



**CHEMAINUS TOWN CENTRE
REVITALIZATION PLAN**

fall 2011

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CONTENTS

Success in town centre revitalizations can be achieved over a period of many years, and then only through the implementation of strong ideas, crafted with the significant input of residents, land owners and businesses.

The ‘vision’ for the town centre must be well understood and easily accessible to existing and new businesses. It must be flexible enough to incorporate unforeseen opportunities. At the same time, it must be able to withstand significant pressures for ‘quick fixes’ which can inadvertently undermine long term goals. Most of all, it needs to work for the people who live and do business in the community and it needs to work “all-day, all-days-per-week, and all season long.”

Chemainus has shown considerable aptitude for success in the face of these challenges. The town has been famously successful in developing Canada’s largest outdoor gallery and in inviting the world to see – not only their industrial heritage – but also a thriving and popular Theatre Festival. These are key elements in the ongoing success and prosperity of the community. Chemainus has demonstrated that when the community works together they can have success that becomes the envy of the many.

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

- .1 Context & Acknowledgements 1
- .2 The Planning Process 2
- .3 How to use this plan 2

2.0 NOTICEABLY DIFFERENT 3

- .1 All Day Every Day 4
- .2 White Picket Fences 5
- .3 Pedestrians First 6
- .4 Made in Chemainus 7
- .5 Alive with Green 8
- .6 Murals & Public Art 10
- .7 Theatres & Festivals 12
- .8 Industrial Heritage 13
- .9 Community Places 14

3.0 KEY PROJECTS 15

- .1 Community Places 16
 - Community Campus 16
 - Skate Park 18
- .2 Library Festival Square 20
- .3 Streets & Lanes 25
 - Chemainus Road 25
 - Willow Street 29
 - Parking Management 34
 - Maple Lane 36
 - Oak Street 39
- .4 Waterfront 43
- .5 Benchlands 48

CONTENTS

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION	53
.1 Planning for Success	54
.2 Infrastructure	56
.3 Financial Incentives	58
.4 Market Potential Description	59
.5 Project leaders & Timeline	60

Chemainus' Downtown Revitalization Plan is a tool for citizens, community leaders and the Municipality to shape the future of Chemainus in a complex, but unified, initiative.



Interested and involved residents at the September 22nd Open House / Public Meeting.

1

Context & Acknowledgements

In the spring of 2011 the Municipality of North Cowichan engaged HB Lanarc Consultants Ltd. to work with Staff, the Chemainus Advisory Committee, and the general public in developing a series of projects and policies to guide the success of Chemainus' future.

The Chemainus Advisory Committee, active since the Fall of 2010, provided invaluable input and local expertise from day one of this plan. This committee is made up of Chemainus business owners, members of the Downtown Business Association, Municipal Councilors, local non-profit organizers, downtown volunteers, and members of the community at large. For the Town Centre Revitalization planning process, the committee was expanded to include representation from Island Timberlands and the Chemainus Theatre. With these additions, there is an active working group of twelve (12) plus additional project Staff from the Municipality. A special thanks goes out to the individuals on this committee who play an invaluable role in this plan's form and future.

HB Lanarc is the primary consultant for this planning process and is supported by Raymond De Beeld Architects, GP Rollo Land Economists, Drdul Transportation Planning, and McElhanney Engineering. Together, this consultant team offers a strong cross-section of professional expertise and provides input to the revitalization plans and ideas from Staff, residents and the Advisory Committee.

2 The Planning Process

In addition to ongoing dialogue and meetings between the consultants, staff, the advisory committee and the public, the following events highlight the Town Centre Revitalization Plan process:

- » **Start-up Meeting:** In May 2011 a project start-up meeting was held with the advisory committee, staff, and consulting team. The meeting began with a presentation and discussion at the Municipality and then moved out into the Chemainus community for a group walk-about.
- » **Design Workshop:** A full day design workshop held in June 2011 provided an opportunity for advisory committee members, staff and the consulting team to work together in the development of project ideas and alternative development scenarios.
- » **Open House:** Also in June 2011, a public open house was hosted at the Chemainus Legion. This event facilitated discussions based on the themes and ideas identified in the proceeding advisory committee design workshop. This community-wide event strengthened the material from the design workshop and set the foundations for further work and investigation.



Active involvement is key in the development of this plan, and moving it forwards as a living document.

- » **Public Meeting / Open House:** In September 2011 the developing plan and revitalization ideas were shared with the Chemainus community at the Chemainus Legion. There was an impressive turnout to this event complete with rich and diverse feedback. At this meeting, community members reviewed material and presentations and participated in discussions. Residents provided further feedback on detailed comment sheets. The overall revitalization plan and ideas were then adjusted to reflect the community input received.
- » **Committee Plan Review:** In October 2011 to follow-up on the public open house and comment form feedback, a meeting was held at the municipality with the advisory committee, staff and the consultant to discuss final plan revisions. The Chemainus Advisory Committee agreed with consensus on final plan directions.

The Municipality of North Cowichan presents this Plan to Council in November, 2011 for their endorsement in principle. Staff will recommend that Council direct Staff to prepare a bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan to add the Town Centre Revitalization Plan as an Appendix to the OCP. This will strengthen the policies and concepts outlined in the Plan and allow for the Municipality to effectively utilize the Plan as an exciting guiding point for the bright future of Chemainus.

3 How to use this plan

The ideas in the following sections are a direct result of the planning process outlined above. This document, 'Chemainus Town Centre Revitalization Plan' is a summary report representing a series of themes and opportunities which support a common vision. The plan represents ideas of vitality and energy for Chemainus as it continues to evolve and thrive as a community. The following plan is organized into three parts:

- » **Broad Themes** (Part II - Noticeably Different)
- » **Key projects** (Part III)
- » **Implementation** (Part IV)

Broad Themes: These are derived from the input received from the planning process. In this plan there are nine (9) themes identified in order to organize the broad approach to revitalization for Chemainus. As one committee member articulated, these themes are the *tests* to measure specific project success and appropriateness.

Key Projects: This plan identifies five (5) key project areas. These projects are not an exhaustive list of the project potential for the community, but an informed summary of priority, feasible projects. These projects demonstrate specific application of the broader themes mentioned above.

Implementation: The implementation section of this plan summarizes the specific actions and parameters for the key projects. This section is of particular importance for partnership building and for the Municipality. This information deals with the specifics of translating stated themes and projects into living realities for the community of Chemainus.



PART II *Noticeably Different*

1

“...vibrant, publicly oriented, and safe ... conducive to all-day, all-days-per-week, all season activity...”

This idea is about a revitalization for Chemainus that pays attention to the needs of current residents and provides the quality of life and amenities to draw new residents into the community. It is about understanding those qualities about Chemainus that make it desirable -- and to enhance and enrich those qualities so that the community becomes the undisputed destination of choice.

This idea recognizes that downtowns can only be successful when they are attractive to their own residents. As revitalization efforts are contemplated they must recognize the need to provide a comfortable safe and attractive environment for locals.



Live-work space provides an opportunity to allow cost efficient businesses to set up as part of a downtown community. These new businesses bring vitality and life to a street 24 hours per day. (Photo: <http://hugeasscity.com/2008/11/01/performtransform/>)

Integrating residential

A variety of housing forms may be considered that can support a vital downtown. One of the most commonly conceived building types involves the redevelopment of single storey commercial properties being redeveloped as 3 or 4 storey buildings where the main floor is commercial and the upper stories are residential. The residential development subsidizes the updated commercial space making it possible for boutique commercial businesses to survive in Chemainus' otherwise small marketplace.

Business recruitment

It will be important to continue to communicate the value of locating new business in Chemainus. Revitalization efforts should involve a recruitment function that includes a strategic outlook and business gap analysis that can assist new businesses in developing bankable business plans. Identifying market niches within the existing business mix is something that local residents can help with.

Provide employment opportunities

Implicit in the recruitment of new businesses is the recognition of the need to provide employment opportunities within the downtown area. Staff will be needed to provide services within new and existing businesses. Are there opportunities to introduce an additional employment source such as a call centre or forest industry office/ clerical function?

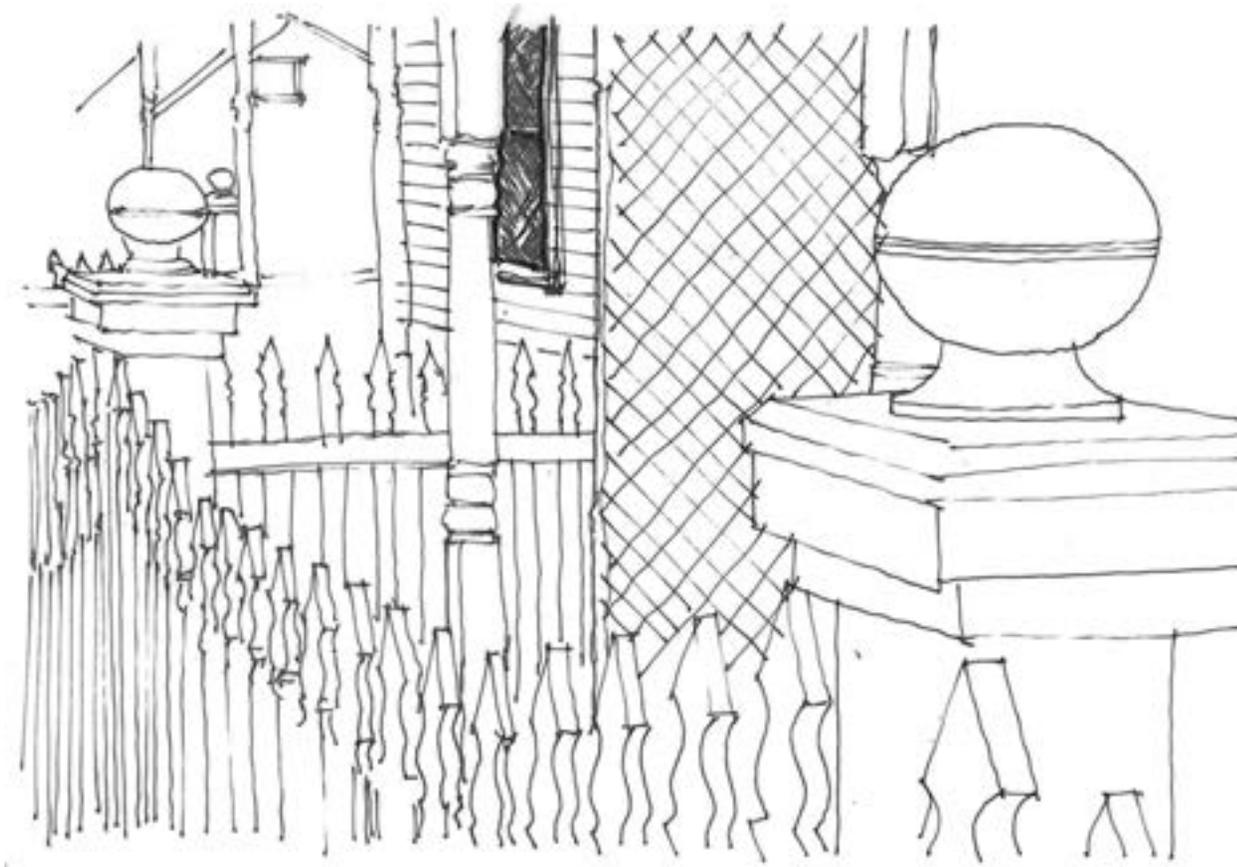
WHITE PICKET FENCES

Part 2 – Noticeably Different

2 Residents and business owners will recognize that many of the themes identified in this plan are already well established in Chemainus. These well established traditions are part of the DNA of the community and provide a distinctive recognizable image for the community. These successful ideas should be enhanced and enriched as part of the community revitalization planning.

'White Picket Fences' is communicated here as a simplified representation of attractive built form.

The quality and visual vernacular of these images are what should continue to develop and define Chemainus as a unique and vibrant community.



3 A measure of the success of Chemainus’ revitalization will be the numbers of people walking its streets and frequenting its businesses. Creating a ‘pedestrian first’ zone will ensure that residents and visitors are provided every opportunity to linger and relax and to take maximum benefit of the commercial opportunities provided.

What it Means

The pedestrian first zone is intended to become a special character zone where cars give way to pedestrians and bicycles. Vehicle speeds would be restricted to 5 km/h through a variety of traffic calming measures. Entrances to the pedestrian zone are not restricted but would have ‘gateways’ indicating the priority of pedestrians and bicycles.



Bixi bikes are purpose built rentals that allow residents and visitors to tour Chemainus for one or two hours at a time. What a great way to encourage visitors parked on Willow street to visit shops on Oak Street, and to enjoy waterfront amenities.

Additional facilities for pedestrians are located within a delineated zone including benches and moveable seating. Bicycle lock-ups are provided to encourage people to arrive and ‘spend the day.’ Bixi Bikes are being installed in many communities as part of a transition away from vehicle only streets. These sturdy purpose built bicycles would allow visitors and residents to use a bike for an hour or two as part of a ‘day-out’ in Chemainus. In Chemainus these could be part of a more comprehensive move to link commercial and retail use on Oak St. Willow St. and the waterfront. Way-finding and signage will be important aspects of defining the pedestrian zone.



4 Sometimes, in the push toward revitalization, communities may undo many of the things that have given them success in the first place.

Looking toward the successes of their neighbouring communities, they can sometimes overlook the simple, local qualities which make them unique. On the other hand, memorable experiences are created when residents and visitors discover a quality that they have not experienced before. They ‘feel’ different, they remember it, and they comment on the difference as they relate stories to friends and relatives.

What it Means

As individual revitalization efforts are advanced, decision makers should be sure to assess proposals on their ability to contribute to memorable experiences. They convey the idea of ‘Made in Chemainus’.

A pedestrian first zone can be a memorable experience. Chemainus murals have been successful in creating this experience. Can other elements of the community’s infrastructure also contribute?



A few images here convey some of the existing ‘Made in Chemainus’ character.



- » Paving (sidewalks, crosswalks)
- » Benches
- » Waste Receptacles
- » Moveable Furnishings
- » Bollards
- » Bicycle Lock-up
- » Lighting
- » Weather Protection
- » Banners
- » Signage
- » Fencing
- » Parking Meters / Utility Covers / Transit Shelters

5 Roses and rhododendron in the front yards of homes on Maple Street are part of the unique charm of Chemainus. Similarly, mature Douglas Fir in Waterwheel Park provide an iconic and memorable image for residents and visitors. Similarly, shoppers on Willow are sure to note the row of four small Cherries that breaks up the expanse parking and asphalt in this area.

Imagine Chemainus without these plants.

Now imagine it with many more!

Too often the simple act of planting is overlooked in the drive to identify unique strategies for redevelopment. This revitalization plan has included a variety of measures to encourage strategic landscape improvement as part of an overall initiative to revitalize Chemainus' downtown. Planted once, feature plants and plantings repay dividends for years and years to come.



