets that traverse more than one district or zone.

In all cases, the particular conclusions of these studies relative to each affected district are set out in the Policies and Actions pertaining to that district.

### Built Form Strategy

The Built Form Strategy will help achieve our vision for a high density urban downtown. Because of Fort McMurray's cold climate and limited hours of sunlight in the winter, we gave careful consideration to the configuration, placement and height of the built form.

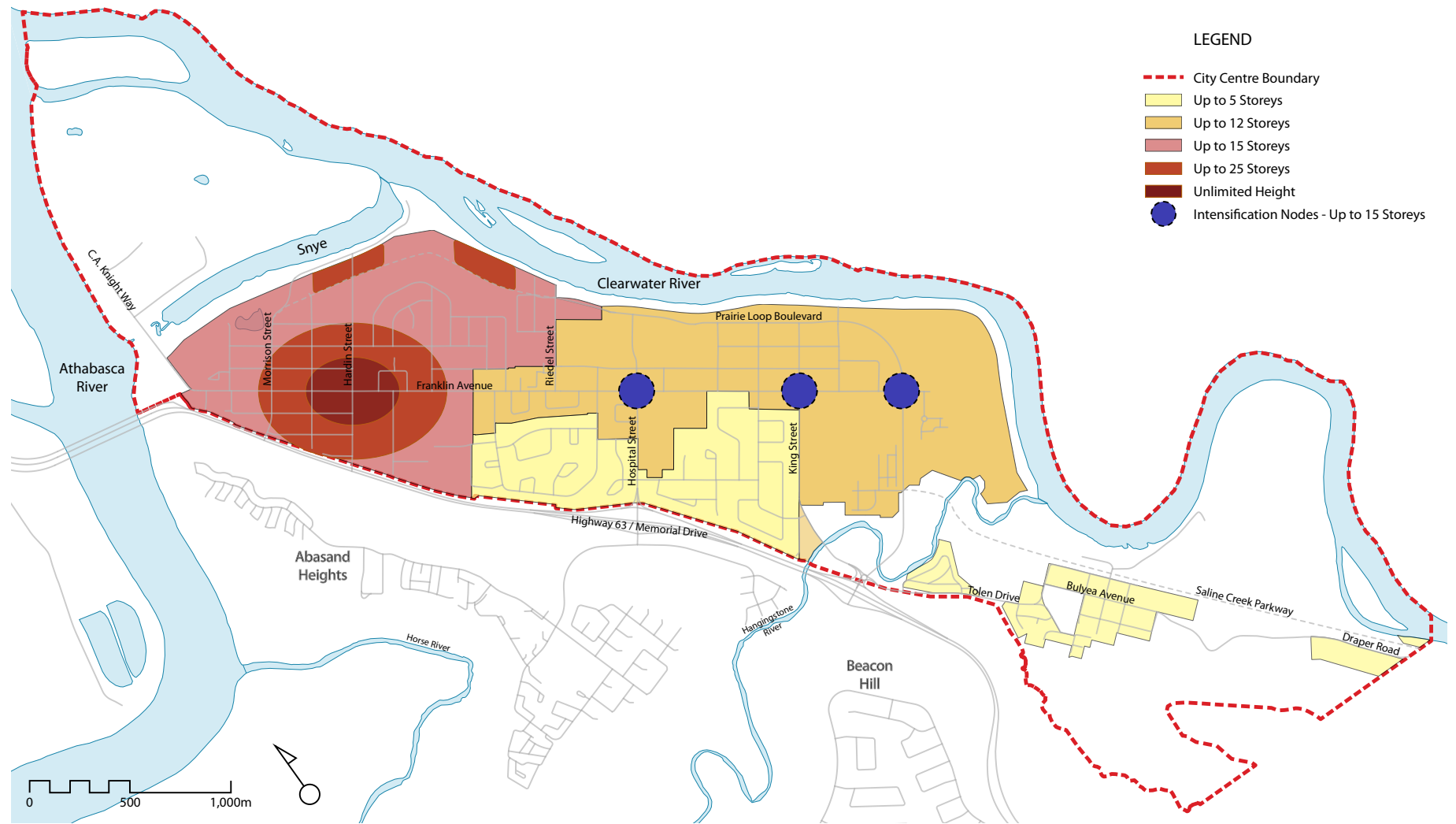
New buildings frame the public spaces and streets, and create strong edges to the outdoor urban realm. Buildings are generally located in the perimeter of the block, allowing for courtyards in the interior. Buildings are designed to be pedestrian-friendly wherever they abut a public sidewalk or open space. Scale, materials and architectural details provide interest and opportunities for engagement to pedestrians, including storefronts, entrances, paving and landscaping. Buildings incorporate features like covered sidewalks, walkways and atriums that provide shelter from the extreme weather conditions that characterize our climate.

The general intent is to mark the Central Business District's centre of gravity by locating the tallest buildings in proximity to the intersection of Franklin Avenue and Hardin Street. Heights would step down from there toward adjacent low-rise residential areas. However, taller buildings would be encouraged in certain locations:

- Overlooking the Snye and Clearwater junction;
- Marking the location of gateways to the City Centre;
- Marking the location of Franklin Square; and
- At intensification nodes around transit stops along Franklin Avenue.



### City Centre Generalized Height Diagram



## Lighting Strategy

Lighting will be used creatively to ensure vitality and the active use of the public spaces, especially during seasons of limited daylight. Innovative lighting will be a major feature of the downtown area.

A conceptual lighting strategy has been developed with the intention of reinforcing the varied character and roles of downtown streets with appropriate lighting levels and characteristics.

### MacDonald Avenue

MacDonald Avenue's focus on entertainment and nightlife means that it requires the highest intensity of night time lighting – both from street lighting and lighted signs and illuminated shop and restaurant windows. Night-time destinations like restaurants, cafes and pubs, and especially theatres and performance venues, would ideally have well-lit and prominent signage along the streetscape.

### Morrison Street

Morrison Street from MacDonald Avenue is the next most important night-time route, providing a north-south link through downtown. If well illuminated and lined with civic and event destinations it will attract pedestrians at night and during dark afternoons and evenings in the winter.

### Main Street

Main Street is also designated as a special lighting corridor to reinforce its function as a small-scale retail and pedestrian-oriented shopping street. Lighting along Main Street is intended to be pedestrian-scaled within the streetscape and reinforced by finely textured lighting of shops and cafes along the route.

### Franklin Avenue

There will also be unique lighting qualities to define Franklin Avenue as the Grand Avenue with emphasis on the Gateways at the east end and the west end.



Example of lighting at the ground level



Example of magical tree lighting



Example of a well-lit civic square, Montreal

## Public Realm Strategy

### Public Square

Fort McMurray's main Public Square will be a unique urban space in the city and the region. It will be a large (one to two acres), open and hard surfaced square, framed by busy arterial streets. Surrounded by hotels, an urban market, a movie theatre complex, retail and mixed-use development, the square will have a diverse and rich mix of uses that will animate it during the day and evening. Due to its size and sheltered location within the City Centre, it will be a prime location for city-wide events at all times of the year. A public atrium space associated with the urban market will provide shelter during the cold season.

### Civic Events Corridor

A Civic Events Corridor along Morrison Street will connect the entertainment core in the Central Business District (CBD) to the Civic Centre in the Borealis District and across a new pedestrian bridge over the Snye to the sports facilities on MacDonald Island. Civic, educational and cultural facilities will be encouraged to locate here in conjunction with the development of a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces for informal cultural events and activities.

### Retail and Entertainment Corridor

A Retail and Entertainment Corridor along MacDonald Avenue is another feature of the public realm plan. Anchored by the Arena/Entertainment Centre and new Public Square, this street, and Franklin Avenue, will come to life, especially in the evening when concerts or sporting events are held at the Entertainment Centre, or when larger gatherings and special events take place at the Public Square.



Fountains at Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto



Street festival



Retail and entertainment corridor

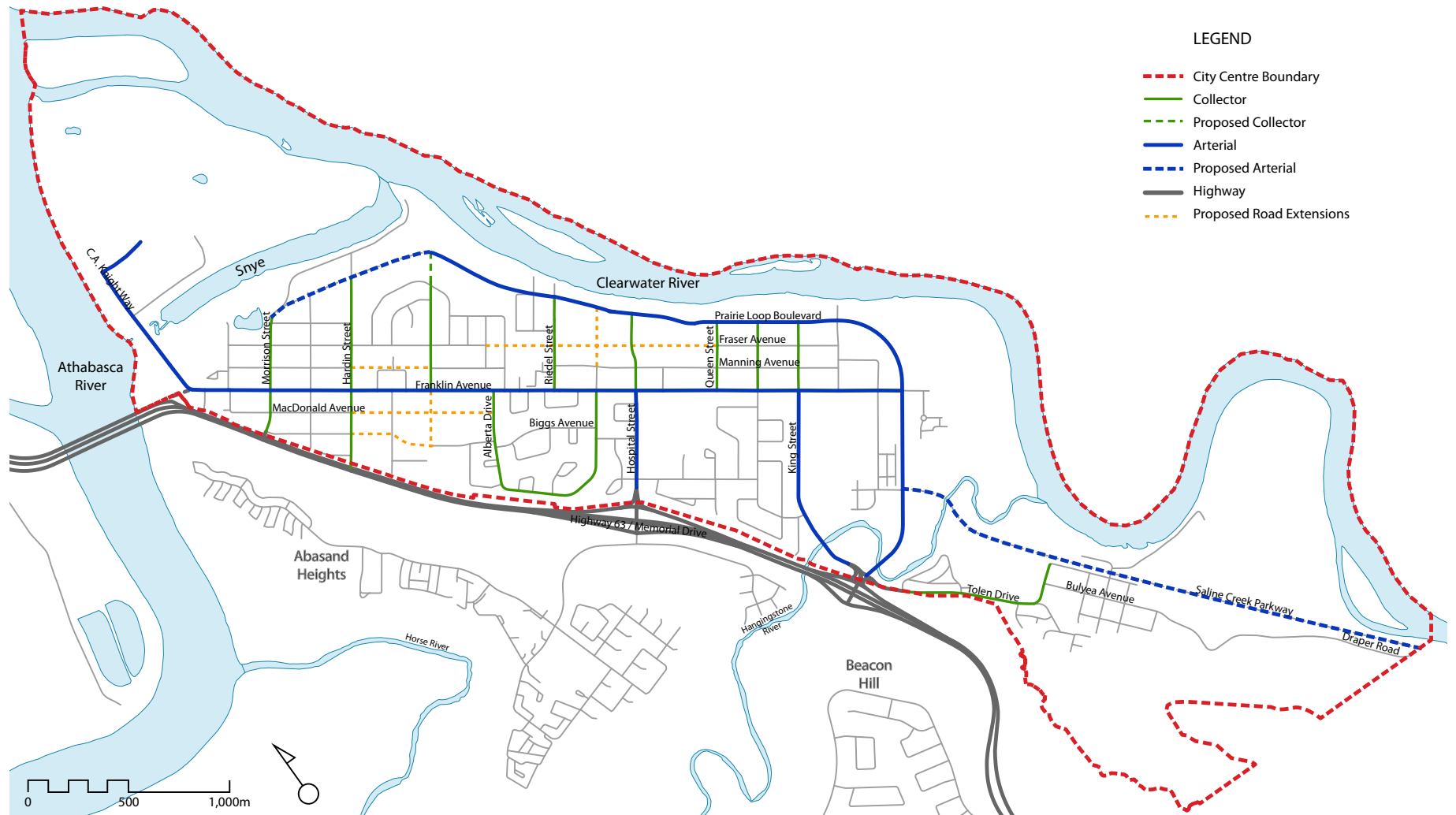


## Major Street Improvements Strategy

### East-West Route Extensions

While the network of streets remains largely unchanged in the downtown with a few key eastward extensions, the Plan proposes creating alternative east-west routes to Franklin Avenue and a more continuous pedestrian network. Fraser Avenue should be extended eastwards to connect to Riedel and Queen Street.