Street Trees

Street trees provide interest and seasonal variety. They protect from hot sun in the summer and harsh winds during winter. However, planted in urban areas, they rarely grow to reach their natural size. Harsh soil conditions are most often the cause.

Urban foresters know that providing sufficient soil volume is essential to support the vigorous long term growth of street trees. This means providing up to 27 cu. m. of soil per tree. Special techniques such as the one illustrated to the left have been developed to achieve these conditions. Implementing these techniques is essential to achieving the full benefit of urban planting.



Street trees are proposed in a number of areas to break up large areas of parking. These trees will have significant impact over time but must be installed with sufficient soil volume and irrigation to support vigorous growth. Silva cells are designed to support paved areas while providing substantial areas of good quality soil.

(Photo: <http://colorlandscapes.wordpress.com>)



Trees like these few cherries in a small boulevard on Willow Street can define the streetscape and highlight the scale of a pedestrian experience.

Boulevard & Median Plantings

As a component of broader revitalization efforts, the image of Chemainus can be dramatically enhanced through a program of public plantings in boulevards and medians. Seasonal floral displays create an instantly positive impression for communities that cannot easily be achieved through other means. Relatively modest investments can transform areas from ordinary or dreary to friendly and upbeat. Popular programs such as “Communities in Bloom” have recognized this benefit and provide support for community led initiatives. These efforts can be particularly successful when partnerships between individuals, service clubs, businesses and the municipality are provided.



Hanging baskets leave a lasting impression of town character. (Photo: <http://2.bp.blogspot.com>)

Hanging Baskets

Hanging basket programs are both effective and practical. Ideally suited for community participation a hanging basket program can grow from an individual basket into one that truly transformed a commercial precinct. Sponsorship of individual baskets can offset costs but the maintenance (watering) of baskets must be well coordinated over the season. Communities can arrange for baskets to be custom grown and once the locations of individual baskets have been worked out the program can be replicated year after year.



Road improvements can include stormwater management practices such as rain gardens and bioswales as depicted in this photo from Nanaimo.

Road Improvements & Stormwater

Redevelopment options for Chemainus Road include significant planted median and boulevards. These areas can provide a significant benefit in reducing the cost and impact of stormwater management but will also contribute to a positive public image of Chemainus as a community that is “Alive with Green.”

.6 Surely Chemainus’ most recognizable export -- the murals of the Little Town that Could -- have been appreciated and enjoyed by visitors from around the world. Much like all great products however, the drawing power of the murals is diminishing and there is a need to develop a strategy to revive this brand and support it in the years ahead.



Chemainus Murals 2.0

A review of the existing mural program would begin with a market assessment of the existing murals to define the current and future market potential and to support a reinvestment plan. A renewed mural program may include:

- » new murals;
- » re-branding of existing murals;
- » links to murals in other communities to create a more expansive tour package;
- » features on mural artists;
- » seasonal features;
- » chalk mural festivals similar to sand castle events;
- » a more formalized 'artist in residence program'
- » a 'mural app' that provides contextual details on artists, etc;
- » mural games such as a 'where's waldo' or 'trivial mural pursuits'



Encourage active viewing of murals by establishing a 'preferred photo location' that may include a permanent tripod mounting and indication of where to stand to get the best photograph of the mural and your loved ones.

(Photo: <http://dlhardyphoto.com>)

Create Mural Snapshots

A revitalized mural program may be supported by additional physical infrastructure to enhance the experience. Among ideas that may be considered are:

- » mural tripods designed to allow visitors to photograph murals from the best angle, and with themselves in the picture;
- » benches provided for viewing;
- » covered viewing areas; and
- » theatrical lighting (perhaps operating by visitors) to enhance the murals during evenings.



A road mural here, drawn with perspective, invites visitors to come closer to investigate. A similar mural on Maple Lane could be used to intrigue visitors and reinforcing the link between Willow and Oak Street commercial areas.

(Photo: The artwork of Justin Beever)

Develop Road Murals

To supplement the existing murals, and to enhance the link between the commercial areas on Oak Street and Willow, the community should consider commissioning an artist to conceive and implement a road mural on Maple Lane.

The location and perspective of Maple Lane make it an ideal location for a mural of this type. The context of the mural will provide many creative opportunities while at the same time providing an intriguing link between Waterwheel Park and the waterfront.



Guided tours through Chemainus

The 'yellow footprints' used to guide visitors through Chemainus need to be updated to provide a better and more meaningful connection through town. In updating this function the community may wish to:

- » develop a lasting icon to direct people through the community such as locally forged brass plaques; and
- » incorporate a system of QR codes to provide information about local history, way-finding, heritage information, etc.



Chemainus' murals mean that the community is already recognized as an outdoor gallery. Traveling displays of public art can help to offset costs and provide an opportunity for an ever-changing gallery.

(Photo: <http://www.artsdowntown.org>)

Public Art

Chemainus is already a living gallery. This image can be enhanced with the inclusion and addition of public sculpture throughout the community. Chemainus may investigate opportunities to take a leadership role in curating outdoor art shows or shared art programs.

Artistic Studios and Workshops



Robert Struder is an artist in glass in Roberts Creek. Outside his studio he illustrates the interest and vitality created when artists 'set up shop' in the community.

7 The Chemainus Theatre Festival is a popular and enduring attraction for central Vancouver Island. To sustain this success the downtown business community should work to develop initiatives to support the ongoing success and benefit provided by the theatre. For example:

- » In addition to the public art initiatives described above, can the theatre collaborate in the presentation of public art festivals that provide supplemental experience for visitors and employment opportunities for residents;
- » Is there a market opportunity for a second theatre? Seasonally, temporarily? Is there a market opportunity for training or educational facilities;
- » Can special events and festivals provide an opportunity to supplement existing venues;
- » Can theatre packages be developed to encourage visits to vineyards, FN cultural centres, or local food experiences; and
- » Alternatively, can packages be developed to incorporate rail or bicycle travel experiences? Can water based shuttles provide customized links to cruise ships in Nanaimo and Victoria?



Creating theatre theme packages that encourage a broader audience and greater variety of experiences will support continued high attendances at the Chemainus Theatre. Rail excursions provide a unique experience for theatre goers.

8 Chemainus' industrial heritage is as it has ever been. The mill is a defining image for Chemainus. On the one hand it cuts the community off from the waterfront, and on the other hand, the activity and industry provide an ever-changing 'mural' of BC's economic prosperity and its link to the forests of Vancouver Island.

What it Means

Although residents are aware of the importance of this local industrial infrastructure, the community does not currently do a good job of introducing visitors to industrial activities which underpin the community. Naturally though, the topography of the harbour and shore creates an amphitheatre down to the active harbour. To build on this opportunity, Chemainus should:



- » develop a 'waterfront walkway' along the top of the slope looking down toward the WFP mill and beyond; and
- » provide interpretive signage that describes the workings, including market and financial information. Using a QR code as part of an interpretive walk, up-to-date information can be shared to provide real insight into the forest industry and its marketplace.



A defining characteristic of Chemainus is its relationship with the industrial waterfront. The topography of the area provides a natural amphitheatre overlooking the interest and activity while at the same time providing a natural separation between uses. Plans illustrated in this revitalization plan accentuate this relationship.

9 Chemainus has a number of opportunities to develop unique and vital community places. For example the proposed library, connected with related services, is a critical piece of the social infrastructure for Chemainus. Well executed, the library can provide not only a focus for learning and sharing but also a link between residents and visitors.



Infrastructure like multi-use trail networks are an important part of linking community places. These trails and linkages can also become community places in and of themselves as well as reach out beyond the community. An example of this is a trail network extending along the rail corridor linking Chemainus internally and to neighbouring communities.

What it Means

This discussion of Community Places underlies the recognition that these spaces provide community connections that will strengthen the character and quality of life that invites new residents and that supports and binds the existing community. While this plan focuses on the practical needs for a dog park, skate park, community centre, etc., it also suggests a larger context that includes the concept of a community campus to aggregate these places. A community campus provides flexibility to accommodate changing needs over time as well as connections such as multi-use trails and waterfront walks.



A new skate park will provide a much needed opportunity for Chemainus kids to connect and socialize. A skate park should be accessible by foot and by bicycle and should be close to all areas of the community. It should encourage positive interaction and should be open and visible for the public. Many communities have incorporated skate parks and their designs are both durable and beautiful.

In reviewing options for the locations of a skate park, a community centre, and a dog park, many alternatives were considered. From these many options, two broad alternatives have emerged that would provide long term flexibility for the addition and alteration of community services. As services individually require parking, access, lighting, garbage collection, occasionally supervision, etc., it became apparent that significant efficiencies are possible where these types of ancillary facilities can be reused by a variety of participants. In addition to these practical benefits, the aggregation of uses can have an additional benefit as a broadly recognized social nucleus for the community. Where individual sites may languish over time, having the cross connection between uses will support a continuous and growing vitality among different community constituents.

A skate park has been discussed for many years. Many sites have been considered and no universally accepted alternative has yet emerged. Similarly, the requirement for indoor community spaces has been discussed including the option for access to gym space. In the context of a community campus, the development of these facilities may become easier when some of the background requirements for access and parking have already been addressed.



PART III *Key Projects*

1

COMMUNITY CAMPUS What it Means

The idea of a community ‘campus’ has arisen through discussion with stakeholders and the Chemainus public. Several sites were identified and reviewed in this planning process as potential locations for a community centre.

Activities

The Community Centre is intended to provide the broadest range of community and recreational opportunities and these are expected to evolve over a long period of time. Indoor and outdoor functions are a joint part of the discussion. However, a detailed Needs Assessment should be conducted as part of the planning process to produce a specific list of community functions required and feasible for the Community Centre. This is discussed further on Page 54 in ‘Part 4 - Implementation’.

Benefits of Aggregated Use

Community and recreational uses often require high levels of parking but for short periods. It is ideal to share parking between uses so that parking can be reused for a variety of events.

As the demand of community facilities grows, the requirement to provide oversight and maintenance support will also grow. Clustering facilities can assist in the efficient delivery of these services.

Recommending a Community Campus Location

Taking a long term perspective, this plan recommends pursuing collaborative opportunities at the site of St. Joseph’s School and the Elm Street ball fields.

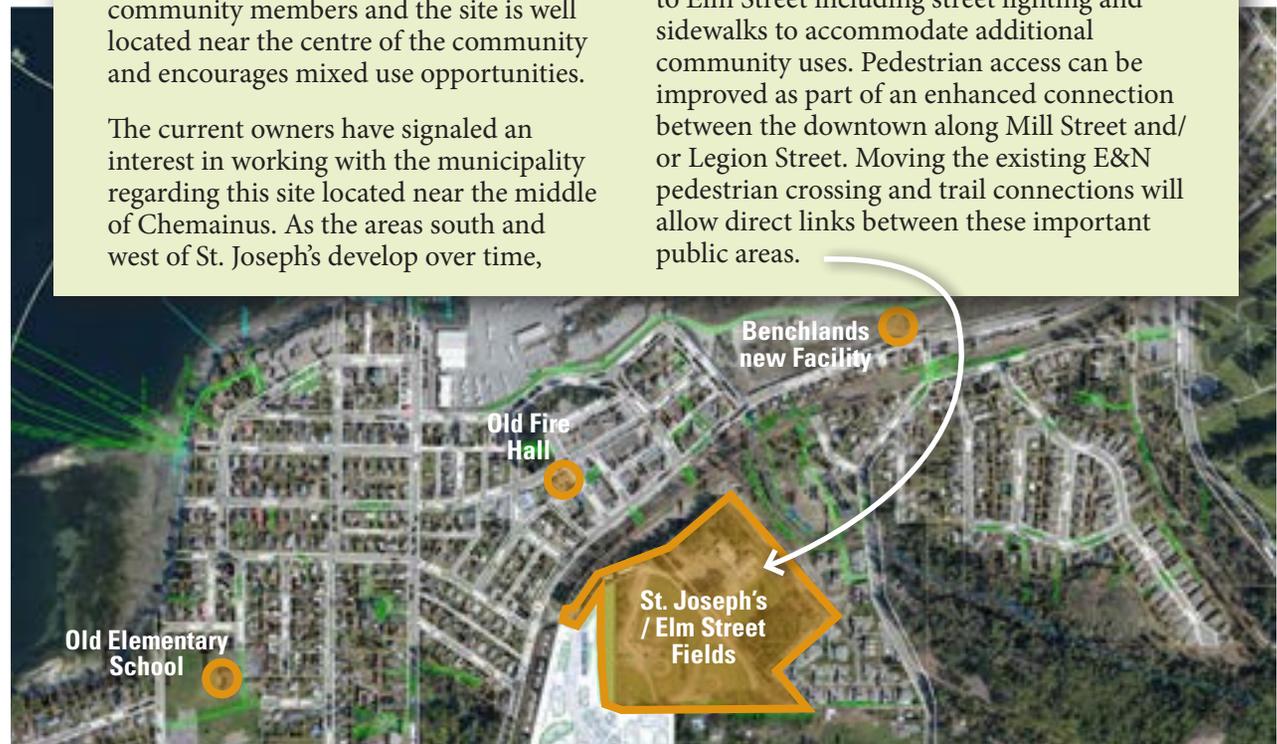
St. Joseph’s Elm Street Fields

This site provides a number of potential benefits as a community facility. The fields and outdoor facilities are well used by community members and the site is well located near the centre of the community and encourages mixed use opportunities.

The current owners have signaled an interest in working with the municipality regarding this site located near the middle of Chemainus. As the areas south and west of St. Joseph’s develop over time,

additional community connections are likely to develop and further enhance linkages to this site. Access to the site is currently limited by the offset entrance at Elm Street and by the separation by the E&N corridor.

Vehicle access to the site may be improved over time by the addition of a road connection to Askew Creek Drive and River Road. This secondary site connection will provide both ease of access and enhanced safety. The Municipality has also identified upgrades to Elm Street including street lighting and sidewalks to accommodate additional community uses. Pedestrian access can be improved as part of an enhanced connection between the downtown along Mill Street and/or Legion Street. Moving the existing E&N pedestrian crossing and trail connections will allow direct links between these important public areas.



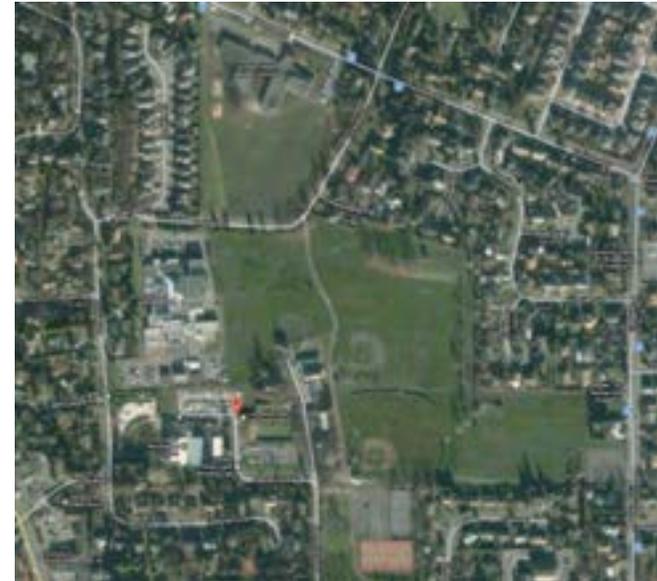
Old Fire Hall

Currently used for some community functions, the old fire hall location provides some opportunity for future community use. Investigations undertaken to date suggest that renovations are not feasible. Building demolition and removal would be necessary for redevelopment. The location of the Fire Hall is ideally suited for a high profile community facility or mixed-use development consistent with the revitalization initiatives outlined in the succeeding pages.