Similarly, MacDonald and Biggs Avenues should be extended east of Hardin Street to allow connectivity to Alberta Drive and provide frontage to smaller development blocks in this part of the CBD. Potential road extensions north across the Clearwater River from the City Centre have been discussed in the past. These should be carefully assessed if a feasible crossing is to be advanced as City Centre consolidates in the coming years.





### Street Character and Function

Morrison, Main and Hardin Streets link the CBD to the Snye waterfront, and Franklin Avenue becomes the prime transit and pedestrian link to the eastern part of the City Centre. Hardin Street is a key vehicular route connecting Highway 63 and Prairie Loop Boulevard. Main Street also connects to the Highway 63 west-bound collector.

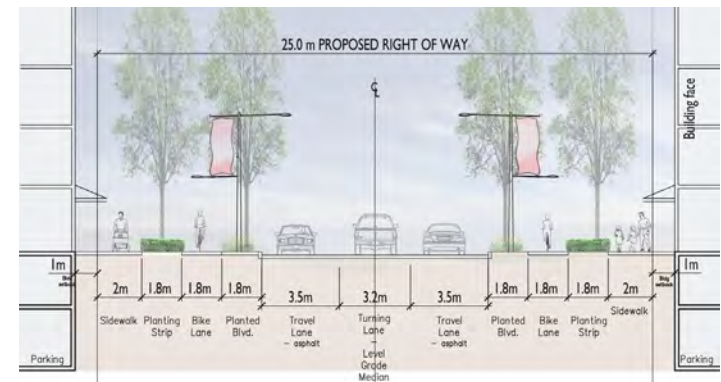
### Key Gateways and Corridors

The street network provides a specific function when combined with an appropriate character and public realm treatment for each of the six key downtown streets: Morrison Street, Main Street, Hardin Street, Prairie Loop Boulevard, Franklin Avenue and MacDonald Avenue.

### Morrison Street

Morrison is intended as the civic corridor through the downtown, leading to the new civic centre on the waterfront. The proposed pedestrian bridge across the Snye links Morrison Street to the MacDonald Island Recreation Zone.

It is proposed that Morrison Street have a right-of-way to accommodate a generous and welcoming public realm with a double row of street trees in landscaped boulevards, wide sidewalks and a dedicated bike lane on each side. To accommodate the space needed for an extensively treed pedestrian and cyclist experience, Morrison Street will not have on-street parking.



Morrison Street

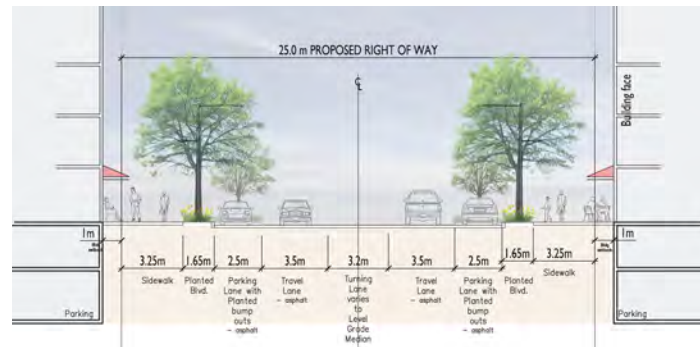


Streets that meet the needs of pedestrians and vehicles

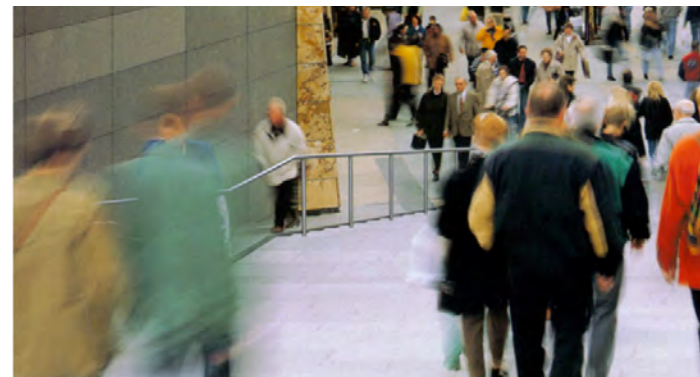
**Main Street**

Main Street is the focus for small-scale retail specialty shopping and restaurants. This is supported with a public realm that invites pedestrians to stroll and linger along its sidewalks. Excellent lighting conducive to these activities will be a key ingredient of its success.

The scale of sidewalks along Main Street is sufficient to permit outdoor eating and sidewalk displays of merchandise to support a high street shopping district.



Main Street

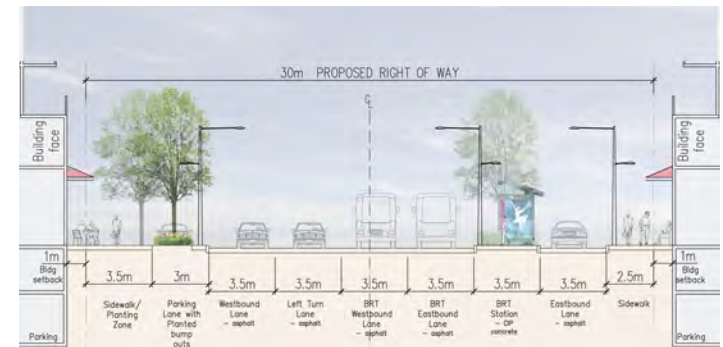


Underground shopping concourse

**Franklin Avenue**

Franklin Avenue is the prime east-west corridor through the heart of downtown with a civic gateway at its intersection and the bridge system on Highway 63. Its primacy in the street hierarchy is emphasized by a wide right-of-way and the configuration and use of its central two lanes as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route. Street trees are accommodated in boulevard strips and sidewalk bulges where possible around the BRT infrastructure.

Sidewalks are planned to be generous; some setbacks on private property may be needed to maintain the sidewalk width throughout the corridor.



Franklin Avenue

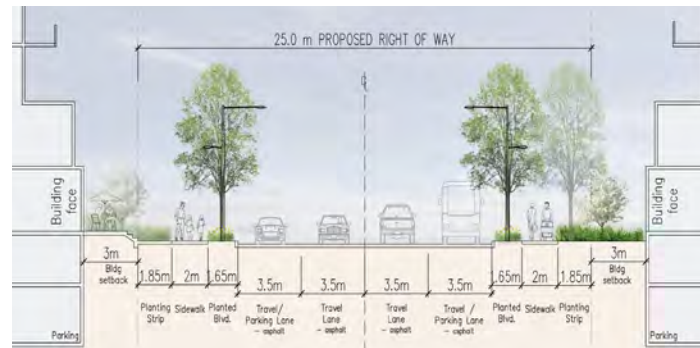


Retail corridor

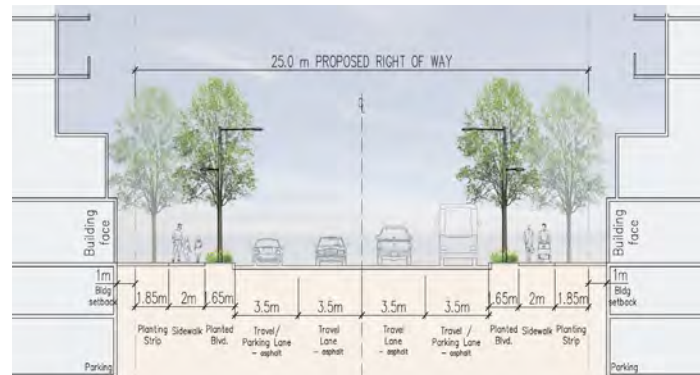
**Hardin Street**

The Plan proposes Hardin Street as a grand avenue, with a landscaped character suited to its primarily residential development. The south end of Hardin Street at the highway is a gateway into the downtown that is also envisioned as landscaped, in keeping with the green and residential character of the streetscape to the north.

The vehicular portion of the streetscape has two lanes in each direction, with the outer lanes available for travel or on-street parking, as assessed by the Municipality.



**Hardin Street North**

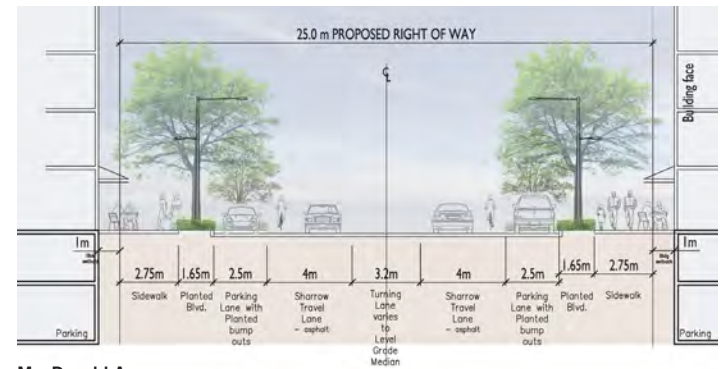


**Hardin Street South**

**MacDonald Avenue**

MacDonald Avenue is the focus of the entertainment corridor with a variety of restaurant, club and other entertainment uses and a vibrant, active street scene well into the evenings. The street right-of-way provides one travel lane in each direction, a central median that is used for left hand turn bays alternating with landscaping. On-street parking is provided on both sides of the street.

Sidewalks are a generous width and buffered from the parking by boulevards with street trees. The sidewalks are envisioned as having outdoor seating, including for cafes and restaurants, and offering weather protection to pedestrians under canopies and awnings.



**MacDonald Avenue**



**Lively restaurant street near the Theatre District, King Street, Toronto**



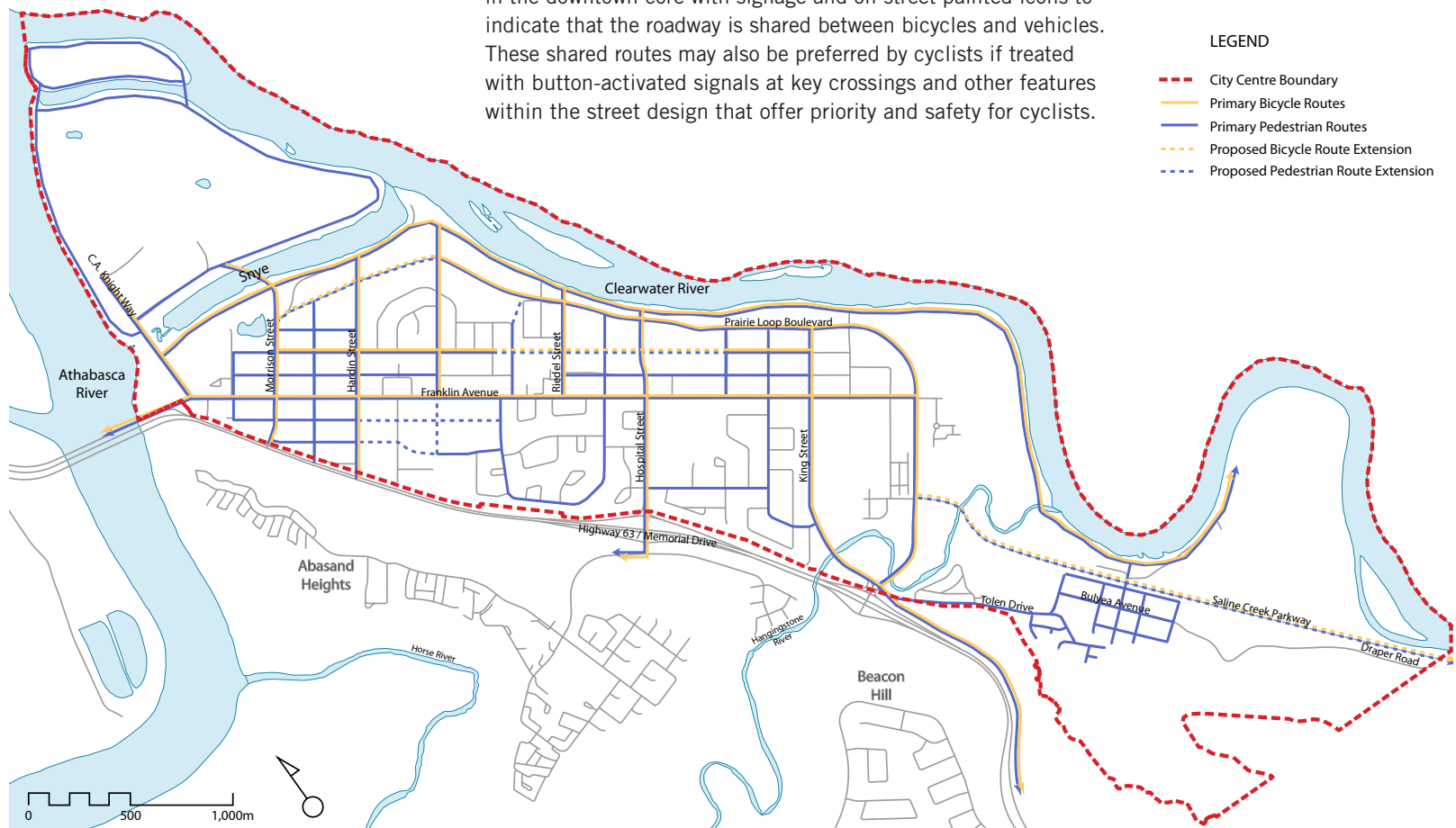
**Pedestrian Network**

The primary pedestrian network is formed by the sidewalks of all the downtown streets. These routes are supplemented by supporting secondary routes within parks and public open spaces and linked mid-block connections that offer a variety of pedestrian experiences and shorten walking distances between key destinations. New buildings adjacent to sidewalks and pedestrian walkways will be designed to provide protection from wind and precipitation, and where appropriate, additional gathering spaces including weather-protected ones.

**Bicycle Network**

Bicycle routes in the downtown will link with the larger Fort McMurray cycling network. This network is meant to encourage cycling for both commuting and recreation. Cycling infrastructure includes several key streets that will have a dedicated bike lane including the edge of the river and adjacent to Prairie Loop Boulevard, Father Mercredi Street and Morrison Street. These dedicated bikeways will provide direct routes through the downtown and to the larger network.

A secondary network of bikeways that share space on downtown streets is proposed. This will provide access to specific destinations in the downtown core with signage and on-street painted icons to indicate that the roadway is shared between bicycles and vehicles. These shared routes may also be preferred by cyclists if treated with button-activated signals at key crossings and other features within the street design that offer priority and safety for cyclists.





## 5.4 Planning Zones – Policies and Actions

There are a number of general planning policies that will help achieve our objectives for the development of the City Centre zones.

### 5.4.1 Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone

The downtown area of City Centre comprises the Central Business District, the Borealis District and Snyeside / Clearwater District. In this area which is designated as the Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone is where significant changes and development are encouraged.

- 5.4.1.1 Encourage a high standard of architecture and urban design in all major new buildings.
- Create a distinctive public realm with streets and sidewalks that are well-lit and landscaped.
  - Develop selected streets with specialized and differentiated functions and characters.
  - Develop memorable public spaces, including a major public square and a revitalized Snye District.
  - Transform the Snye into a more intensively used focal area with a high quality public realm.
- 5.4.1.2 Concentrate new employment and residential opportunities in the downtown area with emphasis on access and mobility via public transportation, walking and cycling.
- Develop a transit way along Franklin Avenue to provide high quality access by public transit to all parts of the City Centre of Fort McMurray.
- 5.4.1.3 Encourage the development of a wide range of cultural, entertainment, shopping, and dining facilities, and hotels in the downtown within easy walking distance.
- 5.4.1.4 Encourage buildings that provide weather protection and are designed to be pedestrian-friendly in relation to abutting sidewalks.
- 5.4.1.5 Facilitate the development of new public attractions downtown, including; a civic centre with cultural and conference facilities on the waterfront, an Arena to accommodate major sports and entertainment events, a public square to act as a focal point for the downtown and accommodate major public events and gatherings.



Orchestra Hall, Minnesota



Typical homes in Neighborhood Stabilization Zone

#### 5.4.2 Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone

Existing areas currently occupied by large-format retail stores and suburban-style shopping malls under this plan are classified as “Reurbanization Areas”

- 5.4.2.1 Promote the transformation of “Reurbanization Areas” by encouraging mixed-use intensification through new urban-style, pedestrian-oriented infill development.
- Develop guidelines and regulations to ensure that buildings are appropriately designed with good scale for pedestrian, covered walking areas and a well-scaled relationship with the street.



Concept of a re-urbanized street

#### 5.4.3 Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone

Designate existing residential neighbourhoods outside of downtown as “Stable Neighbourhoods” within which only minor intensification will be encouraged.

- Provide improved public transit connections to the Stable Neighbourhoods and encourage the development of neighbourhood type services adjacent to them.

#### 5.4.4 Recreation Zone

Designate MacDonald Island and Riverfront Park open spaces as a “Recreation Zone” which will feature large-scale recreational activities.

- Encourage the development of recreational and sports facilities on MacDonald Island, and along Riverfront areas, including appropriate commercial support services, and ensure that they are accessible by a wide range of transportation options.



Recreation space for people of all ages

## 5.5 Individual Planning Districts – Policies and Actions

The Planning Districts described in the Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan (2009) have been reviewed in relation to the four zone approach and the boundaries somewhat refined. They break out as follows:

### **Downtown Major Development Zone:**

5.5.1 Central Business District

5.5.2 Borealis District

5.5.3 Snyeside / Clearwater District

### **Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone**

5.5.4 Prairie District

5.5.5 Franklin Retail Core District

### **Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone**

5.5.6 Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District

5.5.7 Riverside District

5.5.8 Waterways District

### **Recreation Zone**

5.5.9 MacDonald Island District

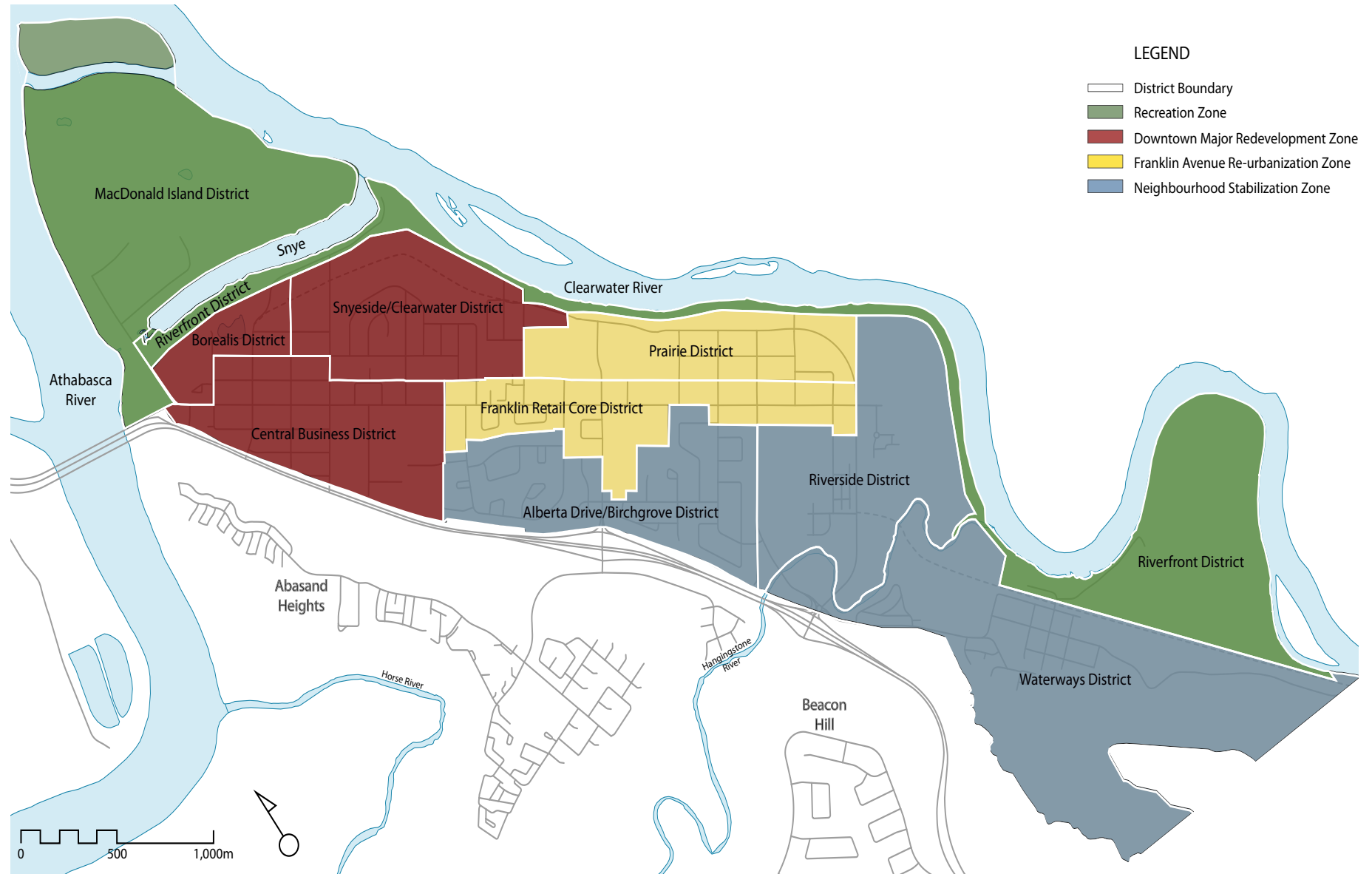
5.5.10 Riverfront District

### **District Plans – Policies and Actions**

The following sections set out the plans that have been developed for each district. Generally, the District Plans are presented in four parts:

- a) General Overview describes the characteristics of the district and its relation to its Zone.
- b) Land Use Policies and Actions set out the policies that will govern new development in the district and actions that will be taken to achieve the Plan's objectives.
- c) Public Realm Policies and Actions set out urban design concepts for the development of streets and public spaces within the district, and the actions that will be taken to implement those improvements.
- d) Transportation Policies and Actions set out policies and actions that will be undertaken with respect to local roads and transit facilities within each district.

### Zones and Districts





## Downtown Major Redevelopment Zone

### 5.5.1 Central Business District

#### General Overview

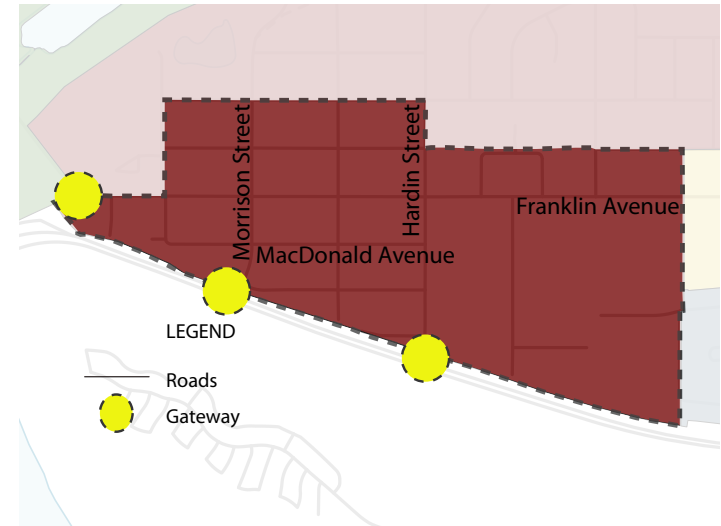
The Central Business District (CBD) will have the highest densities and will be the key central commercial area in the City Centre.

The area is divided into three distinct areas where complementary uses will be concentrated:

- Primary Office Zone (west of Hardin Street)
- Primary Retail Zone (east of Hardin Street)
- Retail and entertainment corridors along and in the vicinity of MacDonald Avenue

Office development will be encouraged in the primary office zone located west of Hardin Street, within which the highest densities will be permitted. Commercial and business uses including major corporate offices and businesses, located within walking distance of each other, will be the primary uses in this zone. The development of high density residential buildings and retail support services will also be encouraged so the CBD remains a safe and livable place at night.