Old Elementary School

The old elementary school has also been discussed as a potential location for a community facility. At this location, the existing site would require building demolition, removal and site preparation prior to development. To note, there are challenges regarding site access in this location. The school's location apart from the downtown area limits the ability of the community centre to provide direct benefit to downtown revitalization.



Lambrick Park in Victoria is an example of a Community campus which provides a social and recreational core to the community, surrounded by residential areas.

Benchlands

During the design workshop undertaken as part of the revitalization process the opportunity for a new purpose-built facility was discussed with particular reference to locating on the benchlands (east of Chemainus Road South). As the timing of this development is uncertain and may be many years into the future, this site option did not appear to meet the short term needs of the community.

SKATE PARK What it Means

A variety of sites were considered for the location of a skate park, including: The Elm Street Fields, old elementary school, Croft Street, among others.

Old Elementary School

- Proximity to residential areas may produce the need to control use of the site in the evenings
- Development could only begin once a joint use agreement and site access is confirmed from the School District
- This site is centrally located within the community, and close to downtown
- This location across from existing playing fields makes for flexible collaborative use
- Development in this area would be cost efficient with no significant physical site limitations. There is the potential for combination with the redevelopment of the existing sport court
- Developing a skate park in this location is outside of the downtown revitalization area and would not specifically enhance or detract from revitalization efforts

Youth participants in the September Open House at the Legion represented skateboarding and other youth interests.



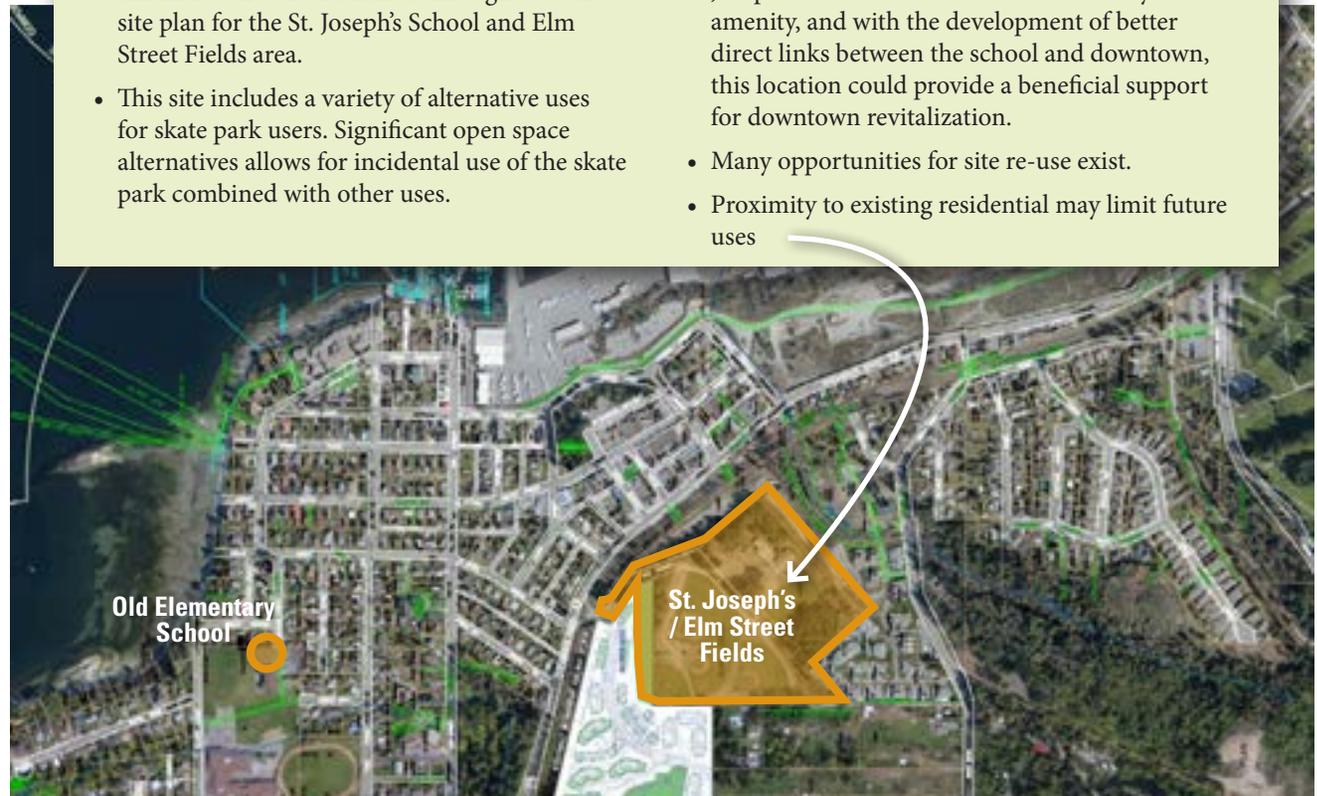
Recommending a Skate Park Location

After reviewing each of these sites, this plan recommends advancing a design of a Skate Park within the area of the Elm Street Fields.

Elm Street Fields

- A new skate park may be constructed in the vicinity of the existing fields and outdoor amenities on a site identified through a detailed site plan for the St. Joseph's School and Elm Street Fields area.
- This site includes a variety of alternative uses for skate park users. Significant open space alternatives allows for incidental use of the skate park combined with other uses.

- Detailed planning for the skate park could commence once a decision on siting is confirmed. Planning should include ideas of the relationship with adjacent land uses.
- Development in this area would be cost efficient with no significant physical site limitations. Combined with a redevelopment of the existing sport court
- Combined with related developments of St. Joseph's school into a broader community amenity, and with the development of better direct links between the school and downtown, this location could provide a beneficial support for downtown revitalization.
- Many opportunities for site re-use exist.
- Proximity to existing residential may limit future uses



	Old Firehall	St. Joseph’s School	Old Elementary School	Benchlands – New Facility
General Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old Firehall located at Willow and Cypress is a key part of a downtown revitalization. The site is owned by the municipally currently housing a number of community functions. The building is near the end of its life and investigations about reuse indicate significant renovation costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located at the end of Elm Street this site is not directly connected to downtown commercial areas on Willow or Oak. Adjacent to the municipal playing fields, the school provides improved flexibility for outdoor uses. The current owner is interested in entering discussions about joint-use possibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing school may be unsuitable for reuse without significant renovations. Adjacent to existing residential. Plans for alternative use should be discussed with neighbours. Located north of the commercial areas on Oak and Willow this site may not be easily accessible by all Chemainus residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New facility may be custom built to match needs. Located at the south end of the community, the site may not be equally accessible to all Chemainus residents. The development of the facility would be directly tied to development planning and market and may not be available for many years.
Is there enough space to allow for a variety of uses to evolve over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Firehall provides a fairly small open space. Adaptations for alternative uses may require complex renovations. The lack of useable outdoor spaces limits the flexible use of the space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative re-use with the existing school functions may allow for flexibility over time as needs change. Space exists to provide additional building room as necessary. Good opportunities exist for collaborative use of outdoor spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor spaces are adjacent to existing residential. These spaces may be used to provide additional building as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A purpose built facility would allow significant opportunity to build flexible and functional spaces
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of community functions are already in place Additional flexibility is limited unless substantial renovations are undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue with current owners could commence immediately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is currently vacant. Discussions on reuse could begin immediately but are pending School District interest and cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing is indeterminate. Would not begin until development was well advanced. Likely 5 to 10 years, and perhaps much longer.
Is this the highest and best use for this site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a very strategic site with opportunities for almost any type of use, including: public use, commercial, residential, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This site is centrally located within the community, and within 100m of downtown Its location across from existing playing fields makes for flexible collaborative use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many opportunities for re-use may exist. Proximity to existing residential may limit future uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Centre may be the type of amenity to be incorporated into this future development. The community may wish to identify opportunities that provide a more unique benefit such as multi-use trail, etc.
Cost Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building renovation is not feasible and demolition / site preparation costs may be significant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Joseph’s may be agreeable to selling surplus lands based on discussions to date that would provide for a Community Centre, skate park, Dog Park, and joint use of gym. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building renovation costs may be significant and are likely to include seismic and building code upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs would be for new construction.
How would this location enhance or detract for downtown revitalization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active reuse of the this property will provide significant beneficial effects for downtown revitalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May provide significant upside potential if this can be developed as part of more interconnected open space plan. Provides opportunities to enhance connections between spaces downtown Chemainus and newer development west of the E&N corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct benefits for downtown revitalization due to location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will have a beneficial effect but not until these developments are implemented, which may be many years away.

2

LIBRARY FESTIVAL SQUARE What it Means

Waterwheel Park and adjacent areas are an important cultural and historical landmark of the town. A number of recommendations for the municipal land adjacent to Waterwheel Park have been incorporated into this plan. Currently, these vacant commercial lots are used primarily for parking as well as hard-surface area for community events.

The following recommendations and changes are designed to respond to the objective provided by the community to develop solutions that are suitable “all day, everyday, all year long”, meet the needs of local citizens and the visiting public. These changes provide an enhanced streetscape and civic experience while at the same time providing a more formalized access to the existing parking. This proposal anchors the commercial town centre on Willow Street and provides active community use and street frontage in the town core.

This site is a great opportunity to begin the revitalization efforts for the town centre right in the ‘heart’... and soon!



LIBRARY Festival Square

Part 3 – Key Projects



Overall, this Library-Park project provides a feasible opportunity to build on an existing community asset, provide a new library and provide associated improvements that strengthen connections in the town centre as a whole.

SOME KEY FACTORS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Bus Loading

Existing bus loading areas are retained adjacent to the museum and public washroom. The location of these stalls has not changed. As buses stop, visitors are greeted with an enhanced public space and park-like surrounding. From the bus door visitors will see not only the existing facilities, washrooms, museum, etc. but also an enhanced public viewpoint and stair connection to additional parking areas on Croft Street. Buses that are loading/unloading for more than a few minutes will be able to circle down to bus parking areas just below the Waterwheel Park lookout. This experience of being dropped in a Civic Park instead of a large ill-defined parking area is, in itself, a significant enhancement.

Library

A 7200 sq. ft. Library and community space is illustrated on 2 floors. The building is designed to provide an exterior public courtyard with seating, trees, and a central feature display (fountain or floral display). The selection of this site provides an opportunity for the municipality to work with the Vancouver Island Library Board to develop this facility as a high profile community amenity. Courtyard park space along Willow allows shoppers and residents an opportunity to link the Willow Street shopping experience with Chemainus' spectacular Waterwheel Park.

Design of the library building may begin as soon as a site has been identified as the VIRL supports the development of this library at this time.



Currently, the parking lot facing Willow Street provides an important function for vehicles but does not serve to provide big-picture connectivity within the Town Centre and to adjacent areas. These three municipally owned properties, currently in holding use as parking, are in a prime town centre location in Chemainus.

Parking & Traffic Circulation

To accommodate the development of the Library and park enhancements, the current parking within this area is reduced. Currently there are 97 marked parking stalls. With the development of the library building as illustrated, there are 47 parking stalls remaining. This reduction of available spaces is offset by the improved access provided by two way traffic on Willow Street and by improved access and connection to parking in adjacent areas. Sixteen additional parking stalls are illustrated along Willow Street between Cypress and Alder. Further, the addition of an enhanced stair connection to Croft Street provides direct access to an additional 40 parking stalls.

Connections

Strong links between Waterwheel Park and the surrounding park areas are a key aspect of a successful community design. The link between the viewpoint overlooking the harbour has been identified as an important one. Reinforcing the connection through the park between Willow Street and Maple Lane is another important link. This connection may be improved through the careful development of broader more accessible stair and pathway connections, and also by the use of theatrical lighting and public art. A walkway connection linking a number of landings featuring public art would provide a memorable connection between Old Town and New Town.

Wednesday Market

The area shown to accommodate the Wednesday market allows for a full range of market activities. As the highest parking demand for this area can be expected to correspond with activities such as the market, patterns of use should be reviewed to ensure that both peak uses and 'lulls' are effectively accommodated. A strong connection with available parking on Croft Street will be a key aspect to the successful implementation of these changes. This space also provides flexible program space for other community / special events.

Willow St. to Cenotaph

Simple infrastructure and pedestrian improvements to Willow Street on the block between Cypress and Alder Streets would enhance the links toward Old town and would provide 10 to 12 additional on-street parking spaces.

This image is a concept rendering of what could be developed further into an iconic building in Chemainus with classic elements such as a landmark tower and an arcade/town square interface to Willow St.

A proposed two-storey library / public use building could also provide central space for the tourist information as well as public amenities such as washrooms and community meeting space.