The primary retail zone will be the focal area for retail development in the CBD. A strong component of large-scale retail uses will be maintained as the area transforms into a medium-high density mixed use area, accommodating large format retail, office, hotel, live-work and residential uses. Existing surface parking will be replaced by parking structures in new developments. Retail at grade and residential above will be encouraged. In less intensively developed areas within the primary retail zone, infill development



Central Business District

will be encouraged that includes retail, residential offices and hotels. The retail and entertainment corridor will serve as a 24/7 hub for entertainment and retail activities. The emphasis will be on creating a pedestrian-oriented environment with a well-designed and attractive public realm. Retail uses will be encouraged to concentrate along Franklin and MacDonald Avenues and Main Street, and around the Public Square. The development of an arena in close proximity will serve as the anchor for retail and entertainment uses.

Built forms should decrease in intensity and height as the transition to the low-rise residential of Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District.

### Land Use Policies and Actions

#### West of Hardin Street (Office)

- 5.5.1.1 Allow for the highest concentration of primarily business and office uses within the primary office zone west of Hardin Street in the CBD.
- 5.5.1.2 Permit high density residential uses in the primary office zone to ensure that the CBD remains a safe and vibrant community at night after business hours.
- 5.5.1.3 Encourage more intensive development, especially in the western portion, through infilling of vacant lots and redevelopment of underutilized sites.

#### East of Hardin Street (Retail)

- 5.5.1.4 In the eastern part of the CBD, south of Franklin Avenue, allow high or medium density mixed uses accommodating large format retail, office, live-work and residential uses
- 5.5.1.5 Encourage large scale retail uses to the east of Hardin Street.
- 5.5.1.6 Maintain a component of large-scale retail uses to be located in the primary retail zone while allowing for this section of the CBD to transform into a high density mixed-use area.
- 5.5.1.7 Encourage mixed-used development, with the requirement that in the high density mixed-use portion of the building a pedestrian-friendly environment including street related retail uses, be provided at grade, with office, retail, hotel and/or residential uses above.
- 5.5.1.8 In less intensively developed areas within the primary retail zone, infill development will be encouraged that includes retail, residential offices and hotels.

#### MacDonald Avenue and Vicinity (Retail and Entertainment Corridor)

- 5.5.1.9 Allow for intensive mixed-use within the Retail and Entertainment Corridor of the CBD which include but are not limited to movie theatres, a farmer's market and a broad range of shopping and entertainment uses.

#### General

- 5.5.1.10 Develop street level retail along Franklin Avenue, continuing through to the Franklin Retail Core District, as well as along Hardin, Main and Morrison Streets.

- 5.5.1.11 Ensure a smooth transition in height and built form between the downtown and adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods especially the Alberta Drive / Birchgrove neighbourhood.
- 5.5.1.12 Encourage new, public spaces within large-scale projects in the CBD to provide residents and workers with access to open space and bring air and sunlight into the denser built environment.
  - Develop guidelines for tall buildings, and for medium and high density mixed-use developments with street oriented ground floor retail.
  - Ensure the design guidelines include specific principles related to winter city design, green buildings standards and barrier-free access.



Office development can create a quality public realm



Ritz Carlton Hotel and Residences – Toronto; an iconic mixed-use complex

### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- Create Franklin Square as an iconic focal point in the downtown.
- Create and distinguish the key corridors and gateways such as Morrison Street, Main Street, Hardin Street, Prairie Loop Boulevard, Franklin Avenue and MacDonald Avenue.
- Formulate and implement Improvement Area Programs in the CBD, targeted at achieving major streetscape improvements in the Public Realm.

### Transportation Policies and Actions

- 5.5.1.13 Improve accessibility throughout the CBD for pedestrian, bicycles and transit, and ensure appropriate access for persons with physical disabilities.
- 5.5.1.14 Prohibit surface parking on private property in front of developments in the CBD. The majority of the parking should be provided in below- or above-ground structures with surface parking at the rear of the development accessible from lanes or side streets.
- 5.5.1.15 Prohibit surface parking lots in the CBD.
- Construct municipal parking structures in central locations within the high density section of the CBD.
  - Develop a parking strategy that ensures adequate, mainly off-street parking, to service existing and new development.
  - Create and enhance connections between the CBD and the Snye and Riverfront area.



Large format retail on Dundas Street, Toronto



Urban market, Granville Island, Vancouver

### 5.5.2 Borealis District

With its proximity to the CBD and convenient access to Highway 63 and the riverfront, the Borealis District is an ideal neighbourhood for a mix of civic and residential uses and development.

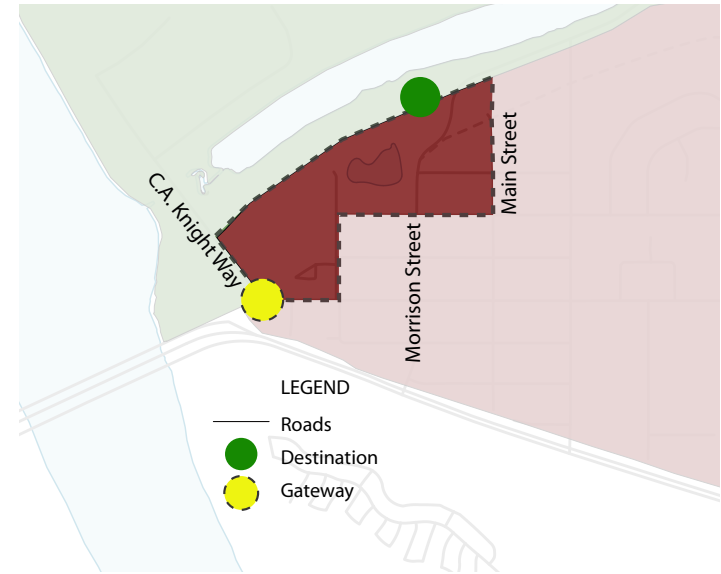
Civic uses include, but are not limited to, a city hall, a library, conference facilities, and a performing and visual arts centre. As a prime residential neighbourhood, the Borealis District will see the development of a broad range of residential types including a major new component of multi-family housing.

High-density residential uses will replace existing buildings over time by filling in the blocks south and east of Borealis Park. Little change is anticipated for the blocks on the west end by C.A. Knight Way.

Increased connections between the Borealis District, MacDonald Island, and the rest of downtown are important to enhance its function as a civic district. The Borealis Park and adjacent natural green spaces will be integrated and improved as a focal point of the district. Borealis District will include medium and high density areas.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.2.1 Allow for the concentration of residential and civic uses in this district. While this is primarily a residential area, limited commercial uses will be permitted along access streets such as Hardin, Main and Morrison Streets.
- 5.5.2.2 Permit small-scale commercial development within the Snye Park area. Such commercial activities will be a key element to creating a more interesting and active public environment along the Snye, and the Municipality should consider ways of encouraging and facilitating some initial commercial development in this area.



Borealis Park, Fort McMurray



- 5.5.2.3 Encourage a mix of housing types within the District. Within individual projects, designs should include a mix of housing, such as buildings with ground-access townhouse units and apartments above or in separate buildings.
- 5.5.2.4 Allow for affordable housing in this area through special programs with private developers and through partnerships.
- 5.5.2.5 Encourage mixed uses in this District by permitting small office and small retail uses at grade and on the second floor of properties.
- Create civic and cultural destination nodes along Morrison Street to reinforce connectivity to the Snye waterfront and to distinguish this street as the Civic and Events Corridor.
  - Develop strategies and programs to encourage and assist small businesses and non-profit organizations to locate in this district.
- 5.5.2.6 Allow for smooth transition in density through design and architectural guidelines.
- 5.5.2.7 Ensure smooth transitions in building heights, increasing towards the CBD and decreasing toward the Snye.

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- 5.5.2.8 Encourage greater use of Borealis Park for more hours of the day and in all seasons.
- Develop and enhance the Borealis and Snye riverfront park system.
  - Promote development of a restaurant facility in Borealis Park Recreation Centre.
  - Provide for better views as part of the improvements.
- 5.5.2.9 Establish Main Street as a pedestrian corridor. Emphasis would be placed on greening the street and lining it with interesting boutiques, cafes and restaurants. Attractive night-lighting will be an important feature.



Iconic civic buildings create a sense of place and pride



Medium density residential development offers a range of housing types



A performing arts centre contributes to a quality urban environment

5.5.2.10 Develop Hardin Street as a Grand Avenue with broad tree-lined sidewalks. Other features include:

- A distinctive gateway feature at the southern end;
- Artwork, a palette of distinctive paving, lighting, banners and furnishing;
- Provision of continuous sidewalk with landscaping;
- Crosswalks at all intersections, including special crosswalks; and
- Bike lanes as well as bike boxes at signalized intersections.

5.5.2.11 Develop the Snye riverfront park as a multi-purpose activity area with a variety of new recreational, leisure uses and supportive retail and dining facilities.

- Implement development plans for Borealis and Snye riverfront areas consistent with policies under the Riverfront Park District.

- Establish a gateway feature on Morrison Street at Franklin Avenue.
- Develop cross-country ski trails, using the park facilities as a start and end point.

5.5.2.12 Ensure development fronting the Snye allows for the protection of the natural environment.

#### **Transportation Policies and Actions**

- Enhance the connections from the Borealis District to the Snye and riverfront, with the first priority being the development of the Morrison Street Corridor, a new civic centre and plaza, and a new pedestrian bridge to MacDonald Island.
- Improve the overall transportation network.

### 5.5.3 Snyeside / Clearwater District

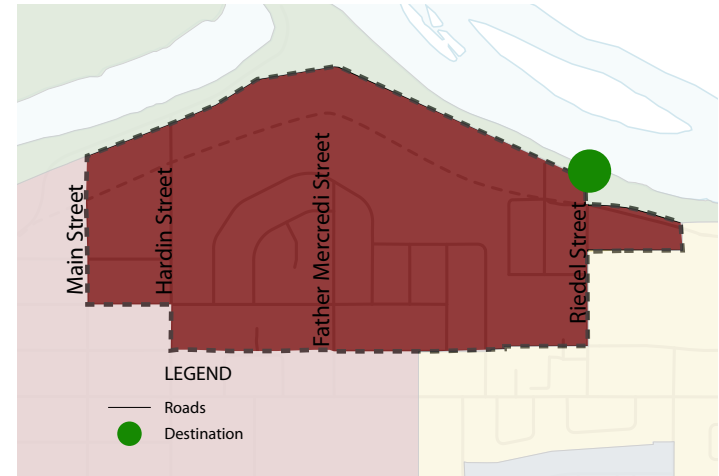
#### General Overview

The Snyeside / Clearwater District will be transformed to incorporate a new high density neighbourhood with strong orientation towards the waterfront.

The Snyeside / Clearwater District will include medium and high density areas with a combination of mid-rise and high-rise buildings that are well integrated into adjacent natural and built areas. Uses at grade will be mostly residential, except along Main Street where there will be shops, cafes and restaurants interspersed with lobby entrances. The intensity of development increases as it approaches the Snye to take advantage of views and park amenities. As the area changes, efforts will be made to ensure smooth transition between higher density and existing lower density areas.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.3.1 Allow for mostly residential uses at grade, except along Main Street where retail and commercial uses such as shops, cafes and restaurants are permitted.
- 5.5.3.2 Promote a mix of towers and mid-rise buildings, with taller towers along Prairie Loop Boulevard.
- 5.5.3.3 Promote the development of a new civic centre fronting toward the Snye, incorporating a variety of civic uses and supportive retail and restaurant uses that will animate the area on evenings and weekends as well as during the work week.
  - Site the new civic building to provide an active edge to a plaza that overlooks the Snye with street end views within the downtown transitioning to panoramic views at the waterfront.
  - Ensure that ground floor uses in the civic buildings are active, interesting and publicly accessible along Morrison Street and north-facing plaza edges.
  - Develop design guidelines for both medium density residential and medium high-density residential categories, ensuring, among other things, that the needs of family occupants are provided for.



Snyeside / Clearwater District



Example of development in Vancouver that complements the natural setting

### Snye Park Strategy

The Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan recognized the importance of developing the Snye riverfront as a multi-purpose activity area with a variety of new recreational, leisure, retail and entertainment facilities. Development plans for integrating the Borealis and Snye riverfront parks referenced the draft Riverfront Master Plan. The revitalization of the riverfront park system is one of the main reasons people will want to live and work downtown. It is also why residents from other parts of the city as well as visitors will come downtown to enjoy the activities, beauty and spirit of the riverfront.

The vision for the future of Snye Park put forward in the draft Riverfront Master Plan included a variety of complementary uses that could include commercial development, a public plaza, supportive retail and commercial development, a rowing club, skating, a boat launch, the continued presence of float planes and other recreational activities. Development in this area would abut the park development, creating an urban edge that would complement the park areas.

The updated strategy for Snye Park builds on this vision. It includes cultural and recreational features and a network of engaging connections to the adjacent downtown. The riverfront edge provides a continuous public open space along the south side of the Snye that becomes fully integrated with Borealis Park at the Civic Centre site. The waterfront is part of the floodplain zone, with the expectation that these lands may flood in unusually high flood conditions. The new dike will mediate between the waterfront and new development. The public and semi-public open spaces at the park edge of new buildings will have a more urban character and benefit from the change in elevation to overlook the Snye and MacDonald Island.

North-south routes through the downtown will end in special places at the waterfront, each with specific functions and characters. These connections will bring the downtown to the Snye and provide linkages to the water's edge that take advantage of the design and view opportunities of the changes in elevation at the transition to the waterfront.

### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- 5.5.3.4 Develop park areas along the Snye and Clearwater Rivers for active park and recreational use.
- 5.5.3.5 Give consideration to retaining existing uses such as float planes and boat launches where feasible when implementing development in the Snye area.
- 5.5.3.6 Improve access, particularly pedestrian access, from and through the district to the Snye and riverfront park system.
- 5.5.3.7 Provide continuous public access for pedestrians and cyclists at both the north edge of the dike, with an urban character, and at the elevation of the Snye waterfront, with a more naturalized character suited to the river ecology and floodplain condition, including sections on elevated boardwalks.
- 5.5.3.8 Promote the development of small food and retail pavilions along the riverfront that encourages active, all season use of the riverfront.
- 5.5.3.9 Require canopies on all development fronting Father Mercredi Street.
  - Focus active recreation activities, including sports fields and courts, at the park.
  - Include small pavilions with food and retail along the lower waterfront route to encourage use by providing amenities, washrooms, etc.
  - Offer views into the riverfront park at the spit from the Prairie Loop Boulevard to provide awareness of the physical setting of the downtown into the Clearwater District.
  - Develop a pier extending over the water north of Main Street as a feature along both the waterfront route and the Main Street corridor.
  - Identify and protect view corridors overlooking the Snye Park from Prairie Loop Boulevard.
  - Create destination nodes along the riverfront at the termination of Hardin Street, Main Street, Father Mercredi Street and Riedel Street. These should provide activity areas to serve as entry ways into the riverfront park system.



### Transportation Policies and Actions

- Allow for improved transportation access prior to major redevelopment in the district. Improvements to include the extension of Prairie Loop Boulevard along the northern boundary of Snyeside/ Clearwater District to alleviate congestion on Franklin Avenue and provide alternate access, and to provide access to the Snye and Clearwater Riverfront park system.
- Examine the technical feasibility for other road improvements:
  - extending Fraser Avenue east to Riedel Street and onto Queen Street;
  - extending McLeod Street north to connect with Prairie Loop Boulevard; and
  - extending Father Mercredi Street north to connect with Prairie Loop Boulevard.
- Improve transportation and access to the park system by extending the Prairie Loop Boulevard west to Morrison Street.
- Provide a continuous pedestrian and bicycle network including the creation of dedicated bike lanes that provide better connections through the riverfront park. Priority should be given to Riedel Street and Father Mercredi Street.



Mixed density residential development creates pedestrian-friendly streets



Retail and restaurants at grade promote active street life

## Franklin Avenue Re-urbanization Zone

### 5.5.4 Prairie District

#### General Overview

Building on the existing large-format commercial and retail base and its proximity to the riverfront park system, this district will be reurbanized to allow for more diverse, medium density mixed-use development in a pedestrian-friendly setting that will give people a greater variety of activities to enjoy.

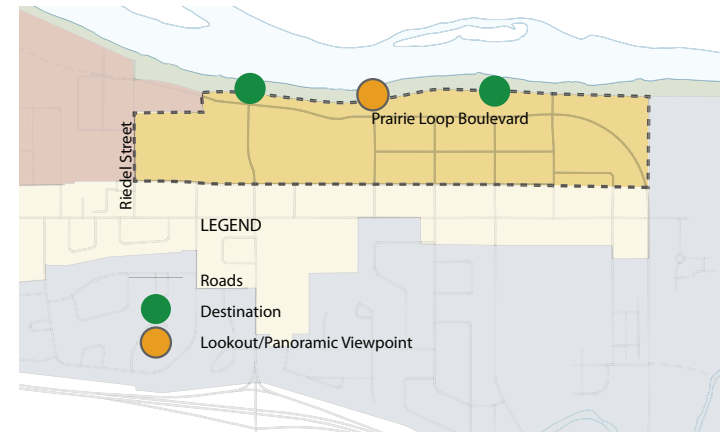
The Prairie District currently contains a wide variety of uses, including large-format retail stores, heavy industry, light industry, office commercial, hotel and entertainment, highway commercial, institutional, and mixed-use commercial and residential developments.

Heavy industrial uses and highway commercial uses will no longer be permitted while the existing heavy industrial uses will be phased out as industrial land opportunities become available elsewhere in the city.

Key areas such as those along Franklin Avenue and Hospital Street will be intensified with established design criteria. Day-to-day commercial uses and other formats not suited for the CBD will be accommodated in this district.

Opportunities for infill development on the outer edge of large retail lots will be examined. Future large-scale retail with street frontage on one or more major streets will be required to provide interesting and attractive connections for pedestrians, in particular connections to the riverfront system.

Residential buildings such as artist lofts and apartments will be allowed in the transition area closer to the Riverside District as an enhancement to the arts and cultural amenities there.



Prairie District

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.4.1 Permit medium density, mixed-use development such as secondary office, other commercial, retail, residential and institutional uses.
- 5.5.4.2 West of Queen Street, allow for a mix of uses including large format retail, restaurants, and residential infill.
- 5.5.4.3 East of Queen Street, allow for light indoor warehousing uses, small scale office, institutional uses and residential uses above the street level. All non-residential uses should be compatible with residential development and should not interrupt pedestrian connectivity in the district.
- 5.5.4.4 Prohibit new heavy industrial uses and any further expansion or redevelopment of current heavy industrial uses.
- 5.5.4.5 Require new commercial developments and intensification of existing large format retail to be street oriented to improve the pedestrian environment in the district.
- 5.5.4.6 Encourage intensification west of Queen Street through infilling underutilized sites.
- 5.5.4.7 Parking for commercial uses should not be located between the building and the street.

- 5.5.4.8 Outlets with drive-in facilities should be located at the side or rear of the building, but not be permitted between the building and the street.
- 5.5.4.9 Allow for smaller scale retail development that complements the Riverfront Park along Prairie Loop Boulevard, especially at the termination of Hospital, Queen and King Streets.
- 5.5.4.10 Require future development in the district to provide interesting and attractive connections to the riverfront park.
- 5.5.4.11 Require canopies on all development fronting Hospital, King, Queens Street and Prairie Loop Boulevard.
- 5.5.4.12 Encourage arts and cultural opportunities in this district.

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- Develop a streetscape improvement program for this district, the first priority being Hospital Street and Franklin Avenue.
- Develop Hospital Street, Alberta Drive and King Street as green corridors.

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- 5.5.4.13 Improve vehicular access within the district through improvements to streets connecting to Prairie Loop Boulevard.
  - Develop pedestrian and bike access connections throughout this district providing interesting connections to the riverfront park.
  - Explore the feasibility of extending Alberta Drive north from Manning Avenue to Prairie Loop Boulevard. This extension would be part of the strategy to reduce the loads on the main arterials.
  - Implement a limit on street parking in this district to reduce the number of vehicles parked for extended periods.



The typical suburban corridor focuses on vehicles



A well-designed corridor meets the needs of pedestrians and vehicles

### 5.5.5 Franklin Retail Core District

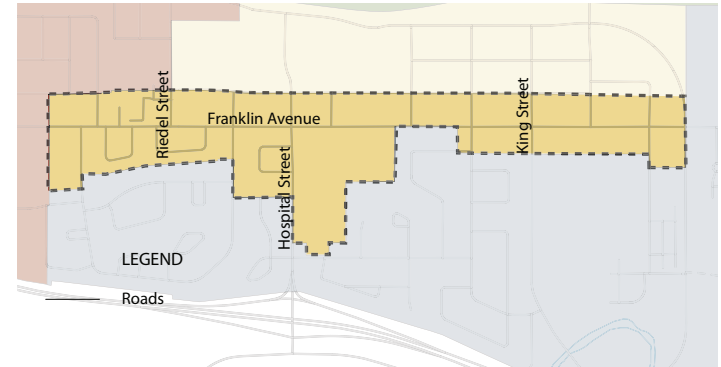
#### General Overview

The Franklin Retail Core District is intended to become a focal point for City Centre neighbourhoods, providing convenient and unique shopping and entertainment opportunities. Franklin Retail Core District will be developed as medium density mixed-use area to encourage street related small retail with upper floor commercial and residential uses.

Franklin Avenue is considered the “main” street within the City Centre and will be the primary corridor for the public transit system. Although the character of development will vary along Franklin Avenue, the Franklin Retail Core District will be an attractive and interesting urban arterial street with a mix of uses in medium density buildings. Retail and entertainment uses will be encouraged along Franklin Avenue in a well-protected environment that facilitates pedestrian movement.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.5.1 Allow for a mix of uses including small scale retail at the street level with residential use above.
- 5.5.5.2 Require the stepping back of upper storeys above the 3rd floor along Franklin Avenue to maintain a pedestrian-friendly street corridor and to provide wind protection at the street level.
- 5.5.5.3 Encourage mixed-use residential redevelopment around Pond and Poplar Crescents.
- 5.5.5.4 Support infill development of parking lots for larger retail centres to create street oriented development.
- 5.5.5.5 Encourage existing development with frontage along Franklin Avenue to provide direct access from Franklin Avenue to their retail spaces as a part of any redevelopment of existing retail properties.



Franklin Retail Core District

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- 5.5.5.6 Encourage the formulation of Private Business Development Committees to undertake improvements of existing commercial shopping plazas and malls to make access to these facilities more pedestrian friendly and attractive, particularly through the existing parking lots.
  - Extend out to Franklin Avenue the existing park at the northwest corner of Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District. Establish this as a new urban park with a water fountain, public art and seating areas that will provide an attractive place for shoppers and residents to relax and enjoy the activity along Franklin Avenue.
  - Encourage higher density mixed use development around transit stops at major intersections, such as Hospital and King Streets and Prairie Loop Boulevard, to allow for convenient access to transit and retail and other services.
  - Develop Hospital Street as one of the prime green corridors in the City Centre. Other corridors will be developed along Riedel Street and MacLeod Street. Green corridor improvements on Hospital Street should include: the provision of a continuous sidewalk from



Franklin Avenue to Prairie Loop Boulevard; additional tree planting in the boulevard strip between the road and sidewalk; improved lighting for the sidewalk; and, provision of designated bike lanes (painted lane markers) on either side of Hospital Street from Highway 63 intersection to the Prairie Loop Boulevard.

- Improve the parks on Poplar Crescent and Pond Crescent to make them more useable and attractive. These parks are large enough to accommodate a variety of activities and uses. Hard surface areas should be introduced with more low-level landscaping and flowerbeds to complement the large coniferous trees. These would be ideal locations for public arts, special artwork and monuments commemorating historic leaders of Fort McMurray.