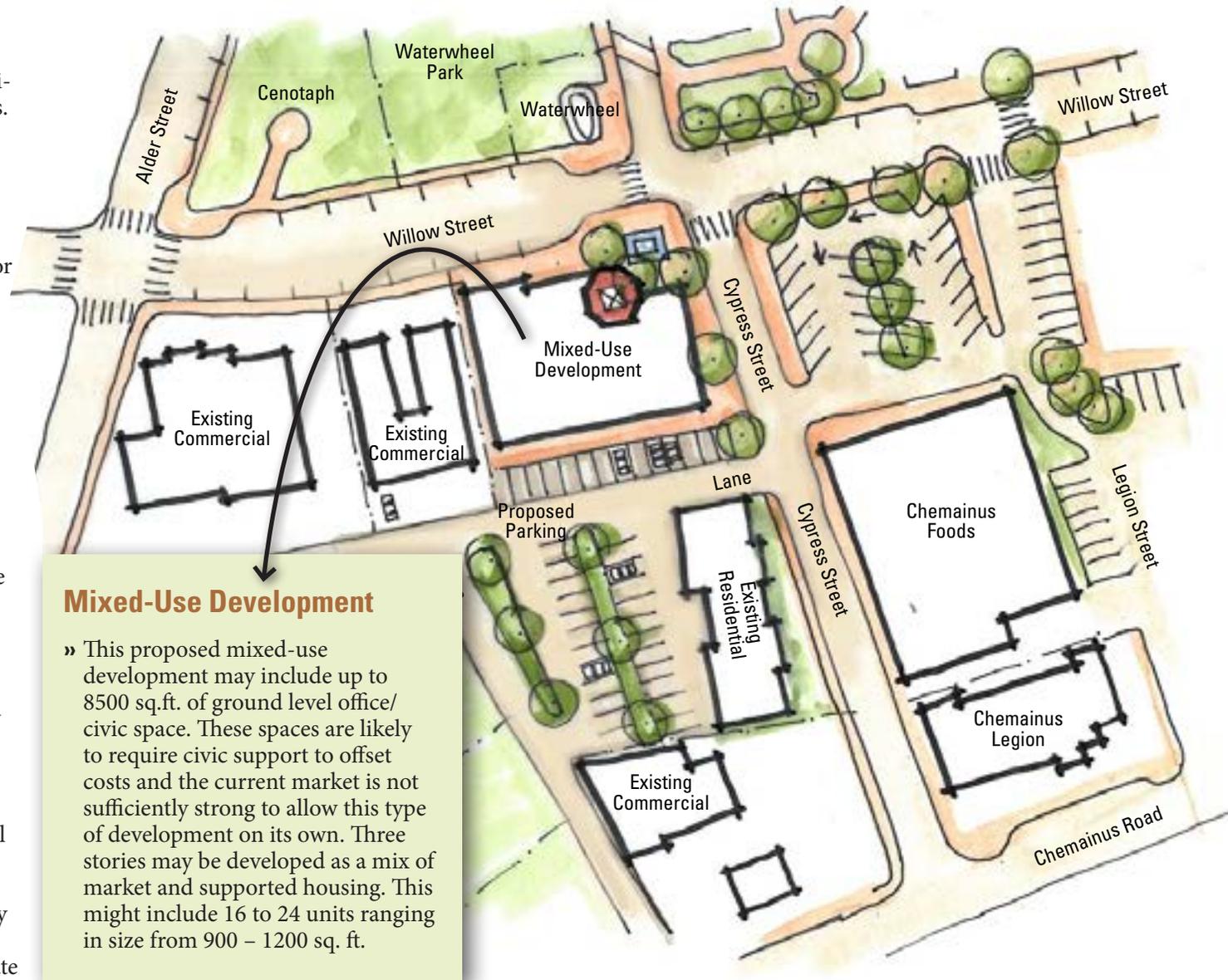


What it Means

The Fire Hall site has had a number of design proposals over the years. Most recently the site was investigated as a multi-use site that included a variety of civic uses. The location is an important one for the community as it provides a terminus for the Willow Street commercial area and a transition to the residential areas below. Whatever the end use of this facility it is clear that it provides a great opportunity for the town centre.

It is suggested that a mixed use facility be developed on the fire hall property which would include a small amount of commercial and civic use on the main floor. The balance of the development would be for residential uses which may include a mix of market and supportive housing. The provision of civic space and even commercial spaces will rely on public participation as the market for these uses is not strong enough to incent new development on its own. The economics for residential development are relatively stronger but a careful analysis will be required to ensure the market viability of a proposed development on this site.

A multi-use building in this location would be strongly supportive of overall revitalization efforts. Additional residential development would increase the number of people living downtown and strengthen all-year economic activities. A thoughtfully designed and well executed building will provide a strong precedent for future private sector developments.



Mixed-Use Development

» This proposed mixed-use development may include up to 8500 sq.ft. of ground level office/civic space. These spaces are likely to require civic support to offset costs and the current market is not sufficiently strong to allow this type of development on its own. Three stories may be developed as a mix of market and supported housing. This might include 16 to 24 units ranging in size from 900 – 1200 sq. ft.

3 CHEMAINUS ROAD Henry Road to Victoria Street

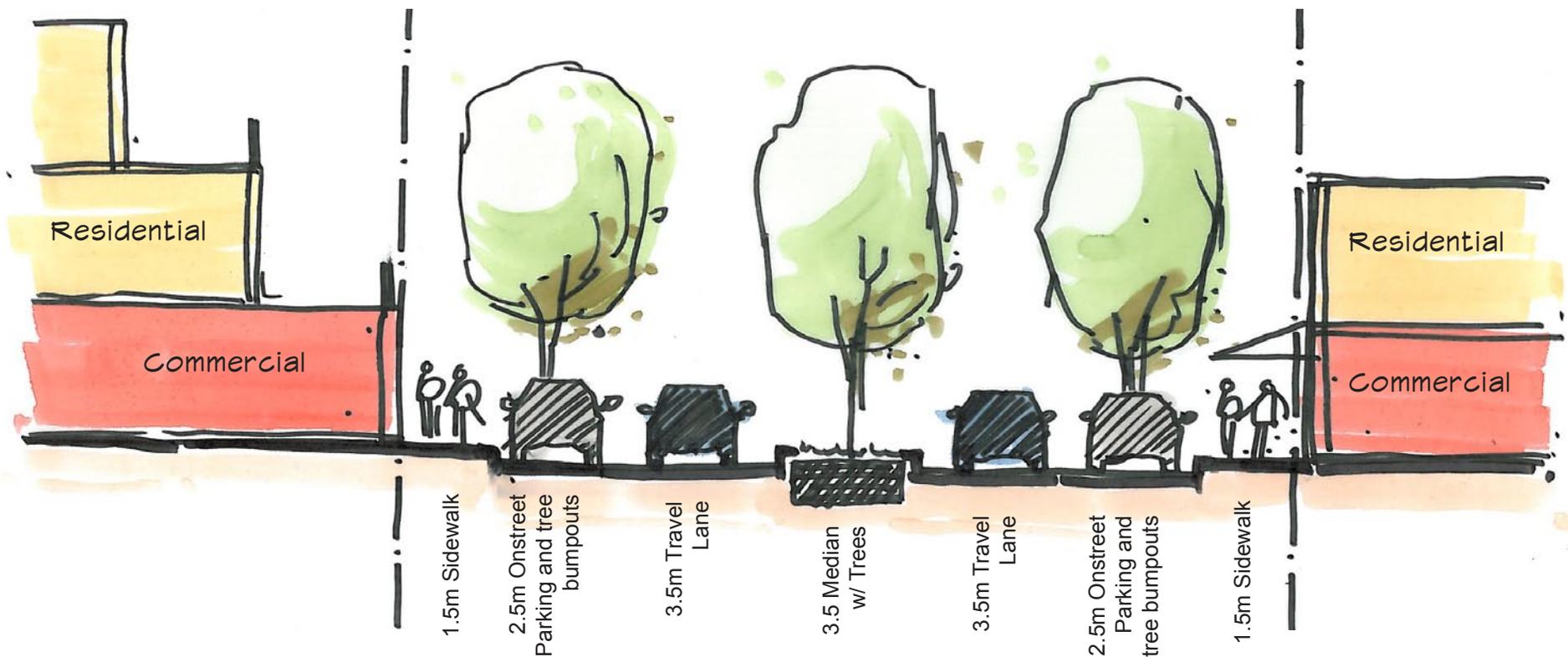
Chemainus Road is transformed as a tree lined street accommodating automobile and commercial truck traffic, that also incorporates sidewalks and street trees. On-street parking supports local businesses and separates pedestrians from moving traffic. Also illustrated in this section are buildings with mixed commercial and residential uses.

Traffic Calming

The addition of a treed median helps to reduce the scale of the street and discourages speeding. A continuous median is possible at many intersections as motorists wishing to turn left onto a side street can travel past the intersection, efficiently drive around a roundabout to return to the intersection, and then turn right onto the side street.

How to do it

The redevelopment of Chemainus Road will provide a significant step toward the overall improvement of the image and character of the community. While the municipality cannot control the timing of the development of the adjacent land (the 'benchlands') it can indicate its intent for this area through the implementation of infrastructure upgrades as indicated in these illustrations.



Roundabouts

Three roundabouts are indicated in the proposed configuration for Chemainus Road:

- » The roundabout at Henry Road currently exists and provides a significant transitional entrance for the community.
- » A new roundabout at the intersection of Chemainus Road and River Road has been identified in the Chemainus Active Transportation Plan, and design development work has advanced to illustrate the configuration and laning in this location. The current proposed design has been modified to include a fourth leg to the roundabout to connect to the proposed Benchlands Lane.

It should be noted that the approximately 45 degree angle between Benchlands Lane and Chemainus Road will require that motorists making right turns from southbound Benchlands Lane to northbound Chemainus Road drive around the roundabout to do so. An example of this is the Penticton roundabout illustrated below.

- » A new roundabout is proposed at the intersection of Chemainus Road and Victoria Street. This roundabout also functions as an “entrance” to the community, indicating to motorists that they are entering an urban area. The road cross section would transition at this point with a treed median south of Victoria Street and no median north of Victoria Street.

The new roundabouts described above have been illustrated at the same size as the existing roundabout at Henry Road to ensure that sufficient space is allowed to accommodate construction of the roundabouts. It should be noted that from a community perspective a smaller roundabout may be preferable, and during the design of each roundabout, opportunities to reduce the size of the roundabouts should be investigated. It is also worth noting that although a roundabout may be larger than a conventional intersection, the use of a roundabout reduces the width of the approach roads by avoiding the need for any turn lanes and additional traffic lanes, as might be required at a conventional intersection.



Lane widths

The cross sections for Chemainus Road (page 25) illustrates one 3.5m travel lane in each direction, separated by a 3.5m wide median. On-street parking is indicated on both sides of the street. Tree planting and pedestrian separation is accommodated in a 2.5m landscaped boulevard on each side of the street. Although standard 1.5m sidewalks are illustrated, wider sidewalks of 2.0m or more should be accommodated on adjacent private land as appropriate.

Traffic lane widths have been purposely limited to minimum widths in support of traffic calming

objectives, to avoid encouraging higher traffic speeds, and to create a pedestrian-oriented and business-friendly environment along Chemainus Road. Many examples of similar streetscape renovations have been undertaken on Vancouver Island.

Cyclists are accommodated on the existing active transportation route parallel to and immediately west of Chemainus Road, and the proposed new waterfront promenade through the Benchlands to the east of Chemainus Road (see plan on adjacent page). Where limited opportunities exist for

cycling facilities, off-street separated facilities such as the active transportation route and waterfront promenade are preferable as they will attract a much broader cross-section of the population than bicycle lanes or other on-street bicycle facilities.



Roundabouts like this one, and the one at Henry Road are becoming more and more popular on Vancouver Island. They offer transportation utility as well as aesthetic value.



Similar to the proposal for Chemainus Rd between Henry Rd and Victoria Rd, the Old Island Highway in Langford presents an attractive treed median and boulevard.



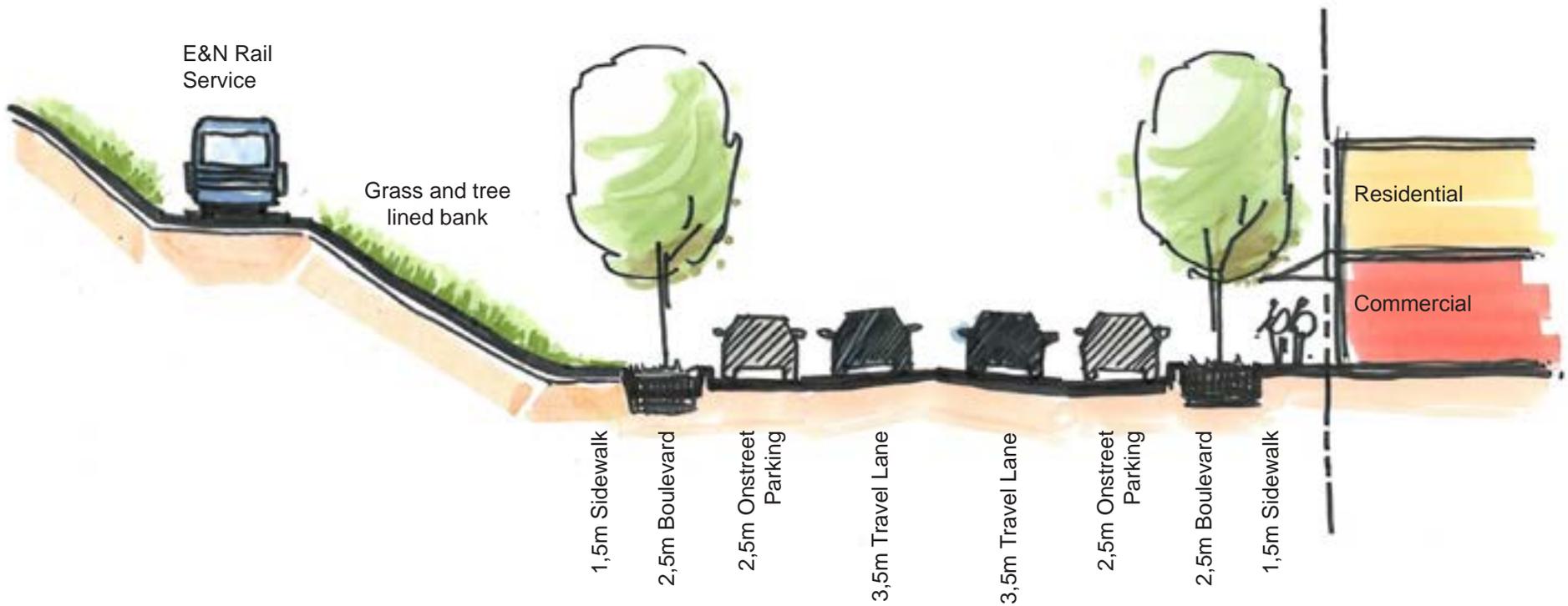
Active transportation routes and multi-use trails like the one above are a priority for the Municipality and key for achieving a pedestrian oriented community.

Victoria St to Cypress St

Between Victoria Street and Cypress the width of Chemainus Road is constrained so that no centre median is possible.

This is a significant opportunity to develop links between the downtown commercial core and the community amenities proposed at St. Joseph's School. Vehicle access is restricted to the Elm Street entrance but pedestrian connections are likely available to connect across the E&N corridor to link these areas.

A park-like grass slope and sidewalk / boulevard area may be created as part of a Chemainus Road redevelopment between Victoria Street and Cypress Street.



WILLOW STREET What it Means

Two-way traffic will be restored on Willow Street to improve automobile access from all directions, to avoid confusion for tourists and other visitors, and to reduce automobile traffic throughout the downtown by eliminating the need for motorists to “drive around the block” in order to access Willow St.

In conjunction with the change to two-way circulation, parking on the section of Willow Street between Legion and Mill Streets will be reverted to parallel parking on both sides of the street, rather than angle parking on one side as currently exists. This will balance the availability of on-street parking for motorists travelling in both directions on Willow Street, and will avoid problems common with angle parking on two-way streets, where motorists travelling in the opposite direction attempt to park in angle parking stalls.



Willow Street on-street parking for good business access.



Traffic calming

Two-way circulation and parallel parking will naturally help to create a more pedestrian-oriented street. Experience shows that on-street parking helps to discourage speeding and creates a buffer between pedestrians and moving traffic.



Similar to the recommendation for Willow Street, Broad Street in Victoria uses street furnishings for separation instead of a curb to create low speeds and a pedestrian environment.