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- 5.5.5.7 Prohibit surface parking in the front of buildings. Parking will be encouraged in the rear or at the side of buildings. On corner lot properties, surface parking will be restricted on Franklin Avenue in front of the properties or along the side streets.
- 5.5.5.8 Make the improvement of pedestrian and bicycle transportation connections through this area a priority, both along Franklin Avenue, as well as north and south connecting the residential areas to the north to the riverfront in the south, as the Franklin Retail Core Area is a key connector for many parts of the City Centre.
- Develop Franklin Avenue into a transitway with increased densities around transit stops.
  - Examine the feasibility of extending Alberta Drive north of Franklin Avenue, through to Manning Street, providing direct access from Alberta Drive area to retail shopping to the north.



A pedestrian-oriented retail street



Well-designed streets for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles

## Neighbourhood Stabilization Zone

### 5.5.6 Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District

#### General Overview

The Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District includes a large, well-developed neighbourhood of single-family homes. The retention of this family housing is critical to maintaining a balance of housing options in the City Centre. However, homes may, in the future, reach the stage where major renovations and/or replacement are required.

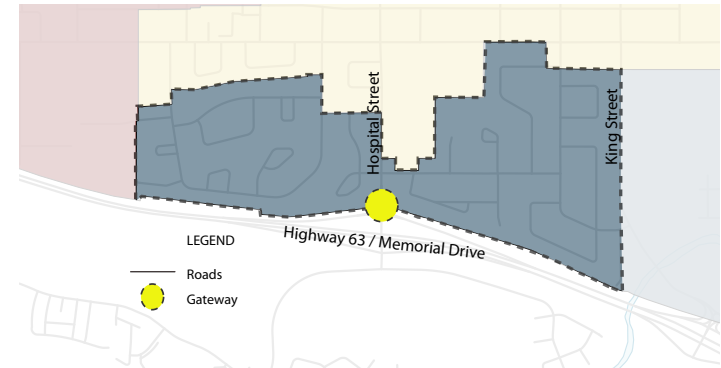
The land use for this area will therefore be designated to permit modest infill housing redevelopment. This will enable gradual replacement of older units, allowing infilling of existing single unit lots with small scale multiple housing, such as duplex or semi-detached units. In addition it should also provide opportunities for more affordable new housing in the area.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.6.1 Retain the Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District as low-density areas but permit infill redevelopment.
- 5.5.6.2 Allow for a mix of residential uses including single detached, semi-detached, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, fourplexes and small apartment buildings.
- 5.5.6.3 Permit infill redevelopment where parking can be provided from the rear lane or the side. Prohibit street access parking for new infill redevelopment that involves increasing the number of units on a lot.
  - Establish design criteria that ensures infill redevelopment retains the character and street-friendly qualities of the area, and is consistent with the style and scale of existing homes. The design criteria should also include green building innovations and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- Establish a gateway feature at Hospital Street.
- Undertake streetscape improvements in this District. Priority should be given to Centennial Drive and Alberta Drive.
- Expand the park at the northwest corner of the District, extending it to front directly onto Franklin Avenue. Develop the new



Alberta Drive / Birchgrove District



Existing low-density residential

- portion of the park along Franklin Avenue as an active, urban park with the addition of water features, public art, hard surface areas, seating and ample lighting. Open up the park to Franklin Avenue to improve the visibility into the park area.
- Develop green corridors to improve pedestrian and bicycle access within and through the District.

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- Improve pedestrian and cycling connections with the development of dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian network.
- Examine the feasibility of extending Biggs Avenue west through to Hardin Street, to provide more convenient access from this neighbourhood to shopping areas to the west.

### 5.5.7 Riverside District

#### General Overview

The Riverside District will be developed for primarily residential use with medium to high density residential located preferably to the portion north of Franklin Avenue or along Prairie Loop Boulevard. A range of densities will be allowed in this district: low, medium and medium-high density.

The area south of Franklin Avenue will be designated for medium density residential as well as institutional. The district is bounded by the Clearwater River to the north and east and the Hangingstone River on the south side. King Street, Franklin Avenue and Penhorwood Street form the western boundary.

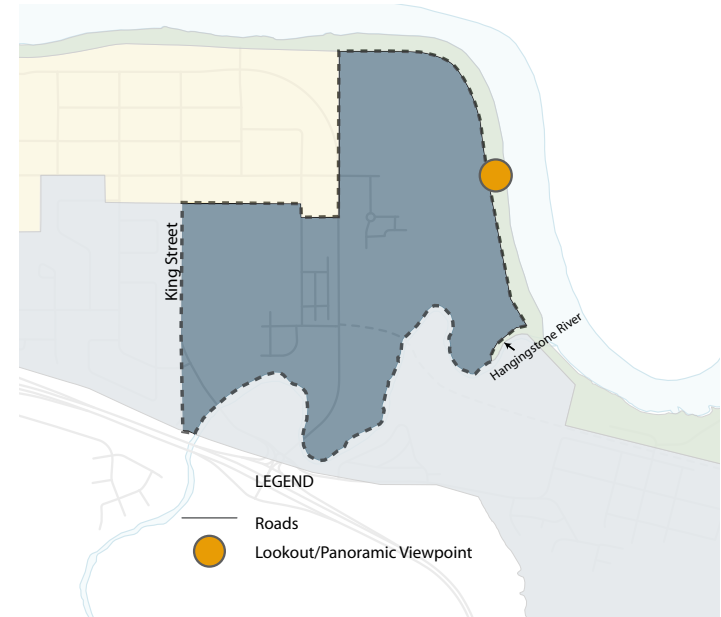
This district includes the largest area of undeveloped private lands in the City Centre. Its proximity to the waterfront and ease of access to Highway 63 and the rest of the City Centre make it a prime area for more intensive residential development. Major institutions such as Keyano College, Composite High School and Heritage Park are located within this District.

Opportunities to develop arts and cultural facilities, as well as housing options tailored to the student population within this district should be pursued where possible. Cohesiveness within the district is required between major land uses such as residential and institutional. Uses around Keyano College will be allowed to expand and intensify.

As the district develops, particularly along riverfront areas, special provisions must be made to ensure proper protection of the shoreline and sufficient allowances for the continuation of the park and trail system throughout the Riverside District.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.7.1 Allow for primarily institutional uses, small scale retail uses and residential uses at and around Keyano College.
- 5.5.7.2 Allow for primarily residential uses with some small scale commercial east of Penhorwood Street and south of Franklin Avenue.



Riverside District

- 5.5.7.3 Allow for the adaptive reuse of the existing warehouse buildings for residential, institutional and commercial use.
- 5.5.7.4 Permit medium-high densities around intensification nodes, specifically where Prairie Loop Boulevard intersects with Franklin Avenue and Saline Creek Parkway.
- 5.5.7.5 Ensure through the Land Use Bylaw that appropriate flood protection provisions are incorporated as part of all new developments in this district, specifically for development east of Prairie Loop Boulevard.
- 5.5.7.6 Establish cohesiveness within the district between major uses such as residential, Keyano College and Heritage and Lion's Parks.
- 5.5.7.7 Require new development along the Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers to protect the environmental quality and character of the riverfront and provide sufficient space for the development of riverfront park systems through these areas to allow for pedestrian and bicycle connections.

- 5.5.7.8 Promote the development of arts, culture and entertainment uses in and around Keyano College.
- Create design criteria for development around intensification nodes.
  - Develop the riverfront park system through the district along the Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers.
  - Develop attractive green corridor connections through the district to the Riverfront Park. Priority should be given to the green corridors along the extension of Franklin Avenue eastward to the Clearwater River, as well as along King Street connecting Heritage Park and the Hangingstone Park to the riverfront park in the north.
  - Develop and implement an erosion control program for critical areas of the Hangingstone and Clearwater Rivers.
  - Maintain an environmental protection zone between any new development that backs onto the Hangingstone and Clearwater Rivers.



Residential development with retail at grade creates people-friendly neighbourhoods

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- Establish a gateway feature at King Street and Prairie Loop Boulevard where they intersect with Highway 63 using the Community Placemaking Initiative. The gateway features here should include a strong historical theme that links and draws people to Heritage Park, and other new historical features to be developed along the riverfront.
- Build upon the historical significance of Heritage Park and the Clearwater River with historical features and interpretation boards included as part of the riverfront park system.
- Create and protect view corridors along the riverfront at the sites identified as panoramic viewpoints.

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- Establish pedestrian and cycling trails that connect through this district from neighbouring districts, providing improved connections to the riverfront.



### 5.5.8 Waterways District

#### General Overview

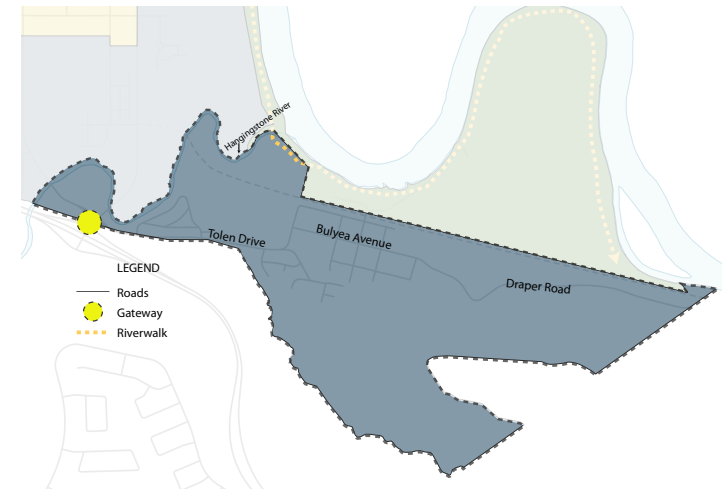
Waterways District is comprised of the Waterways area, an established neighbourhood in the City Centre, and is one of the places where strong historic character is to be preserved and maintained. The Waterways District will be developed as a low-density area. New development will be required to respect and enhance the cultural heritage.

The small-town, residential character will be retained although modest population and density increases will be encouraged through intensification.

The introduction of more family-oriented housing that meets diverse needs will be supported. More mixed-use will be accommodated to enhance the main commercial/mixed-use corridors, particularly along Bulyea and Railway Avenues. Waterways will remain a low-density residential area.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.8.1 Allow for a mix of housing types that meet a variety of needs. Low-rise forms of housing will be permitted to allow infill development for a broader mix of housing forms in the future, including single detached, manufacture homes on a small scale, duplex, semi-detached and townhouses. New infill development will be required to properly integrate with the existing development to ensure that the cultural and physical heritage is maintained.
- 5.5.8.2 Retain Ptarmigan Park and McCormick Park as areas to accommodate manufactured housing.



Waterways District

- 5.5.8.3 Enhance the small-town character of main commercial/mixed-use corridors along Bulyea and Railway Avenues, while encouraging rear lane parking.
- 5.5.8.4 Require the necessary technical studies to assess flood risks and identify appropriate mitigation measures needed to be taken to support safe development in the district.
- Create defined, central areas in the district and allow a mix of commercial, office and residential uses within the areas as well as within individual developments.
  - Retain existing wetlands south of current snow dump and include the wetlands as part of the natural stormwater management system.

**Public Realm Policies and Actions**

- 5.5.8.5 Protect and preserve significant natural and environmentally sensitive areas from incompatible development, especially along the riverfront.
- 5.5.8.6 Maintain and enhance the historic character of the Waterways area.
- Develop green corridors to improve pedestrian access between the district and the riverfront.
  - Develop the riverfront park system to include a continuous trail system as well as locations for recreation and leisure activities along the river. The riverfront trail system should connect to the rest of the riverfront trail system and be extended and linked to the Draper Road Community.
  - Provide additional leisure and recreational opportunities along the river. Consider redevelopment of the old Waterways railway station site as part of the riverfront park system (“Where Steel Meets Keel”).
  - Develop the Horse Pasture Park as a recreational area and link it with the trail system to the City Centre and Draper.
  - Create opportunities for recreation-related commercial uses in both Horse Pasture Park and the old railway station in Waterways.