Trafalgar Street shown here is another example of an active commercial street in a town centre where there is on-street parking, two-way vehicle traffic, and a successful pedestrian environment created with great success. Proposals for Willow Street are very similar with parallel on-street parking in place of the angled on-street parking as shown here. This is due to the space available on Willow.



This layout allows for flexible use of the parking area during market or special events.

Since it is desirable to have vehicles moving at slow speed, the street can be further traffic-calmed with the following design features:

- » Raise the road slightly so that the road and sidewalks are at the same level, with no curbs between the pedestrian zone and the automobile zone. This emphasizes to motorists that Willow Street is a “shared space,” in which pedestrians, motorists and other road users all safely share the space. In this situation vehicles will move through the space at 5 or 10 km/h. Another advantage of this grading and arrangement is that parking spaces can be considered as flexible area that can be temporarily re-purposed for festivals, events, seating and other uses.
- » Use bollards and other street furniture to safely separate the road and parking zones from pedestrian zones.
- » Use a range of materials and design treatments to enhance the streetscape and delineate pedestrian, parking and road zones.

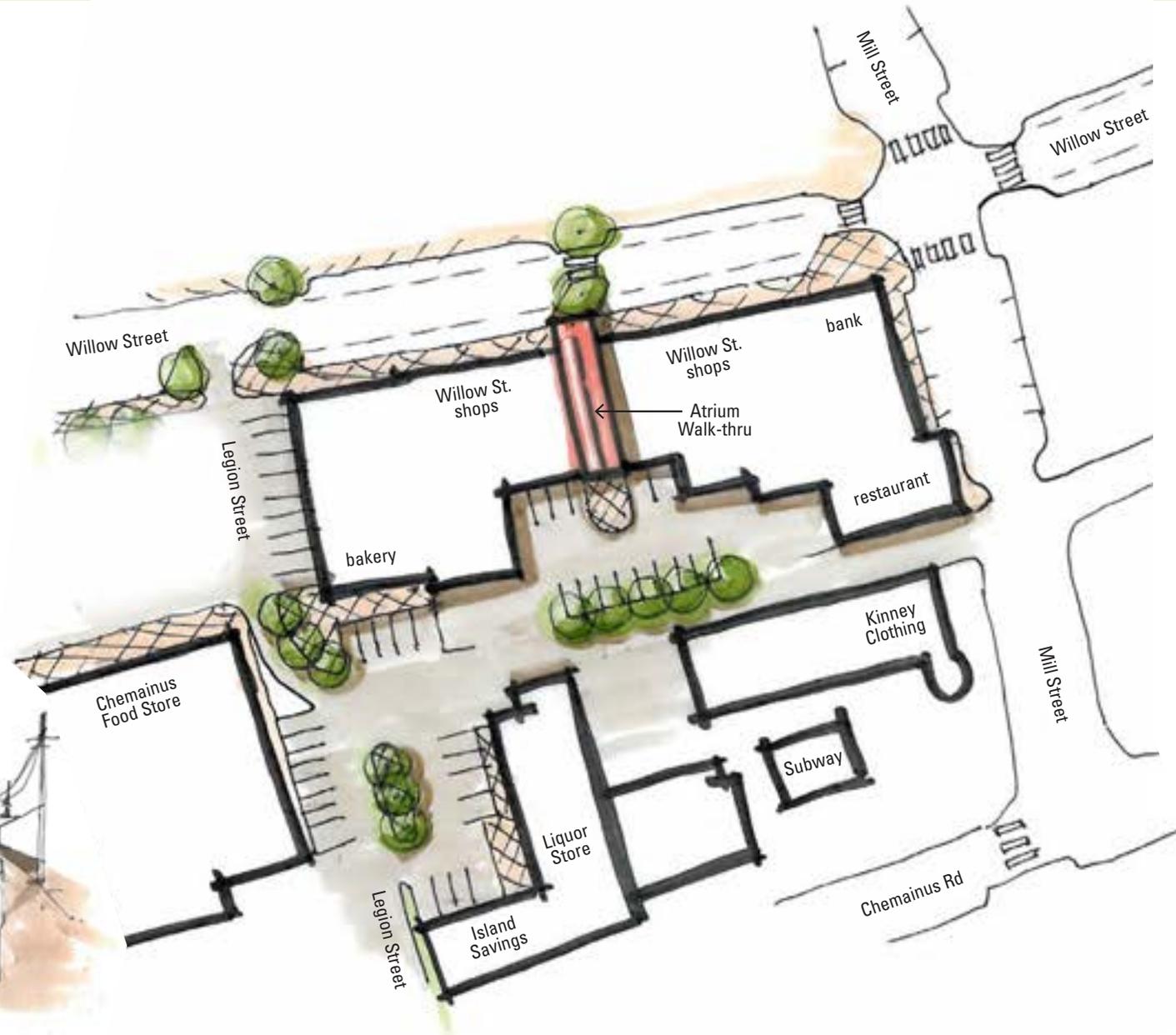


A mid-block Atrium Walk-through and pedestrian crossing shown here, looking north down Willow Street towards Waterwheel Park, provides increased pedestrian connectivity in the town core.

What it Means

The outlying areas surrounding Willow Street provide an opportunity to enrich the pedestrian experience. Currently, there are limited points of interest or infrastructure at the pedestrian scale. Spaces and alleys are dedicated solely to parking and vehicular movement.

What the adjacent plan and concept sketches represent are some simple changes that can be made while accommodating all of the existing vehicular movements and requirements but redefining spaces with pedestrians as priority. The atrium annotated in these sketches represents an opportunity for increased connectivity in the commercial core and opens up the back face of the buildings for micro-economic opportunities favourable in Chemainus such as artisan workshops and studios.



Concept Sketch depicting Willow St. alley with atrium connection to Willow Street as well as in-paving tree planting and pedestrian way-finding



Scale

The emphasis of scale in the previous plan sketch (Willow Street Alley) creates an environment conducive to pedestrian way-finding and enjoyment.



This image depicts a hierarchy of spaces, weather protection through overhangs, and seating/gathering areas, which all animate successful 'in-between' places



This photo depicts several successful methods of creating the texture and scale of experience attractive to a pedestrian: architectural facade features, small-scale character signage, textured paving, moveable flower pots and vegetation. It is easy to imagine this treatment on the backside of the Willow Street business block with small artisans and businesses capitalizing on economical rental spaces and animating the local economy and cultural experience.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

What it Means

In Chemainus' downtown — as in most communities where there is a “parking problem” — concerns arise during times of perceived shortages. This perception raises concerns about suggestions to reuse existing parking to a new library or other uses. Won't this only worsen this shortage of parking?

But is downtown Chemainus really short of parking? As in many communities of a similar size there is a sufficient supply of parking to meet the demand — provided that the demand is properly managed. For downtown Chemainus, there is very little active management of the parking demand with the result that parking in some areas is over-used and this gives the appearance of congestion.

It may be true that during periods of very high use parking stalls may not be available for everyone who wants one, where they want one. Although this might appear to be a shortage of parking, the fact that parking stalls elsewhere in the downtown area sit empty indicates that there is probably sufficient parking — it's just not being used very well.

The good news is that this is a relatively easy problem to solve. A parking management strategy can often eliminate the perceived shortage of parking, and can ensure that as the supply of parking changes with redevelopment, parking will always be available for those who need it.



“Parking management” describes a range of operational practices and parking facilities which are intended to manage the supply and demand for parking. The objectives of a parking management strategy would include:

- » Ensure the availability of parking stalls in all areas, at all times.
- » Ensure that an adequate supply of parking is provided, and at the same time ensure that there is not an over-supply of parking.
- » Provide a positive experience for motorists using parking facilities, including way-finding and other information guiding motorists to parking facilities.

As noted above, there is no overall shortage of parking in downtown Chemainus. Rather, the problem is that the demand for parking is concentrated on the section of Willow Street between Legion and Victoria Streets, and parking lots and side streets in the immediate area around Willow Street. During peak times, there are no parking stalls available in this area, while in other parts of the uptown — especially on Croft Street — many stalls remain empty.

Signage

Finally, a parking management strategy should include a system of signage and way-finding for motorists who are looking for parking. The objective of this is to reinforce the message that there is plenty of parking downtown. The municipality should develop a parking map — illustrating all on-street and off-street parking locations and time limits — to be distributed through merchants, tourist agencies and other organizations. Signage should also be used to indicate off-street parking lots and parking areas on the edge of downtown, particularly where there are no time limits. Signs should indicate the total number of parking stalls in a lot or area, and should also indicate that there are no time limits, (as illustrated in the above image).

On-street parking

On-street parking is an essential element of a successful commercial streetscape. Even in circumstances where ample off-street parking is available, the presence of highly visible parking is a key attractant for businesses. The focus of a parking management strategy for downtown should therefore be to better distribute the demand for parking within the downtown, reducing the demand for on-street parking on Willow Street, and increasing the demand in under-utilized parking areas elsewhere. Two aspects of the parking demand should be considered in identifying appropriate options for re-distributing the parking demand:

- » **Duration** describes the length of time a motorist parks in the downtown. Although no data are available regarding parking durations in downtown Chemainus, it can be expected that there is a wide range — someone might park for only five minutes to run into a store, while an employee of a downtown business might park all day. The objective in re-distributing the parking demand is to shift longer-duration parking to areas where there is currently lower parking demand and many unused parking stalls, leaving parking spaces in high-demand areas for shorter-duration parking.
- » **Location.** There are two locations for parking in the downtown — on-street parking and off-street parking lots. On-street parking is always more popular than off-street parking, because it is perceived as being more convenient. The objective of a parking management strategy is to balance the demand between on-street and off-street parking so that parking stalls are available in all locations, at all times.



Parking Duration

One of the most effective ways to manage parking demand and achieve a more balanced distribution of parking within the downtown is time limits. The principle is to apply the shortest time limits to the highest-demand parking, apply longer time limits in areas of moderate parking demand, and not apply any time limits in areas of low parking demand. In this manner, longer-duration parking (such as employees and visitors spending several hours downtown) is shifted away from high-demand areas, thereby increasing the availability of spaces in areas for shorter-duration parking.

Studies in communities similar to Chemainus have shown that the average duration of a shopping or business trip is an hour and a half, and that 75% of motorists park on-street for less than an hour. Consequently, time limits of one hour and two hours would be appropriate in high-demand areas along Willow Street.

Parking Enforcement

The other important aspect of a successful parking management strategy is enforcement. Without enforcement, motorists will quickly learn that time limits (and any other parking management regulations) are meaningless, and will park where they want, for as long as they want. This is a common problem in many communities that have attempted to manage parking with time limits and other parking regulations, but without regular and effective enforcement.

Enforcement is also one of the most difficult aspects of parking management. Enforcement costs money, it may be seen as a “cash grab,” and it can create opposition to parking management. The challenge is to undertake enforcement in a manner that is seen by the community to be necessary and fair.

The most important aspect of parking enforcement is that it be consistent — that parking regulations be enforced during all times, and for all motorists. Occasional or erratic enforcement is worse than no enforcement at all, as it creates the impression that parking management is unpredictable and arbitrary.

MAPLE LANE What it Means

The intent will be to provide a strong pedestrian oriented link between Oak Street/Old Town and Willow Street/New Town. Maple Lane is a site specific project for implementing pedestrian oriented design and streetscape design elements that should be continued with future laneway and city core developments. Although car access will be maintained, this laneway will be pedestrian oriented. This will be achieved through appropriate scale and design elements as outlined below.



Simple building forms can be adapted for use as studio spaces in the short and medium term.



The mural above shows an perspective distorting illustration by German Artist Edgar Mueller created in the German town of Geldern to celebrate the 30th anniversary of a street art competition. Similar murals along Maple Lane could enhance the narrow rising laneway and reinforce the link between Old Town and New Town.

(Photo: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1153004/Mind-crevasse-The-amazing-3D-pavement-art-pedestrians-edge.html#ixzz1XIAMI1Zm>)

Proposed Multi-Family

The development indicated on the adjacent plan between Willow Street and Maple Lane on the South side of Oak Street is an excellent opportunity for increased residential in the Town Centre.

The development on the adjacent plan indicates a 3-storey building that is approximately 11,000 sq.ft. This translates into approximately 10 units per floor or 30 units total at 1,000-1,200 sq.ft. each.



What the Land Economist says...

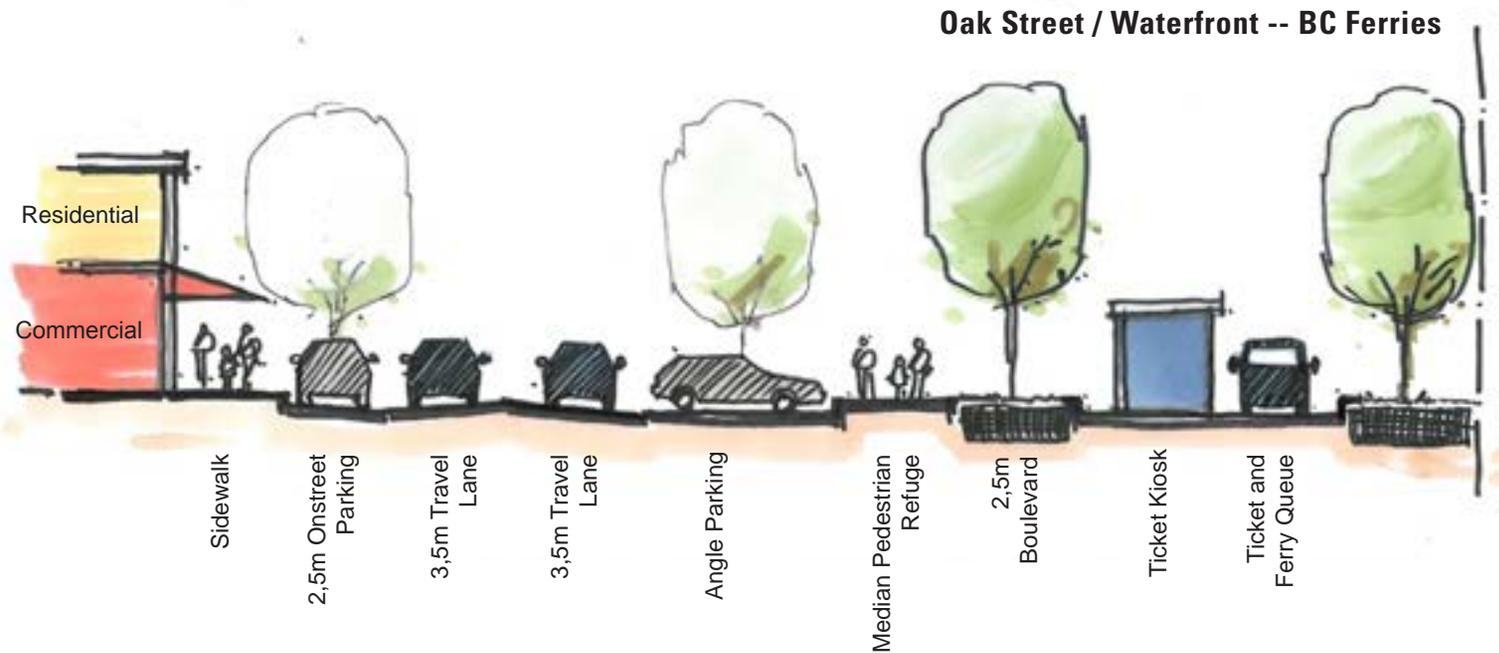
- Should be residential, not mixed commercial and residential.
- Way too much commercial on Oak Street. Most retailers not able to pay economic rent (rent to support new construction). So encourage commercial closer to the water, and develop this block as supporting residential.



OAK STREET What it Means

Streetscape improvements along Oak Street will provide an improved pedestrian environment and positive commercial environment. As the business mix along Oak Street continues to change, the quality of the street will be increasingly important. In this sketch:

- » Access for BC Ferries traffic is accommodated. Further development should be undertaken in conjunction with BCF planners to ensure that ferry operations are properly incorporated.
- » On-street parking is essential to support commercial development. This illustration indicates parking maximization for commercial interests;
- » Narrow travel lanes, street trees and pedestrian bumpouts help to reduce the scale of the street and encourage positive pedestrian experiences;
- » Multi-use trail and waterfront trail connections encourage local and tourist traffic.





STREETS & LANES *Oak Street*

What it Means

For Oak Street, the future has many great opportunities and some real constraints. As the mix of businesses continues to change there will be a need to plan carefully to create a practical and viable commercial hub. These changes are likely to include:

- » Residential development is encouraged. More people means more commerce.
- » Water oriented development should take advantage of this great natural amenity. This includes waterfront walkway, commercial moorage, and marine services.
- » Coordinated development with current landowner along the south side of Oak Street. Investigate opportunities to develop a commercial street frontage on this side. This may include temporary facilities and/or permanent commercial structures.
- » Coordinated development with BC Ferries. Streetscape improvements should be developed in conjunction with BC Ferries to ensure that their medium and longer term needs are met.

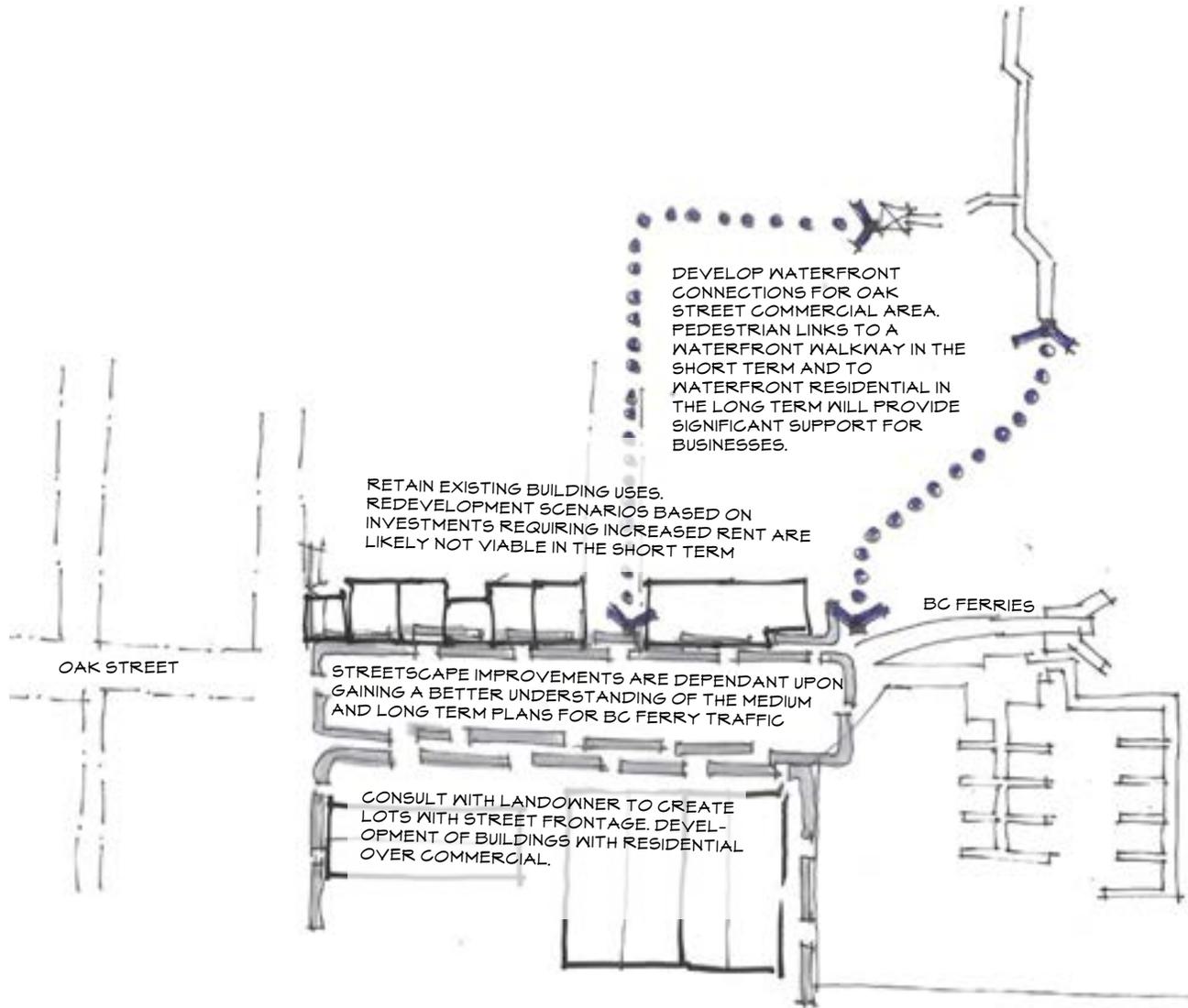


Commercial precincts are enhanced where frontages can be developed to provide additional retail opportunities. Current industrial landowners may wish to consider opportunities to develop the street frontage along Oak Street.

What the Land Economist says...

- Current economic conditions may indicate that little redevelopment opportunity exists in the short term. A market niche which attract niche businesses which can thrive in a low rent environment. Redevelopment which necessarily results in higher rental rates will kill the existing energy. Over the longer term transitional uses that reduce the overall amount of commercial space should be pursued.
- North side of street tied to development plan of south side of the street. Together there is a great opportunity to create a complete neighborhood. If Western Forest Products were to become interested in making land available for residential and commercial development the opportunities for redevelopment would improve.
- Redevelopment options would need to accommodate current and future needs for BC Ferries
- Will take a decade or more for transformation of the street to be complete.
- Redevelopment may include residential over commercial where the residential development subsidizes ground floor commercial.

STREETS & LANES *Oak Street*



What the Land Economist says...

- Limited demand means that revitalization efforts need to be very focused. In small communities like Chemainus this means that redevelopment may occur slowly over many years or even decades. Redevelopment moves at a snail's pace – that's not bad at all, in fact that's part of the charm of the community. But it's a reality that investors and developers and the community have to understand and respond to.
- The key to transforming the Oak Street Commercial precinct over the long term, includes development along the south side of the street. Properties owned by Western Forest Products provide the opportunity to remake this area and provide a fresh community context. As the southern part of the street is redeveloped, it will encourage other developers to come in and acquire the northern part and revitalize it.
- Limited demand for commercial space means that development should include opportunities for 100% residential on several of the Oak Street properties.

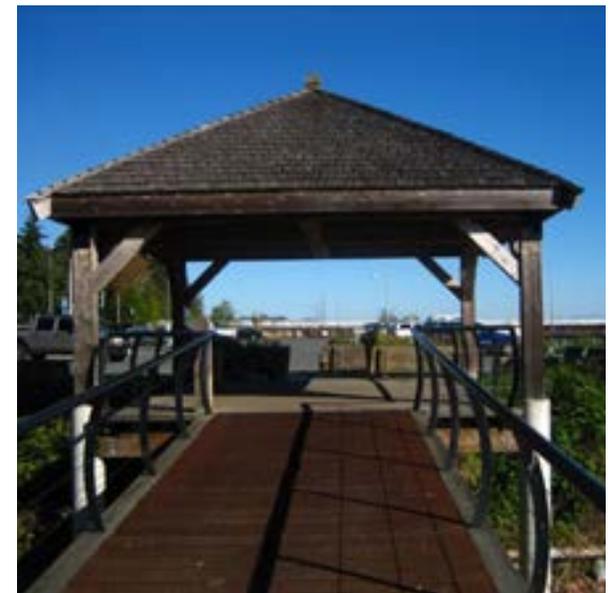
4 WATERFRONT

Identified as one of the most desirable projects by more than 2/3's of responses at the public open house in September, the development of a waterfront boardwalk is clearly an important project for Chemainus residents.

The waterfront walkway illustrated as part of this plan may be seen as a series of smaller projects.

The examples illustrated below are waterfront features developed by communities like Chemainus. These are enduring attractions loved by residents and visitors alike.

Crofton has been very successful in the creation of a waterfront boardwalk. Similarly the walkways at Parksville and in the Okanagan provide waterfront access and recreational opportunities.



WATERFRONT WALKWAY What it Means

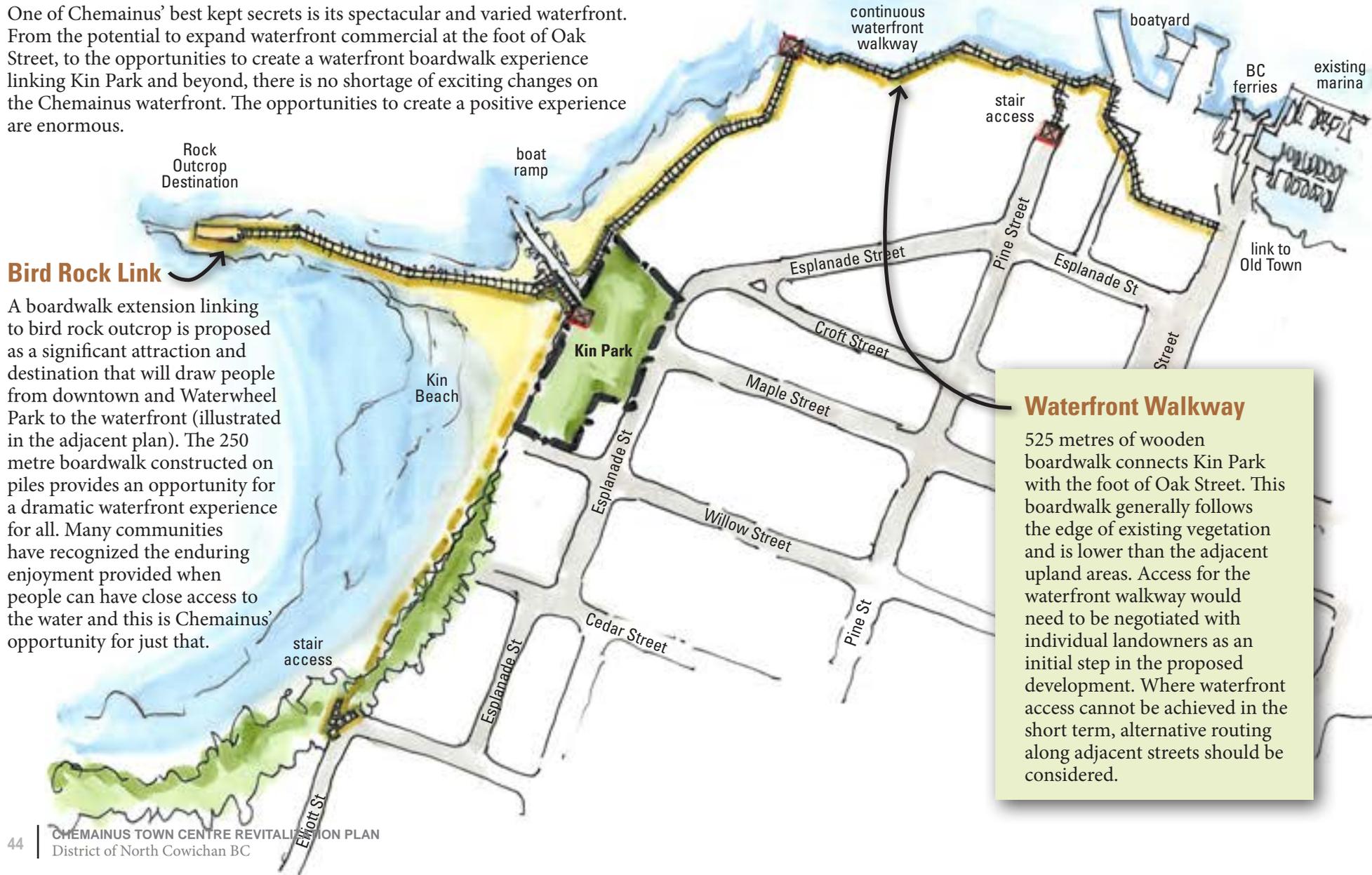
One of Chemainus' best kept secrets is its spectacular and varied waterfront. From the potential to expand waterfront commercial at the foot of Oak Street, to the opportunities to create a waterfront boardwalk experience linking Kin Park and beyond, there is no shortage of exciting changes on the Chemainus waterfront. The opportunities to create a positive experience are enormous.