**Transportation Policies and Actions**

- Maintain the existing off-highway vehicle (OHV) staging area and boat launch facility in the Horse Pasture Park and Riverfront Park.
- Provide improved access from and to the district for pedestrians, bicycles and public transit service.
- Provide convenient and safe transportation linkages from the community to the riverfront.
- Create a pedestrian-oriented street environment along the commercial/mixed-use corridors of Bulyea and Railway Avenues. Maintain and improve quality streetscapes and park space, considering pedestrian safety and health.
- Ensure that the development of the Saline Creek Parkway considers mitigation measures, including noise, dust and safety.

## Recreational Zone

### 5.5.9 MacDonald Island District

#### General Overview

MacDonald Island, with its golf club and leisure centre, is the primary recreational hub for Fort McMurray. Plans are underway for the expansion of the recreational facilities and programs, further strengthening its regional importance.

Increased connectivity will be provided to improve functional integration with the downtown and enhance both pedestrian and vehicular access. A number of options for crossing the Snye will be explored, including an iconic pedestrian bridge.

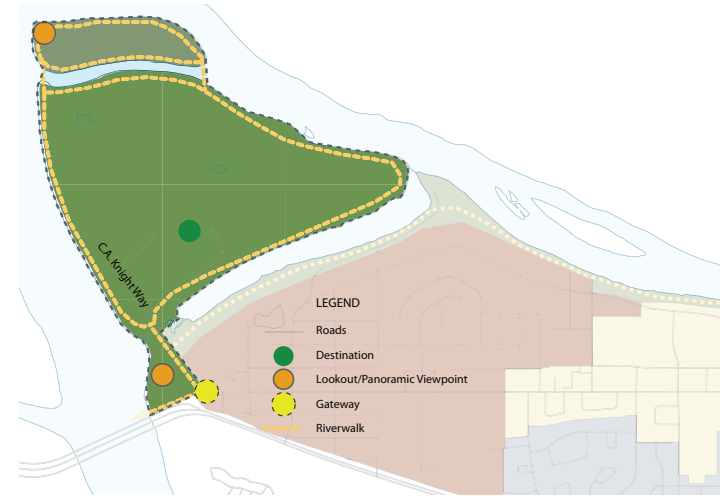
A high quality public realm design should be maintained and enhanced along the Snye by introducing a cyclist and pedestrian promenade, high quality recreation facilities and activities and easy access to the Snye from the City Centre and MacDonald Island.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.9.1 Retain MacDonald Island with parks and recreational use.
- 5.5.9.2 Support the development of MacDonald Island as the prime recreational destination in Fort McMurray.
- 5.5.9.3 Permit ancillary retail and dining uses in active recreational facilities and limited commercial uses in park areas provided they are related to, and compatible with, recreational activities.
- 5.5.9.4 Encourage year-round indoor and outdoor recreation programs and facilities.

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

- Examine other opportunities for the inclusion of elements of interest along the perimeter promenade and trail system such as specific activity areas, public art features and interpretative stations dealing with the historical, plant and animal subjects of interest.
- Improve the Snye riverfront as an iconic park destination in the City Centre, taking into account its relationship with development on its south side.



MacDonald Island District

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- 5.5.9.5 Improve pedestrian, cyclist, transit and vehicular access to and from MacDonald Island.
  - Develop dedicated bicycle lanes and pedestrian pathways as viable alternative modes of accessing the district.
  - Implement transit improvement between MacDonald Island and the civic centre – including a park-and-ride facility.
  - Construct a pedestrian bridge across the Snye to provide pedestrian access to and from MacDonald Island.
  - Examine various options for providing a second vehicular access to MacDonald Island.
  - Improve connectivity between MacDonald Island and Roche Island.

### 5.5.10 Riverfront District

#### General Overview

Riverfront parks are important not only for their natural beauty but also for their historical significance, given the importance of the rivers in the development of the city. These areas present opportunities for the provision of recreational amenities that are essential to a quality urban lifestyle.

The Riverfront District comprises the Snye, Clearwater, Riverside and Horse Pasture Parks. Snye Park is an active riverfront area, and along with the Horse Pasture Park in the Waterways District, provides safe and convenient access to the water. Currently, active recreational activities are supported in Snye Park, which is also a popular area to enjoy the view of the river. Enhancing and expanding Snye Park as an active recreational area within the City Centre is vital.

Clearwater Park is the location for the Marine Park and has relatively good vehicular access due to the parkway from King Street to Riedel Street. However, there is still relatively undeveloped riverfront area on the north side of the parkway.

Riverside Park comprises large tracts of lands adjacent to the Hangingstone River and in the eastern end of the City Centre along the Clearwater River. Development of park and recreational spaces in this area is necessary to enhance the beauty and desirability of the Riverside District, a predominantly residential neighbourhood.

Horse Pasture Park is relatively undeveloped and with limited accessibility, although commonly used by the community to access the Clearwater River. There are opportunities to improve access and allow for the creation of recreational spaces and facilities for the enjoyment of all.

#### Land Use Policies and Actions

- 5.5.10.1 Establish the Clearwater Park as a recreation and tourist destination in the City Centre.
- 5.5.10.2 Ensure that improvement to riverfront areas allows for the continuation of existing uses along with new uses.

- 5.5.10.3 Provide opportunities for retail and commercial development along riverfronts, such as restaurants, shops and recreation.
- 5.5.10.4 Ensure protection of natural areas along the riverfronts as part of development.
- 5.5.10.5 Require development along the riverfront park areas to provide access points to the riverfront area.
  - Create active and safe public spaces, available year-round, along riverfront areas.
  - Establish regulations that address water quality issues and environmental management.
  - Develop Horse Pasture Park as an accessible multi-activity park and recreational area.
  - Develop a riverfront that is accessible and barrier free.

#### Public Realm Policies and Actions

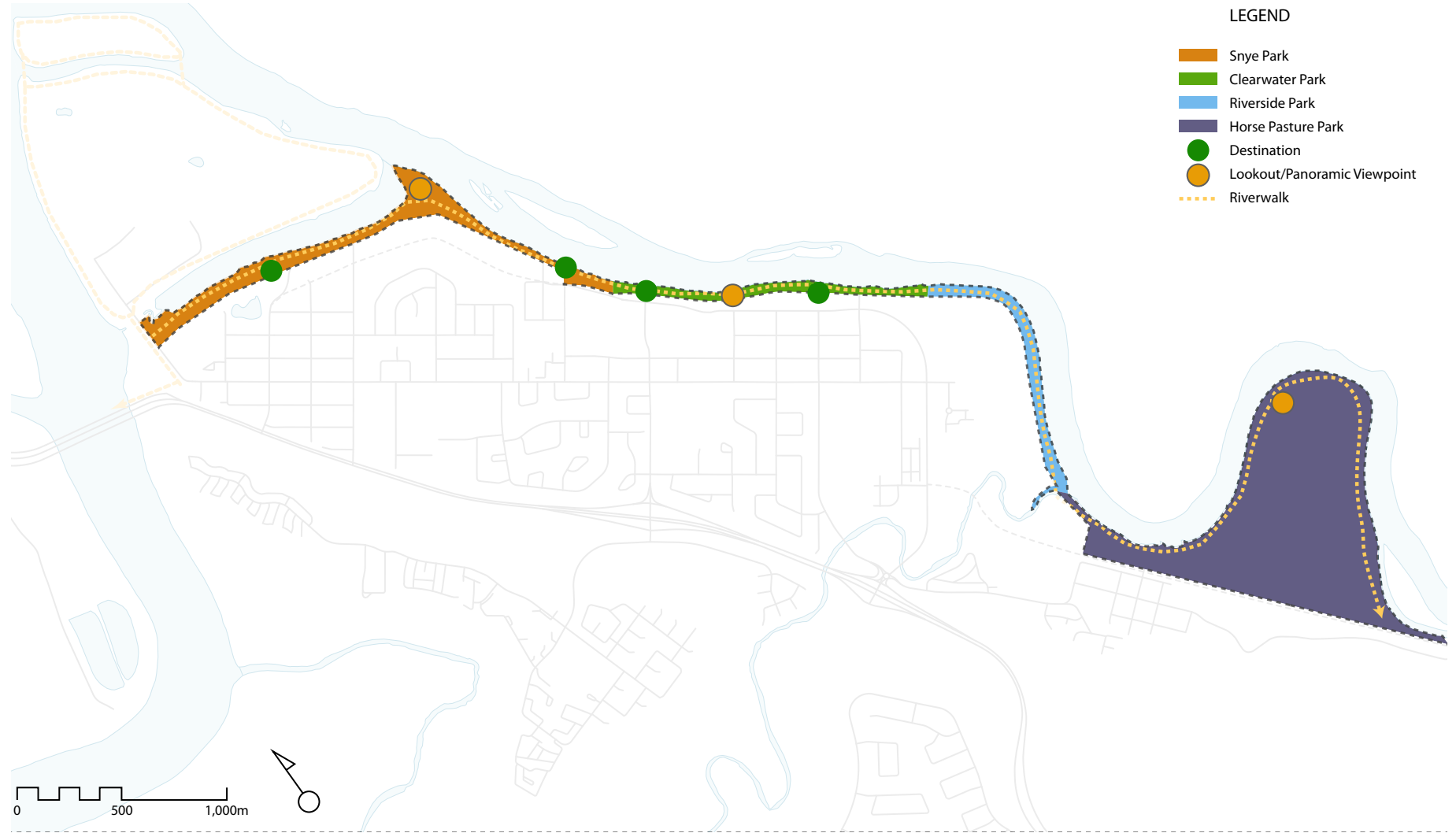
- 5.5.10.6 Promote and encourage historical and cultural markers and facilities, areas and parks.
- 5.5.10.7 Encourage the use of environmentally sustainable materials for lighting, erosion control, trails, promenades, boat launches and buildings.
- 5.5.10.8 Require universal access, covered facilities and environment conducive to the pedestrians as part of riverfront development.
- 5.5.10.9 Re-establish a healthy environment for both aquatic and terrestrial habitat, using primarily native planting material, including grass, shrubs and trees.

#### Transportation Policies and Actions

- Develop a riverwalk system along the Snye, Clearwater and the Hangingstone Rivers that will connect nodes in the riverfront parks system.
- Develop a continuous trail system along the Hangingstone and Clearwater Rivers that is well-lit, landscaped and safe.
- Establish pedestrian and cyclist trails that connect to other neighbourhoods, such as Waterways.



### Riverfront Parks District



## 6.0 Implementation





## 6.0 Implementation

The City Centre Area Redevelopment Plan (CCARP) proposes a policy framework that will position Fort McMurray's City Centre as the focal point of the region, and create an attractive and sustainable centre through good planning and design.

With the repeal of the 2009 Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan, the CCARP provides guidance to Council and Administration on the redevelopment of the City Centre area. As a guide, the CCARP focuses support in setting priorities, allocating budget and monitoring progress necessary to achieve the City Centre vision.

### City Centre Action Program

The City Centre Action Program is intended to guide the implementation of the CCARP through a program of specific actions that will be established and regularly updated and kept relevant to achieve the Plan objectives.

Key implementation elements include:

#### **A New Regulatory Mechanism**

The development of new buildings will be regulated through an appropriate blend of assured entitlement and discretionary design review. While the details of the balance between them are yet to be finalized, the basic approach would be:

#### **Assured Entitlement**

Permitted land use and density, measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), will continue to be specified in broad terms in the Land Use Bylaw (to be brought forward to Council), as would a range of heights within which buildings could be permitted, subject to design review.

#### **Design Review**

Development applications would be reviewed by an expert advisory panel to ensure that they comply with urban design and streetscape objectives and guidelines established for each development district. Thus, both developers and the public will know in advance the type and scale of buildings that can be constructed in each area, while at the same time the "fit" between the proposed building and its neighbouring area can be fine-tuned to ensure that, building by building, the objectives of the ARP are achieved.

#### **Land Use Bylaw (LUB)**

The adoption by Council of a Land Use Bylaw that is consistent with the objectives of this Plan is a key component of the implementation of the CCARP. The LUB will take specific directions from the CCARP on matters pertaining to land uses, built form, public space and pedestrian amenities, scale, density and parking. To achieve this, the Municipality's current Land Use Bylaw will be amended to add a new section that is exclusive to the City Centre area.