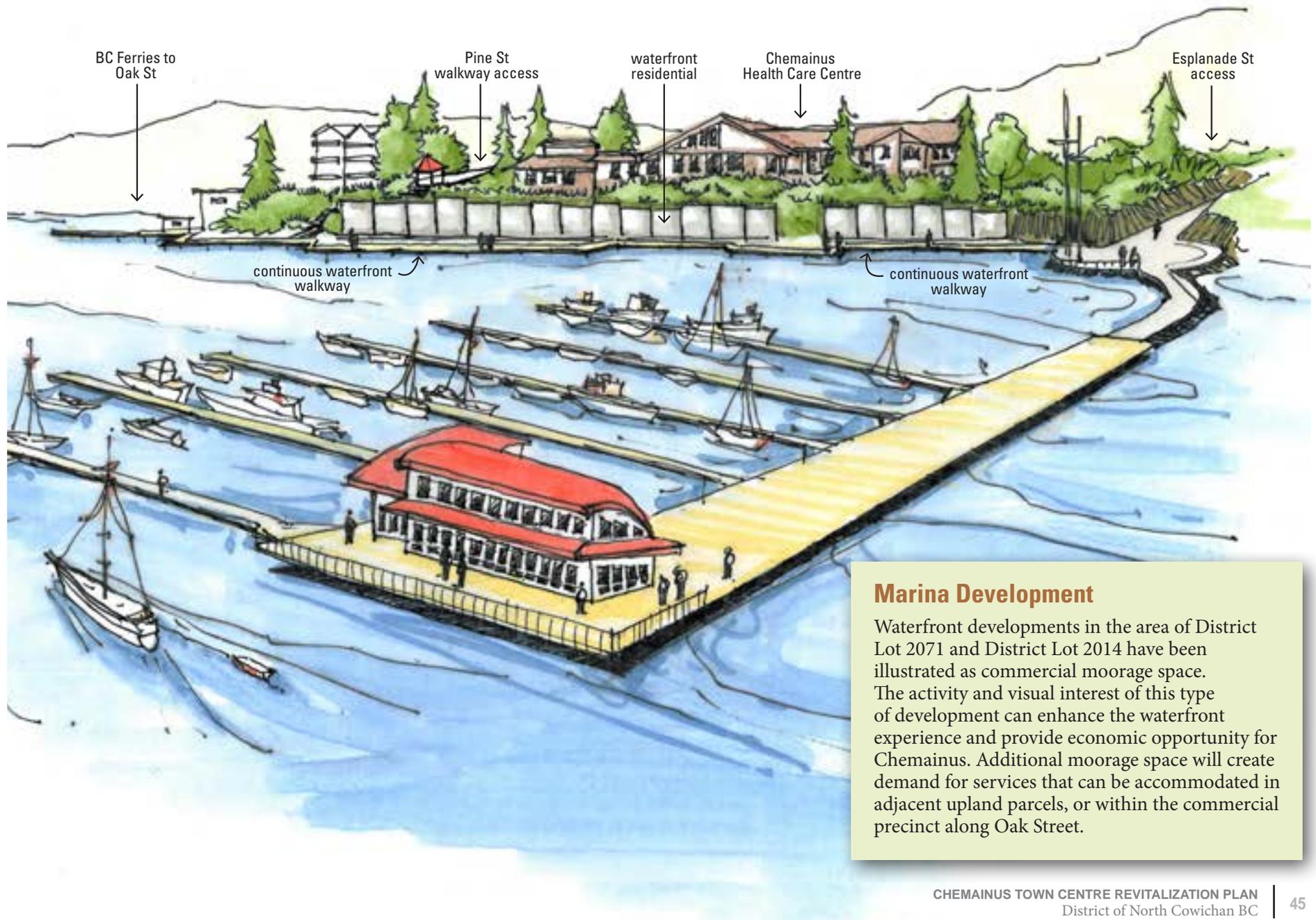
Bird Rock Link

A boardwalk extension linking to bird rock outcrop is proposed as a significant attraction and destination that will draw people from downtown and Waterwheel Park to the waterfront (illustrated in the adjacent plan). The 250 metre boardwalk constructed on piles provides an opportunity for a dramatic waterfront experience for all. Many communities have recognized the enduring enjoyment provided when people can have close access to the water and this is Chemainus' opportunity for just that.

Waterfront Walkway

525 metres of wooden boardwalk connects Kin Park with the foot of Oak Street. This boardwalk generally follows the edge of existing vegetation and is lower than the adjacent upland areas. Access for the waterfront walkway would need to be negotiated with individual landowners as an initial step in the proposed development. Where waterfront access cannot be achieved in the short term, alternative routing along adjacent streets should be considered.



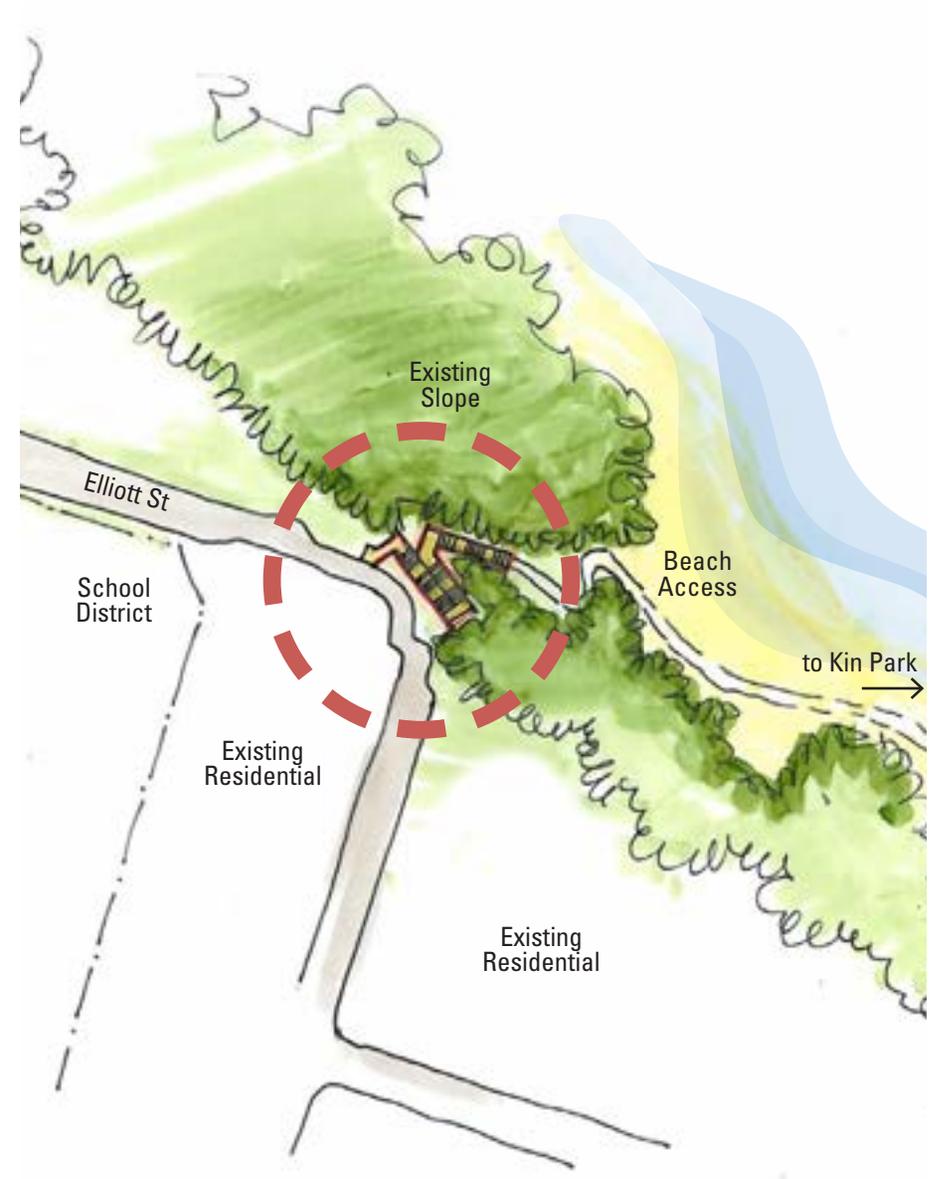


Marina Development

Waterfront developments in the area of District Lot 2071 and District Lot 2014 have been illustrated as commercial moorage space. The activity and visual interest of this type of development can enhance the waterfront experience and provide economic opportunity for Chemainus. Additional moorage space will create demand for services that can be accommodated in adjacent upland parcels, or within the commercial precinct along Oak Street.

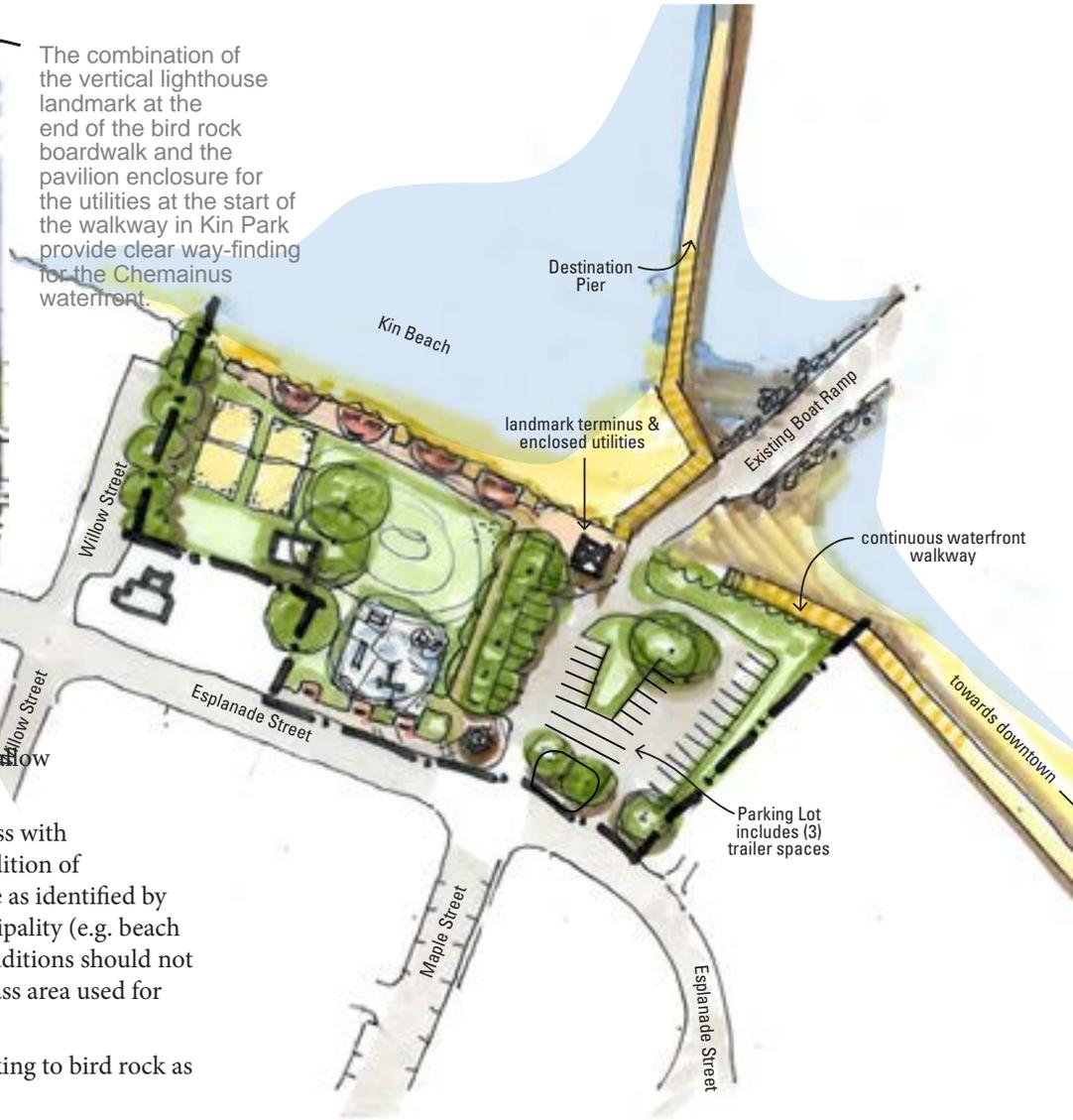
What it Means

This stair will provide a significant connection to the waterfront that does not currently exist. The link allows for a connection between the High School and Kin Park and provides a more direct waterfront access for the school and surrounding residential areas.





The combination of the vertical lighthouse landmark at the end of the bird rock boardwalk and the pavilion enclosure for the utilities at the start of the walkway in Kin Park provide clear way-finding for the Chemainus waterfront.



What it Means

Kin Park is a key piece of public waterfront that is currently under-utilized. Several incremental improvements have been identified through the public process and in discussion with staff. These include:

- New enclosure and fencing for sewer pump station. The prominence of this pump station at the centre of the park and in the middle of an important waterfront vista suggests that a cottage-type building and wood fence should be constructed. This `pavilion` can then also act as a landmark denoting the start of the waterfront walkway.

- Parking is re-organized to allow for better use of area.
- Improved seating and access with the opportunity for the addition of waterfront recreation space as identified by the community and municipality (e.g. beach volleyball courts). These additions should not impact the valued open grass area used for picnics and flexible uses.
- A walkway connection linking to bird rock as described above.

5

What it Means

The Benchlands provides a very significant opportunity for development on Chemainus' south entrance. The building forms illustrated in this report represent a likely form of development based on future market demand. Three and four storey buildings provide residential opportunities with ground floor commercial close to the existing town centre. Surface parking is limited and road access within the site is by narrow lanes.

A commercial plaza is illustrated at the intersection of Willow and Victoria Streets. This public space is surrounded by ground floor commercial uses. Refer to page 50 for illustrated plan. A pedestrian promenade along the top of the bluff provides viewing opportunities to the active mill site and the harbour beyond.



What the Land Economist says...

- A site with good long run development potential.
- Long run probably means 20+ years.
- Potential is mixed residential and commercial.
- Commercial focus should be on the portion of the benchlands adjacent to the existing commercial on Willow Street and Victoria Street near the existing Theatre.



View south down Willow Street towards proposed plaza and Benchlands development.

BENCLANDS *Mixed Residential and Commercial* Part 3 – Key Projects





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double-sided printing*



PART IV *Implementation*

Implementation & Next Steps

A number of projects described in the previous section have been discussed by Chemainus residents for many years. Some capital allocations have already been identified so that some of these projects may be advanced with the successful adoption of this plan. Among these a new Chemainus library, skate park, community centre, waterfront boardwalk and Chemainus road improvements are notable.

Others will become part of a longer term implementation process that may unfold over many years or even decades. Land development projects such as the proposal for mixed use redevelopment of the old Fire Hall, or the on vacant lots as indicated along Oak Street and Maple Lane or on the Benchlands may only advance when the market conditions permit. The most successful communities are often able to recognize these longer term opportunities and to pre-plan so that when these projects proceed the community's aspirations are well understood and easily incorporated.

1

Planning for Success

A number of individual planning activities are recommended to support the development of individual projects.

Community Centre & Skate Park

This report has recommended the development, over the long term, of a Community Campus at the location of St. Joseph's School and the Elm Street Fields. This area is expected to include both indoor recreational and social spaces as well as outdoor areas for organized sports and passive recreation.

Further investigation of this opportunity may include:

User needs survey – the identification of the preferred site in this report has been hampered by the lack of clarity on the community requirements for current and future space needs. A user needs survey may provide service benchmarks from similarly sized communities and thresholds for future investment. Does Chemainus currently have enough community meetings space? What is typical for a community of this size? What is the expected threshold for additional space? What partnership agreements can be developed to share space between the municipality and other agencies.

Site Potential Diagram – What spaces need to be added, removed, or changed to provide the maximum benefit in the medium and longer term? How much parking is required. What

circulation improvements may be contemplated in the future to accommodate an increased level of use? Is there an expectation of additional building requirements? These questions and more may be answered through the preparation of a site potential diagram that illustrates the use and relationship of different activities.

Skate Park Design – Once an overall site potential diagram has been created the detailed design of a skate park facility can be undertaken. Recognizing that the skate park design may occur before other aspects of the campus design are complete, the development of improved pedestrian and cycle links between the park and the E&N Trail should be enhanced and the link between the park and the downtown revitalization area

Library

This report recommends the development of a new library and civic square on vacant properties on Willow Street. The preparation of architectural plans may proceed once the site for the new library has been confirmed. This investigation may include:

- Review of building needs with Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) board;
- Meeting with community stakeholders to identify additional space requirements including: community centre, Chamber of Commerce, visitor services, public washrooms, public market, etc.
- Landscape Design and layout for adjacent parking and bus loading areas;
- Preparing cost estimates for construction; and
- Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) funding.