### Municipal Implementation Framework

A process will be established to encourage and facilitate development. This process will include:

- Implementation of set of regulations and guidelines to ensure effective and efficient processing of applications that are consistent with the intent of the Plan.
- Establishment of a Design Review Process including an Expert Panel.
- Establishment of a Redevelopment Entity with a broad mandate to promote, initiate and accelerate projects that are consistent with the Plan.

Empowered by Council, the Redevelopment Entity will implement key initiatives such as:

- Establish a City Centre “Advisory Cabinet” of local and international experts, recognized in fields associated with high quality innovative urban development.
- Develop strategic branding and communications that target key audiences – citizens, businesses, investors, developers.
- Implement a series of Catalyst Projects that:
  - kick-start development in key areas of City Centre;
  - affirm Municipality’s commitment to building City Centre;
  - establish confidence with investors and developers; and
  - demonstrate municipal leadership.
- Encourage and facilitate further investment and development led by the private sector.
- Determine Key Success Factors and mechanisms for measuring performance and results.

For this process to work effectively, stakeholder involvement is crucial; the Redevelopment Entity will take the lead in building and maintaining key relationships and will ensure the following:

- Engagement of the public throughout the process;
- Build collaborative relationships with all Municipal departments working towards a common goal;
- Establish partnerships with the private sector; and
- Maintain an alignment of interests among the public, government and the private sector.

### **Catalyst Projects**

The Municipality will undertake a series of projects, selected on the basis of their ability to catalyze the implementation of this plan and stimulate private-sector investment within the City Centre. These will be iconic in nature and, as such, attract attention to, and help reshape the look and feel of the City Centre as a vibrant place to live, work, learn and play.

### **Land Acquisition**

For purposes of City Centre redevelopment, the Municipality may need to acquire lands for municipal use, school facilities, parks and recreation, or any other purposes considered necessary to achieve the objectives of this Plan.

### **Redevelopment Levies**

The Municipality will explore, and impose where and if appropriate, redevelopment levies within the City Centre.

### **Further Studies**

Additional studies will be carried out as required to further the implementation of this plan. These include but are not limited to:

1. Detailed transportation studies related to transit improvements, parking provision, street extensions and connections, off-street loading, engineering and logistics
2. Urban design regulations for each district

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Using the metrics established by the Redevelopment Entity, the implementation of the Plan will be regularly monitored and reported on.

### **Amendments to the Plan**

The CCARP will be amended to ensure its ongoing relevance as a policy document guiding redevelopment within the City Centre. It will be reviewed at least every five years.



## Glossary of Terms

### **Actions**

Concrete steps (initiatives) that the Municipality will take and to which a budget and a timeline can be attached.

### **Active transportation**

Any form of human powered transportation, such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, skating and cross country skiing.

### **Affordable housing**

Housing that meets the needs of the households that earn less than the median income for their household size and pay more than 30 percent of their gross annual household income on shelter.

### **Anaerobic digesters**

Bacteria that degrade organic matter and produce biogas – a renewable energy source.

### **Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)**

An ARP is a statutory plan recognized as such in the Alberta Municipal Government Act that applies to existing built up or developed areas in a municipality. Council may through an ARP designate an area for the purpose of preservation or improving buildings, rehabilitating of buildings, removal of buildings or constructing or replacing buildings.

### **Bus rapid transit (BRT)**

A mode of transit, referred to as rapid transit that uses buses that travel for a significant portion of their route on reserved right-of-ways to provide faster service than ordinary bus lines. BRT is implemented by making improvements to existing infrastructure, vehicles and scheduling. This includes, but is not limited, to employing intelligent transportation features and other system improvements to regular fixed bus route services; and the implementation of modifications or improvements to ridership fare payment systems and road right-of-ways to increase speed.

### **Carbon footprint**

A measure of the negative impact activities humans have on the environment and in particular reference to climate change.

### **City**

Refers to the Urban Service Area, known as Fort McMurray.

### **City Centre area**

Refers to areas covering MacDonal Island, Lower Townsite and Waterways in the Urban Service Area known as Fort McMurray.

### **Compact development**

Medium to high density complete communities where buildings are within convenient walking distance from one another. By utilizing less land than conventional development, compact development allows for the efficient use of infrastructure and other resources and the protection of natural areas and green spaces, and provides densities that can efficiently be served by transit, and with increased opportunities for access by active transportation modes.

### **Complete community**

Opportunities for people of all ages to work, live, play, shop and learn in close proximity. Complete communities provide access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, and a full range of housing and community infrastructure. There is convenient access to a wide range of mobility options including public transit, walking and cycling, in addition to private vehicles.

### **Coordinated service delivery**

The delivery of services that are coordinated in a way to minimize cost and maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Cultural and recreational revitalization**

The process of affirming, promoting and adding new life to people's individual and collective cultural and recreational identity.

### **Destination Nodes**

Are activity areas identified along the riverfront that include public art and placemaking initiatives, as well as recreational and commercial activities.

**District energy system**

A technology for providing heating and cooling from a centralized system to multiple users within a given district that includes a full spectrum of land uses. District size can range from clusters of buildings to an entire community.

**Environmental stewardship**

Managing and protecting sensitive natural areas, including watersheds, wetlands and riparian zones, while valuing the integrated role our natural environment plays in the health of the region.

**Floor area ratio (FAR)**

Floor Area Ratio defines the relationship between the total floor area that can be developed on a site and the surface area of that site. It is expressed as a ratio of the amount permitted for each unit area of land.

**Fossil-based energy**

Energy produced from oil, gas and coal. Unlike renewable energy sources, fossil-based energy sources will disappear as planetary reserves are exhausted.

**Frontage roads**

Roadways fronting onto and providing access to Highway 63. Usually these are non-limited access roads running parallel to a higher-speed road, usually a freeway or highway, and feeding it at appropriate points of access (interchanges).

**Gateways features**

Memorable physical features that are located at key roadway entry points to the City Centre. These entry points are important as they serve as markers and provide people, especially visitors, with their first impression of the area. Gateway features should create a strong positive impression, reflect local identity and welcoming feel into the City Centre.

**Grand avenue**

Major arterial roads that traverse the City Centre and by virtue of their scale and character of buildings and landscaping indicate that they, and the city they serve, are important urban places.

**Green building**

Structures that are designed and constructed using energy-efficient design and construction practices and environmentally friendly materials that reduce negative impacts on the natural environment. Typical features include energy conservation, water conservation, adaptive building reuse, and recycling of construction waste.

**Green building compliance**

The minimum level set by the Municipality that new building design and construction should achieve.

**Green building energy code**

Minimum requirements for the design and construction of energy-efficient buildings.

**Green building standards**

Standards established by the Municipality to measure the efficiency of buildings with respect to energy conservation.

**Green building strategy**

A strategy to introduce green building approaches, technologies and practices into the region, starting with the City Centre.

**Green corridors**

Green corridors are linear green spaces, including parks and streets, that feature abundant planting within the City Centre and which provide linkages with parks, recreational grounds and green spaces along the rivers. Within the city, green corridors provide a relaxing environment for people and in more remote areas, serve as habitat for wildlife.

**Green innovations**

Innovations in urban development and maintenance practices that enhance our ability to protect the natural environment.

**High density mixed-use**

This designation, which applies only to the Central Business District, is intended to accommodate a variety of retail services, corporate and business offices and stand-alone commercial activities. Building height of up to 30 storeys with lot coverage of up to 10 times the lot area will be allowed in the commercial core. Multi-family residential will be permitted in addition to commercial uses at densities of up to 25% of the total area permitted each city-block.

**High quality architectural design**

Design of buildings, structures and spaces that is not only functional and visually attractive, but also contribute significantly to the adjacent public realm.

**Iconic focal point**

Iconic focal points are buildings and other features that because of their design and function draw attention to particular areas of the City Centre.

**Infill development**

Development in an existing built-up area using vacant or under-utilized lands in front of, behind or between existing buildings.

**Information and communication technology**

Technology that incorporates real time communication such as instant messaging, telephony and video, telecommunication and computers as well as necessary software, storage and audio-visual system and which enable users to create, access, store, transmit and manipulate information.

**Intelligent community**

A community that displays evidence of innovation based on the existence of state-of-the-art communications networks.

**Intensification (activity) nodes**

Intensification nodes are redevelopment areas located adjacent to major transit stops, or at the intersection of major arterial roads, and which provide an opportunity to introduce, in low density areas, more intensive mixed use development with a variety of built forms. Parks and/or open space may be located in these areas.

**Intensive mixed-uses**

A mix of several uses located in close proximity to each other, built at significant density, and resulting in high volume pedestrian activity during and after regular business hours.

**Large format retail**

Large format retail refers to single retail stores whose floor area exceeds 20,000 sq. ft.

**Liveable community**

Communities that, by virtue of safe, sustainable choices of housing, transportation, education, cultural diversity and enrichment, provide a high quality of urban life, and promote civic engagement through the community of interests shared by its occupants.

**Live-work**

The opportunity to work and live using the same space or within close walking distance.

**Lookout**

Points identified along the riverfront that provides panoramic views.

**Memorable places**

Functional spaces with a strong “sense-of-place” that become identified as go-to places for particular or heightened urban activities and experiences

**Medium density mixed-use**

Area designated medium density mixed use is intended to accommodate a variety of retail, residential and commercial uses. Building heights of up to 12 storeys with lot coverage of 5.0 times the lot areas will be allowed in these areas.

**Mixed use development**

Development that includes a mixture of complementary land uses in the same building, grouping of buildings or development. Typical mix of land uses includes residential, retail, office, commercial services and civic uses.

**Non-potable water**

Water that is not safe for human consumption.

**Northern sustainable communities**

Sustainable communities the design of which has been adapted to northern climatic conditions.

**Policy**

Sets out the approach the Municipality will generally apply in its decision-making in order to achieve an objective, strategy or intent.

**Public realm**

Public realm refers to publicly owned streets, sidewalks, pathways, rights-of-way, parks and open spaces primarily designed for use by pedestrians in getting around the city or spending time at, or gathering in.

**Reclaimed water**

Effluent derived in any part from sewage from a wastewater treatment system that has been adequately and reliably treated, so that as a result of that treatment, it is suitable for a beneficial use or a controlled use that would not otherwise occur and is no longer considered wastewater.

**Redevelopment**

New construction or repurposing of existing structures on previously developed land, including significant changes to the adjacent public realm.

**Resilient economy**

An economy that is diversified so that reliance on a single industry does not make the economy vulnerable as a result of major changes in that industry.

**Run-of-river power generation**

A type of hydroelectric generation where no pondage is used to supply a power station. The amount of power generated is subjected to the seasonal river flows.

**Shared information technology**

Information technology that is accessible to multiple users.

**Social interactions**

Friendly informal interaction among individuals gathered in a public setting.

**Sophisticated lifestyles**

Quality of life that results from people enjoying a variety of choices of accommodation, employment, social relationships, recreational options, educational and cultural pursuits that satisfy their individual preferences.

**Sustainable transportation network**

System of travel with low negative impact on the environment. Including walking, cycling and public transit. Such systems promote energy efficiency and healthy lifestyles.

**Special districts**

An area where an important public facility or amenity will be located.

**State-of-the-art communications capabilities**

Intelligent and productive deployment of the most current communications technology.

**Suburban character**

Single purpose low density buildings primarily designed for access via private vehicles, surrounded by large-scale parking lots, and lacking pedestrian scale and convenience.



**Sustainable development**

A pattern of resource-use in an urban area that aims to meet human physical, social and economic needs while preserving the environment so that those needs can continue to be met for generations to come.

**Transit oriented development (TOD)**

A form of mixed use residential and commercial development that is designed to maximize access to public transit and incorporates features to increase ridership. Concentrating higher density along transit stops makes transit convenient and encourages ridership.

**Transitway**

A portion of a roadway that is reserved for the exclusive and priority use of public transit vehicles.

**Urban Service Area**

Fort McMurray, located within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Fort McMurray is recognized as equivalent to a city by the Government of Alberta for the purposes of program delivery and grant eligibility.

**Waste-to-energy system**

A system that uses solid waste to produce energy for electricity and heating.



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