Pedestrian and Cycle Infrastructure

The Active Transportation Strategy prepared in December 2009 includes a variety of recommendations, many of which have been carried forward as part of the key projects recommended in this report. Of the many recommendations contained there, four individual projects should be advanced as part of the Downtown Revitalization efforts:

Waterfront boardwalk – discussed previously this high profile cluster of projects is an important part of a larger pedestrian network that encourages residents and visitors to recognize Chemainus as a pedestrian friendly community.

Pedestrian Link to St. Joseph's – Although this is a short connection – less than 100 metres it will have a significant benefit for residents throughout Chemainus. A detailed design for the pedestrian link should be developed to review grading and corridor access. An enhanced rail corridor crossing can be developed which minimizes the separation between these two parts of the community. Where access across private land is indicated these design proposals can provide clarity for future land use decisions.

E&N Trail – As part of the crossing design, enhanced access to the E&N trail may be provided. The trail is a significant piece of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure which is under-utilized by Chemainus residents and visitors. The connectivity provided by the trail may be

positively exploited by the downtown community.

Benchlands Promenade – The development proposals for the benchlands include an important pedestrian promenade which follows the crest of the slope. The development of this pedestrian connection will provide a significant community benefit which should be encouraged as part of the early development planning for this site. The bicycle links provided by this promenade, and by the E&N Trail, are important components of the transportation infrastructure for Chemainus. As both of these routes parallel Chemainus Road no on street bicycle lanes have been included in that road cross section.

Waterfront Boardwalk

To implement the projects identified as part of the waterfront boardwalk the municipality must investigate land tenure opportunities to allow these amenities to be developed.

Some parts of the walkway, such as the link to Bird Rock, and the stairway connection to Elliot Street may be easily accommodated. Other areas are likely to involve a higher degree of collaboration with upland landowners and additional planning and legal work to secure land to construct the waterfront walkway.

All aspects of the waterfront walkway proposals must be reviewed by environmental regulators.

With the funding currently identified by the municipality for waterfront amenities it is likely that either the Elliot Street stair, or the Bird Rock

link may be constructed.

Benchlands

The development proposals envisioned in this Downtown Revitalization Report will dramatically alter the landscape between Henry Road and Victoria Street. As this area is adjacent to Chemainus Road, and is such a key part of everyone's experience in entering the community, subsequent planning should be closely coordinated with ongoing downtown revitalization efforts. The scope and timing of this planning work will be led by the landowner but as these decisions have such a significant impact

2

Infrastructure

Water System Requirements

Water is provided from the District of North Cowichan water supply system with distribution through a network of water mains that follow the municipal roadway grid. These mains vary in size from 100 mm to 300 mm diameter and were constructed over time using a variety of pipe materials including cast iron, asbestos cement and PVC. System capacity to deliver fire flows may be limited by pipe size and system layout. Individual development projects will need to be assessed on a case by case basis to determine the potential impact of system capacity on building size and on the method of construction. Water main upgrade and replacement may be a requirement of development

Sewerage System Requirements

Sewerage from the commercial and residential areas in downtown Chemainus is collected in a gravity system that flows towards a pumping facility located in Kin Beach Park at the north end of Maple Street. Discharge from that Kin Beach Lift Station is carried by pressure sewer to the treatment plant located south of the Benchlands on Bare Point Road. This existing system has limited capacity to handle additional flow and system improvements are required to service the development identified in this plan.

The existing gravity sewer lines on both Victoria Street and Croft Street and the Kin Beach Lift Station have insufficient capacity to service anticipated development. Options available to service development of the Benchlands and re-development of the downtown area include the following:

- Replace the existing gravity sewer mains on Victoria Street and Croft Street coupled with an upgrade to the Kin Beach Lift Station at the north end of Maple Street; or,
- Construct a second lift station within the Benchlands to serve that development and the existing residential areas to the south. This second option will free-up additional capacity to service downtown re-development and provide the environmental benefits associated with reducing the pumping head and associated power requirements for the area served.

Drainage System Requirements

Drainage from the existing commercial and residential areas in Chemainus is handled through a system of underground storm sewers, culverts and ditches. No existing capacity issues were identified in the downtown area, however local re-development and associated road upgrade projects would provide an opportunity to replace this aging infrastructure to meet current standards and introduce current standards and Best Management Practices for storm water treatment and discharge.

The Benchlands area is currently undeveloped with no formal drainage system in place. Development of these lands will require construction of new storm water management works to provide drainage and to handle the resulting increased flow. These works should be designed and built in conformance with current standards and Best Management Practices to attenuate flows and provide storm water treatment.

Other Infrastructure Improvements

In addition to the broad Infrastructure requirements described above the municipality can advance its planning and funding for a range of infrastructure improvements identified as elements of the downtown revitalization plan. The overall success of the downtown revitalization initiatives will depend on the gradual improvements to civic infrastructure described as part of this vision.

For example, the following items should be considered and incorporated as part of infrastructure planning for the municipality:

- Stairway connecting Croft Street Parking – A key element of any parking management proposal, this link would provide a direct and easy connection between downtown amenities like the museum, Waterwheel Park and shopping, and the abundance of existing parking along Croft Street. Designed correctly this stair would also provide an enhanced viewing experience from Waterwheel Park toward the harbour.
- Improvements to Willow Streetscape – The revitalization of Willow Street has included discussion of creating a shared pedestrian area that would provide the opportunity for occasion re-use of these ‘plaza’ area for events and markets. While the design of these facilities can be quite straightforward, these changes must be planned and budgeted.
- Street Trees and Furnishings – the revitalization plan includes the addition of street trees in a variety of areas, including the laneway between Willow Street and Chemainus Road. To survive these installations require significant soil volumes through the use of structural paving or Silva cells. This infrastructure can have higher installation costs but much better performance over their life. The higher installation costs must be incorporated into infrastructure planning.
- River Road & Victoria Road Roundabouts – budgeting for roadway improvements of this type must incorporate allocations for public art and landscape development.
- Chemainus Road between Henry Road and Victoria Street— this road improvement project will have a very significant effect on the way that residents and visitors perceive Chemainus.
- Chemainus Road between Victoria Street and Cedar Street – different from the section to the south, this section does not include a median. The redevelopment of Chemainus road will affect the current perpendicular parking and will facilitate a very much enhanced streetscape between the roadway and the rail corridor.
- Improvements to Kin Park – currently under-utilized Kin Park should be identified as a high priority for additional open space investment.
- Pedestrian connection to St. Joseph’s School & Elm Street improvements including street lighting and sidewalks.

3

Financial Incentives

Given the broad range of projects identified in this revitalization plan, there are likely to be many avenues to be explored to confirm funding to allow these projects to move forward.

Capital Funding

Capital funding for the development of a community centre, a new skate park, a new library, waterfront walkway and Chemainus Road improvements have already been included within the municipality's capital plan. As the scope of these projects is confirmed the community will have a better understanding of its funding needs to support these projects.

Many of the project ideas identified in this revitalization plan require stable and long term partnerships. The municipality has done a good job over the years to developing these relationships as part of the regular course of its business.

Downtown revitalization, by its nature, is a partnership between community leaders, business people and landowners. It is anticipated that the recommendations of this revitalization plan will be developed by partner agencies and stakeholders and that shared funding and management will be developed to support the successful implementation of these ideas.

Revitalization Zone

A revitalization zone is an example of a specific type of partnership. Where the municipality recognizes that it cannot lead in the revitalization of individual properties and that funds spent on public infrastructure may not achieve their desired effect without the participation of private landowners. In this situation the municipality may establish a 'Revitalization Zone' that provides a property tax concession over a period of time in exchange for a specific revitalization investment.

For the community this can mean that revitalization investments are incented without a direct cash outlay. For the property owner this allows an improvement in a property with some certainty that a more valuable property is not hindered by higher property taxes.

Façade Improvement Grants

Many communities have success with Façade Improvement Grants. These programs provide the opportunity for a direct cash contribution to incent activities such as painting, lighting, awning improvements, etc. The administration of grants can be delegated to a downtown advisory group and the structure of the program can be established to encourage private investments. Programs which provide for 50/50 cost sharing are common.

4

Market Potential Description

Economic assessments of the key project recommendations described above have been undertaken to determine the broad viability of the proposals. From this review it is evident that difficult economic circumstances should be expected to continue and that care should be taken to ensure that revitalization efforts do not run ahead of market demand. Area specific comments are indicated below.

Oak Street Business Area

- » The market does not exist today to support extensive revitalization efforts. The commercial focus should be toward niche and low cost commercial space. Revitalization efforts that result in higher rents are not likely to be successful as there is not sufficient demand at this location to support demand for higher end commercial space.
- » Over long term, the amount of commercial should be minimized with an effort to attract smaller niche tenants able to pay higher rents required to support new construction. This is an instance when less is more, ie less commercial space is more appropriate space.
- » North side of street tied to development plan of

south side of the street. Together there is a great opportunity to create a nice neighborhood. If Western Forest Products develops or sells street front properties on the south side of Oak Street, there will be added potential to strengthen the redevelopment potential of the northern part of the street. It may take 15+ years, or longer, for this type of transformation to be completed.

- » The economics of expanding marina and waterfront commercial development should be investigated in greater detail. With this development a land based niche commercial area can be created.

Maple Lane at Oak Street

- » Should be residential, not mixed commercial and residential.
- » Too much commercial on Oak Street. Most retailers not able to pay economic rent (rent to support new construction). Encourage commercial closer to the water, and develop this block as supporting residential.

Old Fire Hall Site

- » The highest and best use of the fire hall site is expected to be as a new 3-4 storey residential development. The old fire hall itself would have to be demolished to create the highest and best use.
- » The highest and best use of the site is not a renovation of the existing structure for mixed residential and commercial (2 floors residential over ground floor retail). The costs of renovation and limitations on design by the existing structure would place limitations on the amount of saleable space that could be created plus likely result in too high construction costs to be able to be the highest and best use of the site.
- » There are sufficient other sites to develop commercial space in downtown Chemainus. The old fire hall site should be used to develop all residential space to support existing downtown retail space.
- » Residential development in a new 3-4 storey all residential building could include market residential, affordable strata and/or rental, affordable (subsidized by North Cowichan and Province of BC) affordable housing plus market and subsidized seniors.

5

Project Leaders and Timeline

Project Idea	Project Lead	Implementation Timeline	Next Steps	Municipal Activities	Public Input	Funding Status
.1 Community Spaces						
Community Centre	Lead: MNC Support: SD, CAC, community groups, St. Joseph's School	• Short/ Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review scope of activities to be included: meetings spaces, outdoor recreation, dog off lease areas, etc. Prepare alternative scenarios and evaluate pros and cons; Consult with public to confirm approach; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare discussion paper; Prepare operational plan; Prepare joint venture; agreements as necessary; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation will be required to confirm program, location, budget, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm Capital investment; Prepare Operational plan.
Skate/BMX Park/Dog Park	Lead: MNC Support: CAC; Adjacent landowners; Public; User groups	• Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare diagram of site location and facilities; Consult with public to confirm approach; Confirm project design and construction budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare project outline and budget; Engage consultants to design and implement; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site selection; Connection to other community centre projects; Design Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already included in MNC capital planning
.2 Library & Festival Square						
Library & Festival Square	Lead: MNC Support: VIRL, CVRD, CAC	Short Term	Revise library, Waterwheel Park site plan to respond to public input; Confirm both library and community uses	Confirm project timetable Consult stakeholders Engage building consultants	Review proposed location and adjacent siteplan	Implementation budget in place;

Project Idea	Project Lead	Implementation Timeline	Next Steps	Municipal Activities	Public Input	Funding Status
.3 Streets & Lanes						
Chemainus Road	Lead: MNC Support: MoT, CAC, public	Short/ Medium Term	Confirm road cross sections; Review transportation issues; Prepare preliminary capital estimates; Consult with adjacent property owners;	Consultation with land owners;	Confirm public interest	Prepare capital estimates; Define individual projects/ project triggers;
Parking Management	Lead: MNC Support: CAC; Adjacent landowners; Public; User groups	Short/ Medium Term	Create parking inventory and compare with communities of similar size; Identify parking hotspots and discuss strategies to reduce demand; Develop strategies to improve parking use; Consult with adjacent property owners;	Consultation with land owners;	Confirm public interest	Develop parking strategies;
Willow Street	Lead: MNC, Landowners Support: CAC, public	Short/ Medium Term	Meet with adjacent property owners; Confirm interest in redevelopment; Prepare capital plan confirming MNC infrastructure contributions; Prepare project outline and budget	Provide input of redevelopment potential; Triggers for investment;	Concern about dated style and business vacancies Seen as the heart, offers the most identity or potential	Municipal infrastructure upgrades
Oak Street	Lead: MNC Support: BC Ferries, WFP	• Short/ Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with adjacent property owners; Confirm interest in redevelopment; Prepare capital plan confirming MNC infrastructure contributions; Prepare project outline and budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above; Lead discussions with BC Ferries about terminal improvements 	• As above	• As above
Maple Lane	Lead: MNC Support: Landowners, public	• Short/ Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare project outline and budget; Consult with adjacent land owners; Consideration of use of property on corner of oak and Maple lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm interest with adjacent land owners; Prepare project outline and budget 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare estimate of development costs; Partnership opportunities with Service clubs, etc.

Project Idea	Project Lead	Implementation Timeline	Next Steps	Municipal Activities	Public Input	Funding Status
.4 Waterfront						
Waterfront Public Access in front of VIHA	Lead: Landowner Support: MNC, VIHA, public	• Medium/ Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm proponent interest; • Define public interest in waterfront walkway design; • Consult with environmental regulators WRT waterfront design solutions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with land owner/ proponent; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm support for Chemainus Quay; • Confirm public amenities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand cost of public amenity; • Understand cost sharing with proponent;
Waterfront Boardwalk in front of residential	Lead: MNC Support: public	• Medium/ Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define public interest in waterfront walkway design; • Consult with adjacent land owners; • environmental regulators WRT waterfront design solutions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above
Waterfront Kin Beach, Elliot Street Stair	Lead: MNC Support: public	• Short/ Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review MNC interest in park upgrades; • Consider options for improved waterfront access; • Consult community for project partners; • Consider alternative boat launching sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm interest in waterfront redevelopment; • Prepare project outline and budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for improved water access at Kin Beach • Potential for future land acquisition adjacent to park • Eventual change in boat launch location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare estimate of development costs; • Partnership opportunities with Service clubs, etc.
.5 Benchlands						
Benchlands	Lead: Landowner Support: MNC, CAC, public	• Medium/ Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with property owners; • Confirm land use approach; • Revise land use concept and investigate economic viability; • Prepare capital plan confirming MNC infrastructure contributions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare concept for community review; • Review with land owner to confirm general scope; • Consider appropriate community amenity; • Contemplate timetable for implementation; • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public consultation will be required; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare capital estimates; • Define individual projects/ project triggers;